

## Does Betrayal Music Transform Sexual Pessimism into Optimistic ‘Love with a Laugh’?

WILLIAM J. BUCKLEY

### ABSTRACT

What quixotic so sharply turned the erotic south to be exotic for most westerners only at the end of the century? Postmodern sensualities predated modern sex appeal. Sex came to the city and transculturalized generations before magic realism in Gabriel García Márquez, border crossings in Gloria Anzaldúa or Carlos Vives’ Grammys. Love’s psychic, social and cultural terrains were recharted by composer Alberto Domínguez, arranger Xavier Cougat, performer Lupita Palomera and others. Nearly a century of imaginative techniques (poetics) in lyrics, music and dance hispanicize, latinize and ethnically filter some 250 versions of “Perfidia”. This romantic bolero’s patriarchal sexual pessimism is lyrically re-translated into post-coital optimism (“love with a laugh”). For both sexes, a social imaginary of desolation about capricious romance, is re-performed as confidence in vibrant, consumer choice. Gender, lyrics, instrumentation and arrangements re-signify post-sexual crises of possession. Spanish-speaking subaltern performances preserve verses by revising lyrics through hip poetic re-inventions.

Keywords: Sexual pessimism, subaltern performances, hispanicize, latinize and racialize, the poetics of politics.

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## RESUMEN

¿Qué estrategia quijotesca arrastró tenazmente el sur erótico hacia el exotismo, para la mayoría de los occidentales, únicamente a finales de siglo? Las sensualidades postmodernas predatan el sex appeal moderno. La sexualidad llegó a la ciudad y transformó la cultura de generaciones antes de lo real maravilloso de Gabriel García Márquez, la frontera de Gloria Anzaldúa o los premios Grammy de Carlos Vives. El compositor Alberto Domínguez, Xavier Cougat arreglista, la intérprete Lupita Palomera todos ellos y otros reescribieron terrenos psíquicos, sociales y culturales del amor. Casi un siglo de técnicas imaginativas (poesía) en letras, música y danza hispanizan, latinizan y le dan un carácter étnico a unas 250 versiones de “Perfidia”. El pesimismo sexual patriarcal de este bolero romántico se vuelve a traducir líricamente a un optimismo post-coital (“amor con risas”). Para ambos sexos, un imaginario social de pesimismo sobre el romance caprichoso, se vuelve a representar como la confianza en el más animado de los consumidores. El género, las letras, la instrumentación y los arreglos re-significan las crisis post-sexuales de la posesión. A pesar de ello, las representaciones del subalterno hispanohablante preservan los versos, revisando la lírica por medio de reinventiones poéticas de hip-hop.

Palabras clave: pesimismo sexual, algunas interpretaciones subordinadas, actuación del subalterno, hispanizar, latinizar y racializar, la poesía de la política.

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## 1. “PERFIDIA”: TOWARD A MUSICAL HISTORY OF TREACHERY AND BETRAYAL AS NEGOTIATED TRICKERY

What music changed sexual pessimism so few defend into sexual optimism for which so many yearned? Sex came to the city. Written by Alberto Domínguez Borrás (1911–1975) about love and betrayal, the popular Mexican song “Perfidia”, features Spanish, French, and instrumental versions with English lyrics by Milton Leeds (1909–2005). Passion markets are always brisk. Psychic, social and cultural terrains were imaginatively redrawn for audiences within and outside the United States. Arranger Cougat, performer Palomera and many interpreters redirected hearts that remapped worlds. This occurred generations before magic realism in Gabriel García Márquez and border crossings were symbolized by Gloria Anzaldúa (Anzaldúa xv-xviii; 377–390; García Márquez 1967, 1985).

