

Iberia de Isaac Albéniz: Las versiones integrales grabadas por pianistas del continente americano

*Iberia de Isaac Albéniz: Complete Sound Recordings by Pianists from the
American Continent*

*Iberia de Isaac Albéniz: Versões integradas gravadas por pianistas do
continente americano*

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Resumen

Desde que apareció el primer álbum elepé de *Iberia* de Isaac Albéniz en 1954 y hasta la fecha, se han comercializado 64 grabaciones integrales en el ámbito mundial. De este total, 11 registros sonoros han sido efectuados por pianistas del continente americano. El objetivo de este texto es brindar información discográfica sobre esta oncenena de versiones integrales con el propósito de ofrecer los primeros supuestos a la cuestión de si esta obra española de corte universal ha sido interpretada y producida de manera particular desde América, y en caso de que fuera así, señalar si esta particularidad es a tal grado significativa como para representar una divergencia del canon marcado por los músicos europeos y sobre todo por los grandes maestros españoles. Además, a través de esta investigación, se han rescatado las versiones sonoras grabadas por los pianistas José Echániz, Elsa Puppulo y Francisco Aybar, de importancia histórica al pertenecer a la era del elepé.

Como resultado, se observa que los intérpretes americanos conocen bien la obra de Albéniz y están al tanto de la praxis interpretativa de *Iberia*. Su perfil biográfico revela que recibieron una formación académica excelente y que su memoria musical les permite dominar un repertorio amplio y ecléctico. Además, las carátulas de los discos analizados muestran temas iconográficos generalmente asociados con esta obra para piano. Es

importante señalar que varios pianistas escribieron las notas del folleto que de modo verbal manifiestan la percepción que tienen sobre estas piezas. Finalmente, el análisis temporal metronómico muestra una divergencia menor respecto a la praxis musical plasmada en las grandes versiones españolas de *Iberia*. Por tanto, los resultados indican que estas versiones no presentan una visión diferente a las producciones discográficas facturadas en otros puntos del planeta ni a las generadas en la península ibérica.

Palabras clave: Albéniz, análisis discográfico, grabación sonora, *Iberia*.

Abstract

Since its first launch in an LP format in 1954 to this date, 64 recordings of Isaac Albeniz's *Iberia* have been commercialized worldwide, 11 of which have been recorded by pianists from the American continent. The aim of this article is to provide a discographic analysis of the complete versions created from the western shores of the Atlantic and offer tentative answers to the question whether this Spanish work of universal importance has been interpreted and produced in America distinct from the canon established by European musicians, especially by the great Spanish masters. Moreover, this research rescued the recorded versions by the pianists José Echániz, Elsa Puppulo and Francisco Aybar, all of historical importance as they belong to the album era.

As a result, it can be observed that American pianists know Albeniz's work well and are aware of *Iberia*'s interpretive praxis. It is evident from their biography that they received excellent academic training and that their musical memory allows them to master a broad and eclectic repertoire. In addition, the album covers of the analyzed discs display iconographic themes generally associated with this piano work. It is important to mention that several pianists wrote the liner notes that verbally manifest their perception about these pieces. Finally, the metronomic analysis shows a small divergence from the musical praxis embodied in the great Spanish recordings of *Iberia*. Therefore, the results indicate that these versions do not present a different vision to the discographic productions created on the Iberian Peninsula, or, indeed, in any other part of the world.

Keywords: Albéniz, discographic analysis, sound recording, *Iberia*.

Resumo

Desde o surgimento do primeiro álbum da Iberia por Isaac Albéniz em 1954 e até hoje, 64 gravações integrais foram comercializadas em todo o mundo. Deste total, 11 registros sonoros foram feitos por pianistas do continente americano. O objetivo deste texto é fornecer informações discográficas sobre essas onze versões integrais com o objetivo de oferecer as primeiras suposições para a questão de saber se este trabalho espanhol de corte universal foi interpretado e produzido de uma forma particular a partir da América, e no caso foi assim, para indicar se essa particularidade é tão significativa que representa uma divergência do cânon marcada pelos músicos europeus e especialmente pelos grandes mestres espanhóis. Além disso, através desta investigação, foram resgatadas as versões sonoras gravadas pelos pianistas José Echániz, Elsa Puppulo e Francisco Aybar, de importância histórica ao pertencerem à era do LPEP.

Como resultado, observa-se que os intérpretes americanos conhecem bem o trabalho de Albéniz e estão cientes da praxis interpretativa da Ibéria. Seu perfil biográfico revela que eles receberam uma excelente formação acadêmica e que sua memória musical lhes permite dominar um repertório amplo e eclético. Além disso, as capas dos discos analisados mostram temas iconográficos geralmente associados a este trabalho para piano. É importante notar que vários pianistas escreveram as notas de panfletos que manifestam verbalmente a percepção que têm sobre essas peças. Finalmente, a análise metronômica temporal mostra uma pequena divergência em relação à prática musical incorporada nas grandes versões espanholas da Ibéria. Portanto, os resultados indicam que essas versões não apresentam uma visão diferente das produções discográficas faturadas em outras partes do planeta ou geradas na Península Ibérica.

Palavras-chave: Albéniz, análise discográfica, gravação de som, Iberia.

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Introduction

Iberia de Isaac Albéniz¹ It is a significant work within the Spanish-American pianistic repertoire of the 20th century. This series of twelve pieces was composed by the Catalan musician between 1905 and 1908, in a record time given the complexity and discursive richness of each number. The first comprehensive recordings appeared in the 1950s and since then the number of performances has been increasing. Over the course of six decades, there has been a diversification in terms of nationality and age of the pianists, as well as in the presentation of the discs through increasingly specialized covers and brochures.

Table 1 shows the distribution over time based on the year of recording of the different sound performances². The first column indicates the decade; the second, the number of recordings that were made in each of them, and the third includes the first surname of the interpreters in chronological order.

Tabla 1. Producción de grabaciones integrales de *Iberia* a través del tiempo

Década	N.º de grabaciones	Año de grabación
1950	6	1954: Querol, Echániz / 1955: Loriód, Falgarona / 1956: Gorini / 1958: Larrocha (v1)
1960	6	1962: Larrocha (v2) / 1963: Helffer / 1966: Ciccolini / 1967: Sabater / 1968: Puppulo / 1969 Sánchez
1970	6	1972: Kyriakou / 1973: Larrocha (v3), Block / 1974: Aybar / 1975: Solomon / 1976: Uribe
1980	3	1980: Requejo / 1985: Syomin / 1986: Larrocha (v4)
1990	13	1990: Torra / 1991: Pinzolas / 1992: Orozco / 1993: Heisser (v1) / 1994: Hiseki (v1) / 1995: Baytelman / 1996: Muraro / 1997: González / 1998: Jones, Okada, Peña / 1999: Solano, Unwin
2000	23	2002: Baselga / 2004: Huidobro, Billaut, Hamelin, Torres-Pardo, Díaz-Frénot / 2006: Pérez, Chauzu / 2007: Christian, Job, Kotaro / 2008: Rembrandt, Verona / 2009: Hiseki (v2), Fernández, Díaz-Jerez, Uehara, Montiel, Heisser (v2), Martín Castro, Ish-Hurwitz, Pizarro, Yovchev
2010	7	2010: Huidobro (v2) / 2011: Attenelle, Schaaf / 2013: Grané / 2014: Nishizawa, Boyd / 2015: Díaz-Jerez (v2)
Total	64	

Fuente: Actualización de la tabla realizada por Pérez (2014, p. 144)

¹ El número de catálogo, según Jacinto Torres (2001, pp. 415-428), es T₁₀₅.

