

# Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's Musical Rapports A Tercentenary Remembrance

## I. SOR JUANA'S APPEAL TO ALL SOCIAL LEVELS IN HER VILLANCICOS

SOR JUANA INÉS DE LA CRUZ's life span (1648/51–April 17, 1695) interfaced with the terms of three Mexico City Cathedral *maestros de capilla*—Francisco López Capillas (April 21, 1654–January 18, 1674), José de Agurto y Loaysa, = José de Loaysa y Agurto (*maestro de los villancicos, maestro compositor*, and from 1685 to 1688 *maestro de capilla*), and Antonio de Salazar (active from appointment August 25, 1688 to his death March 25, 1715). Among these three, Agurto y Loaysa—who had ranked sixteenth among nineteen Mexico City Cathedral hired choristers in 1647, who lived at Toluca the year that Salazar replaced him, and who continued thereafter heading the roll of cathedral musicians as late as January 7, 1695, the year of Sor Juana's death<sup>1</sup>—composed the music for her August 15 and December 8, 1676 villancico sets (suites). Although lacking her name on the covers of the two

1676 villancico booklets, both 1676 sets are hers, because of concordances in her 1689 Madrid and 1692 Seville publications.<sup>2</sup> Agurto y Loaysa also composed the music for another three sets that lack her name on the cover pages, but that according to her editor Alfonso Méndez Plancarte are hers also: those for August 15, 1677, 1685, and 1686.<sup>3</sup> Finally, Agurto y Loaysa provided the music for three sets, the texts of which are attributed to her in the booklets themselves: those for June 29, 1677, August 15, 1679, and for June 29, 1683.

Antonio de Salazar while still *maestro de capilla* at Puebla Cathedral supplied the music for four sets attributable to her: June 29, 1680 and 1684, December 25, 1680, August 15, 1681; and after his move to Mexico City for a pair attributable to her, those for June 29, 1691, and 1692. One Christmas set attributable to her reached print at Puebla while Salazar was chapelmaster (Viuda de Juan de Borja y Gandía, 1678) without either lyricist or composer being specified. In addition, Salazar provided the music for one Mexico City set that concords with an

<sup>1</sup> Documented biographical details in Robert Stevenson, *Christmas Music from Baroque Mexico* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 60–61, were supplemented by inclusion at pp. 154–159 of his sole villancico published to date, *Vaya vaya de cantos de amores, A 4 con acompañamiento*. The four vocal parts (Ti Ti A Te) and Acompañamiento survive in the Santísima Trinidad archive now deposited at the Centro Nacional de Información, Documentación e Investigación Musical (CENIDIM), located in 1995 at Torre de Investigación 7° piso, Tlalpan y Río Churubusco s/n Colonia Country Club, Delegación Coyoacán, México, D. F., 04220. For details concerning the collection see note 16 below.

<sup>2</sup> *Obras completas de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, II. *Villancicos y letras sacras*, ed. Alfonso Méndez Plancarte (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1952), pp. 355, 365–366, 464. Both villancico booklets published at Mexico City by the Viuda de Calderón were “Compuestos en metro Musico por el Br. Joseph de Agurto, y Loaysa.”

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 469, 499. On the cover of the 1677 set “el Br. Joseph de Agurto y Loaysa, Maestro Compositor de dicha Sta. Iglesia” is named composer of the music; in the 1686 his names are inverted (“Pusolos en metro Musico, el Br. Joseph de Loaysa, y Agurto”).





entry in her *Letras*, 1715 edition: August 15, 1690.<sup>4</sup> The maestro who succeeded Salazar at Puebla, Miguel Matheo de Dallo y Lana, wrote the music for three sets attributed to her (Concepción and Navidad 1689, San José 1690) and for another set the lyrics of which are attributable (San Pedro Apóstol 1690).<sup>5</sup> Matheo Vallados, maestro de capilla at Oaxaca Cathedral from March 23, 1668, to his death there shortly before September 7, 1708, supplied music for her last attributed set (Santa Catarina, 1691).<sup>6</sup> Two of her attributed sets sung in 1677 lack composer identifications: San Pedro Nolasco, January 31, and San Pedro Apóstol, June 29. In total Sor Juana therefore provided lyrics for twelve canonical sets, all but two of which consist of eight villancicos.<sup>7</sup> Of the ten attributable sets, all but two likewise contain

eight villancicos (three each for first and second nocturns).<sup>8</sup>

*Negros* or their congeners enter second or third nocturns of seven among the twelve attributed sets, and three of the ten attributable. As models for the black dialectical Spanish that pervades her *negros* she could have looked not only to published exemplars by so obvious a predecessor as Góngora,<sup>9</sup> but also to the *guineos*, *negros*, *negrillas*, and the like that abound in the oeuvre of two Puebla Cathedral chapelmasters who preceded Salazar—Gaspar Fernandes<sup>10</sup> (*d* 1629) and Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla (*d* 1664).<sup>11</sup> Closer at hand she had daily opportunities for conversation with a young mulata slave born

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 470, 494, 485, 489; 512, 517, 518, 427. For Salazar's documented biography, see Stevenson, *Christmas Music*, pp. 61–65.

<sup>5</sup> *Obras completas*, II, 408, 413, 419, 506. The third, fourth, fifth, and eighth villancicos in the Puebla 1689 Christmas set (II, nos. 285, 286, 287, 290) are not hers. See Paul R. Laird and David Martínez, "The Villancico in Spain and Latin America: A Collage of Peoples and Influences," *Ars Musica Denver*, VII/1 (Fall, 1994), p. 74. The Puebla imprint (Diego Fernández de León, 1689) lacks her name on the title page (Méndez Planarte, II, 413).

Appointed Puebla Cathedral *maestro de capilla* December 17, 1688, at a yearly 600 pesos (*Actas Capitulares*, XVIII [1681–1689], fol. 386<sup>v</sup>), Dallo y Lana died there September 1, 1705 (*A.C.* XXI [1703–1711], fol. 118<sup>v</sup>). Before Puebla he had been maestro de capilla at Santa María de Palacio church at Logroño (northern Spain) and in 1684–1685 at the collegiate church of San Salvador in Seville. His widely dispersed works reached Bogotá, Guatemala, and Sucre Cathedrals. See Robert Stevenson, *Renaissance and Baroque Musical Sources in the Americas* (Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat, Organization of American States, 1970), pp. 12, 80–81, 239.

<sup>6</sup> *Obras completas*, II, 431. A native of Oaxaca (Oaxaca Cathedral, *Actas Capitulares*, I [1642–1673], fol. 162<sup>v</sup> [March 23, 1668]), Matheo Vallados = Ballados was appointed maestro de capilla there with a 260 peso yearly salary March 23, 1668, "con obligacion de tocar la corneta, componer billansicos en todas las festiuidades que en esta yglesia se acostumbra cantar en el año, las missas y los demas ... y la de la enseñanza todos los días de canto llano y de organo assi a los niños como a los que necesitaron de aprender dela misma capilla." On January 8, 1692, the Oaxaca Cathedral chapter raised Vallados's salary for being chapelmaster to 300 pesos annually.

<sup>7</sup> The 1690 San José set for Puebla contains the usual eight for the nocturns, followed by four more to be sung at Mass. The 1691 Santa Catarina set for Oaxaca includes eight for the nocturns, three for the ensuing Mass. The 1679 Asunción set for Mexico City Cathedral opens with a 16-line *dedicatoria* to the Blessed Virgin sung as a preface to the first villancico.

<sup>8</sup> The 1677 Asunción set for Mexico City Cathedral contains three villancicos for each of the three nocturns (Villancico IX is an *ensaladilla* combining a folkloric *canario* and *negro*). Similarly, the 1686 Assumption set for Mexico City Cathedral closes with a jocular *negro* of the entertaining type that scandalized Pedro Cerone (*El Melopeo y maestro* [Naples: Juan Bautista Gargano y Lucrecio Nucci, 1613], 196–197).

<sup>9</sup> For *negros* sung in Córdoba Cathedral, see Luis de Góngora y Argote (1561–1627), *Letrillas*, ed. by Robert Jammes (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1980), pp. 153–155 (1609, Corpus Christi), 180–181 (1615, Christmas), 182–183 (1615, Epiphany). His 1609 Corpus Christi villancicos contain also a gypsy villancico (pp. 159–160), his 1615 Christmas villancicos a *portugués* (pp. 171–173) and *morisco* (pp. 175–177).

<sup>10</sup> Concerning Gaspar Fernandes hired July 16, 1599, as organist and organ tuner by Guatemala Cathedral authorities, in 1602 as Guatemala maestro de capilla, and on September 15, 1606, as Puebla Cathedral chapelmaster, see Robert Stevenson, ed., *Villancicos Portugueses* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1976 [*Portugaliae Musica*, Série A, Vol. 29], pp. lx–lxxiv. On August 10, 1618, the Puebla Cathedral capitular acts (Volume VII, fol. 169<sup>v</sup>) still refer to chapelmaster Gaspar Fernandes as *presuitero*. However, on June 5, 1618, a homonym Gaspar Fernandes residing in Puebla married Catalina Dias—Sebastián de Gusmán being the marriage celebrant in the Sagrario Metropolitano at Puebla. The homonym, a native of the Portuguese Algarve, was the son of Pedro La Pez and Beatris Hernandez. The marriage document was brought to light by John Koegel (*Libro de matrimonios españoles 1615–1635*, microfilmed in Reel 22770, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah), whom I warmly thank for the following notice:

En sínco de junio de 1618 a<sup>o</sup>s deposa el bachiller Sebastian de gusman con licencia de los curas a gaspar fernandez vesino desta ciudad y natural de los algarbes en los reynos de castilla hijo de pedro la pez y de beatrix hernandez su muger y a catalina dias biuda de Juan tomas siendo testigos Juan de osaeta y el padre morales gabriel dias y otros y lo firmo.

Bllr gusman

<sup>11</sup> See *Christmas Music*, pp. 47–57 for Gutiérrez de Padilla's documented biobibliography; and pp. 113–145, for five of his folkloric villancicos (*jácara*, *negrilla*, *calenda*, *juego de cañas*, and *gallego*).





VILLANCICOS  
 CON QUE SE SOLEMNIZARON  
 EN LA SANTA YGLESLIA CATHEDRAL  
 DE LA CIUDAD DE LA PUEBLA DE LOS  
 ANGELES LOS MAYTINES DEL GLORIOSISSIMO  
 PATRIARCHA  
 SEÑOR S. JOSEPH  
 ESTE AÑO DE 1690.

DOTADOS  
 POR EL REVERENTE AFECTO, Y  
 cordial devocion de vn indigno esclava de este fe-  
 licissimo Esposo de MARIA Santissima, y Padre adop-  
 tivo de Christo Señor Nuetro.

DISCURRIOS  
 LA ERUDICION SIN SEGUNDA, Y  
 siempre acertado entendimiento de la *MADRE IVANATNES DE LA CRUZ*  
 Religiosa professa de Velo y Choro y Contadora  
 en el muy Religioso Convento del Maximo Doctor de  
 la Yglesia San Geronimo, de la Imperial Ciudad de Me-  
 xico en glorioso obsequio del Santissimo Patriarcha,  
 a quien los dedica.

