

INTRODUCTION

The emotions that led to the Mexican Revolution of 1910 also inspired Mexican composers to write works that reflected strong nationalistic character. Leading this nationalistic movement, Miguel Bernal Jiménez developed a unique Mexican style that blended the colonial Spanish culture and the folkloric native Mexican Indian heritage. Furthermore, Bernal Jiménez wrote music that incorporated religious aspects into the music, representing the faith and ideology of the vast majority of the Mexican population of the period.¹ This religiously influenced style of composition is now known as Sacred Nationalism, a movement set forth by Pope Pío X in his *Motu Proprio* of 1903 directing each diocese in the world to establish a formal school for sacred music.²

The first chapter of this paper comprises a study of Bernal's life based on diaries kept by the composer. These diaries and other primary sources consulted for this study are not available in English and have not been published in Spanish. Relevant passages have been presented in this document with a translation by the author.

¹ Alvarez Coral, Juan. Compositores Mexicanos. México: EDAMEX, 1993.

² Alcaraz, José Antonio. En la más honda música de selva. México: Lecturas Mexicanas, 1998.

BIOGRAPHY

1910-1956

José Ignacio Miguel Julián Bernal Jiménez, generally known as Miguel in honor of his father, was born in the small rural town of Morelia Michoacan, México on February 16, 1910, ten months before the beginning of the Mexican Revolution. Within this tranquil community embellished by numerous churches, stone paved streets and abundant local lore, the Bernal family attained high social status partially on account of their financial stability, but for the most part, due to their strong ties to the Catholic Church through two ordained family members. Both maternal and paternal families had been an integral part of this community for generations, holding key posts not only in the religious field, but also in education and other essential areas of endeavor. Miguel Bernal Rodriguez-Gil, the head of the Bernal household, was employed as a postal worker; a highly honored and prestigious position. María de Jesús Jiménez Díaz, his wife, held a teaching degree but did not hold a position until 1914 after the death of her husband. Four children were born from this union: María Elena, María Luisa, Miguel, and Gabriel. While some sources indicate Miguel was the fourth offspring, an interview with Mrs. Jiménez in 1977 reveals that he was the first male and third child born into the family. Gabriel, the fourth child, was born two years after Miguel but died at eighteen months of age. A common custom of the time, the Bernal household included the maternal grandmother, Praxedis Díaz, as a resident in the home.

In 1914, four years after the birth of the composer, Miguel's father passed away from tuberculosis. The effects of his untimely death at the age of 32 forever changed the family. As a

result, María de Jesús was forced to seek employment and leave her children under the care of her mother, Praxedis Díaz. María de Jesús discusses the transition, the impact of her husband's death and the pursuit of her teaching career in a 1977 interview with historian Adrián García Cortés.³

When little Miguel lost his father, the world closed up on me because I had never worked before. But I had the support of my mother, who lived with me...I am trained as a teacher, but I never practiced because I got married when I was eighteen years old.⁴

María de Jesús Jiménez worked as a teacher from 1914 to 1923 when she remarried. Gustavo Landín Jiménez, one of the two children from María's second marriage, asserts that those nine years were quite difficult, but his mother did everything possible to provide all the necessities for her children.

Praxedis assumed charge of the education and parental duties of Miguel, María Elena and María Luisa. She provided structure for the children functioning as a nurturing and guiding force in their scholarly and religious activities. In his diary, *Paginas de un Diario Intimo*, Miguel acknowledged Praxedis as the person who aroused his interest in music through her regular participation in the church choir and frequent singing at home. For as long as he was under Praxedis' care, prayers and music continuously surrounded Miguel.

³ All translations by author unless otherwise noted.

⁴ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 10.

Quando Miguelito quedó huérfano, se me cerró el mundo porque nunca había trabajado. Pero tenía el apoyo de mi mamá, que vivía conmigo...Yo soy maestra de instrucción, pero nunca ejercí antes por que me casé cuando andaba en los 18 años.

Miguel's fascination and natural predisposition to music became evident in 1914 when he had his first opportunity to play a real musical instrument, a harmonium. Although harmoniums were usually seen only in churches and small chapels (being too expensive to be found in homes) this treasured instrument, originally belonging to the Tridentino Seminary, was placed in the Bernal home with the intention of concealing it from government officials. Morelia's Governor Gertrudis Sánchez instituted a national decree in 1914 mandating the appropriation of all assets belonging to the Catholic Church.⁵ As a desperate measure, priests and parishioners emptied the churches, placing as many religious items as possible in devotees' homes. The artifact placed in the Bernal home was none other than the harmonium. Miguel was thrilled when he saw the little instrument and immediately proceeded to play it, imitating the movements and gestures of the organist that he had observed at church so many times. Miguel's mother, in contrast, was extremely fearful of the threatening government officials who were known for their violent and forceful methods. Despite his mother's pleas to stop for fears that the instrument would be heard, Miguel insisted on playing, discovering wonderful harmonies. To his mother's surprise, Miguel sat at the organ and created real melodies from the very first time he began to play.⁶

As a result of the growing anti-clerical sentiment from the government and the violent civil revolution, Miguel's thrill of having access to this lovely instrument was to be short-lived. Violence engulfed all of México, but it was particularly severe in Morelia with its rich Catholic heritage. This forced the Bernal family to flee the city in 1915 and survive a two-year period of nomadic life in the surrounding countryside. Although no evidence of Miguel's musical

⁵ Díaz, Lorena. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000.

⁶ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 11.

activities during this period is available, his musical growth at the time of his return to the city substantiates the presumption that his study of music continued. Upon the family's return to Morelia in 1917, Miguel showed an advanced musical understanding and a beautiful voice, which, despite his young age of only seven, prompted his admission to the Colegio de Infantes de la Catedral de Morelia, a Catholic private school for the boys' choir.⁷

The Colegio de Infantes was a very prestigious school founded in 1765 with the intention of providing the "perfect instruction and formation" for the "Infantes," a select group of twelve young boys who sang in the services at the Cathedral.⁸ The Infantes were required to follow a very rigorous schedule, which included singing the daily 5:00 A.M. mass. The education of these students was not limited to music training; their daily itinerary encompassed solfège class, instrumental instruction (organ most likely), grammar, manners, etiquette, and the Catholic liturgy. Miguel's acceptance was a very special case, since no student had ever been admitted at such a young age. Nonetheless, once admitted, Miguel and Praxedis happily abided by the strict rules and the grueling schedule.⁹ María de Jesús was also supportive of Miguel's involvement with this institution, and was fully aware of his demanding schedule, as disclosed in her correspondence:

He had to be at the cathedral at five in the morning. There he would have breakfast, and then to choir class. After choir they went to their other classes. Who knows at what time they actually had solfège? In the end, that is where he spent the whole day. Well,

⁷ Díaz, Lorena. Miguel Bernal Jiménez, Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000. 15.

⁸ Mouse, Mickey. [Bernal] "Las constituciones, advertencias y reglamentos del Colegio de Infantes." Schola Cantorum (1940): 11.

⁹ Díaz, Lorena. Como un eco lejano...La vida de Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F., México: CENIDIM, 2003.

all the students would go home for lunch, but they had to return for their classes in the afternoon.¹⁰

Miguel flourished during his time as an Infante. More than anything, he enjoyed the music classes in which he excelled. His teachers recognized him as the most advanced student, a designation that would help him further his European studies later in life. In 1918, Father José María Villaseñor wrote a letter to Praxedis, asking if Miguel had previously studied music. He proceeded to explain that the reason for his inquiry was Miguel's facility and speed of learning, "He learns better than all of them [the other students]."¹¹ Even though there are discrepancies regarding the date of Miguel's earliest composition, one of his music teachers, Ernesto Farfán, stated that his first composition entitled *Aves sin Nido* ("Birds without a Nest") was written between 1921 and 1922, when Miguel was only eleven or twelve years old. Professor Farfán remembered the short composition for mixed choir recalling that he only had to correct a "handful of notes".¹²

In 1921, after only two years as an Infante, Miguel advanced to the Orfeón Pio X. The Orfeon was an organization also housed at the Cathedral, but with higher musical standards and more rigorous academic requirements. One of the principal responsibilities of its members included singing at the most important liturgical events of the entire south-central region of

¹⁰ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 13.

