Music and the Jesuit “Way of Proceeding” in the German Counter-Reformation

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Abstract

The present essay considers the Jesuits’ relationship to musical culture along the confessional frontier of Germany, where the immediate presence of religious difference led to an explicit marking of space and boundaries, not least through visual and aural media. While Jesuit reservations concerning the appropriate use of music were always present, individual churches and colleges soon developed ambitious musical practices aimed at embellishing the Catholic liturgy and stimulating religious affect. The present essay traces a gradual shift in Jesuit attitudes toward music between roughly 1580 and 1650, showing steady growth in the Society’s use of musical resources in churches, colleges, hymnbooks, processions, and theatrical productions in the confessionally-contested German orbit.

Keywords


The origins of the well-worn phrase “jesuita non cantat” (a Jesuit does not sing) remain obscure, but it is clear that recent decades have seen a new upsurge of scholarly interest in Jesuit music.1 It is especially instructive to

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1 For example, Thomas D. Culley, S.J., 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-St. Louis: Jesuit Historical Institute-St. Louis University, 1970); T. Frank Kennedy, S.J., “Jesuits and Music: The European Tradition, 1547–1622” (PhD diss., University
consider the Jesuits’ relationship to music close to the confessional frontier of the Holy Roman Empire, where the immediate presence of confessional difference led to an explicit marking of space and boundaries, not least through visual and aural media. It was in this region, perhaps, that traditional Jesuit objections to the use of music were most quickly challenged, and the immediate example of Lutheran polyphony and hymnody—note Adam Contzen’s (1571–1635) remark in his *Politicorum libri decem* (1621) that “the hymns of Luther have killed more souls than his writings or declamations”—likely encouraged Jesuits in the German theatre to reach for music more readily than elsewhere.2

Despite continued official admonitions against the (over)use of music, evidence begins to mount in the 1580s for a more pragmatic and liberal use of music in various Jesuit residences north of the Alps. Drawing on recent research in the German orbit, this essay traces a general shift in Jesuit attitudes toward musical practice between roughly 1580 and 1650 in the contested territories of the empire. Several elements of this shift will be considered: the gradual expansion of musical resources in Jesuit churches, colleges and congregations; Jesuit initiatives in the production of hymnbooks that offered orthodox alternatives to Protestant hymns and psalms in the vernacular; and the Jesuits’ public projection of Catholic ideology by means of elaborate processions and theatrical productions involving both visual and aural media. Despite persistent reservations about the propriety of music among some Jesuits, these phenomena suggest a growing role for music as a resource for sensuous affect and confessional polemic in the contested geography of the Holy Roman Empire.

**Music in Jesuit Churches, Colleges, and Congregations**

On balance, the earliest Jesuits took a negative position with respect to music, as it fit uneasily within a practice heavily oriented toward missionary work and away from the cycle of fixed monastic observances. As is well known, the original Constitutions of the Society forbade its priests from singing the office hours or owning musical instruments, but one must be skeptical about a

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blanket condemnation of music on the part of the Jesuits, some of whom—including Ignatius himself—expressed flexibility in their views and were more concerned to eliminate abuses than to ban music outright. Moreover, the injunction against music-making applied to Jesuit priests themselves, and not necessarily to the students and seminarians in their colleges, who would routinely sing in divine services and learn chant, at least, in the course of their studies. North of the Alps, we find that by the 1550s numerous Jesuit establishments were already cultivating church music, creating “new facts on the ground” that persisted in an uneasy tension with official parameters and pronouncements.

The situation at the Jesuit colleges in Vienna and Prague, founded in 1552 and 1556, respectively, is instructive. In both places church music was introduced almost immediately; in Prague, at least, it was the “music-loving” Bohemians themselves that pressured the rector to institute a sung Mass. Introduced without first securing permission, these novelties quickly brought down censure from Rome, but the interference of Pope Paul IV (r. 1555–59) in 1558 and 1559—who insisted during his brief tenure that the Jesuits should sing the offices like monastic orders—seems to have given both colleges the necessary space to expand music in their churches. At Vienna a sung Mass and vespers were introduced at Christmas 1558, drawing an enthusiastic commentary from Theodore Canisius (1532–1606) who judged it “fitting for attracting the people here to divine services.” By 1564, Jerónimo Nadal (1507–80) could write from Vienna that

much good is done (with the divine grace) by the offices in our Church. On Sundays and feast days, Mass and Vespers are sung with organ, according to the custom of the land, since a great part of the brothers

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4 See Culley and McNaspy, “Music and the Early Jesuits,” 216, and Duhr, Geschichte der Jesuiten, 1:501–2, 2/1:647–49, who cites the requirement of seminarians to learn Gregorian chant as a part of their training.


