

Kelly J. Godoy de Danielson and Robert Danielson
Pentecostal Music in the Public Square: The Christian Songs and Music of Juan Luis Guerra

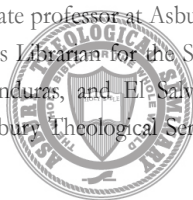
Abstract

This article explores the issue of contextualization of music in Latin America, particularly through the lens of Pentecostal singer-songwriter Juan Luis Guerra and his story of healing and conversion. Instead of leaving the pop music scene that had made him famous, he chose instead to stay in pop music and introduce Pentecostal Christian songs into his secular albums and concerts. This is a continuation of a long history of creative contextualization by Pentecostal musicians in sharp contrast to mainline Protestants who still primarily rely on translations of English hymns and music in a world where music is an integral part of the culture.

Keywords: music, Pentecostalism, Juan Luis Guerra, contextualization, Latin America

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Introduction

Within the church in Latin America, especially traditional Protestant, mainline churches (typically referred to a *Evangélicos* in Spanish) it is common to hear the same hymns you might encounter in any English-speaking mainline church in North America. The same tune, paired with words very closely translated from the English. This is true even after one hundred years of active missionary work. Given the cultural importance of music within Latin America, as well as the plethora of different musical styles, it is perplexing that there are so few hymns written by Spanish speakers within the Latin American context. Rodrigo Riffo Ulloa (2012:65-66) commented on this same observation in regards to CLADE V (the Fifth Latin American Congress on Evangelization) held in Costa Rica in 2012. He wrote, “Songs by artists belonging to the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (FTL, Latin American Theological Fellowship) were an invitation to move the body and sing to a Latin American rhythm and tempo which curiously enough, Protestant churches in Latin America are not accustomed to doing. In these churches it is more common to hear first-person-singular songs translated from English with Western harmonies and lyrics centered on the individual’s life and spiritual experience.” One is left wondering why other group-oriented churches in the Global South, in Africa and Asia especially, have developed rich contextualized hymnodies, but Latin America has not.

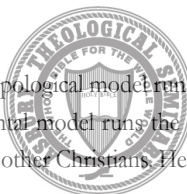
Roman Catholics have the longest foothold in Latin America, and there have been movements to contextualize elements of the Mass into different contexts, including the music, however, some of the most interesting efforts at contextualization have emerged out of the Pentecostal tradition, most recently explored in Daniel Ramírez’s book, *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century*. This paper explores this issue of contextualized music in Latin America through the work of Juan Luis Guerra, a Dominican singer-songwriter who is well known for his pop music, especially the development of the *bachata* and *merengue* styles, music sung in the dance halls and clubs of the Caribbean. About 1995, Guerra experienced a miraculous healing and conversion to Pentecostalism. However, unlike other pop stars who have converted and then subsequently left the pop music scene to either preach or sing only Christian music, Guerra remained in the world of pop music and began introducing original Pentecostal songs on his secular albums. Some of these songs became very popular outside of Christian circles. This paper will demonstrate that his contextualized songs fit well within the traditional theology of the four-fold Gospel of traditional Pentecostalism, although his music has yet to be adopted within churches in Latin America.

Contextualizing Music in Latin America

In reflecting on Psalm 137, Ulloa (2012:67) notes, “What does it mean to sing the same old thing? It means continuing to sing songs imported from the young English-speaking world with vague lyrics derived from a foreign context, lacking in theological or biblical content consistent with the diverse needs of the different communities of Latin America.” But how can we think through the process of contextualization in terms of music? A Lutheran scholar, Leopoldo Sánchez (2012) proposed an interesting model in an article entitled, “Theology in Context: Music as a Test Case” building on the well-known work of Stephen Bevans (2002) in his book *Models of Contextual Theology*. Sánchez took Bevans six models and thought through them in terms of how they might apply to music. His conclusions are summarized in this table:

