

Songs of the Innocent Poor: Musical Discipline and the Orphans of Lyon's Aumône*

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On March 2nd of 1589, the rectors of Lyon's Aumône Générale gathered at the Couvent Saint Bonaventure for an emergency meeting. The city council had elected to formally swear allegiance to the Holy Catholic League, the radical contingent that had been holding Paris under a "reign of terror", violently purging the city not only of supposed Protestants, but also of anyone accused of *politique* sympathies. To support this significant decision, the rectors voted to begin holding processions every Tuesday that would feature the orphans from the Aumône's two hôpitaux.¹ The rectors agreed:

... unanimement et d'une mesme voix ... de faire faire processions aux povres orphelins de ladicte Aulmosne, qui sont aux hospitaux de la Chanal et Sainte-Catherine ... chascun jour de mardy, à commencer mardy prochain, lesdictz enfans orfelins despartiront du couvent Saint-Bonadventure deux à deux et les plus petiz premier de degré en degré portans chacun ung cierge flamboyant en la main chantans, quant aux filz la Litanie, et les filles: "Sainte Marie, mère de Dieu, priés pour nous"; et marchera en teste ung, qui portera le Crucifix, à la manière accoustumée; ausquelles processions assisteront tous les recteurs de ladicte Aulmosne, portans chacun ung cierge cyre blanche de demy-livre, accompagnés des mendians de ceste ville, chacun à son tour; marcheront lesdictz enfans ensemble ... piedz et teste nudz; marcheront les bedeaux, teste nue seulement, attendu la peyne qu'ilz auront à dresser par rang lesdictz pauvres.²

This was not the first time the Aumône's orphans had paraded (nor would it be the last). This procession in particular, however, can sharpen our understanding of the role that these orphans played in the city's economy of faith and goes a long way toward explaining why the rectors placed so much emphasis on the practical education of these children. After offering a brief sketch of the broader relevance of the Aumône's processions to the socio-political systems of Lyon, this paper will hone in on the vocal dimension of education at the hôpitaux, particularly as

* I would like to extend my thanks to Xavier Bisaro for encouraging me to pursue musicological research on Lyon's Aumône and to Kate van Orden for her penetrating insights as I developed the ideas in this article.

¹ Archives Municipales de Lyon, Archives de la Charité de Lyon (hereafter AM ACh) E 25, f. 234.

² *Ibid.*

it relates to the orphans' civic role as supplicants. Relying largely on my research in the archives of the Aumône Générale, I argue that the orphans' education was keyed to their public performances. As a result, core aspects of their education were structured by the vocal and bodily discipline of music. I will explore how the archives document the connection between the Aumône and the oral pedagogical practices of the Jesuits, which leads me to argue that the Aumône was one appropriate destination for the simple musical collections published by the Jesuits.

General Procession of the Poor

Since the 1530s, orphans regularly appeared amongst the great mass of about 3000–4500 poor who marched yearly through the streets of Lyon, singing in thanks to their benefactors, those who had donated to the Aumône Générale.³ The Aumône had been permanently established in 1534, but a precursor to the Aumône was first set up in 1531.⁴ It was the brainchild of a number of elites who were seeking to mitigate the anarchic results of the famine afflicting Lyon and the surrounding countryside. According to the humanist cleric Jean de Vauzelle, the city swarmed with starving poor that resembled bodies dug up from their graves—and all you could hear was “I’m dying of hunger, I’m dying of hunger.”⁵

With the population expansion that Lyon had witnessed in previous decades, this crisis presented new challenges, and it had become apparent that the customary individual handouts from churches and wealthy homes were glaringly inadequate. In answer, city notables instated the Aumône Générale to systematize alms of bread and money, which they dished out weekly at the Couvent Saint Bonaventure.⁶ The Aumône also administered two hôpitaux for the city’s orphans, as well as the Hôtel Dieu for the sick and dying, and the city’s leper colony. It was planned from the outset as an efficient centralization of charity.

Operating beyond the traditions of Christian alms-giving, this new institution publicly articulated Catholicity by harnessing the power of the penitential procession, establishing a yearly “general procession of the poor”. Processions of religious, political and even entertaining characters were important means of marking confessional territory at the time. Unlike other such parades, however, marching in the general procession was not optional: it was required of all

3 These statistics are derived from Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, 2nd ed., Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1975, p. 62. Statistics are also given in the AM ACh, in accounting for the distribution of alms at the general processions. In 1558, for instance, they state that 3 *sous* were given to 4175 poor, while in 1559, they state that 3 *sous* again were given to 4061 poor. AM ACh E 9, f. 129, and AM ACh E 9, f. 300. In 1561, however, 3 *sous* were given out to 4488 poor. AM ACh E 10, f. 82.

4 For foundational studies of Lyon’s Aumône Générale, see N. Z. Davis, “Poor Relief, Humanism and Heresy”, in *Society and Culture*, *op. cit.*, and Jean-Pierre Gutton, *La société et les pauvres: l'exemple de la généralité de Lyon 1534–1789*, Ph.D. diss., Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de Lyon, 1970.

