Triumphant Marches by Rubén Darío, Luis A. Delgadillo, and Giuseppi Verdi: An Archive of Sonic Triumphalism and Nicaraguan Nationalism

Marchas triunfales de Rubén Darío, Luis A. Delgadillo y Giuseppe Verdi: Un archivo del triunfalismo sonoro y el nacionalismo nicaragüense

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Resumen: En este artículo, analizo la adaptación realizada por Luis Abraham Delgadillo del poema de Rubén Darío "Marcha triunfal" en la marcha de concierto titulada *Marcha triunfal*. Propongo que Delgadillo y el gobierno nicaragüense conmemoraron a Darío como héroe nacional, consolidando así el papel simbólico del poeta en la representación de la nación moderna nicaragüense. Exploro las tensiones históricas detrás del nacionalismo moderno nicaragüense, destacando al mismo tiempo la riqueza sonora presente en la poesía dariana. Finalmente, planteo la existencia de un *archivo de triunfalismo sónico* que reúne muestras musicales, poéticas y sonoras tomadas del poema de Darío, la marcha de Delgadillo, la marcha "Gloria all'Egitto" de Giuseppe Verdi en *Aida* y la interpretación del poema de Darío para la Sociedad Ateneo Argentina, las cuales contribuyeron a construir acústicamente una identidad nacionalista y moderna en Nicaragua a inicios del siglo veinte.

Palabras clave: marcha de concierto, archivo sonoro, triunfalismo sonoro, nacionalismo nicaragüense, modernismo, Rubén Darío, Abraham Delgadillo

Abstract: In this article, I analyze Luis Abraham Delgadillo's adaptation of Ruben Darío's poem "Marcha triunfal" into the concert march *Marcha triunfal*. I argue that Delgadillo and the Nicaraguan government commemorated Darío as a national hero and thereby solidified the poet's role in the symbolic representation of the modern Nicaraguan nation. I explore the historical tensions behind modern Nicaraguan nationhood while also giving pride of place to the rich sonic world of Darío's poetry. Finally, I argue for the existence of an *archive of sonic triumphalism* that cues and collates musical, poetic, and sonic samples from Darío's poem, Delgadillo's march, Giuseppi Verdi's march "Gloria all'Egitto" in *Aida*, and the performance of Darío's poem for the Argentinian Ateneo Society, which are sound-engineered to construct a Nicaraguan modern, nationalist identity at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Keywords: Concert March, Sonic Archive, Sonic Triumphalism, Nicaraguan Nationalism, Modernism, Ruben Darío, Abraham Delgadillo

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A Concert March for Rubén Darío's Funeral

On February 6, 1916, the poet Rubén Darío took his last breath. Church bells, pealing like an orchestra, rang from la Catedral de León, and military canons fired from atop the city's Fortín de Acosasco, signaling his death to the public. Soon after, his body was prepared for the lavish funeral ceremony mounted by the Nicaraguan government. The artist Octavio Torrealba completed two portraits of Darío, the first of which depicts his agony, while the second depicts Darío in *livor mortis*. The sculptor José López created a mold cast of Darío's face; and the composer Luis A. Delgadillo adapted Darío's poem "Marcha Triunfal" from *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza* (1905) as a concert march that could be played at the poet's funeral. Having studied at the Conservatory of Milan, Delgadillo had been contacted by the Nicaraguan government to help with that music.[1] Moreover, this concert march set a promising path for Delgadillo's musical career, as he soon became director-general of musical culture for Nicaragua and led the National School of Music in Managua and the National Symphony Orchestra. As these examples indicate, the Nicaraguan government and Nicaraguan artists used Darío's death to solidify their vision of a modern national identity based on his work.

Darío's lavish funeral lasted eight days. After being on display in the auditorium of the Universidad de León, Darío's body was transported to León Cathedral for the ceremony and remains buried there to this day. Shortly afterwards, the newspaper *Diario del Salvador* published an epistolary letter written by Doña A. de Bermúdez, who had originally mailed her letter to her husband, Don Alejandro Bermúdez. Don Alejandro submitted her letter to the newspaper to feature her detailed observations and personal experience of Darío's funeral ceremony. She reported that approximately 5,000 people arrived from different parts of the country to see the deceased poet. In her account, Doña María describes the ceremony that accompanies the death not only of a national hero but of a hero for Central America as a whole:

> En cuanto llegamos a la casa nos vestimos de negro y nos fuimos a la Catedral. Allí fue donde vimos por primera vez el cadáver de Darío. Estaba envuelto en su ropaje blanco, de seda, al estilo griego o romano, con la cara descubierta y la cabeza coronada de laurel. Me impresioné mucho al mirarlo; estaba cambiado mucho; parecía un santo de marfil puesto en veneración ante los fieles. Millares de personas entraban y salían a contemplar el féretro y las ofrendas enviadas de todas partes de Nicaragua y de las demás repúblicas de Centro América. El cadáver estaba colocado en una tarima alta, especie de columna blanca, entre otras cuatro columnas de mármol que sostenían los Pabellones de Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras y Costa Rica, todas ellas con magníficas coronas. Rubén descansaba sobre la columna truncada que representaba a Nicaragua y el Pabellón nuestro caía sobre sus pies. (Bermúdez qtd. in Bautista 331–332)

[1] One year later, Delgadillo set twenty-one more of Darío's poems to music, exploring genres such as the *romanza*, *barcarolle*, *berceuse*, and *canción nicaragüense* (ver Delgadillo, *Música nicaragüense*).

Inside the Cathedral, the funeral service commenced with a grand procession led by Bishop Pereira y Castellón, followed by dozens of clergymen, priests, and seminarians, all dressed in black robes with five-meter trains dragging behind them. As Doña Bermúdez noted, the service included liturgical hymns, and eighty musicians performed funeral marches, most likely including Delgadillo's march: "Principiaron los funerales con responsos y cantos, frente al cadáver. Ochenta músicos tocaban marchas fúnebres" (Bermúdez qtd. in Bautista 332). After the religious ceremony, Dr. Debayle and students from the University of León carried the coffin on their shoulders and exited the cathedral to begin the street procession (Bermúdez qtd. in Bautista 332). Dazzled by the mythology surrounding Darío, Doña María speaks like an average spectator may have, buying into the production value of this public event. The funeral presented a paradox: during his lifetime, Darío had worked for the government but had been poorly compensated and seldom acknowledged by the state. If the funeral is any indication, the state seemed to value him more in death than in life (see Blandón, *Rubén Darío* 123–148).

Doña María describes the music as a tiny funeral detail in her testimonial. However, even this brief mention leads me to wonder how the archive of sounds in Nicaraguan modern poetry expanded and became politicized when composers set Darío's poems to music. What happened when Luis Delgadillo, a leading Nicaraguan composer, turned Darío's "Marcha triunfal"—a formally adventurous poem that created a new sonically oriented language for the Spanish-speaking world—into a concert march? Moreover, what does it mean for this musical setting of Darío's poetry to be performed in a context that promotes a nationalist agenda?