Bevans Model	Musical Interpretation
Translation Model	Close translation of “A Mighty Fortress is Our God” into Spanish
Anthropological Model	Taking an existing cultural song and interpreting it in a Christian way, for example “De Colores”
Praxis Model	Original music and lyrics usually focused on poverty or marginality, for example “Un Pueblo que Camina” or “Enviado soy de Dios”
Transcendental Model	Original music and lyrics drawing from a particular life experience of the author
Countercultural Model	Preserving the “church culture” against the world, for example the use of Latin sung responses in Mass before Vatican II in Latin America
Synthetic Model	Incorporating all of these types of music in different ways within the worship of the church

Sánchez argues that the anthropological model runs the risk of losing the centrality of Christ, and the transcendental model runs the danger of making an individual experience a false standard for other Christians. He ultimately argues for a synthetic



model within a traditional Lutheran service. He (Sánchez 2012:139-140) also notes, “Global South Christians from Africa, Asia, and Latin America are notorious for falling outside the established Western harmonies and meters- not because they are less musical, out of tune, or can’t keep a beat, but because they are more melodically and rhythmically free in their approach to music.”

Our essential problem with Sánchez, despite providing a good starting place to discuss the contextualization of music, is that his understanding of Bevans’ models does not allow for an original song with music and lyrics written by a local Christian within their cultural context emerging out of a local understanding of scripture or theology or a communal experience of the church. The two freest forms he suggests (those most likely to be used in Latin America): the anthropological and transcendental models, he immediately labels as having potential problems. His concern strikes us more as being a way to solidify Lutheran ecclesiastical control over potential contextualization, in the same way that he worries Global South Christians might be too free in their approach to music, as if that is a negative thing!

We would argue that music is a vehicle through which God’s word is communicated to God’s people. It connects theology and culture in a way that makes theology relevant to ordinary people. We see a better understanding of the anthropological model as being original music and lyrics drawn from the communal cultural experience or understanding of scripture. This understanding helps make better sense of the Pentecostal *coritos* which will be discussed later, and which make a better example. As Ulloa (2012:73) continues in his reflection on Psalm 137, “How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?” (v. 4) Their answer reflects the magnificent relationship between the song of their own land- which today would be called folk music- and the song of the Lord. This idea emphasizes that it is impossible to sing the song of the Lord if we are not fully connected to our land, to our context.” This is equally true for Christians in Latin America as it would be for Hispanic immigrants in the United States. Part of truly doing the work of contextual theology is integrating it with our context and storing it in our minds and hearts through the rhythms and music of our native soil.

Pentecostalism and Music in Latin America

Early Pentecostal musicians were not afraid to take their new-found faith and express it with the cultural context of their native musical forms. Daniel Ramírez (2015) has studied some of the development of early Spanish Pentecostal music, especially *coritos* (choruses) out of the borderlands of the U.S. and Mexico, where early Hispanic Pentecostals were influenced by African-American Pentecostals and then took early English Pentecostal songs and loosely translated them and

altered their tunes to become more contextualized hymns for Spanish-speaking Pentecostals. He writes,

In contrast to historic Protestantism's disdainful distancing, Pentecostal hymnody redeemed the fiesta of Mexican and Latino culture. It brightened the previously dark view- held by Protestant missionaries- of popular culture that saw this as hopelessly enmeshed in intractable pathologies of alcoholism and unbridled machismo. Pentecostals returned popular musical culture to the sacred place of ritual, performance, and spectacle. They forged a new sonic universe that replaced the earlier popular Catholic visual world of saints, candles, gilded altars, and paintings- stimuli that had been erased by iconoclastic Protestantism- with intense sonic and sensory stimulation. Against mainline missionary censure, Pentecostals reintroduced a measure of the carnivalesque (laughter, weeping, body movement, profane instruments, feasts, etc.) into liturgical space and time. (Ramírez 2015:178)

