

**Statutes and Ordinances of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome of Cremona; Excerpts from the Reformed Rule of a Flagellant Confraternity in Milan (added)
In Italian and Latin, decorated manuscript on parchment
Northern Italy (Cremona), c. 1497-1498(?), with sixteenth-century addition**

iv (paper) + 41 + iv (paper) on parchment, modern(?) foliation in ink in Arabic numerals, upper outer recto, 1-41, complete (collation i-iii¹⁰ iv⁶⁺⁵ [structure uncertain]), horizontal catchword for quire i, center lower verso, ruled faintly in crayon with full-length horizontal bounding lines, prickings visible in the upper, outer, and lower margins (justification, 114-120 x 82-85 mm.), written in two well-formed Gothic Rotunda hands: (1) ff. 1-35v, on twenty-five to twenty-six long lines and (2) ff. 36rv, on twenty-six long lines in a very similar hand or in the same hand but in a different stint, red rubrics, one-line paraphs in red or blue, some initials drawn with decorative cadels, one- and two-line red or blue initials, three-line blue initial with red pen decorations (f. 1), some corrections and erasures (see particularly f. 34rv), marginal annotations in at least two sixteenth-century hands, later addition on ff. 40-41v ruled faintly in crayon or lead (justification 135 x 100 mm.), written in pale brown ink in an elegant italic script on twenty-two long lines, some soiling in lower outer corners, slight rubbing and fading with some loss of legibility on f. 1, otherwise in very fine condition. Bound in quarter leather over marbled pasteboards, spine with four raised bands, gilt-stamped with title, "COMPAGNIA / DI / S. GIROLAMO," and date, "SEC. XV," marbled pastedowns, bookplate on front pastedown, some splitting along the joints, edges and corners worn, but otherwise in good condition. Dimensions 188 x 130 mm.

The Confraternity of St. Jerome in Cremona, set up by a group of youths who wished to follow the foundational tenets of a Christian life, has not been studied by modern scholars. This manuscript thus provides valuable, and quite possibly unique, evidence of the confraternity's practices in the fifteenth century. Sixteenth-century additions related to a flagellant confraternity in Milan are also of interest. This elegant book formed part of the library of the great book collector, Baron Horace de Landau.

PROVENANCE

1. Almost certainly copied in or around Cremona for the use of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome. The prologue to the confraternity's statutes includes a reference to Saints Himerius and Homobonus – both patron saints of Cremona – as "nostri patroni" on f. 1, and there is a reference in the first chapter of the statutes to a date "al tempo de lo Reuerendo in christo padre venturino uescouo de Cremona" [in the time of Father Venturino, reverend in Christ, Bishop of Cremona] (f. 1rv). Venturino de Marni was bishop of Cremona from 1423 to 1457. Many of the ordinances dated to later in the fifteenth century were issued under the authority of Franciscan vicars for the province of Bologna in the custody of Parma, which included Cremona (Heijden and Roest, 2004, Online Resources).

Script and internal evidence suggest that the original portion of this manuscript was likely copied at the end of the fifteenth century, c. 1497-1498. Though the contents of the original manuscript range in date from 1436 to 1498, most appear to have been copied in a single hand, likely at the same time. There is an evident shift in hand (either a new stint or a new scribe) between the end of an ordinance issued in 11 March 1497 and

the next one, issued on 6 January 1498, and it seems possible that the bulk of the manuscript's contents were copied between these dates, with the 1498 ordinance added after it was issued.

2. There are signs that this manuscript continued in use by one or more members of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome in the sixteenth century. Corrections have been made to the text, including erasures (notably a substantial one on f. 34rv), and additions in at least two sixteenth-century hands, including a prayer invoking Saint Dominic, added in the lower margin of f. 19v following similar prayers in the main text invoking Saints Jerome and Francis.