My article builds from Erick Blandón's noteworthy claim that Darío's legacy was subjected to "máquinas deseantes" in Nicaragua that reconfigured him into a "monumento monolítico de una inmutable identidad nacional" (Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 12). Across the twentieth century, Darío's legacy and his works were subjected to fit differing and even opposing political ideologies to define and redefine Nicaraguan nationhood*:*

> Pese a ello, desde las más opuestas posiciones ideológicas, Rubén Darío ha sido objeto de permanente disputa en la construcción de los discursos del hispanismo, del mestizaje, del antinorteamericanismo, del panamericanismo, del catolicismo, del liberalismo o del tradicionalismo presentes en la construcción del discurso de la nación en Nicaragua. Así la crítica que privilegió su obra poética como materia de estudio, puede reducirlo a un desarraigado galicista, desenterrador de viejas formas métricas del verso, cuando no a corifeo de caudillos oligarcas, o asignarle la función de intelectual orgánico de la dependencia latinoamericana o, del lado opuesto, un nacionalista nicaragüense, prócer de la independencia antiimperialista latinoamericana. (Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 12)

Blandón brings attention to two political factions that inscribed and reinscribed Darío's works to either serve Catholic, conservative views framed by the Vanguardist movement and the Anastasio Somoza García dictatorship (1930s–1970s) or the anti-interventionist, anti-imperialist revolutionary discourse projected by the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (1960s–1980s).

Regardless of the hermeneutic discourse projected onto Darío's works to bolster the Nicaraguan political right or left, Blandón asserts that it is insufficient and inaccurate to project one singular interpretation to define Darío's vast body of work. Rather, as Blandón cites David Whisnant's stance, it is imperative for scholars and readers to acknowledge that Darío's writings are diverse—and even contradictory—in political motivation: "lo que unos y otros han perdido de vista es la realidad de las múltiples motivaciones, perspectivas, roles y voces presentes en la obra de Rubén Darío, quienes lejos de ser unitario representa diferentes y a veces contradictorias identidades" (Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 13). But it is because Darío's body of work is varied in perspective and motivation that these "máquinas deseantes" selectively curated—and excluded—Darío's writings to serve their political agendas.

My contribution fits within Blandón's larger contextual and historical assessment of Nicaraguan nationalist politics and how Darío's legacy is implicated within it. I consider Darío's funeral in León in 1916 and Delgadillo's march *Marcha triunfal* as an additional critical moment that is folded into this "máquina deseante," where Darío's funeral becomes an essential impetus for mobilizing Nicaraguan national politics at the beginning of the twentieth century.

By diving more deeply into the march performed at Darío's funeral, *an archive of sonic triumphalism* emerges, a sonic archive based on a diverse range of poetic, musical, operatic, and sonic references that inaugurate the celebratory and contradictory sounds of Nicaraguan modern nationhood. I assert this sonic triumphalism by conducting a comparative literary and musicological analysis, which allows me not only to identify and describe these sounds but also signal the political, poetic, and musical contradictions inherent to the processes of Nicaraguan modern nationalism.

My comparative analysis first considers Delgadillo's *Marcha triunfal* and its performance at Darío's funeral alongside Darío's "Marcha triunfal", the sonically rich poem that inspired it. I also offer a critical lens to position Darío's poem as rendering musical significance: first, it nods to Giuseppi Verdi's march "Gloria all'Egitto" from his opera *Aida*; secondly, Darío purposed the poem to be performed orally, as evidenced by Argentinian poet Ricardo Jaimes Freyre's performance of it for the Argentinian Ateneo Society in 1895. Regarding the poem, I highlight the well-established fact that Darío expressed ambiguity and contradictory feelings toward his Nicaraguan national identity (see Blandón, *Rubén Darío* 85–122). Moreover, Darío's sonically imbued poem innovates the poetic form—in the form of alliterative words, rhyme, and structure—to cue a pan-Latin American, anti-imperialist soundtrack. Darío's soundtrack also nods to Verdi's chorus march "Gloria all' Egitto" and the Egyptian trumpet procession in "Le truppe Egizie sfilano dinanzi al Re," an essential musical reference worth exploring. I place Darío's poem and Verdi's march in dialogue to account for their artistic and ideological similarities and differences comparatively. As Paul Robinson suggests Verdi's *Aida* could reflect an allegorical anti-imperialist reaction against the Habsburg Austrian occupation in Italy in the nineteenth century, as Verdi was an outspoken advocate for the Italian *risorgimento* movement

(see 139). Moreover, as Robinson suggests, Verdi's music associates Ethiopia with Italy and Egypt with Habsburg Austria (see Robinson 139–140). Although Verdi's "Gloria all'Egitto" glorifies the Egyptian aggressor in "the most traditional harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic means to conjure up an impression of power, authority, and military might" (Robinson 136), the opera on the whole positions Egypt antagonistically and instead sympathizes with Aida, the Ethiopian lead protagonist and her cause. On the one hand, I speculate that Verdi's avid support of the Italian *risorgimento* movement could align with Darío's anti-imperialist vision: they both advocate for political and cultural independence from foreign, imperial aggressors. On the other hand, to Darío, Verdi's march is a beautiful musical piece, inspiring him to poeticize the instrumental and march structure into his own "Marcha triunfal." More importantly, Darío subverts the march's ideological meaning—glorifying an imperial aggressor—and reasserts the march to serve an anti-imperialist spirit. Finally, as Verdi's march is meant to be performed and heard, Darío sets his poem to carry the same musical function. Revisiting the Argentinian Ateneo Society soirée in Buenos Aires in 1895 allows me to further extend the sonic interpretation of Darío's poem.

To conclude my article, I examine Darío's funeral to explore Delgadillo's musical setting of Darío's sonically rich poem and how it contributed to commemorating Darío as a Nicaraguan national poet. It is worth considering how Delgadillo's composition echoes Darío's poem (how imagined sounds become realized) and whether it also nods to Verdi's march. By extension, I suggest that the march's reception at this government-sponsored funeral, rather than Delgadillo's march itself, begins fashioning Darío into a symbol of modernity tied to Nicaraguan nationalism. This comparative analysis begs the question: Does Darío serve as the interlocutor who brings Verdi to Nicaraguan audiences by way of the march? And by positioning Darío as a cultural interlocutor, does it shed light on Nicaraguan conservatives' goal of claiming a more European heritage and further disregarding their indigenous and black heritage?[2] Could Verdi's march have contributed to Nicaragua's race politics at the beginning of the twentieth century?[3]

By creating this comparative constellation that includes Darío's poem, Delgadillo's march, the government-sponsored funeral to commemorate Darío, Verdi's opera march, and the performance of Darío's poem at the Argentinian Ateneo event, an archive of sonic triumphalism emerges. I argue that this *ar-*

[2] Blandón argues that William Walker's fixation to whiten the Nicaraguan people and minimize black and indigenous presence carries over into the twentieth century; a shared ideology amongst the Nicaraguan elite: "No obstante, quienes en el siglo XX controlaron el poder de instituir el canon, viéndose a sí mismos herederos de los conquistadores españoles, ignoraron la ascendencia africana y celebraron la supuesta desaparición del indio para reivindicar el mestizaje como marca de la identidad nacional" (Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 32).

