

Canon, Gender, Power

On the creation of a male canon and female strategies of authorship and self-representation in Chilean classical music of the 20th century

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1. Introduction

This essay delves into the mechanisms, primarily discursive, that contributed to the formation of a narrowly defined and predominantly masculine musical canon¹ in Chile during the first half of the 20th century. We will see how, from the late 1920s onwards, writing about music and music criticism (often exercised by composers on themselves and their own peers) will become one of the main tools to shape (and delimit) a ›new‹ national repertoire and what can be described as a new musical code of conduct.² The notions of ›composer‹, ›authorship‹ and ›national music‹ were also modified during this period, giving way to dissonances between the conceptual sphere and the musical praxis. In response to this scenario, Chilean women composers resorted to different strategies and mechanisms which I understand as devices or strategies of authorship and self-representation.

1 Canon is understood here in a double sense, as proposed by Marcia J. Citron: on the one hand, the *repertorial* canon (repertoires of musical pieces that have become part of a primarily written musical tradition), and on the other hand the *disciplinary* one, which refers to the paradigms guiding musicological practice. It is through the disciplinary canon that a hierarchisation of musical genres takes place, which has to some extent been based on ideological predicaments and gendered categories. See Marcia J. Citron: »Women and the Western Art Canon: Where Are We Now?«, in: *Notes* 64/2 (2007), pp. 209–215.

2 Here I am referring mainly to Katherine Bergeron's idea of canon as a principle of order and as »a relation that orders the behavior of social bodies«. Katherine Bergeron: »Prologue: Disciplining Music«, in: Katherine Bergeron / Philip V. Bohlman (eds.): *Disciplining Music. Musicology and Its Canons*, Chicago 1992, pp. 1f.

A critical milestone in this context was a profound reform of the National Conservatory³ in 1928 and the public campaign that preceded it. This was led by the Bach Society, founded in 1917 as a university choral group by a young law student, Domingo Santa Cruz Wilson (1899–1987). Since its beginnings the group set itself the goal of controlling and overseeing the musical development of the country, initiating what they called a »purifying«⁴ campaign. Within a few years, the Society – to which composers Alfonso Leng, Pedro Humberto Allende, Carlos Isamitt and Jorge Urrutia Blondel, as well as writers and music *aficionados* such as Eugenio Pereira Salas (Historian) belonged in its early years – managed to end up holding »the hegemony of Chilean musical activity«⁵ and became an unopposed (and self-appointed) authority on all matters related to national music and its development.

Thanks to their connections in the political and cultural spheres, the idea of a new ›National Composer‹ – academician, despiser of salon music and opera and, above all, male – became quickly a predominant narrative, leading to exclusions, omissions, inaccuracies and generalisations that disproportionately affected women composers active at the time: Carmela Mackenna (1879–1962), Marta Canales (1895–1986) and María Luisa Sepúlveda (1898–1958) among them. Their absence in the literature and in the current (Chilean) musical scene cannot be explained by the lack of a body of work, as composer Valeria Valle stresses, but rather by an intentional »historical silence«⁶:

Why aren't they known within the academy? Where is the work of Leni Alexander, Ida Vivado, Iris Sangüesa, Cecilia Cordero, Carmela Mackenna, to name a few, in the bibliography of the chairs of composition? What is the musical or cultural reason for their works not to be in the concert programs, in the orchestration studies and in the history of music?⁷

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- 3 Since its foundation in 1849 and until 1928, the National Conservatory had been the only entity responsible for higher musical education in the country.
 - 4 Domingo Santa Cruz: »Mis recuerdos sobre la Sociedad Bach«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 6/40 (1950), pp. 8–62, here pp. 17f.
 - 5 Fernanda Vera Malhue: *¿Músicos sin pasado? Construcción conceptual en la historiografía musical chilena. Tesis para optar al grado de Magíster en Artes con mención en Musicología*, Master thesis, Santiago, Universidad de Chile 2015, p. 107.
 - 6 Valeria Valle: »Ser compositora en Chile«, last modified July 15, 2019: <https://www.simuc.org/sections/columns/enfoque/2019.3-15.07.2019.php> (18.3.2020). Author's translation.
 - 7 »¿[P]or qué no se sabe de ellas en la academia?, ¿dónde está en la bibliografía de consulta de las cátedras de composición la obra de Leni Alexander, Ida Vivado, Iris Sangüesa, Cecilia Cordero, Carmela Mackenna, por nombrar a algunas? o, ¿por qué razón musical y cultural las obras de ellas no están en la programación de obras de conciertos, en el estudio de orquestación y en la historia de la música?« Ibid. Author's translation.

This development was, at the same time, framed in a regional process: the emergence of musical nationalisms in Latin America, marked by the »need of local histories to demonstrate that their countries, like their European counterparts, possessed traditions of their own.«⁸ In Chile, this phenomenon translated into an alienation from the musical tradition that had prevailed until the beginning of the 20th century: the genres associated with the salon (waltzes, polkas, romanzas, songs, contradanzas and *zamacuecas*)⁹,¹⁰ as well as Italian opera.

In this context it is pertinent to link Marcia Citron's reflections on »the automatic trivialization«¹¹ of the work of women composers that is associated with salon music, as well as the gender constructions linked to (purely instrumental) musical forms such as the sonata, symphonies and chamber music.¹² In addition to this, a factor of local nature played a decisive role: According to Fernanda Vera Malhue these genres were considered inferior also because they were not linked to the »modern state project«¹³ but to the Spanish colonial heritage.¹⁴ In doing so, women's music – since the 19th century associated with the salon and its forms – was doubly considered »irrelevant«¹⁵ and not worthy of being recorded in musical history. If mentioned at

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- 8 »Esta tendencia, relevante en la producción de las historias de la música nacionales, se manifestó en la necesidad de las historias locales por demostrar que sus países, al igual que sus símiles europeos, poseían tradiciones propias«. Vera Malhue: *¿Músicos sin pasado?*, p. 28. Author's translation.
- 9 *Zamacueca* is one of the so-called *bailes de la tierra*; that is, colonial dances with local roots, which shared space with European-style dances and music in Chilean salon. According to Torres Alvarado, this coexistence is one of the main characteristics of Chilean salons of the 19th century. Rodrigo Torres Alvarado: »Zamacueca a toda orquesta. Música popular, espectáculo público y orden republicano en Chile (1820–1860)«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 62/209 (2008), pp. 5–27.
- 10 See for example José Manuel Izquierdo König / Fernanda Vera Malhue / José Contreras Stoltze: *Partituras. Archivo Central Andrés Bello. Catálogo razonado*, Santiago 2012, p. 20.
- 11 Marcia J. Citron: »Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon«, in: *The Journal of Musicology* 8/1 (1990), p. 109.
- 12 Marcia J. Citron: »Feminist Approaches to Musicology«, in: Susan C. Cook / Judy S. Tsou (eds.): *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*, University of Illinois Press 1994, pp. 15–34.
- 13 »[E]l proyecto de estado moderno«. Vera Malhue: *¿Músicos sin pasado?*, p. 28. Author's translation.
- 14 Chilean musicologist Alejandro Vera has delved into the disregard of the colonial musical past on the part of Chilean music historiography. See for example Alejandro Vera: »Music, Eurocentrism and Identity. The Myth of the Discovery of America in Chilean Music History«, in: *Advances in Historical Studies* 3/5 (2014), pp. 298–312.
- 15 Melanie Unseld: »Die Kulturwissenschaften als Herausforderung für die Musikwissenschaft – und was sich daraus für die Historische Musikwissenschaft ergibt«, in: Michele Calella / Nikolaus Urbanek (eds.): *Historische Musikwissenschaft. Grundlagen und Perspektiven*, Stuttgart 2013, pp. 266–288, here p. 284.

