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# Ignacio Jerusalem (1707–1769): Italian parvenu in eighteenth-century Mexico

## Part One

INTRODUCTORY SUMMARY

FLORENTINE-TYPE, all sung, opera reached Madrid as early as 1627, when on December 18 and 24 672-line *La selva sin amor* with libretto by Lope de Vega and music by the theorbo-player Filippo Piccinini and the Tuscan envoy Bernardo Monanni, both resident in Madrid, delighted Philip IV and the Spanish court. On September 17, 1708, *El Mejor escudo de Perseo* with libretto by the recently arrived Peruvian viceroy and music by the native of Milan Roque Ceruti, brought to Lima by the viceroy, took pride of place as the first opera of Italian stripe performed in the Americas.

Mexico City, more resistant against Italians than Madrid, Lisbon, Lima, or Buenos Aires, waited until 1742 to receive the 35-year-old married native of Lecce, Ignacio Gerusalemme (in Mexico, Hierusalem or Jerusalem). Contracted at Cádiz as composer and director of a seven-member theater instrumental ensemble (simultaneously contracted), he was born June 3, 1707. Seventh among the children of violinist Matteo Martino Gerusalemme and his second wife, Anna Curzio Stella, both of whom were Neapolitans, Ignacio was reared in his birthplace, where from 1689 his father was violinist in the local Jesuit church. After numerous unsuccessful attempts to lure a Spanish or Mexican worthy successor to Manuel de Zumaya, Mexico City Cathedral authorities in 1750 finally confirmed Jerusalem as titular *maestro de capilla*. Nonetheless, he continued as Coliseo conductor and composer during the next several years, to the great disgust of the cathedral chapter. Separated from his wife, his transgressions of a professional and personal type scandalized the pious, but were tolerated because his abundant flow of commissioned cathedral masterpieces delighted everyone from the archbishop to the humblest laity.

In this paper I meticulously trace his cathedral career to his death at Mexico City in December 1769, mention his relationships with three of his children, summarily catalogue his extant works in Mexico City Cathedral and Colegiata de Guadalupe archives, at Puebla and Guatemala cathedrals, and at church archives in Santa Barbara and Los Angeles (the latter discovered by William Summers and John Koegel), and briefly assess presently available Jerusalem scholarship, published music, and recordings.

### I

In contrast with Spain, Portugal, and even Peru, Mexico tardily welcomed Ignacio Jerusalem (Gerusalemme, Hyerusalem, Hierusalem), the first Italian imported to compose and conduct the theater music needed at the Mexican viceroyalty's Coliseos.

Florentine-type "true" opera had reached Madrid as early as 1627, when on December 18 and 24, all-sung *La selva sin amor*, with members of the orchestra hidden from public view, had delighted Philip IV and attending courtiers at Buen Retiro palace. This

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pastoral opera—with a 672-line libretto by Lope de Vega that joined music composed by the theorbo-player long resident at the Spanish court, Filippo Piccinini (1575–1648), and the Tuscan envoy at Madrid, Bernardo Monanni[1]—therefore reached the stage in the same year that Heinrich Schütz's pastoral tragicomedy, *Dafne* (staged at Torgau April 13/23, 1627) became the "first opera created in Germany."

Not a "true" Florentine-type opera (recitatives alternating with arias) *Dafne* (libretto by Martin Opitz) alternated spoken text with vocal inserts.

*El mejor escudo de Perseo* ("Perseus's best shield"), the "first opera created on American soil" by an immigrant Italian, Roque Ceruti (*b* Milan, *c* 1683; *d* Lima, December 6, 1760), boasted a libretto by the 24th Peruvian viceroy, Manuel de Oms y Santa Pau, Marqués de Castell dos Rius (Barcelona, 1659; Lima, 1710). Mounted at the viceroyal palace in Lima on September 17, 1708, this mythological opera, accompanied instrumentally by the viceroy's select band of nine imported players, paid tribute to Felipe V's son Luis, born at Buen Retiro palace August 25, 1707.[2]

