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Music and the Counter-Reformation

Noel O'Regan

The significant role played by music (in the broadest sense) in the lives of early modern Europeans is often overlooked in general histories of the Counter-Reformation period. This is understandable as historians tend not to feel comfortable discussing music, and musical products are not as accessible or easily readable as works of art or architecture. Music historians in turn have often failed to communicate to a wider public their understanding of how music was experienced; the opportunity offered in this collection of essays is therefore particularly welcome. This chapter will examine some facets of post-Tridentine liturgical and devotional music, with a largely Italian focus. It will refer to some recent work and visit briefly the use of music by Roman confraternities as a window to explore different ways in which music could affect the Catholic experience.

In the early modern period, as now, aural stimuli were as significant as visual ones in shaping liturgies, processions and devotional services. Music helped form people's broader religious experience, whether attending solemn Masses or memorizing basic prayers. Music, however, needs to be continually recreated: what survives is a series of semiotic signs providing a sort of road-map towards reconstructing the sound of the past, but musical notation is at best an imperfect guide, omitting many of the parameters which were understood at the time but are now much less clear. Music historians have traditionally sought to reconstruct the musical past through transcribing and editing surviving music, examining archival sources and theoretical writings for clues to performance practice, and using these same sources to try to understand the roles played by music in society. More recently,

critical musicologists have expanded these approaches, adapting methodologies from other disciplines such as literary criticism or gender studies to deepen their contextual understanding of the music.¹

Music had a variety of functions in the early modern soundscape. While musicologists have understandably tended to concentrate on more complex polyphonic music (i.e. music written for four or more voices and/or instruments singing/playing different parts) this represented only a fraction of what people would have actually heard. Recent scholarship in the area of urban musicology has sought to broaden our view of the sonic experience of city and town dwellers:² bells regulated time and space; the trumpets of town-criers announced particular indulgences as well as secular pronouncements; plainchant and *falsobordone* (simple chordal harmonisation of plainchant) accompanied processions as did the wind-bands which also accompanied civic activities; popular songs were given devotional words and people were encouraged to sing them. Music historians have concentrated on towns and cities, for which archival and musical source materials generally survive, but even the humblest parish churchgoer experienced some plainchant and may have sung a vernacular religious song. Changes were inevitably slow to reach the countryside where long-established popular religious practices would have continued.

Music was a necessary accompaniment to solemn liturgical celebrations, particularly Mass and Vespers, the level of its complexity depending on the importance of the feast and the funds available. Only plainchant was mandatory but churches often went beyond this and added some polyphony. Many institutions concentrated their financial resources on hiring singers and instrumentalists for a big

¹ For instance: Todd M. Borgerding (ed.), *Gender, Sexuality and Early Music* (New York, 2002).

² Fiona Kisby (ed.), *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns* (Cambridge, 2001).

splash on one or two patronal feastday celebrations. Vespers became a particular focus in the years after the Council of Trent, with multiple-choir settings of the psalms and Magnificat pushing into new stylistic areas (see below); hymn-settings, on the other hand, generally remained less flamboyant, retaining traditional references to the plainchant originals. The cyclic Mass, setting the five movements of the Ordinary to the same musical material, remained the cornerstone of composers' contribution to the liturgy through to the eighteenth century, just as it had done since the early fifteenth. Increasingly this was supplemented by the motet or *cantio sacra*, a general-purpose setting of a relatively short text, taken from the liturgy of the day or from scripture. During the sixteenth century this moved from having a formal, often political, function to being more closely integrated into the liturgy and taking on more of an exegetical purpose. Composers and churchmen alike began to show an increasing interest in texts which were now more likely to be taken from the new *Breviarium Romanum* (1568) and *Missale Romanum* (1570). The Song of Songs continued to provide a popular quarry for motet texts, the potentially erotic words encouraging composers to transfer techniques from secular music into the sacred field. In the seventeenth century, motets and the increasingly popular dialogues took their texts from a variety of sources, combining scriptural sentences with words from other places in a process known as centonisation, often stressing the first-person pronoun in order to personalise the devotional response.³

The Council of Trent and its Aftermath

³ Robert Kendrick, 'Devotion, Piety and Commemoration: Sacred Songs and Oratorios', in Tim Carter and John Butt (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 324-77.

The historiography of early modern Catholic music has long been dominated by attempts to establish the nature and extent of the influence of the Council of Trent.⁴ While discussion of sacred music was fairly peripheral at the Council, and its pronouncements vague, there has long been a certain fascination for a version of the story that stressed attempted clerical control and individual heroic resistance. The myth of the salvation of polyphonic music by a single composer – Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina – and a single work - the *Missa Papae Marcelli* - might not have any solid evidential basis but it has its roots in the first decade of the seventeenth century, shortly after the composer's death. It was first mentioned by the Sienese composer Agostino Agazzari in 1607;⁵ he had worked in the Jesuit Collegio Germanico, one of the musical hothouses of the time,⁶ and the myth may have been promulgated by the Jesuits, who had employed Palestrina to organise and teach music at their new Seminario Romano in 1566, shortly after the end of the Council. The myth's last exponent was the German composer Hans Pfitzner whose opera *Palestrina* of 1917 played fast and loose with history in order to portray the struggle of an individual artist against a hostile environment.⁷ Palestrina was certainly the man in the right place when the Council of Trent issued its final documents: *maestro di cappella*

⁴ For instance: Karl Gustav Fellerer, 'Church Music and the Council of Trent', *Musical Quarterly*, 39 (1953): pp. 578-80; Lewis H. Lockwood, *The Counter-Reformation and the Masses of Vincenzo Ruffo* (Vienna, 1969), pp. 74-5.