"Estudiaba dentro de la catedral, por que en esa época tenía que estar a las cinco de la mañana. Ahí mismo le daban de desayunar y luego entraba al coro. Salían de coro e iban a sus clases. Quién sabe a qué hora les daban la clase de solfeo. Total que ahí se la pasaba todo el día. Bueno, iban a comer a sus casas y luego regresaban todos en la tarde a sus clases."

¹¹ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 13.

¹² Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 14.

México. Although many hostile and unfriendly sentiments still prevailed between the church and the government at the end of the Mexican Revolution (1920), their relationship improved greatly. A truce between these two institutions in 1921 resulted in the government declaring the Orfeón Pío X as the “official school of sacred music.” A year later, the school became known as the Superior School of Sacred Music. The name change signified a new level of recognition since the school was then licensed to grant nationally accredited degrees in Gregorian chant, organ performance, and composition. The principal objectives of the school was to train musicians who would create the proper repertoire of music used in religious services and reform the practice of the day, which included arias, concertos, and other secular musical selections. The course of study was extensive and rigorous, incorporating the study of Latin, religion, and a craft such as printing or book binding in addition to the study of music. Miguel Bernal Jiménez remained at the school until he earned a music degree. His mother had concerns as evidenced by the following correspondence: “Well yes, I like music very much, but I would like for you to follow a different path, because music is not going to earn you much money.”¹³ Miguel Bernal Jiménez always responded, “First a musician, Mother, first a musician.”¹⁴

While a student at the Superior School of Sacred Music, Bernal Jiménez immersed himself in his musical studies, excelling in all of his classes. Three of his teachers, Felipe Aguilera, Ignacio Mier, and Father José María Villaseñor, acknowledged his talent and

¹³ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 14.

“Pues si, me gusta mucho la musica, pero yo quisiera que siguieras otra carrera por que la musica no te va a dejar gran cosa...”

¹⁴ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 14.

“Primero músico, mamá, primero músico...”

dedication by recommending him to be admitted to the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music of Rome upon his graduation from the school. This experience would expose Bernal Jiménez to numerous new experiences and musical works, such as the music of J.S. Bach, Debussy, Beethoven, and other masters who shaped his compositional style.

Although not completely convinced, María de Jesús consented to send Miguel to continue his musical studies in Rome. Her foremost concern was Miguel's age since he was only eighteen years old at the time. Despite her worries, she accompanied him by train to the seaport of Veracruz where Bernal Jiménez boarded the luxury French steamboat *Cuba* with destination Santander, Spain. From there, Miguel would reach Rome by way of a long train ride. He carried two light suitcases, a book about the Virgin Mary, his brown notebook, a pen, and a great deal of anticipation. Father José María Villaseñor had requested that Bernal Jiménez keep a diary during his time abroad, and as a good student, he obliged. This diary reveals a great deal about the inner humanity of Bernal Jiménez, including his feelings of loneliness recorded aboard the *Cuba* and his genuine faith in the Virgin Mary:

I ate dinner, and once in my room, I felt the pain of loneliness for the first time...but, I am wrong, I am not alone, because my Mother is with me, my beloved Mother, to whom I have been unfaithful, forgetting her even if not completely, but at times...¹⁵

In addition, this diary presents detailed commentary on his daily activities, for instance, the composer's encounter with Professor Chino (no first name was recorded), a distinguished

¹⁵ Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. Páginas de un diario íntimo. Morelia, Michoacán, México: Firmax Publicistas, 1982.

Cené, y ya una vez en mi cuarto, por primera vez he sentido todo el sufrimiento de estar solo...Pero, digo mal, no voy solo, por que va con migo mi Madre, mi adorada Madre, a quien tantas veces he sido infiel, olvidándola no por completo, pero si en momentos...

pianist and former student of the eminent Russian composer and pianist Aleksandr Glazunov. This charismatic musician consented to coach Bernal Jiménez on his piano skills during their voyage, working on compositions by Chopin and Rachmaninov. Accommodations onboard must have been quite spacious and luxurious since Miguel had the opportunity to attend Mass, take walks, partake of lavish celebrations, and even practice piano. On the last day of the trip, Professor Chino expressed with a somber face that they should enjoy their last night onboard. His observation reminded Miguel that upon his arrival the following day he would be compelled to exchange his opulent ways aboard the Cuba for a highly contrasting and austere lifestyle in Italy.

Following his landing in Santander and a torturous train journey, Bernal Jiménez arrived in Rome the morning of August 3, 1928. He wrote in his diary that the city was not as impressive as he had imagined. Miguel procured a cab and set off to the Colegio Pio Latino, home of the religious order of the “Josefinos” and the place that was to be his home for the next five years. Although he was not required to follow their routine, he adopted their regimen as much as his studies would permit. Bernal Jiménez recorded in his diary visits to other priests, missionary travels to remote villages outside of Rome, and even a visit to the Pope in which he wore the formal attire of this religious order: a black robe and a skull cap.

At the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music of Rome, Miguel’s academic work encompassed the study of counterpoint and fugue with the distinguished pedagogue César Dobici, musicology and composition with Rafael Casimiri, orchestration and harmony with Licino Refice, Gregorian chant with Paolo Ferreti, and organ with the celebrated organist Rafael Manari. Due to his talent and dedication, Miguel gained his teachers’ esteem and admiration soon after his enrollment in the school. This appreciation played a decisive role in 1931 when

Miguel was asked to return to México due to the difficult economic situation in the country. The professors at the institute were very concerned since this early departure would result in Miguel leaving Rome without completing his studies. Rafael Manari was particularly displeased, as evident from a letter to Father José María Villaseñor dated February 28, 1931:

The notice that Mr. Bernal must go back to México at the end of this year has caused me great displeasure. Mr. Bernal is a student with exemplary dedication and conduct, and leaving his studies unfinished is an immense misfortune.

Without exaggeration I can tell you that the aforementioned student will honor the Pontifical Institute...He possesses an extraordinary memory...and in the brief period of two years he has progressed so much that I did not hesitate inviting him to perform in the Organ Congress of Trenton in the presence of the best and most recognized Italian organists, who hold him in high regard due to his performance.¹⁶

The support received from his professors resulted in two more years of monetary assistance. Although Miguel endured financial hardships during his time in Rome, he always seemed optimistic and appreciative of the opportunity granted by his mentors and benefactors in México, who with enormous sacrifices sent funds as regularly as possible. Moreover, monetary and academic challenges seemed only to strengthen his faith in the Virgin, as he recorded in his diary in 1930:

¹⁶ Manary, Rafael. Letter to Father José María Villaseñor. 28 February 1931. Archivo Miguel Bernal Jiménez, México D.F.

He sabido que el Sr. Miguel Bernal debe volver a México al final de este año. Esta noticia me ha causado un gran disgusto, por que el señor Bernal es un alumno ejemplar por su aplicación y buena conducta y va a dejar incompleta su instrucción tanto organística como en el curso de magisterio gregoriano.

Sin exageracion alguna puedo decir que el citado alumno honrará mucho a esta Escuela Pontifica....Tiene una memoria extraordinaria...en el breve espacio de dos años ha hecho tales progresos que no dudé en hacerlo tocar en julio pasado en el Congreso Organístico de Trenton en presencia de los más grandes organistas italianos, todos los cuales quedaron sumamente admirados...

