CANTE TO SOIRÉE:

ANDALUSIAN EXOTICISM IN DEBUSSY'S PIANO WORKS

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MELISSA CAMP

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CANTE TO SOIRÉE:

ANDALUSIAN EXOTICISM IN DEBUSSY'S PIANO WORKS

_________________William Gibbons_____________________________

Major Professor

_________________Gina Bombola______________________________

_________________Martin Blessinger___________________________

_________________Joseph Butler________________________________

Associate Dean of Fine Arts

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I. Introduction

In 1908, Claude Debussy (1862–1917) received a postcard from Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)—or from Carlos de Castera (1868–1943), depending on who is telling the story. In either case, this postcard prominently featured the "gate of wine," located at Granada's Alhambra Palace.[1] Years later, the pianist Marguerite Long (1874–1966) recalled that Debussy gazed thoughtfully at the small photograph before finally exclaiming, "I will do something with that!" Just as it had for many travelers over the centuries, the Alhambra's staid Moorish arch sparked Debussy's fascination, symbolizing the rich and diverse history of Spain, and in particular the Middle Eastern legacy of the Southern Andalusian region. Moreover, in *fin-de-siècle* Paris, the gate represented Spanish culture crossing the Pyrennes into France.

Throughout his career, Debussy was fascinated by the music, people, and stories of other cultures. Although many scholars have explored the musical exoticism resulting from Debussy's fascination with the Far East, his interest in Spanish music and culture has been less thoroughly documented.[2] Musicologists such as Matthew W. Brown, Samuel Llano, and James Parakilas focused primarily on Debussy's *Iberia* (1908) in the larger context of larger Parisian culture, treating his Spanish-themed piano works as prototypes for the orchestral

[1] Cortot believes that the postcard came from de Falla, but Marguerite Long believes it was Carlos de Castera (Paul Roberts, *Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy* (New York: Amadeus Press), 271; Marguerite Long, *At the Piano with Claude Debussy*, translated by Olive Senior-Ellis (London: .M. Dent & Sons), 68).

[2] Modern scholarship of exoticism began with Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). In the twenty-first century, notable works on exoticism pertaining to Debussy include Timothy D. Taylor's *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Durham: Duke UP, 2007), Ralph Locke's *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), and Gurminder Kaur Bhogal's *Details of Consequence: Ornament, Music, and Art in Paris* (New York: Oxford UP, 2013).

composition.[3] This thesis instead foregrounds these shorter works, analyzing and exploring the impact of Spain—and specifically its southern-most province, Andalusia—through five piano works composed during the decade from 1901 to 1911. Studying these pieces—*Lindaraja* (1901), *La Soirée dans Grenade* (1903), *Masques* (1905), *La Sérénade interrompue* (1909), and *La Puerta del Vino* (1911)—offer significant insights into how Debussy approached Spanish musical traditions. Placing these small vignettes into the context of Debussy's exoticism helps reveal his approach toward other countries and cultures.

Throughout this thesis, I argue that Debussy mixes different styles of "Spanishness" in his piano works walks a fine line between attempted "authenticity" and the exotic imaginary. For instance, although the composer includes elements of the *cante jondo* (deep song), habanera, and flamenco guitar, he also includes blatantly Orientalist "Middle Eastern" modality and melodies. For the remainder of this introduction, I will describe some of Debussy's outside influences, including contemporary composers and artists, in *fin-de-siècle* Paris. In section 2, I explore the unique musical language of Andalusia, introducing traditional flamenco folk music as well as the imported Cuban habanera. By analyzing the rhythmic elements in Debussy's music, I demonstrate that the composer frequently turned to the flamenco guitar and habanera ostinato rhythm for inspiration. In section 3, I analyze the pieces' arabesque melodies and chromaticism to assert that Debussy employs Middle Eastern elements, rather than Western tonality, to depict his "Other," imagined place of Andalusia.

[3] Matthew W. Brown, *Debussy's* Iberia (New York: Oxford UP, 2003). Samuel Llano, *Whose Spain?: Negotiating "Spanish Music" in Paris, 1908–1929* (New York: Oxford UP, 2013). James Parakilas, "How Spain Got a Soul," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, edited by Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1998).

Tracing the timeline of Debussy's compositions from 1901 to 1911, I explain how his technique incorporated the exotic into his Spanish creations.

Exoticism and Spanish Folk Music

Borrowing musical styles from other cultures was not a new concept in *fin-de-siècle* Paris. For French composers, the simultaneous proximity and exotic allure of Spain had long proved irresistible, a gateway between comfortable European norms and the "Other" lands of the East. The word "exoticism" derives from "*exo*," meaning outside, and includes anything from a foreign country, as well as the outlandish, grotesque, rich and showy, or glamorous.[4] As Thomas Cooper describes, "The combined threat and allure of the 'other' is one of the qualities which give it its power over the Western civilization."[5] Like the naïve Don José, seduced by the overwhelming fiery power of the Gypsy Carmen in Prosper Mérimée's famous novella (1845) or Georges Bizet's opera (1875), Parisians often viewed their Spanish neighbors to the south as dangerous bullfighters and Gypsies who lived wildly and freely. Musicologist José Colmeiro asserts that grouping Gypsies and Spanish into a collective other led to "the cultural appropriation of the Gypsies' mystique, their commodification as embodiments of the exotic, and their ambiguous relocation to the symbolic center as icons of Spanishness."[6] A study of the folk music styles of Spain, as well as its underlying Moorish influence, reveals how the lively culture the way *fin-de-siècle* composers fit "authentic" music into their imaginations.

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[4] Robert Orledge, "Evocations of Exoticism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel*, edited by Deborah Mawer (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 43.
[5] Orledge, "Evocations of Exoticism," 43.
[6] José F. Colmeiro, "Exorcising Exoticism: 'Carmen' and the Construction of Oriental Spain," in *Comparative Literature*, vol. 54, no. 2 (Spring, 2002), 127–144.

Since the eighth century, the Moors, or Muslim inhabitants, occupied Andalusia despite years of fighting for control between the Arab Empire and Christian Spain. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Spain had lost much of its colonial empire, especially after the Spanish American War in 1898. Consequently, the many diverse cultures that made up Spain—such as the Basques, Catalonians, and Aragonians—struggled to become a unified country, and the growing Nationalist movement eventually culminated in a Civil War in the 1930s. In Andalusia, however, the heritage of the Moors lingered. Occupied by the Moors until the fifteenth century, Andalusia preserved buildings like the Alhambra palace as well as other aspects of traditional Moorish culture.[7]

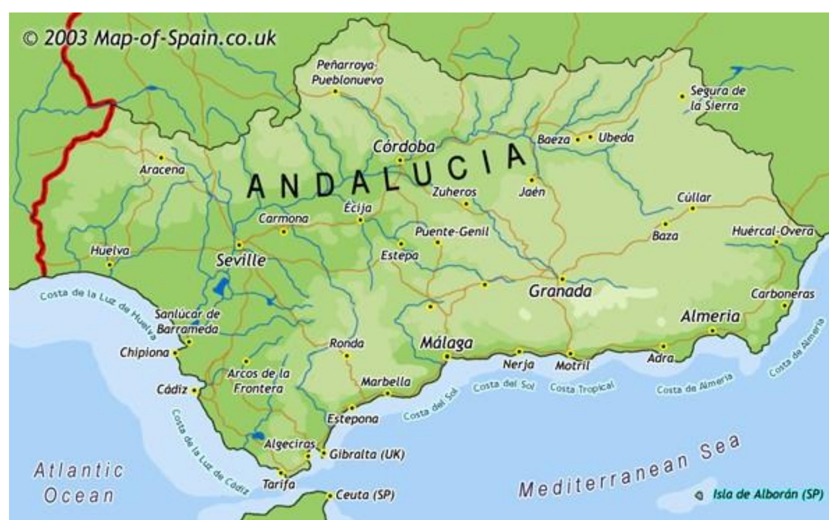

Figure 1.1. Map of Andalusia. Granada, Seville, Málaga, and Córdoba are all major cities of the Southern province.[8]

In music, the *cante jondo* remained the most frequently performed folk tradition of the flamencos—those who performed songs exclaiming catharsis with their voice and

[7] Elizabeth J. Miles and Loren Chase, "Spain," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: Europe*, edited by Timothy Rice, James Porter, and Chris Goertzen, vol. 8 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2002).
[8] "Map of Andalucia," map, Map of Spain, accessed April 24, 2018, http://www.map-of-spain.co.uk/large-map-of-andalucia.htm.

accompanying guitar. Although the *cante jondo* exists in many styles and forms, they all generally contain a similar rhythmic basis. The hemiola pattern of the strumming (*sesquialtera*) provided much of the rhythmic basis for the folk songs. The Spanish colonial empire brought the habanera back to the European continent, which inspired many of French composers' music—most notably Bizet's habanera aria "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle" from *Carmen*. Debussy's incorporation of the *cante jondo*, habanera, and flamenco traditional guitar were the result of his experience discovering these cultures not in their native land but in his own backyard.

Spanish Music in *fin-de-siècle* France

Outside of Debussy's small circle of friends and composers, what Kautsky affectionately described as "Iberomania" swept across the *Île de France* around the turn of the century. The exciting exhibits of the Universal Expositions in 1889 and 1900 and the influx of Spanish artists to the capital caused Spain to cross over into the "civilized" world of Paris. The 1889 *Exposition Universelle* was likely the first encounter many Parisians had with Spanish folk traditions. On the *Avenue de Suffren*, in the shadows of the newly built Eiffel Tower, fairgoers enjoyed "visiting" France's allied countries—including Bolivia, China, Morocco, and Spain—by viewing visiting musical groups, enjoying coffee in the *café*, or gawking at the donkeys and fake architecture of the *Rue du Caire*.[9] A nineteenth-century Disney World, Parisians could appreciate exotic countries and cultures without leaving the comfort of their own city.

[9] Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the Paris World's Fair of 1889* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2005), 158.

Concerts celebrating French culture also featured exoticist music by composers such as Bizet and Emmanuel Chabrier (1841–1894). Many skeptics, however, viewed the fair as a dangerous infiltration of "lower" cultures into Parisian society. Henri Lavoix of *Le Ménestrel* expressed these sentiments in a 1889 article:

> The pessimistic forecasts from the theaters about the *Exposition Universelle* have fortunately not materialized. It was feared that the *Champ de Mars* and the *Esplanade des Invalides*, the luminous fountains, the Eiffel Tower, the "rue du Caire," the Arab cafes, and the Chinese and Vietnamese theatres would absorb the entire visiting population—however great in size it might be—without even counting the competition of Buffalo [Bill] and the *toros* that arrived from all corners of Spain. Our poor theatres would be fatally abandoned next to such an exhibition. This was not so…Paris, the real, everyday Paris, has a much higher resistance. It is in itself an exhibition and one of a different order; thus it had no difficulty fighting against all the attractions of the moment.[10]

Debussy, who attended the fair with his good friend Paul Dukas, appreciated the so-called "danger" these exotic populations seemed to bring. He once stated, "I have always been an observer. And I have tried in my work to put my observations to good account."[11] It was no surprise, then, that it was after he visited the 1900 *Exposition Universelle*'s exhibit on *Andalusia in the Time of the Moors* that Debussy began composing "Spanish-themed" works.[12]

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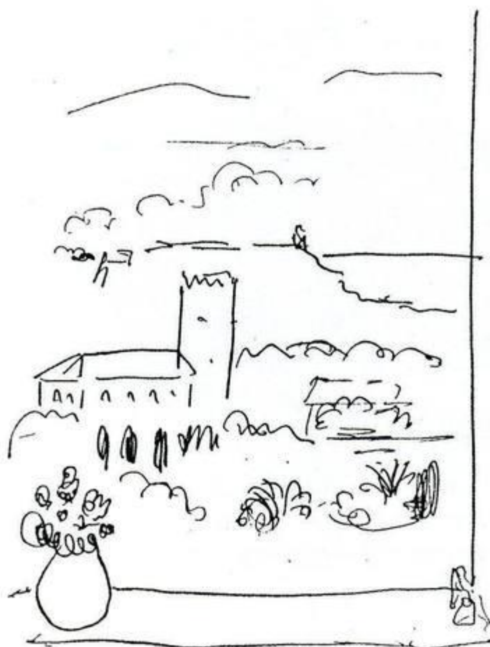
[10] Qtd. In Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the Paris World's Fair of* 1889, 60. From Henri Lavoix, "Les Théâtres," *L'Illustration* 47 (1889): 158.
[11] Edward Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind: Volume II, 1902*–1918 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1965), 256.
[12] Catherine Kautsky, *Debussy's Paris: Piano Portraits of Belle Èpoque* (Landham: Roman & Littlefield, 2017), 69.