⁵ Agostino Agazzari, *Del sonare sopra il basso con tutti gli strumenti* (Siena, 1607), trans. Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History 3: The Baroque Era* (London, 1981), p. 70.

⁶ Thomas D. Culley, *Jesuits and Music I: A Study of the Musicians connected with the German College in Rome during the 17th Century and of their Activities in Northern Europe* (Rome, 1970).

⁷ Peter Franklin, 'Palestrina and the Dangerous Futurists', in *The Idea of Music: Schoenberg and Others* (London, 1985), pp. 117–38.

(chapelmaster in charge of the choir and choirboys) of S. Maria Maggiore, whose archpriest was Cardinal Carlo Borromeo, he would shortly move to teach and guide the music at the prototype post-Tridentine Roman Seminary. In 1571 he moved to St. Peter's Basilica as *maestro* of its resident choir, the Cappella Giulia, where he remained until his death in 1594.⁸ Doubtless, as Marco della Sciuca has suggested, Palestrina grasped the opportunity presented by the Council and its aftermath to reinvent and fashion himself as the composer *par excellence* of the new dispensation.⁹

There is no denying the dissatisfaction that was generally felt with much church music in the first half of the sixteenth century. Criticisms by Protestant reformers are well known but reform-minded critics were plentiful on the Catholic side too: they included people as diverse as Erasmus of Rotterdam, the influential Rome and Loreto cleric Bernardino Cirillo and the avant-garde Italian composer Nicola Vicentino.¹⁰ These criticisms centred on two areas: lack of intelligibility of the words due to the complex nature of the music, and the use of musical material deemed inappropriate, whether because of a text associated with it, or because the style was over-indulgent. Particular ire was levelled at battle Masses (using music from Clément Jannequin's onomatopaeic chanson *La Guerre*) and Masses based on secular chansons, many with erotic overtones.

Church music was discussed at the twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions of the Council in 1562-3 and again, in the context of the reform of female convents, at the twenty-fifth session in 1563. Its pronouncements have been the subject of recent

⁸ Noel O'Regan, 'Palestrina, a Musician and Composer in the Market-place', *Early Music* 22 (1994), pp. 551-70.

⁹ Marco Della Sciuca, *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina* (Palermo, 2009).

¹⁰ Lewis Lockwood (ed.), Giovanni P. da Palestrina, *Pope Marcellus Mass*, Norton Critical Score (New York, 1975).

revisionist studies by Craig Monson and David Crook.¹¹ The former pointed out that the final decrees said the minimum about music in just a single sentence: ‘let them keep away from the churches compositions in which there is an intermingling of the lascivious or impure, whether by instrument or voice’.¹² An earlier canon provided to the delegates for discussion had been more extended, including an injunction that singing during Mass ‘should be calculated, not to afford vain delight to the ear, but so that the words may be comprehensible to all’, but this was not formally adopted.

Crook, meanwhile, has focussed on the use of the words ‘lascivious and impure’ in the final decree.¹³ He points out that this decree substituted the words ‘lascivum aut impurum’ for ‘profanum’ in the earlier canon. Music historians have read the same meaning into both, i.e. a ban on using secular elements in sacred music, such as basing Mass cycles on secular songs, and have evinced surprise at why composers, even in Rome, continued to use such elements after 1563. Crook’s explanation lies in the meaning of the word ‘lascivum’ which did not signify ‘secular’ or, indeed, ‘lascivious’ in the modern sense, but might be better translated as ‘wanton’ and conveyed a sense of immoderation, empty virtuosity, lacking the restraint and sobriety proper to worship.¹⁴

Crook has also recently drawn attention to an important section of a document, copied in 1591 at the Jesuit College in Munich. This provides rare evidence of the

¹¹ Craig Monson, ‘The Council of Trent Revisited’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55 (2002): pp. 1-37; David Crook, ‘Music Wanton or Impure’, unpublished paper given to the conference, *European Sacred Music, 1550-1800; New Approaches*, Université de Fribourg, Institut de Musicologie, 9-12 June 2010.

¹² The translation is from Monson, ‘Council’, p. 11.

¹³ Crook, ‘Music’.

¹⁴ A similar point is made in Della Sciucca, *Palestrina*, p. 124.

control and censorship of music prints and reveals that the work of Orlando di Lasso, the most famous and most widely-published European composer of the day, fell under scrutiny.¹⁵ From this record, Crook has identified four categories of music (both sacred and secular): (i) approved music by Orlando di Lasso, (ii) approved music by other composers, (iii) prohibited music by Lasso, and (iv) prohibited music by other composers. The prohibited music was to be burned. While the inclusion of Lasso, employed by the Duke of Bavaria who had established the Munich College speaks of the seriousness with which the Jesuits undertook the censorship of music used by their students, the music by Lasso which was approved far outweighed the 17 isolated sacred motets prohibited. Categories (iii) and (iv) included ‘Masses based on vain texts’ as well as secular Latin pieces such as Lasso’s *Vinum bonum et soave*, Italian madrigals and canzonette, French *chansons* and German *Lieder*. Crook concludes that the criteria for prohibition were: pieces with clearly erotic texts, those that parodied sacred pieces and those using nonsense syllables or displaying excessive musical frivolity. The context for these lists was the music used by the students for recreational purposes, not liturgically, but the document gives us a useful insight into attitudes of Jesuits in Munich, a city which embraced the full post-Tridentine experience under Duke Wilhelm V (1579-1597).

