

Early Opera in Spain and the New World

CHAD M. GASTA

For Bob who, despite utter calamity and mishap, continues to enjoy Fortune's smile.¹

IN A RECENT *PMLA* ARTICLE, Linda Hutcheon reminds us how unfortunate it is that opera remains a rather understudied discipline. Hutcheon goes on to state that although the majority of research on opera is being carried out by musicologists and historians, the most innovative approaches are coming from scholars in other fields such as literary and cultural studies, and she calls on these specialists to continue undertaking interdisciplinary approaches to the field (804). As she points out, "So long as opera fell primarily within the domain of musicology, it was studied first and foremost as music alone. The fact that the music was written for a specific dramatic text was not deemed particularly significant" (502).

It is similarly not surprising that early modern opera of Spain and its New World colonies has enjoyed little scholarly attention, and there are several reasons for this. First, there are few works from the period to discuss. The genre's growth in Europe came at a time when the Spanish monarchy was unable and unwilling to provide adequate financial support for its development in the peninsula. This lack of funding, in addition to a general rejection of the genre among the populace, meant that opera's arrival to Spain's New World colonies would be delayed

1 The epigraph to two of Robert L. Fiore's books feature these lines by Apuleius: "But Fortune had a smile left / for me when it utter calamity; / perhaps she merely wanted to / preserve me for further mishaps..."

as well. Second, with the large number of great *comedias* to study, the small number of operatic works, their perceived lack of quality, and the emphasis placed solely on their musical value, have put the genre at a disadvantage. Third, since these works are musical and feature singing and dance, and Hispanists are not ordinarily trained in these disciplines, they simply may not be interested in undertaking study of them.

Despite these obstacles, there are very good reasons why we should take note of Hutcheon's belief that multidisciplinary approaches can fuel reevaluation of the genre. For instance, it should be remembered that operas begin as dramatic stories and, thus, are principally texts slated for performance. Indeed, the great French composer Jean-Baptiste Lully called opera *tragédie en musique*, emphasizing that these were dramas set to music. Next, it is equally significant, and probably not by chance, that Spain's most significant Golden Age dramatists whose texts we routinely examine, also played leading roles in introducing opera to Spain and its colonies. For example, the great Lope de Vega introduced the first fully sung, Italian-style opera in Spain, *La selva sin amor* in 1627. Calderón helped ground the genre by initiating several forms of early Spanish opera starting with the *zarzuela* and moving to two full-fledged operas in 1659-1660, *La púrpura de la rosa* and *Celos aun del aire matan*. *La púrpura de la rosa* was subsequently exported to the New World where Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco composed new music and a new *loa* for a 1701 public performance in Lima. Whereas early European opera research has intermittently spiraled out to include Spain's contributions, little or no research outside musicology has tackled its New World cousin. This essay will resituate early modern Spanish opera to bring attention to its role in the diffusion of the genre beyond Iberia, specifically discussing the genre's appearance in the imperial city of Lima and in the Jesuit missions of South America, the latter a seemingly unlikely location to foster opera development. Like Hutcheon, I hope to invigorate study of the genre on the basis of its literary and cultural value to the history of Spanish and New World drama.

As a genre, opera is closely related to nearly all humanistic forms including literature, visual arts, theater, music as well as history and philosophy, and even touches upon modern-day psychology. With this many disciplines at its beckon call, it is not unusual that the genre saw such a rapid and disperse profusion throughout Europe after its first appearance in Florence in 1597, eventually becoming mechanisms of

propaganda and control under Church of state authority.² Early modern Spanish dramatists, fully informed of the power of public spectacle, also understood that, like the *comedia*, opera was unique in that it could provide original storylines, sophisticated stage mechanization and backdrops, and elaborate costumes. Where opera differed, however, was in that it provided *total* entertainment, especially in its use of music, dance and song—supreme aesthetic tools historically used by the crown and the Church to foster particular ideological agendas. In several of her studies, the musicologist and historian, Louise Stein, for example, has demonstrated a causal connection between ideology and the arts, especially as related to theater in general, and lyrical drama in particular. Her work will be quoted throughout this essay. That opera was an aesthetic innovation with clear ideological consequences is not unlike the suggestion by Althusser, Adorno and others that cultural production such as theater or music can be viewed as mechanisms to reconfirm state and church principles.

Opera has its historical foundation in polyphonic ecclesiastical music and liturgical drama from in Medieval Europe. Its invention and development as we know it today occurred during the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque, followed by its dispersion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a period that also saw national and regional schools of opera. Between 1577 and 1582 a group of Florentine Renaissance musicians, poets, singers, and intellectuals—imitating the classical academies of Greece—met regularly to discuss topics related to literature and art of the Greco-Roman world such as how classical drama was represented and to what extent was it sung. Adopting the name “Camerata Fiorentina,” they learned that classical theater was sung in monody (a single voice) rather than in polyphony (multiple voices or collective singing). Since no classical model existed, they decided to write their own works in monody but also featuring instrumental accompaniment and polyphonic songs. The results were two pastoral “*opere in musica*,” or operas: *Dafne* (1597, no longer extant) and *Euridice* (1600). This Renaissance experiment slowly gave opera a preference for monodic style (as opposed to polyphonic song), profane music, and secular dramatic themes. The subsequent transition to the Baroque sig-

2 See Brown and Volgsten's *Music and Manipulation. On the Social Uses and Social Control of Music*.

naled the height of the theatrical spectacle, and opera was an ideal art form to fascinate and entertain all social classes, irrespective of their physical seating in the theater.

