***“Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth”:
Music and Sound in the Ministries of
Early Modern Jesuits***

Guest-editor:

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Introduction

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The studies collected in this special issue of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies* aim to explore how music and sound(s) worked as tools for the mission and ministry of early modern Jesuits. In spite of well-worn clichés, the Jesuits made abundant use of music and sounds (inside and outside the liturgy) for purposes that covered the full spectrum of the classical threefold motto: *docere – delectare – movere* (to teach, to delight, and to move). Music and sound helped the Jesuits convey their religious message, interact with different cultures and social strata, and establish collective identities. They were tools to attract and entertain people, to reshape habits, and even to redefine perceptions of time and space.

Whereas musicology, as a discipline, has been relatively slow to acknowledge the potential of this field of study (probably because of a scholarly agenda that has for decades been preoccupied more with facts of stylistic innovation rather than with the consideration of the cultural and social use of music), the time is now ripe for a re-assessment of the relationship between Jesuits and music, and for a fuller understanding of how this relationship worked in different contexts. This re-assessment needs to be done in the interdisciplinary arena of Jesuit studies. As is well known, some distinctive characteristics of the Society are particularly apt to encourage investigations that are naturally interdisciplinary, and virtually unbound by chronological and geographical limits. First of all, the fact that the Society, during its history, has produced an immense wealth of documentation and, most crucially, has often been able to order it, preserve it, and make it available to the public (in printed form or in well-organized archives). Second, the ramification of the Society's action across all layers of social, cultural, political, and religious life. Third, the global dimension that the Jesuit enterprise assumed since its very beginnings (emblemized by the figure of Francis Xavier). Fourth, the remarkably intense networking among the different centers and agents of this multibranched

and global enterprise. The list could continue, and surely it helps explain why Jesuit studies are an eminently appropriate platform for interchange among the disciplines, as showed for instance by such multi- and interdisciplinary conferences as those hosted by Boston College in 1997 and 2002 (*The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773, I and II*) and 2015 (*Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness*).¹ It is easy to talk about interdisciplinarity: in Jesuit studies we see it happen.

In line with the wide-ranging character of Jesuit studies, the present collection of essays gathers together a diverse team of musicologists from different career stages and backgrounds, and from six countries in three continents. Their works cannot represent anything but a part of the varied research perspectives currently adopted by our colleagues in musicology and related fields, and surely this is but a small (if hopefully helpful) contribution towards the reassessment and fuller understanding I discussed above. Still, what readers will find in the following pages aims at exemplifying a variety of approaches and providing stimuli for both disciplinary and interdisciplinary reflection. Technical discussions and esoteric terminology are deliberately avoided, again in a genuine spirit of interdisciplinarity.

We start with a historiographical *hors d'oeuvre* by T. Frank Kennedy, S.J., then we have two contributions on European settings (by Alexander J. Fisher and Céline Drèze), focused on the “popular” use of vernacular and Latin songs. The following article, by Ignazio Macchiarella and Roberto Milleddu, takes up a similar subject, but in a different area and from the distinct perspective of ethnomusicology. The two last contributions, from Jutta Toelle and Makoto Harris Takao, respectively, further enlarge the horizon to include Latin America and the Far East. Well-established musicological research strategies are combined here with the tools of topical new fields such as sound studies, urban studies, interconfessional studies, and historical ethnomusicology. The essays investigate many different activities, locales, and cultural objects, highlighting the dynamic nature of Jesuit networks in the *longue durée* perspective of the early modern era (here primarily 1550–1750): from the fostering of devotional songs in Marian sodalities to the implementation of a Jesuit soundscape in extra-European missions; from the Habsburg Empire to

1 See the proceedings in John W. O'Malley et al., eds., *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences and the Arts, 1540–1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); John W. O'Malley et al., eds., *The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006); Robert A. Maryks, ed., *Exploring Jesuit Distinctiveness: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ways of Proceeding within the Society of Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

Sicily; and from Antonio Ruiz de Montoya's *Conquista espiritual* of 1639 to the Italian oratorio *La conversione alla santa fede del re di Bungo giapponese* (1703). The approach is local and global, and in a certain sense centrifugal: Jesuit institutions in Rome will not be covered here, as they are probably those best served by previous scholarship. Surely, the students of the main educational institutions of the Society experienced, during their stay in Rome, a variety of uses of music and sound. As Fisher remarks in his article, once they returned to their homeland, and became "churchmen, administrators, teachers, and indeed musicians," they contributed in a substantial way to disseminate that sonic culture across Europe and the world. A closer comparison, in this respect, between center and periphery will, however, remain a task for future research. The six essays in this issue are complemented by a special treat that joins sounds of the past and of the present: an interview by Emanuele Colombo with contemporary composer Ennio Morricone (b.1928). In it, Morricone discusses the Jesuit connections of two of his works: the acclaimed soundtrack for a movie on the eighteenth-century missions among the Guaraní (*The Mission*, 1986) and the recent *Missa Papae Francisci*, composed in 2014 on the occasion of the bicentenary of the Society's restoration and dedicated to the first Jesuit pope.

