

Between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*

Epistolary Forms of *otium* in Early Modern Italy

Edited by Judith Frömmer and Andrea Guidi

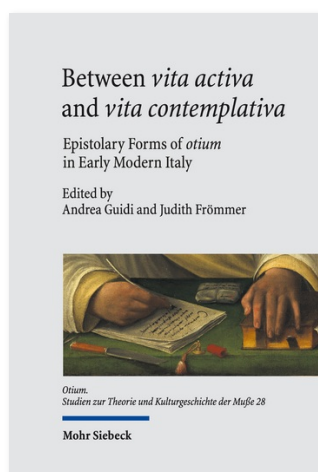
[Zwischen *Vita activa* und *Vita contemplativa*. Epistolare Formen der Muße im Italien der Frühen Neuzeit.]

Published in English.

Letters went viral in early modern Italy, with politics and social interaction, artistic inspiration as well as spirituality and philosophy all hinging on ingenious epistolary cultures. Correspondence fashioned intellectuals and networks, constructed thoughts and schemes, provided a stage for politics and the arts, reflected on existential questions and professional activities. It involved not only writing, but diplomacy, praying, painting, composing, and other forms of artistic expression. And while being a vital activity of everyday lives, epistolary communication also uncovered new spaces of thought, meditation, and creativity. The articles gathered in this volume trace the epistolary threads spun across early modern Italy and unravel the entanglements of their correspondents' active and contemplative lives. They reveal different forms of an epistolary *otium* which was both an indispensable social activity and an essential method of contemplation.

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2024. VI, 154 pages. Otium 28

ISBN 978-3-16-162288-5
hardcover 59,00 €

ISBN 978-3-16-162562-6
eBook PDF 59,00 €

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