Opera's entrance into Spain was tedious. With Lope's introduction of the opera and Calderón's various attempts at solidifying it within the theatrical tradition of early modern Spain, one would think that the genre would have found a niche and flourished. Not the case. The development of opera in Spain took place in short spurts, propelled mainly by available patronage and the wherewithal and ingenuity to take from the Italian traditions. Although up through the eighteenth century Spain dominated the areas around Naples—the home of the most significant opera tradition—the introduction of opera in the peninsula was in no way simple or easy. Opera also flourished in Milan and Rome—where Spain routinely exercised great influence—but economic and political concerns caused by constant warfare with European enemies made it nearly impossible for such an extravagant spectacle to be funded and staged. These events naturally also constrained the genre's introduction into the New World.

In the Americas, pre-Columbian drama existed well before the Spanish arrived,³ and sources such as sixteenth-century dictionaries of Indian languages and chronicle accounts written by European missionaries as well as surviving musical instruments and some musical scores, point to a rich musical tradition among indigenous groups.⁴ Indian groups are not known to have developed musical notation, and the Spanish colonists did not transcribe music they heard. As far as we know, fully-sung lyrical drama had absolutely no precursor in the Americas before its introduction by Spanish and other European colonists. When it did begin its irregular development in the early eighteenth century, it occurred soundly within the tradition of European

3 See Jáuregui and Friedman's introduction to volume 58.1 of the *Bulletin of the Comediantes* (2006), as well as several essays contained within for excellent reviews of research on transatlantic and colonial theater of the period.

4 The most common category of music in pre-Colombian Mesoamerican was ritual music among the Aztecs and Mayas as well as the Guaraní and Inca of South America whose pieces normally were accompanied by dance and song. The most common instruments across indigenous groups were drums, flutes, and wind instruments. The murals of the 8th-century the Bonampak temple, for example, depict a procession with trumpets, drums, and rattles.

polyphonic lyrical drama as exported from Spain, the latter itself the receptor of Italian aesthetic developments and, later, France's artistic influences. The entry of opera into the New World—first in Lima, Peru, then into the Jesuit missions in South America—the collaboration among Europeans, Indians and Criollos in the Americas, plus the news of these collaborations in Europe, makes the genre a truly transatlantic phenomenon that hinged upon the blurring boundaries between center (Spain) and periphery (the Americas). In these cases, however, opera's production was a political act meant to honor the Spanish crown and its religious allies, signaling how aesthetics are inherently tied to ideology (Jowett and O'Donnell 13–14).

But this discussion of opera's expansion to the New World should naturally begin by looking at Spanish musical traditions and how they prepared the terrain for acceptance of lyrical drama within the peninsula and without. In Spain, like in France and Italy, polyphony was the preferred form of song during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Similarly, polyphony was, for a time, the dominant form of song in early opera, giving way in the Baroque period to a combination of polyphony (in duos, trios or choruses) and monodic singing parts. It has been documented that polyphony in Spain was sung in Santiago de Compostela in the twelfth century, and in locations in Aragón, Navarra and Castile in the fourteenth century (Rebatet 120). The *Cancionero de Palacio* (or *Cancionero de Barbieri*), a songbook anthology compiled by Francisco Asenjo Barbieri, featured 458 profane musical pieces of polyphony from between 1474 and 1516, often with instrumental accompaniment. The *Cancionero* is dominated artistically and stylistically by 68 works by Juan del Encina (1468–1529), often credited with being the founder of Spanish drama.⁵ Encina was a notable composer and student of Nebrija who was also a humanist poet, musician, and prominent troubadour. Having written at least fourteen dramatic pieces—eight of which appear at the end of Encina's own monumental 1496 *Cancionero*—he also plays a singular role in the transition from ecclesiastical to secular drama as well as being the most significant author to fuse drama and music since most

5 Encina also held other significant posts: he was a member of the choir at the Cathedral of Salamanca and a favorite of Popes Alexander VI and Julius II, both of whom bestowed favor upon Encina; he was named Prebend, or beneficiary of revenue, of the Salamanca diocese (Alexander VI) and the archdeaconate of Málaga Cathedral (Julius II). Later, he was prior of León's Cathedral.

of his *villancicos*, *romances*, *canciones*, *cantatas* and *intermedios* were fully-dramatized and sung.

Other great Renaissance musicians and composers such as Tomás Luis de Victoria (1540-1611) traveled and studied in Italy, bringing back techniques related to integrating Italian polyphony in ecclesiastical compositions. On the other hand, as the range of songs in the *Cancionero de Palacio* or Encina's dramatic contributions demonstrate, secular forms of polyphony developed in tandem with ecclesiastical polyphony despite the hard stance the Catholic Church took during the Counter Reformation against any musical form that could be considered blasphemous. According to the range of compositions contained in the *Cancionero de Palacio*, vocal performances of profane themes set to music were pivotal musical developments throughout the sixteenth century that would help prepare the terrain for fully or partly sung lyrical dramas.⁶ Indeed, Spain enjoyed a rich musical tradition that eventually gave way to the insertion of popular songs in dramas, the invention of the *zarzuela*, and ultimately, the development of opera, although the overall quality of some of these innovations and adaptations were not as high as in Italy or France.

