

THE ART SONGS OF MODESTA BOR (1926-1998)

by

Nicholas Edward Miguel

An essay submitted in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Doctor of Musical Arts degree  
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The University of Iowa

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Essay Supervisor: Professor John Muriello

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D.M.A. ESSAY

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Nicholas Edward Miguel

has been approved by the Examining Committee for  
the essay requirement for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree  
at the May 2018 graduation.

Essay Committee:

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John Muriello, Essay Supervisor

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Stephen Swanson

---

Luis Martín-Estudillo

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Nathan Platte

---

Wayne Wyman

---

David Puderbaugh

For my children  
and the other young people who will share the world they live in.

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## PUBLIC ABSTRACT

This essay introduces readers to the music of the Venezuelan composer Modesta Bor (1926-1998) and provides a resource for interpretation of her art songs for voice and piano. Bor was an important composer in Venezuela with a successful career in composition, pedagogy, and conducting. However, she is not widely known outside of Venezuela and scholarship on her art song is limited. This study seeks to fill that void by examining Bor's twenty-nine published art songs for solo voice and piano. These works include the song cycles/collections *Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano*, *Canciones infantiles*, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*, and *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*, as well as nine ungrouped songs. Bor's art songs are notable for her imitation of Venezuelan folk and popular music in the vein of Figurative Nationalism, her sophisticated harmonic language, and neoclassical techniques such as ostinato and motivic variation. This essay aims to help performers begin to understand the allusions to the national music of Venezuela. Her music elevates the *llanero*, the common rural laborer, and comments on the social issues of her people. This essay provides a brief history of Venezuelan music, a biography of Bor, and brief biographies of the poets used. It also contributes original poetic and musical analyses of her art songs, exploring the areas of form, melody, rhythm, and harmony. Venezuelan Spanish and the lyric diction appropriate for Bor's songs are discussed. Poetic translations, word-for-word translations, and International Phonetic Alphabet transliterations are included for all of the poetry used.



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### *Purpose of the Study*

Modesta Bor (1926-1998) is a significant figure in Venezuelan music history, and a composer well known to performers and audiences in that country. Her work as a composer, arranger, director and educator played a significant role in creating the relatively robust culture of classical music in Venezuela, especially in choral music. Indeed, her contribution to that repertoire was so great that “there are very few choral concerts in Venezuela that do not include at least one of Modesta Bor’s choral madrigals or arrangements.”<sup>1</sup> In addition, the ensembles she directed served as role models for the rest of the country, and her students went on to become important players of the next generation of composers and musicians in Venezuela. While she is best known for her choral works, she has a small body of songs for voice and piano.<sup>2</sup>

Modesta Bor was among the first generation to receive instruction in the nationalist school championed by Vicente Emilio Sojo (1887-1974), Juan Bautista Plaza (1898-1965),

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<sup>1</sup> Felipe Izcaray, *The Legacy of Vicente Emilio Sojo, Nationalism in Twentieth-Century Venezuelan Orchestral Music* (diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1996), 113.

<sup>2</sup> Cira Guadalupe Parra, *A Conductor's Guide to Selected Choral Works of Modesta Bor* (diss., University of Cincinnati, 2006), 17.

Modesta Bor’s works:

12 original choral works and 83 arrangements of folk songs for equal voices (children’s choirs)

30 original choral works and 200 arrangements of folk songs for mixed voices

32 art songs

11 works for piano

6 chamber works

6 orchestral works

incidental music for two plays

1 cantata

Antonio Calcaño (1900-1978), and others. Venezuela had struggled with political instability and a lack of stable funding for art music since its independence from Spain in the early nineteenth century. In the 1920s through the 1960s, Sojo and his compatriots sought to renovate Venezuelan classical music education along European lines. Through their concerted efforts, they fought to create every cog within the workings of a successful music culture: government organizations, higher education, primary education, public music appreciation, music criticism, music scholarship, large ensembles, music festivals, for example.

A cornerstone of their movement was the composition course taught by Vicente Emilio Sojo, complemented by the music history course (the first of its kind ever in Venezuela) taught by Juan Bautista Plaza at the José Angel Lamas School of Music. Sojo used the course to disseminate his belief that Venezuelan art music should draw on the unique genres of folk music that existed in Venezuela. Sojo, Bor, and others gathered and transcribed folk tunes from all over the country as part of a newly created government entity dedicated to the preservation and study of Venezuelan folklore. Bor and the 18 other students that completed Sojo's degree in composition helped to create a foundational repertory of Venezuelan art music.<sup>3</sup>

Modesta Bor exhibited these nationalist influences during her youth and following her studies in the Soviet Union, she incorporated the compositional techniques of the twentieth century, including extended tonality, non-functional harmony, and atonality. She was highly respected for her accomplishments and her compositions. Her works for choir, chamber ensemble, orchestra, and voice regularly won awards in Venezuela, and she was honored six times by government organizations including the highest honor the Venezuelan government can bestow. Two of her art song cycles received the National Prize for Vocal Music in Venezuela for

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<sup>3</sup> Izcaray, 57-58.

the year they were composed: *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, in 1962; and *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano*, in 1970.<sup>4</sup>

Her compositions for voice and piano remained more grounded in her nationalist roots than her works for piano and orchestra but incorporated many modern compositional techniques. Her early songs employ a tonal framework, and her mid- to late-career works are marked by an extended harmonic palette that employs quartal harmony, non-functional sonorities, and even bitonality learned from her composition instructor at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory, Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978) . Her songs have a distinctive style marked by the use of newly-composed melodic fragments reminiscent of Venezuelan folk genres, compound rhythms taken from Venezuelan popular music such as the *joropo*, and *merengue*, and well-crafted free counterpoint learned from Sojo.

Unfortunately, her works have suffered from a problem common throughout Latin America: poor music publishing. Even Bor's award winning *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano* was unpublished until very recently. This, of course, has resulted in the very limited exposure of Bor's songs outside of her immediate sphere. In this respect, this study is particularly timely. In August 2016, Ediciones ARE, a small Venezuelan publishing venture, made the vast majority of Modesta Bor's vocal music available for purchase online. Before this time, only one of her song cycles was easily purchased and one other cycle was available from select libraries. Thus, Bor's available works have quadrupled from seven to 28. There has never been a better time to provide singers with scholarship and resources related to this repertoire.

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<sup>4</sup> In addition to these awards, she won seven other awards for her compositions of choral, chamber and orchestral works.



I performed her most disseminated song cycle, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano* (Second Cycle of Romances and Songs for Alto and Piano), on a doctoral degree recital. I had discovered this work thanks to a citation in the text *A Guide to the Latin American Art Song Repertoire* by Maya Hoover, which includes the work in its “recommended repertoire” section. The musical score included in *The Latin American Art Song: A Critical Anthology and Interpretative Guide for Singers* by Patricia Caicedo was also cited by Hoover.<sup>56</sup> I was excited to have found this work. It was written specifically for a low voice, and while it was intended for a female, it accommodated well the switch from alto to bass.

The majority of Latin American art song is published for high voice. Therefore, low voices such as myself usually transpose the repertoire. Modesta Bor’s music, however, specifically takes advantage of the strengths present in a low voice: her melodies regularly dip down into the lowest parts of the register, and while the full range of the voice is used, the tessitura is in the middle. Climactic moments are not categorically assigned to higher notes; rather, the strength and richness of the lower-middle register is often exploited. This type of writing is especially effective with the alto voice that can employ chest voice for great volume and expressivity in a lower range that sounds earthy and grounded—ideal for Bor’s synthesis of popular and academic aesthetics.

Bor’s musical language is at once unique and familiar. The melodic content, based on elements of folk song, is accessible but inventively developed and varied. The harmony is dense

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<sup>5</sup> The editions are listed as being published in 2015, but they were not yet available for purchase until 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Kathleen L. Wilson, “Venezuela,” in *A Guide to the Latin American Art Song Repertoire: An Annotated Catalog of Twentieth-Century Art Songs for Voice and Piano*, edited by Maya Hoover. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 207-212, 236, 251, 268; Patricia Caicedo, “Modesta Bor,” *La canción artística en américa latina: antología crítica y guía interpretativa para cantantes/The Latin American Art Song: A Critical Anthology and Interpretative Guide for Singers*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Barcelona: Tritó, 2005), xxxviii-xxxix.

and rich but based on tonal structures and functional substitutions. It is music that is both satisfying to the performer and the analytical ear, as well as pleasing to the common listener. The set was well received when it was performed, and the professors that had heard the recital encouraged me to uncover more of her music and write about it. I am confident that many of Modesta Bor's other songs can be incorporated into studios and recital programs as easily as *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, and I believe that these works deserve to be studied and made known to the international singing community.

In general, there is a growing body of scholarship on Latin American music, adding to the handful of important classic texts on the subject.<sup>7</sup> While some of this new scholarship is in English, much of it is in Spanish, which poses a barrier to those singers, teachers, and scholars interested in this repertoire who do not read the language well. This is the first critical incursion into her art songs, and a resource for study and performance tailored to the needs of English-speaking singers and teachers. With such a resource, perhaps, these songs will be performed more often, in parity with the composer's intentions, and reach a level of exposure that more accurately matches Modesta Bor's importance and merits as a composer.

In addition, this study contributes to the growing and important body of scholarship on women composers. In many ways, it is the responsibility of singers and scholars like myself to raise up individuals like Modesta Bor, and bring them into the awareness of our musical community, so that their contributions can be valued and enjoyed.

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<sup>7</sup> With the addition of a few important dissertations in the last 10 years, Bor has entered the peripheral attention of choral conductors. Most notably Parra, as well as other more broadly scoped works that present her briefly alongside other composers, such as: Cristian Grases, *Nine Venezuelan Composers and a Catalogue of their Choral Works*, (diss., University of Miami, 2009).

### *Literature Review*

This study was conducted as a combination of different efforts and disciplines. To capture a complete understanding of the composer and her music, as well as generate a useful resource for performance, the disciplines of history, musicology, ethnomusicology, music theory, poetic analysis, linguistics, and phonetics were all employed and combined. The primary limitation of this study was the lack of access to primary documents including school and public records, personal documents, and manuscripts. Financial limitations, the timing of the outbreak of the Zika virus with my wife's pregnancy, and the political instability of Venezuela during the writing of this paper combined to make travel to Venezuela untenable. The bulk of the political and musicological data for this paper was derived from secondary sources on the subject. The integration and combination of these many sources is, however, a contribution of this project.

The ethnomusicological data, essential for an analysis of Bor's integration and adaptation of folk music, is largely indebted to the work of Ramón y Rivera whose numerous books on Venezuelan folk music are the best information on the subject. The theoretical analysis of Bor's music benefits from the groundwork analysis that has been done by previous authors. Much of this information is included in charts and in descriptions of the skills learned and cultivated under Vicente Emilio Sojo and Aram Khachaturian. In addition, I have contributed new and more detailed analysis of her art songs in the areas of form and harmony, as well as the adaptation of folk music in melody and rhythm.

The analysis of the poetry for Bor's art songs also represents a significant contribution of this essay. Before the poetry could be properly understood, the original poem had to be located. This immense undertaking often involved the perusal of a poet's complete works, requiring an inordinate number of books to be requested from distant libraries (my apologies to the staff of

interlibrary loan). This task was made more complicated by several factors: the title of the original poem was often not the same as Bor's title; Bor often only excerpted a portion of a much longer poem; occasionally printing errors corrupted the desired poem; and in one case, the poem was misattributed. In addition, while I am a passionate student and an adequately proficient reader of Spanish, it is not my native language. In some cases, travel to Venezuela is necessary, and I was unsuccessful in locating the original of a few poems. I am forced to leave this task to future researchers. The actual analysis of each poem is often my own, informed and supplemented where erudite criticism was available.

The generation of IPA transliterations is an important contribution of this project and a practical tool for singers. This required communication with scholars such as Armando Nones and Patricia Caicedo, and the use of resources on Spanish linguistics and lyric diction. This paper represents the first focused resource in English on lyric diction for Venezuelan composers, discussing the elements of regional pronunciation in detail alongside standard Latin American pronunciation practices. As with many languages, the rules by which IPA transliterations for lyric diction are generated is not strictly codified for Spanish. I integrated numerous resources directed at both the singer and linguist to create a well-informed and appropriately narrow IPA transliteration.

The translation of the Spanish poetry is also a valuable contribution of this paper. A literal word-for-word translation is included alongside the IPA to aid singers whose understanding of Spanish is limited, and a poetic translation is included alongside discussion of the poem for inclusion in recital programs.<sup>8</sup> I do not purport to be a poet, and my intention was

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<sup>8</sup> As far as my part is concerned, performers have permission to use the translations I have generated in recital programs; although, permission from the rights holder to is probably also necessary for reprinting of poems not in

not to create a new English-language poem, but rather to convey the literal meaning of the original poem in as clear and faithful a manner as possible.

The input of Bor's family members, including her daughter Lena Sánchez, her niece Marisabel Bor, her granddaughter Wahári Sánchez, and her great niece Stephanie Bor, was invaluable in generating a fuller understanding of the composer and her music. Communications with other individuals active in the musical community of Venezuela were also helpful, including Armando Nones, the editor of Bor's songs; Rafael Saavedra, a theorist who has studied her work; Khristien Maelzner, the author of a dissertation on her piano works; and Patricia Caicedo, a well-known interpreter of Latin American art song.

The primary contribution of the proposed essay will be the specific attention and analysis of Modesta Bor's art songs. There are important works that discuss her musical output in other respects, or that deal with Modesta Bor's principal mentors in Venezuela. These works were valuable references for contextualization and comparative analysis. I was particularly surprised to notice that three dissertations relevant to this study were written right here at the University of Iowa. I am proud to add my name to the list of scholars from Iowa dedicated to the study of Latin American music including Edward Cetto, Maria del Coro Delgado, and Marc Falk.

The 2006 dissertation by Cira Parra on her choral works is the only work in English dedicated entirely to Modesta Bor and was a model for this paper.<sup>9</sup> She provides a brief history of Venezuelan art music, a biography of Bor's life, a "style study" of some selected choral works, a discussion of folk music elements, and an annotated list of her choral works. While

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the public domain. I would very much like to know that they are being used. Please contact me at nicholasedmiguell@gmail.com.

<sup>9</sup> Parra, *A Conductor's Guide*.

Parra's history and biography are well done, I have integrated more information from different authors and provided more critical inquiry.

There are also less-scholarly sources of information that help fill out the picture of the composer. These include interviews, blog posts, and online articles in which her family and students recount their memories of her. These sources provided valuable insight into her life.

Another significant work dedicated to Bor's music is the 2001 dissertation by Khristien Maelzner on her works for piano.<sup>10</sup> This work is in Spanish and contains newly edited editions of her piano work. Another important section of this work is the inclusion of five complete interviews with Bor's family and students.

The English-language dissertation by Antonio Fermin written in 2000 is also related to Modesta Bor's piano works.<sup>11</sup> This work deals with the history of the Venezuelan *vals*, a variant of the European waltz that was cultivated by pianists throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. Some piano works by Modesta are studied specifically. This is the best resource for analysis and history of this genre, and it includes an in-depth discussion of nineteenth-century Venezuelan composers. Fermin has also recently collaborated with the Modesta Bor Foundation and Ediciones ARE to publish much of Bor's piano music, made available in January of 2018.<sup>12</sup>

There are three important authors that have written significant works on the life and works of Bor's musical mentors. These works are valuable resources for information on Bor's education and the musical environment in which she came of age. In 1999, Marie Elizabeth Labonville wrote a dissertation on the work of Juan Bautista Plaza (considered one of the

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<sup>10</sup> Khristien Maelzner, *Obras completas para piano de Modesta*, diss. (Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> Antonio Fermin, *The Evolution of the Venezuelan Piano Waltz* (thesis, New York University, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.edicionesare.com/>.

“fathers” of modern musical life in Venezuela, and one of Bor’s professors in college).<sup>13</sup> Her work on this subject resulted in the first monograph in English dedicated to a figure in Venezuelan music history.<sup>14</sup> This work contains the most detailed and critical analysis of early-twentieth-century culture in Venezuela; however, Modesta Bor herself is not discussed.

Marc Falk also wrote a dissertation on Plaza, under the guidance of Labonville, with a greater focus on musical elements of nationalism within his secular works.<sup>15</sup> This work has detailed descriptions of Venezuelan musical features, and elements of important folk genres.

Felipe Izcaray wrote an English language dissertation in 1996 on Bor’s other musical mentor, Vicente Emilio Sojo.<sup>16</sup> This work includes detailed description of Venezuelan music history, peppered with personal experiences that the author had with the individuals discussed. The work is somewhat laudatory, but it does contain a brief entry on Modesta Bor, with unique information gained from his personal relationship with her.

There are two dissertations in Spanish that deal with theoretical and stylistic analysis of Modesta Bor’s music.<sup>17</sup> These works are regularly cited in bibliographies, but they are, unfortunately, not available outside of Venezuela. It is likely that most of the information contained in these dissertations has been recycled in other, more recent studies, such as those discussed above. There is also a brief monograph on Modesta Bor by the same authors of one of

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<sup>13</sup> Marie Elizabeth Labonville, *Musical Nationalism in Venezuela: The Work of Juan Bautista Plaza (1898-1965)* (diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Marie Elizabeth Labonville, *Juan Bautista Plaza and Musical Nationalism in Venezuela* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> Marc Falk, *The Secular Choral Music of Juan Bautista Plaza (1898-1965): The Music and Text of Venezuelan Nationalism* (diss., University of Iowa, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Izcaray.

<sup>17</sup> Elsa Magaly Alfonzo Peyre, and Olga Elizabeth López Rolón, *Un acercamiento al lenguaje musical de Modesta Bor*, thesis (Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1991); Gisela Natalie Guilarte Mendoza, *Sincretismo afro-venezolano en las obras de Isabel Aretz y Modesta Bor*, diss. (Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1989).

the above-mentioned dissertations.<sup>18</sup> This work is brief and contains little information that is not available in other sources.

There is one article that deals with a theoretical analysis of Modesta Bor's choral music. It was written in 2015 by Rafael Saavedra.<sup>19</sup> This is an in-depth harmonic analysis of one of Modesta Bor's more popular choral songs. Saavedra's theoretical approach is significant for understanding Bor's harmonic language and formal structure.

The most complete published catalog of Modesta Bor's works exists as a supplement to a musical score publication edited by Felipe Sangiorgi.<sup>20</sup> The catalogs listed on the website of the Fundación Modesta Bor are also important.<sup>21</sup> There is a single unpublished copy of a catalog at the Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela that catalogs her manuscripts that were transferred onto microfilm in the early 1990s after Bor's retirement.<sup>22</sup> This source is only accessible at the library in Caracas. The works list included with this paper will represent the most complete catalog of Modesta Bor's music for voice and piano, combining information from the above two published sources as well as pieces of information found in other sources.

There are a few important classic writings on the history of Venezuelan art and folk music. These include a history of music in Caracas (Venezuela's capital and most culturally

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<sup>18</sup> Elsa Magaly Alfonzo Peyre, and Olga Elizabeth López Rolón, *Modesta Bor: Importante figura del movimiento musical venezolano*, (Caracas: Sacven, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> Rafael Saavedra, "Paul Hindemith y Modesta Bor: la extensión de la tonalidad en la armonía del siglo XX," in *Una Educación Universitaria de Calidad: Programa Estimulo a la Docencia Universitaria*, Chapter 17 (Venezuela: Universidad de Los Andes, 2015) [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu) (accessed July 2017)

<sup>20</sup> Felipe Sangiorgi, "Biografía y catálogo de obras," in *Cuatro fugas para piano*, Modesta Bor (Caracas: Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1991).

<sup>21</sup> Lena Sanchez Bor, *Fundación Modesta Bor*, <https://fundacionmodestabor.wordpress.com/> (accessed October 2, 2016).

<sup>22</sup> Rafael J. Saavedra Vásquez and Ignacio Barreto, eds, *Catálogo temático de la obra de Modesta Bor* (Caracas: Instituto Autónomo Biblioteca Nacional, 1996).



important city) written by José Antonio Calcaño who was among the “fathers” of modern Venezuelan music culture along with Plaza and Sojo.<sup>23</sup> All works discussing Venezuela’s music history reference this text. His discussion of the nationalistic movement probably contains some degree of bias, as he himself was an integral member of that movement, and one of the authors of the narrative that positioned himself and his friends as the progenitors of that movement. However, there is no account as detailed as his on most topics related to history before the 1930s. In addition, this is the information that Bor would have interacted with during her studies. Numa Tortolero’s discussion of Venezuelan composers is the most in-depth collection of composer biographies, and Modesta Bor is included in that text.<sup>24</sup>

Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera has six important books discussing Venezuelan folk music that are invaluable to the discussion of folk influences in Modesta Bor’s music.<sup>25</sup> These books are full of musical examples of transcriptions of folk tunes made in the early twentieth century. The entries related to various folk genres in the *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela* by José Peñín, and Walter Guido are also very extensive and detailed.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> José Antonio Calcaño, *La ciudad y su música*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Caracas: Ediciones Fundarte, 1980). 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Caracas: Conservatorio Teresa Careño, 1958).

<sup>24</sup> Numa Tortolero, *Compositores venezolanos: desde la colonia hasta nuestros días* (Caracas: Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1993); Numa Tortolero, *Sonido que es imagen. . . imagen que es historia* (Caracas: Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo; CONAC, 1996).

<sup>25</sup> Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, *La música folklórica de Venezuela*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Caracas: Monte Avila Editores, 1990); Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, *La música afrovenezolana* (Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1971); Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, *La música popular de Venezuela* (Caracas: Ernesto Armitano, 1976); Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, *El joropo: baile nacional de Venezuela* (Caracas: Ministerio de Educacion Direccion de Cultura y Bellas Artes, 1953); Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, *Cantos de trabajo del pueblo venezolano* (Caracas: Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, 1955); Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, *50 años de música en Caracas: 1930-1980*, (Caracas: Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1988).

<sup>26</sup> José Peñín and Walter Guido, *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela* (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998).

There are a few modern audio recordings commercially available and a small number of videos freely visible online that feature Bor's songs.<sup>27</sup> More important, however, are the historic recordings by singers active during Bor's prime. These include recordings by Morella Muñoz (1935-1995) and Isabel Grau, now Palacios (b. 1950).<sup>28</sup> Both singers knew Bor. The physical LP records are only available in Venezuela, but the librarian at the archive graciously provided digital versions of these recordings. Stylistic elements of performance from these recordings were invaluable in generating suggestions of performance practice.

The varied recordings and videos of music related to the folk and popular genres of Venezuela were also relevant to this study. The recordings made by Soledad Bravo in *Cantares de Venezuela* are particularly indicative of different genres.<sup>29</sup> They helped me gain a deeper understanding of the music and instruments that Modesta Bor heard and incorporated into her songs.

Very little audio-visual material of the composer exists. This is a fact noted by Stephanie Bor, actor, scholar, and Modesta's great niece. In 2014, Stephanie completed a fascinating documentary video on Modesta Bor along with an accompanying written document.<sup>30</sup> The

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<sup>27</sup> Tanya Kruse Ruck and Elena Abend, *Over the Fence*, Electronic Music File (Albany, NY: Albany, 2014); Marina Tafur and Nigel Foster, *Songs from Latin America*, CD (London: Lorelt, 1999).

<sup>28</sup> Morella Muñoz, *Siete canciones populares venezolanas de Juan Bautista Plaza*, LP (Polydor, 198?). This record contains *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, tracks 8-11;

Isabel Grau/Palacios, and Madalit Lamazares, *Isabel Grau, Contralto*, LP (Vistaven, 1976). This record contains "Coplas venezolanas" from *Segundo ciclo*....(track 3) and "Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito" from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* (track 5).

<sup>29</sup> Soledad Bravo, *Cantares de Venezuela*, LP (Ediciones Interamericanas de Música, OEA-010, 1979).

<sup>30</sup> Stephanie Bor and Paola Marquinez, *Modesta Bor: Una aproximación a la película documental biográfica que registre los aspectos más relevantes de la vida y obra de Modesta Bor* (Tesis, Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2014);

Stephanie Bor and Paola Marquinez, *Modesta: Documental biográfico sobre la vida de la compositora venezolana Modesta Bor*, documentary video, (Escuela de Comunicación Social, Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2014).

documentary is around 45 minutes long. It includes numerous interviews with individuals who were close to Modesta Bor, photographs of Bor, performances of Bor's music, musicological and theoretical discussion of her music, videos of Caracas and Juangriego, and a rare recording of Bor briefly discussing her work. Most of the information presented in the video can be found in printed sources as well, but the video offers an unparalleled glimpse into Bor's world and brilliant discussion and demonstration of Bor's music that would be hard to find outside of Venezuelan universities. The accompanying document contains one of the most unique biographies of the composer. The reproduction of numerous interviews with the composer originally published in newspaper articles adds to the scarce amount of Modesta Bor's own words that can be found in scholarly publications. Stephanie Bor's biography also benefits from the input and interviews of those closest to Bor and access to personal documents. It contains an intimacy of information that is not present in other biographies. Her discussion of Bor's parents and grandparents is the most significant of its kind. Stephanie Bor was generous enough to share these resources with me, and I have made them available at the University of Iowa Rita Benton Music Library.

This paper is meant to be read through and used as a reference for specific pieces of information. The initial chapters on the history of music in Venezuela, Bor's life, and the musical analysis are meant to be read through. The sections dealing with the poets and each individual poem can be read through but are also organized so that information on a specific song and poet can be quickly found for inclusion in a program note. The final sections dealing with pronunciation will be most valuable to teachers of singing and graduate-level singers who have had some experience with phonetics.

## CHAPTER 2: A BRIEF HISTORY OF VENEZUELAN MUSIC

The state of classical music in Venezuela is robust. It has been described as the most musically developed country in Latin America.<sup>31</sup> Given its nearly continuous political instability, the Venezuelan culture has overcome significant obstacles to create a musical environment that exports some of the world's finest musicians, harbors elite performing ensembles, participates in modern composition schools, and enriches the lives of its citizens through hundreds of choral societies and youth orchestras.<sup>32</sup> This reality is due to the work and devotion of its citizens and its historic development. Labonville confidently proclaims that "[t]he fact remains that art music culture in Venezuela, in spite of many setbacks past and present, has reached an unprecedented level of modernity and sophistication."<sup>33</sup>

Venezuela experienced its musical movements in a sort of time delay from Europe. The expected difficulties in travel and communication were exacerbated by political issues, causing some eras of music in Venezuela to last thirty, forty, even fifty years beyond their time in Europe. This resulted in dramatic realizations of decades of European musical advancement.

Tortolero divides Venezuelan music history into four periods that largely coincide with political events, as well as significant compositions, Table 2.1.<sup>34</sup> Bor was among the first

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<sup>31</sup> Francisco Curt Lange, "Introducción" in *Compositores venezolanos: desde la colonia hasta nuestros días*, Numa Tortolero (Caracas: Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1993), vi.

<sup>32</sup> Labonville, *Juan Bautista Plaza* (2007), 247-248. Among those exported musicians is Clara Rodríguez, pianist and professor at the Royal College of Music, and Antonio Fermin, a concert pianist. The Camerata of Caracas led by the soprano Isabel Palacios is a world-class early music ensemble.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 4-5. Tortolero provides these benchmark dates for the following reasons. 1779 is the date of the oldest extant manuscript of a Venezuelan composer. The oldest Venezuelan manuscript that exists is the score of a Requiem Mass from 1779 for three voices by José A Caro de Boesi for the Oratorio del Patriarca San Felipe Neri in Caracas. In 1814 the War of Independence consumed all musical life in the colony, and the School of Chacao's most distinguished composer, José Ángel Lamas, dies. The period between 1814 and 1821 was marked by war and great political instability, and practically no music development happened during this period. In 1822 the nation begins a semblance of stability, Juan Francisco Meserón (1779-1845) composed his Octava Sinfonía. In

generation to be instructed in the nationalist school in middle of the twentieth century, and she was among the first generation to explore avant garde composition techniques such as atonality and dodecaphonism in the 1970s. Bor's initial compositions and studies can be classified under Tortolero's third period: Musical Restoration: Nationalism, while Bor's mature period of composition and professional life after her studies in Moscow (1960-1962) can be viewed as part of Tortolero's final period: The Modern Era.<sup>35</sup> This chapter will examine the first three periods that lead up to Modesta Bor's life, detailing the circumstances of her education.

Table 2.1. Eras of music history in Venezuela according to Tortolero<sup>36</sup>

<b>1779-1814</b>	<b>The Colonial Period: The School of Chacao</b>
1779-1789	The First Generation: Baroque and Renaissance Styles
1790-1814	The Second Generation: Classical Style
<b>1822-1922</b>	<b>After Independence: Search for Stability</b>
1822-1853	Continuation of Classical Style
1854-1922	Romanticism
<b>1923-1961</b>	<b>Musical Restoration: Nationalism</b>
1923-1954	Initial Generation and the School of Santa Capilla
1950-1960	Maturity of the Movement
<b>1961- present</b>	<b>The Modern Era: The Avant Garde Modern Instruction</b>
1961-1976	Avant Garde and Iannis Ioannidis
1978- present	Revitalization of Instruction and Antonio Mastrogiovanni

1923, Vicente Emilio Sojo composed his *Misa cromática*, Juan Bautista Plaza returned from Italy, and together they began the process of restoration. In 1961, the nation ratified its constitution, and the first 12-tone piece by a Venezuelan composer was performed, *Casualismos* (Chance-isims), by Rházes Hernández López, that entered Venezuela into the musical vanguard of the time.

<sup>35</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores venezolanos*, 2. Tortolero describes the motivation behind his periodization: "...the reason that the periodization of the history of music generally coincides with politics...especially academic music, whose representatives generally depend on the support of institutions of the state that bear the costs of cultural policy." "Es ese el motivo por el cual la periodización de la historia de la música generalmente coincide con la de la política...especialmente a la música académica, cuyos gestores por lo general dependen del aporte de instituciones del Estado que sufragan los gastos en el marco de una política cultural."

<sup>36</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 3.

### *The Colonial Period: The School of Chacao*

The School of Chacao (1779-1814) ushered in a golden era of Venezuelan music history, where the best musicians came together in a concerted effort to create genuine works of serious art music at the highest level. This shining gem of musical culture existed in what was a relatively unimportant and neglected colony.<sup>37</sup> This period would serve as Venezuela's Classical Period and subject matter for the musical renaissance that would take place at the hands of Bor's instructors. It provided a source of pride for Venezuelans: Bor's alma mater and the school she taught at for the bulk of her professional career were named after famous colonial composers.

Bor would have had significant interaction with this repertoire. The School of Chacao provided historical material that allowed Plaza to teach music history through a Venezuelan lens. And, it provided musical material for archival research, theoretical analysis and performance. Music from this time period was included on programs of the symphonic orchestra and choir.<sup>38</sup>

Venezuelan art music begins in earnest around 1769 when Don Pedro Ramón Palacios y Sojo (1739-1799), a wealthy priest better known as Padre (Father) Sojo,<sup>39</sup> travelled to Italy to obtain permission to set up an Oratory in Caracas. While in Italy he obtained a number of musical instruments and musical scores, particularly those of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) and Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736).<sup>40</sup> He returned to Caracas in 1771 and established the Oratory of Saint Filippo Neri, and the Academy of Music in 1784, appointing Juan Manuel

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<sup>37</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 1. Citing the lectures of Juan Bautista Plaza. Deemed only a Captaincy General, Venezuela did not enjoy the same aristocratic attention that other colonies such as Mexico and Peru did, which impoverished the cathedrals and provided fewer households with interest in art music.

<sup>38</sup> Labonville, *Juan Bautista Plaza* (2007), 186.

<sup>39</sup> Father Sojo has no relation to Vicente Emilio Sojo.

<sup>40</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 36-37.

Olivares (1760-1797) as its director.<sup>41</sup> The organization came to be known as the School of Chacao, a gathering of musicians and composers that played together, shared ideas, and instructed younger generations.<sup>42</sup> A diverse group of more than thirty composers and 150 performers took part.<sup>43</sup> The first generation composed Baroque-era music of the church in Italy such as Masses and Motets. Almost all use Latin texts.<sup>44</sup> Joseph II sent an envoy of naturalists to study the nation.<sup>45</sup> They met with Father Sojo and his compatriots and were impressed with the quality of music that the Venezuelan cohort had managed to create in such a rugged corner of the earth. Upon their return to Europe, their monarch sent instruments to Caracas along with the newest music in the Empire: that of Franz Joseph Haydn (1773-1809), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), and Ignaz Pleyel (1757-1831). The shipment arrived in 1789.<sup>46</sup> The influence of the Viennese School began with the students of Olivares and continued for decades.<sup>47</sup> José Angel Lamas (1756-1814) is “considered the most important musician” of this

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<sup>41</sup> Izcaray, 4; Tortolero, *Compositores*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 6. It is better understood as a common style or aesthetic of a group of musicians and composers than a physical institution.

<sup>43</sup> Parra, 3; Lange, “Introduction,” 2. Lange describes the surprising racial diversity of the group and points out its most notable member of color, Juan Manuel Olivares.

<sup>44</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 7.

<sup>45</sup> Friedrich Schreyvogel and Karl A. Roeder, et al, “Joseph II,” *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica: March 8, 2018) <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Joseph-II> (accessed April 28, 2018). Joseph II, the Holy Roman Emperor of the Austrian Hapsburg dominions from 1765-1790, is considered one of the quintessential monarchs of the Enlightenment and the same monarch that commissioned *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* from Mozart.

<sup>46</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 37-38. Beethoven, born in 1770 would only have been 19 years old when the shipment arrived, and that it was unlikely that any of his music was included as some historians had believed.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 42; Tortolero, *Compositores*, 11.

generation and of the colonial period in general.<sup>48</sup> The musical culture in Venezuela would not be this concurrent with their European counterparts for nearly 150 years. A point which Antonio Calcaño uses to instill a sense of urgency to the cause of musical renovation and nationalism in the early twentieth century.<sup>49</sup> Calcaño's perspective reveals a belief in the inherent cultural value of European musical production that he, Plaza and others held. This implicit understand permeates the histories of Venezuelan music on which this chapter is based. The perceived value of European music gave purpose to the processes of musical development and education in which Bor took part. I do not seek to validate this perspective nor to refute it. This implicit bias is not my own, but an important part of the zeitgeist in Bor's time.

### *After Independence: Search for Stability*

While musical life flourished due to Venezuela's relationship with Europe's powers, the colony wanted independence like many others during that time. Venezuela declared independence in 1811.<sup>50</sup> After a long struggle with Spain, they eventually gained full independence in 1823.<sup>51</sup> Until 1830, Venezuela was part of *Gran Colombia*, which also contained what is now Ecuador, and Colombia.<sup>52</sup> A common theme in Venezuelan thought since that time has been an innate nationalism, and a desire to forge an independent narrative for

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<sup>48</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 8. "Considerado como el músico más importante del período colonial." Despite being a bit older than Olivares, Lamas composed more in the style of the second generation.

<sup>49</sup> Calcaño, *La ciudad y su música*, 363. Antonio Calcaño, *Contribución al desarrollo de la música en Venezuela* (Caracas: Editorial Elite, 1939).

<sup>50</sup> Donna Keyse Rudolph and G. A. Rudolph, "Independencia, Declaración de," *Historical Dictionary of Venezuela*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., *Latin American Historical Dictionaries* 3 (London: Scarecrow, 1996). 350-351. Independence day is July 5<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Independence, Wars of," 348.

<sup>52</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Colombia, República de, 1821-1830)," 168-169.



Venezuela. This sentiment was adapted to the composition of music by Bor, her peers, and her instructors.

The political instability that followed the revolution was devastating for Venezuelan culture and Venezuelan musicians. In the moments they did have for music, they continued the styles that had begun in 1789 with the arrival of Mozart and Haydn, unaware of further developments in European music. Composition until 1850 still exhibited the influence of the School of Chacao.<sup>53</sup> In the 1830s when new music finally made its way across the ocean, “the former disciples of Father Sojo and Olivares found themselves faced with an avalanche of romanticism...”<sup>54</sup> It took two decades from that point for romanticism to express itself in Venezuelan composition.<sup>55</sup>

Venezuela had always had good musicians, especially pianists, not to mention players of traditional instruments.<sup>56</sup> These musicians trained in private environments and some became quite good.<sup>57</sup> What it lacked was a cohesive organization of this talent.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the musical output of the era following independence was characterized by salon music, solo piano music, arrangements of popular melodies from Italian opera, and Venezuela’s first art-folk hybrid, the Venezuelan *vals*.

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<sup>53</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 11. Such as the Octava Sinfonía from 1822 by Francisco Juan Meserón, which continues in Classical style.

<sup>54</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 41. Quoting Antonio Calcaño, *Efectos de la Independencia en nuestra vida musical*, 25-27.

<sup>55</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 13.

<sup>56</sup> Fermin, 53. Citing Ramón de la Plaza, “La Música” in *Primer libro de la Literatura, Ciencias y Bellas Artes* (1895); Ramón y Rivera, *música afrovenezolana*, 21. The piano arrived in Caracas in 1796.

<sup>57</sup> Izcaray, 7; Tortolero, *Compositores*, 13.

<sup>58</sup> Although some attempts were made to form symphony orchestras, particularly *la Orquesta de la Sociedad Filarmónica*, none were able to last or grow beyond their initial organization.

The *vals* (often pronounced and written by Venezuelans as *valse*) was a waltz of the European tradition enlivened with African poly-rhythmic elements, specifically the combination of 3/4 and 6/8.<sup>59</sup> This genre had its own course of development during the nineteenth century, and eventually the *vals* “began to take on the character of the concert piece.”<sup>60</sup> The *vals* “would survive the invasion of foreign rhythms” such as those from Cuba and the United States, “that displaced the [native] national dances.”<sup>61</sup> It provided inspiration for some of Bor’s first compositions and was used by her and others late into the twentieth century.<sup>62</sup>

The most notable *vals* pianist/composer of the period was Federico Villena (1835-1899).<sup>63</sup> In his history of Venezuelan music, Calcaño lamented that Villena and his “companions, principally dedicated to the *vals*, squandered their valuable natural gifts on the low-quality taste of that time,” such as that of “the vacuous Gottschalk,” and he complained that musicians were not familiar with great modern artists.<sup>64</sup> Again, Calcaño reveals a certain bias for ‘serious’ European composers through the devaluing of the American Gottschalk. Perhaps to Calcaño’s chagrin, Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869) made a lasting impression on composers

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<sup>59</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 53.

<sup>60</sup> Torlolo, *Compositores*, 13. “...y empieza a tomar carácter de pieza de concierto.”

<sup>61</sup> Torlolo, *Compositores*, 13. “...forma en la cual podrá sobrevivir cuando la invasión de ritmos foráneos desplaza las danzas nacionales.”

<sup>62</sup> Izcaray, 114. The last movement of her *Suite para Orquesta de Cámara*, “Danza,” 1959, is a great example of the Venezuelan *vals*; Parra, 24.

<sup>63</sup> Fermin, 65-66. Federico Villena was the quintessential composer of salon music and the *vals* “characterized by brilliant passages.” Federico Villena studied with Julio Hohene (n.d.) a German pianist living in Caracas—also the teacher of Teresa Carreño (1853-1917).

<sup>64</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 49, 51. Quoting Calcaño, 55, 440. “Venezuelan Composers from Guzmán until 1919 were familiar with Chopin—who had died 60 yrs before; the vacuous Gottschalk;...Grieg, Codard, Chaminade.”

throughout Latin America in the nineteenth century.<sup>65</sup> Nonetheless, the *vals* from this period was valued by Bor and other nationalist composers as a music of distinctly Venezuelan character. Bor spoke specifically of the *vals* in her work *Genocidio*, discussed later, and she composed piano works clearly imitative of the genre. In Bor's art songs, some florid gestures in the piano, for example in "La flor de apamate," seem to contain echoes of Gottschalk's influence. But certainly, Bor and her classmates at the heed of their instructors sought to rise above the composition of salon music for entertainment and create music of artistic value and depth.

While some of the *vals* compositions of the nineteenth century are rudimentary, possibly due to the expectation that the performer would improvise, the compositions of academic composers display precise notation and complex technical passages.<sup>66</sup> Teresa Carreño (1853-1919) is noteworthy.<sup>67</sup> Carreño studied with Gottschalk and reached a significant level of international fame, and continues to inspire generations of Venezuelan pianists, such as Clara Rodríguez who has recorded Bor's piano works. In the 1970s and 1980s, Bor adjudicated a competition named after the famous pianist: The Teresa Carreño Latin American Piano Competition.<sup>68</sup> Bor, with initial aspirations to be a concert pianist, would certainly have seen Carreño as a model and source of pride.

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<sup>65</sup> Fermin, 65-66. Fermin explains that European dances like the mazurka, minuet, polka, waltz, tarantella, and contradance: "...[had] reached the repertoire of concert music in the form of short virtuoso pieces written specifically for the piano by composers throughout Latin America...[these] composers were avid followers of the American Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869)."

<sup>66</sup> Fermin, 65-66. Fermin also points out the importance of the press (the first newspaper was established in 1808) in disseminating the compositions of Venezuelan piano composers as well as the music of Europeans such as Frederic Chopin (1810-1849), Alfred Margis (1874-1913), and Émile Waldteufel (1837-1915)—composers well known for their waltzes.

<sup>67</sup> Fermin, 76-77. Carreño "is considered the most outstanding musical figure in the history of Venezuelan music." From a musical family that dated back to colonial times, she studied with Hohene, Louis Moreau Gottschalk, Anton Rubinstein, Georges Mathias, and ended up living and teaching in Germany for over 30 years.

<sup>68</sup> Jose Peñín and Walter Guido, vol. 1 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela* (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998), 403.

Second to salon-style piano music, lyric theater was perhaps the most resilient genre during this century of political upheaval. The *Teatro de Caracas* was inaugurated in 1854 and housed productions of opera, especially famous Italian works, like those of Verdi.<sup>69</sup> There are some original Venezuelan operas from this period in an Italian style.<sup>70</sup>

Opera was only marginally explored by the nationalist generation, perhaps because its early antecedents were so reliant on European models, or the difficulty in production, which was also traditionally outsourced.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps also, because opera had been a cultural trophy of political leaders, it was antithetical to the nationalistic focus on the authentic culture of the common man.<sup>72</sup> There were, however, some important oratorio-style dramas composed by Bor and her peers, including *Cantata Criolla* by Antonio Estevez (1954), and Bor's *Jugando a la sombra de la plaza vieja* (1973). Bor was working on another, the *Cantata del Maíz*, when she died.

The various governments that Venezuela had during the second half of the nineteenth century were sometimes interested in “constructing the image of a national culture that compensated for the social shortcomings and contradictions that bothered them, and to give credibility to their new apparatus.”<sup>73</sup> The era of Antonio Guzmán Blanco, who was in power

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<sup>69</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 45; In 1861, the Spanish popular musical comedy *zarzuela* also came to Caracas, and soon the *Teatro de la Zarzuela* was created and housed the first Venezuelan *zarzuela* in 1866, *los alemanes en Italia* by José Angel Montero (1839-1881).

<sup>70</sup> Torlolo, *Compositores*, 12-14. Fermin, 63. There were two notable operas written by Venezuelans in the nineteenth century. *El Maestro Rufo Zapatero* by José María Osorio in 1847 (the first Venezuelan opera), and *Virginia* by José Ángel Montero (1832-1881). Written in Italian, *Virginia* is the first entirely extant Venezuelan opera. Premiered in 1873, it was forgotten for almost a century and then revived in 1969, and 2003.

<sup>71</sup> Torlolo, *Compositores*, 12-14.

<sup>72</sup> William Eleroy Curtis, *Venezuela: A Land Where It's Always Summer* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1886), 151-153.

<sup>73</sup> Torlolo, *Compositores*, 13. “...constituir una imagen de Cultura Nacional que compensara las carencias y contradicciones sociales que enfrentaba, y dar credibilidad a su nuevo aparato.”

from 1870 to 1888 with interruptions, was marked by a number of public works aimed at using the arts to glorify the state and demonstrate Venezuela's success as a culture. While the efforts may have been vain in intention, the result was a vital infrastructure that provided the framework for developments in the early part of the twentieth century. The National Institute of Fine Arts founded in 1877 would go on to be called the José Angel Lamas School and continues to this day.<sup>74</sup> Modesta Bor received her initial instruction at this school. The Municipal Theater was founded in 1881 and became the destination for famous touring opera troupes from Italy and France. Also during this period, General Ramón de la Plaza published the first study of Venezuelan music history *Ensayos sobre el arte en Venezuela* in 1883.<sup>75</sup> Antonio Fermin notes that these governments did a good job of creating the illusion of cultural success and creating pockets of genuine stability. Eleroy Curtis, in his 1886 travelogue, noticed the affinity the government's leaders had for the opera, the existence of conservatories of music, and popularity of the piano, "which is used abundantly, as one who has tramped the streets can testify."<sup>76</sup>

Unfortunately, state support for the arts reached a low point during the government of Juan Vicente Gómez from 1908-1935, a brutal leader who distrusted the arts, demanded

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<sup>74</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 75. *Escuela Superior de Música*; Labonville, Juan Bautista Plaza (2007), 228-229, 232-234. This school has operated under a number of various names from the nineteenth century to the present day. In 1877 it was the National Institute of Fine Arts, *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes*; by 1923, it was the School of Music and Declamation, *Escuela de Música y Declamación*. In 1936 it was changed by Sojo to the National School of Music, which in 1945 split into two schools as part of Juan Bautista Plaza's efforts to reform music education in the country. The National School of Music became the Advanced School of Music, *Escuela Superior de Música*, continuing under the direction of Sojo. The new school, the Preparatory School of Music, was directed by Carlos Figueredo and later by Plaza in 1948. It was created for talented young students who, like Bor who had started college at age 16, couldn't receive the high-level instruction they needed in the public schools. By 1958, the Preparatory School of Music had grown to the point where both the Advanced and the Preparatory Schools were restructured into two independent, degree conferring colleges renamed the José Angel Lamas School of Music, *Escuela de Música José Angel Lamas*, and the Juan Manuel Olivares School of Music, *Escuela de Música Juan Manuel Olivares*, respectively; Izcaray, 15. Izcaray's dates on the subject are likely errant.

<sup>75</sup> Gen. Ramón de la Plaza, *Ensayos sobre el arte en Venezuela*, 1883.

<sup>76</sup> Eleroy Curtis, 151-152.

obedience and praise, and repressed his detractors. Calcaño remembers “what most interested Gómez was livestock...disdaining Caracas, whose mentality he distrusted.”<sup>77</sup> Tarre Murzi comments that “Gómez was almost an illiterate...during those years, culture was a bad word or a suspicious activity. Venezuela was the most backward nation of the hemisphere.”<sup>78</sup>

Due to this regime, the early twentieth century saw a stagnation in the advancement of music composition in Venezuela. Musical society was not lacking in skilled performers in general; pianists, violinist, and singers especially were abundant; nor the will to compose, for many pianists composed waltzes and more accomplished composers wrote masses and zarzuelas. There were active opera houses, a professional military band, academies of music, music periodicals, churches with choral and instrumental ensembles, and a handful of talented musicians were able to study abroad and bring their skills back to Venezuela. However, similar to struggles in the nineteenth century, the culture lacked concerted effort. There were not enough skilled performers in a wide enough variety of instruments with enough interest and support to bring them together to create larger ensembles dedicated to creating serious art music. As before, operas were typically performed by travelling troupes from Europe.<sup>79</sup> There was no symphony orchestra, and most quality musicians played in wind bands that entertained at hotels and parties, or at the silent cinemas. There were no choral ensembles except for the small groups that sang in churches. Salon music and player pianos were popular. Foreign dances such as rumbas, tangos, and foxtrots were becoming increasingly popular, but musicians were unaware of the musical

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<sup>77</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 52. Quoting Calcaño, *La ciudad y su musica*, 434.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 52-53. Quoting Tarre Murzi, *El estado y la cultura*, 61.

<sup>79</sup> María Isabel Brito Stelling, “Opera en Venezuela,” vol. 2 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela*, edited by Peñín, José, and Walter Guido (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998), 354-355.

progress of Europe including Wagner's influence, and Impressionism.<sup>80</sup> Composers largely drew inspiration from melodies heard from travelling European opera troupes and remained preoccupied with the influence of Gottschalk.<sup>81</sup>

Gómez was not without any allowance for art and culture within his regime, but it was only under the strictest censorship that it could exist. There were two periodicals that published articles on musical topics: *Cultura Venezolana* (1918) and *Patria y Arte* (1917) in which Juan Bautista Plaza published his first article "Our Music," stressing the importance of studying Venezuelan folk music. Such articles were only accepted under certain conditions:

...as long as, in those writings, sincere homage is rendered to the Chief of the Nation, Worthy General Juan Vicente Gómez, in admiration and gratitude owed to the unusual labor of restoration and aggrandizement of the Fatherland which he has been carrying out since the day in which the Venezuelan people anointed him with their confidence.<sup>82</sup>

### ***Musical Restoration: Nationalism***

Political restraints on the culture in the early twentieth century made it such that, as Antonio Calcaño claims, the Venezuelan musical public was ignorant of happenings in Europe: "The Russians had appeared, with their new music; Wagner had realized one of the most important revolutions, Impressionism had appeared in France, the English were excelling, even sleeping Spain had opened its eyes, without Venezuelan musicians having noticed any of that."<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Labonville, *Musical Nationalism* (1999), 55, 56.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 53-54. Quoting Arístides Calcaño, "Prospecto," *Patria y Arte* 1 no. 1 (Caracas: November 1917): 2.

<sup>83</sup> Calcaño, *La ciudad y su música*, 363. "Habían aparecido los rusos, con su nueva música; Wagner había realizado una de las más trascendentes revoluciones; había aparecido en Francia el impresionismo, despuntaban los ingleses, y hasta la dormida España había abierto los ojos, sin que los músicos venezolanos se hubieran dado cuenta de nada de eso."

Calcaño relates a fascinating story of how Venezuela came to know Impressionist music through the cigar-business travels of a Scottish musician who had brought with him a book of Preludes by Claude Debussy.<sup>84</sup> Two Dutchmen, a geologist and a banker, are credited with introducing them to Strauss, Milhaud, and Satie, while an avid record collector is said to have favored Wagner and to have shared his music with Calcaño and his friends. The influence of Impressionism was indeed significant upon the nationalist generation, providing a lasting inspiration in the areas of harmony and modal melody.<sup>85</sup>

However, Venezuelans did hear music by Wagner, Debussy, and other European musical revolutionaries. Tortolero and Fermin tell us that in the nineteenth century Villena knew of Wagner, and Delgado knew of Debussy.<sup>86</sup> They either did not like it or did not share the music significantly with other practicing musicians. It was not until 1920 that Europe's musical revolutionaries found a receptive, capable, and available audience in Venezuela that would emulate, educate, and disseminate their music.<sup>87</sup> The public had factions of resistance to musical change in the direction of greater chromaticism and dissonance. Sojo's *Misa cromática* written in 1923 and premiered in 1924 was met with criticism that echoed that of Europe's reaction half a century earlier. Nevertheless, there was a significant shift in musical culture around 1920

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<sup>84</sup> Calcaño, *La ciudad y su música*, 365-366.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Tortolero, *Compositores*, 16. Ramon Delgado Palacios (1867-1907) studied in Paris starting in 1884 with Louis Diemer (a classmate of Bizet and Debussy) and Georges Mathias, like Carreño. He returned in 1886, and although he was most certainly familiar with Debussy and the Impressionists, his compositions remained firmly romantic; Fermin, 65-66. Fermin notes that the German Hohene exposed Villena to Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, and Hummel, but that his "compositions would later evidence a stronger presence of Weber, Franck, and Wagner."

<sup>87</sup> In future research on this period, it may be interesting to consider the broader drivers of cultural change as well. The first orchestral recordings successfully made by Victor for their Talking Machine record player were made in the final years of the 1910's and they probably started to appear in the homes of well-to-do Venezuelans around 1920. In addition, the Panama Canal began usage in 1914 and brought with it a significant amount of ship travel to the region. At the same time, Venezuela was a growing exporter of oil. WWI caused significant migrations of individuals and ideas in the 1910's as well.



precipitated by individuals and coincidences, which once again forced Venezuelan musical culture to grapple with decades of European musical change in a very short period of time.

### Initial Generation and the Santa Capilla School

The musical revolution that would follow was largely the result of work undertaken by three individuals: Vicente Emilio Sojo (1887-1974), Juan Bautista Plaza (1898-1965), and Antonio Calcaño (1900-1978).<sup>88</sup> These three men strove to establish a musical infrastructure in Venezuela along European lines with structured, quality musical education, erudite music criticism, public music appreciation, competitions, archival musicological study, and a unique nationalistic style of composition. Felipe Izcaray describes Sojo's influence: "This self-taught man achieved during part of his lifetime what several generations of musical artists had failed to do: he gave sense, purpose, and logic to a musical movement which, until then, had survived only in the few homes of the privileged who could afford to travel to other countries or to pay private teachers."<sup>89</sup>

While these three men, Sojo, Plaza, and Calcaño, were musicians and composers, it was not their musical ability that set them apart and allowed them to make a significant impact on the culture. Rather, it was their focus on education, creation of large ensembles, musicological research, public music appreciation, music criticism, political acumen and the coordination of every musical element of society to a single purpose that made these men so effective at

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<sup>88</sup> Stephanie Bor, *Modesta Bor*, 40. Also important to this movement was Moisés Moleiro and Miguel Ángel Calcaño. V.E. Sojo is no relation to Father Sojo of Colonial days. The

<sup>89</sup> Izcaray, 11; Torlolo, *Compositores*, 16; Fermin, 56. Salvador N. Llamozas (1854-1949), an important piano pedagog in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, attempted many of the advancements that the next generation would accomplish. He trained a generation of pianists in Caracas, he promoted contemporary compositions as an editor of the periodicals *El Album Lírico*, *Gimnasio del Progreso*, *La Lira Venezolana*.

revolutionizing the musical life in Venezuela. Plaza taught history at the school to the students of Sojo who taught composition, thus they could coordinate a message of nationalistic pride and musical identity. These same students comprised the choir, the *Orfeón Lamas*, and the orchestra, the *Orquesta Sinfónica Venezuela*, both founded in 1930 and conducted by Sojo. The musical ensembles served as performing vehicles for the compositions of Bor and her peers who regularly appeared on the program, motivating them to compose and establishing their works into the repertoire of choirs and symphonies in Venezuela for generations to come.

Each member filled several niches within the culture. Plaza and Calcaño wrote publicity and criticism for the concerts put on by the performing groups. Plaza educated the public through radio programs about music history and appreciation and prepared them to listen to concerts. Calcaño wrote the text on the history of music in Venezuela that highlighted the important steps being taken in musical culture. Plaza edited a huge number of colonial manuscripts that were accidentally discovered in 1935, providing nationalistic material for the orchestra to perform and the students to study, and Sojo used the compositions of his students as material for the choir.

Sojo's influence in the government helped obtain funding for musicological projects, such as seeking out and recording folk melodies, similar to the efforts of Kodály and Bartók in Europe. Their agenda and vision for the School of Music always received precedence whenever challenged, which was not without resistance.<sup>90</sup> It was a firm handed and insular method of generating a functioning musical community, but it worked.

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<sup>90</sup> Labonville, *Juan Bautista Plaza*. 246. While Plaza and his compatriots were and continue to be widely respected and lauded as the "founding fathers" of modern Venezuelan culture, there were those that did not accept the "dark ages" narrative of music culture and who felt that important contributions of other musicians were overlooked or degraded in order to aggrandize the efforts of these individuals. They also criticized the closed network created by Plaza, Sojo, and Calcaño in which the writings and actions of one favored the other and vis versa. Most notable were the detractors of Gabriel Montero and Miguel Angel Espinel. Labonville attributes most of the criticism of these individuals to "personal reasons," but acknowledges that it cannot be "dismissed wholesale because it undoubtedly

## Maturity of the Movement

Within a generation, there was a group of young musical professionals such as Modesta Bor ready to fill positions throughout the country as conductors, composers, teachers, researchers, and critics. Stable large ensembles were performing the music of Venezuelans and participating in international events. Venezuela also notably hosted important international music festivals. The roots were set of what would branch out to be a large tree of music schools, choral societies, professional orchestras. A national passion for amateur and youth music making had been instilled, and a complete system for training music professionals had been created. The genius of these men lay in the realization that it was not just the making of great individual musicians that generates a healthy musical community, but it was in the integrity of the entire machine of musical life that allowed the culture to reach its true potential. Scholars, archivists, critics, conductors, administrators, politicians, concert goers, composers, arrangers, teachers, professors, and performers were all vital cogs that allowed the engine of talent to exert its full force upon the culture.

The interaction between politics, funding, and musical ensembles is significant for this era, and Sojo's close political ties were effective in motivating change from the highest level to support his artistic aims. Sojo wanted a composition contest to encourage young artists to compose new music, and he needed an ensemble that would be able to perform the works of the winners. He also knew that without a true symphonic orchestra, a European-style musical culture was not possible. The creation of the *Orquesta Sinfónica Venezuela* occurred during what is known as *El Trienio* (the triennium), a three-year period between October 1945 and February

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contains a certain amount of truth...[indicating] the biases of Caracas music criticism, and [revealing] the extent of the power and influence" of Plaza, Sojo, and Calcaño.

1948 in which a provisional government headed by Rómulo Betancourt of the political party, *Acción Democrática* (Democratic Action) ruled following the overthrow of Isaías Medina.<sup>91</sup> Sojo was a founding member of Betancourt's party and a close friend.<sup>92</sup> Izcaray relates that "in 1946, the new government approved a substantial subsidy for the *Orquesta Sinfónica Venezuela*. This allowed the ensemble to evolve into a full time professional orchestra. Thirty-two musicians, mostly Italians, were hired from war-devastated Europe."<sup>93</sup> The government's contract with the symphony included six concerts a year, with one concert for children.<sup>94</sup> The governments dedication to education in general was significantly greater during the triennium: the budget for national education went from under 30 million *Bolivares* to over 65 million *Bolivares* in a single year.<sup>95</sup> The symphony brought significant international exposure to the Venezuelan music scene. In 1954 and 1957 it performed at the First and Second Festival of Latin American Music of Caracas which brought in such distinguished composers as Aaron Copland and Alberto Ginastera.<sup>96</sup>

Sojo was named Music Director of the Orchestra in 1946 and established the National Composition Award a year later:

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<sup>91</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Trienio, el," 672-673.

<sup>92</sup> Izcaray, 20.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.; Labonville, *Juan Bautista* (2007), 124. Labonville clarifies the circumstances of how the European musicians were hired: "At last it was possible to professionalize the ensemble and pay the musicians a respectable salary. Prior to that time, the orchestra members had represented many different levels of ability. Now, however, it became necessary to dismiss all but the most expert and hire European musicians to fill the vacancies, about 40 percent of the positions."

<sup>94</sup> Delia Goetz, *Education in Venezuela*, Bulletin No. 14 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1948), 100.

<sup>95</sup> Goetz, 16.

<sup>96</sup> Labonville, *Juan Bautista Plaza* (2007), 124-125.

as a *Sinfónica*-sponsored event, using his salary as Music Director to fund the award ...[w]inning works would be performed in special concerts by the *Sinfónica* or by the various national choruses and chamber groups in the same year the awards were granted. This tradition was preserved until the late 1960s.<sup>97</sup>

Modesta Bor was a frequent recipient of that award; she was one of Sojo's favorite students; and she was among the first generation of musical professionals that helped shape Venezuela's future. In a sense, Modesta Bor was a product of her time and environment. She was a student of the nationalist school; her compositional style, like many of her contemporaries, transitioned from a nationalistic vein to a more modern personal voice; and her teaching extended the intention of her mentors to the next generation. Yet, Modesta Bor was in many ways unique and has left an important stamp on Venezuelan music, as well as a collection of repertoire rich in personal style and compositional talent. Even with an objective look at Modesta Bor's life, it is hard to ignore her surprising success given the enormous hardship that she overcame, and hard not to admire what must have been an unstoppable persistence to make a life in music.

By the end of her life, Bor had received ten composition awards, and six government honors.<sup>98</sup> Choirs, singers and orchestras in Venezuela constantly perform many of her compositions.<sup>99</sup> Many of her students went on to be the next generation of professors, conductors, and composers in Venezuela.<sup>100</sup> Yet, during her life, her dreams of being a professional pianist were destroyed by a sudden and serious illness that temporarily paralyzed

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<sup>97</sup> Izcaray, 20-21. The competition was later funded by the Ministry of Education, then by the Consejo Nacional de la Cultura [CONAC], which was dissolved in 2008 and replaced by the Ministry of Culture.

<sup>98</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 18-19.

<sup>99</sup> There is also an annual festival of her music in Venezuela.

<sup>100</sup> Stephanie Bor, 60. Students of note are César Alejandro Carrillo, Albert Hernández, Mariantonia Palacios, Gilberto Rebolledo, Oscar Galián, and Luís Galián.

her arms and legs. She persevered and changed her focus to composition and conducting. She travelled to the Soviet Union for study, thanks in part to her Communist sympathies, yet when she returned, these associations created difficulties for her in finding work. She persisted again and became one of the most respected composers and teachers in Venezuela.<sup>101</sup> Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that Venezuelans hold her in such high esteem.

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<sup>101</sup> Izcaray, 115.

### CHAPTER 3: BIOGRAPHY OF MODESTA BOR

#### *Early Life and Education*

Modesta Josefina Bor Leandro was born in Juangriego, on the Island of Margarita in the State of Nueva Esparta, on June 15, 1926.<sup>102</sup> Bor's infancy coincided with the nascent musical developments of Juan Bautista Plaza, Vicente Emilio Sojo and Antonio Calcaño that had begun just three years earlier in 1923. Her early musical influences provided the perfect combination of experiences for success in the new nationalistic school of music that they were forming. Her father played the guitar and *cuatro* (a smaller, four stringed guitar), her uncle Nicolás Bor played the mandolin, and her uncle Salvador Leandro was a violinist and was part of the original symphony orchestra started by Sojo in 1930. In addition, the Island of Margarita has a particularly rich folk music tradition. Her family played music for festivals, and she played the organ at church.<sup>103</sup> Her father and uncle "gave serenades in the streets of Juangriego, a subgenre of the Venezuelan *canción* that was well cultivated in those times. As early as her elementary years she showed a particular interest in popular and folk songs...as a child she saw the parades of Saint John the Evangelist, the patron saint of Juangriego; the *Diversiones* of the Mackerel, and other fish of the port, and the processions of the Holy Week."<sup>104</sup> Thus, Bor was exposed to the folk, popular, and cultivated musical styles of Venezuela from a young age, sparking a creative impulse early on in this talented musician.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Stephanie Bor, 50. "ambos daban serenatas por las calles de Juangriego, género muy cultivado de la canción venezolana de aquellos tiempos. Desde sus estudios primarios mostraba un interés particular por las canciones populares y folklóricas...de niña veía los paseos de San Juan Evangelista; las Diversiones del Carite, y otros peces del puerto; y las procesiones de la Semana Santa."

<sup>105</sup> Maelzner, 1; Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 13.

At a time when nearly eighty percent of the Venezuelan population was illiterate, and only twenty percent of school age children attended school, Bor was fortunate to receive a primary education and have the opportunities for musical education that she did.<sup>106</sup> She began formal music studies at the age of fourteen in her hometown with Luis Manuel Gutiérrez, a popular violinist and friend of her father, and Alicia Caraballo Reyes.<sup>107</sup> In 1942 at the age of sixteen, with housing help from her aunt and uncle Isabel de la Paz and Aquiles Leandro Moreno, she moved to Caracas to continue her studies at the José Ángel Lamas Advanced School of Music.<sup>108</sup> At the college, she was one of nearly 400 students, taught by just over twenty professors.<sup>109</sup> She studied theory and solfege with María Lourdes Rotundo during her first and second year, and then basic harmony with Antonio Estévez. Her theoretical study culminated in the course taught by Vicente Emilio Sojo on harmony, counterpoint, fugue, and composition. Her piano teacher was Elena de Arrarte. Also significant to her studies was her time spent in the music history classes taught by Juan Bautista Plaza.

After six years of study, while pursuing the equivalent of a graduate degree in music at the same institution, Bor began to pair employment with her studies. From 1948 to 1951, she worked as the head of the Department of Musicology at the National Folklore Investigation Service, “where she carried out the large and interesting work of transcription and compilation of folkloric material,” especially work songs.<sup>110</sup> This first-hand experience with folk music from

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<sup>106</sup> George I. Sánchez, *The Development of Education in Venezuela*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Bulletin 1963, No. 7, 24. The growth of education in Venezuela began after 1938, the end of Gomez’s regime (98).

<sup>107</sup> Stephanie Bor, 51.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Goetz, 100. In 1945 there 391 students taught by twenty-two professors.

<sup>110</sup> Maelzner, 2. “...trabajo en el Servicio de Investigaciones Folkloricas Nacionales, como Jefe del Departamento de Musicología,” Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 211. “...en el que realiza una amplia e interesante labor de



around the country would serve as a lasting inspiration and source of musical material in her songs and other compositions. At the National Folklore Investigation Service, she worked alongside other notable musicologists such as Isabel Aretz, Inocente Carreño, Eduardo Plaza, and José María Cruxent.<sup>111</sup> Transcriptions that Bor realized during this time can be found in the works of Ramón y Rivera.<sup>112</sup> Thus, while Bor is best remembered for the conservation of Venezuelan music through its incorporation into art music, she is also partly responsible for its literal preservation, and deserves mention alongside the most influential men and women in the discipline.

In 1951, Bor contracted a rare illness called Guillain-Barre syndrome. She was “the first known case of the illness in Venezuela.”<sup>113</sup> The timing of the onset of this illness was particularly poor, as the temporary paralysis caused by the affliction interrupted her graduate piano recital—in five days she was supposed to play Bach’s Double Concerto with the Symphonic Orchestra.<sup>114</sup> The lingering effects of the illness ended what was a very promising career as one of the leading concert pianists of the era. For three years, the paralysis in her arms

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transcripción y recopilación de material folklórico;” Stephanie Bor, 52. Of note from this time is “La diversión del Carite” or “Baile del Carite.”

<sup>111</sup> Stephanie Bor, 52.

<sup>112</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *la música folklórica*, 62. Bor is listed alongside a *malagueña* from Porlamar, Nueva Esparta, Archivo: 1130.

<sup>113</sup> Alfonso and López. *Importante figura*, 14. “...el primer caso conocido en Venezuela;” Mayo Clinic, “Guillain-Barre Syndrome,” *Mayo Clinic Diseases and Conditions*, <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/guillain-barre-syndrome/basics/definition/con-20025832> (accessed October 1 2016).

“Guillain-Barre (gee-YAH-buh-RAY) syndrome—polyradiculoneuropathy (AIDP)—is a rare disorder in which your body’s immune system attacks your nerves...eventually paralyzing your whole body. The exact cause of Guillain-Barre syndrome is unknown...There’s no known cure for Guillain-Barre syndrome...Most people recover from Guillain-Barre syndrome...for some people it could take as long as three years...some experience lingering effects from it, such as weakness, numbness or fatigue.”

<sup>114</sup> Stephanie Bor, 52-53.

and legs left her basically quadriplegic.<sup>115</sup> Even after her recovery, the resting position of her fingers was crooked, and the movement of her hands less agile.<sup>116</sup> It was this illness that set her on a path to become a composer, rather than a performer. Her son Domingo Sánchez Bor relates:

...she was destined to occupy the highest place among her generation as a pianist. However, in time, she was able to overcome this bad experience, that from then on would mark her existence, dedicating herself, to the fortune of all, to composition.<sup>117</sup>

After the worst of her illness, Bor married Domingo Sánchez Piconne in 1953 with whom she would have three children: Domingo (1955), Liliana (1957), and Lena (1959).<sup>118</sup> Today, Domingo Jr. is a composer and musician, and Lena owns Bor's manuscripts and supervises the Modesta Bor Foundation that promotes her work and legacy.<sup>119</sup> Liliana tragically died in her mid-thirties in 1993. Bor's marriage with Domingo lasted until 1963.<sup>120</sup> Later, in 1965, she married the poet Fernando Rodríguez García, and had one more child, Modesta Yamilla, in 1967.<sup>121</sup>

In 1954, Bor returned to the School of Music, shifting her focus to composition under the encouragement of Vicente Emilio Sojo.<sup>122</sup> In addition, at an unspecified date after returning to

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>116</sup> Stephanie Bor, documentary video.

<sup>117</sup> Khristien Maelzner, "Entrevista a Domingo Sanchez Bor," *Obras completas para piano de Modesta Bor* (diss., Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2001), 39. "...estaba destinada a ocupar el primer lugar de su generación como pianista. Sin embargo, pudo sublimar a tiempo esa desagradable experiencia, que de ahí en adelante marcará su existencia, dedicándose para fortuna de todos a la composición."

<sup>118</sup> Alfonzo and López, *Importante figura*, 14; Maelzner, *Obras completas*, 2. Maelzner has is a typo on Liliana's birthdate.

<sup>119</sup> Maelzner, 2; Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 98.

<sup>120</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 13; Stephanie Bor, 54.

<sup>121</sup> Maelzner, 3; Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.

<sup>122</sup> Maelzner, 2; Stephanie Bor, 53; Izcaray, 109-110. There is a slight discrepancy in the date: Izcaray states that "...in 1953, [Sojo] approached her in the halls of the conservatory and handed her a poem... From then on, Modesta

her studies, Bor worked as a music teacher in public elementary and high schools, and directed children's choirs, most notably the Children's Choir of the Caracas Municipal Schools.<sup>123</sup>

Sojo would be an important friend and ally for Bor until his death in 1974. Lena remembers that "[i]n relation to [Sojo] she always had the most respect...she was Sojo-istic to much honor. I believe that, from Sojo, she learned discipline with relation to her musical production."<sup>124</sup> Sojo took Bor's first composition, "Balada de la luna, luna," and premiered it with the choir, apparently without telling her.<sup>125</sup> It was also Sojo that later encouraged her to study abroad, and helped her find work upon her return.<sup>126</sup>

In 1959, her long and interrupted stage of life as a college student at the José Ángel Lamas School of Music—lasting from age sixteen to nearly thirty-three—came to an end when she obtained a master's degree in composition, *Maestro Compositor*, granted for her work Suite in Three Movements, *Suite en tres movimientos*, for chamber orchestra as the capstone project.<sup>127</sup> Bor was one of twenty-one students to graduate with Sojo's composition degree, Table 3.1, known collectively as the Santa Capilla School, *Escuela de Santa Capilla*.<sup>128</sup> Among those, Bor was one of five women to complete the program (indicated with an asterisk). Having begun her studies in the early 1940s, the other graduates were all her classmates at some point, and Izcaray

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Bor studied composition." Perhaps, Bor returned to the conservatory in 1953, but did not start formally start taking composition classes until the next semester in 1954, after Sojo's intervention. Or perhaps, Izcaray is mistaken.

<sup>123</sup> Maelzner, 2; Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 11; Stephanie Bor, 53.

<sup>124</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor," 35. "En relación con su Maestro siempre hubo muchísimo respeto...ella era "sojista" a mucha honra. Creo que aprendió de Sojo la disciplina con relación a su producción musical."

<sup>125</sup> Izcaray, 109-110; Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 11.

<sup>126</sup> Izcaray, 109-110.

<sup>127</sup> Maelzner, 2.

<sup>128</sup> Stephanie Bor, 51.

refers to them as a “Who’s Who of mid-twentieth-century Venezuelan music.”<sup>129</sup> Thus, by the time Bor was finished with her degree in Venezuela, she was connected to many of the important figures of modern Venezuelan music. Interestingly, the accounts of Sojo’s graduating classes differ between Ramón y Rivera and Izcaray.<sup>130</sup> The differences given in Ramón y Rivera are indicated with parentheses.

