

UC Riverside

UC Riverside Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Los Sonidos del cine: Cinematic Music in Mexican Film, 1930-1950

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5k17x9ng>

Author

Avila, Jacqueline A.

Publication Date

2011

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

“Los Sonidos del cine”: Cinematic Music in Mexican Film, 1930-1950

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Music

by

Jacqueline A. Avila

December 2011

Dissertation Committee

Dr. Leonora Saavedra, Chairperson

Dr. Byron Adams

Dr. Walter Clark

Copyright by
Jacqueline A. Avila
2011

This Dissertation of Jacqueline A. Avila is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

Acknowledgements

There are several people and organizations that have helped in this long process. First, I express my sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee, Byron Adams, Walter Clark, and my chair, Leonora Saavedra. Throughout my time at UC Riverside, each member has provided much needed feedback, recommendations, advice, and encouragement. I would especially like to thank Leonora Saavedra who always pushed me further than I thought I could go.

I am indebted to the music faculty at UC Riverside who have all helped me throughout my graduate career. In particular, I want to thank Jonathan Ritter for his help and guidance particularly in the sections regarding Cuban music, and for his overall good nature. Outside of the music department, I thank Keith Harris from the department of media and cultural studies who was an invaluable source of film history and analysis when I first immersed myself into film music and sound theory.

I'd like to thank all the people and organizations that have funded my research throughout the years: American Musicological Society for the Howard Meyer Brown Fellowship in 2010-2011, the UC MEXUS institute for the UC MEXUS Dissertation Research Fellowship 2009-2011, the UC Riverside Graduate Division for the Dissertation Mentorship Fellowship 2008-2009, the Department of the Humanities and Social Sciences for supplying me with several small travel grants, and to UC Riverside Graduate Division Dean Joseph Childers. All people and organizations believed in my research and my ideas and I am very grateful for the support.

In Mexico, I had the pleasure of working with several individuals who helped and inspired me in so many ways. I am indebted to CENIDIM for acting as my host institution during my first year of research. In particular, I would like to express gratitude to Eduardo Contreras Soto and Aurelio Tello, who pointed me in several directions, shared with me their sources, and offered their insights. At IMCINE, I especially thank Cristina Prado who provided several sources for me to follow and gave me much needed encouragement. At the Cineteca Nacional, I thank Catherine Bloch, Dora Moreno Brizuela, and in particular Leopoldo Gaytán for offering their expertise and guidance. I also thank the invaluable staff at the Biblioteca Nacional and Hemeroteca UNAM, the Fimoteca, Cineteca Nacional, and Biblioteca Lerdo de Tejada.

I would especially like to thank my fellow Latin Americanists, Mexicanists, colleagues and friends in music, film studies, and cultural studies who have provided much needed help, comments, feedback, encouragement, love, and laughter over the years: Alyson Payne, Ron Conner, Shawn Mollenhauer, Jake Rekedal, Jonathan Piper, Miles and Liana Shrewsbury, Leonora Saavedra, Walter Clark, Jonathan Ritter, Oswaldo Mejía Mendiola, Guadalupe Caro, Anna Ochs, Jesús Ibarra, Sergio de la Mora, Ana Alonso Minutti, Stephanie Stallings, Alejandro Madrid, Laura Gutiérrez, Rebecca Bodenheimer, Juan Arturo Brennan, Eduardo Herrera, Drew Edward Davies, Roberto Kolb, Elissa Rashkin, and Ilana Luna. I would especially like to thank Shawn Mollenhauer, Ron Conner, Alyson Payne, and Sergio de la Mora who have spent the last few years listening to my crazy ramblings and holding my hand during those darker

moments. Special and sincere thanks are given to Oswaldo Mejía Mendiola, my guardian angel and best friend in Mexico City, who has helped me in so many ways.

Lastly, a big, big thanks is owed to my family. In Mexico, I particularly want to thank my cousins Carlos, Isabel, and Carlitos and my aunt Bika and uncle Ángel who opened their homes to me, helped me, and put up with my antics. Thanks are also given to those members of my family scattered throughout Mexico and the United States who have been supportive in their own creative ways. Finally, I thank my family in California; in particular my parents, who have encouraged me, supported me, and teased me in my academic pursuits.

To María Nuñez de Ávila

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

“Los Sonidos del cine”: Cinematic Music in Mexican Film, 1930-1950

by

Jacqueline A. Avila

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Music
University of California, Riverside, December 2011
Dr. Leonora Saavedra, Chairperson

Mexican expressive culture in the twentieth century – from the murals of David Alvaro Siqueiros and Diego Rivera to the music of Carlos Chávez and Silvestre Revueltas – was key in constructing nationalist identity; in particular, Mexican cinema during 1930-1950 aided in creating new social identities specific to post-Revolutionary Mexican society. The period witnessed the formation and institutionalization of several film genres, the creation of a star system paralleling Hollywood’s, and successful domestic and international reception. An area that has not been thoroughly investigated is music and its contributions to nascent cinematic nationalism.

This dissertation proposes an interdisciplinary investigation of music in Mexican cinema between 1930-1950, concentrating on how orchestral and popular music contributed to creating or enhancing cinematic representations of national identity. I examine several film examples from prominent genres developed during this period, such

as the prostitute melodrama and the *cabaretera* subgenre, the *indigenista* film (films focusing on an indigenous population), *cine de añoranza porfiriana* (films of Porfirian longing), and the *comedia ranchera* (ranch comedy). While diverse in narrative and structure, these genres emblemize a nationalist consciousness through tropes that paralleled the constantly changing perspectives in state ideologies on international affairs, popular and transnational culture, and domestic modernization. Music in these films embellished and amplified the varying and evolving constructions of identity. Because of the important role film has in the construction of Mexican national identity during this period, examining the film's musical track provides a fruitful avenue for new interpretations that have gone unnoticed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Nationalism and Cinema..... | 5 |
| Film Music in Mexico..... | 7 |
| Melodrama and Cultural Synchronesis..... | 12 |
| | |
| CHAPTER 1: The Sounds of the Prostitute | |
| Introduction..... | 19 |
| Spaces for Sexual Commerce..... | 22 |
| The Cabarets and <i>el dancing</i> | 27 |
| Mexico’s First Prostitute..... | 30 |
| The Musical Constructions of the Cinematic Santa..... | 37 |
| The Myth and Modernity of Agustín Lara..... | 39 |
| Santa’s Bolero..... | 43 |
| “Danzón dedicado a Santita, la mujer más bella de México”..... | 50 |
| Exoticism and the <i>Rumbera</i> at the Cabaret..... | 56 |
| <i>Víctimas del Pecado</i> (1950)..... | 62 |
| Conclusion..... | 82 |
| | |
| CHAPTER 2: <i>Indigenismo</i>, Cinematic Music, and Francisco Domínguez | |
| Introduction..... | 85 |
| Integrating the Indian..... | 87 |
| Representing the Indian..... | 96 |
| The Foreign Eye and Fictional-Ethnography: Sergei Eisenstein and <i>¡Que viva México!</i> | 100 |
| Francisco Domínguez: Folklorist and Film Composer..... | 107 |
| <i>Janitzio</i> : Fictional-Ethnography..... | 114 |
| <i>María Candelaria</i> | 128 |
| Conclusion..... | 139 |
| | |
| CHAPTER 3: Music in the <i>cine de añoranza porfiriano</i> | |
| Introduction..... | 142 |
| Reviewing the Porfiriato..... | 145 |
| The Porfirian Utopian: <i>En tiempos de don Porfirio</i> | 154 |
| “México de mis inventos”: The Porfiriato of the 1940s..... | 178 |
| Conclusion..... | 195 |
| | |
| CHAPTER 4: The Singing Charro | |
| Introduction..... | 197 |
| Constructing <i>el charro</i> | 200 |
| <i>Teatro de revista</i> and <i>canción Mexicana</i> | 205 |
| The “bum”: Fernando de Fuentes’s <i>Allá en el Rancho Grande</i> (1936)..... | 211 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| At Rancho Grande..... | 214 |
| Serenades and Accolades..... | 222 |
| Music and <i>Machismo</i> in the Cantina..... | 230 |
| Performing the Archetype: Jorge Negrete in <i>¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!</i> (1941) ... | 238 |
| <i>Machismo</i> and the Performance of Gringoness in <i>Los tres García</i> | 245 |
| Conclusion | 254 |
| Conclusion | 256 |
| Bibliography | 260 |

List of Examples

| | |
|--|-----|
| Example 1.1. Cinquillo Rhythm | 44 |
| Example 2.1. Transcription of <i>Janitzio</i> theme | 117 |
| Example 2.2. Transcription of thematic variant from <i>María Candelaria</i> | 136 |
| Example 4.1. <i>The Turkey and the Straw</i> Melody..... | 251 |

Introduction

In 2009, Mexico was in midst of two crucial domestic movements that were shaping the country's current national identity: President Felipe Calderón's war on the domestic drug cartels and the celebratory events for Mexico's *Bicentenario* (Bicentennial) and *Centenario* (Centennial).¹ Almost immediately after taking office, Calderón began his anti-drug campaign by sending troops into the state of Michoacán, one of the country's largest drug trafficking states, in an attempt to cease drug-related violence and dismantle the power of drug cartels. This action began a series of exceedingly violent events that placed Mexico in a negative light internationally and left the majority of the population in fear.

The preparation of the *Bicentenario* and *Centenario* celebrations for September 15, 2010 ran concurrent with Calderón's war on drugs. Although the fight for Independence from the Spanish Crown began in 1810, it is the Revolution of 1910 that receives far more attention from Mexican institutions and the public. Beginning as a revolt against the thirty-year dictatorship (1876-1910, also known as the Porfiriato) of Porfirio Díaz (1830-1915), the Revolution serves as a crucial turning point for Mexico for not only ending Díaz's oppressive regime, which exploited the working class and

¹ These events include several parades, concerts, and pyrotechnic displays. Museum exhibition throughout Mexico City devoted at least one room to nationalist works, primarily by one of the muralist painters or Frida Kahlo. New monetary coins and bills were printed and distributed as early as 2009, featuring national leaders and heroes. The film industry also disturbed several films that depicted narratives involving the Independence and the Revolution that includes: *Hidalgo: la historia jamás contada* (*Hidalgo: the Untold Story*, 2010, dir. Antonio Serrano); *El Atentado* (*The Attempt*, 2010, dir. Jorge Fons); *Chicogrande* (2010, dir. Felipe Cazals). Although not directly related to the Independence or the Revolution, *El Infierno* (*Hell*, 2010, dir. Luis Estrada) offers scathing criticism concerning the hypocrisy of Calderón's drug war and the Centennial-Bicentennial celebrations.

peasantry while providing preferential treatment to the upper classes and foreign investors, but also igniting a new era of national identity formation. The post-Revolutionary period (roughly after 1921) witnessed crucial national projects that depicted several, at times contrasting, interpretations of *lo mexicano* or *mexicanidad* (Mexicanness). The armed struggle of the Revolution serves as a jumping off point, not as an event, but as a process for many examining the sources and constructions of Mexican national identity.

In 2010, the Revolution was heavily revisited. The committee for the Festejos del Bicentenario de la Independencia y Centenario de la Revolución Mexicana (Festivities for the Bicentennial of Independence and the Centennial of the Mexican Revolution) organized yearlong activities that commemorated the heroes, symbols, and myths of the nation. The Cineteca Nacional and the Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía (IMCINE, Mexican Institute of Cinematography), two organizations committed to the production and distribution of Mexican cinema, sponsored an exhibition at the Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso titled “Cine y Revolución: La Revolución Mexicana vista a través del cine” (“Cinema and Revolution: the Mexican Revolution Seen through Cinema”), located near the Zócalo and National Palace in downtown Mexico City. The exhibition featured screenings, photo stills, costumes, and poster art about the Revolution in Mexican cinema from the silent film period (1896-1930) to the present. The goal of the exhibition was to provide the spectator with conceptions of the Revolution through several constructions put forth by the national film industry. Walking from gallery to gallery allowed you to move through the trajectory of

Revolutionary themes in Mexican film history. Included in the exhibition was a sound installation entitled *1910* by composer and sound artist Antonio Fernández Ros. The installation required the participant to walk through a long, weaving hallway in the dark with the aid of a support railing to guide the way. As the participant walks, they experience a juxtaposition of sounds extracted from various films, designed to re-construct, or re-imagine, the sounds of the Revolutionary period:

1910 es una obra sonora basada en diálogos de películas sobre la Revolución Mexicana. Pequeños extractos sonoros de una gran cantidad de filmes sobre este tema tejen una narración inédita no tanto sobre los hechos, sino sobre el significado de la Revolución...El significado de las palabras es tan importante como la intención dramática con la que son enunciadas por los actores; la palabra se convierte en música y la música en narración.

(1910 is a sound work based on film dialogues regarding the Mexican Revolution. Small sonic extracts of large number of films on this theme weave an unedited narration not so much on facts, but the meaning of the Revolution...the significance of the words is as important as the dramatic intention set forth by the actors; the word converts to music and the music to narration.)²

This re-imagining of Revolutionary sounds includes gunfire, screams, explosions, and music. Integrated in this electro-acoustic narrative are corridos, a narrative song style from the nineteenth century, *rancheras*,³ and even snippets of orchestral underscoring. By placing the installation in the dark, Fernández Ros desires the participant to not only be aware of their other physical senses operating when walking the pathway, but also to recognize what sound and music add to cinema, which he defines as “fenómeno

² Antonio Fernández Ros, “1910,” *Cine y Revolución: La Revolución Mexicana vista a través del cine* (México: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 2010), 123.

³ See chapter four for a definition of the *canción ranchera*.

eminentemente visual pero con una importante riqueza sonora” (“a phenomenon imminently visual but with an important richness of sound”).⁴

The collection and juxtaposition of different sound clips and musical examples to re-create the Revolutionary soundscape relied solely on cinema’s trajectory of reimaginings, in a sense constructing a new reconstruction of the Revolutionary event(s). The effects of the music in this installation led me to ask repeatedly: what role does film music have in this national industry? How did film music, diegetic and non-diegetic, aid in constructing and/or solidifying those symbols and myths that have now become part of nationalist discourse? How does one talk about nationalism through the use of film music?

Critics and historians examine 1930s and 1940s Mexican cinema as a cultural practice evoking contesting several nationalist markers for the mass audience. Music remains on the margins of such analysis although film music works to reinforce these visual representations of national identities. The visual is continuously privileged in film studies receiving the most concentrated scholarly focus regarding nationalist discourse.⁵ However, as Fernández Ros’s sound installation suggests, national myths rely on sonic representations to be convincing. Within Mexican cinema, the continuous reiteration of symbols, myths, memories, and traditions is solidified in the popular imaginary through specific musical associations, each highlighting a certain part of national identity.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See for example Mette Hjort and Scott Mackenzie, *Cinema & Nation* (London: Routledge, 2000); Rick Altman, *Film/Genre* (London: British Film Institute, 1999); Walter Murch, “Foreward,” in *Audio/Vision* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), vii-xxiv.

Nationalism and Cinema

Nation and nationalism are widely interpreted as modernist phenomena stemming from Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when industrialization and the quest for imperial expansion became dominant movements. Nations and nationalism, according to Ernest Gellner, are necessary and crucial social components of modernity. The nation functions as a product of nationalism, which expresses modernity's need for "high cultures," cultures based on homogenous, standard and generic education through the process of interpolation. In an industrialized, modern society where culture, a system of similar ideas, signs, and associations, is needed to suture together populations, nations and nationalisms become essential, creating mass loyalties. The recognition of one individual to another through similarities in cultural practices constructs the nation.⁶

The recognition of Self through symbols and myths is an important component of Eric Hobsbawm's "invented traditions," where cultural practices claim a tie to a communal past. The "invented traditions" in the form of repeated myths, symbols, and rituals, defined as "essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition," became critical apparatuses for the ruling classes to control, manipulate, and absorb the energies of the masses.⁷ For Benedict Anderson, language creates and organizes the nation through the emergence of print-capitalism. In the "imagined community," books, newspapers, and other media written and exhibited in the vernacular help construct and organize large populations built

⁶ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Canto Publishing, 1992), 4.

on the recognition of a similar language. This population may exist at the same time and may never meet, but its member will recognize each other as similar. This grouping encourages the populace to “imagine” themselves as nations.⁸

For these theorists the concept of nation is by and large the product of modernity, and is created and disseminated through historical myths of nationhood. While communal groupings based on recognition of a cultural practice(s) through invented traditions and myths of an ethnic past help to create a nation, those wanting to encourage nationalism face a problem in figuring out how to convince the popular masses to conceive of themselves as a unified socio-cultural unit.⁹ In his article “All the People Came and Did Not Fit Onto the Screen: Notes on the Cinema Audience in Mexico,” renowned cultural critic Carlos Monsiváis argues that the movie theater, or as he frames it “The Celluloid Temple,” became the nation building space for the mass, largely Spanish illiterate, post-Revolutionary Mexican audience. Cinema was the learning tool that modernized the masses into homogenous social behaviors, teaching the public about their unified histories and characterizations. Silent cinema captured the attention of some of the audience, but it was sound cinema that encouraged the weekly ritual of movie going: “The transition from silent cinema to the talkies helped to strengthen the conviction that what happens on the screen is a more real reality. It does not spurn us, but instead allows us instantaneous identification, it addresses us in the first instance, and

⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 195-97.

⁹ Anthony Smith, “Images of the Nation: Cinema, Art and National Identity,” in *Cinema & Nation*, ed. Mette Hjort and Scott Mackenzie (London: Routledge, 2000), 46.

makes us share its idea of the nation, family, and society.”¹⁰ Cinema secularized the audience and helped bring them to modernity, functioning as a vehicle of cultural nationalism and of false cosmopolitanism. Popular media functioned as a form of mediation between the shock of industrialization and “the rural and the popular urban experience, which has not been prepared in any way for this giant change.” The national industry provided what was most irreplaceable to the Mexican public, “the familiar turns of phrase, the scenes of poverty, the faces-like mirrors, the adventures of melodrama, the music which is stubbornly unsophisticated.”¹¹ It is music’s place in this secularizing cinema of the nation that concerns us.

Film Music in Mexico

To date, there is not an extensive study that focuses on the music in Mexican cinema. Mention of music is often limited to the song title (which often doubles as the film title) or the mention of the composer. In her book, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, musicologist Yolanda Moreno Rivas traces the development of popular and folkloric music in Mexico. Organized chronologically, Moreno Rivas offers several sections detailing popular genres and styles, such as the bolero, the *canción ranchera*, *la música tropical* (tropical musical), which have shaped, and been shaped, by the film industry. She provides production, composer and performer information and explanations on performance practice and reception. This source serves as an invaluable

¹⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, “All the People Came and Did Not Fit Onto the Screen: Notes on the Cinema Audience in Mexico,” in *Mexican Cinema*, ed. Paulo Antonio Paranaguá (London: British Film Institute, 1995), 146.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

text for examining the trajectory of music in Mexican popular culture and is an excellent starting point when beginning research on Mexican film music.

Mexico's film heritage from the early silent period is difficult to access and information regarding the musical accompaniment from that period is even more of a challenge. Silent film historian Aurelio de los Reyes details certain facts from silent film music practice in his works *Medio siglo de cine mexicano* (1896-1947) and "La música para cine mudo en México" in *La música de México*. He provides historical context for the films and primary source references describing some of the bands, orchestras, performers, and composers that provided music and sound to Mexico's early cinema.

Other sources focus on music as a central component to the development of the film genres. In her work on the *comedia ranchera* and the *cine campirano* (films set in the countryside), Marina Díaz López examines the cultural roots of these genres, drawing on popular theater, such as the *teatro de revista* and *de género chico*, and radio as central agents. She provides overviews of several films from the 1930s, including *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1936, dir. Fernando de Fuentes), and the divisions of folkloric consumption that intended to "recuperate" a traditional patrimonial society.¹² In works by Ana M. López, Joanne Hershfield, and Dolores Tierney, Afro-Cuban music and dance, in particular the bolero and danzón, in the *cabaretera* genre (dance-hall or nightclub film)

¹² See, Marina Díaz López, "El Folclore invade el imaginario de la ciudad," *Revistas de estudios históricos sobre la imagen, segunda época*, Archivos de la Filmoteca 41(June 2002): 10-31.

become essential signifiers of sexuality when examining the emergence of melodrama in Mexican cinema and changing roles of women in post-Revolutionary Mexican society.¹³

Popular music in Mexican cinema receives more scholarly attention than the orchestral underscoring. With the exception of modernist composer Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940), film composers writing the orchestral music for the film's musical track are typically disregarded and admonished for not bringing to Mexican cinema what Max Steiner (1888-1971) and Erich Korngold (1897-1957) brought to Hollywood: lush, hyper-romantic orchestral scores with dramatic and memorable *leitmotifs*. In his contributions for *Modern Music*, composer Paul Bowles bluntly states, "So far there have been practically no cinema composers in Mexico who have turned out actual scores. The norm has consisted of untalented arrangements of standard tripe."¹⁴ During the 1960s, film critic and historian Emilio García Riera retrospectively jabs several film composers in his individual entries in the monumental *Historia documental del cine mexicano*.¹⁵ He repeats words such as "embarrassing" and "shameful" when referencing any type of

¹³ See Ana M. López, "Tears and Desire: Women and Melodrama in the 'Old' Mexican Cinema," in *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in the Americas*, ed. John King, Ana M. López, Manuel Alvarado (London: British Film Institute, 1993), 147-63; "Of Rhythms and Borders," in *Everynight Life: Culture and Dance in Latin/o America*, ed. Celeste Praser Delgado and José Muñoz (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 310-44; Joanne Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996); Dolores Tierney, "Silver Sling-backs and Mexican Melodrama: *Danzón* and *Salón México*," *Screen* 38, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 360-71.

¹⁴ Paul Bowles, "Letter from Mexico," *Modern Music* (November-December 1941), from Timothy Mangan and Irene Hermann, eds., *Paul Bowles on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 48. Bowles was an author and composer who made several contributions to *Modern Music*. In this particular article, Bowles states that there are only two Mexican composers that have composed successful film scores: Silvestre Revueltas and Raul Lavista. Bowles also calls attention to the dire state of musical practice in Mexican radio and film.

¹⁵ This is a multi-volume collection that provides production details, summaries, and commentaries on every Mexican film from 1929 to 1976.

underscoring (Silvestre Revueltas, however, is the exception).¹⁶ Because the underscoring does not receive any acclaim, information regarding the development of the film score, including the actual score, is scarce. The orchestral underscoring, or *música de fondo*, for Mexican film during the 1930s and 1940s was a space for construction and re-construction. According to Manuel Esperón, a composer credited for more than 200 films and sound mixer for 100 others, the score had to be completed in twenty days after the last day of filming in order to accommodate the actors for dubbing and looping sessions in the play-back segment of post-production. Music was composed after the film and rarely before, in order to fit the film's rhythm. Esperón states, "el ritmo musical es otro muy diferente al ritmo cinematográfico en la totalidad del filme. La música por buena que sea no salva a la película mal hecha" ("the rhythm has a very different pace from the cinematographic rhythm. Good music cannot save a badly made film").¹⁷ The music was never recorded for commercial sale because, at that time, the recording

¹⁶ One particularly blatant criticism is in his entry for *Salón México* (1949, dir. Emilio Fernández). In the film, the club's owner mentions to a group of visiting white men that Aaron Copland visited the club and composed his work *El Salón México* shortly after, which was a success. In the film's entry, García Riera claims Antonio Díaz Conde's film score is "inappropriate" and "in sad competition" with Copland's work, which is not performed, but only mentioned. See Emilio García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano*, vol. 3 (México: Ediciones Era, 1969), 266.

¹⁷ Teresa Carvajal, "La obra de Manuel Esperón en el cine mexicano," *Bibliomúsica* (Spring/Summer 1992): 39. Esperón is one of the few composers who kept a library of his film scores, which includes the orchestral underscoring and the popular diegetic music. However, in a 1989 article for *El Nacional*, Esperón states that his scores from the "Golden Era" were lost in a fire. See Felipe Orso, "Extraviadas las partituras que Manuel Esperón escribió para el cine mexicano," *El Nacional*, June 24, 1989.

industries were not interested in this material.¹⁸ The films are the only sources in which this music exists.

Steps have been taken to close the gap of research regarding the orchestral underscoring, the *música de fondo* composers, and the diegetic, popular music composers. In 2005, *Cuadernos de estudios cinematográficos* published one volume dedicated to film music and sound treatment in Mexican cinema. The articles consist of interviews with contemporary Mexican film composers, such as Javier Álvarez and Antonio Zepeda and explorative essays in the role of music and the composer in narrative films. This volume looks only at music into contemporary Mexican film, offering readers a look in the current music departments in Mexican studios.¹⁹ In 2009, musicologist Aurelio Tello contributed over two hundred biographical entries for the *Diccionario del Cine Iberoamericano*, which features contributions from Spain, Portugal, and Latin America. Tello's entries focus on the composers of Mexican cinema from the beginning of the sound period to present, including a select filmography and short biographical information. This collection, however, is not yet available in the United States.

¹⁸ Ibid. Esperón states in this article that he doesn't know why Mexico was not like the United States in this regard, but he also remembers that the recording industry executives felt that marketing the underscoring was not a good business.

¹⁹ The one exception in this volume is José Antonio Alcaraz's article "La noche de los mayas," which details the musical elements added to the suite rather than the music in the film. See José Antonio Alcaraz, "La noche de los mayas," *Cuadernos de Estudios cinematográficos* 4 (2005): 95-100.

Melodrama and Cultural Synthesis

The development of genres in Mexican cinema during the 1930s and 1940s owed a great deal to melodrama. Scholars such as Carlos Monsiváis, Ana M. López, Joanne Hershfield, and Andrea Noble base their examinations of Mexican melodrama on the work by literary critic Peter Brooks, who defines melodrama as “a fictional system for making sense of experience as a semantic field of force that comes into being in a world where the traditional imperatives of truth and ethics have been violently thrown into question.” Brooks argues that the modern forms of melodrama, shaped by popular theater and the novel, are linked to changes and conflicts in the social and political spheres. The early literary and theatrical melodramas of Europe laid out the aesthetic and thematic foundations carried into cinema of the twentieth century.²⁰ In the case of Latin American melodrama, elements of the older forms of European melodrama were incorporated to fit Latin America’s social and cultural contexts.

Mexican melodrama, according to Joanne Hershfield, has endured as a popular genre through technological changes, “in part because it has served as a mediating function between older forms of narrative and the newer forces of modernity.”²¹ In a similar vein, Jesús Martín-Barbero argues that melodrama functions as a mediation between existing and emerging cultures to address specific social and cultural needs of changing populations, particularly as a bridge between a collective historical experience

²⁰ See Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James: Melodrama and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 152-55.

²¹ Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman*, 43.

and the lives of individuals during periods of social and ideological crisis.²² Although character types will play similar narrative functions in melodramas, the representations are reconstructed in response to current climates, enabling the audience to continue to understand and identify with the representation.

The images depicted in cinematic melodramas enables the audience to see itself within a particular emotional and ideological framework. Marvin d'Lugo states, "that process of mirroring by the reoccurrence of visual and musical tropes . . . transcended the verbal and seduced the popular audience into seeing its own likeness in the obsessions and desires of fictional characters."²³ With the expressive facial and bodily gestures depicted in melodrama, music and auditory effects became crucial components in conveying specific meanings.

Speaking specifically of the cinematic melodrama, Martín-Barbero describes three mechanisms that construct a nation or construct the national: the first is theatrical, consisting of the legitimation of Mexican models of gesture, linguistic expressions, and feelings on a dramatic stage; the second mechanism is degradation: it was necessary for the public to recognize themselves in order for nationalism to be possible. Therefore, images of the nation reflected specific social conditions and concerns, constructing multifaceted symbols; and in the third mechanism, modernization: "often the mixture of

²² Jesús Martín-Barbero, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony: From the Media to Mediations* (London: Sage Publications, 1993), 119. See also Hershfield's discussion in *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman*, 43.

²³ See Marvin d'Lugo, "Luis Alcoriza; or A Certain Antimelodramatic Tendency in Mexican Cinema," in *Latin American Melodrama: Passion, Pathos, and Entertainment*, ed. Darlene J. Sadlier (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 114-15 and Martín-Barbero, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony*, 114.

images contradicted the traditional plots and brought up to date old myths, introduced customs and new models of moral behavior and gave public access to the new rebelliousness and forms of speaking.”²⁴

The aim of this dissertation is to position film music within its historical and cultural context in order to understand its narrative functions and associations to the nationalist symbols and messages conveyed in the film genres influenced by melodramatic forms. Music heard, and sometimes seen, through this lens does not operate as Claudia Gorbman’s “unheard melody” in which the most successful film music does not make its presence completely known to the audience.²⁵ Music rather takes on a role as a cultural suture: providing the necessary sonic associations to the representations and narrative on screen. In order to discuss the associations built by music and the cinematic image, I utilize the concept of cultural synchresis, which builds upon sound theorist Michel Chion’s concept of synchresis, the juxtaposition of two important sound elements, synchronism and synthesis, creating “the spontaneous and irresistible weld produced between a particular auditory phenomenon and visual phenomenon when they occur at the same time.”²⁶ Synchresis permits extemporaneous sounds to fuse with the moving image in order to create implied meanings and contextual determinations, which, with repetition, establish specific psycho-physiological

²⁴ Martín-Barbero, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony*, 167.

²⁵ See Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1987). See also Gorbman’s early article, “Narrative Film Music,” *Yale French Studies* no. 60 (1980): 183-203.

²⁶ Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 63.

associations for the spectator. Considered a Pavlovian technique, Chion claims, “the effect of synchresis is obviously capable of being influenced, reinforced, and oriented by cultural habits.”²⁷ With ample repetition, moving image and sound create a sense of “mutual reinforcement” enabling this association to appear natural and logically obvious.²⁸ When a door slams on screen, we expect to hear an appropriate corresponding sound rather than a bell ringing or a dog barking. This sound event phenomenon in cinema appears to materialize naturally and, because of our expectations and experiences with sound in our own reality, is a habit.

Expanding beyond ambient sound events, the synchresis of music and the moving image creates a space where a deep sense of cultural meaning is both created and consumed. This dissertation will demonstrate not only the specific ways in which Mexican film music played a role in creating and reinforcing Mexican national representations, but also, more generally how music and meaning become coterminous. Music utilized with a specific image and moment in the narrative provides a mutual reinforcement that, when reiterated, appears to be a natural and/or convincing occurrence. The cultural synchresis interpreted by the eyes and ears create a fixed relationship between reality and the simulacrum of reality, entering what Chion calls the audio/visual contract. Spectators watch a film and silently “agree” that what they see and hear is a reality, which allows for identification to become easier.

²⁷ Ibid., 64.

²⁸ Ibid.

Through the examination of the developing film genres of 1930s and 1940s Mexican cinema, different music is utilized to perform functions specific to that genre's goals and representations. Each chapter explores the music in the film genres constructed during the early sound era of the 1930s and how those genres transform during the 1940s to fit with specific social, cultural, and political contexts, but convey similar messages and meanings.

Chapter one examines the music of the prostitute melodrama and the *cabaretera* subgenre, looking specifically at how music reinforces, empathetically and anempathetically, the prostitute character, exemplified in Mexico's first successful sound film *Santa* (1932, dir. Antonio Moreno) and in the later sensual and exotic *rumbera* figure in *Víctimas del Pecado* (*Victims of Sin*, 1950, dir. Emilio Fernández). The prostitute is positioned as a challenging and contradictory presence in the national imaginary, considered a "necessary evil" by Mexican society. This chapter navigates the spaces, specifically the brothel and the cabaret, and their featured dance music as important elements in constructing the identity of the cinematic prostitute figure and her association with Mexico's changing urban nightlife.

Chapter two focuses on the underscoring practices of the *indigenista* films (films featuring Mexico's indigenous populations), looking at two important examples in Mexican film history: *Janitzio* (1934, dir. Carlos Navarro) and *María Candelaria* (1943, dir. Emilio Fernández), both of which feature the music by composer and folklorist Francisco Domínguez. Developed during the post-Revolutionary period in which several discourses advocated the cultural integration of the Indian into modern Mexican society,

such as those presented by anthropologists Manuel Gamio and Alfonso Caso, the *indigenista* films convey an integrationist yet non-integrationist stance on Mexico's indigenous cultures, exhibiting the consequences of both modern penetration and communal isolation. Using Domínguez music as a guide, this chapter explores how these films represented indigenous populations and what messages were sent to the large, urban mestizo audience about the indigenous experience.

The largely overlooked *cine de añoranza porfiriana* (films of Porfirian longing), which reconstructs, or reimagines, the *belle époque* of the Porfiriato is the focus of chapter three. Conceived as homage to Mexico's turn of the century musical tradition by director Juan Bustillo Oro, these films concentrate on the misadventures of the Porfirian bourgeoisie and aristocracy, functioning as an escape valve for the post-Revolutionary middle and upper class audiences made anxious by the social reforms of President Lázaro Cárdenas's leftist administration (1934-1940). Instead of exhibiting especially composed music for the film, the genre recycles examples and arrangements of the *música de salón*, zarzuelas, and *teatro de género chico* traditions in order to reconstruct the Porfiriato as a light-hearted and worry-free utopia away from oppression and struggle. The film's narratives are propelled forward to include complete performances from turn of the century music in order to convey an atmosphere of Porfirian nostalgia.

The last chapter centers on Mexico's most popular film genre during the 1930s and 1940s, the *comedia ranchera*, focusing in particular on the emergence of the singing *charro* figure, Mexico's most utilized national symbol. A consequence of several cultural hybridizations over the course of Mexican history, this chapter examines the

singing *charro* as an experimental figure that became further interpolated into the post-Revolutionary national consciousness through popular theater, radio, and film, quickly becoming the embodiment of *lo mexicano*. The *comedia ranchera* showcased the *charro* and, when synchronized to music, developed the singing *charro* as a successfully exported symbol and commercial tool of Mexican identity. Select musical sequences are examined in two key films, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1936, dir. Fernando de Fuentes) and *Los tres García* (1946, dir. Ismael Rodríguez), and how the music solidifies, or exalts, the *charro*'s sense of *machismo* and his connections with nationalism and the nation in the face of his compatriots and foreigners.

CHAPTER 1: The Sounds of the Prostitute

On March 30, 1932, Antonio Moreno's *Santa* premiered at the Palacio Theater in Mexico City, initiating the film industry's successful transition into recorded and synchronized sound cinema and also introducing the cinematic genre known as the prostitute melodrama. Based on the 1903 novel by Federico Gamboa, the adaptation of *Santa* into the moving medium created quite a spectacle at its premiere:

Porción de coches se detenían junto a la acera. Henchida de gente estaba ésta. Rumoroso vocerío, gritos, llamamientos, apretujones, codazos. De rato en rato, los sonos de una banda se esparcían, ritmando la confusa estridencia del genio. En el enflorado vestíbulo, las tintas rudas de los carteles parecían más vivas, armonizando con la luminosidad del ambiente. Y entre gañir de claxons, conversaciones atropelladas, tintineo de timbres y briosas melodías arrancadas a los metálicos instrumentos, podían percibirse, con la fulgurante levedad de chispas que saltan en la sombra, la breve palabra que sirve de título a la popular novela.

(A portion of cars stopped at the curb already bursting with people. Noisy shouting, yelling, calls, crushing, then nudges. From time to time, the sound of a band was scattered, punctuating the strident confusion of genius. In the fragrant lobby, the harsh ink of the posters seemed more alive, in harmony with the ambient brightness. Amongst the whine of horns, hasty conversations, tinkling bells, and spirited tunes pulled out from the metallic instruments could be seen, with the flashing lightness of sparks in the dark, the short word that serves as the title to the popular novel.)¹

Crowds gathered to see the dramatization of the controversial and patriarchal story of a young country girl who moves to the metropolis and becomes a prostitute, a story that reflects the lives of many women living in Mexico City. After *Santa*, this

¹ "La metamorfosis de Santa," *El Universal*, April 12, 1932.

familiar “fallen woman” narrative became a standard framework in Mexican cinema from the 1930s to the 1950s, set either in the brothel or cabaret, which oozed sex through the smoky space, “tropical” rhythms, and provocative dancing. As such, the prostitute becomes a crucial national figure—a consequence of urban growth and modernization and a symbol of Mexican womanhood.

The prostitute in film stands in “for sexuality and the pleasures and dangers incurred by modernity,”² rubbing uncomfortably against Catholic indoctrinations that viewed sex as only a means to procreate. Because of Catholicism’s strong presence in Mexico since the Conquest, religious teachings became rules of social conduct and female sexuality was strictly contained while male promiscuity was allowed and even encouraged. Prostitution, although frowned upon by the Church as sinful and immoral, was perceived as “a ‘necessary evil’ that could prevent greater problems like rape or seduction from threatening the moral order.”³ As such, the Church separated sexual pleasure from reproductive sex, and placed women in two categories: in one are the domestic women a man sleeps with in order to have children, but not for sexual pleasure (the women are not meant to experience sexual pleasure either). These were the “señoras decentes” (“decent women”) that society needed to immaculate as “angels of the

² Sergio de la Mora, *Cinemachismo: Masculinities and Sexuality in Mexican Film* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 22.

³ Katherine E. Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 3.

household.”⁴ In the other category are the mistresses and sex workers that these men go to for sexual pleasure, but whom they never marry or have children with because they are too licentious and immoral. It was the women in this latter category that were viewed as the deviants of society, the challengers of women solely existing in the domestic sphere, and the perceived singular transmitters of venereal diseases rather than the sexually active men from all social classes and rank that pursued them and then returned to their families.

Intertwined with this construction is an image of Mexico City’s growing urban nightlife, the spaces that the prostitute inhabits and in which she works, carefully watched over and regulated by the State, which enforced the morals of the (male) dominant class through legislation and legal punishment that included the registration and medical inspection of prostitutes. The cinematic prostitute melodramas of the 1930s reflect the uncertainties that the post-Revolutionary public felt about modern expansion evident in the State’s public health and social purity campaigns, which coincided with the rise of cabaret and dance hall culture, entertainment locales that permitted and advocated promiscuity and pleasure. While prostitution was perceived as a continual vice to Mexican modern society, the prostitute was considered an essential yet tainted figure. Her presence reinforced the contradictions and paradoxes over female sexuality, particularly as the prostitute melodrama genre moved out of the brothels and into the brothel-cabaret where currents of popular music helped sonically characterize the

⁴ See Fausto Ramírez, “Crímenes y torturas sexuales: la obra de Julio Ruelas y los discursos sobre la prostitución y la criminalidad en el porfiriato,” in *Modernización y modernismo en el arte mexicano* (México: Universidad de Autónoma de México, 2008), 124-26.

prostitute archetype: music both represented her perceived “downfall” and reflected her sexuality and her abilities to seduce.

Within the prostitute melodrama and the *cabaretera* subgenre (films with the cabaret backdrop), music and narrative create a compelling synthesis that not only engages the character with a particular moment in the scene, but also engages the spectator in recognizing certain cultural associations taken from daily life. Cultural synchresis explores these shifts and juxtapositions among music, the moving image, and the narrative—and their attendant cultural associations. This chapter explore the spaces and the music in two representative films, the prostitute melodrama *Santa* and the later *cabaretera* film *Victimas del Pecado* (*Victims of Sin*, 1950, dir. Emilo Fernández) that construct key elements of identity for the prostitute protagonist, specifically concerning her inextricable association with the urban nightlife. In particular, I examine her irreconcilable split identity—she is both object of desire and focus of spectator sympathy—“played” through the familiar sounds of various forms of transnational dance music.

Spaces for Sexual Commerce

The Mexican Department of Public Health had attempted to regulate sex work and sexual commerce since the mid-nineteenth century with various measures intended to control the spread of venereal diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea. The *Reglamento para el ejercicio de la prostitución 1872* required that all prostitutes, defined as “any woman over the age of fourteen who was not a virgin, who habitually had sexual

relations with more than one man, and who expressed a specific desire to engage in sexual commerce,”⁵ register with Mexican health authorities, focusing only on those women who were sexually active and exempting men from legal and medical surveillance. Borrowing from laws initiated in Paris during the 1830s, prostitutes were inspected for disease and special districts, called *zonas de tolerancia* (tolerance zones), or red-light districts, were portioned off for the execution of vice.⁶ While the law exempts any sexually active male, it also exempts married and sexually active females, narrowing the focus exclusively on female sex workers. In the eyes of the government, these women were the specific transmitters of disease and venereal infections. Studies from the turn of the century by hygienists such as Luis Lara y Prado painted female sex workers as degenerates, arguing that social conditions and patriarchy did not cause prostitution: heredity was to blame.⁷

During the Porfiriato (1876-1911),⁸ sexual commerce was confined to those specifically designated areas that were consistently patrolled by police. In order to avoid

⁵ Ibid., 27-28.

⁶ The French law advocated the separation of legal and illegal prostitution practices and State inspected bordellos. This adoption was the result of the French occupation in Mexico during the 1860s as part of an imperialist project. According to Bliss, the public health regulation was instilled when Maximilian I was emperor. The regulation strongly suggested that the spread of venereal disease was due to prostitution. During the end of the 1860s, after the French occupation ended, the law remained in place but was refined by the Mexican department of health and sanitation. See Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, 29.

⁷ See Luis Lara y Pardo, *La Prostitución en México* (México: Librería de la Vda. De Ch. Bouret, 1908).

⁸ The Porfiriato refers to the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911). Although Manuel González served as president from 1880-1884, Díaz maintained a strong hold on the government. Politically, the Porfiriato is characterized as a period of economic expansion through the incorporation of foreign interests and industrialization (building of railroads, for example) and stability after the Reform Wars. Culturally, the Porfiriato is known for the incorporation of foreign influences, particularly French, in dress, architecture,

arrest and imprisonment, sex workers were required to walk with identification and a registration card at all times. In order to keep the government and the customers (sometimes one and the same) content, sex workers were organized in a system designed to regulate and control the “distribution of vice.”⁹ In her study on prostitution and health and morality campaigns during the Porfiriato and Revolutionary years, Katherine Bliss states that women were classified as *en comunidad* (in community), or working in brothels where they also lived or *aisladas*, women who made appointments to meet men at different locations. *Matronas* (matrons) and madams ran specific sites for sexual commerce which included the *casas de asignación*, houses where registered prostitutes had sexual intercourse with men but did not live there, and the *casas de citas*, where unregistered women could meet and socialize with men. Brothels were divided into four classes where some women could enjoy their own private room in a finely decorated house to “crude shacks where prostitutes and patrons coupled on rough woven mats, using only tattered blankets to secure some privacy from the others doing the same thing only a few feet away.”¹⁰ Mexican cultural critic and historian Salvador Novo claims that a large part of leisurely life for the Porfirian elite took place at the brothels, the *casas de citas*, and the *casas de asignación*. In these spaces, the clients were not inhibited by

and art. See Moisés González Navarro, *Sociedad y cultura en el porfiriato* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultural y las Artes, 1994).

⁹ Excessive drug and alcohol use was also perceived by the Porfirian elite to be part of society’s vices due to modernity. For more information, see Ricardo Pérez Montfort, Pablo Picatto, and Alberto del Castillo, *Hábitos, normas y escándalo: Prensa, criminalidad y drogas durante el porfiriato tardío* (México: Plaza y Valdes, S.A de C.V., 1997).

¹⁰ Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, 31.

social and familial conventions and embraced the “expanding spirituality” of these new modes of communications that filled the room.¹¹

During the armed struggle of the Revolution (1911-1921), sexual commerce grew outside of the *zonas de tolerancia* as a result of a population boom, particularly of single women, in effect ending the Porfiriato house-based bordellos and the reign of the *matronas*. This growth encouraged the rise of a new class of businessman, who invested in hotels, cabarets, and burlesque theaters and other popular entertainment spaces where sexual commerce could take place. Many sex workers were displaced as a result of their closed establishments, forced to walk the streets in an act of desperation and fend for themselves. Public health and morality campaigns put forth by the Department of Public Health continued to target female sex workers as the sole transmitters of disease and executors of vice and immorality: the campaigns included public service announcements in magazines about a woman’s responsibility to society. One such advertisement provided a cautionary tale about sexually active men contracting syphilis after having sexual intercourse with a prostitute, then transmitting it to his innocent family. This ad was strategically placed in women’s magazines to ensure “that such male behavior will not be tolerated,” making the woman responsible for taking proper precautions and stop sexually active men from contracting any disease.¹²

¹¹ Cited in Carlos Monsiváis, *Amor Perdido* (México: Ediciones Era, 1977), 65-66.

¹² This ad reads as follows, “Syphilis in the father caused the ruin of the home. The health certificate guarantees the health of the WIFE and that of the children. A kiss, a caress, these are the frequent vehicles of syphilis contagion. Syphilis is the principal cause of miscarriages and why many children are born dead. Syphilis is not a secret sickness. If you do not confess it, your children will show it.” Featured in this ad is

During the 1920s and the 1930s, sexual commerce became socially and geographically stratified, but it did not disappear. In 1926, the *Reglamento para el ejercicio de la prostitución en el D.F.* “aimed at controlling the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and protecting Mexican against “harmful” foreign influences, including different forms of mass media deemed pornographic.”¹³ Since *zonas de tolerancia* were not strictly enforced, this law required all city hotels that permitted sex workers to register with the police and Department of Public Health, pay a fee, and undergo regular health inspections. This meant that hotel managers had to question women who entered the hotel about their marital status and business at the establishment, which often led to uncomfortable situations for both sides of the business.

Popular entertainment sites were also important venues for sexual commerce. After the dismantling of the Porfirian house system, cabarets, dance halls, theaters, and bars became hot spots for men and women to socialize, dance, and engage in sexual encounters. The rise in vice in these venues led many to believe that this demonstrated Mexico City’s cosmopolitanism and modernity, and linked this metropolis to others such as Barcelona. However, according to anti-vice activist Elías Hurtado, Barcelona housed “men’s only” cabarets, which was a marker of sophistication and modernity that Mexico had yet to reach and, in his opinion, would most likely not. In a declaration similar to the

the father figure standing with crutches behind the mother figure who sits with a crying child on her lap. See the back page of *Mujer: revista para la elevación moral e intelectual de la mujer mexicana*, March 1, 1927 quoted in Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, 134.

¹³ This law remained enforced until 1940. See de la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 36.

moralizing campaigns, Hurtado states that the presence of women is a necessity in Mexico City cabarets, but men should appeal to their paternal instinct to persuade those women who dance nude in these venues to move away from the trade and look for other occupations.¹⁴ Journalist Eduardo Pallares, on the other hand, agreed that action is needed to control and regulate prostitution, but without the hypocritical and forced moralizing campaigns:

Que se persigan el lenocinio y la pública prostitución, pero en forma racional, sin violar los cánones constitucionales, sin las exageraciones de un fanatismo ridículo o una hipocresía estúpida, y sobre todo, sin pretender moralizar al pueblo con medidas atentatorias y violentas, cuando los poderosos se regodean en placeres de todo orden.

Cuando una sociedad hace ostentación de perseguir los vicios y la inmoralidad, es casi seguro que está del todo corrompida.

(We must persecute brothels and prostitution, but in a rational manner, without violating the constitution and falling into exaggerations of fanaticism and stupid hypocrisy, and, above all, without pretending to moralize the people with aggressive and violent measures, while the powerful bask in all kinds of pleasures.

When a society ostentatiously persecutes vices and immorality, it is almost certain that it is entirely corrupted.)¹⁵

The Cabarets and *El dancing*

Since the late 1910s, cabarets became locations that conflated dance, sexuality, and alcohol. In order to avoid problems with authorities and to avoid mandatory

¹⁴ Elías Hurtado, “El problema de la mujer que trabaja en cabarets,” *El Nacional*, October 15, 1937. Bliss provides an excellent discussion on Hurtado’s stance on women in the cabarets. See also Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, 167.

¹⁵ Eduardo Pallares, “La campaña contra la prostitución,” *El Universal*, March 21, 1944.

registration and health exams, women were often hired as waitresses and/or *ficheras*.¹⁶

The alcohol service encouraged by female workers kept these businesses afloat. Bliss notes that certain cabarets such as the Estrella, the Adams, and the Molino Rojo took over the lots where *casas de asignación* once stood, implying that the women who worked in these new establishments most likely catered to the old clientele, placing a new mask on an old practice.¹⁷

The cabaret functioned as a space for men and women to enjoy dancing, leisure, and sexual commerce, and doubled as a visible site for rapid urban growth, modernization, and rising consumer culture. Much of the popularity was due to live music and dancing featuring new dance music from the United States and Cuba, including the foxtrot, the shimmy, and the danzón. Dancing became a type of ritual for the middle class. In a 1919 article for *Revista de Revistas*, Rafael López describes the closeness and intimacy involved in this new dance ritual:

Las parejas desfilan al son de la música, apelmasadas, juntas, fundidas en un estrechamiento de carácter heroico; los hombres se apoderan de las mujeres en un abrazo omnímodo, como si las escaparan de un incendio donde no se presentan los bomberos; es una soldadura tan sólida y tan decisiva, que llama la atención cómo pueden despegarse al callar la orquesta.

(The couples file to the sound of music, stuck together, melted into a tightness of heroic character; the men capture the women in an all encompassing hug as if escaping a fire where there are no firefighters; it is a wielding so solid and so decisive that it is striking they can detach when the orchestra is silent.)¹⁸

¹⁶ A *fichera* is a woman that dances with patrons for pay in the form of a token or *ficha* at the cabarets. In addition to dancing, *ficheras* may also provide sexual services.

¹⁷ See Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, 167.

¹⁸ Rafael López, "Los cabarets en México," *El Universal Ilustrado*, May 8, 1919.

In his book, *El “dancing” mexicano*, Alberto Dallal discusses the development of *el dancing*, a term designating a popular dancing culture emerging in Mexico City among the middle classes. Dallal argues that within the dance hall, dances, especially those once believed for the pleasure and diversion of the lower classes, are reinterpreted and remade to fit a new and consumable context for the middle classes, beginning new rites and rituals disassociated from religion, which now become permissible within the cabaret’s walls.¹⁹ *El dancing* was a necessity for middle class Mexicans because it enabled them to gather with members of their own social status and allowed them the luxury of expressing themselves: “*El dancing* es recipiente de nuestras virtudes y habilidades” (“*El dancing* is a container of our strengths and skills”).²⁰ The cabaret represented a new space for music and dance juxtaposed with the daily life in the capital.

In a 1927 article for *El Universal Ilustrado*, Juan de Ega calls the cabaret, “Las nuevas academias de baile” (“the new dance academies”), which multiplied and exploited “nuestros vicios” (“our vices”). He speaks specifically about participating in *el dancing* particularly with the *ficheras*: “Quince centavos por bailar una pieza con cualquier señorita—cinco minutos de danzar por cada boleto . . . y faltan éstos, hay que irse a la calle” (“Fifteen cents to dance one song with a woman—five minutes of dancing for each ticket . . . and if these are missing, one must go to the street”). De Ega also references the popular dances taking over these new “academies” of dance at the end of the 1920s:

¹⁹ Alberto Dallal, *El “dancing” mexicano* (México: Ediciones Oásis, S.A., 1986), 87.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

“Los danzones, los “fox”, los “charleston”, se suceden vertiginosamente. Aún no se ha apagado el eco de una pieza cuando comienza otra. ¿Qué diligentes los músicos verdad? ¡Si tocaron así, tan incansablemente!” (“The danzones, the fox, the Charleston, follow one another rapidly. You cannot hear the eco of one before another begins. How diligent these musicians are, right? They play like this, so tirelessly!”)²¹ Dancing soon became a marker of social class and ritualized practice of city life, and within these cabarets sexual commerce took place, furthering the musical association to the urban and the prostitute.

Mexico’s First Prostitute: *Santa*

In 1903, Federico Gamboa, Porfirian gentleman, journalist, and diplomat, published what is considered the best novel of the Porfiriato, *Santa*. Gamboa provides a voyeuristic “invitation to gaze at what is morally forbidden but socially sanctioned and a precautionary tale with a morally edifying conclusion”: women who engage in sexual activities before marriage will ultimately face punishment.²² Taken from his experiences of Porfirian era bordello culture, Gamboa tells the story of Santa, a young woman who lives in the idyllic rural town of Chimalistac with her small family. Seduced and abandoned by a general traveling through with his troops, Santa is disowned and thrown from the house by her two older brothers. With nowhere to go, Santa travels to Mexico

²¹ Juan de Ega, “Las nuevas academias de baile se han multiplicado en esta Capital desde hace tres meses,” *El Universal Ilustrado*, January 1927. The author also mentions the shimmy as a popular dance in these new establishments.

²² De la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 32.

City and becomes the sought-after prostitute in Doña Elvira's brothel, winning the affections of Jaraméño, a Spanish bullfighter and Hipólito, the brothel's blind pianist. Santa eventually loses her appeal and is abandoned by Jaraméño. After being passed from the high-end brothels to the lower class houses and shacks, Santa succumbs to alcohol and disease and eventually dies. Gamboa's inspiration for the story comes not just from his observations, but also his friendship with the Spanish prostitute Esperanza Gutiérrez *La Malagueña*, murdered in 1897 by María Villa *La Chiquita*.²³

Gamboa constructs Santa as a passive and submissive character, a tragic victim to the harsh treatments and paradoxes of Porfirian society yet also a destructive figure, a carrier of disease and vice. According to Sergio de la Mora, Santa is a conflation of fear and desire, a symbol of male anxieties about female sexuality and a central emblem for Mexico's conflicted modernity: "She simultaneously displays and masks the contradictory and uneven processes of industrial developmentalism that intimately linked to the growth of Mexico City's cosmopolitan nightlife in the late '20s through the '50s and to the entertainment industry based there." Santa's narrative becomes a symbol for modernity's destruction of the pastoral, pre-industrial, idyllic past.²⁴ In popular culture, the prostitute serves as muse for artists, writers, and composers, who construct and

²³ See Miguel Ángel Morales, "Santa del papel al DVD," *El Nacional*, June 5, 2004. For a discussion of the trial, see Bliss, *Compromised Positions*, 41. For more information on *La Chiquita's* life, see Rafael Sagredo Baeza, *María Villa (a) La Chiquita, no. 4002: un parásito social del Porfiriato* (México: Cal y Arena, 1996).

²⁴ De la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 32-33.

interpolate her into the popular imaginary as an object that is at the same time glorified and tainted.

Fifteen years after its introduction, Gamboa's *Santa* was adapted into a film directed by Luis G. Peredo and produced by Germán Camus.²⁵ During Mexico's silent film period (roughly 1916 to 1930),²⁶ silent narrative films from the United States and Europe (primarily France, Italy, and Germany) were widely screened to Mexican audiences, but distribution diminished as a result of World War I, which enabled various Mexican film studios and independent filmmakers to produce and direct their own features specifically for national consumption. Borrowing from the French style of filming initiated by Georges Méliès and Italian inspired melodrama, *Santa* was the first Mexican film adapted from a novel. The film featured a cast of journalists from the periodical *El Demócrata* and included Alfonso Busson in the role of Hipólito and, from the Conservatorio Nacional de Música and also "alumna de la cátedra de Preparación y práctica de cinematógrafo de Manuel de la Bandera" ("a student of Manuel de la

²⁵ German Camus also produced twelve episodes based on themes presented in *El automóvil gris*, entitled *La banda del automóvil* or *La dama enlutada* also directed by Ernesto Vollrath (1919). Camus began his career first as a traveling film exhibitor then moved into production with *Santa* and *Caridad* (1918). For production information on *Santa* and *Caridad* see Aurelio de los Reyes, *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano 1896-1920* (México: Filmoteca Nacional, 1984), 122. For more information on German Camus, see Federico Dávalos Orozco, *Albores del cine mexicano* (México: Ediciones Clío, 1996), 32-33.

²⁶ The designation of this period is typically for the development of lengthier narrative films. Prior to 1916, the silent film industry specialized in actuality filming of the Revolution and short narrative films with nationalistic themes. For information about Mexican silent film pre-1916, see the extensive twenty one-volume collection by Juan Felipe Leal and Eduardo Barraza, *Anales del cine en México* (México: Voyeur, 2009). The series provides the most thorough research completed on Mexican silent cinema. For information on Mexican silent film during 1896-1930, which includes summaries and production details, see Aurelio de los Reyes, *Medio siglo de cine mexicano (1896-1947)* (México: Editorial Trillas, 1987).

Bandera's class of cinematic study and practice"),²⁷ Elena Sánchez Valenzuela as Santa. According to Federico Dávalos Orozco, Peredo and Camus's *Santa* is a cinematographic triptych corresponding to the three sections of Santa's life: purity, vice, and martyrdom. He states, "Cada parte iba precedida de actitudes simbólicas de la bailarina Norka Rouskaya. Fueron hechas algunas modificaciones a la obra original para atenuar su 'crudo realismo'" ("Each part was preceded by symbolic characterizations by the dancer Norka Rouskaya. Some modifications were made to the original work to mitigate its 'harsh realism'").²⁸ Sánchez Valenzuela's interpretation of Santa follows theatrical practices influenced by Menichelli and Bertini, typical from the Porfirian age, and succeeded in her depiction as a "redeemed sinner" full of facial expressions, raised arms to the heavens, flaring and falling and unceasing anguish."²⁹

Using a stationary camera, the film's still shots provide glimpses of the idyllic rural life of Chimalistac, exemplified through Rouskaya's short performances, and the modernized metropolis with images of the Paseo de la Reforma, Castillo de Chapultepec, Chapultepec Park, and the crowded city streets by Doña Elvira's bordello. In scenes involving Santa's love interest, El Jaraméño, the setting changes to his cosmopolitan

²⁷ Dávalos Orozco, *Albores del cine mexicano*, 32.

²⁸ Ibid. These "symbolic attitudes" or characterizations performed by Norka Rouskaya occur at the beginning of each of the three sections. At the beginning of "Virtue," Rouskaya is in a forest, dressed in white robes similar to a toga with leaves in her hair. She happily gesticulates towards the trees while lying on the grass, connecting virtue with nature. Examples from the 1918 version of *Santa* can be seen in the Special Features section of the 2001 release of *Santa* (1932, dir. Antonio Moreno) on DVD. See Antonio Moreno, *Santa* (México: Colección FilMOTECA de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2001).

²⁹ "Santa: el cine naturalista," *Ciclo Cine Mexicano 1* (1965), Courtesy of Cineteca Nacional.

apartment with cross cuts to the bullring. According to Aurelio de los Reyes, the film not only denounces the exploitation of prostitution and prostitutes, but also serves as a beginning current in nationalist cinema through its depiction of various national locales.³⁰

As a silent film, Peredo and Camus's *Santa* lacks the connection to music and dance culture that pervaded the bordellos. Although music certainly accompanied screenings of the film, I have yet to locate a source that provides any details of the performed music, but that musical accompaniment would have consisted of popular music of the day, such as salon music or excerpts from operas or zarzuelas.³¹ But while the silent film does not provide us with any musical associations, Gamboa's narrative does. In his book, Gamboa names a few title works, some of which he suggests are original compositions by Hipólito, but he also describes the characters' interactions and involvement with the music. After Santa's introduction to the brothel, Hipólito plays a provocative *danza mexicana* entitled *Bienvenida* for her:

La tal "Bienvenida" era, en efecto, una danza apasionada y bellísima, a pesar de su médula canallesca, En su primera parte, sobre todo, parecía gemir una pena honda que no dejaran adivinar totalmente los acordes y contratiempos de los bajos; luego, en la segunda –que es la bailable–, la pena vergonzante desvanecía, moría en la transición armónica y sólo quedaban las notas de fuego que provocan los acercamientos; el ritmo lúbrico y característico que excita y enardece. Hasta cuatro veces obligaron a Hipólito a repetir su composición, en medio de aplausos explosivos y gritones.

