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COLOMBIAN NATIONALISM:
FOUR MUSICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

by

Ana Maria Trujillo

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

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ABSTRACT

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Colombian Nationalism: Four Musical Perspectives for Violin and Piano. Dr. Kenneth Kreitner, Ph.D.

This paper explores the Colombian nationalistic musical movement, which was born as a search for identity that various composers undertook in order to discover the roots of Colombian musical folklore. These roots, while distinct, have all played a significant part in the formation of the culture that gave birth to a unified national identity. It is this identity that acts as a recurring motif throughout the works of the four composers mentioned in this study, each representing a different stage of the nationalistic movement according to their respective generations, backgrounds, and ideological postures. The idea of universalism and the integration of a national identity into the sphere of the Western musical tradition is a dilemma that has caused internal struggle and strife among generations of musicians and artists in general. This paper strives to open a new path in the research of nationalistic music for violin and piano through the analyses of four works written for this type of chamber ensemble: the third movement of the Sonata Op. 7 No.1 for Violin and Piano by Guillermo Uribe Holguín; *Lopeziana*, piece for Violin and Piano by Adolfo Mejía; Sonata for Violin and Piano No.3 by Luís Antonio Escobar; and Dúo rapsódico con aires de currulao for Violin and Piano by Andrés Posada. While the violin is not a Colombian folkloric instrument, nationalistic composers were able to use it to express the nationalistic feeling of their works, representing an often overlooked contribution to Colombian academic music and to the universal violin repertoire

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The history of music in Colombia and in the countries that are part of Latin America is inseparably linked to their social and political history. As a result of the violent conquest that almost wiped out the natives of these lands and the heterogeneous mixing of races and cultures afterward, one musical tradition was superimposed on another in a way that is never easy to disentangle. The search for cultural identity in Latin America has centered on the constant debate between the imported traditions and the autochthonic elements found in its society; countries in this part of the globe are constantly asking themselves the challenging question, “what is our identity?” and pondering how to integrate into the Western world from a position other than that of an imposed colonialism. From this perspective Latin American societies have constantly sought after originality through their various manifestations of culture. This originality does not pretend to be the creation of something special or unique; rather, it strives for recognition from the dominant European cultures of the part that Latin American societies play in the construction of the Western project of civilization.¹

However, the pursuit of a *mestizo* (mixed) nation that Colombia and the other countries of Latin America undertook after their independence from Spain made it difficult to homogenize these societies, which in their purest essence are heterogeneous. In addition, the indigenous and African peoples in these countries were subordinated to a Hispanic heritage that could not avoid the mixing of the three cultures. As a consequence,

¹ Leopoldo Zea, *América en la historia* (Madrid: Ed. Revista de Occidente S.A, 1970), 13.

the idea of a unified Colombian nation passed through several stages of evolution—from the aggressive process of deculturation to a final acculturation which, with its goal of fitting into the Western order, minimized and marginalized the particularities of the African and the native indigenous cultures.

The history of music in Latin America clearly exhibits the search those nations have undergone for a voice of their own within a global context. Beginning before the emancipation movements in the region and especially during the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, Latin American composers have had to face the great challenge of fitting within a European context while at the same time giving their own nations a distinct musical identity. Latin America did not have the organic development which allowed European music to evolve from its origins in polyphony to the unfolding consequence of atonalism. Historian Alejo Carpentier has demonstrated that it is easier to understand the music of Arnold Schoenberg and justify its existence than to understand and justify the music of Heitor Villa-Lobos, who was one of the most important composers of Latin America and who had to overcome the identity crisis which many other composers on the continent suffered as well.²

Independence from Spain not only gave Latin American countries an urgent necessity to find a path towards their own identity but also allowed these nations to discover the rest of the Western world. The search for a national identity saw writers, thinkers, political leaders, artists, and musicians looking in two decidedly differing directions: on the one hand they sought to import European elements and cultural values

² Alejo Carpentier, “América Latina en la confluencia de coordenadas históricas y su repercusión en la música: la hora actual de la música en América Latina,” comp. Isabel Aretz (México: Siglo xxi eds., 1977), 8.

other than those from Spain; on the other, they awakened interest in rediscovering the local manifestations of the mixed societies of Hispanic America. Composers of the second half of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth found themselves divided by the duality that would become the major focus of discussion in the academic music of Latin America: the search for a distinctive national voice versus the acquiring of a universal language that would fit into the Western order.

The challenge that Latin American composers have had to face is merely a reflection of the culture that these countries share. It is a society that struggles with, interprets, and assimilates its inherited cultural elements while at the same time striving to find a point of original creation. As Otto Mayer Serra explains, music in Latin America had two parallel lines of development that go back to the times of the colony. First was the academic music which arose from the imitation of imported elements from Europe—overtures, sonatas from the eighteenth century, symphonic works from classic Viennese composers, and *tonadillas escénicas* being the most prominent. In this sense Latin American music does not offer any new elements. The second line of development was that of the popular music which originated in the less favored economic classes but where the mixing of cultures brought about its own originality. Ignored during the development of the first urban centers and condemned afterwards, the folk and popular music of Latin America was finally liberated after independence from Spain, when it started to gain popularity in all levels of society and overseas.³ The spontaneous expression of popular music was a melting pot of cultures that merged together to create the identity and musical language of the young nations of Hispanic America. This music enabled

³ Otto Mayer Serra, *Enciclopedia de la Música* (Mexico D.F. Atlante, 1943), 2:390.

composers to use the coloristic richness of folklore in their works and marked a path in the history of music in Latin America that finally allowed composers to find a distinctive voice.

Nationalism in Latin America arose at the end of the nineteenth century, some fifty years after Glinka started the movement in Russia. Latino composers were aware that they thus had some catching up to do and, as a result, a wave of composers from all parts of Latin America left their homes to study abroad and in turn to reveal that South America and its musical culture had something to contribute to the Western musical tradition. Many of them, such as Uribe Holguín, Antonio Maria Valencia, and Adolfo Mejía from Colombia, chose Paris—where they were greatly influenced by Impressionism, which they combined with the nationalistic elements in their works.⁴ Other composers, such as Luis Antonio Escobar and Andres Posada, found their voice in the United States, which had become by the second half of the twentieth century a new Mecca of diverse musical tendencies for aspiring composers and musicians.

The composers themselves, therefore, would be the greatest proponents of nationalism in Latin America. As the Panamanian composer Roque Cordero believes that “When the composer is honest with himself and with his peers—an essential quality of a true creator—his music will present, in one way or another, nationalistic characteristics.”⁵

⁴ Guillermo Rendón, “Maestros de la música: Guillermo Uribe Holguín (II),” *Música Casa de las Américas*, no. 51 (March-April 1975): 6-8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 124. “Si el compositor es sincero consigo mismo y con sus semejantes—cualidad esencial del verdadero creador—su música, por ser suya, presentará características nacionales mas o menos claras.”

Also the Cuban composer Amadeo Roldan stated: “I am an American composer and my purpose is, first of all, to create a music that is purely American in its substance and which is distinctive from the European.

We need an art that we can call our own and worthy of being universally accepted; not as an exotic innovation but for its intrinsic value as a contribution from the New World to the universal art.”⁶

Goals of Study

When the history of a country is told through its music, we can perceive values, both tangible and intangible, that are descriptive of and endemic to the people and their culture. Music as a manifestation of art can be, at times, an extraordinary conduit of the human imagination; it is a language that is capable of narrating a story without the use of words as well as evoking the deepest emotions of humanity. The traditions and customs of a culture are also conveyed through its music, which features melodies, rhythms, harmonies, dances, instruments, and traditional attire that together embody the intangible and tangible musical treasure that belongs to the Colombian folk tradition. Taken together, these elements led to the merging of three races and their customs: Africans, with their highly rhythmical music expressed with various instruments of percussion; the Spanish, who were influential in the adoption of European harmonies, structured dances

⁶ Gilbert Chase, *Introducción a la música americana contemporánea* (Buenos Aires: editorial Nova, 1958), 121. “Siendo yo un compositor colombiano mi propósito es, desde luego, lograr en primer término una producción netamente americana en la sustancia, completamente aparte del arte europeo; un arte que podemos llamar nuestro, continental digno de ser universalmente aceptado no a causa de sus cualidades exóticas sino por su verdadera significación su valor intrínseco como una contribución del Nuevo Mundo al arte universal.”

and diverse instruments—the guitar being the most popular; and the indigenous peoples of the territory, who gave a distinct melancholic character to some Colombian dances from the Andean region and left us their instruments as a physical testimony of their, often, obscure past. Together, these three races and their characteristics resemble an unfinished blanket that has been interwoven with threads of different colors.

Besides providing an overview of Colombian musical folklore, this work also endeavors to give insight into the musical history of this country through the lens of the musical movement of greatest significance in Colombia: nationalism. The nationalistic movement was not only the consequence of a search for identity within the mixing of cultures that make up the Latin American nations; it was also their entrance ticket into the Western musical tradition, and it provided the composers of Latin America the wherewithal to explore other musical tendencies and compositional techniques.

This work aims to examine the influence of the nationalistic movement in Colombia on some of its most important composers as seen through a number of their works written for violin and piano. Even though the most representative Colombian nationalistic works have been written for orchestra and for piano solo, the implications of this movement on the literature for violin and piano deserve to be recognized. The violin, while not an integral part of Colombian musical folklore, has been adapted to suit academic works with nationalistic elements. It is thus important for us to explore some of the more significant pieces for violin and piano that express the folklore of the different musical regions of Colombia. Among these are Guillermo Uribe Holguin's Sonata no. 1 op. 7 for Violin and Piano, Adolfo Mejía's *Lopezca*, Luis Antonio Escobar's Sonata for Violin and Piano no. 3, and Andrés Posada's *Duo rapsódico con aires de currulao*.

PART I CONTEXT

CHAPTER 2

COLOMBIAN FOLKLORE: A HYBRID MANIFESTATION

The study of the folklore of any particular nation can give insight into the common life of its people through examination of those traditions, celebrations, artistic manifestations, and beliefs which have been orally transmitted from generation to generation and have survived the inexorable fate of the modernization of its societies. Thus the study of folklore is the study of a country's most valuable treasure: its own culture.

Folklore is defined as “the science of popular knowledge,”¹ and the word itself is a compound of two distinct words: folk (people) and lore (traditional knowledge). The term was first coined by antiquarian William Thoms in a letter published by the journal *Athenaeum* in 1846.² After Thoms, the study of this discipline spread around the globe, and many of its early scholars championed it as a science. Alexander Haggerty Krappe states:³

Folk-lore is an historical science: “historical” because it attempts to throw light on man's past; a “science” because it endeavors to attain this goal, not by speculation or deduction from some abstract principle agreed upon *a priori*, but by the inductive

¹ Javier Ocampo López, *Folklore y los bailes típicos colombianos* (Manizales: Biblioteca de escritores caldenses, n.d.), 8.

² Duncan Emrich, “Folk-Lore: William John Thoms,” *California Folklore Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (October 1946): 355-74.

³ Alexander Haggerty Krappe, *Science of Folklore* (London: Methuen & co. LTD., 1930, accessed 29 June 2010), xv.

method, which in the last analysis underlies all scientific research, whether historical or natural.

Many later scholars also give accounts of their own approaches in support of the same claim. In *La Ciencia del Folklore* Carlos Vega defends folklore as a science in its own right and gives a detailed perspective of its historical development, object of study, and classification of facts.⁴ Another important example is that of Brazilian folklorist Paulo de Carvalho-Neto, who affirms in his *Concepto del folklore* that: “folklore is a scientific area of anthropology and studies the cultural facts of a specific human group. It is mainly anonymous, and it does not belong to any institution.”⁵

Folklore is a dynamic force that pervades the minds of all people, regardless of their background or ethnicity. It manifests itself over centuries and belongs to a collective human group. Since folklore passes from one generation to the next, it is by its nature anonymous and represents a popular expression of a particular people with a variety of specific regional characteristics. In Colombia this regional variation is deeply rooted in its cultural context, since—as with many other countries in Latin America—the country was formed from a combination of three races whose intermingling spread throughout the Colombian territory as a result of various social and cultural forces during the historical development of the country.

The conquest and colony periods were times of unrest during which the clash of cultures went through various stages before finally reaching a point of stabilization. During the process many cultural manifestations disappeared (most of them mixed), while others managed to preserve their traditions and become a testimony to the ways of

⁴ Carlos Vega, *La ciencia del folklore* (Buenos Aires: ed. Nova, 1960), chap. 2-5.

⁵ Paulo de Carvalho-Neto, *Concepto del folklore* (México: ed. Pomarca, 1965), 17.

the ancient American world. (A vivid example would be the Kogi Indians from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, who are direct descendants of the lost Tayrona civilization in Colombia.) The mixing process was predominantly of Hispanic origin, and it was those of Hispanic origin who established the folkloric manifestations and also the mentality and societal prejudices that considered the other races (including their resultant combinations) to be on a lower step of the evolutionary ladder.⁶

Javier Ocampo Lopez traces two important phases in the history of Hispanic America, and particularly of Colombia.⁷ The first is the deculturation experienced by the indigenous population when the Spanish arrived in their territories and almost destroyed the native cultures they found. The Spanish also fostered the widespread deculturation of the African peoples who were brought to the American continent to work as slaves after being cast out from their homes and separated from their native cultures.

The second stage is the acculturation process in which the country's disparate cultures came together and the people adapted their inherited cultures to their environment, thus allowing the mixing of cultures to become part of Colombian society. This acculturation inevitably forced both the indigenous and the African peoples to choose either to assimilate to the Spanish culture or die for what seemed a lost cause. Fortunately for the oppressed ethnic groups, the natural process of cultural syncretism provided an avenue for the preservation of some of their traditions. There are manifestations of syncretism throughout the countries of Latin America. The clearest examples are the religions of Santería from Cuba, the Macumba from Brazil and the

⁶ Luis Carlos Castillo. *Etnicidad y nación: El desafío de la diversidad en Colombia*. (Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2007), 40-46.

⁷ Javier Ocampo López, *Música y folklore de Colombia*, 2nd ed., (Bogotá : Plaza & Janés, 1980) 13-18.

Voodoo from Haiti. Although syncretism is usually seen as a combination of the black and white worlds⁸ in Colombia, it also involved the mutual influence of the indigenous and Spanish cultures in the region. For example, people from the rural areas of Boyacá who are descendants of the Chibchas still combine the Catholic rituals for burying their dead with their ancestral traditions.

The interaction among the three races and the various stages the *mestizaje* endured over time determined specific social and economic conditions that influenced the creation of Colombia's distinctive folklore. The dominant population within colonial society was the Spaniards who had decided to settle in the American territory; although they were forced to adapt to their new environment, they always strived to preserve the Iberian culture and were directly dependent, in every aspect of their lives, on the Spanish empire. On the other hand, the less favored classes (artisans and field workers, the majority of whom were indigenous or African) faced the challenge of reinventing their own cultural manifestations in light of Spanish domination. It is in this portion of colonial society that the acculturation process among the three cultures came most fully to fruition. Although during colonial times there was a pronounced division of social classes, parties and celebrations were generally occasions of greater intermingling among the various levels of society and tended to foster an exchange of cultural and musical expressions. While the Spanish upper class would celebrate with Viennese waltzes, mazurkas, and *pasillos* played on European instruments, the slaves would make merriment as well with their *mapalés*, *currulaos*, *bambucos*, etc. Often the excitement and the alcohol would induce the masters to celebrate with their slaves; this spontaneous

⁸ Andrés I. Pérez Y Mena, "Cuban Santería, Haitian Vodun, Puerto Rican Spiritualism: A Multiculturalist Inquiry into Syncretism." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37, no. 1 (March, 1988): 17.

encounter among the classes was called “colitas” in the Caribbean or Atlantic region of Colombia.⁹

With the twentieth century came total independence from Spain and the beginning of a new culture that went beyond mere imitation and found creative ways to interpret its world through autochthonous manifestations of art, music, literature, and tradition. Colombia would then bet on a *mestizo* project of nationhood that would include the great majority of the Colombian people.

Music in Colombian Folklore: The Merging of Three Races

The music of Colombia, as with any other fundamental manifestation of its folklore, is an inherited tradition that brings together the surviving elements of the three ethnic groups at the foundation of its culture. It is, however, very difficult to distinguish and locate the pure musical manifestations of each distinct culture; and scholars offer differing theories of the origins of even the most important and typical rhythms.¹⁰

As mentioned before, the *mestizaje* process found its highest expression in the popular segments of Colombian society. As a result, traditional music flourished in the country side and continued to be cultivated by the peasants who for decades had been playing and singing the autochthonic rhythms that had been passed down to them from generation to generation via oral tradition. Their modest houses and the typical

⁹ Edwin Albeiro Arias and Paula A. Paniagua, *La Discoteca del siglo, vol 2.*, Discos Fuentes ed. (Medellín: Musik plus, 1999), 116.

¹⁰ Compare: Germán Patiño, “Raíces de africanía en el bambuco,” *Pacífico sur* 2004, no. 2:38-46. And, Davidson, Harry C., ed., *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia: Música, instrumentos y danzas*, Vol. 1. (Bogotá: Publicaciones del Banco de la República, 1970), 188-189.

celebrations of each village were the sight and sound of the *bambucos*, *pasillos*, *torbellinos*, *cumbias*, *currulaos*, and many other dances of anonymous origin. Although many composers had written known folk tunes that subsequently became part of the memory of Colombians (i.e., Carlos Vico *Hacia el calvario*, Jose A. Morales *Pescador, lucero y rio*, Pedro Morales Pino *Cuatro preguntas*), actual folk music refers to the rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic raw materials that peasants and composers had inherited through their oral traditions.¹¹

After liberation from Spain, Colombians became aware of folk music as a cultural phenomenon that reflected their need to find symbols of identity and national unification. The social revolution caused by their independence motivated the Romantic Movement that brought about liberal ideas and the discovery of Colombia's own popular culture.

The musical symbol of liberation from Spain and of local identity was the *bambuco*, which historically is the most representative dance of Colombia. It spread from the lower classes to the upper portions of society becoming a national icon. In the other hand during the colonial period, the Spanish crown, however, would only allow the *pasillo* as a local rhythm during the high society celebrations due to the fact that its origins are found in the Austrian waltz, which was in fashion in Europe in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The dominating colonial society of Colombia was looking for a dance that could be adjusted to the local context and also set them apart from the popular classes. The result was a notoriously faster waltz, which in Colombia and Ecuador was called *pasillo*, whereas in Venezuela it maintained its European nomenclature, waltz. The homogenization of Colombian society that took place during the independence spread the

¹¹ Ocampo López, *Música y folklore de Colombia*, 13-18.

pasillo to the lower classes becoming a *mestizo* dance like all the other folkloric Colombian dances. The first Colombian composers that emerged during the mid-nineteenth century also used folklore as inspiration; however, it was in the twentieth century that the Nationalistic movement began to take carrying both folk and academic music to their highest expression in Colombian history.

Acceptance of racial hybridization has been a slow process and still continues to elude many Colombian people. Ignorance of the cultural diversity upon which this society was formed and a common notion of cultural inferiority (implanted in the collective mind of Colombians since the colonial period, when the Spanish saw the other racial groups as inferior and rejected their mixing)¹² have fostered an attitude of prejudice against Africans, Indians, and *mestizos*, who paradoxically represent the majority of the Colombian population. Overcoming this cultural complex has not been an easy task, since only a small percentage of people in Colombia have access to the educational system; and even there, acknowledgement of cultural diversity and the contributions of each race to the development of Colombian culture have been slow in coming.

In addition to this general ignorance of its own cultural heritage, Colombia has also been susceptible, as a result of the revolutions of twentieth century in travel and technology, to an influx of foreign influences. During this last century, the United States became a Mecca culture for composers from Europe, Asia, and Latin America, who would flock there to study the new tendencies in academic music. The worldwide influence of the United States' pop culture has also made its way to Colombia, where it has transformed the tastes and interests of the younger generations. A clear example

¹² Octavio Marulanda, *Colombia: Práctica de la identidad cultural*, ed. Gladys González (Bogotá: Artestudio editores, 1984), III-IV.

would be the huge presence of commercially driven pop music, which has now largely overshadowed Colombian folk music.

