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State of Europe

State of the Field

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Editor's Note

We're very proud to introduce to you this special edition of *Perspectives on Europe*, providing you a 'state of European Studies'. A lot has happened over the past decade or so, not just in Europe itself but also in our research field. European Studies has matured, becoming even more multidisciplinary and involving stronger relations between Europe and abroad than ever before. The scholarly community brought together by the Council for European Studies (CES) has played its part in these developments.

Therefore, this seems like the ideal moment for providing a state of play of our research field, inviting scholars from various disciplines and from across the globe to provide their views on European Studies. Where do we come from as a research field? Where are we heading? What are our achievements, and what risks and opportunities lay ahead? What is our relevance to and what could be our contribution to developments in Europe itself, in the context of the financial-economic and the institutional crisis in which Europe finds itself at the moment?

This special issue contains contributions from leading sociologists, anthropologists, legal scientists, political scientists, public administration scholars, economists, and historians. It covers topics like the European crisis, but also very interesting flashbacks on the development of European Studies and the role CES has played in this, the evolution of transatlantic relations between scholars, and very diverse perspectives on the future of Europe.

After about two years as editor, this will also be my final issue of *Perspectives on Europe*. With this issue I feel like I'm leaving *Perspective*s at a very good moment and in a very good state. I really enjoyed working with the CES team, including Corey Fabian Borenstein, Siovahn Walker, and John Bowen. Though my name as editor often appeared in the front office, I really have to admit that most of the work was really done by Corey and Siovahn. It's to them that we owe this great journal! I'm very happy to announce that Dr. Neringa Klumbytė from Miami University will become the new editor of *Perspectives on Europe*. I'm fully confident that with her *Perspectives* is in good hands and that she will be able to give a new touch to this much-appreciated journal!

Peter Scholten, Editor

Diego Velázquez, *The Three Musicians* (c. 1616 – 1620)

Council *for* European Studies

Perspectives on Europe

Tracing Musical Theology through Networks of Musicians in Seventeenth-Century Spain

Andrew A. Cashner, University of Chicago

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This research project, part of a dissertation in progress at the University of Chicago, traces how religious beliefs about music were articulated through music itself in the seventeenth-century Spanish Empire. *Villancicos* were the predominant genre of religious vocal music with vernacular words in the early modern Hispanic world. This project focuses on how villancicos articulated changing beliefs about music's power at a time when understandings of the cosmos and humanity's place in it were shifting rapidly. The study does this in part by following several sets of villancicos based on similar themes or even the same poetic texts over the course of the century. The poems and musical settings moved along complex networks of interrelated musicians, with teachers passing on texts to their students, rivals borrowing one another's sources and trying to outdo each other, while, throughout the seventeenth century, composers in the Old World sent music to their colleagues in the New. Thus the project is a study of villancicos in motion – music in physical transit between musicians, and music in theological transition from traditional understandings of music toward new accommodations to a transformed cosmology.

The poetic and musical genre of the villancico is one of the most intriguing and least understood aspects of religious practice in the last century of Habsburg Spain. This genre emerged in the late medieval period as a

courtly form of entertainment and sometimes devotion, which drew in some way on poetic or musical elements from lower-class sources (as the term's etymological relationship to *villa* or village suggests). But in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the performance venue for villancicos began to shift from the aristocratic home to the church, as at the same time the form and thematic content transformed into a primarily religious genre.

Seventeenth-century villancicos are complex pieces of music based on Castilian and other Iberian vernacular poems. All the varying formal schemes in this repertoire share the common element of a refrain (*estribillo*) for the full ensemble and verses (*coplas*), usually for soloists or reduced forces. Though some influence of indigenous musics in the New World is possible, most villancico composers in the New World stayed close to the models set by their Iberian peers, in part because many colonial composers (such as Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla of Puebla Cathedral in modern Mexico) were born and trained in Spain.

Villancicos were performed in every large Spanish church at all the highest feast days – particularly Christmas, Corpus Christi, and the (Immaculate) Conception of Mary. Typically, sets of eight villancicos were integrated into the liturgy of Matins, sung after (or sometimes in place of) the Responsory chants from Gregorian tradition. Though a great deal of this global repertoire has been lost, thousands of musical manuscripts and printed leaflets of villancico poems survive (the imprints were sold in coordination with church performances, especially at Christmas).

