Manuel de Sumaya’s “En María la Gracia”:
A Choral Villancico from Eighteenth-Century Mexico

by

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Manuel de Sumaya’s “En María la Gracia”:
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UC Riverside, January 30, 2009

Music: Performing Edition of “En María la Gracia” 1-11
The autograph of *En María la gracia* resides in the *Archivo Musical de la Catedral Metropolitana de México* (The Musical Archive of the Mexico City Cathedral), listed under the call number 71)20 of the Estrada Collection. There exist separate parts for six vocalists, divided into two “choirs” (a duet and a quartet), a part for accompaniment; the *coplas* consist of one part for solo tenor with accompaniment that appear on the verso side of the tenor and accompaniment parts (that is, the “flip side” of the *estribillo*). Though the *acompañamiento* is only a single bass line, performance practice of the era suggests this part would be realized into full chordal accompaniment by a small group, quite typically harp and guitar joined by a melodic bass instrument such as the cello or bassoon. Also, the organ was frequently utilized. Choir 1 consists of a tenor and a bass; Choir 2 is comprised of a soprano (identified as a *tiple*), alto, tenor, and bass. The title page identifies the work as: *Villancico a 6. A la limpieza / Concepción de Ntra Señora, / En María la gracia. / 7 papeles / Sr, Mº Dº, Manuel de Sumaya / Año de 1728* (Villancico in six parts for the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, “In Mary the Grace ....,” with 7 different sheets, by Señor Maestro Don Manuel de Sumaya, in the year 1728). The individual sheets measure approximately 15 cm by 22 cm; each sheet is folded in the middle, but once each booklet opens up for performance, one reads across the fold, with the staves running continuously across this “larger” sheet (now measuring 30 cm by 22 cm). Each page is labeled to indicate what part it is, and all but the page containing the *coplas* bear his autograph, “Sr Mº Sumaya” or “Mº Sumaya.” The music is written in a facile hand, in mensural notation. The stems are consistently drawn on the right side of the note head (whether they be up or down) instead of on the left for downward stems as is common practice today. The clefs and incipits appear as follows:
Accompañamiento

(Coplas)

Sólo

En María la gracia.

1. No fue rendir al Pá.

Choir 1 Tenor

Choir 1 Bass

En María la Gracia,

En María la gracia.

Choir 2 Soprano

En María la gracia.

Choir 2 Alto

En María la gracia.

Choir 2 Tenor

En María la gracia.

Choir 2 Bass

En María la gracia.
For several decades this villancico was privately held in the Estrada Collection (and therefore unavailable to researchers) but was restored to the Mexico City Cathedral Archive in the year 1998. Its modern premiere—by the Cal Poly Early Music Ensemble under the expert direction of Dr. Tom Davies in 2009—marked its first performance in roughly two and a half centuries. In this performance, I was part of the ensemble and sang the bass part in Choir 1. An archival recording of this performance can be obtained at the Kennedy Library web site at Cal Poly (under the citation for my senior project) or through requesting a copy from the Cal Poly Music Department.

In order to facilitate performance by modern ensembles, I have transposed the piece down a 4th (from C major to G major) and added figurings to the acompañamiento (basso continuo) as well as my own humble offering of a harmonic realization. The facsimiles of the original manuscripts that I have been so fortunate to work with were generously provided to me by Dr. Craig H. Russell.
Regarding Villancicos

A villancico is a sacred piece written for festival days in the church when celebrations reflect a secular flavor. As such, the villancico is sung in the vernacular as opposed to Latin, and the song style imitates folk forms. In some instances, Sumaya takes this quaint form and explodes it into a grand latticework of baroque polyphony.¹

In many modern songs, such as “Blowin in the Wind,” the “verse” or Dylan’s “questions” get the most weight and are more substantially developed: the refrain, on the other hand, is shorter. With the villancico it is turned around. Instead of the verse being the heavier section, it is the refrain or estribillo that is gives the depth or intensity. The refrain gets grand polyphonic treatment, and the coplas (or verses) are in a simpler homophonic style.
Regarding the Composer

Manuel de Sumaya, one of Mexico’s great composers of the colonial era, was born circa 1680 at Mexico City and died in 1755 in the Mexican town of Antequerra. He entered into the service of the Mexico City Cathedral as a choirboy around 1690, where his talent quickly earned him a reputation.

