

Historiography, Cosmopolitanism, and Reception: The Piano Music of Ernesto Elorduy  
(1853-1913)

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This Thesis titled  
Historiography, Cosmopolitanism, and Reception: The Piano Music of Ernesto Elorduy  
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## **Abstract**

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Much of the writing on Mexican composer Ernesto Elorduy (1853-1913) has tended to focus on the European influence in his music and disregarded it due to its lack of Mexican folkloric tunes as well as the technical accessibility of the piano compositions. To gain a deeper understanding of Elorduy's career and works this thesis shifts the focus onto Elorduy's cosmopolitan attitude, piano music (character pieces and dance music), and its reception. I also explore the musical thought of the nineteenth century and propose that the period's values and ideas are crucial to situate Elorduy's work in the history of Mexican music.

## **Dedication**

*To my parents, Bertha and Isaac. For all their love and support, and for, without knowing,  
granting me the luck of being Mexican.*

## **Acknowledgments**

I wish to thank all the people that made this possible. First, to my parents and sisters for their support. To Dr. Ricardo Miranda for providing me with Elorduy's scores, Dr. Emely Phelps for her insights, curiosity, and for delving into this repertoire with me, Dr. Garrett Field for his feedback and advice, Dr. Petite for her encouragement, and to Emma, for all her support during the preparation of this document.

## Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract.....	3
Dedication.....	4
Acknowledgments.....	5
List of Tables .....	8
List of Figures .....	9
Introduction.....	10
Chapter 1. Mexican Piano Music During the Nineteenth Century: A Survey of Critical Literature.....	13
“The Elephant in the Room” .....	15
Inside and Outside Nationalist Perspectives .....	18
Nationalism After the Revolution .....	20
Scholarship About Nineteenth-Century Piano Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries.....	26
Stevenson and Velazco .....	26
Heterofonía Magazine.....	29
Women, Music, and Piano in the Nineteenth Century.....	30
Literature of Salon Music in Other Regions .....	34
Conclusion .....	36
Chapter 2: Cosmopolitanism and Elorduy’s Piano Music.....	38
Defining Cosmopolitanism .....	40
Character Pieces.....	42
Oriental-Inspired Music .....	49
Dance Sets.....	55
Conclusion .....	60
Chapter 3. The Reception of Ernesto Elorduy’s Music .....	61
Elorduy’s Character and His Relationship With Ponce .....	63
“Piano Boxers” .....	68
Musical Thought in Poetry and Literature .....	71
Poetical Criticism.....	73

Recent Reception .....	75
Conclusion .....	78
References.....	80

## List of Tables

	Page
Table 1. Structure and tonal areas of <i>Soñadora</i> .....	46
Table 2. Structure and tonal areas of <i>Airam</i> .....	52
Table 3. Structure and tonal areas of <i>Tropicales no. 1</i> .....	57
Table 4. Poem Despedida al Piano by Salvador Díaz Mirón with English translation.....	72



## List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1. Elorduy, <i>¡Soñadora...!</i> mm. 1-8	45
Figure 2. Robert Schumann, <i>Träumerei</i>	45
Figure 3. . Elorduy, <i>¡Soñadora...!</i> , Part B mm. 18-39	48
Figure 4. Elorduy, <i>Airam</i> , mm. 2-6	51
Figure 5. Elorduy, <i>Airam</i> , mm. 18–20	54
Figure 6. Elorduy, <i>Tropicales. 3 Danzas. No.1</i> , mm. 1-5	56
Figure 7. Elorduy, <i>Tropicales. 3 Danzas. No.1</i> , mm. 9-16	58
Figure 8. Elorduy, <i>Tropicales. 3 Danzas. No.2</i> , Part B	59
Figure 9. Portrait of Ernesto Elorduy	64
Figure 10. Manuel M. Ponce, <i>Elorduyana</i> , mm. 1-16	67

## Introduction

Mexico has served as a fertile ground for many forms of culture, from the pre-Hispanic era to modern days. Over the last two centuries, the arts developed their identities taking European trends as a model. Music was no exception, and explorations to find Mexico's voice came from composers like Melesio Morales (1838-1908), Ricardo Castro (1864-1907), and Angela Peralta (1845-1883). During the late nineteenth century, composers like Julio Ituarte (1845-1905), Juventino Rosas (1868-1894), and Ernesto Elorduy (1853-1913), became popular and mainly composed music for the salon.<sup>1</sup>

Ernesto Elorduy was an upper-class white male born in Zacatecas City to a wealthy mining family in 1853.<sup>2</sup> He began piano lessons in his early childhood and in 1871, at the age of eighteen, he and his brother Edmundo traveled to Europe and lived there for twenty years.<sup>3</sup> During that period, Elorduy lived in Hamburg and then moved to Frankfurt for several years where he presumably studied in the newly opened Hoch Conservatory with Clara Schumann (1819-1896), and Joachim Raff (1822-1882), and also received private lessons from Anton Rubinstein (1828-1894).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gerard Béhague, E. Thomas Stanford, and Arturo Chamorro, "Mexico, United States of" in *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy.library.ohio.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000018539>

<sup>2</sup> There are some discrepancies regarding Elorduy's year of birth. Some sources state he was born in 1853, like the New Grove dictionary online. Others affirm 1854, and even 1855.

<sup>3</sup> Ricardo Miranda-Pérez, "Elorduy (Medina), Ernesto". *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> According to Janina Klasse, Clara Schumann did visit Hamburg several times, but she accepted a teaching position in 1878 in Frankfurt am Main. That is consistent with the years Elorduy spent in Europe, even though some sources declare that he studied with Clara in Hamburg.

After seven years in Germany, Elorduy traveled to Greece, the Arabic peninsula, and stayed in Turkey for some time, which influenced his later compositions. Afterwards, he settled in Paris where he studied with Georges Mathias (1826-1910), who was the director of the city's Conservatory and a proud pupil of Chopin. Later, he worked as Mexican Consul in Marseilles, Santander, and Barcelona, in part due to his marriage to Trinidad Maria Payno Gonzales, the daughter of the Mexican novelist and Consul, Manuel Payno (1810-1894).<sup>5</sup> When he returned to Mexico in 1891, Elorduy found a growing society within a dictatorship crafted by general Porfirio Díaz. As Janet Sturman points out:

In the preceding 55 years since Independence [1810-1821], the presidency had changed 75 times, but Díaz would lead the country for more than three decades, linking the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in a period that came to be known as 'the Porfiriato [1876-1911].'<sup>6</sup>

President Díaz' ideals emphasized "order, stability, and modernity" and he often used music as a tool to enforce them.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, music education and performance in Mexico suffered from the lack of competent teachers and professional musicians. Musical life depended notably on amateur musicians and music lovers from the upper classes, and young women were provided with piano instruction like in Europe.<sup>8</sup> This

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<sup>5</sup> Jorge Velazco, "Mexican Pianism of the XIX Century", *Anales Del Instituto De Investigaciones Estéticas* 13 50-2 (1982): p. 219.

<sup>6</sup> Janet L. Sturman, *The Chourse of Mexican Music* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 163-164. A comprehensive review of all Mexican music, ranging from pre-Hispanic to folk, classical, and pop music.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Dan Malmström, *Introducción a la Música Mexicana del Siglo XX* [Introduction to XX century Mexican music] (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977), 27.

is the niche in which Elorduy's music fits. Upon his return in 1891, he gave three successful recitals of his own work, becoming the first Mexican composer-performer to do so.<sup>9</sup> Elorduy captivated the audience with his music, and his compositions granted him a good reputation in the music scene. However, the perception of his music and that of other composers was influenced by the nationalistic discourse of the twentieth century.

Despite its rich output, Mexican music of the nineteenth century has been marginalized, neglected, and understudied, creating a lacuna in the knowledge. Chapter 1 of this thesis grapples with the reasons behind that gap in the knowledge from a historiographical perspective exploring works from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Understanding how and why this repertoire fell into oblivion is an important step for unraveling the repertoire itself. The case of Ernesto Elorduy is an example of that historiographical negligence. For that reason, this thesis explores his main vehicle of expression, the music for keyboard, to illuminate his style and the role he played in the Mexican society of the time. Chapter 2 is an assessment of his keyboard production using the concept of cosmopolitanism and musical analysis. Chapter 3 examines the reception of Elorduy's music using reception theories, exploring his relationship with renowned Mexican composer, Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948), the musical thought of the time, and recent reception.

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<sup>9</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "Elorduy (Medina), Ernesto". Grove Music Online. 2001.

## Chapter 1. Mexican Piano Music During the Nineteenth Century: A Survey of Critical Literature

One of the first scholars to write a survey about nineteenth-century music in Mexico was Otto Mayer-Serra (1904-1968), a Spanish musicologist that immigrated to Mexico in the 1940s. In his book, *Panorama de la Música Mexicana* (Landscape of Mexican Music, 1941), he focused on music from the Mexican Independence (1810) to his present day. The book was divided into three sections: “Music and Mexican Society in the XIX century,” “Mexican Musical Production of the XIX century,” and “Musical Nationalism in Mexico.” Regarding piano composers like Ricardo Castro (1864-1907) and Ernesto Elorduy (1853-1913), Mayer-Serra wrote:

We won’t analyze, work by work, the pianistic production before [Manuel M.] Ponce due to the simple reason that, with few exceptions, it is of little interest, and besides, it has currently fallen to the utmost oblivion. Its musical value is meager; its universal value, null.<sup>10</sup>

Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948) was Mexico’s leading musical figure at the beginning of the twentieth century and contributed to the nationalistic trend with his use of folkloric

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<sup>10</sup> Otto Mayer-Serra, *Panorama de la Música Mexicana* [Landscape of Mexican music] (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1941; facsimile reprint, México: Conaculta, INBA, Cenidim, 1996), p. 75 “No nos detendremos a analizar, obra por obra, esta producción pianística anterior a Ponce, por la sencilla razón de que, con muy pocas excepciones, ofrece un interés muy escaso, y de que, además, ha caído actualmente en el más completo olvido. Su valor musical es exiguo; su valor universal, nulo.”

material.<sup>11</sup> Ponce is regarded as one of the developers of a “Mexican national style,” which is why Mayer-Serra drew a separation between the music prior to his work and what came after. Mayer-Serra’s statement encapsulates the issues regarding piano production prior to the Mexican Revolution (1910-1921). Why did this music fall into oblivion? How is it evaluated in the current scholarship?

In this chapter, I show how Mayer-Serra’s remarks are indicative of scholarship regarding Mexican piano music of the nineteenth century. When scholars of Mexican art music refer to this body of works, they have tended to discount its artistic value due to their own preferences. Thus, it is time to return to this body of music to develop a more nuanced understanding and fill the gap in the knowledge. I intend my survey of the literature to function as a bedrock for future efforts such as critical editions, analyses, reception studies, studies about gender, identity, and transnationalism. Throughout the chapter, I use the terms “piano music” and “salon music” synonymously since most nineteenth-century Mexican piano compositions were created for salon settings.

The chapter proceeds as follows: First, I contextualize Otto-Mayer Serra’s statement using Jesús Herrera’s perspective outside nationalism and Alejandro Madrid’s ideas about nationalism and modernism in twentieth-century Mexico. Second, I explore the literature produced in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries about the composers and the music

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<sup>11</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "Ponce (Cuéllar), Manuel." *Grove Music Online*. 2001; Accessed 18 Feb. 2023.  
<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000022072>

itself. Then, I continue with an exploration of the scholarship about the works and activities of women. Finally, I summarize the literature and compare it to similar studies of music from other countries in Europe and the Americas.

### “The Elephant in the Room”

In this study of the discourse about nineteenth-century Mexican piano music I have surveyed a selection of works ranging from 1940 to 2020.<sup>12</sup> I chose these studies in virtue of their potential to illustrate either the re-telling of prejudices or a new interest in the musical practices of the past. The following review is not exhaustive, nor does it cover all the works on the topic. Elements to consider in future studies include how the political agenda of the Mexican government after the Revolution (1910), the fading of the Romantic discourse, and the advent of new media and music reproduction contributed to the disuse of the piano repertory.

In 2016, Ricardo Miranda published an article in which he stated that Mexican music of the nineteenth century was the “elephant in the room.”<sup>13</sup> He explained that the study of nineteenth-century music in Mexico has been filled with historiographical mistakes and prejudices. Miranda cites examples of these prejudices in the work of Mayer-Serra, Moreno Rivas, and Carlos Chávez, among others. Chávez said of composers Gustavo E. Campa,

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<sup>12</sup> Luisa Vilar-Payá published an article that also deals with a critical review of the literature, entitled “Historiografía y discurso sobre la música en publicaciones académicas mexicanas de 1917 A 1941” [Historiography and discourse about music in Mexican scholarly publications between 1817 to 1941] in *Heterofonía* 130, January-December, 2004, pp. 89-110. Available at: <http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/594>

<sup>13</sup> Ricardo Miranda, “Musicología e Historiografía Cultural: A propósito de los papeles para Euterpe” [Musicology and cultural historiography: à propos of the papers for Euterpe], *Historia Mexicana*, LXVI, no. 1 (Ciudad de México, 2016): pp. 359-401. Available through: <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=60048432007>

Rocardo Castro, and Felipe Villanueva: “It can be said in general, of the three fellows, that they did not possess great creative force (...) Porfirian peace took its toll on them, which translated to certain lethargy and blandness.”<sup>14</sup> The same story has been told and re-told from the first works, such as that of Alba Herrera y Ogazón,<sup>15</sup> to the most recent surveys.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, he continued, some commentators “such as Mayer-Serra and Moreno Rivas<sup>17</sup> were particularly critical with respect to the musical advances of the period, and it seems like they studied it just to prove how superior the music that followed was.”<sup>18</sup> Miranda’s assertions point to structural deficiencies of Mexican musicology, where researchers of certain periods of time were content with replicating the chronology and common places of nineteenth-century actors without engaging with the music through analysis and other scholarly enterprises. In other words, Mexican musicology of most of the

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<sup>14</sup> Carlos Chávez, “La música” in *México y la Cultura* (Mexico and culture) (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1946) p. 532 as cited in *Ibid.*, p. 361-2, footnote 3. “Puede decirse en general, de los tres compañeros, que no fueron dueños de gran fuerza creadora (...) Se resiente en ellos la paz porfiriana, traducida en cierta quietud y molición.”

