

*Journal of the  
American Musical  
Instrument Society*

VOLUME X • 1984



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# The Diatonic Harp in Ecuador: Historical Background and Modern Traditions *Part I*

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MAJOR DIATONIC HARP TRADITIONS appear today in folk and indigenous cultures in several Latin American countries, notably Paraguay, Venezuela, Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador. Given the strength of these diverse practices, it is not surprising to discover a substantial body of literature attesting to a four-hundred-year presence of the instrument in the New World. In the first two hundred years after the Spanish conquest, the harp was cultivated in church, mission, and settlement with a zeal that imbued in its new performers an affection for the instrument that survived by hundreds of years the disappearance of its original teachers. This article examines the historical development of Ecuadorian harp traditions and investigates modern diatonic harp usage in different zones of the Ecuadorian highlands. The paper seeks to demonstrate the existence of strong modern harp traditions in a country that to date has seen relatively little musicological study, compared with its neighbors to the north (Colombia and Venezuela) and south (Peru and Bolivia); these established Ecuadorian harp traditions, moreover, have seen even scantier treatment in the literature.

The first conquistadors and lay colonists brought the harp to the New World;<sup>1</sup> subsequently, various missionary orders, most notably the Jesuits,

This article is a substantial revision of chapters 2 and 4 of my doctoral dissertation: John M. Schechter, "Music in a Northern Ecuadorian Highland Locus: Diatonic Harp, Genres, Harpists, and Their Ritual Junction in the Quechua Child's Wake," 3 vols. (Ph.D. diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 1982). My twelve months of field research in Ecuador were sponsored by a grant under the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program. I am grateful to Arq. Hernán Crespo Toral, Director of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Quito; to Sr. Plutarco Cisneros A., General Director of the Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, Otavalo; to Lic. Carlos Alberto Coba A., Director of the IOA Departamento de Etnomusicología; and to Lic. Marcelo Erazo, head of the Comisión Fulbright, Quito, for their steadfast support of my work. I also wish to thank Rolena Adorno, Elliott Antokoletz, Gerard Béhague, and Douglas Washburn for reading this article in its several drafts and making valuable suggestions for improvement.

1. On the establishment of the harp as a major instrument already early in the colonial period, see Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia de la música en México (Épocas precortesiana y colonial)* (Mexico City: Talleres de la Editorial "Cultura," 1934), pp. 95, 158, 161, 180; and Robert Stevenson, *Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1952), p. 94.

made important contributions in establishing the harp as a major instrument in liturgical practice and secular life. Indigenous musicians are said to have played instruments in the early convents.<sup>2</sup> The harp was performed, with other instruments, in smaller Indian churches in Mexico<sup>3</sup> and, as will be demonstrated below, in diverse Jesuit settlements of the South American hinterland. Harp and guitar, in consort with violins, provided the music for viceregal balls early in the colonial period. In the early years, these affairs featured formal European dances such as the galliard, pavan, and corrente; later in the period, creole dances<sup>4</sup> appeared, still with traces of the earlier imported forms.<sup>5</sup> As in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain,<sup>6</sup> the harp also took its place in a theatrical context in Valparaiso, Chile, during the eighteenth century; in this instance it was associated with the Feast of the Rosary, celebrated in early October.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, like their Spanish predecessors of the previous two centuries,<sup>8</sup> eighteenth-century Chilean and Peruvian women entertained their guests by playing the harp.<sup>9</sup> The tradition of female harpists

2. Saldívar, *Historia de la música*, p. 182.

3. In an extensive study of Otomí Indian music, Vicente T. Mendoza ("Música indígena Otomí" *Revista de estudios musicales* 2, no. 5/6 [December, 1950–April, 1951]: 443) shows a photograph of a mural in a small Indian chapel of the Valley of Mezquital; most likely it is from the sixteenth century, when Augustinians evangelized the Otomí. The mural pictures a band of angelic musicians playing harp, trumpet, shawm, and *teponaztli* (slit-drum), apparently in ensemble. The harp is depicted with two large sound-holes in the belly.

4. Dances performed by persons of Spanish descent born in the New World.

5. Ann Livermore, *A Short History of Spanish Music* (London: Duckworth, 1972), p. 223.

6. For a description of the performance of the harp, among other instruments, in a theatrical setting during the reign (1556–98) of Philip II, a patron of the theater, see Mariano Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española desde la venida de los Fenicios hasta el año de 1850*, vol. 2 (Madrid, 1856), p. 142. Samuel Claro elucidates the harp's role in seventeenth-century Spanish theatrical performance in "Música dramática en el Cuzco durante el siglo XVIII y catálogo de manuscritos de música del Seminario de San Antonio Abad (Cuzco, Peru)," *Inter-American Institute for Musical Research Yearbook* 5 (1969): 3.

7. See M. Frézier, *Relation du voyage de la Mer du Sud aux cotes du Chili [sic], du Perou, et du Bresil fait pendant les années 1712, 1713 & 1714*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 1717), pp. 166–68.

8. For accounts of female harp virtuosos in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, see M. Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española*, vol. 2, p. 177; and Gilbert Chase, *The Music of Spain*, 2d rev. ed. (New York: Dover, 1959), p. 55.

9. John Byron (1723–86), grandfather of Lord Byron, published an account of a shipwreck in South America and commented on the musical arts of the women of Santiago, Chile, including their performance abilities on guitar and harp; see *The Narrative of the Honourable John Byron (Commodore in a Late Expedition Round the World) Containing an Account of the Great Distresses Suffered by Himself and His Companions on the Coast of Patagonia, from the Year 1740, till Their Arrival in England, 1746* (London, 1768), p. 223. M. Frézier, in his *Relation du voyage*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam, 1717), p. 450, comments on Peruvian creole women performing the harp or guitar for guests.

continues in twentieth-century Chile, where women play the *cueca*, a principal folk-music genre, on the harp.

The harp looms large in documentation concerning Jesuit missionary musical training of indigenous New World peoples. In South America, the Society extended their domination over groups of the upper Amazon, eastern Bolivia, the Chaco, Paraguay, the Pampas, and in Brazil, the lower Amazon, and the Atlantic coast.<sup>10</sup> In the Paraguay-Argentina zone, Jesuit missionary work began in 1609, and the system of *reducciones* (settlements that effectively concentrated the Indian labor force) was quick to develop.<sup>11</sup> During the Jesuit period of evangelism in Paraguay (1609–1767), *reducciones* were located mostly around the Paraná River and took in over one-hundred thousand Indians.<sup>12</sup> Six Jesuit missionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Paraguay-Argentina were themselves good musicians.<sup>13</sup> The harp was definitively present on Paraguayan *reducciones* by the late seventeenth century, and it was performed with notable skill by the *reducción* indigenes. Harps, among other instruments, were made locally and were of export quality.