Musical concoctions made the exotic erotic where difference held quixotic allure. Performances of “Perfidia” resignified gender, lyrics, instrumentation and arrangements with crises of possession. Post-colonial metaphors for passion neither engineered railroads,

revolutions nor cholera but musically performed “treachery” as trickery, resistance and renegotiation of sexual pessimism about capricious romance. Patriarchal skepticism of unpredictable partnerships and fickle companions converts to valued mutual prosperity in durably shared, equitably enjoyed trust. Spanish and English “re-translations” of “Perfidia” optimize intimacy as post-coital “love with a laugh.” These portray confident consumer choices for all in post-colonial, urbanized worlds. “Perfidia” performances were global contact zones of embodiment in which culturally contested meanings occurred for “highly asymmetrical relations of power” (Pratt 1999: 367-378). Transnational counter-interpretations of “Perfidia” renegotiate trust in intimacy by culturally expressing new kinds of aspirations for gender equity. Diverse social imaginaries trick different loves. Social contexts of musical history (Domínguez, Cougat) and social history (Mexico, World War II) shape textual lyrics (kinetic “Latin Americanism”), instrumentation and arrangements, that have foretexts of interpretation in dance. Unquestioned gains for modern egalitarian intimacy weigh cultural prices as post-modern relationships become globalized (“tricked”) for productive work and consumption (Taylor 23, 69).

Published in 1939, “Perfidia” became a 1940 hit for a Spanish émigré to Cuba, trained as a classical violinist known for his commercialization of pop music Xavier Cougat (Francisco de Asís Javier Cugat Mingall de Cru y Deulofeo, 1900-1990). Cougat knew and trusted Alberto Domínguez Borrás, as well as his brothers, Abel, Ernesto and Armando, who were Marimba performers from Mexico’s Chiapas region (Cugat 196; Estrada Pérez 73, 177, 186, 188). Cougat’s knowledge of the lyricist and songwriter undercuts conventional criticisms that his popularizations destroyed regional or national forms of music. But Cougat freely adapted what he promoted.

Yet how could diverging audiences agree about trustworthy interpretations of Domínguez’ “Perfidia”? It mattered. Three vocalists would influence nearly a century of Spanish and English-speaking interpretations. A recording that shaped later male interpretations was done by Miguelito Valdes (Miguel Ángel Eugenio Lázaro Zacarias Izquierdo Valdés Hernández, 1912-1978). Left unexplored was how decisively significant the 1937 recording by female vocalist Lupita Palomera (1916-2008), as well as archived recordings held by the University of California, “between 1920-1930”. This was when a parallel Victor recording of “Perfidia” had also been done by Mexican Juan Arvizu (Juan Nepomuceno Arvizu Santelices 1900-1985), “tenor of the silken voice” (“El Tenor de La Voz de Seda”). Cougat plugged his recording of Domínguez’s tune over the airways, re-working it in an early Cubanized version that blended styles.

Why does Cougat’s “rhumba” disturb so much “slumbah” (Pérez Firmat 2008: 190)? Reasons were musical, racist and gendered. “Perfidia” became a tool in the

toolbox for hispanicizing the other. How? Cougat's recording of "Perfidia" displays how contrived was his own self-invented reputation as the (North American) "King of Rumba;" not least of all, because Cuban bolero-son was misnamed rumba. In his version of "Perfidia," the "instrumentation, interlocking melodic-rhythmic ostinati, vocal delivery, dance styles, and topical lyrics" convict Cougat as a quintessential Europeanizer-Hispanicizer. His "Perfidia" Afro-Cubanizes (then de-Africanizes) a soneros. How? He presents a son in a "watered-down incarnation as the white society cabaret genre of rhumba" (Waxer 147). Cougat blended rumba genres, selected "white" musicians, singers, orchestration and rhythms that blanch supposed agonistic binary worlds of black versus white; together these negotiate a contested allegiance yet departure from some (essentialized) Afrocubanismo (Moore 1995: 179-180; 1997: 135; Cushman 166, 179).

Cougat's *mestizaje* or "hybridity" of Cuban styles and American commercial radio and television as well as his pragmatic commercial aesthetic linking production and consumption adapted him comfortably to shifting musical tastes (tango, cha-cha). Cougat relinquished a youthful classical career ruing family disappointments. Many cited and some examined his own exoticizing wisecrack, "I would rather play 'Chiquita Banana' and have my swimming pool than play Bach and starve" (Cougat 207). His LA dance band became the house band for the New York Waldorf Astoria before and after the Second World War, featuring recurrent divas.

Cougat's proverbial womanizing and relationships parlay male tricksterism into marketing spectacle. Why did Cougat later conceal his relation with Cuban singer Rita Montaner (Rita Aurelia Fulcida Montaner y Facenda, 1900-1958; Sublette 385, 401)? What fears about how invidiously social prejudices shape consumer choices were augmented by American segregationist cultures ("Jim Crow")? Cougat perceived career disadvantages from a relationship, no less than marriage with a woman of color.