² Es importante señalar que el año de grabación no necesariamente concuerda con el año de producción ni de edición, de ahí que en la bibliografía se incluya al final de cada referencia discográfica el tipo de dato técnico en relación con el año señalado: copyright ©, máster fonográfico ® o Depósito Legal (D. L.).

From this group of 64 original recordings included in the world discographic scene, there is a subgroup of 11 sound records made by pianists born in the American continent, which constitute the object of study of this article.

The American recordings

Iberia de Albéniz has been recorded completely by pianists from different countries in recent decades, which speaks of the outstanding journey that this musical composition has had to enter the piano canon as a work of repertoire, a possibility that Olivier Messiaen already predicted by saying that collection of twelve pieces occupies a prominent place in the pianistic firmament (Gauthier, 1978, p. 99)³.

In this sense, this text aims to rescue the versions and profiles of those American pianists who have felt affinity for this Spanish work and who devoted time and effort to putting it on fingers, as well as recording it. These are the following interpreters: José Echániz (1954), Elsa Puppulo (1968), Francisco Aybar (1974), Blanca Uribe (1976), Pola Baytelman (1995), Sergio Peña (1998), Marc-André Hamelin (2004) , Valentina Díaz-Frénot (2004), Sally Christian (2007), Paul Verona (2008) and Peter Schaaf (2011), who in the indicated years made a record of the *Iberia*.

Specifically, seven of these sound records were produced in the United States of America, one in Argentina and one in Mexico; to which two more are added, made in the United Kingdom and Germany, although by interpreters of Canadian and Argentine origin.

The profile of the interpreters

As for the group of 57 pianists who recorded the integral of *Iberia*, 74% are men and 26% are women. The majority are Spanish, although there is also a prominent presence of French, English and Japanese musicians. The Fundació Isaac Albéniz Camprodon has awarded several musicians the Albéniz Medal for the dissemination and integral recording

³ Al parecer también dicha opinión también está reflejada en las notas escritas del álbum que contiene la versión integral de la *Iberia* grabada por la esposa de Messiaen, Yvonne Loriod (1958).

of this work, including Larrocha, Torres-Pardo, Attenelle, Hiseki, Uribe, Pérez, González, Díaz-Jerez, Grané, Pizarro.

The general profile of the type of musician who has recorded the integral indicates that he received a good technical instruction and dominates a broad repertoire. In addition, it has a highly developed musical memory and handles a broad spectrum of timbre colors. Several studied in an auspicious environment where they discovered and learned this piano work through the teachings of other outstanding music interpreters of Isaac Albéniz.

In particular, the education received by the group of eleven American pianists is summarized in Table 2 (ordered by recording date):

Tabla 2. Origen y educación de los intérpretes americanos

Intérprete	Origen	Maestros	Escuelas
José Echániz	Cuba	José Echániz Maíz, Ignacio Tellería, Alberto Falcón	Conservatorio Falcón (La Habana)
Sergio Peña	México	Ofelia García, Stella Contreras, Bernard Flavigny, Bruno Seidelboffer, Sigi Weissenberg, María Curzio, Beveridge Webster, Adele Marcus	Academia del Maestro José F. Velázquez (Cd. de México), Juilliard School of Music (Nueva York)
Elsa Puppulo	Argentina	Jorge Fanelli, Juan Francisco Giacobbe, Alberto Ginastera, Ives Naty, Guido Agosti	Conservatorio Nacional Carlos López Buchardo (Buenos Aires)
Blanca Uribe	Colombia	Richard Hauser, Rosina Lhevinne, Martin Canin	Academia de Música y Arte Dramático (Viena), Juilliard School of Music
Francisco Aybar	República Dominicana	Dora Zaslavsky, Clarence Adler, Llona Cabos	Manhattan School of Music (Nueva York), Fordham University (grado en psicología)
Valentina Díaz-Frénot	Argentina	Roberto Caamaño, Alicia de Larrocha, Madga Tagliaferro, Marcelle Heuclin, Vlado Perlemuter	Conservatorio Nacional de Música Carlos López Buchardo (Buenos Aires), Cursos de Santiago de Compostela
Pola Baytelman	Chile	Russell Sherman, Nancy Garrett	Conservatorio Nacional (Universidad de Chile), Conservatorio de Música (Boston), Universidad de Texas (Austin)
Sally Christian	EE. UU.	Philip Lorenz, Claudio Arrau	Universidad Estatal de California en Fresno, Universidad de Stanford

Paul Verona	EE. UU.	Nadia Boulanger, John Browning, Sergio Perticaroli, Josef Raieff, Rosalyn Tureck, André Watts, Naomi Zaslav	Conservatorio G. B. Martini (Bologna), Juilliard School of Music, Manhattan School of Music
Peter Schaaf	EE. UU.	Sascha Gorodnitzki, Rosina Lhévinne	Juilliard School of Music

Fuente: Elaboración propia

It is important to note that two American pianists have written their doctoral theses on Iberia to obtain the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts. This is Pola Baytelman (1990), who, as a thesis, made a catalog of the composer's piano work entitled *Albéniz: Chronological listing and thematic catalog of his piano Works*, which he defended at the University of Texas (Austin); three years later this work was published as a monograph in the series *Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography* (1993). It should be specified that the pianist of Chilean origin recorded Iberia in 1995.

Similarly, Paul Verona wrote a thesis whose title can be translated as *The Interpretive Practice of the Iberia Suite by Isaac Albéniz as a problematic masterpiece revealed through the interpolation of flamenco with a transcendental technique*⁴ which allowed him to complete his doctorate in musical arts at the Manhattan School of Music in New York, in 1991. However, it took 17 years for the pianist to record Iberia, namely, in 2008.

Another relevant aspect associated with this musical work is the demanding result of the effort that has to be made to play it complete: on the one hand, because the integral interpretation of the 12 fragments adds up to an average total duration of 85 minutes; on the other hand, the pieces increase their technical-musical difficulty as the notebooks advance. The high-level performance requires a mature pianist and, therefore, the recording of this piano collection is usually done in an average age of the pianist, between 35 and 43 years old.

⁴ El título original es *The Iberia suite of Isaac Albéniz: performance practice of a problematic masterpiece revealed through the interpolation of flamenco forms with transcendental technique*. También existió una publicación derivada del mismo autor (1995) que está descatalogada: *The Iberia Suite of Isaac Albeniz: Transcendentalisms in a Flamenco World*.

The age of each of these American pianists is situated along the age spectrum, but the general group between 25 and 80 years does not exceed the limits, with an average of 44 years and a median of 41 years (Pérez, 2012, p 271). Table 3 shows the age at the time of the recording resulting from combining the dates of the recording session with the date of birth⁵. In order to protect the information of the pianists, the personal data in this article have been covered, although they were taken into account to calculate the age at the time of recording for each interpreter, with the purpose of specifying the result.