Ramírez (2015:168-174) points out that mainline missionaries planned early on (in the late 1800's) for the church in Latin America and worked to control hymn books, publishing hymns they approved of and using their own translators to carefully translate the words, so that even by the 1960s Spanish language hymnbooks contained less than 15% of material composed in Spanish, and even when Spanish lyrics were used they were often divorced from Latin American tunes and replaced with the North American $\frac{3}{4}$ beat traditionally used with hymns. Despite this effort, Pentecostal creativity combined with the simplicity and repetitive nature of the *corito* still made inroads. Leopoldo Sánchez (2012:141) notes, "What is heard and criticized as obnoxiously repetitive call-and-response in some North American cultures is heard and celebrated as wondrous simplicity in many global south contexts." One of the early and most influential Pentecostal *coritos* was "Alabaré a Mi Señor," which was written by an anonymous Pentecostal, but over time this song has been accepted by mainline *Evangélicos* and even Roman Catholics and is sung in their churches and found in their newer hymnbooks (Ramírez 2015:197). It represents a good example of Pentecostal contextualization referring to John's vision in Revelation 7:

//Alabaré, alabaré //

Alabaré a mi Señor

Juan vió el número de los redimidos

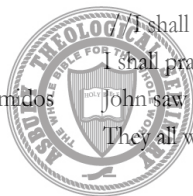
Todos alababan al Señor

//I shall praise, I shall praise//

I shall praise my Lord

John saw the number of the redeemed

They all were praising the Lord



Unos cantaban, otros oraban	Some were singing, others praying
Pero todos alababan al Señor	But all were praising the Lord

Juan Luis Guerra Brings Pentecostal Music to the Public Square

A modern example of contextualized Hispanic hymnody would also come out of the Pentecostal tradition, and can be found in the Christian songs of Juan Luis Guerra. Writing original music and lyrics to express both his personal experience (Transcendental Model) but also the communal experience of theology (Anthropological Model). Juan Luis Guerra was born in the Dominican Republic on June 7, 1957. He is a singer, songwriter, and producer who has sold over 30 million records and won 18 Latin Grammy awards, 2 Grammy awards and 2 Latin Billboard Music awards (MusicBrainz, Nd.). He is known for writing music in the popular dance styles of *merengue*, *salsa*, and *bachata*. His music is distinctively Afro-Latin and is some of the best-known music from the Dominican Republic. With his group 4.40, he has released over 13 albums and is widely known in the Latin Popular Music world. While he was widely known for love songs, and dance music, he was interested in social concerns as well, with one of his most important songs being *Ojalá Que Lluera Café* (I Hope It Rains Coffee) about the poor people who work in the coffee fields in the island. Other socially active songs included *El Costo de la Vida* (The Cost of Living) and *1492*.

In an online interview with Mark Small from Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he graduated with a degree in Jazz composition in 1982, Guerra was asked about his turn towards Christian music with his album *Para Ti* (For You). He responded,

Like I said, *Para Ti* contains the songs that I sing at my church. When I'm not on tour, I play there three times a week. Most of my band plays with me at the church. This album has as its theme my love for Jesus Christ. I accepted Jesus about 10 years ago. I didn't grow up with a faith tradition, and I had found that even though I was successful in my career, I was still somehow feeling very empty inside. I had no center. I had gotten fame and fortune, but I didn't have peace in my heart. I felt anxiety frequently and was taking medication to help with that. A friend told me about Jesus and that the peace I was looking for in other places could not equal his peace. I wanted that, so I opened my heart to him and began to feel very full with the love of Christ. Life is much easier for me this way, and a lot of good things have come from it. All of my performances now are for the glory of God. When I hear beautiful music, I think of him. Jesus is the creator of everything, so he must be a great musician. Think of all the talent he has given to men like Beethoven or Pat Metheny. (Small, Nd.)

