THE POLITICS OF RITUAL KINSHIP

CONFRATERNITIES AND SOCIAL ORDER IN EARLY MODERN ITALY

EDITED BY

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I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONFRATERNITY STUDIES OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS

CHRISTOPHER F. BLACK

Since the 1960s lay confraternities in Italy, as elsewhere, have moved from the periphery of medieval religious history to a central place in mainstream studies of social-religious and cultural history up to the eighteenth century. In the early 1960s a student of medieval and Renaissance Italy might have known about confraternities as part of the broader flagellant movement exploding on the scene from 1260; or as contributors to the cultural scene of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Florence, if they recognized Or San Michele as a confraternity building, or sixteenth century Venice – if it was realized that *Scuola* in the context of, say San Rocco, meant a confraternity and not an educational school. Now it is recognized that confraternities expanded and diversified in Italy through the later medieval, Renaissance, Catholic Reform, and Counter Reformation periods that in this volume are subsumed under the broader term of Early Modern. The Reformation crisis period that saw the collapse of the fraternities or religious guilds (or gilds) in Protestant areas of Germany, in England, and in Scotland, witnessed a major diversification of their roles and activities in Italy, as in Spain and later France.

Confraternities were central to the spiritual life of many urban inhabitants, female as well as male, and more patchily to remoter rural dwellers. They were a key link between the living and the dead. But increasingly we have studied the roles of confraternities in politics, in the structuring

In preparing this chapter I am much indebted to the assistance and encouragement of fellow authors Richard Mackenney, Nicholas Terpstra and Danilo Zardin; of my colleague Sam Cohn, and of my former colleague and *amica simpatica*, Tricia Allerston. For revising this chapter the Editor has opportunely provided me with copies of most other chapters before editing and, in some cases, translation. This has helped me indicate the interpretive context of what my co-authors are analyzing. Archival material has only been cited where supplementary to what can be found in references to my published writings. I have used here: Archivio Storico del Vicariato di Roma (ASVR), Arciconfraternita della Dottrina Cristiana (ADC); Archivio di Stato, Roma (ASR), Camerale II (CII), and Camerale III (CIII).

of social relations and social life, their links with many aspects of social welfare, being involved in hospices and hospitals, prisons and poor houses, in religious education, in the welfare of females from the provision of dowries to secure accommodation to protect vulnerable young girls, battered wives and forsaken widows. The roles of fraternities in cultural life have similarly been much studied since the 1960s; in connection with processions and plays, with religious musical celebrations, as well as with the provision and financing of chapels and church decoration.

This chapter will first highlight the landmark publications, conferences, research projects and institutions that have fostered the expansion of confraternity studies over the past thirty years, and linked them with other developments in historical studies. Subsequently five sections will elaborate on key aspects of confraternity activity and developments, emphasizing what has contributed to broadening our knowledge and understanding. The selectivity of my commentary and examples, governed by my recent research interests, and space limitations, should be compensated for by references in the rich and varied chapters that follow, and in the composite bibliography, so that no major contributor to changing approaches to confraternities through the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries remains unmentioned. Important, but highly specialized studies of local importance, even major contributions to documentary information, may however have been omitted.

Penitential flagellation was one of the significant activities of one type of fraternity. It was renewed interest in medieval flagellation, or discipline (*disciplina*), that most stimulated my generation's interest in early modern confraternities. An anniversary conference in 1960 to celebrate the 1260 flagellant movement produced seminal papers published in 1962, the establishment of a Center in Perugia for the study of discipline confraternities, and the organization of a second conference in 1969 (published in 1972).[1] The conferences and Center set many scholars searching for documentation to establish when and where discipline confraternities existed, and their statutory basis; the pursuit of printed statutes empha-

[1] *Movimento dei disciplinati*, in which G. Alberigo's long "Contributi," 156–256, was an important stimulus to research into lay spirituality in the Catholic Reform period; also *Risultati e Prospettive*; the Centro di Documentazione sul Movimento dei Disciplinati, Perugia, has intermittently published a number of studies, printed statutes, and cataloged sources, but suffered from underfunding. For recent comments on the development of different approaches to confraternity studies see: Banker, *Death in Community*, 1–14; Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 1–8; Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*, xv–vii; Eisenbichler, "Ricerche nord-americane", and his recent "Italian Scholarship." References below are largely to titles listed in the composite Bibliography. Page references are given only in a few cases for something very precise; and sometimes in the case of my own book *Italian Confraternities* as possibly the easiest way of leading readers to further sources.

sized the importance of post-Tridentine reforms, the continuing and changing roles of fraternities thereafter. This effort coincided with a grandiose project to produce ecclesiastical maps of Italy, with supporting studies. Pioneering work for the atlases expanded the range of sources utilized, and emphasized the expansion of different types of fraternities in the later sixteenth century, and their existence in the south and other places outside the great cities.[2] Gilles Gerard Meersseman in his magisterial collection of studies of Dominican fraternities stressed the geographical range of their existence, and their importance into the Catholic Reform period of the sixteenth century. Brian Pullan pioneered a whole new range of studies of confraternity activities in his *Rich and Poor in Renaissance Venice*. This work revealed the full nature of the *Scuole Grandi*, the small, selective but powerful group of Venetian confraternities, better known to art lovers, and their involvement in a whole range of welfare activities. His work also encouraged some of us to look at more than the statutes to understand activities and members; membership lists, minute books, accounts.[3]

From the 1970s the study of confraternities was broadened by the impact of approaches to, and interpretations of, social history in the early modern period, with the influence of sociology, social anthropology, and quantitative methods; some of this developed older ideas on religious sociology from Gabriel Le Bras.[4] In this context. Richard Trexler's *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (1980) was seminal in considering social relations, social-political tensions, and rituals in society that threw light on many roles of confraternities. Ronald Weissman in 1982 similarly analyzed the importance of fraternities in Florence's ritual life, in socializing the young and the old; he broke new ground in the analysis of the patterns of membership, of active and passive participation; and gave major insights into what it was like to be a brother in one of these societies. Weissman illustrated how confraternities could change in the transition from republican Renaissance Florence to the Ducal regime leading Counter Reformation changes. A Ph.D. thesis by John Henderson (1983), sought to document and analyze the whole range of Florentine fraternities in the late medieval and Renaissance period; it was widely influential through private consultation, and through articles the author developed from it, until a splendid book appeared in 1994. This combines a major description and analysis of patterns of lay piety through the

[2] Rosa, "Geografia"; Rosa (ed.), *Problemi e ricerche*; Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 18–19. Olga Marinelli's massive annotated bibliography, *Confraternite di Perugia,* was an impressive example of what could be accumulated by hunting for relevant printed material from the sixteenth century onwards. [3] Meersseman, *Ordo Fraternitas*; Pullan, *Rich and Poor*.