In addition to the United States, many other countries from Latin America, and now even Spain, have also influenced the Colombian musical scene. Tangos from Argentina, rancheras from Mexico, salsa from Cuba, romantic ballads from Spain, and reggaeton from Puerto Rico have all become widely popular and have diluted the influence of Colombia's own native musical traditions. Given the disparity between all these external influences upon Colombian culture and our understanding of the nature of folklore from Thoms and other scholars as a native tradition of the people that persists over time, it seems that in the near future we may have to change the term Colombian folk music to a more specific designation, such as ancient "Colombian music."

The Surviving Elements of the Indigenous People in Colombian Musical Folklore

The first seeds of culture that took root in Colombia, as well as in the rest of the American territories, were those of the area's native indigenous peoples. Although the history of Colombia does not fully recognize the variety of native cultures that the Spaniards found upon their arrival in the New World, we can see from a more detailed look at their various languages and at the reports of the chroniclers of the period that there were different traditions going through a process of mixing and unification.¹³

¹³ Manuel Zapata Olivella, ed. *El hombre colombiano*, vol. 1 of *Enciclopedia del desarrollo colombiano: Colección los fundadores*, ed. Gonzalo Canal Ramirez (Bogotá: Antares, 1974), 29-35.

The main indigenous groups from Colombia—the Chibchas, Caribes, and Arawuaks—are classified according to their linguistic background. Of these the Chibchas are considered to have been the most culturally developed. Unfortunately, the ever-expanding culture of the Spanish conquerors all but erased the traditions of these native groups, and they cannot now be directly traced to the formation of Colombian culture.

Many historians and folklorists have sought to approximate the influence of these indigenous peoples on Colombian folklore and specifically Colombian music. The *bambuco*, for example, which is the most widely recognized folk dance in Colombia, is described by Piñeros Corpas and Nicolas Slonimsky as a paradoxical fusion of the melancholic feeling of the Indian (the misnomer of the time for the indigenous culture) with the joyful rhythms of Spain.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the descriptions these authors gave are not very specific concerning the origin or characteristics of the *bambuco* or of other Colombian folk rhythms. What we know so far regarding the music of the native peoples of Colombia can be found within the three following sources:

1. The records that priests of different Christian orders left to describe the cultural manifestations of these people.
2. The archeological discoveries of their instruments.
3. The investigation of the current indigenous cultures that have been preserved through time.

Because of their practice of passing down their traditions and customs orally, the native peoples of the Americas did not leave any written record of their music. Guillermo Uribe Holguín in his autobiography remarks on how ironic it would be to find music

¹⁴ Joaquín Piñeros Corpas, *Introducción al cancionero noble de Colombia* (Bogotá: Ediciones Universidad de los Andes, 1962), 40. The same description can be found in Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music of Latin America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co.), 167.

from the Chibchan people (the native Indians that occupied the territories of modern day Cundinamarca and Boyacá in Colombia) if they did not even leave any literary work.¹⁵ Fortunately, many of the chronicles that the missionaries left describe the music that the native peoples used to sing, dance, and play, even though from a musical standpoint the chronicles do not give any information about the type of scales, modes, or harmonic content employed in their music. An example of these descriptions is given by Eugenio Pereira Salas, who cites the chronicles of priest Ovalle, *Histórica relación del reino de Chile*, in which he tries to explain in European terms, the homophonic character of the native songs:

Their way of singing is to raise of their voices to a determinate pitch in plainchant form without any differentiation between treble, bass or altos, and when they finish their verses they continue playing flutes and some sort of trumpets in a manner which resembles the *pasacalle* played by the guitar in the music of Spain.¹⁶

The music of the native peoples of Colombia shows some of the same characteristics as that of other pre-Columbian cultures from the Americas. As a manifestation of culture, it was associated solely with their daily activities and with their mystical and religious practices; music was seen not as an art in and of itself but as a magical source of causality. Guillermo Abadía Morales presents a detailed classification of the indigenous music of Colombia divided by genres.¹⁷ Some of these are associated

¹⁵ Guillermo Uribe Holguín, “Conferencia. Concierto musical en el Colón,” *Vida de un músico colombiano* (Bogotá: Voluntad, 1941), 134.

¹⁶ Eugenio Pereira Salas. *Los orígenes del arte musical en Chile*. Santiago: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Chile, 1941. “El modo de cantar es todos a una levantando la voz a un tono a manera de canto llano sin ninguna diferencia de bajos, tiple o contraltos y en acabando la copla tocan luego sus flautas y algunas trompetas que es lo mismo que corresponde al pasacalle de la guitarra en la música de los españoles.”

¹⁷ Guillermo Abadía Morales, *El ABC del Folklore colombiano* ed. Alberto Ramirez Santos (Bogotá: editorial Panamericana, 1995), 175-181.

with ceremonies for the rite of passage into puberty, rituals of harvest and fertility, war, healing, and exorcism. He also discusses the rhythmic songs used to accompany their collective work in the fields. Javier Ocampo López quotes Abadía Morales's description of the way the native peoples used to dance as "rasgatierra," which refers to those who scratch the earth, and affirms that the *mestizo* peasants adapted this characteristic to the choreography of the Colombian folk airs.¹⁸

The study of the surviving musical instruments used by Colombia's native peoples is an archeological contribution to the history of pre-Columbian music in Colombia. Although they did not leave any written music, they actually left an important number of instruments made of ceramic and even gold. José Ignacio Perdomo Escobar, a renowned music historian, has made a significant contribution to the all-too-scarce Colombian musical library with his

*Historia de la música en Colombia.*¹⁹ This book contains valuable information about Colombia's indigenous music and uses the study and classification of the instruments that they left us as an important guide to reconstructing what their music may have sounded like.

The instruments of the main linguistic families, such as the Chibchas, Caribes, and Arawaks, range from the percussive (shakers of various materials and shapes were commonly used) to archaic wind instruments such as: ocarinas, trumpets (*fotuto*—which were played mostly during parties and battles), and an assortment of flutes—of which the most distinctive was the pan flute, also called *capador*. Many of these instruments still

¹⁸ Ocampo López, *Música y folklore de Colombia*, 21.

¹⁹ Perdomo Escobar, José Ignacio. *Historia de la música en Colombia*. 4th ed. Bogotá: ed. ABC, 1975.

survive in today's active Colombian folk traditions, mainly in the Atlantic and Pacific regions. Among these are the *llamador* (drum), the flute of *caña de millo*, and the *guacharaca*, a percussive instrument that produces a scratching sound due to the friction of a wooden tube with ridges against a fork. The native instruments can also be appreciated from a historical perspective in the important collection exhibited in the Museo del Oro (The Museum of Gold), as well as in the José Ignacio Perdomo collection in the Luis Angel Arango library, both in Bogotá.

Although the music of the indigenous peoples cannot be formally identified within the resultant *mestizo* music of Colombia, one can find a semblance of this music among the country people who live in the plains of the regions of Cundinamarca and Boyacá. The people here are typical country men and women, descendants of the Chibchas, who sing *guabinas*, *bambucos*, and *torbellinos* in their communal celebrations, as well as in their traditional markets or on their farms. The melancholy character of their music was inherited from their ancestors and is also reflected in the folk dances of the Colombian Andean region.

The Predominant Spanish Heritage in Colombian Musical Folklore

Without question the largest influence exerted on the development of Colombian folklore has been the Spanish heritage that dominated the Colombian territory in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their violent irruption into the lands of the indigenous people and the forced imposition of their culture upon those peoples almost caused the extinction of the local people and their traditions. However, looking past the

wars of conquest and the political fates of the various populations of Hispanic America, we can see in the music of the region another face of history that allowed the three main racial groups to find bridges of communication which would eventually translate to the transculturation of the dominant Spanish values and the final acculturation among the groups that opened the way to new cultural forms.

When the Spanish arrived in the Americas, they brought with them not only their weapons but also their dances, songs, and instruments as well. Their music was thus performed under various conditions and circumstances in the New World: in the colonized indigenous communities, where the Catholic monks taught plainchant and instruction in playing European instruments; after battle, the Spanish army would play and sing songs from their homeland; and also during social gatherings and celebrations in the newly rising cities. Thus, to be able to understand the roots of Colombian folklore, it is necessary to look into the incipient poetic forms of the Spanish tradition. The *Cántigas de Santa María* of Alfonso X “the Wise” (1221-1284), composed during his reign, comprises some of the earliest known representations of Spanish poetic literature, and it is one of the largest collections of monophonic songs of the Middle Ages. The *Cancionero de Palacio*, which appeared during the Renaissance era, is another compilation of poetic songs gathered together from the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth.

These two literary and musical sources feature the *copla*, a poetic unit typically of four lines (sometimes five or six) following a regular rhyme scheme that appears in *romances*, *seguidillas*, and *villancicos*.²⁰ Running parallel to the discovery of America

²⁰ Andrés Pardo Tovar, *La poesía popular colombiana y sus orígenes españoles* (Bogotá: ediciones Tercer mundo, 1966), 30.

was the invention of the printing press, which spread these forms of Spanish literature to the rest of Europe and brought them from Spain to Colombia, where they were assimilated, adapted, and newly generated by the Colombian people. Writer and professor of Hispanic studies Gisela Beutler gives an account of the shipments that were delivered from Seville to Latin America, information that she bases on contemporary sources of the Spanish conquest of the American territories. She also asserts that the first verses to appear in a literary source in Colombia were part of the most important poetical work from the colonial era in Colombia, a work written by Juan de Castellanos.²¹

The *copla* has been widely used in the literature and music of Hispanic America and therefore typifies the heart of the folklore of these countries. *Coplas* in Colombian music and literature survived in two ways: through adaptation of the old traditional *coplas* from Spain and through newly invented ones as well. The following is an example of the adaptation of a *copla* from a *seguidilla* that Andrés Pardo Tovar, a renowned Colombian musicologist, collected while in *Chocó* (a Colombian state of the Pacific region) and gathered in his book *La poesía colombiana y sus orígenes españoles*:²² “A girl in the palace / was selling meat: / Who has seen in the palace / A butcher shop?”

Coplas remain a living tradition today in Colombian folklore and continue to exist even in a very pure form. That the imaginary world of legendary heroes and

²¹ Gisela Beutler, *Estudios sobre el romancero español en Colombia: En su tradición escrita y oral desde la época de la conquista hasta la actualidad* trans. Gerda Westendorp (Bogotá: Imprenta patriótica del Instituto Caro y Cuervo, Yerbabuena, 1977), 3-5, 141.

²² “Una niña en palacio / Carne vendía: / Quien ha visto en palacio / Carnicería?” Andrés Pardo Tovar, *La poesía popular colombiana y sus orígenes españoles* (Bogotá: ediciones Tercer mundo, 1966), 34.

powerful kings still lives in the minds of people who inhabit the basin of the Atrato River is demonstrated not only by Andrés Pardo Tovar but also by the extraordinary work of musicologists Alejandro Tobón and Claudia Gómez, who recorded and compiled the romances that the first Spanish conquerors brought with them to the wild territories adjoining the Atrato River. The indigenous and African slaves, most of whom worked in the mines, adapted and transformed these literary and musical forms to fit their rustic ways of life.

Décimas are another poetic form, built upon a stanza of ten verses, which was inherited from Spain and continues to be widely used in Colombian folk music from the Caribbean and Pacific regions. There are even festivals of *decimeros*, in which country men carrying the legacy from their ancestors still improvise in this form.²³

In addition to the great influence of *coplas* upon the development of Colombian literature, they played an equally important role in the evolution of its music language—especially in the development of the various *mestizo* rhythms of the *torbellino*, *guabina*, *vallenato*, *bambuco*, *cumbia*, and other folkloric dances that carry the *coplas* in their lyrics. The dances that the Spanish brought to America first appeared in the upper social levels of colonial society and then passed on to the lower classes, where they were adapted and transformed through syncretic contact with the indigenous and African traditions. These Hispanic dances arrived in the colonies of the New World during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries—two clear examples being the *saltarello* (*alta danza*) and the *ballo*, which were some of the first dances that the Spanish brought to Hispanic America. The *ballo* became very popular in Europe during the sixteenth century

²³ Gerard Béhage, *Música folklórica de Latinoamérica*, vol. 22 of *Música folklórica y tradicional de los continentes occidentales*, ed. Bruno Nettl (Madrid: Alianza, 1996), 205.

and was performed by three dancers. Currently it survives in a number of the countries of Hispanic America. In Argentina this dance evolved into the *danza del palito*. In Colombia, in the state of Boyacá, this dance is known as *baile de tres* and it is danced in *torbellino* rhythm.²⁴

At the end of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth, when Spain was the predominant influence in the Western world, dances like the *zarabanda*, *folia*, *chacóna*, *pasacalle*, and *fandango* came to prominence in the most important urban centers of Europe, and also in the American colonies, where these dances became a source of entertainment for the upper classes. It is interesting to note that there is widespread agreement among historical documents that the *zarabanda*, *fandango*, and *chacóna* originated in Latin America during the last years of the sixteenth century.²⁵

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the desire of the Spanish colonizers to have a part of their home country in the wilderness of the New World continued to bring new European dances to the Americas. These included the *pavana* and the *gallarda*, as well as the French dances *minué*, *gavota*, *courante*, and *rigodón*, which became very popular in the main cities of the *Nueva Granada*.

At the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth, the ascendancy of the British empire affected manifestations of culture throughout Europe and the Americas. The industrial revolution sprang forth in England and then spread throughout Europe and the rest of the world, changing it forever. The industrial

²⁴ Ocampo López, *El folclor y los bailes típicos colombianos*, 80.

²⁵ Otto Mayer Serra, *Enciclopedia de la música* (Mexico D.F. Atlante, 1943), 2:380-381.

revolution unleashed important cultural consequences that were driven by British traditions, a clear example being the country-dance that became very famous in the rest of Europe also arriving in Hispanic America, where it defined the creation of different types of folkloric dances.

In Colombia, the new century also brought with it a marked division between the European dances and the dances that began to arise as result of the mixing of the three cultures. These two distinct types of dances were then known as either aristocratic dances or creole dances. Among the aristocratic dances, the country-dance became an emblematic symbol in the battles for independence in Colombia, during which the *contradanzas La Vencedora* and *La Libertadora* were played, respectively, in the defining *Batalla de Boyacá* (Battle of Boyacá) and in the entrance of Bolivar's army into Santa Fé.²⁶

The *contradanza* had several paths of evolution: in the Andean region it developed into the *danza*; and in the Pacific region it kept the name *contradanza*, but the contact African rhythms gave it a syncopated character. The *criollismo*, which refers to the creole character of the dances that initially came from Europe, is portrayed in several literary sources of the time. Javier Ocampo López quotes a passage from *Noticias secretas de América*, by Juan, Jorge, and Antonio Ulloa (1826), describing the folk dances of South America as a “corruption of the European dances with light, licentious rhythms.”²⁷ The majority of the most representative folk music from Colombia was developed from the creole dances that started to evolve when the first seeds of independence spread through the territory. The *bambuco* (which became a national air),

²⁶ Perdomo Escobar, *Historia de la música en Colombia*, 56-57.

²⁷ Ocampo López, *El folklor y los bailes típicos colombianos*, 86.

pasillo, guabina, torbellino, cumbia, jota chocoana, vallenato, etc., are representative of a country that founded its sense of nationhood on the basis of *mestizaje*.

Along with European dances, the Spanish also brought with them from the Old Continent an assortment of instruments, of which the guitar was one of the most influential in the creation of Colombian folklore. From early colonial times the guitar entered through the aristocratic sectors of the society and later spread to the popular classes, together with the *bandola* and *tiple*, to form the typical trio of the Andean region of Colombia. Sources associate the origin of the *bandola* with the Italian mandolin and the Spanish *bandurria*; and the *tiple*, which is renowned in Colombia as a local invention and the country's national instrument, is considered a direct descendant of the guitar.

Although the origin of the *tiple* is still debated by historians, who differ in their hypotheses, there are two clear, early examples of the instrument. In reference to a series of paintings from 1686 by the artist Gregorio Vásquez Ceballos in the cupola of San Ignacio church in Bogota, the musician Jorge Añez cites an affirmation by the painter Roberto Pizano that the angels depicted there are playing *tiples*. Contrary to this attribution, the historians and composers Jesús Bermúdez Silva and Andrés pardo Tovar assert that the *tiple* was invented en the nineteenth century as a derivation of the *chitarra battente*.²⁸

Plucked instruments like the guitar and *tiple* were used primarily for entertaining; however, much of the music that the Spanish introduced in the New World was related to their goals of conquest and colonization. Instruments such as shawns, violas, harps, and small organs were used by the church in the American territories to perform the mass and

²⁸ David Puerta Zuluaga, *Los Caminos del tiple: Teorías sobre el origen del tiple* (Bogotá: ediciones Damel, 1988), <http://www.banrepcultural.org/blaavirtual/musica/tiple/1.htm> (accessed 18, December).

evangelize the natives. Although sources are very scarce and the earliest evidence of a military band in Colombia is the previously mentioned band from Colombia's battles for liberation, writer and *triple* performer Daniel Puerto presumes that the Spanish also used music in their military conquest with instruments such as sackbuts, shawns, flutes, and drums.²⁹ The development of wind instruments and the formation of bands in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century facilitated the introduction of these musical ensembles in Colombia as well, where they became an important part of the folklore of every musical region of the country.

Spain left a permanent mark on every cultural manifestation of Colombia. From its language to its religion and its artistic manifestations, Colombia's musical folklore was profoundly shaped by this country, which Colombians often call the "mother nation"; and the dances, instruments, traditional dancing attire, and folk lyrics carry the Spanish heritage even to this day.

African Folklore in Colombia: A Spiritual Refuge from Slavery

Spanish colonial ambition overran the limits of the populations of the American territories, and the indigenous people began to be endangered as a result of their long and hard labors in the mines and the variety of new illnesses the conquerors brought with them, to which the natives had no immunity. The Spanish crown was unwilling to part with the enormous profits that its colonies provided, and the decision to import slaves from Africa was fundamental to keeping its chests full of gold.

²⁹ Ibid.

The first transport of African slaves arrived in Colombia in the year of 1600 at the port of Cartagena and brought an influx of people from the African occidental coast—specifically from the tribes of the Sudan, the Guinea coast, and, the Congo. Every year ships full of African people arrived in Cartagena awaiting distribution to the rest of the Colombian regions, mainly to the large mining centers of the territory. The brutal hardships of slavery gave rise to the creation of *palenques*, which were safe havens for escaped African slaves. These places were strategically located away from urban areas—thus out of the reach of the slave traders—and hidden in the vegetation deep in the jungle. The *palenqueros* (escaped slaves who inhabited the *palenques*) were the first in the history of Latin American independence to fight for their freedom. The Spanish called these people *Cimarrones*, a term meaning “beasts or domestic animals that flee to the mountains.”³⁰ The *palenques* were sanctuaries for thousands of Africans and their descendants and became places where they could express and preserve their own culture, along with a constant nostalgia for their lost motherland. There are towns such as San Basilio, which is close to Cartagena and which used to be a *palenque*, that even now preserve very old traditions from Africa, traditions that have been kept in an almost pure state and which continue to be passed along to new generations. One example would be their mourning songs, called *lumbalú*, which bears the clear influence of Congolese and Angolan music.³¹ These *lumbalú* consist of a soloist who sings and a choir that answers in a monophonic or polyphonic manner.

³⁰ Rosni Portaccio Fontalvo, *El folklor musical de los litorales colombianos* (Bogotá: Universidad Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, 1995), 37-38.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 73.