Tabla 3. Edad del grupo de pianistas al tiempo de la grabación

Pianista	Fecha de Nacimiento	Fecha de Grabación	Años
Puppulo, Elsa		II/1968	29
Aybar, Francisco		1974	33
Uribe, Blanca		1976	36
Hamelin, Marc-André		7-8/IV/2004, 25-26/VIII/2004	42
Baytelman, Pola		X/1995	49
Echániz, José		Primavera/1954	50
Díaz-Frénot, Valentina		VI y X/2004	60
Peña, Sergio		IX/1998	66
Christian, Sally		II/2007	
Schaaf, Peter		2011	
Verona, Paul		6,9/10/2008, 14/11/2008	54

Fuente: Actualización de la tabla realizada por Pérez (2012, pp. 270-271)

In this sense, the recording of Elsa Puppulo, made when she was 29 years old, appears out of style and a bit slow; it gives the feeling that the pianist perhaps did not know the work completely, because in some numbers like in El puerto it seems to be reading at first sight from the score. On the other side of the scale, is Sergio Peña, who, at 66, seems to be found late in his journey of life to this work, as their musical tempos are also slow and faltering in certain passages of the work . The rest of the pianists seem to be in a position to offer acceptable versions in terms of speed, dynamics and verve.

⁵ No existe información pública disponible sobre la fecha de nacimiento de los siguientes pianistas americanos: Christian y Schaaf.

The commercial product

When analyzing the packaging of the recordings, it is observed that in the American records there are photographs of the pianists, as well as representations of flamenco dancers and the Alhambra, which constitute adequate possibilities to promote these recordings, with visual solutions that are kept within the characteristic iconographic themes related to the integral of Iberia⁶.

It is important to emphasize that including the image of the pianist on the cover is a safe bet to market a recording since, on the one hand, it allows the discophile to identify the performer and, on the other hand, the record label does not have to pay royalties in the case that the photograph has been made by his own staff. The recordings that opted for this possibility were those of Francisco Aybar (1974), Valentina Díaz-Frénot (2005) and Sally Christian (2009), musicians who appear seated or next to the piano, circumstance that reinforces the ability to inform the possible buyer that it is a recording with music for that key instrument.

The drawings of Laura Albéniz that accompanied the Spanish reissue published by the Spanish Musical Union (ca. 1918), derived from the Mutuelle Edition, set a precedent within the cultural imaginary associated with this collection of pieces⁷. In them appear women in traditional dresses that are related to the parties of Andalusia. In relation to this theme, the original cover of José Echániz (1955) presents an illustration with traditional costumes, however, the reissue of a couple of years later includes a powerful image where the dancer Antonio is portrayed who has a pose with panache inside of a game of lights that resemble a cave reflected through a cart. Similarly, the cover of Sergio Peña (2000) includes a representation of a zambra with a dancer in the foreground accompanied by several

⁶ En un análisis previo (Pérez, 2012), un grupo de 57 versiones integrales fue ordenado en 14 categorías: Énfasis tipográfico, Retrato del compositor, Retrato del intérprete, Horizontes desconocidos, Paisajes españoles, Enunciación geográfica, Abstracciones, Tribal, Baile flamenco, Femenidad, Majismo, Religión, Mundo taurino y Quijote.

⁷ Obsérvese, por ejemplo, la fuente de agua sobre papel de la hija del compositor, titulada *Sevillana en el Jardín*, que aparece como un elemento visual en la portada de la edición musical de *Iberia*. (Museo Diocesà de Barcelona, 2009, p. 195).

musicians. While the cover of Pola Baytelman (1998) includes the image of a woman in a bowling suit, although it is striking that the dress is green.

Another suitable possibility is the representation of the Alhambra, which appears on the covers of Blanca Uribe (1976) and Marc-André Hamelin (2005). The recording of the Colombian pianist includes a photograph of the Patio de los Leones, while the record of the Canadian musician shows an illustration of the side of this architectural complex, patrimony of humanity.

The most recent records, made by Paul Verona (2008) and Peter Schaaf (2011), emphasize typography and color as the main elements of their covers. In this sense, it is difficult to establish an emotional or cultural link with this work for piano; However, this solution is not extreme either and can be perceived as neutral.

The recording of Elsa Puppulo (1968), made in Buenos Aires, presents an interesting album from the iconographic and cultural points of view. The cover includes the logo of the Spanish airline Iberia that is shown with a red hue, while the labels referring to the composer, performer and instrument appear in black ink. In short, the color and thickness of the word Iberia, in combination with the sky, suggest a promotional representation of the Spanish airline company of the same name.

It is convenient to remember that this entity made the first commercial flight between Madrid and Buenos Aires in September 1946 (Cué, 21 September 2016), perhaps the intention behind this sound record of Albéniz's piano work was to make a recording to commemorate that first trip between both countries, Spain and Argentina, as well as promoting their caravelle aircraft fleet, given that one of the inside faces of the album contains the following text (Puppulo, 1978):

The whole history of Spain, that of its poets, that of its musicians and that of its painters, is a flight of creative freedom. A trip to the beloved places dearly.

It is also traditional, the tribute that IBERIA pays to Spanish music when it baptizes its "Caravelle" airplanes with names of great figures of Hispanic music.

True musical wings form the fleet of IBERIA, which carries through the skies the names of the great composers who have been able to give their best art for the musical heritage of Spain.

It is a fact that the flotilla was named after illustrious Spanish musicians (see Table 4) in the same way as another fleet was named after Spanish painters and a triad more with those of the Pinta, the Niña and the Santa María.

Tabla 4. Músicos escogidos para representar a una flota aérea de la compañía Iberia

Flota Jett “Caravella” de Iberia			
Isaac Albéniz	Maestro Victoria	José Usandizaga	Emilio Arrieta
Ruperto Chapi	Amadeo Vives	Mastro Padilla	Tomás Bretón
Enrique Granados	Pablo Sarasate	Hilarión Eslava	Jerónimo Jiménez
Manuel de Falla	Alfonso X el sabio	Jesús Guridi	Padre Antonio Soler
Joaquín Turina	Juan C. Arriaga	Teobaldo Power	Francisco Tarrera

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información del LP (Puppulo, 1978)

Within the commercial history of Iberia's integral recordings, Puppulo's album is a particular case given that the recorded performance of the pianist is used to promote a commercial service. There is only one similar product, the Spanish reprint of the recording by Claude Helffer (1974), which included a reproduction of El Goya by Francisco Goya, which was exclusively produced by the Marfer label for the Corte chain. English, which was responsible for distributing it in Spain through its warehouses.

The visual proposals of the American recordings of Iberia can be seen in Figure 1 that includes various themes.

Figura 1. Portadas de las versiones americanas de Iberia



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Of this subgroup of American recordings, four of them are elepé albums: that of Echaniz presents its own box from the 1950s and includes an independent brochure with text by the renowned harpsichordist Fernando Valenti; the other two (Puppulo and Aybar), on the other hand, are opened and the informative text appears printed on the central faces. The text of the Argentine pianist, reviewed in previous paragraphs, was written by the record company, while Martin Bookspan, writer and radio announcer, was the one who was responsible for writing the content for the recording of Francisco Aybar. The original edition of Blanca Uribe also appeared on vinyl, however, we do not know the text that could accompany it, although we suppose that it included a generic text generated by the record label, as it happens in a later reedition where a simple sheet was attached that, unfortunately, It contains errata both in the text and in the name of the pieces (Uribe, 1999).