5 [Jean de Vauzelles], *Police Subsidiare a celle quasi infinie multitude des povres survenuz a Lyo[n] sur le Rosne lan Mil cinq ce[n]s xxxi. Avec les Graces que les Povres enre[n]de[n]t a Dieu et a messieurs de Leglise aux notables de la Ville. Le tout fort exemplaire pour toutes aultres Citéz. Dirigee a honneste ho[m]me Jehan Baril marcha[n]t de Tholoz pour la co[m]muniquer aux habita[n]s dicelle. Dung vray zelle*, Lyon, vend Claude Nourry, [1531], p. 6, “Courans ca & la par les Eglises, rues & carrefours menoyent tells lamentations jour & nuit que vous neussiez ouy que je meurs de fain, je meurs de fain qui estoit piteuse chose a ouyr.” All translations of the *Police Subsidiare* are my own. On the *Police Subsidiare* having been a sermon see N. Z. Davis, *Society and Culture*, p. 279.

6 For the organizational structure of the Aumône, see *La Police de l'Aumosne de Lyon*, Lyon, Sebastien Gryphius, 1539.

who would receive alms. Those who did not parade were struck from the rolls. Moreover, those who were caught trying to duck out of the procession were struck from the rolls *and* thrown into the Aumône’s tower of punishment.⁷

The procession was held during the Easter fair, specifically because this fair saw the greatest influx of foreign, wealthy merchants to the city—offering an ideal opportunity to solicit charity. The success of this procession was gloriously memorialized in the ordinances of the institution, printed by Sebastien Gryphe in Lyon in 1539 as the *Police de l’Aumosne de Lyon*. In particular, the *Police* trumpets the procession’s pious organization:

Après que cahscun [*sic*] s’est assemble audict convent de saint Bonaventure, les quatre bedeaux dressent l’ordre de la procession. Et sont premiereme[n]t marcher les quatre crieurs des confreries sonnans clochetes. Après l’ung des pauvres orphelins portant une grand croix de boys ... & tous les autres deux a deux avec leur maistre descholle: & vont chantans tout le long de la ville, FILI DEI MISERERE NOBIS. Les filles avecques leur maistresse marchent après en ordre semblable, chantans, SANCTA MARIA MERE DE JESUS PRIEZ POUR NOUS. Et consequement tous les autres pauvres hommes & femmes, en disant leur heures, & pryant pour leurs biensfacteurs. Après sont les quatre mendiens, en leur renc & ordre acoustume qui chantent la letanye. Et a leur suytte marchent messieurs de la Justice, les Conseilliers & Eschevins, les Recteurs, leurs officiers & tous ceulx qui ont devotion a conduyre & acompaigner ladicte procession.⁸

I quote this at length partly to emphasize the minimal attention given to “all of the other poor men and women,” who definitively formed the bulk of the procession. Following the stereotypical procession formulas that we find in printed commemorations of royal and noble entries, this account disregards the actual disorder of the procession.⁹ And despite Natalie Davis’ claim that the Aumône’s weekly handout would have been a relatively sedate affair, we can only imagine that having thousands of underfed, ill-clothed, and potentially unwilling citizens marching through the streets would have been somewhat chaotic.¹⁰

Enter the orphans. Directly on the heels of the procession’s sonic announcement—the ringing of the confraternity bells—a single boy orphan heads the parade, bearing a large wooden cross, and singing a supplicatory litany. The rest of the boy orphans follow in tow, marshalled into pairs, singing in concert. The girl orphans march behind, audibly distinguished as they sing a polylingual Sancta Maria.¹¹

The degree to which the orphans are attended to in both these ordinances, as well as in the archives makes it clear that they were the headliners of the processions. Relative to the thousands of poor, who had to be beaten with sticks by the bedeaux (the Aumône’s proto-police) in order

7 *Police de l’aumosne*, p. 40.

8 *Police de l’Aulmosne*, pp. 40–43.

9 For a typical idealistic description of an entry in Lyon, see *Entrée de la Royne faicte en lantique et noble ville de Lyo[n] lan Mile cinq cens trente et troy le xxvij. de may*, Lyon, Jean Crespin, 1533.

10 N. Z. Davis, “Poor Relief, Humanism and Heresy” in *Society and Culture*, *op. cit.*

11 This description is found in the *Police de l’Aulmosne*, pp. 40–43, as well as many of the Aumône’s archival records of the processions, which either offer similar details, or state that the procession took place “following the custom.” For example, AM ACh E 12, f. 44; E 13, f. 55; E 13, f. 226; E 19, f. 92; E 20, f. 188; E 29, f. 40; E 29, f. 248.

to be kept in line, the orphans were comparably disciplined, organized by the metric regulation of chant, and surveilled by their schoolmaster and mistress. In itself, this made it pragmatic to foreground the orphans in the processions. But there was also a spiritual motivation for doing so, which had to do with the orphan's unique role within the city's economy of faith.

According to Catholic precepts, the poor in general had a special supplicatory connection to Christ. The processions of the poor made this bond theatrically visible by stationing a huge wooden cross near the front of the parade—a vision that would have solicited memories of Passion plays and Good Friday processions. The procession route described in the ordinances also aligns with the territory and markers of popular feast-day processions (fig. 1).¹² This general procession replicates the first half of the city's all-parish Corpus Christi procession (fig. 2), which moved from Saint Jean, north to Saint Paul, across the Saône bridge to Saint Nizier, over to Saint Bonaventure; what was missing was the latter half of the procession, when the cortège would move into the printing and commercial quarter.¹³ This was a route that would remain much the same for the general processions of the poor throughout the sixteenth century.