³⁰ Aurelio de los Reyes, *Medio siglo de cine mexicano (1894-1947)* (México: Editorial Trillas, 1987), 68-70.

³¹ For more information regarding musical performance during Mexico's silent film period, see Aurelio de los Reyes, "La música para el cine mudo en México," in *La música de México, I. Historia, 4. Periodo nacionalista (1910 a 1958)*, ed. Julio Estrada (México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984), 85-117.

(The so-called "Bienvenida" ("Welcome") was, in effect, a passionate and beautiful dance, despite its despicable marrow. In its first part, above all, it seemed to moan a deep pain that the chords and syncopations of the bass do not let us guess entirely; then, in the second, which is the dance, the shame and pain faded away, dying into a smooth harmonic transition and leaving only those fiery notes that lead to closeness; the lewd and characteristic rhythm that excites and inflames. Hipólito was forced to repeat his composition up to four times in the midst of explosive applause and screaming.)³²

We, as spectators, get a sense of Hipólito's feelings for Santa through his musical performances in the brothel's salon because he dedicates most of his compositions to her. However, when Santa approaches Hipólito and asks about his life and blindness, he recounts his story of abandonment while playing an unnamed waltz. Gamboa describes the music in parts, which become musically associated with Hipólito's sad story. He knows neither light nor parents. His father abandoned him and his mother was forced to leave him at a school for the blind:

La primera parte del vals brotó de las manos del ciego, acompañada y voluptuosa... La segunda parte del vals, mucho más alegre y ligera que la anterior, se escapaba de los amarillentos dedos de Hipólito, que la perseguía por entre las teclas enlutadas y blancas del piano... La tercera parte del vals, lenta, desfallecida, melancólica se esparció por los ámbitos de la sala del prostíbulo.

(The first part of the waltz sprang from the blind man's hands, rhythmic and voluptuous... The second part of the waltz, much happier and lighter than the first, came out of Hipólito's yellowish fingers, which chased after [the music] among the darker and bland keys of the piano... The third part of the waltz, slow, weak, melancholy spreads throughout the brothel's salon.)³³

³² Federico Gamboa, *Santa*, rev. ed. (1903; repr., México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003), 82.

³³ *Ibid.*, 89-90.

The waltz is verbally syncretized to his words, acting almost anempathetically to his sad story. In the book, Hipólito plays several nameless waltzes. Although they are performed in the brothel's salon, it is in this particular section in that story that Gamboa offers a musical description that is disassociated with sexual commerce and constructs empathy.

Other music, however, develops a more intimate relationship with the prostitute and the act of seduction. Gamboa isolates danzas and danzones as the music and dance of choice when the prostitutes entertain. When Santa arrives to Doña Elvira's brothel, Gamboa describes her as very timid and unable to dance. The other women in the brothel decide to teach her:

Bailaba por rareza, pues no entendía jota del vals que sus adeptos denominaban “boston”, y en cuanto a danzas y danzones, que deben ser bailados con contoneos lascivos y rítmicos—una mezcla excitante de “danza del vientre” oriental y de habanera anticuada—tampoco andaba muy adelantada, sus compañeras de domicilio iniciábanla apenas en el secreto.

– “Te pegas mucho a tu hombre, así ¿ves? . . . En la primera parte hay que dar muchas vueltas, mira, como las damos nosotras, casi sin salir de un mismo lugar . . . y en la segunda, hay que aflojar las caderas, como si se te quebarara la cintura, como si a punto de desmayarte de deleite huyeras de la cercana persecución de tu pareja que se te va encima, resbala tú para atrás y para adelante y para los lados.” (She rarely danced because she did not understand a thing about the type of waltz whose fans called “Boston” and as for the danzas and danzones, which must be danced with lewd and rhythmic swaying, an exciting mix of belly dance and old-fashioned habanera—she was not very advanced either, her house companions were just initiating her in the secrets of the dance.

-“You push yourself against your man a lot here, see? . . . In the first part you need to turn around a lot, see, just like we are doing, without leaving the same spot . . . and in the second part, you have to loosen your hips, as if your waist were breaking, as if, almost fainting with delight, you tried to escape the pursuit

of your partner who goes after you, and you slide back and forth, and side to side.”)³⁴

In the various haunts that Santa visits with the other women, music accompanies these spaces. Gamboa refers to several dance and musical styles that were *en vogue*, offering his audience a descriptive earpiece into what the Porfirian brothels and *salones de baile* sounded like.

The Musical Constructions of the Cinematic Santa

During the late 1920s, the Mexican film industry, building off of sound experimentation from Hollywood’s *The Jazz Singer* (1927, dir. Alan Crosland), utilized the Vitaphone sound-on-disc method of recording and synchronizing sound to the moving image.³⁵ The first film to do this successfully in Mexico is *Más fuerte que el deber* (*Stronger than Duty*, 1929, dir. Raphael J. Sevilla). The sound-on-disc method, however, was short lived. It is difficult to ascertain which film used the sound-on-film, or optical sound, technique first in the Mexican industry, but Antonio Moreno’s 1932 version of *Santa* is Mexico’s first optical sound box office success. This new version of

³⁴ Gamboa, *Santa*, 120.

³⁵ The sound-on-disc method refers to the recording of the film’s soundtrack, which includes music, sound effects, and dialogue, onto a wax cylinder or disc to be played on a gramophone at the same time as screened film. This differs from the sound-on-film or optical sound technology, which allows for a soundtrack to be recorded directly on the film. This method was made possible through the use of directional microphones and sound mixing in the post-production phase of filming. For more information on the film sound, see Elisabeth Wise and John Belton, eds., *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Vincent LoBrutto, *Sound on Film: Interviews with Creators of Film Sound* (Westport: Praer, 1994); Rick Altman, ed. *Sound Theory/Sound Practice* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Santa features a cast and production team with ties to Hollywood, including the director Antonio Moreno, the sound team Joselito and Roberto Rodríguez, and actress Lupita Tovar.

The film's recorded and synchronized sound received very little attention in print media perhaps due to the novelty of the technology. This neglect comes as somewhat of surprise since the Rodríguez brothers developed the optical sound system for the Compañía Nacional Productora de Películas. In a short article in *El Universal Ilustrado*, one author merely states the film boasts perfect sound, better than the Spanish films screened in France and Buenos Aires.³⁶ An article in *Excelsior* avoids sound altogether, focusing principally on the visual: "Los escenarios han sido escogidos con acierto, y a la obra dará oportunidad para que espectadores extraños puedan conocer paisajes, rincones coloniales, amplias perspectivas de la ciudad, adquiriendo una idea de la magnificencia y originalidad de la gran metrópolis mexicana" ("The settings were chosen appropriately and the work will give foreign spectators the opportunity to know the country side, colonial colonial, ample views of the city, gaining an idea of the magnificence and originality of the great Mexican metropolis").³⁷ Discussions of Rodríguez's optical sound system arise in later articles from the 2000s during the centennial celebration of

³⁶ "Santa," *El Universal Ilustrado*, April 7, 1932. See also Carlos Noriega Hope, "Cómo se hace una película vitafónica en México," *El Universal Ilustrado*, December 10, 1931 quoted in *El cine mexicano a través de la crítica*, ed. Gustavo García and David R. Maciel (México: Dirección General de Actividades Cinematográficas, 2001), 65-68.

³⁷ "Gran Triunfo obtuvo anoche 'Santa', la primera película nacional," *Excelsior*, March 31, 1932.

Gamboa's book, which describes the better fidelity of sound and lighter sound equipment.³⁸

While the sound technology received little attention, the musical track did not. The film boasted two important Mexican composers Miguel Lerdo de Tejada (1896-1941) and Agustín Lara (1897-1970). Lerdo de Tejada had considerable experience accompanying films with his popular orchestra yet his involvement in *Santa* is minimal.³⁹ Lerdo de Tejada's music appears in three sections: in beginning credits, in the first scenes set in the countryside, and at the end of the film. Agustín Lara, on the other hand, composed a foxtrot, a bolero, and a danzón that became important markers for the prostitute figure and began Lara's career as a film composer.

The Myth and Modernity of Agustín Lara

The film's musical track receives considerable attention because of the involvement of *el flaco de oro* (the skinny man of gold), Agustín Lara. By the time *Santa* premiered, Lara had already reached mythical proportions in popular Mexican culture.

³⁸ See Ángel Morales, "Santa del Papel al DVD," 12; José de la Colina, "Santa ya centenaria," *Milenio Diario*, January 26, 2008. Some mentions appeared in the early 1990s as well, see José Luis Gallegos, "Pascual Ortiz Rubio, Quien Fuera Presidente de México, dio Facilidades para el Filme "Santa," *Excélsior*, November 5, 1991. In this last article, Gallegos points out that after the success of *Santa* and the optical sound technology, President Ortiz Rubio offered a train to the Rodríguez Brothers to transport their sound equipment from the border to Mexico City.

³⁹ Carlos González Peña states that Lerdo de Tejada and his orchestra served as musical accompaniment for several silent films, but does not say what pieces. See Carlos González Peña, "La decadencia del teatro," *El Mundo Ilustrado*, November 17, 1912, quoted in Aurelio de los Reyes, "La música en el cine mudo en México," 103. For background on Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, see Mario Talavera, *Miguel Lerdo de Tejada: su vida pintoresca y anecdótica* (México: Editorial Compás, 1942).

Lara's beginnings are the stuff of legend. Born to a middle class family in the state of Veracruz, Lara played piano at various sites for popular entertainment including *carpas* (popular tent shows), cabarets, and brothels since 1912. He rose to fame during the 1920s, working in cabarets such as El Cinco Negro, el Héroe, la Casa de Marquesa, and el Agua Azul where it is believed he received the scar on his face, possibly coming to the defense of a prostitute.⁴⁰ Lara soon became a popular and sought-after composer of *canciones* and *revistas* during the late 1920s, beginning with his first registered song with the Sociedad de Autores y Compositores in 1926, *La Prisionera*. After successful performances at the popular Teatro Lírico and the Teatro Politeama, Lara performed in the inaugural program for Emilio Azcárraga's XEW "La Voz de América Latina desde México" ("The Voice of Latin America from Mexico").⁴¹ Lara was soon offered his own radio program called "La hora azul" ("The blue hour"), which he used as a space to premiere his new music.

Lara's rise to fame paralleled the mass migration from the countryside to the metropolis after the armed struggle of the Revolution displaced so many. In this migration, musicians and songwriters brought with them their regional performance

⁴⁰ Some have claimed that the scar is a result of fighting for the Villista forces during the Revolution, acting as a pianist-spy. See Agustín Caro, "El tema de Lara," *Cine* (December 1949): 20.

⁴¹ Other artists that participated in XEW's inaugural program are the police orchestra led by Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, Ana María Fernández, Néstor Mesta Chayres, Ortiz Tirado, Juan Arvizu, Josefina Chacha Aguilar, la Marimba Chiapaneca de los Hermanos Foquez and Lucha Reyes. See Yolanda Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, rev. ed. (1978; repr., México: Oceano, 2008), 70-71; Joy Elizabeth Hayes, *Radio Nation: Communication, Popular Culture, and Nationalism in Mexico, 1920-1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000); José Luis Ortiz Garza, *La Guerra de las ondas* (México: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, 1992).

styles, which found a crucial space on the popular Mexican stage and the *canCIÓN mexicana* tradition (this is discussed more in chapter four). Lara, however, represented a more modernized and urban sound due to his performance background, song topics, and application of diverse musical styles. According to Yolanda Moreno Rivas, “Lara representaba la modernidad para esa nueva clase media citadina que había abandonado sus valores provincianos que determinaban y originaban su clase social” (“Lara represented the modernity of the city’s new middle classes that had abandoned the provincial values determined and originated in their social class”).⁴² Because of the mass diffusion of radio broadcasting, Lara’s show and his music reached a wide and diverse audience from all social classes.

By the 1930s, Lara’s commercial success led him to work in the new sound film industry, immediately finding a niche in films with an urban backdrop, contrasting those films set in the countryside, such as the *comedia ranchera*.⁴³ In an interview with Paco I. Taibo I, Lara explains that he enjoys the folkloric ranch comedies, but would never perform in them: “No es mi género. Si me quiere usted preguntar la razón por la que no escribo canciones rancheras, le diré que porque yo no soy de rancho. Yo soy de cabaret. Y el cabaret no se da en los cerros, sino en los barrios” (“It is not my genre. If you want to ask me the reason why I do not write rancheras, I will tell you it is because I am not

⁴² Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 105.

⁴³ In September 1932, the same year *Santa* premiered, *El Universal* printed announcements and advertisements for another Agustín Lara *revista* titled *Chaquiras*, written for the Compañía del Politeama.

from a ranch. I'm from the cabaret. And the cabaret is not in the hills, but in the city neighborhoods").⁴⁴

Lara's musical style, affectionately labeled as *lاراismo* or *el estilo lارiano*, developed during a time when foreign musical influences, especially from the United States, invaded the country. In order to create something original, Lara familiarized himself with the rhythms and the harmonic and melodic structures of foxtrots, danzones, and tangos. He is most known for his boleros, which link to his past experiences in brothels and cabarets, detailing the pains of the fallen woman. These songs became a fixture in Mexican cinema set in the brothel and cabaret and added to Lara's romanticism, yet he acknowledges the cinematic cabarets are not the establishments he has come to know so well: "Nuestro cine no conoció los cabarets y yo sí los conocí. Los que aparecen en el pantalla están entre blanco y tinta" ("Our cinema did not know the cabarets, but I did. Those that appear on screen are between white and ink").⁴⁵ Regardless, Lara became the mouthpiece for the marginalized, for unrequited love, and the pain of loss. Oscar Leblanc paints a more quixotic and detailed portrait of Lara:

Lara, que fuera primero un forjador de poemas dolorosos, un cancionero del pesimismo, descubrió –y éste fue su mayor acierto para triunfar y obtener fácilmente la popularidad, que solamente debería convertirse en el cantor de la mujer, y como ya conocía el alma de muchas pobres mujeres atormentadas, puso en verso los detalles vulgares del gran dolor humano y comenzó siendo poeta mayor que músico.

⁴⁴ Paco I. Taibo I. *La música de Agustín Lara en el cine* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989), 66.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

(Lara, who was the first forger of painful poems, a singer of pessimism, discovered –and this was his best bet for succeeding and obtaining popularity easily, that he only needed to become a singer of women, and because he already knew the soul of many poor, tormented women, he put in verse the vulgar details of the great human pain, and began to be a poet rather than a musician.)⁴⁶

Lara's importance in Mexican culture is best summed up by Carlos Monsiváis: "Sin Agustín Lara, no existiría la mitad del cine mexicano" ("Without Agustín Lara, half of Mexican cinema would not have existed").⁴⁷

Santa's Bolero

In Gamboa's narrative, Hipólito dedicates waltzes, danzas, and danzones to Santa, but in the 1932 sound production, Santa's experiences in the brothel and as a prostitute are syncretized with a bolero played on the piano and a danzón performed by a Dixieland jazz band.⁴⁸ Santa's music in the film corresponds to then current trends in popular music, which transfer the time period over from the Porfiriato to the 1920s or 1930s,

⁴⁶ Oscar Leblanc, "Lara, el Larismo y las mujeres," *El Universal Ilustrado*, June 9, 1932.

⁴⁷ Macarena Quiroz Arroyo, "Sin Agustín Lara no existiría la mitad del cine mexicano: Carlos Monsiváis," *Excélsior*, February 4, 1991.

⁴⁸ There is one more bolero used in the film. According to an article in *Excélsior*, Juan Alberto Villegas contributed his bolero *Amor de Ciego*, which is played in a brief scene in which Santa is dancing around her room in Doña Elvira's place. Some believe that the bolero is Lara's work, but Villegas wrote to *Excélsior* to clear up the matter. Villegas does not receive credit in the film, although the article states that it was played consistently over the radio. See "La música de Santa es de dos autores," *Excélsior*, April 16, 1932.

creating a recognizable sound bridge for audiences.⁴⁹ Each musical selection, however, functions differently in the narrative.

Agustín Lara did not create the bolero, but helped Mexicanize and diffuse it for mass audiences particularly in 1929 when he premiered his bolero *Imposible* at the Teatro Politeama.⁵⁰ An integral part of the *canción romántica* tradition because of its sentimental lyrics and singing style, the Mexican bolero derives from the Cuban bolero, a 2/4 song and dance form with Afrocuban influences, which included a *cinquillo* rhythmic pattern (Example 1.1), also heard in the *danzón*.⁵¹



Example 1.1: *Cinquillo* rhythm

⁴⁹ The period shift is also evident in the characters clothing, which reflects fashion trends from the 1920s and 1930s, particularly the short hair cuts, which may reflect the culture of *Las pelonas* (Mexican flappers), urban women influenced by the short hair cuts of silent film actresses and fashionistas from Hollywood and Paris. Photographs and artist conceptions on *las pelonas* can be seen in the popular Mexico City magazine *Revista de Revistas* from the 1920s and are associated with the foxtrot, Charleston, and jazz music. For more information on *Las pelonas*, see Anne Rubenstein, “The War on *Las Pelonas*: Modern Women and Their Enemies, Mexico City, 1924,” in *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico*, ed. Jocelyn Olcott, Mary Kay Vaughan and Gabriela Cano (Lanham: Duke University Press, 2006), 57-80.

⁵⁰ According to *Bolero: clave del corazón*, Lara wrote this bolero in the house of Margarita Pérez, which he calls “the best and cleanest” brothel in the neighborhood. See *Bolero: clave del corazón* (México: Fundación Ongenerio Alejo Peralta y Díaz Ceballos, IBP, 2004), 88.

⁵¹ Pablo Dueñas and Yolanda Moreno Rivas link the rhythmic structure of the Cuban bolero to Afrocuban contradanza and the habanera through the rhythmic *cinquillo* cell, a succession of five notes in two beats, which corresponds to the clave. See Pablo Dueñas, *Bolero: Historia gráfica y documental* (México: Asociación Mexicana de estudios Fonográficos, 2005), 17; Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 78-129.

It arrived in Mexico gradually via maritime commerce, such as sugar and tobacco routes, and traveling performing troupes, such as the Compañía de Bufos Cubanos, and was absorbed into Mexican musical culture primarily in the Yucatán at the turn of the century.⁵² The bolero in *estilo yucateco* was played almost exclusively on guitars and decelerated from a fast-paced dance to a slower song style. It was in Mexico City, however, that the bolero underwent its transformation into the “urban sound of Mexico,”⁵³ performed and diffused in the *teatro de revistas*, *carpas*, brothels, and cabarets. In these popular spaces the bolero birthed its modern melodic and lyrical characteristics—particularly, as Monsiváis notes, lyrics with testimonial and confessional value.⁵⁴ Sentimental messages of love, of its capture and loss, its confusions and torments, its outcomes joyful and tragic, overtook the bolero’s narratives, both reflecting and reconfiguring the dramatic psyche of 1920s and 1930s urban Mexicans. Stylistically,

⁵² For more information on the development of the bolero, see Dueñas, *Bolero: Historia gráfica y documental*; Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*; María del Carmen de la Peza Casares, *El bolero y la educación sentimental en México* (México: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco, 2001); *Bolero: Clave del corazón* (México: Línea Continua S.A. de C.V., 2004); George Torres, “The Bolero Romántico: From Cuban Dance to International Popular Song,” in *From Tejano to Tango*, ed. Walter Aaron Clark (New York: Routledge, 2002), 151-71; Carlos Monsiváis, “Bolero: A History,” *Mexican Postcards* (London: Verso, 1997), 166-95. For more information on the Caribbean sugar routes, see Bernard Moitt, *Sugar, Slavery, and Society: Perspectives on the Caribbean, India, the Mascarenes, and the United States* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004); Michelle Harrison, *King Sugar: Jamaica, the Caribbean, and the World Sugar Economy* (London: Latin American Bureau, 2001). For more information regarding the Bufos Cubanos, see Jill Lane, *Blackface Cuba* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Robin Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997). While in Mexico in 1919, the Compañía de Bufos Cubanos performed at the Teatro Principal.

⁵³ Mark Pedelty, “The Bolero: the Birth, Life, and Decline of Mexican Modernity,” *Latin American Music Review* 20, no. 1 (Spring-Summer 1999): 36.

⁵⁴ Monsiváis, *Mexican Postcards*, 167.

Lara molded the bolero to fit an urban style by changing instrumentation from strictly guitars to piano and solo voice, and relaxing the rhythmic structure by playing the verses with arpeggios and exaggerated *rubato*.⁵⁵

In *Santa*, the bolero marks an important narrative transition. Santa, newly adjusted to urban life in the brothel, enjoys a slow night with no client traffic. Santa sits with Hipólito and asks him to recount his life. He describes how his mother abandoned him at the school for the blind, promising to see him every week, but never returning. At the end of his story, Santa asks him to play the song he wrote for her, a slow, lyrical bolero, performed with *rubato* on his upright piano:

En la eterna noche
De mi desconsuelo
Tú has sido la estrella que alumbró mi cielo,
Y yo he adivinado
Tu rara hermosura,
Y has iluminado toda mi negrura.

Santa,
Santa mía
Mujer que iluminaste mi existencia;
Santa,
sé mi guía
Por el triste camino de dolor

Aparta de mi senda todas las espinas,
Calienta con tus besos mi desilusión

⁵⁵ Lara's bolero style of the late 1920s heard in *Imposible* from 1929 was influenced by Guty Cárdenas's bolero from 1926, *Nunca*, which utilizes a relaxed Cuban *cinquillo* rhythmic cell and in a binary form. See Enrique Martín and Álvaro Vega, "La canción yucateca," in *La música en México: Panorama del siglo XX*, coord. Aurelio Tello (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010), 253-90.

Santa,
Santa mía,
Alumbra con tu luz mi corazón.

(During the eternal night
Of my grieving
You've been the star that brightens my sky
And I have guessed your rare beauty
You've illuminated my darkness.

Santa,
My Santa
Woman that illuminated my life;
Santa
Be my guide
Down this sad road of pain

Remove these thorns
Erase with kisses my disappointment

Santa,
My Santa
Brighten up my heart with your light.)⁵⁶

An example of empathetic music, this song creates several emotional connections with the characters. Hipólito composes and performs the song, using the bolero as the conduit to express his devotion to Santa and to communicate his frustration over not being able to see her, conveying a sense of longing. Hipólito's identity as the talented blind piano player is only permissible through sound film rather than silent. In the 1918 version of *Santa*, Hipólito appears mute, essentially an empty vessel. Synchronized

⁵⁶ *Santa*, DVD, directed by Antonio Moreno (1932; México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1994).

sound, in particular music, however, allowed Hipólito's character to mark his presence, both aurally and visually, in the narrative.

Hipólito is not only brought to life with synchronized sound, but also serves as an avatar for Lara. Both are piano players in brothels and bear witness to the effects of urban growth and modernization on the moral hierarchies and structures of Mexican society. Eduardo de la Vega states, "En efecto, con la canción "Santa" que inaugura el cine sonoro mexicano, Lara pone en boca del ciego Hipólito toda una filosofía prostibularia que se mantiene a lo largo de seis décadas" ("Indeed, with the song "Santa," which inaugurated Mexican sound cinema, Lara placed in the lips of the blind Hipólito a complete philosophy of the brothel that would persist for six decades").⁵⁷ Lara situates these experiences in the forefront of his boleros, bringing the marginalized into the spotlight, and participating in a new source of consumer culture. The rise and popularity of the bolero and its associations with prostitution, brothels, and cabarets position Lara where, like Hipólito, he becomes the voice of the urban nightlife, maintaining an important role in the modernization of the nation:

Although difficult to conceive of as nationalistic icons, Lara's boleros and their cinematic renderings also participated in the complex of Mexican nation-building . . . musically and cinematically they serve to inscribe the prostitute and the cabaret life with which she is associated as an anti-utopian paradigm for a so-called modern Mexican life.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Eduardo de la Vega, "Los ritmos populares de cine mexicano," *Cinema & Musique: Mexique* (2010): 42.

⁵⁸ Ana M. López, "Of Rhythms and Borders," in *Everynight Life: Culture and Dance in Latin/o America*, ed. Celeste Fraser Delgado and José Esteban Muñoz (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 323.

During the bolero, the camera does not focus solely on “the point of audition”—sound accompanied with a corresponding shot. While Hipólito sings, the camera slowly pans, revealing groups of women at cocktail tables—playing cards, drinking, and/or talking. When they hear the piano introduction, they stop and look at Hipólito, directing the spectator’s focus to the music. Their gazes create an intimate connection with the music, one that is unified in a shared longing, sadness, and understanding. Intriguingly, the center of attention is not Hipólito, but, rather, the secondary characters: the women of the brothel. The camera concentrates on Hipólito’s small audience, constructing a cultural synchresis that is specifically designed to draw sympathy from the spectator. The fact that the song is about Santa and that the moving image is shared with the other women constructs a deeper association between the music and the moving image: Hipólito could have been singing about any one of them, the marginalized and ostracized women of society, which they acknowledge non-verbally through their focused attention and unflinching gazes. As the song nears its conclusion, however, the camera rests on a close-up of Santa’s face as she watches Hipólito play the final chords, shifting attention back onto the protagonist. The bolero is the only musical number that acquires intense focus by the characters, the camera, and, by extension, the spectators, and is the only musical example played in its entirety.

“Danzón dedicado a Santita, la mujer más bella de México”⁵⁹

In his novel, Gamboa repeatedly refers to the danzón as a popular form, performed especially at the Salón Trivoli. He describes the music, or the people’s reaction to the music, as follows:

El danzón estalla con estrépito de tropical tempestad, los timbales y el pistón haciendo retemblar los vidrios de las ventanas, pugnando por romperlos e ir a enardecer a los transeúntes pacíficos que se detienen y tuercen el rostro, dilatan la nariz y sonríen, conquistados por lo que prometen esas armonías errabundas y lúbricas.

Los gendarmes de vigilancia dentro del salón, míranse entre sí, agrio el gesto, y como no pueden prender aquellas notas irreverentes, se atusan los bigotes.

(The danzón explodes with the clamor of a tropical storm, the timbales and the trumpet make the windowpanes shake, striving to break them and rouse the peaceful passersby that stop and distort their face, dilate their noses and smile, won over by the promise of these wandering and lustful harmonies.

The vigilant policemen in the salon look around with a sour expression, and because they cannot arrest those irreverent notes, adjust their whiskers.)⁶⁰

From this description, Gamboa associates the danzón with the tropical and implies that the music is a seductive and almost siren-like sound that could entice anyone merely walking by, except the police who are helpless to contain the music’s seductive power.⁶¹

Gamboa implies a sense of Otherness between those who enjoy and participate in the music versus those that survey.

⁵⁹ “Danzón dedicated to Santita, the most beautiful woman in Mexico.”

⁶⁰ Gamboa, *Santa*, 116.

⁶¹ Moreno Rivas notes that in Mexico the generalized denomination of “música tropical” (“tropical music”) is used to denote any music with Black or Caribbean influence. Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 169.

Much like the bolero, the danzón stems from Afro-Cuban origins. In Cuba, the danzón developed during the late nineteenth century as an instrumental dance genre from Matanzas, exhibiting rhythmic and stylistic influences of the contradanza and danza. Although originating from black slums, Cuba's black middle class and Afro-Cuban social clubs popularized the danzón by appropriating it as a ballroom dance form.⁶² Also like the bolero, the danzón was absorbed into Mexican musical and theatrical culture through trans-national maritime commerce and traveling performing groups, quickly becoming a popular dance form in Veracruz and the Yucatán, mixing with other regional styles. The danzón eventually adapted to Mexico City and experienced its vogue in the dance halls and cabarets during the 1920s, particularly in the Salón México, popularly known as “la catedral del danzón” (“Cathedral of danzón”).⁶³

The danzón is a couples dance that requires the partners to face each other in an embrace, their upper body fairly stationary while the lower moves in small, circular steps from the knees down. The Cuban danzón obliges that the partners hold each other in a close yet loose embrace, which adds to its seductive character. Because of stricter customs of decorum in Mexico, the embrace is not as close, but retains the style's subtle hip motion and the relaxation of the upper and lower body. The musical structure of the

⁶² Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 26.

⁶³ The danzón was also incorporated into the *teatro de revista*. Jesús Flores y Escalante notes that María Conesa, “La Gatita Blanca,” danced the danzón *El papel de Veracruz* in the 1918 *revista*, *Los muchachos* by Pablo Prida and Carlos M. Ortega with music by Manuel Castro Padilla. See Jesús Flores y Escalante, *Salón México: Historia documental y gráfica del danzón en México* (México: Asociación mexicana de estudios fonográficos, A.C., 2006), 192.

Mexican *danzón* introduces an easily recognizable theme, the *estribillo*, usually in duple meter, which repeats three or more times throughout the dance. Other melodic themes occur after each *estribillo* before arriving to the *montuno*, the final theme that ends the work and emphasizes rhythm and torso movements.⁶⁴ During the 1920s and 1930s, the *danzón* was performed by an orchestra of violins, woodwinds (varies between clarinet, saxophone, and flute), horns, and the *timbal*, and featured the signature *cinquillo* rhythm.⁶⁵

In the film, the *danzón* follows the introduction of Jarameño, the Spanish bullfighter deeply infatuated with Santa. In their shared scenes, Santa performs her sex worker duties for the first time. In earlier scenes, she had played the innocent country girl in modest light-colored dresses full of fear and naiveté of her new urban surroundings. In scenes involving Jarameño, however, she dons a low cut black satin dress that clings to her body; her hair is slicked back—she is unmistakably modern, fashionable, and enticing, reminiscent of the Hollywood starlets that graced the covers and entertainment pages of popular Mexico City periodicals.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ See Susan Cashion, “The Mexican *Danzón*: Restrained Sensuality,” in *Dancing Across Borders: Danzas y Bailes Mexicanos*, ed. Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Norma E. Cantú, and Brenda M. Romero (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 237-55.

⁶⁵ Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 166.

⁶⁶ *Revista de Revistas* and *El Universal Ilustrado* regularly featured photo spreads of Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, Marlene Dietrich, Mae West, and Greta Garbo. *El Universal Ilustrado* also included articles entitled “Hollywood’s Ugly Girls,” featuring pictures and articles on those successful actresses (always in supporting roles) in Hollywood who do not fit a model of beauty. Mary Wickes was a particular favorite.

Sexual tension and seduction become quickly associated with the *danzón*. The outdoor patio of a mansion provides the setting where the brothel's prostitutes mingle with Jarameño's entourage. The crowd is first entertained by a live foxtrot played by the jazz band with female vocalist and danced by the chorus girls from the Teatro Politeama.⁶⁷ Santa uses this moment to make Jarameño jealous by sitting away from him and casting her attention on another man. In response to her new client's request for a *danzón*, she describes the bodily gestures of the dance, similar to the description she received in Gamboa's book: "You have to be very close, you know? First, you must do many turns, almost without leaving the same place. And in the second part, you have to shake your hips."⁶⁸ In a style reminiscent of *danzón* in Veracruz, the bandleader shouts out, "*danzón* dedicado a Santita, la mujer más bella de México" ("*danzón* dedicated to Santita, the most beautiful woman in Mexico"). A symbol of cultural exchange, Lara's jazz ensemble, composed of violins, accordions, guitars, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, and drums, strikes up a minor-key *danzón*. As the music begins, Santa and her client hold each other close and proceed to dance in small circles, quickly followed by the rest of the party.

The *danzón* plays a crucial role in demonstrating the synchresis of the dance genre with desire and seduction. First, it occurs when Santa is acting her part as the prostitute and is enjoying herself, solidifying the dance music's association with

⁶⁷ At the time, Lara composed *revistas* for the Teatro Politeama and this chorus line most likely appeared in his works.

⁶⁸ Moreno, *Santa*, DVD Chapter 6.

sexuality. In an early scene, she cowers in the corner, afraid to let the clientele touch her, claiming she did not know how to dance. Now, her clients ask her to teach them how to dance the *danzón*, indicating that she learned that particular dance while living in the brothel and was becoming a master of it, with all its associated meanings and loss of innocence. Here, in the *danzón* scene, Santa is a confident and captivating cosmopolitan woman, who titillates her clients not just with her provocative appearance, but also by being coquettish and teasing them into jealousy. Whereas the bolero offers a sympathetic view to the effects of the urban nightlife, the *danzón* represents the action of that nightlife. Second, the *danzón* is the only musical genre that is explicitly mentioned and described by any of the film's characters. The labeling of the genre and the explanation of the dance moves provide a bridge for the spectator to recognize what is taking place on screen. This is further enhanced when, after Santa and her client begin to dance, the camera zooms in on the band, placing the ensemble in the foreground rather than the intimate dancing on the dance floor.

Santa was the first successful film to incorporate diegetic music and initiated the intimate relationship between cinema and commercially successful music. Differing from Hollywood productions, Mexican films of the 1930s did not depict an elaborate musical revue style, but a more integrated and “natural” performance. Music, however, is still foregrounded and is diegetically central to the prostitute melodramas.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ López, “Of Rhythms and Borders,” 321.

Santa received positive reviews when it premiered in 1932 after extensive sneak peaks in *El Universal*, which featured picture stills from the film and ads for special screenings of clips.⁷⁰ While some ads for the feature label the film as “the first grand national cinematic production,” others stated, “No es una maravilla...pero es una buen película” (“It is not a wonder...but it is a good film”).⁷¹

Santa as Mexico’s first box office success using the internationalized optical sound placed the consumption of popular music and the prostitute into the national spotlight. Author Luz Alba stated: “El éxito de “Santa” en el público se explica por dos razones: la popularidad de la excelente novela de don Federico Gamboa que sirvió de base a la adaptación filmica y la circunstancia de que la película refleje costumbres nuestras” (“The success of ‘Santa’ with the public can be explained for two reasons: the popularity of the excellent novel by Don Federico Gamboa that serves as the base for the films adaptation and the fact that the film reflects our customs”).⁷² The prostitute would still undergo the morality campaigns initiated by the State, but now garnered a stronger presence in the popular imaginary, which would continue to evolve.

⁷⁰ Special screenings for the film took place in February 1932 the Cine Royal, Cine Lux, Cine Alcazar and the Majestic. Ads for *Santa*, *El Universal*, February 27, 1932.

⁷¹ Ad for *Santa*, *El Universal*, March 25, 1932.

⁷² Luz Alba, “Por el mundo de las sombras que hablan,” *El Universal Ilustrado*, July 21, 1932.

Exoticism and the *Rumbera* at the Cabaret

One year after the premiere of *Santa*, Russian director Arcady Boytler adapted a short story by the French author Guy de Maupassant into a new prostitute melodrama. *La mujer del puerto* (1933) follows a similar portrayal of the “fallen woman” narrative of a socially ruined country girl that moves to an urban area and becomes a prostitute, but utilizes the social taboo of incest to push the female protagonist, Rosaura (Andrea Palma), to commit suicide. Following in *Santa*’s musical track model, the film features the ballad *La mujer del puerto* composed by Manuel Esperón, providing an empathetic association to the prostitute in order to elicit sympathy from the spectators for her current condition, while danzones accompany the communal scenes in the brothel in order to solidify the sexuality of the space. Off screen, prostitutes and *ficheras* continued to be targeted by the Department of Public Safety and the State’s moralizing campaigns yet removing these women from these places of work was out of the question. Some feared that if women could not work in these establishments, they would open up their homes to sexual promiscuity, allowing disease and vice to spread faster.⁷³

During the late 1940s, the prostitute melodrama moves from the brothel and into the urban cabaret, branching into the *cabaretera* subgenre and transforms the narrative structure of the “fallen women” to reflect current changes in the social sphere.⁷⁴ Joanne Hershfield argues that economic and social uncertainty, due to the rapid and uneven

⁷³ Elías Hurtado, “El problema de la mujer que trabaja en cabarets,” *El Nacional*, October 15, 1937.

⁷⁴ Cabaret backdrops had been utilized in Mexican cinema during the late 1930s, but the *cabareteras* or *cine de rumberas* are specifically associated with the Miguel Alemán *sexenio* (1946-1952).

changes made during the presidential tenures or *sexenios* of Manuel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946) and Miguel Alemán (1946-1952), enabled a pessimism in the *cabaretera* film and “reflected a world consumed with anxieties of social transformation.”⁷⁵ Both the Ávila Camacho and Alemán *sexenios* are characterized by rapid economic growth and modernization. Ávila Camacho allied Mexico with the United States during World War II, which opened doors once again to dependence on foreign investments and a move toward a more capitalist-based economy. Alemán’s administration continued the industrialization policies of his predecessor and maintained stable relations with the United States, but also instilled more economic greed and corruption. Social conditions for the majority grew grim as Alemán’s economic policies lowered salaries and raised inflation rates, and new labor policies controlled labor for the benefit of the private sector.⁷⁶

As women entered into the modern work force during and after World War II, specific gender roles and Catholic moral codes required rethinking.⁷⁷ The *cabaretera* film attempted to update the role of women in working-class society as they moved away from the sacred domestic space and challenged “male’s tradition of superiority,” and exemplified the cabaret as “a microcosm of the city, with its multiplicity of ethnicities,

⁷⁵ Joanne Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 79. For a discussion regarding economic corruption during the Ávila Camacho and Alemán *sexenios*, see Stephan R. Niblo, *México en los cuarenta: modernidad y corrupción* (México: Oceano, 1999).

⁷⁶ Susan M. Deeds, Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, 7th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 618-20.

⁷⁷ De la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 51.

classes, and expressions of sexuality.”⁷⁸ The *cabaretera* film became a site that challenged the Porfirian moral order that the prostitute melodrama of the 1930s still enforced, transforming into an emblem of a new modernity.⁷⁹

Conveying an atmosphere of excess and decadence, the *cabaretera* film features extended music and dance numbers by utilizing over the top tropical backdrops, which parallels the influx of Afrocuban dance music in *el dancing* since the 1920s and the gradual migration of several Cuban dancers and musicians.⁸⁰ Embedded in the musical sequences in *cabaretera* films such as *Salón México* (1949, dir. Emilio Fernández) and *Aventurera* (1952, dir. Alberto Gout) is an exoticism functioning as desire. In his work on fin-de-siècle exoticism in opera, Gilles de Van asserts that exoticism is a process of knowledge that transforms into a metaphor for desire: “it is an impetus for the other which becomes a mirror of the self, the search for a foreign land which changes into a reflection of one’s own country, the quest for the different that sends us back to the same.”⁸¹ The cabaret serves as space for fantasy, an escape to desire, and a site for the performance of alternative identities in a safe space. The cabaret offered evasion to the sexual repressions of home to a space where all that is forbidden and deemed immoral is

⁷⁸ Ibid., 100.

⁷⁹ Ana M. López, “Tears and Desire: Women and Melodrama in the ‘Old’ Mexican Cinema,” in *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in the Americas*, ed. John King, Ana M. López, Manuel Alvarado (London: BFI Publishing, 1993), 159.

⁸⁰ Other Cuban performers in Mexico include Beny Moré, Dámaso Pérez Prado, Toña la Negra, and Rita Montaner.

⁸¹ Gilles de Van, “Fin de Siècle Exoticism and the Meaning of Far Away,” *Opera Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (1995): 77-78.

normal.⁸² In order to indulge in this escape from Catholic restrictions and engage in fantasy “role playing,” several cabarets utilized themes, backdrops, and decorations to convey Otherness and to encourage the adoption of other identities. The popular Agua Azul, for example, featured escapist murals of international waterfalls and the Club Ba-Ba-Lú featured a tropical décor of palm trees and drums. The club’s advertisements also featured a blackface character playing a conga drum. Other cabarets such as the Bagdad and Estambul featured Middle Eastern backdrops or “*estilo oriental*” (oriental or eastern style).⁸³ The cabaret of actuality was essentially a social and moral withdrawal for the middle class population and, if Agustín Lara asserts that the cabaret in film is not a depiction of the actual cabaret, the cinematic cabaret functions as an escape to a sanitized exoticism. This cinematic cabaret bares similarities to the seraglio of eighteenth century opera, where “the seraglio represented both political and sexual relations: indeed it was an exotic version of absolutism rendered both appealing and repellent by the gendered clarity of its social divisions.”⁸⁴ Audiences viewing the staged seraglio and cabaret were able, in the span of a few hours, to be transported into new and enticing spaces, temporarily transferring their identities for others and participating in this escape from

⁸² See Carlos Monsiváis, “Mexican Cinema: Of Myths and Demystifications,” in *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in the Americas*, ed. John King, Ana, M. López, Manuel Alvarado (London: BFI Publishing, 1993), 145.

⁸³ For more information on cabarets of the 1930s and 1940s, see Armando Jiménez, *Cabarets de antes y de ahora en la ciudad de México* (México: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 1991).

⁸⁴ See Mary Hunter, “The *Alla Turca* Style in the Late Eighteenth Century: Race and Gender in the Symphony and the Seraglio,” in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern Press, 1998), 56.

present society. The allure of the exotic also became important fixtures between 1930 and 1950 in the popular magazines *Revista de Revistas* and *El Universal Ilustrado*, which visually articulate the exotic in and outside of Mexican culture.⁸⁵ Photographs of Middle Eastern markets, tropical landscapes in Brazil, villages in West Africa, and even Mexican beaches embellished these pages, informing the urban reader of life outside of the metropolis.

The adoption of exotic places adorned the stages in the *cabaretera* films, creating a space where the images and sounds of the Other were imported and translated into a Mexican context. A central component to this construction is the *rumbera*. Stemming from the Afro-Cuban popular dance the rumba, the *rumbera* is the female dancer who typically performs stylized rumbas and other dances for audiences as part of a cabaret show and is perceived as a figure of sexist pleasure.⁸⁶ The *rumberas* of Mexican cinema called “*Las reinas del Trópico*” (The queens of the tropics) include María Antonienta Pons, Ninón Sevilla, Amalia Aguilar, Rosa Carmina, and Meche Barba.⁸⁷ With the

⁸⁵ Gabriela Pulido Llano, *Mulatas y negros cubanos en la escena Mexicana, 1920-1950* (México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2010), 88.

⁸⁶ Moore, *Afrocubanismo*, 285. An early precursor to the *rumbera* comes from the *tiple* (soprano) performers from the *género chico* and *teatro frívolo* (spicy theater), which feature actresses who sing, dance, and act with flair or *chispa*. The scant costuming, music, and provocative choreography allow the actresses to flaunt their figures while singing and dancing a musical number, appealing to the mass, primarily male, audiences. When burlesque shows from Paris arrived in 1925, the *teatro frívolo* was quick to respond with its own interpretation: *Mexican Rataplán* featuring “las primeras ‘venus modernas de huarache’” (“First ‘modern Venuses wearing huaraches’”) appearing nude on stage. See “Las abuelitas de las rumberas” *Somos* 10, no. 189 (November 1999): 82.

⁸⁷ See Fernando Muñoz Castillo, *Las reinas del Trópico* (México: Grupo Azabache, 1993).

exception of Meche Barba, these dancers took part in the transnational move from Cuba to Mexico that permeated the period.

The *rumbera* exercises her exoticness primarily through her dance. In her discussion of the exotic in Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen*, Susan McClary argues that Carmen's seductive dance, sexually driven by her swinging hips and twisting body, is inextricably linked to dance of the Orient, by which Carmen Others herself from the rest of the characters on stage. McClary further suggests that Carmen's depiction through sensuous dance "would not be a problem, were it not for the mind/body anxieties" evident in late-nineteenth-century French culture.⁸⁸ Because of the State's past stronghold on public health campaigns and the deeply embedded Porfirian moral codes and Catholic indoctrinations that transferred into 1930s and 1940s cinema, the *rumbera* serves as challenging figure. Unable to depict nudity or sexually promiscuous behavior due to the close scrutiny of the *Legion mexicana de la decencia* (Mexican Legion of Decency),⁸⁹ the *rumberas* execute their sexuality and exoticism through their gyrating hips, thrusting pelvis, and other provocative movements to the popularized and commercialized music imported from Cuba—such as the rumba, mambo, and conga—thoroughly enjoying seducing the audience on and off screen. In conjunction with space

⁸⁸ Susan McClary, *Georges Bizet Carmen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 55-56.

⁸⁹ This Legion began during the 1930s to censor questionable moral material in cinema, which includes sex, drug and alcohol use. When the *cabaretera* films became popular with moviegoers, the Legion distributed material regarding the appropriate uses of cinema in society, which includes upholding morals. Examples of their propaganda are scarce, however an article in *Cinema Reporter* details some of the League's preoccupations. See "Legion mexicana de la decencia," *Cinema Reporter*, September 27, 1952. I owe special thanks to Leopolo Gaytán at the Cineteca Nacional for sharing this information with me.

and music, the *rumbera* as a representation of the exotic does not strictly follow discourses of Orientalism, which focus on colonialist representations of the Middle East, East and South Asia, and Africa constructed by the European imagination,⁹⁰ but serves a conduit or a bridge to the retranslation of principally Afrocuban musical cultures in Mexico and explorations in the changing social mores executed in a space where exoticism functions as a release valve for the middle class.

Transferring from the prostitute melodrama of the 1930s, the bolero and danzón maintain crucial positions within the *cabaretera* film, but more music is incorporated in order to feature the *rumbera* and keep pace with transformations in the cultural climate. This is best demonstrated in *Víctimas del Pecado* (*Victims of Sin*, 1950), the third prostitute melodrama made by the famous team of director Emilio “El Indio” Fernández, cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa, and screenwriter Mauricio Magdaleno, which paints a seductive and compelling visual and aural interpretation of the urban nightlife.⁹¹

***Víctimas del Pecado* (1950)**

Víctimas del Pecado tells the story of Violeta (Ninón Sevilla), a headlining *rumbera* at the Club Changoo, who adopts the prostitute Rosa’s (Margarita Ceballos)

⁹⁰ There is an exception. In the film, *Aventurera* (1952), Ninón Sevilla dances in a number entitled *In the Persian Market* written by English composer Albert Ketèlby (1875-1959). An example of English Imperial music, the piece musically depicts camel caravans and snake charmers with the use of pentatonic scales. In the film, Sevilla dresses as a belly dancer, performing in a harem (reinterpreting the conception of a Persian market) while men in turbans smoking hookahs, look on. The effect is a double exoticism and a performance for an audience on stage (the “Persian” men), for an audience in the diegesis (the spectators in the cabaret), then for an audience in the extra-diegesis (the spectators watching the film).

⁹¹ Previous prostitute melodramas include *Las abandonadas* (1944) and *Salón México* (1948).

affections of the baby's father, the *pachuco*-pimp, Rodolfo (Rodolfo Acosta).⁹² After Violeta is forced to leave the club due to her new role as mother, she becomes a prostitute to support her adopted son, Juanito. She meets the generous and kind Don Santiago (Tito Junco), who offers her employment at his cabaret La Máquina Loca (The Crazy Machine). Violeta reprises her star status and becomes a successful dancer again. Her time there is short lived, however, when Rodolfo returns after a stint in prison and kills Don Santiago in order to gain control over Violeta and Juanito. When Rodolfo attempts to harm Juanito, Violeta kills him and is thrown in prison while Juanito works on the streets to survive. Unlike *Santa*, Violeta does not succumb to death in the end, but is surprisingly redeemed by the State solely because of her determination to be a good mother and provider for her adopted child.

The cabarets in *Víctimas del Pecado* are the central locales where the action—physical fighting, arguments, and music and dance performance—take place. The Club Changoo and La Máquina Loca are constructed and manipulated by Fernández and Figueroa,⁹³ and are culturally syncretized with different music and dances to match the social divisions of the clientele in each separate establishment: the Club Changoo uses commercialized mambos, boleros, and musical fusions to entertain a middle-class

⁹² A *pachuco* refers to a youth subculture that developed during the 1930s and 1940s in southwest United States, whose emblem was the zoot suit and favored jazz and swing music. For more information, see Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1985), 9-28.

⁹³ Ceri Higgins, *Gabriel Figueroa: Nuevas Perspectivas* (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2008), 202.

audience, and La Máquina Loca features rumbas performed by smaller ensembles for the working class.

The Club Changoo is a large two-floor nightclub with a central dance space visible from the second story, allowing spectators to look down on to the dance floor, providing a bird's eye view of the dancers. Figueroa's vision for the club is strikingly similar to his dance-hall construction in *Salón México*, situated on a dark, narrow city-street with neon, hanging lights. The club's name, Changoo (an exaggerated or satiric take on Changó or Shangó), refers to the most popular *orisha*⁹⁴ in the practice of *santería*.⁹⁵ Because of the prevalence of Catholicism in Cuba, Changó is commonly, and surprising, juxtaposed with the, or camouflaged as, Santa Bárbara. He is able to move from one gender to another in order to comply with both interpretations of *santería* practice and Catholicism. In addition to gender bending, Changó is also worshipped as the greatest drummer, with his own characteristic colors, songs, rhythms and dances:

This god of thunder, fire, and lightning also owns the sacred drums to which all initiates have to be presented. Changó enjoys dancing, drumming, and every manifestation of fun and merriment. In the new environment, Changó is a loud-mouthed extrovert, a libertine who is always chasing after women.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ An *orisha* is a divine supernatural force within the Yoruba religion. Cubans practicing *santería* also use *santos* (saints), creating a connection to Catholicism.

⁹⁵ *Santería*, or *Regla de Ocha*, refers to the Yoruba religion practiced in Cuba. The religion was brought over from Yoruba (northwest Africa) during the slave trade during the 19th century, Cuba's peak period in sugar industry and commerce. The term, however, speaks to several variations. It commonly refers to the synthesis of Catholic and West African religions. See Mercedes Cros Sandoval, *Worldview, the Orichas, and Santería: Africa to Cuba and Beyond* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 229.

Known for his seductive nature, inherent *machismo*, and mastery of music and dance, the cultural meanings of Changó are fixed to the cabaret, making the Club Changoo a critical venue for viewing the importation of a more commercialized and consumable musical culture.

The Club Changoo's headlining performers further enhance this importation. The Changoo's star vocalist is Rita Montaner, a Cuban mulatto singer and follower of *santería*, who performed with the Cuban *teatro vernáculo* and zarzuela, and is considered by such scholars as Robin Moore as a "cultural mediator" for performing Afro-Cuban music in a "sophisticated manner."⁹⁷ She also plays Violeta's godmother and is responsible for finding Violeta the *rumbera* position. The featured ensemble is the Pérez Prado Orchestra led by Cuban born Dámaso Pérez Prado, who is credited for bringing the mambo to Mexico and "Mexicanizing" the genre.⁹⁸ Through the incorporation of jazz band instrumentation, experimental rhythmic elements, and modern uses of dissonance, Pérez Prado and his orchestra won box office success in theaters, nightclubs, and the

⁹⁷ See Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 174-75. For more information regarding Rita Montaner, see Ramón Fajardo Estrada, *Rita Montaner: Testimonio de una época* (La Habana: Fondo Editorial Casa de las Américas, 1997).

⁹⁸ José Agustín, *Tragicomedia Mexicana I: La vida en México de 1940 a 1970*, 2nd ed. (México: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, S.A. de C.V., 2007), 94. The mambo is often defined as the sound of the Alemán administration. Mambos were frequently used in the *cabaretera* films in this period and also in the third wave Mexican cinema of the 1990s. In his controversial film, *La ley de herodes* (1994), director Luis Estrada presents a scathing look at the corruption and greed that prevailed in Mexico during Alemán's presidency. The music used to accompany the more crucial scenes depicting the exploitation and malfeasance executed by the protagonist Juan Vargas (Damián Alcázar) on the citizens of the small pueblo are mambos performed by Santiago Ojeda and his orchestra, La Orquesta del Mambo Kid.

cinema.⁹⁹ Lastly, the Cuban *rumbera* popularly known in Mexico as “la rubia con piernas de oro” (“the blond with legs of gold”), Ninón Sevilla, stars as the blond Venus protagonist, Violeta.

During the first musical number of the film, Violeta is introduced, dancing to *Changó*, enforcing the club’s theme. The number begins with a close up shot of Montaner singing the entrance, then zooms out to reveal several lines of female dancers, whose faces are obscured by dark lighting. It is not clear when these dancers enter, but, as the camera zooms out to a long shot of the dance floor, they suddenly appear already dancing. Violeta emerges from backstage dramatically and the stage light follows her movements, standing out amongst the other dancers with her blond hair and her ruffled dress with an open split on her left side, revealing white bloomers and her famous shapely legs. The other dancers, all brunettes with large bows in their hair, don a variation of Violeta’s dress, but stay in the darkness, making Violeta the focal point of the performance.

Anempathetically, this scene introduces Violeta as a *rumbera*, not a prostitute, and, as Dolores Tierney notes, the camera places her in voyeuristic terms: “Violeta’s dance sequences are shot mainly in high angle, long shot or plan américain that show her whole or almost her whole body.”¹⁰⁰ Figueroa, who was a musician in his youth,

⁹⁹ Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 177-79.

¹⁰⁰ Dolores Tierney, *Emilio Fernández* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 141. The plan américain refers to a medium-long shot, a shot that captures the whole body and shows their surroundings in relation to the character. For definition on the different camera shots and angles, see Susan Hayward, *Cinema Studies: the Key Concepts*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006).

captures Violet's seductiveness by focusing on her through these shots that, when cutting from one shot to another, match the drumming rhythms. There are occasional crosscut shots to Montaner, but the camera envelops Violeta, offering different angles of her from several positions on the dance floor, displaying her movements with the music.

Musically, this opening number is a synthesis of two musical practices, *santería* and mambo, making an exact genre not easily identifiable. This interpretation of *Changó* juxtaposes a "mambo-ized" version of high brass accompaniment performed by the Pérez Prado orchestra during Montaner's entrance followed by rhythmic ostinatos played exclusively on congas, bongos, and güiro (this makeup is called *bembé*) instead of the more traditional *batá* drums.¹⁰¹ The rhythms played by the percussion do not necessarily imitate traditional *batá* rhythms of salute for Changó, but because of the isolation of the percussion with their repetitive ostinato, a *santería* musical ceremony is implied. Brass instruments are not used in the ceremonial performance and chant for Changó or any other *orisha* and its use here suggests a more consumer friendly performance practice, overlapping implied ceremonial rhythms of the percussion with the familiar sounds of mambo, without moving out of the ritualistic atmosphere.

¹⁰¹ In the ceremonial style of *gümilere*, *batá* drums are traditionally used, as they are one of the many voices of the *orishas*, representing the embodiment of power. For more information on *batá* drumming and *santería* worship, see John Amira and Steven Cornelius, *The Music of Santería: Traditional Rhythms of the Batá Drums* (Tempe: White Cliffs Media, Inc., 1991); Migene Gonzalez-Wippler, *Santería: African Magic in Latin America* (New York: the Julien Press, Inc., 1973); Peter Manuel, *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 19-24; Fernando Ortiz, *La música afro-cubana* (Madrid: Ediciones Jucar, 1974); Maya Roy, *Cuban Music: From Son and Rumba to the Buena Vista Social Club and Timba Cubana* (London: Latin American Bureau, 1998).

Montaner sings a reinterpretation of the *batá* chant for Changó, *oba eré*, in Lucumí and in the traditional call and response form. From the scene, it can be assumed that the accompanying dancers and the musicians sing the responsorial, but we, as spectators, do not, however, see them sing at any point. A weak example of diegetic construction, the sounds of singing are heard before the dancers appear, indulging in the illusion that these women are singing, which, when coupled with their sudden appearance, elucidates an almost magical environment: they come out of nowhere. Violeta's vocal interjections are shouts of Changó while her dance invokes several movements derived from folkloric *santería* dance practice—dancing in circles, moving arms back and forth while hands are on her waist, and thrusting her hips from side to side. Her performance also reinterprets *santería* practice: a man always dances for Changó, never a woman. In this sense, Violeta embodies the gender-bending capabilities of Changó. It is unlikely that Fernández, Pérez Prado, Montaner, or Sevilla wanted to recreate a traditional *santería* ceremony, but it is clear that there are cultural borrowings from *santería* musical practices with fusions of brass from the mambo craze to create a new consumable product and introduce Violeta with some flair.

Still following the model of the bolero as empathetic music, singer Pedro Vargas performs *Pecadora (Female Sinner)*, composed by the bolerista Agustín Lara, after the prostitute Rosa places her baby in a garbage bin to please Rodolfo.¹⁰² Rosa returns with him to the club and is confronted by Violeta as to the whereabouts of the child. Through

¹⁰² Vargas also sings the Agustín Lara's bolero *Aventurera* in the film by the same name.

her sobs, Rosa confesses all that really matters to her is Rodolfo and tells Violeta where to find the baby. Violeta runs out of the club and Rosa is left sobbing by herself.

Much like in *Santa*, the bolero is performed in entirety and juxtaposed with suggestive camera close-ups, designed to elicit a sympathetic response from the spectator. The effect, however, is not as powerful as it is in *Santa* because the *Pecadora* scene provides an artificial empathy divorced from Rosa, but fueled by Vargas's performance. In advertisements for the film in *Cinema Reporter* and *El Universal*, Pedro Vargas acts as an advertising tool for the film yet his presence is short.¹⁰³ Inexplicable in the narrative, he appears at the Club Changoo with his left arm in a sling and participates in the film only to sing the bolero and cast sympathetic glances in Rosa's direction. His presence is written into the narrative by the master of ceremonies as the club's special guest:

Esta noche el Cabaret Changoo se viste de gala. Honra su presencia, la gloria más grande que ha dado a México con su canción. Para demostrar nuestro cariño y nuestra admiración, demos un fuerte aplauso a Pedro Vargas!

(Tonight the Cabaret Changoo is in full-dress. It is honored by the presence of the greatest glory of Mexico's song. To show our affection and our admiration, let us give a strong applause to Pedro Vargas!)¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ In the ads from *El Universal* and *Cinema Reporter* February 1951, Pedro Vargas's name appears larger than Rita Montaner, but underneath the Pérez Prado orchestra. These ads ranged from full page to small sections. In smaller ads, his name was always present, sometimes bumping off the name of the film's underscoring composer Antonio Díaz Conde.

¹⁰⁴ "Chapter 3," *Víctimas del Pecado*, DVD, directed by Emilio Fernández (1950; México: Zima Entertainment, 2006).

When Vargas sings the opening verse, the camera zooms in to a close up of his face, his gaze drifting towards Rosa's direction yet she is not shown. It is not until he sings the word "*pecadora*" that the camera cuts to a medium shot of Rosa sobbing at the table. The synchresis of the bolero to the distraught Rosa implies that the song is singling out her situation, but the camera does not reflect this with consistency. Instead of fixing on Rosa, the gaze focuses on the singing Vargas and strings players in the orchestra, creating a confusing effect. How can the spectator sympathize with Rosa if Pedro Vargas takes up the majority of the frame?