[4] Le Bras, "Les confréries chrétiennes."

fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with a heavily documented study of charitable donations and involvement with hospitals and social welfare. It also contextualizes that spectacular artistic monument, the church and tabernacle of Orsanmichele. John Henderson's work, which departs from the eulogistic and complacent approaches of some studies of confraternities, is a good illustration of how studies of urban confraternities developed through the 1970s and 1980s.[5] In juxtaposition, Charles De La Roncière (influenced by Le Bras' religious sociology, but with more understanding of devotional activities), refreshingly focused on the rural context of Tuscan medieval fraternities. Danilo Zardin, specializing on Lombardy, has exemplified how we might look at later rural fraternities, and how they were affected by Catholic reform successes and limitations. In the same period, out of the greater interest of historians on the way death and the afterlife was approached, came important studies that dealt with probably the main concern of confraternities. Here the works of James Banker and Sam Cohn should be emphasized not only for insights into approaches for studying death, memorialization of the dead, or strategies in social welfare, but also for their use of testaments and other notarial records, financial records and artistic evidence, and for their statistical approaches.[6]

Most confraternity studies have been localized, either geographically or by theme and type. Attempts at synthesis, at covering all or large parts of Italy are fraught with difficulty (and are frowned on by some Italian scholars). Gennaro Maria Monti made a brave attempt in 1927 for the medieval period. From the late 1970s there have been new attempts, by Giancarlo Angelozzi (1978), who went into the early modern period; by Roberto Rusconi in a valuable contribution (1986) to the Einaudi *Storia d'Italia* multi-volume work, by Danilo Zardin (1987), who covered northern Italy from the fifteenth to eighteenth century. All these greatly helped in producing my own synthesis in 1989.[7]

In the last decade confraternity studies have become ever more obviously interdisciplinary, and deepened by more research outside the most famous cities. While novelists like David Lodge might satirize the academic conference circuit, and administrators question their costs and

[5] Trexler, *Public Life*; Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*; Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, "Charity," "Confraternities" and "Le confraternite."

[6] De La Roncière, "Confréries à Florence," Confréries en Toscane," and "Val d'Elsa"; Zardin, *Confraternite e vita*; Banker, *Death in Community,* and "Death"; Cohn, *Death and Property* and *Cult of Remembrance*.

[7] Angelozzi, C*onfraternite laicali*; Monti, *Confraternite medievali*; Rusconi, "Confraternite, compagnie e devozioni"; Zardin, " Italia settentrionale"; Black, *Italian Confraternities,* and *Confraternite Italiane* (with corrections and additional references, but some translation misunderstandings), and "Confraternities" (on wider European scene).

benefits, most authors of this collection would surely laud major American conferences (such as the Congress of Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo, and the Renaissance Studies and Sixteenth Century Studies Conferences), where special sessions on confraternities (linking in with others on art history, drama, and music), have brought scholars together from many lands, dealing with different countries and aspects . These have shown the importance of confraternities as patrons in diverse cultural areas; while paintings, buildings, music, plays, and sacred representations were part of the devotional life, recreation, and propaganda of the fraternities. Several of these conferences have generated collections of papers, whether expansions from papers given or newly commissioned like those here (though the specifically cultural aspects have been omitted from this selection).[8] The sociability of confraternity scholars has suitably stimulated academic co-operation. A conference in Toronto (1989) led to the formation of the Society for Confraternity Studies, a newsletter, *Confraternitas*, and the formation of a special Confraternities Collection housed in the library of the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies at the University of Toronto.[9] Major local Italian celebrations, with conferences and associated exhibitions, such as those for Lorenzo de' Medici in 1992, have generated important new interpretations, written documentation and visual illustrations associated with confraternities.[10] The Centro Ricerche di Storia Religiosa, Puglia, under Liana Bertoldi Lenoci has organized research projects, conferences, publications that have brought much new knowledge of confraternities, religious history and art in a significant part of southern Italy. A 1987 conference in Rome on religious sociability in southern confraternities extended out of the Puglia enterprise, while other Roman conferences contributed to valuable work on Roman confraternities and articles published in the periodical *Ricerche per la Storia Religiosa di Roma*.[11]

The above are highlighted as the landmark developments in the emergence of confraternity studies from a historical backwater into the mainstream. Individual contributions, collaborative efforts and sociabil-

[8] Collections of conference papers include: Bertoldi Lenoci (ed.), *Confraternite pugliese*; Eisenbichler (ed.), *Crossing the Boundaries*; Paglia (ed.), *Confraternite e Meridione*; Donnelly and Maher (eds.), *Confraternities and Catholic Reform*.

[9] *Confraternitas*, 1990, ed. William. Bowen and Konrad Eisenbichler, includes listings of confraternity publications, reviews and summaries; as well as information about conferences, research projects and, now, short articles. The 1989 conference papers were published in *Renaissance and Reformation*, vol. 25, no. 1 (Spring 1989), under the title "Ritual and Recreation in Renaissance Confraternities."

[10] See e.g. *Confraternitas* 3, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 29–30, and 6, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 30–31.

[11] *Confraternitas* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1990): 5–8, 23–4, and 4, no. 2, 9 (Fall 1993): 28–9; Bertoldi Lenoci (ed.), *Le confraternite pugliese* and *Confraternite, Chiese*, and her "Sociabilità"; Paglia (ed.), *Confraternite e Meridione*.

ity, and changing trends in historical scholarship generally have produced major interpretative changes in our view of confraternities, which themselves showed dynamism, diversity and adaptability throughout the early modern period.

PREVALENCE OF CONFRATERNITIES

Developments since the 1960s have allowed us to know much more about the numbers and types of confraternities, their membership numbers and profiles, though – as I have outlined elsewhere[12] – the problems of quantification are enormous, given the vagaries of the survival of documentation, let alone discrepancies over scholarly interest in different areas. Pier Luigi Meloni's early attempt at quantification focused on discipline fraternities, and presented problems through narrow definitions, its reliance on statutes and problematic nomenclature. Subsequent research has allowed us to obtain a better idea of the growing diversity of the confraternity scene, as Laudesi companies developed also in the fifteenth century under the impact of the Bianchi of 1399, and as hospital and other welfare-orientated societies were added in the fifteenth and later centuries. Holy Sacrament and other eucharist fraternities, Rosary and Name of God companies were fostered under Catholic Reform. Reforming bishops like Gian Matteo Giberti, Carlo Borromeo, and Gabriele Paleotti promoted various types of parish-based fraternities, Christian Doctrine societies and so forth, while new or reformed Orders, notably the Jesuits and Capuchins added many more. In terms of enumeration and typology the important contributions since my summary in 1989 have mainly been those dealing with Puglia and other parts of the south, previously mentioned. John Henderson's book includes a model appendix enumerating and classifying the fraternities of one city, Florence.[13]

Classifying and counting confraternities has proved less simple than Meloni , for example, perceived. Many "Discipline" fraternities ceased to have flagellation as a significant devotional activity, and be diversely active, as with the Venetian Scuole Grandi, whose members paid the poor to flagellate in processions for them. Other types of fraternities included flagellation as one of the devotions. Some Jesuit fraternities encouraged flagellation as a devotion, some as a punishment, others

[12] Black, *Italian Confraternities*, ch. 2, 3.

