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The *Son Jarocho* and *Fandango* Amidst Struggle and Social Movements:
Migratory Transformation and Reinterpretation of the *Son Jarocho* in La Nueva España,
México, and the United States

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor
of Philosophy in Ethnomusicology

by

Alexandro David Hernández

2014

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2014

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The *Son Jarocho* and *Fandango* Amidst Struggle and Social Movements:
Migratory Transformation and Reinterpretation of the *Son Jarocho* in La Nueva
España, México, and the United States

by

Alexandro David Hernández

Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnomusicology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Steven Loza, Chair

This dissertation is a study on the *son jarocho* and its *fandango* as a migratory and transformative musical culture between nations and social circumstances. The *son jarocho* embodies tradition in many cultural practices of society, such as its presence at social rites and at *fandangos*. However, there exist hidden histories, transcripts of resistance not accounted for in México's official history, of the *son jarocho* as music of struggle and protest. From censorship, punishment, and imprisonment of *son jarocho* musicians and dancers during the Holy Inquisition of eighteenth and nineteenth century New Spain (México), to solidarity exchanges in Zapatista rebel camps in the 1990s, the *son jarocho* functions as a musical demand for social justice and lyrically picaresque resistance. The *son jarocho*'s resistance roots is embedded in this music as it migrates into the United States.

I trace the historical trajectory of the *son jarocho* in California as a way to understand how it was shaped before its present use as music of struggle and protest. The *son jarocho* began

to emerge in the United States during the post-World War II period of 1940s California. Migrant musicians from México, Chicanos, and White Americans introduced the *son jarocho* into universities, the film industry, processional recordings, concert venues, restaurants, and theme parks. Ensembles formed by Andrés Huesca, Los Tigres de la Sierra, and Conjunto Papaloapan was amongst the earliest *son jarocho* groups to develop in California between the 1940s and 1960s. By the 1970s, the *son jarocho* exists within the Chicano Movement as a reinterpreted foundational music of Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles. Participants of the Chicano Movement and the United Farm Workers embraced the music of Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles as a cultural expression to musically support efforts of social justice.

Reclaiming the historical roots of the *son jarocho* as music of resistance and protest, the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement is a prominent presence in social justice movements in the United States. From my observation, since the early 2000s, this music became a common soundtrack for marches, fasts, and protests for immigration reform, worker's rights demonstrations, the Occupy Wall Street Movement, and anti-militarization protests such as the School of the Americas Watch vigil held annually at Fort Benning, Georgia. By looking into the resistance roots of the *son jarocho* during México's colonial period, gathering oral histories from pioneering musicians in California, and participant-observation in social movements in Los Angeles and Washington, DC, the objective of my research traces how the *son jarocho* and its *fandango* migrates and transforms within social and cultural movements.

The dissertation of Alexandro David Hernández is approved.

Rubén Hernández-León

Cheryl L. Keyes

Anthony Seeger

Steven Loza, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2014

Dedicado a mi papá, Pedro R. Hernández, mi guía espiritual desde el más allá

For my father, Pedro R. Hernández, my spiritual guide from “the other side”

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I am the grandson of María Rosa Martínez and Gregorio Gutiérrez Valladares, a merchant-class family from Chinicuila, the former Purépecha name of Villa Victoria, Michoacán, México. I am the grandson of Dominga Rodríguez and Pedro Hernández, Sr., an economically poor, ranch worker family who migrated to the border town of Del Río, Texas from Coahuila, México in the 1920s. I am the son of María Rosa Gutiérrez Hernández, my beautiful *mamá*, who migrated from Villa Victoria, Michoacán to work shoe factories in downtown Los Angeles, but was also a nanny for a wealthy family in Whittier. I am the son of Pedro Rodríguez Hernández, a World War II veteran from Del Río, Texas. For over thirty years, *mi papá* taught the youth of East Los Angeles the subject of social studies at Belvedere Middle School in City Terrace. My greatest sense of appreciation is first and foremost to them, my family, the one's who raised me with the implicit courage to forge ahead in struggle, joy, and love. Más que todas las cosas lindas en esta vida, le doy gracias a Dios por tener una mamá que está al cien por ciento a mi lado. Estaré a tu lado siempre y cuando más me necesites, mamá.

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- 2008 Hernández, Alexandro D. 2008. "Arpex: Conjunto de Arpa Grande." *Smithsonian Folkways*.
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Chapter I: Introduction and Theorizing the Migration and Transformation of the *Son Jarocho*:
México to the United States

My Journey as Son Jarocho Musician, Activist, and Scholar

While in the first grade at St. Stephen Martyr School in Monterrey Park, California, my classroom teacher Ms. Ramos had the class dance “La bamba,” perhaps the most recognized *jarocho son*, for parent appreciation day.¹ That year *La Bamba*, the film by Luis Valdez that portrayed the brief life of Chicano rocker Ritchie Valens, was released, and was quickly embraced by the Chicana and Chicano community of Los Angeles. Los Lobos included their rock ‘n’ roll rendition of “La Bamba” on the film’s soundtrack, which reached number one on the Billboard album charts in 1987. The cultural impact of the film and the revamped version of “La Bamba” by Los Lobos came full circle as we danced the traditional *son jarocho* version of this *son* amongst a polycultural gathering at St. Stephens, a school of predominantly first generation Asian American and Chicana and Chicano students.²

My mother dressed me in her best interpretation of the standardized *jarocho* outfit with a white *guayabera* (a Caribbean formal shirt), white pants, and a red scarf tied around my neck. Our Chicano and Asian American first grade class selected “La bamba” to dance for our parents and student body at St. Stephen’s.³ My Thai American dance partner and I joyously mimicked the *zapateado*, the percussive dance of Mexican *son*, on a makeshift stage of flat surfaced school

¹ “*Jarocho son*,” meaning, a *son* from the *jarocho* style. *Son*, in this context, is a regional genre from México in the *jarocho* style that originated in Southern Veracruz and spread into the *sotavento* region, which also covers portions of Oaxaca and Tabasco.

² “Polycultural,” or “polyculturalism,” is a concept introduced by Robin D.G. Kelley (1999) and expanded upon by Vijay Prashad (2003). Polyculturalism understands the multiple layers of cultural complexity and suggests that communities of the present are historically formed through intersectionality (Prashad 2003:53).

³ In Spanish language grammar, only the first word in a song title is capitalized. Since I am referencing the traditional version of “La bamba,” I will spell *bamba* in lower case. The rock ‘n’ roll version by Ritchie Valens and Los Lobos is written according to English language grammar rules, hence the song title capitalized as “La Bamba.” I will write Spanish language titles accordingly from this point forward in this study.

benches (see figure 1). From that point forward, “La bamba” and the *son jarocho* would become a recurring musical memory in my life until I began to play the music as a young adult in Texas.



Figure 1. In 1987, students from the first grade class of Ms. Ramos at St. Stephen Martyr School dance “La bamba” for parent appreciation day. Photo taken by María Rosa Gutiérrez Hernández.

As an undergraduate at the University of Texas at San Antonio, I came across the Los Lobos album *Just Another Band from East L.A.* I studied the album cover and saw four and eight-string instruments, the *requinto jarocho* and the *jarana*, and immediately began to research where to find such instruments.⁴ The opening track, “El canelo,” left me in wonder of the stringed percussive sounds of the *requinto jarocho* and *jarana*. I searched local instrument shops in Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, across the Texas-México border from my hometown of Del Río to

⁴ The *requinto jarocho*, also known as *guitarra de son*, is traditionally a four-string plucked lute used for melodic improvisation. A five-string *requinto jarocho* was introduced in the 1990s and commonly utilized in contemporary *son jarocho* ensembles. The *jarana* is an eight-string strummed lute that is utilized for harmonic accompaniment.

find a *jarana* but to no avail. I eventually traveled to Mexico City to attain my first *jarana*, which my band mate Alex Chávez had purchased from a luthier.

The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center (GCAC) in San Antonio, Texas was the first place that I performed the *son jarocho*. I felt completely unprepared to take the stage, but I recruited *artista*/medical student Rodrigo Ceballos to perform with me during the Guadalupe Dance Company's, the *ballet folclórico* of the GCAC, performance breaks.⁵ This was one of my first experiences singing melodically, as opposed to singing in the grindcore growl that I was accustomed to in metal bands. Ceballos and I were certainly *son jarocho* novices, but, regardless of our skill level, the crowd appreciated young musicians and our effort to learn this Mexican *son* tradition. In 2003, the *son jarocho* was not a common music in a city steeped in the tradition of *conjunto*/Texas-Mexican music, metal, punk rock, country, and Chicano rhythm and blues.

My first solo *son jarocho* performance at a Books in the Barrio demonstration at South Park Mall in the Southside of San Antonio greatly impacted me. Books in the Barrio was a grassroots effort that rallied for a bookstore in San Antonio's Southside, an economically impoverished area of the city. The support of Chicana feminist-playwrights Virginia Grise and Irma Mayorga, and my undergraduate professor-mentors Josie Méndez-Negrete and Marie Miranda, gave me the confidence to perform to a relatively big crowd. This marked a new beginning for myself as an activist-musician, armed with the *son jarocho* as a way to contribute to social movements. Despite the lure of public performances, I had a strong desire to be well skilled in *son jarocho* musicality. Without a *jarana* or *requinto jarocho* mentor-instructor in San Antonio, my best option was to immerse myself in this musical culture in Veracruz, México.

⁵ Translated as "folkloric ballet," *ballet folclórico* is the choreographed and staged interpretation of traditional-regional dances from México.

July 7, 2004 marked my first visit to Veracruz, México. I took a bus from Mexico City's Tapo Station to *El puerto de Veracruz*, the Port of Veracruz, where I met Gilberto Gutiérrez, director of *jaranero* ensemble Grupo Mono Blanco.⁶ I arrived with so many questions and a great eagerness to learn the *son jarocho* within its cultural context. Gutiérrez provided me with a copy of Grupo Mono Blanco's album *Al primer canto del gallo* to study during the day. On some evenings, he met with me to teach me strum details on the *jarana*. Among his first words were, "*Te voy a comenzar desde el cero*" ("I'm going to begin to teach you from point zero").⁷ I certainly had much to unlearn as my experience up to that point had primarily consisted of fusing *son jarocho* instruments with indie-rock and *cumbia* with the Austin band Maneja Beto.⁸ Gutiérrez also left me with the task to think about why I wanted to learn the *son jarocho*. I had to choose between being a cultural tourist or serious student. He stated, "*puedes hacer como Café Tacvba y hacer lo que quieras con lo que te enseñó, pero yo te voy a enseñar lo tradicional*" ("You can come here like Café Tacvba, and do what you want with with what I teach you, but I'm going to teach you according to the tradition").⁹ In their early work, Mexico City's Café Tacvba fused elements of the *son jarocho* with rock sensibilities, gaining them a worldwide following as one of the most influential Mexican rock bands. However, Gutiérrez remained

⁶ A *jaranero* or *jaranera* is literally someone who plays the *jarana*.

⁷ Gilberto Gutiérrez, personal communication with the author, July 2004.

⁸ *Indie-rock*, but also "indie" music is a marketing colloquialism for independent music. I believe it to be a new term that supplanted the marketing title "alternative" for independent music, meaning music that was not supported by a major record label contract, or music that originally received support from college radio stations in the late 1980s and 1990s. By the early 2000s, I noticed the term "indie" began to be used for non-overtly commercial or popular music. *Cumbia* is both a dance and musical genre originating in Colombia, but became one of the most prolific forms of Latin American music spanning South America, Central America, and North America, with each area creating its own forms of *cumbia* styles. For example, there is *cumbia villera* in Argentina, *cumbia chicha* in Perú, *chanchona* in El Salvador, *cumbia sonidera*, *cumbia norteña*, or *chuntaro* style *cumbia* in México, and *Tejano cumbia* in South Texas.

⁹ Gilberto Gutiérrez, personal communication with the author, July 2004.

adamant that I learn about the music's rural-*campesino* roots and took me to the agrarian villages of El Hato and Boca de San Miguel.¹⁰ According to Gutiérrez, I had to personally experience one of the areas in which the *son jarocho* originated and learn about the music as a culture in rural daily life in order to understand the sounds and the elements that inspire its poetry.

During my stay in Veracruz, traditional Mexican music ensemble Los Cenzontles arrived from San Pablo, California to begin work on their documentary *Fandango: Buscando al Mono Blanco*.¹¹ The following night, a *fandanguito*, or short form *fandango*, was held at El CaSon, a cultural center for the dissemination of the music of Veracruz. The *fandango* in this context is the communal-musical gathering of musicians, *zapateado* dancers, and sometimes poet-vocalists in *son jarocho* culture. Many practitioners embody the aforementioned three elements: musicality on instruments, dance, and the ability to memorize, write, or improvise sung verses.

The *fandango* is a cross-generational practice and can include adults dancing together or children who dance with adults/elders as methods of transmission and practice. *Fandangos* usually begin at nightfall and can last well into the dawn. The energetic *son* "El siquisiri" initiates these gatherings, allowing participants to ask permission to sing, enter the *fandango*, or introduce oneself through sung poetry.¹² Depending on the atmosphere of a *fandango*, *sones* can reflect shifting moods throughout the night. Thus, *fandangos* usually begin with energetic *sones* and can move into mid-tempo rhythms and then to *sones de madrugada*, which mirror the effect of drowsiness or fatigue in the early hours of the morning. *Sones de madrugada* include, for

¹⁰ A *campesino* or *campesina* is someone who works the land, a farm worker in essence.

¹¹ The English translation of the documentary title is *Fandango: Searching for the White Monkey*. In southern Veracruz, "*mono*" is a regional colloquialism for a monkey. Therefore, the translation of *Mono Blanco* is *White Monkey* (Rodríguez and Braojos 2006).

¹² Upon gathering information at *son jarocho talleres*, or workshops, I came to the conclusion that the term *siquisiri* is believed not to bare a specific meaning. Rather, I believe that *siquisiri* is an invented term based on the combination of words from this *son*'s chorus, which often begins with the line, "*que sí que sí, que no que no*" ("oh yes, oh yes, oh no, oh no").

example, “Los chiles verdes,” “El aguanieve,” and “La guanábana” and typically have a slower paced pulse and meditative feel.¹³ In order to re-energize a *fandango*, *sones* such as “La bamba,” “El zapateado,” or “El cascabel” are sometimes performed due to their sonic intensity and fast pulse.¹⁴

In comparison, a *fandanguito* is a colloquial term for a *fandango* of shorter duration. This musical gathering can be impromptu or planned and can last approximately from one to four hours. The building, space, or store hours of a center hosting a *fandanguito* affects the duration of the event. Thus, the *fandanguito* held at El CaSon in Veracruz was brief and served as a form of welcoming Los Cenzontles. Although the footage and documentation of the gathering focused on the musicians on and around the *tarima*—the wooden platform used for the *zapateado*—I focused my attention on the elder musician from Grupo Mono Blanco, Andrés Vega, who sat and played the *guitarra de son* a short distance away.

I was honored to be in the presence of Andrés Vega, the famed *guitarra de son* expert from Grupo Mono Blanco, and the scholar-*jaranero* Antonio García De León Griego.¹⁵ I sat near Vega and began to study the positions and finger movements that he performed on the *guitarra de son*. Its percussive melodies caught my attention and the *guitarra de son* would later become my primary *son jarocho* instrument. Although I had a *jarana* with me, I was too timid to enter the *fandanguito*, but I examined the music, watching the *zapateado* footwork by Lucina

¹³ *Sones de madrugada* translates to “*sones* for the early morning.” In sequential order, translations for “Los chiles verdes,” “El aguanieve,” and “La guanábana” are “The Green Chiles,” “The Morning Mist,” and “The soursop.”

¹⁴ “El zapateado,” which roughly translates to “the percussive dance,” is a *son* that features the technicality and sonic power of *zapateado* dance. “El cascabel” translates to “rattlesnake,” “snake’s rattle,” or “jingle bell” (Sheehy 2009:14).

¹⁵ A *requintero*, in this context, is someone who plays the *requinto jarocho*. Another type of *requinto* is the *requinto romántico*, the lead guitar utilized in *trío* music in the vein of Trío Los Panchos or Los Tres Ases.

Rodríguez and Fabiola Trujillo, along with the great *jarana* work by Hugo Arroyo from Los Cenzontles.

My trip to Veracruz coincided with the monthly *fandango* at El CaSon. Upon receiving my newly constructed *jarana tercera* from Gilberto Gutiérrez, I felt ready to enter the *fandango* as a participant-observer. I paid close attention to the strum patterns to each *son* and mimicked the *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* who appeared to have the most musical experience. Although at the time I was too focused to even notice the film cameras documenting the *fandango*, footage of my first *fandango* is included in *Buscando al Mono Blanco*, a documentary on Grupo Mono Blanco by Eugene Rodríguez, founder of Los Cenzontles Mexican Arts Center in San Pablo, CA.

After a month in Veracruz, I came back home to Texas to set the groundwork to build a *jaranera* and *jaranero* community in San Antonio and Austin. Coincidentally, Grupo Mono Blanco came to San Antonio in October of 2004 to participate in *La vida de los muertos*, a dance-play in collaboration with the Guadalupe Dance Company. Grupo Mono Blanco's temporary stay made a considerable impact on the local community, and inspired dancers Dava Hernández and Jorge Gaxiola to take up the *son jarocho*. During their visit, Octavio Vega asked me to join the group for an impromptu performance at Estela's Mexican Restaurant in the Westside of San Antonio (see figure 2). Despite how utterly nervous I was, I considered the opportunity a great honor. The following year, I was hired as a *jarana* instructor at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center with Dava Hernández, Jorge Gaxiola, and David Goetz as my first students. I was still a novice *jaranero*, but I was the only resource in the area to teach at least the basic elements of the *jarana*.

Along with honing my skills as both a *jaranero* and *requintero*, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center continued to provide performance opportunities to my first *son jarocho* ensemble,

Mono Negro, a humorous word play on Grupo Mono Blanco. Along with medical school student and *arpista*, harpist, Rodrigo Ceballos, bassist Benjamin Jacob, and the occasional accompaniment by Mayra Montalvo and Lauro Torres, Mono Negro also began to perform for social justice causes in San Antonio. Once medical school became more demanding for Ceballos, Mono Negro evolved into Mitote, a *son jarocho*-fusion ensemble based in Austin that musically supported cultural and social justice events.



Figure 2. In October of 2004, Grupo Mono Blanco and guests give an impromptu performance at Estela’s Mexican Restaurant in San Antonio, Texas. From left to right: Octavio Vega on *requinto doble*, Ras Iginga on the steel drum, Gilberto Gutiérrez on *jarana tercera*, Gisela Farías on *jarana primera*, the author on *jarana tercera*, and Ignacio “Nacho” Cano Hernández on *jarana tercera*. This photo is courtesy of Alejandro Pérez.

On April 10, 2006, an international migrants rights march in Austin, Texas coincided with a nation-wide eruption of similar marches. Thousands of locals convened at the Texas State Capitol to support human rights for international migrants. The march proceeded through downtown and ended with a rally outside of the U.S. Federal Courthouse in Austin. Mitote welcomed thousands of marchers with *sones* such as “El chuchumbé” and “La bamba.” The crowd responded with an uproar at the sounds of the *jarana*, *requinto jarocho*, baby bass, and

cajón.¹⁶ Upon performing “La bamba,” hundreds of people sang the chorus, creating a feeling of collective ecstasy. Given the social energy of the march, I recall this as the most energized and inspiring audience I have performed for.

Mitote was envisioned as a modern *son jarocho* ensemble in the vein of virtuoso group Son de Madera. We were an ensemble of scholar-activist-musicians with a line-up that included Benjamin “Mincho” Jacob, Santiago “Chago” Guerra, Alex Chávez, Stevan Azcona, and myself. While I resided in Texas, Mitote performed at many social justice events, special gatherings for the University of Texas Center for Mexican American Studies, and many benefit shows for local organizations and independent businesses.

Mitote supported the late Raúl Salinas at benefit shows for Resistencia, his Leftist-progressive bookstore in Austin. Mitote was also able to play for trailblazers of the Chicano Movement, in particular, United Farm Workers leader Dolores Huerta on her birthday, which she celebrated at the benefit show held at the coffee shop-venue Ruta Maya in Austin 2005. Mitote also performed several times for Leftist spaces such as the Rhizome Collective and Monkey Wrench Bookstore. I believe that the presence of Mitote and Mono Negro set the groundwork for future politically conscious *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* to emerge in Austin and San Antonio.

My experience with Mono Negro, Mitote, and with presenting the *son jarocho* at various events in San Antonio and Austin taught me the impact of music for social justice causes. Moving to Los Angeles for graduate school deepened my work with the *son jarocho* within social movements. With my immediate connection to the Eastside Café *son jarocho* student circle, and with most participants already inclined to social justice causes, I quickly formed an alliance with activist-*jaraneras* and *jaraneros* who often marched the streets of Los Angeles. The teacher’s rebellion of Oaxaca, México in Fall 2006 sparked immediate support and a march with

¹⁶ A *cajón* is a percussion box originally used in Afro-Peruvian music and *flamenco* from Spain.

the Oaxacan community of Los Angeles. Budding *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from the Eastside Café, joined by members of Son del Centro from Santa Ana, CA, sang *sones de protesta*, or protest *sones*, such as “El presidente,” that cover topics about demands for basic human rights and access to a dignified education.

Relocation to Los Angeles helped me gain a wide range of experience in working with people/bands such as Quetzal, Cesar Castro and our bands Zócalozüe and Cambalache, ¡Aparato!, and Las Cafeteras. Through these bands and grassroots *jaranera* and *jaranero* activists, I learned to negotiate multiple roles as researcher, lecturer, *fandanguero*, songwriter, student, instructor, arranger, producer, and band member.¹⁷ I found these roles as an application of bi-musicality and a way to attain deep knowledge of the *son jarocho*, its *fandango*, and its musical fusions as practiced by Chicanas and Chicanos in Los Angeles.¹⁸ In order to understand the cultural roots of the *son jarocho* within its context of origin, I will transition to a brief history of this musical culture in the following section.

A History of the Son Jarocho: México to the United States

The *son jarocho* is a living culture that is constantly in flux, and thereby undergoes a process of creative renewal. It is a complex culture that stretches beyond both the *fandango* and performance ensembles. The culture within the *son jarocho* includes material aesthetics, including *laudería*, *tejidos*, poetry, and food ways. A *tejido* is the craft of fabric weaving, which is mostly done by women. Patterns and designs are made to represent regions or personal preference. Common *tejidos* of Veracruz include *guayaberas*, skirts, sown hats, and women’s knitted blouses. *Laudería* is the production of instruments. A *son jarocho laudero* (luthier), a

¹⁷ *Fandanguero* or *fandanguera* refers to a *jaranero* or *jaranera* who actively participates in the *fandango*.

¹⁸ Bi-musicality is a methodology introduced by ethnomusicologist Mantle Hood, which involves the researcher learning the musical elements of the musical culture of study. A thorough explanation is featured in the literature review included in this chapter.

male dominated work, most commonly crafts the series of *jaranas*, *requinto jarocho/guitarra de son*, *tarima*, and perhaps a regional harp or fiddle. *Laudería* as art allows the craftsperson to create a function-based instrument with a more complex design (for example, an intricate pattern as the sound hole).

The poetic element of the *son jarocho* is important in telling the narratives of the region. One structure of *son jarocho* poetry is the *décima*, a ten-line stanza with a rhyme scheme of ABBAACCDDC.¹⁹ Other poetic forms include the *copla* (couplet), *cuarteta* (quatrain), *quintilla* (five lines), which are often octosyllabic in line length and frequently “picaresque, with double meanings, and usually of a romantic, sexual, or at times of topical (i.e., anti-clerical) significance” (Loza 1982:161). Another form, the *seguidilla compuesta*, is used for *sones* such as “La bamba” and is written with seven lines and follows an ABABCDC rhyme pattern. The first, third, and sixth lines have seven syllables. The second, fourth, and fifth lines have five syllables.

The *son jarocho* music genre began to emerge in New Spain’s southern region of Veracruz and expanded into the *sotavento* in the seventeenth century from a combination of African, indigenous, and European musical-cultural elements.²⁰ The *sotavento*, encompassing a

¹⁹ The *décima* is widely used in Latin American and Caribbean musical traditions such as *jibaro* music in Puerto Rico, Cuban *son*, and in *norteño*, *son huasteco*, *huapango arribeño*, *son de arpa grande* in México. Texas-Mexican *conjunto* music also makes use of the *décima* for narratives of struggle.

²⁰ New Spain is present-day México. According to Sheehy, when the colonizer Hernando Cortés arrived to what is now Veracruz, three main indigenous groups existed in the area: the Huastecas, with their capital in Pánuco in Northern Veracruz, the Totonacas in the central area of Veracruz in Zempoala, and the Popolucas, with their capital in Coatzacoalcos in Southern Veracruz (1979:50) Sheehy states, “each of the three ‘nations’ was united mainly by a common language and, to a greater extent, by common economic, social, and political interests” (Sheehy 1979:50-51). The Popolucas, the latter of the three Nations, have a direct relationship with the *son jarocho* in the Southern region of the *sotavento*. The Popolucas are from the Santa Marta sierra region and also add to the ethnic and musical diversity of the *son jarocho*. Their music appears to be driven by the *jarana* but uniquely distinguishes itself with vocals in the Popoluca language. The Popolucas’ *son* is at times interspersed with words in Spanish, but undeniably an indigenous branch of *son jarocho*.

section of southern Veracruz as well as segments of Oaxaca and Tabasco, is a cultural zone where the *son jarocho* is a dominant musical-cultural practice in both rural and urban centers. An important component to the rural *son jarocho* is the *fandango*, a gathering where musicians and dancers perform on and around a *tarima*, a wooden platform used for percussive dance, the *zapateado*. *Fandangos* usually occur during festivities surrounding Roman Catholic days of saints or in celebration of different manifestations of the Virgin Mary. The *zapateado* includes intricate foot movement with variation, usually a loud and direct heel stomp in segments of *sones* without sung vocals and a *mudanza*, or muted step, during sung vocal sections. Two of the most common types of *zapateado* dances include *sones de montón* and *sones de pareja*, which is a hetero-patriarchal gender practice. *Sones de montón* are danced by women in couples of two, four, or more, depending on the size of the *tarima*. *Sones de pareja* are danced by a male and female couple, and include such *sones* as “La bamba,” “El buscapies,” “El ahualulco,” and “El chuchumbé.” *Sones de pareja* are also comprised of mimetic dances where the male imitates an animal or reptile (for example, the imitation of a bull during “El toro zacamandú,” which also features the female dancer dodging her partner with a bandana or shawl).

Emphasizing the African root of the *fandango*, *son jarocho* musician and poet Patricio Hidalgo traces the origin of the word to Angola. Hidalgo states, “*Hay fragmentos de africanidad en el mundo. Fandango es una palabra Angola, el cual significa ‘el ordenamiento del caos’*” (“There are fragments of African heritage in the world. *Fandango* is an Angolan word, which means, ‘to bring order to chaos’”).²¹ In New Spain, *fandango* became a communal festivity, an enclosed gathering and ordering of percussive dance and sounds, poetry, vocals, and musical instruments. *Sones* and dances such as “El chuchumbé,” “El animal,” and “El jarabe gatuno”

²¹ Patricio Hidalgo, personal communication with the author, August 17, 2012. Author’s translation.

were banned during the Spanish Inquisition because they were considered indecent (Robles-Cahero 2005:63). Restricting the upper body and centering movement on the legs and feet modified the *zapateado* that developed out of sexually suggestive dances. To expand on my discussion of instrumentation/musical functionality in the *son jarocho*, I will proceed to give an organological explanation of this musical tradition.

The rural *son jarocho* includes at least three categories of the Hornbostel-Sachs system of instrument classification: chordophones, idiophones, and membranophones. In essence, chordophones are stringed instruments, which are commonly plucked or strum by hand or with a plectrum (Hornbostel-Sachs 1961:20-24). Chordophones include the *jarana* family, which come in sizes from small to large, including the *chaquiste*, *mosquito*, and the *jarana primera*, *segunda*, *tres-cuartos*, *tercera*, and *tercerola*.²² The *guitarra de son* family includes the *requinto primero*, *medio requinto*, *requinto jarocho* and two bass instruments, the *león* and *leona* (García Ranz 2002).²³ Professional jaranero ensembles such as Grupo Mono Blanco, Son de Madera, and Los Cojolites, occasionally use the Veracruz arpa, or harp.²⁴ However, the *arpa* is seldom used at *fandangos*. The limited use of the *arpa* at *fandangos* is due to its size and the difficulty of carrying the instrument from place to place. The *arpa*, however, is a lead melodic instrument of the urban *son jarocho* style, which was made popular by *son jarocho* musicians who migrated to urban centers for better work opportunities from the 1930s to 1960s.

²² The *jarana* family includes, most commonly, eight stringed lutes used primarily for harmonic accompaniment.

²³ A *guitarra de son*, also known as *requinto jarocho*, amongst other regional or colloquial names, is a 4 or 5 stringed plucked lute with a plectrum called *púa* or *espiga*. The *guitarra de son* primarily functions through musical scales and melodies. Included in this category is the *león* or *leona*, depending on its size, which is also known as the *guitarra grande* or *vozarrona*, and functions as a bass instrument.

²⁴ *Jaranero* and *jaranera* also identifies musicians, dancers, and poets involved in the *jaranero* movement from the late 1970s onward, a movement that reinstated the *fandango* and communal gathering at the forefront of the *son jarocho*.

The following set of popular instruments in the rural-rooted *son jarocho* that I will introduce are idiophones, most commonly struck or friction drums, which include the *quijada*, *marimból*, and *tarima* (Jairazbhoy 1990:91-93). The *quijada* is the mandible of a horse or a cow. The mandible is taken from a deceased animal and its entrails are removed. The teeth are loosened to create a clattering effect when struck. One side of the *quijada*'s teeth, usually the right segment, is scraped with a stick or bone.

The *marimból* (see figure 3) is a large wooden box-resonator with lamella used as bass notes, located in the middle of the main face of the box. Behind the lamella is a sound hole that projects and captures bass notes inside the resonator. Its size must be large enough for the musician to sit on or reach around, slightly bent over, and pluck the lamella. The box is also used percussively in two ways: 1) while plucking the lamella, the finger and hands strike above the sound hole for extra percussive effect. 2) The right and left side of the *marimból* box can be used for hand drumming.²⁵ The *marimból* also shares similitudes with the *marímbula* utilized in roots based *son* and *changüí* in Afro-Cuban music. Both instruments can vary in size and number of lamella, but are in essence wooden boxes that include a sound hole and metal tongues used for percussive bass notes and tones. Variants of the *marimból* or *marímbula* are included in Pan-Afro-Caribbean traditional music such as mento in Jamaica and *son palenquero* in San Basilio de Palenque and the surrounding areas of Colombia.

²⁵ Colombia. Some of these instruments are large enough to play seated, elevated on a chair, or small enough to be hung over the shoulders with a strap.



Figure 3. Members of Son del Centro perform at El Centro Cultural de México in Santa Ana, CA. From left to right: Juan Ruíz on the *león*, Crystal González on *jarana primera*, Omar De la Riva on *marimból*, Ana Siria Urzúa on *jarana tercera*, and Luís Sarmiento on *guitarra de son*. Photo taken by the author.

A standard membranophone, a drum with a skin membrane, is the octagonal *pandero* with two, small clashing cymbals on each of its eight segments. The skin of the *pandero* is struck with movement between the thumb and remaining four fingers. The *pandero*'s edge is scraped with the thumb, which causes friction on the skin membrane and creates a rippling effect on the cymbals.

Aerophones are side- or end-blown wind instruments (Jairazbhoy 1990:101). Two aerophones deserve mention in the classification of *son jarocho* instruments: a lemon tree leaf and the harmonica. Amongst certain communities of the *sotavento*, a lemon tree leaf is sometimes used as a *jarocho* aerophone. The harmonica can be incorporated into an ensemble, recording, or *fandango*; however, this is rare (see figure 4).

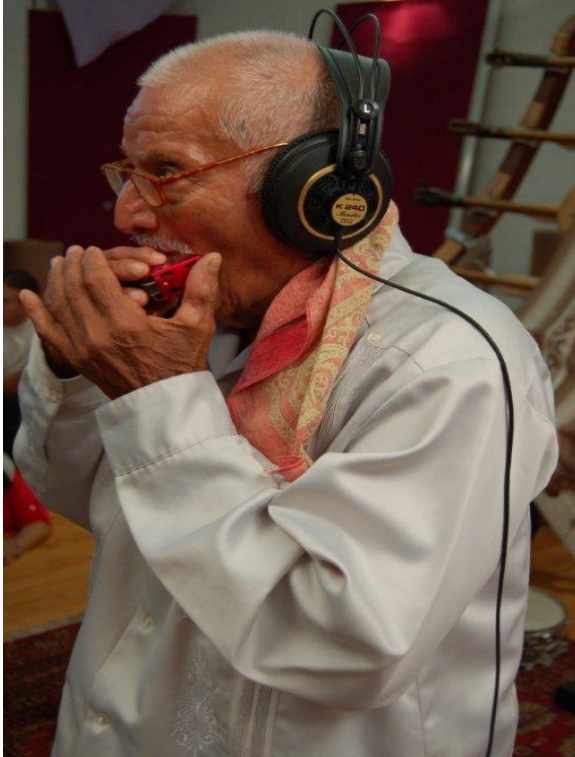


Figure 4. Leonardo Rascón records *jarocho*-style harmonica on “El jarabe loco” and “El buscapies” for Son de Madera’s recording of *Son de Mi Tierra* (2009) on Smithsonian Folkways. This photo is courtesy of Smithsonian Folkways.

Son jarocho instrumentation was discussed in detail because they represent the current sounds used for protest and celebration by predominantly Chicana and Chicano *jaraneros*. Beside the way the instruments are performed, their sonic power accompanies the poetry of resistance of many *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* in México and in Chicana-Chicano communities in the United States. However, the *son jarocho*, a music and culture with approximately four centuries of existence, is imbued with a long course of struggle and protest, both codified and explicit in its sounds and poetry. However, before the music migrated to the United States, the *son jarocho* experienced a transition as a commodity into commercial markets beginning in a time of economic struggle in Veracruz.

In the 1930s, an economic recession severely affected the *sotavento* region and forced rural musicians to migrate in search of work to urban areas such as Jalapa, the Port of Veracruz,

and Mexico City (Rodríguez and Braojos 2006). These musicians commercialized the *son jarocho* by playing at restaurants, appearing on film, radio, and recordings, as well as performing concerts. The music displayed fast virtuosity on the harp, *requinto jarocho* and the *jarana*. Folklorized attire consisted of an entirely white costume, which was the byproduct of commercialization via film, stage performances, and presentation for album covers. The *son jarocho*'s first wave of commercialization was spearheaded by artists such as Andrés Huesca y sus Costeños in the 1930s-1940s and El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez in the 1950s-1960s (Sheehy 2009:3). Musicians such as Huesca and Chávez frequently traveled to Los Angeles to perform at venues such as the Million Dollar Theater, which helped introduce the *son jarocho* to an audience outside of México. The impact of Huesca and Chávez inspired professional *son jarocho* ensembles to form in Los Angeles in the 1950s. Los Tigres de la Sierra and Conjunto Papaloapan were amongst the earliest *son jarocho* ensembles formed in the United States.