The rectors' choice of a partial Corpus Christi procession would have been familiar to residents of Lyon, serving to link the celebration of the body of Christ to the parading poor. During the period that the Aumône was established, Corpus Christi processions had become charged religious events, owing mostly to their public veneration of a sacrament acknowledged by Catholics and not Protestants: the real presence of the Host. As Protestants and Catholics vied for sacred territory in what were supposedly "secular" city spaces, the very emphasis on procession within Catholic ritual helped to secure their dominance. Amanda Eurich has argued that official policies could define neutral areas, but with Catholic devotional practice such as Corpus Christi, "fixed, holy sites of the Catholic community expanded into the neutral spaces of the city, transforming the streets, squares and structures around them into 'virtual' churches, visible manifestations of the Church triumphant."¹⁴ The poor processions came to further define this Catholic territory.

While the poor processions were marked by linkages to the sufferings of Christ, the role of the poor as the Godly beggars of the community was fraught. For the potential to spiritually cleanse the city by processing the poor through the streets was at odds with a concomitant desire to *remove* them from urban space. Despite the Aumône's attempts to distinguish between "deserving" and "undeserving" poor, by and large, they assumed that the poor would dwell in an irremediable moral laxity.

12 *Police de l'aumosne*, p. 43, "Au partement dudict convent prennent leur chemin le long de la grand rue de la-grenette, & passent sur le pont de Saone en la rue saint Eloy, & entre les deux esglises de saint Paul, & saint Laurens. Et de la se vont par les rues, de la Juifrie, des changes & saint Jehan passer au devant de la grand esglise dudict saint Jehan, entrent au cloistre de la maison de l'Arcevesque ... ou tous lesdicts pauvres recoyvent (oultre leur aulmosne ordinaire) trois deniers tournoys. ... Ceste aulmosne faicte se fait ung sermon general en l'eglise dudict saint Jehan".

13 The second half proceeded by first going down to the Rhône bridge hospital, northwest to Notre-Dame de Confort, back up rue Merciere, to return to Saint Jean via the Saône bridge.

14 Amanda Eurich, "Sacralizing Space: Reclaiming Civic Culture in Early Modern France", in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by William Coster and Andrew Spicer, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 272.