Lara's bolero, accompanied by strings, piano, and percussion, details the commercial commodity of the prostitute in his lyrics, implying that the female sinner is unhappy because she does not know how to sell her heart:

¿Por qué te hizo el destino pecadora
si no sabes vender el corazón?
¿Por qué pretende odiarte quien te adora?
¿Por qué vuelve a quererte quien te odió?

Si cada noche tuya es una aurora,
si cada nueva lágrima es el sol,
¿Por qué te hizo el destino pecadora,
si no sabes vender el corazón?

(Why would fate make you a sinner
if you do not know how to sell your heart?
Why does he who adores you pretend to hate you?
Why does he who hates you come back to love you?)

If every one of your nights is a dawn,
if each new tear is the sun,
Why would fate make you a sinner
if you do not know how to sell your heart?)¹⁰⁵

The bolero details the difficulty in being a prostitute as she has not chosen her fate, but is encouraged to sell her love convincingly. Because she is a sinner, her clients pretend not to love her, but continue to return to her, again and again. This bolero not only details Rosa's situation as fate deals her a harsh hand, re-enforced by Rodolfo's *machismo* and selfishness, but also highlights those contradictions inflicted on prostitutes by society: despite their circumstances, women who are prostitutes are considered to be "bad women," and yet men cannot do without them. In a film review, the critic mysteriously named V.V. places momentary attention on Lara's bolero:

La pequeña historia es un bolero de Agustín Lara, con letra en homenaje a las señoras alegres que suelen ser tan tristes y desdichadas. ¡Otro canto más sentimetalón, para lo buenas que resultan las mujeres malas! Por supuesto se canta "Pecadora" del ya temporalmente inmortal músico-poeta.

(The small story is a bolero by Agustín Lara, with lyrics in homage to the happy women that turn out to be sad and unlucky. Another overly sentimental song for the good ones that become bad women! Of course people already sing "Pecadora" by this temporarily immortal musician-poet.)¹⁰⁶

After Violeta's *Changó* dance scene, the Pérez Prado orchestra performs a swing number that features Rodolfo dancing with one of the *ficheras*. Although Pérez Prado is known for his mambos, his orchestra regularly played swing and other jazz music when

¹⁰⁵Lyrics are taken from the film. The lyrics can also be found Mario Kuri-Aldana, and Vicente Mendoza Martínez, *Cancionero Popular Mexicano tomo dos* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1992), 303.

¹⁰⁶ V.V. "Film de la semana," *Mañana*, February 10, 1951.

traveling on tour. The swing dance, however, paints a ridiculous portrait of Rodolfo, as he clumsily dances in his large zoot suit. Sergio de la Mora argues that Rodolfo represents a negative model for Mexican masculinity, playing a cold *pachuco*-pimp who makes life for Violeta difficult. In his role as *pachuco*, Rodolfo's speech, a mixture of Spanish, French, English, and Caló, marks him as decadent and an attractive yet "repulsive emblem of the cosmopolitan dandy." De la Mora adds, "his hip *pachuco* fashion style and subcultural linguistic and corporeal expressions are caricatured as narcissistic and vulgar and are marked as not Mexican."¹⁰⁷

The film premiered at a time when the United States and Mexico engaged in the Bracero Program, a transnational agreement that temporarily imported workers, agricultural and railway, from Mexico to the U.S. for relief during World War II. The program continued into the 1950s and promoted a seasonal migratory back and forth across the border. Although intended to provide work for many Mexican citizens, the program received questionable receptions from the Mexican public due to low wages and maltreatment. Some felt that this was an embarrassment to the country: "En México, la contratación de braceros constituyó un espectáculo deprimente, que hablada más de nuestra propia miseria y de lacras de funestas immoralidades administrativas" ("In Mexico, the contracting of braceros constituted a depressing spectacle that spoke more to our current misery and the deadly scourge of administrative immorality").¹⁰⁸ As the

¹⁰⁷ De la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 57.

¹⁰⁸ "Los braceros y el decoro de la nación," *Hoy*, February 24, 1951.

pachuco was a youth subculture in the south west of the United States, it is likely that it crossed the borders with the *braceros*. As a result, audiences perceived the *pachuco* as a suspicious character due to his cultural hybridity. In the aforementioned review by V.V., s/he illustrates this interpretation of the *pachuco*:

Algo excelente en el fondo temático de *Víctimas del Pecado*, es que alecciona contra el tipo de “cinturita,” del *pachuco* por otros hasta celebrado, ridiculizándolo al extremo de que parezca –tal como es –repugnante, y nada propio para imitarlo como degeneración hombruna.

(Something excellent in the background of *Víctimas del Pecado* is the instructing against the “small waist” type of the *pachuco* who has even been praised by others, ridiculing him to such extremes that he appears as what he is, disgusting, and nothing to be imitated since he is a mannish degenerate.)¹⁰⁹

Unlike other musical scenes at the Changoo, the swing scene is cut short, providing the spectator only moments of music to audibly associate with Rodolfo. Feeding off of Pérez Prado’s reputation, Violeta’s next performance is to a mambo, which follows the rescue of Rosa’s baby from the garbage bin. She brings him to the Changoo, much to the dismay of the club’s owner Don Gonzalo, who adamantly and violently orders the baby out and demands that Violeta perform, pushing her out on the dance floor. Functioning anempathetically, the mambo *La cocaleca* features Violeta dancing solo for the first time and places a brighter spotlight on the Pérez Prado Orchestra.

Pérez Prado, an Afrocuban pianist and composer, performed in cabarets in Havana before arriving in Mexico. He is most known for his internationalization of the

¹⁰⁹ V.V., “Film de la semana,” 11.

mambo, a genre that utilizes small, repetitive rhythmic fragments in a cyclic structure, and utilizing a jazz band. Because of the cyclic and repetitive qualities of the mambo, the structure was easy for musicians to play and infectious with crowds, becoming an important component to *el dancing*. According to Alberto Dallal,

Verdaderas preparaciones sinfónicas, las piezas de Pérez Prado inducían a mover los pies y a hacerlo de una manera nueva que parecía incorporar al ritmo las innovaciones de la era tecnológica. Hoy el contagio se da por sí solo porque el mambo es parte funcional y fundamental de la cultura urbana popular. Pero Pérez Prado no se queda en buen músico. También sabe captar las inquietudes de los grupos sociales, los cambios del tiempo y las posibilidades de “reivindicación” artística.

(True symphonic inventions, Pérez Prado’s pieces induced you to move your feet and to do it in a manner that seemed to translate the innovations of the technological age into rhythm. Now the contagion occurs by itself because mambo is a functional and essential part of popular urban culture. But Pérez Prado is not only a good musician. He also knows how to capture the concerns of social groups, the changes of time and the possibilities of artistic “reclaim.”)¹¹⁰

Much like the *Changó* scene, Violeta highlights her sexuality visually as she dons another elaborate, ruffled costume that exposes her torso (but not her belly button) and legs. During her performance, Violeta is enthusiastic and smiling, which contrasts to her previous desperation in finding food for the crying baby, making the musical sequence an important character construction for Violeta: she is able to perform her number while she sets aside her personal feelings of distress about her new responsibility, which parallels the new struggles and challenges faced by women joining the work force. As spectators, we seem to forget her worries and troubles as she switches quickly into performer mode.

¹¹⁰ Dallal, *El “dancing” mexicano*, 172.

Violeta's ability to shift from mother to performer contributes to the changing perceptions of motherhood and the new roles for workingwomen in Mexican society, another symptom of the period's modernization.

After Violeta is fired from the Club Changoo for not giving up the baby, she begins to work at La Máquina Loca, a cabaret run by the businessman Don Santiago, located near the railroad tracks by Nonoalco Bridge, providing another vision of an urban, modernized environment, but from a lower class area. Figueroa's constructed landscape contrasts to his previous cityscape compositions, particularly to his bright nightlife representation of the Club Changoo. While the Changoo utilizes an electric tropical façade to promote its central theme of the tropical, La Máquina Loca adopts the railroad as its key symbol. Since the Porfirato, the railroad is featured as an important icon, connoting an optimistic modernization.¹¹¹ Its position in the film, however, marks a significant association with urban deterioration, a product of the industrial modernization that characterized the Alemán period. The smoke from the railroads and the obscurity of the surrounding area envelops the cabaret in a dark atmosphere, exhibiting the period's dirty side of urbanization:

¹¹¹ Several silent films during the 1910s featured the railroad traveling across the country and utilized by revolutionaries. The presence of mobility was a great attraction in silent film, featuring trains and automobiles. For more information on the images of the railroad in Mexican silent cinema, see Ana M. López, "Early Latin American Cinema," *Cinema Journal* 40, no. 1 (2000): 48-78.

El puente y la barriada de Nonoalco han sido explotados muchas veces en el cine nacional, pero hasta ahora, gracias a *Víctimas del pecado*, no adquirió carta de naturaleza. Es un hallazgo haber situado la entrada de ese cabaret, La Máquina Loca, en un recodo de la vía del tren, donde luego se desarrolla la tragedia culminante del *film*. Y allí consiguen Emilio Fernández y Gabriel Figueroa una de las más bellas estampas cinematográficas, de gran sabor poético, cuando la protagonista se asoma al puente al paso de los trenes en un amanecer brumoso y cargado de humo que envuelve su figura enlutada. Página de antología en el difícil arte de dirigir y fotografiar películas.

(The bridge and neighborhood of Nonoalco have been exploited many times in national cinema, but only now, thanks to *Víctimas del pecado*, has it acquired the right of citizenship. It was a happy finding to situate the entrance of La Máquina Loca, at the railroad tracks, where later, the film's culminating tragedy would take place. And there Emilio Fernández and Gabriel Figueroa obtain one of the most beautiful cinematographic images, of great poetic flavor, when the protagonist watches from the bridge the trains go by during a misty and smoky dawn that envelops her in mourning. A page from the anthology of the difficult art of directing and shooting films.)¹¹²

With a different location comes a different clientele. The Changoo catered to a middle class crowd with performances by headlined artists. La Máquina Loca, however, caters to the working class, evident in the heavy attendance of railway workers. The cabaret is a two-story space much like the Changoo, but is modestly constructed from wood and does not boast any decorative theme. It also does not feature an illustrious orchestra or headlined performers, but consists of a small drum circle consisting of congas and bongos, performing different music that matches the atmosphere.

After the featured dancer becomes too drunk to dance the number, Violeta takes over, reassuring Don Santiago that she used to perform it at the Club Changoo. Instead of performing in a revealing costume with ruffles and bows, Violeta wears a modern light

¹¹² “Gabriel Figueroa,” *Luna Córnea* 32 (2008): 253-54.

colored dress and high heels, similar to the attire of Santa and Rosario from the 1930s prostitute melodramas. After Violeta quiets the cheering crowd, close up shots enframe Violeta and the rhythmic drums, which perform a rumba, a style, according to Robin Moore, derived from Cuba's black underclasses, their life styles, attitudes, and culture.¹¹³

Violeta's rumba is saturated with eroticism, differing from her musical numbers at the Changoo. Dolores Tierney suggests that the eroticism of her dancing is "not necessarily figured as one of patriarchal domination," but is closely linked to Violeta's enjoyment and pleasure of dancing, which "questions the mores of Mexican bourgeois morality."¹¹⁴ Here, Violeta is less restrained than in the middle class Changoo, freeing herself of the hypocritical constraints of society. Tierney describes Violeta's dancing as freestyle and improvisatory, particularly after she invites one of the musicians to accompany her. Because Violeta, a white woman, dances with a black musician, the uncredited *bongocero* Jimmy Monterrey, Tierney notes that this dance scene is unusual and erotic for Mexican cinema for this period since questions of race in cinema generally involved *indigenismo* and *mestizaje* and virtually ignored African identity.¹¹⁵ Violeta's

¹¹³ Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 169.

¹¹⁴ Tierney, *Emilio Fernández*, 141.

¹¹⁵ The most utilized African identity in Mexican cinema is Afrocuban. Two films that receive the most attention are *Angelitos Negros* (1948, dir. Joselito Rodríguez) and *Mulata* (1954, dir. Gilberto Martínez Solares) for the incorporation of blackface and the performance of Afrocuban music. For a summary on African identities in Mexican cinema, see Leopoldo Gaytán, "Lo negro de lo negro: La negritud a través de sus imágenes cinematográficas," *Antropología* (2011): 85-90. The author provides an overview of films that integrate Afrocuban and Afromexican identities in Mexican cinema during the 1950s and 1960s. For discussion on Afrocuban presence in Mexican film and the use of blackface, see Joanne Hershfield, "Race and Ethnicity in the Classical Cinema," in *Mexico's Cinema: A Century of Film and Filmmakers* (Wilmington: SR Books, 1991), 81-100; Marilyn Miller, "'The Soul Has No Color' But the Skin Does:

performance with a black man in this musical number accommodates issues of race within the boundaries of current social attitudes. The pleasure and spontaneity that Violeta imparts when dancing in addition to dancing with a black man challenge the notions of Mexican racial and national ideology. In previous dance sequences, such as *Changó*, race is pushed onto the sidelines or ignored altogether as the gaze focuses on Violeta as the primary visual conduit to Afrocuban music and dance performance. The rumba scene here, however, integrates and engages with race, places it in the foreground. However, a closer reading of the musical context provides more insight into the association of music to place and to the *rumbera*-prostitute.

Tierney's analysis of the scene points out the eroticism of the dancing, but she does not speak specifically about musical genre and dance, which allows for a deeper contextual reading. The rumba is a dance form that is heavily grounded in the working class of Cuba and has specific connotations to sexuality through the movements. Violeta and Monterrey's nameless character dance a *guaguancó*, a sub-genre of the traditional rumba that involves a "ritualized enactment of sexual conquest."¹¹⁶ According to Ned Sublette, the *guaguancó* is a fast and energetic couple dance, centering on one movement, the *vacunao*. This movement is "an overt game of pursuit-and-capture of the female by the male...the couple dances at each other a few feet apart, until without warning the

Angelitos Negros and the Uses of Blackface on the Mexican Silver Screen, ca. 1950," in *Global Soundtrack: Worlds of Film Music*, ed. Mark Slobin (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), 241-58; Pulido Llano, *Mulatas y negros cubanos en la escena Mexicana, 1920-1950*.

¹¹⁶ Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 168.

male makes a sudden symbolic gesture of possession at the woman's genitals."¹¹⁷ The male partner attempts several aggressive gestures either through moving his hand, kicking, or thrusting his pelvis, and the female, anticipating these movements, quickly covers her pelvic region blocking her partner's intentions in an action known as *botao*.¹¹⁸ Violeta and Monterrey perform these movements with improvisatory flare: Monterrey mimics a baseball player at bat, swinging at the kick that Violeta sends his way, and, at one point, Violeta drops to the floor, exposing her body and her flexibility to the cheering crowd while Don Santiago looks on, contented.¹¹⁹

It is not surprising that the rumba *guaguancó* is featured music for La Máquina Loca as it was a popular form in Cuban cabaret acts since the 1930s. According to Moore, rumbas developed in the black urban slums of Havana and Matanzas and are specifically associated with the lower classes.¹²⁰ The *guaguancó* is the most socially condemned sub-genre of the rumba by the middle class and elite in Cuban society due to "the sexual nature of its choreography and its close associations with the poorest most socially marginal Afrocubans in western areas."¹²¹ With her extensive background in

¹¹⁷ Ned Sublette, *Cuba and its Music: From the First Drums to the Mambo* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 271.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Sevilla executes this particular move in the "In the Persian Market" scene from *Aventurera*. Here, the camera keeps her in a middle shot, which enables the audience off-screen to see the audience on-screen and the performers. In *Aventurera*, the camera zooms to an extreme close up, allowing us to see her full body in this contorted position.

¹²⁰ Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 168.

¹²¹ Ibid., 169.

Afrocuban dance, Ninón Sevilla solidifies the social association when detailing the connection to the rumba as stated in an interview in *Somos*:

. . . y que la rumba es cultura, la rumba es cultura porque es la música de mi país, la de pueblo. La rumba no te la bailaba la gente de dinero, la bailaba la gente del pueblo. Rumba, son, danzón, punto, contrapunto, danzonete, guaracha, cumbia, cha-cha-chá, calipso, mambo . . . todo eso yo tengo dentro de mi.

(. . . the rumba is culture, rumba is culture because it is music of my country, of the people. The rumba was not danced by people with money, it was danced by the people. Rumba, son, danzón, punto, contrapunto, danzonete, guaracha, cumbia, cha-cha-chá, calipso, mambo . . . I have all this inside of me).¹²²

The use of the rumba in *La Máquina Loca* exercises specific cultural and social meanings associated with the working class, serving as another consequential model of modernization that differs from other meanings found at the Club Changoo.

Up until now in my discussion, the synchresis of music to image in *Víctimas del pecado* has consisted of musical genres that point to readings of exoticism, sexuality, and space in order to paint the cultural symptoms of modernization in post-Revolutionary society. The music and dance sequences construct several definitions of Otherness to highlight the ubiquitous urban nightlife and Violeta's engagement with the music solidifies these meanings to the prostitute/*rumbera* figure, seeming to imply what is not Mexican rather than what is. To counter, the symbol of *lo mexicano*, however, is represented in the middle-class businessman and owner of *La Máquina Loca*, Don Santiago, who provides Violeta and her adopted son with a home and care. Contrasting the cosmopolitan representation of Rodolfo, Don Santiago symbolizes modern Mexico

¹²² Muñoz Castillo, *Las reinas del trópico*, 163.

through his paternal and heroic actions and his association with the working class. To reinforce this image, Don Santiago walks around the city with a small mariachi, his own personal minstrels, playing the *son jaliscense* *El tren*,¹²³ functioning in part as a *leitmotif* to counter the synchresis of swing music to Rodolfo. La Máquina Loca is frequented by railroad workers and is located close to the tracks. Since the railroad is closely associated with the Revolution and the *son jaliscense* is considered as a popular sub-genre in the Mexican *son* tradition, Don Santiago becomes an avatar for revolutionist ideologies, marking him as an “authentically modern Mexican.”¹²⁴

Oigan señores el tren
Que lejos se va silbando,
Oigan los silbidos que echa
Cuando ya va caminado.

Oigan y oigan señores,
Oigan al tren caminar,
El que se lleva a los hombres
A la orilla de la mar.

(Listen gentleman, the train
That goes whistling away,
Hear the whistles that play
While it's on its way.

¹²³ In his *Historia documental del cine*, Emilio García Riera labels this *son* as “El trencito” (“Little Train”), but in the *Cancionero Popular Mexicano*, the *son* is labeled as “El tren” (“Train”).

¹²⁴ De la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 56.

Listen and hear gentlemen,
Hear the train go,
That takes men
To the sea's shore.)¹²⁵

Conclusion

During the post-Revolutionary years, the State translated into law the ideas and beliefs of the ruling class concerning the sexuality of women. Contradictory social norms worked in favor of male promiscuity and domination and placed women, particularly sex workers, in restrained roles in society against their wishes and concerns. Despite efforts of regulation, the State did not eradicate prostitution or control the spread of venereal diseases in Mexico City “because their reformist measures and the rhetoric of promoting a ‘revolutionary morality’ did not seriously address the sexual habits of men.”¹²⁶ As such, the prostitute held a contradictory position as a necessity for vice, but rejected by the dominant class, tainted as immoral and full of sin. Although the State attempted to unfairly control and contain sex workers and the spaces in which they worked, regulation proved to be difficult as the growth of the modern city and post-war economic hardship lead to a growth in prostitution. With the rise of cabaret culture at the end of the Revolution through the 1920s into the 1940s, sex workers and their clientele encountered new spaces to manage pleasurable activities. With specially decorated cabarets designed

¹²⁵ Kuri-Aldana, *Cancionero Popular Mexicano tomo uno*, 44.

¹²⁶ De la Mora, *Cinemachismo*, 66.

to depict exotic locales and featuring new currents in transnational dance music, the population moved away from the restrictions of modern social norms within the cabaret's enclosed spaces.

The film industry represented the prostitute's position in society in several features during the 1930s and 1940s, predominantly as a tragic figure that succumbs to the consequences and challenges of modern, urban society, and is cinematically associated with specific music that highlights certain aspects of her identity: she is at once a figure of desire and a figure of pity. Reflecting Porfirian social norms that transferred over into the post-Revolutionary years, Antonio Moreno's *Santa* follows Gamboa's "fallen woman" with the heart of gold narrative and, keeping up to date with currents in popular music culture, utilizes the musical stylings of Agustín Lara's bolero and danzón to depict the prostitute's split identity. In *Víctimas del Pecado*, the prostitute converts to the *rumbera*, an empowering female figure that takes part in pleasure and seduction through dance performances that enforce her sexuality and exoticness. The bolero and danzón maintain crucial positions in the film's narrative, but rumbas and mambos are incorporated into the musical track to keep apace with changes in the cultural climate and to illustrate divisions in social class. Both films paint the prostitute as a challenging and controversial figure, but the changes in narrative (*Santa* dies while *Violeta* is redeemed by the State) and the inclusion of more diegetic music and dance performances reflect transformations in the social sphere. Despite this, the

prostitute/*rumbera* still embodied the anxieties, desires, and contradictions inherent in Mexico's growing modern society.

CHAPTER 2: *Indigenismo*, Cinematic Music, and Francisco Domínguez

The prostitute melodrama provided one glimpse into the Mexico's modernized, urban life, but during the 1930s, the most utilized backdrop for Mexican cinema is the countryside. The *comedias rancheras*, the Revolutionary melodrama, and the *indigenista* films presented an idyllic countryside, and all three attempted to re-create or re-imagine important elements of Mexican history and culture. However, the *indigenista* films offered an interesting challenge for filmmakers: how best to represent the Indian?

During the first half of the twentieth century, several discourses emerged regarding Mexico's indigenous populations, which advocated for the integration, or mestizo-izing, of indigenous populations into modernized, Mexican society, arguing that this process was the key to not only their survival, but also as a method for a unified Mexican nationalism. Integration was not a novel approach, but vastly differed from the exclusionist and oppressive methods undertaken by the elite of the Porfiriato. Instead of a biologically orientated mestizaje, which required racial mixing, a cultural mestizaje was encouraged. As a tool for mass communication, cinema held a unique position in depicting indigenous populations, reevaluating and resignifying the Indian for the dominantly urban mestizo audience who searched for any elements of an Indian heritage they could claim as their own. But cinema presented mixed messages: it neither fully promoted nor negated integrationist procedures through its constructions of indigenous cultures. Within these representations, music played a crucial role in not just providing adequate changes in atmosphere, but for sonically depicting specific components of the indigenous experience.

In his essay entitled “The Steiner Superculture,” ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin states, “every film is ethnographic, and every soundtrack acts like an ethnomusicologist . . . Placing people in motion means you have to construct an integrated and logical society, music and all.”¹ Slobin’s study concentrates on the development of film music paradigms during Hollywood’s studio era, examining the integrated film score of the 1930s as “an effective technical and aesthetic practice,” and as a cultural text that contributes to the film’s narrative. The composer, Slobin argues, acts as an implied narrator marshaling “musical materials to describe how a human community lives” through source and non-source music. While the source music supplies a sonic stamp of association of place and the musical interaction lived on screen, the symphonic underscoring adds many crucial elements from outside of the space of action. Both, however, construct the sounds of the on-screen society: “the interplay of source and score can be very complicated. Together they structure a musical ethnography.”² Slobin’s essay focuses on Hollywood film music, but his concept successfully applies to the developing cinematic score of the 1930s and 1940s *indigenista* films, which utilized several elements to enforce a cultural synchresis with the on-screen indigenous population.

¹ Mark Slobin, “The Steiner Superculture,” in *Global Soundtracks: Worlds of Film Music*, ed. Mark Slobin (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), 4.

² *Ibid.*, 5.

Integrating the Indian

After the armed struggle of the Revolution, Mexico experienced a Reconstructionist period as the country sought to rebuild shattered structures from the last era. Intellectuals and artists sought to forge a new national consciousness, attempting to push the ideologies of the Revolution at the forefront of their endeavors. The large indigenous populations had represented a problem for the intellectuals of the Porfiriato who rooted an austere Mexican national identity in pre-Columbian cultures yet ignored the present indigenous populace and their circumstances. After the dismantling of the Porfiriato, the *indigenismo* movement attempted to provide solutions for the unification of the Mexican people and for the consolidation of a national identity. One possible solution was the integration of the indigenous into the mestizo populace, but the approaches differed. The integration project of the pre-Revolutionary years attempted to exterminate the Indian not through ethnic cleansing, but through miscegenation. The problem, however, was not with skin color, but with the incorporation of the Indian into a modernized, capitalist society.

Intellectuals such as José Vasconcelos (1882-1959) and Andrés Enríquez Molina (1865-1940) proposed a process of mestizaje focused on racial categorization. In *Los grandes problemas nacionales* (1909), Enríquez Molina asserts mestizos are of superior character while Indians are the lowest: passive, submissive, and taciturn.³ He equates mestizaje with nationhood, arguing that the continuation of the mestizo as the dominant

³ Andrés Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales y otros textos (1911-1919)*, rev. ed. (1909; repr., México: Ediciones Era, 1978), 419.

race is the fundamental base for the country's progress.⁴ In a similar vein, Vasconcelos argues mestizaje produces grander civilizations and a race superior to others. Through racial mixing, the inferior traits of the indigenous will be replaced by superior traits of the mestizo. Anthropologists Manuel Gamio (1883-1960) and Alfonso Caso (1883-1946) proposed cultural mestizaje as a solution to mestizo-ize the Indian into the modernized country's way of thinking and behaving.

Manuel Gamio is one of the champion *indigenistas* who believed indigenous populations could be westernized and, with a unifying language and culture, would help construct a homogenous nation. In *Forjando Patria*, Gamio argues that the Indian remains misunderstood in modern society due primarily to a lack of communication. When discussing the Conquest, he claims the contemporary Europeans could not infiltrate the Indian population for two reasons: 1) the Indians maintain a natural resistance to any imposed cultural changes, and 2) we do not know how the Indian thinks, therefore any type of cultural penetration is useless.⁵ In order to resolve this issue, knowledge about the Indian needed to be obtained by dominant society before attempting to gradually and persuasively integrate. He argues that because the Indian is misunderstood, it is not only he/she that should undergo transformation, but also the mestizo. The Indian should be mestizo-ized and the mestizo, to create a national synthesis, Indianized: "Para incorporar al indio no pretendamos "europeizarlo" de golpe; por el contrario, "indianicémonos" nosotros un tanto, para presentarle, ya diluida con la

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, 2nd ed. (1916; repr., México: Editorial Porrúa, S.A., 1960), 25.

suya, nuestra civilización, que entonces no encontrará exótica, cruel, amarga e incompresible” (“To incorporate the Indian we cannot pretend to “Europeanize” them by force; on the contrary, we should “Indianize” ourselves somewhat, in order to present already diluted with theirs, which then will not be exotic, cruel, bitter, and incompressible to them”).⁶ This process, however, does not belong in the hands of the government or sociologist, but is specifically destined to the anthropologist who requires guidelines and perspectives devoid of prejudices.⁷

In speaking specifically of the Indian’s capabilities to integrate, Gamio asserts the Indian’s intellectual aptitudes are comparable to any other race, including white Europeans, capable for progress and acting neither inferior nor superior. Through continued education, the Indian’s timidity will be eventually erased, replaced by a new found confidence, but it was important to study and understand them in order to create the necessary constructions or apparatuses for integration. Through his calcification of cultural characteristics, Gamio determines through scientific methods what of their material and intellectual life they should retain, what are those elements that are useful and beneficial, and what needs to be substituted and introduced in order to establish a modern, unified society.⁸ Knight states:

Indeed, an Indian population genuinely integrated—that is educated, bilingual, and politically mobilized—could better sustain its own culture (language, dress,

⁶ Ibid., 96.

⁷ Ibid., 25.

⁸ See Manuel Gamio, “Calificación de características culturales de los grupos indígenas,” *América Indígena* 2, no. 4 (October 1942): 19-22.

religion, mores) than on that remained marginalized, uneducated, monolingual, and politically inert.⁹

While the integrationists supported a change in the Indian's approaches to production and property to match those of modern society, the artistic culture of the Indians was one area that should remain untouched, as their art practices formed an important part of Mexican national identity.¹⁰ Gamio urged present day artists in Mexico to seek inspiration in indigenous arts for their own works:

Las características artísticas, que quizá son lo más valioso en el acervo cultural de la América autóctona, necesitan seguir floreciendo espontáneamente, alejadas hasta donde sea posible de la influencia de sus similares de origen europeo, inspirándose como hace miles de años, en la fastuosa naturaleza Americana e interpretando sus inagotables motivos de belleza con el modo de hacer del espíritu tradicionalista, ese espíritu que no se sabe si era más estético que religioso o viceversa.

(The artistic features which are perhaps what is the most valuable in the cultural heritage of native America, need to flourish spontaneously, as far as possible from the influence of their European counterparts; inspired as they have been for thousands of years, in the lavish American nature and interpreting their inexhaustible beauty in the manner of their traditional spirit, one that we not know whether it rather aesthetic than religious or vice versa.)¹¹

Another supporter of *indigenismo*, Alfonso Caso, advocates for the cultural integration of the Indian, but looks specifically on the community as a whole and not the individual, proposing a new definition of indigenous populations that relies on cultural terms:

⁹ Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, ed. Richard Graham (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 80.

¹⁰ Indigenous populations believed in collective property, communal farming, and the use of their own traditional technologies standing in contrast to modernized society, which sought private property and western technology. See Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *México Profundo: una civilización negada* (México: Random House Mondadori, 2008).

¹¹ Gamio, "Calificación de características culturales de los grupos indígenas," 22.

Es indio todo individuo que se siente pertenecer a una comunidad indígena; que se concibe porque esta conciencia de grupo no puede existir sino cuando se acepta totalmente la cultura del grupo; cuando se tienen los mismos ideales éticos, estéticos, sociales y políticos del grupo; cuando se participa en las simpatías y antipatías colectivas y se es de buen grado colaborador en sus acciones y reacciones. Es decir, que es indio el que se siente pertenecer a una comunidad indígena.

(Indians are all individuals who feel they belong to an indigenous community, who see themselves as Indian because this group consciousness cannot exist without the total acceptance of the group's culture; who share the ethic, aesthetics, social and political ideals; who participate in collective sympathies and dislikes and willingly collaborate in their actions and reactions. That is to say, Indian is whoever feels that he belongs to an Indigenous community.)¹²

A community is Indian if it feels that it is Indian, whatever its social and cultural construction. The individual that believes himself/herself to be Indian is Indian, but if he/she is part of a community that “lacks the sentiment” of being Indian, he/she cannot be considered as such.¹³ This definition necessitates self-identification based on a set of criteria yet this becomes problematic. Identification is assigned on these populations from the outside, something that had already been established at the time of the Conquest: Spanish conquerors grouped and labeled the indigenous populations when they arrived, creating the concept of the Indian. By Caso's definition, self-identification relies on the recognition of similarities in cultural practices rather than solely on the biological make-up, but the identification is most likely to be a negative determinant

¹² Alfonso Caso, “Definición del indio y lo indio,” *América Indígena* 8, no. 4 (1948) cited in Alfonso Caso, *La comunidad indígena* (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1971), 89-90.

¹³ Knight, “Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*,” 75.

subjected on to communities based on other prejudices and external idiosyncrasies. This identified grouping only furthers the contrast to the mestizo.¹⁴

The recognition of culture poses another obstacle. Caso argues the biggest problem facing the Indian is not economic but cultural, since Indian populations lack appropriate tools for agriculture, materials for communication, adequate knowledge for the prevention of illness and disease, scientific knowledge, and a clear idea of the nation needs. In sum, the culture of the Indian is problematic and requires penetration of useful elements and characteristics from “nuestro pueblos mestizos y blancos” (“our mestizo and white population”). In agreement with Gamio, Caso states that the one area that should be left alone is “el arte popular indígena” (“traditional indigenous art”). He applauds the Indian for his wonderful intuition of transforming crude and rough materials into beautiful objects yet maintains that the indigenous culture is the root of the country’s social, political, and economic problems.¹⁵ Also like Gamio, Caso argues that a just, generous, and scientific method would incorporate the indigenous populace into “la gran comunidad mexicana” (“the great Mexican community”), transforming their communities into the modern towns emerging across the country.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the principal conduit for the mestizo-ing of the population was through education. As part of Article 3 of the Constitution of 1917, which stipulated for free and secular education, Minister of Public Education José Vasconcelos sent hundreds of dedicated teachers into rural and remote areas to teach a

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Alfonso Caso, “Definición del indio y lo indio,” 91-93. See also Alfonso Caso, “La protección de las Artes Populares,” *América Indígena* 2, no. 3 (July 1942): 25-29.

basic curriculum of reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and Mexican history, which continued into the Lázaro Cárdenas's administration (1934-1940).¹⁶ During this period, Mexico witnessed waves of social reform that, for the first time, included the indigenous population in larger numbers. Throughout his *sexenio*, Cárdenas shifted Mexico's economic paradigm to focus on agriculture as a result of the agrarian reform policies, which gave land to communal *ejidos* (large sections of land given in community to a population to work). More rural schools were built incorporating the "learn by doing" pedagogy by U.S. American educator John Dewey. The learning process took place through the cooperative cultivation of gardens and marketing of produce, the raising of animals, first aid, and hygiene, in addition to the core curricula that included Spanish.¹⁷

The rural school was the key space for the integration strategies. According to Caso, education and leading by example without tension and conflict were crucial in the social transformation of indigenous communities: "No obligar, invitar; no ordenar, demostrar; no destruir, transformar. He ahí el camino. Camino lento, como es toda

¹⁶ During the administration of Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928) and his successors, Emilio Portes Gil, Pascual Ortiz Rubio and Abelardo Rodríguez, known as the Maximato, rural education declined over the course of 10 years. During Calles's administration, José Manuel Puig Casauranc and Moisés Sáenz became the Ministers of Education and continued the emphasis on rural education. They created two thousand additional schools by 1928. The focus of the educational program was on the teaching of Spanish. During the Maximato, Calles's string of puppet presidents, education suffered as a result of a governmental shift to the right. Most social reform programs, including land distribution, were almost abandoned and Mexico suffered the aftermath of the Great Depression. See Susan M. Deeds, Michael C. Meyer, and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, 7th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 560-74. For more on President Calles, see Carlos Silva Cázares, *Plutarco Elías Calles* (México: Planeta, 2005); Enrique Krauze, *Plutarco E. Calles: reformar desde el origen* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987); Frank Tannenbaum, *Mexico: the Struggle for Peace and Bread* (New York: Knopf, 1956).

¹⁷ Mary Kay Vaughan, "Nationalizing the Countryside: Schools and Rural Communities in the 1930s," in *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*, ed. Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephan E. Lewis (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006): 158.

educación; camino que requiere no sólo la conformidad, sino la cooperación entusiasta de la comunidad indígena” (“Do not obligate, invite; do not order, demonstrate; do not destroy, transform. There is the road. A slow road just like all of education. A road that requires not just conformity, but the enthusiastic cooperation of the indigenous community”).¹⁸

Educator and former director of the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano (InterAmerican Indigenist Institute), Moisés Sáenz, shares Caso’s perspective. Sáenz worked intensely on the development of rural schools during the administration of Plutarco Calles (1924-1928) and provides first hand accounts of the work of these schoolteachers.¹⁹ In his article, “Mexico: an Appraisal and a Forecast,” Sáenz advocates for the education of the indigenous population, stating that although Indians were the majority fighting during the Revolution, there were hardly any schools for them, resulting in a poor formal education. Through reconstruction, however, this can be remedied. He ponders on the future for the Indian and ponders their assets and drawbacks. While biological fusion has yet to be reached, Sáenz is adamant that the integration of the Indian is found through an emotional and spiritual synthesis:

Our ethnological chaos must give way to order; race fusion must mean spiritual union. Incorporation of the Indian into the Mexican family, should mean as much as incorporation of the Mexican family into the Indian. Mexico is an Indian

¹⁸ Alfonso Caso, “¿El indio mexicano es mexicano?” *Indigenismo* (1958): 95-105, quoted in Caso, *La comunidad indígena*, 115.

¹⁹ See Moisés Sáenz, *Mexico: An Appraisal and a Forecast* (New York: The Committee on Cultural Relation with Latin America, 1929); *México íntegro* (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1982); *Antología de Moisés Sáenz* (México: Ediciones Oasis S.A., 1970).

country...there must be cultural integration. A mestizo boy must have a mestizo soul.²⁰

In integrating rural students into a national identity, Sáñez believes language is a key factor: “A common tongue is essential to our nationality. Spanish is our language. Our respect for the Indian should not lead us into the fallacy of respecting his obviously negative traits.” He also argues that a minimum standard of living “in accordance with modern life,” must be reached.²¹

Although the integration of the indigenous was largely promoted, these scholars and intellectuals did not discuss the whiplash of the process: what negative elements of westernized culture would the indigenous populations inherit. It was optimistically assumed that through mestizaje, Indians would be better off in a modern culture rather than their own, and that they would want to abandon their way of life. This did not take into consideration any of the difficulties the acculturation process would face, as “the positive aspects of Indian culture could be preserved,” while the negative expunged.²² This is of course problematic since an agreement as to what should remain and what should go needed to be reached, but the Indian was not consulted in these decisions.²³ The Indian was the object of *indigenismo* rather than the producer, and it was the discourses located from the outside that attempted to integrate Indians into modern

²⁰ Ibid., 14.

²¹ Ibid., 15.

²² Knight, “Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*,” 86.

²³ For example, Caso states the Indian’s positive values are communal labor, obligation of services, respect to their natural authorities, and popular art. See Caso, *La comunidad indígena*, 105.

society with goals of instituting a common, unified, national Indian heritage through a reevaluation of the Indian.²⁴

Representing the Indian

In the process of mestizaje, visual representations of the Indian in media were constructed and repeatedly reconstructed to fit specific needs. Although agrarian reform and rural integration to educate the indigenous populations were well underway during the 1920s and 1930s, the indigenous populace still had a weak voice in social and political spheres as needs to valorize and redeem indigenous cultures pervaded official ideology. Perceptions of Indian inferiority in society persisted and the Indian continued to be perceived, particularly by the lower classes, as a negative figure with poor education and hygiene and who could not speak the national language. Ricardo Pérez Montfort specifies the contradiction that exists with the exaltation of the Indian in politics and in popular culture:

Desde los primeros años de la década de los veinte una característica central de lo que se intentó definir como ‘indio’ evidenciaba una doble dimensión, aparentemente contradictoria: por un lado se le veía como algo extraño y distante, herencia de la visión colonial, pero por otro se le identificaba como una raíz “de nuestra más auténtica especificidad.”

(Since the beginning of the twenties a central characteristic of the definition of the ‘Indian’ evinced a twofold dimension, apparently contradictory: on one side they were viewed as strange and distant, an inherited colonial point of view, but on the other side they were identified as a root of “our most authentic specificity.”)²⁵

²⁴ Knight, “Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*,” 75.

²⁵ Ricardo Pérez Montfort, *Estampas de nacionalismo popular mexicano: Ensayos sobre cultura popular y nacionalismo* (México: CIESAS, 1994), 161.

Although it was agreed that the negative elements of the indigenous be discarded during the process of mestizaje, the arts were one area that Gamio and Caso contended should remain untouched, or, rather, should not be dissolved out. According to Caso, popular art is not exclusively indigenous or exclusively European. Popular art is a Mexican art because of the slow intrusion of European ideas within an indigenous background.²⁶ In 1921, as part of the Centennial celebrations,²⁷ the Centennial Committee organized events designed to exhibit what was popular. The Exhibition of Popular Arts was one such event, envisioned by artists Jorge Eniso (1879-1969), Roberto Montenegro (1885-1968), and Dr. Atl (Gerardo Murillo, 1875-1964) as a central space to display examples of regional and indigenous art. The samples included shawls, furniture, blankets, paintings, pottery, toys, and any type of ceramic, which were individually photographed and submitted into a catalog organized and written by Dr. Atl, who claimed, “lo más mexicano de México: las artes populares” (“the most Mexican of Mexico [are] the popular arts”):

Las manifestaciones artísticas o industriales de la razas indígenas puras y de las razas mezcladas o intermedias, presentan – al contrario de lo que acontece en los grupos étnicamente semejantes a los europeos – caracteres muy marcados de homogeneidad, de método, de perseverancia, y constituyen realmente una verdadera cultura nacional.

(The artistic and industrial manifestations of the pure indigenous races and the mixed or intermediate races, present – contrary to what happens in those social

²⁶ Caso, “La protección de las artes populares,” 25.

²⁷ The Centennial celebrations actually took place in 1910, still during the Díaz regime. However, this celebration was particularly extravagant with golden carriages and added pomp. In order to receive foreign guests and to show that Mexico was a modern and cosmopolitan country, Díaz ordered that any persons on the street be sequestered in order to “beautify” the city.

groups that are ethnically similar to Europeans – very marked uniformity, of method, of perseverance, and do really constitutes a true national culture.)²⁸

In addition to celebrations and public events, the visual representation of the Indian and his valor, nobility, and suffering became some of the many themes undertaken by the Mexican muralist school. Two years after Vasconcelos became the Minister of Education he commissioned prominent artists, Diego Rivera (1887-1957), David Alfaro Siqueiros (1897-1974), and José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949) to paint the walls of the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria in Mexico City.²⁹ Under Vasconcelos's patronage, the goal of the muralist project was to reflect the ideologies of the Revolution and keep them present for the Spanish illiterate audience. The artists, however, branched into several directions incorporating their own political ideologies despite the displeasure of the public. The depiction of the indigenous populace spanned centuries, from the pre-Conquest utopia to Porfirian oppression to present day isolation and solitude. When Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros, known as “los tres grandes” (“the three giants”) began working, their methods exhibited influences from religious Italian frescoes of the Renaissance, inspired either by sojourns to Italy or through the teachings of Dr. Atl.³⁰

²⁸ Dr. Atl, *Las artes populares en México* (México: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 1921), 15.

²⁹ The muralist school consisted of more artists such as among others. Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros are the most visible of the artists because of Vasconcelos's commission.

³⁰ Although regarded as a post-Revolutionary art movement, the Mexican muralist tradition stems to prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. Celebrated painter of Mexican landscapes and panoramas Dr. Atl, who played a crucial role in the Exhibition of Popular Arts, was the first to urge “the government to invite artists to decorate the walls of public buildings.” After Dr. Atl returned from his European travels in 1903, he encouraged his young students to study the frescoes of the Italian renaissance because he believed they reflected spiritualism and spontaneous energy, which he concluded should be the driving force of Mexican modernism, but it was not until the 1920s that his proposals were taken seriously. For more information on Dr. Atl and his work prior to the muralist movement, see Beatriz Espejo, *Dr. Atl: el paisaje como pasión* (México: Fondo Editorial de la Plástica Mexicana, 1994); Edward Lucie-Smith, *Latin American Art of the*

Each artist incorporated other modern currents into their work during the 1920s.³¹ “Los tres grandes” however were not the only Mexican muralists. Many national and international artists came into the Muralist orbit including Jean Charlot (1898-1979), Fermín Revueltas (1901-1935), Roberto Montenegro (1885-1968), Fanny Rabel (1922-2008), and Dr. Atl.

Although paintings of the Indian stems back to the eighteenth century in works by José de Ibarra (1688-1756), the muralist movement garners the most attention for providing multi-faceted representations of not only indigenous populations, but also severe class distinctions, scathing interpretations of Mexican history, and several examples of oppression. According to Carlos Monsiváis, the murals depicted myths and mythomanias, didactics and aesthetics: muralism “violently contributed to shape the aspiration of destiny, the winning of independence and autonomy of all spheres.”³²

Cinema offered another interpretation of nationalist rhetoric regarding indigenous culture. Despite Mexican silent film’s partiality to the French style actualities or documentary short films and newsreels, narrative films featuring indigenous themes (many pre-Conquest explorations) such as *Tepeyac* (1917, dir. José Manuel Ramos and

20th Century, 2nd ed (New York: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2004), 24; Alma Lilia Roura, *Dr. Atl: paisaje de hielo y fuego* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1999); Arturo Casado Navarro, *Gerardo Murillo, el Dr. Atl* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984).

³¹ Rivera utilized Cubist techniques and influences from European painters such as Cézanne, Ingres, Renoir, and Gauguin to depict the flora and fauna of Mexico and Pre-Columbian narrative reliefs. Similar to Rivera, Siqueiros was inspired by Italian renaissance murals and, while in Europe, became influenced by modern French art and Italian futurism. Orozco, on the other hand, did not travel through Europe, but with Dr. Atl’s guidance, was seduced by Italian frescoes and Symbolism. See Lucie-Smith, *Latin American Art of the 20th Century*, 49-68.

³² Carlos Monsiváis, “Notas sobre la cultura mexicana en el siglo XX,” in *Historia general de México* (México: El Colegio de México, 2000), 993.

Carlos E. González), *Tabaré* (1918, dir. Luis Lezama), *Cuauhtémoc* (1919, dir. Manuel de la Bandera, 1919), and *De raza azteca* (*Of Aztec Race*, 1921, dir. Miguel Contreras Torres), constructed the Indian to reflect various characteristics described as “pure,” “savage,” “beautiful,” “moral,” “spiritual,” “nervous,” “romantic,” and “reserved.” The early film companies such as Popocatépetl Films, Aztlán Films, Quetzal Films, and La Azteca Films³³ also nodded toward a nationalist current that attempted to discover (or re-discover) roots in pre-Columbian cultures.³⁴ But it was not until the 1930s that the filming of the indigenous soared with the arrival of foreign filmmakers and innovations in recorded sound technology. Questionably held as the pioneer and “founding father” of Mexican cinematography, Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein provided a hybrid vision of Mexico, in a sense “teaching” Mexicans and others how to see and understand the country.

The Foreign Eye and Fictional-Ethnography: Sergei Eisenstein and *¡Que viva México!*

Eisenstein arrived in Mexico in 1930 after a failed sojourn in Hollywood, where he attempted to direct a new film with Paramount Studios. With the financial support of liberal novelist Upton Sinclair and his wealthy wife Mary Craig Sinclair, Eisenstein set out to direct a film about Mexico. Due to ideological conflicts with Sinclair and financial

³³ La Azteca Films was the first company that made attempts at becoming an industry. It was established in 1917 by zarzuela diva and writer Mimi Derba and experimental photographer and exhibitor Enrique Rosas. The initial goal was to produce films of national interest, using historic themes that depicted Mexican customs. For more information, see Federico Dávalos Orozco, *Albores del cine mexicano* (México: Editorial Clío, 1996), 30-1.

³⁴ Aurelio de los Reyes, *Medio siglo de cine mexicano (1896-1947)* (México: Editorial Trillas, S.A de C.V., 1986), 70-72.

difficulties, Eisenstein did not complete the film during his lifetime.³⁵ With the editorial skills of Eisenstein's co-writer, Grigori Aleksandrov, and his crew, Eisenstein's work was edited and, with the passage of time, reached mythical proportions in Mexican film history and criticism, placing the Soviet filmmaker at the top of the Mexican cinematographic pyramid.

Eisenstein's touring of Mexico was by no means a pioneering expedition and his depictions of Mexican cultures and indigenous people was not something particularly new. In his study of Eisenstein in Mexico and the birth of *¡Que viva México!*, Aurelio de los Reyes acknowledges several sources that aided in Eisenstein's construction, the majority of which are foreign travel books and magazines, the artistic achievements of the muralist school, and his personal relationships with Mexican artists. Of the most important is Anita Brenner's *Idols Behind Altars*, which details ceremonies, popular art, dances, paintings, and artisanal objects that inspired Eisenstein greatly.³⁶ Also influential was his lengthy tour in the renovated National Museum of Anthropology where he studied the "indigenous civilizations" and traces of Tenochtitlan. With Rivera as his principal guide, Eisenstein toured the murals of the National Palace, Cortez's house in

³⁵ In an article for *El Universal Ilustrado*, Sinclair indicated that the project created animosity between him and Eisenstein because of Eisenstein's persistent need to spread socialist theory. See "Upton Sinclair nos habla del caso Eisenstein," *El Universal Ilustrado*, January 12, 1933.

³⁶ Aurelio de los Reyes notes that Diego Rivera was a close friend of Anita Brenner and most likely gave the book to Eisenstein. However, in his study on the impact of muralismo on Eisenstein's film, Eduardo de la Vega Alfaro claims that Odo Stadé, an employee from a Hollywood bookstore, introduced Eisenstein to the book. According to de la Vega Alfaro, Stadé was a Villista during the Revolution and recommended several books on Mexican culture to Eisenstein, enticing his interest more. See Aurelio de los Reyes, *El nacimiento de ¡Que viva México!* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2006), 133; Eduardo de la Vega Alfaro, *Del muro a la pantalla: S.M. Eisenstein y el arte pictórico mexicano* (México: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 1997), 34.

Cuernavaca, and viewed the collected folk and indigenous art in Rivera's own home.³⁷ European magazines such as *Kölnische Illustrierte* featured sections on *Día de los muertos* (Day of the dead) whose images of the festivities and José Guadalupe Posada's art were included in the final section of the film. Also inspiring was Ernest Gruening's *Mexico and its Heritage*, Carleton Beals's *Mexican Labyrinth*, and the magazine on folk arts edited by Frances Toor, *Mexican Folkways*.³⁸

Eisenstein was welcomed into Mexico with practically open arms from Mexico's circle of vanguard artists, principally the muralists. Sharing the political ideologies of the muralists, which sought to exhibit the oppressed worker and lower classes, Eisenstein embarked on a project that perpetuated the human condition and Revolutionist ideologies that so many rallied for or behind. This is especially true of Diego Rivera, whose art reflected his Communist beliefs. At the time of Eisenstein's arrival, Mexico was riding a wave of socialism, particularly evident in the field of education. Narciso Bassols (1897-1959) became the first Marxist Minister of Education and in accordance with Article 3, Bassols advocated for socialist education and banned all Church influence from schools. Initially, the Mexican government, under the Maximato president Pascual Ortiz Rubio, was hesitant to allow Eisenstein film in the country due to his Communist leanings, going so far as to arrest the director and his crew on one occasion, believing they were agents

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ De los Reyes, *Medio siglo de cine mexicano*, 99.

for the Communist party.³⁹ After their release, Mexican authorities watched Eisenstein closely, granting him permission to make his film on the agreement that he would be led by appointed guides from the Ministry of Education, Adolfo Best Maugard, Gabriel Fernández Ledesma, and Roberto Montenegro, in order for the director to not be persuaded by stereotypes and clichés.⁴⁰ The inclusion of the folkloric stereotypes and the influence of the Mexican artists involved in the nationalist projects during the period had a remarkable impact on Eisenstein's social realist, ethnographic technique. By presenting his narrative in this approach, Eisenstein places himself, a foreign outsider with artistic informants, on an equal level with the Mexican audience, considered outsiders as well.

Eisenstein's edited film is divided into seven episodes or novellas, each dedicated to the artists that inspired Eisenstein, envisaging the project as a "cinematic mural," a mural in movement.⁴¹ The prologue, influenced by David Alfaro Siqueiros's work *Entierro de un obrero*, is set in the Yucatán and includes still images that juxtapose the ancient Mayan past with the Mayan of the present. The argument: the traditions of the Mayans have not changed. *Conquest* depicts the Spanish and Catholic tradition mixing with native Indian traditions and customs, creating a type of folk-Catholicism. In *Sandunga*, Eisenstein focuses on Indian life unaffected by the Spanish through the protagonists Conception and Abundio, using softened images of the pair laying in the sun

³⁹ In 1930, the Communist Party in Mexico had been banned in addition to the halt of land distribution and labor reforms. Strikes against the government were not tolerated and Plutarco Elías Calles, known as "el jefe máximato" (Maximum Boss), used his puppet presidents to gain more authority in the government.

⁴⁰ Andrea Noble, *Mexican National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2005), 130.

⁴¹ For more information on the influence of the muralist school on Eisenstein, see de la Vega Alfaro, *Del muro a la pantalla*, 45-72.

and gathering flowers to imply the simplicity and purity of Indian life. In *Fiesta*, Eisenstein turns to the art of Francisco de Goya to signify a traditional bullfight, highlighting Spanish cultural fusion in Mexican life. His most famous episode, *Maguey*, takes place in a *pulque*-producing hacienda in Hidalgo during the beginning of the Revolution, and depicts uprising at the hacienda to foreshadow the armed struggle. Inspired by the later frescoes of Rivera, Eisenstein uses hard, contrasting images, full of aggression and violence. The episode *Soldadera* is based on the work of Orozco, representing scenes of the armed struggle of the Revolution, but remains unfinished. Finally, the epilogue takes the audience to present day urban Mexico with images of old traditions mingled modernized landscapes, implying a sense of continuity. Emphasizing the theme of renewal, Eisenstein portrays images of *Día de los muertos* with *calaveras* (skeletons), inspired by Posada's prints.⁴²

¡Que viva México! receives considerable scholarly attention yet commentators are puzzled as to how to classify the film: was it a “narrative or documentary film, a treatise on film form, or is it a type of ethnography?”⁴³ The film uses a variety of techniques, from distinctive camera movements and shots and the use of non-actors. Eisenstein's style of socialist realist silent cinema, exemplified in *Battleship Potemkin* (1926) and *October* (1927), and his desire to portray Mexico, characterize the film as an experimental project incorporating many of Eisenstein's ideas on film form that borders

⁴² For a description of the novellas, see Harry M. Geduld and Ronald Gottesman, eds., *Sergei Eisenstein and Upton Sinclair: the Making and Unmaking of Que viva Mexico!* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970); Noble, *Mexican National Cinema*, 123-46.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 128.

on a pseudo-documentary with a fictional narrative structure.⁴⁴ In the incomplete autograph draft that Eisenstein sent to Upton Sinclair before filming in 1931, it becomes evident what Eisenstein had in mind for “the Mexican picture.” His outline reflects a rich tapestry of folkloric Mexico, depicted through artisanal objects such as the sarape, Mayan statues, “Death day,” fiestas, Aztecs, Tehuantepec, Catholicism, and paganism, just to name a few. Eisenstein’s approach is best summed up in his first paragraph where he identifies the sarape as a bridge that links all Mexicans together:

A Sarape is the striped blanket that the Mexican indio, the Mexican charro—every Mexican wears. And the Sarape could be the symbol of Mexico. So striped and violently contrasting are the cultures in Mexico running next to each and at the same time being centuries away. No plot, no whole story could run through this Sarape without being false or artificial.⁴⁵

The imagery that Eisenstein weaves in this description constructs his understanding of Mexico and its population, indigenous and all. The sarape, a colorful blanket worn by inhabitants of popular regions, connects the major national symbols of Mexico: the Indian and the *charro*. Eisenstein also refers to a barbarism or brutality alive in Mexico, using the colors of the sarape that “violently” contrast to illustrate this fact and pointing out that Mexico lives concurrently with the traditions of the past.

Eisenstein’s cinematic collage illustrates the stereotypes of a folkloric yet oppressed indigenous population based on foreign perceptions and the plastic arts,

⁴⁴ For more information on Eisenstein’s ideas regarding film form, see Sergei Eisenstein, *The Film Sense* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1947).

⁴⁵ Sergei Eisenstein, “Rough Outline of the Mexican Picture,” in *Sergei Eisenstein and Upton Sinclair: the Making and Unmaking of Que Viva Mexico!* ed. Harry M. Geduld and Ronald Gottesman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), xxvii.

establishing what some scholars call the “Mexican aesthetic” in national cinema. This aesthetic produced a specific image of the Indian. Pérez Montfort states:

Cierto es que su mirada de extranjero proporcionaba a las imágenes del indígenas que producía, muchas características estereotípicas como el sombrero, el sarape, el calzón blanco, los huaraches, la tez morena, etcétera. Si bien representaba con gran solemnidad al indígena contemporáneo, también caía en cierto folklorismo.

(Indeed his foreign gaze supplied the images of Indians with many stereotypical characteristics such as the sombrero, the sarape, the white undergarment, huaraches, brown complexion, etc. Although he represented the contemporary Indian with great solemnity, he also fell into certain folklorism.)⁴⁶

Eisenstein’s experimental use of the camera and the blurred definition of the film’s genre create a social justice framework that Mexican directors and cinematographers emulate during the 1930s. The preoccupation with indigenous culture carried into the 1930s with films such as *Janitzio* (1934, dir. Carlos Navarro), *Redes* (*Nets*, 1935, dir. Emilio Gómez Muriel), *La india bonita* (*The Pretty Indian Girl*, 1938, dir. Antonio Helú), *La rosa de Xochimilco* (*The Rose of Xochimilco*, 1938, dir. Carlos Véjar), *El indio* (*The Indian*, 1939, dir. Armando Vargas de la Maza), and *La noche de los mayas* (*The Night of the Mayas*, 1939, dir. Chano Ureta), and continued into the 1940s, but with some variation.

Several of the *indigenista* films were attempts by the directors and producers to create a pseudo-ethnographic cinema of indigenous cultures. *Janitzio* and *María Candelaria* (1943, dir. Emilio Fernández) are two unique examples of the industry’s approach to presenting indigenous cultures because the narrative of both films is similar, at times identical, yet the constructions of the Indian are different: *Janitzio* follows the

⁴⁶ Ricardo Pérez Montfort, *Estampas del nacionalismo popular mexicano*, 173.

fictional ethnography model initiated by Eisenstein and *María Candelaria* conveys a folkloric model of *indigenismo*.

Francisco Domínguez: Folklorist and Film Composer

Janitzio and *María Candelaria* feature scores by Francisco Domínguez, composer and folklorist. During the 1940s, Domínguez was one of Emilio Fernández's leading composers, receiving his start with *Janitzio* and continuing with box office successes such as *Flor Silvestre* (*Wild Flower*, 1943, dir. Emilio Fernández) and *¡Que lindo es Michoacán!* (*How Beautiful is Michoacán*, 1943, dir. Ismael Rodríguez).⁴⁷ Domínguez worked on several different film genres including *comedias rancheras* and urban melodramas, making him a versatile film composer for the period. Before venturing into the film industry, however, Domínguez's musical pursuits during the 1920s and 1930s were situated in the study of vernacular and indigenous music in Mexico, projects with the emerging avant-garde movement *Estridentismo* (discussed below) and the national school of dance, and the search for Mexican musical nationalism. Information on Domínguez is scarce, but bits and pieces have been recovered and pieced together to provide a glimpse into the composer's ideologies and endeavors, which influences how the examination his cinematic music.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Fernández's other favorite composer was Antonio Díaz Conde. His scores were featured in the urban and prostitute melodramas of the 1940s and 1950s.