Ensembles Conjunto Alvarado, Conjunto Candelas and Trío Jarocho Angelino formed in Los Angeles in the 1960s. Furthermore, Los Tigres de la Sierra relocated from Stanford University to Los Angeles when director Timothy Harding was hired as a professor at UCLA. A network between working-class musicians and local business Candelas Guitar Shop developed to mutually support the performance and craftsmanship of *son jarocho* instruments. Through the academic and community setting, Harding, especially, utilized the *son jarocho* through cultural-performative presentations to musically support social movements.

Into the 1970s, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles emerges within the social energy and cultural empowerment during the Chicano Movement. It is important to study Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles in their early formation to understand how they built on both the work of groups like Conjunto Candelas in their fusions of Mexican regional musics, as well as on groups

like Los Tigres de la Sierra in utilizing *son jarocho* to support social movements. In order to fully understand Los Lobos' reinterpretation of the *son jarocho*, we must look into the work of ethnomusicologist Steven Loza. Their support for social justice efforts such as the United Farm Workers (UFW) via the album *Sí Se Puede!* stands as a musical document of Chicano Movement music. The album also displays the clever reinterpretation of the popular *son* "El tilingo lingo," which is lyrically recontextualized for the UFW's grape and lettuce strike. The work of Los Lobos was pivotal in setting an example for future Chicana and Chicano *son jarocho* musicians to reimagine the music in social movements and musical fusions.

By the early 2000s, Chicanas and Chicanos in California, Texas, and Chicago explicitly politicize the music with Leftist ideologies, adopting the *fandango* for cultural practice, meanwhile using the experience of collective music making at marches and protests.²⁶ Loza expresses that, "conscious adoption of a stylistic adaptation to Mexican musical genres represented an affirmation of their ethnic origin and identity" (1992:186). The *son jarocho fandango* is precisely a test of attestation and through this practice resistance comes in the moment where there is a demand to be recognized in the public sphere. By analyzing *jaranera* and *jaranero* activism, this research gives emphasis to the adaptation of the *fandango* at demonstrations, community centers, and academic institutions in the United States.

Creative renewal leads to a demand for recognition for Chicanas and Chicanos who practice a cultural heritage—the *son jarocho fandango*—which is, in actuality, a rural practice transferred into the urban ambit. Creative renewal can be defined as the re-imagining or reinterpretation of an established practice through subtle or obvious modifications. The end result is innovation, however significant it may be, and a pressure on tradition. For example, the

²⁶ For clarity, Chicana/o is an ethno-political identity, self-given by a socially conscious individual in the Mexican American community.

son jarocho in the U.S. may include verses that narrate the life and struggle of the Chicano experience adapted from standard narratives about life in rural Veracruz. Another example of creative renewal includes changes to the *fandango* in the U.S. such as dancing with tennis shoes, having a break-dancer on the *tarima*, or challenging the hetero-patriarchal gender practices of the *sones de pareja*, or male and female couples dances.

Son jarocho activist-musicians, who are predominantly Chicana and Chicano, are currently at the forefront of politicized musical expression through participation at marches, social justice vigils, protests, and dialogue between México and the United States. For *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from Santa Ana, California, Texas, and Washington, DC, their connections with the collective work of Son Altepee from Acayucan, Veracruz creates a network of transnational *música tradicional de cuerdas*, or traditional string music, grounded in strengthening communal music practices with political activism.²⁷ For U.S. *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* that have extended stays in Acayucan, activism is both internal and international, primarily looking at issues affecting the U.S., México, and Latin America.

International Workers Day 2006 found thousands of undocumented people, primarily Latina/o, marching through the streets of downtown Los Angeles.²⁸ International Workers Day marches have, since 2006, included *jaraneros* and *jaraneros* marching with their instruments, utilizing the *son jarocho* and its *fandango* as music of struggle and protest. In 2011, Occupy Los

²⁷ “Traditional string music” as opposed to the title *son jarocho*. Members of Son Altepee state that elders in their community do not use the term *son jarocho*, which is believed to be a music marketing title or term used by academics and the music industry. Son Altepee use the titles “traditional string music” or “jarana music” as preferred identifiers to what is commonly known as *son jarocho*.

²⁸ International Workers Day, or Mayday, in Los Angeles demands undocumented peoples’ rights, day laborer rights, and a path to citizenship. International Workers Day is held annually on May 1st.

Angeles, a branch of the Occupy Wall Street Movement, included the *son jarocho* as part of the soundtrack to this burgeoning social movement.

Since the rise of the international migrant rights movement and the Occupy Wall Street Movement in 2011, the urgency to participate in local movements coincided with an increase in Chicana and Chicano activists turned *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*.²⁹ However, to identify as a *jaranero* or *jaranera* holds deeper meaning for Chicana and Chicano activists who become practitioners of the *son jarocho*. *Jaranero* identity, for Chicanas and Chicanos, is more telling of individual and communal experience as opposed to one's role in a *son jarocho* ensemble (Sánchez-Tello 2012:56). According to Sánchez-Tello, "to call oneself a *jaranera* or *jaranero* is a political statement tied to liberal and radical politics of inclusion and solidarity with those in struggle, whether it is movements for immigrant rights, feminism, organizing against police abuse, or retaining cultural heritage under the pressure of American culture and social hierarchies" (2012:57). Therefore, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* primarily lend themselves and the *son jarocho* to a broad campaign of solidarity work with movements for social justice, as opposed to forming ensembles for strictly performance or commercial purposes. Rather than to simply retain a sense of cultural heritage, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* adopt the *son jarocho* and *fandango* to create culture rooted in social action in the United States, but tied to transnational dialogue and work.³⁰

However, the *son jarocho* exists within a larger body of Mexican American protest music in the United States. Since the late 1800s, the *corridos* of the México-U.S. borderlands, especially along the Texas-México border, have served as musical narratives of social struggle

²⁹ A *jaranera* or *jaranero* is someone who plays the *jarana*.

³⁰ I will cover this last topic in Chapter IV.

and intercultural conflict (Paredes 1993). The *corrido* is an emblematic musical, poetic, and oral tradition of struggle in Mexican and Chicana/o communities. With the exception of feminist narratives by artists such as the late Jenni Rivera, *corridos* generally portray male triumphs, trials, and tragedies within the circumstances of social conflict. *Corridos* of struggle stand in stark contrast to the depiction of glorified violence, wealth, and misogyny found in hyper-commercialized *narcocorridos*, or drug trafficking ballads. The *narcocorrido* has evolved into *corridos alterados* and *corridos progresivos*, which are disturbingly explicit in their portrayal of violence and the macabre. Violence certainly enters the storyline in *corridos* of struggle, but they function as counter-narratives of intercultural conflict not found in official history via mainstream media and records.

According to sociologist William G. Roy, social movements typically involve conflict, usually against the state or other authorities. Second, social movements are pre-figurative in that they embody, to a certain extent, the world they are trying to create (2010:238). People participate in social movements when their personal ideologies are aligned to that of the social movement, but also when the movement is able to transform an individual's frame through conversion (Roy 2010:237). Roy argues that the communist-led movement of the 1930s-1940s developed more groundwork than any movement in U.S. history but failed to reach the working-class (2010:235). The communist-led People's Songs Movement never transcended the performer and audience dichotomy (Roy 2010:235). However, Roy cites the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s-1960s as the most effective participatory music movement in U.S. history (2010:235).

Roy believes that today's movements are not as propitious as the collective actions during the Civil Rights Movement. He lists four points to defend this thesis (Roy 2010:248-250):

1. Most people have grown up understanding music mainly as mass media.
2. It is unlikely that any social movement's culture can be independent of the mass media as in the Civil Rights era.
3. There exists little cultural infrastructure in today's movements. There are no unifying parties such as the Communist Party. There are no national organizations like People's Songs. There are no training facilities like the Highlander school. There are no record companies like Folkways to record and promote current protest music.
4. Collective action has lost the tradition of doing music. In marches, chants have replaced songs.

Despite Roy's claim that performing music of protest and struggle is not an effective tool for social justice mobilization today, I believe that the *son jarocho* can and does fulfill this role for Mexican-Chicana/o communities. Perhaps music itself cannot change society, but those who are working toward social transformation can use music as a tool for organizing large numbers of people. Music, at best, can raise social awareness and is most effective when it inspires mobilization for social justice. In regards to social movements in the U.S. (and around the world), I believe that the current music of protest and struggle has a new racial, international, and symbolic context. At marches and protests in the U.S. and now internationally, there is certainly collective singing and music making with the *son jarocho*, and having the *fandango* present at these events opens more possibilities of participation through dance.

Not since the Chicano Movement has Mexican regional music impacted a large number of Latina and Latino activist communities. I state the terms Latina and Latino since although Chicanas and Chicanos make up the majority of *jaranera/o* activists, I attempt to be inclusive of the Salvadorans, Puerto Ricans, Costa Ricans, Colombians, and Argentines, that also constitute

the *son jarocho* community in the U.S. Their cultural and national identities must not be lost within the predominantly Chicana-*jaranera* and Chicano-*jaranero* milieu. In comparison to the Chicano Movement, which was largely focused within the U.S. Southwest, the *jaranera* and *jaranero* activist movement is concentrated in mostly urban areas throughout the country. New York City, Washington, DC, Chicago, Milwaukee, Seattle, and Minneapolis also have similar *jaranera* and *jaranero* social justice activist communities beyond the Southwest.

Organization of the Dissertation and Research Questions

This research plans to address the following questions:

1) What are the hidden histories of the *son jarocho* as a music of struggle and protest within México? How do *son jarocho* practitioners reimagine these narratives of resistance through solidarity work with social movements in the U.S. and Mexico?

“Chapter II: Hidden Histories of Resistance in México’s Son Jarocho” begins with New Spain’s colonial period in Veracruz. This chapter initiates a discussion of “El chuchumbé” as a *son* and *dance* of resistance during the Holy Inquisition. The second section of the chapter introduces the migration of the *conga* rhythm from Cuba to Veracruz. The *conga* is transformed in Veracruz and introduced as part of the *son jarocho* repertoire by the ensemble Chuchumbé. “La conga del viejo,” or “The Old Man’s Conga,” was utilized by shipyard workers in Veracruz as a protest *son* to demand better pay and working conditions in the early 1900s. After the *conga*’s decline in popularity, Chuchumbé reinterprets “La conga del viejo” with *son jarocho* instrumentation and expands the repertoire of the modern *son jarocho* ensemble. I conclude Chapter II with a discussion of *jaranero* César Castro and his liminal experience connecting with Zapatista rebels in Chiapas, México in 1996. Castro’s experience highlights the complexities of a revolution and how music can be peripheral due to the urgency of the situation. The purpose of

the chapter is to outline the hidden histories of resistance of the *son jarocho* and its migration across geopolitical borders. By the time the music migrates to the U.S., it comes embedded with a historical trajectory as a music of struggle and protest.

2) How did the *son jarocho* migrate to Los Angeles? Who were the first *son jarocho* groups to form in the U.S.? What was the social climate of Los Angeles from the mid-1940s-1970s when the initial wave of *son jarocho* ensembles began to form in the city?

3) Did the *son jarocho* contribute to the soundtrack of Chicano Movement music? If so, how does the trajectory of Chicano protest music inform the current *jaranera* and *jaranero* music community?

“Chapter III: A Trajectory of the *Son Jarocho* in Los Angeles, 1940s-1970s” offers response to research questions two and three. Chapter III profiles *son jarocho* musicians beginning with the late Andrés Huesca. The profiles on musicians Roberto Chagolla, Timothy Harding, and Ed Lindgron read like oral histories. The chapter begins with the cultural impact of *arpista* Andrés Huesca and his role in establishing the initial presence of the *son jarocho* via live performance, film, and recordings in mid-1940s Los Angeles. In the 1950s, Conjunto Papaloapan emerges as a *bricolage* ensemble of Mexican Americans out of East Los Angeles. I focus on surviving Conjunto Papaloapan member Roberto Chagolla and how he came to the *son jarocho* as a working-class musician.

Timothy Harding and his ensemble Los Tigres de la Sierra highlight the cultivation of the *son jarocho* within academic institutions since the late 1950s. A staunch Leftist and labor historian, Harding spent a good portion of his academic career blacklisted and under surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. His political ideologies and solidarity work with Latin American struggles were combined with the *son jarocho* to musically support social movements.

The chapter transitions to student ensemble Trío Jarocho Angelino and its emergence out of UCLA in the 1960s. I profile *artista* Ed “Lalo” Lindgron and his role as a student participating primarily as *son jarocho* musician in the academic setting. Members Daniel Sheehy and José Fajeda rounded out the ensemble. Sheehy contributed an academic study on the *son jarocho*, one of the first dissertations on the subject.

Amidst the Chicano Movement for civil rights, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles emerged as a working-class ensemble with the *son jarocho* as their musical foundation. Their initial years touring throughout California for cultural events coincide with the rise of the Chicana and Chicano student activist organizations that hired them to perform. In 1976, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles participated in their first studio recording *Sí Se Puede!*, a benefit album in support of labor rights leader César Chávez and the United Farm Workers.

In order to create a flow into Chapter IV, I conclude with a brief explanation of how the *jaranero* branch of the *son jarocho* and its *fandango* reaches California. In 1989, Eugene Rodríguez, director of Los Cenzontles Mexican Cultural Arts Center, begins to work with Grupo Mono Blanco’s leader Gilberto Gutiérrez to cultivate the *jaranero* branch of the *son jarocho* in California’s Bay Area. Over a decade later, the *jaranero* movement reaches Southern California and becomes a primary music for social justice efforts within the Chicana and Chicano and Mexican international migrant community.

4) How is the *fandango* practiced by *jaranera* and *jaranero* activists in social movements?

“Chapter IV: Creative Renewal of the *Son Jarocho Fandango* Within Social Movements: Occupy Los Angeles and the School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil,” analyzes how the *son jarocho* and *fandango* are transferred to multiple sites of social action as participatory musical expression. This chapter is in part an auto-ethnography of my experience as a *jaranero*

participant-observer at Occupy Los Angeles, at social justice demonstrations in Washington, DC, and at the School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil. I include on-site interviews with *jaraneras* at Occupy Los Angeles, a branch of the Occupy Wall Street Movement that called for the occupation of public sites as an expression of protest against the unethical practices of Wall Street bankers. *Fandaguitos*, short form *fandangos*, were held at Occupy Los Angeles on a weekly basis to express solidarity with this movement.

My coverage of peace vigils in Washington, DC and the School of the Americas Watch (SOA Watch) annual vigil coincides with my time as pre-doctoral fellow at the Smithsonian Institution. The local, national, and international political dynamics of Washington, DC makes the Nation's Capital an important site for social action. Since 2008, the *son jarocho* became a standard music for social movements affecting international migrants and local Latinas and Latinos in Washington, DC. In order to provide a historical trajectory, I include the presence of the *son jarocho* at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and its local manifestation since the 1970s.

My experience with *jaranera and jaranero* social justice collective Son Cosita Seria is included in the sections covering Washington, DC and the SOA Watch annual vigil. I intersperse an emergent third conversation, a critique of the *jaranera and jaranero* movement, as promoted by traditional string music collective Son Altepee from Acayucan, Veracruz. Son Altepee and members of the collective introduce title traditional string music instead of the title *son jarocho*. Claiming that elders of their community do not identify with *son jarocho*, Son Altepee uses the titles traditional string music or *jarana* music to define the traditional music of their community. Furthermore, the Son Altepee collective believes that the *jaranera and jaranero* movement re-standardized and commercialized the music similar to the initial wave of urbanization and

commercialization of 1930s-1960s *son jarocho*. A detailed discussion of Son Altepée's perspectives and their participation in transnational social movements is included in Chapter IV. The following section is a list of approaches, theories, and concepts that have informed this work.

Ethnomusicological Theory

Mantle Hood defines ethnomusicology as, "The study of all varieties of music found in one locale or region, e.g. the 'ethnomusicology' of Tokyo or Los Angeles or Santiago would comprise the study in that locality of all types of European art music, the music of ethnic enclaves, folk, popular and commercial music, musical hybrids, etc." (1969:298). Hood's definition, which includes the study of traditional music in the urban ambit or urban musical hybrids, readily allows us to view *son jarocho* as an emergent genre and style in colonial New Spain, thus rendering *son jarocho* a justifiable and necessary research topic. However, the study transitions to make a transborder connection in Los Angeles, Washington, DC to show how the *son jarocho* becomes a staple music for social justice movements.

Ethnomusicology has roots in its originator's field observations (Rice 2010:105). Furthermore, according to Timothy Rice, "Ethnomusicological theory involves the writing of descriptions, classifications, comparisons, interpretations, and generalizations about music (and possibly sound) in general, about particular musical traditions, about music in a set of related communities, or about music in relation to cognitive, artistic, experiential, social, cultural, political, and economic issues, themes, and processes" (2010:105). Ethnomusicological theory is rooted in scientific, social, and music theory, but its fundamental function is not limited to borrowing from other disciplines (Rice 2010:105).

Timothy Rice suggests that ethnomusicology today utilizes three types of theory: social theory, music theory, and discipline-specific ethnomusicological theory (2010:100). Social theories help to blur the boundaries between disciplines (Geertz 1973), because, “while they may originate in anthropology, history, linguistics, literary studies, philosophy, psychology, or sociology, scholars in many disciplines have found their insights useful for a wide range of projects” (Rice 2010:102). In other words, ethnomusicology is inherently a multi-disciplinary field. Foundational works in ethnomusicology have come from scholars in art history, physics, acoustics, archeology, and biology (Hood 1971:3). This dissertation is a contribution to multi-disciplinary ethnomusicology rooted in social theory. The following is a list of scholars, concepts, and social theories applicable to my research on *jaranero* and *jaranera* music in Los Angeles. These scholars come from a variety of fields such as history, sociology, education, American studies, Chicana and Chicano studies, and Women’s studies.

Activist-Musician Praxis

Paulo Freire’s concept of praxis, a reciprocal process of action and reflection, best describes musician-activist processes. Freire states that the function of praxis involves “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (1983:36). Activist-musicians in *son jarocho* consider themselves accountable to participate in the grassroots process of social change and report their actions through music. Reflection is manifested in the lyrics, notes, and chords utilized in progressive *son jarocho* music.³¹ Freire’s philosophy is applicable to discuss the experience of activist-musicians.

Jaraneras and *jaraneros* maneuver grassroots activism, dialogues and *talleres*, or workshops, to enhance cultural knowledge and musicality, syncretic experimentation with the *son jarocho* and popular music genres, and the performance context. For example, *talleres* are

³¹ In this context, the term progressive applies to ideological and musical expression.

held on a weekly basis at homes and cultural centers throughout the U.S. in order to disseminate and create strong practitioners of the *son jarocho*. *Jaraneras* and *jaraneros* organize *talleres* to create transnational dialogue and learn from *maestros* and *maestras* from Veracruz. Syncretic experimentation with *son jarocho* instrumentation, most frequently by performance ensembles, typically combines indie, “femcee” hip-hop, R&B, rock, and/or Latin American popular musics with *son jarocho*.³² Finally, the performance context is a space where varied styles and diverse narratives are divulged, allowing the audience to create meaning from the performance of the *son jarocho*. For example, performances provide information, usually discussed in a personal or *taller* setting, to the public on subjects such as historical information or the experience of women in the *son jarocho*.

Postmodern Approaches and Hidden Histories

George Lipsitz utilizes post-modern concepts to explain Chicano musical-cultural production. According to the *New Oxford American Dictionary*, bricolage, in art or literature, is the “construction or creation from a diverse range of available things.”³³ Lipsitz employs the concept of bricolage to analyze Chicano rock band Los Lobos and their act of taking limited resources, such as limited access to Mexican folk instruments, to create Chicano interpretations of Mexican traditional music. Similar to the bricolage practices of Los Lobos that Lipsitz analyzes, I argue that certain Chicano *son jarocho* ensembles are bricoleurs of creative musical expression because of their limited access to resources. The majority of these groups consciously fuse traditional instruments and sounds with contemporary musics.

³² “Femcee” is a title that asserts a womanist or even feminist identity for a female “emcee,” or rapper. I apply the term “musics” according to Jocelyn Guilbault’s use of the term in *Governing Sound*, which references the diversity of styles and genres of music played within a music scene. I will employ the term “musics” throughout my work to describe “music” in the plural form.

³³ I use “Chicano” versus “Chicana/o” because Lipsitz only looks at Mexican American male musicians in “Cruising Around the Historical Bloc.” “Chicana/o” is an inclusionary term that represents both male and female Mexican Americans.

Los Lobos, just like current *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* in Los Angeles and beyond, are neither assimilationists nor separatists; they draw upon “‘families of resemblance,’ similarities to the experiences and cultures of other groups—to create a ‘unity of disunity’” (Lipsitz 1992:269-270). The notion of “families of resemblance” is closely related to the concept of polyculturalism as an inter-referential process between ethnicities and culture. Chicana/o-*son jarocho* bands find “families of resemblance” within Los Angeles cultures and beyond. *Son jarocho* in the U.S. forms a “historical bloc” consciousness of “oppositional groups united around counter-hegemonic ideas and intentions, if not experience” (Lipsitz 1992:270). Many *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* reject mainstream music standards that often degrade women or depict ethnic communities in a demeaning manner. Therefore, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* and *son jarocho* ensembles in Los Angeles represent cultural affirmation through syncretic musical practices that form a historical bloc.

Concepts on Identity, Mestizaje, and Polyculturalism

Chicana and Chicano identity is grounded in progressive political ideology and fluidity of cultural practice. However, discussions and practices of identity can quickly devolve into the ideological traps of essentialism and authenticity. In its most prolific state, Chicana and Chicano identities transform themselves and their communities through post-modern agency where essentialism is challenged by abstract, multiple, and collective identities. The work of Néstor García Canclini (1995) and Stuart Hall (2004) invites us to think beyond a strict definition of cultural identity through *mestizaje*, as a continuous process where identity never remains static.³⁴

García Canclini offers an analysis of folk music and its bifocality as an “untainted” peasant expression and a living cultural practice. Folk music is viewed as a static tradition where

³⁴ *Mestizaje* is most commonly referred to as the mixture of European and indigenous heritage and culture.

innovation does not pose a threat to its authenticity. García Canclini provides an analytical frame that helps develop perspectives on the *son jarocho* in its traditional, rock-fusion, and hip-hop-fusion forms. García Canclini also makes an important argument that aesthetic fusion of tradition and modernity provides the continuous fluidity of *mestizaje*.

Hall's analysis of pan-African identity is in affinity with the discourse on Chicana/o-Latina/o identity as an adaptable and situational formation. His assessment on multiple identities critiques the concept of the Black Triangle—Africa, the Americas, and Europe—by challenging the dogmatic binaries that obfuscate the complexity of racial formations in essentialist cultural discourse. This work will utilize Hall's frame to create a critical analysis that highlights the polyculturalism in the creative renewal of the *son jarocho fandango* at Occupy Los Angeles and at the School of the Americas Watch annual vigil.

Polyculturalism is a useful concept for understanding how *jaraneras and jaraneros* juxtapose multiple realities through multi-ethnic grouping and cross-national activism. Robin D.G. Kelley explains, "We were and are 'polycultural,' and I'm talking about all peoples in the Western world. It is not skin, hair, walk, or talk that renders black people [or any people] so diverse. Rather, it is the fact that most of them are products of different 'cultures'—living cultures, not dead ones. These cultures live in and through us every day, with almost no self-consciousness about hierarchy or meaning. 'Polycultural' works better than 'multicultural,' which implies that cultures are fixed, discrete entities that exist side by side...[such] a view obscures power relations, but often reifies race and gender differences" (1999:2). By acknowledging race and gender differences and power relations amongst diverse societies, Kelley sites the intercultural interconnectedness between Blacks, Chicanos, Asians, and Whites in a polycultural urban environment.

Vijay Prashad expands on Kelley's criticism of multiculturalism and reinforces polycultural consciousness. Prashad explains that to retain a "distance and sense of a self-enclosed culture, is to pretend that our histories are not already overlapping, that the borders of each of our cultures are not porous. This 'racism with a distance' ignores our mulatto history, the long waves of linkage that tie people together in ways we tend to forget" (2003:52). The *jaranera* and *jaranero* community is a potential site for transformative experience by pressuring audience and musicians to develop a polycultural consciousness toward music—versus the trappings of multiculturalism and music. Prashad identifies the limitations of multiculturalism, stating that "[multiculturalism] sees cultural zones as discrete and preformed communities (black, Asian, Latino, white), with the role of the multiculturalist being that to respect the border of these zones and ask that we tolerate their practices from afar" (2003:52). Instead, Prashad argues for an inclusive view of culture through polyculturalism, which "offers a dynamic view of history, mainly because it argues for cultural complexity, and it suggests that our communities of the present are historically formed and that these communities move between the dialectic of cultural presence and antiracism, between a demand for acknowledgment and for an obliteration of hierarchy" (2003:53-54). One of the objectives of this study is to develop a multi-ethnic, polycultural understanding of *son jarocho* in the U.S., one that views this musical culture as a historically formed entity and engages the cultural complexities of Los Angeles' musics.

Son jarocho is, in essence, a global music informed by polycultural sounds that acknowledges the inter-referentiality of musical cultures. Polyculturalism is an inter-referential process because it cites the multiple layers that shape any given culture. In this case, polyculturalism is expressed through the sounds, movements, and languages that are enacted by *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* in the U.S.

Literature on Chicana and Chicano Music

Until recently, Chicano music literature remained focused on Texas-Mexican music and Chicano Rock/Soul from the 1950s-1980s. Manuel Peña utilizes a Marxist perspective to position Texas-Mexican identity and class struggle in *conjunto* music (1985), Tejano music (1999), and the *orquesta* tradition in South Texas (1999).³⁵ David Reyes and Tom Waldman (2009) provide a descriptive study of Los Angeles Chicano rock and roll from the 1950s-1980s. Ruben Molina (2007) emphasizes an extensive discography, photography, and a descriptive study of Chicano Soul music in California, New Mexico, and Texas. Pancho McFarland (2008) expands the discussion of Chicano music by analyzing the hyper-masculinity and *afro-mestizaje* in Chicano Rap.³⁶

Steven Loza is a leading scholar on Chicano music in Los Angeles from the 1920s to 1980s. Loza is one of few ethnomusicologists to write about the contributions of Chicano musicians in Los Angeles (1993). This work seeks to add to this discussion by focusing on the emergence of the *son jarocho* in Los Angeles in the 1940s and into the present. My work, in essence, is a micro-history of Chicana and Chicano musical activity focused on the *son jarocho*, while the work of Loza is a macro-history of Mexican American music in Los Angeles. Prior to his ethnography of Chicano music in Los Angeles, *Barrio Rhythm* (1993), Loza wrote a comparative analysis of *son jarocho* practitioners in Veracruz and the style of Chicano band Los Lobos (1992). His work provided invaluable insight into the ways that Chicana and Chicano musicians reinterpreted the *son jarocho* in the U.S.

Américo Paredes is regarded as providing the foundation for Chicano scholarship. Paredes theorized about the complexities of the Texas-Mexican borderland identity, an

³⁵ The Texas-Mexican accordion, *bajo sexto*, bass guitar, and drum ensemble/music.

³⁶ *Afro-mestizaje* is the cultural mixing of African, Indigenous, and European heritage.

examination of the liminal identity of the Chicana/o experience. Paredes' concepts of "Greater México" and language fluency will be used in order to discuss the positionalities, perhaps liminal or inclusive, of Chicana/o musicians in the psychological and geographical borderlands of *son jarocho*.

Paredes also works to uncover a musical archeology, so to speak, of traditional Texas-Mexican border music. By analyzing the text and song forms of Texas-Mexican music, Paredes teases out the political, social, and cultural meanings of this working-class music. I will utilize Paredes' analysis to discuss the political, social, and cultural meanings of working-class sound and ideology in *son jarocho* in the United States.

Literature on Son Jarocho in México and the United States

Ethnomusicologist Daniel Sheehy is a pioneer in the U.S. academic study of the *son jarocho*. His M.A. thesis (1974) and doctoral dissertation (1979) are two of the earliest academic works in the English language on the *son jarocho*'s history and practice in Veracruz. Sheehy also began as an avid practitioner of *son jarocho* in the late 1960s before transitioning into a *mariachi* musician and current director of the Smithsonian Folkways record label. He will be documented in this work as an early pioneer of *son jarocho* musicians in academia, primarily at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Scholars who are looking at the *son jarocho* and the *fandango* as a México-U.S. practice and its political implications include Grammy Award winner and scholar Martha González (2013), who analyzes the *son jarocho fandango* as a de-colonial practice among Chicana/o activist-musicians in Los Angeles, CA and Seattle, WA.³⁷ Feminist scholar Micaela Díaz-Sánchez (2010) looks into the African legacy that challenges the "imagined community"

³⁷ Martha González is a scholar, professor, and lead vocalist of Grammy Award winning band Quetzal.

(Anderson 1991) narrative of colonial México and how it shaped the *son jarocho*. Díaz-Sánchez became a practitioner of the *son jarocho fandango* as a result of the study. Sociologist Stuyvesant Bearns Esteva (2011) embarked on a transnational multi-site ethnographic study on *son jarocho* performance, workshops, techniques and technology of instrument making, and the *fandango* as practiced in México and California.

Master's theses that include studies on the *son jarocho*, Angélica Natalia Loa (2005) introduces historical data on the *son jarocho* and its *fandango*, the *Movimiento Jaranero* and its beginnings in the 1970s, and provides a social-political analysis of Son del Centro, a *jaranera* and *jaranero* collective from Santa Ana, California. George B. Sánchez-Tello (2012) analyzes how the term *jaranera* and *jaranero* becomes a strategy of acculturation psychology by Chicana and Chicano social justice activists who practice *son jarocho*. Hannah Balcomb (2012) explains how Chicano-jaraneras/os and international migrants from Veracruz adopt the *fandango* in Los Angeles as both a political practice and a general connector to Mexican cultural heritage/performance.

Veracruzano scholars Antonio García De León and Rafael Figueroa are both *son jarocho* practitioners and academics. García De León's research on the *son jarocho* and its farmworker repertoire is an important introduction to the music's roots sound and poetry. While a student at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) in the late 1960s, García De León was amongst the few *jaraneros*/students that wrote protest verses against Mexico City's police chief and performed the *son jarocho* in the 1968 mass demonstrations against the authoritarian PRI government. He is also a founding member of Zacamandú, an ensemble that recorded *sones jarochos* that were not commonly performed up until the 1990s.³⁸ Rafael Figueroa is the son of Don Fallo Figueroa—a respected elder of *jarocho* musical-culture—and a scholar with many

³⁸ Antonio García De León, personal communication with the author, April 13, 2013.

publications on *son jarocho* studies. Figueroa is currently writing his own ethnographic dissertation on the *son jarocho* in the United States.

Research Plan and Methodology

Along with eleven years of experience as a respected *son jarocho* musician, my research consists of an ethnographic study of cross-generational *son jarocho* musicians primarily in California. Ethnography in ethnomusicology consists of participant-observer study, musical competency in the instruments or songs of the musical-culture of study, and interviews with participants. In fact, through his “bi-musical” approach, Hood required ethnomusicology students to learn the music of the culture they were studying. “Musicality” refers to, “musicianship, fundamentals of music, [and] solfeggio” (Hood 1960:55). As a musician, I follow Hood’s pedagogy of bi-musicality, believing that “the training of ears, eyes, hands and voice and fluency” can be acquired at *fandangos*, *talleres* (workshops), and performances (1960:54). Understanding of “these skills assures a real comprehension of theoretical studies, which in turn prepares the way for the professional activities of the performer, the composer, the musicologist and the music educator,” thus creating a fuller intellectual approach (Hood 1960:54).

However, my positionalities as an academic, *son jarocho* practitioner, and social justice activist is more complex than the practice of bi-musicality, which primarily calls for the acquisition of musical skill for analytical purposes during graduate studies. I cannot be bi-musical without being bi-ideological, meaning that my own participation in social movements does not only inform my research, but is also aligned with my own political beliefs. Indigenous studies scholar Charlotte Heth believes that subjectivity is beneficial to scholarly work, in which an active participant helps gain insider knowledge (1982). Therefore, the analytical and experiential process of scholar, musician, and activist is cyclical with each element informing the

other. As a *son jarocho* practitioner and activist with eleven years of experience at the time of writing this dissertation, my insider knowledge highly informs the deep analysis in my academic work.

Gathering of data consisted of participant-observer analysis at *fandangos*, *encuentros*,³⁹ *talleres*, demonstrations, peace vigils, and marches for social justice. Online and printed sources, and interviews of musicians, fans, and *jaranero* activists and listening examination of recorded music will also be critical to this study. I seek to attain a deep understanding of the drive for utilizing the *son jarocho* as music of struggle and protest, and the need to gather and play in non-commercial spaces, and staunch grassroots organizing, which are often female-driven, gender inclusive spaces.

Field recordings of performances and *fandangos* are important to this study in order to tease out ways in which they are produced, sponsored, and to ascertain their meaning from band speeches and reactions from the crowd (Cadaval 1998). Another important aspect of field recording is the potential meaning uncovered through analysis of musical nuances, performance, and improvisation. By positioning myself in the crowd at concerts or in a *fandango*, I will take the role of participant observer, which will allow me to engage from both an audience member and participant perspective.

A portion of my ethnography will briefly extend itself to Washington, DC for comparative analysis. Washington, DC is a unique site for *son jarocho* due its multiple realities in having a strong local music scene, being a site of local, national, and international social justice activism, and having major resources such as National Public Radio's *Alt.Latino* show and the Smithsonian Institution with its ongoing support of the *son jarocho*, all of which coalesce into frequent demonstrations and marches with a strong presence of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*.

³⁹ *Son jarocho* festivals

National Public Radio's *Alt.Latino* show provides a weekly presentation and critical commentary on current Latin Alternative and *son jarocho* artists. Collaboration with *Alt.Latino*'s hosts Jasmine Garsd and Felix Contreras allowed me to access significant information in regard to social class, ethnicity, sound, and consciousness of *son jarocho* artists via the perspective of journalism. Since living and conducting research in Washington, DC, I was interviewed and had a comparative analysis-conversation on the *son jarocho* in México and U.S. with the *Alt.Latino* hosts. As a result, the show "With Guitars Like Machetes: Son Jarocho 101" was released on the NPR's *Alt.Latino* in January 2014.

Methodological Preparation

As a doctoral student in ethnomusicology, I have taken coursework on research methodology and the application of theory to ethnography. My training in methodology and ethnography has prepared me to address issues of interpretation, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and sound through participant-observer study in music scenes. My work with the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) has trained me to conduct interviews that tease out story-narratives from informants. The CFCH interview method seeks information that is relatable to a larger audience. By crafting story-narratives of informants through profiles with video, sound recording, and written accounts on Internet websites, information about music and artists becomes accessible to audiences within and beyond academia.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Profiles of Chicano-Latino artists and traditional music artists throughout the world can be found at <<http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/artist_spotlight.aspx>> Accessed on July 10, 2014.

Chapter II: Hidden Histories of Resistance in the *Son Jarocho*

This chapter will focus on the musical, corporal, and poetic expression of struggle and protest through the *son jarocho* and on how the migration of Afro-Caribbean rhythms and dances, particularly “El chuchumbé” and the *conga*, became expressions of struggle for aggrieved populations in Veracruz. The chapter will conclude with an episode of solidarity between *jaraneros* from Veracruz and *Zapatista* insurgents in Chiapas, México.