all, these genres were often considered as part of a previous stage of development: an »evolutionist view«¹⁶ of the country's musical progress, as Juliana Pérez describes it in her monography on the musical histories of Latin America. The comparison of Latin American countries' own musical development with that of Europe was, in this sense, constant.¹⁷

In order to consolidate the new musical paradigm in the official discourse (and themselves as part of the nascent canon), Chilean composers of the period resorted to different positioning strategies, which I have divided into two groups: mechanisms of canonic exclusion, and of inclusion. I will refer to these in the next part of the essay. The different strategies and mechanisms deployed by women composers of the period against this background are described and analysed in the third part.

2. Self-referential, artificial, elitist: A Chilean canon for the 20th century

In his historical account *Historia de la Música en Chile* (1973), composer Jorge Urrutia Blondel (1905–1981) stated that, during the 19th century, »no kind of what could properly be called a »National Composer« [formulated in the male form¹⁸, author's note] could emerge.«¹⁹ Indeed, this idea of the »national composer« »without a past«²⁰ has been reworked from the 1930s onwards in various books and articles which are still considered key for the study of Chilean musical historiography.²¹ This conceptual framework was translated into an affine structure: the creation of a completely new musical institutionality, under the wing of the public university, which also included the founding of new institutes, the consequent (re)distribution of positions, new reward and funding systems for composers, the organisation of

16 Juliana Pérez González: *Las historias de la música en Hispanoamérica (1876–2000)*, Bogotá 2010, p. 74.

17 Moreover, in its general outline, the construction of Latin American music historiographies was inspired by the development of European musical nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries. See González: *Las historias de la música*, p. 90.

18 In Spanish: »el compositor«, »el compositor nacional«.

19 »Es así como no pudo surgir en casi todo el siglo un tipo de lo que pudiera llamarse propiamente un »Compositor Nacional«. Samuel Claro Valdés / Urrutia Blondel: *Historia de la música en Chile*, Santiago 1973, p. 91. Author's translation.

20 An exhaustive analysis of this discursive construction is offered by Vera Malhue in the chapter »Músicos sin pasado: su construcción historiográfica« of her Master thesis. Vera Malhue: *¿Músicas sin pasado?*, pp. 103–133.

21 See for example Eugenio Pereira Salas: »La música chilena en los primeros cincuenta años del siglo XX«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 6/40 (1950), pp. 63–78, and id.: *Historia de La Música En Chile (1850–1900)*, Santiago 1957; Vicente Salas Viú: *La Creación Musical En Chile. 1900–1951*, Santiago 1952; Valdés / Blondel: *Historia de la Música en Chile*.

concert cycles and the creation and use of public media.²² Altogether this is what Fernanda Vera Malhue, Dania Sánchez and Isidora Mora describe as the emergence of a »patriarchal musical institutionality«,²³ consolidated in Chile between the late 1920s and the 1940s.

The notion of an »academic composer«, focused on the creation of absolute music²⁴ and disconnected from his musical past, proved itself excluding and disabling for women, as it became a catalogue of behaviour. This ideal was coupled in the writings of the time with that of the complete thinker, »cultured and rational«,²⁵ who was focused on the foundation of a national academic music²⁶ and whose intellectual production went far beyond composing.²⁷ In the words of Vera Malhue: »the composer ceased to be a *maestro*, to become now a scholar«. ²⁸ Several of the conditions listed above – professional, intellectual, rational, cultured, aspiring to enter the canon²⁹ – also coincide with those schematised by Melanie Unsel as part of the

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- 22 The last four are also considered means for the establishment and perpetuating of a musical canon. See Omar Corrado: »Canon, hegemonía y experiencia estética: algunas reflexiones«, in: *Revista Argentina de Musicología* 5–6/24 (2005), pp. 16–44, here p. 24.
- 23 »[I]nstitucionalidad musical patriarcal«. Fernanda Vera Malhue / Dania Sánchez Hernández / Isidora Mora Salas: »María Luisa Sepúlveda Maira (1883–1957): Desde el »Desvanecimiento Historiográfico« hasta la presencia actual de una compositora y música chilena«, in: *Neuma (Talca)* 2 (2020), pp. 40–77, here p. 71. Author's translation. See also Linda Nochlin: *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*, London/New York 2021, pp. 80f.
- 24 In this regard, it is pertinent to mention Citron's reflections on the relation between gender and (purely instrumental) musical forms such as the sonata or the symphony. Citron: »Feminist Approaches to Musicology«, pp. 15–34.
- 25 »[C]ulto y racional«. Vera Malhue: *¿Músicos sin pasado?*, pp. 109f. Author's translation. Susanne Kogler also emphasises the male connotation of »intellectual« and »rational« authorship (»geistige Urheberschaft«), to which female creation – associated from Kant onwards with beauty (»Schönheit«) – would be unfailingly subordinate. Susanne Kogler: »Autorschaft, Genie, Geschlecht«, in: Susanne Kogler / Kordula Knaus (eds.): *Autorschaft – Genie – Geschlecht*, Köln 2013, pp. 9–22, here p. 14.
- 26 Vera Malhue: *¿Músicos sin pasado?*, p. 103.
- 27 This is notorious in the case of Santa Cruz: After being awarded with the National Music Prize, in 1951 (while he was still Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the public university), *Revista Musical Chilena* (created under his deanship, in 1945) published a facsimile issue about him, which included a complete list of his musical works, followed by an index of his articles and editorials on music, as well as reflections from colleagues about his intellectual and artistic production. The piece gives the impression of a »total work«. Comité Editorial: »Domingo Santa Cruz«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 8/42 (1952), pp. 128–167. It should be stressed that the *Revista* was directed between 1949 and 1952 by composer Juan Orrego Salas, stepson of Santa Cruz.
- 28 »Desde ese momento, el compositor, dejó de ser un maestro para convertirse en catedrático«. Vera Malhue: *¿Músicos sin pasado?*, p. 136. Author's translation.
- 29 Unsel: »Die Kulturwissenschaften als Herausforderung«, p. 284.