[13] Meloni, "Topografia"; Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 23–32; Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, appendix for period 1240–1499; Bornstein, *The Bianchi*, is a major recent contribution to the 1399 movement and its impact; De Sandre Gasparini, "Il Movimento," and Sbriziolo, *Confraternite Veneziane* have some useful insights into both problems of classification, and evolution of types, in the Veneto.

ignored the practice and concentrated on preparing members for death, or major spiritual and physical welfare in Roman prisons. Mackenney's chapter below raises different problems of confused nomenclature and classification, and demonstrates how fraternities, guilds and welfare societies could change and re-form, while Horowitz' contribution demonstrates that confraternities were not exclusive to the Catholic world, but organized collective life and mutual aid for Jewish communities in Ferrara, Bologna, Rome, Venice, and other centers.[14]

More to be stressed are important developments in our knowledge of the membership of confraternities. That significant numbers of women could be members has finally, if belatedly, been recognized as Giovanna Casagrande says. Serious problems have to be overcome in establishing the numbers, and the degree of their activity and responsibility, as her own and Anna Esposito's chapters below illustrate. Richard Mackenney has recently pointed out that female membership may be significantly disguised if fraternities followed the example of at least two Venetian ones that declared: "we are not naming the *sorelle*, along with the *fratelli*, so as not to multiply the words."[15] If we look hard enough we can find a highly specialized sorority for noble women, like Florence's Compagnia di Santa Caterina da Siena, though details are tantalizingly meager, as they are for Rosary companies (despite some valiant work by Danilo Zardin among others), which were to a greater or lesser extent feminine in membership and orientation. As Jennifer Rondeau has already suggested the presence of women in some Laudesi companies may have significantly affected the complex gender aspects of the Laude as prayers to the Virgin and Christ. One assumes that the admission of women for caring roles in hospital-linked confraternities (as in the Roman scene discussed by Anna Esposito below, and in earlier writings), might similarly have influenced the devotions; but this remains to be clarified.[16]

We now know more about the youth membership of confraternities, and about separate youth confraternities – as often particularly for Florence. Within full adult societies there might be a youth novitiate, from which some passed to full membership. But, as Konrad Eisenbichler

[14] Black, *Italian Confraternities*, ch. 4:6 on flagellation, and 23–26 on problems of nomenclature and classification; cf. on latter Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 1–4; Grendi, "Morfologia"; Torre, "Politics Cloaked," esp. 59–60 on an odd distinction between "company" and "fraternity." My "European Confraternities" will discuss these problems in a wider European context.

[15] Mackenney, "The Guilds of Venice," 40: "in ciaschedun capitoli non siano nominate le sorelle, come li fratelli per non molteplicar troppe parole;" fourteenth century statutes of Scuola di San Zuan Battista, and Scuola di Santi Cosmo e Damiano.

[16] Casagrande, "Women in Confraternities" is useful for more than Umbria; Rondeau, "Prayer and Gender," esp. 228–33; see also: Sebregondi, "Noble Women;" Terpstra, "Women;" Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 34–8, 103–4; Zardin, *Confraternite e vita*.

has shown, Florence particularly had a number of youth confraternities which made major contributions, from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, to the cultural life of the city, through plays, sacred representations and musical performances. As he has also recently stressed the Florentine youth confraternities in the fifteenth century not only listened to humanist sermons by leading figures such as Alamanno Rinuccini, Niccolò Machiavelli, Giovanni Nesi and Angelo Poliziano, but had in afternoon sessions sermons regularly given by genuine youths; Nesi is no longer to be seen as unique in this. There can be considerable debate about the roles of these societies, as male bonding organizations, societies that might rescue young males from idleness and a life of sodomy, or encourage it, as training grounds for musicians and composers. Lorenzo Polizzotto's chapter here reinforces Eisenbichler's views of the significant interlinking of patrician and artisan youths in such societies, for political, social, and cultural purposes. Elliott Horowitz has already interestingly contributed to our knowledge about similar Jewish confraternities, especially documenting a youth fraternity started in Asti in 1619 that occupied and educated adolescents and prepared them for marriage.[17]

Diversification came through the new philanthropy (p. 25 below). The widening of philanthropic activity, its extension to society outside the fraternity and immediate family, attracted different kinds of members, either seeking a soul-saving philanthropic role, or preferential treatment as members.

CONFRATERNITIES AND THE REINTERPRETATION OF RENAISSANCE RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Since the 1950s historians have increasingly seen the Burckhardian Renaissance as a great deal more enthusiastically religious, less "individualistic", less pagan. While anti-clericalism might have been both a literary topos and a social reality, it is recognized that Christian devotion could remain strong where it had been before, and might have been enhanced in remoter areas. The nature of the Christian beliefs, the rituals and language changed, under the impact of humanistic scholarship and literature – seen for example in the attitudes to death and the body, the conduct of funerals, the developing of consoling funerals, as studied by Sharon Strocchia for Florence.[18] In major cities at least episcopal and monastic leadership probably declined in favor of more civic and lay centered religious devotion and celebration, as Nicholas Terpstra's study

[17] Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, "Angelo Poliziano," "Il ruolo," and "Strutture;" Weissman, "Sacred Eloquence;" cf. Niccoli "Compagnie di bambini," on dangerous children needing saving! Horowitz, "Jewish Youth Confraternity." [18] Strocchia, *Death and Ritual*.

of Bologna argued. Confraternity studies have contributed to this understanding of changing Christian attitudes and behavior, and an appreciation of corporate behavior; just as they have benefited from the sociological and anthropological trends in general historical interpretation. Many fifteenth-century Italian cities continued to be riven by factional strife; corporate bodies such as confraternities – like kinship and neighborhood groups – could both help cohere such factions and be the means of overcoming conflicts, and be part of peace moves. Jennifer Rondeau's chapter below on various late medieval cases (mainly in Tuscany), interestingly develops the implications in Giovanna Casagrande's earlier study of a confraternity protecting the Virgin's Ring as a peace-keeping gesture in Perugia, which was one of the most faction-ridden cities in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.[19]