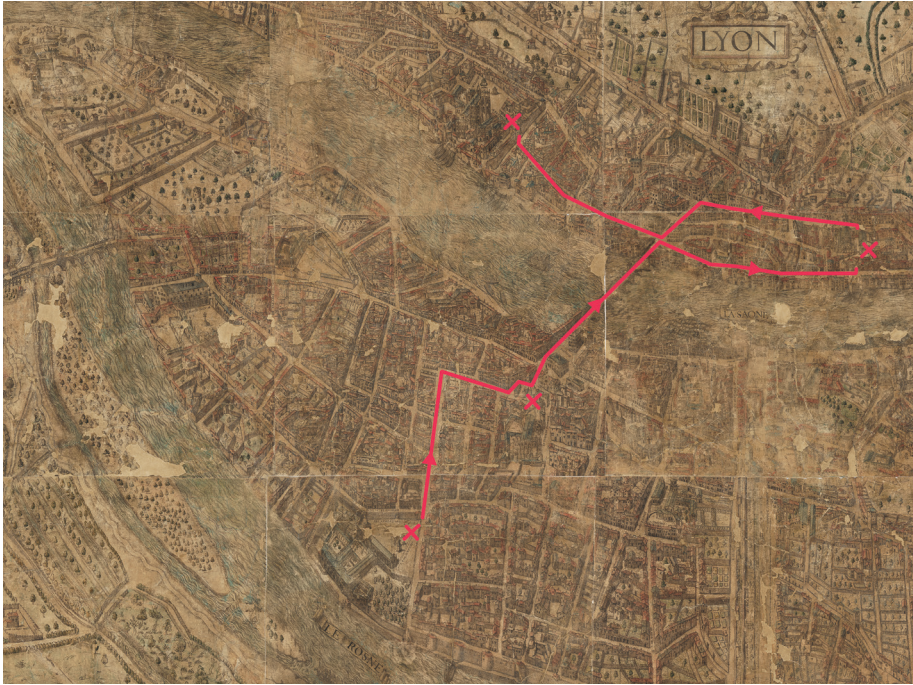


FIG. 1 Poor Procession described in *Police de l'Aulmosne* (1539).
Route superimposed onto *Plan scénographique de Lyon vers 1550*, AM Lyon 2 SAT 3.
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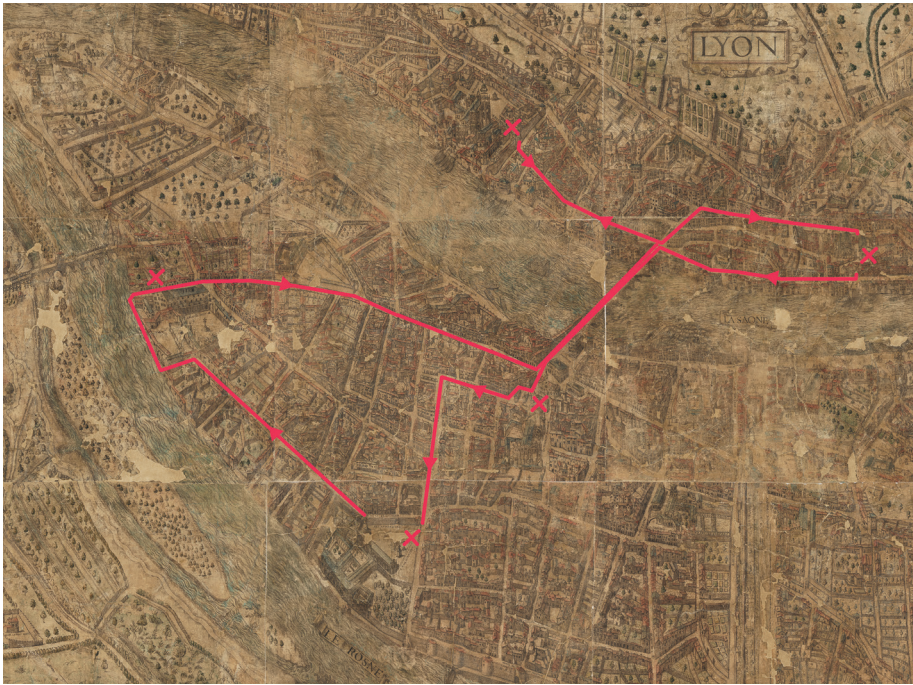


FIG. 2 General Corpus Christi Procession Route in Lyon
Route superimposed onto *Plan scénographique de Lyon vers 1550*, AM Lyon 2 SAT 3.
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The orphans, on the other hand, provided the rectors with a ready representation of innocent poverty, in part because they had been “rescued” from the potential corruptions of street life, and also because these rectors recognized the malleability of childhood. Since the orphans could be indoctrinated young, they could be saved from the supposed loose morals of their social class.

Innocent Students

The Aumône accepted a wide spectrum of children into their hôpitaux. Often, these “orphans” could still have living parents who simply could not afford to care for them; in one instance, a mother brought her daughter to the Hôpital Sainte-Catherine in order to punish her.¹⁵ The Aumône’s main requirement was that the orphans had to be children of Lyonnais residents.¹⁶ In a move particular to Lyon, the rectors actually adopted these orphans, becoming their legal guardians.¹⁷ These rectors thus had a lot riding on the public behaviour of their redeemed Lyonnais subjects, counting on 300–400 orphans aged 7 to 15 to display the good work of the Aumône.

The orphans were mustered for various public roles beyond the general processions. For one, they were frequently sent to stand over the alms boxes that were set up across the city’s parishes.¹⁸ Importantly, they were also sought out by city notables to pray at their funerals. The archives offer a wealth of information about the material used by the orphans in attending funerals—the candles, and *robes de deuil*—because these cost money.¹⁹ The cheapest aspect of their pious display, however, was arguably the most effective: the performance of Catholic chants. For these chants were believed to effect change in this world and the next. Add the power of pure paupers behind them, and these chants pleading for the eternal salvation of diseased benefactors would be certain to reach God’s ear.

We know that there was great demand for the orphans’ services at funerals because in the 1570s and 1580s the Aumône began to restrict how often they could be sent out. Apparently, the orphans began to lose money, as people failed to pay for their services after making requests. Such monetary concerns could have been a motivation to spotlight the orphans’ singing, the least costly facet of their participation. Some bequests imply that the orphans’ primary role was to march in the funeral procession, wherein, as in the processions of the poor, they held white candles and sang prayers. Perhaps they were singing their typical processional Sancta Maria and Litany, but broader Catholic practices would suggest that they may also have been singing appropriate chants from the Office of the Dead.

¹⁵ AM ACh, E 10, f. 214 (Sunday 15 March, 1561).

¹⁶ For example, a situation had arisen in 1544 where the rectors needed to reiterate that “enfants estrangers” or children born outside of the city could not be brought into the Aumône, and had to be sent back to their home. AM ACh E 6, ff. 398–99.

¹⁷ N. Z. Davis, *Society and Culture*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

¹⁸ AM ACh E 5, ff. 376–77 (April 1539); E 7, f. 422 (December 1550).

¹⁹ Archives for 1549–51, in AM ACh E 7, largely center on goods when referring to funerals at which the orphans performed, for example. The archives focus on this issue with greater urgency during a period of extreme economic downturn in the 1580s.

A Musical Education

How, then, were these orphans being trained for their role as the city's supplicants? The ordinances of the Aumône state that the boy orphans were to be taught how to read and write and "all other good manners that we can and should teach young children".²⁰ The girls, on the other hand, were to be taught their faith, and "the good skills necessary for servant women".²¹ Education was unsurprisingly gendered, and more resources (and thus more archival records) were dedicated to the boy orphans at La Chana. Regardless of their gender, the orphans were hired out as apprentices anywhere from about 10 to 15 years old. But even then, they were called back from their masters if they were needed for a funeral or procession.