In a 2016 article from the Spanish paper *El Mundo*, came this account,

“I was lacking peace. Not even with all the awards could I be tranquil in any place. I suffer from anxiety attacks that are horrifying, horrifying. Only someone that has gone through that knows what I am talking about. I accepted Jesus and He came to give me much more than peace, He gave me life in abundance,” he explains to *El Tiempo* in 2015. From the Bible study to his conversion, not much time passed. In 2000 he was already committed to God and became a fundamental part of a church, *Mas que Vencedores* (More Than Conquerors), where he became the director of worship and praise. During that time, Juan Luis took a recess from concerts. “Music is no longer my priority,” he confirmed to *El Clarin* in 2003. Although he never managed to get completely away from it. Thus was born one of his greatest hits: *Las Avispas* (The Wasps). A *merengue* based on verses from Deuteronomy, for which he even won a Grammy for “Best Christian Production.” (Rosa Del Pino 2016: paragraph 3)

His anxiety and stress even affected his vision, which he credits God for divine healing after his conversion. He remains part of *Iglesia Mas que Vencedores*, under its pastor, Sarah Gronau de Jiménez, who was a Charismatic Catholic, influenced by the work of Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland, before she became a pastor and founded her own church (from the church website: <http://www.mqv.org.do/nuestra-pastora.php>).

Upon his conversion in the late 1990s, Juan Luis Guerra made one surprising decision. Usually in Latin America if a secular person becomes religious, they tend to leave their fame and position to go into ministry or the more limited realm of Christian music. Juan Luis Guerra took a different path, however, and began to include religious songs on his secular albums. It was only in 2004 that he released an album of only religious material called *Para Ti* (For You), which contained eleven songs incorporating religious lyrics blended with his traditional music and rhythms. This blending of secular and religious music was so successful that one of the songs from this religious album, *Las Avispas* (The Wasps), actually won for best single in both the Gospel-Pop and Tropical-Merengue categories in the 2005 Billboard Music Awards. Despite this success, Juan Luis Guerra refused to leave the secular music scene and went back to producing secular albums, which usually contained one religious song on each album. In 2007 he released the album *La Llave de Mi Corazon* (The Key of My Heart) with the song *Something Good*, a very poetic song that may not sound religious except for one line (“and I perfumed my bed with myrrh and cinnamon”) reminiscent of Proverbs 7:17. In 2010 his album *A Son de Guerra* (To the Sound of Guerra) contained the religious track *Son al Rey*

(To the Sound of the King). It is important to note that there is also a play of words here, with the word *son*, or “sound,” also being a type of Cuban Afro-Latin music and dance style with a call and response style and strong percussion section. In his 2012 touring album for *A Son de Guerra*, he included an unreleased religious song, *En el Cielo No Hay Hospital* (In Heaven There is No Hospital). In 2012 Guerra also released *Coleccion Cristiana* (The Christian Collection), a collection of his Christian material including a number of new songs. And in his most recent album, 2014’s *Todo Tiene Su Hora* (Everything Has Its Time), the religious song was *El Capitán* (The Captain). Juan Luis Guerra also continues to write songs whose lyrics can be read in a Christian or non-Christian way, with no direct reference to God or Christian theology, such as 2010’s *Caribbean Blues*, with its line, “Heal me with your touch, anoint me, because your love is all I need,” and the chorus, “It’s all about you. You are the one who stays and never goes, a solitary spotlight in my show. You are the one who plays the violin in my Caribbean Blues.”

In an attempt to understand the theology of Juan Luis Guerra’s music, we have attempted to categorize it in terms of a commonly accepted Pentecostal Christology, known as the Fourfold Gospel. The concept of the Fourfold Gospel began with A.B. Simpson, the founder of the Christian-Missionary Alliance in a book published in 1890 called *The Fourfold Gospel*. In this work, Simpson outlines four major aspects of Christian doctrine related to the person of Jesus Christ: Christ as savior, Christ as sanctifier, Christ as healer, and Christ as coming Lord. This holiness teaching entered into Pentecostal circles, especially with Aimee Semple McPherson and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and has become a major framework for understanding the message of the Christian Gospel in clear and concise doctrinal positions. The songs of Juan Luis Guerra fall into the categories of this traditional Pentecostal/Holiness framework fairly well, as long as we also make allowance for songs designed purely for worship and the nature of God, the Father. Songs that are more poetic and harder to classify as Christian songs, such as *Caribbean Blues*, and *Something Good* have been excluded from this list, and some songs which are more difficult to categorize, such as *Son Al Rey* and *Mi Padre Me Ama* which could classify as worship songs and *Soldado*, which has a clear Trinitarian beginning, have been classified by the theme which seems to be most dominant (although that could be open to interpretation). This leaves 21 songs that are clearly Christian in theme between 1998 and 2014.



