



Confraternities as an Interface Between Citizens and Convent Musical Ceremonial in Sixteenth-Century Barcelona

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Résumé de l'article

Confraternities offer an example of the porosity of the early modern urban cloister for musical reasons. Many sixteenth-century Barcelonan guild and devotional confraternities were housed in nunneries and used conventual spaces that were also filled by the sound of nuns singing in the celebration of specified feasts as part of their devotional practices. This article, based on case-studies of the Benedictine convents of Sant Pere de les Puel·les and Sant Antoni i Santa Clara and the Dominican nunneries of Montsió and Els Àngels, analyzes a variety of archival documents in order to assess the close connection between the inhabitants of Barcelona and conventual ceremonies involving music through membership in a confraternity, the desire of members to be buried in convents, and the funerary ceremonies and eschatological beliefs this implied.

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Summary: Confraternities offer an example of the porosity of the early modern urban cloister for musical reasons. Many sixteenth-century Barcelonan guild and devotional confraternities were housed in nunneries and used conventual spaces that were also filled by the sound of nuns singing in the celebration of specified feasts as part of their devotional practices. This article, based on case-studies of the Benedictine convents of Sant Pere de les Puel·les and Sant Antoni i Santa Clara and the Dominican nunneries of Montsió and Els Àngels, analyzes a variety of archival documents in order to assess the close connection between the inhabitants of Barcelona and conventual ceremonies involving music through membership in a confraternity, the desire of members to be buried in convents, and the funerary ceremonies and eschatological beliefs this implied.

Although studies of convents in Spanish cities mention the participation of nuns in processions and other public ceremonies organized by confraternities, it is significant that these studies do not enter into detail as regards confraternities being established within specific nunneries, nor do they discuss the connections between the musical ceremonies held in convents on behalf of the city's inhabitants as members of a confraternity based there. This preliminary study is based on the fragmentary documentation extant in convent archives as regards the musical activities of confraternities, both guild or trade and devotional, that established their headquarters in the female convents in Barcelona in the early modern period. These confraternities, as elsewhere, made use of convent spaces such as chapels and altars and their devotional practices called for music of various kinds including nuns singing and playing the convent organ.¹ The devotional activities of confraternities thus afford an example of the

¹ On music and confraternities in Italy, see O'Regan, "Music at Roman Confraternities to 1650" and "Confraternity Statutes in Early Modern Rome." See also Kisby, *Music and Musicians in Renaissance Cities and Towns*, 178; Eisenbichler, *The Boys*, 235–256. On music and confraternities in seventeenth-century Madrid, see Robledo Estaire, "Música y cofradías madrileñas", and on confraternities in Castilian Dominican nunneries in the late medieval period, see Pérez Vidal, "Between the City and the Cloister," 248. On the role of confraternities as agencies involved in social welfare in Italy, see Terpstra, *The Politics of Ritual Kinship*.

porosity of the early modern urban cloister within the city as a whole, and are here considered specifically from a musical perspective for the first time. Indeed, this aspect, has been almost totally neglected in previous studies of Spanish convents, and the initial survey presented here is developed through case-studies based on the Benedictine convents of Sant Pere de les Puel·les and Sant Antoni i Santa Clara, and the Dominican nunneries of Montsió and dels Àngels, as well as the Jeronymite convent in Barcelona. This article presents an analysis of a variety of archival documents in order to assess the close connection music provided between lay people in confraternities and nuns in convents.

Confraternities, Nunneries, and the Music Networks of the City

In medieval and early modern Barcelona, in addition to the religious confraternities, there were many guild confraternities (*gremis*), that is, associations formed by lay artisanal people, usually of middling status, that joined together to carry out devotional and charitable activities. Good examples of the guild confraternities in Barcelona for which documentation survives include those of the wool makers (*paraires*),² second-hand clothes sellers (*pellers*),³ wool-carders (*carders*),⁴ master builders and millstone makers (*mestres d'obra i molers*),⁵ coopers (*boters*),⁶ and musicians.⁷ Each guild confraternity had a meeting place, either in a house situated on the streets and squares of the city, or in the church where they had a dedicated chapel or altar and where they celebrated the annual feast day of their patron saint.⁸ These festivities sometimes enjoyed the support of the city council

² AHPB, 310/1, *Libre [...] dels actes e contractes e altres coses fahents per lo offici e confraria dels parayres de la ciutat de Barchinona*, 1517, febrer, 12 – 1545, gener, 17; AHPB, 450/1, *Plec de documentació relativa a la confraria dels paraires de Barcelona*.

³ AHPB, 359/37, *Capbreu de la confraria dels pellers*, 1579, març, 9 – 1604, maig, 13, fols. 4–17; *Capbreu de la confraria dels Pellers tret en lo any MDCXXXII*, 1566, maig, 17 – 1577, maig, 24.

⁴ AHPB, 410/3, *Llibre de negocis de la confraria dels carders de Barcelona*, 1549–1559, fols. 21^v–22^v.

⁵ AHPB, 535/67, *Llibre d'inventaries de la confraria de mestres d'obra i molers de Barcelona* [1592].

⁶ AHPB, 414/3, *Liber confrarie boteriorum sub invocacione Sanctorum Georgii, Laurencii et Joannis baptiste presentis civitatis Barcinone*, 1563–75; *Liber confrarie boteriorum sub invocaciones Sanctorum Georgii, Laurencii et Joannis Baptista, presentis civitatis Barcinone* 1586, març, 13 – 1592, setembre, 13.

⁷ See Baldelló Benosa, “La Confraria de Músics de Barcelona.”

