

TWENTIETH CENTURY POPULAR MUSIC IN TEXAS:
HISTORY, DEFINITIONS, AND CHARACTERIZATIONS
OF SELECTED GENRES / STYLES WITH
AN EMPHASIS ON MÚSICA TEJANA

By

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Music
with a Major in Music
May 2014

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my friends and family for supporting me while I attend graduate school, especially my wife Holley, son Dorian, and my parents Oscar and Velma Garcia. I also would like to thank my committee members Dr. Nico Schöler, Dr. Charles Ditto, and Dr. Dimitar Ninov. Finally, I would like to thank God for creating Texas and music.

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ABSTRACT

Music in Texas is as diverse as the variety of cultures that make up the Texas population. Each one of these different cultures, while although different in their backgrounds, shared the same desire for a new life in frontier of Texas. Once these cultures came together, they shared cultures with one another, creating a culture that cannot be described as anything else but Texan. Music is a perfect example of the mixture of cultures to create something unique Texan. Groups like Mexicans, African-Americans, Anglo-American, and the German / Czech, for example, all made extremely significant contributions to the music of Texas, and sharing cultures while simultaneously absorbing elements to create new genres and styles.

One example of a genre of Texas Music that successfully synthesizes various aspects of the various musical cultures of Texas is Música Tejana. One style of Música Tejana, known as the Conjunto, synthesizes the German / Czech instrument, the accordion, with traditional Mexican instruments, such as the bajo sexto / bajo quinto and tambora. Another style, known as the Orquesta, combines elements of the Conjunto with the American genre of Jazz / Swing / Big Band to create a new style that would go on to represent new generations of Tejanos (Texas-Mexicans) until the end of the century and beyond.

I. INTRODUCTION

Listen. Can you hear it? If you're in Texas, you sure can. It's music. It's all over Texas. In fact, there is probably more music in Texas than oil or cattle. And it's not just one kind either. Texas' music is a reflection on the many cultures that have settled within the state, all coming together (sometimes peacefully, while at other times with great conflict) to share their culture with one another.

Growing up in south Texas, music was everywhere because there wasn't much of anything else, so it is what we did. In high school, it seemed like everybody could play guitar, at least play a few chords. A few guys were drummers, and every once and a while (maybe one student per grade) you could find someone who played bass. We all played rock music or some style of it. Bands that had the biggest influence on my small high school were California bands Metallica and Tool, and the Texas band Pantera. Grunge and alternative were also very popular, but with the death of Nirvana front man Kurt Cobain (1967-1994) in 1994 and the breakup of Soundgarden in 1997, the genre was beginning to make its exit from the mainstream. Rap was also very popular, just as country was. I think only one person in my class openly favored conjunto music, a genre of Música Tejana, the music of the Texas-Mexicans. In retrospect, this is shocking as I attended high school in Ben Bolt, Texas, a town just eight miles south of Alice, a town as important to Música Tejana as Nashville is to country music, or Hollywood is to film making.

My high school is a good example of the modern musical life in South Texas in that we all possessed the ability to play music, however, most of us didn't just play the traditional "band" instruments one would expect to learn in grade school. A large number of us taught ourselves to play instruments in the music we were listening to, such as guitar, bass, and drums.

When I was younger, I thought that my school was singularly special, but instead we were part of a long tradition of musicians in Texas. Regardless of our ethnic backgrounds (most of us were of Mexican descent), we all were able to accomplish some level of musicianship. It turns out my school was like many other schools in Texas, full of young music listeners with aspirations to play the music that we love, and maybe create a little music of our own.

In researching the music of Texas, I realized much has been written about the various genres separately and a majority of the connections made between genres has been at the ethnomusicological level and musicological level, but not through theoretical musical analysis. With this idea in mind, my thesis began with the intention of writing about all of the various genres and styles of popular music found in the state of Texas, and to connect them stylistically through analysis, but that would be an undertaking much too large. Examples of genres that would have to be addressed would include country, blues, jazz, rock, rhythm & blues (R&B), hip-hop / rap, techno, and música tejana. Instead I chose to write about the genre from the part of Texas that I call home, south Texas and música tejana.

Embarrassingly enough, I must admit that I knew little to nothing about Música Tejana except that it was all around. It was my goal to learn about the genre and how, if in anyway, it was connected to other styles of music in Texas. It is my hope to one day complete my work and learn about and analyze all the genres of Texas music with the intention on identifying the characteristics that distinguish and connect the different genres. To do this properly, I felt that an understanding of the history of Texas and the various cultures that reside within the state was necessary to fully understand how the different musical genres and styles are connected stylistically.

II. A BRIEF HISTORY OF TEXAS MUSIC AND BREAKDOWN OF THE MUSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MAJOR MUSICAL CONTRIBUTORS TO MUSIC IN TEXAS

2.1. A Brief History of Texas¹

2.1.1. Pre-Columbians and Native Americans

Before Spanish explorers set foot on Texas soil, it was home to many different Native American tribes whose ancestors migrated across the Bering Land Bridge and came to the Americas during the Asiatic migration between ten thousand and thirty thousand years ago, spreading around the North-American continent, through Central America and the Isthmus of Panama into South America and around the Caribbean.

Anthropological evidence suggests that at least four different cultural groups lived in the varied geographical areas of what is now Texas. These four groups were the Native Americans / Indians of the Coastal Area (the Karankawan and the Coahuiltecan), the Plains Indians (the Comanche, the Apache, the Kiowa, and the Tonkawa), the Northeast Texas Indians (the Caddo Indians), and the Juamno Indians of the Trans-Pecos area (the portion of Texas west of the Pecos River). (Calvert and De León 1996, 2-6.)

2.1.2. Spanish Discovery (1528-1684)

The first European claim to the ownership of Texas was by the Spanish when, in 1492, Columbus discovered the New World and claimed it on behalf of Spain. Later in 1521, Hernán Cortés (1485-1547) conquered the Aztec empire and claimed all the lands again as part of Mexico. (Brown 1895, 24.)

Throughout the sixteenth century, various Spanish explorers would go on to document and explore the Texas country, including Alonso Álvarez de Piñeda (1494-1520)

¹ If not otherwise indicated, most of the general historical facts in this portion of the thesis

in 1519, as well as Pánfilo de Narváez (1478-1528), and Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (ca. 1490–ca. 1559) in 1528. (Calvert and De León 1996, 10 / Chipman 2012.)

Entranced by stories of cities of gold that Cabeza de Vaca heard during his travels, the Spanish Viceroy ordered new expeditions to conquer these cities. Lead by explorers such as Francisco Vázquez de Coronado (1510-1554) in 1540, none of these expeditions lead to the discovery of gold in Texas. (McDonald 2007, 28-29.)

Because of the lack of gold, Spain viewed Texas negatively and did not want to invest significant energy or wealth into the area. (McDonald 2007, 29.) In 1680, Spaniards founded the first mission and pueblo within the present boundaries of Texas, Corpus Christi de la Isleta, at the site of modern Ysleta. (Chipman 2012.)

2.1.3. French Colonization (1685-1689)

French explorers established the next European settlement in what would become modern-day Texas by mistake. In 1685, while attempting to get back to Louisiana, French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle (1643-1687) made landfall on the Texas coast near Matagorda Bay. La Salle established Fort St. Louis at Gracitas Creek (near modern day Vanderbilt, Texas). The colonists did not survive very long, succumbing to disease and attacks by local Karankawa Indians after only a few years. La Salle himself was killed at the hands of his own frustrated men while exploring the east Texas frontier. (Calvert and De León 1996, 17.)

2.1.4. Spanish Texas (1690-1821)

Concerned about the threat of French colonization, the Spanish began to reestablish the exploration and colonization of the Texas frontier. The Spanish government started building missions in east, central and south Texas, firmly creating a Spanish presence in Texas.

(Calvert and De León 1996, 19-20.) The first mission erected was San Francisco de las Tejas in 1690 in East Texas, near the site of modern Augusta in northeastern Houston County.

(Chipman 2012.) Other missions were established in or near the Texas frontier, including near El Paso in 1655, along the southern Texas coast in 1700 and around the San Antonio area in 1718, including the mission San Antonio de Valero and its accompanying presidio San Antonio de Béxar, the most successful mission and presidio in Texas.

In 1773, Spanish settlers arrived at the area of the former mission Nuestra Señora de los Nacogdoches and established the town of Nacogdoches in June of 1779. That community, along with La Bahía del Espíritu Santo (Goliad), San Antonio, and Laredo, became permanent municipalities within the boundaries of the future state of Texas. (McDonald2007, 36-38; Chipman 2012.)

A total of ten presidios had extended from central Texas eastward to the site of present Robeline, Louisiana, and southward to Refugio Country along the Gulf Coast with ranches and farms dotting the Texas landscape. (Chipman 2012.) In an effort to boost the economy in Texas, Spanish officials decided that allowing non-Spanish settlers to populate the area would be the best solution, and in 1820, immigration to Texas became legal (Stephens 2010, 41-42).

2.1.5. Mexican Texas (1821-1835)

In 1821, under the leadership of Agustín de Iturbide (1783-1824) and Vicente Guerrero (1782-1831), a successful independence movement in Mexico brought Texas under that new nation. The Mexican War of Independence marked the close of the Spanish era in Texas history in which the Franciscan priests had founded and re-founded missions at approximately forty different sites. As part of the 1824 Constitution of Mexico, the majority of modern day Texas was joined with the province of Coahuila to form the Mexican states of Coahuila Y Tejas, as well as part of the states of Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, and the Territorio de Santa Fe de Nuevo Mexico. (Stephens 2010, 72-73.) That year, Mexico enacted the General Colonization Law and continued allowing settlers from the United States to immigrate to Texas (Manchaca 2001, 187). The first Empresario grant was given to an American named Moses Austin (1761-1821). However, Moses Austin died, and his grant was awarded to his son, Stephen F. Austin (1793-1836). Austin led a group of settlers, known as the Old Three Hundred, and settled along the Brazos River in 1822. (Manchaca 2001, 198.) Between 1821 and 1835, a total of forty-one empresario contracts were signed, allowing some 13,500 families to settle in Texas. Anglo-Americans entered into most of the contracts from the United States. (Calvert and De Leon 1996, 56.)

Along with these Anglo-American settlers came their slaves, as slavery was a major source of labor in the American South. For many Texians [Anglo-Texans], slavery was essential to the early success of Texas by supplying the workforce for the farms and plantations, which were needed for the Texas economy and industry to survive. Mexicans and the Mexican government were opposed to slavery; however, Texas was excluded from the anti-slavery laws. (Calvert and De Leon 1996, 59.) Adding to the tension were the

Conventions of 1832 and 1833, where Texans drafted letters to the Mexican government demanding more rights and the independent statehood of Texas. (Brown 1895, 46-48.)

2.1.6. Texas Revolution and the Republic of Texas (1835-1845)

Tensions between the Mexicans and Texans erupted into violence on October 2, 1835, at the Battle of Gonzalez, where Texans repelled Mexican troops who were attempting to retake a small cannon (Brown 1895, 104-105). On March 2, 1836, Texans signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, seceded from Mexico, and created the Republic of Texas (Vasquez 1997, 74). Later that year, Mexican soldiers led by President and General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna (1794-1876) arrived at the Rio Grande and split into two groups, the larger group led by Santa Anna headed north to San Antonio, while the smaller group was led by General Jose de Urrea (1797-1849) along the Texas coastline. (Hardin 1994, 102-21.) Urrea's forces defeated all resistance along the coastline, culminating in the Goliad Massacre, where three hundred Texan prisoners of war were executed (Roell, 2012a). In San Antonio, after a thirteen-day siege, Santa Anna's forces overwhelmed Texas soldiers defending the Alamo (Hardin, 2012).

After several weeks chasing and maneuvering, the Texas soldiers attacked Santa Anna's forces on April 21, 1836, at the Battle of San Jacinto. Texas forces captured Santa Anna and forced him to sign the Treaties of Velasco, officially ending the war (McDonald 2007, 70-71).

Using a constitution that was drafted in March 1836, the Republic of Texas was established with Sam Houston (1793-1863) being elected as the republic's first president (McDonald 2007 72-73). Although Texas was now governing itself, Mexico refused to

recognize its independence and sent soldiers onto Texas soil many times. (McDonald 2007, 82.)

2.1.7. Texas Annexation into the United States and Statehood (1845-1861)

Texians had always expressed their desires for annexation into the United States, and, in 1837, Texas officials proposed annexation to United States President Martin Van Buren (1782-1862); however, Van Buren was not interested in the annexation of Texas.

In 1843, British interests in Texas caused the United States to regain interest in the annexation of Texas, and on February 28, 1845, the United States Congress passed a bill that would authorize the annexation of Texas. President John Tyler (1790-1862) signed the bill on March 1 of 1845, and Texas was set for annexation on December 29 that same year. On October 13, 1845, Texas voters approved a pro-slavery constitution, which the United States later accepted. (Neu 2012; Wikipedia “History of Texas”, 2012.)

The Mexican government had always warned that the annexation of Texas into the United States would constitute an action of war, so when Texas was accepted into the union on December 29, Mexico broke off diplomatic relations with the United States, resulting in the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). Both Mexico and the United States were claiming the rights to Texas. Mexico claimed that the rightful border between Texas and Mexico was the Nueces River, located about 150 miles north of the Rio Grande. United States President James K. Polk (1795-1849) sent General Zachary Taylor (1784-1850) to defend Texas from Mexican invasion. General Taylor won two important victories, the first at Palo Alto near Brownsville and then at Resaca de la Palma before marching into Mexico where he had victories at Monterrey and Buena Vista. The war concluded with the signing of the Treaty of

Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848, settling all border issues between Texas, the United States, and Mexico. (McDonald 2007, 87-90.)