Table 3.1. Sojo’s graduates

1944	Evencio Castellanos Antonio Estévez Angel Sauce	1950	Andrés Sandoval (*Nazyl Báez Finol)
1945	Antonio José Ramos	1952 (1960?)	José Luiz Muñoz
1946	Inocente Carreño	1959 (1960?)	<b>*Modesta Bor</b> Leopold Billings Raymundo Pereira Rogerio (Rogelio?) A. Pereira (1966?)
1947	Gonzalo Castellanos Yumar Carlos Figueredo Antonio Lauro	1960	*Nelly Mele Lara
1948	*Blanca Estrella José Clemente Laya Manuel Ramos	1964	José Antonio Abreu
		1966	*Alba Quintanilla

The personal connection and professional respect between Bor and Sojo must have been strong, given that they had differing political views. Sojo was “a convinced democrat and publicly opposed Communism,” while Bor believed strongly in the principles of the political left and was “a member of the Venezuelan Communist Party since her student years.”<sup>131</sup> It seems,

<sup>129</sup> Izcaray, 57.

<sup>130</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *50 años de música*, 112-113; Izcaray, 57-58. Ramón y Rivera groups the classes of 1952, 1959 and 1960 into one class graduating in 1960. This seems false, given the graduation date of 1959 cited for Bor in numerous sources. Nazyl Báez Finol was excluded from Izcaray, and Rogerio (and/or Rogelio?) Pereira are spelled and dated differently between the two works. It is my suspicion that they are the same person, but more research is needed.

<sup>131</sup> Izcaray, 11, 112.

that the two were able to respect each other's political differences in light of their strong personal relationship.

Those close to Bor were struck by her magnanimous personality, an outgrowth of her political beliefs. César Alejandro Carillo, Bor's close friend and composition student, relates that she would often lend money or lodging to him in times of need, and then refuse any repayment when offered, which he believes "comes from her political ideas—she was a person of the left—every aspect of her life was in line with these ideals."<sup>132</sup> Izcaray's memory agrees with this sentiment: "This author has witnessed how Modesta Bor has written new compositions or arrangements in order to contribute to the repertoire of a community chorus, a student orchestra, or a young soloist, without demanding or expecting fees or royalties in return."<sup>133</sup> Her strong beliefs in equality and social justice made an impression on those who knew her.<sup>134</sup>

The reception and perception of Communism can be complicated, both past and present, in Venezuela and abroad. The discussion of Bor's involvement in the party and her opinions surrounding the topic are treated cautiously.<sup>135</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that Bor's political beliefs had a significant impact, not just on her personal relationships, but in her musical studies and her career, as well as her choice of poets, the message of her music, and the inspiration for her compositional language which serves to elevate the common people of Venezuela and their culture within the academic and cosmopolitan spheres.

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<sup>132</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a César Alejandro Carillo," 54. "...eso viene dado por sus ideas políticas, que era una persona de izquierda, toda la vida comulgó con esos ideales."

<sup>133</sup> Izcaray, 115.

<sup>134</sup> Correspondence with Marisabel Bor. Bor shared her political views with her brother Armando, with whom her beliefs took shape during her youth.

<sup>135</sup> Parra, 12. Parra notes that sources ignore the political aspects of Bor's career. My conversations with Bor's family also revealed an initial hesitancy to treat the topic openly.

## Studies in Moscow with Aram Khachaturian

In 1960, Bor attended the International Young Communists Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark.<sup>136</sup> As part of her trip, Bor went to Moscow “where she met the Armenian-Soviet composer Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978) during a reception” and obtained an audition on the following day.<sup>137</sup> Izcaray remembers what must have been personally related to him:

She had with her a score of her Sonata for viola and piano and played the piano while she sang the viola part. Khachaturian was impressed with her accomplishments as a composer and her proficiency in counterpoint, so he invited her to stay as his student at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory under full scholarship from the Soviet Government.<sup>138</sup>

Bor had written the work as a composition assignment in collaboration with the players of Sojo’s symphony orchestra. Bor relates the circumstances of the composition that had captivated the attention of Khachaturian:

It was a challenge. In a composition exam, the students’ works were performed by members of the Sinfónica Venezuela. One of them, the professor Lázaro Sternic, violist, made the challenge. He invited any one of us to write a work for viola. Nobody responded. So, I decided to do it, and I dedicated it to him.<sup>139</sup>

She decided to stay in Moscow, despite the difficulty of being away from her husband and three children for two years. She was the first Latin American to undertake graduate studies

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<sup>136</sup>Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 14; Maelzner, 2; Izcaray, 110. Izcaray remembers mistakenly that it was in Bulgaria. *Congreso Internacional de Jóvenes Comunistas*.

<sup>137</sup> Izcaray, 110.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. Izcaray offers no citation for this information, so one can assume it was learned through his relationship with the composer.

<sup>139</sup> Stephanie Bor, 54. Citing *Vértice* [Caracas] 29 (diciembre, 1965): 13-20. “Fue un desafío. En un examen de composición fueron ejecutados los trabajos de los alumnos por un grupo de músicos de la Sinfónica Venezuela. Uno de ellos, el profesor Lázaro Sternic, violista, lanzó el reto. Invitó a cualquiera de nosotros a escribir una obra para viola. Nadie respondió. Entonces decidí hacerla y a él se la dediqué.”

at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory.<sup>140</sup> Her daughter, Lena, confirms the strong personality Bor possessed, necessary to make such a decision:

Apart from the familial aspect, and of her insecurity over the effects of her illness, I believe that she didn't have any other impediment. In her core, she had a great thirst for learning and innovating...her desires for self-improvement were stronger than anything.<sup>141</sup>

While at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory, she studied polyphony with Sergéi Skripkov, music literature with Natalia Fiódorova, orchestration with Dmitri Rogal-Lewitsky, Russian with Nina Vlásova, and composition with Aram Illich Khachaturian.<sup>142</sup> Bor describes the Conservatory as a place of great performing opportunity:

Four floors, with all the accommodations. There are two halls for concerts: one for chamber music, the other larger one for the performance of symphonic works. And, they give concerts everyday including Saturdays and Sundays.<sup>143</sup>

The time spent studying with Khachaturian was extremely important for Bor; it significantly expanded her compositional palette and allowed her to meet other composers and musicians that remained important to her later in life. Lena remembers that “she was practically the ‘Favorite of Khachaturian’...[permitting] her to meet his friends and exchange experiences.”<sup>144</sup> Bor describes her experience with Khachaturian in a newspaper article from 1962:

Khachaturian is stern and charming at the same time. Charming because he cares about his students, he pays attention to them, he listens to them; but at the same time stern, because he demands a lot from them. He wants us to better ourselves. The Armenian composer likes Venezuelan music. He is especially interested in creole rhythms...Even though I like to learn to express myself in a modern language, I don't have to also lose

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<sup>140</sup> Izcaray, 111; Stephanie Bor, 55.

<sup>141</sup> Maelzner, “Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor,” 35. “Aparte del aspecto familiar, y de sus inseguridad por las secuelas de su enfermedad, creo que no había otro impedimento. En el fondo, ella tenía una gran sed por aprender e innovar...Sus deseos de superación eran más fuertes que cualquier cosa.”

<sup>142</sup> Parra, 12-13; Maelzner, 2.

<sup>143</sup> Stephanie Bor, 55. Citing *El Nacional* [Caracas] (marzo 23, 1962). “Cuatro pisos, con todas las comodidades. Hay dos salas para conciertos: una para música de cámara, la otra más amplia para ejecución de obras sinfónicas. Y se dan conciertos todos los días inclusive los sábados y los domingos.”

<sup>144</sup> Maelzner, “Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor,” 36. “...era prácticamente “la consentida de Jachaturián.” ...le permitió conocer a los amigos de este compositor e intercambiar experiencias con ellos.”

my Venezuelan expression, because the *Maestro* maintains with fervor and enthusiasm the idea that every group of people reveals itself through a unique emotion and sensibility.<sup>145</sup>

### ***Political Complications of Bor's Early Career***

Bor's return from Moscow was fraught with difficulty. Her arrival coincided with severely deteriorating relations between the Communist Party of Venezuela, and the democratic government of Romulo Betancourt.<sup>146</sup> Communism and its political adherents were "considered dangerous" for democracy, and Bor was "blacklisted and considered an active Communist by the government"<sup>147</sup> It was a very difficult time for Bor, both personally and professionally.<sup>148</sup>

This era is often not described in much detail in biographies of Modesta Bor, possibly because a Venezuelan audience would already be familiar with the politics of the time, or because authors fear becoming embroiled in political minutiae. Nevertheless, a brief political explanation is necessary for a true understanding of Bor's circumstances upon return from Moscow.

The government was led by the progressive democratic party, Democratic Action, *Acción Democrática* (AD).<sup>149</sup> Betancourt, who was a Communist himself in his youth, was the leader of AD, the most successful democratic party in Venezuela in the middle of the twentieth century.

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<sup>145</sup> Stephanie Bor, 55-56. Citing *El Nacional* [Caracas] (marzo 23, 1962). "Khachaturian es severo y encantador al mismo tiempo. Encantador porque cuida de sus alumnos, los atiende, los escucha; pero al mismo tiempo severo, porque mucho les exige. Quiere que nos superemos. Al compositor armenio le gustó la música venezolana. Se interesó vivamente por los ritmos criollos...Que si bien me conviene aprender a expresarme en el lenguaje moderno, no debo por otra parte, perder la expresión venezolana, porque el Maestro sostiene con fervor y entusiasmo la tesis de que cada pueblo se revela a través de su emoción y sensibilidad peculiares."

<sup>146</sup> Stephanie Bor, 56.

<sup>147</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 13.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> In coalition with the Social Christian Party, *Partido Socialcristiano* (COPEI) and Democratic Republic Union, *Unión Republicana Democrática* (URD).



The party was strongly left-leaning, but believed the democratic process was the most just.<sup>150</sup> Nevertheless, there was Communist representation in the Venezuelan legislative body, and the ideas of the far left were popular in university circles of Caracas, especially.<sup>151</sup> A Communist party was legal under the laws of the democratic government, a reality which was likely an important requisite for Bor's participation in the Communist conference where she met Khachaturian.

Betancourt enjoyed a close relationship with the United States during his presidency.<sup>152</sup> Both nations were motivated by the desire to bolster resistance against Communist uprisings within and around their borders, and the revolution in Cuba was a source of anxiety for both democracies.<sup>153</sup> However, this relationship was not viewed favorably by all Venezuelans. The United States was viewed as an imperialistic power within the region, whose industries exploited vulnerable developing nations and whose invasive, invidious culture was laced with a racism most Venezuelans found repugnant.<sup>154</sup> The relationship was particularly offensive to adherents of

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<sup>150</sup> Robert Jackson Alexander, *The Communist Party of Venezuela*, Hoover Institution Studies: 24 (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1969), 70. The party was successful in wooing most of the demographics that might be tempted by the Communist cause; in the middle part of the twentieth century, it prevented any Communist Party from gaining a strong foothold in Venezuelan politics.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 82-83.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 167. Alexander makes a point, however, that Betancourt's policies were obviously not dictated by the US, despite the amicable relationship; John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers, President's Office Files, Speech Files, Welcome to President Betancourt of Venezuela, February 19, 1963, <https://www.jfklibrary.org> (accessed January, 2018). President John F. Kennedy and Betancourt regularly exchanged diplomatic visits in which they extolled their amicable relationship and sought economic cooperation.

<sup>153</sup> Kennedy Papers.

<sup>154</sup> Winthrop R Wright, *Café con leche: Race, Class, and National Image in Venezuela* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 98-99; Alexander, 167. "Venezuela has been peculiarly subject to pressures and pulls from abroad ever since the petroleum industry became the major source of its income. It is widely believed, and to a considerable extent it is true, that because the major oil companies in Venezuela are American (the British owned Shell is the only exception), and because the United States is the most important market, Venezuelan governments are more subject to pressure from the United States than the government of any sovereign nation should be."

Marxist and Leninist ideologies.<sup>155</sup> Thus, many in the Communist parties felt that Betancourt was cozy with the enemy and antipathetic towards Cuba, the shining example of a successful Communist revolution against the forces of imperialism and oppression.<sup>156</sup> There were many reasons, of course, and this is a simplification of very complicated political dynamics. In any case, the result was that despite the leftist policies of the democratic government, there were those motivated to take strong action against Betancourt's government.

A Leninist break-away group from AD called the Revolutionary Movement of the Left, *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR) joined forces in 1962 with "hard-liners" from the Communist Party of Venezuela, *Partido Comunista de Venezuela* (PCV) to form the Armed Forces of National Liberation, *Las Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional* (FALN).<sup>157</sup> They decided to resort to urban violence and acts of terrorism to inspire a Cuban-style revolution in Venezuela.<sup>158</sup> It was extremely unsuccessful, and led to the alienation of the PCV.<sup>159</sup> As the violence escalated, Betancourt felt forced to outlaw the political parties until they had abandoned their pursuit of violence.<sup>160</sup> The Communist legislators too were eventually forced out.<sup>161</sup> The PCV and MIR operated in secret, and in hiding until the late 1960s.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Alexander, 161.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 53, 58, 201.

<sup>157</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, 298-299, 457-458, 507-509.

<sup>158</sup> Alexander, 76.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 106-108.

<sup>160</sup> Alexander, 79-81.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 106. By April 1967, the Communist Party had decided "to lay aside armed struggle and participate actively in the coming elections."

Bor's return to Venezuela occurred shortly after a particularly deadly act of terrorism, and the Communists' loss of legal status. It was through this lens that the authorities distrusted Bor's desire to teach at a university. Bor had just returned from studies on a full scholarship from the world's leading Communist power. In addition, her husband Domingo was an active member of the PCV.<sup>163</sup> Bor had no choice but "to flee to Lecherías" in 1962.<sup>164</sup>

Bor herself was not active in FALN or any revolutionary violence during this time, although she was friends with at least one other who was.<sup>165</sup> After her return from the Soviet Union, "Bor did not take part in political activities, her ideals were that of social equality, she believed in justice and was characterized by her solidarity towards any human being."<sup>166</sup> Even as Modesta Bor did establish herself in university positions, she never used the classroom as a political pulpit, according to her students.<sup>167</sup> Even though she did not participate in the party's activities, her personal convictions remained: her Communist beliefs "provided her the possibility to dream of a more just society."<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Stephanie Bor, 57.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a César Alejandro Carillo," 54-55. "Modesta was a close friend of my dad [Nery Carrillo], he was a member of the Communist Party, and was later in the division of the Communist Party when the PRV [Venezuelan Revolutionary Party] emerged; he was a guerrilla commander. My dad met Modesta in this context, not in the artistic and musical context, because my dad was not an artist or musician, my dad was, or is, a journalist..." "Modesta era muy amiga de mi papá, él fue miembro del Partido Comunista, y después estuvo en la división del Partido Comunista cuando surgió el PRV, Fue comandante guerrillero. mi papá conoció a Modesta en este contexto, no en el contexto artístico-musical, porque mi papá no era artista ni músico, mi papá era, o es, periodista..."

<sup>166</sup> Stephanie Bor, 57.

<sup>167</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a César Alejandro Carillo," 55.

<sup>168</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor," 37. "le brindó una posibilidad de soñar con una sociedad más justa."

During the next several years, Bor held a number of short jobs. In Lecherías, in the state of Anzoátegui, she directed a children's choir at the University of the Oriente for a year.<sup>169</sup> The choir was made up of the children of fishermen and oil industry workers. While working here, she began to write choral arrangements of which she would eventually write hundreds, constituting a significant portion of the repertoire used by similar ensembles in Venezuela.<sup>170</sup> She returned to Caracas in 1963 hoping to get a job at the Juan Manuel Olivares School of Music, the sister school of her alma mater, which had just been established in its current form five years previously by her former music history professor Juan Bautista Plaza.<sup>171</sup> For two years, she was unable to get the job due to her political association. She was briefly reappointed the director of the Musicology Department at the National Folkloric Investigative Service between 1963 and '64, a position she had held back in her early twenties, but the appointment lasted for less than a year.<sup>172</sup>

Bor was not without friends, however, during this difficult time. Thanks to her former piano teacher Elena Arrarte, she received the degree that she would have gotten if it were not for her illness: Professor of Piano Performance, *Profesora Ejecutante de Piano*.<sup>173</sup> Even though her instruction was not trusted, she was still highly respected as a composer and received several prestigious awards in the years following her return from the Soviet Union: the National Prize

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<sup>169</sup> Alfonso and López, "Bor, Modesta," 211.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 211. "...comienzo a hacer arreglos corales;" Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 17. Bor arranged "83 folk and popular songs for equal voices" (children's choir), and "nearly 200" for mixed voices; Izcaray, 113. "There are few choral concerts in Venezuela that do not include at least one of Modesta Bor's choral arrangements."

<sup>171</sup> See footnote 74 for a history of the school's development.

<sup>172</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 14.

<sup>173</sup> Lena Sánchez Bor, *Fundación Modesta Bor*; Alfonso and López, "Bor, Modesta," 211; Maelzner, 2. These sources indicate that this degree was conferred in 1959, however, the *Fundación Modesta Bor* makes it clear that it was after her return from Moscow that she received the diploma, although an exact year is not given (1962?). Parra uses the Foundation's timing.

for Vocal Music for *Segundo ciclo de romanzas for alto and piano*, 1962; the National Prize for Chamber Music for *Sonata para violin y piano*, 1963; and the National Prize for Short Orchestral works for *Obertura*, 1963.<sup>174</sup>

In 1965, Bor's situation improved. Sojo, a good friend of President Rómulo Betancourt, "convinced the authorities not to bother Ms. Bor with questionings or ban her from working."<sup>175</sup> She was appointed as the first conductor of the children's choir at the Juan Manuel Olivares School of Music, a position she would hold until 1979. Here, she wrote most of her arrangements of folk music for equal voices.<sup>176</sup> Also in 1965, she married Fernando Rodríguez García, and won the Competitive Prize for composing the Music of the Anthem for the Public University Union.<sup>177</sup>

Her political beliefs would interfere in her career in one other important instance several years later. In 1971, Bor submitted the symphonic poem *Genocidio* [Genocide] to the National Music Award competition, in the large works division. It was a programmatic work "which, according to Bor, describes the struggles of Venezuelan traditional music against the mediocrity of media-sponsored foreign music."<sup>178</sup> The work's political implications probably kept it from

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<sup>174</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 18.

<sup>175</sup> Izcaray, 112; Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 14.

<sup>176</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 14-15.

<sup>177</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a Cesar Alejandro Carillo," 54-55. Interestingly, this work may have roots in the Communist revolutionary movements of the 1960s. Carillo relates: "...let me tell you an anecdote that I do not know of being documented: *Himno de la Federación de Centros Universitarios*, originally, is not the Anthem for the Public University Union, but it was an anthem that had to do with the wild revolutionary ideals of the guerrilla movement in the sixties..." "...si te puedo contar una anécdota que yo no sé si esté documentada: El himno de la federación de centros universitarios, originalmente no es el himno de la federación de centros universitarios, sino era un himno que tenía que ver con los ideales revolucionarios del delirio guerrillero de los años sesenta..."

<sup>178</sup> Izcaray, 114; Stephanie Bor, 59.

receiving the award that year; it was declared “null and void (disqualified).”<sup>179</sup> Chirico describes the work in detail:

The will to affirm identity is explicit in *Genocide*, a symphonic poem whose title alludes not to the murder of a large number of people, but rather the massive liquidation of her culture. The conflict is managed to be invoked through the contrast of its own motives, reminiscent of popular song of her native island, and music sourced from television commercial jingles for products of international companies.<sup>180</sup>

“The commercial jingles were that of Pepsicola [sic], Margarina Nelly and a third, unidentified” that played on television and before movies in the cinema.<sup>181</sup> In the 1993 book *Compositores Venezolanos*, Francisco Curt Lange (the musicologist who also supervised the cataloguing of Bor’s manuscripts before her death) shared an opinion blaming the decline of native Venezuelan music on foreign influences—an opinion that Bor shared decades earlier:

...the current systems of radio and television, and the commercial transactions that have indiscriminately invaded us, without compassion, from the United States of North America, have now resulted in a fanaticized youth that has distanced itself from our authentic [Venezuelan] sense, in a manner that is apparently permanent.<sup>182</sup>

Bor’s own words about the piece reveal her detailed attention to musical features and allusions in her own work, the impact of her musical upbringing on her mature compositions, and the place of importance her native music held for her:

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<sup>179</sup> Maelzner, “Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor interview, 37. “...fue negado el Premio, declarándolo desierto.”

<sup>180</sup> Hugo López Chirico, “Modesta Bor,” *Diccionario de la Música Española e Hispanoamericana*, edited by Gen. Emilio Caseres Rodicio, and José Peñín (Madrid: Sociedad General de Autores, 1999), 623-24. “La voluntad de afirmación de la identidad es explícita en *Genocidio*, poema sinfónico cuyo título alude no a la muerte masiva de las personas, sino a la masiva liquidación de su cultura. El conflicto evocado se logra mediante la contraposición de motivos propios, reminiscentes del cantar popular de su isla natal y músicas de fondo de anuncios comerciales de televisión para productos de compañías transnacionales.”

<sup>181</sup> Stephanie Bor, 59.

<sup>182</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 98; Walter Guido, “Lange, Francisco Curt,” in vol. 2 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela*, edited by José Peñín and Walter Guido (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998), 101. Lange, “Introduction,” 4. “...las sitemas (sic) actuales de radio y televisión, y de las transacciones comerciales que nos han invadido indiscriminadamente, sin compasión, desde los Estado Unidos de Norteamérica, logrando hasta ahora que una juventud fanatizada se haya apartado de nuestro sentir auténtico en forma aparentemente definitiva.”

The horn solo with which the poem begins evokes the dawn on the day of San Juan, when the fishermen salute the arrival of the festive day, playing guitar or conch shell; this theme develops, and is presented later in a lyrical form which represents the beauty of the patron-saint festivals with the ringing of bells, fireworks, and the classical parade of music passing through the streets of the village. This passage of music appears as a *vals*.<sup>183</sup>

### A Note About Race

Upon viewing pictures of Modesta Bor, readers may wonder if her race presented obstacles in her life. However, there are significant differences between Venezuelan and US cultures surrounding race. For a detailed account of race history and politics in Venezuela, interested readers should consult Wright's *Café con leche*.<sup>184</sup> To summarize, Venezuelans do not view their society as one in which racial divisions and discrimination exist, and their definitions of race are also less rigid than North American divisions. Wright explains:

As for race, Venezuelans do not accept exact definitions. They traditionally used the terms *negro* and *africano* to describe obviously black or African people, the so-called pure blacks of the nation. For that reason, light-skinned mulattoes typically did not form part of the black population in the minds of the elites. Rather they belonged to the colored, or *pardo* majority.<sup>185</sup>

Modesta Bor's father was black, but Bor herself would have been considered of mixed race, part of the nearly 70-percent majority in mid-twentieth-century Venezuela. Bor's daughter affirms that Bor and her family were and are very proud of Leandro's African ancestry, and that race had no bearing upon Bor's life.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Stephanie Bor, 51. Citing *El Nacional* [Caracas] (julio 25, 1971). "El solo de corno con que comienza el poema, evoca el amanecer del día de San Juan, cuando los pescadores saludaban la llegada del día festivo, tocando una guarura o caracol; este tema se desarrolla, y se presenta luego, en una forma lírica donde se representa la belleza de las fiestas patronales con repiques de campanas, fuegos artificiales y el clásico paseo de música recorriendo las calles del pueblo. Este paseo de música lo sugiero como un valse."

<sup>184</sup> Wright. Despite the title, the book is in English.

<sup>185</sup> Wright, 3.

<sup>186</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sanchez Bor.

In addition, a significant factor that damaged and continues to hamper the relationship between Venezuela and the US is a fear and resentment of the importation of Jim Crow-style racism into Venezuela through US industry, media, culture, political influence, etc.<sup>187</sup> Venezuelans tend to consider “any expression of racial discrimination foreign in origin or un-Venezuelan,” and the presence of such as a particularly malevolent product of imperialism.<sup>188</sup> This understanding helps to contextualize the antipathy felt towards the US sometimes expressed by Bor, such as in *Genocidio*, and other Venezuelans that US scholars are sure to encounter in their readings. To be sure, other issues are significant as well, such as political and military interference in the region, economic imperialism especially related to large multi-national oil companies, cultural imperialism through the flood of media and consumer products, and cultural misrepresentation in media such as TV, movies and news. This enormously dense topic is far beyond the scope of this paper but is mentioned here to help contextualize some of Bor’s expressions that may seem somewhat off-putting to the North American reader.

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<sup>187</sup> Wright, 106-111.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 125.



### *Professional Success and Recognition*

Shortly after founding the children's choir at the Juan Manuel Olivares School of Music, Bor also founded a sextet of women's voices named Arpeggio.<sup>189</sup> There are two dates given for this: Stephanie Bor, Sangiorgi and Parra give 1966, and Alfonzo Peyre, and Maelzner give 1967.<sup>190</sup> The group was dedicated to the performance of children's songs and popular folk melodies, as well as polyphonic music composed for the group. She recorded two LP's with Arpeggio.<sup>191</sup> Several years later, she conducted the CANTV (Choir of Venezuela's Telephone Company) from 1971-1973, also recording two discs.<sup>192</sup>

In the seventies, Bor cemented her reputation as a composer and educator. She won two more National Music Prize's: National Prize for Vocal Music for *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*, in 1970, and Municipal Prize for Vocal Music for the choral work *La mañana ajena*, in 1971 (of which Bor was the first recipient).<sup>193</sup> A couple years later, in 1973, she was appointed Professor of Composition at the Jose Lorenzo Llamozas School of Music where she would work until 1990. In 1974 she was appointed Head of the Music Division of the Department of Culture at the Central University of Venezuela (UCV) "where she promoted musical events, festivals, concerts and music publications." until 1989.<sup>194</sup> Also in 1974, she

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<sup>189</sup> Stephanie Bor, 58. The singers in the group were Aura Colina, soprano; Yasmira Ruiz, soprano; Miriam Bello, mezzosoprano; Evelia Rivas, mezzosoprano; Consuelo Suarez, contralto; and Gloris López, contralto.

<sup>190</sup> Alfonso and López. *Importante figura*, 16.

<sup>191</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 15, 128-129; Modesta Bor, *Música Venezolana*, Grupo Vocal Arpeggio, LP (Discomoda, 196?); Modesta Bor, *Polifonía Infantil y Popular Venezolana*, Grupo Vocal Arpeggio, LP, (no label. no date).

<sup>192</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 15.

<sup>193</sup> Humberto Sagredo, "Premios Municipales," in vol. 2 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela*, edited by José Peñín and Walter Guido (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998), 478. "El Concejo Municipal del Distrito Federal (Caracas), a través de su Comisión de Cultura, otorga un premio anual de Composición Musical desde 1971."

<sup>194</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 15, 18. *Dirección de Cultura de la Universidad Central de Venezuela*.

received an educational honor from the government: The Venezuelan Republic Honors Teachers: Order 27 of June.<sup>195</sup> By 1978, she was a significant enough figure in composition and arranging to be included in Guido Walter's *Panorama de la música en Venezuela*.<sup>196</sup> Carillo recalls his first encounter with her, and the stature she already possessed at that point in time:

Some day in 1978, which I cannot precisely say, I directed myself to the UCV to talk with Modesta Bor...I knew what she was and represented for our national music....I was a bit nervous, due to the stature of person with whom I was about to interview...I had met someone who was going to mark, forever, the course of my life as a human being, musician, arranger, director, and composer."<sup>197</sup>

The following decade was distinguished by three invitations to Cuba to participate in music festivals, and the climactic year of 1986 in which she received three separate composition awards and two government honors. In 1982 she was invited to Cuba by the House of the Americas, *Casa de las Américas*, to serve on the jury of the Musicology Award. In 1984, she was invited to participate in the First International Festival of Contemporary Music, hosted by the Cuban Writers' and Artists' Union. She was invited again to the second such festival in 1986. This time, she submitted a work to the composition contest— *Son Venezolano*, a new work for choir—and won the José Angel Montero Cuban National Prize for Composition. Also at that same festival, her Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1983) was featured, with pianist Teresa

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<sup>195</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 19. "La República de Venezuela honra a los educadores: Orden 27 de Junio"

<sup>196</sup> Walter Guido, *Panorama de la música en Venezuela* (Caracas: Fundarte, 1978), 35. This was Modesta Bor's first appearance in a scholarly reference. "Modesta Bor has done interesting work, not only in composition, but also in the harmonization of traditional melodies and the arrangements for choir. Of her catalog, we extraxt: Obertura para orquesta (1963); Sonata para violín y piano (1963); Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano (1970)" "Modesta Bor ha realizado interesantes trabajos no sólo en la composición sino también en la armonización de melodías tradicionales y en arreglos para coro. De su catálogo extraemos..."

<sup>197</sup> César Alejandro Carillo, "La vida con Modesta," Blog *musicarrillo: experiencias y reflexiones sobre música y arte*, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010, <https://musicarrillo.com/2010/05/09/la-vida-con-modesta-i/> (accessed June 1, 2016). "...un día cualquiera de 1978, el cual ya no puedo precisar, me dirigí a la UCV a hablar con Modesta Bor...Eso sí, sabía lo que ella era y representaba para nuestra música nacional....estaba un poco nervioso debido a la talla del personaje con el cual me iba a entrevistar...había conocido a quien iba marcar, para siempre, el curso de mi vida como ser humano, músico, arreglista, director y compositor..."

Junco, and conductor Jorge López Marín. In addition to the Cuban Prize, she won the Caro de Boesi National Composition Prize, for *Acuarelas* for string orchestra; and the Vinicio Adames National Choral Music Prize for *Basta, basta, basta*. That same year, the Consejo Nacional de la Cultura [CONAC] awarded her a Special Prize, and the Legislative Assembly of the Miranda State named her into the Order of Vicente Emilio Sojo, First Class.

Lena explains how her mother's time in Moscow helped her make the contacts that would later help to generate her strong relationship with Cuba:

Mother had Manolo Puerta as a classmate in the Soviet Union. He contacted her after many years, and through him mother had the opportunity of having contacts with the Writers and Artists Union in Cuba, especially with the excellent pianist named Jorge Gómez Labraña. He even came to Venezuela and stayed at our home for a few months. There, they had the opportunity to exchange ideas. After her first visit, her relationships strengthened with many distinguished musicians from Cuba, México, Brazil and other countries participating in those festivals; and of course, upon getting to know her music, a great respect grew for Modesta in Cuba, in addition to having as a reference having studied with Khachaturian.<sup>198</sup>

In 1990 at the age of sixty-four, Bor retired from her positions in Caracas, and moved to Mérida City in western Venezuela.<sup>199</sup> That year, the University Santa Maria paid homage to Bor in the Seventh Festival of Choirs, and the University Choir Foundation dedicated their entire Festival of Children's Choirs program to Bor. One year later, CONAC awarded Bor the National Prize for Music, which although its name is very similar to other awards, Parra tells us that this particular award is "the highest honor given to any musician in Venezuela. It includes a stipend

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<sup>198</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor," 37. "Mama tuvo como compañero de estudios en la Unión Soviética a Manolo Puerta. Esta persona la contactó de muchos años y a través de él, tuvo mamá la oportunidad de hacer contactos con Union de Escritores y Artistas cubanos [UNEAC] en Cuba, en espeical, con un pianista excelente cuyo nombre es Jorge Gómez Labraña. Incluso él vino a Venezuela y se quedó en casa por unos meses. Allí tuvieron la oportunidad de intercambiar ideas. A partir del primer viaje, se afianzaron las relaciones con muchos músicos destacados de Cuba, México, Brasil y otros países participantes en esos Festivales y, por supuesto, al darse a conocer su música, surgió un gran respeto por Modesta en Cuba, aprte de tener como referencia el haber estudiado con Jachaturian."

<sup>199</sup> Stephanie Bor, 62. For Bor, Caracas had become an overbearing place to live: "In Caracas, I was buried alive" "En Caracas estuve sepultada en vida" Citing *El Universal*, Caracas, noviembre, 13, 1991.

for life given by the Venezuelan government.”<sup>200</sup> According to Alfonso Peyre, this award was granted for “her fruitful work as a composer and educator, as well as her valuable contribution to the Venezuelan choral movement.”<sup>201</sup>

Even though Bor was subsidized, she could not resist the opportunity to educate. She became the professor of harmony and composition at the Centro Universitario de Artes (University Centre for the Arts) and later at the Music Department of the Universidad de los Andes (ULA), also teaching choral conducting and leading workshops on conducting children’s choirs.<sup>202</sup> Lena describes the personal significance of her final years in Mérida:

...the loss of my sister Liliana, who died in 1993, set off a depressed stage...[she] felt great solitude...Nevertheless, she received a lot of love from everyone. Especially...her students that were like children to her... [it] managed to bring about a deep comprehension about many aspects that she needed to understand. I think that it was a great benediction to leave from there. It was her reencounter with spirituality.<sup>203</sup>

Modesta Bor died on April 8, 1998 at the age of seventy-one.<sup>204</sup> She is buried in her hometown of Juangriego.<sup>205</sup>

All of those with whom this author has corresponded, and those who knew her interviewed by others, were deeply impressed with the quality of character that Modesta Bor possessed and her dedication to her work, her students, her family, and others in general. It is

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<sup>200</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 19.

<sup>201</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 211.

<sup>202</sup> Parra, *Conductors Guide*, 15;

<sup>203</sup> Maelzer, “Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor,” 38. “Creo que la pérdida de mi hermana Liliana, quien falleció en 1993, desencadenó una etapa depresiva...Sentía una gran soledad ...Sin embargo, creo que recibió mucho amor de parte de todos. En especial...sus alumnos que ella consideraba como sus hijos...alcanzó una gran comprensión acerca de muchos aspectos que necesitaba entender. Creo que fue una gran bendición venirse para acá. Fue su reencuentro con la espiritualidad.”

<sup>204</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 17. Parra indicates that Bor was seventy-two, but her birthday had not yet arrived being only April of that year, and her birthday in June.

<sup>205</sup> Stephanie Bor, 64.

clear that she left not only an important musical legacy that continues to have influence in Venezuela, but also an inspirational legacy of attitude, character, and generosity that has been equally significant.

## CHAPTER 4: THE MUSIC

### *Nationalism*

While numerous musical examples are provided in this section, it would be overwhelming to provide a figure for every reference to Bor's songs. Therefore, readers may benefit from having her scores at hand if they wish to view the music at every mention.

Modesta Bor's musical style is defined by an imitation and adaptation of traditional folk genres. Venezuelan conductor Hugo López Chirico defines that quality of musical nationalism consistent throughout her life: "The search for authenticity, through the affirmation of the Latin American cultural identity, is the most salient sign of an aesthetic that remained nearly unchanged..."<sup>206</sup> Musical nationalism in Venezuela is typically categorized according to the criterion set forth by the musicologist José Peñín. His organization is described in the Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. José Peñín's categorization of musical nationalism<sup>207</sup>

Music Categorization	Description
Nationalistic	"Uses a national style for political, religious, artistic, or cultural reasons."
Objective Nationalism or National Music	Folk music in its original context, which "includes elements and values considered to be representative of a particular society"
Subjective Nationalism	Folk music outside of its original context
Figurative Nationalism or Atmosphere of Nationalism	Use of "folk or traditional elements as inspiration, motivation, or primary source material to write a piece of art music"
Historical or Reflexive Nationalistic Music	"Evoke[s] a particular historical act or figure"
Stylized Nationalism	"Based on the essence of folk music... general nature of the original music"
Folklorized	"[Music that] is used in the natural social events of the people of that culture and the name of the composer is not even remembered or important"

<sup>206</sup> Chirico, "Modesta Bor," 623-24. "La búsqueda de la autenticidad, a través de la afirmación de la identidad cultural latinoamericana, es el signo sobresaliente de una estética que encuentra casi sin variación..."

<sup>207</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 21-23, 34. Quoting José Peñín, *Nacionalismo Musical en Venezuela* (Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1999), 20, 301.

The use of folk and popular music in the context of art music is considered a feature of the musical nationalism espoused by Bor's mentors, Sojo and Plaza. The students of Sojo's composition class and the methods instructed by Sojo are termed the Santa Capilla School, and their compositional philosophy is broadly considered "Figurative Nationalism."<sup>208</sup> In this vein, Sojo "encouraged his students, including Bor, to incorporate elements of folk and indigenous music to create works of art."<sup>209</sup> Peñín describes Figurative Nationalism in more detail:

In this part we have to allocate all those academic authors that have from an individual perspective, or in a school of composition, used folk music, traditional music, or 'national music' as motivation, as source of inspiration, as attitude, as primary material, or simply as pretext for writing their work and thus have recalled that society. Some formal resources, melodic gestures, metrical structures characteristic of folk genres or simply to write new music in the style of folk music, that serves to make reference to or create an atmosphere of the music of a region that the audience will recognize as such.<sup>210</sup>

Discussions with her family members confirm what academic studies posit: that her music, both her written compositions and the music making she shared with students, friends and family derived great inspiration from the folk music that she grew up with, studied professionally and played herself throughout her life.<sup>211</sup> Some of Bor's favorite genres of popular music to

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<sup>208</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 23. Bor's alma mater, the Angel Lamas School of Music is "known as the Santa Capilla School since its site is situated in downtown Caracas on the Santa Capilla corner (Downtown Caracas addresses are marked by its corners, and not by names of the streets)."

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, 31-32.

<sup>210</sup> Maelzner, 7. Quoting Peñín and Guido, vol. 2, 316. "En esta parte tenemos que colocar a todos aquellos autores académicos que bien desde una postura individual o en grupo formando escuela, han utilizado lo folklórico, lo tradicional, "lo nacional" como motivación, como fuente de inspiración, como actitud, como materia prima o simplemente como pretexto para escribir su obra y así se lo ha reconocido la propia sociedad. Algunos recursos formales, giros melódicos, estructuras métricas características de especies folklóricas o simplemente escribir nuevas músicas a la manera de las folklóricas, que servirán para hacer referencia o crear una atmósfera de la música de una región que la audiencia así se lo reconoce."

<sup>211</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor; Maelzner, 18; Peyre and López, "Bor, Modesta," 212; Correspondence with Wahári Sánchez Bor. "Her experiences are very apparent in her work...She did lots of investigative work, going into town and talking with people that taught her the rhythms and culture of each place. With those rhythms she made variations and used many Venezuelan rhythms within her works." "Sus vivencias están muy marcadas en su obra...hizo muchos trabajos de investigación yendo a los pueblos y hablando con personas que les enseñaban los

adapt were the *vals*, *joropo*, *polo*, *fulía*, *merengue*, *aguinaldo* and varieties of unaccompanied work songs, discussed in more detail later.<sup>212</sup>

Written statements are not necessary for the intended audience of Bor's brand of musical nationalism. As Peñín's description of Figurative Nationalism implies—"[to] create an atmosphere of the music of a region that the audience will recognize as such"—listeners will recognize the allusions when they hear them. The success of music in the vein of Figurative Nationalism relies upon an audience familiar with folk and popular music of the region being evoked. This reality presents an obstacle to those who wish to interact with and understand this music that are not familiar with the national music being referenced. It is one of the purposes of this paper to begin to inform performers such that these obstacles can be mitigated.

However, it is impossible to defend definitively any claim of derivative musical features, short of a statement from the composer that specifically addresses the song or piece being discussed and confirms her intentions to imitate or adapt a certain quality. The arguments presented in this paper do not serve to prove any musical influence or imitation, but rather to argue that these musical features regularly present themselves in Bor's music not because she did not have any other ideas, but because they are deliberate attempts to adapt elements of her national music.

Modesta Bor believed her music had validity beyond the Venezuelan audience, and she did not view herself in opposition to international trends in composition. Despite the nationalistic focus of her initial schooling under Sojo and Plaza, her studies in Moscow ensured that her

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ritmos y cultura de cada lugar. Con esos ritmos hacía variaciones y utilizaba muchos ritmos venezolanos dentro de sus obras."

<sup>212</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 93.



perspectives were broad. Bor indicates her view of the interaction between Venezuelan music and cosmopolitan trends:

I believe that our music is valid anywhere in the world, but we cannot underestimate the new currents in the world of musical creation, if and when these explorations are done on the part of the composer, without becoming a snob to please other people.<sup>213</sup>

### *Periods of Composition*

While her aesthetic remained constant, her compositional style developed significantly throughout her lifetime. She is often considered an “eclectic composer.”<sup>214</sup> She experimented with the “new currents in the world of musical creation,” including works that fully embrace tonality, and those that completely eschew it, as well works that fall somewhere in between strict tonality and complete atonality.<sup>215</sup>

Still, as Chirico affirms, “her primary musical expression in tonal mediums is not squelched by her occasional incursions into atonal languages.”<sup>216</sup> She reserved her most adventurous harmonic writing for instruments that were perhaps better suited to such environments, such as *Sarcasmos* for piano from 1978-80, *Imitación Serial* for string orchestra

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<sup>213</sup> Maelzner, 16-17. Citing Guido Acuña, *Maestro Sojo* (Caracas: Editorial Pomaire, 1991), 168. “Creo que nuestra música es válida en cualquier parte del mundo, pero no podemos subestimar las nuevas corrientes en el mundo de la creación musical, siempre y cuando éstas búsquedas sean por parte del compositor, sin caer en el snob para complacer a los demás.”

<sup>214</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 212. “Nevertheless, we can affirm that Modesta Bor is an eclectic composer, given that from the point of view of form she employs in her works her own techniques of diverse musical tendencies, such as nationalism, Impressionism, and 12-tone.” “No obstante, podemos afirmar que Modesta Bor es una compositora ecléctica, ya que desde el punto de vista formal emplea en sus obras técnicas propias de diversas tendencias musicales, tales como el nacionalismo, el impresionismo y el dodecafonismo.”

<sup>215</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 97. Her choral arrangements of folk tunes also became more harmonically adventurous as she matured: “...her later works incorporate bolder harmonies that she originally reserved only for her art music compositions.”

<sup>216</sup> Chirico, “Modesta Bor,” 623-24. “...su cauce a través de la expresión por medios tonales, que no llegan a ser desmentidos en su conjunto por las esporádicas incursiones en lenguajes atonales...”

(1974), *Concierto para piano y Orquesta* (1982-1983) and *Aquarelas* for string orchestra.<sup>217</sup>

However, she does challenge singers with this new harmonic language in *Prisma Sonoro* for mixed voices.

Bor's early biographers describe her development and diversity of practice with regards to harmony:

Modesta Bor shows in her beginnings an inclination for sustained tonality, generally, by the use of the principal scale degrees. Progressively, she diluted the tonal functions of the chords, preferring a free and altered harmony, initiating the process of tonal dissolution in her works. The atonal composition piece for string orchestra, *Acuarelas*, is a good example in which she rejected the basic relations between the principal scale degrees, conceding autonomy to each of them. In this way, the harmonic language of Modesta Bor evolved into arriving at a unique atonality, with an expressive character and great beauty of her chordal sonorities.<sup>218</sup>

The most marked changes in her style occur during and after her study at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory with Aram Khachaturian, 1960-1962. Her works before this period exhibit Sojistic traits. Her works after demonstrate a general maturation and increased complexity of compositional methods and the incorporation of Khachaturian's compositional philosophies and methods.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Maelzner, 17. Maelzner noted the change of her harmonic style in her piano works "A partir de 1961, con la composición de la Suite infantil para piano, introduce cambios considerables en su lenguaje armónico."

<sup>218</sup> Peyre and López, "Bor, Modesta," 212. "Modesta Bor muestra en sus inicios una inclinación a lo tonal, sustentada, generalmente, por el uso de los principales grados de la escala. Progresivamente, diluye las funciones tonales de los acordes, prefiriendo una armonía libre y alterada, inicia así el proceso de disolución de la tonalidad en sus obras. Buen ejemplo lo encontramos en *Acuarelas* (piezo para orquesta de cuerdas), composición atonal, se sustenta en el abandono o rechazo de las relaciones básicas entre los grados principales de la escala, concediéndole autonomía a cada uno de ellos. De esta manera, el lenguaje armónico de Modesta Bor evoluciona hasta llegar a un atonalismo particular, con un carácter muy expresivo y una gran belleza sonora en sus acordes."

<sup>219</sup> Malezner, 14. Piano works within the first period: Preludio, "Juangriego," Valse para piano, Pequeña Danza, Tres piezas infantiles, Suite criolla, and Sonatina.

## General Features of Sojo's Influence

Sojo inculcated in his students the adaptation of Venezuelan folk music, “the basis and the characteristic stamp of Sojo's school or class of composition.”<sup>220</sup> He encouraged his students to add to the body of Venezuelan literature “with a foundation in the recreation of national airs through rhythmic and melodic gestures.”<sup>221</sup>

Sojo's instructional method was built upon the didactic texts by Hilarion Eslava (1807-1878), through which Sojo claims he was primarily self-taught.<sup>222</sup> His concept of composition and his instructional method were “very strict and demanding, requiring his students to follow his procedures.”<sup>223</sup> The study of counterpoint was paramount, a skill which Bor formed well and would later catch the attention of Khachaturian. Sojo's preference was for imitative counterpoint, and Bor's counterpoint was therefore “generally without artifices such as augmentation, diminution and retrogradation.”<sup>224</sup> Counterpoint with a predilection for accented dissonances can be seen in her earliest songs.

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<sup>220</sup> Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 26-27. “A sus alumnos inculcó la utilización de ritmos propios del país, que se ven resaltados en el uso de la hemiola y la vigorosa polirritmia...sobre la base de ritmos y melodías populares...”

<sup>221</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 212. “...fundamentado en la recreación de aires nacionales a través de giros rítmicos y melódicos.”

<sup>222</sup> Izcaray, 14. Such as Hilarion Eslava, *Prontuario de contrapunto, fuga y composición, en preguntas y respuestas* (Madrid: Imprenta de Luis Beltrán, 1860). Hilarion Eslava, *Escuela de armonia y composición* (Madrid: Imprenta de Beltrán y Viñas, 1857). Hilarion Eslava, *Método completo de solfeo 1ª y 2ª parte: sin acompañamiento*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Madrid: Gran Casa Editorial de B. Eslava, 1878). Interested researchers can find digital editions of these works from the Biblioteca Nacional de España, <http://www.bne.es/es/> (accessed January 1, 2018).

<sup>223</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 24.

<sup>224</sup> Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 31. “...generalmente, sin artificios tales como la aumentación, disminución o retrogradación.”

Sojo's harmonic language was grounded in traditional methods. He believed that tonality "gave the work an equilibrium that permitted a dynamic evolution."<sup>225</sup> However, he did allow for some vestiges of freedom in his contrapuntal and harmonic practices:

The language of Maestro Sojo presents certain harmonic freedoms in the movement of the voices, among which we can mention consecutive 5<sup>ths</sup> and octaves by contrary motion, parallel 5<sup>ths</sup> and octaves by direct motion, free use of the second inversion chord (6/4) without preparation, use of dissonant chords without preparation and in succession, 9<sup>th</sup> chords, augmented and diminished.<sup>226</sup>

An often-noted quality of Sojo's melodic construction, particularly in his madrigals, is the "chant-like" quality of the melody.<sup>227</sup> This is attributed to his experience with Gregorian Chant, working as a church musician, and the related folk genre of *tono llanero*, in which two upper voices harmonize a chant melody.<sup>228</sup> Bor's melodies, too, occasionally reveal the use of church modes, especially hypophrygian, and a melodic style reminiscent of the *tono llanero*.

Furthermore, when discussing the skills that Bor learned in Moscow, it is important to remember that her native instructors were not devoid of all musical complexity. Bor and her instructors all use chromaticism and harmonic dissonance "as a technical intermediate position between altered Wagnerian harmony and atonalism."<sup>229</sup> Chromaticism with an impressionistic bent is evident in some of Bor's early songs such as "Rojo," and "Amanecer" which employ progressions of distantly related major and minor seventh sonorities, often transitioning via

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<sup>225</sup> Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 26. "se considera que la tonalidad proporcionara a la obra un equilibrio que permite una evolución dinámica."

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 26. "El lenguaje del Maestro Sojo presenta ciertas libertades armónicas en el movimiento de las voces, entre las que podemos mencionar Quintas y Octavas consecutivas o paralelas por movimiento contrario, quintas y octavas paralelas por movimiento directo, uso libre del acorde en segunda inversión (6/4) sin preparación, uso de acordes disonantes sin preparación y en forma sucesiva, acordes de novena, acordes aumentados y disminuidos."

<sup>227</sup> Edward F. Cetto, *The Madrigals by Vicente Emilio Sojo*, (diss., University of Iowa, 1999). 41-44.

<sup>228</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 25. See footnote 337 on page 103.

<sup>229</sup> Maelzner, 12-13. "como una posición técnica intermedia entre la armonía alterada al estilo wagneriano y el atonalismo."

chromatic motion. She occasionally resolves chords to sonorities a tritone away (mm. 10-11 in “Amanecer”). Some of Bor’s songs before her time in Moscow exhibit some of the traits normally ascribed to Khachaturian, such as quartal structures, which can be seen in “Rojo” from 1957, m. 17, mm. 22-23, and “Amanecer” also from 1957, mm. 1-2, and higher tertian chords that extend all the way to the 13<sup>th</sup> (“Amanecer” m. 22). Table 4.2 lists the style features of Sojo common to the Santa Capilla School.

Table 4.2. General style features of Sojo and the Santa Capilla School

Constant presence of semi-free counterpoint, often imitative especially in choral music <sup>230</sup>
Tonal harmonic language <sup>231</sup>
Adaptation of the rhythm and melody of Venezuelan folk music into original music <sup>232</sup>
Attention to the proper metrical setting of text <sup>233</sup>
Narrow range of melody <sup>234</sup>
Simple stepwise “chant-like” melody <sup>235</sup>
Humming (B.C. <i>boca cerrada</i> ) <sup>236</sup>
Onomatopoetic syllables imitating folk instruments (choral music) <sup>237</sup>
Popular song form (ABA) <sup>238</sup>

<sup>230</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 24; Alfonso and López, *Importante figura* 26.

<sup>231</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 212; Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 26.

<sup>232</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 212.

<sup>233</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 24.

<sup>234</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 212.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Cetto, 34.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., 57; Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 91. Parra attributes this feature to Bor herself, but it appears that, while she may have made it more popular, the practice has its roots in her instructor.

<sup>238</sup> Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 32.

## General Features of Khachaturian's Influence

During and after her time in Moscow studying with Aram Khachaturian, Bor's compositional palette grew significantly, and the complexity of her harmonic and rhythmic language deepened. This period begins in her art song with *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano* from 1961. In her piano works this period begins with *Suite infantil para piano* from that same year.<sup>239</sup> The change in her choral works begins with "Pescador de anclas" and "Regreso al mar," both from 1962.<sup>240</sup>

Her compositional style continued to develop after her studies with Khachaturian culminating in atonal and twelve-tone compositions such as *Sarcasmos*, and *Aquarelas*. While her harmonic language in her art songs does demonstrate significant maturity, she did not venture as far in this genre as in others. For the most part, the "nationalist composers remained within the parameters of traditional harmony, a fact that also applies to the predominance of certain impressionistic traits."<sup>241</sup> In Bor's case, this is most true for her art songs.

Nevertheless, Bor's style did develop beyond her initial instruction as did many of her classmates: "...some authors such as Juan Vicente Lecuna, Antonio Estévez, Inocente Carreño, and Modesta Bor, came to use Stravinskian and Bartokian resources, complementing the vernacular influence in a very unique way."<sup>242</sup> Specifically, Bor adopted the neoclassical practice

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<sup>239</sup> Maelzner, 28. Suite includes: "Primer día en la escuela," "Vamos a pasear," "Baile," "Canción de cuna," "Un paseo en tren."

<sup>240</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 29.

<sup>241</sup> Maelzner, 12-13. "...el grupo de compositores nacionalistas se mantendrá en un buen porcentaje dentro de los parámetros de la armonía tradicional, hecho que también se aplica al predominio de ciertos rasgos impresionistas."

<sup>242</sup> Ibid. "... algunos autores como Juan Vicente Lecuna, Antonio Estévez, Inocente Carreño, y Modesta Bor, llegarán a emplear recursos stravinskianos y bartokianos, complementando de una manera muy peculiar la influencia vernácula."

of variation of motivic and melodic cells to generate unity within a work.<sup>243</sup> The use of motives in general was already familiar to Bor, as is clear in her early songs.<sup>244</sup> Bor's musical growth "influenced other Venezuelan musicians to experiment with other twentieth-century techniques such as atonality...quartal harmony...and variation techniques."<sup>245</sup>

One change in her harmonic language that is only occasionally noted by other authors is the incorporation of harmony derived from the modes of the ascending portion of the melodic minor scale.<sup>246</sup> This type of harmony can be seen in her songs as early as *Segundo ciclo de romanzas* from 1962. Alfonso and Lopez's reference to augmented and diminished chords with added notes (generally 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>s) is likely an attempt at describing this type of harmony.<sup>247</sup>

Another practice not often mentioned is deriving harmonies from the octatonic scale, sometimes called the diminished scale, which also generates altered sonorities. This includes the altered dominant, F7b9,#9, in m. 34 of "Si el silencio fuera mío," and the poly-chord in m. 2 of "un títere escondido." This type of harmony is present as early as 1961 in *Primero ciclo de romanzas*. These practices are discussed in more detail under the Harmony section.

Khachaturian's musical nationalism and his use of Armenian music as a source for musical material further encouraged Bor to do the same with the music of Venezuela. His instruction provided her with more tools through which she could achieve the goals of nationalistic art music already inculcated by Sojo and Plaza. One of Khachaturian's tools that

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<sup>243</sup> Maelzner, 18-19.

<sup>244</sup> Alfonso and López, "Bor, Modesta," 212.

<sup>245</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 26. "...as in Khachaturian's Concerto-rhapsodies for violin, cello and piano of 1961, 1963, and 1968 respectively."

<sup>246</sup> Saavedra, "Hindemith y Bor." Saavedra notes Bor's use of this scale as a harmonic source in the choral work *Manchas sonoras*.

<sup>247</sup> Alfonso and López, *Importante figura*, 26.

Bor adapted quite effectively was the “periodicity and aperiodicity of meter and the use of ostinati.”<sup>248</sup> Qualities of rhythmic ostinato and irregularity of meter are features abundantly present in Venezuelan folk music: the strumming patterns of the *cuatro*, the improvised polyrhythmic patterns of the harp, and the aperiodic meter of the *merengue*.<sup>249</sup> Bor would have quickly recognized the similarity of these modern rhythmic techniques to her native music, allowing for an effective marriage of the national with the cosmopolitan.

The natural features of folk instruments were significant sources of inspiration for Khachaturian and Bor alike. Sarkisyan notes the influence of Armenian folk instruments on the harmonic language of Khachaturian:

Khachaturian stated that his harmonic language came from ‘imagining the sounds of folk instruments with their characteristic tuning and resulting range of overtones’ which explains his widespread harmonic use of seconds, fourths and fifths, all associated with the tuning of the *saz*, and also his avoidance of chord structures based on thirds.<sup>250</sup>

Khachaturian’s instruction in this respect only motivated Bor to advance a trend already evident in her composition. Bor’s post-1960 harmony demonstrates a preference for harmonies constructed out of non-triadic voices, and the turning of stringed instruments is imitated directly. In “Guitarra” from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*, Bor’s initial harmony is generated from the open strings of the Guitar.<sup>251</sup> His encouragement to use the open tuning of folk instruments is

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<sup>248</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 29; Svetlana Sarkisyan, “Khachaturian, Aram,” Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, (Oxford University Press) <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/14956> (accessed October 17, 2016).

<sup>249</sup> Maelzner, 18-19.

<sup>250</sup> Sarkisyan. Quoting Sovetskaya Muzikav; Johanna Spector, et al, “Saz,” Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online (Oxford University Press) <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/47032> (accessed October 17, 2016). “Most [saz] instruments have eight to ten metal strings in double or triple courses. A typical Azerbaijani tuning is d'/d'/d'-g/g-c'/c'/c'. The first two courses are stopped, the third is played open, providing a drone....”

<sup>251</sup> Stephanie Bor, documentary video. Bor uses similar chords in a number of her works for other instruments.



also obvious in her first song written under his tutelage “Amolador.” The left hand of the last two measures, mm. 55-56, is exactly the tuning of the *cuatro*, presented conspicuously at the end of the song. The popular Venezuelan stringed instrument, the *cuatro*, is traditionally tuned with a recurrent last string: A<sub>3</sub> - D<sub>4</sub> - F#<sub>4</sub> - B<sub>3</sub>.<sup>252</sup> The resultant sonority, a major chord in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inversion, with an added 6<sup>th</sup>, might explain Bor’s frequent use of the Major-add6 sonority as the final tonic in works as early as 1957 in “Rojo.”<sup>253</sup> The sonority is also arpeggiated as a melodic gesture from her earliest songs including “La tarde,” m. 11, and “Canción” from *Canciones infantiles*.

Parra notes that second inversion chords are important in her choral works. In “te amo,” “[m]ost of the chords are written in second inversion with most of the added notes in the melody.”<sup>254</sup> Venezuelan folk music in general prefers inverted chords, likely a result of tuning of the *cuatro* and the wealth of inverted chord positions it generates.<sup>255</sup>

Other early works display an interest in imitating folk instruments, such as “El ratón” which employs an arpeggiated pattern similar to finger-style guitar playing, and “Amanecer” which mimes the harp. In addition, the imitation of instruments in Bor’s choral music has been a defining characteristic from her earliest compositions. Table 4.3. Compiles all the style features present in Bor’s music that this and other authors have noted to have been gained from her time with Khachaturian.

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<sup>252</sup> Fredy Reyna, *Método de cuatro* (Caracas: Monte Ávila de Editores, 1994). Apparently, the recurrent tuning (with the last string lower than the string preceding it) is due to the humidity, which caused the highest string of the Spanish *vihuela* to frequently break.

<sup>253</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 86.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

Table 4.3. Bor's style after her study with Khachaturian, from 1961 onward

Quartal harmony <sup>256</sup>
Quintal harmony <sup>257</sup>
Secundal harmony <sup>258</sup>
Extended triadic harmony (more advanced methods of it) <sup>259</sup>
Rhythmic and melodic ostinato <sup>260</sup>
Chromatic modulations to distant relations (more methods of doing so) <sup>261</sup>
Non-functional or "free harmony" <sup>262</sup>
Melodic minor scale harmony
Octatonic or diminished scale harmony
Harmonic pedals <sup>263</sup>
Juxtaposition of motives
Rhythmic cells
Imitation of folk dances, including the metrical alternation of 6/8 and 3/4
Motivic variation throughout a piece <sup>264</sup>
Alternation of homophony and polyphony <sup>265</sup>
Shifting focus within a composition between melody, texture, and rhythm <sup>266</sup>
Management of dissonance as a structural element <sup>267</sup>
Harmonic derivations of the tuning of folk instruments

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<sup>256</sup> Malezner, 14.

<sup>257</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 29.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Malezner, 14; Alfonso and López, "Bor, Modesta," 212.

<sup>261</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 29.

<sup>262</sup> Alfonso and López, "Bor, Modesta," 212.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid. Such as the first movement of *Suite infantil para piano*.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 28.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> Saavedra, "Hindemith y Bor."

### The *vals venezolano*

The first work she wrote for voice was also the first work she composed after her illness and the work that initiated her motivation to be a composer. For the song “Balada de la luna, luna,” (Figure 4.1) Bor wrote “a choral score that is similar to Venezuelan romantic songs of the nineteenth century” with a melody that is “pure, fluid, and simple.”<sup>268</sup> However, it was originally conceived as an art song, and “while the original version is not available, this could still be considered her first art song,” especially, since the “melodic line and text appear in the soprano voice...the ATB voice lines arpeggiate the chords emulating an instrumental *vals venezolano*.”<sup>269</sup> The romantic songs of distinctly Venezuelan character were often sung versions of the *vals*.<sup>270</sup> The *vals* also is present in her earliest piano works from 1954, such as “Juangriego,” and “Valse para piano.”<sup>271</sup>

A number of Bor’s art songs derive inspiration from the romantic song and *vals*—those which demonstrate a lyrical melody against a triple meter with stress or emphasis frequently on the second beat, or the second half of the second beat.<sup>272</sup> These include her first (unchanged) art song “La tarde,” much of “Suspiro cuando te miro,” as well as sections of “Amanecer,” and the opening to “Nocturno en los muelles.” Most of the lullabies exhibit some of this influence as well: “Mi niño bonito,” “Canción de cuna para dormir un negrito,” and both songs named “Canción de cuna.”

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<sup>268</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 36-37. Bor’s “Canto a la vida” is also a good example of *vals* in her choral music.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música popular*, 120.

<sup>271</sup> Maelzner, 17.

<sup>272</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 53.

Figure 4.1. “Balada de la luna, luna” opening measures<sup>273</sup>

Poesía: Federico García Lorca  
Música: Modesta Bor

Allegretto

**Sopranos**  
1. La lu - na vi - no a la fra - gua con su po - li - sión de nar - dos, la

**Contraltos**  
*B. Ch.*

**Tenores**  
Pli-plín pli-plín plín plín, plín

**Bajos**  
pom pom pom pom pom

6

lu - na vi - no a la fra - gua con su po - li - sión de nar - dos. El

pli - plín pli - plín plín plín, plín

pom pom pom pom pom

<sup>273</sup> Modesta Bor, *Obra coral original de Modesta Bor* (Mérida: Universidad de Los Andes, 2012), 31. Used with permission.

Another important influence on the romantic song was opera. Ramón y Rivera describes the presence of these works among the repertory of Venezuelan composers: “[a]rias and *romanzas*—sometimes also titled *romance*—were composed by all authors of which we have mentioned, and they published sometimes in periodicals and magazines...”<sup>274</sup> The titles of Bor’s song cycles *Primero* and *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano* allude to this genre of salon entertainment popular amongst the *vals* generation in the nineteenth century. While it would be inaccurate to describe Bor’s melodic writing in general as imitative of Italian opera, there are moments that seem inspired by such melodies and their imitations, especially “Mapa de nuestro mar” and the works cited in the previous paragraph. Rubato is appropriate for such lyrical moments.<sup>275</sup> As a guide to performers, “[m]any of the *crescendi* and *descrecendi* markings in Bor’s music are intended to signify the phrasing rather than abrupt dynamic changes.”<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música popular*, 121. “Arias y romanzas—a veces tituladas también *romance*—van componiendo todos los autores de los cuales tenemos noticia, y van publicando unas veces en periódicos y revistas...”

<sup>275</sup> Stephanie Bor, documentary video.

<sup>276</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 53.

## *Form*

Regarding form, most of her songs are set in binary or ternary form. Additive form, “named for the juxtaposition of sections or musical motives,” is also important.<sup>277</sup> These formal structures are also apparent in her piano works. Her songs often employ repeated or recapitulated musical material. In her early compositions, this would occur with a repeat sign, and later she would revive musical ideas, often in a new harmonic context and melodically developed or varied in an otherwise through-composed (TC) format. Table 4.4 displays the formal analyses of her art songs. Some of these repeated forms are common to the Santa Capilla School, and present in popular song forms:

One can point out, also, the use of forms that come from the teachings of Sojo, and the knowledge of the popular and folkloric forms with which she had contact since her youth. This is the case in the *Suite para orquesta de cámara* (1959) and in the madrigals *Ribereñas* and *Árbol de canción* (1962), pieces that present the typical form of popular songs (ternary form A-B-A).<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Maelzner, 17. “...dada por la yuxtaposición de secciones o motivos musicales...”

<sup>278</sup> Alfonso and López, “Bor, Modesta,” 212. “Se destaca, también, el empleo de las formas que proviene de las enseñanzas de Sojo, así como del conocimiento de las formas populares y folklóricas con las que contacto desde su niñez. Es el caso de la *Suite para orquesta de cámara* (1959) y de los madrigales *Ribereñas* y *Árbol de canción* (1962), piezas que presentan la forma típica de la canción popular (forma ternaria A-B-A).”

Table 4.4. Formal analyses of Bor's art songs

	La tarde	abc abc
Tres canciones infantiles	Mi niño bonito	ab ab ab
	Topecito	aa' bb aa'' a'''
	Cosquilla del bubute	aa bb cc' bb
	Amanecer	aa b cc'
	Rojo	TC, preview of main melody in mm. 1-2
Canciones infantiles	Canción	aa'bc aa'bc
	Canción de cuna	ab ab ab ab a
	El ratón	abab' abab'
Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	La flor de apamate	ab (development of a) cdd'e a' [d is based on a]
	Amolador	a bb cc' dd' ef a
	Canción de cuna	aba'
	Coplas	largely TC with allusions to previous material: ab a'c a''b'c' da'''
Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	Si el silencio fuera mío	aa' b a'' c dd' ef a'''
	Coplas venezolanas	aa' b c b aa''
	Suspiro cuando te miro	aba'
	Pregón	a bcdef a' additive form, melody derived from motivic variation of opening gesture
Tríptico sobre poesía cubana	Guitarra	a bb cd a coda
	Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito	aa b aa
	Nocturno en los muelles	largely TC, with return of partial opening melody near the end
Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano	La luna tiene cabellos blancos	largely TC, with return of the latter part of the opening melody near in the end, in a new key
	Te aguardaba entre mástiles	a bc a'
	Sequía	largely TC, some sections repeat gestures
	Un títere escondido	a b a' (broadly)
	Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico	aa' bb' aa'
	Preciosa	aa'a'' bb aa'a''bb
	Es la luz de tu presencia	aa' bb' aa' aa' bb'
	Muchachas bajo la lluvia	TC
Dos canciones para tenor y piano	Mapa de nuestro mar	TC

As an illustrative example of popular forms in Bor’s art songs, “El ratón” shares its form with a *canción de ronda*, a type of children’s play song that was sung in the streets whilst playing games.<sup>279</sup> Bor’s tempo marking gives a clue to her inspiration, *Allegro Scherzando*—playfully happy. The form and several important style features are shared between the *canción de ronda* (Figure 4.2) and “El ratón” (Figure 4.3). If the note values in “El ratón” are halved, to match the division used by Ramón y Rivera, both selections are eight measures long and share a similar anacrusis. The triadic nature of the opening melody, the syllabic patter of text delivery, and ending the melody on the dominant, unresolved, encouraging the short tune to be repeated are also shared. The same tempo (66 bpm) recorded in Ramón y Rivera, could be appropriate for this song, although the half-note should be felt as the beat.

Figure 4.2. *Canción de ronda*<sup>280</sup>

♩ = 66

*mf* Sa-lien - do de Sa - la - man - ca so-le - ròn so-le-ròn le-ròn le - ròn en mi

ca - ba - lli - to an - còn que con el lo-re - tìn que con el lo-re - tòn

Fin

<sup>279</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 20.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.



Figure 4.3. “El ratón”<sup>281</sup>

*Allegro scherzando*  
*mf*

Voz

El ra - tón, el ra - tón o - fi - cial de ta - ller, se pa - sa fa - bri - can - do vi -

Piano

*mp*

13

ller, se pa - sa fa - bri - can - do vi - ru - tas de pa - pel. El ra - pel.

1. , 2.

<sup>281</sup> Bor, “El ratón,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 3. Used with permission. Note that mm. 7-12 are left out intentionally so that the entire song is not given.

## Voice

### Famous Singers of Bor's Music

Bor's music brings together folk and art genres, however, the dominant vocal aesthetic of singers in her time that recorded her work is a well-trained classical sound. Isabel Grau, now Palacios, and Morella Muñoz were singers during Bor's time who knew her as a classmate, teacher, and composer.<sup>282</sup> Their recordings of Bor's work are windows into the quality of voice that Bor had in mind when composing her songs.<sup>283</sup>

Concerning the quality of their voices, both Palacios and Muñoz have a dark and resonant middle, a strong but bright high register and an unabashed use of the chest voice in the lower voice. Bor herself was a mezzo-soprano, and her preference for this voice type is clear.<sup>284</sup> Sturdy vocalism is generally favored, but gentler colors are included when musically appropriate. A mix

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<sup>282</sup> Rafael Salazar, "Muñoz Morella," in vol. 2 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela*, edited by José Peñín y Walter Guido (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998), 274-275; Alfonso and López, "Bor, Modesta," 212; n/a. "Quinteto Contrapunto," Sincopa, entry posted 2002, [http://www.sincopa.com/traditional/artists2/quinteto\\_contrapunto.htm](http://www.sincopa.com/traditional/artists2/quinteto_contrapunto.htm) (accessed Oct. 1, 2016).

Morella Muñoz: (1935-1995). In 1953 she began her formal studies in vocal performance at the José Ángel Lamas School of Music. She would have been a young student during the same time that Modesta was returning to her studies after her illness. Muñoz returned from her studies in Europe in 1962, the same year that Modesta returned from Moscow, and became part of the Quinteto Contrapunto, with whom she recorded an LP: *Quinteto Contrapunto, Música popular y folklórica de Venezuela* (Caracas: Polidor, 1962). Modesta Bor was the arranger for one of the tracks, *Gaita margariteña* (track five of side B). She is probably best known in her country, however, for the recording and performance of Venezuelan folk songs and the compositions of the students in the Santa Capilla School.

Isabel Grau (Palacios): (b. 1950). Grau graduated from the Juan Manuel Olivares School of Music in 1967, two years after Bor began teaching there. She later studied in London at the Guildhall School of Music. Today she conducts choral and orchestral groups and an early music ensemble, the Camerata de Caracas.

<sup>283</sup> Morella Muñoz, *Siete canciones populares venezolanas de Juan Bautista Plaza*, LP (Polydor, 198?). This record contains *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, tracks 8-11.

Isabel Grau/Palacios, and Madalit Lamazares, *Isabel Grau, Contralto*, LP (Vistaven, 1976). This record contains "Coplas venezolanas" from *Segundo ciclo....* (track 3) and "Canción de cuna para dormir a un negro" from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* (track 5).

<sup>284</sup> Correspondence with Marisabel Bor.

of straight and vibratoed tones is used, depending on the length and dramatic quality of the phrase. The vibrato used is quick and energetic, on the top end of vibrato rates within a pleasing range. “Coplas venezolanas,” for example, is performed fast and deliberately, percussive in the piano, like patter at the onset and cried-out in the middle section. Strong accents on the last “ah” are used by Grau, but it is performed smoother by Muñoz.

Bor’s songs were probably composed with the expectation for the middle-lower passages to be sung the strongest, i.e. in the alto’s chest voice, when the music indicates a strong dynamic, Figure 4.4. When transposed or sung by other voice types, it should be kept in mind that the lower passages—near the bottom of the treble staff—(except for those passages G<sub>3</sub> and lower) should often be just as loud as, if not louder than the highest notes. This may prove to be a limiting factor to whether a song can be effectively adapted to another voice type.

Most folk singing in Venezuela, especially in work songs, is performed high in the chest voice for both men and women. Bor’s placement of the voice in this range, and her preference for the lower female voice is deliberate. The earthy quality of the contralto mirrors that of the folk singer and brings focus to the musical allusions of the Venezuelan *llanero*, a rural laborer.

Figure 4.4. Strong chest-voice passage in lower register in  
 “Coplas venezolanas,” *Segundo ciclo de romanzas*<sup>285</sup>

41 *crescendo* *ff*  
 que se de - vuel - ven los sue - ños,  
*crescendo* *ff* *rallentando*  
 8<sup>va</sup>  
 Ped. \*

Phrasing is generally legato, in contrast to the sometimes-percussive quality of the piano accompaniment. Important exceptions are the crisply delivered patter sections: syllabically set, rapid delivery of text, often with repeated notes and melodic gestures, Figure 4.5. This writing is indicative of popular singing and should be delivered without the same classical artifice of more lyrical moments. In other words, the textual rhythm becomes more important than the lyrical line. Text stress is rarely accomplished with a weighty push, but rather a graceful lean of the phrase. Portamenti and scoops at the onset of phrases are heard in slower moments, and especially by the older of the two, Muñoz. As an additional note, Parra mentions an element of performance practice for her choral works that likely transfer to her art songs: “rests have to be

<sup>285</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, *Obra para voz y piano*, 14. Used with permission.

acknowledged as silences; therefore, the resonance of the last consonants should end earlier than is normal performance practice in North America.”<sup>286</sup>

Figure 4.5. Crisply delivered ‘patter’ section in  
 “Coplas venezolanas,” *Segundo ciclo de romanzas*<sup>287</sup>



#### Mode Shifting

While Bor’s melodic writing could often be described as chromatic, melodic phrases genuinely conceived from a chromatic scale are rare. Bor does frequently use a chromatic passing tone, even in her soundly tonal works, and occasionally a chromatic neighbor tone, usually a lower neighbor, but these serve as embellishments. The most conspicuous examples of truly chromatic gestures in the voice are “La flor de apamate” (Figure 4.6) and “Coplas” mm. 34-35, both from *Primer ciclo de romanzas* during her early studies in Moscow. Chromatic writing is more common in the piano part, such as the opening to “Canción de cuna” from the same cycle.