An appreciation of the complexity and diversity of Florentine fraternity life, and Florentine Christianity, has been and continues to be fostered by studies of the Medici – Lorenzo de'Medici in particular. Whether analyzing Medicean political manipulation over neighborhoods to obtain political support through complex patronage systems, or seeking to unravel the nature of Medicean cultural patronage, confraternities have come into play – as Polizzotto here further demonstrates. We now have a better idea of which Medici were members of fraternities (whether active or not), and their relationship to supporters. Dynamic religious and social roles for Laudesi confraternities in a "working class," non-Medicean (possibly anti-Medicean) neighborhood of Florence is (controversially) alleged in a study by Nicholas Eckstein. The attempts to close down Florentine confraternities, then revive them under new control and influence reflect the successes and failures of such bodies to suit certain factions; or to produce some sort of harmony. We know much more about their relationship to the production of various plays and the performance of music. Medicean influence might have been a mixed blessing, as Nerida Newbigin has argued; at times stimulating artistic and religious creativity, but also undermining fraternal independence and vitality through excessive political manipulation.[20]

The importance of confraternity processions, parading with banners and emblems, with singers and musicians, candles and torches (whether in some thanksgiving, or to placate God's apparent wrath), is much better

[19] Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*; cf. my review in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997): 359–61; Casagrande, "Compagnia del S.Anello;" cf. Black, "The Baglioni," and "Perugia".

[20] Black, *Italian Confraternities*, esp. 40–1; Eisenbichler, "Congregazione dei Neri", "Confraternity of the Blacks", "Plays", and *The Boys*; Trexler, *Public Life*, esp. 407, 411–14, and "Charity;" Polizotto, "Confraternities, conventicles;" Sebregondi, "Lorenzo de'Medici;" Kent, "The Buonomini;" Eckstein, *Green Dragon*, and see Trevor Dean's review of it, *English Historical Review* 112 (1997): 727–8; Hatfield, "The Magi;" Newbigin, "Piety and Politics," esp. 24, 37–9.

appreciated. We now have literary historians providing information about plays and sacred representations that were performed in Tuscan and Umbrian cities as well as Rome, and have a better understanding of how confraternities contributed to the religious spectacle that was a major part of Renaissance Christianity, and remained so in altered forms into the Catholic Reform and Baroque periods. Then public plays might have been curtailed, but elaborate Forty Hour (*Quarantore*) devotions, with massive scenic sets, mirrors and light effects were constructed to honor the Host, adored by well-ordered processions of worshippers who came to hear sermons and pray. For the Renaissance period the interlocking of the cultural and social aspects were given prominence in an important collections of essays edited by Timothy Verdon and John Henderson in 1990; much of this focused on Florence.[21]

It is clear from various studies for Florence, Venice and Rome that through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the medieval interest in singing and theatricals in confraternities was elaborately developed; the display was affected by moves towards greater ostentation to enhance reputation and fame (whether of the individual or a corporate body), an elaboration of texts by the greater involvement of more literate members of society, and the music by increased promotion of polyphonic music styles brought in from the Netherlands. The musical trends in particular could lead to a tension or division between the professionals and the amateurs, with the ''normal'' confraternity members having less important participation, as Eisenbichler's recent book shows. The singing of *Laude* had been reinvigorated in Florence by Savonarola and his supporters; as in other areas his martyrdom failed to burn out his influence, and musical reforms in this area were carried forward into the new spirituality in later sixteenth-century Florence, Milan, and Rome, into the Oratorian movement of San Girolamo in Rome, and into the development of religious opera, aided by committed composers like Giovanni Animuccia and Emilio dei Cavalieri.[22]

[21] Verdon and Henderson (eds.), *Christianity and the Renaissance*, esp. Barr, ''Music and Spectacle,'' Newbigin, ''Word made Flesh,'' Ventrone, ''Religious Spectacle,'' Weissman, ''Sacred Eloquence;'' cf. also for contributions to theatrical and ceremonial aspects through to the Counter Reformation: Eisenbichler, ''Nativity,'' and ''Playwright;'' Esposito, ''Apparati'' and ''Gonfalone;'' Falvey, ''Dramatic Traditions'' and ''Italian Saint Play;'' Newbigin, ''Piety and politics;'' Sensi, ''Fraternite disciplinate;'' Weil, ''Forty Hours;'' Wisch, ''Passion of Christ'', ''The Colloseum,'' and ''Roman Church Triumphant;'' Hill, ''Oratory Music in Florence,'' esp. no. 3.

[22] Fenlon, ''Music and Spirituality;'' Wilson, *Music and Merchants*.

THE IMPACT OF CATHOLIC REFORM AND COUNTER-REFORMATION

Confraternities both helped the promotion of Catholic Reform from the late fifteenth century, through the Tridentine and post-Tridentine periods, and were changed in activity, attitude, organization and patronage by the changing religious mood and procedures. It is now clear that the Oratory of Divine Love promoted by Ettore Vernazza in Rome was central to Catholic Reform from the 1490s, not only leading to the Theatine Order, but to a whole range of fraternities and hospitals, promoting care of syphilitics and other "incurables", and eucharistic devotion. As Edoardo Grendi has indicated, Genoa saw a major cult of the Holy Sacrament in the later fifteenth century, which was taken up by a number of youth fraternities in the early 1500s.[23] Vittorino Meneghin and others have revealed there were similar philanthropic-eucharistic fraternities in cities like Brescia, Feltre, Ferrara and Verona, which also fostered the philanthropic spiritual movements that responded to the social-economic crises of the Italian war period, and the theological struggles of the Reformation.[24] Florentine youth, in and out of fraternities, helped promote the Savonarolan revolution with long-term impacts on the spiritual values of reform movements through the sixteenth century, as Polizzotto has most recently emphasized.[25] In the early 1500s in Venice new spiritual forces provided a launch pad for both Rosary devotion in Italy (to become a major contributor to female spirituality and social role-playing), and Sacrament confraternities that were also to become central to the new religious reform in sixteenth-century Italy. In Venice, as Richard Mackenney indicates below, the initiatives for both Rosary and Sacrament societies were primarily lay, and not subject to official church or state leadership or initial fashioning, while elsewhere the ecclesiastical stimulus was much greater. Reforming bishops like Giberti in Verona and Zanetti in Bologna fostered parochial devotional fraternities ahead of Tridentine legislation and post-Tridentine organization. A study of Matteo Guerra, a saintly reformer in Siena, shows both how clerical congregations and lay confraternities could interlock, and thoughts on the Eucharist, religious education and concern for poor neighbors mingle in the new mid-century reforming mood.[26]

Many Tridentine reformers were suspicious of lay fraternities, and Tridentine legislation sought to impose episcopal control over their

[23] Arrizabalaga et al., *The Great Pox*, esp. 145–70; Paschini, *Tre Ricerche*, esp. 11–32; Solfaroli Camillocci, "Divino Amore;" Grendi, "Società dei giovani."