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Figure 1.2. Photograph of the 1900 *Exposition Universelle* Le Palais de L'Espagne. Note the Moorish influence in the decorations surrounding windows and pillars, similar to the architecture of the Alhambra. *La Bibliothèque Nationale de France.*

Many painters and artists similarly became inspired from Spanish cultures at the World's Fairs. The Andalusian Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and French Henri Matisse (1869–1954) spearheaded the modernist movement in *fin-de-siècle* Paris. Matisse's fauvist paintings of the famous Alhambra—the palace in Debussy's postcard—were particularly influential in the capturing of a portrait of Andalusian culture. Debussy, aware of the fauvist movement at the time of his orientalist phase, sought to recreate his hyper-realist imagination in his compositions. Like the bold colors and lack of perspective in Matisse's artwork, Debussy's fragments of folk rhythms and obscure tonalities allude to his otherworldly style.



Henri Matisse. Fig. 1.3. A sketch of the outside of the Alhambra (1910, Palace of Charles V of Granada). Fig. 1.4. *Alhambra*, a table and couch inside the palace (1910, Palace of Charles V of Granada).

The rise in popularity of Spanish composers also influenced Debussy's compositional style. The Catalonian Isaac Albeníz (1860–1909) lived in Paris for a number of years, once

calling it the "center of music today" and "capital of the Orientalist world" in 1898.[13] Albeníz's style, particularly in *Iberia* (1908)—not to be confused with Debussy's orchestral work of the same name—was highly influential for the French composer.[14] Another Catalonian composer, Enrique Granados (1867–1916), rose to prominence at the beginning of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, as far as we know, Granados and Debussy never met, but the Spaniard's *12 Danzas Españolas* (1898) and *Goyescas* (1911) for solo piano were invaluable to Debussy and worthy of comparison to his Spanish guitar-influenced works (see section 2).[15]

Perhaps the two most important Spaniards to Debussy, however, were Manuel de Falla and Ricardo Viñes (1875–1943). Yet another Catalonian, Viñes studied at the Paris Conservatoire—where he probably met Debussy—and was influential to many Parisians at the turn of the century. Viñes's student Francis Poulenc once said, "I admired him madly because at the time, in 1914, he was the only virtuoso player who performed Debussy and Ravel."[16] The pianist premiered many of the Spanish works Debussy wrote at the time, and was close to him in the compositional process for many of his pieces.[17]

Born in Cádiz, de Falla was perhaps the most knowledgeable of the Andalusian elements Debussy used in his works. A fervent proponent of Debussy works, de Falla raised the popularity of the Frenchman's works in articles and reviews, defending the French composer's knowledge of native Spanish music, and even composed a piece of music

[13] Elaine Brody, *Paris: The Musical Kaleidoscope* (New York: Braziller, 1987), 185.
[14] Paul Roberts, *Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy* (New York: Amadeus Press, 2003), 271.
[15] Llano, *Whose Spain?*, 42.
[16] Robert Schmitz, *The Piano Works of Claude Debussy*, edited by Merle Armitage (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1950), 20.
[17] One letter from January 1907 shows Debussy giving advice for one of de Falla's works (Claude Debussy, *Debussy Letters*, selected and edited by François Lesure and Roger Nichols, translated by Roger Nichols (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1987), 176). Many of his biographies (Lockspeiser, Nichols, etc.) also discuss their collaboration.

commemorating his death called *Homenaje* (*Le Tombeau de Debussy*) (1918) for solo piano or guitar. After their meeting in 1905, de Falla complimented Debussy's use of Spanish styles. In a 1922 article promoting Debussy's music, for example, de Falla wrote:

> Our *cante jondo* is, in its most authentic form, what has given origin not only to works of a Spanish character written voluntarily by him [Debussy] but also to specific musical values that can be appreciated in other works of his that were not composed with that intention. We are referring to his frequent use of certain modes, cadences, chord progressions, rhythms, and even melodic figures that reveal an evident relation with our natural music…With what better argument could we demonstrate the utmost importance of our cante jondo as an aesthetic value![18]

Although Debussy was not the only composer at the time producing "Spanish" works, the support of a true Andalusian such as de Falla seemed to legitimize his compositional technique.

Although Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) is frequently compared to Debussy for the similarities of their Impressionist style of composition, the former was actually the first to start composing Spanish works. *Rapsodie Espagnol* (1908) and *Bolero* (1928) are among his most performed works and were both inspired by his Basque heritage. His earlier works, however, including *Sites Auriculaires* (1898) and "Alborada del Gracioso" (1905), were those with which Debussy was most familiar. Debussy was drawn to the pieces' Phrygian modality and rhythms—so much so that he borrowed both scores to peruse before he composed *La Sérénade interrompue* and *La Puerta del Vino*.[19] Although we do not know how much Ravel's works influenced Debussy, we can certainly infer that the two composers'

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[18] Timothy Mitchell, *Flamenco Deep Song* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1994), 162–3.
[19] Roger Nichols, *Ravel* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2011), 53.

competitive nature could have influenced Debussy's spark of inspiration to write Spanish-sounding music.

Debussy's Spanish Piano Music

As I noted above, Debussy's most famous Spanish piece is probably *Ibéria*, the second movement of his larger orchestral work *Images* (1907). Though *Ibéria* was important for Debussy's compositional career, his piano works offer more to explore for the development of the composer's Spanish style. The first piece, *Lindaraja* (1901), for piano for four hands, evokes the private halls and elaborate gardens of the Alhambra palace. Although the piece is more of a prototype for his later Spanish style, *Lindaraja* nonetheless features the Spanish techniques that de Falla found to be "authentic." The rhythmic basis of the *sesquialtera* connects the two players in a Spanish dance, and the ornamented melody alludes to the palace's exotic nature of the hallways and corridors.

Debussy's *La Soirée dans Grenade* from *Estampes* (1903) captures a similar snapshot of the composer's imagined Spain. Literally translating to "stamps," the *Estampes* feature movements from faraway places, such as Indonesia or a magical children's garden. *La Soirée dans Grenade* depicts a lively night of dancing in Grenada. Considering that Debussy's only visit to Spain was to see a bullfight in San Sebastian, his imagined evening in Grenada fits the exoticism of the entire *Estampes*. Placing the piece in between an exotic place such as Indonesia and one closer to home in a French garden, Debussy conveys the message that although Spain is close to France, its closeness to the "Other"—in this case, the Middle East and North Africa—makes the country appear more "exotic." In ternary form, the piece's opening and closing sections are set to a habanera ostinato pattern underneath a chromatic

melody twisting around a central pitch. The piano then crescendos into a dance melody, only to quickly fade away in a mysterious fog, enshrouded in a whole tone tonality. In the return to the A section, Debussy interjects the “dance melody” into the habanera rhythm in an attempt to keep the evening going for as long as possible before it eventually comes to an end.

Debussy originally composed *Masques* (1905) with the idea of an Italian opera in mind, but the flavors of the *cante jondo* and flamenco guitar characterize the piece as more of a “tragedy for piano,” in the words of Marguerite Long.[20] Reflecting the themes of lamentation and catharsis in the *cante jondo*, *Masques* contains driving rhythms and wailing melodies. In his first book of preludes, Debussy includes another piece that contains the similar guitar evocation heard in *Masques*: *La Serenade interrompue* (1909). The newer piece includes the similar “strumming” style, as Debussy humorously evokes a lonely singer with a guitar desperately trying to sing to his love, but who is continually upstaged by a passing band or a loud crash.[21] “Poor guy,” Debussy mused, “He keeps being interrupted!”[22] The composer’s staccato marking reflects the *secco* plucking of a guitar, and the open fifth tonality of the left hand is similar to the guitar’s open strings.

In Debussy’s second book of preludes, *La Puerta del Vino* (1911) again depicts a scene at the Alhambra palace. The gate’s beautifully decorated Moorish arch welcomes travelers, and is commonly known for being the location where most of the Rom Gypsies stay in the town of Grenada.[23] After gathering “folk styles” from Spanish musicologist Felipe Pedrell’s (1841–1922) collections, such as *Cancionero Musical Español* (1903), the

[20] Long, *At the Piano with Debussy,* 52.
[21] Roberts, *Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy*, 37.
[22] Long, *At the Piano with Debussy,* 52.
[23] Mitchell, *Flamenco Deep Song,* 122.

flamenco music Debussy heard at the Universal Exposition of 1900, and the scores of Ravel, he composed the piece to illustrate the scene of travelers staying in the shade of the Gate of Wine, away from the hot Spanish sun.[24] Similar to *La Soirée dans Grenade*, the piece opens with a habanera rhythm, but, instead of going into a dance-like B section, the piece continues with its ostinato pattern.

When Debussy perused that postcard in 1908, his imagination must have run wild with the possibility of composing a piece equal to *Carmen* or *España*. His piano compositions, though largely finished by the time he received the postcard, were not as popular as his larger work *Iberia*, which premiered later that year, but they provide an excellent look into the development of his exotic style. Before we analyze the composer's works, however, we must understand the cultural climate of Spain, as well as the folk traditions that lie in the ancient ruins of the Moorish Empire.

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[24] Brown, *Debussy's* Iberia, 62.

II. Spain

In a 1908 article, Debussy described Spain as one of the "greatest treasure-houses of music riches in the world."[25] Events such as the 1900 World's Fair and the Parisian arrival of Andalusians such as Manuel de Falla, Enrique Granados, Ricardo Viñes, and Pablo Picasso revitalized the French tradition of imitating Spanish folk music. Debussy's collaboration with these Andalusian composers allowed him to become more familiar with the traditional *cante jondo* and flamenco style, which he later incorporated into his works. From 1901–1911, Debussy established his own "Spanish" style in his piano music by including elements such as the flamenco guitar rhythm, the *cante jondo*, and the habanera into the rhythm of his pieces.