<sup>15</sup> *El arte musical en México* [Musical art in Mexico] (México: Departamento Editorial de la Dirección General de Bellas Artes, 1917; facsimile reprint, México: Conaculta, INBA, Cenidim, 1992), Available at: <http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/867?mode=full>

<sup>16</sup> For example, in 1977, Dan Malmström’s *Introducción a la Música Mexicana del siglo XX* [Introduction to twentieth-century Mexican music] (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica) starts with an overview of the precedent music, that of the nineteenth century. The author uses the work of Mayer-Serra and Herrera y Ogazón, stating that his is just a summary of previous works. An alternative to this narrative is Janet Sturman’s *The Course of Mexican Music* (New York: Routledge, 2016), a more recent survey that deals with elements of art music, but also draws from popular and folkloric traditions.

<sup>17</sup> Mayer-Serra with *Panorama de la Música Mexicana*, explained above, and Yolanda Moreno Rivas with *Rostros del Nacionalismo en la Música Mexicana. Un ensayo de interpretación* [Faces of Mexican nationalism. An interpretative essay] (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1995), as cited in Miranda, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Miranda, “Musicología e Historiografía Cultural,” p. 360: “como Otto Mayer-Serra y Yolanda Moreno Rivas, fueron particularmente críticos respecto a los alcances musicales de aquella etapa y más bien parecen haberla estudiado para demostrar cuán mejor fue la música posterior.”



second half of the twentieth century abided by the discourse created after the Revolution without being familiar with the music. This issue constitutes a void in the musical heritage of Mexico and impacts the larger public, since new scholars and the larger public in Mexico and abroad are biased from the outset to believe that Mexican nineteenth-century music has no value.

However, the musical world of the time was prolific and vibrant, as Yael Bitrán points out: “the abundant surviving repertoire for the home, the widespread availability of musical instruction as revealed through advertisements, and witness’ accounts of soirées and concerts in the theatre reveal a budding musical world that has hitherto been overlooked.”<sup>19</sup> The study of music in Mexico provides a window into the salon culture in Latin America, the activities of the bourgeoisie, and the understanding of the Mexican society of the time.<sup>20</sup> This musical scene provided an antithesis for the following generation of artists and the government to react against. The following sections will explore the

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<sup>19</sup> Yael Bitrán, “Musical Women and Identity-Building in Early Independent Mexico (1821-1854)” (PhD. diss., Royal Holloway, University of London, 2012). Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/78864005.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Laura Suárez de la Torre has compiled and edited helpful books from cultural history pertaining to the music and society of the nineteenth century. For instance, in 2014, *Los papeles para Euterpe. La música en la Ciudad de México desde la historia cultura. Siglo XIX* [The papers for Euterpe. Music in Mexico City from cultural history. Nineteenth century] (Ciudad de México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas Dr. José María Luis Mora) and in 2020, *En Distintos Espacios, la Cultura. Ciudad de México, siglo XIX* [In different spaces, culture. Mexico City, nineteenth century] (Ciudad de México: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas Dr. José María Luis Mora). The former contains articles on musical publishing companies, forming of identity, and iconography and the latter concentrates on the space, how it was reconfigured to serve the new leadership after the Independence (1810-1821), and how nineteenth-century society in Mexico City created spaces that fostered “progress of civilization” and public institutions,” p. 13.

literature dealing with nationalism, recent scholarship about keyboard music, the music and activities of women, and finally, a survey of the scholarship in other regions of the world.

### Inside and Outside Nationalist Perspectives

Otto-Mayer Serra's statement regarding the value of nineteenth-century piano music reveals a prejudice regarding originality. However, on a deeper level, it is indicative of the nationalistic ideology of the Mexican Revolution. This section will examine how the ideas and conditions of the Revolution influenced composers and scholars to discount the piano music of the 1800s.

Musicologist Jesús Herrera addresses the issues of originality and nationalism in his article “¿Qué es la Música Mexicana? Una mirada desde fuera del nacionalismo” (What is Mexican Music? A Perspective from Outside Nationalism). The author discusses how post-Revolution scholars, artists, and people in power wanted to support compositions with musical characteristics that would portray Mexico as unique in comparison to other nation-states. Some composers drew from folkloric music, and others reinvented the pre-Cortesian past (previous to the Spaniards' conquest of American territories), like Manuel M. Ponce and Carlos Chávez (1899-1978) respectively. Thus, the piano music was pejoratively tagged as “Europeizante” (Europeanizing), that is, drawing from the European tradition without the

input of original material.<sup>21</sup> According to Herrera, those ideas marginalized the piano repertoire, and hindered its study and performance.<sup>22</sup>

But how can we speculate about music that do not know? Should we take the word of scholars like Mayer-Serra true? As Jesús Herrera states, a good number of people have believed the music to have little value, despite mostly ignoring it. The lack of musical analysis and scholarly works on nineteenth-century music is a lacuna in the knowledge of Mexican music.

Herrera argues that there is, “neither a pure musical identity nor reason to find one.” This is an invitation to contemplate music from a different perspective, apart from nationalism.<sup>23</sup> He continues by saying that “in the absence of preserved written music from the pre-Cortesian era, the source for any composition in the American continent was found to a greater extent in European music, and this, in turn, has its roots in Asia and Africa.”<sup>24</sup> Nineteenth-century Mexican composers did borrow elements from the European tradition, in fact, some of them were educated in European countries, but that alone does not diminish the value of the musical production.

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<sup>21</sup> Jesús Herrera, “¿Qué es la Música Mexicana? Una mirada desde fuera del nacionalismo” [What is Mexican Music? A perspective from outside nationalism] *La palabra y el hombre*, (Summer-Fall, 2019): p.128.. Available at:

[https://www.academia.edu/44109383/\\_Qu%C3%A9\\_es\\_la\\_m%C3%BAsica\\_mexicana\\_Una\\_mirada\\_desde\\_fuera\\_del\\_nacionalismo](https://www.academia.edu/44109383/_Qu%C3%A9_es_la_m%C3%BAsica_mexicana_Una_mirada_desde_fuera_del_nacionalismo)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 145. “Sostengo que no existe una identidad musical pura ni habría por qué buscarla.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 145. “Para el caso que nos ocupa, a falta de música precortesiana que se haya preservado de forma escrita, la base para cualquier composición Americana se encontró en la música proveniente en mayor medida de Europa y esta, a su vez, tiene raíces en Asia y África.”

Herrera concludes with an idea by Roland Barthes, saying that any music has diverse roots, deriving from “the thousand sources of culture.”<sup>25</sup> Barthes also states that “the text is a tissue of citations,”<sup>26</sup> therefore, no author is completely original, and no music has its genesis in the void. Thus, the prejudice of originality exposed by Mayer-Serra is more a representation of his time’s thinking, than an axiom to replicate. Like all prejudices, the one presented by Mayer-Serra is incomplete. There was undeniable European influence in Mexico, but that influence was only a thread in the intertwined fabric that formed the musical tissue of the Mexican nineteenth century. Contemporary approaches allow scholars to contemplate the subject from different angles, acknowledging its value.

### ***Nationalism After the Revolution***

The second issue in Mayer-Serra’s statement deals with the nationalistic ideology present in Mexico after the Revolution. Alejandro L. Madrid explores the relationship between music and the political ideology behind newly created institutions of power following the Mexican Revolution in his book *Sounds of the Modern Nation*.<sup>27</sup> The study concerns the works of Julián Carrillo (1875-1965), Carlos Chávez, and Manuel M. Ponce. Madrid delimitates the scope to the 1920s since that period is key to understanding the unfolding of cultural production in Mexico after the Revolution. Even though the book concerns music and events after the *Porfiriato* (1876-1911), his ideas serve to clarify Mayer-

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author”, translated by Richard Howard. Consulted on Sep. 27, 2022. Available at: <https://writing.upenn.edu/~taransky/Barthes.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Alejandro L. Madrid, *Sounds of the Modern Nation: music, culture, and ideas in post-revolutionary Mexico* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).

Serra's statement and work backward to understand why the works of pre-Revolutionary composers fell into oblivion. First, Madrid says:

I establish that the voices that entered this "official" history and canon succeeded in doing so only because they could be retroactively converted into harbingers of the nationalistic discourse or could be molded to fit its "myth of origin" <sup>28</sup>

The author's assertion concisely answers the question of why the music of the twentieth century received the favor and attention of scholars and institutions, and indirectly why the music of the Porfirian period and nineteenth century was marginalized and forgotten. In other words, the music of the "other" composers was not music that the state wanted to promote; every story needs a villain, and the music (and other elements) of the Porfirian regime served as the antithesis that the new discourse needed.

Manuel M. Ponce, one of the heroes of the nationalistic canon, illustrates Madrid's point about "retroactively" fitting into the discourse since his music already drew from popular and folkloric material.<sup>29</sup> However, Madrid says that Ponce's case is an example of how identities are, "constantly negotiated within hegemonic discourses."<sup>30</sup> After having Carlos Chávez as his student, Ponce studied in Paris and his interests and style changed.

For Chávez, Ponce was the instigator of a "third phase" of Mexican music, but later he stated that Ponce's style was too rooted in *porfirista* culture and therefore could not

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>29</sup> For a recently published study of Ponce's life, see Ricardo Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce* (Ciudad de México: Alfaomega Grupo Editor, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

produce a “new society with a new conception of the world.”<sup>31</sup> Ponce’s earlier production borrowed material from popular and folkloric music, making it “authentic” for the revolutionary discourse, but not all his works remain in the same vein, his style changed and not all of it could fit into the nationalistic agenda.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, Madrid states: “Ponce could maintain a place in the new canon of Mexican music as long as he remained interpreted as a precursor of the revolution’s ‘authentic’ nationalism.”<sup>33</sup> The figure and work of Manuel M. Ponce served as the link between traditions in Mexico, but according to Chávez, the “authentic” music of the country would come after his generation.

As seen in Mayer-Serra’s statement and Madrid’s exposition, discourse is the key element behind the marginalization of some composers in favor of others. According to Madrid, intellectuals of the time discussed the nationalistic ideas at the 1926 “First National Congress of Music.” Jesús C. Romero’s ideas represent a group of intellectuals that wanted:

To create a musical nationalism by accumulation based on the knowledge of the music composed by Mexican authors, as opposed to a nationalism by opposition based on neglecting everything in the past that could not be re-configured according to a desire for authenticity in the present or in an imagined future.<sup>34</sup>

Romero’s ideas would have paved the way for a broader Mexican canon, but they were not the ones to prevail. There was an attempt in following them in a revival of operas by nineteenth-century composers in the 1920s, including *Atzimba* by Ricardo Castro, and

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>32</sup> Mayer-Serra only considers certain works in his book, *Panorama* according to Madrid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>34</sup> As cited in Ibid., p. 142.

*Zulema* by Elorduy among others.<sup>35</sup> Only Castro's work was performed and was not well received by musical intellectuals.

The other faction of the nationalistic discourse included Manuel Gamio (1883-1960), and particularly the younger generation, including Chávez, Gerónimo Baqueiro Foster (1898-1967), and Vicente T. Mendoza (1894-1964), among others.<sup>36</sup> Ten years prior to the Congress, Gamio published a book entitled *Forjando Patria* (Building a Country), in which he criticized the "cosmopolitanism in nineteenth-century Mexican art" and proposed a "re-evaluation of aesthetic criteria that would take into account indigenous art as a "source of authenticity" for Mexican artists."<sup>37</sup> According to Madrid, Gamio's ideas were embraced by musical circles and "were determinant in the new place of "the indigenous" in Mexican society of the 1920s."<sup>38</sup>

However, there were no written records of pre-Conquest music or truthful accounts about how it was employed.<sup>39</sup> Only instruments and musical iconography remain. Furthermore, in the *náhuatl* language spoken by the Aztec culture, there is no word for what

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 140. For a detailed study on the representation elements and their relationship to nationalism in *Atzimba* by Ricardo Castro, see Leonora Saavedra's article "El nuevo pasado Mexicano: estrategias de representación en Atzimba de Ricardo Castro" [The new Mexican past: representation strategies in Atzimba by Ricardo Castro], *Resonancias*, July-November, 2014. Available at:

[https://www.academia.edu/12168385/Saavedra\\_Leonora\\_El\\_nuevo\\_pasado\\_mexicano\\_en\\_Atzimba\\_de\\_Ricardo\\_Castro](https://www.academia.edu/12168385/Saavedra_Leonora_El_nuevo_pasado_mexicano_en_Atzimba_de_Ricardo_Castro)

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 147-148.

<sup>37</sup> Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria* (México: Porrúa Hermanos, 1916), p.47-49 as cited in Madrid, p. 147.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Stevenson, *Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1952), p. 6-7.

is considered “music” in the Western tradition.<sup>40</sup> Madrid explains that composers took on the task of inventing such music, based on indigenous musical practices of the time, in combination with stereotypes of “the primitive” present in contemporary musical discourses.<sup>41</sup> This tendency was entitled “Indigenismo” (Indigenism), as opposed to the “Indianista” (Indianistic) idea pursued by earlier composers like Aniceto Ortega (1825-1875) with his opera *Guatimotzin* (1871), and Castro with *Atzimba* (1900), where they used plots and settings about indigenous culture, but in European nineteenth-century languages, both musical and linguistic, with notes of exoticism.

The most conspicuous actor in this scenario was Carlos Chávez. His works using indigenous sounds (although imaginary) include the *Fuego Nuevo* (New Fire) ballet of (1921) and the *Sinfonía India* (1935-36).<sup>42</sup> Chávez was not only a composer, but also an important voice of the discourse, especially as he stepped into positions of institutional power, like the foundation of Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (National Institute of Fine Arts), and Mexico’s National Conservatory.

Chávez published more than 200 articles during his life; some of them are key to the understanding of the musical life in Mexico in the twentieth century.<sup>43</sup> Madrid explains that

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<sup>40</sup> Jesús Herrera, “Qué es la música mexicana...”, 127. For literature about pre-Hispanic music in Mexico, see Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia de la Música en México. Épocas precortesiana y colonial* [History of Music in Mexico. Pre-Cortesian and colonial periods] (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1934), Pablo Castellanos, *Horizontes de la Música precortesiana* [Horizons of pre-Cortesian music] (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1970), and Stevenson, 1952, among others.

<sup>41</sup> Madrid, op cit., p. 150.

<sup>42</sup> The Word “India” here refers to the indigenous people of Mexico, rather than the people from the Indian subcontinent.