usually know how to sing very well. On Saturday evenings they also sing the *Salve* with other hymns and prayers of Our Lady; and on Sundays after Vespers, the litanies—all with the organ [...]. This is very suitable against the heretics; they are upset by this, and the Catholics, on the contrary, receive great consolation.7

Two years later Nadal drafted a set of detailed instructions governing music in the divine service at Vienna, which allow regularly for a polyphonic Mass ordinary, vespers psalms in *falsobordone* and a polyphonic *Magnificat*, and even motets during the course of both services; the amount of polyphony, moreover, might be expanded for major feast days with the permission of the rector or provincial.8 As for Prague, the rector Paul Hoffaeus (c.1530–1608) reported in early 1559 his great satisfaction with sung services there, which not only pleased the ears of the visiting Duke Ernst of Bavaria (1500–60), but also were of “great edification” for the people more generally.9

The Jesuit generals and their immediate subordinates sought to restrict and regulate the further expansion of music in the northern colleges, but the earlier momentum could not easily be reversed. Concerns mounted that an overemphasis on music could distract Jesuits from their mission and hinder the laity from proper devotion in the churches. Nicolas de Lanoy (1548–81), the former rector at Vienna and now visitor to Austria, expressed such reservations in 1577, and General Everard Mercurian (1514–80) came out especially against the Austrians’ use of wind and organ music the following year.10 The evident musical enthusiasm of the Molsheim Jesuits drew fire from the Rhenish visitor Oliver Manare (1523–1614) in 1585, who complained that “too many Jesuit priests rely too heavily on music,” which, contrary the Society’s statutes, was threatening to become obligatory.11 In the same year, he ordered the abolishment of music

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9 See Kennedy, “Jesuits and Music: Reconsidering the Early Years,” 80–81; and Culley and McNaspy, “Music and the Early Jesuits,” 227. Polyphonic processional litanies were also performed at Prague in 1561 to pray for the success of the Council of Trent; see Culley and McNaspy, “Music and the Early Jesuits,” 228–29.
teaching, the participation of Jesuits in choir, and the use of organs. Manare’s successor Jakob Ernfelder (1544–1601) boasted to General Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615) in 1589 that he had abolished singing in Würzburg and Koblenz, and planned to do so in Cologne as well (at the same time, however, he conceded singing in places like Fulda, where it served edifying ends, and he soon after requested that sung Masses be allowed in his province, for other provinces had more liberal policies than the Rhenish!). In the Upper German Province, Visitor Paul Hoffaeus strictly forbade the use of instruments in home or the church in 1596, excepting only a single (wind) instrument to support the bass, as well as a regal or portative organ. All cantus madrigales, as he called them, were to be removed from the colleges and churches, and he went on to ask Acquaviva to ban the use of elaborate music in the Mass, which was increasingly characterized by madrigalesque compositions, multiple choirs, and a range of hired instrumentalists and singers.

Organs, too, continued to be a matter of debate. Both Mercurian and Acquaviva recommended the gradual removal of organs in the Austrian province, but the Provincial Congregation of 1587 objected that the abolition of organ music had led to much bitterness among the populace, and even led some to equate Jesuit practices with the austerity of the Calvinists. Continued local opposition to the ban finally led Acquaviva in 1600 to relax the rule against organs, as long as their use was moderated. In the Upper German Province, the visitor Manare insisted in 1581 that organs should only be permitted in those places where they existed already, in Munich, Dillingen, and Ingolstadt.

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13 Duhr, Geschichte der Jesuiten, 1:444–45; see also Overath, “Die Kirchenmusikpflege der Kölner Jesuiten,” 188–89. A positive judgment of polyphony in this region may also be seen in the play Dialogus musicae performed at Fulda in 1583, containing a debate on the merits of music between six cuckoos (representing monophonic plainchant) and six nightingales (representing polyphony): while a donkey appears to take the position of the Council of Trent in embracing chant alone, the so-called Iudex Spirensis, the judge of the imperial court at Speyer, celebrates the song of the nightingales instead. See Franz Körndl, “Between Stage and Divine Service: Jesuits and Theatrical Music,” in The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773, ed. John W. O’Malley et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 479–97, here 486–89.
16 Ibid., 1:445.
At the beginning of the new century, the Jesuit colleges at Regensburg and Luzern convinced their provincial Gregor Rosenbusch (Rosephius, 1538–1623) (and, in turn, Acquaviva) to allow them to retain their organs, but these instruments were not to be introduced elsewhere. Despite this latter stricture, the Landshut Jesuits succeeded in installing an organ in their new church by 1642, drawing impassioned complaints from local clergy who feared that the Jesuit music would draw ever more laity away from their parish churches. Church music thus became yet another reason for long-standing suspicions on the part of the traditional parish clergy and cathedral chapters, who rightly feared that the Jesuits would poach their children and congregations.

