

APPENDIX 2

Score Accuracy in Ecuatorial

Two published versions of Ecuatorial exist: that of G. Ricordi and Co., and that of the Colfranc Music Publishing Corporation. Although they appear virtually identical---they are hand-notated rather than engraved, and the identity is undeniable---there are in fact a few discrepancies among the note spellings of a few passages in the two. The Colfranc (the more recent of the two¹) appears to be an editorially "corrected" version of the Ricordi; i.e., it is simply the Ricordi score with the addition of a few accidental signs to some passages.²

The original manuscript of Ecuatorial is in the possession of Chou Wen-Chung, who is the executor of the Varèse estate. Jonathan Bernard, during preparation of his dissertation, was shown by Chou a published version of the score (apparently the Ricordi) in which Chou had pencilled in corrections made from the manuscript. Bernard corrected his own copy of the score from this,

¹Both scores indicate 1961 as the publishing date, but the Colfranc is in fact newer since it now owns the rights to Varèse's music.

²The editor for the Colfranc is not known.

which in turn became the basis for his graphic representation of the work; thus, Bernard's dissertation is in a sense, albeit thrice removed from the manuscript, our most reliable source. However, two places in the Bernard, mm. 58 and 84, pose some problems; there are compelling stylistic reasons to doubt the notes given in these places.³

The various passages which present doubtfulness either stylistically or because of conflicts between the editions are itemized below, with explanations and the present author's preferred readings. (Abbreviations: Ricordi/RI; Colfranc/CO; Bernard/BE)

1. Measure 20, trombone 4, first eighth note

RI, CO, and BE: F#2

As mentioned on page 46 of this study, a tritone rather than an i(5) is expected between trombones 3 and 4 (because on all the recurrences of this passage only chromatically descending tritones appear); that is, it is possible that F2 rather than F#2 is the intended note. However, one is hard pressed to find a practical explanation for how this sharp sign is truly an unintended

³Bernard has affirmed to me that he accurately copied Chou's score in those passages, as he suspected printing errors in those passages also. An error of transmission from the manuscript to Chou's copy, on the other hand, is always possible. Until the manuscript becomes available, or a new edition of Equatorial is made under Chou's supervision, these passages will remain doubtful.

error; for, while the passages at mm. 58, 78, 84 and 86 seem to be likely errors of omission, an "error of addition" is less easy to justify. Thus, there is no compelling reason not to regard it as an intentional deviation on Varese's part; two possible explanations for the F#2, for instance, were given on p. 46.

2. Measure 58, trumpet 2

RI and BE: (A-A-A-Gb-A-Fb-A-Eb)5

CO: (Ab-Ab-Ab-Gb-Ab-Fb-Ab-Eb)5

CO seems to be the more likely version for three reasons: 1) The resulting SC 4-11 would be a repetition at T_{-7}^P of the piano in m. 38 (or, T_{-19}^P , depending on which octave of the piano is chosen); the two figures are so similar in rhythm, duration and contour that a repetition seems to have been intended. 2) In the measure before the restatement of the i(7) in six octaves at m. 111, a similar (but not transpositionally equivalent) trumpet line articulates a linear half-step between the A5 of its line and the G#5 of the trumpet 2 in the next measure; since mm. 110-111 is (generally) a T_1^P transposition of mm. 58-59, the linear half-step (Ab-G)5 which occurs in the CO version of mm. 58-59 is preferable to the linear (A-G)5 of RI and BE. 3) The spelling of the pitch-classes {96} in RI and BE is not in accordance with the normative enharmonic spellings of

pitch-classes in Ecuatorial;⁴ if Varèse had meant the pitch-classes shown in RI and BE, he probably would have avoided the interval of the augmented second by using either A-F# or Bbb-Gb.

3. Measure 78, trombone 4, second sixteenth note

RI, CO, and BE: E2

Measures 77-78, brass, is an exact pitch-class transposition (and a near-exact pitch-transposition) of m. 21, brass, with the exception of the E2, which occurs where an Eb2 is expected. Despite the unanimous choice of E2 among the sources, the passage is still questionable because of this solitary transpositional discrepancy. The present author prefers Eb2.

4. Measures 84-85, piano, right hand

RI and BE: (C-D-G)4-C5 in m. 84, changing to (C#-D-G)4-C#5 in m. 85

CO: (C#-D-G)4-C#5, both measures

The version in CO is preferred by the present author for the following reasons: 1) This version of the passage is repeated later in the work (mm. 119-124) at T_{-4}^P in all three versions, corroborating CO; that is, RI and BE's choice of two chords in the former passage

⁴For some examples of rather painstakingly detailed spellings of notes, apparently to avoid the mixture of sharps and flats in a single passage, see trumpets 1 and 2 in mm. 169-171 and 218-220, and trumpet 1 in mm. 197-199.

is called into doubt by the appearance of only one chord in the latter passage. 2) The inflection of a single pitch-class in a prominent vertical sonority while the other chord members remain the same (as in RI and BE) is uncharacteristic in Ecuadorial. 3) The error of omission seems only too likely here: the copyist meant to add sharp signs to the Cs in both mm. 84 and 85, but only did so in m. 85.⁵

5. Measure 86, timpani, beat 4, first eighth note

CO and RI: C3

BE: C#3

The timpani part in mm. 84-87 evidently should consist only of the dyad G2-C#3, as given in BE.

6. Measure 216, piano, left hand, beat 2

CO and RI: E3

BE: F3

The E3 in CO and RI is very likely a copyist's error. Organ, trombones and piano duplicate each other in m. 216, except for one note: while organ and trombones agree on F3, the piano has an E3 at that moment.

⁵On the other hand, an argument on behalf of RI and BE is also possible: the pitch-class combination {B01237}, is a stylistically viable combination of tones, since it is cluster/6 set 6-37/4. In addition, SC 6-37/4 is (like the SC 5-13 which follows it) a superset of SC 4-29/15, a set which dominates this passage.

BE is evidently correct: the piano should have F3.

7. Measure 226, organ, left hand, beat three, first eighth note

RI, CO, and BE: B#2

Despite the unanimous B#2 among the sources, the present author suggests B2 as being the correct note here. This measure is located in the section where the "SC 4-1 motive" occurs many times (see chapter 4, p. 86), and the resulting sequence (C-C#)3-B2-D3 is the same sequence as the SC 4-1 motive in m. 213, organ, left hand: <+1, -2, +3>. The identity of rhythm, register and medium (organ, left hand) also associate the two. Also, the B#2 presents an atypical notational situation: the presence of the enharmonic equivalents C and B# in within one measure seems unlikely within Varèse's notational norms.