[3] Blandón points to René Schick's ideological stance that Nicaragua should reflect a more European, racially white heritage and how Darío's legacy is manipulated to serve Schick's ideals. In his *Rubén Darío y la política* published in 1966, Schick argues for depoliticizing Darío and claiming his work as an inspiration for Latin American countries to modernize by confronting "el desafío victorioso de las razas sajonas" (qtd. in Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 16).

chive of sonic triumphalism serves as a soundtrack that leads to a more nuanced and complicated understanding of how Nicaraguan nationalist politics were constructed—and heard—at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Darío's Ambivalent Relationship with Nicaragua

Before my analysis, I would like to consider Darío's relationship with Nicaragua. Upon his death, the Nicaraguan government mythologized Darío in lavish ceremonies, awarding him national titles and building monuments in his name. Along with the funeral ceremony, Darío was accorded honors typically reserved for a war minister. Moreover, an official commission conveyed condolences to his second wife, Rosario Murillo (see Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 16). Yet his relationship with Nicaragua had been ambivalent throughout his life, and one might even say paradoxical; it was a relationship he struggled with his entire life. Since the age of fifteen, he had separated himself geographically from the country. He felt insecure about his Nicaraguan origins, mainly due to Nicaragua's "rustic provincialism and the financial insecurity and social marginality suffered by its writers" (Whisnant 10). Nevertheless, he attempted to reaffirm his Nicaraguan identity by taking up several governmental posts abroad. His writings offer few glimpses of what he experienced growing up in Nicaragua, and his poetry seldom thematizes Nicaragua as a poetic subject.[4] Darío's contradictory relationship with his home country was informed and exacerbated by the fact that the government sometimes neglected him, in spite of his work as a diplomat and growing fame as a published author across Latin America and Europe (see Whisnant 29).

The earliest example of the government's neglect of Darío occurred when he was an adolescent. A special legislative resolution secured funding for Darío to study abroad in Europe at the Nicaraguan state's expense. However, the funding was retracted after Darío read his verses at a presidential reception. Darío later described these poems as "rojas de radicalismo antirreligioso, detonantes, posiblemente ateas, y que causaron un efecto de todos los diablos. Al concluir, entre escasos aplausos de mis amigos, oí los murmullos de los graves senadores, y ví moverse desoladamente la cabeza del presidente Chamorro" (Darío, *La vida* 44–45). Since the government and the church held equal power, the president admonished Darío for his ideas and described him as a national and religious threat.[5]

Nevertheless, Darío continued to rely on governmental funding to make a living. Following his residence in El Salvador, he held a sinecure in the secre-

[4] According to Whisnant, fewer than forty of Darío's 450 writings were published in Nicaragua's *Nicaraguan National Bibliography* through 1986. Almost half of those belonged to a series of thirty-page pamphlets issued in 1943 for public schools (see Whisnant 15).

[5] According to Darío, President Pedro Joaquín Chamorro responded to his poem as follows: "Hijo mío, si así escribes ahora contra la religión de tus padres y de tu patria, ¿qué será si te vas a Europa a aprender cosas peores?" (Darío, *La vida* 45) / "My son, if you now write thus against the religion of your parents and your country, what will happen if you go to Europe to learn worse things" (qtd. in Whisnant 13).

tary's office to the Nicaraguan president, allowing him time to write (see Darío 59–60; Whisnant 13). According to Darío's autobiography, the government gave him grudging official recognition as a Nicaraguan delegate to the Columbus quatercentenary celebration in Spain; as a Nicaraguan consul in Paris; as a delegate to the Pan American conference in Rio de Janeiro; as a Nicaraguan delegate for the centennial celebration of Mexico's independence; and as a member of the commission on the Nicaraguan-Honduran border dispute (see Whisnant 12; Darío, *La vida* 111, 244, 257, 261). Despite his appointments, he still harbored resentment toward his country and hoped never to return. As David E. Whisnant states, "although he yearned for official recognition and support, they were doled out to him in … dribs and drabs until the final guiltily effusive outpouring at his death." (Whisnant 16). He viewed Nicaragua as a place that had discouraged him from pursuing a literary career, leading him to pursue his career elsewhere in El Salvador, Chile, Argentina, and Europe (see Whisnant 16).

Perhaps Darío was most resentful because his monetary compensation was unreliable despite his various positions. At times, his salary was not paid in full. For example, under President José Santos Zelaya, the government delayed paying him for three months during his tenure as minister to Spain. The funds eventually provided were insufficient for him to live as befitted an ambassador (see Whisnant 15). His salary from previous work was delayed until the final days before his death. Darío's friend, Dr. Luis Debayle, advocated to President Adolfo Díaz to secure a small monthly sum for Darío's medical expenses. Despite these inequities, Whisnant recognizes that Nicaragua was not the most financially prosperous nation, and like most Central American countries, was treated as a geographical pawn for greater power struggles and held limited ambassadorial representation. At the same time, the Nicaraguan government may have been ambivalent toward Darío's bohemian lifestyle (see Whisnant 15). I want to keep this situation in mind as I now embark on a detailed analysis of the sound archives of Darío's poem.

Darío's Anti-Imperialism

My analysis of the sound archives in Darío's selected poem begins by first situating it within the context of US-Nicaraguan relations and Darío's anti-imperialism. After its defeat in the Spanish-American War of 1898, Spain lost its last colonies—Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines—to the United States, under the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt. The US became the ascendant power in the region and used that influence to serve North American trading, military, economic, and political interests. In 1903, the US government orchestrated Panama's secession from Colombia; by the 1910s, the United Fruit Company (UFCO) oversaw the International Railways of Central America, which ran north–south through the isthmus. Development continued into the next decade (see Rodríguez 6 and 48). In 1914, the United States financed the completion of the interoceanic canal in Panama. Finally, UFCO commanded The Great White Fleet and the Grey Fleet transatlantic lines between Europe,

the United States, and Central America until WWII (see Rodríguez 48). Over a hundred years, the United States and Europe's concessions in Central America transformed its social, political, and economic landscape into a global modernization hub. However, Central America did not benefit from the profits it created. Latin American intellectuals—among them José Martí, José Enrique Rodó, Rubén Darío, and later, Salomón de la Selva—increasingly criticized unequal North-South relations. They denounced US imperialist actions while offering Latin America a renewed moral, aesthetic, and political compass.

Alongside his Latin American intellectual contemporaries, Darío foregrounds his anti-imperialist attitude towards the US in poems included in *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza* (1905), *El canto errante* (1907), and *Prosas profanas* (1896) (see Jrade 41–42). As early as 1891, his chronicles published in the Argentinian journal *La Nación* and in the Costa Rican journal *El Heraldo* openly criticized US imperialism, Spanish colonial occupation, and European colonialism—issues that kept informing his intellectual production.[6] In the poems "A Roosevelt" and "Salutación al águila," he uses the figure of US President Theodore Roosevelt and the American eagle to symbolize US rapacious greed. In contrast, his poem "Momotombo" allows Central America's volcanic landscapes to symbolize resistance to US imperialism. "Sinfonía en gris mayor" and "Tarde del trópico" share an archive of sounds (including that of the "clarín," the military bugle), Central American landscapes and seascapes, animals, and musical instruments from Greek antiquity. In these latter two poems, sounds determine the poems' moods and temporal orientations, representing Darío's fears in his contemporary moment. He turns to a nostalgic past or a future free from US imperial aggression.[7]

Darío's essay "Prefacio" in *Cantos* (1905) offers another good example of this. In it, he discusses why poems in the collection may have a political message: "Si en estos cantos hay política, es porque aparece el universal. Y si encontráis versos a un presidente, es porque son un clamor continental. Mañana podremos ser yanquis (y es lo más probable)" (Darío, "Prefacio" 334).