*La Partenope*, with a libretto by Silvio Stampiglia (1664–1725) and music by Manuel de Zumaya ranks as the first opera produced in North America. Given at the Mexico City palace of viceroy Fernando de Alencastre Noroña y Silva, Duke of Linares, May 1, 1711, Zumaya's *Partenope* was the fourth opera using Stampiglia's libretto, Handel's *Partenope* (1730) the eighth. The bilingual libretto, Italian and Spanish, published at Mexico City (Herederos de la Viuda de M. de Ribera, 1711) survives at the Mexico City Biblioteca Nacional (Signature 17., M4 PAR) as testimony that the opera was produced, even if the music does not survive.

In the interim between Zumaya's departure in 1739 for Oaxaca where he remained to his death December 21, 1755, and the engagement of Ignacio Jerusalem as titular maestro de capilla of Mexico City Cathedral from 1750 to his death at the close of 1769, a decade had passed during which the history of the theater activities at Mexico City merits recounting. Contracted in 1742 at Cádiz by José Cárdenas Guzmán y Flores, administrator of the Hospital Real y General de los Indios at Mexico City that subsisted on profits from theater productions at the capital's Coliseo, Jerusalem has heretofore been identified as a native of Lecce, but without a birth date, family, or musical connections.

## II

The seventh child of the Neapolitan violinist hired in 1689 at the Jesuit church in Lecce, Matteo Martino Gerusalemme (*b* 1666) and Matteo's second wife Anna Curzio Stella, Ignacio was born at Lecce June 3, 1707, and baptized the next day.

The history of the Gerusalemme family at Lecce, carefully culled from local archives by Luisa Cosi,[3] begins in 1683 when at about age 17 the "maestro de viola" Matteo Martino Gerusalemme moved from Naples to Campi Salentina, a small town within a few kilometers from Lecce. During his next six years he supplied music at the local court of Gabriel Agustín Enríquez de Castilla (Gabriele Agostino Erriquez de Castiglia, 1626–1697), a relative of Spanish royalty given the title of prince of Squinzano by Philip IV.

After assuming the post in 1689 of "maestro de

[1] Shirley B. Whitaker, "Florentine Opera Comes to Spain: Lope de Vega's *La selva sin amor*," *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, IX (1984), 54, 63:

Et però il Piccinini ha preso l'assunto di far la musica, Lope de Vega poeta famoso ha fatto le parole spagnuole; et quando sente cantar i suoi versi con questa sorte di musica, se ne va in dolcezza. Et perchè il Piccinini non ne sa straordinariamente, il Segretario Monanni l'ha aiutato et fatto due scene, che sono le più lunghe et saranno le meglio, et donategliene, perchè faceia honore a sè et alla Patria; come fa (letter of Averardo de'Medici, Florentine ambassador at Madrid, dated July 1, 1627).

quoted in Louise K. Stein, *Songs of Mortals, Dialogues of the Gods. Music and Theatre in Seventeenth-Century Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 193, note 17.

[2] Robert Stevenson, *The Music of Peru Aboriginal and Viceroyal Epochs* (Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat, Organization of American States, 1960), 84, 117. According to Pedro Joseph de Peralta Barnuevo, *Lima Triumphante* (Lima: Joseph de Contreras y Alvarado, 1708) fols. M2$^{v}$-M3, the Marqués de Castell dos Rius, a thorough cosmopolitan, whose diplomatic service had taken him previously to Portugal and France, brought a nine-member coterie whose repertory included motets and sonatas by such Italians as [Bonifazio] Graziani (1604/5–1664) and Corelli.

[3] In conjunction with Giuseppe A. Pastore, Luisa Cosi, responsible for all Lecce documentation in this article, published *Pasquale Cefaro musicista salentino del XVIII secolo* (Lecce: Milella, 1980 [81 pp.].

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viola" in the Jesuit church at Lecce, thanks to the recommendation of Vincenzo Stella—a maestro already well known in Lecce as a composer, an organizer of concerts, and a patron of various local musicians,[4] Matteo Gerusalemme in 1691 married Giustina Stefanelli, a native of Lecce. Two years later she died, leaving only one child, Caterina Nicoletta, whose godfather at the request of the aforenamed Erriquez de Castiglia was Vincenzo Stella.