Christ as Savior	Christ as Sanctifier	Christ as Healer	Christ as Coming Lord	Worship/ Nature of God
<i>Testimonio</i> (1998)	<i>Mi Jesus</i> (2012)	<i>Cancion de Sanidad</i> (2004)	<i>Viene Bajando</i> (2012)	<i>Eres</i> (2004)
<i>Extiende Tu Mano</i> (2004)	<i>Las Avispas</i> (2004)	<i>En el Cielo No Hay Hospital</i> (2012)	<i>Caballo Blanco</i> (2012)	<i>Los Dinteles</i> (2004)
<i>Mi Padre Me Ama</i> (2004)	<i>Soldado</i> (2012)	<i>Para Ti</i> (2004)	<i>Como Trompeta En Si Bemol</i> (2012)	<i>Gloria</i> (2004)
<i>Son Al Rey</i> (2010)	<i>El Capitán</i> (2014)			<i>Tan Sólo He Venido</i> (2004)
<i>Nada Me Separará</i> (2012)				<i>Aleluya</i> (2004)
				<i>El Quita Pena</i> (2012)

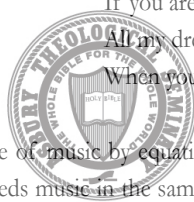
Christian Songs of Juan Luis Guerra 1998-2014

Christ as Savior

One of the major themes in most Christian music seems to revolve around the salvific work of Christ, and the music of Juan Luis Guerra is no different. This theme comes out in his own testimony, which he writes about in a very poetic fashion in the song *Testimonio* (My Testimony). This was his earliest Christian song; being released in 1998 on the secular album *Ni es lo Mismo, Ni es Igual* (Neither is it the Same, Nor is it Equal). In the first verse he notes the fact that he was anxious and often taking medication before his conversion:

No necesito pastillas para dormir,	I do not need sleeping pills,
Si estás conmigo.	If you are with me.
Todos los sueños florecen	All my dreams bloom
Cuando me hablas al oído.	When you talk to me.

He also refers to his own love of music by equating his experience of God with a symphony. He no longer needs music in the same way, since he has experienced



his spiritual transformation. Now God has become his center. He even refers to “pizzicatos in the chest,” which refers to a special way of plucking the strings of a stringed instrument. Likewise in the song he rejects human wisdom, poetry, money, and even human love as replacements for God, as well as drugs and even music itself.

No necesito violines	I do not need violins
Pizzicatos en el pecho.	Pizzicatos in the chest.
Eres todo mi concierto,	You are my entire concert,
La más bella sinfonía.	The most beautiful symphony.

Testimonio is a very personal song, written in a highly poetic style, so that God and Jesus are not mentioned directly, but only implied. This may be because it was his first attempt at a religious song and also because it would appear on a secular album.

A more direct song focusing on salvation is *Nada Me Separará* (Nothing Can Separate Me), reflecting back on Romans 8:38-39 and Psalm 91:3-5. Here, Juan Luis Guerra directly refers to Jesus and the love of God that has become his center.

No me dejas ni me desamparas,	You do not leave me or forsake me,
y me cubres, Señor, con tus alas,	And cover me, Lord, with your wings,
Tu misericordia es para siempre,	Your mercy is forever,
Me levanto, Jesús, y proclamo	I rise, Jesus, and proclaim
tu nombre.	your name.

Nada me separará de ti,	Nothing will separate me from you,
Señor,	Lord,
Nada me separará, si caigo me has	Nothing will separate me, if I fall,
de levantar, Dios.	you will raise me up, God.
Nada me separará de ti,	Nothing will separate me from you,
Señor,	Lord,
Me has amado y es tu amor,	You have loved me and it is your love,
Más ancho y más profundo que el mar.	Wider and deeper than the sea.