Villancicos could be musically, poetically, and theologically quite sophisticated, such as the sober compositions of Joan Cererols, monk at the monastery of Montserrat near Barcelona. On the other hand, villancicos also frequently referred to lower-class subjects like shepherds, barnyard animals, and culturally marginal figures like ethnic minorities (especially blacks, 'gypsies', and Indians).[1] *Negrillas* or 'black villancicos' were a regular part of the cycles of Christmas villancicos by Gutiérrez de Padilla at Puebla. Depictions of parades, masques, and bullfights recur throughout the imprints that survive from Seville, Madrid, Toledo, and Zaragoza. There are even villancicos in which Christ is depicted as a gambling card-player – the subject of a forthcoming article in the *Journal of Early Modern History* for which this archival research provided important evidence.[2]

Traditional historiography of Catholicism after the Council of Trent has viewed the Church as imposing rigid uniformity of belief and liturgical practice. But this was precisely the period in which Spanish villancicos began to flourish. The genre has been considered 'paraliturgical' because its poetic texts were not from the official liturgical books, but the requirement to compose and perform villancicos as part of church liturgies was written into the contract of almost every Hispanic chapelmaster. That requirement made villancicos an essential part of the liturgy. Why, then, was the genre allowed and even encouraged after Trent? One possibility is that the dangers of including 'unofficial' texts were outweighed by the potential benefit of using vernacular languages (and perhaps musical styles closer to 'popular' sources) to present church doctrines to the common people – a goal in keeping with the Tridentine goals of

1 The best overviews of the genre are in Paul R. Laird, *Towards a History of the Spanish Villancico* (Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 1997); and the essays in *Devotional Music in the Iberian World, 1450–1800: The Villancico and Related Genres*, edited by Tess Knighton and Álvaro Torrente (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007). For the genre's broader context in European devotional music, see Robert Kendrick, "Devotion, Piety, and Commemoration: Sacred Songs and Oratorios," in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music*, edited by Tim Carter and John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 324–77. For examples of the music, see volumes 19, 55, 59, and 63 of the series *Monumentos de la música española* (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1955–2002). For a recording of a complete villancico cycle from the Cathedral of Puebla in 1652, see Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla, *Maitines de Navidad, 1652*, México Barroco/Puebla VII, performed by the Angelicum de Puebla, directed by Benjamín Juárez Echenique (Mexico City: Urtext, 1999; CD UMA 2011).

2 Andrew Cashner, "Playing Cards at the Eucharistic Table: Music, Theology, and Society in a Corpus Christi Villancico from Colonial Mexico, 1628," accepted for publication in the *Journal of Early Modern History*.

teaching, reforming, and evangelizing.

The reforming part of the Tridentine agenda, of course, applied more to the Old World, where the evangelizing goal dominated in the New. Thus the villancico genre was animated from the beginning by a continuous exchange between mainland Spain and its colonies, and functioned as part of the Spanish civilizing mission abroad. Recent scholarship is increasingly demonstrating how central music was to Spain's colonizing project. Bernardo Illari, Geoffrey Baker, and David Irving have all interpreted Spanish colonial music as both reflecting and enacting hierarchical, Catholic, colonial society.[3] Thus far, however, little scholarship has attempted to connect this broad social analysis to the details of musical structure. There are almost no analytical or interpretive studies of the music of specific villancicos from this period, and the theological aspect of villancicos has yet to be explored in depth.

This is unfortunate, because the genre is ideal for pursuing the intersection of musical technique with larger social and religious questions. A large proportion of the villancico repertoire uses music to represent itself. Pieces for Christmas, for example, poetically invoke the choirs of angels, singing shepherds, even the sounds of the animals in the Christmas stable. The so-called ethnic villancicos, such as those that introduce black characters to the Nativity scene, usually depict these figures as dancing, playing instruments, and singing in an artificial dialect of Spanish whose 'African-sounding' nonsense syllables are closer to song than to speech.[4] A special subclass of villancicos makes music the central conceit of the whole piece, punning on musical terms (like *sol* for both the fifth note of the scale and the Spanish word for sun, a symbol of Christ) to create a double discourse about both music and theology. These 'metamusical' pieces – music about music – allow an analysis of how musical techniques are used to create this theological discourse on music.