The *son jarocho* embodies tradition in many cultural practices of society through its presence at social and religious rites and *fandangos* (for an image of a present-day *fandango*, please see figure 5). However, there exist hidden histories, transcripts of resistance not accounted for in México’s official history of the *son jarocho* as music of struggle and protest (Scott 1990).⁴¹ From censorship, punishment, and imprisonment of *son jarocho* musicians and dancers during the Holy Inquisition of eighteenth and nineteenth century New Spain (México), to solidarity exchanges in *Zapatista* rebel camps in the 1990s, throughout history the *son jarocho* has functioned as a musical demand for social justice and lyrically picaresque resistance. In order to understand the style or branch of *son jarocho* that will be discussed in this chapter and most of chapter IV, we must recognize the grassroots efforts and early history of *El movimiento jaranero*, the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement and the formation of Grupo Mono Blanco in late 1970s México.⁴² Formed in Mexico City in 1977 by two migrant *jarocho*s from Veracruz, Gilberto Gutiérrez and his brother José Ángel Gutiérrez, and Chicago native Juan Pascoe, Grupo Mono Blanco is recognized as an ensemble that worked to reinvigorate traditional practices of the *son jarocho*, or an interpretation of a rural version of *son jarocho*, that preceded

⁴¹ “Transcripts of resistance” is a concept expanded from Scott, James C. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

⁴² Although the title in Spanish suggests only the efforts of men by using the term “*jaranero*,” I choose to be gender-inclusive and utilize the term “*jaranera*” to recognize the contributions of women in this movement.

its commercialization in the 1930s-1960s.⁴³ Grupo Mono Blanco spearheaded *El movimiento jaranero* in the late 1970s and early 1980s, beginning in Mexico City and then and into Veracruz, México, which helped to reestablish the *fandango*, and recognize the *campesino*, or agrarian-rural roots of the *son jarocho*.

The ensemble's name is derived from the folktale of the *mono blanco*, or white monkey, a supernatural being that is believed to live in the area of Los Tuxtlas in Veracruz (Braojos and Rodríguez 2006). Letterpress printmaker and *jaranero* Juan Pascoe states that the *mono blanco* is believed to be "*diestro, inteligente, y astuto, y poético y que le gusta el fandango*" ("shrewd, astute, intelligent, poetic, and enjoys the *fandango*") (Braojos and Rodríguez 2006).⁴⁴ Historian and *jaranero* Antonio García De León adds to the folktale, explaining, "*Y la gente cree que el mono blanco a veces aparece en la noche. Y la forma de aparecer es que oyen un requinto tocando en la madrugada, sólo, como el que viene entrando del monte al pueblo... otros dicen que es el Diablo en persona*" ("People believe that the white monkey sometimes appears at night. The way it reveals itself is by playing the *requinto jarocho* in the early morning, by itself, like a person entering town from the hills... others believe it is the Devil manifested as a human") (Braojos and Rodríguez 2006).⁴⁵ The story of the *mono blanco* varies between regions or person retelling the folktale. However, folktales in relation to the Devil, or other supernatural equivalent, are found throughout the world, and are important in revealing the cosmology of a people and culture through analysis of the oral tradition. One example of scholarly work on variant stories of the Devil in Mexican and Chicano folklore, focused in South Texas, is the work of anthropologist José E. Limón (1994). However, another example of the Devil in *son jarocho*

⁴³ <<<http://monoblanco.mx/origen/>>> Accessed on July 8, 2014.

⁴⁴ Author's translation

⁴⁵ Author's translation

culture is found in the folktale and text of the *son* “El buscapies.” The following verse reveals a glimpse of the folktale “El buscapies”:

*“¡Ave María, Dios te salve, que Dios te salve, María!”
Así la gente gritaba cuando el Diablo aparecía*

“Hail Mary, may God save you, may God save you, Mary!”
That’s what the people would scream when the Devil appeared

The story of “El buscapies” is a variation of “dancing with the Devil” folktales, which are commonly cautionary tales throughout Latin America and in Mexican and Chicana-Chicano communities in the United States. According to the story, a stranger appears at a *fandango* as a well-dressed, handsome man while *jaraneras*, *jaraneros*, and *zapateado* dancers perform “El buscapies.” He approaches a beautiful woman in a red dress and asks her to dance on the *tarima*, the wooden platform used to dance the *zapateado*. The dance couple moves energetically and begins to levitate, which reveals the handsome man’s true identity. At the sight of the two floating above the *tarima*, the people notice that the man has goat legs, a visual metaphor for the Devil. Startled at this diabolic sight, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* begin to sing religious-Christian verses to ward off the evil spirit from the *fandango*. Many of the verses only reveal minimal details of the folktale and are in remembrance of the Devil’s apparition, such as the verse included above. Based on information provided by variations of the folktale “El buscapies,” it is unclear what happens to the female dancer after the performance of religious verses. The story can be pieced together in a series of verses by experienced *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* at a *fandango* or performance of “El buscapies.” This folktale is often interrupted by the recitation of romantic verses, which is, in essence, an alternate version of “El buscapies.”

The folktale as a fundamental element of *son jarocho* culture is an important and often overlooked factor in histories of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement (see Balmcomb 2012;

Bearns Esteva 2011; González 2009 and 2013). Ultimately, it is not only *sones* such as “El chuchumbé” that were reintroduced to this musical culture, or learning strum patterns on the *jarana*, but also the stories and folktales as part of the transmission process of oral tradition. The naming of Grupo Mono Blanco is part of the ensemble’s regional-cultural reclaiming of rural *jarocho* identity. Folktales are important in shaping the identity and serve as hidden histories that reveal the imagination of a people. In the case of *son jarocho* culture, musical components such as the *requinto jarocho* performed by the *mono blanco* spirit-being duality, which are cultural signifiers, form part of the larger story of the *movimiento jaranera* and *jaranero*. Therefore, the ensemble Grupo Mono Blanco established a successful grassroots effort that not only places the *fandango* at the center of the movement, but also the luthier work of traditional *son jarocho* instruments, recovery and reinterpretation of *sones* such as “El chuchumbé,” the folktales, and the culture in general, and reestablishes the connection to social justice movements.

Former members of Grupo Mono Blanco, such as Patricio Hidalgo, Ramón Guitérrez, José Tereso Vega, formed ensembles that ushered in the second wave of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement in the 1990s. José Tereso Vega, along with Ramón Gutiérrez Hernández and Laura Rebeloso, are founding members of progressive *son jarocho* group Son de Madera, an ensemble notable for their virtuosic musicality, improvisational skill, and new arrangements of traditional *sones*. Patricio Hidalgo, Andrés Flores, and Félix “Liche” Oseguera founded the ensemble Chuchumbé, a band that highlighted the African and Afro-Caribbean musical heritage embedded in the *son jarocho*. Members of the aforementioned *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement ensembles, including Grupo Mono Blanco, engaged in musical and political dialogue with Zapatista insurgents in Chiapas in the mid-1990s. This episode is highlighted through the

experience of former Grupo Mono Blanco member César Castro in the final section of this chapter.

The focus of this chapter discusses three hidden histories of resistance pertaining to the *son jarocho* in colonial New Spain and in contemporary México. Furthermore, this chapter will provide a link between *Veracruzano* cultural practices and the *son jarocho* as a demand for social justice.⁴⁶ For example, the following section begins with a discussion of “El chuchumbé,” which foregrounds the emerging *son jarocho* with lyrically codified strategies of protest in eighteenth century New Spain. The dance component of “El chuchumbé” was in itself an expression of resistance to severe policing during the Holy Inquisition. The migration of the *conga* from Cuba into the *sotavento* region of Veracruz adds another hidden history of resistance within *jarocho* cultural expression. The *conga* provided an expression of struggle for shipyard workers, which remains codified in the chorus of “La conga del viejo” (“The Old Man’s Conga”). Finally, the organizing strategies of the Zapatista Insurgency in 1994 not only attracted social justice advocates around the world, but also a group of *jaraneros*, *son jarocho* musicians who sought to create solidarity with the ski masked rebels in Chiapas, México.

⁴⁶ A *Veracruzano* is a person from Veracruz, México.



Figure 5. A contemporary *fandango* with *zapateado* dancers on a *tarima* in Santa Ana, CA. Musicians with *jaranas*, one *guitarra de son*, and a *quijada* (on the upper left) surround the *tarima*. Photo taken by the author.

“*El chuchumbé*”

The first official written account of *son* as a genre is in reference to “El chuchumbé” in late 1700s New Spain (Saldívar 1934:252; Sheehy 1979:17). According to ethnomusicologist Antonio Robles-Cahero, out of the frequently danced *sones* in eighteenth and nineteenth century New Spain, only three were banned during the Holy Inquisition: “El animal” and “El chuchumbé” in 1767 and “El jarabe gatuno” in 1802 (2005:63).⁴⁷ From approximately 1571 until the end of the Spanish colonial period in the early 1800s, the Holy Inquisition in New Spain brutally punished anyone believed to be subversive to the Catholic Church (Katz 1996:3). During the Holy Inquisition, intolerance of religious and ethnic diversity was extensive. Accused

⁴⁷ According to the Cultural Institute of Veracruz (IVEC), the official cultural center for the state of Veracruz, which also hosts a *son jarocho* research website, a larger group of *sones* and dances were banned between 1571-1820: “El catatumba,” “El currimpamplí,” “El fandango,” “El pan de jarave,” “El pan de manteca,” “El mambrú,” “El saranguando,” “El temor,” “El toro,” “El toro nuevo,” “El torito,” “El zacamandú,” “La cosecha,” “La maturranga,” “Las boleras,” “Las lloviznitas,” “Las pateritas,” “Las seguidillas,” “Las teranas,” “Los chimisclanes,” “Los garbanzos,” “Los merolicos,” “Los panaderos,” and “Los perejiles.”

<<<http://www.musiquesdumonde.net/La-Inquisicion-en-la-musica.html>>> Accessed on October 8, 2012.

practitioners of sorcery, heresy, and blasphemy were burned to death, and even lesser crimes against the Church were punishable by strangulation (Knoll 1890:483). In regard to music censorship, The Holy Inquisition attempted to silence the subversive dance, poetry, and some instrumentation of the emergent *son* during the colonial period.

Jaranero Patricio Hidalgo adds that hand drums were taken away from people of African heritage during the Holy Inquisition. Hidalgo states, “*todo lo que se hacía con las manos, se lo llevaron a la tarima*” (“All rhythms once played by hand were transferred to the *tarima*”).⁴⁸ Therefore, according to Hidalgo, rhythms once performed on hand drums were reconfigured to the lower body. The legs and feet replaced the percussive movement of the hands and the *tarima* became the source of percussion, which shaped the *zapateado*, or percussive dance, of the *son jarocho* in particular, but also of Mexican *son* in general. Those who sang, played, or danced banned *sones* were punished and jailed during this time.

“El chuchumbé” is colloquially referred to as “the area four to five inches below the belly button of a male.”⁴⁹ Feminist scholar and *zapateado* dancer Micaela Díaz-Sánchez connects its etymological roots with the West African word, “cumbé,” which translates to “ombliigo” or “barriga” in Spanish and “belly button” or “belly” in English (2010:124). “El chuchumbé,” as mentioned previously, is currently a popular *son* from the *sotavento* region of the Gulf Coast, a cultural zone covering the southern portion of the Mexican state of Veracruz as well as parts of Oaxaca and Tabasco where the *son jarocho* is the traditional music. However, “El chuchumbé” originated as a dance in Cuba and was transported to Veracruz in the late 1700s.

According to Cuban musicologist Alejo Carpentier and Alan West-Durán, “In 1776, a European fleet that had made a long stopover in Havana transported some immigrants ‘of

⁴⁸ Patricio Hidalgo, personal communication with the author, August 17, 2012. Author’s translation.

⁴⁹ Marco Amador, personal communication with the author, August 2009.

irregular color' to Veracruz. The newcomers brought from Cuba a dance known as *El chuchumbé*; once seen, it spread with incredible speed" (2000:191). "El chuchumbé" came from a family of rhythms and dances known as *paracumbés*, *cachumbas*, *gayumbas*, and *zarambeques* (Carpentier and West-Durán 2000:193). The *son* was a courtship dance with the male in pursuit of the female. Its choreography included coquettish moves such as the "kicking of the apron" and "the lifted skirt," perhaps similar to a female's dance movements in the *rumba-guaguancó* of Cuba (Carpentier and West-Durán 2000:193). An informer of New Spain's Inquisition describes "El chuchumbé": "The verses are sung while others dance, a man with a women or four women and four men; the dance is performed with gestures, shaking, and swaying contrary to all honest intentions...because in it they embrace one another and dance belly to belly" (Carpentier and West-Durán 2000:193). According to Díaz-Sánchez, "the dancing of 'El Chuchumbe' represented not only the possibility of actual slave revolts but operated as a form of larger social revolt against the fundamental colonial power structure" (Díaz-Sánchez 2010:127). Public demonstration of sexually provocative movement became a form of protest through the body. A parallel dance and music form, the Afro-Cuban *rumba-guaguancó*, also simulates stylized, sexually provactive movement as oppositional creative expression comparable to the text and dance of "El chuchumbé." Therefore, the sexually suggestive dancing of "El chuchumbé" was a creative expression of resistance during the Holy Inquisition and a continuation of Afro-resistance practices.

Research on "El chuchumbé" mentions minimal details about its musical properties beyond dance and vocals, especially in its early manifestation in eighteenth century Cuba and Veracruz. Absent is the description of *son jarocho* instrumentation such as the *tarima*, *jarana*, *guitarra de son*, *leona*, or *arpa*. In the eighteenth century, the music itself did not have the title "*son*

jarocho,” but certainly contained the elements of *son*.⁵⁰ Gilberto Gutiérrez’s recovery work of the *son* sparked a new interest in the hidden history of “El chuchumbé.”

Upon finding documentation in México’s national archive, Gilberto Gutiérrez, director of Grupo Mono Blanco, was able to recover verses of “El chuchumbé” that were banned during the Spanish Inquisition:⁵¹

*En la esquina está parado un fraile de la merced
Con los hábitos alzados enseñando el chuchumbé*

A friar from La Merced is “standing” there on the [street] corner
With his religious garb pulled up, showing [his] “chuchumbé”

*Que te vaya bien, que te vaya mal
el chuchumbé te va gustar*

Whether things are going well, whether things are bad,
you will like the chuchumbé⁵²

The text of “El chuchumbé” is both picaresque and full of strategic resistance. This *proton* was banned due to its double-entendre sexual references directed at the Spanish Catholic clergy of New Spain. The verses uncover the sexual liberties of the clergy despite their mandatory vow of abstinence. “El chuchumbé” also reveals how humor through double-entendre verse makes a dangerously subversive statement, which consequently led to serious punishment.⁵³ “El chuchumbé” and other *sones* with similar double-entendre verses and complex metaphors became trademarks of the *son jarocho* (Díaz-Sánchez 2010:121).

Gutiérrez added a I-IV-V chord progression in C major to selected verses of “El chuchumbé.” His ensemble Grupo Mono Blanco recorded “El chuchumbé” as a *son jarocho* in the 1990s. The documentation of banned verses of “El chuchumbé,” and the fact that its dance

⁵⁰ Daniel Sheehy, personal communication with the author, October 1, 2012.

⁵¹ Gilberto Gutiérrez, personal communication with the author, July 2004.

⁵² Grupo Mono Blanco, “El chuchumbé,” *Fandango* (Urtex 2004). Author’s translation.

⁵³ Patricio Hidalgo, personal communication with the author, August 17, 2012.

was censored in the *sotavento*, serves as an early example of the political foundation for an emergent *son jarocho*.⁵⁴ However, it can be generalized that people of African, indigenous, and *mestizo*, or mixed heritage, most expressed their resistance to the Church. To be specific, Patricio Hidalgo believes that the *Mandiga* in Veracruz, an ethnic group originally from West Africa, wrote many *versos* against the Church.⁵⁵ Therefore, there is an added racial component to the *son*, projecting back onto the Church the stereotype of the over-sexualized colonial subject. Grupo Mono Blanco's reimagining of "El chuchumbé" as a *son jarocho* revived the story of resistance during the Holy Inquisition. "El chuchumbé" is now part of the standard repertoire of *sones jarochos* at *fandangos* and performances. Today, several Veracruz *son jarocho* and *jaranera-jaranero* ensembles in the U.S. include their own renditions of "El chuchumbé" as a way to narrate struggle and protest. For example, on the album *It's Time* (2012), East Los Angeles group Las Cafeteras use "El chuchumbé" to denounce current anti-international migrant fervor in Arizona. In the late 1990s, the ensemble Chuchumbé also reinterpreted the hidden history of struggle during the Holy Inquisition in Veracruz and Cuba.

On *¡Caramba niño!* (1999), Chuchumbé, the *son jarocho* ensemble, retells the censorship of "El chuchumbé" during the Spanish Inquisition:

*El chuchumbé fue penado por la Santa Inquisición
Pero ellos se olvidaron que es un ritmo sabrosón*

The Holy Inquisition punished the chuchumbé,
But they forgot that it is a joyous rhythm

*El Papa llegó a la Habana pero el Diablo lo tentó
Al mirar a una cubana el chuchumbé se le alzó*

The Pope arrived at Havana but the Devil tempted him

⁵⁴ The cultural zone of the *son jarocho*.

⁵⁵ Patricio Hidalgo, personal communication with the author, August 17, 2012.

Once he saw a Cuban woman, his “chuchumbé” arose⁵⁶

Chuchumbé’s verses combine historical data with sexualized double-entendre. “*Penado*” has double meaning, which references both punishment (*pena*) and the phallus (*pene*). The second verse refers to a Pope’s sexual desires in Havana, Cuba, which I interpret as the Church’s longtime contradiction of advocating sexual repression, yet many powerholders and priests in the Church act otherwise. Nonetheless, the narrative reconnects “El chuchumbé” to its Cuban origins through the sounds of the *son jarocho* in Veracruz. Furthermore, “El chuchumbé” reads like a folktale in song, one that delineates the hidden history of resistance to oppression during the colonial period of Cuba and Veracruz. In comparison to the strategic resistance found in “El chuchumbé,” because overt protest had severe consequences during the Holy Inquisition, only a few examples of explicit protest survive, for example, the legacy of the *conga* in Veracruz.

The Conga’s Legacy of Struggle and Protest in Veracruz

The *conga* is a standard rhythm of *comparsas*, percussion-driven street bands, during *Carnaval* in Santiago de Cuba. *Carnaval* emerged in the nineteenth century as a festival for enslaved Africans who were given liberty for one day during *Día de los Reyes*, Three Kings Day, or Epiphany on January 6, which was approved by the Church (Bettelheim 1991:67). *Comparsas* in the nineteenth century, and into the twentieth century, were also referred to as *congas*. Instruments played by *comparsas* are often made at home or furnished from inexpensive materials, including plank drums of different shapes and sizes, bells, frying pans, tire rims, trumpets, and the *corneta china* (Moore 1997:64). Indentured servants from China brought the *corneta*, a double-reed horn, to Santiago de Cuba in the late-nineteenth century (Moore

⁵⁶ Chuchumbé, “Pascuas, justicias, y fuga,” *¡Caramba niño!* (Producciones Alebrije 1999). Author’s translation.

1997:252). The *corneta china* is a staple instrument of the *comparsa* and is considered indispensable to the tradition.

Comparsas during Cuba's colonial period were often mistaken as slave rebellions headed by *Cabildos de nación*. *Cabildos* were influential groups that owned land, distributed inheritances to slaves, provided neighborhood police services, and promoted ethnic solidarity (Bettelheim 1991:67-68). *Cabildos de nación* were based on African nation of origin. In the nineteenth century, *cabildos* helped organize uprisings, which led to them to be barred from participation at *Día de los Reyes* festivities in Havana in 1823 (Bettelheim 1991:69). By the time the *conga* rhythm migrated to Veracruz, it travelled with a rich historical trajectory of social struggle and protest.

Similar to the dissemination of "El chuchumbé," the *conga* rhythm and dance transferred to Veracruz by way of Cuba. Most *congas* were performed as protest songs in the streets of Veracruz, and often amounted to demands for social justice on behalf of the lower classes. The Catholic clergy was scandalized by the sexually suggestive dances of the *conga*. Like "El chuchumbé," *congas* in Veracruz had chants that denounced the duplicitous morals of those in positions of authority. However, "La conga del viejo" ("The Old Man's Conga") was able to strategically survive the Holy Inquisition of New Spain. Due to its syncretic symbolism of renovation and good wishes for the New Year, "La conga del viejo" was tolerated and able to survive religious and political scrutiny.⁵⁷ "La conga del viejo" also survived through its incorporation in annual festivities to welcome the New Year in Veracruz's *sotavento* region.

"La conga del viejo" is a musical and cultural ritual performed in the days surrounding New Year's Eve in southern Veracruz. Diverse ensembles of the *son jarocho*, *cumbia*, Brazilian

⁵⁷ Paraphrasing "De nuevo el viejo" << <http://www.musiquesdumonde.net/De-nuevo-El-Viejo.html>>>. Accessed on October 15, 2012.

inspired *batucada*, Afro-Cuban percussion, and bricolage troupes using household appliances as instruments participate by taking to the streets in this annual ritual. Loud brass instruments also accompany this musical uproar during this New Year festivity. Ethnomusicologist Antonio Robles-Cahero provides a conceptual metaphor for rituals of overpowering sound as “*la guerra de los sonidos*,” a war of sounds (2005:65), a reinterpretation of Serge Grazinski’s “images at war” (2001), which was ultimately borrowed from Antonio Gramsci’s concept of “wars of maneuver,”⁵⁸ a counter-hegemonic method that involves physically overwhelming the coercive system of the State.⁵⁹ The sonic power of loud music performed by people with social grievances is a command for basic human rights. The diverse representation of ensembles that parade the streets of Veracruz is a *guerra de los sonidos*, and constitutes a creative demand of recognition from a historically aggrieved community.⁶⁰

“La conga del viejo” is performed as a communal ritual in neighborhoods of the working poor. The chorus “*una limosna para este pobre viejo*” (an alm for this poor old man)⁶¹ includes a line asking for monetary donations during the procession. As the chorus suggests, the costumed portion of the ritual includes predominantly male participation. However, the issue of gender representation is complicated by the costumed depiction of *la viuda*, a widowed woman portrayed by a cross-dressed male. *El viejo*, the old man, is performed in a joyful and raucous manner in order to excite participants. One final installment of the family trilogy includes a man dressed as a baby who represents the New Year.

⁵⁸ Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections From The Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.

⁵⁹ Paraphrasing E. Colin Ruggero’s “Gramsci: A War of Position,” <<http://www.warofposition.com/?page_id=94.>> Accessed on October 15, 2012.

⁶⁰ “Aggrieved communities” is a concept introduced by George Lipsitz, “Chicano Rock: Cruising Around the Historical Bloc,” *Rockin’ the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements*, edited by Reebee Garofalo (Boston: South End Press, 267-279).

⁶¹ Author’s translation

At midnight, a *viejo* doll made of cloth—or other materials—is burnt to symbolically let go of the past and enter the New Year. The burning of objects is also a visual metaphor for purification. Every neighborhood street or block claims its own doll (for example, “*el viejo de Zapata*,” or the “old man from Zapata Street”).⁶² After being passed around the neighborhood gathering, the *viejo* doll is either seated or hung and burnt as part of the ceremony. The burning of *el viejo* in the New Year extends itself to parts of Latin America and Spain. However, “La conga del viejo” has another hypothesis in regard to its origin and practice, one rooted in a hidden history of resistance.

The hidden history of “La conga del viejo” dates back to shipyard worker social unrest at the *astilleros* (shipyards) of Veracruz around 1920.⁶³ According to Francisco Rivera Ávila, shipyard workers collectively wrote “La conga del viejo” as an act of protest at the Port of Veracruz.⁶⁴ Workers marched to the shipyards around mid-December to the beat of the *conga*. The shipyard workers, as organic bricoleurs, took pots, pans, crates, and old instruments, creating an impromptu ensemble of protest music.⁶⁵ Hatton states, “the bricoleur's response to the task at hand is limited to a rearrangement, understood as including new uses, of the existing set of means. This rearrangement involves a reorganization or improvisation with existing elements to create new structures as an ad hoc response to the environment” (1989:76). Comparable to the bricolage assembly of *comparsa* instrumentation in Cuba, the shipyard worker's use of household items provides an example of the improvised gathering of materials due to the urgency of the situation, the struggle for better living and working conditions.

⁶² César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 25, 2012. *La calle Zapata* is a local street in La Huaca, a neighborhood in the city of Veracruz.

⁶³ Patricio Hidalgo, e-mail message to the author, November 15, 2012.

⁶⁴ Citing the documentary *Patricio Hidalgo y el Afrojarocho* (2012).

⁶⁵ Citing the documentary *Patricio Hidalgo y el Afrojarocho* (2012).

Shipyard workers disputed their social situation by improvising verses and singing choruses such as “*una limosna para este pobre viejo que ha dejado hijos para el año nuevo*” (an alm for the poor old man who has left his children for the New Year).⁶⁶ The chorus became a powerful statement of the will to struggle for social change. However, the son’s hidden history of resistance was obfuscated within present New Year festivities in Veracruz. For many years it had become known as merely a song performed once a year to celebrate renewal and the New Year.

The ensemble Chuchumbé considered the *conga* integral to the musical heritage of the *sotavento* region. The *conga* survived in Veracruz with a limited repertoire; however, the work of Chuchumbé and Patricio Hidalgo spearheaded the creation of new compositions bearing the rhythm. According to Hidalgo, since the 1970s, “La conga del viejo” lost its poetic sense and *conga* rhythm.⁶⁷ In the 1990s, Hidalgo’s former group Chuchumbé reimagined “La conga del viejo” by writing new verses and applied the *conga* rhythm to standard *son jarocho* instrumentation such as the *jarana*, *guitarra de son*, *pandero*, *quijada*, and *marimból*.

As a professional ensemble that emerged during the second wave of the *jaranero* movement, Chuchumbé found new ways to understand the *son jarocho* as a genre. Chuchumbé placed the concept of Blackness, considered the third root of the *son jarocho*, at the forefront of their sound and discourse. The sound of Chuchumbé is best described as Afro-Diasporic *son jarocho*. Elements of Cuban *son*, African rooted call and response vocals over percussion, and the recovery work of the *conga jarocho* highlight the creative expression of Black roots in Veracruz. On their album *¡Caramba niño!* “Conga de San Benito” exclaims “Santo San Benito, patrón de los Negros,” (Saintly St. Benito, patrón Saint of Black people), and is call for the

⁶⁶ Citing the documentary *Patricio Hidalgo y el Afrojarocho* (2012). Author’s translation.

⁶⁷ Paraphrased from the documentary *Patricio Hidalgo y el Afrojarocho* (2012).

divine protection of the Black population.⁶⁸ Members of the ensemble also aligned themselves with social movements happening within Mexico. In 1996, members of Chuchumbé accompanied Grupo Mono Blanco's César Castro to participate at the *Intergaláctico* meeting with the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico.

"This Wasn't a Zapa-Tour": Reflections of Jaraneros Crossing into Zapatista Territory

On January 1, 1994 the Zapatista Army for National Liberation (EZLN or "Zapatistas") rose up in arms in the primarily indigenous Mayan regions of Chiapas, located in southern México.⁶⁹ The uprising served as a resistance against the neoliberal policies of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Zapatistas believed that NAFTA would affect the livelihood of indigenous and marginalized people in México.⁷⁰ The EZLN presented eleven demands in the First Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle: "work, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice, and peace" (Conant 2010:12).⁷¹ The eleven demands function as a declaration of inalienable human rights that were denied under mainstream Mexican political power. The EZLN fought for the autonomy of indigenous lands that co-existed within the larger corporatist-democracy of the Mexican Nation.

The aforementioned event on New Years Day 1994 was a calculated and highly organized rebellion. The EZLN figured that a surprise attack would be most effective while the wealthy were celebrating the New Year. A segment from the Sixth Declaration from the Lacandón states, "we prepared ourselves well politically and learned how to use arms and all of the sudden, when the rich were having their big New Year's Eve fiestas, well, we fell upon them

⁶⁸ Chuchumbé, "Conga de San Benito," *¡Caramba niño!*, author's translation and interpretation.

⁶⁹ *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*, or the Zapatista National Liberation Army.

⁷⁰ I will use the term "Zapatista" and the acronym "EZLN" interchangeably. Both reference the same revolutionary group from Chiapas.

⁷¹ *La selva* Lacandón is a jungle in Chiapas and central operating area of the EZLN.

in their cities to let them know that we are here, that from now on they had to take us into account” (Ross 2006:2). The result came from almost a decade of underground organizing of Chiapas’s indigenous communities that had endured a history of disenfranchisement since the colonial period. This included the appropriation of land, lack of solid educational resources, and exploitation. The Zapatista rebellion served as a demand for the recognition of historically aggrieved communities and their agency, struggle for autonomy, and basic human rights.

In April 1996, the EZLN invited activists, cultural workers, journalists, and musicians to the *Internacional* (International) meeting in the municipality of San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas. Thousands of people from México, Central America, South America, Europe, and the United States gathered for this occasion. The event’s overarching theme, “against neoliberalism and for humanity,” served as a welcome banner to the *Internacional*.⁷² The diversity of participants included women struggling for gender rights, LGBTQ⁷³ members, a diversity of indigenous peoples, punks, police in civilian disguise, and journalists.⁷⁴ Amongst this grouping of participants, a couple of *jaraneros*, *son jarocho* musicians from Veracruz, included César Castro from Grupo Mono Blanco.

César Castro is a young master *jaranero* and *laudero*, a luthier, originally from the humble neighborhood of La Huaca in the city of Veracruz. At thirteen years old, Castro officially became a member Grupo Mono Blanco, an ensemble dedicated to the dissemination of the *jaranero* movement and the *fandango*. Since 1978, the *jaranero* movement sought to restore the *son jarocho* to its traditional sound and reestablish the *fandango* as its central practice (González

⁷² Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, “‘Para Todos Todo’: Anécdota de un Fandango Zapatista,” e-mail message to sonjarocho@yahoogrupos.com.mx, January 5, 2010.

⁷³ Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, and Queer.

⁷⁴ Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, “‘Para Todos Todo’: Anécdota de un Fandango Zapatista,” e-mail message to sonjarocho@yahoogrupos.com.mx, January 5, 2010. Author’s translation.

2009:365). Now a resident in Los Angeles, California, Castro dedicates his life to the dissemination of the *son jarocho* and *fandango* in cultural centers, progressive spaces, universities, and public schools; transnational dialogue and workshops between *son jarocho* musicians in the U.S. and Mexico; and works daily on crafting *son jarocho* instruments as a *laudero*.

César Castro became my mentor on the *requinto jarocho* after being awarded the Durfee Foundation Master-Apprentice Grant in Los Angeles, California. I have shared many performances with Castro as a member of his ensembles *Zócalo Züe* and *Cambalache*. As an occasional guest lecturer at the University of California, Los Angeles, Castro would briefly mention the presence of the *son jarocho* in social movements in the U.S. and México. He shared recollections of his time in Grupo Mono Blanco and mentioned travelling to Chiapas to visit the Zapatista Insurgency. Castro's young adult life in México amidst a popular uprising served as an awakening of social consciousness. In 1996, Castro took two trips to the Zapatista areas of armed decolonialization, which contributed greatly to his own process of political awareness. Castro and a fellow *jaranero*/journalist drove for many hours to reach an *Aguascalientes* in Chiapas. According to Conant, *Aguascalientes* are "symbolic and real centers of resistance, with meeting rooms, public amphitheatres, command structures, and guest lodging" (Conant 2010:106). Castro visited the *Aguascalientes* of San José del Río as a photographer for the newspaper *Imagen de Veracruz*. Both travelers brought a *jarana* in case an occasion called for music.

The dirt road to Chiapas provided vivid and surreal scenes of war for Castro. After long hours traveling along a narrow road, the realization of entering a war zone became evident when a tank suddenly crossed the way through the jungle. Frequent military outposts checked every

vehicle and passenger for identification and purpose of travel. Another vivid memory that Castro recalls includes an *Aguascalientes* taken over entirely by the Mexican military. The area was deserted of local inhabitants with only men in green military fatigues. As a hired newspaper photographer, Castro captured these moments with his camera on his way to the his final destination of San José del Río, Chiapas.

Castro recalls feeling overwhelmed by the Mexican military presence throughout the long travel into the Lacandón jungle of Chiapas. Reflecting on the perspective of the resistance, the highly organized methods of the Zapatista army made Castro realize the determination of the uprising. He explains, “This wasn’t a ‘Zapa-tour.’ It was like crossing a border into a war zone.”⁷⁵ Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa states, “the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people from different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrink” (Anzaldúa 1999:19). Anzaldúa’s borderland philosophy allows for an understanding of counter-hegemonic maneuvering through intercultural conflict. A border is not only a geopolitical zone, but also an ideological, sexual, or even contested space between communities in resistance—like the Zapatistas—and a repressive government or military force.

In Chiapas, there exists a classic binary of an upper class with mainstream political power subjugating a group of indigenous people. In the case of the Zapatistas, the answer to oppression was an uprising that declared an autonomous space—a well-defined border—between what they viewed as despotic neoliberal policies such as NAFTA and self-determining liberation.

Sophisticated Zapatista organizing tactics proved a threat for multi-national business and mainstream Mexican politicians. The Mexican government sent infiltrators to Chiapas. Castro recalls, “*Y como en la frontera regresan a gente, igual allá ya regresaban...me tocó ver a uno*

⁷⁵ César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 25, 2012. Author’s translation.

que detectaron como infiltrado del gobierno. Regresaban caminando, “¡y órale güey, vas para atrás”! (Just how people are deported on the [U.S.-México] border, the Zapatistas would [physically] deport people from their territory...I got to witness someone they detected as an infiltrator. They sent this person out walking and said, “Come on you idiot, you’re going back!”).⁷⁶ The EZLN territory was a constant battleground and contested borderland amidst encroachment by the Mexican state. Despite the constant threat or fear of violence, the Zapatistas and *Internacional* participants valued daily time of solidarity through leisure.

After meetings and workshops at the *Internacional*, small fiestas were held every evening. Zapatista men, women, and children of Mayan heritage performed popular songs on the *marimba*, including the popular *cumbia* “La de la mochila azul.”⁷⁷ From the start of the *Internacional*, Castro and his fellow *jaranero* shared *sones* with the Zapatistas and held intensive workshops of the *zapateado*.⁷⁸

César Castro inspired Zapatista children to dance “Los enanos” (the little people). “La tuza” (the gopher) also became a favorite of the EZLN, so much so that it supplanted the original hit, “La de la mochila azul.”⁷⁹ An attendee of the *Internacional* and *jaranero* in the making, Fernando Guadarrama Olivera adds, “*Poco a poco, con timidez al principio y después con un entusiasmo inesperado, la gente del EZLN zapatea descalza sobre la tierra. Con pasos suaves y cadenciosos bailaron todos y cada uno de los sones que los jarocho interpretaban*” (little by little, shy at first and gradually with much enthusiasm, members of the EZLN began to perform

⁷⁶ Spanish grammar rules require quotation marks after the end punctuation. César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 25, 2012. My translation.

⁷⁷ Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, ““Para Todos Todo”: Anécdota de un Fandango Zapatista,” e-mail message to sonjarocho@yahoogrupos.com.mx, January 5, 2010.” Author’s translation.

⁷⁸ Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, ““Para Todos Todo”: Anécdota de un Fandango Zapatista,” e-mail message to sonjarocho@yahoogrupos.com.mx, January 5, 2010. Author’s translation.

⁷⁹ Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, ““Para Todos Todo”: Anécdota de un Fandango Zapatista,” e-mail message to sonjarocho@yahoogrupos.com.mx, January 5, 2010. Author’s translation.

the *zapateado* with their bare feet stomping the ground. All of them danced with a smooth cadence to every *son* that the *jarocho*s performed).⁸⁰ In this case, the mini-*fandango* or short form *fandango*, colloquially termed *fandanguito*, proved to create a celebratory space of solidarity between *jarocho* musical-culture and the indigenous-Zapatista culture of resistance.