The Flamenco tradition, and its connection to freedom and sensuality, reached France long before Debussy's birth. French writer and politician Charles Gautier (1704–1797) expressed his views of the elusive Spanish woman, describing her dance as "more of a dance of temperament than a dance following the rules. It is possible to feel in every gesture all the force of southern blood."[26] During a trip to Paris, Henri Matisse (1869–1954) called Spain "a miracle of suppleness and rhythm."[27] In their fictional accounts of Spain, many artists and authors, including Gautier, Mallarmé, Bizet, Delacroix, and Chabrier, explored the rejection of the rigidity of French civilization in favor of the Spanish liberty they imagined. For

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[25] Claude Debussy, "Concerts Colonne and Société des Nouveaux Concerts: Spanish Music," in *Debussy on Music: The Critical Writings of the Great French Composer*, edited by François Lesure (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 299-303.
[26] Joaquina Labajo, "Body and Voice: The Construction of Gender in Flamenco," in *Music and Gender Perspectives from the Mediterranean*, edited by Tullia Magrini (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 74.
[27] Sue Roe, *In Montmartre: Picasso, Matisse and Modernism in Paris 1900-1910* (London: Penguin, 2014), 306.

instance, *Carmen* (1875), as musicologist Mina Curtiss suggests, was an allegory for Bizet's desire to seek freedom.[28] Bizet designed Carmen as a new protagonist that combined both the hero and the villain into one character, consequently shaping the audience's perception of the Spaniard as one to admire and fear. Carmen became the central figure of an imagined Spain, which was supposedly radically different as an Oriental, mystical place filled with Gypsies.[29]

Chabrier's fascination with Spain derived from a vacation there, where he transcribed Spanish folk music from flamenco traditional songs. In a letter, he described the beauty of a *cante flamenco* performance:

> Every night finds us at the *bailos flamencos*…and all around the gipsy [sic] women singing their malagueñas or dancing the tango, and the manzanilla circulating from hand to hand that everyone was forced to drink. Flashing eyes, flowers in their lovely hairs, shawls knotted at the waist, feet tapping out an endless variety of rhythms, arms, and hands quivering undulating bodies in ceaseless movement, dazzling smiles and that admirable Sevillan behind moving in every direction while the rest of the body remains motionless—and all the while cries of Olé!...uttered by the other women and the public![30]

Chabrier paints a raucous and exciting picture of a woman dancing around in the Andalusian night. Chabrier's words also reflect the sentiment of French colonization at the time. Despite being their close neighbors to the southwest, Spain—especially now a shadow of its once "grand" colonial empire—was though to be a much decadent area governed by sensuality. The stereotypical garments and shouts fascinated Parisians of the 1870s, who had rarely interacted with such a seemingly carefree culture. The "feet tapping" and "endless variety of

[28] Winton Dean, *Georges Bizet: His Life and Work* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1965), 226.
[29] As I discuss in the introduction, José F. Calmeiro's "Exorcising Exoticism: 'Carmen' and the Construction of Oriental Spain" is an excellent example of literature that analyzes Europe's perception of Spain's Orientalism, especially during the decolonization of the Spanish Empire.
[30] Rollo Myers, *Emmanuel Chabrier and His Circle* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1969), 40.

rhythms" Chabrier wrote about his Andalusian excursion appear in the relentless rhythm of his orchestral work *España* (1883). The tambourine introduces the main rhythm of the piece and highlights the triple meter—a technique that Debussy would use later in *Iberia*. Compared to the basic stroke of a castanet rhythm in a flamenco song, the two French composers seem to mimic the rapid, repetitive motion of the instrument. Instead of using the four-beat pattern characteristic to traditional *cante jondo,* they instead use a sixteenth-note triplet to depict the rhythm. Consider the following three passages:

Example 2.1. Example of a castanet rhythm in 6/8 time. The rhythmic "strokes" of the castanet are designated by words.[31]

Example 2.2. Chabrier, *España*, percussion. The tambourine and triangle perform the "castanet" part above a recurring triplet beat.

Example 2.3. Debussy, *Iberia*, castanet part, mm. 12-14.

[31] Ehrenhard Skiera, "Castanets and Other Rhythmic and Percussive Elements," in *Flamenco*, edited by Claus Schreiner, translated by Mollie Comerford Peters (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1990), 150.

Both Debussy and Chabrier use quick staccato notes to imitate a fast dance, with the castanets symbolizing the clicking noise of the performer's feet, hands, or castanets. Despite never having been to Spain—outside of a short six-hour trip to San Sebastian—Debussy's description of the region reveals a similar type of imagery.

> [Isaac Albéniz's music is] where one finds all the atmosphere of those carnation-scented Spanish evenings…the muffled sound of the guitar lamentingly playing to the night, with its sudden upsurges and nervous somersaults…it captures a joys of the mornings, including that of a welcome visit to an inn where the wine flows cool. A constantly changing crowd passes by, its laughing and joking underlined with the ringing sound of the Basque tambourines.[32]

Debussy presented Spain in a different style from his predecessors due to how he imagined Spain. According to scholar Timothy Mitchell, instead of directly quoting the Spanish rhythms like Chabrier, Debussy evoked "Spanishness" through abstracting what he believed to be Spanish folk songs heard around Paris and presenting them as a type of primitive style.[33] His main source of influence, though, came from a close friend rather than his predecessors.

Born in Cádiz, Manuel de Falla embraced his Andalusian heritage and promoted his region's folk music. In fact, in the 1920s, he hosted contests like the *Centro Artístico de Granada* that aimed at "the revival, maintenance, and purification of the old *cante jondo*."[34] After Debussy and de Falla's meeting in 1905, the two corresponded about new works, and de Falla frequently wrote articles promoting the Frenchman's "authenticity." In one article

[32] Claude Debussy, "Concerts Colonne and Société des Nouveaux Concerts: Spanish Music," *Debussy on Music,* 301.
[33] Timothy Mitchell, *Flamenco Deep Song* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1994), 162.
[34] The full program is in de Falla's *On Music and Musicians*, translated by David Urman and J.M. Thomson (New York: Alred A. Knopf, 1929), 112.

complimenting Debussy, de Falla wrote that, of all of his contemporaries, Debussy was truly composing the most "Spanish" sounding pieces. He continued, "That is why his music is not composed *a l'espagnole* but *in Spanish* or rather, *in Andalusian*, the *cante jondo*, in its most authentic form inspired…the works he intended to have a Spanish character."[35] While it is unclear if de Falla truly thought that Debussy's Spanish pieces were truly "the most authentic," perhaps he was attempting to promote and raise awareness of the exoticized version of his beloved folk music. His admiration for Debussy, though, extended far beyond all other exoticist composers writing "Andalusian" music. De Falla's composition *Homenaje* (1920) paid tribute to the late Debussy and included excerpts from *La Soirée dans Grenade*. Exposure to composers from both Spain and France who were writing in a Spanish style aided Debussy in including folk styles such as the *cante jondo* and habanera into his pieces, despite his lack of familiarity with the country.

The *Cante Jondo* and Flamenco Guitar

In Andalusia, the primary folk art music is the flamenco, a style many outsiders to the region believe to have originated from *Gitanos* (Spanish Gypsies).[36] Characteristically flamboyant and cathartic, flamenco, many scholars believe, received its name from the singers' flamingo-like posture as they perform songs. Others believe the flamenco name came from the German word *Flammen*, referring to flames, which describes the fiery nature of the singing and guitar playing of the performer.[37] One of the purest and oldest songs of the

[35] De Falla, *On Music and Musicians,* 109.
[36] Jason Cutmore, "Andaluza: From Inspiration to Interpretation", in *American Music Teacher* Vol. 56, No. 6 (June/July): 2007.
[37] Marion Papenbrok, "History of Flamenco," in *Flamenco: Gypsy Dance and Music from Andalusia*, edited by Claus Schreiner, translated by Mollie Comerford Peters (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1990).

flamenco style, the *cante jondo* (meaning "deep song") was left largely unchanged for hundreds of years.[38] The folk style is based mainly on the Phrygian mode, with an insistent emphasis on the dominant.[39] Although there exist many styles of the *cante jondo*, most types involve a male performer loudly singing with a guitar *rasguedo* (deliberate and forceful strumming), or a contrasting *paseo* (spritely, melodic) style in a homophonic texture. Edgar Neville described the passion in flamenco songs as a "sublime trance" which bursts the performer's veins "in search of the grounds that give voice to his soul's anguish, so that in the end the *copla* falls dead to the ground, while the song continues to vibrate weightless in the air because it is in fact the singer's soul."[40]

The *cante jondo* is sung in a hybrid of Castilian Spanish, in an Andalusian pronunciation, and *Caló*, a fusion of Romani words and Spanish grammar. Such a mixture suggests the *Gitano* influence in the folk musical style, which contributed to the stereotypical image of the Gypsy guitarist performing an elaborate song.[41] Only a handful of lyrics remain from the early twentieth century, unfortunately, since many performers passed on their songs through oral transmission, rather than publication. One set of lyrics from an early *cante jondo* song demonstrates the lamenting theme of the *cante jondo* genre as well as its Gypsy identity:

El dia paso con pena	The day is full of troubles,
y la noche con dolor,	And the night is full of pain,
suspirando me anochece,	Twilight falls on my sighs
llorando me sale el sol.	And the sun rises on my tears.

[38] J.B. Trend and Israel Katz, "Cante Hondo," In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie, 2 ed., vol. 5 (London: Macmillan, 2001), 42-43.
[39] Peter Manuel, "Flamenco Guitar: History, Style, Status," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Guitar*, edited by Victor Anand Coelho (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 24.
[40] "Para mí el major cantaor es el que se quema en ese trance supremo de su cante, y se rompe las arterias buscando el vozarrón que diga exactamente la pena de su alma, y al terminar la copla caiga en el suelo muerto, mientras que el cante quede vibrando en el aire ingravidoporque para eso era su alma" (Edgar Neville, *Flamenco y cante jondo*, edited and translated by José María Goicoechea (Madrid: Reylear, 2006).
[41] Mitchell, *Flamenco Deep Song,* 83.

Yo soy gerá en el vestir	Though I dress like a Spaniard
Calorró de nascimiento	I'm a gypsy by birth.
Yo no quiero ser gerá	I don't want to be a Spaniard
Siendo calé estoy contendo.	For I'm happy as a gypsy.[42]

Toward the beginning of the twentieth century, the *cante jondo* evolved to emphasize the character of the voice—rather than the words of the *copla* (verse) itself.[43] The emotional release and fluctuations of the *cante jondo* appealed to the decadent artists of *fin-de-siècle* Paris wished to live a freer lifestyle.[44] Debussy discussed a similar sentiment in his article in *Revue Musicale de Lyon.* His desire, like other Parisian artists was "for freedom. But freedom must essentially be free. All the noises we hear around ourselves can be re-created…Some people wish above all to conform to the rules; for myself, I wish only to render what I can hear."[45] The passion found in the *cante jondo*'s rhythms, theatrical affectations, and florid lyrics certainly appealed to Debussy when he wrote the article in 1910—while he was also writing the first book of his piano preludes.

The guitar in the *cante jondo* plays as vital of a role for the performance as the singer. The steel strings vibrate as the performer strikes them violently and strums them quickly throughout a song, indicating again that strong release of emotions that the singer embodies. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the flamenco guitar became a symbol for growing Spanish nationalism, as the country came to grips with losing a majority of their Empire at the end of the nineteenth century. Andalusian painter Picasso saw the growing popularity of

[42] Jung, "Cante Flamenco," 79.
[43] William Washabaugh, *Flamenco Music and National Identity in Spain* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 31.
[44] McAuliffe describes in *Twilight of the Belle Èpoque* the extent of the Bohemian lifestyle of visual artists, composers, and poets surrounding *Montmartre* in Paris. Attempting to live like a *Romani Gypsy*, bohemians lived in close quarters and attempted to live an amoral lifestyle, an act in itself as an act of exoticism.
[45] Debussy on Music, December 1910, Statement to an Austrian Journalist.

the instrument and wished to capture the spirit of the guitar—most notably in his *The Old Guitarist* (1903).[46] Method books such as Rafael Marín's *Método de Guitarra por Música y Cifra* began to appear around 1902 to instruct the aspiring guitarist—or French composer—how to perform Spanish folk music.[47] Although we do not know if these composers consulted such books, prevalence of the material indicates knowledge of the instrument was becoming more widespread. Furthermore, introducing such method books, which may not have entirely been accurate in "true" flamenco performance, gave the French composers an alteration of their perceptions in a romanticized version of Spain.

Figure 2.1. Picasso, *The Old Guitarist*, 1903, Art Institute of Chicago. Figure 2.2. Picasso, *Guitar 1912-1914*, 1914, The Museum of Modern Art. The influence of the Spanish guitar persisted through Picasso's many style periods.[48]

[46] Washabaugh, 63.
[47] Manuel, 16.
[48] Picasso once described his allure to the guitar, describing the instrument as having the appearance of a woman's body. In the second figure, Picasso wishes to capture the different angles of a woman (Claudia Kalb, "Picasso, Genius," in *National Geographic* (May 2018): 98-123).

