grounded in a perfected language forcing people to react according to logic and not personal interest.

During the French Revolution, Condorcet was an active public figure. In the final years of the *ancien régime,* his refusal to compromise philosophical principles for political expediency had made him many enemies. His international reputation nevertheless enabled him to serve various finance ministers and to be a member of the Committee on Public Instruction, which produced the first systematic proposal for the secular public schooling he considered the bedrock of a functioning republic. He supported the abolition of titles and of the monarchy and the creation of a French Republic. Elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1791 and the Constitutional Convention in 1792, he wrote a daring constitution that was never adopted, as the Jacobins feared its consequences for their own election prospects.

Detested by the Right as a traitor and by the Left as a threat, Condorcet was finally proscribed by the Committee on Public Safety in July 1793. Hidden by an elderly widow in Paris, ill, and in a state of moral dejection, he wrote, at Sophie's request, his most famous work, the *Sketch of a Historical Table of the Progress of the Human Spirit,* a brilliant history of intellectual development in the great Enlightenment tradition of Buffon, and a vision of unlimited human social progress. In March of 1794, fearing the house was to be searched, he fled to the countryside. He was captured and found dead two days later in his cell. Some believe he was murdered; still others believe he committed suicide or that, suffering from exposure, he died of a stroke.

A martyr to the Terror, Condorcet was nonetheless a founding father of republican France. Many of his political principles made their way into later constitutions. The French civil service, as heart of the state, owes its soul to his idea that civil servants function correctly when their education induces them to perceive the logical procedures shared by all human beings and to put them into the service of that same totality, the public. The balance between individual liberty and the particularly French notion of "solidarity" here finds its source in Condorcet's mathematization of social and political concepts.

See also **Buffon, Georges Louis Leclerc; Enlightenment; Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat de; Revolutions, Age of; Rousseau, Jean-Jacques; Voltaire.**

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WILDA CHRISTINE ANDERSON

CONFRATERNITIES. Literally "brotherhoods," these were corporate groups found in various religious traditions that organized the devotional and charitable life of lay believers around the model of ritual kinship. They ranged in size from a few dozen to a few hundred members and were active in practically every urban center and in many rural districts. Venice had 120 confraternities in c. 1500 and 387 by c. 1700; almost 20 percent of the population of mid-seventeenth century Antwerp belonged to a brotherhood, a proportion found in most European cities. By the late eighteenth century 70 percent of rural parishes in Trier had a confraternity, as did almost all rural villages in Spain, where a 1771 government census reported 25,038 brotherhoods. Membership conferred spiritual, social, and charitable benefits, and individuals might belong to one or more groups according to need or preference. In the Catholic world of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they became critical agents of a process of "christianization" that

involved catechetical education, moral discipline, intense devotional exercises, and dramatic public processions. By the eighteenth century, a new generation of Catholic reformers criticized their wealth, materialist piety, and often self-serving charity, and successfully advocated reforms by which state governments across Europe suppressed confraternities and directed their resources to charitable purposes.

MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE FORMS

Voluntary kin groups were active in the early church and in the Carolingian period, but confraternities first expanded rapidly with the mendicant urban missions of the thirteenth century, when they emphasized peacemaking, mutual support, and egalitarian brotherhood. Into the early modern period, their individual and collective religious exercises adapted mendicant models to lay life, and included praise singing, penitential flagellation, processions, funerary and requiem services, and charity exercised to members and the urban poor. Their administration followed guild models, and most guarded their autonomy from the clergy. In larger cities, confraternities organized members according to devotional preference, trade, nationality, neighborhood, or charitable activity, and took on extensive social responsibilities as a result. Theirs was a distinctly local piety, and confraternities were often the custodians of local shrines, the organizers of civic religious rituals, and the administrators of local hospitals, orphanages, and hostels. They were the lay face of the church, and most of what passed for social welfare was organized and run by the brotherhoods.