As for CD sets, the booklet accompanying the recording by Díaz-Frénót stands out. The text was written by musicologist Jacqueline Kalfa and appears in three languages

(Spanish, French and English), with a total of 66 pages. The one who accompanies the recording of Hamelin was written by another specialist musicologist in Albéniz: Professor Walter A. Clark. Equally important are the recordings of Sergio Peña, Pola Baytelman, Paul Verona and Peter Schaaf, since the same interpreters wrote their texts or contributed to the brochure. The sound record design by Sally Christian is the only Iberia recording that offers a folio instead of the typical stapled booklet; On its sides information and photographs about the composer, the interpreter and the piano tuner are observed, as well as a description of the modifications made to the instrument to make said recording.

Vinyl transfer

Three full Iberia recordings made by American pianist were published on 33 rpm discs and there is no commercial CD release. These recordings are historical records and getting a copy of them required a systematic tracking at auction sites to be able to buy them. These are the recordings of José Echániz (1954), Elsa Puppulo (1968) and Francisco Aybar (1974), which were acquired from collectors through the American and Argentine portals of Ebay.

At first, it was thought to perform a non-invasive transfer, through a possible 3D reconstruction, but when reading the text corresponding to the thesis of Baozhong Tian (2008), it was observed that this field of action is still far from having a real application and it will take several years before it becomes a viable economic possibility in the form of an affordable player. His research was based on the comparison of algorithms to convert an optical reading of the grooves of vinyl into sound, the technique is still in experimental phase and it required huge work hours to produce the transfer of small examples.

As a second option, one of the guidelines of the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives [IASA] (2006) was taken into account, which states that "the ultimate purpose of preservation is to ensure that access to the content of the audio collection is available to authorized users of today and tomorrow, without threatening or damaging the integrity of the audio item "(page 5). For this, it was decided to make a quality copy and, with that premise, the digital transfer in stereo of the LPs was carried out in the Radio UG facilities of the University of Guanajuato.

For this, a turntable SL-1210M5G of the Matsushita brand was used. The type of player Technics SL-1200 is a series of rotating plates manufactured between 1972 to 2010 by the Japanese company. Specifically, the SL-1210M5G model was marketed in the period of 2002-2008 and corresponds to a special edition of the 30th anniversary of this product. Among the qualities of the SL-1200, it stands out that it uses a Servo Control frequency generator block quartz system necessary to produce the most accurate and consistent speed possible. The system is immune to the static and dynamic drag of the needle while maintaining a high metronomic stability.

In addition, Shure brand M44-7 needle spare parts were available, which have an ultra-high anti-hail resistance, with ultra-low wear of the disc and an emphasized bass sound. An M-164UF mixer was also used, which has 16 channels and can be used through a USB 2.0 connection. The capture was made through a computer of the Dell brand that had installed Windows 7 as a platform and Adobe Audition as an audio editor. The audio files were not modified nor were any filters passed, given that the type of study that was going to be done was about the time parameter of the music. Two copies were saved in a pair of hard disks, with a view to leaving an intact for reasons of conservation⁸.

For the temporal analysis the Sonic Visualiser music software was used⁹ (version 2.4) In order to put the timestamps to the visualization of the sound wave, the data was exported to Excel MS to convert the numbers to a metronomic reality and to make the graphs that appear in the following section.

⁸ Con la anterior jefe de Departamento de Radio Universidad, Laura Lozano, se acordó dejar una copia digital de las grabaciones de *Iberia* realizadas por pianistas del continente americano, provenientes de la colección de Alfonso Pérez, autor de este artículo, para que exista una memoria sonora de dichos registros sonoros en un lugar fuera de España, resguardada en la fonoteca de una institución de educación superior, acción que se realizará en su debido momento, para garantizar su futura existencia.

⁹ Más información sobre este programa se puede encontrar en Cannam, Landone y Sandler (2010). La referencia al *software* es Cannam (2005/2015).

Temporal analysis: material and methodology

From the methodological point of view, and in relation to piano literature, the decision to study the tempo parameter is due to the fact that, at present, it is the musical variable that can be analyzed objectively with the computer tools of systematic musicology. The dynamics would be the second factor to be evaluated, however, the level of objectivity is lower due to the characteristics of the different sound supports, as well as the hardware and software specifications used for the transfer and analysis of the dynamic curves. In a third place, aspects such as the timbre, the pedal and the acoustic-spatial reality would appear that are still a pending issue, since computer programs are hardly being developed to be able to study them quantitatively (Author / s, masked 3).

The importance of studying the tempo has worried authors like Clive Brown (2009) who writes in this regard the following:

One of the fundamental problems that has been explicitly posed, or that underlies the assertions of many musicians about the tempo, is the question of the degree of deviation of the "ideal" tempo possible without altering the intended effect. That acceptable margin of deviation can not be established exactly, but it is obvious to every experienced musician that, while it is contrary to art to insist on a single and immutable tempo for each piece of music and all circumstances, a composition may be interpreted. at a tempo so different from that predicted by the composer that his character is totally altered (p. 25).

And that is precisely one of the purposes of this academic text: to observe the temporal divergences presented by the American pianists in their recordings of Iberia. In this section appear the graphs corresponding to the study of the metronomic marks of those eleven integral versions made by pianists of the American continent, with the intention of knowing how much the pianists approach the air indications given by the composer for the twelve pieces in the score.

Tabla 5. Indicaciones temporales plasmadas en la partitura

Pieza	Indicación agógica	Referencia metronómica
<i>Evocación</i>	Allegretto (espressivo)	♩ = (92)
<i>El puerto</i>	Allegro comodo	♩. = (114)
<i>Corpus Christi en Sevilla</i>	Allegro preciso (gracioso)	♩ = (115)
<i>Rondeña</i>	Allegretto	♩. = 116
<i>Almería</i>	Allegro moderé	♩. = 72
<i>Triana</i>	Allegretto con anima	♩ = 94
<i>El Albaicín</i>	Allegro assai, ma melancolico	♩. = 60
<i>El polo</i>	Allegro melancolico	♩. = 66
<i>Lavapiés</i>	Allegretto bien rithmé mais san presser	♩ = 84
<i>Málaga</i>	Allegro vivo	♩. = 58
<i>Jerez</i>	Andantino	♩ = 76
<i>Eritaña</i>	Allegretto grazioso	♩ = 84

Fuente: Elaboración propia

Table 5 shows the agagic and metronomic indications indicated in the manuscript¹⁰ and in the first edition of the score of Iberia, which apparently the composer had the opportunity to review only hastily due to the illness that afflicted him at the end of his life. The comparison of the values is direct in the last three notebooks since Albéniz specified the initial metronomic speed; instead, he omitted said indication in the first notebook and, instead, offered expressions of tempo. For this reason, through the general results obtained from a previous analysis (Pérez, 2012, p.667), the tentative metronome numbers that the

¹⁰ En el caso de *Evocación*, hay una diferencia entre el manuscrito y la primera edición, pues en esta última el compositor agregó el calificativo “espressivo” al Allegretto. Asimismo, en el *Corpus Christi en Sevilla* hay una divergencia entre ambos documentos musicales, ya que en el autógrafo aparece el calificativo “preciso” mientras que en la primera edición aparece la palabra “gracioso” junto al Allegro.

