

Statutes and Register of the Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord In Italian, manuscript on parchment and paper Italy (Parma), 1563-1735

24 (parchment) + 6 (paper) folios, watermark on f. 25 of an unattributed double-fichée cross with the letters G (or C), V, and B arranged in a triangle with the V at bottom, modern pencil foliation in Arabic numerals in upper recto corners, complete (collation i¹⁶ ii⁸ iii⁶), written in four parts: (i) ff. 1-4v, ruled in ink (justification 205 x 137 mm.), written in Italian Humanistic script by two hands on 29 lines, rubrics and initials in red, imprint and traces of wax seal on f. 3, dated to 1589; (ii) ff. 5v-22, ruled in ink, written in several Italian cursive hands of wavering execution on 27-29 lines, dated 1680-1733; (iii) ff. 22v-24v, unruled, justification variable, in several large non-cursive hands of wavering execution on 34-39 lines, dated 1680-1735; (iv) ff. 25-29, unruled lines (justification c. 225 x c. 140 mm.), written in seventeenth-century Italian cancelleresca by one hand on 23 lines, moderate wear, discoloration, and staining throughout parchment quires with minor rippling, chipping or chewing at edges, paper quire has some staining, flecking, folding at corners, uneven bottom edges, worming on blank last folio, no text loss. Contemporary folder binding of cardboard with parchment outer covering, warping but stable condition, indecipherable writing in brown ink by several hands on front and back. Dimensions c. 265 x c. 190 mm.

The only surviving manuscript of the unedited and unprinted statutes of Parma's Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, with an extensive register recording its members, and the rules of a second unidentified confraternity dedicated to the Stigmata of St. Francis. These texts illustrate the social, cultural, and religious values of two lay confraternities. The extensive list of named members offers new evidence relevant to the history of Parma at the height of the Farnese power.

PROVENANCE

1. The main part of this manuscript contains the governing statutes and register of members of the Confraternity of the Five Wounds ("Cinque Piaghe") of Our Lord, affiliated with the Church of San Ambrosio in Parma (now demolished). It is a practical manuscript, written gradually over centuries, with dates throughout. As confirmed in an inscription in the top margin of f. 1, "A[p]provati da Mons[ignor] Vescovo Ferdinando Farnese Anno 1563," the statutes contemporary with the Confraternity's founding were ratified by Ferdinando Farnese, cousin of the powerful Duke Alessandro Farnese. (According to the Council of Trent in 1562 stipulated that new confraternities needed episcopal permission and their statutes were subject to episcopal approval; Black 1989).
2. The second section, a continuation of the statutes dated 1589, was written in the same quire some twenty-five years later, also in Parma; the remainder of the quire was apparently left empty for eighty years.
3. Following the 1589 statutes is a register with first and last names of the men who belonged to the Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, recorded by various

scribes (presumably members) as they were accepted between 1669 and 1735. Some families apparently held membership for decades. Frequently occurring surnames include Mazza, Rizzardi, Gandolfi, Bianchi, Morretti, Ferrari, Zanardi, Piazza, Tromba, Ceci, and Provinciale.

4. The manuscript's final text, written in the seventeenth century, was not written for the Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, but rather for a confraternity dedicated to Sacred Stigmata. It is unclear whether it was written in Parma, as no such confraternity appears among the documents in the State Archives of Parma. However, the introduction its first folio explains its presence here: it is kept because the founder of the confraternity for which these statutes were made was once a member of the Confraternity of the Five Wounds. Although the introduction says that the confraternity is named in the statutes ("*della Compagnia che si nomina in delli Capitoli*"), it is, in fact, not.
5. Private European collection.

TEXT

ff. 1-3, *IHS Al nome di Dio onnipotente, Capitoli della Compagnia delle cinque Piaghe di nostro Signore*, incipit, "Considerando che la vita christiana tutta consiste in cognoscere et amare le cose eterne, celesti, et nell'alienarsi dal sonerchio amor delle cose caduche mondane ... Quia unctio docebit omnia Soli Deo honor et gloria. Amen *IHS*"; [f. 3v, blank]

This appears to be the only extant manuscript of the ten foundational statutes of the Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord. Unedited and unprinted, these statutes set forth the moral and practical obligations of the members, stipulating spiritual, cultural, and community responsibilities, including almsgiving, visitation of sick and dying members, and the governance of the confraternity.

f. 4rv, *Capitula alli vecchi per ridurre la compagnia a miglior forma di operare et vivere spiritualmente approvari et accettari da essa compagnia l'anno del Signore 1589*, incipit, "Primo. non si accettino hnomini di mala vita o fama ... [14] Il medesimo si faccia anco nelle processione servando sempre il silentio andando peri con il suo compagno e servando una ugual distantia e prestando una essatta et perfetta ubedentia alli Sargenti come al proprio Signor Rettore"; [f. 5, blank]

To our knowledge, the sole surviving copy of fourteen additional statutes of the Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, instituted some twenty-five years after the first set to improve the operations of the confraternity. They outline more specific activities than the foundational statutes, including the moral and practical conditions of becoming a member, the habits worn by brothers, and their performance of religious duties concerning special Masses, commemoration of the dead, and processions.

ff. 5v-24v Register of members of the Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, 1669-1735;

Confratelli are listed by date, beginning with a full list of members in 1669 (a later entry at the beginning of the list reads 1697, but should be overlooked in favor of the date offered in the register's introduction). Thereafter, new members are listed annually. The top and bottom margins of the first quire (including up to f. 6v) are scored so no further names could be erroneously added. As members passed away, a *cross pattée* was placed in the margin before their names; this is carried out more sporadically in the later years, perhaps indicating inconsistent record keeping.