In July of 1996, the global *Intergaláctico* (Intergalactic) meeting was held in Chiapas. The Sixth Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle describes the general purpose of the *Intergaláctico*, stating, “we conducted an international survey, that is, we met to talk with people of America and Asia and Africa and Europe and Oceania and came to know their struggles and their ways” (Ross 2006:4). Finding what George Lipsitz calls “families of resemblance” between the *jaranero* movement and the Zapatista uprising, several *jaraneros* attended the *Intergaláctico* as a cultural exchange.⁸¹ Castro returned with fellow *jaranera* and *jaranero* musicians from Grupo Mono Blanco, Gilberto Gutiérrez and Octavio Vega; from Son de Madera, Ramón Gutiérrez and Laura Reboloso; and members of the ensemble Chuchumbé, Patricio Hidalgo, Zenén Zeferino, Ricardo Perry, and Andrés Flores.

The participation of a larger group of *jaraneros* leaned toward a symbolic exchange of solidarity with the EZLN. Castro recalls being on the sidelines from meetings and general dialogues between *Intergaláctico* participants and the Zapatistas. However, the primary role of the *jaraneros* at the *Intergaláctico* was the call for sharing the *son jarocho* with the EZLN.

Subcomandante Tacho, an EZLN leader pictured with the emblematic Zapatista *pasamontañas*, ski mask, in figure 6, occasionally accompanied the *jaraneros* with a guitar. However, Subcomandante Tacho only spared the time he could before receiving urgent calls to meetings.

⁸⁰ Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, “‘Para Todos Todo’: Anécdota de un Fandango Zapatista,” e-mail message to sonjarocho@yahoogrupos.com.mx, January 5, 2010. Author’s translation.

⁸¹ “Families of resemblance” is a concept introduced by George Lipsitz in “Cruising Around the Historical Bloc.”



Figure 6. From left to right: unidentified person, Subcomandante Tacho of the EZLN, Fernando Guadarrama Olivera, and César Castro. This photo is courtesy of Fernando Guadarrama Olivera.

The *jaraneros* and *jaranera* (Laura Reboloso) were asked to perform for the EZLN at the *Intergaláctico*. Immediately facing the stage were *comandantes*, the male and female leadership of the EZLN. Castro recalls:

Y ahí fue la única ocasión en que podíamos llegar cerca de ellos y a saludar, y nos pusimos a tocar...y tocábamos todos, éramos todos y cantábamos y tocábamos: Zenén, Patricio...Gilberto se echaba sus versos “chingones”. Ya más tarde se hacían las fiestas y acabamos haciendo un relajó buenísimo. Llovía y se hizo un lodo increíble. Estaban contentos ya del trabajo que se había cumplido. Eso era nuestro que hacer.

It was the only occasion that we were close to the Zapatista leadership and were able to greet them; and we immediately began to perform. All [*jaraneros*] performed together. All of us sang and played together; Zenén [Zeferino], Patricio [Hidalgo]...Gilberto [Gutiérrez] recited awesome verses. Fiestas were held later on and it was a great time! It rained and mud began to form everywhere. Everyone was thrilled about all the hard work that was accomplished. Our duty was to bring joy.⁸²

Serious play in pressing times of revolution was another way to celebrate the uprising in Chiapas. It is not an escape, but a way to honor the difficult and sometimes under-appreciated work of social justice. At the *Intergaláctico*, the presence of the *son jarocho* brought an immediate understanding of valuing culture as resistance. During a conversation with a Zapatista leader, César Castro recalls a quick exchange of mutual recognition between the work of

⁸² César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 25, 2012. Author's translation.

jaraneros and the Zapatistas. The EZLN Insurgency, which is still active today, inspired social justice activists to look at internal issues in their own respective communities.⁸³ I credit the *Zapatista Internacional* and *Intergalático* meetings for embedding progressive ideologies, dialogue, and transnational organizing in *son jarocho* practitioners. Transnational dialogue between U.S. based activists and Zapatistas gave Chicanas and Chicanos the proper experience to have exchanges with *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from Veracruz. The purpose was not to become a Zapatista or a *jarocha-jarocho*, but to acquire a new organizing skill set to create positive social change.

The trajectory of the *son jarocho* as a music of struggle and protest continues today. The *son jarocho* serves as a creative and shared expression of struggle at marches, protests, and demonstrations in Mexico and the United States. Still there are stories to write about such as *jaranero* Arcadio Hidalgo's participation as a *son jarocho* musician and people's soldier during the Mexican Revolution. Hidalgo's words have influenced many *son jarocho* musicians to understand poetry and music as a tool for social justice, and the role of music, poetry, and dance as a reflection of collective struggle.

The hidden histories of "El chuchumbé," "La conga del viejo," and the *jaranero* cultural exchange with Zapatistas highlight the long history of the *son jarocho*'s presence in communal resistance. These three episodes reveal stories of struggle through migration in times of repression. In the case of "El chuchumbé" and "La conga del viejo," both musical expressions are rooted in Afro-Cuban struggle and emerge in Veracruz, Mexico to create a new culture of resistance during the Holy Inquisition. *Son jarocho* ensembles from the new *jaranero* movement research and revisit the stories of "El chuchumbé" and "La conga del viejo" in the 1990s. Both

⁸³ César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 25, 2012. Author's translation.

narratives are re-communicated and reclaimed through the contemporary sounds of the *son jarocho*. Finally, *jaranero* solidarity with the Zapatista Insurgency reveals the importance of sharing culture and exchanging the ideals of social justice.

Participants of the East Los Angeles Chicana and Chicano arts and music scene attended the Zapatista meetings in 1996, and thereby the organizing strategies of the Zapatistas became important tools for Chicana and Chicano civil rights activism in the 1990s. Cultural exchange and dialogue with the Zapatistas provided a foundation for organizing strategies between *son jarocho* musicians in the United States and México. Chicana and Chicano activists and *jaraneros* who attended the *Intergalático* in Chiapas would later meet and establish the *son jarocho* as music of struggle and protest in their organizing. Ultimately, solidarity work within the *son jarocho* blurs the meaning of Nation and its borders, and the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement was strategic in utilizing this to musically support the struggle for immigrant rights/transnational issues.

However, the following chapter seeks to foreground *son jarocho* as political praxis by documenting how the *son jarocho* migrated to Los Angeles beginning in the mid-1940s. As a *jaranero-fandanguero* practitioner, I sought to create a genealogy of the *son jarocho* before the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement and the *fandango* reached Los Angeles. In other words, what came before our present movement of utilizing the *son jarocho* to musically support efforts for social justice? Working-class Mexican American ensembles in the 1950s were not explicitly consciousness of resistance because the music served a primarily cultural-performative purpose. In contrast, Timothy Harding and his ensemble Los Tigres de la Sierra operated in multiple performance contexts, but they repoliticized the genre, utilizing the *son jarocho* to support social justice causes. The chapter proceeds into the Chicano Movement of the 1970s with a discussion

on Los Lobos del Este del Los Angeles. Before the ensemble transitioned to performing rock ‘n’ roll, blues, country, and *norteño* music in the 1980s, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles began as an ensemble that reinterpreted traditional Mexican and Latin American music. The *son jarocho* served as a musical foundation for this ensemble. Their music became a soundtrack to Chicana and Chicano student organization functions and provided support for the United Farm Workers. The chapter concludes with the migration of the *jaranero* and *fandanguero* branch of the *son jarocho* into California’s Bay Area in the late 1980s, and its solidification, once again, as protest music.

Chapter III: A Genealogy of the *Son Jarocho* in Los Angeles, California, 1940s-1970s

Considering important *son jarocho* sites of development, California is critical in the music's dissemination, cultivation, and creative renewal outside of México. Beginning in the mid-1940s, I trace the initial presence of *son jarocho* in California via Andrés Huesca, a professional harpist and film performer whose malleable approach to *son jarocho* merged with *jalisciense*-esque, or *mariachi*-inspired sounds (Cruz-Bárceñas 2007). By the 1950s, ensembles such as Conjunto Papaloapan and Los Tigres de la Sierra formed in Los Angeles and in Palo Alto. Conjunto Papaloapan emerges as a working-class *son jarocho* group based in East Los Angeles and performed at restaurants and theme parks as a source of income. In contrast, Timothy Harding, a labor historian, staunch Leftist, and director of Los Tigres de la Sierra, spent his early academic career under surveillance by the FBI and helped to cultivate the *son jarocho* at universities.

Academic institutions such as Stanford University, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), California State University, Los Angeles, and California State University, Northridge became sites of cultivating and presenting the *son jarocho*.⁸⁴ As mentioned earlier, Los Tigres de la Sierra formed at Stanford University in 1958, but relocated to Los Angeles in the 1960s and became an ethnically diverse *son jarocho* ensemble. Timothy Harding, director of Los Tigres de la Sierra, taught courses on Latin American music and history at California State University, Los Angeles from the 1960s through the 1990s, and this university became a base for his *son jarocho* ensemble. Trío Angelino Jarocho consisted of *requintero* and then ethnomusicology graduate student Daniel Sheehy, *arpista* and Spanish education student Ed

⁸⁴ To clarify, Palo Alto, California was the site where Los Tigres de la Sierra formed while founder members Timothy Harding and Patricia Harding attended Stanford University in 1958. Thus being more of the place where the group formed than providing an official university *son jarocho* ensemble.

“Lalo” Lindgrön, and Cuban *jaranero* José Faget and was formed while the three attended the University of California, Los Angeles in the late 1960s. California State University, Northridge (CSUN) is a stronghold of the Herrera family as their *son jarocho* ensemble, Conjunto Hueyapan, consists of professors at the university. Professor Fermín Herrera joined the faculty of Chicana/o Studies at CSUN in 1971 and formed Conjunto Hueyapan in 1973 along with his brothers Andrés, Jorge, and Tomás and sister/CSUN professor María Isabel in Oxnard, California.⁸⁵

By the 1950s, and into the 1970s, ensembles such as Conjunto Papaloapan, Los Tigres de la Sierra, Trío Angelino Jarocho, Conjunto Alvarado, and Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles performed professionally in the greater Los Angeles area.⁸⁶ Conjunto Alma Grande de los Hermanos Moraza was formed in 1975 by brothers Lorenzo, Antonio, Carlos and their sister Carmen in Ventura, California. Conjunto Alma Grande is yet another example of *son jarocho* groups operating as a family ensemble that was formed during the Chicano Movement.⁸⁷ Like many music ensembles that emerged during the Chicano Movement, their repertoire extends beyond the *son jarocho* and includes popular genres such as the romantic *bolero* and *canción ranchera*.

Urban ensembles such as Conjunto Papaloapan and Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles performed for social justice leaders such as César Chávez and the United Farm Workers. Their music existed within a historical apogee of the Chicano Movement, and therefore coincides with the cultural events, ideology, and evolution of the movement. Ethnomusicologist Stevan Azcona

⁸⁵ Ramos Chandler, Carmen. 2012. “Concert to Celebrate CSUN Professor Fermín Herrera’s Contributions to California’s Mexican American/Chicano Culture.” *Newsroom-California State University, Northridge*, July 30th. <<<http://blogs.csun.edu/news/2012/07/fermin-herrera/>>> Accessed on July 9, 2014.

⁸⁶ Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles later shortened their name to Los Lobos.

⁸⁷ This paragraph was in part paraphrased from the album notes to *Canciones y Sonos con Los Hermanos Moraza* (2004).

explains, “One element in the growth and development of the urban-based Chicano Movement was song and music-making that took the form of a cultural *rescate* or revival. Mexican musical styles and genres, although similarly used within the framework of *huelga* songs, took on new meaning for Chicana/o musicians, who were predominantly students and young people. Music, like the arts, became a symbolic expression of emergent Chicana/o identity and mediation of the social ills that plague the community” (2008:117).⁸⁸ Cultural nationalism, inspired by Chicano Movement, had a considerable impact on music ensembles formed in the 1960s and 1970s. Most of the ensembles I will discuss in this chapter utilized instruments such as the *jarana jarocho* and *requinto jarocho* to perform various regional Mexican styles; however, the *son jarocho* served as their musical foundation. Groups such as Conjunto Alvarado, Los Tigres de la Sierra, and Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles performed *rancheras*, *boleros*, Latin American folk songs, and *huapangos* along with a strong *son jarocho* repertoire. One of few ensembles to focus their music exclusively on the *son jarocho* was Conjunto Hueyapan from Oxnard, California.

In this chapter, I will document the emergence of *son jarocho* ensembles or key artists in Los Angeles beginning in the mid-1940s. The formation of domestic *son jarocho* bands marks the regular presence of the music in California; previously, the *son jarocho* was only present through the touring professional groups from México that began traveling to the state in the 1940s, or through its presentation in *ballet folclórico*, the staged and choreographed performance of regional Mexican dances. Local *son jarocho* ensembles established a continuous trajectory of preservation, teaching, re-interpretation, and innovation (Loza 1992:192). This chapter will read like an oral history, giving space to the interviewees to have agency and voice their experience with the *son jarocho*. These micro-histories document the daily hidden transcripts of learning how to play this musical tradition for the cultural-performative setting without many available

⁸⁸ *Huelga* meaning “strike.”

resources. Small communities of shared interest in the *son jarocho* were forged amongst working-class musicians, academic institutions, and social movements throughout California, but were largely centered in Los Angeles.

This chapter will highlight how early *son jarocho* ensembles in California such as Los Tigres de la Sierra had ties to Leftist politics and social justice movements. The second section of this chapter will focus on the presence of the *son jarocho* amidst the Chicano Movement of the 1960s-1970s. Finally, I will conclude the chapter by documenting the activity of *son jarocho* ensembles in California in the 1980s and 1990s.

Migrant Son Jarocho Musicians from México to Los Angeles: 1940s-1970s

Beginning in the mid-1940s, professional *son jarocho* musicians from Veracruz migrated to work in Southern California, primarily in Los Angeles. Well-established artists such as Andrés Huesca and Lino Chávez toured in Los Angeles and areas of the Southwest to expand their careers as professional musicians. While in Southern California, these musicians also taught local musicians how to improve their skills in the *son jarocho*. Chávez taught Chicano musicians, such as Tomás Herrera, a member of Conjunto Hueyapan, his intricate *requinto jarocho* techniques. Veracruz born José “Chayote” Gutiérrez spent time performing in Los Angeles from the 1970s into the 1990s. Gutiérrez provided a consistent *son jarocho* soundscape to restaurants, performance stages, and commercial spaces in Los Angeles, as well as throughout the U.S. and the world.

The formation of homegrown *son jarocho* ensembles in California in the 1950s has a significant precursor in the 1940s. Born in the city of Veracruz, Andrés Huesca brought his distinguished *son jarocho arpa* technique to the film, recording, and performance industry in 1940s-1950s Los Angeles. The following section will explain the importance of Huesca’s work

in film, commercial recordings, and his legacy as an early migrant *jarocho* musician, traveling between México and the United States.

Andrés Huesca: Jarocho Harpist in Los Angeles, 1940s-1950s

Andrés Huesca, a professional *son jarocho* musician from Veracruz, México, relocated to Los Angeles in the mid-1940s to expand his successful career in film and music. Huesca and his group Los Costeños performed a commercial style of *son jarocho*, which was favored in México's film, radio, recording, and television industry in the 1930s, and 1940s México and United States. This original commercial wave of *son jarocho* by groups such as Andrés Huesca y Los Costeños and El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez helped create a musical standard for this music. Both in México and the U.S., Huesca was known as an innovator and pioneer in successfully experimenting with new ways to visually present and interpret the *son jarocho*.

Upon interviewing a pioneer *son jarocho* musician from Los Angeles, Roberto Chagolla, I asked him if he met Huesca in the 1950s. Chagolla responded, "No, but that's how it started...the *jarocho*, with Andrés Huesca. That was when I first heard him. That was right here at the Million Dollar [Theater]. And then he passed away."⁸⁹ Chagolla socially locates Huesca as both a musical influence and as someone who set Los Angeles as a historic site for the cultivation of the *son jarocho* outside of México.

Andrés Huesca was born on November 3, 1917 in the city of Veracruz and began to record professionally in the 1930s (Cruz Bárcenas 2007). However, the 1940s made way for Huesca to become an international figure with consistent work on Mexican films, recordings, and live performances between Los Angeles and Mexico City (Cruz Bárcenas 2007). His father Arnulfo Huesca was an *arpista*, or harpist, and was well known as a musician throughout the

⁸⁹ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

region surrounding the city of Veracruz. Andrés Huesca greatly admired his father's musical skill and pleaded with his father to teach him the *arpa*, but his father refused since he deemed Huesca too young at the time (1957:4). When Andrés Huesca was ten years old, his father had to leave Veracruz due to an emergency and left his *arpa* at home since he did not have pending performances (Cruz Bárcenas 2007). When his father returned after three months, Huesca had already taught himself how to play the *arpa* and could accompany a few *sones jarochos*. This story reached the entire city and by the time he was eleven years of age, Huesca began to perform at the Eslava del Puerto Theater in the city of Veracruz where México's most successful musicians performed, including Veracruz musical icon Toña la Negra (1957:4).

According to Mexican newspaper *La Jornada*, Huesca is credited with making "La bamba" popular across the world in the 1940s (Cruz Bárcenas 2007). The widely popular recording of "La bamba" by Andrés and Huesca and his brother is believed to have influenced the rock 'n' roll interpretation of the song by Ritchie Valens. Steve Sullivan states, "This provided a great background for the first great recording of the ancient tune by Andres Huesca and his brother Victor; this sensationally exciting performance is very likely the one from which Ritchie Valens learned the song from his classic rendition in 1958" (2013:460). Amongst other accomplishments, Huesca participated in seventy-seven films, which include classics such as *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1936), Disney's *The Three Caballeros* (1944), and *Sólo Veracruz es bello* (1948); performed *son jarocho* for Miguel Alemán's presidential campaign in México in the mid-1940s; and established the *jarocho*-style *arpa* popularized in the 1930s (Cruz Bárcenas 2007).

The traditional *arpa jarocho* is approximately one meter and twenty centimeters in height (Barahona Londoño 1997:155). The relatively small size of the instrument required *arpistas* to

sit while playing. In 1936, Huesca made an aesthetic decision to use a much bigger harp, an *arpa grande* from Michoacán, while filming *Allá en el rancho grande*. Andrés Barahona Londoño states, “*Este cambio fue bien recibido por los ejecutantes de arpa, ya que además de ser por su tamaño un instrumento con mayor sonoridad, también permitió a los músicos salir con mejor imagen y presencia en las grabaciones cinematográficas o en fotografías*” (“This change was well-received by harpists, and not only for its great sound due to its size, but also allowed musicians have a greater image and presence in films and photographs”) (1997:155). Therefore, Huesca’s change to the *arpa grande* provided both greater aesthetic and musical possibilities than the traditional *arpa veracruzana*. This change to the *arpa grande* in the late-1930s became the standard for most *son jarocho arpistas*, or harpists in the professional recording, radio, and film industries.

Huesca’s musical style reflected the fusions of popular regional music from México. His *jarocho*-style harp playing was at the center of his sound, although instruments such as the nylon string acoustic guitar often accompanied his music, and provided heavy leanings toward a mariachi inspired style (Cruz Bárcenas 2007). Standard *son jarocho* instruments such as the *jarana* and *requinto jarocho* were often absent from his recordings and appearances in film. Mexican newspaper *La Jornada* states, “*Entre sus aciertos está, sin duda, el de haber establecido el son jarocho en un ambiente muy cargado hacia el son jalisciense (mariachi jarocho o jarocho jalisciense) y con una competencia fuerte con el son huasteco.*” (“Within his accomplishments, without a doubt, was establishing the *son jarocho* in a style leaning strongly toward the *son jalisciense (mariachi jarocho or jarocho jalisciense)* and with a strong influence of the *son huasteco*”) (Cruz Bárcenas 2007).⁹⁰ Huesca’s signature sound is a merger of *son jarocho* infused with mariachi-style guitar work. His style blurred the lines of Mexican *son*

⁹⁰ Author’s translation

styles, but I view Huesca as a *son jarocho* musician steeped in the tradition, yet flexible to adopt other regional and popular Mexican styles to his repertoire. This type of musical flexibility of cross-regional Mexican *son* and popular musics became the framework for reinterpretation that Chicano/U.S. based ensembles with a musical foundation in the *son jarocho* utilized in their fusions.

Ethnomusicologist Steven Loza also notes Huesca's musical abilities stretched beyond the *son jarocho*. It became common in the 1940s-1970s for ensembles in Los Angeles to have a foundation *in son jarocho* yet freely incorporate various regional Mexican musics. In regard to great performances at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium in 1945, Loza states, "Featured in the these acts were Andrés Huesca y Sus Costeños, who interpreted musical forms such as *canciones, rumbas, bailes, and sones*" (1993:56). I believe that Huesca's professional recording experience and work in motion pictures facilitated his fluidity through musical genres. Given that Mexican films from the 1930s-1950s required regional representations of music and culture, combined with Huesca's participation in many of these films, Mexican cinema allowed him to venture into musical styles beyond the *son jarocho*. Nonetheless, the *son jarocho arpa* technique that he developed is the foundation of his musical approach.

The bilingual newspaper *El Tucsonense* from Tucson, Arizona enthusiastically reported on Huesca's performances in the area between 1945 and 1957. According to *El Tucsonense*, Huesca passed away on September 12, 1957 at Olive View Sanitarium in the San Fernando Valley of California. He spent the final year of his life struggling with his health, away from the public (1957:4). Huesca was only forty years old when he passed away from complications due to tuberculosis. His wife Gabriela, who worked as a nurse at the Los Angeles County General

Hospital, and daughter Gabriela, survived him.⁹¹ But before his untimely passing, Andrés Huesca participated in the soundtrack to *The Three Caballeros*, a Disney film released in the era of the Good Neighbor Policy, which will be discussed below.

Huesca performed in popular entertainment stages of Los Angeles such as the Philharmonic Auditorium and the Million Dollar Theater (Loza 1993:56). Huesca also participated in a translocal imaginary film *The Three Caballeros*, which depicts three Disney cartoon characters in cultural adventures to various sites in Latin America. The three cartoon protagonists travel to Brazil and México. In the latter site, Donald Duck, Zé Carioca, and Panchito Pistoles encounter Mexican *son abajeño* in Michoacán and *son jarocho* in Veracruz. In the film, México and Brazil are simply imagined representations of the regional musical culture in these countries. In actuality, these sites were recreated and filmed at Walt Disney Animations Studios in Burbank, California but given a sense of authenticity with Mexican American dancers and Mexican musicians such as Andrés Huesca.

The Good Neighbor Policy as Cultural Diplomacy: Reimagining the Son Jarocho Fandango in Disney's The Three Caballeros

In a scene set in an imagined Veracruz, México, a *son jarocho fandango* is depicted in the 1944 Disney film *The Three Caballeros*. The film combines live actors with animation and purports to be an innocent adventure through Latin America. However, in comparison to its precursor film, *Saludos Amigos* (1942), and its colonial gaze, Darlene J. Sadler states, “*The Three Caballeros* is caught up less in the portrayal of flora and fauna than in a sort of colonialist fascination with the indigenous female” (2012:55). If through the Good Neighbor Policy the United States pledged non-intervention into the affairs of Latin America, *The Three Caballeros*

⁹¹ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

is a cultural intervention out of cultural and sexual curiosity of Latin America and the *mestiza*-indigenous female.

Donald Duck represents the U.S. colonial gaze of Latin America and the objectification of women, a stereotypic trope recreated in the media up to the present day. Along with friends Panchito Pistoles and José “Zé” Carioca, the three protagonists are not only caricatures per se, but are caricaturing Latin American musical culture. Women and musicians featured in this film seldom have speaking roles, but every time a “native” Latin American speaks it is with a thick and stereotypic accent. Women, often dancers, and male musicians are portrayed as cheerful, always smiling, and mostly communicate with body movements and polite nods. It is significant that most of the cast is from California, yet they are masked under the guise of an “authentic” Latin America recreated in an animation studio.

The Three Caballeros was filmed in a Disney studio based in Burbank, California. After a *son abajeño jarabe* scene in imagined Michoacán, at about 52:12, the three protagonists, Donald Duck, José “Zé” Carioca, and Panchito Pistoles, take a "flying *sarape* ride" to imagined Veracruz. The three male protagonists arrive at a *son jarocho fandango* with female dancers moving to “Lilongo,” a tune that sounds strikingly similar to “La bamba,” and was recorded by Trío Calaveras with Andrés Huesca on *arpa*. After Donald Duck is unable to dance to “Lilongo,” the *fandango* is quickly interspersed with swing dance and transitions into Brazilian *samba* (and then back to *son jarocho*). The musical transitions are flawless and well executed. The message is the “harmony” that exists between *son jarocho*, swing, and *samba*, essentially unification between the U.S., México, and Brasil through music. However, the Good Neighbor Policy’s decree of non-intervention into Latin America actually is a cultural intervention and a show of power through music, before settling back into *son jarocho*.

The musicians act out their parts through playback. A *requinto jarocho* is heard but not seen, but the scene does feature two standard acoustic guitars, a large *arpa*—performed by Andrés Huesca, although he is not featured or credited in the film— as well as a stand-up bass and violin. *The ballet folclórico* featured in the scene is credited to the “Padua Hills Players,” but they were also known as the Mexican Players from Claremont, California. According to professional *folclórico* dancer, Rosario Chavarria Peña, “The only film footage that exists of the Mexican Players (to our knowledge) is the 1945 Walt Disney film *Los Tres Caballeros*, in which there are dance scenes set in Michoacán and Veracruz” (2012:A.5). Despite the rampant colonial gaze and cultural stereotyping in *The Three Caballeros*, the film serves as a historical documentation of The Mexican Players, an early Mexican American *ballet folclórico*. Furthermore, the reimaged *son jarocho fandango* and Michoacán *jarabe* segment in the film is a remarkable document of the musicians who migrated to Los Angeles to work on *The Three Caballeros*. Trío Calaveras and Andrés Huesca, both musical participants in the *fandango* scene, were amongst the most popular musicians in México and Los Angeles in the 1940s through the 1950s.

As a pioneer migratory *son jarocho* musician from Veracruz, Andrés Huesca was the first *jarocho* to make a successful transition into the Los Angeles entertainment industry. However, it would take future generations of Veracruz-born *jarocho* musicians years of groundwork in Los Angeles before receiving due recognition for their cultural contribution. Ultimately, this is primarily because future migrant *jarocho* musicians would not be connected to the major entertainment industry to the same extent as Huesca. However, Chicano musicians such Los Lobos insert the *son jarocho* or their own musical fusions with *jarocho* instrumentation with *sones* such as “La bamba” and “El canelo” in major films such as *La Bamba* (1987), *Nacho Libre*

(2006), and the animated film *Rango* (2011). Los Lobos also featured a comical bilingual version of “El canelo” on the children’s educational show Sesame Street in 1992.⁹²

Mexican American *son jarocho* ensembles such as Conjunto Papaloapan emerged in the mid-1950s to carry forward the tradition that Huesca established in Los Angeles and the U.S. Southwest. As noted earlier, Huesca’s presence in Mexican concert venues such as the Million Dollar Theater greatly influenced the next generation of *son jarocho* musicians in Los Angeles. For example, after experiencing a live performance at the Million Dollar Theater, Roberto Chagolla was impacted by the music of Andrés Huesca, but was also influenced by El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez. The following section will focus on Roberto Chagolla and his lifelong venture with Conjunto Papaloapan and Conjunto Alvarado as a working-class *son jarocho* musician in Los Angeles.

Conjunto Papaloapan, Conjunto Alvarado, and Conjunto Candelas: A Profile on Roberto “Bobby” Chagolla, A Pioneer Son Jarocho Musician in Los Angeles

Conjunto Papaloapan is a historic Mexican American *son jarocho* ensemble formed in Los Angeles circa 1954-1955. Original members include founder Gary Giambroni Gutiérrez on *arpa*, Robert Murillo, Armando Díaz, Gilbert “Chaparro” Hernández, and Roberto “Bobby” Chagolla. Members of Conjunto Papaloapan taught themselves how to play their own respective *son jarocho* instruments. In 1950s Los Angeles, not many resources for learning *son jarocho* existed beyond recordings, film, or radio. It also appears that these musicians didn’t have access to Andrés Huesca, who was immersed in a busy life with appearances in film and as a performer in concert halls across the U.S. Southwest. However, Roberto Chagolla befriended and learned historical information from famed *son jarocho requintero* Lino Chávez, bandleader of Conjunto Medellín from México.

⁹² Los Lobos perform “El canelo” on Sesame Street in 1992:
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVYI0s3Da_0>> Accessed on August 15, 2014.

One of few surviving members at 80 years old, Chagolla is an elder *son jarocho* musician originally from Boyle Heights in East Los Angeles. Chagolla's mother is of Native American heritage and was raised on a reservation in Arizona. His father was born in Texas to parents from León, Guanajuato. Along with his cousins, Chagolla spent his teenage years between Los Angeles and, as a seasonal farm worker, in the fields surrounding Fresno, California. He picked grapes, walnuts, and learned how to prepare raisins. Chagolla recalls the ridicule young farm workers faced when returning to school in Los Angeles, especially after spending months peeling walnuts, which dyes the hands a dark black. To get a glimpse of his life in Los Angeles in the 1940s, Chagolla recalls his experience in East Los Angeles schools. Public education in 1940s and 1950s Los Angeles proved intolerable of the language diversity in the city. Chagolla states, "At that time, we couldn't speak at school, not one word of Spanish, or if you were Japanese... 'go home'!" We couldn't speak no... 'Hey, *amigo*,' anything in Spanish, they send you home. Everything was [in] English."⁹³ Along with the institutional racism of the time, people living in poverty also maneuvered ridicule in schools from their peers. Despite the systematic discrimination that Chagolla faced as a teenager, much of his life became dedicated to singing in Spanish to the sounds of regional Mexican music. Ultimately, Chagolla's choice to perform *son jarocho*, despite institutionalized cultural and language discrimination, represents a demand for recognition and serves as a hidden transcript of resistance. The term "hidden transcript" characterizes the discourse that takes place "offstage," beyond direct observation of powerholders (Scott 1990:5). The hidden transcript consists of those offstage speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what hegemonic institutions enforce (Scott 1990:5). It is a demand for recognition for Chagolla, a Native American-Chicano who creatively expressed his cultural and ethnic complexities by performing traditional Mexican music in the

⁹³ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

urban landscape. As popular jazz styles and later rock ‘n’ roll became the musical preference of Los Angeles youth in the 1940s and 1950s, to perform Mexican traditional music, and specifically the *son jarocho*, represents cultural resistance for the time period.

While working the fields of Central California, Chagolla discovered his passion for music. He states, “When I used to go pick grapes, that was the first time when I heard [Los] Panchos.”⁹⁴ The impact of the burgeoning Spanish language radio in California transmitted groups like Trío Los Panchos to the ears of the young Chagolla. Indeed, by the 1940s, the *boleros* of Agustín Lara and Trío Los Panchos were widely distributed via radio and recordings in México and the United States and inspired many young Mexican Americans (García Corona 2011:5). One of his first music ensembles was a *trío* that performed romantic *boleros* and the *canción ranchera*, with the lead guitar known as a *requinto romántico* as his main instrument.⁹⁵ However, upon discovering the *son jarocho* of El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez, Chagolla sought to find a *requinto jarocho*. Through travels in México to learn *son jarocho*, Conjunto Papaloapan band mate Gary Giambroni Gutiérrez found a worn out *requinto jarocho* for Chagolla, which was purchased from Lino Chávez.

Given that few musicians played *son jarocho* in Los Angeles in the 1950s, no one was able to teach Chagolla how to play the *requinto jarocho*. Many challenges presented themselves, including finding the right plectrum and properly tensioned strings, and even learning how to tune the instrument. Chagolla recalls, “Nobody knew how to tune a *requinto*. Nobody knew what to use. The only one that helped me out, I never did meet the guy. The guy was a milkman. *Era*

⁹⁴ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

⁹⁵ The *requinto romántico* is shaped and designed like a classical nylon string guitar but is smaller. It is tuned A, D, G, C, E, A, a fourth higher than standard tuning for the guitar, in order to create enough tension to easily pluck with the index and middle finger.

de Veracruz and he played a *requinto jarocho*.”⁹⁶ Along with a Conjunto Papaloapan band mate, the *Veracruzano* milkman took the well-used and slightly damaged *requinto jarocho* to Candelas Guitar Shop in Boyle Heights for repairs. Luthier Porfirio “Pilo” Delgado asked the milkman how to play the *requinto jarocho*, but also inquired about the plectrum utilized for the instrument. Chagolla recalls, “So he gave a piece of leather, like from a shoe, he just cut it out and told [Delgado], ‘this is what you play it with.’”⁹⁷

Upon learning how to tune the *requinto jarocho*, Chagolla proceeded to have problems experimenting with different types of plectrums. Given the distance between the four strings of the *requinto jarocho*, which facilitates the instrument’s percussive potential, a proper plectrum was needed to properly execute this percussive quality. After thumb picks proved feeble, Chagolla proceeded to make his own *púa*, the long plectrum used for the *requinto jarocho*, but carved one out of a Stanley brush handle. A former band mate in Chagolla’s *trío romántico*, Rudy Áviles, provided bullhorns from his butcher work in the city of Vernon. Chagolla’s organic ingenuity to construct an authentic *púa* was put to practice at his auto shop workplace. Chagolla recalls, “So [Rudy Áviles] brought me a box of bullhorns. I started making my own picks at the shop because I was an auto-machinist for 20 years. So I got the sanders and everything there [and] I started making my own picks” (see figure 7).⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014. *Era de Veracruz* translates to “He was from Veracruz.”

⁹⁷ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014. Porfirio “Pilo” Delgado is the co-founder of Candelas Guitar Shop, which spans three generations of master luthiers of the Delgado family in Boyle Heights.

⁹⁸ Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.



Figure 7. From a piece of plastic on the left, Roberto Chagolla made a *púa*, to the right, as a plectrum for the *requinto jarocho*. Band mate Jorge Holguín added a piece of Velcro so the *púa* will not slip off the plucking hand. Photo taken by the author.

The detailed discussion of Roberto Chagolla's early venture into the *son jarocho* reveals the bricolage practice of creating resources where there is a lack thereof. Chagolla had to become resourceful with the machinery provided in his workplace to custom make plectrums for the *requinto jarocho*. In 1950s Los Angeles, learning the appropriate tuning, finding the proper strings, and creating a durable plectrum meant going through an organic process of trial and error. Referencing the music practices of Chicanos, Lipsitz states, "The juxtaposition of multiple realities in Chicano life allowed for the juxtaposition of multiple realities in Mexican-American music" (1986:169). Creating a *son jarocho* culture in Los Angeles was juxtaposed with the reality of having to forge makeshift instruments. Since the *son jarocho* was a relatively new music in the area, a demand to perform multiple kinds of Mexican music forced Chagolla to adapt the *requinto jarocho* to other forms of regional music.

Chagolla was creative in his methods in not only making resources for the *requinto jarocho*, but also applying the instrument to styles outside the *son jarocho*. Given his early experience playing amongst patrons at restaurants with Conjunto Papaloapan, Chagolla chose to

utilize the *requinto jarocho* to perform *boleros*, *rancheras*, and *huapangos* instead of switching between instruments. By the 1960s, Chagolla formed a new ensemble in which every member juxtaposed instruments from Mexican *son* to craft their sound. The foundation of their music is *son jarocho*, but allowed flexibility to venture into various forms of Mexican popular and *son* styles. The following section will cover a brief narrative of Conjunto Alvarado.