The schoolmasters that were hired at La Chana throughout the sixteenth century were mostly priests, and, based on the accolades that some of them received from the rectors, their instruction put the children on a path that the Aumône approved of.²² Presumably, given the public importance of the orphans at city notables' funerals, a primary goal would have been the acquisition of skills for funeral ceremonial—both in the sense of basic "civilized" behaviour, and as regards the specific musical performances that these funerals demanded. A payment made in 1559 to the book merchant Antoine Volant for fifty-five *sous tournois* for three dozen *Heures* and three dozen *Chartes* suggests that these basic pedagogical aims were being achieved, if not exceeded. The purchase of the *Heures* may partly indicate training in at least a basic level of literacy, for the ABCs that were often sold with and bound to Books of Hours were frequently used as primers. As Kate van Orden has shown, much elementary "reading" was based more within aural (often musical) memory. In fact, van Orden has shown that such "reading" with texts like the ABCs bound to Book of Hours "activated a matrix of background knowledge stored in musical form"²³—for students were learning to "read" texts that they already knew as songs from Sunday school and catechism.

The ubiquity of Books of Hours also points to a linguistic issue that is clearly at play within the description of the general procession of the poor in the *Police de l'Aumosne*, which states that the girl orphans were singing "Sancta Maria, priez pour nous". This phrase appears in many guises as a supplication in both plainchant and polyphony, but its most widespread usage was as the litany "Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis" or as the latter half of the Ave Maria.²⁴ The Ave Maria was one of three basic prayers all Christians were required to know (the other two being the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed).²⁵ It is possible that the orphan girls were singing a por-

20 *Police de l'aumosne*, p. 41.

21 *Ibid.*

22 The priest Hugues Narbollier, schoolmaster at La Chana by at least 1537, for example, was given a bonus by the rectors in 1543 in recognition of his great service. AM ACh E 6, f. 343. He remained the schoolmaster until 1545, when he fled during a plague epidemic. AM ACh E 6, ff. 480–81.

23 Kate van Orden, "Children's Voices Singing and Literacy in Sixteenth-Century France", *Early Music History* 25, 2006, p. 216. Van Orden here glosses an argument from Roger Chartier's "Communities of Readers" in *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe Between the 14th and 18th Centuries*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1994.

24 For a discussion of the broad use of various "Ave Maria" prayers, and their relevance to musical composition and practice, see *ibid.*, pp. 209–56.

25 Virginia Reinburg, *French Books of Hours: Making an Archive of Prayer, c. 1400–1600*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 88.

tion (or the entirety) of the Ave Maria, but whatever the case, they were definitively singing a supplicatory phrase that had widespread currency. The striking issue with this very common prayer is that it is referred to in the *Police de l'Aumosne* as a poly-lingual text. The mixture of Latin and French here speaks to more general issues about the vernacular in religious education and ritual, a matter in which the Jesuits would become thoroughly embroiled as they advocated for extensive use of the vernacular in all of their European and colonial proselytizing. The performance of a polylingual “Sancta Maria, priez pour nous” in 1539, furthermore, points to a relationship with Books of Hours which, by the 1520s, were mostly Latin-French hybrids.²⁶ The Office of the Virgin, in fact, was generally translated into French, and it was also the textual heart of the Book of Hours.²⁷ The use of Books of Hours within the Aumône’s educational paradigm would have been basic and essential; the poly-lingual content of these texts also specifically intimates the possibility of education in the vernacular, including the potential use of the vernacular in key Catholic chants. Practically, the purchase of so many Books of Hours supports the aforementioned suggestion that the orphans were performing from the Office of the Dead at the funeral services that they attended, for this Office was typically included in most *Heures*.

The only period during which Catholic training and its correlated oral practices did not dominate at the Hopitaux was the fourteen months of Protestant rule, from 1562–63. As part of their coup, the Protestants took over the administration of the Aumône. Significantly, while the Protestants were in power, the Aumône was promised a donation of one hundred official Genevan psalters (all of which would have had musical notation) from the merchant-printer and former Aumône rector, Antoine Vincent, for use by the children at La Chana.²⁸ The Protestant psalter was, of course, considered a key component of indoctrination, and children were particularly targeted as absorbent subjects. Since they sang at funerals (though this practice would have been halted during the Protestant rule), likely at the alms boxes, and definitely at the general processions of the poor (though, again, not in 1562), the orphans would have received a certain level of musical training. A donation as large as one hundred psalters suggests that the Protestants intended for the boy orphans to receive training in musical literacy, for such ample quantities of musical prints would not have been necessary if the orphans were only going to be trained by rote to sing the psalms.

Jesuit dominance of Aumône

Once the Protestants were removed from power, the Hôpital de la Chana began to develop close ties with the Collège de la Trinité—an institution that had been fully overtaken by the ultra-Catholic Jesuits by 1567. For one, through an endowment from the former rector, nobleman Hugues Athiaud, the Aumône was able to send up to six promising orphans to attend the Collège every year (a tradition that would last well into the eighteenth century).²⁹ For much of

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²⁸ AM ACh E 10, ff. 443–44.