Darío's dramatic warning became a reality in many respects. The United States occupied the Central American region during the first half of the twentieth century. People in Central America embraced US culture partly due to the American-made products they consumed. Darío could reflect on these hemispheric relations because of his distance as a cosmopolitan. By the time *Cantos*

[6] According to Sanhueza, Darío argues in defense of Latin America in the wake of US occupation and reflects on US imperialism in articles such as "Bronce al soldado Juan" (1891) and "Por el lado del Norte" (1892). Sanhueza explains that in "Bronce al soldado Juan," Darío celebrates Juan Santamaría, a Costa Rican who fought against William Walker's invasion in 1856. He further observes that in "La insurrección en Cuba" (1895), Darío challenges North American expansionism and Spanish imperialism while expressing his support for Cuban revolutionaries like José Martí. He analyzes how in "El triunfo de Calibán" (*El Tiempo* de Buenos Aires, May 20, 1898) and in "El crepúsculo de España" (1898) Darío examines US imperialist occupation in Latin America (see Sanhueza 308–309).

[7] For a detailed analysis of sounds in "Sinfonía en gris mayor" and "Tarde del trópico", which allows for a more nuanced reading of Darío's anti-imperial sounds in "Marcha triunfal", see Zambrano.

was published, he had visited and lived in several cities of Western Europe, the US northeast, and across Central and South America. His world experience allowed him to gain a global vantage point that likely led him to anticipate how the United States would come to dominate Central and South America.

The Archive of Sounds in "Marcha triunfal"

I now analyze "Marcha triunfal," a poem in which Darío explicitly expresses his desire to resist imperial domination in Central America. This poem uses sounds associated with the military to imagine a hopeful future and nostalgic past. Like in "Sinfonía en gris mayor" and "Tarde del trópico," Darío includes again the sounds of a bugle's call, thunder, a bronzed French horn, kettle drums, clanking military armor, and the ghostly voices of dead soldiers. The poem's omniscient speaker opens with an exclamation:

> ¡Ya viene el cortejo!
> ¡Ya viene el cortejo!" Ya se oyen los claros clarines.
> La espada se anuncia con vivo reflejo;
> ya viene, oro y hierro, el cortejo de los paladines.
> (102)

Notably, Darío describes the soldiers as "paladins" (paladines), a likely reference to *Don Quixote*.[8] The paladin is a canonical knight-errant figure from the Spanish romance, *Amadís de Gaula*—a figure revered and imitated by Don Quixote. The figure of the paladin carries a double meaning. It could allude to a valiant knight who defends an empire, but it could also allude to a faithful, chivalrous knight who protects the weak and defends liberty and justice. Darío's poem seems to evoke the latter meaning. He sought to revalorize Spanish literary traditions at the very moment when Spain had lost its territories to the US. From there, the poem shifts to the clanking sounds of military armor ("el ruido"):

> Se escucha el ruido que forman las armas de los caballeros,
> los frenos que mascan los fuertes caballos de guerra,
> los cascos que hieren la tierra
> y los timbaleros,
> que el paso acompasan con ritmos marciales.
> ¡Tal pasan los fieros guerreros
> debajo los arcos triunfales!
> (Darío, "Marcha triunfal" 102–103)

This stanza employs assonant rhyming and consonant alliteration; note, for example, "forman" / "armas," "caballeros" / "frenos" / "fuertes caballeros" / "los cascos," and "guerras" / "hierren la tierra" / "fieros guerreros." Darío follows an ABBA rhyme scheme (with "caballeros" / "timbaleros"; "guerra" / "tierra;" "marciales" / "triunfales") and specific phonetic sounds are repeated.

[8] Darío's poem "Letanías de nuestro Señor Don Quixote" in *Cantos* also references paladins: "De rudos malsines / falsos paladines."

In the next stanza, as in other poems I analyzed above, Darío highlights again the sound of the "clarín":

> Cita: Los claros clarines de pronto levantan sus sones,
> su canto sonoro,
> su cálido coro,
> que envuelve en su trueno de oro
> la augusta soberbia de los pabellones.
> (Darío, "Marcha triunfal" 102–103)

More than just using the word "clarín" to describe a musical instrument or as a metaphor for a song, Darío emphasizes its phonetic qualities. Traditionally, the bugle calls troops to battle, but it describes and announces a battle victory here. The "cl" of "clarín" is particularly emphasized: "claros clarines" ("clear bugles"), "canto" ("song"), and "cálido coro" ("ardent chorus"). Darío also emphasizes the assonant rhyme of "o" that draws from "claros" and is repeated several times: "los claros," "de pronto," "sus sones," "su canto sonoro / su cálido coro," "trueno de oro," and "los pabellones." Darío forefronts musical instruments and the sounds of military armor, which seem to speak. Sound no longer remains background noise; instead, it conveys the story of the bloody battle the soldiers fought:

> Él dice la lucha, la herida venganza,
> las ásperas crines,
> los rudos penachos, la pica, la lanza,
> la sangre que riega de heroicos carmines
> la tierra;
> los negros mastines
> que azuza la muerte, que rige la guerra.
> (102–103)

Through sound, Darío offers a violent spectacle of battle and death. The following verse shifts from a somber, violent scene to a more celebratory one. The "clarín," described as "los áureos sonidos," announces the arrival of soaring condors:

> Los áureos sonidos
> anuncian el advenimiento
> triunfal de la Gloria;
> dejando el picacho que guarda sus nidos,
> tendiendo sus alas enormes al viento,
> los cóndores llegan. ¡Llegó la victoria!
> (104–105)

The condor mainly resides in the Andean mountains, Northern Mexico, and the southwestern United States. Darío draws from the condor's geographic placement to symbolize a victorious, pan-Latin America, most likely to counter

the bald eagle, the condor's relative, and the patriotic symbol of the United States.[9] Here, the "clarín" delivers this image of pan-Latin Americanism.

The poem returns to the pavilion scene, in which men, women, and children celebrate the returning soldiers. Once again, the "clarín" resounds to signal victory and triumph:

> ¡Honor al que trae cautiva la extraña bandera;
> honor al herido y honor a los fieles soldados
> que muerte encontraron por mano extranjera:
> ¡Clarines! ¡Laureles!
> (104–105)

The poem ushers in haunted silence as well. Darío introduces an ellipse, a few stanzas later and towards the end of the poem. The air is filled with the voices of dead soldiers:

> Cita: Las trompas guerreras resuenan;
> de voces los aires se llenan…
> A aquellas antiguas espadas,
> a aquellos ilustres aceros,
> que encarnan las glorias pasadas…
> (104–105)

Here, the ancient swords are remembered. At the same time, the narrator remembers the fallen soldiers who carried those weapons. When the narrator says, "de voces los aires se llenan…" and "que encarnan las glorias pasadas…" sounds of voices and images of bodies that no longer live fill the air. The ellipses work as a silent memorial for the dead.