<sup>43</sup> Leonora Saavedra, “Los Escritos Periodísticos de Carlos Chávez: Una fuente para la historia de la música en México” [The journalistic writing of Carlos Chávez: a source for the history of music



Chávez' articles of the 1930s were determinant in the construction of a "teleological and essentialist history that validates new hegemony. The reproduction of Chávez's discourse by historians such as Mayer-Serra was part of a process of re-signification that brought this discourse into the realm of mythology."<sup>44</sup> In sum, this is the answer to the question posed earlier: the piano music of the nineteenth century (and other genres, particularly the opera) in Mexico did not just fall into oblivion. Instead, Mexican composers and scholars like Chávez and Mayer-Serra actively criticized it and discussed its "flaws" at the First National Congress of Music in 1926.

Madrid states that attempting to reinstate marginalized music to its "rightful" place in the canon of Mexican music would only revive the essentialist discourse of what Mexican music is or is not.<sup>45</sup> However, that notion changes in the light of Jesús Herrera's ideas, where there is no need of finding a pure Mexican identity or reviving the essentialist discourse since music has diverse roots and sources.

Madrid also comments: "we should understand the Mexican musical history and canon as essentialist discourses designed after political circumstances rather than after an understanding of the multicultural and multi-ideological context that permeates the history

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in Mexico] *Inter-American Music Review* 10, no. 2 (Spring-Summer, 1989): pp. 77 – 91. Available in: <https://revistas.uchile.cl/index.php/IAMR/article/view/53513>

As a figure of power, Chávez had allies and opponents but acquired a negative image in some circles. In part due to his polemics with other important figures like Julián Carrillo and Silvestre Revueltas; however, his contribution to the musical scene of Mexico is undeniable. For an exploration of his work and context, see Leonora Saavedra (ed.) *Carlos Chávez and His World*, (Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>44</sup> Madrid, op. cit., p. 168.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

and the experience of Mexican people.”<sup>46</sup> I suggest that time has granted scholars greater emotional detachment and allows them to change their perspective, find tools for the appraisal of the issue, and contribute to the understanding of the multicultural context that was lacking in the past and continues to be missing in the present. The next section is an exploration of the literature about the piano in the nineteenth century.

#### Scholarship About Nineteenth-Century Piano Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

##### *Stevenson and Velazco*

In his 1952 book *Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey*, musicologist at the University of California Los Angeles, Robert Stevenson surveyed Mexican music from the pre-Colonial period to his day. He devoted a chapter to the nineteenth century, entitled “The Operatic Nineteenth Century.” As the title suggests, Stevenson concluded that the “Mexican musical horizon between the Independence and the close of the Porfirian epoch (1911) was narrowly confined within the world of Italian opera.”<sup>47</sup> In regards to piano music, Stevenson detailed the activities of figures like Tomás León (1826-93). León who became the “first professor of piano” in the 1866 Conservatory, and gave one of the first performances of Beethoven’s work in Mexico (the Seventh Symphony), which he had arranged for piano four hands at a concert on July 27, 1867.<sup>48</sup> Stevenson also described the mammoth amount of salon music composed in the century, as shown in the catalogs of the publishing company

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Stevenson, “Music in Mexico...” p. 192.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

A. Wagner y Levien,<sup>49</sup> and the collection of manuscripts at the library of the National Conservatory.

Further, Stevenson mentioned Juventino Rosas (1868-1894), famous for his *Sobre las Olas* (Over the Waves) waltz, and other piano composers and virtuoso performers, like José Antonio Gómez (1805-1876)<sup>50</sup>, Julio Ituarte (1845-1905)<sup>51</sup>, Melesio Morales (1838-1908), and Felipe Villanueva (1863-93). Stevenson devoted a subheading to Ricardo Castro.<sup>52</sup>

Stevenson's book was the first English-language survey of Mexican music, and it was influential in the works that came after it. Despite being chronologically close to Mayer-Serra's work in the 40s, and having Chávez's support, Stevenson's book had a more neutral position in regard to the discourse in the Spanish-language publications.

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<sup>49</sup> Olivia Moreno Gamboa has published explorations into this company's history, catalog, and recital hall, in 2014 and 2020. Other publishing companies existed, including H. Nagel.

<sup>50</sup> John G. Lazos has studied the life and works of Gómez. For his article "Gómez Antonio: el maestro de los maestros entre los mexicanos, o ajonjolí de todos los moles" [Gómez Antonio: teacher of teachers of the Mexicans, or sesame seed of all the *moles* (traditional dish)] published in *Heterofonía* 140, 2009, visit his Academia profile: <https://independent.academia.edu/JohnGLazos/Articles>

<sup>51</sup> Emilio Casco Centeno devoted his Master's Thesis (2005) at Universidad Veracruzana to the Works of Ituarte. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/40598518/UNIVERSIDAD\\_VERACRUZANA](https://www.academia.edu/40598518/UNIVERSIDAD_VERACRUZANA)

<sup>52</sup> Rogelio Álvarez has published on the life and works of Castro through the Universidad de Colima. Available at: <https://ucol.academia.edu/RenataTebaldi>

In 1982,<sup>53</sup> Jorge Velazco published an article devoted to the piano music of the nineteenth century.<sup>54</sup> Velazco's opening statement suggested his attitude towards the repertoire: "It is very hard to define whether the piano music and the piano performers were advancing or restricting the musical development of Mexican nineteenth-century music."<sup>55</sup> In other words, Velazco doubted the value of the piano music of the nineteenth century and thought it may have deprived the country of better music. In addition, Velazco selected Aldana's *Minuet*, a composition discussed by Stevenson in his 1952 book, to illustrate the possibilities of early nineteenth-century music. Velazco called it a "little piece with Mozartian flavor."<sup>56</sup> This is also illustrative of Velazco's attitude, since he selected a piece that supported his doubts regarding the benefits of piano music in the nineteenth century.

Later, similar to Stevenson, Velazco tells the story of the piano in Mexico, from the piano manufacturers to the teachers and performers. For him, the piano music of the century did not have fertile soil to grow, or their actors died too soon. Velazco closed his article by criticizing Mexican society for its intellectual poverty and indifference towards art.

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<sup>53</sup> In the time between Stevenson's book and Velazco's article, there were no major publications regarding Mexican music, except for Dan Malmström's *Introducción a la Música Mexicana del siglo XX* [Introduction to twentieth-century Mexican music] (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica). See footnote 16.

<sup>54</sup> Jorge Velazco, "El pianismo mexicano del siglo XIX" [Mexican pianism of the nineteenth century], *Anales Del Instituto De Investigaciones Estéticas* 13 50 no.2 (1982), pp. 205–239. Available through: <http://www.analesiie.unam.mx/index.php/analesiie/article/view/2375>

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. "Es muy difícil definir si la acción del piano y los pianistas fue benéfica o limitativa del desarrollo musical mexicano en el siglo XIX." p. 205.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 209. Aldana's *Minuet* was part of the *Quaderno Mayner* studied by Jesús Herrera.

### *Heterofonía Magazine*

In the second half of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, the *Heterofonía* (Heterophony) magazine provided an important medium for musical scholarship. In number 130 (2004), Miriam Vázquez wrote about piano music in the nineteenth century in an article entitled “La Música Mexicana en la Época del Modernismo” (Mexican music in the Modern Period).<sup>57</sup> There, Vázquez contests the tags of “europeizante” and “francesista” (French-influenced) that several scholars used for the music of the second half of the nineteenth century, including Stevenson and Velazco. For her:

The influence of Chopin and Schumann must not be understood as a mere imitation on the account of our countries’ composers. Considering the conditions of the American continent at the end of the nineteenth century, the cosmopolitan ideology of the time was not intended to imitate; rather it assimilated other artistic currents to adhere to a universal style and not remain outside the concept of culture.<sup>58</sup>

Vázquez provides a different perspective on the study of salon music, in direct contrast to Mayer-Serra’s assertion: nineteenth-century composers were not merely imitators, but cosmopolitan actors wanting to adhere themselves to international trends. Therefore, it is

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<sup>57</sup> Vázquez, “La Música Mexicana en la Época del Modernismo” *Heterofonía* 130, January-December, 2004, pp. 41-68. See note 12 for a handle to the publication.

<sup>58</sup> “La influencia de Chopin y de Schumann no debe interpretarse como una imitación servil por parte de los compositores de nuestro país. Dadas las condiciones que se vivían en la América de fines del siglo XIX, la ideología cosmopolita de esa época no tenía como finalidad la imitación; más bien asimilaba otras corrientes artísticas con el objetivo de adherirse a un estilo universal y no permanecer al margen del concepto que se tenía de cultura.” Vázquez also wrote a Master’s thesis on the music of Castro, Elorduy, and Villanueva, available at: <https://cdigital.uv.mx/handle/123456789/29820>

relevant to use the music as a window to explore the Mexican side of cosmopolitanism and understand better the society of the time.

Ten issues later, *Heterofonía* 140 (2009) was dedicated to the nineteenth century, and it is a good example of a shifting attitude that scholars adopted in the early twenty-first century.<sup>59</sup> There are articles on the music of Ernesto Elorduy by Ricardo Miranda, Melesio Morales by Yael Bitrán and Jesús Herrera, and Antonio Gómez by John G. Lazos. The publication aligns with Ricardo Miranda's call for hands-on studies and made available scores of Morales' piano music in a CD, which can be accessed through an online repository.<sup>60</sup> *Heterofonía* has contributed to the literature on Mexican music and has served as a medium for the development of ideas and dialogue, advancing the study of previously overlooked repertoires.

### ***Women, Music, and Piano in the Nineteenth Century***

Iconography, periodicals, and testimonies of the time show the presence of women in nineteenth-century Mexican salon and opera theater.<sup>61</sup> Why is it important to study the role of women at the time and its relationship with Ernesto Elorduy's music? Salon music was associated with female participation since women musicians studied the music to play in social gatherings.<sup>62</sup> It is important to study the activities and presence of women

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<sup>59</sup> Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/11271/600>

<sup>60</sup> The scores of the CD are available as a pdf on the same handle of the previous footnote.

<sup>61</sup> Carmen Piñero, "Música, Mujeres e Identidad en el México Decimonónico: Un abanico por desplegar" [Music, Women, and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Mexico: A Fan to Unfold] in *De Nueva España a México: el universo musical mexicano entre centenarios (1517-1917)*, Javier Marín-López (ed.). (Sevilla, Universidad Internacional de Andalucía, 2020. ISBN 978-84-7993-357-9), p. 262. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10334/5381>

<sup>62</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "En la Galera de Cleopatra" (In Cleopatra's galley). *Heterofonía*, no. 132-133 (Mexico: January-December 2005: 101-120. Accessed April 9, 2023 from:

musicians in nineteenth-century Mexico, because the association between salon music and women made the nineteenth-century piano repertoire easier to discount for people with misogynistic beliefs. Such beliefs coupled with the nationalistic ideology render logical the marginalization of nineteenth-century music. Ernesto Elorduy's compositions were popular among female musicians, therefore studying their activities and the discourse about them provides a better contextualization of the composer and his music.

Recent scholarship on Mexican music has explored women's activities in the nineteenth century. For example, Carmen Piñero summarizes research by Leticia Armijo, Yael Bitrán, Jesús Herrera, Guadalupe Huacuz, Enrique Salmerón, and Ricardo Miranda.<sup>63</sup> Piñero states that scholars began to study Mexican women in the nineteenth century in regards to their participation in the creation and performance of salon music and the part they played in its consumption.<sup>64</sup>

Jesús Herrera investigates nineteenth-century notebooks and handwritten collections of music created for the use of women. For example, he examines *Quaderno para Guadalupe Mayner* (Notebook for Guadalupe Mayner), which was created during the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821). The notebook contains technical exercises like scales and arpeggios, and music attributed to both unknown and familiar composers, including Joseph Haydn's keyboard version of *The Last Seven words of Christ on the Cross*

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<http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/595> p. 116. Miranda states that playing pieces like a *berceuse* in the nineteenth-century salon allowed female performers to dream about marriage and children.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 253-4.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

(1786).<sup>65</sup> The *Quaderno Mayner* appears to be created with pedagogical intentions, for her owner, Guadalupe, to learn technique and have some examples of the keyboard repertoire.

Another instance of women's activity is found in the *Manuscrito de Mariana Vasques* (Manuscript of Mariana Vasquez). As Herrera states, the manuscript is a musical anthology for keyboards and vocal music with keyboard, the copy of which was done in Mexico between 1820 and 1840, approximately.<sup>66</sup> The manuscript contains solo music, but also opera arrangements and dance music, like waltzes, *boleras*, *jarabes*, and minuets, by mostly unknown composers. However, some familiar names are notated like Manuel Corral (1790-????), Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), and José Antonio Gómez. In the nineteenth century, keyboard music was at the center of musical activity in Mexico's capital for enjoying opera arias at home, dancing with friends, or just listening to *nocturnes* and *berceuses*.

In 2020, Alejandro Barrañón published an article entitled, "Toward a New Ideal of the Feminine: The Nineteenth-Century Pianism of Guadalupe Olmedo and María Garfías."<sup>67</sup> Barrañón engages with the music of two female Mexican performers and

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<sup>65</sup> Jesús Herrera, "Entre lo público y lo privado. Música, política y religión en el Quaderno para Guadalupe Mayner al inicio de la Independencia de México". [Between the public and the private. Music, politics, and religion in the Notebook for Guadalupe Mayner at the beginning of Mexico's Independence] in *Cantos de Guerra y Paz...* [Songs of war and piece] pp. 354, as cited in Piñero, 2020.

<sup>66</sup> Jesús Herrera, "El Manuscrito de Mariana Vasques: música para tocar, bailar y cantar de principios del México independiente" [The Manuscript of Mariana Vasques: music for playing, dancing, and singing from the beginning of independent Mexico], *Heterofonía* 132-133, 2005, p. 9. Other study of a musical manuscript includes Enrique Salmerón's "El Cuaderno de Merced Acebal: nueva música del período independiente" [The Merced Acebal's notebook: new Music from the independent period] in *Cantos de Guerra y Paz...*, pp. 69-84.

