Daniele V. Filippi

# Songs in Early Modern Catholic Missions: Between Europe, the Indies, and the "Indies of Europe"*

## 1 Songs in early modern Catholic missions

To investigate the use of songs in the global Catholic missions of the early modern era requires, on the one hand, to gather a vast amount of data dispersed in a diverse and interdisciplinary literature, and on the other hand to cope with complex theoretical and historiographical problems. The present article is therefore intended to be no more than an introduction to this complex topic and consists of two parts. In the first part, I will provide a summary survey of how and why the missionaries in extra-European lands (notably, but not exclusively, in America) used music and songs to support their endeavor. I will mainly concentrate on para- and extraliturgical songs and on the interrelation between song, memory, and language. In the second part, I will narrow the focus to songs connected with the teaching of catechism and at the same time broaden the scope to explore wider historiographical questions: How do we account for the parallel developments in the musical strategies of missionaries working in Europe and in extra-European lands? What can we learn by taking into consideration the triangular route between Europe, the Indies, and what became known as "our Indies" (missionized areas on European soil)? And how does a comparative consideration of internal and foreign missions reflect on our understanding of the role of songs in early modern Catholicism?

### "Más que por las predicaciones se convierten por la música"

As early as 1540, the first bishop of New Spain, the Franciscan Juan de Zumárraga, wrote to Emperor Charles V:

> la experiencia muestra cuánto se edifican de ello [*scil.* del canto de órgano] los naturales, que son muy dados a la música, y los religiosos que oyen sus confesiones nos lo dicen, que *más que por las predicaciones se*

* The research for this article started as part of a larger project on "The Soundscape of Early Modern Catholicism", which I conducted at the Jesuit Institute of Boston College in 2012–2014. I thank Klaus Pietschmann for kindly inviting me to participate in the 2015 conference in Mainz where I read a preliminary version of this paper. A cognate paper was read at the workshop-conference "The Global Music Culture of the Catholic Missions in 17th–18th centuries", King's College London, February 2015. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

> *convierten por la música*, y los vemos venir de partes remotas para la oír y trabajan por la aprender.[1]
>
> Experience has shown how greatly edified the natives are by polyphony [*canto de órgano*] and how fond they are of music; indeed the Fathers who hear their confessions tell us that *more than by preaching the natives are converted by the music*; and we see them come from afar in order to listen to music, and they apply themselves to learn it.

European missionaries sent to extra-European lands were quick to realize that music was a powerful tool for establishing relations with the natives and for paving the way for their conversion. The "metaphysical powers of song," in the words of Gary Tomlinson,[2] were at the core of most traditional cultures. The Franciscan Pedro de Gante (1479?–1572) wrote about the Mexican natives in 1558 that "toda su adoración dellos a sus dioses era cantar y bailar delante dellos"[3] ("all their worship to their idols consisted in singing and dancing before them"); similarly, Paul Le Jeune (1591–1664), a Jesuit missionary in New France, stated after observing the Huron in 1634 that "all their religion consists mainly in singing."[4] Thus, the missionaries recognized that singing was "a potent force in conveying their own metaphysics."[5] A passage from an early eighteenth-century biography of the Franciscan Gerónimo de Aguilar (d. 1591), who was active in various Asian countries, especially in the Philippines, further highlights the crucial role of music in the evangelization process:

> This servant of God knew that well-ordered music – besides being a right tribute to God for his gifts – was, with its sweet melody, a delightful preparation for the preaching of our holy faith. As the Christian

1 Quoted in Sergio Botta, "I *cantores* nella Chiesa francescana della Nuova Spagna. La costruzione di un sistema di mediazione", *La musica dei semplici. L'altra Controriforma*, ed. Stefania Nanni (Rome, 2012), pp. 311–18: p. 313. Italics mine.

2 Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 176.

3 Quoted in Jutta Toelle, "'Da indessen die Mohren den Psalm: Lobet den Herrn alle Heiden! abgesungen': Musik und Klang im Kontext der Mission im México der Frühen Neuzeit", *Historische Anthropologie* 22, no. 3 (2014), pp. 334–49: p. 342.

4 Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610–1791*, vol. 6: *Québec, 1633–1634* (Cleveland, 1898), p. 183 (digital transcription by Thom Mentrak at http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/relations_06.html). (Accessed 25.04.2018)

5 Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World* (cf. fn. 2), p. 176.

> faith and its doctrine were totally unknown among these infidels of the Philippines, he established music as the foundation of Christianity [*púso à la Música por fundamento de la Christiandad*] in his new plantation, by which the hearing of the infidel was mellowed with sonorous voices, and the soul made joyful with sweet music […] This holy aim [was] achieved with such happiness, that the Filipinos who converted to our holy faith were innumerable, their proud brutality appeased with the sweet arms of instrumental and vocal music.[6]

Music, with its direct, non-linguistic appeal to body and soul, could help bridge the often overwhelming cultural difference between Western missionaries and indigenous people and prepare the terrain for preaching and other intellectually more exacting ways of conveying the Christian faith. Thus, soon after discovering the natives' musical skills and their interest in European music, many missionaries "established music" as the foundation of their Christianizing effort and included various kinds of musical activities in their ministry, in a conscious and often remarkably organized way.

## Soft acculturation

Pedro de Gante (Pieter van der Moere)[7] arrived in Mexico in 1523. Initially, he had difficulties with the natives, but when he fully realized that music played a crucial role in their spiritual life the consequences were obvious. A couple of months before Christmas of 1528, he composed some "solemn verses" regarding the law of God and the history of Redemption ("compuse metros muy solemnes sobre la Ley de Dios y de la fe, y cómo Dios se hizo hombre por salvar al linaje humano, y cómo nació de la Vírgen María") and organized a Christmas play. The natives of the entire area ("from twenty miles around Mexico") were invited to participate and to contribute with songs and dances. This event marked a turning point in the evangelization process, as the Franciscan reported in a letter of 1532 to Emperor Charles V.[8] Afterwards, Gante taught music to the natives, and the results were remarkable: Soon, in the words of Ros-Fábregas, native musicians

6 Quoted in D. R. M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford, New York, 2010), p. 115; I have changed some passages in Irving's translation to make it reflect more closely the original Spanish text given in note by the same author.

7 See Emilio Ros-Fábregas, "'Imagine All the People...': Polyphonic Flowers in the Hands and Voices of Indians in 16th-Century Mexico", *Early Music* 40, no. 2 (2012), pp. 177–89; Toelle, "'Da indessen die Mohren'", (cf. fn. 3), *passim*, and the literature cited in both studies.

8 For all these details, see Ros-Fábregas, "'Imagine All the People...'" (cf. fn. 7).

"could hold books of polyphony in their hands and skillfully perform the same repertory as a major European music chapel."[9]

Many missionaries mention, among other things, the natives' readiness to learn European music:

> We hold from experience that [the Nahuatl] are quick to learn and employ the mechanical arts […] Also in trades such as tailor, shoemaker, silkmaker, printer, scribe, reader, accountant, *singer of "canto llano" and "canto de órgano", flute player, pipe player, sackbut player, trumpeter, organist* […] they have talent for it and learn it and know it, and they teach it.[10]

While the actual level of proficiency of these musically bilingual native performers is a matter of debate among scholars,[11] some aspects are nonetheless clear. Gante started using music in his ministry at a remarkably early date (the late 1520s). He used verse and music to convey doctrinal contents. Since he had to confront a well-developed musical culture, he opted for a sort of "soft acculturation," which led to a virtual merging of imported and local soundscapes. This is evident in cases such as the Christmas pageant of 1528 mentioned above or the feast of St Francis in 1567 when Western polyphony and *cantares* in Nahuatl were sung in the presence of the missionary.[12]

## "Imbiando algunos niños que sepan tañer"

Sometimes the missionaries left Europe already prepared and equipped for their musical needs; otherwise the missionaries sought for equipment as soon as possible. Portuguese Jesuits who were assigned to India and Brazil either brought musically trained boys – usually orphans, who attended the Society's schools – with them or summoned them from Europe to impress the natives and help teach

9 Ibid., p. 179.

10 Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España* (1575–1580); I slightly adjust the translation given in Miguel León Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún, First Anthropologist* (Norman, 2002), p. 97. Italics mine.

11 See Ros-Fábregas, "'Imagine All the People...'", (cf. fn. 7), pp. 179–81. Also, Victor A. Coelho, "Music in New Worlds", *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Tim Carter and John Butt (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 88–110: p. 94.

