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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

MANUEL M. PONCE: A STUDY OF HIS SOLO PIANO WORKS AND HIS
RELATIONSHIP TO MEXICAN MUSICAL NATIONALISM

A DOCUMENT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

By

DAHLIA GUERRA

NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

1997

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MANUEL M. PONCE: A STUDY OF HIS SOLO PIANO WORKS AND HIS
RELATIONSHIP TO MEXICAN MUSICAL NATIONALISM

A DOCUMENT
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**MANUEL M. PONCE: A STUDY OF HIS SOLO PIANO WORKS AND HIS
RELATIONSHIP TO MEXICAN MUSICAL NATIONALISM**

BY: DAHLIA GUERRA

MAJOR PROFESSOR: EDWARD GATES, D.M.A.

The purpose of this document is to study selected solo piano works of Manuel M. Ponce in order to encourage interest, interpretive understanding, and performance of his compositions. This study also highlights Ponce's relationship to the development of Mexican musical nationalism as seen in his solo piano works.

The document contains an Introduction and five chapters followed by a bibliography and two appendices. The Introduction contains brief background information on Manuel M. Ponce and his music, including the Purpose of the Study, Need for the Study, Limitations, Procedure, Related Literature, and an Outline of the Study.

Chapter One is comprised of a brief summary on the development of Mexican music and musical nationalism, and emphasizes the composers of solo piano repertoire. This chapter stresses the historical events that shaped the musical environment inherited by Ponce. This chapter also includes a discussion of European influence on Mexican music and the effects of "folklore" on the art music of Mexico.

Chapter Two contains a biography of Manuel M. Ponce. Topics such as early influences, teachers, places of study, academic activities and appointments, and significant information relating to his compositions are addressed.

Chapter Three provides additional insight into the major elements of Ponce's style. It will cover Ponce's musical style periods: First Period - 1891-1924 (Romantic Style); Second Period - 1925-1932 (Second European Study - Modern Style); and Third Period - 1933-1948 (Return to Mexico - Modern Style with an emphasis on Nationalism). This chapter will also address the stylistic trends in music that Ponce encountered in his studies in Europe and will discuss how his musical development was influenced and affected by these trends. This chapter includes an overview of Ponce's solo piano works, their stylistic characteristics, and how they fit into his periods of compositional development.

Chapter Four focuses on five piano solo compositions of Manuel M. Ponce including the Tema Mexicano Variado, the Sonata No. II, the Preludios Encadenados, the Quatre Pieces pour Piano (also called the Suite Bitonal), and the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas. A stylistic analysis describes the works in terms of form, style, texture, harmonic language, rhythmic characteristics, melodic or rhythmic sources of a folkloric nature (nationalistic characteristics), pianistic and expressive devices, and other aspects of importance.

The final chapter summarizes Ponce's compositional techniques, stylistic characteristics and pianistic approach, and discusses performance considerations for

pianists. In addition, his contribution to the music of the Twentieth Century will be summarized, especially his influence on the nationalist composers of Mexico.

Following the bibliography, Appendix A includes a chronological listing of the solo piano works of Manuel M. Ponce with publishers indicated. Appendix B follows with a discography of the solo piano works.

MANUEL M. PONCE: A STUDY OF HIS SOLO PIANO WORKS AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO MEXICAN MUSICAL NATIONALISM

INTRODUCTION

Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948) is one of Mexico's finest and most highly influential musicians. He is internationally renowned for his song Estrellita which appeared in numerous editions throughout the world after its publication in 1914. Over 150 of Ponce's compositions have been published, including works for orchestra, guitar, violin and cello, voice, piano, and chamber music. He also wrote solo concertos for violin, piano, and guitar.

Ponce composed in a wide variety of musical forms and styles, from works in baroque and classical structures to romantic rhapsodies and impressionistic suites. Many of his works were influenced by the European romanticism that pervaded Mexico during Ponce's youth, but he was also influenced by the music of Cuba, Spain, and France. He studied with Paul Dukas at the Ecole Normale de Musique, in Paris, from 1925 to 1932. Dukas honored Ponce at his graduation from the school by announcing to Ponce that he was "not really a student but a distinguished musician who gives me the honor of attending my classes."¹

¹Otero, Corazon, Manuel M. Ponce and The Guitar, (Great Britain: Musical New Services Limited, 1983), 61.

Ponce developed a special relationship with the famous Spanish guitarist Andres Segovia who enlisted him to compose more than eighty works for the guitar, including a guitar concerto, a sonata for guitar and harpsichord, four sonatas, two baroque suites, thirty-one preludes, and other pieces. Upon Ponce's death, Segovia wrote, "Anyone who loves the instrument...must revere the memory of Ponce. He lifted the guitar from the low artistic state in which it had lain." In a letter to Ponce, Segovia writes, "To sum it up, your work is, to me and to all the other musicians who listen to it, the best in all the guitar literature..."² In Montevideo, 1941, Segovia premiered Ponce's magnificent Concierto del Sur, for guitar and orchestra. This internationally known and praised work is a tribute to the music of Spain.

The Violin Concerto, Ponce's last major work, was premiered in 1943 by the great violinist Henryk Szeryng and the Orquesta Sinfonica de México conducted by Carlos Chávez. It is neoclassic, neoromantic, impressionistic, as well as highly nationalistic. It was considered by Szeryng as Ponce's greatest creation and as one of the best concertos written in the Twentieth Century.³

The piano was the first instrument that Ponce composed for, and in his words, "el instrumento al que más amo" ("the instrument I love most"). Over two hundred works for piano reveal Ponce's passion for this instrument. He utilized a great variety of forms and styles in his piano compositions, both small (mazurkas, preludes,

²Otero, 68.

³Lopez-Alonzo, David, Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo Biografico, (México: Ediciones Botas, 1971), 15.

studies, rhapsodies, and other numerous short pieces) and large (sonatas, a concerto, and various suites). Ponce presented a recital of his piano compositions on March 27, 1916 at the Aeolian Hall in New York City. He also presented many performances of his own works in Cuba (1915-1917), and in Mexico throughout his lifetime.

Ponce is considered the pioneer of musical nationalism in Mexico since he was the first to collect and classify a large portion of the folkloric music of his native land. The Mexican Revolution brought about a new concept of national unity and created a fresh orientation in the arts for the search of a distinctly Mexican form of expression. Ponce's Canciones Mexicanas (1912-1913) and some of his piano pieces based on popular themes were associated with the nationalistic ideals of the revolution. For the first time in Mexican history the existence of a rich patrimony of genuinely national melodies came to light.⁴ Ponce founded the first class of folklore in Mexico City, at the Escuela Universitaria de Música in 1934 and became chairman of the Academy of Folk Studies at the National Conservatory in 1939. From Ponce's classes emerged the first generation of Mexican researchers of musical folklore. One of Ponce's students was Carlos Chávez who later became one of Mexico's finest and most influential musicians and composers. Other distinguished students who later became prominent musicologists and composers in Mexico include Vicente T. Mendoza, author of El Romance Español y El Corrido Mexicano (The Spanish Romance and the Mexican Corrido), 1939, and Panorama de la Música Tradicional de

⁴Otto Mayer-Serra, "Silvestre Revueltas and Musical Nationalism in Mexico," The Musical Quarterly Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (April, 1941), 124.

México (Panorama of the Traditional Music of Mexico), 1956.

Ponce devoted much of his life to the mission of making known the treasure of folk music of his native land through his compositions, writings and lectures. He possessed the ability to express his views fluently and clearly, and in 1919 he co-edited twelve issues of the Revista Musical de México, a collection of essays on musical subjects. In 1917 his "Escritos y Composiciones Musicales" ("Musical Writings and Compositions") were published. These writings consisted of articles on musical aesthetics and studies on Mexican music. In 1925, Ponce settled in Paris and devoted himself to composition and to publishing the journal Gaceta Musical (1928). This magazine, the first of its kind in Spanish, promoted the recognition of Latin American music on French soil. From 1936 to 1937, Ponce was the director of the Cultura Musical, a publication of the National Conservatory. He was very active as a lecturer and addressed such topics as "Música Indígena" ("Indigenous Music" - 1937) and "El Folklore Mexicano" ("Mexican Folklore" - 1941). Ponce persuaded both Mexican composers and audiences to become aware of the intrinsic value of Mexico's vernacular music.

I consider a duty of every Mexican composer to ennoble the music of his native country, giving it artistic form, dressing it with polyphonic cloths and preserving with love the popular melodies which are the expression of the national soul.⁵

Ponce received numerous awards of professional achievement throughout his life. On February 26, 1948, he was the first composer to be awarded the "Premio

⁵Quoted in Carlos Vazquez, "Manuel M. Ponce: Sencillez y Sinceridad," Revista del Conservatorio, no.13 (June 1966), 11.

Nacional de Artes y Ciencias" ("National Prize of Arts and Sciences"). Mexico's president Miguel Alemán presented the prize and the composer Carlos Chávez pronounced these important words:

....Maestro Ponce's historic situation in the development of Mexican music is of fundamental significance: he is the first great "Explorer" of the popular Mexican Art and the initiator of the first frank nationalist tendency in our country: his work, fertile and uninterrupted, has culminated with creations that, like his guitar concerto, have reached universal consecration.⁶

Robert Stevenson, a leading authority on the music of Mexico, writes that Ponce "had a unique ability to speak directly to the masses, and yet also to speak, when he so desired, in a sophisticated idiom appealing directly to the most advanced musical mind."⁷

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Historians consider Manuel M. Ponce to be a vital influence in the birth of musical nationalism in Mexico. He was internationally known during his lifetime for his song Estrellita and his Concierto del Sur for guitar and orchestra. The piano works of Manuel M. Ponce, however, are not well known. They are performed

⁶Quoted in Luis Sandi, "Compositores Mexicanos de 1910 a 1958," La Música de México: I. Historia, ed. Julio Estrada (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984), 4:45.

⁷Stevenson, Robert, Music in Mexico. A Historical Survey, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1985), 235.

occasionally in Mexico, but are rarely played in public concerts in the United States. Arthur Rubinstein recorded Ponce's Two Etudes, No.22 and No.23, which may be heard in "Homage to Arthur Rubinstein Vol. 1," Piano Works by Spanish and Latin American Composers, 1987.

Although a substantial body of information about the life and guitar works of Ponce is available through books, graduate documents and dissertations, as well as in numerous articles, no source includes any detailed discussion and analysis of the piano literature. Ponce's piano compositions occupy an important and unique position in the piano literature of the early Twentieth Century. They display an interesting development in style as Ponce merged his European musical studies with his Mexican nationalistic ideals. His idiom is musically sophisticated even as he incorporates the vernacular melodies of his native land.

The purpose of this document is to study the solo piano works of Manuel M. Ponce in order to encourage interest, interpretive understanding, and performance of these compositions. The study also highlights Ponce's relationship to the development of Mexican musical nationalism as seen in the solo piano works. The study provides background material that concerns the development of music in Mexico with respect to events that affected Ponce's music. This background material describes the development of music in Mexico as the indigenous music was overcome by Spanish art forms and European traditions proceeded to dominate the musical scene into the Twentieth Century. This historical background is necessary to fully understand

the musical climate inherited by Ponce during this era in Mexican history. This study provides a biography of the composer and a summary of musical characteristics according to the composer's stylistic periods of development, including a discussion of the primary influences on Ponce's compositional style. Included is a brief survey of his works for piano solo as well as a stylistic analysis of five piano works that represent different stages in Ponce's compositional development.

The works analyzed were chosen as representative of Ponce's piano compositions because they reflect the development in his musical style. They also include a variety of forms and influences. In addition, these works were selected for their substantial worth for performing pianists.

The works discussed are the Tema Mexicano Variado, the Sonata No. 2, the Preludios Encadenados, the Quatre Pieces pour Piano (also known as the Suite Bitonal), and the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas. The Tema Mexicano Variado, composed in 1912, represents Ponce's first period of compositional development (1891-1924, Romantic Style). It is written in a theme and variations structure, utilizes a characteristically Mexican melody, and reveals Ponce's early nationalistic tendencies. The Sonata No. 2, composed in 1916, also represents Ponce's first period of compositional development and was written during Ponce's stay in Cuba. It is explored to discover influences and elements of "sonata form." The Preludios Encadenados, composed in 1927, and the Quatre Pieces pour Piano (also known

as the Suite Bitonal), composed in 1929, represent Ponce's second period of compositional development (1925-1932 - Modern Style). These pieces reveal a pronounced development in Ponce's harmonic language as his studies in Europe greatly affected his writing style. Characteristics of these works include impressionism, bitonality, quartal harmonies, and neoclassism. The Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas, composed in 1941, is a late work representing Ponce's third compositional period (1933-1948 - Modern Nationalism). It combines Ponce's use of original harmonic language with a Mexican flavor.

The solo piano works of Manuel M. Ponce provide a rich source of material for study. They reveal Ponce's great love and appreciation for the vernacular music of his country while exhibiting Ponce's ability to compose in a musically sophisticated and refined manner. This document is a study of the development and creative output of an early Twentieth Century composer in Mexico as he worked to adapt and merge his European education and training with his own nationalistic tendencies.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The piano compositions of Manuel M. Ponce occupy an important and unique position in the piano literature of the early Twentieth Century. The solo piano works, however, are not well known and are rarely performed. There is much information

about the life and guitar works of Ponce, but no source includes a detailed discussion of the solo piano literature. The author of this document hopes this research will inspire future performances of Manuel M. Ponce's compositions, particularly those discussed in this document.

Many of the sources for research in the area of Mexican music are in the Spanish language. Almost all sources for information on the piano works of Manuel M. Ponce are in Spanish. There is a need to bring these Spanish sources together, make pertinent information available in English through this paper, and apply them to the solo piano works of Ponce. This document fulfills this need.

LIMITATIONS

Manuel M. Ponce composed numerous works for voice and piano, chamber ensemble with piano, and piano with orchestra. This study is limited to the works for solo piano. While references to Ponce's solo piano music as a whole are incorporated into this document, this study limits detailed stylistic discussion to the following pieces of music: Tema Mexicano Variado, Sonata No. 2, Preludios Encadenados, Quatre Pieces pour Piano (Suite Bitonal), and the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas.

The author draws information from Spanish sources but does not translate entire sources for the purpose of this study. Short sections or phrases of important

information are quoted and translated into English.

PROCEDURES

As a model for this study, the author follows the format of a document written for the University of Oklahoma, by Valerie Clar Cisler,⁸ which is devoted to the piano sonatas of Robert Muczynski. The document on Manuel M. Ponce follows a similar structure consisting of historical background and biographical information, a discussion of stylistic characteristics, and a stylistic analysis of representative musical compositions. A dissertation by Diane Nordyke entitled "The Piano Works of Carlos Chávez"⁹ (Texas Tech University, 1982) is also a good model for this document. It includes a biography of Chávez, a general overview of his style and works, a survey of his piano works, and an analysis of selected piano works. The Nordyke dissertation serves as a better model in the analysis chapter since several pieces by Chávez, written in a variety of forms, are studied in this dissertation as opposed to Cisler's in which only sonatas are analyzed.

The stylistic analysis describes the work in terms of form, style, harmonic language, rhythmic characteristics, pianistic and expressive devices used, as well as other aspects of importance. This analysis is not a detailed harmonic analysis,

⁸Valerie Clar Cisler, "The Piano Sonatas of Robert Muczynski," (D.M.A. Document, University of Oklahoma, 1993).

⁹Diane Nordyke, "The Piano Works of Carlos Chavez," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1982).

but rather one that focuses on elements that contribute to an understanding of the overall style. The purpose of the analysis is to provide the performer of Ponce's music with a good sense of what is stylistically important in these works. The method of analysis varies from composition to composition depending on the distinctive aspects of each piece of music. Of particular interest are characteristics that can be identified as nationalistic with melodic or rhythmic sources of a folkloric nature.

Several sources are consulted to aid in the analysis of these pieces. These include Teaching Approaches in Music Theory by Michael Rogers,¹⁰ Musical Structure and Performance by Wallace Berry,¹¹ and Guidelines for Style Analysis by Jan La Rue.¹²

RELATED LITERATURE

Related literature, written in Spanish, that concerns Mexican music history in general or the development of Mexican musical nationalism includes the research of Otto Mayer-Serra, an important figure in Mexican musicology. His Panorama de la Música Mexicana¹³ (1941) is one of the older definitive sources. It contains a

¹⁰Michael Rogers, Teaching Approaches in Music Theory, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984).

¹¹Wallace Berry, Musical Structure and Performance, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

¹²Jan La Rue, Guidelines for Style Analysis, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1970).

¹³Otto Mayer-Serra, Panorama de la Música Mexicana, (Panuco, México: El Colegio de México, 1941, 1963).

scholarly presentation of the evolution of Mexican nationalism, tracing the historical developments leading to Ponce's appearance on the Mexican musical scene.

Mayer-Serra regards musical nationalism in Mexico as being divided into four phases. The first phase includes indigenous folk music and art music of foreign idiom existing side by side. In the second phase, composers assimilate folk melodies and rhythms without altering the basic structure of the music. The third phase includes the creation of a national language, and in the final fourth phase, foreign models are discarded and folkloric elements are crystallized into a new idiom with a universal character. Mayer-Serra credits Ponce as the first Mexican composer to use folk music consistently. Mayer-Serra also published the work Música Y Músicos de Latinoamerica¹⁴ (1947), which includes biographical material on Ponce, and El Estado Presente de la Música en México¹⁵ (The Present State of Music in Mexico, 1946), a brief (50 page) and general history of Mexican music up to 1946.

Other Mexican sources include the book El Folklore Musical de las Ciudades¹⁶ (The Musical Folklore of the Cities, 1930), by Ruben Campos. Campos documents the growth of salon music in Mexico and includes many musical examples of this style of piano piece. He also includes a chapter on the role of the piano in Mexican society, the growth of its popularity in Mexico, and how the piano became an

¹⁴Mayer-Serra, Música Y Músicos de Latinoamerica, (Mexico City: Editorial Atlante S.A., 1947).

¹⁵Mayer-Serra, El Estado Presente de la Música en México, (Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat of Organization of American States, 1946).

¹⁶Ruben M. Campos, El Folklore Musical de las Ciudades, (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1928).

essential household item. Vicente T. Mendoza is another well respected musicologist in Mexico and his Panorama de la Música Tradicional de México¹⁷ (1956) documents the music of the indigenous people of Mexico as well as the growth and development of folkloric music. Mendoza includes many musical examples of indigenous and mestizo¹⁸ melodies. The book Breve Historia de la Música en México¹⁹ (1949) by Guillermo Orta Velasquez is a history of the music of the Colonial era and is a source for important musical events that occurred in the 1800's as well. Ponce is discussed as an important figure in Mexican music. Rostros del Nacionalismo en la Música Mexicana²⁰ (The Appearance of Nationalism in Mexican Music) by Yolanda Moreno Rivas is a newer source book (1989) that discusses Mexican nationalism in detail. Rivas provides a substantial section on Manuel Ponce, describing his contribution to the nationalist movement. The book also includes many musical examples.

Books written in English on the subject of Mexican music include Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey²¹ (1952) by Robert Stevenson. This is an informative source on the development of art music in Mexico and the merging of the

¹⁷Vicente T. Mendoza, Panorama de la Música Tradicional de México, (México, UNAM, 1956).

¹⁸"Mestizo" is the race created by the mixture of the indigenous and Spanish culture.

¹⁹Guillermo Orta Velasquez, Breve Historia de la Música en México, (México: Librería de Manuel Porrúa, 1949, 1970).

²⁰Yolanda Moreno Rivas, Rostros del Nacionalismo en la Música Mexicana, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, S.A. de C.V., 1989).

²¹Robert Stevenson, Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1952).

indigenous and Spanish cultures. Stevenson includes a section on Ponce that discusses the development of his style. The book (originally a dissertation) by Dan Malmstrom, Introduction to Twentieth Century Mexican Music²² (1974) includes brief historical background and descriptions of the musical scene, opera, and the National Conservatory of Mexico, as well as biographical information on Mexican composers of the Twentieth Century, including Ponce. One of today's most prominent ethnomusicologists is Gerard Behague of the University of Texas. His book Music in Latin America: An Introduction²³ (1979) covers Mexico, South America, and Cuba, and includes chapters on the Colonial period, the rise of nationalism, and counter-currents in the Twentieth Century. The section on Mexico includes a brief description of the music of Ponce and his contemporaries.

Other biographical information on Manuel M. Ponce can be found in a number of reference sources, such as Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Music and Musicians²⁴ (1984), The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians²⁵ (1986), Composers of the Americas²⁶ (1955), Compositores Mexicanos²⁷ (1981) by Juan

²²Dan Malmstrom, Introduction to Twentieth Century Mexican Music, (Sweden: Uppsala University, 1974).

²³Gerard Behague, Music in Latin America: An Introduction, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1979).

²⁴T. Baker, Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, (New York: Shirmer Books, 1984).

²⁵Stanley Sadie, ed. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, (New York: Grove's Dictionaries of Music, Inc., 1986).

²⁶Composers of the Americas, Vol. I, "Manuel M. Ponce," (Washington D.C.: Pan American Union, 1965).

Coral, Pequeñas Biografías de Grandes Músicos Mexicanos²⁸ (Small Biographies of Great Mexican Musicians, 1966) by Francisco Moncada García, and The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians²⁹ (1985) edited by Oscar Thompson.

There are several books in Spanish devoted to Ponce, including Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo³⁰ (Essay, 1982) by Pablo Castellanos. Castellanos was a student of Ponce and his book is informative, although quite brief. He discusses Ponce's compositions in general within four periods of stylistic development and mentions some of the piano works. Manuel M. Ponce³¹ (1950), by David Alonso López, although mainly biographical, does discuss folkloric influences on Ponce's music. López describes Ponce as having been deeply affected by the color and flavor of village fairs, especially the "Feria de San Marcos" (the San Marcos Fair), and he was inspired by his friends: the nationalist poet Saturnino Herrán and the nationalist painter, López Velarde. The author also mentions previous composers whose works reflect an interest in the vernacular music of Mexico. Manuel M. Ponce and The

²⁷Juan Álvarez Coral, Compositores Mexicanos - Manuel M. Ponce, (México: Editores Asociados, 1981).

²⁸Francisco Moncada García, Pequeñas Biografías de Grandes Músicos Mexicanos, (México: Ediciones Framong, 1966).

²⁹Oscar Thompson, ed. The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1985).

³⁰Pablo Castellanos, Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo, (Universidad Autónoma de México, 1982).

³¹David Alonso López, Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo Biográfico, (México: Ediciones Botas, 1971).

Guitar³² (1983), by Corazón Otero, is largely biographical and concentrates on the guitar works of Ponce and his relationship with Andres Segovia. The book was written in Spanish but has been translated into English. Lists of compositions and publishers of the solo piano music of Ponce are included in these three biographies.

