

Analysis and Evolution of the Liturgical Repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca

Priscila Alexandra Urgiles Encalada

1. Universidad de Cuenca, Cuenca, Ecuador, priscila.urgiles@ucuenca.edu.ec

ABSTRACT

This article presents a detailed analysis of the evolution of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca, Ecuador, exploring the transformations and adaptations that have taken place since its opening to the present day. With a rich history that reflects both Cuenca's cultural heritage and global ecclesiastical reforms, the musical repertoire of the New Cathedral constitutes a fundamental aspect of the city's liturgical and cultural identity. Through a qualitative approach, the study draws on historical documents, scores, testimonies of chapel masters and other key actors, allowing for an exploration of how the repertoire has been influenced by historical, social and religious contexts.

The study emphasizes the influence of the Second Vatican Council, an event that profoundly transformed liturgical music around the world. In the New Cathedral, post-conciliar reforms promoted the use of the vernacular and the integration of accessible melodies, replacing the exclusive use of Latin and Gregorian chant, with the aim of encouraging greater participation of the faithful in the liturgy. This change resulted in a more inclusive musical selection, which resonated with the daily life of the Cuenca community and facilitated a more intimate connection with the liturgy.

The article also highlights the role of the chapel master in this process of transformation, taking as a particular case Jhoffre Mora, one of the last exponents of this figure in the New Cathedral. Over the years, Mora not only preserved the traditional repertoire, but enriched it with compositions and arrangements adapted to liturgical changes and local cultural sensitivities. Their work illustrates how chapel masters have been instrumental in the adaptation of sacred music, acting as bridges between tradition and the new demands of the religious community.

KEYWORDS: Liturgical repertoire, New Cathedral of Cuenca, Liturgical music, Sacred music.

1. Introduction

The New Cathedral of Cuenca, located in the heart of the city, is one of the most significant religious symbols of Ecuador, not only for its architectural value, but for its role in the preservation and promotion of a musical tradition that has endured for centuries. Since its foundation, the cathedral has been a center of liturgical expression, where the musical repertoire has served as a means of connecting the faithful with their faith and culture. The evolution of this repertoire has not been an

isolated process; It has been intimately linked to liturgical changes and to social and cultural transformations, particularly in response to the Second Vatican Council, whose reforms brought about a significant change in Catholic liturgical music throughout the world. This study explores the trajectory of the liturgical repertoire of the New Cathedral of Cuenca, identifying its main characteristics, phases of evolution, and the role of key figures, such as the chapel masters, in the adaptation and preservation of this musical heritage.

Liturgical music has historically been a pillar of religious life in Cuenca. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the repertoire was centered on Gregorian chant and other forms of sacred music in Latin, whose monodic and solemn character sought to evoke a sense of spiritual recollection. This musical style, characteristic of the pre-conciliar repertoire, was intended for contemplation and praise through a musical language that, although formal and highly structured, resonated deeply with the faithful. The musical structure of this time, based on Latin, reflected the universality of the Catholic Church and strengthened the sense of community, although, in many cases, it was difficult for the faithful to access in terms of understanding and participation.

With the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church underwent a radical change in the celebration of its rites and, in particular, in liturgical music. The Council promoted the use of vernacular languages and encouraged the inclusion of popular musical elements that would facilitate the participation of the faithful in religious ceremonies. For the New Cathedral of Cuenca, this transformation implied a revision of the traditional repertoire and an adaptation towards musical forms that would allow a more direct and accessible connection for the Cuenca community. The transition from Latin to Spanish in the liturgy made it necessary to develop a repertoire that, while preserving the solemnity and respect of sacred music, could be sung and understood by all those present at Mass.

In this transformation process, the role of the chapel master was fundamental. Jhoffre Mora, one of the last chapel masters of the New Cathedral, was responsible not only for maintaining the church's musical legacy, but for enriching it through compositions and adaptations that reflected the values and culture of Cuenca. His work consisted of selecting and adapting pieces that combined the tradition of sacred music with the new liturgical arrangements, creating a balance between preserving the essence of liturgical music and including elements that resonated with the people of Cuenca. Thus, the figure of Mora represents the continuous effort to keep musical traditions alive while responding to the contemporary demands of the community.

