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RODRIGO DE CEBALLOS'S *MAGNIFICAT CYCLE ON THE EIGHT TONES*: A DESCRIPTION AND COMPARISON WITH SIMILAR CYCLES BY CRISTOBAL DE MORALES AND FRANCISCO GUERRERO

Abstract

Until recently the music of Rodrigo de Ceballos (ca. 1525/30–1581) had been largely ignored by musicologists under the assumption that most of it was lost or preserved in deteriorated manuscripts. Research by the musicologist Robert Snow proved this assumption wrong and placed the composer among important figures of Spanish music during the sixteenth century. Ceballos's style is influenced by the music of two major Spanish composers of the sixteenth century, Cristóbal de Morales (1500–1553) and Francisco Guerrero (1528–1599).

Morales, Guerrero, and Ceballos wrote polyphonic settings of the odd-verses of the Magnificat text on the eight tones, to be sung *alternatim* with the even-numbered verses at Vespers. Ceballos's Magnificat cycle was sung for several centuries at the cathedral in Bogotá, Colombia, and the manuscripts extant there constitute the only surviving source for the setting.

The settings by the three composers present similarities in the number of voices, number of measures per verse, number of points of imitation, tone transposition, use of *cantus firmus*, use of a rhythmic motive, cadences, and use the *finalis* from the monophonic intonation. After a description of general bibliographical data and interactions among the three composers, this study examines the main characteristics of the Magnificat setting of the odd verses of the text on the eight tones by Ceballos and its similarities and differences with comparable cycles by Morales and Guerrero. This description establishes specific musical influences among them and determines stylistic traits of the music of the most important Spanish composers of the mid-sixteenth century.

Keywords: Magnificat, Rodrigo de Ceballos, Cristóbal de Morales, Francisco Guerrero.

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