At school, I've had to deal with very diverse feelings: pride, sadness, disappointment, delight, exhilaration; but of all, I want my devotion as a slave of the Virgin Mary to be the sentiment that prevails. Today I have decided that my years here must serve as a preparation for my advocacy for sacred music; I have synthesized my life into three virtues: purity, humbleness, and diligence, all three copied from my Saint Mother.¹⁷

Fulfilling his oath, Miguel devoted himself to his studies wholeheartedly, receiving the Pontifical Prize in 1930, 1931, and 1932; an annual proceeding in which the Pope recognized the student with the highest academic achievement. In 1933, Miguel Bernal Jiménez became the first student ever to earn the three degrees offered by the prestigious institution: the doctoral degrees in Gregorian chant, sacred composition, and organ performance. After his graduation Miguel returned to México in June 1933.

Upon his return to México, Miguel Bernal Jiménez dedicated the majority of his time to education, sharing the knowledge he acquired while in Rome. Although he was offered magisterial postings in prestigious music schools established in the capital, Miguel decided to return to Morelia, his birthplace, and assume the position of director of choirs at the Superior School of Sacred Music. This decision proved to be detrimental to his career since it severed relationships with a small number of prominent musicians established in México City. Some of these important personalities even considered Miguel's decision personally and professionally insulting. Unaware of the ramifications of his decision, Miguel devoted himself to his pupils and

¹⁷ Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. Paginas de un diario íntimo. Morelia, Michoacán, México: Firmax Publicistas, 1982. 56.

En la escuela tengo que luchar con sentimientos muy diversos, de escándalo, de orgullo, de desaliento, de descontento y otros, pero quiero que predomine el de esclavo de la Virgen María. Hoy heme detenido en reflexionar que los años que pase acá deben ser de noviciado como preparación a mi apostolado de la música sagrada; he sintetizado mi vida en tres virtudes: pureza, humildad y diligencia, todas tres copiadas de mi Santa Señora y Madre.

the choirs under his direction while performing numerous concerts in Morelia and in other parts of the country.

Miguel spent nearly three years as lecturer at the School of Sacred Music, a period of significant growth in the school due in part to the new political regime of president Lázaro Cárdenas whose policies encouraged acceptance and accord between the national government and the Catholic Church. In 1936, nearly three years after his return from Rome, Miguel Bernal was named Director of the School of Sacred Music, a post he held for sixteen years. He is recognized as one of the most dynamic administrators in the history of this institution in which he modernized the plan of studies, appointed international artists to the school's faculty, and produced some of the era's the most outstanding organists and choir directors in the country.¹⁸

In addition to his work as administrator and educator, Bernal Jiménez developed a significant catalogue of compositions in diverse settings. During this period, Bernal composed works for choir, organ, piano, the ballet *Las ocednidas*, and even the symphonic suite *Estampas Morelianas*. The most acclaimed composition from this time is the *Cuarteto Colonial*, which later would be known as the *Cuarteto Virreynal* (1937) dedicated to his good friend and renowned Mexican composer Manuel M. Ponce. This composition is based on four traditional children folk songs: *A la víbora de la mar*, *Naranja dulce*, *limon partido*, *Pica,pica,pica, perico*, and *Pase la elegida, la niña dichosa*. Bernal Jiménez was able to masterfully shape these songs into an intimate chamber music work for string quartet, entwining traditional Mexican characteristics with the gallant and structured style of the music of the eighteenth-century. Very

¹⁸ Herrera Zapién, Tarsicio. "La Originalidad de Bernal Jiménez." *Conservatorianos* 207.20. 1 December 2008 <<http://www.conservatorianos.com.mx/web/Conservatorianos%207%20para%20web/herrera7.pdf>>.

much like Joseph Haydn, Bernal composed a complete string quartet developing large structures from very short and simple *motifs*.¹⁹

In 1939, Bernal Jiménez funded the scholarly journal *Schola Cantorum* (1939-1974). Resulting from Bernal's desire "to be informed and to inform" about everything related to music, this invaluable tool was the first scholarly music journal printed in México. Bernal Jiménez was the main contributor, writing under the pseudonyms M. Mouse, Jaime Le Brungel and Primicerius. Bernal very much emulated the style of Robert Schumann, one of his most admired musicians. In 1939 alone, Bernal published twenty-four articles in *Schola Cantorum*, publications that placed him as one of the leading scholars in the field of musicology and musical research.²⁰ Much of Bernal's research dealt with the study of historical manuscripts. His most significant discovery in this discipline is finding of the *Sinfonía* by Antonio Sarrier. This composition is similar in style and instrumentation to those written in Italy around 1700 and it is the earliest Mexican composition on record. Regarding his discovery, Bernal wrote:

When we are finished discovering and studying our musical archives, we will be astonished at our past and we will be very proud of it...maybe then we will stop believing that our musical history starts with the National Anthem or that México is a barbarian country with nothing to comment about until the last twenty five years.²¹

Miguel Bernal was well liked in Morelia. His success as an educator, scholar and performer, in addition to his extraordinary education and prosperous future, resulted in having

¹⁹ Sutcliffe, W. Dean (1989). "Haydn's Musical Personality". *The Musical Times* **130** (1756): 341–344.

²⁰ Díaz, Lorena. Miguel Bernal Jiménez, Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000. 22.

²¹ Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. Páginas de un diario íntimo. Morelia, Michoacán, México: Firmax Publicistas, 1982.

Cuando nuestros archivos musicales hayan sido descubiertos y estudiados, nos sorprenderemos de nuestro pasado musical y nos sentiremos orgullosos de él...Tal vez así dejemos de creer que la historia musical empieza con el Himno Nacional o que México es un país bárbaro del cual nada se puede decir hasta los últimos 25 años.

“many girls interested in him.”²² According to María de Jesús Jiménez, Miguel confessed that even though he considered priesthood more than once, he had also thought about matrimony. María Cristina Macouzet became Miguel Bernal’s devoted wife and life partner in January 1940. The cold winter night before the wedding marks an exceptional event when three of the most outstanding Mexican musicians, Manuel M. Ponce, Jesús Estrada, and Miguel Bernal got together to serenade the girl who would later be known only as Kitty, mother of Miguel Bernal’s eleven children and author of the most extensive chronicle of the composer’s life: *Media Vuelta al Corazón (Diario de una Mujer)*.

It is through this recollection that we learn about the difficult times and the successes faced by the composer and his immediate family. The first major disappointment recorded in Kitty’s diary took place in 1941 with the cancellation of the production and performance of one of his major works, the opera *Tata Vasco* (Father Vasco), in the illustrious *Sala de Bellas Artes* in México City. Although the relationship between the government and the church was cordial and stable, some government officials believed that the symphonic drama had a religious tone that aroused extremist religious and political behavior. The performance was cancelled, despite the fact that it had already been advertised. Ironically, the cancellation resulted in the best publicity for the opera, prompting numerous newspaper articles that in the end stimulated public attendance at performances. Although Dan Malström stated that this opera was never performed in the capital, records show inconsistencies with this affirmation.²³ Leonor Cardena, celebrated soprano and member of the original cast, attested that there were twenty-two sold out performances in twenty-two consecutive days in the *Arbeu* Theater, one of the most prestigious

²² Páramo, José A. *Miguel Bernal Jiménez*. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 36.

²³ Malström, Dan. *Introducción a la música mexicana del siglo XX*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977

venues in the capital.²⁴ In her writings Kitty expressed disappointment at the fact that such a success did not bring any monetary benefit to her husband since what was collected from ticket sales barely covered the cost of the production.

For his composition, *Tata Vasco*, Bernal received the Civil Merit medal from the newspaper *El Universal* in 1941. In 1943 the Institute of Sciences and Cinematographic Arts conferred on the composer the National Prize, recognizing his score for the movie *La Virgen que forjó una patria* (The Virgin who shaped a country). Although Miguel Bernal was considered a distinguished music scholar, performer, composer and educator, he never enjoyed a wealthy lifestyle. The awards he received for his compositions placed him in a very prominent position as a composer but carried little monetary value. Nevertheless, these prizes brought him international recognition and offered him new opportunities outside of México.

