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Morales in Plasencia and “New” Works from his Early Compositional Period¹

Cristina Diego Pacheco

While some recent publications have shed new light on his works², nothing new has recently been published on Cristóbal Morales’s life following the hypothesis published in 2002 by Alison Sanders MacFarland (pointing out a Toledan connection for the composer)³, a hypothesis later questioned by Robert Stevenson, one of his main biographers⁴. This article thus seeks to open a new chapter on this composer’s life and career prior to his Roman period, or more precisely speaking, during his time as *maestro de capilla* of Plasencia Cathedral where the first traces of his activity can be found in its archives.

Morales’s Life Prior to 1527

The title pages of Morales’s 1544 volumes of Masses (*Christophori Moralis Hyspalensis*)⁵ attest that he was born in Seville and there is virtually no evidence to refute this theory. Furthermore, the chapter of Plasencia Cathedral, where he worked before leaving for Rome, clearly states that Seville is “the city from where he originated” (“*de donde es natural*”)⁶, thus strongly discrediting the possibility of a ‘Morales toledano’ suggested by some of the documents cited in MacFarland’s work –but not ruling out the hypothesis of Morales being ordained a priest in the City of Toledo⁷. As Stevenson stated, Morales had most likely been a choirboy at Seville Cathedral, where he could have been taught by Escobar, the master of the choirboys from 1507 to 1514 (a choirboy “Cristóbal de

¹ Portions of this study were read at the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference, Vienna, 2007. I very much wish to thank Alejandro Planchart and Juan Ruiz for their generous and luminous remarks on this article. I also wish to thank warmly Juan Manuel Ramos Berrococo, *archivero* of the Plasencia cathedral, for his caring, enthusiastic and generous help during my years of research on these archives.

² See K. Pietschmann, “A Renaissance Composer writes to his Patrons: Newly discovered Letters from Cristóbal de Morales to Cosimo I de Medici and Cardinal Alessandro Farnese”, *Early Music* XXVIII/3 (2000), pp. 383-400; Michael Noone, “Cristóbal de Morales in Toledo, 1545-6 : ToleBC 25 and ‘new’ works by Morales, Guerrero, Lobo, Tejada and Ambiel”, *Early Music* XXX/3 (2002), pp. 341-363; Bernadette Nelson, “Was Morales in Valencia? New light on the origins of the *Missa benedicta es, caelorum regina*”, *Early Music* XXX/3 (2002), p. 364-379; and, above all, the recent *Cristóbal de Morales. Sources, Influences, Reception*. Woodbridge : Boydell Press, 2007, edited by Owen Rees and Bernadette Nelson.

³ Alison Sanders Mc Farland, “Within the circle of Charles V: New light on the biography of Cristóbal de Morales”, *Early Music* XXX/3 (2002), pp. 324-340.

⁴ This controversy is discussed on *Cristóbal de Morales. Sources...* p. xliii. For Morales’s biography, Stevenson’s remarkable study *Spanish cathedral Music in the Golden Age*, Berkeley, 1961 is still a reference (we will follow in this study the Spanish revised version: *La música en las catedrales españolas del Siglo de Oro*, Madrid: Alianza, 1993). Another important biographer of Morales is Jaime Moll: See, for example, “Cristóbal de Morales en España (notas para su biografía)” and José María Llorens, “Cristóbal de Morales, cantor en la capilla pontificia de Paulo III (1535-1545)”, both published in *Anuario Musical* VIII (1953), pp. 3- 26 and pp. 39-69 respectively.

⁵ *Missarum liber primus* and *Missarum liber secundus* (both first published by Dorico in 1544, with the former reedited in Lyons by Moderne one year later and the latter reedited by the same editor in 1551).

⁶ Plasencia, Archivo Capitular, Actas del Capítulo, book 7, fol. 129v (in this study, the abbreviation PCA is used for Plasencia, Chapter Acts). The act is transcribed on note 38.

⁷ Sanders MacFarland, pp. 330 ss.

Morales” is quoted by Juan Ruiz in 1513, most likely our composer⁸), and could also have been influenced by another Sevillian master, Peñalosa, thus linking him to this important generation of musicians. This, of course, supports K. Kreitner’s theory recently published⁹, and concords with the hypothesis put forth in his study, suggesting that Morales should be considered more as a late 15th-century rather than a “pure” 16th-century composer. Since a number of ambiguities concerning musicians quoted as “Morales” in the Sevillian sources have been conclusively cleared up by Juan Ruiz in his monography on Seville’s cathedral, I will only mention that the organist “Morales” quoted by Elústiza and Castrillo¹⁰ and by Stevenson¹¹ is “Rodrigo” and not “Cristóbal”, and that the “Morales” quoted by Kreitner¹² in E-TZ2/3 (Magnificat) is Rodrigo also¹³.

Morales did likely attend Charles V and Isabel of Portugal’s wedding at Seville in 1526 as Moll and Stevenson suggest. That would have provided him with the opportunity to acquaint himself with Gombert, his music and other musicians from the same circle. That time and place would also have allowed him to attend Germaine de Foix’s marriage to the Duke of Calabria, a well-known music-lover and later protector of the vihuelist Milán. As a member of the Papal Choir, Morales met Emperor Charles the Fifth probably three times: in 1536 (during Charles’s visit to Rome)¹⁴, in 1538 (to celebrate the treaty of Nice, for which he composed his *Iubilate Deo*) and most likely in Genova in 1543, before the interview between the emperor and the Pope in Buseto¹⁵. As we know, his *Missarum liber primus* was dedicated to Cosme de Medici, married to the daughter of the viceroy of Naples, from the Alvarez de Toledo’s family. After his Roman period, Morales worked for the Duke of Arcos from 1549 to 1551. Morales’s personal links with nobiliar houses were thus fluent and significant, as other scholars such as Sanders MacFarland have strongly pointed out.