VESTOS EN METROMUSICO POR EL LI-  
 cenciado D. MIGUEL MATHEO DE DALLO  
 TLANA, Maestro de Capilla de dicha Santa Yglesia.  
 Contienda en la Puebla en la Oficina de Diego Fernandez de León 1690.

Dios y Joseph apuestan  
 q' oyan digan a Dios  
 oyan oyan a Joseph  
 q' aunque es ombre  
 se pone a quantas con el  
 y no se qual alcanza  
 pero solo se q' Dios gusta  
 de q' le alcanse Joseph

## COPLAS:

Dios y Joseph parese  
 q' andan apuestas,  
 sobre qual executa  
 maior finesa.

Dios le dise io te hago  
 felis Esposo,  
 de la q' aclaman Reina  
 los altos coros.

Joseph dise io pago  
 con q' essa misma,  
 señora aunque es casada  
 guardo donsella.

Dios le dise ese obsequio  
 es bien te premie,  
 con q' despues del parto  
 Virgen te quede.

Yo de tener progenie  
 quise pribarme,  
 para q' tu tubieses  
 Virgen por Madre.

Yo para compensarte  
 ese serbicio,  
 hise q' tener puedas  
 a Dios por hijo.

Yo te di para Madre  
 mi misma Esposa,  
 yo para Esposa tuia  
 mi Madre propia.

Luego ninguno alcanza  
 pues en la cuenta,  
 tanto bale la paga  
 como la deuda.

The following transcription was made by Samuel Claro Valdés who published it with his realization of the continuo in his epoch-making *Antología de la música colonial en el América del Sur* (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones de la Universidad de Chile, 1974), pp. 77-78. In his prefatory note (p. lxiii), Claro signaled Julia Elena Fortún as owner in 1957 of the parts (for two triples and continuo) at the time that she published her *Navidad en Bolivia*. In his transcription, Claro lowered the pitches a minor third. According to him the cover page reads: *Dios y Joseph apuestan / A Duo / Al S<sup>r</sup>. S<sup>r</sup>. Joseph, / Del M<sup>tro</sup> D<sup>n</sup> Anthonio Duran de la motta. / J<sup>n</sup> B<sup>ta</sup> flores guanaco / 8 tono*. Claro published also the complete manuscript text, not known to be Sor Juana's by him or by Carlos Seoane who included his A Major version of the same villancico in his *Lírica colonial boliviana* (1993), pp. 147-151.



# DIOS Y JOSEPH APUESTAN

Antonio Durán de la Motta

[ossia:

Tiple I - II

Continuo

Dios y Jo-seph a-pues - tan que que que di - gan a Dios oi - gan oi - gan

di - gan a Dios oi - gan oi - gan oi - gan a Joseph que aun-ques hom-bre se ponea cuen - tas con él y

no sé y no sé cuál al - can - za pero sólo sé pero sólo sé que Dios gus - ta de que le al - can - ce Jo-seph  
Dios y Jo -

Dios y Jo - seph a-pues - tan y Jo seph a-pues - tan oi - gan a Dios oi - gan oi - gan oi - gan a Jo-seph  
que que di - gan a Dios oi - gan di - gan





oi - gan di - gan a di - gan di - gan a Joseph que aunque es hom - bre se po - nea cuen - tas con él que aunque  
 di - gan di - gan a Joseph que aunque es hom - bre se po - nea cuen - tas con él que aunque es hom - bre se po - nea cuen -

hom - bre se po - nea cuen - tas con él y no sé y no sé cuál al - can - za pero sólo sé pero sólo sé que Dios  
 tas con él a cuen - tas con él y no sé y no sé pero sólo sé pero sólo sé que Dios pero sólo

gus - ta de que leal - can - ce de que leal - can - ceal - can - ce Jo - seph Dios y Jo - seph apues - tan  
 losé que Dios gus - ta de que leal - can - ce de que leal - can - ce Jo - seph que

qué qué qué que aunque es hom - bre se po - nea cuen - tas con él 1.- Dios y Jo - seph pa - re -  
 qué qué que aunque es hom - bre se po - nea cuen - tas con él a cuen - tas con él

ce que andan a - puestas so - bre cuál e - je - cu - ta ma - yor fi - ne - za 1.- fi - ne - za 2.-





**VILLANCICOS,**  
 CON QUE SE SOLEMNIZARON  
 en la Santa Iglesia, y primera Cathedral de la Ciudad de Antequera, Valle de Oaxaca, los Maytines de la Gloriosa Martyr SANTA CATHARINA, este año de mil seiscientos y noventa y uno.

**DOTADOS POR EL REVERENTE**  
*afecto, y cordial devocion de el Doctor Don Jacinto de Labedesa Verastegui, Chantre de la Santa Iglesia Cathedral Comissario Apostolico, y Real, Subdelegado de la Santa Cruzada, y assi mismo Comissario de el Santo Oficio de la Inquisicion, y su*  
 (✕) *Qualificador* (✕)

DISCURRIOLOS LA ERUDICION sin segunda, y admirable entendimiento de la Madre Juana Ynes de la Cruz Religiosa profesa de Velo, y Choro de el Religioso Convento de el Señor San Geronimo de la Ciudad de Mexico. en obsequio de esta Rossa Alexandrina.

**PUSOLOS EN METRO MUSICO**  
*el Licenciado Don Masbeo Vallados Maestro de Capilla*

**DEDICALOS DICHO SEÑOR CHANTRE, Y COMISSARIO:**

**A EL M. R. P. MAESTRO**  
**FRAY FRANCISCO DE REYNA**  
 Provincial Actual de la Provincia de San Hypolito Martyr de dicha Ciudad de Oaxaca.

CON LICENCIA, en la Puebla de los Angeles, en su Imprenta de Diego Fernandez de Leon. Año de 1691.

✕ **VILLANCICOS,** ✕  
**QUE SE CANTARON**

EN LOS MAITINES DEL GLORIOSISSIMO PADRE

**S. PEDRO NOLASCO,**

Fundador de la Sagrada Familia de Redemptores del Orden de Nuestra Señora de la Merced, dia 31. de Henero de

1677. años.



✕ **DEDICATORIA.** ✕

<p><i>Cuiss est          imago bac          et super          scriptis?          Cesaris.          rediss er-          go qua sui          Cesaris          Cesaris c.          21. Mat.</i></p>	<p><b>E</b>N fee de sentencia tal          Por punto de ley, ajulto          Que la Imagen siempre es justo,          Se buelva à su Originil.          Que ella es de vn Cesar señal          Conosco h atiendo al cuya:          Más supuesto que sea suya          Por lo que en esta diviso          Otro ay à quien es preciso          Que Cesar de Dios se arguya.</p>	<p><b>D</b>E este Cesar oy mi voz          Publica el fello à la luz          De el ser señal de la Cruz,          Con que es señal que es de Dios,          Para en vno son los dos;          O Julia Cesar Augusta,          Nuestra atencion muy bien gusta          Si oy à vos, la Imagen vuestra          Consagra: que es gloria nuestra          A vueltas de ser tan justa.</p>
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*De la N. Juana Ynes de la Cruz*

on the estate of her mother, Isabel Ramírez, who donated the slave to her when she entered San Jerónimo convent.<sup>12</sup>

To lend further attractiveness, all ten of her *negros*, *negrillas*, and *puerto rico* (Méndez Plancarte, *Obras completas*, II, 15, 26, 39, 72, 96, 143, 247, 257, 276, 314) rank among her liveliest productions. One is sung *al son de un calabozo* (rattle, page 39), another with *sonajas en los pies* (foot rattles, 314), another is accompanied by a *sacanbuche* (sackbut, 276), and still another is sung by *princesas de Guinea* (72).

<sup>12</sup> *Cuatro documentos relativos a Sor Juana*, transcribed by Lota M. Spell (México: Imprenta Universitaria, 1947), pp. 21-22. On February 25, 1669, Isabel Ramírez, "resident in Chalco province, widow of Pedro de Asbaje y Vargas my husband" gave her "legitimate daughter Juana Ramírez de Asbaje" as lifetime slave "Juana de San Joseph, daughter of Isabel Ramírez's mulata slave Francisca de Jesús."

Sor Juana's other ethnic villancicos include: (1) Aztec tocotines<sup>13</sup> (Méndez Plancarte, II, 17, sung in

<sup>13</sup> Concerning the Aztec toco[n]tin, see Stevenson, *Music in Aztec & Inca Territory* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 50-51, 165. According to Andrés Pérez de Ribas, *Historia de los trivnos de nvestra sancta fee* (Madrid: Alonso de Paredes, 1645), III, 326-327, the tocontin continued being the dance of the highest native Indian aristocracy in the capital at mid-century. According to him, "the three syllables of the word *Tocontin* imitate the sound that the teponaztli makes and from these sounds the dance takes its name." The tocontin = tocotin welcomes the seventeenth viceroy, Diego López Pacheco (Marqués de Villena), when he made his triumphal entry into Mexico City in 1640. To the accompaniment of ayacachtlis and teponaztlis, it was danced in a "grave and majestic" manner on November 18 (Cristóbal Gutiérrez de Medina, *Viage de Tierra, y Mar* [1640], 1947 ed., p. 88). It was danced to the sound of tlalpanhuehuelt, teponaztli, omichichuatzli, ayacachtli, and cuauhtlapitzalli when Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora visited Querétaro in 1675.





VILLANCICOS,  
QUE SE CANTARON EN LA SANTA  
Iglesia Cathedral de Mexico, à los Maytines del Gloriosísimo Principe de la  
Iglesia, el Señor SAN PEDRO.

Que fundó, y dotó el Doct. y M. D. Simon Estevan Beltran, de Alzate, y Esquivel ( que  
Dios ayá ) Maestro-escuela, que sur, de esta S. Iglesia Cathedral, y Cathedratico Jubilado de  
Sagrada Escritura, en esta Real Universidad de Mexico.



DEDICALOS,  
AL Señor Lic.<sup>do</sup> D. Garcia de Legaspi, Velasco, Almirante, y  
Albornoz, Canonigo desta Santa Iglesia Cathedral de Mexico. &c

Señor mio, ofrezcale à V. Señoria, los Villancicos, que para los Maytines del Prín-  
cipe de los Apóstolos S. Pedro, hice como pade à violencias de mi estoril vena, po-  
ca cultura, corta salud, y menos lugar, por las indispensables ocupaciones de mi  
estado. Lo festivo de sus alegorias se debe a la fiesta: y sobre el comun privilegio de  
versos, tienen amplia licencia en la imitacion de mi gran P. S. Geronimo, que en una  
Epistola ad Eulochium dice: *Festus est dies, et natalis Besti Petri festivus est, salto con-  
dendus, ita tamen, ut scripturarum cardinem iacularis sermo non fugias.* La que tienen  
de malos tanar puede a la sombra de Pedro; aunque he advertido, que para sanar el mal  
de vnos pies ( tal es el mas incurable de los versos ) se valió de su mano: imagen, y viva  
sombra de sus padres (son los hijos, que con la imitacion de sus exemplos sino: igualan,  
lo menos figuen el tamaño de sus virtudes, y grandea de sus hazañas: fealo U. Señoria  
de su P. S. Pedro, por lo Ecclesiastico, ya que en lo natural, y politico es glorioso el-  
plendo de sus nobilissimas progenitores, y de la mano de su favor a mis versos, para  
que corran como buenos a la sombra de su patronio: para conseguirla no algo mas  
titulos porque no quiero adelantarle à U. Señoria en el rostro el color, que desta la  
purpura en los vestidos ambicioso de reicherse en el Capelo con el lustre, y honor de  
su sangre. Tampoco el culo la pequenía de lo que ofrezco, porque como hija de S. Ge-  
ronimo, quiero que U. Señoria la escuse con sus palabras, en la Epistola ad Marcellum,  
reconociendo en lo pequeño del don, lo consagrado de la voluntad, q lo ofrezco: *Quia  
velata Virginitatis matris est, aliqua in ipsi masculis esse misera de manifestum.* Guarde  
Dios à U. Señoria como de lo. Es deste Convento de N. P. S. Geronymo, JUNIO 30.  
de 1677. años.