The first and most significant of these opportunities took place in November 1945 when Bernal was invited to teach a class at Loyola University in New Orleans. This first contact would culminate in a move to New Orleans years later. Bernal's tutoring at Loyola was interrupted in 1947 by an invitation to travel through Europe for ten months directing, teaching and performing in Spain, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, France and Italy. Starting in Spain, the composer directed numerous performances of his opera *Tata Vasco*, his symphonic poem *México*, the *Sinfonía* by Antonio Sarrier, and the *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* by Manuel M. Ponce. During his sojourn in Spain the composer became acquainted with Joaquín Rodrigo and Joaquín Turina, who made very favorable remarks about Bernal's compositions in the Spanish newspapers *Marca* and *Dígame*. In addition to directing and performing, the composer held numerous lectures pertaining to musicology, historical

²⁴ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 43.

compositions and sacred music. Interconnections from these presentations prompted an invitation for Bernal to be a member of the judging panel for the national competition of composition of sacred music in Brazil, which took place in 1950. After this extensive trip, Bernal returned to México onboard the Spanish vessel *Magallanes*. It was during this trip that the composer wrote *Impromptu en alta mar*, in which he depicted in great detail the occurrences over the ten months he spent in Europe, including the visit to the resting places of Antonio de Cabezón (1510-1566) and Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611); the Royal Conservatoire of Spain, the seminaries of Vitoria and Mallorca, also in Spain; the *Schola Cantorum* and the Monastery of San Pedro de Solesmes in France; The visit to the Vienna boys choir, in Austria; and the *Kirchenmusikschule* in Germany.²⁵

Bernal's arrival to Morelia after his European venture was marked by a series of concerts and celebrations, but the closing of his beloved music school, the *Conservatorio de las Rosas*, shattered the happiness of his return. Although over twenty years had already passed since Bernal's first return to Morelia in 1933, the repercussions of his decision not to take an academic position in the capital still lurked and aggrieved the individuals that occupied higher and more influential academic and governmental positions. The two events in which these consequences are clearly manifest are the closing of the conservatory and the National Composition contest in 1949. The conservatoire was closed based on the rationale that Morelia, not being the capital of México, should not have a conservatoire as large and advanced as the *Conservatorio de las Rosas*.²⁶ Following this heartbreaking event, Bernal Jiménez entered a composition contest sponsored by the National Institute of Fine Arts in 1949. Once again, the high administrators were biased against Bernal. Even though he was declared first prize winner, Bernal was never

²⁵ Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. *Impromptu en alta mar*. México:Jus, 1951.

²⁶ Páramo, José A. *Miguel Bernal Jiménez*. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 65.

notified of the official results of the contest; moreover at the last minute, the administrators decided that Bernal's composition *Tres Cartas de México* (Three letters from México) was to share first price with *Tierra de Temporal* by Pablo Moncayo.

Although Bernal suffered several unfavorable and hurtful situations due to his disengagement from México City, national audiences and critics alike favored his compositions. Among his most sought after compositions of this time period are his ballets *El Chueco* (The Crooked) (1951) and *Los Tres Galanes de Juana* (Juana's three Striking Men) (1952) which were very well received and prompted scholars and critics to compare Bernal's composing style with that of eminent Russian composer Igor Stravinsky.²⁷ But despite his success and his arduous efforts, Miguel Bernal was afflicted by severe economical difficulties. Kitty recalled that it was impossible to live on Miguel's salary, and he spent vacations and weekends doing freelance jobs so he could make ends meet.²⁸ Bernal approached the school administration requesting a salary raise but the administrators denied it claiming that the school had great expenses as it was, including the publication of the journal *Schola Cantorum*. This situation lead Bernal to the decision to accept the offer made by Loyola University to return to New Orleans. The proposal was to return to Loyola to teach with the strong possibility of assuming the directorship of the School of Music shortly after his return. This was a difficult decision, as expressed by Kitty:

How it is going to hurt to leave all this! Who would think, when he [Bernal] rejected offers in México City, good offers...everything so he did not have to leave this beautiful place where we live peacefully; where the sky is always blue and the mountains are green, where our life passes humbly, without complications...to leave everything: my parents, my house...ah! But this is not going to discourage me: more than ever I have to

²⁷ Alcaraz, Jose A. *En la mas honda musica de la selva*. México:Lecturas Mexicanas, 1998.

²⁸ Páramo, José A. *Miguel Bernal Jiménez*. México D.F.:EPSSA, 1992. 75.

motivate Miguel. And here we are, ready for whatever may come.²⁹

Miguel tried to stay in his native Morelia, but despite his efforts all of his proposals and requests to the school of music, the church, the government and individuals were turned down; it seemed as if the musician who was recognized outside of México as a genius was being released of his duties in his beloved Morelia. In 1953 Bernal Jiménez returned to New Orleans and assumed a lecturer position. The transition was a difficult one since Miguel had to endure resentful attitudes from some of his colleagues who viewed him as an intruder, and even animosity from those who coveted the position of director. The response from the students was not much better at first; Bernal even received impudent notes asking him to improve his broken English. With unbeatable resilience, Bernal turned this situation around through his dedication and commitment to the students. At Loyola he taught composition, Gregorian chant and directed the choirs. In addition, he got involved and became a member of the board of directors of the New Orleans Symphony and the music journal *Ceciliae*. In February 1954, the *Loyola Maroon*, the local newspaper, announced the designation of Dr. Miguel Bernal Jiménez as the new director of the School of Music.

During his tenure as director Miguel Bernal Jiménez drastically transformed every aspect of the music school, from recruiting better students and professors to the mere physical aspect of the school buildings. Manuel Zacarías, Bernal's student at Loyola, recalled that the school did not even have an organ before Bernal arrived; however, this condition changed promptly after

²⁹ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992. 75.

Si nos vamos, cuánto me va a doler dejar todo esto. Quién lo imaginaría cuando rechazó ofertas en la ciudad de México, buenos puestos...todo por no desprenderse de esta bella provincia en donde se vive en quietud y en paz; en donde el cielo es siempre azul y verdes las montañas, en donde nuestra vida se desliza sencillamente, sin complicaciones...Dejar todo, mis padres, mi casa...ah! pero esto no me va a bajar los ánimos: más que nunca tengo que animar a Miguel. Y aquí estamos, dispuestos a todo lo que venga.

his arrival as he found one the school could rent right away. Just one year after his appointment, Bernal had changed some of the furnishings in the classrooms and replaced obsolete pianos. This immense commitment drained Bernal's strength, making him appear tired and ill, thus making the upcoming summer break a very anticipated relief.³⁰

As the composer's wife had pointed out previously, Miguel took vacations so he could continue working on other projects, and the summer of 1956 was no different. Miguel, his wife Kitty, and their daughter María Cristina traveled from New Orleans in a Volkswagen Bug with the intention of preparing for two upcoming lectures in Guanajuato and finishing a composition that Miguel had started before the trip. Near the end of the journey (in Guanajuato) Miguel revealed to his wife that he was feeling very tired. Although he had a very promising future in New Orleans and a profound love for Morelia, Miguel did not get to see either place again, dying the afternoon of July 26, 1956 in Guanajuato, México.

Sources indicate that Miguel Bernal Jiménez went to church that morning and played the choral composed by J. S. Bach, *Man, cry your sins*. This however, cannot be confirmed. What can be established without a doubt is that Bernal was working on *The hymn of the forest* at the time of his death. The text he was setting to music recites "I give unto the pleasant sleep that enervates me and I find peace and pleasant freshness over your full turf." It was 5:30 in the afternoon, and one of the most prominent composers and most dedicated pedagogues of México ceased to exist due to a massive heart attack.

³⁰ Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESA, 1992. 84.