Spanish musician would have preferred are used as reference: *Evocación* (negra = 92 MM)¹¹, *El Puerto* (negra con punto = 114 MM) y *Corpus Christi en Sevilla* (negra = 115 MM)¹².

In a complementary way, table 6 shows the names of the pieces followed by the number of measures that were analyzed by means of the wave display and the part of the musical form to which each selected extract corresponds. Care was taken to select an initial piece that was representative of each piece so as to situate the theoretical tempo more accurately.

Tabla 6. Número de compases por pieza tomados como muestra para analizar

Pieza	Tamaño de la muestra	Extracto analizado
<i>Evocación</i>	20 cc	Primer tema
<i>El Puerto</i>	17 cc	Introducción y principio del primer tema
<i>Corpus Christi en Sevilla</i>	17 cc	Exposición del primer tema
<i>Rondeña</i>	17 cc	Primer tema
<i>Almería</i>	13 cc	Parte del primer tema
<i>Triana</i>	16 cc	Introducción y parte del primer tema
<i>El Albaicín</i>	18 cc	Parte de la introducción
<i>El Polo</i>	24 cc	Introducción y parte del primer tema
<i>Lavapiés</i>	14 cc	Parte del primer tema
<i>Málaga</i>	20 cc	Parte del primer tema
<i>Jerez</i>	10 cc	Exposición del tema
<i>Eritaña</i>	09 cc	Parte del primer tema

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información contenida en Pérez (2012, pp. 560-608)

The musical tempo was observed in a micro sphere and involved three steps: a) sound analysis, b) descriptive statistics and c) metronomic references. For the analysis the Sonic Visualiser program was used, which has the advantage of being able to modify the visual representation of the musical extract without the speed of execution varying the height of the tone that is heard. This allows to place the mark in a precise way, which was ratified with auditions at low speed to check the accuracy of the marks made. From there, the metronomic

¹¹ MM es la abreviatura de Mälzel's Metronome.

¹² Para mayores detalles sobre la metodología y la muestra utilizada para deducir las marcas metronómicas del primer cuaderno de *Iberia*, véase Pérez (2012, pp. 624-639).

marks that allow comparing the sound versions in a quantified reality were generated. That is, the method involved working with the audio tracks, from whose selected extracts were extrapolated from the compass marks the metronomic values assigned to the sound wave representation of a group of integral recordings.

From musical praxis, it is assumed that the metronomic indication in a score corresponds to the initial tempo recommended by the composer. This also applies to *Iberia* by Isaac Albéniz and, in this sense, the metronomic speed is the one that, in theory, should have served as a guide for the pianists to interpret the beginning of each piece. Also, we think that the sound recording allows us to study a "captured" interpretation of the musician and his temporary conception of the work, at a given moment of his career as an interpreter. From these conditions, it is possible to compare the beginnings of the different versions to see how much the pianists adhere to the tempo assigned by the composer, without needing at this stage to deduce the metronomic marks of all the measures that compose each fragment of the collection.

Results

Next, a total of 12 graphs are presented that present the same design: in the vertical axis the scale appears in metronomic values; the horizontal axis orders the pianists in ascending order (from left to right) based on the median resulting from the measures analyzed¹³. The metronomic reference of each piece appears in the column separated from the rest and stuck to the right corner.

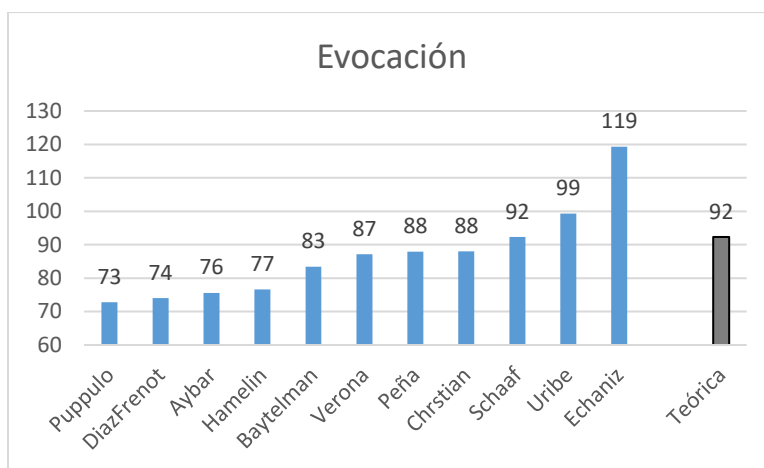
First notebook

In the first piece of the collection we see that Peter Schaaf is the one who matches the possible theoretical metronomic mark of black = 92 MM (Figure 2). Our attention is drawn to the high speed with which José Echániz approaches the beginning of the piece by

¹³ Para facilitar la representación visual de los números dentro de las gráficas, se han suprimido los decimales de los valores metronómicos deducidos a partir de análisis discográfico. No obstante, para el cálculo de los valores metronómicos sí se emplearon todos los decimales permitidos por Sonic Visualiser y MS Excel.

producing a black mark = 119 MM, an indication that exceeds the recommendation of Guillermo González (1998) in its revised edition (112-116 MM) and even the MIDI version generated by Yogore (sf). Uribe, Christian, Peña and Verona present moderate relative times while the rest of the 5 pianists offer a slow performance, especially Puppulo with a speed in the initial theme of 73 MM.

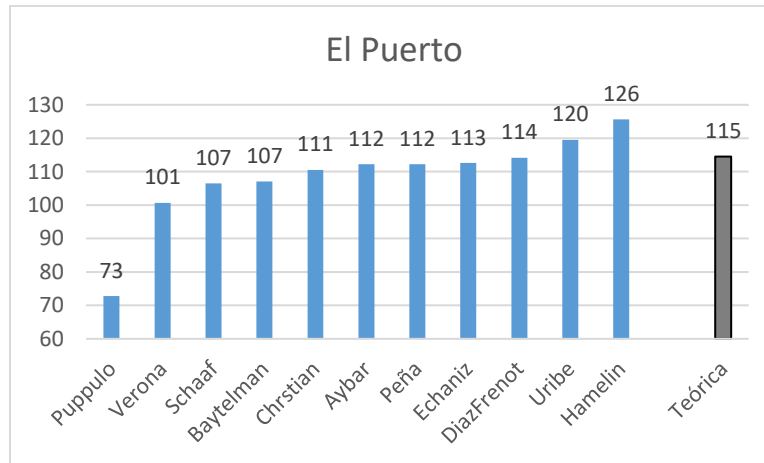
Figura 2. *Evocación*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-20]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

The Port presents a graph where most of the pianists stay close to the theoretical metronomic mark. Valentina Díaz-Frenot being the closest with a black value with a point = 114 MM (Figure 3). Elsa Puppulo offers a poor interpretation of this piece of music giving the impression that it is reading at first sight and its speed is very low when counting a value of 73 MM.