Texas' population grew rapidly after the Mexican-American War, as immigrants from all over Europe and the United States were attracted by Texas agriculture. A significant number of German, Polish, Czech, and French immigrants began arriving in the 1840s and 1850s. The African-American population in Texas also increased dramatically, as the cotton farmers in east Texas imported more and more slaves to work the fields. (McDonald 2007, 97-99.)

2.1.8. Confederate Texas and the Civil War era (1861-1865)

Issues like slavery, westward expansion, and state's rights increased political tensions in the United States during the 1850s. After the election of the northern Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) on November 6, 1860, southern Democratic states (beginning with South Carolina on December 20) began seceding from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. On February 23, 1861, Texans voted to secede from the United States and joined the Confederacy.

On April 1861, The American Civil War began with the battle of Fort Sumter in South Carolina. Texas' role for the Confederacy was that of a supply state until mid-1863, when the North captured the lands along the Mississippi River. Little fighting took place within Texas; however, much did occur along its borders, including the final battle of the Civil War near Brownsville at Palmito Ranch on May 12, 1865. Soldiers from Texas fought in every major battle in the war. More Texans entered the service than did citizens of any other state. (McDonald 2007, 101-12; Wikipedia "History of Texas" 2012.)

2.1.9. Texas Post-Civil War (1865-1899)

On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger (1822-1876) arrived in Galveston with 1,800 Union soldiers and declared the end of the civil war in Texas, proclaiming that all slaves were “henceforth and forever free” as stated in President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation.

Texas suffered little in the Civil War, but trade and commerce were disrupted. The years after the Civil War left a legacy of lawlessness in Texas for decades. Feuds, such as the deadly Sutton-Taylor feud, gunfighters and bank / train Robbers, such as John Wesley Hardin (1853-1895) and Sam Bass (1851-1878), white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan, and Indian raids all added to the lawlessness in Texas. (McDonald 2007, 116-27.)

Important to Texas in the mid-nineteenth century was the cattle kingdom and the infamous cattle drives. In addition to providing Texans with a practical, economical means of marketing surplus livestock, it also achieved mythological stature as an aspect of the American frontier. In their heyday from 1866 to 1890, they ceased in the 1890s with the arrival of the railroads to Dallas in the 1880s, which allowed Texas farmers and ranchers to sell their cattle and cotton much easier, also making Dallas a major center of commerce. (McDonald 2007, 131-35; Skaggs 2012; Wikipedia “History of Texas” 2012.)

2.1.10. Texas in the Twentieth Century (1900-1999)

On September 8, 1900, a major hurricane destroyed the port at Galveston. With more than 6,000 fatalities, it is the worst natural disaster in United States history. A new port was built further inland at Houston, which would become the primary port in Texas. Railroads were built to Houston, connecting it with cities like San Antonio, Dallas, Ft. Worth, and Austin. (McDonald 2007, 156-57; Wikipedia “History of Texas” 2012.)

On January 10, 1901, the first major oil well in Texas was drilled at Spindletop, located south of Beaumont. With the discovery of the East Texas oilfield and others throughout Texas and under the Gulf of Mexico, the resulting Texas oil boom transformed the Texas economy and led to its first significant expansion since the Civil War. (McDonald 2007, 167-68; Wikipedia “History of Texas” 2012.)

The Texas economy saw a sharp decline when the stock market crashed in 1929, as thousands of Texas workers became unemployed and the prices of cotton and livestock fell sharply, severely hurting Texas farmers and ranchers. Beginning in 1934 and lasting until 1939, an ecological disaster of severe drought and wind caused an exodus from Texas, leaving many homeless, jobless, and hungry.

On December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan attacked the United States, causing the U.S. to enter World War II (WWII). The war had a dramatic impact on Texas, as federal money poured in for the establishment of military bases, munitions factories, prisoner of war detention camps, and Army hospitals. Hundreds of thousands of Texas men enlisted in the service, and cities exploded with new industry. Houston enjoyed the most growth during WWII, thanks to its shipping and oil. Other major growth industries included steel, munitions, and shipbuilding.

After the war, the Texas economy saw more growth due to the electronics industry expansion into Texas during the 1950s and 1960s. Electronics companies and factories were opened in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston, with the Austin area being nicknamed “Silicon Hills” and Dallas being nicknamed “Silicon Prairie.” Texas also has a large aeronautics industry with The National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, and Lockheed Martin’s Aeronautics division

as well as Bell Helicopter Textron located in Fort Worth. (Wikipedia “History of Texas” 2012.)

2.2. Breakdown of the Different Texas Settlers and Their Music

Immigrants from all over the world have moved to Texas in search of a better life. Arriving from various countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America, many of the immigrants had to leave much from their lives behind, but one part of home they could bring to Texas was their music. Many of these groups, particularly the Spanish, Anglo- and African-Americans, Germans, Czech, Polish and French, had rich musical heritages and would have a tremendous influence on what would become music in Texas.

2.2.1. Music of the Native Americans

Originally home to various Native American tribes, it was their music that was first heard in Texas. The music of the Native Americans consisted of monophonic songs, involving singing, rattles, and percussion devices, as well as simple wind instruments. The Native Americans used music in a variety of ways. They used music in their religious ceremonies and prayers, mothers sang to their crying babies, young males would sing or play tunes on their reed to attract young maidens, medicine men would sing to drive away evil spirits from the sick, and warriors would bang on drums, shake drums, and blow through shell horns in preparations of war.

The Native Americans had no method of writing down their music, and it was all learned by sheer imitation. None of the songs of the early Native Americans in Texas has been preserved in its original form. (Spell 1936, 2-5).

2.2.2. Spanish Settlers and Their Music

The first European music to reach Texas was that of the Catholic Church, which came by way of the European music school established in 1525 in Mexico City, after the Spanish conquered the Aztecs in 1521. (Davis and Spell 2012; Classical Music 2012, 114).

Dramatizations and musical arrangements were utilized at the missions in Texas to convert and educate the natives (Gutiérrez 2003, 152). At the first mission established near present day El Paso, Our Lady of Guadalupe, music was taught to the young natives. The Native Americans were taught how to sing songs and prayers of the church, as well as how to play various instruments, as music was a very important part of daily life in the missions.

All natives learned to sing the *Pater Noster*, the *Salve*, and the *Ave*, while the more gifted singers learned more elaborate chants and hymns, as well as instruments such as the guitar, flute, and violin. The natives who showed to be the most especially proficient in some branch of music were often sent from one mission to the next to assist in teaching music to their Native American brethren. (Spell 1936, 6-13).

The music of the Spanish soldiers and settlers in Texas was a mixture of folk music from Spain and the Canary Islands, as well as songs of Native American influence from Mexico. In addition to the music of the church was the music of the various craftsmen and vendors, such as the plowman, the wine-maker, and the tamale vendor. Once the settlements boasted enough brass musicians, brass bands were formed and played in the plaza. The musicians of the missions were skilled in both playing and constructing guitars and flutes; they particularly excelled at group performing (Spell 1936, 14-21). The Spanish influence itself was an assimilation of influences from the Spanish, Moorish, Caribbean natives, and various African tribes. (Gutiérrez 2003, 149-50.) Overall, the Spanish had a tremendous

impact on music in Texas by introducing European music and providing the first music teachers. (Spell 1936, 21-22).

2.2.3. French Settlers and Their Music

In 1685, the French were the next who attempted to establish a colony in Texas, called Fort St. Louis, near Matagorda Bay, but the colony failed. Later attempts were made by the French to establish colonies in Texas, but none was successful until the 1840s, when Frenchman Henri Castro (1786-1865) had success bringing over two thousand European immigrants to Texas and established colonies in today's Medina County, including Castroville, in 1844. Along with these immigrants came instruments such as pianos, organs, flutes and violins. (French 2012; Spell 1936, 55-58.)

The music of the French and other French-influenced music came to Texas during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from four sources: France, French Canada, and Louisiana, where sophisticated white Creole (descendants of the original French colonists) and black Creole cultures (descendants of the slaves of the original French colonists, who, over time, developed a common patois, or mixture of the French language with their own dialect) had developed in and around New Orleans. (Classical Music 2012, 114; Hartman 2012b, 224.) In the twentieth century, the black creole culture would have a major influence on Texas music with their blending of African rhythms with gospel, blues, rhythm and blues, and other genres into a style called zydeco (Hartman 2012, 224).

Another group of French-speaking immigrants who would have a major influence on music in Texas in the twentieth century were the Cajuns from southwestern Louisiana. This group of French-speaking settlers, originally from the northern and western coastal areas of Brittany and Normandy in France, previously had settled in an area of eastern Canada called

Acadia, but were expelled by British forces in 1755. Many sought refuge in New Orleans; however, authorities in New Orleans directed the refugees to settle in the less populated swamps and bayous of southwestern Louisiana, where they managed to live in relative isolation until the 1930s. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, thousands of Cajuns migrated into Texas, where their music, which was rooted in both French and Celtic traditions, began blending with other musical styles. Although Cajun music is often thought as a Louisiana-based music, many of the most influential Cajun musicians lived and recorded in East Texas. Immigrants directly from France did settle in central Texas in the 1840s. The largest contingent of this group was from Alsace in eastern France. The musical cultures of the Alsatian immigrants reflected both French and German influences and ranged from the formal works of European composers to the rich and complex folk music of the French working class. (Hartman 2012b, 225-26.)

2.2.4. Mexican Settlers and Their Music

In 1821, the year after Spain began to allow immigration to Texas, Mexico gained its independence from Spain, and a secularization and rapid disintegration of the mission system occurred. The *hacienda* (ranch) system took its place and gave rise to feasts, rodeos, elaborate multi-day wedding celebrations, funerals and other special occasions, all accented and accompanied by music. *Fandangos* (informal, public dances) and *bailes* (formal, “high class” dances) became commonplace in haciendas. (Gutiérrez 2003, 152; Peña, 1999b.)

By the mid to late 1800s, Mexicans began turning away from traditional Spanish and Mexican music and began to favor European salon music that was coming to Texas by way of Mexico City and with the various groups of European immigrants who arrived in Texas and Mexico in the mid 1800s. Being avid dancers, *tejanos* [Texas-Mexicans] enthusiastically

embraced dances such as the waltz (*val*), a popular European dance that was brought to Texas and was popular with the locals, as well as other import dances such as polkas, *schottisches*, *mazurkas*, and minuets. Also popular was the Mexican *huapango*. (Peña 1999b, 27; Hartman 2003, 7; Dickey 2012, 427; San Miguel 2002, 10).

2.2.5. Anglo-American Settlers and Their Music

Through the empresario program, Anglo-Americans came from all over the United States; however, the majority was from the southern United States. Immigrants from Georgia, Mississippi, and parts of Alabama tended to settle near the cotton fields in east Texas, while immigrants from Tennessee and northern Alabama settled further west and grew corn. Immigrants from Louisiana settled along the Gulf Coast, especially among the lower Brazos River valley, where they grew sugar cane. (McDonald 2007, 97-98.) The Anglo-American settlers imported their culture to Texas and resisted Mexican culture. Rich or poor, Anglo immigrants were independent-minded, self-sufficient republicans suspicious of the traditional deferential society of Hispanic culture. (Henson 2012.)

The music of the Anglo-Americans consisted of the music of the English, Irish, and Scottish, as well as the poetry of the Welsh (Hartman 2012a, 134). They also played the popular European waltzes, minuets, square dances, polkas, two-step, and *schottisches*. (Hartman 2003, 24.) With the Anglo-Americans came smaller instruments such as the fiddle and flutes (Classical Music 2012, 114). For entertainment, upper class Anglos preferred European parlor songs and classics. In the early 1840s, Anglo-Americans brought visiting concert groups. By the end of the 1850s, a few small traveling opera companies were coming to Texas from New Orleans and Mexico. Fashionable with the lower class Anglo-Americans would be the earliest forms of popular music in America, minstrel shows and traveling

medicine shows (Campbell 1996, 47; Fowler 2012, 399). Fiddle music was very prominent with traveling medicine shows, and it was not at all uncommon for impromptu fiddle contests to occur. Many of Texas' musicians gained experiences playing for traveling medicine shows. (Fowler 2012, 399-400.) Square dances with a lead fiddle were very popular on the frontier, as were play parties, which featured song-accompanied dances that allowed no instruments. (Abernethy and Jasinski 2012, 217-18.)

The Anglo-Americans also brought a religious folk music. In east Texas and areas of the south, a style of religious music called Sacred Harp is popular. Originally called "fasola" because of the names of its shaped notation, it featured old-time white spirituals sung a cappella. Sacred Harp music was adapted from English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh folk tunes. Another style of religious music that also employed shaped-note notation was hymnody. Hymnody attracted a greater audience and was sung statewide. The first community singing in Texas that used shaped notes was in 1879. (Mason and Jasinski 2012, 248.)

2.2.6. African-American Slaves and Their Music

In addition to bringing their music, the Anglo-Americans brought their African-American slaves, as Anglo-Americans were accustomed to using African slaves as a primary source of labor. At first, slavery in Texas grew slowly, as Mexicans abhorred slavery, but pragmatic politicians shut their eyes eager to have the Anglos produce cotton in Texas. (Henson 2012.) However, after Texas' independence from Mexico in 1836, slavery became an integral part of the state's economic development and began to grow rapidly along the gulf coast and in east, central, and north Texas (Dulaney 2012).