⁸ Tintó i Sala, “Les cases gremials de Barcelona i el seu entorn urbà,” 899. On Barcelona's guild confraternities, see also González Sugrañes, *Contribució a la història dels antichs gremis* and Darna Galobart, “Emblemas de gremios y cofradías.”

and included street processions between the confraternity's house and its dedicated chapel; many of these chapels were based in convents. There the confraternity organized the celebration of liturgical ceremonies related to their patron saints and other devotional activities; they also often hired musical ensembles to solemnify the occasion. Thus, music for these events was performed and heard in both street and church throughout the year. Luis Robledo's study of the musical activities of confraternities in Madrid demonstrates how these organisations allowed people of middling status to participate in urban events and festivities, and contribute to the creation of an urban music network.⁹

The urban music networks in which both confraternities and convents were deeply embedded helped to foster musical discourse, maintain oral traditions of music and share musical artefacts (music books and musical instruments) as well as musicians. Indeed, nunneries quite often became centres of cultural activity intrinsic to the social and economic life of the city. At least seventeen nunneries were active in Barcelona in the sixteenth century, but they have been relatively little studied for this period.¹⁰ Some convents were centrally located, near the main institutions for musical activity in Barcelona, such as the cathedral, and were important settings for social networking and meeting-points between nuns and the city's inhabitants. Musical activities organized at convents at times acquired a political nuance through the attendance of city councillors, visiting monarchs and members of the nobility. The high social status of the nuns of most convents—themselves inhabited by female members of the Catalan nobility—played an important role in the connections between convents, music, and political life. On occasion, nuns took part in royal events, such as royal burials, as well as in the urban ceremonies held on the occasion of beatifications, canonizations, and royal entries, in which confraternities also participated.

Table 1 presents examples of confraternities based in convents in sixteenth-century Barcelona. Nunneries were often the headquarters (*sede*) of confraternities, and documents generated by those organisations form part of the convent archives; similarly, confraternities' books of proceedings include references to agreements with nunneries for the celebration of specific feast days with music. Wills drawn up on behalf of nuns show that they, too, were members of confraternities.

⁹ Robledo Estaire, "Música y cofradías madrileñas," 491.

¹⁰ Most existing studies of convents in Barcelona focus on the medieval period, generally seen in the historiography of the city as representing the zenith of its economic situation and its influence in the Mediterranean area.

Table 1. Confraternities Founded in Barcelonan Nunneries

Nunnery	Related confraternities
Convent (<i>monestir</i>) of the Mare de Déu dels Àngels (Dominican)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guild confraternity of ropemakers (<i>corders</i>); patron saint: St Francis • guild confraternity of grain-weighers (<i>mesurers</i>); patron saint: the Most Holy Trinity • Confraternity of the Most Sweet Name of Jesus (<i>Dulcissim Nom de Jesus</i>)¹¹
Convent of Jeronymite nuns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guild confraternity of booksellers (<i>llibreters</i>) (1553); patron saint: St Jerome • Confraternity of the Holy Land (<i>Terra Santa</i>) (1618)
Convent of Santa Maria de Jerusalem (Observant Franciscan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confraternity of the Guardian Angel (<i>Sant Àngel Custodi</i>) (1532)¹²
Convent of Santa Maria de Montsió (Dominican)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confraternity of the Rosary (<i>Roser</i>) (1488) • guild confraternity of municipal rod-bearers (<i>verguers</i>) and gatekeepers (<i>porters</i>) (1524); patron saint: St Christopher • Confraternity of St Apolonia (1534)
Convent of Sant Pere de les Puel·les (Benedictine)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guild confraternity of cloth dyers (<i>tintorers</i>) (sixteenth century); patron saint: St Maurice • Confraternity of St Magí Martyr (1580) • guild confraternity of market gardeners (<i>hortelans</i>); patron saints: St Abdon and St Sennen • guild confraternity of tailors (<i>sastres</i>); patron saint: St Homobonus
Convent of Sant Antoni i Santa Clara (Benedictine)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confraternity of Our Lady (<i>Nostra Senyora</i>) • guild confraternity of sailors (<i>mariners</i>); patron saint: St Elm • guild confraternity of fishermen (<i>pescadors</i>); patron saint: St Peter • guild confraternity of carpenters (<i>fusters</i>); patron saint: St John the Baptist

¹¹ See *Als Illustres reuerendissims egregis*, and UB, Reserva, 07 Ms 1005, fol. 96^v.

¹² See Marca, *Chronica Seraphica de la Santa Provincia de Catalunya*, 271.

The Musical Activities of Confraternities within Convent Spaces

The musical relationship between confraternities and nunneries is well illustrated by the links between the Jeronymite nunnery in Barcelona and the confraternity of booksellers. Prior to its foundation on 31 January 1553, the confraternity needed to find a church or chapel where the annual feast day of their patron saint, St Jerome, could be celebrated. On 17 May the confraternity signed an agreement with Caterina Rodés, the prioress of the Jeronymite convent, according to which her nuns were obliged to celebrate every year, on the feast day of S Jerome, a solemn Mass at the high altar with priest, deacon, sub-deacon, organ, and sermon in the presence of confraternity members. The nuns likewise had to celebrate first and second Vespers of the feast and to decorate the church for the three days of the celebrations: on the third day a solemn anniversary in memory of deceased members of the confraternity was to be celebrated. The confraternity covered the expenses of these services and also provided candles:

[the Jeronymite nuns] promise the honourable booksellers that they will celebrate at the main altar a solemn Mass with priest, deacon, subdeacon, organ, and sermon on the feast day of the glorious St Jerome; they will adorn the church with drapery and greenery to the best of their ability and use the best vestments, baldachin, and ornaments required for the feast; they will do the same for first and second Vespers of the feast day; they promise that they will not celebrate Vespers and Mass until the honourable booksellers, or at least the majority of them, are present in the convent church.¹³

Ceremonies such as these had a considerable impact on urban daily life, and were often attended by the city councillors, according to them high