<sup>67</sup> *ESCENA Revista de artes* 79 No. 2, (January-June, 2020): pp. 189-213.



composers, Olmedo (1856-1889) and Garfias (1849-1918) through analytical and contextual commentaries. The author states that the literature on Mexican women composers is limited, and information on them is hard to trace. He then explores the life and works of Olmedo and Garfias, explaining that their compositional styles reveal a voice that echoes the virtuosic performances of Liszt. The works of Olmedo and Garfias did not conform to the accepted femininity norms of the time (directing women to be submissive, simple, without pretensions). Rather, they crossed into a territory considered masculine, hence reaching a “new ideal.”<sup>68</sup> Barrañón’s article also adheres to Ricardo Miranda’s earlier call for hands-on study of the scores, and aesthetic discourse regarding the important features of the repertoire, and it also contributes to the twenty-first-century trends revisiting the music of underrepresented composers.

The literature produced in the twentieth century exhibits certain points of view and the retelling of a discourse that contributed to the marginalization of nineteenth-century music. However, a growing number of scholars at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century have begun to review the music from the score, and the context of the time, studying the culture from different perspectives and giving attention to the music and activities of women.<sup>69</sup> There is a contrast between the scholarship of the twenty and

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<sup>68</sup> Luisa Vilar-Payá and Jannu Montecristo-Pérez explored the works of a famous Mexican singer and composer, Angela Peralta in “Ángela Peralta (1845-1883) como Compositora. Historiografía y Análisis de la Canción *El Deseo*” [Ángela Peralta as composer. Historiography and analysis of the song *El Deseo*] *Revista del Instituto de Investigación Musicológica Carlos Vega* 34 no.1, (Buenos Aires) 2020, pp. 107-126. Available at: <https://repositorio.uca.edu.ar/handle/123456789/11190>  
Peralta’s piano album is available at: <https://archive.org/details/b10644908/page/n27/mode/2up>

<sup>69</sup> It is worth mentioning other works on Mexican women musicians. For instance, Leonora Saavedras’ article “Mujeres musicólogas de México” [Mexico’s Women Musicologists] *Heterofonía* 123, July-December, 2000. Available at:

twenty-first centuries. Scholarship in the twentieth century was largely negative or discouraging towards salon music, while scholarship in the twenty-first century has tended to engage in more serious evaluations of music and culture.

### Literature of Salon Music in Other Regions

In Europe, recent studies reflect an interest in the phenomenon of salon culture. For example, the publication *Musical Salon Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century* edited by Anja Bunzel and Natasha Loges is a collection of essays that “uses the idea of the salon as a springboard to examine issues such as gender, religion, biography, and performance.”<sup>70</sup> In addition, it explores how the salon was represented in different media and the heterogeneity of the phenomenon in lesser-known salons in both Europe and the United States.

Nineteenth-century music not only has musical value, but it offers a window for a better understanding of the culture and society of the time. There are several examples of this in the works of Arthur Loesser, Richard Wetzel, and Sergio Ospina Romero, to name a few. Arthur Loesser’s book *Men, Women, and Pianos. A Social History* traces the development of the instrument and its genres from West Europe to the United States.<sup>71</sup> Richard Wetzel argues that the music of composer, arranger, and publisher William Cumming Peters (1805-66) represents an important link in the formation of the United

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<http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/584> Or the number of Cuadernos de Música UNAM *Mujeres en la Música en México: De la Gesta Individual a las Colectivas Feministas* [Women in Mexico’s music: from the individual quest to feminist collectives], edited by Yael Bitrán in 2022.

<sup>70</sup> Anja Bunzel and Natasha Loges, eds., *Musical salon culture in the long nineteenth century* (Woodbridge, UK, and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2019).

<sup>71</sup> Arthur Loesser, *Men, women, and pianos* (New York: Dover Publications, 1990).

States national identity.<sup>72</sup> Sergio Ospina Romero explores the music and life of Colombian composer Juan A. Calvo in his book *Dolor que canta. La vida y la música de Luis A. Calvo en la sociedad colombiana de comienzos del siglo XX* (Pain that sings: The life and music of Luis A. Calvo in the Colombian society at the beginning of the twentieth century).<sup>73</sup> The author states that the study of Calvo's life allows looking into the social life of Bogotá.<sup>74</sup> Studies like those mentioned above exhibit possible pathways that Mexican scholarship could follow for studying the music of the nineteenth century.

Venezuelan pianist, composer, and scholar, Juan Francisco Sans offers another pathway for the study of salon music in his article "Nineteenth Century Spanish American Salon as a Translocal Music Scene."<sup>75</sup> Sans states that

The most remarkable thing about nineteenth-century salon is that it made up an omnipresent urban institution across Spanish America, with an activity interconnected and interchangeable from region to region with musical-danceable genres that were shared with remarkable ease, in a time when communications were far from being global as at present.<sup>76</sup>

Sans' remarks put the phenomenon of salon culture into a larger perspective, forming an interconnected musical scene. He proposed the "use of what Bennet and Peterson define as

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<sup>72</sup> Richard Wetzel, "Oh! Sing No More that Gentle Song" *The Musical Life and Times of William Cumming Peters (1805-66)* (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2000).

<sup>73</sup> Sergio Ospina Romero, *Dolor que canta* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2017).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>75</sup> Published in Julio Mendívil and Christian Spenser Espinosa, eds., *Made in Latin America: Studies in Popular Music* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>76</sup> Sans, "Nineteenth Century Spanish American Salon...", p. 38.

a translocal music scene (2004).” The development of this music scene was possible due to several factors, including the printed media, and the absence of a linguistic barrier. These elements enabled the creation of an “imagined community” beyond direct communication, distinctive of local music scenes.

For Sans, the translocal scene of the salon encompassed the enjoyment of certain musical forms coupled with the formation of class ideology and the construction of the Spanish American national identities.<sup>77</sup> These ideas infused the music with value, as it acted as a catalyst for extra-musical elements that aided in the understanding of the cultural history of the period. For the author, nineteenth-century music served as a platform for other styles to emerge. However, as this survey has shown, that was not the case in Mexico.

### Conclusion

The history of music in Mexico is a growing field of study that was not established formally until the twentieth century. Scholars like Otto Mayer-Serra laid the foundations of the discipline. Political matters were instrumental in the development of historiography in the first half of the twentieth century, which proved fatal for the nineteenth-century repertoire. The efforts for building a national identity highlighted some voices while silencing others. That is the reason behind the need for critical studies of the literature, to understand what is behind its common places, and the mechanisms behind its culture.

The scholarship of the present century portrays a change in attitude in relation to nineteenth-century music, acknowledging biases and distancing itself from past trends. It is

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

critical of the past and is starting to look for those voices who have been silenced by the discourse, such as the music and contributions of women, through musical analysis and other considerations, such as studies of gender, and Orientalism. The new generation of musicologists of Mexican music have more tools at hand to face the paradoxes, challenges, and richness of the past.

## Chapter 2: Cosmopolitanism and Elorduy's Piano Music

Elorduy's output comprises<sup>78</sup> mainly short works for piano, but he also composed pedagogical choral music, sacred music, *Zulema*, a zarzuela<sup>79</sup> with libretto of writer and musician, Rubén M. Campos (1876-1945), and a march for an important historic moment of the Porfiriato.<sup>80</sup> His education in Europe provided him with extensive knowledge of the romantic style in music and trends of the time, which infused his own compositions.<sup>81</sup> Elorduy's music was popular among nineteenth-century Mexican society, which attracted prominent music publishers of the time, such as A. Wagner y Levien, Otto y Arzoz, and H. Nagel, and brought him financial stability.<sup>82</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 1, the music of the nineteenth century has been marginalized and disregarded because it did not fit the agenda of the artists and government of the twentieth century. How should this marginalized music be theorized? Miriam Vázquez

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<sup>78</sup> In 2021, the catalog of the Historic Archive of Mexico's National Conservatory's Library was published. It was edited by Áurea Maya, and it contains 64 pieces by Elorduy, p. 78-83. It is available at: <http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/2662>

<sup>79</sup> According to Louise K. Stein and Roger Alier, zarzuela is "a Spanish genre of musical theatre characterized by a mixture of sung and spoken dialogue." Stein, Louise K., and Roger Alier. "Zarzuela." Grove Music Online. 2001; Accessed 13 Mar. 2023. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy.library.ohio.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040742>

<sup>80</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "De Estambul a Tuxtepec: *Zulema*" (From Istanbul to Tuxtepec: *Zulema*), in *Ecos, Alientos y Sonidos: Ensayos sobre Música Mexicana* (Ecos, breaths, and sounds: essays on Mexican music), (Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana and Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001), p. 158. In his article, Miranda notes that when the Independence Bell was taken from its original place in the Mexican state of Hidalgo to the capital by orders of president Díaz, Elorduy composed the music for the occasion.

<sup>81</sup> Emilio Casco, "Julio Ituarte (1845-1905): Vida y Obra" [Life and works of Julio Ituarte (1845-1905)], (Master's thesis, Xalapa, Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana, 2005), p. 57-58.

<sup>82</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "Laberinto de planchas, selva editorial: la música de Ernesto Elorduy y sus Fuentes" [Sheet labyrinth, editorial jungle: Ernesto Elorduy's music and its sources] (paper presented at the Internal Colloquium "Las fuentes documentales en la investigación Musical" [Document sources in music scholarship], CENIDIM, Tlaxcala, México, July 15-17, 2007).

argues that modernism and cosmopolitanism are better frames to understand the music of composers like Elorduy.<sup>83</sup> Vázquez defines cosmopolitanism (“cosmopolitismo”) as:

The cosmopolitanism of the time could be interpreted as the interest for being acquainted with other styles, the desire for renovation in the poetic language, and the liking of the past and other cultures considered exotic; these aspects that the specialized critics have widely analyzed in the literature of modern Hispanic poets, can also be perceived in the attitude and work of Mexican composers of the same period.<sup>84</sup>

Vázquez describes the work of Mexican composers as actors in a broader scheme, rather than mere imitators of European models. Just as literary critics have analyzed the diverse influences in Hispanic poetry and literature of the time, it is useful to understand analyze the cosmopolitan influences on Mexican composers of the nineteenth century.<sup>85</sup> Taking cosmopolitanism into account, and Ricardo Miranda’s criticism of the “elephant in the room,” (the lack of engagement with primary sources in Mexican music scholarship), the next section examines a selection of Elorduy’s works using musical analysis.

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<sup>83</sup> Vázquez’s *Heterofonía* article cited in Chapter 1 seems to be part of her Master’s thesis, “El Modernismo en la Obra para Piano de Castro, Elorduy y Villanueva” (Modernism in the piano works of Castro, Elorduy, and Villanueva) (Xalapa Veracruz, Mexico: 2006). Available at: <https://cdigital.uv.mx/handle/123456789/29820>

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 25: “El cosmopolitismo de la época puede interpretarse como el interés por el conocimiento de otros estilos, el deseo de renovación del lenguaje poético, y el gusto por tiempos pasados y otras culturas consideradas exóticas; estos aspectos que la crítica especializada ha analizado ampliamente en la literatura de los poetas modernistas hispanoamericanos, también pueden percibirse en la actitud y la obra de los compositores mexicanos de la misma época.”

<sup>85</sup> Cosmopolitanism has been studied by a number of scholars in different fields. See Appiah, 2006. For a study of cosmopolitanism and music, see Ryan Weber, *Cosmopolitanism and Transatlantic Circles in Music and Literature*, Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

## Defining Cosmopolitanism

In her article, “Cosmopolitanism and Music in the Nineteenth Century,” Cristina Magaldi explores cosmopolitanism and its relationship with music. Magaldi uses the ideas of political philosophy scholar Jeremy Waldron, stating that, “culture should be considered a negotiable process of engagement and of disengagement to one’s community social structure and order, a process that is always open to new modes of interaction and negotiation.”<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Mexican composers like Elorduy used different cultural materials in their compositions, engaging with materials from Europe, but also with local sources. For example, Elorduy composed sets of dances with regional inspiration, such as his *Oaxaqueñas* (from the Mexican state of Oaxaca), *Tropicales* (from the tropic), and others. However, the nineteenth-century interest in cosmopolitanism was suppressed after the Mexican Revolution.

Furthermore, Magaldi proposes that for Waldron, “Cosmopolitanism can thus be understood as a flexible process of engagement that cannot coexist with historicized and politicized notions of homogeneous, naturalized, and static individual or collective cultural identities.”<sup>87</sup> The Revolution’s emphasis on historicized and politicized notions of collective Mexican cultural identities are exactly the reasons behind the marginalization of the Mexican nineteenth-century repertoire. Therefore, cosmopolitanism serves as a tool for understanding the transnational influences present in the music of Ernesto Elorduy.

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<sup>86</sup> Magaldi, “Cosmopolitanism and Music in the Nineteenth Century,” Oxford Handbooks Online: Music: Scholarly Research Reviews, p. 2 of the pdf.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935321.013.62>

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.



Waldron's notions are clearly illustrated by Ricardo Miranda's description of *Zulema*, Elorduy's zarzuela:

The originality of the work lies in its mestizaje [mixing of race], in the carefree eclecticism of an author that, without concern, takes what he wants of each world: of the outside [of his world], the melodic ease of the traditional zarzuela choruses and the dramatism of the opera for certain crucial moments; of his inner imagination, the rhythmic allure of his dances, the peculiar oriental array developed by him, and an endless lyric inspiration that is natural to him, spontaneous, and that Elorduy will let stream without any apparent reserve or revision.<sup>88</sup>

Here, Miranda's description of *Zulema* aligns with the concept of cosmopolitanism explored before because it shows how Elorduy negotiated with materials coming from different places. For instance, he was acquainted with European musical style which allowed him to use techniques from the opera and romantic piano music, but at the same time, he used those techniques to express and evoke his inner world. Therefore, cosmopolitanism is useful to understand and contextualize Elorduy's inspiration to portray the "Orient" or a Mexican region, like the state of Oaxaca.

There are two broad types of compositions in Elorduy's piano output: character pieces and music for dancing.<sup>89</sup> Within the first group, there are *barcaroles*, *berceuses*, and

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<sup>88</sup> Miranda, "De Estambul a Tuxtepec...", p. 161-2. "La originalidad de la obra yace en su mestizaje, en el desenfadado eclecticismo de un autor que, sin recato, toma de cada mundo lo que le conviene: de fuera, la facilidad melódica de los tradicionales coros de zarzuela y el dramatismo de la ópera apto para ciertos momentos cruciales; de su imaginación interior, la sensualidad rítmica de sus danzas, el peculiar abanico oriental por él desarrollado, y una inagotable inspiración lírica que le es natural, espontánea, y que Elorduy dejará fluir sin aparentes reservas o revisiones."