⁴⁸ See the following music encyclopedia entries on Domínguez: Gabriel Pareyón, *Diccionario Enciclopédico de Música en México* vol. I (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura de Jalisco, 1995), 189; Aurelio Tello, "Francisco Domínguez," in *Diccionario del Cine Iberoamericano* (Madrid: Sociedad General de Autores y Editores, 2008). See also the following sources on his involvement in dance: Alma Rosa Cortés González, *60 Aniversario de la Escuela Nacional de Danza Nellie y Gloria Campobello* (México:

Research on Domínguez focuses on his contributions to the post-Revolutionary pursuit of musical nationalism during the 1920s. As part of a list of educational programs and fieldwork assignments from the Ministry of Education, Domínguez was contracted in 1923 to study and catalogue vernacular music in the state of Michoacán. The finished product, a monograph entitled *Album de Michoacán*, features musical transcriptions of *sones*, *jarabes*, *corridos* and *canciones abajeñas* for solo piano or piano and voice. In the monograph's "Notas preliminares" (Preliminary notes), Domínguez explains that the melodies included in the monograph represent the diverse regions of the state: "lacustre (región que comprende el lago de Pátzcuaro), serrana (region montañosa) y abajeña (tierra caliente), como un homenaje al genio creador de los ignorados compositores mestizos e indígenas tarascos" ("Lake region [which includes Lake Pátzcuaro], highlands [mountainous region] and the lowlands [hot lands], as a homage to the genius of the ignored mestizo and indigenous Tarascan composers").⁴⁹ Domínguez also provides contextual information on some of the collected melodies, generally remarking on unique musical characteristics and providing folkloric descriptions to color the reader's understanding of the songs. He ends his note with a summation of the music:

Esta música se caracteriza por su sencillez y sana alegría; sus melodías son espontáneas e inspiradas, y su armonización está basada en el sistema musical diatónico. A pesar de esto, la música conserva una fuerte raigambre aborígen en sus giros melódicos, sus cadencias y sus ritmos combinados.

(This music is characterized by its simplicity and its healthy joy; its melodies are spontaneous and inspired and its harmonization is based on a diatonic musical

Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1992); Margarita Tortajada Quiroz, *Danza y poder* (México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1995), 124, n16.

⁴⁹ Francisco Domínguez, *Album musical de Michoacán* (México: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 1923), 3.

system. Despite this, the music conserves strong aboriginal roots in its melodic turns, its cadences and its combined rhythms.)⁵⁰

Domínguez's transcriptions of the melodies fit within the paradigms of western art music with time signatures in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8 in primarily major keys with lyrics in Spanish.

In 1926, Domínguez's fieldwork in Michoacán aided in his participation in the *Estridentista* theatrical endeavor *El Teatro mexicano del murciélago* (Mexican Theater of the Bat), a joint project, bringing together theater director Luis Quintanilla, painter Carlos González, and folk composer Nicolás Bartolo Juárez.⁵¹ Inspired by Russian variety shows that combined folklore and popular culture with avant-garde aesthetics, the *Teatro mexicano del murciélago* featured folk dances and “comic representations of modern urban life,” incorporating folkloric numbers and popular representations of emerging national figures such as the *charro*. The music and dances of Michoacán made up several acts of the production and, as Elissa Rashkin notes, to some extent resembled the *Noche Mexicana* spectacles of the early 1920s, but was much more inventive.⁵² Unfortunately

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Estridentismo* (Stridentism) is an avant-garde movement that took place in Mexico during the 1920s by poets Manuel Maples Arce, Germán List Arzubide, and Salvador Gallardo and painters Fermín Revueltas, Ramón Alva de la Canal, and Jean Charlot. The movement rejected the academy and enforced new approaches to modernism through technological mediums such as radio and cinema, printed prose, and plays. Ended in 1928, the movement maintained influence during the 1930s in Mexican art. For more information, see Elissa Rashkin, *The Stridentist Movement in Mexico: the Avant-Garde and Cultural Change in the 1920s* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009); Luis Mario Schneider, ed., *El estridentismo: México 1921-1927* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985).

⁵² *Noche Mexicana* refers to a festival or garden party in Chapultepec Park in 1921 to commemorate the Centennial of Independence. The festival was modeled after regional fairs and featured several examples of popular and regional culture. See Rashkin, *The Stridentist Movement in Mexico*, 103 and Rick A. López, “The Noche Mexicana and Popular Arts,” in *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in*

the musical scores of these stage performances has not been found, but it is important to note that because of Domínguez's musical background and fieldwork experience in the rural areas of Michoacán, he was considered a suitable composer for these stage works.⁵³ Although not strictly a recognized member of the *Estridentista* movement, his participation in these performances leads me to believe that his personal ideologies on music and art, much like the movements', rejected strict academic and western European paradigms in pursuit of something more experimental and more homegrown.

Domínguez's ideology of musical nationalism is made apparent through his participation in the First National Congress of Music on September 5, 1926. The First National Congress of Music was the first time that Mexican musicians, composers, performers, musicologists, critics and educators met to discuss musical matters. Topics for debate at this meeting ranged from issues of national music, folklore, and the state of musical affairs in the post-Revolutionary society in the form of paper presentations that were discussed and evaluated during the eight-day course of the meeting.⁵⁴ Leonora Saavedra notes that the congress had three main groups of participants: the

Mexico, 1920-1940, eds. Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephen E. Lewis (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006): 23-42.

⁵³ In 1925, Domínguez composed for the *revista*, *La revista es mía*, with Alvaro Pruneda. Their song *La Catarina* is featured and sung by the *triple* Chucha Camacho. See *Crónicas de teatro de "Hoy"* (México: Ediciones Botas, 1941), 40.

⁵⁴ For more information on the First National Congress of Music in 1926, see Alejandro L. Madrid, "The Sounds of the Nation, Modernity, and Tradition: the First National Congress of Music as Synecdoche of Discourses," in *The Sounds of the Modern Nation: Music, Culture, and Ideas in Post-Revolutionary Mexico* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 112-37; Alejandro L. Madrid, "The Sounds of the Nation: Visions of Modernity and tradition in Mexico's First National Congress," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86, no. 4 (2006): 681-706; Leonora Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music" (Ph.D. Diss, University of Pittsburgh, 2001).

tradicionalistas (traditionalists), an older generation of composers who did not feel the desire to move away from the late-Romantic, European style and felt little need to search for a national style of composition; the *evolutionistas* (evolutionists), composers following the path of Julián Carrillo and his work on microtonalism; and, lastly, the participants interested in folk music, to which Domínguez belonged.⁵⁵ In his paper entitled “Nuevas orientaciones sobre el folk-lore mexicano” (“New Orientations in Mexican Folklore”), Domínguez adamantly suggests that Mexican composers move away from the European art music tradition, criticizing arrangers of popular music and blaming Manuel M. Ponce for the aesthetic injury caused on folk music.⁵⁶ Domínguez, who was a previous student of Carrillo’s at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música and was the only musician at the time to conduct fieldwork on folk music in Mexico, insisted that the young composers concentrate on Mexico’s folkloric music, heavily emphasizing the need for these individuals to do fieldwork, transcribe, and publish this music. Adopting the melodies within their own music will mold a Mexican musical nationalism and move away from a European model. His paper was rejected.

⁵⁵ Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others,” 181-84.

⁵⁶ In an essay for *Revista de Revistas* entitled “La música y la canción mexicana,” Ponce advocates for the appropriation of the popular *canción* (song) into a Western art music framework in order to elevate the music to a suitable status for the cultural elite and the bourgeoisie. Saavedra notes that, upon a closer reading of the article, Ponce saw himself as the composer with a high enough status to succeed in the endeavor. For a discussion of Ponce’s article and his work with the *canción*, see Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others,” 19-27.

Although examples of Domínguez's compositions are scarce, it can be deduced whether he incorporated his ideologies in his musical and folkloric endeavors.⁵⁷ During the 1930s, Domínguez became heavily involved in Mexico's dance culture, the Escuela Nacional de Danza (National School of Dance) and the Escuela de Plástica Dinámica (School of Dynamic Plastic Arts).⁵⁸ According to several theater programs, Domínguez composed ballet and dance music with regional and folkloric themes, such as *Tierra (Earth)*, *La danza de los Malinches (The Dance of the Malinches)* and *La Virgen y las Fieras (The Virgin and the Beasts)*.⁵⁹ Domínguez helped develop the curriculum at the Escuela Nacional de Danza particularly in indigenous and folkloric dance and in 1935 he was appointed the director of the school. He continued his collaborations and involvement with the school into the 1940s, composing and arranging music for performances of Mexico's top dancers such as José Limón, Nelly and Gloria Campobello, and Yol-Izma.⁶⁰ In conjunction with the Escuela Nacional de Danza,

⁵⁷ Recordings of musical arrangements by Francisco Domínguez are located at the Museo de Culturas Populares in Mexico City. This includes: *Ay cocol*, *Costumbres Yaquis*, *El palomo*, *El capire* and a recording featuring Yucateca singer Guty Cárdenas accompanied by the Orquesta Madriguera.

⁵⁸ Tortajada Quiroz, *Danza y poder*, 64.

⁵⁹ Tortajada Quiroz also lists the following works during the 1930s, which received support from Lázaro Cárdenas: *El vaso de dios*, *Ofrendas y danza ritual*, *Simiente*, *Xochiquétzal*, *Yohualnepantla*, *Amarádecua*, 30-30, *El quinto sol* or *Sacrificio gladiatorio*. Ibid., 124, n16.

⁶⁰ Yol-Izma was especially known for her folkloric and indigenous dances. Domínguez provided music for several of her dance performances such as *Coqueta*, *Danza tehuana* (1929); *Danza antigua tarasca*, *La promesa*, *La siembre*, and *Danza michoacana* (1932). See César Delgado Martínez and Julio C. Villalva Jiménez, *Yol-Izma: La danzarina de las leyendas* (México: Escenología A.C., 1996), 189-96.

Domínguez continued to work for the Ministry of Education, publishing several essays and transcriptions of musics from several regions across Mexico.⁶¹

Due to Domínguez's involvement with the Ministry of Education and his work with the dancers, he was hired as the composer for Carlos Navarro's *Janitzio*. How he came to be hired for that film is unknown, but he may have come into contact with Luis Márquez Romay, the film's screenwriter, silent film actor, and photographer. In 1922, Márquez enrolled in film workshops sponsored by the Ministry of Education "para guardar memoria visual de las multiples actividades de tal ministerio" ("to save the visual memory of the ministry's activities").⁶² The following year, he accompanied ethnographers on the "Misiones Culturales" (Cultural Missions) to Janitzio, in marvel over the local folklore and in particular the celebration of *Día de los muertos*.⁶³

According to the entry in Emilio García Riera's *Historia documental del cine mexicano*,

Márquez states:

Visité por primera vez la isla de Janitzio en 1923; se celebraba la famosa noche de muertos de la cual no se tenía conocimiento en la ciudad de México. Posteriormente Rafael Saavedra y Carlos González hicieron el Teatro del Murciélagos donde presentaban diversos aspectos típicos de Michoacán; fue así como se conoció en la ciudad la Danza de los Moros, la de los Viejitos, la Noche de muertos.

⁶¹ His contributions for the Ministry of Education's *Investigación Folklórica en México I* during the 1930s include: Chalma, Estado de México (1931); Música Yaqui, México DF (1931); Jilotepec, Estado de México (1931); Tepoztlán, Morelos (1933); Huixquilucan, Estado de México (1933); Regiones de los Yaquis, Seris y Mayos Sonora (1933); San Juan de los Lagos, Jalisco (1934); Chiapas (1934); San Pedro Tlachichilco, Hidalgo (1934); Tepoztlán, Morelos (1937).

⁶² Aurelio de los Reyes, "Luis Márquez y el cine," *Alquimia* 4, no. 10 (2000): 34.

⁶³ "Gabriel Figueroa," *Luna Córnea*, no. 32 (2008): 216.

(I visited the island of Janitzio for the first time in 1923; they celebrated the famous night of the dead, which is not known in Mexico City. Afterward, Rafael Saavedra and Carlos González did the Teatro del Murciélago where they presented diverse typical aspects of Michoacán; this is how they learned about the Danza de los Moros, the Viejitos, the night of the dead in Mexico City.)⁶⁴

It is possible that Domínguez and Márquez worked together or at least were acquainted during this trip. Regardless of whether they met or not, Domínguez became the film's composer and it is to be determined if he incorporated his musical ideologies into the *indigenista* film seven years after the First National Congress of Music.

***Janitzio*: Fictional Ethnography**

Janitzio tells the story of star-crossed lovers who suffer first at the hands of an outsider, then suffer through the intolerance of their own community. The romance is between the fisherman Zirahuén (Emilio Fernández) and Eréndira (María Teresa Orozco) and the alleged tradition of the Purépecha people of Janitzio: if a native female has relations with an outsider, that female will be considered impure. Because impurity was considered an insult, she and her lover must be punished by death, their bodies thrown into Lake Pátzcuaro. Zirahuén and Eréndira's romance is cut short when a corrupt businessman, Manuel Moreno (Gilberto González), takes over the fish market on the island and buys the people's catch for lower than what he sells it. When Zirahuén confronts him, they fight and Zirahuén is subsequently arrested and thrown in prison. In order to negotiate his release, Eréndira agrees to go away with Moreno to Pátzcuaro.

⁶⁴ From Raquel Tibol, *México en la cultura* quoted in Emilio García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano* (México: Ediciones Era, 1969), 154. See also Aurelio de los Reyes, "Luis Márquez y el cine," 33-38.

After Zirahuén is free, he discovers her infidelity and considers her to be impure.

Although Zirahuén eventually accepts her, their people do not and she is stoned to death. Zirahuén, heartbroken, carries her body into the lake until they both disappear under the water, bringing the film to a tragic end.

In order to comply with the model of ethnographic film, parts of the narrative, in particular the description of the Purépecha's traditions, are supposedly based on accounts collected by Luis Márquez Romay during his sojourn in Janitzio. While not extracted specifically from Purépecha culture, the story is a juxtaposition of elements from two narratives: the punishment handed to Eréndira is reminiscent of an Old Testament passage from Deuteronomy⁶⁵ and Zirahuén carrying her lifeless body to her final resting place is similar to the legend of Iztaccíhuatl and Popocatepetl.⁶⁶ When filming began in 1933, Janitzio and Pátzcuaro had received ample attention not just by the Ministry of Education, but also by *El Universal Ilustrado*, which featured photo spreads of the island and the people, in particular Janitzio's picturesque butterfly fishing nets and the island's Day of the Dead festivities.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Deuteronomy 22:23-24 states: "If within the city a man comes upon a maiden who is betrothed, and has relations with her, you shall bring them both out to the gate of the city and there stone them to death." Stoning is a standard punishment for every infraction in the Bible.

⁶⁶ According to Aztec legend, Iztaccíhuatl was a princess that fell in love with the warrior Popocatepetl and they planned to marry. When Popocatepetl went to war, Iztaccíhuatl was told he died. After receiving the news, Iztaccíhuatl died of grief. When Popocatepetl returned, he was dismayed to discover his love had died. He carried her body outside of Tenochtitlan and remained at her grave. Seeing this display, the gods covered them both with snow and turned them into mountains. Popocatepetl transformed into a volcano, erupting and sending ash onto the city in his rage, and Iztaccíhuatl a snow-capped mountain, which resembles a woman sleeping. See "Los dos volcanes: Popocatepetl e Iztaccíhuatl," *Artes de México*, no. 73 (México: Artes de México, 2006).

⁶⁷ *El Universal Ilustrado* featured photo spreads and articles on several locations in Michoacán weekly during January through March 1933. The film, however, was not mentioned in the articles.

Prior to working on *Janitzio*, Emilio Fernández was part of a small circle of Mexican actors, producers, and directors working in Hollywood. When returning to Mexico, these individuals incorporated techniques and representations learned in Hollywood in early Mexican cinema, which included conceptions of the “primitive Other.”⁶⁸ According to García Riera, *Janitzio* gave Fernández an opportunity to proudly display his athletic torso while wearing a small white undergarment, strategically fashioned to look like a loincloth, stating, “*Janitzio* fue tributaria de la moda de *Tarzán* impuesta en la época por las películas con Johnny Weissmuller, un moda que exaltaba la inocente sensualidad de lo ‘primitivo’” (“*Janitzio* was a tribute to the *Tarzan* style imposed in the era of films with Johnny Weissmuller, a style that exalted the innocent sensuality of the ‘primitive’”).⁶⁹ Zirahuén is captured majestically by Jack Draper’s Eisensteinian influenced cinematography against medium shots of the butterfly nets and the establishing shots of the island, marketing him as an attractive specimen of Mexican indigeneity.

Advertisements in the periodical *El Universal* describe the film as “un gran película mexicana; el perfume de una leyenda pletórica de romance y tragedia” (“A great Mexican film; the perfume of a legend teeming with romance and tragedy”),⁷⁰ and a

⁶⁸ Also in Hollywood with Fernández were Lupita Tovar, Dolores del Río, Ramón Navarro, director Carlos Navarro, actor and director Antonio Moreno, and the sound engineers Los Hermanos Rodríguez.

⁶⁹ Emilio García Riera, *Emilio Fernández, 1904-1986* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara Centro de Investigaciones e Enseñanza Cinematográficas, 1987), 19.

⁷⁰ “Un gran película mexicana,” *El Universal*, September 28, 1935.

“película de costumbres muy mexicanas” (“a film with very Mexican customs”).⁷¹ What music helped to reinforce these decided Mexican customs?

Straddling both the silent and sound period, *Janitzio* relies predominantly on music to propel the narrative and provide adequate environmental and emotional cues. The underscoring stands in for limited dialogue and, as such, acts in the manner of the silent film compiled score.⁷² This is evident in the introductory six-minute sequence that depicts several changes in mood, location, and character situation, yet no dialogue. This sequence quotes the principal theme and moves into a series of major key folkloric-like melodies performed primarily by woodwinds, moving in parallel thirds, reminiscent of a *canción*. It is the principal leitmotif, however, that is the most utilized during the film’s more dramatic scenes.

Domínguez begins the film with the principal leitmotif based on an A minor descending pentatonic scale, although the presence of the eighth note B suggests a modal A minor (Example 2.1).



Example 2.1: Transcription from opening credits of *Janitzio* (1934, dir. Carlos Navarro).

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² For more information of the silent film compiled score, see Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (London: BFI Publishing, 1987); Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film Score* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992); Martin Miller Marks, *Music in the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); James Wierzbicki, *Film Music: a History* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

This theme contains heavy articulations, emphasized by the low brass and, at other times, upper woodwinds. In film music, this was a normal practice particularly in silent film music anthologies that contained collections of specific music associated with moods, actions, locations, and ethnicity. Claudia Gorbman argues that musical stereotypes for the exotic Other, notably the Indian, “descend from a Euro-American all-purpose shorthand for representing primitive or exotic peoples. Musical representations of Turks, Chinese, Scots, and generic peasants since the late eighteenth century have tended toward pentatonicism, rhythmic repetitiveness, and open fourths and fifths.”⁷³ Gorbman proposes a binary representation of the Hollywood Indian, either as bloodthirsty marauders, represented by rhythmic, repetitive drumming figures, typically the Scotch-snap, or romanticized and noble, depicted with lush melodies in a legato style.⁷⁴

The Hollywood western, however, cannot strictly be compared to the *indigenista* films because representations of the Indian are distinct. Mexican cinema did not portray the Indian as antagonistic or violent, but rather, exalted the figure, featuring him/her (typically him) as noble and heroic. Cinematic music in the *indigenista* films developed, or borrowed from, the rising Mexican musical nationalism when composers such as

⁷³ Claudia Gorbman, “Scoring the Indian: Music in the Liberal Western,” in *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 236. For a source on scoring the Indian in film and popular theater, see also Michael V. Pisani, “I’m an Indian too’: Creating Native American Identities in Nineteenth—and Early Twentieth-Century Music,” in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 218-57.

⁷⁴ Repetitive percussive ostinati and the Scotch-snap are not found in the underscoring for the *indigenista* films of the 1930s and 1940s. However, Silvestre Revueltas utilized this rhythmic figure in *Cuauhnáhuac* (1931). Leonora Saavedra points out that Revueltas’s past experiences in the silent film houses in San Antonio and Mobile may have been influential for Revueltas’s stereotypical signifier of the Indian. The silent film music anthology *Sam Fox Moving Picture Music* by J.S. Zamecnik features a section entitled “Indian Music” which depicts a similar rhythmic pattern. See Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others,” 257-58.

Carlos Chávez looked to the Indian for inspiration in uncovering a national identity, appropriating current Indian melodies into their own music.⁷⁵ Regardless of ideology and personal beliefs, cinematic music representing the Indian followed in the then current art music trends, marking film music as another area in which composers could illustrate the Indian representation, but now with the visual crutch of said Indian on-screen.⁷⁶ In her study on the politics of modern Mexican music and national musical projects, Leonora Saavedra examines the state of research of Indian music in Mexico during the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and how composers approached the Indian *topos* in their works. During the 1920s, composers, such as Chávez, Antonio Gomezanda, and Manuel M. Ponce, adopted western art music signifiers for the exoticized other to represent the Indian. The Academia de Investigación de la Música Popular within the Conservatorio Nacional de Música was one space in which the exploration of pentatonicism in pre-Columbian music took place. An influential source of the period is René and Marguerite d'Harcourt's study *La Musique des Incas et ses survivances* (1925), in which "the authors collected and transcribed Peruvian folk music, which they presented as the authentic surviving Inca music because it was based—as all primitive

⁷⁵ Chávez provides the best example of this with his composition *Sinfonia India* (1935), which features two Seri melodies transcribed by Domínguez, "I Coos" and "Jime Eke" from his trips to the Yaqui, Seri, and Mayo regions in 1933. See *Ibid.*, 305.

⁷⁶ Saavedra observes that the music intended to depict the Aztec Other was extended to incorporate the contemporary Indian, although this is not made explicit. In sound cinema of the 1930s, the *indigenista* films did not depict a pre-Columbian population, but rather the present day Indian experience, leaving the pre-Columbian traditions to silent film. One exception is *El signo de la muerte* (*The Sign of Death*, 1939, dir. Chano Ureta) starring Mario Moreno "Cantiflas." During the 1940s, more films featuring pre-Columbian cultures, particularly the Aztecs, surfaced, retelling the story of Juan Diego and the sighting of the Virgin of Guadalupe, such as *La virgen morena* (*The Brown Skinned Virgin*, 1942, dir. Gabriel Soria).

musics of the world were said to be—on pentatonic collections.” Saavedra further asserts:

The identification of the pentatonic with the Indian is based on the evolutionist assumption, widely held in European scholarship and not exclusive to the d’Harcourts, that all musical cultures pass through a series of steps similar to the developmental steps of human beings (infancy, adolescence, maturity, etc.). According to this view, in “primitive” cultures music is pentatonic, and only by “progressing” do cultures “progress” in their music to the use of heptatonic and diatonic scales.⁷⁷

The use of the pentatonic paradigm, as Saavedra argues, is an example of the European value system applied to represent other cultures, furthering the contention that “Mexican scholars and composers internalized a European conception of the non-European as primitive, took this conception as their point of departure, concluded that ancient Mexican music must have been primitive.”⁷⁸ As previously stated, Domínguez was surrounded by several composers who incorporated this framework in their own music and he was associated with those who were the most influential in music from his participation in the First National Congress of Music. Although Domínguez argued for young composers to conduct fieldwork and use the transcribed melodies as the basis for their own compositions in an attempt to represent national identity, Domínguez fell into the western European paradigm of representing the Other for the film’s theme.

The film presents the Purépecha people on Janitzio as oppressed by society, struggling to cling to their traditions when an outsider shakes the balance. This struggle is sonically syncretized by the principal theme. Its appearance in the film occurs in

⁷⁷ Ibid., 235-36.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 237.

several scenes, each of which strategically amplifies the conditions of the Purépecha people, either foreshadowing tragedy or solidifying the appearance of a present injustice.

As previously stated, the film begins with very little to no dialogue, allowing the music to set the moods. The theme repeats while images of the fisherman in their canoes with the mandatory butterfly nets appear, fishing and reeling in their catch. The goal of this sequence is the ethnographic portrayal of the island's idyllic way of life. We, as spectators, see the labor involved with bringing in the catch through extreme close ups on the fish in the nets and choppy tracking shots of the fishermen in their canoes.

A part of the ethnographical paradigm is the continued educating of the outsider audience through explanations of the on screen society. The mouthpiece of this education is the learned, mestizo character Don Pablo (Max Langler) who provides the explanations of the traditions of the island to Moreno and to the broader audience. Don Pablo instructs Moreno about the tradition of outsiders having relations with the inhabitants, but also describes the consequences of another village trespassing on the Purépecha territory. He explains that since the time of the Conquest, Páztcuaro waters belonged to the inhabitants of Janitzio. Any other villagers who fish in "their" lake are violating traditional code and the Purépecha have the right to defend themselves. The penetration of their territorial waters is construed as an injustice since their tradition and way of life is under attack and the theme returns full force in order to accentuate this fact.

After the opening musical sequence, the theme returns when Zirahuén and the other fishermen on the island witness Moreno lower the prices of their catch. During a long shot of the fisherman collectively reading the announcement of the lowered prices,

the oboe and flute quote the antecedent section of the theme in unison, which is then followed by the consequent with full orchestra, at a slow tempo and legato. More articulated weight is placed on the triplets at the beginning of the theme, emphasizing the heavy atmosphere of despair. The theme repeats six times, accompanying a sequence of images of the fisherman and Zirahuén, throwing concerned and resenting glances at Moreno as he walks through the town. The weighted descent of the theme, moving from upper woodwinds to lower strings, its darkened tone color, the minor key, and the slower tempo reiterates the injustice of the situation, providing no movement towards a positive closure.

This scene reflects circumstances in the current political and social sphere of the 1930s. The Revolution attempted to dismantle the oppressive structures of the Porfiriato, particularly in regards to the treatment of the lower and working classes, and the weakening of the national bourgeoisie. During the Maximato, however, Mexico gravitated to capitalist development, allowing many of the dominant groups from the Porfiriato such as commercial landowners and industrialists to reinstate themselves in the new economic system. While the working classes were brought into the national political life as a consequence of the Revolution and the Constitution of 1917, the post-Revolutionary central government sought to control these people rather than respond to them, intent on preserving their economic model. Labor laws were limited and the working class found the objectives for which they fought for were not met.⁷⁹ By the

⁷⁹ Nora Hamilton, *The Limits of State Autonomy: Post-Revolutionary Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 98-103.

1930s, changes were underway particularly during the *sexenio* of Lázaro Cárdenas which established alliances with the working class and peasantry.

Moving away from the ethnographical approach and into the realm of fiction, the theme also foreshadows tragedy, which is most prominent at the film's end. When Janitzio's adversaries take revenge on Zirahuén by stabbing him in the lake, he is taken back to Janitzio to recover. Eréndira, worried, returns to Janitzio in a canoe in order to search for him, knowing her life is in danger by returning. She is quickly spotted by her rival Tacha who tells the villagers that Eréndira has returned. Once told, the villagers come out of their homes and shops with lit torches, intent on punishing Eréndira for disobeying the island's tradition. The theme is quoted in entirety several times *legato* during this sequence, moving from low brass to high woodwinds to full orchestra, and provides a sorrowful accompaniment to Zirahuén and Eréndira's situation before replaced by faster, rhythmic music, intended to emphasize the panic of the chase. The torch-bearing crowd eventually corners Zirahuén and Eréndira, who eventually sacrifices herself when the crowd begins to throw stones at the couple.

Dominguez's theme is not the only representative piece of music in the film, but it is the most utilized. Other melodies are used to accompany the various moods and emphasize specific situations that contain stylistic characteristics similar to music of the region as transcribed in Domínguez's monograph on Michoacán. Domínguez supplies one song bearing similarities to a *pirékua*, a lyrical Purépecha *canCIÓN* typically in 3/4 or 6/8 with romantic text, to correspond with Zirahuén and Eréndira's romance. Played by guitars and clarinet and with a male vocalist, the *canCIÓN* offers the necessary regional

association that the underscoring cannot provide and which Slobin deems as essential to providing the complete ethnographic approach. The *canCIÓN* is brief and is delicately introduced as source music, providing a hint of tenderness to the blossoming relationship and the necessary authenticity that the viewers absorb as an accurate portrayal of the on-screen culture.⁸⁰

Ya no recuerdas que yo fui
Tu primer amor.
El único poseedor
De tu tierno corazón.
Si tú me olvidas niña,
Si tú me olvidas,
Yo no podré vivir,
Porque desde que te vide
Toda mi vida te di.

(Now you do not remember
That I was your first love.
The only possessor
Of your tender heart.
If you forget me girl,
If you forget me,
I will not be able to live,
Because since the first time I saw you
I gave you my whole life.)⁸¹

The inclusion of this melody is similar to Silvestre Revueltas's 1933 work, *Janitzio*, which features several signifiers of the folkloric and popular. The piece is composed in an ABA form and exhibits an intended *pirékua* played in parallel thirds by oboes in the A sections. In addition to studying and transcribing melodies from the Janitzio and Pátzcuaro regions, it is likely that Domínguez drew influence from Revueltas's work for

⁸⁰ Mark Slobin, "The Steiner Superculture," 20.

⁸¹ *Luna Córnea*, 218.

his own film score.⁸² According to *Revista de Revistas*, the Orquesta Sinfónica de México, which performed Revueltas's *Janitzio* in December 1933, played Domínguez's score for the film's musical track in 1935.⁸³

Revueltas's film scores may have also served as an inspiration for Domínguez. In 1935, Emilio Gómez Muriel's *Redes* premiered with underscoring by Revueltas. Although not strictly classified as an *indigenista* film, *Redes* exhibits strong similarities visually and musically to *Janitzio* although the narratives are slightly different: *Janitzio* is a story of star-crossed lovers in Michoacán whereas *Redes* features an uprising in the small village of Alvarado in the east coast state of Veracruz. Both films, however, feature the plight of the worker at the hands of a corrupt, capitalist businessman who takes advantage of the fishermen in several ways. The music for each film features a theme solidifying the present oppression felt by the fishing community, folkloric elements accompanying scenes of successful fishing and the quaintness of the village, and dissonant and abrasive variations of the principal theme in scenes of physical

⁸² For more information of the Revueltas's *Janitzio*, see Roberto Kolb, "*Janitzio*, ¿música de tarjeta postal? La retórica de un albur musical de Silvestre Revueltas" (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, working paper). For a cinematic analysis of the work, see Jacqueline Avila, "The Influence of the Cinematic in the Music of Silvestre Revueltas" (master's thesis, University of California, Riverside, 2007).

⁸³ See Hugo del Mar, "Luces y Sombras del Cine Nacional," *Revista de Revistas*, July 28, 1935: 4. Del Mar states that the orchestra is directed by Revueltas, but does not mention whether Revueltas himself conducted Domínguez's underscoring. According to another entry from *Revista de Revistas*, filming for *Janitzio* began in November 1934. It is possible that Domínguez attended the performance of *Janitzio* in 1933 and became aware of Revueltas's technique with mestizo musical elements. For his orchestral work, Carlos Chávez encouraged Revueltas, then director of the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, to study the music of Pátzcuaro in 1931. Saavedra notes, however, that it is not known if Revueltas completed the trip. See Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others," 267.

conflict. Although *Redes* was filmed before *Janitzio*, it premiered after yet both films present a powerful response to the current social and political climate.⁸⁴

Janitzio was applauded in several periodicals for depicting “lo más mexicano” (“the most Mexican”) and is considered the industry’s first anthropological attempt:

“Janitzio,” la película mexicana que ha triunfado por sus propios méritos y por su alto valor documental, ofrece en cada una de sus escenas, paisajes que sorprenden por su belleza, y tipos regionales de indiscutible autenticidad, revelando al mundo los insospechados tesoros naturales y el intenso temperamento artístico de los nativos de la región michocana.

(“Janitzio,” the Mexican film that has triumphed on its own merits and for its high documentary value, provides in each one of its scenes landscapes that will impress by their beauty, and regional types of indisputable authenticity, revealing to the world the unsuspected national treasures and the intense artistic temperament of the natives from the Michoacán region.)⁸⁵

The fictional ethnographical structure of the film concurs with Gamio’s persistence in understanding the indigenous populations in order to successfully integrate them. Several of the players in the film’s development, including the screenwriter Marqués and the composer Domínguez, completed research and fieldwork experience with the community presented on screen. The film, however, does not fully encourage cultural integration, as modern society is portrayed as oppressive and corrupt and the Purépecha as isolationist and resistant.

⁸⁴ *Janitzio* premiered in September 28, 1935 and *Redes* premiered July 16, 1936. For more information on Revueltas’s score for *Redes*, see Eduardo Contreras Soto, *Silvestre Revueltas En Escena y En Pantalla: la música del compositor en el cine, el teatro y la danza* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, forthcoming) and José Luis Castillo and Roberto Kolb, eds. *Silvestre Revueltas Edición Crítica: Redes (1935)* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009).

⁸⁵ “Auténticos Pescadores del lago de Pátzcuaro,” *El Universal*, October 6, 1935.

The last film of the 1930s to follow the fictional ethnographic model was *La noche de los mayas* (*The Night of the Mayas*, 1939, dir. Chano Ureta), a romantic drama about a Mayan woman who falls in love with a *criollo chicle* hunter during the caste war of the Yucatán.⁸⁶ Because this outsider penetrates the Mayan community, acting against the morals and traditions of the people, a draught falls on the land, endangering the health of the population and their crops. Only with the lover's deaths do the rains come, saving the Mayans from starvation. In 1939, *Cinema Reporter* followed the production and filming of *La noche de los mayas*, providing details of its progress in attempts to garner public interest. Much like *Janitzio*, *La noche de los mayas* was an endeavor to provide an anthropological portrayal of an indigenous culture, specifically the Mayans. The film featured several Mayan rain rituals, Mayan melodies by Yucatecan composer Cornelio Cárdenas Samada, and accurate costuming, but also incorporated essentialist features to enhance primitiveness such as the ritualistic use of magic. The film did well at the time, winning several awards from the Asociación Mexicana de Películas y la Unión de Directores including Best Musical Score by Silvestre Revueltas, but has virtually disappeared in Mexican film history and is considered an anomaly because it is the only film during the period to depict the Mayan population.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ For information on the caste war, see Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964) and Don E. Dumond, *The Machete and the Cross: Campesino Rebellion in Yucatan* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

⁸⁷ The other awards include: Best Film, Best Actress (Isabela Corona), Best Editing (Emilio Gómez Muriel). See *Cinema Reporter*, February 9, 1940.

María Candelaria

By the early 1940s, the representation of the Indian and discourses of *indigenismo* lessened as a consequence to the modernization and industrialization that characterized the President Manuel Ávila Camacho's administration (1940-1946). Many of the social and labor reforms initiated by Cárdenas desisted or came to a halt entirely. The rural education program continued, but began to copy the methods of their urban counterparts in attempts to assimilate the indigenous populations into modern Mexican society as quickly as possible. Agrarian reform decreased as the new administration shifted towards a more capitalist paradigm focused on obtaining foreign capital, and the Catholic Church, which had been severed from Mexican society due to the separation of Church and State from the Constitution of 1917 and the Cristero rebellion, surfaced again as an important conservative voice.⁸⁸ Daily life for Mexicans was changing and the preoccupations of the government swayed away from the revalorization of indigenous populations to modernizing the nation.

The works of Gamio and Caso during the 1940s continued to encourage the integration of the Indian through education and continued anthropological study of culture in order to understand indigenous populations. In 1943, the Indian became a film protagonist once again when *Janitzio* actor turned director Emilio Fernández teamed up

⁸⁸ The Cristero rebellion arose when Calles enforced the anticlerical articles of the Constitution of 1917. He first ended religious processions, then deported priests and nuns and closing churches and convents. In 1926, the archbishop declared a strike on ceremonies and tensions grew violent and bloody, particularly in Michoacán, Jalisco, Puebla, Oaxaca, Zacatecas, and Nayarit. Fighting lasted until 1929 when the new presidential elections took place. See David C. Bailey, *Viva Cristo Rey: the Cristero Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974); Deeds, *The Course of Mexican History*, 565-68.

with rising cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa, screenwriter Mauricio Magdaleno, and Francisco Domínguez for the new *indigenista* film, *María Candelaria*.⁸⁹ Unlike *Janitzio*, this film maintains a special place in popular culture, considered to be the most important national film for exhibiting a crucial representation of *lo mexicano* for national and international audiences.⁹⁰ In this film, Fernández attempts to capture the beauty and simplicity of the indigenous by transplanting the *Janitzio* narrative onto the idyllic floating gardens of Xochimilco with two representative faces of Mexico's rising star system, Dolores del Río and Pedro Armendáriz, termed by Carlos Monsiváis as “the mythic couple of Mexican cinema.” According to reviews in *Excélsior* from January 25, 1944, the film was considered “una obra maestra del cine nacional” (“a masterpiece of national cinema”), acknowledging Fernández as a national talent and genius.⁹¹

Set in 1909, a year before the Revolution, *María Candelaria* tells the tragic story of the young Indian woman, María Candelaria and the circumstances leading to her death. María Candelaria (Dolores del Río) and her fiancé Lorenzo Rafael (Pedro

⁸⁹ Screenwriter Magdaleno did not want to write the screenplay for the film, believing the narrative to be poor and in bad taste. In addition to successful screenwriting, Magdaleno is a highly regarded *indigenista* novelist. In his novel *El resplandor*, he details the inequalities and injustices suffered by the Indian after the Revolution. See “Mauricio Magdaleno,” *Cuadernos de la Cineteca*, no. 3 (México: Cineteca Nacional, 1976), 29.

⁹⁰ This fact is based on a study entitled “Revisión del Cine Mexicano completed in December 1990 to February 1991 by famed anthropologist Nestor García Canclini in his book *Los nuevos espectadores: cine, televisión y video en México* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994). The study consisted of questions regarding the state of Mexican national cinema up to the present period, particularly mindful of spectatorship during the 1940s and 1950s. Participants were asked to list three films they considered to be important to national cinema. Of the selected films, *María Candelaria* was ranked the highest with 20% of the participant's vote. Also, *María Candelaria* was an entry in the Cannes International Film Festival and received the Grand Prix, the first time a Mexican film won the prestigious prize.

⁹¹ “Una obra maestra del cine nacional es la película *María Candelaria*,” *Excélsior*, January 25, 1944.

Armendaríz) live slightly outside of Xochimilco, ostracized by their people because María Candelaria's mother was a prostitute. As a result, María is forbidden to sell her flowers in the village.

Aside from her village's hostility, María Candelaria is consistently subjugated by the mestizo businessman, Don Damián (Miguel Inclán), who claims that she owes him money, but is in actuality resentful because she declines his advances. Don Damián is an interesting character that mediates relations with the state on behalf of the Indian populace: he runs the local drug store and is in charge of distributing quinine to the Indians, but only does so as he sees fit. Because of his position and because he is mestizo, he occupies a higher social status than the Indian, marking his own identity by donning a black *charro* suit and speaking of the uselessness of Indians. Joanne Hershfield points out that "Don Damián articulates the state's paternalistic attitude towards the Indians, who were generally considered to be like children, incapable of taking care of themselves" yet it is unclear if she is speaking about the 1909 state or the 1940s state.⁹²

María Candelaria and Lorenzo Rafael want to marry, but through several unfortunate episodes involving Don Damien killing their prize pig and refusing quinine to María Candelaria after she contracts malaria, and Lorenzo Rafael's imprisonment for stealing the quinine and a wedding dress for his betrothed, the marriage date is postponed. In order for María Candelaria to negotiate Lorenzo's release, she agrees to pose for a portrait for a nameless *criollo* painter, who is in awe of her Indian visage and

⁹² Joanne Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 55.

labels her as “the essence of Mexico.” After painting her face, he is forced to use another model to complete the portrait because María Candelaria refuses to remove her clothes for the nude painting. One of the villagers of Xochimilco catches a glimpse of the completed portrait and informs the rest of the village. Seeking revenge on María Candelaria for shaking the balance of their way of life and their purity, María Candelaria is stoned to death. Lorenzo Rafael, escaped from prison, places her lifeless body in a canoe and they drift through the canals of Xochimilco, bringing the film to an end.

María Candelaria tells a story of hostility and persecution that the protagonist and her fiancé suffer at the hands of her community as a consequence of rigid moral customs, paralleling the supposed Purépecha legends proposed in *Janitzio*. In order to complement the similarities in narrative, Domínguez utilizes the thematic material from *Janitzio* to reinforce its cinematic associations to oppression and social injustice. It is important to note, however, that *Janitzio*'s theme is the only music material that is reused, not the whole score. Domínguez incorporates other music, such as a love *leitmotif* for María Candelaria and Lorenzo Rafael, and other music strategically emphasizing the primitive Other. While Domínguez utilizes an exoticist theme in conjunction with vernacular-influenced music to provide an adequate cultural synchresis to *Janitzio*, in *María Candelaria*, Domínguez resorts to other essentialist signifiers that further Fernández's goal of rooting national identity in Mexico's pre-Columbian heritage. This is most illustrative in the opening scene of the film: a montage of close-up shots of pre-Columbian statues, concluding with a close-up of a present day Indian woman standing next to an Aztec stone statue with defined cheekbones and a stately facial expression.

Placing the Indian woman next to the statue links the ancient past and the present, implying that the traditions of the pre-Columbian past (summed up here in artifacts and facial features) are still alive in the present day Indian. Hershfield astutely observes that this particular sequence is almost identical to Sergei Eisenstein's scene in his prologue to *¡Que viva México!*, but rather than operating as a homage, it re-enforces the bridge between past and present indigeneity that Fernández attempts to make. It should also be noted that this sequence is also replicated in the OCIAA (Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs) 1942 travelogue entitled *Yucatán*, which superimposes the image of a present day Mayan man with a statue of an Olmec head, indicating that the ancient past is still alive particularly in the faces of present day inhabitants of the Yucatán. In *María Candelaria*, as well as in *¡Que viva México!* and *Yucatán*, the focus on pre-Columbian artifacts and their connection to the present is sonically represented with an implied Indian melody based on a pentatonic scale, repeated twice by flute, rattles, and marimba, and eighth note ostinati performed by percussion.

Regardless of time period, the *Janitzio* theme is utilized again and this time to a greater extent, appearing in the *María Candelaria* more than ten times. It is not entirely known, however, why Domínguez chose to reuse the theme in this film, but, in terms of film music practice in Mexico at this time, it was common for film composers to recycle some, if not all, of their scores to other films due to severe time constraints, funding issues, or problems with studio orchestras. By 1943, Domínguez had composed original music for four films, including *Soy puro mexicano (I'm a Pure Mexican, 1942)* and *Flor Silvestre (Wild Flower, 1943)*, both directed by Emilio Fernández, and *Doña Bárbara*

(1943), directed by Fernando de Fuentes. The reuse of the *Janitzio* theme may be the result of a heavy workload or time restraints, but, after watching the complete edited version of the film for timing and establishment of moods, Domínguez may have recognized the borrowed narrative and chose to recycle his past theme, re-orchestrated and bursting with studio polish, for moments that reflected identical conditions of oppression and injustice. The music reinforcing these particular aspects of the narrative links the two films together, the past and present approaches to cinematic *indigenismo*. If Fernández constructs a gaze that is folkloric in nature based on stereotypes and his own perception of Indianness, Domínguez constructs the cinematic ear to match that gaze.

Functioning differently from *Janitzio*, which did not associate the theme to a specific character, the theme in *María Candelaria* amplifies the circumstances surrounding María Candelaria and not the other characters. The film and the music focus on her, her actions, and her village's actions against her. María Candelaria becomes a key symbol of the film, the vessel, an icon that synthesizes the nation with the Indian through the portrait painted of her by the nameless painter, who describes her as an "Indian of pure Mexican race, a princess meant to judge the conquistadors." Domínguez's theme reinforces her significance in three crucial scenes that construct an intimate tie with María Candelaria and the oppression and intolerance that she suffers from within her community rather than outside of it.

Intending to sell her flowers in an early scene to pay for a debt set by the film's villain Don Damián, María Candelaria floats through the canals in a canoe, singing her *pregón* (street cry) in a high soprano register, more reminiscent of a singer trained in the

art music tradition rather than a folkloric singing style. Construing her attempt to sell in the village as insubordination, the entire village gathers gradually together, creating a blockade. As she moves closer to them in the water, the diegetic *pregón* metamorphoses into the non-diegetic theme in low woodwinds, gradually adds in instrumentation and louder dynamic and creates a separation between the villagers and herself. The theme, coupled visually with a long shot of the villager's faces, turns into a declamatory wall of sound, enforcing the notion that she is not welcome and establishes a strong sense of oppression, placing María Candelaria and the villagers on opposing ends until Lorenzo Rafael calls out to her and tells her to go home.

Rather than just marking the scene as “oppression in action,” the theme is interestingly presented here in two ways. When María Candelaria rows towards the villagers, the camera, through cut shots, gradually zooms back to provide a wider gaze of the surroundings, making clear that the entire village was present and not letting her pass. Musically, the theme is repeated at a slower tempo and softer dynamic, but, with each cut, becomes faster and louder, accentuating the expansion of the diegesis. The theme is still functioning as the theme of oppression and does so in conjunction with the camera's expansive gaze. After María Candelaria stops rowing and confronts the villagers, extreme close up shots reveal the villagers' expression of anger and blatant intolerance and María Candelaria's visage of desperation and defeat. The theme's instrumentation lessens from full orchestra to individual woodwinds and the thinner texture narrows that cinematic space, becoming much more intimate. At this point, the theme evolves into a *leitmotif* for María Candelaria's feelings of despair, almost rhythmically sighing with her,

accentuating the deep weight of each breath. This music associates closely with María Candelaria's emotions and functions not only as marker of oppression, but also as a physical indication of her desperation and melancholy.

In a later scene, Lorenzo Rafael is thrown in prison for stealing the quinine and dress from Don Damián, leading to María Candelaria posing for the painter. After the portrait is completed, using María Candelaria's face on another model's nude body, a resident of Xochimilco recognizes the naked María Candelaria in the portrait and quickly rushes back to her village. As she runs back to Xochimilco, the theme accompanies her, one restatement for each cut shot of a new location, which foreshadows the violence that will soon take place. When she runs down the street, away from the camera, the theme is quoted by solo bassoon. When the shot cuts to her running down a hillside, it is stated by solo French horn. When a group of residents, including Don Damián, hurry back with her, upper woodwinds quote the theme, adding more instrumentation to signify the physical presence of more people. When the villagers reach the studio, they see the portrait and are astonished and upset, claiming that María Candelaria has embarrassed the village of Xochimilco and must be thrown out of her garden home. The atmosphere in the studio is of angered humiliation: they see the portrait as a threat to their people and, because it is María Candelaria and because her mother was a prostitute, the situation is a danger that must be dealt with immediately. To emphasize this anger, the theme is quoted several times with mounting dynamics and quicker tempi, articulated by the brass in a bombastic manner. When Don Damián disgustingly acknowledges that it is María Candelaria in the portrait, the theme is quoted in entirety by trumpets with a declamatory

descending harmonic line. The people run out of the studio, furious, ready to punish María Candelaria for her sin and the scene is over. The theme functions here in two ways. Because of the consistency of the theme coupled with the actions of mounting anger, the theme foreshadows tragedy, similar to *Janitzio*. However, because of its dramatic manner and its consistent presence underneath the dialogue, the theme fuels the people's anger, siding with them in their antagonism and hatred for María Candelaria.

The next scene pays homage to the climatic ending of *Janitzio*. After leaving the studio, the camera cuts to a close up of a woman ringing the village's bell, bringing people together in the center. Much like in *Janitzio*, the bell ringer in *María Candelaria* is the jealous rival who intends on getting rid of María Candelaria by any means possible. The bell calls the people out of their homes with torches, a lynch mob mobilizing to punish María Candelaria. When at the studio, the people agreed to throw her out of the village, but with their rapid mobilization and use of torches, it is evident that they intend to kill her. Here, the theme is quoted at several points during the chase, but is also present in a varied form, primarily with static eighth notes that bare similarity to the dramatic articulated fate theme of Beethoven's first movement of his Symphony no. 5 in C minor, a fitting signifier for María Candelaria's present circumstance (Example 2.2).



Example 2.2: Transcription of thematic variant from *María Candelaria* (1943, dir. Emilio Fernández)

María Candelaria drudgingly runs through the canals of Xochimilco, followed closely by the torch-bearing mob. When she is cornered in the village, María Candelaria does not sacrifice herself as Eréndira did, but cowers against the wall and repeats over and over “I did nothing wrong.” When Lorenzo Rafael reaches her, the theme is quoted *tutti*, seemingly sealing her fate at the hands of the angry mob. The film ends with Lorenzo Rafael taking María Candelaria in his canoe down the *Canal de los muertos* (Canal of the Dead) with the final *tutti* restatement of the theme.

While Domínguez utilized the *Janitzio* theme in *María Candelaria*, he did not incorporate the other folkloric music from his underscoring. *María Candelaria* does not feature a working scene, as *Janitzio* and *Redes* did. With the State’s paradigm switch from socialist reform to capitalist models, instead of functioning as a social commentary film on the state of the indigenous populations and the plight of the worker, *María Candelaria* operates more as a melodrama and does not exhibit any type of folkloric music in its underscoring. While at the time considered a prize to the national film industry and receiving accolades at Cannes for being an exemplary model of Mexican cinema, the film is not without its criticism, particularly from the nation’s prominent artists. In a 1944 interview with the popular film magazine *Novelas de la Pantalla*, Diego Rivera called the film a complete failure. He pointed out the film’s many shortcomings, accusing the actors and crew of not conducting proper research into any of the Indian populations of Xochimilco, relying instead on stereotypes:

Y es que nuestros actores, viviendo a media hora de Xochimilco, no se tomaron la molestia de visitarlo para oír de viva voz a los indios de aquel lugar, ni los camarógrafos tuvieron la feliz ocurrencia de fotografiar el mercado en mañana de

tianguis, prefiriendo hacer escenas en uno más convencional, lleno de puestos fantásticos, absurdos, que yo jamás he visto.

(And our actors, living a half hour from Xochimilco, did not bother to visit the city to hear the live voice of the Indians in that place nor did the cameramen have the good sense to photograph the market in the morning *tianguis*, preferring to do scenes in a more conventional place, full of fantastic, absurd stalls that I have never seen.)⁹³

Other critics were more verbally antagonistic about the film. In a review written by critic Efraín Huerta, *María Candelaria* occupies the worst space in Mexican national cinema. Huerta agrees with Rivera in stating that the film did no justice to any Mexican indigenous community, particularly concerning the cinematic village's reaction to María Candelaria's portrait. He along with author, playwright, and cultural critic, Salvador Novo, create a list of reasons explaining why the film is mediocre and terrible. Reason three states:

Las reacciones del pueblo (de la masa del pueblo, estaría mejor dicho) de Xochimilco, son también la gente menos que inferior y esclavo. Hay en esto una falta total de conocimiento de los aborígenes y mestizos de Xochimilco.

(The pueblo's reaction (better said as the mass pueblo) of Xochimilco are also the people lower than the bottom and slaves. There is in this a total lack of knowledge of the aborigines and the mestizos of Xochimilco.)⁹⁴

Novo and Huerta comment that the narrative, which they describe as *bobo* (stupid) and *ramplón* (vulgar or common), is a repetition of *Janitzio*. Not many critics or scholars comment on the reuse of the musical material, although there are some mentions. The positive review printed in *Excelsior* makes the connection, but with wrong details:

⁹³ Díaz Ruanova, "Diego Rivera contra todos," *Novelas de la Pantalla*, February 1944.

⁹⁴ Efraín Huerta, "Cine," *Esto*, February 3, 1944.

Hace algún tiempo, no recordamos la fecha, admiramos una película mexicana titulada “Janitzio” y por vez primera llamó nuestra atención el trabajo digno de alabanza de Emilio Fernández, lo mismo que la técnica de la cinta y la música del aquel gran maestro Silvestre Revueltas que, claro, era bien distinta de la monótona y carente de expresión que a diario vemos en nuestras obras filmicas.

(It has been a while, we do not remember the date, that we admired a Mexican film titled “Janitzio” and for the first time the praiseworthy work of Emilio Fernández drew our attention as well as the music of the great maestro Silvestre Revueltas, who, of course, was quite different from the monotonous and expression-lacking one we face constantly in our film works.)⁹⁵

Despite harsh criticisms and obvious flaws in the narrative and representation of the Indians, the film was a success with audiences and continued the so-called Mexican aesthetic in cinema. Fernández’s representation of the Indian, labeled by Adela Fernández as *indias fernandianas* (Fernadian Indians), was based on several cinematic constructions. However, in 1948 Fernández directed *Maclovía*, starring María Félix and Pedro Armendáriz, which recycled the *Janitzio* and *María Candelaria* narrative once again, but used music by Antonio Díaz Conde. The regurgitation of the narrative and its representations indicate that despite flaws, inaccuracies, and constructions based on outside influences, this was the image of the popular Indian.

Conclusion

Although filmed in two different time periods during different social and political climates, *Janitzio* and *María Candelaria* share a similar narrative with similar music to convey similar messages. The integrationist discourses of Gamio and Caso advocated for

⁹⁵ “Una obra maestra del cine nacional es la película *María Candelaria*,” *Excelsior*, January 25, 1944. Although music is rarely mentioned, some sources have indicated Fernando Domínguez or Silvestre Revueltas composed the music.

not only teaching the Indian how to function within a modernized, western society, but also encouraged that the indigenous populations be understood rather than marginalized. To an extent, these films conveyed these messages. Written specifically for a modern mestizo audience and not necessarily an indigenous one, the films attempt to introduce the modern spectator to rural indigenous culture. Contradictorily, however, the societies on-screen are isolationist, unready to be penetrated by modernism or anything outside of their sphere. Changes in this life balance end with tragic consequences from within the community. *Janitzio*, however, delivered other messages regarding the position of the oppressed worker, not just the Indian, in modern society. *María Candelaria* attempted to identify the modern audience with the Indian and show that much of the oppression and negative impact felt by the Indian is not so much a consequence of modern society, but by the indigenous community itself. This message implies that the Indian would be better off integrating than left on their own.

In imagining a society on-screen, Mark Slobin argues that the composer must include music that logically fits with the construction. In doing so, the composer describes how the community lives, creating a musical ethnography for the time period. The repetitive use of the minor key, pentatonic theme in both *Janitzio* and *María Candelaria* suggest that the oppression and injustice suffered by the represented indigenous populations is absolute, that the indigenous experience is in a constant state of severity, either caused by an outsider or from those in the community or both. Domínguez held an influential position as the composer for the emerging national cinema as modern audiences flocked to the theater, where the symbols of the nation were

constructed and consistently repeated. Those who investigated further into the indigenous populations controlled these images and representations in cinema and Domínguez, as the composer and folklorist, supplied the necessary music to guide the audience through the narrative that exhibited them. Using exoticist frameworks, Domínguez resorts to a familiar musical construction of the indigenous Other that conforms to then current representations of the Indian, adding to the developing constructions of national identity that took over the period.

CHAPTER 3: Music in the *cine de añoranza porfiriana*

“*En tiempos de don Porfirio*: una brillante evocación de tiempos pasados, que para muchos fueron siempre mejores. La obra maestra del cine mexicano.”

(“*En tiempos de don Porfirio*: a brilliant depiction of past times, which were the best of times. A masterpiece of Mexican cinema.”)

-Advertisement from *Hoy* 1940

Juan Bustillo Oro’s 1939 film *En tiempos de don Porfirio* (*In the Times of Don Porfirio*) begins with a slow zoom in of the score *Vals poético* (*Poetic Waltz*) for piano by Mexican composer Felipe Villanueva (1862-1893). Accompanying the zoom in is the waltz played by strings, not piano as originally composed. As the piece continues, an invisible hand turns the first page of the score and we, as spectators, see carefully transcribed musical notation. Another page turn and an inter-title written in elegant calligraphy appears: “Dedicamos esta película a la hermosa música mexicana del pasado y a sus creadores, quienes supieron aprisionar en las bellas melodías el espíritu de su época, haciéndola así inmortal” (“We dedicate this film to the beautiful Mexican music of the past, and to its creators, who grasped in the beautiful melodies the spirit of the period thus making it immortal”).¹ After another page turn, the dedication turns into page after page of the sketched faces of nineteenth century Mexican composers: Felipe Villanueva, Alberto Ma. Alvarado, Manuel M. Ponce, Rodolfo Campodónico, José de Jesús Martínez, Alberto de la Peña Gil, Alfredo Carrasco, Juventino Rosas, Genaro Codina, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, Ernesto Elorduy, Delino M. Preza, Ricardo García de Arellano, Ricardo

¹ “Chapter 1,” *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, DVD, directed by Juan Bustillo Oro (1939; Mexico City: Laguna Films, 2007).

Castro, and J. Peredes Enríquez. After this dedication to the *música de salón* tradition, the regular credits role, beginning a film set at the end of the nineteenth century during the reigning years of dictator Porfirio Díaz (1830-1915), more commonly known as the Porfiriato.

The *cine de añoranza porfiriana* (films of Porfirian longing) uses the Porfiriato as the backdrop for narratives of romantic misunderstandings, comedic sketches, and musical performance. Coming at the tail end of the 1930s, the genre is a latecomer to the already established cinematic genres such the revolutionary melodrama, the prostitute melodrama, the *comedia ranchera*, and the *indigenista* film. The Mexican film industry was not unaccustomed to producing films that were historically based, having explored the Conquest and the wars of Independence with vigor and usually without question to validity or motive. However, during the mid-1930s, filmmakers examined those historical events and processes that were still fresh in the social, cultural, and economic memory of the present day. This is the case with the Revolutionary melodrama and its antithesis the *cine de añoranza porfiriana*.

Although operating with very different goals, the Revolutionary melodrama and the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* reinterpret, or a reimagine, a part of history for the post-Revolutionary society. In her suggestive chapter on the Revolutionary melodrama, Andrea Noble discusses the concept of moving memory to describe the consequences of audio-visual relationships to images of the Revolution. Her study focuses on Carmen Toscano's documentary *Memorias de un mexicano* (1950), which consists of newsreels and actuality footage filmed by director Salvador Toscano (Carmen's father) from the

Revolution, edited together with newly synchronized music and sound that presented the Revolution as a unified, cohesive event.² Noble surmises:

For the revolution to function within the post-revolutionary political and cultural imaginary as the desired unifying, foundational narrative of identity, it therefore had to be remembered and thereby *reinvented* as what it was not: a unified struggle propelled by a set of coherent aim and ideals.³

The *cine de añoranza porfiriana* performs in a similar way. In examining the trajectory of films using the Porfiriato ambience, it becomes evident that the era was not portrayed as a complicated and corrupted dictatorship swayed by foreign interests or as an era of rapid industrialization and growth. The cinematic Porfiriato was a simpler, easier era for the bourgeoisie and aristocracy, far away from the post-Revolutionary social and political instability and institutional revolution of the 1920s and 1930s. In one of the few examples of scholarship discussing the genre, Mexican film scholar Jorge Ayala Blanco states:

Estamos en el mundo de la fantásica, decidida, envidiable, enternecidamente reaccionaria, lánguida y porfiriana añoranza. Una evocación, plena de amabilidad y gentileza del 1900, de los mejores tiempos idos, pero no demasiado remotos y rescatables.

(We are in a world of fantasy, of determined, enviable, compassionate, reactionary, languid, and Porfirian longing. It was an evocation, full of kindness and gentleness of 1900, of the best times gone by, but not too remote and rescuable.)⁴

² For more information regarding Salvador Toscano and *Memorias de un mexicano*, see Pablo Ortiz Monasterio, *Fragmentos: Narración cinematográfica compilada y arreglada por Salvador Toscano, 1900-1930* (México: IMCINE, 2010).