Music for the African-Americans in Texas [Afro-Texans], like African-American music in the American South, reflected the experiences of the day. Mistreatment by slave

owners, loss and separation of family members, and hope for a better life were reflected in the music of the Afro-Texans in the mid-nineteenth century. (Felps 2001, 11.)

The music of the African-American slaves consisted of religious music, work songs and recreational music. Each type adapted elements of African and European musical traditions and shaped the development of many styles of music, including gospel, blues, and jazz. (PBS 2012.)

One of the important features of African-American music is the “call and response,” an African tradition in which the lead singer calls out in verses, while other members respond in unison. Utilized in work songs such as field hollers, the “call and response” was a highly interactive music that provided numerous opportunities for innovation and improvisation, while serving a much more practical purpose of establishing a work rhythm as they labored in order to synchronize group tasks and ease the burden of difficult labor. The “call and response” was also important to the development of African-American religious music.

Religious music for African-Americans was rooted in the colonial era, when African-Americans would attend church services with their owners and became very familiar with the lyrics and melodies of European religious music. Over time, African-Americans combined these European hymns with African traditions in order to suit the experiences of their daily lives. Religious songs were usually sung a cappella and accompanied by handclapping and foot stamping. (Hartman 2008, 61-62; PBS 2012.)

In their free time, slaves listened and danced to music performed on string instruments and were sometimes invited by their masters to play at European music festivals and gatherings (PBS 2012).

2.2.7. German Settlers and Their Music

Groups from all over Europe began immigrating to Texas for various reasons, after immigration to Texas was allowed. The European group with the largest presence in Texas is the Germans, who began immigrating to Texas in the 1830s. The Germans tended to live in clusters along a broad, fragmented belt that ran across the south central part of the state. The belt stretched from Galveston and Houston in the fertile, humid coastal plains of east Texas to towns like Kerrville, Mason, and Hondo in the semi-arid hill country of central Texas. Thousands of Germans continued to migrate to Texas in the 1840s, including the group known as the Forty-Eighters, immigrants from the revolution of 1848, with many staying in cities such as Houston, Galveston, and San Antonio, while others moved to the hill country and the newly founded settlements of New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, Boerne, and Castroville. German immigrants continued arriving in Texas in the 1880s, and by 1881, Germans were establishing colonies on the high plains of west Texas. German immigration to Texas began to decline in the 1890s. (Jordan 2012.) Another group of immigrants who settled alongside the Germans in Texas were the Wends (also known as Sorbs or Lusatian Serbs). Originally located in an area known as Lusatia in the upper Spree River valley of East Germany, the Wends began immigrating out of Lusatia in the 1840s. They settled in two areas of the world, Australia and Texas, in search of better economic opportunity and religious freedom. In Texas, the Wends were quickly absorbed into German communities. Over the years, the Texas Wends spread throughout south-central Texas, with large Wendish populations in Lee, Fayette, Williamson, Coryell, and Bell Counties, and in Texas cities such as Houston, Austin, and Port Arthur. (Grider 2012.) Groups of German-speaking Swiss immigrants also began settling in Texas during the late nineteenth century. The Swiss began

settling in Bexar, Dallas, Austin, Fayette, Travis, Williamson, and Wilbarger counties, establishing towns like Vernon and Schoenau. (Field 2012.)

Musically, the contributions made by the Germans are beyond profound. By 1845, the Germans had become the greatest contributors to the musical developments in Texas, although their influence was already present during the days of the Republic. German immigrants began importing larger instruments (such as the piano) to Texas during the 1830s. In addition to introducing some instruments to Texas, the instruments the Germans brought with them were often of high quality. (Classical Music 2012, 114; Albrecht 2012, 236-37.) Many Germans made efforts to maintain their culture by establishing institutions in Texas similar to those in their homeland. These organizations are the ancestors to today's choirs, bands, orchestras, and opera companies. (Wolz 2003, 119-21.) By 1838, classical music was becoming more formalized, especially in urban centers and in the church. In 1838, a theatre opened in Houston and hosted singers and musicians from around the United States and Europe. By the 1850s, larger communities established local bands (sometimes a military band) and by 1900, most of the towns had bands. In 1845, music instruction was first introduced into the public schools in Galveston; and in 1848, the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Galveston had the first organ built at his cathedral. (Classical Music 2012, 114.)

One of the important forebears of concert music in Texas was the *Gesangvereine*, or German singing societies. In the mid-1840s, the Germans organized the first informal German singing societies in New Braunfels, Galveston, and Houston. In the 1850s, formal sacred music singing societies were established in several cities, such as San Antonio, Austin, Houston, and New Braunfels. In 1853, these singing societies organized the first statewide *Sängerfest* (singing festival) in New Braunfels. The Texas *Sängerfest* became an annual event and led to many musical developments. The 1854 *Sängerfest* saw the beginnings of the

league of singing societies (*Sängerbund*). In Texas' larger cities, the *Gesangvereine* groups were associated with some sort of instrumental ensemble, usually a band. These bands varied greatly in instrumentation, some based on the older French model of *Harmoniemusik*, for which a clarinet was the principle melody instrument, and some modeled after brass bands. In smaller towns, however, bands depended on any and every available player and instrument. These bands gave outdoor concerts and played at parades, picnics and dances. Being associated with the *Gesangvereine*, bands would play works of European masters as well as music for drinking and dancing, such as polka, redowa, schottische, and waltz. (Wolz 2003, 123-26.)

After the Civil War, instrument ensembles (both band and orchestra) were featured prominently in the Texas *Sängerfest*. These groups would lead to the establishment of permanent orchestras in Texas. In 1874, the eleventh *Sängerfest* was held in San Antonio. An orchestra of strings and winds was organized and played overtures from Bellini's *Norma* and Rossini's *Tancredi*. (Wolz 2003, 130.)

The annual *Sängerfest* became very popular among non-Germans. At the *Sängerfest* in Dallas in 1883, part of the concert was devoted to a major choral work in English, Frederic Cowen's *The Rose Maiden*. In 1885, Carl Beck (1850-1920) was appointed as the *Sängerfest*'s music director for the orchestra. At the 1887 *Sängerfest* in San Antonio, Beck conducted the first complete symphony performed in Texas, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4 ("Italian"). The high standards set by Beck and the San Antonio *Sängerfest* orchestra served as inspiration for the founding of the San Antonio Symphony in 1939 (Wolz 2003, 130-31; San Antonio Symphony 2012).

The first performance of any opera in Texas occurred on March 21, 1856, when a traveling German opera group from St. Louis, Missouri, performed at the Lone Star Hall in

Houston, and then Galveston before leaving Texas. One other German opera group would perform in Texas before 1870, when the railroads made it easier for companies to travel. In 1869, Marie Friederici's Grand German Opera Troupe performed three operas in Houston on January 15-16 (*Martha* by Friedrich von Flotow, *Fra Diavolo* by Daniel Auber, and *The Magic Flute* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart) and six in Galveston on January 18-21 (*Martha*, *Fra Diavolo*, *The Magic Flute*, *Der Freischütz* by Carl Maria von Weber, *Faust* by Charles Gounod, and *Il Trovatore* by Giuseppe Verdi).

Amateur musical organizations and social clubs also produced operas in the nineteenth century. In 1859, the first amateur production of a German Opera in Texas was by the German Casino of San Antonio, who built the Casino Hall and shortly thereafter staged portions of Weber's *Der Freischütz*. (Wolz 2003 122-23.) Germans also brought sheet music production to Texas. In Victoria, German descendants established the Hauschild Music Company, which went on to become one of the largest publishers of sheet music in the American Southwest from 1891 to 1922 (Albrecht 2012a, 236-37).

German music also had a profound influence on the music of the Mexicans and Texas-Mexicans, as it was German / Czech immigrants who first brought the accordion to Texas. The accordion would later become the cornerstone of Música Tejana. European songs and dances, such as the polka, waltz, mazurka, and schottische, were very popular. Texas Germans often hired local Texas-Mexican musicians for German celebrations, and by the late nineteenth century, Texas-Mexican bands were playing European songs at local dances almost exclusively. By the end of the nineteenth century, genres such as the polka, waltz, and schottische had become so consumed by the Texas-Mexican musicians that it was now considered the music of the Texas Mexicans, instead of the music of the Europeans. (Dickey 2012, 426-27.)

2.2.8. Czech Settlers and Their Music

Texas also saw a large influx of Czech immigrants during the second half of the nineteenth century. Coming from areas like Bohemia, Moravia and parts of Silesia, the Czech immigrants were successful in establishing hundreds of settlements throughout east, central, north, and south Texas, with the greatest concentration being in Lavaca, Fayette, Washington, Burleson, and Brazos Counties. (Machann 2012.) Like the Germans, Czech immigrants in Texas brought their culture with them and continued to celebrate their music heritage in their new homeland. Virtually every Czech community in Texas had singing societies, church choirs, school ensembles, and local bands, which ranged from guitar-fiddle duos to more elaborate orchestras that featured clarinets, saxophones, trumpets, trombones, accordions, piano, and drums. Most Czech groups featured a broad repertoire that included polkas, waltzes, schottisches, Czech folk music, religious music, and other styles. Although the Germans and Polish also performed polka music in Texas, the Czech polka tradition was the strongest in the state. (Rivard and Jasinski 2012, 480.)

In the twentieth century, new styles were added to the Czech band repertoire, such as swing, jazz, pop, and country. Also in the twentieth century, many Czech musicians and bands made contributions to Texas music. Czech bands like the Baca Band and the Patek Band were very popular in the early twentieth century, while Czech musician Adolph Hofner (1916-2000) became one of Texas' most versatile and dynamic musicians in the mid-twentieth century. The Czech also established many music venues all throughout the state in the form of SPJST (Slavonic Benevolent Order of the State of Texas) halls. Originally built as community centers for Czech immigrants, many were eventually opened to the public and began featuring a broad range of musical styles. (Hartman 2008, 112-16.)

2.2.9. Polish Settlers and Their Music

Immigrants from Poland also flocked to Texas, seeking shelter from the deteriorating socioeconomic conditions in their homeland. Poles began immigrating to Texas as early as 1830, settling in central and south Texas towns such as San Antonio, New Braunfels, and Castroville. In 1854, Poles founded the first permanent Polish colony in the United States called Panna Maria in Karnes County. While the Poles settled primarily in central and south Texas, Poles began establishing colonies in east Texas after the Civil War. The earliest Polish colony founded in east Texas was the town of New Waverly in Walker County in 1867. (Perkowski and Wozniak 2012.)

Music for the Polish immigrants in Texas was a very important part of everyday life. Many played musical instruments, because music for the Poles had to be self-produced and was passed down orally from generation to generation. The typical Polish band was composed of one or two fiddle players and a bowed bass player. Occasionally there might have been a guitar and / or clarinet added, but the clarinet was expensive and not that common.

The fiddle was the preferred instrument of the Polish, and there were two distinct styles of Polish fiddle music in Texas: the rhythmic sawing style known as Washington County style and the more melodic Robertson County style. The house dance was another popular Polish music tradition that was brought to Texas. Those who had instruments brought them along, and whoever and whatever was available formed musical groups. The music played at the house dance was primarily Polish dance music with the occasional country song or Czech polka. (Griffith 2003, 175-82.)

2.2.10. Other European and Asian settlers

Italian immigrants, looking to escape the horrible social and economic conditions in Italy, began arriving in Texas towards the end of the nineteenth century. Part of a larger Italian migration to the American Gulf Coast, Italian immigrants in Texas initially settled in the lower Brazos valley in east Texas and in north Texas. Eventually Italian settlements developed in Houston, Galveston, and San Antonio. (Belfiglio 2012.) Immigrants from the Habsburg Empire (later the Republic of Austria) also came to Texas, settling in predominantly German towns and areas, instead of establishing their own settlements. (Goyne 2012.)

Immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales also moved to Texas. The Irish were among the first to settle in Spanish Texas. Many of the families in the Old Three Hundred were Irish, and Irish empresarios successfully settled the areas now making up modern-day Refugio and San Patricio counties. There were also several Irish families in Martín De Leon's (1765-1833) Colony in Victoria. (Fry 2012.) Immigrants from England began migrating to Texas individually by the beginning of the nineteenth century working as farmers and businessmen. In the 1820s, at least six empresario contracts were given to Englishmen, but none was successful in bringing in families. In 1833, Englishman John Charles Beales (1804-1878) established a colony in the Rio Grande valley with a mixture of English, German, American and Spanish-American families (Rister 2012). In 1841, Englishman William Smalling Peters (1779-1853) started a colony in north Texas, spreading English families throughout parts of twenty-six future Texas counties (Davis and Fry 2012). In 1850, the English colony of Kent was established in today's Bosque County, but the colony failed and was abandoned the next year (Ribb 2012). Immigrants from Scotland began coming to Texas, individually and in small groups, as early as 1825, and dispersed

rapidly throughout the population. There were attempts to establish Scottish colonies, but they had limited success. (Davis 2012.)