The only dissertations written on the music of Ponce are "Three Violin Works by Mexican Composer Manuel M. Ponce,"³³ by Jorge Barron-Corvera (University of Texas at Austin, 1993), and "Harmonic Practice in the Guitar Music of Manuel M. Ponce,"³⁴ by David J. Nystel (North Texas State University, 1985). Both dissertations have biographical information and are references for stylistic characteristics found in Ponce's guitar and violin works and in his music in general. Dissertations written about Mexican music in general include "Change in Cultural Context and Musical Style: A Connective Process, Formulated and Applied to the Mexican Revolution and Mexican Music,"³⁵ by Iris Kaphan (University of California, 1977). This is a survey of the history of Mexican music and the development of nationalism in the arts as a response to the Mexican Revolution. A

³²Corazon Otero, Manuel M. Ponce and the Guitar, Translated by J.D. Roberts, (Great Britain: Musical New Services Limited, 1983).

³³Jorge Barron-Corvera, "Three Violin Works by Mexican Composer Manuel M. Ponce," (D.M.A. Document, University of Texas at Austin, 1993).

³⁴David J. Nystel, "Harmonic Practice in the Guitar Music of Manuel M. Ponce," (M.A. Dissertation, North Texas State University, 1985).

³⁵Iris Kaphan, "Change in Cultural Context and Musical Style: A Connective Process, Formulated and Applied to the Mexican Revolution and Mexican Music," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 1977).

dissertation by Susan Goday entitled "Mexican Music from 1920 to 1953"³⁶ (Radcliffe College, 1960), also contains background material on the history of Mexican music and includes general information on the life and works of Ponce.

There are many articles written on Ponce's music, as listed in the bibliography. Most of them applaud his accomplishments in his guitar music or discuss his contribution to the development of nationalism in Mexico. Ponce's protégé Carlos Vasquez published one article, in Spanish, on the piano music of Ponce, "Manuel M. Ponce y el Piano,"³⁷ in Heterofonía, 1982, and offers brief but useful information about the solo piano works in general.

Ponce was an accomplished scholar, author, and lecturer and published many articles on the subject of Mexican folklore. A collection of his writings were also published in the book Escritos Y Composiciones Musicales³⁸ (Writings and Musical Compositions, 1917). The following example is from this collection:

Cuales son los elementos armónicos o melódicos constitutivos de la música mexicana? Los elementos armónicos son pobres y sencillísimos, empleándose, casi siempre, solamente los acordes fundamentales sobre la tónica, la dominante y la subdominante. Raramente se encuentran modulaciones a tonalidades vecinas. Los acompañamientos de los bailables son monótonos y sin el menor interés armónico; la melodía, en cambio, es frecuentemente sugestiva y de un sabor local remarcable....El carácter general de la música es triste y apasionada, como apasionado y triste es el mestizo que la compuso.

³⁶Susan Goday, "Mexican Music from 1920 to 1953," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Radcliffe College, 1960).

³⁷Carlos Vasquez, "Manuel M. Ponce y el Piano," Heterofonía 15, no. 79, (1982): 14-21.

³⁸Manuel M. Ponce, Escritos Y Composiciones Musicales, (México: Cultura T. IV, no. 4, 1917).

What are the harmonic and melodic elements that are found in Mexican music? The harmonic elements are poor and simple and almost always include the basic tonic, dominant, and subdominant chords. Modulations to neighboring keys are rare. Dance accompaniments are monotonous and without the slightest harmonic interest; the melody, on the other hand, is frequently suggestive and with a remarkable local color (flavor)..... The general character of the music is sad and passionate, as is the mestizo who created it.³⁹

Since Ponce was the first Mexican composer to investigate, collect, and promote the folkloric music of Mexico, his writings and publications are an excellent source for the development of musical nationalism in his country. Ponce's writings are listed in the bibliography of this document and have been collected and consulted by the author of this study.

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This document consists of an Introduction and five chapters followed by a bibliography and two appendices. The Introduction contains brief background information on Manuel M. Ponce and his music, and also includes the Purpose of the Study, Need for the Study, Limitations, Procedures, Related Literature, and an Outline of the Study.

³⁹Translation by D. Guerra

Chapter One contains brief background on the development of Mexican music and musical nationalism, and emphasizes the composers of piano repertoire. This chapter stresses the historical events that shaped the musical environment inherited by Ponce. This chapter also discusses the European influence on Mexican music and the effects of "folklore" on the art music of Mexico.

Chapter Two contains a biography of Manuel M. Ponce. Topics such as early influences, teachers, places of study, academic activities and appointments, and significant information regarding his compositions are addressed.

Chapter Three provides additional insight into the major elements of Ponce's style. It covers Ponce's musical style periods: First Period - 1891-1924 (Romantic Style); Second Period - 1925-1932 (Second European Study - Modern Style); and Third Period - 1933-1948 (Return to Mexico - Modern Style with an emphasis on Nationalism). This chapter also addresses the stylistic trends in music that Ponce encountered during his studies in Europe and discusses how his musical development was influenced and affected. It also discusses how the musical climate of Mexico at the turn of the Twentieth Century affected Ponce's solo piano compositions. His interest in the emergence of nationalism in Mexico is also addressed. This chapter includes an overview of Ponce's solo piano works, their stylistic characteristics, and how they fit into his periods of compositional development.

Chapter Four focuses on five piano solo compositions of Manuel Ponce including the Tema Mexicano Variado, the Sonata No. 2, the Preludios Encadenados, the Quatre Pieces pour Piano (also known as the Suite Bitonal), and the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas. A stylistic analysis describes the work in terms of form, style, texture, harmonic language, rhythmic characteristics, melodic or rhythmic sources of a folkloric nature (nationalistic characteristics), pianistic and expressive devices, and other aspects of importance.

The final chapter summarizes Ponce's compositional techniques, stylistic characteristics, and pianistic approach. It also summarizes his contribution to the music of the Twentieth Century, especially his influence on the nationalist composers of Mexico.

Following the bibliography, Appendix A includes a chronological listing of the solo piano works of Manuel M. Ponce. This chronology is compiled from three sources: Composers of the Americas, Volume I, "Manuel M. Ponce,"⁴⁰ Manuel M. Ponce by Pablo Castellanos,⁴¹ and "Efermérides de Manuel M. Ponce" by Jesus C. Romero.⁴² The solo piano works are listed chronologically, although many dates are left blank because they are unknown. Also included are publishers of the works.

⁴⁰Composers of the Americas, Vol. I., "Manuel M. Ponce," (Washington D.C.: Pan American Union, 1965), 66-69.

⁴¹Pablo Castellanos, Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo, (Universidad Autónoma de México, 1982), 55-62.

⁴²Jesus C. Romero. "Efermérides de Manuel M. Ponce," Nuestra Música, (no.18, 1950), 190-194.

The listing is as precise as possible, yet is not all-inclusive, since many of Ponce's works have never been published and many manuscripts have been lost. Appendix B follows with a discography of the solo piano works.

Chapter I

The Development of Mexican Musical Nationalism

Historical Background

The solo piano works of Manuel M. Ponce encompass a wide variety of musical styles. Ponce was influenced by European music, popular in Mexico during the Nineteenth Century. He was also inspired by the folk music of Mexico, Spain, and Cuba. As a result of Ponce's interest in the folk music of his homeland, he became a pioneer in the movement of Mexican musical nationalism. A look at Spanish, Indian, and European musical influences, and a study of the political and cultural background of Mexico is necessary to understand the musical environment inherited by Ponce at the turn of the Twentieth Century. To trace the development of nationalism in Mexico and follow Ponce's role in the movement, it is important to consider the cultural elements reflected in the music of Mexico.

"Mexican Music" is defined by the Mexican composer Carlos Chávez as "the Indian music of the ancient Mexicans; the music of Spanish or other origin implanted in Mexico; and the production in Mexico of a mixture of these elements."¹ This mixed ancestry of Indo-Spanish elements is found in various proportions in Mexican music. Other musical art forms also came to Mexico by way of Spain and added

¹Herbert Wienstock, Mexican Music, (New York: William E. Rudge's Sons, 1940), 10. (notes for concerts arranged by Carlos Chavez at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City).

Italian, German, French, and Moorish-Arabic influences. Historians and musicologists categorize art and music in Mexico within the following time frames: the pre-Conquest era (prior to 1521); the Colonial era (1521 to 1821); the era of Independence (1821 to 1910) and the Twentieth Century.

Pre- Conquest Era

In 1521, when the Spaniards arrived in the "New World," they encountered a civilization which regarded music as a vital institution of religious and civil life. In the Aztec² culture, music was not cultivated as a fine art for expressive purposes, but as an essential tool for pantheistic worship. Every important ceremonial and communal religious event was accompanied by music and dance, which went hand-in-hand.³ Pre-conquest instruments included drums of all sizes, conch shell trumpets, clay and reed flutes, bone and wooden rasps, and rattling vessels. Melody was played by the wind instruments, rhythm by percussion instruments, and harmony was created by several flutes and two-toned drums playing together.⁴ String instruments were unknown before the Spanish conquest, and no system of indigenous notation was found by the Spaniards.

²The term "Aztec" was coined by the historian William H. Prescott. The indigenous people of the "Valley of Mexico" called themselves the "Mexica" when the Spaniards arrived, and they spoke in the Nahuatl tongue.

³Vicente Mendoza, Panorama de la Música Tradicional de México, (México: UNAM, 1956), 20.

⁴Ibid., 28-29.

Since there are no surviving examples of Aztec melodies, scholars have studied the music and instruments of present day Indian tribes living in remote villages. Mexican musicologists believe that melodies collected from remote Indian tribes such as the Huichol and the Tarahumara Indians reveal characteristics probably found in pre-hispanic indigenous music. Robert Stevenson summarizes findings concerning the music of these tribes and describes indigenous music as predominantly percussive with a strong rhythmic drive. Most melodies are pentatonic with no sense of melodic climax. They are characterized by constantly shifting rhythms and a strong rhythmic propulsive force. Nearly all songs are religious and ceremonial with the outstanding characteristic of repeating melodic fragments.⁵

The Mexican composer associated with a renaissance of pre-conquest ideals is Carlos Chávez. He lectured in 1928 that pre-Spanish music "expressed what is profoundest and deepest in the Mexican soul."⁶ Manuel Ponce drew more from "mestizo" sources for inspiration for his solo piano works, but did quote several indigenous melodies in his compositions. Veinte Piezas Fáciles (1939) is a collection of pieces designed for the younger pianist in which Ponce includes several Huichol, Yaqui, and Mayan melodies. In his symphonic works Canto y Danza de los Antiguos Mexicanos (Song and Dance of the Ancient Mexicans, 1933), Chapultepec (final

⁵Robert Stevenson, Music in Mexico: A Historical Survey, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1952), 41.

⁶Ibid., 6.

version 1934), and Ferial (Impressions of a Fair, 1940), Ponce quotes indigenous melodies within a modern and sometimes impressionistic style.

Colonial Era 1521-1821

With the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, the Mexican Indian was reduced to the level of a peasant and a slave. An era of almost three hundred years of Colonialism followed as the Spaniards tried to transplant their culture in "New Spain." The conquerors imposed not only their Roman Catholic religion, but also their customs, language, and musical practices. The first bishop of Spain instructed his missionaries to teach music wherever they went as "an indispensable aid in the process of conversion."⁷ The indigenous people of Mexico had a strong musical tradition and an innate musicality. They quickly mastered the polyphonic church music and instruments brought from Spain. Historical chronicles extoll the talent displayed by the Indians in mastering the European musical system.⁸ The Mexican historian Gabriel Salazar mentions an account of a polyphonic mass written by an Indian as early as twenty years after the conquest.⁹ Unfortunately, however, Mexico

⁷Ibid., 51. The first bishop of Mexico was Fray Juan de Zumárraga (1468-1548).

⁸Ibid.

⁹Gabriel Saldivar, Historia de la Música en México, (México: Biblioteca Enciclopédica del Estado de México, 1934, 1981), 89.

was allowed no evolution of its indigenous music and the oppression and exploitation of the native people had profound repercussions on musical culture.¹⁰ Mexican musicians did not lack for talent or ambition, yet the social climate did not allow for a complete achievement of the nation's musical potential. Mexico proceeded to have a history of continuous destruction and a substitution of cultures instead of a normal growth from one period to another. In this manner, music in Mexico took a vastly different course of development from that of Europe.¹¹

The development of two different types of musical genres began during the Colonial era. The genres of sacred and art music, and of popular and folk music developed along separate lines remaining separate until the Twentieth Century.

Manuel M. Ponce and other nationalist composers brought about the fusion of folk and art music to create a specifically Mexican musical idiom.

Sacred and Art Music

Sacred music was brought from Spain by Pedro de Gante, a Flemish musician who established the first music school in Texcoco, in 1523, and later in Mexico City. The first organ was brought to Mexico from Seville in 1530, and the establishment of a printing press, in 1539, produced 220 books by the end of the Sixteenth Century.

¹⁰Otto Mayer-Serra, Panorama de la Música Mexicana, (Panuco, México: El Colegio de México, 1941), 25.

¹¹Ibid.

Twelve of these books contained music and are milestones in the history of printed music.¹² Important cathedrals were established in Puebla and Mexico City in the Sixteenth Century. Catholic church music in Mexico followed the same course as that of Spain, with the flourishing of the polyphony of Palestrina, Victoria, Cristóbal Morales, and Francisco Guerrero.¹³ Newly-composed religious music in Mexico copied Spanish models. Few Indians rose to positions of prominence, and most positions of authority in the cathedrals were occupied by imported musicians from Europe. Church music flowered in the first centuries of the Colonial era, but grew decadent in the Eighteenth Century. The Catholic Church discouraged innovations or individuality and consequently held back musical development.¹⁴

During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, the polyphonic villancico became very popular. These villancicos, using Spanish texts, were intended for use in the mass during Christmas or other festive occasions, but originated as a type of secular song. These compositions were characterized by an atmosphere of excitement and exuberance, and often made references to folk-music elements of various traditions.¹⁵

¹²Stevenson, 69.

¹³Ibid., 86.

¹⁴Mayer-Serra, 68.

¹⁵Gerald Behague, Music in Latin America: An Introduction, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1979), 60.

The church also regulated the course of art music during the colonial period. The secular arts of the theater and ballroom dancing were imported from Spain. The political and ecclesiastical authorities fought hard against the popular diversions of a morally changing society, and the church issued many edicts that forbade the evils and abuses of certain dances such as the waltz.¹⁶

The theater became an important vehicle for the public diffusion of art music as well as popular music. The Teatro Coliseo opened in Mexico City in 1670 but was destroyed by fire in 1722, and the theater Coliseo Nuevo opened in 1735.¹⁷ The zarzuela and the tonadilla escénica developed as musical sketches of a comic or satiric character introduced between the acts of a play. The entertainment presented at the theater consisted of solos, ensembles, and dances that exhibited the local color and a nationalistic tone.¹⁸

Mayer-Serra states that "instrumental music, which barely existed, drew its repertory from a few samples of the Eighteenth Century Italian style and from a few classical Viennese works."¹⁹ There was not much musical activity during this era in Mexico other than church music, because the Spaniards were preoccupied with social and economic administrative problems. Very few examples of solo or symphony

¹⁶Mayer-Serra, 104.

¹⁷Behague, 60.

¹⁸Mayer-Serra, 102.

¹⁹Otto Mayer-Serra, The Present State of Music in Mexico, (Washington, D.C.: General Secretariat of Organization of American States, 1946). 26.

concerts exist until after Mexico's independence from Spain in 1810. Yet, in 1711, the first production of a full Italian opera took place at the viceroval palace in Mexico City.²⁰ Italian opera, however, did not fully develop in Mexico until the era of independence.

Folk and Popular Music

The church regulated the course of art music in Mexico, but the Spanish settlers brought with them a rich stock of regional folk music that was to have the greatest effect on the musical destiny of this country.

A wide diversity of folk songs from the provinces of Andalucía, Extremadura, Asturias, Galicia, Aragón, and other regions of Spain were introduced and dispersed throughout Mexico. Some of Cortez' men opened schools of dancing and singing and many Indians became proficient in the guitar, harp, viola, vihuela, and lute. Spanish dances such as the seguidillas, boleros, fandangos, zapateados, and jotas were transplanted in a different environment, and underwent a transformation of character to create the new "mestizo" music and dance. The Mexican musicologist Gabriel Saldívar describes the culture of the Spanish conquistador as one not purely Spanish but also of Arabic influence. Spain had a history of almost eight hundred years of Moorish occupation on the Iberian Peninsula (from 711 to 1492), and the

²⁰Mayer-Serra, Panorama de la Música Mexicana, 30.

music of the Moors left its mark on Spanish music.²¹ The music of the south of Spain, in Andalucía, also reflects the influence of the Gypsy people who are believed to have migrated with the invading Moorish armies.

Saldívar also includes the Negro culture as a vital and important influence in the folk music of Mexico.²² Negroes came along with the conquistadores and were also imported as slave labor during the colonial period. African influences in the folk music of Mexico are seen in a variety of dance forms (the rumba, bamba, huapango), and also in the rhythmic practice of alternating duple and triple meter through the use of persistent syncopations. Another example of the Black influence is seen in a specific type of villancico called the negrilla or guineo, which included Negro dialect in the text.²³

The Mexican scholar Vicente T. Mendoza establishes the Spanish folk ballad, the romance, as the ancestor of the Mexican folk ballad, the corrido.²⁴ Even after the conquistadores departed from Spain, they continued with their romances to sing about their homeland. The corrido developed into an important popular musical form in Mexico. The narrative folk ballad was the oral news service of the time. The ballads provided accounts of sensational events, important political figures, and national

²¹Saldívar, 154.

²²Saldívar, 156-157.

²³Composer Gaspar Fernandez (1566-1629) wrote 250 villancicos of this type at the Puebla Cathedral.

²⁴Mendoza, 46.

heroes.

The religious counterparts of the romances were the alabados, simple and folklike religious songs with strong accentual rhythms, sequential melodic patterns, and simple tonic-dominant harmonies.²⁵ The alabado could have been a derivative of Catholic chant since many of its melodic lines corresponded closely to melodies of Gregorian chant.²⁶

The lyrical and sentimental canción developed as the intimate expression of the people. The interest in this song form was concentrated in the melodic line and subject matter included texts filled with pathos and melancholy. In the late Nineteenth Century, the canción was significantly influenced by the development of Italian opera in Mexico City. The canción was cultivated by composers of art music, especially Manuel M. Ponce who collected and documented many examples of this style of musical folklore. Ponce describes the origins and characteristics of the canción in his collected writings.²⁷ Chapter Three of this document will further discuss the influence of the folkloric canción on the compositions of Ponce.

²⁵Stevenson, 165.

²⁶Douglas Edward Schoen, "A Historical Survey of Mexican Music: Its Application in the Music Education of Mex-Am Children," (Ed. D. diss., Washington University, 1982), 37.

²⁷Manuel M. Ponce, Escritos y Composiciones Musicales, (México: Cultura T. IV, no. 4, 1917), 17-26.

The son and the huapango were the characteristic instrumental forms that developed in Mexican folk music. A possible source of the son is the seguidilla española that acclimated itself in diverse regions of the country and was given a variety of names.²⁸ The outstanding trait of the son was the rhythmic hemiola, which became the most striking element in Mexican folk music. Unequal triple rhythms that combine and alternate 6/8 and 3/4 meter create a distinctive rhythmic flexibility, called sesquialtera. The son form usually alternates verses with refrains, and song texts are in octosyllabic couplets. Instrumental accompaniments to the son and huapango vary regionally and include native harps and guitars of various sizes. Vicente Mendoza discusses the son at length in his Panorama de la Música Mexicana and lists numerous examples.²⁹ In the Twentieth Century, the nationalist composers drew on the son and huapango for inspiration in art music. Ponce's Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas reveal a Mexican character through their use of alternating duple and triple groupings. Blas Galindo's (b.1910) Sones de Mariachi is a standard piece of the modern Mexican symphonic repertory, and Jose Pablo Moncayo (b.1912) is remembered chiefly for his nationalist work, Huapango, written in 1941.

The jarabe, a choreographic genre that consists of a series of short dances, developed during the colonial era as the symbol of the "mestizo" peasant as he

²⁸Marco Arturo Montero, "La Música Popular Mexicana," Claridad, XIX, (February, 1940), 81-95.

²⁹Mendoza, 64-71.

struggled for independence. The jarabe was condemned by the Inquisition authorities on moral grounds, and was later banned by the political authorities as insurrectionary music. It became a formidable tool of social criticism and satire, and the people found in this music a vehicle for releasing rebellion and expressing discontent. Although it was prohibited in 1802, the jarabe continued to be sung and danced, and was the favorite musical expression of the revolutionaries. The jarabe became the national dance and artistic symbol of the country.³⁰ The jarabe consisted of five to nine brief sections that included a variety of rhythmic styles. The short dances fit together with unity because of the similarity of harmonic patterns and the squared phraseology of each section. Stevenson describes jarabes as repetitious and not outstanding, musically speaking, but nevertheless historical landmarks. Jarabes were written by all the major composers in the Nineteenth Century and may be compared to the Slavonic Dances of Dvorak or the Norwegian Dances by Grieg.³¹

Three tablatures that exist in Mexico contain music from the colonial period. A fragmented organ tablature, dated about 1620, contains a tiento, the Spanish counterpart of the polyphonic Italian ricercar. The second tablature dates from the 1650's and is an instruction book for the cittern, Metodo de Citara by Sebastián de Aguirre. It contains a variety of dances, including the pavanna, pasacalle, gallarda,

³⁰Montero, 84.

³¹Stevenson, 185.

branle, panama, zarabanda, minuete, and an Indian tocotin.³² Also included in this tablature are a Negro dance, portorrico de los negros, and an instrumental transcription of a corrido, a Mexican folk ballad. The third tablature is dated 1740, Tablatura de Vihuela, and contains fifty types of dance music: the jota, fandango, folias españolas, sarabanda, paspied, rigaudon, tarantela, seguidillas, and Negro dances referred to as cumbées.³³

Era of Independence (1821-1910)

Political strife was rampant in Mexico in the years following the battle for independence. The country was in constant conflict torn between the two major political groups: the Conservatives, who advocated monarchism, centralism, and a state church, and the Liberals, who wanted republicanism, federalism, and separation of church and state. The Mexican-American War devastated the country from 1846 to 1848 and was followed by the invasion of the French army, from 1864 to 1867. The Federalist leader Benito Juárez, a Zapotec Indian and a sincere patriot, led the country through an era of economic and social reform. After the death of Juárez in 1872, Porfirio Díaz assumed the presidency and became the totalitarian leader of

³²A tocotin is an indigenous religious dance with singing.

³³Stevenson, 161-162.