<sup>286</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 39.

<sup>287</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 11. Used with permission.

Figure 4.6. Chromatic passage  
in “La flor de apamate”<sup>288</sup>



More often, phrases that appear chromatic are different diatonic or modal scales, abruptly juxtaposed. While one may argue that this is a feature of chromaticism in general, the difference in conception is significant. The recognition of the different modes used can be enormously beneficial to the singer attempting to learn their part. The singer should endeavor to identify the mode of the musical moment, which will bring clarity to the construction of the melody. This practice is related to Bor’s use of harmony, discussed in the next section, which employs novel resolutions and juxtapositions of unrelated key areas. Often, the resolution of a phrase transitions melodically by way of half step to a different tonal area. Thinking of these resolutions as a modal shift is helpful.<sup>289</sup> Mm. 36-37 of “Suspiro cuando te miro,” in Figure 4.7 is a prime example of the harmonic and modal shifts coinciding with the resolution of phrases.

<sup>288</sup> Bor, “La flor de apamate,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4. Used with permission.

<sup>289</sup> If difficulty is encountered, the singer may imagine what the resolution might be without such a shift and then change it back to the notated pitch.

Figure 4.7. Resolution into new tonal area in “Si el silencio fuera mío”<sup>290</sup>

The musical score for Figure 4.7 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 36 with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The lyrics are "el ha - cha de pen - sa - mien - to, y el a - za -". The dynamics shift to mezzo-piano (*mp*) and then decrescendo (*dim.*). The piano accompaniment features a similar dynamic progression, with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) start, a mezzo-piano (*mp*) section, and a decrescendo (*dim.*) ending. A marking "8va" with a dashed line indicates an octave shift in the right hand of the piano part. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is common time (C).

Furthermore, the singer should not assume that the mode of their melody is identical to that of the sonority underneath it. While they often do line up, they are also often different. Bor will set the voice in one mode, often a non-major mode, and the piano will be playing higher tertian sonorities underneath it that do not share the root of the melodic mode. Instead, the melody creates, or is underlined by, added tones and harmonic extensions to the root harmony. While considering what member of the chord the voice occupies is important for tuning, the singer will likely understand the gesture of the phrase better if she recognizes the distinct mode of the melody. Sometimes, the mode of the voice remains the same while the harmony underneath travels to distant relations, occasionally creating significant tension between the harmony and melody.

Figure 4.8 shows a clear example of this practice in the opening of “Pregón” from *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*. The voice is in a tetraphonic modal variety of

<sup>290</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, *Obra para voz y piano*, 8. Used with permission.

C# minor—the lowest four notes of the C# minor pentatonic scale. The piano however, plays a D major 7 with an added 9<sup>th</sup>. The melody mode operates off the extensions: C#, the major 7<sup>th</sup>; E, the major 9<sup>th</sup>. The same is true of m. 5, where the melodic mode remains the same, and the harmony changes to an E minor, major 7, add major 6, add 9—a derivative of the E melodic minor scale, voiced in the right hand in 4<sup>ths</sup> and 2<sup>nds</sup>.<sup>291</sup> The melody again takes advantage of the extensions: F#, the 9<sup>th</sup>; E, the root; C#, the major 6<sup>th</sup>. This same melodic pattern appears again in mm. 14-20 in D# minor, and in mm. 60-64 (slightly modified) in C minor. The root of the harmony does not agree with the mode of the voice in any of these instances.

Figure 4.8. “Pregón” modal melody distinct from harmony mm. 1-5<sup>292</sup>

Occasionally, the change in mode is more difficult to discern. Figure 4.9, also from “Pregón,” is an example of these hidden modal shifts. The notational and harmonic shift would lead one to believe that the mode changes in m. 23, but the shift occurs on the second beat of m. 21. The melody from m. 14 to the first beat of m. 21 is in a tetratonic mode, a variety of D#

<sup>291</sup> In the edition of “Pregón” edited by Patricia Caicedo, the G $\flat$  is notated as a G#, changing the quality of the chord to E major, with extensions. The ARE edition specifically indicates the G $\flat$  with a courtesy accidental, therefore I will consider that the correct spelling of the chord.

<sup>292</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 26. Used with permission.



minor. Beginning with the C# in m. 21, the mode shifts to this same mode, now based on Bb. When respelled enharmonically, the pitch content from the second beat of m. 21 to m. 23 is Bb, Db, Eb, and F. This also means that the mode in m. 25 (Bb major) is also distinct from that of m. 23, despite the similarity in notation.

Figure 4.9. Hidden modal shifts in “Pregón,” *Segundo ciclo de romanzas*<sup>293</sup>

19

ran - - jas, na - ran - jas a - ma -

23

ri - - llas, cuan - do el na - ran - jo se

crescendo

The use of these simple, open, modal scales as the building blocks for more complicated melodies is a hallmark of Bor’s writing for the voice. Many of the modes used by Bor have their roots in Afro-Venezuelan music. Ramón y Rivera is the best source on the subject:

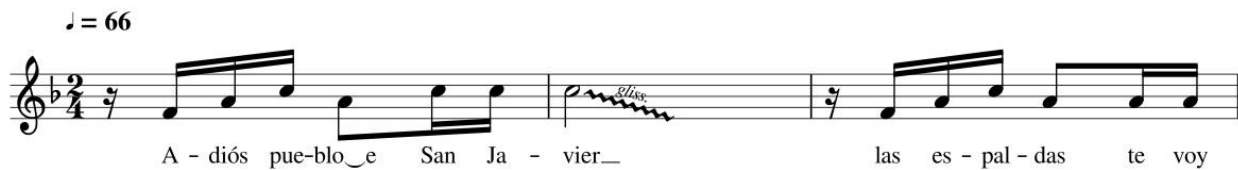
<sup>293</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 27. Used with permission.

It is evident that the presence of scales that do not belong to that [European] system, indicate an older time of construction; that is to say, triphonic, tetraphonic, pentatonic, and all other modalities one might come across, do not belong to this century, nor to those recently passed: they are much older.”<sup>294</sup> ...pentatonic scales, and some other melodies based on less than five sounds, with their combination of intervals that are neither indigenous nor European, are also African...<sup>295</sup>

### Triadic Melodies

Occasionally, a melody will seem to be generated entirely from an arpeggio of a single sonority. This use is almost certainly derivative of folk music.<sup>296</sup> Ramón y Rivera provides a transcription of a clothes-washing song generated from a triphonic scale (essentially a triad), Figure 4.10. The most significant example of a triadic melody in Bor’s art song occurs in “Coplas venezolanas,” from *Segundo ciclo de romanzas*, Figure 4.11.

Figure 4.10. *Canto de Lavanderas*<sup>297</sup>



<sup>294</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música afrovenezolana*, 39. “es evidente que la presencia de escalas no pertenecientes a ese sistema está acusando un tiempo anterior de estructuración; es decir, escalas trifónicas, tetrafónicas, pentatónicas y todas las modales halladas, no pertenecen a este siglo ni a los inmediatos anteriores: son mucho más antiguas.”

<sup>295</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música afrovenezolana*, 46. “la pentatonía, y algunas otras melodías basadas en menos de cinco sonidos, con su combinación de intervalos nada indígena ni europea, es también africana;”

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., 39. “Las escalas en que se basan las melodías colectadas, demuestran en una gran parte la antigüedad de los cantos...escalas trifónicas, tetrafónicas, pentatónicas...”

<sup>297</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 36.

Figure 4.11. Triadic melody in “Coplas venezolanas”<sup>298</sup>

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the piece "Coplas venezolanas". Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and the time signature is 4/4. The first system begins at measure 33, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The vocal line features a triadic melody: G#4 (quarter), A#4 (quarter), B5 (quarter), followed by a half rest, then G#4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The lyrics are "Que se de - vuel - ven los o - - jos,". The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands. The second system begins at measure 37, also marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The vocal line continues the triadic melody: G#4 (quarter), A#4 (quarter), B5 (quarter), followed by a half rest, then G#4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The lyrics are "que se de - vuel - ven los pies,". The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic textures. Both systems include an 8va (octave) marking above the piano's right hand in the latter half of each system.

### Work Songs

The ending of “Amolador” from *Primer ciclo de romanzas* (Figure 4.12) uses a triphonic mode similar to the tetraphonic mode of “Pregón.” In this case, the first three notes of the minor pentatonic scale. The reiterative focus of the minor third, as mentioned above, is related to African melody. Interestingly, audiences familiar with the work of Gershwin may find the sound somewhat familiar—that of African derived melodic gestures (in Gershwin’s case, that of jazz),

<sup>298</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 14. Used with permission.

against the backdrop of Western harmony. Whether Bor intended to compose a Gershwinian phrase is debatable, however. It is more likely that both composers arrived at a similar result, working from source materials that were distant from each other, but with common roots. While Bor did admire the jazz pianist Bill Evans among others, similarity due to common derivation as opposed to imitation is probably true of all features in Bor's music that seem to smack of jazz.<sup>299</sup>

As an additional note related to the ending of "Amolador," if one wishes to create an accurate approximation of folk singing, the glissandos should be performed quickly.<sup>300</sup> Ramon y Rivera explains that "[s]low glissandos are very rare in our music, due to the lack in them of a sorrowful feeling."<sup>301</sup>

The melody of "Amolador" is an imitation of the *Canto de ordeño*, a cattle call. In his analysis of a very similar melodic gesture in Estévez's *Cantata Criolla*, Chirico states that Estévez's *Tema de la Sabana* (Figure 4.13) "unequivocally approximates a *Canto de ordeño*."<sup>302</sup> This is the music of common men and women, the rural laborer, revealing a musical focus on the common worker that mirrors her philosophical and political focus on the working class. Furthermore, the melodic gestures of both phrases are of African origin, according to Ramón y Rivera:

Certain reiterated combinations of 3<sup>rd</sup>s and 4<sup>th</sup>s, [and] certain motivic progressions—generally descending—of those intervals, constitute, according to my criteria, the most characteristic feature of Afro-Venezuelan melody.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Correspondence with Rafael Saavedra.

<sup>300</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *afrovenezolana*, 50.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid. "Glissandos lentos son muy raros en nuestra música, por la ausencia en ella de sentido doloroso."

<sup>302</sup> Hugo López Chirico, *La "Cantata Criollo" de Antonio Estévez* (Caracas: Consejo Nacional de la Cultura, 1987), 127-128.

<sup>303</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música afrovenezolana*, 37. "Ciertas combinaciones reiteradas de 3as. y 4as., cierta progresión motivica—generalmente descendente— de esos intervalos, constituyen según mi criterio lo más característico de la melodía afrovenezolana."

Figure 4.12. “Amolador”<sup>304</sup>

46 rall. . . . a

49 *p* Tempo primo A - mo - la - dor,

52 rall. . rit. *p* a - mo - la - dor a - mue - la.

*p* *p* *p* *Ped.* *8va* \*

<sup>304</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 16. Used with permission.

Chirico clarifies Ramón y Rivera’s statement: “...the singular management of the intervals in the *Cantos de Trabajo* [work songs in general], based on the jumps of 3<sup>rds</sup>, 4<sup>ths</sup>, and 5<sup>ths</sup>” is of African origin.<sup>305</sup>

Figure 4.13. *Tema de la Sabana, Canto de ordeño*  
in Antonio Estévez’s *Cantata Criolla*<sup>306</sup>

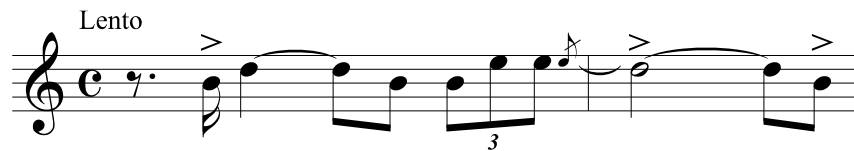


Figure 4.14, an excerpt of “Sequía” from *Tres canciones para mezzo soprano* is a great example of Bor’s meaningful use of work songs to enhance the imagery of the poetry. The text of this section translates:

from the empty jugs, the wind of the savannah  
draws out a monotonous sound  
and the voice of a girl shoots into the air the arrow  
of a deliberate verse:

The melody is a musical representation of the “voice of a girl” singing her “deliberate verse.” The melody is filled with repetitive notes, oscillations of a third, minor modal pitch content, and short declamatory phrases that begin and end on the same note. These melodic features are reminiscent of an unaccompanied work song, such as a *canto de arreo* (Figure 4.15), another cattle driver’s song.

<sup>305</sup> Chirico, *Cantata Criolla*, 111. “...el singular manejo de los intervalos en los *Cantos de Trabajo*, a base de saltos de tercera, cuarta y quinta...”

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 127.

Figure 4.14. “Sequía”<sup>307</sup>

35 *Allegro*  
*mp*

De las mú-cu-ras va-cí-as el vien-to de la sa-ba-na a-rran-ca un son-mo-no-cor-de y la voz de u-na mu-cha-cha dis-

Figure 4.15. *Canto de arreo*<sup>308</sup>

♩ ~ 100

*f* Si la no-vi-lla su-pie-ra que la lle-van a ven dé ¡Oh! y ba-ja-ran a be-bé ¡o-jo!

<sup>307</sup> Bor, *3 canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 21-22. Used with permission.

<sup>308</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 25.

This information isn't only valuable for analysis and general interest; it has real bearing on choices that can be made in performance. The singer, to imitate the voice of the *muchacha*, could decide to use a simpler, more direct voice quality that embraces the short declamatory nature of the phrasing, rather than seeking to create a longer more Italianate gesture. Parra notes the importance of "vocal color" in the melody of Bor's choral music as well.<sup>309</sup>

### Melodic Repetition

A very similar melody is also used in "Coplas" from *Primer ciclo de romanzas* (Figure 4.16). This melody is also clearly a *Canto de ordeño*, and highlights another feature of Afro-Venezuelan melody that Bor was particularly fond of: the repetition of melodic phrases and fragments. Ramón y Rivera explains the close association of the practice with music of African origin:

"Repetition is characteristic, of either the entire motive, or of some parts of it, simply through their reiteration, act like a stamp on each [Afro-Venezuelan] melody and on the Afro-music in general."<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 39.

<sup>310</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *afrovenezolana*, 43. "es característica la repetición, o bien de todo el motivo, o de algunos incisos que, justamente por su reiteración, dan como un sello a cada melodía y a la música afroide en general."



Figure 4.16. *Canto de ordeño* in “Coplas”<sup>311</sup>

Più mosso  
*p subito*

17

Hu -

*p subito*

Ped. \*

19

bo quien lo vió ca - er, ya - ún des - pués de ca -

22

er, hi - zo o - tra vez el ca - mi - no

*cresc.*

<sup>311</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 24. Used with permission.

Repetitive melodies that use a narrow range of pitches, or more accurately, those based on the Afro/folk-derived tritonic, tetratonic, and pentatonic scales, can be found in many of Bor's songs, often constituting a contrasting section, such as "Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito," (Figure 4.17). The immediate repetition of a motive or melodic gesture is so common to Bor's melodic language that it would be overwhelming to illustrate every occurrence, but a few more will be noted: mm. 13-17 of "Nocturno en los muelles," mm. 32-36 of "Un títere escondido," mm. 5-8 of "Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico," and mm. 1-2 of "Preciosa," mm. 33-39 of "Coplas venezolanas," mm. 7-14 of "Amolador," among others.<sup>312</sup>

Figure 4.17. African melodic repetition, "Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito"<sup>313</sup>

All of Bor's lullabies repeat the initial melodic gesture. In "Mi niño bonito," mm. 1-2 display an exact repetition of the initial descending major triad. "Preciosa" employs a similar descending triad that is immediately repeated (mm.1-2). "Canción de cuna" also opens with a triadic gesture that is the repeated (mm. 1-4). In "Canción de cuna" the third movement of

<sup>312</sup> Bor, *Obra para voz y piano*.

<sup>313</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 17. Used with permission

*Primero ciclo de romanzas*, the first two measures of the melody are repeated in the following two measures. In “Topecito,” mm. 1-2 match mm. 5-6. “Canción de cuna para dormir un negrito” and “Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico” also have immediately reiterated musical material from the initial gesture.

The repetition is not always as exact. Passages or phrases that are best understood as a melodic variation are most common in Bor’s songs. Bor adapts this practice with modal shifts and harmonic changes, such as mm. 13-18 of “Suspiro cuando te miro” and mm. 29-35 in “Guitarra” and even generates new melodic shapes from the repetition and variation of melodic gestures. Motivic treatment in this manner is also a feature of Khachaturian’s instruction, presenting a fascinating similarity and compatibility between Bor’s nationalistic methods of folk adaptation and the modern compositional methods she learned in Moscow. Generally, extended motivic treatment and variation is most prevalent in the piano part.

### Motivic Variation

The most sophisticated motivic variation and development in the voice can be heard in “Pregón.”<sup>314</sup> “Bor develops and varies four motives over the course of the song to generate nearly all of the melodic material. The four motives, all heard within the first phrase, are presented Figure 4.18 to Figure 4.21.”<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 82-85. In her choral works, motivic transformation can be found in “Aqui te amo.”

<sup>315</sup> These motives also reappear, of course, when that entire phrase is repeated at different key levels.

Figure 4.18. “Pregón” Motive 1,  
minor third mm. 1-3<sup>316</sup>

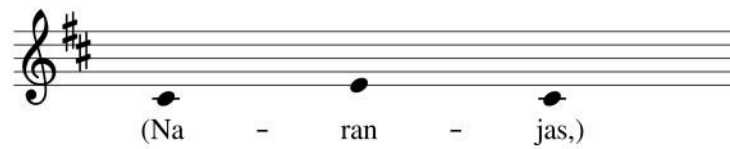


Figure 4.19. “Pregón” Motive 2,  
minor triad m. 4<sup>317</sup>

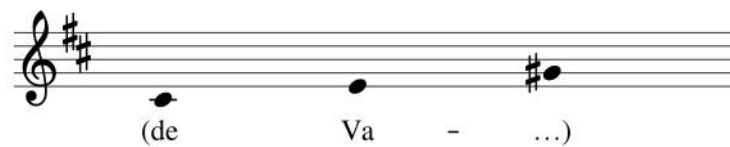


Figure 4.20. “Pregón” Motive 3,  
descending major third passage mm. 4-5<sup>318</sup>

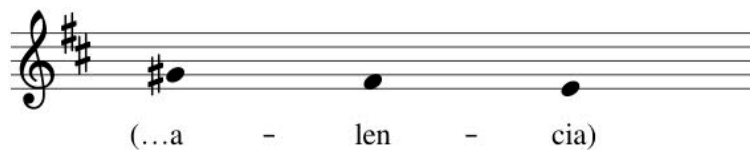
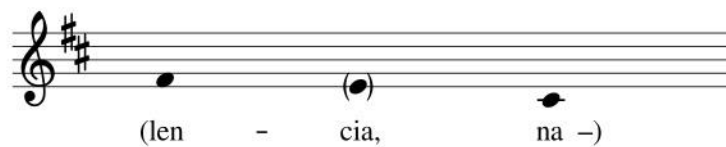


Figure 4.21. “Pregón” Motive 4,  
descending fourth passage m. 5<sup>319</sup>



<sup>316</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 26.

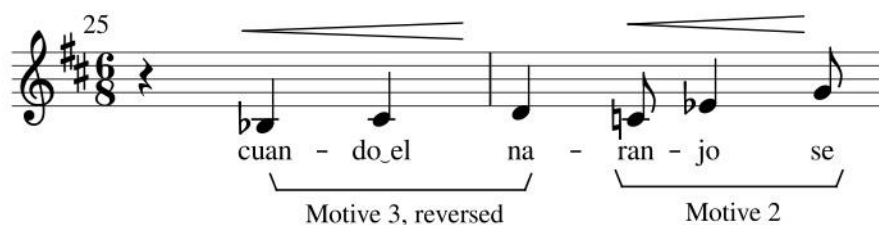
<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

Bor reorganizes these motives, varies and develops them. She varies the order they are presented, in most cases, and often varies their rhythmic values as well. Their direction is often reversed, as is Motive 3 in Figure 4.22 and Figure 4.23, and Motive 4 and Motive 2 in Figure 4.25. In the case of Motive 4, the span of the motive, a perfect fourth, is extracted and developed in Figure 4.24 and Figure 4.26. Sometimes they share a note, as do Motive 4 and 2 in Figure 4.26, and sometimes they are presented without any overlap as in Figure 4.22 and Figure 4.28. In Figure 4.25, Motive 1 is used, but with a key shift part way through. The result is a remarkably unified yet diverse melody. The *llanero* origins of the motivic material ground the persona in the *pueblo* (village) and sharpen the image of a common street vendor. The musical form also mirrors the function of the text; the vendor varies and modifies his message for each passerby, but the subject—buy my oranges—is always the same.

Figure 4.22. “Pregón” variation and reordering of Motive 3 and Motive 2<sup>320</sup>



<sup>320</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 28.

Figure 4.23. “Pregón” variation of Motive 3, mm. 21-22<sup>321</sup>

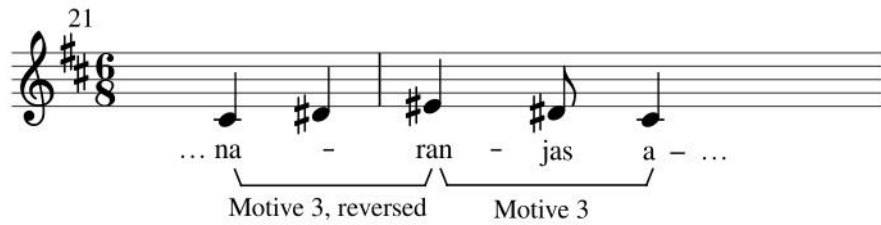


Figure 4.24. “Pregón” variation and reordering of Motive 1, Motive 3, and Motive 4, mm. 40-41<sup>322</sup>

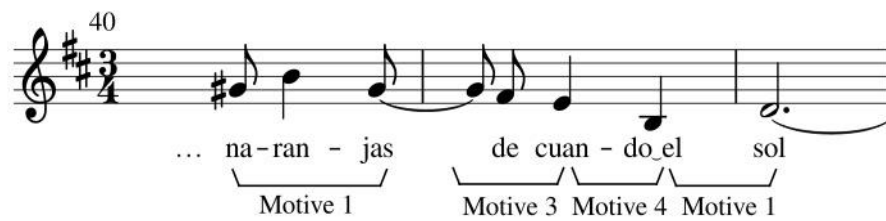
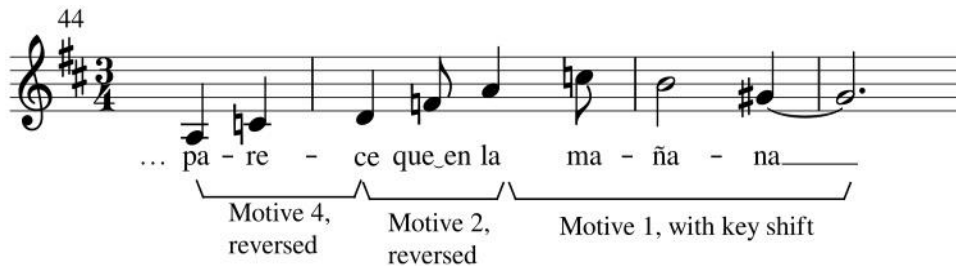


Figure 4.25. “Pregón” variation and reordering of Motive 4, Motive 2, and Motive 1, mm. 44-45<sup>323</sup>



<sup>321</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 27.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

Figure 4.26. “Pregón variation and reordering  
of Motive 4, Motive 2, and Motive 1, mm. 48-50<sup>324</sup>

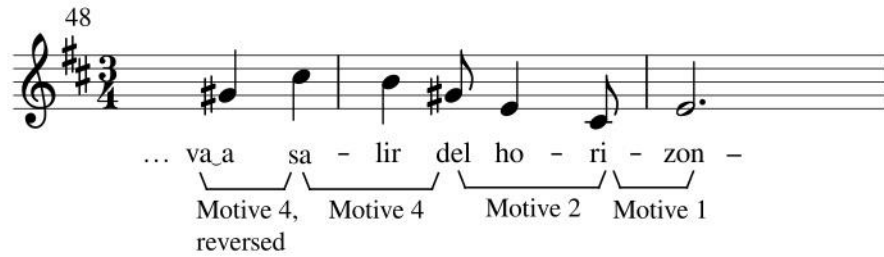
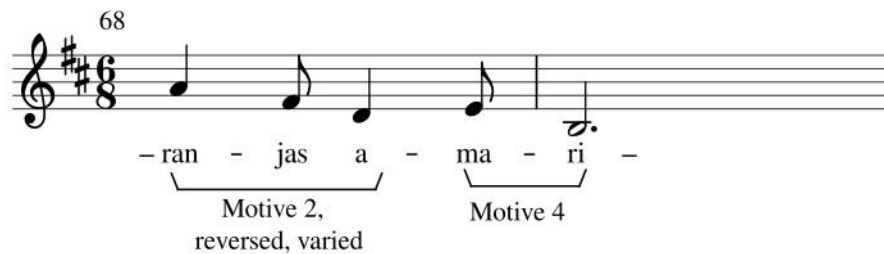


Figure 4.27. “Pregón,”  
development of Motive 4 and Motive 1, mm. 52-55<sup>325</sup>



Figure 4.28. “Pregón,”  
variation of Motive 2 and Motive 4, mm. 67-69<sup>326</sup>



<sup>324</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, “Obra para voz y piano,” 29.

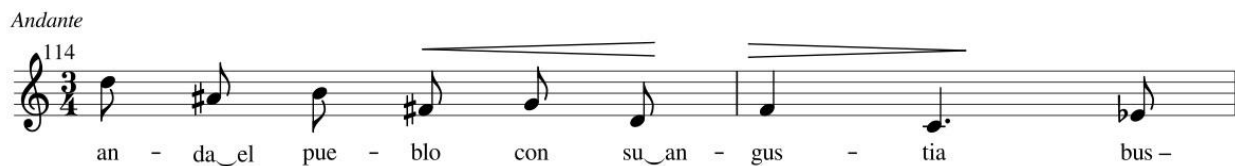
<sup>325</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., 31.

Motivic treatment like that of “Pregón,” in which much of the melodic material is generated from development of a palette of motives, can also be seen in “Sequía” from *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano*, where most of the melodic gestures in mm. 8-29 are reminiscent of the opening melody in mm. 6-7. This pattern is also taken up by the piano in mm. 65-76, refined into a smaller related cell in mm. 77-82, and augmented in mm. 83-84. Bor uses motivic development here to create a transition into the lively *joropo* section that follows, mm. 85-108, achieving an auditory scene change from the *sabana* (plains) of mm. 35-64, to the *veredas* (sidewalks).

Features of Venezuelan folk and popular melodies are typically the source for Bor’s melodic motives. Figure 4.29 shows a different moment of motivic variation from “Sequía.” The melodic cell of a descending fourth is repeated four times sequentially.<sup>327</sup>

Figure 4.29. “Sequía” *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano*, melodic variation<sup>328</sup>



<sup>327</sup> The initial fourth between D<sup>5</sup> and A<sup>#4</sup> is diminished.

<sup>328</sup> Bor, *3 Canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*, *Obra para voz y piano*, 28-29. New engraving.



Not only is the descending fourth a common melodic ending gesture, the first four notes outline a second inversion minor chord (if the A# is treated as chromatic lower neighbor) a staple of *llanero* melodic construction.<sup>329</sup> Chirico notes its usage in Antonio Estévez's *Cantata Criolla* to evoke a relationship to the Venezuelan countryside.<sup>330</sup> This "6/4 theme" and passages that could be considered variations of it, can be found frequently in Bor's art songs. Ramón y Rivera describes its prevalence in the music of the *llaneros*:

Here we have one of the most characteristic melodic movements of our *llaneros*, or as we have called it "the 6/4 theme." This gesture consists of a movement that articulates a minor third (very rarely major) and descends immediately down a perfect fourth.<sup>331</sup>

### Independent Melody

Another feature of Venezuelan folk music adapted by Bor is "independent melody."

Ramón y Rivera defines the practice:

The relationship of the melody with the accompaniment many times establishes independence of accents, in such a way that the singer can intone his song without worrying about the beat of the accompanying instruments. This rhythmic phenomenon, which we will call "independent melody" occurs not only in the music that we are studying, but in the vast majority of Venezuelan songs that have accompaniment. It is a phenomenon strictly of a popular origin...<sup>332</sup>

Ramón y Rivera further explains:

One can observe the way in which the singer uses individual notes, binary and ternary feet, groups of five, pauses, etc....[that] make it organic when the melody is subject to the

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<sup>329</sup> Chirico, *Cantata Criolla*, 91-92, 109.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>331</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *Cantos de trabajo*, 25. "Aparece aquí uno de los movimientos melódicos más característicos de nuestros llaneros, o sea el que hemos denominado típico de cuarta y sexta. Consiste este giro en un movimiento que articula una tercera menor (muy raramente mayor) y desciende inmediatamente sobre una cuarta justa."

<sup>332</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *afrovenezolana*, 44-45. "La relación de la melodía con el acompañamiento establece muchas veces independencia de acentos, de tal modo que un cantor puede entonar su canto sin preocuparse del compás que llevan sus acompañantes. Este fenómeno rítmico, al que denominamos *melódica independiente*, ocurre no sólo en la música que estamos estudiando, sino en la gran mayoría de los cantos venezolanos que llevan acompañamiento. Fenómeno de raíz estrictamente popular..."

beat; or rather, the melodic phrase is conceived in such a way, that even though the beat exhibits a fixed accentuation, there is not a contradiction between the accentuation of the text and that of the melody.”<sup>333</sup>

Usually, Bor changes the meter to accommodate the textual accent, achieving the free quality of the vocal accent, but losing the resultant conflict with the accompaniment. The opening of “Te aguardaba entre mástiles” is a clear example of this practice in which the meter changes four times in five measures. In “Nocturno en los muelles,” however, Bor uses a non-metrical grouping to accommodate the text in mm. 17-19 (Figure 4.30), as well changing meters, mm. 33-39. A *Novena para San Benito* transcribed by Ramón y Rivera (Figure 4.31) demonstrates similar rhythmic groupings, and a similar declamatory style with many repeated notes.

Figure 4.30. Independent melody in  
“Nocturno en los muelles,” *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*<sup>334</sup>

<sup>333</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *afrovenezolana*, 44. “Puede observarse de qué manera el cantor utiliza notas sueltas, pies binarios o ternarios, agrupaciones quíntas, cesuras, etc., ...se hace orgánica cuando las melodías van sujetas a compás; o sea, que la frase melódica está concebida de tal manera, que aunque el compás exige una acentuación fija, no hay contradicción entre la acentuación del texto y la de la melodía.”

<sup>334</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*, *Obra para voz y piano*, 22. Used with permission.

Figure 4.31. *Novena para San Benito*<sup>335</sup>



Bor's use of this technique allows for a quality of unbridled emotional release. The section of "Nocturno en los muelles" that employs independent melody contains some of the most dramatic passages for the voice in her art songs. The singer communicates the unforgotten suffering of slavery through relentless declamatory writing. It is also significant that such rhythmically free singing is an African feature in Venezuelan folk music; Bor appropriately gives an African voice to the pain of African slaves brought to work on Cuba's sugar plantations.

#### Hypophrygian Mode and the *tono llanero*

Bor's melodies are sometimes based on old plagal church modes, especially Hypophrygian, the plagal version of the authentic mode built on E, Figure 4.32. The scale itself has origins in Greece, but it came to Venezuela with the Spanish via Gregorian chant. It is present in much of the folk music of that country, most notably the *tono llanero*.<sup>336</sup> This melodic style has been noted as a feature of Sojo's compositional style, and Bor likely picked up this particular practice from his instruction. Parra describes the *tono llanero* as "simple and pure with

<sup>335</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 96.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid., 54; Chirico, *Cantata Criolla*, 91-92.

a narrow range, well-prepared cadences and an abundance of repeated notes.” It was originally sung *a capella* or with *cuatro* by three male voices.<sup>337</sup>

Figure 4.32. Hypophrygian mode



Melodies that center around a single pitch, gravitating back to the center from above and below, likely draw inspiration from this or other similar modes. Such melodic gestures are reminiscent of chant and the subsequent use of similar gestures in the *tono llanero*. The “tenor” (labelled T) was the pitch around which the melody centered, that would eventually repose upon the final (labelled F). “Un títere escondido” has one of the clearest examples of a Hypophrygian scale used in a chant-like manner, Figure 4.33. B is the tenor and F# the final. Bor uses this variety of melody to enhance themes of innocence and goodness. This example highlights the innocence of children—“Smiles of children that also look at the big nose that lives in goodness.”

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<sup>337</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 25. Quoting José Antonio Calcaño, *Contribución al desarrollo de la música en Venezuela* (Caracas: Editorial Elite, 1939), 96. “The melodic style of Sojo is similar to Gregorian chant and the typical Venezuelan *tono llanero* (Song from the plains)...The *tono llanero* is sung in three-voice harmony: the lower voice, *la de alante* (the one that leads), carries the *tono* or Gregorian chant; the *tenor* (middle voice) and the *falso* (falsetto or contratenor) join the music making the last syllables of the first word, creating three-part harmony. The *tono llanero* was usually sung by three unaccompanied male voices, but sometimes an *ad libitum* accompaniment is used, played by the *cuatro* (Venezuelan four-stringed guitar).”

Figure 4.33. Hypophrygian melody in “Un títere escondido”<sup>338</sup>

*Tranquilo* **T**

26 *mf*

Son - ri - sas de ni - ños que mi - ran tam - bién a la na - ríz

29 *f* **F**

gran - de que vi - ve del bien.

Likewise, a chant-like melody appears in “la luna tiene cabellos blancos” mm. 11-13, as a child describes his grandparents singing him to sleep—“I dream with them when they sing to me.” “Muchachas bajo la lluvia,” in mm. 14-16 (Figure 4.34), also uses a chant-like melody to highlight themes of youth and goodness. This melody is probably best considered in the Dorian mode, with tenor on F# and final on B. The poet’s subject matter is young girls and the text of Figure 4.34 translates to “with a Samaritan attitude.”

<sup>338</sup> Bor, “Un títere escondido,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4. Used with permission.

Figure 4.34. “Muchachas bajo la lluvia”<sup>339</sup>



### *Cante jondo*

In “Guitarra,” Bor uses of the Phrygian mode to evoke the vocal improvisations of the *joropo* derived from the *cante jondo* of Spain. The final melody, declaimed with the characteristic *¡Ah!*, employs a conspicuous Phrygian melodic gesture, Figure 4.35. The *cante jondo* was imported into the Venezuelan *joropo* from Spanish genres. In Venezuela, the rapid melismatic passages characteristic of Spanish singers are abandoned, but the exclamatory syllables *¡Ay!*, *¡Ah!*, *¡O!* are common.<sup>340</sup> The musical association of such passages with Spain evokes the guitar—the primary image of the poem. Imitations of these wordless exclamations appear in her songs after her studies in Moscow, such as “Amolador” mm. 45-50, “Coplas venezolanas” mm. 68-77, and “Sequía” mm. 120-122.

<sup>339</sup> Bor, “Muchachas bajo la lluvia,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4. Used with permission.

<sup>340</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *El joropo*, 64.

Figure 4.35. Phrygian mode with Spanish association in “Guitarra”<sup>341</sup>

The musical score for "Guitarra" consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 116 with a long note, followed by a slur over the next two measures, and then a final note marked *p*. The piano accompaniment features arpeggiated figures labeled *M.I.* and *M.D.* with a *6* indicating a sixteenth note. The piece ends with a *pp* marking and a *rall.* instruction.

#### Arpeggiated Gestures

The arpeggiated gesture is a common trope in Bor’s art songs. Not to be confused with melodies built of tritonic scales, discussed earlier, this quick rising arpeggio, often outlining a minor 7<sup>th</sup> chord, serves to build energy in the phrase and reach a melodic climax. It is often followed by a stepwise descent, or a different arpeggiated descent. This type of melodic gesture also has its roots in folk genres which often employ rising arpeggiations, especially at the start of phrases.

Figure 4.36 shows a *Canto de recolección del café*, or coffee harvesting song, that begins with a rising arpeggio. Similarly, the *Gaita* (a popular genre) in Figure 4.37, uses a rising arpeggio to build towards a melodic climax. This practice can be seen in some of her earlier songs including “Amanecer” mm. 19-20 and “Rojo” mm. 12-13 (Figure 4.38), as well as her

<sup>341</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*, 14. *Obra para voz y piano*. Used with permission.

works after 1960 including “La flor de apamate,” “Canción de Cuna,” and “Coplas” (Figure 4.39) from *Primer ciclo de romanzas*.

Figure 4.36. *Canto de recolección del café*, ascending arpeggiated melody<sup>342</sup>

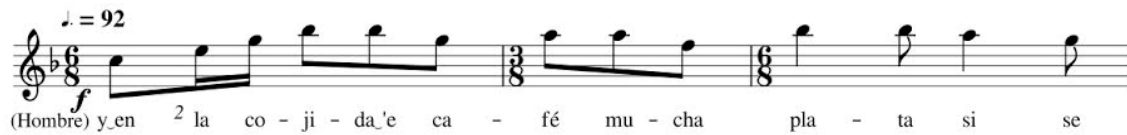


Figure 4.37. *Gaita*, ascending arpeggiated melody<sup>343</sup>

Figure 4.37 shows a musical score for "Gaita". The score is written on two staves in 6/8 time. The first staff contains the melody with chords F7, Bb, and D7. The lyrics are: ... nues - tra vi - da cam - bia - rá y nue - stra fe lle - va - ra... The second staff continues the melody with chords Gm, D7, Gm, and Cm. The lyrics are: — por los 2 sen - de - ros 2 cris - tia - nos Pa - tro-na de los ...

<sup>342</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 29.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid., 131.



Figure 4.38. Rising arpeggio to melodic climax in “Rojo”<sup>344</sup>

Figure 4.38 shows a musical score for the piece "Rojo". The score is in 3/4 time and features a rising arpeggio in the piano accompaniment that leads to a melodic climax in the vocal line. The vocal line is in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "nien - te in - cen - dió el pa - be - llón de ra - so de la tar - de." The score includes a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The piano part has a "Ped." (pedal) marking and a "\*" symbol. The vocal part has a "Ped." marking and a "\*" symbol.

Figure 4.39. Primer ciclo de romanzas “Coplas,” rising arpeggio to melodic climax<sup>345</sup>

Figure 4.39 shows a musical score for the piece "Primer ciclo de romanzas 'Coplas'". The score is in 3/4 time and features a rising arpeggio in the piano accompaniment that leads to a melodic climax in the vocal line. The vocal line is in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "su - po cuán - do, có - mo, dón - de". The score includes a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The piano part has a "cresc." (crescendo) marking and a "marcato" marking. The vocal part has a "f" (forte) marking and a "rall." (rallentando) marking. The piano part has a "3" (triple) marking and a "f" (forte) marking. The vocal part has a "3" (triple) marking and a "f" (forte) marking. The piano part has a "8vb" (8va below) marking and a "f" (forte) marking. The vocal part has a "f" (forte) marking and a "rall." (rallentando) marking.

<sup>344</sup> Bor, “Rojo,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4. Used with permission.

<sup>345</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, *Obra para voz y piano*, 23. Used with permission.

### Imitation of Other Genres

While the songs of the *llaneros* are Bor's largest source of melodic material, there are some works that imitate the melodic gestures of other popular genres. "Es la luz de tu presencia" is the most clearly imitative of a specific genre, both in melody and form: the nostalgic Cuban ballroom dance that Bor clearly indicates in her score: *bolero-danzón*.<sup>346</sup> "Guitarra," during its *aire de merengue* section draws on many rhythmic patterns commonly found in the melodies of the *merengue*, discussed further under the Piano section. In the *merengue*, the dominant melodic pattern is syllabically declaimed eighth notes on all five beats which Bor uses in a number of places including mm. 51-52, and 55-56.<sup>347</sup> These sections should be performed crisply, without rushing. The syncopated rhythm in m. 58 and the pattern of accentuation in mm. 47-48 are both common as well. Also, as discussed earlier, the romantic song—both the *vals-canción* and the *aria-canción*—are sources of inspiration for some of Bor's songs.

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<sup>346</sup> Bor, "Es la luz de tu presencia," *Obra para voz y piano*, 3.

<sup>347</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 220.

## *Piano*

Bor was a pianist first, and she would likely have made a career as a performer were it not for an illness that left her hands weakened. The piano bears much of Bor's musical allusion to Venezuelan folk and popular music, because it is the primary rhythmic instrument between itself and the voice. Also, Bor's unique harmonic language is present in the piano, but this will be discussed in the next section. This section will primarily be devoted to the presence of folk and popular rhythms that Bor adapted for the piano. While her melodic writing is significant, it is in the piano that the whole composer is visible. Maelzner shares a similar view:

Although our composer was able to stand out for the high level of all her choral music and her brilliant orchestrations, we believe that it is in her pianistic language that she reveals in a simple and diaphanous way that particular musical language...<sup>348</sup>

As a pianist, Bor admired an eclectic mix of pianists. Her son Domingo relates some of her favorites: "[Beethoven, Schumann, Debussy, etc.,] [y]es, and also Bola de Nieve, Bill Evans, Ellington, Corea, etc.,...her personal sanctuary until her physical disappearance was the sparkling work of J.S. Bach."<sup>349</sup> Bor was able to improvise and imitate the styles of different pianists as is related by César Alejandro Carillo: "We very much enjoyed her improvising at the piano. In one opportunity she did more than twenty variations on *la cucaracha que no podía caminar*, and we all voted for the one we liked best, for me, it was the *Chopanistic Cucaracha*."<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> Maelzner, 14. "Si bien nuestra compositora logró destacarse por el alto nivel de toda su música moral y sus brillantes orquestaciones, consideramos que es en su lenguaje pianístico donde nos revela de manera sencilla y diáfana ese lenguaje musical tan particular..."

<sup>349</sup> Maelzner, "Entrevista a Domingo Sanchez Bor," 40-41. "...Beethoven, Schumann, Debussy, etc.? Sí, y además por Bola de Nieve, Bill Evans, Ellington, Corea, etc....su santuario personal hasta su desaparición física, fue la obra rutilante de J. S. Bach."

<sup>350</sup> Carillo, "La vida con Modesta." "Nos divertíamos mucho jugando a improvisar en el piano. en (sic) una oportunidad hizo más de 20 variaciones sobre la cucaracha que no podía caminar y todos votamos por la que más nos gustaba, para mí fué la cucaracha chopiniana."

Improvisation was her preferred method of brainstorming compositional ideas.<sup>351</sup> “Many times, she played the piano without reading anything, rather improvising and tossing out ideas,” she both imitated other genres of music and invented her own.<sup>352</sup>

### Text Painting

Bor often uses her piano writing to text paint. In “Sequía” the monotonous sound referenced in the text—the resonance generated in an empty bottle when air is blown across the top—is imitated in the bass of the piano with a repeated A<sub>2</sub> sounded at the beginning of each measure (Figure 4.14 on page 90). Recognizing moments like this can inform performance: the pianist may choose to voice the repeated bass note louder and at a steadier volume to draw attention to the monotonous sound. Machine gun fire is imitated for the revolutionary poem “Nocturno en los muelles” (mm. 21-22). The bangs and noises mentioned in “Si el silencio fuera mío” are translated into thunderous bass notes (m. 31). Once instructed to look for these musical depictions of the text, singers, pianists and listeners should have no trouble identifying them and interpreting them accordingly. Such passages were meant to be easily recognized and thereby affect the listener. Rather than illustrate every such instance in Bor’s songs, this essay seeks to illuminate those musical allusions and references that are less readily grasped by the non-Venezuelan performer and audience.

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<sup>351</sup> Correspondence with Wahári Sánchez Bor.

<sup>352</sup> Correspondence with Wahári Sánchez Bor: “...many times she played the piano without looking at any music, but rather improvising and tossing out ideas.” “...muchas veces no tocaba el piano leyendo alguna partitura sino improvisando y sacando ideas.” She both imitated other genres of music and invented her own.

## The *Joropo*

Bor and the Santa Capilla School in general most often drew rhythmic inspiration from the *joropo*. Just as Bor's melodic content bears resemblance to the rural *llanero* melodies, so does her rhythmic content evoke the countryside and the rural populace through the use of *joropo* rhythmic patterns. When seeking to evoke the national music of Venezuela, the *llaneros* and their music were the preferred source for many of the nationalist composers. It is notable that during the early twentieth century, the economy and demographics of Venezuela were rapidly changing to a more urban society. The explosive growth of the oil industry between 1922 and 1945 was especially significant.<sup>353</sup> The fact that this growth was largely in the hands of British and US companies, who unscrupulously took advantage of the Venezuelan work force and natural resources, greatly contributed to nationalistic sentiment. The focus on rural life in music is both nationalistic and nostalgic and implies a belief that the countryside possessed a certain purity of Venezuelan character that was evolving as society urbanized and became more bound to markets and cultures abroad.

The *joropo*, officially the national dance of Venezuela, also refers to the broad genre of music to which the dance is executed. Its origins, like many genres of folk music from Venezuela and Latin America in general, are derived from a combination of European, African and indigenous influences due the region's history of colonization and slavery.<sup>354</sup> The Spanish *fandango* is indicated as the probable origin of the "figure of amorous galantry" of the *joropo*

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<sup>353</sup> Judith Ewell, *Venezuela: A Century of Change* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1984). 63-65.

<sup>354</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 24, 31-32. "...the black Caribbean cultural influence is most noticeable in the north of Venezuela, in the coastal regions; the far east coast is influenced by the English-speaking islands of Trinidad and Tobago; the coastal regions, the *llanos* (the plains), recieved more influence from Hispanic settlers (noticeable in the *joropo*, a dance in alternating 6/8, 3/4 meter, derived from the Spanish fandango). Indigenous cultural influence is minimal because Venezuelan Indians were nomads and did not establish well-developed civilizations. Some of their music is preserved (mostly in the south), but a few settlements still exist."

dance.<sup>355</sup> In the early development of the genre, which began as early as the eighteenth century, the term *fandango* was synonymous with *joropo*.<sup>356</sup> The European waltz, and the development of the *vals venezolano*, also played an important role, which can be seen in the general organization of triple meter (3/4) and the poetic and literary aspects of the genre.<sup>357</sup> Africans contributed rhythmic complexity in the accompaniment and metrical freedom in the melody.<sup>358</sup> The use of maracas and certain elements of the melodic character are considered indigenous.<sup>359</sup> When the piano uses a *joropo* rhythm, the pianist might choose to emphasize qualities of the musical dance.

Bor uses the *joropo* to create physical setting for her songs, orienting the action of the poetry on the Venezuelan plains. The *joropo* is a country dance, and its music is associated with the *llaneros*, Venezuelan cowboys, and the *llanos*, plains, on which they live. To understand the geography and occupations associated with it, US readers might relate it to country, cowboy or bluegrass music in the US; however, the musical and cultural differences are many and the cultures themselves should not be conflated.<sup>360</sup> The music and dance are typically learned by ear in the *pueblos*, as well as taught in schools and universities.<sup>361</sup> Ortiz describes the place of the dance and its music within the culture:

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<sup>355</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *El Joropo*, 13. "...la figura del galanteo amoroso." Although, Venezuelans did not transport the tamborine or castanets common to the *fandango*.

<sup>356</sup> Manuel Antonio Ortiz, "Joropo," vol. 1 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela*, edited by José Peñín and Walter Guido (Caracas, Venezuela: Fundación Bigot), 70. Its first mention is in 1749.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Correspondence with Wahári Sánchez Bor.

<sup>361</sup> Ortiz, 72.

The *joropo* is played and danced at any time of the year, during every family occasion and for every collective celebration. In rural areas, hosts and guests gather on the patio, in the shade of trees, or in large [outdoor] corridors where they trample up the dust, a sign of their vigor and enthusiasm. Singers alternate competing verses, while the harpists take a break so that the music lasts for long days of joy and recreation.<sup>362</sup>

There are several varieties of *joropo* distinguished by region. The most widespread and well-known is the *joropo llanero* (of the plains). The *joropo central*, *centro-occidental*, and *oriental* are distinguished from the *llanero* by the instruments used, the presence of an *estribillo* (refrain), and other musical differences, as well as differences in the lyrics and dance.<sup>363</sup> Figure 4.40 shows the general distribution of these varieties of *joropo*. The *joropo llanero* is in orange, *joropo central* is in blue, *joropo centro-occidental* is in yellow, and the *joropo oriental* is in red. Ortiz describes the distribution of the *joropo*:

The word *joropo* is associated frequently by Venezuelans and foreigners with the *joropo llanero*; perhaps because this is the most dispersed within and outside of Venezuela. The distribution of *joropo llanero* includes the states Apure, Cojedes, Barinas, Guárico, Monagas y Portuguesa.<sup>364</sup>

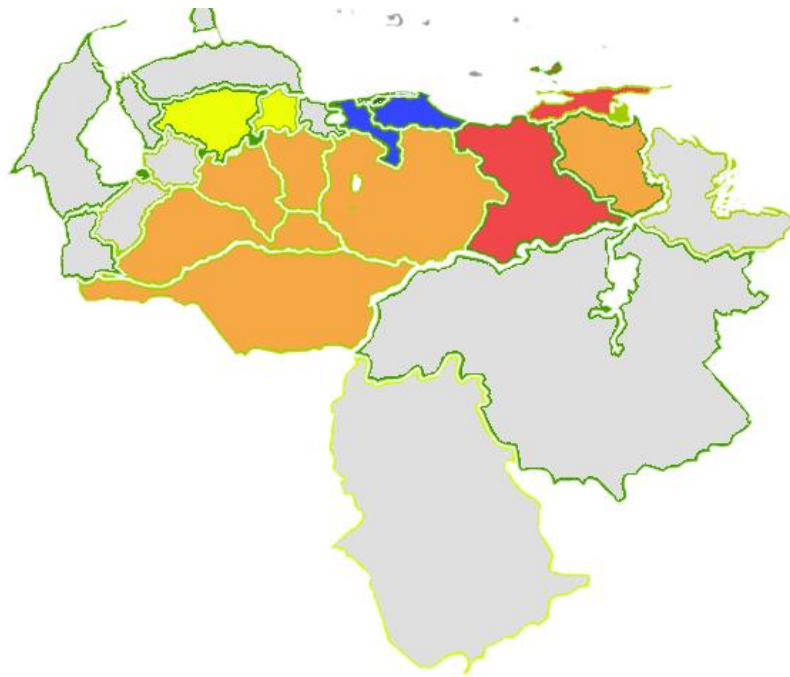
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<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 71. “El joropo se toca y baila en todas las ocasiones de celebración familiar y colectiva, y en cualquier momento del año. En las zonas rurales los dueños de casa e invitados ocupan el patio, y bajo la sombra de los árboles, o en los grandes corredores, zapatean levantando el polvo que da muestra de vigor y entusiasmo. Los cantores del llano se alternan en el contrapunteo, mientras los arpistas se relevan para que la música permanezca en largas jornadas de alegría y esparcimiento.”

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 70-71.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 70. “La palabra joropo es asociada muy frecuentemente por venezolanos y extranjeros con el joropo llanero; quizás porque éste es el más difundido dentro y fuera de Venezuela. La dispersión del joropo llanero comprende los estados Apure, Cojedes, Barinas, Guárico, Monagas y Portuguesa.”

Figure 4.40. Distribution of the varieties of *joropo*<sup>365</sup>



There are two broad sub-genres of the *joropo llanero*, the hard-hitting, vigorous *golpe* (implied by the literal definition “blow”) and the lyrical *pasaje*.<sup>366</sup> The *golpe* itself contains numerous sub-genres, while the differences in *pasaje* are usually indicated with a distinctive reference in the title to a person or place.<sup>367</sup> The performers are usually harp or bandola, cuatro, maracas, and singers.<sup>368</sup> The melody is declaimed syllabically, and the harmony is usually diatonic, mostly tonic and dominant, limited by the diatonic strings of the harp. The tempo is

<sup>365</sup> The coloring of this map is my own, based on the information in Oritz.

<sup>366</sup> Oritz, 70. *Pasaje* has many definitions including “passage,” “ticket,” and “voyage,” but in this case the regional definition of “story” or “anecdote” is more appropriate.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid., 71. Other subgenres of *golpe* include: *seis por numeración*, *seis por derecho*, *pajarillo*, *seis figureao*, *zumba que zumba*, *guacharaca*, *gaván*, *chipola*, *merecure*, *periquera*, *carnaval*, *quirpa*, *San Rafael*, *catira*, *paloma*, *cunavichero*, *caracolas*, and the *gavilán*. Also significant is the *corrío* or *corrido* sometimes considered a distinct genre of its own.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid. 70.



brisk, and the rhythm is complicated, dominated by the overlay and alternation of 6/8 and 3/4.<sup>369</sup> As a dance, it is performed in couples, with the man typically more active than the woman.<sup>370</sup>

The *zoropo central* is from Miranda and Aragua.<sup>371</sup> The harp is particularly important to this variety and carries the melody, unlike its more rhythmic use in the *llanero* variety. A singer and maracas accompany, while the *cuatro* is absent. Rhythmic intensity, overall, is less than the *llanero* and melodic character is more important which is smoother, as is the dance.<sup>372</sup>

The *zoropo centro-occidental* is from Lara and Yaracuy, where a variety of *golpe* is popular called the *golpe larense*. More strings are used: a *cuatro*, *medio cinco*, and *cinco*, as well as *tamboras* and maracas. Two singers sing in parallel motion, with a short refrain.

The *zoropo oriental* comes from Sucre, Anzoátegui, and Nueva Esparta, a state comprised of islands off the northern coast, including the island of Margarita, Bor's birthplace. Instruments used are more eclectic including the accordion or *bandolín*, *cuatro*, guitar, marimba, maracas, and voice. In a common genre called *zoropo* or *golpe con estribillo*, the accordion or bandolín carry the *canto firme* and the singer sings a fixed verse with an improvised *estribillo* (refrain).<sup>373</sup> The *polo margariteño* and the *galerón* are important subgenres from this region.

In general, the *zoropo* is characterized most saliently by its rhythmic content: an overlay and alternation between ternary meter (usually notated 3/4) and binary meter (usually notated 6/8). The meter chosen for the piece, if notated, is simply the preference of the composer, and sometimes different instruments are notated in different meters, or both meters are given.

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<sup>369</sup> Oritz, 71.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid. The interested reader is encouraged to avail themselves of the many online videos of this type of dancing.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid. Citing Ramón y Rivera, *musical folklórica*, 191-192.

Regardless, the result is a measure of six eighth notes with variety in patterns of accentuation.<sup>374</sup>

Ramón y Rivera and Lopez Chirico both indicate that ternary meter (3/4), that of the *vals* from which the *joropo* derived some of its structure, is the primary organization of the beat.<sup>375</sup>

Notations in 6/8 often use a ternary organization of the measure, despite the choice in meter. This is frequently the case in Bor's music, and the singer and pianist alike will often benefit from reconsidering the meter as 3/4 when it is notated as 6/8, especially when the rhythm of the *joropo* is being imitated. Parra gives a similar instruction to conductors of Bor's choral music: "Use a 3 pattern, and don't conduct feeling of implied 6/8...[which] works as a syncopation and can be articulated with accents."<sup>376</sup> For the singer, the correct metrical organization is usually implied by the textual accent, a point also noted by Parra.<sup>377</sup> Ramón y Rivera explains:

"The predominant rhythm [division of the beat] is duple.....Triple rhythm [division of the beat], so common in the percussion of certain drum beats, is nevertheless scarce in melody. In addition, there is in general a tendency to transform into duple the triple rhythms of the melody...the polyrhythm that we have is not European, nor indigenous, rather it comes from Africa."<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Oritz, 72.

<sup>375</sup> Chirico, *Cantata Criolla*, 104; Ramón y Rivera *música folklórica*, 54; Ramón y Rivera, *El Jopopo*, 45.

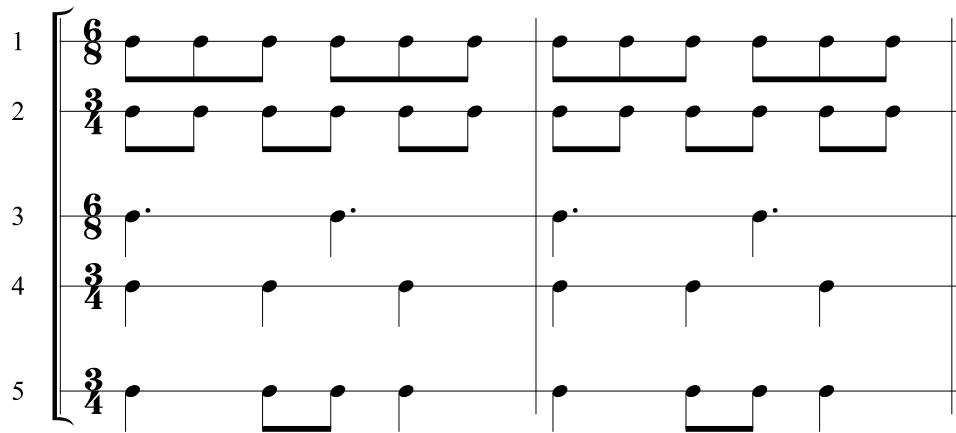
<sup>376</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 39.

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>378</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *afrovenezolana*, 44, 46. "...el ritmo predominante es el binario...El ritmo ternario, tan común en la percusión de ciertos golpes de tambor, es sin embargo escaso en las melodías. Hay además, en general, una tendencia a transformar en binarios los ritmos ternarios de la melodía...la polirritmia que etenemos (sic) no es europea ni indígena, luego procede de Africa."

Figure 4.41 illustrates this relationship termed two vs. three, hemiola, or sesquialtera. Lines 1 and 2 show the different organizations of eighth notes in 6/8 and 3/4 respectively. Lines 3 and 4 show the resultant binary and ternary structures of the meters, and line 5 represents the composite rhythm generated when lines 3 and 4 are combined.

Figure 4.41. *Joropo*: 2 vs. 3, hemiola or sesquialtera



As indicated above, the most common instrument to accompany most varieties of *joropo* is the *cuatro*. The *cuatro*, among the most popular instruments in Venezuela, is a four-stringed instrument similar to the guitar's Spanish ancestor, the *vihuela*. Many different genres of popular and folk music employ the instrument, including the *joropo*, *gaita*, *fulía*, *merengue*, and *diversión*. Each genre of music has a distinctive strumming pattern that serves as a steady ostinato. The pattern can be embellished with rapidly strummed *rasquidos* and modified briefly, but it always returns and is related to the standard pattern.<sup>379</sup> Most patterns, and especially that of the *joropo*, include a mix of strumming and *chasquidos*. *Chasquidos*, clicks made with the *cuatro*, are created by quickly striking the strings from above or below, and immediately

<sup>379</sup> Reyna, *Metodo de cuatro*.

snuffing the sound with the body and base of the thumb (from above), or the back of the fingers (from below). The resultant sound is percussive and sharp.<sup>380</sup> The *chasquido* provides a certain accent, but it is also devoid of the sonorous quality of the strumming.

The pattern of the *cuatro* for *joropo* is particularly interesting in its ability to be conceived in both 6/8 and 3/4: two strummed eighth notes followed by a single eighth-note click. It is usually executed without significant accentuation, rather more like a stream of equal eighth notes. Changes in harmony usually provide enough strength to lock the pattern into one meter or the other, but devoid of such a change or an embellishment that accents a certain beat, the pattern is ambiguous.

Figure 4.42 illustrates the *cuatro*'s pattern in relation to other metrical divisions. When the pattern is adapted to the piano, as in Bor's art songs, it appears as a variety of line 1 or 2. Line 1, a short-long pattern in 6/8, is the inversion of the classic lilting long-short pattern of 6/8. Line 2 shows the same rhythm conceived in ternary meter. Tenuto markings indicate where one perceives the stress in each metrical conception. Line 3 is the *cuatro* pattern strictly transcribed with x-noteheads indicating the click. The maracas part in line 4 is also a stream of eighth notes and contains accents synchronized with the *cuatro*'s clicks.<sup>381</sup> Line 5 indicates the binary structure of 6/8, and line 6 displays a pattern in 3/4, a common bass-line rhythm. The *cuatro* pattern could be considered as a relation to either line 5 or line 6, or both simultaneously. Interestingly, Ramón y Rivera claims that Venezuelan theorists consider the click, together with

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<sup>380</sup> Reyna, *Metodo de cuatro*.

<sup>381</sup> Chirico, *Cantata Criolla*, 106.

accent of the maracas, as the important metrical beat.<sup>382</sup> This results in a metrical grouping of 6/8 that is out of phase with the other meters, indicated in line 4.

Figure 4.42. *Cuatro* pattern in the *joropo*

1: appearance in Bor's music

2: appearance in Bor's music

3: cuatro pattern

4: maracas pattern

5: metrical accent in 6/8

6: metrical accent in 3/4

The click is sometimes honored with a rest (third eighth note of line 2), and other times ignored allowing the previous note value to extend over (sixth eighth note of line 2). However, regardless of how it is notated when this pattern is encountered, it is my opinion that it should be performed *secco*, with note values no longer than an eighth note, and *without* metrical accentuation. The rhythmic pattern of the *cuatro* often appears in the harp as well. The articulation of the harp is also sharp and short. Passages that repeat blocks of notes in a rhythmic pattern are likely more imitative of the *cuatro*, while passages that alternate notes in patterns are likely more imitative of the harp, Figure 4.43. Regardless, the musical allusion to the *joropo* is the same.

<sup>382</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *El joropo*, 45-46.

Bor was not unique in this pianistic imitation of the instruments of the *joropo*. Juan Bautista Plaza's "Sonatina venezolana" from 1934 contains nearly identical patterning in the hands of the piano.<sup>383</sup> Ramón y Rivera indicates that such "cross-rhythms and syncopations [are] without a doubt very close to the rhythmic characteristics of the *golpe*, the *corrido*, etc." (subgenres of the *joropo*).<sup>384</sup>

Figure 4.43. *Cuatro*/harp *joropo* pattern in "Amolador"

The harp is an important instrument in the *joropo*. Contrary to the sweeping arpeggios it is sometimes relegated to, the harp in the *joropo llanero* is rhythmic, percussive, energetic, and exciting. The high strings deliver sharp sub-divisional patterns and the low strings, often played rough for an effect called *bordoneo*, accentuate polyrhythms and polymeters to motivate the dancers.<sup>385</sup> Much of Bor's piano writing in the *joropo* style seems to evoke the patterns and character of the harp, Figure 4.44. Interestingly, Brandt contends that due to the harp's development in Spain and Venezuela, much of the "harp-playing styles of Venezuela closely

<sup>383</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *50 años de la música*, 150.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid., 149. "...contratiempos y las síncopas, sin duda muy carcanos a los caracteres rítmicos del "golpe", el "corrido", etc."

<sup>385</sup> Keyla Orozco, *El Arpa en el Joropo Llanero*, documentary video (Nederlands Fonds Podiumkinsten, 2006) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8pa9ma4zAg> (accessed February 2018). A bass string is called a *bordón*.

resemble Spanish Baroque keyboard styles,” allowing the patterns of the harp to readily adapt to the piano.<sup>386</sup>

Figure 4.44. Harp patterns and large hemiola in “Pregón”<sup>387</sup>



One of the ways in which harpists add rhythmic complexity to the foundation described above is by including hemiola on a scale twice that of the normal: two dotted half notes vs. three half notes. Bor occasionally includes this large hemiola in her adaptations of *joropo* rhythm such as mm. 36-41 of “Pregón,” Figure 4.44 above.

This two-measure hemiola is noted as a feature of the harp by Ramón y Rivera and Chirico, illustrated in Figure 4.45.<sup>388</sup> In the figure, line 1 represents the rhythm of the harp indicated by Ramón and y Rivera and Chirico who conceive it as polymeter, notating it in 2/4.<sup>389</sup>

<sup>386</sup> Max H. Brandt, *Venezuela*, in *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, edited by Dale A. Olsen and Daniel E. Sheehy (New York: Garland, 2000), 237.

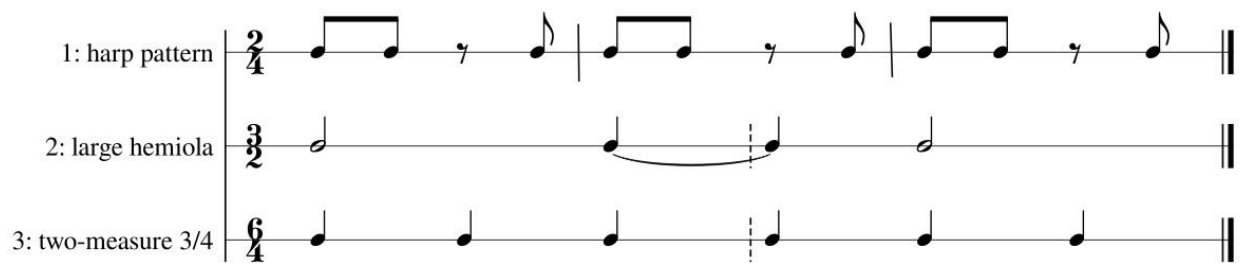
<sup>387</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 28. Used with permission.

<sup>388</sup> Chirico, *Cantata criolla*, 106. The right hand of the harp part in his example contains this same pattern that could be conceived as this large-scale hemiola, although.

<sup>389</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *El joropo*, 48.

This rhythm also matches a rhythm in a recording of “El Gavan” a *joropo llanero*, made by the Quinteto Contrapunto, a Venezuelan group of five singers that performed academic arrangements of folk songs in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>390</sup> Line 2 is the underlying hemiola of the transcribed rhythm, and the rhythm used in “Pregón.” Line 3 is 3/4 stretched into a two-measure segment. The meters of lines 2 and 3 have been notated to indicate the two-measure duration of the pattern (3/2 and 6/4), and to highlight its similarity to the 3/4 and 6/8 relationship present at the sub-divisional level.

Figure 4.45. Large hemiola of *joropo llanero*



Gentler textures imitative of the harp are also present in Bor’s piano writing. A common harp gesture can be found in “Si el silencio fuera mío” (Figure 4.46). Perhaps, Bor draws inspiration from the gentler *joropo central* for such passages. This descending two-eighth-note pattern of can be found in other songs as well, such as “Amanecer” and “Muchachas bajo la lluvia” where the harp is also likely the inspiration.

<sup>390</sup> Quinteto contrapunto, vol. 5 of *Música popular y folclórica de Venezuela*, LP (Caracas: Vida Records C.A.), track 1, “El Gavan.” With the note: “JOROPO Folclor Llanero.” Interested readers are encouraged to listen to this group for excellent representative examples of the folk genres discussed.



Figure 4.46. “Si el silencio fuera mío”<sup>391</sup>

The musical score is for a song titled "Si el silencio fuera mío". It is written for voice and piano. The tempo is marked "Andantino, cantabile" and the mood is "mp". The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The voice part starts with a rest for two measures, then sings "Si el si-len-cio fue-ra mí-o, ¡qué si-len-cio!". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand, with some chords and accidentals.

#### Guitarra and the *merengue venezolano*

“Guitarra” from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* is a song rich in musical and poetic reference alike. Contrary to the instincts of most composers, Bor does not draw on the inherent musical form of Guillén’s poem. Guillén’s poem is in the form a *son*, a popular form of Cuban dance music. Rather than imitating the Cuban musical genre, Bor takes Guillén’s message for the Cuban people to seek their full potential and transports it into the musical world of Venezuela imitating folk singing and the popular dance, the *merengue venezolano*. Guillén’s message is delivered through Venezuelan voices—the voices of the folk and popular genres that she imitates—and to a Venezuelan audience, the group for whom the musical references would have been clear and significant.

This song was written near the end of the failed attempt on the part of the Communist parties in Venezuela at stimulating a revolution through guerrilla violence and urban terrorism. Like many others at that time, Bor did not agree with the violent direction of the Communist

<sup>391</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 4. Used with permission.

movement in Venezuela. Guillén's message—that now is the dawn of an open future, a chance to overcome obstacles, one that must be taken advantage of by the common people, sober and proud—is significant when transported into the Venezuelan zeitgeist.

The *merengue venezolano* (no musical relation to the *merengue* of the Dominican Republic) is associated with urban life in Caracas.<sup>392</sup> Its development in Caracas in the early decades of the twentieth century resulted in its “conversion into a symbol of the city,” and the “spark and joy of living” of its citizens.<sup>393</sup> The years of 1920-1940 are considered the “golden age of the *merengue caraqueño*.”<sup>394</sup> Its influence on the life of the city was significant, and it filled a niche in social society. “In the twenties, the *merengue* in Caracas had found its own space and importance: it was the favorite dance in the *mabiles*, popular dance halls.”<sup>395</sup> It was popular throughout the nation due to the radio. During Carnivals, bands would play *merengue* from the back of trucks and people would dance into the early morning in the streets and at shrines.<sup>396</sup> The basic step of the dance is executed over two measures and “can be accompanied by marked movements of the hip, for which it has been described by its detractors as rude, lewd, and crude.”<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> James Dreier, *Latin Jazz Guide: A Path to Authentic Percussion and Ensemble Performance* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard, 2015), 143.

<sup>393</sup> Cristóbal Soto, “Merengue,” vol. 2 of *Enciclopedia de la música en Venezuela*, edited by José Peñín and Guido Walter (Caracas: Fundación Bigott, 1998), 219. “...llegó a convertirse en símbolo de la ciudad.” “...la chispa y alegría de vivir...”

<sup>394</sup> Ibid., 221. “la época de oro del merengue caraqueño” *caraqueño* is the term referring to someone or something from Caracas.

<sup>395</sup> Soto, “Merengue,” 221. “Para los años veinte, el merengue había adquirido en Caracas un espacio propio y de importancia: era el baile favorito en los “mabiles”, sitios donde se bailaba...”

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid. “puede estar acompañado de marcados movimientos de cadera, por lo que ha sido descrito por sus detractores como soez, lascivo, o grosero.”

Its origins are unclear, but the most likely sources include European and African music. The European contradance, and its derivative in Venezuela, the *danza* is a likely precursor: “We find in the *danza* and the *danza-merengue* of the nineteenth century a great similarity with the first *merengues* that appeared toward the end of the century.”<sup>398</sup> Sojo postulated that “...the Basques brought the *zorrico*, their regional dance of complex rhythm, that gave (perhaps) origin to our *merengue*.”<sup>399</sup> In addition, there exist similarities between the compound rhythmic patterns of the *merengue* and the music of some African cultures.<sup>400</sup> More detailed study is needed in this area of research.

Formal sections are typically eight, twelve or sixteen measures, similar to other dance music, and the harmony, originally, was simple and diatonic, similar to most popular music of the time, although recently artists have adapted the genre with more complicated harmonies.<sup>401</sup> The accompanying instruments, played strongly, were *cuatro*, bass and percussion, and solo instruments were trumpets, trombones, saxophones and clarinets.<sup>402</sup> The *merengue* shares its rhythmic pattern with other Venezuelan genres including “the *aguinaldo*, the *guasa*, the *parranda*, and the *merengue cumanés*.”<sup>403</sup> The harmonic sequence is also the same in the *aguinaldo* and the *guasa*.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 220. “Encontramos en la danza y la danza-merengue del siglo XIX una gran similitud con los primeros merengues aparecidos hacia el final del siglo.”

<sup>399</sup> Ibid. Quoting Vicente Emilio Sojo, “Carta al poeta Carlos Augusto León” (Caracas: Agencia Musical, 1968), 4.

<sup>400</sup> Ibid.; Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 31-32. African slaves in Venezuela were mostly from Congolese and Angolan regions.