In the cathedrals, the harp was used specifically as a *basso continuo* instrument during the Hispanic-American Baroque (which persisted into the nineteenth century), a role it shared with the musical practice of the Spanish and Portuguese Baroque.<sup>14</sup>

10. Alfred Métraux, "Part 2: Jesuit Missions in South America," in Julian H. Steward, ed., *Handbook of South American Indians*, vol. 5 (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1963), p. 645.

11. Juan Max Boettner, *Música y músicos del Paraguay* (Asunción: Edición de Autores Paraguayos Asociados, Editorial "El Gráfico" S.R.L., 1956 [?]), p. 46.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 54–55. Inventories and descriptions of early instruction in the harp, as well as its manufacture and performance along with other stringed instruments in the Paraguay-Argentina zone, may be found in Guillermo Furlong, S.J., *Músicos argentinos durante la dominación española* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Huarpes, 1945), pp. 58, 73–74, 77–79; and in P. Grenón, S.J., *Nuestra primera música instrumental: Datos históricos* (Buenos Aires: Librería "La Cotizadora Económica," de Emilio Perrot, 1929), pp. 3–5, 10, 14, 18, 19, 20, 24, 28, 30–31, 36, 38–39.

14. Lauro Ayestarán, "El Barroco musical hispanoamericano," *Inter-American Institute for Musical Research Yearbook* 1 (1965): 78. About 1630 the harp took over the bass role of the sackbut in the *capilla de música* of the Lima Cathedral, where it continued to be used until 1832, when the position of harpist was abolished; see Andrés Sas Orchassal, *La música en la Catedral de Lima durante el virreinato*, part 1, *Historia general* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos y La Casa de la Cultura del Perú, 1971), pp. 146, 148, 149. Sas Orchassal lists the names of twenty-five harpists who performed their services at the Cathedral between 1639 and 1832; the indigenous Esparza family figured prominently among these musicians: one Joseph de Esparza served from before 1759 until 1805 (*ibid.*, pp. 149–50). The following references attest to the presence of figured or, more often, slightly figured or un-

*The Harp in Eighteenth-Century Ecuador*

Missionary instruction in Ecuador dates from 1555, when the Franciscan Fathers founded the Colegio de San Andrés in their Quito convent; the purpose of this secondary-school institution was to educate indigenous youngsters in reading, writing, and music.<sup>15</sup> When the Franciscans left the Colegio in 1581, the Augustinians took it over and changed its name to the Colegio de San Nicolás de Tolentino, preserving its institutional purpose. As for the Quito Cathedral, the first Quito bishop, Garcí Díaz Arias, arriving from Peru around 1550, was strongly convinced of the need for good music. He took special pains that the Divine Office be performed with excellent music, and the Cathedral's musical presentations are reputed to have been among the finest of all the Andean churches.<sup>16</sup> It is likely that Díaz Arias brought Spanish musicians to the Quito Cathedral to instruct the young indigenes in several instruments so that they would be able to perform in the Cathedral choir. Moreover, the Ecuadorian highlands began to attract others skilled in such instruments as, for example, zither, psaltery, guitar, and harp; those new persons were administrators for the Real Audiencia (royal tribunal)<sup>17</sup> or seekers after the reputed great riches to be found in the Andes. Among these instruments, the harp allegedly enjoyed an elevated status: up until the nineteenth century, at least, it was the preferred instrument in churches lacking an organ or harmonium and in the salons of the upper classes. The flute, clarinet, and oboe were known in colonial Ecuador, but the violin and harp dominated the ensembles performing for fiestas of the privileged classes.<sup>18</sup>

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figured harp continuo parts for compositions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in various Hispanic-American cathedral archives and other libraries. For La Plata (today Sucre), Bolivia, see Robert Stevenson, *The Music of Peru: Aboriginal and Viceroyal Epochs* (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 1959–60), p. 204, n. 72; and Ayestarán, "El Barroco musical hispanoamericano," pp. 89–91. For Puebla, Mexico, see Alice Ray Catalyne, "Music of the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries in the Cathedral of Puebla, Mexico," *Inter-American Institute for Musical Research Yearbook* 2 (1966): 80–90. For Bogotá, Colombia, see Robert Stevenson, *Renaissance and Baroque Musical Sources in the Americas* (Washington, D.C.: Organization of American States, 1970), pp. 5–28. For Cuzco, Peru, see *ibid.*, pp. 31–49. For Guatemala City, Guatemala, see *ibid.*, p. 85.

15. Federico González Suárez, *Historia general de la República del Ecuador*, book 3, chap. 7 (Quito: Imprenta del Clero, 1892), pp. 333–34, and p. 334, n. 4.

16. *Ibid.*, book 2, chap. 11, 2d ed. (Quito: Daniel Cadena A., 1931), pp. 429–35.

17. This was the general administrative board and highest court of justice in a Spanish-American kingdom. The Quito Audiencia was established in 1563. See John Leddy Phelan, *The Kingdom of Quito in the Seventeenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), pp. 119, 342.

18. Segundo Luis Moreno Andrade, "La música en el Ecuador," in J. Gonzalo Orellana,

In the Ecuadorian hinterland, the superior status of the violin and the harp is evinced in Jesuit accounts of conversion-cum-music. Among the most carefully detailed descriptions of music in the Jesuits' evangelistic work is P. José Chantre y Herrera's study of settlements in the Marañón River zone of the Peruvian-Ecuadorian Oriente.<sup>19</sup> The work was written sometime between 1770, when the Marañón-area Jesuits left the continent for Italy (after the 1767 expulsion of Jesuits from all Spanish dominions by Charles III of Spain), and 1801, the date of the author's death. With less than forty men in Quito in 1615, the Jesuits administered the Amazon missions from 1638 onward; their headquarters were at San Francisco de Borja.<sup>20</sup> Chantre y Herrera describes area missionary labors over the 130-year period from 1637 to 1767. Because it contains a careful discussion of evangelistic methods exploiting music, Chantre y Herrera's work will be cited at some length below.

Book 11, chapter 17, "De los cantores, músicos y tañedores de instrumentos" (Of singers, musicians, and players of instruments), is introduced by an apology for the fact that, in their evangelism, not all the Jesuit missionaries in the zone worked with music. Several reasons are given: 1) the "genios bárbaros" (barbaric natures) and "rusticidad" (rusticity) of the indigenes of the area sometimes barely made it possible to teach the catechism, the more urgent work, and the "necessary" had to be given priority over the merely "useful";<sup>21</sup> 2) the distance and difficulty of travel between the regions involved and the "Spanish" cities (Lima, Quito) made it more difficult than on other missions to bring in those who would teach the indigenes how to sing or how to play instruments;<sup>22</sup> and 3) missionaries sometimes had more pressing matters to attend to than teaching music.<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, descriptions of musical activity proliferate. P. Bernardo Zurmillén, missionary of the village at La Laguna in the mid-eighteenth

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ed., *El Ecuador en cien años de independencia: 1830-1930*, vol. 2 (Quito: Imprenta de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1930), p. 210.