Progress toward fully sung lyrical drama was made when instrumental music, dances and song texts were woven into the popular *comedia nueva* during the early seventeenth century. At first, musicians were routinely employed by several theater houses to play background music during theatrical performances. It was widely believed that musical pieces within drama added complexity and verisimilitude to the dramatic work being performed since different melodies helped set the scene in much the same way as they do in films today. The targeted use of music and dance in drama was promoted by Lope based on his reading of Aristotle. In his *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias*, Lope clearly indicates how dance and music fulfill important roles in the *comedia*: "el baile le es tanto en la comedia / que le aprueba Aristóteles" and "cuquiera imitación poética / se hace de tres cosas, que son, plática, / verso dulce, armonía y la música" (225-26; 54-56). From that point on, several categories of musical pieces in *comedia* texts became standardized through Lope's practice, especially song texts that borrowed existing

6 For an exploration of Renaissance Spanish music see Stevenson (*Spanish*), Chase and Knighton.

words, phrases, popular sayings and refrains that were then combined with the dramatist's own verses (Stein, *Songs* 27-28).⁷ And when a performance was slated for the palace, playwrights went to greater lengths to include a wider range of musical pieces. Several of these different musical compositions, *entremeses cantados*, *jácaras*, *mojigangas* and *bailes*, were routinely used in the *comedia*. These short musical segments featured popular songs whose themes were often known to the audience, and which treated moral or social matters (Stein, "Iberian" 328). Over time, however, some of these such as the *jácara* took on burlesque or satirical qualities. Overall, though, the *comedia* text maintained primacy while music, dance and song were selected resources used in particular situations to advance characterization, theme or plot. They did not, however, appropriate the dominance of the dramatic text.

In the first years of the seventeenth century in Spain, while popular songs, familiar dances and fashionable instrumental pieces were becoming a standard addition to *comedia* performances, the development of fully-sung lyrical theater like opera was still quite a distance off. Already by the late 1620s, Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), a distinguished singer and composer of madrigals and religious polyphony in Mantua, had composed several operas that virtually revolutionized the young genre. Monteverdi reoriented himself toward a new style that departed from polyphony to incorporate monody marked especially by recitative style, a principal component of opera whereby a single singing voice accentuates the natural contours of speech to explain storylines. Other composers in Rome, Naples and Venice followed his example. Moreover, Italian opera houses during the early part of the seventeenth century adopted an entrepreneurial model whereby the spectators paid at least a portion of the costs through entrance fees. Several opera houses even featured private balconies and boxes for the wealthiest patrons, while charging

7 Stein points out that a number of Lope de Vega's song texts were taken word for word from the existing *romance viejo* or the *romance nuevo* (*Songs* 28-29). She also provides a rather exhaustive list of Lopean and Cervantine stage directions which call for vocal and instrumental music: see Table 1 and Table 2 (334-45). Stein lists the following instruments common to Lope's plays: trumpets, shawms, flutes, shepherd's pipes, bagpipes, guitars, harps, drums, tambourines, and bells (*Songs* 20). Some instruments had particular roles for courtly scenes (flutes, harps, guitars), or battle scenes (drums, trumpets), while others were employed to hide the off stage noise of spectators or stage machinery.

a lower admission for standing-room-only spaces for the lower classes. None of this was subsequently transferred to Spain where lyrical theater was a spectacle reserved for the nobility or the royal family who in turn had to financially support it. If Italian opera troupes were to journey from Italy to Spain, their only opportunity for performance was in Madrid (and sometimes Barcelona) because other Spanish cities along their route did not have the financial means or audience interest to support a performances there (Alier, *¿Qué es esto?* 29). This supposed an enormous cost structure for one or two performances in the capital, a sum of money even the wealthiest patrons simply would not pay during the difficult financial periods under Philip III and Philip IV. Additionally, opera was usually performed in Italian—sometimes in dialect—and it featured unknown storylines that were entirely sung. These are not exactly attractive features for audiences accustomed to the *comedia nueva*'s intriguing plots, sword play, comedic interludes, and lofty questions of love and honor. As a result, audiences and enthusiasts were not much predisposed to a musical tradition leading to opera-like works, and the establishment of opera in the peninsula was complicated.

Therefore, it is somewhat understandable how only a few operas were composed during the seventeenth century in Spain, if one considers the enormous production costs, the long distances to be traveled by troupes, and the large number of musicians and performers required to perform the genre. Despite these obstacles—or perhaps because of them—Lope, always the innovator, took a shot at writing a work, *La selva sin amor* (1627), that clearly had operatic features. *La selva sin amor*, with music by Filippo Piccinini (1575-1648), was produced under the guidance of the Florentine stage designer Cosimo Lotti and other members of the Florentine delegation who were brought to Madrid by Philip VI in 1626.⁸ Lope's work was composed completely of Italian meter with *silvas* in order to match the need to sing the entire work in recitative, "singing while acting." Similar to the Italian eclogue tradition, Lope himself called the work an "égloga pastoril," and it was performed entirely by the Italian delegation. For these reasons, *La selva sin amor* falls within the Florentine tradition of opera (Stein, "Contera" 80 and Cancelliere 118) and can be considered the first non-native Spanish op-

8 Piccinini was Philip III's chamber musician who taught the viol to the future Philip IV and his brothers.

era in Spain. Lope must have known he was venturing into uncharted waters. In his 1629 prologue to the published version of the work he proclaimed it was “cosa nueva en España” (65). These words may allude not only to the genre itself as being “something new” to Spain, but perhaps something new to him. If the genre was previously unknown to Lope, it makes sense that he would go to extremes to describe the role of music and song: “Los instrumentos ocupaban la primera parte del teatro, sin ser vistos, a cuya armonía cantaban las figuras los versos, hacienda en la misma composición de la música las admiraciones, las quejas, las iras y los demás afectos” (66). *La selva sin amor* featured an entire gamut of singing parts: solos, duets, trios and choruses. It also included memorable stage mechanizations and backdrops including cityscapes, a light-house, ships, harbors, and fish swimming against a moving sea, much of which is described by Lope in his prologue. The architect of these mechanizations, Cosimo Lotti, was an engineer by trade, a background that came in handy for his elaborate stage designs and remarkable use of theatrical machinery. During his time in Spain, marked especially by his role in *La selva sin amor*, Lotti introduced a number of significant changes to the Spanish stage such as artificial lighting, portable machines, and special effects (trap doors, portable clouds, moving seas, and even pyrotechnics). The Italian also was an ingenious set designer who preferred Italianate perspective stage scenery.