While not included in the final Tridentine decree, the importance of word-intelligibility ran through the discussions which followed, just as it had dominated much of the pre-Council debate. It was an easy peg on which to hang superficial allegiance to the Council and lip-service was paid to it in many music publication titles and dedications, the phrase ‘according to the Council of Trent’ becoming

¹⁵ David Crook, ‘A Sixteenth-century Catalogue of Prohibited Music’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 62 (2009): pp. 1-78.

something of a cliché. The twelfth Canon of the twenty-fourth session effectively delegated the regulation of the divine offices to provincial synods and to local bishops. Both Monson and Crook quote from a number of such local pronouncements which often referred to the need for singers to make the words intelligible.

Repertories were rewritten with this in view, most notably that of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome where two successive *maestri di cappella*, Giovanni Animuccia (1555-71) and Palestrina (1571-94) provided new settings of various liturgical items. Both published volumes of Masses in 1567, Animuccia wishing to 'disturb the hearing of the text as little as possible, but nevertheless in such a way that it may not be entirely devoid of artifice' while Palestrina spoke of setting the text in a 'new manner'.¹⁶

Giovanni's brother Paolo offered to compose new settings for the Cappella Pontificia, the papal choir, but this task too was largely entrusted to Palestrina.¹⁷ Reform even touched plainchant, when Pope Gregory XIII charged Palestrina and Annibale Zoilo in 1577 with revising it, largely by eliminating melismas (runs of notes – often quite long – on single syllables), now labelled as barbarisms in the new climate which sought to match text and music more closely. In fact this proved a difficult task and was not completed by the time of Palestrina's death in 1594. It was continued by Felice Anerio and Francesco Soriano and eventually issued by the *Typografia Medicea* in Rome in 1614 and 1615.¹⁸ Chants were shortened and melismas eliminated, cadences and key signatures were standardised and word declamation improved. Although approved by Rome it was never used as standard throughout the

¹⁶ 'Animuccia', in Stanley Sadie (ed.) *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 2001); the text of Palestrina's dedication is given in Lockwood, *Marcellus*, pp. 22-3.

¹⁷ Richard Sherr, 'A Letter from Paolo Animuccia: A Composer's Response to the Council of Trent', *Early Music* 12 (1984): pp. 74-8.

¹⁸ Robert F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music* (Collegeville, 1979), pp. 33ff.

church and other reformed chants were issued by publishers in, for example Venice and Paris, the latter reflecting a separate neo-Gallican dialect.

In the wake of the Council, synods were held in many dioceses which addressed sacred music to some extent. In Rome some headline steps were taken by a commission of cardinals, including Carlo Borromeo and Vitellozzo Vitelli: the singers in the Cappella Pontificia were re-auditioned and a report prepared, not just about their musical abilities, but also their moral standing; as a result 14 singers (out of 37) were dismissed.¹⁹ The commission also held a session with the papal singers in order to try out a number of unspecified Masses for text intelligibility; this may have been the context which produced Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*, published in 1567. Borromeo also sent instructions to his vicar in the archdiocese of Milan to have Masses commissioned from Vincenzo Ruffo and Nicola Vicentino showing how the words could be made intelligible. Christine Getz and Robert Kendrick have provided comprehensive surveys of music in Milan covering the pre- and post-Tridentine periods.²⁰ Reform of Catholic church music did not, of course, end in the 1570s but remained an active process. In 1657 Pope Alexander VII issued a bull (with follow-up instructions for Rome in 1665) seeking to regulate the choice of texts, the number of voices used and other matters related to performance in churches; later popes continued to legislate, up to the comprehensive bull *Annus qui* of Benedict XIV in 1749.²¹

Liturgical Music: Diversification of Styles

¹⁹ Two were subsequently reinstated. Richard Sherr, 'Competence and Incompetence in the Papal Choir in the Age of Palestrina', *Early Music* 22 (1994): pp. 606-9.

²⁰ Christine Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience in Sixteenth-Century Milan* (Aldershot, 2005); Robert Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan, 1585-1650* (Oxford, 2002).

²¹ Hayburn, *Papal Legislation*, pp. 76ff.

In the longer term, concern over the intelligibility of the words led to a watershed in composers' approach to the setting of sacred texts. This was related to changing attitudes to text-setting generally, especially in the secular field, arising out of humanist interest in rhetoric and in reproducing the potential for influencing human behaviour which the Ancient Greeks had thought music to possess. In general terms sacred music went in three simultaneous directions from the 1590s onwards: (i) large-scale polychoral settings using blocks of voices and instruments which could be separated on platforms or balconies; (ii) small-scale settings for one or a few solo voices with accompaniment by the newly-invented *basso continuo*;²² (iii) the *stile antico* or *stile osservato*, a modified version of the mid-sixteenth-century pan-European style in which musical imitation between the voices remained a significant compositional tool. The very idea of composers having a choice of different styles was relatively new.

A number of authors have dealt with polychoral music which became an important badge of Roman Catholic music-making throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (though adopted by Lutherans too).²³ Written for two or more choirs of voices and/or instruments, it was the ideal medium for antiphonal texts such as Psalms, Marian Antiphons and the Magnificat. Its tendency towards pomposity lent itself to celebratory Mass and Vespers with the choirs stereophonically separated, in order to surround clergy and congregation with sound intended to conjure up the music of the heavenly choirs. Thomas Coryat said that the music at Venice's Scuola

²² A bass line for keyboard and other bass instruments with indications as to the harmony to be played above it.