Within months of having been left a widower, Matteo Martino married Vincenzo Stella's daughter, Anna Curzio Stella. The couple resided first in one of the Santa Maria parishes, then in the cathedral parish. Between 1694 and 1716 their nine children born at Lecce had for godparents the cream of Lecce society known for their musical interests. Their seventh child, born at 10 p.m. June 3, 1707, was baptized June 4. The baptismal certification as extracted by Luisa Cosi, reads:

> Ignatius Dominicus Orontius Joseph Pascali . . . natus die tertio mensis Junij 1707 hora vero vigesima. Baptizatus . . . die quatro ejusdem a R.D. Domenico Praiola de Purculis Lycij degente Suscipiens fuit Michael Fuscarini barensis Lycij degens

On the recommendation of a family friend, the Jesuit Domenico Viva, Ignacio (shedding his other four baptismal names) probably completed his schooling at the local Jesuit *collègio* where his brother Cesare (whose document of ordination to the priesthood survives) had studied. Ignacio's father must be credited with his musical initiation. Despite a nine-year interdict from 1710 to 1719 imposed on Lecce by Bishop Fabrizio Pignatelli (1659–1734) inhibiting public performances of sacred music,[5] Ignacio's father continued holding his musician's post in the Jesuit church until at least 1726—the year in which his eldest daughter, Caterina Nicoletta, married. Doubtless Matteo Martino found it during the interim more advantageous to remain in Lecce, thanks both to the patronage of local aristocracy, especially that of the Erriquez family, and to Jesuit patronage.

Errico Erriquez (1701–1756), son of the second prince of Squinzano, entered papal diplomatic service and from 1742 to 1754, by express desire of Philip IV and Ferdinand VI, was apostolic delegate at Madrid. Whether he had any thing to do with bringing Jerusalem to Spain remains mere speculation. The cathedral archive a Cuenca houses a nineteenth-century copy of Ignacio Jerusalem's *aria a dúo* accompanied by two violins and continuo, *Cielo que alto mirais* (*Catálogo Musical del Archivo de la Santa Iglesia Catedral Basilica de Cuenca*, secunda edición, 1973, p. 316), but mere presence of such a late copy tells nothing. The bridge between his beginning in Lecce and 1742 had not yet been crossed.

## III

In 1742 and 1743 when Administrator Cárdenas or his agent at Cádiz signed new Coliseo personnel, every evidence points to Cárdenas's desire to lift to a new much higher level the performances in Mexico City's one public theater.[6] The names of the performers contracted at Cádiz began with Josef Ordóñez and his wife Isabel Gamarra, their two daughters Vicenta and Josefa Ordóñez. Next were contracted a couple formerly at the Barcelona theater: Francisco Rueda, *sobresaliente en violín y trompa caccia* ("outstanding violinist and player of the hunting horn") and his wife Petronila Ordóñez, *famosa actriz y excelente cantarina, que se acompañaba grandemente a si misma con violín y guitarra* ("famous actress and excellent singer, who accompanies herself magnificently with violin and guitar").

[4] Among Lecce notables aided by Stella, violinist and composer Pietro Migalo (Migali), born at Lecce *c*1670 (Carlo Schmidl, *Supplemento al Dizionario Universale dei Musicisti* [Milan: Sonsogno, 1938], 534) published (12) *Sonate A trè, doi violini, e violone, ò Arcileuto, col basso per l'organo*, Op. 1 (Rome: Mascardi, 1696). Antonio Bolognini studied at Naples with Cristoforo Caranzana (1655–1713). Cosi lists also the Lecce native, Leonardo Pranzo.

[5] Gaetano Argento, "Consulta intorno all'interdetto di Lecce," in *Contributi alla storia della Chiesa di Lecce* (Congedo Editore Galatina, 1981), 71–116, fleshes out the entire history of the interdict. Pignatelli's biography consumes pp. 114–116.