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T. Frank Kennedy, whose combined activity as scholar, promoter of Jesuit studies, and producer of Jesuit operas has been pioneering, grounds his historiographical excursus on historian John W. O'Malley's interpretation of Jesuit historiography as subdivided in three main periods: 1540 to c.1900; 1900 to c.1990; and from the 1990s forward. By doing so, Kennedy offers musicologist readers an insight into the complex interaction between Jesuit history and Jesuit historiography, while other scholars will learn, in the second part of his article, how recent musicological work reflects some of these broader trends and in turn contributes to this ongoing discussion. The following article, by Alex Fisher, exemplifies, with characteristic effortlessness, the vast range of institutions, documents, and practices we have to consider if we want to understand the Jesuits' approach to music. A key factor for the area studied by Fisher, the Holy Roman Empire and its immediate surroundings, is its multi-confessionality. Confessional difference prompted Jesuits to have a stronger "multimedia" presence on the public scene, both for the sake of visibility and in order to emulate and counter the Protestant use of sonic media, notably vernacular songs. In turn, this led them to question the Society's initial restraint regarding music, primarily rooted, as is well known since the seminal

study by Culley and McNaspy,² in the priority Ignatius gave to missionary work at the expense of any other aspect of religious life. Fisher describes the “shift in Jesuit attitudes toward musical practice” that took place, not without vehement altercations between center and outposts, from 1580 to 1650. Rome insisted, but the abundance of liturgical music recorded in Vienna, Munich, and Prague shows, even more explicitly than the extant written controversies, how local Jesuits considered music a strategic asset in order to attract people to liturgical services. As a famous episode of censorship attests,³ the Jesuits remained alert to the potential dangers of musical practice (as did most other early modern church authorities); at the same time, however, they were quick to absorb stylistic novelties, both in terms of concerted liturgical music and of operatic style for theatrical productions. Progressively, the “edificatory potential” of church music was taken for granted. Besides liturgical music, Fisher discusses devotional songs, which were largely used both for teaching the catechism (and here, interestingly, we see documented for German-speaking lands what increasingly appears to be a global phenomenon)⁴ and generally “to encourage orthodox belief and pious practice.” Finally, we see how music and sounds were used in the various forms of spectacles and public events sponsored by the Jesuits, from processions to dramas to canonization festivals.

Among the different institutions Fisher discusses, Marian sodalities, with their penchant for litanies sung in processions, appear to have had a special role, so far hardly acknowledged by modern scholarship. This provides the link to the next article, by Céline Drèze, which concentrates precisely on these sodalities (also known as Marian congregations) in the Gallo- and Flandro-Belgian provinces, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Drèze draws from a rich archival material in order to elucidate the musical aspects of the sodalities’ life. The two main types of events provided with music were the yearly Marian feasts and the Lenten meetings for meditation. Two elements are especially noteworthy. First, the fact that both professional performances and congregational singing were part of the sodalities’ staple diet. As to the professional performances, they required the sodalities to put together the necessary “financial, human, and material resources”: this in turn involved negotiations

2 Thomas D. Culley and Clement G. McNaspy, “Music and the Early Jesuits (1540–1565),” *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 40 (1971): 213–45.

3 See David Crook, “A Sixteenth-Century Catalog of Prohibited Music,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62, no. 1 (2009): 1–78.

4 See Daniele V. Filippi, “A Sound Doctrine: Early Modern Jesuits and the Singing of the Catechism,” *Early Music History* 34 (2015): 1–43.

between the members of the sodality, the Jesuit institution that hosted it, and the musical establishment of the city, thus fostering (and challenging) the local anchoring of the enterprise. As to the congregational singing, this adds to the growing evidence for communal singing as a substantial ingredient in the soundscape of early modern Catholicism, in spite of its traditionally almost-exclusive association with Protestant environments. The second element is that, in investigating the role of the litanies in the ritual life of the sodalities, Drèze uncovers a series of kindred late sixteenth-century music publications with litanic settings across Europe, from Antwerp to Paris to Munich. Similarly, then, to the use of the sung catechism, we see here a global method and local adaptations, and we come to better understand the nature of a network that linked both center with periphery and different points along the periphery to one another.