Despite the efforts of the Africans to defend their cultural identity, the Inquisition, waving its counter-reformist flag, succeeded in eliminating many of their traditions and religious manifestations, which were considered by the Catholic Church to be witchcraft or simply devil worship. The Inquisitorial court from Cartagena focused on the black population with the intent of stifling the religious expressions of the African slaves, many of whom would be tortured and sometimes killed as a punishment for practicing their native religious traditions and rituals. Only through conversion and acculturation were Africans able to escape this fate. Despite the decimation of their religious traditions, their music found its way into Colombian society and became the most influential manifestation of their African heritage.

The magical and religious character of the music of the African descendants was manifested in the richness of its rhythms, which became a major influence upon the music of all Latin American countries. The northern region of the Antioquian state and the Pacific and Atlantic regions of Colombia today have the largest African population, and it is here that dances like the *bullerengue*, *mapalé*, *currulao*, *porro*, *cumbia*, and *vallenato* still survive and even thrive—the last three of which enjoy popular recognition on both a national and international level.

The polyrhythmic nature of the music that Colombian folklore inherited from Africa is one of the most valuable characteristics of the music of the Caribbean and Pacific regions. This characteristic is reflected in the wide assortment of instruments that the African people brought across the ocean. Those of a percussive nature are the finest representations of this music, which is filled with such rhythmic vitality. One example within the family of the drums of the Atlantic coast is the *tambora*, which produces a low

pitch sound when struck. The exact origin of this instrument is not certain, and there are many who assert that it actually originated with the indigenous tribes. Another of these instruments is the *pechiche*, which is two meters long and is generally used to announce a death. The *llamador* (the one that calls), also known as *macho* (male), is a drum in charge of calling to the *alegre* (happy), or *hembra* (female), drum. There are also female and male drums in the Pacific region that go by the name of *cununo* (a term for this type of drum in the Pacific region) *hembra* or *menor* (minor), which has a high pitch, and the *cununo macho* or *mayor* (bigger), which sounds a low pitch. Other types of instruments are the shakers: *maracas*, *guasá*, *guache*, *cencerro*, and *claves*. The marimba is also a very important instrument that exists in both Atlantic and Pacific regions and is considered sacred in the Pacific, a tradition that harkens back to the times of the Mali kingdom in West Africa.

In considering the impact of the African heritage on Colombian folklore, one cannot go without speaking about Colombian music's intrinsic relationship with dance. It serves a social and a religious function in its expression of the various emotions and feelings experienced by an individual in relation to his or her community. Many of these rhythms and dances actually contain acculturated elements of both Hispanic and indigenous influence. A clear example is the *cumbia*, which, despite some differences regarding its origin, is believed to have come from the Guinea coast in the Batá region, where there was a dance called the *cumbé*. The acculturated elements in the *cumbia* are the instruments of indigenous origin, the *caña de millo* or *gaita*, combined with the African drums and the *guasá* shaker. The structure of the stanzas in the lyrics of the *cumbia* clearly shows its Hispanic influence in its use of the previously mentioned poetic

form called *décimas*. The *cumbia*'s dance costumes also carry the tradition of the first Spanish colonizers, who used to dress their slaves with elegant outfits in order to assist with the popular festivities and also to display the economic power of a specific family.³² Today both the *cumbia* and the *porro*, which became internationally recognized during the 1950's, are widely known and enjoyed in Colombia. Other rhythms, such as the *vallenato*, *currulao*, *mapalé*, and *merecumbé*, are well known in Colombian folklore. Of these, the *vallenato* became the most popular during the 1980's and 1990's, and it is now one of the most common styles of music listened to by people throughout the country as well as in other parts of the continent.³³

The joyful character of the Afro-Colombian people is reflected not only in their music but also in their celebrations and carnivals. Among these are the Festival of the *vallenato* legend, the parties of San Pacho, and, most importantly the Carnival of Barranquilla, which was recognized by UNESCO in 2003 as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Celebrations and commemorations are fundamental aspects of a culture, in their constant reaffirmation of the identity of its people. In Colombia these festivities share in the influence of old traditions from each of its main racial groups. Since the Spanish were the dominant culture, it was mainly through a natural process of syncretism that Colombia's native people's and its transplanted Africans were able to preserve their beliefs and ways and that its various cultures could be brought together under one national umbrella to shape the festive spirit of the Colombian people.

³² Edwin Albeiro Arias and Paula A. Paniagua, *La discoteca del siglo, vol 2.*, Discos Fuentes ed. (Medellín:Musik plus, 1999), 116.

³³ Ibid, 94-95.

Musical Regions of Colombia

Colombia is divided into six natural regions (the Andean region, the Caribbean region, the Pacific region, the Orinoco region, the Amazon region, and the Insular region), each of which features its own unique geographic characteristics and environments. These have greatly influenced the historical development of the country and bestowed upon each region its distinctive cultural qualities. Colombia's music, a fundamental part of its folklore, features a great diversity of rhythms, dances, and instruments that mirrors the country's natural diversity.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century distinct divisions between the cultural characteristics of Colombia's various regions began to appear, divisions which were directly related to the way its three main racial groups spread out within its territory. Independence from Spain not only accorded Colombians a national identity but also allowed for further distinctions among themselves through recognition of their regional backgrounds. This phenomenon was also reflected in the political sphere, where after 1810 the independent Colombia debated its centralistic and federalist ideas in the period of the so-called *patria boba* (foolish motherland).

The works to be analyzed in this paper represent three of the regions of Colombia: Andean, Caribbean and Pacific. The most important cities in Colombia are to be found within these regions, and it is for this reason that the trends of academic music and nationalism arose specifically in these areas.

Andean Region

This geographical region is crossed by the mountains, valleys, and savannahs of the three branches of the Andean chain and extends from Colombia's border with Ecuador to the Caribbean plains in the Guajira, Colombia's northernmost state. It comprises the departments of Antioquia, Caldas, Risaralda, Quindío, Valle, Cauca, Nariño, Huila, Tolima, Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Santander, and Norte de Santander. The range of climates and ecosystems in this region shaped by the three branches of the Andean mountains causes the existence of natural sub-regions, among them the old Caldas, the mountains of Antioquia, and the Valley of the Magdalena.

This natural diversity, with its contrasting landscapes, is also reflected in the people of the Andean region, where we find the largest concentration of the Colombian population as well as its greatest diversity of societies and ethnic groups, each holding to its own customs and traditions. There are various native tribes and also *mulatos* (a mix between those of Spanish and those of African descent) distributed throughout the Andean states, as well as Afro-Colombians in the Valle del Cauca, *mestizos* in the plains of Cundinamarca and Boyacá, and European descendents in Antioquia and Santander.

Identifying a specific type of music that is common to every culture in the Andean region would be impossible, especially today when foreign influences have so pervasively shaped the musical taste of the Colombian people. (Prominent examples are the ranchera from Mexico and the pop music of the United States.) However, before foreign influences began extending throughout the Andean region, the *bambuco* had spread to a number of states (Antioquia, Caldas, Risaralda, Huila, Cundinamarca,

Boyacá, Santander, Norte de Santander, Tolima, Cauca, Nariño, and Valle del Cauca) during the second half of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, and it has become the national air by excellence, a categorization conferred upon this rhythm by various Colombian writers. Writer Rafael Pombo penned two poems hailing the *bambuco* as one of the strongest symbols of a Colombian nation which had just gained its independence.³⁴ Unfortunately this vision ignored the diversity of Colombian music with its many origins and reinforced the centralistic tendencies of this region, which holds Colombia's main urban centers.

The character and lyrics of the music of the Andean region evoke the landscape which describe the towns and surrounding environment; they portray inner emotions such as love and nostalgia while also maintaining a strong religious sentiment based on the moral principles of Christianity and the family as a basic structure of the society. All of these elements are set in folk airs, in which the melodic aspect plays the fundamental role while the rhythmic and harmonic are played according to defined patterns. The most important folk dances are *bambuco*, *torbellino*, *pasillo*, *guabina*, *bunde*, *pasodoble*, *danza*, and *caña*. These are mainly performed by plucked stringed instruments, among which we find the previously mentioned typical Colombian trio of the *tiple*, *bandola*, and guitar. In addition to the *tiple* and the *requinto* (a smaller and a higher-pitched guitar, respectively), the *guabina* and *torbellino* rhythms use an assortment of percussive instruments made from seeds, wood, and even animal bones (the *esterilla*, *carraca*, *gurre*, *zambumbia*, and *quiribillo*). There are also wind instruments, such as the *ocarina*, and various types of flutes, such as *pitos*, *quenas*, and *dulzainas*.

³⁴ Miguel Antonio Cruz González, "Folclore, música y nación: El papel del bambuco en la construcción de lo colombiano", *Revista Nómadas*, no. 17 (2002): 227.

Caribbean Region

The Colombian Caribbean region, also known as the Atlantic region, borders the Caribbean Sea from the Gulf of Urabá to the Guajira peninsula. It comprises the departments of Guajira, Bolivar, Sucre, Córdoba, Atlántico, Magdalena, and Cesar. Colombians call this region “la costa” (“the coast”), because it is the most popular tourist destination in the country. Like the Andean region, the Caribbean is populated by a combination of Colombia’s three main ethnic groups. From the beginning of the seventeenth century the slave trade in Cartagena (the current capital of Bolivar) introduced a large number of African people to the region and created a population composed mostly of *mulatos* (a mixture of those of African descent and those of Spanish descent) and *zambos* (a mixture of Africans and indigenous natives). There are also native tribes such as the Koguis, Guajiros, and Aruacos who have isolated themselves from society in order to preserve their cultures and therefore present unique characteristics, different from the vast majority of mixed people.

The culture of this region reflects the vitality and joyful character of the tribes of transplanted slaves from Africa, and this character is also imprinted on the folk music of this coastal territory. The most representative rhythms of this region are the *cumbia*, *vallenato*, *merengue*, *mapalé*, *bullerengue*, *porro* (with its two varieties, *puya* and *gaita*), and labor songs like the *zafras* and *cantos de vaquería*, which were used in specific situations such as dealing with cattle or cultivating the land. These rhythms made vast use of idiophonic and membranophonic instruments such as the *tambora*, *llamador*, *pechiche*, *alegre*, *caja vallenata*, *maracas*, *guacharaca*, and *claves*, all of which are of African

heritage. Aerophonic instruments of aboriginal origin typically perform the melodic material, among which the male and female *gaitas* are the most representative because of their use in the *cumbia*. The accordion, which was brought to the New World by the Spanish, also played a fundamental role in what is currently the most popular folkloric air from Colombia: the *vallenato*.

Driven by the intense rhythmic character of the Caribbean region's music, the lyrics relate stories and events of daily life with evocative feeling, but not with the same degree of detailed description as the airs of the Andean region.

Pacific Region

The Pacific region is delineated by the western branch of the Andean Chain to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west, and it stretches from the Panamanian border in the north to the Ecuadoran border in the south. The region covers the entire department of Chocó and the coastal area of the departments of Valle, Cauca, and Nariño. Whereas in the Caribbean region we find the area of least precipitation in Colombia (Santa Marta city), in the Pacific region we find the country's most humid environments located in the jungles of Chocó, where the amount of rainfall is among the highest in the world. This region still contains untouched forests and wild jungles where groups of African descendants (who form the majority), *mulatos*, and a small percentage of native Indians live isolated from the big cities. The majority of Afro-Colombians live in this region, where they were brought during colonial times to work in the gold and platinum mines of Chocó, a department very rich in natural resources but paradoxically composed of one of

the poorest populations in Colombia. The mixing process has not developed here as it has in other Colombian regions; thus its folklore has been preserved as if in a time capsule. One clear example would be the previously mentioned tradition of *decimeros* and the *romances* from the Atrato River. The music of this region undoubtedly carries the African heritage in its *a capella* religious songs and in the rapturous character of the folk rhythms. The most representative folk airs are the *currulao*, *patacoré*, *berejú*, *aguajabo*, and *makerule*, as well as the acculturated *polka*, *mazurka*, *country-dance*, and *jota chocoana*. The *a capella* songs include the *romances*, *pregones*, *alabaos*, and *arrullos*.

The most characteristic instruments from this region can be found in the ensemble of the *currulao*, which consists of the *marimba de chonta* and the female and male drums called *cununos*, *tambora*, and *guasá*. European military band instruments such as the clarinet, snare drum, and euphonium are also used in performing the rhythms of the Pacific region, primarily in festivities and popular celebrations.

CHAPTER 3
NATIONALISM: A NEW BORN NATION SEARCHES FOR A
VOICE OF ITS OWN

Musical Context Before the Independence

“‘America’ as we know it was an *invention* forged in the process of European colonial history and the consolidation and expansion of the Western world view and institutions.”¹ With this brief statement Walter Mignolo offers an important insight into the development of the South American continent during the colonial period and how it was that this period of domination set the newborn nations on a path toward their eventual independence from European power. Concepts such as imposition, acculturation, transformation, imitation, slavery, and evangelization are directly associated with Spain’s project of colonization in Hispanic America. Here dominant and dominated peoples coexisted and eventually commingled so that the new countries that emerged on the continent came to embody the duality of the autochthonous and the foreign, originality and imitation, all coming together as one cultural entity.

The search for the origins of Colombia’s folk music and the diverse elements that gave birth to it were analyzed in the previous chapter. In this chapter we will see how the vaguely named “classical music”, “academic music”, “erudite music,” etc. (Andrés

¹ Walter D. Mignolo, “The ‘Americas’ on the Colonial Horizon of Modernity,” *The Idea of Latin-America* (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 2.

Posada's interesting analysis² of the various denominations given to this type of music invites reflection) which was passed on to Colombia from the European tradition delineates a parallel story of the paradox of struggling for acceptance in the Western context while striving to forge an individualized independent identity.

Music in Latin American history, and specifically Colombian history, developed along two different lines: sacred and secular. Sacred music came by way of the huge project of evangelization and the political, economic, and cultural regulations from Spain which brought about a considerable uniformity among the societies that occupied the vast territories from the northern regions of Nueva España to the Tierra del Fuego. The colonial times represented the golden age of religious music in the New World, where Spanish authorities built cathedrals, each of which housed its own musical archive, in the principal cities of every province. Innumerable quantities of music were brought from Spain to the cathedral archives, chant schools, and seminars throughout Hispanic America. Colombia has an archive in its First Cathedral of Bogotá—incidentally, the oldest in Latin America—which is presumed to have been founded by Jose Ignacio Perdomo Escobar. Despite the political revolutions of 1948 and the fires of those violent times, the cathedral still preserves old manuscripts such as the psalm parchments of Gutierre Fernández Hidalgo and is today a patrimony of Colombian history.³

Colombia's secular music developed along two branches of its own: folk music and academic music. Although both musical trends developed very differently and in

² Andrés Posada, "La proyección de la nueva música en América Latina: Proyección y periferia," *Artes: La Revista* 5 no. 9 (2005), 15-17.

³ José Ignacio Perdomo Escobar, *El archivo musical de la catedral de Bogotá* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo), 1976.

different spheres of Colombian society, the nationalistic musical current that took root toward the end of the nineteenth century brought the two streams together as Colombian composers began to search for their folkloric foundations. This movement has caused controversy among composers and musical scholars in both Colombia and the wider Latin America. However, its relationship to some of the defining historical events of these countries has made it the most important movement in Colombian musical history.

During the time of independence from Spain, Colombian composers felt the need to assert their own independence by rejecting the past and forging a new path which largely dismissed the music that had been cultivated in the church and monasteries. The role of the composers did not change, however, since they were conceived essentially as artisans that satisfied a specific purpose of the dominant class.⁴ During the struggle for independence, it was the call of the military that musicians now had to answer.

Colombian musicologist Ellie Anne Duque gives an account of the historical facts and personalities of the Colombian musical scene at that time: Juan Antonio Velasco (?-1859), Nicolás Quevedo de Radachell (1803-1874) and José Maria Cancino (1828-1878) were all musicians who fought in the battles of independence while attempting at the same time to establish a musical environment through the founding of music schools, chamber groups, and conducting bands.⁵ Two other figures in the musical scene who are worthy of mention are Englishmen Henry Price and his son Jorge Price, who were fundamental in the dissemination of music in Santa Fé de Bogotá. The father founded the

⁴ Alberto Calzavara, "El músico latinoamericano actual: ¿Artista o tecnócrata?," *Boletín de música* no.3 (Enero-Marzo 1988):16-17.

⁵ Ellie Anne Duque, *La cultura musical en Colombia: Siglos XIX y XX*, vol. 6 of *Gran enciclopedia de Colombia temática: Arte*, (Bogotá: Círculo de lectores, 1993), 217-218.

Sociedad Filarmónica and the son the Academia Nacional de Musica, which was to become the current conservatory of the National University in Bogotá.

During this early period after independence, folkloric elements were not yet recognized as suitable material for a nationalistic type of art; the dominant creole class considered the mixed rhythms of Colombian folk music to be manifestations of a lower form of music. They would listen to, play, and arrange European dances from France and England and especially favored the country-dance of English origin. It is the characteristic rhythm of the country-dance that was used in the two famous pieces—“La Vencedora” and “La Libertadora,” both anonymous— played by the military band conducted by Cancino after the decisive battle of Boyacá.

Romanticism: The Ideal of Nationalism

After achieving independence, Colombian leaders looked to the precepts of the Romantic movement for an ideological foundation on which to build their new nation. Romanticism’s high valuation of the uniqueness of the individual was extended also to the particularities of a nation as reflected in its own culture. However, along with this emphasis on distinctiveness, it was also necessary for there to be a common impulse toward integration, especially in a country as diverse as Colombia. Thus was its nationalist movement born. Miguel Antonio Cruz quotes the famous anthropologist Ernest Gellner, who asserts that “nationalism is a political principle that must accomplish congruence between the national unit and the politics of a country which consequently invents its own culture, making it homogeneous and transforming it in such a radical way

that it creates tradition and permanence in the memory.”⁶ The political and social changes that resulted from Colombia’s independence converged and created a conglomerate of people, who exchanged their traditions and achieved a *modus vivendi*, transforming the vertical (hierarchical) society of colonial times into a more horizontally egalitarian one. The result was a large scale mixing which occurred at every level of Colombian society, where common symbols of identity were necessary in order to define and build a nation.

In both Europe and South America, Romanticism set the path for the general nationalistic trend that also brought forth nationalistic music. Just as Europe found in nationalism a response to the Germanic cultural dominance in music, Hispanic America discovered in its own nationalistic impulse a symbol of independence from Spain as well as an impetus toward the search for identity. Colombia and the other Latin American countries did not already have their own traditions of Western Academic music; therefore the first seeds of nationalism lay in the recognition and establishment of vernacular music as a symbol of identity. This first period of the second half of the nineteenth century is identified by musicologists as *costumbrismo*⁷ (which pertains to custom or tradition). During this period composers were encouraged to grasp the essence of a folkloric rhythm in order to be able to write it on paper, rather than learn how to compose a sonata or symphony, forms which would come into use again only after the turn of the twentieth century.

The most important Colombian composers from this period were: José Joaquín Guarín (1825-1854), whose lack of a musical education was compensated for by his

⁶ Ernst Gellner, *Naciones y nacionalismo* (Madrid: Fondo de cultura económica 1978), 79 quoted in Miguel Antonio Cruz, “Folclore música y nación: El papel del bambuco en la construcción de lo colombiano,” revista *Nómadas* no. 17 (2002): 221.

⁷ Duque, *Cultura musical en Colombia*, 21.

talent; Manuel María Párraga (1826-1895), who made the first efforts to include popular melodies and rhythms in cultivated music; and Julio Quevedo Arvelo (1829-1896), who was the son of Nicolás Quevedo de Rachadell, a musician and one of Simon Bolivar's commanders. Even though there was an attempt, after independence, to wipe out every sign of the Spanish domination, the Quevedo family was able to preserve the legacy of the compositional techniques taught by the priests from the colonial period. Julio Quevedo was thus the first composer in Colombia with knowledge of counterpoint, harmony, and orchestration, which he acquired not only from the musical teachings of the colony but also from Quevedo's own autodidactic spirit. These composers paved the road of musical creation in Colombia, composing short pieces, character music for piano, or songs that expressed the romantic ideal of individuality, most of this music inspired by vernacular rhythms. Romanticism in Colombia also conferred upon composers a strong religious sensibility and an interest in themes related to death. A fine example is Quevedo's *Misa negra* (black mass).