Mexico for the next thirty years, until the people finally revolted in 1910.³⁴

After Mexico achieved independence from Spain, the new progressive forces tried to sever spiritual and ideological ties to the colonial system. However, the new nation faced a vacuum without having cultivated an indigenous cultural heritage. Political conditions in Mexico were not ideal to produce a powerful art of a universal scope, and the music of Mexico had no tradition on which to base its development. Mexican music was generally in the hands of the amateur by the end of the colonial era. The trained and professional musician was scarce, and there was a "sad want of masters" during the early years of the Independence. Musicians turned to Europe for inspiration, and found Italian opera and the leftovers of "Romanticism" in the form of "salon music."³⁵

By the late 1700's, pianos were introduced into Mexican society. The construction of pianos began in Durango, in 1793, and in Mexico City, in 1796. The piano soon became the fashionable and favorite household instrument. Liberation from the church created a radical change in spiritual and creative freedom. However, for the composer to exist economically, once he was liberated artistically, he resorted to the production of music that would sell.³⁶ The female amateur pianist dominated the

³⁴Arthur P. Whitaker and David C. Jordan, Nationalism in Contemporary Latin America, (New York: Free Press, 1966), 33.

³⁵Mayer-Serra, Panorama de la Música Mexicana, 68-76.

³⁶*Ibid.*

musical scene, with a large demand for pieces of moderate difficulty.

Professional musicians were rare in Mexico because they could not make a living. Instrumentalists had work during a few months a year, during opera and zarzuela season, and played for church ceremonies, private celebrations, and public dances. Composers faced a more desperate situation. Classical symphonic or chamber concerts hardly existed, and organizations formed to promote classical concerts were shortlived because people would not attend. Consequently, only a handful of orchestral works were written during the Romantic era in Mexico. The birth of salon music was a response to a social and cultural need. European salon dances became very popular among the upper and middle classes. Salon music influenced all musical development and deeply affected the role of the composer. Music written during this era in Mexican history was an imitative slave of Italian, German, and French models, especially after the French intervention when the Mexican aristocracy became infatuated with French styles. Apart from a short flowering of Italian opera written by Mexican composers, the main production of compositions were "música salonesca" for piano. These salon dances were to become Manuel M. Ponce's musical inheritance at the turn of the Twentieth Century.

An important composer during Mexico's era of independence was Jose Mariano Elizaga, considered the "father of Mexican music." He wrote the first Mexican treatise on music theory (Elementos de Música, 1823), and founded the first musical society in Mexico (La Sociedad Filarmónica, 1824). He established La

Academia Filarmónica de Música in 1825. This was the first conservatory of music in Mexico City, although it only had a brief existence. He founded the first printing press for the publication of secular music in Mexico City in 1826, and organized and conducted the first symphonic ensemble in the same year. Elizaga composed sacred works in the Classical style and was the last representative of Viennese Classicism in Mexico. After his death the salon style pervaded Mexican music. Robert Stevenson compares Elizaga's efforts as a music educator to those of the pioneer music educator Lowell Mason in the United States. Elizaga commented that music in Mexico at the end of the Colonial era had "sunk to a disgracefully low level" because of bad teaching.³⁷

At the end of the colonial era, the Eighteenth Century style of theater was replaced by drama, comedy, and opera. Italian opera sung in Italian was popularized in Mexico by Manuel García who presented the Barber of Seville (Rossini), in 1827. In 1831, the Teatro Principal began to hold a regular annual season of Italian opera, and by mid-century the local composers began composing in the Italian style, with generally inadequate imitations of the original models. Among the better known composers of opera were Luis Baca (1826-1855), Cenobio Paniagua (1821-1882), and Melesio Morales (1838-1908). The opera Guatimotzin (premiered in 1871) by Aniceto Ortega (1823-1875) was the first attempt to incorporate native elements within the Italian format. The Spanish libretto appeals to the nationalist sentiment of

³⁷Stevenson, 189.

the time, with a romanticized Aztec theme.

In 1866, the Sociedad Filarmónica Mexicana founded a conservatory in Mexico City that eventually developed into the Conservatorio Nacional de Música in 1877, subsidized by the government. A large number of pianist-composers at the conservatory composed piano music in the European Romantic style and salon genres. The library of the Conservatorio Nacional contains piano pieces written by over three hundred Nineteenth Century Mexican composers.³⁸

Salon music maintained the basic elements of traditional music within an easier and more accessible form, and with simplified formulas. The harmonic language was based on the dominant-tonic cadencial formula, with modulations to closely related keys. Periodic structure was determined by measures in groups of fours. Melodic clichés were in abundance, with stereotyped pianistic runs and arpeggios, repeated notes, chromatic passages of thirds and sixths, and long trills. However, these technical aspects were generally not as challenging as the European style they were imitating, such as the pianistic figurations of Liszt. Popular dance forms included the polka, mazurca, redowa, schotisch, valse, contradanza, and cuadrilla. The Afro-Cuban influence on Mexican music extended in the Nineteenth Century to the salon music as seen in the danza habanera.³⁹ Romantic character pieces were the norm and included the romanza, capricho, nocturno, serenata, and idilio, but the

³⁸Ibid., 206.

³⁹Mayer-Serra, 118.

character of the piece did not necessarily fit the title. Potpourris and fantasias on well-known operatic themes were popular, as were military marches and pieces of an exotic nature, such as the orientale and morisca. Transcriptions of operas were popular, and took on the operatic formal element of a three-part aria with slow introduction. According to Otto Mayer-Serra, these styles were originally created by dignified Romantic composers, but they became decadent and were perpetuated by inferior composers.⁴⁰

The Mexican school of piano in the 1800's was not a school of large proportions, but it was of great importance and influence on the future development of Mexican music.⁴¹ The composers from this era paved the way for the future cultivation of Mexican musical nationalism in art music. A waltz by Juventino Rosas (1868-1894), an Otomi Indian, acquired international fame. He composed the acclaimed Sobre las Olas (Over the Waves), at the age of 23, as a part of a set of French-style waltzes. The first internationally renowned pianist to visit Mexico was Henri Herz, in 1849. He made a lasting impression on Tomás Leon (1826-1893), who became the first professor of piano at the Conservatorio in 1866.⁴² He was the first pianist to promote the works of Beethoven, and organized "Beethoven Festivals." His own compositions were mostly the salon type. Leon's best student, Julio Ituarte

⁴⁰Ibid., 73-74.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Stevenson, 208.

(1845-1905), was a well known virtuoso among the Mexican aristocracy. He taught piano at the conservatory from 1868 until 1885. Ituarte composed fantasies on themes of Liszt, in the style of Thalberg and Gottschalk. He was the first Mexican pianist to perform all of his concerts from memory. Felipe Villanueva (1863-1893), a pure-blooded Indian, was also a virtuoso of distinction. He wrote a copious amount of salon music, characterized by cross rhythms between the hands. Villanueva was a superior composer to those of the preceding generations, in terms of harmonic finesse. He was the first musical personality in Mexico to express himself in an original way by means of the short character piece. Ernesto Elorduy (1853-1912) cultivated the danza Mexicana (along with Villanueva) and it became a type of stylized popular piece based on the Cuban contradanzas. These contradanzas were developed in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries, and became highly influential in Latin America. Ricardo Castro (1864-1907) was the most successful of the Mexican piano virtuosos and won praise in Europe for his Piano Concerto, his opera, La Legende de Rudel, and his Cello Concerto. Castro reflects an international style in his works, and he was the first Mexican to introduce a Lisztian complexity into his piano compositions. He championed new influences from France and Germany in Mexico, as opposed to those from Italy, but with him ended the epoch of imitation of European music in Mexico.⁴³

⁴³Behague, 98-101.

The roots of Mexican nationalism are seen in the compositions of the Romantic pianists. Folkloric song and dance gained identity as the voice of the people during the various conflicts that the nation endured. Piano arrangements of folk dances and songs can be found dating before 1850. The jarabe was the most popular dance after the struggle for independence, and it was widely used by composers of the salon style. In 1841, Jose Antonio Gomez, a composer from Mexico City, used a jarabe as the theme for a series of variations. Tomás Leon composed his Jarabe Nacional, in 1860, in a style reminiscent of Thalberg's virtuosic writing. In 1880, Julio Ituarte composed Ecos de México, a stylized arrangement of national airs that captured the character of each song.⁴⁴ Mayer-Serra points out that in the aires nacionales of Ituarte, Mexican melodies were incorporated for the first time in salon music.⁴⁵

Composers such as Elorduy and Villanueva, with their danzas Mexicanas, and Gómez, Leon, and Ituarte, with their arrangements of jarabes, paved the way for the future cultivation of Mexican musical nationalism in art music. The Revolution of 1910 fostered national unity, and the search for a distinctly Mexican form of expression began in the arts with the painters Saturnino Herran and Diego Rivera, and with the poet Lopez Velarde. The most important catalyst and landmark figure in the development of musical nationalism in Mexico, however, was Manuel M. Ponce.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Mayer-Serra, 126.

Ponce promoted folk music as a valid and important source of inspiration for the composers of art music. His writings and musical compositions led Mexico into a new artistic era as musicians searched for an authentic national style and means of expression.

Otto Mayer-Serra traces the evolution of nationalism as one divided into four phases. In the first phase, indigenous folk music, such as the folk dances and sones popular in Mexican theater in the early Nineteenth Century, and art music of a foreign idiom (Italian opera) existed side by side. In the second phase, the popular melodic and rhythmic element gained strength. Composers assimilated folk melodies and rhythms without altering the basic structure of the music. Ponce fit into this phase of development with his adaption of folk melodies to a foreign writing style. In the third phase, there was a passage from assimilation of folkloric material to the creation of a new national language. The fourth stage discarded foreign models, and folkloric elements were crystallized into a new idiom with a universal character.⁴⁶

The emergence of nationalistic trends in Europe also had an impact on Mexican music. In tracing the emergence and rise of musical nationalism in the Americas, it is necessary to acknowledge the influence of important European movements such as the "Russian Five" and the Spanish nationalist school led by Felipe Pedrell. Pedrell believed that each country should build its musical art system

⁴⁶Mayer-Serra, 99.

on the foundation of its national folk music.⁴⁷ Ponce proposed that the popular song most characteristically expressed the musical feelings of a nation. In the countries with a musical tradition of their own, such as France and Germany, there was only a casual effect of nationalism. In countries such as Spain and England, folklore offered the only point of departure for the formation of a personal and national style. Mexico entered late in the universal picture.

The Relationship of Ponce to Mexican Musical Nationalism

Ponce's creative work singlehandedly summarizes the scholarly and artistic labor for Mexico realized in Spain by Pedrell and Albeniz. His music and research was the indispensable source for all that belongs to Mexican musical nationalism.⁴⁸ Although there are examples of compositions written during the Nineteenth Century that include dances of a folkloric nature, such as the piano arrangements of jarabes and the "aires nacionales" of Ituarte, the assimilation of the popular and typically nationalistic is realized particularly in the works of Ponce.⁴⁹ Ponce collected the majority of the styles of the "mestizo" folkloric genre and started the beginning of the

⁴⁷Gilbert Chase, A Guide to the Music of Latin America, (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 1962), 19.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 123.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 147.

selection and classification of these songs. Mayer-Serra writes that within the double task of investigator and harmonizer, Ponce injected into the music of his country a wealth of new musical elements through his stylizations that included inexhaustible harmonic and rhythmic possibilities. On some occasions, Ponce has been reproached for dressing Mexican canciones in a European style, but Mayer-Serra defends Ponce by stating that the assimilation of universal styles to national ones corresponds to an inevitable historical evolutionary process. Ponce's achievement consisted in offering the first artistic stylizations of perfection in a genre that had not achieved a reconciliation between the popular and the universal.⁵⁰

After the revolution put an end to the thirty-year-old Diaz regime, dependence upon European sources for musical ideas was to become an anachronism. The slogan, "with our face toward the Mexican native musical treasures" became the inspiration of a new generation of composers in the 1920's. Ponce was the pathfinder, and Carlos Chávez (1899-1978), and Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940), became the chief standard-bearers of Mexican musical nationalism.⁵¹ Other outstanding Mexican musicians who created the heart of the nationalist school include Jose Rolon (1883-1945), and Eduardo Moncada (1899-1970). The students of these musicians include Luis Sandi (b. 1905), Miguel Bernal Jimenez (1910-1956), and the

⁵⁰Ibid., 150.

⁵¹Salomon Kahan, "Mexico: Toward Development of the Seeds of Nationalism," Musical America LXX, No. 2 (January, 1950): 30.

Group of Four: Daniel Ayala (b. 1908), Salvador Contreras (b. 1912), Blas Galindo (b. 1910), and Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958). The period from 1920-1940 was the "golden era" of Mexican musical nationalism. After the 1940's, Mexican composers followed an international trend and began to look beyond Mexico to foreign countries for inspiration.

Ponce is credited with the first deliberate orientation towards folk music and the first systematic collection of this music.⁵² Ponce proposed and promoted the founding of the Department of Folklore in 1921, by the Secretary of Education in Mexico. He proposed a plan of musical research that would divide Mexico into zones. Delegates from these zones were to take photographs and catalogue the characteristics of music and dance native to the region. Melodies were to be collected, catalogued, and published by region or subject-matter.⁵³ Ponce's plan was approved but never fulfilled due to lack of governmental support, but Ponce personally collected and harmonized many Mexican canciones.

During Ponce's era as a music educator, ethnomusicology was unknown in Mexico. Ponce took it upon himself to inform the public and his students of the possibilities and responsibilities facing the modern musician and composer. He gave his first music conference on national music in 1913, with a discussion of "La

⁵²Mayer-Serra, 32.

⁵³Carmen Sordi Sodi, "La Labor de Investigacion Folklorica de Manuel M. Ponce," Heterofonía 15, no. 79 (1982): 36-39.

Canción Mexicana." He published a collection of his musical investigations of folklore in 1917, entitled Escritos y Composiciones Musicales, with a prologue by Ruben M. Campos. Along with Campos, Ponce founded and directed the publication Revista Musical de México, and also wrote articles on music in the newspaper El Universal. He created the field of "musical folklore" at the Escuela de Música de la Universidad, and at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, where he personally taught the classes. Many of his students became distinguished researchers and composers including Francisco Dominguez, Concha Michel, Amelia Millan, Virginia Rivera, Vicente T. Mendoza, Carlos Chávez, and Pablo Castellanos. These students of Manuel Ponce have, in turn, given Mexico a panorama of the traditional and folkloric music of Mexico.

Chapter II

Manuel Maria Ponce (1882-1948)

Biography

Manuel Maria Ponce was born in Fresnillo, Zacatecas, on December 8, 1882, to a musical family. He spent his childhood in Aguascalientes, where he began the study of piano at age six. Ponce composed his first piano piece by the age of nine, La Danza del Sarampion (the smallpox dance). He became a member of the local church choir at the age of ten, and the principal organist by age fifteen. At the age of fourteen, Ponce composed a Gavotte which was made famous by the dancer "Argentina" who used the piece for her performances throughout the world.

Ponce enrolled in the National Conservatory in Mexico City in 1901, where he remained for only one year, dissatisfied with the quality of instruction he found there. He returned to Aguascalientes, where he taught piano in his private academy, and often performed his own compositions. As a young man, Ponce became fond of the Romantic piano music imported from Europe, especially the salon style of Mozkowsky.¹ He also showed a great interest in the indigenous folk melodies of his own country. Ponce was a music critic for the local newspaper, El Observador, and

¹Robert Stevenson, "Manuel M. Ponce," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 20 Vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), XV, 74.

continued throughout his life to enjoy writing.²

In 1904, Ponce left on the first of two journeys to Europe for further musical training. He studied counterpoint with Cesare Dall'Olio and piano with Luigi Torchi for one year at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, Italy. He moved to Berlin, Germany, in November of 1905, to study at the Stern Conservatory with Martin Krause, a Liszt disciple. While in Germany, he was influenced by his classmates who were devoted to German folk songs. Ponce's classmates encouraged him to explore the native folk music of Mexico and incorporate it into his compositions.³ His friends gave him a farewell gift of the Stimmen der Volker (Voices of the People), by Albert Friedenthal, which included a volume on Mexico.⁴ Ponce reaffirmed his interest in exploring the vernacular music of his native country.

After his return to Mexico in 1907, Ponce resumed teaching piano in his home of Aguascalientes. He became the first musician in Mexico to introduce and teach Debussy and organized an all-Debussy program on June 24, 1912 for his students. One of the students performing was the thirteen-year-old Carlos Chávez, who later became an outstanding figure in Mexican music.⁵

²Stevenson, 74.

³Robert Stevenson, Music in Mexico, (New York: Thomas Cromwell Co., 1952), 233.

⁴Jesus C. Romero, "Efermérides de Manuel M. Ponce," Nuestra Música 5, no. 18 (1950): 165.

⁵Ibid., 171.

In 1908, Ponce returned to the National Conservatory in Mexico City as a professor of piano and music history. His career as a composer, performer, and writer/lecturer began to flourish. On July 7, 1912, at the Teatro Arbeau, Ponce gave a concert of his works which included his Concerto for Piano. This same year, he performed his Canciones Mexicanas for piano, considered by historians as the beginning of the modern phase of Mexican national music.⁶ Ponce laid the foundation as the first composer to show real interest in the folklore of his country.⁷ He collected, classified, and harmonized dozens of songs. Ponce's original Mexican song Estrellita, published in 1914, became his most famous and well known. He published many compositions for piano solo during this period, many with titles revealing nationalistic inclinations such as the Rapsodia Mexicana, Balada Mexicana, and the Tema Mexicano Variado. Ponce promoted his nationalistic ideas through his lectures and writings, and encouraged Mexican composers and audiences to appreciate the intrinsic value of Mexican vernacular music.

From 1915 to 1917, Ponce lived in Havana, Cuba where he was active as a piano teacher, performer, and writer. Ponce wrote several piano compositions of Cuban influence during this era, including the Preludio Cubano, Tres Rapsodias Cubanas, and Suite Cubana. Ponce's Second Piano Sonata and Cello Sonata also date

⁶Nicolas Slonimsky, Music of Latin America, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1972), 245.

⁷Dan Malmstrom, Introduction to Twentieth Century Mexican Music, (Ph. D. dissertation, Uppsala University, 1974; Uppsala, Sweden: Textgruppen I Uppsala), 39.

from his years in Cuba. During his residency in Cuba, Ponce traveled to New York, where he performed a recital of his own compositions at the Aeolian Hall on March 27, 1916.

Ponce returned to Mexico in 1917. He resumed teaching at the National Conservatory and married the French singer Clema Maurel. He continued to compose and was the co-editor of the Revista Musical de México, a collection of essays on musical aesthetics. He lectured extensively on the cultural significance and national importance of Mexican folklore. He was also appointed conductor of the National Symphony. In 1923, Ponce met the great Spanish guitarist Andres Segovia, and began to compose material for the guitar.

Ponce became dissatisfied with his compositional technique, and in 1925, at the age of forty, he returned to Europe for more instruction. He lived in Paris for the next seven years, where he studied with Paul Dukas at the Ecole Normale de Musique. Ponce was impressed with Dukas' theories on free thematic development, and found them adaptable to Mexican melodies.⁸ His harmonic vocabulary was developing towards a more modern vein, with a greater use of chromaticism, tonal instability, and contrapuntal writing.⁹ While in Europe, Ponce composed the first of his great orchestral works, Chapultepec, as well as most of his guitar works. Segovia

⁸Gerard Behague, Music in Latin America: An Introduction, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1979), 126.

⁹Ibid.

performed Ponce's works in his many concert tours, and spread Ponce's fame internationally. As a result of his association with Segovia, Ponce contributed immensely to the literature of the guitar and helped Segovia elevate the guitar from its neglected position.¹⁰

While in Paris, Ponce came in contact with the music of many diverse contemporary musicians such as Stravinsky, Varese, Milhaud, de Falla, Villa-Lobos, Ravel and Satie. In 1928, Ponce became the founder and editor of the Gaceta Musical, the first Spanish magazine to recognize Latin-American music in France. He also composed works for chamber music during his stay in Paris, including the Sonata Breve for violin and piano, Three Preludes for cello and piano, and Tres Poemas de Mariano Brull for voice and piano. Ponce wrote several works for solo piano during this era, including the Preludios Encadenados, the Quatre Pieces pour Piano, and the Sonatina.

Ponce received his diploma from the Ecole Normale de Musique in 1932 and returned to Mexico in 1933 as an established European celebrity. He devoted the last fifteen years of his life to composition and teaching at the National Conservatory and the Escuela Universitaria de Música. He continued to be quite active as a lecturer, especially on topics of musical folklore, and he was the director of Cultura Musical, a publication of the National Conservatory. Ponce's compositions from this era include

¹⁰Peter E. Segal, "The Role of Andrés Segovia in Re-shaping the Repertoire of the Classical Guitar." D.M.A. document, Temple University, 1994.

many orchestral works such as the Canto y Danza de los Antiguos Mexicanos (1933), the Poema Elegiaco (1935), the Ferial (1940), and the Concerto for Violin (1943). In 1941, Segovia premiered Ponce's internationally known and praised Concierto del Sur for guitar and orchestra. Ponce conducted the first performance of this work in South America at Montevideo. The masterful Violin Concerto was premiered in 1943 with Carlos Chávez conducting and Henry Szering as soloist.

In 1939, Ponce composed his Veinte Piezas para los Pequeños Pianistas Mexicanos (Twenty Pieces for Little Mexican Pianists), after his appointment to the post of "Music Inspector for Kindergartens." The Veinte Piezas, following the idea of Bartok's Mikrokosmos, are studies based on folk melodies for the young pianist.

Ponce received many prestigious awards during his lifetime, and he was the first composer to receive the "National Prize of Arts and Sciences." In a ceremony on February 26, 1948, Ponce was honored by President Miguel Aleman. Carlos Chávez spoke on Ponce's behalf and announced his achievements as immensely significant in the development of Mexican music. Chávez stated that Ponce implanted the large forms into Mexican music; he was the first great explorer of the popular Mexican Art; and he was the initiator of the first nationalist tendency in Mexico.¹¹

¹¹Julio Estrada, ed. La Música de México: I. Historia, by Luis Sandi, (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1984), 45.

Two months after receiving the national award, Manuel Maria Ponce died, on April 24, 1948, in Mexico City, of uremic poisoning. In honor of Ponce's achievements, a concert hall in the Palacio Nacional de Bellas Artes has been renamed the "Sala Manuel M. Ponce."

Chapter III

Characteristics and Influences

Musical Style Periods and Piano Literature

Otto Mayer-Serra writes that the difference between the works of Ponce and his predecessors, such as Ituarte with his Ecos de México, is that Ponce achieved a total amalgamation of the harmonic body and folk melodies, expressed and realized by a musical substance that molded perfectly to a particular character.¹

It is true that Ponce's Canciones Mexicanas for piano, like the Spanish Dances of Enrique Granados, with whom he has close affinities, belong to salon music and do not go beyond an almost Schubertian romanticism. But the reason for this is very often the character of the folk melodies themselves...Ponce's merit resides in having subordinated his harmonization to the aim of placing the folk song in a suitable environment, in expressing by means of the romantic piano technique their musical, poetic and atmospheric character.....The tradition of piano virtuosity had been consolidated in Mexico by Ponce's predecessor, Richard Castro. Whereas this talented composer, perhaps the most representative of the Porfirian era, confined himself to exact imitations of the Chopin polonaise and ballade and the Liszt rhapsody, Ponce used these forms and their techniques, but infused into them the thematic material of folk songs or melodies in that style.²

In many of his writings, Ponce discusses the inherent qualities of the canción and the intrinsic value of creating a national style based on this folk music.