Multiple hands enter brief notes alongside some names: for example, Alessandro Borsani, a member in 1669, was treasurer of the collection for "degne cause" (worthy causes) (f. 7v); Carlo Conti, member at the same time, was a priest at Parma's San Sepolcro church (f. 9); and Don Francesco Marazzi, who joined in 1683, was a Third Order Franciscan (f. 10v). Carmelites and Capuchins are also noted among the members. One scribe, a certain Giovanni Battista Biagi writing in 1713, names himself on f. 17. Fewer new members are recorded annually as the years progress. The final entry on f. 24v, which is partially illegible, is dated 1735.

ff. 25-29, *Quesi capitoli qui si conservono sol per memoria, essendo che il Fondatore della Compagnia che si nomina in delli Capitoli, era uno de Confratelli della Compagnia delle Cinque Piaghe di N[ostro] S[ignore] G[esù] C[risto] di Parma, incipit, "Che tutti fratelli debbano ninere catholicamente soggetti alla santa Madre Chiesa ... Quando morira un fratello, onero Sorella, la Compagnia sara obligata andâre a sepelirli, et puoi cantargli alla cor chiesa l'officio de Morti, et le sorelle sono obligate dire cinque Pater nostro, et cinque Ave Maria per l'Anima dil defunto, onero defunta." [ff. 29v-30 blank]*

Statutes of a confraternity, apparently dedicated to the Stigmata of St. Francis, otherwise unidentified. Topics include customary behavior of members, the confraternity's habit, almsgiving, performance of the Divine Office, observance of the Feast of the Sacred Stigmata of St. Francis (17 September), acceptance of new members, confraternity government, and the role of the confraternity's sisters. According to the statutes, they explicitly followed Franciscan customs and used their secular Breviary. The Confraternity of the Sacred Stigmata existed in several cities, including Assisi and Florence; it is presently unclear where this confraternity was located, as their presence in Parma is attested in no other documents.

Confraternities were (and still are) associations of laypeople centered around carrying out pious and charitable works, which through their performance and associated indulgences prepared members for a favorable afterlife. With roots in antiquity, confraternities were central to city life in the late Middle Ages, continued well into the Early Modern period, and still exist in Christian communities today. Members were bound through a shared sense of brotherhood and ritual, and by rules which promoted positive social behavior (Black, 1989 and Rubin, 1993). Many confraternities were inspired or sponsored by the mendicant orders, as is evidenced by the statutes in this manuscript apparently dedicated to the Sacred Stigmata of St. Francis.

The Five Wounds of Christ – the four nail wounds on his hands and feet, and the lance piercing in his side – were especially venerated in the late Middle Ages (Williams, 2004). The Confraternity of the Five Wounds of Our Lord was founded by a Franciscan Friar Minor, Giovanni Antonio Majavacca of Busseto (Capelli, 1997), and formally approved in the Oratorio della Disciplina di Porta Nuova in November 1564 (Cherbi, 1839), a year after the confirmation of their statutes recorded in this manuscript. In addition to members from various religious

orders, it also included a female branch: the Infanta Maria of Guimarães, wife of Alessandro Farnese, Duke of Parma, joined them as a matron before her death in 1588 (Perez, 1593, p. 187). Almost no research has been published on this confraternity, or on confraternities in Parma more generally.

Late medieval and early modern Parma was a hotbed of political struggle and unrest among its nobility, with regions of the province divided amongst several ruling families from the fifteenth through, in some areas, the nineteenth century. After centuries of serving as a battle ground in the Italian Wars, it was brought under Papal control in 1545. The city of Parma, together with Piacenza, was then given as a duchy by Pope Paul III, himself a member of the powerful Farnese family, to his illegitimate son Pier Luigi Farnese. It was an unpopular move: plotting against the Farnese family continued amongst Parma's nobles into the seventeenth century. The family, however, went on to rule Parma until 1731, just four years before the last entry in this manuscript's register (Bilotto, Del Negro, and Mozzarelli, 1997, and Gamrath, 2007).

The Confraternity of the Five Wounds in Parma were granted rights to a legacy by Princess Mary Luigia in 1847 (see *Raccolta generale*, p. 48) but ceased to exist at some point in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Church of San Ambrosio was demolished in 1913 (Mendogni, Online Resources) and today, the Vicolo Cinque Piaghe marks the former location of the Confraternity of the Oratory of the Five Wounds. All other known documents from the confraternity are held by the State Archives of Parma. They are to date unedited, and are not itemized or digitized online, making the availability of this manuscript a particularly important opportunity for further research.

LITERATURE

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bfarnf.html>

Mendogni, Pier Paolo. "Palazzo Venturini Baiardi"
<http://www.pierpaolomendogni.it/pdf/PalazzoVenturini.pdf>

State Archives of Parma, list of Convents and Confraternities
<http://www.archiviodistatoparma.beniculturali.it/getFile.php?id=82>

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