gendered symbolic ordering that has taken place in Western music since the 19th century.³⁰

Within this framework, we attest to the emergence of a *self-referential writing* as an effective mechanism of inclusion in the canon: (Male) composers who, from a place of institutional,³¹ gender and class power, publicly wrote about other (male) composers and musicians³² – Santa Cruz, Leng, Isamitt, Samuel Negrete, among the main ones. It is remarkable, in this regard, that several composers linked to the Bach Society did write about their contemporaries and evaluate their work in an uninterrupted way for decades, also in the context of official competitions and musical festivals organised by themselves.³³ The magazines founded by members of the Bach Society or of its immediate circle – *Marsyas* (1927–1928), *Aulos* (1932–1934), *Revista de Arte* (1934–1939) and *Revista Musical Chilena* (1945–) – played a decisive role when it came to defining the contours of the new canon: not only in terms of ›who‹, but above all, in terms of ›how‹.³⁴ Musicologist Juan Pablo González describes this phenomenon as ›self-canonisation‹ (›auto-canonización sonora‹³⁵), since canonisation processes have been commanded by ›its own protagonists, the composers‹.³⁶

The dissociation or dissonance between the conceptual and editorial work on the figures of the new canon and their musical practice is also worth analysing. Composers like Allende, Leng³⁷ and Santa Cruz³⁸ were oftentimes described as total intellectuals and musicians, yet they tended towards musical forms such as *Lieder*, madrigales, *cantos* and cantatas. In the case of the latter it is also noted that the writing of major symphonic works did not occur before the 1930s. Let us dwell briefly on

30 Ibid., p. 284.

31 See Juan Pablo González: ›Música chilena del siglo XX y la construcción sonora de la Nación‹, in: *Debates Críticos Sobre El Chile Del Bicentenario*, Santiago 2010, p. 3: <http://guiauditiva.uc.cl/musicachilena.pdf> (11.4.2022).

32 For background information, see Eugenio Pereira Salas: ›La música chilena‹, in: *Revista de Arte de La Universidad de Chile* 3/14 (1937), pp. 29–33 and ›La música chilena en los primeros cincuenta años del siglo XX‹.

33 See for example Carlos Humeres / Armando Carvajal / Próspero Bisquert / Luis Mutschler: ›Concurso Anual de Composición‹, in: *Aulos* 7 (Summer 1934), p. 36; Juan Orrego Salas: ›Segundo Festival de Música Chilena‹, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 6/39 (1950), pp. 5–13.

34 See for example Pereira Salas: ›La música chilena‹.

35 González: ›Música chilena del siglo XX‹, p. 3.

36 ›[E]n la construcción canónica de la música nacional han participado activamente sus propios protagonistas; los compositores.‹ Ibid. Author's translation.

37 See for example Comité Editorial: ›Catálogo de las obras musicales de Alfonso Leng‹, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 11/54 (August 1957), pp. 76–78. The compilation was probably made by composer Alfonso Letelier Llona, director of the *Revista* between 1957 and 1962.

38 See for example Luis Merino Montero: ›Catálogo de la obra musical de Domingo Santa Cruz‹, in: *Anales de la Universidad de Chile* 11 (August 1986), pp. 55–76.

the case of Pedro Humberto Allende: He was established in the discourse as »the father of musical nationalism«,³⁹ responsible for its translation into genres such as the symphonic poem or the concert. However, for composer Cirilo Vila, Allende should be rather regarded as a »master of the small form«,⁴⁰ which becomes evident when examining his production of *tonadas* and *canciones*.⁴¹

Considering that the musical forms and structures were in many cases European, the idea of the national had to be asserted in other spheres. The effort to link up and compare composers of the time with other figures of the national intelligentsia, such as poet and politician Pablo Neruda (1904–1973) or painter Juan Francisco González (1853–1933)⁴² is also seen as part of this discursive strategy: »Just as Neruda is the poet of the people of Chile, Humberto Allende is its musician«⁴³ stated (also) composer Alfonso Leng⁴⁴ in 1945. Coupled with this, the invention and circulation of a heroic, epic story around the first period of the Bach Society – which concluded with the reform of the Conservatory – can be considered a further mechanism of exclusion (and, at the same time, of insertion into the new canon). The language used was confrontational from the beginning, functional to the group's stance towards the Chilean musical field: It resembled a battlefield, which had to be conquered and then defended. Santa Cruz spoke in terms of allies and »enemies«,⁴⁵ and references to Don Quixote⁴⁶ and crusaders⁴⁷ were frequently brought up. Such metaphors around battle and violence are, according to Unseld, »so clearly opposed«

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- 39 See for example Pereira Salas: »La música chilena en los primeros cincuenta años del siglo XX«, p. 71. See also Vicente Salas Viú: »Allende y el nacionalismo musical«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 1/5 (1945), pp. 15–24.
- 40 Luis Merino Montero: »Canon musical y canon musicológico desde una perspectiva de la música chilena«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 60/205 (2006), pp. 29f.
- 41 See Raquel Bustos Valderrama: »Nuevos aportes al estudio de Pedro Humberto Allende (1885–1959)«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 44/174 (1990), pp. 27–56.
- 42 E. Lira Espejo: »Raigambre popular en la expresión de Allende«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 1/5 (1945), pp. 8–14.
- 43 »Así como Neruda es el poeta del pueblo de Chile, Humberto Allende es su músico«. Comité Editorial: »Los músicos chilenos opinan sobre P.H. Allende«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 1/5 (1945), pp. 48–56. Author's translation. Director of the *Revista* between 1945 and 1949 was Vicente Salas Viú.
- 44 At the time, Leng was dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at the Universidad Chile. Since the 1940s, he actively participated in the Institute of Musical Extension and also in the design of the Chilean Music Festivals organised by the Faculty of Arts. See »Alfonso Leng Haygus«, Universidad de Chile: <https://www.uchile.cl/presentacion/historia/grandes-figuras/premios-nacionales/musica/alfonso-leng-haygus> (3.4.2023).
- 45 »[E]nemigos«. Domingo Santa Cruz: »Medio Siglo«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 6/37 (1950), pp. 3–7, here p. 7. Author's translation.
- 46 Santa Cruz: »Mis recuerdos sobre la Sociedad Bach«, p. 29.
- 47 See for example Pereira Salas: »La música chilena en los primeros cincuenta años del siglo XX«, p. 67.

to the femininity concepts developed and established during the 19th century and the decades to follow that »a compatibility of ›genius‹ and ›female‹ no longer seemed conceivable«. ⁴⁸

The imposition of this heroic narrative would not have been possible without a good deal of historical denial: The idea of musicians and composers without a past was reinforced by an intentional agency to erase a specific group of composers and their contributions from Chilean musical historiography.⁴⁹ Figures such as composer and professor Luigi Stefano Giarda, composer Enrique Soro (director of the National Conservatory until 1928) and María Luisa Sepúlveda were quickly and roughly identified with the so-called ›Italian school⁵⁰ and, therefore, with the musical »backwardness«⁵¹ in which the country supposedly found itself towards the end of the 1930s. For those women who had studied at the Conservatory and were trained in other musical languages and traditions, this process of profound institutional and cultural uprooting meant, in many cases, a »de facto exclusion«⁵² from the canon. It also left them *without a past*, yet floating in a present that no longer considered or accepted them as peers.