Sumaya’s first documentation dates from May 25, 1694, in a letter from the Cathedral Chapter, who had granted him some money because his father had died and his family was in financial straits. The document mentions the financial help and also delves into his musical talents, and suggests that he begin instruction at the organ and in composition. Additionally, it was recommended that he not take the vows to become a friar in order to give him ample time to develop his musical talents.

He wrote a theatrical work, Rodrigo (1708), in celebration of the birth of Prince Luis of Spain; most likely it had musical accompaniment which Sumaya would have composed. In the same year he achieved the position of Second Organist at the Mexico City Cathedral. In 1710, Chapel Master Antonio de Salazar realized his failing eyesight wouldn’t allow him to continue to fulfill his duties as a teacher at the escoleta (public school) and named his pupil Sumaya as his successor. Salazar’s announcement came much to the chagrin of Francisco de Atienza, who was senior to Sumaya in the hierarchy of the Cathedral, having served in its third most prominent position (behind Chapel Master and Principal Organist) since 1695. Atienza objected vehemently, but to no avail. In 1711, Mexico got a new viceroy who became enthralled with Sumaya and employed him at his court, commissioning him to translate Italian librettos and also write original ones. The viceroy commissioned Sumaya to write the opera Partenope which premiered at the viceregal palace on May 1, 1711. This was the first opera written by a composer who had been born in the New World. The original libretto for Partenope that Sumaya translated was had only recently been penned by Silvio Stampiglia for a 1699 production of Partenope in Naples—inspiring several subsequent productions in the first decade of the eighteenth century, suggesting the possibility that Sumaya actually traveled to Italy in the early 1700s. He was promoted to Principal Organist at the Cathedral in 1714. In 1715 he competed with his old rival Francisco de Atienza for the position of Chapel Master and thoroughly trounced him.
Sumaya spent twenty-three years as Chapel Master and then in 1738 followed his dear friend Tomás Montaño to Oaxaca Cathedral (where Montaño had been named Archbishop), a move that demonstrated how much Sumaya valued his personal relationships over any kind of material success or social standing, because it was a step down the ladder in status. The position of Chapel Master at the Mexico City Cathedral was a prestigious job and Oaxaca was a backwater by comparison. Rather than be the big, “famous” composer at an urban center he elected to work at the less prestigious post in Oaxaca in order to be near his friend, doing so in spite of insistent correspondence from Cathedral Chapter that he return to his duties in Mexico City. He did eventually rise to the position of Chapel Master at Oaxaca, but not until 1745. Sumaya remained at Oaxaca until his death in 1755.14

Among Sumaya’s musical achievements are the expansion of the orchestras in each of the cathedrals where he worked. He was a prolific composer who wrote a wealth of both sacred and secular music including several operas, about eighty villancicos, thirty a capella Latin works, and at least three complete masses.15 Stylistically, he spanned two eras, in that he wrote pieces reminiscent of the Renaissance style, but was equally at home in the High Baroque. He employed a bold harmonic vocabulary that made frequent, effective use of augmented, diminished, and secondary dominant chords. Sumaya was a master whose works were as elegant and inspired as those of any of his European contemporaries.
Translation of the Text

En Maria la gracia
Manuel de Sumaya

Estribillo
En María la Gracia,
fue privilegio.
que ella sola le goza
desde ab eterno.

Refrain
In Mary, grace
was a privilege
that she alone enjoys
since the beginning of time.

Coplas
1. No fue vencer al Pecado,
sin duda el mayor trofeo:
Sino el cantar la Victoria,
sin ver el semblante al riesgo.

Couplets
It was not victory over sin,
without a doubt the better trophy;
rather it was singing of her victory
without seeing the resemblance to
that danger.

2. Ayá en el lucido Empireo,
se preservó este Portento
antes de ponerse en fuga,
el Matutino Luzero.

There in the starry heavens,
they preserved this portent,
even before the bright morning star
was set in flight.

3. Armando funestas tropas,
al proponerle este objeto
como possible; aun entonces,
no perturbó tu sosiego.

Armored, baneful troops,
proposed this object to you
as possible; even though they did not
upset your harvesting.