The addition of sixteenth-century excerpts from a Milanese flagellant confraternity's rule suggests that the manuscript remained in Lombardy, and it may indicate an effort on the part of the book's sixteenth-century users to adapt to the post-Tridentine reforms

3. Belonged to Baron Horace de Landau (1824-1903), director of the Rothschild bank in Turin, bibliophile, and collector of one of the finest nineteenth-century private libraries in Europe; his bookplate on the front pastedown. A description of the present manuscript appears in the 1890 catalogue of his collection (see, *Catalogue*, 1890, pp. 35-36, no. 97).
4. The manuscript was included in a 1949 sale of items in Baron de Landau's collection by the Libreria Antiquaria Ulrico Hoepli; lot no. 73 in *Biblioteca del Barone Landau*, Milan, Libreria Antiquaria Ulrico Hoepli, 16-18 June 1949, p. 30.

TEXT

ff. 1-12, *Questi sono li statuti et ordinatione de la compagnia de sancto hieronimo. Prologus, incipit, "AL nome de la sancta et idiuidua trinitade, padre e filiolo e spiritu sancto ..."; f. 1, Doctrina de mesere iesu christo, Capitulo primo, incipit, "PARlando el dolçe maestro christo a li suoi discipuli daua a loro celestiale doctrina ...; f. 10v, De la examinatione de le colpe e de la confessione e del stare in zenochione a le colpe e de la compagnie peruerse e del non dire bosie e altri modi al uiuere uirtosamente] ... E che noi se reposiamo in lui per infinita secula seculorum. Amen. Per infinita secula seculorum. Tu autem domine nostri miserere";*

Statutes and ordinances of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome in Cremona, originating in February 1436; the statutes include fourteen chapters, which have been numbered by the scribe or a later annotator.

ff. 12-15v, *Questa e la regula e forma del uiuere religiosamente e honestamente secondo dio, E prima comenzaremo a quelle cose che comanda la sancta madre ecclesia, Poi seguiremo li altri capituli i breuita e per questi dimostraremo li altri infrascripti che sono i destineti pui tractabelmente de dreto da questi, incipit, "Prima sapere li deci comandamenti de la leze de dio e obseruarli ... Anchora che alchuno non fia obligato a peccato mortale per tute le ordinatione sopradicte saluo che ale ordinatione de la sancta madre ecclesia. Finis";*

Rules for honest and religious living, many with reference to the chapters of the preceding statutes and ordinances (ff. 1-12). These are divided into three sets, the first concerned with

ecclesiastical regulations and the second and third with the regulations of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome, pertaining to spiritual and worldly behavior.

ff. 16-21, *El modo de fare oratione al nostro signore yhesu christo quanto se uole elezere lo ordinario nouo* [inserted here in a later hand: *el qual deba esser ei[?] deuotione e costumi*] *el primo de li fratelli in la compagnia e primamente in uocare lo adiutorio cum deuotione digando, incipit, "Pater noster, DEus in adiutorium meum intende ... Qui uiuis et regnas in secula seculorum. Amen. Pater noster. Secreto, Deo gratias. Amen. Et diuinum auxilium maneat semper nobiscum. Amen. Jesus. Maria";*

Prayers and other texts to be said by the brothers of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome for the election of a new *padre ordinario* and, on f. 19, prayers for the feasts of Christmas, Easter, the apostles Peter and Paul, and the archangel Michael. These are followed by prayers invoking Saints Jerome and Francis (f. 19v). A prayer similarly invoking Saint Dominic has been added in the lower margin of f. 19v.

ff. 21-32v, *Questa sie regula e forma del uiuer religiosamente e honestamente e secundo Idio, incipit, "Prima de sapere li deci comandamenti de la leze de dio e obseruarli ... E per piacere a lo altissimo dio i el quale si a da noi laudati e da tute quante le creature. Amen";*

These rules for honest and religious living include the rules also found on ff. 16-21, but here they are not subdivided into three groups, and additional rules are included. The final rule, "De obseruatione de lo silentio" (f. 32), refers to the date of a deliberation among the members of the confraternity regarding silence in the "oratorio de sancto Girolodo" (f. 32) and to the parties present: "In nomine Jesu christi M^o. cccc^o. Lxviii^o. a di .viii^o. de aprile [9 April 1469]. Et fo in presentia de lo Reuerendo in christo padre e vicario de la prouincia de bologna Mesere frate Ludouico da ferara e Mesere frate Antonio da uico padre nostro ..." (f. 32).