This article, therefore, examines how the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca has evolved from its origins to the present day, analyzing the different phases and the factors that have influenced its transformation. Historical and cultural aspects are addressed, as well as the pedagogical and spiritual function of music in the church, to understand how the New Cathedral has managed to preserve its musical heritage over time. Through a qualitative approach that includes interviews, documentary analysis and direct observation, this study seeks to offer a complete perspective on the evolution of the liturgical repertoire of the New Cathedral and its impact on the cultural and religious identity of Cuenca.

2. General objective

To examine the evolution of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca, identifying the changes and adaptations that have taken place in response to historical, liturgical and cultural factors, as well as to analyze the role of the chapel master in the selection and preservation of sacred music in this context.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research approach

Qualitative Approach: Since the main objective is to analyze and understand the evolution of a cultural and liturgical phenomenon over time, a qualitative approach is used that allows for an in-depth exploration of changes in the musical repertoire, external influences, and the role of key figures, such as chapel masters.

Historical-Documentary Approach: The analysis is based on the examination of historical and liturgical documents, which is essential to reconstruct the different stages and characteristics of the musical repertoire in the New Cathedral.

3.2 Type of study

Case Study: The research is structured as a case study focused on the New Cathedral of Cuenca. This allows a detailed analysis of the specific context of Cuenca and the particularities of the musical repertoire in this cathedral, facilitating the identification of patterns and singularities in the musical evolution.

3.3 Technique and data collection

Documentary Analysis: Historical liturgical documents of the New Cathedral of Cuenca are collected and analyzed, including missals, scores, and repertoire records from different periods. This review allows us to identify the characteristics of the repertoire in different historical periods, before and after the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

Semi-Structured Interviews: Interviews are conducted with key actors, such as chapel masters, priests, and other members of the cathedral staff who have been involved in the selection and performance of liturgical music. The interviews provide valuable information about the repertoire selection processes, the adaptations implemented and the changes perceived over time. If possible, testimonies of Jhoffre Mora and people who collaborated with him in his work are included.

Non-Participant Observation: When possible, direct observation of liturgical ceremonies in the New Cathedral is carried out, allowing the documentation and analysis of the current musical repertoire and its performance in a real context. This facilitates a comparison between the historical and current repertoire, providing insight into how liturgical music has been adapted to the needs of the community.

3.4 Data analysis

Content Analysis: Data collected from interviews, documents, and observations are analyzed using the content analysis method, identifying recurring categories and

themes. This method is particularly useful for classifying the repertoire according to its liturgical characteristics, identifying changes in musical styles and languages, and observing the incorporation of cultural elements specific to Cuenca in liturgical music.

Comparative Analysis: A comparative analysis of the repertoires used before and after the Second Vatican Council is carried out, observing the transition from a repertoire in Latin and based on Gregorian chant to a repertoire in the vernacular language and with more accessible musical elements. This comparison allows us to study the influence of liturgical reforms and the impact of historical and cultural factors on the evolution of the repertoire.

3.5 Sources of information

Primary: Historical documents of the New Cathedral, scores, transcripts of interviews with chapel masters and priests, and repertoire records. Materials collected from local archives and the Historical Archive of the Archdiocesan Curia of Cuenca are also included.

Secondary: Academic literature and previous studies on the history of liturgical music, the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, and the role of chapel masters in the Latin American context, as well as research on the cultural heritage of Cuenca.

4. Results

4.1 The church of the New Cathedral

In 1988 Jhoffre Mora was invited by Monsignor Luis Alberto Luna Tobar to play in several masses in the new Cathedral and seeing his musical quality, and above all, his knowledge in relation to participation in the celebrations, he invited him as chapel master of the same, entrusting him with the entire calendar of activities of the new Cathedral.

4.2 Jhoffre Mora's performance as chapel master in the new cathedral of Cuenca.

Jhoffre Mora played a fundamental role in the preservation, adaptation and revitalization of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca, consolidating himself as a key figure in the musical tradition of the city. His career as Kapellmeister spanned more than two decades of dedication, marked by a balance between preserving the roots of sacred music and adapting to the contemporary needs of the community. His arrival at the New Cathedral took place in 1988, when Archbishop Luis Alberto Luna Tobar invited him to collaborate in several masses. Mora's experience and knowledge in liturgical repertoire, acquired in years of work in other churches, positioned him as the ideal candidate to assume the musical direction of the cathedral. Since then, his work has been key to coordinating the musical repertoire of the daily Masses and the special celebrations of the liturgical calendar.