Hamilton claims that the performance of *La selva sin amor* places Spain at the forefront of opera development, behind Italy and Germany (21, 100). In reality, however, Lope’s work made little impact on the course of opera in Spain. First, recitative monody was not employed in lyrical drama for the next 23 years, perhaps because the style was extremely difficult to imitate (Stein, *Songs* 202). Moreover, the unique genre was rejected by most of the artistic community and its royal patrons for being tedious and difficult to follow. Finally, a drama in which music, song and dance were the centerpieces rather than strategic accompaniments was simply not customary in the world of the *comedia nueva*.⁹ Perhaps the rejection explains why opera was not produced again in Philip IV’s court during the decades leading up to 1650, despite the king’s great

9 Stein believes the work was unsuccessful due to the unoriginality of the text and because the music made little impression, leaving Lotti’s visual spectacle as the only aspect of the opera to make an impact (*Songs* 202).

interest in the production marked by his attendance at nearly all of the rehearsals for *La selva sin amor* (Stein, *Songs* 201).

One thing that was clear from Lope's experiment was that lyrical theater was possible, and music and song could be moved away from the traditional polyphonic style. Lope's opera was the only genuine large-scale experiment with music before Calderón wrote *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra* in 1652 and *Fortunas de Andrómeda y Perseo* in 1653, works that included a high degree of music, but which cannot be considered rightly operatic.¹⁰ In fact, Stein categorizes them as a new genre, "mythological semi-operas," because they included "operatic scenes with a systematized incorporation of sung dialogue and recitative" (*Songs* 130). But, Calderón's role in the long development of opera cannot be understated. After 1651 he became a priest and dedicated himself to writing exclusively for court festivities, presumably giving him the latitude to experiment. The playwright began seeking out techniques to overcome the limitations of *comedia* storylines, and to establish music and song into popular drama. The result was the "zarzuela," a one or two act musical and dramatic piece that featured alternating singing and spoken parts (sometimes in recitative) but which also included dance sequences, often with comedic characters and burlesque or satirical plots. It was the zarzuela, according to Hamilton, that would eventually give Spain its own nationalistic style of lyrical drama (11). These musical and singing compositions were the staples for performances in Philip IV's hunting lodge, La Zarzuela, and became increasingly more complex over the years by including intensifying degrees of music and vocals until they were finally nearly entirely sung. Calderón's use of music in the zarzuela seemed to fuse Spanish polyphonic musical tradition with elements from Italian opera (Stein, "Plática" 31). In fact, the stage directions for *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra* are the first that specifically call for singing in recitative, but the playwright also incorporated parts sung in polyphony (choral refrains, for example).

Located on the outskirts of Madrid, near El Pardo, the Zarzuela was the principal location for Philip IV to hunt and escape from the bustle of Madrid. The productions on the small Zarzuela stage were

10 Stroud reminds us that *La fiera, el rayo y la piedra* is one of the only plays before 1700 for which complete scenery drawings exist; they signal the splendor involved in producing elaborate theatrical spectacles (18).

directed at members of the court who accompanied Philip, several of whom may have attended opera performances in Italy. In other words, Calderón probably realized that the peculiarities and uniqueness of the genre were more acceptable for this sort of audience. The first of these works to formally carry the “zarzuela” label was Calderón’s *El laurel de Apolo: zarzuela en dos jornadas* (1657) followed a year later by his *El golfo de las sirenas* (1658).¹¹

The years 1659–1660 marked an important change in Calderón’s interest in introducing fully-sung lyrical drama. In those years, Calderón wrote two operas in honor of the marriage of the Spanish princess María Teresa to France’s King Louis XIV, a matrimonial agreement meant to seal the Peace of the Pyrenees that ended years of warfare between the two countries. The playwright wrote the *librettos* for *La púrpura de la rosa* and *Celos aun del aire matan* and the musical score is believed to have been composed by Juan Hidalgo (1610–1685), the respected harpist, musician of the royal chapel, and composer.¹² Originally scheduled to be performed in the Zarzuela and presumably directed at members of the court, *La púrpura de la rosa* was eventually moved to the Coliseo del Buen Retiro and staged on January 17, 1660, months after the initial peace agreement of 1659 and well before the marriage in June 1660. This was followed on December 5, 1660 by *Celos aun del aire matan*, the latter being the earliest existing opera manuscript containing the entire libretto and musical score featuring recitative, arias and choruses similar to Italian *opera seria*. The staging of both of these operas in the Retiro was a major change since the performance became a public event directed at all citizens regardless of social or economic class. And both operas were wildly elaborate events not least of all because they were among the first theatrical works to be presented after a Royal dictate closed the theaters for two years.

11 *El laurel de Apolo* was originally planned for the Zarzuela palace (1657), but instead transferred to the Retiro at Philip IV’s request, and finally performed in 1658. Chase calls it the “prototype” for the zarzuela (301).

12 The music for *La púrpura de la rosa* has been lost while that of *Celos aun del aire matan* was found in 1927 by José Subirá (Act 1) and by Santiago Kastner (Act 2) in 1945 (Alier, *Historia* 91; Livermore 100), and the entire three acts are contained in a manuscript held in Évora, Portugal discovered in 1942 by Luis Freitas Branco (Stroud 41). The completeness of the Évora manuscript makes *Celos aun del aire matan* the first extant opera since it includes the entire musical score. See Matthew Stroud’s study and edition for full details.