12 Ros-Fábregas, "'Imagine All the People…'", (cf. fn. 7), p. 183.

them.[13] In Brazil, in the 1550s, the Jesuits even founded a confraternity intended to mix the Portuguese orphans with native boys and help the process of linguistic and musical exchange, providing opportunities for mutual learning.[14] In a letter addressed from Baía to Father Pero Doménech on August 5, 1552, Father Francesco Pires wrote on behalf of the aforementioned orphans:

> Parézeme, según ellos son amigos de cossas músicas, que nosotros tañendo y cantando entre ellos los ganaríamos [...] si V[uestra] R[everencia] nos hiziesse proveer de algunos instrumentos para que acá tañamos (imbiando algunos niños que sepan tañer), como son flautas, y gaitas, y nésperas [*marginal note:* son instrumentos], y unas vergas de yerro con unas argollicas dentro las quales tañen da[n]do con un yerro en la verga; y un par de panderos y sonajas. Si viniesse algun tamborilero y gaitero acá, parézeme que no avría Principal que no diesse sus hijos par que los enseñassen.[15]
>
> It seems to me that, since the natives are fond of musical things, we would win them over if we played and sang among them […] if Your Reverence provided us with some instruments for us to play here (sending over some boys able to play), such as flutes, bagpipes, little bronze bells, and triangles;[16] and a couple of tambourines and rattles. If any drummers and bagpipers came here, it seems to me that there would be no elder who would not send his children to learn.

13 Thomas D. Culley and Clement G. McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits (1540–1565)", *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 40 (1971), pp. 213–45: pp. 235 and 242–43. Josef Wicki, "Gesang, Tänze und Musik im Dienst der alten indischen Jesuitenmissionen (ca 1542–1582)", *Missionskirche im Orient: ausgewählte Beiträge über Portugiesisch-Asien*, Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft, Supplementa 24 (Immensee, 1976), pp. 138–52: p. 141. On the departure of the Portuguese orphans from Lisbon in January 1550, see also my article "La cultura sonora del Cattolicesimo nella prima età moderna: Cinque ricercari", "*Cara scientia mia, musica*": *Studi per Maria Caraci Vela*, ed. Angela Romagnoli et al. (Pisa, 2018), pp. 521–41.

14 Robert Ricard, "Les jésuites au Brésil pendant la seconde moitié du XVI siècle (1549–1597)", *Revue d'Histoire des Missions* 4 (1937), pp. 321–66, 435–70: p. 333. See also Paulo Castagna, "The Use of Music by the Jesuits in the Conversion of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil". *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences and the Arts, 1540–1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley et al. (Toronto, Buffalo, 1999), pp. 641–58: p. 644.

15 Serafim Leite (ed.), *Monumenta Brasiliae: 1. 1538–1553*, Monumenta historica Societatis Iesu 79 (Rome, 1956), pp. 375–89: pp. 383–84.

16 I wish to thank Michael Noone and Colleen Baade for helping me with the translation of this passage.

Two aspects from this quote are worth noting. First, the request for a rich series of musical instruments alone should be enough to dissuade us from imagining (anachronistically) that the missionaries abroad imported an algid, purely vocal European sound made of Solesmes-style plainchant and immaculate a cappella polyphony. Many reports document the missionaries' efforts to obtain the most disparate musical instruments, and in certain cases, notably in the Jesuit *reducciones*, the missionaries themselves became instrument makers and taught the art to the natives (see below). The second remarkable aspect of the quote from Pires' letter is the allusion to the peculiar power of peer education. Judging from the documents of the Jesuit missions in Brazil, the activities of the European orphans among their peers was highly effective:

> Los niños huérfanos que nos embiaron de Lisboa con sus cantares atraen a sí los hijos de los gentiles y edifican mucho los christianos.[17]
>
> The orphan boys that they sent us from Lisbon attract the sons of the pagans to themselves with their songs, and are very edifying to the Christians.[18]

A letter from Doménech to Ignatius of Loyola of Fall 1552 provides an interesting description of how in turn the "sons of the pagans" acted as musical mediators of the Fathers' teachings:[19]

> a la noche los Padres que tienen cargo dellos les dan meditaciones de la muerte o de juizio o semejantes cosas; y por la mañana madrugan y vanse por las casas de los negros y gentíos y tómanlos en la cama y allí les platican de la muerte y infierno e de la passión de nuestro Señor y algunas vezes baylan y cantan, y ansí los ajuntan. Después desto que los tienen ajuntados, assí baylando y cantando, dizenles la passión de nuestro Señor, mandamientos, Pater noster, Credo e Salve Regina en su lingua, de manera que los niñyos en su lingua ensenyan a sus padres, y los padres van con las manos juntas tras sus hijos cantando Sancta Maria, y ellos responden ora pro nobis.
>
> At nights the Fathers who are in charge of the boys give them meditations about death or the judgment or similar things; in the mornings,

17 Leite, *Monumenta Brasiliae* (cf. fn. 15), p. 269.

18 I use the translation given in Culley and McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits" (cf. fn. 14), p. 235.

19 Domenech wrote from Lisbon, reporting on letters he had received from Brazil; see Leite, *Monumenta Brasiliae* (cf. fn. 15), pp. 416–17.

> the boys wake up early and go around the houses of the negroes and the pagans when they are still in bed, and they talk to them about death and hell and about the Passion of our Lord, and sometimes they dance and sing, and so they gather them together. Once they are gathered, by dancing and singing they tell them the Passion of our Lord, the Commandments, and the *Pater noster*, *Credo*, and *Salve Regina* in their language. In this way, the children teach their parents in their language; the parents follow their children with their hands joined and sing "Sancta María", and they answer "ora pro nobis".

The boys apparently performed a sort of early morning *svegliarino* (wake-up call), a recurring element of early modern missions.[20] The characteristically disturbing themes of *memento mori*, the torments of hell, and the Passion, typical of these nocturnal raids, were mitigated by song and dance. The adults (both "Negroes" and "Indians") were attracted and, once they were gathered, a session of sung catechism could start, including the Commandments and a classic set of prayers, concluding with a litany.

With or without the help of European peers, the missionaries almost invariably targeted the native children and youngsters as the primary recipients of Christian education. As Kristin Dutcher Mann has remarked, the method of having the native children learn the doctrine through songs and in turn teach their elders "reversed the order of cultural transmission" in those communities,[21] subverting the rules of patriarchal society. Both the Franciscans and the Jesuits formulated this strategy explicitly.[22]

20 See Paolo Broggio, *Evangelizzare il mondo: le missioni della Compagnia di Gesù tra Europa e America: secoli XVI-XVII* (Rome, 2004), pp. 302–305.

21 Kristin Dutcher Mann, *The Power of Song: Music and Dance in the Mission Communities of Northern New Spain, 1590–1810* (Stanford, 2010), p. 89.

22 For the Franciscans, see Steven E. Turley, *Franciscan Spirituality and Mission in New Spain, 1524–1599: Conflict beneath the Sycamore Tree (Luke 19:1–10)* (Farnham, Burlington, 2014), p. 58. See also Paolo Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes: Diego Luis de Sanvítores et la circulation des stratégies d'évangelisation de la Compagnie de Jésus au XVIIe siècle", *Missions religieuses modernes: "Notre lieu est le monde"*, ed. Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Bernard Vincent (Rome, 2007), pp. 229–59: pp. 248–49; Toelle, "Da indessen die Mohren" (cf. fn. 3), p. 338; Francismar Alex Lopes de Carvalho, "Mediadores do sagrado: os auxiliares indígenas dos missionários nas reduções jesuíticas da Amazônia ocidental (c. 1638–1767)," *Revista de História* 173 (2015), pp. 175–210: pp. 192–193.

## "Los missioneros deben ser maestros […] de musica"

Once the basic missionary infrastructure had been established, the missionaries taught the natives European music in major centers and then sent them "to the front" in minor centers as teachers, organists, and church musicians. According to Lemmon, one of the reasons to teach music at the Jesuit college of San Gregorio in Mexico City was to train and provide church musicians "for villages throughout the Archdiocese of Mexico."[23] The same approach was adopted in Fontibón for the surrounding missionary areas in the New Kingdom of Granada.[24] A similar situation on a different continent is described by Irving for the Philippines.[25]

In an eighteenth-century account of the founder of the music school in Fontibón, José de Hurtado, S.J. (1578–1660), we find another interesting element, after the usual *topos* about the natives' fondness of music is mentioned ("conociendo quan aficionados son aquellos Indios à la musica"). In Europe, music might seem an "inappropriate activity" for a priest ("impertinente ocupacion"), the Jesuit chronicler observes, a "frivolity or a vain pastime" ("ociosidad, ò divertimiento fantastico"). In the missions, however, it was "one of the means by which the Indians were tamed, and of which God availed himself for their conversion" ("uno de los medios con que se suavizaban los Indios, y de que se valía Dios para su conversion").[26] Thus, in the missions it did not suffice to be a "maestro de escuela ò de gramatica" which was common for the Jesuits:

> en Indias, los missioneros deben ser maestros de obras, de musica, de organo, y otras habilidades.
>
> in the Indies, the missionaries must be master builders, teachers of music, of organ, and of other skills.