As chapel master, Mora took on responsibilities ranging from selecting the repertoire to performing and directing the music during ceremonies. Their work involved careful planning to adjust the songs to the demands of the liturgical calendar, taking

into account the solemnity of each event. Its repertoire included both traditional Latin chants and pieces in Spanish, adapted to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, which sought to encourage greater participation of the faithful in the liturgy. This approach reflected his commitment to the preservation of tradition, while responding to liturgical and cultural transformations that demanded a repertoire that was more accessible and understandable to the community.

The impact of the post-conciliar reforms was evident in Mora's work. It incorporated Spanish chants that allowed for a more direct connection between the faithful and the liturgy, while preserving historical pieces that gave continuity to the cathedral's musical heritage. During major ceremonies, such as Christmas, Easter, and Corpus Christi, Mora enriched the repertoire with new compositions and arrangements that respected traditions while introducing elements of innovation. His work extended beyond musical performance, as he also trained and advised musicians to ensure the quality of performances at special ceremonies.

The work of Jhoffer Mora was fundamental in preserving the intangible heritage of liturgical music in Cuenca. During his performance, he not only preserved a historical repertoire, but also enriched it with his own compositions and adaptations that reflected the cultural identity of the region. This allowed the New Cathedral to continue to be a space of reference in the spiritual and cultural life of the city. His legacy transcends music, as he managed to strengthen the connection between the community and its heritage, promoting a sense of belonging and active participation in religious ceremonies.

Although formal records of his hiring as Kapellmeister only date from 2008, his influence began much earlier and continued until his retirement in 2015. For 27 years, Jhoffer Mora left an indelible mark on the musical life of the New Cathedral of Cuenca. His dedication and ability to combine tradition with innovation made him a reference not only for liturgical music, but also for the cultural preservation of Cuenca. His legacy lives on as a testament to how sacred music can be a bridge between cultural heritage and the demands of an ever-evolving community.

4.3 Ordinary and special celebrations. Schedule of activities

Maestro Jhoffer Mora carried out his work in the New Cathedral of Cuenca complying with a rigorous schedule established by the then Archbishop Monsignor Luis Alberto Luna Tobar. During his period of service, Mora was to solemnize three daily Masses from Monday to Saturday, scheduled at 07:00, 09:30 and 12:00. On Sundays, their presence was required at the 7:00 a.m. Mass, while the rest of the Sunday celebrations were in charge of volunteer groups, such as young people, religious movements or lay people. This schedule formed the basis of regular activities throughout the year, although the liturgical calendar often called for adjustments for special events, to which Mora always responded with punctuality and commitment.

In addition to the regular celebrations, Mora also attended special offices of a private or private nature. According to his own words, he was fortunate to have the unconditional support of Mother Amable, who coordinated the activities of the cathedral and relied exclusively on his chapel master to cover all events, both official

and private. This preference not only consolidated his position as a musical manager, but also represented an economic benefit for him. Mora recalls: "[...] sometimes people would go to request the physical space of the church for a special event such as marriage, and they would tell Mother Amable that they wanted to bring musicians, to which the mother flatly refused, because the church had a chapel master and he was in charge of all the offices. [...]".

When these requests were submitted, Mora had a team of musicians who accompanied him to solemnize the ceremonies. The selection of the group depended on the preferences and demands of the applicants, as well as the budget available. This flexible approach allowed Mora to tailor musical resources for each occasion, ensuring an appropriate and personalized liturgical experience for the faithful. His organizational skills and commitment cemented his reputation as an upright and efficient chapel master, deeply valued by the community of the New Cathedral of Cuenca.



Image 1. Maestro Jhoffer Mora on the organ of the new Cathedral of Cuenca accompanied by the Mariachi del Austro. Photographic Archive Maestro Jhoffer Mora.

Maestro Jhoffer Mora recalls how, in certain celebrations, he was asked to organize more elaborate musical groups to enhance the solemnity of the ceremonies, especially those considered "first class". These masses, which were usually financed by the priostes, required special musical accompaniment, which included the formation of an orchestra. In his words: "[...] there were masses that were called first class in which I was asked to see some musicians to form what they called the orchestra, generally the priostes paid for this type of group [...] or for private masses according to what the interested party wants".