La púrpura de la rosa was very different from Lope's *La selva sin amor*, or any other lyrical drama up to that point in time. First, Calderón was fully aware that while the nobility may have seen similar works behind closed palace doors, general spectators had not. In the *loa*, the character Vulgo, states that *La púrpura* must be totally sung: "Por señas que ha de ser / toda música que intenta / Introducir este estilo" (425-27).¹³ Vulgo suggests that the motivation for this sort of lyrical drama was to "introduce" opera, to a wider public (beyond the palace walls) and, perhaps, to initiate the genre in Spain. But, Calderón foresaw audience apprehension for the genre: "¿No mira cuánto se arriesga / en que cólera española / sufra toda una comedia / cantada?" (429-32). The playwright downplays the work's fully-sung repertoire by replying—once again through Vulgo—that the lyrical work is intended only to be a short piece for entertainment: "No lo será, / sino sola una pequeña / representación [...]" (433-35). Several years earlier, the playwright employed the same tactic in the *loa* for *El laurel de Apolo*: "No es comedia, sino solo / una fábula pequeña / en que, a imitación de Italia, / se canta y se representa" (928). Audience appreciation or rejection of this Italian style of singing in drama was certainly on the playwright's mind.

A second differentiation between *La púrpura de la rosa* and other musical-dramatic works before Calderón is related to the dramatist's knowledge of several musical devices common to seventeenth-century opera: recitative, arias, choruses (in duos or trios), and dances—constructions that were not known to exist together in earlier Spanish musical dramas.¹⁴ In the stage directions, Calderón clearly states his overt desire to incorporate recitative, "il stilo rappresentativo:" "Van saliendo Flora, Cintia, Clori, Libia, cada una de por sí, cantando en estilo recitativo, como con asombro, mirando al vestuario, como huyendo con admiración" (166). By the mid-seventeenth century, the aria, a strong vocal melody often with musical accompaniment, was all the rage in

13 The text was first published by Juan de Vera Tassis as part of *Tercera Parte de Comedias de D. Pedro Calderón de la Barca* in Madrid (1664).

14 There seem to be parallels between Calderón's opera experiments and existing opera texts that, if true, suggest Calderón was versed on the historical development of Italian opera. For example, Livermore believes Auro's grieving at the beginning of the first act of *Celos aun del aire matan* is very similar in theme and structure (short aria and long recitative) to Arianna's lament in Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna* (1608), indicating Calderón had Monteverdi's opera in mind (100-01).

Italian opera. And the use of the aria was central to Calderón's opera: "Hidalgo and Calderón produced a Spanish operatic style (in which the predominant texture is that of the strophic aire, even for narrative and dialogue) more than a decade before Lully and Quinault developed a French one" (Stein, "Iberian" 329). However, recitative played a larger role in Calderón's *La púrpura* than in equivalent Italian opera, perhaps because its structure allowed for singing that mimicked normal speech and was easier for the audience to understand than the drawn out syllabic enunciations of the aria. Regardless, these radical changes in dramatic presentation for an audience accustomed to the popular themes, plots and characters of the *comedia nueva* probably pleased very few. But, Calderón, like Lope before him, was clearly a theatrical innovator and realized that if the Spanish stage was to continue advancing, playwrights like him must take chances: "quien no se atreve a errar, no / se atreve a acertar" (434-39). As Stein points out, Calderón may have known quite a bit about Italian opera, but the two operas from 1659-1660 are his only absolute attempts at introducing opera in Spain; other lyrical dramas he wrote afterwards picked up the zarzuela tradition where he left it in 1658 ("Plática" 29).

During the reign of Charles II (1665-1700), the zarzuela continued to be the most appreciated form of lyrical drama. Zarzuelas were produced and performed throughout the peninsula, especially in Madrid. Successful composers such as Juan Hidalgo wrote several zarzuelas while another writer, Sebastián Durón (1650-1716), even began to title his zarzuelas "operas," starting with *La Guerra de los gigantes* in 1710. Subirá indicates that the term "ópera" appeared even earlier, in 1698, as "fiesta de ópera" when a couple Madrid theater companies began using the term (*Ópera castellana* 26-27). But it was not until the arrival to the Spanish throne of Philip V (1701-1724 and 1724-1746) and his wife María Luisa of Savoy that opera enjoyed a measure of success in the peninsula. Before arriving in Madrid to take up the throne on behalf of the House of Bourbon, Philip V traveled to Italy where it is said he attended operas by the famed composer Alessandro Scarlatti (Hamilton 102). The King and Queen were fluent French speakers who were enraptured by Italian culture. Under their patronage, several lyrical dramas were produced in Spain as Madrid saw a surge in artistic activity by French and Italian writers and artists. Even the Royal Treasury subsidized singers, composers, scenery designers and painters as well as costume produc-

ers and those associated with production (Hamilton 101). The Queen's dislike for Spanish *comedias* led the crown to contract Italian theatrical companies, followed by Italian actors, which relegated Spanish composers and singers to a second-rate position well into the nineteenth century. Indeed, as early as 1703, the king gave privileged access to the Buen Retiro stage for three consecutive months to a company of Italian singers known as "La Compañía de Farsa Italiana" who presented the opera *Il Pomo D'Oro*, written in three acts with music and dancing. This company eventually was called the "Trufaldines," named after one of the lead writers, and the moniker became synonymous with the seemingly never ending "invasion" of Italians who displaced Spanish musicians and singers in the capital.