<sup>401</sup> Soto, “Merengue,” 221.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Parra, *Conductor’s Guide*, 97. Parra explains the difference between these very similar genres: “What differentiates them is their textual content. While *aguinaldos* have Christmas texts, the *guasa* is a *merengue* with a

In some ways, Venezuelan *merengue* can be considered a correlate to big band music in the US during the same period: Both are dance music, indicative of certain youthful vigor, both are a synthesis of African and European musical features, both are associated with the country's major urban center, both feature wind instruments with string and percussion accompaniment, both benefited from the diffusion provided by the radio, and the rhythm of both swing and *merengue* have experienced trouble adapting to traditional notation.<sup>405</sup>

The most salient feature of the *merengue* is the rhythm, which, incidentally, is also its most controversial. The basic pattern is “a two-beat phrase (+-108-140)” with a group of three followed by a group of two, with an accent on the final note.<sup>406</sup> Ramón y Rivera states that this “accent” is “in reality, more than an accent, it is an elongation, a greater metrical quantity.”<sup>407</sup>

The notation of the *merengue* rhythm is not standardized; there are three different systems. Emilio Mendoza claims that none of them work “efficiently to make a performance from notation, without previous audio knowledge, sound like a *merengue venezolano*.”<sup>408</sup> Bor uses 5/8 for the *merengue* in “Guitarra.” Many composers, including Sojo for most of his life and occasionally Bor in her other works, notate the *merengue* in 2/4 as a triplet group followed by two straight eighth notes. Some view this as a negation of the true quality of the *merengue*.<sup>409</sup>

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humorous appeal; the *merengue*, in general, uses a variety of textual topics, ranging from the depiction of animals, people and flowers, to town life and narrative accounts.”

<sup>405</sup> There are, of course, very important differences, but the relation may help US readers relate to musical allusions outside of their purview.

<sup>406</sup> Emilio Mendoza, “Merengue Venezolano,” vol. 9 of *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World, Genres: Caribbean and Latin America*, edited by David Horn and John Shepherd (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 5, [http://prof.usb.ve/emendoza/emilio/articulos/Merengue\\_venezolano.pdf](http://prof.usb.ve/emendoza/emilio/articulos/Merengue_venezolano.pdf) (accessed July 4, 2017).

<sup>407</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 217. “el segundo acento en realidad más que acento es un alargamiento, una mayor cantidad métrica.”

<sup>408</sup> Mendoza, 5.

<sup>409</sup> Reyna, 140.

But, Ramón y Rivera states that all methods of notation are “sometimes right and sometimes not, based on the performers,” because “various rhythmic elements are mixed” and to limit oneself to a single metrical construct loses the “local flavor” of the *merengue*.<sup>410</sup> In practice, academic composers and jazz artists tend to prefer 5/8 because of its rhythmic interest; alternatively, folk and popular musicians prefer 6/8 or 2/4 and the more danceable beat that they imply.<sup>411</sup> The savvy and well acculturated performer uses (most of the time) a subtle lengthening of the fifth eighth note in 5/8 or a subtle shortening of the last eighth note in 6/8 so that the new measure seems to arrive a bit later or sooner than expected to achieve the proper *sabor*, or flavor.<sup>412</sup> The notes of 2/4 should be considered more even than notated, except for the last eighth note of the measure. This modification of the strict notation is appropriate for the *aire de merengue* of “Guitarra.” According to her granddaughter, Bor herself described the rhythm of the *merengue* as “an ‘out’ rhythm because of the complexity of its timing.”<sup>413</sup>

I have found it helpful to imagine one of the common *merengue* strumming patterns of the *cuatro*: down-up-down-up-down.<sup>414</sup> When the pattern repeats, there are two down strokes in a row, the slight delay caused by resetting the arm to the top of the strings (if not executed too deftly) generates an ametrical delay and slight agogic accent to the final note of each measure. For an auditory model, performers should listen to the pianist Elena Abend on the album *Over*

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<sup>410</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 217-218. “...una escritura como esa es correcta unas veces y otras no, según los ejecutantes; pues lo corriente es que varios elementos rítmicos se mezclen...pues un merengue acompañado únicamente en 5 x 8, perdería su “sabor local” producto del uso de varias y no una sola fórmula acompañamiento.”

<sup>411</sup> Mendoza, 6.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., 7.

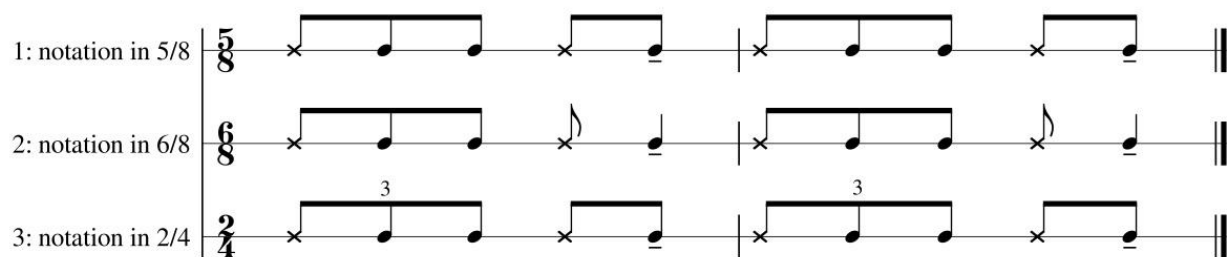
<sup>413</sup> Correspondence with Wahari Sánchez Bor.

<sup>414</sup> Reyna, 140.

*the Fence*.<sup>415</sup> Also, the pianist on the documentary video by Stephanie Bor performs it in this manner.<sup>416</sup> This rhythmic modification should be executed by the pianist and accommodated by the singer.

Figure 4.47 illustrates the various methods of notation of the *merengue*. The pattern notated is that of the *cuatro*, as described by Ramón y Rivera, x-noteheads indicate the placement of the click.<sup>417</sup> Two measures are included because the dance step is a two-measure unit, and an important musical unit as well. Line 1 is the standard 5/8 rhythm. Line 2 is the same rhythm notated in 6/8, an over-compensation for the lengthened fifth beat of the 5/8 rhythm. Line 3 shows the rhythm notated in 2/4.

Figure 4.47. *Merengue venezolano*, methods of notation and rhythmic pattern



The initial pattern of the *Aire de merengue* of “Guitarra” from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* is shown in Figure 4.48. The tempo is *allegro*, quarter-note should be around 140 bpm. The rocking back and forth of the harmony is reminiscent of the tonic to dominant pattern of the popular *merengue*. Bor’s harmony is derived from the tuning of the guitar—E<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>, D<sub>3</sub>, G<sub>3</sub>, B<sub>3</sub>,

<sup>415</sup> Tanya Kruse Ruck and Elena Abend, *Over the Fence*, electronic music file (Albany, NY: Albany, 2014).

<sup>416</sup> Stephanie Bor, documentary video.

<sup>417</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *música folklórica*, 220.

E<sub>4</sub>—up the octave. The second harmony, D minor/E in m. 18 is similar to Phrygian-derived harmonies used in Spanish flamenco.<sup>418</sup> Both sonorities represent the sound of the guitar—a primary subject of the poetry. The rhythm is reminiscent of that of the *cuatro* part illustrated above: the right hand usually carries the click, while the left hand the sounding strings. The only deviation is the second eighth note which, if the relation were strictly applied, would be in the left hand. Nevertheless, the characteristic syncopation between the initial three grouping and subsequent two groupings, illustrated in line 5 of Figure 4.47, is present.

Figure 4.48. Bor's *Aire de merengue* from "Guitarra"<sup>419</sup>

Bor's *aire de merengue* in "Guitarra" employs a distinct variety of syncopation common to the *merengue venezolano*. Furthermore, this syncopation can be thought of as a metrical reorganization of a larger two-measure section into a measure of 2/4 and a measure of 3/4. Given that the important structural unit of the *merengue* dance is the two-measure segment, this

<sup>418</sup> Lola Fernández, *Flamenco Music Theory: Rhythm, Harmony, Melody, Form* (Madrid: Acordes Concert, 2004), 83.

<sup>419</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 6.

organization is fitting. Figure 4.49 illustrates this polymeter in “Guitarra” mm. 65-66 (line 3) alongside the *cuatro* part (line 1), and the metrical regrouping into 2/4 and 3/4 (line 2). This rhythm can be heard in other *merengues* as well, such as the arpeggiated guitar pattern in “San Juan to’ lo tiene” recorded by Isabel Grau (line 4).<sup>420</sup> The same pattern can be seen in one of Bor’s choral works, an *aguinaldo* (genre with a *merengue* rhythm played at Christmas) titled “Los tres reyes magos” (line 5). Do not be confused by the apparent differences in rhythm due to meter choices: these are different systems for notating the same rhythm.

Figure 4.49. *Merengue* two-measure syncopation and polymeter in “Guitarra”<sup>421</sup>

1: *cuatro* part

2: metrical regrouping

3: "Guitarra" mm. 65-66, piano

4: "San Juan to' lo tiene," guitar

5: "Los tres reyes magos" mm. 10-12, soprano

Ma - gos vie - nen del O -

<sup>420</sup> Grau, *contralto*, track 7.

<sup>421</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 9; Grau, *contralto*, track 7; Bor, *Obra coral*, 117.



Recognizing this regrouping is significant for a couple of reasons. First, the rhythmic pattern in “Guitarra” beginning in m. 65, 71 and 88 *is* part of the *aire de merengue*, and should be consistent with qualities of the other *merengue* sections. Like many of Bor’s treatments of dense folk rhythms, Bor imitates the rhythms played by different instruments, offering them sequentially rather than simultaneously, and treating each one as a longer structural element through ostinato. Bor’s use of this rhythm as an ostinato with quartal based harmonies is consistent with style features developed under Khachaturian. It is my opinion that pianists should opt for a danceable quality of articulation. Second, this organization reveals the structure of the left hand—an underlay of 6/8 against 3/4, the classic hemiola of Venezuelan popular music.

## *Harmony*

While some of Bor's harmonic language in her art songs is tonal, many of Bor's sonorities are not functional in the traditional sense, i.e., their motion from one to the next is not motivated by dominant to tonic relationships, but the sonorities themselves are present in tonal music and are derived from tonal and modal scales. This imbues her music with a quality of free tonality or non-functional tonality in which the chords themselves are familiar, but their use is novel. There are, however, specific sonorities that she employs more than others.<sup>422</sup> In addition, there are semi-functional harmonic ideas that Bor uses that are important for her style, including harmonic motion similar to the Andalusian cadence, the characteristic cadence of flamenco music.<sup>423</sup>

Chords themselves are also conceived broadly. For example, Bor's use of the major 7<sup>th</sup> chord often includes any and all extensions possible within the derivative scale: major 6<sup>th</sup>, major 9<sup>th</sup> and others. This is true for other chord qualities as well. Other practices indicative of Bor's style include her treatment of key areas, the use of relative tension as harmonic function, and advanced harmonic practices such as harmonies derived from the melodic minor scale and the octatonic scale.

Bor treats functional resolution loosely in her mature works. Although, as this discussion will suggest, a more obscured function may be hidden under what appears at first glance a random chord motion.<sup>424</sup> Nevertheless, there are instances in which no function exists other than

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<sup>422</sup> I will leave the task of gathering numerical data on this subject to other authors. The performer will notice, however, that some of the same complex sonorities are used within and across songs. Perhaps this is due to Bor's improvisation methods of composition, in which her hands may have led the way to certain chord choices.

<sup>423</sup> Fernández, *Flamenco Music Theory*, 83. For example: A minor, G major, F major, E major.

<sup>424</sup> Parra, *Conductor's Guide*, 90. Describing *Bajaste del cielo con luz primorosa* 1996, "Its harmony is tonal but not functional."

the voice leading between the parts and the resultant aural effect of the chordal transition. To this end, an excerpt from Tchaikovsky's *Guide to the Practical Study of Harmony* is instructive:

...in a highly-developed harmonization, the melodic tendencies of the voices are so powerful, that even the boldest deviations from these laws [of harmony] are sometimes justified by them....The Dominant-Seventh chord...can, however, be resolved into other triads of its own or of strange keys...[or] even resolve into a dissonant chord, provided the voice-leading is good. In like manner every dissonant chord can resolve into a chord other than its resolution, if such a deviation be demanded by the voice-leading or the higher aims of the composer.<sup>425</sup>

Bor's "higher aims" are clear: a nationalistic music, with rich musical material drawn from Venezuelan folk and popular music in the context of well-crafted art composition that incorporated the best modern techniques.

One may be tempted to glean specific meaning from a chord, attempting to plumb the emotional qualities of Bor's harmony. I believe that Bor did intend certain meaningful qualities in the harmony and other aspects of her composition; however, the pursuit of this topic is best left to each performer as it is somewhat subjective. Furthermore, Bor's versatile use of the exact same sonority in various songs probably precludes any specific programmatic intention that Bor might have had with any single harmony in general. Rather, Bor often takes a traditional harmonic pattern common to popular music, such as the oscillation between tonic, predominant or dominant, and uses that as a canvas on which a modern harmonic palette can add new colors and depth. The result of her efforts was a unique style that represented a fascinating mix of modern methods and folk styles that elevated the music of the common men and women of Venezuela into the realm of art music of the highest quality.

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<sup>425</sup> Pyotr Tschaikowsky, *Guide to the Practical Study of Harmony*, translated by Emil Krall and James Liebling (Moscow: P. Jurgenson, 1900), 135-136.

## Key Areas

Many of her songs begin on what could loosely be considered tonic, at least for the initial section of music. Some songs do not have a clear or consistent enough pitch center to make even liberal judgements possible including “Un títere escondido,” “Sequía,” “Si el silencio fuera mío,” “Pregón,” and “Coplas.” Also, some of Bor’s songs begin *in medias res* on a pre-dominant function or other distant relation. Her early song “Topecito” begins with IV, as does “Te aguardaba entre mástiles;” “Nocturno en los muelles” begins with a swift motion to IV, a gesture very similar to the beginning of “La luna tiene cabellos blancos;” “La flor de apamate” begins with bVII; “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito” with an altered bVII, a derivative of iv; and “Suspiro cuando te miro” with bVI.

Some of her songs, from as early as “Topecito” in 1956, have a contrasting middle section that also changes key. She prefers to modulate somewhat suddenly or chromatically to keys related to the parallel minor, such as bVI. “Topecito” explores this key area in m. 9, as does “Amanecer” in m. 12. Similarly, iv is explored in “Coplas venezolanas” m. 32. “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito” uses bII for its middle section. Occasionally more related key areas are explored, as in “Amolador” in which IV is explored in m. 7. More commonly, however, key areas do not last long enough for them to be considered a formal section. Three, two, or even one chord may belong to a common key area before being abandoned for another.

## Juxtaposition and Harmonic Function

Theorists often note Bor’s use of harmony for the sake of color rather than strict function in her mature works. Rapidly juxtaposing sonorities belonging to different key areas generates this effect of color-contrast. Like complimentary colors placed side-by-side, they enhance each

other's qualities and draw attention to their differences. While this is an accurate analysis, it also leaves much to be explained and fails to acknowledge the craftsmanship with which Bor generates and arranges her sonorities. The chords Bor uses are not just interesting sounds, randomly chosen to move from one to the next, but carefully selected sonorities that occasionally have function that is heard, but not always understood.

“Pregón” is an example of entirely unrelated sonorities being juxtaposed, each one relegated to a different rhythmic ostinato derived from the *joropo*. Some sonorities are stable—Bb major 6 in m. 23, C major 7 in m. 42, Ab major 7 in m. 60, implying a key area, and some are ambiguous, such as the G# suspended dominant 7 in m. 11, or dissonant such as the harsh split-third altered dominant (C#7, b9, #9) in m. 54.

In this song and others, the “function” of Bor’s harmony is best explained using the method proposed by Rafael Saavedra, who applied Hindemith’s theories to Bor’s music. Saavedra postulates that one can evaluate sonorities of Bor’s music based “on the degree of stability and instability that they present” and conceive of the form of her music through the “designation of zones of more or less tension” and the evolution of that tension.<sup>426</sup> Saavedra aptly employs Hindemith’s methods in describing the choral work *Manchas sonoras*, but in many cases, one need not crunch the numbers to discern the relative level of dissonance of Bor’s sonorities and map a general progression of that tension.

In “Pregón,” mm. 33-41 and 54-59 are the most dissonant areas of the greatest tension, both release into less dissonant sonorities. An intermediate position is occupied by the suspended chords in mm. 11-22, and 27-32. The most stable are the major 7<sup>th</sup> chords that open and close the

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<sup>426</sup> Saavedra, “Hindemith y Bor,” 293. “...una segunda valoración, de acuerdo al grado de estabilidad e inestabilidad que pudieran presentar...la ubicación de las zonas de mayor y menor tensión, así como su evolución.”

piece and those in mm. 23-26, and 42-47. The result is a progression from stability toward dissonance, a slight reprieve, followed by a return to dissonance, and a final resolution to stability. Of course, a more thorough application of Hindemith's categories of dissonance would reveal more subtlety, but the general shape is apparent. Singer's and pianists should consider such a progression throughout Bor's songs when determining how to shape a performance.

These judgements of dissonance and stability are relative. In general, Bor liked dissonant chords that from Hindemith's perspective, lack real stability. Saavedra notes the "...predominance of category IV chords (according to Hindemith's classification), that is to say, of greater relative instability..."<sup>427</sup> The result is that the "prevailing tendency is for intensities of medium and great instability."<sup>428</sup> This is partly due to her treatment of "2<sup>nds</sup>, 7<sup>ths</sup>, 9<sup>ths</sup>, and tritones... [as] imperfect consonances..."<sup>429</sup> Therefore, performers should consider certain types of chords as stable constructs: major 6<sup>th</sup> chords, and major 7<sup>th</sup> chords especially can be felt as moments of release and arrival.

In her mature works, simple major or minor sonorities without any added notes, or upper extensions are rare. Typically, the most stable chord used is a major chord with an added 6<sup>th</sup>—the chord generated from the open strings of the *cuatro*. The notable exception from late in her life is "Preciosa," a lullaby written for her granddaughter, which does contain a few simple major chords and is strongly tonal. However, even this song contains some striking dissonances. A Bb French augmented 6<sup>th</sup> chord is used three times in the piece mm. 6, 14 and 18. In m. 14 and m.

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<sup>427</sup> Saavedra, "Hindemith y Bor," 297. "...el predominio de acordes de categoría IV, es decir, de mayor inestabilidad en comparación."

<sup>428</sup> Ibid., 297. "La tendencia que prevalece es de intensidades de mediana a gran inestabilidad."

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., 286. "Las segundas, las séptimas, las novenas y los tritonos son empleados como consonancias imperfectas..."

18 the melody sings the dominant, a major 7<sup>th</sup> from the root of the sonority, Bb, also creating a minor 2<sup>nd</sup> dissonance against the G#.

### Andalusian Cadence

The dissonance described above could be considered a derivative of the Andalusian cadence, which seems to provide inspiration for many of Bor's harmonic movements. The Andalusian cadence is essentially the harmonies derived from the descent of the minor tetrachord to the dominant, for example: A minor, G major, F major, E major.<sup>430</sup> The harmonies are usually embellished and altered, occasionally generating striking dissonances. Particularly common are augmented sixth chords on the penultimate sonority; the major 7, b5 also on the penultimate sonority; and a b9 on the final chord. Furthermore, this cadence is not exclusively Spanish, as it was adapted into Venezuelan genres, most notably the *Polo margariteño*, a variety of *joropo* from Bor's native island.<sup>431</sup>

The harmonic approach to the resolution by half-step from above characteristic of this cadence is common in Bor's harmonic language. Some examples include mm. 9-10 of "Topecito," mm. 15-16 of "Amanecer," mm. 49-50 of "Amolador" (Figure 4.12 on page 88), mm. 9-10 of "Suspiro cuando te miro," mm. 5-6 of "Guitarra," mm. 8-9 of "Nocturno en los muelles," mm. 37-39 of "Te aguardaba entre mástiles," mm. 17-18 of "Sequía," mm. 60-61 of "Un títere escondido." Some moments, like "Guitarra," and "Amolador," are clearly meant to evoke this cadence specifically in the minds and ears of the listeners. In other instances, it simply serves as material for harmonic progression, providing a source of functional motion other than

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<sup>430</sup> Fernández, *Flamenco Music Theory*, 83.

<sup>431</sup> The harmony of this particular genre is based on the *guardame las vacas* chord progression by Luis de Narváez.

the traditional dominant and plagal. The cadence appears in its entirety in “Guitarra,” Figure 4.50. Bor modifies the descending baseline, approaching the two intermediate chords from below. The first chord is modified to major, and the resolution chord, usually major, is modified as well, arriving at a sonority close to E minor based on the open tuning of the guitar. The evocation of the guitar in the ears of the listeners is clear.

Figure 4.50. Modified Andalusian cadence in “Guitarra”<sup>432</sup>

11

ra - da, de - ses - pe - ra - da, de - ses - pe -

13

ra - da, de - ses - pe - ra - da.

*rit.* *p*

*rit.* *p*

<sup>432</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 5. Used with permission.



Given the diverse ways in which Bor finds function in non-traditional chord motion, one should guard against simply labeling all Bor's unusual sonorities as "color chords," or "passing motion." Many of Bor's sonorities can be understood and perceived in different ways.<sup>433</sup>

According to Saavedra, Bor "incorporates chords formed from scalar models...minor melodic...minor pentatonic...major pentatonic...major...natural minor...[and] Dorian..."<sup>434</sup> The octatonic scale should be added to Saavedra's list as well. Therefore, a sonority may have a more complicated and meaningful derivation that can give clues to its function, which may be ambiguous, or have different ways that it can be viewed and function.

The following two discussions on melodic minor harmony and octatonic scale harmony may be beyond the interest of some readers but are included because they are not discussed at length by any other author, and because I believe they help instill a deeper understanding of Bor's methods of composition. In addition, they may help the pianist understand the sonorities that she is playing and the singer the dissonances against which she must sing.

### Melodic Minor Harmony

The traditional understanding of the melodic minor scale is a minor scale with raised 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> scale degrees when ascending, and the notes of the natural minor scale when descending. Such an arrangement creates the desired push and pull towards the tonic when headed in each direction. The pattern of half and whole steps in the ascending melodic minor scale is unique (half-steps are a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> apart, as opposed to the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> of the traditional church modes). The

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<sup>433</sup> Saavedra, "Hindemith y Bor," 290-291.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid., 293. "Modesta Bor incorpora en su obra acordes formados a partir de modelos de escalas...menor melódico...pentatónica menor...pentatónica mayor...mayor...menor natural...dórica..."

harmonies generated by these sonorities can usually be described as altered versions of traditional triadic harmony, but they are distinct in their derivation. Traditionally, harmonies generated from the ascending portion of the scale are used only as passing motion or accented dissonances that readily resolve.<sup>435</sup> However, these sonorities can stand on their own. Discussions of these harmonies are often found in theory books directed at jazz artists, but such harmony is discussed by Schoenberg as well.<sup>436</sup> Some of Bor's most employed sonorities, including the F Lydian dominant, or F13, #11, are melodic minor harmony, Figure 4.51, m. 20.<sup>437</sup>

When played with its full range of extensions, this sonority can be described as a polychord: C minor, major 7, 9 over F major. This is often how it is voiced in Bor's piano parts—F major in the left hand and C minor, major 7 in the right. However, simply naming it a polychord reveals little of the composer's concept of the chord because it ignores her choosing which chords to put together. In Bor's case, I believe, the choice is deliberate and reveals a deep understanding of harmonic function.

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<sup>435</sup> Such as the chord based on the third mode of the melodic minor scale on beat one of the second-to-last measure of the piano postlude to Franz Schubert's "An die Musik."

<sup>436</sup> Mark Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book* (Petaluma, California: Sher Music, 1989), 69; Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, translated by Roy E. Carter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 95-105.

<sup>437</sup> Lydian dominant is the name used by some for the triadic harmony built by stacking thirds in the following pattern (M=major third, m= minor third): MmmMMm. It is called "Lydian" because the initial six notes of the scale from which it is derived resemble the traditional Lydian mode, and "dominant" because the 7<sup>th</sup> scale degree is a minor 7<sup>th</sup> from the root.

Figure 4.51. F Lydian dominant in “Sequía”<sup>438</sup>

Bor assigns a plagal function to the F Lydian dominant chord in m. 20. The chord leads to C major 7 in m. 21. The parent scale from which the mode is derived is C melodic minor. Therefore, the underlying modes present in this resolution are a basic motion from minor to the parallel major: C minor to C major. Because the root motion is that of a descending fourth, this function can be considered broadly plagal, and because Bor exploits the change between parallel modes, this can be considered a technique of modal mixture.

Indeed, the Lydian dominant, notated as F13 #11, seems to be a favorite of Bor, perhaps because of its use in the Andalusian cadence. “Canción de cuna para dormir un negrito” opens with the chord, rocking back and forth between it and the tonic G major (add 6), the same resolution noted above. This sonority is also free to act in other ways. The Lydian dominant resolves down by half step in “Guitarra,” a resolution related to the Andalusian cadence; up a major third in “Nocturno en los muelles,” as a modified bVI; and up a whole step in “Preciosa,” as a deceptively resolved dominant.

<sup>438</sup> Bor, *3 canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 20. Used with permission

## Octatonic Harmony

One of Bor's late compositions, "Un títere escondido," displays some of her more adventurous harmonic writing for her art songs. Bor explores polytonality and the dissonant resulting sonorities in this song and others. Figure 4.52 is the opening piano part for "Un títere escondido." The second sonority, in m. 2, is clearly conceived as a polytonal chord: F# minor over Eb major. The resultant sonority could be described as an altered dominant: Eb7(#9, #11), but notating one sonority in flats and the other in sharps draws attention to the merger of two unrelated chords. These chords combined serve a dominant function to the E minor 7 sonority in m. 3.

Both chords can be formed from an octatonic scale: a symmetrical scale of eight tones formed by alternating half steps and whole steps. Eb, E, F#, G, A, Bb, C, C# (Db). The octatonic scale is also called the diminished scale because it can be generated by the overlay of two diminished chords (Figure 4.53). Furthermore, its function can be as versatile as those component diminished sonorities. In this case, the diminished chord Eb/D#, F#, A functions as the vii° to E minor in m. 3. The sonority in m. 5 is the same construction, though transposed, and resolves in the same manner.

Diminished sonorities are relatively versatile in their ability to resolve to different destinations. In addition to their traditional resolution, diminished sonorities can also resolve to a sonority that shares a note with a member of the diminished chord, in what is called a common-tone diminished chord (Figure 4.53). The use of this octatonic-derived polychord at the end of the piece takes advantage of common-tone resolution in both component diminished sonorities, mm. 66-67 (Figure 4.54). In fact, Bor's resolution keeps the entire F# minor structure common across the chord change, mirroring the pedal tone in the voice.

Figure 4.52. “Un títere escondido”<sup>439</sup>

In the poem for “Un títere escondido,” the socially concerned poet Carlos Augusto León motivates the reader to create a better future with his call to see “in art / a new dawn.” Art, poetry, theater and play are tools that León sees as essential for the creation of a sunrise over a life and society worth smiling at. Bor ends the song with a musical depiction of sunset and a harmonic representation of the optimism of León’s “new dawn.” Bor sets up an Andalusian-like cadence toward the final resolution of the song. Starting in m. 61, the voice holds an A<sub>4</sub> on the text “atardecer,” or evening. Like the sun, the piano descends: A major 6, G major 7, F Lydian dominant, and then continues to descend into the polychord discussed above, whose bass motion resolves not downward but up. With harmonic tools that she uses elsewhere to different effect, Bor manages to capture a quality of lingering outside into the evening as the sun sets, giving way not to darkness, but an arrival, a new resolution. It is as if the persona has slipped off into León’s dream of a “new dawn.” The final stanza of León’s text reads “Smile at life/ smile and come, let’s play in the air/ and in the evening.

<sup>439</sup> Bor, “Un títere escondido,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 3. Used with permission.

Figure 4.53. Octatonic scale: derivative sonorites and their resolutions

### Octatonic scale



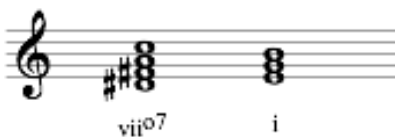
### Eb major and F# minor derived from octatonic scale



### Diminished chords in octatonic scale



### Dominant-function resolution of component diminished sonority



### Common-tone resolutions of component diminished sonorities



Figure 4.54. “Un títere escondido,”  
common-tone resolution of polytonal sonority derived from octatonic scale<sup>440</sup>

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the piece "Un títere escondido." The first system, starting at measure 65, features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics "cer, a - tar - - de -". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. A blue bracket highlights a specific passage in the piano accompaniment, showing a common-tone resolution of polytonal sonority derived from an octatonic scale. A blue arrow points to the right, indicating the continuation of this musical idea. The second system, starting at measure 67, continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line has the lyrics "cer." The piano accompaniment also features a blue bracket highlighting a similar passage, with a blue arrow pointing to the right. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals, as well as performance markings like "Red." and "(b)".

Given the tools discussed in this paper, there is an enormous amount of further analysis that can be done on Bor's music. I leave such exhaustive attention to future students and scholars who may discover Bor's music and find it fitting for their analysis assignments and areas of research.

<sup>440</sup> Bor, "Un títere escondido," *Obra para voz y piano*, 9. Used with permission.

## CHAPTER 5: THE POETS

### *Bor's Selection of Poets*

Modesta Bor's choice of poets for her art songs demonstrates both an effort to use poets from her native island and country, and also an unrestricted appreciation for poets from the rest of the Spanish-speaking world including Cuba, Argentina, Ecuador, Chile, and Spain. In addition, poets that shared Bor's philosophies and political beliefs were favored, most notably Andrade, León, Nazoa, Neruda, and Guillén.

Bor's use of revolutionary and Marxists poets, especially Guillén and León, places her among a larger trend in Latin American revolutionary music.<sup>441</sup> Judson identifies the themes present in the latter part of the twentieth century in this variety of music:

...patriotism and national historical experiential continuity, particularly the linkage of epochs of social struggle and figures symbolizing those struggles; anti-imperialism, specifically resistance to the United States interventions and control of the region; internationalism and solidarity with similar anti-imperialist and revolutionary struggles, especially in Latin America, but also throughout the world...the realm of the future, with its visions, dreams and, in Sorel's terms, *myths* of the revolutionary society to come.<sup>442</sup>

Bor and the poets of her lyrics display these themes throughout their work. The nationalist movement is rooted in patriotism and a desire to extend the cultural experiences of the past into the modern day. Guillén dredges up the ghosts of slavery in "Nocturno en los muelles" to link the social struggles of the past to those of the present, namely the resistance of US imperialism. Bor's symphonic poem *Genocidio* delivers a message of resistance to US cultural influence. Bor's dedication of an entire song cycle to Cuban poets displays her solidarity with revolutionary

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<sup>441</sup> Fred Judson, "Central American Revolutionary Music," in *Music and Marx: Ideas, Practice, Politics*, edited by Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, *Critical and Cultural Musicology* 6, edited by Martha Feldman (New York: Routledge, 2002), 204-235.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid., 211-212.



struggles in the region. Guillén's "Guitarra" and León's "Un títere escondido" focus on a vision for the future built on revolutionary ideals. Also significant to this movement, to Bor's music, and the nationalist movement in Venezuela in general is an identification with the *pueblo*, the common men and women of the working class.<sup>443</sup> They are the protagonists of the poetry, and the subject matter of the national genres that serve as the music's inspiration.

Bor had a notable affinity for Cuba. She was sympathetic to their Communist political aspirations. She had classmates and connections there, and she participated several times in musical competitions on the island. Her association with Cuban poetry extends back to at least 1966 when she wrote *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*. Her choice of poetry reflects identification with cultural movements in Cuba. "Guitarra" champions a strong cultural and nationalistic message. "Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito" reveals an interest in the cultural history of Africans in Cuba through the dialectal poetry of Emilio Ballagas. This poem is also from a collection dedicated to the Fidel Castro. Andrade notes features present in the works of these poets and Bor that are characteristic of Latin American authors in general: "...rebelliousness, a passion for justice, and inclination toward the baroque, and a powerful humane feeling which saves him from being dragged into the trend toward dehumanization."<sup>444</sup>

Bor's favorite poets, at least those that she set most often, were Venezuelan. Andrés Eloy Blanco was tapped most frequently, and he was Bor's primary source for art song poetry while she was studying in Moscow.<sup>445</sup> Also notable is Francisco Lárez Granado who was used for three

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<sup>443</sup> Judson, 220-223.

<sup>444</sup> Jorge Carrera Andrade, *Reflections on Spanish American Poetry*, translated by Don C. Bliss and Gabriela de C. Bliss (Albany: State University of New York, 1973), 11.

<sup>445</sup> *Primero and Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y soprano*, 1961 and 1962. Bor most certainly brought *Giraluna*, 1955 with her to Moscow.

different songs. She was acquainted with Lárez Granado from their shared home island of Margarita, and she turned to his poetry for some of her first serious art song compositions, “Rojo,” and “Amanecer” from 1957. His was among the poetry that she brought with her to Moscow, and she remained inspired by his poetry again in 1970 for “Sequía” in *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*.<sup>446</sup> Bor also turned to her close friends Yolanda Osuna and Mimina Rodríguez Lezama for poetry. Osuna seems to have written two poems exclusively for Bor. “Topecito” and “Cosquilla del bubute,” and Lezama’s “Hijo” was used in Bor’s triptych *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*. This set highlights three separate Venezuelan poets. Aquiles Nazoa was sourced for the undated work “Muchachas bajo la lluvia.”

The choice of a Spanish poet, José Moreno Villa, is particularly curious for a composer largely ascribed to the nationalistic school. Nationalism in Latin America typically represented a distancing of one’s self from Spain—the oppressive force from which independence was wrested—and an affirmation of that which was unique or distinct to each nation. Interestingly, Bor used a different poet for each song of *Canciones infantiles*, each one from a different nation: Argentina, Ecuador, and Spain. This set contains most of the non-Cuban, non-Venezuelan poetry that she used.

Before *Canciones infantiles* in 1960, Bor had only set the poetry of herself and those that she knew personally, at least for her art songs. Sojo tended to promote native poets to his students, and Khachaturian also encouraged local sources for inspiration. This set of three foreign poets represents a deliberate effort on her part to set poetry outside of her immediate sphere. Perhaps Bor’s altruistic belief in the connection of human beings regardless of their political boundaries motivated her to look beyond her borders: “[s]he believed in the equality of

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<sup>446</sup> Correspondence with Marisabel Bor.

human beings and questioned racism as well as any difference based on creed, social condition, or race.”<sup>447</sup>

Also notable is Bor’s setting of the poetry of the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, and the Spaniard Antonio Machado. These works are not discussed in this paper because they remain unpublished; however, they are included in works lists and are relevant for this discussion of her selection of poets. “Homenaje a Neruda,” 1987 and the undated “Resurrecciones” both are listed with Neruda as the poet. Bor’s work for voices and orchestra, *Jugando a la sombra de la plaza vieja*, a cantata for mezzo-soprano, children’s chorus and orchestra, was set to the poetry of Antonio Machado, a Spaniard of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. These instances of non-Venezuelan poetry used by Bor indicate that Bor’s perspective remained broad, even while drawing primarily upon local musical and poetic inspiration.

Bor’s adaptation of poems into the lyrics for her songs demonstrates an effort to secularize poems that originally bore a religious tenor. Her daughter Lena explains Bor’s relationship with the church and Christian ideas:

Modesta believed in God, she was “Maria’s Daughter” in her hometown and played the organ in church. Later, due to her Communist ideals she left the church, and she questioned the opulence of the Vatican in light of the poverty that she saw every day. Nevertheless, she composed and arranged many *aguinaldos* dedicated to Jesus. For that reason, I think that in her heart, she had faith, but her upbringing made her question many things.<sup>448</sup>

Generally speaking, Marxism is incompatible with religion. Marx viewed religion as a product of human consciousness, and a tool by which oppressed classes are placated into

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<sup>447</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor: “Creía en la igualdad de los seres humanos y cuestionaba el racismo así como cualquier diferencia establecida por credo, condición social o raza.”

<sup>448</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sanchez Bor. “Modesta creía en Dios, fue “Hija de María” en su pueblo y tocaba el órgano en la iglesia. Mas adelante por sus ideales comunistas se apartó de la iglesia pues, cuestionaba la opulencia del Vaticano frente a la pobreza que veía a diario. sin embargo, compuso y arreglo muchos aguinaldos dedicados a Jesús. por ello pienso que en el fondo tenía Fe, pero su entrenamiento de vida la hizo cuestionar muchas cosas.”

complicity. However, Alexander claims that in Venezuela, by the 1960s, the rift between Catholicism and Marxism-Leninism was less stark than it formerly was because of the Church's awakening to the "material needs and aspirations of the average layman."<sup>449</sup> In her art songs, Bor's aversion to the church is more evident in the selection of text than whatever faith she felt personally. However, the fact that she continued to read and be inspired by poetry of a religious tenor indicates that certain elements of Christian faith remained attractive to her despite her objections.

### Works in the Public Domain

Many of the poems used by Bor are still protected under copyright law and permission should be sought for reprinting them in programs and other publications. There are two poets whose works have recently entered the public domain. The works of Emilio Ballagas, a Cuban poet, became public domain on the first of January in 2005.<sup>450</sup> This would apply to "Canción para dormir a un negrito" from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*. Likewise, the works of Andrés Eloy Blanco, a Venezuelan poet, recently became public domain on the first of January in 2016. This applies to Eloy Blanco's poetry collection, *Giraluna*, which Bor sourced for ten songs within three of her song cycles/collections: *Primer* and *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*, and *dos canciones para tenor y piano*.<sup>451</sup>

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<sup>449</sup> Alexander, 159-161.

<sup>450</sup> "Cuba: Decreto-Ley N.º 156 de 28 de septiembre de 1994, que modifica la Ley N.º 14 de 28 de diciembre de 1977, sobre Derechos de Autor, Artículo 43," World Intellectual Property Organization, [http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file\\_id=239453](http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=239453) (accessed July 12, 2017). Public domain in Cuba extends 50 years after the death of the author, counting from the first of January in the year immediately following the author's death. "El periodo de vigencia del derecho de autor comprende la vida del autor y cincuenta años después de su muerte, salvo las excepciones señaladas expresamente en esta Ley...El plazo de cincuenta años señalado en este artículo comienza a contarse a partir del primero de enero del año siguiente al fallecimiento del autor."

<sup>451</sup> "Venezuela: Ley sobre el Derecho de Autor, 1993 Artículo 25," World Intellectual Property Organization, <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=3989> (accessed July 12, 2017). Public domain in Venezuela extends

No other poets used by Bor will enter into the public domain for at least another eighteen years from the writing of this paper.<sup>452</sup> Jose Moreno Villa, a Spanish poet, died in the same year as Eloy Blanco, 1955, but for the year in question Spain's public domain extends eighty years; therefore, Moreno Villa should enter the public domain in January of 2036.<sup>453</sup> Aquiles Nazoa, a Venezuelan poet, will lose copyright protection around the same time, in January of 2037.<sup>454</sup> Nicolás Guillén, a Cuban poet like Ballagas, is governed by a relatively short copyright period, fifty years. He died in 1989, so his works will become public domain in January of 2040. The works of Francisco Luiz Bernárdez, Argentinian, and Jorge Carrera Andrade, Ecuadorian, will all become public domain in January of 2049, both having died in 1978 and governed by seventy-year terms.<sup>455</sup> Francisco Lárez Granado, Venezuelan, will lose copyright protection in

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60 years after the death of the author, counting from the first of January in the year immediately following the author's death: "El derecho de autor durará toda la vida de éste y se extiende a los sesenta años contados a partir del primero de enero del año siguiente al de su muerte, incluso respecto a las obras no divulgadas durante su vida." Specific titles by Blanco in the public domain: "La flor de apamate," "Amolador," "Canción de cuna," "Coplas," "Si el silencio fuera mío," "Coplas venezolanas," "Suspiro cuando te miro," "Pregón," and the two songs within *dos canciones para tenor y piano*: "Mapa de nuestro mar," and another unknown title.

<sup>452</sup> Copyright terms are regularly subject to legislative change.

<sup>453</sup> Spain's public domain period is seventy years beyond the death of the poet for authors after the year 1987, as it is in all of the EU, but it is eighty years for authors that died before Dec 7<sup>th</sup>, 1987; "Spain: Real Decreto Legislativo 1/1996, de 12 de abril, por el que se aprueba el texto refundido de la Ley de Propiedad Intelectual, regularizando, aclarando y armonizando las disposiciones legales vigentes sobre la material. Artículo 26, 30, & Disposición transitoria cuarta. Autores fallecidos antes del 7 de diciembre de 1987," World Intellectual Property Organization, [http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file\\_id=443328](http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=443328) (accessed July 12, 2017); Pre-1987 copyright is governed by "Spain: Ley de 10 de enero de 1879, de la propiedad intelectual, Article 6," World Intellectual Property Organization, <http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/es/gq/gq005es.pdf> (accessed July 12, 2017).

<sup>454</sup> Nazoa died in 1976 and is governed by Venezuela's sixty-year copyright term.

<sup>455</sup> "Argentina: Intellectual Property Law No. 11.723 of September 28, 1933, Article 5," World Intellectual Property Organization, [https://archive.is/20050221010722/http://www.wipo.int/clea/docs\\_new/en/ar/ar012en.html#selection-783.1-783.59](https://archive.is/20050221010722/http://www.wipo.int/clea/docs_new/en/ar/ar012en.html#selection-783.1-783.59) (accessed July 12, 2017).

"Ecuador: Art. 80 of Ley No. 83 de Propiedad Intelectual, 1998," World Intellectual Property Organization, [https://archive.is/20041112080757/http://www.wipo.int/clea/docs\\_new/en/ec/ec001en.html](https://archive.is/20041112080757/http://www.wipo.int/clea/docs_new/en/ec/ec001en.html) (accessed July 12, 2017).

that same year.<sup>456</sup> The works of the other Venezuelan poets Carlos Augusto León, Mimina Rodríguez Lezama, and Yolanda Osuna, will become public domain in January of 2055, 2067, and 2069 respectively.<sup>457</sup> The works of Modesta Bor will become public domain in 2059; she died in 1998, and her heirs benefit from sixty years of copyright protection.

***Poet: Modesta Bor***

Bor had a great love for poetry, an affinity that if not instilled was strengthened by her mentors in college, Vicente Emilio Sojo and Juan Bautista Plaza. A passion confirmed not only by her use of others' poetry, but by her own forays into the genre. Bor wrote the poetry for her earliest art song, "La tarde" and the lyrics of two lullabies, one for her own son, "Mi niño bonito" and one for the grandson of a good friend, "Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico." She is also listed as a co-author for "Es la luz de tu presencia" with Argenis Rivera. Modesta Bor wrote poetry exclusively for her songs and she did not publish them apart from the music.<sup>458</sup> Her daughter describes her as "not a poet" by trade, but "very creative."

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<sup>456</sup> Francisco Lárez Granado (Venezuelan 60-year term, d. 1988): 2049

<sup>457</sup> The sixty-year Venezuelan term applies to León (d. 1994), Lezama (d. 2006), Osuna (d. 2008).

<sup>458</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.

**Poet: Yolanda Osuna**

Yolanda Osuna Ceballos (1929-2008) was a Venezuelan professor, author, poet, and a good friend of Bor.<sup>459</sup> While Osuna has a number of scholarly publications to her name, as well as poetry, there is very little published information about her. A few short biographies occupy the back page of some of her written publications. Osuna was originally from Tovar, in the state of Mérida (the same state in which Bor lived at the end of her life).<sup>460</sup>

Osuna had a significant interest in music, and the history of art in general. She was an award-winning author of musical history and criticism, including a biography of the famous Venezuelan pianist of the nineteenth century, Teresa Carreño.<sup>461</sup> She was a professor at the Universidad de Lara, and in the School of Social Communication at the Universidad Central de Venezuela, and she held a Ph.D. (1981) in the Sociology and Semiology of Literature and Art from the Sorbonne in Paris.<sup>462</sup>

Two of Bor's songs were written to Osuna's poetry, *Topecito* and *Cosquilla del bubute* from *Canciones infantiles*. Both are unpublished as poetry alone, at least nowhere that I could find. It is possible that they were written for Bor personally, perhaps for the occasion of the birth of her son Domingo, born in 1955. Bor and Osuna likely crossed paths in Caracas during their collegiate studies. Osuna received her Bachelor of Arts from the Universidad Central de

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<sup>459</sup> Rafael Uzcátegui, "Hasta siempre Yolanda Osuna," *Perdida en Itaca Blog*, entry posted January 25, 2008, <https://rafaeluzcategui.wordpress.com/2008/01/25/hasta-siempre-yolanda-osuna/> (accessed July 2, 2017). Uzcátegui stated that she passed on January 19, 2008 from cancer. Osuna's second surname was learned from the holding records in the library catalog of the National Venezuelan Library (Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela, BNV). Her relationship to Bor was learned from correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.

<sup>460</sup> Osuna, "Biografía Literaria," 3, 45.

<sup>461</sup> *Esbozo biográfico de Teresa Carreño* won an award from the Unión Nacional de Mujeres (National Women's Union) in 1953; Yolanda Osuna, "Biografía Literaria," in *Talisman* (Caracas: El pez soluble, 2006), 3, 45.

<sup>462</sup> Yolanda Osuna, *Memoria de los días* (Caracas: Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1986), Back cover.

Venezuela in 1956 (the same year of *Topecito*'s composition), and they would have been studying at schools less than ten miles apart for at least two years between 1954-1956.

Rafael Uzcátegui, who reportedly knew her personally, states that she was a part of the Communist Youth of Venezuela, and that she fought against the dictator General Marcos Pérez Jiménez who was president between 1953 and 1958.<sup>463</sup> It is possible that she knew Bor through her association with the Communist Party.

### ***Poet: Francisco Lárez Granado***

Francisco de Paula Lárez Granado (1903-1988), known as “Pachito Lárez” and “el poeta del mar” (the poet of the sea) was a native of Bor’s home island.<sup>464</sup> The choice of him as a poet represents a deliberate effort on Bor’s part to set not only the music of her nation, but of her home state (Nueva Esparta), and Island of Margarita. The works of Lárez Granado provided significant inspiration for Bor: they were among the books that she brought with her to the Soviet Union during her study with Aram Khachaturian.<sup>465</sup> Bor and Granado were at least acquainted with each other, having met at least once.<sup>466</sup>

Granado does not have an available dedicated biography. A few of his poetic publications have dedications and forwards that provide some information about him, usually a description of his poetic style and his poetry’s importance. These laudatory writings corroborate the high

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<sup>463</sup> Uzcátegui. *Juventud Comunista de Venezuela*; Donna Keyse Rudolph and G. A. Rudolph, “Pérez Jiménez,” *Historical Dictionary of Venezuela*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., *Latin American Historical Dictionaries* 3 (London: Scarecrow, 1996). 531-532.

<sup>464</sup> Francisco Suniaga, “Presentación,” in *Exodo*, Francisco Lárez Granado (Caracas: Ediciones el Cercado, 2014) [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/24176026-xodo?from\\_search=true](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/24176026-xodo?from_search=true) (accessed, July 4, 2017).

<sup>465</sup> Correspondence with Marisabel Bor.

<sup>466</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.



sentiment held by *margariteños* for their homeland, a feeling that permeates Granados' poetry. The publication "Umbral de Ausencia" acknowledges that he was largely unknown even within his own country.<sup>467</sup> That statement was published in 1955, shortly before Bor's composition of *Amanecer*. Today, there is a cultural center that bears his name, and other monuments in his honor on the island. Detailed information about Granado is likely available in Margarita for those interested in studying him further. There is reportedly an anthology of his work that likely contains the most scholarly information on the poet, but this work is not available outside of Venezuela.<sup>468</sup>

He was self-taught, and employed himself in a variety of fields, but he was appreciated as a poet by the likes of Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral.<sup>469</sup> His poetry is informed by his time spent at sea. As a teenager he sailed around the Caribbean islands with his uncle, and as a young man he sailed to Maracaibo on the northwestern Venezuelan coast during the petroleum boom and fulfilled various jobs.<sup>470</sup> A sort of Renaissance man, he also was an important chronicler of Margaritan history, the editor of several Margaritan periodicals, a theater stagehand, actor and director, a public official, and a baseball shortstop.<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>467</sup> Francisco Lárez Granado, *Umbral de ausencia* (Caracas, Venezuela: Ediciones del Ministerio de Educación, 1955), 2.

<sup>468</sup> Francisco Lárez Granado, *Me voy porque el mar me llama y yo soy un marinero: antología poética*, edited by Chevige Guayke, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Nueva Esparta: Imprenta Oficial del Estado Nueva Esparta, 2001); Dcampano[psued.] and various, "Francisco Lárez Granado," *Wikipedia: La enciclopedia libre*, created September 2013, [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco\\_L%C3%A1rez\\_Granados](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_L%C3%A1rez_Granados) (accessed July 4, 2017). Note on sources for Francisco Lárez Granado: The most detailed accounts of this poet available to researches outside of Margarita are online in non-peer-reviewed formats. Recognizing that these sources are likely not impartial towards Lárez Granado, and may contain some inaccuracies or exaggerations, I decided to include them in the absence of other information.

<sup>469</sup> Various, "Francisco Lárez Granado: About," *Facebook*, <https://m.facebook.com/francisco.larezgranado> (accessed July 4, 2017).

<sup>470</sup> Various, "Lárez Granado," *Facebook*.

<sup>471</sup> Dcampano[psued.], "Lárez Granado," *Wikipedia*; Various, "Lárez Granado," *Facebook*.

Lárez Granado's poetry centers itself in the island, the sea, his homeland and its people. The sea is a consistent image throughout his work. His poetry is romantic, rich in figurative description, and unabashedly laudatory of Margarita. The sea often carries symbolic significance and represents the men who toiled and lived on and around it, bearing meanings such as longing, anguish, effort, death, bounty, scarcity, culture, heroism and the dreams of individuals and society as a whole.<sup>472</sup> *Velero Mundo* was dedicated to Margarita Island, and written in celebration of the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its discovery by Christopher Columbus in 1498.<sup>473</sup>

**Poet: José Moreno Villa**

José Moreno Villa (1887-1955) was a Spanish poet, professor and historian.<sup>474</sup> During the Spanish civil war, he was forced into exile in Mexico where he lived out the rest of his life.<sup>475</sup> He is considered part of the Generation of '27. This group of Spanish poets was influenced by avant-garde movements such as "Symbolism, Futurism and Surrealism."<sup>476</sup> While each had their own individual approach, as a whole they looked beyond "strictly logical descriptions," and opted instead for "constant and audacious use of metaphor."<sup>477</sup> Villa's poetry is "sober and

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<sup>472</sup> vernisalazar[psued.], "Francisco Lárez Granado," Vernisalazar Blog, entry posted March 28, 2017, <https://vernisalazar.wordpress.com/2017/03/28/francisco-larez-granado/> (accessed July 4, 2017). Citing: Rosauo Rosa Acosta, *Margariteñerías*, no. 200 (March, 1988).

<sup>473</sup> Francisco Lárez Granado, "Introduction," *Caballo del mar* (Juangriego: Lit. Publisla, 1970). 9. Interestingly labeled as the "trisesquicentennial" (3-times-150-year anniversary); Donna Keyse Rudolph and G. A. Rudolph, "Margarita," *Historical Dictionary of Venezuela*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., *Latin American Historical Dictionaries* 3 (London: Scarecrow, 1996). 410.

<sup>474</sup> Tomás Fernández, "José Moreno Villa," *Biografías y vidas: la enciclopedia biográfica en línea*, [https://www.biografiasyvidas.com/biografia/m/moreno\\_villa.htm](https://www.biografiasyvidas.com/biografia/m/moreno_villa.htm) (accessed January 4, 2017).

<sup>475</sup> Ibid.

<sup>476</sup> The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "The Generation of 1927," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica: January 25, 2007) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Generation-of-1927> (accessed February 16, 2018).

<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

intellectual...with a tendency for symbolism.”<sup>478</sup> Bor used his poetry for a children’s song, likely charmed by Villa’s use of color, nature and animals as playful enigmatic symbols.

***Poet: Francisco Luis Bernárdez***

In the ARE score, “Canción de cuna” from *Canciones infantiles* is wrongly attributed to Francisco Luis **Hernandez**.<sup>479</sup> This poem is also erroneously listed as “Poesía Anónima” in the works listing of Felipe Sangiorgi’s edition of *Cuatro Fugas*.<sup>480</sup>

Argentine poet Francisco Luis **Bernárdez** (1900-1978) won the National Prize for Poetry in 1944 for *poemas de carne y hueso* a work in which he reached his “lyrical fullness” of an “original catholic baroqueism.”<sup>481</sup> While in his early works, during his time in Spain in the 1920s, he explored more vanguard poetic genres, he later returned to more traditional forms and “a marked catholic accent.”<sup>482</sup> In Buenos Aires, he “formed part of the Martín Fierro group,” which refers to the narrative poem *Martín Fierro* by José Hernández, a seminal work in the *gauchesco* literature of Argentina.<sup>483</sup> This association may have contributed to the confusion in attributing this poem.

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<sup>478</sup> Fernández, “José Moreno Villa.”

<sup>479</sup> There is no well-known poet by that name. This must be a typo, or a misreading of Modesta’s handwriting on the letters “H”-“B” and “r”-“n.” There is another Argentine poet by the name of Luis Guillermo Hernández Camarero (1941-1977), and another José Rafael Hernández y Pueyrredón (1834-1886); perhaps the names were confused by Modesta herself.

<sup>480</sup> Sangiorgi, “Biografía y catálogo,” 33. This paper contains the first proper attribution, as far as I know.

<sup>481</sup> Fernández, “Francisco Luis Bernárdez.”

<sup>482</sup> Víctor de Lama, *Antología de la poesía amorosa española e hispanoamericana* (Madrid: EDAF, 2002), 321. “Su evolución posterior le lleva a retornar a los clásicos con marcado acento católico.”

<sup>483</sup> Ibid. A *gaucho* is a nineteenth-century cowboy of the plains region, *llanuras*, in Argentina.

***Poet: Jorge Carrera Andrade***

Jorge Carrera Andrade (1902-1978) was from Quito, Ecuador. He worked as a poet, journalist, editor, and ambassador to a number of countries including Peru, the US, and Japan. He spent a significant part of his life abroad, and much of his work was published abroad, including his translations, criticism and poetry. His travels left him with an enlightened perspective on world affairs and humanity across political boundaries. Acosta and Beckman write in the introduction to *Micrograms* that:

for Carrera Andrade, the international was less about crossing boundaries and more about disregarding them in the name of the universal. He writes, “I try to testify to an ordinary man’s orbit in time.” At first, he feels a stranger in the midst of a changing world but later...discovers deep within himself a feeling of solidarity with all men of the planet.<sup>484</sup>

Perhaps it was this quality of Carrera Andrade that Bor found attractive, who also shared a strong affinity for humanity in general.<sup>485</sup> Bor set one of Carrera Andrade’s poems: “Ratón” from *Microgramas*, 1940. It is part of the set *Canciones infantiles* for the song “El ratón,” 1960.

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<sup>484</sup>Alejandro de Acosta and Joshua Beckman, “Translators’ Introduction,” in *Micrograms*, Jorge Carrera Andrade (New York: Wave Books, 2011), vii.

<sup>485</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.

***Poet: Andrés Eloy Blanco***

Andrés Eloy Blanco (1897-1955), was from Cumaná in the state of Sucre, along the northern coast of Venezuela. During his childhood, he spent a few years living in Bor's home state on the Island of Margarita, which is just north of the coast of Cumaná.

Blanco grew up during the oppressive regimes of Cipriano Castro (1858-1924), leader from 1899-1908 who was responsible for his father's incarceration, and Juan Vicente Gómez (1857-1935), leader from 1908-1935. Castro and his administration were "Despotic, reckless, licentious...thought to have been the most corrupt and inefficient [government] in Venezuelan history."<sup>486</sup> Unetta Thompson Moore notes that "Perhaps because of this tyranny, public and political activities came to occupy an important place in the life of the mature Andrés Eloy Blanco."<sup>487</sup> During his life, Blanco himself suffered incarceration five consecutive times from 1928-1934 for opposition to Gómez's regime.<sup>488</sup> During his imprisonment, he was shackled, confined, tortured, and lied to that his hometown was destroyed by a hurricane.<sup>489</sup> To add to the mental and spiritual torture exacted upon him, his captor's burned many of the poems that he had written while imprisoned.<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Castro, [General] Cipriano," 144-145. Along with Gómez, Castro invaded and overthrew the government of Ignacio Andrade in 1899.

<sup>487</sup> Unetta Thompson Moore, *The Poetry of Andrés Eloy Blanco* (diss., University of Illinois, 1960), 10.

<sup>488</sup> Moore, 10-13. His initial imprisonment occurred while he was a 21-year-old student at the Universidad Central de Venezuela for his opposition to the Gómez regime's "friendliness towards the Germans" during WWI; Rudolph and Rudolph, "Sojo, Vicente Emilio," 91-92.

<sup>489</sup> Moore, 13.

<sup>490</sup> Moore, 13-14.

His struggles against the government led to an active political life after his release “which he hoped would lead to a liberal form of government in Venezuela.”<sup>491</sup> He twice served as a National Congressional representative, and he held municipal posts in Caracas, building his reputation as an orator. Later, he was part of the *Partido Democrático Nacional* (PDN) which was reorganized under the name *Acción Democrática* (AD), in 1941.

Blanco, an important founding member of AD, was the party’s vice president. After a revolution in 1945 supported by AD, he presided over the National Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional Constituyente*) an elected body during the provisional government led by Rómulo Betancourt (1908-1981). Under his leadership, the Assembly drafted a new liberal constitution issued on July 5<sup>th</sup> of 1947.<sup>492</sup> Martz notes that while “debates were heated and sometimes bitter...Blanco’s wit, diplomacy, and brilliance contributed mightily to the calming of tempers.”<sup>493</sup> While the benefits of this constitution lasted little more than a year, they represented significant political progress of many liberal reforms including social security, public health initiatives and universal suffrage, which affected Bor directly.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> Moore, 14.

<sup>492</sup> Ibid., 15. July 5<sup>th</sup> is Venezuelan Independence Day. This constitution was the twenty-second constitution adopted since independence, which might give the reader an idea of the political turmoil in which music and education had to develop; Rudolph and Rudolph, “Presidents,” 563. After 1941, The founders of Acción Democrática, including Blanco, Sojo, and Betancourt “spent the next four years developing a national organization for the party” (Rudolph and Rudolph, 88). In June of 1945, they joined a group of disgruntled military officers, the Unión Patriótica Militar, to overthrow the government of Isaías Medina Agarita. They overthrew the government on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1945 (Rudolph and Rudolph, 682). The provisional government was called *La Junta Revolucionaria de Gobierno* (October 18, 1945-February 15, 1948) with Rómulo Betancourt, as its de facto leader.

<sup>493</sup> John D. Martz, *Acción Democrática: Evolution of a Modern Political Party in Venezuela* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966. 70.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid., 70, 84. “Articles 53-57 committed the state to an extensive system of social security, including state construction of low-cost housing for workers, and...the prevention and eradication of disease.... The most famed accomplishment [of the provisional government], perhaps, was the remarkable eradication of malaria in the short space of two years—thus eliminating a disease previously contracted annually by nearly one-fifth of the population,” Rudolph and Rudolph, “Constitution of 1947,” 200. The constitution lasted until the military coup in November 24, 1948 led by Marcos Pérez Jimenez, a member of the Unión Patriótica Militar that had helped bring Acción Democrática to power in 1945. (Rudolph and Rudolph, 531).

Women had recently been granted the right to vote in municipal elections in 1945, but the passage of this constitution represented the first universal suffrage for women for congressional and presidential elections.<sup>495</sup> The law before this new constitution, granted voting rights to literate men over 21. Modesta Bor would have just turned 21 less than a month before the passing of this constitution, a moment in which the injustice of her position was most acute. As a young, educated, politically active woman, the acquisition of this right was surely significant, as was Blanco's role in its genesis.

It is significant that the Communist Party, traditionally a suspiciously viewed minority, were ensured a legally represented status, a privilege which they had only just received in 1945.<sup>496</sup> Communists were usually imprisoned during Gómez's reign (all political parties were illegal), and the Constitution of 1936 expressly forbid a Communist party.<sup>497</sup> Therefore, not only was Bor allowed to vote, but she could vote in concordance with her political beliefs.<sup>498</sup>

The new elections were popular in general. The engaged populace turned out in enormous percentages: "92 percent of those enrolled in the new census participated," an over 700 percent increase in voter turnout compared to those under previous election law.<sup>499</sup> In 1948,

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<sup>495</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Suffrage," 651. There were guarantees of the right to work, organize and strike. There were also provisions to receive pensions, vacation and sick pay, severance pay and to share in the profits...Both the president and the members of the bicameral Congress were elected directly by a secret vote of both men and women over eighteen and not subject to political or penal disqualification; Martz, 65. Women were previously granted suffrage in March 15, 1946 by Decree No. 216 issued by Betancourt for the election of the Constituent Assembly that would write the constitution.

<sup>496</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, 507-508. Despite being relatively few in numbers, there were two Communist parties in Venezuela due to a split in leadership. The Constitution of 1947 required party representation by color for illiterate voters. The *Partido Comunista de Venezuela* (PCV) became known as the Red Communists, and the *Partido Revolucionario del Proletariado* (PRP) became known as the Black Communists.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>498</sup> Martz, 72. It should be noted however, that the PCV did vocally oppose Article 77 which allowed for the "preventative detention of all those believed to be conspiring to subvert the government."

<sup>499</sup> Ibid., 69, 75. This represented what is estimated to be about "36 percent of the entire population, a sharp contrast with the customary 5 percent under earlier election laws." The overwhelming winner in all branches of government

the first presidential election with universal suffrage elected Romulo Gallegos, AD's party president. He won with the support of Blanco who became the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to the UN.<sup>500</sup> Unfortunately for Blanco, Gallegos' government was overthrown by a military coup later than same year. Blanco went into exile in Cuba and then Mexico where he tragically died in a car accident.<sup>501</sup>

It is almost certain that Bor and her mentor Vicente Emilio Sojo respected the political work of Blanco. Sojo, who regularly encouraged his students to read Venezuelan poetry, may have been responsible for introducing Blanco to Bor, or the very least, a motivating force in her appreciation for the poet.<sup>502</sup> Sojo was "one of the founders" of AD, as was Blanco.<sup>503</sup> Both Blanco and Sojo were close to Rómulo Betancourt, president of Venezuela from (1964-1969), and "perhaps the most influential political leader of the twentieth century."<sup>504</sup> Betancourt was the general secretary of AD and worked closely with Blanco when he was its vice-president in the early 1940s.<sup>505</sup>

Furthermore, Bor's Communist associations do not necessarily negate her appreciation for the democratic Blanco. The viewpoints of Blanco, Sojo, Betancourt were not distant from

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was AD, receiving over 70% of the votes, over three times as many as their closest rival, the conservative Catholic party, *Partido Social Cristiano* (COPEI). The Communist Party (PCV) received around 3% of the vote, mostly in Caracas.

<sup>500</sup> Rudolph, 91-92.

<sup>501</sup> Moore, 14-16. They were not the only ones to flee to Mexico during years of General Marcos Pérez Jiménez (president 1953-1958) and the provisional military governments that followed the coup. The publishing house, Yocoima, responsible for the first two editions of *Giraluna*, among others, was "apparently formed by Venezuelans living in exile in Mexico."

<sup>502</sup> Izcaray, 17.

<sup>503</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Sojo," 638-639; Izcaray, 24. Sojo also served as a senator for the party in 1958 and 1963.

<sup>504</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Betancourt, Rómulo," 87.

<sup>505</sup> Moore, 15.



that of the Communists, despite difference in political party. Betancourt's successful political party, AD, was born out of leftist ideologies and organizations; in fact, the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV) shares its origin with AD.<sup>506</sup> Furthermore, followers of one party were sympathetic to the other: "by 1953 [AD's] followers were young and sympathetic towards the Communists."<sup>507</sup> Martz notes that the "competition between Communism and democratic reformism was suggestive to all of Latin America concerning the best road of achieving socio-economic progress and a better life for the common man."<sup>508</sup> In short, while views differed on the best political organization to achieve societal goals, those goals were often shared.<sup>509</sup>

Blanco wrote many poetry collections and prose. He was awarded several times for his work as a poet and as a political figure.<sup>510</sup> Moore writes of Blanco's popularity among the public in 1960, sentiments which Bor likely shared, having taken his poetry with her to Moscow and having set his poetry numerous times to music in her art song and choral works:

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<sup>506</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Betancourt, Rómulo," 87. In the mid-1930s, Betancourt co-founded the Unionist Alliance of Great Colombia and helped found the Marxist Revolutionary Group of the Left. He also edited the *Plan of Baranquilla*, a Marxist analysis of Venezuelan conditions, and founded the Costa Rican Communist Party. After Gómez died in 1936, he returned, and founded the Movement of the Venezuelan Organization (ORVE) along with most of the Generation of 1928. ORVE and other parties united into the National Democratic Party (PDN). In early 1937, PDN was declared illegal by Eleazar López Contreras, forcing it underground and its leaders into exile. Betancourt went to Chile and worked with its Socialist Party. In 1939, PDN split into two factions, that of Betancourt still called PDN, and the militants formed the Communist Party (PCV). PDN would later reform into the party Democratic Action (AD).

<sup>507</sup> Rudolph and Rudolph, "Acción Democrática," 6-9.

<sup>508</sup> Marts, 113.

<sup>509</sup> Ibid., 68. This does not mean that there was not significant animosity, especially amongst party leaders; their rivalry within the labor movement caused a "struggle for the domination of organized labor" that "exacerbated relations between the two."

<sup>510</sup> Moore, 19.

Most critics admit that he is one of the most popular of modern Venezuelan poets, not so much because of the quality of his verses, as because of his treatment of subjects dear to the Venezuelans (sic) and perhaps, because of the qualities evinced by the man during his lifetime and because of the efforts of the politician to improve political and economic conditions for his countrymen, even at the price of great personal sacrifice...Perhaps the great esteem and affection enjoyed by Blanco among his countrymen are in part the reciprocal affection of a people that knows itself to be deeply loved by a great man and poet.

As a poet, Blanco is considered part of the Modernist school, marked by a tendency for long meters and strophic forms, especially the traditional hendecasyllabic Spanish sonnet, quatrains, *quintillas*, *sextillas*, and the *alejandrino*, fourteen-syllable-line Spanish *alexandrine*, and the Modernist *silva* of varied meter.<sup>511</sup> French rhyming patterns, and consonant rhyme patterns are also notable.<sup>512</sup>

Important stylistic features of Blanco's work include "enjambment, alliteration, and onomatopoeia (both phonemic and rhythmic)."<sup>513</sup> Also significant is his use of diction which includes "extensive use of synonyms, equivalent expressions, and uncommon words and phrases...Blanco even invents a word or employs a newly coined phrase to fill a definite need."<sup>514</sup> Blanco often prefers cultivated language with a wealth of Latin and Greek derivatives, religious terms, and technical terms. His language is "essentially figurative with an abundance of metaphors, similes, symbols, and images."<sup>515</sup> This is marked by "the apparent desire to create his own imagery, forsaking the old and tried images."<sup>516</sup> His writing is marked by the themes of love

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<sup>511</sup> Moore, 26-27.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid., 181.

for mankind, compassion for the suffering, responsibility, fertility, life, death, and the future of Venezuela, and the Americas.<sup>517</sup>

In her art songs, Bor exclusively set the poetry of the last work published during Blanco's lifetime, *Giraluna* (1955), a collection of poetry written over more than a dozen years.<sup>518</sup> Moore describes Blanco's style in this work, which differs from his general trend toward greater formal freedom in the works from his early to middle period: "*Giraluna* (1955) marks a period of renewed interest on the part of the poet in more regular verse and in some of the more rigorous traditional meters, including the sonnet, as well as a return to rhyme."<sup>519</sup> *Giraluna* also has a "reduced reliance on an abundance of Latin derivatives [which] leads in general to a less elevated, less solemn, less sonorous tone, as well as to a less slowly moving line at times, resulting in a style more adapted to the new subject...a conversational, an everyday diction, employing at times an almost colloquial language to express the love he felt for Lilina Iturbe, his *Giraluna*. Bor must have found Blanco's use of language in *Giraluna* inspiring and appropriate for her brand of art song.

*Giraluna* "displays a unity of persons which is peculiar among all Blanco's collections of poetry."<sup>520</sup> However, there is no real unity of setting or timeline in the work. "It is merely a personal world in which move the poet and members of his family," including himself, his wife,

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<sup>517</sup> Ibid., 306-307.

<sup>518</sup> Moore, 33.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid., 253.

and his two sons.<sup>521</sup> The overall themes of this work are his love for his wife Lilina Iturbe, absence, and death which he “seems to regard...calmly, with greater resignation.”<sup>522</sup>

Themes of Blanco’s life and his manner of living are expressed in *Giraluna*, especially “Canto a los hijos” in which he speaks to his two young sons: “love, brotherhood, forgiveness, compassion...the renunciation of hate and the observation that all men are equal in his eyes, regardless of race or national origin.”<sup>523</sup> Blanco called for the living of an “unselfish way of life” with a “responsibility in the employment of his time.”<sup>524</sup> These themes resonate with Bor’s character as it has been described to this author by her family members. It is likely that she related strongly to Blanco’s perspective. Indeed, Bor could share Blanco’s motto:

To live without pause, to die without haste  
To live to give your life for justice and beauty<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>522</sup> Ibid., 302-303.

<sup>523</sup> Moore, 304.

<sup>524</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>525</sup> Ibid., 305. “Para vivir sin pausa, para morir sin prisa, /vivir es desvivirse por lo justo y lo bello.”

### *Poet: Emilio Ballagas*

Emilio Ballagas (1908-1954) was a white Cuban poet and professor known for his Afro-Cuban poetry. Argyll Pryor Rice attests that, “[a]lthough Ballagas was not black, “the quality of his Afro-Cuban poetry was second only to that of Nicolás Guillén.”<sup>526</sup> Aside for the *Cuaderno de poesía negra* published in 1934, which includes “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito,” he published two important anthologies, a doctoral thesis, and numerous essays and articles on the subject.<sup>527</sup>

In general, Ballagas’ poetry brings together a number of contemporary trends including “post-modernism, avant-gardism, pure poetry, black poetry, and sociopolitical poetry.”<sup>528</sup> His experiences and perceptions in early life were particularly important for his poetry throughout his lifetime.<sup>529</sup> Such vivid memories of his early life were particularly valuable for his Afro-Cuban poetry. Ballagas lived within a generation following the end of slavery in Cuba, which persisted until 1886.<sup>530</sup> Many of his writings “capture brief scenes from the daily life of the blacks,” which places these works among the *costumbrista* movement, which sought to elevate

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<sup>526</sup> Argyll Pryor Rice, “Emilio Ballagas,” in vol. 3 of *Latin American Writers*, edited by Carlos A. Solé and Maria Isabel Abreu (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1989), 1081-1087. 1083.

<sup>527</sup> Ibid., 1082. His works include: *Antología de poesía negra hispanoamericana*, 1935; *Mapa de la poesía negra americana*, 1946; “Situación de la poesía afroamericana,” 1946.

<sup>528</sup> Ibid.; The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, “Pure Poetry,” *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica: May 13, 2008) <https://www.britannica.com/art/pure-poetry> (accessed March 8, 2018). “Pure poetry, message-free verse that is concerned with exploring the essential musical nature of the language than with conveying a narrative or having didactic purpose.”

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., 1081.

<sup>530</sup> Rebecca J. Scott, “Slavery: Abolition,” vol. 5 of *Encyclopedia of Latin American History & Culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. edited by Jay Kinsbruner and Erick D. Langer (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2008), 869-873. The process of abolition began in 1870 by the Spanish government, starting with children and the elderly, and Cortes had declared Cuban slaves free in 1880 with mandatory apprenticeship, but emancipation was not formal until 1886.

daily life into the artistic sphere.<sup>531</sup> “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito,” among other poems, is written in an Afro-Cuban dialect. Rice attests that this device “imbues the scenes with intimacy and authenticity.”