For these occasions, Mora summoned outstanding musicians from the region,

forming a group composed of Ignacio Romero on violin, Leopoldo Yanzahuano on clarinet, and Manuel Ochoa on saxophone. In the choir, he used to have the voices of Delfín Mejía, Luis Pacheco and Luis Mendieta. This team was particularly prominent in the 1990s, when liturgical music took on a more dynamic role in the celebrations of the New Cathedral. In addition, Mora sometimes included his sons, Patricio and Miguel, who played the violin and participated when their time permitted, contributing to the family repertoire and strengthening the musical team.

In some cases, the priostes chose to include mariachis in the ceremonies, especially for private masses or events of high significance. Mora says: "[...] on other occasions the priostes used to ask for masses with mariachi accompaniment and my children who played in a mariachi group helped me [...] but these were private or very special masses [...] from there, in general, the one who played was only me [...]". Despite these exceptions, in most regular liturgical celebrations, Mora worked alone, ensuring that liturgical music remained a central element of the Cathedral's spirituality.

This versatile approach, which ranged from complex instrumental music to individual performances, demonstrates Mora's ability to adapt to the diverse musical demands of the community, cementing his role as a chapel master committed to musical excellence and the preservation of liturgical traditions.



Image 2. Maestro Jhoffre Mora accompanied by his son Patricio Mora in a private mass. Photographic Archive Maestro Patricio Mora.

In the performance of maestro Jhoffer Mora as chapel master in the New Cathedral of Cuenca, a dynamic is observed that, although it does not completely follow the traditional model of the chapel master, shows significant similarities, especially in the so-called "first class" masses or special celebrations. Although Mora did not formally charge musicians as choristers, chaplains or permanent organists, for these special ceremonies he used to summon well-known musicians, who worked together with him to offer exceptional musical accompaniment. This type of work required detailed planning, in which Mora assumed responsibility for preparing the necessary material and coordinating the participants, reflecting aspects of the classic role of the chapel master.

In 2008, with the entry of Monsignor Vicente Cisneros as director of the Curia, Mora's employment situation took on a more formal framework with the signing of a contract. This document established his position as "organist" of the New Cathedral, defining a more limited working schedule. According to the contract: "[...] The worker will work one hundred and twenty hours per month, according to the schedule of Masses to be celebrated in the New Cathedral of Cuenca. [...]". This agreement marked a change in Mora's responsibilities and schedule, reflecting a transition in his work.

From that moment on, Mora began to play only at the 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. Masses from Monday to Saturday, eliminating the 7:00 a.m. Mass from his daily routine. In addition, Sundays became his day of rest, a belated recognition of decades of uninterrupted work. This modification in his schedule represented a relief for Mora, who points out that for years he did not have vacations due to the commitment to comply with the liturgical celebrations established by the Cathedral.

The change in his responsibilities also illustrates the evolution of the chapel master's role in the New Cathedral, adapting to a model that, although influenced by traditions, was more aligned with contemporary demands and modern working conditions. This new work framework allowed Mora to continue his work with a more defined focus, ensuring the quality of his performance while maintaining his commitment to liturgical music and the cultural heritage of the cathedral.

4.4 Analysis of the evolution of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca

The evolution of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca reflects a constant interaction between tradition, liturgical reforms and adaptations to the cultural and social needs of the community. Since its construction, the Cathedral has been a reference center for sacred music in Cuenca, marked by a rich tradition that has been transformed over time due to various historical, liturgical and social factors.

The Preconciliar Repertory: Tradition and Solemnity

Before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the liturgical repertoire of the New Cathedral was deeply rooted in the traditional musical practices of the Catholic Church. Latin was the exclusive language of the celebrations, and Gregorian chant dominated the repertoire. These pieces, characterized by their monodic and solemn style, were performed mainly by choirs and organists, in an atmosphere of deep reverence and spirituality.

The preconciliar repertoire sought to elevate the spirit through introspective music, designed for contemplation and adoration. This period was characterized by a notable separation between the faithful and the musicians, since the repertoire was intended more to be heard than to be sung by the congregation. In this context, the musicians and chapel masters assumed a central role, being the only ones responsible for the interpretation of the pieces.

Impact of the Second Vatican Council: A New Musical Approach

The Second Vatican Council marked a turning point in the history of liturgical music, with reforms that sought greater participation of the faithful in the liturgy. These reforms promoted the use of vernacular languages instead of Latin and encouraged the inclusion of accessible melodies that facilitated communal singing. In the New Cathedral, this transition involved a significant transformation of the repertoire, which went from being dominated by Gregorian chant to incorporating pieces in Spanish and adaptations of traditional melodies.