B. L. M. D. U. Señoria, su mas afesta servidora, que mas le estima.

Juana Inés de la Cruz.

VILLANCICOS,  
QUE SE CANTARON EN LOS MAYTINES DEL  
Glorioso Principe de la Iglesia el Señor  
SAN PEDRO,

En la Santa Iglesia Metropolitana de Mexico.  
Que instituyó, y dotó la devocion del Señor Doctor, y M. DON SIMON  
ESTEVAN BELTRAN DE ALZATE, Y ESQUIVEL, Cathedratico Jubilado de  
Prima de Sagrada Escritura en la Real Universidad y dignissimo Maestro  
Escuela de dicha S. Iglesia. (Que Dios ayá)



Compuestos en Metro Musico: Por el Maestro ANTONIO DE SALAZAR  
que lo es actual de Capilla de dicha Santa Iglesia.

Náhuatl; 41 and 289, sung in a mixture of Náhuatl and Spanish); (2) a *canario* (247); and (3) *folias* (263). Only in the August 15, 1681, villancico set for Puebla Cathedral does she enumerate a trio of instruments not recommended for use in a cathedral celebration—the *cuatro*, *gaita*, and *pandero*.<sup>14</sup> However, even in the same concluding *ensaladilla* she welcomes *los Indios* who arrive *al son de su tocotin*.

The June 29, 1691 Mexico Cathedral set enumerating the widest assortment of instruments accompanying any of her villancicos has been already twice extensively discussed in the two English-language publications, *Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey* (1952) and *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, Volume II (1978). Her villancico beginning

<sup>14</sup> *Obras completas*, II, 289. Neither the four-course *cuatro* (guitar) played by mestizos who misunderstand the import of the August 15 celebration, nor the *gaita* (hurdy-gurdy) and *pandero* (small drum) played by rustic Galicians going on pilgrimages, benefit so sacred a celebration as that of the Assumption.

“¡Qué bien la Iglesia Mayor / le hace fiesta a su Pastor!” in the third nocturn of the 1691 St. Peter set (*Compuestos en Metro Musico: Por el Maestro Antonio de Salazar*) specifies by name the twenty instruments that comprised Salazar’s accompanying ensemble.<sup>15</sup>

Translated, the relevant excerpt reads as follows:

[*Estríbillo.*] How well the cathedral honors her shepherd, [St. Peter]! Hear the peal of the bells, *tan tan talan, tan tan!* Listen to the clarion, *tin tin tilin, tin tin!* Better still

<sup>15</sup> Many instruments mentioned in Sor Juana’s verse are shown in paintings by her Mexican contemporaries Cristóbal de Villalpando and Juan Correa. For color reproductions of twelve paintings see *Ángeles músicos: homenaje a Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. Salvador Moreno (Mexico City: 1980). Villalpando’s canvases show harps, lutes, portative organs, gambas, viol, krummhorn, transverse flute, guitar; Correa’s show also a bajoncillo.





## TERCERO NOCTURNO

lxxiii

## VILLANCICO VII

## Estribillo

—¡QUÉ BIEN la Iglesia Mayor  
le hace fiesta a su Pastor!  
Oíd los repiques; veréis cómo dan:  
¡Tan tan, talán, tan, tan!  
Oíd el clarín:  
¡Tin tin, tilín, tin, tin!  
—Mejor suena la trompeta,  
el sacabuche y corneta,  
el órgano y el bajón.  
10 —¡Jesús, y qué confusión!  
Con los repiques que dan,  
templar no puedo el violín.  
—¡Tan tan, talán, tan, tan!  
—¡Tin tin, tilín, tin, tin!

## Coplas

De Pedro el sacro día,  
para más lucimiento,  
uno y otro instrumento  
forme dulce armonía;  
suene la chirimía  
20 y acompañe el violín:  
—¡Tin, tilín, tin, tin!  
Porque el rumor se escuche,  
retumbe la trompeta,  
gorjee la corneta  
y ayude el sacabuche;  
una con otra luce,  
voces que entrando van:  
—¡Tan, talán, tan, tan!  
30 Rechine la marina  
trompa, con el violón;  
déles tono el bajón  
y el eco que refina  
la cítara, que trina  
apostando al violín:  
—¡Tin, tilín, tin, tin!  
El tenor gorgoree,  
la vihuela discante,  
el rabelillo encante,  
la bandurria vocee,  
40 el arpa gargantee,  
que así rumor harán:  
—¡Tan, talán, tan, tan!

the sound of the trumpet, the sackbut, the cornett, the organ, and the bassoon. Jesus, what din they all make, so loud the violin can't even tune! *Tan tan talan tan tan, tin tin tilin tin tin!* [Coplas.] To lend added sparkle to Peter's sacred day, one instrument joins another in sweetest harmony: the shawn accompanying the violin. *Tin tilin tin tin!* Now the trumpet loudly blares, now the cornett trills, now the sackbut joins the fray of contending lines. *Tan talan tan tan!* Now the tromba marina squeaks above the double bass, their pitch stabilized by the bassoon. Now echo refines the zither's trill, alternating with the violin. *Tin tilin tin tin!* The tenor [shawm] gurgles, the vihuela runs in counterpoint, the small rebec lends its charm, the bandore takes a part, the harp quavers: and thus they all resound. *Tan talan tan tan!*

Not only does Sor Juana name Salazar's instruments in this 1691 villancico suite, but also she tells what specific consort accompanied the refrain and each stanza of the coplas: trumpet, sackbut, and cornett, bassoon, and organ the refrain; shawn and violin the first coplas; trumpet, cornett, and sackbut the second coplas; tromba marina, double bass and bassoon, zither and violin the third coplas; tenor shawn, vihuela, small rebec, bandore, and harp the fourth coplas.

## II. MUSICAL CONDITIONS WITHIN SAN JERÓNIMO CONVENT, 1669-1695

Although her villancicos may possibly have been rehearsed within her earshot during her 27 years in San Jerónimo convent, she obviously did not hear them performed in the cathedrals for which they were written. But what of musical life within her own convent itself? How intense was the musical life in Santísima Trinidad convent at Puebla,<sup>16</sup> from

<sup>16</sup>When at its most populous in 1714, Holy Trinity Convent at Puebla housed sixty Franciscan Conceptionist *religiosas*. Founded in 1619, Holy Trinity survived until the 1860's—on April 6, 1867, ending its 248-year existence. During the epoch of Bishop Diego Osorio de Escobar y Llamas (ruled Puebla diocese 1656-1673) a sumptuous new church was built for the nuns of Holy Trinity.

Jesús Sánchez Garza, born at Ciudad Porfirio Díaz (now Piedras Negras), Coahuila, amassed a library of colonial treasures that included 276 items of Holy Trinity convent colonial music manuscripts. His widow sold the collection to the Mexican National Institute of Fine Arts March 17, 1967. Robert Stevenson's catalogue of the collection occupies pages 10 through 17 of his *Christmas Music from Baroque Mexico*. Until a prior



which locale fictitious Sor Filotea sent her the letter eliciting her autobiographical response,<sup>17</sup> can be judged from the Santísima Trinidad music archive now held by the Centro Nacional de Información, Documentación e Investigación Musical (CENIDIM). The six Newberry Library Mexican convent choirbooks (call number Case MS VM 2147 C36) first inventoried by Robert Stevenson in *Notes of the Music Library Association*, 29/2 (December 1972), pages 203–214, give some idea of the musical riches once presumably held by the Mexico City Encarnación convent.

Although no such tangible remains have thus far surfaced to document San Jerónimo musical activities, what does survive includes the convent constitutions approved January 7, 1673, by Archbishop of Mexico Fray Payo Enríquez de Rivera [Ribera],<sup>18</sup> one clause of which specifies an appropriation to the *madre vicaria de coro* each year of 20 pesos payable to the *maestro que compone la música* commissioned by the convent, 6 pesos payable for strings (*cuerdas*) and reeds (*cañuelas*), and 10 pesos for straw mats (*petates*) placed on upper and lower floors of the sanctuary.<sup>19</sup> The table of organization called for one of the professed nuns (of whom there

were a total of 83 in 1670, 86 in 1677, 82 in 1680)<sup>20</sup> to be choral vicar for polyphony, and another to be corrector of plainsong.<sup>21</sup>

From time to time excellent youthful singers lacking the stipulated dowry sums gained admittance, solely because of their musical abilities. As examples: (1) Antonia Rosa de la Trinidad was allowed to profess in 1692 without the requisite dowry sum, because the deaths of various singing nuns who had officiated at the obligatory endowed masses had seriously thinned the choir (*porque el coro se hallaba muy falta de voces para officiar las misas de obligación por habérsenos muerto las religiosas cantoras*). Admitted with the *título de música*, Antonia Rosa de la Trinidad had previously demonstrated her musical sufficiency, not only as a singer but also as an instrumentalist.<sup>22</sup> In 1694 two other postulants were permitted to profess without depositing the accustomed dowry—Juana de Gálvez y Escalona and Margarita Luisa Domínguez, both with the *título de música*. Who supplied the musical candidates with certificates of proficiency included in at least one documented instance, Antonio de Salazar, Mexico City Cathedral chapelmaster mentioned above as composer of Sor Juana's 1690 set of Assumption villancicos and 1691 ascribed St. Peter set.<sup>23</sup>

According to Legajo 405, expediente 2, in the Bienes Nacionales section of the Archivo General de la Nación at Mexico City:

Antonio de Salazar, maestro de capilla de esta santa iglesia digo: que en cumplimiento del decreto se examinó en el arte de música a Josepha de Torres Moctezuma en el convento de San Jerónimo.<sup>24</sup>

composition by a Mexican woman surfaces, María Joachina's *Músicos Ruypeñores, Cantata Duo Al Nacimiento* in the Holy Trinity collection ranks as the earliest extant work by an American-born woman.

For a synopsis of Miguel Zerón Zapata's history of Holy Trinity convent see Hugo Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla* (Puebla: A. Mijares y Hno., 1934), pages 426, 466–467 (*Christmas Music*, p. 10).