[24] Meneghin "Due Compagnie;" Angelozzi, *Confraternite laicali*, 172–83.

[25] Polizzotto, *The Elect Nation*, esp. 117–23; Polizzotto, "Confraternities, conventicles."

[26] Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 29–30, 190–2; Rosa, "Pietà mariana;" Nardi, "Matteo Guerra."

foundation, their statutes, and their fulfilment of testamentary dispositions. Others saw fraternities as valuable agencies for controlling welfare for the deserving, and providing a new parochial education for the populace. Much confraternity scholarship has consolidated our knowledge of the ways post-Tridentine religious and social life was fostered and monitored through confraternities. As I have recently argued, the evidence is conflicting on the ways parish priests and confraternities interacted. There is no doubt that the new approaches to parish-led reform fostered numerous confraternities – notably Sacrament, Eucharistic, Name of God, Rosary, and Christian Doctrine fraternities. Parochial initiatives could generate enthusiasm in some parishes, but have little popular following in others. While much impetus for new foundations came from the reforming bishops and their deputies, lay members of society – suspicious of the clergy – continued to promote new foundations. Strong local lay feelings could lead to attempts to break away from the parish church, and clerical domination. Claudio Bernardi's Chapter below further indicates that the imposition of parochial authority could generate considerable tension, whether with civic authorities or between the new fraternities like those of the Holy Sacrament, and traditional societies still representing medieval and lay spirituality. Angelo Torre's chapter adds to his earlier work showing the complexity of parochial–fraternity relations, and different kinds of religious communities in the later post-Tridentine period . It is interesting to note how Pentecostal fraternities (combining an annual feast and some charitable work), largely associated with French and Swiss fraternal movements, persisted in Piedmont despite the reform tendencies of post-Tridentine bishops and Visitors.[27] Evidence from Rome, the Kingdom of Naples, Piedmont, Umbria, and Tuscany, suggests that after a period of profitable cooperation between reformed parochial systems and confraternities in the immediate post-tridentine decades, tensions and problems developed through the seventeenth and eighteenth century, such that fraternities generally ceased to be puppets or agents of the clergy. This might undermine good religious practice on the one hand, but forestall excessively conformist social control on the other; fraternities could help pay for parish churches and their decoration, but also totally disrupt parochial life and organization.[28]

[27] Black, "European Confraternities" (forthcoming), will develop this point.

[28] Black, "Confraternities and the Parish;" see also Black, "Perugia," 443–9; Bertoldi Lenoci, "Sociabilità;" Casagrande, "Ricerche;" De Sandre Gasparini, *Contadini*; Fiorani, "L'esperienza" and "Visite;" Prosperi, "Parrocchie;" Russo, "Parrocchie," esp. 234–37, 245–7, 315; Sannino, "Confraternite potentine," 125, 136; D'Addario, *Aspetti*, 319–20; Torre, *Il comsumo*, and see Roisin Cossar's review of it in *Confraternitas* 7, 2 (Fall 1996): 14–15; Proietti Pedetta, *Confraternite di Assisi*; Torre, "Ceremonial Life," and especially his very valuable "Politics" which unfortunately

For reformers like Borromeo, Paleotti and Bellarmine effective reform depended on better religious knowledge, to be imparted through schools of Christian Doctrine, and the dissemination of suitable religious texts, taking advantage of the growth of cheaper printing. Recent research, led among others by Guerrino Pellicia and Paul Grendler has given some insight into the role of confraternities and schools of Christian Doctrine as teaching organizations and improvers of literacy; though my sampling of some Roman records highlighted serious organizational problems that suggest caution about some other optimistic views of the success of such schools.[29]

Also lay confraternities have been increasingly studied for their work in the religious education of both novices and full adult members. As Konrad Eisenbichler has pointed out, youth confraternities earlier had significantly developed the religious education of the youth – independent of the influence of the parish priest. Valuable work – focusing primarily on Borromean Lombardy – is under way on the literature available for confraternity members, what was encouraged and what controlled, and what might be solicited from a printer like Vincenzo Girardone by the confraternity brothers and sisters themselves. As Danilo Zardin stresses, in this region at least this literature and education were part of a campaign to influence all family life and morality through the confraternities. Some of the impetus came from the Jesuits, but initiatives came from within confraternities as well.[30]

The new or reformed religious Orders had rival roles to play in the formation and activity of confraternities from the sixteenth century. Though the massive local study of Callisto Urbanelli has alerted us to the work of Capuchins with confraternities, it is the ongoing work on the many sided contributions of the Jesuits that has been most noticeable, from the works of Pasquale Lopez, Vincenzo Paglia, John O'Malley, Danilo Zardin, and research students in Lombardy and Toronto. Louis Châtellier has emphasized the networking of Jesuit companies and confraternities across Europe, reinforcing their influence. Given the diversity

had escaped my attention when writing my talk and chapter on parochial problems.

[29] Pellicia, "Scuole;" Grendler, *Schooling*, esp. ch. 12; cf. ch.10:3 in my *Italian Confraternities*, and *Confraternite Italiane* , and now my "Confraternities and the parish," at note 27; ASVR, ADC, palchetto 168, vol. 417, Congregationi 1599–1608. A new book by Gilberto Aranci, *Formazione religiosa* (which I have not yet seen), on Ippolito Galantini and the Florentine Christian Doctrine teaching seems to be taking important new steps in interpreting post-Tridentine fraternities, under clerical control; see Review by Mary Watt in *Confraternitas* 8, 2 (Fall 1997): 17–18.

[30] Zardin, "Il rilancio;" esp . 110–16, 129; Zardin, "Confraternite e 'congregazioni';" Bottoni, "Libri e lettura;" Stevens, "Vincenzo Girardone," esp. 644–50; Eisenbichler, "Angelo Poliziano," "Il ruolo," and *The Boys*, esp. ch. 10 "The teaching of Christian Doctrine;" Weissman, "Sacred Eloquence;" Rusconi, "Pratica cultuale."

of their attitudes and activities generally they contributed to the diversification of confraternal worship and behavior; from penitential exercises, Quarantore celebrations, to advocacy of the Seven Acts of Mercy as a guide to philanthropic activity, which might include running prisons.[31] Lance Lazar's and Mark Lewis' chapters below develop from this background of Jesuit inspired fraternal activity and devotion.