[6] Mexico City's first public theater built in 1671–1672 burned the night of January 19, 1722. The second Coliseo, also of wood, was inaugurated in 1725. In 1749 it was in such ruinous state that it closed three weeks for repairs, and in 1752 it also burned. This was the theater in which Jerusalem and his companions signed at Cádiz in 1742 began their services. The third Coliseo, that began being built in December 1752, opened December 23, 1753, with Viceroy Revilla Gigedo and his wife present for a play entitled *Mejor está que estaba* ("It's better than it was"). For further details concerning these Coliseos, see J. Luis Trenti Rocamora, *El teatro en la América Colonial* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Huarpes, 1947), 311–320. He cites his sources for Mexico in his notes at pages 428–430.

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Additionally, Cárdenas received royal permission to contract the following instrumentalists: Juan Gregorio Panseco, *natural de Milán y sobresaliente en los instrumentos de violín, violón y flauta traveçera* ("outstanding violinist, violoncellist, and player of the transverse flute"); Josef Pisoni *del Ducado de Milán sobresaliente en violín, trompas de caccia y maestro de danza* ("of the Milan duchy, outstanding violinist, expert hunting horn player, and dancing master"), Juan Bautista Arestín, *francés sobresaliente en violín y violón* ("Frenchman, outstanding violinist and violoncellist"), Gaspar and Andrés Espinosa, *tocadores de trompa de caccia, flauta travesera, violín y oboe* ("players of the hunting horn, transverse flute, violin, and oboe"), and Benito Andrés Preibus *del Puerto de Santa María, que tenía la misma habilidad de los anteriores* ("of El Puerto de Santa María [Spanish export city seven miles NE of Cádiz, at the mouth of the Guadalete], possessor of the same ability as the others").[7]

For spectacles involving musical excesses, the viceroyal palace had previously served the aristocracy—*El Rodrigo* was performed in 1708, *Partenope* in 1711, *El amor excede al arte* and *Maquinas de Arquimedes* in 1729, *Aspides y basiliscos* in 1731, *Duelos de ingenio y fortuna* in 1732, *Amando bien no se venderá un desdén* in 1733.[8]

Who provided the music for Calderón's *Celós aun del aire matan* performed December 19, 1728, at the viceroyal palace the *Gazeta de México* for November–December of 1728 and January of 1729 does not say. But for the 1727 Coliseo season a "Doctor" Ricardo de la Main was contracted as *músico director*, Gerónimo Pisero as one of the Coliseo *músicos*, and Josefa Trejo and Francisca de la Rivera as *cantantes* (singers).[9] On April 9, 1729, Gerónimo Pizero succeeded "Doctor" Main as *músico director* and Caterina Rodríguez was added as *cantante*, only to be replaced next year (March 30, 1730) by Francisca Xaviera Xaramillo as comic and singer.[10] In 1732 Joseph Rosales succeeded Pizero as *músico director*.[11] On March 21, 1736, the musical personnel contracted for the season comprised the director, whose duties also included composing the needed music, first and second violins, harp, and other instrumentalists to be hired "when required." The number of women singers who were also dancers contracted that day rose to five.[12]

What part music actually enjoyed in plays written for the Coliseo and produced there shortly before Jerusalem's arrival, can best be known from three extant plays by the supremely talented immigrant actor, Eusebio Vela (1688–1737). A native of Toledo who teamed with his brother José to manage Coliseo productions from 1718 until his death from smallpox at Veracruz, Eusebio Vela wrote at least ten plays mounted at the Coliseo under his supervision.