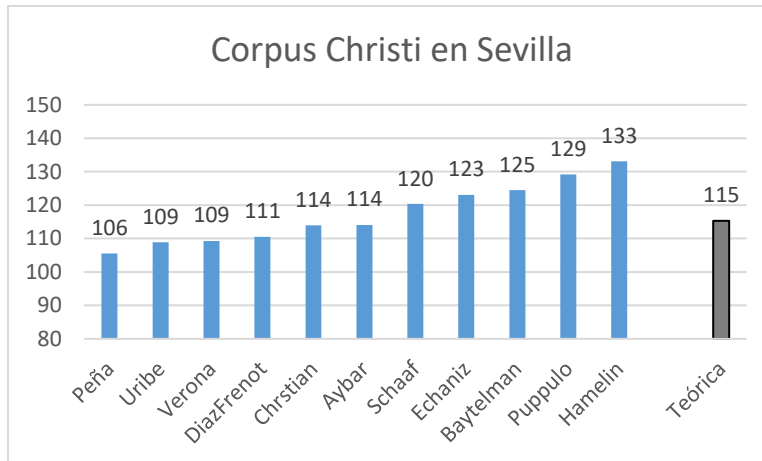
Figura 3. *El Puerto*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-17]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

The third piece is of programmatic cut and presents a balanced graph when standing in the center those pianists (Aybar, Christian and Schaaf) who approach the theoretical speed of black = 115 MM (Figure 4). In the lower end appears Sergio Peña who chooses a cautious tempo of 106 MM, in part perhaps due to his age (66 years), while Marc-André Hamelin starts quickly with a 133 MM, which serves to show the virtuosity that is characteristic in pieces of bravery.

Figura 4. *Corpus Christi en Sevilla*, análisis metronómico [cc.8-24]

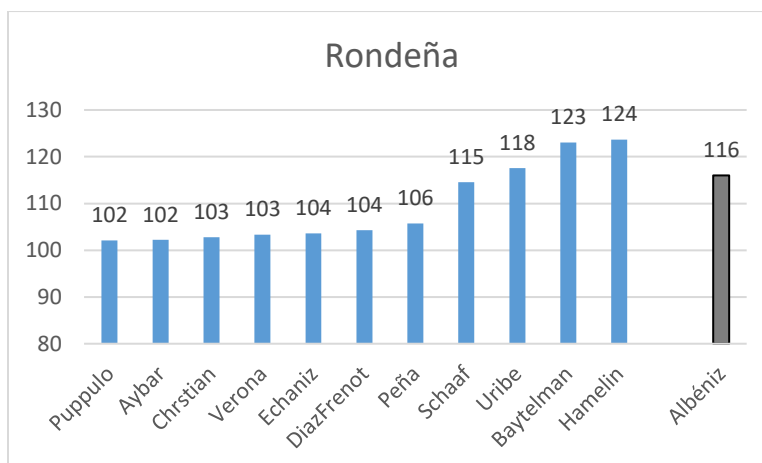


Fuente: Elaboración propia

Second notebook

In Rondeña, Peter Schaaf (115 MM) and Blanca Uribe (118 MM) are the ones that come closest to the speed depicted by Albéniz in the first edition of the score: black with a point = 116 MM (Figure 5). The majority of the group remains between 102 and 106 MM, while only Baytelman and Hamelin offer faster versions.

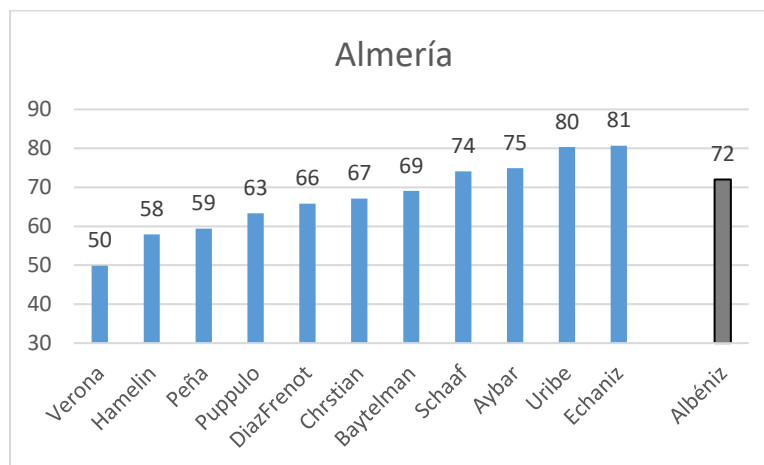
FIGURA 5. *Rondeña*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-17]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Almería is a piece with an outstanding formal architecture that allows the interpreters to construct the temporal outline of the piece in different ways. However, based on the average tempo of the first 13 measures analyzed, Baytelman and Schaaf are those that most closely approach the indication of black with point = 72 (Figure 6). It is important to mention that Hamelin starts with a speed of 58 MM in a conscious way, since its interest is to present the algid parts of the piece in a virtuous way and to make a character contrast between the couplet and the different themes.

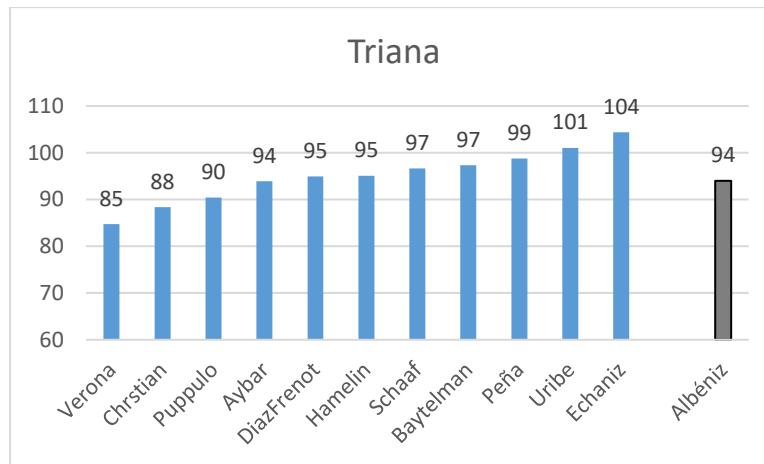
Figura 6. *Almería*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-13]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Triana is a well-constructed piece with themes that distill folk rhythmic resources within a static stability, perhaps for this reason it usually presents a moderate divergence in reference to the metronomic indication given by the composer (negra = 94). Francisco Aybar is the most accurate when executing the beginning of the piece (Figure 7), while Verona opts for a calmer tempo and Echániz for showing a spirited version.

Figura 7. *Triana*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-16]

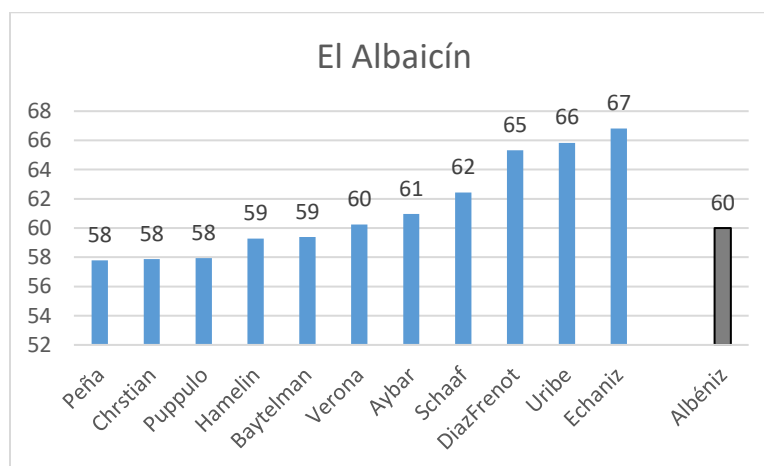


Fuente: Elaboración propia

Third notebook

The Albaicín requires a chronometric interpretation that simulates the accuracy of a clock at the beginning of the piece that the composer stipulates in black with a dot = 60 MM (Figure 8). Paul Verona manages to express that speed, although he is followed closely by Aybar, Baytelman and Hamelin.