²³ Anthony Carver, *Cori Spezzati* (Cambridge, 1988); Francesco Luisi, Danilo Curti and Marco Gozzi (eds.), *La scuola poliorale romana del Sei-Settecento: atti del Convegno internazionale di studi in memoria di Laurence Feininger, Trento 4-5 ottobre 1996* (Trent, 1997).

Grande di S. Rocco in 1608 left him ‘rapt up with St. Paul into the third heaven’.²⁴ Such music was well fitted to the new open baroque churches, nowhere more than St Peter’s Basilica where, in the mid-seventeenth century, up to twelve separate choirs sang at Vespers on the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, including one placed on the walkway inside the dome.²⁵ What might be called the ‘shock and awe’ which this music produced was a significant part of the post-Tridentine church’s offensive in attracting people – particularly from the upper classes – to church services. It could also be used for aggrandizement by absolute rulers – Louis XIV, for instance, who commissioned the *grand motets* of Jean-Baptiste Lully and others to provide a continuous musical accompaniment to his preferred low Masses.²⁶

At the other extreme, small-scale pieces for one or a few singers, called *sacri concerti* or *concerti ecclesiastici*, resulted from moves to communicate the text even more clearly. Related to similar trends in secular music and to the *stile rappresentativo* which developed into operatic recitative, this was largely a courtly style, but was widely practised in devotional contexts such as the *Quarant’ore*, or for Vespers antiphons. Most famous are the *Cento Concerti Ecclesiastici* published by the Franciscan Ludovico da Viadana in Venice in 1602 but others were simultaneously pioneering this new style in Rome and elsewhere.²⁷ As time went on it

²⁴ Quoted in ‘Venice’, *The New Grove*.

²⁵ Pietro della Valle, ‘Della Musica dell’età nostra [1640]’ in Angelo Solerti, *Le origini del melodramma* (Turin, 1903) pp. 148-185 at p. 172.

²⁶ John J. Heyer (ed.), *Jean-Baptiste Lully and the Music of the French Baroque: Essays in Honor of James R. Anthony* (Cambridge, 1989).

²⁷ Noel O’Regan, ‘Asprilio Pacelli, Ludovico da Viadana and the Origins of the Roman Concerto Ecclesiastico’, *Journal of Seventeenth-Century Music* 6 (2000) <http://www.sscm-jscm.org/jscm/v6/no1/Oregan.html> (last accessed 5 October 2011).

was also combined with the large-scale polychoral idiom to produce an amalgam *concertato* style which proved very popular for large-scale church music in the later baroque period.²⁸

The continuing *stile antico* became associated with a certain rectitude in church music, particularly in connection with the Cappella Pontificia in Rome and with the name of Palestrina. It was used for Mass Ordinaries, hymns and Magnificats, the latter two often alternating verses in polyphony with those in plainchant. In his influential survey on seventeenth-century music, Lorenzo Bianconi stressed the long shadow which Palestrina cast on Catholic music through the seventeenth century, even when his actual music was no longer being performed.²⁹ Adopted by composers such as Gregorio Allegri and Alessandro Scarlatti, the *stile antico* would be codified in Vienna in 1725 by Johann Joseph Fux and formed the basis of teaching programmes which continue to the present. The same style was represented for organ music in the *Fiori musicali*, the best-known publication by another iconic figure in Catholic music, Girolamo Frescobaldi. Organist at St. Peter's in Rome on and off from 1608 to 1643, Frescobaldi's organ music provided a template for all later keyboard composers, and not just those in the Catholic tradition.³⁰

It was not, however, music in any of these styles which came to symbolize the mystery and exoticism of the Catholic 'other' in the eighteenth century, but a setting of the *Miserere* (Psalm 50), which began life as a basic chordal harmonization in *falsobordone* by Gregorio Allegri, split between two choirs of four and five voices,

²⁸ An important publication which combined all these styles was the Marian Vespers and Mass published in 1610 by Claudio Monteverdi.

²⁹ Lorenzo Bianconi, *Music in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. David Bryant (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 105-7.

³⁰ Frederick Hammond, *Girolamo Frescobaldi* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983).

respectively, and a third plainsong choir. It was sung in near total darkness during the Holy Week offices of Tenebrae in the Sistine Chapel. As with all *falsobordone* settings the singers improvised ornamental figures at cadences; these gradually became more and more elaborate and, for a long time, were not written down. The piece's fame was due to a supposed ban on its copying and attempts by musicians such as Charles Burney, Wolfgang A. Mozart and Felix Mendelssohn to subvert this or take it down from memory. Another symbol of the Catholic 'other' was the castrato voice, bedrock of the soprano section of the Cappella Pontificia from the early seventeenth century and both lauded and reviled in the courts and opera houses of Europe.³¹

Music for Devotion

Liturgical music formed only part of people's musical experience in the early modern era. If Catholics were not expected to sing during liturgical services they were encouraged to do so away from them, whether in the home or on the street. The Catholic Church, like its Protestant counterparts, was concerned with channelling man's (and woman's) natural vocalising inclinations into singing spiritual songs instead of secular ones. The Catholic authorities were conscious that Protestants had made many conversions through their use of congregational singing in church and domestic singing of psalms. Supplying good devotional music was thus something of an imperative and, like liturgical music, could cross confessional boundaries in countries with more than one affiliation. In both types of music it was the text which increasingly generated the musical structure, using techniques analogous to the rhetorical figures which dominated oratory and sermons in particular.³²

³¹ K. Bergeron: 'The Castrato as History', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, viii (1996), pp. 167–84.

³² Eric T. Chafe, *Monteverdi's Tonal Language* (New York, 1992); Kendrick, 'Devotion', pp. 327 ff.

