

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Margarida Montenegro, Maria, Francisco d'Orey Manoel, and Henrique Leitão, eds. A "Compromisso" for the Future: 500th Anniversary of the First Printed Edition of the Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia

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centrale. Pour les chercheurs dont l'accès direct à ces travaux reste difficile et parfois impossible pour des raisons linguistiques, il s'agit d'une précieuse porte d'entrée dans ce monde qui mérite d'être mieux connu et exploré.

Grâce à la très belle qualité globale de ce recueil, Louthan et Murdock atteignent pleinement leur objectif. Ils offrent un aperçu synthétique sans équivalent d'une partie encore insuffisamment étudiée des mutations religieuses qui ont bouleversé la chrétienté européenne à l'époque des réformes.

HUGUES DAUSSY

Université de Franche-Comté

**Margarida Montenegro, Maria, Francisco d'Orey Manoel, and Henrique Leitão, eds.**

***A "Compromisso" for the Future: 500th Anniversary of the First Printed Edition of the Compromisso of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia.***

Lisbon: Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, 2017. Pp. 295 + ill. ISBN 978-989-8712-61-5 (paperback) €30.

The *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* was one of the defining institutions in early modern Portugal and its overseas holdings, and has continued to play an important role to the present. From the original house in Lisbon, founded in 1498, sister houses were rapidly established in most Portuguese urban centres and followed the Portuguese overseas. They were operated by a crown-sponsored religious confraternity (*confraternidade da Misericórdia*), whose mission was to perform all fourteen works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual. The ambitious scope of activities sets this confraternity apart from most other such volunteer religio-social organizations of the period. The first surviving "Compromisso" (Statutes) of the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* of Lisbon dates to 1502 and the first printed edition to 1516. The *Santa Casa da Misericórdia*, in partnership with Musei Vaticani, Museo de Arte Sacro de Teruel, and Dióceses de Teruel y de Albarracín, celebrated the quincentenary of the first printing of the *Compromisso* with a major exhibition (10 May–10 September 2017) which combined the early modern editions of the *Compromisso* with a large-scale presentation of sacred art pertaining to the fourteen works of mercy, and with photography by young Portuguese artists promoting similar themes. The

present volume is the catalogue of the exhibition, titled *A “Compromisso” for the Future: 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Printed Edition of the Compromisso* of the Confraternity of the Misericórdia, under the editorship of Maria Margarida Montenegro, Francisco d’Orey Manoel, and Henrique Leitão.

The volume is organized into ten sections. The first four are brief: they introduce the project and offer a discussion of the contemporary mission of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Lisbon, the concept of mercy from a Christian (Catholic) viewpoint, and the continued importance of active works of compassion and social support that the fourteen works of mercy encompass. The majority of the volume (31–256) consists of scholarly chapters on key issues associated with the exhibition. The final section (257–95) provides beautifully produced samples of the visual materials that had been included in the exhibition. These cover examples of the iconography and palaeography of the early documents pertaining to the confraternity, including the 1502 and 1520 manuscripts of the *Compromisso*, frontispieces and examples of typography from the early modern printed version of the *Compromisso*, and a selection of late medieval paintings representing Our Lady of Mercy and the works of mercy, and conclude with contemporary artistic photography pertaining to social awareness and compassion.

The first two scholarly chapters focus on the history and comparative analysis of the sixteenth-century *Compromissos*. The chapter by Helga Maria Jüsten (35–77) concentrates on the bibliographical and typographical history of the two main printed versions of the Statutes, the 1516 original and the mid-sixteenth-century “counterfeit” version. Jüsten offers a painstaking comparison of the typographical elements, advancing the hypothesis that the “counterfeit” version, generally associated with the workshop of João Rodrigues, was in fact the work of Germão Galharde. The chapter by Francisco d’Orey Manoel and Nelson Moreira Antão (79–120) offers an analysis of the Statutes’ content in the context of various sixteenth-century manuscript and printed copies produced for the Misericórdia confraternities in different parts of Portugal. The two chapters are complementary and should be read in conjunction.

The following two chapters deal with the history of the events and personal roles associated with the founding of the confraternity and with its Statutes. The chapter (121–58) by Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, a preeminent historian of the topic, provides a succinct summary of the founding of the confraternity and a valuable commentary on the development of the doctrine of the fourteen works

of mercy, and their practice in Renaissance Portugal. The study by Lisbeth Rodrigues provides a valuable and original insight into the influences that shaped the notions of charity of Queen Leonor, the founder of the *Misericórdia* confraternity, in terms both of intellectual and spiritual authorities and of practical implementation, particularly in the case of the famous hospital and church of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo (Our Lady of the People) that she founded in her town of Caldas da Rainha.

The final two chapters are written by historians of religious art. Celso Mangucci (189–244) examines the role that visual art and the use of images played as didactic tools in conveying the scriptural teaching and doctrinal catechism of the works of mercy, using examples ranging from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The last chapter (245–56, 278), by Pedro L. H. Sebastián, analyzes the earliest Iberian painting representing Our Lady of Mercy with her iconic mantle sheltering victims and sinners alike: the panel of *Virgem da Misericórdia* in the collections of the Museo de Arte Sacro in Teruel, which is featured as the catalogue's cover image. The art history component concludes with a brief commentary by Adele Breda (280–82) on Olivuccio di Ciccarello's panels *Opere do Misericordia* (1404).

A “Compromisso” goes beyond its basic function as context and a lasting memento of the quincentenary exhibition. It is a scholarly collection of considerable significance. The visual material it presents and the constituent chapters by leading Portuguese historians and art historians make it an important source for the history of the following topics: early printing in Portugal, the concept of works of mercy in late medieval Portugal, religious art depicting the works of mercy, Virgin Mary in her aspect as Our Lady of Mercy (Our Lady of the Mantle), the didactic function fulfilled by religious visual art, and the history of the Confraternity of Mercy and the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* of Lisbon.