Another important figure was José Maria Ponce de León (1846-1882), a close friend of Julio Quevedo, who is known historically as the first Colombian composer to pursue studies abroad. The state of isolation and ignorance that characterized the rudimentary musical environment of Colombia during the second half of the nineteenth century forced Ponce de León to travel to France in order to acquire a proper musical education at the Paris Conservatory, where he had the opportunity to study under Charles Gounod. He composed the first two Colombian operas, *Ester* and *Florinda*, which have

to this day been the only operas that belong to a Colombian composer to be performed and staged in the country.⁸

Although today the music of Quevedo and Ponce de León is best regarded for its historical significance rather than for its intrinsic musical value, the contributions of these composers to the development of the musical history of Colombia is as fundamental as a sketch of one of Beethoven's symphonies to the history of European "Classical" music. These first musical seeds were planted by Quevedo in his own students, among them Santos Cifuentes, who was regarded by Luís Antonio Escobar as the first professional musician in Colombia because of his thorough knowledge and the excellence of his works.⁹

The most renowned of Quevedo's students is one of the fundamental figures in the development of music in Colombia: Pedro Morales Pino (1863-1926), a man whom Escobar also names in his article and labels the pioneer of the nationalistic movement.¹⁰ Pino was able to enhance folkloric music through his knowledge of theory and composition techniques, which allowed him to take popular music and popular instruments from the villages into the concert halls. He undertook to master the folkloric rhythms, which he then organized and classified and set basic standards for notation. Although most of his compositions are of a popular character and written for typical folkloric instruments, he also composed a fantasia based on Colombian folk airs for orchestra: *Fantasia sobre temas colombianos*. Morales Pino used airs only from the

⁸ Luis Carlos Rodríguez, "José María Ponce de León: Compositor colombiano", josemariaponcedeleon.tripod.com. <http://josemariaponcedeleon.tripod.com/>. (accessed March 6, 2011).

⁹ Luís Antonio Escobar "La música en el siglo xx," in *Historia de Colombia*, 1989, 1887.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 1887.

Andean region of Colombia, which were the only ones accepted by the dominant creole class at that time. When rhythms like the *bambuco* and *torbellino* were taken to the urban areas, and especially into receptions and concert halls, Morales strived to erase the African and indigenous influences in this folk music; he began using only instruments of Spanish descent and leaving behind the drums and flutes used in the region's traditional music. Although Morales Pino contributed to the development of Colombian folk music and set a high standard with the level of interpretation accomplished by him and his ensembles, his music still represented the ideals of the dominant portion of the society of the nineteenth century and ignored much of the cultural diversity of Colombia.

First Half of the Twentieth Century: Reflections On Nationalism

Composers from the nineteenth century must be given the credit for their dedication in striving to overcome the lethargic state that music fell into after the wars of independence. They were planting seeds in a virgin land without enough knowledge of how to cultivate them. Nevertheless, they endeavored with great perseverance to start a musical tradition, not only through their compositions but also through their performances and their pedagogical work in the music education centers they founded.

The previously mentioned *costumbrismo* that characterized the Romantic movement in Colombia was an initial expression of the nationalistic movement, and it was to become the most important compositional resource available to composers of the first half of the twentieth century. Most of the nineteenth-century composers either used direct quotations from folk tunes in their compositions or simply adapted these melodies

directly for European instruments in order to accommodate them to the tastes of the dominant class. Apart from this practice, the gap between popular and academic music became progressively larger, and both trends were in turn obligated to take different roads.

The advent of the twentieth century and the great influence of Morales Pino brought with it a wave of composers who saw in Colombian folklore the answer to their search for identity. Some of the most important were Andrés Martínez Montoya (1869-1933), with his renowned *Rapsodia colombiana*; Emilio Murillo (1880-1942), whose *pasillos* required a high level of technical proficiency in order to be performed; and Luis A. Calvo (1882-1945), a student of Morales Pino who wrote character pieces for piano and thus came to be known as the “Colombian Chopin.”¹¹

There are two composers in particular, however, who can be said to have revolutionized the history of music in Colombia: Guillermo Uribe Holguín (1880-1971) and Antonio María Valencia (1902-1952). Although they became rivals during the course of their careers, the similarities in their professional lives are striking, and together they left a permanent legacy in the musical life of this country. They both studied at the Schola Cantorum in Paris under the tutelage of Vincent d’Indy. The deep influence of their Parisian years on their compositional styles can be seen in their use of modal harmonies and added sevenths and ninths, as well as in their use of Impressionism as an intermediary language through which to approach their native folklore. Valencia and Holguín were each also founders of important musical education institutions in their country; the conservatory of the National University in Bogotá and the Antonio María

¹¹ Joaquín Piñeros Corpas, *Introducción al cancionero noble de Colombia* (Bogotá: Edición especial de la Universidad de los Andes, 1962), 138.

Valencia conservatory in Cali are today two of the most prominent centers of musical instruction in Colombia.¹² The substantial education informing the work of these two composers carried the nationalistic movement to a new level that not only made more rational use of folkloric elements but also employed the latest compositional techniques.

The naive exploration of Colombian folklore undertaken by the *costumbristas* composers from the nineteenth century corresponded to the patriotic feeling that swept the country after its independence from Spain. This exploratory effort, however, still lacked the ideological and material foundations to create a nationalistic identity. Composers of the early twentieth century then faced the task of attempting to reconcile the duality of nationalism and universalism, a dilemma suffered by every writer, politician, and artist of those unstable times. This contradiction was based on a project of modernization which admired the European models but found it difficult to adapt them to a highly hierarchical Colombia that was also plagued by civil wars. Uribe Holguín embodied this dilemma in his compositions and his writings, and especially in his autobiography, *Vida de un músico colombiano*. Throughout his life he went up against music critics who demanded that composers needed to exalt Colombian values through the incorporation of folkloric elements in their works in order to find an original and uniquely Colombian musical language.

However, this search for originality in Colombia did not have an “original origin,” since the search itself was copied from the nationalistic ideas of Europe, which during the first half of the twentieth century began taking on a purist bent that would eventually give rise to the fascist movements of the time. Nationalistic fervor in Colombia was

¹² Frédéric Martínez, “En los orígenes del nacionalismo colombiano: Europeísmo e ideología nacional en Samper, Núñez y Holguín,” *Boletín cultural y bibliográfico* 32, no. 39 (1996): 45.

introduced and encouraged by its leaders and those of the elite who had the opportunity to see the European models. The presidencies of Rafael Nuñez (1825-1894) and Carlos Holguín (1832-1894) (relative of Guillermo Uribe Holguín) actually implemented an idea of nationalism defined and controlled by the dominant portion of society and anxiously encouraged artists, writers, and all Colombians to search for an authentic idea of nationality, a mandate which was to some extent narrow-minded, since it limited composers to textual quotations of folkloric rhythms and often ignored the advances of music in the rest of the Western world.

Uribe Holguín stated in his writings and conferences, and by the example of his own music, that “musical nationalism in Colombia was an impossibility, since the folkloric music of this country descends from Spain”¹³; he furthermore wrote in a letter to his friend, Spanish composer Felipe Pedrell, that “The treasure of the folkloric music of the mother land also belongs to the Colombians, as well as does the language.”¹⁴ Uribe’s first statement is easily refutable and evidences a certain prejudice or lack of knowledge towards the folk music of African descent and towards the music of Colombia’s native peoples, which Uribe refers to as a mere production of noise.¹⁵ The drive during this particular period to seek authenticity and originality motivated Holguín to compose several works (mentioned in his biography in the following chapter) that explore the sounds of the native Indians.

¹³ Guillermo Uribe Holguín, “Como piensan los artistas colombianos contra el nacionalismo musical,” *Revista de las Indias* 30 no. 96 (1947): 353.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 354.

Other important composers, such as José Roza Contreras (1894-1976), Adolfo Mejía Navarro (1905-1973), and Santiago Velasco Llanos (1915-1996), brought the nationalistic ethos to their works by employing a spontaneous and simple compositional style that contrasted with the academic and precise writing of Uribe Holguín. Mejía, a composer of multifaceted abilities, explored the folkloric rhythms of the Andean and Caribbean regions of Colombia and was the first composer of academic Colombian music to use influences from the latter region. Unlike Uribe Holguín, who thoroughly rationalized his approach to creating a Colombian nationalistic music, Mejía used folkloric elements in his academic compositions as a reflection of what he was: a man who deeply belonged to and culture and allowed it to inspire his art.

Second half of the Twentieth Century: The Pursuit for Identity

The second half of the twentieth century was for composers a breath of fresh air. Colombian society's easier access to mass media enabled people to know more about the exterior world and to overcome the protectionist attitude and the extremist nationalism that the dominant classes had imparted to the rest of the population. Composers no longer found themselves at a crossroads between the demand for a nationalistic language and the freedom to pursue their own individual style. New compositional techniques started to call the attention of Colombian composers who strived to catch up to the development of Western music. Already accustomed to the influences of Impressionism in the music of Uribe Hoguín, Valencia, and Mejía, other composers dared to venture even further. Roberto Pineda Duque (1910-1977) wrote Colombia's first dodecaphonic work, his *Suite*

dodecafónica para violín y piano; Fabio Gonzalez Zuleta (1920), another innovator, wrote the first electroacoustic piece, a work entitled *Ensayo electrónico*; and Luís Antonio Escobar (1925-1993) gave nationalism another form of expression in his use of a neoclassic style of composition.

Critics and composers, who now had the opportunity to discover the state of music in Europe and the United States, better understood the initial protests of Holguín against nationalism. The debate between nationalism and universalism took its true form now that Colombian composers had to struggle for an identity of their own while still striving to have their works recognized on an international, universal level. They realized that identity had a deeper meaning than simply the use of folkloric material in their compositions, and they began to pursue more varied and personal approaches to style in their music. Regarding this issue, Cuban musicologist Alejo Carpentier stated, “it cannot be accepted as dogma that the Latin American composer has to be restricted inside a nationalistic orbit.”¹⁶

Andrés Posada (1954), who is currently an active musical figure in Colombia, proposes different ways to approach nationalism as a composer. He asserts that it is pertinent for a musician to inquire into extramusical themes, such as those concerning the ethical aspects of life: the nation’s politics, religion, or social issues with which a composer feels invested and identified. For Posada, an artist is not indebted to a single nation or limited to an arbitrary ethnological or political grouping. His cosmopolitan vision of nationalism takes into account the current globalization phenomenon and

¹⁶ Alejo Carpentier, “América Latina en la confluencia de coordenadas históricas y su repercusión en la música: La hora actual de la música en América Latina,” comp. Isabel Aretz (México: Siglo xxi eds., 1977), 18.

encourages the awareness of Latin America, and specifically of Colombia, as an amalgamation of many cultural elements which come together define an individual or a group of people. This idea of the aggregated value of the combination of cultures is one that people have learned to appreciate with less prejudice.¹⁷

Nationalism, not only in music but also in many aspects of our everyday lives, is a manifestation of who we are; and since people and cultures are in a process of constant change, so too is our understanding and perspective of nationalism. Posada postulates that nationalism in music can also have external connotations that relate to the contemporary concerns of Colombian society and proposes also that foreign influences, rather than simply overshadowing local manifestations, can actually enrich the palette of possibilities that composers use in creating their music. Thus the duality that tormented Colombian composers throughout the twentieth century has finally been dissolved, and this young nation has been enabled to find a point of maturity that might allow its composers and artists also to find their point of balance.

¹⁷ Andrés Posada, “La proyección de la nueva música en América Latina: globalización y periferia.” *Artes: La revista* 5, no.9 (2005): 20-21.

CHAPTER 4
FOUR COLOMBIAN COMPOSERS: FOUR APPROACHES
TO NATIONALISM

Guillermo Uribe Holguín

The legacy of Guillermo Uribe Holguín (Bogotá, March 17, 1880 - Bogotá, June 26, 1971) in the musical context of Colombia can be felt not only in his vast production of music but also in his great pedagogical efforts that materialized in the creation of the National Conservatory of Music, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the National Band of Colombia, which was regrettably dissolved in 2003 due to lack of government support. Even though new generations of Colombian musicians may ignore his important contributions to the cultural and artistic development of the country, Uribe's achievements remain in the collective memory of Colombian musicians and its people in general, who today regularly take the opportunity to enjoy a concert by any of the aforementioned institutions.

The life of Guillermo Uribe Holguín is deeply intertwined with the musical development of the country in the first half of the twentieth century; and in the preface of his autobiography he described how his life and the historical circumstances that formed and defined the state of music in Colombia were in constant relation.¹ Uribe was born to a high-class family in Bogotá in 1880. At the age of eleven he entered the Academy of Music, which had been founded by Jorge Price in 1882. There he began studying violin

¹ Guillermo Uribe Holguín, *Vida de un músico colombiano* (Bogotá: ed. Voluntad, 1941), 5.

with Ricardo Figueroa and theory with Santos Cifuentes. It is a testament to his prodigious talent and dedication that he became a violin teacher in the Academy when he was just fifteen years old. The first steps he took as a composer were to improvise *pasillos* and *bambucos* on the piano whenever social or family reunions were held.

From a very early age, Uribe realized that Bogotá had a very poor musical environment. At the beginning of the twentieth century the musical life of the capital was dominated by *zarzuelas* (a Spanish traditional form of comedy) and operas, which Uribe describes as being performed by “mediocre Italian companies that used to frequent the city.”² He was also very critical of the level of the Academy of Music and constantly struggled to become a better musician. Once, while receiving private violin lessons with Narciso Garay (a Panamanian musician, politician, and humanist who had also studied music in Bogotá and with whom Holguín studied from a very young age), Uribe impressed everybody in the school with a performance of the Kreutzer etude no. 2 playing it *sautillé*—a standard bow stroke which should be within the means of any moderately advanced violin student. He blamed the low level of the musical education in Colombia on the poor preparation of the music teachers who were mainly amateurs. The effort to change this condition was one of the biggest tasks that Uribe would undertake throughout the rest of his life.

After a failed experience with certain business ventures, Uribe Holguín, driven by a great desire to increase his musical knowledge, decided to travel to the United States. In 1903 he arrived in New York, where he had the opportunity to experience for the first time a symphony orchestra in concert. He was particularly affected by a Carnegie Hall

² Ibid., 37.

performance by the Boston Symphony of symphonic poems of Richard Strauss conducted by the composer himself. He also witnessed a Kneisel Quartet performance and a cycle of operas by Wagner, which left a profound impact on him.

Even though Holguín had originally planned to live permanently in the United States, the illness of his father prompted him to return to Colombia in 1905. Having experienced world-class artists during his time in the United States, he was shocked upon his return to Colombia to realize how poor the state of music was in Bogotá. Driven by a great desire to change this state of affairs, Uribe immediately re-opened the Academy of Music, which had been closed due to the war of a thousand days (*guerra de los mil días*), and was determined as well to create a symphony orchestra in Colombia. Uribe's sense of vision, and his passion and determination to realize it, overcame the almost insurmountable difficulties of starting an orchestra. There were few musicians or instruments, and many of the music scores were incomplete. Yet it is from this difficult situation that the Symphony Orchestra of Colombia would emerge.³

The first concert of this newborn orchestra took place in the Teatro Colón of Bogotá on July 6, 1905. After this event Uribe gained recognition within political circles and was awarded a scholarship by the Colombian government to study violin and composition in France at the famous Schola Cantorum. His composition teacher there was Vincent d'Indy, who was a major proponent of tonality and the classic forms in his teaching. Uribe Holguín's style bears the clear influence of d'Indy, who himself had studied with César Franck. This influence is evident in Uribe's preference for the "cyclic

³ Elianne Duque names the ensembles that preceded this orchestra: In 1848 *La Sociedad Filarmónica* founded by Henry Price, which lasted for ten years. Then *La Unión Musical* in 1858 and *La Sociedad Filarmónica Santa Cecilia* in 1868. Elianne Duque, *Uribe Holguín y sus 300 Trozos en el sentimiento popular* (Bogotá: Patronato de Artes y Ciencias, 1980), 13.

form” in his compositions and for modulatory sequences to distant keys. We see this, for example, in his Sonata for Violin and Piano, op. 7.

Uribe was also very much influenced by Debussy and the Impressionist movement. Despite the rivalry between the Schola Cantorum, where Uribe was studying, and the Paris Conservatory, where Debussy taught, Uribe felt great admiration for the famous composer; and it was one of his great regrets that, because of the endless contention between the two schools, he was prevented from ever meeting Debussy in person.

Since Colombia had only recently become independent from the Spanish crown (July 20, 1810), nationalistic fervor was still at an all-time high; and this spirit also permeates many of Uribe’s works. His first work to highlight these elements was the Symphony No.2, Op. 15 called *Sinfonía del terruño* (1924). Previously, Uribe had rejected the idea of using any form of Colombian folk element in his music since he considered them lacking melodic interest and saw their use of harmony as poor and primitive, therefore Colombian music for him did not have enough value to be part of an academic work.⁴

Uribe’s poor opinion of the folk music of Colombia was highly criticized by his contemporaries and the nationalistic movement during this time became so strong in Latin America that besides his *Sinfonía del terruño* he was overwhelmed by the popular sentiment and began incorporating folk elements in his more of his music. His only opera, *Furatena*, and three of his symphonic poems, *Bochica*, *Los Conquistadores*, and *Ceremonia indígena*, were based on indigenous South American mythology; he strived to

⁴ Guillermo Uribe Holguín, “Como piensan los artistas colombianos contra el nacionalismo musical,” *Revista de las Indias* 30, no. 96 (1947), 352.

find a primitive sound that allowed himself to put aside the academy and experiment with harmonies that simulated the native Indians music as he imagined it could had been. He also explored the dances of the Andean region as the only expression of the Colombian folklore he would approached in his musical career; his most important works were the aforementioned *Sinfonía del terruño*, *Tres ballets criollos*, and the *300 Trozos en el sentimiento popular*.

During his stay in Paris, Uribe's compositions were well accepted by d'Indy and the Colombian composer's classmates, among them Satie and Turina. His sonata no.1 Op. 7 for Violin and Piano was performed on several occasions: twice in the Schola Cantorum, once in the house of the millionaire Charles Stern, and then at the Societé Nationale de Musique. Almost immediately after those initial performances, the sonata was also performed in Brussels, and soon after that, the Alphonse Leduc Company published the work.

Paris not only offered Holguín the opportunity of studying in the Schola Cantorum; it was here also that he met his future wife, Lucía Gutierrez, a pianist of Colombian parents who had been born in France. She became the inspiration of his life even after her early death in 1925, after which he composed his Requiem and conducted it in a performance in her memory.

After finishing his studies in Paris, Uribe decided to move back to Colombia to continue working toward his dream of transforming the musical environment there. Felipe Pedrell, his personal friend and a precursor of the nationalist movement in Spain, was greatly influential in Uribe's decision to return to his home country. Once in Bogotá, Holguín was assigned directorship of the Academy of Music, which—in accordance with

a decision by the composer and following a resolution of the secretary of education—was renamed the Conservatory of Music in 1910. As director of the conservatory, Uribe brought about many reforms that would change the state of music education as a whole in the country. He established strict admissions exams, educated the military bands' musicians, formed various choirs within the institution, and created a magazine of the Conservatory that circulated for only a year before it was cancelled due to lack of financial support.

In 1911 the orchestra was restructured and conducted once again by Uribe. It became the essential instrument for educating the musical taste of the people of Bogotá. The repertoire chosen for each concert was music never heard before in Colombia. It reflected the musical taste of Uribe, who would always pick popular pieces from the Baroque and Classical periods, works from the Romantic French composers (including d'Indy, who is rarely performed today), and some of his own compositions.