¹³ Agreement between the Jeronymite convent in Barcelona and the confraternity of booksellers dated 17 May 1553: "Capitulacio feta per y entre la Rt. Priora y convent de les hieronimes de una part y la confraria dels honorables libraters de la part altra, en poder den francescus mulnell notari de Barcelona de dits monestir y confraria a xvii de maig del any MDLIII"; AHPB, Notaries Francisco Mulnell and Pedro Mambla, *Liber Confratrie sancti Hieronimi bibliopolarum Barchinone*, transcribed in Paulí Meléndez, *Ejemérides históricas del monasterio de San Matías de Barcelona*, 60–61: "[the nuns of the Jeronymite convent] prometent a dits honorables libraters que elles lo dia o festa de dit glorios Sanct Hieronim faran y celebraran en lo dit altar maior solemne offici ab prevere diaca sotsdiaca orgue e sermo e empaliaran y enramaran la dita Iglesia com millor y mes solemnement poran servirse dels millors vestiments palit y altres ornaments a la celebratio de dita festa necessaris que elles tindran E lo mateix faran y servaran a las primeres y segones vespres de dita festivitiat Les quals vespres e offici prometent que no diran ni celebraran lo dit dia y vigilia fins a tant los dits honorables libraters eo la major part de aquells sien presents en la sglesia de dit Monestir." Here and hereafter, all translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

status in the city's annual calendar.¹⁴ According to a book of proceedings of the booksellers' confraternity, the arrangements for the feast day of St Jerome included music, candles, and flowers, as was the custom for many of the confraternities of the city (see fig. 1.1).¹⁵ This document also indicates that the ceremony took place, as did the confraternity's regular meetings, at the convent. The proceedings also include the lists of books printed and bound by aspiring members of the confraternity and submitted for examination; many of these involved liturgical books, some of which would have included printed music.¹⁶ In the 1560s, the prioress Caterina Rodés was succeeded by Violant de Guardiola, who was probably related to Joan Guardiola (d. 1561), a major Barcelonan bookseller and one of the founding members of the confraternity. Guardiola is well known in the musico-logical context for the unusually high proportion of international musical repertory listed in the inventories of his bookshop.¹⁷

The confraternities founded at the convent of Sant Pere de les Puel·les offer a further case study for the analysis of contact between convent nuns and city inhabitants, not only through their musical activities within its walls, but also through donations made by members, and their desire—manifest in their wills—to be buried there. The statutes of the confraternity of St Magí Martyr—whose feast day is 19 August—were submitted for the approval of the bishop of Barcelona on 19 April 1580. The confraternity was founded by two major figures: Bartolomé Vilanova and Pere Guancer, both hebdomads (appointed on a weekly basis to sing Mass) of the convent church, together with twenty members of the church's community of benefice-holders, and two Barcelona citizens: Serapi de Sorribes, then a young member of an established noble family much involved in artistic patronage in the city, and Bartolomé Soldevila, a wool-carder (*paraire*).¹⁸ The abbess at that time, Brígida Millàs (1576–81), was placed in charge of the

¹⁴ Vergés i Fons, *Les jerònimes de Barcelona*, 42–44; González Sugrañes, *Contribució a la història dels antichs gremis*.

¹⁵ AHPB, 409/88, *Llibre d'actes de la confraria de Sant Jeroni dels llibreers de Barcelona* (1 October 1579 to 20 December 1583) ("Book of proceedings of the confraternity of booksellers in Barcelona"), fol. 2^v (September 1580): "font proposat en dit consell lo dia de dita festa si y haura musica candeles y ramelletes." Further references to musical activities at the convent for the feast day of the confraternity's patron saint are found at fols. 3^r, 8^v and 12^v.

¹⁶ AHPB, 409/88, *Llibre d'actes de la confraria de Sant Jeroni dels llibreers de Barcelona*, fols. 1^r, 2^r, 4^r and 7^r.

¹⁷ Madurell i Marimón, "Documentos de archivo," 211–212; Peña Díaz, "Un librero-editor en la Barcelona del XVI," 316; Ros-Fàbregas, "Libros de música," 23–24; Knighton, "Petrucci's Books in Early Sixteenth-Century Spain."

¹⁸ AMSP, *Llibres de visites*, no. 2, fol. 49^v; no. 4, fol. 74^r. A document dated 23 August 1587 states that the Confraternity of Sant Magí had been founded at Sant Pere de les Puel·les seven years earlier; AMSP, *Llibres de visites*, no. 2, fol. 40^v.

administration of the confraternity. On 30 August 1581 the confraternity obtained a number of papal privileges (extended by Pope Clement VIII in 1595), including full indulgence for its members on their death, and other indulgences for those who visited the St Magí chapel on the patronal feast day and attended the ceremonies celebrated in his honour, or participated in the suffrages (*suffragios*) held in memory of deceased members for the relief of their souls in Purgatory. The confraternity had a particularly important role in the lives—and deaths—of its members as regards this particular devotional aspect. The documentation preserved at the convent contains records of monthly payments for weekly Masses in honour of confraternity members, usually celebrated on Wednesdays.¹⁹ In 1596, the confraternity left Sant Pere de les Puel·les and moved to the church of Sant Sebastià, where it still resides today.