Why did Cougat and his version of "Perfidia" prove so influential? Where mockery culturally mentors audiences, betrayal performatively re-negotiates new kinds of trust.

Cougat saw television. Recognition in Spain for Cougat's many accomplishments led to freedom from the military for him and his brothers and release from jail for his father. In the USA, this brought decades of Latina/o and Anglo cultural parody, but also recent retrievals. Why? Cougat was not only multitalented; he was farsighted. Television has been broadcasting from New York since 1928. An artist and entrepreneur, Cougat continually (re)invented himself with unabashed bluster.

But he was not alone. The 1937 recording of "Perfidia" by Mexican star Lupita Palomera signaled much. Excitement caused by her wedding in 1939 marriage to

Fernando Fernández, “El Crooner de México” (1916-1999) resulted in it being the first wedding electronically transmitted on the radio in Mexico City. Astutely attuned interpretations of the role of radio in promoting culture, especially big band interpretations of “Perfidia”, are boosted by alertness to concurrent visual media and counter voices among women (Olea Prieto 109; Granados Chaparro 271).

How do we know decades of listeners trusted Palomera’s “Perfidia”? First we must understand Cougat in mid-century commercializing musical culture; second we must consider “Perfidia”.

Cougat gave audiences what he helped them want. This musical maestro shaped meanings for audiences whose hyphenated identities were orchestrated with “sameness” and “difference”. How did Cougat so adroitly capitalize on his border-crossing credentials, bicoastal media connections, professional musical opportunities and the expanding world of commercial entertainment? “Perfidia” was one tool for crossing social worlds. Later conventional cultural constructions ignored relevant historical contexts. Cougat was more complex than an epitomized caricature of that trans-nationally vapid “Hispanic” (later “Latino”) impresario. What cultural devices served him so well in midcentury capitalism? Cougat used a familiar retinue of genderized, exoticized tropic accoutrements (parrots, a dog, palm trees, posed ingénues and vamps). As a talented graphic artist, such images were hardly imposed but deliberately endorsed if not in part designed by him for his music (his album covers, shows, TV ads). As a live performer whose income depended (in part) on being constantly hired and paid, such images arguably gave “brand recognition” in a competitive market of other performers. As deliberately contrived icon, the recognition that gave him location (actually trans-coastal mobility) and a livelihood in Anglo worlds brought contempt (if not envy) outside it. As a border-crosser and broker among cultures, such images both legitimated his role as interpreter by pandering to stereotypes — but also gave him cultural cache to offer his own ongoing (if contested) versions of different traditions and performers. As a cross-cultural worker and entertainer, Cougat’s pedigree was fairly ancient.

But Cougat’s marionette like portrayal, complete with Chihuahuas and pipes (that he never smoked), were the undeniably opportunistic tools of a complex parodic interwar trickster. “Americans know nothing about Latin [American] music. They neither understand nor feel it. So they have to be given music more for the eyes than the ears. Eighty percent visual, the rest aural. To succeed in American I gave the Americans a Latin [American] music that had nothing authentic about it. Then I began to change the music and play more legitimately” (Roberts 87; Gasca 85). At this time, “Latin” is a metonym for Latin-American culture; later usage and analyses investigated

“Latino/a” as conventionally ascribed to ethnic identity of geographic provenance. Cougat constantly troped genres that were visual, lyrical and musical. To understand Cougat’s bombast as one rhetoric for mobilizing commercial support for ignorant if not hostile Anglo cultures, is barely to be convinced by how he border crosses or interprets cultures.

In Cougat, “Perfidia” had its trickster. But what kind of betrayal (“Perfidia”) and renegotiated trust were the cartoons that Cougat portrayed? Put another way, one interpretation of Cougat frames him as cross-cultural trickster to an emerging commercialized media of performances.

But what made “Perfidia” such a good magic trick?