Morales’s first position as *maestro de capilla* was that of Avila Cathedral, which he held -according to Spanish musicologist Mitjana- on August 8th 1526¹⁶. Unfortunately

⁸ Juan Ruiz Jiménez, *La librería de canto de órgano. Creación y pervivencia del repertorio del Renacimiento en la actividad musical de la catedral de Sevilla*, Sevilla: Junta de Andalucía, 2007, p. 155.

⁹ Kenneth Kreitner, “Two Early Morales Magnificat Settings”, *Cristóbal de Morales. Sources...* pp. 21-61, particularly p. 22.

¹⁰ *Antología musical*, Barcelona: Rafael Casulleras, 1933, p. LI.

¹¹ Stevenson, p. 25.

¹² Kreitner, pp. 27-31.

¹³ Ruiz Jiménez, p. 139.

¹⁴ Capp. Sist. Diar. I, fol. 28v.

¹⁵ Capp. Sist. Diar. II, fol. 35v (“Morales obtinuit licentiam pro vno mense Ianue”, probably obtained to go to Genoa). New information about Morales in Rome is discussed in Cristina Diego Pacheco, “La Chapelle Papale et les musiciens espagnols à Rome”, Caen, PUC (in press).

¹⁶ Mitjana, Rafael, “Nuevas noticias referentes a la vida y las obras de Cristóbal de Morales”, *Música Sacro-Hispana* XII (1919), pp. 15-17.

however, this postulate can no longer be verified, as the sources that led Mitjana to state this in 1919¹⁷ are lost today. Yet, if his sources are not to be brought into question given the accuracy of Mitjana's work, it could also be assumed that the two Morales's are not the same, since it should be kept in mind that this surname is very common throughout the Iberian Peninsula. Mitjana's research similarly stated that three unknown masses of Morales were mentioned in an inventory of Avila Cathedral, further corroborating claims of the composer's stay there. But again, this information can no longer be verified due to the disappearance of this inventory¹⁸. Following again Moll's own research on Avila's archives, a new chapelmaster, Barrionuevo, obtained in 1528 a permission to quit Avila for 20 days¹⁹, a fact which has often been forgotten, implying that Morales could only have been appointed prior to that date.

Morales in Plasencia

What is absolutely certain though is that Morales was Plasencia Cathedral's *maestro de capilla*, although unfortunately no music from him has been found in its archives²⁰.

The first reference to Cristóbal de Morales in Plasencia can be found in the "libro de hacienda" number 6 of the Cathedral²¹. While this book has surprisingly been ignored by Stevenson, Moll, Llorens, López-Calo and other researchers, it nonetheless constitutes the only known source in the cathedral archives for the year 1527, since volume 7 of the Chapter Acts (1514-1535) is devoid of any information on that particular year. Upon studying the book, we discovered that the official chapelmaster in Plasencia, despite having been given leave in 1525 for an "unlimited amount of time"²², was Juan Altamirano until at least August 16th 1527²³, and that Morales already held that very title on October 11th

¹⁷ Avila cathedral, Chapter Acts, 1529-1533, fol. 42v.

¹⁸ The information was quoted in "Le Ménestrel" (4368/3) on January 16th 1920, p. 27: "Les actes capitulaires du chapitre de la cathédrale d'Avila semblent, selon Rafael Mitjana, constituer un domaine d'investigation des plus suggestifs. Ils révèlent notamment la présence du glorieux Cristóbal de Morales, comme maître de chapelle de ladite cathédrale, en date du 8 août 1526, détail complètement inconnu des historiens, paraît-il. [...] Mais le plus palpitant est la mention, dans l'inventaire des livres de la cathédrale (rédigé vers 1440 [*sic* for 1540]), entre deux livres de messes des flamands Josquin des Prés et Baudin, d'un ouvrage de trois messes inconnues de Morales".

¹⁹ Moll, p. 5.

²⁰ A music catalogue of the cathedral can be found in José López-Calo, "El archivo de Música de la catedral de Plasencia", *Anuario Musical* V (1950), pp. 147-168. The most complete catalogue of this archive is however the one published by Juan Manuel Ramos Berrocoso "Índice de los fondos del archivo musical de la catedral de Plasencia", *Ars et sapientia* 16 (2005), pp. 51-78, partly completed in "Instrumentos bibliográficos para el estudio de la música en la catedral de Plasencia", *Memoria Histórica de Plasencia y su comarca*, Plasencia: Universidad Popular, Concejalía de Cultura, 2006, pp. 137-144.

²¹ Libro de Hacienda, vol. 6, (1502-1527, no foliation).

²² PCA, January 19th 1525: "Dieron licencia a Altamirano, maestro de capilla de la dcha Yglesia, para que este absente desta çibdad hasta que le llamen que venga, la qual licencia le dieron por algunas consideraciones que les movieron".

²³ Libro de Hacienda, vol. 6, (no foliation).

1527²⁴, probably obtaining a 50.000 *maravedis* salary²⁵. There is therefore no doubt that the composer arrived in Plasencia at some time in September 1527.