The major vernacular forms in Italy were the *lauda spirituale*, *madrigale spirituale* and *canzonetta spirituale*. The medieval singing of the *laudesi* companies, revived in Florence during the period of Savonarola, was transmitted to Rome through the charisma of Philip Neri and there found a new lease of life. Devotional poetry, some old and some newly written, was fitted to standard melodic formulae which were sung in unison or given simple three- and four-part harmony. A stream of *lauda* prints issued from the Roman Congregation of the Oratory set up by Neri and spread throughout Italy by his followers.³³

The Jesuits too appreciated the usefulness of music in spreading their message. After a somewhat shaky start, due to Ignatius Loyola's desire not to have his new congregation spend time singing the divine office, the Jesuits rowed in behind the Oratorians with a determination to use and control music, both liturgically and devotionally.³⁴ This was especially the case once they took on the running of seminaries and colleges, and the appointment of Palestrina to teach and direct the music in their Seminario Romano in 1566 may have been crucial here. One area which has recently received attention is the use of simple *lauda*-like formulae to teach Christian doctrine and to help memorize basic prayers.³⁵ In 1573 the Spanish Jesuit, Jacques Ledesma, published his *Modo per insegnar la dottrina christiana* in Rome,

³³ Giancarlo Rostirolla, Danilo Zardin, Oscar Mischiati, *La lauda spirituale tra Cinque e Seicento: Poesie e canti devozionale nell'Italia della Contrariforma* (Rome, 2001); Iain Fenlon, 'Music and Reform: the Savanarolan Legacy' in Iain Fenlon, *Music and Culture in Late Renaissance Italy* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 44-66; Eyolf Østrem and Nils Holger Petersen, *Medieval Ritual and Early Modern Music: The Devotional Practice of Lauda Singing in Late-Renaissance Italy* (Turnhout, 2008).

³⁴ T. Frank Kennedy, *Jesuits and Music: The European Tradition, 1547-1622*, PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1982.

³⁵ Rostirolla et al., *Lauda*; Østrem and Petersen, *Medieval*.

the preface of which stresses the importance placed on music at these gatherings, both to help memorize texts and to counteract the singing of rude songs:

[...] in particular the reason for singing, especially in places where to sing like this is a novelty, is because thus the pupils learn more easily and especially those, who do not know very well how to speak or how to read [...] since the memory is reinforced by singing and the teaching is made more sweet; also in places where rude songs are commonly sung, [it is better] to sing those holy and good songs [...] ³⁶

In 1576 a small book of *Lodi e Canzoni spirituali* was published as a companion to a revised *Dottrina christiana a modo di dialogo* published in the same year (both in Milan). It included a few very simple melodies harmonized in four parts which could be used for any number of *laude* and also for prayers such as the *Pater noster* and *Ave Maria*. From the statutes of the Roman Compagnia della Dottrina Christiana we know that the singing of *laude* was part of the weekly catechetical teaching of boys and girls and in the annual series of catechism competitions held on the Sunday after Epiphany ³⁷ The Jesuits encouraged singing in the colleges under their control, most commonly during meetings of their Marian congregations, based on lay confraternities, and as part of the spiritual dramas which were regularly mounted by their students. ³⁸

³⁶ *Modo per insegnar la dottrina christiana. Composto per il Dottore Ledesma, della Compagnia di Giesu* (Rome, 1573), f. 8v. Quoted in Rostirolla et al., *Lauda*, p. 298. Author's translation.

³⁷ *Consitutioni della Venerabile Archiconfraternita della Dottrina Christiana di Roma* (Rome, 1611), pp. 55ff.

³⁸ Franz Körndle, 'Between Stage and Divine Service: Jesuits and Theatrical Music', In John W. O'Malley et al., (eds.) *The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, pp. 479–97.

Meanwhile, the domestic market was supplied by collections of spiritual madrigals and canzonets. The former were modelled on the contemporary secular madrigal, a term which covered a wide variety of forms and functions. Aimed at those with some reading knowledge of music, such as cultivated amateurs from all classes, clerics and nuns, they were also performed in oratories and academies. From Giovanni del Bene's *Musica spirituale* of 1563 onwards, streams of spiritual madrigals issued from the pens of most major Italian composers, as well as others like Orlando di Lasso whose setting of Luigi Tansillo's *Lagime di San Pietro* cycle are a high point in the repertory. The *Vergine* cycle of poems by Petrarch was a particularly popular source, mined by Palestrina and Cipriano da Rore among others. Canzonets were simpler in style, often for just three voices and generally used block chords rather than the more varied textures of the madrigal. Boundaries were blurred, not least by a lively fashion for *contrafacta*: this involved writing spiritual words to existing secular madrigals (the new texts could be in Latin or in the vernacular). As in Protestant circles, only diehards felt that all music tainted by secular texts should be avoided; for most, the substitution of sacred words was sufficient ('verbum bonum' for 'vinum bonum' for example). Composers working in regions with Catholics and Protestants could see their music used by both, perhaps with some text changes so as not to offend confessional sensibilities..³⁹

While other countries had their equivalents it was in Spain and Spanish dominions that vernacular music most successfully penetrated both devotional and liturgical areas. The Spanish villancico enjoyed huge popularity on the Iberian

³⁹ Christian Leitmeier and Franz Körndle, 'Probleme der Identifikation katholischer und protestantischer Kirchenmusik im 16. Jahrhundert', in *Proceedings of the International Congress of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, Weimar 2004*, Detlef Altenburg et al. (eds.) (in press)

peninsula and equal success in Latin America where indigenous languages were also employed.⁴⁰ Popular as a secular form in the sixteenth century, after Trent it became largely confined to devotional texts and eventually replaced the motet as the most popular form of non-strictly liturgical music over wide areas of the world. Villancicos replaced the responsories in Christmas Matins and were also commissioned for Corpus Christi, Marian feasts and processions generally. They were accompanied by instruments and their largely triple-time rhythms, block chord declamation and refrain structure formed a bridge with popular culture, blurring boundaries between the secular and the religious, the liturgical and the devotional.