3. »Dedicated to my dearest friend...«: Women's strategies of authorship and self-representation in turbulent times

In this scenario, the strategies of positioning, networking and self-representation of women composers took place in a more intimate sphere and register, forcing us

48 »Diese Metaphern von Gewalt und Aggression freilich setzen sich so klar gegen die Weiblichkeitsvorstellungen der Zeit ab, dass eine Vereinbarkeit von ›genial‹ und ›weiblich‹ nicht mehr denkbar schien.« Melanie Unseld: »Genie und Geschlecht: Strategien der Musikgeschichtsschreibung und der Selbstinszenierung«, in: Kogler / Knaus (eds.): *Autorschaft – Genie – Geschlecht*, pp. 23–45, p. 39. Author's translation.

49 More details about this process are provided in José Manuel Izquierdo König: »Prólogo«, in: Roberto Doniez Soro: *Palabra de Soro*, Viña del Mar 2011, p. 18.

50 See for example Domingo Santa Cruz: »Porqué el Conservatorio no ha llenado su función cultural«, in: *Marsyas* 3 (May 1927), pp. 73–75; Pereira Salas: »La música chilena«. This ›Italian connection‹ could be explained as follows: Professor and composer Giarda was Italian and Soro had studied in Milan, however, the latter devoted himself above all to symphonic and chamber music (see Vicente Salas Viú: »Enrique Soro en el movimiento musical de Chile«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 4/30 (1948), pp. 10–17, here p. 13), even venturing into polyphony, as did also Sepúlveda (see for example Antonio Voland: »María Luisa Sepúlveda: La primera de las primeras«, in: *La panera* 128 (July 2021), pp. 24f.)

51 »Retroceso musical«. Santa Cruz: »Mis recuerdos sobre la Sociedad Bach«, p. 57. Author's translations.

52 Citron: »Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon«, p. 110.

to look for material traces of authorship in a more intentional, closer way. These devices and their corresponding mechanisms do not reveal a decided intention to enter the new canon or to take part in its construction, but rather to leave a record of one's own creation by alternative means, several of them offered by musical writing itself. These include: the networking with other women or like-minded people, which authors such as María Luisa Sepúlveda and Carmela Mackenna tried to make explicit in the form of co-authorship and dedications in their scores; concealment of one's identity; and the documentation and self-distribution of one's own work.

My signature and my manuscript are mine alone

Although intellectual property registrations by women remained marginal around 1925, a study by the Chilean Department of Intellectual Property found a considerable increase in the decade 1916–1925, when compared with the period 1886–1895.⁵³ Even more, musical works proved themselves as a pre-eminent medium of female creation: they accounted for 38.5 % of all registrations by women between 1886 and 1925. This can be attributed to the fact that, since its foundation in 1850, the Conservatory was regularly attended by girls and women, even in a higher proportion than boys and men in some of the courses.⁵⁴ Different press publications of the period⁵⁵ also provide an account of the positive reception of the work of women musicians and composers of the time, such as Sepúlveda. She herself appears in the aforementioned study with two compositions: *Te quiero porque te quiero* (Canción para canto y piano, 1921) and *Estudio para piano* (1924). It is remarkable that the form provided for the intellectual property registration was addressed to male authors exclusively, as the word ›don« (Mr.) had to be ›feminised‹ in manual form: ›doña« (Mrs.) (see Fig. 1 und Fig. 2). A material confirmation of the perception of authorship as a primarily masculine endeavour.

53 Departamento de Derechos Intelectuales: »Música de mujeres: desde el hogar al registro de propiedad intelectual«: <https://www.propiedadintelectual.gob.cl/galeria/musica-de-mujeres-desde-el-hogar-al-registro-de-propiedad-intelectual> (20.5.2022). The study focused on the period 1886–1925.

54 See for example Eugenio Pereira Salas: »Los primeros años del Conservatorio Nacional de la Música«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 5/35-36 (1949), pp. 13–22, here pp. 21f.

55 See for example Emilio Uzcátegui García: »María Luisa Sepúlveda«, in: *Música*, October 1920, p. 1f., and »Srta. Marta Canales Pizarro«, in: *Música*, April 1922, pp. 1–3; Aníbal Aracena Infanta: »Del Conservatorio Nacional de Música«, in: *Zig-Zag*, 1919, n.p. The last article is also accessible online, in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/624/w3-article-153895.html> (30.5.2022).

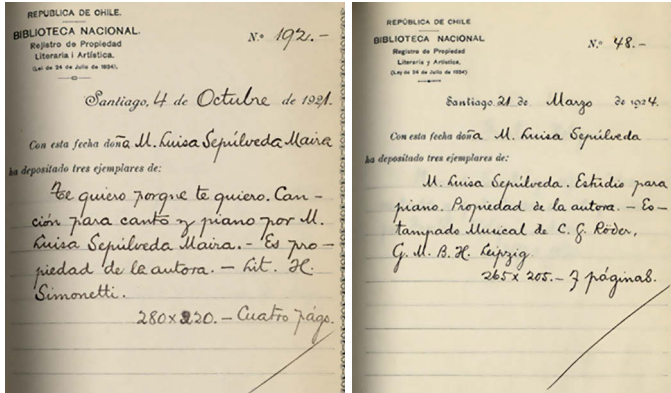


Fig. 1 and 2: Intellectual property registration forms provided by the Chilean National Library, which at the time housed the Register of Literary and Artistic Property (»Registro de Propiedad Literaria y Artística«). Departamento de Derechos Intelectuales: »Música de mujeres: desde el hogar al registro de propiedad intelectual«, <https://www.propiedadintelectual.gob.cl/galeria/musica-de-mujeres-desde-el-hogar-al-registro-de-propiedad-intelectual> (20.5.2022).