¹Mayer-Serra, 148.

²Mayer-Serra, The Present State of Music in Mexico, 34.

La canción popular es la manifestación melodiosa del alma de un pueblo. El pueblo canta, porque necesita esa exquisita forma de expresión para externar sus más íntimos sentimientos. Es el desahogo del alma popular que sufre y calla, y no hace uso de las palabras únicamente, porque solo la música puede interpretar sus más reconditas emociones. Por eso, la música es la más antigua y la más dulce compañera de la humanidad.... La obra de folclorismo internacional ha tenido muchos e inteligentes apóstoles que, tomando como material precioso las melodías populares, han edificado, con ese material, suntuosos palacios de armonías nuevas, con las que han enriquecido la literatura musical y han mostrado al mundo el alma de sus respectivos pueblos, cristalizada en sus cantos y exornada con las más brillantes galas de su alta y noble inspiración.....Y si por crueldad del destino tuviésemos que sufrir la injusta opresión de un pueblo más fuerte que nosotros, quedarían para fortalecer nuestro amor a la Patria, el azul incomparable de nuestro cielo y las hermosas canciones populares que son el símbolo de nuestro mexicanismo indestructible.³

The popular (folkloric) canción is the melodic manifestation of the soul of a nation. The people sing because they need this exquisite form of expression to externalize their most intimate feelings. It (the canción) is the comfort of the soul of the people who suffer silently and do not use solely words, for only music can express their most intimate emotions. This is why music is humanity's most ancient and loving companion.... International efforts in the art of folklore have had many intelligent apostles who have regarded melodic folklore as precious material on which to build sumptuous palaces of original harmonies enriching the musical literature and revealing to all the world the soul of their respective nation, crystallized in song and displayed with the most brilliant decor of its high and noble inspiration....And if for a cruel twist of fate we must suffer the unjust oppression of a nation more powerful than ours, our love for our country will continue to be strengthened by the our incomparable blue skies and by our beautiful folk songs that continue to be the symbol of our indestructible 'mexicanismo' [Mexican spirit].⁴

³Manuel M. Ponce, Escritos y Composiciones Musicales, (México: Cultura T. IV, no. 4, 1917), 17-26.

⁴Translated by D. Guerra.

As a young composer, Ponce embarked upon a life-long task of collecting and arranging the folk material of his country. Melodic and harmonic elements of the canción were especially used by Ponce as the basis of his original works. His melodic themes often exuded a Mexican flavor with their folk-like atmosphere, and Ponce quoted existing folksongs in some of his compositions.

Manuel M. Ponce belongs to the first generation of composers in Mexico who consciously created a "Mexican" style. It is undeniable that all the popular styles representing the musical sentiments of Mexico such as the canción, corrido, huapango, and the son integrate musical elements of European precedence. What they have of "Mexican" characteristics are certain melodic and rhythmic expressions repeated with insistence, as well as a distinctive method of interpretation. Cross-rhythms (especially hemiolas), dotted rhythms, syncopations, and combinations of unequal triple rhythms that alternate 6/8 and 3/4 (called sesquialtera) create a rhythmic flexibility. The sesquialtera is considered by native musicians to be one of the most typical characteristics of Mexican music. The singing style of the corrido, with its parallel thirds and feminine cadences ending on a falling third, creates a plaintive melodic quality that is identifiably "Mexican." A "Mexican" flavor is also produced in performance of folk music by all the elements that make up the interpretation such as voicing, instrumentation, stamping, clapping, ejaculations, and other elements of atmosphere. There is also a use of high tension in the vocal apparatus during singing, a slight nasaling, and a preference for a high falsetto pitch.

These singing traits are thought to be derived from both pre-Conquest and Andalusian music. The indigenous influence is not prominent in the melodic lines of the "mestizo" folk music of the Twentieth Century. Harmonies in folk music are generally tonic, sub-dominant, dominant with seventh and ninth chords, with simple or no modulations. Ponce describes the general character of Mexican folk music as melancholy and passionate, capturing the pain, love, and humility of the people who created it.⁵ Indian characteristics are sometimes presented with strict diatonicism punctuated with percussive touches, a pentatonic melodic line or repeated melodic fragments, the use of indigenous instruments, and a strong and percussive rhythmic drive.

Ponce captured the "Mexican" quality in many of his nationalistic compositions, even while speaking with a European musical language. His compositional style, however, was quite varied and evolved a great deal during his lifetime. Robert Stevenson describes Ponce as a composer who changed with the times.⁶ Ponce was a transitional composer whose compositional career spanned almost fifty years and connected two stages of Mexican music: the Porfirian school of composers, hanging on to the remnants of romanticism and salon music, and the new modern Mexican school of composition, represented by Chávez, Revueltas, and others.

⁵Ponce, 10-11.

⁶Stevenson, 235.

First Period - Romantic Style 1891-1924

Ponce's student and protégé Carlos Vasquez, who has revised and edited many of his teacher's works, credits Ponce with some 200 works for piano, "a testament to Ponce's great passion for the instrument. Large and small forms and a great rhythmic variety reveal Ponce's solid technical and expressive facility."⁷ Vasquez characterizes Ponce's piano compositions as beautifully lyrical, regardless of folkloric origins. He describes Ponce's piano compositions as a product of Chopinesque influence characterized by a rhythmic agility and a poetic quality.

Ponce's early works followed the example of the composers Felipe Villanueva and Ernesto Elorduy with their danzas Mexicanas. Ponce acknowledged this link by naming one of his danzas Elorduyana. He wrote in a conservative style characteristic of the romantic period, and considered old fashioned by many European composers. At the start of his compositional career, Ponce wrote many short romantic piano pieces in the salon style, characterized by a lyrical and expressive melodic line. In his first era of romantic compositions, Ponce also wrote many works that display an interest in Mexican musical folklore.

Vasquez points out the following early works, written before 1915, as those not based on folksong yet exuding an outstanding lyrical quality: Primer Amor, Leyenda,

⁷Carlos Vásquez, "Manuel M. Ponce y el Piano," Heterofonía 15, no. 79 (1982), 14.

Dos Nocturnos, Dos Intermezzi, Vals Galante, Gavotte et Musette, Once Miniaturas, Album de Amor (seven pieces), Trozos Romanticos (14), and Tres Minuetos.

Ponce utilized Chopin's mazurka form with three-parts plus a ritornello. He wrote two groups of mazurkas, one set simply entitled Mazurkas, and one set called Mazurkas de Salon. One mazurka is edited as number 27, but only 23 exist due to the ravaging of Ponce's archives during the Mexican Revolution.⁸ Pablo Castellanos, another Mexican scholar and enthusiastic proponent of Ponce's music, writes that not all of Ponce's production deserves equal merit, and that out of all of his mazurkas, one should choose three or four as the best since many were written as pieces for "ladies of society." This is also the case with the 23 etudes of this era.⁹

Ex. 1.- Xa Mazurka - Measures 1-15



⁸Vásquez, 15.

⁹Pablo Castellanos, Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo, Recopilación y revision de Paolo Mello, (Universidad Autónoma de México, 1982), 22.

Other works written during Ponce's early compositional era include the Tema Variado Mexicano, the first Intermezzo, and many Preludes. The Tema Variado Mexicano is a theme and variations based on a folk melody. This composition will be analyzed in Chapter Four of this document. The first Intermezzo is described by Vasquez as an admirable gem in the form of a miniature sonata, complete with an introduction and coda. It is only two minutes long yet it is a "perfect synthesis between technique and poetry".¹⁰

Ex. 2. - Intermezzo I - Measures 1-15



Ponce wrote many preludios including the Preludio Tragico, using a repeated chord motif, and written as a passionate response to the death of a friend's mother. The Preludio Mexicano is based on the folk theme of "Cielito Lindo."

Some works are published under different names, with some of the preludes also

¹⁰Vásquez, 15.

listed as studies. The Preludio Tragico is the same composition as the Estudio I. There is a Pequeño Preludio in Ponce's Trozos Romanticos, a Preludio Cubano and a Preludio Galante (also listed as a study). Vasquez labels the Andante Malinconico as a prelude, and describes the Once Miniaturas as small preludes. The Estudio II has been lost, Hacia la Cima is also Estudio III, and the Morire Habemus is Estudio IV. La Hilandera is the Estudio V, and Alma en la Primavera is the Estudio VI. Juventude is the Estudio VII, and the Preludio Galante is the Estudio VIII. There is a study with no number dedicated to Moscheles, and a study called Metamorfosis de Estrellita. La Vida Sonríe is also called Estudio XII.¹¹

Ex. 3. - La Vida Sonríe - Measures 41-51.



Before Ponce's first trip to Europe in 1904, he had already harmonized several Mexican canciones including "Marchita el Alma", "La Barca del Marino", and "Perdí un Amor." Ponce was arranging the songs that he recalled from his youth. He would annually attend the Feria de San Marcos (San Marcos Fair), and was deeply affected

¹¹Ibid., 16.

by the color and local flavor of the festive event. While in Europe, however, he was inspired to rededicate himself to promoting the folklore of his country. He witnessed the nationalistic trends occurring in various countries in Europe, due to the cultivation of their folklore. Upon his return to Mexico, he began a systematic study of the different regions of Mexico. He collected and arranged over 200 Mexican canciones. Castellanos describes Ponce's nationalistic endeavors as threefold: Ponce selected and classified a considerable number of melodies from the diverse regions of the country; he presented the folkloric themes in the forms of sonatas, suites, and variations; and as a result of his profound assimilation of the folkloric element, he wrote works that were undeniably Mexican without using popular melodies.¹²

With his study in Italy, and a few more years of composition, Ponce began writing in larger forms, and his harmony developed a more complex and richer texture. His Piano Concerto, Estampas Nocturnas for String Orchestra, and the Trio Romantico for violin, cello, and piano, begin to point to a more modern sound, with the use of augmented triads, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords, and rapidly modulating harmonies.¹³

Castellanos writes that during Ponce's first study in Europe, the primary influence on his writing style and piano technique was Lisztian, since Ponce's teacher

¹²Castellanos, 28.

¹³Jorge Barrón Corvera, "Three Violin Works by Mexican Composer Manuel Maria Ponce," D.M. Document, University of Texas at Austin, 1993.

Martin Krause was a student of Liszt. Castellanos believes the proof of Lisztian influence can be seen in Ponce's Piano Concerto, written upon his return to Mexico. The concerto, perhaps Ponce's most important work during his romantic phase, consists of four connecting sections that form a large sonata movement in the cyclic style of Liszt. All of the themes are transformed rhythmically and melodically, also in the style of Liszt. In the first movement Allegro, the main subject evokes the theme from Liszt's B Minor Sonata. A second theme becomes a romantic canción in the Andante, and a "danza tropical" in the Allegretto. A third theme (Scherzo) signals the end of the exposition, and the piano cadenza becomes the development and recapitulation. The fourth movement is an extensive coda, again recalling the cyclic style of Liszt. Castellanos laments the fact that this work has been largely overlooked in the piano literature of the Twentieth Century. Ponce's Piano Concerto is an excellent example of a nationalistic concerto from the American continent written during the early 1900's, and Castellanos doubts that the concertos of MacDowell are of superior quality.¹⁴

On July 7, 1912, Ponce presented a program at the Teatro Arbeu consisting exclusively of his own compositions. Vasquez describes the program as an important event in the history of Mexican nationalism. Ponce performed original compositions for string orchestra, piano trio, and piano solo, including Preludio y Fuga sobre un tema de Bach, Leyenda, Mazurcas VI, VII, XV, and XX, Segundo Nocturno, Hacia

¹⁴Ibid., 31.

la Cima, Cuatro Canciones Mexicanas, Primer Rapsodia Mexicana, and the Piano Concerto, with the composer/conductor Julian Carrillo and the "Beethoven Orchestra." The concert was enthusiastically received and widely acclaimed by both the public and the musicians of Mexico. Ponce gathered accolades as composer, pianist, and proponent of nationalism.¹⁵

Ponce was not the first musician from his country to write in sonata form, but he was the first to introduce Mexican themes in sonata structure. He wrote the Sonata I in 1913, the Balada Mexicana in 1915, and the Sonata II in 1916. Castellanos describes the Balada as utilizing the techniques of composition that Ponce learned in Europe. Ponce uses two Mexican canciones as the first and second themes of the exposition. He also uses a whole-tone scale in the style of Debussy, whose works were introduced in Mexico by Ponce. The Sonata II also uses canciones as the main themes and combines binary and ternary rhythms in the Mexican style. This sonata signifies Ponce's development towards a more modernized technique with its unresolved dissonances, non-traditional chord progressions, modality, and traces of impressionism. The Sonata II will be analyzed in more detail in the next chapter of this document.

Ponce's Scherzino a Debussy is one of the Cuatro Scherzinos and is another example of Debussy's influence. The Scherzino alternates binary and ternary rhythms

¹⁵Vásquez, 17.

in the style of the folkloric huapangos and corridos.¹⁶

In 1915, Ponce departed for Cuba, where he remained until 1917. In Havana, Ponce taught lessons, gave concerts and continued composing. This stay in Cuba was an important event in Ponce's life. During his visit, he assimilated the local musical folklore and infused these musical impressions into his compositions. Compositions written during this era include the Suite Cubana in three parts, the Serenata Marina, Plenilunio y Paz de Ocaso, Rapsodias Cubanas, Preludio Cubano, Elegia de la Ausencia, with its syncopated rhythms characteristic of Cuba, and the Guateque, a Cuban danzon. The "habanera" motive (measures 211-220) of the Sonata II (1916) reveals the Cuban influence in the works of this era. During his Cuban stay, Ponce also composed the beautiful Sonata for Cello and Piano.¹⁷

On March 27, 1916, Ponce made a brief visit to New York City to present a program of his compositions at the Aeolian Hall. He performed the Preludio y Fuga sobre un Tema de Handel, Sonata I, Preludio Trágico, Morie Habemus, Romanza de Amor, La Vida Sonríe, Plenilunio, La Hilandera, Mazurca XXIII, Rapsodía Cubana I, Canciones Mexicanas I, XVII, XIV, Balada Mexicana, Barcarola Mexicana, and the II Rapsodía Mexicana.¹⁸ Ponce's visit to the United States also influenced his compositions as seen in the piece Broadway from Ponce's Evocaciones, written in

¹⁶Castellanos, 32.

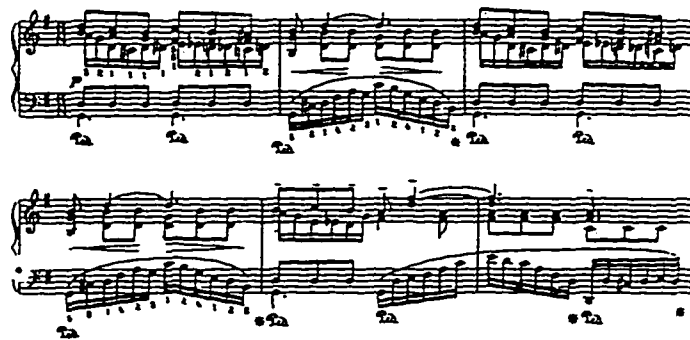
¹⁷Ibid., 35.

¹⁸Vásquez, 17.

1921. Evocaciones also includes the pieces of diverse character La Alhambra, Venecia, and Versalles.

Other pieces by Ponce composed during this era in his musical career include the Cuatro Pequeñas Fugas (four small fugues), for two voices, written for his students, and a Prelude and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, written for the advanced pianist. The Arrulladora (lullaby) is based on the folk melody "La Rancherita" in a theme and variations style. Castellanos describes this piece as reminiscent of Chopin's Berceuse with its delicate variations and inner moving voices.¹⁹

Ex. 4 - Arrulladora - Measures 22-27



Second Period - Second European Study - Modern Style 1925-1932

Ponce was not satisfied with his compositional technique, and returned to Paris in 1925 to study with Paul Dukas, a great pedagogue among the modern composers, and musical advisor to de Falla, Ravel, and Villa-Lobos. Many of Ponce's first

¹⁹Castellanos, 32.

compositions have nationalistic titles such as the Rapsodia and Balada Mexicana, but the second period of Ponce's compositional development reveals abstract titles such as his sixteen studies and his Quatre Pieces pour Piano. The influence of the "French Six" composers is possible, as seen in Ponce's new concern for miniatures and brevity. Examples include his Miniatures for strings, the Sonatina for piano, the Sonata Breve for violin, and his Preludios for cello. The change that took place in Ponce's compositional style during his years in Paris was profound. Ponce's compositional styles and techniques became very diverse. His harmonic language became much more dissonant, with increased tonal instability. Harmonic practices included modality and impressionism, bitonality and pandiatonicism, and musical passages that bordered on atonality, with many unresolved dissonances. Some of these unresolved dissonances were a result of dissonant counterpoint and a busy polyphonic texture. Stevenson writes that during Ponce's second European study, "his musical style became immeasurably more contrapuntal and his rhythms tauter."²⁰ Castellanos summarizes the changes as the subjective and romantic Mexican style verses the objective and modern Paris style.²¹

The Quatre Pieces pour Piano (Suite Bitonal) is an example of Ponce's use of bitonality, with each staff written in a different key. The Preludios Encadenados also have many examples of chromaticism and unresolved dissonances. These

²⁰Stevenson, 234.

²¹Castellanos, 37.

compositions will be analyzed in more detail in the next chapter of this document.

Also written during Ponce's years in Paris were the Etudes 22 and 23 on the interval of a second. The etudes are very attractive, and they are pianistically challenging.²²

The Intermezzo II,²³ was also composed during this era, and it displays a modern contrast from the first romantic Intermezzo I.

Ex. 5. - Etude No. 23 - Measures 1-6

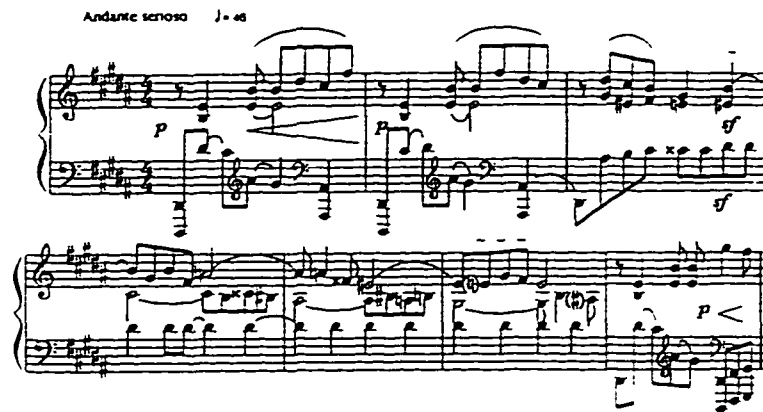
Allegro non troppo ♩ = 98

The musical score for Etude No. 23, Measures 1-6, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-3) and the second system (measures 4-6) are both written for piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegro non troppo' with a quarter note equal to 98 beats per minute. The first system begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a 'legato' marking. The music features a complex, flowing melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the piece with similar melodic and harmonic development.

²²The etudes were recorded by Arthur Rubenstein in the collection: Piano works by Latin American Composers.

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Ex. 6. - Intermezzo II - Measures 1-7



The musical language of the Sonatina for piano (1932) will surprise those people who consider Ponce strictly a romantic. This is a three movement work with the first movement in the form of a neoclassic sonata. The second movement is in three-part structure, and Castellanos writes that its melodic turns are undoubtedly influenced by the Mexican canción. The final movement has an Indian flavor, an idea that Ponce used again in his symphonic poem Chapultepec. This was Ponce's first "Indianist" manifestation, although Carlos Chávez had started the Indianist movement in 1921, with his ballet El Fuego Nuevo.²⁴ Ponce also wrote his Sonata Breve for violin and piano in 1932, his last year in Paris. The sonata is in a neoclassic style with some impressionistic flourishes. Yet the harmonic writing is highly dissonant and chromatic with a modern melody characterized by irregular phrasing, wide range and wide leaps, and utilizing the chromatic scale. Ponce does, however, incorporate a Spanish popular song ("Anda Jaleo") in the final movement.

²⁴Ibid., 40.

During Ponce's years in Europe, he collaborated extensively with the Spanish guitarist Andres Segovia. Their friendship had a significant effect on the history of the guitar. Ponce wrote a considerable amount of literature for this instrument at Segovia's request, including preludes, fugues, sonatas, variations, and studies, culminating in the outstanding Concerto del Sur, inspired by the folk music of Spain. Ponce's contribution to the literature of the guitar is of extreme worth and importance.

At Ponce's graduation from Paul Dukas' composition class in 1932, Dukas highly praised Ponce's work and his musicianship. He remarked that Ponce was certainly not at the level of a student but rather a distinguished musician. Ponce returned to Mexico in 1933, and remained there until his death.

Third Period - Return to Mexico - Modern Style with an Emphasis on Nationalism 1933 - 1948

Ponce's final era of composition is his most nationalistic, and almost all of his works are written in a modern-nationalistic style, with the exception of the Concerto del Sur, and the Sonata for Violin and Viola. Ponce's compositions of this era reveal neoclassic, impressionistic, and neoromantic elements. Three types of compositions may be distinguished: compositions that are artistic stylizations of folkloric themes, such as the Instantaneas Mexicanas for orchestra, and the Veinte Piezas para los

Pequeños Pianistas Mexicanos; compositions with popular melodies as the basis of structural elaboration, such as the symphonic poems Chapultepec and Ferial; and compositions with original themes that reveal a personal nationalism developed by the composer, such as the Concerto for Violin and the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas.²⁵

Ponce's harmonic language is less adventurous and experimental than his years in Paris but is still characterized by unresolved dissonances. Instead of the polytonality and pandiatonicism of the previous years, harmonies are tertian, and modal or chromatic, often with an impressionistic flavor.²⁶ His moderation upon his return to Mexico could have been a result of the criticism he received because of his new style. Some critics missed his romantic style, yet others argued that he was behind the current developments of the modern Mexican school of composition of Chávez and Revueltas. Ponce's mature style was modern, but never avant-garde, and always based on traditional musical values and tonality.²⁷

Examples of Ponce's compositions which are stylizations of folkloric themes include the Veinte Piezas para los Pequeños Pianistas Mexicanos,²⁸ written in 1939. The Veinte Piezas were composed as a result of Ponce's appointment to the post of

²⁵Castellanos, 45.

²⁶Barrón Corvera, 39.

²⁷Ibid., 43.