Cultural historians have added considerably to our knowledge of the artistic contributions of confraternities, and the use of the arts as part of their religious life and propaganda. Graham Dixon and Noel O'Regan have revealed how important music was for the religious devotion of Roman confraternity members (as well as sometimes for visiting outsiders, and for the development of musical careers and styles), as Denis Arnold and now Jonathan Glixon have shown for Venice. For Florence, Konrad Eisenbichler's book on the Archangel Raphael develops from John Hill's earlier studies of Florentine oratory music. Music made a considerable impact on pilgrims to Rome, particularly those coming for Jubilees, who were welcomed, guided (spiritually and physically) by the host confraternities of SS. Trinità, the Gonfalone, and Della Morte. Some of the more spectacular music was linked to the Forty-Hour devotions (Quarantore), for which leading artists like Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Pietro della Cortona could provide elaborate scenery and light effects, as part of Baroque illusionism.[32] In years between much publicized celebrations in San Lorenzo in Damaso, a philanthropic fraternity such as the Soccorso dei Poveri might organize a Quarantore celebration using lesser artists and musicians.[33]

Art historians have paid increasing attention to the role of confraternities as patrons of chapels, altars and altarpieces – as well as the creators of sometimes architecturally adventurous free-standing Oratories. While

[31] Urbanelli, *Cappuccini*; Lopez, "Confraternite laicali;" Paglia, *La Morte Confortata* and "*Pietà dei Carcerati*;" Châtellier, *The Devout*; O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, esp. ch. 5; Zardin, *Confraternita e Vita*; Rurale, "L'attività caritativa;" cf. Index of my *Italian Confraternities* under Capuchins and Jesuits; De Molen (ed.), *Religious Orders*, see ch. 5, O'Malley's "The Society of Jesus," and otherwise the Index under confraternities.

[32] Arnold, *Giovanni Gabrieli*, 188–210; "Scuola di San Rocco" and "A Venetian confraternity;" Barr, "Music and Spectacle;" Black, *Italian Confraternities*, esp. 117–21, 272–3; Dixon, "Lenten Devotions;" Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, esp. ch. 18; Glixon, "Music and Ceremony," "The *Scuole*," and "Public ceremony;" Hill, "Oratory Music;" Hammond, *Music and Spectacle*, 148–56, 159–61; O'Regan, "Palestrina" and *Institutional Patronage*; Weil, "The Devotion;" Weisz, "*Caritas/Controriforma*," and *Pittura e Misericordia*. An exhibition coinciding with the Edinburgh International Festival of 1998 ("Effigies and Ecstasies: Roman Baroque Sculpture and Design in the Age of Bernini"), has highlighted some Quarantore celebrations and surviving designs for them; see my "'Exceeding Every Expression'."

[33] ASVR, Congregazione del Soccorso dei Poveri in San Lorenzo in Damaso, Congregazione e Decreti, vol. 4 (1617–29): on 12 March 1629 paid for artists Giulio de Bonis and Giuseppe Buglia, and *maestro di capella* Giovanni Giacomo for a Quarantore celebration.

their understanding of the artefacts has gained considerably from the work of other historians with less specialized interests, we have benefited from many books, articles and conference papers by art-history specialists who have taken a refreshingly broad approach to their researches and artistic interpretation. So far the interactions have born most fruit in our understanding of the confraternal world of Venice – whether in the Scuole Grandi or in the chapels and altarpieces of the *scuole piccole* – and Rome. Through the sixteenth century and beyond, the artistic environment for confraternity members, at least in the wealthier and better patronized societies, could be important not only for emotional uplift and introspective contemplation, but also for didactic purposes; helping to teach (as in earlier periods) about the Virgin, Christ, and the Saints, but also about the need for charitable works of many kinds. Here especially significant was Paul Hills' study of Tintoretto's paintings for Venetian Sacrament confraternities, emphasizing the links between the Eucharist and helping the poor (whether old men or nursing mothers), in seeking salvation.[34]

CONFRATERNITIES IN RELATION TO THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORDERS

Attitudes of secular as well as religious authorities to confraternities were ambivalent. Such social groupings, bound by rules, often by oaths of secrecy, could be seen as threats to regimes or excluded social groups. They could be potential centers of opposition to the elite or a ruling faction, as frequently alleged in Florence in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; if associated with artisan and worker groups they could be suspect as kinds of trade unions against employers; as male bonding societies (discussed below by Jennifer Rondeau in other contexts), they might be accused of fostering the great vice of sodomy, following Michael Rocke's work.[35] It remains to be seen whether the growth of women's sororities were or could be seen as powerful feminist organizations threatening male roles, as well as being undoubtedly important vehicles for female religiosity (discussed below by Giovanna Casagrande).

[34] Hills, "Piety and Patronage;" cf. my *Italian Confraternities*, ch. 11, "Confraternity buildings and their decoration." Other key works in this context to be highlighted: Cope, *Venetian Chapel*; Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, ch. 19, "Art in the Confraternity;" Fortini Brown, "Honor and Necessity;" Henneberg, *L'oratorio*; Humfrey, *The Altarpiece*, and "Competitive Devotions;" Humfrey and Mackenney, "Trade guilds;" *La Liguria delle Casacce*; Sebregondi, *Tre confraternite*; Weisz, "*Caritas/Controriforma*" and *Pittura e Misericordia*; Wisch, "The Passion."

[35] See my *Italian Confraternities*, 38–43, 45–7, 58–62; Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, esp. 187–8; Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, esp. 80–105, 128–9; also on fraternities and male bonding, Clawson, "Fraternalism."

Modern research has highlighted different trends in different kinds of fraternities – towards exclusivity and inclusivity. The increased stress on nobility and gentility from the late fifteenth century encouraged the creation of fraternities for the elite only. On the other hand the Catholic reform stress on parochial-based societies fostered the idea that confraternities should co-ordinate people from most levels of society, and both sexes. As the works of Weissman, Terpstra, Olivieri Baldissarri, Zardin, Eisenbichler, and others have shown or suggested, authorities might encourage a compromise whereby confraternities with a socially diverse membership might be supervized and controlled by a social or godly elite, to prevent political, economic or religious subversion.[36] The migration of people into a few large cities, whether from remoter parts of Italy or further afield, saw the expansion of "national" fraternities that provided a social and religious focus for the incomers, fostering job opportunities, and providing a charitable safety net if needed.[37]

A growing emphasis on nobility and honor also encouraged a concern for helping the "poveri vergognosi" or ashamed poor, whether by specialist fraternities or others that felt obliged to give some priority to assisting secretly those too ashamed to seek assistance openly. The Venetian Fraterna Grande of San Antonin, specifically helping the *poveri vergognosi*, debated the issue of shame: "This word shame from which derives shame-faced at times signifies the infamy and dishonour that comes from vice, and from badly done things . . . Conversely at times it signifies a sensitivity [*rispetto*] or timidity to do or say or receive something that brings proof or dishonour to us and this sensitivity comes from a modesty and candour [*ingenuità*], and is numbered among the things of praise."[38] We know certainly that the poveri vergognosi included not just poor nobles, but others of "respectability," and therefore capable of shame, further down the social scale; this was certainly true of one of the prototypical fraternities helping the poveri vergognosi, the Florentine Buonomini di San Martino, which initially in the early fifteenth century targeted artisans and respectable workers, as Amleto Spicciani and Dale

[36] Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, esp. ch. 8; Fanti, *La Chiesa*, 85–95; Olivieri Baldissarri, *"Poveri Prigioni,"* esp. 103–5, 114–16, 225–6; Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*, esp. 28–30, 124–5, 139–44, 189, 198; Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 58; Zardin, "Le confraternite," 88–9. Cf. my *Italian Confraternities*, 88–9.