Members of confraternities were actively involved in the foundation of Masses and other offices that involved music. On 27 October 1578, the guild confraternity of cloth dyers, also based at the convent of Sant Pere de les Puel·les, endowed an annual celebration of a sung Mass with deacon, subdeacon, and organ in honour of their patron saint, St Maurice.²⁰ In that inaugural year, the money allocated to the organ was spent on repairing, rather than playing, the instrument.²¹ The account books of Sant Pere de les Puel·les make reference to a confraternity of tailors being paid in 1523, and on other occasions, for an anniversary to commemorate Antonio Pla, who was one of its members, and his wife, with a said Mass (*missa baixa*) and a high sung Mass (*missa alta*).²² The visitation books of this convent also include information on a confraternity of market gardeners (*hortolans*) which, on 22 August 1587, had founded the celebration of a low Mass every Sunday at the high altar of Our Lady as well as three anniversaries each year.²³

Other convents were inextricably linked with the ceremonies and musical activities of confraternities. A good example is afforded by the confraternity of the Rosary, founded at the convent of Montsió in 1488.²⁴ This was the oldest community of Dominican nuns in Barcelona, and

¹⁹ AMSP, *Llibres de sagristia*, no. 8 (1581–1693).

²⁰ AMSP, *Manuels de notaris*, no. 61 (1576–80), “Fundació de un ofici solemne per la festivitat de Sant Maurici, eo lo primer Diumenge seguent a ella” (“Foundation of a solemn Mass for the festivity of St Maurice or the Sunday following the feast day”), fols. 62^v–63^v.

²¹ AMSP, *Manuels de notaris*, no. 61, fol. 84^{r-v}. Part of this document is cited in Alcalá, “El Real Monasterio de San Pedro de las Puellas,” 111.

²² AMSP, *Llibres d’abadesses*, no. 185, fol. [2]^v, under the title “sastres” (tailors).

²³ AMSP, *Llibres de de visites*, no. 2, fol. 48^r; no. 4 (1670–72), fol. 75^{r-v}.

²⁴ On this confraternity, see AHPB, 418/59, *Registre de llicencies de la confraria de Santa Maria del Roser* ([1574]–90).

throughout the sixteenth century was not strictly enclosed; the nuns enjoyed a rich musical life, singing, playing musical instruments and receiving singing lessons:

[...] it seems clear that, in the late fifteenth and throughout the sixteenth century, laymen and women continued to enter and leave through the door of Montsió and that the cloister was permeable. Meanwhile the nuns enjoyed a rich cultural life: they read, wrote, sang, played string instruments and even had singing teachers, all this despite increased strictures to the contrary, as is clearly shown in the 1461 statutes (*ordenacions*) drawn up by Marcial de Auro Bello, general of the Dominican Order.²⁵

The feast day in May of the Confraternity of the Rosary was solemnly celebrated at the Dominican convent, and announced by the sound of trumpets and drums who accompanied the crier through the streets.²⁶ Later, when Pope Gregory XIV (r. 1590–91) dedicated the month of October to the Virgin of the Rosary, the confraternity celebrated the “Rosary month” with singing and processions.²⁷ Àngela Pujades (c. 1491–1549), a nun of Montsió, headed the confraternity of the Rosary between 1521 and 1547 and drew up statutes for it.²⁸ A further example is that of the confraternity of St Christopher whose members comprised the municipal rod-bearers (*verguers*) and gatekeepers (*porters*) who signed an agreement with the convent and its prioress, Caterina Amat, in 1524.²⁹ One of the clauses of these statutes concerned the celebration of a solemn Mass on St Christopher’s

²⁵ Hernández Cabrera, “La celda del convento una habitación propia,” 28: “[...] pero parece claro que a finales del siglo XV y a lo largo del XVI mujeres y hombres laicos seguían entrando y saliendo por la puerta de Montesión y que la clausura era permeable. Las monjas, por otro lado, tienen una rica vida cultural, leen, escriben, cantan, tocan instrumentos de cuerda o incluso tienen profesores de canto, todo ello a pesar del endurecimiento de las prescripciones en contra, de las que son clara muestra las ‘Ordenacions’ de 1461 redactadas por Marcial de Auro Bello, general de la orden de predicadores.”

²⁶ Paulí Meléndez, *El Real Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Monte-Sión*, 57; Hernández Cabrera, “Montesión, una comunidad de dominicas en Barcelona,” 114: “Los cofrades [Rosario] y devotos lucraban al monasterio en la fiesta de la virgen del Rosario, en mayo; que se anunciaba por la ciudad al son de trompetas y tambores y, en la celebración de las indulgencias en las festividades de Jesús, María, San Miguel Arcángel, Santo Domingo, San Pedro Mártir y Santa Catalina.”

²⁷ Paulí Meléndez, *El Real Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Monte-Sión*, 60.

²⁸ Adiazola Acha, “Fragmentos de una vida.”

²⁹ AHPB, 278/43, Plec de documentació (1524); Paulí Meléndez, *El Real Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Monte-Sión*, 63–64; Hernández Cabrera, “Montesión, una comunidad de dominicas en Barcelona,” 115.

feast day, with organist (*sonador del orga*), as well as the celebration of Requiem Masses and commemorations for the deceased members of the confraternity and their relatives. Another confraternity, that of St Apolonia (for protection against toothache) was founded at Montsió on 29 January 1534.³⁰ The lyrics of *goigs* (devotional songs in the vernacular similar to the Italian *lauda*) in honour of St Apolonia and other saints associated with the convent were often printed for distribution among those present at the celebration, and some are still preserved today.³¹ These poetic texts, usually in Catalan, were sung by the community in the context of religious celebrations, such as a Mass or a procession. Most were sung to popular tunes that circulated as part of oral tradition: their music was rarely notated.

The Benedictine convent of Sant Antoni and Santa Clara, founded in 1237, was home to the confraternity of Our Lady (*Nostra Senyora*). José García Oro's study of confraternities devoted to the Immaculate Conception shows that their original aim was essentially devotional, but by the late sixteenth century their activities in social welfare had become increasingly important.³² Ceremony and music formed a regular and intrinsic part of their devotions: for example, the statutes of the confraternity of the Most Pure Conception (*la Purísima Concepción*) in Burgos include detailed information about the feast of Our Lady, St Anne and St Francis held at the Franciscan convent, including the celebration of Masses and processions throughout the city, and the participation of instrumentalists.³³ Several receipts of the Confraternity of Our Lady, dated between 1502 and 1526, are preserved in the archive of Sant Antoni and Santa Clara in Barcelona.³⁴ On the first Sunday of every month it was customary to celebrate a sung Mass, with a procession and a responsory for the deceased members of the confraternity. Requiem Masses were also celebrated in honour of its members. Every Sunday, after the main Mass celebrated in the convent church, the Marian antiphon *Conceptio tua* was to be sung.