²⁹ The registers of La Charité from 1760 suggest an impressive continuity of this endowment: “il y a toujours ... dans cet hôpital, six enfans qu’on fait étudier au collège, sous le nom des: *enfants Athiaud*.” *Inventaire sommaire*, Serie C, 2: 4.

this period, this would have meant receiving a Jesuit education and participating in the extravagant musical-theatrical productions that the Collège mounted each year.³⁰

The Aumône in general also began to grow increasingly connected to the Jesuits—unsurprisingly at the moment when their influence was substantially mounting in the city. In 1580, the Jesuit Émond Auger even gave the sermon at the end of the general procession of the poor at Saint Jean.³¹ The Jesuits’ extensive pedagogical influence in the city surely also took hold at the Hopitaux. Another educational purchase at the Aumône in 1582 points to this possibility, for the rectors bought two dozen *Phabetz*, two dozen *Vita Christi*, two dozen *Catons*, six *Pellissonnet*, and a dozen *Cathéquismes* for the children at La Chana—all from Jean Pillehotte, a zealous Catholic and the Jesuit’s official printer.³² Given the great success of Auger’s catechism (Henri Hours has estimated that about 40,000 copies were printed in the eight years after its initial publication), and Pillehotte’s connection with the Jesuits, the dozen catechisms were probably Auger’s *Catechisme et sommaire de la religion chrestienne avec un formulaire de diverses prieres catholiques*, printed in Lyon in 1563, 1564, and 1568 by the other official Jesuit printer, Michel Jove.³³

Jesuit tunes

The purchase of these books from Pillehotte connects the Aumône materially with the effects of Jesuit pedagogy. It seems likely, then, that Jesuit practices of musical indoctrination could have taken root at the Aumône—for music was considered integral to Jesuit proselytizing, both in Europe and in the colonies. As the Jesuit François Le Mercier recalled of his time with the “sauvages” of Nouvelle-France, “When these songs pass from the ear to the heart, it is a stroke of salvation and a sign that God wills to become the Master thereof.”³⁴

Given his political and religious connections with the rectors, Pillehotte might have peddled them his print of the Jesuit father and rector of the Collège de la Trinité, Michel Coyssard’s 1592 *Paraphrase des Hymnes et Cantiques Spirituelz pour chanter avecque la Doctrine Chrestienne*. The *Paraphrase* translates into the vernacular texts from the catechism, and, as Denise Launay explains, it was intended as a musical supplement (rather than a replacement)

30 On such spectacles at the Collège, see Pierre Guillot, *Les Jésuites et la musique. Le Collège de la Trinité à Lyon, 1565–1762*, Liège, Mardaga, 1991. Most of the extant sources for such spectacles begin in the seventeenth century, but the students were apparently performing in (musical-) theatrical pieces throughout the Jesuit control of the school; while some of these productions were for great political figures like Henry IV, most of them were actually encomia to the city council.

31 AM ACh E 20, f. 49.

32 AM ACh E 21, ff. 78–79.

33 On the Hours statistic, see Brandon Hartley, “War and Tolerance: Catholic Polemic in Lyon During the French Religious Wars”, PhD diss., University of Arizona, 2007, p. 256. The rest of the purchases also suggest a relatively advanced educational program. The “Catons” and “Pellissonnets” would have been used, respectively, in the *cinquième* class, the first step up from the *abécédaire*, where students would have continued to practice reading and writing Latin; and in the next level, the *quatrième*, where students began to study Terence and Cicero, through the help of humanist grammarians like Pellisson (as well as Valla, Linacre, and Clénard). See George Huppert, *Public Schools in Renaissance France*, Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1984, p. 53. The use of Pellisson in Lyon was particularly fitting, as he had been hired as a teacher at the Collège de la Trinité in 1533.

34 *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, ed. By Reuben Gold Thwaites, New York: Pageant book, 1959, vol. LXI, p. 221.

CANTIQUE S
PARAPHRASE DV
Pater noſter.

SUPERIVS.

N Oſtre Pere qui des cieux Habites au
grand domaine, Ton ſainct nom ſoit glo-
rieux, Ton Royaume nous aduienne.

TENOR.

N Oſtre Pere qui des cieux Habites
au grand domaine, Ton ſainct nom ſoit glo-
rieux, Ton Royaume nous aduienne.
Vien

SPIRITVELZ.
PARAPHRASE DV
Pater noſter.

CONTRATENOR.

N Oſtre Pere qui des cieux Habites au
grand domaine, Ton ſainct nom ſoit glo-
rieux, Ton Royaume nous aduienne.

BASSVS.

N Oſtre Pere qui des cieux Habites au
grand domaine, Ton ſainct nom ſoit glo-
rieux, Ton Royaume nous aduienne.

FIG. 3 "Pater Noster" from Coyssard, *Paraphrase des Hymnes*
BnF Res VMD 14. With permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France

for the catechism manual.³⁵ This collection would have provided an apt musical addition to Coyssard's own catechism, or to the Auger catechism that the Aumône likely already owned. The chants paraphrased here were also those that the orphans were likely required to perform most often—including, of course, their processional Ave Maria, as well as the litany.

The kinds of musical practices that are laid out in Coyssard's *Paraphrase* were experimented with by the Jesuits well before they were put into print; after all, these publications were still oriented towards oral practice, and very likely learning by rote. The Catholic hierarchy remained uncomfortable with giving the *menu peuple* access to the Word; and Jesuit pedagogy remained focused on learning practices that could be surveilled, something particularly suited to musical learning.³⁶ The (literally) captive audience of the orphans, who necessarily needed to be trained in singing chants for processions and funerals, would have provided an ideal group for the Jesuits'

35 Denise Launay, *La musique religieuse en France du Concile de Trente à 1804*, Paris, Société Française de Musicologie, 1993, p. 120.