From 1910 to 1935 Uribe worked rigorously as the head of the Conservatory and the orchestra. During all these years he had to overcome financial crises and criticisms of his management of these institutions. Published in 1941 after his retirement from public activity, he used his autobiography to justify the decisions he took as director of the Conservatory and to explain his vision of nationalism in music. In it he described the sadness and personal offense he felt seeing the changes many people chose to introduce to the Conservatory and the orchestra. He had differences, especially, with composer Antonio Maria Valencia, who wanted to institute structural reforms in the curriculum of the Conservatory. This would create a schism between the two composers, ultimately causing Valencia to leave Bogotá and move to his hometown of Cali, where he founded

another conservatory that now bears his name. Uribe's autobiography, published in 1941 after his retirement from public activity, was his way of justifying the decisions he took as director of the Conservatory and explaining his vision of nationalism in music.

Despite much criticism, Holguín received recognition of his life's work as a pedagogue and composer when in 1934 he was awarded the *Cruz de Boyacá*, the highest distinction a civilian can receive in Colombia. He became honorary conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Colombia, was distinguished by the Legion of Honor in France and was recognized as an honorary teacher by the Conservatory of Music in Bogotá.

Guillermo Uribe Holguín's tireless work for the development of music in Colombia had a profound impact on the cultural environment of the country, influencing both musicians and society alike. Even though his music is scarcely performed today his accomplishments as a composer and educator paved the road for generations after him. His music, most of it unpublished, remains in the Patronato de Artes y Ciencias in Bogotá, to which his family donated it in 1975.

Adolfo Mejía Navarro

Composer Adolfo Mejía Navarro (Sincé-Sucre, May 2, 1905 - Cartagena de Indias, June 7, 1973) was a significant musical figure in the Caribbean region of Colombia and was the first to bring together successfully the popular music of the Atlantic coast and the academic forms of classical music.⁵

⁵ Ellie Anne Duque, "Adolfo Mejía Navarro (1905-1973): Compositor Colombiano", lablaa.org. <http://www.lablaa.org/blaavirtual/musica/blaaudio/compo/mejia/indice.htm> (accessed January 13, 2010).

He was born in the town of Sincé in the district of Sucre, but soon after his birth his family moved to Cartagena de Indias, an elegant coastal city with a vast colonial heritage. Cartagena was a decidedly hierarchical society, but this did not prevent Mejía from playing with musicians from all social backgrounds. His active engagement with such varied musical styles made him a prominent figure in both popular and academic music fields, and this musical diversity would later lead to his appearance in many publications and anthologies of Colombian music dealing with both of these streams.

Although heralded by Luis Antonio Escobar as one of the most talented composers that Colombia has ever had,⁶

Mejía's compositional catalogue is relatively small. His music ranges from accomplished works to simple pieces, most of which were composed as a result of bohemian nights playing in pubs or taverns where the guitar was his constant companion. Overall, the life and music of this important composer spanned the dichotomous worlds of the serious academic composer and a guitarist whose nightlife forays were well renowned.

Mejía began his musical education with his father who also played the guitar. In his childhood he was considered a prodigy after he composed *Primicias*, his first work, at the age of eleven. It was with this piece that Mejía became a household name in Cartagena and would subsequently be chosen to join the choir of the San Pedro Claver church. In 1923 Mejía began studies at the Musical Institute of Cartagena, a school of music created in 1890 under the direction of Italian Lorenzo Margotini, who would later

⁶ Luís Antonio Escobar, "La Música en Cartagena de Indias," lablaa.org. <http://www.lablaa.org/blaavirtual/publicacionesbanrep/boletin/boleti4/bol6/cartag.htm> (accessed January 13, 2010).

become his teacher, together with Tito Sangiorgi and Juan D'Sanctis. It was here that Mejía discovered the fundamentals of harmony and counterpoint; however, a good portion of his musical experience came not from academia but from his involvement in a variety of musical groups, such as Francisco Lorduy's jazz band, in which Mejía played piano and guitar. It is said that at seventeen years of age he was conducting and composing for Lorduy's band, although reports are conflicting on this point. While most sources are in agreement on this subject, Eliana Duque speculates that he could not have been doing so at such a fragile age.⁷

In 1930 Mejía was struck with the idea of visiting the United States and decided to go on a whim, leaving behind his wife, Rosa Franco, whom he had just married. This would be the first in a series of travels he would make between 1930 and 1951. With the growing popularity of Latin American rhythms abroad, Mejía managed to obtain several recording contracts with major labels such as RCA Victor and Columbia. During the summer of 1930 he formed the Trio Albéniz, which gained some reputation in New York and continued to tour throughout the United States. While there he created several works, two of which were recorded with RCA Victor between September and December of 1930: *El Mantón*, a *danzón volado* (a type of dance which has its origins in Cuba and which has as precursors the *contradanza* and the *habanera*) and "El Chino Trompeta," a *fandango*. Mejía had formed the Trio Albéniz with Terig Tucci, an Argentinean musician who greatly influenced the Colombian composer, exposing him to basic compositional techniques and also to rudimentary orchestration. Tucci had gained experience in these areas as the primary musical arranger for the National Broadcast Corporation (NBC).

⁷ Ellie Anne Duque, "Adolfo Mejía Navarro (1905-1973): Compositor Colombiano." lablaa.org. <http://www.lablaa.org/blaavirtual/musica/blaaudio/compo/mejia/indice.htm> (accessed February 10, 2010).

In 1932 Mejía decided to return to Colombia. It is suggested his return was due, at least in part, to the occurrence of the Great Depression. Once back, however, he found himself extremely busy as librarian of the National Symphony Orchestra in Bogotá while also entering the National Conservatory of Music to study under nationalist composer Jesus Bermúdez Silva. Regarding his stay in Bogotá there is very little concrete information, although it is known that he formed yet another guitar trio and also began playing piano with the popular orchestras of the area.

Between 1933 and 1935 the socio-political environment of Colombia was still being affected by the ongoing feud which began at the turn of the century between the liberal and conservative parties of the time. This situation was felt in the capital primarily, taking its toll on the emerging cultural landscape as well. Prime examples would be the annexation of the Conservatory to the National University of Colombia (which also effected the withdrawal—after twenty-five years—of Guillermo Uribe Holguín from his position as head of the Conservatory) and also the conversion of the Conservatory's orchestra into the National Symphony Orchestra. A year later Mejía composed two of his better-known pieces: *Cartagena* and *Pequeña suite*, for which he went on to win first prize in the Ezequiel Bernal competition (August 6, 1939), a split award which he also shared with his teacher and mentor, Jesús Bermúdez Silva, for his *Tres danzas típicas*.

This era is considered to be the golden age of Colombian music. Along with composers like Guillermo Uribe Holguin, Antonio Maria Valencia, and Jesús Bermúdez Silva, Mejía cultivated a strong nationalistic resonance within his music. In 1939 he won a state scholarship, which allowed him to further pursue his musical ambitions by

enrolling in the *École Normal de Paris* in France. Because of the advent of the Second World War, however, he found himself in an unstable socio-political environment and was forced to leave Paris for the south of France, where he studied briefly with Henry Koechlin, a French composer and teacher who taught fugue and modal polyphony at the *Schola Cantorum*.

In 1940 the composer decided to travel yet again, this time for a brief stay in Italy and then to Rio de Janeiro, where he met the famed Leopold Stokowski. Stokowski, who had conducted the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra among others, was also founder of the All-American Youth Orchestra, with which Mejía would make his second journey to New York. Mejía then traveled to Argentina for several months, after which he would return to Cartagena in his home country, where he was reunited with his family and estranged wife after an almost ten-year period of absence.

In 1941 Mejía assumed directorship of the National Army Naval School Band, for which he in 1955 composed the hymn: “¡Viva Colombia, soy marinero!” Four years after (in 1945) he founded the *Pro-arte musical de Cartagena* association along with Guillermo Espinosa Grau and under the direction of Gustavo Lemaitre Román. The association would in turn create the music festivals of Cartagena de Indias, festivals that would come to an untimely end in 1962 due to loss of interest by both the association and the society of the time.

In 1950 Mejía travelled to Europe once more for a brief period, only to return once more to New York, where he would remain for another six months teaching guitar. In 1954 Mejía returned to Colombia and became director of the Musical Institute of

Cartagena until 1957. Two years prior to becoming director he had similarly been offered the post of director of the Symphonic Orchestra of Cali, but due to the consternation and protest of the people of Cartagena, who claimed Mejía as their own and did not want to see him displaced to another city, he refused the offer.

By 1960 Mejía had slowed his composing output and decided to dedicate himself to teaching. Among his major works of this period are *El Tropelin* and *El Torito*, which were choral pieces written for the Student Singing Club (a type of glee club) comprising university choir students. In 1970 he received official recognition of his life's work when he received the distinction of Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Cartagena and was also awarded the National Prize of Music by the Colombian Institute for Culture.

Mejía died on July 6, 1973, after several blood clots in his brain caused a stroke. It goes without saying that the influence he has left behind both musically and culturally for Colombia is enormous being the first composer to apply rhythms from the Atlantic coast of Colombia to the symphonic Colombian literature.⁸ A prime example of this would be the last movement of his renowned *Pequeña suite*, named *Cumbia*. As opposed to Guillermo Uribe Holguín, who had a rigorous compositional style bound to academic musical forms, Adolfo Mejía indulged in the use of nationalistic elements in a very spontaneous and explicit way, not adhering to any prescribed forms. Another important difference with Holguín (who only used the folkloric dances of the Andean region for his nationalistic compositions) was Mejía's great versatility in moving from the style of the Andean rhythms to those of the Atlantic, a region where he was an emblematic figure. However, Mejía's talent not only allowed him to use different folkloric styles from

⁸ Eliana, Duque. *Gran enciclopedia de Colombia temática: arte*, vol. 6 (Bogotá: Círculo de lectores, 1993), 225-226.

Colombia but also from Hispanic America. We can see this in works like *Bachiana* for guitar and *Capricho español* for orchestra.

From his more complex arrangements, be they orchestral or choral, to his less demanding pieces, such as those he was composing for Lorduy's Jazz band, Mejía's life work is a testament to his diversity of style and to his enormous contribution to the recognition of nationalistic Colombian music as an important element of modern classical music.

Luís Antonio Escobar

Unlike most of the main composers in Colombia, Luis Antonio Escobar (Villapinzón, July 14, 1925 – Miami, September 11, 1993) did not grow up in an urban environment. On the contrary, he was raised in the small village of Villapinzón in the district of Cundinamarca. From the cold mountains where the peasants worked the land, to the church that was the village's main cultural source, the memories of this modest place would stay with Escobar for the rest of his life and influenced his music in many ways.

Luis and his two siblings lost his mother at an early age and were raised by their father, José del Carmen Escobar, a mystical man who gave his children a strict education founded upon his firm Catholic beliefs. Despite the severity of his father, Luis Antonio Escobar frequently found ways to escape his house to immerse himself in the natural environment, often enjoying the view of the countryside surrounding Villapinzón or

simply listening to a bird's song. This inclination towards nature would make a profound mark on the composer in both his personal and his professional life.

The religious environment of his town also had a significant influence on Escobar's life and compositional style. He would often hear people singing medieval style chants as they passed in front of his house making their way to Chiquinquirá on pilgrimage to see the statue of the miraculous Virgin. He developed a fascination for this ancient musical form, which he would use in his vocal and choral music to set texts of popular poetry.

In Villapinzón, celebrations of all sorts were always accompanied by folk tunes like *guabinas* and *pasillos*, played by peasants on *tiples*, *requintos*, and *chuchos*, popular musical instruments of his day.⁹ Escobar never forgot his musical roots, which were reflected later in his music through his use of a nationalistic style which at the same time adhered to the tonal and formal structures of European Classical music.¹⁰

After he had finished middle school, Escobar was enrolled in a Franciscan high school (San Joaquin de Cali) in accordance with his father's wishes and his religious upbringing. Here he immersed himself in the study of humanities: Greek, Latin, history, literature, and music; and it was here also he had his first encounter with the Western Classical music tradition singing sixteenth-century polyphonic works of Tomás Luis de Victoria and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina in his school choir. In addition, Escobar's

⁹ Amparo Angel, "Luis Antonio Escobar (1925-1993)," lablaa.org. <http://www.lablaa.org/blaavirtual/musica/blaaudio/compo/escobar/indice.htm> (accessed March 14, 2010).

¹⁰ Ellie Anne Duque, "Luis Antonio Escobar: "Neoclasicismo y nacionalismo, gratos de oír," *Revista credencial historia* 120 (December 1999): 11-12.

first violin lessons and his first introduction to musical theory were all carried out under the direction of the Franciscan monks of San Joaquín.

The intellectual and musical stimulation of his high school years sparked his interest in pursuing a musical calling, and he decided upon graduation to travel to Bogotá to further his studies. He was able to secure financial support from his village of Villapinzón toward his undertaking to become a musician, and with the money received he purchased a violin and a methods book for the instrument.

In 1940 Escobar moved to a small town close to Bogotá named Vianí, where he worked to save up the money necessary for the trip to the capital to study at the Conservatory of Music there. During his two-year stay in Vianí he managed to purchase a piano with the help of the curator of a local school, under the condition that he stay in Vianí until he paid it off. It was with this piano and the violin he had received from the people of Villapinzón that he would begin learning to read music. By the end of his two years in Vianí, Escobar had managed to learn Beethoven's "Pathetique Sonata"; a piece he performed for his entrance exam at the Conservatory of Music in Bogotá in front of professors Lucía Pérez, who was known as being a terror of the hopeful aspirants of the piano department, and Guillermo Uribe Holguín (the Colombian composer who had helped found the school itself). Later in life, Escobar would confess: "I'm not sure how I dared play for the admissions jury without having had any formal lessons and with the 'Pathetique Sonata'; nonetheless, I believe they felt sorry for me but also saw in me the desire and the will to study music."¹¹ Once accepted, he would go on to study with several professors: Pedro Villá, his piano professor, who after listening to some of his

¹¹ "Amparo Angel, "Luis Antonio Escobar (1925-1993)," lablaa.org. <http://www.lablaa.org/blaavirtual/musica/blaaudio/compo/escobar/indice.htm> (accessed March 14, 2010).

early compositions would motivate him to continue his work; Egisto Giovanetti, his professor of composition; and Lucía Pérez.

Although Escobar now felt he had finally found his calling and considered himself lucky to be able to pursue his passion, his financial situation was still precarious, and he was still being aided monetarily by what his village would send every month in support of their young musician.

However, in 1947 his life would take a significant turn with the offer of a scholarship by the Universidad Nacional of Bogotá to study at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore. There he would go on to study with Nicolas Nabokov, who was also the Director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. During the same year and while still studying in Baltimore Escobar travelled to New York to take several music history classes at the Columbia University, and also went on to win second prize in the Coltejer Music Composition Contest of Medellín, Colombia for his *Sonatina No.1* for Violin and Piano, which he had composed while still in Colombia.

Over the next few years he composed several other pieces: his *Sonatina No. 2* for violin and piano (1948), *Canción ligera* (a choral piece written in 1949) and his *Serenata* (an orchestral piece written in 1950). In 1951 Escobar embarked on a trip to Europe and arrived in Paris, only to meet Nicolas Nabokov once more. Nabokov recommended Escobar to a fellow professor and personal friend: Boris Blacher, a prominent composer of the era, who would become one of Escobar's greatest inspirations. Escobar thus moved in 1951 to Berlin, Germany, to begin studies with Blacher at the Hochschule School of Music, where Escobar increased his mastery of counterpoint, various musical forms, harmony, musical history, and musical appreciation. Escobar later said of Blacher: "He

was an excellent mentor. In the few classes I had I was able to accomplish in a few months that which I hadn't done in years."¹²

At this point in his life Escobar also developed a great interest in other forms of art. His stay in Europe allowed him not only to grow as a musician but also to gain an understanding of the origins of the Western artistic tradition which would enable him later to write several books exploring the musical roots of Colombia throughout the different periods of its musical history (e.g., *Obras Polifónicas de Autores Colombianos* and *Archivo de Música Colonial*). During the next few years he continued travelling through Europe to places like Vienna, Rome, and back to Paris.

In 1954 Escobar married Christine Haasis and returned with her to Colombia, where he began working in many areas of the mass media and also teaching composition, harmony, and musical history as a professor at the Conservatory of the National University. He received support for his work from Olav Roots, the conductor of the Symphonic Orchestra of Bogotá and a great promoter of Colombian composers who held performances of Escobar's "Concertino for Flute and Orchestra" and his ballet *Avirama*, for which he received great popular and critical acclaim. His stay in Colombia, however, would be short lived. In 1957 Escobar travelled again to the United States after receiving a Guggenheim fellowship with the support of Mexican composer Carlos Chávez and American composer Aaron Copland. There he would go on to compose such works as his ballet *Preludios para percusión*, which premiered at the Ballet Theater of New York and had George Balanchine as its choreographer.

¹² Ibid.

At the beginning of the following decade Escobar found himself back in Colombia, and it is in this period that many of his most important works were written. These were often greatly influenced by his formative years in Villapinzón and also by the incorporation of past historical events. They also often employ traditional Colombian musical forms such as the *bambuco* and *pasillo*, styles generally found in the Andean region of Colombia. His most important works of this period include: *Cantata campesina* No. 1, *Cántica de cantas colombianas*, and the Symphonic Poem *Juramento a Bolívar*, which is a massive piece written for orchestra and three hundred male voices with text by Jorge Rojas. It was also Escobar who would found the Club of Student Vocalists, which would in turn find its place in over twenty other universities around the country.

During the following years Escobar also worked on many pieces for children, due in part to nostalgia for the period of his own youth. Such works include a show for children entitled “The Marriage of Uncle Sapo” and a ballet entitled “The Little Match Girl,” which also went on to win the Hans Christian Anderson Contest in Denmark.

Beginning in 1976 Escobar took great interest in pre-Columbian music and the Colonial period of the southern and middle regions of South America, an interest which led him to travel throughout the previously mentioned regions during the same year and until his death. The result of these journeys was a plethora of published writings: *La música precolombina*, *La música en Cartagena de Indias*, and *La herencia de Quetzal* among several others. On September 11, 1993, Luis Antonio Escobar died in Miami, Florida, while assigned as Colombian Cultural Attaché to the United States. His ashes were scattered along the Florida coast according to his last wishes.

Andrés Posada

Contemporary music spans a multitude of currents and genres. It is more than a school of art; it is a manifestation of an artistic impulse many times devoid of the governing dogma of earlier musical periods. The twentieth century delivered a great change of society's perspective with regards to many different areas of study. Einstein changed the way time was understood through his theory of relativity, Freud changed the way people would regard the human mind through his introduction of psychoanalysis; men like Picasso and Dalí forever changed the way a brush would henceforth make contact with a canvas and composers like Schoenberg and Stravinsky would alter the musical landscape for years to come.

In other words, world perspectives exhibited an abrupt change. The predictable universe had ceased to exist giving way to a sense of chaos. The unconscious arose from its obscurity and the arts distorted the shape of reality with music slowly letting go of tonality and opening the path to new ways of experimentation with sound. It is these aforementioned circumstances that can also be used to describe Andrés Posada's musical career and personality: a cosmopolitan composer who is aware of the new challenges of globalization and what they can offer the Latin American composer of the twenty-first century.¹³

During his years at the University of Antioquia he realized that his teachers considered any musical manifestation after the Romantic period taboo. Therefore, after his arrival in New York he explained: "When I arrived in New York, I felt all the

¹³ Andrés Posada, "La proyección de la nueva música en América Latina: globalización y periferia." *Artes: La revista* 5, no.9 (2005): 26-28.

academic limitations of the rules of harmony and counterpoint which are rules made for the school. But the study of harmony and counterpoint is not the study of composition; they are tools of theory used to later incorporate into one's unconfined creative work.”¹⁴

Posada was born on February 24, 1954 in Medellín, Colombia. He began his foray into music at the age of seven when he, like most musicians in Colombia, began playing popular Colombian songs on the guitar. Shortly after he began studying classical guitar with teachers Rufino Duque and Eduardo Gaviria and later piano but after finishing high school in 1972, Posada decided to take up architecture at the Pontifical Bolivarian University. After four semesters the composer decided to follow his instinct and leaves architecture behind and dedicated himself to music. For the next two years he studied applied music for piano at the University of Antioquia in Medellín and then from 1976 to 1980 worked on and finally obtaining his musical theory diploma from the Superior School of Music also in Medellín.