Especially in certain environments, notably in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Jesuit *reducciones* in the Paracuaria province (probably the mission-

23 Alfred E. Lemmon, "Jesuits and Music in Mexico", *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 46 (1977), pp. 191–98: p. 194.

24 José Cassani, *Historia de la provincia de la Compañia de Jesús del Nuevo Reino de Granada en la America* (Madrid, 1741), p. 507 (a digital reproduction of the book is available at http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/3674. (Accessed 25.04.2018)). See Alfred E. Lemmon, "Jesuits and Music in the 'Provincia del Nuevo Reino de Granada", *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 48 (1979), pp. 149–60: p. 153.

25 Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint* (cf. fn. 7), pp. 123–25.

26 These and the following citations from Cassani, *Historia de la provincia de la Compañia de Jesús del Nuevo Reino de Granada* (cf. fn. 24), pp. 507–508.

ary stations where musical culture was more actively promoted and developed),[27] the profile of the missionary itself underwent a "musical" transformation. Several missionaries in the *reducciones*, from Anton Sepp (1655–1733) to Martin Schmid (1694–1772), were, or became, musicians, performers, teachers, and organ and instrument builders. Schmid epitomized the musical qualities of a missionary in a frequently cited sentence: "gerade deswegen bin ich Missionar, weil ich singe, spiele und tanze" ("I am a missionary precisely because I sing, play, and dance").[28] Musical skills became important requisites for the selection of prospective missionaries: Eighteenth-century Jesuit candidate missionaries explicitly advertised their musical qualifications in the applications sent to Rome (*indipetae*), and in turn, Rome made specific requests to certain provinces.[29] The case of Juan María Salvatierra (1644–1717) is exemplary: After receiving an excellent education in music in Milan and Parma, he made his skills as a lute player known in his *indipeta*, and, once having been sent to Baja California, reportedly composed songs, gave singing lessons, played, and even danced with the natives.[30]

## Ambiguities and conflicts

It would be obviously naïve for the modern scholar to uncritically and one-sidedly accept the missionaries' accounts regarding the prodigious effects of music and song as tools for the missionary endeavor. Of course there were all sorts of problems and complications. Well-known is the case of the Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún (1499–1590), catechist, historian, and scholar of the language and

27 The literature on music in the *reducciones* is copious: see at least Johann Herczog, *Orfeo nelle Indie: i gesuiti e la musica in Paraguay (1609–1767)* ([Galatina], 2001); Piotr Nawrot, "Teaching of Music and the Celebration of Liturgical Events in the Jesuit Reductions", *Anthropos* 99, no. 1 (2004), pp. 73–84; Guillermo Wilde, "Toward a Political Anthropology of Mission Sound: Paraguay in the 17th and 18th Centuries", *Music and Politics* 1, no. 2 (2007), http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0001.204. (Accessed 25.04.2018); and Leonardo J. Waisman, "Urban Music in the Wilderness: Ideology and Power in the Jesuit *reducciones*, 1609–1767", *Music and Urban Society in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Geoffrey Baker and Tess Knighton (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 208–29.

28 See Leonardo Waisman, "'Ich bin Missionar, weil ich singe, spiele und tanze': Martin Schmid als Musiker", *Martin Schmid: 1694–1772: Missionar – Musiker – Architekt; ein Jesuit aus der Schweiz bei den Chiquitano-Indianern in Bolivien*, ed. Eckart Kühne (Lucerne, 1994), pp. 55–63: p. 55.

29 See Tomasz Jeż, "Jesuit Musicians from Baroque Silesia as Missionaries and Music Educators in South America", *La cultura del barroco español e iberoamericano y su contexto europeo*, ed. Kazimierz Sabik and Karolina Kumor (Warsaw, 2010), pp. 607–17.

30 Lemmon, "Jesuits and Music in Mexico" (cf. fn. 24), pp. 195–96.

customs of the Indians.[31] As soon as he arrived in Mexico in 1529 he became aware of the importance of songs in the traditional "Indian" cultures. He shared with Gante a missionary approach not *a priori* hostile to pre-existing traditions: They were initially inclined to christianize local customs rather then eradicating them.[32] At a later point, however, fray Bernardino realized that the pre-Christian song repertoire persisted among the natives even after many years of evangelization. This led him to suspect that the "idolatrous" songs were a sign (and maybe even a concomitant cause) of the shallowness of the Christianization process, a fact lamented by other contemporary missionaries, too: The obscure style of the texts and the occasional alternation between Christian songs and pagan "tropes" aroused their anxiety.[33] When in 1583 fray Bernardino eventually published his *Psalmodia christiana*, a songbook in Hispanicized Nahuatl, including catechetical songs and paraliturgical prayers,[34] he intended to accelerate the process of substitution and obliteration of the traditional, pre-Christian songs.[35] This shows the other side of the coin: the silencing of indigenous music and the enduring struggle of the missionaries against the "ineradicable presence of native song and dance," which had clearly complicated, and resulted in sometimes disastrous consequences.[36]

31 On Sahagún, see at least Bernardino de Sahagún, *Psalmodia Christiana (Christian Psalmody)*, ed. Arthur J.O. Anderson (Salt Lake City, 1993); León Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún, First Anthropologist* (cf. fn. 10); Lorenzo Candelaria, "Bernardino de Sahagún's *Psalmodia Christiana*: A Catholic Songbook from Sixteenth-Century New Spain", *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 67, no. 3 (2014), pp. 619–84.

32 Sahagún, *Psalmodia Christiana* (cf. fn. 31), Introduction, p. xxi.

33 See also Toelle, "'Da indessen die Mohren'", (cf. fn. 3), pp. 347–48.

34 *Psalmodia christiana y sermonario de los sanctos del año, en lengua mexicana … Ordenada en cantares ò psalmos: para que canten los Indios en los areytos, que hazen en las Iglesias* [Christian psalmody and sermonary of the saints of the year, in the Mexican language … Arranged into songs or psalms for the Indians to sing in their feasts in the churches] (En Mexico, 1583). See León Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún, First Anthropologist* (cf. fn. 10), p. 226 and Candelaria, "Bernardino de Sahagún's *Psalmodia Christiana*" (cf. fn. 31). For an edition and English translation, see Sahagún, *Psalmodia Christiana* (cf. fn. 31).

35 See León Portilla, *Bernardino de Sahagún, First Anthropologist* (cf. fn. 10), pp. 226–28; Candelaria, "Bernardino de Sahagún's *Psalmodia Christiana*", (cf. fn. 31), pp. 639–40. See also Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World*, (cf. fn. 3), especially pp. 178–81.

36 Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World* (cf. fn. 3), p. 182. See also Sahagún, *Psalmodia Christiana* (cf. fn. 31), Introduction, p. xviii; and Egberto Bermúdez, "Sounds from Fortresses of Faith and Ideal Cities: Society, Politics, and Music in Missionary Activities in the Americas, 1525–1575", *Listening to Early Modern Catholicism: Perspectives from Musicology*, ed. Daniele V. Filippi and Michael Noone (Leiden, 2017), pp. 301–25.

On another level, the Jesuits' "musical accommodation" with the adoption and Christianization of local tunes and instruments had to face harsh criticism: Pedro Fernandes Sardinha, the first bishop of Brazil, famously condemned their way of proceeding.[37] After the early experiments, missionaries encountered growing difficulties, and sometimes restrictive policies were implemented. Similar things happened in other missions as well: Writing about Mexico, Ros-Fábregas has suggested that "the initial 50-year period of musical encounter" (circa 1525–1575) was rather unique for its richness, while various factors contributed to alter the situation subsequently.[38]

## Symbolic associations

As a matter of fact, music was used in a broad range of situations in the missions, sometimes in a very sophisticated way and for different, even though often overlapping purposes. Liturgy was an ambit of primary importance, but equally remarkable and extensive were the para- and extraliturgical uses of music, particularly those in connection with the teaching of Christian doctrine and the fostering of spiritual life, which I will focus on in the rest of this article.

Music was an essential ingredient in public ceremonies and played an important role in building and disciplining communities. Marking daily, weekly, and seasonal cycles, music and sound (think of the bells)[39] helped also to convey "a European sense of time."[40] Especially during processions and solemn rituals, music and sound helped redefine the spaces of cities and settled areas and emphasized the importance of churches and other sacred sites. Music was appreciated for its emotional power, often able to bridge linguistic gaps. According to ancient and deep-rooted *topoi*, it was also considered as the seal of social harmony.[41] At times its power to quell violence was explicitly invoked: In a letter of May 31, 1553,

37 See Leite, *Monumenta Brasiliae* (cf. fn. 15), pp. 359–60, 373; Culley and McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits", (cf. fn. 14), pp. 235–37; Castagna, "The Use of Music by the Jesuits", (cf. fn. 15), pp. 644–45.

38 See Ros-Fábregas, "'Imagine All the People...,'" (cf. fn. 7), pp. 183–85. See also Candelaria, "Bernardino de Sahagún's *Psalmodia Christiana*," (cf. fn. 31), p. 635.