19. P. José Chantre y Herrera, *Historia de la misión de los indios Mainas y de otras muchas naciones situadas en el Marañón español y en otros varios ríos que desembocan en él, distribuida en doce libros, sacada principalmente de las apuntes de los misioneros de la Compañía de Jesús, que por el espacio de 130 años trabajaron en aquellas partes de la América meridional predicando, plantando y extendiendo la fe de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo hasta derramar, varios de ellos, su sangre en defensa de la ley santa que predicaban y en testimonio del Evangelio que anunciaban* (Madrid: Imprenta de A. Avrial, 1901 [sic]).

20. Phelan, *The Kingdom of Quito*, p. 9; see p. 35 for a map of Jesuit missions in the Amazon country.

21. Chantre y Herrera, *Historia de la misión*, p. 649.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

century, taught eight or ten children to sing Mass; they performed so well that other padres, accustomed to hearing the excellently prepared music of European Masses, found that of the youngsters equally satisfying musically.<sup>24</sup> We also read one of few specific accounts of how the Jesuits would send indigenous youths to major "Spanish" cities for instruction on the harp:

En la reducción de Santo Tomás de Andoas había todavía vestigios y reliquias de la celosa industria del P. Wenceslao Brayer, que enseñó á cantar la Misa á media docena de niños, hizo aprender á tocar el arpa en Quito á un mozo Andoa, costeándole todo lo necesario desde la misión, enseñó por sí mismo á tocar el violín, en que era eminente, á varios indiecitos y de esta manera, mantuvo un coro muy lucido durante su residencia en aquel pueblo.<sup>25</sup>

(In the *reducción* of Santo Tomás de Andoas<sup>26</sup> there were still vestiges and remains of the zealous labor of P. Wenceslao Brayer. He taught half a dozen children how to sing Mass, and he had a young Andoan lad taught how to play the harp, in Quito, providing him with all he needed for the journey from the mission. He himself taught the violin, on which instrument he was eminent, to several Indian children. In this way, he maintained a brilliant ensemble during his stay in that village.)

We are told, also, how music was employed for inter-tribal evangelization:

Parecióle al superior de las misiones, que lo era entonces el P. Carlos Brentano, trasladar al P. Zefiris á la reducción de San Regis para que introdujese en los Yameos el uso de la música y del canto que había introducido en los Xeveros. Logróse el fin que se pretendía, porque llevando el padre consigo cuatro indiecitos de los suyos, dos tañedores y dos cantores enseñó con ellos a los Yameitos de San Regis, los cuales entraron prontamente en el manejo de los instrumentos y aún con mayor felicidad en el canto.<sup>27</sup>

(It occurred to the superior of missions, who was then P. Carlos Brentano, to transfer P. Zefiris to the *reducción* of San Regis in order that he introduce to the Yameos<sup>28</sup> the use of music and of song that he had introduced to the Jívaros.<sup>29</sup> He succeeded in the attempt, because by taking with him four of his own Indian youths, two instrumentalists and two singers, he taught with them the Yameitos

24. *Ibid.*, p. 650.

25. *Ibid.*

26. The Andoa were Záparo-speaking people who lived originally between the Pastaza and Morona Rivers, above the Maina.

27. Chantre y Herrera, *Historia de la misión*, p. 651.

28. This group occupies a triangular zone between the lower Napo and Marañón Rivers.

29. Probably today's Jívaro, or Shuar, of this Oriente region.

of San Regis—who themselves quickly learned to manipulate the instruments and who performed even better in song.)

Music had begun to flourish in San Joaquín de Omaguas<sup>30</sup> since about 1723.<sup>31</sup> Two indigenous musicians of San Joaquín de Omaguas, one a Quito-trained harpist and the other a P. Brayer-trained rabelist, formed a duo to accompany (presumably liturgical) song; they performed “con gracia, realce y consonancia”<sup>32</sup> (with grace, splendor, and consonance). Also among the Omaguas, P. Martín Iriarte became distressed when a plague killed his best singers and several instrumentalists.<sup>33</sup>

If one wonders why the Jesuits were not merely content to have their mission Indians play wind instruments—their own and/or those introduced by the Christians—the answer is suggested by the following description. After a new church had been built to replace one destroyed by wind, this same P. Iriarte, with “outside” assistance, rebuilt his musical base: for more than two years, with the aid of a Spanish boy singer, he taught the Omagua children how to sing in church and in processions and viatica. Missing was only the accompaniment of “good” instruments, because the “clarines y cornetillas” (clarins and little cornetts) the Omaguas already had learned did not please the padre’s “sensitive” ears. Visiting the village of La Laguna on a task for the superior of missions, P. Iriarte succeeded in obtaining harps and violins, which “spoke better with song” and were “sweeter and more pleasing to those who attended the church functions.”<sup>34</sup>

P. Iriarte also taught music reading to the Omagua youths; it was this note-reading ability that enabled two young Omagua boys, sent to Lima, to learn “en poco tiempo . . . á tocar con habilidad y destreza, arpa y violin, de manera que igualaban a sus mismos maestros”<sup>35</sup> (in a short time . . . how to play with ability and skill harp and violin, in such a way that they were the equals of their very teachers). These trained Indian musicians then returned to San Joaquín to play in its church; they were warmly received. Jealous of these youngsters’ abilities, other Indian parents sent their own children to the missionary to learn to sing and to play instruments. Indian children from Pevás, Napeanos, and San Regis were sent to San Joaquín to

30. The Omaguas lived from the mouth of the Napo River eastward to the junction of the Jutahy River with the Amazon River.

31. Chantre y Herrera, *Historia de la misión*, p. 651.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 652.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 652–53.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 653.



learn music from the Omagua musicians and from their missionary tutors. These children returned to their own pueblos with performance abilities in singing and playing the violin and harp.<sup>36</sup>

In San Pablo de Yameos, Napeanos, musical training had been undertaken by its founding missionary, P. Vahamonde, with the aid of another “mozo español” (Spanish lad). His successors continued this work, and at the time of the 1767 expulsion, the village had its harpist and violinist to accompany the choir. In 1768, again owing to P. Vahamonde’s efforts, San Ignacio de Pevas also had “buenos cantores y tocadores de arpa y violin para las funciones de iglesia”<sup>37</sup> (good singers and players of harp and violin for church functions).