HIS OEUVRE

Miguel Bernal Jiménez was a respected artist widely known for his skill as an organist;³¹ however, his work as composer and music scholar is inarguably of more significance. Bernal was an enthusiastic and passionate writer who published around 200 scholarly articles and reviews; moreover, he was equally prolific and impassioned as a composer with a catalog of over 250 works for different mediums.³² As a researcher, Bernal was a pioneer in the field of Colonial Music. His major achievement was the discovery and catalog of the music of the *Colegio de Santa Maria de Valladolid*, the richest and most complete record of art music written in México in the eighteenth century.

The bulk of Bernal's essays and articles was published in *Schola Cantorum*, a scholarly publication founded by Bernal in 1937 and printed and distributed in México, Latin America, and Spain. The publication was originally published only in Spanish; however, some of its volumes have been translated into English and Portuguese. The *Schola* was considered the most important media of musical diffusion in the country, featuring compositions and articles written by respected music scholars from México and Latin America.³³ In addition to articles written under his own name, Bernal also authored works under a number of pseudonyms that would often antagonize and criticize his own writings. "M. Mouse" contributed 16 articles about musicology and "Q.U.D."³⁴ published 17 reviews of concerts and new compositions. Additionally, "Mr. Baton", "Little Sixteenth-note", and "Dr. Natural" led controversial discussions with the readers while "Primicerius," a Gregorian chant expert, was featured in four

³¹ Jose Antonio Alcaraz, "Miguel Bernal Jiménez (1910-1956)"

³² Díaz, Lorena. *Miguel Bernal Jiménez. Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales*. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000.

³³ Díaz, Lorena. *Miguel Bernal Jiménez. Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales*. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000.

³⁴ from the latin *Quod erat demonstrandum*, as it has been stated.

articles. Lastly, “Fray Florindo” was a character that wrote about morality and even wrote two children books. Fortunately, the complete collection of articles and publications by Bernal’s articles are currently available at the “Conservatorio de las Rosas” in Morelia, México.

Besides publishing extensively in México, Bernal ventured internationally publishing articles in *La Revue Saint Gregoire* (Quebec, Canada), *Hispanis* (Sevilla, Spain), and *Caecilia* (Boston, USA). His writings portray an artist who was not only an expert in the theory but also in the practice of subjects such as Gregorian chant, choral direction, composition, and musicology.

Most of the music written by Miguel Bernal Jiménez is also catalogued and preserved at the *Conservatorio de las Rosas*. This is a rare fortune giving the political and cultural situation in México during the Mexican Revolution, an unstable and even violent environment that resulted in the loss of many of the items of cultural and historical interest of this era--especially those pertaining to the sacred movement.³⁵

The following works are compositions by Bernal Jiménez that have been performed as recently as 2000 and additionally have been actively performed between 1975 and 2000, according to records kept at the *Conservatorio de las Rosas*. For further research, the Mexican scholar Lorena Diaz has published a complete catalog of Bernal’s compositions.

Cuarteto Virreinal para instrumentos de arco (1937): The first performance occurred on May 19, 1939 at the *Palacio de Bellas Artes* and premiered by the *Cuarteto Classico Nacional*: Ezequiel Sierra and José Trejo, violins, David Saloma, viola, and Domingo Gonzalez, cello. The Cuarteto Lationamericano made the last recording of this quartet in 2002.

Por el Valle de las Rosas (1941): Set to a poem by Julio Alarcon, this villancico (a Christmas

³⁵ Díaz, Lorena. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000.

tune) was written originally for voice and organ. This work was so sought after that it was later arranged by the composer for children's choir, for 6 voices mixed choir and for a four-voice mixed choir. Arguably the most published work by Jiménez, the first publication was in 1941 and dedicated to Tere Olivera.

Tata Vasco (1941): The first grand opera by Bernal set to a libretto by Manuel Muñoz and written in five acts for choir and orchestra. The first performance took place on February 15, 1941 in Patzcuaro, Michoacan performed by the National University Symphony (currently known as the National Symphony) and directed by the composer. Bernal was awarded two National Prizes for this composition.

La Virgen que Forjó una Patria (1942): This composition, written for the film of the same name, was written for children's choir, organ and strings; and was awarded the National Prize for the best film music in 1942. The premiere of the movie took place on December 11, 1942 in México City at the Chinese Palace.

Tres Cartas de México (1949): This symphonic suite for orchestra was written in three movements and was first performed on December 2, 1949. The performance took place at the *Palacio de Bellas Artes* by the National Symphony conducted by Pablo Moncayo. This composition was written as homage to F. Chopin and was awarded First Prize in the celebration for Chopin's year in 1949.

El Chueco (1951): The first performance of this ballet took place on December 1, 1951. Bernal directed the National Symphony in collaboration with the National Ballet Company choreographed by Guillermo Arenas.

Los Tres Galanes de Juana (1952): Staged drama in five scenes for children's choir and orchestra. Miguel Bernal Jiménez wrote the libretto that included poems by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and Sergio Franco choreographed the first performance. The premiere took place on September 9, 1952 in México City at the *Palacio de Bellas Artes*. Miguel Bernal directed the Orchestra of the National Institute of Fine Arts and included the children's choir of Morelia and the National Ballet Company.

Suite Sinfónica Michoacán (1940): This symphonic suite was written in four movements for orchestra, piano, and two harps. This work was dedicated with “great admiration” and premiered by the National Symphony in 1941.

Noche en Morelia (1941): A symphonic poem for orchestra dedicated to the Symphony Orchestra of México, was premiered on August 1, 1941 under the direction of Carlos Chavez.

Sinfonía-Poema: México (1946): Composition in four movements for orchestra. Commissioned by Carlos Chavez and dedicated to Manuel Gomez Morin, this work was first performed on August 30, 1946 at the *Palacio de Bellas Artes* by the Symphony Orchestra of México directed by Carlos Chavez.

CUARTETO VIRREINAL

Although Bernal is considered the most important exponent of sacred music in México, it is important to mention that his ample catalog of secular music is equally significant, especially works regarding the *Virreinal* style. Spain's rule over México is known as the *Virreinato* (1800-1920). During this period, the arts blossomed influenced by the elegant style of the French court. The music of this era features graceful mannerisms, structural clarity (homophony was preferred), and short melodies marked by clear cadences. One of Bernal's major works is the *Cuarteto Virreinal*, dedicated with great "admiration and sincere gratitude" to Manuel M. Ponce and his wife Clemita, and arguably the most widely performed string quartet written by a Mexican composer. Many Mexican scholars consider this work as the best representative of the nationalistic and folkloric movements in México in the twentieth century.³⁶ Before starting the quartet, Bernal expressed the desire to write a work that would sound as if it was written in México in the eighteenth century; following the forms and the style of the era while using folkloric themes. A complete score of the string quartet is included at the end of this chapter.

The central theme of the first movement is the children's folk song *A la vibora de la mar* (*the serpent of the sea*); a game in which children form a line (the serpent) holding each others' hands and run around as they sing the serpent song. Two children, independent from the line, raise their arms forming an arch which comes down at the end of each stanza "capturing" parts of the snake. The following inserts show the main stanza of the folk tune and the complete lyrics in Spanish and a translation to English.

³⁶ Alvarez Coral, Juan. Compositores Mexicanos. México: EDAMEX, 1993.

A la vibora de la mar

Traditional folk song



Spanish:

A la víbora, víbora
de la mar, de la mar
por aquí pueden pasar
Los de adelante corren mucho
y los de atrás se quedarán
tras, tras, tras, tras.