With the article by Macchiarella and Milleddu we have a complete change of setting, from central and western Europe to the Mediterranean islands of Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily. There is also a change of perspective: from that of historical musicology to that of historical *ethno*-musicology. But there is nonetheless a continuity in that the focus remains essentially on confraternities—those intermediate bodies which in the early modern era were crucial places of appropriation and transformation of external stimuli, places of negotiation between local and global identities. Macchiarella and Milleddu innovatively examine the sonic and cultural impact of Jesuit missions in the “Mediterranean Indies” from an ethnomusicological point of view: their case studies are based on the authors’ fieldwork, successively compared and reframed with the results of archival research, as if tracing back practices of the present (or the recent past) to their early modern origins. From colorful popular rituals in 1980s Palermo, featuring the blind musicians of a congregation originally sponsored by the Jesuits, to the progressive transformation, in Corsica and Sardinia, of missionary songs into popular-music hits overloaded with localistic issues (when not with insular nationalism *tout court*), the complexity of their scenarios challenges any naïve hermeneutics of simple continuity. Contemporary orally transmitted practices are not unaltered reproductions of past performances, as tradition and re-invention always go hand in hand. Still, the connections between the Jesuit missionary work of the early modern era and confraternal musical practices lasting to the present day in southern Europe are undeniable. A comparative study can not only help us measure the impact of early modern missionary strategies (as well as the resistance they provoked), but also contemplate broader questions: how do top-down and bottom-up cultural vectors interact and what shapes local identities and, ultimately, “popular” traditions?

With this we finally leave Europe and set sail for the Indies, western and eastern. In her article, Jutta Toelle considers the export of European sounds to Latin America, focusing on bells as the most effective element in the missionaries' "sonic artillery." Bells, on the one hand, have formed the subject of a good number of scholarly reflections, notably after Alain Corbin's seminal book, *Les cloches de la terre* of 1994.⁵ Toelle provides enticing further bibliography on the subject, which will surely stimulate renewed interest among interdisciplinary readers. On the other hand, the Latin American scenario is one of the most frequently studied in the literature regarding Jesuits and music. Here, however, the two topics are combined for what is probably the first time. According to Toelle, bells and bell towers were among the first Christian *insignia* installed in any new mission settlement. In the Jesuit *reducciones*, they helped missionaries establish a "new, common and Christian soundscape," thus exemplifying how sounds can form a sense of space, regulate social life, and give an audibility to time and order. Imported at first, then cast *in situ*, bells were tools for communicating, but they also conveyed symbolic values, were accorded apotropaic powers, and helped make foreign places sound more familiar to European missionaries. Acoustic hegemony went hand in hand with the spiritual conquest. The martyrdom of Roque González de Santa Cruz in 1628 dramatically epitomizes the centrality of bells in the missionary enterprise: St. Roque was killed by an indigenous man in the very moment when he was tying the clapper to a new bell, as if to manifest the identification of the Jesuit missionary as a "living bell" that propagates the sound of God in pagan countries.

Whereas Toelle's imaginative account draws from documents and texts directly connected with the Latin American missions, the article by Makoto Harris Takao on the sixteenth-century Jesuit mission in Japan takes a different path. Here, the main text is not a historical document, but rather a poetic work, written by an early eighteenth-century Italian Jesuit. Heir to a well-established tradition of "Japanese plays" (dating back at least to the momentous beatification of Paul Miki and his companions by Pope Urban VIII in 1627), *La conversione alla santa fede del re di Bungo giapponese* (The conversion of the Japanese king of Bungo to the holy faith) of 1703 is unique in its adopting the Japanese matter for an oratorio (a sort of non-staged sacred opera, featuring soli, choir, and orchestra). The score by Pietro Paolo Laurenti is unfortunately lost, but the libretto written by the Jesuit Giovanni Tedeschi under the name of "Verbenio" allows for a reflection on how the stories of Japanese Christianity were used, in Takao's words, "as a mirror through which Catholic Europe could see

5 English translation, Alain Corbin, *Village Bells: The Culture of the Senses in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

an exemplary reflection of its own faith” and of its doctrinal confrontations. Many diverse elements come into play, and the libretto is a curious combination of exoticism and unfeigned love for theological disputation. The representation of Buddhism is clearly subordinate to the apologetic aim, and the Eurocentric bias is hardly surprising. While the libretto is surely a fascinating testimony to the persistent interest in Japan, a country that had been a central concern for the Society for the previous two centuries, what is probably most thought-provoking is the dramatization of materials found in the histories of the Society (here Verbenio-Tedeschi explicitly draws from Daniello Bartoli’s *Asia*). The libretto thus provides a further example of the maze of intertextual references and of the complex cross-fertilization phenomena that characterize early modern Jesuit literature in its many different ramifications; needless to say, such a multi-layered complexity constantly challenges the interpretive skills of any modern reader.