Sometimes, instead of the Indians’ having to go to Quito or Lima to seek their harp and violin training, the training came to them, despite the alleged great distances involved: “En el Nombre del Jesús tuvieron un buen arpista venido de Quito, para enseñar á los jóvenes que se fueren efectivamente aficionando y disponiendo para la música.”<sup>38</sup> (In Nombre del Jesús, they had a good harpist from Quito who had come to teach those youths who were sufficiently interested and disposed to music.) Unfortunately, this maestro succumbed to the rigors of the Oriente jungle habitat and died.

Festivals celebrated in the eighteenth-century Jesuit Spanish Marañón included Corpus (Corpus Christi, usually in June), Sagrado Corazón de Jesús (Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 13), and Patrono del Pueblo (Patron Saint of the Village). At Corpus, after an unusually early Mass—in order to allow for the procession before the heat of the day arrived—the procession formed at the church; no one was excused, and all behaved with great composure. Included in the procession were adult male indigenes, formed in one or two groups and playing their clarins, drums, fifes, and *cabos*.<sup>39</sup> The indigenous instruments, clearly, were permitted performance at the Corpus procession.

Earlier on the festival morning, “castillos”<sup>40</sup> had been erected in different spots along the procession route; the structures were adorned with live animals, fish, fruit, and other foods.<sup>41</sup> Palms had been placed around the

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p. 654.

38. Ibid.

39. Probably cow’s horn(s), today in Ecuador called *bocina*.

40. This most likely refers to tall wooden structures from which various articles are suspended, notably foodstuffs.

41. In June, 1980, I observed and photographed similar *castillos* (the same term is still

streets. Sacristans had built chapels and altars for the stops the procession would make, where, the halo or Blessed Sacrament set down, singers with instrumental accompaniment would sing a hymn or other devotional song.<sup>42</sup> The priest would also give a benediction from these street chapels and altars.

Thus, distinct from and in addition to the ensemble of probably mostly indigenous flutes and drums was this other ensemble, that of the specially trained musicians, which accompanied the priest during the procession:

Los cantores y tañedores de instrumentos acompañaban de cerca al Señor y cantaban por toda la procesión, ya el Pange lingua, ya el Sacris Solemniis. A distancia de seis á ocho pasos del sacerdote, iba por delante el estandarte ó pendón que llevaba uno de los principales (el cual solía nombrarse cada año como mayordomo de la fiesta), y dos compañeros recogiendo las borlas y cordón por uno y otro lado. Cerca del estandarte hacía sus habilidades una turba de danzantes, que bien ensayados de antemano, danzaban con garbo y gracia al son de una flauta y tamborcillo que tocaba un indio. El sacerdote colocaba en cada una de las capillas el Santísimo, y daba lugar á que se tocase algo de arpa y violín y se cantasen algunas coplillas devotas, y dicha la oración del Sacramento, daba la bendición con el venerable.<sup>43</sup>

(The singers and instrumentalists closely accompanied the Señor [the Jesuit priest], and they sang throughout the procession, either the "Pange lingua" or the "Sacris solemniiis." Six or eight steps away from the priest went ahead the standard or banner, carried by one of the principals [he who customarily was named every year as steward of the fiesta], and two companions picking up the tufts and strands on both sides. Near the banner a crowd of *danzantes* performed, who, well rehearsed beforehand, danced with elegance and grace to the sound of a flute and small drum played by an Indian.<sup>44</sup> The priest, at each of the small chapels, placed down the Most Holy, giving way to the performance of something on harp and violin and to the singing of some devotional verses; the Sacrament having been said, he gave the benediction with the monstrance.)

The final source for indigenous harp practice in this period emanates from the circum-Quito area. P. Bernardo Recio, S.J. (1714–91), from

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used) constructed for the celebrations of Corpus and its Octave in a small parish in the central highland Ecuadorian province of Tungurahua.

42. Chantre y Herrera, *Historia de la misión*, p. 661.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 661–62.

44. At the same Corpus celebration in 1980 referred to above in note 41, there were two costumed, headdressed indigenous *danzantes* who performed their dancing accompanied by two other indigenes, each playing *pingullo* (duct flute) and *bombo* (large two-headed drum).

Gerona, Italy, arrived in Quito in 1750 and traveled through the northern area of Otavalo-Ibarra-Pasto in 1754. After the expulsion, he returned to Gerona, where he wrote his *Compendiosa relación de la Cristiandad [en el Reino] de Quito*.<sup>45</sup>

Chapter 21 of Recio's work bears the title "De la música, y otros medios, para aumento del culto divino en ese país" (Of music and other means for enhancing the divine practice in that land); the previous chapter had referred to the "País de Quito" (Quito Land). In paragraph 332 of chapter 21, Recio describes what we have found to be typical Jesuit practice elsewhere: well-performed music in cathedrals and in other churches, now in the circum-Quito zone, and a great number of musical instruments in use in these places—instruments such as flutes, oboes, vihuelas, harps, violins, double-basses, clavichords, and organs. He reports having heard that the first European to bring the violin into the area had been a Jesuit from Germany, the same man who had produced an accurate map of the Amazon River. The author of the prologue to Recio's book, García Goldaráz, suggests that this missionary might have been one P. Samuel Fritz.<sup>46</sup>

Recio then speaks (paragraph 333) of the great proliferation of Indian violinists in the area, many of whom were exceptionally skilled. They frequently played in Masses to diverse saints. Perhaps we can appreciate the Jesuits' stated preference for the violin by Recio's comment on the effect this instrument is said to have had on an ill St. Francis.<sup>47</sup> In paragraph 334, however, Recio addresses himself specifically to eighteenth-century indigenous harp practice in the Quito zone and most likely also the northern Ecuadorian area:

Pero el instrumento más común, y el que con más primor manejan los indios, es el harpa. Es de manera, que en donde quiera se hallan harperos. Veránse muchos lugares o pueblos de indios, sin sastre ni zapatero. Faltarán aquí el pan, allí la carne, acullá el vino; pero la harpa no puede faltar. A mí en las misiones me recreaba mucho el ver, cómo en todas se tocaba, y siempre bien. Tócanla en

45. P. Bernardo Recio, S.J., *Compendiosa relación de la Cristiandad [en el Reino] de Quito* (Gerona, 1773; reprint ed., Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas Instituto Santo Toribio de Mongrovejo, 1947).

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 425–26; see also García Goldaráz, *ibid.*, p. 426, n. 1.