Conjunto Alvarado: Son Jarocho and Beyond in 1960s-1970s Los Angeles

After forming a local network performing at local restaurants with Conjunto Papaloapan, Chagolla took an opportunity to form a new ensemble named Conjunto Alvarado in the 1960s. The ensemble's most consistent members included Chagolla on *requinto jarocho*, Arthur Gerst on *arpa*, Roberto Murillo on a second *arpa*, Jorge Holguín on guitar, Felix Chanes on the *requinto romántico*, and his brother David Chagolla on the *jarana*. An initial invitation to perform at Disneyland special events prompted Chagolla to form a new version of Conjunto Papaloapan, which was renamed Conjunto Alvarado. By 1971, the ensemble moved on to work at Knott's Berry Farm along with weekly gigs at restaurants throughout Los Angeles.⁹⁹ What was an initial daily commitment of two to three months at Knott's Berry Farm turned into a consistent work for approximately seven-years.

Conjunto Alvarado eventually became "Conjunto Candelas" at Knott's Berry Farm in order to advertise the Candelas guitar shop of master luthiers Candelario and Porfirio "Pilo" Delgado. Candela's is a historic shop of fine, handcrafted guitars in Boyle Heights. Members of Conjunto Alvarado became well acquainted with "Candy" Delgado, as well as luthier and nephew Candelario Delgado, as the ensemble frequented the shop for instrument repairs. Conjunto Alvarado guitarist and vocalist, Jorge Holguín recalls, "He was Pilo's son...he brought

⁹⁹ Chagolla and his new band mates initially began performing as Conjunto Papaloapan at Knott's Berry Farm in the 1960s. The ensemble soon changed their name to Conjunto Alvarado.

up the idea of sponsoring us, because instead of us going for repairs, so he said, ‘no, I’ll just do the repairs for free for you guys.’”¹⁰⁰ Thus, Conjunto Candelas became the official *son jarocho*/traditional Mexican music group at Knott’s Berry Farm in exchange for instrument repairs by Candy Delgado.

The members of Conjunto Alvarado dedicated up to five hours a night of rehearsal to develop their sound. Band members Roberto Chagolla and Jorge Holguín confirmed that the ensemble spent a year rehearsing together before performing in public. Based on recordings from the 1960s that Holguín shared with me, Conjunto Alvarado’s sound was at the highest caliber of musical ability. I heard *sones jarochos* such as “La tuza” and “Canto a Veracruz,” but also *sones huastecos* sung by Holguín and his well-executed falsetto voice. For *huapangos/son huasteco*, *arpista* Arthur Gerst would switch to violin meanwhile harmonizing with Roberto Chagolla on the *requinto jarocho*. Their carefully crafted style and variety of regional Mexican *son* caught the attention of Natividad Cano, leader of Mariachi Los Camperos. In the 1960s, Conjunto Alvarado was invited to perform at La Fonda, Cano’s historic mariachi restaurant near Mac Arthur Park, in between sets of Mariachi Los Camperos.

Conjunto Alvarado’s work at La Fonda was brief, but left a lasting impression to its patrons. Holguín recalls the frustration of having a very talented ensemble, yet being placed in a subordinate time slot within the restaurant. He states, “We had two harps, it was about 5 or 6 of us. We were 6 and they instructed us to play between the people. So when they brought the orders, they would push us out of the way.”¹⁰¹ Conjunto Alvarado only had 15 minutes to perform while Mariachi Los Camperos were on break, but their popularity began to grow amongst patrons of La Fonda. Chagolla recalls garnering support once patrons began asking for

¹⁰⁰ Jorge Holguín, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

¹⁰¹ Jorge Holguín, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

more songs from Conjunto Alvarado. With two harps, *requinto jarocho*, guitar and *jarana* for *son jarocho*, *requinto romántico* to transition to *boleros*, and *guitarrón* and *huasteco* style violin to perform *huapangos*, their impressive talent allowed them to be four ensembles in one. During the interview process, I could sense pride from Chagolla and Holguín and the musical abilities of Conjunto Alvarado. The ensemble disbanded in the 1970s, but all members pursued new musical endeavors in *son jarocho*, *mariachi*, and *trío romántico* styles. Reflecting on over 60 years as musician, Chagolla states, “But it was a rough life, man. My dad told me, ‘well, it’s what you wanted.’ But you got to stay with it.”¹⁰²

By the 1960s, Chicanos, migrant Mexicans, White Americans, and various people of diverse cultural heritage were key in establishing the *son jarocho* within universities in California. Student ensembles of Mexican music at universities were part of a bigger musical movement in part driven by the Chicano Movement, and framed by the newly established Chicana and Chicano Studies departments across California.¹⁰³ However, the *son jarocho* was not confined to the Mexican or Chicano community. In the late-1950s, Los Tigres de La Sierra challenged the racial normativity of *son jarocho* and began as a White-American ensemble out of Stanford University. This was due more to circumstance of place and the low numbers of Mexican Americans in higher education during this timeframe. Into the 1960s, UCLA based ensemble Trío Jarocho Angelino made a presence alongside ensembles such as Mariachi Uclatlán and the relocated version of Los Tigres de la Sierra in Los Angeles universities. The following sections will present the oral histories of Los Tigres de la Sierra and Trío Jarocho Angelino.

¹⁰² Roberto Chagolla, personal communication with the author, April 7, 2014.

¹⁰³ Daniel Sheehy, personal communication with the author, October 1, 2012.

Timothy Harding and Los Tigres de la Sierra

“See, Tim [Harding] lived in the turbulent 60s and 70s so he had a lot of causes. And the girls came up where things had sort of died down, faded away, so they’ve concentrated their sense of community and duty to promoting the jarocho music. But they were brought up with this idea of working for causes.” -Ed Lindgrön¹⁰⁴

Originally formed at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, Los Tigres de la Sierra believed in Latin American solidarity work and strongly connected to Leftist politics during the Cold War. Group leader Timothy F. Harding was a labor historian and was a staunch Leftist with a special interest in the music of Latin America. The name of the ensemble came while Harding studied Veracruz music in México a year before he began his studies at Stanford. As trucks frequented the streets of Veracruz, Harding noticed that each vehicle had a name, one of which was called “El Tigre de la Costa.” He went on to use that name only to find that a group of musicians in Veracruz were called Los Tigres de la Costa; therefore, he slightly altered the name to Los Tigres de la Sierra.

Harding dedicated a year of studies in México after graduating from college. He had studied Spanish since high school and followed up to further learn the language at the Universidad Autónoma de México, the National University in Mexico City. With the exception of a trip to Spain, every year he would go to México and bring a tape recorder to document the music in different parts of the country, including the *son jarocho*, which he would then bring home and try to learn.

Harding enrolled in a college run by and for U.S. citizens called Mexico City College, and studied Spanish, Mexican Politics, and Mexican History, as well as enrolling in a class on Mexican Music. Harding met Joseph Hellmer, whose office was in the basement of *Bellas Artes*, the National Fine Arts Palace of México. Hellmer’s work involved recording the Symphony

¹⁰⁴ Ed “Lalo” Lindgrön, personal communication with the author, March 5, 2013.

Orchestra and made it available to the public. However, his passion was traditional Mexican music. Hellmer was originally from Philadelphia and migrated to México in the 1940s. During his initial stay in México he caught rheumatic fever. He almost died and was nursed back to life by a young woman, married her, and never returned to the United States.¹⁰⁵

Hellmer taught Harding about traditional Mexican music. Hellmer had taken recording equipment all over the country and maintained an archive of field recordings, which became property of *Bellas Artes*. Hellmer would bring traditional artists into the recording studio and document their music. Harding met some of the musicians that Hellmer recorded, one of whom included *son jarocho* musician Darío Yepes. Harding recalls getting fully immersed in the *son jarocho*:

[Hellmer] said to me one day, ‘there’s a *jarocho* musician heading that way and he needs money, would you be willing to take classes with him?’ So that’s how I started actually playing and his name was Darío Yepes. He had played with a number of groups and he was a teacher. He taught young people, like high school age, [*son*] *jarocho*. A lot of his students were women. Women harpists and *jarana* players. And so once I became his student he would have me go to quinceañeras and birthday parties of people from Veracruz who lived in Mexico City. And he would bring a pool of musicians and we would take turns playing and we would go on for four, five, or six hours continuously. So I got a lot of practice. Once I was good enough to sort of hold my own, he would have me be one of the people that would revolve in and out. And then one time he said, ‘look, I have to make some money so you’re going to drive me to Veracruz. I had a car there and we’re gonna go to pick up pineapples from my relatives and bring them back and sell them in Mexico City.’ I said, ‘When do we leave?’ He said, ‘next Thursday,’ and so we drove down and I said, ‘look, I’ll help you with the pineapples but you have to help me meet Veracruz musicians,’ and I had my recording equipment. So we went around to different family members that played *jarocho* and we recorded them. And then met them and you know, interviewed them and got to not only the City of Veracruz, but Boca del Río. I never made it to Tlacotalpan, but at least that area. And I met a lot of people and saw the different ways they played. After a while I left Mexico City College and I went to the UNAM as a graduate student in History and I took a year of courses in Mexican History there as some kind of a visiting foreign student. And from there I got recruited to go to Stanford...so when I got to Stanford then I was already playing.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Timothy Harding, personal communication with the author, May 16, 2013.

¹⁰⁶ Timothy Harding, personal communication with the author, May 16, 2013.

Los Tigres de la Sierra formed circa 1958, when Timothy Harding relocated to California to begin doctoral studies at Stanford University. The original members of the ensemble included his former wife, Patricia Harding, and Bill Hutchinson on *jarana*, as well as Timothy Harding on the harp. Other Stanford students were recruited to play the basics of *requinto jarocho* in the ensemble's initial period. The quartet performed around Stanford University, in clubs in San Francisco, and at cultural events in California's Bay Area.

But the emergence of Los Tigres de la Sierra was short lived as Timothy Harding left to conduct fieldwork research in Brazil in 1959. Harding was unable to play *son jarocho* until returning to California in 1962. The ensemble was eventually resurrected in Palo Alto, California while Harding worked on his dissertation.

In 1963, Harding was hired at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in the Department of Education. Although his doctorate was in Latin American Studies with an emphasis on labor movements, Harding was trained to become a Latin American education specialist at UCLA. On campus, Harding discovered the field of ethnomusicology and a mariachi performance ensemble, which was headed by Don Borchedt. Harding joined the mariachi and taught some of the musicians how to play *son jarocho*. The resurgence of Los Tigres de la Sierra in Los Angeles included Timothy Harding on *arpa*, Patricia Harding on *jarana*, Don Borchedt on *jarana*, and Larry Saunders. A violinist in Mariachi Uclatlán–UCLA's first mariachi performance ensemble–Saunders was recruited to play *requinto jarocho*. According to Harding, Saunders was, “an absolutely brilliant musician...and he picked up the *requinto [jarocho]* in about an hour. I've never seen anything like it! He could hear parts and memorize them the first time he heard them.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Timothy Harding, personal communication with the author, May 16, 2013.

Los Tigres de La Sierra was one of two *son jarocho* performance groups at UCLA, and eventually a Mexican folkloric dance group also formed on campus. The dancers brought Rafael Zamarripa, a dance instructor from Guadalajara, México, who was the head of the *folclórico* at the University of Guadalajara. Zamarripa worked with graduate student Susan Cashion in the Dance Department. They brought together the UCLA and Universidad de Guadalajara *ballet folclórico* groups, Los Tigres de la Sierra, and Mariachi Uclatlán and toured around California. Harding states, “And by then, which was about 1964, we had a huastecan group and we had other styles going on as well. So we were able to accompany them with live music with all the different styles we did.”¹⁰⁸

Around 1963, Harding began teaching at Cal State Los Angeles (Cal State L.A.), a tenure that lasted until he retired in the 1990s. He still played *son jarocho* at UCLA, but he also developed an interest in having Mexican music performance groups at Cal State L.A. Harding already performed *son jarocho* at events throughout the Cal State L.A. campus in connection with Latin American Studies or the Music Department. However, the Music Department was not interested in developing Mexican music. Meanwhile, Chicano Studies was in the process of being established at Cal State L.A., and was one of the earliest programs of its kind. Harding helped to start Chicano Studies and, with the help of students from Latin American Studies who became teachers in Chicano Studies, the Chicano Studies Department ultimately sponsored a Mexican performance class and a Mexican dance class.

Cal State L.A. started with a *mariachi* and then formed ensembles in *son jarocho*, *son huasteco*, *marimba*, and Mexican *banda*. Similar to the format at UCLA, a dance group complimented the ensembles and would do a series of concerts every year. These performances

¹⁰⁸ Timothy Harding, personal communication with the author, May 16, 2013.

continued for many years until Harding retired in 1995. Los Tigres de la Sierra was based out of Cal State L.A. for most of Harding's academic career, and primarily performed for fundraisers, art museums, and an occasional nightclub gig. Upon retiring from Cal State L.A., around 1995-96, Harding reconstructed Los Tigres de la Sierra in Santa Barbara while working part time at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) teaching a Music of México course.

Timothy Harding also taught his daughters Libby and Cindy to play the *son jarocho*. Harding would take his daughters to a music store off Barrington Avenue in West Los Angeles every Saturday. From the music store, Harding would go to Daniel Sheehy's small home to teach *son jarocho* about one block from University High School. Harding had also taught ethnomusicologist Daniel Sheehy, who would eventually join Los Tigres de la Sierra, around 1968-1969. Due to his solidarity work in Latin America and affiliation with the Communist Party, Harding was constantly under surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Sheehy recalls a vehicle consistently parked near the center where Harding taught *son jarocho* classes.¹⁰⁹ Timothy Harding would jokingly dismiss the car and would tell Sheehy, "don't worry, it's probably just the FBI or CIA."¹¹⁰ Throughout his tenure at Cal State L.A., Harding continued to support causes for social justice along with Los Tigres de la Sierra. While Los Tigres de la Sierra became active in Los Angeles universities, Trío Jarocho Angelino emerged out of UCLA in the 1960s. In the next section, I will introduce Ed "Lalo" Lindgrön and his experience with Trío Jarocho Angelino at UCLA.

Trío Jarocho Angelino: A Student-based Son Jarocho Ensemble at UCLA, Late-1960s to Early-1970s

Trío Jarocho Angelino was a UCLA student ensemble in the late 1960s that consisted of Daniel Sheehy, Ed "Lalo" Lindgrön, and José Faget. At the time, Sheehy was a graduate student

¹⁰⁹ Daniel Sheehy, personal communication with the author, October 1, 2012

¹¹⁰ Daniel Sheehy, personal communication with the author, December 11, 2012

in ethnomusicology; Lindgrön studied Spanish in preparation for Spanish-language education, and Cuban American José Faget was also a UCLA student. As a *son jarocho* trio, Sheehy played the *requinto jarocho*, Lindgrön was on the *arpa*, and Faget played the *jarana* (see figure 8).

The three students came together out of an affinity for folk and traditional music from Latin America. Ed Lindgrön took performance courses, primarily *mariachi*, at the former Institute of Ethnomusicology at UCLA, where he met Daniel Sheehy. Both Lindgrön and Sheehy became active performers in the UCLA-based *mariachi* Uclatlán and Trío Jarocho Angelino. Out of Lindgrön's *mariachi arpa* playing in Uclatlán, and his interest in the *son jarocho*, and Sheehy's growing expertise in both musics, they came to form Trío Angelino Jarocho, originally with Indonesian student Jardja Susilo on *jarana*. Susilo moved on to teach at Hawaii University and was replaced by José Faget, a UCLA student who came to the U.S. in 1959, after the Cuban Revolution. Lindgrön recalls Faget's contribution to the group, "So it was perfect because his 'accento' was *igual a los Veracruzanos* (the same as the people from Veracruz). It was the same kind of swing. *Como se traga la 's' como los 'Estado' Unido*' (How he swallows the 's' when saying, for example, *Estado' Unido*' [United States].' So that worked perfectly. We were the three that were together for so many years...for the longest time it was with José Faget."¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Ed "Lalo" Lindgrön, personal communication with the author, March 5, 2013.



Figure 8. Trío Jarocho Angelino from UCLA circa late-1960s. From left to right: Ed “Lalo” Lindgrön on the *arpa*, Daniel Sheehy on *requinto jarocho*, and José Faget on *jarana*. This photo is courtesy of Daniel Sheehy.

In response to my curiosity about how Ed Lindgrön learned how to play *son jarocho arpa* in the 1960s, he explained that listening to Spanish language radio stations such as KWKW sparked his interest in Mexican music. Lindgrön explains the initial moment he was compelled to learn *son jarocho*:

But one day, out of nowhere, I heard the most strange, most beautiful sound and I knew enough Spanish by then to get the nerve to call up the station and ask them, “What was that?” So they gave me the name of the album and I ran out to a record store and it turns out it was Andrés Huesca. But on the front [cover] it was an arpa de mariachi. That’s what he used to use at least sometimes. It has that rooster crest of the dip there...where it curves. And so I just fell in love with that and just started calling around all these local music stores. Nobody knew what I was

talking about and I finally get to call Candelas. And they had a harp...it was a mariachi harp. That's what I started learning on.¹¹²

As noted earlier in this chapter, Andrés Huesca is credited for making the transition from the traditional *son jarocho arpa* to an *arpa grande* used in *mariachi* and in *son de tierra caliente* from the state of Michoacán. Huesca made considerable impact on *son jarocho* musicians in México and the U.S., especially through his use of the *arpa grande*. Lindgrön was influenced by Huesca's music, which compelled him to search for an *arpa* until he found one at Candelas Guitar Shop in Boyle Heights.

It is imperative to state Candelas' significance in providing traditional Mexican instruments for Los Angelinos and the effect that this had on the *son jarocho*'s early dissemination in California. To this day, there are very few luthiers in the United States who are able to craft traditional Mexican *son* instruments. For Ed Lindgrön, finding an *arpa grande* at Candelas started him on his long journey of playing *son jarocho* primarily in the Los Angeles area. Lindgrön recalls his early years of learning how to play the *arpa*, "I was probably about 19 years old when I got my first harp (from Candelas Guitar Shop) after hearing that strange, wonderful new sound on the radio that I told you about and called the radio station to discover that it was a harp and that the harpist was Andrés Huesca. For probably a year or so after acquiring this harp, I never actually saw anyone playing the harp. Without knowing any better, I actually began to learn to play with my hands in reverse position (left playing melody and right playing bass). After seeing that movie, *Dos gallos en Palenque*, I realized that I was playing incorrectly and had to retrain myself."¹¹³

¹¹² Ed "Lalo" Lindgrön, personal communication with the author, March 5, 2013.

¹¹³ Ed "Lalo" Lindgrön, personal communication with the author, March 5, 2013.

While at UCLA, Lindgrön received occasional playing advice on the *arpa* from Timothy Harding and Arthur Gerst. Harding was an instructor at UCLA and leader of *son jarocho* ensemble Los Tigres de la Sierra. Gerst is a respected *arpista* of both *mariachi* and *son jarocho* music in the Los Angeles area. He performed for many years in Mariachi Los Camperos and Mariachi Sol de México. Lindgrön eventually played *jarana*, *arpa*, and violin in an ensemble with Gerst, Conjunto Alvarado, which was the *son jarocho* group that played during intermissions for Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano at La Fonda.

Trío Jarocho Angelino performed mostly at homes in the Westside of Los Angeles and in Hollywood. However, notable performances include working with Amalia Hernández and her Ballet Folklórico de México. However, Lindgrön remains critical of having worked with Hernández. Lindgrön states, “I don’t think we ever were inclined to see how fast we could play, because if we were ever to play for Amalia Hernández, they would want us to play those [*sones*] faster and faster. She was never quite satisfied. She was always inclined to see how fast she could make her dancers go. It’s just some cadence that you lose when you play *jarocho* too fast.”¹¹⁴ Along with working in Mariachi Uclatlán, members of Trío Jarocho Angelino performed with the Ballet Folklórico Nacional de México on several occasions throughout University of California campuses. Lindgrön’s critique of losing the cadence by performing too fast provides an interesting point of perspective. It is a statement embedded in knowledge of musicality of *son jarocho*. In comparison to the *jaranero/fandanguero* branch, the *porteño* style that Trío Jarocho Angelino performs is much faster and requires practice to execute with the appropriate speed and cadence. To perform the *son jarocho* any faster, which was the preference of director Amalia Hernández, would be an extreme exaggeration for show purposes. Nonetheless, members of Trío

¹¹⁴ Ed “Lalo” Lindgrön, personal communication with the author, March 5, 2013.

Jarocho Angelino would move on to interesting careers in music, education, and cultural arts advocacy.

From the late 1960s into the 1970s, Trio Jarocho Angelino operated as a UCLA student-led ensemble. Members Ed Lindgrön and Daniel Sheehy balanced their time playing *son jarocho* along with Mariachi Uclatlán during their tenure at UCLA. José Faget rounded out the ensemble as its most consistent member on the *jarana*. By the mid-1970s, Sheehy began working at the Festival of American Folklife presenting *son jarocho* ensembles from the U.S. and México in Washington, DC. Sheehy also formed Los Amigos in Washington, DC, which included the *son jarocho* amongst other popular Latin American music in their repertoire, but eventually transitioned to become a *mariachi* ensemble. Amongst his many important accomplishments, Daniel Sheehy was among the first to write a doctoral dissertation on the *son jarocho* in the English language based on his fieldwork in Veracruz. His work on the *son jarocho* and *mariachi* music remains an often-cited document for the academic and historical research of these musics.

José Faget also relocated to Washington, DC in the 1970s after his tenure at UCLA. Faget worked as a storefront fashion designer and remained in contact with Daniel Sheehy. Faget passed away in the early 1980s in Washington, DC. Ed Lindgrön continues to play the harp and has taken a recent interest in learning and performing Irish harp music. In 1974, Lindgrön recorded on *Gracias a la Vida*, an album of popular Latin American music of struggle and protest and folk songs as interpreted by Joan Baez. Lindgrön and wife Elia occasionally perform popular Latin American folk music at farmer's markets in the Los Angeles area. During this same period, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles, as their name implies, formed in East Los Angeles and were inspired by the social energy of empowerment through Mexican cultural

signifiers. Just like groups such as Trio Jarocho Angelino or Conjunto Alvarado, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles made the *son jarocho* their musical foundation.

By the 1970s, before becoming a celebrated Chicano rock ‘n’ roll band, Los Lobos began as a traditional Mexican and Latin American ensemble with a solid foundation in the *son jarocho*. Their venture into various forms of Mexican *son* and Latin American traditional music was shaped by groups such as Andrés Huesca y Sus Costeños, Conjunto Papaloapan, and Conjunto Alvarado a generation before them. The juxtaposition of *son jarocho* instruments to *huapangos* and other forms outside the *jarocho* music tradition is a testament to the multiple realities of Los Lobos.

The Son Jarocho Amidst the United Farmworker’s Strike and Chicano Movement, 1960s-1970s: Los Lobos del Este Los Angeles

The music of the Chicano Movement covered a broad range of musical styles often rooted in traditional Mexican music as well as popular musical styles from Latin America, the Caribbean, and the U.S. At the peak of the urban Chicano Movement in the 1970s, in areas such as Los Angeles, the *son jarocho* was but one musical style performed at marches, protests, and cultural events. The following section will cover brief examples of Chicano Movement songs as way to highlight other musical forms during this time period. I will then transition to a discussion of how Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles creatively reinterprets the *son jarocho* as a form of support for the United Farm Workers.

The Chicano Movement coincides with the U.S. War in Vietnam. The history of Chicanos in all major U.S. wars/interventions is similar to the Irish struggle under the British. Unfortunately, Chicanos were strategically placed on the frontlines of major U.S. wars. Chicanos and Latinos, working-class whites, and African-Americans constituted a disproportionate

number of U.S. casualties in Vietnam since these groups were often placed on combat frontlines. Vietnam War veteran and scholar George Mariscal elaborates on this issue (1993:3):

Two of the surnames that appear most often on the wall of the Viet Nam Memorial in Washington, DC, are Johnson and Rodriguez. These two names tell us something about the composition of the U.S. military during the war, especially in combat units. “Johnson” combines the Caucasian and African American sacrifices. It emphasizes through a last name, “Johnson,” the black-white binary that predominantly structures discussions of race relations in the United States. “Rodriguez” stands for the Latino experience during the war—Chicanos from the Southwest, Puerto Ricans and Nuyoricans, Cuban Americans, and even Mexican nationals. “Rodriguez” functions as a third term or supplement that disrupts and complicates the black/white dichotomy.

Mariscal based his data on personal observations during the war, research, and numbers at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC. Mariscal effectively divulges the disproportionate number of people of color casualties during the war. Thousands of Vietnamese, both North and South Vietnamese soldiers and innocent civilians, were killed during the war as well.

“Vietnam Veterano” is an emotional ballad, a Chicano *corrido* that portrays the feelings Chicana/o communities experienced during the Vietnam War (Azcona 2005:32). Combat soundscapes, added to the musical and narrative sections, intensify the track while complementing Al Reyes’ lamenting vocals (Azcona 2005:32):

*You found yourself on a beach in Da Nang, with dudes from Tejas, corridos you sang,
to get your mind off another patrol. Get your 16 ready; it’s time to go.*

*You crawled through jungles, steamy-hot; you saw vatos your age get shot.
Heard the cries, saw them die there, you’ve come home with ugly nightmares...*

*In Chu Lai you were fighting away, with the raza on the streets in L.A.
They say this country ships us all off to fight, to return and deny us our rights.*

*So Chicanos fought and Chicanos died, spirits of Aztec warriors at their side.
Fight fiercely, what else could we do? Just like we did in World War II.*

*Qué loco, Vietnam veterano, José, Luis, y Chano;
On the frontlines, again, los Chicanos, Martínez, García, y Lujano...*

Qué loco, Vietnam veterano, the scars are still in you...

In conjunction with a long tradition of struggle-narratives (*corridos*), the *son jarocho* is part of the trajectory of Chicano music for social action. The *son jarocho* began to appear as politicized expression, or as the musical accompaniment at Chicana and Chicano student events and social movement festivities, during the UFW grape strikes into the Chicano Movement (1965-1970s). From that point forward, the *son jarocho* became consistent as music of struggle, protest, or cultural resistance in the United States.

*Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles: Just Another [Son Jarocho] Band from East L.A.*¹¹⁵

“It was either 1975 or ’76...when I attended a MEChA student leadership conference at UC Davis, when I was in high school in Northern California.¹¹⁶ The lunchtime entertainment was a band called Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles. I remember I went home and told my dad, “you’re never going to believe this, I saw a bunch of Chicano hippies playing *mariachi!*” –Felix Contreras, NPR Journalist¹¹⁷

Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles is a primary example of Chicanos self-taught in Mexican traditional music. Their homegrown approach to learning *rancheras*, *son jarocho*, *boleros*, and *son huasteco* allowed them to craft an urban Chicano version of traditional Mexican music. Considering that all members of Los Lobos grew up listening to rock ‘n’ roll, their music had hidden influences beyond the traditional sounds they began to learn in the early 1970s.

¹¹⁵ The title of this section is a play on the Los Lobos album *Just Another Band from East L.A.*

¹¹⁶ “Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana-Chicano de Aztlán” or “The Chicana and Chicano Student Movement from Aztlán. Aztlán is believed to be the ancestral homeland of the Mexica/Aztecs, which was located in what is now a portion of the Southwestern United States.

¹¹⁷ Contreras, Felix. 2012. “How the Wolf Survived: 40 Years of Los Lobos.” *NPR’s Alt.Latino: Latin Alternative Music and Rock en Español*.

<<<http://www.npr.org/2012/11/29/166170472/how-the-wolf-survived-40-years-of-los-lobos>>>
Accessed on October 14, 2012.

Guitarist-*jaranero*-drummer Louie Pérez states, “We became so intrigued that we started digging around at records and stuff like Lino Chávez and thought, ‘wow this guy can play licks just like Jimmy Page!’ That was it. We all had rock ‘n’ roll sensibilities and applied them to Mexican music because we played it in an intense way.”¹¹⁸ In other words, their approach to *son jarocho* and other Mexican musics was embedded with hidden elements of rock ‘n’ roll virtuosity merged with the talents of musicians such as Lino Chávez.

Along with their efforts to perfect their music, Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles connected to Chicano student-activist organizations and the United Farm Workers (UFW) in the mid-1970s. In the initial decade since their formation, Los Lobos, for short, included their *son jarocho* repertoire at events for El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana and Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), a student-activist group based in high schools, colleges and universities across the U.S. that emerged in the 1970s. On numerous occasions, the band was asked to perform for MEChA at California State University, Los Angeles. In the 1970s, Los Lobos toured with the UFW theater troupe El Teatro Campesino, The Farm Workers Theater Group, in Europe. In conjunction with their ongoing support of César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and the United Farm Workers, Los Lobos worked on the benefit album entitled *Sí Se Puede!* (Yes We Can!). Sales of the album were donated to support the UFW’s campaign for the basic human rights of farm workers in the Central Valley of California and across the U.S.

Sí Se Puede!: A Benefit Album for César Chávez and the United Farm Workers

"This album mirrors the spirit and vitality that have sustained the farm workers through good times and bad for more than a decade. It celebrates the love and solidarity we share as a people united in a common struggle. It is a tribute to the artists who donated their talents to support the cause. It will be cherished within the movement, and it will help bring our message to friends and supporters everywhere." -César Chávez¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Louie Pérez, personal communication with the author, June 4, 2012.

¹¹⁹ César Chávez’s statement is included on the backside of the album *Sí Se Puede!*

Sí Se Puede! is the 1976 professional recording debut of Los Lobos, and they were accompanied by Chicana and Chicano musicians from Los Angeles and the Central Valley of California. The album's proceeds were designated to support the UFW's campaigns for basic human rights of farm workers. Through these efforts, Los Lobos became well acquainted with UFW leaders César Chávez and Dolores Huerta in Delano, CA. In *Sí Se Puede!*, Los Lobos function primarily as a backing band to other musicians and participants; for example, "De Colores" is a collaborative song with elementary students from the School of Santa Isabel in Boyle Heights. Los Lobos were featured on one *son* made popular by El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez and Los Nacionales de Jacinto Gática, "El Tilingo Lingo," which was re-contextualized to highlight UFW campaigns for social justice. The second verse, lasting from 0:59 to 1:26, contextualizes the UFW lettuce and grape strike of the mid-1960s into the 1970s (*Sí Se Puede!* 1976):

*Mientras nos estamos en huelga
No se puede comer uva
Tampoco ensalada
Por la huelga de lechuga
[2x]*

While we are on strike
We cannot eat grapes
Not even salad
Because of the lettuce strike

*Tilingo lingo lingo
Tilingo lingo la
Que bonitas, que bonitas
Las Chicanas por aca*

Tilingo lingo lingo
Tilingo lingo la
How beautiful, how beautiful
The Chicanas from over here

Their rendition of “El Tilingo Lingo” borrows from the melodies recorded by El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez, Los Nacionales de Jacinto Gática, or Conjunto Hueyapan, but it can best be described best as a reinterpretation of the popular version of this *jarocho son*. Los Lobos perform “El Tilingo Lingo” with a duple meter polka rhythm and begin with the solo melody, which is performed in the recordings of El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez and Los Nacionales de Jacinto Gática after the first verse, with a mandolin instead of a *requinto jarocho* or *arpa* (*Sones Jarochos: Con los Conjuntos Tlalixcoyan y Medellín* 1990; *Sones Jarochos: Los Nacionales de Jacinto Gática* 1993). Along with the *jarana jarocho*, an acoustic guitar follows on the off beats with the *mariachi guitarrón* playing bass notes on the downbeat. “El Tilingo Lingo,” as interpreted by Los Lobos, is a prime example of the creative renewal of traditional Mexican musical traditions. Theirs is a “folk music” approach with acoustic instruments, yet comes with the knowledge of having studied the *son jarocho* well enough to transform its nuances into a polka with lyrics that support the UFW.

“La Bamba” in the 1980s: The Convergence of Rock ‘N’ Roll and Son Jarocho

The Los Lobos rendition of “La Bamba,” a standard *son jarocho* that Ritchie Valens turned into a rock ‘n’ roll song, entered the top of album sales charts in 1987. Their version includes audibly hidden elements that stand out from the original rock ‘n’ roll recording of “La Bamba.” Los Lobos include elements of country-twang electric guitars, Texas Mexican style accordion melodies, and a *son jarocho* ending. Guitarist and drummer Louie Pérez humorously considers this the section where, “the radio turns down and goes to the next song.”¹²⁰

The ending is marked by the *requinto jarocho* performed by David Hidalgo and accompanied by *jarana*, acoustic guitar, and a *mariachi guitarrón*. I consider this a Chicano *son jarocho* ending because the inclusion of a *mariachi* bass (*guitarrón*) is a regional juxtaposition of

¹²⁰ Louie Pérez, personal communication with the author, June 4, 2012.

instruments. Since the inception of Los Lobos, their traditional sound was the result of mixing regional Mexican *son* instruments together to create their own sound. The songs' ending only lasts for approximately one minute but reminds the listener of the musical origins of "La Bamba."

By 1988, Los Lobos won a Grammy for their traditional Mexican *son* album *La Pistola y el Corazón*. With a combination of *son* from Michoacán, the Costa Chica, *son huasteco*, and *canción ranchera*, the album also features two signature *sones jarochos*, "La guacamaya" and "El canelo." The remarkable work of Los Lobos well into the 1980s marked a milestone for a Chicano rock band that performs *son* from Mexico, an integral soundscape of Mexican communities in Los Angeles. Journalist Betto Arcos states, "Son Jarocho has been popular in Los Angeles, going back to the 1950s with Ritchie Valens, then Los Lobos. Today, it's a part of the regular soundtrack of Latino music in East L.A."¹²¹

Conclusion and Transition into the 1980s and 1990s: The Emergence of Jaranera and Jaranero Son Jarocho in California

As early as the 1970s, ensembles from California were able to represent the *son jarocho* outside the local level. For example, Conjunto Cuextecatl, a variation of Oxnard's Conjunto Hueyapan, performed at the Festival of American Folklife in Washington, DC in 1975.¹²² The ensemble consisted of family members Fermín Herrera as director/*arpista*, *jaranero* Jorge Herrera Sr., *jaranera* and dancer María Isabel Herrera, along with *jaranero* Juan Alvarado and

¹²¹ Arcos, Betto. 2011. "A Musical Style that Unites Mexican Americans." *National Public Radio's All Things Considered*, October 28. <<<http://www.npr.org/2011/10/29/141723031/a-musical-style-that-unites-mexican-americans>>> Accessed on July 14, 2014.

¹²² "Cuextecatl" is the Nahuatl word meaning, "Capitán que vigilaba la costa en el momento de la llegada de los españoles," or "Captain that guarded the coast as the Spanish arrived." Translation from Nahuatl to Spanish was cited from *Diccionario de la lengua nahuatl or mexicana* (1988) by Rémi Siméon. Author's translation from Spanish to English. The Festival of American Folklife is now the Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

requintero Manuel “Crow” Vásquez. Daniel Sheehy, a former member of Trío Angelino Jarocho, served as Conjunto Cuextecatí’s festival presenter.