Scandinavians also immigrated to Texas. Swedish immigration was fostered by Swante Magnus Swenson (1816-1896), a Swedish immigrant who purchased a plantation located in Fort Bend County. At Sam Houston's request, Swenson arranged for twenty-five Swedish families to join him. Later, Swenson sold his plantation and slaves and moved to a large sheep and cattle ranch he had purchased east of Austin in Travis County. Swenson continued to assist his countrymen by advancing passage money in return for their labor. In 1882, Swenson established the SMS Ranch, centered in Stamford in Jones County. There had also been considerable immigration into Texas from the north central states, notably Illinois. The bulk of that movement took place in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century. There are also large groups of Swedes and their descendants around Lyford, Melvin, Brady, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Waco. (Leatherwood 2012.) Many immigrants from the rural parts of Norway immigrated to Texas and became farmers in their new homeland.

Norseman Johan Reinert Reiersen (1810–1864) established a colony in 1845 in Henderson County, and other Norse immigrants settled in Van Zandt, Cherokee, Kaufman, and Bosque counties between 1846 and 1872. (Hewitt 2012.) Danish immigration to Texas was sparse, with the first immigrants coming to Texas as individuals. There was a small Danish presence in Lee and Gillespie counties. The largest Danish settlement was Danevang in Wharton County. (Davis 2012a.)

Various groups from Asia also immigrated to Texas. The Chinese were the first Asians to come to Texas and came in two groups with the railroads. In 1870, the first group of Chinese came to Texas through California to build the Houston and Texas Central lines. When the lines were completed, a few of the Chinese remained in Robertson County. The

second group arrived in 1881 via California and built lines for Southern Pacific. When the railroads were completed, some Chinese stayed in El Paso, San Antonio and Houston. (Rhoads 2012a.) The Japanese began immigrating to Texas after a Japanese fact-finding tour of the Gulf Coast recommend that Japanese rice farmers would be welcome in Texas. At least thirty attempts were made by the Japanese to grow rice around Texas. The two most successful were in Harris and Orange counties. In the early twentieth century, another group of Japanese came to Texas, fleeing the anti-Japanese agitation in California. This group settled in the Rio Grande valley in Cameron and Hidalgo counties. There is also a sizeable Japanese presence in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and El Paso. (Rhoads 2012b.) The first Koreans came as the brides to American servicemen who served in the Korean War (1950-1953). Other Koreans came as a result of the liberalization of United States immigration laws in 1965. Many Koreans settled in Dallas, Harris, Bell, Bexar, Travis, Tarrant, and El Paso counties. (Rhoads 2012c.) Vietnamese immigrants have been living in Texas before 1975, such as military personnel sent for training, students, and “war brides”, but the Vietnamese began coming to Texas in large numbers in the late 1970s. They generally moved into urban areas such as Houston, Dallas, and Austin. (Von der Mehden 2012.) Large groups of immigrants from Lebanon and Syria also moved to Texas. The period of heaviest migration was between 1880 until World War I. Lebanese and Syrian communities can be found in all of the metropolitan areas of Texas. (McGuire 2012.)

Jewish and Islamic immigrants have also come to Texas. Jewish immigrants began coming to Texas in the nineteenth century, and by the twentieth century, they had established communities in all of Texas’ major cities and many small towns as well. (Kessler 2012.) Muslim communities can be found in the urban areas of the state (Rauf and Hajjaar 2012).

2.3. The Importance of Guitar, Accordion, Fiddle, and Piano in Texas Music

Certain instruments, such as the guitar, accordion, fiddle / violin, and piano, are the cornerstones of Texas music. Arriving with the Spanish settlers who establish missions and presidios in the Texas frontier, the guitar has been present in much of the music making in Texas. The guitar came to prominence in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the arrival of genres such as the blues, country western, and rock'n'roll. Many legendary American guitarists were born in or moved to Texas such as Blind Lemon Jefferson (ca. 1893-1929) and Stevie Ray Vaughn (1954-1990). Blues great and native Texan Blind Lemon Jefferson was one of the most prolific blues artists of all time who influenced generations of blues guitarists. What distinguished Jefferson from other bluesmen of his time was his singular approach to the guitar, which established the basis of what is known today as Texas style² (Govenar 2012, 67-68). Stevie Ray Vaughn and his band Double Trouble renewed interest in blues in the late twentieth century with his virtuosic playing that ranks him among the greatest guitarists ever. In música tejana, the guitar (or the bajo sexto / bajo quinto) also played a pivotal role in the development and popularization of the genre. In the conjunto, the bajo sexto / bajo quinto was paired with accordion and the resulting combination would go on to become the core of the conjunto ensemble.

Arriving in both Northern Mexico and Texas around the same time with German and Czech immigrants in the nineteenth century, the accordion had a tremendous impact on Texas music. The accordion was revolutionary in that it was a small, affordable instrument that could provide both melody and harmony at the same time. Popular with German and Czech polka, the accordion was eagerly embraced by the Mexican community in Texas

² Texas Style is when the guitar strings are strummed or “hammered” with repetitive bass figures and produces a succession of open and fretted notes, using a quick release and picking single-string arpeggio runs (Govenar 2012, 68).

during the nineteenth century, and by the twentieth century; the accordion was the instrument of choice with the Mexican working class. The accordion also became popular with the French population living in east Texas and became the featured instrument of zydeco, a blues-inspired genre of the twentieth century.

The fiddle first came to Texas with early Anglo-American settlers and was very prominent in the music of the Anglo-American and Polish communities. Fiddles were popular in the music of the traveling minstrel shows and medicine shows of the nineteenth century and would go on to be one of the cornerstone instruments of country western in the twentieth century. The fiddle was very important to the Polish community in Texas, and two Polish styles of playing developed in Texas: Washington County style and Robertson County style.

The piano also figures prominently in Texas music, especially with the African-American community, which developed a new style of piano playing in Texas, called boogie-woogie. Also known as “barrelhouse” or “fast Texas blues”, boogie-woogie originated in the sawmills and lumber camps of east Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas during the early twentieth century. Pianists developed an up-tempo, hard-driving, rocking rhythm that had to be loud enough to be heard throughout a bar or tavern. (Hartman 2008, 70-73; Peña 1999b, 43.)

III. MÚSICA TEJANA – VOCAL MUSIC, THE TEXAS-MEXICAN CONJUNTO AND LA ORQUESTA

3.1. Música Tejana

Tejanos have distinguished themselves from the other Mexican-Americans with their strong innovative musical spirit. As part of the musical vanguard of the Hispanic Southwest, tejanos have been the principle innovators of forms and styles like the corrido, the conjunto and orquesta during the first half of the twentieth century, and tejano during the second. Música tejana is mostly sung in Spanish and is intimately related to *norteño*, or North Mexican culture, as they both look to central Mexico and Mexico City for cultural and musical trends. (Peña 1999b, 14; San Miguel 2002, 9.)

Música tejana was nurtured mostly in the different regions of South Texas during the twentieth century, with each region contributing to its development in its own way. The lower Texas border region was the historical breeding ground for música tejana, producing seminal conjunto musicians such as Narcisco Martinez (1911-1992), Bruno Villarreal (1901-1976), and Valerio Longoria (1924-2000). The San Antonio area became a center of strong support and active promotion of música tejana and its subgenres, especially conjunto. The Alice area and its surrounding communities, such as Kingsville, Falfurrias, and Corpus Christi on the Gulf Coast, became the creative center of música tejana. (San Miguel 2002, 5-6.)

3.2. Definition and Characterizations of Música Tejana

Generally speaking, música tejana is composed of a diverse repertoire of songs and dances. In the nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries, dance forms such as the polka, huapango, waltz, schottisches, and mazurka were very popular with tejanos. In the years following WWII, new Latin dances such as the bolero, mambo, *danzones*, and *cumbias*, as well as the American genres such as the fox-trot, rhythm & blues, soul, funk, rock, country, and pop, became popular among the tejanos and were added to the música tejana repertoire. The polka, in particular, emerged as the most popular style among tejanos and is reflected in the amount of polkas recorded during the years 1927 to 1941. (San Miguel 2002, 10).

3.3. Brief History of Música Tejana in the Twentieth Century

As Anglo-Americans began to immigrate to Texas in the nineteenth century, the result had a profound impact on the lives of the tejanos. Tensions between Texans and the Mexican government resulted in violence, culminating with the Texas Revolution, and later the Mexican-American war. In the years following the Mexican-American war, tejanos were diminished to second-class citizens and thought of as lowly workers, thereafter ensuing a lengthy history of inter-ethnic conflict between tejanos and texians. This tension and conflict would go on to have a direct influence on the music of the tejanos.

In 1927, large American recording companies made their first efforts to commercialize the music of the tejanos; the record companies – Columbia, Victor, Decca, Brunswick, Vocalion – found an abundance of native talent and stylistic diversity. This had a tremendous impact on the stylistic maturation on música tejana. A majority of the recordings

made were of vocal singing with guitar accompaniment, orquestas of various sizes and styles, and rudimentary conjunto groups. (Peña 1999b, 11; San Miguel 2002, 20-21.)

The beginning years of the 1940s saw a decline in the recording of música tejana, due to shortage of materials sparked by the onset of WWII, as well as the large companies abandoning their efforts to record regional music in 1941. In the years after, small record companies, such as Ideal in Alice, and Falcon in Mission, opened by local tejano entrepreneurs, filled the void and fostered relationships with the musicians that allowed música tejana to continue to flourish and mature. (San Miguel 2002, 20; Peña 1999b, 12.)

The generation of upwardly mobile Mexican-Americans born between 1930 and the early 1960s came to be known as the Mexican-American generation (Peña 1999a, 25). Musically, tejanos of this generation either attempted to polish and refine their sound like that of professional Anglo bands and orchestras, or they remained playing music with a Mexican-ranchera (country) esthetic. The music of the former style went under the title *música moderna* – the *canción romántica* and the *orquesta tejana*.

Musically, many developments occurred in the years after WWII. Among these developments was the emergence of two different musical styles – the female-based duet and the orquesta tejana – and the reemergence and eventual dominance of conjunto music. (San Miguel 2002, 37.)

The events of the 1960s – the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War (1955-1975), and the hippy counter-culture – also impacted the Mexican-American community and caused a political-cultural explosion that came to be known as “the Chicano Movement” (Peña 1999a, 25). Made up of Mexican-Americans who came of age in the 1960s, the Chicano generation sought to recapture the culture of their Mexican ancestors. Musically, tejano musician sought to return to a simpler ranchera-esthetic that was played by

generations past. The music of the tejanos of this generation came to be known as *La Onda Chicana*.

The 1980s introduced a new musical climate to Texas, and música tejana as a new genre known simply as Tejano came to represent a diverse collection of styles that were emerging.

The final decade of the twentieth century, *grupo* continued its dominance of música tejana; however, progressive conjuntos challenged them for supremacy. Also, traditional conjuntos reemerged as a creative force in the 1990s. The core of the música tejana repertoire was composed of *rancheras*, polkas, cumbias, *baladas*, and country songs. The changes that occurred to música tejana during these years were due to the involvement and influence of major record labels, which had by now completely acquired the música tejana recording industry, and encouraged the rapid and upward growth of the Mexican-American community during the 1990s, and the influence of American, Caribbean, and Latin American musical forms on música tejana musicians. (San Miguel 2002, 92-93.)

IV. VOCAL MUSIC – CANCIONES, CORRIDOS, AND FEMALE DUETS

4.1. Vocal Music of the Tejano

Vocal music is very important in música tejana. During the latter years of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century, two genres predominated in the vocal music of the tejano – the *canción* (lyrical song) and the *corrido* (ballad). Vocal music was generally preformed at family celebrations, as salons and concert halls were absent from the tejano way of life. (Peña 1999b, 37-39).

In 1920, when the record companies arrived, vocal duets were their focus and became the most popular musical form among the Hispanic Southwest, with an estimated two-thirds of the music promoted by the record labels being of the vocal-duet variety. Artists were recorded in makeshift studios set up in hotels of cities like San Antonio and Dallas. (Peña 1999b, 51).

Popular tejana singers prior to WWII included groups Los Hermanos Chavarría, Gaitán y Cantú, Rocha y Martínez, and the legendary Lydia Mendoza (1916-2007). Known as “La Alondra de la Frontera” (The Lark of the Border,) Mendoza was the best-known solo tejana singer of her time. In the years following WWII, a number of other tejana singers enjoyed some success including the duet of Carmen y Laura, and canción-romántica singer Chelo Silva (1922–1988). (Peña 1999b, 52-60).

Performers were usually accompanied by one or more instruments, such as guitar, violin, and accordion, and sang a variety of songs including various types of canciones and corridos. The text in these songs most often reflected the political, social, and cultural experiences of Mexicans on both sides of the border.

4.2. The Canción

The canción, or traditional Mexican song, was a diffuse genre that reflected both the continuity and change of Mexican culture in Texas. The canción subsumes a broad array of forms and themes, most of which focused on non-political topics, especially love, and is often merged with other genres, such as the *habañera*, the bolero, and the vals, to create such hybrids as the canción-bolero, canción-vals, and the canción-huapango. The canción generally reflected the continuity of the traditional Mexican agrarian culture in the Southwest. (Peña 1999b, 37-39.)