[37] Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 43–45; Maas, *The German Community* is a major study in this context.

[38] Jonathan Walker, working on his Cambridge University Ph.D. ("Honour and Venetian Nobles, *c.*1500 – *c.*1650"), kindly supplied me with this quotation from the Fraterna's *Universal Compendium* of 1529–1653. On *poveri vergognosi* see Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 147–50, 160, 169–74; Kent, "The Buonomini;" Ricci, "Povertà, vergogna;" Pugliese, "Buonomini;" Spicciani, "Poveri vergognosi;" Trexler, "Charity;" Pullan, *Rich and Poor*, 267–8; Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, 389–97; Rurale, "L'attività," esp. 267–72.

Kent have stressed. Given that they had to be helped secretly – and that confraternity brethren were capable of considerable discretion – it is very difficult to discover who specifically was helped and by how much. As Jonathan Walker's thesis will show the Venetian poor nobles could go to considerable lengths in deception to secure assistance – and possibly to exaggerate their degree of poverty and raggedness.

The chief organizing system of urban society in the late medieval and early modern period was the guild (*arte*). While it has been recognized that artisan and trading guilds might have strong religious and charitable aspects, and be in some dimensions also "confraternities", it has only really been in Venice – where there were special legal conditions requiring economic guilds and their members to have religious-charitable fraternities (*scuole*) – that they have been fully studied, notably by Richard Mackenney. Even if from the sixteenth century economic guilds declined in importance, I suggest religious aspects might be worth pursuing further. My brief sampling of late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Roman guild records suggests that some continued to have a significant religious and welfare dimension, for themselves – and for saving condemned prisoners.[39]

Catholic Reform innovations and enthusiasms could and did lead in various directions; both laity and leading church reformers like Borromeo sought "revolutionary" change in moral and social attitudes and behavior. As Danilo Zardin argues below, the need of the political and social elites, backed by traditional inertia, tended to prevail. Nicholas Terpstra also reminds us in some of his works that government interests might easily encourage the philanthropic enterprises to concentrate on the more restrictive and conservative aspects of welfare. Claudio Bernardi, Dale Kent, and Konrad Eisenbichler have recently stressed how members of ruling families saw the value of sponsoring confraternities, if well controlled, for regulated philanthropy, patronage control, and glorification of their family image.[40]

SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Much exciting work in recent decades has exemplified how early modern fraternities expanded the scope of philanthropic activity, for members

[39] Mackenney, "Continuity and Change," *Tradesmen and Traders*, and "The Guilds of Venice;" Pullan, "The *Scuole*;" ASR CII, Arti e Mestieri: Busta 6 , *Bombardieri di Castello* and *Caffetieri* (foglio 12); Busta 25, *Muratori, Stoccatori, Imbiancatori*, and *Musicanti* (foglio 56); Busta 19, *Lanari*.

[40] Robert Buranello's Review of Bernardi, *Carnevale* (which I have not yet consulted), in *Confraternitas* 7/2 (Fall 1996): 10–11; Kent, "The Buonomini;" Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, esp. ch.20 on the obsequies of Cosimo II Medici.

and their relatives, but also for outsiders, as Italy faced crises in the social order, notably occasioned by war, dearth and disease from 1494. Brian Pullan's studies of the Venetian Scuole Grandi awakened interest in philanthropic activities, as did the wider debates about poverty, and conflicting attitudes to the poor and remedies under the "new philanthropy". Pullan sees the confraternities as "the most adaptable organization for dispensing charity" in the period.[41] Some later medieval fraternities did exercise charity beyond the provision of suitable funerals for members and immediate relatives; in providing dowries; in running small hospices or hospitals for sick travelers and pilgrims, unsupported pregnant women, the old and destitute; in issuing alms in food or money; in (by the fifteenth century) escorting prisoners to their execution in a comforting manner. By the sixteenth century the care of prisoners, whether condemned to death or not, was a major activity for some confraternities, as various important specialist studies have shown. As Nicholas Terpstra and Giovanni Romeo have argued, not only did the comforting of the condemned (securing a contrite confession and penitence) become a specialist activity of elite fraternity members, as in Bologna or Naples, but their work could be seen as enhancing elitist social control and discipline, and Inquisitorial-led morality, as much as charitably helping poor prisoners and their families.[42] A wide range of confraternities, at least in the Papal State, gained the privilege of securing the release of prisoners from execution or the galleys (with some possible financial gain to the fraternity's finances from the lucky "saved"); surviving petitions can throw interesting light on attitudes to crime and punishment, as my own samplings for Rome revealed.[43]

Much research has been done on confraternity involvement in hospitals, hospices, orphanages, conservatories for vulnerable children and women, and in helping the poor in their homes or at oratory and church doors, and in providing dowries for marriage or nunnery entrance. We face many frustrations in not knowing the amount of input from frater-

[41] Pullan, *Rich and Poor*, and *Poverty and Charity*, which usefully reprints his major articles, including "Support and Redeem" (no. 5), from which I quote, 183. Cf. my *Italian Confraternities*, chs. 7–10; Cavallo, *Charity and Power*, "Patterns" and "Conceptions;" Zardin (ed.), *Città e Poveri*, which includes Pullan's "Povertà, Carità;" Grendi "Pauperismo" and "Ideologia;" Weissman, "Brothers and Strangers."

[42] Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 217–23; Edgerton, *Pictures and Punishment*; Fanti, "La conforteria;" Olivieri Baldissarri, "*Poveri Prigioni*"; Paglia, *La morte confortata, "Pietà dei Carcerati*," and "Le confraternite;" Prosperi, "Il sangue;" Romeo, *Aspettando il boia*; Scarabello, "La fraterna;" Terpstra, "Piety and Punishment;" Pullan, "Charity;" Weisz, *Pittura e Misericordia*; Mascia, *Confraternita dei Bianchi*.