4. Porque el Poder, y el Amor
hermosa Aurora á este tiempo
con Sabiduría hizo,
feliz tu instante Primero.

Because Power and Love,
beautiful Dawn, in this time
brought about with wisdom—
joyous—your first instant.

5. Tu sola romper pudiste,
el comun, preciso yerro
haciendo mares de Gracia,
de la culpa los estrechos.

You alone could have broken
the common, precise mistake—
thus making oceans of Grace
out of the guilt of the straits.
Endnotes


3 Javier Marín López, “Una desconocida colección de villancicos sacros novohispanos (1689-1812): El Fondo Estrada de la Catedral de México,” from *La música y el Atlántico: Relaciones musicales entre España y Latinoamérica*, María Gembero Ustároz and Emilio Ros-Fábregas, editors (University of Granada, Spain, 2007), pp. 311-58.


7 José Mariano Beristáin de Souza, *Biblioteca Hispano Americana Septentrional o Catálogo y noticias de los literarios que o nacidos o educados, o florecientes en la América septentrional española*, 6 vols.,


Beristáin de Souza, *Biblioteca Hispano Americana*, vol. 5, p. 201. The printed libretto for the *Partenope* production, including the translation of the text into Spanish (presumably by Sumaya himself), is found in the Biblioteca Nacional de México under the call number: Fondo Reservado. 1. R M862.1 PAR.f.

This claim must have the disclaimer, however, that Sumaya’s *Rodrigo* might have been an opera, not merely a staged work, in which case the first opera would be his *Rodrigo* of 1708, not *Partenope* of 1711.


These figures were arrived at by adding the works listed in Russell’s *New Grove* article with those listed in Javier Marín López’ *Una desconocida colección de villancicos sacros*, pp. 311-58.


"Credo 5to tono, alternando con el Credo Artanense" ..... Juan Bautista Sancho from *Misa en sol*, M.0573 at Stanford

*CHORUS WITH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

Two Alleluias in plainchant ........................................ Durán choirbooks
Alleluia, Multifaria olim Deus, for the Circumcision, Jan. 1

*MEN'S CHOIR, PLAINCHANT*

Alleluia, Viđimus stellam ejus, for Epiphany, January 6

*WOMEN'S CHOIR, PLAINCHANT*

¡O Rey de corazones! Procession for Corpus Christi ........ Various mission mss.

*CHORUS WITH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

*Misa en sol* ......................................................... Juan Bautista Sancho
Sanctus
Agnus Dei

*CHORUS WITH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

*Ya se beriza* (1728)................................................. Manuel de Sumaya
Villancico a 6 for Our Lady of Guadalupe,
Estrada Collection, Leg. 7019 in the Mexico City Cathedral

*CHORUS WITH BASSO CONTINUO ACCOMPANIMENT*

All performing editions (except for "En María la gracia") were reconstructed and edited by Craig H. Russell, working from the original manuscripts in Californian and Mexican archives.

Although the vocal lines are preserved, the instrumental accompaniments are editorial additions composed by Dr. Russell. He discusses the background and stylistic features of this music in his forthcoming book, *From Sierra to Sancho: Music and Pageantry in the California Missions* (New York: Oxford University Press, April 2009). That book will contain the performing editions for most of the music in today's concert.

The performing edition of Sumaya's "En María la gracia" was reconstructed by Jeremy "Spud" Schroeder from a facsimile of Legajo 7120 in the Estrada Collection in the Mexico City Cathedral. Today marks the modern premiere of that composition.
**The Cal Poly Early Music Ensemble**

**Vocalists**

**Soprano**
- Natalie de Bruijn
- Kelly Eshoff
- Lisa Fiegel
- Chloé Gill
- Amy Beth Nickelson

**Tenor**
- Bruno Caulk
- Evan Griffith
- Pat Little

**Alto**
- Emily Allyn
- Karlie Saenz
- Corrie Stallings

**Bass**
- John Cape
- Matt Donner
- Brian Kim
- J. Spud Schroeder

**Instrumentalists**

- Janet Strauss, Susan Feldman, violin
- Elisabeth LeGuin, cello
- Jennifer Sayre, baroque harp
- Craig H. Russell, baroque guitar

**Program**

*Lauda Sion Salvatorum, Sequence for Corpus Christi* ........ Durán choirbooks

**Choir with Choral Accompaniment**

*Puer natus est, Introit for the Circumcision, January 1* .......... Durán choirbooks

**Men’s Choir, Plainchant**

*Misa del quarto tono (Mass in Mode 4)* ......................... Durán choirbooks

**Kyrie & S*Be Deoc 2**

**Gloria**

**Choir with Basso Continuo Accompaniment (Cello, Harp, Guitar)**

*Misa de los Ángeles* .............................................. Juan Bautista Sancho [?]