The copyright of one's own intellectual work became even more relevant from 1928 onwards. Not being considered in the public and musical discourse meant for several female authors of the period the same as the material loss of their work, unless they had been backed up by the composers themselves. According to tenor and scholar Gonzalo Cuadra, in Sepúlveda's case, an »overwhelming percentage«⁵⁶ of her compositions (albeit catalogued) are irretrievably lost. It should be noted that after 1932 – the year in which her exclusion from the Conservatory became irrevocable⁵⁷ –, the composer's works were no longer printed by official publishing houses, but were recorded only as manuscripts⁵⁸ (which leads one to believe that their publication was, in some way, obstructed). This is the case with most of her compositions for orchestra: *Estudio sinfónico* (1932), *Greca* (1932), *Suite* (1940), *Canción de las corhuillas*

- 56 »Un porcentaje abrumador«. Gonzalo Cuadra: *María Luisa Sepúlveda (2): »Te Quiero Porque Te Quiero«*. Canción, YouTube, posted on 04.11.2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ilhDHZn6U> (4.11.2020). Author's translation. According to a Master thesis on Sepúlveda, of the 75 works documented by the author, at least 24 have no known location: Catalina Sentis Acuña: *La compositora chilena María Luisa Sepúlveda Maira (1883–1958). Discursos historiográficos, exoneración y feminismo*, Master thesis, Santiago, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile 2020, pp. 97–106.
- 57 See Raquel Bustos Valderrama: *La mujer compositora y su aporte al desarrollo musical chileno*, Santiago 2012, p. 74.
- 58 *Ibid.*, pp. 221–227.

(1940) and *Trutruka* (1940).⁵⁹ The preservation of the manuscript becomes, in such a case, the only means of circulation, yet it does not ensure its permanence in time. In the case of Carmela Mackenna, of the 47 works compiled by Raquel Bustos, 22 are in manuscript,⁶⁰ while the others correspond to private editions commissioned personally by the author in Berlin and New York. In printed scores, such as that of *Canto de cuna* (1934), Mackenna wrote: »Im Selbstverlag des Autors. Alle Rechte vorbehalten.«⁶¹ Other pieces bear the inscription »Als Manuskript auf dem Opelograph [sic!] gedruckt.«⁶²

Based in the German capital from 1926 to 1940, this city became the epicentre of her artistic life. Few Chilean sources report on her work as a composer,⁶³ although her achievements include the successful premiere of her *Klavierkonzert* – considered her greatest work – at the Berlin Opera in 1933⁶⁴ and the second prize at the Frankfurt Religious Music Competition for her *Misa para coro a capella* in the following year.⁶⁵ A meticulous worker, the definitive copy of Mackenna's score of the *Klavierkonzert*⁶⁶ has numerous annotations made in graphite pencil in her own handwriting, as well as corrections which were pasted over the original score (see Fig. 2). Almost all of the notes are accompanied by her signature, along with the date and time of the review (for example: »12.2.34 2:30 morgen«,⁶⁷ see Fig. 3).

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- 59 The last two can be consulted as microfiche in the Chilean National Library. No record has been found of the other two pieces. See Sentis Acuña: *La compositora chilena María Luisa Sepúlveda*, pp. 97–106.
- 60 Bustos Valderrama: *La mujer compositora y su aporte al desarrollo musical chileno*, pp. 217–220.
- 61 Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux: *Canto de Cuna* (1934), in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/624/w3-article-355586.html> (30.3.2023).
- 62 See for example Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux: *Duo für Violoncello und Klavier* (1935), in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/624/w3-article-355579.html> (30.3.2023).
- 63 See »Escritos«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 2 (2013), <https://lajtp.uchile.cl/index.php/RMCH/article/view/16618> (5.4.2023), and »Crónicas, notas y documentos«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 2 (2013), <https://lajtp.uchile.cl/index.php/RMCH/article/view/16616> (5.4.2023).
- 64 G.S.V. [initials of the article's author]: »El Concierto de Carmela Mackenna«, 1935, n.p. This article was digitised by the Chilean National Library. However, there is no information on which newspaper or the exact date it was published: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/624/w3-article-153906.html>.
- 65 Bustos Valderrama: *La mujer compositora y su aporte al desarrollo musical chileno*, p. 218.
- 66 Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux: *Klavierkonzert*, Berlin (1934), in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/visor/BND:351000> (30.3.2023).
- 67 That is, 02:30 in the morning. The following page (121) reads »Fleck auf der anderen Seite hat hier nichts zu bedeuten. 12.2.[19]34 4:30 morgen« (»The stain on the other page has no meaning here. 12.2.[19]34, 04:30 in the morning«. Author's translation).

This last gesture I interpret as a »mark of appropriation« (*marca de apropiación*)⁶⁸ since it seeks to make explicit a sense of »ownership over the material«,⁶⁹ as suggested by Vera Malhue and Laura Jordán González in their analysis of what they describe as »marks of use«⁷⁰ (*marcas de uso*) of women's music albums in northern Chile. In the case of Mackenna, the signature also becomes a means that, as Peggy Kamuf observes, contributes to blurring the boundaries between »writer and work, ›life‹ and ›letters‹. Signature articulates the one with the other, the one in the other: It both divides and joins.«⁷¹



Fig. 3: Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux: *Klavierkonzert*, Berlin 1934, pp. 12of. Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/visor/BND:351000> (30.3.2023). This and other scores by Mackenna are preserved in the Music Archive of the Chilean National Library.

Considering the few options for publication and circulation of works for those who did not belong to the circle of the reformed Conservatoire during the 1930s and 1940s, these material traces can be seen as another mechanism for enduring in time. For if we follow Jacques Derrida, although the handwritten signature »implies the

68 Laura Jordán González / Fernanda Vera Malhue: »Álbumes musicales de mujeres, marcas de uso y escena cultural«, in: *Latin American Music Review* 43/1 (June 2022), pp. 27–66.

69 »[M]arcas de apropiación, que consisten en la inscripción de nombres y firmas que denotan propiedad sobre el material«. *Ibid.*, p. 42. Author's translation.

70 *Ibid.*, pp. 48f.

71 Peggy Kamuf: *Signature Pieces. On the Institution of Authorship*, Ithaca 1988, p. viii.

actual or empirical nonpresence of the signer«, it reaffirms in that very fact her existence and capacity of transcendence: »[...] it also marks and retains his [sic!] having-been present in a past now, which will remain a future now, and therefore in a now in general, in the transcendental form of nowness (*maintenance*).«⁷² A more special case is that of Marta Canales Pizarro, who studied harmony, counterpoint and composition privately with Luigi Stefano Giarda and violin with the Italian master Luis Gervino. According to Domingo Santa Cruz, the composer's house was »certainly a musical centre of the utmost importance«⁷³ in the Chilean capital at the beginning of the 20th century. Canales, as the eldest of five siblings, played an important organisational role in this context, even leading a chamber quartet that livened up these gatherings.⁷⁴ Many of the meetings of the Bach Society also took place in her home (her brother Ricardo was a founding member⁷⁵). However, she was never listed as an official member of the group.