<sup>89</sup> Miranda, "En la Galera de Cleopatra...", p. 104.

reveries like *Soñadora* (Dreamer), *María Luisa*, and *Nebulosa* (Nebulous). There are also character pieces with oriental inspiration, such as *Airam* and *Canción Árabe* (Arab song), among others. The composer did not distinguish between the terms “Arab” and “oriental.”<sup>90</sup> As Leonora Saavedra states, these oriental pieces can be labeled *alhambristas* (Moorish/Gypsy), a trend explored by Spanish composer Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909).<sup>91</sup> In his dance music, Elorduy incorporated rhythms such as the *habanera* pattern in stand-alone works and in sets of multi-movement dances.

Elorduy’s piano works in general are filled with evocation and imaginative power despite their brevity and moderate technical difficulty. One general characteristic of Elorduy’s music is a movement of the nineteenth century that Dahlhaus defines as “scenic emotion,” in which the melody is the most important element and does not require any further development.<sup>92</sup> There are other common elements in his work, such as the use of uncomplicated harmonic language, ornamentation, evocation, and extreme changes in dynamics and register, among others, as the analysis will show.

### Character Pieces

*Soñadora* (Dreamer, 1900), marked Lento, presents an epigraph that is indicative of

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<sup>90</sup> For an in-depth study of Elorduy’s oriental music, see Leonora Saavedra’s article “Spanish Moores and Turkish Captives in fin de siècle Mexico: Exoticism as Strategy,” in the *Journal of Musicological Research*, 31: 4, 231-261. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01411896.2012.721334>

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. In this article, Saavedra also provides an exploration of *Zulema*, Elorduy’s zarzuela, which he was not capable of orchestrating, giving that task to other musicians including Ricardo Castro (1864-1907) *Recuerdo de Sevilla* (Seville memory), published by Otto y Arzoz, undated, is an example of this trend, using elements of flamenco. It can be compared to Albeniz’s own *Sevilla*, third piece from his *Suite Española*, op. 47 (1886).

<sup>92</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* University of California Press, 1989, pp. 12-13, as cited in Miranda, “En la Galera de Cleopatra,” p. 105.

Elorduy's compositional output: "It feels; but it cannot be defined...Lethargic while awakening the soul. Listening to it, it silences with happiness the most insensitive heart. [in German] *Träumerin* [dreamer in German]." <sup>93</sup> As the epigraph illustrates, expression and dreams are key elements in Elorduy's writing. A component that supports the dream state is the drone fifth in the bass (E and B) that permeates throughout the first section (see Figure 1). There is a *soñando* (dreaming) marking, and an indication for "dos Ped." (two pedals), but it is unclear which pedals he is asking for: a grand piano has three pedals, the *Una corda* or soft pedal, <sup>94</sup> the *sostenuto* pedal, <sup>95</sup> and the sustaining or damper pedal.

It is worth noting the similarities between Elorduy's *Soñadora* and Robert Schumann's (1810-1856) *Träumerei* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15 composed in 1838. First, Elorduy's epigraph cited above holds a resemblance to Schumann's title (Reveries), both setting the scene to a dream-like atmosphere. Second, Elorduy's opening rhythm and melodic contour (Figure 1) are similar to that of Schumann's (Figure 2), with an ascending leap and notes values that could be interpreted as analogous even though they are composed

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<sup>93</sup> Ernesto Elorduy, *Soñadora* (Mexico City: H. Nagel, 1900). "Se siente, pero no se puede definir... Aletarga a la vez que despierta el alma. Al escucharla enmudece de felicidad el corazón más insensible. *Träumerin*."

<sup>94</sup> According to Ripin, the soft pedal "shifts the action sideways so that the hammers strike only two of the three strings," and it is not only a volume effect but also a change in timbre. Edwin M Ripin and David Rowland. "Una corda." *Grove Music Online*. 2001; Accessed 1 Mar. 2023. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy.library.ohio.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000028749>

<sup>95</sup> This is an "optional middle pedal provided on some pianos that enables the performer to sustain the sound of a note held down at the moment the pedal is depressed." Edwin M Ripin and David Rowland. "Sostenuto pedal." *Grove Music Online*. 2001; Accessed 1 Mar. 2023. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy.library.ohio.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000026274>

in different time signatures (2/4 in Elorduy's piece, 4/4 in Robert Schumann's). Finally, even though Schumann's texture is denser and more contrapuntal, both pieces convey a gentle character, underlying their dream-like extramusical indications. Even though Elorduy and Robert Schumann never met in person, since the later died three years after Elorduy's birth, it is possible to conjecture that Elorduy knew Schumann's compositions since he studied under Clara Schumann (1819-1896), Robert's editor, and widow. Thus, it might be interpreted that Elorduy found inspiration in Schumann's piece and incorporated its elements for his own purposes.

*Soñadora* is constructed with a ternary design in the key of E major. Part A (see Figure 1) has a repeat bar. It spans sixteen measures and ends with a measure of rest with a fermata. The contextual analysis shows that part A is well rooted in the Tonic (see Table 1). Part B exhibits harmonic and melodic contrasts, changing key to A minor, using modal mixture (see Figure 3). Then it goes to its parallel major with a lyrical theme, repeats, and ends in the same mode and material as the beginning of the section. After Part B, there is an almost identical return to the original material. The lack of dominant presence, and the movement from tonic to pre-dominant and back, creates a rocking motion that might be interpreted as a mechanism to create the dreamy effect the composer was trying to portray, like the rocking motion in a lullaby, but in the background structure.



Figure 1. Elorduy, *¡Soñadora...!*, mm. 1-8 (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucesores, 1900)

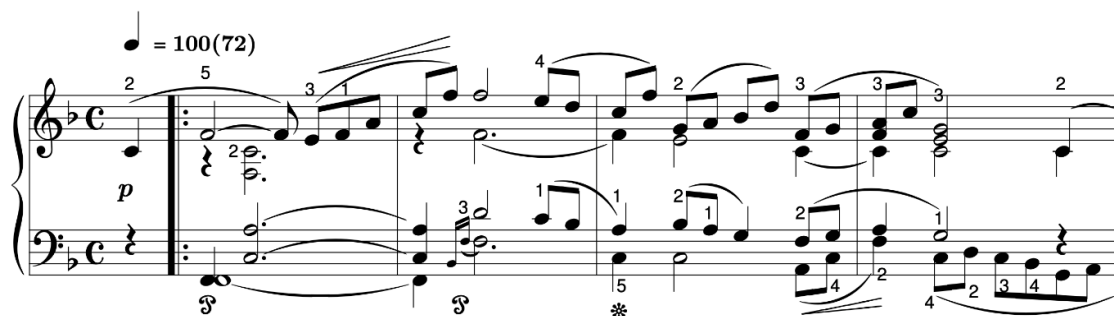


Figure 2. Robert Schumann, *Träumerei*, mm. 1-4 (André Van Ryckeghem, ed., undated).<sup>96</sup>

In harmonic terms, Part A features no strong Perfect Authentic Cadences, in part due to the drone effect of the left hand's fifths, only an inverted dominant-seventh chord motion in the left hand that goes to the tonic. The phrase structure in Part A features two parallel

<sup>96</sup> This edition is published under Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 3.0. No changes were made. Available at: <https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/f8/IMSLP201570-WIMA.f0c7-traeum.pdf>

sectional periods, with two phrases each, showing an antecedent-consequent relationship. They are parallel because the first of their phrases has the same melodic and harmonic material, and sectional because the first phrase ends conclusively in the tonic key. The last cadence is an Imperfect Authentic one, in measure 15.

Table 1. Structure and tonal areas of *Soñadora*.

	A :	: B :	A'
<b>Number of measures</b>	17	26	18
<b>Tonal areas</b>	E major	A minor – A major- A minor	E major
<b>Contextual analysis</b>	Tonic	Pre-Dominant	Tonic

As previously mentioned, Part B includes modal mixture, starting in A minor. It is constructed with three parts, making it a ternary form within the larger ternary design (see Figure 3). The first part is a period with phrases that contrast in dynamic, rhythm, and register. The first one starts *mezzo forte* and moves immediately to *piano*. The second phrase starts *forte* and then repeats and octave higher but *pianissimo*. This might be interpreted as an echo, or a distant iteration of the same idea but in a far-away place. Repetition is an important element in this period, as the first two measures are identical, and the second phrase is repeated in different registers. The material of the first phrase is restated after the repetition bar, serving as connecting tissue between Part B and the return of the original material.

*Soñadora* portrays Elorduy's characteristic use of the melody. However, the melody of Part A is undefined and unstable due to its leaps, particularly the first that spans the interval of a seventh as Figure 1 shows. Miranda proposes that it evokes within the listener the sensation of arriving late and missing the beginning, which, in turn, does not exist.<sup>97</sup> The periods of Part A have a melody that spans two octaves. Elorduy reaches the highest point in measure three, and then makes its way down to the original register and begins again in measure nine.

In contrast, the middle section of Part B (mm. 26-39) presents a lyrical theme in the key of A major, marked *cantando* (singing) and *muy expresivo* (very expressive) (Figure 3). The melody here moves by step, rather than the arpeggiations of previous materials. Arpeggios, however, pass between the hands and accompany the lyric theme, making use of Dominant and Tonic harmony in the key of A major.

*Soñadora* is a good example of Elorduy's use of ornaments and arpeggios. Part A conveys a light and tender character with *appoggiaturas* in the right hand. Part B, as mentioned before, presents cascades of arpeggios that are passed between the hands. The lyric theme of Part B is also embellished with *appoggiaturas*, usually at the beginning of a gesture or when coming down a melodic high point. Another instance where arpeggios are used is the connecting tissue between the parts, measures 18-21 and 40-43, that features an ascending A minor arpeggio. These elements are recurrent in Elorduy's music, and serve different purposes, such as building up to a climax, covering a melody with mystery, or

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<sup>97</sup> Miranda, "En la Galera de Cleopatra," p. 105.

assisting the dream-like character as in *Soñadora*.

The musical score is for a piece in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of five systems of piano and vocal staves. Measure 18 starts with a piano introduction (mf, p) featuring triplets and accents. Measure 22 has a forte (f) piano introduction. Measure 26 begins the vocal part (cantando, mf, muy expresivo, p) with a melodic line in the treble and accompaniment in the bass. Measures 30 and 34 continue the vocal melody and piano accompaniment.

Figure 3. Elorduy, *¡Soñadora...!*, Part B mm. 18-39 (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucesores, 1900)

With its evocative capacity and accessible writing, Elorduy's music was successful both socially and commercially. In addition, as Miranda observes, "it cannot be forgotten



that, in their time, they [Elorduy's compositions] were effective and artistic ways of accessing an imaginary idyll."<sup>98</sup> In other words, Elorduy used elements from the European tradition in an accessible and appealing way, that allowed his performers and audience to imagine far-away landscapes and their inner worlds. Moreover, Elorduy understood his audience and provided elegant music that they understood and cherished. Having examined Elorduy's depiction of dreams, the following section focuses on the "oriental" music.

### Oriental-Inspired Music

One example of Elorduy's oriental pieces is *Airam* (undated, but circa 1896 according to Saavedra).<sup>99</sup> There are analyses affirming that there are no authentic Arabic elements in Elorduy's oriental pieces, but as Miranda explains, it is not imitation that was sought after, but rather an imaginative setting of a fantasy world and an evocation of mystery.<sup>100</sup> The title itself is an anagram of the name Maria, which contributes to the mysterious and enigmatic character of the piece. It was dedicated to Mrs. María Mangino de Ydrac, probably an intimate friend of the composer, since he dedicated her a collection of pieces including *Souviens-toi* (Remember in French), *Rêve de Fée* (Fairy dream in French), and *Toujours* (Always in French).

*Airam* has the subtitle *Canción Oriental* (Oriental Song). It is notable that there is a

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 116 "(...) pero no puede olvidarse que, en su tiempo, fueron formas eficaces y artísticas de acceder a un idilio imaginario::

<sup>99</sup> Saavedra, "Spanish Moors...", p. 238.

<sup>100</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "Anastasia, o de las evocaciones de oriente" (Anastasia, or oriental evocations), *Heterofonía* 140 (January-June 2009): 45-60.

version of this piece that has lyrics by Antonio H. Altamirano<sup>101</sup> and a melody line added to the original piano part. The lyrics present exotic invocations, such as the “glories of Koran,” the “moon and my [unnamed] sultan,” and “Alhambra and Mahomed.” There is also a lament to a lost love, with an exotic background, making allusions to the desert and the “ardent Moorish land.”<sup>102</sup> Saavedra notes that this version of the piece might have been put together with lyrics after the successful performances of Elorduy’s *Zulema* in 1902.<sup>103</sup> The cover of this version emphasizes the oriental atmosphere with an illustration of a Near-East-like market, and other elements like palms, flowers, and a stringed instrument.<sup>104</sup>

The piece begins in the key of C minor, with a *habanera*<sup>105</sup> ostinato pattern in the left hand that creates a mysterious mood (Figure 4).

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<sup>101</sup> There is not a lot of information regarding the writer, rather than a selection of his works in an anthology of poems: *Antología de poetas hidalguenses* (Pachuca, Hidalgo, Mexico: Secretaría de Gobierno del Estado de Hidalgo, Secretaría de Educación Pública del Estado de Hidalgo, 2012).

<sup>102</sup> Elorduy and Altamirano, *Airam Cancion Oriental para canto y Piano*, Mexico: A. Wagner y Levien, undated. “¡Ay! Por las glorias del Koram[,] por la luna y mi Sultan[,] por mi Alhambra y Mahomet[,] Amor dulce amor[,] El de la ardiente tierra mora[,] Que igneo sol fecunda y dora[,] Donde se abrieron mis pupilas[,] Al misterioso cielo azul[,] ¡Ay! Que se fué y en mi desierto[,] Lloro en las noches mi amor muerto amor[,] Ya en los naranjos hay rocío[,] Todo florece y yo muriendo[,] Al dulce amor le digo adios[,] adios.” There are several misspellings due to missing accents.

<sup>103</sup> Saavedra, “Spanish Moors...,” p. 247.

<sup>104</sup> The score is available through Spain’s National Library, at: <http://bdh.bne.es/bnearch/detalle/bdh0000255500>

<sup>105</sup> The pattern consists of a dotted eighth note and a sixteenth note, followed two eighth notes. It emphasizes the second beat. In *Airam*, it is expanded by two quartet notes at the end of the 4/4 bar.