36 In the seventeenth century, after visiting the orphan Hôpitaux, Étienne Chomen, a rector of the Aumône, gave a report to the Bureau, where he suggested having the La Chana orphans read at dinner, replicating practices

musical-pedagogical essays.³⁷ With the exception of the apparent plan of the Protestants to train the orphan boys to read music, none of the pedagogical purchases at the Aumône point to a likelihood that these children were being taught to read music, necessarily. Fittingly, the elementary polyphonic language of Coyssard's *Paraphrase* would have been well suited to learning by rote.

The simplicity of the four-voice vernacular settings in Coyssard's *Paraphrase* would have been appropriate to the elementary musical training and demure performances demanded of orphans aged 7 to 15 at such events. One might imagine the orphans singing many of the sweet settings from the collection while stationed in front of the collection boxes. The homophonic setting of the "Pater Noster", as part of the Office of the Dead, could have been sung at funeral processions, with the schoolmaster taking up the bass (fig. 3).³⁸ One piece that would have been particularly suited to preliminary exercises in polyphonic singing is the "Canon à quatre en unison", a canon for four high voices that sets terse little paraphrases of the Ten Commandments (example 1).³⁹

Such a round could easily have been taught by rote, as each voice enters every sixth *tactus*, and the musical phrases are simple, but memorably distinct. The melody would have offered some playful interest to these child performers, as it moves from a catchy Parisian chanson rhythm at its opening ("Adore un Dieu."), into pattery semiminims ("Ne sois meurtrier. Ni paillard."), finally leaping to its peak pitches on the final phrase ("A l'autrui ne pretens."). This canon would have been particularly pragmatic for performances by the orphans in settings that demanded flexible timing, as they could have cycled through the canon *ad infinitum*, until their innocent voices were no longer required.

Two other pithy settings in the Coyssard *Paraphrase* would have been especially suited to the musical demands made of the orphans: the two little litanies, "Kyrie eleison", and "Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis" (fig. 4). Set in decorated homophony, the top three voices of both of these brief settings could have been performed by the orphans during the great processions of the poor, while their schoolmaster could have helped to monitor and organize their singing by, again, holding down the bass. Coyssard's settings were, after all, linguistic variations on the chants that the orphans were described as singing in the *Police de l'Aulmosne* of 1539—where the boys sang "Fili dei miserere nobis", and the girls, "Sancta Maria mère de Jesus, priès pour nous".

from the Jesuit colleges: "pendant leurdict repas, les ungs après les aultres, les plus capables feroient lecture, comme l'on faict aux colléges". AM ACh E 29, f. 273 (1604).

37 In 1561, the Hôpital Sainte Catherine actually set up a prison, in order to punish and extirpate the debauchery of the young women therein: "il y a plusieurs filles adoptives à l'Aulmosne que font les folles et permectent se cognoistre charnellement et déflorer, de sort qu'il en est advenu plusieurs scandalles, et qu'il seroit de besoing les chastier ung peu rigoureusement pour donner exemple aux aultres." AM ACh E 10, f. 312 (August 1561). References in the archives to girl orphans needing to be punished and imprisoned for their degeneracy continue well into the seventeenth century.

38 A later print by Coyssard could also have proven useful for orphans' performances at funerals, *Les Hymnes Sacrez, et Odes Spirituelles. Pour chanter devant, & apres la Leçon du Catechisme, Avec un petit Traicté du profit, qu'on en tire*, Lyon, Jean Pillehotte, 1608. This collection contains numerous chants for the Office of the Dead. The print, however, did not necessarily offer the simple polyphonic interest of the *Paraphrase des Hymnes*, for all of these paraphrases are given without music, but assumedly were to be sung as contrafacta. See also Kate van Orden's discussion of both of these collections in "Children's Voices", art. cit.

39 There is also a seven-voice canon with even shorter musical phrases that is written out in a clear early modern hand in the only known surviving edition of the Coyssard *Paraphrase des Hymnes*, which is held at the BnF. Res VMD 14. Discussed in van Orden, "Children's Voices", art. cit.

A - dore un Dieu. Ne jure en vain son nom. Gar - der les fes - tes. Ho - nore tes pa - rens. Ne sois meur
 A - dore un Dieu. Ne jure en vain son nom. Gar -
 A -

12
 trier. Ni pai-llard. Ni lar - ron. Ni faux tes - moin. A l'au - truy ne pre - tens.
 der les fes - tes. Ho - nore tes pa - rens. Ne sois meur trier. Ni pai-llard. Ni lar - ron. Ni faux tes -
 dore un Dieu. Ne jure en vain son nom. Gar - der les fes - tes. Ho - nore tes pa -
 A - dore un Dieu. Ne jure en vain son

21
 moin. A l'au - truy ne pre - tens.
 rens. Ne sois meur - trier. Ni pai-llard. Ni lar - ron. Ni faux tes - moin A
 nom. Gar - der les fes - tes. Ho - nore tes pa - rens. Ne sois meur -

27
 l'au - truy ne pre - tens.
 trier. Ni pai-llard. Ni lar - ron. Ni faux tes - moin. A l'au - truy ne pre - tens.

EX. 1 Realisation of "Adore un Dieu" from Coyssard, *Paraphrase des Hymnes*
 BnF. Res VMD 14

SPIRITVELZ. 28

Pro Litanis.

SUPERIVS.

K Yrie eleison.

CONTRATENOR.

K Yric eleison.

TENOR.

K Yrie eleison.

BASSVS.

K Yrie eleison.