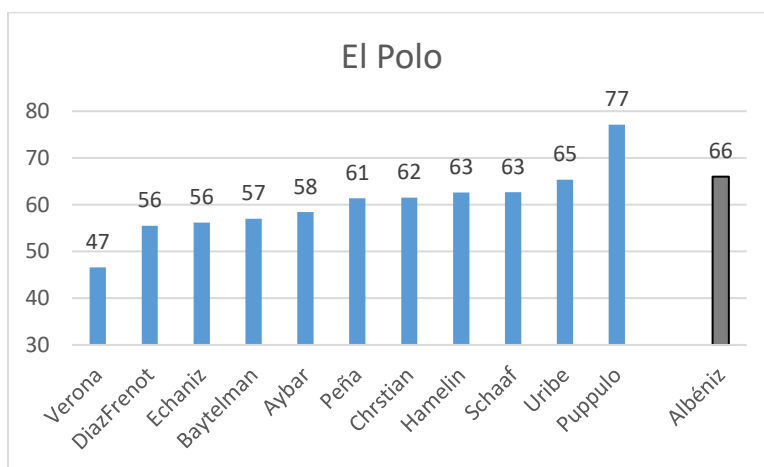
Figura 8. *El Albaicín*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-18]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

The Pole has an introduction that accumulates sound to bar 17 to start the main theme below. Of the group of American pianists, Blanca Uribe is very close to the indicated by Albéniz (black with point = 66 MM). As an exception, Elsa Puppulo, which in most of the pieces is usually located on the left side of the graphics due to their resting tempos, in this piece offers the highest speed (77 MM), which is eleven metronomic points above the reference (Figure 9). On the contrary, the rest of the pianists is below the initial metronomic indication of the score, even Paul Verona offers a slow version that is around 47 MM.

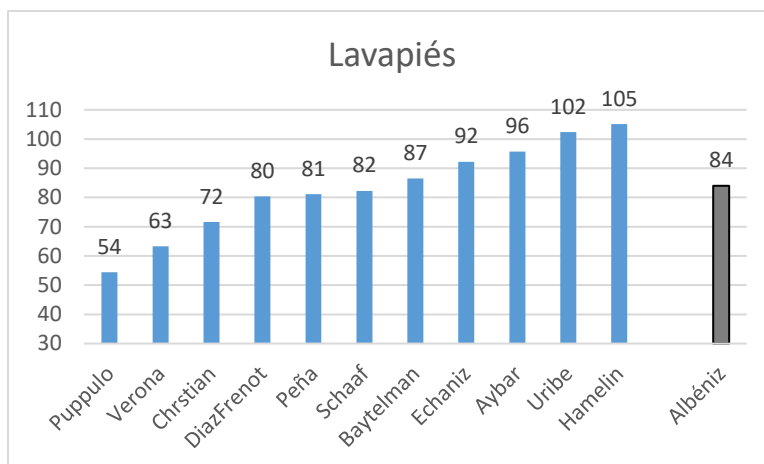
Figura 9. *El Polo*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-24]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Lavapiés it was considered by the composer himself and by some pianists of the first half of the 20th century as untouchable. However, as time passed, their technical demands were overcome and the interpretations of great Iberian interpreters were recorded on discs; in such a way that young pianists who have recorded *Iberia* in the first decade of the 21st century consider it a difficult piece but one that can be mastered with an adequate study. The American pianists have also overcome their special difficulty and we can find suitable versions such as Pola Baytelman and José Echániz (Figure 10), which are close to what was indicated by the composer.

Figura 10. *Lavapiés*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-14]

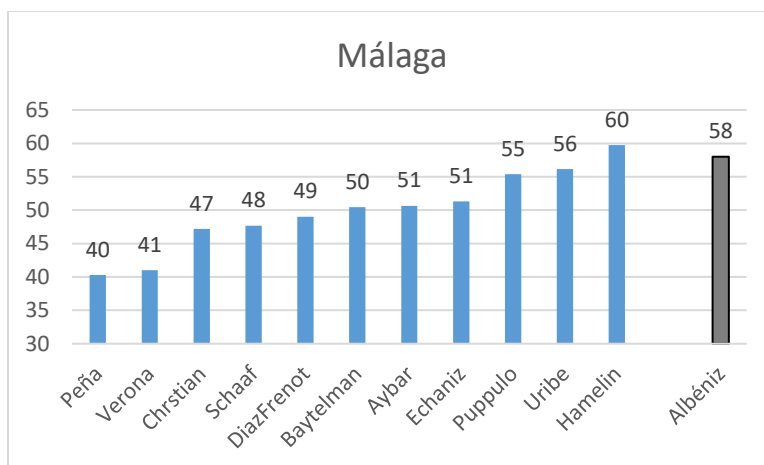


Fuente: Elaboración propia

Fourth notebook

Málaga presents a complex beginning from the rhythmic point of view and vigor is required to execute the piece at the speed indicated by the composer (white with point = 58). Marc-André Hamelin and Blanca Uribe present interpretations with mettle that contrast with versions such as Sergio Peña and Paul Verona with tempos almost 20 metronome points below the albeniziana reference; as shown in figure 11.

Figura 11. *Málaga*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-20]

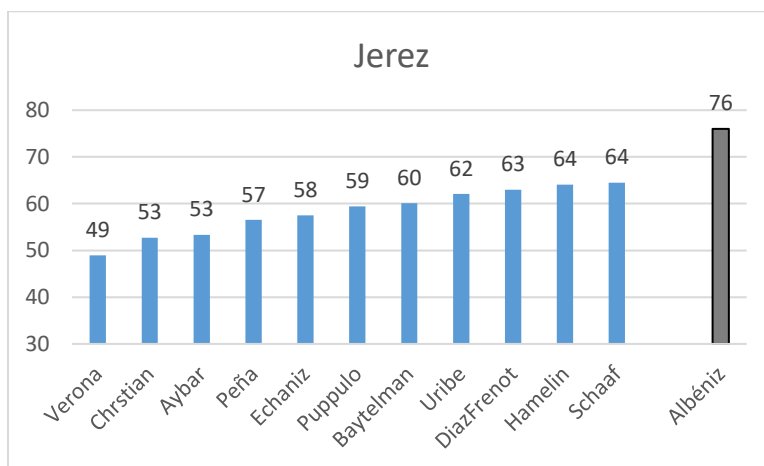


Fuente: Elaboración propia

The metronomic indication of Jerez is located in the black = 76 MM and was designed by Albéniz to give coherence to the phrasing of the languid couplet whose interludes last several measures. Both the general group of pianists and the subgroup of American pianists (Figure 12) have ignored the metronomic indication of the score and unlike Lavapiés, where overcoming their difficulties has been a manifest challenge and overcome, in Jerez the interpreters have chosen to play the piece at a lower speed.