Among other significant performances were several works written by José de Cañizares' with music by the Venetian composer Giacomo Facco that helped consolidate Italian opera in the peninsula: *Las amazonas de España* (1720) and *Amor es todo invención: Júpiter y Amphitríón* (1721), *Angélica y Medoro: Dramma músico u ópera scénica en estilo italiano* (1722) and *La hazaña mayor de Alcides* (1723).¹⁵ The royal family's journey to Badajoz in 1728 for the wedding of the Prince Ferdinand to Portuguese Princess María Bárbara of Braganza and its subsequent relocation to Seville for five years (1728-1733) signaled a cessation of opera production as companies disbanded. This changed, however, with the arrival to Madrid of María Barbara. The Princess' penchant for music was noteworthy, having studied exclusively with Alessandro Scarlatti's son, Domenico (1685-1757), since 1721, including during his appointment as palace harpsichordist in 1729. In 1737, Queen Isabel Farnesio, Philip V's second wife, contracted the famed *castrato* Carlo Boschi, known as "Farinelli" (1705-1782). Farinelli sang almost entirely for Philip V and spent the best part of his career in Madrid performing in the court of Philip V, then Fernando VI, until he was dismissed by Charles III in 1759, a king who exhibited little enthusiasm for opera and even arranged for its prohibition (1777-1787). Overall, though, up to the arrival of Farinelli, Italian opera in Spain was not well received outside of the

15 The *loa* and *sainete* for *Angélica y Medoro* was written by José Cañizares and Giacomo Facco but the *comedia* text by Antonio Zamora and composer Antonio San Juan. For a good review of these details as well as the state of lyrical drama at the beginning of the eighteenth century, see Ignacio López Alemany's study.

royal family, and, as a result, enjoyed uneven success.

In the course of the development of Spanish opera, regardless of audience appreciation for the genre, Calderón's lyrical initiatives during the years 1659-1660 played a major role. *La púrpura de la rosa*, for example, became a preferential theatrical work to memorialize momentous political events. In 1680, the opera was again performed and included a new *loa* with music written by Juan Hidalgo, and staged in honor of another Franco-Spanish alliance, the marriage of King Charles II to Marie-Louise d'Orléans. Fernández de la Hoz believes it was the 1680 performance that solidified this opera's place as the premiere musical work to celebrate weddings and other royal events in both Spain and the New World (233).

But opera's entrance into the New World was an uneasy one plagued by many of the same problems as in Spain: general public disfavor of the genre, a shortage of funds, no appropriate theatrical venues for staging, an absence of trained singers and musicians, and, more than anything, a nearly total lack of royal or political will. From Spain's initial establishment of its colonies in the New World up through the eighteenth century, peninsular dramatists such as Lope, Tirso and Calderón remained popular with American audiences (Hesse 12; Stein, "Iberian" 334). Many of Calderón's *auto sacramentales*, for example, featured several offstage choruses accompanying musical pieces that were performed in Lima and other New World metropolitan centers through the eighteenth century. The cross-Atlantic exportation of other theatrical songs, *villancicos* and secular pieces also were immediately integrated into American theater and became well known to New World spectators. But, the evolution from a Spanish national style represented by the traditional writers like Lope and Calderón to a French Bourbon style was due mostly to the unfolding political events: the end of the Habsburg line in Spain in 1700 and the chaotic arrival of the Bourbon monarchy thoroughly changed the pattern of patronage as traditional Spanish arts and culture ceded primacy to new artistic trends (Stein, "Iberian" 330). Surprisingly, though, the new artistic style was Italian, not French. In fact, as we have seen, Philip V generously provided funding to bring to Spain numerous Italian musicians, actors and painters in his determination to establish Italian opera as a commercial enterprise. Opera's eventual precarious foothold in Spain made possible its subsequent exportation to the crown's New World kingdoms.

The first known opera in the New World, by Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco in 1701, was a rewriting of Calderón's *La púrpura de la rosa*. Torrejón's Lima *refundición* was performed in honor of the first year of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain and the New World, and in celebration of King Philip V's eighteenth birthday. For the occasion, Torrejón was provided with exceptional funding by the Peruvian Viceroy, the Conde de la Monclova, for the public performance that lasted over four hours. The Chapelmaster wrote a new *loa*, or overture, conserved Calderón's original story of Venus and Adonis, and composed a new musical score for the entire opera since Calderón's had been lost.¹⁶ As it is passed down to us today, the *loa* comes off as pure propaganda composed to defend Philip V's right to the Spanish throne during the War of Succession between the Bourbons and the Austrian Habsburgs.¹⁷ This is clearly outlined on the title page: "fiesta co q celebro el año decimo octavo, y primero de su reynado de el rey n^o, s^t, D, Phelipe Quinto." Torrejón was under viceregal orders to compose the opera in honor of Philip V and even provided with extravagant funding to pull it off. Although the thrust of the *loa* features comparisons between the king and the god Apollo, it is the chorus of "las nueve ninfas," whose divine mission is to give esteem to the work's composition, "la pluma," and its song, "la voz," the two principal structural elements that make up opera. Their singing parts, in duos, trios and as a chorus, are written to praise Philip:

a cuatro Viua Philipo viua
 viua el susesor
 del imperio que puesto a sus plantas
 seguro afianza su eterno blazon

Viua Philipo y su nombre
 aclame el clarin dela fama veloz
 por invencible por juſto y benigno
 desde el oriente de su formacion
 viuv [viva] [...] (54-62)

¹⁶ Fernández Rufete demonstrates that several melodies by Miguel Gómez Camargo found in popular *villancicos* may have been derived from the text of Calderón's *La púrpura de la rosa*, melodies that were later used by Torrejón in his version.

¹⁷ This argument is more fully developed in my study "Public Reception, Politics and Propaganda in Torrejón's *La púrpura de la rosa*, the First New World Opera."