Posada makes mention of this period and how he was somehow conflicted when finally deciding to leave the architectural career behind and take up music completely; not because he wasn't sure about music being his profession but because of society's perception of artists: “It still is socially accepted that music, art, theater, dance are all chores that are acknowledged as something worthwhile only when taken together with an

¹⁴ Cristóbal Peláez González, “Andrés Posada—Obertura para un nuevo compositor,” [matacandelas.com](http://www.matacandelas.com). <http://www.matacandelas.com/AndresPosada.html> (accessed February 20, 2010) taken from *Revista vía pública* 2, no. 8 (Medellín, Colombia, 1991). “Al llegar a Nueva York, sentía todas las limitaciones de lo que son las reglas académicas de la armonía y el contrapunto que son reglas para la escuela. Pero estudiar armonía y contrapunto no es estudiar composición, son unas herramientas teóricas para incorporarlas más adelante a tu trabajo creativo libre.”

accepted parallel career. Society still rejects a person who completely dedicates himself to one career.”¹⁵

In 1981 Posada arrived in New York City and continued his studies at Mannes College of Music, where he observed the stark contrast between what he had learned in Colombia and what was being taught in the American city. In 1985 he obtained his bachelor’s degree in composition under the tutelage of Peter Stearns and Leo Edwards. Stearns had been an alumnus of the same college and developed the composition curriculum there, and along with being the director of the Preparatory Division which focused on the development of young musicians he was also a composer of contemporary church music. Leo Edwards, a well-known American composer, had also obtained his bachelor’s degree from Mannes and aside from becoming a faculty member (he was appointed Director of the Extension Division of Mannes), Edwards was also a member of *Nota Bene* (a music ensemble of the Aaron Copland School of Music, which is part of Queen’s College in Queens, New York). During the next year Posada went on to study Orchestral Direction with Jacob Kreisberg and then in 1987 he would obtain his Master’s Degree in Composition at Mannes.

Upon his return to Colombia, Posada, like Uribe Holguin before him, worked intensely trying to push the academic envelope in order to broaden the perspective of the Colombian musical landscape, which was still quite limited. Along with Guillermo Gaviria (contemporary Colombian composer) he created the Colombian Composers Association, which has as its goal the advancing of new Latin America music. Furthermore, in 1989 he became co-founder of the Jacqueline Nova Laboratory of

¹⁵ Ibid. “Todavía está la idea social de que la música, la pintura, el teatro, la danza, son quehaceres que se ven mejor cuando son paralelos a un oficio aceptado. Aún la sociedad rechaza a una persona dedicada por completo a una actividad artística.”

Electronic Music, a department which is part of the Autonomous University of Manizales. Later that same year he would also go on to win an honorary mention in the Valentino Bucchi International Composition Contest in Rome, Italy with the piece *Elegía primera* for mixed choir.

He returned to the United States in 1994 with an invitation to participate in the Inter-American Compositional Workshop: Music and Word, which took place at the Indiana University. Posada has also had many of his works commissioned in the United States or by American performers. In 1985 The Bloom Duo would commission and perform his *Dúo rapsódico con aires de currulao* while in Colombia and more recently the New York Chamber Winds Ensemble as well as the *Aglaia Contemporary Dance Company* (also of New York) have had pieces commissioned. His participation in September of 2003 in the Eighteenth Festival of Havana in Cuba included the premiere of the piece *6 para 6* which he wrote for wind and percussion quintet and four years later Posada would return to Havana as a jury member in the second edition of the House of the Americas Compositional Award Ceremony where his *Sonata Festival* and his *Dúo rapsódico con aires de currulao* was performed. Currently, Andrés Posada is a professor in the Music Department at EAFIT University (a department he helped co-found) where he heads the Composition Department and he also teaches at the Instituto Musical Diego Echavarría, both institutions located in Medellín.

PART II. ANALYSES

CHAPTER 5

SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO NO.1 OP. 7, 3RD MOVEMENT

BY GUILLERMO URIBE HOLGUÍN: ANALYSIS

The Sonata Op.7 No.1 for Violin and Piano was written by Guillermo Uribe Holguín as an assignment for the composition class of Vincent d'Indy in the Schola Cantorum. The quality of this work garnered the appreciation of Uribe's mentor and colleagues and was played three times in France and once in Belgium and was highly praised by the musical critics of Europe. After such positive performances and comments from the press, Uribe easily found an editing company to publish his Sonata: the renowned Alphonse Leduc Editions that published his first accomplished work for violin and piano in 1910.

Beginning with his first works, Uribe Holguín portrayed nationalistic elements, a factor that would become an integral part of his music. In an interview taken by the *Revista de las Indias* he states: "In the last part of my first Sonata for Violin and Piano our [Colombian] rhythms clearly stand out, a fact that did not pass unnoticed by the Parisian critics. However, this tendency [of composing with popular elements] acquired real importance with the composition of my *Sinfonía del terruño*, opus 15.

From then on almost all my works have contained popular elements.”¹ It is important to clarify that Uribe made reference to popular music instead of folk because that he believed that Colombia did not have autochthonous folkloric music; instead, he regarded Colombian folk music as Spanish in origin.²

This work is especially important from a nationalistic perspective, since it was Uribe’s first attempt in this musical vein (however, the nationalistic element here is considerably more subtle than his later nationalistic works). Although this sonata does not have any programmatic title, and Holguín does not specify what kind of nationalistic references he uses, it is clear from the first measures of this movement that it is based on the folk dance called *danza*.

This work was Uribe Holguín’s first introduction into the European musical environment, where he strived both to demonstrate his capacity to use the current compositional techniques and also to look for originality through the use of nationalistic elements that would give the piece its Latin American imprint. Uribe Holguín’s seeming disregard toward nationalism and thus Colombian musical folklore³ led him to choose the *danza* for his first Violin and Piano Sonata which was a more recognized rhythm in the European twentieth-century context.

¹ Guillermo Uribe Holguín, “Como piensan los artistas colombianos contra el nacionalismo musical” *Revista de las Indias* 30 no. 96 (Mayo 1947): 356. “En mi primera sonata para violín y piano, se destacan claramente en la parte final ritmos nuestros, lo que no pasó inadvertido a los críticos parisienses. Pero esta tendencia vino a adquirir definitiva importancia partir de mi Sinfonía del terruño, op 15. Desde entonces toda mi obra contiene elementos populares.

² *Ibid*, 352.

³ See Chapter 3, Nationalism: A Newborn Nation Searches for a Voice of Its Own, 50.

Danza

The term *danza* comes from the *contradanza cubana* or *danza cubana* and is also popularly known as the *habanera*. Colombian composer and folklorist Daniel Zamudio referred to the *danza* in his article: *El Folklore Musical en Colombia*. He asserted that the *danza* is one and the same with the *habanera* and became very popular in Colombia in the middle of the nineteenth century, when it was initially called *danza cubana* and eventually became *danza*.⁴

The *danza* has its roots in the English country-dance. It arrived in France at the end of the seventeenth century and it became very popular among the middle class. When France conquered Santo Domingo (the present day Haiti) in 1795, much of the French bourgeoisie who occupied the city brought with them this rhythm which immediately attracted the attention of the African slaves. The loose partner dance style of the country-dance reminded the African descendants of the way they used to dance in their homeland. In 1801 the Haitian revolution brought a massive migration of people from Santo Domingo to Cuba, bringing along with them the French country-dance. Although French musicologist Maya Roy asserts that the Spanish had already brought this European popular dance into Cuba, the immigrants from Santo Domingo brought a new element: the *cinquillo*.⁵ The *cinquillo* is a five-note syncopated rhythmic pattern which played a fundamental role in the formation of Cuban music. It is related to the *danza* yet it

⁴ Daniel Zamudio, "El folklore musical en Colombia." *Revista de las Indias* 35, no. 109 (May-June 1949): 24-25.

⁵ Maya Roy, *Músicas cubanas* (Madrid: Ediciones Akal S.A, 2003), 87.

acquired its truly syncopated nature evolving into the *danzón* (a Cuban dance portrayed in Mejía's analysis).

In Cuba we find some of the most relevant descendants of the *habanera*: the *danzón*, *son*, *guajira*, *clave*, *criolla*, and *bolero*.⁶ In Argentina aside from the influences of the *milonga* and *candombe*, the tango also found its roots in the *habanera*; Daniel Zamudio even went so far as to speculate on the possible relation of the *danza* to the rhythm of the accompaniment of the Colombian *bambuco*, which is a dance of polemic origin. Harry Davidson in his *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia* documents the first reference to this rhythm in the *El Tiempo* newspaper in its eighth year, the twenty-second of March in 1856. An announcement in the classified section of the aforementioned newspaper refers to this *danza* as a typical Colombian rhythm. Although in different sources of renowned folklorists (Harry C. Davidson, Javier Ocampo López, Daniel Zamudio, Guillermo Abadía, and Octavio Marulanda) it is not specified how the *danza* came to Colombia, the works of important composers like Luís A. Calvo, Pedro Morales Pino, Emilio Murillo, Alejandro Wills, and Diógenes Chávez Pinzón demonstrate that the *danza* became part of Colombian folklore. At present the *danza* is not part of popular taste and is scarcely known by the majority of Colombian people.

The rhythmic structure of the *danza* is written in a 2/4 or in a 6/8 time signature where the configuration of dotted rhythms, syncopations, and triplets, which differentiate the *habanera* from its antecessor the country-dance, comprising the chief characteristics of this rhythm as can be seen in the example below:

⁶ Alejo Carpentier, *La música en Cuba* (México: Colección Popular, 1972; reprint, México, Fondo de cultura económica, 2004), 129.

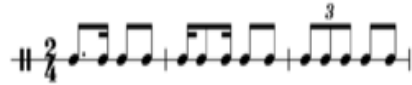


Figure 1. Habanera Rhythmic Cell.

The *habanera* has captivated not only popular and folkloric composers but also scholarly music creators such as Ravel, Albéniz, Saint Sæens, de Falla, Debussy, Chabrier and Bizet who wrote the most famous *Habanera* in his the first act of the opera *Carmen*.⁷ In order to not fall into what Andrés Posada calls “Latino América: la periferia de la periferia” (Latin America: the fringe of the fringe)⁸ we need to acknowledge the work of some of the erudite Latin American composers who cultivated the *Danza* in their compositions. These include the Cuban composer Ignacio Cervantes, who is renowned for his forty-one *danzas*; Mexican Arturo Márquez, famous for his *Danzón* op. 2; and the Colombians Luis A. Calvo, Adolfo Mejia, and Guillermo Uribe Holguín. We will here focus on Uribe's last movement of his *Sonata for Violin and Piano* op. 7, which forms the basis of this historical background and accompanying analysis.

Analysis

This movement is built in a ternary form with long sections that include several contrasting themes. The ternary form of this movement might be confused with a *rondo*

⁷ Heliana Portes de Roux, “Contradanzas, danzas y danzones.” *Entreartes*, no. 1 (2002): 84.

⁸ In his article Posada analyzes how the history of music from Spain was founded on the periphery of Western music history, therefore distancing Latin America from appearing in historical or musical reference books.

form due to the fact that the central part starts with an abbreviated statement of the **A** theme which is found in the beginning and in the end. This quotation does not state the entire **A** theme, but instead presents different musical material beginning in its sixth measure and therefore differs from the **A** theme presented in the first and last sections. For this reason and because of the organization of the themes and sections, this movement features a ternary form portrayed in the following graphic:

	First Section	Measure 1 to 83
	Theme A	Measure 1 to 15
	Theme B	Measure 24 to 63
	Theme C	Measure 64 to 83
	Second Section	Measure 84 to 150
	Theme A var.	Measure 84 to 94
	Theme D	Measure 95 to 150
	Third Section: recapitulation of the first section	Measure 151 to 233
	Theme A	Measure 151 to 161
	Theme B	Measure 192 to 221
	Theme C	Measure 222 to 233
	Coda	Measure 234 to 272

Table 1. Formal Structure of the Third Movement of Uribe's Sonata Op.7 for Violin and Piano.

First Section

Theme A

Theme A is completely modal, starting in F# aeolian, and it has an internal division of two secondary themes: the first theme has two phrases of five measures in which the violin plays the melody while the piano accompanies with parallel fifths in the bass line and quintuplets in the right hand. Each phrase is built from rhythmic cells of the habanera, which is related to the Colombian *cumbia*. The combination of the quarter note triplets with the duple meter creates a polyrhythm and is one of the main characteristics of music of African descent. In this case the polyrhythm is portrayed in the first and second measures, which reflect a rhythmic pattern typical of the *habanera* and is especially featured by the quarter note triplets. The quintuplet is also a rhythmic element that makes reference to the aforementioned *cinquillo*

Vif et joyeux

Violin

Piano

Figure 2. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 1-4, score.

A modal change introduces the second secondary theme of **A**, which starts in measure eleven and presents the first phrase of the first secondary theme transposed to the dominant, C# aeolian, where the piano now plays the melody while the violin holds a pedal on C#, the new tonal center to the section. The transition or bridge to theme **B** is clearly developed by descending Phrygian tetrachords that start at measure sixteen and repeat after a long G# in between; meanwhile the piano plays a passage of descending sixths and a B pedal which is the dominant of the **B** theme.

Theme B

This theme is in E mixolydian and starts at measure 24 with a phrase of six measures built by four different rhythmic cells. Here the dotted figures and syncopation depicted in the example below evoke the habanera rhythm of the beginning of the movement.

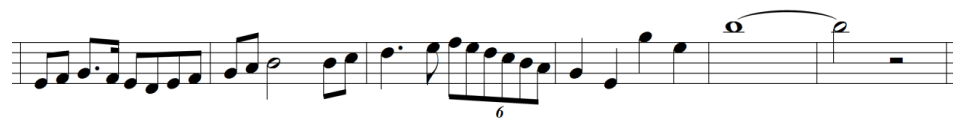


Figure 3. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 24-28, score.

The piano carries the harmony, which for this passage is based on only two chords: E minor (with the seventh found only in the second half of measure 25) and D major. At measure 30 the quarter note triplets appear again as reminiscence of the rhythmic cells of the *habanera*, becoming the musical element that is going to relate the

diverse subsequent passages of theme **B**. This point is characterized by a more hectic rhythm which the composer reinforces using the French indication *très rythmé*.



Figure 4. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 30-33, score.

The accompaniment is carried by the previously mentioned quarter note triplets in the left hand of the piano and a descending counter melody of eighth notes on the violin.



Figure 5. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 32-33, score.

Measure 36 introduces the quarter-note triplets in the violin while the piano plays a different melody that becomes more chromatic and leads to a descending octatonic scale played by the piano in quarter note rhythm. The last portion of **B** is constructed phrases played by the violin in which each has contrasting elements. The first phrase is performed in the middle register of the violin and uses double stops in a *forte* dynamic. On the other hand the second phrase is in the low register of the violin without double stops and in *piano* dynamic. The piano accompanies the violin line with a texture of

descending eighth notes, which from measure 61 to measure 63 performs a melodic epilogue that closes theme **B**.



Figure 6. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 61-63, score.

Theme C

Theme C is characterized by its novel elements, which Uribe Holguín assimilated from the French Impressionistic compositional school. Whole tone scales and augmented chords on the piano are present throughout this theme, which can be divided into three secondary themes. The first part of each secondary theme begins with augmented chords on the piano and ascending sixteenth notes built on whole-tone scales in the violin, to then be answered by the descending sixteenth notes also in whole tone scales on the piano.



Figure 7. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 64-65, score.

The second part of each secondary theme has contrasting elements in comparison to the first part: the dynamic is reduced to *piano*, and the rhythm has longer value figures.

The first statement of the secondary theme has four measures, the second five, then between the second secondary theme and the third there are two chords: E minor and Dmaj7, which work as a transition to the third secondary theme that also has five measures. In the end we have a reiteration of the last two measures of the third secondary theme linked to other two measures that have the C#7 chord, dominant of F# minor or F# aeolian (the mode of the returning A theme).

Second Section

Theme A var.

After the impressionistic flavor of C from the previewed section, the recapitulation of A var. re-introduces the *habanera* rhythm. A var. is shorter than the A of the first section, here the first half of the melody is played by the violin and the second part by the piano in its middle register. A is restated in a textual manner although the accompaniment in the piano varies in rhythm and texture, changing the quintuplets for up beats and the parallel fifths for consecutive quarter notes. The harmony remains the same as in the former A found in the beginning of the movement.

The image shows a musical score for measures 86-87. The top staff is for Violin (Vln.) and the bottom two staves are for Piano (Pno.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). In measure 86, the violin plays a melodic line starting with a dotted quarter note, followed by an eighth note, and then a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment consists of eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand.

Figure 8. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 86-87, score.

Theme D

This theme begins in measure 95 and stands out among the others due to the use of the harmony Holguín employs; he transitions from a modal language to tonal writing with well-defined cadences. The tempo as well as the melody is constructed of long note values (Holguín uses eighth notes in the piano accompaniment at the end of this theme) thus exhibiting a great contrast in the overall character of this movement.

The image shows a musical score for measures 97-100. The top staff is for Violin (Vln.) and the bottom two staves are for Piano (Pno.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The violin part is marked 'très chantant' and features long, sustained notes. The piano accompaniment consists of eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand, with some notes beamed together.

Figure 9 Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 97-100, score.

Theme **D** is divided into two parts: the first one revolves around E as the tonal center of this passage, which is reinforced by a pedal of the some syncopation. The resultant chords show the bimodal relation between E major and E minor. The end of this part comes with a perfect cadence in E minor (between measures 118 and 119). From measure 120 the piano has a vertical harmonic passage where Holguín uses chords in the context of E major with nonfunctional harmony.

The second part of **D** starts at measure 129 with the melody in the violin accompanied by eighth note arpeggios in the piano. The harmony moves towards A minor and the perfect cadence in this key takes place between measures 135 and 136. After this point the piano plays a descending scale that finishes in a G# major chord which leads to C#, the central tone of the next passage. The C# section features a heterophonic melody built on three motifs; each one them made up of two half notes and a whole note on the violin while the piano doubles this melody in an ornamented manner playing one octave below the violin line with the right hand and two octaves below with the left hand.



Figure 10. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 141-142, score.

From measure 147 to 150 there is a bridge that is in used to link the middle section with the last section. This bridge is made up of half notes on the violin copied by the piano two octaves below and with a continuous trill of C# on the right hand, which is the dominant tone of F# aeolian, the tonal center of the **A** theme that recapitulates in the next section.

Third Section

At this point the recapitulation of the first section takes place, which preserves the melodic material, the harmonic base and the proportion of the themes. However, in contrast to themes **A** and **C**, which are repeated similarly to the first time they appeared, **B** features important variations.

Theme A

The violin, as in the initial section, presents the theme but the accompaniment varies on the piano, which plays descendant arpeggios in septuplets although it preserves the harmony of the **A** theme from the first section. From measure 162 until measure 165 there is a bridge of four measures that has a motif of two measures which repeats itself leading to a passage that combines motifs from **A** and **B**.

Link Between A and B

The union of themes A and B is represented in a new passage in the movement that starts at measure 166 and finishes in measure 192. Here Uribe Holguín quotes musical cells from both **A** and **B** themes.



Figure 11. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 166-169, score.