### 2.1. *Facing “Perfidia”*

Faces were needed for emerging radio, film and TV media. Cougat’s project to Europeanize “Perfidia” by “hispanicizing” it, deliberately selected a vocally skilled interpreter. He thus chose an ethnic mestizo (Spanish father and Mexican mother) yet one who was visually white, in fact “as black a white guy as you could meet in Havana,” Miguelito Valdes (1912-1978; Sublette 440). Cougat’s strategy was repeated in North America at a time of emerging visual media. To this visual rhetoric of recognizably appealing vocalists was added a linguistic Americanization starting in the 1940’s, even as Cougat receded into cultural caricature. Films familiarized viewers with the song; first it was Cubanized in 1939, and again the 1950’s; later it was “latinized” by parody in the 1970’s.

### 2.2. *Tricking tyranny: “Perfidia” goes to war*

World wars never hurt. Americanized “Perfidia(s)” dramatically lionized hearts of men and women to conquer new frontiers, by culturally re-territorializing its roots. Bandleader Glenn Miller’s assertion that “Perfidia” was the most popularly requested tune by troops among wartime big bands, would be echoed on airways that by 1941 featured five different recordings of “Perfidia” as top fifteen hits in the USA (Estrada Pérez 65, 154, 162, 168; Pérez Firmat 181).

In the midst of hispanicizing music being latinized, Heaghney’s sexually eroticized, paraphrased lyrics are rejected yet Domínguez’s lyrics are “optimized” by Leeds. How? Genderized culture industries used “Perfidia” music and dance in dramas and “women’s weepies” (1942, “Casablanca,” 1942 “Now Voyager”). How did this work?

### 2.3. *“Perfidia” linguistically and visually colors media*

“Perfidia” also linguistically and visually colorized cinema through a new medium called television. Later recoveries of “Perfidia” that satirized how media marshalled such wartime sentiments from 1939-2010, missed their own shadows. Visual media racialize a caucasian plumbline, as linguistic media American-ize by orally and aurally “latinizing” this song and its heritage. Early and later Latina/o versions would all be comedically troped on TV by later mainline Anglo TV culture. Cougar’s guitarist Desi Arnaz (1917-1986) lip-synched “Perfidia” to an unknown opera tenor in the film “Father Takes a Wife” (1941).

Did later versions of “Perfidia” merely caricature (parody) or essentially serve as simulacra/o (copy of a copy), as suggested by contemporary culture critics such as Jameson, Deleuze, Baudrillard? Performed meanings more precisely put questions for audiences as how later interpretations refashioned earlier understandings. “Perfidia” was no fixed artefact of some high culture, but conversed with mobile, evolving audiences of transnational Spanish and English speakers.

Was this some new cha-cha? Did the 2003 re-release of Cal Tjader’s half century old 1954 “Perfidia” say something new? Hardly. It was instead the long echo of Canción romantica from border radios in recordings by Lupita Palomero and Avelina Landín Rodríguez (1917-1991) that reached behind Cougar to re-invigorate retrievals as counter-voices to essentialized and homogenized understandings of “mujerismo”. What do we mean?

For example, a Spanish verse of “Perfidia” has shifted from “Mujer” in 1939, to “Mi Bien” by 2006. What historical changes are background contexts for this terminological shift? Colloquially in Mexico, the song “Perfidia” has long been known as “Mi Bien,” (“My Beloved”). The shift in affectionate discourse among intimates from “Mujer” to “Mi Bien” enlarges participation by democratizing intimacy and enabling women and men to address the divine (“si puedes tú con Dios hablar, Pregúntale si yo alguna vez, Te he dejado de adorar”). Many avoid claims about women that are “idealizing” (making normative) or “essentializing” (making what is particular into what is general for all). For example, cultural claims about “mujerismo” assert commonalities across complex traditions that are contested because they invite more finely grained distinctions among different kinds of communal experiences of gendered identity (Gutierrez y Muhs; Castillo); social advocacy to correct patriarchal machismo culturally has evoked a contrarian “Femism” (“Hembrismo” in Badinter 2004). Cultural artefacts like “Perfidia” interpret and re-envision “Mujer” as embodied performances.

The history of transnational interpretations of “Perfidia” trace how ethnicity, gender and class internally colonize and culturally exile many — yet provoked creative resistance. Hence “Perfidia” exemplifies twists and turns in Spanish-speaking, especially post-colonial enhancements of different historical layers of Anglophone and Francophone feminisms (Gutiérrez y Muhs vii-ix). “Perfidia’s” cultural performances resisted genderized sexualities replete with “Hispanicizations” and “latinizations” that engaged questions of suffrage, divorce, employment, embodiment and self-identity. Parody must not be confused with contempt, because audiences shifted.