The chapel master played a crucial role in this process, selecting and adapting the pieces to meet the new liturgical guidelines. During this time, the repertoire expanded to include folk songs that reflected the local culture, maintaining a balance between the solemnity of tradition and the need for accessibility for the community.

The Influence of Jhoffer Mora on the Evolution of the Repertoire

With the arrival of Jhoffer Mora as chapel master in 1988, the liturgical repertoire of the New Cathedral underwent a significant renewal. Mora incorporated both traditional compositions and new works adapted to contemporary needs. In his work, he balanced the preservation of historical pieces with the inclusion of arrangements that resonated with the faithful of Cuenca.

Mora adapted the repertoire to the demands of the liturgical calendar, with emphasis on special events such as Christmas, Holy Week and Corpus Christi, where musical accompaniment acquired greater prominence. During these celebrations, the repertoire was enriched by the participation of additional musicians, forming small orchestras to solemnize the ceremonies. This approach reflected Mora's ability to keep tradition alive while responding to modern community expectations.

The Repertoire in Contemporaneity: Preservation and Adaptation

In recent years, the repertoire of the New Cathedral has continued to evolve, maintaining traditional elements while adapting to cultural and technological changes. Although Latin is still used in some solemn ceremonies, Spanish dominates most regular celebrations, with chants allowing for the active participation of the faithful.

The influence of popular music and the demands of particular events have also left their mark on the repertoire. For example, "first class" celebrations or masses sponsored by priestesses often include special compositions or even mariachi groups, reflecting a mixture of the sacred with local cultural expressions.

The evolution of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca is a living example of how sacred music can adapt to changes without losing its essence. From

the roots of Gregorian chant to contemporary Spanish melodies, the repertoire has been shaped by liturgical reforms, cultural influences, and the dedication of chapel masters such as Jhoffre Mora.

This process of evolution demonstrates the ability of the New Cathedral to integrate tradition and innovation, maintaining itself as a space of reference for the spiritual and cultural life of Cuenca. The liturgical repertoire is not only an expression of faith, but also a vehicle for the preservation of the cultural and religious identity of the community.

4.5 Repertoire

At each moment of the Mass there was a song that was freely chosen by the chapel master. For the selection of the repertoire, there were books sponsored by the Archdiocese of Cuenca where the repertoire had to be selected depending on the liturgy of the day.

There is a book called "Rhythms of the People of God", which is a compilation by Jorge Baylach, with songs given by the Curia, which is one of the most used today by parishioners.

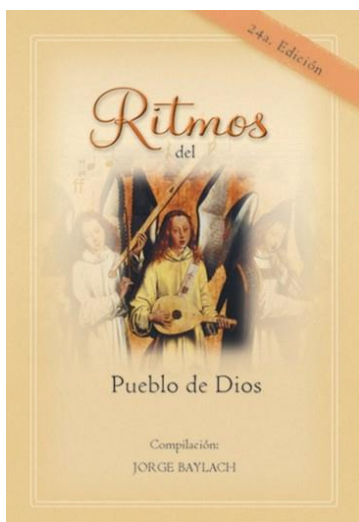


Image 3. Cover of the hymnal "Rhythms of the People of God". Photo taken by Priscila Urgilés E.

Maestro Mora also had a Pastoral Liturgical Cantoral called "Celebrate Singing" published by the Ecuadorian Episcopal Conference. This book, in addition to the texts of the songs, contained the melodic lines and the ciphers of the same. Here the master could count on 839 canticles to celebrate the masses throughout the year.

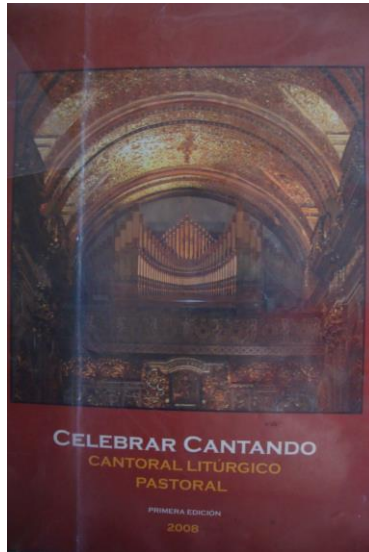


Image 4. Cover of the Liturgical Pastoral Cantoral "Celebrate Singing". Photo taken by Priscila Urgilés E.