In another song, *Mi Jesús* (My Jesus), Juan Luis Guerra makes his most direct statement about salvation, when he declares, “My Jesus, today, I receive your forgiveness, I declare you as my Lord, my Savior.” However, the overall theme of this song is more accurately sanctification rather than salvation. What is interesting is that Christ as Savior is probably the most difficult element of the Fourfold Gospel

to detect in his music. But it is not because of its lack of importance in his theology. He clearly sees the themes of love and salvation in his own personal faith story, but he also sees salvation in a more holistic way, so you see elements of salvation in his worship music and music on sanctification as well.

Christ as Sanctifier

The theme of sanctification comes out most clearly in the previously mentioned song, *Mi Jesús* (My Jesus). In this song the verses refer to the role of Jesus Christ as savior and redeemer, but the majority of the song really focuses on the chorus, which emphasizes the power of Jesus to transform people and then shifts to the role of the Holy Spirit as a fire that makes everything feel new. This may be referencing Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16, or Acts 2:3.

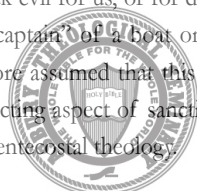
Mi Jesús, en tu nombre hay poder,
yo he pasado de tiniebla a luz,
y todo es nuevo, aleluia, con
amén,
y siento un fuego.

My Jesus, in your name there is power,
I've gone from darkness to light,
and everything is new, alleluia, with an
amen,
and I feel a fire.

/Espíritu santo y fuego,
un gozo me cae del cielo
y enciendo mi candelero
con tu fuego, yo siento un fuego./
Espíritu santo y fuego.

/Holy Spirit and fire,
a joy from heaven falls over me
and I light my candle
with your fire, I feel a fire./
Holy Spirit and fire.

Clearly the idea of sanctification, of being made holy, is attributed to the Holy Spirit, within the normal teaching of the Pentecostal tradition. There is no mention of *glossolalia*, or “speaking in tongues,” perhaps given the nature of his mostly secular audience. What is interesting is that the songs which most seem related to sanctification: “*Las Avispas*,” “*Soldado*,” and “*El Capitán*” are more about the power of God to keep us or protect us from sin and evil in our lives, whether it be through God sending “wasps” to attack evil for us, or for discipling us to be “soldiers” for God, or if God is like the “captain of a boat on the raging sea, and guides us through the tempest. It is more assumed that this is done through the power of the Holy Spirit, but this protecting aspect of sanctification might be an important insight into Latin American Pentecostal theology.



Christ as Healer

Healing is an important theme in the religious music of Juan Luis Guerra in part because of a healing he experienced in his own life. Several songs deal with healing, including a popular fast paced song, *En el Cielo No Hay Hospital* (In Heaven There is no Hospital).

Gracias al Dios Bendito yo fui sanado de todo stress	Thanks to Blessed God, I was healed of all stress
Me curó de la sinusitis y la migraña que bueno es El	I was cured of sinusitis and the migraine, That good is He!
Me sacó de la depresión y ahora yo le bailo en un solo pie	He pulled me out of the depression and now I Dance on one foot
Y no me duele la cinturita, ay! Que rico.	And now my little waist does not hurt, ay! How delicious.

And in a later verse he continues with his personal testimony of healing.

Gracias a Jesucristo yo fui sanado de un gran dolor	Thanks to Jesus Christ I was healed of great pain
Para El no hay nada imposible todo lo puede que gran doctor (que doctor!)	For Him there is nothing impossible at all That great doctor (what a doctor!)
Me sanó del ojo derecho y de un colapso en el corazón	I was cured in my right eye and of a collapse in the heart,
Y no me duele la espalda baja, ay! Que rico.	And my lower back doesn't hurt me, ay! How delicious.

In a more focused and serious song, *Cancion de Sanidad* (Song of Healing), Juan Luis Guerra communicates his theology of healing, building off of Matthew 9:19-21 when Jesus heals the woman with the chronic bleeding.