Ballagas intended his Afro-Cuban poetry to be a genuine expression of “the most profound traits of the Afro-Cuban character.”<sup>532</sup> In his 1937 article “Poesía negra liberada,” Ballagas argues that black poetry must not simply present “the superficial aspects of Afro-Cuban culture.” However, Ballagas’ poetry is sometimes described as part of what is known as “the *negrista* movement.”<sup>533</sup> A relative of the *costumbrista* movement, the *negrista* movement in Cuba “adopted the wave of international artistic curiosity about the picturesque aspects of black life.”<sup>534</sup> *Negrista* tends to ignore harsher realities of life, and is therefore sometimes criticized. An in depth literary criticism of these terms and Afro-Cuban poetry is beyond the scope of this paper, but the concepts are introduced here for the reader to consider.

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<sup>531</sup> Enrique Saínz, “Emilio Ballagas,” *Diccionario Enciclopédico de las Letras de América Latina*, ed. José Medina, (Caracas: Monte Avila, 1995), 464; José Leandro Urbina, “Costumbrismo,” *Diccionario Enciclopédico de las Letras de América Latina*, edited by José Medina (Caracas: Monte Avila, 1995), 1243-1247.

<sup>532</sup> Rice, 1803.

<sup>533</sup> Keith Ellis, *Cuba’s Nicolás Guillén: Poetry and Ideology* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1983), 61-62.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

***Poet: Nicolás Guillén***

Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén (1902-1989) is considered “one of the classic Latin American poets of the twentieth century.”<sup>535</sup> Guillén has been related to various poetic movements and groups. “He is generally lionized by the critics as an exponent of an exotic version of mainstream Latin American poetry, a somewhat avant-garde negroid poetry.”<sup>536</sup> He is a part of the Afro-American literary movement alongside figures of the Harlem Renaissance such as Langston Hughes.<sup>537</sup> Perhaps the most accurate understanding of Guillén, according to the scholar Ian Smart and others, is that of a Caribbean, or West Indian poet.<sup>538</sup> As far as art and poetry are concerned, “resistance is central to Caribbean literature.”<sup>539</sup> Guillén’s work, in the latter period from which Bor sourced her lyrics, was committed “to his assumed constituents, the ‘wretched of the earth’ and, in particular, those of the Caribbean who have been scarred by the brutal reality of sugar and slavery.”<sup>540</sup> Andrade sums up the poetic aspirations of Guillén:

...to interpret the “collective I” of his people and his race, resorting to the simplest forms of song, which will bring his poetry to all lips as an instrument of human solidarity... The content of his poetry is nearly always ideological, with intense Spanish-American feeling.<sup>541</sup>

Race is obviously tied to the history of the slave trade in the Caribbean, and the suffering exacted by the practice was felt acutely and universally by those of African heritage in the

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<sup>535</sup> Ian Isidore Smart, *Nicolás Guillén: Popular Poet of the Caribbean* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1990), 1.

<sup>536</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>537</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid.*, 107. Smart’s words.

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>541</sup> Andrade, *Reflections on Spanish-American Poetry*, 19.

region. Smart attests that ‘African’ is part and parcel of a Caribbean label.<sup>542</sup> However, Guillén’s Marxist philosophy--he joined the Communist party in 1937--was “antithetical to race consciousness.”<sup>543</sup> Marxism focuses exclusively on class.<sup>544</sup> Guillén rejected race as an organizing principle for the revolution: “negritude...cannot possibly be considered a political position á outrance; if it were it would become another form of racism.”<sup>545</sup> However, Guillén still dealt with race in his revolution-themed poetry, but he contended that the situation of blacks “transcends racial identification.”<sup>546</sup> Guillén’s black character of Sabás from *West Indies, Ltd.*, for example, “is a representative of the oppressed.”<sup>547</sup> Therefore, what was important for Guillén was not that the oppressed were black, and their oppressors white, but the existence of the oppression, and the action required in response.

Guillén’s own life was marked by the collateral damage of imperialism. Guillén’s father, a politically active newspaper editor, was “killed by soldiers” in 1917 “during a dirty little race war stirred up essentially by the US occupation,” and the attempt by President Mario Garcia Menocal to hold onto power after his term had ended.<sup>548</sup> This trauma of his teenage years would later motivate his political militancy.<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>542</sup> Smart, 2.

<sup>543</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid.

<sup>545</sup> Ibid.

<sup>546</sup> Ibid.

<sup>547</sup> Ibid.

<sup>548</sup> Smart, 106; Ellis, 51.

<sup>549</sup> Smart, 106.



As a visible writer who supported the revolution, Guillén was forced into exile when the revolution started.<sup>550</sup> He returned after the overthrow of Fulgencio Batista in January of 1959 as a revered poet of the revolution.<sup>551</sup> As the revolution created cultural institutions and underwent literacy campaigns, Guillén prepared the First National Congress of Cuban Writers and Artists.<sup>552</sup> In preparation for the Congress, a series of lectures were held in which the revolutionary leader Prime Minister Dr. Fidel Castro spoke on the subject of art and the revolution:

The Revolution cannot attempt to stifle art or culture when one of the goals and one of the fundamental principles or purposes of the Revolution is to develop art and culture...in the same way that the Revolution is concerned about developing the conditions and strengths that will allow the people to satisfy all their material needs, we also want to develop the conditions that will allow the people to satisfy their cultural needs...It is necessary to strive in all manifestations to reach the people, but in turn it is necessary to do everything possible so that the people may understand more and more profoundly. I believe that that principle does not run contrary to the aspirations of the artist, and least of all if he bears in mind the fact that people ought to create for their contemporaries.<sup>553</sup>

Castro's words are not only fitting and important for an understanding of Guillén and his work, but ring true for that of Bor as well. Bor admired Castro's position, whose focus on meeting cultural needs in society and reaching the people in such a way that they can understand mirrors closely that of her Venezuelan mentors. In addition, the charge that artists should write for their contemporaries would have corroborated Bor's belief in participating in modern schools of composition. One can hear echoes of Castro in Bor's words accompanying her symphonic

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<sup>550</sup> Ellis, 40.

<sup>551</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid.

<sup>553</sup> Ibid. 41-42.

poem *Genocidio*: “Through their art, the composer should unite themselves with the struggles of their people.”<sup>554</sup>

Guillén’s Congress of Writers brought about the creation of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), with Guillén as its president, which in the 1980s hosted two festivals of contemporary music in which Bor participated. Thus, the cultural administration led by Guillén based on the revolutionary principles of Castro were personally significant for Bor’s professional life. Interestingly, Guillén also visited Venezuela in November of 1945 while Bor was studying in Caracas. It is possible that the nineteen-year old Bor was interested in his visit and saw him speak, but I have no evidence other than coincidence.

Modesta Bor sourced from two of Guillén’s collections: *West Indies, Ltd.* from 1934, and *Son Entero* from 1947. An Antillean understanding of Guillén is appropriate for both of these works. Ian Smart posits that *West Indies, Ltd.* marks Guillén’s “full evolution” into his “Radicalization phase.”<sup>555</sup> Also called his “the fighting phase” in which Guillén “turns himself into an awakener of the people,” creating a “fighting literature, a revolutionary literature, and a national literature.”<sup>556</sup> Guillén believed that the fight by the people “against the forces of occupation” was a substantive part of national identity itself.<sup>557</sup>

This poetry collection was written during “days of intense revolutionary agitation of the masses.” Ellis postulates that the strong “combativeness” of this collection is related to the fall of the Machado dictatorship in 1933.<sup>558</sup> The coup occurred during the years of writing for *West*

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<sup>554</sup>Stephanie Bor, 64 “El compositor debe sumarse con su arte a los problemas de su pueblo.”

<sup>555</sup> Smart, 104.

<sup>556</sup> Ibid.

<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> Ellis, 96-97.

*Indies, Ltd.*, in which there was “an atmosphere that was more propitious to militant writing and political activity.”<sup>559</sup> The oppressive forces understood in revolutionary Cuba were often US political and financial powers.<sup>560</sup> The military commander Fulgencio Batista who came to power following Machado was viewed as the “unconditional agent of North American financial interests.”<sup>561</sup> The suffering and human cost of imperialism is laid out in unsettling language in “Nocturno en los muelles” from *West Indies, Ltd.*, which Bor uses to close her song cycle *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*. This and other poems in the collection call on the reader to hold back their open gesture (towards the oppressive forces of imperialism, racism, and capitalism), and opt instead for a strong fist.

***Poet: Francisco Rodríguez***

Francisco Rodríguez García was Bor’s second husband; they married in 1965. As far as I can tell, his work is not published, and the rest of Bor’s family knows little about him.<sup>562</sup> Further research of this poet is beyond the scope of this paper.

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<sup>559</sup> Ibid.

<sup>560</sup> Smart, 104.

<sup>561</sup> Ellis, 96-97.

<sup>562</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor. From Lena, this author learned that his second surname is García, and that they separated while Bor was living in Caracas. He likely resided in Caracas at the time of writing.

***Poet: Mimina Rodríguez Lezama***

The poet Mimina “Mimia” Guillermina Rodríguez Lezama (1924-2006) was from Upata, located in the eastern central part of Venezuela.<sup>563</sup> Unfortunately, she has no formal biography. There are a few blogs online that briefly discuss her, mostly in a laudatory, poetic manner; however, some concrete information can be gleaned. She was born into relative poverty, and she found her passion for poetry during grade school.<sup>564</sup> She was a cultural promoter, and helped to found cultural institutions and promoted the creation of museums.<sup>565</sup> She was also a close friend of Bor, who used her poem “Hijo” as the lyric for “Te aguardaba entre mastiles.”<sup>566</sup> There is likely more information available for Rodríguez Lezama in Venezuela at local historical societies, and institutions related to her life.

***Poet: Aquiles Nazoa***

The Venezuelan writer Aquiles Nazoa (1920-1976) greatly admired the Cuban revolution and its leader, Fidel Castro. The collection of poetry that Bor sourced contains the following dedication: “To Fidel Castro, liberator of the people, master of the youth of America, I dedicate this book in proof of my admiration and revolutionary faith.”<sup>567</sup> Joaquín Marta Sosa contends

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<sup>563</sup>Por amor a Venezuela[psued.], “Mimina Rodríguez Lezama, mujer paradigma y poetisa venezolana,” Talento Venezolano Blog, entry posted November 13, 2016, <http://talentovenezolano.blogspot.com/2006/11/mimina-rodriguez-lezama-mujer-paradigma.html> (accessed July 13, 2017).

<sup>564</sup>Américo Fernández, “MIMINA RODRÍGUEZ LEZAMA / ¿Por qué escribo?,” Blog de la Asociación de . Escritores de Venezuela, entry posted January 9, 2010, <http://escritoresdelestadobolivar.blogspot.com/2010/01/mimina-rodriguez-lezama-por-que-escribo.html> (accessed, July 13, 2017).

<sup>565</sup> Por amor a Venezuela[psued.].

<sup>566</sup> Correspondence with Lena Sánchez Bor.

<sup>567</sup> Aquiles Nazoa, *Los poemas* (Caracas: Amigos de la Poesía, 1961), 9. “A Fidel Castro, / libertador del pueblo, / maestro de la juventud de américa, / dedico este libro en prueba de admiración / y fe revolucionaria”

that in this collection, entitled *Los poemas*, Nazoa ranges from politically combative poems to poetry of full personal sentiment “without equal in simplicity and finesse.”<sup>568</sup> Through works that display a mastery of Classical meters and strophic forms, he “touch[ed] the hearts of ordinary people in their most habitual emotions.”<sup>569</sup> While Bor would have admired Nazoa’s political convictions, it was his romantic poetry that inspired her song “Muchachas bajo la lluvia.”

***Poet: Carlos Augusto León***

“Un títere escondido” is attributed to the Venezuelan poet Carlos Augusto León (1914-1994). I could not find the poem among his works.<sup>570</sup> Carlos Augusto León was employed as a professor in history, geography, and contemporary literature at the National Pedagogy Institute, the Andrés Bello High School, and the Central University of Venezuela where he worked for the last twenty years of his life.<sup>571</sup> Both Bor and León were well-known professors working in Caracas, and it is likely that they were acquainted.

Like Yolanda Osuna, León was politically active in opposition to the dictatorship of Marcos Pérez Jiménez in the mid-1950s.<sup>572</sup> He was imprisoned and exiled on separate occasions.<sup>573</sup> His travels and advocacy for liberal social justice reform during his exile garnered

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<sup>568</sup> Joaquín Marta Sosa, *Navegación de tres siglos: Antología básica de la poesía venezolana 1826-2013*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Caracas: Sociedad de Amigos de la Cultura Urbana, 2013), 233. “...de sin igual sencillez y finura.”

<sup>569</sup> Marta, 233. “...tocar el corazón de la gente común en sus emociones más habituales.”

<sup>570</sup> Carlos Augusto León, *Antología poética*, edited by José Ramón Medina (Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores, 2011).

<sup>571</sup> Manuel Ruano, “León, Carlos Augusto,” *Diccionario enciclopédico de las letras de américa latina*, edited by José Medina (Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores Latinoamericana, 1995), 2652-2653.

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.*, 2653.

<sup>573</sup> *Ibid.*

him in 1953 the Gold Medal by the World Peace Council, a Soviet organization.<sup>574</sup> Later, he held political office, both in municipal government in Caracas, and as a senator in the National Congress.<sup>575</sup>

He was an award-winning writer. He won the Municipal Prize for Literature in 1943, the Municipal Prize for Prose in 1946, and the National Prize for Poetry in 1947-1948 for his book *A solas con la vida*.<sup>576</sup> Ruano states that “From his first poetry collections, his work reveals a constant social preoccupation.”<sup>577</sup> His concepts of Man, Woman, and People (in capital letters), and their “uniting in the same loving dimension,” characterize much of his work.<sup>578</sup> Bor would have found León’s focus on social justice attractive, and it is fitting that she was inspired by and championed his work.

### ***Poet: Argenis Rivera***

Argenis Agustín Rivera was born on May 19, 1960 in Río Caribe, in the state of Sucre. He was Bor’s composition student and a close friend to her and her family. He is currently a Professor of Choral Direction at the Universidad de Los Andes in the city of Mérida, and the Director of the Youth Symphony Chorus of Mérida, a part of the System of Youth and Children’s Choirs and Orchestras.<sup>579</sup>

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<sup>574</sup> Ibid.

<sup>575</sup> Ibid.

<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

<sup>577</sup> Ruano, 2652.

<sup>578</sup> Ibid., 2653.

<sup>579</sup> All biographical data learned from a conversation with Armando Nones, the editor of ediciones ARE, and a student of Argenis Rivera who contacted Rivera on the author’s behalf. Rivera is listed on the ULA’s website under the name Agustín Rivera, but he does not list an email or phone number.

## CHAPTER 6: THE POETRY

The poetry for each song is presented in chronological order of musical composition. Undated works are at the end. Each song will be introduced with a table of general information on the song, its poetry, and the recording and publishing history. A slash mark, —, indicates that no such information is available or relevant for that song. Range is presented with octave designation numbers where middle-C is C<sub>4</sub>. The voice part of the song is notated in treble clef unless otherwise noted alongside the range. For the language dialect, “Standard” indicates Standard Latin American Spanish, and “Regional” indicates the Caribbean/Venezuelan Regional dialect discussed in Chapter 7.

The poetry follows next. If the song’s lyrics were taken from the initial stanzas of a longer poem, the additional stanzas present in the original poem will immediately follow with the note: (additional stanzas). If the lyrics were excerpted from the middle of a longer poem, or multiple poems, the entire original poem is presented following the song’s lyrics. All the poetry is presented alongside an original poetic translation. My translations were approved by Luis Martín Estudillo, a professor of Latin American Literature at the University of Iowa.

This will be followed by a discussion of the poetry, including the derivation of the lyrics from the original poetry. If the song included a dedication, it will be noted here. References within the poetry are defined and explained. Also, a brief analysis of the poem and a possible interpretation are at times offered. Occasionally, other poetry related to the source poem is necessary or helpful in understanding the poem’s meaning and context. In these cases, the supporting poetry is presented after the poetry discussion.

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[http://www.artes.ula.ve/profesores\\_investigadores.php](http://www.artes.ula.ve/profesores_investigadores.php). (accessed July 1, 2017). The full name of the symphony chorus: *Coro Sinfónico Juvenil de Mérida en el Sistema de Coros y Orquestas Juveniles e Infantiles*.

## *La tarde*

Table 6.1. General information about “La tarde”

Song Title	La tarde
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified: likely baritone or tenor
Range	D <sub>3</sub> —E <sub>4</sub> , Bass Clef
Poet	Modesta Bor
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1953(?)
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.2. Text and poetic translation for “La tarde”<sup>580</sup>

<b>La tarde</b>	<b>The Evening</b>
<p>La tarde se moría,  ya el mar está tranquilo  el sol se esconde entre las olas  y las gaviotas y se alejan,  buscando su nido  la luz argentada dora ya sus alas.</p> <p>La nube pregunta,  ya se estancó en el cielo  las naves plegan ya sus velas  y surcan las azules aguas  avanza la noche  con su manto oscuro cubre ya la tarde.  —Modesta Bor</p>	<p>The evening was passing away,  the sea is now calm  the sun conceals itself in the waves  and the seagulls leave,  searching for their nests  the silver-plated light gilds their wings.</p> <p>The question of a cloud  stood still in the sky  the ships fold their sails  and plow through the blue waters  the night advances  with its dark cloak covers the evening.  —Nicholas Miguel</p>

<sup>580</sup> Modesta Bor, “La tarde,” *Obra para Voz y Piano de Modesta Bor*, edited by Armando Nones and Lena Sánchez Bor, Fundación Modesta Bor (Mérida, Venezuela: Ediciones ARE, 2015), 4.



## Poetic Analysis of La tarde

This poem is a figurative description of evening leading to nightfall. As an allegory, it could function as a description for several things. Interpretations might take their cue from some of the diction and images employed: “la tarde se moría” might lead the reader to consider the poem as an allegory for death, a likely interpretation given that darkness and night time are common symbols for death. This interpretation is supported by the final image of the poem, “su manto oscuro” possibly hinting at the garb of the personage of Death. Jorge Carrera Andrade posits that Latin American poetry in general was strongly influenced by Edgar Allen Poe, initiating a literature of “mystery,” alongside the simultaneous influence of German romanticism and the preference for “night and death.”<sup>581</sup> Bor absorbed these trends in Spanish-American poetry, also present in “Nocturno en los muelles” with poetry by Nicolas Guillén.

### *Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano*

Table 6.3. Contents of *Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano*<sup>582</sup>

#	Song Title	Poet
I	Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)	Modesta Bor
II	Topecito	Yolanda Osuna
III	Cosquilla del bubute	Yolanda Osuna

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<sup>581</sup> Andrade, *Reflections on Spanish-America Poetry*, 7.

<sup>582</sup> Three Children’s Songs for Voice and Piano

## Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)

Table 6.4. General information about “Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)”

Song Title	Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)
Collection Title	<i>Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano</i>
Position in Collection	I
Voice	Unspecified, likely Treble
Range	G4—D5
Poet	Modesta Bor
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Language Dialect	Standard or Regional
Composition Date	1956
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.5. Text and poetic translation for “Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)”<sup>583</sup>

### Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)

Mi niño bonito  
se quiere dormir,  
cierra los ojitos,  
y los vuelve a abrir.  
—Modesta Bor

### My Beautiful Boy (Lullaby)

My beautiful boy,  
wants to sleep,  
close your little eyes,  
and open them later.  
—Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)

This poem is a lullaby. The words and phrases used are common and straightforward. This was written for her own son, Domingo, with the dedication “a mi hijo, Dominguito” (to my son, little Domingo).

<sup>583</sup> Bor, “Mi niño bonito,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4.

## Topecito

Table 6.6. General information about “Topecito”

Song Title	Topecito
Collection Title	<i>Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano</i>
Position in Collection	II
Voice	Unspecified, likely Treble
Range	B <sub>3</sub> —B <sub>4</sub>
Poet	Yolanda Osuna
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Poet’s Origin	Mérida, Venezuela
Language Dialect	Standard or Regional
Composition Date	1956
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.7. Text and poetic translation for “Topecito”<sup>584</sup>

### Topecito

Tope, tope, tope,  
dulce serafín;  
tope, tope, tope,  
dienticos de arroz.

Cucurucerito de trigo y maíz.<sup>585</sup>  
tope, tope, tope,  
tope, tope, tó,  
tope, tope, tó.  
—Yolanda Osuna

### Little Bump

Bump, bump, bump,  
sweet angel;  
bump, bump, bump,  
little teeth of rice.

Little black boy of wheat and corn.  
Bump, bump, boom,  
bump, bump, boom,  
bump, bump, boom.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>584</sup> Bor, “Topecito,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 5.

<sup>585</sup> “Cucurucerito” is a colloquial term of endearment. The meaning is likely related to a “negrito cucurucero” which, in Eastern Venezuela, including Margarita where Bor grew up, is a young boy with particularly dark skin.

## Poetic Analysis of Topecito

*Tope, tope, tope* is an infant game played not just in Venezuela, but also in other Latin American countries, in which a mother (or other caregiver) holds a baby with two arms in front of them so that they are face to face. She then says “tope, tope, tope...” meaning “we are going to bump our heads!” or “I’m going to bump you with my head!” as she slowly brings her forehead towards that of the child.<sup>586</sup> When the foreheads do bump together (gently, of course) the mother exclaims “tó” (often “tun,” in other variations of the game in Latin America) meaning “boom,” “crash,” “pow,” etc. There is much laughing and mutual enjoyment (hopefully), and the pattern is repeated. The game is included in many books of children’s rhymes and songs.

## Cosquilla del bubute

Table 6.8. General information about “Cosquilla del bubute”

Song Title	Cosquilla del bubute
Collection Title	<i>Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano</i>
Position in Collection	III
Voice	Unspecified, likely Treble
Range	C# <sub>4</sub> —B <sub>4</sub>
Poet	Yolanda Osuna
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Poet’s Origin	Mérida, Venezuela
Language Dialect	Standard, Regional or Andean
Composition Date	1956
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

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<sup>586</sup> “Tope” is derived from the verb “topar” meaning “to bump into.”

Table 6.9. Text and poetic translation for “Cosquilla del bubute”<sup>587</sup>

Cosquilla del bubute	Tickle of the Beetle
Bubute, bubute azul colorado. Lucero con alas, volando casado.	Beetle, beetle colored blue Star with wings, flying joined together.
Bubute, bubute bubu.	Beetle, Beetle boo boo.
De día apagado de noche con luz, Bubute, bubute bu, bubute, bubute, bu. —Yolanda Osuna	By day shut off by night with light, beetle, beetle boo, beetle, beetle boo. —Nicholas Miguel

#### Poetic Analysis of Cosquilla del bubute

*Cosquilla del bubute* is an infant play song with repetitive words and nonsense syllables.

“Bubute” is translated as a colloquial Caribbean term for “beetle,” however the final stanza seems to indicate an illuminating firefly-like bug. “By day shut off by night with light” is probably also a description of an infant, whose sleep schedules are often opposite that of their parents. Such a reading also gives a clever double entendre to the title: both the tickle given by a beetle, as it walks or flutters by, but also the tickle given to the baby “beetle” by her mother.

<sup>587</sup> Bor, “Cosquilla del bubute,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 5.

## *Amanecer*

Table 6.10. General information about “Amanecer”

Song Title	Amanecer
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified, likely Mezzo-Soprano
Range	B <sub>3</sub> —D <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Francisco Lárez Granado
Original Poem Title	“Cromo Rosa”
Original Poem Publication	<i>Velero Mundo</i> , 1948
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1957
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.11. Text and poetic translation for “Amanecer” / “Cromo Rosa,” *Velero Mundo*<sup>588</sup>

<b>Amanecer / Cromo Rosa</b>	<b>Sunrise / Pink Card</b>
AMANECE. Y es mariposa sobre vidrio el alba.	IT BRIGHTENS. And is a butterfly upon glass, the dawn.
En el horizonte asoma una velita blanca.	On the horizon appears a small white candle.
Velita que semeja la punta de una daga.	Candle that resembles the point of a dagger.
O el pico de una estrella que se quedó en el agua. —Francisco Lárez Granado.	Or the corner of a star that stuck in the water. —Nicholas Miguel

<sup>588</sup> Francisco Lárez Granado, *Velero mundo* (Caracas: Editorial Grafolit, 1948), 35; Bor, “Amanecer,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 6.

## Poetic Analysis of Amanecer

*Amanecer* was originally published under the name “Cromo rosa” in the book *Velero mundo*.<sup>589</sup> The book is broken into four sections named after the cardinal directions. This poem appears in *Sur* (South). “Cromo rosa” is a figurative description of sunrise. The first line is broken into two, with the second part offset to bring attention to the metrical change. The first word, in all caps and set on its own line, communicates the poet’s awe for the sunrise

### *Rojo*

Table 6.12. General information about “Rojo”

Song Title	Rojo
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified
Range	D <sub>4</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Francisco Lárez Granado
Original Poem Title	?
Original Poem Publication	?
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1957
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

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<sup>589</sup> Lárez Granado, *Velero mundo*, 35.

Table 6.13. Text and poetic translation for “Rojo”<sup>590</sup>

<b>Rojo</b>	<b>Red</b>
La llamarada, la llamarada del poniente incendió el pabellón de raso de la tarde. Y el bostezo, y el bostezo del viento aventó las chispas de espacio que se llenó de estrellas. <sup>591</sup> —Francisco Lárez Granado	The flash, the flash from the west ignited the evening’s satin flag. and the yawn, and the yawn of the wind fanned the sparks of space that filled itself with stars. —Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of Rojo

This poem is a figurative description of a sunset. Images are likely symbolic.

Unfortunately, the original publication of this poem could not be found. Future research done in Venezuela would be valuable in this respect.

### *Canciones infantiles*

Table 6.14. Contents of *Canciones infantiles*

#	Song Title	Poet
I	Canción	José Moreno Villa
III	Canción de cuna	Francisco Luis Bernárdez
V	El ratón	Jorge Carrera Andrade

### Note

*Canciones infantiles* (Children’s Songs) is dedicated “to all the children of my country.”<sup>592</sup> This cycle also contains choral works for treble voices between those for solo voice.

<sup>590</sup> Bor, “Rojo,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 7.

<sup>591</sup> The score has “llevó” instead of “llenó” within the music. I am trusting the printing of the poem alone after the music to be more accurate.

<sup>592</sup> “a todos los niños de mi país”



In fact, “Canción” is written as a counterpoint between two voices much like her choral works. Works for children constitute Bor’s largest body of work. Directing children’s choirs and instructing others to do so was an important part of her career. Therefore, it is not surprising that some of her earliest song collections are for children. Wahari Sánchez, Bor’s granddaughter, relates her affinity for the children she worked with, and the importance Bor felt for such work:

She loved children and was very fun with them. That is why she made so many arrangements for children’s choir, and while she was living in Caracas, thanks to music, she was able to reform a number of troubled young people.<sup>593</sup>

### Canción

Table 6.15. General information about “Canción”

Song Title	Canción
Collection Title	<i>Canciones infantiles</i>
Position in Collection	I
Voice	Unspecified, likely Treble
Range	C <sub>4</sub> —C <sub>5</sub>
Poet	José Moreno Villa
Poet’s Origin	Castile, Spain
Original Poem Title	Canciones: I
Original Poem Publication	<i>Colección: Poesías</i>
Language Dialect	Standard or Castilian
Composition Date	1960
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

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<sup>593</sup> Correspondence with Wahári Sánchez. “Le encantaban los niños y era divertida con ellos. Por eso hizo tantos arreglos para coro de niños y mientras vivía en Caracas gracias a la música pudo reformar a varios adolocentes con vicios.”

Table 6.16. Text and poetic translation for “Canción,”<sup>594</sup>

<b>Canción</b>	<b>Song</b>
Gris y morado es mi verde olivar; blanca mi casa y azul mi mar.	Gray and purple is my green olive grove; white, my house and blue, my sea.
Cuando tú vengas me vas a encontrar; yo seré un pájaro del verde olivar. —José Moreno Villa	When you come you will find me; I will be a bird of the green olive grove. —Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.17. Text and poetic translation for additional stanzas from “Canciones: I”<sup>595</sup>

<b>Canciones: I (additional stanzas)</b>	<b>Songs: I (additional stanzas)</b>
Cuando tú vengas me vas a encontrar; seré una llamita roja del hogar.	When you come you will find me; I will be a red flame in the fireplace.
Cuando tú vengas me vas a encontrar; seré una estrella encima del mar. —José Moreno Villa	When you come you will find me; I will be a star above the sea. —Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of Canción

Modesta Bor used the first two stanzas of a poem by the Spanish poet José Moreno Villa (1887-1955). The original poem was published in 1924 in *Colección: Poesías* as the first of a

<sup>594</sup> Bor, “Canción,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4.

<sup>595</sup> José Moreno Villa, “Canciones: I,” *Collección: Poesía* (Madrid: Imprenta de Cara Raggio, 1924), 120.

small grouping labeled “Canciones.”<sup>596</sup> Dedication of *Colección*: To the land that sustains me and drives me forward: Castile.<sup>597</sup>

This song presents the performer with the issue of what dialect of Spanish to employ. Castilian Spanish would apply to the poet, and the Standard Latin American Spanish dialect would apply to the composer. From a practical standpoint, the point of difference between the two for this particular lyric is the pronunciation of the word *azul*. Does the singer employ *distinción* [a. 'θul], as Moreno Villa would have, or does one use *seseo* [a. 'sul], as Bor would have? Either would be appropriate, and the singer can make their own decision.

### Canción de cuna

Table 6.18. General information about “Canción de cuna”

Song Title	Canción de cuna
Collection Title	<i>Canciones infantiles</i>
Position in Collection	II
Voice	Unspecified, likely Treble
Range	D <sub>4</sub> —A <sub>4</sub>
Poet	Francisco Luis Bernárdez
Poet’s Origin	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Original Poem Title	“Canción de cuna I—Niño querido” (stanzas 1-2) “Canción de cuna II—Todos los niños.” (stanzas 3-5)
Original Poem Publication	<i>Poemas de carne y hueso</i> , 1943
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1960
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

<sup>596</sup> José Moreno Villa, *Poesías completas*, edited by Juan Pérez de Ayala (Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico; Madrid: Amigos de la Residencia de Estudiantes, 1998), 233, 297, 823.

<sup>597</sup> “A la tierra que me sostiene y me lanza: Castilla”

Table 6.19. Text and poetic translation for “Canción de cuna”<sup>598</sup>

<b>Canción de cuna</b>	<b>Lullaby</b>
Niño querido Ya viene el sueño Por el camino De los luceros.	Dear child Sleep is on its way On a pathway Made of stars.
Niño querido El sueño avanza Y se detiene Frente a tu casa.	Dear child Sleep comes And stops In front of your house.
Todos los niños Que hay en las flores Están durmiendo Entre canciones.	All the children That are in the flowers Are sleeping Amongst songs.
Duérmete, niño De mis amores Como los niños Que hay en las flores.	Sleep, child Of my love Like the children That are in the flowers.
Duérmete, niño De mis amores Como los niños Que hay en el bosque. —Francisco Luis Bernárdez	Sleep, child Of my love Like the children That are in the forest. —Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.20. Text and poetic translation for “Canción de cuna: I & II”<sup>599</sup>

<b>Canción de cuna</b> <b>I</b>	<b>Lullaby</b> <b>I</b>
Niño querido Ya viene el sueño Por el camino De los luceros.	Dear child Sleep is coming On a pathway Made of stars.
Y a se sienten Galopar Sus caballos De cristal.	And they feel Like galloping Its horses Of crystal.

<sup>598</sup> Bor, “Canción de cuna,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4.

<sup>599</sup> Francisco Luis Bernárdez, *Poemas de carne y hueso* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1943), 99-102.

Table 6.20. - continued

El sueño cruza  
Tierras dormidas,  
Y de repente  
Dobla tu esquina.

Por tu calle  
Ya se ve  
Su carroza  
De papel.

Niño querido:  
El sueño avanza,  
Y se detiene  
Frente a tu casa.

Ya levanta  
Tu aldabón  
Con su mano  
De algodón.

Ya se oye al grillo  
Que, con su llave,  
Le abre la puerta.  
Para que pase.

Y el viajero  
Llega a ti  
Con su paso  
De alhelí.

## **Canción de cuna II**

Todos los niños  
Que hay en el cielo  
En sus estrellas  
Están durmiendo.

Duérmete, niño,  
Niño pequeño,  
Como los niños  
Que hay en el cielo.

Todos los niños  
Que hay en las flores  
Están durmiendo  
Entre canciones.

Duérmete, niño  
De mis amores,  
Como los niños  
Que hay en las flores.

Sleep crosses  
Sleeping lands,  
And suddenly  
Turns your corner.

On your street  
One sees  
Its carriage  
Of paper.

Dear child:  
Sleep comes up,  
And stops  
In front of your house.

It raises  
Your knocker  
With its hand  
Of cotton.

You can hear the cricket  
Which, with its key,  
Opens the door.  
So that it can come through.

And the traveler  
Comes to you  
With its step  
Of wallflower.

## **Lullaby II**

All the children  
That are in the heavens  
In their stars  
Are sleeping

Sleep, child,  
Small child,  
Like the children  
That are in the heavens.

All the children  
That are in the flowers  
Are sleeping  
Among songs.

Sleep, child  
Of my love,  
Like the children  
That are in the flowers.

Table 6.20. – continued

Todos los niños Que hay en el viento, Sobre las nubes Están durmiendo.	All the children That are in the wind, Above the clouds Are sleeping.
Duérmete, niño, Niño pequeño, Como los niños Que hay en el viento.	Sleep, child, Small child, Like the children That are in the wind.
Todos los niños Que hay en el bosque Están durmiendo Como lirones.	All the children That are in the forest Are sleeping Like dormice. <sup>600</sup>
Duérmete, niño De mis amores, Como los niños Que hay en el bosque. —Francisco Luis Bernárdez	Sleep, child Of my love, Like the children That are in the forest. —Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of Canción de cuna

This song employs excerpts from two poems by Bernárdez, both published in *Poemas de carne y hueso* (1943).<sup>601</sup> The first two stanzas of Bor's song are the first and fifth stanzas of "Canción de cuna I—Niño Querido" and Bor's last three stanzas are the third, fourth and eighth stanzas of "Canción de cuna II—Todos los niños."

Bernárdez's first "Canción de cuna" (lullaby) is a figurative personification of sleep and an allegory of the process of falling to sleep. It is sweet and innocent in character and full of inventive images that draw upon the things of a child's world. It is interesting that "Sleep" in this lullaby is personified as a foil to Death. Death is commonly described as coming to one's door, knocking and entering as is Sleep in this poem. Sleep, however, is made of all things soft and bright; he comes with beneficent intention, in contrast to the dark, maleficent character of Death.

<sup>600</sup> Dormice are rodents that hibernate a long time.

<sup>601</sup> Bernárdez, *Poemas de carne y hueso*, 99-102.

“Canción de cuna II” is probably religious in tenor, as is much of *Poemas de Carne y Hueso*. The lullaby alternates between those children in the sky/heaven (the same word means both) and above the clouds, and those children among flowers and trees. This is a juxtaposition of two worlds—the heavenly and the earthly. The persona is imploring their child to sleep like the children of angels and the children of men. The juxtaposition also enlivens the possibility of a Marian persona appealing to the unique quality of divinity and flesh in the baby Jesus. Bor excerpts only those verses about earthly things: flowers and trees, demonstrating her inclination to secularize poems that were originally laden with more sacred or spiritual denotations and connotations.

### El ratón

Table 6.21. General information about “El ratón”

Song Title	El ratón
Collection Title	<i>Canciones infantiles</i>
Position in Collection	III
Voice	Unspecified, likely Treble
Range	E <sub>3</sub> —C# <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Jorge Carrera Andrade
Poet’s Origin	Quito, Ecuador
Original Poem Title	El ratón
Original Poem Publication	<i>Microgramas</i> , 1926
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1960
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.22. Text and poetic translation for “El ratón”<sup>602</sup>

<b>El ratón</b>	<b>The Mouse</b>
El ratón, oficial del taller, se pasa fabricando virutas de papel. —Jorge Carrera Andrade	The mouse, skilled craftsman, he goes on making paper shavings. —Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.23. Text and poetic translation for additional stanza of “El ratón”<sup>603</sup>

<b>El ratón (additional stanza)</b>	<b>The Mouse (additional stanza)</b>
Pst... la S señorial y la i de los libros le gusta deletrear. —Jorge Carrera Andrade	Psst ... the stately “S” and the “i” of books he likes to spell out. —Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of El ratón

“El ratón” uses the first of two stanzas published under the title “El ratón” in the collection *Microgramas* (1926) by Jorge Carrera Andrade.<sup>604</sup> A *micrograma* or microgram is a type of poetry miniature coined by Andrade, inspired by the Spanish forms epigram, song, and *saeta*, and the Japanese haiku.<sup>605</sup> “The microgram is a poem usually between three to six lines long and about little natural creatures (both flora and fauna) and their existence in the universe.”<sup>606</sup> The tenor of Andrade’s microgram is largely positive, and meant to evoke deeper

<sup>602</sup> Bor, “El ratón,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 4.

<sup>603</sup> Jorge Carrera Andrade, *Microgramas*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Quito: Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, 2004), 53.

<sup>604</sup> Jorge Carrera Andrade, *Microgramas*, translated by Alejandro de Acosta and Joshua Beckman (New York: Wave Books, 2011). 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Tokyo: Asia América, 1940).

<sup>605</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>606</sup> de Acosta, “Translators’ Introduction,” viii.



truths about humanity, nature, the divine, and the “ordering [of the] universe.”<sup>607</sup> Andrade

describes the conceptual motivation for *Microgramas*:

There is a many-hued and ever-changing immediate universe, composed of small beings that our hand can move at will, placing them in more or less harmonious order. In this little animated universe, which has surrounded me since childhood, I was able to mark my preferred friendships and give myself over to a kind of cosmic and nontranscendent—though meaningful—game.... The hummingbird...like the wandering spirit of colors...the spider...a patient and moderate worker...the snail, which is a lesson, however timid, in effort and marching...I discovered that ugly beings, too, in their own way, work at a lovely task, and that the toad, the blowfly, and the worm are so many other ciphers of the secret key of the universe.<sup>608</sup>

Andrade viewed the world of small, living things as a philosophical key to a greater understanding of life and the world, and perhaps, as an inspiration for how to live better. The reader is charged with the task of deciphering this philosophical “key of the universe” from the short poem.

“Ratón” is filled with double entendre. “Oficial” can mean both “official” and “skilled.” Other translations of this poem have chosen to translate the second line as “a workshop official.”<sup>609</sup> The benefit of this clever word play is that the mouse is made both important and adept at the same time. Andrade has essentially exalted the lowliest of creatures and bestowed upon the mouse’s “workshop” (of paper-shaving production) an importance as if it were a government entity. In the second stanza, the “i” of books/ He likes to spell out” implies that the mouse is literate, while strictly speaking, he just chews the book’s pages to pieces. The result, again, is the personification and exaltation of the mouse.

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<sup>607</sup> Andrade, *Microgramas*, 29.

<sup>608</sup> Ibid., 29-30

<sup>609</sup> Andrade, *Microgramas*, 55.

Sound play is also important. The two letters that the mouse likes to spell-out, “S” and “i” spell the word “sí,” yes. In the Acosta translation, the letters are changed to “y” and “es” in order for English speakers to understand the reference.<sup>610</sup> Such an affirmative mouse makes him either optimistic, decisive, or both. As with most of Andrade’s micrograms, the deeper understanding, or “key” is present within the mundane act of the miniscule subject matter. In this case, the “sí, sí, sí” of the mouse is the squeaky sound that a mouse makes. The importance of the sound of language to the meaning of the poem is a feature noted by Andrade in his discussion of haikus.<sup>611</sup> Not letting the sound of the words and letters go wasted, as mere by-products of words chosen for different reasons, is one way in which Andrade and other writers of poetic miniatures are able to increase the density of their poetry and the resultant efficiency of form.

### *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*

Table 6.24. Contents of *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*

#	Song Title	Poet
I	La flor de apamate	Andrés Eloy Blanco
II	Amolador	Andrés Eloy Blanco
III	Canción de cuna	Andrés Eloy Blanco
IV	Coplas	Andrés Eloy Blanco

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<sup>610</sup> Ibid.

<sup>611</sup> Ibid., 18.

## Note

*Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano* (First Cycle of Romances for Contralto and Piano) was dedicated to Alexandra Artsemiuk, who was likely a classmate of Bor's in Moscow and the singer who premiered the work. I was unable to find any information about Ms. Artsemiuk. Research in the archives of the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow, unearthing documents related to Bor's studies and helping to create a fuller picture of her time there is an interesting area for further study that is beyond the scope of this paper.

## La flor de apamate

Table 6.25. General information about “La flor de apamate”

Song Title	La flor de apamate
Collection Title	<i>Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	I
Voice	Alto / Mezzo-Soprano
Range	G <sub>3</sub> —F <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet's Origin	Cumaná, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	La flor de apamate
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna la novia</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1961
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.26. Text and poetic translation for “La flor de apamate”<sup>612</sup>

**La flor de apamate**

¡Qué pena de medio luto  
tiene la flor de apamate,  
qué pena de medio luto,  
desde que tu te marchaste!

Tu marcha me echó en las venas  
los morados de la tarde,  
la sangre me quedó viuda  
como la flor de apamate.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**The Flower of the Rosy Trumpet Tree**

What sorrow of half mourning  
has the flower of the rosy trumpet tree,  
what sorrow, what sorrow of half-mourning,  
since you left!

Your departure laid down in my veins  
the purples of the evening,  
blood left me a widow  
like the flower of the rosy trumpet tree.  
—Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.27. Text and poetic translation for additional stanzas of “La flor de apamate”<sup>613</sup>

**La flor de apamate  
(additional stanzas)**

No sé qué cosa me pides,  
no sé qué cosa pedir,  
si morir por no quererte  
o quererte hasta morir;

yo no sé qué es lo más bueno  
yo no sé qué es lo peor,  
no sé si amor sin presencia  
o presencia sin amor,

pero no quiere y te llama,  
desde que tú te marchaste,  
mi sangre de medio luto,  
como la flor de apamate.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**The Flower of the Rosy Trumpet Tree  
(additional stanzas)**

I don’t know what you ask of me,  
I don’t know what to ask for,  
whether to die from not loving you  
or to love you until death;

I don’t know which is better  
I don’t know which is worse,  
whether to have love without presence  
or presence without love,

but it doesn’t love and it calls you,  
since you left,  
my blood of half-mourning,  
like the flower of the rosy trumpet tree.  
—Nicholas Miguel

**Poetic Analysis of La flor de apamate**

All Eloy Blanco’s poetry that Bor used was from *Giraluna*, published in 1955. Bor used the first two stanzas of Blanco’s poem of the same name. “La flor de apamate” is an extended metaphor comparing the sorrow of mourning to the flowers of a tree. Understanding of the

<sup>612</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 10.

<sup>613</sup> Andrés Eloy Blanco, *Giraluna* (Caracas: Editorial Cordillera, 1955, 1960), 50-51. “La flor de apamate” is the ninth poem of “Giraluna, la novia,” which is the first section of *Giraluna*.

metaphor hinges upon familiarity with the Victorian-era practice of half-mourning, and the colors of the *apamate* tree, scientific name *tabebuia rosea*, usually known in English as the rosy trumpet tree.

Half-mourning was the second year following the death of a loved one.<sup>614</sup> The restrictions on women's clothing lessened, and more colors were allowed. Grey and purple were initially permitted and lightened as mourning went on to mauve and white.<sup>615</sup>

The *apamate* tree has a relatively long life, and presents flowers that have a range of colors, but often display shades of pink and purple. In addition, these flowers tend to appear when the tree has shed most, or all its leaves.<sup>616</sup> One can see what inspired the poet's metaphor: a tree that outlives it peers and seems to change its "garment" from duller leaves to flowers that share their hue with a widow's dress.

The persona, clearly defined as the widow in line seven "me quedó viuda (left me widowed)" sees a mirror for her sorrow in the flowers of the tree. The circumstances surrounding her widowhood are not clearly elucidated, but some of the words used connote that her husband was a soldier. "Tu marcha" can mean "departure" in a general sense, and "a march" such as that performed by a group of soldiers. The persona also blames "la sangre" (blood) as the reason for her widowhood, which might indicate that her husband did not die of natural causes.

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<sup>614</sup> Kelley Graham, "*Gone to The Shops*": *Shopping in Victorian England, Victorian Life and Times*, edited by Sally Mitchell (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2008), 51-53.

<sup>615</sup> Melanie King, *The Dying Game: A Curious History of Death* (London: Oneworld, 2008), 106..

<sup>616</sup> Fundación Jardín Botánico de Mérida, "Apamate," Jardín Botánico de Mérida, [http://vereda.ula.ve/jardin\\_botanico/areas-tematicas/jardin-caducifolio/apamate/](http://vereda.ula.ve/jardin_botanico/areas-tematicas/jardin-caducifolio/apamate/) (accessed October 30, 2016).

## Amolador

Table 6.28. General information about “Amolador”

Song Title	Amolador
Collection Title	<i>Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	II
Voice	Alto/Mezzo-Soprano
Range	A <sub>3</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Canto de Giraluna para amolar tijeras
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1961
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.29. Text and poetic translation for “Amolador”<sup>617</sup>

### Amolador

Amolador, amuela,  
silba tu silbato, silba  
hasta que silbar te duela,  
hasta que estén amolados  
el silbo de tu silbido<sup>618</sup>  
y el filo de mis tijeras.

Mira que tengo que hacer  
pañales y pañoletas  
para el niño de mis noches,  
y el niño de Nochebuena.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Knife Grinder

Knife grinder, grind,  
play your whistle, play  
until it hurts to play,  
until they are sharpened  
the sound of your whistle  
and the blade of my scissors.

See that I have to make  
diapers and headscarves  
for the child of my nights,  
and the child of Christmas Eve.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>617</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 17.

<sup>618</sup> There is a typo in the ARE score: “silbato” is wrong.

Table 6.30. Text and poetic translation for “Canto de Giraluna para amolar tijeras”<sup>619</sup>

**Canto de Giraluna para amolar tijeras  
(additional stanzas)**

Mira que vienen los niños  
por bandadas de cigüeña  
y tengo que hacer pañales  
al mundo que los espera,  
y colchas de agua de tilo  
y fundas de yerbabuena;  
tengo a mi niño con fiebres  
y a mi sueño con espera.

Dale al pié suena el silbato,  
amolador, amuela;  
que corte como los rayos  
el filo de mis tijeras,  
que corte el vuelo del aire  
y el salto de las candelas,  
que corte una gota de agua,  
que pique picos de estrellas,  
y arrimándose a la cuna  
donde mi niño se enferma,  
que me le corte la fiebre  
y el azul de las ojeras.

¡Mira, amolador que silbas,  
mira, amolador que amuelas,  
mira ese chorro de fuego  
que está soltando la piedra!  
Mira que es un colibrí,  
cómo brilla, cómo vuela,  
cómo chupa, cómo arde,  
espántalo de la piedra,  
mira que se está bebiendo  
el agua de mis tijeras!

Domador de colibríes,  
amolador, amuela,  
mira que vienen los niños  
montados en las cigüeñas.

**Giraluna’s Song for Sharpening Knives  
(additional stanza)**

Look the children are coming  
by flocks of storks  
and I have to make diapers  
for the world that awaits them,  
and bedspreads of lime-water  
and covers of peppermint;  
I have my child with fever  
and my dream with hope.

Get up, the whistle blows,  
knife grinder, grind;  
let it cut like bolts of lightning  
the edge of my scissors,  
let it cut the flight of air  
and the flicker of candles,  
let it cut a drop of water,  
let it grind off the points of stars,  
and moving into the cradle  
where my child is sick,  
let it cut down his fever for me  
and the blue of the bags under the eyes.

Look, knife grinder that whistles,  
look, knife grinder that grinds,  
look at this jet of fire  
that is jumping from the stone!  
See that it is a hummingbird,  
how it shines, how it flies,  
how it sucks, how it burns,  
shoo it from the stone,  
see that it is drinking  
the water of my scissors!

Tamer of hummingbirds,  
grinder, grind  
see that the children are coming  
riding in the storks.

<sup>619</sup> Andrés Eloy Blanco, *Giraluna*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Mexico City: Yocoima, 1956), 99-101; Blanco, *Giraluna*, (Cordillera), 76. There is a misprint in this edition; pages 77-90 are incorrect. The final stanza of the poem is not present, the two following poems are missing, while unlisted poems are included instead. “Canto de Giraluna para amolar tijeras” is the sixth poem of “Giraluna, la esposa” from *Giraluna*.

Table 6.30. – continued

Cuando acabe mi costura  
pondremos a andar tu piedra  
para cazar colibríes,  
uno macho y uno hembra,  
el incendio de un suspiro  
y el disparo de una queja.  
Los meteré en una jaula  
que tenga de amor las rejas  
y les daré de beber  
el agua de mis tijeras,  
el silbo de tu silbato  
y el oro de tus candelas,  
pero mientras haya niños,  
amolador, amuela.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

When my sewing is finished  
we can set your stone out  
to hunt hummingbirds,  
one male and one female  
the spark of a sigh  
and the shot of a moan.  
We will put them in a cage  
that has love for bars  
and I will give them to drink  
the water of my scissors,  
the sound of your whistle  
and the gold of your candles,  
but while there might be children,  
grinder, grind.  
—Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of Amolador

Bor excerpted these two stanzas from a longer four-stanza poem by Eloy Blanco called “Canto de Giraluna para Amolar Tijeras.” Bor took the final line of her song from a later stanza and attached it to the end of the second stanza.

The literal understanding of “Amolador” rests upon familiarity with the occupation of the street knife grinder, known in the Spanish-speaking world as *amolador*, or *afilador*. This very old occupation has its origins in Galicia and was transported to Latin America where it persists to this day. These ambulatory servicemen transport a grinding wheel to sharpen knives and scissors. They even repaired umbrellas in earlier times. Originally, the grinding wheel was mounted on a cart and pushed around, it was later attached to bicycles, and motor vehicles.<sup>620</sup> These laborers would carry with them a flute, whistle, or harmonica-like instrument to announce their arrival to residents as they came down the street.<sup>621</sup>

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<sup>620</sup> Ramón y Rivera, *Cantos de trabajo*, 19-20.

<sup>621</sup> There are a couple famous paintings that feature these craftsmen. One by Francisco Goya, and the other attributed to Antonio Puga.



The line “and the child of Christmas Eve” is likely a metonymy for Jesus. At first glance, it seems that the persona needs to make these diapers and hats for the baby Jesus, implying that the persona is the virgin Mary, a subtle association also present in the first poems of *Giraluna* (see Pregón). However, a less specific persona is possible as well. The haste felt by the persona in treating their ill child mirrors the immediacy felt by believers for the return of Christ and their ultimate judgement before God. The similes in the final stanza “...cut like a bolt of lightning, etc.” together with the call to “get up, the whistle blows” allude to images in the Book of Revelation (Table 6.31). Therefore, the ‘preparations’ made by the persona have other symbolic implications of preparation for Jesus’ return.

There is an erotic component to this poem as well. The final stanza, especially, hints that perhaps that the knife grinder is also the mother’s (*Giraluna*’s) lover. *Giraluna* was largely written for and about Eloy Blanco’s wife, so this romantic element would be in keeping with the book’s tenor. This romantic element would not necessarily conflict with the religious allusions: Christ as the groom and the believer as the bride is a common allegory.

The poem paints a picture of *Giraluna*’s world. She is a woman dogged by daily chores, in perpetual care and preparation of and for her children. She is a woman of Christian hope and fear, and a woman of love and passion. These qualities seem to impatiently press her forward, a quality captured by the grinder’s persistent labor that serves as the backdrop for the whole poem.

The density and complexity of *Giraluna* is removed by Bor, who opts for a simpler lyric of tradesman and woman, both at work. As with Bor’s other poetic selections from Eloy Blanco, her excerpt reveals an intention to reduce the religious significance of the text. Cutting the poem short at “the child of Christmas Eve” eliminates most of the language that could be interpreted as religious allusions, while retaining some of the depth of Eloy Blanco’s original. Perhaps, Bor

wished to simplify the lyric to bring focus to the textual and musical evocation of a place and culture.

Table 6.31. Allusions to the Book of Revelation in “Canto de Giraluna para amolar tijeras”

Book of Revelation	Canto de Giraluna para amolar tijeras
Expectation of his return (Christian hope)	“And my dream with hope”
Sounding of the trumpet <sup>622</sup>	“Get up, the whistle blows”
Double edged sword <sup>623</sup>	“Let it cut...” & “...the edge of my scissors”
Seven candles <sup>624</sup>	“And the flicker of candles”
Seven stars <sup>625</sup>	“Let it grind off the points of stars”
Thunder and lightning <sup>626</sup>	“Let it cut like bolts of lightning”
“...God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”	“Let it cut a drop of water”
“...neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat” <sup>627</sup>	“Let it cut down his fever for me”
The number seven <sup>628</sup>	Seven requests to the knife grinder to cut things <sup>629</sup>

<sup>622</sup> Rev 4:1 (AV) “the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me” Also see (Rev 8 and 9)

<sup>623</sup> Rev 1:16 “out of his mouth came a two-edged sword”

<sup>624</sup> Rev 1: 12 “golden candlesticks”

<sup>625</sup> Rev 1:16

<sup>626</sup> Rev 4:5 “out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices”

<sup>627</sup> Rev 7:16

<sup>628</sup> These things appear in sevens in the Book of Revelation: “churches” (Rev 1:4), symbolized by the “golden candelsticks” (Rev 1: 12) and “spirits” (Rev 1:4), symbolized by the “stars” (Rev 1:16), “horns” and “eyes” which are the “Spirits of God” (Rev 5:6), “seven seals” (Rev 5:1), “trumpets” and “angels”(Rev 8:2), “thunders” (Rev 10:4)

<sup>629</sup> The persona asks of the knife grinder to cut these things in this order: scissors, flight of air, flicker of candles, drop of water, points of stars, child’s fever, and bags under the eyes (probably her’s from being up at night with the sick child).

## Canción de cuna

Table 6.32. General information about “Canción de cuna”

Song Title	Canción de cuna
Collection Title	<i>Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	III
Voice	Alto/Mezzo-Soprano
Range	A <sub>3</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná & Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Giraluna duerme al niño
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna la esposa</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1961
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.33. Text and poetic translation for “Canción de cuna”<sup>630</sup>

### Canción de cuna

No te duermas, niño,  
que dormir es feo;  
todo, todo, todo  
se te pone negro.

No cierres los ojos,  
porque me ennochezco,  
no cierres los labios  
porque me ensilencio.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Lullaby

Don’t fall asleep, child,  
for sleeping is ugly;  
everything, everything, everything  
puts on black.

Don’t close your eyes,  
because I put myself in the dark,  
don’t close your lips  
because I silence myself.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>630</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 21.

Table 6.34. Text and poetic translation for “Giraluna duerme al niño”<sup>631</sup>

**Giraluna duerme al niño**

No te duermas, niño,  
que dormir es feo;  
todo, todo, todo  
se te pone negro.

Dios hace su noche  
para sus estrellas;  
yo no te di ojitos  
para que durmieras.

No hay nada más malo  
que un niño durmiendo,  
que la madre llora,  
que parece muerto.

Los niños debieran  
dormir a las madres;  
yo tengo mi niño  
para que me cante;

dormir a las madres  
los niños debieran;  
yo tengo mi niño  
para que me duerma.

Yo quiero que grites,  
yo quiero que llores,  
sin dormir de día,  
sin dormir de noche,

que rompas la jaula  
que mates el mirlo  
que digan: –¡Qué malo!,  
¡qué malo este niño!

Que grites al chino  
y a los barquilleros,  
que te tengan rabia,  
que te tengan miedo;

que le tires piedras  
a los Reyes Magos  
para que te caigan  
entre los zapatos.

**Giraluna Puts a Child to Sleep**

Do not sleep, child,  
for sleeping is ugly;  
everything, everything, everything  
everything puts on black.

God makes his night  
for its stars;  
I will not give little eyes  
so that you might sleep.

There is nothing worse  
than a child sleeping,  
for the mother cries,  
for he appears dead.

Children should  
put their mothers to sleep;  
I have my child  
so that he might sing to me;

put their mothers to sleep  
children should;  
I have my child  
so that he might put me to sleep.

I want you to scream,  
I want you to cry,  
without sleeping during the day,  
without sleeping during the night,

to break the cage  
to kill the blackbird  
to say: “How bad!  
how bad is this child!”

To shout to the Chinese  
and the sailors,  
that they might be angry with you,  
that they might fear you;

that you throw stones  
at the Three Kings  
so that they fall  
at your feet.

<sup>631</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 73-74. “Giraluna duerme al niño” is the fifth poem of *Giraluna, la esposa* which is the third section of *Giraluna*.

Table 6.34. – continued

Que no duerma nadie,  
porque no los dejas,  
que la misma Virgen  
se quede despierta

y que se trasnochen  
hasta las estrellas  
y las pille el día  
toditas afuera...

No cierres los ojos  
porque me ennochezco,  
no cierres los labios  
porque me ensilencio;  
gritando de día,  
de noche, gritando,  
que yo tenga siempre  
tu grito en mis brazos...

—Pero como él hace  
todo lo contrario,  
ya estará dormido  
cuando acabe el canto.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

Let no one sleep,  
because you do not let them,  
let even the Virgin Mary  
stay awake

and that they go through the night  
until the stars  
have, by the day,  
been pulled out of the sky...

Don't close your eyes  
because I put myself in the dark,  
don't close your lips  
because I silence myself;  
screaming by day,  
by night, screaming,  
let me always have  
your cry in my arms...

—But like he does  
everything on the contrary,  
he will already be asleep  
when the song is finished.  
—Nicholas Miguel

### Poetic Analysis of Canción de cuna

*Canción de cuna* is a brief excerpt from the poem, “Giraluna duerme al niño,” by Andrés Eloy Blanco. Blanco’s poem has Christian significance. Bor redacts most religious implications.

On a formal level, the poem can be considered a paradox. A lullaby is meant to put someone to sleep, while the text clearly forbids it. The original poem, however, uses the reader’s shock to transition attention to the tenor of the extended metaphor: the theological implications of Jesus’ death. The persona calls on Jesus to not be passive, rather to shake the poet out of his self-imposed darkness and silence and to reckon with Christ’s significance: “Let me always have your cry in my arms...”

Blanco’s use of neologism, or the invention of new words, is notable. *Ennochezco* is the verb-ification of *noche* (night), with an added *en-* prefix, which is like the English prefix. The

verb ending *-ezco* implies a first-person subject. *Ensilencio* is a verb-ification of *silencio* (silence) with an added *en-* prefix. The ending letter *-o* also implies a first-person subject.

## Coplas

Table 6.35. General information about “Coplas”

Song Title	Coplas
Collection Title	<i>Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	IV
Voice	Alto/Mezzo-Soprano
Range	G <sub>3</sub> —F <sub>4</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná & Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Para cantar
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna, la novia</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1961
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.36. Text and poetic translation for “Coplas”<sup>632</sup>

### Coplas

Hay un punto en el camino  
donde se empieza a querer;  
el que no lo vió, no supo  
cuándo, cómo, dónde fué.

Hubo quien lo vió caer (*y cayó*)  
y aún después de caer  
hizo otra vez el camino  
para caer otra vez.

No hay manera de dejarlo,  
ni de salirlo a buscar;  
es un punto en el camino  
que tiene su caminar.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Songs

There is a point in the path  
where one begins to love;  
that which one doesn’t see, one doesn’t know  
when, how, where it went.

There was someone who saw him falling  
and even after falling  
he took again to the path  
in order to fall again.

There is no way to leave it,  
nor to take it out when looking for it;  
it is a point in the path  
that is part of one’s journey.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>632</sup> Bor, *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 27.

Table 6.37. Text and poetic translation of “Para cantar”<sup>633</sup>

**Para cantar**

^\*Hay un punto en el camino  
donde se empieza a querer;  
el que no lo vio no supo  
cuándo, cómo, dónde fue.

^\*Hubo quien lo vio y cayó  
y aún después de caer  
hizo otra vez el camino  
para caer otra vez.

^\*No hay manera de dejarlo  
ni de salirlo a buscar;  
es un punto en el camino  
que tiene su caminar.

#Nadie sabe las razones  
de este empezarte a querer,  
de este seguirte queriendo,  
de este quererte después.

#Que se devuelven los ojos,  
que se devuelven los pies,  
que se devuelven los sueños  
adonde quiera que estés.

##Yo tengo los pies enfermos  
de un modo de caminar,  
que se me devuelven solos  
adonde quiera que estás.

Toda la noche fue poca  
para los viajes que hacía  
de tus ojos a tu boca.

%Suspiro cuando te miro,  
pero te me pongo al lado  
y el fuego de tu costado  
me va quemando el suspiro.

%Siempre que te tengo lejos  
me paso el día buscando  
lo tuyo de los espejos.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**For Singing**

There is a point in the path  
where one begins to love;  
that which one didn’t see, one didn’t know  
when, how, or where it went.

There was someone who saw it and fell  
and even after falling  
he took again to the path  
in order to fall again.

There is no way to leave it  
nor to take it out when looking for it;  
it is a point in the path,  
that is part of one’s journey.

Nobody knows  
why I start loving you like this,  
why I continue loving you like this,  
why I love you like this afterwards.

Let my eyes return,  
let my feet return,  
let my dreams return  
to wherever you might be.

I have feet that are sick  
of a way of walking,  
they only take me back  
to where you are.

All night was little  
for the travels there were  
between your eyes and your mouth.

I sigh when I see you,  
but I put myself next to you  
and the fire of your side  
goes on burning my sigh.

Always, when you are away  
I spend the day searching  
for your reflection.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>633</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 39-40.

\* Stanza shared with other Blanco manuscripts

^ Stanza used in “Coplas” from *Primero ciclo de romanzas*

# Stanza used in “Coplas venezolanas” from *Segundo ciclo de romanzas*

% Stanza in “Suspiro cuando te miro” from *Segundo ciclo de romanzas*

## Poetic Analysis of Coplas

“Coplas” along with “Coplas venezolanas” and “Suspiro cuando te miro” from *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano* are excerpted from “Para cantar” from *Giraluna* by Andrés Eloy Blanco.<sup>634</sup> There is one text discrepancy between the two versions: the fifth line reads “lo vio y cayó” (saw it/him and fell) in Blanco’s original, and “lo vió caer” (saw it/him falling) in Bor’s excerpt. It is likely that Bor simply made a typo in her manuscript, as the change damages the stanza’s rhyme scheme.

The tenor of the poem is romantic, and the theme seems to be absent or lost love, a common theme in *Giraluna* as a whole. Bor’s version leaves out, in this song at least, the most overtly romantic stanzas, and leaves the poetry in a vague, ambiguous state.

It is possible that the original poems themselves were conceived with a different tenor in mind, and later adapted to the world of *Giraluna* by Blanco. Stanzas from “Para cantar” also appear in two unedited manuscripts held at the Biblioteca Nacional and printed in an anthology of his work entitled *Poesía*.<sup>635</sup> The two related poems are printed in full below. Eloy Blanco’s unedited manuscripts “Donde se empieza a querer” and “Yo no te dije que fueras,” could easily be a description of a journey of faith, and the irresistible quality of God’s love.<sup>636</sup> The “someone who saw it and fell” and takes again to path anyway is not the common man picking himself up after loss, but Jesus picking himself up as he hauls the cross.

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<sup>634</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 39-40. “Para cantar” is the 5<sup>th</sup> poem in *Giraluna, la novia* which is the first section of *Giraluna*.

<sup>635</sup> Andrés Eloy Blanco, *Poesía*, edited by José Ramón Medina, et al (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1996), 189-190.

<sup>636</sup> Blanco, *Poesía*, 189-190.



Religious tenor may not be overt in either Blanco's or Bor's final cut but understanding the conceptual origin of this poetry can help the singer unravel the mysteries of the text and connect to the depth and complexity of Blanco's words. As far as musical setting of a poem, this was Bor's favorite text that she used most often for her art songs. The themes of perseverance, persistence, love, and loss were strong features of her own character and journey through life.

Table 6.38. Text and poetic translation of "Donde se empieza a querer" (manuscript)<sup>637</sup>

**Donde se empieza a querer**

^\*Hay un punto en el camino  
donde se empieza a querer;  
el que no lo vió, no supo,  
cuándo, cómo, dónde fué.

el que lo vio se detuvo  
o saltó o se devolvió  
y hay quien lo viene mirando  
y cae. Son cosas de Dios.

En un momento que nadie  
podrá decir cómo fue  
porque antes de él somos unos  
y otros después de él.

^\*Hubo quien lo vió cayó  
y aún después de caer,  
hizo otra vez el camino  
para caer otra vez.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**Where One Begins to Love**

There is a point in the path  
where one begins to love  
that which one didn't see, he didn't know,  
when, how, or where it went.

That which one sees stopped  
or jumped or returned  
and there is someone who returns it looking  
and falls. These are things of God.

In a moment when nobody  
could tell how it was  
because before him we were different  
and changed after him.

There was someone who saw it fall.  
and even after falling,  
he took again to the path  
in order to fall again.  
—Nicholas Miguel

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<sup>637</sup> Blanco, *Poesía*, 189-190.

Table 6.39. Text and poetic translation of [Yo no te dije que fueras] (untitled manuscript)<sup>638</sup>

**[Yo no te dije que fueras]**

Yo no te dije que fueras  
ni que dejaras de ir;  
pero es que si tú no vas  
él mismo viene hacia ti.

^\*No hay manera de dejarlo  
ni de salirlo a buscar;  
es un punto en el camino,  
que tiene su caminar.

Cuando me pediste amparo  
no te supe dar razón  
porque supe que caías  
y esas son cosas de Dios.

#\*Yo tengo los pies enfermos  
de un modo de caminar,  
que se me devuelven solos  
a donde quiera que estás.

Y ves que es cosa de Dios  
este empezarte a querer  
y este seguirte queriendo  
y este quererte después.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**[I did not tell you to go]**

I did not tell you to go  
nor that you should stop going;  
only that if you don't go  
the same will come back to you.

There is no way to leave it  
or to take it out when looking for it;  
it is a point in the path,  
that is part of one's journey.

When you asked me for refuge  
I didn't think to give you a reason  
because I learned that you fell  
and these are things of God.

I have feet that are sick  
of a way of walking,  
they only take me back  
to where you are.

And you see that this is a thing of God  
this beginning to love you  
and this continuing to love  
and this returning to love you after.  
—Nicholas Miguel

***Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano***

Table 6.40. Contents of *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*

#	Song Title	Poet
I	Si el silencio fuera mío	Andrés Eloy Blanco
II	Coplas venezolanas	Andrés Eloy Blanco
III	Suspiro cuando te miro	Andrés Eloy Blanco
IV	Pregón	Andrés Eloy Blanco

<sup>638</sup> Blanco, *Poesía*, 195-196.

## Note

Some of the publications of this tetralogy name the song cycle *Segundo ciclo de romanzas y canciones para contralto y piano* (Second Cycle of Romances **and** Songs for Contralto and Piano). This is not how the cycle is named in the ARE editions or on the website of the Modesta Bor Foundation; therefore, I have not included that small addition to the title in this paper.

## Si el silencio fuera mío

Table 6.41. General information about “Si el silencio fuera mío”

Song Title	Si el silencio fuera mío
Collection Title	<i>Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	I
Voice	Alto/ Mezzo-Soprano
Range	G <sub>3</sub> —F <sub>4</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet's Origin	Cumaná & Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Si el silencio fuera mío
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna la esposa</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1962
Commercial Recording	Morella Muñoz, 198?, track 8
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Tritó, 2005 Consejo Nacional de la Cultura, 1984

Table 6.42. Text and poetic translation for “Si el silencio fuera mío”<sup>639</sup>

**Si el silencio fuera mío**

Si el silencio fuera mío,  
¡qué silencio!  
Si el silencio fuera mío,  
cuando haya silencio  
no te darás cuenta  
de tanto silencio.

Ya las cosas no serían  
hechas a golpes y ruidos;  
serían todas de aceite  
las sierras y los martillos,  
el hacha del pensamiento  
y el azadón de suspiro.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**If Silence Were Mine**

If silence were mine,  
what silence!  
If silence were mine,  
when there is silence,  
you would not notice  
all of the silence.

Things would not be  
made by blows and noises;  
everything would be made of oil  
the saws and hammers,  
the hatchet of thought  
and the mattock of sigh.  
—Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.43. Text and poetic translation for “Si el silencio fuera mío” (additional stanzas)<sup>640</sup>

**Si el silencio fuera mío (additional stanzas)**

¡Si el silencio fuera mío,  
qué silencio!  
Si el silencio fuera mío,  
cuando haya silencio  
no te darás cuenta  
de tanto silencio.

Ya las cosas no serían  
hechas a golpes y ruidos;  
serían todos de aceite  
las sierras y los martillos,  
el hacha de pensamiento  
y el azadón de suspiro.

Qué nueva música haríamos  
con canciones de maíz  
y con palabras de trigo  
y obreros con voz de pan,  
y obreras con voz de hijo  
y una noche que contara  
la historia del mar dormido,  
si el silencio fuera tuyo,  
si el silencio fuera mío.

**If Silence Were Mine (additional stanzas)**

If silence were mine,  
what silence!  
If silence were mine,  
when there is silence  
you would not notice  
all of the silence.

Things would not be  
made by blows and noises;  
everything would be made of oil  
the saws and hammers,  
the hatchet of thought  
and the mattock of sigh.

What new music we would make  
with songs of corn  
and with words of wheat  
and men with voice of bread,  
and women with voice of child  
and a night that tells  
the history of the sleeping sea,  
if silence were yours,  
if silence were mine.

<sup>639</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 10.

<sup>640</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 67-69. “Si el silencio fuera mío” is the third poem in *Giraluna la esposa* which is the third section of *Giraluna*.

Table 6.43. – continued

Siempre habría que contar  
con la cigarra, no hay nada  
mejor para hacer silencios;  
para hacer silencios nadie ha hecho tanto  
como la cigarra.  
Podrá haber silencios, silencios tan grandes  
que los ojos oigan a los ojos que hablan,  
por no habrá nunca un silencio  
como el silencio con cigarra.  
Podrías meterte dentro de un silencio,  
con toda la boca del mundo cerrada,  
y no podrías darte cuenta del silencio,  
hasta que llega la cigarra.

Nadie sabe nunca que empezó el silencio,  
hasta que empieza la cigarra.  
Ella firma el silencio,  
ello lo subraya  
es un silencio en bastardilla  
el silencio con cigarra.

Para hacer trabajo santo,  
para hacer hijo en la noche,  
sin miedo de la mañana,  
para que amaras de modo  
que tus ojos se escucharan,  
te daría un mundo en paz  
y un silencio con cigarra.

Si el silencio fuera mío,  
con un silencio que amara,  
de esos que nunca se saben  
hasta que hay cigarra,  
te haría un mundo sin odios,  
sin niños con caras pálidas,  
sin mujeres con ojeras  
y sin hombres con espadas;  
y tendrían mi silencio  
guardadito en una caja,  
y le pondría alcanfor  
para que no lo picaran las cigarras.

Pero el domingo en la tarde,  
para que tú lo escucharas,  
para que te hicieras toda de silencios,  
te haría uno con cigarra.

Si el silencio fuera mío,  
le pondría un lazo azul  
con un silencio de amor  
y lo tendría guardado  
hasta el día de tu voz.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

One would always have to count  
on the cicada, there is nothing  
better for making silences;  
for making silences nobody has done as much  
as the cicada.

There could be silences, silences so big  
that the eyes listen to the eyes that speak,  
for there will never be silence  
like silence with a cicada.  
You could put yourself in the middle of silence,  
with everyone's mouth shut,  
and you would not be able to notice the silence,  
until the cicada arrived.