What did Plasencia look like at that time? While today Plasencia is a small and virtually insignificant town in northern Extremadura, a region located in the western part of Spain, during the first half of the 16th century, it and its surrounding region were home to a significant number of conquistadors with the richest of them ordering the construction of new chapels and palaces under their sponsorship²⁶. The polyphonic chapel appears in cathedral documents for the first time in 1444, and in 1505 the chapel was deeply restructured by the bishop himself (Gutierre de Toledo, a son of the first duke of Alba by the way) who had decided to dismiss a number of singers: the decision was firmly condemned by the chapel members who did nevertheless opt to rearrange the whole and recruit new singers offering them very high salaries. Among those singers were Juan Vázquez (appointed contralto in 1511²⁷, probably a homonym of the famous composer²⁸) and Alonso de Baena (who left his job as a singer at Granada Cathedral to go to Plasencia in 1556²⁹). Two permanent organists worked for the cathedral, a stable number since the beginning of the 16th century. Among these, were performers of well-known organ dynasties such as the Soto family. During Morales's *magisterio*, the organist was Luis de Oliver³⁰. As for the four choirboys working at the polyphonic chapel (as the number is clearly indicated in a 1523 act, also quoted by Moll³¹), they were recruited following the same directives as other cathedrals with the *maestro* being in charge of tending to their education. One last category of musicians must also be mentioned when considering Morales's time in Plasencia: the *ministriles*. Although the first record of instrumentalists working directly for the cathedral date from 1537³², many were recruited for the *Corpus*

²⁴ Libro de Hacienda, vol. 6 (no foliation): "En Plasencia a xj de octubre de mil U xxvij años estando los muy reverendos señores presidente dean y cabildo de la santa iglesia de plasencia ayuntados capitularmente según costumbre en la capilla de san pablo sita en el claustro de la dicha iglesia [...] estando presentes en el dicho claustro [...] pedro de bueso e xtval de morales racionero [...]"

²⁵ This was the salary of his predecessor and his successor: In 1532, the new *maestro* obtains a 50.000 *maravedis* salary, "same as his predecessor [Morales]" (PCA, February 19th 1532).

²⁶ Some of these conquistadors are Alonso de Monroy, who conquered Chile in the name of the Spanish crown; Loaysa, who attempted to conquer the Moluccas (though his expedition ended in failure); and Fernández de Paniagua and his brother, who brought peace to Peru following the rebellion led by the Trujillo-born Gonzalo Pizarro (a town near Plasencia and belonging to its diocese).

²⁷ See Román Gómez Guillén, "Cristóbal de Morales, Maestro de Capilla en la Catedral de Plasencia", *Revista de Estudios Extremeños* XXVIII (1972), p. 349.

²⁸ Stevenson, p. 385 (note 32). It is interesting to note that Vázquez was master of the choirboys in Avila in 1530 (Stevenson, p. 27).

²⁹ López-Calo, p. 17.

³⁰ PCA, January 20th 1525, fol. 118 and PCA, October 23rd 1534, fol. 191v (Also quoted by Moll, p. 13).

³¹ Moll, p. 11.

³² PCA, January 12th 1537 (Also Calo, p. 25).

Christi festivities (for example, for the processions held on 1517, 1532, 1535, etc³³) as was likely the case during Morales's stay in Plasencia - though no documentation to confirm this has yet been found. The presence of *ministriles* at the music chapel is firmly established from 1555 onwards with the instruments played being *bajones*, *chirimías*, flutes and, quite surprisingly, "vihuelas de arco"³⁴.

References to Morales in the Plasencia chapter book of acts are unfortunately not very informative about the 1527-1530 period. He did however seem to have taken his duty as a *racionero* to heart for more than a year since his name constantly appears at most of the chapter meetings between the end of 1527 and April 1529. Morales is quoted as having been given the right to vote in the cathedral chapter³⁵ and as being a "*racionero*"³⁶ ("prebendary"), a detail that does not necessarily imply that he might be at least 26 years old, as McFarland states³⁷.

On May 15th 1529, permission was granted to the *racionero* Morales to take leave from Plasencia. The usual documental procedure being to first copy the *formulae* for the absences and then add the specific details, we are unable to determine the length, reason, nor destination of his first leave-of-absence since the scribe had omitted to fill in the information³⁸. Not a single act mentions Morales's presence at any of the chapter meetings as of this date until February 4th 1530. Nevertheless, information provided by this latter act is particularly pertinent since it establishes two vital facts: firstly, Morales obtained a second leave-of-absence in order to go to Seville for a month - "the place where he was born"- to "attend to his sister's wedding" since "she had lost her father"³⁹; and secondly, he was no

³³ Calo, pp. 32-33.

³⁴ See López-Calo, pp. 25-30.

³⁵ This privilege took end after the death of Bishop Carvajal (1559), when it was decided that only dignitaries and chanoines could vote: "En este tiempo se determino, con parecer de doctissimos Maestros de la Vniuersidad de Salamanca. Que en la administracion del Obispado, Sede vacante, solamente tienen voto las Dignidades, y Canonigos de la dicha Iglesia in sacris constituydos, y ninguno otro, ni los Racioneros aunque por costumbre le tienen en la administracion de la favrica y rentas de la Mesa Capitular" (Fray Alonso Fernández, *Historia y Anales de la ciudad y obispado de Plasencia*, Madrid: Juan González, 1627, p. 194).

³⁶ As *racionero*, he took part in the vote for collegial decisions concerning both the economic and governmental life of the cathedral. He also voted on and for the leaves of absence accorded to cathedral personnel; in major elections at the chapter for the nomination of the *majordomos*; and his advice was crucial for the recruitment of singers (for instance, that of Hernándo Pérez or "tiple" on December 14th 1528).

³⁷ Sanders MacFarland, p. 330.

³⁸ PCA, Mai 15th 1529, fol. 136: "Este dia el dicho cabildo e los dichos señores dieron licencia de su pedimento al señor racionero Morales por daquí a [blank] e que le sea contada la prima" (Moll incorrectly dates this act on Mai 7th 1529: "Morales en España", p. 9).