47. "Leemos que hallándose una vez San Francisco enfermo muy triste, con sólo una leve tocata de una ángel al violín, se bañó el serafín humano de tan celeste suavidad, que cambió su angustia en un exceso de júbilo. Este efecto participan a proporción los fieles con la música devota" (*ibid.*, p. 426). (We read that, St. Francis, finding himself once ill and very sad, with but a light piece of an angel on the violin, was bathed with such a heavenly smoothness, that it transformed his anguish into an excessive joy. The faithful partake of this effect, in proportion, with liturgical music.)

la Misa, en los bautismos, en la Salve, y en otras varias funciones. Pero donde me complacía más era en el Via Crucis; pues antes de cada paso tocan los indios un verso muy tierno. A veces por una función sagrada se juntan muchos harperos, y es admirable la consonancia y ornato con que la tocan, y lucen muy bien el aparato de la función.<sup>48</sup>

(But the most common instrument, and that which the Indians play with the greatest skill, is the harp. It is such that wherever you look you find harpists. There will be many places or villages of Indians without a tailor or a shoemaker. There will be here no bread, there no meat, over there no wine; but the harp cannot be missing. I was much delighted, at the missions, to see how in all of them it was played, and always well. They play it at Mass, at baptisms, for the Salve, and at other functions. But where it pleased me most was at the Via Crucis; for, before each station the Indians play a very tender verse. At times, for a sacred function, many harpists gather together, and the consonance and embellishment with which they play is admirable, and they enhance very well the pomp of the occasion.)

An active musical culture, then, with significant indigenous involvement, prevailed in Jesuit institutions in the New World. Many Jesuit writers remark upon the Indians' natural musical aptitudes. Younger Indians especially were taught music by ear and by note; they learned to sing liturgical and quasi-liturgical song and to play European wind and stringed instruments, including the diatonic harp. Indian ensembles were active in travel with missionaries to various neighboring tribes of an area. Certain groups attained high reputations in this endeavor, attracting Indians to their settlements to be taught to sing and to play the new European music. In Jesuit settlements the harp was performed inside the church to accompany singers for Mass, baptism, Salve, villancico, chanzoneta, and for Patron Saint celebration; the harp was employed outdoors for processions at Corpus and for the Via Crucis. In the Marañón River region, young indigenes received training in harp playing by being sent to Quito or Lima, or by having a harpist from Quito, for example, visit the mission to offer instruction. Two or three years seem to have constituted a sufficient training period to produce a satisfactory Indian harpist. Certain Jesuit missionaries, notably those from Austria and Germany, were themselves excellent violinists, and they particularly favored the harp as well. Indeed, the combination of violin and harp was a preferred indigenous duo among the Jesuits. As we have seen, a Jesuit reported that harp playing was widespread and of high quality among the Indians in the Quito area (and probably also the

48. Recio, *Compendiosa relación de la Cristiandad*, p. 426.

northern Ecuadorian zone) in the mid-eighteenth century, including the playing of many harps together at religious celebrations.

### *The Harp in Nineteenth-Century Ecuador*

The change in basso-continuo instrumentation between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries was clear and apparently quite complete: in general, the organ took over this role from the harp, which had performed it regularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The transition is observable in Robert Stevenson's catalogue:<sup>49</sup> of the pertinent manuscripts in the Sucre Cathedral, eighty-eight different compositions specifically call for the use of the harp, forty-two pieces specify the organ, and in only four instances are parts provided for both harp and organ in the same piece. Of the total of 126 pieces requiring either harp or organ or both, the dated harp pieces all come from the eighteenth century, the earliest being 1717, the latest 1772. Of a total of twenty-three dated compositions specifying the organ, eighteen are from the eighteenth century and five from the nineteenth century. But of the forty-five dated harp pieces, only seven are dated after 1750; thirty-eight, the great majority, are pre-1740. On the contrary, of the twenty-three dated organ works, only six pieces are pre-1770; seventeen pieces, the great majority, are post-1770. Of the four instances calling for both instruments in the same composition, three are dated: 1736, 1737, and 1771—these years are, roughly, the outer limits of chronological usage for each instrument (i.e., 1736 very early for organ, 1771 late for harp). In fact, the transition between the two continuo instruments was occurring in Sucre during the period from about 1740 to 1770.

Evidence for the conclusion of this transitional process can be found by examining a catalogue of primarily nineteenth-century works; an example is Stevenson's listing for the Santiago, Chile, Cathedral.<sup>50</sup> More than one hundred works by New and Old World composers of the late eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries specify organ; only one piece, a solo by an Italian composer, specifies harp for its accompaniment. There is no other mention whatsoever of "harp" in that listing.

In the nineteenth century, after the 1767 expulsion of the Jesuits with

49. R. Stevenson, *Renaissance and Baroque Musical Sources*, pp. 223–52.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 315–46.

their intense musical involvement and their specific interest in the harp and violin, and with the replacement of the harp by the organ as a cathedral accompanimental instrument, descriptions of the Latin American harp focus less on *reducción* and church, and more on folk and salon practice. First-hand accounts of harp usage in nineteenth-century Ecuador appear in works by W. B. Stevenson and F. Hassaurek. In his *A Historical and Descriptive Narrative of Twenty Years' Residence in South America*,<sup>51</sup> Stevenson, an Anglo-Irishman who had served as the private secretary to Count Ruiz de Castilla, one of the last Spanish presidents of the Quito Audiencia, described what he saw of life among the *zambo* (black-Indian) villages of coastal Esmeraldas,<sup>52</sup> among the various social classes of Guayaquil and Quito, and among highland Indians. In his description of Guayaquil, after noting the racial features of its inhabitants, their gaits, and their character, he remarks:

Indeed every thing here bears the marks of exertion and activity. The favourite amusements are bull fights, excursions on the water in balsas (rafts), and dancing; of the latter all ranks appear passionately fond, and in the evening the harp, the guitar, or the violin may be heard in almost every street, and, contrary to what might be expected in a country lying between the tropics, the reel, the waltz, and the country dance are preferred to any other.<sup>53</sup>

In contrast, Hassaurek's detailed remarks pertain to highland Ecuador. Hassaurek notes that, in early nineteenth-century Quito, women of the middle and upper classes played the piano, most of them rather poorly. And, "the guitar and the harp are great favorites, especially with the middle and lower classes; but a woman who plays either of these instruments, scarcely ever knows a note."<sup>54</sup> During the week from Christmas to New Year, both "common people" and "the higher classes" conducted masquerades, wandering about costumed in the streets at night, playing jokes and pranks. After visiting the homes of other friends, the revelers would "wind up" at a prearranged house, the "winding up" consisting of an improvised ball. If the house lacked a piano, one or two musicians would be brought

51. W. B. Stevenson, *A Historical and Descriptive Narrative of Twenty Years' Residence in South America*, 2 vols. (London, 1825).