Official objections aside, there is considerable positive evidence for the spread of church music among the German Jesuits. To cite only a few examples, a document from the Jesuit curia archive in Rome (c.1586) urged general caution with respect to church music in the Rhenish province, but also described the routine inclusion of motets as substitutes for various items of the Mass proper and to accompany the elevation. Vespers, too, was decorated with a combination of chant, falsobordone, and polyphony, with motets performed at the end of the office. In Cologne, one of the largest colleges of the province, there is considerable evidence for routine church music as well as more sumptuous ensembles for major feasts and occasions, particularly after the completion of the new church of St. Mariae Himmelfahrt in 1629. To the south in Munich, the Society’s musical life was greatly enriched by the Bavarian Wittelsbachs, who donated their massive new church of St. Michael (1597) and encouraged musical collaborations with the court chapel; it is little surprise that the music of Orlando di Lasso (1530/32–94) is well represented in the church’s extant choirbooks. The boys of the Jesuits’ so-called Domus Gregoriana, founded for poor students by Duke Albrecht V (r.1550–79) in 1574,
increasingly asserted themselves as a musical ensemble during this period, and increasingly enjoyed systematic instruction in both singing and musical instruments.\textsuperscript{23} Between roughly 1591 and 1616 the Munich Jesuits enjoyed a dedicated music director in the Silesian native Georg Victorinus (d.1632), who compiled and published three grand anthologies of sacred music in a highly modern cast: the litanies of the \textit{Thesaurus litaniarum} (Munich, 1596), and the Latin-texted sacred concertos of the \textit{Siren coelestis} (Munich, 1616) and \textit{Philomela coelestis} (Munich, 1624).\textsuperscript{24} Whether drawn from these anthologies or not, sacred concertos were heard at Munich by 1633, the year that the congregation of the Upper German province issued a memorandum explicitly allowing their use as long as they were suited to devotion and shunned “vain” or “secular” features.\textsuperscript{25}

The introduction of concerted music with thoroughbass and greater vocal virtuosity did indeed lead to concerns that overtly secular, theatrical styles would overwhelm the traditional gravity of liturgical music.\textsuperscript{26} Jeremias Drexel (1581–1638), the long-serving court preacher to Elector Maximilian I of Bavaria (r.1597–1651), wrote in his \textit{Rhetorica caelestis} (1636) that “now a new species of singing is dominant in the temples, but it is showy, curtailed, dance-like, very little religious, indeed, but more suitable for theatre or dance than for the temple.” Drexel rejected the moderns, urging his readers to “let at least something of the old religiosity of sacred music be revived [...]. Let the music of the temples be of the kind which does not confuse prayer but arouses and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[25] Bayhsta, Jesuitica 85, 11\textsuperscript{a}, also discussed in Duhr, \textit{Geschichte der Jesuiten}, 2/2:53, and in Fisher, \textit{Music, Piety, and Propaganda}, 49–50. Note that the foreword to the 1669 printed edition of the Jesuit drama \textit{Philothea} (discussed below) also allowed its concerted vocal numbers to be detached and performed for the Gradual, Offertory, and Elevation.
\item[26] The congregation of the Upper Rhenish province, for example, issued directives in 1628, 1633, and 1636 urging moderation and sobriety in church music; see Duhr, \textit{Geschichte der Jesuiten}, 2/2:53–54.
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kindles it.”27 Georg Wittweiler (1556–1633), the author of the *Catholisch Haußbuch* (Catholic house-book, 1631), echoed these concerns with “secular, frivolous melodies” and warns against those “who will never stop with their pipes and trombones.” At the same time, however, he insisted that sacred music, in principle, was to God’s glory, moved souls to devotion, helped to pass the time in pious thoughts, and was a proclamation of true faith. “One abides in the divine service far more easily and readily,” he writes, “when lovely song is heard, as may be seen in many other places. Drivers and travellers pass their time through the fields with song, and even for children in the cradle, singing makes the time pass more pleasantly.”28 For Wittweiler and his contemporaries, the presence and edificatory potential of church music in the German provinces was taken as a given, even if it still required discipline and regulation.

Paraliturgical, devotional, and recreational contexts in the Jesuit colleges offered broader contexts for musical performance. The litany, with its textual stress on the intercession offered by the Virgin Mary and the saints, became a locus of devotion in the Catholic world and especially among the Jesuits, who increasingly offered musical litanies on Saturdays or Sundays, sometimes in conjunction with traditional *Salve* services honoring the Virgin Mary.29 The Jesuits also featured Lenten devotions involving musical performances of the psalm *Miserere mei Deus*, as well as so-called “cradle devotions” (*Krippenandachten*) at Christmastime, when a constructed cradle with the Christchild would be rocked to the sound of music.30 Recreational music within the colleges was permitted, but subjected to increasing scrutiny. In 1575, Mercurian permitted non-heretical, ecclesiastical music, but “compositions with disgraceful texts or music, or a manner of singing in which obscene or vain


29 Culley and McNaspy, “Music and the Early Jesuits,” 231–32, and Kennedy, “Jesuit Colleges and Chapels,” 208–9. At Munich polyphonic litanies for the Virgin, such as those transmitted in Victorinus’s *Thesaurus litaniarum* (1596), were regularly performed on Saturdays following Vespers and on other occasions; see Fisher, *Music, Piety, and Propaganda*, 44–47.