Newer versions of “Perfidia” were also different. Female and many male Spanish recordings never “recovered” what they never “lost”. These instead re-interpreted the verse (AB) and voice behind Anglo influenced genderized versions by rumba, big band and rock and roll that had privileged the chorus (CDC) and dropped the verses. New versions (signs) were different because performers (signifiers) were different, because performances were different (signifying), because audiences were changing (person-objects as referents, Saussure 335).

For whom did it matter? Versions of “Perfidia” in Latina/o cultures were never so governed by parodies from mainline Anglo TV or media. That “Perfidia” simultaneously becomes a big band hit neglected its pre-North American history as a Mexican song in Radio culture (Olea Prieto). Another (hi) story was waiting to be told.

Subsequent recordings had wide audiences and different routes. They diverge simultaneous with the emergence of radio, television and movies as media of representation for (de)legitimizing virtuosi ideologies in times of national and international conflicts from the second “world” war through years of regional conflicts termed the Cold War. Concurrent with and subsequent to these conflicts, more than two hundred and fifty commercial renditions domesticate and trans-nationalize this song. Musical performances of “betrayal” disclose how intimacy is re-negotiated in new trust practices.

### 3. WHAT KIND OF TRUST DOES BETRAYAL MUSIC RITUALLY RE-NEGOTIATE?

How do “Perfidia’s” lyrics, translations and melodies display betrayals, trickeries, resistances and re-negotiations? Versions of “Perfidia” re-signify crises of “possession”— that are variously sexualized, yet not merely for “generalized” others such as women, men, Spanish versus English-speaking, Mexican versus Chilean versus Panamanian, etc. Nonetheless, telling contours emerge for how, for example, women renegotiate new lyrics to re-assert agency over fickle partners. For border-crossing cultural artefacts like



“Perfidia”, questions about fine and popular arts are debated in at least three distinct and independent forums. These appeal to what is convincing for different audiences; working artists, ordinary audiences and academic critics. “Perfidia’s” lyrics and history of translations and melodies betray, trick, resist and re-negotiate.

How did artists discuss an original romantic song that became a dance song that was re-interpreted as a “heard” and “visually viewed” performance for evolving audiences? “Perfidia” recordings mixed four fields of music-making including participation, performance, high fidelity and studio art. Each involved distinct kinds of activity, artistic roles, values, goals and people in specific instances of music making and dance (Turino 2008: 23, 66). Participatory performances don’t distinguish artists and audiences, and enhance social bonding.

“Perfidia” performances blended everything. With nearly a century of two hundred and fifty versions, important questions emerged — especially what H.J. Jauss terms the “effective history” of how later performances interpret earlier versions.

### *3.1. Translated lyrics as negotiated trickery: revising sexual pessimism into love with a laugh*

What were the tricks behind “Perfidia’s” English translation? Domínguez’s 1939 original Mexican bolero lyrics build on literary traditions of perfidy at the hands of a transnational traveler using persona existing in novels, theatre and music in one kind of (Catholic) culture shifting from rural and town to urban settings that cherish (serial) monogamy. Leeds’ translation reflects emerging Anglo-American plural, urban and suburban cultures managing relationships with adaptive consent rituals (dating, marriage with nuclear and non-nuclear kinship). Urbanization was one context for culture industries in both that de-coupled sexual practices from kinship roles. These re-shape border-crossing immigrant identities by impacting variable valuations of premarital virginity in accord with socioeconomic context (capital feminino) and regionalized expressions of patriarchy in which hetero-sexualized masculinity was locally hegemonized (González-López 5).

Domínguez’s Spanish narrator laments grief as seen by others (melodic Verse measures A& B) and queries beloved and betrayer to ask God to testify to the fidelity of given love (Chorus C). Leeds re-iterates the confirmed self-knowledge of the betrayed as but a temporary and ironic competitive victory for the betrayer, (“I find my love was not for you [the betrayer]. And so I take it back with a sigh, perfidious one, Goodbye.”)