³⁹ PCA, February 4th 1530, fol. 139v: "En Plasencia biernes quat° dias del mes de Hebrer° de mil dxxx años estando los muy re[veren]dos señores presidente dean e cabildo d la Sta iglesia de plasencia ayuntados capitularmente en la capilla de san Pablo sita en el claustro de la dicha Iglesia estando presentes en el dicho cabildo don luis de caceres arcediano de t[ru]jillo [etc.]... dixeron que por quanto Xtoval de Morales, ma° de capilla de la dicha Iglesia les avia dcho en el dcho Cabildo como el queria yr a Sevilla donde es natural a entender en cosas que le cumplen e especialmente para entender en casar e desposar a una hermana que quedo huerfana despues que su padre fallecio que para yr les avia pedido e pidio licencia por tanto los dchos

longer a “*racionero*”. Cited only as a “chapelmaster” in the act, Morales had been deposed of those duties⁴⁰. But remarkably worth mentioning is the fact that following this decision, which would reduce his 60.000 maravedis salary, was the decision to add a gratification of 40 gold ducats to be paid to the composer over two years from the rents of the fabric⁴¹.

Hence it is intriguing to note that the chapter established both a sanction and a gratification for Morales, a paradox that would continue the following year. On March 31st 1530 Morales had not yet returned and was once again simply quoted as a “chapelmaster” and not as a “*racionero*”. Once again the chapter decided to punish his unauthorized extended absence through a substantial financial penalty: his salary would be reduced *pro rata* for every missing working day⁴². This was, of course, a severe measure aimed at putting pressure on him and at urging him to return immediately. What happened next is both surprising and unexpected: only a month later, on April 7th of the same year, the chapter decided, for “some reasons” that none of his salary would be retained⁴³. Might this have been to coax him into staying on at the Cathedral? Or was the lack of justification surrounding this radical change of mind by the chapter a result of the intervention against its will of Morales’ powerful patron, Gutierre Vargas de Carvajal, bishop of Plasencia from 1524 to 1559? The son of Francisco de Vargas, minister (*privado*) of Emperor Charles the Fifth, Gutierre was a highly educated man⁴⁴ who participated actively in the Council of

señores dixeron que le daban e dieron la dicha licencia por tiempo de un mes que empieza a correr desde el día que partiere de esta cibdad”.

⁴⁰ Maybe because of his absences: it is plausible that he was absent from 1529 to 1530. ACP, February 4th 1530, fol. 140: “En este dicho día mes e año susodichos los dichos señores en el dicho Cabildo dixeron que por algunas cabsas e consideraciones que a sus Mercedes movian especialmente porque X^oval. de Morales, Maestro de Capilla de la dicha Iglesia, a cabsa de haber sido amovido de la media racion que en la dicha iglesia poseia, se le habia restringido el partido e salario en menos suma de aquello que por ella llevaba e ganaba, habido respecto a lo que despues se le asigno ... avian e ovieron por bien por via de remuneracion e gratificacion de le dar como le mandaron librar quarenta ducados de oro o su valor que le sean pagados de las rentas de la fabrica en dos años conviene a saber en este presente la mitad e la otra mitad en el siguiente de mdxxxi por estos dos años solamente”.

⁴¹ Stevenson wrongly suggests that this gratification was made for his sister’s wedding (Stevenson, *La música...*, p. 28).

⁴² PCA, March 31st 1530, fol. 141v: “En este dicho día mes e años susodichos [March 31st 1530] los dichos señores presidente dean e cabildo de la dicha iglesia ayuntados capitularmente en la dicha capilla de san Pablo, dixeron que atento que ovieron dado licencia a Xtoval de Morales maestro de capilla de la dicha iglesia por tiempo de treinta dias para yr a la ciudad de sevilla a donde se partio y el termino es cumplido e no ha benydo de que el servicio de la dicha iglesia a resebido detrimento en lo que toca a su cargo e oficio por tanto que mandavan e mandaron que todo el tiempo que ha faltado e faltare hasta que vuelva le sea descontado de su salario de todo lo que montare por cada año como lo gana”.

⁴³ PCA, April 7th 1530, fol. 141v: “En Plasencia sidos siete dias del mes de abril del dicho año de mil uxxx años estando los muy reverendos señores presendete dean e cabildo de la dicha santa iglesia de plasencia ayuntados capitularmente en la capilla de san Pablo sita en el claostro de la dicha Iglesia estando presentes en el dicho cabildo... dixeron aue por quanto ovieron mandado descontar al maestro de capilla Xval de Morales todo el tiempo que ha faltado e faltase que agora por algunas rezones que a ellos les movian mandavan e mandaron que no se le descuente cosa alguna” [On margin: “que no se descuente a Morales”].

⁴⁴ In 1650, the Carvajal family donated the family library to the San Vicente convent, containing almost 3000 volumes; among these, we highly supposed that bishop Gutierre was an important buyer. See Ricardo Luengo

Trent. With an “inclination for war during his youth⁴⁵”, he was fascinated with and involved in sea expeditions - he financed an exploratory project to the Cape of Good Hope⁴⁶. His links with the New World were also developed, as was the case with most prominent families of Extremadura, since he was the brother-in-law of the viceroy of Peru⁴⁷. While the close relationship between Morales and his patron cannot be fully corroborated after consultation of cathedral sources, there are sufficient indicators to show that Morales was strongly supported by bishop Carvajal. On the other hand, tensions between the bishop and the chapter at that time were not unusual. The chapter even decided to send a few years later the dean Diego de Xerez to the Royal Court in order to complain of the abusive authority of the bishop. The meeting of the chapter decided to keep this mission “secret” and to impose a 200 reales sanction to anyone revealing this particular affair⁴⁸.