Ven, tócame Señor,
quiero recibir
tu preciosa unción



Come, touch me Lord,
I want to receive
Your precious anointing

Ven, sáname Señor
que un milagro hoy
quiero yo de tí

Come, Lord heal me
This is a miracle today
I want from you

En el nombre de Jesús recibo sanidad
he tocado el borde de su manto
sano estoy por su Espíritu Santo

In the name of Jesus, I receive healing
I have touched the hem of his garment
I have been healed by His Holy Spirit

In this song, healing comes in the name of Jesus, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. The song ends with “Gracias, Señor.” (“Thank you, Lord.”).

In his song, *Para Ti* (For You), Juan Luis Guerra presents a very worshipful view of God, whose greatness comes in the creation and the way he helped the faithful like Noah, Daniel, Moses, and Sarah. He refers over and over again to the idea that nothing is impossible for God, and he refers to Christ multiplying the bread and fish and bringing Lazarus back to life. But he ends focusing more on the personal needs people face:

No hay problemas ni enfermedades
para ti, para ti
no hay divorcio ni droga en
la calle, no
para ti, para ti
ya no hay cancer, ni SIDA,
ni males
para ti, para ti
y no, no, no, no hay tormenta
ni calamidades
para ti todo lo puedes, ajá.

There are no problems or diseases
for you, for you
There is no divorce or drug on
the street, no
for you, for you
There is no cancer, no AIDS,
no illness
for you, for you
and no, no, no, no there is no storm
of calamity
for you can do everything, aha.

For Juan Luis Guerra, healing is clearly part of the ongoing work of God through Christ, and his own experience supports this conclusion, which he then theologizes for people in terms of modern illnesses such as cancer and AIDS.



Christ as Coming Lord

In another song, called *Viene Bajando* (He is Coming Down), Guerra takes a more lighthearted approach to the return of Christ. In an upbeat, lively song, he is telling various people to get ready for the coming of Christ to “prepara la maleta” (prepare your suitcase), with one verse calling out,

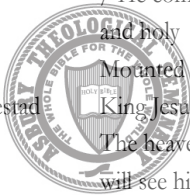
Prepara la maleta, Manuela. (Manuela)	Manuela, prepare your suitcase. (Manuela)
No se necesita visa si vas con él. (eh)	No visa is required if you go with him. (eh)
El vuelo es sin escala mi negra. (mi negra)	The flight is nonstop, my dark one. (my dark one)
Sólo tienes que aceptarlo Señor y Rey.	You just have to accept Him as Lord and King.

Building on the common view of many of the poor in the Caribbean and Latin America in general, that somehow immigrating to the United States would be a panacea for all their problems. Heaven, unlike the United States does not require a visa. This is a good example of contextualization within the current culture of Latin America, yet building off a specific biblical theology, and not just personal experience. He might be building of Mark 13:32, Luke 21: 27-28, or Acts 1:11.

Guerra deals with the subject of Christ as the coming Lord again in the song *Caballo Blanco* (The White Horse). This song clearly builds on the revelation of John in Revelation 6:2, and Revelation 19:11-16. In this apocalyptic vision, Jesus is shown as returning on a white horse to rule the nations and bring judgment and justice. In the song, Juan Luis Guerra writes,

Todo ojo le verá	Every eye will see Him
Todo ojo le verá	Every eye will see Him
Y toda rodilla se doblará	And every knee will bow
Toda rodilla se doblará	Every knee will bow

/Viene en las nubes, poderoso y santo	/ He comes in the clouds, powerful and holy
Montado en un caballo blanco	Mounted on a white horse
Viene el rey Jesús en toda majestad	King Jesus comes in all majesty
Se abre los cielos todo ojo le verá./ (Y viene)	The heavens will open; every eye will see him./ (And he comes)



Juan Luis Guerra has a definite place in his theology for the eschatological theme of Christ's return. *Como Trompeta en si Bemol* (Like a Trumpet in C Flat) begins with the lines,

En un abrir y cerrar de ojos	In the blink of an eye
Como trompeta de Jazz en solo	Like a Jazz trumpet solo
Nadie sabra hora ni día	No one will know the hour or day
Como ladrón en noche fría.	As a thief on a cold night.