The chorus declares Philip to be the legitimate heir to the Spanish throne, but their song is significant for another reason: just as Calderón did in his 1660 *loa*, Torrejón felt it was necessary to offer an explanation—perhaps even a defense—for staging opera to an audience more attracted to popular *comedias de capa y espada* and *comedias de enredo*. The muses harmoniously ask the audience for pardon and applause clearing pointing to music and song as the innovative effects for this new musical style of drama: “[...] y nuestro afecto / rendido ala superior / magestad de su grandeza / meresca aplauso y perdon” (62–65). Like Calderón 41 years earlier, Torrejón specifies that music and spectacle in the form of opera are fresh trends to be appreciated because they point to the modernization and uniqueness of the New World stage under the Bourbons.

Regardless of Torrejón’s intent, it is extremely difficult to gauge the success of this new musical invention not to mention whether or not the praises to Philip V had the impact Torrejón was seeking. Not that it mattered; historical accounts tell us that Torrejón’s musical experiment was well-received by the nobility and the Viceroy himself which suggests that he may have been somewhat successful in advancing his agenda—at least on the surface. Indeed, according to José de Buendía’s 1701 *Parentación Real al Soberano Nombre e immortal memoria del Católico Rey de las Españas*, the audience received the work enthusiastically:

[...] the crowd was so vast that it seemed useless to hope for silence during the music [...]. However, the delicious harmony of voices, organs, and other instruments so captivated the ear that all noise gave way to rapt attention. [...] The chapelmaster—Don Tomás de Torrejón—showing that same meticulousness and zeal with which he attends to every task assigned him, had with very special care composed new polychoral music for the Invitatory, the Lessons of Job in the three nocturns, and for certain psalms such as the Miserere [...] Having managed to gather all the best voices in the city, he united them in such a moving ensemble that everyone present was reduced to tears during the more affecting canticles. (qtd. in Stevenson, *Púrpura* 106–07).

But, not everyone was happy with this performance. Stevenson reminds

us that Torrejón's production displeased Lima's archbishop, "who took steps the next year to stop the performance of all 'jocular music' in the cathedral and to ban the nuns from participating in anything that smacked of entertainment" (*Music* 83). But, we can assume that *La pura de la rosa* was successful in cementing the genre into the repertoire of stage productions available in Lima (it was re-staged in Lima in 1708 and in Mexico City in 1728 [Hesse 13]), even though the genre was not quite a viable alternative to popular, established forms of court entertainment. For example, in 1708 the successor to Torrejón, Roque Ceruti (a native of Milan), composed the music for *El mejor escudo de Perseo* with *libretto* by the recently-arrived Viceroy, the Marquis of Castelflos, who was known as an excellent guitarist. *El mejor escudo de Perseo* was a lavish spectacle and no expense was too much, especially since the work honored the birth of the crown prince, Luis. This was followed in 1711 by Pedro Peralta Barnuevo (1664-1743), a Lima writer familiar with Italian-style opera, who staged *Triunfos de amor y poder* over eight alternating days in the Viceregal palace. The opera commemorated the 1710 victory of French forces at Villaviciosa which guaranteed Philip V the Spanish throne and included a *loa*, dances, a satirical *fin de fiesta* and a bullfight, all put to music. In 1724 Peralta followed this up with a short opera *Loa para la comedia* which featured arias, choruses and an imitation of Italian-style recitative as well as demonstrating a matured knowledge of printed scenery and stage mechanizations that only Lima could properly fund and bring to fruition.¹⁸ Based upon the musical works to this point, it can be said that opera has a foundation in the Americas from which to build.

As far as we know, no major New World city cultivated an opera tradition other than the notable exception of the Italian styled opera, *Partenope* (now lost) by the Mexican organist and chapel master, Manuel de Zumaya (1678-1755). But, the genre did arrive to the New World through alternate means, especially via the large number of Jesuit missionaries from Europe who came to South America to minister to the Indian populations.¹⁹ When the Jesuits were expelled from Spanish ter-

¹⁸ For information on both of Peralta's works, see Williams.

¹⁹ See my study, "Opera and Spanish Evangelization in the New World," for a more in-depth look at this argument as well as a detailed study of the opera *San Ignacio de Loyola*.

ritories in 1767, they destroyed nearly their entire documentary existence. However, musicologists have spent a great deal of time and effort in reconstituting much of these lost manuscripts. In the Bishop's archives of the Diocese of Concepción de Chiquitos in Eastern Bolivia, for example, musicologists have discovered over 5,000 sheets of music dating from the Jesuit era, transferred there from the Jesuit mission towns, or "reducciones."²⁰ Among these was an opera known today as *San Ignacio de Loyola* (1717-1726) written by the great Italian organ master and composer, Domenico Zipoli (1688-1726).²¹ Domenico Zipoli was a Florentine by birth who studied Cathedral music in Florence, then Naples, where he fell under the tutelage of the opera composer Alessandro Scarlatti (1709). He worked in Bologna, then in Rome's Cathedral, before making his way to Seville to await passage to the Paraguay reductions where the Jesuit missionaries were famous throughout Europe for teaching, protecting and evangelizing the Indians. Zipoli arrived in Buenos Aires in 1717, traveled to Córdoba where he spent the next nine years studying for the priesthood at the Colegio Máximo at the University of Córdoba. His musical works for the organ and the harpsichord include oratorios, masses, and cantatas, and they are considered among the very best during the period.

Zipoli's only opera is believed to be *San Ignacio de Loyola*, which tells the story of the Saints Ignacio Loyola and Francisco Javier, founders of the Company of Jesus. The first half is called "Mensajero" and recounts San Ignacio's battle against the Devil and the second, "Despedida," features Javier's 1541 departure to the Indies to evangelize the natives. The entire musical score of the opera has survived and the *libretto* contains stage directions which state that the work was meant to be sung exclu-

20 The "reducción" was the term the Jesuits used to describe the Jesuit Indian missions in the former Paraguay province. Watkins points out that these missions were points where "different groups of nomadic Indians were brought together to live a sedentary lifestyle in which they could be both a protected from slavery and more easily evangelized" (15). The Jesuit reductions were famous for their resistance to Indian enslavement.