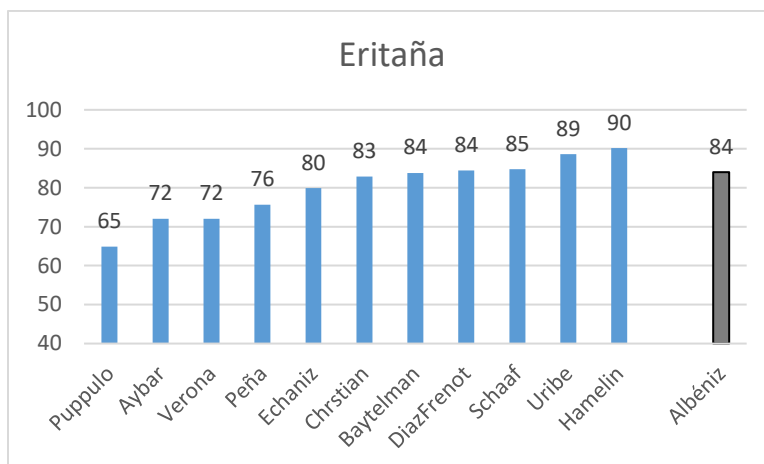
The problem is that the piece executed at lower speeds makes the perception of the public for this tenth piece of the collection a bit of boredom. However, the outstanding versions of Nicholas Unwin (2000), Alicia de Larrocha (1958) and Albert Attenelle (2011) show that, played at tempo, the piece acquires a different aesthetic and becomes a piece of brave, in addition that the couplet gains character and coherence.

Figura 12. *Jerez*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-10]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Figura 13. *Eritaña*, análisis metronómico [cc.1-9]



Fuente: Elaboración propia

Eritaña requires an adequate tempo to manifest the effervescence present in this twelfth piece that closes the collection and the indication of Albéniz is very suitable as a guide. Valentina Díaz-Frénol and Pola Baytelman respect the measure of black = 84 MM (Figure 13). Peña, Verona and Aybar show slow time and Puppulo again offers the slowest version recorded at 65 MM.

To summarize, in table 7 the surnames of the pianists appear, which, according to their initial metronomic marks, are closer to the theoretical reference established in advance.

Tabla 7. Pianistas cuya marca metronómica más se acerca a la indicación de referencia

Cuaderno	I	II	III	IV
Pieza 1	Schaaf	Schaaf	Verona	Hamelin
Pieza 2	Díaz-Frénol	Schaaf	Uribe	
Pieza 3	Aybar	Aybar	Baytelman	Christian

Fuente: Elaboración propia

The metronomic range generated from the selected discographic versions is suitable for almost all of the 12 pieces; however, the interpretations of Jerez have a metronomic speed that could be considered as deficient from the numerical point of view, given that even the

highest initial marks, namely Hamelin and Schaaf with 64 MM, are far from the indicated reference by Albéniz in the score (76 MM).

Discussion

The intention of this article has been to analyze a subgroup of 11 sound records made by pianists born in the American continent, which are part of the general group of 64 original recordings of Iberia included in the world discography.

The historical-musicological emphasis fell on three recordings published in album *elepé*, which remain unpublished since they have not been reedited commercially yet. In this sense, this research work rescues the works of José Echániz, Elsa Puppulo and Francisco Aybar, whose versions were recorded in 1954, 1968 and 1974, respectively. Thus, the existence of a digital stereo copy made for conservation purposes is guaranteed, which becomes part of the record collection of Alfonso Pérez and, also, will be recorded in the Radio Universidad de Guanajuato library. Important fact when taking into account that there are no copies of some of these sound records in libraries of Spanish libraries, such as the National Library of Spain (Madrid) and the Library of Catalonia, to mention two of the most important, nor does it seem to exist a copy of them in national libraries of the American continent.

One of the problems of working with recordings is that the copyright law related to copyright is not as comprehensive with the use of images of commercial products in academic texts, that is why it included a single illustration that contains extracts from the covers of discs in low resolution and in a tiny size, conditions that allow to include in this article a visual reference of the studied, because this is justified in the exception "Quote and illustration of teaching"¹⁴ that allows to include these materials for the purposes of criticism and academic research.

Something similar happens with the recordings themselves, because although there is a copy of all the comprehensive sound records analyzed, it was not possible to embed audio extracts in this article, which would help the reader to have an auditory reference about the

¹⁴ De acuerdo con el artículo 32 del "Texto Refundido" de la *Ley de Propiedad Intelectual* (2006, p. 25567).

sound versions of these eleven American pianists playing Iberia by Isaac Albéniz. However, even so, the objective of rescue, dissemination and promotion of the Iberian American sound recordings of Isaac Albéniz is fulfilled, by leaving a documentary record of the discographic analysis carried out¹⁵.

A broader analysis and at different levels of the musical tempo of these versions of Iberia is pending, as well as the study of other musical parameters, such as dynamics and timbre, to build a perspective on the musical praxis associated with this work for piano from different parts of the world.

Conclusions

This text offers a brief assessment of the recent recordings recorded in New York by the pianists Paul Verona (2008) and Peter Schaaf (2011), as well as the integral recordings of Uribe (1976), Baytelman (1995), Peña (1998), Díaz-Frénot (2004), Hamelin (2004), and Christian (2007), which serve to propose an interpretative perspective of the musicians of the American continent in relation to this collection of pieces for piano, on which it can be concluded that the American interpreter does not escape the need to know the score very well, nor the requirement to be aware of the interpretative tradition of this work. In addition, the biographical evidence shows that he has a good academic background and his repertoire is usually broad and eclectic.

The discs present iconographic themes and characteristics common to the rest of the group of integral versions. Representations of flamenco dancers, the Alhambra and the photograph of the pianist are used safely to market these versions. In addition, several interpreters contributed to the written notes that accompany the records and contain personal information about their relationship with this Albéniz work.

¹⁵ Véase Pérez (2013) para conocer las complicaciones de catalogar y documentar registros sonoros desde la perspectiva del copyright. En este sentido, los sistemas de citación también ocasionan problemas, como por ejemplo el APA, pues son incompletos al momento de documentar un registro sonoro. Por lo que, en el apartado de referencias de este artículo, se ha agregado al final de cada referencia sonora el número de catálogo, así como el tipo de derecho que ampara la grabación, para que cada grabación puede ser identificada de manera exacta.

Based on the metronomic analysis, it is detected that no pianist presents perfect times in terms of the indications of the twelve fragments, although they tend to stand out in one or several pieces. In particular, it is important to point out that they have not been able to overcome the lack of speed in Jerez, where the average of most of the pianists of the general group is 10 points below the metronomic reference (black = 76), perhaps confused by the subtitle of the piece: Bolero "aburrío" and where only some performers such as Alicia de Larrocha and Nicholas Unwin have left interpretations of high musical level that are quite close to the indication indicated by the composer in the score. However, it is recommended to respect the metronomic brand and, within that virtuous tempo, let the musical discourse acquire the distant character that the composer wanted to give to the Andalusian cadence through ingenious piano transformations.

Ultimately, it is reaffirmed that sound records are valid documents to study the possible divergences of the interpretative praxis of a musical work. And through this research it has been observed that the integral recordings of the American pianists do not indicate a marked divergence of the versions made by European musicians and of other latitudes of the world, nor of the canon established by the great Spanish masters, but they contribute to the spectrum of interpretative possibilities of this work of universal cut.

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