39 See Jutta Toelle, "'Todas las naciones han de oyrla': Bells in the Jesuit reducciones of Early Modern Paraguay," in *"Their Sound Hath Gone Forth into All the Earth": Music and Sound in the Ministries of Early Modern Jesuits*, ed. Daniele V. Filippi, special issue, *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 3, no. 3 (2016), pp. 437–50, http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/22141332/3/3. (Accessed 14.05.2015)

40 Waisman, "Urban Music in the Wildernes" (cf. fn. 27), p. 214. For an extensive discussion of this aspect, see Dutcher Mann, *The Power of Song* (cf. fn. 21).

41 See for instance ibid., pp. 87–88.

Jesuit Brother Antonio Rodrigues wrote to the Fathers and Brothers of Coimbra that "Father João Gabriel has composed songs for them [*i.e.* the natives of Brazil] against all their vices, namely, not to eat human flesh, not to paint themselves, not to kill, etc."[42] The songs apparently even functioned as a safe-conduct for the missionaries in dangerous areas.[43]

Given its ubiquity in early modern writings on musical subjects,[44] the *topos* of heavenly music unsurprisingly surfaced in this connection in order to substantiate the ultimate identification of the Christian utopia of the Jesuit *reducciones* as a foretaste of the heavenly Jerusalem:

> cuando estas Reducciones parecen un paraíso … es por la noche, cuando todos cantan las cosas de nuestra santa fe, puesta en cierto modo de música muy llano, lo cual hacen los niños y niñas en las calles públicas al pie de las cruces, y los hombres en sus casas y en lugar separado de las mujeres; después rezan el rosario y concluyen esta devota función con cánticos de alabanza de Cristo Señor Nuestro y de su Santísima Madre Nuestra Señora la Virgen María.[45]
>
> It is at night that these *reducciones* look like paradise: when everybody sings the things of our faith, set to music in a certain very simple way; the boys and girls sing them in the public streets at the feet of crosses, the men and the women in their houses, in separated places; then they recite the rosary and conclude this devout service with songs of praise to Christ our Lord and his most holy Mother our Lady the Virgin Mary.

## "Chacun en sa langue avec un bel accord"

Moving from symbolic associations to more practical matters, what was the specific utility of songs, and of doctrinal songs in particular, for the missionary enterprise? Let us sum up the main factors, including both those which were explicitly

42 Culley and McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits," (cf. fn. 14), p. 234.

43 See ibid., p. 237.

44 See Daniele V. Filippi, "Sonic Afterworld: Mapping the Soundscape of Heaven and Hell in Early Modern Cities", *Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe, 1300–1918*, ed. Ian D. Biddle and Kirsten Gibson (Abindgon, New York, 2017), pp. 186–204.

45 Patricio Fernández, *Relación historial de las misiones de los Indios, que llaman Chiquitos* (Madrid, 1726), quoted in Hans-Jakob Zimmer, "Das Musikleben in den Jesuitenmissionen von Chiquitos", *Die Musik- und Theaterpraxis der Jesuiten im kolonialen Amerika: Grundlagen, Desiderate, Forschungsperspektiven*, ed. Christian Storch (Sinzig, 2014), pp. 113–32: p. 120.

conceptualized by the missionaries themselves and those formulated *a posteriori* in missionary and modern scholarly literature.[46]

The primary factor clearly is memory. The mnemotechnic value of organizing doctrinally or spiritually relevant text in metrical form and adding music, repeatedly noted by catechists and Catholic authors in Europe, became even more critical in the context of the missions. Why? Being constantly on the move, the missionaries often could not occupy a permanent *physical space* in the life of the newly founded local communities. Thus, they occupied their *time* through *memory*.[47] The *depositum fidei* had to be preserved in a stable form even without direct supervision. The newly converted natives, who were soon left to their own devices or to a local catechist as their only spiritual guide, frequently observed the holy days by means of simple devotional and paraliturgical practices in which formular recitation and song had a central role.[48]

Song worked as a support for religious and spiritual practice when liturgical celebrations or other rites which required the presence of ordained priests were not possible. Much the same, for that matter, happened in certain missionized areas in Europe: In Brittany during the 1640s, for instance, a layman, who was appointed to lead the prayer in Sein when no priest was available, asked the Jesuit missionary Julien Maunoir to have copies of his songs made in Breton so that the congregation could sing them during their gatherings.[49] In the colonies, however, this mechanism might have had more complex implications: In New Spain, for instance, native *cantores* usually belonged to the local nobility and inherited the social and religious roles fulfilled by equivalent figures in pre-hispanic society as well as a social status similar to theirs.[50]

We should moreover observe that the mnemonic support granted by music was also of a quantitative nature. Through song one could memorize *more content* and *in a shorter span of time*. Both were clearly valuable assets. Of course, this also held true on European soil. The missionary Dom Michel Le Nobletz commented in a letter about the astonishing apostolic successes achieved in Brittany by the

46 Many of the existing studies on the sonic practices of extra-European missions provide valuable reflections on this topic; here I draw inspiration especially from historian Paul-André Dubois' perceptive book *De l'oreille au cœur: Naissance du chant religieux en langues amérindiennes dans les missions de Nouvelle-France, 1600–1650* (Sillery, 1997).

47 Ibid., p. 133.

48 Ibid., p. 105 and *passim*. See also Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes", (cf. fn. 22), p. 250 (with the interesting mention of bilingual *tablas* containing the doctrine), and Carvalho, "Mediadores do sagrado" (cf. fn. 22), p. 179.

49 See Denise Launay, *La musique religieuse en France du Concile de Trente à 1804* (Paris, 1993), p. 385.

50 Botta, "I *cantores* nella Chiesa francescana della Nuova Spagna" (cf. fn. 1).

previously mentioned Maunoir, who was able to teach the inhabitants of the Island of Ushant (Ouessant) five hundred lines of *cantiques spirituels* with different tunes in a fortnight.[51]

Songs were also important for reasons connected to the complicated process of translating into the native language doctrinal formulae and theological concepts which was a constant, delicate, and time-consuming problem for many missionaries. They often did not master the native language(s), especially in the early phase of the mission.[52] Therefore, they had to rely on concise and formalized texts, apt to be sung, fruit of such long and laborious sessions with local interpreters as those described by Francis Xavier in a letter from Cochin of January 15, 1544:

> y como ellos no me entendiessen, ni yo a ellos, por ser su lengua natural malavar y la mía bizcaína, ayunté los que entr'ellos eran más sabidores, y busqué personas que entendiessen nuestra lengua y suia dellos. Y después de avernos ayuntado muchos días con grande trabajo, sacamos las oraciones, começando por el modo de sanctiguar.[53]

> Since they did not understand me nor I them, their native language being Malabar and mine Basque, I assembled those who were more knowledgeable and sought out individuals who understood both our language and theirs. After they had helped me with great toil for many days, we translated the prayers, beginning with the Sign of the Cross.[54]

Songs helped "to transmit the principal Christian symbols and mysteries in a fashion that was unambiguous."[55] Besides supporting individual and communal prayer as well as spiritual practice, song was thus a means of formalizing, preserving, and disseminating the doctrine.

As to the last aspect, dissemination, those who learned the songs directly from the missionary (during schooling, catechesis, or ceremonies) then became in turn "loudspeakers" for the doctrine. The newly converted natives learned the songs, brought them along during their wanderings, and taught them to their family,

51 See Bernard Dompnier, "Les cantiques dans la pastorale missionnaire en France au XVIIe siècle", *La musica dei semplici. L'altra Controriforma*, ed. Stefania Nanni (Rome, 2012), pp. 73–106: pp. 82–83, 85.

52 Dubois, *De l'oreille au cœur* (cf. fn. 46), pp. 74–75, 78.

53 Georg Schurhammer and Josef Wicki (eds.), *Epistolae S. Francisci Xaverii aliaque eius scripta*, Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu 67–68, vol. 1 (Rome, 1944), p. 162.

54 Translation from M. Joseph Costelloe (ed.), *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier* (St. Louis/Mo., 1992), pp. 64–65.

55 Castagna, "The Use of Music by the Jesuits", (cf. fn. 15), p. 643.

tribe, or group. In this way, those who were not exposed to formal catechetical sessions or liturgical ceremonies could hear the songs, too. The degree of penetration of the new songs into the local repertoire became a topos of missionary accounts: In Europe and abroad, the missionaries were eager to point out sonic signs of conversion (or signs of sonic conversion) in their reports.