The combination of motifs from **A** and **B** takes place at the beginning of this passage from measure 166 until measure 176. From measure 178, rhythmic cells are extracted from the A theme which the piano plays accompanied by syncopated figures on the violin. This procedure repeats in measure 180 but now the role of the voices is inverted: the piano plays the syncopation while the violin plays the motifs extracted from A merging both voices merge to a G7 in measure 183. The last eight measures of this passage are the same as the eight measures that linked **A** and **B** from the first section with the only difference being that they are in G (dominant of C minor key of the **B** theme), whereas the first time the measures were in E.

Theme B

The recapitulation of the **B** theme has significant variations. The most noticeable change is that the theme is presented in a new mode: C Mixolydian; then in measures 201 and 202 the note C becomes the seventh note of D flat, which through an enharmonic spelling modulates to C# Mixolydian in measure 203.

The image shows a musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Piano (Pno.) for measures 201-203. The Violin part starts in measure 201 with a half note G4, marked 'pizz.' and 'tres retenu'. In measure 202, it plays a half note F4, also marked 'pizz.' and 'tres retenu'. In measure 203, it plays quarter note triplets of G4, A4, and B4, marked 'Au mouvement' and 'archet'. The Piano part starts in measure 201 with a half note G4, marked 'p' and 'tres retenu'. In measure 202, it plays a half note F4, marked 'p' and 'tres retenu'. In measure 203, it plays a half note G4, marked 'ff' and 'Au mouvement', with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

Figure 12. Holguín, Sonata Op. 7 No.1 (1910), mvt. 3, mm. 201-203, score.

The second part of **B** in the recapitulation is inverted in relation to the **B** of the first section. The eighth notes that were played on the violin in the first **B** theme are now played by the piano in the left hand while the violin performs the quarter note triplets (measures 203-206). Another difference with the **B** of the first section is that after Holguín quoted the first elements of this theme he then shortened them in order to lead the music to the epilogue that concludes this theme (measures 215-221).

Theme C

Contrasting with the C theme of the first section, this next theme appears transposed a minor second higher. This C theme is also built by secondary themes but is shorter in length compared to the previous one due to the fact that there are only two secondary themes instead of three present in the first C theme. These two secondary themes are identical: each one of them has four measures as well as the whole tone scale and the augmented chord. The only difference between them is the ending chords where the first secondary theme ends in an A minor chord in the first inversion and the second secondary theme finishes in a D chord in the first inversion. The theme concludes with a repetition an octave higher in the violin of the last two measures of the second secondary theme (228-229), then two measures with a C#min7 chord close this theme.

Coda

The coda starts in measure 234 featuring melodic material from all the preceding themes. It starts with a quarter note up beat in the violin which leads to a passage in F# major. The piano plays four measures in a clear *fauxbourdon* while the violin doubles the top voice adding ornamentations. In measure 241 the piano plays a melody in F# extracted from the A theme while the top voice of the piano and violin line complete the harmony. In measure 250 the violin plays the melody, which is similar to the one at the beginning of the coda. This melody finishes with a decrease of tempo indicated by the *un peu retenu* indication.

The melody extracted from A is played by the piano again in measure 254 but this time is doubled by the upper parallel third, sixth and the octave. The violin accompanies

the basic notes of the harmony to which Uribe added trills. The dynamic at this point for both instruments is a triple *forte* (*fff*) and the pulse is slightly slower in order to give it a more *pesante* character. In measure 258 the violin plays the beginning of the **A** theme twice followed by a Gmin7 chord which gives the entrance to the **B** theme (measure 262). The final passage of the movement is featured by the violin which plays a repetitive dotted quarter note and an eighth note that leads to the final quote of the first motif of **A**; the piano plays descendant parallel chords and both the piano and violin lines converge to the key center of F# major.

With this work, Holguín strived to prove to himself as well as to his colleagues and his mentor, Vincent d'Indy, his quality as a composer who was able to break the barriers of the limited musical education he received while growing up in Colombia. His foremost purpose at the time was to acquire the musical language of the Western tradition while at the same time providing his own take on it through the use of nationalistic elements, validating himself as a universal composer.

It is only within the last movement of this Sonata that Holguín used a nationalistic influence choosing the *danza* as his folkloric reference due the fact that European audiences and critics alike were familiar with this rhythm, which also maintained a distinct Latin American signature.

CHAPTER 6

LOPEZIANA: PIECE FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

BY ADOLFO MEJÍA NAVARRO: ANALYSIS

Lopeziana or *Lopezca* is a piece for violin and piano composed by Adolfo Mejía in 1951 and dedicated to the renowned poet from Cartagena Luis Carlos López, who, like Mejía, used to write about the people from Cartagena and the simple lifestyle of their daily labors.

Lopeziana is a sectional piece written for violin and piano where every section contains elements that stand apart from each other. There is only one textual repetition, in measure 30, where the composer recapitulates the first eight measures of the work; the rest of the musical material is unrelated melodically or rhythmically. That which unifies the different sections, however, is the novel harmonic elements. Mejía's search for tonal colors is evident throughout the piece in his employment of added harmonies like seventh and ninth chords and his use of chromaticism. The nationalistic aspect of this piece is based on the Afro- Caribbean dance called *danzón*. Although this dance did not originate in Colombia, it had such influence in the first half of the twentieth century that it crossed the Cuban borders (its country of origin) dispersing throughout Latin America.

Danzón

This rhythm was fashioned in Creole Cuba in the late nineteenth century as a perfect blend of European and African elements. The *danzón* found its roots in the

contradanze and in the *danza* or *habanera*. It also became a national symbol of cultural identity when the struggle for independence took place in Cuba. The *danzón* is the basis for the development of important Cuban rhythms such as *cha cha chá*, *mambo*, *son*, and *rumba*. The creation of this dance is attributed to Miguel Failde, a *mulato* composer and bandleader whose second version of *Las Alturas del Simpson* in 1897 established the difference between the *danza* and the new *danzón*.¹ This rhythm distinguishes itself from the *danza* by maintaining a more relaxed pulse and also through the use of accents in every three notes in a binary measure. The following example from Arturo Marquez illustrates the accents very clearly:



Figure 13. Marquez, Danzón No. 2 for Orchestra, mm. 75-77, score.

We also notice the constant presence of syncopated rhythms, the fact that the rhythm contains three parts that portray different *tempos*, and also the 2/4 meter, which was at times written in 6/8. Cuban composer Emilio Grenet creates a parallel relation between the *danzón* and a classical form saying that it has the structure of *allegro - andante - allegro*.² The *danzón* also distinguishes itself from the *danza* because of the

¹ Heliana Portes de Roux, “Contradanzas, danzas y danzones.” *Entreartes*, no. 1 (2002): 85.

² Emilio Grenet, “Música cubana: Orientaciones para su conocimiento y estudio”, comp. Jean Paul Margot (Santiago de Cuba, 1996), 60-62.

use of the *cinquillo* (mentioned previously in the Holguín analysis), which is the fundamental rhythmic formula in Cuban dances that developed into the *clave*. In Spanish this term means key or code and refers to a five note pattern as does the *cinquillo* but is rhythmically organized in a different way. It is used in the most important Cuban rhythms that came after the *danza* and *danzón*. It evolved into different types of claves like the *son clave*, *rumba clave*, *6/8 clave*, and odd-meter *claves*.



Figure 14. *Cinquillo*. Alejo Carpentier, *La Música en Cuba* (México: Colección Popular, 1972; reprint, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004), 130.

This musical genre is represented by a sensual dance with a slower pace, which allows the dancing couple to draw closer together. This led to the *danzón* being viewed as licentious, generating controversy particularly in high-class circles where, paradoxically, the *danzón* was becoming very popular.

The *danzón* crossed its national borders and occupied the first line of preference in dance rooms across Europe and Latin America. In Mexico the *danzón* arrived by way of the Yucatán peninsula where a strong Cuban influence made of this dance a tradition that still survives even if in Cuba it remains a thing of the past due to the fact that other musical genres like *rumba*, *cha-cha-chá*, and *mambo* began supplanting the *danzón*. However, the association of writers and artists of Cuba is trying to revive this tradition

with the *Festival Internacional de Danzón*, which is celebrated every year in Cuba.¹ The *Danzón no.2* from Mexican composer Arturo Márquez is a world-renowned piece that is played extensively, especially in Latin America, and it has been regarded almost as a second National Anthem for Mexicans. Although the *danzón* is not a typical Colombian dance, works like Mejía's *Lopeziana* demonstrate that the folklore of Latin American countries share a common ancestry. Musicologist Otto Mayer Serra confirms this statement saying that there are more similarities in the musical folklore of all the Hispanic countries than there are differences.² Mejía, as a composer from the Caribbean region of Colombia, was aware of and applied in his music the Cuban rhythms that were gaining popularity throughout the other Latin American countries during the first half of the twentieth century.

Analysis

There is little here in the *Lopeziana* in the way of formal musical structure. Only in the first part of the piece are we vaguely able to distinguish the repetition of the melodic material. Another element lacking is the use of functional harmony due to the

¹ Ada Oramas, "Génesis y Signo del Danzón en el Baile Popular" *Cubahora* http://www.uneac.org.cu/index.php?module=eventos&act=show_details&id=203 (Accessed April 6, 2011).

² Otto Mayer Serra, *Enciclopedia de la Música* (Mexico D.F. Atlante, 1943), 2:398.

fact that the chords are used freely, without traditional harmonic function, and the majority of the resulting scales are modal.

Section **A**, which is also the initial theme, is made up of eight measures, the first phrase being in F# Aeolian with the responding phrase being in C# Aeolian. A pedal that revolves around the fundamental notes (F# and C#) gives harmonic support to this first section.

The violin plays a melody in its middle register, which features important characteristics from the Caribbean *danzón*. They include the accents (see Figure 2) of the second and third measures and the constant syncopation that permits a clear distinction of this dance from the *habanera* or *danza Cubana*. The piano also illustrates nationalistic elements, performing a contrapuntal line that features a variation of the aforementioned rhythmic formula of the *cinquillo* beginning with the first measure and after that in every other measure. The accents typical of the *danzón* are also present in the piano.



Figure 15. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm.1, score.

Figure 16. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm. 1-4, score.

Section **B** enters in high contrast with the previously heard **A** section. Several elements mark the dissimilarity between these two sections, with **B** having the following characteristics: the high register of the melody played by the violin; the function of the piano which changes and no longer supports the melody but instead accompanies it through the use of rapid figures and ample chord structures; and the heightening of the volume, which in section **B** is in *fortissimo* dynamic and *sforzato* articulation marks. However, there are two important elements that **B** preserves from **A** which are the modal treatment of the harmony and melody (C# Aeolian), and the characteristic rhythmic elements typical of the *danzón* which are the constant use of syncopation (starting at measure 17) and the presence of the *cinquillo* that is now presented in a different variation from the **A** theme.

Figure 17. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm.19, score.

Measure 12 and 16 bring an interesting harmonic formula through the use of the French sixth chord used to illustrate a new tonal color (and not for creating an initial modulatory point). Immediately after the Fr+6, a new diatonic melody emerges, played by the violin along with a contrary movement by the left hand in the piano part. This contrary movement leads us to the repetition of the **B** section and then a four measure bridge comprised of octave leaps in both right and left hands which serve as a preamble to the exact repetition of section **A**.

The image shows a musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Piano (Pno.) for measures 9 through 12. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 3/4. The violin part begins with a dynamic marking of *sfz ff* and contains a melodic line with various ornaments like accents and slurs. The piano part has a more complex accompaniment, also marked with *sfz*, and includes a French sixth chord in the final measure.

Figure 18. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm.9-12 , score.

Section **C** and **D** make up the central part of the piece where the melody and accompaniment stray from the strict rhythmic formula of the *danzón*, featuring improvised-like passages, arpeggiated accompaniment patterns and the free use of a variety of rhythmic figures. Section **C** begins with measure 38. Along with an ostinato accompaniment in C# aeolian by the piano, the violin plays an improvised-like melodic line which finishes in E ionian (the D# designating the 7th of the chord). The left hand piano continues playing the ostinato while the right hand produces a melodic line similar to that played previously by the violin, which in turn creates a counterpoint. The tailpiece

of the section resembles the beginning with the piano again playing an ostinato and moving in thirds from C# to the principal tone of F#. The melody of the violin then dissipates and becomes connected with the subsequent section.

The image shows a musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Piano (Pno.) for measures 41-43. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The violin part (top staff) begins with a half note G4, followed by a series of eighth notes: A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The piano part (bottom staff) features an arpeggiated accompaniment. The right hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The left hand plays a sequence of eighth notes: C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F#3, E3, D3, C3. The piano part is characterized by a constant presence of D# in the bass line.

Figure 19. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm. 41-43, score.

Section **D** begins with measure 56, where the violin continues playing the melodic line creating a descending arc while the piano accompanies with an arpeggiated B major 9 chord which is resolved on E. Measure 60 acts as a harmonic climax of the piece due to the concentration of notes found within it: F# diminished with an added 7th and 9th over an E pedal which acts as the bass. Taking the E as a principal tone, the piano then produces an ample plagal cadence (I-IV-I) while the violin plays a soloist passage like a short cadenza. The final four measures reaffirm the supremacy of the E (the last chord being a transparent E major) after which the section repeats entirely. From this point we begin to perceive the E as a tonal center because of the pedal on E in measure 60, the previously mentioned plagal cadence which finishes in an E major chord in the fermata of measure 65, and the constant presence of D#.



Figure 20. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm. 65, score.

Section E begins with measure 70, bringing back the rhythmic character of the *danzón*. Here the violin plays arpeggios while the piano performs with the right-hand syncopated figures typical of the aforementioned dance and of Caribbean music in general; the left hand plays a repeated pattern of offbeat accompaniment chords built by parallel fifths and octaves. At measure 75, the violin performs the syncopated figures and the piano keeps playing the chords, which creates a cadence-like motion leading us to an undetermined B chord without a third. This section is immediately repeated although the end of the section is varied in that it segues into a bridge in measure 82 that arrives at a change of the tonal center. The last chord of the section is formed by fifths that start in G.



Figure 21. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm. , score.

Section F, the final portion of the piece, is written in G Lydian and begins in measure 88. It is made up of two opposing rhythmic components: a *vivo*, where a melodic cell composed of two measures is played in the right hand of the piano and then imitated in the violin while the left hand of the piano accompanies with descending parallel thirds from the principal tone of the section to that of B minor.

Measures 91 and 93 exhibit the nationalistic element through the rhythmic pattern of syncopation followed by two eighth notes. The second portion of the section is indicated as being *lento*. The construction of this part seems to avoid any type of rhythmic melody. The violin creates an ample melodic line while the piano performs syncopated arpeggios with one hand and an offbeat B mixolydian structure with the other.

Vivo

Lento

Figure 22. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm. 89-91, 97-99, score.

Measure 103 prompts the coda and is composed of a descending melody of eight measures played by the violin, which reveal a characteristic two-measure cell. The piano accompanies and maintains an E pedal while playing E major arpeggios with a C# added until arriving to the final fermata (110) where the piece ends with a complete E major chord.



Figure 23. Mejía, *Lopeziana* (1951), mm. 104-105, score

Inside the nationalistic repertoire for violin and piano written by Colombian composers, this piece possesses a particular characteristic of having Afro-Caribbean rhythms, which are rarely found in the violin and piano repertoire of the academic music of Colombia and of Latin America. Although the *danzón* is not a typical dance of Colombian folklore, it presents important attributes that belong to the mixed traditions of African and European descendents. From the Caribbean region (which covers the Antilles and extends from the south of North America to the north of South America), great quantities of music and dances were developed that share the singular flavor of this region, relying on the power of its highly syncopated figures and characteristic

rhythmical patterns. In consequence, the *danzón* is one of a variety of dances that share many common elements that belong to the folklore of Latin American countries. Regarding this aspect, historian Otto Mayer Serra talks about the homogeneity of the folklore of Latin American countries which has nurtured a fertile ground for local composers to look for a national language where historical events allowed them to see the particularities of each nations folklore.³

Latin American people share a common ancestry that can be described as having more similarities than differences. It is this ancestry that happened to be defined by the political fate of each nation. The resultant frontiers of Latin American countries were delineated, ignoring the cultural bonds that the people of these territories share. Adolfo Mejía was able to transcend these barriers by illustrating the interest for Hispanic rhythms and moreover helped demonstrate that people from Latin America possess a folklore that is common and universal to all Latin American nations regardless of the folklore of their particular countries.

³ Ibid, 150.

CHAPTER 7

SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO No. 3 BY LUÍS

ANTONIO ESCOBAR: ANALYSIS

This sonata was composed in 1949 for the *Fabricato* musical contest (*Fabricato* being an important Colombian textile company) for which he received an honorable mention. The piece is written in three movements and features three Colombian folkloric rhythms that are found in the last two movements: the *torbellino*, *bambuco* and *caña*, which are typical folkloric airs from the Andean region of Colombia. Coincidentally these three dances are quoted in an article titled *El Tiple* from the journal *El Museo* that Harry C. Davidson quotes in his folkloric dictionary: “Our dances are a degeneration of the dances of the Peninsula. For us it is evident that our popular dances are not but a half wild parody of those. Compare our *bambuco*, our *torbellino*, our *caña* with the *fandango*, the *boleros*, the *jota aragonesa* and others and we find many points of likeness between them: elegant and poetic the latter, rude and prosaic the former, but legitimate siblings and descendants from a common source.”¹

This vision reveals how the Colombian colonial society undervalued the local manifestations of folklore. Fortunately time has given the strength of tradition to the Colombian dances which inspired composers like Escobar to use them as compositional elements for his works highly regard in the Colombian academic music.

¹ Harry C. Davidson, *Diccionario Folklórico de Colombia: Música, instrumentos y danzas*, vol. 1 (Bogotá: Publicaciones del Banco de la República, 1970), 208-209. “Nuestros bailes son una degeneración de los bailes de la Península. Para nosotros es evidente que nuestras danzas populares no son sino una parodia medio salvaje de aquellas. Comparemos nuestro bambuco, nuestro torbellino, nuestra caña con el fandango, los boleros, la jota aragonesa y otros y hallamos muchos puntos de semejanza entre ellos: elegantes y poéticos éstos, groseros y prosáicos aquellos; pero hermanos legítimos de un común tronco.”

I. Andante

This first movement of the sonata for violin and piano is made up of an enlarged binary form with two well-defined yet contrasting themes which are repeated and eventually are presented with changes in timbre and harmony. The movement closes with a short coda that uses elements from the first theme.

General Form: **I: A B :I A' B' Coda**

The first manifestation of section **A** is sixteen measures in length and is made up of two contrasting themes: the first, a generous melody (in its majority pentatonic) presented by the violin from the first to the sixth measure. The triplet is the main rhythmic figure here, creating polyrhythm with the accompaniment of the piano which is wholly binary. The piano alternates between downbeats, played by the left hand, and upbeats played by the right. A further analysis shows the left hand playing, in measures 4, 5, and 6, octave-based scales while the right hand plays chords based around quartal harmony.

Measures 7, 8, and 9 act as a bridge to the second theme where the piano plays the melody, keeping the binary rhythm intact while also accommodating the triplet

Andante

The image shows a musical score for the first six measures of the first movement of Escobar's Sonata No. 3. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of two systems. The first system includes a Violin part and a Piano part. The Violin part begins with a triplet of eighth notes, marked 'p' and 'ligado'. The Piano part has a right-hand line with chords and a left-hand line with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second system shows the Violin part with a triplet of eighth notes marked 'crescendo' and 'f'. The Piano part continues with chords and accompaniment.

Figure 24. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 1, mm. 1-6, score.

The second theme enters on an upbeat and contains an octave leap, a triplet, and two eighth notes. All of these elements are superimposed in measure 11 creating a stretto. First the violin enters, after which the right-hand piano line immediately enters, followed by the left hand and finally the violin, which finishes with a Bmaj7/9 chord, repeats the theme.

The second part is significantly different from the previous due to the fact that the character, the dynamics, and the melodic range are now expanded. The melody has become tonal while the harmony more chromatic with triadic chords and some additions of 7th's, which are used to lend color. The end of this section and the bridge to part **B** (measures 14 and 15) are reserved once more for the piano, which constructs a short imitated sequence with a 2/4 measure decisively designating the change to section **B**.