Nobody knows a thing about what started silence,  
until the cicada starts.  
She signs the silence,  
it highlights it  
It is silence in italics  
silence with a cicada.

do holy work,  
to make a child in the night,  
without fear of the morning,  
in order for you to love in a way  
that your eyes listen,  
I would give you a world in peace  
and silence with a cicada.

If silence were mine,  
with silence that loves,  
one never knows about those  
until there is a cicada,  
for you, I would make a world without sounds,  
without children with pale faces,  
without women with bags under their eyes  
and without men with swords;  
and they would have my silence  
kept in a box,  
and I would put mothballs in there  
so that the cicadas would not chew it.

But on Sunday afternoon,  
so that you can hear it,  
so that you can do everything in silence,  
for you, I would make silence with a cicada.

If silence were mine,  
I would give it a blue ribbon  
with a silence of love  
and I would keep it  
until the day of your voice.  
—Nicholas Miguel

## Poetic Analysis of Si el silencio fuera mío

“Si el silencio fuera mío” is part of a group of poems that defines silence in more specific terms. The preceding poem “Silence” is translated below. Silence is described as a constant, immutable medium for love. The love expressed is that which the poet felt for his wife, about whom the collection is written. Moore notes that during this period, Blanco viewed death with resignation and calm, and that sentiment is evident in the poem “Silence” and in Blanco’s concept and symbol of silence in general.<sup>641</sup>

Table 6.44. Text and poetic translation of “Silencio,” *Giraluna*<sup>642</sup>

### Silencio

Cuando tú te quedas muda,  
cuando yo me quede ciego,  
nos quedarán las manos  
y el silencio.

Cuando tú te pongas vieja,  
cuando y me ponga viejo,  
nos quedarán los labios  
y el silencio.

Cuando tú te quedas muerta,  
cuando yo me quede muerto,  
tendrán que enterrarnos juntos  
y en silencio;

Y cuando tú resucites,  
cuando yo viva de nuevo,  
nos volveremos a amar  
en silencio.

Y cuando todo se acabe  
por siempre en el universo,  
será un silencio de amor  
el silencio.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Silence

When you go mute,  
when I go blind,  
we will still have our hands  
and silence.

When you become old,  
when I become old,  
we will still have our lips  
and silence.

When you are dead,  
when I am dead,  
they will have to bury us together  
in silence;

And when they bring you back to life,  
when I have new life,  
we will return to loving each other  
in silence.

And when everything ends  
forever in the universe,  
there will be a silence of love  
silence.  
—Nicholas Miguel

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<sup>641</sup> Moore, 302-303.

<sup>642</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna*, (Cordillera), 65-66.

## Coplas venezolanas

Table 6.45. General information about “Coplas venezolanas”

Song Title	Coplas venezolanas
Collection Title	<i>Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	II
Voice	Alto/ Mezzo-Soprano
Range	B <sub>3</sub> —C <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná & Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Para Cantar
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna, la novia</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1962
Commercial Recording	Morella Muñoz, 198?, track 9 Isabel Grau/Palacios and Mandalit Lamazares, 1976, track 3
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Tritó, 2005 Consejo Nacional de la Cultura, 1984

Table 6.46. Text and poetic translation of “Coplas venezolanas”<sup>643</sup>

### Coplas venezolanas

Nadie sabe las razones  
de este empezarte a querer,  
de este seguirte queriendo,  
de este quererte después.

Que se devuelven los ojos,  
que se devuelven los pies,  
Que se devuelven los sueños  
a donde quiera que estés.

Yo tengo los pies enfermos  
de un modo de caminar,  
Que se me devuelven solos  
a donde quiera que estás.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Venezuelan Songs

Nobody knows  
why I start loving you like this,  
why I continue loving you this,  
why I love you like this afterwards.

Let my eyes return,  
let my feet return,  
Let my dreams return  
to wherever you might be.

I have feet that are sick  
of a way of walking,  
They only take me back  
to where you are.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>643</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 18.

## Poetry Analysis of Coplas venezolanas

“Coplas venezolanas,” as well as “Suspiro cuando te miro,” and “Coplas” are excerpted from “Para cantar” from *Giraluna* by Eloy Blanco.<sup>644</sup> “Para cantar” is discussed in detail in the discussion of “Coplas” from *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*.

### Suspiro cuando te miro

Table 6.47. General information about “Suspiro cuando te miro”

Song Title	Suspiro cuando te miro
Collection Title	<i>Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	III
Voice	Alto / Mezzo-Soprano
Range	G <sub>3</sub> —D <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	La flor de apamate
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna la novia</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1961
Commercial Recording	Morella Muñoz, 198?, track 10
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Tritó, 2005 Consejo Nacional de la Cultura, 1984

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<sup>644</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 39-40.



Table 6.48. Text and poetic translation for “Suspiro cuando te miro”<sup>645</sup>

**Suspiro cuando te miro**

Suspiro cuando te miro,  
pero te me pongo al lado  
y el fuego de tu costado  
me va quemando el suspiro.

Siempre que te tengo lejos,  
me paso el día buscando,  
lo tuyo de los espejos.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**I Sigh When I See You**

I sigh when I see you,  
but I put myself next to you  
and the fire of your side  
goes on burning my sigh.

Always when you are away,  
I spend the day searching,  
for your reflection.  
—Nicholas Miguel

Poetry Analysis of Suspiro cuando te miro

“Suspiro cuando te miro,” as well as “Coplas venezolanas” and “Coplas” are excerpted from “Para cantar” from *Giraluna* by Andrés Eloy Blanco.<sup>646</sup> “Suspiro cuando te miro” is the last two stanzas of the source poem. “Para cantar” is discussed in detail above in the discussion of “Coplas” from *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*.

<sup>645</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 25.

<sup>646</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 39-40.

## Pregón

Table 6.49. General information about “Pregón”

Song Title	Pregón
Collection Title	<i>Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano</i>
Position in Collection	IV
Voice	Alto / Mezzo-Soprano
Range	G <sub>3</sub> —D <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Aparición de Giraluna: Pregón
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna, la novia</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1961
Commercial Recording	Morella Muñoz, 198?, track 11
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Tritó, 2005 Consejo Nacional de la Cultura, 1984

Table 6.50. Text and poetic translation for “Pregón”<sup>647</sup>

### Pregón

¡Naranjas, de Valencia,  
naranjas frescas,  
naranjas amarillas  
cuando el naranjo se baña!  
—¡Naranjas, de cuando el sol  
parece que en la mañana (alborada in original)  
va a salir del horizonte  
y sale de las naranjas!  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Vendor’s Cry

Oranges, from Valencia,  
fresh oranges,  
yellow oranges  
when the orange tree bathes in fruit!  
“Oranges, oranges of when the sun  
seems that, in the morning (daybreak)  
it is going to leave the horizon  
and come out of the oranges!”  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>647</sup> Bor, *Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 32.

## Poetry Analysis of Pregón

“Pregón” is a vendor’s street cry. Sung street cries were common among vendors in Venezuelan cities and are among the genres of work music discussed by Ramón y Rivera. “Pregón” is the first short poem within a larger multi-part poem called “Aparición de Giraluna,” which is in turn a component of the section *Giraluna la novia*.<sup>648</sup> Bor used the entirety of the short poem “Pregón.”

The reader and singer will better understand the setting of “Pregón” and the context of all the poems by Andrés Eloy Blanco from *Giraluna* if they have read the other poems of “Aparición de Giraluna:” “Anuncio,” “La tarde,” and “Aparición.” “Aparición de Giraluna” sets the stage for the romantic tenor of much of *Giraluna*. “Pregón” firmly establishes the setting in Valencia, along the northern Venezuelan coast.<sup>649</sup> In “Anuncio” and “la tarde,” the rich symbolism of the oranges is revealed: the oranges represent beauty, youth, romance, and fresh love. In “Aparición,” Blanco weaves a description that explains his title character’s name, Giraluna, a neologism and a play on the word *girasol* (sunflower) that might be translated as “moonflower.”<sup>650</sup> Also significant are the titles to “Anuncio” and “Aparición,” both of which allude to Christian events related to the Virgin Mary, an association that imbues Giraluna’s

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<sup>648</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 31.

<sup>649</sup> The city of Valencia is the capital of the state of Carabobo centrally located along the coast. Its original official name was Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de la Nueva Valencia del Rey, and was named after (and not to be confused with) the Spanish portal city and autonomous community (state-like political division), also called Valencia. Giraluna’s Marian association is strengthened by the fact that the city in which Blanco sets his poem is named after a Marian event—the Assumption, or her elevation into heaven.

<sup>650</sup> *Girasol* nm (Helianthus annuus) sunflower n. The sunflower gets its name from the way in which it turns during the day in the direction of the sun. In English, the property of turning towards the sun is called “heliotropism,” literally, “sun-turn;” very similar to the literal translation of the Spanish *girasol*, “turn-sun.” The literal translation of “giraluna” would then be: “turn-moon” or a flower that follows the moon (presumably, nocturnally, in contrast to the diurnal (daytime) habits of the sunflower, and other heliotropes). Since, in English, we call the sun-turner a “sunflower,” an apt English translation of *giraluna*, or moon-turner, would be “moonflower.” Perhaps the poet chose this nocturnal association because it was at night that he and his lover shared their romantic moment and proposal.

appearance to the poet with divine, mystical properties.<sup>651</sup> Marian qualities are also given to Giraluna in “Canto de Giraluna para amolar Tijeras,” the source poem for “Amolador” of *Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano*.

Table 6.51. Text and poetic translation for “Aparición de Giraluna”<sup>652</sup>

Aparición de Giraluna	Apparition of Giraluna
<b>Pregón...</b>	<b>Street Cry ...</b>
¡Naranjas, de Valencia, naranjas frescas, naranjas amarillas, cuando el naranjo se baña! —¡Naranjas, de cuando el sol parece que en la mañana (alborada in original) va a salir del horizonte, y sale de las naranjas!	Oranges, from Valencia, fresh oranges, yellow oranges, when the orange tree bathes in fruit! “Oranges, from when the sun seems that, in the morning (daybreak) it is going to leave the horizon, and come out of the oranges!”
<b>Anuncio</b>	<b>Annunciation</b>
Valencia del Rey, Valencia; también está entre naranjos Valencia de Venezuela. Palabra madrugadora, carne de mañana tierna, zumo de naranja fría de Valencia—fue en Valencia—; amanecer del naranjo, amanecer de las eras, el canario y el naranjo se apuestan sus amarillos y gana la naranjera. —¡Hoy va a nacer Giraluna! Fue en Valencia. —Hoy hablará Giraluna; si las naranjas hablaran hablarían como ella.	Valencia del Rey, Valencia; is also amongst orange trees Valencia of Venezuela. Early-rising word, tender morning meat, cold orange juice from Valencia, “it was in Valencia;” dawn of the orange tree, dawn of the ages, the canary and the orange tree bet their yellows against each other and the orange grove wins. “Giraluna is going to be born today!” It was in Valencia. “Giraluna will speak today;” if the oranges could speak they would talk like her.

<sup>651</sup> “Anuncio,” or the Annunciation, alludes to the moment that Angel Gabriel told the virgin Mary that she would conceive and bear God’s son. “Aparición” alludes to the Marian Apparitions, a sixteenth-century appearance of the Virgin Mary to a man in Mexico that sparked the cult of La Virgen de Guadalupe, Our Lady of Guadalupe, popular throughout Latin America.

<sup>652</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 31-34.

Table 6.51. - continued

### La tarde

Una boda al aire libre de Valencia, por la tarde,  
los novios por los jardines,  
como jugando a casarse.  
En Valencia hay azahar  
para que el mundo se case;  
si con las once mil vírgenes  
llegan once mil galanes,  
bastará que un abanico  
les guíe a los naranjales  
y para once mil doncellas  
sobrarán los azahares.

Metidos en los jardines  
novios, padrinos y padres,  
invitados y curiosos;  
los naranjos al rozarles  
dejaban caer botones  
de azahares  
y parecía que todos,  
novios, invitados, padres,  
padrinos, niños, jugaban  
a casarse.  
Mientras todos se casaban  
y empezaba ya casarme  
con la flor de los naranjos  
y las novias de la tarde.

### Aparición

Y fue entonces: Una niña  
y en dos trenzas los cabellos,  
una luz en la mirada  
que alumbraba hasta allá lejos;  
ancho mirar, como plaza  
para un noviazgo labriego;  
las pestañas como juncos  
junto a los ojos inmensos;  
—¿cómo hará para cerrarlos?  
¡y qué grande será el sueño!

La tarde, que lo sabía,  
dejó la noche en el cielo,  
una noche para dos  
que quieran quedarse ciegos  
y un cielo para querer,  
para querer ir al cielo.

### The Afternoon

An afternoon wedding in the open air of Valencia,  
the bride and groom in the gardens,  
pretending to get married.  
In Valencia, there is an orange blossom  
for everyone to get married;  
if eleven thousand virgins  
arrive with eleven thousand lovers,  
all that is needed is a fan  
to wink at the orange groves  
and for eleven thousand maidens  
there will be an excess of orange blossoms.

Placed in the gardens  
grooms, brides, godparents and parents,  
invited and curious;  
when the orange trees brushed against them  
they dropped buttons  
of orange blossoms  
and it seemed that everyone,  
grooms, brides, guests, fathers,  
godfathers, children, they pretended  
to get married.  
And while everyone was getting married  
I had already started to get married  
with the orange blossom  
and afternoon brides.

### Apparition

And it was then: A girl  
and in two braids, her hair,  
a light in her eyes  
which lit up from way over there;  
with wide gaze, like a town square  
for a peasant courtship;  
eyelashes like reeds  
right next to her immense eyes;  
“how will you close them?  
and how great will be the dream!”

The afternoon, which I knew,  
left the night in the sky,  
a night for two  
that wish to go blind  
and a sky for loving,  
for wanting to go to heaven.

Table 6.51 - continued

Sus ojos, sus grandes ojos  
del color de las castañas,  
sus trenzas, sus largas trenzas  
del largo de su mirada  
ojos de estarse mirándolos hasta más allá del alma.

A la orilla de los ojos  
llegué; la empecé a mirar:  
—Quién tornara a los tiempos buenos,  
quién volviera la vida atrás,  
quién me diera diez años menos,  
quién te diera diez años más!

De la orilla de los ojos  
me llamó.  
—¿Quieres casarte conmigo? —  
dije yo.  
Y en el fondo de los ojos  
respondió.

Y escondida en los naranjos  
encontré la nueva flor.  
Encontré la giraluna,  
la novia del girasol.  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

Her eyes, her big eyes  
the color of chestnuts,  
her braids, her long braids  
the length of her gaze  
eyes for staring at, deep beyond the soul.

At the edge of her eyes  
I arrived; I started to look at her:  
“Who would go back to the good times,  
who would turn life back,  
who would give me ten years less,  
who would give you ten years more!”

From the edge of her eyes  
she called me.  
“Will you marry me?”  
said I.  
And from the depths of her eyes  
she answered.

And hidden in the orange trees  
I found the new flower.  
I found the *giraluna* “moonflower,”  
bride of the sunflower.  
—Nicholas Miguel

### *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*

Table 6.52. Contents of *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*<sup>653</sup>

#	Song Title	Poet
I	Guitarra	Nicolas Guillén
II	Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito	Emilio Ballagas
III	Nocturno en los muelles	Nicolas Guillén

<sup>653</sup> Tryptich on Cuban Poetry

## Guitarra

Table 6.53. General information about “Guitarra”

Song Title	Guitarra
Collection Title	<i>Tríptico sobre poesía cubana</i>
Position in Collection	I
Voice	Alto / Mezzo-Soprano
Range	C# <sub>3</sub> —F# <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Nicolas Guillén
Poet’s Origin	Cuba
Original Poem Title	Guitarra
Original Poem Publication	<i>Son Entero</i> , 1947
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1966
Commercial Recording	Tanya Kruse Ruck and Elena Abend, 2014, track 12 Tafur, Marina, Nigel Foster, 1999, track 4
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Ediciones del Instituto Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1979

Table 6.54. Text and poetic translation for “Guitarra”<sup>654</sup>

### Guitarra

Tendida en la madrugada,  
la firme guitarra espera:  
voz de profunda madera  
desesperada.

Su clamorosa cintura,  
en la que el pueblo suspira,  
preñada de son, estira  
la carne dura.

Y alzó la cabeza fina  
Universal y cubana  
sin opio, ni marihuana,  
ni cocaína.

### Guitar

Lying down in the early morning,  
the firm guitar waits:  
voice of deep wood  
desperate.

Its clamorous waist,  
for which the people sigh,  
pregnant with sound, stretches  
its hard flesh.

And it raised its fine head  
Universal and Cuban  
without opium, nor marihuana,  
nor cocaine.

<sup>654</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 15.

Table 6.54. - continued

Cógela tú guitarrero,  
límpiame de alcol la boca,  
y en esa guitarra, toca  
tu son entero.

El son del querer maduro  
el del abierto futuro,  
el del pié por sobre el muro,  
tu son entero.  
—Nicolás Guillén

Take her, you, guitar man,  
clean your mouth of alcohol,  
and on that guitar, play  
your full sound.

The sound of ripe desire  
of an open future,  
of a foot crossing over the wall,  
your full sound.  
—Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.55. Text and poetic translation for “Guitarra,” *Son entero*<sup>655</sup>

**Guitarra**

Tendida en la madrugada,  
la firme guitarra espera;  
voz de profunda madera  
desesperada.

Su clamorosa cintura,  
en la que el pueblo suspira,  
preñada de son, estira  
la carne dura.

Arde la guitarra sola,  
mientras la luna se acaba;  
arde libre de su esclava  
bata de cola.

Dejó el borracho en su coche,  
dejó el cabaret sombrío,  
donde se muere de frío,  
noche tras noche,

Y alzó la cabeza fina,  
Universal y cubana,  
Sin opio, ni marihuana,  
ni cocaína.

¡Venga la guitarra vieja,  
nueva otra vez al castigo  
con que la espera el amigo,  
que no la deja!

**Guitar**

Lying down in the early morning,  
the firm guitar waits;  
voice of deep wood  
desperate.

Its clamorous waist,  
for which the people sigh,  
pregnant with sound, stretches  
its hard flesh.

Burns the guitar alone,  
while the moon stops;  
burns free from its slave  
tailed gown

It left the drunk in his car,  
it left the cheerless cabaret,  
where one dies of cold,  
night after night,

And it raised its fine head,  
Universal and Cuban,  
Without opium, nor marihuana,  
nor cocaine.

The old guitar is coming,  
newly renewed to the burden  
which awaits the friend,  
that does not leave it!

<sup>655</sup> Nicolás Guillén, *El son entero: Suma Poetica 1929-1946* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Pleamar, 1947), 127-128; Nicolás Guillén, *Grandes elegias y otros poemas*, edited by Angel Augier (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1984), 107-108.



Table 6.55. - continued

Alta siempre, no caída,  
traiga su risa y su llanto,  
clave las uñas de amianto,  
sobre la vida.

Cógela tú guitarrero,  
límpiame de alcohol la boca,  
y en esa guitarra, toca  
tu son entero.

El son del querer maduro,  
tu son entero;  
el del abierto futuro,  
tu son entero;  
el del pie por sobre el muro,  
tu son entero...

Cógela tu, guitarrero,  
límpiame de alcohol la boca,  
y en esa guitarra, toca  
tu son entero.  
—Nicolás Guillén

Always high, it doesn't fall,  
it carries your laugh and your cry,  
it pounds the hooves of asbestos,  
over life.

Take her, you, guitar man,  
clean your mouth of alcohol,  
and on that guitar, play  
your full sound.

The sound of ripe desire,  
your full sound;  
of an open future,  
your full sound;  
of a foot crossing over the wall,  
your full sound...

Take her, you, guitar man,  
clean your mouth of alcohol,  
and on that guitar, play  
your full sound.  
—Nicholas Miguel

### Poetry Analysis of Guitarra

“Guitarra” is from a longer poem published in *El son entero* (1947). The guitar is a special symbol for Guillén that he employed “in all important stages of his poetry.” His early poem “Ansia” (Anguish) establishes the guitar as “a vehicle for his art.”<sup>656</sup>

The word is the prison of the idea.  
I, instead of the word,  
want, to represent my mourning,  
the musical moan of a guitar.  
One of those guitars whose  
sweet, simple, chaste music,  
always finds for its haven  
a corner of the soul...<sup>657</sup>

<sup>656</sup> Ellis, 56.

<sup>657</sup> Ibid. “La palabra es la cárcel de la idea. /Yo, en vez de la palabra, /quisiera, para concretar mi duelo, /la queja musical de una guitarra. /Una de esas guitarras cuya música dulce, sencilla, casta, /encuentra siempre para hacer su nido /algún rincón del alma...” Translation by Keith Ellis.

In this context, the player of the guitar can be seen metaphorically as both the average citizen, the artist, the writer, and even Guillén himself called to action on the part of the revolution. The poem exalts the potential and power of art and poetry, and specifically art created with a sober mind in service of the goals of Cuban society. Ellis states that

The guitar as an instrument with which the people are familiar serves as a symbol of popular poetry; but this popularity involves serious responsibility. The guitar is presented in the early morning hours, the conventional time of clear-headed alertness and is modified by the adjective ‘firme,’ indicating an attitude of ready combativeness on behalf of the authentic interests of the people. It eschews, therefore, some of the accustomed haunts of the guitar, especially those associated with the cabaret and with impaired levels of perception. Here again, as in *West Indies, Ltd.*, it is indicated that a lucid, sober, developmental viewing of society is one effected without ‘opio, ni mariguana, ni cocaína.’<sup>658</sup>

A Marxian sense of self-determination and self-reliance of the Cuban people as a whole is a common theme in Guillén’s revolutionary poetry. This is present in *West Indies, Ltd.* encapsulated in this excerpt from the preceding poem “Sabás:” “Get up and get your bread, don’t just beg for it; /get up and get your light, your true hope, /grab hold of the reins, man.”<sup>659</sup> “Guitarra” from *Son entero*, also displays these themes. “Take her, you guitar man, /clean your mouth of alcohol, /and on that guitar, play /your full sound.”<sup>660</sup>

A full understanding of Guillén’s perspective requires an understanding of Marx’s view of labor, consciousness, and liberty. For Marx, labor and struggle are the key to the dawning of consciousness, and thus connected to labor and the satisfaction of one’s human needs, “people discover themselves as productive beings who humanize themselves through their labour...they

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<sup>658</sup> Ellis, 110-111.

<sup>659</sup> Smart, 104-105. “Coge tu pan, pero no lo pidas; /coge tu luz, coge tu esperanza cierta / como a un caballo por las bridas.” Translation by Ian Smart.

<sup>660</sup> Guillén, *son entero*, 128. “Cógela tú guitarrero, /límpiame de alcol la boca, /y en esa guitarra, toca /tu son entero.”

find the conditions of their fulfilment, of the realization of their true stature.”<sup>661</sup> Through labor and creative activities, one sees the proof of their own “creation by himself” and therefore, “for man, man is the supreme being.”<sup>662</sup> Deprived of such conditions, man is not truly free. Therefore, for Guillén, the call to creative action in *Guitarra*, and the insistence on a sober frame of mind is more significant than simply getting a job done, but necessary for a state of consciousness that is essential for true liberty and human identity.

Guillén’s poem is in the form of a *son*, a popular Cuban music genre. The general structure is that of call and response between a lead singer, the *sonero*, who sings verses called the *motivo* or *letra*, and the chorus, the *coro*, that sings the refrain, sometimes called the *estribillo*, *sonsonete*, or *bordón*.<sup>663</sup> Guillén’s *son* uses a *motivo* of octosyllabic lines and a chorus that chimes in with a short five-syllable *estribillo*—“tu son entero.” Guillén was fond of the genre and used it to great effect in other works such as *Motivos de son*.<sup>664</sup> Ellis describes the significance of Guillén’s use of *son*:

He exposes the inadequacy of the *negrista* movement in its playful mode by bringing authentically and forcefully to our attention a neglected sector of Cuban society, without whose inclusion the national spectrum is incomplete. By using a truly Cuban form originating in the confluence of African and Spanish cultural patterns, he challenges the idea, from within a neo-colonial setting, that the source of new forms is necessarily foreign and metropolitan. He makes truly artistic an oral tradition that had been disparaged by much of the privileged sector and elevates it to confront the existing forms of printed poetry.

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<sup>661</sup> Henri Chambre and David T. McLellan, “Marxism,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, (Encyclopædia Britannica: July 18, 2016) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Marxism> (accessed January 2, 2018).

<sup>662</sup> Chambre and McLellan.

<sup>663</sup> Ellis, 65.

<sup>664</sup> *Ibid.* 71.

The parallels between Bor's musical aesthetic and Guillén's use of *son* are many: Bor focuses on uniquely Venezuelan music genres, making "truly artistic" oral traditions of music, and thereby elevates sectors of society that are undervalued.

However, in *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana*, Bor's use of Guillén's *son* poetry before the poem of Ballagas, which could be described as *negrista*, is curious. If Guillén's use of the *son* "exposes the inadequacy of *negrista*," why follow with *negrista*?

Through juxtaposition, Bor creates a sort of cultural lesson in the perception and reality of black Cubans: They can create and resist and are not just blissfully ignorant curiosities. In addition, Ballagas' poetry does reveal a depth and intimacy of human emotion and is not limited to superficial stereotyping. The inclusion of such intimacy alongside Guillén's poems displays the full range of humanity of the Afro-Cuban. In considering Bor's construction of this set, Fidel Castro's guidance to artists seems apropos: "It is necessary to strive in all manifestations to reach the people, but in turn it is necessary to do everything possible so that the people may understand more and more profoundly."<sup>665</sup>

While all three poems in Bor's cycle deal significantly with the experience of blacks in Cuba, it would be wrong to assume Bor's intention to be particularly race-driven. Like Marx, and Guillén, Bor was more interested in class oppression than purely racial divisions. Furthermore, Bor's focus on Cuba made this musical set inherently West Indian in its perspective, of which "African" is an inexorable component. Like Guillén, Bor's scope is inclusive: it is about Cuba; it is about Venezuela.<sup>666</sup>

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<sup>665</sup> Ellis. 44.

<sup>666</sup> Ibid., 76.

As described in greater detail in Chapter 3, during the 1960s after Bor's return from Moscow, the political situation in Venezuela was particularly tense for those of Communist sympathies. The Venezuelan Communist parties were outlawed, removed from positions of influence, and ostracized for their efforts to overthrow the government through violence. The new Communist government in Cuba motivated the Communists and frightened the established democracy in Venezuela.

The composition of her Triptych on Cuban poetry during this period could be viewed as an expression of support for the Communist Cuban revolution, of solidarity with the Cuban people, and a motivation to the Venezuelan people to take similar action. While members of the Communist Party in Venezuela were relatively few during the 1960s, Bor's message would not have fallen on deaf ears, nor would this understanding of the song cycle imply support for the civilian terrorism that the party was engaged in. Alexander attests that components of Marxism-Leninism were popular in mainstream society:

A belief in the class nature of society, in the ultimate validity of Lenin's analysis of imperialism, is almost universal among intellectuals and literate working-class groups. These ideas, shared by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, are of course highly realistic in the Venezuelan context, where great class differences are obvious, and where the economy for two generations has been overwhelmingly dominated by an oil industry almost completely in foreign hands.<sup>667</sup>

Nevertheless, Bor's use of Cuban revolutionary poetry in a Venezuelan nationalistic musical style could be viewed as in conflict with itself, and therefore represents what might have been a maverick intellectual and political position among her contemporaries. Alexander explains the cognitive dissonance between Communism and Venezuelan nationalism:

The Communist interpretation of Marxism-Leninism thus conflicts with an even more widespread ideology: nationalism. If there is a single ideology which is virtually universal in Venezuelan society, it is nationalism. A fundamental belief is that the

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<sup>667</sup> Alexander, 161.

country must follow its own path, seeking its own answers to its own peculiar problems, and not follow the lead of any group which, like Communists, appears to owe allegiance to some other nation.<sup>668</sup>

Therefore, Venezuelan nationalism precluded Cuban and Soviet as well as US influence.

Alexander explains:

...resentment against what is considered the excessive influence of the United States has not made Venezuelans eager to throw themselves into the arms of some other foreign power, least of all a small Latin American one. The resentment against Cuban interference in internal Venezuelan affairs—which spread in 1966 into the ranks of the Venezuelan Communist Party—has been all but universal.<sup>669</sup>

Bor's cycle *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* was written in 1966, at the same time that the Communist Party began to distance itself from Cuba and reverse course on its efforts to spark revolution. Perhaps, in an effort to reconcile the seeming contradictions of this cycle, Bor chose Cuban poetry to affirm her affinity for the Cuban revolution, while at the same time using a Venezuelan musical voice to call for a unique and nationalistic approach to their own struggle for self-determination and problems of class inequality. She did this at a time of great unpopularity of the Communist Party and Cuban influence, but with underlying ideas that were widely shared across political boundaries that when translated through Venezuelan musical themes may have effectively reached the listener.

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<sup>668</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>669</sup> Alexander, 167.

## Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito

Table 6.56. General information about “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito”

Song Title	Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito
Collection Title	<i>Tríptico sobre poesía cubana</i>
Position in Collection	II
Voice	Unspecified
Range	C <sub>4</sub> —D <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Emilio Ballagas
Poet’s Origin	Camagüey, Cuba
Original Poem Title	Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito
Original Poem Publication	<i>Cuaderno de poesía negra</i> , 1934
Language Dialect	Standard or Cuban <i>bozal</i>
Composition Date	1966
Commercial Recording	Tanya Kruse Ruck and Elena Abend, 2014, track 13 Marina Tafur and Nigel Foster, 1999, track 5 Isabel Grau/Palacios, and Mandalit Lamazares, 1976, track 5
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Ediciones del Instituto Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1979

Table 6.57. Text and poetic translation for “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito”<sup>670</sup>

### Canción de cuna para dormir un negrito

Dórmiti, mi nengre,  
drómiti ningrito.  
Caimito y merengue,  
merengue y caimito.

Drómiti mi nengre,  
mi nengre bonito.  
¡Diente de merengue,  
bemba de caimito!

Cuando tú sea glandi  
va a sé bosiador...  
Nengre de mi vida,  
nengre de mi amor.  
—Emilio Ballagas

### Lullaby for a Little Black Boy

Go to sleep, my black boy,  
go to sleep, little black boy.  
Caimito and meringue,  
meringue and caimito.

Go to sleep, my black boy,  
my pretty black boy.  
Tooth of meringue,  
lip of caimito!

When you are big,  
you are going to be a boxer...  
Black boy of my life,  
black boy of my love.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>670</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 19.

Table 6.58. Text in original dialect, traditional Spanish translation, and poetic translation for “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito,” *Cuaderno de poesía negra*<sup>671</sup>

Original Dialect	Traditional Spanish	English Translation
Dórmiti, mi nengre, dórmiti, ningrito. Caimito y merengue, merengue y caimito. Drómiti, mi nengre, mi nengre bonito. ¡Diente de merengue, bemba de caimito! Cuando tú sea glandi va a sé bosiador... Nengre de mi vida, nengre de mi amor... (Mi chiviricoqui, chiviricó... ¡Yo gualda pa ti tajá de melón!) Si no calla bemba y no limpia moco, le va’abrí la puetta a Visente e’loco. Si no calla bemba te va’da e’gran sutto. Te va’a llevá e’loco dentro su macuto. Ne la mata’e güira te ñama sijú. Condío en la puetta etá e’tatajú... Drómiti mi nengre, cara’e bosiador, nengre de mi vida, nengre de mi amor. Mi chiviricoco, chiviricoquito... Caimito y merengue, merengue y caimito. A’ora yo te acuetta ’la maca e papito y te mese suave... Du’ce..., depasito... y mata la pugga y epanta moquito pa que due’ma bien mi nengre bonito. — Emilio Ballagas	Duérmete mi negro, duérmete negrito. Caimito y merengue, merengue y caimito. Duérmete mi negro, mi negro bonito. ¡Dientes de merengue, bemba de caimito! Cuando tú seas grande vas a ser boxeador... Negro de mi vida, negro de mi amor... Mi chiviricoqui, chiviricó... (cute names) ¡Yo guardo para ti, una tajada de melón!) Si no callas la bemba y no limpias tus mocos, Le voy a abrir la puerta a Vicente El Loco. Si no callas la bemba te va a dar el gran susto. Te va a llevar el Loco dentro de su macuto. En la mata de güira te llama el sijú. Escondido en la puerta está el papá Judas... Duérmete mi negro, cara de boxeador, Negro de mi vida, negro de mi amor. Mi chiviricoqui, chiviricó... Caimito y merengue, merengue y caimito. Ahora yo te acuesto en la hamaca de papito Y te meceré suave... dulce..., despacito... Y mataré la pulga y espantaré el mosquito Para que duerma bien mi negro bonito. —Various	Sleep my black child, sleep little black one. Caimito and meringue, meringue and caimito. Sleep my black child, my pretty black child. Teeth of meringue, lips of caimito! When you are big you’re going to be a boxer... Black child of my life, black child of my love... (My cutie pie, cutie ... I keep for you, a slice of melon!) If you do not shut your lips and do not clean your snot, I’m going to open the door to Madman Vicente. If you do not shut your lips he’s gonna give you a big scare. He’s gonna take you inside his backpack. Into the Calabash Tree forest the pygmy owl calls you. Hidden in the door is Old Man Judas... Go to sleep my black child, face of a boxer, Black child of my life, black child of my love. My cutie pie, cutie... Caimito and meringue, meringue and caimito. Now I’ll lay you in daddy’s hammock and I’ll rock you gently... Sweet..., slow... And I’ll kill the flea and I’ll scatter the mosquito, so you can sleep well my pretty black child. — Nicholas Miguel

<sup>671</sup> Emilio Ballagas, *Cuaderno de poesía negra* (La Habana: Santa Clara, 1934), 14-15. This work is in the public domain. The entire poem is set by Xavier Montsalvatge under the title “Nana,” which apparently was meant to be included in his *Cinco canciones negras*, 1945, but was left out by the publisher.



### Poetry Analysis of Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito

“Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito” is from a longer poem written in a colloquial Afro-Cuban accent published in *Cuaderna de poesía negra* (1934) and first appearing in *Grafos* that same year.<sup>672</sup> *Grafos* was a Havana-based monthly magazine founded in 1933 aimed at intellectuals that included poetry, short stories, theatrical criticism, and Cuban history.<sup>673</sup>

A few words present in the full poem deserve some description. *Caimito* is a fruit—the Star Apple, scientific name *chrysophyllum cainito*. “The pulp is soft, sweet and very juicy in nature and can be processed to jam, jellies, juices, marmalades, ice cream and flavors.”

*Merengue* (meringue) is a dessert made of whipped egg whites and sugar. The meringue could be flavored with the juice of the caimito, or the fruit could be served on top of the meringue. The *sijú* is the Cuban pygmy owl, scientific name *glaucidium siju*. The *güira* is the Calabash Tree, scientific name *crescentia cujete*.

Ballagas’ poem is part of the *costumbrista* movement. Merriam Webster defines *costumbrista* as “a Spanish or Latin-American writer or artist whose work is marked by usually realistic depiction of local or regional customs and types.”<sup>674</sup> A number of phonological elements common to Afro-Hispanic *bozal* speech patterns can be noted in the literary dialect Ballagas uses

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<sup>672</sup> Ballagas, *Cuaderno*, 14-15. After the poem it reads “—en “Grafos” Habana 1934—” A copy of the periodical is held at the University of Miami.

<sup>673</sup> Fundación Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, “Grafos,” *Diccionario de la literatura cubana*, Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, <http://bib.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/02494907545027618976613/254g.htm> (accessed June 16, 2017).

<sup>674</sup> “Costumbrista,” Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/costumbrista> (accessed June 17, 2017).

for this poem.<sup>675</sup> The strict definition of *bozal* refers to people, and the language of those people, who were “born in Africa, [and] only partially acculturated to Hispanic language and society.”<sup>676</sup>

John Lipski has a detailed study on the origins of Afro-Hispanic language usage and pronunciation throughout the colonial period and into the nineteenth century.<sup>677</sup> Lipski notes the Cuban vogue for the African dialect:

...by far the greatest number of Afro-Hispanic *bozal* representations come from nineteenth-and early twentieth-century Cuba. The literary outpouring of Cuban *costumbrista* literature, together with travel narratives, anthropological works, popular songs, and even a few religious texts, placed the speech of Cuban *bozales* in a prominent position....The accuracy of many of the texts is questionable, but the common denominators are also many.<sup>678</sup>

The sentiments of the *costumbrista* movement are similar to those of the Santa Capilla School. The elevation of everyday culture, especially those more rustic, common-man elements of culture, to the level of art was a foundational intent of the nationalist movement in Venezuela and elsewhere. Bor’s choice of a Cuban poet does not represent so much an abandonment of her nationalistic ideals, but rather a recognition and acknowledgment of the sentiments shared throughout the region.

This poem, a tender lullaby replete with cute interactions between mother and son, in which the mother hopes the child will be lucky enough to grow up to be a boxer could certainly

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<sup>675</sup> For the generation of the “Traditional Spanish” translation, the author is indebted to: Zeprius[pseud.], comment on “Dórmite mi nengre...,” WordReference Language Forum, comment posted on September 27, 2007, <http://forum.wordreference.com/threads/d%C3%B3rmite-mi-nengre.657104/> (accessed June 17, 2017); sinderik[pseud.], comment on “Dórmite mi nengre...,” WordReference Language Forum, comment posted on December 12, 2016, <http://forum.wordreference.com/threads/d%C3%B3rmite-mi-nengre.657104/> (accessed June 17, 2017).

<sup>676</sup> John M. Lipski, *A History of Afro-Hispanic Language: Five Centuries, Five Continents* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 168.

<sup>677</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*.

<sup>678</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 145.

be criticized as an idyllic generalization of black life. The genre of *negrista*, in which Ballagas' work is occasionally critiqued, tends to treat black life as exotic and idyllic ignoring any harsher realities.<sup>679</sup> See page 228 for a discussion of the implications of using such a work alongside the other poems in the cycle.

In literary imitations, such as that of Ballagas, the meaning of *bozal* is sometimes extended “to a more general meaning of rustic, uneducated, and isolated from urban society.”<sup>680</sup> Imitations of the more general *bozal* exhibit traits that “are also used by white Cubans of comparable socioeconomic status,” and are present in other Caribbean dialects as well.<sup>681</sup> Lipski states that “these same pan-Caribbean traits have been used by Afro-Cuban authors such as Nicolás Guillén, as well as by white Cuban writers who imitated the speech of blacks, including Emilio Ballagas, Ramón Guirao, etc.”<sup>682</sup> Many of the pronunciation and grammar features discussed by Lipski can be found in Ballagas' literary dialect, Table 6.59 and Table 6.60.

Table 6.59. *Bozal* pronunciation features in Ballagas' text of “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito”

1	“intrusive nasalization” addition of <i>n</i> before occlusive consonants
2	<i>ll</i> changed to <i>ñ</i>
3	loss of syllable-final <i>s</i>
4	loss of syllable-final <i>r</i>
5	loss of intervocalic <i>d</i>
6	“lamdacismo” replacement of <i>r</i> with <i>l</i>

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<sup>679</sup> Ellis, 61.

<sup>680</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 168.

<sup>681</sup> Ibid. True *bozal* employed its own pidgin vocabulary in addition to grammatical and pronunciation variances, and it could still be heard in Cuba through the early twentieth century. Its influence continues in popular music and poetry to this day especially in the popular music genre, *son*.

<sup>682</sup> Ibid.

Table 6.60. *Bozal* grammar features in Ballagas' text of "Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito"

1	invariable use of third person verb forms
2	lack of noun-adjective concordance
3	preference for the disjunctive pronoun
4	omittance of definite and indefinite articles

The first noticeable linguistic feature is what is called "intrusive nasalization," or essentially, the insertion of a nasal consonant—/n/, /m/, /ɲ/— where there wasn't one before. Notations of intrusive nasalization are "found in representations of Afro-Hispanic language from the sixteenth century to the late nineteenth century, [and are] one of the few phonetic traits not traceable to vernacular non-Africanized Spanish that spans the entire time period for which some type of pidginized Afro-Hispanic speech is attested."<sup>683</sup> This can be observed in the words *nengre* for *negro* and *ningrito* for *negrito*. The changing of *ll* to *ñ* (/ʎ/ to /ɲ/), *ñama* for *llama*, has also been documented in Cuban *bozal* Spanish.<sup>684</sup> Frequent loss of all syllable-final /s/ was a feature of Afro-Hispanic language, although this consonantal weakening was also underway in native Spanish dialects. It is one of the most consistent occurrences in Ballagas' text: *diente* for *dientes*, *sia* for *seas*, *acuetta* for *acuesto*.<sup>685</sup> Loss of /r/, also a noted African feature, can be seen in a few cases: *puetta* for *puerta*, *due'ma* for *duerma*, *abrí* for *abrir*.<sup>686</sup> More common in Ballagas' text is *lamdacismo*, the replacement of /r/ with /l/: *gualda* for *guardo*, *glandi* for

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<sup>683</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 233.

<sup>684</sup> Ibid., 234.

<sup>685</sup> Ibid., 242.

<sup>686</sup> Ibid.

*grande*.<sup>687</sup> Also notable is Ballagas' occasional omission of the intervocalic /d/ which was very weak or absent in *bozal*: *Condío* for *Escondido*, *mata 'e* for *mata de*.

Other grammatical elements of Ballagas' text reflect features pointed out by Lipski as strong markers of the Afro-Cuban accent in the nineteenth century. Most notable is the "frequent use of the third-person singular verb form as invariant verbs."<sup>688</sup> *yo gualda* for *yo gualdo*, *calla* for *callas*, *epanta* for *espantaré*. Also notable is the "frequent lack of noun-adjective concordance:" *mi nengre bonito* for *mi negro bonito*. Preference for the disjunctive pronouns can also be seen: *Dórmiti* for *duermete*.<sup>689</sup> The words *dórmi* and *drómi* are dialectal derivatives of the verb infinitive *dormir*.<sup>690</sup> Also, the omission of definite and indefinite articles is visible: *calla bamba* for *calla la bamba*, *ñama sijú* for *llama el sijú*. Lipski describes that "[i]n the early stages of acquisition of Spanish and Portuguese, nearly all Africans omitted definite and indefinite articles; this tendency prevailed across all substratum families and time periods."<sup>691</sup>

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<sup>687</sup> Ibid., 243.

<sup>688</sup> Ibid., 276.

<sup>689</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 275.

The spellings "Dórmiti" and "Drómiti" are not consistent amongst published versions of the poem and song. The first publication of Modesta Bor's music by Ediciones del Instituto Vicente Emilio Sojo has "Dórmito...drómiti...Drómiti. The newest edition by Ediciones ARE also has that same pattern in the music, but where the poem is printed alone it is "Dórmiti...dórmiti...Drómiti." *Cuaderno de poesía negra* corroborates Ediciones ARE's printing of the poem alone "Dórmiti...dórmiti...drómiti." However, Angel Flores in vol. 4 of *The Literature of Spanish America* (New York: Las Americas Publishing, 1967), 436, reads "Drómiti...drómiti...drómiti." I have not seen the original printing in *Grafos*, nor the original manuscript if extant, and the curious reader might wish to see if they corroborate any of these variations.

<sup>690</sup> The switching of the *o* and *r* is a form of metathesis, in which the order of phonemes is confused. This practice was not discussed by Lipski but is a common phenomenon in many languages in casual environments or with uneducated speakers. For example, in English, the word "comfortable" is often rendered "comfterble," essentially misplacing the *t* before the *r*.

<sup>691</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 275.

## Nocturno en los muelles

Table 6.61. General information about “Nocturno en los muelles”

Song Title	Nocturno en los muelles
Collection Title	<i>Tríptico sobre poesía cubana</i>
Position in Collection	III
Voice	Unspecified
Range	E <sub>4</sub> —G# <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Nicolás Guillén
Poet’s Origin	Camagüey, Cuba
Original Poem Title	Nocturno en los muelles
Original Poem Publication	<i>West Indies Ltd.</i> , 1934
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1966
Commercial Recording	Marina Tafur and Nigel Foster, 1999, track 5
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015 Ediciones del Instituto Vicente Emilio Sojo, 1979

Table 6.62. Text and poetic translation for “Nocturno en los muelles”<sup>692</sup>

### Nocturno en los muelles

Bajo la noche tropical, el puerto.  
El agua lame la inocente orilla  
y el faro insulta al malecón desierto.

¡Qué calma tan robusta y tan sencilla!  
Pero sobre los muelles solitarios  
flota una tormentosa pesadilla.

Pena de cementerios y de osarios,  
que enseña en pizarrones angustiosos  
cómo un mismo dolor se parte en varios.

¡Oh puño fuerte elemental y duro!<sup>693</sup>  
¿Quién te sujeta el ademán abierto?  
Nadie responde en el dolor del puerto.  
El faro grita sobre el mar oscuro.  
—Nicolás Guillén

### Nocturne on the Docks

Under the tropical night, the port.  
The water laps the innocent shore  
and the lighthouse insults the deserted pier.

What calm so robust and so natural!  
But over the solitary docks  
floats a tempestuous nightmare.

Ghost of cemeteries and of ossuaries,  
that teaches on anguished chalkboards  
how the same pain is broken into pieces.

Oh strong fist, elemental and hard!  
Who restrains your open gesture?  
Nobody responds to the pain of the port.  
The lighthouse screams over the dark sea.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>692</sup> Bor, *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana, Obra para voz y piano*, 30.

<sup>693</sup> There is a discrepancy among the editions cited. *Grandes elegias*, has “puro” (pure).

Table 6.63. Text and poetic translation for “Nocturno en los muelles,” *West Indies, Ltd.*<sup>694</sup>

**Nocturno en los muelles**

Bajo la noche tropical, el puerto.  
El agua lame la inocente orilla  
y el faro insulta al malecón desierto.

¡Qué calma tan robusta y tan sencilla!  
Pero sobre los muelles solitarios  
flota una tormentosa pesadilla.

Pena de cementerios y de osarios,  
que enseña en pizarrones angustiosos  
cómo un mismo dolor se parte en varios.

Es que aquí están los gritos silenciosos  
y el sudor hecho vidrio; las tremendas  
horas de muchos hombres musculosos

y débiles, sujetos por las riendas  
como potros. Voluntades en freno,  
y las heridas pálidas sin vendas.

La gran quietud se agita. En este seno  
de paz mueve y anda un grupo enorme  
que come el pan untándolo en veneno.

Ellos duermen ahora en el informe  
lecho, sin descansar. Sueñan acaso,  
y aquí estalla el espíritu inconforme

que al alba dura tragará su vaso  
de sangre diaria en el cuartón oscuro,  
y a estrecho ritmo ha de ajustar el paso.

¡Oh puño fuerte elemental y duro!  
¿Quién te sujeta el ademán abierto?  
Nadie responde en el dolor del puerto.  
El faro grita sobre el mar oscuro.  
—Nicolás Guillén

**Nocturne on the Docks**

Under the tropical night, the port.  
The water laps the innocent shore  
and the lighthouse insults the deserted pier.

What calm so robust and so natural!  
But over the solitary docks  
floats a tempestuous nightmare.

Ghost of cemeteries and of ossuaries,  
that teaches on anguished chalkboards  
how the same pain is broken into pieces.

For here are the silent screams  
and the sweat turned to glass; the terrible  
hours of many muscular men

and weak, held by the reins  
like colts. Choices at the bit,  
and the faint wounds without bandages.

The great calm stirs. In this bosom  
of peace moves and goes an enormous group  
that eats bread smeared with venom.

They sleep now in the shapeless  
bed, without resting. They dream, perhaps,  
and there bursts out the dissident spirit

that the harsh dawn will drink its glass  
of daily blood on the gloomy plank,  
and in strict rhythm it must make its step.

Oh strong fist, elemental and hard!  
Who restrains your open gesture?  
Nobody responds to the pain of the port.  
The lighthouse screams over the dark sea.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>694</sup> Nicolás Guillén, *West Indies Ltd.* (1934), in *Las grandes elegias y otros poemas*, edited by Ángel Augier (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1984). 68-69; Guillén, *El Son Entero*, 55-56.

## Poetry Analysis of Nocturno en los muelles

“Nocturno en los muelles, from *West Indies, Ltd.*, highlights the suffering caused by colonialism and imperialism, and the madness of complicity towards such oppression. Cuba is the “innocent” tropical shore; its lighthouse is insulting because it welcomes, protects, and guides the ships that come to take advantage of it. The same metaphorical lighthouse also welcomed countless ships carrying Africans into slavery on sugar plantations. The ghosts of slavery linger; their pain is not forgotten. While the slave trade has ended—the piers are now empty—the “dissident spirit” born of their suffering motivates the hand of modern Cuba to stay closed, unwelcoming to those imperialistic powers that seek to commit further injustice. In other words, poverty is “a motive for reasoned rebellion.”<sup>695</sup> The mood of “mystery and terror” was a common element in Spanish-American poetry following the influence of Edgar Allen Poe and German romanticism.<sup>696</sup>

Following Ballagas’ intimate lullaby, Guillén’s “Nocturno en los muelles” is jarring. The absence of suffering for blacks in Ballagas’ poem seems almost incompatible with the intensity of their suffering in Guillén’s. The juxtaposition highlights the innocence of the oppressed and pulls the listener out of the complacency of exoticization into the reality of universal experience and justice that was championed in the first movement, “Guitarra.”

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<sup>695</sup> Ellis, 82.

<sup>696</sup> Carrera Andrade, *Reflections on Spanish-American Poetry*, 7.



### *Tres Canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*

Table 6.64. Contents of *Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*<sup>697</sup>

#	Song Title	Poet
I	La luna tiene cabellos blancos	Fernando Rodriguez Garcia
II	Te aguardaba entre mástiles	Mimina Rodríguez Lezama
III	Sequía	Francisco Lárez Granado

### **La luna tiene cabellos blancos**

Table 6.65. General information about “La luna tiene cabellos blancos”

Song Title	La luna tiene cabellos blancos
Collection Title	<i>Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano</i>
Position in Collection	I
Voice	Mezzo-Soprano/ Alto
Range	C# <sub>4</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Fernando Rodriguez Garcia
Poet's Origin	?
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1970
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

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<sup>697</sup> Three Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano

Table 6.66. Text and poetic translation for “La luna tiene cabellos blancos”<sup>698</sup>

**La luna tiene cabellos blancos**

La luna tiene cabellos blancos como abuelita.  
Abuelito bigotes blancos, rayos de sol.  
Sueño con ellos cuando me cantan,  
sueño con ellos cuando me duermen.  
Sueños de luna, sueños de sol.

Canto de gallos cuando despierto.  
Caballo blanco, cometa roja.  
Ya se voló,  
rompió los hilos,  
hoy pude verla,  
está dormida cerca del sol.  
—Fernando Rodríguez

**The Moon Has White Hair**

The moon has white hairs like grandmother.  
Grandfather has a white mustache like rays of sunlight.  
I dream with them while they sing to me,  
I dream with them while they put me to sleep.  
Dreams of the moon, dreams of the sun.

Rooster songs when I wake.  
White horse, red kite.  
Had set itself aflight,  
it broke the wires,  
today one could see it,  
it is sleeping next to the sun.  
—Nicholas Miguel

Poetry Analysis of La luna tiene cabellos blancos

The origins of this poem are unknown, because so little is known about this poet, and he does not appear to have any publications of his poetry. In addition, because the poem has not been seen in its original format, the arrangement of the lines and stanzas is also unknown.<sup>699</sup> The above arrangement is as it appears in the ARE edition.

The perspective of the persona seems to be that of a child, implied through the grandparent’s singing of a lullaby, and the subject matter of the kite. The red kite sleeping next to the sun could be a figurative description of a sunset. The curious similes present in the title and initial lines of the poem that compare the hair of his elderly grandparents to the light given by the moon and sun can be attributed to the imagination of a child.

<sup>698</sup> Bor, *3 canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 10.

<sup>699</sup> The printing in the ARE edition is not a reliable reflection of its original appearance.

There are a couple features of the poetic meter that may give clues to its original arrangement.<sup>700</sup> The meter seems to be dominated by five-syllable clauses.<sup>701</sup> There are four lines of *verso agudo* that seem to act as rhythmic punctuation. Let us consider the possibility that it was divided into pentameter, and that the two stanzas are broken into four, based on this *agudo* punctuation. While there is no way to know Rodríguez’s original intent, this different arrangement in Table 6.67 may help the reader and singer better understand its structure, rhythm and form.

Table 6.67. Possible stanzaic arrangement of “La luna tiene cabellos blancos”

**La luna tiene cabellos blancos**

La luna tiene  
cabellos blancos  
como abuelita.  
Abuelito  
bigotes blancos,  
rayos de sol.

Sueño con ellos  
cuando me cantan,  
sueño con ellos  
cuando me duermen.  
Sueños de luna,  
sueños de sol.

Canto de gallos  
cuando despierto.  
Caballo blanco,  
cometa roja.  
Ya se voló,

rompió los hilos,  
hoy pude verla,

**The Moon Has White Hair**

The moon  
has white hairs  
like Grandmother.  
Grandfather  
white mustaches,  
rays of sun.

I dream with them  
while they sing to me,  
I dream with them  
while they put me to sleep.  
Dreams of the moon,  
dreams of the sun.

Rooster songs  
when I wake.  
White horse,  
red kite.  
Already sets itself aflight,

it broke the wires,  
today one could see it,

<sup>700</sup> Fred F. Jehle, *Spanish Versification: Syllable*, Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne, <http://users.ipfw.edu/jehle/poesia/sylcount.htm> (accessed July 28, 2017). In Spanish, the number of syllables per line determines poetic meter. The *palabra llana* (word with stress on the second-to-last syllable) is the standard. A line that ends in a *palabra aguda* (stress on the last syllable) adds 1 to the syllable count. A line that ends with a *palabra esdrújula* (stress on the third-to-last syllable) subtracts 1 from the count. A line that ends with a *palabra sobresdrújula* (stress on the fourth-to-last syllable) subtracts 2 from the count. A line or *verso* that ends with each type of word is called *verso agudo*, *verso llano*, etc. The combining of vowels is called synalepha across words and syneresis within words. Poetic license separates vowels—hiatus (across words) and diaresis (within a word).

<sup>701</sup> *Abuelito* would employ diaresis to be five syllables: A. bu. e. li. to.

está dormida  
cerca del sol.  
—Fernando Rodríguez

it is sleeping  
next to the sun.  
—Nicholas Miguel

### Te aguardaba entre mástiles

Table 6.68. General information about “Te aguardaba entre mástiles”

Song Title	Te aguardaba entre mástiles
Collection Title	<i>Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano</i>
Position in Collection	II
Voice	Mezzo-Soprano/Alto
Range	B <sub>3</sub> —D <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Mimina Rodríguez Lezama
Poet’s Origin	Upata, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Hijo
Original Poem Publication	<i>La palabra sin rostro</i> , 1975
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1970
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.69. Text and poetic translation for “Te aguardaba entre mástiles”<sup>702</sup>

#### Te aguardaba entre mástiles

Te aguardaba entre mástiles  
confundido al oleaje del ramaje celeste  
el alba perseguía la fuga de los peces  
y autóctonas guaruras  
rompían el sortilegio del arpa sideral.  
Alimenté tus labios  
con la dulzura humilde del cerezo  
bastaba poco entonces para trenzar los mimbres  
tu beso tenía fresco  
sabor de agua madura  
en la corteza láctea de los frutos  
—Mimina Rodríguez Lezama

#### I Was Waiting for You Between Masts

I was waiting for you between masts  
disoriented at the swell of the sky-blue branches  
the dawn chased the flight of the fish  
and indigenous snails  
they broke the spell of the astral harp  
I fed your lips  
with the gentle sweetness of cherry  
I needed little then to braid the wicker  
your kiss had the  
fresh taste of ripe water  
from the fruits milky shell  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>702</sup> Bor, *3 canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano*, *Obra para voz y piano*, 17.

Table 6.70. Text and poetic translation for “Hijo”<sup>703</sup>

**Hijo (additional stanzas)**

Contabas de la hormiga  
de los pequeños gnomos  
que anclaron en tu almohada balandras de papel  
tus ojos despertaban preguntas y caminos  
en el tibio recinto de los rosados sellos  
Todo estambre de júbilo fue celeste a tu cuna  
tan de amor la tristeza floreció en las guitarras  
no persigas al árbol donde un nido fue lámpara  
devuelve a la tarde sus naves de cristal

Descubre la colina donde zumban los siglos  
donde la sed del hombre auspicia la belleza  
donde el otoño abuelo guarda sus remos blancos  
y esparce su canción de hojas marchitas  
Ayer tan sólo fuiste raíz sobre la tierra  
creciente en los anillos nocturnos de la muerte  
confuso era tu signo  
amargo tu brebaje  
El sol—Arquero Rojo—vistió su jabalina de coral

Eres el siempre niño de la fábula  
aún palpita en tu mano la eternidad del astro  
Eres el siempre niño quemando los veranos  
con la morena chispa del guijarro.  
Para tu adolescencia murió la primavera  
y hay sal en la pupila que atisba  
el sumergido pulmón de la clepsidra

No inicies los pañuelos  
mi devenir arrastra petrificados ríos  
no en vano el humo habita la luz de mis cabellos  
tu ausencia creció en garras colmillos y sudarios.  
Semilla de mis manos  
ternura de mi sangre  
la espiga se hace hombre y el hombre se hizo árbol  
—Mimina Rodríguez Lezama

**Son (additional stanzas)**

You used to talk of the ant  
of the small gnomes  
that would anchor on your pillow paper yachts  
your eyes awoke questions and roads  
in the indifferent premises of the pink stamps  
Every yarn of jubilation was heavenly at your crib  
as with love, sadness blossomed in the guitars  
do not seek the tree where a nest was a lamp  
return to the evening your boats of glass

Discover the hill where the centuries buzz  
where the thirst of man funds beauty  
where grandfather autumn keeps his white oars  
and spreads his song of withered leaves  
yesterday you were only just a root on the earth  
growing in the nighttime rings of death  
confused was your gesture  
bitter your brew  
The sun—Red Archer—wears his spear of coral.

You are forever that fabled boy  
the eternity of the star even beats in your hand  
You are forever that boy burning the summers  
with the dark-skinned wit of the pebble  
For your adolescence the spring died  
and there is salt in the pupil that watches  
the submerged lung of the clepsydra (water-clock)

Don't start the handkerchiefs  
my transformation sweeps over petrified rivers  
not in vain, the smoke inhabits the light of my hair  
your absence grew in talons, fangs and shrouds.  
Seed of my hands  
affection of my blood  
the sprig became man and man became the tree  
—Nicholas Miguel

Poetry Analysis of *Te aguardaba entre mástiles*

“Te aguardaba entre mástiles” was excerpted from the longer poem “Hijo” by Mimina Rodríguez Lezama. I found this poem in *La palabra sin rostro* published by Monte Avila in 1975, five years after the composition date of the song. This is the only edition of this collection

<sup>703</sup> Mimina Rodríguez Lezama, “Hijo,” *La palabra sin rostro* (Caracas: Monte Ávila, 1975), 41-43.

that I could find. Rodríguez Lezama was a close friend of Bor's and it is possible that Bor was privy to the poem before its publication, or that it was published elsewhere, such as a periodical.

Rodríguez's poem, written with sparse punctuation in a stream of consciousness, is very dense with rich metaphors that at once enchant and unsettle the reader. The poem is about a boy, given the clue from the title, "Son." Each stanza occupies a moment in the boy's growth from a nursing infant in the first, learning to talk and make sense of the world in the second, growing to adolescence in the fourth, and finally becoming a man in the final line. The poet mixes past-tense memory with present-tense metaphorical instructions "do not seek the tree," "Discover the hill," and "Don't start the handkerchiefs." The poet clings to the memory of their younger child, "You are forever that fabled boy," and sheds tears, "salt in the pupil that watches," for the passage of time, represented by the clepsydra. This water-clock, perhaps, is meant to measure time in the tears the mother sheds in love, joy and sadness over her son.

Bor's excerpt is simpler and focuses on the many tropes commonly found within Venezuelan poetry: the sea and all things nautical, as well as native animals, and plants. Bor's excerpt also makes the relationship vague: the poet could be speaking to a lover. Bor's intention to broaden the scope of text is evident in her elision of Rodríguez's title, which had given important context to the metaphors of the poem. "I fed your lips" is not simply literal as in "I nursed you," but could be a metaphor for a kiss. The wet kiss of the infant becomes the kiss of a lover, taking advantage of the regular romantic association of fruit, a trope also present in Blanco's *Giraluna*.

## Sequía

Table 6.71. General information about “Sequía”

Song Title	Sequía
Collection Title	<i>Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano</i>
Position in Collection	III
Voice	Mezzo-Soprano/Alto
Range	C <sub>4</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Francisco Lárez Granado
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1970
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.72. Text and poetic translation for “Sequía”<sup>704</sup>

### Sequía

Hace tiempo que no llueve,  
las fuentes están exhaustas  
y las angustias del pueblo  
se enfilan hacia las charcas.

Por las veredas con sol,  
con luna o madrugada  
saltando anémicos verdes  
de ortigas y de retamas,  
anda la sed sofocante  
tras la sonrisa del agua.

De las múcuras vacías  
el viento de la sabana  
arranca un son moncorde  
y la voz de una muchacha  
dispara al aire la flecha  
de una copla intencionada:

### Drought

It has been a while without rain,  
the fountains are exhausted  
and the worried people of the town  
line up at the pond.

On the sidewalk in the sun,  
moonlight, or twilight  
jumping over the anemic greens  
of nettle and broom,  
the suffocating thirst goes  
to the smile of water.

From the empty jugs,  
the wind of the savannah  
draws out a monotonous sound  
and the voice of a girl  
shoots into the air the arrow  
of a deliberate verse:

<sup>704</sup> Bor, *3 canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano, Obra para voz y piano*, 30.

Table 6.72 – continued.

Con hiel no se coje abejas,  
con sed no se apagan llamas,  
y promesas incumplidas  
como la hiel son amargas.

y por veredas con sol,  
con luna o madrugada  
anda el pueblo con su angustia  
buscando alivio en las charcas,<sup>705</sup>  
Sequía, sequía, ¡Ah!  
—Francisco Lárez Granados

With bile one cannot harvest from bees,  
with thirst one doesn't squelch flames,  
and incomplete promises  
like bile are bitter.

and on the sidewalks in the sun,  
moonlight, or twilight  
the town goes with its anxiety  
searching for relief in the pools,  
Drought, drought, Ah!  
—Nicholas Miguel

### Poetry Analysis of Sequía

The original publication to which “Sequía” belongs could not be found. Research in Venezuela is necessary. Rhyme is at first alternating, xaxa, but develops into an almost relentless rhyme on the vowel *a* every line. The onomatopoeic qualities of this rhyme imitate the sighs of thirsty exhausted residents of the drought-stricken area. Themes of nature and man's place within it are common to Lárez Granado.

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<sup>705</sup> In the score, this line reads “a” instead of “en” as it is written after the music when the poem is presented in full.



***Un títere escondido***

Table 6.73. General information about “Un títere escondido”

Song Title	Un títere escondido
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified
Range	B <sub>3</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Carlos Augusto León
Poet’s Origin	Caracas, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	1981
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.74. Text and poetic translation for “Un títere escondido”<sup>706</sup>

**Un títere escondido**

Un niño escondido  
detrás de un carrusel  
dice cosas muy bellas  
de un amanecer.

Sonrisas de niños  
que miran también  
a la nariz grande  
que vive del bien.

Los niños sonríen  
y el hombre también  
que mira en el arte  
un nuevo amanecer.

Sonríe a la vida,  
sonríele y ven,  
juguemos al aire  
y a un atardecer.  
—Carlos Augusto León

**A Hidden Puppet**

A hidden child  
behind a carousel  
says very beautiful things  
of a sunrise.

Smiles of children  
who also look  
at the big nose  
that lives in goodness.

The children smile  
and also the man  
that sees in art  
new dawn.

Smile at life  
smile and come,  
let’s play in the air  
and in the evening.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>706</sup> Bor, “Un títere escondido,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 10.

## Poetry Analysis of Un títere escondido

I could not find “Un títere escondido” in the published work of Carlos Augusto León. The “carousel” in the first stanza is likely not a “merry-go-round,” but a slide projector that would use a carousel, or circular slide tray, to hold the slides and prepare them for display. Perhaps the child is describing an image of a sunset being displayed or using the large projector screen for a puppet show or shadow play, an interpretation implied by the title “A Hidden Puppet.”

The poem’s subject matter revolves around children, the influence and importance of parents and adults in society, and the possibility for a better future with art as a tool to achieve it. In the second stanza, the children smile at “the big nose.” This is likely a somewhat humorous synecdoche for a parent, looking at and leaning close to their child, while their child focuses on their big nose (at least it is big compared to theirs).<sup>707</sup> One of the first things children reach for is often the facial features of their parents, so while this synecdoche may seem unflattering from an adult perspective, it represents intimacy and love from that of a child. The poet motivates the reader to create a better future with his call to “smile at life...let’s play” and to see “in art / a new dawn.” Art, poetry, theater, and play are the tools that León sees as essential to a “new dawn,” a sunrise over a life and society worth smiling at. Life, peace, and love are regular themes in León’s poetry.<sup>708</sup>

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<sup>707</sup> David Crystal, *A Dictionary of Language*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1999), 217, 329. Synecdoche is a specific form of metonymy, a type of figurative speech in which a related thing is used to represent something else. For example, “blue-collar” does not refer to clothing per se, but the types of manual and factory labor in which a denim shirt might be worn, or the individuals who do such work. A synecdoche must not only be related in some way, but a smaller part of the thing being referred to: “the strong hand that leads them” refers not just to the hand, but the whole person who is leading.

<sup>708</sup> Ruano. 2652-2653.

Poetry with social significance, is a general feature of twentieth-century Latin-American writers.<sup>709</sup> A “love for humanity” and “the advance of humanity toward new horizons” are social themes that have worked their way into the works of León’s work and those of many authors from the region.<sup>710</sup> Jean Franco’s conclusions about Latin American art are apt not only for León, and most of Bor’s poets, but for the composer herself:

The greatest difference (between Latin American culture and that of the rest of the world) is not the obvious one of diversity of race and landscape, but it is rather related to the fundamental ideas about the ultimate aims of art. While a considerable part of occidental art is principally interested in individual experience and in relations between the sexes, the best Latin-American literary works, and even its paintings, are preoccupied with greatest intensity with social ideals and phenomena.<sup>711</sup>

### *Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico*

Table 6.75. General information about “Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico”

Song Title	Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified
Range	Eb <sub>4</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Modesta Bor
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Language Dialect	Standard or Regional
Composition Date	1986
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

<sup>709</sup> Carrera Andrade, *Reflections on Spanish American Poetry*, 37.

<sup>710</sup> Ibid.

<sup>711</sup> Ibid. Quoting Jean Franco, uncited.

Table 6.76. Text and poetic translation for “Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico”<sup>712</sup>

**Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico**

Duérmete mi niño,  
duérmete mi sol;  
duerme, pedacito  
de mi corazón.

y si tú te duermes,  
yo te compraré,  
caballitos blancos  
cargados de nuez,  
yo te compraré  
un lindo payaso  
con su carrusel.

Si te duermes pronto,  
te voy a traer  
un lindo barquito,  
y un tren de papel.  
Te traeré un osito  
de color de miel,  
y unos zapaticos  
que te harán correr.  
—Modesta Bor

**Lullaby to Put Little Albert to Sleep**

Go to sleep my child,  
go to sleep my sun;  
sleep, little piece  
of my heart.

and if you fall asleep,  
I will buy you,  
little white horses  
loaded with walnuts,  
I will buy you  
a cute clown  
with his carousel.

If you fall asleep quickly,  
I am going to bring you  
a cute little boat,  
and a paper train.  
I will bring you a little bear  
the color of honey,  
and some little shoes  
that will make you run.  
—Nicholas Miguel

**Poetry Analysis of Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico**

This song was written for the grandson of Manolo Puerta, a Cuban musician and Bor’s former classmate in the Soviet Union.<sup>713</sup> They reconnected after many years, and he was her initial contact with the Writers and Artists Union in Cuba that gave her the opportunity on several occasions to travel to Cuba and compete with her compositions.<sup>714</sup> Wahari Sanchez relates, “when my grandmother visited Cuba, she learned that her good friend had had a

<sup>712</sup> Bor, “Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 6.

<sup>713</sup> Communication with Wahári Sanchez and Lena Sanchez Bor.

<sup>714</sup> Maelzner, “Entrevista a Lena Sanchez Bor,” 37.

grandson, and she dedicated this song to him.”<sup>715</sup> That visit was likely during the Second International Festival of Contemporary Music, hosted by the Cuban Writer’ and Artists’ Union in 1986.

Like all the lullabies that Bor penned herself, the text is straightforward and takes advantage of traditional constructs. In this case, the singer lists all the lovely things that they will bring to the child if they fall asleep quickly.

The rhyme scheme may also indicate a dialectical conception. The consistency of the rhyme scheme is strengthened if final /s/ is aspirated, and if the distinction between final /r/ and /l/ is lost (see Chapter 7). If pronounced with those regional and colloquial features, words such as *nuez* [ˈnwɛh] and *duermes* [ˈdwɛr.mɛh] would rhyme with *comparé* [çɔŋ.pa.ˈrɛ], and *zapaticos* [sa.pa.ˈtɪ.kəh] with *osito* [ɔ.ˈsi.tɔ]. The words ending in *l* like *carrusel* [ka.ru.ˈsɛl], *papel* [pa.ˈpɛl], and *miel* [mjɛl], would rhyme with words ending in *r* like *correr* [kɔ.ˈrɛl] and *traer* [tra.ˈɛl]. If pronounced in this manner, the final stanza would have a strong alternating rhyme pattern: abababab. While this is not definitive evidence of a dialectical conception, it increases the likelihood of a regional Caribbean pronunciation, with colloquial variants retained.

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<sup>715</sup> Communication with Wahári Sanchez and Lena Sanchez Bor. Wahári: “cuando mi abuelo visitó Cuba se enteró que su gran amigo había tenido un nieto y le dedico esta canción.”

## *Preciosa*

Table 6.77. General information about “Preciosa”

Song Title	Preciosa
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified
Range	A <sub>3</sub> —B <sub>4</sub>
Poet	Modesta Bor
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Language Dialect	Standard or Regional
Composition Date	1987
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.78. Text and poetic translation for “Preciosa,”<sup>716</sup>

### **Preciosa**

Preciosa, preciosa  
la muñeca de mamá;<sup>717</sup>  
preciosa, preciosa  
es la niña de papá.

Que linda la niña,  
la muñeca de Tatá,  
la muñeca más preciosa  
de mamá y de papá.  
—Modesta Bor

### **Beautiful**

Beautiful, beautiful  
Mama’s little doll;  
beautiful, beautiful  
is Papa’s little girl.

How cute the girl,  
Dada’s little doll,  
Mama and Papa’s  
most beautiful doll.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>716</sup> Bor, “Preciosa,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 5.

<sup>717</sup> The ARE score reads “Es la niña de mamá” within the music. I am assuming that the printing of the poem alone after the music is correct.

## Poetry Analysis of Preciosa

The text of “Preciosa” is straight forward as is most of Bor’s lullaby poetry. “Tatá” is an endearing variant of Papa, and in this case is used as his nickname.<sup>718</sup> The date of this work has not previously been recorded. However, the work was dedicated to Bor’s granddaughter, Wahari Sanchez, who was born September 15, 1987.<sup>719</sup> Wahari is Lena Sanchez Bor’s daughter. Speaking about the song dedicated to her, Wahari says the following:

Every time that I listen to that work, I feel her [Modesta] very close to me, through the music she expressed her love and the variations of this work express many aspects of my personality, such that every time I hear it, I am filled with emotion.<sup>720</sup>

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<sup>718</sup> María Josefina Tejera, “Tata,” vol. 3 of *Diccionario de venezolanismos* (Caracas: Academia Venezolana de la Lengua, et al, 1993), 177. “Tata (masc.) is a rural term meaning either 1. an endearing term for father of the family, or 2. it can also be used as a nickname to refer to one’s father, or to elderly people.” “TATA masculina rural 1. Padre de familia. Es voz de cariño. 2. fórmula de tratamiento Úsase también como apodo Se usa para referirse al padre y a las personas mayores.”