Singing by Catholic congregations did not have to be in the vernacular, particularly in Southern Europe where vernaculars were in any case close to Latin. Robert Kendrick has recently published a study of litanies which deals with the full range of settings, from high cultural ones for double-choir, through simple settings in *falsobordone* style for children published for the *Dottrina Cristiana* – to those in plainchant.⁴¹ Settings which alternated chant and polyphony could democratize the process, the inclusiveness of the chant heightened by the polyphonic sections. The *Salve Regina* and other Marian antiphons were similarly sung in plainchant and/or polyphony on Saturday evenings by members of lay sodalities and confraternities, as well as by members of religious orders.

Transmission Patterns and Commissioning of Music

⁴⁰ Tess Knighton and Alvaro Torrente (eds.), *Devotional Music in the Iberian World, 1450–1800* (Aldershot, 2007).

⁴¹ Robert Kendrick, “‘Honore a Dio, e allegrezza alli santi e consolazione alli putti’: the Musical Projection of Litanies in Sixteenth-century Italy’ in Simon Ditchfield (ed.), “Plasmare il suono” (Sanctorum 6), pp. 15-46.

While it would be simplistic to see musical developments in the Catholic world after Trent just in terms of centres and peripheries, there is no doubt that Italy provided the mainspring of new trends in music in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These moved rapidly outwards using the medium of print and long-established transmission routes, from Rome and Venice in particular, to other European Catholic centres. Within Italy the major music printing centre was Venice, not Rome or Milan (though these did have some music printing), and it was mainly Venice that fed the demand for music from countries North of the Alps until the printing industry began to decline in the middle of the seventeenth century. Much of this music was spread through anthologies which selected music in various styles by composers from across Italy and repackaged them in centres such as Nuremberg and Antwerp for Northern demand.

In Spain and Portugal, on the other hand, it was Rome which was the main supplier of music. Iain Fenlon and Tess Knighton have studied the contents of Spanish cathedral libraries and their inventories and found very little music by Venetian composers, but much by those based in Rome.⁴² There were various avenues for transmission, including the movement of Spanish composers like Tomás Luis de Victoria and Francisco Guerrero between Spain and Italy. Victoria was a key link between Rome and Spain, dedicating prints to Philip II and Philip III and issuing a retrospective publication of his polychoral music, mostly composed for Rome, by the Royal Typographer in Madrid, Ioannes Flandrus, in 1600. This and other publications, including his 1605 Requiem did much to provide model pieces in the

⁴² Iain Fenlon and Tess Knighton (eds.), *Early Music Printing and Publishing in the Iberian World* (Kassel, 2006).

Roman style of the 1570s and 1580s for subsequent Iberian and New World composers.

The Jesuits, for whom Victoria had worked in Rome's Collegio Germanico, were important for music transmission through their networks of colleges and universities. Jesuit and Dominican missionaries brought western art music to the Philippines, for instance.⁴³ The Portuguese Jesuit missionary Tomás Pereira found that his skills as organist and theorist, and his ability to write down Chinese melodies on one hearing, ingratiated him with the Chinese Emperor Kangxi. He spent thirty-six years at the Chinese court, writing four volumes on the theory of Chinese music and composing Chinese hymns, as well as acting as a diplomat and making converts.⁴⁴ Attempts to adapt liturgy and music to Chinese culture, however, came to an end with the Rites Controversy of the early eighteenth century. Poland was perhaps Rome's most successful musical colony in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The Vasa King Zygmunt III brought a succession of Roman musicians to Warsaw to take charge of music at the court, beginning with Luca Marenzio in 1595 and finishing with Marco Scacchi who left there in 1649. Roman-style polychoral music was much in demand and continued to be composed by Polish composers well into the seventeenth century.

A particular peripheral case was Britain, where confessional allegiances played an important role in the selection of texts to set to music. Valuable research on the composer William Byrd and on his music has led to a fuller understanding of the pressures he worked under as a practising Roman Catholic in an officially Protestant country. Due to the researches of Kerry McCarthy and others we know a lot about

⁴³ David Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford, 2010).

⁴⁴ 'Pereira, Tomás,' in *Grove*.

Byrd, including some of the books which formed part of his library.⁴⁵ While remaining a member of Queen Elizabeth I's Chapel Royal and retaining her protection, Byrd's faith and musical output were very much affected by the executions of Jesuit missionaries from the 1580s onwards and he began to set texts specifically for Catholic recusants, such as verses from the poem 'Why do I use my paper, ink and pen' written on the death of Edmund Campion. He and his older contemporary Thomas Tallis, also probably a Catholic, set texts of alienation such as the Lamentations of Jeremiah which provided coded messages of support for other Catholics. A fascinating musical exchange with Philippe de Monte, chapelmaster to the Emperor Rudolf II, drove home Byrd's unusual situation: Monte sent Byrd an eight-voice setting of the first half of the exile Psalm 136 ('By the waters of Babylon...') to which Byrd responded by sending his own setting of the second half ('How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?').