Let us consider that much of what the group was up to had to do with institutional and political power structures, most of them patriarchal in nature. In such an environment, it was to be expected that Canales could not stand out publicly as a composer and choral conductor. This withdrawal was often read and interpreted from the outside as »modesty«, a rather positive, desirable attribute in the case of women. Yet Melanie Unseld does not understand it as a character trait,⁷⁶ but as a form of »Selbstinszenierung«⁷⁷ (or self-presentation) imposed by the outside in the face of the widespread association of genius with masculinity: »Transgressions of boundaries, which the genius was granted as a matter of course and which were even considered a necessary premise for his artistic activity [...], were not intended for women.«⁷⁸ »In the seclusion of her life, she is an industrious artist who has given shape, without any ostentation, to an eminently nationalistic work«,⁷⁹ stated for

72 Jacques Derrida: »Signature Event Context: Margins of Philosophy«, in: Barry Stocker (ed.), *Jacques Derridá. Basic Writings*, translated by Alan Bass, London 2007, pp. 105–134, here p. 131. Italics in the original.

73 »La casa de la familia Canales era ciertamente un centro musical de la mayor importancia«. Santa Cruz: »Mis recuerdos sobre la Sociedad Bach«, pp. 9f. Author's translation.

74 Raquel Bustos Valderrama: »Marta Canales Pizarro (1895–)«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 36/157 (1982), pp. 40–64, here p. 41.

75 Santa Cruz: »Mis recuerdos sobre la Sociedad Bach«, pp. 9f.

76 Unseld: »Genie und Geschlecht«, p. 44. Author's translation.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

78 »Grenzüberschreitungen, wie sie dem Genie selbstverständlich zugestanden, ja für sein künstlerisches Handeln geradezu als notwendige Prämisse erachtet wurden (Suppen-Anekdoten), waren für Frauen nicht vorgesehen«. Unseld: »Genie und Geschlecht«, p. 44. Author's translation.

79 »María Luisa Sepúlveda es una artista laboriosa que ha hecho sin ostentación en el recogimiento de su vida, su obra eminentemente nacionalista«. »Una nueva obra de María Luisa Sepúlveda«, in: *Zig Zag* (1st October, 1927), n.p. Author's translation. This (unsigned) press ar-

example *Zig-Zag* magazine in 1927, referring to María Luisa Sepúlveda. The same goes for Canales, who was described as a »quiet, religious«⁸⁰ woman. It is no surprise then that of the 43 works documented by Raquel Bustos in her 1982 article on Canales – which can be grouped into masses, oratorios and *madrigales sacros* – only three were ever printed.⁸¹

Within this framework, I understand the private distribution of Canales' work as a strategy of positioning herself in contexts other than those dominated by male authors. The manuscript of the *Madrigales teresianos* – the composer's most widely distributed work according to Bustos⁸² – was given as a gift from the author to the Monasterio de las Carmelitas Descalzas (Carmelite Monastery), which perhaps indicates the value she gave to the analogue version of the score. In return, Canales was made a sister of the confraternity.⁸³ In the following, I translate the impressions that the prioress of the convent sent to Bustos in 1982:

[T]he handwriting is old, almost gothic; the written parts are decorated and framed in beautiful vignettes in colour, possibly painted with watercolour of good quality. In general the decorations are intended to show small Teresian or Carmelite prints or engravings, e.g. the coat of arms of Saint Teresa's family, the ancient walls of Avila, sections of the cloister etc.⁸⁴

I dare to think that, in this case, the ornaments reinforce the score's character not only of a gift, but also of an offering, considering that almost all of Canales' work is of a profoundly religious nature. But they constitute, at the same time, a mark of appropriation and authorship, in that they accentuate the personalised nature of this manuscript edition and reveal another artistic and stylistic facet of the author. Its enjoyment, however, was reserved for the inhabitants of the monastery only.

ticle is available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital (Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile): <http://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/624/w3-article-154018.html> (8.6.2022).

80 Bustos Valderrama: »Marta Canales Pizarro (1895-)«, p. 40.

81 Ibid., pp. 59–64. And of these three, there is also no record of the existence of a printed score of the *Misa eucarística*, although Bustos points out that it was the first score to be printed in the country.

82 Ibid., p. 55.

83 Ibid, p. 42.

84 »[L]a letra es antigua, casi gótica; las partes escritas están adornadas y encuadradas en hermosas viñetas a color, pintadas posiblemente con acuarela de buena calidad y gusto. En general los adornos quieren mostrar pequeñas estampas o grabados teresiano-carmelitanos. vgr: Escudo de la familia de Santa Teresa, antiguas murallas de Ávila, tramos del claustro etc.« Ibid. Author's translation.

Scores and letters as ›animated objects‹ that speak of a cultural field and its networks

Jordán González and Vera Malhue's research aimed to determine »the different kinds of material traces that a single score can present«, understanding them as an »object animated by living practices«. ⁸⁵ Dedications, co-authorships and the musicalisation of literary texts represent, in this context, another ›mark of appropriation‹, accounting for the networks in which the authors took part. In the absence of an explicit connection to the author of a literary text set to music, the reference to this text means to indicate the composer's belonging to a certain »intellectual field« ⁸⁶: The reading and quoting of certain works as well as the knowledge of other artistic languages and trends in use and circulation can be seen as an attempt to opt for »cultural legitimacy« ⁸⁷ (as Pierre Bourdieu proposed).

In the case of María Luisa Sepúlveda we find a co-authorship with the Chilean poet Blanca Vanini to give life to the *Himno a la moderna mujer* ⁸⁸ (1925) (Hymn to the Modern Woman), composed on the occasion of the First International Women's Congress in Chile, which also shows the involvement (or, at least, the sympathy) of the author with the feminist movement. In addition, she musicalised several texts by Chilean and Latin American writers and poets of her time, such as Gabriela Mistral, Manuel Magallanes Moure, Humberto Díaz Casanueva or the Uruguayan Juana de Ibarborou.

As for Sepúlveda's works with dedications (also in the printed versions), they reaffirm the continuity of a musical world that did not end with the Bach Society: most of them are for colleagues or musicians trained at the ›old‹ Conservatory. ⁸⁹ This is the case of *L'Angelus* (for voice and piano), dedicated to the lyric singer and teacher at the Conservatory between 1921 and 1924, Mercedes Neumann ⁹⁰; her *Ave Maria*, dedicated to the memory of her teacher Bindo Paoli (undated); *Canción* (undated), dedicated to the violinist also trained at the Conservatory, Lidia Montero; or

85 »[N]uestra indagación de las marcas de uso apunta a juzgar los rastros diversos que una misma partitura puede presentar, procurando interrogar a través de ellas lo que la partitura delata de su historia como objeto animado por prácticas vivas.« Jordán González / Vera Malhue: »Álbumes musicales de mujeres, marcas de uso y escena cultural«, pp. 48f. Author's translation.

86 Pierre Bourdieu: *Campo de poder, campo intelectual*, Montessor 2002, p. 9.

87 »[L]egitimidad cultural«. Ibid., p. 15. Author's translation.