Jhoffre Mora also has some music notebooks that the Catalina mothers had given him, because they had the San Luis bookstore and all the Spanish books with lyrics and music arrived there.

Mora also tells us that among the colleagues they shared the scores of the repertoire that each one handled. Thus, Jhoffre Mora has several scores transcribed by him, the product of these exchanges between the existing chapel masters in the city whom we have not been able to identify with their authors.¹²⁷

The repertoire was chosen according to the type of mass to be celebrated, whether it was a mass for the dead, for honors, etc., and the importance in the selection criterion lay in the text rather than in the music.

In this sense, Jhoffre Mora had absolute freedom of decision because, due to the experience he had acquired, he did not have the need to consult with anyone about the ceremonies to be performed or about the repertoire to be performed.¹²⁸

In this period we can find the Hymn to San Martín de Porres, with lyrics and music by Jhoffre Mora and composed in 1995. Although this Hymn was not performed in the new Cathedral, which is our object of study, we cite it because maestro Mora served as chapel master simultaneously in the church of Santo Domingo and this theme became a Hymn that is sung every Monday to this day, according to statements by maestro Mora.

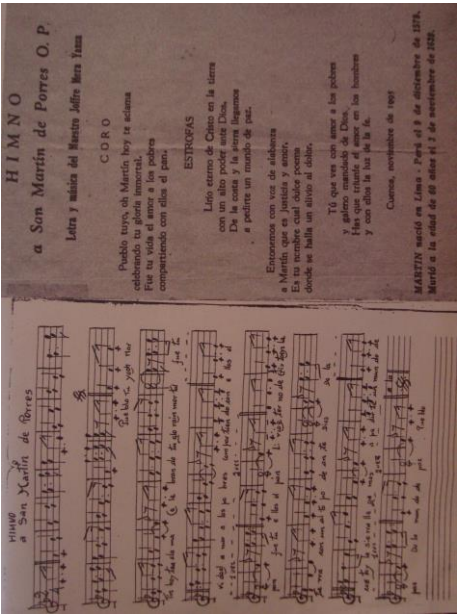


Image 5. Photo of the copy of the score of the Hymn to St. Martin de Porres. Lyrics and music by Jhoffer Mora. November 1995. Jhoffer Mora's musical archive. Photo taken by Priscila Urgilés E.

We also find a carol entitled "Ven pues Manuelito", authored by Jhoffer Mora, which was performed in the new Cathedral at Christmas time.

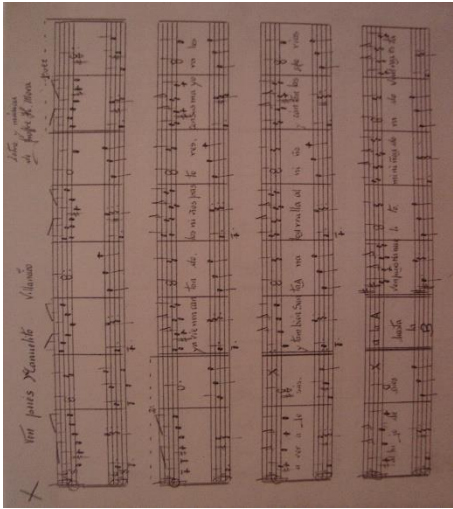


Image 6. Photo of the copy of the score of the carol Come then Manuelito. Lyrics and music by Jhoffer Mora. Jhoffer Mora's musical archive. Photo taken by Priscila Urgilés E.

Among the works with which Jhoffer Mora participated in the liturgical ceremonies we also find the following:

➤ Cuenca Creole Mass. By R. A. Sojos. Of this Mass, only the "Alleluia" was performed until today.

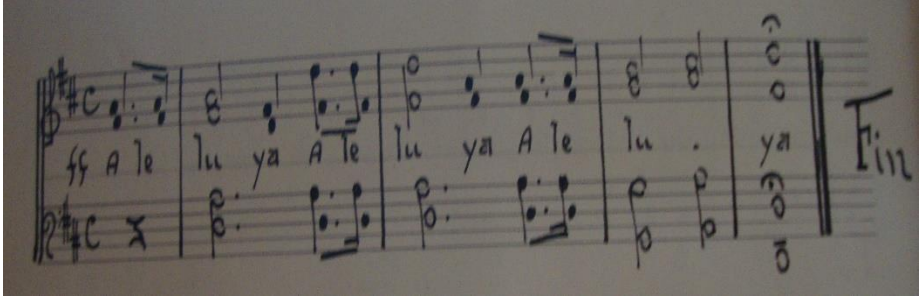


Image 7. Original score of the Misa Criolla Cuencana by R.A. Sojos. Hallelujah. Jhoffer Mora's musical archive. Photo taken by Priscila Urgilés E.