ff. 32v-34, *Constituito per frate Laurentio da parma per lo comandamento del Reuerendo in christo padre Frate Ludouico da ferara vicario dignissimo, incipit, "In nomine domini yhesu christi. Anno domini M^o. cccc^o. Lxx^o. A di xxviii de Aprile lo frate Laurentio da parma mandato ... Item sel fosse alchuno de la compagnia che temptasse de uoler mettere el terzo ordine in la compagnia sia priuato de la compagnia. Amen";*

Additional ordinances, the first issued by Lorenzo da Parma on 29 April 1470 and the third issued on 4 September 1471, followed by a confirmation by Niccolo da Rezo, vicar in the province of Bologna.

f. 34v, incipit, "Item se li discreti fano alchuna determinatione in consilio chel non sia alchuno de la compagnia che olsa ne prosuma a contradire a quella senza la uolunta de li suprascripti discreti che hano determinato tal cosa";

An additional ordinance, presumably issued at a later date than those preceding (ff. 32v-34). There is evidence of significant erasure preceding this ordinance on f. 34rv suggesting that the other ordinances issued at the same time have all been effaced.

ff. 34v-35, *Constitutione ouer ordenatione per lo Reuerendo in christo padre Frate Jacobo da mantoua uicario de la prouincia de bologna dignissimo, incipit, "In nomine domini iesu christi. Anno domini .1.4.97. a di .29.*

de zener in sancto angelo e fo in presentia del Reuerendo in christo padre Frate Bernardo di Fasoli guardiano dignissimo et altri discreti de la compagnia ... A li quali prego che a preno bene lo intellecto sopra questo a laude et honore de dio. Amen”;

Additional ordinance issued by Jacopo da Mantua on 29 January 1497.

f. 35rv, *Constitutione ouer ordinatione fata per li discreti presente tuta la compagnia fata a di .xj. de marzo 1.4.9.7*, incipit, “Item uoliamo et ordenamo azo che la compagnia uada de bene in melio ... ne conduce al paradiso a laude et honore de dio. Amen. *Deus in nomine tuo saluum me fac et in uirtute tua libera me. Amen. Deo Gratias Amen*”;

Additional ordinance issued by members of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome on 11 March 1497.

f. 36rv, *Constitutione ouer ordinatione facta per tuti li discreti de la compagnia a di 6 de zener 1498*, incipit, “CARissimi como dice sancto petro siati sobrij et uigilanti in oratione ... et que in sola spe gratie celestis innititur tuo semper munere gubernetur. Per dominum”; [ff. 37-39v, blank but ruled];

Additional ordinance issued by the Confraternity of Saint Jerome on 6 January 1498, followed by two prayers.

ff. 40-41v, *Modo di fare Oratione in commune, Cap. xxviiij*, incipit, “Dilettißimi in CHRISTO GIESV Padri, et fratelli, Perche in questo diuino Officio non habbiamo lodato il nostro Creatore ... V. Diuinum auxilium descendat super nos et maneat semper nobiscum. R. Amen. LAVS DEO.”

Chapters 28 and 29 of a reformed rule of a Milanese flagellant confraternity (*confraternità dei disciplinati*), promulgated under Carlo Borromeo, archbishop of Milan (1564-1584), as part of his sweeping reforms in the archdiocese. It is included in the second edition of the *Acta Ecclesie Mediolanensis* (1599, pp. 899-910).

This manuscript contains a series of statutes, rules, and ordinances dictating the conduct of the Confraternity of Saint Jerome in Cremona over the course of the fifteenth century, with the earliest statutes dating to 1436 and the latest added ordinances dating to 1498. To these have been added two chapters of a sixteenth-century reformed rule for a Milanese flagellant confraternity.