Leeds’ “Perfidia” rescues by using a kinetic interchangeability of atmospheric Latin Americanism that pedagogically normalizes a contrived “Other” through simplified music and lyrics, thereby revising sexual pessimism to a post-coital optimism

of love with a laugh. Leeds' "Latin Americanism" re-invents partner fickleness and the unhappiness in love from a sultry female torch Canción Mexicana, or urbane male crooner bolero. Americans lyrically chuckle about sex, to functionally shrug failed relationships as no obstacles to new opportunities (Pérez Firmat 2008: 187-198).

Translated "Perfidia" lyrics are tricky negotiations of sexual pessimism into optimism for new audiences.

#### 4. MUSIC: STYLES OF MUSICAL TRICKERY

How did 250 versions of "Perfidia" dramatize "love with a laugh"? Rich and varied ways showed key "Perfidia" performances to be "styles" that displayed how people were hooked. "Perfidia" was sung, heard, seen and danced on stage with radio, bands, film and TV. "Perfidia" revised local "mannerisms" into new "common senses" more complex than contrived polarities between popular artistic expressions and industrialized cultures (Adorno 1941). Musical categories artfully evolved to construct embodied identities across imaginative borders with social identities (Frith 250, 275, 276).

Why and for whom did "Perfidia" maintain separate male and female Spanish vocal traditions of verse (AB) with chorus (CDC) as well as some choral versions that all informed new retrievals in English and Europe, including big band folk songs? "Perfidia" re-negotiates identities by poetically re-inventing them.

##### 4.1. *"Perfidia" Becomes Participative-Improvised Marimba (1920-1937, 2006)*

What do many experience, when they hear original versions of "Perfidia"? "Perfidia" as "Marimba", or "the wood that sings," ("las maderas que cantan"), is socially participative as improvised rhythm; it is a shared performance of tonal and percussive Chiapas instrumentation ("pure" and "orchestral"). What is culturally regional is historically African.

##### 4.2. *From Marimba Improvisation to Structured Canción Mexicana (1937-2006)*

How does what is locally heard, become nationally sung? Why is the 1937 recording of "Perfidia" still such a popular classic? Bolero composers and marimbistas, the San Cristobal Marimba band (Domínguez brothers) accompany twenty-one year old singer Lupita Palomera. By 1939 Alberto Domínguez published a "Perfidia" marimba as a Canción Mexicana melody with verse and chorus. Why is this so influential for later interpretations? These original recordings and first printed versions dramatically display how the quest to become "Hispanic" as European adapts then commercially culture industries or the "Tin Pan Alley" form. This converts what is locally unique into

what is commercially cosmopolitan for nationalist purposes. Domínguez' printed musical whole "(re)-presents" as a hispanicizing musical performance the more participative Marimba dimensions of earlier "Perfidia" versions for an audience.

Regional musical appropriations of this *Canción Mexicana* gave it new twists and posed new hurdles as they crossed borders such as Norteña Spanish versions in 1938-1941 "Perfidia" of Cuarteto y Sexteto Caney. These are later retrieved by Los Agues (1995), and Palma Nicolina ("Estela") Raval (1929) of Los Cincos Latinos (2007).

#### 4.3. *From Canción Mexicana to Rhumba (1940-1945)*

A world at war put worlds in motion; Cougat recognized people loved to dance and "Perfidia" was the perfectly adaptable tool. It was rhythm rather than melodies that made bands popular. Cougat converted a musically skilled, inviting performance into an exciting dance for audiences who enjoyed participating in simple 4/4 meter accented speeds (beats) and repetitive pulses (tempo). Cougat commercially renegotiates Domínguez's "Canción Mexicana" into his newly invented "Rhumba" for chiefly North American wartime audiences.

#### 4.4. *From Rhumba to Big Band (Jazz, 1939-1950's)*

What made "Perfidia" the most popularly requested Big Band wartime song? "Perfidia's" beauty became the beast, as dances got sexy with smoky jazz. A shortened musical formula combines with a tobacco vogue. The musical magic came from dropping verses and quickening the pace of the Chorus in Glenn Miller's 1941 famous 3 minute 15 second recording that uses a vocally close chorus of saxophone-like sung melody-lines. Miller and RCA determined his "Perfidia" version would be vocal rather instrumental for a recording session and nine 1941 radio broadcasts supported by the Chesterfield tobacco company. Domínguez attributed "Perfidia's" emerging success to friend, the Navy bandleader-clarinetist who toured in the Pacific theatre named Artie Shaw. American-speaking audiences mostly recalled competitor Miller's Army Air Force recording with echoes from his tour of Europe (Estrada Pérez 54-78). Who was the missing link? It took a well-trained violinist and commercial arranger to work with Miller and finely blend "Perfidia's" new smoky jazz vocals: Jerry Grey (Generoso Graziano, 1915-1976).