4.2.1. Definition and Characterization of the Canción

Many different types of canciones have been popular with tejanos in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the traditional *canción mexicana*, also known as the *canción típica*, was most popular style of canción among the tejanos. (Peña 1999b, 37.) The canción mexicana was generally of a folk nature with simple tunes and lyrics, anonymous in composition, and was associated with the agrarian culture (Peña 1999b, 51). The *canción mexicana* subsumed a broad array of forms and themes and was often merged with other genres, especially dances, such as the bolero, vals, and polka. The canción mexicana focused on several themes, ranging from unrequited love to critiques to modern life. One of the most popular themes was that of the treacherous woman. (San Miguel 2002, 21-22.)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Italian-inspired *canción-romántica*, took root among the tejanos and continued to dominate until later in the twentieth century (Peña 1999b, 38). The canción romántica was associated with the Latin-American urban culture and its attraction to European imports, especially Italian music (Peña 1999b, 50). The

canción romántica dealt with a range of non-political themes from unrequited love to passionate betrayal; however, unlike the canción mexicana, the canción romántica did not portray the woman negatively (San Miguel 2002, 22).

Beginning in the 1920s, canción mexicana began to be known as the *canción ranchera*, and its lyrical content became powerfully charged with class and gender implications (Peña 1999b, 51). During its development in the twentieth century, the canción began to symbolize the polarization of cultural economics, and its new variant, the canción ranchera, spoke poignantly about the harsh conditions of the working class while evoking a vanishing pastoral economy. In contrast, the canción romántica invoked the modernizing power of capitalism. (Peña 1999b, 39).

In the years following World War II, the canción romántica, along with its principle purveyor – the orquesta – came of age in part by its dominant new variant, the canción-bolero (Peña 1999b, 64). However, despite the popularity of the canción-bolero, the canción romántica had a rather meager impact on the music of the tejano in the first half of the century, as the canción romántica was popular only within small circles of the musically sophisticated, and the masses preferred the canción ranchera. (Peña 1999b, 58).

4.2.2. Analysis of Vocal Music: The Canción – “Mal Hombre” as performed by Lydia Mendoza

As mentioned earlier, Lydia Mendoza was one of the most popular tejana singers of her time. Mendoza’s ranchero sensibility resonated strongly with her tejano fans, and her canción “Mal Hombre” (cold-hearted man), released in 1934, was her first of many hits. Recorded at an audition for Bluebird Records in 1934, Mendoza was paid \$60 for her effort. (Acosta 2012c, 404-405.)

As Mendoza’s popularity grew, she toured the Rio Grande Valley with her family, with her performances described as “magical and could awaken a populist frenzy and collective pride in Mexicans,” as Mendoza’s “soulful, yearning voice”, coupled with her skillful guitar playing, resonated well with her audience. By the onset of WWII, Mendoza was one of the most famous Spanish-language singers of the Texas-Mexico border region. (Acosta 2012c, 404-405.)

Mendoza has received many awards and recognition for her contributions to music. She has been invited to perform for two United States Presidents, at President Jimmy Carter’s (b. 1924) inauguration festivities in 1977, as well as in 1999, when she was presented with the National Medal of Arts by President Bill Clinton (b. 1946). In 1982, Mendoza was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. In the state of Texas, Mendoza has been recognized with her enshrinement in the Tejano Music Hall of Fame in 1982, the Texas Women’s Hall of Fame in 1985, and the Tejano R.O.O.T.S. Hall of Fame and Museum in 2002. (Acosta 2012c, 404-405.)

In Mendoza’s recording of the canción “Mal Hombre,” Mendoza accompanies herself on a twelve-stringed guitar that is down-tuned one whole step. The key of the song is D minor and is played against a tango rhythm.

The songs opening section outlines a i-iv-i-V7-i chord progression:

Dm – Gm – Dm – A7 – Dm

Followed by a verse section with the progression i-i-i-V7-V7-V7-V7-i:

Dm – Dm – Dm – A7 – A7 – A7 – A7 – Dm

The Bridge's progression is V/III-III-V/III-III-V/iv-iv-V7-I-I:

C – F – C – F – D – Gm – A7 – D – D

The progression in the chorus is V7-V7-i-i-iv-i-V7-V7:

A7 – A7 – Dm – Dm – Gm – Dm – A7 – A7

And the turnaround progression is i-V7-V7-i:

Dm – A7 – A7 – Dm

Mal hombre

Era yo una chiquilla todavía
cuando tú casualmente me encontraste
y a merced a tus artes de mundano
de mi honra el perfuma me llevaste.

Luego hiciste conmigo lo que todos
los que son como tú con las mujeres,
por lo tanto no extrañes que yo ahora
en tu cara te diga lo que eres.

Mal hombre,
tan ruin es tu alma que no tiene nombre.
Eres un canalla. Eres un malvado.
Eres un mal hombre.

A mi triste destino abandonada
entable fiero lucha con la vida,
ella recia y cruel me torturaba
y más débil al fin caí vencida.

Tú supiste a tiempo mi derrota,
mi espantoso calvario conociste.
Te dijeron algunos:
"Ve a salvarle."
Y probando quien eres,
te reíste.

Mal hombre,
tan ruin es tu alma que no tiene nombre.
Eres un canalla. Eres un malvado.
Eres un mal hombre.

Poco tiempo después en el arroyo,
entre sombras mi vida defendía.
Una noche con otra
tú pasaste,
que al mirarme sentí que te decía:

"¿Quién es esa mujer?"
"¿Tú la conoces?"
"Ya la veres", respondiste,
"una cualquiera".
al oír de tus labios el ultraje
demostrabas también,
lo que tú eras.

Mal hombre,
tan ruin es tu alma que no tiene nombre.
Eres un canalla. Eres un malvado.
Eres un mal hombre.

Cold-Hearted Man (lit. Bad Man)

I was still a young girl
when, by chance, you found me.

And thanks to your worldly charm,
you crushed the flower of my innocence.

Later you treated me like all men
who are like you, treat women.
So don't be surprised that, now,
I tell you to your face what you are.

Cold-hearted man,
your soul is so wicked it has no name.
You are a pig. You are evil.
You are a cold-hearted man.

To my sad fate abandoned,
engaged in a fierce struggle with life,
suffering the depths of cruelty,
I was weak and finally defeated.

With time, you learned of my downfall,
how my life had become a road to hell.
Some told you:
"Go save her".
And proving who you are,
you just laughed.

Cold-hearted man,
your soul is so wicked it has no name.
You are a pig. You are evil.
You are a cold-hearted man.

A short time later in the gutter,
I defended my life in a shadowy world.
One night, with another woman,
you passed by me,
and upon seeing my expression, she said to you:

"Who is that woman?"
"Do you know her?"
"Soon you will see", you replied,
"she's a nobody."
At the hearing from your lips the abuse,
you were showing again,
what you were.

Cold-hearted man,
your soul is so wicked it has no name.
You are a pig. You are evil.
You are a cold-hearted man.

4.3. The Corrido

The corrido was important to tejanos as a rapidly developing narrative form that emerged as an artistic expression on the struggling lives of the tejanos and their relations with their new Anglo neighbors, especially in the years following the Texas Revolution (Peña 1999b, 40).

4.3.1. Definition and Characterization of the Corrido

In its usual form, the corrido is a ballad of eight-syllable, four-line stanzas, sung to a simple tune in fast waltz time, now often in polka rhythm as well. Generally, corridos are in major keys and have short tunes with a narrow – less than octave – range. In Texas, the corrido has traditionally been accompanied by the bajo sexto / bajo quinto. (Dickey 2012a, 131; San Miguel 2002, 7.)

In its literary structure, the corrido is based on the Spanish *romance*, a ballad form that developed during the Middle Ages and brought to Texas by Spanish conquistadors. Like the *romance*, the corrido features a four-line stanza form in an *abcd* rhyming pattern and relates a story or event of local or national interest – a hero's deeds, a bandit's exploits, or a natural disaster, for instance. (Dickey 2012a, 131.)

In addition to its music, form, and subject matter, the corrido also employs certain formal ballad conventions. Six primary formal characteristics or conventions of the corrido include: (1) the initial call of the *corridista*, or balladeer, to the public, sometimes called the formal opening; (2) the stating of the place, time, and name of the protagonist featured in the ballad; (3) the arguments of the protagonist; (4) the message; (5) the farewell arguments of the protagonist; and (6) the *despedida* (farewell) of the *corridista*. The importance of each element of the corrido differs from region to region throughout Mexico and the American-

Southwest; in Texas and the border region, the formal opening is not as important as the despedida. Texas corridistas often skip the opening of the corrido and begin with the action of the story to gain the interest of the audience; however, the despedida is almost never dropped. Traditionally, the corrido have been men's songs, sung at home, on horseback, in town plazas by traveling troubadours, in cantinas by *guitarreros*, on campaigns during the Mexican Revolution, and on migrant worker's journeys to the fields. (Dickey 2012a, 131.)

In Texas, the corrido form developed in the years following the Texas Revolution and Mexican-American War and became extremely popular. The border corrido developed after 1848 and reached its zenith between 1890 and 1910, at least ten years before the peak of the Mexican corrido during the Mexican Revolution. Corridos of the border, in a short, dramatic form, feature a heroic struggle against oppression and rival Mexican corridos in quality, if not quantity. (Dickey 2012a, 131.)

Few border corridos were composed after 1930; however, the corrido tradition did not die, but changed. In the decades of the 1920s to 1950s, hundreds of corridos were composed and sung about bad working conditions, poverty, and the hopelessness of the tejano migrant agricultural worker. In the late 1940s and 1950s, when recording companies began their recording activities in Texas and the music of the tejano became commercialized, so did the corrido; however, these recorded corridos were about sensational topics such as barroom shooting and drug smuggling. (Dickey 2012a, 132.)

The corrido genre would see resurgence in the months following the assassination of United States President John F. Kennedy (1917-1963). In contrast to the commercially recorded corridos of the time, the corridos about Kennedy resembled the heroic corridos of the past. (Dickey 2012a, 132.) Corridos continued to thrive after the mid-1960s with the Chicano movement featuring subjects about Chicano leaders and ideals of economic justice

and cultural pride. From the 1970s on to the end of the twentieth century, in Texas, Northern Mexico, and the American Southwest, a new genre called *narcocorridos* began to rise in popularity, chronicling the exploits and lifestyles of drug dealers. (Dickey 2012a, 132.)

In the years since 1980, some corridos have been composed about famous tejanos, including Henry Cisneros and the late Selena, as well as American disasters, such as the Challenger explosion and the events on September 11, 2001. (Dickey 2012a, 131-132.)

4.3.2. Analysis of Vocal Music: The Corrido – “Gregorio Cortez” as performed by Jose-Luis Orozco

The corrido “Gregorio Cortez” is the quintessential border corrido. It features the story of Gregorio Cortez (1875-1916), who shot an Anglo sheriff who had shot Cortez’s brother over a misunderstanding. Cortez fled throughout the South Texas region and was pursued by as many as 300 Texas Rangers before he was arrested and convicted of second-degree murder. A small victory, considering Cortez was originally accused of much heavier charges.

The corrido that immortalizes Cortez’s episode is a short piece that is only four measures long, but has as many as twenty-eight verses. The corrido is in the key of G major and in a 9/8 compound meter. An analysis of the chord progression of “Gregorio Cortez” shows a progression of:

I-I-I | I-I-IV | V7-V7-I | I-V7-I.

Lyrics to the corrido “Gregorio Cortez” are as follows (Paredes 1976, 64-67):

<i>En el condado de El Carmen miren lo que ha sucedido, murió el Cherife Mayor, quedando Román herido.</i>	In the county of El Carmen, look what has happened; the Major Sheriff is dead, leaving Román badly wounded.
<i>En el condado de El Carmen tal desgracia sucedió,</i>	In the county of El Carmen such a tragedy took place:

