

# INDIGENOUS PRE-CUAUHTEMOC TEXTS

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forms are alien but the spirit and interpretation are indigenous. The same is true of instruments. Huichol, Tarahumara, or Chamula guitars or violins may look like their sixteenth-century European forebears, but it is practically impossible to play European music on them, since their makers have only their own music in mind in their tuning and construction. The same is true of the native's peculiar guttural voice production, meant for spontaneously impressive effect and not for high C's and roulades. It is this native essence, color, line, and style for which we should look when studying native music, and not its similarities with European music. Some Yaqui *Pascolas*, Otomi and Zapotec tunes or *sones*, Maya *bolonchons*, and even Chinantec music for the "Musical Bow" are inspired by past and current European popular songs.

The churchyard may have replaced the temple square; the jewels of contemporary dancers may be of tin and glass instead of precious stones, gold, and silver; sandals of soft deer-skin embroidered with gold may now be rough, heavy-soled boots—but the sense of line, color, and style of movement and the devotion that animated their ancestors is ever present.

Many musicians and dancers today keep the flame of ancient tradition alive. These artists create new tunes based on the old and preserve traditional steps, dancing patterns, and style of movement. Every dance or instrumental ensemble includes young men and children who absorb and carry on the old traditions. When asked how they were taught, they usually answer, "By listening, Señor. By listening and watching the Old Ones."

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