We find an extensive repertoire addressed to the Virgin, of which we will name:

- Save Save great madam. Melody Inca of author unknown. Performed at Easter until today.
- Rosary of the Dawn. By an unknown author.
- Blessed be your purity. By an unknown author.
- It is María la Blanca Paloma. By an unknown author.
- Hail Mary. By an unknown author.
- My wish. By an unknown author.
- Tender mother. By an unknown author.
- Hail Mary. By an unknown author. (different from the previous one)
- Ave Maria (popular song)
- Santa Marianita's hymn.

Other songs without an author present are:

- Let us acclaim Christ present.
- Hymn to Santo Domingo

From this list of themes, we have been able to identify "Salve, salve gran Señora", which is an Inca melody that is present in the Pastoral Liturgical Cantoral "Celebrate Singing" that we had mentioned above.

Attempts have been made to compare the other works with the archive of the church of Todos Santos, but no coincidences have been found.

Among the archive of pieces that have composers we have, for example:

- Morenica. Second L. Moreno.
- Yes, I love you. From Santo Hermano Miguel.
- Come and let us go, all of you. By Monsignor Costamagna.
- As a pledge. By Monsignor Costamagna.

For the repertoire of the Masses belonging to Ordinary Time, transcribed scores of songs that are frequently played to this day and that are known to the parishioners have been found. These are pieces taken from a CD of music that Fr Bellini, rector of the Salesian Technician, had brought from Italy with the permission of the papacy on one of his trips.

- Among them we have:
- Let's bless the Lord.
- Have mercy on you, Lord.
- Hallelujah.
- We present wine and bread.
- Si de ti me alejé.
- Santo, saint.
- La Paz
- Feast of the Banquet

Also present as a manuscript:

- They come with joy. By C. Gabarain
- Christ needs you. De C, Gabarain.
- Fisher of men.

4.6 Selection of the repertoire, analysis and illustrative execution in the New Cathedral of Cuenca

The selection, analysis and performance of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca are processes that reflect a combination of tradition, musical sensitivity and adaptation to the liturgical and cultural demands of each context. These elements, interconnected, were fundamental pillars in the work of chapel masters such as Jhoffre Mora, whose practice illustrates how liturgical music is managed and developed in a space with deep spiritual and cultural values.

Selection of the Repertoire: Criteria and Liturgical Context

The selection of the liturgical repertoire is a central task of the chapel master, as it involves ensuring that the music is harmoniously integrated into the development of the liturgy. In the New Cathedral, this process was deeply influenced by the liturgical calendar, the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, and the cultural and spiritual expectations of the Cuenca community.

The repertoire selected pieces that respected the liturgical norms of the Catholic Church, with a focus on the solemnity and spiritual significance of each celebration. This implied a balance between traditional Latin chants, such as Gregorian chant, and contemporary pieces in Spanish that encouraged the active participation of the faithful. Jhoffer Mora, as chapel master, carefully selected the songs considering aspects such as:

1. **Liturgical Adaptation:** The pieces had to be aligned with the theme and purpose of the celebration, whether it was a regular Mass, a solemn feast or a special event.
2. **Accessibility and Participation:** The repertoire was to include pieces that the faithful could sing, especially after the post-conciliar reforms that promoted the use of vernacular languages.
3. **Cultural Relevance:** On special occasions, elements of local popular music were integrated, such as the inclusion of mariachis or specific arrangements that connected with the cultural identity of Cuenca.

Repertoire Analysis: Structure and Meaning

The analysis of the liturgical repertoire involves not only understanding the musical structure of the pieces, but also their spiritual and symbolic function within the liturgy. In this sense, the repertoire in the New Cathedral could be classified into two main categories:

1. **Traditional Repertoire:** Included Gregorian chants, polyphonic hymns, and classical works that provided a sense of historical continuity and solemnity. These pieces, although complex in their execution, had a significant symbolic value, evoking the universality of the Church.
2. **Adapted Repertoire:** It consisted of contemporary songs in Spanish, often adaptations of traditional hymns, which facilitated community participation. These pieces reflected an evolution of the repertoire towards more accessible forms, without compromising their liturgical content.