Moreover, in places where missionaries had to work in a multi-linguistic context, songs could provide further advantages.[56] French missionaries in New France taught songs based on the same melody to the different linguistic groups, so that everybody, French and natives belonging to different tribes, could sing and pray together, even though in different languages, and have a sonic token of their affiliation to the Church:

> afin de les animer davantage, nos François en cantent une Strophe en nostre langue, puis les Seminaristes une autre en Huron, et puis tous ensemble en chantent une troisiesme, *chacun en sa langue avec un bel accord*; cela leur agrée tant qu'ils font retentir par tout cette chanson saincte et sacrée […] J'ay ouy chanter les François, les Montagnez et les Hurons tous ensemble les articles de nostre creance, et jaçoit qu'ils parlassent en trois langues, ils s'accordoient si gentiment qu'on prenoit grand plaisir à les ouïr.[57]
>
> In order to further encourage them, our Frenchmen sing a stanza in our language, then the Seminarians sing another stanza in Huron, and then they sing all together a third stanza, *each in their own language with a beautiful consonance*; they like it so much that they make this song resound everywhere […] I have heard Frenchmen, Montaignais and Hurons sing together the articles of our faith, and even though they used three [different] languages, they harmonized so nicely that it was a great pleasure to hear them.

This testimony from a Jesuit source, referring to the singing of a paraphrased Credo in 1637, could not be clearer. Thanks to the shared melody, the different linguistic groups could alternate or sing simultaneously, thus powerfully expressing their "unity in variety."[58] The practical and symbolic expedience of the procedure needs no further comment. More generally, we are reminded here of another advantage of songs as communication media, obvious as it may be: Simple melodic

56 Dubois, *De l'oreille au cœur* (cf. fn. 46), p. 90.

57 Ibid., p. 121 (italics mine).

58 For a similar practice in the Philippines, see Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes" (cf. fn. 22), pp. 245–46.

structures easily allowed for the interchangeability of texts. This opened up many opportunities in the manifold situations of community life. When, for instance, there was a need for a special prayer due to an unexpected circumstance or an unforeseen necessity, it was easy to put together a new text or to adapt an existing one relying on the unfailing support of a well-known melody.[59] Interestingly, the sonic trick the Jesuits adopted to have the different tribes sing together in New France is not dissimilar from the methods implemented by other Jesuits in seventeenth-century Italian missions: The alternation of Latin texts, sung by the clergy, and simplified vernacular refrains, sung by the people, had a unifying effect, not necessarily through an identical melody but by the responsorial interaction.[60]

How did rote learning, undoubtedly facilitated by song, and the understanding of the doctrinal contents, not to mention their interior acceptance and appropriation, relate to each other? Some scholars have taken an outspokenly skeptical stance in this regard.[61] In my view, however, the decision to privilege a mnemonic-affective method supported by music did not rule out intellectually and spiritually more developed approaches. Even today, immersed as we are in a completely different educational culture, simple and apparently pointless memorizing tasks provide the necessary support and reference for more complex intellectual processes.[62] Surely, however, the problem of going beyond memorization existed, and the most discerning among the missionaries did not ignore it.[63] Whenever possible, the mechanical aspect of learning was integrated in various ways, as recommended in 1552 by Ignatius Loyola to Sebastiano Romei, a missionary in Cyprus:

59 Dompnier, "Les cantiques dans la pastorale missionnaire", (cf. fn. 51), p. 95.

60 See Bernadette Majorana, "Musiche voci e suoni nelle missioni rurali dei gesuiti italiani (XVI–XVIII secolo)", *La musica dei semplici. L'altra Controriforma*, ed. Stefania Nanni (Rome, 2012), pp. 125–54: pp. 135, 144.

61 See for instance Majorana, "Musiche voci e suoni", (cf. fn. 60), *passim*.

62 Many pupils learn the alphabet by chanting and singing it, and this helps them in countless situations when the alphabetical order is key to other operations. While in secondary school, my Ancient Greek teacher arranged the many Greek prepositions in a quasi-metric sequence and had us memorize and recite it in order then to be able to instantaneously recognize the prepositions as such when reading: this eased the laborious task of deciphering Greek syntactic structures. The idea was brilliant, and perhaps thanks to the Greek teacher's intimidating manners during pop quizzes, I still remember the "prepositions chant" after twenty-eight years.

63 Compare the reflections on similar problems, but in the Anglican context, in Ian Green, *The Christian's Abc: Catechisms and Catechizing in England c.1530–1740* (Oxford, New York, 1996), chapter 5, "Changes in Catechetical Technique".

> Attendete ad insegnare la doctrina christiana, facendoli imparare (alli puti maxime et rudi) quello che è necessario per la salute loro, come è il Credo, Pater noster, Ave Maria; et alli più capaci li comandamenti, peccati mortali, opere de misericordia, etc. Et circa questa parte tre cure haverete: una, che imparino a mente; altra, che l'intendano, dandoli qualche conveniente interpretatione; altra, se si può, che il prete o alcuna persona idonea pigli l'assumpto de fare questo officio per l'advenire.[64]
>
> Attend to teaching the Christian doctrine, having them (especially the children and the uneducated) learn what is necessary for their salvation, that is the Credo, Pater Noster, and Ave Maria. For the more capable, the Commandments, the mortal sins, the works of mercy, etc. In this regard you will take care of three things: first, that they memorize; second, that they understand, by giving them some appropriate interpretations; third, if possible, that a priest or another suitable person undertake this duty in the future.

## 2 Between Europe, the Indies, and the "Indies of Europe"

As historian Dominique Deslandres has remarked, "Le mouvement centrifuge qui porte l'Europe chrétienne hors de ses frontières s'accompagne ainsi d'un mouvement centripète de christianisation interne."[65] Recent historiography has started to compare the strategies embraced by early modern missionaries in extra-European contexts and in the so-called "popular" or "internal" missions on European soil.[66] In the central decades of the sixteenth century, the Jesuits, reviving an older tradition, had begun to missionize rural areas, especially in Southern Europe: The case of Silvestro Landini in Corsica in the 1550s is well-known.[67] In such remote and poverty-stricken areas they found their own "Indies": "las Indias de por acá,"

64 Letter of 8 October 1552, from Rome, quoted in P. F. Grendler, "Fifteenth-Century Catechesis, the Schools of Christian Doctrine, and the Jesuits", *Studia Borromaica* 26 (2012), pp. 291–319: p. 313.

65 Dominique Deslandres, *Croire et faire croire: les missions françaises au XVIIe siècle (1600–1650)* (Paris, 2003), p. 21.

66 See Ibid.; Broggio, *Evangelizzare il mondo* (cf. fn. 21); Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Bernard Vincent (eds.), *Missions religieuses modernes: "Notre lieu est le monde"* (Rome, 2007); Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (New York, 2008); Karen Melvin, "The Globalization of Reform", *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, ed. Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and Mary Laven (Farnham, Burlington, 2013), pp. 435–50.

67 See the relevant passages in Armando Guidetti, *Le missioni popolari: i grandi gesuiti italiani* (Milan, 1988); and Carlo Luongo, *Silvestro Landini e le "nostre Indie"* (Florence, 2008).

"le nostre Indie." These terms, which would soon become a *topos*, were famously coined in this period.[68] According, for instance, to Philip Neri's biographers, the future saint desired to leave as a missionary after reading the Jesuit annual letters from the Indies in 1557. However, he consulted a Cistercian monk and was told "che l'Indie sue dovevano essere in Roma": his Indies were to be in Rome.[69] The recurrence of such terms in many writings from those years marks a moment when many European Catholics realized the urgency of a renewed missionary effort at home.

During internal missions, the missionaries often faced problems which were strikingly similar to those encountered by their colleagues in extra-European lands. The problem of language, for instance, which has been repeatedly mentioned above, could be observed in Europe, too. In many rural areas of Italy, France, or Spain most people did not master standard Italian, French, or Spanish but rather spoke a local dialect; the widespread adoption of visual and sonic devices as well as of vivid non-verbal strategies in preaching during popular missions partly derives from the need to bridge this communication gap.[70] Evidently, a "feedback effect" took place: the foreign missions became a testing laboratory for new methods, and the experiments conducted there influenced and inspired churchmen and missionaries who worked in Europe. Whereas from the point of view of the missionaries' careers the direction was normally from European to extra-European missions (rarely the opposite),[71] the private correspondence, the official letters, the accounts, and the rich missionary literature in general traveled both ways and ensured a global circulation of experiences.

The interdisciplinary scholarly community is now well aware of these mechanisms, but to my knowledge no specific comparison between the two kinds of missions with regard to the use of songs and music has been attempted so far.

68 See Adriano Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza: Inquisitori, confessori, missionari*, 2nd edition (Turin, 2009), pp. 551–61; Elisa Novi Chavarria, "'Las indias de por açá' nelle relazioni dei gesuiti napoletani tra Cinque e Seicento", *Les missions intérieures en France et en Italie du XVIe siècle au XXe siècle: actes du colloque de Chambéry (18–20 mars 1999),* ed. Christian Sorrel and Frédéric Meyer (Chambéry, 2001), pp. 133–44; and Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes", (cf. fn. 22), pp. 230–31, with further literature on the concept of "our Indies" in the Italian, Spanish, and French traditions. See also Deslandres, *Croire et faire croire* (cf. fn. 65).