Into the late 1970s and 1980s, *son jarocho* performed by predominantly Chicano-U.S. based musicians entered the commercial music realm through recordings, film, and radio. For example, Los Angeles *son jarocho* musicians Manuel “Crow” Vásquez and Arthur Gerst performed on Warren Zevon’s 1978 album *Excitable Boy* on the song “Veracruz.” At the forefront of national and international recognition of *son jarocho*, Los Lobos garnered commercial visibility for Mexican *son* with their Grammy award for “Best Mexican American/Tejano Music Performance” for *La Pistola y el Corazón* in 1989. Their album includes well-known *sones jarochos* such as “El canelo” and “La guacamaya,” but also *son huasteco* with “El gusto” and a *son* from Guerrero, “Las amarillas.” Los Lobos’ remains committed to their origins as a traditional Mexican music ensemble with the inclusion of *son jarocho* along with other regional *son* styles and *canções mexicana*. Their format is in accordance with ensembles that emerged before and during the Chicano Movement who covered a variety of regional Mexican musical styles, including *son jarocho*. These ensembles include Conjunto Alma Grande de Los Hermanos Moraza from Ventura, Artemio Posada and Los Trovadores de la Costa from San Jose, Los Alacranes Mojados from San Diego, and in the 1990s groups like Los Hermanos Herrera from Fillmore, Conjunto Xi from Los Angeles, and Los Cenzontles from San Pablo, CA. Therefore, visibility in the 1980s through the 1990s was not limited to Los Lobos; in fact, groups solely dedicated to the dissemination of the *son jarocho*, such as Conjunto Hueyapan, Los Pregoneros del Puerto, and child prodigy ensemble Los Hermanos Herrera toured at the national level on occasion.

Within social movements, groups such as Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles, Conjunto Hueyapan, the Harding sisters, and Los Tigres de la Sierra were involved in projects to support local California struggles such as the United Farm Workers' campaign for basic human rights. The *son jarocho* was but one musical style heard in social movements of 1960s-1970s California, but social justice campaigns play an important role in outlining a history of its use, especially its instrumentation, as music of struggle and protest in the United States.

Another important note, with the exception of María Isabel Herrera, Carmen Moraza, sisters Libby and Cindy Harding, and their mother Patricia, at the time of writing this dissertation, not many women were either instrumentalists or public performers in *son jarocho* ensembles in 1940s-1970s California. However, this is certainly not the case now as many *jaraneras* are active in *fandango* communities throughout the United States, especially in California; Austin, San Antonio, and the Río Grande Valley in Texas; Seattle and the Pacific Northwest; Chicago and the Northern Midwest; New York City and Washington, DC. Although I was only able to identify five female performers in this early period of *son jarocho* ensembles in California, *jaraneras* now constitute a majority of the performers in *son jarocho* communities throughout the U.S.

Southern California is one of the few areas outside of Veracruz, México that has active *son jarocho* ensembles that perform in its two most popular branches: the urban-*porteño* style as crafted by Andrés Huesca y Sus Costeños, Los Nacionales de Jacinto Gática, and El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez and the *fandanguero-jaranero* branch as introduced to the masses by Grupo Mono Blanco. Although these two branches remain active in Southern California as represented by groups such as Conjunto Hueyapan, Conjunto Xi, Conjunto Tenocelomeh, Cambalache, Son del Centro, and many *jaranera* and *jaranero* students participate in *fandangos*,

workshops, informal gatherings, and occasional performances, these two *son jarocho* styles are seldom in conversation outside of the annual *Encuentro de Jaraneros* in Los Angeles. In other words, there appears to be ideological differences, harsh opinions, personal preference, or strategic distancing that keeps the practitioners of these two styles from dialogue. However, if these two branches of *son jarocho* are placed in respectful conversation in relation to their emergence in California, many will hopefully come to appreciate the genealogy of this music in relation to the United States.

In the late 1980s into the 1990s Southern California had continuous formations of *son jarocho* ensembles and milestones related to the genre. *Son jarocho* maestro José “Chayote” Gutiérrez was given the National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Award in 1989. That same year, Los Cenzontles began as a youth performance ensemble in San Pablo, California. A notable distinction from the urban-commercial style of *son jarocho* that long dominated performance ensembles in California, Los Cenzontles were amongst the earliest Chicana-Chicano groups to adopt the *jaranero-fandanguero* style. From 1992 to 1995, Los Cenzontles director Eugene Rodríguez formed the Fandango Project along with Gilberto Gutiérrez, director of Grupo Mono Blanco from Veracruz, México, to teach *zapateado*, instrument making, and how to play *son jarocho* instruments.¹²³ It took over a decade before the *jaranero* branch of *son jarocho* began to dominate in Southern California. Los Cenzontles’ first trips to Southern Veracruz began in 1991, and helped to initiate Chicano and Jarocho transnational work in disseminating both the *fandango* and *son jarocho*.

In the 1990s, urban-*porteño* groups began to reemerge in California. In Fillmore, Los Hermanos Herrera began as a child prodigy ensemble in 1990 and eventually toured around the U.S. Southwest as a concert-opening ensemble for Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano.

¹²³ Eugene Rodríguez, personal communication with the author, October 14, 2013.

Conjunto Tenocelomeh emerges in 1995 out of the San Fernando Valley. Conjunto Xi began in 1998 East Los Angeles with both mentors and younger members as part of the ensemble.

With the Mexican *son*-fusion experimentations of Los Lobos as an example, Chicana-Chicano music groups such as Quetzal and Ozomatli emerged in the 1990s. These ensembles began to fuse *son jarocho* instrumentation to sounds beyond Mexican traditional music. By the first decade of the 2000s, Chicana and Chicano *jaranero* and *jaranera* ensembles such as Son del Centro, Candela, Las No Que No, Cambalache, and Las Cafeteras formed in Southern California. Along with many *jaraneros* and *jaraneras* that do not participate in performance ensembles, the aforementioned groups helped to establish the *son jarocho* and *fandango* as musical accompaniment and cultural expression in U.S. social movements.

From the late 1970s onward, the impact of Grupo Mono Blanco's work to reinvigorate the *fandango*, and the group's gradual international presence, ushered in an alternate way of practicing the *son jarocho*, distinct from the urban-*porteño* style of quintessential groups Andrés Huesca y Sus Costeños and El Conjunto Medellín de Lino Chávez, in México and the U.S. However, historically, the *fandango*, the communal festivity of the *son jarocho* and its culture, had not disappeared from the *sotavento* altogether. Nonetheless, the work of Grupo Mono Blanco helped to introduce their *jaranero* style and *fandango* to places in the U.S. where the urban-*porteño* branch of *son jarocho* had firm roots.

The perceived accessibility of *jaranera* and *jaranero son jarocho* and the participatory elements of the *fandango* inspired a new generation of predominantly Chicanas and Chicanos to learn this music. Its practitioners create a new culture with the *son jarocho* through utilizing the *fandango* and the *son* itself as a musical component for social justice movements. This generation of U.S. based *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*, which has grown steadily since the early

2000s, leave an important mark in transforming the *son jarocho* as an organizing strategy, a symbol of protest, and a progressive space to discuss issues of gender, sexuality, workers rights, and international migrant rights in this country. The following chapter will discuss how *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* have utilized the creative renewal of the *son jarocho* and *fandango* during Occupy Los Angeles, in Washington, DC, and at the School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil in Georgia.

Chapter IV: Creative Renewal of the *Son Jarocho Fandango* Within Social Movements: Occupy Los Angeles, Washington, DC, and the School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil

The *son jarocho fandango* in Veracruz was once a marginalized cultural practice. As previously mentioned in chapter two, the early roots of *son jarocho fandango* were considered socially indecent due to the genre's subversive dance forms and lyrics. By the latter half of the 20th century, the *fandango* had almost entirely disappeared from the communities in Veracruz where it had emerged and thrived for almost two centuries, in part due to migration and to the commercialization of the music. However, during the 1980s *jarocho* musicians in México sought to revitalize these rural dance and musical practices. By 1989, a roots version of the *son jarocho* and its *fandango* began to set roots in the Bay Area of California. Thus began a transnational network of *son jarocho jaraneros* and *jaraneras* between California and Veracruz. This transnational network allowed for the transmission of the *zapateado* and *sones*, as well as the acquisition of instruments, which laid the foundation for the first *jaranero* and *jaranera* communities outside of México. This movement came to be known as the *jaranero* movement, in contrast to the earlier movement of *son jarocho* in 1950s Los Angeles discussed in the previous chapter. The *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement in the U.S. is known for its predominant grouping of activist-musicians who support diverse causes, yet who ground their musical practice in international migrant struggles such as anti-deportation actions, peace activism, and housing justice, and for whom the *fandango* is central to the tradition and practice of *son jarocho*.

However, despite the social justice work within the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement, the strong network of practitioners established amongst themselves, and its emphasis on the *fandango* practice, there are debates and conflicts between practitioners in Los Angeles as well as other cities. Controversies exist over the degree of musicality and understanding of the *son*

jarocho before it can be performed outside the *fandango*. Ideas of respecting the authenticity of the *fandango* tradition as expressed by professional musicians clash with seemingly less experienced *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* who present the *son jarocho* at performance venues or events. Political philosopher Paul Ricouer states, “there is a kind of unresolved contradiction tied to the difficulty, even the possibility, of legitimating authority in the final instance” (Ricouer 2007: 91). In Los Angeles, the recurring competing claim of authority comes from the standpoint of generational and musical achievement. Although the discussion is based on who deserves to “properly” represent the *son jarocho* in the public space and in practice, dialogue and community building via the *fandango* is maintained. As an extension of this discussion, questions revolve around who is ready to lead a workshop. But a well-defined set of values cannot be in accordance with every *jaranera* or *jaranero*’s views on the creative expression of the *son jarocho*, which has caused divisions within the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement in Los Angeles. This fissure was largely directed at the ensemble Las Cafeteras, a group of Chicana and Chicano musicians who merge progressive political messages and tell stories of urban struggle in Los Angeles with *son jarocho* instrumentation. According to journalist Adolfo Guzmán-López, “There’s a debate going on right now in Southern California among dozens of musicians and activists who play and practice the [*son jarocho* and *fandango*]. The debate ranges from expletive pissing matches online to a philosophical debate over the nature of community music building, and the process by which a musical practice that’s spiritual to many is carried out” (2012).

Despite the emphasis on cultivating the *fandango* as a way of building community, Guzmán-López points out the result of general contradictions that undermine collective music making through the *son jarocho*. Passionate online debates, primarily via social media such as

Facebook, and occasional formal and informal gatherings to debate practices within the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement of Los Angeles, has created personal and ideological distancing between practitioners. However, I emphasize that these divisions are primarily between members in professional ensembles such as Quetzal, Cambalache, and Las Cafeteras. To expand briefly in an attempt to represent these groups thoroughly, each aforementioned ensemble participates in their own method of social justice work. On an individual level, members of these ensembles also act as leaders and facilitators of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement of Los Angeles.

In actuality, *jaranera* and *jaranero* activists, most of who are largely represented at marches, vigils, and protests, appear to maneuver these debates by focusing on social actions. Their participation in social justice work contributes greatly to the process of creative renewal of the *fandango* in the urban setting. The majority of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* are not part of professional ensembles or pursue the music with commercial intentions. Rather, they form organized collectives with a foundation of social justice activism and for the purpose of learning and teaching the *son jarocho*.

By analyzing the *fandanguero* community of Los Angeles and Washington, DC, this chapter gives emphasis to *jaraneros* and *jaraneras* and how they utilize the *fandango* at demonstrations and community centers in Los Angeles and in the Nation's Capital.¹²⁴ The transnational networks established by the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement helped to foster these dialogues across Veracruz, California, and Washington, DC. As a participant-observer *jaranero* and researcher at Occupy Los Angeles, Washington, DC and the School of the Americas Watch annual vigil, this chapter will be an auto-ethnography of my experiences at these sites, and observations of the creative renewal, and transformative power, of the *fandango*. Furthermore, the chapter will look toward potentially the next wave of *son jarocho*, referred to as *música*

¹²⁴ A *fandanguero* or *fandanguera* is an active practitioner of the *son jarocho fandango*.

tradicional de cuerdas, or traditional string music, and the response to the urban transition of *fandangos*. I employ the concept of *creative renewal* to highlight the ways in which workshops, social gatherings, and protests in Los Angeles and Washington, DC have reshaped the *son jarocho fandango*.

The creative renewal of cultural heritage allows for recovery and appropriation into different contexts. Musical examples of creative renewal are found throughout the world. In 1960s Nigeria, Fela Kuti combined traditional rhythms of the Yoruba with popular music sensibilities of highlife, jazz, and funk to create Afrobeat. The ceremonial elements of the Yoruba were interwoven into Kuti's performances, which were serious, theatric, and innovative. Another example of creative renewal includes Mexico City's Café Tacvba. In the 1990s, members of the band traveled to Veracruz, México to study the *son jarocho* with maestro Gilberto Gutiérrez. Café Tacvba channeled this experience by including the instrumentation and rhythmic foundation of the *son jarocho* in their albums. For Chicanas and Chicanos in the U.S., however, an adaptation of the *son jarocho fandango* became an immersion process toward a creative renewal of *jaranera* and *jaranero* musical culture. The first wave of commercialization of the *son jarocho* can be considered as creative renewal of this musical tradition. Its initial movement into the urban ambit of México in the late-1930s, 1940s, and 1950s allowed the music to transform into new artistic mediums through professional recordings, promotion via radio, and the creation of a *jarocho* image on film and album covers. The relatively wide distribution of the *son jarocho* sound and image during this period thus created a standard for musicianship and professional presentation of this music.

However, I see creative renewal as a cyclical practice. For example, if a tradition previously underwent a process of transformation and later became a standardized practice, then

this allows room for new processes of creative renewal to challenge the established standard. After many years of the initial commercialization of the *son jarocho* were exhausted of innovative possibilities, the reclaiming of the *fandango* and rural based *son jarocho* by the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement became an example of creative renewal. The continuity and preservation of the *son jarocho fandango* in the past thirty-years did not result in “authentic” recovery of this “lost” practice, but a carrying forward of a centuries old phenomenon into the future.

The sonic power of the *jarana*, *guitarra de son/requinto jarocho*, and *zapateado* allows the *fandango* to shape spaces due to their loud and percussive qualities. A demand for recognition is created at marches, protests, and cultural centers, as these instruments do not need electric amplification in order to captivate an audience. The *fandango* can create *encanto*, an enchantment that not only draws people to experience the *son jarocho*, but also enables an altered state of consciousness for participants. *Jaranero*, artist, and cultural organizer Arturo Martínez claims:

¿Cómo te puede llevar el sonido a que tu de alguna manera te posesiones y aguantes diez horas continuas cantando y bailando de una manera monótona y que estés contento? Por eso digo que es una fuerza de energía que es provocado precisamente por un conjunto de cuerdas que están a la mano...tu mente y tu sensibilidad abren una puerta para que tu te transportes. ¿Sí? Entonces así lo veo. Y yo lo veo como una especie de embrujo.

How is it that its sound can somehow possess you and allow you to withstand ten hours singing and dancing in a monotonous manner and also make you happy? That’s why I think that it’s a strong force of energy provoked by an ensemble of stringed instruments that are on our hands...your mind and awareness open a door that allows you to transport, right? So that’s how I see it. I see it like some kind of spell.¹²⁵

Similar to the explanation of *encanto*, or ecstasy by Martínez, *jaranero* and poet Patricio Hidalgo identifies an altered state of consciousness as a form of liberation. In reference to *son jarocho* ensemble Son de Madera, Hidalgo states, “When one plays with musicians like these

¹²⁵ Arturo Martínez, personal communication with the author, April 2, 2012.

here...then the music reaches the spirit...and liberates one.”¹²⁶ Collective music making is a form of liberation. The liberatory power experienced through the *son jarocho* also inspires practitioners to creatively renew its elements into efforts for social justice and new musical fusions.

Creative renewal leads to a demand for recognition for U.S.-based *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* who practice a cultural heritage—the *son jarocho*—regardless of cultural or familial ties to the music. Therefore, there exists a juxtaposition of a rural Mexican tradition into the U.S. urban ambit. When *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* publicly engage the *fandango* and simultaneously alter meaning by context, place, mode of dress, or challenge gender-based *zapateado* guidelines for a given *son*, there is a declaration of both creative renewal of tradition and an attestation of identity. The Chicano identity is one that exists “teetering” between two or multiple worlds and goes through the physical or psychological experience of belonging, rejection, or ambivalence in U.S.-México relations. This experience is mediated through cultural production, and the *fandango* is a format for expressing renewed vindication of identity.

Similar to Woody Guthrie writing “This Machine Kills Fascists” on his acoustic guitar, U.S. *son jarocho* groups or collectives associate with radicalized re-interpretations of this musical tradition. That is, they employ this traditional instrument as a political symbol of resistance. For instance, Son del Centro, from Santa Ana, California, titled their first album *Mi jarana es mi fusil* (*My jarana is my Automatic Weapon*). Similarly, a Tía Chucha’s Centro Cultural student called the *jarana* a “*jararma*,” the combination of *jarana* and *arma*, or weapon, a metaphoric association of the instrument as a weapon for social justice.¹²⁷ However, it’s not just the instrument that becomes a symbol of resistance, but the musical practice itself. Son

¹²⁶ “Improvisation in the Son Jarocho.” *Música del Pueblo: A Smithsonian Virtual Exhibition!* <<<http://www.musicadelpueblo.org/>>> Accessed on July 14, 2014.

¹²⁷ Cesar Castro, personal communication with the author, September 2012.

Armado (“Armed Son”), a collective from Austin, Texas proposes, “our music and *fandango* exists with our movement and resistance, it does not exist outside of the struggle for dignity, respect, and justice” (2010).¹²⁸ This is a powerful statement through a radicalized activist perspective and positions the *fandango* in the U.S. primarily as a tool of social action and resistance. The politicized *fandango* therefore manifests itself at rallies/marches for undocumented peoples rights, protests at universities, and other gatherings for social justice. Son Armado’s statement as *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* adopting the *son jarocho* as a Chicana and Chicano musical practice is significant. The statement socially locates the *son jarocho* and *fandango* as a transnational practice but simultaneously affirms it as a U.S. practice. Since many *son jarocho* interpreters in the *jaranero* movement were activists previous to adopting this tradition, the *son jarocho* and *fandango* have become synonymous with centers, projects, and actions for social justice in the U.S. Therefore, once the *son jarocho* travels to the U.S. in the late 1980s, the tradition is then reinterpreted and renewed through the Chicana and Chicano community. The *fandango* becomes the primary space for experimentation and re-interpretation of the *son jarocho* within the urban centers, and some rural spaces, within the U.S.

The following section will transition to a discussion of the urban *fandango* at the Eagle Rock Music Festival and the *fandanguitos* held at Occupy Los Angeles. I will employ the concept of creative renewal to discuss the reinterpretation of the *fandango* within current cultural events and within Occupy Los Angeles. The final two sections of the chapter will discuss the presence of the *son jarocho* in Washington, DC. *Jaranera* and *jaranero* activism is cited as a creative renewal of the *fandango*/performance setting within the Nation’s Capital and the School of the America’s Watch annual vigil.

¹²⁸ Borrowed from Son Armado’s manifesto on Facebook, accessed on March 9, 2010.

Creative Renewal of the Fandango in U.S. Social Movements: A Comparative Analysis of Two Jaranera and Jaranero Sites: Los Angeles and Washington, DC

In the *sotavento*, the cultural area of the *son jarocho* in México, the *fandango* is a musical gathering practice that occurs for social and religious rites and festivities. A *fandango* can happen anywhere: in an agrarian community of Veracruz in observance of religious feast days, in a feeble garage amidst a 30-degree winter in Austin, TX, on a humid summer night at Lamont Park in Washington, DC, or at a mega-march, rally, or protest for social justice in downtown Los Angeles.¹²⁹ For over a decade, the *jaranero* and *jaranera* movement in the United States has utilized the *fandango* as a way to unite progressive politics, community resistance, and express multi-layered Chicano/Mexicano cultural production. For example, the urban *fandango* utilizes traditional repertoire and structure but meets occasional dissimulation into rapped vocals, *zapateado* dancing with tennis shoes—instead of boots with wooden soles, or verses that specifically deal with issues within historically aggrieved communities (Lipsitz 1986:163). *Fandangos* operate primarily within the Chicano-Mexicano communities and spaces of México and the U.S., but have since the inception of the *jaranero* movement become visible at marches and protests in the U.S. The *fandango* is a way to be heard and recognized by affirming cultural heritage. Political philosopher Hannah Arendt suggests, “all of culture begins with this kind of world-making, which in Aristotelian terms is already an *athanatidzein*, a making-immortal” (Arendt 2007:189). For Chicanos and Mexicanos, the *fandango* is a way to create a world by gathering and practicing centuries worth of musical-cultural history. The *fandango* has faced moments of State and Church repression, for example, during the Spanish Inquisition, but the cyclical-creative renewal of this phenomenon forges this practice into newer generations, a metaphoric “immortality.” The *son jarocho* and its *fandango* have grown to include a network of

¹²⁹ In the “moving” *fandango* at a march or demonstration, a portable *tarima* is essential in order to move to different sites.

musicians, activists, and scholars in both urban and a few rural areas of the United States. But I must emphasize that the adoption and cultivation of this musical-cultural heritage faces creative altering and innovation in order to create relevancy in a new space and generation.

The transition of the *fandango* in the U.S. not only included the transfer from its place of origin within México, but also a move from rural and urban landscapes in Veracruz to a predominantly urban ambit in the U.S. For example, on October 3, 2009 a *fandango* was held on Colorado Boulevard at the Eagle Rock Music Festival near a 7-11 convenience store. Members of East Los Angeles band Las Cafeteras scheduled the *fandango* and invited *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* to participate. Amidst over 15 stages of 60 artists propped along Colorado Blvd., a *tarima* was set up on the street serving as a metaphoric merger of a rural practice with the concrete landscape of Los Angeles.¹³⁰ Although Los Angeles hosts a 70 year history of the *son jarocho*, the *fandango* was only recently introduced into a larger community of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*, who outnumber *son jarocho* bands, in Los Angeles since the early 2000s. The *fandango* at the Eagle Rock Music Festival is highly significant (see figure 9). An urban *jaranera* and *jaranero* identity was established by the very nature of the *fandango*, a gathering of *son jarocho* interpreters literally enclosed around a *tarima* to demonstrate a creative renewal of cultural heritage. The fact that the *tarima* was positioned on Colorado Blvd. is an attestation of *jaranera* and *jaranero* urban expression.

¹³⁰ A *tarima* is the wooden platform used for percussive dance in the *fandango*.



Figure 9. A *fandango* on Colorado Blvd. at the Eagle Rock Music with Hector Flores and Denise Carlos on the *tarima*. This photo is courtesy of Don Simonds.

Along with manifestations of the *fandango* at free public music events such as the annual Eagle Rock Music Festival, this community music practice is found at social action demonstrations such as the Mayday march in support of international migrant rights. However, increasingly *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* are bringing the *fandango* to predominantly non-Latino actions such as Occupy Los Angeles in late 2011. Indeed, *fandanguitos*, or short-form *fandangos*, were held at Occupy Los Angeles on a weekly basis in an attempt to share this musical culture and to support the Occupy Wall Street movement. Therefore, in addition to the transformation of the *fandango* in the urban context, the practice is further complicated by another transformation in non-Chicano/Mexicano spaces.

Occupy Los Angeles and the Participation of Jaraneras and Jaraneros

Since the rise of the Occupy Wall Street movement during the fall of 2011, the urgency to participate in this national movement coincides with an increase of activists turned *jaraneras*

and *jaraneros*.¹³¹ *Jaranero*-journalist George B. Sánchez Tello explains, “there is an assumption of an individual that has a critical approach to politics and that the *jarana*—and playing *Son Jarocho*—is exemplary of a political statement or connected to a critical political subject” (2012:60). Sánchez Tello references U.S.-based *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* as politically progressive activists. Participation effort for social justice in many movements is an ultimate thought or goal for U.S. *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*. I believe that having *fandanguitos*, or short form *fandangos*, at Occupy Los Angeles was an effort to outreach in movements beyond those affecting the Chicana-Chicano and Latina-Latino community. Furthermore, this was an attempt to make the *fandango* visible within a movement of national proportion.

From October 1st through November 30, 2011, Occupy Los Angeles saw consistent participation of *jaraneros* and *jaraneras* in its downtown City Hall encampment. It appeared, however, that the larger group of participants, perhaps at the camp for the moment, versus those that camped weekly, would take a while to be convinced or begin to grasp the purpose of hosting *fandanguitos* at Occupy Los Angeles. But the presence of the *son jarocho* and *fandanguitos* certainly garnered support. While on site, I gathered perspectives from *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* at the encampment. *Jaranera* Melina Simonds states, “My perspective on us being here is to

¹³¹ A *jaranero* or *jaranera* is a person who plays the *jarana*, an eight-string, guitar-like instrument of the *son jarocho*. To identify as a *jaranero* or *jaranera* holds deeper meaning for Chicana and Chicano activists who become practitioners of the *son jarocho*, music originally from the *sotavento*¹³¹ region of México. *Jaranero* identity, for Chicanas and Chicanos, is more telling of individual and communal experience as opposed to ones role in a *son jarocho* ensemble (Sánchez-Tello 2012:56). According to Sánchez-Tello, “to call oneself a *jaranera* or *jaranero* is a political statement tied to liberal and radical politics of inclusion and solidarity with those in struggle, whether it is movements for immigrant rights, feminism, organizing against police abuse, or retaining cultural heritage under the pressure of American culture and social hierarchies” (2012:57). Therefore, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* primarily lend themselves and the *son jarocho* to a broad campaign of solidarity work with movements for social justice, as opposed to forming ensembles for strictly performance or commercial purposes. Rather than retain cultural heritage, Chicano-Jarochos adopt the *son jarocho* and *fandango* to create culture rooted in social action in the United States, yet tied to transnational dialogue.

show solidarity. I think us just being here brought a lot of people to us. And I heard a lot people of saying, ‘there’s just a certain energy with music and it’s beautiful that you guys are here.’”¹³² I believe that solidarity is the key term to explain the participation of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* at Occupy Los Angeles. Coming together via the *fandanguito* at Occupy Los Angeles was a way to express our support for the burgeoning movement.

In contrast to Simonds, as a weekly participant at the encampment, it took me about a month to feel connected as a *jaranero* at the demonstration. Beside feeling that a major injustice due to white collar crime by Wall Street bankers who caused a national economic recession, I felt ambivalent about the main purpose of the Occupy Wall Street Movement. It appeared to accept all reasons for people to leave their homes and temporarily live in protest encampments throughout major cities across the country. But its open policy also easily allowed for local police forces to dress in civilian clothing to infiltrate and map out every strategy of the Occupy Wall Street Movement.

At first, the *fandanguitos* felt isolated from the rest of the Occupy Los Angeles encampment. Or another way to look at it, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* carved our own section on the protest grounds in which to sonically express our support. It seemed that other protestors were not interested in coming around to enjoy our *son jarocho* music and dance. This was difficult for me to accept considering that at Mayday marches and other protests people normally gravitated to the *fandango*, which created an atmosphere of joy and mutual support. In the following weeks, however, protestors began to show up to listen seemingly out of curiosity. Since the *fandango* format of performing a *son* is in cyclical format, which does not adhere to the commercial format of playing *sones* within 2-3 minutes, *sones* were played between 10 to 15 minutes each. I recall a bystander who was perplexed and did not understand the nature of

¹³² Melina Simonds, personal communication with the author, October 2011.

playing *sones* at Occupy Los Angeles. This man, who reeked of terrible body odor, proceeded to put his arm around me while I played the *requinto* and stated, “Why are you guys playing the same chords for the last fifteen minutes? Can’t you play something else?” I was repulsed by his smell and comment. I forced his arm off my shoulder and asked him never to do that again. I felt that our participation was trivial to the confusing and broad objectives of Occupy Los Angeles. Translating the *fandango* as participatory support within this struggle appeared to be lost at that moment.

But *jaranera* and *jaraneros* prevailed in having a presence several times a week at Occupy Los Angeles, a few actually camped out at City Hall on select nights. After approximately one month of gathering for *fandanguitos*, the general crowd of protestors began to genuinely appreciate our music, dance, and participation, especially after explanations of its connection to social movements. On *Día de muertos*, or Day of the Dead on November 1, 2011, I recall a crowd of approximately fifty people who showed up to enjoy our *fandanguito*. We eventually shifted our enclosed positions around the *tarima* and opened ourselves up to reveal more of a performance. I finally felt genuine appreciation for our music and felt connected to the rest of the protestors. Overall, many Chicana and Chicano activists around Los Angeles seemed reluctant to step into the Occupy encampment at City Hall. While a meeting was held weeks before at Corazón del Pueblo in Boyle Heights as an Occupy Los Angeles outreach to involve more Chicana and Chicano participation, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* were already present at the encampment since the movement began.

Marisa Martínez, one of the organizers of *fandanguitos* at Occupy Los Angeles, explains the importance of the Chicano-Latino presence via *son jarocho* at the encampment. Martínez states, “People can see the Latino-Chicano culture represented here and hear it through the

music. I think that they can see themselves represented here if they have *son* present.”¹³³ For Martínez, the *son jarocho* was a way to have representation in a predominantly White-American space at Occupy Los Angeles. Despite the demographics of Los Angeles, Chicanos and Latinos were never a major presence at the encampment. But for *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*, the *fandanguito* was a expression of solidarity for the multiple causes that formed Occupy Los Angeles. With the *son jarocho* and *fandanguito* as a resource, this was also a claim of recognition for Chicana/o and Latina/o participation. Protestors soon caught on to our attempts to be an important presence at the encampment. I felt that our consistent effort, which often felt overlooked by the rest of the protestors, was finally accepted as a vital soundscape to Occupy Los Angeles.

After a few *sones*, a “mic check,” or “human microphone,” abruptly halted our performance.¹³⁴ A Chicano visitor from Occupy Oakland made the most compelling speech I heard at Occupy Los Angeles. He mentioned that on *Día de muertos* we are to remember our ancestors even within the current economic recession. His most poignant statement in my opinion was the call for Occupy Los Angeles to recognize social struggles that came before to the encampment, and made a direct reference to support the effort for international migrant rights. His speech was the most humanitarian that I heard at Occupy Los Angeles, especially because *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* have consistently participated at international migrant rights marches since 2006. It was a validation of our music and of the small group of predominantly Chicanas and Chicanos who participated at Occupy Los Angeles. I felt that *jaranera* and

¹³³ Marisa Martínez, personal communication with the author, October 2011.

¹³⁴ The “Mic check” or “human microphone” call was practiced several times a day at Occupy Los Angeles. It is utilized as a collective call and response, usually in repeated short sentences, to update participants on pertinent information in the Occupy Movement in general.

jaranero support at Occupy Los Angeles was authenticated as a result of that speech, ironically, from an Occupy Oakland visitor.

After *Día de muertos*, we continued to participate every week at Occupy Los Angeles amidst rumors that the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) would soon raid the encampment. Nevertheless, this utopia of resistance seemed doomed when I viewed a live feed of the New York Police Department raid on Occupy Wall Street at Zuccotti Park in the early morning of November 15, 2011. I saw blurred and slow moving images of tear gas clouds and groups of protestors pushed out of the park. The scene looked violent in New York and I wondered if the LAPD would enter the Los Angeles encampment with such force. In California, images and sounds of Occupy Oakland via *Democracy Now!* appeared to be a war zone.

Jaraneras and *jaraneros* came to experience the raid at Occupy Los Angeles without *son jarocho* instruments at first, only to be comforted by this music when leaving the uprooted site.

The Night of the LAPD Eviction of Occupy Los Angeles

I decided not to take my *jarana* or *guitarra de son* in fear that these instruments would be broken in case of potential violence. Considering the LAPD's extensive record of police brutality, I was not willing to sacrifice my priceless *son jarocho* instruments at the Occupy Los Angeles raid on the night of November 29, 2011. The LAPD attack on protestors at the 2000 Democratic National Convention (DNC) demonstration concert outside the Staples Center is a recent example of their brutal tactics. The Los Angeles Times reports, "LAPD officials said that officers fired more than 200 rounds of 'less lethal' projectiles, including rubber bullets, and that more than 100 officers reported being struck by objects thrown by protestors" (McGreevy 2004). Gaye Theresa Johnson adds that the LAPD, "attacked audience members, disconnected the band's microphones from the speakers and enabled their own, and declared the concert an

unlawful assembly” (2013:184). The LAPD’s micro-riot at the 2000 DNC ensued as polycultural band Ozomatli took the stage. Seven years later, the LAPD would once more attack a peaceful social justice gathering.

At the 2007 Mayday march, which convened at MacArthur Park, general protestors, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*, and journalists tried to evade rubber bullets and were forced to maneuver through tear gas as they were attacked by LAPD in riot gear. Understanding the questionable ethics of the LAPD made me think twice about bringing my peaceful, musical method of protest, which typically involves using my *son jarocho* instruments. Although I did not enter the raid with music, it was the *son jarocho* that would conclude the final night of Occupy Los Angeles.

Upon arriving near the encampment at City Hall, playwright Virginia Grise, Vaneza Calderón and myself came across a police line that covered a two-block radius surrounding Occupy Los Angeles. The LAPD refused to let anyone cross the line even into a nearby bar on 2nd street. After people attempting to cross the police line distracted LAPD officers, I heard Grise frantically whisper, “Let’s go, let’s go, let’s go.”¹³⁵ We quickly crossed under the police line and dashed down 2nd street. I took a quick glance over my shoulder to find Calderón shocked and still standing behind the line. I figured that police would rush to our arrest, but we safely made it to the encampment around 11:00pm.

The encampment and area surrounding 1st, Main, Temple, and Hill streets had protestors waiting for the LAPD to fully arrive on site. Grise and I decided to be witnesses at the raid. There were moments of confusion as people decided to take lead and guide groups of people to other areas surrounding the encampment. Once at a seemingly random point, our moving between areas appeared pointless, perhaps a purposeful confusion created by infiltrators. The

¹³⁵ Virginia Grise, personal communication with the author, November 29, 2011.

Huffington Post reports, “Los Angeles police used nearly a dozen undercover detectives to infiltrate the Occupy LA encampment before [the] raid to gather information on protesters' intentions, according to media reports Friday. None of the officers slept at the camp, but tried to blend in during the weeks leading up to the raid to learn about plans to resist or use weapons against police” (2011). The open policy at the General Meetings at Occupy Los Angeles really opened the door for LAPD to go undercover and plan the eviction. On the other hand, it is disturbing that official forces can step into a social movement to undermine its efforts.

In the early morning of November 30, 2011, the LAPD—some in riot gear and others sporting Hazardous Materials suits, which read HAZMAT—raided the Occupy Los Angeles encampment on the City Hall lawn. Over 1,400 police swarmed out of City Hall like ants rushing out of an ant colony to arrest over 200 protesters who refused to leave the encampment (2011).¹³⁶ I believe that the uprooting of the Occupy Los Angeles encampment by the LAPD forcefully ended the demonstration. Although their actions were not immediately violent, the overwhelming number of armed LAPD in riot gear gave the impression of potential impending chaos.

The LAPD made a blockade around the entire block that surrounds City Hall. Eventually another blockade formed at the City Hall lawn to stop anyone who attempted to enter the newly evicted encampment. A massive arrest ensued as hundreds of police placed plastic handcuffs on protestors who refused to leave their tents. Along the streets, I spotted a few fellow *jaraneros* who were also witnesses to the raid. After a few hours of potential violence or capture, Goshen and myself decided to make an exit and not risk arrest.

¹³⁶ Paraphrasing “Occupy L.A. Raid: Police Move In and Clear Occupy L.A. Camp and Arrest 200 Protestors.” Huffington Post, November 30, 2011.