88 Voland: »María Luisa Sepúlveda«, p. 25.

89 Raquel Bustos Valderrama: »María Luisa Sepúlveda Maira (1892–1958)«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 35/153 (1981), pp. 130–140.

90 See Iván Barrientos Garrido: »Luigi Stefano Giarda: Una luz en la historia de la música chilena«, in: *Revista Musical Chilena* 50/186 (1996), pp. 40–72.

her *Preludio para arpa* (1929), for Mercedes Santiagos, the first harpist with a Conservatory degree in the country. The latter was also a member of the *White Orchestra*: a group composed entirely of female professors and students at the Conservatory, formed and conducted by Sepúlveda herself.⁹¹ Dedication was exercised by Mackenna to a lesser extent and was addressed rather to her private contacts (such as her father, to whom she dedicates her *Misa para coro a cappella*, 1934, privately published in Berlin⁹²). One of the connections that the author chooses to make explicit, however, is the one to musicologist Hans Mersmann (1891–1971), who was also her private composition teacher, and from whose text *Strom* she musicalised two fragments (*Zwei Gesänge für Singstimme u. Klavier*).⁹³

Although there are not many other sources that give an account of Mackenna's cultural and social context, I would like to mention here her epistolary exchange with the poet, diplomat and Nobel Prize of Literature winner Gabriela Mistral (1889–1957) between 1945 and 1948. In the letters, Mackenna addresses the Nobel Prize winner as »my dear friend« and asks her for favours in her capacity as consul in the Brazilian city of Petrópolis. In one of the notes she refers to a suitcase containing her musical scores, which she lost in Brazil:

I have been told by the »American Express«, that they can send it by steamship without paying anything, if the »Consulate of Chile« would ask them to take the cultural work of the Chilean composer C. Mackenna to the »Consulate of Chile« in New York. If this were not an inconvenience for you, I would thank you with all my heart, *since this music has caused me much heartache* since I left Europe.⁹⁴

As documented by Vera, Sánchez and Mora, Sepúlveda also attempted to establish contact with Mistral after activating other networks to gain access to the Nobel Prize winner.⁹⁵ Ten years after her exoneration, the composer still hoped that her profes-

91 See for example O.G.F. [initials of the article's author]: »Srta. Mercedes Santiagos. Distinguida Arpista Chilena«, in: *Música*, September 1921, p. 1.

92 Bustos Valderrama: »Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux«, pp. 68–75.

93 These are *Der Knabe* and *Die Frau*. Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux: *Zwei Gesänge für Singstimme u. Klavier* (1935), in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/624/w3-article-355584.html> (5.4.2023).

94 »[M]e han dicho en el »American Express«, que ellos pueden mandarla por vapor sin pagar nada, si el »Consulado de Chile« pidiera que llevaran esa obra cultural de la compositora chilena C. Mackenna al »Consulado de Chile« en New York. Si para usted esto no fuera una molestia, yo se lo agradecería con toda mi alma, pues *son muchos los sinsabores que me causa esta música* desde que salí de Europa«. Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux: »[Carta] [a] Gabriela Mistral, [Manuscrito] Carmela Mackenna.«, September 27, 1945, in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at: <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/623/w3-article-135851.html> (5.4.2023). Author's translation. The underlining is Mackenna's, italics by the author.

95 Malhue / Sánchez Hernández / Mora Salas: »María Luisa Sepúlveda Maira (1883–1957)«, p. 57.

sorship at the Conservatory could be reinstated, and, in what can be considered a last attempt to generate alliances around her cause, she wrote to the poet as follows:

I hope that the new government will do me justice by removing an unjust exoneration. I am hopeful. Then I could have a situation that would allow me to dedicate myself a little more to composition. I am sending you some of them.⁹⁶

While it could be claimed that Sepúlveda puts herself here in the place of the victim, I understand this act in the same sense as suggested by Citron, that is, as »an articulation of strength, for to give a name to the injustices that continue to oppress is to adamantly refuse victim status«. ⁹⁷ If we consider how small the musical circuit was in Sepúlveda's time and that at the beginning of her Conservatory career she was also assistant to the composer Pedro Humberto Allende, the following question posed by researcher Fernanda Vera Malhue is worth being further explored: »What was Alfonso Leng listening to when he composed *La muerte de Alsino* [symphonic poem, author's note]? And Pedro Humberto Allende?« ⁹⁸ In these circumstances, it is significant to consider that Sepúlveda began her study of Latin American and Chilean forms (such as the *tonada* or the *zamacueca*) and the »stylisation« of them very early in her career. By then, she had shared two first-place prizes with Allende, one in 1916⁹⁹ and another which was probably awarded at the end of that same decade.¹⁰⁰ The question raised by Vera does not necessarily hint at plagiarism, but rather to a cultural circuit in which musical influences were shared, and to which Sepúlveda, until 1928, belonged as a pioneer in her own right.

Positioning strategies and self-representation: Modest, but with glasses

I have already mentioned the first prizes that Sepúlveda shared with Pedro Humberto Allende – whom she always referred to as »maestro«. ¹⁰¹ For the first submis-

96 »Espero que el nuevo gobierno me haga justicia quitándome una injusta exoneración. Tengo esperanzas. Así podría tener una situación que me permita dedicarme un poco más a la composición. Le envío algunas composiciones mías«. María Luisa Sepúlveda: »[Carta] Santiago, Chile [a] Gabriela Mistral, La Habana, [Cuba] [Manuscrito] M. Luisa Sepúlveda Maira«, January 9, 1939, in: Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at: <https://www.biblioteca-nacionaldigital.gob.cl/bnd/623/w3-article-135286.html> (24.1.24). Author's translation.

97 Marcia J. Citron: »Feminist Waves and Classical Music. Pedagogy, Performance, Research«, in: *Women and Music. A Journal of Gender and Culture* 8/1 (2004), pp. 47–60, here p. 59.

98 This idea was discussed during a conversation with the author in January 2023.

99 Uzcátegui García: »María Luisa Sepúlveda«, pp. 1f.

100 Ibid.

101 See for example »Los músicos chilenos opinan sobre P.H. Allende«.

sion, in 1916, Sepúlveda chose »Alfonso y Corbalán« as her pseudonym.¹⁰² At the age of 23, she was perhaps already aware that the implicit or unconscious bias¹⁰³ towards a female author by an entirely male jury might work against her. In the case of the second competition, Sepúlveda signed as »A Chilean man« (»un chileno«), while Allende chose »Mapuche«¹⁰⁴ as his pseudonym.¹⁰⁵

Although Carmela Mackenna did not make active use of pseudonyms, she did conceal her first name when submitting her work to music contests, such as the Frankfurt Religious Music Competition. According to musicologist Raquel Bustos, »[i]n that opportunity the public could not get over their astonishment when they realised that behind the name C. Mackenna [...] there was a woman«.¹⁰⁶ In both cases we could speak of caution and concealment as a positioning strategy in an already adverse circuit for women. As to her self-image and self-perception, the use of sobriquets or the concealment of one's identity may express what Citron describes as »contradictory statements or actions about one's relationship with the creative process«.¹⁰⁷ This is a central aspect of the »anxiety of authorship«¹⁰⁸ experienced by women composers, in contrast to the implicitness with which men see themselves in the role of the creator.¹⁰⁹

This idea could have, in certain cases, a visual correlate: In the few images of Marta Canales that are available we see that, from her youth, she allowed herself to be portrayed with the violin (her preferred instrument) and not with her scores (Fig. 4 and 5). This attitude is related to the traditional role of women in the Chilean 19th- and 20th-century salon, where the proficiency as instrumentalist was considered a valuable asset for young women.