The poem sounds out a military victory, offering an alternate outcome that resists Darío's contemporary moment of imperial aggression. In Darío's alternate world, his pan-Latin American compatriots claim a version of liberty and justice that differs from the one US and European imperial aggressors might decree. More significantly, the poem evades any specific reference to Nicaraguan nationhood, a literary maneuver that aligns with Darío's decision to seldom thematize Nicaragua as a poetic subject. The poem pushes against a Nicaraguan nationalist framework and instead presents a pan-Latin American, anti-imperi-

[9] Darío's "Salutación al águila" envisions a familiar and intimate kinship between the eagle (hailing from North America) and the condor (hailing from South America): "Águila, existe el Cóndor. Es tu hermano en las grandes alturas. / Los Andes le conocen y saben que, cual tú, mira al Sol. / *May this grand Union have no end!* dice el poeta. / Puedan ambos juntarse, en plenitud, concordia y esfuerzo" (43). Where Darío's "A Roosevelt", adamantly criticizes U.S. military occupation and imperial interest in Latin America, "Salutación al águila" prompts a renewed and optimistic vision for north-south hemispheric relations, but one only made possible by poets, (rather than by politicians and businessmen). In addition to Darío's parallels between the eagle and condor, he also creates a parallel between Walt Whitman and himself—one poet hailing from the north, the other from the south. Darío's poem turns to Walt Whitman as the North American poet and peacemaker who Latin American poets—like Darío—can build a deep alliance and fellowship with: "Bien vengas, oh mágica Águila, que amara tanto Walt Whitman, / quien te hubiera cantado en esta olímpica jira" (43). For Darío, diplomatic relations are only possible when poetry and art remain at the center of this cultural exchange.

alist vision. In the same way, Darío's other poems ("Sinfonía en gris mayor," "Tarde del trópico," "A Roosevelt," "Salutación al águila," and "Momotombo") display a regional, Central American vision that partakes in a larger pan-Latin Americanism, rather than a Nicaraguan one. As I will discuss later in this article, the poem's message differs from the Nicaraguan-centered, nationalist direction that the poem assumes when it is set to Delgadillo's march and performed at Darío's funeral.

Verdi's *Aida*: A Distant Referent in "Marcha triunfal"

Darío's "Marcha triunfal" alludes to the march "Gloria all'Egitto" ("Glory to Egypt") from Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Aida*. The scholars Enrique Anderson Imbert and Jorge Eduardo Arellano suggest that Darío wrote the poem inspired by a performance of the opera he had attended in Paris (see Sux 302), a claim based on Alejandro Sux's testimonial, Darío's friend and secretary during his tenure in Paris (see Kühl 96–101). Sux describes how Darío had seen a performance of *Aida* in Paris, which profoundly affected him (see Sux 316). Anderson and Arellano's claim and Sux's testimonial suggest a mystical lore about Darío, leading to an enticing and romantic story for Darío enthusiasts to believe and for Nicaraguan government officials to fold into their nationalist agenda. According to Sux, Darío was in a state of catharsis and allegedly grabbed the first sheet of paper and pen he could find to write "Marcha triunfal" the very night of the performance:

> Su famosa "Marcha triunfal" la escribió a la madrugada, después de haber estado "poco menos que a empellones en la ópera... de no recuerdo qué ciudad." Asistió a la representación de *Aida* de Verdi y Ghislanzoni; el retorno triunfante de Radamès precedido de la doble hilera de trompeteros, le había impresionado "hasta la obsesión". "Si esa noche no escribo 'La Marcha Triunfal' hubiese enloquecido" –me dijo–; "las estrofas se agolpaban en mi cabeza como algo material, y me gritaban en tropel, como para que les abriera una puerta de escape. Cuando liberé todas las imágenes y todas las rimas, me quedé profundamente dormido sobre la mesa. Al otro día, al leer lo que había escrito, tuve la sensación de que alguien me había dictado." Para completar esta explicación, me dijo enseguida mirándome con severidad, como para que no fuese a dudar un solo instante de que estaba hablando en serio: "Sepa que mi Musa es el Ángel Gabriel; el mismo que anunció a María que Dios había elegido su vientre para humanizarse y venir al mundo perecedero en la forma de Cristo." Así trabajaba Darío: De pronto, en mitad de conversación, comida o paseo, quedaba mudo e inmóvil, con los ojos fijos en un punto bajo; pedía papel y pluma –porque nunca llevaba consigo ni el uno ni la otra–, y excusándose con palabras ininteligibles, apartábase y escribía moviendo la cabeza a modo de batuta. (Sux 316)

Listening to the opera march in a live performance surely shaped the sounds Darío chose therein to compose the poem. As a listener, he seems to have fixated on the march's brass fanfare, with the trumpets playing a distinctive melodic line to cue Radamès' procession before the Egyptian king. Darío would have heard Verdi's musical representation of Egypt. For the opera's debut in 1871, Verdi had commissioned an instrument craftsman to design elongated trumpets

to mimic those depicted in ancient Egyptian paintings—a design that gave a particular timbre and A flat range inconceivable for the traditional trumpet.[10] For the opera's debut in 1871, Verdi had commissioned an instrument craftsman to design elongated trumpets to mimic those depicted in ancient Egyptian paintings—a design that gave a particular timbre and A flat range inconceivable for the traditional trumpet. Sux describes that Darío obsessively listened to this new brass sound: "el retorno triunfante de Radamès precedido de la doble hilera de trompeteros, le había impresionado 'hasta la obsesión'" (Sux 316).

Darío heard this stylized trumpet part as an innovative, new, and modern sound. As a result, he may have felt a sense of urgency about embedding it in his poetry.

Sux's testimony positions Darío as an ardent aficionado of Verdi's opera. The publication of his testimony in *Revista Hispánica Moderna* in 1946 could confirm Darío's position as an interlocutor who brings Verdi to Nicaraguan audiences through his poem. Blandón's observation that the Nicaraguan elite at the beginning of the twentieth century favored a European heritage to define a modern Nicaraguan identity and even mobilized to encourage European immigrants to settle in the country—and some of Darío's writings support these efforts—allows one to ponder that Verdi's march is not merely a beautiful musical piece that inspires a poet, but also serves as an essential Italian-European cultural sample that helps construct the archive of sonic triumphalism that informs Nicaraguan nationalist politics (see Blandón, *Discursos transversales* 14–15). The "triumph" lies in Darío's ability to cue and replay Verdi's march to audiences who may not otherwise have access to Verdi's opera. By rendering Darío a Nicaraguan national hero, the Nicaraguan elite may embrace Verdi's music as a new Nicaraguan (European) cultural symbol.

The Sounds in Verdi's "Gloria all Egitto" and Darío's Sonic Rendering

Darío's poem and Verdi's march share not only aesthetic principles in terms of presenting "new" sounds but also suggest similar attitudes towards imperialism. *Aida* tells a tragic story about the love between the Ethiopian princess Aida and the Egyptian military commander Radamés, who cannot openly love

[10] *Utah Opera* contextualizes Verdi's specific instrumental arrangements for "6 Trombe Egiziane" (six Egyptian trumpets) performed south stage for the "Triumphal Scene" in *Aida* (Verdi, 1913). According to Giulio Ricordi's Production Book, which documented the first production of *Aida* scheduled for December 1871 in Cairo, Egypt and then in La Scala Opera House in Milan on February 8, 1872, Verdi wanted Egyptian trumpets for the Ceremonial March in the "Triumphal Scene." As *Utah Opera* summarizes, "they had to be long and straight (unlike the usual trumpet); three had to be in the key of Ab, and three in B." To meet Verdi's request, Ricordi ordered the trumpets from a Milan instrument maker and had them adjusted to meet the tonal and tambor quality Verdi demanded: "the notes Verdi had written were impossible without a slight change of design and a sleight of hand to disguise the valve which would allow access to those notes. Verdi just wanted to show 'what the trumpets were like in ancient times.' And he obviously wanted that march tune to be heard from the stage." It is likely that Ricordi included these six specialized trumpets in the rental package for other theatres to reuse for their own productions of *Aida* (see "The Music of Aida").

one another because they belong to two warring countries. Commissioned by the Egyptian Viceroy Isma'il Pasha, *Aida*—with a libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni—premiered on December 24, 1871, in Cairo's Khedivial Opera House.