³ Andrea Noble, *Mexican National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2005), 53.

⁴ Jorge Ayala Blanco, *La aventura del cine mexicano: en la época de oro y después* (México: Editorial Grijalbo, 1993), 37.

The world of fantasy and the Porfirian longing that Ayala Blanco speaks of is not merely presented in a romanticized narrative, or lush costume and set design, but is represented in the musical sequences, which are full and complete performances of vocal, piano, and stage works from the turn of the century, strategically situated in the film in accordance to performance practice and enforcing the implication that the Porfiriato was an utopian era. As the beginning sequence in Bustillo Oro's *En tiempos de don Porfirio* suggests, music plays a key role in establishing the appropriate style of the period, but a closer examination reveals that the musical performances create a synchresis to develop an atmosphere of utopia instigated by middle and upper class nostalgia during the social and political agitation of the post-Revolutionary years.

Reviewing the Porfiriato

As previously mentioned, historical dramas focusing on the Conquest, the Independence, the Reform period, and yes, the Revolution, were a part of Mexico's cinematic tradition during the 1930s and 1940s,⁵ but the Porfiriato as a film genre, at first glance, is somewhat of an oddity given the position the period has in Mexican history and in the Mexican imaginary. What was the Porfiriato and why was it reimagined for film?

Positive and negative gazes from the differing social sectors have defined the epoch. The positive gaze views the Porfiriato as a period of industrialization, economic growth, political stability, and supposed peace and prosperity while the negative gaze

⁵ For more information on these historical themes in Mexican film, see Ángel Miguel, coor., *La ficción de la historia: el siglo XIX en el cine mexicano* (México: Cineteca Nacional, 2010).

characterizes it as a period of deep corruption, fear, oppression, and violence. When Díaz first obtained presidential power in 1876, he inherited an empty treasury and massive foreign debt as a result of several domestic and international wars and political instability since the Independence. Díaz's primary concern was to change Mexico's image to foreign investors in the United States and Europe, whose capital Díaz believed would stimulate the manufacturing, mining, and agricultural sectors of Mexican society. Potential investors would be more inclined to invest in Mexico if order, stability, and firmness were implemented into the political and social arenas. As a result, he embraced the positivist ideology of Order and Progress.⁶

Campaigning on the platform of "no re-election," after Díaz's first term in office, he stepped down from the presidency and his handpicked successor Manuel González (1833-1893) stepped in. This interregnum presidency reeked of corruption as González granted land favors to the United States and European countries and ran Mexico into massive foreign debt.⁷ At the end of his term in 1884, Díaz was happily re-elected to office and did not step down until 1911.

Díaz immediately continued his campaign commitments of economic reform and improving Mexico's image abroad. As he consolidated his political power, Mexico entered a period of sustained modern growth through rapid industrialization with steam, water, and electric power, and new hydraulic and hydroelectric-generating stations.

⁶ See Susan M. Deeds, Michael C. Meyer, and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, 7th ed. (1979; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 415.

⁷ Friedrich Katz, "The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato, 1867-1910," in *Mexico Since Independence*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 73-74.

Improvements in transportation led by the railroad boom and the founding of the Mexican Central Railroad Company (backed by investors from Boston) connected the city with the countryside and reached the limits of the country's borders. Health and sanitation improved when the British firm S. Pearson and Son, Ltd arrived to Mexico to help the drainage problem, and lights were installed on city streets by U.S. American, Canadian, German, and English firms.⁸ Much of the nation's business was conducted in Mexico City as Díaz centralized political and social power into the metropolis. Foreign businessmen and merchants maintained the most power, but not the Mexican citizenry.⁹ The once problematic treasury was now in the hands of José Ives Limantour (1854-1935), who reorganized and implemented tariff laws, negotiated loans with modest interest rates, switched Mexico from the silver to gold standard, and gradually paid off foreign loans.¹⁰ Other industries such as oil received ample attention from British and U.S. investors, who competed for the exploitation of Mexican petroleum.

Modernization and the prevalent peace of the period, however, came by force, violence, and intimidation to the lower working classes and peasantry. Díaz's infamous guard, the *rurales*, was an important enforcement tool during the *pax porfiriana* (Porfirian peace).¹¹ Indian slave labor ran full force in henequen plantations in the

⁸ See the discussion of Porfirian modernization in Deeds, *The Course of Mexican History*, 421-23.

⁹ Michael Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 16.

¹⁰ See William Schell, Jr., "Money as Commodity: Mexico's Conversion to the Gold Standard, 1905," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 12, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 67-89.

¹¹ The *rurales* were not solely a Porfirian invention. This police force had been in implementation since Benito Juárez was in power (1858-1864). See Paul J. Vanderwood, *Los rurales mexicanos* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1981).

Yucatán where Mayan and deported Yaqui Indians of Sonora were beaten and forced to work. Muckraking socialist John Kenneth Turner provides accounts of the slave conditions in his exposé entitled *Barbarous Mexico*, claiming that Mexico's peace and prosperity were in fact superficial. While the gross national product was rising and seductive to foreign investors, the standard of living for the majority of the population was extremely poor and declining. Peace took the form of fear and everyone kept silent.¹² The *hacienda* system, in place since the colonial period, was consistently abused by Díaz's regime, particularly when the railroad boom pushed land values up and foreign seizure was greatly encouraged. New laws initiated by González in 1883 were designed "to encourage foreign colonization of rural Mexico, authoriz(ing) land companies to survey public lands for the purpose of subdivision and settlement."¹³ Rural Mexicans bore the cost of the rapid rises in modernization through fear from the *rurales*, exploitations by the *hacendados*, and the continued confiscation of land by the government and foreign industries.¹⁴

Commerce and industry at the expense of the lower classes flourished in Mexico and gave rise to new consumer cultures, lifestyles, and social stratification. This social class system expanded to include a new, small, bourgeoisie or middle class, which included skilled artisans, government bureaucrats, and other professional men, who were

¹² See John Kenneth Turner, *Barbarous Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969). See also Manuel Balbas, *Recuerdos del Yaqui: principales episodios durante la campaña de 1899 a 1901* (México: Sociedad de Edición y Librería Franco Americana, 1927).

¹³ Deeds, *The Course of Mexican History*, 439.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

now able to move their families from smaller residences in poorer neighborhoods to larger apartment homes off the more popular boulevards and became, according to Moisés González Navarro, the nucleus model of the nation.¹⁵ The wealthy, perceiving themselves to be the pillar of civilization, enjoyed the pleasures of the Porfirian regime by all things foreign, particularly all that was French, as Mexico City transformed into a cosmopolitan center. Michael Johns posits that one can view “the look of Europe in the streets of Mexico.”¹⁶ Architecture of *fin-de-siècle* Paris became the model for building construction and the popular Paseo de la Reforma was renovated boasting similarities to the Champs-Élysées. Fashion was either imported directly from Paris or designed to match French couture, and parks, such as the popular Alameda, were renovated and turned into large, lush public gardens, suitable for leisurely afternoon strolls by the upper-classes.¹⁷

In addition to the construction of public buildings and parks, certain venues became popular haunts for the upper-classes such as the Casino Español, a variety of French and Swiss inspired cafés located on the popular boulevard Plateros, and the illustrious Jockey Club, which, according to William H. Beezely, was an elite association

¹⁵ Moisés González Navarro, *Sociedad y cultura en el porfiriato* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994), 146. On the middle class in Mexico, see also Juan Díaz Covarrubias, “La clase media: novela de costumbres mexicanas,” in *Obras completas* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1959): 327-97.

¹⁶ Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz*, 17.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 23-24. See also Charles Flandrau, *Viva Mexico!* (London: Elan Books, 1982) and Edith O’Shaughnessy, *Diplomatic Days* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911).

for high society men and women and a popular venue for Díaz's celebrations including his presidential inaugural ball and several of his birthdays.¹⁸

The Porfirian elite appeared to live within a well-furnished bubble that strongly maintained a separation between themselves and the lower classes. The upper-classes in Mexico, however, were by no means a cohesive unit. The upper- and middle-classes were in no position to negotiate with the powers that be as the opposition press was continuously silenced. Díaz's process of control was not to develop political parties or any governmental run political parties, but to "play off different cliques within Mexico's elite" and place them against each other.¹⁹ The crucial goal for the middle- and upper-classes during the Porfiriato was social and economic advancement. As a result, the upper- and middle-classes gave up political powers, allowing Díaz and his political circle to call the shots.

After continued corruption, oppression, and fraudulent re-elections (despite having campaigned on a "no re-election" platform), an armed uprising in 1910 fueled by ex-presidential candidate Francisco I. Madero brought down the Díaz regime and the culture of the Porfiriato. The Revolution marked ten years of civil and political unrest in which all social strata witnessed the burning and destruction of the Porfirian era and increased violence for the demands addressed in the Constitution of 1917: sweeping agrarian reform that gave sequestered land back to the people, liberation and equality for

¹⁸ William H. Beezley, *Judas at the Jockey Club and Other Episodes of Porfirian Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1987), 3-12. See also González Navarro, *Sociedad y cultura en el porfiriato*.

¹⁹ Katz, "The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato," 84.

the lower classes, particularly those in slave labor, a separation of Church and State, and progressive labor codes designed to protect the worker.

In the post-Revolutionary years of the 1920s, the topic of the Porfiriato stayed outside of social spheres due to national projects and reconstruction, and was ultimately pushed out of the national imaginary in order to focus on molding a current national identity. The burgeoning film industry even went under scrutiny by the government. Continuing from a 1919 mandate, the government incessantly intervened in film production, censoring any films documenting the Porfiriato and the Revolution, in a sense “protecting” the public from the past in order to assure there would be no more uprisings or conflict. The last film depicting the period was Enrique Rosas controversial 1919 film *El automovil gris (The Grey Automobile)*, which, according to Aurelio de los Reyes, “era una vista, una narración lineal, sobre los robos cometidos por una banda durante el año más difícil de Revolución, 1915” (“was a glance, a linear narrative, about the robberies committed by a group during the most difficult year of the Revolution, 1915”).²⁰ The 1930s marked a reassessment of the Revolution and its ideals after the social and political reforms of the Constitution of 1917 had gone virtually untouched by the interim presidents of the Maximato of the 1920s and early 1930s.

President Lázaro Cardenás (1934-1940), however, brought with him new pursuits to remedy that which previous presidents had barely touched or neglected. First on his agenda: maintaining constant contact with the population. He travelled to different parts of Mexico, meeting with delegates of workers and peasants, listening patiently to their

²⁰ Aurelio de los Reyes, *Medio siglo de cine mexicano (1896-1947)* (México: Editorial Trillas, 1987), 75.

problems and concerns and put into effect the agrarian reform that had long gone ignored, distributing 49 million acres of land by the end of his term.²¹ Cárdenas also strengthened the labor movement, favoring complete State control over the unions and enforcing carefully organized propaganda campaigns intended to organize, unify, and discipline.

Arturo Anguiano states,

In every work place he visited, in every meeting where he spoke to workers, he insisted again and again, to the point of exhaustion, on the need for workers to organize. This would be the president's transcendental preoccupation, his obsession, and it would lead Cárdenas to become the most important propagandist and the leading promoter of the mobilization of the working masses.²²

In addition to the “mass politics” to provoke mobilization, Cárdenas nationalized the oil industries, constructing the government oil company, Petróleos Mexicanos (PEMEX) and removing foreign interests from Mexico, creating economic independence for Mexicans, specifically, as journalist Francisco Martínez de la Vez states, for the Mexican worker.²³ This led to further opposition from dominant groups and the right wing. Internationally, Cárdenas fully supported the socialist Republican struggle during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), sending aid and materials to the Republicans and granting asylum to those

²¹ Alan Knight, “The Rise and Fall of Cardenismo, c. 1940-1946,” in *Mexico since Independence*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 249-50.

²² Arturo Anguiano, “Cárdenas and the Masses,” in *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, ed. Gilbert M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 458. For further reading on society during the Cárdenas *sexenio*, see Salvador Novo, *La vida en México en el periodo presidencial de Lázaro Cárdenas* (México: Empresas Editoriales, S.A., 1964).

²³ When Cárdenas became president, 16 foreign companies controlled 98 percent of the petroleum industry. See Nora Hamilton, *The Limits to Autonomy: Post-Revolutionary Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 220-22 and Francisco Martínez de la Vez, “El petróleo: pasión y triunfo de México,” *Hoy*, February 24, 1951.

escaping General Francisco Franco's fascism regime, much to the chagrin of more conservative Mexicans who did not want to open the borders to refugees.

Cárdenas's leftist leanings in government carried out many of the aspirations put forth by the Constitution of 1917 and placed him in a mythicized and romanticized position in Mexican history and popular folklore, much to the dissatisfaction of the middle- and upper-classes who were the product of past Mexico's capitalist growth. Cárdenas placed the working class and peasantry in the national spotlight, implementing socialist reforms in labor, education, and land use for their benefit. Nora Hamilton notes that preferential treatment shifted from the middle and upper class circles to the working class and against dominant class interests, creating more polarization between the groups. The Cárdenas government had gone as far as it could in restructuring Mexican society within the existing capitalist constraints, but towards the end of his administration, he lost steam.²⁴ Many of the new policies and programs lost a great deal of revenue resulting in inflation and economic difficulty, leading many wealthy Mexicans, already fearful of the establishment of a communist state, and foreign capitalists to look elsewhere for lucrative investments.²⁵ It was in this heated climate of social and economic instability that the Porfiriato was remembered by the insecure middle- and upper-classes with longing.

²⁴ Hamilton, *The Limits to Autonomy*, 240.

²⁵ For more information on the effects of Cardenismo, see Enrique Krauze, *El sexenio de Lázaro Cárdenas* (México: Clío, 2000); Carlos Alvear Acevedo, *Lázaro Cárdenas: el hombre y el mito* (México: Ediciones Promesa S.A., 1986); Albert L. Michaels, "The Crisis of Cardenismo," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 2, no. 1 (May 1970): 51-79; Roberto Blanco Moheno, *Cardenismo* (México: Libro Mex Editores, 1963).

The Porfirian Utopia: *En tiempos de don Porfirio*

The Porfiriato was not a stranger to celluloid. In 1896, the Lumière Brothers sent two representatives, Claude Ferdinand Bon Bernard and Gabriel Veyre, to Mexico with the *cinematographe* apparatus and a few samples of actuality films. The Frenchmen received a warm welcome from Chapultepec Castle where the first screening took place, away from the press and the public and in front of Díaz and a selection of his closest friends. The technology was a great success and Díaz encouraged the Lumière workers to film as much of Mexico as they deemed fit and also subtly suggested they film him as well. The filming of Díaz was entirely for vanity's sake, but the consequences had political benefits: by screening his image across the country, the films gave the Mexican population a chance to see their president for the first time and, by extension, to see segments of society that they would not have otherwise. Silent film scholar Juan Felipe Leal states,

La recepción de las vistas de don Porfirio por el público mexicano, exhibidas por los personeros de los Lumière en Plateros, Espíritu Santo, y luego, en la ciudad de Guadalajara, como se verá, le confirmaron al General lo acertado de su juicio: la exhibición cinematográfica de su imagen era un medio privilegiado de afirmar su poder. El cine daría a conocer su figura en los sitios más apartados de la República como no había podido hacerlo ningún medio de propaganda anterior. Muchos conocieron por primera vez a don Porfirio gracias a sus presencia cinematográfica.

(The reception of the images of Don Porfirio by the Mexican public, screened by the Lumière workers on Plateros, Espíritu Santo, and later, in the city of Guadalajara, confirmed the certainty of the General's judgment: the film exhibition of his image was a privileged way of asserting his power. Cinema would unveil his figure to the most remote places as the Republic failed to do so

many times before by means of propaganda. Many met don Porfirio for the first time thanks to his cinematographic presence.)²⁶

Those who could afford the admission to a screening site were introduced to the Porfiriato through celluloid images of Díaz riding a horse through Chapultepec Park, riding a buggy from Chapultepec Castle to the National Palace, walking with his ministers, and enjoying the *belle époque* of the Porfiriato.²⁷ The filmmaker Salvador Toscano followed Díaz on his trip to the Yucatán and filmed the dictator arriving in Merida, visiting local institutions, and greeting the people.²⁸ At the outbreak of the Revolution, Mexican silent film focused entirely on the armed struggle and images of the Porfiriato disappeared after Díaz's exile. The last film to document the dictator's era was *Las fiestas del Centenario*, which depicted the lush and expensive festivities of the Centennial celebration of 1910.

The Porfiriato was utilized as a backdrop in the *teatro de asuntos políticos* (theater of political issues), which reached a new peak of popularity at the end of the 1930s. Political theater offered the Mexican public to see interpretations of current political and social events in the form of entertainment and the *teatro de revista* was a popular entertainment space for audiences of all social spheres. During the Porfiriato topics varied: the upper- and middle-classes were entertained by the *teatro culto* (cultured theater) of foreign plays, Spanish zarzuelas, and operas, and the working and

²⁶ Juan Felipe Leal, Carlos Arturo Flores, and Eduardo Barraza, *Anales del cine en México, 1895-1911*, vol. 2, *1896: el vitascopio y el cinematógrafo en México* (México: D.R. Voyeur, 2006), 47.

²⁷ De los Reyes, *Medio siglo de cine mexicano*, 27.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 39-43. Regarding a documented history of silent film in Mexico including the production of actualities and performance spaces, see the multivolume work, Felipe Leal et. al, *Anales del cine en México, 1895-1911*.

lower classes were entertained by the *teatro popular*, a theatrical culture influenced by puppet theaters, the circus, and other popular spectacles and is divided further into two categories: *teatro frívolo* (spicy or frivolous theater) and *teatro obrero* (worker/laborer theater).²⁹ According to John Nomland, the first hint of nostalgia for the Porfiriato appears in the 1938 one-act *revista En tiempos de don Porfirio* by Carlos Ortega and Pablo Prida with music by Federico Ruíz and Manuel Castro Padilla. Nomland states:

Es una alegre y divertida revista que contrasta los aspectos materiales de la civilización actual con los “buenos tiempos pasados.” Bajo los lujosos trajes y buen humor se mencionan algunos serios temas sociales. Es curioso que cada una de las cuatro obras de Ortega y Prida escritas durante los treinta y que aquí se han estudiado muestren la misma actitud descontenta hacia la situación actual y una nostálgica predilección por la tranquilidad del ayer.

(It is a happy and fun revue that contrasts the material aspects of present day civilization to the “good old days.” Beneath the luxurious costumes and the good humor, some serious social themes are mentioned. It is interesting that every one of the four plays by Ortega and Prida written during the thirties and shown here depicts the same attitude towards the current unhappy situation and a nostalgic fondness for the tranquility of yesteryear.)³⁰

The recovery of the Porfiriato in the *revista* led to further installments of the Porfirian past through screenings of *Las fiestas del Centenario* and performances of the theatrical works *Recordar es vivir* (*Remembering is Living*, 1938), *Aquellos 35 años* (*Those 35 Years*, 1938), and *Parece que fue Ayer* (*It Feels like it was Yesterday*, 1938). These

²⁹ For more information on popular theater during the Porfiriato and Revolution, see Susan E. Bryan, “Teatro popular y sociedad durante el Porfiriato,” *Historia Mexicana* 33, no. 1 (Jul-Sept, 1983): 130-69; Armando de María y Campos, *El teatro de género chico en la revolución mexicana* (México: Biblioteca del Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1956). For more information on the *teatro de revista*, see Pablo Dueñas, *Las divas en el teatro de revista mexicano* (México: Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos, 1994) and *El país de las tandas: teatro de revista, 1900-1940* (México: Museo Nacional de Culturas Populares, 1984).

³⁰ John Nomland, *Teatro mexicano contemporáneo 1900-1950* (México: Ediciones del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, Departamento de Literatura, 1967), 159-60.

spectacles premiered at the Teatro Lírico in Mexico City, a hot spot for political theater, and all events were well attended.³¹ According to Antonio de María y Campos, the figure of Díaz was present in the productions, but the playwrights took great care in the representation: “Los autores tuvieron la atingencia de no hacer hablar a este personaje, limitándose a exhibirlo solemne, marcial y, en verdad, imponente, al final de cada una de estas revistas” (“The authors had the good sense not to make this character speak, limiting themselves to make him appear, solemn, martial, and, in truth, imposing, at the end of each of the revues”).³² The revues relied on a simple narrative within the Porfirian backdrop that poked fun at social and political issues, complemented with musical pieces from the past and present. The film genre, however, operated differently.

Juan Bustillo Oro, a lawyer turned theater and film director and a member of upper class society, also shared Ortega and Prida’s fondness of the Porfirian epoch. During the late 1930s, Bustillo Oro approached producer Jesús Grovas from the prominent Producciones Grovas to create a film with a turn of the century atmosphere, specifically the Porfiriato.³³ Grovas adamantly declined the proposal, assuming no one

³¹ Armando de María y Campos writes that the Teatro Lírico was very popular for politically themed revues. Famous theater performer Roberto Soto began a season of *revistas políticas* in 1935 in which Cárdenas’s politics inspired many of the skits. See de María y Campos, *El teatro de género chico en la revolución mexicana*, 363-80.

³² *Ibid.*, 378. De María y Campos also mentions that Don Porfirio was played by David Martínez in all these productions.

³³ By 1939, Juan Bustillo Oro had worked at Producciones Grovas for some years, making a series of films for the company including: *Amapola del camino* (*Poppy of the Road*, 1937); *Huapango* (1937); *Las tías de las muchachas* (*The Aunts of Girls*, 1939); *Cada loco con su tema* (*To Each His Own*, 1938) and *Caballo y caballo* (*Horse and Horse*, 1939). See Emilio García Riera, *Historia del cine mexicano* (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1986), 110-11.

would be interested in the era, but after witnessing the success of the Porfirian *revistas* in the theater, he finally gave the go ahead in 1939.

Writer Humberto Gómez Landero and Bustillo Oro present a complicated and romantic fable centered on the rich pseudo-bohemian gentleman, Don Francisco de la Torre (Fernando Soler), “un caballero muy de fin de siglo, venido a menos, buen bebedor, jugador impenitente, mujeriego y de invulnerable buen humor” (“A very fin-de-siècle gentleman, a rundown, good drinker, unrepentant gambler, womanizer, and of invulnerable good humor”).³⁴ Don Francisco misses his wedding due to a night of card playing, drinking, and listening to repeated performances of Villanueva’s *Vals Poético* and *Recuerdo* by Alberto Alvarado with Don Rodrigo Rodríguez Eje (Joaquín Pardavé) at Orizaba’s Gran Casino. When attempting to seek amends from his fiancée Carlota’s (Aurora Walker) family the following morning, he is thrown out of the house with the promise he will never see her again. Carlota, pregnant, sails away to Paris and marries her uncle in an effort to save her reputation, leaving Don Francisco behind.

In 1884, the year of Díaz’s second presidential inauguration, Carlota returns to Mexico with her daughter Carmen (Marina Tamayo) and the servant Chloe (Dolores Camarillo), who professes more faith and affection to Don Francisco than to Carlota. Chloe seeks out Don Francisco to tell him of their return and of his child’s existence and together, they devise ways in which Don Francisco can see and bond with his daughter. When Carmen is older, Carlota, wanting Carmen to marry into a proper family, decides to arrange her marriage to the rich yet ridiculous Don Rodrigo. The problem, however, is

³⁴ Juan Bustillo Oro, *Vida Cinematográfica* (México: Cineteca Nacional, 1984), 181.

that she has fallen in love with Don Francisco's godson Fernando Villanueva (Emilio Tuero), causing the film's central dilemma. In order to woo Carmen, Fernando consistently sings waltzes, *danzas*, and serenades, much to the displeasure and discomfort of Carlota and Don Rodrigo. Through careful and hilarious scheming on the part of Don Francisco and Fernando to break up Carmen and Don Rodrigo's engagement, Carmen and Fernando eventually become engaged as well as Don Francisco and Carlota. The film ends with the happy couples at last in each other's arms.

In his work "Entertainment and Utopia," Richard Dyer examines musicals as entertainment that functions ideologically to respond to the socio-cultural context of the period. Entertainment is portrayed as 'escape' and as 'wish fulfillment,' pointing towards notions of utopianism: "Entertainment offers the image of 'something better' to escape into, or something we want deeply that our day-to-day lives do not provide. Alternatives, hopes, wishes—these are the stuff of utopia, the sense that things could be better, that something other than what is can be imagined and maybe realized."³⁵ The utopianism that Dyer addresses in musicals refers to emotion rather than construction: what it **feels** like rather than how it is organized. He designates five emotive categories that speak to specific present day social tensions that the musical attempts to temporarily solve: energy, abundance, intensity, transparency, and community. These approaches respond to real, present needs created by society and musicals act as a form of compensation.³⁶ *En tiempos de don Porfirio* and the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* fulfill that compensatory

³⁵ Richard Dyer, *Only Entertainment* (London: Routledge, 1992), 20.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

role and strictly depict an idealized and romanticized bourgeoisie paradise away from any of the socio-cultural or socio-political struggles permeating the epoch, excluding others from its utopian bubble.

As previously mentioned, the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* is typically not discussed in Mexican film history or criticism perhaps because the genre does not portray the nationalist representations that other film genres during the 1930s tended to depict, or because the goals of the film were drastically different from others. The Porfiriato represents the opposite of *cardenismo* and in that realization, the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* stood contrary to the Revolutionary melodrama, offering a different sort of escape for audiences, but for a very specific type of audience. Both Jorge Ayala Blanco and Jaime Contreras S. suggest that the genre is a result of the social unease felt in the middle- and upper-classes during the Cárdenas *sexenio* leading into Manuel Ávila Camacho's term in office. Contreras S. explicitly states:

No resulta ocioso acotar que el régimen de Cárdenas (1934-1940) implantó el cine revolucionario como subgénero llevándolo a sus mejores consecuencias. De ahí se derivaron las bases para el sustentamiento de la industria cinematográfica nacional. Para Ávila Camacho, la situación recién pasada que representaba el cardenismo tenía que ser apaciguada con ese famoso regreso al tiempo aquel cuya calma podía garantizar de algún modo, no sólo la estabilidad económica, la cual presuponían, sino también – y eso parecía ser lo más importante – la social.

(It is useful to note that the Cárdenas regime (1934-1940) introduced the cine revolucionario as a subgenre, leading it to the best results. From there, the supporting base of the national film industry arose. For Ávila Camacho, the past situations created by *cardenismo* had to be pacified by means of the now famous return to the past, a time whose calmness could promise not just economic stability, which is assumed, but also – and this was the most important – social stability.)³⁷

³⁷ Jaime Contreras S., "El cine de ambiente porfiriano," in *Revista Filmoteca: Cine y Revolución* (México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989), 41.

It would be a dire mistake to imply that the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* did not exhibit an atmosphere of anxiety due to social tensions of the period, but Bustillo Oro's fundamental vision was to make a film that specifically showcased the music of the period, stating succinctly: "Me ilusionaba una película en la que tuviera espacio importante la música mexicana de aquel tiempo" ("I imagined a film that had an important space for Mexican music for that era").³⁸ Bustillo Oro collaborated with Castro Padilla and Gómez Landero to select the musical numbers, entitling the project "Melodías de antaño" (Melodies of yesteryear)³⁹ although Grovas claimed that the era was "more dead than the melodies."⁴⁰

But the melodies of the Porfiriato were anything but dead. The musical traditions at the end of the century included a mixture of theatrical works by Mexican and foreign composers and the *música de salón*. The Italian *bel canto* tradition, French grand opera, zarzuelas and the *género chico* were popular in Mexico in the post-Independence years and sopranos such as Ángela Peralta (1845-1883) and Adelina Patti (1843-1919) were among the more popular performers of the period.⁴¹ *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, however, focuses on the lighter and simpler *danzas* and waltzes, rearranged by German-born film composer Max Urban. Much like many of the cultural aspects of the Porfiriato

³⁸ Bustillo Oro, *Vida Cinematográfica*, 179.

³⁹ This title became the subtitle or secondary title for *En tiempos de don Porfirio*.

⁴⁰ Bustillo Oro, *Vida Cinematográfica*, 180.

⁴¹ For more information on opera in Mexico, see Gloria Carmona, *La música de México: Periodo de la independencia a la revolución (1810 a 1910)*, ed. Julio Estrada (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984).

already mentioned, the *música de salón* tradition exhibits foreign influences in compositional technique and form. Yolanda Moreno Rivas states,

Otras formas de origen extranjero se instalaron en el país, aclimatándose y transformándose según el peculiar sentir de los compositores nacionales. Entran en ese grupo en especial las formas bailables; la polka de origen checoslovaco, la mazurca y la redova polacas, el vals vienés, el schottische o chotís y la galopa.

(Other forms of foreign origin found their place in the country, acclimated and transformed following the particular feeling of national composers. Included in this group, in particular, are the dance forms; the polka of Czechoslovakian origin, the Polish mazurka and redova, the Viennese waltz, the schottische or chotís and the gallop.)⁴²

Mexican composers of the nineteenth century utilized these styles and forms in their compositions, transforming the genres to their own tastes. Moreno Rivas points out the line dividing the popular music and the *música culta* was tenuous at best as these forms and composers of all social classes and education utilized these styles.⁴³ Waltzes and *danzas* were especially popular and easy to perform due to their melodic simplicity and repetitive rhythmic structure. By the period of the Porfiriato, these works were performed in the salon or drawing room by all social classes, which, according to Ricardo Miranda, was the location for controlling the social and private intercourse for those in attendance. Piano playing and courtship were inseparable during this period and gave young ladies the opportunity to show off their musical qualities.⁴⁴ Bustillo Oro and his

⁴² Yolanda Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana* (México: Oceano, 2008), 21.

⁴³ Yolanda Moreno Rivas, "Los estilos nacionalistas en la música culta: aculturación de las formas populares," in *El nacionalismo y el arte mexicano (IX Coloquio de historia del arte)* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1986), 39.

⁴⁴ Ricardo Miranda, "La seducción y sus pautas," *Artes de México: Música de la Independencia a la Revolución* 97 (2010): 16.

crew's musical selection for the film establish a deep appreciation for the nineteenth century musical tradition and prominent and popular Mexican composers. Other period films about nineteenth century Mexico, such as *Bugambilia* (1944, dir. Emilio Fernández), strictly feature music by European composers (operating diegetically).⁴⁵ Although European compositions were also in vogue during the Porfiriato, Bustillo Oro chose to exhibit the Mexican *música de salón* tradition in his film, providing the necessary period association, or, as Bustillo Oro points out, the appropriate *style*:

El escogimiento de la música, por supuesto, tuvo atención muy especial. Gómez Landero y yo nos corrimos una verdadera parranda melódica con el maestro Jesús Corona, atesorador de aquel repertorio. Los tres nos encerramos en un reservado del restaurant Hollywood, frente a la Alameda, que estaba dotado de un piano. Y ello fue que, entre libación y libación, escuchando interminable torrente de danzas, vales y canciones, estuvimos desde las ocho de la noche hasta las ocho de la mañana. Y sacamos una copiosa lista. De ella seleccionamos: el **Vals poético**, de Villanueva; **Club verde**, de Campodónico; **Galán incógnito**, de no sé quién, para Joaquín Pardavé; **Adiós** de Carrasco; **Altiva**, de Rica y Castellot; **Tristes jardines**, de Chucho Martínez; **Serenata mexicana** de Manuel M. Ponce; **Amor**, de Villanueva; **Recuerdo**, de Alvarado; una fusión de las canciones para juegos infantiles; el tema del ofrecimiento de flores a la Virgen por las niñas, y las cantinelas de la "posadas" que preceden a la Navidad. Todo esto se escuchó en la película, y aunque no todo era rigurosamente decimonónico, sí era todo del estilo apropiado.

(The musical selection, of course, required special attention. Gómez Landero and I ran a true melodic marathon with maestro Jesús Corona, a hoarder of this repertory. The three of us shut ourselves in a reserved space in Restaurant Hollywood, in front of the Alameda, which had a piano. In there, between libation and libation, we listened to an endless torrent of dances, waltzes, and songs, from eight at night to eight in the morning. And we came out with a copious list. From this, we chose: **Vals poético** by Villanueva; **Club Verde** by Campodónico; **Galán incógnito**, by I do not know who, for Joaquín Pardavé; **Adiós** de Carrasco; **Altiva** by Rica and Castellot; **Tristes jardines** by Chucho Martínez; **Serenata mexicana** by Manuel M. Ponce; **Amor** by Villanueva; **Recuerdo** by Alvarado; a fusion of children's playing songs; the theme for the

⁴⁵ *Bugambilia* features music by Franz Liszt and Frédéric Chopin, two composers who were popular and had tremendous influence on Mexican composers during the nineteenth century.

flower offering by little girls to the Virgin Mary and the ditties for “posadas” that occur before Christmas. You hear all of these in the movie and, although not all is rigorously from the nineteenth century, it is in the appropriate style.)⁴⁶

Bustillo Oro, Jesús Corona, and Max Urban incorporate the musical performances in such a way as that they would be considered a “natural” part of the environment. To do this, the music is performed in venues meant to reflect the performance style of the period: large ballrooms, salons, and, a requisite for cinematic romance, below a young lady’s balcony.

Performances in the film occur in scenes of comedic relief and in scenes of romance, which at times go hand in hand. The crucial figure for comedic relief is Don Rodrigo Rodríguez Eje, played by the crowd-pleasing theatrical performer Joaquín Pardavé.⁴⁷ Pardavé commonly played characters who express their nervousness in absurd or awkward ways and are often the butt of jokes, which in *En tiempos de don Porfirio* are brought about in scenes concerning his engagement to Carmen. Fernando Villanueva, played by Emilio Tuero, is the conduit for romance through his performance of all serenades and waltzes.

This fusion of theatrical comedy and musical performance occurs in a scene involving Carmen, Don Rodrigo, and Carlota, sitting together in Carlota’s salon in an attempt for the couple to get to know each other in the presence of a chaperon. However, they look and act bored, each yawning in turn, comically mickey-moused by muted brass glissandi. Carlota and Don Rodrigo engage in an awkward conversation, which shapes

⁴⁶ Bustillo Oro, *Vida Cinematográfica*, 182-83.

⁴⁷ For more information on the career of Joaquín Pardavé, see Josefina Estrada, *Joaquín Pardavé: el señor del espectáculo*, vol. I-III (México: Clío, 1996); Jorge Carrasco Vázquez, *Joaquín Pardavé: un actor vuelto leyenda* (México: Grupo Editorial Tomo, S.A. de C.V., 2004).

Don Rodrigo as a nervous and rather inelegant sort of fellow, much to the frustration and impatience of Carlota. Reminiscent of theatrical practice, the quick back and forth dialogue between the characters creates a humorous atmosphere as Don Rodrigo consistently misunderstands Carlota's comments and explanations, only to end up offending her. In one particular part of the conversation, Don Rodrigo nervously looks at a clock and asks about its origins. Carlota uses this time to establish herself as part of the Mexican and French aristocracy by explaining that it is a family heirloom:

DON RODRIGO: No han pasado los años por usted, Doña Carlota

CARLOTA: Oh sí, los años... (smiling pleasantly yet awkwardly)

DON RODRIGO: No, no han pasado. Se conserva usted muy bien. Nadie diría que tenía usted tantos.

CARLOTA: Muchas... gracias (obviously offended)

DON RODRIGO: Vaya... vaya... ¡hermoso reloj!

CARLOTA: Es un recuerdo de familia. Perteneció a Maximiliano.

DON RODRIGO: ¿A su hermano?

CARLOTA: Al emperador. (agitated)

DON RODRIGO: Ahhhhh... ¿su hermano era emperador?

CARLOTA: Y mi tío Napoleón...

DON RODRIGO: Su tío, él que casó con usted?

(DON RODRIGO: The years have not affected you, Doña Carlota.

CARLOTA: Oh yes... the years...

DON RODRIGO: No, they have not affected you. You are preserved very well. Nobody would think you were so old.

CARLOTA: Thank... you...

DON RODRIGO: Well... well... what a beautiful clock!

CARLOTA: It's a family heirloom. It belonged to Maximilian.⁴⁸

DON RODRIGO: Your brother?

CARLOTA: The emperor...

DON RODRIGO: Your brother was the emperor?

CARLOTA: And my uncle Napoleon...

DON RODRIGO: Your uncle, the one who married you?)

⁴⁸ Maximilian I of Hapsburg was the emperor of Mexico from 1864-67, appointed by Napoleon III, after the French Intervention in Mexico. Maximilian was not well received by the conservative and liberal Mexicans and was later ousted by Benito Juárez. He later captured Maximilian and sentenced him to death by firing squad.

The conversation is interrupted by Fernando's whistling, who, in an utterly romantic gesture, waits underneath the balcony outside for Carmen. The whistling heightens Don Rodrigo's nervousness as he desperately tries to ignore it and focuses his attention onto the piano on the other side of the room. To distract from Fernando's consistent whistling, which grows louder and more frustrated, Carmen nervously recommends that Don Rodrigo perform a duet with her, offering a natural shift to musical performance. His choice is a "*soneto* (sonnet)," a bouncy poetic song in duple meter entitled *El galán incógnito*, a popular song from the zarzuela tradition. Carmen, at the piano, plays a few measures before Don Rodrigo, who after clearing his throat and coughing, enters:

En noche lóbrega
Galán incógnito
Las calles céntricas atravesó
Y bajo clásica ventana gótica
Templó su cítara y así cantó:

"Niña purísima, de faz angélica!
Que en blancas sábanas roncando estás
Despierta y óyeme
Que en mis cánticos
Suspiros prófugos escucharás."

La bella sílfide oyo sus cánticos
Entre las sabanas se arrebujo
Y dijo "Cáscara es el murciélago!
Que un romántico, no le abro yo."

(One dark night
an incognito suitor
crossed the central streets
and underneath a classic Gothic window
Tuned his lyre and thus sang:

"Pure lady, with an angelic face
Who sleeps on white sheets

Wake up and listen to me
That in my chants
You will hear my fugitive sighs.”

The beautiful sylph heard his songs,
Snuggled between the sheets,
And said “Heavens, it is a bat!
Romantic singer, I will not open for you!”⁴⁹

The song enters another space after Carmen plays the introductory measures when, instead of solo piano, the spectator hears, but does not see, an orchestra take over the accompaniment. After Don Rodrigo finishes the last *copla*, the camera abruptly cuts to Fernando, who, waiting impatiently and angrily outside, interjects a *copla* into Don Rodrigo’s song:

Rival incógnito de voz escuálida
Viejo ridículo que canta ahí
Coge tu música y pronto lárgate,
¡Que Carmencita no es para ti!

(Unknown rival with a squalid voice
Ridiculous old man that sings over there
Take your music and leave quickly
Carmencita is not for you!)⁵⁰

Here the scene enters further into a fantasy world. Although Fernando is standing outside, below the balcony, he can hear all the music performed as if he were standing in the same room. There is not a difference between the sound in the salon and the sound on the street: they are miraculously the same. Fernando perceives Don Rodrigo’s song as a threat and rushes to defend Carmen, or, rather, to claim what he feels is his.

Fernando’s interjection borders on Dyer’s categorization of “intensity” within the musical

⁴⁹ Bustillo Oro, *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, DVD Chapter 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

utopia, where intensity is the experiencing of emotion directly, fully, unambiguously, “authentically,” without holding back. His actions are bold, all in the name of *el amor*, and are backed up by the orchestral accompaniment which continues even when Carmen stops playing, abolishing any notions that she was in control of the music. Where is that sound coming from? Carmen attempts to brush off Fernando’s singing, playing hard to get, and begins to perform the sentimental and lush *Altiya* by Alberto de la Peña Gil. When she begins to play, the camera cuts to a medium shot of her face throwing glances from the score back to the direction of the balcony. From this gesture, it can be assumed that she is performing the work for Fernando and hopes he understands her signals. Fernando, in turn, begins to sing the romantic lyrics, causing Carmen to physically stop playing, but the accompaniment continues, pushing Fernando forward.

Many elements are at work in this scene that relate to character development, emotive atmospheres, and the realm of fantasy. Despite Carmen’s request for a romantic “waltz or *danza*,” Don Rodrigo chooses an old-fashioned *soneto* that describes a singer intent on serenading his love interest, but she perceives him to be a bat (or rather vile) and would prefer to stay in her bed than hear his romantic song. The song’s content and Don Rodrigo’s over the top gestures (dramatically clearing his throat, plucking an invisible lyre, and nervously laughing when he hears Fernando’s *copla*) juxtapose into an example of tomfoolery and positions Don Rodrigo as antithetical to the chivalrous Fernando. After this performance, it becomes clear Don Rodrigo will not be able to win Carmen’s heart and as spectators we prefer as much. Fernando, becoming defensive of

Carmen, delivers his pithy comeback, but then counters and challenges Don Rodrigo's "romantic" performance with a velvety interpretation of *Altiva*.

The sudden aural presence of the orchestra and the lack of spatial depth between Fernando, who is standing below the balcony, and Don Rodrigo and Carmen, who are on the second floor of the house, are another matter. The orchestral accompaniment functions on a border of diegetic and non-diegetic categorizations, creating a quasi-reality. This transition enters what Robynn J. Stilwell terms the "fantastical gap": the liminal space between what we hear and what we see that falls into the realm of fantasy. It is the process of crossing from one part of the geographical soundscape to another, challenging original notions of film sound taxonomy so that identifying what is the diegetic and the non-diegetic becomes uncertain. This liminal space, Stilwell argues, is "a space of power and transformation, of inversion and the uncanny, of making strange in order to make sense."⁵¹ In this particular scene, orchestral accompaniment in the ruse of the piano accompaniment enhances the emotional atmosphere that otherwise would have not been accomplished by piano alone. The orchestral sound becomes a necessity to the performances.

The orchestral sound from the fantastical gap has a persistent presence in the film's musical sequences, further implying that the use of solo piano is not quite enough for effect. This requires a rearrangement of several musical selections and reinterprets *música de salón* performance practice for the sake of the narrative. The off screen

⁵¹ Robynn J. Stilwell, "The Fantastical Gap between Diegetic and Nondiegetic," in *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*, ed. Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, and Richard Leppert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 186.

orchestra operates as a tool of transcendence for spectators and provides necessary emotive elements to scenes, which revolve around love and longing. For example, when Don Francisco discovers Fernando and Carmen's love, he decides that it is up to him to break up the engagement between Don Rodrigo and his daughter. As part of his schemes, he invites both Fernando and Don Rodrigo over to discuss "how" Don Rodrigo should win Carmen's affections. Don Francisco and Fernando suggest a serenade for Carmen, but to be performed by Fernando, not Don Rodrigo. Initially, Don Rodrigo proposes an encore performance of *El galán incógnito*, but Don Francisco, a self-defined connoisseur of music, prefers the popular turn of the century *danza Adios...!* by Alfredo Carrasco. The light melody in A major with descending fourths makes frequent appearances in the Urban's underscoring when Carmen and Don Francisco are together, sharing tender and affectionate moments. During the performance, the rich orchestral sound accompanies Fernando while Don Francisco stares at a photograph of Carmen with regret and sadness over the years lost. Although a *danza*, the lyrics speak to Don Francisco's deep albeit unspoken desire to admit to Carmen that he is her father:

Los ojos que tú tienes
son luz de mis amores;
dime si ya no me quieres,
moriré sin ilusiones.

En un momento quiero
decirte lo que siento,
yo te juro serte fiel hasta el morir
si me amas tú.

Sublime, es el amor
que yo he cifrado en ti,
tú en cambio, ni un recuerdo
guardas para mí.

Yo quiero
unir nuestros corazones ya,
para quererte y adorarte
sin cesar.

No ocultes tus miradas
ni ocultes tus enojos,
ven y escucha un momento
mis palabras a tu oído.

(Your eyes
are the light of my love.
Tell me if you do not love me
I will die without illusions.

In one moment I want
To tell you everything I feel.
I promise to be faithful until I die
If you love me.

Sublime is the love
I have deposited on you
You, in return, not one memory
You save of me.

I want
To unite our hearts now
To take care of you and adore you
Without ceasing.

Do not hide your looks,
Do not hide your angers
Come and listen one moment
To my words in your ear.)⁵²

Fernando performs on an upright piano, but when the camera is on Don Francisco, the orchestral sound reinforces Don Francisco's state of melancholy.

⁵² Mario Kuri-Aldana and Vicente Mendoza Martínez, *Cancionero popular mexicano, tomo uno* (México: Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes, 2001), 98-99.

Much like the *cabaretera* films and the *comedia rancheras*, *En tiempos de don Porfirio* served as a performance vehicle for those artists to showcase their commercial talents to the 1930s consumer culture. As previously mentioned, Joaquín Pardavé and Emilio Tuero were especially featured in the film performing roles that gained them notoriety. At the time of filming, Pardavé had already penetrated the national film industry, but had considerable experience in theater, *carpas*, and *revistas*, performing regularly with the illustrious Roberto Soto and his company. Pardavé also played the role of Porfirio Díaz in the theater. According to Josefina Estrada, Pardavé's interpretation of Díaz was a huge success with audiences in the capital. However, when the company began performances in Oaxaca, Díaz's home state, Pardavé was consistently insulted and yelled at to quit. Pardavé's intention was to show the public the different faces of Díaz, not focusing on his dictatorship, but to show Díaz as a liberal fighter during the French invasion. This came much to the displeasure of the Oaxaqueños:

Los oaxaqueños le respondieron con vivas a Madero y a la revolución e, indignados, trataron de subir al escenario para atacarlo. La fuerza policiaca lo protegió y la función se suspendió, con la idea de continuar al siguiente día.

(The Oaxaqueños responded with long live Madero and the Revolution and, indignant, tried to climb the stage to attack him. The police force protected him and the function was suspended, with the idea that it would take place the next day.)⁵³

During the course of the run, Pardavé received numerous death threats, which led the company to end the show's engagements. The image of Díaz, while comforting to the insecure few in the urban areas, was still an open wound, particularly to those that lived outside of the capital's borders.

⁵³ Estrada, *Joaquín Pardavé* vol. III, 29-31.

The other spotlight artist was Emilio Tuero, a Spanish born singer who found fame in Mexican radio and film during the 1930s and 1940s. Popularly known as “el Bartíono de Argel” (“The Baritone from Algiers”), Tuero became a Latin American icon for his interpretations of boleros and tangos, earning him a position on XEW’s crowd pleasing “La hora azul.” Because of his genteel looks and “delicate manners,” Tuero was immediately typecast as a character from an aristocratic or bourgeois background. His velvety voice consistently placed him front and center for musical performances, which revolved around romancing or seducing a woman. In *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, this is no exception as he steals every musical (and romantic) scene and is the performer of every piece (with the exception of *El galán incógnito*).

Throughout the film, several different locales are shown, each of which reinforces the Porfiriato’s dominant classes. In the public spheres, the spectator sees the Alameda Park in Orizaba with uniformly dressed children who are playing and strangely singing songs in unison, and to the nearby cathedral where the devoted and pious young Carmen has her first communion and, in later years, prays she does not have to marry Don Rodrigo. Moving from the public to the private domains, the film begins at the Gran Casino in Orizaba, mimicking the Casino Español of Mexico City and serving as Don Francisco’s watering hole and salon for entertainment complete with a private string orchestra. This space is deemed immoral by passersby, who bless themselves in order to ward off its evil temptation. There is also an introduction to Carlota’s house, decorated in a French style with elaborate staircases, furniture, and sculptures, and grand ballroom for the bourgeoisie to celebrate the Christmas *posadas*. These spaces exist within the

confines of the bourgeoisie utopian bubble and never venture outside of it. With the exception of the humble and hilarious servant Chloe, no other social class outside the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie are present, succeeding in accurately capturing the ambience of the Porfiriato through its exclusion of peoples outside their social circle. We, as spectators, never see anything or anybody outside of this world.

With the uniform exclusion of the lower classes comes a sense of camaraderie among the upper class, evident during the musical performances at the *posada*. After successfully performing the serenade for Carmen, Fernando attempts to be as close to her as possible. He approaches Don Rodrigo, Carmen, and Carlota and boldly asks to dance a waltz with Carmen. Carlota and Don Rodrigo exclaim, however, that he cannot dance a waltz with her until he earns the privilege, which in this case is a performance of a waltz with the ballroom's small string orchestra. According to Carlota, this is a standard party tradition, but in actuality is a convenient and "natural" way of introducing another romantic waltz, performed by the visually and audibly attractive Fernando. Fernando gladly accepts and fulfills his end by performing Felipe Villanueva's *Vals Amor*, which he dedicates to Carlota and Carmen. Villanueva's waltz, however, was written for piano and in this scene it is performed with romantic lyrics and rearranged for orchestra.

When Fernando begins to sing, the ballroom stops all action and turns their attention towards him. Up until this point in the film, Fernando strictly sang all music, but here, he receives assistance from his audience. Fulfilling Dryer's category of community, a sense of unification and camaraderie to instill utopia, the participants sing call and responses to the waltz's verses. Each verse is given to a specific gender and age

group, who have conveniently reorganized themselves in the ballroom to appear like a choir: women sing first, followed by the elderly gentleman, then the young men. The effect of the community participation presents an overly idealistic if not sappy performance, but succeeds in shaping the utopian atmosphere that Dryer proposes: everyone at the party peacefully participates and is visibly happy. When Fernando and Carmen dance and sing Alvarado's waltz *Recuerdo*, the effect is furthered. Here, again, the participants in the ballroom sing sections of the waltz while either dancing or happily swaying to the music. The community is divided once again and conveys a sense of uniformity: those individuals standing on the edges of the room wear different ball gowns and suits, but those on the dance floor wear the same clothing as those dancing. This waltz is not only another example of Fernando's declaration of love for Carmen, depicting the only moment where he can face and touch her without fear of moral indecency, but also organizes the bourgeoisie society accordingly.

Throughout the film, Don Francisco devises several schemes for separating Carmen and Don Rodrigo, including getting Don Rodrigo drunk in order for him to miss his own wedding. Don Francisco also successfully convinces Don Rodrigo that he insulted, slapped, and challenged Fernando to a duel. Don Rodrigo arrives at the duel site, pistol in hand, but when the moment presents itself, he flees back to his estate, tail between his legs thus terminating the engagement with Carmen. After Don Rodrigo's abrupt disappearance, Don Francisco, Fernando, Carlota, and Carmen are reunited in the field. Here, Fernando and Carmen declare their love for each other in front of Carlota, and Don Francisco proposes again to Carlota, hoping to marry her not so much for love,

but so that Carmen can call him father in front of others respectfully. The film ends with Don Francisco and Carlota, walking away arm and arm, finally contented with the turn of events. The lingering moral of the film: love can and will conquer all, even money.

Much like the *revistas* about the Porfiriato, *En tiempo de don Porfirio* was a grand success with critics and audiences, breaking box office records its first week. Grovas initial hypothesis that the period was “more dead than the music” and that the film would be a flop was in fact a flop. A critic from *La Prensa* states:

La inmortal música, el brillante ingenio y el perfumado romanticismo de aquellos tiempos, son revividos en la pantalla con exquisito gusto y genial inspiración. Esta película abre una senda luminosa para el cine mexicano.

(The immortal music, the brilliant wit and perfumed romanticism of those years are revived on screen with exquisite taste and pleasant inspiration. This film opens a bright path for Mexican cinema.)⁵⁴

A luminous path indeed. Bustillo Oro’s film premiered on April 4, 1940 at the beautiful Teatro Alameda in Mexico City to a full house.⁵⁵ The nostalgic film about the Porfirian upper-classes was also intended and initially screened for the small, present-day insecure upper-classes. Emilio García Riera states,

La gran aceptación de esta cinta por un público que pagó durante tres semanas de exhibición en el Alameda dos pesos por butaca (hecho sin precedents en aquel tiempo), consagró la obra más ambiciosa y lograda hasta el momento de Bustillo Oro. La invocación que el título hacía de don Porfirio (que sólo aparece en la película como simple referencia de época y como un “pegote” impuesto a Bustillo

⁵⁴ “Cartel del Teatro Alameda,” *La Prensa*, April 3, 1940.

⁵⁵ Francisco H. Alfaro and Alejandra Ochoa state that the theater is supposed to be a simulacrum of a city street with fashioned streetlights and wooden furniture. Because of the design, the theater has been deemed as having nationalist qualities. Upper class theaters tended to be elaborately decorated according to a theme. See Francisco H. Alfaro and Alejandra Ochoa, *La república de los cines* (México: Clío, 1998), 36-37.

por el productor Grovas) predispuso en favor de la película a toda una clase media ávida de encontrar en el cine un refugio nostálgico.

(The great welcoming of this film by an audience that paid two pesos a seat for three weeks of screening at the Alameda (a fact without precedents at this time) established the film as the most ambitious and successful work by Bustillo Oro up to that point. The invocation in the title of Don Porfirio (who only appears in the film as a simple reference to the era and as a patch imposed to Bustillo by the producer Grovas) favorably predisposed an entire middle class eager for nostalgic refuge at the movies.)⁵⁶

After its three-week run at the Teatro Alameda, the film moved to the more affordable and popular cine Encanto, catering now to the working classes.⁵⁷ Advertisements and articles about the film filled pages of *El Universal* and *Cinema Reporter*, more so than any other film from the period. Full-page ads were taken, providing letters from the spectators, expressing their delight and enthusiasm for the film. Surprisingly, President Cárdenas also sent a letter to Producciones Grovas, congratulating the company on elevating the artistic prestige of the country.⁵⁸

En tiempo de don Porfirio initiated a wave of cultural activities that attempted to capture the nostalgia of the Porfiriato. At the time of the film's premiere, the popular company Cerveceria Cuauhtémoc S.A. sponsored the *Fiesta del Traje* (Costume Party) in Chapultepec Park. The festivities included a performance of *música de ayer* (yesterday's music) by XEW's Juan Garrido and his orchestra, the *revista ¡Ay que tiempos Señor don Simón!* starring Joaquín Pardavé and Amelia Wilhelmy, a parade of Porfirian fashion, a

⁵⁶ Emilio García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano*, vol. 2 (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1992), 130.

⁵⁷ "En tiempos de don Porfirio, un legítimo triunfo," *Cinema Reporter*, February 9, 1940.

⁵⁸ "Homenaje a la gran película mexicana *En tiempos de don Porfirio*," *El Universal*, April 6, 1940.

performance of selections from *En tiempos de don Porfirio* by Emilio Tuero, and as a grand finale, cancan dancers: “El baile más sensacional y bullanguero del París del siglo pasado” (“The most sensational and rowdy dance of Paris of the last century”).⁵⁹ In conjunction with the festival, *El Universal Ilustrado* dedicated several articles to a re-examination of Díaz and his time as dictator. Writer Alfonso Junco traces Díaz’s rise to power and his goals for modernization, stating that Díaz’s main goal was to construct channels for work and peace. His actions, therefore, should not be exaggerated. He ends his two-part article with a glowing assessment of the dictator:

Los errores y lacras del régimen porfiriano, sean para nosotros advertencia y lección. El hombre excepcional, probo y patriota que organizó la paz, la concordia y la grandeza material de México; que concentró en su mano, por tres décadas, la adhesión entusiasta de sus conciudadanos, tendrá inconcusamente [sic] en nuestra historia un sitio ilustre. Vano será quien quiera deificarlo; injusto quien hable de él sin respecto.

(The errors and defects of the Porfirian regime are for us a warning and a lesson. The exceptional, honest and patriotic man who organized peace, order, and material grandeur in Mexico, who held in his hand, for three decades, the enthusiasm of his fellow countrymen, will inconvertibly maintain an illustrious position in our history. Vain is anyone who wants to deify him; unjust is anyone who speaks of him without respect.)⁶⁰

“México de mis inventos”: the Porfiriato of the 1940s⁶¹

Cárdenas’s successor Manuel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946) moved contrary to the leftist currents of *cardenismo* and adopted a more moderate stance that catered to the neglected middle-classes. Ávila Camacho had military experience and gradually rose

⁵⁹ Advertisements for “Fiesta del Traje,” *El Universal*, Espectáculos, April 14, 1940.

⁶⁰ Alfonso Junco, “Don Porfirio y su Obra,” *El Universal*, April 13, 1940.

⁶¹ “Mexico of My Inventions”

through the ranks and fought in the Revolution, but the reforms of the Revolution did not enter his campaign. When asked about his beliefs, Ávila Camacho responded “soy creyente” (“I am a believer”), bringing the Catholic Church back full force into the social and political sphere and providing a new direction for Mexican leaders in the post-Revolutionary years: “A todo lo largo de su gobierno continuó apoyando y subsidiando actividades religiosas a las que anteriores presidentes se habrían opuesto” (“Throughout his ruling, his government continued to support and subsidize religious activities that past presidents would have opposed”).⁶² Once in office Ávila Camacho was eager to branch into new programs while filtering out the old, mirroring the growing anti-Communist sentiment by the middle- and upper-classes. The new *avilacamachismo* slowed down land distribution, changes in the educational programs, and promoted new conservative philosophies and leadership in the unions. The radical social reforms of the Revolution and of *cardenismo* were replaced by moderate capitalism with a focus on industrialization and modernization. The middle class increased in size and power and became the favored class over the lower class laborers and farmers.⁶³ Of all things, Ávila Camacho advocated for family, religion, and national culture, rejecting communism and class struggle.⁶⁴

The Mexican film industry benefited from this new conservatism and focus on capitalist enterprises. Because of the upsurge in industrialization and modernization,

⁶² Stephen R. Niblo, *México en los cuarenta: modernidad y corrupción* (México: Oceano, 2008), 96.

⁶³ Virginia B. Derr, “The Rise of the Middle-Class Tradition in Mexican Art,” *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 3, no. 3 (1961): 388.

⁶⁴ Knight, “The Rise and Fall of Cardenismo,” 298-302.

which lead to a population boom, urban based films increased from 57% from 1937 to 1940 to 76% by 1941, whereas films set in the rural countryside decreased from 43% in 1940 to 24% by 1941.⁶⁵ Also on the rise were historical films specifically based on Mexican history, which included the Porfiriato. *En tiempos de don Porfirio* initiated a specific narrative that focused on romance, comedy, and to a lesser extent social decorum and morality. Propriety drove Carlota to marry her uncle in order to hide her illegitimate child and her need to solidify a proper marriage for Carmen. Propriety, however, is given momentary attention in comparison to Don Francisco's antics with Don Rodrigo and Fernando's swoony waltzes and serenades. Morality, decency, and social codes, however, become a major focus for the 1940s Porfirian utopia.

Musically speaking, the Porfiriato of the 1940s moved away from the simple and sentimental waltzes and *danzas* from Bustillo Oro's Porfirian construction and engaged with more elaborate theatrical spectacles rather than solo performances. Musical selections and performances were tempered towards conceptions of morality and decency. In the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* of the 1940s, this is exhibited in the zarzuela, *género chico*, and *revista* numbers, entertainment within the entertainment that exhibits cancan dancers, choreographed communal dances, and songs with risqué and suggestive lyrics, serving as a conduit for evoking lasciviousness, immorality, and indecency in a society that considers this behavior taboo.