Debussy's fascination with the flamenco guitar is one of the most recognizable attributes of his solo piano works such as *Lindaraja*, *Masques*, and especially *La Sérénade interrompue*. The rhythm of the flamenco guitar in *cante jondo* performance drives the characteristic "Spanish" sound that Debussy and others emulated. In traditional practice, the guitar is meant to be played deliberately and forcefully, to evoke a metallic timbre from the steel strings.[49] The *sesquialtera*, a three-against-two ratio in music, dominates the rhythm of the *cante jondo*, and creates a busy accompaniment to the melody.[50] Debussy's experimentation with the *sesquialtera* began with one of his first "Spanish" piano works, *Lindaraja* (1901). The four hand piece, in a 2/4 meter, manipulates the vertical and horizontal alignments of the triplet and eighth-note rhythms. In measures 11–15, the pianos both alternate between eighths and triplets while vertically contrasting the *sesquialtera*.

11

ppp

Example 2.4. Debussy, *Lindaraja*, mm. 11-15.

[49] Israel J. Katz, "Flamenco," In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie, 2nd ed., vol. 8 (London: Macmillan, 2001), 920-25

[50] John M. Schechter, "Themes in Latin American Music Culture," In *Music In Latin American Culture*, edited by John M. Schechter (New York: Schirmer, 1999).

Example 2.5. Characteristic 12-beat pattern of the *cante jondo*.[51]

Très vif et fantasque (𝅗𝅥. = 104)

pp détaché et rythmé

Example 2.6. Debussy, *Masques*, mm.1-4.

The other rhythmic basis of the *cante jondo* is the 12-beat form with a repeating two measure ostinato pattern in 6/8 with accents on the first, third, fifth, eighth, and eleventh eighth notes, coupling to form four-measure phrases (see example 2.5). This simple structure supports a basic form for singing florid melodies, and the busy rhythmic *rasguedo* of the guitar provides a way for the performer to accompany themselves both melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically. In Debussy's *Masques* (1905), the composer mimics the sound of the guitar by utilizing the rhythm of the *cante jondo*, beginning in the first four measures of the piece (ex. 2.6).[52] The opening thematic rhythm, which acts as an ostinato throughout the piece, is a rhythmic pattern using the pitches A and E, which alludes to a guitar's open strings tuned in fifths. To emphasize the "accented" notes of the original pattern, Debussy articulates the chord on the first, third, fifth, seventh, tenth, and twelfth accents. Although this is not precisely the pattern of accents in a traditional flamenco song,

[51]Christof Jung, "Cante Flamenco," in *Flamenco: Gypsy Dance and Music from Andalusia*, edited by Claus Schreiner, translated by Mollie Comerford Peters (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1990). The example is transcribed by the author.
[52] Jung, "Cante Flamenco," 32.

Debussy produces the same effect with a driving, forceful rhythmic pattern. In his transitions into different sections, the composer switches the quintal harmony to a clustered seconds-interval separated by an octave. For example, in measures 80–87, with the entrance of the single-line melody, Debussy incorporates a repetitious C-D chord in the accented pattern (ex. 2.7). The secundal harmony accompanies the chromatic melody, creating an uneasiness before the next section in C-sharp.

Example 2.7. Debussy, *Masques*, mm.76–86.

Marked *trés vif et fantastique* (very lively and capricious), the piano's resonance and brightness imitates the "dry, earthy, and sometimes metallic" sounds of the flamenco guitar.[53] The other stylistic indication, *détaché et rhythmé* (detached and rhythmic), also refers to the plucking and strumming of a guitar. The hammer action of the piano acts as a flamenco performer's strumming hand, forcefully striking the piano strings to create a metallic sound. The resonance continues in the *cédez un peu* (yield a little) section, when Debussy augments the rhythmic pattern across the span of eight measures. His instruction of *laissez vibrer*

[53] David George, *The Flamenco Guitar* (Madrid: Society for Spanish Studies, 1969), 18.

pendant ces 4 mesures (let vibrate during these four measures) allows a resonating effect for the piano's strings, similar to a flamenco guitarist striking the guitar and letting it resonate. The composer's augmentation of the rhythm and resonance then makes the section sound calm—a contrast to the energetic pattern heard throughout the A sections. Continuing in this section, Debussy eliminates the *cante jondo* pattern and creates a straight *sesquialtera* rhythm (ex. 2.8). The duple eighths in the right hand contrast with the ascending eighths in 6/8 time, creating an unsteadiness before continuing into a new section in the original key.

Example 2.8. Debussy, *Masques*, *Cédez* Section.

Debussy utilizes the flamenco guitar sound later in his compositional career with *La Sérénade interrompue*. The prelude, as Debussy once told pianist Marguerite Long, narrates the story of a young Don Juan character archetype attempting to serenade his beloved but becoming frustrated at getting continually interrupted.[54] The humorous vignette begins with

[54] The stereotypical Don Juan character predates Debussy's time. Tirso de Molina's original storyline depicts the character as a romantic fellow who seems to swoon every woman in Andalusia with his guitar. In W.A.

the instruction *quasi guitarra* (like a guitar) with a single six-note statement, as if the character is checking his guitar's strings before he begins the song. The instruction, along with the staccato articulation marks, suggests the manner of a guitarist dryly plucking the strings. Instead of the resonate sonority Debussy evokes in *Masques*, the composer attempts to convey a *paseo* style of the flamenco guitar.[55] Furthermore, the different direction of the stems indicates to the performer to alternate both hands while playing the rhythm (ex. 2.9). At the *a tempo* marking in measure 19, the first chord of the entire piece is F dominant, as Debussy imitates strumming out a chord on a guitar and preparing the beginning of the "song."

Example 2.9. Debussy, *La Sérénade interrompue*, mm. 1-10.

When the melody enters, however, Debussy's characterization of the guitar changes. Instead of the soft and *secco* "plucking" found in the introduction, the "strumming," now an

Mozart's interpretation of the narrative, *Don Giovanni* (1787), the libertine brags about his many lovers ("Madamina, il Catalogo è Questo"), especially the 1,003 lovers in Spain. Long's memory of Debussy telling her the story comes from her memoir *At the Piano with Debussy*.

[55] George, *The Flamenco Guitar*, 19.

open fifth—again resembling the open fifths of the guitar strings—is in more of the *paseo* style heard in *Masques*. The alternating hands continue the chords while accompanying the chromatic melody in the same homophonic texture of a *cante jondo* song (ex. 2.10). Later in the piece, although the open fifth harmony remains, the left hand leaps in between alternations (ex. 2.11). A contrast to the previous section, where the fifths were only separated by a second, this planing bass line resembles a guitarist keeping their hand in the same position but moving along the fretboard. Debussy's evocation of Andalusian folk music lies in his manipulation of the piano to resemble a flamenco guitar.

Figure 2.10. Debussy, *La Sérénade Interrompue*, mm. 35-44.

Figure 2.11. Debussy, *La Serenade Interrompue*, mm. 63-77.

Compared to Debussy, Spanish contemporary composers incorporate the same styles in their "Andalusian" piano compositions. For example, Granados composed *12 Danzas Españolas* for the piano, with each dance representing either a type of genre of Spain. The fifth dance, *Andaluza* alludes to the flamenco guitar. Similar to *La Sérénade interrompue*, *Andaluza,* incorporates fast, *secco* hand alternations to imitate guitar strumming. Although it is not clearly indicated in the score, the different octaves of the piano determine the right- to left-hand technique. In the first eight measures, Granados introduces the "guitar" with short staccato markings with syncopations in the treble clef (see ex. 2.12). The melody's entrance in measure 3, though, is much less florid and slow-moving than the "Don Juan" character in *La Sérénade interrompue*, which might be due to the quicker tempo.

Andantino, quasi Allegretto.

Example 2.12. Granados, *12 Danzas Españolas No. 5 Andaluza*, mm. 1-7.

The rhythms that comprise the *cante jondo* influenced Debussy's piano works. *Lindaraja* and *Masques* were heavily influenced by the twelve beat pattern and *sesquialtera* while the flamenco guitar inspired *La Sérénade interrompue*. Debussy's picture of the spirit of his beloved Spain depended on his knowledge of these rhythms, and pieces such as Granados's *12 Danzas Españolas* provided the tools he needed.

The Habanera

The habanera, although not native to the Iberian Peninsula, was a prominent tool for providing the rhythmic basis for many exoticist works. The habanera traces its origins back to Cuba when , in the late 1700s, French colonists settled in Havana, bringing with them the contredanse. This traditional dance eventually mixed with the Afro-Cuban styles of the island, and as the dance became more "Cuban," it developed a signature, albeit genteel,

syncopated rhythm.[56] The rhythm of the habanera consists of a dotted-eighth, sixteenth-note followed by two eighth notes (ex. 2.13).

Example 2.13. Sample Habanera rhythm.

The most prominent example of an exoticized habanera at the end of the nineteenth century was the habanera aria, "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle," from Bizet's *Carmen*. Introduced by the cellos, the rhythm continues as an ostinato throughout the aria while Carmen sings a melody using syncopated rhythms, such as quarter-note triplets. The chorus then frequently interjects the habanera rhythm, reflecting the ostinato bass throughout.

Debussy was very familiar with *Carmen* and the famous habanera, noting in 1894 that he was enchanted by the opera's heroine.[57] The habanera ostinato rhythm from the aria is similar as two of his solo piano works: *Soirée dans Grenade* from his larger work *Estampes*, and *La Puerta del Vino* from his *Preludes* Book II. Both evoking Grenada, rather than the opera's Seville, these pieces narrate of the passionate flamenco song. The marking at the head of *La Puerta del Vino*—*avec brusques oppositions d'extrême violence et de passionnée douceur* (with sudden contrasts of extreme violence and passionate tenderness)—captures how Debussy imagined the fluctuating moods of flamenco and the Gypsies that occupied

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[56] Frances Barulich and Jan Farley, "Habanera," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie, 2nd ed., vol. 10, 632-4. Peter Manuel, *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988).

[57] Marcel Dietschy, *A Portrait of Claude Debussy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990), 111.

Grenada.[58] Although the habanera is not native to Andalusia, Debussy no doubt chose the rhythmic ostinato as an homage to the captivating moods he heard in *Carmen* and other *cante jondo*-inspired compositions.

Debussy had the freedom to create a melody within the strict form of the ostinato, and he continued composing pieces that contained a similar habanera rhythm. In *La Soirée dans Grenade*, Debussy chose the habanera as an allusion to the dance, with frequent interruptions of guitar rhythms and languid flamenco melodies that make this piece difficult to perform. A frequent performer of the work, Ricardo Viñes once wrote in his diary, "Debussy never found this piece played as he wanted it."[59] Debussy's persnickety nature with his "Spanish" pieces reveals something of his intentions with these pieces. Instead of enjoying a native pianist's interpretation of the piece—which may or may not have sounded more "authentic" than the notes written down—Debussy was instead preoccupied with his imagined Spain.

La Soirée dans Grenade depicts an evening dance one Andalusian night, but Debussy's inspiration for writing the piece might be because of a contemporary composer. The musical basis for *La Soirée*, as musicologist Roger Nichols describes, originated from Ravel's score of *Sites Auriculaires* (1895), which Debussy had asked to borrow after a performance in 1898.[60] The introduction of *La Soirée dans Grenade*, featuring the stylistic marking *commencer lentement dans un rythme nonchalamment gracieux* (start slowly nonchalantly with grace), is meant to be played slowly. In the introduction, the habanera rhythm begins with an open C-sharp chord, emphasizing the fifths of the chordal structure, which once again point to the fifth tuning of the guitar from previous examples (ex. 2.14).

[58] Roberts, *Images*,270.
[59] Quoted in Roberts, *Images,* 63.
[60] Roger Nichols, *Ravel*, 96.

Mouvement de Habanera

Commencer lentement dans un rythme nonchalamment gracieux

ppp

Example 2.14. Debussy, *La Soiree dans Grenade*, mm. 1-4.

As the melody enters, the habanera rhythmic pattern remains static on C-sharp, giving the appearance of an ambiguous tonality (for more on the tonality of *La Soirée das Grenade*, see section 3). The first theme transitions and crescendos *en augmentant beaucoup* (growing very much) into a fortissimo *très rhythmé* section, perhaps indicating that everyone at the ball has joined in on the dance. The dynamic and textural difference from the introduction creates a drastic contrast, yet the habanera subtly persists as the stable rhythmic accompaniment. Instead of containing a single note, however, the last eighth note of the rhythmic pattern ends in an accented quintal chord. The quintal chord, again pointing back to the guitar influence, is rolled, much like in *La Sérénade interrompue*. As measures 38–46 demonstrate, the open fifth harmony compliments the melody played in octaves (ex. 2.15).