Una Mexicana que fruta vendía
ciruela, chabacano, melón y sandía.
Será melón, será sandía
será la vieja del otro día
día, día, día, día

El puente esta quebrado
que lo manden componer
Con cascara de huevo
y pedazos de oropel
pel, pel, pel, pel

English Translation:

*The serpent, the serpent
Of the sea, of the sea
All of you can pass through here
Those up front run quickly
Those at back are left behind
'hind, 'hind, 'hind, 'hind*

*An old Mexican lady, that sold many fruits
Plums, apricots, cantaloupes and
watermelons
Is it cantaloupe? Is it watermelon?
Is it the old lady we saw the other day?
Day, day, day, day!*

*The bridge is broken
Someone send to have it fixed
With broken bits of eggshell
And pieces of aluminum foil
Foil, foil, foil, foil*

The first movement is written in sonata form and combines extraordinary vigor with rhythmical ease. The most remarkable aspect of this movement is Bernal's ability to produce a forceful and expressive movement that adhered to the classical form while giving prominence to the folk tune. Very much like Franz Joseph Haydn enhanced the Croatian folk tunes in his string quartets Op. 17, No. 1; 33, No. 3; and Op. 50, No. 1;³⁷ Bernal was able to heighten Mexican folk songs in a direct and energetic style while observing the requirements of sonata form and vernacular speech.

The opening of the work is written in a fanfare-like style, similar to the early Opus 18 string quartets by Beethoven. The rhythmic start follows faithfully the cadence of the folk tune, stressing the enunciation of the original lyrics with accents. Contrary to the mentioned compositions by Beethoven and Haydn, Bernal's first movement is more repetitive and fragmented due in part to the faithful observance of the tune; Furthermore, the voice exchanges are also more fragmented and repetitive than those observed in a string quartet written in the eighteenth century. Bernal's composition is highly chromatic as well; and although the first movement's harmony is primarily functional and triadic, there are sections such as measures 13 through 16 in which Bernal uses a highly chromatic and exotic chain of diminished chords to arrive to a cadence.

The following illustration shows the opening of the first movement "Allegro" of the *Cuarteto Virreinal*.

³⁷ Blom, Eric, editor (1954). *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (fifth edition). New York: St. Martin's Press and London: Macmillan.

Fanfare-like opening

Cuarteto Virreinal

Miguel Bernal Jiménez

Allegro

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Highlighting of E

P

f *p*

5

Transition

Highlighting of G

f *p* *cresc.*

6

PAC in E

Imitative motivic treatment

13

f *sf* *mf*

Chain of diminished secondary chords: vii°7/D D vii°7/c#-c# vii°7/b-b

Imitative motivic treatment

19

p *mf* *p*

The primary theme area (P) of the piece (measures 1-8) begins on the tonic (E major) and closes in measure 8 with a very strong perfect cadence in the tonic. The Transition starts in measure 9, with a strong reiteration of G# that prepares the secondary theme area (S) in C# minor that starts in measure 34. It is important to note that Bernal shows a high degree of sensitivity to the text of the original song, as the alternating rhythm of triplets and eight-notes presented in unison in the first two measures of the movement--and every recurrent statement of the theme, preserve the natural word stress of the original song. In the first phrase, we notice the highlighting of the tonic E through the voicing in the second violin part, which moves from the note E to F# to the leading tone D# and back to E from measures 3 to 6. In the transition, the second violin again emphasises the dominant pedal G# by moving from G# to A# to the leading tone F double sharp to G# (measures 11 and 12). This voicing is important because it represents the slithering of the serpent represented by the waiving movement of the children in the game. Throughout this movement, Bernal creates tension and friction by using more chromaticism and encourages flow and motion by simplifying the harmony and the voicing.

The second subject group (S) in C# minor starts in measure 34. The subject is first introduced by the cello and sounds somewhat similar to the opening with the strong and rhythmic interval of a fourth; nevertheless, it morphs into a more lyrical theme that boasts a canon-like flair by the alternation of leading voice between the first and second violins. The classical and galant style quickly changes yet again into a much more folkloric setting with a mariachi like flair through the paired voicing in thirds or sixths. This folk like feeling is emphasized by musical gestures, such as the accent on the first note (violin voices) in measure 41; after a very melodic and conjunct line, the tune is interrupted by a joyful and festive

gesticulation, much like a cheerful shout by a member of the mariachi group celebrating a challenge successfully met by a member of the group.

25

31

38

44

50

p *cresc.* *f*

p *cresc.* *f*

cresc. *p* *cresc.* *f*

f *sf* *f* *pp* *C# minor*

Mariachi Voicing *Mariachi Gesture* *HC*

p *mf* *mf*

V6/5 saltellato *i [AC]* *mf* *pizz* *mf*

The development section starts with the upbeat to measure 75 and it moves through many keys using both main themes. The cello spearheads the re-transition with a dominant pedal on the note B in measure 117. The second theme is presented and it combines the mariachi-style with canon-like sections where the motive is passed from one instrument to the other. There is a strong establishment of B as the dominant to the recapitulation in measure 123 (B7), however, Bernal builds tension with a string of diminished chords starting in measure 130-- E#°7, leading to the recapitulation in measure 144 in the home key of E major. The secondary thematic area in the recapitulation is stated in E minor and leads to the coda in measure 204. The coda re-states the opening theme featuring alternation of eight notes and triplets followed by a closing of running triplets that bring the movement to a strong and dashing closing 4 measures before the end and surprises everyone by closing the movement in a guitar like manner with all four instruments in pizzicato back in the home key of E major.

The image shows a musical score for measures 112 to 120. The score is written for four staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is E major (two sharps). The time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Annotations in blue and red text are present:

- 112**: *ff* (fortissimo) in the first staff.
- 113**: *p* (piano) in the first staff.
- 114**: *ff* in the first staff.
- 115**: *p* in the first staff.
- 116**: *ff* in the first staff.
- 117**: *p* in the first staff.
- 118**: *pp* (pianissimo) in the first staff.
- 119**: *p* in the first staff.
- 120**: *p* in the first staff.
- 121**: *sempre p* (sempre piano) in the first staff.
- 122**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 123**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 124**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 125**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 126**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 127**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 128**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 129**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 130**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 131**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 132**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 133**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 134**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 135**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 136**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 137**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 138**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 139**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 140**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 141**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 142**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 143**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 144**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 145**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 146**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 147**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 148**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 149**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 150**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 151**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 152**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 153**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 154**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 155**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 156**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 157**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 158**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 159**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 160**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 161**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 162**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 163**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 164**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 165**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 166**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 167**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 168**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 169**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 170**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 171**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 172**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 173**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 174**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 175**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 176**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 177**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 178**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 179**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 180**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 181**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 182**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 183**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 184**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 185**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 186**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 187**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 188**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 189**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 190**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 191**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 192**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 193**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 194**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 195**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 196**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 197**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 198**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 199**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 200**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 201**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 202**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 203**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 204**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 205**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 206**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 207**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 208**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 209**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 210**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 211**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 212**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 213**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 214**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 215**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 216**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 217**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 218**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 219**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 220**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 221**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 222**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 223**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 224**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 225**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 226**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 227**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 228**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 229**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 230**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 231**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 232**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 233**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 234**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 235**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 236**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 237**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 238**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 239**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 240**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 241**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 242**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 243**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 244**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 245**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 246**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 247**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 248**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 249**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 250**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 251**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 252**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 253**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 254**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 255**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 256**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 257**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 258**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 259**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 260**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 261**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 262**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 263**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 264**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 265**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 266**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 267**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 268**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 269**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 270**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 271**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 272**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 273**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 274**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 275**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 276**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 277**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 278**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 279**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 280**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 281**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 282**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 283**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 284**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 285**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 286**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 287**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 288**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 289**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 290**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 291**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 292**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 293**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 294**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 295**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 296**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 297**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 298**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 299**: *sempre p* in the first staff.
- 300**: *sempre p* in the first staff.

V7

and the contrasting middle section—Bach composed a variation in the relative major, Bernal inserted the folk tune also in the relative major. Bernal, however, did not write a *ciaccona* or *chaconne*; he wrote a Baroque style continuous variation on a ground bass. The folk tune *Naranja Dulce* is the music to a game in which children dance slowly in circles as they sing the song. The only important rule is that the number of participants is not even, since the goal in the end is to get a hug and the one that ends up with no partner loses.

Spanish

Naranja dulce
Limón partido
dame un abrazo
que yo te pido.