The confraternity of sailors, also based at this nunnery, celebrated the eve of the feast of their patron saint, St Elm (d. 303), with Vespers sung by the nuns. As was customary among confraternities in Barcelona and elsewhere, the nuns then sang a solemn Mass on the feast day itself, and an anniversary on the following day, and the confraternity paid a small amount to each nun who participated. According to a book from 1598

³⁰ Paulí Meléndez, *El Real Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Monte-Sión*, 61–65; Hernández Cabrera, “Montesión, una comunidad de dominicas en Barcelona,” 114.

³¹ For example, in the case of Montsió, printed *goigs* survive from c. 1740—the *Goigs de la gloriosa verge, y Martyr Santa Polonia*—and 1651: *Goigs del Glorios Sant Nicasi Bisbe y Martyr*.

³² García Oro, “La Corte de España y las cofradías inmaculistas.”

³³ García Oro, “La Corte de España y las cofradías inmaculistas,” 464–465.

³⁴ AMSBM, Box 19, no. 374 (1502).

belonging to the nunnery, this tradition dated back at least to 1461.³⁵ These events acquired a major profile thanks to the attendance of city councillors and wealthy merchants. The guild confraternity of carpenters, dedicated to St John the Baptist, was likewise established at the convent of Sant Antoni and Santa Clara, and its celebrations also included the singing of Masses by the nuns.³⁶ Some confraternities observed more than one feast day during the year, and required the nuns to sing on all these occasions. The confraternity of fishermen organized ceremonies at the convent on the feast days of their patron St Peter, as well as on those of the Assumption of the Virgin, St Andrew and the Virgin of Hope (*Virgen de la Esperanza*). Mass and Vespers were sung by the nuns on at least two occasions annually and the ceremonies customarily included organ, minstrels and sermon:

The confraternity of fishermen has its chapel and altar dedicated to St Peter at the church of this convent, where they organize celebrations on the following days: the feast of St Peter, Our Lady of August, the feast of St Andrew and the Virgin of Hope. The Masses are sung by the nuns on the occasion of the feast days of St Peter and St Andrew, when Vespers are also sung. Organ, minstrels, and a sermon are customarily included. For each Mass, the confraternity pays fifteen sous and a further sou for the nun responsible for pumping the organ bellows.³⁷

These musical arrangements were fairly standard among at least the larger confraternities of the city; the main interest here lies in the specification that the nuns should sing at the Mass and Office.

³⁵ AMSBM, Box 12, no. 743, *Llibre dels càrrecs i oficis* (1598), 88 (chapter 31, “De les confraries fundades en la iglesia del present monestir o que tenen costum venir hi en cert dia”); see the sheets 147–148 (modern pagination), under the title “Expenses arising from the feast of St Elm” (“Despensa de la festa de Sant Elm”).

³⁶ AMSBM, Box 12, no. 743, *Llibre dels càrrecs i oficis* (1598), 90 (chapter 33, “De la confraria de san joan dels fusters”). For a later period, see the book of the confraternity of St Peter Apostle at Sant Antoni (1675), in ACA, ORM, Monacales-Hacienda, Volúmenes, 2124; and the list of members of this confraternity in ACA, ORM, Monacales-Hacienda, Volúmenes, 2130 (1679). On the confraternity and guild of carpenters, see also AHCB, Gremis, Fusters, 37/2, *Llibre de Concels de la Confraria dels fusters* (1583).

³⁷ AMSBM, Box 12, no. 743, *Llibre dels càrrecs i oficis* (1598), 89 (chapter 32, “De la confraria dels pescadors”): “La confraria dels pescadors tenen son capella y altar de sant pere en la iglesia del present monestir en lo qual fan festa en los dias següents // lo dia de sant pere // lo dia de nostra senhora de agost // lo dia de san Andreu // y lo dia de la verge maria de sperança // los ofisis son cantats per les señores monges // en les festes de sant pere y san Andreu y ha primeres vespres // sol y hauer orgue juglars y sermo // per cada hu de dits oficis donen de charitat quinze sous y un sou per la manxadora.”

The Contribution of Confraternities and Nuns to Urban Musical Ceremonies Outside the Cloister

During the sixteenth century, both nuns and confraternities participated in urban musical ceremonies held outside convent premises, notably in the context of major processions in Barcelona. A good example is the convent of Sant Antoni and Santa Clara that served as the destination for the processions seeking divine intervention in times of prolonged drought. For instance, on 7 April 1526, the cathedral canons and clergy, accompanied by the bishop, the city councillors, and many confraternities brought the body of the martyr St Severus in a solemn procession to the convent church where they celebrated a Mass sung by the nuns.³⁸ These processions for relief from drought occurred fairly regularly over a long period of time: on 30 January 1613, the body of the martyr was again brought in solemn procession from the cathedral to the convent church.³⁹ It is not clear whether the nuns participated in the main procession outside the cloister, but this was certainly the case on other occasions.⁴⁰ A good example is the convent's participation in the procession held annually during the Octave of Corpus Christi to which the Abbess invited—and expected—the confraternities based in the convent church to attend. The sailors' guild confraternity of St Elm had already agreed to participate and now that of the carpenters of St John Baptist debated their response to the Abbess's invitation at a council meeting held on 21 June 1604:

It was proposed that since the Abbess of Santa Clara had sent word to the leaders (*promens*) concerning the convent's intention this year to mount the procession of the Most Holy Sacrament outside the church and how, for the greater veneration and honour of the Most Holy Sacrament, the confraternity of St Elm will go in the procession with their banners and lanterns because they have a chapel in the church of Santa Clara, and as this confraternity [of the carpenters] also has a chapel in the said church of Santa Clara, the Abbess

³⁸ *Manual de novells ardits*, 3:377. The same ceremony seeking divine intervention in times of drought is recorded on several occasions; see, among other examples, *Manual de novells ardits*, 3:403 (6 February 1529), 4:61 (23 October 1537) and 4:163–164 (28 April 1545).