Building off of the buzz of *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, Julio Bracho directs *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!* in 1941, which appropriates many of the narrative

⁶⁵ Emilio García Riera, *Breve Historia del cine mexicano: primer siglo, 1897-1997* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998), 124.

elements from Bustillo Oro's successful script, but with some variation.⁶⁶ *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!* is a romantic comedy that revolves around the widow Inés (Mapy Cortés), her new soldier love interest Miguel (Arturo de Córdova) and the socially important yet slightly unrefined Don Simón (Joaquín Pardavé). The conflict occurs when Inés has suspicions of Miguel's fidelity. Inés and her friend Beatriz (Anita Blanch) sneak into a "gentlemen only" theater and discover that he is involved with the famous *tiple* Coco Anchondo. Inés, distraught, decides to end her relationship with Miguel. As a consequence of her indiscretion of entering a "gentlemen only" theater, the *Liga de Defensores de las Buenas Costumbres* (League in the Defense of Good Customs) decides to throw her out of their elite organization. Don Simón, the president of the League, is smitten with Inés and asks for her hand in marriage at a social soirée, which Inés considers but only to make ex-lover Miguel jealous. Threatened by losing Inés, Miguel makes several attempts to win Inés back and challenges Don Simón to a duel. Through a series of rather comical and absurd obstacles, the film ends with Inés and Miguel happily back in each other's arms and rejoicing in the revelation that Miguel is Don Simón's lost son.

The film's major performances take place at the theater. Inés and Beatriz ride up to the Teatro los Héroes in a carriage, and an extreme close up of the theater's playbill shows the list of varieties: "La mimada tiple Coco Anchondo y 30 señoritas del conjunto en Los Tiempos Actuales, espectáculo solo para caballeros" ("The indulgent *tiple* Coco

⁶⁶ For more information on Julio Bracho, see Jesús Ibarra, *Los Bracho: Tres generaciones de cine mexicano* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006).

Anchodo and 30 chorus girls in *Los Tiempos Actuales*, a spectacle for gentlemen only”).⁶⁷ After causing a scandal amidst the confused male workers at the theater, Inés and Beatriz sit in a box and watch the revue, on the lookout for Miguel. On stage is a chorus line of cancan dancers performing as the male audience eagerly devours them with their eyes. The film’s cinematographer, the distinguished Gabriel Figueroa, takes every liberty in camera position and movement to capture the provocative and suggestive movements of the dancers to the fast and rhythmic music. He utilizes extreme close-ups and middle shots of the petticoats, white ruffled bloomers, garters, and black stockings of the dancers, high kicking and circling their shapely calves in the air.⁶⁸ The more daring shots are from an angle down stage looking up as if sitting in the front row, allowing the on-screen (and off-screen) spectator to see the contours of the thighs and the extent to which the dancers extend their legs. Capturing the dancers from this particular angle also provides the spectator with momentary glimpses of the women’s crotches, daintily covered by the embellished undergarments, leading one to wonder if what they are peeking at is that which should not be seen. The images are quite playful, shocking, and enticing for the male audience, which demands an encore performance.

Although featuring an obligatory quotation of Jacques Offenbach’s famous cancan gallop from the operetta *Orphée aux enfers* (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), the

⁶⁷ “Chapter 1” *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!*, DVD, directed by Julio Bracho (1941; México; Televisa S.A. de C.V., 2008).

⁶⁸ The high kick in cancan dancing is known as a *battement*. The mid air circular movement of the calf is known as the *rond de jambe*. The *port d’armes* requires the dancer to turn on one leg while holding the other vertically by the ankle. Cartwheels are also a popular movement in the tradition. For more information on the cancan, see Arthur Moss, *Cancan and Barcarolle: the Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975) and David Price, *Cancan!* (London: Cygnus Arts, 1998).

arrangement also features a rather coquettish song entitled *Algo más también* (*Something Else as Well*) detailing secrets that are much too naughty to repeat:

Si tu novio te engaña,
no llores, véngate!
Engómale el bigote
cuando dormido esté.

Y algo más también
Difícil de decir
Y algo más también,
Que no he de repetir.

(If your boyfriend is deceiving you,
avenge yourself!
Wax up his mustache
when he is sleeping.

And there is something more
That is difficult to say
And there is something more
That you cannot repeat.)⁶⁹

The song speaks and even foreshadows Inés's situation. Her motive for arriving in the theater is to discover if Miguel is cheating on her with one of the theater's dancers. She spies him in the theater, ogling Coco from a box seat and, from the secret looks, knows of the indiscretion. Her suspicions are confirmed when she sees Miguel standing in the wings of the stage waiting for Coco to finish her number. They share a passionate moment and Inés, mortified, leaves the theater promptly, which leads her to seek revenge.

The cancan scene exhibits discrepancies in Porfirian social codes. Already a provocative and scandalous dance in its homeland of France, the cancan in Mexico becomes a site of sexual indulgence and cosmopolitanism and its presence in the film is a

⁶⁹ Bracho, *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!*, DVD Chapter 1. I would like to give special thanks to Jesús Ibarra for helping me with the lyrics.

perfect escapist and satirical response to the conservatism and ridged social norms that permeated Porfirian society and by extension the conservative Ávila Camacho *sexenio*. It is also a terrific moment in the film to display social and cultural contradictions and taboos. As Inés and Beatriz enter the Teatro los Héroes, they are immediately recognized by the passing Méndez sisters, Caritina Méndez (Consuelo Guerrero de Luna) and Adelaida Méndez (Dolores Camarillo), elite members of the League in the Defense of Good Customs and strangely dressed in identical clothes. Upon seeing the two women walk into the theater, they whisper disapprovingly to each other and agree that they will bring up this imprudence at the league's next meeting, faulting the women for having the audacity to enter into a private space for males even though that space is deemed suitable for dances considered indecent and scandalous. When Inés and Beatriz are inside the theater, Beatrice worries about being caught by the league, but Inés does not share her concern because she spies the president of the league Don Simón staring greedily through his binoculars at the dancers on stage. Through a cross cut shot, it is clear that Don Simón has transfixed his binoculars entirely on Coco and her exposed lower half. This scene reveals the contradictory standards implemented on men and women of "good society."

Katherine Bliss states that the Porfiriato's currents of rapid modernization gave rise to sexual commerce and need for sanitation regulation particularly in urban areas to lessen and control the spread of venereal disease among the "descent people" of Mexico's population; notably the sexually adventurous high class men who, after succeeding with their conquest, returned to their bourgeoisie wives and children. The

rise of brothels during the Porfiriato labored under the Catholic notions of moral transgression. Prostitution was perceived as a “necessary evil” that prevented sexually promiscuous men from greater threats to the social order “such as rape, bestiality, pederasty, or homosexual intercourse.”⁷⁰ Women of proper upbringing, however, did not move in these circles. The theaters did not strictly operate as a brothel, but the “gentlemen only” performance in the film speaks about the sex norms and social taboos of the period. Similar to the *rumbera* in the *cabaretera* genre, the exploitation of women envisaged through the cancan in the film takes the place of lascivious behavior in the brothel. During the nineteenth century, the cancan was a scandalous yet popular dance. According to Maya Ramos Smith, the cancan was based on spontaneity: “the cancan was characterized by complete freedom of inventive choreography, extroverted attitude, exhibitionism, eroticism.”⁷¹ Sexual promiscuity is not only strongly implied with the suggestive cancan dancing, but also with Miguel’s actions with the dancer Coco. As she backs away into the wings of the stage, he seductively kisses her exposed shoulder before kissing her fully on the mouth. Sex is insinuated and it is enough to raise flags on impropriety. However, it is Inés’s behavior that is scrutinized with dissatisfaction for daring to venture into a male entertainment space and not the indiscretion of Miguel and the wolf like leering of Don Simón.

⁷⁰ Katherine Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Park, 2001), 29.

⁷¹ Maya Ramos Smith, *Teatro musical y danza en el México de la belle époque (1867-1910)* (México: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana y Grupo Editorial Gaceta, 1995), 32. For more information on the cancan in Mexico, see Luis Reyes de la Maza, *Circo, maroma y teatro, 1819-1910* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985) and Anna Ochs, “Opera in Contention: Social Conflict in Late Nineteenth Century Mexico City” (Ph.D Diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2011), 164-76.

As the champions of social mores, the League of the Defense of Good Customs mirrors the Catholic Church driven *Liga de la decencia* (League of Decency) mentioned in Chapter One. Headed by first lady Soledad Orozco de Ávila Camacho in the 1940s, the league experienced its peak during the Ávila Camacho *sexenio*, intending to bring Catholic values back into Mexico. Their good deeds included covering up nude statues and the censorship of songs they viewed to be erotic or indecent.⁷² In terms of cinema, the league was inspired by the 1936 *Vigilanti Cura*, the Vatican's official statement on the burgeoning film industry. The Vatican banned kissing, semi-nudity, and any hints of erotic behavior, believing that cinema was an educating tool and should be used for moral means.⁷³

The entertainment within the entertainment in the film moves away from the sugary sentimentality conveyed in Bustillo Oro's film. Portrayed in the same utopian atmosphere as its predecessor and exhibiting that upper class nostalgia, *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!* suggests and even promotes a sense of artificiality for the period. Rather than relying on *música de salón* for its goals, the film depicts spectacles and conveys a sense of the ridiculous, which is exploited by Pardavé's Don Simón. The confrontation between Inés, Miguel, and Don Simón takes place at the theater during three featured *sainetes*: *La golondrina*, *Abre tus alas*, and *El mundo comedia es*.⁷⁴ In

⁷² This included several songs by Agustín Lara.

⁷³ Included on the Vatican's censor list was Walt Disney's animated feature *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The church believed it indecent and immoral that a young woman should live in household of seven men. See Jesús Flores y Escalante, "La Liga de la Decencia," *Relatos e Historias en México* 1, no. 11 (2009): 71-76.

⁷⁴ A *sainete* is a comic play in one act that features music and skits.

attempting to thwart Miguel, Don Simón, dressed in an absurd disguise of an oversized suit and fake beard, wanders on stage by accident and is forced to lip-sync the last act of the *sainete*, reinterpreting a dramatic act featuring a duel into a comedic one, and in a sense poking fun at the ridiculousness of not just the situation, but the Porfiriato as well.⁷⁵

The use of theatrical productions during the Porfiriato continued in *México de mis recuerdos* (*Mexico of My Memories*, 1944, dir. Juan Bustillo Oro). Now following Bracho's lead, Bustillo Oro focuses on questions of social norms and impropriety, but also places the Porfiriato within a historical and social context. True to nostalgic form, *México de mis recuerdos* is presented as a flashback with a voice over narrative. The beginning moments capture present-day Mexico City, full of traffic, crowds on the sidewalk, and the noises of the street. The narrator describes this Mexico, which is perhaps 1944, as very modern with new buildings and congested and loud streets: "No es el México de viejos...el México de mis recuerdos" ("This is not the old Mexico...the Mexico that I remember").⁷⁶ While viewing the montage of images depicting modern Mexico City, the narrator expresses sadness and regret about the modernization emphasized by sounds of car horns and extreme dissonances, claiming it is not the Mexico that made him sigh. In a scene fade, the film transports back to Porfiriato, visually depicted in the Alameda, the Teatro Principal, and the beautiful Jockey Club. Instead of the modernized sounds of congestion, the nostalgic sounds of the "pregones

⁷⁵ Contreras S., "El cine de ambiente porfiriano," 43-44.

⁷⁶ "Chapter 1," *México de mis recuerdos*, DVD, directed by Juan Bustillo Oro (1944; México: Zima Entertainment, 2008).

populares de la época” (“popular street cries of the era”), sung by a variety of street vendors are heard, offering the first yet brief glimpse of the working class in a Porfiriato film.

The impetus to the narrative is a waltz. Upon hearing the waltz *Carmen* at a ball at the *très chic* Jockey Club, Don Porfirio (Antonio R. Frausto, who is reprising his role from *En tiempos de don Porfirio*) and his wife Doña Carmen (Virigina Zurí) become enamored with the music and must know the composer. They turn to a passing soldier for information who indicates that the waltz, popular in Mexico, is named after the president’s wife and composed by Jesús Flores (also popularly known as Don Chucho played by Fernando Soler), much to Díaz’s surprise and contentment: he knows Chucho Flores from “way back when.”⁷⁷ Wanting to thank Flores for a beautiful waltz, Díaz asks his cultural secretary Susanita Peñafiel y Somellera (Joaquín Pardavé) to track down Flores and give him a piano.

Here, the neglected component of the *cine de añoranza porfiriana*, Porfirio Díaz, becomes visible. As previously mentioned, the figure of Díaz played relatively small and insignificant roles in the *revistas*, typically portrayed as a simple and “imposing” man. In *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, his small appearance serves as nothing more than a transition point in the narrative and in *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!* he does not make an appearance at all. If the negative reception of Pardavé’s theatrical representation of Díaz

⁷⁷ The waltz is entitled *Carmen* and is dedicated to Porfirio Díaz’s wife Carmen Romero, but is composed by Juventino Rosas (1868-1894). Bustillo Oro places an inter-title at the film’s beginning stating that although Rosas composed the waltz, for the purposes of the film the character Jesús Flores will be the composer of the work.

in Oaxaca is any indication of how the popular public felt about the dictator, his absence in the films is not unwarranted since the films were screened to a larger audience. In 1944, however, Bustillo Oro revived Díaz's image stating, "Don Porfirio era un fondo inseparable del ambiente. Así lo recibí imparcialmente. No lo enaltecí, simplemente lo usé. Y lo usé como legítima figura de comedia" ("Don Porfirio was an inseparable part of the ambient background. That is how I received him impartially. I do not exalt him; I simply used him. And I used him as a legitimate figure of comedy").⁷⁸ Don Porfirio's role, however, surpasses the role of comedy. Bustillo Oro did not want to exalt Díaz, but Díaz's role and his actions construct him as the principal figure of moral order in the film. Moving past a purely comedic role, his actions and decisions sway the people around him to his way of thinking. He is able to forgive any indiscretion. This point will be discussed later.

Unlike the other examples of *cine de añoranza porfiriana* discussed, *México de mis recuerdos* relies on the performances of a woman, Rosario Medina (Sofía Álvarez). Rosario is the intended match for Don Chucho's son Pablo, who has no interest in her and prefers to spend his time with chorus girls and *tiples* from the zarzuelas and *género chico*, a social taboo raised in Bracho's film. Pablo's aunts, who are staunch followers of the Porfirian moral and social code, believe Rosario is a decent girl and perfect for him. Rosario has been educated in piano and voice and utilizes her talents to entertain in the salon. On one such occasion, Pablo, who arrives at the house seeking money from his aunts to spend at the theater, is forced to sit and listen to Rosario's performance of the

⁷⁸ Bustillo Oro, *Vida cinematográfica*, 214.

Vals capricho by Ricardo Castro. Unimpressed, Pablo is eager to leave, but Rosario is able to stall him with a performance of the *Al espejo al salir me miré* from the zarzuela, *La viejecita* by Manuel Fernández Caballero transcribed for piano.⁷⁹ After the rather uninspired performance, the aunts express their delight and press Rosario to name the work. When the aunts learn that it is from a Spanish zarzuela, their initial enthusiasm disappears and is replaced by consternation. Although described as “a very pretty and very moral zarzuela,” the aunt Gerturdis, played by the prominent zarzuela and film star Mimí Derba, sternly states, “there are no moral zarzuelas.”⁸⁰ Here, the infamous Porfirian bourgeoisie morality comes into action and work against Rosario for her choice of musical repertoire. As previously mentioned, zarzuelas, particularly Spanish zarzuelas, were popular during the nineteenth century. Originally, zarzuelas conveyed themes popular with the aristocracy such as historic stories and myths, which later incorporated political commentary, social criticism, parody, and even a little sensuality.⁸¹ Performers, although held in high esteem by the public, were not considered moral or descent,

⁷⁹ Miranda states that music from the theater and opera also passed onto the piano in the form of transcriptions and fantasies. See Miranda, “La seducción y sus pautas,” 21.

⁸⁰ Mimí Derba’s role is intended to be comical in this film because she was a well-recognized diva from the *revista mexicana*. Derba began her career in theater, starring in zarzuelas during the turn of the century wanting to follow in the steps of Virginia Fábregas and Esperanza Iris. She began as a second *tiple* for a zarzuela company before making her professional debut at the Teatro Lírico in the zarzuela by Carlos Arniches *El cabo primero*. She later joined the Compañía Teatral Mexicana and performed in the *revista Las musas del país* by José F. Elizondo. Derba eventually found her way into silent cinema, becoming an important figure in Mexico’s early studio Azteca Films. Her introduction into sound film was in 1931 as Doña Elvira in Antonio Moreno’s *Santa*. For more information on Mimí Derba, see Ángel Miguel, *Mimí Derba* (México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2000). See also Armando de María y Campos, *Frivolerías* (México: Imprenta Nacional, 1919); Manuel Haro, “Teatros,” *La Semana Ilustrada*, July 3, 1912; Diego de Miranda, “La semana teatral,” *Novedades*, November 27, 1912; Armando de María y Campos, “Adiós de Mimí Derba,” *Hoy*, July 9, 1938.

⁸¹ This later leads to the development of the *género chico*, which takes the model of the larger zarzuela, but condenses it into one act. See Moreno Riveras, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 56.

particularly those performing in the *revistas* and *zarzuelas de género chico*.⁸² Because the bourgeoisie during the Porfiriato sought to ascend the social and economic ladder, performing in theater was viewed as a *faux pas*.

Rosario's indiscretion is carried further as she is willing to abandon all in order to capture Pablo's affections with Don Chucho's help. Because of Pablo predilections for chorus girls, particularly the *triple* Adelina, Rosario decides to exercise her musical talents and become an Argentinian *triple* Clementina Arriaga who, with Don Chucho's connections, quickly becomes socially connected with Susanito and Don Porfirio. When Pablo sees Rosario, he is smitten. To woo Pablo, Rosario auditions for a *revista* at the Teatro Principal,⁸³ which earlier in the film was the performance space for the Mexican zarzuela *Chin Chun Chan* by José Elizondo and Rafael Medina with music by Luis G. Jordá, the first zarzuela by local authors to achieve success. Rosario performs *La maquinista del amor* from the Rafael Calleja's zarzuela *Las bribonas*. Her performance is nothing short of coquettish, fitting for the music-hall atmosphere of the song. Singing

⁸² *Zarzuelas de género grande* (longer zarzuelas) were very moral and conservative while the *zarzuelas de género chico* were more popular in nature. Also, zarzuelas performed in the afternoon and matinee times were more suitable for women and children versus evening performances, which became more sexual. For more information on zarzuelas, see Emilio García Carretero, *Historia del Teatro de la zarzuela de Madrid* (Madrid: Fundación de la Zarzuela Española, 2003-2005); Christopher Webber, *The Zarzuela Companion* (Lanham: Scarecrow, 2002); Janet Sturman L. *Zarzuela: Spanish Operetta, American Stage* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000); For the Cuban zarzuela, see Susan Thomas, *Cuban Zarzuela: Performing Race and Gender on Havana's Lyric Stage* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

⁸³ At the turn of the century, the Teatro Principal was one the most important theater featuring prominent zarzuelas and operettas. Other theaters include Teatro Lírico, Arbeu, Virginia Fábregas, Esperanza Iris and Renacimiento. Owners Genara and Romualda Moriones inherited the Principal after their husbands passed away. Their new ownership inaugurated an era of creativity and explorations of new theatrical forms. The Principal became a central space for performances of the *género chico*. For more information on the Teatro Principal, see Haro, "Teatro," *La Semana Ilustrada*, 1912; Armando de María y Campos, *Las Tandas del Principal* (México: Editorial Diana, 1989); Gabriela Pulido Llano, "Empresarias y tandas," *Bicentenario* 2, no. 6 (2009): 14-21.

about being regularly ogled by men who follow her like a train in Paris, Rosario is surrounded by men in costume on the stage, pursuing her with persistence.⁸⁴ She pushes some out of the way while flirting with others, evocatively moving her hips and her hands. Her flirtatious performance paints another image of Rosario, one that is the opposite of her previous position of a “decent woman” of the bourgeoisie performing Castro’s waltz. In order to entice Pablo, she changes her demeanor, her look, and her repertoire to fit his personal wants.⁸⁵

Rosario goes on to perform in several other musical numbers that include more *género chico coplas* and the now obligatory comedic musical number with Pardavé with Don Porfirio in the audience looking on before she admits to Pablo her true identity. Pablo now sees her as the charismatic and wonderful woman he wants to marry. When seeking his aunt’s approval, they instantly declare their discontent and disappointment, stating that since Rosario has become affiliated with the theater and zarzuelas, she has lost her good reputation and is now impure. Pablo fraternizing with chorus girls and his rather public tastes for provocative women are not considered by the aunts to be impediments of reputation and morality. However, Don Chucho reveals that *el señor presidente* Don Porfirio will be presiding as the godfather of Pablo and Rosario’s wedding. The mention of Díaz ruffles the aunts...if what Rosario did was so indecent,

⁸⁴ The costumed men are a sportsman, a French soldier, a corporal, an Englishman, a modernist, a Turk, an old man, and a French bricklayer. See Rafael Calleja, *Las bribonas: Zarzuela in One Act* (Madrid: Madrid Instituto Comptense de Ciencias Musicales, 2007).

⁸⁵ The female role in the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* was typically described in this way: “Epoca romántica en la cual todavía las mujeres ni bebían licores ni fumaban, y pelaban la pava detrás de la rejas de sus ventanas” (“A romantic period when women still did not drink liquor or smoke and make love behind the grating of their windows”). See “El Pisaverde y la bella,” *El Universal*, April 3, 1940.

why was Don Porfirio, the patriarch of the country, not only going to the wedding, but acting as godfather? Perhaps Rosario is not so terrible? The aunts quickly change their mind.

Díaz's ability to quickly persuade the aunts is not that surprising. As previously mentioned, during his dictatorship Díaz consistently offered opportunities of advancement to the bourgeoisie in order to dissuade any type of conflict. All the characters of *México de mis recuerdos* were beneficiaries of Díaz's rule and were in awe of his presence. But unlike the other *porfiriato* films, certain social issues and historical references surfaced that poked at the utopian bubble. In an early scene, the 1892 presidential candidate Nicolás Zúñiga y Miranda (played by Max Langler) makes an awkward appearance as the "picturesque and safe candidate," serving as a reminder to the election fraud committed by the Díaz political machine.⁸⁶ The film also makes reference to the beginning of the Revolution, which sent Díaz into exile. In the final scenes, people riot in the streets calling for Díaz to leave. At the film's end, a rousing crowd cheers as Díaz boards a boat in the port of Veracruz en route to France. Don Chucho, Rosario, Pablo, and Susanito watch their Díaz depart, showing their tears of sadness and disappointment, not so much for the absence of their leader, but an end to their way of life. Don Chucho states, "Moría un México para que naciera otro. Empezaba a agonizar lentamente el México de mis recuerdos" ("Death to a Mexico so another could be born. Slowly the Mexico that I remembered began to weaken").⁸⁷

⁸⁶ García Riera, *Historia de documental del cine mexicano* vol. 3, 96.

⁸⁷ Bustillo Oro, *México de mis recuerdos* DVD, Chapter 12.

Much like *En tiempos de don Porfirio, México de mis recuerdos* received ample attention from the press. Advertisements for the film featured cartoons comparing the caricatures of the Porfiriato with those of the present day. One such cartoon compares a Porfirian cancan dancer with the current *rumbera*, stating: “Pasado: ¡Nuestros abuelos, ayer, enloquecían con la pulgada del piel que descubría la tela! Presente: ¡Los nietos, hoy, se desesperan con la pulgada de tela que cubre la piel!” (“Past: Our grandparents, yesterday, went crazy over an inch of skin that was covered by fabric! Present: The grandsons, today, despair when an inch of fabric covers the skin!”)⁸⁸ Porfirian nostalgia once again took over as articles described popular Porfirian cultural practices that were still in existence. One article in particular examined the organ grinders of the city, using *México de mis recuerdos* as a natural transition into the topic, describing the still existing specimen of the Porfiriato, actively performing on the streets yet not as respected as they once were.⁸⁹ Reviews also captured the utopianism of the cinematic Porfiriato, proclaiming that it was a faithful reproduction of the period:

“México de mis recuerdos” es una historia que podría relatar cualquiera de nuestros padres o abuelos, porque es una fiel reproducción de la vida nacional de hace cuatro décadas o medio siglo. Es el México de aquel entonces, con sus típicas costumbres, con sus hombres distinguidos en la política nacional, en la poesía, en la música, en el teatro y, en general, en todos los aspectos de una sociedad como la de los años anteriores a 1910, tan contrastada y tan romántica.

(“México de mis recuerdos” is a story that you can relate to anyone’s parents or grandparents because it is a faithful reproduction of national life from four decades or half a century ago. It is Mexico of the time, with their typical customs,

⁸⁸ Advertisement for *México de mis recuerdos*, *El Universal*, March 17, 1944.

⁸⁹ See “‘Sobre las olas,’ una de la piezas más en boga cuando los organilleros reinaban,” *El Universal*, March 28, 1944.

with their distinguished men of national politics, in poetry, in music, in the theater and, in general, in all aspects of society in the years prior to 1910, so contrasting and so romantic.)⁹⁰

Conclusion

The *cine de añoranza porfiriana* continued to be a fashionable film genre during the 1940s with *Yo bailé con don Porfirio* (*I Dance with Don Porfirio*, 1942, dir. Gilberto Martínez Solares), *El globo de Cantolla* (*The Globe of Cantolla*, 1943, dir. Gilberto Martínez Solares), *Las tandas del Principal* (1949, dir. Juan Bustillo Oro), and the later *Los vales venían de Viena y los niños de París* (*The Waltzes Came from Vienna and the Children from Paris*, 1966, dir. Juan Bustillo Oro). Mexico's *música de salón* and turn of the century theatrical traditions offered directors of the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* a rich selection of works that, when borrowed for the films, sonically defined the epoch on screen and instilled sensations of nostalgia for the select audience. In *En tiempos de don Porfirio*, *¡Ay que tiempos señor don Simón!*, and *México de mis recuerdos*, the spectator sees and hears the musical works taken out of their historical context and re-interpreted to serve particular needs of the film yet responding to present day needs in society. *En tiempos de don Porfirio* utilized waltzes, *danzas* and serenades to depict an atmosphere of the romance and camaraderie of the upper-classes while *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!* and *México de mis recuerdos* referenced theatrical works, the entertainment within the entertainment, to address social mores and habits. Given drastic social and political changes at the end of the 1930s with the currents of *cardenismo* and the

⁹⁰ "Sofía Alvarez y J. Pardavé en una graciosa escena de 'México de mis recuerdos,'" *El Universal*, April 1, 1944.

conservative modernization of *avilacamachismo*, the need for cultural, social, and political stability in the form of the Porfiriato was only a temporary solution. Much like the Revolutionary melodramas of the 1930s and 1940s, the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* succeeded in depicting that which it was not.

The *cine de añoranza porfiriana* painted an image of the urban bourgeoisie for the post-Revolutionary audience and reinvented an epoch as a utopia for audiences. The *comedia ranchera*, on the other hand, looked to the countryside and the hacienda to provide the necessary escape. Much like the Porfiriato, the hacienda became another utopian landscape reinterpreted with music for present day audiences that is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: The Singing *Charro*

The previous chapter explored the utopian escape of the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* for middle- and upper-class audiences, eager to dismiss the possibility of a communist state for the safety and security of an imagined Porfirian Mexico. While the escape proved popular for audiences as evidenced by the weekly publicity coverage, the *cine de añoranza porfiriana* targeted a specific audience demographic, making the industry's repeated use of the genre somewhat unlikely (only thirteen films were produced during the 1940s). The search for utopia, however, is not confined to cinema's depiction of the Porfirian bourgeois lifestyle, but extends beyond the metropolis to the countryside, specifically to Mexico's central valley haciendas, large portions of land converted into self-sufficient agricultural estates. During the industry's early sound period in the 1930s, several films, laboring under the umbrella categorization of *cine campirano* (country films), utilized a country backdrop as a rural paradise, intent on defining a specific idea of *lo mexicano*.

In films such as *Mano a mano* (1932, dir. Arcady Boytler), *Revolución: La sombra de Pancho Villa* (1933, dir. Miguel Contreras Torres), *La calandria* (1933, dir. Fernando de Fuentes), *El compadre Mendoza* (1934, dir. Fernando de Fuentes), and *Cielito Lindo* (1936, dir. Robert Quigley), the *charro*, the Mexican horseman dressed in a short jacket, fitted pants with chaps, and a large brimmed sombrero, is the central character in narratives set against the nineteenth-century hacienda system and the armed struggle of the Revolution. The *charro* exhibits a rich history that reaches back to

Mexico's viceroyalty period¹ as a highly esteemed and decorated horseman, working on haciendas and ranches. They were respected individuals in the rural societies devoted to horse and cattle raising and *charrería*, the practice of horsemanship. When theater, radio, and the silver screen appropriated the *charro* and reconstructed him into the popular urban imaginary, he came to signify the nation's most emblematic figure, a myth that the popular media continued to fabricate. Cinema maintains the most influential role:

Charro movies projected the image of a Mexico removed from its historical or temporal context, tightly bound to tradition and to the social and moral order dictated by religion. The inhabitants of this imaginary Mexico were rustic, heroic, respectful of honor and customs, and prepared to exhibit at any given moment their courage, virility and machismo, as well as their arrogance, friendliness, and singing ability.²

A crucial diffuser of the *charro* figure is the regional folkloric film genre, the *comedia ranchera*. Film historian Rafael Aviña describes the film genre as an inoffensive way of mythifying the provinces and country life, exhibiting exaggerations of Mexican traditional symbols or, as he terms it, *mexiquitos* (Mexicanisms):

La comedia ranchera es la muestra de un cine *exageradamente mexicano*, como el tequila y sus machos bravíos. Su universo es el del mezcal y el mariachi, el de los jarritos de barro y el papel picado, el de los sombreros charros, los sarapes, las trenzas arregladas y el repertorio de trajes típicos; los sones del mariachi, las canciones autóctonas y las coplas populares, antecedente fino del vulgar albur.

(The *comedia ranchera* is an example of an exaggerated Mexican cinema, like tequila and its fierce machos. Its universe is one of mezcal and mariachi, of the earthenware pots and *papel picado*, of the charro hats, the blankets, the decorated braids and the repertory of regional costumes; the songs of the mariachi, the

¹ The *virreinato*, or viceroyalty, refers to the period of roughly 1531-1821, when Spain settled in Mexico, then known as New Spain. After the conquest, Spain established the seat of the first vicerealties in what is now Mexico City.

² Tania Carreño King, "I Am Mexican, I Come from an Untamed Land," in *Artes de México: Charrería* (México: Artes de México, 2000), 92.

indigenous songs, and the popular coplas, which are refined antecedents to the vulgar *albur*.)³

But this description only scratches the surface. Beginning with Fernando de Fuentes's *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1936), the *comedia ranchera* re-imagines rural life in the hacienda system with the aid of the *canción mexicana* performed by the *charro* protagonist. The *comedia ranchera* and its special depiction of the singing *charro* not only consolidated several cultural elements into one medium, but also exhibited a full body mask of changing perceptions of Mexican masculinity. Throughout the genre's trajectory during the end of the 1930s and the 1940s, music added to the social and cultural changes through manifesto-like songs and strategically composed underscoring.

The *comedia ranchera* is an example of a cultural hybridization where, as defined by Nestor García Canclini, several facets of popular cultural systems intersect, constructing new cultural spaces for interpretation.⁴ This chapter examines the singing *charro* and the *comedia ranchera* not with the intention of concentrating on a picturesque representation of folklore on screen, but as an experimental product of a specific socio-cultural context, a vehicle of cultural and musical hybridization, and as a space for the changing representations of *lo mexicano*, synthesized in the *charro* protagonist. In understanding its significance as a genre, I discuss those hybrid components such as the

³ Rafael Aviña, *Una Mirada insólita: temas y géneros del cine mexicano* (México: Editorial Oceano, 2004), 152. The *papel picado* is a popular type of ornament made of colorful paper, pierced to create silhouettes. An *albur* refers to a form of word play that is interpreted as sexual puns or jokes. *Albures* are usually coded as masculine in nature and refer to homosexuality and phallic imagery. For discussions on the *albur* in Mexican culture, see Samuel Ramos, *Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico*, rev. ed. (1934; repr., Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962) and Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, rev. ed. (1961; repr., New York: Grove Press Inc., 1985).

⁴ Néstor García Canclini, *Consumidores y ciudadanos: conflictos multiculturales de la globalización* (México: Debolsillo, 2009), 132.

charro figure, theatrical practice, and musical currents that structured the *comedia ranchera* and developed the singing *charro* as a successfully exported symbol and commercial tool of Mexican identity.

Constructing *el charro*

The film industry did not fabricate the *charro*, but catapulted him into mythical proportions in the Mexican imaginary. Sound cinema of the late 1930s and 1940s characterizes the *charro* as a forceful singer, heavy drinker, a fighter, a womanizer, and an embodiment of the *machismo* attitude,⁵ but the *charro* outside of the diegesis is a different representation. An in depth historical analysis of the *charro* is beyond the scope of this project, but we can examine some of the key characteristics that helped shape the figure that Mexican national cinema exploited.

Visually, the *charro* is recognized by his traditional clothing, which underwent a process of appropriation through *criollo*, Spanish (typically Andalusian), Arab, and mestizo influences. This attire consistently included a short coat, fitted pants and/or chaps, a wide low-crowned hat, and spurs. Writers and investigators of *charros* and *charrería* point to the horseman of the *virreinato* as the antecedent to the twentieth-century *charro*, a time when Spanish conquistadors and settlers brought horses to their expeditions of the New World and, with it, a tradition of horsemanship that suited

⁵ See Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, 29-46.

Spanish rural culture.⁶ For the Spaniards, the *charro* became a symbol of their conquistador qualities and for the mestizo, *criollo*, and Indian trained in these practices, this symbol was an “ascent in the social hierarchy and their psychological identification with the members of the dominant class.”⁷

During the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, the ruthless countryside police or *rurales* wore a *charro* style of uniform consisting of gray suits with white piping and striped insignia while riding through rural areas on horses, associating the symbol of Mexican horsemanship and national identity with the oppression and injustice of the Porfiriato.⁸ Another important rural setting for the *charro* was the hacienda. Since the colonial period, the hacienda complex dominated life in the Mexican countryside, and during the Díaz regime, the forced labor and oppression of Indian and mestizo peons grew worse.⁹ During periods of economic expansion, particularly when railroad construction pushed up

⁶ For more information on *charros* and *charrería*, see Siboney Obscura Gutiérrez, “La comedia ranchera y la construcción del estereotipo del charro cantante en el cine mexicano de los treinta e inicio de los cuarenta” (master’s thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2003), 17-47; Tania Carreño King, *El charro: la construcción de un estereotipo nacional 1920-1940* (México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 2000); Kathleen Mullen Sands, *Charrería Mexicana: an Equestrian Folk Tradition* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993); Octavio Chávez, *La charrería: tradición mexicana* (México: Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura, 1991); José Valero Silva, *El libro de la Charrería* (México: Gráficas Montealbán, 1989); James Norman, *Charro: Mexican Horsemen* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1969); D. Carlos Rincon Gallardo, *El libro del charro mexicano*, 3rd ed. (1939 rev., México: Editorial Porrúa, S.A., 1960); Luis Inclán, *El libro de las charrerías* (México: Librería Porrúa, 1940).

⁷ María Elena Franco, “Charrería, Recurso Turístico de México” (master’s thesis, Autonomous University of Nayarit, Mexico, 1990), 22, cited in Mullen Sands, *Charrería Mexicana*, 39.

⁸ José Cisneros, *Riders Across the Centuries: Horsemen of the Spanish Borderlands* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1984), 176; Inclán, *El libro de las charrerías*; Mullen Sands, *Charrería Mexicana*, 64.

⁹ For more information regarding the hacienda system in Mexico, see Giselia Von Wobeser, *La formación de la hacienda en la época colonial* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989); Enrique Semo, *Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana, Tomo I: El siglo de la hacienda 1800-1900* (México: Siglo XXI-CEHAM, 1988); François Chevalier, *La formación de los latifundios en México*, reprint (1956, rev. ed., México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976).

land values and land was disturbed to benefit foreign investors, the haciendas continued to grow at the expense of peasant communities. At the head of each hacienda was the *hacendado* often in the form of a *charro*, who worked with, or oversaw, others practicing *charrería* such as the foreman and the *vaqueros* (cowboys).¹⁰ For haciendas with cattle, the branding, gelding, and trimming seasons were times for celebrations and the working *charros* of the estate would perform the tasks sometimes in front of an audience made up of neighbors, the hacienda owner's extended family, and friends.¹¹ In her study on the *charro*, Olga Nájera-Ramírez states that the hacienda was a space that presented a localized social structure, which reflected the class, gender, and ethnic differentiation of Mexican society. The male *hacendado* protected and ruled over his wife, children, and employees. Next in line were the foreman and managers, then the *vaqueros* and peons. No matter what position on the hierarchy, the man ruled over women and children. Social relationships became capitalistic, and masculinized authority and class power became intimately correlated.¹²

The Revolution added new symbolism to the *charro* through the contemporary fighters Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa who led rancheros, *vaqueros*, and peons into battle. Zapata and Villa were known to be effective leaders against the government

¹⁰ See Olga Nájera-Ramírez, "Engendering Nationalism: Identity, Discourse, and the Mexican Charro," *Anthropology Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (1994): 3.

¹¹ Alfonso Rincón Gallardo, "En la hacienda de antaño," in *Artes de México: Charrería* (México: Reproducciones Fotomecánicas, S.A. de C.V., 2000), 28.

¹² Nájera-Ramírez, "Engendering Nationalism," 3. See also the works by Luis Inclán who provides first-hand experience of life on the hacienda. In his novel *Astucias*, Inclán glorifies the *charro* as a cowboy hero helping those in distress, preferring action to words. *Charros* have a code of conduct, are chivalrous to women, and fair to enemies. See Luis Inclán, *Astucias* (México: Imprenta Universitaria, 1945).

troops because of their knowledge of long distances of terrain. Because *charrería* was taken up by many from all social strata, the hacendado *charro*, associated with the political and professional classes, was placed contrary to other *charros* from the lower and working classes: in a sense, *charro* would face *charro* in lines of battle.¹³ At the end of the Revolution, the oppressive hacienda system was abolished and many *charros* began to work on smaller and independent ranches throughout the country and demonstrated their skills at local festivals and rodeos. The closed haciendas, however, left many without work and with the mass migration of rural workers to the metropolis; many *charros* found that their horsemanship skills were not a necessity for city life. As a result, *charrería* was modified to fit with their new situation and location, “detached from the work practices and environment of the countryside.”¹⁴ The emulation of the work tasks into a sport became a popular spectacle in urban areas, allowing the urban elite to boast over successfully modernizing the rural masses.¹⁵

During the 1910s and 1920s, the Mexican and Hollywood silent film industries gradually appropriated the *charro* as a popular stock character, but the interpretations in both industries proved to be drastically different. Hollywood’s version shined a negative light on the Mexican national in *charro* clothing, repeatedly depicting him as a villain,

¹³ Rincón Gallardo, “En la hacienda de antaño,” 30.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ With this modernization of the *charro* in the urban setting came the development of the Charro Association of Jalisco and the National Association of Charros, both of which sought to preserve the traditions and customs of *charrería* in the urban setting. Luis Inclán also noticed the popularity of *charrería* in the urban landscape and wrote a book, almost a “how to” guide for amateur enthusiasts, *El libro del charro mexicano*. See Mullen Sands, *Charrería Mexicana*, 74; Nájera-Ramírez, “Engendering Nationalism,” 5; Inclán, *El libro del charro mexicano*, 121.

thief, and rapist. The borrowing of the national icon and its negative re-interpretation had lasting effects on the Mexican populace and prompted Mexican filmmakers to counter the representation by incorporating the *charro* in their own films, which developed a multi-pronged stereotype of the *charro* that became a national symbol.

Representations of the cinematic *charro* in a folkloric landscape began as early as 1917. In the film *Barranca trágica* (*Tragic Ravine*), director Manuel de la Bandera incorporates several national elements:

Un sabor nacional tan nuestro que en el “jaripeo” con sus “charros” y en las “peleas” de gallos con su concurso abigarrado y pintoresco no existe como tema monótono y obligado el indispensable indígena ni el burdo “pelado”; sus escenas están llenas de gran colorido.

(Our own national flavor is such in the “rodeos” with their “charros” and in the “cockfights” with their variegated and picturesque competition, that there is no need for the ubiquitous and monotonous topic of the indispensable Indian or the blunt “pelado”; its scenes are full of great color.)¹⁶

In April 1921, the same year as the Centennial celebrations, director Miguel Contreras Torres premiered his film *El caporal*, which “se basaba en la vida de una hacienda y giraba en torno a un personaje, el caporal, que aunque no es llamado charro, anuncia ya en el cine las películas de tema campirano, encaminadas a exaltar las virtudes de los charros” (“was based on the life in a hacienda and revolved around a character, a caporal, which, although not called a charro, already foreshadowed the films set in the country,

¹⁶ “*Barranca trágica*,” *El Universal*, December 16, 1917. See also Carreño King, *El Charro: la construcción de un estereotipo nacional*, 46. The *pelado* is a raggedy, poor fellow from the slums symbolizing the plight of the working and lower classes. The *pelado* was a common fixture in the *teatro de revista* that transferred into cinema during the late 1930s. The most well-known *pelado* is Mario Moreno “Cantinflas” (1911-1993).

meant to exalt the virtues of the charro”).¹⁷ The *charro* also made appearances in other important silent features such as *Triste Crepúsculo* (*Sad Twilight*, 1917, dir. Manuel de la Bandera), *Santa* (1918, dir. Luis G. Peredo), *En la hacienda* (*At the Hacienda*, 1922, dir. Ernesto Vollrath)¹⁸, *El águila y el nopal* (*The Eagle and the Cactus*, 1929, dir. Miguel Contreras Torres), and *La boda de Rosario* (*Rosario’s Wedding*, 1929, dir. Gustavo Sáenz de Sicilia).¹⁹ Once synchronized and recorded sound films emerged, the *charro* followed reproductions set forth by practices in *teatro de revista* that helped form the visual and aural structures of the *comedia ranchera*.

Teatro de revista and the canción mexicana

The *teatro de revista* is a satirical theatrical genre derived from the Spanish zarzuela and is a combination of social analysis, political commentary, and burlesque.²⁰ Theatrical storylines and backdrops were borrowed from the *teatro de revista* and adapted to the structural development of silent and sound cinema. Several key players from the theater transferred their talents from the stage to the screen and molded a

¹⁷ Aurelio de los Reyes, “El nacionalismo en el cine 1920-1930: búsqueda de una nueva simbología,” in *El nacionalismo y el arte mexicano (IX Coloquio de Historia del Arte)* (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1986), 284.

¹⁸ At the beginning of 1922, a Mexico City newspaper took votes for the best film of 1921. *En la Hacienda* received the first spot with 485 votes. The film is also based on the 1907 zarzuela, written by Federico Carlos Kegel with music by Roberto Contreras.

¹⁹ For specific summaries and production details on Mexican silent films, see Aurelio de los Reyes, *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano, 1896-1920* (México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1986); *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano, volumen II, 1920-1924* (México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1994); *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano, volumen III, 1924-1931* (México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2000).

²⁰ Leonora Saavedra, “Urban Music in the Mexican Revolution,” (Paper read at the National Meeting for the Society of Ethnomusicology, Columbus, Ohio 2007).

cinematic practice with strong theatrical origins. As a consequence of the crossover, these actors, directors, playwrights, and composers kept their fingers on the popular pulse of the nation:²¹

La Revista mexicana da comienzo . . . como un acto de afirmación costumbrista. Los paisajes, el habla, los tipos populares de la tradición vernácula hispana debe llevarse sus cuadros a otra partes o, al menos, dejar que en las estructuras de sus sainetes y zarzuelas se escuche el corer de las aguas mexicanas, el humilde cantar de sus trovadores.

(The Mexican *revista* began . . . as an act of traditional affirmation. The countryside, the speech, the popular types of the traditional Spanish vernacular must take their *cuadros* to other place or, at least, let the structures of their sainetes and zarzuelas listen to the running Mexican waters, the humble song of their bards.)²²

During the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary years, the stage became a forum for the consolidation of national symbols for urban audiences and for the circulation of political and social criticism. Here, regional customs and practices, such as dance and music, were swapped and borrowed among traveling performers and companies, mixing with other traditions.²³ The *charro* archetype became one of those figures that underwent experimentation and hybridization and passed into other spheres

²¹ Some actors include: Joaquín Pardavé, Mario Moreno “Cantinflas”, Mimí Derba, Lupe Rivas Cacho, Leopoldo Cuatezón Beristáin, Lucina Joya, and Alfonso Pompín Iglesias. Composers include: Manuel Castro Padilla, Agustín Lara, Ferderico Ruiz, Lorenzo Barcelata. Playwrights include Guz Aguila and Pablo Prida.

²² *El país de la tandas: teatro de revista, 1900-1940* (México: Museo Nacional de Culturas Populares, 1984), 94.

²³ It is important to note that the revistas were not just spaces for the depiction of the rural countryside. In her article “Manuel M. Ponce y los músicos populares,” Leonora Saavedra notes that the *revistas* were sites for the depiction of several interpretations of daily life, such as urban life, that the Mexican public recognized. See Leonora Saavedra, “Manuel M. Ponce y los músicos populares,” *Heterofonía* 143 (July-December 2010).

where it functioned as a synthesis to rural Mexico, linked to political and class interests.²⁴

In addition to the growing popularity of the *charrerías* in the urban landscape, the *charro* and the *china poblana* were common fixtures in *revistas* such as *Las Musas del País* (1913), *México Lindo* and *Del rancho a la capital* (1919), *Cielito lindo* (1922), and Carlos M. Ortega y Pablo Prida's *Las Cuatro Milpas* (1927).²⁵

The use of theatrical ingredients in the early days of sound cinema occurred for several reasons, one of which concerned reaching the mass audience. The overlap of popular *revista* structures into sound film provided an easy and non-intimidating way of enticing audiences to accept the moving medium and to fill up theaters. For the *comedia ranchera* and other examples of musical rural comedies during the 1930s, the synthesized *revista* provided a sturdy dramatic narrative foundation,²⁶ but the development of the genre depended on music because the protagonist and the impact characters (except the antagonist) sang. *Rancheras* performed by mariachis dressed in full *trajes de charros* became one of the genre's musical and visual signifiers during the 1940s, but the

²⁴ Obscura Gutiérrez, "La comedia ranchera y el estereotipo del charro," 72. See also Ricardo Pérez Montfort, *Estampas de nacionalismo popular mexicano: ensayos sobre cultura popular y nacionalismo* (México: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1994), 123.

²⁵ Saavedra, "Manuel M. Ponce y los músicos populares." For more information regarding the political and social messages in *Las cuatro milpas*, see Armando de María y Campos, *El teatro de genero chico en la Revolución mexicana* (México: Impreso en los Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1956), 298-300. For information regarding *En la hacienda* (1907), see Antonio Magaña Esquivel, *Medio siglo de teatro mexicano (1900-1961)* (México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1964), 11-12.

²⁶ An example of this is the 1907 zarzuela *En la hacienda* by Federico Kegel, which Ernesto Vallah later adapted for the silent screen in 1922, and which later was re-adapted by Guz Aguila and Fernando de Fuentes for the sound film in 1936 *Allá en el Rancho Grande*. Aurelio de los Reyes notes that the music for the zarzuela was performed for the screening of Vallah's silent version, played by Miguel Lerdo de Tejada and his orchestra. See De los Reyes, "La música en el cine mudo in México," 109.

comedia ranchera's diegetic musical track is much more musically diverse, including originally composed *canciones mexicanas* and *canciones rancheras*.

The *canción ranchera* from the 1920s was a different style than that performed by the standard mariachi ensemble of strings and trumpets.²⁷ Early instrumentation consisted of piano and a string orchestra or winds. This early *ranchera* style, known as the *canción campirana* (country song), underwent several stylistic juxtapositions when converted to the new city setting through experimentation in instrumentation (specifically addition of the trumpet), the incorporation of different rhythmic structures, and a more polished and commercial sound, yet still hinted at countryside influences through its thematic content. Some examples of this progression include the nostalgic style in *Canción Mixteca* (1916) by José López Alavés, arrangements of *La pajarera* (1917) and *El desterrado* (1917), and *La borrachita* (1918) by Ignacio Fernández Esperón (Tata Nacho).²⁸

²⁷ The mariachi ensemble has evolved from the nineteenth century, from smaller ensembles of indigenous musicians from the western states of Jalisco. The standardized ensemble make up did not formalize until mass migration of rural musicians to the urban centers (mainly Mexico City). Moreno Rivas marks 1927 as a key year for the mariachi with the establishment of the Mariachi Marmolejo. By the 1930s, with the help of radio, the mariachi became a popular ensemble. In 1934, Silvestre Vargas arrives to Mexico City with his group, the Mariachi Vargas with new instrumentation: violins, harp, *guitarra sexta*, vihuela, and the *guitarrón de golpe* (or the *tololoche*). The trumpet was added later, but a definitive explanation as to its presence is not known. Some speculate that the trumpet sound was an added modification for the newly recorded sound technology or an imitation of a Cuban ensemble, Septeto Tipico Habanero, which utilized trumpets in their music. It was not until the end of the 1930s that the standardized mariachi ensemble was formed complete with *charro* dress. The repertoire consisted primarily of *sones*, but later broadened to the *canción romántica*, waltzes, popular dances, and more. See Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 133-34.

²⁸ Moreno Rivas lists four titles from the 1920s that fit this description: *Adiós Mariquita Linda* (1925) by Marco Antonio Jiménez, *La negra noche* (1926) by Emilio D. Uranga, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1927) an arrangement by Silvano Ramos and *El limoncito* (1928) an arrangement by Alfonso Esparza Oteo. Saavedra states that Tata Nacho published his arrangements, which acquired popularity through oral transmission before its publication in 1920 and 1921. See Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular*

The *canción ranchera* and the *canción mexicana* became musical staples in the *teatro de revista*, performed as interludes in between the scenes or *cuadros*, and often having nothing to do with the content of the *revista*. These performances ultimately helped transmit music to popular audiences in addition to advancements in the burgeoning radio industry. Radio contributed greatly to the nation-wide diffusion of the *canción mexicana* during the 1920s, particularly after the migration of rural workers to the urban centers that supported the influx of regional folk music. By 1930, the largest radio broadcasting system in Mexico was born: XEW “The Voice of Latin America from Mexico,” reaching the largest Mexican and Latin American audience than any other radio signal. A crucial part of XEW programming was the musical variety programs, helping new and upcoming artists perform to a larger audience, encouraging more to travel to the city.²⁹

As previously mentioned, the *canción ranchera* was not solely dependent on the mariachi ensemble, but was a gradual acculturation of regional and metropolitan hybridity. One important adjustment was the singing style. The style associated with the *canción mexicana* and the *canción ranchera* is often traced back to the Italian *bel canto* tradition from the nineteenth century, when Italian opera was in vogue in Mexico City. Labeled as the *estilo bravío* (forceful singing), this expressive singing required an emphasized use of the chest and diaphragm to project and belt to a larger audience. The effect is often raspy, commanding, and aggressive, but damaging to the larynx without

mexicana, 135; Saavedra, “Manuel M. Ponce y los músicos populares”; and Jesús Jáuregui, *El mariachi* (México: Santillana Ediciones Generales, S.A. de C.V., 2007), 99-133.

²⁹ Obscura Gutiérrez, “La comedia ranchera y la construcción del charro,” 77.

proper warming up, and contrasted with the more lyrical and amorous *canCIÓN romantica* tradition.³⁰ The *estilo bravío* is a common feature in the 1940s, especially with the renowned *ranchera* singer Lucha Reyes (1906-1944), but its origins lay with the singing *charros* in *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, which later “masculinized” in *comedias rancheras* of the 1940s featuring Jorge Negrete, Pedro Infante, and Luis Aguilar.

During the late 1930s, the *canCIÓN ranchera* and the *canCIÓN mexicana* in sound cinema quickly synthesized with the figure of the *charro* and established close associations with *machismo*. This synchresis of image, gender, attitude, and music is not surprising as the *canCIÓN mexicana* is tied with Mexican masculinity, written essentially from a man’s point of view. In a 1936 article in *El Universal Ilustrado*, the author compares the masculine sounds of popular theater composer Jorge del Moral with the effeminate lyrics and sounds of Agustín Lara, arguing that *canciones* are inherently masculine and therefore purely Mexican:

Las canciones mexicanas verdaderamente populares tienen sexo masculino . . . Los autores que han mixtificado el sabor nacional en la canción mexicana se han apartado del sabor hombruno, del paladeo macho de nuestros sonos. Por eso no han hecho, en el sentido estricto, música popular mexicana.

(The truly popular Mexican canciones are gendered masculine . . . The authors that have muddled with the national flavor of the Mexican *canCIÓN* have turned away from masculine flavor, from savoring the macho of our *sonos*. That is why, in a strict sense, they have not written popular Mexican music.)³¹

The *charro* figure by itself, as already discussed, was a respected and noble figure during the end of the nineteenth century, who embodied masculine dominance

³⁰ Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 136.

³¹ A.F.B., “El mundo y la canción mexicana,” *El Universal Ilustrado* 1936.

particularly as the *charro hacendado*. Synchronized sound associated specific music to the *charro*, which helped hone his nationally and internationally known *machismo* attitude: “otras de las características de los charros cinematograficos serán: ser pendencieros y dar origen, como una consecuencia lógica, al canto bravío y acentuar el machismo” (“other characteristics of the cinematic charro are: be argumentative and lead, as a logical consequence, to forceful singing and accentuate machismo”).³²

The “bum”: Fernando de Fuentes’s *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1936)

Although Antonio Moreno’s *Santa* was the first recorded synchronized sound film that gained box office success, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* is repeatedly considered the first successful venture of the Mexican film industry during the 1930s for the following reasons: it provides a folkloric collage of rural life, which many identified as a reflection of the “true Mexico”; it is the first Mexican film to receive international accolades;³³ it is a film genre that successfully branched away from Hollywood genres, demonstrating something that was inherently “Mexican”;³⁴ it catapulted advertising interests through the diffusion and performance of the *canción ranchera*; and it painted a positive and desirable image of *lo mexicano*, articulated through the *macho* singing *charro* that challenged Hollywood’s stereotypes.

³² De los Reyes, “El nacionalismo en el cine, 1920-1930,” 287-88.

³³ The film received an award for Best Cinematography in Venice’s *Mostra* International Film Festival in 1938. This award is the first international award received by Mexican cinema.

³⁴ One common comparison that Mexican film scholars make to the *comedias rancheras* is to the Will Rogers and Gene Autry musical westerns from the 1930s.

Much like Sergei Eisenstein's 1931 *¡Que viva México!*, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* maintains a luminous position in Mexican film history and the national imaginary. Although several films during the 1930s utilized a rural backdrop and illustrated hacienda life, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* provided an audience friendly juxtaposition of folkloric images and archetypes and popular music set to a melodramatic narrative. It also propelled the image of the *charro* as a desirable figure for self-identity that counters the representations of the Indian perpetuated in silent and early sound cinema, literature, visual art, and music. The *charro* exemplified the juxtaposition of musical ability, European features, and sexual charisma.³⁵

Produced during the presidential *sexenio* of Lázaro Cárdenas, the film is consistently labeled by Mexican film historians and film critics as an example of conservative sentiments objecting the *reforma agraria* (agrarian reform), land reform initiatives that returned previously confiscated land to the Mexican people, specifically to peasants and the lower working class. The rapid redistribution of sizable land as communally farmed *ejidos* received substantial protest from the Mexico's conservative sector, some of whom believed that the dismantling of the hacienda was in fact a dismantling of Mexico. Because *Allá en el Rancho Grande* is set on a hacienda in Jalisco, the film is acknowledged as a conservative response to the changes in the Mexican countryside, almost an exaltation of the hacienda rather than a rebuke. It is also criticized for blatantly evading the Revolution and avoiding social conflict and class struggle,

³⁵ Tim Mitchell, *Intoxicating Identities: Alcohol's Power in Mexican History and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 149.

constructing a lost rural utopia, an escape for the middle- and upper-class cinema audience. Emilio García Riera states,

Esa huida significa el recobro de un universo feliz e idílico que la burguesía urbana gustaba suponer existente: la arcadia bucólica cuyo mito la Revolución destruyó sin contemplaciones. Pero si ya se sabe que el campo mexicano no es eso, que en 1936 la Reforma Agraria es un hecho real, el mito de la hacienda dichosa es mantenido celosamente por un cine al que su contenido de clase le aconseja el rechazo de la realidad.

(This flight signifies the recovery of a happy and idyllic universe that the urban bourgeoisie wanted to believe existed: the bucolic arcadia whose myth the Revolution destroyed ruthlessly. But if you already know that the Mexican countryside is not that, that in 1936 the Agrarian Reform is a real fact, the myth of the blessed hacienda is jealously kept by a film in which class content advises the rejection of reality.)³⁶

While it is no question that the rural backdrop presented in *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, and by extension other films set in the countryside that came later such as *Así es mi tierra* (*This is My Land*, 1937, dir. Arcady Boytler) and *Bajo el cielo* (*Under the Sky*, 1937, dir. Fernando de Fuentes), conveys nostalgia, the film does not carry as much conservative weight as most argue. Because it was produced during Cárdenas's turbulent administration, the film carries a certain amount of social and historical obligation in the eyes of film historians and critics; this is due in part to director Fernando de Fuentes's Revolution film trilogy that examines the questionable consequences of the Revolution and their key players.³⁷ However, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* presents several elements that reverse a narrow conservative interpretation into a widened reflection of the urban

³⁶ Emilio Garcia Riera, *Historia del cine mexicano* (México: Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo, 1986), 85.

³⁷ Fernando de Fuentes's Revolution trilogy includes *El prisionero trece* (1933), *El compadre Mendoza* (1934), and *¡Vámonos con Pancho Villa!* (1936). The latter was filmed before *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, but premiered after.

experience for newly arrived rural migrants to the metropolis, perhaps eager for any semblance of the home they recently left behind.

At Rancho Grande

When Don Rosendo, the fair and generous *hacendado* of Rancho Grande, passes away in 1936, his son Felipe (René Cardona) inherits the hacienda and, as the new *hacendado*, Felipe appoints his close childhood friend, José Francisco (played by the international singing sensation Tito Guízar) as the ranch's foreman. José Francisco and his sister Eulalia are orphans from Rancho Chico left to the care of Rancho Grande's washerwoman Angela (Emma Roldán) and her comically drunk husband, Florentino (Carlos López *Chaflán*). José Francisco falls in love with Cruz (Esther Fernández), Angela's Cinderella-like servant adorned in *rebozos* and braids, who reciprocates José Francisco's affections.³⁸ Cruz, however, catches the eye of two other men: Martín (Lorenzo Barcelata), another worker on Rancho Grande aiming to become the foreman, and Felipe, who is already engaged to the upper class Margarita. Although Cruz is devoted to José Francisco, it is this love triangle that causes the most friction and drives the narrative.