The analysis also involved adapting the scores to fit the available resources, whether in terms of musicians, rehearsal time, or ceremony characteristics. For example, at "first class" Masses, Mora worked with additional musicians to enrich the performance, while at regular celebrations he was often personally in charge of the musical accompaniment.

Illustrative Performance: The Role of Musicians and Impact on the Liturgy

The performance of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral was a work profoundly illustrative of the chapel master's ability to transform the liturgical space through music. Jhoffer Mora took on multiple roles, from organist to conductor of small ensembles, depending on the nature of the celebration.

At solemn events, such as Christmas celebrations or Holy Week, Mora led musical groups made up of experienced musicians, including instrumentalists and choristers who brought depth and richness to the repertoire. In the words of Mora: "[...] For the first-class masses we formed what we called the orchestra, with musicians such as

Ignacio Romero on violin, Leopoldo Yanzahuano on clarinet and Manuel Ochoa on saxophone [...]"'. Such arrangements not only embellished the ceremony, but also reinforced its solemn and festive character.

At regular Masses, Mora, often alone, adapted the pieces to the organ, prioritizing an accompaniment that would guide the faithful in singing. Simplicity and clarity in execution were essential to ensure that the congregation could actively participate. This reflects how music, even in its most basic expression, can strengthen the spiritual connection of the community.

The selection, analysis and performance of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca are examples of how music can be adapted to the liturgical and cultural demands of a community without losing its essence. Jhoffer Mora's work illustrates this dynamic, combining tradition and innovation, solemnity and accessibility.

The impact of this process lies not only in the quality of the interpretations, but also in its ability to enrich the liturgical experience and connect the faithful to the spiritual meaning of each celebration. Music, as a liturgical tool, thus acquires a transformative character, becoming a bridge between the human and the divine, between the past and the present, and between tradition and modernity.

5. Conclusions

The analysis of the selection, analysis and execution of the liturgical repertoire in the New Cathedral of Cuenca shows how sacred music has been an essential vehicle for spiritual expression and community cohesion in this space. The work of the chapel master, represented in this case by Jhoffer Mora, stands out as a central factor in the preservation and evolution of liturgical music, demonstrating that tradition can coexist with innovation to respond to the demands of an ever-changing community.

The selection of the repertoire in the New Cathedral reflects a balance between tradition and accessibility. The traditional repertoire, composed of Gregorian chants and classical works, brings solemnity and historical continuity to the ceremonies, while the pieces adapted in Spanish facilitate the participation of the faithful, one of the main goals of the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. This dual approach ensures that liturgical music retains its sacred essence while becoming inclusive and understandable.

The structural and symbolic analysis of the repertoire demonstrates that liturgical music is not only a complement to the liturgy, but an integral part of the spiritual experience. The selected pieces are deeply connected to the meaning of the celebrations, and their interpretation requires not only a musical understanding, but also a theological and cultural one. This process, led by the chapel master, highlights the complexity and importance of his role within the ecclesiastical sphere.

The performance of the repertoire in the New Cathedral shows the versatility and commitment of the chapel master. At more solemn celebrations, such as "first class" Masses, Mora would organize ensembles that enriched the ceremonies with exceptional musical depth, while at regular celebrations he would take a simpler

approach, adapting to the available resources and the needs of the community. This demonstrates his ability to balance quality and practicality in liturgical music.

The adaptation of the repertoire to the available human and cultural resources also highlights Mora's ability to work with local musicians and form teams that respond to the specific demands of each celebration. By integrating elements of popular music on some special occasions, he achieved a cultural connection that strengthened the local identity of the ceremonies, without sacrificing their sacredness.

The impact of this approach extends beyond the music itself, influencing how the community participates in and perceives the liturgy. The music selected and performed in the New Cathedral not only embellishes the ceremonies, but also deepens the spiritual experience of the faithful, creating a bridge between the transcendental meaning of the liturgy and the daily experiences of the Cuenca community.

In short, the work on the liturgical repertoire of the New Cathedral, under the direction of Jhoffre Mora, is a clear example of how sacred music can evolve without losing its essence. This analysis underscores that the selection, analysis, and performance of liturgical music are not merely technical activities, but acts of cultural creation and preservation that strengthen both the faith and the identity of a community. The work of the chapel master in this context is, therefore, a key piece for the continuity and relevance of liturgical music in the contemporary world.

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