<p><i>murió el Cherife Mayor, no saben quién lo mató.</i></p> <p><i>Se anduvieron informando como media hora después, supieron que el malhechor era Gregorio Cortez.</i></p> <p><i>Ya insortaron a Cortez por toditito el estado, que vivo o muerto se aprehenda porque a varios ha matado.</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez con su pistola en la mano: -No siento haberlo matado, lo que siento es a mi hermano.-</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez con su alma muy encendida: -No siento haberlo matado, la defensa es permitida.-</i></p> <p><i>Venían los americanos más blancos que una amapola, de miedo que le tenían a Cortez con su pistola.</i></p> <p><i>Decían los americanos, decían con timidez: - Vamos a seguir la huella que el malhechor es Cortez.-</i></p> <p><i>Soltaron los perros jaunes pa' que siguieran la huella, pero alcanzar a Cortez era seguir a una estrella.</i></p> <p><i>Tiró con rumbo a Gonzales sin ninguna timidez: -Siganme, rinches cobardes, yo soy Gregorio Cortez.-</i></p> <p><i>Se fue de Belmont al rancho, lo alcanzaron a rodear, poquitos más de trescientos,</i></p>	<p>the Major Sheriff is dead, no one knows who killed him.</p> <p>They went around asking questions about half an hour afterward; they found out that the wrongdoer had been Gregorio Cortez.</p> <p>Now they have outlawed Cortez throughout the whole state; let him be taken, dead or alive, for he has killed several men.</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, with his pistol in his hand, “I don’t regret having killed him; what I regret is my brother’s death.”</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, with his soul aflame, “I don’t regret having killed him; self-defense is permitted.”</p> <p>The Americans were coming; they were whiter than poppy from the fear that they had of Cortez and his pistol.</p> <p>Then the Americans said, and they said it fearfully, “Come, let us follow the trail, for the wrongdoer is Cortez.”</p> <p>They let loose the bloodhounds so they could follow the trail, but trying to overtake Cortez was like following a star.</p> <p>He struck out for Gonzales, without showing any fear: “Follow me, cowardly <i>rinches</i>; I am Gregorio Cortez.”</p> <p>From Belmont he went to the ranch, where they succeeded in surrounding him, quite a few more than three hundred, but he jumped out of their corral.</p>
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<p><i>y allí les brincó el corral.</i></p> <p><i>Cuandoles brincó el corral, según lo que aquí se dice, se agarraron a balazos y les mató otro cherife.</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez con su pistola en la mano: -No corran rinches cobardes, con un solo mexicano.-</i></p> <p><i>Salió Gregorio Cortez, salió con rumbo a Laredo, no lo quisieron seguir porque le tuvieron miedo.</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez: - ¿Pa' qué se valen de planes? No me pueden agarrar ni con esos perros jaunes. —</i></p> <p><i>Decían los americanos: -Si lo alcanzamos ¿qué hacemos? Si le entramos por derecho muy poquitos volveremos.-</i></p> <p><i>Allá por El Encinal, según lo que aquí se dice, le formaron un corral y les mató otro cherife.</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez echando muchos balazos': -Me he escapado de aguaceros, continúa de nublinaños.-</i></p> <p><i>Ya se encontró a un mexicano, le dice con altivez: -Platíneme qué hay de nuevo, yo soy Gregorio Cortez.</i></p> <p><i>-Dicen que por culpa mía han matado mucha gente, pues ya me voy a entregar porque eso no es conveniente.-</i></p>	<p>When he jumped out of their corral, according to what is said here, they got into a gunfight, and he killed them another sheriff.</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, with his pistol in his hand, “don't run, you cowardly <i>rinches</i>, from a single mexican.”</p> <p>Gregorio Cortez went out, he went out toward laredo: they would not follow him because they were afraid of him.</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, “What is the use of your scheming? You cannot catch me, even with those bloodhounds.”</p> <p>Then said the Americans, “If we catch up with him, what shall we do? If we fight him man to man, very few of us will return.”</p> <p>Way over near El Encinal, according to what is said here, they made him a corral, and he killed them another sheriff.</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, shooting out a lot of bullets, “I have weathered thunderstorms: this little mist doesn't bother me.”</p> <p>Now he has met a Mexican: he says to him haughtly, “Tell me the news, I am Gregorio Cortez.”</p> <p>“They say that because of me many people have been killed; so now I will surrender, because such things are not right.”</p> <p>Cortez says to Jesús, “At last you are going to see it;</p>
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<p><i>Cortez le dice a Jesús: -Ora sí lo vas a ver, anda diles a los rinches que me vengan a aprehender.-</i></p> <p><i>Venían todos los rinches, venían que hasta volaban, porque se iban a ganar diez mil pesos que les daban.</i></p> <p><i>Cuando rodearon la casa Cortez se les presentó: -Por la buena sí me llevan porque de otro modo no.-</i></p> <p><i>Decía el Cherife Mayor como queriendo llorar: -Cortez, entrega tus armas, no te vamos a matar.-</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez, les gritaba en alto voz: -Mis armas no las entrego hasta estar en calaboz'.</i></p> <p><i>Decía Gregorio Cortez, decía en su voz divina: -Mis armas no las entrego hasta estar en bartolina.-</i></p> <p><i>Ya agarraron a Cortez, ya terminó la cuestión, la pobre de su familia lo lleva en el corazón.</i></p> <p><i>Ya con ésta me despido a la sombra de un ciprés, aquí se acaba el corrido de don Gregorio Cortez.</i></p>	<p>go and tell the <i>rinches</i> that they can come and arrest me.”</p> <p>All the <i>rinches</i> were coming, so fast that they almost flew, because they were going to get the ten thousand dollars that were offered.</p> <p>When they surrounded the house, Cortez appeared before them; You will take me if I'm willing but not another way.”</p> <p>Then said the Major Sheriff, as if he was going to cry, “Cortez, hand over your weapons; we do not want to kill you.”</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, shouting to them in a loud voice, “I won't surrender my weapons until I am in a cell.”</p> <p>Then said Gregorio Cortez, speaking in his godlike voice, “I won't surrender my weapons until I am in jail.”</p> <p>Now they have taken Cortez, and not the matter is ended; his poor family is keeping him in their hearts.</p> <p>Now with this I say farewell in the shade of a cypress; this is the end of the ballad of Don Gregorio Cortez.</p>
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In “Gregorio Cortez” there is no initial call of the *corridista* (1). Verses 1 through 4 introduce us to Gregorio Cortez, and informs us as to what has happened (2). Verses 5 through 18 are the arguments of the protagonist, where we find out that Cortez does not regret killing the sheriff because he was only protecting himself (3). Verses 19 through 21 convey the message of the corrido, that killing is wrong and that a real man would give himself up to the authorities (4). Verses 22 through 26 serve as the farewell of the protagonist, in which the authorities are portrayed a greedy and cowardly, and Cortez is referred to as “God-Like” (5). The final two verses (verses 27 and 28) are the farewell of the *corridista* in which the conflict is declared over (6).

4.4. Female Duets

Female duets were very popular in Mexican culture as well as Texas-Mexican culture, and were among the first styles of *música tejana* recorded.

4.4.1. Definition and Characterizations of Female Duets

The *mujeres Tejanas* were extremely important in initiating a new style and helped establish the dominance of *tejano conjuntos* and *orquesta Tejanas* over other Mexican-inspired styles.

The repertoire of the female duets included both traditional Texas-Mexican songs, such as *rancheras* and *vales*, as well as new ones, such as *boleros*, *porros*, *mambos*, and *fox-trots*, and were always sung in Spanish. (San Miguel 2002, 45.)

Discos Ideal, the aforementioned small independent recording company started in Alice, Texas, by Armando Marroquín (1912-1990) and Paco Betancourtin (1903-1971) was very instrumental in shaping the sound of vocal duets in *música tejana*. In addition to starting trends in *conjunto* and *orquesta*, a majority of female duets recorded by Ideal featured *orquesta* and *conjunto* accompaniments. The first female duet recorded by Ideal was “Se Me Fue Mi Amor” by the group Carmen y Laura. (San Miguel 2002, 39.)

Accordionists such as Narcisco Martinez and Paulino Bernal, along with *bajo sexto* players such as Santiago Almeida, accompanied most songs recorded by *mujeres Tejanas*. *Mujeres Tejanas* also recorded with the *orquesta* sound of the saxophone and other wind instruments and popular *orquesta* musicians like Beto Villa. Occasionally, a few duets were recorded with the traditional horn and trumpet sounds of the *mariachi* style; however, the majority was accompanied by a *conjunto* or *orquesta tejana*. (San Miguel 2002, 41-42.)

4.4.2. Analysis of Vocal Music: Female Duets – “Se Me Fue Mi Amor” as performed by Carmen y Laura

The song “Se Me Fue Mi Amor” was important for many reasons. First of all, it presented a woman’s point of view, commenting on the feelings of a woman longing for her lover.

Female perspectives in love songs were highly unusual in the extremely patriarchal Mexican culture and likewise there was an absence from this perspective in the recording industry, with the exception of Lydia Mendoza. (San Miguel 2002, 40-41.)

The second reason for the importance of “Se Me Fue Mi Amor” was that it popularized the “tejano” sound, a style unique to Texas and differentiating them from the traditional Mexican sound and other Mexican-inspired sounds of the Southwest. Most Mexican female singers were accompanied by a variety of instruments, but none utilized the accordion like the tejanos did.

“Se Me Fue Mi Amor” is in 6/8 and the key of G major. The song features a main melody that appears at the beginning played by an accordion, as well as after the third verse, and after the final verse. There are six verses that follow the main melody. The harmony consists of an alternation of G (I) chords and D (V) chords.

Main Melody: G – D – G – D – G – D – G

Verses 1, 2, 5, and 6: G – D – G – D – G

Verses 3 and 4: G – D – G – D – G – D – G – D – G

4.5. Conclusion

Today, vocal music is still very important in the life of the Tejanos. Many young Tejanos, as well as other Texans, aspire to become vocalists, and with the help of some of the twenty-first century reality television shows, such as “American Idol” and “The Voice,” some do achieve fame on the national level. Most, however, do not and sing for their own enjoyment in their homes for their families, keeping alive a centuries old practice within the Tejano community.

V. THE TEXAS-MEXICAN CONJUNTO – CONJUNTO, PROGRESSIVE CONJUNTO, AND CHICANO COUNTRY

5.1. The Texas-Mexican Conjunto

5.2. Conjunto

Instrumental music was also important to tejanos during the nineteenth century, as instrumental music was featured at all types of celebrations. Accordion ensembles became associated with the fandango, although small violin-based groups would remain present at fandangos and other working-class dances until the 1920s. Orchestral ensembles, both string-based and wind-based, became associated with the baile.

As the accordion's popularity began to increase among tejanos, an ensemble began to form around the instrument around the 1890s. In the 1920s, the accordion began to be grouped with the *tambora de rancho*, a quasi-native drum that was fashioned out of whatever materials were available, and the bajo sexto, a bass-like twelve-string instrument from Western Mexico. (Peña 1999b, 44.)

In the twentieth century, the modern conjunto can be divided into two groups: the traditional conjunto and the progressive conjunto (San Miguel 2002, 16-17). The traditional conjunto was based on the one- and two-row accordion, grouped with the bajo sexto and a drum, the *tambora de rancho*, until the 1940s, when the drumset replaced the *tambora* (San Miguel 2002, 17; Reyna 2000).

In the years following WWII, the conjunto enjoyed a reemergence thanks to the establishment of small record labels such as Ideal and resurgences of artists like Narcisco Martinez, who was popular in the post-war years. (San Miguel 2002, 50.)

From the years after WWII until the early 1960s, the conjunto saw significant changes that lead to the solidification of a standard ensemble. These changes occurred

because of several innovations introduced at different points in the 1940s and 1950s. One major innovation occurred in 1948, when Valerio Longoria introduced vocal singing to the conjunto. Longoria added lyrics to polkas and the val, which led to the creation of the ranchera tejana and the val ranchera. (San Miguel 2002, 53.)

Female duets were also impacted by the addition of lyrics to the conjunto. Female duets had a significant decrease in popularity, as the vocal singing tradition had not merged with the male-only conjunto. (San Miguel 2002, 53.)

Another innovation was a change in instruments to the lineup. Conjuntos began to include the modern drumset, an electric bass guitar, and introduced amplification – speakers and microphones. Longoria was the first to add the drumset to the conjunto, but was popularized by Tony de la Rosa in the late 1950s. The addition of the drumset ‘settled down’ the tempo, especially for the polka, and kept time for the accordion and bajo sexto, allowing them to explore new modes of articulation. (San Miguel 2002, 53-54.)

The repertoire of the conjunto also saw a change in the 1950s, as conjuntos began to include rancheras and boleros. By the end of the 1950s, the ranchera became the core of the conjunto repertoire. Other musical styles such as the redowa, schottisches, and mazurka began to be played with less frequency. (San Miguel 2002, 54-55.)

El Conjunto Bernal, a group from Kingsville, Texas, ushered in new innovations as well with virtuosic playing on chromatic three-row accordions and singing in two- and three-part harmony; however, despite El Conjunto Bernal’s popularity, they had little impact on their conjunto peers of their day. (San Miguel 2002, 55.) Conjunto also began to be played in public and private music halls (San Miguel 2002, 56).

Another major trend was the emergence of norteño conjunto in the tejano scene. Norteño groups sang more corridos than the tejano counterparts and had a nasalized form

of singing. Norteño also had two vocalists, a faster beat, and additional instruments besides the accordion and bajo sexto. Norteño groups resisted many of the new trends occurring in conjunto and played in a style that was unique to them. (San Miguel 2002, 57.)

By the end of the 1950s, the conjunto was the dominant form of music in the tejano community. This was due to the commitment made by the local independent label to record that style of music, the growth of the number of cantinas and paid admission dances in the 1940s and 1950s, the emergence of a new dance popularly known as *el taquachito*³, and the rapid increase of working-class individuals within the tejano population. (San Miguel 2002, 57-58.)

During the 1960s, tejano conjuntos increased in popularity, as did norteño groups. Conjunto groups began to include and play the occasional baladas and cumbias; however, the majority continued to primarily play polkas and rancheras and featured one vocalist. One of the exceptions was Conjunto Bernal, who experimented and expanded the traditional conjunto ensemble by featuring two accordionists playing five-row button accordions, as well as incorporating two- and three-part harmonies into music. Conjunto Bernal also expanded their repertoire to include polkas, rancheras, cumbias, vales, schottisches, and rock'n'roll. El Conjunto Bernal's exploration of the limits of conjunto made them the dominant conjunto of the 1960s. (San Miguel 2002, 61-62.)

During the 1970s and 1980s, the popularity of conjunto music declined among the tejanos, as fewer new conjuntos were formed, and a vast majority of recordings were made by older conjunto groups. The decline was due to the lack of interest in and / or rejection of accordion-based music by large segments of the tejano community, especially the younger members. For many individuals, the accordion was viewed as instrument of shame and not

³El taquachito was a slower, more expressive way of dancing to the polka and ranchera.

pride. Conjunto's failure to incorporate new sounds and styles also contributed to conjunto's decline in popularity. Some conjuntos expanded their repertoire to include newer styles, such as contemporary soul, funk, and rock; however, most conjuntos stuck to polkas and rancheras. (San Miguel 2002, 62-64.)