[43] ASR, CIII, Confraternite, Buste 1968, 1971, 1973. I discussed some of this material in a paper, "Welfare and the Enclosed," to the Twenty-Seventh International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo 1992.

nity members, whether in visiting or directly assisting the needy, sick and wounded, or in raising money – as opposed to appointing and intermittently supervising paid officials. Whether in evidence from the period, or in modern analyses, it is often difficult to isolate confraternal contributions to institutions dealing with the poor. We also need to know more about who was helped by different institutions; who received dowries or money; who were taken into institutions; whether help was primarily for local networks of neighbors or kinship groups. There have been some significant local studies seeking various solutions to such problems.[44]

Among the most interesting and controversial investigations of early modern confraternity activity have been those concerned with vulnerable girls and women – dealing with repentant prostitutes and their daughters, abandoned children, battered wives, and so forth. Debates concern the extent to which institutions shifted attention from the really poor and vulnerable, to those less needy (and potentially less troublesome); and the extent to which such institutions were more concerned with strict male control and morality, than with loving care for one's neighbor. But as some of us detect, there could be variations between those institutions preoccupied with rigid control, and those more concerned with easing the path of the innocent or sinful, the vulnerable or the temptress, back into family society.[45]

Various works have emphasized that fraternal assistance to the poor and needy was discriminatory, favoring "deserving" (very young, old, female) over "undeserving" (idle able-bodied, the morally vicious and criminal); fraternities have been shown to be involved in "social control" by institutionalizing and disciplining the undeserving in "hospitals" or conservatories that might be prison-like or strict convents.[46] Confraternity brothers and sisters, who seldom came from the poorest sectors of society (unless they were in a fraternity for licensed beggars), might not want to sully themselves with contact with the most dangerous and disgusting orders of society. Some voluntarily followed Jesuits or Capuchins in dealing with the messiest sick in hospitals, and the gentlemanly brethren of a Compagnia di San Michele in Florence were chosen to visit the poor during the great plague of 1630; they were responsible

[44] My *Italian Confraternities*, ch. 7:3 ("The preferred poor"), and Ch. 9 faced such issues, and indicated major and minor studies. See now also Zardin "Carità;" Gazzini, "Solidarietà vicinale;" D'Amelia, Grendi, "Ideologia;" D'Amelia, "Economia familiare;" Henderson, *Piety and Charity*, part 2 "Charity;" Navarrini and Belfanti, "Problema della povertà;" Terpstra. *Lay Confraternities*, 193–205, and his "Apprenticeship;" see note 45 below.

[45] Cavallo, *Charity and power*, ch. 4; Ciammitti, "Fanciulle" and "Quanto costa;" Cohen, *Women's Asylums*; my *Italian Confraternities*, 206–13.

[46] A key specific study was Calori, *Una iniziativa*; Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities*, 203–5; cf. Erba, "Pauperismo;" Grendi, "Pauperismo;" Fatica, "Reclusione."

for a report revealing ''a degree and diffusion of poverty absolutely unimaginable,'' and they organized the supply of new clean mattresses for thousands of poor.[47]

The shift of a confraternity to involvement in philanthropic activities could change its complexion; the receipt of a legacy to offer a mere two dowries a year was enough to change the Urbino Corpus Domini confraternity from one primarily for gentlemen and citizens (and the budding painter Federico Barocci), to one including the poor, miserable and begging. This suggests that further thought is needed on motivations for joining fraternities, and for offering philanthropy; join to do something for one's soul and for ''neighbours'', or to receive?[48]

Since the modern expansion of confraternity studies started with consideration of the 1260 events it is hardly surprising that the last decades of the early modern period have often been neglected. However the work of historians dealing with southern Italy in particular has emphasized that fraternities continued to be founded into the eighteenth century. But also, as Mackenney's chapter on Venice shows, a northern city seemingly replete with medieval and early Catholic Reform scuole could find room for more in the eighteenth century. Other scholars like Bottoni, Eisenbichler, Hill, and Zardin have thrown light on northern fraternities. They emphasize the ambivalent position that fraternities continued to be founded or relaunched, yet came under attack (as Eisenbichler's Chapter here partly shows) from ''enlightened'' thinkers, rulers and ministers for perpetuating ''superstitious'' rites and cults, for wasting legacies, for encouraging the idle through charity, and for undermining the leadership and control of the parish priest (as Peter Leopold of Tuscany argued). Confraternity funds might also be tempting for ministers wanting to improve education.[49]

From thirty years of research we have realized more obviously that confraternities were very diverse in membership, motivation, and activity; they generated opposition and enthusiasm, and they adapted to wider political, social, and religious changes. They still leave many puzzles to be

[47] Cipolla, *Fighting the Plague,* 15

[48] Moranti, *Corpus Domini*, 36, 227. Sandra Cavallo, though not particularly concerned with fraternities has some valuable reflections on attitudes to charity, and how historians have (mis)handled interpretations, in her ''Motivations of Benefactors''.

[49] Bertoldi Lenoci (ed.) *Confraternite Pugliese* has many relevant articles; Black, ''Confraternities and the Parish,'' at n. 43 and 44; Bottoni, ''Confraternite milanesi;'' Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, esp. ch. 21 ''The Final Years;'' Hill, ''Oratory Music,'' esp. 3: ''The Confraternities;'' Nardi, ''Matteo Guerra,'' which also deals with eighteenth century; Sannino, ''Confraternite potentine'' and others in Paglia (ed.), *Confraternite e Meridione*; Torre, ''Politics Cloaked'' and ''Village Ceremonial;'' Zardin, ''Confraternite e 'congregationi','' and ''Italia settentrionale.''

investigated, and new areas to be researched. In all periods we need much more detail about who where members, how active they really were, and when. To understand the socio-political importance of confraternities it would help to identify the normal active members (not just a few elite noble men and women), and study what else they did in their community. We might better understand then how far they were agencies of political, godly, and moral control. While some papers here are furthering our knowledge about women and confraternities, there is a great more to be done in discovering the nature and degree of female participation.

Catholic Reform saw expansion, a shift of activities and devotions, and supposedly more outside control. It would be helpful to know how much lay voluntarism remained, how much parish priests and other clergy took control. Southern Italy saw a major expansion of devotional fraternities under Catholic Reform leadership and pressures, at least as far as names, altars, and dedications tell us, but much needs to be learned about the extent of activity that followed; and the extent of philanthropic work conducted in a largely poverty-stricken society. As I was asked at a recent seminar in London, were or are southerners reluctant to join corporate groups like guilds and confraternities voluntarily, and if so, why? Is the southern expansion from the late sixteenth century almost entirely due to leadership and imposition from above, by bishops and Jesuits?

This general chapter should help to contextualize the way my co-authors are building on past approaches and breaking new ground, even if still more for the north and centre, than for the southern Italy.