Si fuera falso
tu juramento,
en un momento
te olvidaré.

Toca la marcha,
mi pecho llora,
adiós señora,
que ya me voy.

Si acaso muero
en la batalla,
tened cuidado
de no llorar.

Porque su llanto
puede ser tanto
que hasta pudiera
resucitar.

English

*Sweet orange,
Sliced lemon too,
Give me the hug
I ask from you.*

*If your oath
Were untrue
In just a wink
I'd forget you.*

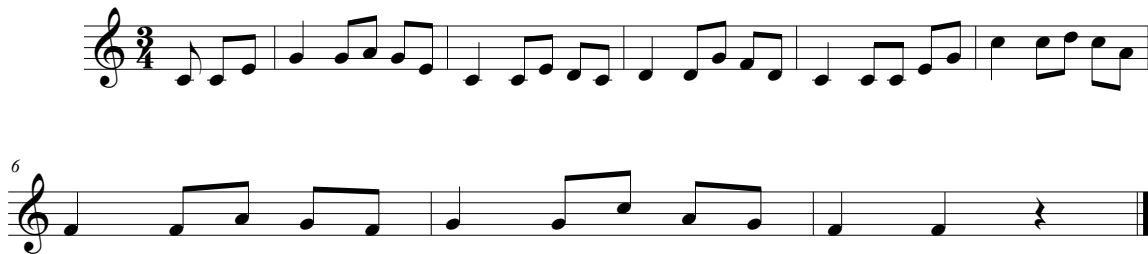
*The march is playing
My heart is crying
Farewell my lady
Away I'm going.*

*If in the battle
I were to die
Be careful
Not to cry.*

*For they could be so many
The tears you'd shed
That I could even
Rise from the dead.*

Naranja Dulce Limon Partido

Folk Song



plays the melody of the folk tune consisting of long and fluid phrases. This allegretto is written in ABA' form with a small codetta starting in measure 65 that transitions back into the *zarabanda* with its reflective mood of the opening theme (measure 73) to close the movement.

Largo
♩ = 120

Violin I
p con sordino
cresc.

Violin II
p con sordino

Viola
p con sordino

Violoncello
p con sordino

All voices, first variation over ground bass

a. 1 *ii6/4/2* *V6/5* *V4/2 of iv* *iv* *V6/4-i-ii6*

2 voices, second variation

pp *i6/4 V* *1*

Third variation, ground bass more active.

p

Levare il sordino
p **Fourth variation, 3 voices**

cresc. *p* *levare il sordino (se possibile)*

mf *mf*

32

mf

36

f *mf*

39

f *dim.* *pp dolce*

A

Allegretto moderato e grazioso
♩ = 140

44

mf *p*

B

Folk Tune

50

cresc.

57

dolce scherz.

pp scherz.

pp scherz.

schierz.

63

Codetta

dim. e tornando al tempo 1°

pp

dim. e tornando al tempo 1°

pp

dim. e tornando al tempo 1°

pp

dim. e tornando al tempo 1°

70

Coda = 120

rit.

pp

rit.

p con sordino

p con sordino

p con sordino

p con sordino

79

pp

pp

pp

p

p

p

88

pp

pp

pp

pp

The Allegretto follows the phrase structure of the *Zarabanda*-- each phrase is 8 measures long, and even the codetta (m 65) is the same length. Although simple in harmonic motion, the Allegretto is a remarkable rendition of the original folk tune with a beautiful and brilliant orchestration.

Following the typical structure of a string quartet, the third movement is entitled Minuet and Trio, a perfectly balanced movement written in the classical style that reveals Bernal's boundless creativity while abiding strictly to the classical form.

The minuet is written in rounded binary form and the phrases are 8 measures long. Bernal emphasized thematic continuity, constantly passing motives from one instrument to another.³⁸ This practice is particularly evident in the B sections of the minuet and trio, the sections with more chromatic challenges. The A section of the minuet is a parallel period, starting in tonic (C Major) and comes to a close with an authentic cadence in measure 16. The B section is harmonically attention grabbing, starting with a diminished seven chord (vii°7) of D moving to D minor in measure 22. This section (B) is divided in four-bar units that sequence and tonicize a segment of the circle of fifths: first d, then a, and closing with e to return to the large A section, a literal repetition.

³⁸ Blom, Eric, editor (1954). *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (fifth edition). New York: St. Martin's Press and London: Macmillan.

Minuet
♩ = 168 ♩

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

A **HC** **C.**

B **AC** **a: vii°7/iv** **iv**

vii°7/i **i** **vii°7/v....dominant pedal.....**

Motive passed around voices in stretto

FIN
molto rit.

53 **Trio**
♩ = 140

Voices in thirds

a: i V i V i iv vii°/V-V i

62

V V4/2 of iv iv i 6/4 V i C mf vii°

71

Voices in thirds

Passing motive

80

Voices in thirds

Tonicization of C Tonicization of Bb

91

al s y FIN

I ii°6/4/2 of V..... morphing to V

The Trio is also written in a manner faithful to the classical traditions: contrasting character, 8 measure phrases, and strong cadences. Bernal marked the viola *tacet* during the trio, so only three players or voices perform in this movement. Harmonically, Bernal uses strings of

diminished chords as he did in the first movement as pivot points to explore other tonalities. The texture of the first half of the trio, although light, pairs one set of instruments in thirds in a very folk like style. The second part of the Trio is harmonically unstable, same as the B section of the Minuet. The section starts in C major, but quickly delves briefly into a tonicization of F through a set of diminished chords. The cadence in E minor in measure 74 (iii) is unusual, however it is followed by a set of diminished chords in measures that lead to a tonicization of Bb for the rest of the movement. The trio finishes with a long secondary dominant pedal chord (vii°7 of C) that morphs into the dominant of C major that drives the movement back to the *da capo* to the Minuet in C major.

The distinctive flavor of Mexican music is manifested from the start in the last movement: *Fugato*. The opening of movement is written in the style of a fugue and centered on the theme of *Pica perico*, another folk melody that Bernal develops with an elaborated imitative counterpoint. After all the voices enter, the composition turns into a set of variations based on the motive of the movement.



Principal motive

Pica, pica, pica Perico

Traditional folk tune

The musical score is written on two staves in G major (one sharp) and 8/8 time. The first staff contains the first line of the melody, which ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second staff begins with a measure rest marked with a '6', indicating a six-measure rest. The melody continues on the second staff and ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The lyrics are written below the notes.

se no ra su pe ri qui to me quie re lle var al ri o yo le pi ca pi ca

6

pi ca pe ri co pi ca pi ca pi ca en la ra ma

Spanish

Senora, su periquito

Me quiere, llevar al rio

Yo le digo que no

Porque me muero de frio

Pica, pica, pica Perico

Pica, pica, pica en la rama.

Pica, pica, pica Perico

Pica, pica, pica en la rama

English

Miss, your little parrot

He wants to take me to the river

And I said no

Because I am dying of cold

Pick, pick, pick little parrot

Pick, pick pick on the branch

Pick, pick, pick little parrot

Pick, pick pick on the branch

The entire string quartet is based on folkloric themes, however out of all four movements, the last contains the most elements of Mexican folk music. Pica, pica, pica perico is what is known as a “*son*” or a “*huapango*”, a highly rhythmic and agile dance for couples. This dance was first brought from Spain in the fifteenth century and was transformed from a court dance into a truly folk and indigenous cultural element. The *son* evolved into a dance in which both dancers get to charm each other with their graceful movements and agility. The dance starts with the male dancer throwing his hat on the floor as the lady dancer moves rapidly around it, displaying grace and agility with fast and loud steps as the percussive sounds are part of the accompaniment to the song. The male dancer moves around wildly with outlandish foot and hand motions representing a wild peacock displaying every attribute possible to attract a mate.³⁹ Bernal used different bowings and effects to bring out and emulate the indigenous traits that not only display sensitivity to the text of the song but also preserve the meaning and the intent of the gestures and choreography that are such consequential elements in the original performance practice of the song.