³⁹ AMSBM, Box 8, no. 742, *Llibre de les coses dignes de memoria del monestir de S. Clara de Barcelona* (1599–1895), 55.

⁴⁰ An early example is the participation of the nuns of the convent of Santa Maria de Junqueras (of the military Order of Santiago) in the procession held for the translation of the relics of St Eulalia in 1334, although whether their singing was heard on this occasion is not specified: “En l'any 1334, que fou la última Traslació de las Reliquias de S[an]ta Eulalia, las monjas de Junqueras asistiren a la Professó, com consta en lo Arxiu del Capítol de Barcelona”; *Ceremonial dels magnífichs consellers*, vol. 3, chapter 42.

asks the leaders if they would also process with their flag and members and illuminations in the procession to be held on the coming Thursday, the day of the Octave of Corpus Christi. And as the leaders could not by themselves take this decision, it was put before the general council to decide whether they should attend the processions with their flag and lanterns.⁴¹

The decision was taken to participate in the procession with their flag and lanterns, because it was “a Godly act” (“cosa del seruey de deu”). No specific mention is made of their contribution to the soundscape of the city, but it would have been usual for wind-bands to have been involved in the various processions of the Octave of Corpus Christi.

Music was heard in other processions in which both the nuns and the convent-based confraternities participated. For example, the nuns of Sant Pere de les Puel·les and the confraternity of market gardeners based there participated in the procession from the convent that took place through the streets of the city for the octave of Corpus Christi, as on 10 June 1518. The city chronicler reported on the itinerary and the musical aspect of this procession, which was headed by the flag of the confraternity of market gardeners, who walked in pairs holding lighted candles. The abbess of the nunnery carried the convents’ cross and the nuns participated, processing in pairs and carrying lighted candles of white wax in their hands. On this occasion, the music was performed by the thirty or so chaplains of the convent church who sang, while seven musicians played string instruments:⁴²

On this day [10 June 1518] the nuns of the convent of Sant Pere de les Puel·les of the city of Barcelona celebrated the procession known as that of the octave of Corpus Christi. Thus, at six o’clock in the afternoon, the procession left the convent along Sant Pere Street,

⁴¹ “Fonch proposat que atessa la abadessa del monestir de Sta Clara de la present Ciutat a Enuiat a cercar dits promens y a dit com aquest any los dit monestir de Sta Clara comenda a fer la professo del sanctissim sacrament fora de la Isglesia y com pera mes veneratio y honrra del sanctissim sacrament van en dita professo los de la confraria de St Elmo ab los pendos y lluminaria ya asso per tenir cappella dins dita sglesia de Sta Clara y com la present confraria tingue tambe capella en la dita sglesia de Sta Clara dita señora Abadesa supliqua als dits promens fossen seruits de anar ab la bandera y confreres y luminaria de la present confraria a la dita professo sera dijous primer vinent que sera lo die de la [fol. 43^r] octaua de Corpus y com dits promens sols no poden resolver lo faedor per ço dit general consell determinas s ils appareria qual s anas a la dita professo ab la bandera e lluminaria o no [...]”; AHCB Gremis especials, Gremi dels fusters: 2B.37/2, fols. 42^v–43^r.

⁴² Although the city chronicler’s account does not specify this, these instrumentalists may have been drawn from among the blind *oracioners* (or singers and reciters of prayers) who typically sang to the accompaniment of stringed instruments and who were hired to perform in urban ceremonial; see Knighton, “Orality and Aurality”.

going up to the street that crosses the lower part of Sant Pere Street, coming out at Fonellar Street and turning left to go back along the said street of Sant Pere the Lower, and returning to the convent. The order of the procession [was] as follows: the flag of the [confraternity of] market gardeners, and the market gardeners themselves, [processing] in pairs, holding candles; then the banners and the cross of Sant Pere; then the chaplains, who were around thirty, wearing surplices and singing and bearing candles; then the nuns, ordered in pairs and carrying lighted white candles in their hands; then seven musicians, dressed in dalmatics, playing string instruments; then the monstrance on a float carried by priests wearing white robes (*camís*) and stoles, and the baldachin, which was carried by honourable men of the parish church and others; then the reverend abbess carrying the cross and a white candle in her hand between two priests vested as deacon and sub-deacon; then some men of high status and others carrying lighted candles; and many people [followed] out of devotion. All the streets through which this procession passed had been cleaned, swept and ornamented with canopies and well ordered devotional altars. May Our Lord accept this service and allow them to maintain it every year so increasing piety on behalf of all. Amen.⁴³

The last case to be considered here is that of the Dominican convent of the Mare de Deu dels Àngels where a number of confraternities were based: the guild confraternities of ropemakers (*corders*) and of grain-weighers (*mesurers*); and the devotional confraternity of the Most Sweet Name of Jesus (*Dulcissim Nom de Jesus*). Members of these confraternities