<sup>719</sup> Correspondence with Wahári Sanchez.

<sup>720</sup> Correspondence with Wahári Sanchez. “Cada vez que escucho esa obra la siento a ella muy cerca de mi, a través de la música ella expresaba su amor y las variaciones de esta obra expresan muchos aspectos de mi personalidad así que siempre que la escucho me llena de emoción.”

***Es la luz de tu presencia***

Table 6.79. General information about “Es la luz de tu presencia”

Song Title	Es la luz de tu presencia
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified
Range	D <sub>4</sub> —D <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Modesta Bor y Argenis Rivera
Poet’s Origin	Isla de Margarita, Venezuela & Rio Caribe, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	—
Original Poem Publication	—
Language Dialect	Standard or Regional
Composition Date	1991
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.80. Text and poetic translation for “Es la luz de tu presencia”<sup>721</sup>

**Es la luz de tu presencia**

Es la luz de tu presencia  
la que altera mis sentidos  
es terrible lo que ha sido  
sufrir tanto por tu ausencia.

En la playa de tus ojos  
quiero anclar mi pensamiento,  
y en la costa de tus labios  
expresar lo que yo siento.

En la playa de tus ojos  
quiero anclar mi pensamiento,  
estrecharte entre mis brazos  
y decirte lo que siento.  
—Modesta Bor & Argenis Rivera

**It’s the Light of Your Presence**

It’s the light of your presence  
that flusters my feelings  
it’s awful what has been  
suffering so much by your absence.

On the beach of your eyes  
I want to anchor my thoughts,  
and on the coast of your lips  
to express what I feel.

On the beach of your eyes  
I want to anchor my thoughts,  
embrace you in my arms  
and say to you what I feel.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>721</sup> Bor, “Es la luz de tu presencia,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 6.



## Poetry Analysis of Es la luz de tu presencia

This poem represents the only collaboration within her art song repertoire. Bor would collaborate with Rivera again for the text to the *Cantata del Maíz*, an unfinished composition for children's choir and orchestra that Bor was working on when she died.<sup>722</sup> Argenis Rivera was a student and close friend of Bor, and they often shared musical ideas:

...at that time [Rivera] composed many popular songs and sometimes showed some to Modesta; and she had, as he recalls, the sketches of that song that is similar to a Bolero. Given the link to popular music, she asked him to collaborate to complete the idea of text.<sup>723</sup>

### *Muchachas bajo la lluvia*

Table 6.81. General information about “Muchachas bajo la lluvia”

Song Title	Muchachas bajo la lluvia
Collection Title	—
Position in Collection	—
Voice	Unspecified
Range	Bb <sub>3</sub> —E <sub>5</sub>
Poet	Aquiles Nazoa
Poet's Origin	Caracas, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Muchachas bajo la lluvia
Original Poem Publication	<i>Poesía para colorear</i> , 1961
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	?
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

<sup>722</sup>Correspondence with Armando Nones. Nones is the editor of the ARE editions and a student of Argenis Rivera; Cira Parra, “Tendencias musicales en el nacionalismo venezolano desde la música coral de Modesta Bor,” *Revista de Investigación* 34, no. 69 (2010): 77-105, [http://www.scielo.org.ve/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1010-29142010000100006&lng=es&tlng=es](http://www.scielo.org.ve/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1010-29142010000100006&lng=es&tlng=es) (accessed August 15, 2017). The *Cantata del Maíz* “refers to tales and myths of the Andes for children's choir and orchestra. From it she left the choral part and the accompaniment of piano complete with indications for the orchestration.”

<sup>723</sup> Correspondence with Armando Nones. “...en esa época componía muchas canciones populares y en ocasiones le mostraba algunas a Modesta y que ella tenía según recuerda los bocetos de esa canción que es parecida a un estilo Bolero. Y dado el vínculo a lo popular el pidió colaboración para completar la idea de la letra.”

Table 6.82. Text and poetic translation for “Muchachas bajo la lluvia”<sup>724</sup>

**Muchachas bajo la lluvia**

Muchachas que pasáis bajo la lluvia  
con campanitas de agua en el cabello;  
niñas de la actitud samaritana  
que lleváis levantados los cuadernos  
como para que el agua milagrosa  
su inocente canción escriba en ellos.<sup>725</sup>

Muchachas que ofrecisteis las mejillas  
al fauno pizarón del aguacero;  
frutales niñas que cruzáis la isla tarde de trenzas<sup>726</sup>  
la gris y uniforme nuevo:  
¡Con qué gusto romántico andaría mi corazón  
envuelto en un pañuelo!  
—Aquiles Nazoa

**Girls in The Rain**

Girls, walk out into the rain  
with tinkler bells of water in your hair;  
girls with a Samaritan attitude  
bring your notebooks, lifted above your heads  
as if miraculous water might write  
its innocent song in them.

Girls, offer your cheeks  
to the naughty faun of the downpour;  
girls like fruit trees, weave through the island afternoon  
in your new grey uniform:  
With what romantic pleasure my heart would go  
wrapped up in a handkerchief!  
—Nicholas Miguel

Table 6.83. Text and poetic translation for “Muchachas bajo la lluvia” (additional stanzas)<sup>727</sup>

**Muchachas bajo la lluvia (additional stanzas)**

A ti, delgada niña que transitas  
con paso saltarín de minuterio,  
te pondría esta flor de mi solapa  
—sombrija vegetal—entre los dedos.

Y tú, la de la capa y verde gorro  
de enanito de cuento,  
en una torre de ajedrez podrías  
vivir mientras escampa el aguacero.

O niñas que pasáis bajo la lluvia,  
mojados pajaritos del buen tiempo,  
¡venid, que en barco de papel nos vamos a jugar con la  
lluvia por los puertos!  
—Aquiles Nazoa

**Girls in The Rain (additional stanzas)**

To you, thin girl that circles  
with the lively step of a minute-hand,  
I would give this flower from my lapel  
“vegetable umbrella” between your fingers.

And you, with the cape and green hood  
like a storybook dwarf,  
in a chess castle you would be able  
to live while the downpour clears up.

Oh girls, walk out in the rain,  
wet little birds of the tropics,  
come, for in a paper boat we are going to play with  
the rain at the ports!  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>724</sup> Bor, “Muchachas bajo la lluvia,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 8.

<sup>725</sup> A typo in ARE score reads “escrita” instead of the correct, “escriba.”

<sup>726</sup> The words “cruzáis la isla tarde” are printed wrong in the music of the ARE editions.

<sup>727</sup> Aquiles Nazoa, *Poesía para colorear, Los poemas* (Caracas: Editora Amigos de la poesía, 1961). 53-54. Used with permission.

## Poetry Analysis of Muchachas bajo la lluvia

Nazoa's poem is romantic in nature, full of attractive metaphors and similes to describe the young women who are the object of the poet's admiration. Perhaps, Nazoa is describing a scene of young women leaving school on a rainy day. Bor's redaction retains the initial character of the poem. Elements of Latin American poetry discussed by Carrera Andrade are abundantly present in this poem by Nazoa. The expression of the vitality and vibrancy of life and a focus on the present moment are common, as well as an intention to "penetrate the material world and decipher its secrets by relying upon spontaneous, imaginative intuition."<sup>728</sup> Indeed these features can be found in much of the poetry that Bor set to music.

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<sup>728</sup> Carrera, Andrade, *Reflections on Spanish-American poetry*, 13, 20.

## *Mapa de nuestro mar*

Table 6.84. General information about “Mapa de nuestro mar”

Song Title	Mapa de nuestro mar
Collection Title	<i>Dos canciones para tenor y piano</i> <sup>729</sup>
Position in Collection	?
Voice	Lyric Tenor
Range	D <sub>3</sub> —B <sub>5</sub> , Tenor clef
Poet	Andrés Eloy Blanco
Poet’s Origin	Cumaná, & Isla de Margarita, Venezuela
Original Poem Title	Mapa de nuestro mar
Original Poem Publication	<i>Giraluna: Giraluna y el mar</i> , 1955
Language Dialect	Standard
Composition Date	?
Commercial Recording	—
Publication	Ediciones ARE, 2015

Table 6.85. Text and poetic translation for “Mapa de nuestro mar”<sup>730</sup>

### Mapa de nuestro mar

Del silencio de ayer quedó entreabierta  
la salida hacia el mar que te he guardado,  
donde duerme en el golfo no encontrado  
la península nunca descubierta.

Un mar al pie de tu amargura muerte,  
de faro, y luna y sol desalumbrado;  
agua de fuego en el acantilado,  
sumergida pasión junto a tu puerta.<sup>731</sup>  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

### Map of Our Sea

The exit toward the sea remained half-open  
from yesterday’s silence that I have kept for you,  
where the undiscovered peninsula  
sleeps in the unfound gulf.

A sea at the feet of your sorrowful death,  
with lighthouse, and moon and sun unlit;  
water of fire in the cliff,  
submerged passion next to your door.  
—Nicholas Miguel

<sup>729</sup> “Mapa de nuestro mar” is not listed anywhere as being part of *Dos canciones para tenor y piano* (Two Songs for Tenor and Piano); however, one can confidently say that it does belong to this set. The song is written in tenor clef, which indicates a clear conception of voice type; *Dos canciones para tenor y piano* is the only set specifically indicating the tenor voice. The poet is Andrés Eloy Blanco; *Dos canciones para tenor y piano* lists Eloy Blanco as its poet, and there are no other songs in Bor’s works list attributed to him that are not already accounted for. And finally, no other song in any of her works lists shares this title, and *Dos canciones para tenor y piano* is the only song set in her works lists without specific songs that have been identified.

<sup>730</sup> Bor, “Mapa de nuestro mar,” *Obra para voz y piano*, 7.

<sup>731</sup> There is a typo in the poem following the score of the ARE edition: “Puente” instead of the correct “puerta.”

Table 6.86. Text and poetic translation for “Mapa de nuestro mar” (additional stanzas)<sup>732</sup>

**Mapa de nuestro mar (additional stanzas)**

Viaje de ardida nave y playas solas,  
singladura de sed que así me pierdes,  
racha de ti que así me desarbolas

mar de los mares que mi casco muerdes...  
un mar para tu amor, un mar sin olas,  
un mar que hicimos de silencios verdes...  
—Andrés Eloy Blanco

**Map of our sea (additional stanzas)**

Travel of intrepid ship and solitary beaches,  
nautical day of thirst in which you lose me,  
gust of you in which you undo me,

sea of the seas that bites my hull...  
a sea for your love, a sea without waves,  
a sea we made of green silences...  
—Nicholas Miguel

Poetry Analysis of Mapa de nuestro mar

Blanco’s poem, from *Giraluna*, takes advantage of the most significant trope in Venezuelan poetry: the sea. The images created around the sea by Blanco represent elements of his romantic relationship with his wife, about whom the collection is written. The poet seems to also allude to another poem in the collection “Silencio” discussed early, reusing the symbol of silence as love.

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<sup>732</sup> Blanco, *Giraluna* (Cordillera), 99. “Mapa de nuestro mar” is the ninth poem of “Giraluna y el mar” which is the fourth section of *Giraluna*.

## CHAPTER 7: DICTION AND VENEZUELAN SPANISH

The accent used in most of Venezuela is similar to that of the rest of the Caribbean. It is distinct from the Spanish spoken in Madrid, and that of many Spanish-speaking areas in the USA, although immigrant communities from Puerto Rico and Cuba share dialectical traits with Venezuela.

Generally for academic art music from Venezuela, singers use Standard Latin American Spanish that avoids characteristics strongly associated with Castile and that contains features common to most regions in Latin America.<sup>733</sup> Regionalisms are permitted for popular works, and can also be used in academic compositions with a distinct “popular quality to the lyrics,” a category often found in the composers of the Santa Capilla School, such as “Habladurías” by Antonio Estévez.<sup>734</sup> Modesta Bor “viewed her repertoire for voice and piano as Art Song, not as popular music.”<sup>735</sup> Therefore, one should generally employ Standard Latin American Spanish when singing her works.

Venezuelan regionalisms are not discussed thoroughly in any work addressed to singers. Rees Rohrabacher has a few suggestions for the Caribbean accent that are largely accurate, but are only briefly mentioned.<sup>736</sup> The discussion of these regionalisms would be valuable for understanding the literary dialect in “Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito,” the performance of some other of Bor’s art songs in which a regional dialect may be appropriate, and

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<sup>733</sup> Correspondence with Patricia Caicedo, Cirra Parra, and Armando Nones.

<sup>734</sup> Correspondence with Armando Nones. “Hay obras de otros autores similares que usan una poesía en la cual tiene ya el aire popular en el verso y luego, aunque sea Canción de corte “academico” se usa la forma popular de pronunciación. Como el case de Habladurías de Antonio Estévez.”

<sup>735</sup> Correspondence with Armando Nones. “Modesta veía ese repertorio de Voz y Piano como Canción Artística. No como repertorio popular.”

<sup>736</sup> Denise Elaine Rees-Rohrbacher, *A Spanish Diction Manual for Singers*, (diss., Indiana University, 1985), 63.

for the performance of folk music alongside Bor's art songs. Therefore, this paper will discuss the regional dialect of Venezuela and the Caribbean in addition to the Standard Latin American Dialect. Important Spanish linguistic works provide the source material for this discussion.

"Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito" from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* with poetry by Emilio Ballagas uses an Afro-Cuban dialect related to *bozal*. Ballagas' literary dialect includes many features common to regional Caribbean pronunciation such as *lamdacismo*, and consonant weakening and omission.

In addition, an argument could be made for the use of regionalisms in "Es la luz de tu presencia" which is composed in a more overtly popular form, the lullabies dedicated to a specific individual, because they are intimate and personal, and the children's songs, because of their youthful demographic.

The inclusion of folk and popular music alongside Bor's art songs is a good programming choice that can help orient the audience's ears to the sounds they will hear in a more learned music environment. Unaccompanied *Cantos de Arreo*, *Cantos de Ordeño*, and other genres related to the music about to be performed would be easy to incorporate because they do not require any special instrumentation or creative arrangement for the piano. The recordings of Soledad Bravo, Jesus Sevillano, Quinteto Contrapunto, Quinteto Cantacclaro, and Morella Muñoz are possible sources of folk melodies for the singer. Of course, the transcriptions by Ramón y Rivera included in his numerous publications are also clear options, but the singer should be sure to consult the above artists to accurately capture the appropriate style.

## The Venezuelan Accent

The dialects of Latin America share many features with the Andalusian dialect, from the south of Spain.<sup>737</sup> The concordance between America and Andalusia developed “undoubtedly as a result of the initial predominance of Andalusian migrants, and the continued relationship with the Canary Islands.”<sup>738</sup> *Lenguaplana*, a linguistic process of consonant relaxation apparent in Andalusian Spanish and adopted in the New World, is responsible for many of the differences in dialect.<sup>739</sup> Native languages, African languages, and other European languages also contributed to the development of unique dialect characteristics.

The distinction between mountainous and coastal areas common throughout Latin America is also true of Venezuela. The northern tip of the Andes mountain range runs near the western edge of Venezuela and three Andean states exhibit different pronunciation patterns than the rest of the country. In the “states of Táchira, Mérida, and Trujillo the articulation is more like that of highland Colombia across the border.”<sup>740</sup> Syllable-final /s/, /l/, /r/, and /n/ are pronounced clearly.<sup>741</sup> The rest of the country “is for the most part that of the Caribbean.”<sup>742</sup> Modesta Bor was born in the state of Nueva Esparta, off the Northern coast, lived and worked most of her life in Caracas, the capital city and cultural hub of the state, and spent the last years of her life in Mérida.

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<sup>737</sup> Lincoln D. Canfield, *Spanish Pronunciation in the Americas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 2.

<sup>738</sup> Eleanor Greet Cotton and John M. Sharp, *Spanish in the Americas* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2001), 203. “...sin duda como consecuencia del inicial predominio migratorio andaluz y de la continua relación con Canarias;” Canfield, 2-3.

<sup>739</sup> Canfield, 2, 5, 7.

<sup>740</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>741</sup> *Ibid.* One poet used by Bor, Yolanda Osuna, is from the state of Mérida.

<sup>742</sup> *Ibid.*



The rules have been assigned to two categories: Standard and Regional. “Standard” represents traits common to most of Latin America and appropriate for the generic accent used in most of Bor’s art songs. The failure to use these traits will inappropriately associate the singer with Castilian Spanish, and a few isolated regions in South America.<sup>743</sup> The aspiration of the unvoiced velar fricative: /x/→/h/, and the lack of voiced [ʃ] or [z] allophone of /s/ before a voiced consonant are somewhat regional characteristics appropriate for a standard dialect for composers from Venezuela and the Caribbean.

“Regional” is used for those traits that are more specific to the Venezuelan accent (except the Andean states) and regions of similar accent: Caribbean Antilles islands, eastern coast of Mexico, eastern half of Panama, and north coast of Colombia.<sup>744</sup> Use of these traits will associate the singer, the poet and composer with common people from these regions and are more appropriate for popular music, and the specific exceptions within Bor’s repertoire mentioned above. Traits from other Latin American dialects and Castilian Spanish that the singer should avoid are also indicated.

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<sup>743</sup> Canfield, 15, 17.

<sup>744</sup> Vincent Alonso Zamora, *Dialectología española* (Madrid: Gredos, 1979), 182. Venezuelan Andean states are Táchira, Mérida, and Trujillo.

## *Consonants*

Table 7.1. Venezuelan pronunciation rules summary

### **Standard**

*Yeísmo*: *y* and *ll* → /j/

*Seseo*: *s*, *z*, and *c* before *e*, and *i* → /s/

Laminal /s/

Aspiration of unvoiced velar fricative: /x/ → /h/

Lack of voiced [ʒ] or [z] allophone of /s/ before a voiced consonant

### **Regional**

Aspiration or omission of syllable-final /s/: /-s/ → [h] or → [Ø]<sup>745</sup>

Velarization of implosive /N/: word and sometimes syllable-final /n/ → [ŋ]

*Lamdacismo* /ɾ/ → [l], *Rotacismo* /l/ → [r], and Hybridization [ɫ]

Weakening of final consonants and intervocalic voiced stop phonemes

### Standard

#### Yeísmo [j]

*Yeísmo* /je. 'is.mo/ is the practice of using [j], the voiced palatal fricative, for both *y* and *ll*.

[j] is similar to [j], the palatal approximant, but tighter, with audible friction against the hard

palate.<sup>746</sup> The "Castilian /k/ is nonexistent" in Venezuela;<sup>747</sup> *yeísmo* is categorical for all coastal

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<sup>745</sup> Note that [Ø] indicates an omitted sound, NOT the mixed vowel [ø].

<sup>746</sup> *-ísmo* is the Spanish equivalent to -ism. Linguistic patterns of all varieties are often named as \_\_\_\_*ísmo*, with the blank filled by the phone or word in question.

<sup>747</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204.

areas.<sup>748</sup> *Lleísmo* /ʎe.is.mo/ is the traditional Castilian practice of using [ʎ] for *ll* and [j] for *y*.<sup>749</sup>

The phoneme [j] has a clear fricative quality throughout most of Venezuela, except the Andean region, and is realized as [ɣ] at the beginning of a phrase.<sup>750</sup>

#### Seseo /s/

*Seseo* /se.'se.o/ is the use of /s/ for *s*, *z*, and *c* before *e*, and *i*, and it is a shared feature of all American Spanish dialects. *Seseo*'s Castilian counterpart, *distinción*, preserves the differentiation between *s*, pronounced /s/ and *z*, and *c* before *e*, and *i* pronounced /θ/.<sup>751</sup> The term *ceceo* /θe.'θe.o/ is sometimes applied to the Castilian pronunciation, however, it is more appropriately used in reference to a strictly Andalusian practice.<sup>752</sup>

#### Laminal /s/

The laminal /s/ should be familiar to most English speakers. “Laminal” indicates the use of the blade of the tongue. The “American Spanish /s/ is usually of high resonance, more often dorsoalveolar than apicodental...”<sup>753</sup> “Apical” refers to a consonant produced with the tip of the

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<sup>748</sup> Manuel Alvar, *Manual de dialectología hispánica: el español de América* (Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, S.A., 1996), 12; Robert M Hammond, *The Sounds of Spanish: Analysis and Application (With Special Reference to American English)*, (Somerville: Cascadilla, 2001), 375-376; Rees-Rohrbacher, 63.

<sup>749</sup> Maria Del Coro Delgado, *Castilian Spanish for Singers: A Pronunciation Study and its Application to the Peninsular Vocal Repertoire*. (diss., University of Iowa, 2006), 326. Interestingly, Delgado describes that even in Spain “.../ʎ/ is gradually disappearing from the inventory of sounds of Castilian Spanish.” There are some isolated areas in Latin America of *lleista* dialect, see Canfield.

<sup>750</sup> John M. Lipski, *Latin American Spanish* (London: Longman, 1994), 350.

<sup>751</sup> Alvar, 120; Hammond, 375-376.

<sup>752</sup> Hammond, 360. *Ceceo* is a “stigmatized pronunciation trait outside of Andalucía.” “In pure *ceceo* only the phone [θ] is used for the letters “s”, “z”, and “c” before front vowels, but in the speech of many Andalusians the two fricatives [θ] and [s] are found in free variation.”

<sup>753</sup> Canfield, 17.

tongue, and Castilian Spanish is noted for its use of the apical-alveolar [ʒ], which is essentially an /s/ produced with the tip of the tongue creating friction with the alveolar ridge. The apical-alveolar [ʒ] sounds darker than the laminal /s/ most Americans are accustomed to.<sup>754</sup>

/x/ → /h/

In most of Venezuela and Caribbean areas of a similar dialect, the phoneme /x/, normally indicated orthographically with *j* and *g* before *i* and *e*, is changed to /h/.<sup>755</sup>

Cotton and Sharp elaborate that /h/ “can be pronounced in two ways, which are in free variation. It can be a very weak velar consonant in which the tongue does not touch the velum, producing a sound acoustically similar to [h], or it may be an actual [h], laryngeal or pharyngeal.”<sup>756</sup> This trait too seems to have its roots in Andalusia.<sup>757</sup> The varieties of [h] described by Cotton and Sharp might be notated as follows: weak velar /h/ → [h<sup>v</sup>], pharyngeal /h/ → [h̠], or [h̡], and laryngeal or glottal /h/ → [h̥].<sup>758</sup> The English speaker is likely to hear these as different intensities of /h/, without any meaningful distinction between them, and Venezuelans

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<sup>754</sup> Ibid., 2-5. Canfield explains that in Castilian Spanish, this sound derived from the Latin *S*, and is indicated with a written *s*. In Andalusia and the New World, it was replaced by the apicodental (tip of the tongue at the teeth) or the more common dorsoalveolar (laminar: blade of the tongue at the alveolar ridge) /s/ through *lenguaplana*.

<sup>755</sup> Ibid., 91; Alvar, 120; Rees-Rohrbacher, 63; Hammond, 361.

<sup>756</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204.

<sup>757</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204. Citing Navarro Tomás, *El Español en Puerto Rico*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Rio Piedras: Editorial Universitaria Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1948), 71-74. Some sources include /h/ as a new phoneme for Caribbean and Andalusian Spanish, while some consider it the dominant allophone. This paper will consider it as a replacement phoneme, a la Hammond.

<sup>758</sup> The superscript [h<sup>v</sup>] indicates velarization. [h̠] is the unvoiced pharyngeal fricative. The superscript [h̡] indicates pharyngealization. “Laryngeal” articulation is typically referred to as “glottal” in standard IPA.

probably experience them similarly.<sup>759</sup> The singer can decide based on the intensity of the music and meaning of the text how much friction the /h/ requires, and where to generate it.

Lack of voiced [ʒ] or [z] allophone of /s/ before a voiced consonant

The phoneme /s/ does not become voiced before a voiced consonant in most of Venezuela. This is a result of its frequent aspiration and omission in popular dialects discussed below. Despite this being a somewhat regional practice, even when sounded, the /s/ should remain unvoiced in the Standard dialect used for most of Bor's art songs.<sup>760</sup>

Regional

Syllable-final /s/→[h]

Syllable-final phonemic /s/ is often aspirated—i.e. realized as [h]—or omitted altogether [Ø] in more rustic speech. Rees-Rohrbacher instructs to “pronounce all syllable final S's as aspirate [h].”<sup>761</sup> Other authors concur, including the possibility that the sound be omitted altogether: “in all but the Andean section, the syllable-final /s/ is often aspirated or dropped: *buscan unas hojas verdes* ['buh.kəŋ 'u.nah 'ɔ.hah 'βɛl.ðɛh].<sup>762</sup> It is important to note that it is final *phonemic* /s/ which becomes aspirated, not just orthographic *s*. Phonemic /s/ includes those instances of /s/ notated with orthographic *z*. Therefore, this practice includes words like *voz*,

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<sup>759</sup> The term “free variation” used by Cotton and Sharp indicates this kind of phonetic freedom.

<sup>760</sup> Delgado explains that even in Castilian Spanish, voicing is gentle and that foreign singers often over-voice the /s/. She instructs that unless particularly familiar with the sound, singers should avoid voicing..

<sup>761</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 63.

<sup>762</sup> Canfield, 91; Hammond, 375-376.

[ˈbɔh], *capaz* [ka.ˈpah], *andaluz* [aŋ.ða.ˈluh], *cadiz* [ka.ˈðih], etc.<sup>763</sup> An important consequence of this practice mentioned above is that /s/ has no [z] allophone as it does in Castilian Spanish and the highland regions of Latin America.<sup>764</sup>

While this practice of aspiration is not categorical for all speakers, it is very pervasive.<sup>765</sup> In one study of the pronunciation of the Canary Islands, which share most traits with Andalusia and the Caribbean, weakening of final /s/ was recorded 90.56% of the time among the urban population.<sup>766</sup> Such a pervasive practice, even among the urban population, brings this phenomenon close to a general rule of pronunciation, and differentiates it from other consonant weakening practices. It is important to remember, however, that the phoneme remains /s/, with [h] simply being the dominant allophone. Therefore, [s] is still understood even though [h] is usually used in these instances.

Aspiration of final /s/ may even represent the preferred cultured dialect of Venezuela. Interestingly, Venezuela presents “one of the few cases in Latin America where an /s/-weakening dialect constitutes the prestige norm vis-à-vis /s/-retaining dialects.”<sup>767</sup> The speech of the Andean region, which retains its final /s/ pronunciation, “is considered quaint and rustic” compared to the “consonant-weak dialect of Caracas.”<sup>768</sup> This dynamic is in contrast to most other regions

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<sup>763</sup> Hammond, 364.

<sup>764</sup> Alvar, 120. In Castilian Spanish, /s/ is often pronounced as [z] before a voiced consonant: Castilian pronunciation of *muchas gracias* would be [mu.caz.ɣra.θjas]. Delgado prefers the notation [s̺], a voiced [s]—a sort gentle [z] indicating a shorter length and less strength than the typical English [z].

<sup>765</sup> Juan C. Zamora Munné and Jorge M. Guitart, *Dialectología Hispanoamericana: Teoría, descripción, historia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Salamanca, Spain: Publicaciones del Colegio de España, 1988), 130-131.

<sup>766</sup> Hammond, 366. Citing José Andtonio Samper Padilla, *Estudio sociolingüístico del español de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria* (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: La Caja de Canarias, 1990), 64.

<sup>767</sup> Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*, 350-351.

<sup>768</sup> *Ibid.*, 138-139.

including neighboring Colombia, in which consonant weakening in general is considered uncultivated.<sup>769</sup> In addition, the subtle presence of the [h], rather than simply dropping the /s/ altogether, is important and can localize the dialect with regards to social class. Lipski summarizes that “aspiration continues to be preferred in higher social classes, while elision predominates at lower levels.”<sup>770</sup>

The recordings of Grau and Muñoz reveal the occasional aspiration of word-final /s/, despite a general use of Standard Latin American Spanish. However, this only occurs sporadically and on short common words, which indicates that it might have been unintentional. The fact that this practice crept into the attentive diction of these singers demonstrates the strength of this practice in Venezuela.

#### Velarization: Syllable-final /n/→[ŋ]

The phoneme /n/ is realized as the velarized nasal [ŋ] in syllable-final (post-nuclear) position.<sup>771</sup> Hammond’s description includes the possibility for velarization of any *n* or *m* in a syllable-final environment, and other authors agree.<sup>772</sup> Cotton and Sharp note the possibility of velarization “especially when its syllable is a prefix that corresponds to an independent preposition like *en* or *con*.”<sup>773</sup> The possibilities offered by Hammond include the words:

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<sup>769</sup> Ibid., 351.

<sup>770</sup> Ibid., 350. Citing Ricardo Calles and Paola Bentivoglio, “Hacía un perfil sociolingüístico del habla de Caracas,” in *Actas del I Congreso Internacional sobre el Español de América*, edited by Jose Moreno del Alba (San Juan: Academia Puertorriqueña de la Lengua Española, 1986), 619-632.

<sup>771</sup> Hammond, 257, 361-362. Andean States excluded. This is also true of Caribbean Spanish in general, and Andalusian Spanish; Canfield, 7. “...common in southern Mexico, all of Central America, coastal Columbia, most of Venezuela, Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia.” In linguistic definition, the syllable is divided into the “onset” and the “rhyme.” The “onset” includes the initial consonant(s), and the “rhyme” is divided into the “nucleus” and the “coda.” The nucleus includes the central vowel, while the “coda” is comprised of the final consonant(s).

<sup>772</sup> Alvar, 120.

<sup>773</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204. They indicate that its origin is Andalusian.

*imposible, un vaso, énfasis, un fuego, mantener, un día, anzuelo, un zapato, ancho, un chanco, conlleva, un yeso, ángel, un gesto, un ojo, and pan*, all of whose nasals could be realized as [ŋ].<sup>774</sup> Instances excluded are before another nasal phoneme (governed by different rules described below), and syllable-initial *n* or *m*, the one position in which these consonants avoid any mutation).

This process, like the sequencing of two nasal phonemes, is dependent upon the speech environment. Hammond describes the sequencing of two adjacent nasal phonemes ([in. 'na. tɔ̃] → [i. 'na. tɔ̃]; [him. 'na. sɔ̃] → [hin. 'na. sɔ̃]; [in. mɛ. 'ðja. tɔ̃] → [im. mɛ. 'ðja. tɔ̃]) as dependent on the speech register used.<sup>775</sup> Hammond does not specifically define the environments in which velarization occurs beyond indicating the factors that might be pertinent such as age and education, but one can assume that more educated individuals, and those in more formal speaking environments employ less velarization of the phoneme /n/, similar to nasal sequencing. Singers can decide how educated the singer of the particular folk genre might be and employ the practice accordingly.<sup>776</sup>

There are authors whose description of this practice is more restrictive. Canfield and Rees-Rohrbacher indicate this practice for word-final /n/ only.<sup>777</sup> Another caveat often placed upon it is that the word-final position must also be “before a following vowel or before a pause,” in other words, not before another word that begins with a consonant in the same breath group.<sup>778</sup>

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<sup>774</sup> Hammond, 258.

<sup>775</sup> Ibid., 259. “Formal” he describes, is the register used when “speaking to a child, to a foreigner, or to an auditorially challenged individual.”

<sup>776</sup> Hammond, 257.

<sup>777</sup> Canfield, 91. “and /n/ word final before a pause or a vowel is generally [ŋ].”

<sup>778</sup> Ibid., 7.



Perhaps in this line of thinking, if the /n/ is followed by another consonant, it assumes the articulatory position of that consonant through regressive assimilation (the usual practice for Spanish).<sup>779</sup>

Rees-Rohrbacher, whose work is addressed to singers, recommends that only word-final /n/ become [ŋ], and that seems to be the most common and consistent velarization to occur, especially before a pause, or breath.<sup>780</sup> Below is a table indicating situations that may be velarized ranked from most to least likely.<sup>781</sup>

Table 7.2. Velarized [ŋ] situations

1	before a velar consonant [g], [k] (normal in Standard and Regional Venezuelan Spanish)
2	breath-group final position
3	independent prepositions <i>en</i> and <i>con</i>
5	word final before a vowel, esp. common words, like <i>un</i> , <i>también</i> , <i>pan</i> , etc.
6	syllable final before a vowel
7	word final before a non-velar consonant
8	syllable final before a non-velar consonant
9	in rare words or words that are difficult to understand

Lamdacismo /r/→[l], Rotacismo /l/ →[r], and Hybridization [l]

*Lamdacismo* or lamdasization is the practice of substituting an /l/ for /r/, "ca[l]ta for *carta*, pue[l]ta for *puerta*."<sup>782</sup> *Rotacismo* or rotacization is the practice of substituting an /r/ for an

<sup>779</sup> Hammond, 251-256; Delgado.

<sup>780</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 63.

<sup>781</sup> Hammond, 257. My own ranking based on the literature.

<sup>782</sup> Alvar, 120. "La neutralización de la /l/ y /r/ en posición implosiva da lugar a dos fenómenos conocidos como rotacismo (bo[r]sa por bolsa, sa[r]ta por salta) y lamdacismo (ca[l]ta por carta, pue[l]ta por puerta).

/l/, "bo[r]sa for *bolsa*, sa[r]ta for *salta*."<sup>783</sup> The related practice of hybridization is the "co-articulation of the phones [r] and [l]" and it is represented with a number of symbols [r], [ɣ], [rʲ], [lʲ], [r̥], [r̥l], [r̥l̥] or the standard IPA symbol [ɭ].<sup>784</sup>

In the Venezuelan dialect, these practices are heard in "the pronunciation of syllable-final and word-final /l/ in unaffected speech."<sup>785</sup> Lipski indicates that *lamdacismo* is the most frequent practice, but *rotacismo* is sporadically present.<sup>786</sup> In general, [r] and [l] in syllable- and word-final positions are in free variation.<sup>787</sup> This practice is present throughout the Caribbean and Andalusia.<sup>788</sup>

Education level and class also affect the practice. This is especially true in Caracas, where *lamdacismo* and *rotacismo* are found "only among the lowest sociocultural strata."<sup>789</sup> Still, for most of the country, it is typical: "the neutralization of /l/ and /r/ "is more or less general among the uneducated population throughout the country (except the Andes), and even among people of a certain cultural level in the plains and in the east" i.e. not Caracas in the north, or the mountainous west."<sup>790</sup>

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<sup>783</sup> Ibid.

<sup>784</sup> Hammond, 288. For [ɭ]; Canfield, 91. For [ɣ]; Timothy Lee Face, *Guide to the Phonetic Symbols of Spanish* (Somerville, Mass.: Cascadia, 2008). 74-77, 103-108, 157, 159, 162.

<sup>785</sup> Hammond, 288. Hammond uses /l̥/ to indicate a palatized alveolar lateral, with a resultant post-alveolar place of articulation which he claims is standard for Spanish. Modern IPA would notate this [lʲ].

<sup>786</sup> Alvar, 120. According to Alvar, there may be some geological distribution within Venezuela between the two practices: *rotacismo* seems more prevalent in the East, while *lamdacismo* is more prevalent in the central-West.

<sup>787</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204. Citing Navarro, *Puerto Rico*, 81.

<sup>788</sup> Canfield, 7. and Cotton and Sharp, 204. Citing Navarro, *Puerto Rico*, 81.

<sup>789</sup> Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*, 350.

<sup>790</sup> Alvar, 120. "...la neutralización de /l/ y /r/ "es más o menos general entre la población no educada de todo el país (excepto en Los Andes), e incluso entre la gente de cierto nivel cultural en Los Llanos y en Oriente."

It is difficult to make concrete recommendations on this practice because most speakers use their own idiolect.<sup>791</sup> In addition, little discussion of this practice has been directed at singers. Rees-Rohrbacher, the only work directed at singers to address it, recommends *lamdacismo* and instructs that “it’s up to the singer how many to do.”<sup>792</sup> The hybridized [r] and [l], if the singer can manage to produce it well, would be a good choice.<sup>793</sup> The singer could use the hybridized allophone for implosive *r* or *l* or both in all or select cases.

If the singer does differentiate clearly, they should probably be consistent with which words they choose to lambdacize, or roticize except in the most rustic songs. Although vacillation between the phones /l/ and /r/ is common, it tends to reduce and become more consistent with moderate levels of education, often with the speaker completely replacing their phonetic, and often orthographic, concept of the word with whatever version to which they are most accustomed.<sup>794</sup> Again, the singer can decide how educated the singer of the genre might be and let that guide his or her choices.

### Final and Intervocalic Consonant Weakening

Both Andalusian and Caribbean dialects include a significantly greater and more frequent practice of consonant weakening than Castilian Spanish.<sup>795</sup> Consonant weakening in the following manners are appropriate for folk and popular music.

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<sup>791</sup> In other words, everyone does it slightly differently

<sup>792</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 63. She does not forbid rotacismo; however, she does not mention it.

<sup>793</sup> Hammond’s text includes a website with free audio files that might prove useful to the singer. Specifically Table 19.7 on page 289, <http://www.cascadilla.com/ssaa/index.html> (accessed, June 22, 2017).

<sup>794</sup> Alonso, 122-123.

<sup>795</sup> Hammond, 375-376. According to Hammond, these are “general phonological processes in coastal dialects of the New World...[that] vary from dialect to dialect and among speakers...”

One of the more significant of these is the weakening of /d̪/, [ð̞] in intervocalic and word-final position.<sup>796</sup> Cotton and Sharp indicate that the "relaxed [ð̞]" is present "even in cultured speech" and is "often deleted."<sup>797</sup> And, according to Alvar, the *-ado* ending is particularly susceptible to weakening.<sup>798</sup> It may even be deleted altogether.<sup>799</sup> Again displaying Samper Padilla's findings of a dialectically similar area, intervocalic /d̪/, is weakened close to 70% of the time.<sup>800</sup> Weakening is true of the other stop phonemes /g/ and /b/ as well in intervocalic position in the Caribbean at large, but it seems to be less apparent in Venezuela.<sup>801</sup>

The phoneme /r/, in coda position with a following consonant or pause, is weakened and often omitted.<sup>802</sup> The loss of this consonant is "relatively common in Caracas," especially in verb infinitives.<sup>803</sup> This practice may actually occur almost as frequently as omission of syllable-final /s/: as much as 80% of the time in a region of similar dialect.<sup>804</sup> Remembering that /r/ and /l/ are

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<sup>796</sup> Alvar, 120. "El alófono fricativo [ð̞] se debilita en posición intervocálica...Ésta, sin embargo, puede darse cuando [ð̞] está en posición final de palabra;" Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*, 350.

<sup>797</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 203. "More limited to lowland, even in cultured speech, is a relaxed [ð̞], which is often deleted." Citing Alonso, 412.

<sup>798</sup> Alvar, 120. "El alófono fricativo [ð̞] se debilita...en mayor grado en la terminación *-ado*, aun cuando raramente llega a la elisión total." but claims that [ð̞] is rarely omitted altogether.

<sup>799</sup> Hammond, 365.

<sup>800</sup> Hammond, 366. Exactly 67.93% in urban areas of the Canary Islands. Citing Samper Padilla, José Andtonio. *Estudio sociolingüístico del español de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: La Caja de Canarias, 1990, 262.

<sup>801</sup> Ibid, 365. Hammond notates these weakened consonants as a smaller, raised symbol (superscript): *tobillo* [tɔ. <sup>β</sup>i. jɔ̞], *lago* [<sup>β</sup>la. <sup>ɣ</sup>ɔ̞], *pelado* [pɛ. <sup>β</sup>la. <sup>ɣ</sup>ɔ̞]. The phonemes /g/ and /b/ are not mentioned in specific discussions of Venezuelan dialect by authors such as Lipski, Canfield, and Alvar, and are only discussed by Hammond in his general description of Caribbean Spanish.

<sup>802</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204.

<sup>803</sup> Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*. 350.

<sup>804</sup> Hammond, 366. Exactly 81.85% in the urban population of the Canary Islands. Citing Samper, 152.

often confused in this dialect region, /l/ undergoes similar changes in the same phonetic environment, nearly 70% of the time.<sup>805</sup>

Word- and syllable-final /n/—often pronounced [ŋ]— is also weakened or omitted on infrequent occasion.<sup>806</sup> When this does occur, the preceding vowel is usually nasalized: *pan*, /pan/→[paŋ]→[pãŋ]→[pã].<sup>807</sup>

In Andalusian and Caribbean Spanish, the pronunciation of the affricate /tʃ/ is often weakened, losing its plosive stop component: /tʃ/→[ʃ].<sup>808</sup> This practice, however, is not as strong in Venezuela as it is in the rest of the dialect zone. Lipski states that “the affricate /tʃ/ rarely loses its occlusive element” in Venezuela.<sup>809</sup> There are a few other minor consonant changes mentioned by Alvar, but they are not particularly relevant for singing.<sup>810</sup>

#### Latin American and Peninsular Variants to Avoid

As an additional note, students of Spanish and Spanish speakers familiar with other Latin American dialects should be aware of those variants not present in the Venezuelan dialect, as well as peninsular habits to avoid.

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<sup>805</sup> Ibid. Exactly 68.17% in the urban population of the Canary Islands. Citing Samper, 191.

<sup>806</sup> Ibid. Exactly 17.83% in the urban population of the Canary Islands. Citing Samper, 217.

<sup>807</sup> Ibid., 364.

<sup>808</sup> Hammond, 363.

<sup>809</sup> Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*, 350. Lipski uses the symbol /c/ with a hacek for the unvoiced palatal affricate, a common practice among Spanish linguists. I have changed the notation within the quote to remain consistent with its notation in standard IPA.

<sup>810</sup> Alvar, 120.

Table 7.3. Latin American variants to avoid

[ç] and [çj]	[ç] for <i>j</i> and <i>g</i> before <i>e</i> and <i>i</i> , and the addition of [j] after [ç] (Chilean)
retroflex <i>r</i> [ɻ]	retroflex [ɻ] as part of the <i>tr</i> consonant cluster (Chilean) <sup>811</sup>
aspirate <i>h</i>	aspirate pronunciation of <i>h</i> : <i>hora</i> /'hɔ. ra/ (Puerto Rican) <sup>812</sup>
[j] for <i>y</i> and <i>ll</i>	weakening of [j] to [j̥] <sup>813</sup>
zeísmo	[ʒ] for <i>ll</i> and <i>y</i> (Argentina) <sup>814</sup>
Assibilation	Assibilated /r/ <sup>815</sup>
/r̥/	fully unvoiced rolled <i>r</i> /r̥/ (Puerto Rican, Cuban) <sup>816</sup>
[ɸ]	Voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ] in place of /f/ <sup>817</sup>

Table 7.4. Castilian/peninsular variants to avoid

distinción	/θ/ for <i>z</i> and <i>c</i> before <i>i</i> and <i>e</i> & [ð] for <i>z</i> before a voiced consonant
ceceo	Weak /θ/ for <i>s</i> , <i>z</i> , and <i>c</i> before <i>i</i> and <i>e</i> . (Andalusia) <sup>818</sup>
lleísmo	/ʎ/ for <i>ll</i>
apical <i>s</i>	Apicoalveolar /s̟/ for orthographic <i>s</i> & [z̟] before a voiced consonant <sup>819</sup>

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<sup>811</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 64.

<sup>812</sup> Navarro, *Puerto Rico*.

<sup>813</sup> Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*, 350.

<sup>814</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 65.

<sup>815</sup> Canfield, 7-8, 91; Hammond, 373. Assibilation results in the sound of [s] or [z] produced with the tongue in the position of the /r/. Assibilation is a feature of interior Argentina, highland Bolivia, Chile, highland Colombia, non-coastal Costa Rica, highland Ecuador, Guatemala, parts of Mexico, Paraguay, and highland Peru.

<sup>816</sup> Lipski, *Latin American Spanish*, 350.

<sup>817</sup> Hammond, 208-210.

<sup>818</sup> Ibid., 360.

<sup>819</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 60-61.

## Vowels

### Five Phonemes

Spanish has five vowel phonemes: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/. Compared to English, which has over a dozen vowel phonemes, Spanish is relatively straightforward. Spanish is also rather phonetically notated; the orthographic representation closely mirrors the phonetic realization. Like Italian, vowels are “pure” and are only diphthongized when more than one vowel is notated in the same syllable, and they do not neutralize to /ə/ or similar vowels in unaccented positions. In fact, many sources do not offer any allophonic variations to the five phonemes. In other words, the vowels sound the same regardless of their phonetic environment. At a broad level, this is true, although at a narrow level there may be some allophonic variation, and this variation may be more important for Caribbean/Venezuelan Spanish.

Most vowels are comparable to phonemes in other common singing languages, except /e/ and /o/ which represent a unique medial position. The following chart is generated from data collected by Pierre Delattre in his *Comparing the Phonetic Features of English French German and Spanish*.<sup>820</sup> It shows the average vowel formant frequencies for all five Spanish phonemes and related phonemes in the other languages.<sup>821</sup> The medial position of the Spanish phonemes between the closed /o/, /e/ and the open /ɔ/, /ɛ/ is evident.<sup>822</sup>

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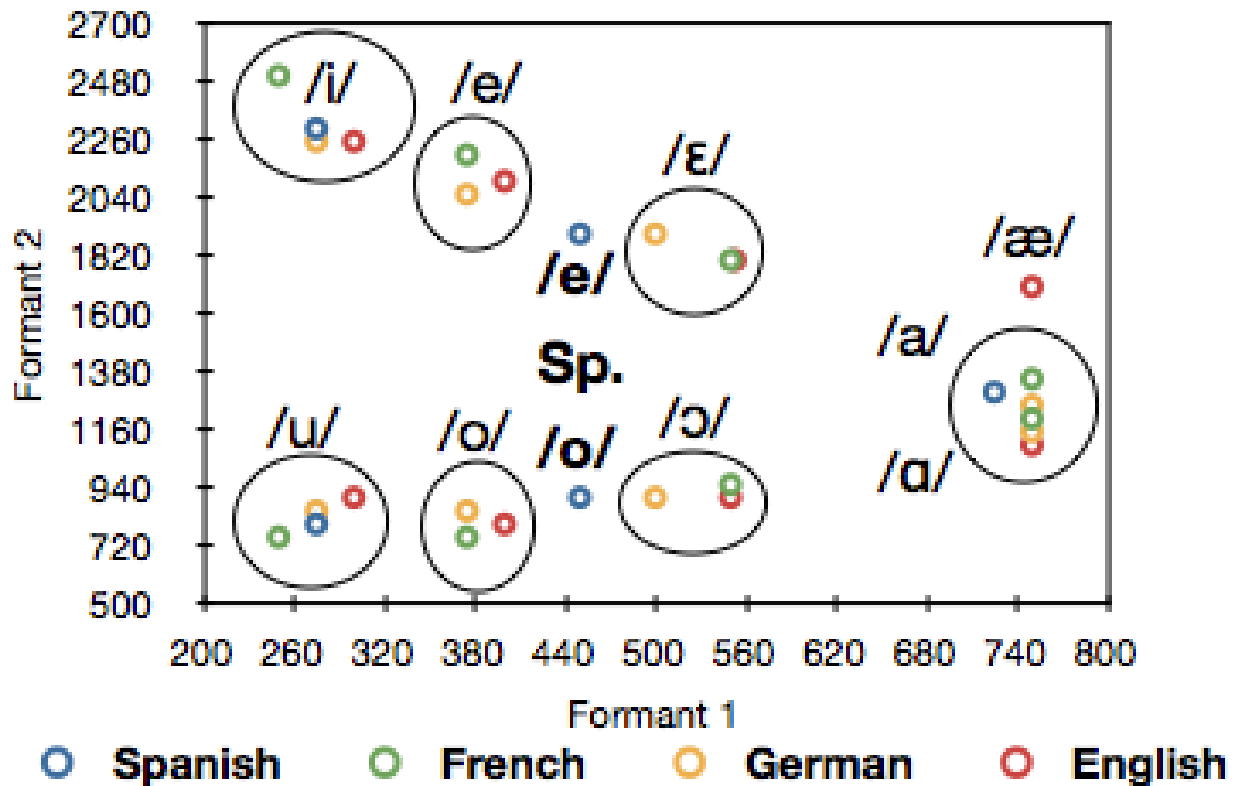
<sup>820</sup> Pierre Delattre, *Comparing the Phonetic Features of English, French, German and Spanish: An Interim Report* (Heidelberg: Groos, 1965), 49.

<sup>821</sup> Unfortunately for singers, the study does not include Italian.

<sup>822</sup> Interestingly, the /i/ and /u/ also represent medial positions between the French and English extremes, and the /a/ is also located between the French bright /a/ and dark /ɑ/.

Table 7.5. Vowel comparison from Delattre<sup>823</sup>

	Spanish		French		German		English	
	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2
i	275	2300	250	2500	275	2250	300	2250
e	450	1900	375	2200	375	2050	400	2100
a	725	1300	750	1350	750	1250		
o	450	900	375	750	375	850	400	800
u	275	800	250	750	275	850	300	900
ɛ			550	1800	500	1900	550	1800
ɔ			550	950	500	900	550	900
ɑ			750	1200	750	1150	750	1100
æ							750	1700



<sup>823</sup> Delattre, 49. The graph is my creation. Formant 1 and 2 (in Hertz) are the resonances of the vocal tract that are primarily responsible for defining the vowel. Formant 1 is modified most significantly by the opening of the mouth, and Formant 2 by the fronting of the tongue. The reader may recognize the familiar “vowel pyramid” turned on its side.



The medial nature of /e/ and /o/ presents challenges to authors deciding which symbols to use in their IPA transcriptions. One must keep the intended audience in mind when generating IPA transcriptions. Different symbols have different subjective aural models based upon one's native and familiar languages. This paper's primary audience is English speakers familiar with other lyric languages such as Italian, French, and German. It is this problem of audience that has bearing upon the two phonemes /e/ and /o/. The Spanish /e/ is somewhat unique in its mid-placement compared to English and German. It is neither as closed as the German /e/ nor as open as the English /ɛ/, and the same holds true for /o/ which is neither as closed as the German /o/ nor as open as the English /ɔ/.<sup>824</sup> So to offer one of these symbols, unadorned and undescribed, to the singer familiar with English and German runs the risk of miscommunicating the closeness or openness of these vowels.

Authors attempt to solve the problem in different ways. Some, like Nico Castel opt for the open variants, fearing an overly closed Germanic accent, while others, like Patricia Caicedo, choose the closed variants, fearing an overly open American accent. Others decide to add diacritical marks to indicate the difference. For example, Delgado decides on a single phonetic symbol [ɐ̞], the closed [e] with a "lowered" diacritical mark [̞].<sup>825</sup> Similarly, she chooses to notate the phoneme /o/ as [ɔ̞], an open [ɔ] with a raised diacritical mark [̞].<sup>826</sup>

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<sup>824</sup> Rees-Rohrbacher, 22.

<sup>825</sup> Delgado, 178. Delgado chose to adorn the closed variant, because "the concept native Spanish singers have of the Spanish /e/ is that of a close vowel."

<sup>826</sup> Ibid., 192-193. Delgado chose to adorn the open variant, because the Spanish speaker's "perception of /o/ is that of a rounded open vowel."

## Allophonic Variations

At a narrower level of attention, a greater variety of vowel diversity may be present. An important and early work on the pronunciation of Castilian Spanish, Navarro Tomás' *Manual de Pronunciación Española* first published in 1918, details three varieties each of /a/, /e/, and /o/, and four varieties each of /i/ and /u/ for a total of 17 distinct Spanish vowel allophones.<sup>827</sup>

However in a recent article, Eugenio Martínez-Celdrán addresses Tomás' contribution and raises doubt over the presence of such variations:

Spanish has five vowels, which may occur in both stressed and unstressed syllables: /i/, /e/, /a/, /o/, /u/. Navarro Tomás (1918) described open variants of /i/, /e/, /o/, /u/ in some contexts. In the case of the open central vowel, he distinguished palatal and velar variants in certain contexts. However, later experimental studies do not seem to confirm such variants.<sup>828</sup>

Nevertheless, Tomás' findings continue to inform current authors and textbooks of Spanish diction. He is cited in most documents on the subject. In general, allophonic variation of Spanish vowel phonemes is an ongoing area of research and debate, and few sources address the issue identically. The vowel /e/ receives the most discussion, but /a/ and /o/ may also have variances.

Again, the issue of audience is very important when discussing any allophonic variations. English, German, French and Italian all have *phonetic* distinction between /e/ and /ɛ/ and between /o/ and /ɔ/. Spanish does not. Any difference in open and closed quality of these vowels is a subtle *allophonic* difference of the same phoneme.<sup>829</sup> Any difference in openness of the

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<sup>827</sup> Tomás Navarro Tomás, *Manual de pronunciación española*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1918, 1921). The differences discussed by Navarro Tomás are largely the result of stress placement and assimilative processes that mutate the quality of the vowel. In other words, vowels are tenser when accented, less tense when unaccented, darker when adjacent to a consonant produced in the back of the mouth and brighter when adjacent to a consonant produced in the front of the mouth.

<sup>828</sup> Martínez-Celdrán, 256.

<sup>829</sup> Native Spanish speakers may not necessarily intend the difference, or even notice the difference, and the difference does not affect the meaning of the words, i.e. they are not distinctive.

allophones [e] and [ɛ] in Spanish is not nearly as important as the Italian difference between the phonemes /e/ and /ɛ/, for example, and any implication that it is, even if an unintentional consequence of how one organized their phonological rules, is misleading.<sup>830</sup> Likewise, hinting at more open varieties of /i/ or /u/ to a native English speaker would easily run the risk of implying /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ which would most certainly be too open.

There is also some question of how important such subtle differences are for singing, where technical, musical, and acoustic demands make such subtle distinctions untenable. One might make the argument, as does Nico Castel in his *A Singer's Manual of Spanish Lyric Diction* that when singing, a “comfortable” singing vowel, such as /ɛ/ should be provided and one should not bother with the subtle distinctions between allophones.<sup>831</sup> The acoustic demands of singing often require that singers stretch the boundaries of a normal spoken phoneme and encroach upon neighboring phonemes or neutralize vowels beyond what would be tolerated in speech. The result is that singers frequently do not faithfully reproduce the subtle distinctions present in particularly narrow phonetic transcriptions of vowels.<sup>832</sup>

With regards to Castilian Spanish, Delgado indicates that these distinctions are too fussy for most Spanish-speaking singers:

...the concrete distribution [of [e] and [ɛ]] is quite arbitrary even among Spanish speakers and rather confusing for English-speaking singers who do not speak Spanish. As far as lyric diction is concerned, the issue of the allophones of the Spanish mid-front phoneme /e/ is secondary... even the most conscious Spanish performers are not aware of

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<sup>830</sup> Delgado, 176; Tomás Navarro Tomás, *Studies in Spanish Phonology*, trans. Miami Linguistics Series 4, (Coral Gables, Florida: University of Miami, 1968). Even Navarro, who champions the many allophone theory, makes a point to distinguish the level of importance in Spanish variants from that of Italian.

<sup>831</sup> Nico Castel, *A Singer's Manual of Spanish Lyric Diction* (New York: Excalibur Publishing, 1994), 19.

<sup>832</sup> Furthermore, these mutations of the vowel quality are observed in casual normally-paced speech, and are likely lost in careful slow speech.

their own utterance of the open or close allophones, not to mention the distribution rules.<sup>833</sup>

Delgado also instructs that these vowels can be opened or closed at the singer's discretion without overly distorting the language:

In practical terms, the American singer should come to perceive the Spanish /e/-[ɐ] as a versatile vowel because it allows him to adjust the tenseness (open or close) of the vowel to suit specific technical as well as musical needs without having to worry about distorting the meaning of the word. For example...Some prefer to lean towards the close allophone and therefore sing [a.ma.'re] while others prefer to open the vowel towards [ɛ] and sing [a.ma.'ɛ]. Both solutions are perfectly valid as long as the singer achieves a consistent balance among all vowels.<sup>834</sup>

Delgado has a similar discussion of the phoneme /o/ and its allophonic variants [o] and [ɔ]. However, the difference among these vowels is even smaller than that of [e] and [ɛ] and that “unlike with the Spanish /e/, there is no discussion regarding the degree of openness of /o/ among Spanish voice professionals.”<sup>835</sup> She adds that it is “also a supple vowel because the singer may open or close it to suit specific technical as well as musical needs.”<sup>836</sup> Hammond corroborates Delgado's conclusions related to these vowels.<sup>837</sup>

### Allophonic Variation in the Venezuelan-Caribbean Accent

Some variation, especially with regards to /e/, /o/ and /a/, may be more important in Andalusia, Latin America, and the Venezuelan-Caribbean accent than it is for north-central peninsular, Castilian Spanish. While Delgado and Hammond, primarily concerned with Castilian Spanish, affirm no difference in the openness/closeness of these vowels, Cotton and Sharp attest

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<sup>833</sup> Delgado, 176.

<sup>834</sup> Ibid., 178.

<sup>835</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>836</sup> Ibid., 192-193.

<sup>837</sup> Hammond, 94-96.

that “vowels in the lowlands [Caribbean accent] behave somewhat differently.”<sup>838</sup> In general, these variations are not universally agreed upon by linguists, and there is a need for more research specific to the region. There are three types of variations that are noted by some authors:

- 1) The opening of the /a/, /e/, and /o/ to indicate a final /s/ that is omitted or aspirated (especially in plural forms).<sup>839</sup>
- 2) A greater distinction between the allophones [e], [ɛ] and [o], [ɔ] in different phonetic environments.<sup>840</sup>
- 3) An overall preference for a more open sound on /e/ and /o/.<sup>841</sup>

Summarizing the mixed findings of various authors, it may be more appropriate in most cases to use a mid-open [ɛ] and [ɔ] vowel in most of Venezuela and the Caribbean, although the difference for [ɔ] is likely less than [ɛ]. The use of the mid-open vowel seems particularly true adjacent to /r/. Mid-open [ɛ] & [ɔ] and perhaps even [ɑ] may also be important at the end of words when /s/ has been omitted in a colloquial accent.

### Stress and Phrasing

The phrasing of Spanish for spoken and sung language is different than that of English and deserves a brief explanation. There are two factors that affect this difference: Syllable vs. stress timing, and the distinctive quality of word boundaries. Spanish is a *syllable-timed*

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<sup>838</sup> Cotton and Sharp, 204.

<sup>839</sup> Ibid. Citing Navarro, *Puerto Rico*, 46. “...when syllable-final /s/ is aspirated or lost, again a preceding /e/→[ɛ], /a/→[ɑ], and /o/→[ɔ]. Further, if the /s/ is deleted, the opening of the vowel may serve to supply an absent morpheme or identify a part of speech. Here again may be seen a resemblance to Andaluz,” Zamora, 130-131. Called *phonological unfolding*.

<sup>840</sup> Zamora, 132; John B. Dalbor, *Spanish Pronunciation: Theory and Practice* (New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980); Daniel N. Cárdenas, *Dominant Spanish Dialects Spoken in the United States*, Report ED 042137 (Washington, D. C.: Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), 1970); Joseph H. Matluck, “La é trabada en la ciudad de México: estudio experimental,” *AdeL* 3, (1963): 5-32.

<sup>841</sup> Matluck, 5-32.

*language*. Syllables “tend to occur at regular intervals of time.”<sup>842</sup> Therefore, “the rhythm of Spanish prosody depends on the number of syllables in a sentence.”<sup>843</sup> English, by contrast, is a *stress-timed language*. Pacing is determined by the regular spacing of stressed syllables.<sup>844</sup> Word boundaries are not distinctive in Spanish, meaning that they are not necessary for the listener to understand what is being said. English, however, relies on clear word boundaries for comprehension.<sup>845</sup> Similarly, emphasis is not generally created with space between words, as it is in English.

In addition, while Bor is rather attentive to the stress of the text in the vast majority of her art songs, there are a few isolated instances in which the text stress does not line up with the metrical accent nor does it indicate a clear polyrhythm, or meter different than that of the piano or the notated meter. “La tarde,” m. 2 on the second verse, and “Amolador,” m. 41, are examples. In these instances, it should be remembered that while text stress is important, misplacement does not damage the prosody as much as it would in English. Singers should simply sing each syllable evenly, neither over-accenting the metrically placed unaccented syllable which would distort the word, nor go out of their way to over-accent the unmetrically placed accented syllable, only to highlight its awkward placement.

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<sup>842</sup> Peter Ladefoged and Keith Johnson, *A Course in Phonetics* (Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2015), 222.

<sup>843</sup> Delgado, 91.

<sup>844</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>845</sup> *Ibid.* Word boundaries are therefore “distinctive features in English.”

### *IPA Practices in This Paper*

Spanish linguists have largely resisted the adoption of IPA until recently, and even then, only a small minority of authors faithfully and exclusively employ it, most notably Eugenio Martínez-Celdrán. Spanish linguists, for the most part, have used the alphabet developed in the early twentieth century published in the *Revista de Filología Española* used in the seminal works by Navarro Tomás.<sup>846</sup>

My intention has been to employ modern IPA for the benefit of those accustomed to its usage, such as graduate singers and teachers of singing. All texts have been transliterated into the International Phonetic Alphabet based primarily upon the rules presented by Delgado, and Martínez-Celdrán.<sup>847</sup> Delgado notates the voiceless (alveo)palatal affricate /tʃ/ as /c/ to highlight the differences between the Spanish and English version of this phoneme. I use the more common and standard symbol /tʃ/, following the practice of Martínez-Celdrán.<sup>848</sup>

I follow Delgado's practice for most vowels: /a/→[a], /i/→[i], /u/→[u], and /o/→[ɔ], while modifying the allophone used for /e/ to [ɛ] instead of [e̞], acknowledging that the Venezuelan dialect may favor the more open variant in more circumstances than Castilian Spanish. The continuity of both vowels being notated as raised-open variants makes the phonetic transcriptions more readily understandable and concurs with Nico Castel with whom many readers are likely familiar. These vowels should still be treated as mid-line vowels that are flexible to accommodate the needs of the singer. Specific openings and closings will not be

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<sup>846</sup> Face, 2-3.

<sup>847</sup> Martínez-Celdrán. Every letter's discussion will not be cited, but a few more complicated items are cited here: Delgado's discussion of /ɾ/, 360; /D/, 245-246; *v*, 264-267; silent *p* 237; /G/, 253-255.

<sup>848</sup> Delgado, 294. Readers interested in the subtle differences between the languages with regards to this phoneme should consult Delgado. In general, the Spanish affricate is brighter (no lip rounding), palatized (produced in a similar place as [j]), and little fricative portion [ʃ] at the latter half of the phoneme.

notated. Future research that more specifically addresses this issue with respect to Caribbean and Venezuelan pronunciation may find evidence for more definitive distribution rules and that the distinction between close and open is in fact more important for this region.

Eugenio Martínez-Celdrán uses diacritical marks indicating a more open approximant pronunciation of the allophones [ɣ], [ð̞], [β̞], and [j̞] which are traditionally viewed as fricative. He claims, however, that “...these consonants do not exist as fricatives,”<sup>849</sup> and that the understanding of that principle is clear enough that “it is possible to suppress the diacritic from approximants in broad [and semi-narrow] transcription.”<sup>850</sup> Timothy Face explains that “these spirants have traditionally been considered to be the fricatives [β], [ð], and [ɣ], though more recently it has been shown that they are more often realized as approximants rather than fricatives.”<sup>851</sup> However, in lyric diction, especially in more academic literature, the letters *b*, *v*, *d*, and *g* are often realized with greater clarity, bringing their pronunciation closer to the actual phoneme /b/, /d/, and /g/.<sup>852</sup> Turning all of these consonants into approximants would result in singing that is hard to understand, or pronunciation that sounds colloquial and casual. This paper will retain the traditional notation of these allophones as used by Delgado. The sound [j̞] can exist on number of strength levels, some more fricative than others, and Lipski has indicated that this sound is strong in Venezuelan Spanish, and it will therefore also remain notated as the fricative.<sup>853</sup>

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<sup>849</sup> Martínez-Celdrán, 258.

<sup>850</sup> Ibid.

<sup>851</sup> Face, 9.

<sup>852</sup> Grau, *contralto*.

<sup>853</sup> Face, 11. “The most common pronunciations span a range of degrees of constriction, from the approximant [j̞] on one extreme and the stop [j] on the other.”



## Hidden Features of *Bozal* Dialect

“Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito” from *Tríptico sobre poesía cubana* uses a *bozal* dialect discussed in Chapter 6. Ballagas notates many features of the dialect into the language; however, there are other features of the Afro-Hispanic pronunciation that are more difficult to notate that may be helpful to the singer in recreating an approximation of this dialect. In *bozal*, there was a lack of the rolled /r/ favoring flipped /r/ in all cases. Also, speakers used a consistent occlusive pronunciation of /b/, /g/ and /d/; the voiced bilabial fricative [β], the voiced velar fricative [ɣ], and the dental fricative [ð] are *not* available allophonic choices for /b/, /g/, and /d/ respectively.<sup>854</sup>

Intervocalic /d/ was often weakened or omitted. This feature is sometimes notated directly by Ballagas. The singer may keep this principle in mind when pronouncing those intervocalic /d/’s that are notated and avoid an overly strong sound. In my IPA transcription, I have indicated this weakened /d/ as [ḑ] (with the diacritical mark for “extra short”).

The nasalization of vowels adjacent to nasal consonants, a practice which is common to many dialects of Spanish, may also be appropriate.<sup>855</sup> This is especially applicable when the vowel is immediately followed by a nasal consonant within the same syllable or sandwiched between two nasals.<sup>856</sup> Indeed, this pattern can be seen in English as well, however, in both languages they do not represent distinct phonemes as they do in French, but merely allophonic variations, and this practice is often trained out of singers during classical training for English

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<sup>854</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 242-243.

<sup>855</sup> Ibid., 234; Eugenio Martínez-Celdrán, Ana Ma. Fernández-Planas, and Josefina Carrera-Sabaté, “Castilian Spanish,” *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 33, no. 2 (2003): 256. “Vowels have nasalized variants when they appear between two nasal consonants or followed by a nasal consonant in syllabic coda.”

<sup>856</sup> Hammond, 37, 400; Martínez-Celdrán, 256.

and Spanish. Intentional nasalization of any vowel when singing in the standard dialect of Castilian or Latin American Spanish is not recommended, but it may be more appropriate for this colloquial, dialect-specific style, especially where the poet has added a nasal vowel to the normal spelling of the word. The singer can decide how much nasalization, if any, to include. Singers should be wary however, as rightward spreading [-nẽ-] of nasality “rarely, if ever, affect[s] the final vowel.”<sup>857</sup> The practice is most common on the first vowel and in leftward spreading [-ẽn-].<sup>858</sup> Thus, [ˈnẽŋ.ɡre] would be most appropriate, while [a.ˈmõr] would be the most inappropriate.

In addition, “prenasalization of many word-initial voiced obstruents and occasionally of word-initial voiceless stops” was especially developed in the dialect of Afro-Cubans.<sup>859</sup> Anticipatory nasal vowels such as /n/, /m/, /ɲ/ before initial consonants such as /d/, /b/, /g/ or even /t/, /p/, /k/, may be appropriate. However, it is possible that this practice is not applicable for this song: prenasalization could have been notated by Ballagas. In the IPA transcription, prenasalization is notated with a small superscript nasal vowel for voiced consonants [ˈnd], [ˈmb], to instruct which nasal vowel to use but also to indicate that they are optional.<sup>860</sup>

This song is also one of the few songs for which there are extant professional recordings from Bor’s lifetime. Isabel Grau (now Palacios) included the song on her album *Isabel Grau, contralto*, track 5.<sup>861</sup> For the most part, Grau treats this song like her other recordings in a

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<sup>857</sup> Lipski, *Afro-Hispanic Language*, 234.

<sup>858</sup> Ibid.

<sup>859</sup> Ibid.

<sup>860</sup> There are elements of the pronunciation that were not discussed such as the quality of any of the vowels, especially /e/ and /o/, or whether the dental articulation of /d/, /t/, /l/ is retained.

<sup>861</sup> Grau, *contralto*.

standard Latin American dialect.<sup>862</sup> Grau does use consistently occlusive pronunciation of /d/, /b/, and /g/; however, she does not weaken intervocalic /d/'s. She does not have a strong nasal presence in her vowels, but *merengue* and *nengre* may have some subtle nasalization: [me. 'rẽŋ.ge] and ['nẽŋ.gre].<sup>863</sup> Grau does not include any prenasalization.<sup>864</sup>

The IPA transliterations and word-for-word translations will be presented in the following format (Table 7.6). All English translations and IPA transliterations are mine. Spanish translations were approved by Dr. Luis Martín-Estudillo, professor of Latin American literature at the University of Iowa. The mark [ | ] indicates that vowels are not elided because they are assigned to individual notes in the music.

Table 7.6. IPA and word-for-word format

Original Spanish text (in bold)	<b>Canción de cuna</b>
IPA phonetic transliteration (in brackets)	[kan. 'sjõŋ. ðẽ 'ku.na.]
Word-for-word literal translation	song of cradle
Poetic translation from Chapter 6 (in italics)	<i>Lullaby</i>

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<sup>862</sup> Grau, *contralto*.

<sup>863</sup> Ibid., track 5.

<sup>864</sup> Ibid.

## APPENDIX A. IPA TRANSLITERATIONS

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**La Tarde**

[la 'tar.ð̞ɛ]

**the evening**

*The Evening*

La tarde se moría,

[la 'tar.ð̞ɛ sɛ mɔ̞.'ri.a]

The evening (itself) it-was-dying

*The evening was passing away,*

ya el mar está tranquilo

[ja ɛl mar ɛs.'ta t̞ɾaɲ.'ki.lɔ]

Now the sea it-is calm

*the sea is now calm*

el sol se esconde entre las olas

[ɛl sɔl sɛ\_ɛs.'kɔɲ.ð̞ɛ\_ɛ̞̞.t̞ɾɛ las ɔ̞.'las]

The sun itself it-hides between the waves

*the sun conceals itself in the waves*

y las gaviotas se alejan,

[i las ɣa.'βjɔ̞.t̞as sɛ\_a.'lɛ.han]

and the seagulls (themselves) they-distance

*and the seagulls leave,*

buscando su nido

[bus.'kaɲ.ð̞ɔ̞ su ni.ð̞ɔ̞]

searching their nest

*searching for their nests*

la luz argentada dora ya sus alas,

[la lus ar.'hɛ̞̞.t̞a.ð̞a 'ð̞ɔ̞.ra ja sus 'a.las]

the light silvered it-gilds now their wings

*the silver-plated light gilds their wings,*

La nube pregunta,  
[la 'nu.βɛ prɛ. 'yũ.ɬa]  
the cloud question  
*the question of a cloud,*

ya se estancó en el cielo  
[ja sɛ\_ɛs. 'taŋ.kɔ\_ɛn ɛl sjɛ. 'lɔ]  
now itself it-stood-still in the sky  
*stood still in the sky*

las naves plegan ya sus velas  
[las 'na.βɛs 'plɛ.ɣan ja sus βɛ. 'las]  
the ships they-fold now their sails  
*the ships fold their sails*

y surcan las azules aguas  
[i 'sur.kan las a. 'su.lɛs 'a.ɣwas]  
And they-plow the blue waters  
*and plow through the blue waters*

avanza la noche  
[a. 'βan.sa la 'nɔ.tʃɛ]  
it-advances the night  
*the night advances*

con su manto oscuro cubre ya la tarde.  
[kɔn su 'maɲ.tɔ\_ɔs. 'ku.rɔ 'ku.βrɛ ja la 'tar.ðɛ]  
with his cloak dark it-covers now the night  
*with its dark cloak covers the evening.*

**Mi niño bonito**

[mi 'ni.nɔ βɔ.'ni.tɔ]

**My boy beautiful**

*My beautiful boy*

Mi niño bonito,

[mi 'ni.nɔ βɔ.'ni.tɔ]

My boy beautiful

*My beautiful boy,*

se quiere dormir,

[sɛ 'kjɛ.rɛ 'ðɔr.mir]

himself he-wants to-sleep

*wants to sleep,*

cierre los ojitos,

['sjɛ.rɛ lɔs ɔ.'hi.tɔs]

close the little-eyes

*close your little eyes,*

y los vuelve a abrir.