The scholars Edward Said and Paul Robinson propose this anti-imperialist sentiment, even though they offer different analytical methods and historical conclusions. Consequently, one could claim that Darío's poem and Verdi's triumphal march are critical of imperialism.

Edward Said describes *Aida*'s staging production and libretto as "an imperial *article de luxe"* hinting at the British occupation of Egypt (see Said 82). The first staging of the opera offered orientalist representations of Egypt and Ethiopia, and the libretto orientalized these North African countries as well. For Said, the opera reflects the ethnic and class biases and racism that characterized the British and French imperial projects in Egypt.

Robinson extends Said's reading of the opera as imperialist, but via a different approach: examining Verdi's music, rather than the libretto and opera's stage production.[11] When examining the music, Robinson concludes that Verdi's *Aida* is an anti-imperialist critique in which the music creates a dialectical frame between Egypt as an authoritarian, tyrannical, and expansionist nation and Ethiopia as an exploited and colonized nation (see Robinson 135). The music allows listeners to sympathize with the exploited victims and criticize the empire by creating different themes and sounds for Egyptian and Ethiopian characters. He further suggests that the Egyptian-Ethiopian story serves as an anti-imperialist allegory to the Italian *risorgimento* movement, in which Italians fought and gained independence from Habsburg Austrian occupation in Italy in the nineteenth century (see Robinson 139–140).[12]

Verdi's music to accompany Egyptian events is commonly regular, diatonic, and brassy. Relying on the most traditional harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic elements, it evokes authority and military might (see Robinson 136), as the battle hymn "Su! Del Nilo," "Gloria all'Egitto," and a noisier and triumphant version of "Su!" exemplify it. "Gloria all'Egitto"—the piece that inspired Darío's poem—signals Egypt's imperial power. With a brass fanfare, the Egyptian army enters the stage in a procession. Verdi creates music for the Egyptians that echoes an "aggressively traditional European idiom" (Robinson 136). In contrast, Verdi depicts Ethiopia with melancholic arias for Amonasro and Aida. At the height of the drama, their melodic lines become chromatic, accompanied by subdued woodwinds. As Robinson suggested, this music evokes the imagined sounds of racially characterized non-Europeans and contrasts the imperial sounds associated with Egypt.

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[11] Robinson argues that Said's claims that *Aida* is an orientalist opera are limited because he does not consider the music in the opera: "Of course, any discussion that confines itself to the circumstances of the opera's commission or the origin of its libretto and *mise en scène,* while illuminating, does not really get us to the heart of the matter… If *Aida* is an orientalist opera, then, it will have to be because of its music" (135).

[12] For further inquiry, see Gossett.

Darío's "Marcha triunfal" simultaneously evokes the march's brass fanfare and the opera's anti-imperial message. Darío translates Verdi's anti-imperial allegory to serve his critique of US imperial aggression in Latin America. With "Gloria all'Egitto," which stages and ceremoniously celebrates the Egyptian military's victory over the Ethiopians, Darío subverts its significance in his poem. In his poem, the victors are the Ethiopian exploited victims (the Latin Americans) rather than the Egyptian imperial aggressor (the U.S). Like in the opera, the poem describes a procession of soldiers returning from a battle victory: "¡Ya viene el cortejo!" and "¡Tal pasan los fieros guerreros / debajo los arcos triunfales!" Darío also evokes the image of Verdi's trumpets in phrases like "sus largas trompetas" and "voces de bronce las trompas de guerra que tocan la marcha triunfal…" The poem plays with the phonetic possibilities of "clarín", using consonant alliteration and assonant rhyme to exaggerate its sonic quality ("claros clarines," "canto," and "cálido coro"). By appropriating the victory march for Latin America, Darío evokes spiritual triumph over imperial conquest.

The Argentinian Ateneo and Reading Darío's "Marcha triunfal" Aloud

Argentinian poet Ricardo Jaimes Freyre's 1895 performance of "Marcha triunfal" for an Argentinian Ateneo event adds another layer of interpretation to the poem's sonic and musical significance (see García; Barcia). Moreover, in his historical account, García offers a different explanation of how Darío came to write "Marcha triunfal." According to Sux's claim, published in 1946, Darío saw *Aida* in Paris and wrote the poem soon thereafter. García's article, published in 2016, suggests that Darío wrote the poem in Martín García Island on Río de la Plata and does not mention Alejandro Sux. I bring attention to this contradiction to suggest the mythical lore that helped position Darío as Nicaragua's national hero in the first half of the twentieth century. It begs the question: Is Sux's testimony accurate, or does it serve the purpose of fomenting a European heritage for a Nicaraguan identity? Furthermore, García's extensive research convincingly concludes that Darío was in Argentina and not Paris when he wrote the poem. Regardless of who is "more right," I am more interested in pointing out the inherent contradiction within this sonic triumphalism archive. It is necessary to point out the mythical lore that positions Darío as a national and pan-Latin American hero for the arts and politics.

Darío and a group of Argentinian intellectuals and artists—including Carlos Guido Spano, Rafael Obligado, Lucio Vicente López, and Lucio V. Mansilla—founded the Argentinian Ateneo (see Schiaffino). Following the long-established Athenaeum societies in Barcelona, London, and Manchester, the Argentinian Ateneo's mission was to encourage appreciation for the fine arts and the humanities in Buenos Aires. The society welcomed Argentinian artists, writers, and intellectuals.[13] As part of its activities, the Ateneo usually held an-

[13] The Ateneo's celebratory debut came at the foot of the newly elected president, José E. Uriburu in January 1895, whose administration endowed funding for the first Facultad de Filosofía y Letras at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, as well as for the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes—campaigns directed by Eduardo Schiaffino (see García 55–56).

nual art expositions as well. For their exposition scheduled on May 26, 1895, in Buenos Aires, the society invited Darío to write a poem to complement the "velada literario-musical" (a literary-musical concert) portion of the event (see García 55–56). Plaza recounts that Darío received Ateneo's formal request over telegram while on vacation with Prudencio Plaza on Martín García Island in the Río de la Plata a few days before the event (see Barcia 12). Fervently, he wrote the poem on the eve of May 23 and mailed his draft with all his markings and corrections, just in time for it to be included in the mail carrier service on the last boat leaving for Buenos Aires on May 25. On his way to the post office, he formulated the poem's title:

> "Vamos al telégrafo" y en el camino recuerdo perfectamente que decía "la Revolución de Mayo, la epopeya redentora, todos los héroes de América que vuelven a ver su obra, la recorren en una Marcha triunfal" y repitió "Marcha triunfal así se llamará mi composición" e hizo el telegrama anunciando el nombre de su trabajo. (Barcia 13)

Plaza's memory of Darío evoking the Revolution of May, marking Argentina's independence from Spain in 1810, allows him to appropriate the poem for the project of Argentinian nationalism and pan-Latin Americanism. He imagines Darío's poem as representing a new moment of political urgency.