69 See for instance Pietro Giacomo Bacci, *Vita di S. Filippo Neri … ridotta in compendio* (Rome: G. Mascardi, 1622), pp. 11–12.

70 See Camilo Fernández Cortizo, "Les missiones populaires dans le royaume de Galice (1550–1700)", *Missions religieuses modernes: "Notre lieu est le monde"*, ed. Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Bernard Vincent (Rome, 2007), pp. 315–40: p. 327; Rita Librandi, *La letteratura religiosa*, L'italiano: Testi e generi (Bologna, 2012), p. 92.

71 Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes" (cf. fn. 22).

Once we begin to examine matters from a comparativist perspective, the first problem that arises is one of chronology: The adoption of songs and music as missionary tools seems to occur surprisingly early in extra-European lands. This is unexpected because scholarship has traditionally seen the intensive exploitation of vernacular songs in Catholic ministry as a typical post-Tridentine phenomenon (the Oratorian and Jesuit *lauda* in Italy, the *cantiques spirituels* in France) connected with the confessionalization processes which ensued after the Council (1545–1563). But, as we have seen, Franciscan missionaries extensively used songs in New Spain as early as the late 1520s, a practice the Jesuits embraced, from Asia to Brazil, already in the 1540s. How do we solve this apparent chronological dissonance?

True, many missionaries accounted for the use of songs in terms of a reaction to specific characteristics of the missionized areas: notably, the prominent role of music and singing in pre-Christian religious and social life, the keen interest of the indigenous people for European music and instruments, and the difficulty of verbal communication. The rapidity and complexity with which the missionaries in extra-European scenarios adopted their "sonic tools" nevertheless arouse the suspicion that these must have already been part of their culture and of their missionary equipment. For a series of reasons which range from the compartmentalization of knowledge between scholars of the "Middle Ages" and of the "Renaissance" to the persistence of the die-hard paradigm based on the unidirectional sequence Reformation-Counter Reformation, we likely tend to underestimate the use of vernacular songs in pre-Tridentine (and even pre-Reformation) ministry. However, recent studies have let the proverbial tip of the iceberg surface by stressing the late medieval (and Dominican) roots of the Oratorian and Jesuit *lauda*[72] and by calling attention to such "early" and largely unexplored repertoires such as the songs of the *Devotio moderna* in the Low Countries[73] and the Franciscan songs in different languages and in different parts of Europe.[74] Further investigations are needed in order to elucidate the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century use of devotional songs and to reframe it in a more reliable historical perspective.

For the moment, the study of catechism-related songs may help us shed some light on how methods and musical practices circulated among missionaries working on distant continents. As I have discussed elsewhere, sung catechism was

72 Lothar Schmidt, *Die römische Lauda und die Verchristlichung von Musik im 16. Jahrhundert* (Kassel, 2003); Anne Piéjus, *Musique et dévotion à Rome à la fin de la Renaissance: Les laudes de l'Oratoire* (Turnhout, 2013).

73 Ulrike Hascher-Burger, *Singen für die Seligkeit: Studien zu einer Liedersammlung der Devotio moderna: Zwolle, Historisch Centrum Overijssel, coll. Emmanuelshuizen, cat. VI* (Leiden, Boston, 2007).

74 Fabien Guilloux, "Les mouvements franciscains et la chanson religieuse (XIIIe–XVIe siècles): Prospectives bibliographiques", *Etudes franciscaines* N.S. 2, no. 1 (2009), pp. 189–204.

"one of the most ubiquitous and characteristic elements of Catholic sonic cultures" in the early modern era, from the late sixteenth to at least the early nineteenth century.[75] The method was based on the alternation of dialogue, recitation, and singing: Essential elements of the Christian faith (starting from the sign of the cross and the main prayers, and including lists of Commandments, precepts, sins and virtues, etc.) were translated in vernacular and set to easily memorizable tunes. The method apparently originated in the Iberian peninsula, but abundant evidence shows that it was employed all over the world, in countless variants, from India to Brazil, from France to New Spain, from Florida to Japan. In the following, I will show two brief case studies demonstrating how from an early phase on this method travelled back and forth on the routes of evangelization, disseminated by individuals and entire networks. The first case regards a scarcely known lay missionary, Gregorio de Pesquera, the second concerns the missionary *par excellence*: Francis Xavier.

## Gregorio de Pesquera

Gregorio de Pesquera is a rather elusive figure.[76] A native of Burgos, Spain, he travelled through America during the second half of the 1530s, but not as a missionary: rather, as a conquistador. Only later he converted, and even though he remained a layman he was active as a missionary and educator "en España y en Indias juntamente."[77] In the early 1540s he started the Colegios de Niños de la Doctrina in Spain (the first was in Valladolid) which have been defined as "a

75 Daniele V. Filippi, "A Sound Doctrine: Early Modern Jesuits and the Singing of the Catechism", *Early Music History* 34 (2015), pp. 1–43: p. 2. See also Noel O'Regan, "Music, Memory, and Faith: How Did Singing in Latin and the Vernacular Influence What People Knew About Their Faith in Early Modern Rome?", *The Italianist* 34, no. 3 (2014): pp. 437–448.

76 See Félix Santolaria Sierra, "Los colegios de doctrinos o de niños de la doctrina cristiana: nuevos datos y fuentes documentales para su estudio", *Hispania: Revista española de historia* 56, no. 192 (1996), pp. 267–90; Inés De Diego, "Les 'colegios de niños de la doctrina' ou ›niños doctrinos': les voies et les enjeux de la formation en Espagne et en Amérique au XVIe siècle", *Passeurs culturels: mécanismes de métissage*, ed. Louise Bénat Tachot and Serge Gruzinski (Paris, Marne-La-Vallée, 2001), pp. 169–90; Félix Santolaria Sierra, "Una edición no conocida de la *doctrina cristiana* de san Juan de Ávila, incluida en la compilación de Gregorio de Pesquera: *Doctrina cristiana y Espejo de bien vivir* (Valladolid, 1 de mayo de 1554)," *Hispania Sacra* 57, no. 116 (2005), pp. 491–558; María Jesús Framiñán de Miguel, "La *Doctrina cristiana* de Gregorio de Pesquera (Valladolid, 1554): esbozo de análisis y contextualización histórico-literaria", *Criticón* 96 (2006), pp. 5–46; Luis Resines, *San Juan de Ávila:* "*Doctrina Cristiana que se canta*" (Madrid, 2012), pp. 51–146.

77 De Diego, "Les 'colegios de niños de la doctrina'", (cf. fn. 76), p. 174.

network of centers created to offer shelter and education to destitute children" all over the Iberian Peninsula and which became a kind of "pre-Tridentine movement for popular education."[78]

In 1544–1545 Pesquera travelled to Mexico with Bartolomé de las Casas on the famous expedition when Las Casas was going to take possession of his diocese after being appointed bishop of Ciudad Real de Chiapa. In 1546 in Mexico City, Pesquera founded and then directed a *colegio*, one of the first centers for orphans, *mestizos*, and other indigent children in the Americas (it later took the name of College of San Juan de Letrán). There he was also in contact with Pedro de Gante, who, as we have seen above, was one of the pioneers in the teaching of catechism and in the use of music as a medium for communicating with the natives.

In the following decades, Pesquera repeatedly travelled between Spain and Mexico.[79] In Mexico during the late 1540s, he printed a (now lost) catechism for the children of his college, some copies of which he then apparently brought to Spain.[80] In 1554, this time in Valladolid, he published another catechism, entitled *Doctrina christiana, y Espejo de bien biuir*.[81] It is a compendium of miscellaneous pedagogical tools, evidently designed for the needs of his *niños* and includes a version of Juan de Ávila's seminal catechism (Ávila was a pioneering figure in the field of catechesis, and his influence was decisive for many early members of the Society of Jesus who exported his methods to Italy and elsewhere).[82] According

78 Félix Santolaria Sierra, "Una carta impresa del maestro Ávila en un compendio de uso escolar de 1554", *Hispania Sacra* 60, no. 121 (2008), pp. 173–80: p. 175: "Una red de centros que se había ido extendiendo por todo el territorio de la península ibérica […] creados para recoger y educar a la infancia más desfavorecida de cada lugar, y que se convirtió en un amplio movimiento pretridentino de educación popular". See also Bernabé Bartolomé Martínez, "Los centros de asistencia, correción y formación de minorias sociales en la Iglesia moderna española", *Historia de la acción educadora de la Iglesia en España*, ed. Bernabé Bartolomé Martínez, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1995), vol. 1, pp. 965–1005: especially pp. 974–79.