52. Phelan, *The Kingdom of Quito*, pp. 9–10.

53. W. B. Stevenson, *A Historical and Descriptive Narrative*, vol. 2, pp. 209–10.

54. F. Hassaurek, *Four Years among Spanish-Americans* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), p. 168. Hassaurek's poor evaluation compares with the same mediocre abilities allegedly possessed by contemporary women of Bogotá, Colombia; see Harry C. Davidson, *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia: Música, instrumentos y danzas*, vol. 1 (Bogotá: Banco de la República, Departamento de Talleres Gráficos, 1970), p. 33.

along by the party: "Sometimes a harp or a few guitars compose the orchestra, and the night is spent in dancing and revelry."<sup>55</sup>

After describing the oppressed condition of circum-Quito indigenes, Hassaurek comments on their music, with more than a trace of Romantic sentimentalism:

At their revels nowadays, they sing and dance to the tune of a drum and fife, or the harp, or an instrument resembling the ancient rebeck. It is but one and the same sad and monotonous tune they play, and to which they sing and dance for hours and days. The same tune that enlivens them at their festivals, resounds at their funerals; but that tune is full of the deepest significance. It is slow and plaintive, like the mourning of a subjected race, bewailing the loss of its ancient greatness, and its present misery and degradation.<sup>56</sup>

On June 24, 1863, Hassaurek left Quito to witness the celebrated San Juan–San Pedro festivities in the circum-Otavalo area; he wrote a valuable early description of Otavalo-area Quechua harp use at San Juan–San Pedro, specifically the festivities on June 26, 1863, in the vicinity of the chapel of San Juan, near Otavalo. Costumed adult male Indians were dancing, he notes, as their wives sat by, observing them and preparing to come to their aid should they become inebriated. Near the refreshment stands,

. . . crowds were continually thronging, as the eating and drinking went on incessantly. Hundreds of besotted Indians, simpering and reeling, and supported by their faithful wives, were drinking to the health of their compadres [close male companions] and commadres [*sic*] [close female companions], now bickering and tearing about, to their hearts' content. Others were singing, with hoarse drunken voices, to the tune of the harp or guitar, or even without accompaniment, while still others lay stretched out on the ground, fast asleep.<sup>57</sup>

Hassaurek continues his description to include the several types of musical instruments that were in evidence at the festivities; there were numerous *rondadors* (panpipes), many flutes and violins, "also several harps,"<sup>58</sup> horns, and no drums. The instruments were not grouped into ensembles but were performed by "many different parties," of at least two or three musicians each, marching about the grounds. Again, the aural impression for Hassaurek was that "they played but one solitary tune. It was the same from morning to night, without variation or intermission."<sup>59</sup>

Particularly significant is the account of just how harps were carried by

55. Hassaurek, *Four Years among Spanish-Americans*, p. 182.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 271.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 273.

59. *Ibid.*

indigenous musicians in procession and played at the same time. At the same celebration,

... about twelve or fifteen dancers, more or less, form a procession, somewhat irregular, with little boys among them, in fancy dresses like their seniors, and march up and down the fairground to its whole length, wheeling around at one end to return to the other. While marching, some of them will play their crude flutes or guitars. Even harps will be carried along in the procession, with their bottoms resting on the back of a little boy, while the musician harps away at the strings, and one of his companions beats the time on the side of the instrument.<sup>60</sup>

This description is of interest for several reasons. First, in this and in the previously quoted statement, Hassaurek comments that more than one harp is being played; the implication is that the resonance of a single harp was insufficient to provide sound for the dancing of so many people (he remarked at the outset that there were several hundred Indian women and about as many Indian men at the site).<sup>61</sup>

Second, we see that Indians were adept at having the instrument carried as it was being played. In the eighteenth-century *Marañón español*, it will be recalled, the harpist and violinist, both probably trained Indians, accompanied the priest during the Corpus procession; they played at each altar along the route, and they accompanied the singers' "Pange lingua" or "Sacris solemnibus," sung throughout the procession. It appears that the pedagogy of the Jesuit musician-Fathers had extended to instructing their Indian musical charges in the art of playing the harp during procession, a performance practice that may date from sixteenth-century Spain<sup>62</sup> and

60. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

61. The harps I observed in 1980 being played by Indians within twenty kilometers of this place were very close in size and appearance to early Ecuadorian Andean harps. They were small instruments, with up to half of their strings of nonresonant gut.

62. In sixteenth-century Spain, during the reign of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor (Charles I of Spain) (reigned 1516–56), the Royal Chapel consisted of one maestro de capilla, a maestro de órgano, singers, and "ministriles de Arpas, Chirimias, Dulzainas, Bajoncillos y Sacabuches" (minstrels of harps, shawms, flageolets, small bassoons, and sackbuts) (Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española*, vol. 2, p. 115). It appears, then, that harps might have been performed during processions for Corpus and for the Octave of Corpus during Charles V's reign: in 1545, Charles V ordered that there be, among the functions of his Royal Chapel, processions for those two occasions. Near the end of the long procession, which was specifically to include, among other elements, "trompetas y atabales" (trumpets and drums), representatives of various priestly orders were to be found, including Augustinians, Dominicans, and Franciscans. Then came the Cross of the Royal Chapel, after which were "los cantores y 'ministriles' en dos hileras, siguiendo a las religiones y a los curas de las parroquias" (the "singers" and "minstrels" in two lines, following the priestly orders and the parish priests) (*ibid.*, p. 117, n. 1). The fact that the harp has been used in



that is definitely established for nineteenth- and twentieth-century Peru and twentieth-century Mexico.<sup>63</sup>

Third, the harp is described as being carried not by the harpist himself on his shoulder, as is the Peruvian practice, but on the back of a little boy.

Fourth, there is some need for interpretation of Hassaurek's statement that the harps had "their bottoms resting on the back of a little boy." What he must have meant, for the instrument to have been playable, was that the "bottom," in this instance, was in fact the part of the neck near the forepillar; only when carried in this way would the instrument have had its treble and bass strings in their normal relative positions for playing, with the treble

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eighteenth-century Peruvian-Ecuadorian Marañón español, in nineteenth-century Ecuadorian, and in twentieth-century Peruvian processions (see Isabel Aretz, "Peru. II. Folk Music," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* [1980], vol. 14, p. 563, fig. 3, for a photograph of two harpists in procession in Cuzco, Peru) is well documented, and it is possible that the practice might have been introduced by the evangelistic orders that arrived in the New World during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, having observed harps similarly employed in sixteenth-century Spain.