After Darío handed off his poem to the Ateneo society, the event organizers struggled to find someone to recite it right up to the evening of the event. The poem's performance brings up another layer to understand the significance of the poem's sounds. The Ateneo had programmed a series of poetry readings and musical pieces, including a choral performance of the Argentinian national anthem and readings of Enrique Rivarola's "A los poetas argentinos" and Darío's poem (see García 57). Decades later, Freyre's brother Raúl Jaimes Freyre shares a first-hand account of the evening's unfolding:

> Al llegar Ricardo, encontró a los organizadores de la fiesta en una grave dificultad. Darío había dado una poesía para que fuera leída y el encargado de hacerlo, el poeta Domingo Martinto, fue esa noche, desolado, a excusarse: dijo que en vano había leído repetidas veces la poesía; no había podido encontrar el ritmo que la regía. (Qtd. in García 57)

Martinto's struggle to master the poem's rhythm speaks to the poem's formal maneuvers of sound. The poem does not follow a one-meter scheme, but rather a polymetric scheme. It results in unevenness or unpredictability when read aloud. Martinto had likely not encountered such versification before and shied away from the challenge. The poem asks the reader to repeat particular sounds in rapid succession, which could have added to Martinto's difficulty.

Nevertheless, Ricardo Jaimes Freyre rose to the challenge. Despite feeling underdressed for the event, he agreed to perform it (see García 57). Freyre's brother recounts: "Al ver a Ricardo, se consideraron salvados: allí estaba el principal representante, con Rubén, del movimiento renovador de la poesía castellana, y era seguro que él encontraría la rebelde melodía de los versos" (qtd. in García 57).

In the same way that Plaza praises Darío for leading a new, "rebellious" generation of Argentinian artists, Freyre's brother praises his performance. The newspaper *La Nación* also celebrated Freyre's performance: "Se escuchó con sumo agrado una elegante y magnífica poesía de Rubén Darío, titulada 'Marcha triunfal', que leyó el señor Ricardo Jaimes Freyre con muy oportuna entonación y noble acento" (qtd. in García 57).

Freyre's "oportuna entonación" and "noble acento" are significant here. Freyre creates an experience of the sounds in the poem. Martinto, the Ateneo group, Freyre's brother, and the newspaper reporters hear the poem as resonating sounds of rebellion, hardship, and magnificence all at once. Based on their experience, they believe the poem represents the Argentinian intellectual community of the Ateneo. Listening to the poem read aloud shapes how they perceive and interpret it.

Luis A. Delgadillo's Concert March: *Marcha triunfal*

I now address Delgadillo's setting of Darío's "Marcha triunfal," which premiered at Darío's funeral ceremony in León, Nicaragua, in 1916. Delgadillo set Darío's poem as a military march. Once again, the meaning of Darío's "Marcha triunfal" shifts in Delgadillo's piece. It is interesting to consider whether Delgadillo follows Darío's meter or tries to replicate the sounds it evokes. Strikingly, Delgadillo's piece is a march –a conventional genre immensely popular in Europe and in the US in the late nineteenth century. Delgadillo's march appeals to Nicaraguan nationalism and unified civic duty.[14]

Between 1880 and World War I, military marches grew in commercial popularity in the US and Europe (see Schwandt and Lamb). Famous march composers such as John Philip Sousa and Briton Kennedy J. Alford and their touring woodwind bands gained global recognition (see Schwandt and Lamb). Delgadillo was likely inspired by his commissions for military and wind bands, which were popular in Latin America. Military marches were typically programmed for public band concerts, parades, and ceremonial and military occasions to commemorate regiments, generals, and governing officials. Marches also projected the traits that late nineteenth and early twentieth-century listeners hoped to find in themselves: a sense of masculinity, patriotism, and a balance between cultural sophistication and everyday musical sensibilities (see Warfield 292). Typical features of the military march, such as *da capo* form, duple meter, a major key, an uncomplicated main theme, a brass-heavy arrangement, a dramatic finale, and brevity, ensured audiences a sense of predictability that met their expectations for the genre (see Schwandt and Lamb). The predictability of Delgadillo's march aligns with this more significant trend of military marches of the late nineteenth century. Like many of those marches, Delgadillo's march serves to commemorate a national hero, in this case, Darío.

[14] The Napoleonic Wars gave new impetus to the composition of marches specifically for regiments and armies to signal their partisanship. After the French Revolution, marches were primarily composed for ceremonial and military occasions (see Schwandt and Lamb).

Unlike Sousa's or Alford's wind-band instrumentation, Delgadillo's *Marcha triunfal* is composed for strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion (see Delgadillo, *Marcha triunfal*).[15] During most of the march, the instruments perform in a homophonic setting resembling an anthem. Historically, such settings express power, collectivity, and a united voice. In this case, the march was performed at a public event that called for national unity in Nicaragua. There are times, however, when Delgadillo singles out specific instruments, specifically in the brass and percussion sections. On the one hand, it could seem that Delgadillo is recalling the poem's foregrounded sounds of brass instruments ("claros clarines" and "largas trompetas") and percussion ("los timbaleros"). On the other hand, he could be following the standard of the nineteenth-century march, which privileges the brass section and unites the instruments to play homorhythmically and homophonically.

The march's principal theme resembles the characteristic theme of the nineteenth-century march. It is repeated five times, with six sections interspersed between these repetitions. The main melody is sixteen bars long, legato, and resembles a hymn theme with the orchestra playing in unison. The brass section plays the theme with the winds and strings accompanying, and the percussion forcefully marks the downbeat. For the listener, the theme becomes a source of musical relief; it is simple and memorable, as is characteristic of the march genre (see Schwandt and Lamb). Delgadillo varies the march theme each time it is repeated by adding ornamentation –another typical march feature. The second time the central theme is played, the flutes and piccolo create a harmony to accompany it. The third time, the piccolo plays decorative trills. The fourth time, the orchestra plays more forcefully than before. The fifth and final time, the theme grows in climactic gesture to a dramatic close. Set to a slower tempo, the brass plays louder and the orchestra more forcefully, while the basses accompany with a descending melodic eighth-note gesture. The march concludes with an orchestral crescendo accompanied by snare and timpani rolls ending in a loud cymbal crash. The finale offers a sense of relief and resolution at the end of the piece.

Argentinian and Nicaraguan Reception of Delgadillo's Concert March

Delgadillo's *Marcha triunfal* was performed two more times after Darío's public funeral: first in Buenos Aires in April 1916 and then in Managua in 1933 for the inauguration of the Rubén Darío Monument. The local newspapers emphasized Delgadillo's close attention to the poem in composing the music, ignoring Darío's tumultuous relationship with his home country.

[15] According to Schwandt and Lamb, it is possible that Delgadillo's orchestral arrangement reflects the art music turn given by composers to the march form. After World War I, composers like Charles Ives, Alban Berg, and Igor Stravinsky experimented with the march form and removed its formal military trappings. The march evolved into a more flexible, less stereotyped genre, and the orchestration became more colorful (see Schwandt and Lamb).