79 See De Diego, "Les 'colegios de niños de la doctrina'" (cf. fn. 76), pp. 174–75.

80 Santolaria Sierra, "Una edición no conocida de la *doctrina cristiana* de san Juan de Ávila", (cf. fn. 76), p. 501.

81 *Doctrina christiana, y Espejo de bien biuir: diuidido en tres partes. La primera es vn dialogo o coloquio entre dos niños con muchas cosas dela fe prouechosas, y la doctrina declarada y luego la llana. En la segunda se contienen muchas obras breues y de buena y saua doctrina. La tercera tiene muchas coplas y cantares deuotos para se holgar y cantar los niños* (Valladolid: en casa de Sebastián Martínez, 1554). For bibliographic details, facsimiles of selected pages, and a transcription of the first part, see Santolaria Sierra, "Una edición no conocida de la *doctrina cristiana* de san Juan de Ávila" (cf. fn. 76). See also Framiñán de Miguel, "La *Doctrina cristiana* de Gregorio de Pesquera«.

82 See Filippi, "A Sound Doctrine" (cf. fn. 75). Ávila even plead the cause of the Christian doctrine in his memorials addressed to the Council of Trent in 1551 and 1561.

to historian of education Félix Santolaria Sierra, Pesquera's Colegios were rooted in Ávila's teachings and educational vision.[83]

In conformity with the rules of the Colegios their members were instructed to proclaim and sing the Christian doctrine in the streets and squares, in hospitals and prisons, in nearby villages, and so on.[84] This helps explain why, in addition to including the "standard" sung catechism, Pesquera devoted the entire third part of the book to songs: "muchos cantares y coplas devotas para que los niños y otras personas canten y se alegren con devoción" ("many songs and devout *coplas*, for the children and other people to sing and devoutly rejoice") – an uncommonly large set of poems and songs described in a recent study as consisting mainly of villancicos, romances, and coplas, plus additional "bonus" materials, including "Biblical and educational materials, devotional exercises, a treatise on good manners, and an ample casuistic discussion of confession as well as of the Final Judgment."[85] Thus, similarly to what happened in the foreign missions, Pesquera's children were assigned the role of mediators of the doctrine, and singing was a key element in this public and socially relevant enterprise. In the same year of the publication of the *Doctrina* Pesquera wrote to Ignatius Loyola in Rome,[86] to ask for his help in consolidating his Mexican enterprise: He was searching for teachers for his college there, but Ignatius could not accede to his wishes.[87]

In sum, Pesquera, a former conquistador, was in touch with some of the most relevant figures of the mid sixteenth-century scene of Catholic missions, on both sides of the Atlantic, from Pedro de Gante to Juan de Ávila, from Bartolomé de Las Casas to Ignatius Loyola. He was active both in Spain and in New Spain using the same methods, which included the sung catechism and devotional songs as tools for instructing and entertaining the children and for enhancing the public role of Christian doctrine.

## Francis Xavier

Unlike Pesquera, Francis Xavier probably requires no introduction. Suffice it to say that he was one of the first companions of Ignatius and the first Jesuit mis-

83 Santolaria Sierra, "Una edición no conocida de la *doctrina cristiana* de san Juan de Ávila" (cf. fn. 76).

84 Framiñán de Miguel, "La *Doctrina cristiana* de Gregorio de Pesquera" (cf. fn. 76), pp. 28–29.

85 Ibid., p. 8: "un extenso corpus poético, con predominio de villancicos, romances y coplas, en el que se vierten materia bíblica y preceptiva, prácticas religiosas, un tratado de urbanidad y toda una casuística sobre la confesión y el Juicio final" (for a detailed description, see pp. 17–26).

86 See *Epistolae mixtae, ex variis Europae locis ab anno 1537 ad 1556 scriptae*, vol. 4 (Madrid, 1900), pp. 170–73.

87 De Diego, "Les 'colegios de niños de la doctrina'" (cf. fn. 76), p. 177.

sionary: He famously left Lisbon in 1541 and missionized India, Malaysia, and Japan. His letters from Asia were received widely[88] and inspired many prospective missionaries. Xavier was, among other things, a phenomenal catechist. As we read in Torsellini's well-known biography,[89] Xavier walked along the roads in Goa, India, ringing a little bell ("cum tintinnabulo") and chanting an invitation to the people to send their children and servants to the Christian doctrine (see Figure 1):

> Homo id aetatis atque auctoritatis vias plateasque cum tintinnabulo circumibat […] puerosque ac servos ad Christianam doctrinam convocans, ad viarum angulos et compita subinde tali carmine incolarum pietatem excitabat: "Fideles Christiani, liberos vestros servosque pro vestra in Christum caritate, ad Christianam disciplinam dimittite". Ad hanc rei novitatem maximi puerorum ac mancipiorum undique se proripientium, aliorumque hominum concurrebant greges.
>
> A man of such age and authority went around the streets and squares with a little bell […] calling the children and servants to the Christian doctrine; then, at the corners and crossroads, he stimulated the piety of the inhabitants with such a song: "For the love of Christ, faithful Christians, send your children and servants to the Christian doctrine." Huge crowds of boys and slaves hurrying along from every quarter, and other men, flocked together to see this novelty.

Once the crowd had gathered, attracted by the unusual spectacle, Xavier taught the catechism by singing ("Catechismum modulans docebat").

> Quos ille omnes in aedem B. Mariae quasi agmine adductos catechismum modulans docebat, ratus pueros cantus suavitate delinitos et libentius conventuros ad audiendum, et facilius illa tanquam carmina memoriae mandaturos; quod utrunque rei eventus comprobavit […] singula

88 See for instance Costelloe, *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier* (cf. fn. 54), p. xi: "Few letters have been so enthusiastically received and so widely diffused as those of St. Francis Xavier to his friends and colleagues, written from India, the Indonesian archipelago, Japan, and the island of Sancian off the coast of China. They were copied, recopied, translated into Latin, German, French, and other languages, and frequently printed for wider circulation" (see also p. xxiv); see also Schurhammer and Wicki, *Epistolae Xaverii* (cf. fn. 53), Introductio generalis, vol. 1, pp. 15*–17*.

89 Orazio Torsellini, *De vita Francisci Xaverii ... libri sex* (Rome: Zannetti, 1596), book II, ch. 3.

> rerum capita decantata pro auditorum captu et intelligentia explicabat breviter appositeque.
>
> After leading them all, as if in procession, to the church of St. Mary, he taught them the catechism by singing, reckoning that the children, charmed by the sweetness of the song, would both gather more gladly to listen and memorize more easily those things as if they were songs: and the results confirmed both expectations […] he briefly and appropriately explained each of the items he had sung, according to the capacity and understanding of his listeners.

The method was successful: The pupils learned easily and joined in the singing. Besides the "invitation song", Xavier apparently used both chanted formulas for the presentation of the articles of faith and lists of precepts and insistent refrains consisting of short prayers to Jesus and Mary.[90] It is of special relevance here that when Xavier composed his first short catechism in Goa in May 1542 he followed the very model of Portuguese and Spanish primers (*cartinhas*/*cartillas*),[91] which were at the origin of the European tradition.[92] He adhered to the model both with regard to the content and to the irregular, quasi-metrical diction. In fact, Xavier used a Portuguese version of the sung catechism as well as translations in local languages (Tamil, Malay, Japanese, etc.), which he serially patched together coping with enormous linguistic problems.[93] In a famous letter of January 20, 1548 he related:[94]

> Era para dar gracias a nuestro Señor el fruto que Dios fazía en emprimir en los coraçones de sus criaturas cantares de su loor y alabança en gente nuevamente convertida a su fee. Era de manera en Maluco, que por las

90 See Schurhammer and Wicki, *Epistolae Xaverii* (cf. fn. 53), vol. 1, pp. 162–64, and Orazio Torsellini (ed.), *Francisci Xaverii epistolarum libri quatuor* (Rome: Zannetti, 1596), book I, letter 5, pp. 17–18.

91 See Schurhammer and Wicki, *Epistolae Xaverii* (cf. fn. 53), vol. 1, pp. 93–116 (especially pp. 94–95). For Portuguese *cartinhas*, see Víctor Infantes, *De las primeras letras: cartillas españolas para enseñar a leer de los siglos XV y XVI* (Salamanca, 1998), pp. 40–41.

92 While the method travelled from Lisbon to India with Xavier, it travelled from Spain to Italy thanks to other Jesuits; there it was given a more refined form and a sensible pedagogical background by one of the most influential theologians and pedagogists in the Society, Diego de Ledesma (in his *Modo per insegnar la dottrina christiana* [Rome, 1573]), and further circulated. See Filippi, "A Sound Doctrine" (cf. fn. 75).

93 See Schurhammer and Wicki, *Epistolae Xaverii* (cf. fn. 53), vol. 1, p. 94.

94 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 377–78.