63. Pancho Fierro, Lima watercolorist (1803–79), portrayed contemporary harp usage in several works. His "Danza de pallas" (Peruvian Quechua dance) of 1820 shows a *castillo* (see above, nn. 40 and 41) and other vertical adornments in the background—this possibly at the Corpus Christi season—and a half-hidden harp being carried on the shoulder of a processioner; see Angélica Palma, *Pancho Fierro: Acuarelista limeño* (Lima: Sanmarti y Cia., S.A., 1935), p. 38. In Fierro's "Los diablos (Procesión de Corpus de San Marcelo. San Pedro, en Chorrillos)" (The Devils [Corpus Procession in San Marcelo. St. Peter, in Chorrillos]), one of the three figures present is a masked harpist carrying his harp on his shoulder; see Rodolfo Holzmann, comp., *Panorama de la música tradicional del Perú* (Lima: Casa Mozart, 1966), p. 8. The same artist's "Danza 'Son de los diablos'" (Dance "Song of the Devils") portrays a *danzante*—again suggestive of Corpus (see above, n. 44)—with costume, including headdress, dancing to music of harp, guitar, drum, and *quijada* (jawbone of burro, horse, or cow); the harp is wielded on the left shoulder. See Arturo Jiménez Borja, *Instrumentos musicales del Perú: Colección Arturo Jiménez Borja* (Lima: Museo de la Cultura, 1951), plate 19. Photographic documentation for the harp's being carried atop the shoulder and played in twentieth-century Peru is ample. In addition to Aretz, "Peru. II. Folk Music" (see above, n. 62), see also Holzmann, *Panorama de la música*, supp., pp. 6, 9; Jiménez Borja, *Instrumentos musicales del Perú*, plate 105; R. et M. d'Harcourt, *La Musique des Incas et ses survivances* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1925), plate 38, no. 1; Pierre Verger, *Fiestas y danzas en el Cuzco y en los Andes* (Buenos Aires: Ed. Sudamericana, 1945), photograph 70; and Alfredo Rolando Ortiz, *Latin American Harp Music and Techniques for Pedal and Non-Pedal Harpists* (Corona, Calif.: Alfredo Rolando Ortiz, 1979), p. 19. A recent and important organological study of this country concentrates the modern shoulder-walking harp practice in Ayacucho, Huancavelica, Apurímac, and Arequipa; see Josafat Roel Pineda, et al., *Mapa de los instrumentos musicales de uso popular en el Perú: Clasificación y ubicación geográfica* (Lima: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 1978), p. 149. Evon Z. Vogt, *The Zinacantecos of Mexico: A Modern Maya Way of Life* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 80, depicts the harp's being played while carried in a harp-guitar-violin trio in an unnamed ritual procession of Tzotzil-speaking Zinacantecos of Chiapas, Mexico.

(smallest) strings nearest the body of the harpist. The legs would have been in the air. Had the real bottom (i.e., back) of the instrument rested on the boy's back, whether right-side-up or upside-down, the harp's bass strings would have been closest to the musician, an unlikely playing position.

Fifth, Hassaurek perceptively includes in his remarks the fact that one of the harpist's companions beats in time to the music on the side of the harp. (It will be shown in part 2 of this article that the presence and performance of this *golpeador*, or beater, is a characteristic—in fact essential—ingredient in Quechua Indian harp practice in northern Ecuador today.)

Finally, Hassaurek's description is noteworthy for what is omitted: drums. Indeed, the northern Ecuadorian Indians—unlike the Salasaca and other indigenous groups of the central Ecuadorian highlands, the Indian groups of the Ecuadorian Oriente, and the Aymara people of highland Bolivia—do not necessarily include the drum as a principal instrument in their musical groups. Its rhythmic role may be fulfilled by striking the belly of the harp.

Swallowed up in a negative generalization about Ecuadorian highland Indians as a whole is a pertinent comment by another nineteenth-century writer, Pedro Fermin Cevallos, who notes that sometimes a “mala arpa . . . se oye rascar en sus casuches del campo” (bad harp . . . is heard scraped in their miserable country huts).<sup>64</sup>

We recall Hassaurek's statement that “the same tune that enlivens them at their festivals, resounds at their funerals.”<sup>65</sup> Figure 1 shows an oil painting entitled “Velorio de Indios” (Indians' wake) by the well-known Quito School painter Joaquín Pinto (1842–1906). It depicts what is almost certainly a highland indigenous home (the character of the patio is typical for the region, and the males wear ponchos). Eleven people are seen in the patio area. A single harpist plays a large instrument lacking legs; it has a rounded forepillar finial, and at least one belly sound-hole is visible. One couple is dancing; a seated woman holds a bottle. Barely visible within the house are at least four lit candles and, on a table or platform, a figure—unclear as to sex or age (or even humanness) except for a pair of wings at its shoulders and something, perhaps a crown, on its head. The wings suggest an angel: in fact, this is probably the wake of an Indian child, because, in the Ecuadorian highlands, it is particularly at indigenous children's wakes,

64. Pedro Fermin Cevallos, *Resumen de la historia del Ecuador*, 1st ed. rev. (Guayaquil: Imprenta de la Nación, 1889), vol. 6, p. 151.

65. Hassaurek, *Four Years among Spanish-Americans*, p. 189.



FIGURE 1. Joaquín Pinto (1842–1906), “Velorio de Indios” (Indians’ wake). Archivo Histórico Municipal y Museo “Alberto Mena Caamaño,” Quito, Ecuador.

not adults’, that music is performed.<sup>66</sup> South American children’s wakes, often referred to as “velorios de angelito,” frequently are festive in character, and the custom of playing the highland harp at such occasions is still carried on today (observations of this practice made in 1979–80 will be discussed in part 2 of this article). The pictorial evidence described above suggests that this is a tradition that has continued in the same region for at least one hundred years.

In his oil painting entitled “Paisaje” (Landscape),<sup>67</sup> shown here in figure 2, Joaquín Pinto also documented the traditional combination of the harp and the violin in performances by Indians in Jesuit settlements, churches, and processions. The painting portrays two Indian males (in white pants, bare feet, brown felt hats, and ponchos) walking out-of-doors with a lake and a large mountain in the background. One man plays a violin, while the other carries two harps on his back. An observer familiar with the landscape of Imbabura Province would say that the scene looks very much like

66. See John M. Schechter, “*Corona y baile: Music in the Child’s Wake of Ecuador and Hispanic South America, Past and Present,*” *Latin American Music Review* 4, no. 1 (spring-summer, 1983): 1–80.

67. Like Pinto’s “Velorio de Indios,” this painting is found in the Archivo Histórico Municipal y Museo “Alberto Mena Caamaño,” Quito.



FIGURE 2. Joaquín Pinto, "Paisaje" (Landscape). Archivo Histórico Municipal y Museo "Alberto Mena Caamaño," Quito, Ecuador.