In her article "Race and Ethnicity in the Classical Cinema," Joanne Hershfield examines the political, racial, and gender politics that the film conveys and uses this as a model of later *comedias rancheras*. She contends that the *comedia ranchera* romanticizes the discourse of *hispanismo*, an ideology exalting the Euro-Spanish heritage,

³⁸ Emilio García Riera, *Fernando de Fuentes (1894-1958)* (México: Cineteca Nacional, 1984), 135.

which is visually localized in the *charro* character and the glorification of *machismo*. She further argues that links are visible between the *hacendado*, the State, and paternalism, where the hacienda functions as a symbol of the country and *charro hacendado* maintains the structures of the feudal system. Underneath the musical love story is a resistance towards Cárdenas's social and economic reforms, including the nationalization of the oil industry and land reform, which leads Hershfield to ask: how could such films be made and released during Cárdena's presidential administration?³⁹ The answer, however, is not as cut and dry as the question she asks. *Allá en el Rancho Grande* does not set out to speak directly against or destroy the Cárdenas administration. It is a product of a socially and culturally self-conscious period and the film's narrative components and archetypes must be examined within their historical context in order to understand their messages.

According to Hershfield, when examining race and ethnicity in the *comedia ranchera*, the cinematic *charro* becomes a challenging figure. Narrowing her focus to the *charros* of Rancho Grande, she defines the *charro* as “a symbol of Hispanic masculinity, light-skinned, handsome, and respectful of the “inherent” divisions within Mexican society.”⁴⁰ The *charro*'s physical appearance in the movies confronts the representations of *charros* in actuality: they were not only Hispanic white-skinned men,

³⁹ Hershfield also notes the following as possessing conservative views that rub uncomfortably against the Cárdenas policies: *Bajo el Cielo de México* (*Under the Sky in Mexico*, 1937, dir. Fernando de Fuentes); *La Zandunga* (1938, dir. Fernando de Fuentes); *Nobleza Ranchera* (*Rural Chivalry*, 1938, dir. Alfredo de Diestro); and *La Tierra del Mariachi* (*The Land of Mariachi*, 1938, dir. Raúl de Anda).

⁴⁰ Joanne Hershfield, “Race and Ethnicity in the Classical Cinema,” in *Mexico's Cinema: a Century of Film and Filmmakers*, ed. Joanne Hershfield and David R. Maciel (Wilmington: SR Books, 1999), 90-91.

but others trained in the long-standing tradition of *charrería*. However, *criollo hacendados* were typical fixtures in the hacienda system during eighteenth and nineteenth century, visually portrayed in paintings by Ernesto Icaza (1866-1935) as white skinned, elaborately dressed horsemen. René Cardona, who plays the *charro hacendado* Felipe in *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, shares this description: “Fernando de Fuentes me ligó inmediatamente para patrón del Rancho Grande. Me dijo: “Mira, los patrones de Jalisco son como tú, blancos y de ojos azules, y para esta película que voy a filmar necesito un patrón así. Te voy a dar a leer el argumento” (“Fernando de Fuentes immediately hired me to play the boss at Rancho Grande. He said “Look, the bosses of Jalisco are like you, white with blue eyes, and for this movie that I am going to film, I need a boss like that. I will give the script for you to read”).⁴¹

Allá en el Rancho Grande is singled out as a problematic example of racial tensions through this visual representation although discourses in Mexican identity formation at the time questioned or challenged different aspects of racial and ethnic makeup in Mexican identity. In cinema, several films featured characters with those physical characteristics that Hershfield designates as challenging to the *comedia ranchera* schema. The *indigenista* films such as *La noche de los mayas* (*The Night of the Mayans*, 1939, dir. Chano Ureta) and *Maria Candelaria* (1943, dir. Emilio Fernández) featured white-skinned actors as the indigenous protagonists, reserving the secondary and minor roles for darker-skinned mestizo and Indian actors and extras. In an interview with the

⁴¹ Elena Rico, “Anatomía de un éxito loco: *Allá en el Rancho Grande*,” *Contenido* 157 (June 1976): 20-56, quoted in García Riera, *Fernando de Fuentes*, 48.

periodical *Contenido*, the film's cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa explains that "antes del *Rancho Grande*, los productores tenían miedo de "sacar indios" en la películas, y se consideraba por lo general que estas imágenes serían "denigrantes para México" ("before *Rancho Grande*, the producers were scared to "take out the Indians" in the films and they generally considered these images would be "denigrating for Mexico").⁴² Sergio de la Mora states that despite past efforts to exalt the mestizo body, evident in the eroticization of the mestizo male in Eisenstein's *¡Que viva México!* and artist Adolfo Best Maugard's film *Humanidad* (*Humanity*, 1934), whiteness was a crucial element for the mass audience and imagined to be more beautiful and acceptable than brown skin.⁴³ This practice was also the norm in the hegemonic Hollywood industry, as many white-skinned Mexican actors found success during the silent period, either playing an acceptable interpretation of the exotic Other or advantageously passing and performing as European.⁴⁴ Keeping this in mind, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* should not be construed so problematic since "the *ranchero* comedies were neither more or less racist than other cultural products."⁴⁵

While Hershfield privileges the *hispanismo* in the *charro*, she fails to recognize any presence of the mestizo, which is evident in the film's diegetic music. As previously

⁴² Ibid., 45.

⁴³ Sergio de la Mora, *Cinemachismo: Masculinities and Sexualities in Mexican Films* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 86.

⁴⁴ Mexican actors in Hollywood include Dolores del Río, Ramón Navarro, Lupita Tovar, Lupe Vélez, Antonio Moreno, and Emilio Fernández.

⁴⁵ Mitchell, *Intoxicated Identities*, 151.

mentioned, the development of the *comedia ranchera* parallels advancements in radio and sound recording technology, making sound cinema an important stage for up-and-coming singers and performers. With the mixing of the urban and rural cultures during the post-Revolutionary years, the public became addicted to the nostalgia encoded or encapsulated in songs and the films weaved the narratives around these performances.⁴⁶ The music is an example of cultural *mestizaje*, a mixing of the regional and the urban and is a crucial *synchresis* for the development of a consistently changing hybrid popular culture. Marina Díaz López states, “La música es un elemento crucial para atender a los procesos de *mestizaje* y fundación de una cultura popular local porque necesita un entorno donde ejecutarse . . . la cultura *mestiza* se refleja en la música y, simultáneamente, en la cultura agraria” (“The music is a crucial element to use in the processes of *mestizaje* and to the foundation of a local popular culture because it needs an environment to run on . . . the *mestizo* culture is reflected in the music and, at the same time, the agrarian culture”).⁴⁷ The film’s diegetic music is consistently grouped into the category of the folkloric, along with the presence of artisanal crafts and sarapes, but the *canciones* and their strategic performance in the narrative mark the presence of the *mestizo* culture that Díaz López points out. The music operates as a function of daily country life and, as such, as music of the people who live in and interact in that environment.

The film’s composer is the Veracruz-born Lorenzo Barcelata (1898-1943), who demonstrated talent at playing the guitar and writing songs at a young age. While

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁴⁷ Marina Díaz López, “El Folclore invade el imaginario de la ciudad,” *Revistas de estudios históricos sobre la imagen, segunda época* 41 (June 2002): 16.

working for the government during his period of civil service in 1925, he began several small groups such as the Cuarteto Regional and los Ruiseñores Tampiqueños, during which time he experimented and “modified” the *canción campirana*. With the full economic and moral support from the governor of Tamualipas, Emilio Portes Gil, Barcelata rechristened his group Los Trovadores Tamaulipecos (consisting of Barcelata, lyricist Ernesto Cortázar, José Agustín Ramírez, and Carlos Peña) in 1929, which led to an eventual contract with XEW performing regional music.⁴⁸

Barcelata’s success with Los Trovadores Tamaulipecos, his international hit, *María Elena*, and his later position as artistic director of XEFO led to his involvement in *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, aiding in the “*jalisco*” (“Jalisco-izing”) of Mexican cinema.⁴⁹ Barcelata and lyricist Cortázar composed and arranged several songs for the film, which are placed strategically in the film’s narrative as musical interludes during scenes (following the sketches in the *revista*) and included other popular and traditional songs, constructing the necessary sounds of the rural backdrop.

In the film’s first musical scene, the servant Cruz performs *Canción Mixteca* by the conservatory trained Oaxacan composer, José López Alavés (1889-1974). Cruz sings the *canción* in a high soprano register while ironing, encouraged by the drunk self-described Communist, Florentino, who accompanies her with open arpeggios on guitar.

⁴⁸ Pablo Dueñas, “El trovador de sotavento: Lorenzo Barcelata,” *Relatos e historias en México* 2, no. 18 (2010): 68-9. For more information on Lorenzo Barcelata, see Mario Kuri-Aldana and Vicente Mendoza Martínez, *Cancionero Popular Mexicano Tomo dos* (México: Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes, 2001), 438-50.

⁴⁹ Dueñas, “El trovador de sotavento: Lorenzo Barcelata,” 70.

The song, written in a simple, relaxed waltz, is slow and wistful, detailing the recollection of a lost homeland:

Qué lejos estoy del suelo donde he nacido!
Intensa nostalgia invade mi pensamiento,
Y al verme tan solo y triste cual hoja al viento
Quisiera llorar, quisiera morir de sentimiento!

Oh, tierra del sol! Suspiro por verte,
Ahora que lejos yo vivo sin luz, sin amor.
Y al verme tan solo y triste cual hoja al viento
Quisiera llorar, quisiera morir de sentimiento.

(How far I am from the land I am from,
Intense nostalgia invades my thinking,
And when I see myself so alone and sad as a leaf in the wind
I want to cry, I want to die of grief!

Oh, earth of the sun! I long to see you
Now that I live far away, without love
And when I see myself so alone and sad as a leaf in the wind
I want to cry, I want to die of grief!)⁵⁰

The Mixteca is a region of Oaxaca, Guerrero, and Puebla, whose name refers to the indigenous people who originally inhabited it, near where the composer grew up before moving to Mexico City before the Revolution. Perhaps the nostalgia conveyed in the song speaks to the composer's personal feelings about being so far from his home, paralleling those who left their birth land in order to look for a new way of life in Mexico City or other urban areas during the post-Revolutionary years. In the film, the nostalgia

⁵⁰ "Chapter 4," *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, DVD, directed by Fernando de Fuentes (1936; México: Cinemateca, 2007). The song's lyrics are also included in *Cancionero Popular Mexicano tomo uno* (México: Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes, 2001), 97. López Alavés grew up in Huajuapán de León in Oaxaca and moved to Mexico City in 1906 to study music at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, where he worked with Rafael J. Tello and Julián Carrillo. In 1917, he submitted it to the First Canción Mexicana competition sponsored by *El Universal*. The song won first prize while second place went to the *canción La apasionada*. See Simón Tapia Colman, *Música y músicos en México* (México: Panorama Editorial, 1991), 76-77.

felt for the “land of their birth” is transferred onto the hacienda of Jalisco, reinforcing the idea of an idyllic land.

Aside from articulating the longing for a lost countryside, this *canción* is an example of the rural simplicity juxtaposed with urban influences, portraying hints of sophistication from the *música de salón* tradition through the fluidity of the melodic line and waltz-like tempo. The *canción* has a simple and static melodic line that stays within the interval of a fifth. In the film, Cruz supplies her own *ritardandos* and *fermatas*, particularly during the last line of the first verse, describing her need to cry, and the first two lines of the next verse, referencing the lost home land, which compels her to sigh. The first line of the second verse reaches its climax as the melodic line outlines an ascending major triad settling on the octave tonic with the word *sol*, then gradually descending to mimic the sounds of her sighs. While singing, Cruz continues to iron without hesitation, further linking this music with her everyday life.

As Cruz finishes the last verse, Martín, dressed in a *charro* suit enters the scene and accompanies her for the remaining lines of the last verse, confirming that this is a popular and familiar song in Rancho Grande. When she walks to the gated window, Martín flirts with Cruz before José Francisco, also in *charro* clothing, comes by. Both men are vying for the position of *caporal* (foreman) of Rancho Grande so they can marry Cruz, but Don Felipe has already appointed José Francisco for the position, much to Martín’s disappointment.

Serenades and Accolades

The film's serenade and cock-fighting scenes feature several musical performances that detail the most folkloric events of daily life and enforces class and gender divisions among the characters. José Francisco and Martín are rivals, but come together in solidarity to sing at Don Felipe's request, who asks them to perform a serenade at the gated window of his fiancée, Margarita. This romantic performance begins with a brief and lyrical quotation of the popular *Las mañanitas* then transitions to *Amanecer Ranchero (Ranch Dawn)*, sung by José Francisco and Martín in parallel thirds and sixths, a *canCIÓN mexicana* archetype. As they sing, the camera zooms to a close up of José Francisco and Martín with a momentary cross cut to the dark, seemingly vacant window. The first half of the song conveys the nostalgia for a homeland described in the *CanCIÓN Mixteca*, detailing the sadness of being in a distant location and a love that remained there and, the second half of the song transitions to a faster tempo, bringing in the full ensemble for the chorus:

Qué triste es la vida mía
Que llora por un amor
Mis campos, mis flores
Se mueren sin sol.

Y jacalitos sin techo
Ay, como extrañan tu ausencia
Dime chiquita que te he hecho
Vuelve a buscar mi querencia.
Ven pronto, ranchera, pues quiero tu amor.

Ay que cielo tan azul
Pa' que estrella estoy mirando (2x)

Ay, que corazón tan duro
Tiene la que estoy amando

No más me dice que sí
Pero no me dice cuando.

(How sad is the life
That cries for a love
My fields, my flowers
Are dying without sunshine.

My house does not have a roof
And misses you desperately
Tell me little one what have I done,
I returned to find my home,
Come quickly, ranch girl, because I want your love.)

Oh what a blue sky
For the star to which I stare (2x)

Oh, what a strong heart
The one I love has.
She only tells me yes
But she does not say when.)⁵¹

During this performance, José Francisco and Martín appear to sing towards a different audience: Martín gazes towards the direction of Margarita's window while José Francisco stares straight ahead, perhaps at the wall or at Don Felipe, which disassociates him from the present task. After a pause, Don Felipe requests José Francisco the *canción romantica*, *Por ti aprendí a querer* (*For you I learned to Love*), accompanied by Martín on guitar, which is more specific to Felipe's supposed affection for Margarita:

Dulcísima mujer
Tus ojos son una canción
Nos dan la imploración que pertubo mi corazón
Ven a mis brazos que te esperan solo a tí
Por tí mujer ideal sólo por tí yo soy feliz.

⁵¹ De Fuentes, *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, DVD Chapter 5.

(Sweetest woman
Your eyes are a song
Imploring us to what disturbs my heart
Come to my arms that wait just for you
For you, ideal woman, only for you am I happy.)⁵²

In an interview with the Cineteca Nacional, cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa describes the scene as follows:

José Francisco y Martín tocan la guitarra y cantan muy bien, de manera que Felipe se sirve de ellos cuando quiere llevar serenata a su novia Margarita. Los dos peones visten bellos trajes de charros y sarapes cuando José Francisco canta “Por ti aprendí a querer” mientras el patron se tapa con el sombrero galoneado para besar a la amada que lo recibe en el balcón.

(José Francisco and Martín play the guitar and sing very well, in such a way that Felipe uses them to perform a serenade for his girlfriend Margarita. The two peones wear beautiful charro suits and sarapes as José Francisco sings “Por ti aprendí a querer” (“For You I Learned to Love”) while the boss covers his face with his braided sombrero to kiss his beloved who receives him on the balcony.)⁵³

As Felipe kisses Margarita, José Francisco, Martín, and their ensemble do not perform *Por ti aprendí a querer*, (they do this beforehand) but turn around to allow the lovers privacy and accompany them with “un waltz moderno” (“a modern waltz”). They promptly begin an arrangement of Juventino Rosas’s *Sobre las olas* (*On the Waves*), a waltz from the end of the nineteenth century. It is an odd choice for “un waltz moderno,” but an easily recognizable one for Mexican and international audiences.

While the live performance and the collage of musical numbers are meant to be romantic gestures from Felipe to Margarita, José Francisco and Martín are hired to perform while Felipe looks on, insinuating that these *charros* are capable of providing

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ “Gabriel Figueroa,” in *Cuadernos de la Cineteca Nacional* no. 3 (México: Cineteca Nacional, 1976), 45.

something that the *charro hacendado* cannot. The privilege of singing is not given to Don Felipe, only to the *peón charros*, which socially and sonically separates Don Felipe from the other characters. The performance also isolates Margarita. Although the serenade was meant for Margarita, the scene places her on the farthest side of the frame, centering on the men and keeping her on the margins. She is only introduced into the scene after all the performances are over, emerging out to the window to validate Felipe's successful romantic conquest. Her dialogue is kept to a minimum as Felipe tells her he will come back in the morning to ask her father for permission to marry and declaring they will be married within a month. Margarita agrees to everything Felipe says and remains seated behind the gated window, protected, shielded, and separated from the cohort of singing *charros*. Felipe's stern decision making and Margarita's fast acceptance characterize the music of the serenade as a series of hypnotic, siren-like songs, subduing the object of affection into an affirming submission. Since she is not the center of attention, however, her obedience comes as merely an after thought. The serenade functions here not as a crucial tool in understanding the love and relationship between Margarita and Felipe, but more as a space for observing the romantic and seductive capacities of the singing *charros*.

The next musically significant scene takes place at the cockfight between rival haciendas, Real Minero and Rancho Grande. Before the actual competition begins, the crowd of *charros*, *china poblanas*, and the gringo archetype, Pete from Denver, Colorado, is entertained by a series of performers, beginning with the "cancioneros del alma nacional" ("singers with national soul"). The trio Murciélagos and the trio Tariácuri enter

into the center arena with chairs, facing each other in a confrontational line up and surrounding a *tarima*, a wooden floor for dancing. Each performer places one leg on their chair to play his guitar.

Dressed in white *charro* suits with sarapes draped over their shoulders, the first trio begins with Barcelata's *canción ranchera Lucha María*, which describes a womanizing *charro* as a game cock who wants a beautiful lady to sit next to him so that he may flirt with her:

Estoy como el gallo tiro
De palenque de la feria
Pieron a los galleros que me suelten al cualquiera
Pieron a los galleros que me suelten al cualquiera.
Y a vez una ensalada
con torito a gallera.

Saca tu taburete, Lucha María, siente aquí
Que te quiero ver sentada toda la feria cerca de mi.

(I'm like a rooster
at the fair's cockpit
Asking the cock breeders
To let me fight with anyone
Asking the cock breeders
To let me fight with anyone

Take out your stool, Lucha María, sit here
I want to see you sitting next to me during the fair.)⁵⁴

The trio sings in unison with rich, velvety harmonies, displaying vocal inflexions specific to the *canción* style such as a slight descending glissandi at the end of each phrase.

During their performance, the camera zooms to an extreme close-up of the trio's hands, focusing on their rapid strumming techniques and virtuosity as they accelerate the tempo

⁵⁴ De Fuentes, *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, DVD Chapter 6.

and sing the last verse faster. To contrast, the other trio dressed in black suits also with sarapes draped over one shoulder plays Barcelata's *Presumida (Vain Woman)*, which colorfully describes a man leaving the vain love of his life:

Pajarillo manzanero
Llévame a cortar manzanas (2x)

¿Cómo quieres que las corte,
Si no me bajas la rama? (2x)

Presumida, presumida,
Deja ya de estar dormida (2x)
Ya mi voy bien de mi vida
Y por ti llorando estoy
Y por ti llorando estoy
Adios linda de mi vida.

(Little apple bird
Take me to cut apples (2x)

How do you want me to cut them
If you do not lower your branches? (2x)

Vain woman,
Wake up (2x)
I am going well through life
And I am crying for you
And I am crying for you
Goodbye love of my life.)⁵⁵

The strength in this trio lies in their guitar technique. Their performance is longer than the other trio's due to a lengthy guitar introduction rather than an acceleration of tempi. In addition to extreme close-ups, the camera crosscuts to show several angles of the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

musicians, placing a spotlight on the emerging trio performance style.⁵⁶ Moreno Rivas traces the origins of the musical trio to the popular ensemble of the Teatro Lírico, the trio Garnica-Ascencio in 1927 and to Lorenzo Barcelata's group los Trovadores Tamaulipecos who "añadieron al estilo de conjunto vocal un uso casi virtuosístico de la guitarra, que provenía del estilo de ejecución del arpa en el huapango" ("added to the vocal ensemble to the almost virtuosic use of the guitar, which came from the harp playing style in the huapango").⁵⁷ Presented in this scene are not necessarily displays of traditional or nostalgic music—although there are hints with the lyrical references to nature and leaving "the love of their life"—but different methods of performance practice that embrace a *machismo* aesthetic: it is confrontational, relying on increasing elaborate musical technique in order to claim superiority over the other, performing songs detailing female conquest yet colored with references of nature. It is a musical duel of sorts, but there is no declared winner as both groups show off for each other and vie for audience approval.

After the trio challenge, the musicians group together and move to the side of the *tarima*, leaving it empty for two dancers, Olga Falcón and Emilio Fernández, dressed in *china poblana* and *traje de charro* respectively, who perform the *Jarabe Tapatío*.⁵⁸ The

⁵⁶ The era of the trio typically begins with the debut of the trio Los Panchos in 1948. See Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, 122.

⁵⁷ Ibid. For more information regarding the trio, see "Trio Garnica-Ascencio," *El Universal Ilustrado*, July 7, 1927.

⁵⁸ The *jarabe* is a dance style with Spanish origins that focuses on the rhythmic movement of the feet called *zapateado*. During the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century, the dance was deemed inappropriate and banned by the viceroynalities, but later adopted by the insurgents during the War of Independence. The *jarabe* was also included in performances of the *género chico* and *revistas* during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its incorporation as a symbol of nationhood was accelerated after

piece, however, is broken into three different sections. Falcón and Fernández perform the first part of the *jarabe*, which transitions to an arrangement of a traditional *jarabe* in triple meter *El atole*, describing a popular corn-based drink consumed with tamales:

Pasen a tomar atole
Todos los que van pasando.
Que el atole está bueno
La atolera está regalando.

(Come to drink atole
All who are passing by
The atole is very good
The vendor is giving it away.)⁵⁹

During the dance, the camera crosscuts to closeups to select members of the audience, who express admiration, pleasure, and delight. After an extreme close up of Falcón's feet dancing on Fernández's sombrero, the music returns to the final section of the *Jarabe Tapatio*. Considered the national dance of Mexico after the Revolutionary years, the performance of the *Jarabe Tapatio* provides the most recognizable representation of Mexican nationalism, described by *Variety* magazine in December 1936 as "a routine that shines with its authenticity."⁶⁰

After the performance, the *charros* in the crowd break out in *gritos*, the symbolic cry associated with *charros*, the *canción ranchera*, and the presence of *machismo*. The

Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova included an *en pointe* performance of the *Jarabe Tapatio* for the *revista, Fantasia Mexicana* in 1919. During the 1920s, Minister of Public Education José Vasconcelos included the dance in Mexican dance school curriculum. For a history on the *jarabe* see Gabriel Saldavar, *El jarabe: baile popular mexicano* (Puebla: Lecturas Historicas de Puebla, 1987).

⁵⁹ De Fuentes, *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, DVD Chapter 6. *El Atole* is one of many *jarabes* that can be added to create a longer *jarabe* such as the *tapatio*.

⁶⁰ Edga, "Allá en el Rancho Grande," *Variety*, December 2, 1936, quoted in García Riera, *Fernando de Fuentes*,

camera cuts to two extreme close-ups of *charros* and their version of the *grito* before resting on the gringo character Pete from Denver (Clifford Carr), who manages to yell out a pathetic and unmanly “whoopee, whoopee!” before placing the wrong end of his cigar in his mouth in a gesture of buffoonery. The gringo’s “whoopee” reinforces and elevates the *machismo* in the *charro*’s *grito*. All of these elements offer the most visual and audible representation of *lo mexicano*. The mixture of trio performances and the dance performance of the *Jarabe Tapatío* at a cockfight with an audience of *charros*, *chinas poblanas*, and, to subtly contrast, a gringo stereotype, stop the narrative and presents several clear examples of Mexican nationhood.

Music and *Machismo* in the Cantina

An important marker for the *charro* is the embodiment of *machismo*, already hinted at in past musical scenes but which is exemplified in two ways after the cockfight. First, non-musically with Felipe at the Casa Grande, then second, musically in the *cantina* after José Francisco wins a big race against Rancho Chico.

Although he is engaged to Margarita, Felipe’s desire for Cruz is too strong for him to bear and, as a result, he concocts a plan to buy Cruz from Angela so he could rape her. His plan is foiled, however, when Cruz suffers from a severe asthma attack and faints after fighting off Felipe’s advances. When she wakes up, she declares that she is in love with José Francisco and does not want to be considered a “ruined woman.” Felipe takes pity on her and walks her back to her home, unaware that his night guards watched them leave together. The men perceive Felipe’s actions as just another sexual conquest

by their womanizing boss, but Cruz, in their eyes, has committed an unforgiveable indiscretion and is now tainted.

José Francisco's performance of *machismo* occurs at the local cantina, one of the select locations that Carlos Monsiváis labels as a mythical space for Mexican cinema. Here, "men build up their virility and prepare their physical decline, fatal decisions are taken and the ballads (*rancheras*) ring out like hymns to self destruction."⁶¹ In the throes of celebrating a successful race whose award will allow José Francisco to marry Cruz, the cantina men request that he perform *Rancho Grande*. Not capable of passing up an opportunity to perform, or to show off, José Francisco grabs a guitar and launches into a communal version of *Allá en el Rancho Grande*. This collective performance generates an atmosphere of masculine and nationalistic camaraderie as all the men in the cantina know and sing along with the chorus, interjecting their own strategically placed *gritos* and catcalls:

Allá en el Rancho Grande,
Allá donde vivía
Había una rancherita
Que alegre me decía,
Que alegre me decía...

(Over on the Big Ranch
Over where I lived
There was a ranch girl
Who was happy to tell me,
Who was happy to tell me...) ⁶²

⁶¹ Carlos Monsiváis, "Mexican Cinema: Of Myths and Mystification," in *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in the Americas*, ed. John King, Ana López, Manuel Alvarado (London: BFI, 1993), 145.

⁶² De Fuentes, *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, DVD Chapter 8.

On the surface, this song does not necessarily emote *macho* sensibilities, but its adoption as the film's title song does. A standard practice in Mexican cinema during the 1930s and especially in the 1940s was the utilization of popular songs for film titles as a way to feed the growing consumer culture and entice audiences into theaters.⁶³ For this film, the anonymous song *Allá en el Rancho Grande*⁶⁴ was used, but the original film title was *Cruz*, after a Guz Aguila story. According to García Riera, Tito Guízar and Lorenzo Barcelata objected to *Cruz* as the film's title and proposed that the film be titled after the song that made Guízar famous in the United States, *Allá en el Rancho Grande*.⁶⁵ In the article "Anatomía de un éxito loco: *Allá en el Rancho Grande*," Guízar states that when he first read the script, he agreed with Barcelata that the title was wrong for the film.

Guízar claims responsibility for the title change:

(Tito Guízar) Le propusimos a don Fernando que la película se llamara *El Rancho Grande* y le cantamos la canción que él no conocía. No era popular aunque yo la había cantado mucho en Estados Unidos.

⁶³ *Santa* (1932) was the first film that utilized a popular song title included in the film. See Chapter 1, "The Sounds of the Prostitute."

⁶⁴ The authorship of the song *Allá en el Rancho Grande* is questionable. In the film and in the writings of Emilio García Riera and in Yolanda Moreno Rivas's *Historia de la música popular mexicana*, the song is labeled as anonymous. The *Cancionero Popular Mexicano Tomo Uno* gives lyric credit to Juan D. del Moral with music by Emilio D. Uranga. However, the article "Escandalazo a propósito de una cinta ya estrenada: *Allá en el Rancho Grande* es del señor Silvano R. Ramos" from October 9, 1936 in *La Prensa* gives credit to Silvano Ramos who supposedly composed the song in 1915, but did not register it in Mexico. In the case *Marks vs. Stasny*, Ramos declared the song was his original work because the song is included under the category "Vaqueros of the Southwest" in John and Alan Lomax's *American Ballads and Folk Songs*, published in 1934 with Ramos as the composer. For a summary on the court proceeding and outcomes, see UCLA School of Law: Music Copyright and Infringement Resource, "Marks vs. Stasny 1 F.R.D. 720 (S.D.N.Y)," <http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/1940-1949/Pages/marksstasny.aspx>. For the 1934 version of the song, see John and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folks Songs* (New York: Macmillan, 1934), 361.

⁶⁵ García Riera, *Fernando de Fuentes*, 42.

(We proposed to Don Fernando that the film should be titled *El Rancho Grande* and we sang the song that he did not know. It was not popular until I sang it a lot in the United States.)⁶⁶

An interview with René Cardona, however, implies that the title change was Cardona's idea, not Guízar's:

El argumento me pareció muy interesante y muy simpático. Al principio se llamaba *Crucita*. Una mañana que me estaba desayunado en un café de Reforma con Fernando de Fuentes y Guz Aguila, el autor, decidimos que el título de *Crucita* no nos gustaba a ninguno de los tres. En esos momentos estaban tocando precisamente la canción "El Rancho Grande" y se me ocurrió decir: "Bueno, pues *Allá en el Rancho Grande* sería un buen título." Fernando me contestó: "Yo también he pensado eso, fíjate" y así quedó por fin el título en *Allá en el Rancho Grande* y se descartó el de *Crucita*.

(I thought the story was very interesting and likeable. It was first called *Crucita*. One morning I was eating breakfast at a café on Reforma with Fernando de Fuentes and Guz Aguila, the author, and we decided, all three of use, that we did not like the title *Crucita*. In those moments someone was playing the song "El Rancho Grande" and it occurred to me to say: "Ok, well *Allá en el Rancho Grande* would be a good title." Fernando told me: "You know, I was also thinking that" and like that, in the end, the title stayed *Allá en el Rancho Grande* and *Crucita* was discarded.")⁶⁷

Had *Cruz* remained as the film's title, the focus would have changed from the popular song, the location, and masculine pride to the female protagonist, who does not receive much attention in the film other than as an object that is sold and fought over by José Francisco, Martín, and Felipe. She is there for the *charros*'s amusement. José Vera states that had this title remained the ending would have been quite different:

Se suponía que el escritor Gus [sic] Aguila, un poeta de los buenos (según Cardona), habla concebido el final de la siguiente manera: casi al terminar la película, *Crucita* se cruzaría en el momento en que el patrón y el caporal se daban

⁶⁶ Rico, "Anatomía de un éxito loco: *Allá en el Rancho Grande*," 47.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

de balazos por su amor, ella cae muerta, de bruces, y sobre su espalda se refeljaría una cruz (sombra).

Cabe señalar, que el argumento fue modificado a petición de la esposa del actor cantante, quien recomendó a De Fuentes que le añadiera un final feliz en lugar de una terminación trágica.

(I suppose that the writer Gus Aguila, one of the good poets (according to Cardona), conceived of the ending as follows: near the end of the film, Crucita crosses at the moment that the boss and the foreman shoot for her love, she falls dead, face down and with a shadow of a cross on her back.

It should be noted that the story was modified at the request of the singing actor's wife who recommended to De Fuentes to add a happy ending rather than a tragic ending.)⁶⁸

This new ending, however, does not imply that Cruz would secure a more centralized role in the narrative. This alternate ending follows patterns set forth by another developing genre, the prostitute melodrama, in killing the female character in order to stabilize the status quo. Cruz's presence upsets the balance of the hacienda, the cause for the feuding amongst the *charros*, and must therefore be removed from the environment in order for harmony to exist once again.

After the performance of the communal song, the next request is for a *huapango*, a song style that moves away from the *ranchera* tradition and serves as a guise for the confrontation between José Francisco and Martín over the indiscretion of Felipe and Cruz and elevates *machismo* pride:

Esta escena es muy importante porque resume un elemento crucial para entender los modos en los que se irá forjando el estereotipo del macho: la exaltación nacionalista se materializa en un himno que cantan los hombres solos en la

⁶⁸ José Vera, "El 'Bum' Empezó Hace 50 Años: "Allá en el Rancho Grande Mostró al Mundo por Primera Vez Nuestra Vida de Campo: Parte II," *El Sol de México*, June 11, 1986.

cantina, al que sigue, como manera explícita de celebración, el combate entre dos hombres por el amor de una mujer, que es vivido por todos como un espectáculo.

(This scene is very important because it summarizes a crucial element in understanding the ways in which the macho stereotype is constructed: the nationalistic exaltation is materialized in a hymn that only the men in the bar sing, which follows, like an explicit manner of celebration, the fight between the two men for the love of a woman, who lives as a spectacle for everyone.)⁶⁹

The *huapango* is not only an example of musical talent, but also of quick thinking and wit. The strophic *coplas* begin as playfully poking at one another, but both men gradually devise ways to subtly insult each other's character. Martín pushes José Francisco further by insulting Cruz in his last verse, insinuating she gave her love away (meaning her body) to another.

Vale más saber perder
Y guardar bien el honor
Con la mujer que uno quiere
No hay que hacer combinación
Si pierdo revancha tomo
Y a la Cruz de mi pasión
Por un caballo palomo
No se la cambio al patrón.

(It is worth more losing
and keep your honor well
You must not share
The woman that you love
If I lose I take revenge
And the Cruz of my passion
For a horse
I will not exchange with the boss.)⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Marina Díaz López, "El folclore invade el imaginario de la ciudad," 15.

⁷⁰ De Fuentes, *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, DVD Chapter 8.

Everyone in the cantina except José Francisco knows that Cruz was alone with Don Felipe and, because of this, they assume that she is ruined and tell him so. When the secret is out, José Francisco rushes to the house to confront her.

When José Francisco discovers that Felipe bought his fiancée, he challenges Felipe to a physical, not musical, duel. Here, the utopian social division that scholars argue exists in the film is broken as the worker stands up to the *hacendado*, singing *charro* against the non-singing *charro*. Tim Mitchell suggests that this action challenges criticism that all *comedia ranchera charros* sided against the Cárdenas's land reform policies when they were perhaps in favor of them:

Far from being a reactionary rebuke to *cardenismo*, therefore, musical comedies that portrayed charismatic *charros* standing up to evil landowners provided fantasmatic support for it. Keeping the people focused on the old love-hate relationship with the hacienda was the best possible smokescreen for a land distribution plan that either failed miserably or turned the state itself into what Krauze calls 'a new and all encompassing hacendado.'⁷¹

Felipe is not depicted in the film as a positive or desired *charro* figure: he does not perform in any musical numbers, which Others him from the rest of the players, and attempts to buy what he wants whenever he wants. The film demonizes the *hacendando*, which provides "tactical support for the governmental dream of liberating peons from the hacienda system."⁷²

The working *charro* prevails. Don Felipe explains what happened with Doña Angela and Cruz, emphasizing that if he had known that José Francisco and Cruz were

⁷¹ Mitchell, *Intoxicated Identities*, 153.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 152.

together, he would have never made advances towards her, implying that if Cruz was in fact unattached, those advances would be socially tolerated and accepted despite her protests. José Francisco decides to believe Felipe and welcomes Cruz back to him with open arms, declaring that they now have to find a new place to live because of this unfortunate situation, which further implies that although Cruz did not do anything to illicit Felipe's behavior, she is still considered tainted. José Francisco, however, remains loyal to her. Angela, on the other hand, is beaten by her husband Florentino for her wrongdoing and apologizes to José Francisco for selling Cruz (but does not apologize directly to Cruz). Cruz receives the most mistreatment while Felipe comes out of the situation practically unscathed. In the end, José Francisco marries Cruz, Felipe marries Margarita, and Florentino and Angela remarry in a mass wedding, bringing the film to a happy close.

Ultimately, it was not the rural audience that the film was attempting to please, but an urban audience who recently migrated to the city from the countryside and was feeling perhaps nostalgic for their lost home. Much like many of the *revistas* with country backdrops, *Allá en el Rancho Grande* presents an urban interpretation of the rural for the urban. And these audiences recognized the construction as a faithful depiction: “*Allá en el Rancho Grande* es un tema emocionante, atrayente que tiene todo del sabor de la tierra mexicana, nuestras costumbres, mucha originalidad y la que con recias pincelada expone la firmeza del carácter mexicano” (“*Allá en el Rancho Grande* is an exciting and attractive theme that has all the flavor of the Mexican land, our customs, and much

originality and which with a sturdy stroke exposes the firmness of Mexican character”).⁷³

This perception crossed into the diaspora communities in the United States as well. In a review from the Los Angeles Spanish language newspaper, *La Opinión*, an anonymous source states:

Por fin hemos visitado una película que es reflejo fiel de la vida mexicana en el campo. Ya estábamos cansados de ver cintas que bajo el título de “mexicanas” constituían mediocres manifestaciones, sin llevar ningún mensaje nuevo al espíritu de los norteamericanos. Esta “Allá en el Rancho Grande” es de las obras que prestigian y exaltecen a México en el extranjero.

(At last we see a film with a faithful reflection of Mexican life in the countryside. We were already tired of watching films that were mediocre manifestations under the title of “Mexican” that did not carry a new message to the spirit of the North Americans. This “Allá en el Rancho Grande” is of those works that prestiges and exalts Mexico to the foreigner.)⁷⁴

Performing the Archetype: Jorge Negrete in *¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!* (1941)

Although *Allá en el Rancho Grande* became an important celluloid signifier of and for Mexican identity by placing the singing *charro* in the national spotlight, Tito Guízar did not become the “face of Mexican *machismo*.” In a review of the film, critic Fidel Murillo states,

Hablando en plata, y desde el punto de vista del actuación, el único que resulta un tanto flojo, es Tito Guízar. Pero cuales quiera que sean sus defectos, palidecen cuando se le oye cantar. Al público le hubiese gustado un tipo más vigorosamente masculino...

(Speaking plainly and from the point of view of the acting, the only one that came off not as sharp is Tito Guízar. But whatever his faults, they pale when we hear him sing. The public would have enjoyed a more vigorously masculine type...)⁷⁵

⁷³ “Allá en el Rancho Grande,” *El Cine Gráfico*, October 11, 1936.

⁷⁴ “Ruidoso éxito de la película “Rancho Grande,” *La Opinión*, February 24, 1937.

⁷⁵ Fidel Murillo, “Una Opinión sobre ‘Allá en el Rancho Grande,’” *La Opinión*, January 18, 1937.

Consistently referred to as the “happy *charro*” or, as Moreno Rivas puts it, the “*charro rosa*” (“pink *charro*”), Guízar did not stay long in Mexico, returning instead to the United States to pursue a career in Hollywood films and U.S. American radio. The singing *charro* archetype, however, was recycled in the film *Guadalajara* (1936, dir. Agustín Jiménez) starring Pepe Guízar and in the folkloric tapestry *Así es mi tierra (This is My Land)*, 1937, dir. Arcady Boytler), but it was not until 1941 that the popular figure achieved an appropriate level of “*machismo*-ness” that resonated with the movie-going and radio listening audience. Enrique Serna and Carlos Monsiváis argue that Jorge Negrete embodied the full representation of the singing *charro* and Mexican masculinity in his pistol swinging performance in *¡Ay, Jalisco, no te rajes! (Oh Jalisco, Don’t Give Up!)*, 1941, dir. Joselito Rodríguez).

Set in rural Jalisco during the post-Revolutionary years, the film follows the “gentleman gunman” and outlaw, Salvador Pérez Gómez (Negrete), who lost his parents by hired gunman and seeks to avenge their deaths. In the midst of tracking down the killers, Salvador meets and falls in love with the beautiful and modern Carmela (Gloria Marín), who bashfully returns his affections. Carmela, however, is fighting off the advances from the mayor’s son, the smug anti-*charro* Felipe, who attempts to coerce Carmela into marrying him to save her father’s ranch. After Salvador returns from a trip to Guadalajara, where he successfully and skillfully killed a group of men involved in his parent’s murder, he is stunned to find Carmela engaged to Felipe. The engagement, however, is short-lived after Salvador wins a horse race against Felipe, and Felipe’s

father, the ringleader of Salvador's parent's murder, is shot to death. Once the revenge killing ends, Salvador and Carmela ride off together to get married.

¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes! elevated Negrete's star status and magnified the image of the pueblo in a way that *Allá en el Rancho Grande* did not: a demonstration that the pueblo, and not just the feudal haciendas, could also be elegant. However, Negrete was not enthusiastic about participating in the film, at first turning the role down and repeatedly calling the film a *churro*.⁷⁶ The *comedia ranchera* marks a genre transition for Negrete; his previous film experiences include several historic period films including *El cementario de las aguilas* (*The Graveyard of Eagles*, 1938, dir. Luis Lezama) and *Perjura* (1938, dir. Raphael J. Sevilla) and rural musical comedies such as *Juan sin miedo* (*Juan without Fear*, 1939, dir. Juan José Segura).⁷⁷ The *comedias rancheras*, however, were something that he adamantly wanted to stay away from because he hated the *traje de charro* and did not want to subject himself to singing *rancheras*, a musical genre he did not particularly enjoy. Trained as an operatic baritone, Negrete studied privately with José Pierson during the 1920s, deciding early on in his career to not waste his talent in *tonadillas* or any type of popular or, as he terms it, kitsch entertainment. The occasional performances on the radio for XETR and his later contract with XEW were

⁷⁶ Enrique Serna, *Jorge el bueno: la vida de Jorge Negrete I* (Mexico: Clío, 1993), 45. *Churros* refer to the films that are formulaic and are produced rapidly. Anne Rubenstein states, "Viewers began to refer to many movies made in Mexico as *churros* as early as 1950, comparing them to the machine-made crullers (ring-shaped, deep-fried cake) for sale on many city street corners: Like *churros*, Mexican movies were no nourishing, rapidly made, soon forgotten, identical to one another and cheap." Negrete's comment about the film being a *churro* indicates that this term for a label of mechanical and repetitive films was used much earlier. See Andrea Noble, *Mexican National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2005), 16-7, and Anne Rubenstein, "Mass Media and Popular Culture in the Post Revolutionary Era," in *The Oxford History of Mexico*, ed. M.C. Meyer and W.H. Beezley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 665.

⁷⁷ In *Juan sin miedo*, Jorge Negrete plays a secondary character and does not sing any *rancheras*.

only placeholders until he was able to win a position in a national or international opera company. This was evident in his selected repertoire for XETR, which consisted of *romanzas*, arias, and serenatas.⁷⁸ After some performances with Roberto Soto's theatrical company at the Teatro Lírico and successful performances in New York, Negrete turned to cinema.⁷⁹

Despite Negrete's negative proclivities to the *rancheras*, he became a sensation and pushed the *canción ranchera* in a new direction. The molding of Negrete as the macho singing *charro* was largely the result of the film's composer, Manuel Esperón, and the lyricist, Ernesto Cortázar, considered the most successful composer and lyricist team of the 1930s and 1940s and credited, along with Barcelata, for developing the sounds of the *charro*. Negrete's baritone voice was already well trained to sing *rancheras* as a result of his opera training with Pierson and his experiences singing *canción mexicana* for various radio programs. Esperón shares this memory of Negrete singing a *ranchera* for the first time:

La primera relación que tuve con él fue muy desagradable, nos dijeron groserías en la galería por cantar ópera; él, además, interpretaba cosas de tipo cubano y romanzas, pero no rancheras . . . Jorge estaba fuera de México. Realicé la música de las canciones, mientras que Ernesto Cortázar la letra. Llegó Jorge, escuchó las piezas, se enojó y me dijo que él no era mariachi; entonces tomó la hoja de papel la hizo bola y la arrojó debajo del piano y salió. Esa fue nuestra primera relación de compositor e intérprete. Después lo hicieron regresar, ya que había que cumplir el contrato. Cantó a fuerzas, pero apenas comenzó a hacerlo y se enteró que la cosa iba muy bien se empezó a entusiasmar, luego le puso muchas ganas y resultó lo que yo había imaginado, el éxito. Se disculpó y nació una relación de doce años que terminó con su muerte, en 1953.

⁷⁸ Carlos Bravo Fernández, "La vida del Jorge Negrete," *Cine Mundial*, November 7, 1954.

⁷⁹ See advertisements for the Compañía de Roberto Soto, *El Universal*, 1927.

(The first meeting that I had with him was very disagreeable. People said mean things to us in the gallery for singing opera. He also sang things with a Cuban style and romances, but not rancheras . . . Jorge was away from Mexico. I composed the music for the songs while Ernesto Cortázar wrote the lyrics. Jorge arrived, listened to the pieces, got mad and told me he was not a mariachi. As a result he made a ball out of the piece of paper and threw it under the piano and left. That was our first meeting as composer and performer. Later on he came back because he had to fulfill the contract. At first he sang because he had to, but just as he began to do so, and saw things were going well, he started to get excited, then he tried really hard and the result is what I had imagined, success. He apologized and a twelve-year relationship was born that ended with his death in 1953.)⁸⁰

Differing from Tito Guízar, Negrete's voice was more dominant and did not display an excessive use of vibrato and *portamento*. To sum up Negrete's musical education, Enrique Serna states that while Pierson taught Negrete to sing opera, Esperón taught him to sing the *canción ranchera*.⁸¹

And while Esperón provided the sound, Cortázar provided the lyrics. In *¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!*, Salvador participates in several activities linked to *machismo*: gambling, herding cattle, tequila drinking, horse racing, and attending cockfights. His conversations with other characters also aid in the *machismo* construction through statements such as "I will kill my parent's murderers like dogs." He refuses help from anyone, stating he could do it himself, and any man that begs for life and does not pick up a gun to defend himself, is a coward: "Cortázar en gran medida fabricó la imagen bravucona de Jorge. En algunas de sus letras, el macho de pistol al cinto es su objeto de adoración narcisista" ("In great measure Cortázar fabricated the bullying image of Jorge.

⁸⁰ "Hicieron Historia en el Siglo XX; Manuel Esperón," *Excélsior*, July 23, 1999.

⁸¹ Serna, *Jorge el bueno*, 49. See also "La música está de luto con la partida de Manuel Esperón," *Imagen Diario*, February 14, 2011.

In some of his lyrics, the macho with the pistol on his belt is an object of narcissistic adoration”).⁸² This comes out especially in the *coplas* confrontation scene against the antagonist Felipe, exhibiting similarities to the cantina *huapango* in *Allá en el Rancho Grande*. After performing a serenade for Carmela at her window, Salvador is challenged to *coplas* by Felipe and his men, who are dressed in cosmopolitan two-piece suits. Salvador performs the first *copla*, while Felipe passes the guitar to one of his friends, ordering him to sing in his place and to make his comeback “muy macho” (“very macho”). Felipe’s cosmopolitanism, modernity, and his unwillingness to sing, even for his love interest, make Salvador appear much more desirable and strengthen the *charro*’s levels of *machismo*.

The film features several original songs written by Esperón and Cortázar including the title song *¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!* performed by Lucha Reyes at the obligatory cockfight and a repeat performance featuring Jorge Negrete with other cast members at a cantina. Both artists offer different interpretations of the song: Lucha Reyes provides a strong and raw solo performance, which exemplifies the *estilo bravío*, while Negrete’s is a polished musical spectacle featuring the Trio los Río, mariachi with trumpets, and communal singing from the surrounding *charros* and *chinas poblanas*. The song is ultimately a glorification of Jalisco, but embodied in the *charro* figure: Jalisco and the *charro* become synonymous. If the *charro* is Jalisco and Jalisco is Mexico, then the *charro* becomes Mexico:

⁸² Serna, *Jorge el bueno*, 49.

¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!
Tus hombres son machos y son cumplidores,
Valientes, ariscos y sostenedores,
No admiten rivales en cosa de amores.

Su orgullo es su traje de charro,
Traer su pistol, pasear en el pinto,
Y con su guitarra echar mucho tipo,
Y a los que presumen quitarles el hipo.

(Oh Jalisco, don't backslide!
You men are machos and are honorable,
Brave, surly, and committed
They do not admit rivals in things concerning love

Their pride is their charro suit
To carry a gun, ride a pinto
And with their guitar do a lot of bravado
And to those who are vain they cure them of hiccups.)⁸³

Negrete's *charro* representation and apotheosis of *machismo* becomes a crucial fixture in his acting career and an important model for future *comedias rancheras*. The singing *charro* comes from an orphaned background, which enables him to hide behind a mask of pride and confidence and not seek help if needed: to receive help without asking would be considered an insult. The singing *charro* also exercises all practices of *charrería* and completes each task so well that he consistently wins competitions, all of which offer a cash award. He will claim a woman as his own and not only demonstrate his *machismo* through sharp talking, fist fights, and tequila drinking, but also through musical performances at the cantina (confrontational music) and at his girlfriend's gated window (romantic music). The singing *charro* is also a loyal figure and will not abandon

⁸³ Kuri-Aldana, *Cancionero Popular Mexicano tomo uno*, 364. A pinto refers to a dark colored horse with white patches.

his girlfriend, will avenge the death of his parents, and will never lie. He is a figure of strength, talent, and admiration.

Machismo and the Performance of Gringo-ness in *Los tres García*

In May 1942, after German attacks on the Mexican oil tanks *Potrero del Llano* and *Faja de Oro*, President Ávila Camacho allied with the neighbors to the north and entered into the Second World War. This new Mexico-United States alliance affected Mexico's industrial and agricultural development, as the United States exploited Mexican resources and labor for their own gain. This also led to the further modernization of the film industry.

The Office for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), headed by Nelson Rockefeller, was responsible for the cultural and economic relations between Latin America and the United States during the war and intervened on Mexican film production, attempting to push forward Good Neighbor policies: “the initial rationale for Hollywood intervention in the Mexican film industry had less to do with preventing pro-Axis Mexican movie production than with formulating a transnational mode of entertainment production to serve U.S. ideological interests.”⁸⁴ U.S. aid supplied new machinery and equipment, a consolidation of studios, and the training of new, national technicians to the Mexican industry. Hollywood could now maintain control over the Latin-American audience after failing to fund their own Spanish-speaking industry back

⁸⁴ Seth Fein, “Myths of Cultural Imperialism and Nationalism in Golden Age Mexican Cinema,” in *Fragments of a Golden Age: the Politics of Culture in Mexico since 1940*, ed. Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein, and Eric Zolov (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 164.

home.⁸⁵ The U.S. now turned to Mexico and supplied their burgeoning industry with Hollywood technology, supplies and expertise, in order to keep a close control on the industry and develop strong Pan-American relationships.⁸⁶

Complying with the Good Neighbor policy, Hollywood now attempted to portray positive depictions of Mexicans and Latin Americans to negate past decades of negative representations. Men received more focused treatment. Since the silent period, Hollywood constructions of Mexicans and non-Western masculinities relied on derogatory stereotypes; Hollywood continuously portrayed the Other in a submissive and negative role as a strategy to elevate images of self-representation:

While a heterogeneous range of masculine identities is emphasized for the dominant culture, the representation of the identity of non-Western males stands out for its singular and homogeneous economy, resting entirely within the negative side of the masculine equation.⁸⁷

Because of Mexico's close proximity to the United States, Mexicans received the worst characterization in Hollywood films. The reconstruction of masculine identity was

⁸⁵ Seth Fein points out that Mexico once held the leading place in the production of Spanish-language films. At the time, the coveted role went to the Argentinian film industry, but to prevent the industry from becoming a direct or indirect source of Axis propaganda, the U.S. cut off the exportation of film stock, a monopolized commodity in the U.S., thereby crippling Argentina's film industry. See Ibid., 166-67. For more information on the Argentine film industry, see Tamara L. Falicov, *The Cinematic Tango: Contemporary Argentine Film* (London: Wallflower, 2007) and her article "Latin America: How Mexico and Argentina Cope and Cooperate with the Behemoth of the North," in *The Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry*, ed. Paul MacDonald and Janet Wasko (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008).

⁸⁶ Fein, "Myths of Cultural Imperialism and Nationalism in Golden Age Mexican Cinema," 171. For more information on Mexico-U.S. relations in cinema during World War II, see also Seth Fein, "Hollywood and United States-Mexican Relations in the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1999); Francisco Peredo Castro, *Cine y propaganda para Latinoamérica: México y Estados Unidos en los años cuarenta* (México: Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2004).

⁸⁷ Rosa Linda Fregoso, *The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 29.

divided into categories that were associated with specific historical contexts. Mexican males were represented as conquistadors (extremely violent and unruly), Indians (blood thirsty Aztecs) and, specific for the 20th century, as greasers (violent revolutionaries à la Pancho Villa), Latin Lovers (sexually promiscuous), and gang members (a fusion of all the above attributes).⁸⁸ Due to the armed struggle of the Revolution, U.S. Americans labored under the misconception that all Mexicans were violent and unruly, capable of rising up, or revolting, at any moment.⁸⁹ The *charro* in Hollywood films, depicted with a dark moustache and fitted *traje de charro*, became the villain of choice, the kidnapper and rapist of innocent white women, and the thief that took advantage of decent, law abiding U.S. citizens.⁹⁰

Mexicans did not receive these past representations kindly. Since Hollywood's films were distributed to theaters, screenings of these negative representations were perpetuated to the Mexican audience. In order to protect the public from the damaging images of the Mexican national, a censorship committee rejected those Hollywood films that strongly challenged a positive Mexican identity. The Mexican industry, therefore,

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ This belief arose as a result of actuality-style films focusing on Pancho Villa during battles. These films were produced by the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company and include *Life of Villa* (1912) and *The Life of General Villa* (1913). The Tropical Film Company also produced a film starring Villa: *Following the Flag in Mexico* (1916).

⁹⁰ Some prominent silent films that follow this storyline include *The Life of Villa* (1913, dir. Christy Cabanne and Raoul Walsh), *An Arizona Wooing* (1915, dir. Tom Mix), *Along the Border* (1916, dir. Tom Mix), *Heart of the Sunset* (1918, dir. Frank Powell), *The Bad Man* (1923, dir. Edwin Carewe). Hollywood sound films that feature a *charro* character include *Viva Villa!* (1934, dir. John Conway), *Song of the Gringo* (1936, dir. John P. McCarthy), *Border G-Man* (1938, dir. David Howard), *Durango Valley Raiders* (1938, dir. Sam Newfield), *In Old México* (1938, dir. Edward D. Venturini), *South of the Border* (1939, dir. George Sherman). See David R. Maciel, *El bandolero, el pocho y la raza* (México: Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes, 2000), 26-78.

acquired the difficult task of repairing the national image, particularly during a time when a unified national identity was in flux. During this cinematic reconstruction that included receiving foreign aid from the U.S., several directors, including Arcady Boytler, Fernando de Fuentes, Emilio Fernández, and Ismael Rodríguez, interpolate into their film narrative a U.S. American male character that reciprocated similar negative perceptions.⁹¹ The result is an articulation of a stereotypical white U.S. American male, or a performance of gringo-ness, best demonstrated in the *comedia ranchera*, *Los tres García* (*The Three Garcías*, 1946, dir. Ismael Rodríguez).

Los tres García focuses on three feuding cousins, José Luis (Abel Salazar), Luis Antonio (Pedro Infante), and Luis Manuel (Victor Manuel Mendoza), who compete for the attention of their visiting blond Mexican-American cousin, Lupita Smith García (Marga López). The García cousins continue a long-standing family tradition of fighting, much to the chagrin and annoyance of their black clothed, cigar-smoking grandmother (Sara García), the only authority figure the men listen to and respect. The three cousins represent different facets of Mexican *machismo*, forming a diverse archetype that one single *charro* could not personify. Luis Manuel García is the well-dressed businessman whose sole preoccupation is with money.⁹² He is able to turn off his ruthless business

⁹¹ Some films that include a gringo archetype are: *La mujer del Puerto* (1934, dir. Arcady Boytler); *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (1936, dir. Fernando de Fuentes), *La golondrina* (1938, dir. Miguel Contreras Torres); *Mala yerba* (1940, dir. Gabriel Soria); *Rancho Alegre* (1941, dir. Rolando Aguilar); *Salón México* (1949, dir. Emilio Fernández)

⁹² Jorge Ayala Blanco, *La aventurera del cine mexicano: En la época de oro y después* (México: Grijalbo, 1993), 61. Luis Manuel dons the *charro* suit after meeting Lupe. Upon meeting him for the first time, Lupe comments on how he does not look like he belongs to the town because he is wearing a flashy, double-breasted business suit. He remarks that only tourists expect Mexican townsmen to always wear a *charro* suit. Lupe expresses her admiration for the attire, exclaiming that it is very beautiful and *macho*. After this encounter, Luis Manuel dresses as a *charro* for the remainder of the film.

nature and get in touch with his sentimental side through his poetry. José Luis García represents the pride and independent nature of the *macho* male. He refuses to work for fear of being exploited for pay and is easily offended. Although living in poverty, his pride will not allow him to ask for help. José Luis represents the triumphant dignity of the *macho mexicano*. He is also overly sensitive and on a quest for self-discovery evident through the titles of his reading material: *How to Find Yourself* and *Masculine Pride*.

The last García, Luis Antonio, receives the most scholarly attention because he is played by Mexico's Don Juan, Pedro Infante. Luis Antonio is consistently described as "a happy womanizing cheater, dirty talker, a drunk, and sentimental."⁹³ Exhibiting the most *machismo* of the three, his pattern of womanizing is evident in his numerous wall portraits of his conquests and in the collection of earrings, which he strategically obtains after he kisses or sucks the lady's ear. Luis Antonio's *machismo* presence is solidified in his self-descriptive performance of Esperón's *Dicen que soy mujereigo* (*They say I am a womanizer*), which he performs at his grandmother's birthday party. While a song that elucidates his sexual conquests may seem inappropriate at his grandmother's birthday, the crowd, especially his grandmother and several other women, enjoy the performance and applaud for Luis Antonio enthusiastically. His *macho* façade is not only accepted; it is rewarded.

Much like other *comedias rancheras*, *Los tres García* features folkloric performances that showcase several national symbols with music by the Esperón-Cortázar team. The diegetic, foregrounded use of mariachi and small brass bands at the

⁹³ Ibid.

grandmother's house, including a serenade of the traditional *Cielito Lindo*, and the brandish show-off performances of the three cousins at the *jaripeo*, were intended to seduce the lovely Lupita. According to the popular film magazine *El Cine Gráfico*, *Los tres García* is “una película sin grandes pretensiones pero que llega al corazón del público porque ha reunido todas las características para triunfar” (“A film without grand pretensions that nevertheless captures the public's heart because it has all the necessary characteristics to be successful”).⁹⁴

Aside from the performed *rancheras* and the serenades, Esperón's orchestral underscoring helps to further establish a strong foundation of *machismo*. In several scenes involving Lupita's father, blandly named John Smith (Clifford Carr), and self-identity searching José Luis, Esperón sneaks in a quotation of the U.S popular song *The Turkey in the Straw*. The first cue sounds in an early scene involving John and Lupe, who pull up in a convertible car, and José Luis, who is on horseback. Here, John's performance of gringo-ness is evident as he yells out in English, “Hey, boy!” to José Luis in order for him to walk over. Not knowing that she is speaking with her Mexican cousin, Lupe politely asks in fluent Spanish where they can find the village of San Luis de la Paz. After José Luis cheerfully points them in the right direction, John attempts to give José Luis a tip for his trouble. José Luis takes offense to this gesture and swiftly turns away from them, insulted and annoyed. In the scene's background, *upper woodwinds and strings play The Turkey and the Straw*, fastening a cultural synchresis to John's embarrassing and clumsy behavior (Example 4.1).