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"Inspector of Kindergartens." Although in this final era of his life Ponce was recognized as a very important composer of the American continent and he was highly distinguished as the director of the National Conservatory and the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, he was forced because of financial reasons to accept the post of "Inspector of Kindergartens." The Veinte Piezas para los Pequeños Pianistas Mexicanos is comparable to those of Bartok on Hungarian themes. Some of the twenty short pieces are comprised of pentatonic Indian melodies of the Maya, Yaqui, and Huichol Indian tribes. (See Ex. 7a-7c.) Characteristic are asymmetric rhythms which evoke Pre-hispanic instruments and harmonies. Also included are traditional mestizo songs and dances, such as the jarabes and huapangos, and the corrido melodies of the revolution. (See Ex. 7d-7f.) It closes with the Mexican National Anthem. (See Ex. 7g.) The pieces are harmonized with the simplicity required by the subject-matter, and some are canonic in two voices.²⁹

Ex. 7a. - Veinte Piezas - Danza Yaqui - Measures 1-6



²⁹Castellanos, 48.

Ex. 7b. - Veinte Piezas - Los Xtoles (Canto Maya) - Measures 1-11

Allegretto

p espress

pp *p*

Ex. 7c. - Veinte Piezas - Danza de la Lluvia (Huichol) - Measures 1-4

Marziale

f *pp*

Ex. 7d. - Veinte Piezas - Las Mañanitas - Measures 1-5

Andante

p *legato* *>*

Ex. 7e. - Veinte Piezas - La Sandunga - Measures 1-9

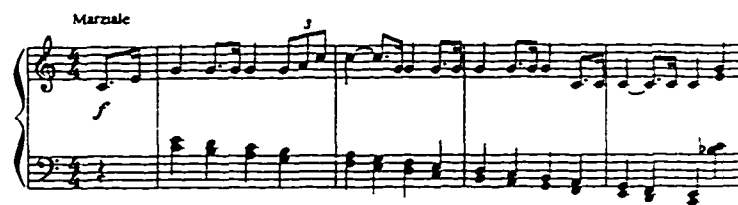
Tempo di Valse moderato

p *f*

Ex. 7f. - Veinte Piezas - La Posada - Measures 1-5



Ex. 7g. - Veinte Piezas - La Patria - Measures 1-4



The Mazurka No. 28, composed in 1941, is a sharp contrast from those twenty-seven mazurkas written in Ponce's romantic era, in a style reminiscent of Chopin. The Mazurka No. 28 was inspired by the solea gitana, a folkloric song of the Andalusian area of Spain. It creates an atmosphere that evokes the zapateados (dance steps), guitars, and cante jondo³⁰ of the gypsy culture of Spain. Rhythms, however, evoke the Polish dance of the mazurka, and the harmonic language is Ponce's modern style.³¹

The Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas, also composed in 1941, is an example of a Poncian original theme that reveals the development of a personal nationalism.

³⁰Cante jondo is a style of gypsy singing that is expressive, florid, and highly emotional.

³¹Castellanos, 38.

Characteristics include subtle modulations, chromaticism, cuartal harmonies, gregorian modes, polytonal elements, and pianistic figurations. This suite will be further analyzed in Chapter Four of this document. Other compositions for piano written during this era are the Idilio Mexicano for two pianos and a piano arrangement of Ponce's famous Estrellita.

Stevenson writes that "not only did Ponce show an extraordinary ability to enlarge his musical vocabulary, but he also shifted his subject-matter." The second piece of the Instantaneas Mexicanas, Música Yaqui, is an imaginative arrangement of a Yaqui pentatonic melody over a very sparse bass. Stevenson points out the vast difference from the arrangements of the mestizo Canciones Mexicanas,³² which were Romantic harmonizations of mestizo folk melodies. Ponce's Ferial (1940), for orchestra, includes more exploration into indigenous sources as it portrays the excitement of a Mexican "fiesta" in vivid impressionistic colors.

Ponce's last major work was his Violin Concerto. It is one of Ponce's most nationalistic works with neoclassic, neoromantic, and impressionistic elements of style. It portrays the entire spectrum of Mexican culture including indigenous origins, Spanish heritage, and the resulting mestizo culture. Ponce uses a four-note cell with remarkable thematic transformation. The cell integrates the whole concerto in an individual manner.³³

³²Stevenson, 237.

³³Barrón Corvera, x-xi.

Paolo Mello, a pianist of Italian birth, who lived in Mexico and studied with Pablo Castellanos, has dedicated many hours of study and research to Manuel M. Ponce and his works. He describes a "sabor Ponciano" (Poncian flavor) that identifies Ponce's compositions. This "sabor Ponciano" may be described as a musical manifestation of the Mexican spirit with the outstanding characteristic of lyricism, often with a plaintive and melancholy quality created by the harmonization of the melodic line in thirds. The "Poncian style" also maintains a rhythmic vitality through shifting meters and often includes a contrapuntal texture. Mello believes Ponce's works have a distinctive personality regardless of which era they were written, and regardless of outside influences such as Chopin, Liszt, or Debussy. Ponce's manner of expression was unique.³⁴ "The most important fact is that for almost half a century of Mexican history, Ponce's music reflected the customs, traditions, and sentiments of the nation."³⁵

³⁴Esperanza Pulido, "Diversos Aspectos del Nacionalismo de Manuel M. Ponce," Heterofonía 18, no. 90 (1985), 50-51.

³⁵Paolo Mello, "Manuel M. Ponce, Músico Polifacético," Heterofonía 15, no. 79 (1982), 30.

Chapter IV

Stylistic Analysis of Five Compositions

Tema Mexicano Variado

The Tema Mexicano Variado¹, written in 1912, represents Ponce's first period of composition. This early work is a theme and four variations in a Romantic style. It utilizes a characteristically Mexican melody and reveals Ponce's early nationalistic tendencies.

Ex. 8a1. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Theme - Measures 1-8



Paolo Mello describes this theme and five variations as "emanating the atmosphere of the Canción Romántica Mexicana"². It is an example of Ponce's abundant lyricism and contrapuntal skill. Mexican characteristics include parallel thirds in the melodic line, much use of shifting rhythms, and a sentimental and melancholy theme. The texture is different with each variation, and Variations I, II,

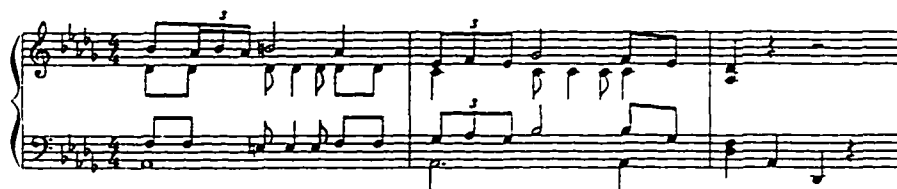
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²Mello, p.26.

and III display the most contrapuntal interest.

The theme, marked Andante in 4/4 time, consists of four phrases (11 measures), with the first phrase repeated. The theme is in D $\flat$ Major, with a modulation to f minor in the third phrase, and back to D $\flat$ in the final phrase. Harmonic progressions are the traditional tonic-dominant, with an altered tonic seventh in the final phrase (measure 9, second beat).

Ex. 8a2. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Measures 9-11



Variation I, now a Vivo tempo in 12/16 time, maintains basically the same right hand, with slight embellishment, as the theme. The left hand, however, is now a moving and flowing line of sixteenth notes. The harmony is consistent with that of the theme, still in D $\flat$ Major, with an abundance of passing tones creating harmonic interest.

Ex. 8b1. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Variation I - Measures 12-15



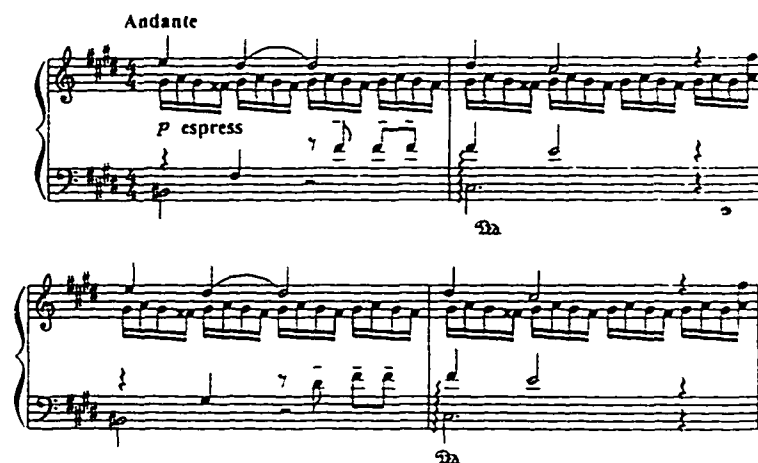
A possible mistake in editing occurs in the right hand of measure five of the first variation. The second chord appears to require an E natural in the top voice to be consistent with the melodic line of the theme and other variations, as well as to fit the chord, which is a C Major 7th with a Db passing tone in the left hand.

Ex. 8b2. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Variation I - Measure 5



Variation II goes back to an Andante tempo in 4/4, but is now in c# minor. There is a sixteenth note ostinato throughout this variation, and the melodic line is divided between the hands. The phrase structure remains the same as in the Theme and Variations I and II.

Ex. 8c. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Variation II - Measures 22-25



Variation III, a Piu Mosso in 9/8 time, is the most contrapuntal and complex of the variations, with many non-harmonic passing tones, and upper and lower

neighbors on the beat. The melodic line is hidden within the moving eighth notes in various inner voices.

Ex. 8d. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Variation III - Measures 32-37

Piu mosso



This variation, also in Db Major, ends with an unfinished feeling as it rests on a V7, and does not resolve to the tonic, as in the previous variations. This chord leads into the final variation in the same key of Db, marked Tempo I, in 4/4 time.

Ex 8e. - Tema Mexicano Variado - Variation IV - Measures 41-47

Tempo I



This final variation returns to a simple harmonization of the Mexican melody with large moving chords in both hands. Triplets in the right hand are pitted against left hand duples. The fourth phrase is extended as it leads into a six measure coda. The coda winds the work down with the opening theme quoted in a reminiscent manner.

In summary, the Tema Mexicano Variado exemplifies an early stage in Ponce's musical career, yet Ponce is already developing a personal style with this early work. Poncian traits of sentimental lyricism and contrapuntal skills are evident as he incorporates the Mexican characteristics of harmonization of the melodic material in parallel thirds and a preference for shifting rhythms. His interest in Mexican musical nationalism is also revealed with this study of a Mexican melody in variation form.

Sonata No. II

Ponce wrote the Sonata II³ in 1916, during his stay in Cuba. This two-movement sonata is an attractive, eclectic, and well-structured work that reveals a development towards a modern technique. Characteristics include unresolved dissonances, non-traditional chord progressions, neo-modality, and traces of impressionism, along with a prevailing romanticism. Ponce continues his nationalistic tendencies, and uses two Mexican canciones as the first and second themes of the

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exposition. The first theme is based on the canción "El sombrero ancho" and the second theme is based on the folk melody "Las mañanitas". Ponce was the first composer to introduce Mexican folk themes in a sonata structure.

Movement I - Allegro

The first movement is in a sonata-allegro form. It reveals Ponce's skill for motivic manipulation, as well as a concern for unity within the movement. The following diagram presents the basic structure of this movement:

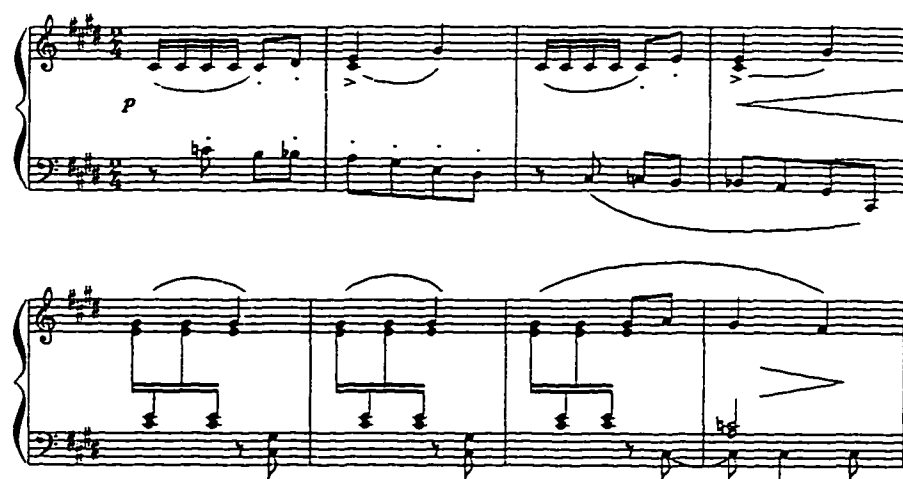
FORMAL STRUCTURE OF FIRST MOVEMENT

Part:	Exposition				
Theme:	Theme I	transition	Theme II	Closing Th.	Codetta
	"El sombrero ancho"		"Las mañanitas"		
Key:	c# min.		E Maj.	E Maj.	E Maj.
Measure:	1	105	112(2nd beat)	128	165
Part:	Development				
Theme:	"Cancion theme"			"Habanera theme"	Retransition
Key:					
Measure:	176	183-185, 192-193, 200-203		211, 221	268-288
Part:	Recapitulation				
Theme:	Theme I	trans.	Theme II	Closing Th.	Coda (Habanera th.)
Key:	c# Min.		C# Maj.	C# Maj.	c# min.
Measure:	289	392	399(2nd beat)	415	453-467

Thematic Material

Theme I is in c# minor and is based on a "four sixteenth-note" figure (from the Mexican cancion "El sombrero ancho") that reoccurs throughout the entire movement, serving as a unifying device. This repeated-note motive creates a strong rhythmic drive, and propels the motion forward. The character of the first theme is bold and dramatic, and Ponce uses the theme sequentially in the first section. The sixteenth note motive permeates the entire first theme area of measures 1-104.

Ex. 9a. - Sonata No. II - Allegro - Theme I - Measures 1-8



There is much rhythmic shifting between duple and triple meter in this section through the use of syncopations and tied notes. The transition to Theme II begins with a measure of silence and a tempo change to Piu calmo. An abrupt character change to the new and "cancion-like" Theme II occurs on the second beat of measure 112.

Ex. 9b. - Sonata No. II - Allegro - Theme II - Measures 111-122



This theme is based on the folk song "Las mañanitas". It has a folk-like lyrical character with rhythmic shifting that combines binary and ternary rhythms. The chordal and sustained texture of this second theme area is also different from the first theme area, which was contrapuntal with wide-ranging leaps. Only 15 measures later, the mood abruptly changes again to the closing theme, which is an inversion of the opening theme. The closing theme, however, has a different nature than the first theme, and seems to combine the personalities of both the first and second themes. The "four sixteenth-note motive" again permeates this area as the music leads into the Development. A six measure Codetta has repeated sixteenth notes on E, suspending the motion temporarily in preparation for the next section.

The development section is a fanciful combination of the "sixteenth-note motive" of Theme I and a "canción motive" reminiscent of Theme II. The "canción motive" (measure 183-185, 191-192, and 201-203), exudes a folk-like character with

its parallel thirds and lyrical melodic line. A "musical argument " between the "sixteenth-note motive" and the "canción motive" leads to an unexpected new theme which emerges in measure 211. This theme is in the rhythm of a habanera, and is marked Assai piu lento. (See following section, Rhythm and Meter) Ponce was inspired by the music of Cuba during his visit to this country, and the Cuban influence is obvious in this sonata.

Ex. 9c. - Sonata No. II - Development Section - Habanera motive - Mm 211-220

Assai piu lento $\text{♩} = 28$

p subito in ritmo di Habanera

Allegro (riprende il tempo)

p cresc.

The development section alternates moods between forceful repeated sixteenth notes and two "habanera motive" entrances in measures 209-226. Repeated sixteenth note figures and arpeggios are predominant in the next section, finally leading to a

retransition in measure 268. This retransition section of measures 268 to 278 consists of a huge crescendo of repeated and ascending sixteenth note octaves, and chords in both hands. A sudden change to a sparse texture and softer dynamics, in measures 278-288, with repeated B# sixteenth notes, leads to the recapitulation in c# minor, in measure 289. Sharp sforzandos on c sharps and a b# diminished chord (leading tone to c#) gives a hint of the ensuing recapitulation in c# minor.

Measures 289-336 of the recapitulation are a direct repetition of the exposition material of measures 1-48, but now the material is presented in octaves and with slight modifications. Measures 337-391 of the recapitulation match measures 49-104 of the exposition, but now the material is a minor third lower, in preparation for presenting the second theme in the tonic major. The transition to the second theme, which starts in measure 392, matches its expositional counterpart measure for measure, but the remainder of the movement is in C# Major. The Coda begins in measure 453 and includes the "sixteenth-note motive" and the "habanera motive" from the development section. The Coda begins in a Presto tempo with loud and furious broken chord figures that continue for twelve measures, but a sudden long note that is marked Lento abruptly stops the frenzied motion. The Coda ends with the "habanera theme," a languid contrast to the preceding material that serves to wind down the first

movement. The final two measures restate the repeated "sixteenth-note motive" very softly, reminiscent of the opening theme.

Rhythm and Meter

The rhythmic motives in this sonata are of great importance. They serve as the unifying force as well as create contrast, and they provide the forward motion towards musical goals. The rhythmic drive of the first movement is created by the following predominant motive:



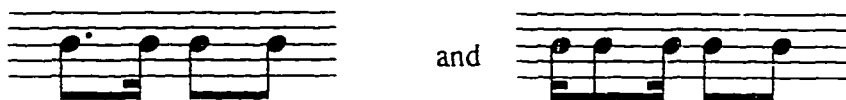
This motive is also condensed to the smaller rhythmic motive of four sixteenth notes. These two rhythmic motives permeate and characterize the entire movement. The Mexican trait in folk-music of shifting rhythms and alternating duple and triple meter is characteristic in this movement. The Cuban habanera rhythm and other syncopated rhythms are also present. The syncopated pattern of:  is seen in much of the Theme I area.

Ex. 9d. - Sonata No. II - Measure 20



The second theme also combines duple and triple meter (see Ex. 9b). The Closing theme is the same "sixteenth-note" rhythmic motive of Theme I, and leads into the development section. In measure 211 of the development section, the left hand of the "habanera theme" (measure 211) is the characteristic habanera rhythmic pattern of:


 A habanera is a Cuban dance in 2/4 meter which is characterized by the following distinctive rhythmic patterns:



Vicente Mendoza describes the habanera as a dance of Spanish origins with a languid and sentimental character.⁴

Measure 227 has sextuplet sixteenth notes in the right hand against four sixteenth notes in the left hand. This is an important rhythmic combination that is used with much frequency in this movement. The retransition consists of twenty-one measures of repeated sixteenth notes that lead to the recapitulation.

Ex. 9e. - Sonata No. II - Measure 227



⁴Mendoza, 101.

The rhythmic motives presented in the Coda unify the movement with both the "sixteenth note motive" and the "habanera motive" presented one final time. The very soft four sixteenth notes at the end tie the entire movement together as it ends exactly as it started.

Harmony

Harmonically speaking, this sonata shows transitional characteristics between the romantic style and a more modern Twentieth Century style. Ponce still relies on traditional tonal harmony for the most part, but he begins to include unresolved dissonances, non-traditional chord progressions, modality, and traces of impressionism. The use of folkloric elements creates an original mixture of styles.

The use of unresolved seventh chords presented in parallel clusters of chords (planing) and the use of the whole tone scale reveal the French influence that Ponce admired.

Ex. 9f. - Sonata No. II - Measures 29-32



The transition to the second theme is another example of parallel unresolved seventh chords that hint of impressionism.

Ex. 9g. - Sonata No. II - Measures 106-112



Another example of Ponce's use of the whole-tone scale as well as modal scales is found in measures 57-62 of the exposition. The left hand utilizes a descending whole-tone scale in octaves, while the right hand includes a whole-tone melodic sequence and modal ascending scales in measures 61 and 62.

Ex. 9h. - Sonata No. II - Measures 57-62



One phrase that exudes a canción-like lyricism followed by rich romantic harmonies is the following passage from the development section.

Ex. 9i. - Sonata No. II - Measures 201-206



Despite these traces of impressionism and some modern harmonies, Ponce is still harmonically conservative in this movement. The more radical development in his style was to come during his study with Dukas in Paris.

Texture

Ponce's use of texture in this sonata is important since he creates variety and contrast between themes in a textural manner, and the textural variety of the first movement plays a significant role in determining the structure of the movement. Areas of excitement and great forward motion are created by a thick texture of leaping chords, arpeggios, and scale passages, with much rhythmic variety and contrapuntal activity. The first theme area has a rambunctious character created by the strong drive of the rhythmic motives and the wide range of movement and leaps. The texture of the second theme is a large contrast with a homophonic and chordal texture. Ponce also uses a change in texture to signal important events. The

development and the recapitulation are both set off by an extreme thinning of a full rich texture to a soft repeated note. There is much variety of dynamics and articulation indicated in the score, and this variety adds to the personality and success of the piece. However, the only surviving edition of the Sonata II is that of Ponce's student Carlos Vasquez, and it is not known which markings belong to Ponce.

Movement II - Allegro Scherzo

This movement is a three-part scherzo form with the A sections based on a Mexican sonecito (small folk song), called "Pica, pica, perico" (referring to a parrot). The melodic content gives the scherzo a Mexican lyric quality but the harmonic language looks towards a Twentieth Century style. The musical language and style of this movement is elegant and charming, reminiscent of the music of the French composer Fauré. It has Faure's qualities of a lyrical, continuously developing melody with meandering harmonies of seventh chords and tritones that pull away from a tonic.

FORMAL STRUCTURE OF SECOND MOVEMENT

Part:	Intro	Scherzo	Trio	Scherzo
Theme:		A: a1 a2	B (Molto piu lento)	A: a1 a2
Key:		Db Major		Db Major
Measure:	1	3 51	182	305-483

Thematic Material

The scherzo section is based on two musical ideas. The first theme "a1" in Db Major has the lyrical and rhythmic quality of a Mexican canción, because it is based on a sonecito, and is harmonized with the traditional parallel thirds.

Ex. 10a. - Sonata No. II - Allegro Scherzo - Measures 1-10



Ponce manipulates theme "a1" of measures 3-6 as a continuously developing melody and then restates it in measures 31-38. The descending semi-chromatic line of measure six is used as a melodic motive throughout the work. A contrasting section of stark and parallel open fifth chords is seen in measure 51 (theme "a2"). A change in character takes place here with sfzorzandos and marcato indications.

Ex. 10b. - Sonata No. II - Allegro Scherzo - Measures 51-58



The canción-like theme "a1" quietly floats back in, and a "musical argument" between the two themes and contrasting characters ensues throughout the remainder of this scherzo section. This section builds to a climax in measures 170-180. A measure of silence follows to set off the next B section, which is a contrasting trio marked Molto piu lento.