The last mention made in the chapter book of acts about the chapelmaster (whose name is not given) is dated on April 29th 1530⁴⁹. It concerns the *maestro*'s complaint about the absences of some of the singers when he was supposed to give them everyday music lessons. The act bluntly names singers Ortiz, Roa, Serradilla and “*el capado*” (“castrato”: this is one of the first Spanish references to a castrato by the way) and suggests a 2-*ducados* punishment for them. The disrespect shown by contralto singer Ortiz towards the *maestro* (whose name is not given: was it Morales or a substitute?) may be explained by his own ambitions at the music chapel. On August 25th 1531 he was offered a chaplaincy for his “sufficiency” and “ability” as well as his “good behaviour”⁵⁰. From that time on no other

Pacheco, *Libros y lectores en Plasencia (siglos XVI-XVIII)*, Cáceres: Universidad de Extremadura, 2002, pp. 258 ss. After our own consultation of the catalogue (Cáceres Historical Archives, leg. 1074), we have found Salinas's *De musica libri Septem*, and Boetius *De Musica* (the document has no foliation to locate these items), maybe acquired by Gutierre himself.

⁴⁵ Fray Alonso Hernández, *Historia y Anales...*p. 192b.

⁴⁶ Rosario Rubio de Orellana Pizarro, “Don Gutierre de Vargas y Carvajal: Iglesia, Mar y Casa Real”, XXXV Coloquios Históricos de Extremadura, Trujillo: 2006, pp. 595-602. See also Alfonso Párraga Sánchez, “Semblanzas de don Gutierre de Vargas Carvajal, obispo de Plasencia y de su expedición al Estrecho de Magallanes”, *Memoria Histórica de Plasencia y su comarca*, Plasencia: Concejalía, 2007, pp. 71-84.

⁴⁷ His sister Leonor de Vargas married Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy of Peru.

⁴⁸ PCA, January 10th 1535.

⁴⁹ PCA, April 29th 1530, fol. 142: “En Plasencia viernes xxix das del mes de abril de mill uxxx años estando los muy reverendos señores dean e cabildo de la santa iglesia de plasencia ayuntados a su cabildo en la capilla de san pablo sita en el claustro de la dicha iglesia estando presente en el dicho cabildo... dixeron que atento que el maestro de capilla les refirio en el dicho cabildo que abia que los cantores de la dicha iglesia no venian a tomar licion cada un dia del mes e semana el no podia complir e no queria cumplir oficio portando los dichos señores proveyendo en lo susdicho mandaron nota fecha por my el dicho notario a los dichos cantores e especialmente a Ortiz e Roa e Serradilla e el capado que vengan cada dia a tomar licion del dicho maestro so pena que no viniendo aya cada uno por cada vez que faltare dos reales aplicados para la dicha iglesia que todos los otros cantores clerigos e beneficiados de la dicha iglesia questan salaridados vengan un dia cada semana a cantar e proveer lo que se ha de cantar que queste dia sea el jueves salvo si oviere ynpedimento justo que aquel dia no se pueda licionar que sea otra dia que el dicho maestro pareciese e les pidiese”.

⁵⁰ PCA, August 25th 1531, fol. 150.

information on Morales is recorded. But there is mention on October 24th 1531 of the chapel “lacking a *maestro de capilla*”⁵¹, which is vital information which has been sometimes overlooked. This same act indicates further on that the provisional *maestro* is Oliva, a position that he might have executed for some time since the chapter states that he is no longer suitable for that post⁵². Once again it would seem that the singer Ortiz mentioned above took advantage of the situation, and on December 9th 1531⁵³, helped the chapter to “seek singers and a new chapelmaster”, a task for which he received 6 *ducados*.

This would suggest that Morales was no longer in Plasencia as of October 1531, and the lack of any reference to him from late August onwards would imply that he had permanently left Plasencia by September 1531. Furthermore, the acts state that Diego Bruselas was appointed chapelmaster⁵⁴ on February 9th 1532, but did not come⁵⁵, leaving the position open to Villafranca who became the new maestro on June 7th 1532 “with the same conditions as those given to Morales”, a fact which leads us to believe that Morales was his immediate predecessor⁵⁶.

Given the heterogeneity of the information put forth by the various biographers surrounding Morales’ time in Plasencia, it would appear only logical to re-examine their accuracy. Moll states that the first notice of Morales dates from February 14th 1528⁵⁷, and so do Llorens⁵⁸ and O. Rees⁵⁹. However, the New Grove Online (written by Stevenson and Planchart) surprisingly states that Morales arrived in Plasencia in 1529⁶⁰. It can only be assumed that MacFarland⁶¹ and others⁶² took the 1529 error to be true and that this was the

⁵¹ PCA, October 24th 1531, fol. 152v: “En Plasencia xxiiij dias de este dicho mes [October] e año estando los señores presidente e dean e cabildo de la Santa iglesia de plasencia ayuntados capitularmente en la capilla de san pablo sita en el claostro de la dicha iglesia... dixeron que por quanto la iglesia no es suplida en lo que toca a la capilla que ordenaban e ordenaron que [Gurria?] llebe el salario que se la da hasta el día de ahora he de oy adelante por hazerle bien por que es persona honrada e clérigo racionero es en voluntad que cada año de agora en adelante se le den xv ducados hasta tanto que se le de una capellania del coro e dandosela no llebe nada de la fabrica e sea la obligacion de cantar que tiene en el coro”. The particular task of Gurria [?] in the choir (beyond being a singer and a future chaplain) is not clearly specified.

⁵² PCA, October 24th 1531, fol. 152v: “Ordenaron que por quanto la iglesia tiene falta de tipples y oliva que sirve al facistol no es suficiente que desde agora se aya por despedido y que le hazen gracia de lo que le debe de su salario”. This indication explains why Oliva is quoted by López-Caló as a “former chapelmaster” in *La música...*, p. 22.

⁵³ PCA, fol. 158.

⁵⁴ PCA, February 9th 1532, fol. 162v (Caló incorrectly indicates March 13th 1532). Bruselas is given a 50.000 *maravedis* salary.