<sup>17</sup>First published in her *Fama y Obras Póstumas* (1700), Sor Juana's *Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy ilustre Sor Filotea de la Cruz* (*Obras completas*, iv [1957]) salutes Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz y Sahagún (bishop of Puebla July 1676 to his death February 1, 1699), masquerading as a nun in the Puebla Holy Trinity convent.

<sup>18</sup>Twenty-seventh viceroy of Mexico (December 13, 1673 to November 30, 1680), Fray Payo Enríquez de Rivera was simultaneously archbishop of Mexico (elected in 1668). An Augustinian born at Seville (son of Fernando Afán de Rivera y Enríquez, duque de Alcalá, and Leonor Manrique de Lara), he served as bishop of Guatemala 1657–1667. Sor Juana petitioned him for the rite of confirmation in a 240-line poem (Méndez Plancarte, i, 32–38). She was confirmed in San Jerónimo convent March 13, 1674, by his deputy the bishop of Honduras, Martín de Espinosa (*ibid.*, p. 373).

<sup>19</sup>María del Carmen Reyes, *El convento de San Jerónimo: Vida conventual y finanzas* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1990), p. 29.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*: "En 1670 se registraron los siguientes puestos; priora, vicaria, ... sacristanas ... maestra de mozas, provisor vicaria de coro de canto de órgano, correctora de canto llano, correctora de letra, maestra de novicias ..."

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 22 and 31 (note 3).

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 106 (1712). According to an exception sought by the Abbess Sor Mariana de la Ascensión, and approved in 1648, male music instructors were from time to time allowed to enter San Jerónimo to give music lessons ("para que pudieran entrar al convento los maestros de música, a dar la lección" [*ibid.*, p. 43]). Under this proviso, not only Salazar but two prior Mexico City Cathedral maestros de capilla may have given Sor Juana personal music instruction (López Capillas who died January 18, 1674, and his successor Agurto y Loaysa).





In Salazar's commissioned report he certified that Josepha de Torres Moctezuma had demonstrated proficiency in both harp and organ playing. The specifying of these two instruments, harp and organ, assures us of their availability for convent functions. So far as other instruments go, the 1673 constitutions allowing the *madre vicaria de coro* annual expense money for strings and reeds strongly implies a larger convent instrumental ensemble than any mere harp and organ. Before surrendering her library in 1694, Sor Juana herself owned a cabinet of many *instrumentos músicos, preciosos, y exquisitos*—if Calleja is to be believed.<sup>25</sup>

### III. SOR JUANA'S MUSICAL ERUDITION

Did the *Protesta que rubricada con su sangre, hizo de su fe y amor a Dios* signed by Sor Juana March 5, 1694, at the time of her abandoning humane studies,<sup>26</sup> also lead to the dispersal of her copy of Cerone's *El Melopeo y maestro* (1613) and, with it, of her own music treatise called *El caracol*? What can she have heard before writing her treatise? Before 1669 was she a frequent witness to the music "so exquisite in that City," wrote one informed traveler, "that the people are drawn to their churches more for the delight of it than the service of God." If such were her musical ambience during her quinquennium at the viceregal court, her biographers who have mentioned her annotated copy of Cerone and her *El caracol* owe their readers more than a passing glance at the "all sorts of exquisite music" heard by Thomas Gage in Mexico City churches—music that according to him more potently attracted the public than any heard elsewhere during his American travels.<sup>27</sup> In Juana's years at court the already mentioned Mexico City Cathedral chapelmaster Francisco López Capillas, had the dis-

tingtion of being the first cathedral maestro whose birth in the viceregal capital is attested in his will.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, he was educated in Mexico. While *Bajonero* and organist at Puebla Cathedral before appointment at Mexico City Cathedral, he counted the unequaled Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla as his chapelmaster.<sup>29</sup>

While she was still Juana Ramírez de Asbaje, the archbishop during her first years at court was Alonso de Cuevas Dávalos (who was indeed the first native of Mexico City elevated to the highest ecclesiastical post in the viceroyalty).<sup>30</sup> Immediately upon elevation, Cuevas Dávalos proposed adding yet another musician to López Capillas's staff, *bachiller* Nicolás de Rivas, hired at a 150-peso annual salary. Also, upon Cuevas Dávalos's advent, the cathedral chapter began at once demanding better rehearsed musical performances, new Christmas villancicos, and a full complement of musicians at Saturday Salves.<sup>31</sup>

All these enhancements could scarcely have been lost on any impressionable newcomer at the viceregal court. To add to his acquirements, López Capillas was a university trained *licenciado* with a penchant for musical learning. Himself the composer of eight extant Masses, copies of which occupy folios 1 through 174 in MS M. 2428 at the Madrid Biblioteca Nacional, these same eight Masses—*Super scalam Aretinam*, a 5; *Super Alleluia*, a 5; *Pange lingua*, a 6; *de Batalla*, a 6; *Benedicta sit Sancta Trinitas*, a 4 (Palestrina parody); *Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui*, a 4 (another Palestrina parody); *Re sol*, a 4 (Juan de Riscos [I]<sup>32</sup> parody) and *Aufer*

<sup>28</sup> "Mexico City Cathedral Music, 1600–1675." *Inter-American Music Review*, ix/1 (Fall–Winter 1987), 97–98, 111–113 (text of López Capillas's will).

<sup>29</sup> *Christmas Music from Baroque Mexico*, pp. 50, 55 (notes 61–69).

<sup>30</sup> Francisco Sosa, *El episcopado mexicano*, 3d edn. (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1962), I, 184; 277–278, 290 (consecrated for Oaxaca October 13, 1656), 299 (translation to Mexico City). Before becoming archbishop of Mexico Cuevas Dávalos (1590–1665) had risen from canon and archdeacon at Puebla Cathedral to dean of Mexico City Cathedral, and bishop of Oaxaca. By personally intervening in 1660 he calmed a rebellion at Tehuantepec—thereafter receiving royal thanks for averting greater disaster.

<sup>31</sup> "Mexico City Cathedral Music, 1600–1675," p. 109.

<sup>32</sup> Concerning this Riscos, see Robert Stevenson, "Francisco Correa de Arauxo: new light on his career," *Revista Musical Chilena*, xxii/103 (January–March 1968), pp. 22 and 33 (note 97).

<sup>25</sup> Diego Calleja's biography published in *Fama y obras póstumas* (1700), was republished in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz ante la historia ... Recopilación de Francisco de la Maza* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1980). (See p. 151 for her surrender of her musical instruments.)

<sup>26</sup> *Obras completas*, iv, 518, 670, 672.

<sup>27</sup> *Thomas Gage's Travels in the New World*, ed. by J.E.S. Thompson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), p. 72. In the introduction, p. xlvii, Thompson writes: "In all matters, except religious, which can be verified, I have found Gage truthful and reliable."



*a nobis*, a 4—coexist in Mexico City Cathedral choir books.

Prefacing the hexachord Mass in Mexico City Choirbook VII, López Capillas provides an erudite *Declaración de la Missa*<sup>33</sup> in which seven-paragraph document he repeatedly invokes as his authority the theorist Pedro de Guevara Loyola who wrote an *Arte para componer el canto llano* published at Seville in 1582.<sup>34</sup> Thereafter he emigrated to Mexico City—according to López Capillas, who identifies him as a sometime cathedral maestro.

According to López, Guevara Loyola in chapter 15 of his *Compendio de música* decreed that in the kind of ternary mensuration signalled by a circle, a longa when followed by a black semibreve forfeits a sixth of its value. In López's paragraphs II and V he again cites Guevara Loyola's *Compendio de música* as his authority. Next, in paragraph IV of his *Declaración de la Missa* he appeals to Cerone's *El Melopeo y maestro*, Book 20, section 4, and in his paragraph VI to Book 18, section 9. On Cerone's authority López adduces as six examples of exceptional procedures that are nonetheless validated by mensural theory: (1) Manchicourt's *Hic est panis* motet, top voice; (2) Morales's Osanna of his *L'homme armé* Mass, a 5; (3) Lupus Hellinck's Osanna of his *Missa peccata mea*; (4) Richafort's *Beati omnes* motet, part 2, tenor voice; and finally (5) and (6) Palestrina's five-voice *Gaude Barbara*, part 2 (= *Gaude quia meruisti*, alto, mm. 90–93) and the Gloria of his *L'homme armé* Mass, a 5 (tenor I, mm. 13–72). To vaunt his allegiance to *El Melopeo y maestro*, López culled his first five examples of exceptional procedures from Cerone's pages 974–975 and his sixth from 1030–1031.

Shown her pathway by erudite López Capillas—the sole maestro de capilla whose works Sor Juana

may personally have heard in Mexico City Cathedral before reciting final vows February 24, 1669—she obtained her own personal copy of 1160-page *El Melopeo y maestro*—a copy which minus a few pages still survived in 1988 at the Biblioteca del Congreso in Mexico City.<sup>35</sup> Her volume, encountered by bookseller Demetrio García in 1930 (together with her autographed copy of Octavio della Mirandola's anthology of Latin poets)<sup>36</sup> contains her own handwritten comment at the bottom of Cerone's page 284, continued at the top of 285—where she signs herself “Esta Raçon de Ceron su discipula Juana Inés de la Cruz.”

Expressing surprise that she should have called herself “Cerone's disciple,” Octavio Paz labelled her annotation “unimportant in itself”<sup>37</sup>—unimportant to him, obviously because he was so musically nescent as to identify Cerone as a “Neapolitan” who “was Kapellmeister for Philip II and Philip III” (see note 3, Paz's chapter 16). Notwithstanding Paz, Sor Juana's annotation at Cerone's pages 284–285 proves how attentively she had studied chapter 53 of Book II, a book headed with the title “Que es de las Curiosidades y antigualles en Musica.” In that chapter Cerone allies himself with Gonçalo Martínez de Bizcargui<sup>38</sup> when saying that e-f and b-c (the “singable” semitones) consist of five commas, whereas

According to François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1874), iv, 138, Guevara at fol. 9<sup>v</sup> of his 30-leaf octavo *Arte para componer el canto llano*, 1582, claimed to have written another treatise with a title beginning *De la Verdad*. Comprising eight books reaching from plainchant, polyphony, proportions, and counterpoint to free composition, the now lost *De la Verdad* parading the names of such other Spanish theorists as Guillermo [Despuig], Juan Martínez, Cristóbal de Reyna, Alonso de Taraçona, and Luys de Villfranca, may be his *Compendio de música*.

<sup>35</sup> Pages 284–285 are shown in facsimile overleaf.

<sup>36</sup> Octavio della Mirandola's *Illustrium poetarum flores*, published at Lyons in 1590, contains excerpts from such writers as Catullus, Horace, Juvenal, Lucan, Lucretius, Martial, Ovid, Plautus, Propertius, Tibullus, and Virgil. According to Emilio Abreu Gómez, the volume, which was in use 1646–1652, probably belonged to Juana's maternal grandfather, Pedro Ramírez de Santillana, an Andalusian from Sanlúcar de Barrameda, who leased a hacienda at Panoayán (where Juana grew up before his death in 1656). See Emilio Abreu Gómez. *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz; Bibliografía y Biblioteca* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1934), pp. 450–451.