The B section begins with both hands moving an octave apart very quietly and devoid of a pull to any particular tonic.

Ex. 10c. - Sonata No. II - Allegro Scherzo - Molto piu lento - Measures 182-198

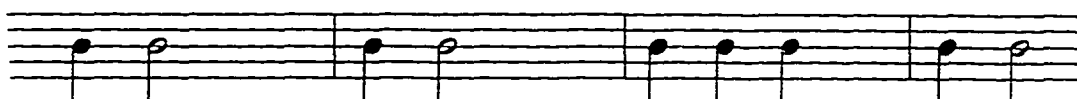


This section is a stark contrast to the previous section with its thin texture and subdued quality. The interval of a fifth and tritone and the use of parallel chords are predominant in this section. Descending melodic motives derived from Measures 192-194 are used throughout the trio section.

The section with measures 227-294 is contrapuntal and canonic and presents the motive mentioned above as an ostinato in the left hand, while a different ostinato in the right hand acts as a second voice in a large crescendo of activity. Another similar section of contrapuntal activity with the use of two ostinatos is then presented in a more subdued manner, as if to wind down this section. The trio section ends as it began, with very soft moving line in octaves that seems to be devoid of direction. The D.S. al Scherzo repeats the Scherzo exactly as it was heard the first time, completing the A-B-A format.

Rhythm and Meter

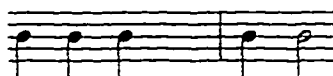
Rhythm is an important part of this movement of the sonata, as it was in the first movement. The rhythmic patterns help to create the unique personality of Ponce's work, and they instill a vitality and vibrant spirit to the music. The opening melody has the rhythmic pattern:



This pattern is also fragmented and heard as:



or



These motives are heard throughout the movement as is the motive from the theme "b". The ostinatos on measures 247-294 use the two rhythmic motives:

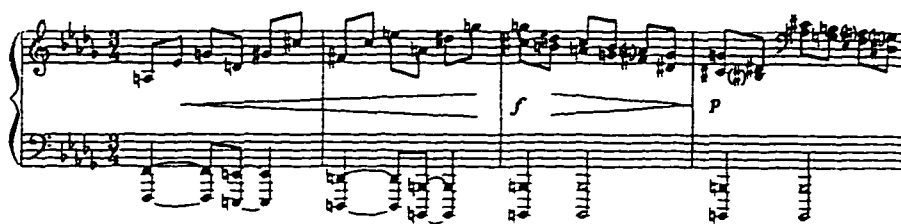


These ostinato motives are cleverly rebarred and manipulated in a contrapuntal fashion within the ostinatos.

Harmony

Ponce's use of harmony in this movement reveals transitional characteristics between the Romantic style and the French early Twentieth Century style. Ponce incorporates folk canción melodies, harmonized in thirds in contrast with non-traditional chord progressions, parallel seventh chords, and open-fifth chords. (see example 10b). He also uses tritone intervals and whole tone scales in the Impressionist style:

Ex. 10d. - Sonata No. II - Allegro Scherzo - Measures 89-92



The A section of this movement (measures 1-180) centers on D $\flat$ Major. Ponce refrains from establishing a key center in the Trio section (Molto piu lento -

measures 182-304). He avoids a pull to the tonic, with octaves wandering about in a seemingly random manner. (See example 10c).

Texture

Ponce again uses texture as a device to create variety and contrast, and as a structural device to designate certain themes and sections. In the scherzo section, the themes "a1" and "a2" are contrasting in texture. The B section is also an extreme contrast in texture from the previous thick, chordal and wide-ranging scherzo section to a stark, thin, and subdued trio section. The contrapuntal and canonic measures 228-294 are an interesting contrast to all the previous material and serve to prepare the da capo of the Scherzo section.

Preludios Encadenados

In 1925, Ponce returned to Europe for more musical instruction. His studies with Paul Dukas at the Ecole Normale de Musique greatly affected his compositional style. His harmonic vocabulary was developing towards a modern vein. The compositions written during this era reveal a greater use of chromaticism, tonal instability, and contrapuntal writing. The Preludios Encadenados⁵ were written in 1927. The preludes are objective and universal as far as Ponce's nationalistic melodic

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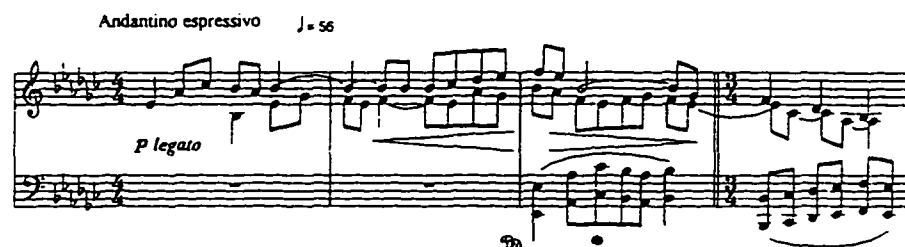
tendencies are concerned, with the exception of the final prelude which seems to evoke an indigenous atmosphere.

The Preludios Encadenados consist of an Andantino espressivo (measures 1-41); an Agitato (measures 42-80); an Andante (measures 81-115); and an Allegro, ma non troppo (measures 116-195). These four connected preludes are very diverse in style and compositional techniques, but seem to be connected by similarities in character. In these preludes, Ponce creates a feeling of antiquity expressed through modern harmonies. Although the preludes are each very distinct in style, a general mood of looking backward or suspending time prevails.

Prelude No. I - Andante espressivo

The Andante espressivo consists of 35 measures in e flat minor that alternate 4/4, 3/4 and 5/4 time. The style is Neo-Baroque with a prevailing fugal texture.

Ex. 11a1. - Preludios Encadenados - Andante espressivo - Measures 1-4



Thematic Material

The theme is treated canonically with many entrances throughout the prelude. The melodic entrances are frequent and they alternate between the hands, sometimes as complete themes (measures 1,3,5) and sometimes as fragments (measures

7,9,17,22,23). In measures 35-41, the theme is extended to wind down the prelude with a final G $\flat$ fermata becoming an F $\sharp$ in the next prelude.

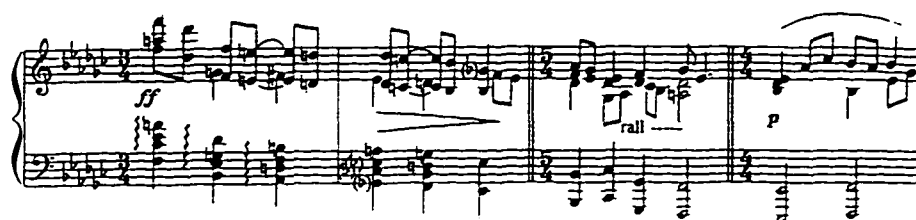
Rhythm and Meter

The meter shifts constantly between 4/4, 3/4, and 5/4 in this prelude. The theme entrances fall on different strong-beats because of the meter changes. The rhythmic effect is one of a "spinning out" of the thematic material in a non-metric yet driving manner. The rhythmic motive gives the prelude unity as well as rhythmic drive.

Harmony and Texture

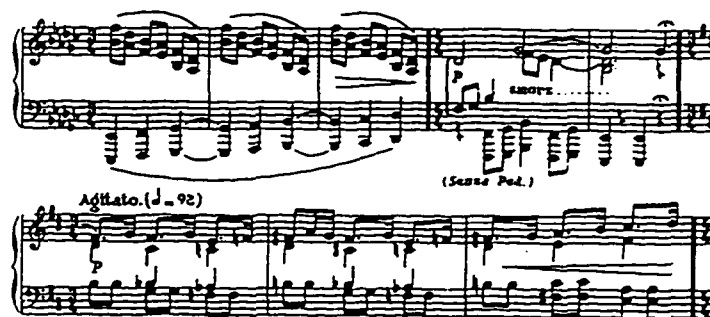
This prelude has a strong tonic pull in the traditional sense, but the suspensions, unresolved dissonances, non-harmonic tones, and chromatic alterations overshadow the resolutions to create a highly chromatic effect. The following example includes a chain of unresolved seventh chords: F Major 7th - E flat Major 7th - b minor 7th - a diminished minor 7th - g minor 7th - e flat minor chord with a suspension - b flat minor 7th - C flat major chord with a non-harmonic tone in the alto voice - G flat Major 7th with a non-harmonic tone in the tenor voice - F augmented chord with non-harmonic tones in the soprano. The use of the parallel chords pull away from the tonic, but the F augmented chord, with the G $\flat$ and E $\flat$ in the soprano, (m. 34) prepares the final entrance of the theme in e flat minor (m. 35).

Ex. 11a.2 - Preludios Encadenados - Andante espressivo - Measures 32-35



The descending parallel fourths in measures 37-39 bring the prelude to a close. The e flat minor seventh chord at the end of this prelude signals that there is more to come. The tied Gb in the right hand becomes an F# in the second prelude, now in b minor, with a relationship of a major third between prelude one and prelude two.

Ex. 11a3. - Preludios Encadenados - Measures 36-43



The texture of each prelude in this set of preludes is unique and varied. The texture of the first prelude is contrapuntal and canonic in a Neo-Baroque manner. The main theme winds through and unifies the entire prelude, but not in a strict Baroque fugal format. Ponce indicates a wide range of dynamic markings, from pp to ff that create interest and contrast. This prelude has the shape of a Baroque fugue beginning with one voice and swelling to several thick textured climaxes of thick chromatic seventh chords.

Prelude No. II - Agitato

The Agitato consists of 39 measures (measures 42-80) in b minor that alternate 3/4, 4/4, and 2/4 time. It is characterized by dotted rhythms, much chromaticism, parallel motion, many repeated patterns and ostinatos, a quality of searching, and a feeling of improvisation.

Thematic Material

This prelude is based on the rhythmic motive  and a half-step motive. The theme is characterized by half-steps and dotted rhythms that seem to move vaguely and in a random fashion.

Ex. 11b. - Preludios Encadenados - Agitato - Measures 42-45



Structurally, it is an unusual Theme and Variations with the following form:

Measure:	Thematic Material:
42-48	Presentation of Theme - rhythmic motive: 
49-51	Theme fragment with rhythmic pattern:  Variation I
52-60	Development of theme - using both rhythmic motives
61-65	Theme fragment in octaves and thicker texture - Variation II
66-72	Theme in triplets - Variation III
73-80	Theme fragment in triplets - Coda

Rhythm and Meter

Rhythm is an important element in this prelude with a rhythmic play between the following rhythmic motives to create the personality of this work:



This prelude also includes a constant change of meter between 3/4, 4/4, and 2/4.

Harmony and Texture

A general quality of vagueness is created with the thematic motive, rhythmic motives, and the harmonic language. The theme follows the parallel movement of the following three chords: b minor - g diminished with a major 7th - and a f minor 7th chord, as seen in the first three chords of Example 11b. All of the variations begin in b minor but the harmony is chromatic and non-functional. Chromaticism and parallel chord movement create a searching quality and lack of harmonic repose, with measures 52-60 as the most wide ranging from traditional functional shapes.

This prelude includes a consistent texture of melody over chords and repeated bass notes, with some contrapuntal interest. The prelude ends with more vagueness of beat and accent, with a C# and D# in the right hand, and a tied B in the left hand. This B becomes a pedal point in the left hand of the next prelude.

Prelude No. III - Andante

The Andante is the most "impressionistic" and "fantasy-like" of the set of connecting preludes. The techniques of parallel harmonic movement, chromaticism, and vagueness of tonic also prevail in this prelude, as in the previous preludes, but the constantly repeated melodic rhythm seems to be hypnotic in its clarity of beat. The prelude is in 2/4 time throughout, and seems to skirt around e minor (due to the pedal points on B), however never actually resolving to the tonic.

Thematic Material

This prelude is based on a rhythmic and melodic motive that is built on a perfect fourth and a tritone:

Ex. 11c. - Preludios Encadenados - Andante - Measures 81-86

Andante $\text{♩} = 50$

The musical score for Ex. 11c, Measures 81-86 of Preludios Encadenados, Andante, is presented in two systems. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a metronome marking of 50. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score is in 2/4 time. The first system shows measures 81-83. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody with a 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamic and 'legato' articulation, with the instruction 'cantando la melodía' (singing the melody). The left hand (bass clef) plays an arpeggiated accompaniment. The second system shows measures 84-86, continuing the melodic and arpeggiated patterns.

The melodic material is characterized by many repetitions of the same arpeggiated motive and its variants played ascending and descending. The structure

appears to be a fantasy of random and varied repetitions of the motive. A possible form could be:

A (extended)	A' (extended and reharmonized) octave lower	A
m.81	m.96	m.107

Rhythm and Meter

The entire prelude is based on the rhythmic motive:



The right hand of the prelude carries the bulk of the rhythmic activity, while the left hand accompanies with eighth notes and quarter notes. Measure 82, which is the second measure of this prelude, includes dotted rhythms reminiscent of the previous prelude. This isolated dotted rhythm serves as a unifying link between the second and third preludes.

Harmony and Texture

This prelude seems to be based on e minor, but with the avoidance of the tonic and the predominance of tritones and chromaticism, a vagueness of tonality is created.

The opening motive is based on the parallel movement of the following chords that are a half-step apart:



The chords are used as sonorous units and not traditional progressions. The arpeggiated chord progressions are transposed to different scale degrees, varied, and played both ascending and descending. The tonic is briefly suggested in the left hand

of measure 97, seventeen measures into the prelude. A vague, "searching" quality is created, and a strong tonality is never established.

The texture of this prelude is created by the arpeggiated figure of the right hand repeated continuously throughout the prelude against a more constant left hand. The use of perfect fourths and tritones, and the predominance of the parallel movement of half-steps between non-traditional and sonorous chords, gives an "impressionistic" texture to this prelude.

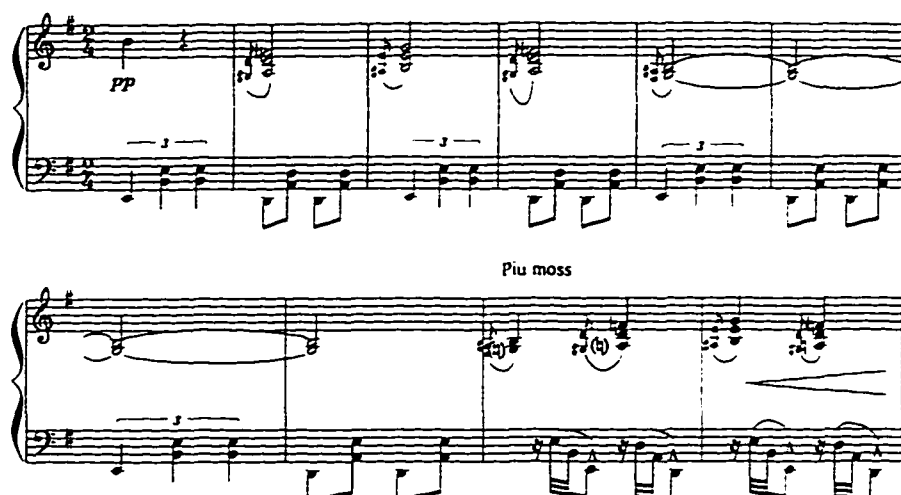
Prelude No. IV - Allegro, ma non troppo

This fourth prelude is described by Vasquez as a "danza indigena"⁶ (indigenous dance), and described by Mello as possessing the characteristic of "ritmo de danza indigena."⁷ The quality of indigenous music that this prelude conveys is the drone-like repetition of two chords in the style of a repeated mantra. The entire prelude is based on the parallel movement between e minor and d minor chords, and it centers on the tonality of e minor. Constant repetition of these two chords includes chromatic alterations and embellishments. An appoggiatura interval of a fourth, fifth, or third often played before the right hand chords also creates a drone effect that evokes a folk-like atmosphere. The appoggiatura might simulate a technique used by flamenco guitarists in the folk music of Spain.

⁶Vasquez, 20.

⁷Mello, 28.

Ex. 11d1. - Preludios Encadenados - Allegro, ma non troppo - Measures 116-125



Thematic Material

Even with the repetitiveness of the progression between the e and d minor chords, there is much dynamic and expressive variety in this prelude. The prelude is through-composed and sectionalized with various LH ostinati and right hand decorations for each part. The prelude is in the following fantasy-like form:

Measures:	Section:	Description:
116-123	A	Introductory material (see Ex. 11d1. for A and B)
124-129	B	Piu Mosso - LH is descending pattern E-B-E, D-A-D
130-139	C	Parallel 3rds and 4ths in the RH - Dynamic marking pp
140-143	B	Condensed
144-155	D	Development of e, d min. chords - Modal melodic patterns
156-165	A1	Thicker texture in RH
166-169	E	Parallel 4ths & 5ths in LH - Modal scale patterns in RH
170-175	B1	Slight variation of B
176-184	C1	Dynamic marking - FF
185-195	A	Extended with repetition of d min. chord before final e min.

Rhythm and Meter

This fourth prelude is in 2/4 meter. The introductory material in the left hand of the A section has the following rhythm:



This combination of triple and duple meter, characteristic of Mexican, Spanish, and indigenous folk music, sets the mood for the entire prelude. The following rhythmic pattern of the B section is a recurring motive that unifies the prelude:

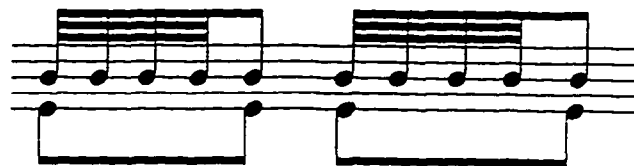


The C section includes the following rhythmic motive as its basis:



Soft but fast parallel 3rds and 4ths in the right hand characterize the melodic material.

The D section introduces a new rhythmic motive:



The E section includes the final rhythmic motive presented in this prelude:



The A1 section and the final section are forms of the introductory motive, unifying the entire prelude. Ponce uses a subtle variety of rhythmic patterns to create interest in what could be a monotonous repetition of two chords. At times, the rhythmic variety is shared between the hands, with one hand remaining constant while the other explores a new pattern. The rhythmic and melodic improvisation on two chords evokes techniques used by flamenco guitarists in Spanish folk music.

Harmony and Texture

This entire prelude is based on the parallel movement between an e minor chord and a d minor chord, with a variety of chromatic alterations and embellishments included. Many parallel fourths and fifths are characteristic, as well as modal scale passages, creating an effect of "modern antiquity." The appoggiaturas create a droning effect of a folk nature.

Ex. 11 d2. - Preludios Encadenados - Allegro, ma non troppo - Measures 166-171



The texture of the sections differ, with a variety of rhythmic and melodic interest. Sections A and B have a sparse open texture, while sections C, D and E have thicker textures, with fast repeated parallel thirds and fourths, repeated octaves, and scale patterns.

Quatre Pieces pour Piano
(Suite Bitonal)

Ponce composed the suite Quatre Pieces pour Piano⁸ in 1929, during his years of study with Paul Dukas in Paris. This work is also nicknamed the Suite Bitonal because of the bitonality between the hands. The suite is a very attractive, clever, and diverse work that is technically difficult and pianistically challenging. The Mexican pianist Pablo Castellanos describes the work as a perfect assimilation of modern technique with its combination of tonalities and new chord structures based on fourths and fifths.⁹ The Mexican pianist Paolo Mello discusses the work as one in which we hear the litany of the celebrations of the Nativity ("oimos la letania de las posadas navidenas").¹⁰

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behalf of Editions Salabert (France).

⁹Castellanos, 40.

¹⁰Mello, 28.

The suite is an example of 20th-century Neoclassicism with its contemporary treatment of features derived from previous centuries. The revival of the Baroque suite is seen in the four movements of the suite: the Preludio Scherzoso, the Arietta, the Sarabande, and the Gigue. There is a great variety of moods created between the movements. The suite seems to be an exploration of the sonorous possibilities of using combinations of tonalities.

I. Preludio Scherzoso

The Preludio is in a three-part form with the following structure:

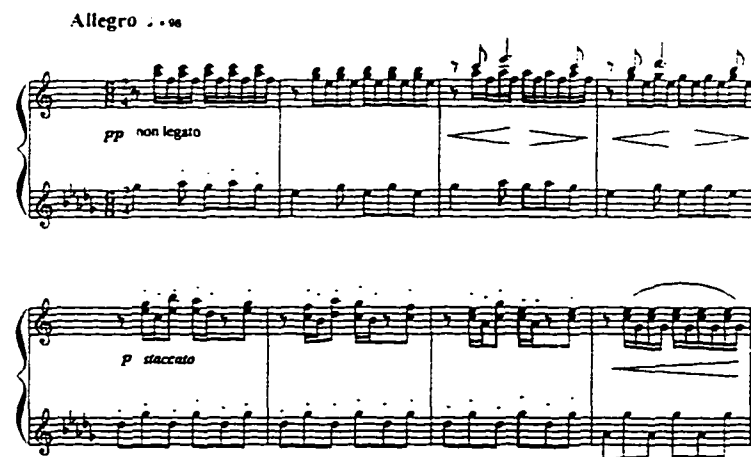
Part:	A		B		A'
Theme:	a1	a2			
Key:	CM/D $\flat$ (G $\flat$ Pentatonic)				
Measure:	1	27	61		95-121

Thematic Material and Harmony

A discussion of the thematic material and the harmony goes hand in hand since the two musical elements are intertwined and inseparable in this work. The combination of the melodic lines of each hand created from a merging of unrelated and juxtaposed tonalities results in a modern harmonic style of unresolved dissonances, with a prevalence of clashing half-steps. The harmony is a direct result of simultaneous moving lines, and does not involve harmonic progressions in the traditional sense.

The "a" section is characterized by a G flat pentatonic melody on the black keys in the left hand, and an oscillating broken chord in the right hand that uses all the white keys and is also pentatonic. The tempo is brisk (dotted quarter = 98). The meter is marked 6/8 and 2/4, with an Allegro indication.

Ex. 12a1. - Preludio Scherzoso - Measures 1-8



The dynamics are very soft and the articulation is non-legato, creating a light, fleeting, and fluttering movement throughout this "a" section (measures 1-26). A very unusual and dissonant effect is created with the tonality, since each staff is in a different key. The dissonance is further increased because both hands are juxtaposed in the same register and major seconds are prevalent between the hands.

Three moving lines are distinctly heard between the two hands. The right hand has two voices in measures three and four of the opening section: an upper melodic line that accents unexpected beats, an inner voice that oscillates on a third; and the left hand has a moving line (see measure 3 of example 12a1).

The melodic material is nationalistically oriented in the "a2" melody (measure 27) of the first section, with the Mexican melody "La Paloma" popping surprisingly out of nowhere, yet merging successfully with the surrounding material.