Who was commissioning sacred music? There is not always a straightforward answer since specific documentation, such as that found for the commissioning of religious paintings, is lacking for music. In almost all cases what was commissioned – whether by an individual patron or an ecclesiastical institution – was not a specific musical work, but the composer and the time he spent in writing it, plus payment for the musicians who performed it. What was required was something described in Italian as 'una bellissima musica', a musical effect which would impress those attending and reflect well on the institution or patron. The music's preservation was

⁴⁵Craig Monson, 'Byrd, the Catholics, and the Motet: The Hearing Reopened', in *Hearing the Motet: Essays on the Motet of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Dolores Pesce, pp. 348–74 (New York, 1997); Kerry McCarthy, *Liturgy and Contemplation in Byrd's Gradualia* (New York, 2007); Kerry McCarthy and John Harley, 'From the library of William Byrd', *Musical Times* 150 (2009), pp. 17–30.

not important – in that sense it can be seen as equivalent to the ephemeral *apparati* constructed to display the Sacrament, or draperies brought in for the day. Minutes of Rome’s religious institutions, for instance, do not record discussions of an aesthetic or religious nature about the music to be provided, simply that a particular musician should be employed, or deputing one or more officials to employ a suitable musician, making sure that no more than a given sum of money would be spent. After the celebration the *maestro* in charge presented his bill which might incidentally include a list of the musicians hired. Such rare lists are extremely valuable in helping music historians piece together the numbers of singers and instrumentalists involved, as well as tracking the movements of particular musicians. Rather than focussing on exceptional occasions and institutions, however, the Venice-based scholars David Bryant and Elena Quaranta have convincingly argued for the importance of getting as full a picture as possible of musical activity across the board in each city.⁴⁶

Among the institutions which have occupied music researchers in recent times, Italian female convents have had a particularly important place. Significant studies by Craig Monson (Bologna), Robert Kendrick (Milan) and Colleen Reardon (Siena) have dealt with the various ways music was used in convents, who composed and taught it (including some nuns) and the conflicts which occurred between nuns and male churchmen over the teaching and performance of music within convents.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ David Bryant and Elena Quaranta, ‘Per una nuova storiografia della musica sacra da chiesa in epoca pre-napoleonica’ in David Bryant and Elena Quaranta (eds.), *Produzione, Circolazione e Consumo* (Venice, 2006).

⁴⁷ Craig A. Monson, *Disembodied Voices: Music and Culture in an Early Modern Italian Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Robert Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and Their Music in Early Modern Milan* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996); Colleen Reardon, *Holy Concord within Sacred Walls: Nuns and Music in Siena, 1575-1700* (New York, 2002).

These authors' work has even inspired a novel whose background is a plausible description of a putative Ferrarese convent's reaction to the pressures placed on their music-making in the aftermath of the Council of Trent.⁴⁸

Lay Confraternities and Music

In seeking to understand the importance which institutions, even minor ones, gave to music in the early modern period, lay confraternities provide a useful testing ground. Jonathan Glixon's book on the Venetian *Scuole* gives an important overview for that city.⁴⁹ More detailed studies on the Florentine Arciconfraternita dell'Archangelo Raffaele have allowed John W. Hill and Konrad Eisenbichler to drill down into one confraternity's musico-dramatic activity.⁵⁰ My own work on Roman confraternities seeks to assess the totality of the musical experience over a complex and extensive network of interlocking devotional organisations.⁵¹ Musicians were required on a wide variety of occasions: major patronal feasts, the *Quarant'ore*, Lenten Oratory devotions, official visits by Cardinal Protectors and others and, above all, for processions. These were ubiquitous in Roman confraternal life, whether to show off girls to whom dowries were to be given, a prisoner released to mark a patronal feastday, to accompany the Blessed Sacrament at Corpus Christi or during

⁴⁸ Sarah Dunant, *Sacred Hearts* (London, 2009).

⁴⁹ Jonathan Glixon, *Honouring God and the City: Music at the Venetian Confraternities, 1260-1807* (Oxford, 2003).

⁵⁰ John W. Hill, 'Oratory Music in Florence, I: *Recitar Cantando*, 1583-1655', *Acta Musicologica*, 51 (1979), pp. 108-36; Konrad Eisenbichler, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785* (Toronto, 1998).

⁵¹ Noel O'Regan, *Institutional Patronage in Post-Tridentine Rome: Music at Santissima Trinità dei Pellegrini, 1550-1650* (London, 1995); idem., 'Music at Roman confraternities to 1650: the current state of research', *Analecta Musicologica*, xlv (2011), pp. 132-158.

the *Quarant'ore*, or to receive groups of visiting pilgrims and accompany them around the major basilicas. Music was essential for such processions: a silent procession would have seemed too powerful and would in any case have been overcome by the distractions of the crowded city. Musicians drew attention both to the procession and to particular items which it accompanied.

The most elaborate and expensive were the processions undertaken by many Roman confraternities between Maundy Thursday and Good Friday carrying ornate floats and statues into St. Peter's Basilica to view the relics of the Passion preserved there. These needed at least two choirs of singers, normally one smaller and one larger group, which did not come cheaply.⁵² Richer confraternities sought to have some papal singers in their train, as much for the prestige which they brought with them as for the quality of their voices; they were more expensive to hire. Other processions had at least one group of singers, plus musicians playing trumpets, shawms and sackbutts and groups of friars chanting litanies in plainchant. While some simpler singing took place during the actual procession, more complex motets would have been sung at stations along the way. Processional music, more than anything else, must have represented most people's sonic experience of confraternities, in Rome and elsewhere. Processions could also have political overtones, such as that organised by the Spanish Arcicofradía del Santísima Resurrección around the Piazza Navona before dawn on Easter Sunday Morning. There were up to eight groups of musicians on platforms around the Piazza, trumpeters leading the procession and further singers placed before the Blessed Sacrament which brought up the rear. This