Figure 4. Elorduy, *Airam*, mm. 2-6, (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucesores, undated, ca. 1896-97)

As in *Sonadora*, this piece has the indication “con dos pedales” (with two pedals). The work is constructed with two parts framed by an introductory material that comes back identically at the end. In fact, that material has to be repeated since Elorduy wrote a *Da capo al segno* indication but said segno at the beginning only encompasses the two first measures, that is, the introduction. In other words, at the end the introductory material is played twice, and then proceeds to the final cadence.<sup>106</sup> *Airam* presents quintessential Elorduy traits, such as *appoggiaturas*, arpeggios, and rolled chords, but these elements are not developed or used as motives according to Miranda.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> It is unusual for that marking to repeat only two measures of music. It is used in pieces that utilize a refrain with the same music but different text. The version with lyrics presents the symbol as well.

<sup>107</sup> Miranda, “Anastasia...” p. 46.

Table 2. Structure and tonal areas of *Airam*.

	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Coda</b>
<b>Number of measures</b>	2	7	12	5
<b>Tonal areas</b>	C minor	C minor	Ab major (Tonicization of Eb major) → C minor	C minor
<b>Contextual analysis</b>	Tonic	Tonic	Tonic Expansion → Pre-Dominant → Dominant → Tonic	Tonic

As Table 2 shows, Part A spans over seven measures, which can be interpreted as a single phrase of five measures with two measures of extension. Harmonically, there is a clear Perfect Authentic Cadence on measure seven, and the following extension of the phrase reiterates the V to I movement. However, the melodic contour does not match the harmonic movement. The melody enters with the indication “El canto marcado,” (marked singing) sustaining a long G that is ornamented with an arabesque figure over dominant harmony. The momentum comes to a halt with two fermatas on high notes over an F minor seven chord (a pre-dominant harmony), almost like a half cadence, but in the middle of the phrase structure<sup>108</sup> (see Figure 4). It then proceeds to a V<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub> chord, moves to V<sup>7</sup>, and lands on the tonic. The melodic contour moves down to the original register after the fermatas.

Part B starts with a phrase (or direct) modulation, since Part A closes in C minor harmony, and Part B starts in Ab major, and is asserted by V<sup>7</sup> to I movement in measures

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<sup>108</sup> Here in the sense of the harmonic movement in Western Common Practice music, going from tonic to predominant, dominant, and coming back to tonic.

10-11. However, the F minor harmony in measure 12 serves as a pivot to return to the original key of C minor in the following two measures. Part B extends the harmonic range by a tonicization of Eb major in measure 16, and the use of Ab major as tonic expansion. It returns to the home key of C minor by the end of the section.

The phrase structure of Part B might be analyzed as a progressive, parallel, interrupted period, with two measures of introduction. The period is comprised of two phrases of five measures each. It is a progressive period because it moves from the key to Ab major to C minor. Parallel, due to its melodic similarities, particularly due to the repetition of mm. 13-14 in mm. 19-20, and the use of arpeggios. And interrupted, because the first phrase ends with a type of half cadence, the tonicization of Eb major, and the second phrase starts with tonic harmony, so the harmonic movement gets interrupted for it to restart in the second phrase.

Miranda suggests that the melody struggles to ascend,<sup>109</sup> but it might be interpreted that Elorduy used ascending arpeggios in the right hand to create momentum throughout the piece. The first climactic moment arrives in measure 12 over dominant harmony after an F minor arpeggio. Next, the melody keeps moving up with the tonicization of Eb major. The anacrusis to measure 17, a high C minor arpeggio marked *pianissimo* reaches a root-position C minor triad. It is then repeated in the following measure in a lower octave with a crescendo, but this time arriving to an Ab major chord in measure 18. That chord precedes the climax of the piece, marked *forte* in the second half of that measure and crossing over

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<sup>109</sup> Miranda, "Anastasia" p. 47.

to the next bar (see Figure 5). It is a downwards arpeggiation of a D half-diminished seventh chord in the first inversion, that is, pre-dominant harmony, moving to a  $V^7$  chord in C minor. Therefore, Elorduy makes a connection between two important moments of the piece, the fermatas in Part A and the climax in mm. 18-19, by supporting them with pre-dominant harmony. The climax is followed by a mostly stepwise descent to the original register at the Coda.

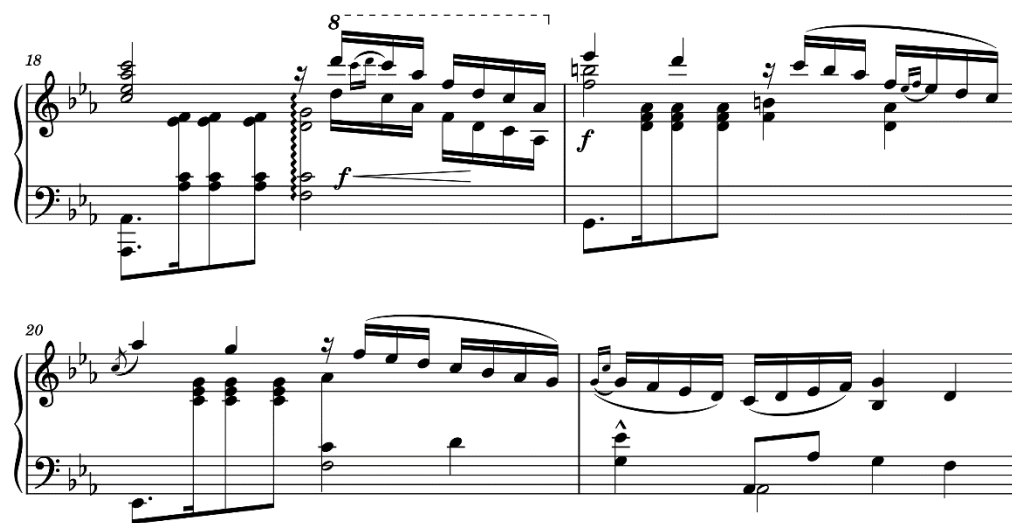


Figure 5. Elorduy, *Airam*, mm. 18–20 (Mexico, H. Nagel Sucesores, undated, ca 1896–97)

As the analysis shows, Elorduy used arpeggios, surface level ornaments, harmony, and the habanera ostinato pattern to paint a picture of a far-away world for the consumption of the Mexican turn-of-the-century society. From a compositional standpoint, *Airam* is built with concise materials that allure its public, such as its elegant character, and the sparks that emanate from its ornaments. In addition, the harmonic motion creates contrasts and supports

the unfolding of the piece. Furthermore, *Airam* allows the performer to indulge in romantic climaxes that show the composer's understanding of the keyboard since they fit the hands well. In sum, *Airam* allows the performers (and their audience) to imagine the "Orient" through an idiomatic piece that uses the language of romanticism while displaying technical accessibility. For that reason, it is not a surprise that according to a source of the time,<sup>110</sup> *Airam* was played at every keyboard of Mexico City.

Considering the previous analyses, it is a logical conclusion that character pieces such as *Soñadora* and *Airam* granted popularity to Elorduy. However, it is also important to consider Elorduy's main performers and consumers, who were primarily female amateur pianist. In Chapter 3, I contextualize Elorduy's audience and study the reception of his music. The next section provides an overview of another important genre in salon music and Elorduy's output, the music for dancing.

### Dance Sets

All of Elorduy's pieces, even the dances, belong to the realm of imagination: after all, salon music was conceived not for physical movement, but for recreating an imaginary dance.<sup>111</sup> He composed several sets of dances, such as *Tropicales* (Tropical dances), *Primaverales* (Spring dances), *Oaxaqueñas* (Dances of the state of Oaxaca, Mexico), *Flores Silvestres* (Wild flowers), and *Juguetonas* (Playful ones), among others, making it one of his most prolific genres. Elorduy draws inspiration from the work of another Mexican

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<sup>110</sup> Anonymous, "En el Conservatorio: La audición de 'Zulema' (At the conservatory: the hearing of Zulema)," *El Imparcial*, January 23, 1903, as cited in *Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>111</sup> Miranda, "En la Galera de Cleopatra", p. 109.

composer, Felipe Villanueva (1862-1893), and the *Cuban habanera* model of composers like Manuel Saumell (1818-1870).<sup>112</sup>

The *habanera* or *contradanza* consists of two contrasting parts of sixteen measures each; the first one is light and eloquent, while the second contains the essence of its character.<sup>113</sup> Ramírez describes it as: "that delicate tint, that charming morbidity, that tropical heat that vivifies, that simple, rapturous, sweet and passionate song, that *rubato* so incomprehensible for the one who has not been born in these regions [Cuba]."<sup>114</sup> Besides the structure, *habaneras* employ dotted rhythms, syncopation, and an incessant interplay of eighth and quarter note triplets, all elements present in Elorduy's dances and some character pieces as seen in *Airam*.



Figure 6. Elorduy, *Tropicales. 3 Danzas. No.1*, mm. 1-5 (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucosores, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1898)

One example of this genre by Elorduy is *Tres Danzas Tropicales* (Three tropical dances), the third edition of which has an 1898 copyright.<sup>115</sup> In a fast, fast, slow tempo

<sup>112</sup> Mayer-Serra, *Panorama de la Música Mexicana* [Landscape of Mexican Music] p. 133-134.

<sup>113</sup> Ramírez, p. 69, cited in *ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Elorduy, *Tropicales. 3 Danzas* (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucosores, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1898)



structure, each movement spans over one page with *Da Capo* indications, creating simple binary forms. No. 1 is marked *Vivo*, with a structure shown in Table 3. Part A, spanning eight measures and a repetition, does not go out of C minor. The only harmonic movement is between the tonic and the dominant chords. It is energetic, displaying scalar and arpeggio passages in the right hand, and octave writing and syncopation in the left hand (See Figure 6).

Table 3. Structure and tonal areas of *Tropicales no. 1*

	A :	B (Da Capo)
<b>Number of measures</b>	8	16
<b>Tonal areas</b>	C minor	Eb major
<b>Tempo</b>	Vivo	<i>Languido</i> (Slow, relaxed)

Part B modulates to the relative major, Eb, and it stays there (See Figure 7). It has a “dos Ped.” Indication as other works by the composer. The *lánguido* (languid, slow, relaxed) indications comes after the first four measures of Part B. It presents a change in texture and character, since the right hand exhibits arpeggios and scales in thirds. The character changes in part due to the left hand’s *habanera* pattern accompaniment. Elorduy uses ascending arpeggios to create momentum, as in mm. 9-10 and 17-18. Part B can be analyzed as a repeated parallel interrupted period. Each period is eight measures long, comprised of two phrases. It is parallel because the harmonic and melodic material is the same and interrupted because the first phrase ends in a half cadence in Eb. The main difference between the repeated periods is the dynamics, the first one starts *forte* and grows

to a *fortissimo* and the second one starts *piano* and descends to a *pianissimo*. Part B ends with a perfect authentic cadence. The first movement of *Tropicales* conveys power and energy, coupled with a contrasting middle section that is calm and refined. These features rendered popularity to the set, as the number of editions shows.



Figure 7. Elorduy, *Tropicales. 3 Danzas. No.1*, mm. 9-16 (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucesores, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1898)

Dance no. 2 has the same form and tempi characteristics of no. 1, a simple binary form with contrasts in tempo, character, and harmony. Furthermore, the accompaniment patterns of the left hand are similar. Part A features a syncopated chordal accompaniment while Part B changes to a *habanera* pattern playing a single note a time (Figure 8). The right hand of no. 2 is similar to that of no. 1 as well. In the *Vivo* section, there is more prominence

of arpeggios and ornaments going up the keyboard, and the descent features scalar motion. In harmonic terms, No. 2 also resembles the first movement of the set. It starts with eight measures of G minor, then, the two measures of transition serve as pivot to modulate to the key of Part B, Bb major. The rolled octaves aid the *languid* character of the second part.



Figure 8. Elorduy, *Tropicales. 3 Danzas. No.2*, Part B, mm.10-25 (Mexico: H. Nagel Sucesores, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1898)

The third dance contrasts in tempo with the previous two since it remains *Lento* throughout the piece. It has the same form as No. 1 and No. 2, but it differs in regards of time signature. It starts with a 4/4, and switches to 2/4 for Part B. The movement starts in the key of G minor, with an ostinato accompaniment pattern that spans seven measures. The right hand features a lyric and sumptuous melody in octaves, characteristic of Elorduy's

writing. There are elements of the *alhambrista* tradition discussed in his character pieces. For example, the use of neighboring tones that resemble the sound of castanets. That element becomes clearer when Part B comes, in the parallel major mode.<sup>116</sup> Part B also exhibits rolled intervals, and chromatic passing tones that enrich the character of the piece.

### Conclusion

The analysis shows that Elorduy's attitude is consistent with the cosmopolitan framework discussed above. The pieces show his interest in genres of different parts of the world, namely German, French, and Cuban styles, and using elements from them to portray the Orient, in the case of *Airam* and his other oriental pieces. There are elements that permeate Elorduy's work, such as the use of arpeggios, sweeping melodic lines, ornaments (appoggiaturas are one of the most prominent), and ostinato accompaniment patterns. Cosmopolitanism helps understand that Elorduy was aware of several styles of the time and combined them to create a style that granted him popularity in his time.

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<sup>116</sup> See Albeniz's *El Puerto*, from *Iberia* book 1 for a similar device.

### Chapter 3. The Reception of Ernesto Elorduy's Music

Ernesto Elorduy became a significant figure in the artistic scene of the late Mexican nineteenth century. His compositions gave the audience (performers, listeners, music critics, etc.) the opportunity to visit imaginary realms, such as the “Orient” and dreams. In this chapter, I explore the reception of Elorduy's music and the musical thought of the time, but also his connection to Manuel M. Ponce, one of Mexico's foremost composers, and more recently, recordings of Elorduy's works in both CD and available on streaming platforms.

This examination will be framed by reception theories discussed in Mark Everist's chapter “Reception Theories, Canonic Discourses, and Musical Value.”<sup>117</sup> Everist argues that “texts and documents which articulate the reception of a work are similar in many cases identical to those that are responsible for imparting value to the work, and hence for its inclusion in, or exclusion from, the canon.”<sup>118</sup> In other words, the documents and attitudes towards a piece are in many cases responsible for its inclusion or exclusion from the canon. In the chapter, Everist examines the interrelations between reception and canon. Considering that, as shown in Chapter 1, nineteenth-century music faced criticism and rejection from both artists and critics after the Revolution, these ideas are pertinent to the study.