30 For the example of Munich, where students sang litanies of the Name of Jesus before the cradle, see Felix Joseph Lipowsky, *Geschichte der Jesuiten in Baiern* (Munich: Jakob Giel, 1816), 2:85; and Putz, *Die Domus Gregoriana*, 140–41.
things are thought to exist” were to be destroyed. Superiors, furthermore, were required to examine any questionable materials and prohibit them as necessary. Ferdinand Alber (1548–1617) expanded on these guidelines around 1591, when he helped to draft an extensive catalogue of music—presumably from the library of the Munich college—divided into several categories: approved and prohibited music by Orlando di Lasso, the famed Bavarian chapelmaster; and approved and prohibited music by other composers. Remarkable here is not simply the prominent role played by Lasso’s music, but also the fact that musical style, and not text alone, could potentially be of concern. Works like Lasso’s *Fertur in conviviis*, with its plain mockery of liturgical chant, and his *Super flumina Babylonis*, with its humorous “patter” of individual syllables, fell under the same suspicion as “masses composed on vain texts,” for example.

Musical connections between the Jesuit colleges and their surrounding communities were forged by the Marian congregations, associations for students and laypersons that resembled traditional confraternities to a degree, but fervently projected the aims of Counter-Reformation. Conspicuous from an early stage were their Lenten exercises, the musical centerpiece of which was the penitential psalm *Miserere mei Deus*. In 1580, Munich sodalists hosted a striking public devotion featuring the performance of Orlando di Lasso’s *Penitential Psalms*, music that previously had been reserved for the enjoyment of Duke Albrecht alone. By 1584, Jesuit students and Marian

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34 See Lipowsky, *Geschichte der Jesuiten in Baiern*, 1199, whose source for this information is unclear. See David Crook’s discussion in “A Performance of Lasso’s Penitential Psalms on Maundy Thursday 1580,” in *Orlando di Lasso in der Musikgeschichte*, ed. Bernhold Schmid (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 69–77. This ritual was anticipated by earlier performances of the *Miserere* during Lent at the Munich college, although the involvement of the Marian congregation is unclear.
sodalists at Ingolstadt appeared in front of the sepulchre, scourging their flesh to the sound of this psalm; by the following decade a penitential procession was added to the ritual. The Lenten Miserere, in turn, would soon be imitated widely in Catholic courts and parish churches. 35 An even more routine sound among the Marian congregations were litanies sung during devotions, processions, and pilgrimages, especially the Litany of Loreto that had been championed by the German Jesuits and by the famed Peter Canisius (1521–97) in particular, who issued its first printed edition at Dillingen in 1560. 36 Notably, Georg Victorinus, the first prefect of Munich’s congregation for male laity in 1610, dedicated his great Thesaurus litaniarum to these groups, stressing in his preface the usefulness of these polyphonic litanies to pilgrims on their way to holy shrines. 37 At Ingolstadt the academic Marian congregation was requested to sing “litanies with musical accompaniment” to help ward off pestilence from the city in 1592, and some years later the lay Congregation of Mary Victorious would frequently embellish its devotions with polyphonic litanies in its oratorio that attracted a large audience. 38 Processional litanies were surely a common sound among the congregations: the procession held on the feast of the purification by the journeymen's congregation


36 Fisher, “Thesaurus litaniarum,” 76. Victorinus’s collection was but one example of a broader phenomenon of litany publication aimed at the devotional practices of the Marian congregations; see Céline Drèze’s essay in the current issue of this journal for further discussion.

in Würzburg in 1660, for example, featured “the musicians with cornets and trombones along with three boys, who sang the litany, upon which the musicians played, and the entire brotherhood responded in song.” More research is needed to clarify whether the Marian congregations in the German orbit performed or heard more elaborate polyphony in their devotions: in the case of Munich, for example, we do know that prominent musicians like Victoria were directly associated with the congregations, and one of the groups—the “lesser” congregation for gymnasium students and the lay public—engaged its own musical directors by 1629. The Marian congregations were also a ready audience for vernacular religious song crafted in the spirit of Catholic reform, such as the Psalmen Dauidis in allerlei Teutsche gesangreimen bracht (The psalms of David in German rhyme; Cologne, 1582), composed by the Rhenish Jesuit Caspar Ulenberg (1549–1617) as a riposte to the Genevan Psalter and its popular German translation by Ambrosius Lobwasser (1515–85).

