

THE METEORITES IN THE WORK OF GREGORIO VASQUEZ DE ARCE Y CEBALLOS AS EVIDENCE OF BOLIDE OVER BOGOTÁ

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RESUMEN

El tiempo del ruido es un fenómeno sónico escuchado en la región central de Colombia en 1687. Debido a su intensidad se mantuvo en la memoria de los colombianos por más de tres siglos. La descripción hecha por los cronistas de la época corresponde a los fenómenos producidos por el paso de un meteoroido en la atmósfera. Una búsqueda permitió encontrar una pintura del artista bogotano Gregorio Vásquez (1638-1711) en la que aparecen imágenes de ángeles lanzando piedras. De acuerdo con la cosmología la época en Bogotá, los ángeles eran los encargados de los movimientos de los cuerpos celestes.

ABSTRACT

The Time of Noise is one of the most outstanding events in the history of Bogotá. The sonic event occurred on March 9th of 1687. A search in the historical archive of Pontificia Universidad Javeriana led to a document written in 1691, in which the chroniclers described three loud explosions in a period from fifteen to thirty minutes, emitting sounds similar to war machines. In addition to listening to the sonic wave, the chroniclers highlighted a penetrating sulfur odor that polluted the air for several hours.

Key Words: history and philosophy of astronomy

The chroniclers of the colony period described accurately the phenomena related to the pass of a meteoroid over the skies of central Colombia. In the consulted documentation it is exposed that on March 9th night of 1687 a small comet or asteroid (meteoroid) entered the Earth's atmosphere, passed through and was possibly fragmented in Bogotá's sky. According to several authors, the effects caused by this type of phenomena are: 1. Explosions: caused by shock waves originated during the interaction of the object traveling at hypersonic speed. 2. Subsequent explosions in the form of echoes: they are attributed to boom of the objects originated by the fragmentation of the original body. 3. Whistles: they are heard simultaneously with the fireball. 4.

Sulfur odors, which in some cases may last for hours. Another clue confirming the astronomic origin of this event is a work of art by the painter Gregorio Vasquez de Arce and Ceballos, who lived in Bogotá between 1638 and 1710, was found along the research; it is titled Santiago patron de España (Saint James, the Patron Saint of Spain) and there is the image of three angels throwing stones from the sky to the earth. This image constitutes a very creative allegorical representation according to the cosmology of the time, in which the angels were the ones in charge of the movements of the celestial bodies according to the knowledge that was taught in Bogotá at that time.

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