

Thesis Completed (Abstract)

Rohling, Geraldine M. *Exequial and Votive Practices of the Viennese Bruderschaften: A Study of Music and Liturgical Piety*. Ph.D. thesis, The Catholic University of America, 1996. Director, Cyrilla Barr.

The history of the *Bruderschaften* (brotherhoods) in Vienna spans over half a millennium, and has its roots in the development of the early “prayer fraternities” of the eighth and ninth centuries. In contrast to the professional municipal *Gilden* and *Zünfte*, the *Bruderschaften* were religious organizations of lay men and women whose pious practices, corporal works of mercy, and absolute affiliation with the Church were fundamental to their existence. While membership was generally unrestricted, some brotherhoods catered to specific crafts or trades, including those for musicians and minstrels.

The religious and political turmoil of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries severely affected the *Bruderschaften*, causing the secularization and/or dissolution of many. Some, however, were maintained in secrecy. In the late sixteenth century the brotherhoods were revived through the fervent efforts of the prelates of Vienna and the religious orders of the Counter- Reformation. From 1637 to 1740 these societies grew and flourished. The largest total number of *Bruderschaften* in Vienna and its environs was 234. In 1758 signs of a governmental suppression of the brotherhoods began to appear. Finally, in 1783 by decree of Joseph II, all brotherhoods in Austria were annulled.

The *Bruderschaften* were critical to the pious and musical life of Vienna, and to its economy. The proliferation of worship services stimulated the “industry” and growth of church music, and influenced musical style and the development of some musical genres (e.g., the litany, the *Miserere*, Vespers, and *Volkslieder*). Consequently, the brotherhoods became primary agents in the musical life of Vienna.

The purpose of this study is to examine the origins and development of the Viennese *Bruderschaften*, their influence on and contribution to the city’s musical life and practices. Emphasis is given to the exequial-related rituals of the brotherhoods and other suffrages for the dead, particularly as they pertain to the use of popular pious *Volkslieder*, the performance of the *Musikkapelle* of various ecclesiastical establishments, including the *Hofmusikkapelle*, and the assistance provided by the brotherhoods in the promotion and financing of music for worship. The method of research for this study is primarily archival.