⁹⁴ “Enorme Exito se Anotan Los Tres García,” *El Cine Gráfico*, August 17, 1947.

phase. During the film's spotting session, Esperón may have recognized the imprudence on the part of the gringo stereotype to the *charro* rules of conduct gradually established through the *comedia ranchera*'s trajectory.⁹⁵ The inclusion of *The Turkey and the Straw* instills a cultural synchresis akin to George Lipstiz's concept of "strategizing anti-essentialism." Borrowing from Gayatri Spivak's "strategic essentialism," a concept applied to a group of individuals who accentuate a common history or interests that ignores the heterogeneity of the group in order to build unity based on common needs and desires, Lipstiz seeks a "particular disguise on the basis of its ability to highlight, underscore, and augment an aspect of one's identity that one cannot express directly."⁹⁶ Mexican cinema experimented with the depiction of U.S. American male archetype in the 1936 version of *Allá en el Ranch Grande* with the secondary character Pete from Denver.⁹⁷ From the outset, the character is molded as the stock buffoon character: he is clumsy, oafish, and anti-*macho*, exemplified in his inability to reproduce the *grito* or to successfully defend himself when confronted by other *charros*.⁹⁸ In *Los tres García*, the

⁹⁵ By the time *Los tres García* premiered, Esperón had worked on several *comedia rancheras* including: *¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!* (*Oh Jalisco Don't Give Up!*, 1941, dir. Joselito Rodríguez); *La liga de las canciones* (*The League of Songs*, 1941, dir. Chano Ureta); *Adios mi chaparrita* (*Goodbye My Small Girl*, 1943, dir. René Cardona); *Hasta que perdió Jalisco* (*Until Jalisco Loses*, 1945, dir. Fernando de Fuentes); *No basta ser charro* (*It is Not Enough to be a Charro*, 1946, dir. Juan Bustillo Oro); *El tigre de Jalisco* (*The Tiger of Jalisco*, 1947, dir. René Cardona); *Si me han de matar mañana* (*If You Have to Kill Me Tomorrow*, 1947, dir. Miguel Zacarías); *Soy charro de Rancho Grande* (*I am a Charro of Rancho Grande*, 1947, dir. Joaquín Párdave). Esperón was aware of *machismo* signifiers in the *charro* figure.

⁹⁶ George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism, and the Poetics of Place* (London: Verso, 1994), 62. See also Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 3-4.

⁹⁷ This depiction was also portrayed in the remake of *Allá en el Rancho Grande* from 1949 starring Jorge Negrete.

⁹⁸ It is important to note here that Clifford Carr plays both Pete from Denver and John Smith in *Allá en el Rancho Grande*.

performance of the gringo John culturally syncretized to *The Turkey and the Straw* speaks both to the self-perception of Mexican *machismo* and to U.S. American masculinity. First known as *Zip Coon*, *The Turkey and the Straw* is a minstrel song used by white performers in blackface to parody black slaves.⁹⁹ According to Charles Hamm, the lyrics of *Zip Coon* are written in a specific dialect intended to portray the black male as a “comical, illiterate, almost subhuman being.”¹⁰⁰ While the lyrics of the song are not sung in the film, the popular melody is associated to the presence of the United States, in the form of John and his interactions with the *charros*. Esperón appropriates *The Turkey in the Straw* in order to Other the gringo archetype and uphold the *macho* Mexican *charro* in a rejection of Pan-Americanism.¹⁰¹ This cultural borrowing also implies that the *charro* by himself cannot fulfill the *machismo* role (as evidenced through the division

⁹⁹ U.S. American composer Carl Breil borrows twenty-six popular tunes for his original score to D.W. Griffith’s monumental and racist film, *The Birth of a Nation* (1918). Included in that list is “Zip Coon,” which accompanies a particularly controversial scene set at the slave plantation. For more information and analysis on Carl Breil’s score for *The Birth of a Nation*, see Martin Miller Marks, *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁰ Charles Hamm, *Music in the New World* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1983), 163-164. For more information on *The Turkey and the Straw* and minstrelsy see Carle Frederick Wikke, *Tambo and Bones: a History of the American Minstrel Stage* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1930).

¹⁰¹ Esperón’s use of *The Turkey and the Straw* hints at silent film music compilation practice. Silent film music cue sheets consistently provided music, albeit stereotypical music, of ethnicities and nationalities in order for the audience to understand the change of character and/or location on screen. While the song is a part of the minstrel tradition and is anchored with racist connotations, the song, after a necessary title change that occurred during the turn of the century, is an important part of U.S. American popular song. Composer and silent film music compiler Erno Rapeé includes *The Turkey in the Straw* in his *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* under his categorization of American “Southern” songs. See Erno Rapeé, *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* (New York: Belwin, 1925), 65. For synchronized, animated films, such as Walt Disney’s *Steamboat Willie* (1928), *The Turkey and the Straw* became a prominent tune for on-screen, synchronized dancing. With its racial historical context and liveliness as a light-hearted dance tune, *The Turkey and the Straw* became a sound embodiment for United States culture and parody.

of *machismo* characteristics in the three cousins) and necessitates assistance from the gringo archetype with essentialist music as a foil.

Conclusion

The *charro* in the *comedia ranchera* is idolized as an ambassador of *lo mexicano* to national and international audiences. The figure, however, has undergone a series of constructions through its journey as a horseman and ranch hand, as a popular figure absorbed by the urban into theater, as an actor in silent film, and as a singer-actor in sound film. Through each representation, the *charro* adds different characteristics based on specific socio-cultural and socio-political contexts that allow him to still be recognizable to the popular, urban audience. In theater, the *charro* became a crucial fixture for *revistas* set in the countryside and in sound cinema he became an important emblem of Mexican masculinity and nationalism through his ability to sing the *canción mexicana* and the *canción ranchera*. In *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, his beginning constructions in sound cinema are evident in the folkloric collage that became an important blueprint for the Mexican industry and challenged notions of conservatism during the Cárdenas administration. Throughout the 1940s, the singing *charro* became attached to members of the rising star system and ultimately came to represent the “perfect man.” In *Los tres García*, the *charro* is placed side by side with a gringo stereotype that turns past representations of Mexicans in Hollywood cinema on its head.

Throughout this discussion, music, whether functioning diegetically or non-diegetically, has played a powerful role in creating a positive representation for the

charro for Mexican audiences, either through romantic serenades, confrontational *coplas*, or suggestive underscoring. Music's role in the *comedia ranchera* can be construed as crucial to the narrative since the representation of the *charro* without music would be incomplete. In an interview with *Novedades*, Manuel Esperón states this about the importance of music in national cinema: "La música es parte esencial, un personaje tan importante como los protagonistas en el cine" ("The music is an essential part, a character as important as the protagonists in film").¹⁰²

¹⁰² María Luisa Velez, "Por los costos, sacrifican la música en el cine: Esperón," *Novedades*, December 9, 1989.

Conclusion

In this study, I have discussed and analyzed several examples of diegetic and non-diegetic music from four important film genres that developed during the 1930s and 1940s. Each genre exhibits several representations of national symbols that were not necessarily created or initiated by the film industry, but were continuously shaped and modified cinematically to fit specific narrative structures and achieve various goals. Music within these films became a crucial and intriguing layer of discourse by providing a necessary sonic stamp of association with the characters, settings, narratives, and moving images. The associations of these phenomena were recognizable to the spectator thereby making them relatable.

The films I examined, however, were not precise reflections of Mexican society. Rather, they were products of and responses to the search for national identity in Mexico during a period of socio-cultural and political instability.¹ The conventions of nationalist rhetoric were made evident in these films and through the close examination of film music's functions, it becomes apparent that these national symbols and representations were visually and aurally open for continued re-interpretation, re-imaging, and reconstructing. As Stuart Hall suggests, identity is constantly in flux.² The early sound period of the 1930s juxtaposed and reorganized those elements—character types, backdrops, narratives, music—that formed those genres now popular to Mexican

¹ This draws on Hershfield's conclusion concerning the cinematic representations of women in Mexican film. See Joanne Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema, Mexican Woman, 1940-1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1996), 133.

² Stuart Hall, *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage, 1996), 1.

audiences and conveyed particular beliefs and practices that were then evident in the present social sphere. As Joanne Hershfield notes, cinema “gave narrative form and visual confirmation to real-life experience.”³ The use of diegetic and non-diegetic music not only aided, but also considerably grafted meanings onto these experiences. In this way, film music performs cinematically: acting on equal levels with other components of the film to project messages and enhance the spectator’s experience.

I have used film music in Mexican cinema as an alternate avenue to examine the multiple representations of national identity. In the prostitute melodrama and *cabaretera* subgenre, recent currents in transnational dance music and boleros were used to enhance the growing Mexican urban nightlife and help develop important character traits of the prostitute protagonist. In the *comedia ranchera*, selections from the *canción mexicana* and the *canción ranchera* traditions are used to not only to link the urban spectator with the rural countryside, but to also build up the *machismo* attitude of the singing *charro*, the most visual representation of Mexican nationalism. Moving away from popular trends, the *indigenista* genre paralleled currents in national art music towards musically signifying the indigenous, intertwined with frameworks of regional music to convey an adequate and convincing sonic atmosphere for the on-screen indigenous population. These films conveyed specific representations of indigenous cultures, operating within a frameworks constructed at the time by anthropologists and government officials and the music helped solidify for the mestizo audience messages regarding the relationships and dynamic between the indigenous and the mestizo. In a similar methodology, the *cine de*

³ Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema, Mexican Woman*, 133.

añoranza porfiriana borrows from the *música de salón* and *teatro de género chico* tradition and turn-of-the century popular music in order to re-construct, or create, a utopian ambience of the Porfiriato, consoling the middle class and bourgeoisie anxieties from leftist leanings in social and political spheres. Each genre uses music to successfully portray its intended representation(s) and, as each representation develops through changes in consumer culture, society, and presidential *sexenio*.

This work, however, is just a beginning to a more thorough investigation into Mexican film music. Although this project examines several of the key genres and their featured music, it does not discuss all genres that developed during this period such as the science fiction feature, the horror film, the urban melodrama, and the Revolution film. More work is needed particularly in understanding the practices of the studio music departments and the film composers and the musicians. As mentioned in the introduction, there is now a growing interest in Mexican film music as more literature and scholarship, particularly regarding composer's biographies, is emerging, but research proves to be challenge as film scores have been lost or discarded and information regarding the recording processes of the musical tracks is scarce. Popular periodicals and circulars offer some information regarding musical currents in cinema, but for the scholar of Mexican film music, the actual films are more often than not the only source that proves this music exists: if the film is lost or destroyed, the music is lost and destroyed.

Finally, I hope this analysis has demonstrated a new avenue of film music interpretation that moves away from a focus on Hollywood practices during the so-called "Classical" period. Studies on the history and analysis of film music avoid discussing the

practices of the Mexican film industry and, by extension Latin American film industries (Brazil and Argentina are sometimes mentioned), focusing primarily on Hollywood music departments, composers, and films. Several foreign industries such as France, Italy, Germany, India, England, and Japan receive considerable attention as providing unique examples of film music practice, often with the focused lens on how that film music functions in a national industry. While Mexican film composers were no doubt influenced by Hollywood film scoring practices, they brought something original to their craft rather than slavishly imitating Hollywood. Composers, both national and international, in the Mexican industry looked to the regional and urban cultural and musical practices for inspiration (or appropriation) for their film scores. Several genres in Mexico's early sound film period relied heavily on music to carry the narrative and provide specific information to spectators. Music was, in effect, the centerpiece in these films, strategically placed and operating with specific motives. As an example of film music practice, Mexican films convey musical conventions specific to the industry and specific to the country. As studies on the Mexican national film industry continue to grow to include examinations of race, gender, class, nationalism, and transnationalism, it will be prudent to include discussions as to how and why the music utilized in these films helps, solidifies, and expands those representations of identity. This work augments those readings and further contributes to those studies by looking at Mexican film music as a catalyst for exploring larger issues of Mexican nationalism. In the concatenation of sight and sound (which is referred to as synchresis) and its attendant cultural associations, Mexican film music becomes a locus for the contestation of ideology and identity.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Advertisements for "Fiesta del Traje." *El Universal*, Espectáculos, April 14, 1940.

A.F.B. "El mundo y la canción mexicana." *El Universal Ilustrado* 1936.

Alba, Luz. "Por el mundo de las sombras que hablan." *El Universal Ilustrado*, July 21, 1932.

"Allá en el Rancho Grande." *El cine gráfico*, October 11, 1936.

Anguiano, Arturo. "Cárdenas and the Masses." In *The Mexico Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Edited by Gilbert M. Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002. 458.

Atl., Dr. *Las artes populares en México*. México: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 1921.

Audiberti, Jacques. "Greta, Marlene, Ninon." *Cahiers du Cinéma* 5, no. 30 (1953): 3-10.

"Auténticos Pescadores del lago de Pátzcuaro." *El Universal*, October 6, 1935.

"Barranca trágica." *El Universal*, December 26, 1917.

Borja, Martín. "La música del maestro Díaz Conde y su gratitud por el cine mexicano." *Cinema Reporter*, July 2, 1949.

Bowles, Paul. "Letter from Mexico." In *Paul Bowles on Music*. Edited Irene Herrman and Timothy Mangan. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

"Los braceros y el decoro de la nación." *Hoy*, February 24, 1951.

Bravo Fernández, Carlos. "La vida del Jorge Negrete." *Cine Mundial*, November 7, 1954.

Caro, Agustín. "El tema de Lara." *Cine* (December 1949): 20.

"Cartel del Teatro Alameda," *La Prensa*, April 3, 1940.

Caso, Alfonso. *La comunidad indígena*. México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1971.

_____. "¿El indio mexicano es mexicano?" *Indigenismo* (1958): 95-105.

_____. "Definición del indio y lo indio." *América Indígena* 8, no. 4 (1948): 145-181.

_____. "La protección de las Artes Populares." *América Indígena* 2, no. 3 (July 1942): 25-29.

Crónicas de teatro de "Hoy." México: Ediciones Botas, 1941.

De Ega, Juan. "Las nuevas academias de baile se han multiplicado en esta Capital desde hace tres meses." *El Universal Ilustrado*, January 1927.

De Miranda, Diego. "La semana teatral." *Novedades*, November 27, 1912.

Del Mar, Hugo. "Luces y Sombras del Cine Nacional." *Revista de Revistas* (July 28, 1935): 4.

"Desde 'Santa' hasta hoy." *Cinema Reporter* (April 1942): 7.

Domínguez, Francisco. *Informe sobre la investigación folklórico-musical realizada en las regiones de los Yaquis, seris y mayos.* México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1933.

_____. *Album musical de Michoacán.* México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1923.

Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Film Sense.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1947.

"Emma Roldán." In *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano Vol. VI.* México: Cineteca Nacional, 1976: 13-27.

"Enorme Exito se Anotan Los Tres García," *El Cine Gráfico*, August 17, 1947.

"Exito en Puebla de *La noche de los mayas.*" *Cinema Reporter*, October 6, 1939.

Gamboa, Federico. 1903. *Santa.* Reprint. México: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 2003.

Gamio, Manuel. 1916. *Forjando Patria.* Second Edition. México: Editorial Porrúa, S.A., 1960.

_____. "Calificación de características culturales de los grupos indígenas," in *América Indígena* 2, no. 4 (October 1942): 19-22.

- González Peña, Carlos. "La decadencia del teatro." *El Mundo Ilustrado*, November 17, 1912.
- Grah. "Allá en el Rancho Grande." *Variety*, October 12, 1936.
- "Gran Triunfo obtuvo anoche 'Santa', la primera película nacional." *Excélsior*, March 31, 1932.
- Haro, Manuel. "Teatros." *La Semana Ilustrada*, July 3, 1912.
- Herrman, Irene and Timothy Mangan, ed. *Paul Bowles on Music*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- "Hicieron Historia en el Siglo XX; Manuel Esperón." *Excélsior*, July 23, 1999.
- "Homenaje a la gran película mexicana *En tiempos de don Porfirio*." *El Universal*, April 6, 1940.
- Huerta, Efraín. "Cine." *Esto*, February 3, 1944.
- Hurtado, Elías. "El problema de la mujer que trabaja en cabarets." *El Nacional*, October 15, 1937.
- Inclán, Luis. *Astucias*. México: Imprenta Universitaria, 1945.
- _____. *El libro de las charrerías* (México: Librería Porrúa, 1940).
- Junco, Alfonso. "Don Porfirio y su Obra." *El Universal*, April 13, 1940.
- "Lara Pedagógico." *El Universal*, October 1, 1932.
- Lara y Pardo, Luis. *La Prostitución en México*. México: Librería de la Vda. De Ch. Bouret, 1908.
- Lazaro, Angel. "María Candelaria." *Excélsior*, January 24, 1944.
- Leblanc, Oscar. "Lara, el Larismo y las mujeres." *El Universal Ilustrado*, June 9, 1932.
- "Legion mexicana de la decencia." *Cinema Reporter*, September 27, 1952.
- López, Rafael. "Los cabarets en México." *El Universal Ilustrado*, May 8, 1919.
- Luis Gallegos, José. "Pascual Ortiz Rubio, Quien Fuera Presidente de México, dio

- Facilidades para el Filme “Santa.” *Excélsior*, November 5, 1991.
- Luisa Velez, María. “Por los costos, sacrifican la música en el cine: Esperón.” *Novedades*, December 9, 1989.
- María y Campos, Armando de. “Adiós de Mimí Derba.” *Hoy*, July 9, 1938.
- Martínez de la Vez, Francisco. “El petroleo: pasión y triunfo de México.” *Hoy*, February 24, 1951.
- “La metamorfosis de Santa.” *El Universal*, April 12, 1932.
- “México de mis recuerdos.” *El Universal*, March 17, 1944.
- Molina Enríquez, Andrés. *Los grandes problemas nacionales*. 1909. Reprint, México: Ediciones Era, 1978.
- Monsiváis, Carlos. “Siete temas de, desde, hacia el Indio Fernández.” *Proceso*, April 9, 1984: 52-55.
- “El mundo y la canción mexicana.” *El Universal Ilustrado*, July 1932.
- Murillo, Fidel. “Una opinion sobre “Allá en el Rancho Grande.” *La Opinión*, January 18, 1937.
- “La música está de luto con la partida de Manuel Esperón.” *Imagen Diario*, February 14, 2011.
- “La música de Santa es de dos autores.” *Excélsior*, April 16, 1932.
- “La noche de los mayas triunfa en la Habana.” *Cinema Reporter*, December 27, 1940: 6.
- Noriega Hope, Carlos. “Cómo se hace una película vitafónica en México.” *El Universal Ilustrado*, December 10, 1931.
- “El Nuevo sistema sonoro.” *Cinema Reporter*, June 16, 1936.
- Orso, Felipe. “Extraviadas las partituras que Manuel Esperón escribió para el cine mexicano.” *El Nacional*, June 24, 1989.
- Pallares, Eduardo. “La campaña contra la prostitución.” *El Universal*, March 21, 1944.
- “El Pisaverde y la bella.” *El Universal*, April 3, 1940.

- “El problema de la mujer que trabaja en cabarets.” *El Nacional*, October 15, 1937.
- Quiroz Arroyo, Macarena. “Sin Agustín Lara no existiría la mitad del cine mexicano: Carlos Monsiváis.” *Excélsior*, February 4, 1991.
- Ramos, Samuel. 1934. *Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico*. Reprint. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962.
- Rapeé, Erno. *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures*. New York: Belwin, 1925.
- “Reporteando.” *Cinema Reporter*, May 5, 1939): 2.
- Rico, Elena. “Anatomía de un éxito loco: *Allá en el Rancho Grande*.” *Contenido* 157 (June 1976): 20-56.
- Ruanova, Diaz. “Diego Rivera contra todos.” *Novelas de la Pantalla*. February 1944.
- “Ruidoso éxito de la película ‘Rancho Grande.’” *La Opinión*, February 24, 1937.
- Sáenz, Moisés. *México Integro*. México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1982.
- _____. *Antología de Moisés Sáenz*. México: Ediciones Oasis S.A., 1970.
- _____. *Mexico: An Appraisal and a Forecast*. New York: The Committee on Cultural Relation with Latin America, 1929.
- “Santa.” *El Universal Ilustrado*, April 7, 1932: 29.
- “Santa: el cine naturalista,” *Ciclo Cine Mexicano I* (1965), Courtesy of Cineteca Nacional.
- “Se corta *La noche de los mayas*.” *Cinema Reporter*, April 28, 1939): 4.
- “Silvestre Revueltas y ‘El Indio.’” *Cinema Reporter* July 22, 1938: 2.
- Smith, Harry T. “Allá en el Rancho Grande.” *The New York Times*, November 23, 1936.
- “‘Sobre las olas,’ una de la piezas más en boga cuando los organilleros reinaban.” *El Universal*, March 28, 1944.
- “Sofía Alvarez y J. Pardavé en una graciosa escena de ‘México de mis recuerdos.’” *El Universal*, April 1, 1944.
- “Teatros por Jublio.” *El Universal Ilustrado*, July 1932.

- “Terminó *La noche de los mayas*.” *Cinema Reporter*, April 21, 1939.
- “*En tiempos de don Porfirio*, un legítimo triunfo.” *Cinema Reporter*, February 9, 1940.
- “Trio Garnica-Ascencio.” *El Universal Ilustrado* July 7, 1927.
- “Un gran película mexicana.” *El Universal*, September 28, 1935.
- “Una obra maestra del cine national es la película *María Candelaria*.” *Excélsior*, January 25, 1944.
- “Upton Sinclair nos habla del caso Eisenstein.” *El Universal Ilustrado* January 12, 1933.
- V.V. “Film de la semana.” *Mañana*, February 10, 1951.
- Vera, José. “El ‘Bum’ Empezó Hace 50 Años: “*Allá en el Rancho Grande* Mostró al Mundo por Primera Vez Nuestra Vida de Campo: Parte II.” *El Sol de México*, June 11, 1986.
- Villa. “Remolino.” *Esto*, January 18, 1944.

Secondary Sources

- “Las abuelitas de las rumberas.” *Somos* 10, no. 189 (November 1999): 82-83.
- Adorno, Theodor and Hanns Eisler. *Composing for the Films*. London: Athlone Press, 1994.
- Agrasanchez, Rogelio, Jr. *Mexican Movies in the United States: A History of the Films, Theaters, and Audiences, 1920 – 1960*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2006.
- Agustín, José. *Tragicomedia Mexicana I: La vida en México de 1940 a 1970*. 2nd ed. México: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, S.A. de C.V., 2007.
- Alfaro, Francisco H. and Alejandro Ochoa. *La república de los cines*. México: Editorial Clío, 1998.
- Altman, Rick. *Silent Film Sound*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004
- _____. *Film/Genre*. London: BFI Publishing, 1999.

- _____. *Sound Theory/Sound Practice*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- _____. "Moving Lips: Cinema as Ventriloquism." *Yale French Studies* 60, *Cinema/Sound* (1980): 67-79.
- Alvarado, Manuel, Ana M. López, and John King, eds. *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in Latin America*. London: BFI, 1993.
- Álvarez, Lucía. "El compositor en el cine y teatro." *Cuadernos de Estudios cinematográficos* 4 (2005): 55-66.
- Alvear Acevedo, Carlos. *Lázaro Cárdenas: el hombre y el mito*. México: Ediciones Promesa S.A., 1986.
- Amira, John and Steven Cornelius. *The Music of Santería: Traditional Rhythms of the Batá Drums*. Tempe: White Cliffs Media, Inc., 1991.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Second Edition. London: Verso, 2006.
- "Andrea Palma." In *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano*. Vol I. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1975: 45-59.
- Ángel Morales, Miguel. "Santa del papel al DVD." *El Nacional*, June 5, 2004.
- Antonio Alcaraz, José. "La noche de los mayas." *Cuadernos de Estudios cinematográficos* 4 (2005): 95-100.
- "Antonio Díaz Conde." In *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano*. Vol, IV. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1976: 83-93.
- Avila, Jacqueline. "The Influence of the Cinematic in the Music of Silvestre Revueltas." Master's Thesis, University of California, Riverside, 2007.
- Aviña, Rafael. *Una mirada insólita: temas y géneros del cine mexicano*. México, D.F.: Editorial Oceano de México, S.A. de C.V., 2004.
- Ayala Blanco, Jorge. *La aventurera del cine mexicano: En la época de oro y después*. México: Grijalbo, 1993.
- _____. *La condición del cine mexicano*. México: Posada, 1986.
- Bailey, David C. *Viva Cristo Rey: the Cristero Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict*

- in Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974.
- Balbas, Manuel. *Recuerdos del Yaqui: principales episodios durante la campaña de 1899 a 1901*. México: Sociedad de Edición y Librería Franco Americana, 1927.
- Beals, Carleton. "Las Carpas: Mexican Street Theatres." *Theater Arts Monthly* 7, no.2 (1928): 99-108.
- Beezley, William H. *Judas at the Jockey Club and Other Episodes of Porfirian Mexico*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1987.
- Bellman, Jonathan, ed. *The Exotic in Western Music*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998.
- Belton, John and Elisabeth Wise eds. *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Blanco Moheno, Roberto. *Cardenismo*. México: Libro Mex Editores, 1963.
- Bliss, Katherine E. *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001.
- Bolero: clave del corazón*. México: Fundación Ongenerio Alejo Peralta y Díaz Ceballos, IBP, 2004.
- Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. *México Profundo: una civilización negrada*. Third Edition. México: Random House Mondadori, S.A. de C.V., 2008
- Born, Georgina and David Hesmondhalgh, ed. *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Bracho, Julio, dir. *¡Ay qué tiempos señor don Simón!* DVD. 1941; México; Televisa S.A. de C.V., 2008.
- Brooks, Peter. *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James: Melodrama and the Mode of Excess*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.
- Bryan, Susan E. "Teatro popular y sociedad durante el Porfiriato." *Historia Mexicana* 33, no. 1 (Jul-Sept 1983): 130-169.

- Bustillo Oro, Juan. *Vida Cinematográfica*. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1984.
- _____, dir. *México de mis recuerdos*. DVD. 1944; México: Zima Entertainment, 2008.
- _____, dir. *En tiempos de don Porfirio*. DVD. 1939; México: Laguna Films, 2007.
- Calleja, Rafael. *Las bribonas: Zarzuela in One Act*. Madrid: Madrid Instituto Comptulense de Ciencias Musicales, 2007.
- Cano, Gabriela, Jocelyn Olcott, and Mary Kay Vaughan. *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico*. Lanham: Duke University Press, 2006.
- “Cara e’ foca y otros demonios,” *Somos: Las rumberas del cine* 10, no. 189 (Nov 1999): 96-98.
- Carmona, Gloria. *La música de México: Periodo de la independencia a la revolución (1810 a 1910)*. Ed. Julio Estrada. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984.
- Carrasco Vázquez, Jorge. *Joaquín Pardavé: un actor vuelto leyenda*. México: Grupo Editorial Tomo, S.A. de C.V., 2004.
- Carreño King, Tania. *El Charro: la construcción de un estereotipo nacional 1920-1940*. México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Historicos de la Revolución Mexicana, 2000.
- _____. “I Am Mexican, I Come from an Untamed Land.” In *Artes de México: Charrería*. México: Artes de México, 2000.
- Casado Navarro, Arturo. *Gerardo Murillo, el Dr. Atl*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984.
- Cashion, Susan. “The Mexican Danzón: Restrained Sensuality.” In *Dancing Across Borders: Danzas y Bailes Mexicanos*. Ed. Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Norma E. Cantú, and Brenda M. Romero. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. 237-255.
- Castillo, José Luis and Roberto Kolb, eds. *Silvestre Revueltas Edición Crítica: Redes (1935)*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009.
- Cecilia Frost, Elsa. *Las categorías de la cultural mexicana*. México: Fondo de

- Cultura Económica, 2009.
- Châteauevert, Jean and André Gaudreault. "The Noises of Spectators, or the Spectator as Additive to the Spectacle." In *The Sounds of Early Cinema*. Edited by Richard Abel and Rick Altman. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001. 183-191.
- Chatman, Seymour. "What Novels Can Do That Films Can't (and Vice Versa)." In *On Narrative*, edited by W.J.T. Mitchell, 117-136. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Chávez, Octavio. *La charrería: tradición mexicana*. México: Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura, 1991.
- Chevalier, Francois. *La formación de los latifundios en México*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1976 [1956].
- Chion, Michel. *Audio-Vision*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- _____. *La música en el cine*. México: Paidós, 1997.
- _____. *The Voice of Cinema*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- "El cine y la revolución Mexicana." *Revista Filmoteca*. No. 1, November 1979.
- Cisneros, José. *Riders Across the Centuries: Horsemen of the Spanish Borderlands*. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1984.
- Ciuk, Perla. *Diccionario de Directores de Cine Mexicano 657 realizadores: biografías, testimonios y fotografías*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2009.
- Contreras S., Jaime. "El cine de ambiente porfiriano." *Revista Filmoteca: Cine y Revolución*. México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989.
- Contreras Soto, Eduardo. *Silvestre Revueltas: baile, duelo y son*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2000.
- _____. *Silvestre Revueltas En Escena y En Pantalla: la música del compositor en el cine, el teatro y la danza* (México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultural y las Artes, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, forthcoming).
- Coria, José Felipe. *Taller de cinefilia*. México: Paidós, 2006.

- Cortés González, Alma Rosa. *60 Aniversario de la Escuela Nacional de Danza Nellie y Gloria Campobello*. México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1992.
- Cros Sandoval, Mercedes. *Worldview, the Orichas, and Santería: Africa to Cuba and Beyond*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006.
- Dallal, Alberto. *El "dancing" mexicano*. México: Ediciones Oásis, S.A., 1986.
- Dávalos Orozco, Federico. *Albores del cine mexicano*. México: Editorial Clío, 1996.
- De Fuentes, Fernando, dir. *Allá en el Rancho Grande*. DVD. 1936; México: Cinemateca, 2007.
- De la Colina, José. "Santa ya centenaria." *Milenio Diario* (26 January 2008): 8.
- De la Mora, Sergio. *Cinemachismo: Masculinities and Sexuality in Mexican Film*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006.
- De la Vega Alfaro, Eduardo. "Los ritmos populares de cine mexicano." *Cinema & Musique: Mexique* (2010): 42.
- _____. *Del muro a la pantalla: S.M. Eisenstein y el arte pictórico mexicano*. México: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 1997.
- De los Reyes, Aurelio. *Historia de la vida cotidiana en México: Siglo XX, Campo y ciudad*. México: Fondo de Cultural Económica, 2006.
- _____. *El nacimiento de Que viva México!* México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006.
- _____. *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano, volumen III, 1924-1931*. México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2000.
- _____. "Luis Márquez y el cine." *Alquimia* 4, no. 10 (2000): 33-41.
- _____. *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano, volumen II, 1920-1924*. México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1994.
- _____. *Medio Siglo de Cine Mexicano (1896-1947)*. México: Editorial Trillas, 1987.
- _____. "El nacionalismo en el cine 1920-1930: búsqueda de una nueva simbología." In *El nacionalismo y el arte mexicano (IX Coloquio de Historia del*

- Arte*) (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1986.
- _____. “La música para cine mudo en México.” In *La música de México* vol. 4. Edited by Julio Estrada. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984. 85-117.
- _____. *Filmografía del cine mudo mexicano 1896-1920*. México: Filmoteca Nacional, 1984.
- _____. *Los orígenes del cine en México (1896-1900)*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1983.
- De Luna, Andrés. *La Batalla y su sombra: la revolución en el cine mexicano*. México: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Unidad Xochimilco, 1984.
- De Van, Gilles. “Fin de Siècle Exoticism and the Meaning of Far Away.” *Opera Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (1995): 77-94.
- Deeds, Susan M. Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman. *The Course of Mexican History*. Seventh Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Del Carmen de la Peza Casares, María. *El bolero y la educación sentimental en México*. México: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco, 2001.
- Delgado Martínez, César and Julio C. Villalva Jiménez. *Yol-Izma: La danzarina de las leyendas*. México: Escenología A.C., 1996.
- Delpar, Helen. *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations between the U.S. and Mexico, 1920-1935*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992.
- Derr, Virginia B. “The Rise of the Middle-Class Tradition in Mexican Art.” *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 3, no. 3 (1961):
- Díaz Covarrubias, Juan. “La clase media: novela de costumbres mexicanas.” In *Obras completas*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1959: 327-397.
- Díaz López, Marina. “El Folclore invade el imaginario de la ciudad.” *Revistas de estudios históricos sobre la imagen, segunda época*, Archivos de la Filmoteca 41 (June 2002): 10-31.
- D’Lugo, Marvin. “Luis Alcoriza; or A Certain Antimelodramatic Tendency in Mexican Cinema.” In *Latin American Melodrama: Passion, Pathos, and Entertainment*. Edited Darlene J. Sadlier. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. 110-129.

- “Los dos volcanes: Popocatepetl e Iztaccíhuatl.” *Artes de México*, no. 73. México: Artes de México, 2006.
- Dyer, Richard. *Only Entertainment*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Dueñas, Pablo. “El trovador de sotavento: Lorenzo Barcelata.” In *Relatos e historias en México* 2, no. 18 (2010): 68-69.
- _____. *Bolero: Historica grafica y documental*. México: Asociación Mexicana de estudios Fonograficos, 2005.
- _____. *Las divas en el teatro de revista mexicano*. México: Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos, 1994.
- Dueñas, Pablo and Jesús Flores y Escalante. *Bicentenario 200 años de la historia de la música en México*. México: Sony Music Entertainment México S.A. de C.V., 2010.
- Dumond, Don E. *The Machete and the Cross: Campesino Rebellion in Yucatan*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.
- Eisenstein, Sergei. “Rough Outline of the Mexican Picture.” In *Sergei Eisenstein and Upton Sinclair: the Making and Unmaking of Que Viva Mexico!* Edited by Harry M. Geduld and Ronald Gottesman. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970. xxvii.
- Elena Franco, María. “Charrería, Recurso Turístico de México.” Master’s Thesis, Autonomous University of Nayarit, Mexico, 1990.
- Espejo, Beatriz. *Dr. Atl: el paisaje como pasión*. México: Fondo Editorial de la Plástica Mexicana, 1994.
- Estrada, Josefina. *Joaquín Pardavé: el señor del espectáculo. Vol I-III*. México: Clio, 1996.
- García Carretero, Emilio. *Historia del Teatro de la zarzuela de Madrid*. Madrid: Fundación de la Zarzuela Española, 2003-2005.
- González Navarro, Moisés. *Sociedad y cultura en el porfiriato*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultural y las Artes, 1994.
- Gonzalez-Wippler, Migene. *Santería: African Magic in Latin America*. New York: Julien Press, Inc., 1973.

- Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies: the Key Concepts*. Third Edition. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Higgins, Ceri. *Gabriel Figueroa: Nuevas Perspectivas*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2008.
- Fabio Sánchez, Fernando and Gerardo García Muñoz. *La luz y la Guerra: el cine de la Revolución Mexicana*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultural y las Artes, 2010.
- Fajardo Estrada, Ramón. *Rita Montaner: Testimonio de una epocá*. La Habana: Fondo Editorial Casa de las Américas, 1997.
- Falicov, Tamara L. "Latin America: How Mexico and Argentina Cope and Cooperate with the Behemoth of the North." In *The Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry*. Edited by Paul MacDonald and Janet Wasko. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008.
- _____. *The Cinematic Tango: Contemporary Argentine Film*. London: Wallflower, 2007.
- Fein, Seth. "Myths of Cultural Imperialism and Nationalism in Golden Age Mexican Cinema," in *Fragments of a Golden Age: the Politics of Culture in Mexico since 1940*. Edited by Gilbert Joseph, Anne Rubenstein, and Eric Zolov. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001. 159-198.
- _____. "Hollywood and United States-Mexico Relations in the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema." Ph.D. Diss. University of Texas at Austin, 1996.
- Felipe Leal, Juan and Eduardo Barraza. *Anales del cine en México, 1895-1911*. Vol. 1-6. Second Edition. México: D.R. Voyeur, 2006.
- Fernández, Adela. *El Indio Fernández: Vida y Mito*. Third Edition. México: Panorama Editorial, S.A., 1986.
- Fernández, Emilio. *Victimas del Pecado*. DVD. 1950; México: Zima Entertainment, 2006.
- Fernández Ros, Antonio. "1910." *Cine y Revolución: La Revolución Mexicana vista a través del cine*. México: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 2010. 123.
- Flandrau, Charles. *Viva Mexico!* London: Elan Books, 1982.

- Flores y Escalante, Jesús. *Salón México: Histórica documental y gráfica del danzón en México*. México: Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos, A.C., 2006.
- Frederick Wikke, Carle. *Tambo and Bones: a History of the American Minstrel Stage*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1930.
- “Gabriel Figueroa.” *Luna Córnea* 32 (2008).
- “Gabriel Figueroa.” In *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano Vol. III*. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1975: 39-55.
- García, Gustavo and David R. Macial. *El cine mexicano a través de la crítica*. México: Dirección General de Actividades Cinematográficas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2001.
- García Canclini, Nestor. *Consumidores y ciudadanos: conflictos multiculturales de la globalización*. México: Random House Mondadori, S.A. de C.V., 2009.
- _____. *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- _____. *Los nuevos espectadores: cine, televisión, y video en México*. México: IMCINE, Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994.
- _____. *Transforming Modernity: Popular Culture in Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.
- García Riera, Emilio. *Emilio Fernández, 1904-1986*. Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara Centro de Investigaciones e Enseñanza Cinematográficas, 1987.
- _____. *Historia del cine mexicano*. México: Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo, 1985.
- _____. *Fernando de Fuentes (1894-1958)*. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1984.
- _____. *Historia documental de cine mexicano*. México: Ediciones Era S.A., 1969.
- Garrido, Juan S. *Historia de la música popular en México*. México: Editorial Extemporaneos, 1974.
- Gaytán, Leopoldo. “Lo negro de lo negro: La negritud a través de sus imágenes cinematográficas,” *Antropología* (2011): 85-90.

- Geduld Harry M. and Ronald Gottesman eds. *Sergei Eisenstein and Upton Sinclair: the Making and Unmaking of Que viva Mexico!* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983.
- Gómez Villanueva, Augusto. *Nacionalismo revolucionario: Orígenes socioeconómicos de la doctrina internacional de la Revolución mexicana*. México: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2009.
- Gonzalez Rubio I, Javier and Hugo Lara Chávez. *Cine antropológico mexicano*. México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2009.
- Gonzalez-Wippler, Migene. *Santería: African Magic in Latin America*. New York: Julien Press, Inc., 1973.
- Gorbman, Claudia. "Scoring the Indian: Music in the Liberal Western." In *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*. Ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. 234-253.
- _____. *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- _____. "Narrative Film Music," *Yale French Studies* 60, Cinema/Sound (1980): 117-136.
- Gradante, William. "'El Hijo del Pueblo': José Alfredo Jiménez and the Mexican *Canción Ranchera*." *Latin American Music Review* 3, no. 1 (1982): 36-59.
- Graham, Richard, ed. *The Idea of Race in Latin American, 1870-1940*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990.
- Granados, Pedro. *Carpas de México: Leyendas, anécdotas e historia del Teatro Popular*. México: Editorial Universo, 1984.
- Hall, Stuart. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, 1996.
- Hamilton, Nora. *The Limits of State Autonomy: Post-Revolutionary Mexico*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Hamm, Charles. *Music in the New World*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1983.

- Harrison, Michelle. *King Sugar: Jamaica, the Caribbean, and the World Sugar Economy*. London: Latin American Bureau, 2001.
- Hayes, Joy Elizabeth. *Radio Nation: Communication, Popular Culture, and Nationalism in Mexico, 1920-1950*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000.
- Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies: the Key Concepts*. Third Edition. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Hershfield, Joanne. *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996.
- _____. "Race and Ethnicity in the Classical Cinema." In *Mexico's Cinema: A Century of Film and Filmmakers*. Wilmington: SR Books, 1991. 81-100.
- Hershfield, Joanne and David Maciel. *Mexico's Cinema: A Century of Film and Filmmakers*. Wilmington: SR Books, 1991.
- Higgins, Ceri. *Gabriel Figueroa: Nuevas perspectivas*. México: Consejo Nacional para la cultura y las artes, 2008.
- Hjort, Mette and Scott Mackenzie. *Cinema & Nation*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In *The Invention of Tradition*. Edited Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Cambridge: Canto Publishing, 1992. 1-14.
- Hobsbawm Eric and Terrence Ranger, ed. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Hunter, Mary. "The *Alla Turca* Style in the Late Eighteenth Century: Race and Gender in the Symphony and the Seraglio." In *The Exotic in Western Music*. Edited by Jonathan Bellman. Boston: Northeastern Press, 1998. 43-73.
- Ibarra, Jesús. *Los Bracho: Tres generaciones de cine mexicano*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006.
- Intolerancia*, Revista del Cine, No. 7 (Nov-Dec 1990).
- Jablonsja, Aleksandra and Juan Felipe Leal. *La revolución Mexicana en el cine nacional Filmografía 1911-1917*. México: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, 1991.
- Jáuregui, Jesús. *El Mariachi: Símbolo musical de México*. México: Santillana Ediciones Generales, S.A. de C.V., 2007.

- Jiménez, Armando. *Cabarets de antes y de ahora en la ciudad de México*. México: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 1991.
- Johns, Michael. *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997.
- Joseph, Gilbert H. ed. *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994.
- Joseph, Gilbert, Anne Rubenstein and Eric Zolov, eds. *Fragments of a Golden Age: the Politics of Culture in Mexico since 1940*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.
- “Julio Bracho.” In *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano*. Vol. V. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1976: 29-45.
- Kalinak, Kathryn. *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.
- Katz, Friedrich. “The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato, 1867-1910.” In *Mexico Since Independence*. Edited by Leslie Bethell. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Kenneth Turner, John. *Barbarous Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969.
- Knight, Alan. “The Rise and Fall of Cardenismo, c. 1940-1946.” In *Mexico Since Independence*. Edited by Leslie Bethell. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- _____. “Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940.” In *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*. Edited by Richard Graham. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990. 71-113.
- Krauze, Enrique. *El sexenio de Lázaro Cárdenas*. México: Clío, 2000.
- _____. *Plutarco E. Calles: reformar desde el origen*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987.
- Kuri-Aldana, Mario and Vicente Mendoza Martínez. *Cancionero Popular Mexicano Tomo I y II*. Second Edition. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1992.
- Lane, Jill. *Blackface Cuba*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.

- Lilia Roura, Alma. *Dr. Atl: paisaje de hielo y fuego*. México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1999.
- Linda Fregoso, Rosa. *The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
- Lipsitz, George. *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism, and the Poetics of Place*. London: Verso, 1994.
- LoBrutto, Vincent. *Sound on Film: Interviews with Creators of Film Sound*. Westport: Praer, 1994.
- Lomax, John and Alan. *American Ballads and Folks Songs*. New York: Macmillan, 1934.
- López, Ana M. "Early Cinema and Modernity in Latin America." *Cinema Journal* 40, no. 1 (2000): 48-78.
- _____. "Of Rhythms and Borders." In *Everynight Life: Culture and Dance in Latin/o America*. Edited by Celese Fraser Delgado and José Esteban Muñoz. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997. 310-342.
- _____. "Tears and Desire: Women and Melodrama in the 'Old' Mexican Cinema." Edited by Manuel Alvarado, Ana M. López, and John King. *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in Latin America*. London: BFI, 1993. 147-163.
- López, Rick A. "The Noche Mexicana and Popular Arts." In *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*. Edited by Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephen E. Lewis. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006: 23-42.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. *Latin American Art of the 20th Century*. Second Edition. New York: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2004.
- Maciel, David R. *El bandolero, el pocho y la raza*. México: Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes, 2000.
- Madrid, Alejandro. "The Sounds of the Nation: Visions of Modernity and Tradition in Mexico's First National Congress." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86, no. 4 (2006): 681-706.
- _____. *Sounds of the Modern Nation: Music, Culture, and Ideas in Post-Revolutionary Mexico*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.

- Magaña Esquivel, Antonio. *Medio siglo de teatro mexicano (1900-1961)*. México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1964.
- “Manuel Esperón González.” In *Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano* vol. III. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1975: 99-101.
- Manuel, Peter. *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995.
- María y Campos, Armando de. *Las Tandas del Principal*. México: Editorial Diana, 1989.
- _____. *El teatro de genero chico en la Revolución mexicana*. México: Impreso en los Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1956.
- _____. *Frivolerías*. México: Imprenta Nacional, 1919.
- Martín, Enrique and Álvaro Vega. “La canción yucateca.” In *La música en México: Panorama del siglo XX*. Coord. Aurelio Tello. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010. 253-290.
- Martín-Barbero, Jesús. *Communication, Culture and Hegemony: From the Media to Mediations*. London: Sage Publications, 1993.
- “Mauricio Magdaleno.” *Cuadernos de la Cineteca Nacional: Testimonios para la historia del cine mexicano*. México: Cineteca Nacional, 1976.
- McClary, Susan. *Georges Bizet Carmen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Mercer, John and Martin Shingler. *Melodrama: Genre, Style, Sensibility*. London: Wallflower, 2004.
- Michaels, Albert L. “The Crisis of Cardenismo.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 2, no. 1 (May 1970): 51-79.
- Michel, Manuel and Neal Oxenhandler. “Mexican Cinema: A Panoramic View.” *Film Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (1965): 46-55.
- Miguel, Ángel. *Acercamientos al cine silente mexicano*. Cuernavaca: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos, 2006.
- _____. *Mimí Derba*. México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2000.

- Miguel, Ángel, coor. *La ficción de la historia: el siglo XIX en el cine mexicano*. México: Cineteca Nacional, 2010.
- Miller, Marilyn. "'The Soul Has No Color' But the Skin Does: *Angelitos Negros* and the Uses of Blackface on the Mexican Silver Screen, ca. 1950." In *Global Soundtrack: Worlds of Film Music*. Edited by Mark Slobin. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2008. 241-258
- Miller, Patrick. "Music and the Silent Film." *Perspectives of New Music* 21, no. 1 (1982): 582-584.
- Miller Marks, Martin. *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Miranda, Ricardo "La seducción y sus pautas." In *Artes de México: Música de la Independencia a la Revolución* 97 (2010): 14-25.
- Mitchell, Tim. *Intoxicating Identities: Alcohol's Power in Mexican History and Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Moitt, Bernard. *Sugar, Slavery, and Society: Perspectives on the Caribbean, India, the Mascarenes, and the United States*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Monsiváis, Carlos. "Notas sobre la cultura mexicana en siglo XX." In *Historia general de México*. México: El Colegio de México, A.C., 2000.
- _____. *Aires de familia: Cultura y sociedad en América Latina*. Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama, 2000.
- _____. *Mexican Postcards*. London: Verso, 1997.
- _____. "All the People Came and Did Not Fit Onto the Screen: Notes on the Cinema Audience in Mexico." In *Mexican Cinema*. Edited by Paulo Antonio Paranaguá. London: British Film Institute, 1995. 145-151.
- _____. *A través del espejo: el cine mexicano y su público*. México: Ediciones El Milagro/Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 1994.
- _____. "Mexican Cinema: Of Myths and Demystifications." In *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in Latin America*. Edited by Manuel Alvarado, Ana M. López, and John King. London: BFI, 1993. 139-146.

- _____. *Amor Perdido*. México: Ediciones Era, 1977.
- Moore, Robin D. *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940*. Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1997.
- Mora, Carl J. *Mexican Cinema: Reflections of a Society, 1896-2004*. Third Edition. London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005.
- Moreno, Antonio, dir. *Santa*. DVD. 1932; México: Filmoteca Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1994.
- Moreno Rivas, Yolanda. *Historia de la música popular mexicana*. México: Alianza Editorial Mexicana, Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1989.
- _____. *Rostros del nacionalismo en la música mexicana: un ensayo de Interpretación*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989.
- _____. “Los estilos nacionalistas en la música culta: aculturación de las formas populares.” In *El nacionalismo y el arte mexicano (IX Coloquio de historia del arte)*. México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1986.
- Moss, Arthur. *Cancan and Barcarolle: the Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975.
- Mullen Sands, Kathleen. *Charrería Mexicana: an Equestrian Folk Tradition*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993.
- Muñoz Castillo, Fernando. *Las reinas del trópico*. México: Azabache, 1993.
- Murch, Walter. “Foreward.” In *Audio/Vision*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990. vii-xxiv.
- “Música de la Independencia a la Revolución.” *Artes de México*, No. 97. México: Artes de México y del Mundo, S.A. de C.V., 2010.
- Nájera-Ramírez, Olga. “Engendering Nationalism: Identity, Discourse, and the Mexican Charro.” *Anthropology Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (1994):
- The New American Bible for Catholics*. Washington D.C.: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1991.
- Niblo, Stephen R. *México en los cuarenta: Modernidad y corrupción*. México: Editorial Oceano de México, 2008.

- Noble, Andera. *Mexican National Cinema*. London: Routledge, 2005.
- Nomland, John. *Teatro mexicano contemporáneo 1900-1950*. México: Ediciones del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, Departamento de Literatura, 1967.
- Noriega, Chon A. and Steven Ricci, eds. *The Mexican Cinema Project*. Los Angeles: UCLA Film and Television Archive, 1994.
- Norman, James. *Charro: Mexican Horsemen*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1969.
- Novo, Salvador. *La vida en México en el periodo presidencial de Lázaro Cárdenas*. México: Empresas Editoriales, S.A., 1964.
- Ochs, Anna. "Opera in Contention: Social Conflict in Late Nineteenth Century Mexico City." PhD Diss. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2011.
- O'Shaughnessy, Edith. *Diplomatic Days*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911.
- Obscura Gutierrez, Siboney. "La comedia ranchera y la construcción del estereotipo del charro cantante en el cine mexicano de los treinta e inicio de los cuarenta." Master's Thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2003.
- Ortiz, Fernando. *La música afro-cubana*. Madrid: Ediciones Jucar, 1974.
- Ortiz Garza, José Luis. *La Guerra de las ondas*. México: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, 1992.
- Ortiz Monasterio, Pablo, ed. *Fragmentos: Narración cinematográfica compilada y arreglada por Salvador Toscano, 1900-1930*. México: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 2010.
- El país de la tandas: teatro de revista, 1900-1940*. México: Museo Nacional de Culturas Populares, 1984.
- Paranaguá, Paulo Antonio, ed. *Mexican Cinema*. Trans. Ana M. López. London: British Film Institute/Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía/Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes de México, 1995.
- Pareyón, Gabriel. *Diccionario Enciclopédico de Música en México*. Vol. I. Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura de Jalisco, 1995.
- Parker, Robert. "Revueltas, the Chicago Years." *Latin American Music Review*, 25, no. 2 (2004): 180-194.

- _____. "Revueltas in San Antonio and Mobile." *Latin American Music Review* 23, no. 1 (2002): 114-130.
- Paz, Octavio. *The Labyrinth of Solitude and Other Essays*. Reprint. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1985.
- Pedelty, Mark. *Musical Ritual in Mexico City: From the Aztec to NAFTA*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004.
- _____. "The Bolero: the Birth, Life, and Decline of Mexican Modernity," *Latin American Music Review* 20, no. 1 (Spring-Summer 1999): 30-58.
- Peredo Castro, Francisco. *Cine y propaganda para Latinoamérica: México y Estados Unidos en los años cuarenta*. México: Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2004.
- Pérez Montfort, Ricardo. Pablo Picatto, and Alberto del Castillo. *Hábitos, normas y escándalo: Prensa, criminalidad y drogas durante el porfiriato tardío*. México: Plaza y valdes, S.A de C.V., 1997.
- _____. *Estampas de nacionalismo popular mexicano: Ensayos sobre cultura popular y nacionalismo*. México: CIESAS, 1994.
- Pisani, Michael V. " 'I'm an Indian too': Creating Native American Identities in Nineteenth – and Early Twentieth-Century Music." In *The Exotic in Western Music*. Edited by Jonathan Bellman. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998. 218-257.
- Price, David. *Cancan!* London: Cygnus Arts, 1998.
- Pulido Llano, Gabriela. *Mulatas y negros cubanos en la escena Mexicana, 1920-1950*. México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2010.
- _____. "Empresarias y tandas." *Bicentenario* 2, no. 6 (2009): 14-21.
- Radano, Ronald and Philip V. Bohlman ed. *Music and the Racial Imagination*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Ramirez, Fausto. "Crímenes y torturas sexuales: la obra de Julio Ruelas y los discursos sobre la prostitución y la criminalidad en el porfiriato." In *Modernización y modernismo en el arte mexicano*. México: Universidad de Autónoma de México, 2008. 119-147.

- Ramos Smith, Maya. *Teatro musical y danza en el México de la belle époque (1867-1910)*. México: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana y Grupo Editorial Gaceta, 1995.
- Rashkin, Elissa J. *The Stridentist Movement in Mexico: the Avant-Garde and Cultural Change in the 1920s*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009.
- _____. *Women Filmmakers in Mexico: the Country of Which We Dream*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001.
- Reed, Nelson. *The Caste War of Yucatan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964.
- “Revision del Cine Mexicano: Edición Especial.” *Artes de México*. México: Artes de México, 2000.
- Reyes de la Maza, Luis. *Circo, maroma y teatro, 1819-1910*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985.
- Rincón Gallardo, Alfonso. “En la hacienda de antaño.” In *Artes de México: Charrería*. México: Reproducciones Fotomecánicas, S.A. de C.V., 2000.
- Rincon Gallardo, D. Carlos. *El libro del charro mexicano*. Third Edition. 1939. México: Editorial Porrúa, S.A., 1960.
- Reyes Nevares, Beatriz. *Trece directores del cine mexicano*. México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1974.
- Rosen, Philip. “Adorno and Film Music: Theoretical Notes on Composing for Films.” *Yale French Studies* 60, Cinema/Sound (1980): 157-182.
- Roy, Maya. *Cuban Music: From Son and Rumba to the Buena Vista Social Club and Timba Cubana*. London: Latin American Bureau, 1998.
- Rubenstein, Anne. “The War on *Las Pelonas*: Modern Women and Their Enemies, Mexico City, 1924.” In *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico*. Edited by Jocelyn Olcott, Mary Kay Vaughan and Gabriela Cano. Lanham: Duke University Press, 2006. 57-80.
- _____. “Mass Media and Popular Culture in the Post Revolutionary Era.” In *The Oxford History of Mexico*. Edited by M.C. Meyer and W.H. Beezley. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. 665.
- “La rubia con piernas de oro.” *Somos: las rumberas del cine* 10, no. 189 (Nov. 1999): 60-67.

- “Las rumberas del cine mexicano.” *Somos: las rumberas del cine* 10, no. 189 (Nov. 1999: 82-85).
- Saavedra, Leonora. “Manuel M. Ponce y los músicos populares.” *Heterofonía* 143 (July-December 2010).
- _____. “Urban Music in the Mexican Revolution.” Paper read at the National Meeting for the Society of Ethnomusicology, Columbus, OH, 2007.
- _____. “Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music.” PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2000.
- Sadlier, Darlene J., ed. *Latin American Melodrama: Passion, Pathos, and Entertainment*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.
- Sagredo Baeza, Rafael. *Maria Villa (a) La Chiquita, no. 4002: un parásito social del Porfiriato*. México: Cal y Arena, 1996.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Random House, 1978.
- Saldavar, Gabriel. *El jarabe: baile popular mexicano*. Puebla: Lecturas Historicas de Puebla, 1987.
- Semo, Enrique. *Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana, Tomo I: El siglo de la hacienda 1800-1900*. México: Siglo XXI-CEHAM, 1988.
- Serna, Enrique. *Jorge el bueno: la vida de Jorge Negrete*. Vol. I and II. México: Clío, 1993.
- Schell Jr., William. “Money as Commodity: Mexico’s Conversion to the Gold Standard, 1905.” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 12, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 67-89.
- Schneider, Luis M. ed. *El estridentismo: México 1921-1927*. México: Insitituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985.
- Silva Cázares, Carlos. *Plutarco Elías Calles*. México: Planeta, 2005.
- Singer, Ben. *Melodrama and Modernity: Early Sensational Cinema and Its Contexts*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Slobin, Mark, ed. *Global Soundtracks: Worlds of Film Music*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2008.

- Smith, Anthony D. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- _____. "Images of the Nation: Cinema, Art and National Identity." In *Cinema & Nation*. Edited by Mette Hjort and Scott Mackenzie. London: Routledge, 2000. 45-60.
- Somos: las rumberas del cine* 10, no. 189 (Nov. 1999).
- Stilwell, Robynn J. "The Fantastical Gap between Diegetic and Nondiegetic." In *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*. Edited by Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, and Richard Leppert. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. 184- 202.
- Sturman, Janet L. *Zarzuela: Spanish Operetta, American Stage*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Sublette, Ned. *Cuba and its Music: From the First Drums to the Mambo*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2004.
- Taibo I, Paco I. *La música de Agustín Lara en el cine*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1985.
- Talavera, Mario. *Miguel Lerdo de Tejada: su vida pintoresca y anecdótica*. México: Editorial Compas, 1942.
- Tannenbaum, Frank. *Mexico: the Struggle for Peace and Bread*. New York: Knopf, 1956.
- Tapia Colman, Simón. *Música y músicos en México*. México: Panorama Editorial, 1991.
- Tello, Aurelio. "Francisco Domínguez." In *Diccionario del Cine Iberoamericano*. Madrid: Sociedad General de Autores y Editores, 2008.
- Thomas, Susan. *Cuban Zarzuela: Performing Race and Gender on Havana's Lyric Stage*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009.
- Tierney, Dolores. *Emilio Fernández*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- _____. "Silver Sling-backs and Mexican Melodrama: *Danzón* and *Salón México*." *Screen* 38, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 360-371.
- Tortajada Quiroz, Margarita. *Danza y poder*. México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1995.

- Tuñón, J. *Mujeres de luz y sombra en el cine mexicano: La construcción de una imagen, 1939-1952*. México: El Colegio de México/Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, 1998.
- Valero Silva, José. *El libro de la Charrería*. México: Gráficas Montealbán, 1989.
- Vanderwood, Paul J. *Los rurales mexicanos*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1981.
- Vasconcelos, José. *The Cosmic Race*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976
- Vaughan, Mary Kay and Stephan E. Lewis, eds. *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.
- _____. "Nationalizing the Countryside: Schools and Rural Communities in the 1930s." In *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*. Edited by Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephan E. Lewis. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006: 157-175.
- Von Wobeser, Giselia. *La formación de la hacienda en la época colonial*. México: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989.
- Webber, Christopher. *The Zarzuela Companion*. Lanham: Scarecrow, 2002.
- Wierzbicki, James. *Film Music: a History*. London: Routledge, 2009.

Website

UCLA School of Law: Music Copyright and Infringement Resource, "Marks vs. Stasny 1 F.R.D. 720 (S.D.N.Y)," <http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/1940-1949/Pages/marksstasny.aspx>