There were a few exceptions to this conservative trend in conjunto music other than Conjunto Bernal, such as Steve Jordan y El Rio Jordan and Chavela y Brown Express. Steve Jordan (1939-2010) was a "musician's musician", and his conjunto was different from his peers in several distinct ways. In addition to the traditional repertoire of polkas, rancheras, and boleros, Steve Jordan y El Rio Jordan began to include cumbias, corridos, rock, country, and even zydeco. Jordan also began incorporating jazz and rhythm and blues into his own accordion playing style. El Rio Jordan added political themes to their lyrics and transformed English songs into the Spanish language. Jordan also played at such a virtuosic level that no other conjunto performer could match his creativity and playing. (San Miguel 2002, 64-65.)

Chavela y Brown Express was also innovative during this period. Chavela, born Isabela Salaiza Ortiz (-1992) in Fresno, California, was a rarity in the tejano music scene, as not only was Chavela a woman lead accordionist and vocalist, but also a Californian. Chavela y Brown Express was the only female-based group to record in the 1970s and 1980s. Despite the innovations made by Steve Jordan y El Rio Jordan and Chavela y Brown Express, other conjuntos failed to follow suit and remained playing the traditional repertoire in the traditional style. (San Miguel 2002, 65-66.)

Despite the decrease in popularity of conjunto during these years, norteño saw an increase in their popularity and by the 1970s had begun to compete with Texas conjuntos for market dominance. One reason for the increase in popularity was the absence of a dominant tejano conjunto group, which opened the market to competition, and norteño took

advantage of this opening. Among the nortño groups to experience success in Texas were Los Relámpagos del Norte and Ramón Ayala y Los Bravos del Norte, both groups featuring Ramón Ayala (1945-), the king of nortño. (San Miguel 2002, 66-69.)

5.3. Progressive Conjunto

Progressive conjuntos first formed in the 1970s, but did not become significant in música tejana until the 1990s. Progressive conjuntos differed from the traditional conjunto by adding *pitos* (a set of saxophones and / or trumpets) and keyboards (organ or synthesizer). In the 1970s, the progressive conjunto movement was initiated by Roberto Pulido (1950?), when he added two saxophones to his group, Roberto Pulido y los Clásicos. Pulido was a fan of conjunto music, as well as of the “brassy” sound of the orquesta, so in the early 1970s, he merged the sounds by adding pitos to the conjunto. Although this was nothing new to nortño, it was new in música tejana and the Texas-Mexican conjunto. In addition to adding pitos to the conjunto, Pulido also added country songs and ballads to the traditional repertoire of polkas and rancheras, and Pulido was key to the popularization of country music among the Tejano community. Many of his fans accepted the changes he made to the conjunto ensemble and repertoire, and new groups were formed using the new progressive conjunto model, such as David Lee Garza y Los Musicales. (San Miguel 2002, 78-79.)

In the 1990s, progressive conjuntos became extremely popular in música tejana thanks to Emilio Navaira y el Grupo Río. Prior to forming el Grupo Río in 1989, Navaira (1962-) was the frontman for David Lee Garza y los Musicales from 1985 to 1989, when Navaira left los Musicales and formed el Grupo Río. Navaira kept the conjunto ensemble, but augmented it by adding the popular synthesizer. This addition brought a newer, modern sound to el Grupo Río and in some ways, was a synthesis of the conjunto and grupo

ensembles. In addition to this conjunto / grupo synthesis, Navaira introduced the modern country and cowboy / vaquero fashions into música tejana. By modernizing and popularizing this look, Navaira added some legitimacy to the community's historical presence in Texan culture. After Navaira's success with this image, many other groups began to adopt this look as part of their own image, as did many fans.

Navaira also maintained the traditional repertoire of polkas and rancheras; however, he selectively incorporated other contemporary influences, such as country and rock. His interest in country music would eventually lead Navaira to record two country albums; however, Navaira continued to be rooted in música tejana in the traditional repertoire of polkas and rancheras. (San Miguel 2002, 93-96.)

Navaira also developed a unique performance style when originated the "Emilio Shuffle", a shoulder-swiveling, hip-shaking, 360-degree rotating dance routine, usually done to a polka or ranchera. Navaira's look, sound, and performance style gained him quick acceptance among the tejano community and earned Navaira the title of the "King of Tejano." (San Miguel 2002, 96.)

Emilio's success led to an increased popularity of the accordion as a symbol of cultural pride. Many of Emilio's younger fans accepted the accordion as a part of their heritage and began to favor the instrument. Several other factors contributed to the reacceptance of the accordion in the 1990s, such as the establishment of an annual conjunto festival in San Antonio, the creation of a traditional conjunto and progressive conjunto award in the annual Tejano Music Awards, the rise of bilingual radio stations, and the re-entry of the major record labels in to the música tejana industry. All styles of conjunto – the Texas-Mexican conjunto, and norteño – saw resurgence in popularity during the 1990s.

Norteño, however, became the dominant ensemble in the latter half of the 1990s, and even challenged all other types of música tejana. (San Miguel 2002, 97.)

Conjunto was reenergized by a new generation, and new artists began to start conjuntos and brought changes to the instrumentation, repertoire, and performance style of the traditional conjunto. Conjunto groups who led the resurgence were groups such as Los Chamacos and Los Palominos. Los Chamacos were popular in the late 1980s and 1990s, thanks to swirling accordion runs, sweet vocal, harmonies, and lively foot-stomping polkas. Los Palominos were described as old-time traditionalist, with a solid rhythm section and sweet harmonies, and were very popular among both adults and youths. (San Miguel 2002, 97-98.)

However, as mentioned earlier, by the middle of the decade, norteño groups had begun to challenge other música tejana groups for dominance of the música tejana market. Key groups to this movement were Michael Salgado (1971-), Intocable, and Limite. Intocable, although a Texas conjunto, played in the norteño style, yet with a uniqueness all their own that included the mixture of “norteño/soul/blues-drenched vocals,” engaging accordion runs, thumping bass lines, and a “tropical” sounding percussion section. Intocable was also popular in Mexico, where, in the past, tejano musicians were not normally well accepted. However, Intocable was able to buck this trend and play in both markets. (San Miguel 2002, 99.)

Some of the reasons for norteño emergence as the dominant genre in música tejana can be attributed to the absence of creative superstars in the música tejana community. The major groups of the early 1990s – Emilio, Selena, La Mafia, and Mazz – had run their creative course in música tejana and either moved on to another style /market or were

silenced forever, as in Selena's case. Norteño groups also had new, fresh approaches to the tradition that included new songs and rhythms. (San Miguel 2002, 102.)

5.4. Chicano Country

Chicano country bands probably originated in the 1960s, if not earlier, and were very popular in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (San Miguel 2002, 77). Chicano country bands have at least three general characteristics. First, they were small, with between four and six musicians in the ensemble, and depended on the violin and steel guitar. Second, the vocalist sang with a country twang. Third, Chicano country bands play traditional country music and traditional Mexican music, but in their own style. Chicano country bands "Mexicanized" traditional country music and "countrified" traditional Mexican songs. Little is known about the origins of Chicano country bands, but it is probable that they originated sometime in the 1950s or 1960s in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and became popular in the 1970s and 1980s. One Chicano country band, the Country Roland Band, became extremely well known in the early 1970s. (San Miguel 2002, 18.)

Chicano country bands, in most cases, did not use any instruments identified with the traditional conjunto or orquesta, but rather used instruments that were akin to the Anglo country ensemble, such as violins, steel guitars, and rhythm guitars. They sang traditional Mexican canciones, as well as American country songs, in an American country style with Spanish lyrics, although some country songs were sung in English. (San Miguel 2002, 81.)

The country sounds reflected in the progressive conjunto and Chicano country bands were so popular that other música tejana groups began to incorporate this style and rhythm into their sets. (San Miguel 2002, 81.)

5.5 Treatment of Harmony in the Conjunto

Conjunto in the early era of the Conjunto had simple harmonies to accommodate to the limited ranges of the early diatonic 2-row accordions. Harmonies mainly consisted of the tonic (I), dominant (V), subdominant (IV), and supertonic (ii) harmonies, with the occasional submediant (vi) and secondary dominant of the sub-dominant harmony (V7/IV). As accordion technology progressed and larger, chromatic accordions became available, harmonies became more sophisticated and included more secondary harmonies such as the secondary dominant of the dominant (V7/V) and supertonic (V7/ii) harmonies. In the later half of the twentieth century, harmonies began to resemble harmonies used within other genres popular within the state, such as the blues, rock, and country. Examples of such harmonies include the subtonic (bVII), lowered mediant (bIII), and Neapolitan chord (bII).

5.6 Conclusion

Although the accordion had to travel over 5,000 miles to reach the shores of Texas and Northeast Mexico, once it arrived, the accordion quickly established itself as a favorite of the Tejanos of South Texas. Thanks to pioneers such as Narcisco Martinez and his partner, Santiago Almeida (1911-1999), on bajo sexto, the accordion became the anchor of the conjunto ensemble and came to represent the musical life of the Tejano. As time passed and new instruments were added to the conjunto, only the accordion remained. Only in Chicano country do we not find the accordion serving as the foundation for the group, but it is quite easy to argue that Chicano country is not truly part of the conjunto.

As the quality and range of the accordions arriving to Texas progressed, so did the quality and sophistication of the playing style of the conjunto musicians, as well as the music itself. Today the accordion still leads the conjunto ensemble and has gone on to influence musicians of many other genres of music who have sought to include the “Tejano” sound into their music, such as the Talking Heads and the Clash.

VI. LA ORQUESTA TEJANA – ORQUESTA, LA ONDA CHICANA, AND GRUPO

6.1. La Orquesta Tejana

More affluent tejanos preferred orquestas of different varieties, such as brass bands and string orquestas. However, tejano orquestas could never attain the refinement of the great orchestras of the Anglo-American upper class. Tejano musicians of the nineteenth century were typically self-taught, although toward the end of the century an increasing number of *profesores de música* from Monterrey had begun to migrate to south Texas cities such as Brownsville, Laredo, and San Antonio. (Peña 1999b, 37-51.)

Orquestas of the nineteenth century were based primarily on string instruments, such as the violin, psaltery, *vihuela*, mandolin, guitar, and contrabass. Other instruments were used on occasion, such as the trumpet, trombone, clarinet, and tuba. If brass or wind instruments were used, the ensemble was known as an *orquesta típica*. If only brass or wind instruments were in the ensemble, it was known as an *orquesta de pitos*, or called a *banda*. Orquestas that only used string instruments were known as *orquestas de cuerda*. Bandas emerged in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and were not as popular with tejanos as the other types of orquestas were, as *orquesta típicas* and *orquestas de cuerdas* were found among both the elite and working-class groups of tejanos during the nineteenth century. In Texas, by the early twentieth century, orquestas came to be associated with the middle class. In the two decades after WWII, saxophones became extremely important to the modern orquestas. (San Miguel 2002, 16.)

Orquestas de cuerdas and bandas experienced a decline in popularity as *orquesta típica* were transformed and evolved into the modern *orquesta tejana*. Orquesta musicians were also evolving and were adding new elements to their style, including elements from old Mexican orquestas and newer American and Latin American orchestras, and blended them

to forge the new modern *orquesta tejana*. They removed the violins and mandolins and replaced them with the saxophone and trumpet. Beto Villa was the first to establish the modern *orquesta* in Falfurrias, Texas. Villa wanted to play what was now known as *música ranchera* (country music from the border region), but in a more sophisticated way by adding saxophones and trumpets. In 1947, Villa recorded for Ideal, and the result was a hit. His combination of instruments associated with *orquestas* and *conjunto* instruments created a totally new sound in *música tejana*. (San Miguel 2002, 46-47.)

Later in the 1960s and 1970s, organs and electric guitars were added (San Miguel 2002, 16). The *orquesta* repertoire was diverse and played vals, huapangos, mazurkas, *pasodobles*, marches, *danzas*, schottisches, *sones*, one-steps, and other dances.

During the years from the 1960s to the 1980s, the *orquesta* experienced significant changes in their instrumentation, repertoire, and popularity. *Orquestas* began adding the organ to the ensemble and eliminated many of the Caribbean and American styles of the older groups and substituted them with newer songs and dances that were popular in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. It was because of changes like these to *orquesta tejana* that helped the genre emerge as the dominant style of *música tejana* in the 1970s; however, by the 1980s, *orquestas* popularity faded and was replaced by the *grupos tejanos*. (San Miguel 2002, 69.)

6.2. La Onda Chicana

The *orquesta* of the 1960s and 1970s, also known as “Tex-Mex” or “La Onda Chicana,” originated when Texas-Mexican rock’n’roll group Sunny Ozuna and the Sunglows began recording Mexican music in Spanish. Their first hit, “Carino Nuevo,” featured the modern sounds of the organ and electric guitar and was an instant success. (San Miguel 2002, 69-70.)

Previous to recording in Spanish, Sunny Ozuna and the Sunglows, like many other new musical groups of young tejanos, were heavily influenced by the American strands of popular music – rock’n’roll and rhythm and blues – and recorded American genres. Initially, lyrics were in Spanish, but they eventually sang them in English. Other groups of tejanos singing in English emerged, such as Los Dinos, Rudy and the Reno Bops, Little Joe and the Latinaires, and Sam the Sham and the Pharaohs. Sunny Ozuna and the Sunglows, however, were the most successful and scored several top-ten hits, including “Talk To Me,” and appeared on the popular television show *American Bandstand*. Despite Ozuna’s success, in 1964, he began to record in Spanish and initiated a trend toward the development of a new sound in *música tejana*, the modern *orquesta tejana*. (San Miguel 2002, 70-73.)