Looking beyond the Jesuit churches and colleges themselves, the course of church music in seventeenth-century Catholic Germany was influenced in no small part by the example and returning alumni of the Jesuits’ Collegium Germanicum et Hungaricum in Rome, an institution with an impressive musical profile cultivated by a long series of talented music directors—among the most notable were Tomás Luis de Victoria (c.1573–c.77), Annibale Stabile (c.1578–c.91), Ruggiero Giovannelli (1591–94), Asprilio Pacelli (1595–1602), and especially Giacomo Carissimi (1629–74). Returning to the north after their studies, alumni of the German College drove the cause of Catholic reform and Counter-Reformation, serving as churchmen, administrators, teachers, and indeed as musicians. Of special importance to the musical culture of Catholic Germany were Wolfgang Dietrich von Raitenau, archbishop of Salzburg (r.1587–1612), who greatly expanded and modernized his court music and

39 Bayerisches Staatsarchiv Würzburg, Historischer Verein für Aschaffenburg und Unterfranken, ms fol. 1103, p. 106 (February 2, 1660).
40 From a manuscript history of the congregation, see BSB, Clm 2323. On Lasso’s involvement with the “greater” congregation see my discussion in Fisher, Music, Piety, and Propaganda, 143–44.
42 See Culley, Jesuits and Music; Max Wittwer, “Die Musikpflege im Jesuitenorden unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Länder deutscher Zunge” (PhD diss., University of Greifswald, 1934); and Andreas Steinhuber, Geschichte des Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum in Rom, 2nd ed. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1906).
formally introduced the Roman liturgy in his see; Felice Sances (c.1600–79), a former choirboy at the German College who went on to become the chapel-master to Emperor Ferdinand III (r.1637–57) at Vienna; Johann Kaspar Kerll (1627–93), a former student of Carissimi and later organist and chapelmaster in Munich and Vienna; and Vincenzo Albrici (1631–90), who would become one of the leading composers at the Saxon court in Dresden in the 1660s and was partly responsible for the thorough Italianization of the chapel's repertory in the generation after Heinrich Schütz's tenure. Further research is needed to tease out the complex links between the German College and the musical institutions of the north, but it is evident that the college's example gave a powerful impulse both to liturgical Romanization and to the reorientation of German church music toward Italian models.

**Jesuit Hymnody in Germany**

By the early seventeenth century the Jesuits well recognized the potency of vernacular song for religious edification and propaganda, and in fact had become the primary force behind the publication of Catholic songbooks and chapbooks that sought to recover some of the landscape lost to the hymns of the Protestants. Apart from some isolated chapbooks containing vitriolic contrafacta of popular Lutheran melodies, Jesuit songbooks tended to avoid overt confessionalist propaganda; they were either larger-format compendia for a variety of uses, on more literary, overtly devotional products that


44 Sances and his Viennese context are explored in Andrew Weaver, *Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III: Representing the Counter-Reformation Monarch at the End of the Thirty Years’ War* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012).


addressed a more cultivated readership. The earliest of the large-format books was likely the Innsbruck *Catholisch Gesangbüchlein, bey dem Catechismo [*...] zugebrauchen* (Little Catholic songbook for the catechism, 1588), followed in 1594 by similar songbooks from Ingolstadt and Konstanz, which likewise foreground catechism instruction on their title pages as a principal context (see below).\(^49\) The center of gravity, however, quickly shifted westward to the confessionally contested geography of the Rhenish province. Jesuits there were directly or indirectly involved in the publication of many of the major Catholic hymnals of the early seventeenth century, including the so-called Speyer songbook (Cologne, 1599)\(^50\) and the *Catholisch Cantual* (Catholic songbook; Mainz, 1605), the latter probably compiled by the Hildesheim Jesuit Johann Hammer (1546–1606).\(^51\) Most widely circulated of all was surely the *Geistliches Psälterlein* (Little spiritual psalter; Cologne, 1637), a popular collection of songs for catechism, schools, and household devotion that would be issued in no fewer than ten editions by 1653.\(^52\)

\(^49\) *Catholisch Gesangbüchlein* (Innsbruck: Hans Paur, 1588); *Katholische Kirchengesäng für die christliche katholische Jugend* (Ingolstadt, 1594 [lost]); and *Catholicische Kirchen Gesäng, vor und nach dem Catechismo* (Konstanz: Gemperlin, 1594).

\(^50\) Nominaly intended for the diocese of Speyer, the *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchen- geseng* was in turn heavily influenced by the Konstanz hymnal of 1594, itself a Jesuit effort; see Andrea Neuhaus, “Barockzeit (17. und 18. Jahrhundert),” in *Geschichte des katholischen Gesangbuchs*, ed. Dominik Fugger and Andreas Scheidgen (Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag, 2008), 11–18, here 12.