⁵⁵ In a note on the margin of the act quoted *supra* we can read: “Bruxelas said on March 14th that he could not come” (A xiiij de março escrevio el dcho Bruxelas como no podia venir”. See also Moll, “Cristóbal de Morales...”, p. 13).

⁵⁶ Information also given by Moll, p. 10.

⁵⁷ Moll, p. 7.

⁵⁸ *Diccionario de la Música Española e Iberoamericana*, Madrid: Sociedad General de Autores y Editores, vol. 7, 2000, p. 761 (J.M. Llorens Cisteró).

⁵⁹ *Cristóbal de Morales: Sources...* p. XXX.

⁶⁰ Also in *The New Grove dictionary of music and musicians* (2nd ed.), Londres: Macmillan, 2001, vol. 17, p. 85.

⁶¹ “Within the circle...” p. 325.

result of the misreading of Robert Stevenson's work which put Morales as "already" in Plasencia in 1529"⁶³ but which also clearly stated that Morales probably moved from Avila "in early 1528"⁶⁴.

Another ambiguous point of interest lies in his departure date from Plasencia. Moll assumes that Morales worked in Plasencia until December 1531⁶⁵ because a new chapelmaster was sought at that time. Rees states that he left in April 1530, "after an absence of perhaps two months in Seville"⁶⁶. Stevenson states that he stayed in Plasencia until December the 9th 1531 when he "resigned from the post"⁶⁷. MacFarland subscribes to this latter hypothesis, but assumes that he quit the town "before 1531"⁶⁸ while Nelson writes that his departure from Plasencia took place in late December 1531⁶⁹. Not all the aforementioned information is so contradictory. Morales did no doubt work in Plasencia from September/October 1527 until maybe September/October 1531. But it must be remembered that Morales was no longer directly or indirectly mentioned in the chapter acts from April 1530 onwards, even though the lack of a *maestro de capilla* was not mentioned before October 1531. And, last but not least, another piece of confusion is given by the fact that many scholars still misread the name of this town, spelling "Palencia" (castillian town close to Valladolid) instead of "Plasencia"⁷⁰, a fact that aggravates the confusion on his early biography.

After Plasencia

After his nomination, the first entry of the Capella Sistina diary concerning Morales indicates his arrival from Naples⁷¹ suggesting a link between the composer and the viceroy of Naples Pedro Alvarez de Toledo, as Stevenson and MacFarland state⁷². Two elements could support this hypothesis: first, the *Missarum liber primus* is dedicated to Cosme of Medicis, married to the viceroy's daughter, and second, the bishop of Plasencia during Morales's stay in this town, Gutierre Vargas de Carvajal, was a member of the Alvarez de Toledo's family. This hypothesis, yet to be explored and justified, would refute Nelson's

⁶² See, for instance, the article "Morales" in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik begründet von Friedrich Blume* [MGG], 2nd revised edition, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel, 1994-).

⁶³ Stevenson, *La música...* p. 26.

⁶⁴ Stevenson, "Cristóbal de Morales (ca. 1500-1553): Light of Spain in Music", *Inter-American Music review* 13/2 (1993), p. 11.

⁶⁵ Moll, "Cristóbal de Morales...", p. 10.

⁶⁶ *Cristóbal de Morales: Sources...* p. XXXI.

⁶⁷ NGO. Also *The New Grove Dictionary...*, p. 86.

⁶⁸ "Within the circle...", p. 325.

⁶⁹ "Was Morales...", p. 365.

⁷⁰ Errors in the spelling of Plasencia are too often to be all submitted (Noone, Rees, MacFarland, etc.).

⁷¹ Capp. Sist. Diar. I, fol. 20 : "Die sabati XXIII octobris 1535: Moralis advenit de Napoli".

⁷² Stevenson, *La música...* p. 31, MacFarland, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

suggestion that Morales stayed in Valencia in the early 30s⁷³, unless he had travelled to Italy via this town.

Morales's Works during his Stay in Plasencia

Until a recently, there was virtually no evidence of any creative activity of Morales prior to his stay in Italy. But it is a very plausible conjecture that Morales was already a highly skilled and respected musician and composer prior to his leaving for Italy, and more precisely, during his time spent in Plasencia⁷⁴. Three motets found in the E-Vc5 manuscript⁷⁵, conserved at Valladolid cathedral and that are believed to have been written during that particular period (“In diebus illis”, “Apostole Christe Jacobe” and “Ego infelix peccator”), back this postulate. However, this article’s aim is not to delve too long into their content⁷⁶, but to briefly expose some of their characteristics in order to place them chronologically.

“In diebus illis” (not attributed in E-Vc5 manuscript) is a highly interesting motet because on the one hand, it does not appear in any current catalogue of the composer (Martin Ham’s Worklist excepted⁷⁷) and on the other hand, there exists a keyboard version which can be found in the first printed book source for keyboard music known in the Iberian Peninsula (i.e. Gonzalo de Baena’s *Arte novamente inventada para aprender a tañer*⁷⁸).

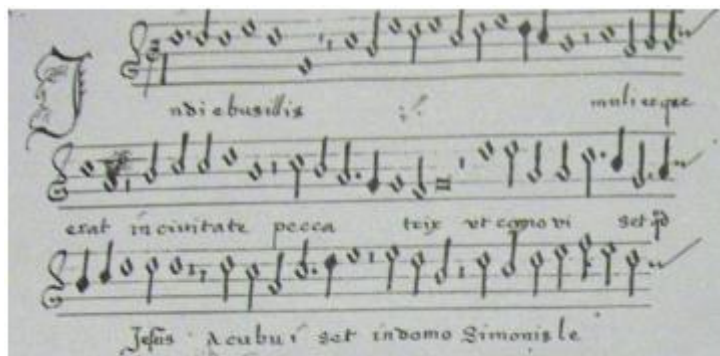


Image 1: In diebus illis, Superius (with permission)

⁷³ See Nelson, “Was Morales...”, pp. 370 ss.

