

Reviews

La música ecuatoriana desde su origen hasta 1875. By J[UAN] AGUSTÍN GUERRERO, introduction by Abelardo Pachano Bertero (Quito, Banco Central del Ecuador, 1984. 54 pp. [Fuentes y Documentos, para la historia de la música en el Ecuador, 1]).

This facsimile reprint of the original edition (Quito: Imprenta Nacional, 1876) deprives Ramón de la Plaza of the primacy usually accorded him. True, Guerrero provides no musical appendix as does Plaza in his *Ensayos sobre el arte en Venezuela* (Caracas: Imprenta al Vapor "La Opinión Nacional," 1883).¹ Nor is Guerrero aware of colonial achievements. He does quote a laudatory paragraph from the Jesuit historian Juan de Velasco (1727–1792) to introduce his section on Inca music.² Thence he leaps to personalities prominent in the early independence period. Among these he recalls Ignacio Miño, composer of four masses, and Juan Bastidas—both of whom were excellent violinists. Manuel Checa, a good harpist, knew enough harmony to teach rudiments in a conservatory. The Franciscan Antonio Alcuna, installed as cathedral maestro de capilla in 1811, was succeeded five years later by Crisanto Castro, tenor

singer, reputable violinist, and prolific composer. Castro's *Te Deum laudamus* never failed to inspire devotion with its majestic measures. In 1832 so many able instrumentalists resided at Quito that the impresario of a visiting spoken theatre company—a certain Spaniard named Villalva—lamented the needless expense of having brought from Lima three Peruvians (a pair of violins and a French horn) to accompany the two vocal soloists.

However, in the 1830's Quito cathedral music lagged somewhat behind what two religious orders were providing. Their music directors in that decade were the Augustinian José Viteri and the Franciscan Mariano Vaca. In 1810 the native of Quito Fray Tomás Mideros (after four years' music study at Cuenca and a grounding at Quito with an Italian friar) had opened an *aula de música* that enrolled the best talents, and had started an orchestra. The Augustinians still retained their musical supremacy in the 1830's because Viteri was then aided also by Fray Francisco Fraga, first tenor in the cathedral and an able *cantollanista*. After Fraga's death in 1840, his prophecy that the large cathedral choirbooks containing plainchant would be buried, and not again used, was fulfilled.

In 1865 Marcos Jiménez de la Espada headed a visiting Spanish scientific commission sent to Quito, and it was he who prevailed upon Guerrero to send him for publication at Madrid a collection of Ecuadorian yaravies.³ This request gives Guerrero his opportunity to defend the autochthonous yaraví (page 12). Even though no more than the repetition of two or three phrases, the yaraví speaks to the soul of the uninstructed *quiteño*, who

¹ See *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, 40 (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1978), p. 554, item 9146, and *Notes of the Music Library Association*, 35/4 (June 1978), 876–877.

² The first native of Ecuador to write a history of Quito territory, Juan de Velasco (*b* Riobamba, January 6, 1727; *d* Faenza, Italy, June 29, 1792) entered the Society of Jesus novitiate at Latacunga July 22, 1744. Guerrero quoted the paragraph on Inca instruments that concludes Libro 2, §5 of his *Historia antigua*, second volume of *Historia del Reino de Quito* (Quito: Imprenta a del Gobierno, 1842). Velasco lists eight different Inca instruments: chichiles (rattles and jingles), cuybi (whistle emitting five notes), tinya, huayrampura (syrinx), huayllaco (large flute), huancari (small drum for dances), quipa (trumpet). Guerrero cites these instruments, adding Velasco's remarks: "they were skilled in sounding all these types of instruments invented by them. . . . The instruments came in larger and smaller sizes and were made of wood, cane, gourds, bones, and metals."

³ At page 13, Guerrero takes credit for having provided transcriptions of all the *melodías indianas y populares* that Jiménez de la Espada, without giving him any credit, published in his *Colección de [19] yaravies quiteños*, Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, *Actas de la Cuarta Reunión Madrid, 1881*, vol. 2, appendix (Madrid: Imprenta de Fortanet, 1883). Jiménez de la Espada called himself *un mero aficionado al divino arte* (*ibid.*, p. 163).