[i lɔs 'βwɛl.βɛ | a | a.'βrir]

and them return to open

*and open them later.*

**Topecito**  
**[tɔ.pɛ. 'si.tɔ]**  
**little-bump**  
*Little Bump*

Tope, tope, tope,  
 [ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ ]  
 bump bump bump  
*Bump, bump, bump,*

dulce serafín;  
 [ 'dʊl.sɛ sɛ.ra. 'fɪn ]  
 sweet angel  
*sweet angel;*

tope, tope, tope,  
 [ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ ]  
 bump bump bump  
*bump, bump, bump,*

dienticos de arroz.  
 [dʲɛn. 'tʲi.kɔs dʲɛ a. 'r:ɔs]  
 little-teeth of rice  
*little teeth of rice.*

Cucurucero de trigo y maíz.  
 [ku.ku.ru.sɛ. 'ri.tɔ dʲɛ 'tri.ɣɔ i ma. 'is]  
 Little-dark-skinned-boy of wheat and corn  
*Little black boy of wheat and corn*

tope, tope, tope,  
 [ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ ]  
 bump bump bump  
*bump, bump, bump*

tope, tope, tó,  
 [ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ tɔ ]  
 bump bump boom  
*bump, bump, boom,*

tope, tope, tó.  
 [ 'tɔ.pɛ 'tɔ.pɛ tɔ ]  
 bump bump boom  
*bump, bump, boom.*



Cosquilla del bubute  
[kʰs. 'ki.ja Ǿɛl βu. 'βu.tɕ]

tickle of-the beetle

*Tickle of the Beetle*

Bubute, bubute,  
[bu. 'βu.tɕ βu. 'βu.tɕ]

beetle beetle

*Beetle, beetle,*

De día apagado,

[dɛ 'ði.a a.pa. 'ɣa.Ǿɔ]

by day shut-off

*By day shut off,*

azul colorado.

[a. 'sul kʰ.lʰ. 'ra.Ǿɔ]

blue red/colored

*colored blue*

de noche con luz,

[Ǿɛ 'nʰ.tɕ kʰn lus]

by night with light

*by night with light,*

Lucero con alas,

[lu. 'sɛ.rʰ kʰn 'a.las]

star with wings

*Star with wings,*

Bubute, bubute, bu,

[bu. 'βu.tɕ βu. 'βu.tɕ βu]

beetle beetle boo

*beetle, beetle, boo,*

volando casado.

[βʰ. 'lan.dʰ ka. 'sa.Ǿɔ]

flying married

*flying joined together.*

Bubute, bubute, bu.

[bu. 'βu.tɕ βu. 'βu.tɕ βu]

beetle beetle boo

*beetle, beetle, boo.*

Bubute, bubute, bu.

[bu. 'βu.tɕ βu. 'βu.tɕ βu]

beetle beetle boo

*Beetle, beetle, boo.*

**Amanecer**  
**[a.ma.nɛ.'sɛr]**  
**sunrise/dawn**  
*Sunrise*

Amanece.  
 [a.ma.'nɛ.sɛ]  
 it brightens  
*The dawn brightens.*

Y es mariposa  
 [i\_ɛs ma.ri.'pɔ.sa]  
 and it-is butterfly  
*And is a butterfly*

sobre vidrio el alba.  
 ['sɔ.βrɛ 'βi.ðrjɔ | ɛl 'al.βa]  
 upon glass the dawn  
*upon glass.*

en el horizonte asoma  
 [ɛn ɛl ɔ.ri.'sɔŋ.tɛ\_a.'sɔ.ma | ]  
 on the horizon it-appears  
*on the horizon appears*

una velita blanca.  
 ['u.na βɛ.'li.t̪a 'βlaŋ.ka]  
 a little-candle white  
*a small white candle.*

Velita que semeja  
 [bɛ.'li.t̪a kɛ sɛ.'mɛ.ha]  
 little-candle that it-resembles  
*A candle that resembles*

la punta de una daga  
 [la 'puŋ.t̪a ðɛ\_u.na 'ð̞a.ɣa]  
 the point of a dagger  
*the point of a dagger*

O el pico de una estrella  
 [ɔ | ɛl 'pi.kɔ ðɛ | 'u.na\_ɛs.'trɛ.ja]  
 or the corner of a star  
*or the corner of a star*

que se quedó en el agua.  
 [kɛ sɛ kɛ.'ð̞ɔ\_ɛn ɛl 'a.ɣwa]  
 that itself it-stayed in the water  
*that stuck in the water.*

**Rajo**

[ˈrːɔ.hɔ]

**red**

*Red*

La llamarada, la llamarada del poniente  
[la ja.ma.ˈra.ð̞a la ja.ma.ˈra.ð̞a ð̞el pɔ.ˈnjɛn.t̞ɛ]  
the flash the flash of-the west

*The flash, the flash from the west*

incendió el pabellón de raso de la tarde.  
[in.sɛn̩.ˈd̞jɔ̞\_ɛl pa.βɛ.ˈjɔn̩ d̞ɛ ˈrːa.sɔ ð̞ɛ la ˈtar.ð̞ɛ]  
it-ignited the flag of satin of the evening  
*ignited the evening's satin flag.*

Y el bostezo, y el bostezo del viento  
[i\_ɛl βɔs.ˈt̞ɛ.sɔ i\_ɛl βɔs.ˈt̞ɛ.sɔ ð̞el ˈβjɛn.t̞ɔ | ]  
and the yawn and the yawn of-the wind  
*And the yawn, and the yawn of the wind*

aventó las chispas de espacio  
[a.βɛn̩.ˈt̞ɔ las ˈt̞ʃis.pas ð̞ɛ\_ɛs.ˈpa.sjɔ]  
it-fanned the sparks of space  
*fanned the sparks of space*

que se llenó de estrellas.  
[kɛ sɛ jɛ.ˈnɔ ð̞ɛ | ɛs.ˈtrɛ.jas]  
that itself it-filled (of) stars  
*that filled itself with stars.*

**Canción**  
**[kan. 'sjɔn]**  
**song**  
*Song*

Gris y morado  
 [gris i mɔ. 'ra.ʤɔ̃]  
 gray and purple  
*Gray and purple*

es mi verde olivar;  
 [ɛs mi 'βɛr.ʤɛ̃ɔ̃.li. 'βar]  
 it-is my green olive-grove  
*is my green olive grove;*

blanca mi casa  
 ['blaŋ.ka mi 'ka.sa]  
 white my house  
*white, my house*

y azul mi mar.  
 [i\_a. 'sul mi mar] or [i\_a. 'θul mi mar]  
 and blue my sea  
*and blue, my sea.*

Cuando tu vengas  
 ['kwaŋ.ɖɔ tu 'βɛŋ.gas]  
 when you you-come  
*When you come*

me vas a encontrar;  
 [mɛ βas a\_ɛŋ.kɔn. 'tɾar]  
 me you-go to find  
*you will find me;*

yo seré un pájaro  
 [jɔ sɛ. 'rɛ | um 'pa.ha.rɔ̃]  
 I I-will-be a bird  
*I will be a bird*

del verde olivar.  
 [ðɛl 'βɛr.ʤɛ̃ɔ̃.li. 'βar]  
 of-the green olive-grove  
*of the green olive grove.*

**Canción de cuna**  
**[kan.'sjɔŋ ɖɛ 'ku.na]**  
**song of cradle**  
*Lullaby*

Niño querido:  
 ['ni.ɲɔ kɛ.'ri.ðɔ]  
 boy dear  
*Dear child:*

Ya viene el sueño  
 [ja 'βjɛ.nɛ\_ɛl 'swɛɲɔ]  
 already it-comes the sleep  
*Sleep is on its way*

Por el camino  
 [pɔɾ ɛl ka.'mi.ɲɔ]  
 on the road  
*On a pathway*

De los luceros.  
 [ðɛ lɔs lu.'sɛ.rɔs]  
 of the stars  
*Made of stars.*

Niño querido:  
 ['ni.ɲɔ kɛ.'ri.ðɔ]  
 boy dear  
*Dear child:*

El sueño avanza  
 ɛl 'swɛɲɔ\_a.'βan.sa]  
 the sleep it-advances  
*Sleep comes*

Y se detiene  
 [i sɛ ðɛ.'tjɛ.nɛ]  
 and itself it-stops  
*And stops*

Frente a tu casa.  
 ['frɛɲ.tɛ\_a tu 'ka.sa]  
 in-front of your house  
*In front of your house.*

Todos los niños  
 ['tɔ.ðɔs lɔs 'ni.ɲɔs]  
 All the children  
*All the children*

Que hay en las flores  
 [kɛ| aj\_ɛn las 'flɔ.rɛs]  
 that there-are in the flowers  
*That are in the flowers*

Están durmiendo  
 [ɛs.'tʌɲ ɖur.'mjɛɲ.ɖɔ|]  
 they-are sleeping  
*Are sleeping*

Entre canciones.  
 ['ɛɲ.tɾɛ kan.'sjɔ.nɛs]  
 between songs  
*Amongst songs.*

Duérmete        niño  
[ˈdwɛɾ.mɛ.tɛ    ˈni.ɲɔ]  
sleep-yourself    boy  
*Sleep, child*

De    mis    amores,  
[ðɛ    mis    a.ˈmɔ.ɾɛs]  
of    my    loves  
*Of my love,*

Como    los    niños  
[ˈkɔ.mɔ    lɔs    ˈni.ɲɔs]  
like        the    children  
*Like the children*

que    hay        en    las    flores.  
[kɛ|    aj\_ɛn        las    ˈflɔ.ɾɛs]  
that there-are in the    flowers  
*That are in the flowers.*

Duérmete        niño  
[ˈdwɛɾ.mɛ.tɛ    ˈni.ɲɔ]  
sleep-yourself    boy  
*Sleep, child*

De    mis    amores,  
[ðɛ    mis    a.ˈmɔ.ɾɛs]  
of    my    loves  
*Of my love,*

Como    los    niños  
[ˈkɔ.mɔ    lɔs    ˈni.ɲɔs]  
like        the    children  
*Like the children*

Que    hay        en    el    bosque.  
[kɛ|    aj\_ɛn        ɛl    ˈβɔs.kɛ]  
that there-are in the    forest  
*That are in the forest.*

**El ratón**  
**[ɛl r:a.'tɔn]**  
**the mouse**  
*The Mouse*

El ratón,  
[ɛl r:a.'tɔn]  
the mouse  
*The mouse,*

oficial del taller,  
[ɔ.fi.'sjal ɔ̃ɛl ta.'jɛr]  
official of-the workshop  
*skilled craftsman,*

se pasa fabricando  
[sɛ 'pa.sa fa.βri.'kaŋ.ðɔ]  
himself he-passes-time making  
*he goes on making*

virutas de papel.  
[βi.'ru.tas ɔ̃ɛ pa.'pɛl]  
shavings of paper  
*paper shavings.*

**La flor de apamate**  
**[la flɔr ðɛ a.pa.'ma.tɛ]**  
**the flower of the-rosy-trumpet-tree**  
*The Flower of the Rosy Trumpet Tree*

¡Qué pena de medio luto  
[kɛ 'pɛ.na ðɛ 'mɛ.ðjɔ 'lu.tɔ]  
what sorrow of half mourning  
*What sorrow of half-mourning*

tiene la flor de apamate,  
['tjɛ.nɛ la flɔr ðɛ a.pa.'ma.tɛ]  
it-has the flower of the-rosy-trumpet-tree  
*has the flower of the rosy trumpet tree,*

qué pena de medio luto,  
[kɛ 'pɛ.na ðɛ 'mɛ.ðjɔ 'lu.tɔ]  
what sorrow of half mourning  
*what sorrow of half-mourning,*

desde que tu te marchaste!  
['ðɛs.ðɛ kɛ tu tɛ mar.'tʃas.tɛ]  
since (that) you yourself you-left/marched-away  
*since you left!*

Tu marcha me echó en las venas  
[tu 'mar.tʃa mɛ.ɛ.'tʃɔ.ɛn las 'βɛ.nas]  
your departure to-me it-laid in the veins  
*Your departure laid down in my veins*

los morados de la tarde,  
[lɔs mɔ.'ra.ðɔs ðɛ la 'tar.ðɛ]  
the purples of the evening  
*the purples of the evening,*



la sangre me quedó viuda

[la 'saŋ.grɛ mɛ kɛ.'ðɔ 'βju.ða]

the blood to-me it-left widowed

*blood left me a widow,*

como la flor de apamate.

['kɔ.mɔ la flɔr ðɛ\_a.pa.'ma.tɛ]

like the flower of the-rosy-trumpet-tree

*like the flower of the rosy trumpet tree.*

## Knife Grinder

y el niño de Nochebuena.  
[i<sub>ɛ</sub>l 'ni.ɲɔ ð̞ɛ nɔ.tʃɛ.'βwɛ.na]  
and the child of Christmas-Eve  
*and the child of Christmas Eve*

Canción de cuna  
[kan. 'sjón ǾǾ 'ku.na]  
song of cradle  
*Lullaby*

No te duermas, niño,  
[nɔ tɛ 'ðwɛr.mas 'ni.nɔ]  
do-not yourself you-fall-asleep boy  
*Don't fall asleep, child,*

que dormir es feo;  
[kɛ Ǿɔr.'mir ɛs 'fɛ.ɔ]  
for sleeping it-is ugly  
*for sleep is ugly;*

todo, todo, todo,  
'tɔ.Ǿɔ 'tɔ.Ǿɔ 'tɔ.Ǿɔ  
everything everything everything  
*everything, everything, everything,*

se te pone negro.  
[sɛ tɛ 'pɔ.nɛ 'nɛ.ɣrɔ]  
itself to-you it-puts-on black  
*becomes black.*

No cierres los ojos,  
[nɔ 'sjɛ.r:ɛs lɔs 'ɔ.hɔs]  
do-not you-close the eyes  
*Don't close your eyes,*

porque me ennochezco,  
[pɔr.'kɛ mɛ\_ɛn.nɔ.'tʃɛs.kɔ]  
because myself I-make-dark  
*because I put myself in the dark,*

no cierres los labios  
[nɔ 'sjɛ.r:ɛs lɔs 'la.βjɔs]  
do-not you-close the lips  
*don't close your lips*

porque me ensilencio.  
[pɔr.'kɛ mɛ\_ɛn.si.'lɛn.sjɔ]  
because myself I-make-silent  
*because I silence myself.*

## Coplas

[ 'kɔ.plas]

songs

*Songs*

Hay un punto en el camino

[aj | um 'puɲ.tɔ\_ɛn ɛl ka.'mi.nɔ]

there-is a point in the path

*There is a point in the path,*

donde se empieza a querer;

[ 'ðɔɲ.ɖɛ sɛ\_ɛm.'pjɛ.sa\_a kɛ.'rɛr]

where one begins to love

*where one begins to love;*

el que no lo vió, no supo

[ɛl kɛ nɔ lɔ vjɔ nɔ 'su.pɔ]

that which not it he-did-see not he-did-know

*that which one didn't see, one didn't know,*

cuándo, cómo, dónde fué.

[ 'kwan.ɖɔ 'kɔ.mɔ 'ðɔɲ.ɖɛ fwɛ]

when, how, where it-went

*when, how, or where it went.*

Hubo quien lo vió caer (lo vio y cayó)

[ 'u.βɔ kjɛn lɔ βjɔ ka.'ɛr (lɔ βjɔ\_i ka.'jɔ]

there-was someone him he-saw fall (it he-saw and he-fell)

*There was someone who saw him fall, (saw it and fell)*

y aún después de caer

[i\_a.'uɲ ɖɛs.'pwɛs ðɛ ka.'ɛr]

and even after (of) falling

*and even after falling,*

hizo otra vez el camino  
[ˈi.sɔ̣ ˈɔ̣.tra βɛs ɛl ka.ˈmi.nɔ̣]  
he-did another time the path  
*he took again to the path,*

para caer otra vez.  
[ˈpa.ra ka.ˈɛr ˈɔ̣.tra βɛs  
to fall another time  
*in order to fall again.*

No hay manera de dejarlo  
[nɔ̣.aj ma.ˈnɛ.ra ʔɛ ʔɛ.ˈhaɾ.lɔ̣]  
not there-is way of leaving-it  
*There is no way to leave it*

ni de salirlo a buscar;  
[ni ʔɛ sa.ˈliɾ.lɔ̣.a βus.ˈkaɾ]  
nor of taking-it-out upon searching  
*nor to take it out when looking for it*

es un punto en el camino  
[ɛs um ˈpuɲ.tɔ̣.ɛn ɛl ka.ˈmi.nɔ̣]  
it-is a point in the path  
*it is a point in the path*

que tiene su caminar.  
[kɛ ˈtʃɛ.nɛ su ka.mi.ˈnaɾ]  
that it-has one's journey  
*that is part of one's journey.*

Si el silencio fuera mío,  
 [si\_ɛl si.'lɛn.sjɔ 'fwɛ.ra 'mi.ɔ]  
 if the silence were mine  
*If Silence Were Mine*

Si el silencio fuera mío,  
 [si\_ɛl si.'lɛn.sjɔ 'fwɛ.ra 'mi.ɔ]  
 if the silence were mine  
*If silence were mine,*

Ya las cosas no serían  
 [ja las 'kɔ.sas nɔ sɛ.'ri.an]  
 Indeed the things not would-be  
*Things would not be*

¡qué silencio!  
 [kɛ si.'lɛn.sjɔ]  
 what silence  
*what silence!*

hechas a golpes y ruidos;  
 ['ɛ.tʃas a 'ɣɔl.pɛs i 'r.wi.ðɔs]  
 made by blows and noises  
*made by blows and noises;*

Si el silencio fuera mío,  
 [si\_ɛl si.'lɛn.sjɔ 'fwɛ.ra 'mi.ɔ]  
 if the silence were mine  
*If silence were mine,*

serían todas de aceite  
 [sɛ.'ri.an 'tɔ.ðas ðɛ a.'sɛj.tɛ]  
 they-would-be all of oil  
*everything would be made of oil*

cuando haya silencio  
 ['kwan.ðɔ 'a.ja si.'lɛn.sjɔ]  
 when there-be silence  
*when there is silence*

las sierras y los martillos,  
 [las 'sjɛ.r:as i lɔs mar.'ti.jɔs]  
 the saws and the hammers  
*the saws and hammers,*

no te darás cuenta  
 [nɔ tɛ ða.'ras 'kwɛn.ta]  
 not to-you you-will-take-notice  
*you would not notice*

el hacha del pensamiento  
 [ɛl 'a.tʃa ðɛl pɛn.sa.'mjɛn.tɔ]  
 the hatchet of-the thought  
*the hatchet of thought*

de tanto silencio.  
 [ðɛ 'tan.tɔ si.'lɛn.sjɔ]  
 of so-much silence  
*all of the silence.*

y el azadón de suspiro.  
 [y\_ɛl a.sa.'ðɔn ðɛ sus.'pi.rɔ]  
 and the mattock of sigh  
*and the mattock of sigh.*

**Coplas venezolanas**  
**[kɔ.plas βɛ.nɛ.sɔ.'la.nas]**  
**songs venezuelan**  
*Venezuelan Songs*

Nadie sabe las razones  
 ['na.ðjɛ 'sa.βɛ las ra.'sɔ.nɛs]  
 nobody knows the reasons  
*Nobody knows*

Que se devuelven los sueños  
 [kɛ sɛ ðɛ.'βwɛl.βɛn lɔs 'swɛ.ɲɔs]  
 Let themselves they-return the dreams  
*Let my dreams return*

de este empezarte a querer,  
 [ðɛ\_ 'ɛs.tɛ\_ɛm.pɛ.'sar.tɛ\_a kɛ.'rɛr]  
 for this to-begin-to-you to love  
*Why I start loving you like this,*

a donde queira que estés.  
 [a 'ðɔŋ.ðɛ 'kjɛ.ra kɛ\_ɛs.'tɛs]  
 to where ever that you-be  
*To wherever you may be.*

de este seguirte queriendo,  
 [ðɛ\_ 'ɛs.tɛ sɛ.'gi.rɛɛ kɛ.'rjɛŋ.ðɔ]  
 for this to-continue-to-you loving  
*Why I continue loving you like this,*

Yo tengo los pies enfermos  
 [jɔ 'tɛŋ.gɔ lɔs pjɛs ɛŋ.'fɛr.mɔs]  
 I have the feet sick  
*I have feet that are sick*

de este quererte después.  
 [ðɛ\_ 'ɛs.tɛ kɛ.'rɛr.tɛ ðɛs.'pwɛs]  
 for this to-love-you after  
*Why I love you like this afterwards.*

de un modo de caminar,  
 [ðɛ\_um 'mɔ.ðɔ ðɛ ka.mi.'nar]  
 of a way of walking  
*Of a way of walking,*

Que se devuelven los ojos,  
 [kɛ sɛ ðɛ.'βwɛl.βɛn los 'ɔ.hɔs]  
 Let themselves they-return the eyes  
*Let my eyes return,*

Que se me devuelven solos  
 [kɛ sɛ mɛ ðɛ.'βwɛl.βɛn 'sɔ.lɔs]  
 for themselves me they-return alone  
*They only take me back*

que se devuelven los pies,  
 [kɛ sɛ ðɛ.'βwɛl.βɛn lɔs pjɛs]  
 Let themselves they-return the feet  
*Let my feet return*

a donde quiera que estás, Ah.  
 [a 'ðɔŋ.ðɛ 'kjɛ.ra kɛ\_ɛs.'tɛs a]  
 to where ever that you-are, ah  
*To wherever you are, Ah.*

Suspiro cuando te miro  
 [sus. 'pi.rɔ̌ 'kwaŋ.ɖɔ̌ tɕ mi.rɔ̌]  
 I-sigh when you I-see  
*I Sigh When I See You,*

Suspiro cuando te miro,  
 [sus. 'pi.rɔ̌ 'kwaŋ.ɖɔ̌ tɕ 'mi.rɔ̌]  
 I-sigh when you I-see  
*I sigh when I see you,*

Siempre que te tengo lejos,  
 ['sjɛm.prɛ kɛ tɛ 'tɛŋ.gɔ̌ 'lɛ.hɔ̌s]  
 always when you I-have far-away  
*always, when you are away,*

pero te me pongo al lado  
 ['pɛ.rɔ̌ tɕ mɛ 'pɔŋ.gɔ̌ al 'la.ɖɔ̌]  
 but you to-me I-put at-the side  
*but I put myself next to you*

me paso el día buscando,  
 [mɛ 'pa.sɔ̌\_ɛl 'ði.a βus. 'kaŋ.ɖɔ̌]  
 myself I-pass the day searching  
*I spend my day searching,*

y el fuego de tu costado  
 [i\_ɛl 'fwɛ.ʏɔ̌ ðɛ tu kɔ̌s. 'ta.ɖɔ̌]  
 and the fire of-the your side  
*and the fire of your side*

lo tuyo de los espejos.  
 [lɔ̌ 'tu.jɔ̌ ðɛ lɔ̌s ɛs. 'pɛ.hɔ̌s]  
 it yours of the mirrors  
*for your reflection.*

me va quemando el suspiro.  
 [mɛ βa kɛ. 'maŋ.ɖɔ̌\_ɛl sus. 'pi.rɔ̌]  
 to-me it-goes burning the sign  
*goes on burning my sigh.*



**Pregón**  
**[prɛ. 'ɣɔn]**  
**street-cry**  
*Vendor's Cry*

¡Naranjas, de Valencia,  
 [na. 'ran.has ɔ̌ɛ βa. 'lɛn.sja]  
 oranges from Valencia (Venezuela)  
*Oranges, from Valencia,*

naranjas frescas,  
 [na. 'ran.has 'frɛs.kas]  
 oranges fresh  
*fresh oranges,*

naranjas amarillas  
 [na. 'ran.has a.ma. 'ri.jas]  
 oranges yellow  
*yellow oranges*

cuando el naranjo se baña!  
 ['kwan.ɖɔ̌ɛl na. 'ran.hɔ sɛ 'ba.ɲa]  
 when the orange-tree itself bathes  
*when the orange tree bathes in fruit!*

—¡Naranjas, de cuando el sol  
 [na. 'ran.has ɔ̌ɛ 'kwan.ɖɔ̌ɛl sɔl]  
 oranges of when the sun  
*“Oranges, from when the sun*

parece que en la mañana (alborarda)  
 [pa.rɛ.sɛ kɛ\_ɛn la ma. 'ɲa.na (al.βɔ. 'ra.ɔ̌a)  
 seems that in the morning (daybreak)  
*seems that, in the morning (daybreak)*

va a salir del horizonte  
 [βa\_a sa. 'lir ɔ̌ɛl ɔ̌.ri. 'sɔ̌n.tɛ]  
 it-goes to go-out from-the horizon  
*it is going to leave the horizon*

y sale de las naranjas!  
 [i 'sa.lɛ ɔ̌ɛ las na. 'ran.has]  
 and it-comes-out of the oranges  
*and come out of the oranges!”*

**Guitarra**  
**[gi. 'ʎa.r:a]**  
**guitar**  
*Guitar*

Tendida en la madrugada,  
 [t̪ɛ̃n̪. 'di.ð̞a\_ɛ̃n la ma.ð̞ru. 'ʎa.ð̞a]  
 laid-down in the early-morning  
*Lying down in the early morning,*

la firme guitarra espera;  
 [la 'fir.m̪ɛ gi. 'ʎa.r:a\_ɛ̃s. 'p̪ɛ.ra]  
 the firm guitar waits  
*the firm guitar waits;*

Voz de profunda madera  
 [b̞ɔ̃s ð̞ɛ pr̞ɔ. 'fu̞n̪.ð̞a ma. 'ð̞ɛ.ra]  
 voice of deep wood  
*voice of deep wood*

Desesperada,  
 [ð̞ɛ̃s.ɛ̃s.p̪ɛ. 'ra.ð̞a]  
 desperate  
*desperate,*

su clamorosa cintura  
 [su kla.m̞ɔ. 'r̞ɔ.sa si̞n̪. 'ʎu.ra | ]  
 its clamorous waist  
*its clamorous waist,*

en la que el pueblo suspira  
 [ɛ̃n la k̪ɛ\_ɛl 'p̪w̪ɛ.β̞l̞ɔ sus. 'pi.ra]  
 In it that the villaine sighs  
*for which the people sigh*

preñada de son, estira  
 [pr̪ɛ. 'ɲa.ð̞a ð̞ɛ s̞ɔn ɛ̃s. 'ʎi.ra]  
 pregnant with sound it-stretches  
*pregnant with sound, stretches*

la carne dura.  
 [la 'kaɾ.n̪ɛ 'ð̞u.ra]  
 the flesh firm  
*its hard flesh.*

Y alzó la cabeza fina  
 [i\_al. 's̞ɔ la ka. 'β̞ɛ.sa 'fi.na]  
 and it-raised the head fine  
*And it raised its fine head*

Universal y cubana  
 [u.ni.β̞ɛɾ. 'sal i ku. 'β̞a.na]  
 universal and Cuban  
*Universal and Cuban*

in opio, ni mariguana,  
 [sin 'ɔ.pj̞ɔ ni ma.ri. 'hwa.na]  
 without opium nor marihuana  
*without opium, nor marihuana,*

ni cocaína.  
 [ni k̞ɔ.ka. 'i.na]  
 nor cocaine  
*nor cocaine.*

Cógela tú guitarrero,  
 ['kɔ.hɛ.la tu gi.ta.'r:ɛ.rɔ]  
 take-her you male-guitar-player  
*Take her, you, guitar man*

límpiate de alcol la boca,  
 ['lim.pja.tɛ ʔɛ.al.'kɔl la 'βɔ.ka]  
 clean-yourself of alcohol the mouth  
*clean your mouth of alcohol,*

y en esa guitarra, toca  
 [i\_ɛn 'ɛ.sa gi.'ta.r:a 'tɔ.ka]  
 and on that guitar play  
*and on that guitar, play*

tu son entero.  
 [tu sɔn ɛn.'tɛ.rɔ]  
 your sound complete  
*your full sound.*

El son del querer maduro  
 ɛl sɔn ʔɛl kɛ.'rɛr ma.'ʔu.rɔ | ]  
 the sound of-the desire ripe  
*The sound of ripe desire*

el del abierto futuro  
 [ɛl ʔɛl a.'βjɛr.tɔ fu.'tu.rɔ | ]  
 that of-the open future  
 of an open future

el del pié por sobre el muro  
 [ɛl ʔɛl pjɛ pɔr 'sɔ.βrɛ\_ɛl 'mu.rɔ]  
 that of-the foot over the wall  
*of a foot crossing over the wall*

tu son entero, Ah!  
 [tu sɔn ɛn.'tɛ.rɔ | a]  
 your sound complete ah  
*your full sound, Ah!*

**Canción de cuna para dormir un negrito**  
 [kan. 'sjɔŋ ɖɛ 'ku. na 'pa. ra ɖɔr. 'mir un nɛ. 'yri. tɔ]  
**song of cradle to put-to-sleep a little-black-boy**  
*Lullaby for a little black boy*

Dórmite mi negre,  
 ['nɖɔr.mi.ti mi 'nɛŋ.grɛ]  
 sleep-you my black-one  
*Go to sleep, my black boy,*

Diente de merengue,  
 ['ndjɛŋ.tɛ ɖɛ mɛ. 'rɛŋ.grɛ]  
 teeth of meringue  
*Teeth like meringue,*

dórmite negrito.  
 ['nɖɔr.mi.ti 'niŋ.gri.tɔ]  
 sleep-you little-black-boy  
*go to sleep, little black boy.*

bemba de caimito!  
 ['mbɛm.ba. ɖɛ kaj. 'mi.tɔ]  
 lips of caimito  
*lips like caimito fruit!*

Caimito y merengue,  
 [kaj. 'mi.tɔ i mɛ. 'rɛŋ.grɛ]  
 caimito and meringue  
*Caimito fruit and meringue,*

Cuando tú sea glandi  
 ['kwan.ɖɔ tu 'sɛ.a 'ŋlaŋ.ɖi]  
 when you be big  
*When you are big*

merengue y caimito.  
 [mɛ. 'rɛŋ.grɛ i kaj. 'mi.tɔ]  
 meringue and caimito  
*meringue and caimito fruit.*

va a sé bosiador...  
 [mba a sɛ mbɔ.sja. 'ɖɔr]  
 he-go to be boxer  
*you are going to be a boxer...*

Drómite mi negre,  
 ['nɖɔr.mi.ti mi 'nɛŋ.grɛ]  
 sleep-you my black-one  
*Go to sleep, my black boy,*

Nengre de mi vida,  
 ['nɛŋ.grɛ ɖɛ mi 'mbi. ɖa]  
 black-one of my life  
*Black boy of my life,*

mi negre bonito.  
 [mi 'nɛŋ.grɛ mbɔ. 'ni. tɔ]  
 my black-one beautiful  
*my beautiful black boy.*

nengre de mi amor.  
 ['nɛŋ.grɛ ɖɛ mi a mɔr]  
 black-one of my love  
*black boy of my love*

Nocturno en los muelles  
[nɔ̃k. 'tuɾ.nɔ̃ ɛn lɔs 'mwɛ.jɛs]  
nocturne on the docks  
*Nocturne on the Docks*

Bajo la noche tropical, el puerto.  
[ 'ba.hɔ̃ la 'nɔ̃.tʃɛ tɾɔ.pi.'kal ɛl 'pwɛ.rtõ | ]  
underneath the night tropical the port  
*Under the tropical night, the port.*

El agua lame la inocente orilla  
[ɛl 'a.ɣwa 'la.mɛ la i.nɔ̃.'sɛn.tɛ̃ ɔ̃.'ri.ja]  
the water laps the innocent shore  
*The water laps the innocent shore*

y el faro insulta al malecón desierto.  
[i ɛl 'fa.ɾɔ̃ in.'sul.tã al ma.lɛ̃.'kɔ̃n dɛ̃.sjɛr.tõ]  
and the lighthouse insults to-the pier deserted  
*And the lighthouse insults the deserted pier.*

Qué calma tán robusta y tán sencilla!  
[kɛ̃ 'kal.ma tan r:ɔ̃.βus.tã i tan sɛ̃n.'si.ja]  
What calm so robust and so natural  
*What calm, so robust and natural!*

Pero sobre los muelles solitarios  
[ 'pɛ̃.ɾɔ̃ sɔ̃.βɾɛ̃ lɔs 'mwɛ.jɛs sɔ̃.li.'ta.rjɔ̃s]  
But over the docks solitary  
*But over the solitary docks*

flota una tormentosa pesadilla.  
 ['flɔ.t̪a\_ 'u.na t̪ɔr.mɛɲ.'t̪ɔ.sa pɛ.sa.'ð̪i.ja]  
 floats a tempestuous nightmare  
*floats a tempestuous nightmare.*

Pena de cementerios y de osarios,  
 ['pɛ.na ð̪ɛ sɛ.mɛɲ.'t̪ɛ.rjɔs i ð̪ɛ\_ɔ.'sa.rjɔs]  
 ghost of cemeteries and of ossuaries  
*A ghost of the cemeteries and ossuaries,*

que enseña en pizarrones angustiosos  
 [kɛ\_ɛn.'sɛ.na\_ɛm pi.sa.'r:ɔ.nɛs aɲ.gus.'t̪jɔ.sɔs]  
 that teaches on chalkboards anguished  
*that teaches on anguished chalkboards*

cómo un mismo dolor se parte en varios.  
 ['kɔ.mɔ\_ɯm 'mis.mɔ ð̪ɔ.'lɔr sɛ 'paɾ.t̪ɛ\_ɛm 'ba.rjɔs]  
 how a same pain itself divides in several  
*how pain multiplies itself.*

¡Oh! puño fuerte elemental y duro!  
 [ɔ 'pu.ɲɔ 'fwɛ.r̪t̪ɛ\_ɛ.lɛ.mɛɲ.'t̪al i 'ð̪u.rɔ]  
 Oh fist strong elemental and hard  
*Oh! Strong fist, elemental and hard!*

¿Quién te sujeta el ademán abierto?  
 ['k̪jɛɲ t̪ɛ su.'hɛ.t̪a\_ɛl a.ð̪ɛ.'man a.'βjɛr.t̪ɔ]  
 who to-you restrains the gesture open  
*Who restrains your open gesture?*

Nadie responde en el dolor del puerto.

[ 'na.ðje r:ɛ. 'spɔŋ.ðɛ | ɛn ɛl ðɔ. 'lɔr ðɛl 'pwɛɾ.tɔ | ]

nobody responds in the pain of-the port

*Nobody responds in the pained port.*

El faro grita sobre el mar oscuro.

[ ɛl 'fa.rɔ 'ɣri.ta 'sɔ.βɾɛ\_ɛl mar ɔs. 'ku.rɔ ]

The lighthouse screams over the sea dark

*And the lighthouse screams over the dark sea.*

La luna tiene cabellos blancos  
 [la 'lu.na 'tʃɛ.nɛ ka.βɛ.jɔs 'βlaŋ.kɔs]  
 the moon has hairs white  
*The Moon Has White Hair*

La luna tiene cabellos blancos como abuelita.  
 [la 'lu.na 'tʃɛ.nɛ ka.βɛ.jɔs 'βlaŋ.kɔs 'kɔ.mɔ a.βwɛ.'li.ta]  
 the moon has hairs white like little-grandmother  
*The moon has white hair like grandmother.*

Abuelito bigotes blancos, rayos de sol.  
 [a.βwɛ.'li.tɔ βi.'ʏɔ.tɛs 'βlaŋ.kɔs 'r:a.jɔs ʔɛl sɔl]  
 little-grandfather mustaches white rays of sun  
*Grandfather has a white mustache like rays of sunlight.*

Sueño con ellos cuando me cantan,  
 ['swɛ.ŋɔ kɔn 'ɛ.jɔs 'kwaŋ.ɔɔ mɛ 'kaŋ.taŋ]  
 I-dream with them when to-me they-sing  
*I dream with them while they sing to me,*

sueño con ellos cuando me duermen.  
 ['swɛ.ŋɔ kɔn 'ɛ.jɔs 'kwaŋ.ɔɔ mɛ 'ðwɛr.mɛn]  
 I-dream with them when to-me they-put-to-sleep  
*I dream with them while they put me to sleep.*

Sueños de luna, sueños de sol.  
 ['swɛ.ŋɔs ʔɛ 'lu.na 'swɛ.ŋɔs ʔɛ sɔl]  
 dreams of moon dreams of sun  
*Dreams of the moon, dreams of the sun.*

Canto de gallos cuando despierto.  
 ['kaŋ.tɔ ʔɛ 'ʎa.jɔs 'kwaŋ.ɔɔ ʔɛs.'pjɛr.tɔ]  
 Song of roosters when I-wake  
*Rooster songs when I wake.*



Caballo blanco, cometa roja.  
[ka.'βa.jɔ̃ 'βlaŋ.kɔ̃ kɔ̃.'mɛ.ʈa 'r:ɔ̃.ha]  
horse white kite red

*White horse, red kite.*

Ya se voló,  
[ja sɛ βɔ̃.'lɔ̃]  
already itself it-flew

*Had set itself in flight,*

rompió los hilos,  
[r:ɔ̃m.'pjɔ̃ lɔ̃s 'i.lɔ̃s]  
it-broke the wires

*it broke its strings,*

hoy pude verla,  
[ɔ̃j 'pu.ðɛ 'βɛr.la]  
today one-could see-it

*today, one could see it,*

está dormida cerca del sol.  
[ɛs.'ʈa ðɔ̃r.'mi.ða 'sɛr.ka ðɛl sɔ̃l]  
it-is sleeping next to-the sun

*it is sleeping next to the sun.*

Te        aguardaba        entre        mástiles  
 [t͡ʃa.ɣwar. 'ð̞a.βa ɛ̃n.t͡ʃe        'mas.t͡ʃi.lɛs]  
 for-you I-was-waiting    between masts  
*I Was Waiting For You Between Masts*

Te        aguardaba        entre        mástiles  
 [t͡ʃa.ɣwar. 'ð̞a.βa ɛ̃n.t͡ʃe        'mas.t͡ʃi.lɛs]  
 for-you I-was-waiting    between masts  
*I was waiting for you between masts*

confundido        al        oleaje        del        ramaje        celeste  
 [kɔ̃ŋ.fuɲ. 'di.ð̞ɔ̃ al        ɔ̃. 'lɛ̃a.hɛ̃ ð̞ɛ̃l        r̥a. 'ma.hɛ̃        sɛ̃. 'lɛ̃s.t͡ʃɛ̃]  
 disoriented        at-the swell        of-the branches        sky-blue  
*disoriented at the swell of the sky-blue branches*

el        alba        perseguía        la        fuga        de        los        peces  
 [ɛ̃l        'al.βa        pɛ̃r.sɛ̃. 'ɣi.a        la        'fu.ɣa        ð̞ɛ̃        lɔ̃s        'pɛ̃.sɛ̃s]  
 the dawn chased        the flight        of        the fish  
*the dawn chased the flight of the fish*

y        autoctonas        guaruras  
 [i ɔ̃aw. 't͡ʃk̞.t͡ʃ.nas        ɣwa. 'ru.ras]  
 and indigenous        snails  
*and indigenous snails*

rompían        el        sortilegio        del        arpa        sideral  
 [r̥ɔ̃m. 'pi.an        ɛ̃l        sɔ̃r.t͡ʃi. 'lɛ̃.hjɔ̃ ð̞ɛ̃l        'ar.pa        si.ð̞ɛ̃. 'ral]  
 they-broke the spell        of-the harp        astral  
*they broke the spell of the astral harp*

Alimenté        tus        labios  
 [a.li.mɛ̃ɲ. 't͡ʃɛ̃        t͡ʃus        'la.βjɔ̃s]  
 I-fed        your lips  
*I fed your lips*

con la dulzura humilde del cerezo  
[kɔn la ɖul.'su.ra u.'miɭ.ðɛ ɖɛl sɛ.'rɛ.sɔ]  
with the sweetness gentle of-the cherry  
*with the gentle sweetness of cherry*

bastaba poco entonces para trenzar los mimbres  
[bas.'ta.βa pɔ.kɔ ɛn.'tɔn.sɛs 'pa.ra tɾɛn.'sar lɔs 'mim.brɛs]  
I-lacked little then to braid the wicker  
*I needed little then to braid the wicker*

tu beso tenía fresco  
[tu 'βɛ.sɔ tɛ.'ni.a 'frɛs.kɔ]  
your kiss had fresh  
*your kiss had the fresh*

sabor de agua madura  
[sa.'βɔr ɖɛ 'a.ywa ma.'ðu.ra]  
taste of water ripe  
*taste of ripe water*

en la corteza láctea de los frutos  
[ɛn la kɔr.'tɛ.sa 'lak.tɛ̃a ɖɛ lɔs 'fru.tɔs]  
in the shell milky of the fruits  
*from the fruit's milky shell*

## Sequía

[sɛ. 'ki.a]

drought

*Drought*

Hace tiempo que no llueve,  
[ 'a.sɛ 'tjɛm.pɔ kɛ nɔ 'jwɛ.βɛ]

It's-been time since no rain

*It has been a while without rain,*

las fuentes están exhaustas  
[las 'fwɛn.tɛs ɛs. 'tan ɛks. 'äus.tas]

the fountains are exhausted

*the fountains are exhausted*

y las angustias del pueblo  
[i las aŋ. 'gus.tjas ɔɛl 'pwɛ.βlɔ]

and the anxieties of-the village

*and the worried townspeople*

se enfilan hacia las charcas.  
[sɛ ɛŋ. 'fi.lan a. 'si.a las 'tʃar.kas]

themselves they-file towards the ponds

*line up at the pond.*

por las veredas con sol,  
[por las βɛ. 'rɛ.ðas kɔn sɔl]

on the sidewalks with sun

*on the sidewalks in the sun,*

con luna o madrugada  
[kɔn 'lu.na ɔ ma.ðru. 'ya.ðä]

with moon or early-morning

*in the moonlight or early-morning twilight*

saltando anémicos verdes

[sal. 'tan.ɔɔ a. 'nɛ.mi.kɔs 'βɛr.ðɛs]

jumping anemic greens

*jumping over the anemic greens*

de ortigas y de retamas,

[ðɛ ɔr. 'ti.ɣas i ðɛ r.ɛ. 'ta.mas]

of nettles and of brooms (plant)

*of nettle and broom,*

anda la sed sofocante

['an.ða la sɛð sɔ.fɔ. 'kan.tɛ]

it-goes the thirst suffocating

*the suffocating thirst goes*

tras la sonrisa de agua.

[tras la sɔn. 'ri.sa ɔɛl a. 'ɣwa]

through the smile of water

*to the smile of water.*

De las múcuras vacías

[ðɛ las 'mu.ku.ras βa. 'si.as]

from the jugs empty

*from the empty jugs,*

el viento de la sabana

ɛl 'βjɛn.tɔ ðɛ la sa. 'βa.na | ]

the wind of the savannah

*the wind of the savannah*



Un títere escondido

[un 'ti.t̪e.r̪e̞s.k̪o̞n̪. 'di.ð̪o̞]

a puppet hidden

*A Hidden Puppet*

Un niño escondido

[un 'ni.ɲ̺̌e̞s.k̪o̞n̪. 'di.ð̪o̞]

a boy hidden

*A hidden child*

que miran también

[k̪e̞ 'mi.ra̞n̪ ɬam.'bj̪e̞n]

that they-look also

*who also look*

detrás de un carrusel

[d̪e̞. 'tras̪ ð̪e̞un̪ ka.r̪:u.'s̪e̞l]

behind a carousel

*behind a carousel*

a la nariz grande

[a la na.'ris̪ 'ɣra̞n̪.d̪e̞]

at the nose big

*at the big nose*

dice cosas muy bellas

[ 'di.s̪e̞ 'k̪o̞.sas̪ muɣ̌ 'β̪e̞.jas̪]

says things very beautiful

*says very beautiful things*

que vive del bien.

[k̪e̞ 'β̪i.β̪e̞ ð̪e̞l̪ bj̪e̞n]

that it-lives of-the good

*that lives in goodness.*

de un amanecer.

[ð̪e̞un̪ a.ma.n̪e̞.'s̪e̞r̪]

of a sunrise

*of a sunrise.*

Los niños sonrien

[l̪o̞s̪ 'ni.ɲ̺̌o̞s̪ s̪o̞n̪.'r̪j̪e̞n]

the children they-smile

*The children smile*

Sonrisas de niños

[s̪o̞n̪.'ri.sas̪ ð̪e̞ 'ni.ɲ̺̌o̞s̪]

smiles of children

*Smiles of children*

y el hombre también

[i̞el̪ 'o̞m.br̪e̞ ɬam.'bj̪e̞n]

and the man also

*and also the man*

que mira en el arte  
[kɛ 'mi.ra\_ɛn ɛl 'ar.tɛ]  
that he-sees in the art  
*that sees in art*

un nuevo amanecer.  
[un 'nwɛ.βɔ\_a.ma.nɛ.'sɛr]  
a new dawn  
*a new dawn.*

Sonrie a la vida,  
[sɔn.'rjɛ\_a la 'βi.ð̞a]  
smile at the life  
*Smile at life*

sonriele y ven,  
[sɔn.'rjɛ.lɛ\_i βɛn  
smile-to-yourself and come  
*smile to yourself and come,*

juguemos al aire  
[hu.'ʎɛ.mɔs al 'aj.rɛ | ]  
let-us-play in-the air  
*let's play in the open air*

y a un atardecer.  
[i\_a\_un a.taɾ.ð̞ɛ.'sɛr]  
and in a evening  
*and in the evening.*

Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico  
 [kan.sjɔŋ ðɛ ku.na pa.ra ʔɔr.mir a\_al.βɛr.ti.kɔ]  
 song of cradle to put-to-sleep (to) little-Albert  
*Lullaby to Put Little Albert to Sleep*

Duérmete mi niño,  
 ['ðwɛr.mɛ.tɛ mi 'ni.ɲɔ]  
 go-to-sleep-yourself my boy  
*Go to sleep my child,*

caballitos blancos  
 [ka.βa.'ji.tɔs 'βlaŋ.kɔs]  
 little-horses white  
*little white horses*

duérmete mi sol;  
 ['ðwɛr.mɛ.tɛ mi sɔl]  
 go-to-sleep-yourself my sun  
*go to sleep my sun;*

cargados de nuez,  
 [kar.'ɣa.dɔs ðɛ nwɛs]  
 loaded of walnuts  
*loaded with walnuts,*

duerme, pedacito  
 ['ðwɛr.mɛ pɛ.ð̞a.'si.tɔ]  
 go-to-sleep little-piece  
*sleep, little piece*

Y si tú te duermes,  
 [i si tu tɛ 'ðwɛr.mɛs]  
 and if you yourself you-sleep  
*And if you fall asleep,*

de mi corazón.  
 [ðɛ mi kɔ.ra.'sɔŋ]  
 of my heart  
*Oof my heart.*

yo te compraré  
 [jɔ tɛ kɔm.pra.'rɛ | ]  
 I to-you I-will-buy  
*I will buy you*

Y si tú te duermes,  
 [i si tu tɛ 'ðwɛr.mɛs]  
 and if you yourself you-sleep  
*And if you fall asleep,*

un lindo payaso  
 [un 'liŋ.dɔ pa.'ja.sɔ]  
 a cute clown  
*a cute clown*

yo te compraré,  
 [jɔ tɛ kɔm.pra.'rɛ]  
 I to-you I-will-buy  
*I will buy you,*

con su carrousel.  
 [kɔn su ka.r:'u.sɛl]  
 with his carousel  
*with his carousel.*



Si te duermes pronto,  
 [si tɛ 'ðwɛr.mɛs 'prɔŋ.tɔ]  
 if yourself you-sleep quickly  
*If you fall asleep quickly,*

te voy a traer  
 [tɛ βɔj | a tɾa.'ɛr]  
 to-you I-go (to) to-bring  
*I am going to bring you*

un lindo barquito,  
 [un 'liŋ.ðɔ βar.'ki.tɔ | ]  
 a cute little-boat  
*a cute little boat,*

y un tren de papel.  
 [i un tɾɛn ðɛ pa.pɛl]  
 and a train of paper  
*and a paper train.*

Te traeré un osito  
 [tɛ tɾa.ɛ.'rɛ un ɔ.'si.tɔ]  
 to-you I-will-bring a little-bear  
*I will bring you a little bear*

de color de miel,  
 [ðɛ kɔ.'lɔr ðɛ mjɛl]  
 of color of honey  
*the color of honey,*

y unos zapaticos  
 [i 'u.nɔs sa.pa.'ti.kɔs]  
 and some little-shoes  
*and some little shoes*

que te harán correr.  
 [kɛ tɛ a.'ran kɔ.'r:ɛr]  
 that to-you they-will-make to-run  
*that will make you run.*

**Preciosa**  
**[prɛ. 'sjɔ.sa]**  
**beautiful**  
*Beautiful*

Preciosa, preciosa  
 [prɛ. 'sjɔ.sa prɛ. 'sjɔ.sa]  
 beautiful beautiful  
*Beautiful, beautiful*

La muñeca de mamá;  
 [la mu. 'nɛ.ka ðɛ ma. 'ma]  
 the doll of mama  
*Mama's little doll;*

preciosa, preciosa  
 [prɛ. 'sjɔ.sa prɛ. 'sjɔ.sa | ]  
 beautiful beautiful  
*beautiful, beautiful*

es la niña de papá.  
 [ɛs la 'ni.ɲa ðɛ pa. 'pa]  
 she-is the girl of papa  
*is papa's girl.*

Qué linda la niña,  
 [kɛ 'liŋ.ða la 'ni.ɲa | ]  
 how cute the girl  
*How cute is the girl,*

la muñeca de Tatá,  
 [la mu. 'nɛ.ka ðɛ ta. 'ta]  
 the doll of Dada  
*Dada's little doll,*

la muñeca más preciosa  
 [la mu. 'nɛ.ka mas prɛ. 'sjɔ.sa]  
 The doll most beautiful  
*Mama and papa's*

de mamá y de papá.  
 [ðɛ ma. 'ma | i ðɛ pa. 'pa]  
 of mama and of papa  
*Most beautiful doll.*

Es la luz de tu presencia  
 [ɛs la lus ðɛ tu prɛ.'sɛn.sja]  
 it-is the light of your presence  
*It's the Light of Your Presence*

Es la luz de tu presencia  
 [ɛs la lus ðɛ tu prɛ.'sɛn.sja]  
 it-is the light of your presence  
*It's the light of your presence*

y en la costa de tus labios  
 [i\_ɛn la 'kɔs.ta ðɛ tus 'la.βjɔs]  
 and on the coast of your lips  
*and on the coast of your lips*

la que altera mis sentidos  
 [la kɛ\_al.'tɛ.ra mis sɛn.'ti.ðɔs]  
 that which alters my feelings  
*that flusters my feelings*

expresar lo que yo siento.  
 [ɛks.prɛ.'sar lɔ kɛ jɔ 'sjɛn.tɔ]  
 to-express that which I feel  
*to express what I feel.*

es terrible lo que ha sido  
 [ɛs tɛ.'r.i.βlɛ lɔ kɛ\_a si.ðɔ]  
 it-is terrible that which has been  
*it's awful what has been*

En la playa de tus ojos  
 [ɛn la 'pla.ja ðɛ tus 'ɔ.hɔs]  
 on the beach of your eyes  
*On the beach of your eyes*

sufrir tanto por tu ausencia.  
 [suf.'rir 'taŋ.tɔ pɔr tu\_aw.'sɛn.sja]  
 to-suffer so-much by your absence  
*suffering so much from your absence.*

quiero anclar mi pensamiento,  
 ['kjɛ.rɔ\_ɔŋ.'klar mi pɛn.sa.'mjɛn.tɔ]  
 I-want to-anchor my thought  
*I want to anchor my thoughts,*

En la playa de tus ojos  
 [ɛn la 'pla.ja ðɛ tus 'ɔ.hɔs]  
 on the beach of your eyes  
*On the beach of your eyes*

estrecharte entre mis brazos  
 [ɛs.tɾɛ.'tʃar.tɛ\_ɛn.tɾɛ mis 'bra.sɔs]  
 to-embrace-you between my arms  
*embrace you in my arms*

quiero anclar mi pensamiento,  
 ['kjɛ.rɔ\_ɔŋ.'klar mi pɛn.sa.'mjɛn.tɔ]  
 I-want to-anchor my thought  
*I want to anchor my thoughts,*

y decirte lo que siento.  
 [i ðɛ.'sir.tɛ lɔ kɛ 'sjɛn.tɔ]  
 and to-say-to-you that which I-feel  
*and say to you what I feel.*

Muchachas bajo la lluvia  
 [mu.ˈtʃa.tʃas ˈβa.hɔ la ˈju.βja]  
 girls under the rain  
*Girls in The Rain*

Muchachas que pasáis bajo la lluvia  
 [mu.ˈtʃa.tʃas kɛ pa.ˈsajs ˈβa.hɔ la ˈju.βja]  
 girls let you-all-pass under the rain  
*Girls, walk out into the rain*

con campanitas de agua en el cabello;  
 [kɔŋ kam.pa.ˈni.tas ðɛ ˈa.ɣwa ɛn ɛl ka.ˈβɛ.jɔ]  
 with little-bells of water in the hair  
*with tinkerbells of water in their hair;*

niñas de la actitud samaritana  
 [ˈni.ɲas ðɛ la | ak̟.ti.ˈtuð̟ sa.ma.ri.ˈta.na]  
 girls of the attitude Samaritan  
*girls with a Samaritan attitude*

que lleváis levantados los cuadernos  
 [kɛ jɛ.ˈβajs lɛ.βan.ˈta.ð̟s lɔs kwa.ˈð̟r.nɔs]  
 that you-all-bring lifted-up the notebooks  
*Bring your notebooks, lifted above your heads*

como para que el agua milagrosa  
 [ˈkɔ.mɔ ˈpa.ra kɛ | ɛl ˈa.ɣwa mi.la.ˈɣrɔ.sa]  
 like so that the water miraculous  
*as if miraculous water might write*

su inocente canción escriba en ellos.  
 [su i.nɔ. 'sɛŋ.tɛ kan. 'sjɔn ɛs. 'kri.βa\_ɛn 'ɛ.jɔs]  
 their innocent song it-might-write in them  
*Its innocent song in them.*

Muchachas que ofrecisteis las mejillas  
 [mu. 'tʃa.tʃas kɛ\_ɔ.frɛ. 'sis.tɛjs las mɛ. 'hi.jas]  
 girls that you-all-offered the cheeks  
*Girls, offer your cheeks*

al fauno pizarón del aguacero;  
 [al 'faw.nɔ pi.ka. 'rɔŋ dɛl a.ɣwa. 'sɛ.rɔ]  
 to-the fawn naughty of-the downpour  
*to the naughty faun of the downpour;*

frutales niñas que cruzáis la isla tarde de trenzas  
 [fru. 'tʃa.lɛs 'ni.ɲas kɛ kru. 'sajs la\_ 'is.la 'tʃar.ðɛ ðɛ 'tɾɛn.sas]  
 fruit-trees children that you-all-cross the island late of braids  
*girls like fruit trees, weave across the island afternoon*

la gris y uniforme nuevo:  
 [la ɣris i\_u.ni. 'fɔr.mɛ 'nwɛ.βɔ]  
 the grey and uniform new  
*in your new grey uniform:*

¡Con qué gusto romántico andaría mi corazón  
 [kɔŋ kɛ 'ɣus.tɔ r.ɔ. 'maŋ.ti.kɔ\_ aŋ.ða. 'ri.a mi kɔ.ra. 'sɔn]  
 with what pleasure romantic it-would-go my heart  
*With what romantic pleasure my heart would go*

envuelto en un pañuelo!  
 [ɛm. 'bwɛl.tɔ\_ɛn um pa. 'ɲwɛ.lɔ]  
 wrapped-up in a handkerchief  
*wrapped up in a handkerchief!*

Mapa de nuestro mar  
[ 'ma.pa ǾǾ 'nwɛs.trɔ mar]  
map of our sea  
*Map of Our Sea*

Del silencio de ayer quedó entreabierta  
[dɛl si.'lɛn.sjɔ ǾǾa.'jɛr kɛ.'Ǿɔ'ɛn.trɛa.'βjɛr.tɔ]  
of-the silence of yesterday it-remained half-opened  
*The exit toward the sea remained half-open*

la salida hacia el mar que te he guardado,  
[la sa.'li.Ǿa'a.'si.a\_ɛl mar kɛ tɛ\_ɛ ɣwar.'Ǿa.Ǿɔ]  
the exit toward the sea that for-you I-have watched  
*from yesterday's silence that I have kept for you,*

donde duerme en el golfo no encontrado  
[ 'Ǿɔn.dɛ 'Ǿwɛr.mɛ\_ɛn ɛl 'ɣɔl.fɔ nɔ\_ɛn.kɔn.'tra.Ǿɔ]  
where it-sleeps in the gulf not found  
*where the undiscovered peninsula*

la península nunca descubierta.  
[la pɛ.'nin.su.la 'nuŋ.ka ǾǾs.ku.'βjɛr.tɔ]  
the peninsula never discovered  
*sleeps in the unfound gulf.*

Un mar al pié de tu amargura muerte,  
[um mar al pjɛ ǾǾ tu\_a.mar.'ɣu.ra 'mwɛr.tɛ]  
a sea at-the feet of your bitter death  
*A sea At the feet of your sorrowful death,*

de faro, y luna y sol desalumbrado;  
 [ð̥ɛ 'fa.r̥ɔ̣i 'lu.na | i sɔl ð̥ɛs.a.lum.'bra.ð̥ɔ̣ | ]  
 of lighthouse and moon and sun unlit  
*with lighthouse, and moon, and sun unlit;*

agua de fuego en el acantilador,  
 ['a.ɣwa ð̥ɛ 'fwɛ.ɣɔ̣ | ɛn ɛl a.kan̩.t̩i.la.'ð̥ɔ̣r]  
 water of fire on the cliff  
*water of fire on the cliff,*

sumergida pasión junto a tu puerta.  
 [su.mɛɾ.'hi.ð̥a pa.'sjɔn 'hun̩.t̩ɔ̣a tu 'pwɛɾ.t̩a]  
 submerged passion next to your door  
*submerged passion next to your door.*

## APPENDIX B: VENEZUELAN SPANISH PRONUNCIATION CHART

letter	phoneme	allophone	notes
<b>a</b>	/a/	[a]	see section on vowels
<b>b</b>	/b/	[b]	breath initial, after nasal consonant
		[β]	after non-nasal consonants, and intervocalic
	/B/	[b̃]	in syllable final, word medial position, free variation in careful speech <sup>865</sup>
<b>c</b>	/k/	[k]	before a, o, u
	/G/	[k̃]	in syllable final, word medial position, in free variation in careful speech
	/s/	[s]	(laminar) before e, i
<b>ch</b>	/tʃ/	[tʃ]	pronounced with no lip rounding [tʃ <sup>w</sup> ], little presence of separate [ʃ] phase, palatized, and bright
<b>d</b>	/d̪/	[d̪]	beginning of breath, and after a nasal consonant
		[ð̪]	(dental) after non-nasal consonant, intervocalic (never: [r])

<sup>865</sup> Please consult Delgado for other possibilities and greater specificity for all entries in this chart, especially regarding archiphonemes such as /B/, /G/, /D̪/, and /N/.



	/Ḑ/	[ḑ̞]	syllable final, word medial, in careful speech in free variation
<i>e</i>	/e/	[ɛ̞]	see section on vowels
		[ɛ̞̞]	As non-central part of a multi-vowel syllable
<i>f</i>	/f/	[f]	always
<i>g</i>	/g/		before- <i>o,a,u</i>
		[g]	breath initial, after nasal consonant
		[ɣ]	after non-nasal consonant, intervocalic
	/G/	[ḡ]	before- <i>o,a,u</i> in syllable final, word medial position, in free variation careful speech
	/h/	[h]	before- <i>e,i</i> , in free variation
<i>h</i>	silent	silent	almost always
	/j/	[j]	<i>hie</i> -as in <i>hierba</i> , [ˈjɛr.βa] in careful speech
	/w/	[wʷ]	<i>hue</i> - as in <i>hueso</i> [ˈwʷɛ̞.sɔ̞] (velarized)
<i>i</i>	/i/	[i]	see section on vowels
		[j]	non-central part of multi-vowel syllable

<i>j</i>	/h/	[h]	in free variation
<i>k</i>	/k/	[k]	borrowed letter
	/G/	[k̰]	in syllable final, word medial position, in free variation
<i>l</i>	/l/	[l]	alveolar/palatal [l], body of tongue is high in mouth, apico-alveolar never: [ɫ] the velarized [l]
		[lʲ]	palatized, lamino-palato-alveolar lateral liquid. before /t͡ʃ/.
		[ɭ]	apico-dental, before dental consonants /d͡t̪/, /t͡d̪/
		[ɬ]	before /j/, /j̃/, /ɲ/
	/r/		<i>rotacismo</i> before consonants or pause in casual speech
		[r]	in free variation
		[ɭ]	in free variation <i>hybridization</i> (often seen as [ˈr], [ɭ], [rˈ], [ɭ], [lˈ], [rˈ], or [ˈr])
<i>ll</i>	/j̃/	[j̃]	word and syllable initial, except after /N/ or lateral /l/ in careful speech
		[j̃j̃]	after /N/ or /l/ in the same breath group in careful speech, and in absolute initial position in casual speech
<i>m</i>	/m/	[m]	syllable initial

	/N/		anywhere else
		[m]	before [b], [p], [m]
		[ɱ]	before [f]
		[ɲ]	before [ɳ]
		[n̟]	before [j̟], [t̟]
		[ŋ]	before [g], [k] and word final in casual speech
		[n]	before [s], [ɾ], [r], [n], [l], [h]
		[ɳ]	before [d͡], [t͡]
<i>n</i>	/n/	[n]	syllable initial
	/N/		anywhere else
		[ŋ]	before [g], [k] and word final in casual speech
		[m]	before [b], [p], [m]
		[ɱ]	before [f]
		[ɲ]	before [j], [ɳ], [ç] (palato-alveolar)
		[n]	before [s], [ɾ], [r], [n], [l], [h]
		[ɳ]	before [d͡], [t͡]

<i>ñ</i>	/ɲ/	[ɲ]	always. not [ɲj]
<i>o</i>	/o/	[ɔ̞]	see section on vowels
		[ɔ̞̃]	as non-central part of a multi-vowel syllable
<i>p</i>	/p/	[p]	never: [p <sup>h</sup> ]
	/B/	[p̞]	syllable final, word medial, in careful speech in free variation
<i>q(u)</i>	/k/	[k]	always. <i>u</i> is silent
<i>r</i>	/r/		wherever <i>r</i> is <b>not</b> doubled, even across word boundaries
		[r:] 3+	3 or more vibrations always in word-initial position, and after <i>l</i> , <i>n</i> , or <i>s</i> .
		[r] 2	2 vibrations before pause or consonant in free variation, and after consonant in the same syllable in lyric diction
		[ɾ]	single flap before pause or consonant in free variation, and after consonant in the same syllable in speech
	/ɻ/		<i>lamdacismo</i> before consonant or pause in casual speech
		[ɻ]	in free variation

		[ɭ]	in free variation <i>hybridization</i> (often seen as [ɭʳ], [ɭʲ], [rɭ], [ɭʳ], [ɭʲ], or [ɭʳ])
	/ɾ/	[ɾ]	intervocalic within a word or across word boundaries within a breath, but never when <i>r</i> is word initial.
<i>rr</i>	/r/	[r:] 3+	3 or more vibrations, even two single <i>r</i> 's that are adjacent across word boundaries
<i>s</i>	/s/		always, never [z]
		[s]	(laminar) syllable initial, intervocalic, anytime more often in lyric diction
		[h]	syllable final in careful regional speech
<i>t</i>	/t̪/	[t̪]	(dental) never: [tʰ]
	/D̪/	[t̪]	syllable final, word medial, free variation in casual speech
<i>u</i>	/u/	[u]	see section on vowels
		[w]	as non-central part of a multi-vowel syllable
	/b/	[b]	after breath, and after nasal consonant, never [v] <sup>866</sup>

<sup>866</sup> Delgado, 261. Citing Dalbor, 205-206. In modern Spanish of all dialects, b and v are treated identically.

v		[β]	after non-nasal consonant, and intervocalic
	/B/	[ḃ]	syllable final, word medial in careful speech
w	/w/	[w]	borrowed letter
x	/ks/	[ks]	in free variation in careful speech
y	/j/	[j]	word and syllable initial, except after /N/ or lateral /l/ in careful speech
		[j̥]	after /N/ or /l/ in the same breath group in careful speech, and in absolute initial position in casual speech
z	/s/		always, never [z]
		[s]	always in syllable initial, and intervocalic position always in formal speech always in lyric diction
		[h]	syllable final in careful regional speech

### APPENDIX C: ART SONGS WORKS LIST

Date	Song	Collection	#	Poet
1953	La tarde			Modesta Bor
1956	Mi niño bonito (Canción de cuna)	Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano	I	Modesta Bor
1956	Topecito	Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano	II	Yolanda Osuna
1956	Cosquilla del bubute	Tres canciones infantiles para voz y piano	III	Yolanda Osuna
1957	Amanecer			Francisco Lárez Granado
1957	Rojo			Francisco Lárez Granado
1960	Canción	Canciones infantiles	I	José Moreno Villa
1960	Canción de cuna	Canciones infantiles	III	Francisco Bernárdez
1960	El ratón	Canciones infantiles	V	Jorge Carrera Andrade
1961	La flor del apamate	Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	I	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1961	Amolador	Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	II	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1961	Canción de cuna	Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	III	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1961	Coplas	Primer ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	IV	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1962	Si el silencio fuera mío	Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	I	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1962	Coplas venezolanas	Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	II	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1962	Suspiro cuando te miro	Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	III	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1962	Pregón	Segundo ciclo de romanzas para contralto y piano	IV	Andrés Eloy Blanco
1966	Guitarra	Tríptico sobre poesía cubana	I	Nicolás Guillén
1966	Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito	Tríptico sobre poesía cubana	II	Emilio Ballagas
1966	Nocturno en los muelles	Tríptico sobre poesía cubana	III	Nicolás Guillén
1970	La luna tiene cabellos blancos	Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano	I	Fernando Rodríguez García
1970	Te aguardaba entre mástiles	Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano	II	Mimina Rodríguez Lezama
1970	Sequía	Tres canciones para mezzo-soprano y piano	III	Francisco Lárez Granado

1981	Un títere escondido			Carlos Augusto León
1986	Canción de cuna para dormir a Albertico			Modesta Bor
1987	Preciosa			Modesta Bor
1991	Es la luz de tu presencia			Argenis Rivera/ Modesta Bor
?	Muchachas bajo la lluvia			Aquiles Nazoa
?	Mapa de nuestro mar	Dos canciones para tenor y piano	?	Andrés Eloy Blanco
?	?	Dos canciones para tenor y piano	?	Andrés Eloy Blanco
?	<i>Coplas de la sed</i>			?
?	<i>Resurrecciones</i>			Pablo Neruda
?	<i>Homenaje a Neruda</i>			Pablo Neruda

Unpublished works are in italics.



## **APPENDIX D: POSSIBLE MUSICAL ERRORS IN THE ‘EDICIONES ARE’ EDITIONS**

### **Cosquilla del Bubute**

m. 16, piano, right hand, b. 2: should be F#

Underlining is exact throughout the song except for this note.

### **Rojo**

m. 16, piano, left hand, b. 1 should be C $\flat$ , instead of C#

C $\flat$ 's are in the right hand, and the left hand has a clear chromatic descent in the preceding measure.

### **Canciones Infantiles: Canción de cuna**

m. 11, piano, left hand, b. 2 should be F#, instead of G $\flat$

Song would otherwise end un-resolved.

### **Un títere escondido**

m. 65, piano, left hand, b. 1.5 should be Eb, instead of E $\flat$

Eb's are in the right hand, and the F Lydian dominant is common in Bor's songs.

## APPENDIX E: PERMISSIONS

Poet	Publication	Rights Contact
Emilio Ballagas	Cuaderno de poesía negra, 1934	Public Domain
Jorge Carrera Andrade	Microgramas, 1926	Juan Carrera Colin
Andrés Eloy Blanco	Giraluna, 1955	Public Domain
Francisco Luis Bernárdez	Poemas de carne y hueso, 1943	Margarita de Lara margaritadelara1@gmail.com
Francisco Lárez Granado	Velero mundo, 1948	<a href="https://m.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100001823763292">https://m.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100001823763292</a>
José Moreno Villa	Collección: Poesía, 1924	Editorial Cara Raggio Alfonso XII, 52 Madrid, 28014 SPAIN <a href="http://www.losbaroja.com/contacto.asp">http://www.losbaroja.com/contacto.asp</a>
Nicolás Guillén	West Indies Ltd., 1934; & El Son Entero, 1947	Biblioteca Ayacucho 8 Avenida Urdaneta, Caracas, Distrito Capital, VENEZUELA
Aquiles Nazoa	Los poemas de Aquiles Nazoa, 1961	amigosculturaurbana@gmail.com
Mimina Rodríguez Lezama	La palabra sin rostro, 1975	Monte Ávila Editores Latinoamericana Centro Simón Bolívar Torre Norte. Piso 22. Caracas, Distrito Capital, El Silencio, VENEZUELA.
Carlos Augusto León		
Yolanda Osuna		
Modesta Bor	Obra para voz y piano de Modesta Bor, 2015	Lena Sánchez Bor lsbor@hotmail.com fundaciónmodestabor@gmail.com Armando Nones Ediciones ARE, 2015 edicionesare@gmail.com
Fernando Rodriguez Garcia		
Argenis Rivera		Armando Nones edicionesare@gmail.com
Khristien Maelzner	Obras completas para piano de Modesta Bor, 2002	khristienknut@hotmail.com

Aquiles Nazoa Permission

Fundación para la Cultura Urbana, amigosculturaurbana@gmail.com, July 21 2017

Estimado señor Nicholas, gracias por comunicarse con nosotros.

Disculpe la tardanza en responder su correo. Tenemos entendido que si es con fines académicos, puede publicar los poemas siempre y cuando cite la obra original en la que fueron publicados.

Khristian Maelzner Permission

Khristien Maelzner, khristienknut@hotmail.com, October 27, 2016

¡Saludos estimado! Sí, puede utilizar y difundir los ejemplos que desee de la obra de Modesta Bor para su trabajo de investigación.

Argenis Rivera Permissions

Armando Nones, edicionesare@gmail.com, August 11, 2017

Estimado Nicholas, disculpa la demora.

El profesor Argenis no tiene problemas igual en que se use la poesía.

Francisco Luiz Bernárdez Permission

Margarita de Lara, margaritadelara1@gmail.com, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Estimado Señor Nicholas Miguel le otorgo el permiso para la realización de los poemas del libro "Poemas de Carne y Hueso." Yo soy la persona que tiene los derechos de autor del poeta Francisco Luis Bernárdez desde que falleció su hijo Luis María, mi marido.

Mérida, Venezuela  
10 de agosto de 2017  
Lena Sánchez Bor  
Fundación Modesta Bor  
lsbor@hotmail.com  
fundacionmodestabor@gmail.com  
Armando Nones  
Ediciones ARE  
edicionesare@gmail.com

Estimado Nicholas Miguel,

Estamos muy contentos por el trabajo tan hermoso que realizas con la obra de nuestra querida Modesta Bor, esperamos poder verlo algún día. Hemos recibido tus solicitudes y por nuestra parte estamos completamente seguro que usaras los ejemplos musicales y las poesías de Modesta Bor en buenos términos, por lo tanto, no tenemos ningún inconveniente las uses en tu Tesis para tan prestigiosa Universidad.

Por ahora no tenemos contacto con Fernando Rodríguez García, para que te puedas comunicar con él. Con el Profesor Argenis Rivera si tenemos contacto y pronto te daremos respuesta de esa autorización.

Atentamente,

  
Lena Sánchez Bor



  
Armando Nones

Fundación Modesta Bor Ediciones ARE

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