Example 2.15. Debussy, *La Soiree dans Grenade*, mm. 38–46.

As the piece ends its habanera ostinato rhythm, Debussy directs the performer to play *avec plus d'abandon* (with more abandon). Reflecting the freedom he so desperately craved in Spanish music, he invites the performer to break away from the strict rhythm of the ostinato. As the key climbs further away from F-sharp major, he begins to build more tertian harmonies over the ostinato. For instance, in measures 101 through 106, the pattern begins in F-sharp major and progresses through C-sharp Major, B minor, and D Major chords (ex. 2.16). By overlaying a tertian harmony on the ostinato, the pattern is no longer tonally ambiguous and now serves a harmonic function. Debussy builds harmony with the habanera ostinato rhythm aligns with the building tension of the piece.

Example 2.16. Debussy, *La Soiree dans Grenade*, mm. 101-109.

La Puerta del Vino also depicts a scene in Grenada, yet instead of a raucous night of dancing, the piece illustrates a scene of travelers resting in the shadows of the "Gate of Wine."[61] The gate's connotations of wine and debauchery intrigued Debussy, and the wild, flamboyant style of the piece reflects the drastic sunlight and shadows of an imagined lazy Spanish afternoon. Unlike the pianissimo introduction of *La Soirée dans Grenade*, the opening of *La Puerta del Vino* begins abruptly with quick, forceful grace-note figures. The grace notes resemble a guitar's strumming patterns of the *cante jondo* guitarists that reside by the gate. The grace notes eventually transform into the habanera pattern, again occurring in fifths, in measure 3 (see ex. 2.17). The habanera rhythm in the left hand, based on D-flat and

[61] Paul Roberts (*Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy*) and Robert Schmitz (*The Piano Works of Claude Debussy*) both describe the scenario as Debussy imagines in *La Puerta del Vino*.

A-flat, is the basis for the majority of the piece, and underlies the chromatic melody. Debussy's treatment of the melody resembles *Carmen*'s habanera or his earlier *Lindaraja*, and it largely depends on the *sesquialtera* prevalent in the *cante jondo* style. For example, in measures 17 and 18, the *sequialtera* occurs in the melody with the triplet-eighth note combination. The emphasis of the triplet draws out the quick rhythm of the sixteenth note in the habanera ostinato.

Example 2.17. Debussy, *La Puerta del Vino*, mm. 1-4.

Example 2.18. Debussy, *La Puerta del Vino*, mm. 17-18.

Example 2.19. Debussy, *La Puerta del Vino*, mm. 50-52.

In the few measures that do not feature the habanera, Debussy utilizes the grace-note figure introduced at the beginning to call attention to the transitions in the piece's structure. In measure 50 (ex. 2.19), Debussy marks the section with the stylistic indicator *ironique* (ironic), perhaps to emphasize the elimination of the habanera rhythm. Moreover, the composer implements the same grace-note technique from measures 1 and 2, and the figure creates the aural illusion of the habanera pattern. The arpeggiated grace notes also recall Debussy's same technique of rolling chords to create a strummed guitar effect. Debussy's *La Puerta del Vino* combines both the habanera along with elements from the *cante jondo*.

In his search to find the perfect sonority for his imagined Spain, Debussy uses the habanera rhythm and the flamenco guitar as inspiration for his piano compositions. In an article in 1920, Manuel de Falla once stated, "Here we are truly confronted with Andalusia: truth without authenticity, so to speak, for not a bar is directly borrowed from Spanish folklore yet the entire piece down to the smallest detail makes one feel the character of Spain."[62] Although Debussy did not study the music of Spain as in-depth as his contemporaries, he was able to capture the spirit of the music through incorporating Andalusian folk rhythms, the habanera ostinato, and the flamenco guitar style into his piano compositions.

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[62] Edward Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind: Volume II 1902-1918*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1965), 257.

III. Middle East

To say the Moorish influence on Spain was significant would be an understatement. Traces of the Arab empire remain in almost every aspect of the art and architecture in the Andalusia cities, such as the aforementioned Alhambra palace in Grenada, the mosque of Cordoba, and the Giralda in Seville. The influence of Middle Eastern modality on Andalusian music was so profound that it even made its way to Paris, where composers subsequently adopted what they considered as "Spanish." These composers sought musical inspiration in the "exotic" sounds of Spain, Asia, and the Middle East in the Eastern scales and ornamented melodies they heard from the World's Fairs of 1889 and 1900. Debussy also alluded to the Middle East in his "Spanish" works by including some of these scales and ornamented melodies, consequently subverting the latter into a group of generalized "Other" countries.

In his imagined Spain, Debussy was fascinated by the Moorish influence that pervaded every aspect of the culture, including the musical style of Gypsy culture. In a 1913 article in the monthly bulletin of the *Société Internationale de Musique*, Debussy asserted the "rugged beauty of the old Moorish cantilenas" of Spain as the "soul" that drove the nation's character. When he heard Spanish music, Debussy said he was transported to the "stones on the roads [that] seem to blaze with a voluptuousness which burns the eyes, where the muleteers summon from their throats notes of sincerest passion."[63] Hearing what he believed to be a

[63] Claude Debussy, "Concerts Colonne and Société des Nouveaux Concerts, Spanish Music." In *Debussy On Music*, collected by François Lesure, edited and translated by Richard Langham Smith, 1977.

"fiery" Spanish style, he used the Moorish "cantilenas" as inspiration for recreating his exotic fantasy. His Spanish-influenced piano compositions frequently illustrate "arabesques," or ornamented melodies that weave chromatically around a central note, as a method of depicting the exotic. Debussy's use of the Arabic Andalusian scale, for example, demonstrates the composer's knowledge of characteristic Spanish music, which conveyed the sense of "authenticity" that contemporary composer Manuel de Falla would later identify.[64] In both his construction of melodies and his use of Arab modality, however, Debussy also employed exotic musical devices that suggest other cultures other than Spain, such as Asia and the Middle East. A massive geographic region, both Asia and the Middle East feature diverse groups of people, topography, and sub-cultures that cannot be grouped into a single identity. Yet French composers, in their imperialist mindset, ignored the cultural nuances of this large area and instead implemented sonorities outside of Western tonality, such as whole tone scales and pentatonic scales.

The name Andalusia derived from the Arabic word *al-Andalus* in Medieval Islamic Spain. Over hundreds of years, the Moors developed an Andalusian culture unique to southern Spain and North Africa (see Fig. 3.1). In 1492, the marriage of Isabella I of Castille and Ferdinand II of Aragon unified the Iberian Peninsula, and pushed the Moors from the region, causing Andalusian culture became largely concentrated in North Africa.[65] Traces of Middle Eastern influence—particularly in ornaments and scales—persist in the flamenco and *cante jondo* songs of Spanish Andalusia, however. Although technically Moorish in nature, both genres were frequently associated with the music of Spanish Gypsies (*Gitano)*, since

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[64] Manuel de Falla, "Debussy and Spain," In *On Music and Musicians*, Translated by David Urman and J.M. Thompson, (London: Marion Boyars, 1979), 41–45.
[65] Mahmoud Guettat, "The Andalusian Musical Heritage," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of Music: The Middle East*, edited by Virginia Danielson, Scott Marcus, and Dwight Reynolds (New York: Routledge, 2002).

many Spaniards viewed the group collectively as Egyptian or Middle Eastern. Musicologist James Parakilas notes, for example, that this perception solidified in the nineteenth century as the image of the Moorish Gypsy a romanticized "Other," a stock character in both Spanish and foreign works depicting Andalusia.[66] France, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century wished to capture the image in operas, symphonies, and other grandiose works.[67]

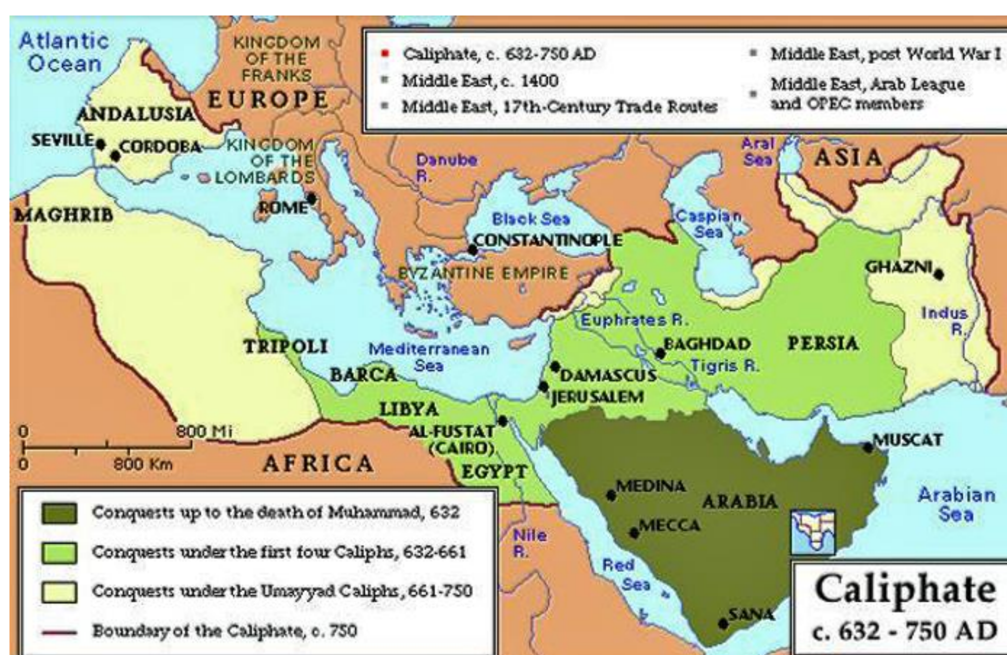

Figure 3.1. The Arab Empire at its height expanded from the Iberian Peninsula to Persia. The map prominently shows the name of the region that is now Spain, called Andalusia.[68]

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[66] James Parakilas, "How Spain Got a Soul," In *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. John Bellman, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 137-193.

[67] Many exotic Middle Eastern operas appeared in the late nineteenth century, beginning with Verdi's *Aida* (1871), which was the first opera to be performed on the African continent. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (1888) and Massanet's *Cléopâtre* (1914) were based on famous stories that came from the Middle East.

[68] "Map of Arab Empire," map, Slideshow on Islamic and Arabic Contributions to Mathematics, accessed April 24, 2018. https://www.slideshare.net/TonyGuerra1/islamic-arabic-contributions-to-mathematics.

In early modern France, perceptions of the once vast Arab Empire—and with it, Spain—transferred into art and music. In 1798, Napoleon conquered Egypt, arousing French interest in Middle Eastern archaeology, religions, linguistics, and art. Ironically, this introduction to the Middle East also shaped the French people's fascination with Spain. In the eyes of *fin-de-siècle* Parisians, Spain's association with exotic Moors and Gypsies connected the nation closely with the "Oriental" faraway East, including countries such as India, Indonesia, China, and Japan.[69] A quote by the nineteenth-century French author Victor Hugo, for example, demonstrates how Parisians viewed the so-called Orient. Describing his unapologetic fascination and exploitation of Spanish cultures in *Les Orientales* (1829), Hugo stated:

> The Orient, as image or as thought, has become, for the intelligence as well as for the imagination, a sort of general preoccupation which the author of this book has obeyed perhaps without his knowledge. Oriental colors came as of their own accord to imprint themselves on all his thoughts, all his dreams, and his dreams and his thoughts found themselves in tune, and almost without having wished it so, Hebraic, Turkish, Greek, Persian, Arab, even Spanish, because Spain is still the Orient; Spain is still half African, Africa is half Asiatic.[70]

Hugo admits that exotic cultures are essentially interchangeable. Moreover, he unabashedly identifies Spain as "Other," due to its cultural similarities to the Middle East, and, by extension, the Far East.