#### 4.5. *From Rhumba and Big Band to Mambo (1950-): "Perfidia" is Latinized as "Sexy" because "Noisy" Political Movement*

How did "Perfidia" heat up the Cold War? Urban subalterns reveled in making margins delightful. Poetics became political, when historic dances (*Danzón*) were fused with unexpected rhythmic accents (syncopations) in Mambo that resisted a world of

two major powers. Exciting dances for couples retrieved African traditions via edgy cultures (Cuba, Mexico). “Perfidia” is transnationally retailed as “sexy” because “Latin.” What versions of “Perfidia” were commercially cosmopolitan for mobile (especially urban) hybrid identities of transnational Spanish-speaking as well as English enthusiasts? Mambo “Perfidias” by Puerto Rican (“Newyorican”) Tito Puentes (1923-2000) and Cuban-Mexican Perez Prado (1916-1989) converted orchestras into percussion instruments as polyrhythmic syncopations used new wind elements that revised Cougat’s cabaret predictability and Miller’s big bands. These retrieved an aesthetic unity of visual and aural arts (Goodman, Bassie, Ellington; Spellman and Horwitz, 2001). Resistance to dominance renegotiated “Americanness” and became newly “Latin”.

#### 4.6. *From Big Band (Jazz) to Rock and Roll (1961-65): How “Perfidia” Electrified Love*

How did “Perfidia” recharge “love”? It became a “Rock and Roll” hit in December, 1960. By repeating the Chorus melody line, shifting keys and adding a “driving” guitar lead (“surfer”) this two minute instrumental version of “Perfidia” helped make a group of working class masonry workers from Tacoma, Washington the best selling instrumental band of all time. The “Perfidia” melody line by Ventures guitarist Bob Bogle (1934-2009) used a formula adapted from his hit “Walk Don’t Run,” that imitated Chet Atkins (1924-2001). The Ventures record this “Perfidia”, as do the Shadows, and Shadows singer Cliff Richards adds a phonetic Spanish Chorus. This aurally dislodged “Perfidia” from “Latin,” “Hispanic” and “Mexican” roots. The shift to electric music also amplified social and cultural changes of the 1960’s accelerated by rival North American urban coastal cultures that sought to define musical tastes.

#### 4.7. *From Canción Mexicana to Cosmopolitan Mestizaje (1992)*

Why did so many hear so much in a single recording? Linda Ronstadt’s 1992 recording both verbally rejoiced and lamented in Angel’s tears that “shock of recognition” which legalized divorce. This “Perfidia” counter-interprets Cougat’s eagerly exchanged rumba partners. What caught many ears was intimates resisting subordination, not generalized others who wanted to Europeanize “Perfidia” as an oral folk song such as versions by Carsten Gerlitz. Women’s counter-narratives orally revised written lyrics in ways still not officially acknowledged in published lyrics.

On the one hand, where border-crossing and transculturalism were oral and aural, memories were rich. Ronstadt doesn’t “recover” Spanish verses that were never so eclipsed as in American-speaking worlds. Yet Ronstadt’s recording contains a single, key

oral-lyrical change disclosive of wider cultural changes for women. Ronstadt's vocal phrasing has debts to Lupita Palomera's recordings but follows Spaniard Sarita Montiel (1965) in orally shifting the fourth verse of Domínguez's text. Thus Ronstadt changes Domínguez's present ("donde quiera que yo voy; I am looking for you...") to a definite past (preterite; "por doquiera que yo voy, I have looked for you...." not in published lyrics).

Montiel's same amended lyric in 1965 followed her 1964 divorce from American actor and film director Anthony Mann (Emil Anton Bundsmann, 1906-1967), her 1964 several month marriage to Roman attorney José Vicente Ramírez-Olaya, and her 1965 affair with Italian actor Giancarlo del Duca. These all occurred before divorce was either culturally or legally accepted in Italy (1971) or Spain (1981). "Perfidia" performances reflected two cultural shifts: legal freedoms brought cultural adjustments. No longer vestigial "property" without rights, women re-aligned culturally novel internalized commercial colonizations as neoliberal beings: could my flourishing come from my choices, not merely how others valued my worth as "exchanged encounters"? New voices of performed "Perfidia" mused new experiences.