Ex. 12a2. - Preludio Scherzoso - Measures 24-32



Ponce frequently uses repeated motives as a unifying device and to add coherence to a piece of music. Measure 27 (see Ex.12a2) becomes a rhythmic and melodic motive that is developed throughout the "a2" section. The intensity increases in this section with louder dynamics indicated up to FFF, and wide-ranged leaps crashing about in development of the motive. At the climax and loudest point of the prelude (measures 46 and 47), the hands switch key colors. The right hand is now all black keys and the left hand is now a white key G seventh chord. The mood abruptly changes back to a subito pp and a transitional section (measures 48-60). In this transitional section, a religious theme from a "letania de las posadas mexicanas" (popular Nativity litany)¹¹ is heard in the top voice of the right hand in measures 53-56. This same theme is heard again in measures 79-86 in the top voice of the

¹¹Castellanos, 40.

right hand (see Ex.12a4). The "Nativity theme" leads to a "B" section (measure 61) of rapidly alternating thirds, fourths, and fifths.

Ex. 12a3. - Preludio Scherzoso - Measures 61-66



The "B" section continues with a variety of figurations and repeated patterns, again with soft dynamics, a light touch, and with an extremely close proximity between the hands. An allargando leads back to a repeat of the "A" section, now with a thicker texture, and louder dynamics. The "a2" motive is briefly heard in measures 103, 107, and 111. The Preludio ends with a trill in the right hand on a C and D, and in the left hand on a D flat and E flat, and finally with a soft and short minor second on a C and D flat.

Rhythm and Texture

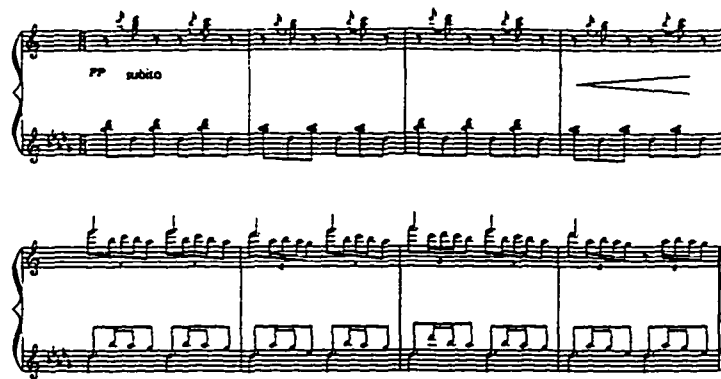
Ponce's rhythmic manipulation gives the preludio a vibrant, exciting, and unpredictable quality. The time signature of this Preludio, marked 6/8 and 2/4, gives the impression that the piece is to be felt in an overall duple meter. However, the "a" section consists of a three-voiced texture, and each line has a different rhythmic

accentuation. The "a2" section is even more complex with tied and dotted notes, and an imposed feeling of triple meter.

Ponce uses texture to create variety and contrast between sections. The texture of the "a2" section is thicker than the preceding section, with octaves in the left hand and three-voiced chords in the right hand. The "B" section has yet another texture to make this part unique from the sections surrounding it, with thirds and fourths alternating between the hands.

The "B" section begins with a simple duple meter. However, some rhythmic interest is created in measure 75 of the "B" section with the right hand accenting the off-beats, and in measures 79-85, with triplets in the right hand against duples in the left hand.

Ex. 12a4. - Preludio Scherzoso - Measures 75-82



The "a" section is repeated in a condensed form, but with a thicker texture. The left hand is now doubled in octaves, and the right hand has fuller chords. A rhythmic augmentation of the "a2" motive brings the prelude to an end in measures

111-114. The trill at the end of the piece decrescendos in dynamics to a stark textured and unusual finale of a minor second.

II. Arietta

The Arietta is in a three-part form with the following structure:

Part:	A	B	A'	Coda
Key:	am/ BM (F# Pentatonic) throughout			
Measure:	1	22	46	58-82

Thematic Material and Harmony

The Arietta has a lyrical and expressive song-like character, as its name implies. In this piece, Ponce develops a feeling of timelessness. The musical movement seems to have no direction, appearing to be suspended. Unusual and resonant sonorities are created by the combination of tonalities.

As in the Preludio Scherzoso, the harmony is a result of three voices in two tonalities moving simultaneously, and not traditional harmonic progressions. The right hand consists of two moving lines of varying intervals that expand and converge with a preponderance of parallel fourths. The key signature for the right hand indicates C major or a minor (all white keys), however a definite key center is never achieved. The left hand has the key signature of five sharps, but the tonality definitely centers on an F# Pentatonic scale.

The Arietta is marked Allegretto espressivo, in 2/4 time. The tempo is moderate and flowing with the quarter note = 64. Theme "A" is the upper voice of the first eight measures of the piece:

Ex. 12b1. - Arietta - Measures 1-8



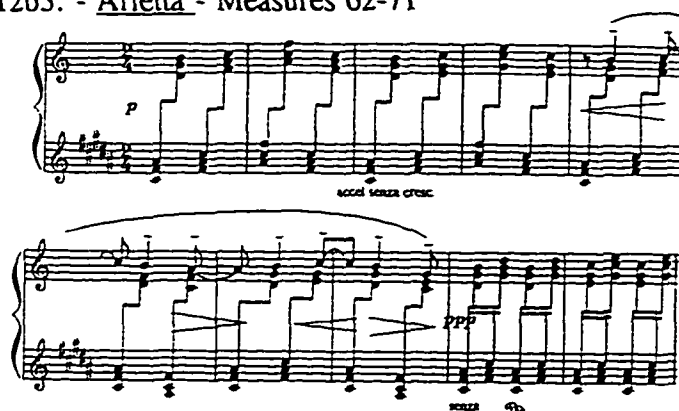
Musical motives include octaves and open fifths in the left hand, and parallel fourths in the right hand. The "B" section centers on a C#-G# arpeggio in the left hand, and patterns of quartal harmony in the right hand.

Ex. 12b2. - Arietta - Measures 22-29



Dynamics are generally soft and low-key throughout the piece, with the exception of a crescendo and accelerando in the "B" section. A poco rallentando leads to the return of the "A" theme in measure 46. An extension of the "A" theme leads to a Coda of chords alternating between the hands, marked piu mosso, and creating rich sonorities. The left hand is made entirely of F# chords while the right hand alternates between C, G, and F chords.

Ex. 12b3. - Arietta - Measures 62-71



The Arietta ends with an arpeggiated G chord in the right hand played simultaneously with F# to C# open fifths in the left hand.

Rhythm and Texture

In the Arietta, Ponce often dissolves barlines with tied notes and notes played on the off-beats. The result is an unpredictable shifting of the meter. The following example shows the dissolution of the barlines in the "B" section.

Ex. 12b4. - Arietta - Measures 28-41



Ponce often varies his returns to the opening theme with a thicker texture, as in measure 46. The left hand is now in octaves, and the right hand has fuller chords.

The texture remains full to the end of the piece with alternating chords that create an unusual sonorous quality. The hands juxtaposed a half-step apart, with repeated F# chords in the left hand, accent the bitonal aspect of the composition.

III. Sarabande

A "sarabande" is described in the Harvard Dictionary of Music as a 17th and 18th-century dance in slow triple meter and dignified style. It is usually without upbeat, and often has an accent or prolonged tone on the second beat, with feminine phrase endings.¹² It is interesting that the sarabande is believed to have originated in Mexico, and it appeared in Spain in the early 16th century. Ponce's interest in the sarabande may have been for a nationalistic reason, or simply as a neoclassic dance. Ponce's Sarabande does retain some of the qualities of the 17th and 18th century sarabandes. The second beat of some of the measures are extended, and phrase endings are often feminine. This sarabande is a short but beautiful and effective piece that captures a quality of antiquity. Castellanos describes the Sarabande as the most beautiful of the Quatre Pieces Pour Piano.¹³

The Sarabande is in a two-part form of A B A' B' as follows:

Part:	A	B	A'	B'
Key:	g# minor (Black key Pentatonic) / B Locrian - all white keys			
Measure:	1	12	24	37

¹²Wili Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977), 750.

¹³Castellanos, 40.

Thematic Material and Harmony

Ponce's Sarabande is of lyrical and expressive character, marked Non troppo lento, ma espressivo. The right hand has five sharps indicated in the key signature, but a Pentatonic tonality is established on the black keys. The left hand has no sharps or flats in the key signature. It tends to gravitate toward B Locrian and seems to define the key signature more than the right hand. The "B" section ends with white key descending octaves starting on an F and ending on a B, possibly a Locrian mode. In general, the harmony is again a result of the hands independently establishing their own tonalities or modes. The Sarabande is an exploration of the sonorous possibilities of bitonality.

The right hand is characterized by the movement of parallel octaves with a hidden melodic line of open fifths and fourths. The melodic line in this hand evokes the personality of early organum. The left hand also includes parallel octaves with open fifths and fourths, with the same feeling of chant-like organum. All of the left hand phrases in the "A" section end on F octaves, suggesting a Lydian tonality or a substitute dominant quality in B Locrian.

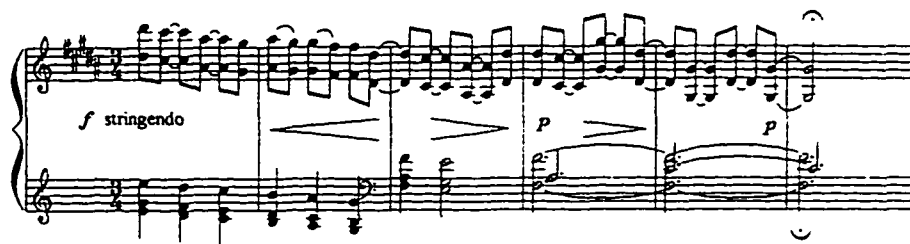
Ex. 12c1. - Sarabande - Measures 1-11

The musical score for Ex. 12c1. - Sarabande - Measures 1-11 is presented in two systems. The key signature is five sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#, A#). The right hand (RH) plays a melodic line with parallel octaves, marked with 'p' and 'pp'. The left hand (LH) plays a harmonic line with parallel octaves, marked with 'pp'. The score is divided into two systems, with measures 1-11 shown. The page number 119 is visible at the bottom.

Measures 8-11 of the "A" section (see example above) introduce an unexpected melodic line of parallel thirds in the left hand that is emphasized with marcato indications. The parallel thirds are a surprise because they evoke a very different character from the organum-like open fifths and fourths. The parallel thirds represent the "Mexican folk element" that Ponce instills into his compositions.

The "B" section (measures 12-24) continues with stepwise descending thirds in the left hand. The right hand of this section includes a wandering line of parallel octaves that are often tied into the strong beats. The effect is a dissolution of the right hand barline throughout the "B" section, as seen in the following example.

Ex. 12c2. - Sarabande - Measures 18-23



A noteworthy harmonic event occurs on measure 23 (see Ex. 12c2), which is the midpoint of the "B" section. The right hand lands on a G# (Ab), and the left hand lands on an open fifth F and C. The resulting F minor chord is an unusual moment of tonal congruence between the hands. Another area of harmonic interest occurs at the end of this "B" section in measure 23. The right hand settles on G# and D# octaves, and the left hand lands on a low B octave, forming a g# minor chord, another unusual minor chord in the midst of bitonality.

The A and B sections return with some variation. The "Mexican folk parallel thirds" return, now a step higher, and again with marcato markings to emphasize their importance. The B' section is now a third higher. An extra melodic line of "Mexican folk parallel thirds" is added in the left hand as an extension of the B' section (measures 42-46). The right hand of this concluding section becomes an ostinato of D sharps and C sharps in octaves. These octaves blur the barlines by accenting the off-beats. The Sarabande concludes with a left hand descending octave scale on the white keys, from a low B to an octave lower B. This unusual descending B scale on the white keys may be described as a scale on the Locrian mode. During this left hand descending scale, the right hand has an ostinato of parallel octaves with an inner voice, as seen in the following example:

Ex. 12c3. - Sarabande - Measures 47-59



Measures 55-57 (see Ex. 12c3) sound as if the tonality is in g# minor, and the final chord is a B Major chord, as was the first left hand chord, a logical finale for the Sarabande since the right hand key signature has five sharps (g# minor or B

Major). The tonal ending of this piece is unexpected, however, since the entire composition generally avoids all semblance of a major or minor tonality up to this point.

Rhythm and Texture

An important characteristic of a sarabande is a prolonged second beat. Ponce's Sarabande meets this criteria sporadically, such as in measures 5, 6, 14, 21, 22, 30, 31, 34, 43, and 44 in the left hand. This Sarabande also includes the characteristic of feminine phrase endings, and Ponce accents this characteristic by placing a fermata over some feminine endings, such as in measure 11 and measure 17. There is little feeling of a dance, however, especially when the right hand melodic material dissolves the barline by using tied notes from strong to weak beats, and tied notes over barlines (see Ex. 12c2.)

The texture of this Sarabande remains consistent throughout the piece. The hands move independently, with the right hand characterized by moving eighth notes, and the left hand with slower quarter notes.

IV. Gigue

The Gigue is patterned after the Italian gigas, which were fast pieces in 6/8 time, and the French gigues, which were fugal pieces in compound duple time. Ponce's Gigue is unique because it alternates 2/4 and 6/8 meter in the Mexican

folkloric "huapango" style. It is characterized by a contrapuntal texture and many triple-against-duple patterns between the hands. This Gigue is also written with the bitonal harmonic techniques of the other pieces in this suite. Pablo Castellanos describes the Gigue as brilliant and pianistic, in a novel and personal style, much like a modern toccata. The overlapping positioning of hands and rapid octaves are challenging to the pianist.¹⁴

The Gigue is more complex in form than the other pieces. It is written in a four-part form as follows:

Part:	A	B (repeat A,B)	A'	B'
Key:	C Major / Gb Pent.		Lydian / Db Pent.	CM / Gb Pent.
Measure:	1	33	63	91

Thematic Material and Harmony

The Gigue is marked 6/8 (2/4), and Vivace with a dotted quarter = 120. The theme A section is highly spirited and lively. The mood is quickly established as playful and energetic with rhythmic and melodic motives thrown back and forth between the hands.

¹⁴Castellanos, 43.

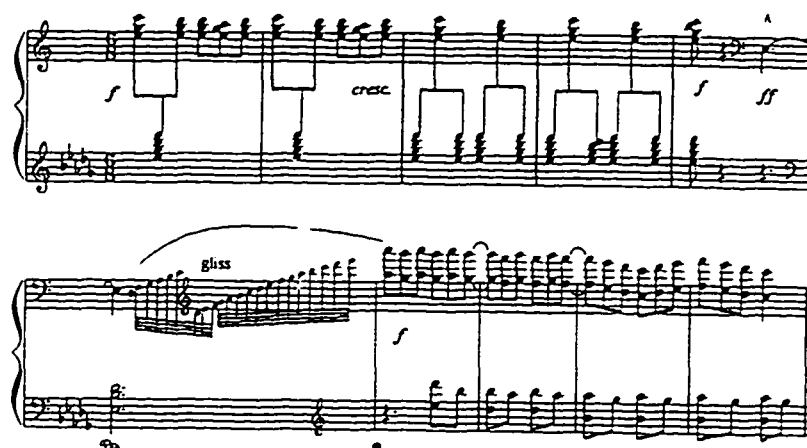
Ex. 12d1. - Gigue - Measures 1-8



The harmonic language is modern and non-traditional with the bitonality between the hands. The right hand is in C Major, and is characterized by running step-wise patterns alternating with jumps and leaps. The left hand is in a Gb Pentatonic tonality. It includes many arpeggiated figures, and movement from open fourths to open fifths. These fourths and fifths are in a duple meter against triplets in the right hand.

The B theme is a contrasting section of alternating chords between the hands, glissandos, and fast parallel octaves in the right hand.

Ex. 12d2. - Gigue - Measures 33-42



The end of the B section includes an ostinato of F and C chords in the right hand, and Db to Ab octaves in the left hand. At the end of the B section, the left hand establishes a tonal center on D flat pentatonic, and the right hand is emphasizing an F tonal center. This section moves forward quickly and dramatically with a huge crescendo plus an accelerando and rallentando leading to the recapitulation of the A section.

The recapitulation, (A') is in F Lydian in the right hand and Db Pentatonic in the left hand. Melodic patterns are very much like the A section, but with some variance. The A' section moves back towards the original tonalities of C Major in the right hand and Gb Pentatonic in the left hand. The B' section repeats the melodic material of the B theme in these tonalities (CM, Gb Pentatonic) and with some variance. The Gigue ends with the B section, in accordance with the style of Baroque giges which were often in a repeated binary form (AABB). Ponce retains the repeating 'flavor' of the Baroque dances although not the actual form (ABA'B'); an appropriate finale to Ponce's Neo-classic suite.

Rhythm and Texture

The traditional characteristics of a gigue in a lively 6/8 time, and the sudden shifts of meter representing the tradition of Mexican folk rhythms, merge to create a unique and personal "Poncian style." The simultaneous use of triple and duple meter between the hands is Ponce's trademark in this gigue, as seen in Ex. 12d1. These

cross-rhythms as well as tied notes from weak to strong beats (as seen in the above mentioned example) contribute to an exciting rhythmic complexity and a driving forward motion.

The texture of the Gigue is contrapuntal. It alternates between a two-voiced texture, rapid alternating, repeated or broken chords, and fast parallel octaves. Even glissandos are included to propel the motion forward. Ponce again uses texture to separate different theme areas.

Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas

After seven years of study in Paris (from 1925-1933), Ponce returned to Mexico and dedicated the remainder of his life to composing and teaching. The Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas¹⁵ were composed in 1941. This suite is an example of Ponce's late work and third compositional period (1933-1948).

The danzas were dedicated to Paquita Segovia, wife of Ponce's good friend Andres Segovia. They were written in a style of danza mexicana (or contradanza) cultivated in Mexico in the late Nineteenth Century by Ernesto Elorduy (1853-1912) and Felipe Villanueva (1862-1893). Elorduy and Villanueva modeled their danzas after the Cuban contradanzas of Manuel Saumell and Ignacio Cervantes. The Cuban contradanza became a very popular and influential Latin American dance in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries. Villanueva and Elorduy popularized the

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danza mexicana in Mexico. The structure of these danzas was a two-part form that included evenly divided and contrasting sections of eight measures which were to be repeated. Four or eight-measure phrase lengths were common, as were syncopations, cross-meters, and habanera rhythms.¹⁶

Pablo Castellanos describes the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas as dances in two part form with introductory and slower sections. The melodies are expressive of a tropical atmosphere, with syncopated rhythms that combine binary and ternary meters. The danzas are characterized by subtle modulations, quartal harmonies, Gregorian modes, modern cadences, polytonal elements, pianistic figurations, and originality of style.¹⁷

Gerald Behague describes the danzas as an example of "Ponce's awareness of the necessity for proper balance between the popular elements of the music and the modern tendencies of harmonic vocabulary." Ponce achieves this aim through the combination of Mexican melodic and rhythmic traits with a modern sound of much chromaticism and dissonance.¹⁸ Behague describes these Mexican traits as rhythmic, including crossrhythms and hemiolas, the alternation of duple and triple groupings, and the use of rhythmic figures associated with the Nineteenth-Century contradanza and habanera.

¹⁶Behague, 100.

¹⁷Castellanos, 50.

¹⁸Behague, 126.

Yolanda Moreno Rivas, in her book on Mexican musical nationalism, discusses the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas. She describes the danzas as characterized by chromaticism and interconnected chains of dissonances that disguise and intellectualize the simplicity of the melodic ideas.¹⁹ Rivas points out certain sections as habaneras with typical Poncian melodies and complex polyrhythms.

The Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas (1941) show a definite change in style from the Quatro Pieces pour Piano, written in 1929 during the Paris years. The danzas are less experimental and more nationalistic in nature. The danzas have a more subjective character than the neoclassic, bitonal, and objective Paris suite. They are highly chromatic but more traditional than the bitonal suite. Ponce seems to return to the personal and emotional style of his early salon pieces, but now with a much more refined and sophisticated harmonic and compositional technique.

The danzas are in two-part form. Most of the sections have first and second endings with the exception of the B section to Danza I, and the B section to Danza III.

The following chart describes the structure of the four danzas:

Dance:	I	
Theme:	A (<u>Vivo</u>)	B (<u>Meno mosso, epr.</u>)
Measure:	1	18
Key:	DM to AM7	DM

¹⁹Yolanda Moreno Rivas, Rostros del Nacionalismo en la Música Mexicana, (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, S.A. de C.V., 1989), 122.

Dance:	II	
Theme	A (<u>Vivo</u>)	B (<u>Piu lento</u>)
Measure:	1	24
Key:	dm to gdim.	FM

Dance	III	
Theme:	A (<u>Vivo</u>)	B (<u>Meno mosso</u>)
Measure:	1	30
Key:	ebm	EbM (ends minor)

Dance	IV	
Theme:	A (<u>Vivo</u>)	B(<u>Poco meno</u>)
Measure:	1	23
Key:	AM/ePent. to c#m	F#M

Thematic Material and Harmony

The A sections of all the danzas are a faster tempo as well as a different mood and character from the B sections. The B sections, in general, capture a more "Mexican feeling", with characteristics of tropical dance rhythms, as well as languid and lyrical melodic material.

The opening of Danza I is characterized by a descending pattern of chords that use parallel fourths. The harmonies are tonal but highly chromatic, with lush seventh and ninth chords used as sonorous units.

Ex. 13a1. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza I - Measures 1-8

Vivo J = 120

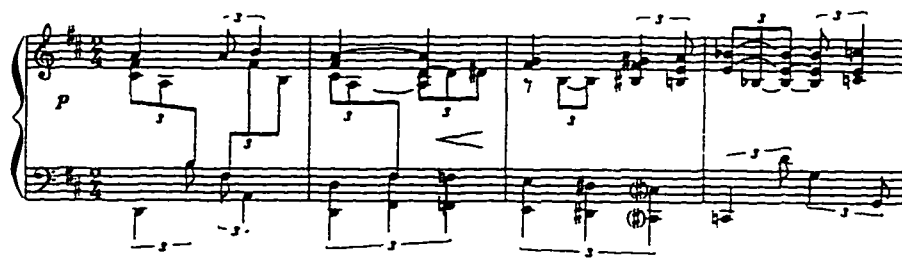
This first A section consists of sixteen measures or 4 four-measure phrases, each of which follows the same parallel harmonic descent, essentially from F# down to A in the bass. Each phrase is harmonized differently. The harmonic language consists of parallel movement of many seventh and ninth chords. For example, measures 1-8, as seen in Ex. 13a1, consist of the following chord progressions (including many non-harmonic tones on and between beats):

- Measure 1: DM - C#M
- Measure 2: AM7 - AbM7 -GM7
- Measure 3: AM - dm7
- Measure 4: edim.7 - AM7 - DM7 -AM9
- Measure 5: f#m7 - BbM9
- Measure 6: em7 - AbM9
- Measure 7: em9
- Measure 8: edim.9 - AM7

Seventh and ninth chords are not prepared or resolved traditionally, but they are used as sonorous units, and as a means to create a mood or atmosphere. The descending harmonies of the A section are decorated with ascending or descending broken chords, and melodic lines that move by half-step.