Modern *orquestas* differed from their predecessors in three key ways – they featured smaller horn sections with four horns or fewer, the electric organ became more important and significant in the new *orquesta*, and the *bajo sexto* was replaced by the electric guitar. Changes were also made to the *orquesta* repertoire when they stopped playing *danzones*, *cha-cha-chas*, *porros*, *guarachas* and *paso dobles*, and replaced them with rock’n’roll, soul, and country. The *cumbia* was added to the modern *orquesta* repertoire by the late 1960s. Although the modern *orquesta* emerged from the *orquesta* tradition within the community, the modern *orquesta* was not organically linked to the *orquestas* of the past. (San Miguel 2002, 73-74.)

Other groups also made the switch from playing in English to Spanish, such as Little Joe and the Latinaires and Los Dinos. Los Dinos played an important role in popularizing the *orquesta* sound in the Gulf Coast and Lower Rio Grande Valley, but despite their initial popularity, Little Joe’s and Sunny Ozuna’s groups were the dominant groups in the modern

orquesta tradition. (San Miguel 2002, 74-75.) The most prolific tejano rock'n'roll artist was Balderama Huerta, who is better known by the name Freddie Fender (San Miguel 2002, 11).

The orquesta sound continued to increase in popularity during the end of the 1960s and 1970s; however, by the early 1980s, the popularity of orquesta was dwindling. Two reasons for orquestas decline include the orquesta failure to keep up with the tastes of the modern tejano music-listener. Also, the new generation of tejanos were interested in newer American and Latin-American genres and styles, such as pop, dance music, country, rap, as well as cumbias, *merengues*, and *música romántica*. The groups were willing to incorporate newer instruments, such as the synthesizer, and the new styles became increasingly popular in the 1980s and 1990s. (San Miguel 2002, 75-77.)

6.3. Grupo

Grupo is anchored in keyboards, especially the organ and synthesizer. Also present in grupo are a variety of string and wind instruments, drums, and vocals. Prior to the 1990s, the accordion was not present in grupo. In Texas, grupos sang and played a variety of songs, including baladas, cumbias, rancheras, country, and pop songs. The first grupo tejano was Los Fabulosos Cuatro in the 1960s; however, Los Fabulosos Cuatro didn't emerge as a powerful force until the 1980s. Among the most popular grupos tejanos in the 1990s were Mazz, La Mafia, and Selena y los Dinos. (San Miguel 2002, 17.) Grupos were smaller than orquesta Tejanas, and the synthesizer, rather than the accordion, became the dominant instrument of the group. Prior to the advent of the synthesizer, the organ was used. There were grupos in Mexico; however, Mexican grupos played mainly pop ballads or *música romántica*. Texas grupos played the entire repertoire of *música tejana*, not just ballads and *música romántica*. (San Miguel 2002, 82-83.)

The grupo tradition emerged out of the conjunto tradition in the mid-1960s. The originators of this style were Los Fabulosos Cuatro. Inspired by music groups like the Beatles, Los Fabulosos Cuatro used an organ instead of the accordion and replaced the bajo sexto with the electric guitar. (San Miguel 2002, 83-84.)

The influence of Los Fabulosos Cuatro would inspire many new grupos to form in the 1970s and 1980s, such as Laura Canales in the 1970s and Mazz, La Mafia, and Selena in the 1980s. The grupos of the 1970s and 1980s not only used different instruments, but they also expanded the grupo repertoire as well. In addition to playing the traditional Mexican songs such as the polka and ranchera, they also included cumbias and baladas, as well as American country and pop songs. Although Los Fabulosos Cuatro started the grupo trend in the mid-1960s, grupo and the organ-based ensemble did not become popular until the 1970s. In the late 1970s, the synthesizer replaced the organ, and grupo increased in popularity during the 1980s. The grupos of the 1980s were extremely popular and were headlined by three groups in particular, Mazz, La Mafia, and Selena y los Dinos. The initiator of this new sound was Mazz in the late 1970s. Mazz, like many other grupos of the 1970s, expanded their repertoire and in doing so gained a new generation of listeners. Over time, Mazz recorded an increasing number of rancheras, but emphasized songs without a polka beat. (San Miguel 2002, 85-87.)

Another group to have an impact on grupo was La Mafia from Houston, Texas. La Mafia, in many ways, was a transitional music group. They featured the accordion and bajo sexto combination and recorded a large number of polkas and rancheras like norteño groups; however, like many progressive conjuntos and grupos, they also used pitos and the synthesizer. La Mafia was able to play in three distinct styles. On some songs, they were able to play in a conjunto style with accordion, bajo sexto, bass, and drums, while on other songs

they included pitos and played in a progressive conjunto style; and on other songs, they played in a grupo style with synthesizer. Over time, though, La Mafia assumed the makings of a grupo. La Mafia also made a significant contribution to música tejana by adding showmanship and improved lighting and sound systems. By the end of the 1980s, La Mafia's stage show was unique to música tejana. (San Miguel 2002, 88-89.)

Another group to have a major impact in the 1980s was Selena y Los Dinos. The group's lead vocalist, Selena Quintilla-Perez (1971-1995), was an innovative, engaging, and influential artist who shaped both grupo and música tejana in the 1980s. By the end of the 1980s, Selena was the queen of Tejano music and was poised to crossover into the American pop markets before her untimely death. Selena promoted a new tejano aesthetic by focusing on cumbias and baladas and by adding choreography and a feminist touch to the male-dominated música tejana. In addition to helping popularize the cumbia in música tejana, she also added pop, rap, rock, dance, hip-hop, and mariachi influences to her songs. Her stage performance was also very innovative with choreographed dances that enthralled her fans, and her female perspective on issues like love had been missing since the 1940s. (San Miguel 2002, 89-90.)

By the end of the 1980s, grupo had become the most popular ensemble in the música tejana community and was taking the genre as a whole into new directions. (San Miguel 2002, 90-91.)

Grupo musicians made at least two significant changes to their ensemble during the 1990s. First, they added the accordion to the existing instrumentation of the grupo. Secondly, grupos continued to promote a new música tejana aesthetic in their recordings that reflected their desire for an internationalization of música tejana. Record companies sought to sell música tejana first to the international Spanish-speaking music market, then to the American

English-speaking market. For this reason, record companies encouraged música tejana groups of the 1990s to record cumbias and baladas. Texas grupos who welcomed these new opportunities included La Mafia, Mazz and Selena. The leader of these groups was La Mafia, a group that made several strategic and stylistic changes in order to expand the appeal of música tejana beyond the American southwest and into Mexico and other international markets. They did this by touring Mexico. La Mafia also slowed down the tempo of their songs and began playing more cumbias, baladas, and “techno,” with heavy synthesizer and bass. These new sounds attracted a wider following, including international audiences in Mexico, Latin America, and Puerto Rico, as well as in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Miami. (San Miguel 2002, 102-105.)

Mazz followed La Mafia’s initiative and toured in Mexico; however, not with the same success. Mazz was still quite popular, but with a slightly more diverse repertoire than their grupo counterparts. Mazz had hits with ranchera, cumbias, two-steps, and even banda tunes; however, their biggest success was with baladas. (San Miguel 2002, 105-106.)

Selena y los Dinos also followed La Mafia’s example and toured in Mexico; however, unlike Mazz, Selena quickly developed a large following in Mexico, as well as in other parts of the United States, including Los Angeles. Selena was also one of the forerunners of the new tejano aesthetic, recording a large number of cumbias and baladas; however, Selena did not abandon the ranchera, as many of her songs featured the polka beat. (San Miguel 2002, 106.)

Selena made several contributions to música tejana in the 1990s, including helping to popularize the cumbia as a dance style in música tejana. Selena also included pop, rap, rock, dance, and mariachi into música tejana, and she was the first female to introduce dynamism

and choreography into her stage performance. Selena also refined the neo-feminist perspective that she had introduced in the 1980s. (San Miguel 2002, 108-110.)

6.4 Treatment of Harmony in the Orquesta and Grupo

Harmony in the orquesta has always been more sophisticated than its conjunto counterpart, as the orquesta was structured after American swing and big bands and played material with similar difficulty. Examples of a high sophistication level in the orquesta include modulation, and secondary and borrowed harmonies as early as the music of Beto Villa.

6.5 Conclusion

Although Orquesta may have had a reputation for being “high class,” negative or positive, it was a music that was always looking forward, eager to evolve their music by adding newer technologies, such as the electric piano and synthesizer, when they were new. Thanks to this forward-thinking attitude and an eagerness to try something different, orquesta eventually lost the mystique of being high class, and became the music of those who looked forward, the tejano youths of the 1960’s and beyond.

Orquesta also was the music of those who were aware of the other music around them. Like their Texian musical counterpart, the western-swing ensemble, the orquesta tejana would not exist without our musical neighbors in Louisiana, and their native music of jazz, as orquesta was the tejano response to jazz coming from New Orleans. Orquesta was the first genre to also adapt more sophisticated rhythms into the music of the tejano. Thanks to the willingness and desire to experiment, orquesta musicians ensured the survival of the genre and its dominance into the 21st century.

EPILOGUE

Sitting at the cultural crossroads of America, Texas has been lucky to be the destination of so many different immigrants looking for a better life. Immigrants from all over the world have brought the cultures of their homelands, including their music. Within the Texas borders, these different styles of music mixed and coalesced into new styles that would go on to represent Texas and all of its residents.

In addition, many world-class musicians can call Texas their home, either native or transplant. From world-renowned classical musicians like Franz van der Stucken a.k.a. “Frank Valentine” (1858-1929) and Harvey Lavan “Van” Cliburn, Jr. (1934-2013), to great American classic bluesmen and songsters such as “Blind” Willie Johnson (1897-1945), “Blind” Lemon Jefferson, and Huddie “Leadbelly” Ledbetter (1888-1949), as well as many modern American bluesmen such as Aaron Thibaux “T-Bone” Walker (1910-1975), Freddie King (1934-1976), Sam John “Lightnin’” Hopkins (1912-1982) and Stevie Ray Vaughn. Texas produced some of America’s most notable rock’n’roll pioneers, such as Charles Hardin “Buddy” Holly (1936-1959), Roy Orbison (1936-1988), and Janis Joplin (1943-1970). Many country music legends hail from Texas, from western-swing pioneers such as The Light Crust Doughboys, Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, and Milton Brown and his Musical Brownies, to early country-western legends such as Ernest Tubb (1914-1984), George Jones (1931-2013) and Honky Tonk proponent William Orville “Lefty” Frizzel (1928-1975). Austin was home to the Cosmic Cowboy movement in the 1970s and was a hangout for many country musicians of the later half of the 20th century, including country outlaws Willie Nelson (1933-) and Waylon Jennings (1937-2002). In the final years of the 20th century, Texas country musicians like George Strait (1952-) would gain international fame and continue to sellout concerts and win accolades well into the 21st century. Many Texans would also make

extremely significant contributions to music in the world of jazz, such as ragtime pioneer Scott Joplin (1867/68?-1917), Eddie Durham (1906-1987), Weldon “Jack” Teagarden (1905-1964), and Charles “Charlie” Christian (1916-1942). Texans also made significant musical contributions to rhythm & blues, hip-hop, and rap. The Houston-based rap group The Geto Boys pioneered Southern Rap in the early 1990s. In hip-hop, Robert Earl Davis, Jr. a.k.a. “DJ Screw,” created the now-famous “Chopped and Screwed” DJ technique. In R&B, the Houston-based girls group Destiny’s Child became one of the popular R&B groups of the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century, and launched the career of Texan Beyoncé Knowles (1981-).

Although it is country music that is commonly referred to when one thinks of the music of Texas, one should rather think of all genres, because Texas musicians have had their hand in the creation, influencing, and evolution of many of the various styles of music popular in the United States and the world. For example, The Beatles, originally from Liverpool, England, were heavily influenced by Texas musicians, particularly Buddy Holly. When the Beatles chose to bring in an organ player for their “Get Back Sessions,” they enlisted the help of Billy Preston, a native of Houston.

Música tejana is a good example of a genre that attempts to capture and synthesize various aspects of different genres of music in Texas. Whenever Tejanos encountered new sounds, they were on the vanguard of musical experimentation and exploration. The accordion, for instance, is the foundational instrument in música tejana and was invented half a world away, but was eagerly embraced when the instrument was introduced to them by the Germans / Czechs in the nineteenth century, as well as song styles such as the polka and schottische. Tejanos took this instrument and ideas and combined them with instruments and ideas of the Mexican musical culture, especially the northeastern Mexican

states. In the early twentieth century, the conjunto emerged as the dominant synthesis of the Tejano / Mexican culture and a foreign, German culture. As time progressed, aspects from jazz (which itself was a synthesis of African-American and Anglo-American culture) were added to the conjunto and led to the creation of the orquesta. Technological advances made it possible for both the conjunto and the orquesta to expand and evolve into new styles such as the progressive conjunto and grupo, which themselves were heavily influenced by the Anglo- and African-American cultures, as well as Texas-Mexican culture.

Much has been written about the various individual styles of music played within the Texas borders and their evolution to what they are today. My goal with my thesis was to tie all these genres together, and instead of calling separate genres, to show connections and similarities. Just like the various cultures that came together to create what is now the Texas culture, their music did as well and it created new genres and styles that we can call the Music of Texas.

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