Sixty years later, the 1889 *Exposition Universelle*, an annual showcase of a country's power, brought many different cultures from around the world to Paris, while celebrating the

[69] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); Timothy D. Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Durham: Duke UP, 2007); and Ralph Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and* Reflections (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009) are some of many musicologists who have written about Moorish exoticism.

[70] Quoted in Susan McClary's *Georges Bizet: Carmen*.

future of technology and innovation. Inventors such as Thomas Edison, for example, introduced new machines at the fair that could jumpstart the world into the next century. Charles Darwin's new theory of evolution and its relation to all human civilizations, regardless of nation, stunned crowds. These modern technologies juxtaposed with the "primitive" exhibits drawn from the native cultures of France's colonies to advertise France's vast Empire. A demonstration of this power, the *Exposition Universelle* featured the "History of Human Habitation" exhibit that lined the grassy area in the shadow of the newly constructed Eiffel Tower, where indigenous peoples performed in *café concerts* for the enjoyment and edification of curious attendees.[71] Much attention has been given to the fascination of Parisians with the Javanese gamelans of the *kampong javanais* exhibit.[72] The most visited Oriental exhibit, however, was the *Rue du Caire*, a street decorated with belly dancers and architecture evocative of ancient Egypt.[73]

[71]Jann Pasler notes that the architect for the exhibit, Charles Garnier, also designed the Paris Opera House, which was another place for performances of exotic works (Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2009).
[72] Fauser, Pasler, etc. have written extensively on Javanese Music's impact of Debussy's works.
[73] Fauser, 225. Madeleine Dobie also offers a unique perspective to the treatment of "Oriental" Women in *Foreign Bodies: Gender, Language, and Culture in French Orientalism* (2004).

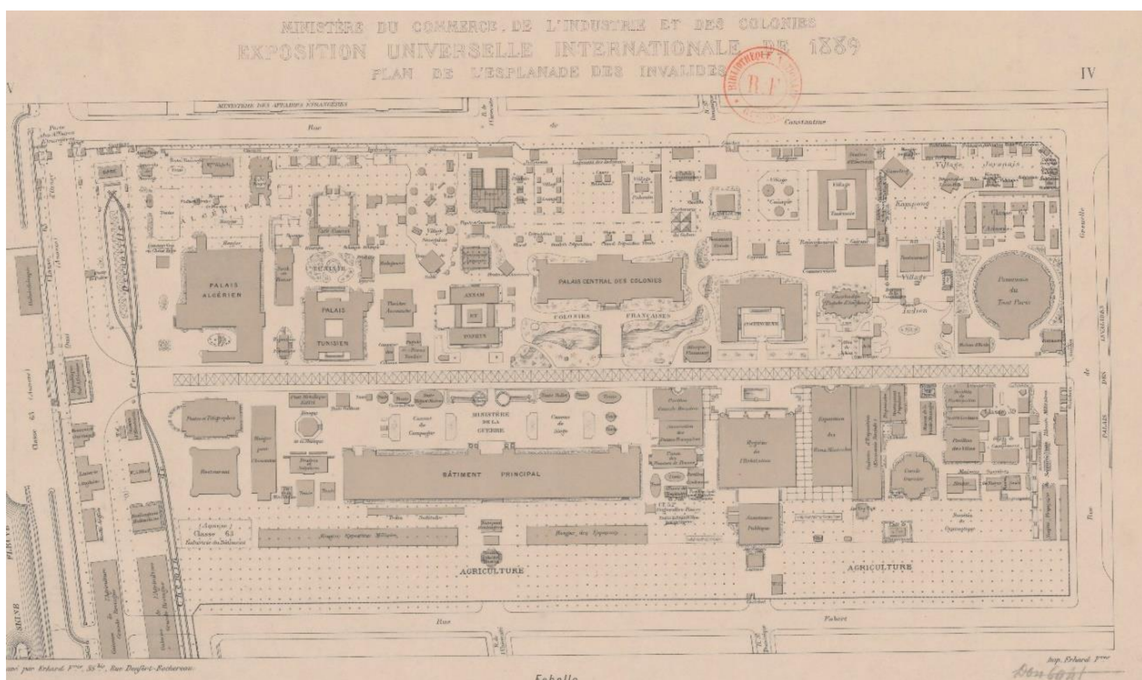

Figure 3.2. Map of the Colonial Sections at the 1889 World's Fair. La Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Such encounters at the 1889 World's Fair profoundly influenced the musical style of many French composers. The eighteen-year-old Debussy, for example, viewed the music of French Indochina, Egypt, and other French colonies, as he later described, as "a sort of operatic embryo."[74] His encounters with the Spanish and Middle Eastern culture expanded beyond the exposition's *café concerts*. At the Trocadéro, where many international musicians held concerts, Debussy attended many concerts where orchestras performed popular pieces such as Chabrier's *España* and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* (1887).[75] He also likely attended one of the twenty-nine performances of Bizet's *Carmen*, which was easily the most popular opera of the fair. As musicologists such as Annegret Fauser and Paul

[74] Quoted in McAuliffe, *Dawn of the Belle Èpoque,* 201. Nichols also notes in *The Life of Debussy* that Debussy used this description for the Annamite Theater in a newspaper article in 1913.
[75] According to Fauser's Appendix 1, the French orchestra performed *España* on May 23, 1889, and the Russian orchestra performed *Capriccio Espagnol* on June 29, 1889. Interestingly, both pieces were performed last on their concerts (Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the Paris World's Fair of 1889*).

Roberts have pointed out, the Asian musical styles of the World's Fair influenced Debussy's compositions in subsequent years, and other cultures affected his musical palette. For example, *Pagodes*, the first movement of his exoticist work *Estampes* (1903), is reminiscent of his Orientalist musical evocations of Asia. His second movement, *La Soirée dans Grenade,* demonstrates a similar exoticization of Andalusian music, and, thereby, Middle Eastern musical styles.

Eleven years later, when the *Exposition Universelle* returned to Paris in 1900, much of the fair concentrated on Spanish culture and music, rather than on a conglomerate of Eastern cultures. A large exhibition entitled *Andalusia in the Time of the Moors* featured the Moorish architecture of Andalusia that Parisians could see without travelling to the country (see figure 2 in the introduction, *Le Palais de L'Espagne,* which displays the Moorish decorations).[76] Similar to the *Rue de Caire* at the 1889 *Exposition Universelle*, the Andalusian exhibit depicted a Moorish empiric city that mimicked life in the twelfth century. A regular attendee of the fair, Debussy enjoyed many of the attractions while also reliving his younger days at the 1889 *Exposition*.[77] Similar to his "Orientalist" works that followed in the wake of the 1889 fair, Debussy wrote a number of "Spanish" works appeared after his attendance to the 1900 fair, beginning with *Lindaraja* and continuing through the next decade.

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[76] Catherine Kautsky, *Debussy's Paris: Piano Portraits of the Belle Èpoque*, Lanham: Roman and Littlefield, 2017), 69.
[77] Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul," 137-193.

Debussy and the Arabesque Melody

As many *fin-de-siècle* artists and musicians became acquainted with Eastern cultures via such experiences as the 1889 World's Fair in Paris, different depictions of the "Other" side of the world began to distort the image of Asia.[78] Symbolist poets, fauvist painters, and impressionist composers, among others, evoked exotic cultures in ambiguous, yet exaggerated ways. Each group became obsessed with the highly ornamented art known as the arabesque, which represented nature, geometry, and the exotic. For example, in Henri Matisse's *Harmony in Red/La Desserte Rouge* (1908, see fig. 3.3), ornate black and blue tendrils curl around the striking red room and female figure. Inspired by such art, composers sought to depict the arabesque in melodies evoking a generalized "Other."[79]

Figure 3.3. Henri Matisse, *The Dessert: Harmony in Red*, 1908, Hermitage Museum.

[78] Ralph Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[79] Debussy stated in 1913 "the primitives, Palestrina, Vittoria, Orlando de Lasso, made use of that divine 'arabesque.' They discovered the principle in Gregorian chant and supported its delicate intertwinings with firm counterpoint. When Bach took over the arabesque he made it more supple and fluid and, despite the severe discipline that great master imposed on Beauty, it was able to move with that free, ever fresh fantasy which still amazes us today." Quoted in Caroline Potter's "Debussy and Nature."

Musicologist Guminder Kaur Bhogal defines the musical arabesque as a slow-moving melody over static accompaniment, found in the elaborate rococo melodies that flowed from the pens of many *fin-de-siècle* composers.[80] For example, the solo flute opening of Debussy's orchestral *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1894) offers a clear example of an arabesque melody. The melodic line chromatically ornaments C sharp, the most important note of the phrase, musically mimicking arabesques shapes. Throughout the piece, the flute returns to the first theme while the orchestra plays a static accompaniment (see fig. 4). Similar to Matisse's *Harmony in Red*, Debussy's pieces lacks a central focal point. *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* later inspired a 1912 ballet version, choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky. Léon Bakst, a painter who frequently worked for Ninjinsky and his *Ballet Russes*, designed the illustration of the program (Fig. 3.4), which visually mirrors the flute's melody. The faun in the foreground holds a bunch of grapes while seemingly trapped amid the colorful swirling arabesque. Bhogal describes many other arabesque melodies of *fin-de-siècle* Paris, such as the opening bassoon solo of Igor Stravinsky ballet *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913). From Ancient Greece to pagan Russia, the arabesque melody connects the audience to a more primitive scenario.

[80] Although Bhogal mentions the arabesque was popular in the artistic movements of the *fin de siècle*, many generations of artists and composers found the ornamentation fascinating. Plato himself described melodies that should have "the decoration of a slow-moving melody with quick instrumental note clusters." Andrew Barker, *Greek Musical Writings*, 204.

Example 3.1. ***Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, mm.1-4.**

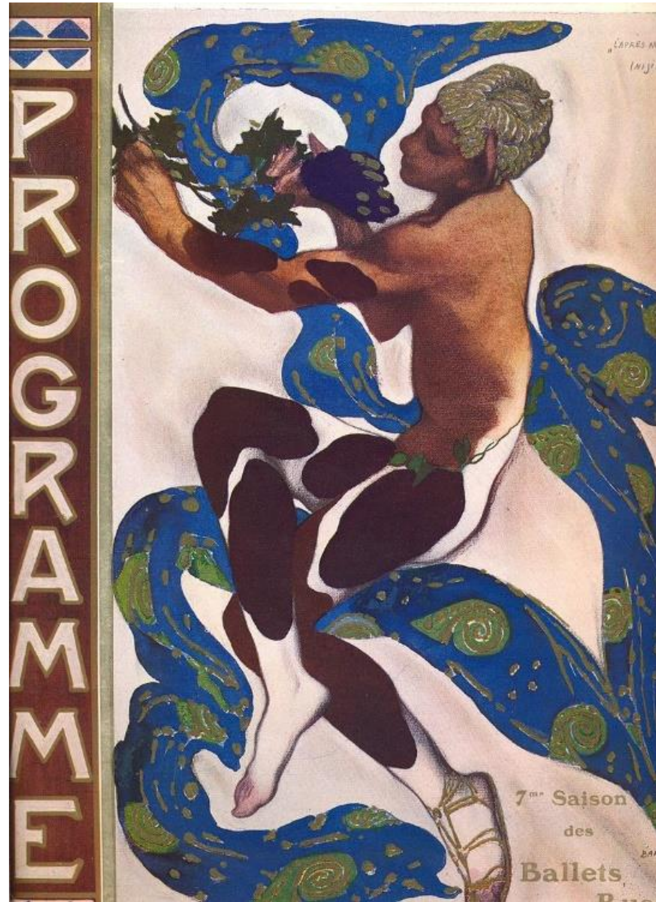

Figure 3.4. Bakst, Program for *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, 1912.