"Música" and "Acompañamiento" are two of the designated characters in *La Pérdida de España* ("The Loss of Spain," manuscript source in the British Library, Add. 33,479, pp. 130–206)—which tells the all too familiar story of the loss of Visigothic Spain to the Moors after Don Rodrigo deflowers Florinda and her father Count Julian welcomes the invader. Sung refrains pervade Act I, during which Florinda is serenaded by *dos damas* who keep repeating the quatrain: *Tiempo, lugar y ventura, / muchos hay que la han tenido; / pero pocos han sabido / gozar de la cuyuntura* ("Many have had the time, place, and opportunity, but few have known how to enjoy their conjunction"). In *Si el amor excede al arte, ni amor ni arte a la prudencia* ("If love surpasses art, neither love nor art exceeds prudence"). Minerva disguised as Mentor convinces Telemachus detained on her island by Calypso, that prudence better befits him than union with Calypso or with a nymph on the same island. While in Cupid's thrall, Telemachus is constantly enchanted by seven recurring musical refrains.[13] At beginning and end of the play "Música" sings solos.[14] In contrast with the two just named plays, *Apostolada en las Indias y martirio de un cacique* ("Apostolate in the Indies and martyrdom of a [young] chieftain") takes Mexico City for its scene of action. The *dramatis personae* include Hernando Cortés, governor Alonso de Estrada, two of the Francisco evangelists

[7] Trenti Rocamora, 318.

[8] *Ibid.*, 314 and 317, citing Rodolfo Usigli, *México en el teatro* (Mexico City: Imprenta Mundial, 1932), p. 57, and Armando de María y Campos, *Andanzas y picardías de Eusebio Vela (autor y comediante mexicano del siglo XVIII)* (Mexico City: Ediciones populares, 1944), pp. 72–74.

[9] Jefferson Rea Spell and Francisco Monterde, *Tres comedias de Eusebio Vela* (Mexico City: Imprenta Universitaria, 1948), p. x, citing Mexico City Archivo de Notarías, Registro de Vasconcelos, March 27, 1727.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. xv.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 118–121.

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91, 156.

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who arrived in 1524, seven Aztec lords and the son of a lord, plus two angels. The son of a cacique baptized with the name of Cristóbal returns home to be burned alive by his furious father whom he has tried to convert. Cortés's entrance is signaled with *Música* (European instruments) but the approach of Aztecs requires teponaztlis[15] (the two-pronged indigenous wooden slit-drum).

The musical interludes required in Eusebio Vela's plays abide by conventions already long established in Spanish theater, and Jerusalem can therefore be assumed to have known in advance what would be expected of him and his companions who included singers, dancers, and instrumentalists. They began arriving at Mexico City not in 1742, the year when contracts began being signed at Cádiz, but at the end of 1743.[16] Their performances did not begin until the Spring of the next year, the date of their contract for the season being March 27, 1744.[17]

Again, just as in Spain where the licentiousness of the stage often invoked the protest of stern moralists, so also at Mexico City. The actress Ana María de Castro, lauded in the early 1740's for her singing as well as acting ability,[18] and who with Diego Francisco de Asís de Hoyos controlled presentations in the 1741 and 1742 seasons, quit the stage in the very year that Jerusalem and his cohorts began being contracted at Cádiz.[19]

With its continued reputation for immoral influences the Coliseo cannot have immediately with the arrival of new personnel from Europe served Mexico City cathedral authorities as a happy hunting ground for new musical appointees.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 16.

[16] Spell and Monterde, p. xvii, citing administrator José Cárdenas to Torres, November 11, 1743, in the Registro de Balbuena, 1743, fols. 35$^{v}$–38.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. xvii, citing "Escritura de cómicos," March, 27, 1744, in the Registro de Balbuena, 1744, 9 unnumbered pages.

[18] According to Usigli, *México en el teatro*, p. 60: Francisco de Chávarri reported to the viceroy that the public highly acclaimed her. "Es aclamada de todo el público su viveza en representar, lo bien sentido del verso, consonancia de las palabras, la retórica, y viveza de sus acciones; la dulzura y armonía de su voz en lo que canta."

[19] Joše Mariano Beristain de Souza, *Biblioteca Hispano Americana Septentrional* [1816–1821] (Mexico City: Ediciones Fuente Cultural, 1947), I, 136, reported that Padre Matías Conchoso's sermons moved her to repentance for her irregular life, whereupon she in 1742 abandoned the theater.