\(^52\) The *Geistliches Psälterlein, darinn die außerverlesenste alt und newe Kirchen unnd Hauffgesäng neben den Psalmen Davids verfasset seyn* (Cologne: Peter Grevenbruch, 1637) was based in turn on another Jesuit-inspired hymnal, the *Catholicische Kirchen Gesäng, Auff die Fur- nemmste Fest des Jahrs*, first published at Cologne by Paul von der Elst in 1607. For commentary on these songbooks and their relationship see Härting, “Das deutsche Kirchenlied der Barockzeit,” 2308–9; Neuhaus, “Barockzeit (17. und 18. Jahrhundert),” 12; and Lukas Richter and Albrecht Classen, *Lied und Liederbuch in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Münster–New York: Waxmann, 2010), 30–31.
By and large these larger-format songbooks of the Jesuits addressed a wide variety of potential contexts, ranging from the liturgy—note that the Mainz Cantual, for example, provides for a German Singmesse for churches where a complete Latin choral service was impossible—to catechism instruction, processions, pilgrimages, and general devotion. By recovering and repackaging traditional, pre-Reformation songs, the Jesuits appropriated a venerable tradition of religious singing that was uncorrupted by heretical novelties. But new songs were also composed by some of the Society’s most prominent writers and poets, including Conrad Vetter (d.1622), Jakob Bidermann (1578–1639), and especially Friedrich Spee (1591–1635), whose posthumous Trutz Nachtigal (Nightingale-in-Despite; Cologne, 1649) remains one the most famed collections of baroque religious poetry and song.\(^{53}\) While Spee’s earlier songs (published anonymously in the early 1620s at Würzburg and Cologne) are direct and didactic, and designed largely for the needs of catechism,\(^{54}\) his later work transmitted in the Geistliches Psälterlein and Trutz Nachtigal exhibits a fine literary sensibility, offering carefully crafted religious poetry with a strongly pastoral, bucolic profile suited to the meditative practice of a literate audience, and generally avoiding confessional polemic. Overly sophisticated melodies are not to be found in the Jesuit song repertory: the new tunes were simple and straightforward, and authors like Vetter and Bidermann often made provision for singers to substitute their own melodies at will, allowing these texts to spread more easily through familiar tunes.

Rather than an organic expression of popular, Catholic piety, Jesuit songs were part of a programmatic missionary effort designed to encourage orthodox belief and pious practice in the world. They made abstract ideas concrete; encouraged submission to God and one’s personal identification with the characters and narratives of holy scripture; and provided saintly models for emulation.\(^{55}\) Further research is needed to clarify how often they were sung by lay

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54 Friedrich Spee, Auserlesene, Catholische, Geistliche Kirchengesäng (Cologne: Peter Brachel, 1623). Now lost, its contents have been reconstructed by Theo G. M. van Oorschot, in Spee, Sämtliche Schriften 4 (Tübingen: A. Francke, 2005). Some of these songs first appeared in two smaller Würzburg prints, the Bell’ Vedere Oder Herbipolis Wurtzgärlein (1621) and Il più bello del mondo: Das Allerschönste Kind in der Welt (1622).

55 An extensive typology of themes in Jesuit song may be found in Moser, Verkündigung durch Volksgesang, 85–292. On the direct and concrete quality of Jesuit song see also ibid., 293–97.
parishioners, but it seems clear that Jesuit song was increasingly prized in catechism instruction as a vehicle for memorization.\textsuperscript{56} They versified articles of faith, presented narratives of faith and salvation, and more broadly sought to emotionalize religious experience.\textsuperscript{57} There are early and intriguing reports of singing during children’s catechism at Vienna and Dillingen (1569),\textsuperscript{58} but specific praise for the practice comes from Fulda in 1586, where Claudius Marchal (dates unknown) reported the following to Acquaviva:

That which was thought impossible a year ago has turned out entirely differently. Already our [fathers] are providing catechism instruction in eleven villages on every Sunday, and it is wonderful to see the value of singing the catechism. I had previously spent nearly a year [teaching] a few boys from the countryside, and they barely learned the Our Father. But now by singing they commit to memory the confession of faith and the Ten Commandments in only a few hours [...]. Wholly charmed by the enthusiasm and the spirit which song brings to the listeners, our catechumens come back every Sunday to the college [...]. Father Visitor [Oliver Manare] wishes to introduce the singing of the catechism throughout the entire [Rhenish] province.\textsuperscript{59}

This evident success is confirmed by the tendency in Catholic songbooks, many of which were curated by the Jesuits, to include distinct collections of catechism songs by the end of the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{60} Apart from Friederich Spee’s early essays in catechism song,\textsuperscript{61} we have an especially ambitious


\textsuperscript{57} Scheitler, “Lied und katholische Katechese,” 167–68.