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The first part of the title for this special issue of the journal is a quote from Psalm 18 [19], 4: “In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum.” St. Paul cites this verse in Romans 10, 18, immediately after the famous formula “fides ex auditu” (verse 17): faith comes by hearing. The intellectual and visual aspects of the Jesuit enterprise have until recently all but monopolized scholarly attention. Still, as the case studies gathered here show, its sonic character was not less relevant, precisely because of the unique potential of music and sonic media for the transmission of religious messages. Sound granted a privileged access to the people’s corporeity, memory, and emotion, and was a key factor in creating experiences which were genuinely collective and at the same time intimately individual. Thus, early modern Jesuits used their voice not only to pray, to preach, and to give classes, but also to teach the catechism by chanting simple *formulae* in any language they could master (from Breton to Tamil, from Tupí to Huron); to intone processional songs along the streets of Vienna or the pathways of Sardinia; to awaken the villagers of Brazil or the citizens of Naples in the middle of the night with frightening *svagliarini*. They promoted liturgical music, devotional songs, processional hymns, and semi-operatic performances. They wrote, paraphrased, translated, commissioned, collected, copied, printed, and disseminated songs. They educated or hired professional musicians and encouraged congregational singing. They brought songs, scores, and music instruments with them to the imperial courts of Ethiopia and China, to the Philippines, to the Andes, and to the banks of the Saint Lawrence River.

We have only begun to appreciate the unity and variety of these practices, and the richness of the musical encounters they generated⁶: future research will surely reveal more. Each of the articles included here bears (more or less explicitly) indications for further research in its particular field and on neighboring topics. More generally, among the future research tasks there is, in my opinion, the implementation of comparative surveys, in order to re-frame the myriad case studies disseminated in an always growing and almost unmanageable bibliography⁷: comparisons between Europe and other regions, between the different missions themselves, and between the Jesuits and other orders, notably the Franciscans. Issues of local resistance, too, and the silencing of indigenous music, will have to be seriously and equanimously dealt with. Moreover, it will be necessary to integrate the study of “high” musical artifacts (such as spiritual madrigals, motets, and cantatas) commissioned or composed by Jesuits with the study of a broader range of musical and sonic practices, such as those privileged in this collection of studies—with all the due distinctions in terms of aesthetic significance, but also being aware of the continuity and interchange between different cultural levels.

Early modern Jesuits, especially those from well-to-do families, participated in a Christian-humanistic education that was naturally conducive to a well-regulated enjoyment of music. The German Jesuit Jeremias Drexel (1581–1638) wrote: “Inter haec inferiora nil, putem, similius est, magisque cognatum caelo, quam musica” (Nothing, among earthly things, is more similar, I would say, and more kindred to heaven than music).⁸ Practically wherever they went, moreover, the missionaries of the Society noticed an enthusiasm for music and singing among the natives. A missionary wrote from Brazil in 1552, “Parézeme, según ellos son amigos de cossas músicas, que nosotros tañendo y cantando entre ellos los ganaríamos” (It seems to me, that, since they [the natives] are so fond of all things musical, if we played and sang among them we would win them over).⁹ It is not surprising, then, that in its multifarious ministries the Society of Jesus produced such variety of songs, sonic practices, and “things musical.” Truly, “their sound hath gone forth into all the earth.”

6 A rewarding and eminently readable introduction to the surprising globalization of music engendered by early modern missionaries and travellers is Jean-Christophe Frisch, *Le baroque nomade* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2014).

7 It is to be hoped that such innovative tools as the New Sommervogel Online (<http://bibliographies.brillonline.com/browse/nso>) will help scholars navigate more confidently this *mare magnum*.

8 Jeremias Drexel, *Caelum beatorum civitas* (Antwerp: J. Cnobbaert, 1635), book 2, ch. 5 (“Quintum in caelo gaudium, voluptas aurium”), § 1.

9 Serafim Leite, ed., *Monumenta Brasiliae: 1. 1538–1553* (Rome: Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 1956), 383.