<sup>37</sup> *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz / Las trampas de la fe* (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1982), p. 311: “El apunte, más bien insignificante ...”.

<sup>38</sup> For the twelve printings to 1550 of Martínez de Bizcargui's *Arte de canto llano* (premiered at Burgos by Fadrique de Basilea

<sup>33</sup> First published in Lester Brothers, “A New World Hexachord Mass by Francisco López Capillas,” *Yearbook for Inter-American Musical Research*, ix (1973), 39–40; repeated in “Mexico City Cathedral Music, 1600–1675,” pp. 113–114.

<sup>34</sup> The *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque de F.J. Fétis* (Brussels: 1877; repr. Bologna: Forni Editor, n.d.), item 5951, and François Lesure, *Écrits imprimés concernant la musique* (Répertoire international des sources musicales, Bv1) [Munich-Duisburg, G. Henle, 1971], p. 385, locate copies of the extremely rare *Arte para componer el canto llano y para corregir y emendar la Canturia que esta compuesta fuera de Arte, quitando todas las opiniones y dificultades, que hasta agora a avido, por falta de los que la compusieron. Puesta en razon por Pedro de Loyola Guevara* (Seville: Andrea Pescioni, 1582) at Brussels (Bibliothèque royale de Belgique) and Paris (Bibliothèque nationale).





Pythagoricos y otros practicos, digan que el dicho Semitono no es de cinco Comas, lo que es falso. Item. cap. 6. lib. 1.

Exemplo vulgar y casero para dar à entender à los nuevos professo. ves esta contrariedad. Cap. L III.

Obispo. Resposta. Exemplo para entender de como el Semitono es de cinco Comas. Obispo. Resposta. Exemplo para entender de como el Semitono es de cinco Comas. Obispo. Resposta. Exemplo para entender de como el Semitono es de cinco Comas.

Siento tambien q. la razon de la maxima menor es de cinco Comas y mayor al de quatro es respecto de la gran porcion que quanto sea cantidad es mayor es menor y de no denominacion y al contrario q. menor es la su de no minacion es mayor como sea quanto es mayor or

En la Razon de su dij. publico. Que es de las Curiosidades y antigualas en Musica. 285

ricos teniendo consideracion, no à la cantidad de la perfeccion, si no à la cantidad de la imperfeccion, ditemos que el mismo Semitono de cinco Comas, es el menor: porque si el Tono perfecto es de once Comas, dividido en dos Semitonos, è por dezir mas propriamente en dos Tonos imperfectos, el vno compuesto de cinco Comas, y el otro de quatro; el de cinco (que es el Mi fa Semitono cantable) es el menor en la imperfeccion por estar mas cerca à la perfeccion; pues para llegar à las nueve Comas, faltantes solamente quatro. Y el otro Semitono (que es el incantable de quatro Comas) diremos ser mayor en la imperfeccion; pues para llegar à las nueve, faltantes cinco Comas: porque se dice aquella cosa ser mas imperfecta, la que es mas apartada de su perfeccion: y de dos cosas imperfectas se dice ser mas perfecta, la que es mas cerca de su perfeccion.

Prosigue la mesma materia para mayor declaracion de lo dicho, &c. Cap. L IIII.

Soy de parecer que el Mus. Practico en lugar de dezir Semitono mayor è menor, como dice la mayor parte de los Theoricos, havia de dezir, como hazen algunos Practicos, Tono imperfecto menor è Tono imperfecto mayor; que desta manera quedaran las partes satisfechas y concertadas. Y advertir que esta palabra Semitonus, es palabra compuesta, mas empero no es compuesta de la manera que Montanos, Martinez y los de su parte se piensan: por quanto no deriva de estas dos diciones Semis, que quiere dezir medio, y Tonus Tono, y que el dezir Semitono, sea lo mismo que medio Tono. Que solamente los valores de las notas è figuras musicales se componen de la dicha palabra Semp, que es medio: como à dezir, Breve Semibreve, Minima Semiminima, Corchea Semicorchea. Y assi, si la Breve vale vn valor, la Semibreve valdrà la mitad del valor de la Breve; y esto segun fuere el signo indicial del Tiempo, que se suele poner en principio del canto; como à dezir: Si la Breve vale quatro compases, la Semibreve valdrà dos compases, que es la mitad de quatro: y si vale la dicha Breve dos, la Semibreve valdrà vn compas, &c. Lo mismo digo de la Semiminima, que vale la mitad del valor de la Minima; y de la Semicorchea, la mitad de la Corchea. Mas diremos que esta palabra Semitonus, es compuesta de Semus, que quiere dezir imperfecto, y de Tonus Tono: que ayuntado suena Imperfecto Tono. Porque desta palabra Semus, se componen solamente las distancias è intervalos musicales; como en diciendo Diapente, sin dezir otra cosa mas, se entiende Quinta perfecta; que es consonancia compuesta de tres Tonos Sexquioctavos, y de vn Semitono cantable. Mas diciendo Semidiapente, entendiense Quinta imperfecta, que es distancia compuesta de dos Tonos Sexquioctavos, y de dos Semitonos cantables: è que serà compuesta de quatro Tonos, como fomos para ver en otro lugar. Que segun lo dicho, Semidiapente, no quiere dezir media Diapente, ni la mitad de la Diapente, ni no Diapente imperfecta. Tambien el Ditono de los Theoricos, es la Tercera mayor è pta entre los Practicos, respecto à la menor: y el Semiditono de los Theoricos, es la Tercera menor è imperfecta entre los Practicos, respecto à la mayor. Que quando fuesse que Semus es la interpretacion de los nombres compuestos de los intervalos y distancias, quisiese dezir medio, (como en la composicion de las figuras, Breve Semibreve, &c.) fuera menester de dezir, que Semiditono es medio Ditono (que vendria ser la cantidad de vn Tono Sexquioctavo, porque el Ditono esta compuesto de dos Tonos) lo que es falsissimo; si no que el Semiditono, es Ditono imperfecto, por otro nombre practico llamado Tercera menor, compuesta de vn Tono Sexquioctavo y de vn Semitono cantable, siendo menor del Ditono, de la cantidad de vn Semitono incantable. La espada de he tomado del puño à Martinez con el qual tengo cortadas todas sus razones, e esta autoridad que dice que el mismo pone en su arte, de Guillermo de Podioja qui dice assi: Semitona non è Semis, quod est dimidium sed è Semus, quod est imperfectum, dicitur. Lo mismo sientè Gasfuro en el pr. de Har. Instr. adonde dice; Sic enim Semitonia dista non à Semis, quasi dimidium Toni tenentis, et non nulli existimant sed è Semus, quod imper-

Porque el mesmo Semitono se llama tambien menor. Segun Bonio cap. 15. lib. 3. el Tono Sexquioctavo es mayor de 8. Comas, y menor de 9. Algunos nombres de las figuras musicales: como se componen con esta palabra Semus, que quiere dezir medio. Algunos nombres de las intervalos musicales: como se componen con esta palabra Semus, que quiere dezir medio. Advertencia. Lib. 1. ca. 17. Cap. 156.





the chromatic c-c#, d-d#, f-f#, g-g#, b<sub>b</sub>-b<sub>1</sub> ("unsingable" semitones) consist of only four commas. True, Cerone admits at page 284 in the same chapter that Marchettus of Padua, Pietro Aron, and Vicente Lusitano had espoused opposing views. But splitting hairs, Cerone proposes calling the singable semitone the less (*menor*) semitone, because it comes closer to the whole step of an agreed nine commas, and calling the unsingable semitone the greater (*mayor*) semitone, because four commas is further from nine commas.

Sor Juana, who fully comprehended how important in her epoch was the exact size of semitones, before equal temperament became the norm, added her approval of Cerone's sophistry when she penned these lines at the bottom of his page 284:

Siento tambien q. la raçon de llamar semitono menor el de cinco Comas Y mayor el de quatro es respecto de la proporcion pues quanto Vna cantidad es mayor es menor la denominacion Y al Contrario q<sup>10</sup> es menor ella su denominacion es Mayor Como vn quarto es mayor en [line missing due to page cropping]

Also I feel that the reason for calling the semitone of five commas the lesser and that of four commas the greater derives from proportionality: since the greater the quantity the smaller are its fractions, and vice versa, when lesser the quantity the larger are its fractions.

In none of her poetry does Sor Juana mention Cerone. Nonetheless, she digested him thoroughly—how thoroughly comes to light in her romance addressed to the Condesa de Paredes beginning "Después de estimar mi amor" (Romance 21 in Méndez Plancarte's edition). In it (line 127) she admits having confected a tract given the name of *El caracol*. Why *caracol* = spiral = conch, for her title? The spiraling Ptolemaic circle of fifths results in a pitch higher than the ascent by octaves in an 81:80 ratio. Coincidentally she cannot have been unaware that the *caracol* was the basic Aztec signaling instrument.<sup>39</sup>

in 1511), see Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta, *Los tratados de canto llano de España, Martínez de Bizcargui y Molina* (Madrid: Joyas Bibliográficas, 1978), pp. 86–87. For a review of Albert Seay's error-ridden edition of Martínez de Bizcargui's *Arte de canto llano* (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 1979), see Robert Stevenson, in *Inter-American Music Review*, II/2 (Spring–Summer 1980), 135–138.

<sup>39</sup> For data concerning the *atecocolli* = *atecuculli* in Náhuatl, *puuaqua* in Purépecha (Tarascan), *panicataopani* in Zapotec,

In the poetic 172-line résumé of her music treatise, Sor Juana opens with her excuse for not sending it to the patron who after returning to the peninsula secured publication of both Sor Juana's *Inundación Castalida* (1689) and *Poemas* (1690).

Lady, do you ask me for concerts when during my entire life I have done nothing that sounds well to me? And so far as composing is concerned, what do note shapes, ciphers, proportions, mensurations, dots, lines, and intervals signify? What schismas are, and whether commas that divide a [whole] tone are correctly calculated—these are problems sufficient to drive me out of my mind. Does the unsingable semitone consist of an odd number [of commas] as followers of Pythagoras contend?<sup>40</sup> Should the perfect fourth be considered a consonance, as Pope John XXII classed it in his *Extravagantes communes* [Book III, 1 (1324–5)]?<sup>41</sup> In tuning an instrument does so

see "Aztec Organography," *Inter-American Music Review*, IX/2 (Spring–Summer 1988), 2–3 and 5 (illustration).

According to Emilio Abreu Gómez's above cited (note 36) *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz; Bibliografía y Biblioteca*, p. 173, "Después de estimar mi amor," written between 1680 and 1686, enters *Poemas de la vnica poetisa americana* (Saragossa: Manuel Román, 1692), at page 323, and *Obras poéticas* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1715), at page 247. Reacting to her musical science, the Conde de la Granja (Luis Antonio de Oviedo y Herrera [1636–1717], educated at Salamanca University) saluted her in his romance, "A vos Mejjcana Musa," lines 153–154, as superior to fabled Arion and Orpheus ("Con vos, Son Arión y Orfeo / en la Música chorlitos").