⁴³ *Manual de novells ardots*, 3:276–277: “En aquest dia las Rev.ts monjas del monastir de Sanct Pere de les puellas de la present Ciutat de Barchinona faheren professo ques diu de les octavas de Corpore Xpi. Axi a las horas sis apres dinar, la qual parti de dit monastir et tira per lo carrer de Sanct Pere subirá fins al carrer qui travessa al carrer de Sanct Pere jussa et ix devant lo carrer den Fonellar et girant a ma Esquerra tira per lo dit carrer de Sanct Pere jussa, e torna en dit monasteir – Lorde de la qual es lo seguent, que primer anave la bandera dels ortolans, e los ortolans de dos en dos ab ciris en las mans, apres anaven los ganfanons y apres la creu de Sanct Pere, apres los capellans qui eren en nombre de XXX poch mes o menyns ab los sobrepeyllis cantant, e portant ciris en la ma, apres venien las monjas ordonades de dos en dos ab los ciris blanchs encesos en la ma, apres venien set musichs vestits ab dalmáticas sonant instrument de corda, apres venia la custodia sobre una civera que aportaven preveres ab los camis, e stolas vestits et desus lo talem qui aportaven homens de honor de la parrochia, e altres, apres venie la Rev.t abbadessa ab la crossa y un ciri Blanch en la ma en mix de dos preveres vestits com a diacas, e sotsdiacas, apres venien alguns homens de condicio e altres portant ciris encesos, e molta altre gent per devocio. Tots los carres per hont passa dita professo eren molt regats scombrats, e los enfronts empaliats, e envelats los cels, de loch en loch ab altars molt en orda y cosa de devotio. Placie a N.e S.r deu ho accepte en survey y las deix perseverar quiscun any en auctmentatio de bones obres pera tots amen.”

participated, together with the nuns, in specific urban ceremonies in which music formed a part. For example, when in March 1562 the community of nuns moved to a new building inside the city walls of Barcelona, this was treated as a major occasion in urban life: thirty-six nuns, wearing black robes and thick black veils over their faces processed in pairs, together with many members of other ecclesiastical institutions of the city and sixty knights bearing torches. The image of Our Lady of the Angels was carried by members of the confraternities of ropemakers and grain-weighers. The city chronicle provides a detailed account of this event, which includes a description of the nuns singing hymns and responsories as they processed:

[On 19 March 1562] [...] they left the convent dels Àngels, outside this city, and proceeded in this way: first went the banners of Santa Maria del Pi, and then four caskets [*túmols*] or boxes full of bones of dead nuns of the convent carried by porters [*bastaixos*] on their shoulders, accompanied by many people carrying lanterns; and then came the cross of the parish church of Santa Maria del Pi, and then many chaplains, and then the nuns, in this way: first a nun wearing a veil with a crucifix together with two altar boys with two candelabras and covered faces; then came all the nuns in order, forming eighteen pairs, each wearing a black robe and a thick black veil over her face. Among them went officials with rods to ensure that the nuns' path was not blocked, as those present were so numerous that they proceeded with difficulty. They walked singing many holy hymns and responsories, and behind them came many knights and other important people carrying lighted torches, and then came the Blessed Sacrament with its baldachin carried by the magnificent city councilors [...]. And they proceeded from their [old] convent to the Portal Nou and entered the city and passed before the convent of Sant Pere [de les Puel·les], along Sant Pere the Higher Street, past the nunnery of Junqueras, along Condal Street, along Santa Anna Street, Peu de la Creu Street (or "d'en Borra"), and entered the [new] convent [Mare de Deu dels Àngels], [currently] very small and diminutive, but with plenty of space for building, and [it] already had a chapel and choir with its grille, and the nuns installed themselves as best they could [...].⁴⁴ (see fig. 1.2)

⁴⁴ Cases i Loscos *et al.*, *Dietaris de la Generalitat de Catalunya*, 2:120: "E isqueren de dit monestir dels Àngells, de dafora la present ciutat, y anaren en la forma següent: primerament, anaven los ganfarons de la Verja Maria del Pi, y après quatre túmols o caxas plenas de ossos de altres monjes que en dit monestir eren mortes, y aquelles aportaven bastaxos al coll, y al costat de elles molta gent ab gran luminària; y après venia la creu de dita sglésia parrochial del Pi, y après molts capellans; y après de ells venian les monjes, ço és, primerament una monja ab un vell devant la cara, ab un Crist crucificat, alt, ab dues scolanes ab dos canalobres, ab

On this special occasion, with the nuns taking centre-stage as they moved from their former convent outside the city walls to their new home, their voices, singing hymns and responsories, would have been heard in the streets while the confraternities participated in the procession.

This brief survey of the confraternities currently known to have been based in nunneries active in sixteenth-century Barcelona indicates that these were places for encounter, integration, and interaction between different sectors of Barcelona society. The confraternities, both guild and devotional, played an essential role in the musical networks operating in the city and the music they organized—singing, organ-playing, minstrels and other instrumentalists, and the ringing of bells—contributed to the porosity of the cloister and the profile of the convent. The musical life of these nunneries was inextricably linked to that of the city through the hiring of musicians, the circulation of music books, and the specific kind of musical patronage involved in liturgical foundations by both a broad cross-section of individual citizens and by collectives such as confraternities. Convents, with their confraternities, were economic agents within the city, so in this context music can be seen as a commodity that contributed to the networks that underlay the musical cartography of the city and characterized the place occupied by nunneries within this complex system. The connections between convents and confraternities resulted in musical exchanges in fulfilment of their devotional needs and formed part of the larger urban musical networks in which both communities were embedded. However, beyond its necessary contribution to the liturgical performance of Masses, anniversaries and processions, music was heard as a symbol of political power and social status so, according to the eschatological beliefs of the time, was deemed to be an important conduit for reaching heaven, a notion of particular importance to confraternities many of whose devotional and pious activities were dedicated to saving the souls—or at least speeding their paths through purgatory—of their