Arabesque designs appear prominently in Islamic art, particularly in the architecture of Andalusian towns such as Granada. Nestled in the foothills of the Spanish Sierra Nevada mountains, Granada still retains a strong Moorish culture. The Alhambra palace rises above the skyline, revealing its Gothic architecture as a symbol of Moorish culture to the rest of Europe.[81] The Puerta del Vino, or "the Gate of Wine" (see fig. 6), is just one of many gates that leads into the castle, but Debussy singled it out as the inspiration for *La Puerta del Vino*.

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[81] Sources by historians such as John Gill, Enrique Sordo, and Titus Burkhardt offer more information on the Middle Eastern influence on Andalusia.

As I discussed in the introduction, and shown in fig. 3.5, Debussy received a postcard depicting the famous gate that was a meeting place for many Moorish gypsies.

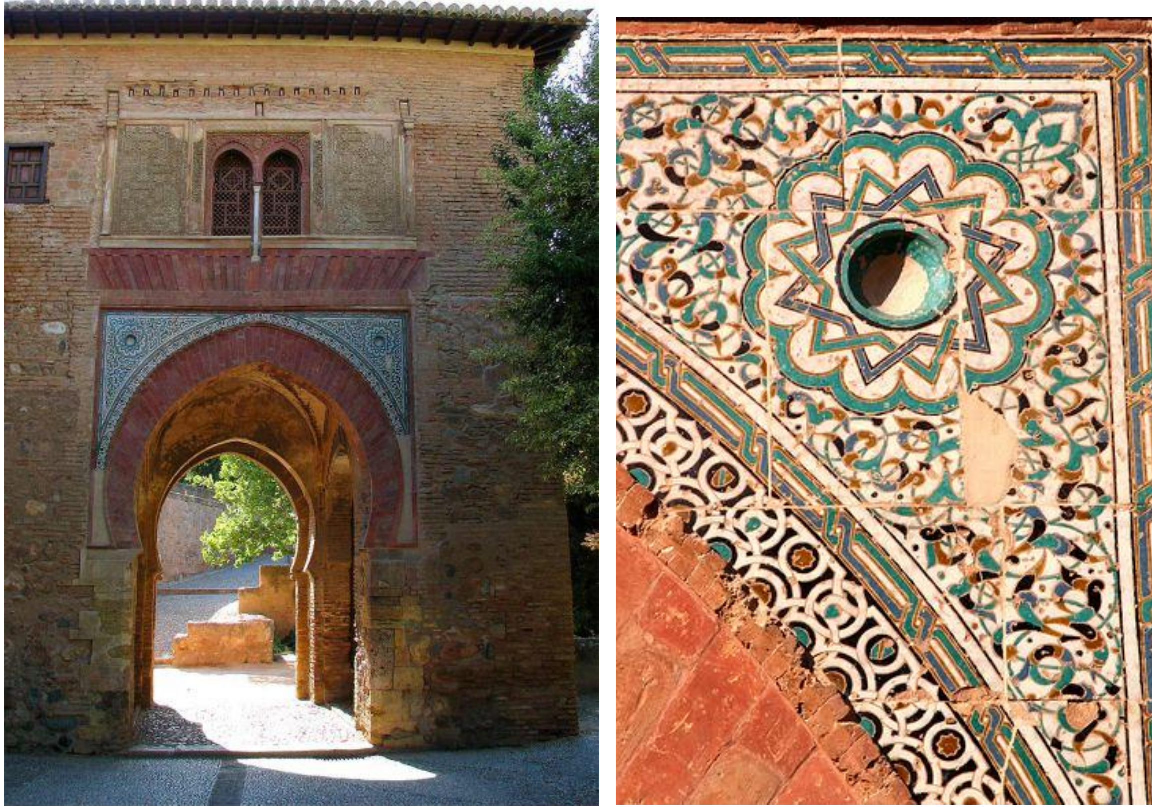

Figure 3.5. The *Puerta del Vino*.[82] Figure 3.6. Geometric Detail of the Alhambra.[83]

Above the opening a turquoise and white arabesque design (see fig. 3.6), welcomes guests into the cathedral. These designs inspired romanticized descriptions by foreign visitors. Prominent French writer François-René de Châteaubriand (1768–1848), for example, described the arabesque walls as having "the appearance of oriental fabrics embroidered in the harem by a bored slave-girl."[84] Certainly, the gate's exotic imagery as

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[82] "La Alhambra rehabilita la Puerta del Vino para recuperar sus pinturas murales," photograph, Navarra Informción, accessed April 24, 2018, http://www.navarrainformacion.es/2016/08/07/la-alhambra-rehabilita-la-puerta-del-vino-recuperar-pinturas-murales/.

[83] "Detail from La Puerta del Vino, Gate of Wine," photograph, Flikr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/72213316@N00/407115431/.

[84] Enrique Sordo, *Moorish Spain* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1963), 132.

captured on the postcard similarly caught Debussy's eye. Marguerite Long reminisced about the Spanish-Moorish fantasy of the Alhambra in his piano pieces, saying, "What riotous sounds, what lasciviousness in this hovel behind the Puerta del Vino! She offers herself and then draws back—with 'rough contrasts of extreme violence and passionate sweetness.'"[85]

In *La Puerta del Vino*, Debussy evokes many of the gate's architectural details into his arabesque style. The exposition of the piece displays a slow-moving melody gliding over the constant habanera rhythm. The melody, circling around E-natural (the raised second in the key) highlights both half steps to F and E-flat. At the same time, this dissonance clashes both the D-flat to A-flat ostinato as well as the sustained tritone in the bass clef (see example 3.2). The chromatic melody, against the dissonance of the bass, sounds "wrong" to the ear, and therefore evokes a place that rejects Western Europe's tonal system.[86] Debussy's limited knowledge of Andalusia leads him to highlight the Moorishness of the gate, rather than connecting the region with traditional Western culture. A Lydian-mode flourish immediately interrupts the melody in measure 21, resembling the vocal outbursts of the flamenco singers who Debussy imagined performing in the gate's shadows. In this opening section, Debussy not only depicts the gate's arabesque architecture, but also in scenery surrounding of the Alhambra.

[85] Marguerite Long, *At the Piano with Debussy*, 68.
[86] Geographically, Spain is in Western Europe, but I mean the symbolic Western Europe music's countries, such as France, England, Germany, and Italy.

Example 3.2. *La Puerta del Vino*, mm. 5–22.

Debussy's first "Spanish" style piece, *Lindaraja* depicts a garden and hallway of the Alhambra. Debussy designed the piece for two pianists to imitate the act of two dancers along with an arabesque melody that would be a prototype for later solo piano pieces. Although not much analysis has been conducted on this early piece, scholars have discerned

it in comparison with Debussy's other Spanish-style works.[87] The introduction of the piece mimics the similar form Debussy uses for the later *La Soiree dans Grenade* and *La Puerta del Vino*. The ostinato of a *seguidilla* rhythm opens the piece, as discussed in the second section, but after the brief introduction, a third hand enters with an arabesque melody centered around A, as signified by the G-sharp accidental acting as a leading tone (see ex. 3.3). Debussy continues to revolve chromatically around A, pointing to the dominant of D minor. The tied notes are frequently interrupted by thirty-second note flourishes.

Debussy's *La Soirée dans Grenade* paints another exoticized image of Granada, this time an evening dance in the town. The arabesque melody, though not inspired by any type of architecture, springs solely from Debussy's imagination. Like *La Puerta de Vino*, *La Soirée* opens with an arabesque melody. In measure 7, the habanera pattern on C clashes with the scalar flourishes of the melody in F# minor (see ex. 3.4). Debussy further evoked the *cante jondo*, a vocal song of Andalusian notable for its melodic wailing, in constructing the fluid rhythm of the arabesque.[88] While it is unclear if Debussy ever heard a *cante jondo*, the arabesque melody of *La Soirée dans Grenade* parallels that style. Both *La Puerta del Vino* and *La Soirée dans Grenade* show some similarities to *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Each of the three pieces all begin with an opening arabesque melody that surrounds certain notes—usually dissonant to the key—and it snakes its way down the range of the instrument.[89] Whether Debussy attempts to depict Spain or ancient Greece, the arabesque alludes to a faraway, and almost primitive, place.

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[87] Matthew Brown, for instance, in *Debussy's* Iberia, discusses this piece as a predecessor for the symphonic work in reference to its *seguidilla* rhythm that pervades throughout the work.
[88] Gill, *Andalusia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 150.
[89] It is also worth noting the prevalence of other notable French works that also begin with an arabesque melody, namely Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Delilah* (which begins with an oboe).

6

pp

p expressif, un peu en dehors

p

più p

ppp

11

ppp

16

pp

p

21

p très expressif

Example 3.3. Debussy, *Lindaraja*, mm. 6-25.

Example 3.4 *La Soirée dans Grenade*, mm.7-14.

The style of the *cante jondo* also appears in *Sérénade interrompue.* The *cante jondo*, similar to an arabesque, features a slow, drawn out melody over a rhythmic ostinato. When the "Don Juan" singer finally sings his song (measures 54 to the end), the result matches a similar sort of arabesque melody as seen in *La Soirée dans Grenade* or *La Puerta del Vino*. Its seemingly aimless direction slowly moves over the ostinato rhythms of the "guitar," or left hand. As the melody climbs up the scale, the noticeable Arabic sonority of the doubly-chromatic scale appears, creating tritone dissonances against the bass line. In the last iteration of the melody, the singer can finally perform his entire song with a full accompaniment. Compared to the quick sixteenth notes in the left hand, the melody in the right hand seems slow with seemingly nowhere to go. The stylistic indication, *doux et harmonieux* (sweetly and harmonious) suggests that the performer should play the slow-moving and sustained melody much different than the *secco* accompaniment. In the left hand, the combination of D-natural and D-flat Debussy's incorporation of the doubly-chromatic, clashing sonority.

Debussy wrote slow-moving and chromatic melodies with the intention of creating the illusion of a distant place. The chromatic lines that wove in and out of one focal note—such as C-sharp in the flute melody of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*—established a doubly-chromatic sound that developed into new scales that Debussy incorporated from the Arab tonal system.

Example 3.5. Debussy, *Lindaraja*, Last iteration of melody.

Debussy's Sonority and Scales

Because Andalusian culture was steeped in Moorish culture for centuries, many aspects of Middle Eastern music crossed the Mediterranean and took hold in the Iberian Peninsula. Although scholars agree that Andalusian music now resides in North Africa, the

origins of the musical style developed during the ninth and tenth centuries in the cultural centers of *al-Andalus:* Córdoba and Grenada.[90] The basis for Andalusian music is in the Arabian *maqam*, or melodic modes, that build the foundation for the entire structure of a song. Similar to a Western scale, the *maqam* is a heptatonic scale that is constructed with augmented, major, and minor second intervals.[91] With over seventy different *maqam* to choose from, the performer typically uses a mode according to either the emotion or the location he or she wants to portray. In addition, the music of Andalusia, typically has a scale that is based on the raised second and third degree (see ex. 3.6), resulting in the doubly-chromatic sound commonly heard in Middle Eastern music.[92] In addition to the minor second intervals built into the piece, performers typically use unique quarter-note ornaments to depict the different emotions.[93]

Example 3.6. The Andalusian Scale.