<sup>40</sup> In Pythagorean tuning systems c-c# equals 114 cents, c#-d equals 90 cents, the singable semitone therefore being the smaller. See J. Murray Barbour, *Tuning and Temperament A Historical Survey* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951), p. 90. Bartolomé Ramos de Pareja's opposition to Pythagorean tuning earned him the enmity of Franchinus Gaffurius (*Theorica musica*, 1492) but eventually qualified him as the most avant-garde theorist of his century. See Robert Stevenson, "Iberian Musical Outreach Before Encounter with the New World," *Inter-American Music Review*, VIII/2 (Spring–Summer 1987), 29, col. 1.

<sup>41</sup> John XXII (1245/1249–1334), pope at Avignon 1316–1334, issued in 1324/25 a decree (Latin text in H. E. Wooldridge, *Oxford History of Music*, I [1905], 89–90; quoting *Extravagantes communes*, liber 3, tit. 1, cap. unic. *De vita et honestitate clericorum*) that disallowed the running to and fro of added parts, gasping for hockets, and occasional superimposition of secular melodies, but did specify octaves, fifths, and fourths added above the ecclesiastical chant as laudable consonances "beautifying the melody." The pertinent sentence mentioning consonant fourths reads thus: "Per hoc autem, non intendimus prohibere, quin interdum, diebus festis praecipue, sive solemnibus in missis, et praefatis divinis officiiis, aliquae consonantiae quae melodiam sapiunt, puta octavae, quintae, quarta, et huiusmodi supra cantum ecclesiasticum simplicem proferentur."





small a quantity as a comma<sup>42</sup> make a difference? Does the dot of alteration<sup>43</sup> that affects the note after the dot also determine syllable placement? Is the *maxima* the time unit in major perfect mode and the *longa* the unit in minor perfect mode?<sup>44</sup> How does tripla mensuration (3/1)<sup>45</sup> differ from sesquialtera (3/2)?<sup>46</sup> How much durational value does an imperfected note lose—most of it [as a void] or only a part, and what circumstances govern the amount of the loss [caused by imperfecting it]?<sup>47</sup> Does the space left between notes in a given voice part signify anything? Can any other intervals than octaves and perfect fifths serve [at cadences]? Does the blackening of note shapes that lessens their durational value have any other [ancillary] significance? How is the harmonic mean to be distinguished from the geometrical and arithmetical means?<sup>48</sup> Is all music governed by only two signatures, one designating [duple or triple] mensuration, the other the succession of pulses?

Does plainchant when sung solo admit of flats and sharps<sup>49</sup> and do varied note shapes [in plainchant] signify

Among Spanish sixteenth-century theorists, both Guillermo Despuig (1495) and Francisco Salinas (1577) classed the fourth as a consonance, whereas Juan Bermudo called it a dissonance (*Declaración de instrumentos musicales*, 1555, fol. 59').

<sup>42</sup>The comma (ninth part of a whole tone) equals some 24 cents in the Pythagorean tuning system (ratio of 74:73) and about 22 cents (ratio of 81:80) in the Ptolemaic tuning system. Smaller than a comma, a schisma equals only about 2 cents—the difference between the syntonic and ditonic commas (Barbour, p. xi).

<sup>43</sup>Concerning the *punctus divisionis*, see Willi Apel, *The Notation of Polyphonic Music 900–1600* (Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1949), pp. 115–116.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 98: "The mensuration of the *L* [longa] was called *modus longarum* (*modus minor*, "lesser mode") and that of the *Mx* [maxima] *modus maximarum* (*modus major*, "greater mode").

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 155: "*Proportio tripla*, like all the proportions, is—at least normally—based on the *S* [semibreve] and not on the *B* [breve]."

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 158: "*Proportio sesquialtera* signifies diminution in the ratio of 3 to 2."

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 126: "The following two rules constitute the basis of this important concept: 1. A blackened note loses one-third of its value. 2. Blackened notes are always imperfect."

Despite Apel's extensive third chapter on coloration (pp. 126–144), he bypasses Juan Bermudo, who in his *Libro primero de la declaración de instrumentos musicales* (1549), fol. 122', and *Declaración* (1555), fol. 54, decreed that in imperfect mensuration a black breve followed by a black semibreve equals a white dotted semibreve followed by a white minim. See Robert Stevenson, *Juan Bermudo* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), p. 8.

<sup>48</sup>Barbour, *op. cit.*, differentiates between arithmetical and geometrical divisions at his pp. 68–73 and 52–55.

<sup>49</sup>Lavish accidentalizing characterized Spanish plainsong usage throughout the Renaissance. See Robert Stevenson,

differing durations? Does the ratio between *ut* and *re* equal that between *re* and *mi* and the ratio between *fa* and *sol* equal that between *sol* and *la*?<sup>50</sup> And although the difference between 10:9 and 9:8 is scarcely perceptible [to the ear], does the difference truly matter?<sup>51</sup> Can the enharmonic genus be perceived audibly, or only intellectually?<sup>52</sup> Does the term "chromatic" best apply to black keys used on the keyboard or instead to notes sharpened or flatted?

To finalize: gathering all the extremely detailed data concerning fermatas, staves, cues at ends of staves, clefs, dots, and ciphers, demands much more than my limited capacity, and instead requires ability to conduct a cathedral choir. Is my music instructor needed by beautiful Doña Petronila<sup>53</sup> to add melodiousness to her singing? Can I teach music to an angel? Who would not laugh at my lowly human attempt to instruct so superior an intelligence?

But to tell truth, sometime ago I did indeed seek solace for my sorrows with the manic attempt to begin a treatise, thereby endeavoring to see whether abstruse musical theorems can be simplified. In it, if I correctly recall, I likened harmony to spiral, not a circle, and therefore called it *El caracol*. But this treatise remains still so tentative that [in its present state] it would not only be unworthy of you, but also would do me no credit to send it. But if Heaven grants me health and further length of days, I will try to improve it, because placing it with you would entitle me to glorious envy.

Sor Juana closes with greetings to the viceroy, whose infinite favors she will never forget. Although of necessity absent from the viceregal court, she will forever implore divine blessings on her benefactors.

The Spanish text, published as Romance 21 in the Mendez Plancarte edition (I, 61–65), merits insertion here for the benefit of readers desiring the original text.

*Spanish Music in the Age of Columbus* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), pp. 51–52, 67, 77, 84, 95.

<sup>50</sup>In Ramos de Pareja's tuning system the major seconds c-d, g-a, and their octaves were tuned in the 10:9 ratio, but A-B, d-e, f-g and their octaves still conformed with the 9:8 ratio prescribed by Pythagorean tuning theory and accepted by Guidonians. See *Spanish Music in the Age of Columbus*, p. 57. The 9:8 major whole tone equals 204 cents, the 10:9 minor whole tone equals 182 cents (Barbour, p. 227).

<sup>51</sup>See note 42 above. A difference of 22 cents between major (9:8) and minor (10:9) whole tones cannot be called mathematically insignificant.

<sup>52</sup>Always a favorite Renaissance bone of contention, the enharmonic genus involving such a descent as A-F<sub>♭</sub>-E (implying microtones) occupies Barbour at his pages 21, 108–110, 117.

<sup>53</sup>Presumptively a singer at the viceregal court (Méndez Plancarte, I, 389).





Que escribe a la Excelentísima Señora Condesa de Paredes, excusándose de enviar un Libro de Música; y muestra cuán eminente era en esta Arte, como lo prueba en las demás.

DESPUÉS de estimar mi amor,  
 excelsa, bella María,  
 el que en la divina vuestra  
 conservéis memorias mías;  
 después de haber admirado  
 que, en vuestra soberanía,  
 no borrada, de mi amor,  
 se mantenga la noticia;  
 paso a daros la razón  
 10 que a no obedecer me obliga  
 vuestro precepto, si es que hay  
 para esto disculpa digna.  
 De la Música un Cuaderno  
 pedís, y es cosa precisa  
 que me haga a mí disonancia  
 que me pidáis armonías.  
 ¿A mí, Señora, conciertos,  
 cuando yo en toda mi vida  
 no he hecho cosa que merezca  
 20 sonarme bien a mí misma?  
 ¿Yo, arte de composiciones,  
 reglas, caracteres, cifras,  
 proporciones, cantidades,  
 intervalos, puntos, líneas,  
 quebrándome la cabeza  
 sobre cómo son las *rismas*,  
 si son cabales las *comas*,  
 en qué el tono se divide?  
 Si el *semitono* incantable  
 30 en número impar estriba,  
 a Pitágoras sobre esto  
 revolviendo las cenizas;  
 si el *diatearón* ser debe  
 por consonancia tenida,  
 citando una Extravagante  
 en que el Papa Juan lo afirma;  
 si el *temple* en un instrumento,  
 al hacerlo, necesita  
 de hacer participación  
 40 de una *coma* que hay perdida;  
 si el *punto de alteración*  
 a la *segunda* se inclina,  
 más porque ayude a la letra  
 que porque a las notas sirva;  
 si el modo mayor perfecto  
 en la *máxima* consista,  
 y si el menor toca al *longo*;  
 cuál es *áltera* y cuál *tripla*;  
 si la imperfección que causa  
 50 a una nota, otra más chica,  
 es total, o si es parcial,  
 esencial o advenediza;  
 si la voz que, como vemos,  
 es cantidad sucesiva,

valga sólo aquel respecto  
 con que una voz de otra dista;  
 si el *diapasón* y el *diapente*  
 el ser perfectas, consista  
 en que ni menos ni más  
 60 su composición admita;  
 si la *tinta* es a las notas  
 quien todo el valor les quita,  
 siendo así que muchas hay  
 que les da valor la *tinta*;  
 lo que el *Armónico* medio  
 de sus dos extremos dista,  
 y del *Geométrico* en qué,  
 y *Aritmético*, distinga;  
 si a dos mensuras es toda  
 70 la Música reducida,  
 la una que mide la voz  
 y la otra que el tiempo mida;  
 si la que toca a la voz,  
 o ya intensa, o ya remisa,  
 subiendo o bajando, el Canto  
 Llano sólo la ejercita,  
 mas la exterior, que le toca  
 al tiempo en que es proferida,  
 mide el compás y a las notas  
 80 varios valores asigna;  
 si la proporción que hay  
 del *Ut* al *Re* no es la misma  
 que del *Re* al *Mi*, ni el *Fa Sol*  
 lo mismo que el *Sol La* dista:  
 que aunque es cantidad tan tenue  
 que apenas es percibida,  
*sesquioctava* o *sesquinona*  
 son proporciones distintas;  
 si la *Enarmónica* ser  
 90 a práctica reducida  
 puede, o si se queda en ser  
 cognición intelectual;  
 si lo *Cromático* el nombre  
 de los colores reciba  
 de las teclas, o lo vario  
 de las voces añadidas;  
 y en fin, andar recogiendo  
 las inmensas baratijas  
 de calderones, guiones,  
 100 claves, reglas, puntos, cifras,  
 pide otra capacidad  
 mucho mayor que la mía,  
 que aspire en las Catedrales  
 a gobernar las Capillas.  
 Y más, si es porque en él la  
 bella Doña Petronila  
 a la Música, en su voz,  
 nueva añadida melodía.  
 ¿Enseñar Música a un Ángel?  
 110 ¿Quién habrá que no se ría  
 de que la rudeza humana  
 las Inteligencias rija?  
 Mas si he de hablar la verdad,