Everist examines reception theory proposed by German literary theorists.<sup>119</sup> He explains that it is important to recognize the difference between *Wirkung* (effect) and

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<sup>117</sup> Mark Everist chapter, published in *Rethinking Music*, Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist eds. (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 378-402.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

<sup>119</sup> Particularly a 1967 essay by Hans Robert Jauss (1921-1997).

*Rezeption* (reception). Everist explains that *Wirkung* “focuses on the textual and musical aspects of the process, while *Rezeption* addresses the reader – in the broadest sense, the recipient of the text.”<sup>120</sup> For him, the analysis of interrelations between these two aspects is powerful in the understanding of a piece and its historical appreciation.<sup>121</sup>

Another important concept is “the horizon of expectations” (*Erwartungshorizont*).<sup>122</sup> Everist explains that “the horizon of expectations embodies the relationship between *Wirkung* and *Rezeption*.”<sup>123</sup> In other words, the horizon of expectations is necessary for the understanding of a work, because it takes into account the actual object, what has been said of it, and its relationship with other works. It is worth noting that the horizon of expectations allows for readings in different points in time, as well as their development, and gives each juncture the same importance<sup>124</sup> Everist concludes by saying that

(...) a theory of reception produces a wide range of documents that bear witness to the echo of a work across history, and therefore to a series of competing interpretations that affect our current view of their value and their place in a canonic discourse.<sup>125</sup>

This may be taken as an invitation to examine the different evaluations of Elorduy’s music, from the journalist writings to that of his acquaintances, including a musical *homage* by

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 379-80.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 380.

<sup>122</sup> A central concept in Jauss’s 1967 essay, according to Everist, p. 382.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 383.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 400.

Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948), to the critical attitudes of the 1930s and 40s (explored in Chapter 1), and how his music has been performed and recorded at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.

### Elorduy's Character and His Relationship With Ponce

To have a context on the *Rezeption* of Elorduy's music, it is illuminating to use as starting point the following characterization by Rubén M. Campos, his friend, and the writer of *Zulema's* libretto:

In person Elorduy was a curious specimen of an invaluable worth: small as a gnome, with expressive features on his old faun face, with a prominent nose as big as that of a cockatoo, always neat and elegantly dressed, wearing a silken top hat believing that it would make him look taller and a preppy cane that he would almost always have under the arm, Elorduy appeared pleasant due of course to his exquisite education, to his jolliness, to his undeniable intelligence, to his ease in talking in the five languages he had learned<sup>126</sup> in the five countries he had lived, and for the gift he had for embracing new friendships and corresponding with them with the utmost intimacy and comradery. There was no gathering that Elorduy attended that would not cheer up because of his ingenious buffoonery, and soon there was no gathering in which Elorduy was not present.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Elorduy's native language was naturally Spanish. But it can be conjectured that he also spoke German and French as he lived in Germany and France for a number of years. As for the other two languages, they could have been Greek, Turkish, or even Arabic,

<sup>127</sup> Rubén M. Campos, *El bar, La vida literaria de México en 1900* (The bar, literary life in 1900 Mexico) (Mexico: UNAM, 1996), p. 114 as cited in Vázquez, "El Modernismo en la Obra para Piano..." p. 110. "Personalmente Elorduy era un curioso ejemplar de un valor inestimable: pequeño como un gnomo, de rasgos expresivos en su rostro de viejo fauno, con una gran nariz de

Campos's insights on Elorduy help to understand not only the comments his music received from critics, but also the nature of the composer. According to Campos, Elorduy had a charming presence, and was capable of witty remarks and warm friendship. The following section explores a relationship that has not received enough attention in Mexican musicology: that of Elorduy and Manuel M. Ponce. This exploration is based on writings by Ponce about Elorduy, and a musical tribute, *Elorduyana*.



Figure 9. Portrait of Ernesto Elorduy.<sup>128</sup>

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cacatúa, siempre elegantemente vestido y atildado, llevando un sombrero de seda y copa con el que creía hacerse crecer en estatura y un bastón de fífi que portaba casi siempre bajo el brazo, Elorduy se hacía simpático desde luego por su exquisita educación, por su jovialidad, por su inteligencia indiscutible, por su facilidad para expresarse en cinco idiomas que había aprendido en cinco países en que había vivido, y por la facilidad con que acogía las amistades y las correspondía llegando hasta la intimidad y la camaradería. No había reunión íntima en que estuviera Elorduy que no se animara con sus gracejadas ingeniosas, y bien pronto no hubo reunión en la que no estuviera Elorduy.”

<sup>128</sup> Taken from Heredia, Martha, “Ernesto Elorduy,” *Voces. Portal de Educación*, 2018. Accessed on April 11, 2023 from: <http://revistavoces.net/9-ernesto-elorduy/>



For Ponce, the pages written by Elorduy were “fiery with passion”, and “tinged with moonlight, bejeweled with stars or gently enveloped in twilight reflections.”<sup>129</sup> Here, the younger composer is employing literary language for describing the music of Elorduy, a practice called *poetical criticism* that will be dealt with below. Ponce’s words seem to comprehend the gentle character of Elorduy’s compositions, such as *Soñadora*, and Ponce’s “bejeweled with stars” analogy might refer to the prolific use of ornaments by Elorduy. In the magazine *México Musical* (Musical Mexico), Ponce wrote: “Like Chopin, he [Elorduy] had as his sole confidant, the piano. He never felt the orchestra. The piano was enough to entrust his secrets and inspiration.”<sup>130</sup> Both composers were well acquainted with the pianistic trends of the time and used the instrument to express their distinctive styles.

Is the Elorduy that Ponce knew the same as the one Otto Mayer-Serra wrote about? How was Elorduy’s music become associated with that of Ponce, at least during his early stages? According to Everist, these are questions of *Wirkung*, or process because they relate a piece of music to another one. Therefore, addressing them helps reconstruct the horizon of expectations for Elorduy’s work and its recipients. As the writings show, Ponce knew Elorduy’s music, and had a friendly relationship with him. In fact, after Elorduy’s passing in 1913, Ponce organized trips with other artists to honor Ernesto Elorduy’s grave in Mexico

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<sup>129</sup> Miranda, “En la Galera de Cleopatra,” p. 119-120. “Para Manuel M. Ponce, las páginas escritas por Elorduy, “ardientes de pasión”, estaban “teñidas de claridad lunar, enjovadas de estrellas o suavemente envueltas en reflejos crepusculares”.

<sup>130</sup> Ponce, “Elogio de Ernesto Elorduy dicho por Manuel M. Ponce,” *México Musical* (Mexico, 3 no. 5, May 1933) p. 10-11, as cited in Jorge Barrón Corvera, *Manuel M. Ponce: A Bio-Biography* (Westport, Connecticut/London: Praeger, 2004) p. 192, B511. Given in English, the original Spanish is not present.

City. They would walk in a procession from Elorduy's house to the cemetery and place flowers on his grave.<sup>131</sup> Ponce's musical association with Elorduy can be examined through his compositional tribute.

*Elorduyana* was published ca. 1903 as a set of five *Hojas de Álbum* (Album leafs).<sup>132</sup> It was also collected in Rubén M. Campos's book *El Folklore Musical de las Ciudades. Investigación acerca de la música mexicana para bailar y cantar* (The musical folklore of the cities. Investigation on Mexican music for dancing and singing), a survey of the music and composers of the time, containing scores as well.<sup>133</sup> The *Hojas de Álbum* edition contains the dedication "To the inspired Maestro and very esteemed friend Ernesto Elorduy."<sup>134</sup>

The piece is a repeated binary form in the key of D major, and it exhibits some of Elorduy's characteristic traits. First, it is a slow dance like many Elorduy wrote. It has the indication "2 Ped." Just like the pieces by Elorduy analyzed previously. An exploration of Part A will serve to point out the similarities and differences in this tribute to Elorduy. A first *Elorduyan* feature is the use of appoggiaturas as seen in measures 2 and 4. In harmonic terms, the piece resembles Elorduy's use of relatively stable diatonic harmony. However, the *agitando* (agitating) passage starting in measure 9 sounds closer to Ponce's style than

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<sup>131</sup> Ricardo Miranda, lecture in the seminar *500 years of Music in Mexico* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2021)

<sup>132</sup> Published by Otto y Arzoz, according to Jorge Barrón, *Manuel M. Ponce*, p. 63, W114.

<sup>133</sup> Rubén M. Campos (Mexico: CENIDIM, 1995, facsimilar reproduction, originally published by the Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1930), available at: <http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/776>

<sup>134</sup> "Al inspirado Maestro y muy querido amigo Ernesto Elorduy."

Elorduy's.<sup>135</sup> The passage builds up to the climax in measure 12 using chromatic writing, triplets, and octaves in the right with, supported by syncopation in the left hand. The rhythmic complexity aids the agitated character of the passage. The use of arpeggios offers a nexus between both composer's styles, but while Elorduy uses single note arpeggios, Ponce fills them creating cascades of inverted blocked chord, as in measure 13 (See Figure 10).



Figure 10. Manuel M. Ponce, *Elorduyana*, mm. 1-16 (Rubén M. Campos, *El Folklore Musical de Las Ciudades...* Mexico: CENIDIM, 1995, facsimile reproduction)

<sup>135</sup> For instance, Ponce's *Notturmo* exhibits that more romantic side, and of course his piano concerto, entitled *Romántico* (Romantic).

Part B modulates to G major and presents contrasting material, with a more recognizable melody embellished with arabesques and other ornaments. Above the superficial features that resemble Elorduy's writing, Ponce's work strived to capture the essence of Elorduy's character, with his stylized poise and ease for evoking dreams and images but takes it further by using other techniques of his own, like his romantic outburst and chromatism.

After this exploration, it would be relevant to address the question of what opinion is more important, that of Ponce, or that of Mayer-Serra or Chávez. As Everist notes, in the horizon of expectations there are competing interpretations that affect the current view of, in this case, Elorduy's work. Both interpretations of Elorduy's work, in favor of it and against it, are significant. In fact, they also reveal important aspects about the musical thought of their own times. In twenty-first-century scholarship, it is necessary to be aware of all the points of view and create a full picture of the issue. For that reason, let's explore documents that illustrate the musical thought of the turn of the century Mexican bourgeoisie.

### ***"Piano Boxers"***

In 1896, the famous Mexican poet Amado Nervo (1870-1919) published an article entitled *Las Señoritas que Estudian el Piano* ("Ladies that play piano"). It appeared in the newspaper *El Nacional* (The National).<sup>136</sup> In the article, Nervo stated that having a piano instructor was indispensable. He calculated the number of ladies that received piano

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<sup>136</sup> "Las señoritas que estudian el piano". Available at:  
<http://antologiasinpoesia.blogspot.com/2011/12/las-senoritas-que-estudian-piano-de.html>

instruction in Mexico, and how much money and time were invested in such education, and asks:

And now, for every eight-year season, how many artists do we produce in Mexico? (...). Of the forty thousand ladies studying, thirty-nine thousand are *piano boxers* and do not get past that. We have a thousand left; of that thousand, nine hundred and fifty stun their neighbors with fragments of zarzuela (...). Fifty remain, forty of which can play something, and thanks to their pertinacious procedures they manage to read a Chopin's mazurka, a nocturne by [R.] Schumann, or a minuet by [Francis] Thomé [1850-1909]. Regarding dynamic markings... nothing; you won't hear the slightest *nuance* as the French call it; it is a flat music, excruciatingly flat. Where the author, due to a skillful inspiration, left a sob, a scream, a moan, the gentle fingers of the performer sink two or three white keys and that's it. But the last ten remain: will they be artists? Would they know how to infuse the music with that color, which without it, it turns into the most annoying of noises? Let's suppose that yes. It is time to suppose so.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> “Ahora bien, en cada temporada de ocho años, ¿cuántas artistas logramos en México? (...). De cuarenta mil muchachas en pleno estudio, treinta y nueve mil son boxeadoras del piano y no pasan de ahí. Nos quedan mil; mas de estas mil, novecientos cincuenta aturden a sus vecinos con trocillos de zarzuela (...). Restan cincuenta, cuarenta de las cuales *tocan algo*, al pertinaz teje maneje merced al cual se logra leer una mazurca de Chopin, un nocturno de Schumann, un minueto de Thomé. De matices... nada; no advertiréis el menor *nuance* que dicen los franceses; es aquella una música uniforme, insoportablemente uniforme. Donde el autor, merced a una habilísima inspiración, dejó un sollozo, un grito, un gemido, los amanerados dedos de la que toca algo, hunden dos o tres teclas blancas y ya está.

Pero nos quedan aún las *diez* últimas: ¿Serán artistas? ¿Sabrán dar a la música ese colorido sin el cual se convierte en el más fastidioso de los ruidos? Supongamos que sí. Ya es tiempo de suponerlo.”

Nervo disparagingly referred to most of the piano students of the time as “piano boxers” (*boxeadoras del piano*) who punch the keyboard as a boxer would do with a punching bag. Nervo’s humorous critique illuminates how widespread piano playing had become for Mexican women of in the late 1800s. The poet also noted that among the thousands of women piano students, very few became professional pianists. This reflects not only the author’s misogynistic attitude towards female performers, but also the ideological structure imposed on women, as they were not allowed or encouraged to become professional musicians.<sup>138</sup>

Elorduy’s music was presumably popular among Nervo’s “piano boxers,” due to the characteristics that have been discussed earlier, namely the evocation capability, the moderate technical difficulty, and the wide selection of dances that he composed. Therefore, the value of Elorduy’s music for his audience (mainly comprised by women performers) was elevated. Elorduy gave these performers the possibility to succeed in their artistic endeavors with piano compositions that were adequate to their technical ability, which in turn was not allowed to increase due to misogynistic beliefs and discourse. It is important to study the activities of women at the time since they were promoters in the creation of the repertoire and music scene.

Elorduy was aware of his audience. On the one hand, he attended many social gatherings and succeeded in creating connections and friendships. On the other hand, he provided products that his audience would find attractive. But how important was piano

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<sup>138</sup> Miranda, lecture in *500 years of Music in Mexico* seminar.

playing at the time? In the next section, I analyze a poem that illustrates the significance of the instrument.