102 See »María Luisa Sepúlveda Maira (1892–1958)«, in: *Memoria Chilena, Biblioteca Nacional de Chile*, <https://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-92952.html> (12.3.2021).

103 In this regard, see for example Kate Moloney / Helen F. Mitchell: »Promoting Awareness of Unconscious Gender Bias in the Evaluation of Harp Performance«, in: *Music Education Research* 24/5 (October 20, 2022), pp. 588–598.

104 »Mapuche« is the designation of the largest indigenous group in Chile. Allende's intention was probably to hint at a deep connection with his homeland. The gesture should be understood as part of the musical nationalism which marked this period and also his artistic production.

105 I did not find any evidence that using pseudonyms was mandatory at such competitions. Yet, as most of the participants and the jury members were connected to the Conservatory, it was probably a common practice.

106 »En esa oportunidad, el público no logró salir de su asombro al comprobar que tras el escueto nombre C. Mackenna [...], había una mujer.« Bustos Valderrama: »Carmela Mackenna Subercaseaux«, p. 51. Author's translation.

107 Citron: »Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon«, p. 54.

108 Ibid.

109 See also Kogler: »Autorschaft, Genie, Geschlecht«, p. 15.



Fig. 4: Composer Marta Canales and the Bulgarian violinist Emeric Stefaniai in 1925. Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, available at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: <https://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-126762.html> (31.5.2023).



Fig. 5: Marta Canales around 1919. Emilio Uzcátegui García: *Músicos Chilenos Contemporáneos (Datos Biográficos e Impresiones Sobre Sus Obras)*, Santiago 1919, p. 68. Colección Biblioteca Nacional de Chile.

Although in Sepúlveda's case there are no pictures that show her in the act of composing,¹¹⁰ there is a detail on which tenor Gonzalo Cuadra dwells in his analysis of the composer. In several official photographs Sepúlveda appears with her glasses on:

If you look through the newspapers and magazines of the time, [you will see that] women never appeared with their glasses on in an official photograph, [because] taking a photo was ›an event‹. She, on the other hand, appears fashionably dressed, but with her glasses on. In a way, she is implying her place and that, at the end of the day, what mattered was not the glasses, but what was behind them.¹¹¹

110 Yet several of them show her at the piano: The first degree she obtained at the Conservatory was as a piano teacher and concert pianist. Bustos Valderrama: *La mujer compositora y su aporte al desarrollo musical chileno*, p. 72.

111 Gonzalo Cuadra: María Luisa Sepúlveda (2).



Fig. 6: María Luisa Sepúlveda around 1919. Emilio Uz-
cátegui García: *Músicos Chilenos Contemporáneos (Datos
Biográficos e Impresiones Sobre Sus Obras)*, Santiago 1919,
p. 74.



Fig. 7: María Luisa Sepúlveda pho-
tographed at the piano, in 1927. In:
Zig Zag (1st October 1927). Colección
Biblioteca Nacional de Chile, availa-
ble at Biblioteca Nacional Digital: [www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-ar-
ticle-126757.html](http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/602/w3-article-126757.html) (31.5.2023).

4. Conclusion (or notes on abandoning the shadowy place at the end of the world)

As we have seen, until the mid-1920s there was a structural and social framework that, although restrictive in several ways, allowed the training and inclusion of women in the musical life in Chile. From the late 1920s onwards the institutional and social conditions for women's musical writing – which Linda Nochlin identifies as the basic explanation for the »achievement or the lack of it in the arts«¹¹² – changed abruptly, redefining also what was understood by musician, professional and (national) composer. A profound analysis and review of the so-called Chilean classical canon should not only aim at its expansion, but also at a critical review of the social context¹¹³ from which it emerged. This also requires to realise that Canales', Mackenna's or Sepúlveda's withdrawal and modesty were not desired, but rather forced upon them by new structures and discourses which actively hindered female composers' insertion in the national canon.

In this context I understand the marks of scriptural use and appropriation by these women as well as their strategies of positioning as alternatives for exercising authorship and confronting musical and intellectual creation in a complex and

112 Nochlin: *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*, pp. 80f.

113 See Citron: »Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon«, p. 114.

markedly patriarchal working environment. Thus, the difficulty of publishing in official printing houses or in specialised magazines was faced through the circulation of manuscript scores. The monopoly on the public discourse and the self-referential writing of their male peers had its equivalent in the making visible of their networks and contacts. And while the Bach Society composers would make use of (and abuse) the relationships they held at the political and governmental level, women sought to activate their connections with other important women (such as Gabriela Mistral) or figures seen as potential allies.

Without influence over the mechanisms of canonical inclusion and exclusion set in motion by dominant male figures such as Domingo Santa Cruz, the confirmation of their quality and their place as authors took place for them in those spaces that were under their control: the score, the signature, the name, the picture. Added to this was the difficulty of inserting themselves into a genealogy and a creative tradition – insofar as the new one did not accept them as peers or role models. All of the reviewed cases however concluded in a »withdrawal« from classical musical life, »from the public sphere and from established male-dominated hierarchically organised institutions«.¹¹⁴ Canales took refuge in choral activity and religion, Mackenna hardly composed in the last 20 years of her life and Sepúlveda saw in the research and compilation of folk music and knowledge an opportunity to turn her career as a classical composer around. A final move which, according to Susanne Kogler, should not be underestimated as a strategy for unleash creative and artistic potential.¹¹⁵

I return here to the issue of pseudonymity and anonymity. Could it be possible that Sepúlveda and Mackenna had other reasons to hide the authorship of some of their lyrics? The conscious use of the pseudonym seems to me, in this case, to be an exercise (also a very deliberate one) of creative freedom. »Un hombre chileno« – »a Chilean man« thus becomes a metaphor for the female musical writing of the time, always threatening to dissolve in the backlighting and folds of the newly emerging modernity.

114 »[D]er Rückzug aus der Öffentlichkeit und aus etablierten männlich dominierten hierarchisch organisierten Institutionen.« Kogler: »Autorschaft, Genie, Geschlecht«, p. 16. Author's translation.

115 See *Ibid.*