In "La *Marcha Triunfal* de Luis A. Delgadillo en la Argentina" (*La Nación,* April 16, 1916 and reprinted in *El Gráfico* in 1929), an unnamed author describes the performance of Delgadillo's march in Buenos Aires two months after the monumental funeral ceremony in León.[16] The author draws precise connections between the poem and the march to legitimize Darío's legacy and boast Delgadillo's burgeoning career as a composer. The author singles out instrumental references in the poem and shows how they are realized in the march. The author notices that Delgadillo opens with trumpets, crashing cymbals, and percussion as Darío did. The march's percussion section is also noted:

> Se trata de un hermoso poema sinfónico. Sus primeras notas son las de una fanfarria lejana; se acerca, y como en la poesía, "se oyen los claros clarines." De pronto, hay una irrupción de metales, y es que "ya pasa el cortejo bajo los arcos…" Sigue una parte dulce. Vuelve la fanfarria, y los instrumentos imitan entonces "el ruido de las armas de los caballeros…" Hay una parte grave y heroica; aquella que anuncia "La gloria solemne de los estandartes." Suenan los tambores y timbales "Anunciando a los timbaleros que el paso acompasa." Violentamente "Levantan sus sones los claros clarines," y hay una nota solemne: aquella que dice: "Los cóndores llegan; llegó la victoria…" Se inicia la grandiosidad en la marcha, cuando "señala el abuelo los héroes al niño." Y las notas tornándose suaves, casi dicen: "Como circunda el armiño los bucles de oro." El final es majestuoso, cuando "saludan con voces de bronce las trompas de guerra que tocan la marcha triunfal…". ("La *Marcha triunfal*")

The author wants to find a close relationship between the march and the poem, also in its finale. But much of what is described is predictable and true of any standard nineteenth-century march.

On September 24, 1933, Gerónimo Ramírez Brown published the article "La *Marcha triunfal* de Luis A. Delgadillo en la Argentina" in the Nicaraguan journal *La Noticia, Diario Independiente y intereses generales,* announcing a ceremony to erect a monument to Darío in Managua. The opening ceremony would include a performance of Delgadillo's march, which by then had been played in Argentina and would finally be reheard in Dario's home country. In response to the march's inclusion in the monument's ceremonious reveal in Managua, Brown revisits its history, reprinting an article from *El Comercio* published in 1927 that recounts the performance of Delgadillo's *Marcha triunfal* in Buenos Aires in 1916 (see Ramírez Brown 3).[17] The anonymous article published in 1916 in *La Nación* focused on the location of the march, the Bosque de Palermo—a city park in Buenos Aires—and the event itself. The article idealizes the event and begins with a phrase often used in fairy tales:

> Una vez fue en la Patria de San Martín y de Sarmiento. El Dr. don Pedro González, Delegado de Nicaragua al Congreso Financiero Panamericano que se reunió en Buenos

[16] The Hemeroteca Nacional of Nicaragua does not indicate why this reprint occurred.

[17] I obtained the printed article in *La Noticia* on September 24, 1933, at the Hemeroteca Nacional, located in the Palacio Nacional in Managua. The original article, printed in *El Comercio* on Oct. 30, 1927 was not available. Nevertheless, it's worth acknowledging the newspapers' practice of reprinting past articles, so as to create a canon—a body of work— that documents and aims to commemorate the cultural and national significance of Delgadillo's march in Nicaragua.

> Aires en 1916, obsequió al Director de la Banda de aquella gran urbe, con los papeles de la "Marcha Triunfal Rubén Darío." ("La *Marcha triunfal*" qtd. in Ramírez Brown 3)

The reviewer describes Delgadillo's march as a beautiful gift bequeathed on Argentina by Nicaragua, noting the concert program's ornate detail, akin to Cinderella's invitation to the ball: "En preciosa cartulina, recibimos invitación para ir al Bosque de Palermo a escuchar un concierto de gala en el cual iba a ser ejecutada la Hermosa Marcha Triunfal de Delgadillo" (qtd. in Ramírez Brown 3). Most notable, however, is that the author emphasizes how the Bosque de Palermo was decorated with Nicaraguan national emblems:

> […] brillantes cintas con colores de la bandera de Nicaragua; los programas del concierto ostentaban también los colores de nuestro emblema nacional, y en ellos, con el número uno, en letras especiales, se leía: '*Marcha triunfal Rubén Darío*, obra de su compatriota Luis A. Delgadillo. (Qtd in Ramírez Brown 3)

By reprinting parts of this old article in the 1933 article, the Nicaraguan newspaper sets the stage for the inauguration of the Monument of Darío. Moreover, it reminded its readers of Nicaragua's diplomatic alliance with Argentina. Even more significantly, Darío's poem takes on a different meaning in this context. Darío and Delgadillo become co-authors in this construction of Nicaraguan nationhood.

Conclusion

It is necessary to trace the sounds, references to sound, and listening practices encouraged by the different marches to draw out the similarities, contradictions, and mythical lore that construct this archive of sonic triumphalism tied to Nicaraguan nationalist politics. Verdi's triumphal march in *Aida* can be considered within a critique of imperialism, as demonstrated in his different musical representations of Egypt and Ethiopia, although this idea is much contested. Darío heard Verdi's "Gloria all'Egitto" and transcribed its sounds into poetry through alliteration and assonant rhyme. He repurposed Verdi's sounds to serve a pan-Latin American purpose. Ricardo Jaimes Freyre's recitation of Darío's poem demonstrated poetic innovation to a small, elite audience of intellectuals and artists identifying as Argentinian and pan-Latin American. Finally, Delgadillo transforms Darío's poem into an American-style march arranged for a military band. This march also gives pride of place to a brass fanfare. Delgadillo's march can be used for the civil articulation of national pride in contrast to the performance of Darío's poem at the Ateneo soirée. Performing Delgadillo's march at Darío's public funeral reminded the people attending of their national commitment to Nicaragua. This march contrasts with Verdi's in style and political purpose. Ultimately, the poetry reading and Delgadillo's march realize Darío's poem differently to different ends.

By transforming Darío's poem into a military march in 1916, Delgadillo's *Marcha triunfal* works as a means of commemorating Darío as a national hero, thereby solidifying the poet's role in the symbolic representation of the Nicara-

guan nation. After his death, Darío's poetry became a symbol of the nation. In this article, I explored this transformation by first examining Darío's tumultuous relationship with Nicaragua and how his history with his homeland contradicts the Nicaraguan government's actions to integrate and celebrate him after his death. During his lifetime, Darío's tendency to avoid speaking of national belonging illustrated his conflicted relationship with his homeland. By exploring the sounds in "Marcha triunfal," I investigated Darío's anti-imperialism and pan-Latin Americanism more deeply as it contrasts with his commemoration. "Marcha triunfal" evokes a pan-Latin American, anti-imperial sentiment, not a Nicaraguan, nationalist one. Darío's "Marcha triunfal" evokes a bugle's call, thunder, a bronzed French horn, kettle drums, clanking military armor, and the ghostly voices of dead soldiers to evoke a scene of celebration and joy. These sounds offer traces of the various circumstances that shaped the poem: US and European imperialism in Latin America, a dialogue with the Argentinian intellectual community, and Verdi's opera march "Gloria all'Egitto" from *Aida.* This poem evokes an era of pan-Latin American independence and artistic freedom. Delgadillo revised the meaning of Darío's poem. When he realized his *Marcha triunfal*, Darío was transformed into an icon, and the particularities of his life and work somewhat got lost. My article exposes these historical tensions, folklore, and contradictions that comprise the sonic triumphalism archive. This sonic archive offers a deeper understanding of Nicaraguan nationalist politics at the beginning of the twentieth century revealing how nationalism is *sonically* constructed, and *who* privileges these sounds and musical references. Giving pride of place to the rich sonic world of Darío's poetry allows scholars to rethink and further complicate Nicaraguan nationalism and to continue to resound in Darío's complex, contradictory world of poetry and political discourse.

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