CONFRATERNITIES AND CATHOLIC REFORM

From the late fifteenth century, lay and clerical Catholic reformers advocated renewal of the church based on the works of physical and spiritual charity and on expanded devotional exercises centered on prayer and the sacraments. They saw the confraternities as vehicles for organizing and spreading this activity among the laity and built many aspects of their reform programs around the brotherhoods: confraternity members worked in prisons, established hospitals, offered dowries and loans to the poor, and opened shelters for orphans, prostitutes, and widows. At the same time, some clerical reformers believed that confraternities' traditional emphasis on lay autonomy left them vulnerable to

heresies and undermined the authority of priests and bishops. They advocated closer clerical supervision of the groups. There had been no canon law governing confraternities in the middle ages, but in Session XXII (1562), the Council of Trent empowered bishops to review statutes, supervise worship, and audit accounts in regular visitations (canons VIII and IX). Many confraternities resisted, but in 1604 Clement VIII issued the bull *Quaecumque,* which required episcopal approval for all new foundations.

The regulatory process ordered by Trent and *Quaecumque* took hold slowly, particularly in rural areas, but the potential of confraternities to realize Catholic reform objectives led secular and regular clergy to establish brotherhoods that had a standard form, specific function, and uniform statutes. At the parish and diocesan level, two early-sixteenth-century innovations that multiplied after Trent were the Holy Sacrament confraternities dedicated to eucharistic devotion and the Christian Doctrine confraternities dedicated to catechetical instruction. Reforming bishops such as Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584) of Milan and Gabrielle Paleotti (1528–1597) of Bologna believed eucharistic devotion to be the touchstone of the Catholic faith and aimed to have a Holy Sacrament confraternity in every parish. Both wrote standard statutes that confirmed their status as parish auxiliaries under the priest's authority. Members brought the Eucharist to sick parishioners in their homes, held Corpus Domini processions that took the Host around the city, and organized the Forty Hour devotions, which drew believers into chapels to pray before it for that period of time. Members of Christian Doctrine confraternities taught reading, writing, and religion to boys and girls in Sunday afternoon sessions, working with specially adapted textbooks. Another innovation, which promoted standardized rules and clerical control and directed lay attention to Rome, was the emergence of archconfraternities from the 1530s. Based initially in Rome, these received extraordinary papal privileges and indulgences that they shared with brotherhoods in other localities. Confraternities aggregating to the archconfraternity pledged to adopt its statutes and practices and sent members on pilgrimages to Rome, where the archconfraternity hosted them.

CONFRATERNAL NETWORKS

New and existing religious orders made confraternities a central element in their mission outreach. Many of the new orders began as confraternities, chiefly the Jesuits, Theatines, Ursulines, Visitandines, Barnabites, Piarists, and Oratorians, and all employed confraternities to gather and socialize their recruits and to underwrite their charitable and mission outreach. Organization as a confraternity allowed the French Daughters of Charity to live communally but avoid enclosure, and so continue working openly in schools and hospitals. The Dominican James Sprenger founded a Confraternity of the Holy Rosary in Cologne in 1475; Dominicans subsequently established branches across Europe to promote the new devotion, particularly among the illiterate, and claimed a million members by the eve of the Reformation. The Theatines and Oratory of Divine Love established brotherhoods of nobles to work with the sick and the poor in hospitals.

Of all religious orders, the Jesuits relied most heavily on confraternities, called Marian sodalities, to promote and underwrite their missions and charitable institutions. These first emerged in the Roman College in 1563, and as Jesuit colleges multiplied, they moved out beyond students and alumni to enroll elites across Catholic Europe. Their devotions were conventional, but by establishing separate groups for professionals and nobles, students, and artisans, the Jesuits ensured that they would foster more intense socialization and greater cohesion than traditional confraternities. They grew rapidly in numbers, activity, and influence through the seventeenth century, sometimes as public and sometimes as secret bodies. Among the latter was the French Company of the Holy Sacrament, established in 1629. It grew to sixty-two provincial congregations before suppression in 1667 and enrolled royal courtiers, judges, bishops, bureaucrats, and merchants who were dedicated to the promotion of the monarchy, Catholic missions, personal devotions, and charity. Much of the administrative elite of expanding states had been trained in Jesuit colleges, and lifelong membership in the Marian sodalities preserved and extended their personal networks and created a governing class committed to this work of "christianization."