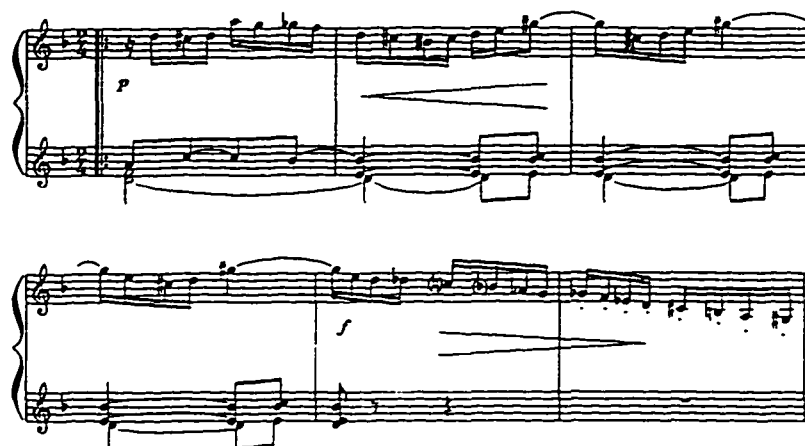
The B section is marked Meno mosso, espressivo and includes a definite character change. Complex polyrhythms, habanera characteristics, and lyrical material create a "Mexican flavor." Much of the harmonic language, however, is chromatic. The B section consists of 23 measures and could be described as "a" (measures 18-30) followed by "a1" (31-40).

Ex. 13a2. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza I - Measures 18-21



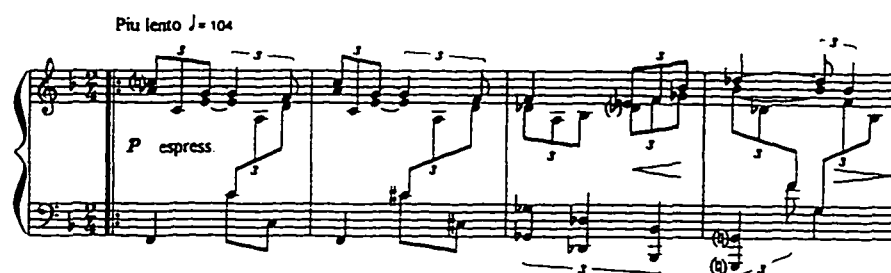
Danza II begins in d minor with a Vivo tempo marking. It is characterized by chromatic and unusual scale patterns in the right hand, and a sparse ostinato-like left hand in the first four measures. The right hand of measure 1 is a melodic motive that is developed throughout the A section.

Ex. 13b1. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza II - Measures 1-6



At the end of this section (measures 17-22), parallel quartal harmonies in the right hand and a habanera rhythmic motive in the left hand anticipate a mood change in the B section. A tempo change to a Piu lento introduces the lyrical B section in F Major. Complex polyrhythms and hemiolas characterize this section. The melodic material is lyrical contrast to the previous section, with the melody often harmonized in thirds. The harmony is less dissonant in this B section of Danza II than in the A section, and more traditional and romantic.

Ex. 13b2. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza II - Measures 24-27



The A part of Danza III is a dramatic section marked "con fuoco" in a Vivo tempo. It begins in e flat minor with loud and fast parallel octaves in the left hand.

The first beat of measure 2, right hand, becomes a sequential melodic motive.

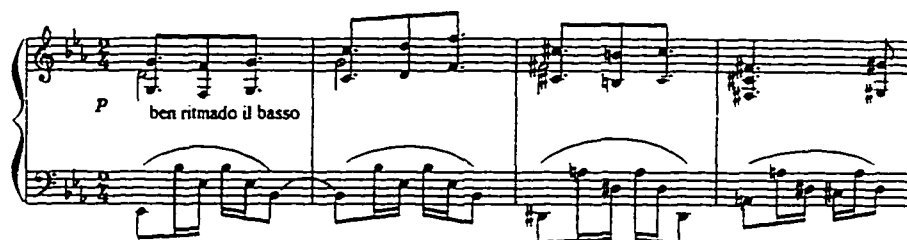
Ex.13c1.- Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza III - Measures 1-6



Arpeggiated seventh chords in the left hand against descending chromatic octaves in the right hand (measures 10-13) lead dramatically into a repetition of the first phrase, now a half-step higher. Several measures of seventh and ninth chords, with sequential repetitions of the motive from measure 2, lead in to the B section.

The B section of Danza III presents a complete character change from the dramatic and forceful previous section. The tempo is now marked Meno mosso and the mood changes to a languid right melodic line with an inner melody. The left hand maintains a steady rhythmic ostinato while asymmetrical rhythms in the right hand disguise the 2/4 tempo.

Ex. 13c2. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza III - Measures 30-34



This section includes sonorous harmonies of seventh and ninth chords. The tonality centers around E flat Major with unusual progressions and subtle chromatic modulations. The final measures (measures 53-55) progress towards an ending in E flat Major, but the danza ends surprising in e flat minor.

The A section of Danza IV is described by Castellanos as a modern toccata.²⁰ It is a Vivo section with fast-moving and driving patterns of sixteenth notes in both hands, with parallel thirds interspersed in the right hand and with parallel fifths interspersed in the left hand. This section appears to be bitonal, since the right hand is in A Major and the left hand is in an E Pentatonic mode. However the section sounds diatonic since Ponce leaves out certain notes of the scale (D and G# at first), and he emphasizes the D in measures 5-6 and the C# in measures 7-8, 14, and 21-22.

Ex. 13d1. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza IV - Measures 1-6



²⁰Castellanos, 50.

In measure 7, the first phrase cadences in C# minor. This section is characterized by modal harmonic language in measures 10-22. Scale passages and sixteenth note patterns are prevalent in a driving and forceful manner. Measures 18 and 19 are based on a C# Phrygian tonality and come to a cadence on c# octaves and open fifths.

The B section, marked Poco Meno is a startling contrast. The character returns to a romantic and lyrical mood and atmosphere. Harmonies are rich and sonorous with progressions of seventh chords. The form of this section may be described as "a1" (measures 23-33) followed by "a2" (measures 34-45), with a repeat indicated by a first and second ending.

Ex. 13d2. - Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas - Danza IV - Measures 23-26

Poco meno ♩ = 108

p *giocosso*

The first beat of the right hand of measure 23 becomes a melodic and rhythmic motive that is developed. The danza ends with an exciting buildup, marked animando, with forceful alternating chords between the hands in different registers.

In summary, the harmonic language of the Cuatro Danzas is highly chromatic and characterized by interconnected and dissonant chord chains. Modulations are subtle and include quartal harmonies, modal harmonies and elements of polytonality. Ponce reveals a fascination with interesting tonal colors and textures. He toys with harmonic comprehensibility, the unexpected and the unpredictable.

Rhythm and Texture

In the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas, Ponce differentiates between the A sections and the B sections with both rhythm and texture. The A sections are more universal in character and tend toward duple rhythms. The B sections have the rhythmic characteristics of tropical dances such as the contradanza and the habanera, and play with triple rhythms. Complex polyrhythms with habanera characteristics, combined with rich romantic harmonies of seventh, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords establish Ponce's concept of the atmosphere evoked by a tropical Mexican dance.

Ponce is very conscious of creating a unique texture for each section of every dance. The A sections are especially varied with driving rhythmic patterns. They are generally more contrapuntal than the B sections. The B sections are essentially more homophonic, flowing and dance-like with subtle cross-rhythms and hemiolas.

Chapter V

Conclusions of Analysis

This analysis of selected solo piano repertoire of Manuel M. Ponce has established several conclusions concerning Ponce's compositional style:

1) Ponce's early works are salonesque, with a lyrical poetic quality and a rhythmic agility.

2) Ponce's assimilation of the folkloric element was profound and evident in the compositions analyzed. The Mexican canción with its particular melodic turns, harmonization in parallel thirds, and expressive pathos greatly influenced Ponce's compositions.

3) The characteristic rhythmic traits of abrupt meter changes from triple to duple meter, cross rhythms between the hands, hemiolas and syncopated rhythms are evident in all of Ponce's compositions in this analysis, regardless of what era they represent in Ponce's musical development. He used the rhythmic characteristics of the folk habanera and contradanza, and huapango to evoke a "Mexican" atmosphere in a nationalistic manner in the Sonata II (first movement, measures 211, 453), The Quatre Pieces pour Piano (Gigue), and the Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas (B sections of all the Danzas).

4) Ponce was greatly influenced by the French school of composition before and after his studies with Paul Dukas. Examples of Impressionism are seen in the Sonata II, including the use of the whole-tone scale, modal melodies, non-traditional

chord progressions, unresolved dissonances, unresolved seventh and ninth chords in parallel motion (planing), and other coloristic effects.

5) Ponce had a preference for a contrapuntal texture and inner-moving voices. He used texture as a means to contrast and differentiate thematic sections. He often used pedal-tones, and melodic or harmonic ostinatos.

6) Ponce was always concerned with unity of form and structure and he used both melodic and rhythmic motives and tonal centers as unifying devices.

7) During his years in Paris, as a student of Paul Dukas, Ponce's compositional techniques gravitated towards a more modern style. His harmony became more dissonant with increased tonal instability. He experimented with bitonality, pentatonic and modal scales, (Quatre Pieces pour Piano) and some musical passages border on atonality with many unresolved dissonances (Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas). Some of these unresolved dissonances are a result of dissonant counterpoint and a busy polyphonic texture. Ponce's compositions during the Paris years are generally objective in character (with less emphasis on nationalism-Preludios Encadenados) and often have elements of neo-classism (Quatre Pieces pour Piano).

8) Ponce's later compositions (after 1933) are less adventurous than those of his Paris years. They reveal neo-romantic and nationalistic elements and are often chromatic.

9) Ponce works can be strikingly diverse and unpredictable with a preference for interesting colors and textures (Quatre Pieces pour Piano-Gigue).

10) This analysis of Ponce's compositions reveals a wide range of styles and techniques from beautiful lyricism to non-lyric music that is robust, driving, and fiery.

Performance Considerations for Pianists

The following observations pertain to the study and performance of the compositions analyzed in this chapter and the difficulties and challenges that may be encountered. The pieces range in difficulty from moderately difficult to difficult.

The Tema Mexicano Variado is of moderate difficulty. The lyrical qualities of this theme and variations require a pianist to project the singing melodic line. The ostinatos in the Variation II require consistency and a controlled touch. The inner-voice melodies of this variation must be projected. The contrapuntal texture of Variation III with its hidden melodies also requires careful attention and delicate voicing.

The Sonata No. II is moderately difficult to difficult. The eclectic nature of this piece requires a technical facility for repeated notes and chords, rapid arpeggios and parallel octaves, wide leaps of full chords, fast scale passages, and a wide dynamic and expressive range. The first movement might sound disjunct if a steady and driving rhythm is not maintained, except where otherwise indicated. The polyphonic texture of the second movement requires careful voicing and fingering.

The Preludios Encadenados are difficult to read because of their intense chromaticism and contrapuntal texture. The fugue-like first prelude demands attention to projection of the main melodic motive. The rhythmic motives which are repeated ostinatos in the Agitato must be precise and consistent. The inner voices, thick polyphonic texture, and dotted rhythms of this second prelude make it difficult to play. The impressionistic third prelude has an arpeggiated ostinato in the right hand, requiring careful attention to pedaling, and a supple and light touch. The final prelude includes tricky rhythmic displacement which must remain consistent, and fast parallel thirds, fourths, and octaves requiring technical facility.

The Quatre Pieces pour Piano (Suite Bitonal) are technically difficult because one hand is on the white keys, and the other is on the black keys, and they are juxtaposed in very close proximity or overlap. In the first prelude, the bitonality, rhythmic displacements, and dotted rhythms make the piece difficult to read. It demands a light and controlled touch, and projection of hidden melodies. The second and third pieces require a lyrical and controlled expressive quality. The contrapuntal texture of the fourth piece is technically demanding and includes many rhythmic displacements and unexpected turns. Coordination of the hands is difficult, and a glissando leads into fast and difficult parallel octaves.

The Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas are difficult to read because of intense chromaticism. They require a romantic, lyrical, and expressive interpretation, and a subtle projection of the melodic line in the B sections. Rhythmic displacements,

syncopations, and dotted rhythms require flexibility and sensitivity to the dances that they represent. Fast sixteenth-note patterns and octaves in Danza III are marked con fuoco and demand an aggressive and forceful execution. Section A of the Danza IV is toccata-like, and needs both a driving rhythm and independence of the hands for a successful interpretation.

A Summary of the Relationship of Ponce to Mexican Musical Nationalism

Ponce's endeavors as a researcher and investigator in the area of musical folklore are respected to such a great extent that he is considered the "father of Mexican musical nationalism." Classical art music in Mexico, at the turn of the Twentieth-Century, was in the hands of the elite Porfirian society who emulated all things which were European. Ponce appeared on the scene when two periods of opposing ideologies clashed in Mexico, the Porfirian elite and the Revolutionaries seeking reform. He came into contact with the national schools in Europe, and decided that the music of his country should follow a similar path. According to Otto Mayer-Serra, when Ponce wrote his first Mexican songs five years before the fall of the dictatorship, he became the "outstanding precursor of the new musical ideology of the revolution."¹

¹Mayer-Serra. The Present State of Music in Mexico, 32.

Other Significant Contributions by Ponce

The role and significance of Manuel M. Ponce in the history of Mexican music is multifaceted and of extreme importance. Ponce was a highly influential man in his country as a composer, teacher, music critic and author, pianist, conductor, and folklorist.

Ponce's contribution to the music literature of the classical guitar is immeasurable. His association with the Spanish guitarist Andres Segovia resulted in a wealth of original compositions for the guitar. Segovia writes that "from the time that I first became acquainted with Ponce in Mexico in 1923, until the physical pain of his illness stifled his will to create, he composed more than eighty works for the guitar; large or small, they are all of them pure and beautiful.." ²

Ponce's contribution to the symphonic literature of early Mexican nationalism is also outstanding. After the Mexican revolution, Mexican music established a new direction and became nationally oriented. Music in Mexico entered a new phase characterized by a substitution of the piano, an instrument of the romantic salon, by the symphonic orchestra. According to Mayer-Serra, Ponce was the first Mexican composer to take the step from one musical genre to the other, and he inaugurated the Mexican folkloric symphony. Ponce wrote the symphonic work Chapultepec in 1921; Chávez followed with El Fuego Nuevo in 1921; Rolon wrote El Festin de los Enanos

²Andres Segovia, "Manuel M. Ponce, Sketches from Heart and Memory," Guitar Review, (Summer, 1948): 4.

in 1925; and *Revueltas* completed Cuauhnauac in 1930.³

Carlos Chávez writes a historical evaluation of Manuel M. Ponce with the following words: "The historical significance of Manuel M. Ponce in relation to Mexican music is enormous.....Ponce's work has had an essential influence on the development of the music of his country." Chávez goes on to describe Ponce's influence as two-fold. First of all, Ponce composed in the larger forms at a time when Mexican composers scarcely ventured beyond the limits of "salon music." Ponce's Piano Concerto and Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello were monumental works which were emulated by the younger composers, creating a new epoch in Mexican music. Chávez discusses Ponce's other great legacy as the initiation of musical nationalism in Mexico. Chávez concludes: "just as the intrinsic worth of his outstanding compositions, such as his concerto for guitar, will shine ever more brightly among the greatest of the world's masterpieces, so will the historical significance of his work, with the years, become ever more apparent."⁴

³Mayer-Serra, Panorama de la Música Mexicana, 153.

⁴Carlos Chávez, "Historical Evaluation of Manuel M. Ponce," Guitar Review IV, (1948), 4.

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APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF THE SOLO PIANO WORKS of MANUEL MARIA PONCE

Composition--Publisher	Date Composed (if known)
Marcha del Sarampion MS	1891
Malagre tout (for left hand) EM	1900
Gavota EM,SMP	1901
Miniaturas (11 piezas) OA	1903
5 Estudios EM,WL	
3 Preludios BUO	1905 (Italy)
Bersagliera OA	1905 (Italy)
4 Fugas OA,SMP	1906 (Germany)
Primer Amor WL	1909
Scherzino Mexicano EM	1909
(Published 1922)	
Trozos Romanticos (14 pieces) EM	1910
Rapsodia Mexicana No.1 WL	1911
Preludio y Fuga (on a Theme of Bach) OA,SMP	1912
2 Nocturnos OA	1912
Leyenda OA	1912
Scherzino a Debussy WL	1912
Tema Mexicano Variado SMP	1912
Album de Amor (7 pieces) EM	1912
A la Memoria de un Artista MS	1913
Sonata No.1 MS	1913
La Vida Tumultuosa (Allegro)	
Reposo de Amor (2nd move.)	
Esplendor de Alegria (3rd move.)	
Es una Desolacion WL	1913
La Hilandera Not published (On Tape Only)	
Rapsodia Mexicana No.2 WL	1914
Barcarola Mexicana "Xochimilco" EM	1915
Balada Mexicana WL	1915
Serenata Mexicana WL	1915
Romanza PG	1915
Rapsodia Cubana No.1 AL	1915 (Cuba)

Elegia de la Ausencia	SMP	1916 (Cuba)
Preludio Cubano	WL	1916 (Cuba)
Guateque (Danzon)	WL	1916 (Cuba)
Suite Cubana (3 pieces)	EM	1916 (Cuba)
Serenata Marina		
Preludio		
Paz de Ocaso		
Rapsodias Cubanas No.2 y 3	MS	1916 (Cuba)
Sonata No.2	SMP	1916
Morire Habemus	MS	1916
Preludio y Fuga(on a Theme of Handel)	WL,SMP	1916
Elorduyana (Danza Mexicana)	MS	1917
Preludio Mexicano	WL	1919
Minueto	PG	1919
Rapsodia Mexicana No.3	WL	1919
Temas Yucatecas Folkloricas		
Scherzino Maya	MS	1919
Glosario Intimo		1919
Cancion del Martirio	MS	1919
Evocaciones (5 pieces, 3 Publ.)	EM	1921
Versalles		
Venecia		
Alhambra		
Danza Mexicana	PG	1922
Danza Cubana	PG	1922
Gavota y Museta	PG,SMP	
Intermezzo No.1	PG	
Serenata	PG	
Vals No.1	WL	
Valses No.2 y 3	EM	
Amorosamente		
Apasionadamente		
2 Danzas on a theme of J. Gilbert	EM	
Suspiro		
Sonrisa		
Hojas de Album (5 pieces)	OA	
Bocetos Nocturnos (Suite of 3 pieces)	CAM	
Duerme		
Vals Melancolico		
Vision Sideral		
Arrulladora Mexicana "La Rancherita"	WL	
Horas Augustas (5 pieces)	WL	

Mayo WL
 Serenata de Schubert WL
 16 Studies (7 and 12 Publ.) EM,WL
 Mazurcas Nos.1,2,3,4,17,23,27 PG
 Mazurcas No.6,11,12, and "De Salon" EM
 Mazurcas No.7,8,10,13 WL
 12 Mazurcas MS
 2 Cadencias (for Beethoven's 4th Concierto) SMP
 1 Cadencia (for J.C. Bach's Sinfonia Concertante) MS
 Preludios Encadenados ECP,SMP 1927
 Preludio y Fuga (for Left Hand) ECP,SMP
 Canon (for 2 Voices) MS
 Suite Bitonal-4 Piezas para Piano MSE 1929
 Sonatina MS 1932
 Intermezzo No. 2 SMP
 2 Estudios No.22 y No.23 GS
 Preludio Romantico MS 1934
 Arrulladora Mexicana No. 2 CAM 1935
 Danza de la Pascola ECP,SMP 1937
 Sobre Temas Indigenas
 20 Piezas ECP,SMP 1939
 Para los Pequeños Pianistas Mexicanos
 I. Cielito Lindo
 Las Mañanitas
 Yo No Se Que Decir
 La Pasadita
 La Sandunga
 Ven, Oh Luna!
 II. Homenaje a Villanueva
 Arrullo del Niño Dios
 La Posada
 La Revolución
 La Cucaracha
 Mañana de Abril
 La Patria
 Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas CIC,SMP 1941
 Mazurca No. 28 MS 1941
 Estrellita (arrangement) SMP 1943
 Idilio Mexicano (for 2 pianos) ECP

Publishers

EM	=	Enrique Munguia, México, D.F.
OA	=	Otto y Arzoz, México, D.F.
WL	=	Wagner y Leien, México, D.F.
PG	=	Peña Gil, México, D.F.
CAM	=	Casa Alemán de Música, México, D.F.
ECP	=	Ediciones Clema M. de Ponce, México, D.F.
BUO	=	Buongiovanni, Bologna, Italia
AL	=	Anselmo Lopez, La Habana, Cuba
MSE	=	Maurice Senart, Paris, Francia
GS	=	G. Schirmer, New York, USA
CIC	=	Cooperativa Interamericana de Compositores, Montevideo, Uruguay
SMP	=	Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc., New York, USA
MS	=	Manuscript

APPENDIX B

DISCOGRAPHY OF SOLO PIANO WORKS

HARMONY (Columbia), HC 13110

Pablo Castellanos - Pianist

Preludio

Gavota

Mazurka

Balada

Piezas Indigenas

Arrulladora y Scherzino Mexicano

Cuatro Danzas Mexicanas

Estrellita

CAPITOL, P18037

Miguel Garcia Mora - Pianist

Vals Galante

MUSART M.C.D. 3012

Miguel Garcia Mora - Pianist

Plenilunio

Scherzino

Intermezzo

Balada Mexicana

MUSART M.C.D. 3019

Carlos Vasques - Pianist

Intermezzo

Arrulladora Mexicana

Scherzino Maya

Scherzino Stacco

Scherzino a Debussy

Estudio Juventud

Xochimilco

Ven, Oh, Luna!

Mazurkas 2, 7, 11, 12, and 23

Preludio y Fuga sobre un tema de Handel

CONCERMEX, Cm 7

Stella Contreras - Pianist

Rapsodia Mexicana No. 2

Mazurka

Balada Gavota

Scherzino

Intermezzo

PEERLES

Fausto Garcia Medeles - Pianist

Intermezzo

Balada

Cuatro Danzas

Cuatro Mazurkas

Arreglos de Cielito Lindo y Valentina

MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY 512502H

David Witten - Pianist

Preludio y Fuga para la mano izquierda sola

Preludio y Fuga sobre un tema de Handel

Hommage to Arthur Rubinstein, Vol.1, Ocean, N.J., 1987

Piano Works by Spanish and Latin American Composers

Arthur Rubinstein - Pianist

Two Etudes (No.22 and No.33)

Organización de los Estados Americanos,

Ediciones Musicales - Washington, D.C. - OAS-004

Raquel Boldonini - Pianist

Dos Estudios

EMI Capitol Records, 33C167

Carlos Vasquez - Pianist

Sonata No. 2