After we exited the LAPD raid of Occupy Los Angeles, the most healing action of the night was in meeting a small group of supporters, amongst them *jaranera* Susie Alcalá and *jaranero* Daniel French, in front of Señor Fish on the corner of 1st St. and Alameda in Little Tokyo. Alcalá and French strummed their *jaranas* as we attempted to improvise verses about Occupy Los Angeles to “El buscapies.” With a rush of memories of LAPD in riot gear and hoping that no one was harmed, I stumbled at improvising verses about what I just experienced. However, I chose to sing a standard *verso*, or verse, of “El buscapies” to calm my nerves.

I was asked to say a few words about the raid, but I recall not being able to fully summarize the experience since I was still processing the events of the night. We proceed to play another *son* before I decided to head for home. It was approximately 2:00am and although I felt alert, my body was ready to decompress and rest. Despite the fact that *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* were not able to play *sones* inside the raid, the *son jarocho* was certainly present as a welcoming sound across from the Japanese American National Museum.

The social energy of protest that is inspired through the text, dance, and instruments of the *son jarocho* has transferred throughout the United States. *Jaraneras* and *jaraneros* participated at Occupy Philadelphia and in the Texas Rio Grande Valley. Cities and areas such as Austin, San Antonio, the Texas Rio Grande Valley, San Diego, Santa Ana, California’s Bay Area, Seattle, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York City, and Washington, DC all have a dedicated group of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* for social action. In the following section I will focus on Washington, DC area *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* who utilize the *son jarocho* and *fandango* to add pressure to the Nation’s social issues. From solidarity work for Latin American activists, anti-militarization, and issues affecting the Central American community of the Washington, DC area, activist-*son jarocho* collective Son Cosita Seria is at the forefront of these struggles.

“Repiquen las campanas de Guachinton”: *The Son Jarocho in the Nation’s Capital*¹³⁷

In order to understand the presence of *son jarocho* in Washington, DC, it is important to acknowledge the first performances of this musical genre in the Nation’s Capital. The Smithsonian Folklife Festival played a pivotal role in bringing *son jarocho* musicians from Veracruz and California since 1975. Meanwhile during this time period, ethnomusicologist Daniel Sheehy and Luís González performed *sones jarochos* in their repertoire at Northwestern DC are restaurants.

Outside of a non-political, cultural-performative setting, Son Cosita Seria is a collective dedicated to the dissemination of the *son jarocho* and social justice activism. I believe that is an important point when thinking of the *son jarocho* in the Nation’s Capital. It is in part the people who participate in making a *son jarocho* community; however, it is more important in knowing why the *son jarocho* is present in Washington, DC. The primary focus is to express solidarity between local causes, local cultural/community events, grassroots organizations, or pressing international movements that come to Washington, DC and raise awareness.

In the cultural-performative setting, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, which was previously entitled Festival of American Folklife, has featured the *son jarocho* since 1975. It is a platform that recognizes the highest talents within musical-cultures to a devoted audience that is local, national, and international. *Son jarocho* ensembles and practitioners from the urban-*porteño* and *jaranero-fandanguero* styles from México and California have worked as presenters or performed at the festival.

From July 2nd to July 6, 1975, in the “Old Ways in the New World” segment of the festival under the “Mexican” category, a group listed as “Jarocho Ensemble” performed at the

¹³⁷ *“Repiquen las campanas de Guachinton”* roughly translates to “Let the bells of Washington [DC] ring out.”

festival. The ensemble was Los Hermanos Fierro from México with Alejandro Fierro Samuyo (*arpa*), Daniel Ramos Palacio (*jarana*), and Hermo Solís Portela (*jarana*). The program describes the *son jarocho* as, “A musical tradition gaining in popularity among Mexican-Americans is the jarocho of Southern Vera Cruz. An ensemble of five performers from Mexico will play the harp-dominated music and execute the complex footwork of the dances” (1975:43). The description identifies Mexican-Americans as aficionados of the *son jarocho*. I believe this is a direct reference to the predominantly Chicano *son jarocho* ensembles that formed between the 1950s-1970s in California and their followers. Furthermore, Conjunto Cuextecatl, a Chicano ensemble featuring three members of Conjunto Hueyapan from Oxnard along with José Alvarado and Manuel “Crow” Vásquez from Los Angeles, performed at the festival circa 1974-1975.

It appears that a major gap of *son jarocho* programming occurred as the Festival of American Folklife transitioned to the National Mall and became the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in the 1990s, which now embraced folk traditions and cultural bearers from around the world. By 2004, the *Nuestra Música: Music in Latino Culture* initiative spearheaded by Daniel Sheehy and Olivia Cadaval began to feature the *son jarocho* once more. However, the 2004 festival included participants representing both the urban format and the *jaranero-fandanguero* branch of the *son jarocho*. José Gutiérrez y Los Hermanos Ochoa from the City of Veracruz, and Folkways recording artist with *La Bamba: Sones Jarocho from Veracruz*, participated for the entirety of the festival. The trio featured José Gutiérrez on *requinto jarocho*, Marcos Ochoa on *jarana*, and Felipe Ochoa on the *arpa*. The 2004 Smithsonian Folklife Festival program describes the trio as, “NEA National Heritage Fellow José Gutiérrez and Los Hermanos Ochoa represent the best of the *son jarocho* tradition from the southern coastal plain of Veracruz,

Mexico. The virtuosic interaction between these musicians who play and sing creates an exciting dialogue of musical and textual flow that defines the simple harmonic yet rhythmically complex style of the dance music that is the *son jarocho*” (2004:99). The festival also featured the *laudería*, or instrument making, of Gutiérrez and his master abilities to construct the seven-panel harp and the solid one-piece *jarana* and *requintos*. Gutiérrez also supplies quality instruments to other fine *jarocho* musicians in Mexico and the U.S. (2004:101).

In the *Bailemos, Let's Dance! Son Jarocho Fandango* presentation, Quetzal Flores and Martha González led discussion and taught participants how to *zapatear* in the *fandango*. The nucleus of *jaranero*-Chicano band Quetzal, Martha González and Quetzal Flores, gave workshops on the *fandango zapateado*. Similar to the aforementioned members of Quetzal, amongst California's Chicano musicians who masterfully reinterpret Mexican musical traditions, including the *son jarocho*, Francisco González presented at the festival as a strings maker. At the time, González based his Guadalupe Custom Strings shop in Goleta, California. His string shop would not only become supplier for *mariachi* and *norteño* musicians, but the premier string supplier for *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* in México and the United States. The program describes González as, “a multi-instrumentalist who out of frustration embarked on a journey to find the perfect string for his instruments. He is a master harpist, a founding member of Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles, has worked as the musical director for the Teatro Campesino, and currently leads the Conjunto Guadalupe” (2004:101). González is not only a pioneering member of the early version of Los Lobos, but made a considerable contribution by creating appropriately tensioned strings for *son jarocho* instrumentation. Prior to the handcrafted creation of each string by González, *son jarocho* musicians in the U.S. and México struggled to find the best strings for their instruments.

The 2006 Smithsonian Folklife Festival was the third installment of the *Nuestra Música* initiative, but with an emphasis on *Latino Chicago*. Ensembles such as Sones de México and Tarima Son featured *son jarocho* in their repertoire. Of special events that occurred at the festival, a *bombazo-fandango* with Puerto Rican *bomba* musicians and dancers and members of Sones de México and Tarima Son organically came together. The Puerto Rican *bombazo* is the community dance-drumming-singing tradition whose purpose is akin to the *son jarocho fandango*. To emphasize Chicago's intersectionality between Latina and Latino musical communities, *reggaetón* rappers joined the *bombazo-fandango* to add their bilingual verbal rhymes to the one of a kind festivity.

I was able to work as a presenter at the 2009 festival alongside fellow Chicano musician-jaranero-academics such as Quetzal Flores, Martha González, and Russell Rodríguez. The 2009 festival concluded the *Nuestra Música* initiative with *Las Américas: Un Mundo Musical: Music in Latino Culture*. An impressive grouping of musical masters came from Latin American and Caribbean countries featuring the sounds of *merengue típico* from the Dominican Republic, *joropo/música llanera* from Venezuela and Colombia, *currulao* and *vallenato* from Colombia, *plena* from Puerto Rico, *conjunto* music from San Antonio, Texas, and *son jarocho* from Veracruz, México. Smithsonian Folkways recording artist Son de Madera brought their progressive *son jarocho* to the festival.

Director of Son de Madera Ramón Gutiérrez brought collaborator Patricio Hidalgo to the México section of the 2010 Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Gutiérrez featured his luthier work and Hidalgo presented on verbal-poetic improvisation in the *son jarocho*. At the 2012 festival, Quetzal Flores and Martha González presented their *son jarocho* inspired band Quetzal in promotion of their album *Imaginaries*. In 2013, Quetzal won a Grammy for "Best Latin Rock,

Urban or Alternative Album” for *Imaginarie*, a Smithsonian Folkways Recordings release. The *son jarocho*, its musical fusions, dance, poetry, and luthier work have made a strong presence at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival since the mid-1970s.

Beyond the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Washington, DC venues such as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the Mexican Cultural Institute feature the *son jarocho* on occasion. However, the *son jarocho* became a presence at the community level of Washington, DC since the late-1980s. After completion of his graduate studies at UCLA, and participation with ensembles Trio Angelino Jarocho and Mariachi Uclatlán, Daniel Sheehy relocated his musical and academic projects to the Nation’s Capital. Sheehy formed Los Amigos as a duo, which featured *son jarocho* in their repertoire and later expanded to become a *mariachi* ensemble.

Los Amigos: From Son Jarocho to Mariachi

Approximately twenty-five years ago, Mexican traditional music group, Washington, DC’s Los Amigos included *sones jarochos* in their repertoire, as well as popular songs from Latin America. Los Amigos performed in every possible manifestation of membership, for example, as Duo Los Amigos or Trio Los Amigos. Two of its key members were current Smithsonian Folkways director Daniel Sheehy and the late Luis González. Los Amigos performed weekly at Tazumal Restaurant on 18th Street, not far from the current location of McDonald’s in Adams Morgan.

Tazumal Restaurant was part of the Northwest Washington, DC experience in the 1980s. People enjoyed going to the restaurant and listening to music as part of its “grittiness” and charm. Ethnomusicologist Sheehy recalls radicals from Nicaragua that would frequent Tazumal and enjoy listening to Los Amigos. Along with a staple repertoire of *son jarocho*, Los Amigos

performed other forms of popular Latin American music. Like Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles, or Los Alacranes Mojados, U.S.-based Latino music groups from the 1970s onward held a healthy base of *son jarocho* in their repertoire, but also diversified into various regional Mexican music and Latin American popular musics.

Tazumal's owner later enforced a dress code in order to make the restaurant appear "high class." Apparently this was a terrible business move and Tazumal ended up losing many of its patrons. The owner ultimately sold the restaurant, which is currently the site of Rumba Café, a salsa music nightclub. Tazumal's patrons really enjoyed the experience of the Columbia Heights-Adams Morgan area for its character. Tazumal was part of the overall lure of Latino Northwestern DC. For a few years, Los Amigos and their Latin American folk sounds, which included the *son jarocho*, contributed to Northwest DC's musical ambiance.

Los Amigos developed into a mariachi ensemble with trumpets, violins, *guitarrón*, *vihuela*, and the emblematic *traje de charro*. Now known as Mariachi Los Amigos, this professional ensemble presents itself at events along the DC metro area, which includes Northern Virginia and Maryland. Mariachi Los Amigos perform *sones jarochos*, but with standard mariachi instruments. In comparison to the work of Los Amigos, a new generation of *son jarocho* interpreters combines cultural performance focused on musically supporting local and international social movements in the Nation's Capital. To clarify, the Son Cosita Seria collective functions as a performance ensemble, but its main foci is to disseminate the teaching of *son jarocho* instruments and musical participation in progressive social actions.

This next generation of *son jarocho* interpreters came from grassroots activism experience at universities and urban struggles in Washington, DC. Son Cosita Seria began as an activist-*jaranera* and *jaranero* collective by founding members Salvador Sarmiento, Susanna

Duncan, Daniel Herrera Cervantes, Isis Goldberg, Ximena Camus, and Daniel Pielago. Given the transient, revolving door dynamic of young professionals and activists who enter and leave Washington, DC, Son Cosita Seria adjusts to a shift in membership approximately every year since its formation in 2008.

Son Cosita Seria: Activist Son Jarocho in the Nation's Capital

The Washington, DC metro area music scene has a history of activist-musicians spanning hardcore punk to Latin American traditional sounds. The hardcore punk community from the 1980s and 1990s often held benefit shows at Northwest Washington, DC church basements and cultural centers, which were regularly in support of Central American struggles or food programs to aid the homeless. Spaces such as Centro de Arte, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, and La Casa held both hardcore punk and Latin American music shows in support of local struggles. Punk rock bands such as Fugazi, Nation of Ulysses, and Machetres regularly donated their talent to benefit shows. Within Latin American popular music ensembles in the Washington, DC area, *nueva canción* ensemble Los Rumisonkos was also a group that lent its efforts to social justice causes. Salvadoran musician-organizer Lilo González was a liaison between Central American musics and hardcore punk activists, specifically Mark Andersen's Positive Force organization, at spaces such as Centro de Arte and the Latin America Youth Center.

Within Washington, DC's rich tapestry of Black civil rights music, ensembles such as Sweet Honey in the Rock and founder Bernice Reagon provide a trajectory of collective a cappella singing for social justice. Active since the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, the weekly drum circle at Meridian Hill Park provides a polycultural gathering of sonic claiming of space by African Americans, Latinas and Latinos who are predominantly of Central American heritage, and White Americans (Weiss 2011:66). The balance between urgent, fast-paced hardcore punk

and slow, meditative reggae by Anacostia's Bad Brains, was akin to sonic resistance through racial and musical normativity within a majority White American punk rock scene. The presence of Bad Brains, a Black-Rastafarian hardcore punk ensemble with musical interludes into reggae, challenged the established image and sound representation of punk rock through their sonic claiming of space. The aforementioned ensembles and activist-musicians exemplify a long fetch of social justice music established in Washington, DC as a community, which provides an alternative perspective of the city and its dominant images of National monuments, symbols such as the White House and U.S. Capitol, and Presidents. By the time Son Cosita Seria emerges in 2008 as an activist-*son jarocho* collective, the ensemble followed the trajectory of an established community of activist-artists, musicians, and organizers.

Son Cosita Seria is a Washington, DC *son jarocho* ensemble, grassroots collective, and *taller* (workshop) with Salvador Sarmiento and Susanna Duncan as its longtime facilitators. A Chicano from Santa Ana, California, Sarmiento comes from a family of activists. His mother Socorro Sarmiento is a founder of El Centro Cultural de México, "El Centro" for short, a non-profit, progressive cultural center in Santa Ana. El Centro is also a transnational bastion for the cultivation of the *son jarocho* and *fandango*. In its early formation, Salvador Sarmiento helped form Son del Centro, the center's *son jarocho* performance and social justice ensemble. Angélica Loa Pérez states, "Son del Centro is committed to [its] 'political statement' as a key strategy for with which to gain support for its activist, pro-immigrant and people of color agenda" (2005:90). Son del Centro's experience in supporting international migrant rights and other causes (for example, against police brutality in Orange County) provided ideological grounding for Son Cosita Seria. Now Sarmiento, along with a revolving membership of Son Cosita Seria, connect

their personal professions with the *son jarocho* as entities for social justice causes in Washington, DC.

Solidarity work between Central Americans, South Americans, African Americans, White Americans, Chicanos and Mexicans in Washington, DC forges intersectionality grounded in Pan-Latino shared struggles. On analyzing the concept of shared struggles, Gaye Theresa Johnson states, “these struggles do not need to be structured around the liberation of *all* groups, they merely need to be ready to act on the possibility that their struggles empower and/or affect other, similarly disenfranchised, groups” (2013:186). The work of Son Cosita Seria is largely focused on issues that affect the Latina/o community of the Washington, DC area. The collective consists of day laborer organizers, student activists, cultural workers, and intellectuals who converge to musically support Latino struggles. Some efforts have national consequence, for example, the effort to end deportations that are affecting families not only in Washington, DC, but also international migrant populations across the country.

The collective hosts free weekly *son jarocho talleres*, or music workshops, at La Casa in the neighborhood of Mt. Pleasant bordering Columbia Heights. Son Cosita Seria is but one example of Pan-Latino convergence via music in the Nation’s Capital, which manifests through the *son jarocho* in this case. The music ensemble and *talleres*, or *son jarocho* workshops, consist of lawyers, students, international migrants, and activists of diverse nationalities. I had the opportunity to work with Son Cosita Seria while I was a pre-doctoral fellow at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Less than a week after I began my fellowship in September 2012, I found myself marching with members of Son Cosita Seria at *La caravana por la paz*, or Caravan for Peace.

Marching to Son Jarocho at La caravana por la paz, The Caravan for Peace

On September 12, 2012, victims of narco-violence in México turned peace activists, known as *La caravana por la paz*, or Caravan for Peace, held a march from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church to Meridian Hill Park. The march included chants to end violence in México and moments of *son jarocho* music. The solemnity of the march, however, did not call for joyous *son jarocho* played in major keys, but for serious sounds played in minor keys. Mary Alfaro and I joined Sarmiento on a rendition of "La morena" during the march. Participants generally enjoyed the music but it was difficult to play and sing verses that did not relate to the event. A group of mother's who had either lost their children, family members, or husbands comprised the majority of the caravan. Their painful expressions of recent loss proved difficult for celebratory music. We instinctively declined to play music at the rally, which was held at Meridian Hill Park located in the neighborhood of Columbia Heights. Sometimes it is wise to know when certain musics or types of songs are appropriate at social actions. The mood was much too solemn for the upbeat energy of the *son jarocho* that is normally performed at marches.

About one week after the *Caravana por la paz*, the occasion for *son jarocho* was appropriate at the Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt Annual Memorial Service. The guest speakers and organizers of the memorial created a space for *Son Cosita Seria*. After performing a few *sones jarochos* as an act of solidarity for the fallen diplomats, an improvised performance of a popular South American *nueva canción* song solidified our purpose at the memorial.

Son Cosita Seria at the Letelier and Moffitt Annual Memorial Service

On the morning of September 21, 1976, along with a young co-worker Ronnie Karpen Moffitt, former Chilean ambassador to the United States Orlando Letelier was killed when a

bomb exploded under his car as they drove to work along embassy row in Washington, DC (Walker 2011:109). An outspoken critic of Augusto Pinochet's regime in Chile, Letelier was the director for the Institute for Policy Studies Transnational Institute and Moffitt an IPS development associate. A memorial is held every year at Sheridan Circle, located along Embassy Row, where Letelier and Moffitt were killed. A group of speakers from the IPS, a family member of Letelier, and Chile's current ambassador participated at the memorial. As an act of solidarity, Son Cosita Seria performed at Letelier and Moffitt's annual memorial service held on Sunday, September 23, 2012.

On this occasion, the ensemble consisted of Salvador Sarmiento (*jarana tercera*), Daniel Herrera (*cajón* and violin), Karla Quintana Osuna (*jarana primera*), and myself on the *requinto jarocho* (see figure 10). I introduced the *son jarocho* in the U.S. as music bound to peace movements for social justice. In the middle of the program, Son Cosita Seria performed "El siquisiri" and "La morena" with poetic interludes that declared our purpose and solidarity at the memorial. Sarmiento eloquently improvised verses that connected the *son jarocho* to Letelier and Moffitt.

While flowers were laid at a plaque dedicated to Letelier and Moffitt, Son Cosita Seria chose "Gracias a la vida," a song from the *nueva canción* repertoire. Songstresses Mercedes Sosa and Violeta Parra, two prominent South American leaders of the *nueva canción* movement, popularized "Gracias a la vida." The performance of "Gracias a la vida" with *son jarocho* instruments represented a connection of *jaranera* and *jaranero* solidarity with an act of peace, such as remembering the life of Letelier, who was openly critical of the Pinochet dictatorship. *Nueva canción* with *son jarocho* instruments is not a common practice. Both willingness for Son

Cosita Seria to perform at the memorial and the cause for the event called for a song that greater expressed Chile's international struggle for peace.



Figure 10. Son Cosita Seria, from left to right: The author, Karla Quintana Osuna, Salvador Sarmiento, and Daniel Herrera Cervantes perform at the annual memorial service for Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt. This photo is courtesy of Jeremy Bigwood.

As a site of national and international pressure for human rights lobbying and grassroots activism, I came to find the frequency of rallies, protests, marches, acts of civil disobedience, and memorials held in Washington, DC. The *Caravana por la paz* and Letelier-Moffitt memorial began a series of actions that featured Son Cosita Seria's participation in Fall 2012. The following months included a taller, dialogue, and School of the Americas Watch benefit show with Son Altepee, a young ensemble from Acayucan, Veracruz. Son Cosita Seria's work with Son Altepee culminated at the School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil at Fort Benning, Georgia in November of 2012.

Son Altepee, Son del Centro Children's Group, Jarochicanos, and members of Son Cosita Seria as Son Solidario at Fort Benning, Georgia: The School of the Americas Annual Vigil

Son Altepee, an ensemble and collective that cultivates *música tradicional de cuerdas*, or traditional string music from Veracruz, uses this description instead of the title "*son jarocho*."

Traveling from Acayucan, Veracruz, Son Altepee arrived in Washington, DC on October 11,

2012 in order to promote their perspective on traditional string music of Veracruz, México. “Altepee” means “the people” in the Nahuatl indigenous language, a name given to the collective by the Nahuatl community in Veracruz. What is commercially known as “*son jarocho*,” Son Altepee identifies as traditional string music from the *sotavento* region. Their critique of the *jaranero* movement solidifies a third space or discourse in the trajectory of the *son jarocho*/traditional string music from Veracruz.

The assessment extends itself to the *jaranero* movement, claiming that it too commercialized the *son jarocho* as did musicians such as Lino Chávez and Andrés Huesca. According to Sael Blanco, members of the *jaranero* movement once contributed to building community through the *fandango* and workshops, but have since focused on international tours and maintaining a comfortable lifestyle.¹³⁸ In other words, the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement converted into the new mainstream, or new standard, of *son jarocho* at the popular level. At the initial phase of the *jaranero* movement in México in the late 1970s-early 1980s, *jaraneros* and *jaraneras* worked to challenge and create an alternate image and sound as a result of the caricaturing of the established style of *son jarocho*. However, after thirty years of grassroots work and presentations in larger media platforms, the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement has become the new standard. Members of this movement from both México and the United States have replicated many of the methods of diffusion as the initial commercial style of *son jarocho*. Professional *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* and their ensembles record albums, appear in films, and participate in performances at prestigious concert venues. But the major difference between these two strands of commercialization of the *son jarocho*, is that many experienced members of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement still practice or teach the method, for example, the *zapateado* dance and ways to improve musicality, of the *fandango* through *talleres*, or workshops.

¹³⁸ Sael Blanco, personal communication with the author, October 14, 2012.

With the success of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement's grassroots efforts, but also in part funded by government grants, *son jarocho* and *fandango talleres*, or workshops, are now held in areas throughout the México, U.S., and Europe, the oversight on who is experienced enough to teach has become impossible to implement. Experienced and respected *jaraneros*, mostly men, are now the main negotiators to the *son jarocho* within grassroots, governmental, and commercial media and performance networks. In other words, the extent of the success cannot be controlled and has placed the leaders of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement akin to a new *son jarocho* mainstream.

Although these *jaranero* leaders came out of alternative perspectives and ways of representing the *son jarocho* and *fandango*, a third discourse is being cultivated by the Altepee Collective from Acayucan, Veracruz. A prominent claim is a critical approach toward the term “*son jarocho*,” which members claim is a term used by intellectuals and for commercial purposes. Anna Arismendez, a *jaranera* originally from Texas, is a member of the Colectivo Altepee. Arismendez explains, “When you talk to the *señores*, they don't say *son jarocho*. At least they [previously] didn't because now there's this need to identify [themselves] or connect [themselves] by labeling it. But really, when they talk about their music, they talk about their instruments. It's not like, ‘oh, I'm gonna go play *son jarocho*’ [or] ‘What's your music?’ ‘It's this [instrument] right here.’ And the name that they would use was, ‘*es la música de cuerdas* (it's string music).”¹³⁹ The Altepee Collective and its performance ensemble, Son Altepee, utilize the word of elders from their community who do not identify the music as *son jarocho*, rather as traditional string music from Veracruz or *jarana* music.

¹³⁹ Anna Arismendez, personal communication with the author, June 16, 2014. *Señores* is a term of respect used for male elders.

Members of Son Altepee align themselves with social movements within their home region, throughout México, and internationally. During the 2012 presidential election, Enrique Peña Nieto, a candidate under the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), was deemed the winner. Immediately, the election was considered a fraud and the YoSoy#132 (I Am 132) movement formed against Peña Nieto's election. Son Altepee participated in the YoSoy#132 movement in Acayucan with their string music to accompany demonstrations. They were met by armed forces that prevented the demonstration from advancing. According to Simón Sedillo, the armed forces put out a bribe of nine hundred *pesos* to report anyone who played *jaranas*.¹⁴⁰ On this occasion, *jarana* string music was considered a threat to the election at hand. In the 1940s, *son jarocho* musicians such as Rutilo Parroquín accompanied then presidential candidate Miguel Alemán to provide the soundtrack to his campaign (Kohl 2007:11). With "La bamba" as his campaign's theme song, Alemán successfully became president of México in 1946. This form of mobilizing the underclass to vote was acceptable because it would ultimately reinforce mainstream political gains by the long established PRI. The genealogical memory of official forces in México recognizes the political potential for mobilizing the public through the *son jarocho*. Therefore, after two National Action Party (PAN) presidencies, a grassroots movement of traditional string music practitioners who protest for the needs of the underclass was a threat to the PRI's effort to reestablish authoritarian power in México.

Son Altepee believes in building community through traditional string music by bringing together elders and children as important contributors to this musical culture. It is not so much a performance ensemble as it is a delegation of string music from their region. The experience of gathering multi-generational string music practitioners is important in a time of great violence in

¹⁴⁰ Simon Cedillo, personal communication with the author, October 14, 2012. *Pesos* or *peso* is the official currency of México.

their region. Their resilience to host *fandangos* despite the threat of violence is a creative renewal of resistance. Son Altepee has to adjust times to host *huapanagos*, the equivalent of a *fandango* in their region, early in the day—which are normally held at night—in order to avoid potential violence at nighttime. Affirmation of culture and its preservation, in this case, is an act of resistance at the threat of violence from drug cartels and members of organized crime who are trying to take over the Acayucan, Veracruz community.

The ensemble convened in Washington, DC to give workshops and present their documentary *Ayer, hoy y mañana: Música tradicional de cuerdas* (2012). Their workshops included critiques of standardizations set by the *jaranero* movement. But more so than standard ways of teaching the *son jarocho*, the strums and dancing techniques taught by members of the *jaranero* movement serve as a guideline. For example, I learned how to strum the *jarana* analyzing strum patterns at a *fandango* at El CaSon in Veracruz. I found that a basic strum followed a “*pa se se pa pa se*,” or “down, up, up, down, down, up” pattern. I came to understand this strum pattern more as a guideline than standardization, a reference from which to expand and improvise musically. However, it appeared that Son Altepee saw even this as a form of standardization. I suppose Son Altepee taught workshop participants the traditional *rasgueos*, or strum patterns, and *zapateado* according to their region.

On October 14, 2012, The School of the Americas Watch (SOA Watch) held a fundraiser at Haydee’s Restaurant in Mt. Pleasant, Washington, DC. The event raised funds for the SOA Watch annual vigil to close School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia (see figure 11). Son Altepee lent their musical talents with *jaranas*, *león*, and *guitarra grande* to back the efforts of SOA Watch. Members of Son Cosita Seria, which included Salvador Sarmiento, Daniel Herrera Cervantes, and myself, accompanied Son Altepee at the fundraiser. The music was

presented with an energetic and great spirited delivery. In the middle of the set, *jaranero*-activist-documentarian Simón Cedillo announced that *música de cuerdas/son jarocho* was music of resistance. Cedillo's comment served as a reminder surrounding the importance of supporting the cause for closing the School of the Americas. The SOA Watch fundraiser gathered enough funds to send members of the organization to its annual vigil the following month.



Figure 11. A School of the America's Watch fundraiser flyer bordering Columbia Heights/Mt. Pleasant, Washington, DC featuring traditional string music ensemble Son Altepepe.

A few members of the Son Cosita Seria collective, including myself, drove from Washington, DC to Fort Benning, Georgia to attend the SOA Watch annual vigil. The experience was transformative, but I also got to witness the creative renewal of the *son jarocho* and *fandango* as a peaceful protest against oppressive militarization. The vigil proved to be an angle distinct from the international migrant rights marches or Occupy Los Angeles that *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* support. Compared to Occupy Los Angeles, the SOA Watch annual vigil had well-defined objectives and fully understood the power of *son jarocho* within this social movement.

The 2012 School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil at Fort Benning, Georgia

The School of the Americas Watch is a nonviolent grassroots movement that works to stand in solidarity with the people of Latin America and the Caribbean, to close the SOA/WHINSEC and to change oppressive U.S. foreign policy that the SOA represents. It is an independent organization that seeks to close the US Army School of the Americas, now known as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), or through vigils and fasts, demonstrations and nonviolent protest, as well as media and legislative work.¹⁴¹ SOA Watch began in 1990 inside a small apartment outside the main gate of Fort Benning, Georgia, and spearheaded by radical Catholic priest Fr. Roy Bourgeois. He explains, “We found that, since 1946, the SOA had trained over 50,000 soldiers from 18 different countries and was well known throughout Latin America as the ‘School of the Assassins,’ ‘School for Dictators,’ and ‘School of Coups’” (2012:11). The SOA Watch national office is now located in Washington, DC, and holds an annual vigil at Fort Benning to remember the victims of SOA trained forces in Latin America. The annual vigil brings together torture survivors and victims of violence as speakers, social justice grounded music groups, and workshops of various topics involving peaceful tactics for justice.

On November 17, 2012, *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from across the United States and Veracruz gathered to peacefully protest the School of the Americas/WHINSEC. Son del Centro’s children’s group from Santa Ana, CA, Jarochicanos from Chicago, IL, members of Son Cosita Seria, Son Altepee from Acayucan, Veracruz, and community *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from Milwaukee, Wisconsin made a strong presence as Son Solidario at the SOA Watch Annual Vigil. Son Solidario began as a social justice *son jarocho* concept/ensemble at the Coalition of

¹⁴¹ Paraphrasing Anonymous. 1999. “About SOA Watch.”
<<<http://www.soaw.org/about-us?format=pdf>>> Accessed May 6, 2014.

Immokalee Workers' Farmworker Freedom March in 2010. *Jaranera* Maya Zazhil Fernández states, "We stuck with the idea and started using it in other events such as SOAW annual vigil, US Social Forum, local/national immigration marches, and wherever we can really."¹⁴² Anarchist punks, The Revolutionary Communist Party, hippies, social justice lawyers, queer activists, student activists, U.S. Veterans for Peace, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, Buddhists, and peace activist Christians are but a few of the groups who gathered at the vigil as well.

Saturday afternoon programming at the gates of Fort Benning included musical performances and speakers on an outdoor concert stage. Son del Centro's children's group performed a few *sones* including an original *son* titled "Las arañas." Their rendition of "Señor presidente" ("Mr. President"), a protest *son*, asked for peace over violence and adequate education. Son del Centro's children's group is predominantly female with two adult *jaraneros*, Luis Sarmiento and Teri Saydak, guiding the ensemble. It was powerful to witness children, some in their teens, begin a trajectory of utilizing the *son jarocho* in movements for peace.

Following Son del Centro's performance, Belén Asunción introduced her work with México's *Caravana por la paz*, or Caravan for Peace, a campaign against violence caused by drug cartels, the Mexican military and police, organized crime syndicates, and the kidnapping/killing of innocent family members. As noted earlier in this chapter, *Caravana por la paz* made a stop in Washington, DC a few months prior to the vigil before embarking on a long tour across the country. The *son jarocho* and *Caravana por la paz* crossed paths once more, but this time within the larger quest for peace from violence by SOA trainees in Latin America. The majority of participants in the *Caravana por la paz* have lost family members due to the current drug cartel and organized crime violence in México, including Asunción. While Asunción

¹⁴² Maya Zazhil Fernández, personal communication with the author, April 9, 2014.

struggled to recount the painful story of her missing brother, two *jaraneras* from Son del Centro held a banner in remembrance of innocent victims of violence (see figure 12).



Figure 12. Belén Asunción from the Caravan for Peace and two Son del Centro Children's Group *jaraneras* at the SOA Watch Annual Vigil.

In between music performances by diverse musical ensembles, torture survivors told disturbing, yet powerful accounts of their unfortunate experiences with SOA trained forces in Latin America. Chilean-American duo Rebel Díaz from Bronx, NY by way of Chicago gave a strong performance with their revolutionary hip-hop. The group introduced their father Mario Venegas, a Chilean exile who was tortured by SOA trainees under the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, the coup that toppled the democratically elected socialist president Salvador Allende. Son Altepee followed to perform after the speech delivered by Venegas (see figure 13). Their brief performance of about two *sones* complimented the messages of struggle and suffering via torture by speakers such as Venegas. Serving as an interpreter and speaker for Son Altepee, Simón Cedillo combined his experience of revolutionary activism and documentation in México in conjunction with eloquent speeches about traditional string music from Veracruz. Activist music ensembles such as Emma Revolution also contributed to performances in solidarity with

the purpose of the SOA Watch Annual Vigil. After a break for regrouping at the Columbus Georgia Convention and Trade Center in a neighboring community, participants gathered at select workshops related to themes of peace activism.



Figure 13. Son Altepee, from left to right: Mario Doroteo, Simón Cedillo, Gemaly Pádua Uscanga, Sael Blanco, Alberto Alor Alemán, and Luís Sarmiento (not shown) perform at the SOA Watch Vigil in Fort Benning, Georgia.

Workshops at the Columbus Georgia Convention and Trade Center

Multiple workshops were held at the Columbus Georgia Convention and Trade Center after the rally at the gates of Fort Benning. The common denominator of the conference style workshops was to discuss peace activism in greater detail. The workshops included direct action training for potential prisoners of conscience, social justice lawyer meetings, Son Altepee's documentary presentation/discussion, and an Inter-faith prayer service for peace.

I decided to attend the Inter-faith prayer service before catching the latter portion of Son Altepee's workshop. Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, nuns, and spiritually inspired activists attended the service. Music played a central role that called for direct participation for peace. Songs in English and Spanish called for peace, courage, justice, and faith in our struggle for social justice. The Inter-faith service concluded with a procession with Buddhist chants and drums.

I entered the Son Altepée workshop immediately after the Inter-faith service. The workshop was already in its final half-hour and well into an open discussion. A young woman asked how much time members of Son Altepée put into their work and music. Sael Blanco responded, “no es un pasatiempo, es una forma de vida y un servicio a nuestra comunidad” (this is not a hobby, it is a way of life and a service to our community).¹⁴³ Son Altepée’s community of Acayucan, Veracruz, like many places in México, is currently struggling with organized crime and drug cartel violence. According to Blanco, the Mexican government is working with select cartels and working against others. Blanco recalled that even former Mexican President Felipe Calderón admitted to U.S. President Barack Obama that México has a problem with corruption. According to Son Altepée member and documentarian Simón Cedillo, Calderón’s declaration was intended to put pressure on Obama to admit the internal problems of drug demand and corruption. As an added dichotomy to the U.S.-México connection to drug trafficking and violence, the majority of weapons that Mexican drug cartels use are provided by the U.S. Also, drugs cultivated in México are predominantly in demand and consumption by the United States. However, the string tradition of Veracruz is a resource for gathering the community. Nonetheless, the violence in Acayucan makes people worry about knowing their neighbors. The *fandango* is still a space to connect to one another.