⁷⁴ A pre-Roman Magnificat *Primi Toni* was first noticed by Cristina Diego Pacheco, *Un nouvel apport à l'étude de la musique de la Renaissance en Espagne: le manuscrit 5 de la cathédrale de Valladolid et son contexte*, PhD, Université de La Sorbonne, 2005, pp. 22-29) and later by Kenneth Kreitner (“Two Early...”, p. 25).

⁷⁵ Fols. 79v-81; 77v-79 and 32v-34 respectively. We are preparing an edition of these motets to be published soon.

⁷⁶ They are discussed in Cristina Diego Pacheco, *Un nouvel apport...* chapter 8, and “Cristóbal de Morales y la circulación de música manuscrita: recuperación de algunos motets presumiblemente anteriores al periodo romano”, *Revista de Musicología* XXVIII/2 (2005), pp. 1487-1499.

⁷⁷ Discussed in *Cristóbal de Morales: Sources...* pp. 283-284.

⁷⁸ Lisbon: Germão Galharde, 1540. Motet *In diebus illis* appears in fol. 41 attributed to “Morales”. This is the only work attributed to Morales in the printed volume.

While the only remaining copy of this instrumental publication can be found at the Royal Library of Madrid and is dated 1540, it is important to note that the license for the book was conferred in 1536⁷⁹ and that the front page of this volume contains the initials of the engraver (F.D.) and the year 1534, which would have further delayed by two years the date of publication of the book. One could then suppose that there might have been three editions of this volume dated 1534, 1536 and 1540. If we accept the hypothesis of a 1534 volume⁸⁰, it would be reasonable to think that the works printed would have already been in circulation at least a decade before. This is corroborated by the volume's repertoire which contains works mostly from the generation of Josquin, Compère, Obrecht, etc. and the Spaniards Peñalosa, Urrede, Escobar, etc. That a work by Morales appears in this book illustrates and supports his links to the Peñalosa generation and his prominence as a composer. Of course, a motet with an instrumental version could not have circulated had it not been quite well known.

“Apostole Christi Jacobe” (attributed to Morales in E-Vc5) could convincingly have been written by the composer in Spain, given the country's strong devotion to Saint James, which was much less important in Italy. This is supported by the listing of this motet in the inventory of the now lost choirbook 1 of the cathedral in Tarazona⁸¹, which also contains music from the Peñalosa generation and which would again link Morales's work to composers from that period. With the veneration of Saint James being as many know, especially acute in Spain, a motet dedicated to this Saint could have been written almost anywhere and under the auspices of any given cathedral. Plasencia would not have been an exception to the rule. In the 1622 Annals of the cathedral, Fray Alonso Fernández highlights the city's somewhat profound devotion to the Virgin Mary (to whom the cathedral is dedicated) as well as to Saint James, partly because Plasencia depended on the Santiago archbishopric⁸². The Saint James church was located *extramuros*⁸³, which implies that it constituted a destination for traditional processions to honour the Saint, a fact which is reinforced by the structure of Morales's work which is articulated homophonically

⁷⁹ The printed book was “discovered” by Alejandro Luis Iglesias, who generously allowed us to examine his preliminary report on this volume. See also Tess Knighton, “A Newly discovered Keyboard Source (Gonzalo de Baena's *Arte nouamente inuentada para aprender a tanger*, Lisbon 1540): A Preliminary Report” *Plainsong and Medieval Music* V/1 (1996), pp. 81-112. See also her articles on Gonzalo de Baena in *Diccionario...* and *NGO*.

⁸⁰ This hypothesis could be supported by the lack of the first five folios in the 1540 volume, usually devoted to the license, approval, introductory verses, etc.

⁸¹ Number 45, Morales: “Apostole Christi”, fol. 115, book 3. See Pedro Calahorra, “Los fondos musicales en el siglo XVI de la catedral de Tarazona. I. Inventarios”, *Nassarre* VIII/1 (1992), pp. 9-56 (information on this motet on p. 16).

⁸² Fray Alonso Fernández, *Historia...* p. 31a.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 3a and 3b.

around a series of melodic repetitions on a versified text (i.e. a style that very much resembles a processional hymn⁸⁴).

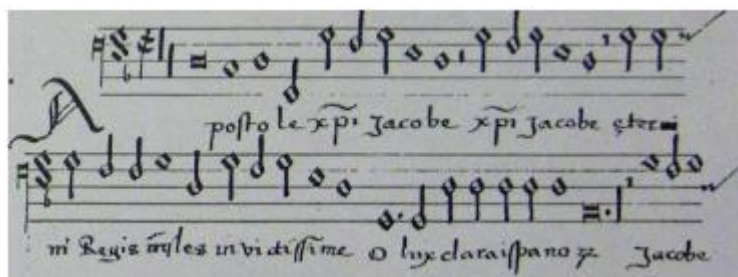


Image 2: Apostole Christi Jacobe, Bassus (with permission)

As regards “Ego infelix peccator”, the other possible pre-italian motet, the only concordance found thus far is with the anonymous motet in the OpBP40 manuscript containing a number of works by Morales and Guerrero⁸⁵. While discussing stylistic attributes and similarities is always delicate, it must nonetheless be said that this work appears to be an early maturity motet written for low voices, using frequently disjointed intervals in a less “palestrinian” melodic line, which is in visible contrast to the style of his later works⁸⁶.