This body of poetry and music opens a window into how Spanish Catholics used music to propagate faith to listeners. Many of the metamusical villancicos in this study seem designed to go beyond merely using music to teach a theological lesson, as in a simple mnemonic function of music. These pieces actually appear as tools for musical contemplation according to a Neoplatonic theology, transmitted to the medieval West by Augustine and Boethius, and rearticulated in early modern Spain by theologians like fray Luís de Granada and music theorists like Pedro Cerone. Composers of metamusical villancicos brought the artifice of music to the surface: for example, Joan Cererols depicts the words "heavenly counterpoint" using the quintessential contrapuntal technique of fugue. These pieces invite listeners to compare this constructed earthly music with higher Neoplatonic levels of music. These pieces model a way of listening in which earthly sounding music prompts properly disposed listeners to rise in contemplation to the music of the spheres, of the angels in heaven above, and even the theological 'Music' of the divine nature itself. Other villancicos seem to eschew this contemplative function in favor of a more direct affective impact on listeners, where a connection based on sympathetic vibration is made between performers and hearers, such that the two are harmonized with each other in their affections. Thus music could be a way to put society into proper order.

These theological understandings of music developed over the course of the century as successive composers treated similar texts and themes. Thus the archival research in Spain traced metamusical villancicos through networks of composers and institutions across Iberia. In Barcelona's Biblioteca de Catalunya, manuscript performing parts as well as composer's scores (which are rare in this genre) demonstrated how much interchange there was among musicians in

3 Bernardo Illari, "The Popular, the Sacred, the Colonial and the Local: The Performance of Identities in the Villancicos from Sucre (Bolivia)," in *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, edited by Knighton and Torrente, 409–40; Geoffrey Baker, *Imposing Harmony: Music and Society in Colonial Cuzco* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); David R. M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

4 See Geoffrey Baker, "The 'Ethnic Villancico' and Racial Politics in 17th-Century Mexico," in *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 399–408.

Catalonia and even throughout the Kingdom of Aragon. In the nearby monastery of Montserrat, hearing a performance of the monastery's Escolanía, or boys' singing school, suggested how the same ensemble may have sounded in the seventeenth century under the direction of Joan Cererols.

On the other side of Spain, the extraordinarily well-preserved archive of Segovia Cathedral opened up further possibilities for tracing networks of influence between composers. Chapelmaster Miguel de Irízar drafted his villancico scores on the backsides of letters he had received from other musicians, which remain as historical documents of precious worth.[5] Many of the letters are requests for an interchange of villancico music or poetry, and on this basis specific connections can be proven between music performed at the Cathedral of Segovia and other Spanish institutions in which Irízar had connections.[6]

The vast collection of villancico poetry imprints at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid allowed for further tracing of networks of exchange by following concordances between texts that were printed multiple times. Finally, the close connections between sacred music, architecture, and painting, and the importance of each performance space in shaping the repertoire performed there, became evident from visits to the cathedrals of Barcelona, Toledo, Seville, religious sites in Segovia, and the most important musical institutions in Madrid (the convents of the Encarnación and Las Descalzas, the royal palace).

My dissertation will connect this archival work with other fieldwork in the New World (with a special focus on Puebla Cathedral). It will present a global perspective on villancicos as part of a transatlantic network of musical exchange, in which this genre functioned to express and perform beliefs about music's theological power.

5 Many of the letters are transcribed in Matilde Olarte Martínez, "Miguel de Irízar y Domenzain (1635–1684?): Biografía, epistolario y estudio de sus lamentaciones" (Doctoral thesis, Universidad de Valladolid, 1996).

6 See Pablo-Lorenzo Rodríguez, "Villancicos and Personal Networks in 17th-Century Spain," *Journal of the Institute of Romance Studies*, vol. 8, 79–89.