Montiel's vocally lyricized counter narrative, subalternly pivots resistance in other tricky negotiations. It influences the version of Andalusian Isabel Pantoja (María Isabel Pantoja Martín). Companions need be neither sentimentalized nor demonized: bringing civic equity to capricious romance, adjusted calibrations about disruptions on kinship from broken relationships.

Was "Perfidia" heterosexist? Some even found non-hetero-normative receptions in the Spanish text. For example, Ronstadt's 1992 singing to another woman were said to exemplify gender indeterminacy. Thus the bolero lyrics suggested semiotic shifting between "tu"/"usted" and "yo". Furthermore at least some find fluid meanings no longer hetero-normative between heterosexual masculine subjects and feminine "objects of desire" (Colon Zayas 30-34; Powrie and Stillwell 92). A geographic and maritime imaginary of "hispanic" and "latin" romance is poetically re-invented for post-sexual eras with newly constructed clinical "objects" of globally consumerized intimacy.

We have come full circle: crises of possession in "Perfidia" performances demonstrate how a post-sexual era is not post-intimate. Beyond narratives of sheer demise or extravagant surprise, "Perfidia" tricks and renegotiates new diverse equities beyond binary constraints (ethnic stereotypes, heterosexism, genderism). A 1939 nationalistic Canción Mexicana aspired to hispanicize a 1920-1930's Marimba of its participatory improvisations. A 1940's Rumba version (AB, CDC, CDC), reduced to only genderized male choruses (CDC) for 1941-1950's big bands, 1950'+ Jazz swing

and for rock and roll versions starting in 1960. Counter-voices emerged; in Ronstadt, Spanish-speaking women continue Palomera's voice demanding equity over fickle partners; others ask whether hetero-normative ideals are best stated in consumer terms.

"Perfidia" evokes recognition not as trick or betrayal but musical poetry that hiply transgresses memory and anticipation for cosmopolitan trans-nationals. This new blend is no longer simply Mexican, merely historically, "Latin," only culturally "hispanic," exclusively geographically "Caribbean," quintessentially urban salsa'd, post-nationally "Miamicized" or economically "American LA tunes" (Party 2007: 75-80). Cultural workers find passion here.

New kinds of social meanings, have re-negotiated social performances of "Perfidia".

Some performances suggested room for further inquiry. Spanish and English speaking audiences are re-negotiating a complex *mestizaje* or "hybridity" of socially re-negotiated trusts. Many are being taught to dance — to walk together anew.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Does "Perfidia" transform sexual pessimism into optimism? What could be more absurd? Many "Perfidia" performances have made critics of difference blush over cultural "treachery" ("Perfidia"). Here especially there has always been a surplus of racism, sexism, classism and self-demeaning spectacle of the "Other". Yet excluded now speak. Using imaginative techniques (poetics) in lyrics, music and dance to hispanicize, latinize and racialize its content, nearly a century of some 250 lyrical, musical and dance versions have renegotiated the patriarchal sexual pessimism of a romantic bolero (*Canción Mexicana*) into consumerized post-coital optimisms of democratic capitalisms ("love with a laugh"). But all that glisters is not gold: not every bouyant assurance (optimism) is equally convincing about all erotic memories, expectations and anticipations. What appears sentimental, utopian kitsch that interrupts by subverting "placer culpable" ("guilty pleasure") is something more (Leonel 151-158; Party 2009: 71). When we listen carefully, complex border-crossing discourses imaginatively revise politics of intimacy with corrective cautions about demands for gender equity, amidst pressures to consumerize and genderize globalizations (Turino 2008: 189, 225; Rosaldo 1993: 91, 196). Spanish-speaking performances reflect and scrutinize experiences, ambitions and ambiguities of post-sexual eras in which personal commitments mobilize transnational political meanings. Voices of "others as ourselves" emerge. Here subalterns speak, sing, dance and perform four different kinds of "Perfidia" music as participative, performative, high fidelity and studio art (Turino

2008: 26-27, 90-91, 234). “Perfidia” re-negotiates (tricks) new kinds of social trust. Politics is poetics again.

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