\textsuperscript{60} See, for example, the songbooks printed at Innsbruck (1588), Ingolstadt and Konstanz (1594), Cologne (1599), and Mainz (1605). For discussion see ibid., 2/2:18–19, and especially Scheitler, “Lied und katholische Katechese.”

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 172–77.
collection in the *Catechismüs in aüsserlesenen Exempln, kürzten Fragen, schönen Gesängern, Reýmen und Reýen für Kirchen und Schülēn* (Catechism in selected examples, short questions, fine songs, rhymes, and dances for churches and schools), issued at Würzburg in 1625 by the Jesuit preacher Georg Vogler (1585–1635) (Fig. 1).62 Vogler provides exquisitely detailed instructions on how songs, liberally interspersed within a program of prayer, instruction, and examination, could shape the experience of children’s catechism—not a few of them were designed, in fact, for children’s annual “catechism processions.” Vogler provides 152 songs—some of which are in simple polyphony—but he also permits catechists to substitute other melodies at will and even provides a number of short refrains of text and music that the illiterate could quickly memorize and insert between the strophes of other songs. Vogler’s *Catechismüs*, a bellwether of the genre, would be widely adopted in German Catholic territories and bishoprics in German-speaking lands.

**Jesuit Spectacle and Theatre in the Public Sphere**

Vogler’s catechism processions were only one facet of a broader Jesuit effort to project their religious culture into the public sphere through a variety of aural and visual media. Urban processions were indeed a key element of their strategy, and took on heightened confessional significance given the long-standing roots of the Reformation in the cities. Jesuit students sang and played instruments both in the grand sacramental processions for Corpus Christi and in evening processions on Good Friday, spectacles that often featured marching flagellants and torchbearers. Possibly originating in Jesuit Lenten devotions, the latter were common by the early 1600s and provoked strong reactions in cities with significant Protestant populations.63 Among the most impressive multimedia spectacles mounted by the Jesuits were those celebrating the canonization of Ignatius and Francis Xavier in spring of 1622, held simultaneously in most, if not all, of the cities with Jesuit residences. Jesuit chronicles tell us of “joyful ceremonies and signs of public rejoicing: spectacles, games, theatrical works to great applause; works of the Muses, arts of painting and

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Figure 1  Georg Vogler, Catechismus in aüserlesenen Exempeln (Würzburg, 1630), Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Catech. 650, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10390047-5. Courtesy of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München.
craft; and ceremonies among the public sound and clamor of bells and of war, the thankful acclamations of the multitudes." In many places we hear of grand processions with music, bells, trumpets, military drums, and the discharge of musket and cannon; the performance of theatrical works in honor of the new saints; and liturgical and paraliturgical services with polyphonic music. Occurring during a period of Catholic military victories during the early phase of the Thirty Years’ War, these festivals of sight and sound projected Catholic triumphalism throughout a confessionally divided landscape.

As in catechism instruction, the German Jesuits gradually came to realize the affective potential of music in their theatrical productions, even if some were scandalized by the sounds of Italian opera and oratorio that began to seep into Jesuit drama during the seventeenth century. Much of the music for these performances—largely homophonic, declamatory choruses with Latin texts arranged in classical verse forms—is no longer extant. One site for increasingly ambitious works was the Bavarian capital of Munich. Orlando di Lasso wrote a number of works that have been linked to Jesuit drama: we know that he provided six choruses for Ultimum judicium (The last judgment; Graz, 1589), and some of his motets were required for drinking scenes in Jakob Gretser’s (1562–1625) Udo of Magdeburg (Ingolstadt, 1587)—a few of these would eventually end up in Ferdinand Alber’s catalogue of “prohibited” music at the Munich college. Lasso’s compositions aside, we know of other specific Jesuit productions at Munich that featured an impressive musical apparatus of vocalists and instrumentalists, including the play Hester (or Esther) (1577), Gottfried von Bouillon (1596), and Benno (1598). The most impressive of these

64 Franciscus Xaverius Kropf, Historia provinciae Societatis Jesu Germaniae Superioris: Pars IV; Ab anno 1601 ad annum 1630 (Munich: Johann Jakob Vötter, 1740), 284.