las caras cubiertas, après venian totas las monjas en orde, eren deuvuyt parells, totes ab sos mantos negres y ab sos vells negres molt spesos en les lurs cares. En entre ellas anaven algunas personas onradas ab ses vergues, procurant no les stanguessen, que la gent que les mirava ere tanta que ab gran treball podien anar a pler. Anaven cantant molts sancts imnes y responsos, y après de elles venien molts cavallers y altra gent onrada ab entorxes enseses, y après venia lo Sanct Sagrament ab lo tàlem, que aportaven los magnífichs concellers; [...] Y vingueren del dit monestir al portal Nou, y entraren dins ciutat, y devant Sanct Pere, per lo carrer Alt de Sant Pere, devant Jonqueres, per lo carrer Condal, per lo carrer de Sancta Anna, per lo dit carrer del Peu de la Creu, àlies d'en Borra, y entraren en dit monestir, encara que molt xic y petit, més lo spay per hobar-lo és molt gran, y un(a) capella que-y havia ja faerenhi un cor ab ses rexes, y se acomodaren lo millor que pogueren [...].”

members.⁴⁵ Much research remains to be done as regards the presence of confraternities in female convents and their contribution to the musical life of their churches and chapels and to their processional activities within their vicinity. This approach is essential for the holistic assessment of the role of music in Barcelona society and for understanding the soundscape of both confraternal devotional activities and convent life.

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CITED WORKS

Abbreviations

ACA	Barcelona. Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó
AHCB	Barcelona. Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat
AHPB	Barcelona. Arxiu Històric de Protocols
AMSBM	Barcelona. Arxiu del Monestir de Sant Benet de Montserrat
AMSP	Barcelona. Arxiu del Monestir de Sant Pere
UB	Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona

Manuscript Sources

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ORM, Monacales-Hacienda, Volúmenes, 2124, *Barcelona, monasterio de Santa Clara. Libro de la cofradia de San Pedro Apóstol* (1675).

ORM, Monacales-Hacienda, Volúmenes, 2130, *Barcelona, monasterio de Santa Clara. Relación de individuos de la cofradía de San Pedro Apóstol* (1679).

Barcelona. Arxiu Històric de Protocols (AHPB)

278/43, *Plec de documentació* (1524).

310/1, *Libre [...] dels actes e contractes e altres coses fahents per lo ofici e confraria dels parayres de la ciutat de Barchinona, 1517, febrer, 12 – 1545, gener, 17.*

⁴⁵ A chapter dedicated to this subject will form part of my forthcoming book *Women in Convent Spaces and the Music Networks of Early Modern Spaces* to be published as part of the Routledge Research in Music series. The classic texts on the meaning of purgatory include Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité de l'au-delà* and Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire*. For Spain, see Eire, *From Madrid to Purgatory*, and for a recent, more general study see Booth and Tingle, *A Companion to Death*.

- 359/37, *Capbreu de la confraria dels pellers*, 1579, març, 9 – 1604, maig, 13; *Capbreu de la confraria dels Pellers tret en lo any MDCXXXII*, 1566, maig, 17 – 1577, maig, 24.
- 409/88, *Llibre d'actes de la confraria de Sant Jeroni dels llibreters de Barcelona* (1579–1583).
- 410/3, *Llibre de negocis de la confraria dels carders de Barcelona*, 1549–1559.
- 414/3, *Liber confrarie boteriorum sub invocacione Sanctorum Georgii, Laurencii et Joannis baptiste presentis civitatis Barcinone*, 1563–1575; *Liber confrarie boteriorum sub invocaciones Sanctorum Georgii, Laurencii et Joannis Baptista, presentis civitatis Barcinone* 1586, març, 13 – 1592, setembre, 13.
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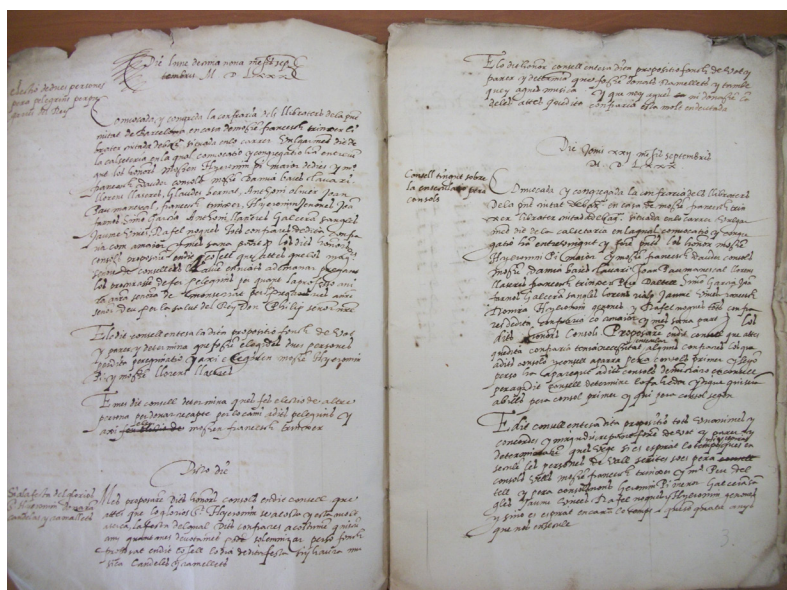


Fig. 1.1. Book of proceedings of the Confraternity of Booksellers in Barcelona (1579–1583). Meetings dated: Monday 19 September 1580, and Thursday 22 September 1580. “Llibre d’actes de la confraria de Sant Jeroni dels llibreters de Barcelona”. AHPB, 409/88; unfoliated.



Fig. 1.2. The choir of the nunnery of la Mare de Déu dels Àngels in Barcelona, photographed in 1918. Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, Fons fotogràfic Salvany.