In his piano works, Debussy makes use of these doubly chromatic scales to illustrate a more characteristic Moorish/Spanish style. Yet he also includes whole tone and pentatonic scales, which he used previously in his "Asian" exoticist works. Debussy's inclusion of scales not traditionally found in Andalusian music indicates two things. On the one hand, he could be asserting his characteristic compositional style by employing two of his favorite

[90] Habib Hassan Touma, *The Music of the Arabs*, translated by Laurie Schwartz (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1996), 68.
[91] Habib Hassan Touma, *The Music of the Arabs*, translated by Laurie Schwartz (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1996), 18.
[92] Elizabeth J. Miles and Loren Chuse, "Spain," In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: Europe*, edited by Timothy Rice, James Porter, and Chris Goetzen (New York: Garland Publishing, 2002), 593-601.
[93] Ammon Shiloah, *Music in the World of Islam: A Socio-Cultural Study*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995.

scales. On the other hand, he is engaging the aforementioned Parisian mindset that Spain is "half African," which is "half Asiatic." Either way, musicologist Ralph Locke connects Victor Hugo's generalizations into the music of Debussy through what Locke describes as the "Exotic Style Only" Paradigm.[94] Locke defines this theory as "dealing with exotically colored instrumental works, in which there are usually no clues to the work's intended ethnic reference other than the notes and other markings in the score and perhaps a brief title."[95] Although Debussy alludes to his Spanish works through "brief titles," his own characteristic compositional style gets in the way of an authentic Andalusian representation. In addition, Debussy evokes a generalized exoticism in his piano works due to his use of other styles that are characteristic of Andalusian music. A study of tonality and scales in each of his piano works will reveal the extent of Debussy's so-called Spanish exoticism. *La Puerta del Vino*, *La Sérénade interrompue*, and *La Soirée dans Grenade* all feature Moorish scales.

Example 3.7. *La Puerta del Vino*, transcribed Andalusian scale in the A Section.

Turning again to the Alhambra, we find many Moorish influences in Debussy's pieces evoking the old fortress. In *La Puerta del Vino*, a D-flat pedal set to a habanera rhythm opens the piece as the slow-moving melody meanders through an Andalusian scale. As the melody surrounds E, the flourishes highlight the half step intervals of E to F and B to C, as well as the augmented seconds of A-flat to B. This technique of mixing E and F, the

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[95] Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections,* 20.

lowered and natural third scale degree suggests more of an exotic Arabic, rather than Spanish, flavor. The doubly-chromatic scale opens up the sonorities of augmented seconds, therefore also suggesting Middle Eastern scales. As the A section of the piece transitions to the B section, however, Debussy conveys a sense of mystery by setting the *cante jondo*-like flourishes to whole tone scales, as seen in measures 21, 25, and 27–30 (see ex. 3.2). Perhaps Debussy, in his own characteristic way, is trying to deconstruct the tonality before the truly atonal B section. However, the whole tone scale also inevitably alludes to the music of Asian cultures. By utilizing the whole tone scale here in this *La Puerta del Vino*, he implies that Spain is a culture that reaches across the Mediterranean to the "Other" cultures rather than a Western European nation. In addition, Debussy's pieces where he evokes the style of the guitar—such as in *La Sérénade interrompue*—also provide the same distorted scales as his previous pieces.

In Debussy's first book of the *Préludes*, *La Sérénade interrompue* offers another example of the Andalusian scale in Debussy's music. The piece begins with a short staccato F to G-flat eighth note motif, which introduces the chromatic theme before the "guitarist" character gets interrupted. The character begins again and "strums" down his imaginary guitar in a Phrygian modal pattern beginning on F. The G-flat plays a pivotal role in turning into the major third of D Major for the rest of the section.[96] Further in the piece, in the *librement* section, the piano mimics the guitarist "wailing" out a *cante jondo*, as a descending melodic line appears as the G-flat Andalusian scale (ex. 3.8). The piano's rhythm and staccato articulation of the piece certainly alludes to the Spanish guitar, but the work's tonality is constructed in a way that it symbolizes Andalusian culture.

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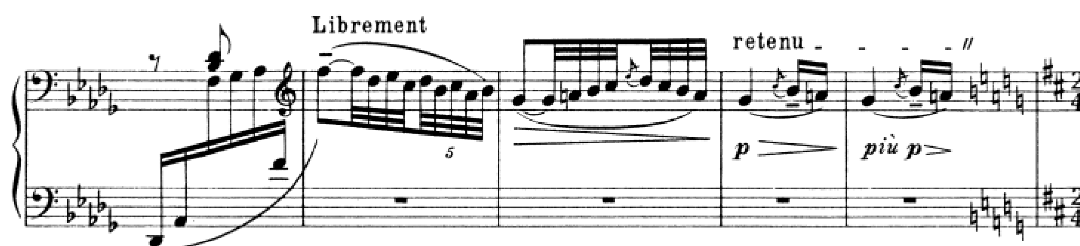
[96] Paul Roberts in *Images: The Piano Music of Claude Debussy* demonstrates this similarity of the two opening passages (257-9).



Example 3.8. ***La Sérénade Interrompue*****,** ***Librement*** **Section.**

Like the architecture of the Alhambra, the remnants of Middle Eastern culture lie in Debussy's *La Soirée dans Grenade*. The arabesque melody contains many chromatic inflections, indicating again a similar generalized Moorishs sonority. The melody shows the chromaticism between B and B-sharp, C-sharp and D, and F-sharp and G-sharp. As with *La Puerta del Vino*, Debussy again employs whole tone scales over a stagnant C-sharp habanera bass line. However, the planing of chords—a technique used in several of his "Asian" pieces such as *Pagodes*—also shows Debussy's uses of whole tone scales to convey a dream-like state, which is distinct from his intentionally exotic East Asian works.

When the whole tone scales transitions into the second section, the piece breaks into a glorious dance in A major, reminiscent of dance scenes in *Carmen* or a main theme from *España*. Indeed, many Andalusians used the major scale in traditional songs, especially when mixed with its relative minor equivalent. In *La Soirée dans Grenade*, Debussy uses the mixed mode in the harmonic progression of the *trés rhythmé* section. For example, Debussy includes E-sharp/F natural that draws on the relative minor of A major, F minor. Although this generally does not change the tonality, due to the pedal A in the bass, the addition of the lowered sixth adds a modal flavor that alludes to the Andalusian scale.

Although he never visited Andalusia, Debussy captures a sense of an "Other" place through using these Moorish elements particular to Spanish folk styles. The arabesque's

highly ornamented form over a slow moving harmony aided in Debussy's use of melodies over a static habanera rhythm. The modal tonalities in each of the works also provides a reflection of Debussy's representation of the Andalusian style.[97] Again, it is hard for us to interpret what de Falla's true intentions for calling Debussy's music "authentic," but the public saw the affirmation by de Falla as credible and believable. A closer look into the cultural context of each of the pieces reveals Debussy's generalization of the exotic world, and his representation of Spain exudes a more Middle Eastern style. His opinions of a generalized "Other" reflect the views of Parisians at the time, who were interested in fauvism and symbolism, as well as events like the 1889 and 1900 *Exposition Universelles*. The seemingly impassable Pyrennes mountain range between Spain and France acted as a physical and metaphorical barrier for composers of *fin de siècle* France; its allusions to an ancient, more primitive time fascinated those who were interested in Eastern cultures—Debussy as no exception. His "Spanish" piano works act as a window into the imaginative world of his exotic compositional style, and although his Andalusian influence might not be as "authentic" as Manuel de Falla believed, the works fulfill many of the Spanish archetypes that were popular at the time.

[97] Manuel de Falla, *Debussy and Spain,* 44.

IV. Conclusion

In *fin-de-siècle* Paris, composers, artists, and writers fantasized about the other places and exotic cultures that existed beyond France's borders. When Debussy, who was searching for an escape from the Romantic Era, arrived at the *Exposition Universelles* of 1889 and 1900, he was drawn to the *Esplanade des Invalides* that held France's colonial cultures. In response to the new tonalities and rhythms he witnessed, Debussy incorporated Javanese and Spanish musical elements into his compositions. Through an analysis of his Spanish works, however, the composer does not remain "true" to the elements of Spain but rather groups the country into a larger collective "Other." The exoticization of his Spanish neighbor shows how Debussy—like many Parisians at the time—viewed Spain as closer to the Middle East rather than Western Europe.

Debussy found the Spanish rhythms of Andalusia to be a primary basis for his piano compositions. Directly from the Gypsy flamenco tradition, Debussy utilized the *sesquialtera* and 6/8 rhythmic pattern from the *cante jondo* tradition. For example, his early pieces, such as *Lindaraja* and *Masques*, the composer incorporated aspects of the *sesquialtera* pattern in both a slow and faster tempo, respectively. The resulting pattern presented a driving rhythm that kept Debussy's imagination of the Spanish energy alive. Along with the *cante jondo* tradition, Debussy was fascinated by the habanera rhythm he heard from other contemporary Spanish exoticist music. In *La Puerta del Vino* and *La Soirée dans Grenade*, the composer incorporated the habanera rhythm to evoke a dance in Grenada. Debussy, like many of his

contemporaries, used the rhythm as an ostinato to create a recurring form to present melodies. Both the Andalusian native *cante jondo* and the foreign Cuban habanera contributed to the rhythms he fell in love with when listening to exoticized Spanish music.

The most iconic, as well as popular, symbol of the imagined Spain to *fin-de-siècle* Parisians was the Spanish guitar. During Debussy's period of Spanish exoticism, painters such as Pablo Picasso created portraits of the instrument. Recreating the image in piano pieces such as *La Sérènade interrompue* and *Masques*, the French composer incorporated open fifth tonalities, staccato "plucking" articulations, and resonant sonorities to recreate a flamenco guitarist's style. *La Sérénade interrompue* in particular combined both the rhythmic and melodic styles of the *cante jondo* style by providing florid melodies against the staccato "strumming" accompaniment.

In the melodies of the piano pieces, instead of using the Spanish idioms, Debussy incorporated Middle Eastern tonality, thus placing his Andalusian works more "Eastern." These elements of the Middle East include the "Andalusian" doubly-chromatic scale and what the composer believed to be arabesque melodies. For example, in *La Puerta del Vino*, the opening of the piece suggests an Andalusian scale beginning on D-flat with the melody chromatically swirling around the focal note of E-natural. The augmented second sound—that stereotypically alludes to music that is not traditionally from Western tonal music—consequently evokes a more Eastern place supposedly more dangerous than the comfortable Paris. Such chromaticism is found in the other four piano works, which overwhelmingly proves Debussy's intention of painting his picture of Spain as "Other," despite the country's proximity to France.

Although Manuel de Falla highly praised Debussy's work as highly "authentic" without ever "knowing Spain, or without ever having set foot on Spanish ground," the French composer treated Spanish music as an exotic "Other."[98] The postcard of the Alhambra palace that serendipitously fell into Debussy's lap in 1908 was a symbol for his entire exoticist period: a snapshot, or a small picture, of what the composer imagined the whole culture to be. In the "snapshots" of his short piano works, Debussy effectively created an atmosphere of his imagined wild, dangerous Spain.

[98] Manuel de Falla, "Claude Debussy and Spain," in *On Music and Musicians*, translated by David Urman and J.M. Thomson (London: Marion Boyars, 1979), 42.

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Abstract

The *Belle Epoque* (1870-1914) of Paris welcomed many visitors from faraway places to participate in cultural events, such as the *Exposition Universelles* of 1889 and 1900, and share their music with other artists. Not a stranger to these events, Claude Debussy embraced the exotic cultures and began to pay homage to the brilliant sounds he heard. Particularly studied in Debussy's works are his exoticist views of the Orient, or East Asia; the composer, however, also studied other cultures such as Ancient Greece and Spain, particularly the region of Andalusia. Fascinated with the southern Spanish region, Debussy once stated that the popular Spanish songs were filled with "imagination [that] mingles with so much rhythm, qualities that make it one of the greatest treasure-houses of musical riches in the world." His treatment of Spanish music mimics his previous fascinations with other countries. The highly ornamented "arabesque" melodies he utilized contribute to the Moorish influence of his Spanish works, while "oriental" scales and tonality also take his pieces to a far-away, distant location. Furthermore, Debussy uses rhythms influenced by the Andalusian *cante jondo* and flamenco guitar tradition, as well as the genteel habanera from Cuba, to paint the picture of his imagined Spain filled with Gypsies. With the support and patronage of Andalucian composer Manuel de Falla, along with other Spanish composers and artists, Debussy's final exploration of exoticism in Spanish music and culture proves to be similar to his other generalized view of the non-western world. In his small portraits of Spain, particularly his piano pieces *Lindaraja*, *La Puerta del Vino, Serenade Interrompue, Soiree dans Grenade,* and *Masques*, Debussy imagines Spain as a distant land, despite its proximity to France.