This merging of church and state in the form of networked elite confraternities that served political and religious purposes was an early modern characteristic that extended beyond the Jesuits. During the French Wars of Religion, Catholic royalists promoted confraternities of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Name of Jesus to challenge both Protestantism and those who advocated religious toleration on political grounds.

Portugal's dowager Queen Leonor founded the Lisbon Misericórdia as a charitable agency in 1498, and under royal patronage Misericórdia confraternities soon spread across the nation and to the Azores and the Madeiras before tracking Portugal's expansion to Macau, Brazil, and North Africa. The Lisbon Misericórdia statutes, first printed in 1516, were usually adopted by these local groups, whose upper-class members exercised the works of corporal and spiritual mercy toward the poor. A succession of royal privileges through the sixteenth century set the Misericórdia confraternities ahead of all local counterparts in charitable activity and beyond the control of episcopal authorities in all but cultic worship. A virtual monopoly on alms gathering gradually brought most charitable hospitals under their control and, combined with tax concessions, generated a patrimony, which patrician administrators employed in lavish public devotions or lent on generous terms to their peers. The Portuguese Misericórdias enjoyed local autonomy and exercised considerable political, social, and even judicial authority until the later eighteenth century, when political opposition to their privileges, combined with the rise of devotional alternatives (particularly the Third Orders), undercut their powers, resources, and influence.

CONFRATERNITIES IN ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA

The Misericórdia confraternities helped administer Portugal's empire, and much of Catholic expansion overseas employed confraternities as agents of missions, charity, and political and social control. The Jesuits founded indigenous confraternities in Japan, and in the space of three decades, the brotherhoods had won 215,000 converts. In an area with few missionaries, they provided the main contact with Christianity and were the key to its rapid spread. Japanese confraternities organized festivals, charity, and mutual assistance, and became the core of an underground church once persecution began in 1587. A parallel situation developed some decades

later in China. The Jesuit mission there had initially concentrated on court and intellectual circles, but when persecution in 1616–1620 led these members to drop away, the Jesuits concentrated on planting confraternities among merchants and peasants. Numbers rose from 60,000 in the 1640s to 300,000 by 1700.

Confraternities were even more important to Catholic colonizers in the Americas, where the Spanish and Portuguese used them to build the fabric of the Catholic Church and also to control indigenous groups and slaves. Groups like the Portuguese Misericórdias took the lead in building the bulwark of churches and hospitals, processions and rituals that sheltered European cultural identity for colonial settlers. They were also the main means of spreading Catholic doctrine and ritual among indigenous groups in the Americas from the time that the first one was established in Mexico City in 1526 or 1527, and they multiplied rapidly. Mexico City had possibly three hundred indigenous confraternities by 1585, and the most dramatic expansion across Central and South America occurred in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Most Latin American confraternities grew out of the missions of the religious orders. The Jesuits in Brazil initially aimed to gather believers of diverse racial backgrounds into single local confraternities in order to demonstrate the unity of Church universal against Dutch and French Protestants who were trying to establish settlements in Brazil. Yet the logic of the Jesuits' own hierarchical model, the racism of colonial society, and the possibilities of resistance soon altered the situation, so that in Brazil and across Latin America there were distinct groups for aboriginals, for African slaves, for Spanish or Portuguese settlers, and for the expanding mestizo population. Dominicans joined the Jesuits in actively promoting racially distinct groups, and black confraternities in particular.

The parallel brotherhoods for different racial groups became vehicles for maintaining, albeit in syncretized form, West African and pre-Columbian religious and political practices. While intended to promote christianization, in some cases these groups became protected shelters of indigenous cultural identity in a context that suppressed all other non-Catholic or non-Hispanic cultural institutions.

African and mestizo fraternities in Brazil exercised limited legal powers within their communities and sometimes countered Portuguese overlords by challenging cruel slave owners in court and by lending members money to buy their freedom. Aztec, Mayan, and Incan confraternities drew members through charity and sociability and frequently preserved indigenous forms of kin-based social organization. Beyond this, Catholic devotions often appealed because they resonated well with pre-Columbian religious practices, particularly the rituals of respect and care for the dead, and the practice of penitential flagellation.