⁵² Noel O'Regan, 'Processions and their music in post-Tridentine Rome', *Recercare* 4 (1992), pp. 45-80.

was as much about displaying Spanish hegemony and pomp as it was about religion, with music playing an important supporting role.⁵³

TABLE 1

Year	Musician(s) employed	<i>Scudi di moneta</i>
1544	Cantori di S. Maria Maggiore	2
1575	Giovanni Maria [Nanino] maestro di cappella (mdc) di S. Luigi	4.20
1582	Giovanni Battista [Jacomelli] del violino, cioe scudi 6 alli cantori de S. Maria Maggiore et scudi 4 alli cantori de Cappella [Pontificia]	10
1587	Asprilio [Pacelli] mdc in S. Lucia [...] due vespri + una messa [...] a tre cori	12
1591	Curtio [Mancini] mdc [...] musica fatta a tre cori alli doi vesperi et messa	20
1596	Horatio maestro di cappella [...] musica de S. Lucia et oratione delle 40 hore	25
1615	Fabio Costantino mdc [...] musica + organista	34
1623	Girolamo Frescobaldi mdc	42
1632	Roberto Valerio [...] musica di S. Lucia [...] vigilia e festa	28.76

Year	Musician(s) employed	<i>Scudi di moneta</i>
1544	To the singers of S. Maria Maggiore	2
1575	To Giovanni Maria [Nanino] master of the choir of S. Luigi dei Francesi	4.20

⁵³ Thomas J. Dandeleet, *Spanish Rome 1500-1700* (New Haven, 2001), pp. 110ff.

1582	To Giovanni Battista [Jacomelli] ‘del violino’ (of the violin) 6 scudi to the singers of S. Maria Maggiore and 4 scudi to the singers of the Cappella [Pontificia]	10
1587	To Asprilio [Pacelli] master of the choir in S. Lucia [...] for two Vespers and a Mass sung by three choirs	12
1591	To Curtio [Mancini] master of the choir [...] for music sung by three choirs at two Vespers and at Mass	20
1596	To Horatio master of the choir [...] for music [at the feast] of S. Lucia and the 40 hours devotion	25
1615	To Fabio Costantino master of the choir [...] for music and an organist	34
1623	To Girolamo Frescobaldi master of the choir	42
1632	To Roberto Valerio [...] for music [at the feast] of S. Lucia [...] on both the vigil and feast	28.76

Table 1 shows expenditure in Roman *scudi di moneta* on musicians hired in selected years for its major patronal feast of St. Lucy by the Roman Arciconfraternita del Gonfalone between 1544 and 1632, after which expenditure remained relatively constant.⁵⁴ The confraternity briefly set up a regular choir in the 1580s but was unable to support it. The increase in expenditure to 1623 far outstripped inflation over this period and can be directly linked to the growing popularity of polychoral music from the 1580s. Other confraternities show a similar pattern – competition played an important role – resulting in a buoyant freelance market for musicians in the city. Confraternities would only have spent hard-earned money on music if they saw a clear return in terms of prestige, of attracting influential and wealthy people, but also,

⁵⁴ Unpublished information from Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Arciconfraternita del Gonfalone.

it must not be forgotten, of helping create a beautiful feast-day for God and their own members, and for those who happened to enter the church. This music was potentially available to people of all classes and, in a city like Rome, almost every day of the year saw such music being performed in at least one church.

More than that, music had a significant role in forming the community life of confraternities, what Jennifer Fisk Rondeau has called ‘homosocial interaction’ between the members.⁵⁵ By the late sixteenth century this centred on a private oratory where members gathered on Sundays and feastdays to chant the Office of the Blessed Virgin or other offices and litanies and the *Salve Regina* on Saturdays. Plainchant was thus woven into the lives of confraternity members, also accompanying their processions and their flagellations. Many oratories had small groups of largely amateur singers capable of harmonizing the chant in *falsobordone*. A number of the larger oratories developed weekly devotional services during Lent and other periods, with music playing a crucial part. Starting with the singing of the penitential psalms, these services later included settings of dialogue scenes from the bible and ended with extended oratorios by the mid-seventeenth century. The most significant was the oratory of the Arciconfraternita del Santissimo Crocifisso in S. Marcello whose Lenten Friday devotions were crucial for the development of the oratorio genre, an importance shared with the Oratories of S. Gerolamo della Carità and the Chiesa Nuova, founded by Philip Neri.⁵⁶ Andrew dell’Antonio’s work on listening as spiritual practice is opening up an important new area of discourse here.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Jennifer Fisk Rondeau, ‘Homosociality and Civic (Dis)order in Late Medieval Italian Confraternities’ in Nicholas Terpstra (ed.), *The Politics of Ritual Kinship* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 30-47.

⁵⁶ ‘Oratorio’, in *Grove*.

⁵⁷ Andrew dell’Antonio, *Listening as Spiritual Practice in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, 2011).

For Counter-reformation Catholics music took on a new and more widespread importance. Paradoxically, sacred polyphonic music bounced back from attempts to silence, or at least control, it and entered a period in which its usefulness was not just recognised but positively exploited. With a newly-developed power of rhetorical expression of the text, an ability to conjure up the glories of heaven as well as mysteries on earth, its capacity to aggrandize and support various hierarchical systems as well as to build communities and reflect confessional identity, its effectiveness in education and memory, music came to be relied on more and more across the Catholic world. As a result the post-Tridentine period was one of the most successful in the history of sacred music.

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