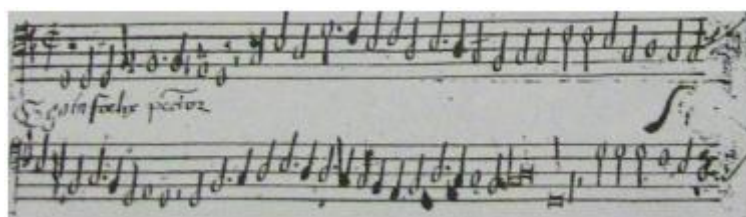


Image 3: Ego infelix peccator, Tenor (with permission)

Let us now try to imagine how these three motets, which might have been composed in Plasencia, came to be copied into Valladolid manuscript EVc5. To do so, we will consider the very real possibility that his works transited from Plasencia to Valladolid via Palencia Cathedral. However, in order to establish such a conjecture, a link must first be established between Palencia and Valladolid.

⁸⁴ For Samuel Rubio, however, this motet is not a hymn since it belongs to the category of “local liturgy” (Samuel Rubio, *Cristóbal de Morales. Estudio crítico de su polifonía*, El Escorial: Biblioteca “La ciudad de Dios”, 1969, p. 196).

⁸⁵ The manuscript is discussed in José María Llorens, “El MM.40 de la Biblioteca Municipal de Oporto fuente única de la misa l’Homme Armé de F. Guerrero, Misa Pequeña de Morales y de otras novedades”, *Anuario Musical* XLIX (1994), pp. 75-102 (Fols. 153v-154: *Apostole Christi Jacobe*).

⁸⁶ Martín Ham suggests conversely that the motet can presumably date from his Papal period, since Ivo Barry, singer at the Papal chapel at the same time as Morales, wrote a similar motet on the same text (Martín Ham, “Morales: The Canon”, *Cristóbal de Morales: Sources...* p. 283).

How could Morales's works travel from Plasencia to Palencia? My hypothesis is based upon the relationship that Morales nurtured with the chapelmasters in Palencia and more precisely with fellow composer Alonso Ordóñez who was born in Plasencia and, before becoming chapelmaster in Santiago de Compostela in 1529, was a choirboy in his hometown cathedral at the very same time that Morales was chapelmaster there. Acts of the Santiago chapter later showed that he frequently came back to his native town where he and Morales more than likely met on several occasions⁸⁷. Moreover, Alonso Ordóñez's brother, Pedro, was a singer at the Papal Court in 1539 where he met Morales and he may also have met him in Plasencia where he too had more than likely served as a choirboy. Given that both of the Ordóñez brothers were successively chapelmasters in Palencia - the former from 1541 to 1551 and the latter from 1551 until his death - it would seem perfectly natural that one or the other at one point in time had brought some of their choirmaster's works from their native town to Palencia. This hypothesis is made all the more plausible by the fact that the only compositions conserved by Alonso Ordóñez are precisely copied in manuscript E-Vc5⁸⁸.

The link between Palencia and Valladolid is quite easy to establish considering the fact that Valladolid was a collegiate church until 1595 and, from an ecclesiastical standpoint, came under the jurisdiction of Palencia Cathedral. Thus, it is of no surprise from a musical point of view, that there was much evidence to support that the two churches frequently exchanged musicians⁸⁹ and that a number of musical copists from Palencia equally worked for the Valladolid Collegiate Church where there was no *scriptorium*. We have, for instance, found a contract in which the "music writer" (*scriptor de libros*) Francisco Martín from Palencia received 160 *maravedís* in 1559 for writing music for the Valladolid Cathedral⁹⁰. Another example is that of Juan Ruiz, a Palencia copist who was hired in 1575 to "prepare two choral books with the new prayers"⁹¹. It would thus seem evident that an exchange of musicians, music and choral books between the two churches was commonplace, thus fueling the argument that the composer's music would have circulated from Palencia to Valladolid.

⁸⁷ See López-Calo, article "Santiago de Compostela", *Diccionario...*, vol. 9, pp. 759a-776b (especialmente p. 761b).

⁸⁸ "Iste est Alfei Jacobus" (fols. 43v-45); "Salve Regina" (fols. 45v-50); and "Vias tuas Domine" (fols. 55v-57).

⁸⁹ The examples are numerous: on October 14th 1552 the singers of Palencia cathedral are allowed "to serve the Valladolid celebration for cardinal Tavera's funeral"; on June 22nd 1582 some musicians are asked to leave for Valladolid in order to sing for the "mass that will be given by the [Palencia] bishop", etc. Quotations are taken from López-Calo, *La música en la catedral de Palencia*, Palencia: Institución "Pedro Téllez de Meneses", Diputación Provincial; 1980, p. 468 and 508 respectively.

⁹⁰ Libro de Hacienda, vol. 1556-1561, January 1st 1559.

⁹¹ Historical Archives of Valladolid [Archivo Histórico Provincial de Valladolid, Sección de Protocolos] 1-169, fol. 287.

To conclude, it must be stand to reason that these three motets were not the only works written by Morales before his stay in Rome. And I suggest that, apart from the specific motets he wrote for Toledo Cathedral after his stay in Rome, those manuscript sources that have traditionally been considered as works from the post-Roman period should in essence be re-examined in a new light. A perfect example of this would be his “missa cortilla” which can also be found in E-Vc5 and traditionally considered as a Toledan work. Although one cannot definitely state that it was written before Rome, it should no longer be assumed that any Morales manuscript can only belong to his post-Roman period and was thus composed in Toledo, Marchena or Málaga.

The archival material presented here offers new light about Morales’s early life and suggests how and why he and his music travelled from one place to another. For the first time, his activity in Plasencia is clearly exposed, shedding light on ambiguous dates and errors—so common in modern biographies of the composer. But above all, this study allows us to reexamine our judgments on the composer during his pre-Roman career, since it confirms that Morales was famous enough to have one of his motets included in an instrumental printed book, and thus strongly suggesting that his works were almost certainly well known in Spain before he left for Rome.