Lake San Pablo in front of Mt. Cotacachi or Mt. Imbabura. The intention of the artist was probably to depict a typical scene of the area, with violin and harps being borne and played by local indigenous musicians. (Twentieth-century observations and a recording confirm the continued indigenous use of the harp and/or violin in the Otavalo zone of northern Ecuador.<sup>68</sup>)

68. In her discussion of the Otavalo-area child's wake, Gladys Villavicencio Rivadeneira, *Relaciones interétnicas en Otavalo: ¿Una nacionalidad india en formación?*, Ediciones Especiales, 65 (Mexico City: Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1973), p. 190, notes that the funeral is conducted to music of violins and guitars. John Collier, Jr., and Aníbal Buitrón, *The Awakening Valley*, [2d ed.] (Instituto Otavaleño de Antropología, Quito: Talleres Gráficos del Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1971), p. 152, describe the violin's use in the processional segment of an indigenous adult funeral, also circum-Otavalo; these authors assert, further, that the harp is "indispensable for wedding music" among the Otavaleñian Quechua (*ibid.*, p. 141). Elsie Clews Parsons's data in *Peguche, Canton of Otavalo, Province of Imbabura, Ecuador: A Study of Andean Indians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), pp. 57–58, for Peguche (neighboring Otavalo), collected ca. 1940, clarify the specific contexts for this indigenous harp usage at weddings. In the 1979 commercial recording *Mushuc Huaira Huacamuñun* [A new wind rushes this way] by the Quechua ensemble named "Conjunto Indígena Peguche" (Guayaquil: Industria Fonográfica Ecuatoriana S.A. [IFESA], 1979), the selection "Huahua Huañui" (Child's wake) is an aural simulation of segments of a local-area child's wake; a harp-violin duet provides the music for dancing at this "wake."

*Mestizo*<sup>69</sup> harp traditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are described by Segundo Luis Moreno Andrade, a native of Cotacachi, Imbabura. We are told that the first school of music in Ecuador was founded in Quito in 1810 by Fr. Tomás de Mideros y Mino, an Augustine; among the early students of the institution was one “Manuel Checa, buen arpista.”<sup>70</sup> Moreno Andrade provides the first discussion in the literature of the harp traditions in Tungurahua in the central highlands. The diatonic harp is said to have been (ca. 1925) a favorite instrument, and there is a reference to (good) harpists’ being blind:

En la provincia de Tungurahua—tal vez por falta de buenos profesores—ha estado sumido el arte musical en el más profundo aletargamiento. El arpa, pero el arpa primitiva, que no consta sino de una sola escala diatónica—ha sido el instrumento predilecto en esta sección de nuestra República, y en el que ha tenido muy hábiles ejecutantes; pero los más hábiles han sido ciegos.<sup>71</sup>

(In Tungurahua Province, perhaps for lack of good instructors, the musical art has been sunk in the deepest lethargy. The harp—but the primitive harp that consists of only one diatonic scale—has been the preferred instrument in this part of our country, and there have been very able performers on it; but the most capable ones have been the blind.)

(The past and present harp-making traditions of Ambato, provincial capital of Tungurahua, and the harp-performance tradition of one of the finest Ecuadorian interpreters of the instrument—and not blind—will be discussed in part 2 of this article.)

Moreno Andrade provides greater detail for harp practice in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Imbabura. The harp was used in churches in Ibarra, the provincial capital; speaking of (probably mestizo) musicians of that city in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Moreno Andrade mentions one Francisco de la Torre, a composer and harpist, who was called upon to perform in and out of church, in the latter context for street processions.<sup>72</sup> In another Ibarra church in the first half of the nineteenth century, another mestizo harpist played and sang: the

69. For highland Ecuador, *mestizo* refers to a person of mixed Ibero-American and indigenous cultural heritage, whose primary language is Spanish and whose style of dress is typically Westernized.

70. Moreno Andrade, “La música en el Ecuador,” p. 230.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 260.

72. Segundo Luis Moreno Andrade, *La música en la provincia de Imbabura* (Quito: Tipografía y Encuadernación Salesianas, 1923), p. 5.

church of San Felipe, destroyed by earthquake in 1868, never had a liturgical musical instrument, except for a harp with which José Vacas Placencia accompanied the song; he is said to have had a robust and harmonious voice.<sup>73</sup>

In Cotacachi, a nonagenarian, Mercedes Páliz (d. 1900), sister of the fine violinist and flutist José Páliz (ca. 1780–1890),<sup>74</sup> is reputed to have played the harp well and to have sung with expression. Bedecked in jewels, she appeared on the balcony of her home to entertain passersby on her instrument. In 1852, when the Ecuadorian President José María Urbina (served 1852–56) came to the zone to visit the famous Lake Cuicocha near Cotacachi, the female harpist formed a part of the committee of honor, accompanying the First Magistrate on the boat, where she serenaded with the harp.<sup>75</sup>

Moreno Andrade reserves his greatest plaudits for a harpist named Pastora Chaves (1854–93). He calls her the finest harpist of either sex the province has ever known. Noting that she is supposed to have performed compositions from the symphonic repertory, Moreno Andrade conjectures that she used either a pedal harp or the standard diatonic harp with a greater number of strings, some tuned chromatically.<sup>76</sup>

Whereas Moreno Andrade first remarked that in Imbabura Province as a whole the inclination for music was “innate,”<sup>77</sup> the Cotacachi native son later singles out its indigenous population as possessing special musical talent, including that dedicated to the harp:

Los indios de esta provincia son de especiales aptitudes musicales: es raro, rarísimo que alguno no toque siquiera la flauta. Los de los cantones de Otavalo y Cotacachi son más filarmónicos: aparte de los instrumentos autóctonos—pingullos de tres y seis huecos, flautas de carrizo y de tunda, rondadores y tambores de diversos tamaños—tocan el violín a doble cuerda, el arpa, el rondín, la bandurria, la guitarra, etc.<sup>78</sup>

(The Indians of this province [i.e., Imbabura] have a special musical aptitude; it is rare, very rare, that one of them does not play at least the flute. Those of the cantons of Otavalo and Cotacachi are fonder of music: apart from indigenous instruments—*pingullos* with three and six holes, reed and bamboo flutes, *ronda-*

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., p. 15.

75. Ibid., p. 17.

76. Ibid., pp. 26–27.

77. Moreno Andrade, “La música en el Ecuador,” p. 261.

78. Ibid., p. 269.

*dors*, and drums of various sizes—they play the two-stringed violin, the harp, the harmonica, the bandurria, the guitar, etc.)

\* \* \*

Part 2 of this article will describe and illustrate musical practice with the harp in the northern and central Ecuadorian highlands today: the players, their instruments, and their music.

*Auburn, Pennsylvania*