### Musical Thought in Poetry and Literature

The works of Salvador Díaz Mirón (1853-1928) exemplify the musical thought of the time. Díaz Mirón was one of the most famous Mexican modernist poets. He was also involved in politics and held an office in the government as a congressman for different administrations, including general Porfirio Díaz', and later Victoriano Huerta's.<sup>139</sup> Díaz Mirón wrote for several publications including *El Veracruzano* (The Veracruz Man), *El Diario Comercial* (The Commercial Daily), and later *El Imparcial* (The Impartial).<sup>140</sup>

In his poem *Despedida al Piano* (Farewell to the piano), he portrayed the Mexican romantic ideas regarding the instrument.<sup>141</sup> The publication date of this poem is uncertain, since it was not contained in any of his collections of poems. It was probably published in one of the newspapers that he collaborated with. In his book *Lascas* (flakes or splinters) of 1901, Díaz Mirón alluded to music again in poems like *Música de Schubert* (Schubert's Music), and *Música Fúnebre* (Funeral Music).

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<sup>139</sup> All biographical information comes from the prologue to *Poesías Completas* (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 5th. Edition, 1966)

<sup>140</sup> Prologue to *Poesías Completas*, p. XIV.

<sup>141</sup> As cited in Carmen Piñero, p. 266. The author used the poem to close her article but did not go into depth of analysis or historical context of it.

Table 4. Poem *Despedida al Piano* by Salvador Díaz Mirón with English translation (my own)

<p>Tristes los ojos, pálido el semblante, de opaca luz al resplandor incierto, una joven con paso vacilante su sombra traza en el salón incierto.</p> <p>Se sienta al piano: su mirada grave fija en el lago de marfil que un día aguardó el beso de su mano suave para rizarse en olas de armonía.</p> <p>Agitada, febril, con insistencia evoca al borde del teclado mismo, a las hadas que en rítmica cadencia se alzaron otra vez desde el abismo.</p> <p>Ya de Mozart divino ensaya el estro, de Palestrina el numen religioso, de Weber triste el suspirar siniestro y de Schubert el canto melodioso.</p> <p>-¡Es vano! –exclamó la joven bella, y apagó en el teclado repentino su último son, porque sabía ella que era inútil luchar contra el destino.</p> <p>-Adiós –le dice–, eterno cofidente de mis sueños de amor que el tiempo agota, tú que guardabas en mi edad riante para cada ilusión alguna nota;</p> <p>hoy mudo estás cuando tu amiga llega, y al ver mi triste corazón herido, no puedes darme lo que Dios me niega: ¡la nota del amor o del olvido!</p>	<p>Sad eyes, pale face, from opaque light to uncertain glare, a young woman with a hesitant step its shadow traces in the uncertain room [salon].</p> <p>She sits at the piano: her grave gaze fixed in the ivory lake that one day waited for the kiss of her soft hand to curl into waves of harmony.</p> <p>Agitated, feverish, with insistence evokes on the edge of the keyboard itself, the fairies that in rhythmic cadence rose again from the abyss.</p> <p>From Mozart already rehearses the estrus, of Palestrina the religious numen, of Weber sad the sinister sigh and Schubert's melodious singing.</p> <p>-It is vain! - cried the young beauty, and suddenly turned off in the keyboard her last sound, because she knew that it was useless to fight fate.</p> <p>-Farewell, she says, eternal confidant of my dreams of love that time exhausts, you who kept in my smiling age for each illusion some note;</p> <p>today you are silent when your friend arrives, and seeing my sad wounded heart, you cannot give me what God denies me: the note of love or oblivion!</p>
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In the poem, Díaz Mirón portrayed how the piano was a vehicle for the vehement sentiments of young women. It contains seven stanzas, with four lines each and a rhyme scheme of every other line. In the first stanza, Díaz Mirón describes the entrances of a pale young lady into an uncertain room (or salon). The second stanza compares the piano keyboard to a lake of ivory (*el lago de marfil*), which waited for the kiss (*beso*) of her hands to curl into waves of harmony. Then, agitated, and feverish (*agitada, febril*), she evokes the fairies that rose from the abyss, that is, the sounds that came out of the piano: Mozart, Weber, Schubert, and even Palestrina, all reconciled in the nineteenth-century salon. But suddenly, she stops the music, saying that all is in vain, and the salon is filled with dramatic silence.

Díaz Mirón elucidated the crux of the poem in the last two stanzas. The piano, that accompanied the joy and laughter of the character with tunes, is silent now that her heart is sad and wounded, unable to provide her with notes of love, or oblivion (*olvido*). And that is why she must say farewell. The work of the poet shines light into the ideas and imagery related to the piano in the late nineteenth century Mexico City, which probably included Ernesto Elorduy's compositions.

### ***Poetical Criticism***

According to Ricardo Miranda, poetical criticism consisted in capturing the impression of a musical work in literary terms, so the readers could experience the impact of the music without listening to it. Robert Schumann considered it to be the “critical

exercise itself.”<sup>142</sup> For instance, in 1913 Francisco de Gándara wrote about Elorduy’s *Playeras*:

The *Playeras*, elegant and rich, caress the ear as would caress the eyes the sumptuousness of the galley of Cleopatra with its golden stern, with its purple candles and silver oars, gliding down the Cidno river, lulled by the sounds of utes, oboes, and zithers.<sup>143</sup>

Gándara’s words reflect the style of criticism of the time, but also are evidence of how the music of Elorduy was received by his audience. The images that Gándara created are full of color and vibrancy, which index the praise that Elorduy had in his time. And they are of particular interest in the present day since there is no scholarship on the piece that he described, *Playeras* (probably a set of dances, translates literally to “For the Beach”). The score, if not missing, is probably in one of Mexico’s archives.

The writer Anselmo Alfaro commented Elorduy’s *Nebulosa* (1896):

The infinite, that peace of the sky we see from the earth brought to the keyboard in his *Nebulosa*: agglomeration of stars, rennet of lights that converts into musical notes, and distances it from our foolish vulture as the astronomical nebula is far from our globe.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Miranda, “En la Galera de Cleopatra,” p. 101.

<sup>143</sup> Francisco Gándara, “Ernesto Elorduy,” *El Mundo Ilustrado* (Mexico City, January 12, 1913, s. p.) As cited in Miranda, “En la Galera de Cleopatra,” p. 103. “Las Playeras, elegantes y ricas, acarician el oído como acariciaría los ojos la suntuosidad de la galera de Cleopatra con su popa de oro, con sus velas de púrpura y remos de plata, deslizándose por el río Cidno, arrullada por los sonos de las autas, de los oboes y las cítaras.”

<sup>144</sup> Anselmo Alfaro, “Un músico. Ernesto Elorduy,” *El Nacional* (The National), 13 de julio de 1895, p. 1, as cited in Miranda, “En la Galera de Cleopatra,” p. 103.

The sky, the stars, nebula; the music of Elorduy produced these images in Alfaro, allowing him to experience otherworldly sensations, and then reaching far corners of his soul. To provoke such reactions in the listener was one of the aesthetic interests of the romantic period, and Elorduy was successful doing so.<sup>145</sup>

### Recent Reception

After almost a century of living in the dark, Elorduy's music is beginning to emerge.<sup>146</sup> In the twenty-first century, Mexican scholarship has devoted some attention to Elorduy's work.<sup>147</sup> In addition to writing, Elorduy's piano music has been recorded by a polish pianist, Józef Olechowski.<sup>148</sup> There are two albums available on Spotify, *Alma y Corazón* (Soul and Heart), and *Obsesión* (Obsession). The copyright of both is under Quindecim Recordings, in 2004. Both albums are around one hour long, with a varied selection of Elorduy's output, including sets of dances such as *Jugetonas* (Playful ones),

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"El infinito, esa paz del cielo que vemos desde la tierra traído al teclado en su *Nebulosa*: aglomeración de estrellas, cuajo de luces que convierte en notas musicales, y la aleja de nuestro vulgo necio como la nebulosa astronómica está lejos de nuestro globo." Miranda credits the text to "Alfonso Alfaro", but the primary source, now available digitized online, states "Anselmo": <http://www.hndm.unam.mx/consulta/publicacion/visualizar/558075be7d1e63c9fea1a379?anio=1895&mes=07&dia=13&tipo=publicacion>

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>146</sup> In her article "México de mis inventos: Salon Music, Lyric Theater, and Nostalgia in 'Cine de añoranza porfiriana'" published by the *Latin American Music Review*, Vol. 38 no. 1, (Summer 2017): pp. 1-27, Jacqueline Avila studies a genre of Mexican film from the 1940s that was short-lived but provided an interesting take on the *Porfiriato*, using original samples of salon music and lyric theater instead of new compositions for the films. Avila notes that the genre portrayed issues of nostalgia and gender, particularly social norms regarding women. According to Avila, two of Elorduy's works were used in Bustillo Oro's 1944 film, *México de mis recuerdos* (Mexico of my memories): "Dos danzas de salón, Amor" and "Corazón," p. 23.

<sup>147</sup> Mainly essays by Miranda (2001, 2005, 2009, etc.) and Saavedra (2012).

<sup>148</sup> According to Tempus Clásico, an independent Mexican record label, Olechowski has a successful career as a concert pianist and teacher. He has recorded more than thirty albums of Mexican music. [http://tempusclasico.com/Artistas/jozef\\_olechowski.html](http://tempusclasico.com/Artistas/jozef_olechowski.html)

character pieces like *Soñadora*, and oriental pieces such as *Canción Árabe* (Arab song) and *Serenata Árabe* (Arab serenade). The existence of these recordings points to a shifting attitude towards the repertoire, one that attributes Elorduy's compositions more value than what it had in the middle of last century. Additionally, some performers have uploaded amateur recordings of Elorduy's composition to YouTube. *Tres Danzas Tropicales* and *Airam* are among the most popular works on the site.<sup>149</sup> This proliferation of recordings is also indicative of a shift of attitude toward Elorduy's compositions, and the music of other Mexican composers of the nineteenth century.

The reception of Elorduy's music has changed over time. During the composer's life, it had the favor of the audience and the publishers. Even Manuel M. Ponce praised it and his friendship with Elorduy. However, the value of Elorduy's music was diminished in the eyes of critics like Mayer-Serra and Chávez because it did not fulfill their expectations and needs. That prejudice permeated over the historiography, silencing the music for decades. However, the horizon of expectations allows for competing interpretations across time. It is apparent that there has been a more positive attitude towards Elorduy's music in the last two decades, as the scholarship of the beginning of the twenty-first century shows, along with multiple recordings of his piano music. These efforts are indicative of an interest in the music of nineteenth-century composers, therefore attaching (or re-attaching) value to Elorduy's music.

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<sup>149</sup> During the preparation of this thesis, there were recordings ranging between the early 2000s to 2022.

Everist's argument made clear that the reception of a piece affects the perceived value of the work, and therefore its inclusion or exclusion from the canon. This notion aligns with Alejandro Madrid's ideas regarding "re-instating" composers to their "rightful" place in the Mexican canon.<sup>150</sup> It is logical that Elorduy's music was not included in the Mexican canon of the twentieth century, since it did not fit the political agenda of what Mexican music should be and sound like. Building on Madrid's and Herrera's ideas, the music of the nineteenth century is not compatible with the twentieth-century Mexican canon due to that canon's core principals.<sup>151</sup> However, as the reception analysis has shown, the music has value, and it would fit in a more open idea of the canon, one that as Madrid says, "contemplates the multi-cultural and multi-ideological context that permeates the history and the experience of Mexican people,"<sup>152</sup> or rather, in no canon at all.

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<sup>150</sup> Madrid, *Sounds of the Modern Nation*, see Chapter 1, notes 44 and 45.

<sup>151</sup> Herrera, "¿Qué es la Música Mexicana? Una mirada desde fuera del nacionalismo" [What is Mexican Music? A perspective from outside nationalism].

<sup>152</sup> Madrid, p. 169.

## Conclusion

The piano music of Ernesto Elorduy functioned as a springboard to address several issues in this thesis. First, it served to explore how the music of the nineteenth century was dealt with in historical surveys, and why it was marginalized after the Revolution. Second, framing the music with the concept of cosmopolitanism helped understand Elorduy's intentions, and the musical analysis broadened the picture regarding Elorduy's piano output. It also builds on Miranda's critique of Mexican musicology, what he called the "elephant in the room." Lastly, the review of documents using reception theory expanded the scope of nineteenth-century music interpretations, and their relationship to the established canon. This exploration, at large, illustrates not only the thought of the time but also how the Mexican identity was constructed.

As the review has shown, the historiography of the nineteenth century exhibits different attitudes in the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries. In the twentieth century, the nationalistic discourse put forward by Chávez, Mayer-Serra, and other intellectuals defined the attitude toward the music of Elorduy and other composers. This attitude relegated the repertoire to an inferior level and deemed it not valuable because it did not exhibit folkloric material or other elements that they considered authentically Mexican, creating a prejudice toward the repertoire that was replicated by subsequent surveys of Mexican music.

In contrast, scholarship of the current century exhibits a more welcoming attitude regarding nineteenth-century music. For example, Alejandro Madrid states that the Mexican canon is based on an essentialist discourse designed by a political agenda, and that the values

and premises of its creation should be questioned. In addition, Jesús Herrera proposed studying the music from a different perspective, one that understand that music has many origins, and moves past the prejudice of originality constructed in the 1900s. Recent scholarship also explores the music of women composers such as Guadalupe Olmedo and María Garfías, and different theories to approach the phenomenon of salon music. These efforts exemplify a shifting attitude and draw a path of possibilities for future scholarship.

Does Elorduy's music have null universal value, as Mayer-Serra stated? Theories of reception and the horizon of expectations allow for competing interpretations. Elorduy's music received praise from his contemporaries, and the composer himself enjoyed popularity among certain bourgeois circles during his life. As noted before, the repertoire was not well received after the Revolution and during most of the twentieth century. But more recent interpretations seem to give it a higher value, as indicated by the surveyed studies and recordings. The musical analysis shows that Elorduy possessed an array of tools, such as ornaments, arpeggios, and suggestive titles and epigraphs, that allowed him to effectively create imaginary realms and dance music. The value placed on the repertoire is changing, which may open the door for further scholarship, such as critical editions, studies about gender and identity, and spark the interest of performers. In turn, scholarship and performance would allow this music to be heard and be a part of the Mexican identity.

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