**Gloria (reconstructed from WPA folder 69)** (1772-1830)

**Choir with Chamber Orchestra**

*Ecce advenit Dominatur, Introit for Epiphany, January 6* .... Durán choirbooks

**Women’s Choir, Plainchant**

*En María la gracia (1728)* ........................................ Manuel de Sumaya

**Villancico a 6 for the Immaculate Conception** (1680-1755)

Reconstructed and edited by Jeremy Schroeder from the
Estrada Collection, Leg. 7120 in the Mexico City Cathedral
Choir with basso continuo accompaniment

*Today marks the modern premiere of this work*

*Gozos de la Purísima, “Para dar luz inmortal”* ............... Various mission mss.

**Choir with Basso Continuo Accompaniment**

*Two Credos* ......................................................... Anon., WPA folder 52

*“Credo Artanense” (beginning)*

**Choir with Choral Accompaniment**
ENCuentros/ENCounters 2009
Walter Clark, director

Music and Musicians of the California Missions is part of Encuentros/Encounters, an annual celebration of the Iberian and Latin American cultural heritage through the presentation of original research and high-quality performance in a particular area of interest. Encuentros Brasileiros 2010 will examine issues of race and ethnicity in Brazilian music from the colonial period to the modern day. Later Encuentros/Encounters will explore the music of tango and flamenco.

Center for Iberian and Latin American Music
The Center for Iberian and Latin American Music (CILAM) was established at University of California, Riverside, in 2004 to foster research and performance in an interdisciplinary spirit, embracing the entire musical heritage of Iberia and Latin America. The Center’s activities include maintaining an educational website, www.cilam.ucr.edu; an online scholarly journal, Diagonal; and annual Encuentros/Encounters, featuring concerts and a conference dealing with a particular aspect of Iberian or Latin American music.

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Music of the California Missions:
A Tapestry of Sounds

The Cal Poly Early Music Ensemble
Thomas Davies, Director
Craig H. Russell, Musicologist and Artistic Consultant

Vocalists
Sopranos
Natalie de Bruijn
Kelly Eshoff
Lisa Fibel
Chloe Gill

Altos
Emily Allyn
Karlie Saenz
Corrie Stallings

Tenors
Bruno Caulk
Evan Griffith
Pat Little

Basses
John Cape
Matt Donner
Brian Kim
Spud Schroeder

Instrumentalists
Janet Strauss, Susan Feldman, violins
Elisabeth LeGuin, cello
Jennifer Sayre, Baroque harp
Craig H. Russell, Baroque guitar

Friday, January 30, 2009
8:00 P.M.
Performance Lab, ARTS 166
PROGRAM

Laetab Sion Salvatorum, Sequence for Corpus Christi
Durán choirbooks
Choir with chordal accompaniment

Puer natus est, Introit for the Circumcision, January 1
Men’s choir, plainchant
Durán choirbooks

Misa del quarto tono (Mass in Mode 4)
Kyrie & SB* Doc. 2
Durán choirbooks
Choir with basso continuo accompaniment (cello, harp, guitar)

Misa de los Ángeles
Gloria (reconstructed from WPA folder 69)
(1772-1830)
Juan Bautista Sancho [P]
Choir with chamber orchestra

Ecce adventi Dominatus, Introit for Epiphany, January 6
Women’s choir, plainchant
Durán choirbooks

En María la gracia (1728)*
Manuel de Sumaya
(1680-1755)

* Today marks the modern premiere of this work.

