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Presciutti, Diana Bullen, ed. Space, Place, and Motion: Locating Confraternities in the Late Medieval and Early Modern City

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Perhaps too quickly, the introduction also notes a striking difference between the skeptical stance Gianfrancesco had adopted in his *De Rerum Prenotione* and the *Examen Vanitatis*, and the conventional Thomism of *De Adoratione*. Considering this text survives only in one copy penned by a later scribe, this inconsistency in the *usus philosophandi* raises the issue of authenticity, which this edition might have addressed more openly.

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Presciutti, Diana Bullen, ed.

Space, Place, and Motion: Locating Confraternities in the Late Medieval and Early Modern City.

Art and Material Culture in Medieval and Renaissance Europe 8. Leiden: Brill, 2017. Pp. xx, 450 + 117 ill. ISBN 978-90-04-29297-0 (hardcover) US\$207.

What difference did places of worship, charity, sociability, and ritual make to confraternal communities and the towns and cities they inhabited? Did movement through, around, and between them turn “space” into “practised place” as Michel de Certeau proposed? Was ritual and the custodianship of shrines a communal possession or mutually exclusive—a co-operative pious play that enlarged the community, or a zero-sum game played by rivals in the ritual arena?

This essay collection brings the spatial turn fully into the field of confraternity research. Fifteen essays by new and established scholars explore in a focused way the themes that have long figured in other studies but that have not yet been brought together for comparative analysis. The individual studies bring together history, art and architectural history, theatre, and theology, and range geographically across the Baltic, the Netherlands, England, Ireland, France, Spain, and Mexico, and move across all of northern and southern Italy. They are grouped together according to three themes: spaces of piety and charity, spaces of ritual and theatre, and spaces of identity and rivalry.

“Spaces of Piety and Charity” includes five essays that expand on how food was the vehicle turning the private spaces of confraternities into public communal places, either with periodic festivity in Tallinn (Ann Mänd) or as

assistance to members and others in Norwich and Leiden (Arie van Steensel), or by establishing the sites of inclusion that brought those from the margins (illness, prison, homelessness) back into the civic mainstream in Mexico City (Laura Dirskmeier). Two essays emphasize the importance of recognizing the integrity of *religious* motivations shaping the use of space, neither reducing charitable actions to social function in Alest (Ellen Decraene), nor ignoring the importance of worship spaces as transformative sites of sensory spectacle in Dublin (Cormac Begadon). A few broader issues connect a number of these papers. One is the way that charitable spaces are those most open to the movements and actions of women. Another is the reality that a fluidity of forms and terms can mask commonalities in object and purpose, particularly among guilds, confraternities, and sodalities in northern Europe.

“Spaces of Ritual and Theatre” turns to Italy and to the street and piazza, where de Certeau’s notion of “practised place” is most clearly seen. These essays most fully explore motion, and particularly the dynamics between moving and fixed in the theatre of public space. Two essays follow processional routes in Tivoli and Pavia and centre the multiple levels of meaning in the moving body. When the body of confraternal brothers put two of Tivoli’s most cherished icons in motion, they not only united the Saviour and the Madonna but also set the bounds of social body by steering their procession around the twelve hospitals spaced along the city walls (Rebekah Perry). A Pavian confraternity similarly recreated the civic body and its steady disciplining over time as flagellation gave way to more decorous behaviour (Andrew Chen). Rome’s SS Trinita dei Pellegrini e Convalescenti built a chapel outside the city to draw pilgrims to where the apostles Peter and Paul had met and parted, a spot they marked with a chapel and a cross (Barbara Wisch). Crosses and altars also marked the spots on a stational route with which a S. Croce (Holy Cross) confraternity laced Milan (Pamela A.V. Stewart), and a highly resonant crucifix led criminals and their comforters from San Fantin across Venice en route to execution (Meryl Bailey).

“Spaces of Identity and Rivalry” moves indoors to look at the spaces that confraternities built and the artworks that turned these, too, into practiced places, occupied both by the brothers and sisters of the sodality and by the saints who attracted their devotion and directed their identity. In this case, it was movement of the spirit more than movement of the body that animated the spaces. While the ritual movements of confraternal bodies “practised” outdoor

spaces, it was the stable sacramentality of crucifixes, frescoes, and altarpieces that consecrated confraternal oratories. Lay brothers aimed to capture that charism through patronage of all or some of this art and architecture, as we see in Rome (Kira Maye Albinsky), Rouen (Caroline Blondeau-Morizot), Florence (Douglas N. Dow), Palermo (Danielle Carrabino), and Seville (Ellen Alexandra Dooley).

Any collection dedicated to exploring a new scholarly turn runs the risk of incoherence as the authors go, in Stephen Leacock's memorable phrase, "madly off in all directions." Editor Diana Bullen Presciutti has worked expertly to draw the authors and articles together, and to encourage a formal discipline that underscores their arguments and connections. A common bibliography incorporating archival and secondary sources makes this a valuable guide to the *status quaestionis*, while an extraordinary collection of well over one hundred maps and illustrations, many of them in colour, underscores the visual and sensory themes that connect the various pieces. Above all, they animate the central argument that tracing space, place, and motion are as important as measuring politics, kinship, and ritual when we aim to demonstrate the critical role that confraternities played in the social, physical, sensory, and psychic worlds of the early modern world.

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Provan, Iain.

The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture.

Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017. Pp. 730. ISBN 978-1-4813-0608-9 (hardcover) US\$49.95.

In the Reformation, the inspiration and authority of the Bible—its perspicuity, efficacy, and sufficiency—came to the fore. For the present generation that has lost its confidence in the Bible, Iain Provan's book has recaptured and recovered the internal structure and logic of the Reformation hermeneutic, with its emphasis on the literal sense. Strategically, Provan engages with four contemporary "ways" of reading Scripture that he finds somewhat deficient. Provan's ways are as follows (13–21): first, "Historical Criticism" (e.g., James