Guerra clearly builds on Mark 13:32, 1 Corinthians 15:52, and 1 Thessalonians 5:2 for his theology of the coming Christ.

Along with his worship songs, Juan Luis Guerra presents a very balanced Pentecostal Christology in his music, and at the same time he contextualizes the music for his secular audience. Looking back at Sánchez's (2012) view of Bevans' and how his models related to music, it is clear that Juan Luis Guerra does not fit into any category, except possibly the transcendental model in terms of his healing and personal testimony. However, this overview of Guerra's music demonstrates that his music is rooted in scripture and traditional Pentecostal theology, which we would argue points more to the need to redefine Sanchez's anthropological model. Music can be written with original lyrics and music within the cultural context of the writer, expressing his or her understanding of Christian theology in a way that makes sense to the larger community of that culture. Both early Pentecostal *coritos* and the contextualized Christian music of Juan Luis Guerra deserve a place in any categorizing of contextualized music. Arguing from Bevans (2002) and Sánchez's (2012), we would propose the following classification of contextualized music:



Bevans Model	Musical Interpretation
Translation Model	Direct translation from one language to another with an identical or near identical meaning and identical tune. The freer the translation of the original words and/or the use of indigenous rhythms with the traditional tune, moves this song along a continuum closer to the Anthropological Model.
Anthropological Model	Song written in the original language from a local perspective focused on a local view of theology and utilizing traditional folk music, tunes, or rhythms.
Praxis Model	Original or borrowed music and/or lyrics usually focused on specific subjects and social issues, such as poverty or marginality.
Transcendental Model	Original music and lyrics focused on the particular spiritual experience of the author. Such music becomes more Anthropological as others more commonly have a similar shared experience in the local community.
Countercultural Model	Any music or lyrics that seek to preserve an older or foreign theological viewpoint in opposition to the local culture, even if the lyrics are translated into the local language.
Synthetic Model	Any blend of music and lyrics that are a composite of two or more of the other models.

Conclusion

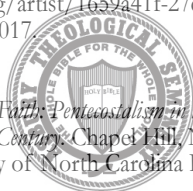
Contextual theology has become an important part of missions and the church in our globalized world, yet music in the mainline Latin American church remains primarily defined by translated words and music from the English-speaking North. Pentecostalism took a very different path with influences from the African-American church, greater freedom in translating lyrics, and the use of indigenous musical forms. The diffusion of *cortos* like “Alabaré” into mainline and Roman Catholic churches points to its effectiveness within the culture. It demonstrates in

part the effectiveness of Bevans' anthropological model over a purely translational approach, such as that used by *Evangélicos*. The rapid growth of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement within Roman Catholicism speaks in part to the dynamic use of contextualized music. Music in Latin America is one of the defining cultural traits by which people do not just understand, but feel their identity. *Tango* in Argentina, *salsa* in Cuba, *cumbia* in Colombia, and *ranchera* in Mexico are just some of the many examples of how music helps define nationality and identity. For the church to fail to develop hymnodies rooted in the musical context of Latin America is a major problem for developing and expressing indigenous theologies.

Juan Luis Guerra, from the Dominican Republic has been one of the few to take the defining rhythms of *bachata* and *merengue* from his island context and wed them to his Pentecostal theology in the public square. Rather than retreating to the Christian music scene, he remains missiologically and evangelistically open in his music, introducing key elements of the Pentecostal Fourfold Gospel in secular concerts and on his secular albums. He provides a model for future contextualization in this and other parts of Latin America. As God redeems people, so God can redeem the music of discos and bars, and breathe the life and vitality of the Latin American culture back into it churches. There is a growing need for *Evangélicos* as well as Pentecostals to locate their theology within the music that helps shape their identity as a people. Truly contextualized music will help the church reach out to people in the Public Square without expecting them to enter our buildings and worship services. Our music will call to them and communicate the life and beauty of our faith to their hearts and souls, as well as their minds.

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