> plaças los niños, y en las casas, de día y de noche, las niñas y mugeres, y en los campos los labradores, y en la mar los pescadores, en lugar de vanas canciones cantavan sanctos cantares, come el Credo, Pater noster, Ave María, mandamientos, obras de misericordia, y la confessión general, y otras muchas oraciones todas en lenguage, de manera que todos las entendían, así los nuevamente convertidos a nuestra fee, como los que no lo eran.
>
> There was reason for thanking our Lord for the fruit which was produced by God in the hearts of his creatures, who sang his praise and glory among a race newly converted to his faith. For it turned out in Maluco that the boys on the squares, the girls and women in their homes both day and night, the workers in the fields, and the fishermen on the sea, instead of their vain songs, sang sacred canticles, for example, the Creed, the Our Father and Hail Mary, the Commandments, the Works of Mercy, the *Confiteor*, and many other prayers, all in their own language,[95] so that everybody understood them, both those who had been recently converted to our faith and those who had not.[96]

Torsellini remarks that the fruit of Xavier's labor was abundant and lasting ("Nec vero huius laboris fructus aut exiguus aut caducus fuit"). Thirty years later, in 1578, another Jesuit missionary, Francesco Pasio, reported in a letter to Rome that on an island near Goa

> pueri bini processionaliter ad locum catecheseos ibant cantantes Doctrinam Christianam melodia alacri et pia, quam P. Franciscus Xaverius sanctae memoriae docuerat et quae per totam Indiam in usu erat. Omnibus congregatis Pater Doctrinam intonare coepit et reliqui respondebant. Et ita cantabant Pater noster, Ave, Credo, Salve Regina, Decalogum, 5 praecepta Ecclesiae cum Declaratione et, postquam haec omnia lingua lusitana cantaverant, idem sua propria lingua repetebant.[97]
>
> [t]he children walked in procession, two abreast, to the place where catechesis should take place, singing the Christian Doctrine with a lively and devout melody, which Father Francis Xavier of blessed memory had

95 According to Schurhammer and Wicki, Xavier used the phrase "en lenguage" both for Portuguese and for the local language; for the bilingual nature of his sung catechism, see in any case the final part of the subsequent quote.

96 Translation from Costelloe, *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier* (cf. fn. 54), p. 171.

97 Schurhammer and Wicki, *Epistolae Xaverii* (cf. fn. 53), vol. 1, p. 98.


**Figure 1:** Francis Xavier walking through the streets of Goa, ringing a little bell to invite the children to catechism class, from Filippo Maria Salvatori, *Fatti più rimarchevoli della vita di S. Francesco Saverio* (Rome, 1793), facing p. 46.

> taught and which was in use all over India. Once they were all gathered, the Father began to intone the Doctrine and the others responded. Thus they sang the Lord's Prayer, Ave Maria, Credo, Salve Regina, the Commandments, and the Five precepts of the Church with their explanation; after singing all these things in Portuguese, they repeated the same in their own language.

## The triangular route

The two case studies just discussed exemplify how missionary strategies and their corresponding sonic tools were tested and developed in a mutual interchange between Europe and extra-European missions. If Pesquera embodied the bidirectional feedback between the two focuses of the same global mission, Xavier contributed to perpetuate the same mechanism by becoming a global model for missionaries. Xavier died in 1552 and soon after the news got to Rome a preliminary investigation for the cause of his canonization was started.[98] Long before the actual canonization took place (1622), Xavier was already being presented as a role model for Jesuit missionaries, both for those in the Indies and for those in the "Indies of Europe". The sonic aspects of his catechetical methods were also considered worthy of imitation, to the degree that when the French Jesuit Michel Coyssard wrote a treatise to defend the use of singing in catechism classes (1608) one of his main references was Xavier, and he quoted the relevant passages from his letters and from Torsellini's biography. What Xavier had done in India could justify what Coyssard was doing in France. In particular, Xavier's example was invoked in order to override the objections raised against the use of doctrinal songs in vernacular.[99]

Another case, a later but no less emblematic one, illustrates how missionary experiences, methods, and sonic tools traveled through complex networks on the triangular route between Europe, the Indies, and the "Indies of Europe"

98 Franco Mormando, "Introduction: The Making of the Second Jesuit Saint: The Campaign for the Canonization of Francis Xavier, 1555–1622", *Francis Xavier and the Jesuit Missions in the Far East: An Anniversary Exhibition of Early Printed Works from the Jesuitana Collection of the John J. Burns Library, Boston College*, ed. Franco Mormando and Jill G. Thomas (Chestnut Hill/Mass., 2006), pp. 9–22.

99 Certain Catholic leaders automatically associated the use of French songs with Huguenot practices. On Coyssard and his *Traicté du profit que toute Personne tire de chanter en la Doctrine Chrestienne, & ailleurs, les Hymnes, & Chansons spirituelles en vulgaire* (Treatise of the profit that everyone derives from singing, in the [classes of] Christian doctrine and elsewhere, hymns and spiritual songs in vernacular) see Filippi, "A Sound Doctrine" (cf. fn. 75), pp. 13–24 and the literature cited there.

throughout the early modern era. As it epitomizes many of the dynamics we have examined so far, it will form a fit conclusion for the present discussion. The Spanish Jesuit Diego Luis de Sanvítores (1627–1672)[100] was a preacher of popular missions in his home country in the 1650s. In the early 1660s, however, he was assigned overseas. He left Spain, stopped off in Mexico, and reached the Philippines where he stayed from 1662 to 1667. The following year he moved on to the Mariana Islands (again via Mexico) where he was the first missionary ever and died a martyr's death in 1672.[101] At all his stations he adopted the sung catechism à la Xavier and the so-called *Acto de contrición*, a nocturnal procession which included various prayers and chanted slogans or ejaculatory prayers, called *saetas*, exhorting the sinners to repent; Sanvítores had the *saetas* translated in Nahuatl, in Tagalog, and in the local language of the Mariana Islands.[102] When he moved to the Marianas, he took with him three Filipino singers trained in European music, and in 1671 he ordered from Mexico a number of instruments (including harps, guitars, cornetts, and even an organ) and music books.[103] According to his first biographer Francisco García, when he found it difficult to attract the natives, who were "naturally inclined to minstrelsy and fond of music and dance," he turned himself into a minstrel of God ("se hazia juglar con ellos à lo Divino"):

> Entravase en medio de el corro, y dando palmadas en la mano à compàs de musica, empeçava à baylar, y cantar en su lengua: "Alegria, alegria, alegria, buena, buena, Iesus Maria. Nuestra alegria, Iesus y Maria. Amen, amen, Iesus, Maria, y Ioseph". Y repitiendo estas ultimas palabras al son de las manos, proseguia cantando y bailando un gran rato, acompañandole los Marianos.[104]

100 See Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes" (cf. fn. 22), pp. 232–34 and 243–54; Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint* (cf. fn. 6), pp. 58–59; Ulrike Strasser, "Copies With Souls: The Late Seventeenth-century Marianas Martyrs, Francis Xavier, and the Question of Clerical Reproduction", *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 2, no. 4 (2015), pp. 558–85, http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/10.1163/22141332-00204002. (Accessed 14.05.2018)

101 He was beatified in 1985 by Pope John Paul II.

102 See Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes" (cf. fn. 22), pp. 244–45 (Mexico), 245–46 (Philippines) and 247 (Mariana Islands).

103 Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint* (cf. fn. 6), p. 59.

104 Francisco García, *Vida y martyrio de el ... padre Diego Luis de Sanuitores, de la Compañia de Iesus, primer apostol de las islas Marianas* (Madrid: Iuan García Infanzón, 1683), p. 216; a digital reproduction is available at http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000092860. (Accessed 25.04.2018)

> He walked into the middle of the group and, clapping his hands to a musical rhythm, started to dance and to sing in their language: "Joy, joy, joy, good, good, Jesus and Mary. Our joy, Jesus and Mary. Amen, amen, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph." And repeating these words to the clapping of the hands he went on singing and dancing for quite some time, and the natives accompanied him.

After this, he taught them the doctrine and concluded the session with the same dance as before to reinforce the natives' enthusiasm.

As remarked by his biographers, Sanvítores stayed in contact all his life with his fellow Jesuit and exact contemporary Juan Gabriel Guillén, a prominent preacher of popular missions throughout Spain. The bond of friendship between the two (parallel, in Jesuit missionary literature, to that between the archetypal figures of Xavier and Simão Rodrigues)[105] exemplifies with utmost clarity the ongoing sharing of experiences between missionaries in the Indies and in the "Indies of Europe" and embodies the original and persisting unity of the two aspects in the Jesuit missionary calling. The immense missionary literature produced in the early modern era likely contains many other examples of similar interactions between missionaries active in different scenarios. It is to be hoped that future studies will further explore this topic in a comparativist perspective and elucidate how Catholic missions contributed to shape local and global sonic cultures.

105 See Broggio, "L'acto de contrición' entre Europe et nouveaux mondes" (cf. fn. 22), p. 254. Rodrigues (1510–1579) was one Ignatius Loyola's first companions.