Villancico a 6 for the Immaculate Conception.
Reconstructed and edited by Jeremy Schroeder from the Estrada Collection, Leg. 71)20 in the Mexico City Cathedral
Choir with basso continuo accompaniment

Gozos de la Purísima, “Para dar luz inmortal”
Various mission mss.
Choir with basso continuo accompaniment

Two Credos
“Credo Artaanense” (beginning)
Anon., WPA folder 52
Choir with chordal accompaniment

“Credo sec. tono, alternando con el Credo Artanense”
Juan Bautista Sancho
from the Misa en sol, M.0573 at Stanford
(1772-1830)
Choir with chamber orchestra

Two Alleluias in plainchant
Alleluia, Multiplar obian Deus, for the Circumcision, Jan. 1
Men’s choir, plainchant
Durán choirbooks

Alleluia, Vidimus stellam ejus, for Epiphany, January 6
Women’s choir, plainchant

¡O Rey de corazones! Procession for Corpus Christi
Various mission mss.
Choir with chamber orchestra

Misa en sol
Sanctus
Agnus Dei
(1772-1830)
Juan Bautista Sancho
Choir with chamber orchestra

Ya se heriza (1728)
Manuel de Sumaya
(1680-1755)
Estrada Collection, Leg. 70)19 in the Mexico City Cathedral
Choir with basso continuo accompaniment

Estrada

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The performing edition of Sumaya’s “En María la gracia” was reconstructed by Jeremy “Spud” Schroeder from a facsimile of Legajo 71)20 in the Estrada Collection in the Mexico City Cathedral. Please: No flash photography or videotaping. Remember to turn off cell phones and pagers.
En Maria la Gracia
Villancico a 6

Manuel de Sumaya (ca. 1680-1755)
edited by J. Spud Schroeder

Choro Primero

Choro Segundo

Accompto.

J. Spud Schroeder, © 2009
En María la Gracia

1º Choro

13

fue privilegio, fue privilegio,

2º Choro

fue privilegio, fue privilegio.

fue privilegio, fue privilegio.

Acc.

fue privilegio

fue privilegio

fue privilegio

fue privilegio
En María la Gracia

1º Choro

2º Choro

Acc.
En María la Gracia

1º Choro

deab aeterno,
qu'ella

deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le

2º Choro

qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
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qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
qu'ella sola le goza des deab aeterno,
1º Choro

so-la le go-zá des-deab ae-ter-nó,

2º Choro

gozá des-deab ae-ter-nó, so-la le_

ter-nó, qu'e-lla so-la le go-zá, des-de ab ae-

ter-nó, qu'e-lla so-la le go-zá, des-

Acc.

qu'e-lla so-la le go-zá des-deab ae-

ter-nó, ab ae-ter-nó, qu'e-lla so-

En María la Gracia
En María la Gracia

1º Choro

qu'e-l la so-la le go-za de-des-deab ae-ter-no.

go-za de-des-deab ae-ter-no, de-des-deab ae-ter-no.

der - ter-no de-des-deab ae-ter-no.

2º Choro

qu'e-l la so-la le go-za, de-des-deab ae-ter-no.

_ le go-za de-des-deab ae-ter-no.

Acc.

38
Coplas solas

Tenor

1. No fue vencer al Pe- ca-do, sin du-da'el ma-

2. A- ya'en el lu- ci-do Em-pi-reo, se pre-ser-vo'es-

Accompto.

En Maria la Gracia

J. Spud Schroeder, © 2009
En María la Gracia

54

T

\(\text{tar la} \ \text{Vi\-ctor\-ia, sin ver al sem\-bla\-nte al} \)

Acc.

\(\text{po\-ner\-se en fu\-ga, el Ma\-tu\-ti\-no\- Lu}\)


58

T

\(\text{ries\- ze\-go.} \)

Acc.

\(\text{ze\-ro.} \)
3. Armando funestas tropas, al proponer.
4. Por que el Poder, y el Amor hermosauror.
5. Tu sola romper pudes-te, el comun, pre-

En Maria la Gracia
J. Spud Schroeder, © 2009
En Maria la Gracia

T

71

8

si - ble; aun en - ton - ces, no per - tur - bo tu so
du - ri - a - hi - zo, fe - liz tu in - stan - te Pri -
ma - res de Gra - cia, de la cul - pa los es -

Acc.

71

6

71

6

6

5

sie - me - go.
me - ro.
tre - chos.

Acc.

75

75

75

4

3

7

6

11