CONFRATERNITIES OUTSIDE CATHOLICISM

Examples of confraternities crossing confessional boundaries occur in Europe as well, where most combined political, charitable, and cultic functions, and developed into semiautonomous governing structures for expatriate, subordinate, or marginalized communities. In Venice, the San Niccolò confraternity gathered the Greek Orthodox community from 1498. It taxed Greek merchants to underwrite burials, dowries, and poor relief for members; it constructed the Church of San Giorgio dei Greci (1539–1573); and it sent aid to Orthodox hospitals, convents, and monasteries throughout the Venetian empire. Orthodox believers in the Ukraine used confraternities (called *bratstva*) to preserve Slavic cultural, religious, and political identity against the Polish state and, from 1596, against the Eastern Rite Catholic Church. The brotherhoods initially organized charity, worship, and discipline, but soon extended their reach to political protest, education, and judicial discipline of members. They remained active into the twentieth century. Jewish confraternities began emerging in Italy as racial tensions increased in the early sixteenth century, and then expanded more rapidly with the establishment of ghettos in Venice (1516) and Rome (1555). Jewish fraternalism was shaped in part through a dynamic with Catholic forms and initially focused on helping the old, sick, and needy, and on burying the dead. Fraternities of teachers and students prefigured the yeshiva, and in cities where declining populations forced the closing of synagogues, the confraternities multiplied in number, members, and cultic activities. Moving into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Jewish confraternities demonstrated some of the

same social patterns observed in contemporary Catholic confraternities, particularly an increasing pietism, more gender distinctions, and the development of mutual aid from charity towards insurance.

CHALLENGES AND SUPPRESSIONS

The later seventeenth century was the high point of confraternal activity and influence, and by the mid-eighteenth century these organizations were being challenged by reform movements rooted in Jansenism and Enlightenment values. Their organization mirrored the stratified social hierarchy of the *ancien régime,* ranging from a small number of exclusive groups that enjoyed significant wealth and special privileges to a broader range of occupational, parochial, and charitable groups that aimed to adapt popular piety to the rhythm of Catholic orthodoxy. Both sides expressed their faith in dramatic rituals such as public flagellation, in lavish processions, and in periodic feasts. Tintoretto, Rubens, and El Greco were among the famous artists commissioned to adorn the quarters of elite confraternities, while a host of minor talents designed ornate chapels and oratories or painted the elaborate banners, altarpieces, and images that brought the "devotional consumption" of baroque piety to local streets and village chapels.

By the 1750s, a growing chorus of critics within and outside the Catholic church found confraternal piety to be wasteful, corrupt, tasteless, and superstitious, and called for worship characterized by moderation, simplicity, inner devotion, and charity. Political authorities resented the confraternities' autonomies and untaxed patrimonies. New ritual kin groups such as the Masons offered fraternity without flagellation and grew at confraternities' expense, particularly in France. The political elites who once had favored and patronized the confraternities now deliberately dismantled them. In Austria, Joseph II suppressed the confraternities in 1782. In Grand Ducal Tuscany, a 1783 census paved the way for suppression of all but a handful of charitable groups in 1785. In both instances, expropriated properties and possessions were to be redistributed to the poor. In Spain, mounting criticism from the 1750s led to a royal census of confraternal wealth in 1768–1771, followed by suppression of all but charitable and religious groups in 1784, the disentailment of confraternal property in 1798, and a final expropriation of remaining resources in 1841. Though confraternities eventually revived as devotional groups in the nineteenth century, they never regained the social and political influence that they had enjoyed in the *ancien régime.*

See also **Catholicism; Jesuits; Missions and Missionaries; Reformation, Catholic; Religious Orders.**

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CONSCRIPTION. *See* **Military: Armies: Recruitment, Organization, and Social Composition**

CONSTANTINOPLE. The city of Constantinople, called Kostantaniyye in Arabic and in formal Ottoman usage and Istanbul in the vernacular, was the most cosmopolitan city in the Mediterra-