65 For discussion in the Bavarian context see Fisher, Music, Piety, and Propaganda, 233–35.

66 As noted by Körndle, “Between Stage and Divine Service,” 481.

67 See Franz Körndle, “Ad te perenne gaudium.’ Lassos Musik zum ’Ultimum Judicium,’” Die Musikforschung 53 (2000): 68–71, and Körndle, “Between Stage and Divine Service,” 480–86. It is possible that Lasso wrote choruses for Samson in Munich (1568), but these seem not to survive; see Körndle, “Between Stage and Divine Service,” 480. On the prohibition of some of these works at the Munich college, see also Crook, “A Sixteenth-Century Catalog,” 23.

must have been the *Triumphus Divi Michaelis Archangeli Bavarici* (Triumph of St. Michael, Archangel of Bavaria), performed for the consecration of St. Michael in 1597. The drama lasted some eight hours, involved some nine hundred persons in total, and concluded with the breathtaking descent of the “dragon of unbelief” and three hundred demons into the abyss, followed by a triumphal procession of the church. The large-scale choruses by Georg Victorinus have not survived, but it is plausible that Lasso’s motet *Tibi progenies unica patris* was heard as the final chorus of the saints.69

As the seventeenth century wore on Jesuit theatrical music began to resemble broader currents in Italian opera and oratorio. This was not without controversy: music in Jesuit drama had already operated as a symbol for immorality, lassitude, and misbehavior (note Lasso’s “drinking choruses” in *Udo of Magdeburg*), and we have already seen Jeremias Drexel’s explicit criticisms of theatrical music in his *Rhetorica caelestis* (Heavenly rhetoric, 1638). Nevertheless, in March and September 1643, respectively, two thoroughly remarkable works were presented there that far outstripped earlier productions in musical ambition: *Philothea* is *Theophilus* by the Jesuit Johannes Paullin (or Silbermann, 1604–71). The music for *Theophilus* is lost, but *Philothea* survives in a manuscript score (1650) and a set of printed partbooks (1669).70 A fully sung drama—one may debate whether it should properly be classified as an opera or oratorio—consisting of arias, concertato pieces for few voices, and choruses, *Philothea* is entirely composed of texts assembled from scripture, with special prominence given to Canticles texts with which the female protagonist Philothea expresses her desire for Christ and union with God, having rejected the wiles of World, Flesh, and Satan.71 Barbara Münch-Kienast has demonstrated the parallels between Philothea’s journey and the course of the Jesuit *Spiritual Exercises*,72 but of more immediate impact on viewers was


70 The libretto for *Theophilus* is extant (Munich: Cornelius Leysser, 1643). The music for *Philothea, id est anima Deo chara* was printed in partbooks in Munich by Johann Jäcklin in 1669, while an earlier manuscript score is preserved in Bischöfliches Zentralarchiv Regensburg, Proske A.R. 781.


72 Münch-Kienast, Philothea, 12, 229–30.
Paullin’s deployment of instrumental timbres to embellish the song of individual characters: violins for Christ and the angels, a *violetta* or viola for Mercy, Clemency, Divine Love, and the weeping Philothea, and trombones for Justice and for Christ as judge, to name a few examples. This instrumental color is favored over vocal virtuosity, as Paullin openly embraced what he called a “stylo mixto” (mixed style) in the singing that emphasized a fluid arioso and largely syllabic text setting.\(^\text{73}\) Despite its impressive orchestration, then, *Philothea* projected a certain simplicity and directness of expression that seems to have been met with enthusiasm by its audiences. We are told, for example, that a 1650 performance in Fribourg was seen by a great number of female audience members, “and there was so much noise, crying out, and tumult that hardly anything could be heard.”\(^\text{74}\) *Philothea*, performed in thirty-three different cities between 1643 and 1754, is powerful testimony to the Jesuits’ judicious embrace of modern theatrical music north of the Alps, and foreshadowed even more operatic modes of religious drama in the later seventeenth century.\(^\text{75}\)

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The preceding essay sketches only a few key developments in the Jesuits’ use of music in the Holy Roman Empire, and can only hint at the musical richness to be found in their liturgical and devotional practices. Moreover, by concluding around 1650 it cannot explore how many of these phenomena—liturgical music, congregations, processions, pilgrimages, and theatre—would come to full flower by the early eighteenth century, the culmination of what might broadly be called the culture of baroque Catholicism. Nevertheless, it is instructive to see how Jesuit attitudes toward music evolved in the earliest decades of their presence in German-speaking lands, especially given the tumultuous confessional struggles that defined that era. Despite persistent concerns from the Society’s officials, the Jesuits gradually came to acknowledge music as an attractive missionary tool. It helped foster a more theatrical sense of Catholic liturgy, enhanced paraliturgical rituals, devotions, and theatrical

\(^{73}\) As per his preface to the 1669 printed score.


\(^{75}\) For example, those of Johann Bernhard Staudt at the Jesuit college in Vienna; see T. Frank Kennedy, S.J., “Jesuit Opera in Seventeenth-Century Vienna: *Patientis Christi memoria* by Johann Bernhard Staudt (1654–1712),” in *The Jesuits II*, 787–801.
productions that helped foster a distinctive sense of Catholic identity and, not least, it helped people memorize and internalize critical points of doctrine, not a small thing given the Jesuits’ intense interest in education. In the broadest sense, Jesuit music decisively altered the soundscape of the Holy Roman Empire in these critical decades, creating and shaping new kinds of confessional spaces in a fragmented and contested religious landscape.