eslo que yo, algunos días,  
 por divertir mis tristezas  
 di en tener esa manía,  
 y empecé a hacer un *Tratado*  
 para ver si reducía  
 a mayor facilidad  
 120 las reglas que andan escritas.  
 En él, si mal no me acuerdo,  
 me parece que decía  
 que es una línea espiral,  
 no un círculo, la Armonía;  
 y por razón de su forma  
 revuelta sobre sí misma,  
 lo intitulé *Caracol*,  
 porque esa revuelta hacía.  
 Pero éste está tan informe,  
 130 que no sólo es cosa indigna  
 de vuestras manos, mas juzgo  
 que aun le desechan las mías.  
 Por esto no os le remito;  
 mas como el Cielo permita  
 a mi salud más alientos  
 y algún espacio a mi vida,  
 yo procuraré enmendarle,  
 porque teniendo la dicha  
 de ponerse a vuestros pies,  
 140 me cause gloriosa envidia.  
 De Don Martín y Don Pedro  
 no podéis culpar de omisas  
 las diligencias, que juzgo  
 que aun excedieron de activas.  
 Y mandadme; que no siempre  
 ha de ser tal mi desdicha,  
 que queriendo obedeceros,  
 con querer no lo consiga.  
 Y al gran Marqués, mi Señor,  
 150 le diréis, de parte mía,  
 que aun en tan muertas distancias  
 conservo memorias vivas;  
 que no olvido de su mano  
 sus mercedes recibidas:  
 que no son ingratos todos  
 los que, al parecer, se olvidan;  
 que si no se lo repito,  
 es por la razón ya dicha  
 de excusar que lo molesta  
 160 ostente lo agradecida;  
 que no le escribo porqué,  
 siendo alhaja tan baldía  
 la de mis letras, no intento  
 que de embarazo le sirva;  
 que el carácter de crecer  
 el número a su Familia,  
 le tengo impreso en el alma  
 si no sale a las mejillas;  
 y que ya que mi desgracia  
 170 de estar a sus pies me priva,  
 le serviré en pedir sólo  
 a Dios la vuestra y su vida.

Because the contents of the poem imply an already cemented friendship with the Condesa de Paredes, she obviously wrote it well after the solemn entrance of the viceregal pair November 30, 1680. But when and why she wrote the treatise itself are another matter. According to Diego Calleja, who was in 1700 based at the Colegio Imperial in Madrid, her brilliance already at age seventeen confounded the forty examiners assembled by the Marquis de Mancera, the viceroy from 1664 to 1673. However, her formal musical studies postdated her taking the veil in the Jeronymite convent, February 24, 1669, declares Calleja—who attributed their inception to the musical needs of her fellow convent sisters. In Calleja's orthography:<sup>54</sup>

Pareciendola que las ciencias que avia estudiado, no podian ser de provecho a su Religiosa Familia, donde se professa con esmero tan edificativo el Arte de la Musica, por agradecer à sus carisimas Hermanas el hospedage cariñoso, que todas la hizieron, estudiò el Arte muy de proposito, y le alcanço con tal felicidad, que compuso otro nuevo, y mas facil, en que se llega à su perfecto vso sin los rodeos del antiguo methodo: obra, de los que esto entienden, tan alabada, que bastava ella sola, dicen, para hazerla famosa en el Mundo.

Upon her seeing that the sciences that she had heretofore studied could not confer advantage on sisters in the convent where the Art of Music was so edifyingly and excellently cultivated, she very gladly studied the Art [of Music] in order to benefit her dear convent sisters who had all welcomed her with such love. After making such happy advances in her study, she herself wrote a new and easier music instructor enabling users to arrive at perfection without the strayings of the old method—her instructor being so highly esteemed by those competent in the art that they said it alone was sufficient to make her world famous.

#### *Dates of her musical statements*

How soon Sor Juana mastered the complex terminology that has so constantly baffled commentators struggling with her musical allusions is a matter that invites speculation.<sup>55</sup> But certainly no later than

<sup>54</sup>For modernized orthography, see *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz ante la historia* (1980), p. 145.

<sup>55</sup>*Obras completas*, I, 388: "Sismas, comas, temple, enarmonica, sesquioctava, etc.: tecnicismos de Música (y arcaicos ya, los más), a cuya explicación renunciamos por nuestra absoluta profanidad, y porque exigiría—so pena de ser inútil—una monografía para especialistas."









numero baxò à quarenta y cinco, que es *sexquinona* [10:9], y es, como de *Mi* [misprint for *Ut*], à *Re*;<sup>61</sup> de aqui à quarenta, que es *sexquioctava* [9:8], y es como de *Re*, à *Mi* y de aqui à treinta, que es *sexquitercia*, que es la de el *Diatessaron*: de aqui à veinte, que es la de el Diapente: de aqui à diez, que es la *dupla*, que es el *Diapasson*, y como no ay mas proporciones harmonicas, no passo de ai. Pues como se podrá entender esto sin Musica?

In summary, Sor Juana here contends that Abraham's plea for the Cities of the Plain involved requests for mercy if 50, then 45, next 40, then 30, next 20, finally 10 righteous inhabitants could be found. The 10:9 ratio defines the smaller whole tone C-D; the 9:8 defines the larger D-E; 4:3 bespeaks a fourth; 3:2 a fifth; 2:1 an octave. Whence Sor Juana's ingenious exegesis? Octavio Paz refuses to credit her with originating it. Instead he invokes Cerone's name, but without adducing the all-important page-citation. But wherever she found her source, she still at the close of her career flashed the same brilliance and splendor that had illuminated all her previous production. At the end, as at the beginning, she ranked as one of the supreme intellects of her age.

### Sor Juana's Dramatic Productions

Sor Juana's three-act *comedia*, *Los empeños de una casa* ("The Trials of a Noble House") staged at the viceregal palace October 4, 1683, during a festival celebrating the public entrance into his see of Francisco de Aguiar y Seixas = Seijas<sup>62</sup> (archbishop of Mexico, to his decease October 14, 1698) is her one play wholly written by her. The Mexico City tax collector Fernando Deza, paid for the celebration given in the presence of the viceregal couple—Tomás Antonio de la Cerda and María Luisa Manrique de Lara y Gonzaga.

Only first and third acts of her other secular play, *Amor es más laberinto* ("Love, the Greater Labyrinth") are hers: the middle act having been written

by a priest born in Mexico, Juan de Guevara,<sup>63</sup> who achieved some reputation as a Gongorist poet. Staged at the viceregal palace January 11, 1689, in honor of the birthday of the Conde de Galve<sup>64</sup> (vice-roy from 1688 to 1696), this play dealing with the Athenian hero Theseus, who slew the Minotaur, should by virtue of its mythological subject contain more frequent musical interludes than a *comedia de enredos*. Both plays did outlive their Mexico City premieres, performances of *Amor es más laberinto* and *Los empeños de una casa* having been given as late as 1709 in far distant Manila,<sup>65</sup> to climax a nine-day festivity celebrating the birth of Philip V's son, Luis.<sup>66</sup>

The one substantial musical interlude in *Los empeños* inhabits Act II, lines 413–444, at which juncture five soloists and two *coros* argue the question, "Which is the harshest of love's pains?" *Amor es más laberinto* opens with Coro I praising the beauty of the two princesses of Crete, Phaedra and Ariadne. In a less sanguine mood, Coro II foretells Fortune's duplicities. Ariadne asks, why so sad a prophecy? Phaedra comments on the contradictory effects that song can produce, at one moment bliss, at another foreboding.

Lady Music (*Música*) acts as mistress of ceremonies, not in the body of either play but rather in Sor Juana's loas that precede them. In the loa that precedes *Los empeños* Lady Music serves as arbiter during a dispute among four personified abstractions, Merit, Diligence, Fortune, and Chance. They argue this pair of questions: (1) what constitutes the supreme Joy? (2) which of the just listed four personifications can best guarantee supreme Joy? At the climax of their argument a trumpet blast behind scenes heralds the parting of curtains, whereupon crowned Joy wielding a scepter announces that the arrival of the *Excelsa María Luisa* with her husband, the *Invicto Cerda* (Tomás Antonio de la Cerda, vice-roy 1680 to 1686) constitutes the sublimest happiness.

Sor Juana's *sainete* that intervenes between Acts

<sup>61</sup> The 10:9 ratio yields the minor tone C-D, the 9:8 ratio yields the major tone D-E. See above, note 50.

<sup>62</sup> José de Lezamis's *Breve relación de la vida y muerte del Ilmo. y Revmo. Señor Doctor Don Francisco Aguiar y Seijas* [Sosa's modernized spelling of the title] (México: 1699), elevates him to sainthood. Lezamis, a Basque, served as Aguiar y Seijas's confessor throughout the latter's entire time in Mexico. See Sosa's downgrading of Lezamis's biography, p. 151, note 1. Paz despises Lezamis's hagiography.

<sup>63</sup> *Obras completas*, iv (Alberto G. Salceda, ed.), 587.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi. The Conde de Galve, who reached Mexico City November 18, 1688, arrived with the reputation of having been a great promoter of plays while at the court in Madrid (*ibid.*, 575).

<sup>65</sup> Paz, *Las trampas*, p. 441.

<sup>66</sup> Luis, born at Madrid August 25, 1707, succeeded to the throne February 9, 1724, and died of smallpox August 31, 1724.





I and II of *Los empeños* begins with an alcalde singing his summons to five personifications—Ardor, Respect, Courtesy, Kindness, and Hope. In the game of courtship, which approach soonest turns a lady off, and breeds scorn rather than acceptance? Answering the alcalde, each personification sings a quatrain (but none wins). In the sainete that precedes Act III, two spectators to a play by Acevedo (Sor Juana's alter ego?) join their companions in taunting Acevedo with hissing songs. As a postlude to Act III, Sor Juana adds a *Sarao de cuatro naciones* in which Spaniards, Blacks, Italians, and Mexicans praise the viceregal couple in songs accompanied by drums, clarion, and fife (*caja, clarín, pifano*). These, and unnamed instruments, accompany the four Nations singing a tune labeled *Reina*. Next they play a *Turdión* and then a *Jácara* while the four Nations dance.<sup>67</sup>

Apart from her secular plays, Sor Juana wrote three *autos sacramentales* (Corpus Christi plays, each in one long continuous act), a loa to precede each of them, and a detached loa in honor of the Immaculate Conception. The loa preceding her masterpiece, *El divino Narciso*, begins with Lady Music's summoning the noble Aztecs to an annual communion service [held on December 3], in which they eat the "great god of the seeds" in a ceremony called *Teocualo* ("God is eaten"). Dressed in suitable attire for dancing the solemn *Tocotín*, feathers adorning them and rattles (*ayacachtli*) in hand, the dancers move about to the strains of sung trimeter poetry. The man-size statue of Huitzilopochtli, "the great god of seeds" (which is made of amaranth seeds laced with children's blood) is shot down, whereupon bits of the crumbled statue are distributed among the Aztec participants in a communion ceremony.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Sor Juana's *Bailes y tonos provinciales* includes a 52-line *Turdión* (quatrains of eleven-syllable lines) performed in San Jerónimo convent during a festival celebrating a visit of the viceroy and his wife María Luisa Manrique de Lara y Gonzaga, Condesa de Paredes and Marquesa de la Laguna. The same festivity continued with an española, a panamá, and a jácara. See *Obras completas* 1, 181–186 and 467 (April 8, 1684, the viceregal couple visited San Jerónimo convent).