The very significant motive of the opening: Pica,Pica, Pica Perico, is the nucleus of the movement. This theme is heavily transformed throughout the movement and serves as a medium for Bernal to display deep understanding of Mexican folklore. The movement starts in the form of a four-voice fugal exposition with the subject presented in the cello. The subject is very syncopated, accurately close to the second verse of the folk tune. All entries keep very close to the tonic E and have been presented by measure 17. Bernal then starts transforming the motive, first by inverting it in measure 18. These inverted statements and segments are explored until

³⁹ Sodi, Maria. El Jarabe Nacional. México D.F. INBA 1985

measure 36, when Bernal states the theme as a duet, in which the voices move mostly in contrary motion. The rhythm is highly syncopated already making this movement very folk like, but in addition, Bernal's voicing evokes the popular "*conjuntos*" of south México; small ensembles often formed by a recorder and a clarinet accompanied by percussion performing in this mirror-like style, with the voices always moving in contrary motion. In measure 44, a voice is added and the second violin and the viola in thirds now present the theme with the cello playing a running scalar bass line. The variations keep the 8-measure phrase length and the harmonic structure throughout, and as the movement progresses, the complexity and excitement grow to deliver a triumphant and joyous closing, but Bernal surprises the listener yet one last time by finishing the quartet with all four instruments playing in pizzicato, emulating a guitar.

Bernal's musical training in Rome is evident in this composition by the display of mastery of the classical and baroque forms. His major achievement, however, is the ability to take the folklore of the country as a whole and take it to a more refined place, capturing and transforming not only the music, but also the soul and the deeper meaning of the music he "elaborated" on. The style of this quartet is very unique, combining very sophisticated and elaborate forms such as sonata form, variations on a ground bass, and even fugue with the raw traditions and costumes of ordinary people. Bernal exploited the versatility of the stringed instruments and evoked popular ensembles such as a *mariachi* or *conjunto* through voicing or bowing effects, enhancing the already clearly stated folk tune. Although he left México at an early age to continue and perfect his musical studies, Bernal was always close to his roots. Perhaps it was his yearning for home while studying away in Rome what strengthen and fortified his appreciation for the Mexican traditions, and in the end it was this devotion to his culture that triumphed over the challenges of writing a serious string quartet based on children's folk tunes.

Mosso e spigliato
 $\text{♩} = 168$

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello

subject
Answer
Main motive (subject)
Countersubject
p
mf
11
Answer
End of exposition
Inverted answer
Inverted segment
mf
p
21
mf
f
cresc. molto
cresc. molto
cresc. molto
cresc. molto
Countersubject
31
f
dim.
Mirror like voicing, opposite motion
pp subito
41
mf
p
mf
mf

CONCLUSION

Bernal was an exceptional artist that undisputedly spearheaded a cultural movement that impacted not only his hometown of Morelia but also the entire country. Bernal has often been labeled a “complete musician”, and artist who excelled as an instrumental virtuoso, an influential pedagogue, and a notable composer. Bernal exceeded that label since his oeuvre also includes distinguished studies in musicology and even several successful projects in literature. His bond with the Catholic church meant that he was distanced from the musical authorities from the capital of México who were ruled by the government; however, despite of this detachment, Bernal is one of very few acclaimed and recognized composers and musicians in México who was educated--and worked outside of the capital. His oeuvre as a “complete artist” is extraordinary and has been commended and celebrated in other countries; yet, until recently, Bernal’s work has been grievously neglected in México.

What makes Miguel Bernal Jiménez and his music worthy of further study is his unprecedented regard for melodic folklore as precious material on which to build and enrich the musical literature. His compositions show a superior understanding of form and musical theory, a boundless creativity, and outstanding craftsmanship that in turn deliver works of stunning originality. His music does not merely emulate the popular *corrido* or *charanga*, but honors all of the aspects of the music, including the performance practice and the customs that surround the tune. The *Cuarteto Virreinal* is a clear example of this all-encompassing nationalistic composition. In order to perform this work correctly, the lore must be an intrinsic part of the performance.

As an organist, Bernal performed throughout México, Arizona, New Orleans, California, and Europe. There were, however, many performance and lecture invitations that he had to turn

down due to economic difficulties. When traveling to the United States, Bernal often drove with his wife; but traveling to Europe was costly and often required sponsorship. In his diary, Bernal recounted the difficult decision of turning down the extraordinary opportunity of perform in Rome for the Pope due to the impossibility of raising the funds to go. The disappointments never stopped Bernal from thriving though, and in the end the challenges presented strengthen his faith and his motivation to succeed.

As a pedagogue, Bernal dedicated 16 years to the *Conservatorio de las Rosas* to form and to educate some of the most eminent musicians and pedagogues of the time. His students honor him and remember him as the most dedicated pedagogue, a determined and indefatigable mentor and guide with a kindred spirit. These attributes were passed on to his students. I know of this first hand because the person who I deem as my mentor, Jose Hernandez Gama, was one of his students in Morelia.

There is an anecdote, in which Bernal, while walking with his children around a park in Guadalajara, México, heard a little child sing one of his compositions. Bernal went up to the child singer and asked if he knew who composed the song he was singing? The little singer answered: yes, a musician who plays in Morelia; but he is very sick and is going to die soon. After hearing this, one of his children started to cry, but Bernal said: don't cry son, didn't you hear what he was singing? It was my song! That means that I am never going to die!

Through my research I have found Bernal to be a consequential force in the musical development of México. As he told his son, such a creative force cannot die; Bernal's music remains immortal along with the works of internationally recognized composers.

Works Cited

- Alcaraz, José Antonio. En la más honda música de selva. México: Lecturas Mexicanas, 1998.
- Alvarez Coral, Juan. Compositores Mexicanos. México: EDAMEX, 1993.
- Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. Paginas de un diario íntimo. Morelia, Michoacán, México: Firmax Publicistas, 1982.
- Bitran, Yael. E-mail to the author. 10 Sept. 2008.
- Blom, Eric, editor (1954). *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (fifth edition). New York: St. Martin's Press and London: Macmillan.
- Castaneda, Daniel. Gran Corrido a la Virgen de Guadalupe. México: Ed Polis, 1941.
- Díaz, Lorena. Como un eco lejano...La vida de Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F., México: CENIDIM, 2003.
- Díaz, Lorena. Miguel Bernal Jiménez, Catálogo y otras fuentes documentales. Morelia, México: CENIDIM, 2000.
- Díaz, Lorena. E-mail to the author. 28 Sept. 2008.
- Díez, Fernando. "En pos de Miguel Bernal Jiménez." El Universal 15 Aug. 2006: Cultura.
- Hernandez Gama, José. Telephone interview. 26 Nov. 2008.
- Herrera Zapién, Tarsicio. "La Originalidad de Bernal Jiménez." Conservatorianos 207.20. 1 Dec. 2008 <<http://www.conservatorianos.com.mx/web/Conservatorianos%207%20para%20web/herrera7.pdf>>.
- Macías Sánchez, Rogelio. "En el 50 aniversario luctuoso de Bernal Jiménez." Cambio de Michoacan 25 July 2006: Cultura.

Malström, Dan. Introducción a la música mexicana del siglo XX. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977.

Martínez Madrigal, Ignacio. “Miguel Bernal Jiménez, en su Cincuentenario Luctuoso”
Comunidad Cristiana 22 Oct. 2005.

Páramo, José A. Miguel Bernal Jiménez. México D.F.:EPESSA, 1992.

Paredes, Arnulfo. Telephone interview. 06 Nov. 2008.

Sodi, María. El Jarabe Nacional. México D.F. INBA 1985

Vargas, Ángel. “Homenaje de la OFCM al compositor y organista Miguel Bernal Jiménez.” La Jornada 02 Dec. 2006: Cultura 5.