Although their roots date back earlier, from the late Middle Ages and well into the Early Modern Period confraternities were an extremely important part of the life of most cities and some rural districts across Europe. As expressed in Miri Rubin’s expansive definition, medieval confraternities were formed “to promote welfare and security within a framework governed by an idiom of kinship, entered into and forged by ritual, and bound by mutual obligation” (1993, p. 186).

According to the account provided in the opening of its statutes (f. 1rv), this particular confraternity was founded by a group of devout youths (“questo principio fo fatto de alquanti zoueni deuoti,” f. 1v) because they wished to live under the sweet yoke of Christ and subject to some ways and customs for the salvation of their souls (“uoler uiuere sotto el suaue zouo de

christo e sotto alchuni boni modi e costumi per salute de le lor anime," f. 1v). The statutes and ordinances that follow this declaration attest to the confraternity's investment in instructing its members in the foundational tenets of Christian life – one statute stresses that the brothers should know and observe the Ten Commandments, Twelve Articles of Faith, and Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy (ff. 1v-2) – and in keeping them from succumbing to the temptations of youth – for example, another statute dictates that members should not enter a tavern without great need ("non andare in tauerna senza gran bisegno," f. 3v) and should avoid pomp and pride in their attire.

As far as we have been able to determine, this Cremona confraternity has gone unstudied and even unknown, but these points of emphasis in its statutes resonate with the values and practices upheld by the Bolognese Compagnia di S. Girolamo, a youths's confraternity active from early in the fifteenth century (its history and practices discussed by Nicholas Terpstra, 1995, listing surviving documents connected, p. 229). A comparison of the statutes and ordinances in our manuscript with those surviving from the Bolognese confraternity would be of considerable interest.

That both confraternities designated Jerome as their patron saint reflects the enormous surge in the popularity of his cult in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This surge seems, at least in part, to have been the product of a broader religious revival. A number of monastic congregations devoted to Jerome were founded during this time in Italy, as well as in Spain, and their dedication to Jerome expressed a "discontent with existing orders" (Linde, 2012, p. 56). In his discussion of these congregations, Eugene F. Rice noted the concurrent proliferation in Tuscany of lay companies of Saint Jerome (1985, p. 71). At least one of these, based in Florence, grew under the direction of the founder of a Hieronymite monastic congregation, Carlo da Montegranelli, who had earlier been a Franciscan tertiary (see Rice, 1985, p. 71). The dated ordinances in the present manuscript indicate that this confraternity as well entered into or maintained a relationship with the Franciscans. A number of these ordinances were issued during visitations by Franciscan provincial vicars and the first of them stipulates that tertiaries have no voice or office in the confraternity (f. 33).

The texts included here, both those copied by its primary scribe and those added later, shed valuable light on this book's use. Among the manuscript's original texts, the repeated sets of rules for honest and religious living are particularly noteworthy, offering a digest of the rules laid out in the statutes with two different presentations, the first grouped according to the different responsibilities of the confraternity brothers and carefully keyed to the statutes and the second marked throughout with rubrics, many of the same length as the rules themselves, identifying the content of each rule. It is interesting that both of these texts seem to have been copied by a single scribe. While the second set offers an extended set of rules – hence, perhaps, its inclusion in the manuscript – it also repeats the entire content of the first. Their double presentation certainly attests to their importance and may also indicate two different priorities. The first set emphasizes that these rules belonged to the confraternity's founding statutes. The second copy, in contrast, was organized to ensure ease of access. Later emendations and additions to the manuscript point to its continued use by one or more members of the confraternity.

One of the rules included within the book, *De lezere li statuti* (f. 26v), may indicate the use to which it was put. This rule specifies that the chapters of the confraternity's statutes should be read aloud by the *ordinario*, the lay head of the confraternity, along with the Ten Commandments, Twelve Articles of Faith, and the Works of Corporal and Spiritual Mercy, all of which should also be communicated *in uulgare* (in the vernacular). The statutes very likely were read from a manuscript such as this one and that its careful emendations were made by or on behalf of successive *ordinarii* in the confraternity.

LITERATURE

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