21 Since the actual manuscript does not contain a title, one was given by Bernardo Illari, the musicologist who discovered it in two parts in Chiquitos and Moxos, respectively. Illari consciously divided the work in several scenes in imitation of early eighteenth-century operatic style. He explains that each scene includes one or more short pieces (either a recitative, a short aria, or an accompanying recitative) and a long aria ("MetaStasio" 348-9).

sively by Indian actors while other Indians provided the musical accompaniment. This suggests that *San Ignacio* is likely the first known opera performed completely by Indians. In fact, the *libretto* was written in Spanish but included a corresponding text in the Chiquitos language which explained the opera to the indigenous audience: "Dado que el libreto cantado está en castellano, y que los chiquitanos no entendían la lengua, el texto paralelo debe haberles permitido comprender lo que se decía en escena: de manera extraordinaria, pues, la ópera se desarrollaba paralelamente a su propia traducción al chiquitano" (Illari, *Metafísica* 349). Watkins writes that Zipoli likely comprehended the different playing levels of the Indians and probably composed the opera with Guaraní Indians in mind (73). As such, the opera can be viewed as a cross-cultural tool illustrating the close relationship between the Jesuits and the Indians. On the one hand, it was composed by a European and taught to the Indians by other Jesuits; from there, however, it is likely that the Indians provided the instrumentation, sang and acted the roles, created the stage sets and designs, as well as costumes. As such, *San Ignacio* is one of the truest cross-cultural endeavors of its kind.

Until the Jesuit order was suppressed in 1767, colonial Latin America missionaries routinely composed theatrical and musical pieces extolling the virtues of Catholicism, and several historical dates such as Corpus Christi, Epiphany, Christmas, were celebrated with ceremonies that included lyrical drama that were extraordinarily elaborate. As the Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians learned, the Indians possessed an inclination for plays with music. And the Jesuits were amazingly effective at adapting music to drama in an effort to "bolster their argument that the Indians could adopt Christian faith, understand its principles, and live by its commands" (Mendoza de Arce 9). Claro writes that the Indian's ability to play music was first-rate, and their aptitude for song and dance was especially useful to the Jesuits who came to believe that aesthetic means were effective methods of evangelization:

La afición por la música, la danza y la construcción de instrumentos musicales, aparejada con la extraordinaria facilidad que demostraron los naturales en el aprendizaje de la música, facilitó en gran medida la labor de los misioneros. (...) Los jesuitas enseñaron música a los indios y pronto éstos ocuparon sus lugares en el coro, como solistas,

instrumentistas, copistas, constructores de instrumentos y hasta de maestros de capilla. (11-12)

Popular stories circulated throughout Europe that described the extraordinary talent of Indian musicians and singers who were said to be as good as, or better than, their European counterparts.

If we consider Zipoli's extensive training in Naples and Rome, two significant loci of opera development, as well as his education under Scarlatti, there can be no doubt that he drew on these European experiences when he composed the opera. Although Torrejón's works were printed and dispersed to other areas of the New World, there is no record of Zipoli having access to them.²² Zipoli's inclusion of recitative, arias, choruses (in duos and trios), and dances suggest an Italian influence but these constructs are not exercised in the same fashion as in Calderón's opera. In the Calderonian system recitative and arias were known to possess persuasive qualities and were thus sung exclusively by the gods (Stein, *Songs* 138). In *San Ignacio*, however, recitative and arias are employed throughout the opera but these structures are sung equally by the mortals (San Ignacio and San Xavier) and the god-like angels. Moreover, Zipoli's opera is distinct from others due to its brevity and its level of difficulty. Zipoli's style, for example, often incorporated technically difficult and high quality pieces that no untaught soloist could ever sing, though it was widely believed that several Indians were trained to this level of difficulty (Kennedy, "Candide" 321-22; Illari, "Vespers"). Taken as a whole, Zipoli's opera is significant in that it is a record of collaboration among the Indians, and between Europeans and Indians, in a seemingly unlikely location. That this opera was produced in the missions—and nearly lost to us—suggests that others like it may await rediscovery, especially since other musicians and composers made up the Jesuit contingents in the New World. In the meantime, *San Ignacio* represents a transatlantic cultural space illuminating the advancement of opera beyond the metropolitan centers of Europe or the Americas.

The general lack of operatic works from the sixteenth through early eighteenth centuries in Spain and its New World colonies can be ex-

22 During his career as chapel master of Lima Cathedral, Torrejón's works were printed in Antwerp (1688) and in Lima (1701, 1708, and 1725). His work was in demand in Cuzco and Trujillo, and his compositions were requested from as far away as Guatemala (Stevenson, "First" 34)

plained by keeping in mind the slow development of opera's content and structure, the enormous cost required to stage opera spectacles as well as the general discontent of regular audiences not accustomed to the genre. Each of these obstacles has led to few works being produced during the period, and, as a result, a relatively limited scope of investigation for scholars. If the study of opera in early modern Spain has suffered for lack of scholarly attention, the situation is considerably worse in the New World colonies. Fortunate archival discoveries throughout Mexico and South America continue to bring to light forgotten or unknown lyrical dramas, but a good majority of the research into these works has been carried out by musicologists who are naturally interested in their musical value. What Hispanists bring to the table is, of course, an orientation toward and inclination for multidisciplinary approaches to the genre that is so vital to understanding the socio-cultural and literary context within which these works were conceived and performed. This essay was meant to provide a brief overview of several significant musical dramatic pieces that formed the cornerstone of opera development in both Spain and its New World colonies in the hopes of inciting additional inquiry into them.

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