CANTIQUES SPIRITVELZ.

SUPERIVS.

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

CONTRATENOR.

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

TENOR.

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

BASSVS.

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

FIN.

FIG. 4 “Kyrie eleison” and “Sancta Maria” from Coyssard, *Paraphrase des Hymnes* BnF. Res VMD 14. With permission of Bibliothèque nationale de France

Coyssard’s collection would have done double duty, building the orphans’ store of songs suitable to their civic performances, while also extending the educational work of catechism. As Coyssard himself argued, music imprinted itself better on the soul than words alone—it was a “saule” used to flavor an otherwise dry meat.⁴⁰ If these orphan students were learning this simple polyphony by rote, one or two instructor volumes of the *Paraphrase* would have sufficed at the hôpitaux. After all, printed with all parts contained in one book (rather than as individual partbooks), the material form of the *Paraphrase* betrays its likely usage as a print for teachers. As Kate van Orden has argued, the upright octavo format of the *Paraphrase* was very unusual for French music books of the time, but ideal for binding with catechisms or books of hours.⁴¹

Purging the Streets

The ties between the Aumône and the Jesuits that allow us to imagine these musical utterances were at their height around the period that Coyssard’s *Paraphrase* was printed. As radical Catholicism took hold in the later 1580s, the orphans were surely deployed in various public rites

40 Coyssard in D. Launay, *La musique religieuse*, op. cit., pp. 119–30.

41 Kate van Orden, *Materialities: Books, Readers, and the Chanson in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 139.



FIG. 5 March 1589 Procession of the Poor
Route superimposed onto *Plan scénographique de Lyon vers 1550*, AM Lyon 2 SAT 3.
© Gilles Bernasconi / Archives municipales de Lyon

of spiritual cleansing, perhaps in the style of the weekly 1589 processions with which I opened this paper. The differentiated route taken by these marching orphans in 1589 alerts us to the political motives of such processions. Here, the orphans follow the latter half of the Corpus Christi procession route that was always lacking in the general procession of the poor (fig. 5).⁴² Rather than visiting important Catholic sites—in particular, the entire left side of the Saône, including the Cathédral Saint Jean, and the loci of the Church of Lyon—the orphans encircle the entirety of the commercial district. The procession, religious in function, seems to have been oriented towards affectively eliciting the political support of the artisan and merchant population of the “Côté Nizier” as the city shifted into explicit allegiance with the Holy Catholic League.

In coordination with the rise of aggressive Catholicism, the rectors of the Aumône began to obsess over purging the poor from the streets. They forced them to don identity badges—crosses of red and blue—and began to devise plans to lock them up for good.⁴³ As these dreams were

⁴² “... l'on despartira dudict couvent, tirant à la grand rue du Puys-Pelloux, droict à l'Hostel-Dieu du pont du Rhosne, de la à Confort, par rue Mercière, jusques à l'esglise Saint-Nizier, et, au retour, par la Grenette et place des Courdellier, jusques audict couvent”. AM ACh E 25, f. 234.

⁴³ AM ACh E 21, ff. 48 and 68. Badges for the poor seem to have been enforced for the rest of the century, and a request for 1500 such crosses appears in 1613. AM ACh, E 31.

realized, the orphans took on an increasingly dominating role in the processions. As of 1614, when some of the poor were first enclosed in the old plague building, the Hôpital Saint Laurent, the confined poor were corralled on either end by the singing orphans, and they were conclusively denied entry to Saint Jean.⁴⁴

With the great confinement of the poor in the seventeenth century, the orphans would continue to be thrust into public roles, singing, praying, and marching on behalf of the elites of Lyon. And bequests would continue to suggest the importance of their musical education. When archdeacon Antoine Gilberte offered to help finance the purchase of a building to confine the poor in 1615, it was on the condition that, every year in perpetuity, the orphans at both La Chana and Sainte-Catherine would perform a *De Profundis* and a *Salve Regina* in honour of their benefactors.⁴⁵

When I first began exploring the great archival tomes that record the weekly *bureau* of the Aumône, I imagined optimistically that I might fall upon rich descriptions of the quotidian musical experiences of the Hôpitaux's orphans. Realistically, the archives focus predominantly on finances—making it stand in relief when the rectors of the Aumône turned their attention to cultural actions. These rectors were powerful figures in the city. They moved between the board of the Aumône and the city council, and held sway over pivotal civic decisions. The weight that they placed on the supplicatory performances of the orphans—evidenced in particular by the 1589 processions—highlights the expectations they would have held for public education. During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, these performances were dominated by simple musical prayers. The material connections between the Aumône and the city's Jesuits, attested to by the Aumône's pedagogical purchases, may clue us in to possible application of collections such as Coyssard's *Paraphrase* as references for the institution's teachers. Such use underlines the orality of the orphans' musical education, as students would have learned the musical practices proper to their civic role through imitation and immersion.

In a country torn apart by the Wars of Religion, Lyon's Hôpitaux would not develop the elaborate musical practices of Italian Ospedali. But it was precisely the bloody conflicts internal to France's second city that would define the spiritual and orderly importance of these orphans. As the adopted children of the city, the orphan students of the Aumône purged the city streets of Lyon in the pure voice of poverty.

44 AM ACh E 32, f. 320.

45 *Inventaire sommaire*, Serie C, 10: 21.