<sup>68</sup> Juan de Torquemada (1557?–1624), *Monarquía Indiana* (Madrid: Nicolás Rodríguez Franco, 1723), II, 73, col. 1 (book VI, ch. 38). Sor Juana had access to the first edition published at Seville in 1615.

## AVTO SACRAMENTAL

DEL DIVINO NARCISO,  
POR ALEGORIAS.

COMPUESTO POR EL SINGVLAR NVMEN,  
y nunca dignamente alabado ingenio, claridad,  
y propiedad de fraile Castellana,  
de la Madre

IVANA INES DE LA CRUZ,  
RELIGIOSA PROFESSA EN EL MONASTERIO  
del Señor San Geronimo de la Imperial Ciudad  
de Mexico.

## LOA PARA ESTE AVTO

Personas que hablan en ella.

El Occidente.  
La America.

El Ze'lo  
La Religión.

Músicos.  
Sociedades.

Salir el Occidente Indio con Corona, y a America a la lado, de India bizorra, con manto y coronas, al mo lo que se canta el Tocotín. Sentarse en dos sillas, y por una parte, y otra baxian Indios, e Indias, cumplidos, y risas en las manos, como se baxa de ordinario esta Dança, y mientras baxian canta la Música.

Músicos Nobles Mexicanos,  
cuya flirpe anagua,  
de las claras luzes  
del Sol le origina;  
pues oy es el año  
del dicho día,  
en que se confagra  
la mayor riqueza;  
venid a Jornadas  
de vuestras Divisas,

y a la devoción  
le vna la alegría,  
y en pompa festiva  
celebrad al gran Dios de las Semillas.  
Músicos. Y pues la abundancia  
de vuestras Provincias  
se le debe al que es  
quien las fecundiza;  
ofreced devotos,  
pues le son debidas,

de

Sor Juana composed her "Divine Narcissus" *auto sacramental* not spontaneously but at the behest of the Condesa de Paredes, María Luisa Manrique de Lara y Gonzaga, wife of the *Invicto Cerda*, Marquis of Laguna, viceroy 1680–1686. In the 498-line prefatory loa, speaking character Zeal asks whether an *auto sacramental* written in Mexico can appropriately be shown at Madrid. In reply, Religion assures Zeal that the writing of *El divino Narciso* yielded to no personal whim, but instead was undertaken solely in obedience to her patroness's commission.<sup>69</sup>

So far as musical moments in the *auto* itself are concerned: Sinagoga appears in the first float, attended by two choirs that reiterate an estribillo sung between coplas spoken by Gentilidad and

<sup>69</sup> *Obras completas*, III (1955), 513. For a summary and criticism of *The Divine Narcissus*, see Gerard Flynn, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1971), pp. 71–74.





Naturaleza Humana. In the second float, Old Testament worthies Abel, Enoch, and Moses pass by, each singing an edifying quatrain addressed to Deity. In the next sequence, the fallen archangel Lucifer disguised as the alluring maiden Echo pursues to a high mountain the divine Narcissus, who is Christ. There in the heights Echo tempts Narcissus, winging her blandishments *en tono recitativo*.<sup>70</sup>

Further musical intercalations include the following: (1) Divine Grace, habited as a shepherdess, sings a dozen lines, Lady Music repeating the twelfth line; (2) After speaking four short lines, Narcissus sings a long fifth line; he repeats this pattern of “speaking” 21 times; (3) Upon being deprived of the ability to make a sound, except as an echo, the temptress Echo can utter only the words *tengo*, *pena*, *rabia*, each of which is immediately repeated behind scenes *en tono triste*; (4) After various ensuing reiterated quatrains, Lady Music repeats each time the last line of *Naturaleza Humana*’s nine verse-paragraphs, in which Human Nature bewails Narcissus’s death; (5) Divine Grace joins Human Nature in singing a Spanish translation of the *Pange lingua* to end the auto.

Sor Juana precedes her San Hermenegildo auto sacramental with a loa at the outset of which two theological students argue the question: which was Christ’s greater beneficence (*fineza*), dying for humankind (Augustine’s conviction), or bequeathing to us the sacrament of his body and blood (Thomas Aquinas’s viewpoint). A third student, entering like an Elihu on Bildad and Zophar, offers to resolve the dispute with a play within a play. Two soldiers enter, placing Hercules’s columns at earth’s supposed western terminus. Lady Music, joined by a choir, affirms the motto: “*Non plus ultra! Non plus ultra!* ¡Aquí acaba el Universo!” after which motto the soldiers march out. Behind the scenes, a commotion prefaces the landfall of October 12, 1492. Columbus enters to the sound of drums and trumpets (*cajas y clarines*). Coro I favors Hercules’s world view, Coro

II prefers Columbus’s larger world. The third student now imposes his judgment: Christ’s greater *fineza* was the institution of the Eucharist, whereby his presence continues amongst us *per omnia saecula saeculorum*. In the San Hermenegildo auto which the loa prefaces, personified Faith bursts into song when warning Hermenegildo against Arian error. After the protagonist is beheaded rather than submitting to error, Faith sings a threnody (*endechas*) extolling his constancy. Two choirs, not previously heard, repeat the couplet, *¡llore lllore la Tierra / y cante cante el Cielo!* (“let Earth bewail while Heaven sings [in exultation]”).

With notably greater insistence than in the San Hermenegildo loa and auto, Music intervenes repeatedly throughout *El Cetro de José* (“Joseph’s Scepter”), both loa and auto. Lady Music sings all her lines in the loa. All four personifications, Faith, Law of Grace, Natural Law, and Nature, respond with sung solos, after which they join in a sung quartet. On the other hand, Idolatry—who contends that human flesh is the best sacrifice to the Almighty—never sings. In the auto, Música enacts various opposing roles. She represents God’s voice, as he reveals himself to Jacob. But she also acclaims the glories of the Pharaoh whose dream Joseph successfully interprets. Joseph enters in triumph to musical strains that salute him as the *Salvador del Mundo*. When Lucifer queries the meaning of the table to which Joseph has invited his brothers (a profiguring of the Last Supper) Prophecy sings the explanation of the mystery (“Omnipotent Deity can separate substance from accident”). Prophecy repeats the sung refrain line *¡Atended al prodigio!* (“Behold the prodigy”) ten times before saluting the Bread of Heaven with *¡Misterio de los Misterios, el Prodigio de los Prodigios!*

Both Sor Juana’s secular and religious theatre everywhere reveals her acquaintance with Calderonian precedents. However, any search for his consistency must take into account her inability to control productions while inhabiting a convent. Especially would this be so when *El divino Narciso*, written for Madrid, is studied. The character of the theatrical music interspersing her theatre, whether her plays reached the boards at Madrid, Manila, or Mexico City, must therefore be inferred from the character of the Hidalgo, Navas, and Serqueira excerpts published in Louise Kathrin Stein’s 1993 Oxford Clarendon Press authoritative book in which

<sup>70</sup> Louise K. Stein, *Songs of mortals, dialogues of the gods: music and theatre in seventeenth-century Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 135–136, cites *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra*, Calderón’s spectacle play produced in May 1652 at the Buen Retiro palace theatre—the staging supervised by the Florentine Baccio del Bianco (1604–1657)—as his first to include stage directions that “explicitly call for recitative.” At pages 150–151 she states that in Calderón’s theatre recitative failed to replace ordinary speech, being reserved instead for the utterances of deities.





she magisterially contemplated the entire Spanish seventeenth-century surviving homeland theatrical repertory.

### *Birthday Loas*

The five loas celebrating the birthdays of Carlos II (born November 6, 1661) that date from 1675 to 1684 consistently require music interludes—usually of a refrain type. Two choirs intervene in the loas numbered 374–375 in the Méndez Plancarte edition, three choirs in 376, four in 377. Additionally, in 376 the personifications of Time, the Heavens, the Sun, and Prudence, sing solos. *Cielo* (the Heavens) sings her lines having to do with the harmony of the spheres as a *recitativo* (“*Oye, pues la armonia / que hacen con giros varios mis Orbes que se mueven / con giracion, trepidacion, y raptó*”). However, among Sor Juana’s total of twelve dramatic loas, ten of which celebrate birthdays, as well as the one loa written on commission for a December 8 celebration in a private citizen’s Mexico City palace, all resemble one another, so far as the frequency of musical interventions is concerned.

The one birthday ode that may possibly have been performed by students in the patio of San Jerónimo convent salutes Elvira de Toledo, Countess of Galve and the wife of Gaspar de Sandoval Cerda Silva y Mendoza, viceroy from November 1688 to February 1696. In honor of her birthday October 20, 1689 (or with less likelihood, 1690), Sor Juana’s *Encomiástico Poema a los Años de la Condesa de Galve* requires among the dramatis personae Lady Music, a *coro de música*, and personifications of the six Guidonian syllables. *Ut* responds to Lady Music’s summons, followed by *Re*—without which no first whole step upward could start the hexachord. *Mi*’s entrance makes possible the first harmonious interval, the consonance of a major third. *Fa* rises only a semitone above *Mi*, to prevent the harshness of a tritone. *Sol* is the first syllable that forms with *Ut* a perfect consonance. *La* completes the hexachord.

Whatever the mutation, *La* remains the highest sung syllable. After having been thus introduced, each syllable next returns with an anagram poster. *Ut* stands for *Virtud*, *Re* for *Recocijo*, *Mi* for *Miramiento*, *Fa* for *Fama*, *Sol* for *Solicitud*, *La* for *Latitud*. Not yet exhausted, the Guidonian syllables join one another in a concluding paean filled with a variety of virtuosic conceits.

Whatever the date of the ode paying tribute to the Condesa de Galve on her birthday in 1689 or 1690, Sor Juana’s allegiance to the hexachord fittingly rounds out a career that began in the 1664–1668 quinquennium with her only opportunity to hear cathedral music in Mexico City Cathedral itself. During those five years reigned the most erudite of cathedral maestros born in Mexico City—Francisco López Capillas, whose proudest achievement signaled in his *Declaración de la Missa*, was his hexachord Mass.

### *Recapitulation*

Sor Juana’s own musical erudition—based on a solicitous reading of Cerone’s *El Melopeo y maestro*, a personally owned copy of which she intelligently annotated—took wing in her own recension, a treatise long lost that she herself called *El caracol* (a title with both Pythagorean and Mexican significance). She filled her villancicos with musical allusions that include an abecedary of musical instruments. The term *recitativo* encountered in her dramatic works presumes her familiarity with Calderonian “semi-opera” (Stein’s chapter title). No less intrepidly than Calderón she mixed music with metaphor. Only the neglect of her oeuvre by music theorists has heretofore delayed her placement among Spanish-language authors in columns of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, and their other prestigious congener lexicons. No baroque literary colossus bestriding both hemispheres ever approached her level of musical learning.