Toward the end of the discussion, one comment really struck me. Sael Blanco commented that during the Holy Inquisition of colonial New Spain (México), infiltrators were sent to *fandangos* in order to find out what *son* practitioners were thinking.¹⁴⁴ It did not occur to me that infiltrators would be present at the SOA Watch Annual Vigil. As a matter of fact, after

¹⁴³ Sael Blanco, personal communication with the author, November 17, 2012.

¹⁴⁴ Sael Blanco, personal communication with the author, November 17, 2012.

Son Altepee's discussion/presentation, a few U.S. government infiltrators¹⁴⁵ were caught within the premises of the Columbus, Georgia Trade and Convention Center. Son Altepee member Simón Cedillo recognized the two infiltrators from previous years. Most of the lawyers present at the SOA Watch Vigil and other participants blocked the infiltrators from coming into the Convention Center. Some participants entered a heated discussion with the infiltrators and were filmed with smart phones from all directions. According to various participants, other infiltrators in civilian clothing were caught and confronted inside the Convention Center.

Upon hearing of these instances, I suddenly realized the severity and real threat of peace work against repressive forces in the United States that encroach on Latin American democracy. To centralize my observation further, the work of peace activist musicians, and the *son jarocho* in particular, is now recognized as an alert to U.S. government agencies that seek to investigate its purpose and impact in social movements. The effort to shut down the School of the Americas/WHINSEC, which is a strong symbol of peace activism, is a serious threat to the government entities that stubbornly reject to recognize the school's repressive impact in México, Central America, and South America.

The musical-cultural expressions at the SOA Watch annual vigil continued into evening at the Columbus Georgia Trade and Convention Center. *Son jarocho* performances made a definitive presence by the Jarochicanos ensemble from Chicago and Son Altepee. However, the creative renewal of the *fandango* occurred briefly after Altepee's performance due to time constraints. For the short amount of time that the Son Solidario concept as an activist-*jaranera/o* collective from a different part of the country was put to practice, spontaneous dynamics challenged progressive ideologies that night.

¹⁴⁵ I cannot confirm which government agency sent the infiltrators, whether they were local police, CIA, or FBI agents. All of the agencies listed are known to intrude and disrupt progressive social movements in the United States and Latin America.

Son Jarocho/Traditional String Music Performances and the Fandanguito at the SOA Watch Vigil Nighttime Concert

The presence of the *son jarocho* was again asserted at the nighttime concert inside the convention center. The Jarochicanos ensemble performed an energetic set of *sones* with Leftist oriented *versos* (verses). Their rendition of “Señor presidente” (Mr. President) included a line that states, “*me gusta la vida, me gusta el cariño, pero yo le pido que escuche a los niños*” (“I like life, I like care, but I ask that you listen to children”).¹⁴⁶ Jarochicanos mirrored the children’s ensemble of Son del Centro and their version of “Señor presidente” earlier in the day. It was a metaphoric call and response, a foundational *son jarocho* practice, as a clever presentation to follow the pleas of the youth, our future community leaders.

Son Altepee followed with a performance after Jarochicanos. As an observer in the crowd, I could sense both a growing appreciation for *son jarocho* within the audience, but also a feeling of saturation of this music for the day. Son Altepee kept their performance brief before asking all *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* to join in a *fandanguito* below the stage. I felt that the concept of Son Solidario was solidified in bringing together *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from across the country and Veracruz. Two *sones* were played collectively and in *fandango* format, which gathered *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from Acayucan, Veracruz, Chicago, IL, Madison and Milwaukee, WI, Santa Ana, CA, and Washington, DC. A few participants had trouble finding the preferred tuning of Son Altepee, which is a half step higher than the standard *jarana* tuning of GCEAG, essentially in C#. Due to time constraints at the convention center, the *fandanguito* began with “El siquisirí” and immediately concluded with “El buscapies.” The *fandanguito* was a gathering, or *encuentro* as it is called in the *jaranera* and *jaranero* community, of activist

¹⁴⁶ Author’s translation

jaraneras and *jaraneros* for peace. It was a quick celebration and mutual recognition of our social justice work in the United States and Veracruz (see figure 14).



Figure 14. A *fandanguito* in protest of the School of the Americas/WHINSEC at the Columbus Georgia Convention and Trade Center. Pictured are *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* from across the United States and Veracruz, México.

The participatory elements of the *fandango* often inspire eager observers to try and join in this joyous collective music making. To the first time witness, I assume that the *fandango* seems like a free form practice without obvious guidelines. During the *fandanguito*, two audience members made an attempt to dance on the *tarima*. Unaware of the guidelines that establish an organized *fandango*, the two were quickly told to step off by Simon Cedillo (see figure 15). Furthermore, these were two male participant-observers attempted to jump into a *zapateado* dance tradition that remains a hetero-patriarchal normative practice, no matter how politically and socially progressive the participants. As mentioned in Chapter I, the *fandango* generally follows a gendered dance format, which most often features women dancing together in *sones de*

a montón and male and female coupled in *sones de pareja*.



Figure 15. Simón Cedillo tells two eager participants to step off the *tarima* upon not knowing the guidelines or *zapateado* for a *fandango*.

At its utmost display of hetero-patriarchal normativity, “El colás,” a *son de pareja*, features one male dancer in the middle of four women on the *tarima*. “El colás” represents a male’s freedom to have multiple female partners. There exists no equal *son de pareja* for women since the *son jarocho fandango* remains a largely hetero-patriarchal practice. Despite the efforts for social equality and justice within the ideologies of many *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*, the gendered practice of the *zapateado* within the *fandango* remains largely unchallenged. It appears that only during workshops focused on teaching the *zapateado* this gendered practice has deviance. For example, for the purposes of practice, men learn women’s *zapateado* steps to *sones* such as “El siquisirí” or “El pájaro cú” in order to better train the legs and feet. I have witnessed two men dance on a *tarima* to “El colás” but only during a workshop. Once public *fandangos* occur, dances based on gender normativity and patriarchy are reinforced and practiced. Even in a progressive gathering such as the SOA Watch Annual Vigil, reinforcing the hetero-patriarchy in the *fandango* remained unchanged. However, I emphasize that the

placement of the *fandango* at this international peace activism gathering is an example of creative renewal. The social justice *fandango* reveals the creation of a new tradition of resistance; one that can work beyond the model of performer-audience. Once learning the guidelines of the *fandango*, be it through the *zapateado* and in playing instruments, then one can achieve a more collective form of participation, especially within social movements.

The span of this chapter focuses on select cultural events and social actions from 2008-2012 with utilization of the *son jarocho* and *fandango*. I begin in Los Angeles as a site of creative renewal of the *fandango* at the Eagle Rock Music Festival and Occupy Los Angeles encampment at City Hall. *Jaraneras* and *jaraneros* reinterpret the *fandango* within urban movements for social justice in Los Angeles. The creative renewal of the *fandango* for social action is now a tradition of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* in the United States. A comparative analysis of Washington, DC collective Son Cosita Seria and their involvement in peace movements and local struggles concludes this chapter.

A history of *son jarocho* at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and within the Washington, DC community reveals a trajectory of this music in the cultural-performative setting. With groups such as Los Amigos who began with a repertoire of *son jarocho*, regional Mexican, and Latin American traditional music, and of organized collectives formed in Northwest Washington, DC, Son Cosita Seria is a creative renewal of cultural-performative *son jarocho* and social justice collective of Washington, DC. Their work in cultivating the *son jarocho* and *fandango* through *talleres* is put into practice at manifestations, marches, civil disobedience actions, and rallies for international migrant rights and peace movements such as the School of the Americas Watch Annual Vigil.

However, the activist *son jarocho* and the *fandango* itself should receive further critical and comparative analysis beyond and within their function in social movements. The following chapter will examine musical tensions of the *fandango*. The chapter will transition into an analysis of “La bamba” as symbolic cultural capital and power through its dissemination in mainstream political campaigns and in commercial media. I will conclude this dissertation with a discussion of intersectionality between the *nueva canción* movement of Latin America, the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement, and connect these movements with protest music of recent uprisings in the Global South.

CONCLUSION

Steven Loza's *Barrio Rhythm* (1993) has nine case studies of Chicana and Chicano music in Los Angeles. Following the model that Loza presented in his book, this dissertation looks into three case studies that offer a glimpse into Chicano and Mexican interpretations of the *son jarocho*. This dissertation covers three areas of the *son jarocho* in regard to time, place and social circumstance: the colonial period of New Spain, or present-day México, amidst the Holy Inquisition to the Zapatista insurgency, the formation of *son jarocho* ensembles in California beginning in the 1940s and 1950s, and how this music and its *fandango* are utilized in contemporary social movements in the United States. From the origins of the *son jarocho* in the colonial territory of La Nueva España, or New Spain, we can trace hidden histories of resistance through "El chuchumbé," into modern México with "La conga del viejo" and *jaranera-jaranero* exchange with Zapatista rebels in Chiapas.

In this dissertation, I have established a connection between the *son jarocho*'s hidden histories of resistance in La Nueva España into contemporary México, the migration and early history of the urban-*porteño* style in Los Angeles, and the *fandango/jaranera* and *jaranero* style as used in social movements of today. Although there are details of musical difference between two of the *son jarocho*'s most popular branches, the urban-*porteño* and *jaranero-fandaguero* style, what I attempt to establish is that these two styles have a lot more in common, existing within U.S. and transnational social movements. There is certainly lack of dialogue and musical understanding between participants of these two popular branches of *son jarocho*, which creates a historical gap, a discontinuity in the music's presence in the U.S. for over seventy years. In summary, when recognizing the *son jarocho* as one whole musical culture that operates multiple realities through colonial resistance, commercial transformation resulting in the urban-*porteño*

style, the migration and reinterpretation of the music to California between the 1940s and 1970s, and the emergence of a *jaranera* and *jaranero* social activist community in the U.S., one can see how the *son jarocho* and its *fandango* is reshaped, commercialized, and in essence returns to its resistance roots in a cyclical form.

Furthermore, there is a divide primarily between *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* and professional musicians within or well acquainted with the U.S. *jaranero* movement. The disagreement is much more complex than what I was able to present in this work. Where there are political, ideological, or differences in musicality, there also exist personal issues that contribute to the divide. The style, politics, among other perspectives, including my own, can be interpreted as speculative and personal opinions. Study participants, despite efforts to be objective, are ultimately biased. Furthermore, study participants can distort memory of events. Even what is viewed as a foundational grounding and place of sharing musical expressions, the *fandango* itself should receive a critical analysis of factors beyond its political-symbolic meaning in transnational social movements.

Musical Tension in a Liberatory Practice: A Critical Analysis of the U.S. Son Jarocho Fandango

Of often un-cited elements, there exist important components that create tension in the *fandango*. Musical ability, current state of friendships, states of inebriation, the purpose for gathering, strained relationships between *jaraneras* and *jaraneros*, or varying degrees of understanding the nuances of each *son* are some examples that designate the push and pull effect of the general *fandango* experience. Musician-scholar-activist Martha González conceptualizes the *son jarocho fandango* as a convivial space. González cites *convivencia*, or conviviality, as “profound practices of convening as community outside of commercial markets” (2013:3). When the *fandango* is understood as a practice of conviviality, for the most part, it is a powerful

occurrence that functions away from commercial means of experiencing music. Commercial spaces for live music such as nightclubs or concert halls often require a fee of entrance and sell varying beverages and sometimes food, yet pay musicians little to no money for their performances. However, it is understood that one should not pay or expect to receive pay to participate in a *fandango*. Therefore, the *fandango* is a practice that, as González explains, “intrinsically articulates the importance of *convivencia* in the music making process independent of capitalist ventures” (2013:110).

Whereas experiencing the *fandango* can be understood as a decolonial practice beyond capitalist endeavors, I argue that we need to enhance this argument to include personal, social, and musicality as factors that complicate and shape the *fandango*. The *fandango* is constantly on the “verge of collapse or possibility,” which according to *jaranero* Roberto Macias Jr., is “what makes the *fandango* exciting.”¹⁴⁷ Depending on the musical ability of a *fandango* participant, the intricate details embedded within chord progressions or finding a person to follow is difficult to designate. Every *son* is distinguished by accents in a chord progression, the *zapateado*, and the pulse of the *requinto jarocho*. It is comparable to the concept of “swing” in jazz, which I believe is accomplished through dedicated practice and becoming musically conscious of these accents in *sones jarochos*. Thus, the sonic power of a *fandango* can create a “wave-like” effect determined by varying tempos relatively close in timing, the number of participants, and the musical tension created by participants on opposite positions of a chord progression. Ultimately, even if more experienced *jaraneras*, *jaraneras*, and *zapateado* dancers are present, musical tension is an inevitable effect at a *fandango*.

Aside from the visibility of *son jarocho* cultural practice and performance at social justice protests, marches, and in performance venues, *fandangos* in the U.S. often occur in

¹⁴⁷ Roberto Macias, Jr., personal communication with the author, February 21, 2014.

enclosed cultural and private spaces away from a larger general public. The *fandango*'s sense of public openness is at times restricted to a group of participants with cultural, political, and ideological affinities. The combination of the aforementioned factors creates solidarity and cultural empowerment, but I cannot dismiss the sense of exclusivity and hierarchalization that occurs within the *jaranera* and *jaranero* community. These two factors, exclusivity and hierarchy, ultimately create tensions and disagreements that challenge the efforts for social justice within the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement. Also, I recognize that the creation of alternative experiences away from commercial markets is important to autonomous cultural practice. However, to invalidate a music based on its commercial exposure is to limit the understanding of its symbolic-cultural potential. The following section will explain symbolic-cultural capital with the presence of "La bamba" in mainstream political campaigns and commercial visibility.

"What is Wrong with Commercialism and the Son Jarocho?": "La bamba" and its Symbolic Cultural Capital and Power

There exists a selective assumption that *son jarocho* as a commodity is not as valid as grassroots social activism with this music. "La bamba" is highly visible in commercial film, recordings, radio, and in mainstream political efforts, which made the *son jarocho* into a symbol of Mexican and Chicana-Chicano cultural expression. "La bamba" represents an ideological commercial aspect that we can trace in four episodes. In the 1940s, Andrés and Victor Huesca make "La bamba" into an internationally recognized *son*. During that same decade, Miguel Alemán had a successful political campaign for México's presidency with "La bamba" as his anthem. One of the musicians who accompanied Alemán's campaign was Rutilo Parroquín from Otatitlán, Veracruz. But, Parroquín's work to musically support the authoritarian platform of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in México is more complex. As a nationally recognized

son jarocho diplomat, Parroquín also performed for Cuba's Communist President Fidel Castro.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, Parroquín maneuvered his musical support of a mainstream Mexican political campaign, which maintained the authoritarian regime of the PRI, but also performed for a Leftist-revolutionary leader in Cuba who later became a dictator. Ultimately, Parroquín's participation as a musician was inconsequential to the overall political result of both presidents, Miguel Alemán and Fidel Castro, but this example reveals how the *son jarocho* has reached into the consciousness of mainstream political platforms beyond the commercial music industry.

Despite the commodification of "La bamba" in a mainstream political campaign, commercialization does not define the cultural power of *son jarocho*. Rather than negatively criticize the commercial life of "La bamba," it is constructive to view its musical quality as symbolic cultural power. Furthermore, "La bamba" and the *son jarocho* become a symbol of cultural capital as an embodied form of collective aspirations of representation (for example, the dignified recognition of historically aggrieved communities in the mainstream media). Pierre Bourdieu explains that cultural capital "can exist in three forms: in the *embodied* state, i.e. in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.); ...and in the *institutionalized* state..." (2011:82). "La bamba" and its cultural power through commercial media exemplifies Bourdieu's *embodied* and *objectified* state of cultural capital. "La bamba," as an embodied state of cultural capital, reveals symbolic meaning to a historically aggrieved Chicana and Chicano population as a reimagining of *son jarocho* transformed as a rock 'n' roll song. It is objectified and commoditized as a cultural good, but is ultimately symbolic of Chicano and Chicano musical code switching and the meaning this practice resembles for this population.

¹⁴⁸ Patricia Parroquín, personal communication with the author, March 2012.

Into the 1950s, the rock ‘n’ roll version of “La Bamba” as interpreted by Ritchie Valens marks a second episode of the commercial life of this *son*.¹⁴⁹ For Valens, “La Bamba” represents cultural capital through the innovation of combining a traditional *son*, a Mexican cultural signifier, with the global youth cultural expression of rock ‘n’ roll in the late 1950s. “La Bamba,” as a rock ‘n’ roll song became a symbol of cultural capital to historically aggrieved post-World War II Chicana and Chicano youth seldom represented in a non-stereotypic format, or nearly invisible in mainstream U.S. film, television, and music. Thus, Ritchie Valens, a working-class Chicano from Pacoima, California, and his reinterpretation of “La Bamba,” became cultural symbols of ethnic, class, and cultural empowerment to a community already accustomed to musical code switching and polycultural intersectionality, but not represented in U.S. mainstream entertainment until that moment in the late 1950s.

By the late-1980s, Los Lobos introduced a third episode of “La Bamba” into the commercial realm. In comparison to the original rock ‘n’ roll version of “La Bamba” by Valens, the rendition by Los Lobos reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, therefore introducing the song to a new generation, but also introducing a greater audience to Chicano musical code switching. Masters of revealing Chicano polycultural identity, Los Lobos attained the musicality to represent the complexities of a culture or people by performing zydeco, country music, rock ‘n’ roll, Mexican *son* with a foundation of *son jarocho*, Texas-Mexican *conjunto*, *norteño*, rhythm and blues, and even finding artistic commonalities with other traditional musics by collaborating with Hindustani or bluegrass musicians for special projects. Ultimately, it is the commercial success of Los Lobos that allows this quintessential Chicano band to reveal

¹⁴⁹ As noted in Chapter III, “La Bamba,” with a capital “B” represents the U.S. rock ‘n’ roll version in accordance to English language grammar rules. “La bamba” with a lower case “b” represents traditional *son jarocho* versions or interpretations in accordance with Spanish language grammar rules.

symbolic-cultural power. Their interpretation of “La Bamba,” one highly informed by the version made popular by Ritchie Valens, presented the merger of rock ‘n’ roll with a *son jarocho* ending, which highlighted the cultural roots of “La Bamba” for audiences perhaps unaware of its hidden history as a *son jarocho*.

In 2012, “La bamba” returns as an anthem for a presidential political campaign, but in support of the progressive-Leftist politician Andrés Manuel López Obrador. “La bamba para Andrés Manuel,” its full title, circulated on the social networking site YouTube, featuring *son jarocho* musicians and Latin Alternative artists based in Mexico City.¹⁵⁰ Contrary to Miguel Alemán’s use of “La bamba” during his political campaign in the mid-1940s under the PRI political party, “La bamba para Andrés Manuel,” is a claim of hope and progressive social change in México under the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD). However, López Obrador was not elected president of México despite support from progressive or politically Leftist artists, the reinterpretation of “La bamba” stands as a symbol of cultural capital for social change under a mainstream political campaign. Furthermore, the *son jarocho* as a symbol for social change can be applied to comparative analysis to protest music movements throughout the world, especially in the Global South.

Roots Music as Protest Song: Intersectionality Between The New Song Movement of Latin America, the Jaranera and Jaranero Movement, and Communities of Resistance in the Global South

First taking shape in the southern cone of South America during the late 1950s and early 1960s, *nueva canción* began as a proactive musical and social justice movement that contested political dictatorships in South American countries. Declining social conditions in rural areas led people—primarily from indigenous communities—to relocate to the urban ambit. Bringing with

¹⁵⁰ “La bamba para Andrés Manuel, or “La bamba for Andrés Manuel.”
<<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5ZgabSGekA>>> Accessed on July 7, 2014.

them rural musical traditions, socially and politically conscious students, activists and the middle class individuals borrowed the aforementioned elements, blending them with popular music styles from Europe and the United States to develop new artistic expressions, which were grounded with ideologies of solidarity and social justice. *Nueva canción* denounced political oppression with evocative and poetic lyrics, calling for mass-protests and active participation for social change.

The music often combined Andean-indigenous instruments such as the *quena*, a flute-like aerophone, *zampoñas*, or pan-pipes, the *bombo*, a membranophone struck with mallets, and the *charango*, a ten-stringed strummed and plucked chordophone comparable to the *son jarocho jarana*, with elements of popular music, traditional music of South America, yet this was reinforced with poetic politicized expression (Hernández 2007).¹⁵¹ Artists such as Mercedes Sosa, Violeta Parra, Victor Jara, and the ensemble Inti-Illimani received international recognition for their social justice activism and politically critical content of their music. Early *nueva canción* or "new song" was seen as a reaffirmation of traditional culture through music, but in fact elements of traditional culture and regional folk songs, reinterpreted by the literati, validated the region's marginalized indigenous cultures (Hernández 2007).¹⁵²

As the genre spread it became more politicized and played an integral role in burgeoning social movements. The rise of totalitarian military governments in South America during the 1960s and 1970s brought increased political oppression and deteriorating social conditions. Activist-musicians adopted *nueva canción* as a means to express collective struggle in a time of

¹⁵¹ Paraphrasing the author's essay "La Nueva Canción: The New Song Movement in Latin America" via Smithsonian Folkways:

<<http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/la_nueva.aspx>> Accessed on July 12, 2014.

¹⁵² This paragraph is paraphrased from the author's essay "La Nueva Canción: The New Song Movement in Latin America" via Smithsonian Folkways:

<<http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/la_nueva.aspx>> Accessed on July 12, 2014.

violent repression. Increasingly, *nueva canción* lyrics spoke explicitly to issues such as poverty, imperialism, democracy, human rights, and religious freedom. In Chile, Violeta Parra became a driving force in the New Song Movement, singing folk songs of her country detailing the worsened social conditions and the desire for freedom of expression. Parra's two children, Isabel and Ángel, and artists such as Suni Paz, an Argentine international migrant to the U.S., became instrumental in introducing the *nueva canción* to new generations (Hernández 2007).¹⁵³

As *nueva canción* gained popularity in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, the appeal of the music as a popular means of protest and spur for positive social change grew in other regions of Latin America as well. The poetic artistry of the lyrics and the music's foundation in rural-indigenous cultures prompted many to see the New Song Movement as a genuine form of "people's music." *Nueva canción* was adapted to reflect the diverse political and social climates of many Latin American countries, especially in the Caribbean. Yet in every variation of *nueva canción*, emphasis on the use of traditional Latin American, or Caribbean music remained. In Cuba, *nueva trova*, a music genre comparable to *nueva canción*, artists such as Carlos Puebla, Silvio Rodríguez, and Pablo Milanés drew upon the vast wealth of Cuban and Afro-Cuban rhythms to express their poetic calls for social change. The political repression in Chile in the 1960s and 1970s forced artists and professionals—many of them former political prisoners—into exile in Canada, Europe, Cuba, México, and the United States (Hernández 2007).¹⁵⁴

Suni Paz, an Argentine *nueva canción* artist and educator, relocated to the United States in the 1970s and utilized music in curricula to teach socio-political awareness to public school

¹⁵³ This paragraph is paraphrased from the author's essay "La Nueva Canción: The New Song Movement in Latin America" via Smithsonian Folkways:
<<http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/la_nueva.aspx>> Accessed on July 12, 2014.

¹⁵⁴ This paragraph is paraphrased from the author's essay "La Nueva Canción: The New Song Movement in Latin America" via Smithsonian Folkways:
<<http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/la_nueva.aspx>> Accessed on July 12, 2014.

students in Southern California and New York City. Her involvement in social justice movements led her to work with the United Farm Workers during the Chicano Movement for civil rights (1960-1970s). Paz shared her musical experience in *nueva canción*, which has an ideological foundation in solidarity with historically aggrieved communities around the world, with Chicanas and Chicanos working for the basic human rights of farm workers.¹⁵⁵

Furthermore, the extensive influence of *nueva canción* reached México in the 1960s and 1970s, which produced artists such as Óscar Chávez, a musician that uses political satire and traditional Mexican music to express critical views of class and social struggle. Rock music and *nueva canción* became the soundtrack of Mexican counterculture via student-worker-citizen activism, known as *La Onda*, in the late-1960s (Zolov 1999:122-123). For Gilberto Gutiérrez, the popularity of *nueva canción* in Mexico City revealed a significant moment of “families of resemblance,” which according to George Lipsitz are “similarities to the experience and culture of other groups” (1986:160). According to *jaranero* and luthier César Castro, in the late 1970s, Gilberto Gutiérrez saw “Mexican hippies,” participants of Mexican counterculture; perform *nueva canción* on *charangos* in Mexico City.¹⁵⁶ This moment led Gutiérrez to recognize the resemblance of the *charango* to the *jarana* from the *son jarocho* tradition that surrounds his home area in Tres Zapotes, Veracruz.¹⁵⁷ Following the cultural reclamation and social energy of the 1960s and 1970s, Gutiérrez opted to reclaim the musical-cultural heritage of his home region, the *sotavento* of Veracruz, and learn a rural-roots based *son jarocho* instead of following the established *nueva canción* counterculture and the popularized *urban-porteño son jarocho*. This recognition moment of finding “families of resemblance” (Lipsitz 1986:160) through musical instruments of the *nueva canción* and the *son jarocho*, I believe, was critical to the formation of

¹⁵⁵ Suni Paz, personal communication with the author, November 2012.

¹⁵⁶ César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 2012.

¹⁵⁷ César Castro, personal communication with the author, October 2012.

Grupo Mono Blanco in Mexico City. The *nueva canción* movement in Mexico City perhaps led Gilberto Gutiérrez, the director of Grupo Mono Blanco, to recognize the urban-cultural and political activism of the *nueva canción* musical movement. This led Gutiérrez and his brother José Ángel Gutiérrez, along with Juan Pascoe, to return to Veracruz and establish a grassroots *jaranera* and *jaranero* musical-cultural movement.

Therefore, there exists a larger musical movement, the *nueva canción*, which in part informed some of the original leaders of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement with a critical perspective of reclaiming cultural heritage beyond urban centers of cultural and political activity in México. Although the urban work of *jaraneras* and *jaraneros* is an important extension of this movement, especially in the United States, the music produced remains rooted in interpretations of rural *son jarocho* traditions. As mentioned in Chapter IV, Washington, DC's Son Cosita Seria also found "families of resemblance" (Lipsitz 1986:160) between the *nueva canción* and the *son jarocho* by reinterpreting "Gracias a la vida" with *jaranas* and a *requinto jarocho* at a memorial for Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier and his assistant Ronni Moffitt. These examples show the malleability of politicized musical movements to find musical, ideological, and creative solidarity in times of social-cultural activity and struggle.

The process is cyclical with different periods of reclaiming heritage, folklore, solidarity, and resistance to injustice. Recent uprisings in the Global South can reveal the collective psychology of mutual movements of resistance to injustice. According to the Center for the Global South at American University, "The nations of Africa, Central and Latin America, and most of Asia—collectively known as the Global South—face great challenges and offer real opportunities. Political, social, and economic upheaval are prevalent in many of these nations; at the same time, the populations of the [Global] South and their emerging markets offer immense

hopes for economic growth, investment, and cultural contribution.”¹⁵⁸ Communities of resistance in the Global South are communicating musical-cultural contributions via social media to a global community outside of the directly affected areas. For example, “Protestors in Tahrir Square Break into Song,” a video uploaded to YouTube on February 4, 2011, captures a moment of collective music making through protest song at the height of social unrest and revolution in the Arab world, known as the Arab Spring.¹⁵⁹ In the video, crowds of protestors gathered around a makeshift stage in Tahrir Square in collective singing of a protest song to denounce Egypt’s longtime authoritarian leader Hosni Mubarak. The scene in Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo, Egypt reveals a strikingly similar gathering comparable to movements of resistance such as the Occupy Wall Street and the School of the Americas Watch annual vigil. To be inclusive of social movements in the Global North, which are often transnational, such as the U.S. branch of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement or the solidarity work of musician-activist Pete Seeger and communities related to his work, a global community of resistance must offer mutual recognition of communities of resistance in the Global South.

The *son jarocho* and its *fandango*, as resistance to injustice, can be utilized to communicate the social unrest in Ukraine, Palestine, or of the Arab Spring. The music produced by these sites as a response to struggle is revelatory of resistance in the Global South. Similar to the social energy and activism of the 1960s and 1970s, I believe that a global community of resistance is operating in solidarity for progressive social change at this historical moment. Music of struggle and protest produced by this global community of resistance mutually reflects and recognizes the urgency for liberation from dictatorships, authoritarianism, gender inequality,

¹⁵⁸American University Center for the Global South:
<<<http://www1.american.edu/academic.depts/acainst/cgs/about.html>>> Accessed on July 13, 2014.

¹⁵⁹“Protestors in Tahrir Square Break into Song” via YouTube:
<<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahCwBBndlVY>>> Accessed on July 13, 2014.

religious understanding, and racial-ethnic tensions. Therefore, the *son jarocho*, and the application of the *fandango* in social movements, is but one musical-cultural expression among many within a global uprising for political, religious, and social change.

GLOSSARY

Arpa (*jarocho* or *veracruzana*): the harp used in the *son jarocho* or *arpa grande*, the big harp, originally an instrument utilized in the *son de tierra caliente*, *son* from the hot lands of Michoacán, México, and later adopted by the *jarocho* musician Andrés Huesca in the late 1930s.

Astillero(s): a shipyard or shipyards in plural form.

Ballet folclórico: the choreographed and staged performance of Mexican *son* dances, usually performed by professional or community troupes from cultural arts centers in México and the United States. *Ballet folclórico* dancers wear costumes that visually represent the traditional, popular, or ritual attire of a region, *son*, or indigenous group.

Chuchumbé: the *son jarocho* ensemble that placed the African and Afro-Caribbean musical legacy at the forefront of their sound and cultural-political consciousness.

“El chuchumbé”: a proto-*son* and dance that traveled from Cuba to Veracruz in the late 1700s during the colonial period of both nations. The legacy of political and cultural resistance in the *son jarocho* is traceable to this *son*.

Cajón: a wooden percussion box most commonly struck by hand. The *cajón* is traceable to Afro-Peruvian music, but is also utilized in Afro-Cuban *rumba* and *flamenco* music from Spain. The *cajón* is now a common instrument in *jaranera-jaranero* performance ensembles.

Conga: a rhythm and dance in the Afro-Cuban *comparsa* tradition since the colonial period, which is an annual event of street marching bands, similar to second line parades of New Orleans, of mostly percussion instruments held January 6th for the Christian-Catholic celebration of Three Kings Day-Epiphany. Until the abolishment of

slavery in Cuba, enslaved Africans and *cabildos*, societies of organized support groups of Afro-Cubans, were granted a day of liberty on Three Kings Day and resistance to oppression is expressed through the sonic power, dances, and theatrics of the *comparsas*. In the context of this dissertation, the *conga* is one of many Afro-Cuban musics that traveled into Veracruz and reinterpreted in the *son jarocho* repertoire primarily by the ensemble Chuchumbé and *jaranero*-poet Patricio Hidalgo.

Convivencia: or conviviality, a term that scholar-musician-activist Martha González (2013) utilizes to describe the *son jarocho fandango* as de-colonial practice independent of commodification.

Encuentro(s): *Son jarocho* festivals

Fandango: a communal-musical gathering of the *son jarocho*

Fandanguito: short form *fandango*.

Guayabera: a Caribbean formal shirt

Grupo Mono Blanco: leaders of the *jaranera* and *jaranero* movement who helped establish the *fandango* the foundational practice of the *son jarocho* at an international level.

Guitarra de son or requinto jarocho: a lead-melodic guitar-like instrument in the *son jarocho*. The instrument has four strings, with a fifth string added in the 1990s, and is plucked with an *espiga* or *púa*, a filed down and polished horn of a bull utilized as a plectrum.

Jarana: an eight-stringed chordophone and main harmonic accompanying instrument of the *son jarocho*.

Jaranera or jaranero: literally, someone who plays the *son jarocho jaranera*, however,

in the context of this dissertation, it is a cultural-political identity that adheres to social justice activism and musical-cultural dissemination with the *son jarocho*.

Laudero: a luthier or instrument craftsperson.

León, leona, or guitarra grande: an instrument of the *guitarra de son/requinto jarocho* family, which functions as a bass instrument in the *son jarocho*.

Marimból: a large wooden box-resonator with lamella used as bass notes.

Nueva canción: a musical, cultural, and a Leftist-politically conscious movement and genre originating in South America in the 1960s. The music often combined Andean-indigenous instruments such as the *quena*, a flute-like aerophone, *zampoñas*, or pan-pipes, *bombo* a membranophone struck with mallets, and the *charango*, a ten-stringed strummed and plucked chordophone comparable to the *son jarocho jarana*, with elements of popular music, traditional music of South America, yet reinforced with poetic politicized expression. Artists such as Mercedes Sosa, Violeta Parra, Victor Jara, and the ensemble Inti-Illimani received international recognition for their social justice activism and politically critical content of their music.

Nueva trova: the post-Revolutionary Cuba, politically conscious, and highly poetic music comparable to *nueva canción*, however, with elements of Afro-Cuban *son* and popular music intertwined in its musical expression. Artists such as Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanés became *nueva trova*'s international figures.

El movimiento jaranera and jaranero: a movement spearheaded by Grupo Mono Blanco beginning in the late 1970s, this transnational *son jarocho jaranera and jaranero* movement began in México, migrated into the United States in the late 1980s, and has now extended into South America and Europe.

Música tradicional de cuerdas: “traditional string music for Veracruz,” an alternative title for *son jarocho* as presented by the collective **Son Altepée** from Acayucan, Veracruz.

La Onda: the late-1960s student-worker-citizen activist movement against authoritarianism in México.

Quijada: the mandible of a horse or donkey and utilized as a percussion instrument.

Rumba-guaguancó: one of three *rumba* rhythms of Afro-Cuban *son*, including the *rumba-yambú* and *rumba-columbia*, with sexually suggestive movements between a female and male dancer.

Sí se Puede!: “Yes We Can!” is the official slogan of the United Farm Workers (UFW) and their campaigns for basic human rights. *Sí se Puede!* is also the title of the first professional recording of Los Lobos del Este de Los Angeles, which is a benefit album in support of the UFW.

Son: a regional-cultural music genre, often of African, indigenous, and European musical-cultural fusion, from Cuba and México. *Son* styles from México include the *son jarocho* from Southern Veracruz into the *sotavento* region, *son huasteco* of the *Huasteca* region, *son jalisciense* from the state of Jalisco (a direct root of *mariachi* music), *son de arpa grande*, *son abajeño*, and *pirekuas* from the state of Michoacán, *son de tarima* from the state of Guerrero, and *huapango arribeño* from the highlands of Guanajuato, Querétaro, and San Luís Potosí. Each of these *son* styles has their own form of communal-musical gathering and celebration comparable to the *fandango* in *son jarocho*.

Son Cosita Seria: a Washington, DC activist collective that utilizes the *son jarocho* to musically accompany movements for social justice.

Sotavento: the regional-cultural zone of the *son jarocho* covering Southern Veracruz into portions of Oaxaca and Tabasco, México.

Tarima: a wooden platform/percussion instrument utilized to dance the *zapateado* in Mexican *son*.

Talleres: *son jarocho* workshops, which can be focused on learning the *jarana*, *zapateado*, or writing verses and learning the guidelines of participation in a *fandango*.

Veracruzano* or *Veracruzana: a person from Veracruz, México.

Zapateado: the percussive dance in Mexican *son* and *ballet folclórico*.

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