Figure 25. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 1, mm. 10-12, score.

Once section **B** begins, the tempo slows and the dynamics soften after which the violin plays a cantabile melody in E major. The bass register of the left hand of the piano then adds a second contrapuntal melody while the right hand highlights the melody and completes the harmony in a very fashionable Baroque style. Measure 25 becomes the transition for the repetition. Similarly to the previous one, the following section begins with an atypical 3/4 measure.

Figure 26. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 1, mm. 1-6, score.

The **A'** section starts with the recurrence of the main theme of section **A** which is introduced by the piano in measure 26 along with a contrapuntal line being played by the violin. Three measures after m. 26 the violin replays the pentatonic theme while the piano features the same accompaniment played in section **A** at the beginning of the movement. In measure 31 (six measures after presenting theme **A**) a transition or bridge begins, resembling once more the beginning of section **A**; but instead of going to the second part of **A** it moves directly to section **B'** which is in the key of B major. The majority of the material is identical with the first appearance of the first **B** section. The only adjustment is the three final measures of the section where Escobar dissolves the tonal center, finishing abruptly in measure 44 with an unexpected G#m7b5 chord. The coda is the last four measures of the movement, where the violin plays the central elements of section **A** and the piano also plays characteristic material of the accompaniment, finishing with a Gmaj7 chord.

II. Canciones del Campo

This movement features a ternary form (A-B-A) where the nationalistic aspect appears in the central part (B) featuring the folk air named *torbellino*.

Torbellino

This dance is characteristic of the Andean region of Colombia and specifically from the states of Boyacá, Cundinamarca, and Santander. There are two different

hypotheses regarding the origin of this dance: one that suggests it is Spanish in origin and the other that asserts that the dance originates from the indigenous culture. Both positions are supported by recognized musicologists in Colombian folklore. Guillermo Abadía Morales defends the native Indian hypothesis by identifying rhythmic similarity between the *torbellino* and the songs of journey called *Karakeney* that the tribes of the *Yucomotilones* (natives that come from the *Chibcha* family) sang when they undertook their long voyages. Abadía states that the rhythm of the *torbellino* depicts the fast walking called “*trotecito de indio*” that Indians used to help make these foot journeys a little easier while crossing mountains and savannahs. While resting they would sing *coplas* (a poetic unit of typically four lines) with the accompaniment of their *tiples* (folk instrument related to the guitar),² which were in charge of carrying the rhythm of the *torbellino*. The repetitive character of this dance is another element that resembles the indigenous music, which was considered to be monotonous by the chroniclers.³

The Spanish hypothesis is exposed by Daniel Zamudio who stated that the *torbellino* is related with the *galerón* which in turn bears rhythmical resemblance with the *guajira*, the Hispanic-Cuban dance.⁴ Zamudio also found a connection between the commonly used melodic elements of the *torbellino* and one of the primitive modes: the *tetrardus*, which is one of the four ancient modes. The first Spanish settlers brought these liturgical chants to the territories of the *Muiscas* (native Indians from the states of Cundinamarca and Boyacá that come from the *Chibcha* family) who learned them and

² Guillermo Abadía Morales, *La Música Folklórica Colombiana* (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional, 1973.), 62.

³ José Caicedo Rojas, “Don Alvaro,” *Revista de Bogotá*, no. 11 (Junio 1872): 688.

⁴ Daniel Zamudio, “El Folklore Musical en Colombia,” *Revista de las Indias* 35, no. 109 (1949): 13-15.

mixed them with the perceptions of their own environment and their feelings of love, sorrow and defeat.

The earliest source that refers to the dance itself is a printed document that José Ignacio Perdomo quotes in his *Historia de la Música en Colombia* regarding the arrival of the Viceroy Don Antonio Amar y Borbón. The aforementioned document illustrates the dances that were played for these occasions: *minuet*, *passe-pied*, *bretaña*, *jota*, *la manta*, *fandango*, *el punto*, *contradanza*, and *torbellino*.⁵ However, chronicler José Caicedo Rojas wrote in 1872: “In the year of 1600 the natives could never have imitated the *seguidillas* from the Spanish and the only thing they were capable of doing was to sing the *torbellino* out of tune,” contradicting previously formed notions.⁶ Another characteristic that reveals the *torbellino* as one of the earliest *mestizo* dances is the language used in most of the *torbellino* songs, which feature the old Castilian.

The *torbellino* is found in very early sources and state that the name comes from the literal meaning of the word, which is to spin around. This is reflected in the way this folk tune is danced, where the woman is constantly spinning. The *torbellino* however is not the same in the different states where it is performed. In the cold lands of Cundinamarca and Boyacá the melancholic character inherited from the *Chibchas* contrasts with the warm state of Santander where this dance is faster and more festive.

Regarding the musical characteristics of the *torbellino*, this folkloric air distinguishes itself by always keeping a 3/4 meter, the common use of syncopation with a predominance of eighth notes, and the fact that it usually ends with the dominant chord.

⁵ José Ignacio Perdomo, *Historia de la música en Colombia*, 5th ed. (Bogotá: ed. ABC, 1975), 50.

⁶ José Caicedo Rojas, “Don Alvaro,” *Revista de Bogotá*, no. 11 (Junio 1872): 686.

The traditional *torbellino* is generally composed of four-measure phrases that can be repeated several times throughout the dance and serve as musical background to the *copla*. This type of phrasing and the repetitive rhythm

gives a sense of continuity, a characteristic that also explains why the *torbellino* usually ends with the dominant chord.

Throughout history the *torbellino* has been a compulsory dance for every celebration and traditional festivity representing the spirit of the peasants from Cundinamarca, Boyacá and Santander, who still carry the imprint of their *Chibcha* antecessors.

Analysis

Canciones de Campo is a movement in a ternary form (A-B-A) where the A section is divided into three well-defined parts. The first is made up of nine measures, in which the melody is played by the violin and it is in the mode of B aeolian. This melody exhibits a G# in the first measure. Although it is a note foreign to the mode; Escobar uses it as some sort of nonchord tone that leads to the following A of the second measure. In this passage the piano line plays a counterpoint to the melody on the violin using non-functional chords. This theme is as divided in two sub-parts as well: the initial phrase (established by the first four measures on the violin) and the resultant phrase that is composed of the following five measures, ending in a Gmaj9 chord.

First Sub-part

First Measure of
Second
Sub-part

The image shows a musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Piano (Pno.) in 3/4 time, marked Lento. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The Violin part begins with a melodic line starting on D5, moving through E5, F#5, G5, and A5, with dynamics ranging from *p* (piano) to *f* (forte). The Piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score covers measures 1 through 5.

Figure 27. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 2, mm. 1-5, score.

The second part of the A section has only four measures that repeat at the double bar, ending in an authentic V7-I cadence in which the A# gives us a sense of a B minor key.

The image shows a musical score for measures 12 and 13. The Violin part (top staff) has a melodic line with a double bar line at the end of measure 12. The Piano part (bottom two staves) has a rhythmic accompaniment with a double bar line at the end of measure 13. The key signature remains two sharps.

Figure 28. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 2, mm. 12-13, score.

As with those before it, the final part of **A** is constructed by the piano and violin counterpoint which return to B aeolian. The entrance is performed in the higher register of the piano while the left hand plays a reiterative bass line that is only modified during the last two measures. The violin is the last to enter, exposing a theme extracted from the first part of the movement, and finishes this section accompanied by the piano, which is sounding a C# minor 7 chord.



Figure 29. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 2, mm. 16-19, score.

The central part of the movement (**B**) is in G major and features the aforementioned *torbellino* rhythm, which Escobar characterizes by the indication mark “un poco mas alegre” (a little happier). After the piano plays three introductory measures (beginning measure 21) the violin enters with the task of exhibiting the four phrases which are comprised of four measures each. This organization of the phrases, the use of eight notes as the main rhythmic figures and the often syncopation portray the most relevant characteristics of the *torbellino*.

Un poco más alegre

Figure 30. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 2, mm. 21-24, score.

The first phrase is in G major, the second and third are built on the dominant, and the fourth is in G major finishing on the dominant, which marks the end of the *torbellino* leading to the repetition of the entire **B** section. Finally, Escobar returns to the A theme, which is the exposition of its first eight measures bearing the same attributes; the only difference is the fermata at the end of the phrase which also marks the end of the movement.

III. Bambuco

The last movement of this work for violin and piano is written in a ternary form with well-defined and contrasting sections where the nationalistic aspect is represented by two typical dances from which the *bambuco* is the most important within the Colombian musical folklore.

Bambuco

The history of the *bambuco* is intrinsically attached to the formation of Colombia as a nation, embarked upon after the war of independence. It is the most representative folkloric air from the Andean region and it has been labeled as the national dance par excellence. This idea blossomed and was represented through the writings of important Colombian writers like Rafael Pombo and José María Samper, who found in the *bambuco* the representation of the national identity of a newborn nation based on the amalgamation of several cultures. Based on the exhaustive work of Harry C. Davidson, who dedicates the majority of the first volume of his *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia*⁴ to the dance, the origin of the *bambuco* is said to be at the end of the nineteenth century in the regions of the old Cauca (an extensive territory during the colony time that was ruled by the government of Popayán). The oldest source quoted not only by Davidson but also by other scholars (Carlos Miñana, German Patiño, Miguel Antonio Cruz) that refers to the *bambuco* is a letter that general Santander sent to general Paris dated December 6, 1819. Using a jovial tone, Santander wrote to his colleague in Popayán suggesting a series of typical things from the region, among which he specifically recommended dancing the *bambuco*.

As with the other folkloric dances, the scholars have different opinions about the origin of the *bambuco*, where each one of them defend their own positions regarding its indigenous, Spanish, or African birth. Regarding the summary of the different hypotheses that Javier Ocampo Lopez includes in his book *El Folclor y los Bailes Típicos*

⁴ Harry C. Davidson, *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia: Música, instrumentos y danzas*, vol. 1 (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 1970), 2:500.

Colombianos, the native Indian origin of the *bambuco* refers to a tribe called *Bambas* who occasionally used the suffix “*uco*” in their language and the *bambucos* were part of their traditional music. The dance’s African origin is first proposed by Colombian writer Jorge Isaacs in 1876 in his novel *La María* which states that the *bambuco* came from the African region of Bambuk; more recently however Guillermo Abadía Morales made reference to the Antillean instruments called *Caránganos* which were made of *bambú* (bamboo) wood, consequently the music performed with them was called *bambucos*. The Spanish hypothesis attaches the origin of the *bambuco* to musical manifestations from the Basque country in Spain, specifically with a dance called *zortzico*.

Although many theories about the origin of the *bambuco* can be put on the table of discussion, the essence of this dance is eminently of *amestizo* nature. Historian Germán Patiño quotes Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, who stated that when different cultures come together, even though there is one that dominates, the others do not remain passive; instead they interact and modify the predominant one creating over time a new culture with its own identity.⁵ In this sense the *bambuco* is proof of the aforementioned statement, which important composers and scholars from the Colombian musical scene like Daniel Zamudio, Andrés Pardo Tovar, José Ignacio Perdomo and Luís Antonio Escobar support, reaffirming that the *bambuco* is a dance that spontaneously emerged from the mixing of the three races which has, over the years, taken on a national identity of its own.

The dynamism in society provoked by the process of independence caused the *bambuco*, which started as a popular manifestation of the lower classes, to escalate to the

⁵ Germán Patiño, “Raíces de africanía en el bambuco,” *Pacífico sur*, no. 2 (2004): 39.

higher portions of society. The battles of emancipation also introduced the Romantic era, which came strongly attached with the idea of building a new nation where the *bambuco* played a main role. This folkloric dance also manifested itself through the social cohesion that guaranteed a unified country based on the principles of *mestizaje*. However, the predominance of the *bambuco* as the most representative dance of Colombia would eventually lead to the undervaluing of the cultural diversity of this country and the different folkloric rhythms that rose in other regions. The *bambuco* became one more symptom of a strong centralism that has marked Colombian society and history.

The musical characteristics of the *bambuco* have also been a topic for debate among scholars and composers who, trying to grasp its rhythmic essence on paper, have not agreed whether it should be written in 6/8 or 3/4. Luís Antonio Escobar makes sure not to fall into the endless discussion and goes ahead and uses both meters in the third movement of his third violin and piano sonata. The *bambuco* also features much syncopation which gives it its polyrhythmic character and is formally divided into two parts of which the first is in a minor key and the second in major. The *bambuco* is a flattery dance where the woman teases the man and finishes with a mutual hug.

Caña

The *caña* is a folkloric dance that, while not as renowned as the *bambuco* or *torbellino*, holds an important place in Colombian musical culture and also represents one of the earliest agricultural industries in Colombia, which is the production of sugar. This industry has existed from middle of the seventeenth century and thus leads us to the

conclusion that the *caña* was born around that time. The *caña* is an air that portrays the making of sugar and its typical Colombian derivatives: *panela*, *guarapo*, *chicha*. Therefore every step of the dance resembles each one of the movements performed in the *trapiche* (typical place with antiquated machinery where the sugar and its derivatives are made) and the lyrics as well tell in the process of the making of the sugar. The meter of this rhythm is in 6/8 and thus bears similarity to the *bambuco*. In his book *La Música Folklórica de Colombia* Abadía Morales refers to the *caña* as an old *bambuco* with a strophic passage.⁶ In this sense we can affirm that the *caña* is an antecedent of the *bambuco*, however Davidson affirms that the choreography of both dances is very different.⁷

He also asserts that the origin of this dance is purely Spanish due to the existence of the Spanish dance called *caña* from the region of Andalucía.⁸

Analysis

The movement is written in a ternary form with many contrasting themes found in every section:

General Form: **A** **B** **A** Coda

(alegre) (un poco lento) (alegre)

Part A is written in 3/4 whereas part B is in 6/8.

⁶ Guillermo Abadía Morales. *La Música folklórica Colombiana*. (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1973), 89.

⁷ Harry C. Davidson, *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia: Música, instrumentos y danzas*, vol. 2 (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 1970), 85.

⁸ *Ibid*, 82.

Section **A** is composed of an internal binary form where the two components contrast with each other: the first part extends to measure 18 and is an ample passage made up of varied phrases where the violin and the piano accompany each other. The harmony is constantly being added to with new color, which is the result of the free use of modal harmony. The first five measures are in B dorian after which five measures follow beginning with the formation of the B minor chord with an 11th and 13th added. Meanwhile, the violin features pizzcatti with the left hand in measures 8 and 9. Measure 11 brings with it the dominant seventh chord with an added sharp ninth that ambiguously resolves in measure 12 where the piano plays the D (the third of the chord) and D# notes simultaneously. The five measures that close out this part (14-18) are the consequence of the repetition of a measure built upon quartal chords. In the rhythmical aspect the left hand of the piano is always playing the accompaniment of the *bambuco*.

The image displays a musical score for measures 6 through 18 of the third movement of Escobar's Sonata No. 3. It consists of two staves: Violin (Vln.) and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is B major (two sharps). The violin part begins with a whole note chord in measure 6, followed by a half note chord in measure 7, and then a series of eighth notes with pizzcatti markings in measures 8 and 9. The piano part features a steady accompaniment of eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand, marked with a 'crescendo y bien marcado' instruction. The score concludes with a final chord in measure 18.

Figure 31. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 3, mm. 1-6, score.

The second part of the section begins in measure 19 with a melody of five measures in the *caña* style while the piano doubles parts of the melody and complements the chords, all revolving around B mixolydian.



Figure 32. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 3, mm. 19-20, score.

The following five measures serve as brief interlude before the introduction of the *caña* theme comes once more; this time transposed to D mixolydian. The section finishes with a codetta made up of arpeggiated chords in 6/8 time while the left hand plays eighth notes in 3/4. This codetta begins in measure 34 followed by a quartal chord in measure 37 and then a G major chord, which introduces the new tonality (G major). A change in the meter and in the key signature introduces section **B**, which is written in a 6/8 time signature. It is composed of two main parts, the first of which is constructed of three phrases without much melodic relationship between their themes. This part is fifteen measures long and within it the aforementioned three phrases are made up of five measures each, where Escobar incorporates new elements attempting to exhibit their individuality. The first phrase is played by the violin and reinforced by the piano and it is here that the second voice and the resulting harmony are distinguished as being quartal; it

is only in the end that the tonic chord is placed, albeit with several odd notes. The second phrase starts at measure 43 and is characterized by the borrowed notes from the minor key; in these first two themes, Escobar uses glissandi combined with double stops on the violin which give more character to the *bambuco* played in 6/8. The third phrase features a polymetric passage and is divided in two sub-phrases written in 6/8 time but implying a 9/8 signature. The phrase ends with a decrease in timbre and dynamic while ostensibly searching for the G major tonality.

The second part of **B** begins with the repetition of the previous measure, played an octave higher on the piano. Immediately after, the new polymetric phrase enters, made up of six measures comprised of three syncopated sub-phrases, and the part then ends with a break in measure 60, allowing a transparent G major to sound. The final phrase is enveloped by the piano, the first sub-phrase, and by the violin (played in a higher register using diminished chords which progress towards the tonality of **A**.)

The re-emergence of section **A** is written identically in form to its counterpart during its first 23 measures and is eventually followed up by a five-measure interlude with added harmonies, which takes us to the distinctive theme of the second part of **A** (the *caña* rhythm) that shifts again toward D mixolydian. Two major differences between this latter **A** and the former one is the *stretto* that builds up to measure 97 and the fact that the piano now begins the theme that is then imitated by the violin which continues with the complete presentation of the theme.

Figure 33. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 3, mm. 98-99, score.

Three measures follow where the musical material is made up of small comments interrupted by rests. Two measures follow containing fermatas that slow down the continuous rhythmic motion.

The final passage is a product of the alteration of the previous theme where measures of 3/4 and 6/8 are alternated. The accompaniment is a simple counterpoint that evolves until it reaches a texture of large portions of quartal intervals, which are played until measure 128 where the piano creates a manner of epilogue that connects with the high register in order to bring about a short coda made up of two distinctive segments. The first three measures (measure 131–133) make up the first segment which is in *piano* dynamic with a slow tempo indicated by the word *lento* (slow) linked by a descending scale to the second segment (measure 135–137) that, in obvious contrast with the previous one, is in *forte* dynamic with a *rápido* tempo and reiterates a B major chord in its second inversion.

First Segment: Measures 131-133.

Lento
p *pp*
Lento *p* *8^{va}*

Second Segment with Scale that Connects: Measures 134-137.

f *Tiempo* *Rápido* *seco*
f *f* *f*
Rápido Medellin, agosto de 1949

Figure 34. Escobar, Sonata No.3 (1949), mvt. 3, mm. 134-137, score.

Sonata No.3 for Violin and Piano from Luís Antonio Escobar clearly portrays the nationalistic intention of the composer, who uses some of the most representative rhythms of Colombian folklore. Escobar grew up in a country town of Cundinamarca that borders the state of Boyacá, where the *bambuco*, *torbellino*, and *caña* have been cultivated over generations. He lived in this environment that deeply influenced his musical career and throughout the years Escobar maintained a permanent relationship with Colombian folklore, which was reflected not only in his compositions, but also in his research published in several books.

Escobar organized his work in a way that every folk rhythm defined a new section or a movement such as the third, which Escobar named *bambuco*. This compositional plan ascribes great importance to each folk rhythm aside from the fact that he clearly portrays these dances with their main melodic and rhythmic characteristics.

Escobar's nationalistic inspiration was a response to his attachment to the Andean folklore that he was raised with since his childhood in his little town of *Villapinzón*, and thus his stylistic approach was an expression of a man and composer deeply influenced by his musical roots.

CHAPTER 8.

DÚO RAPSÓDICO CON AIRES DE CURRULAO FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO BY

ANDRÉS POSADA: ANALYSIS

This piece was commissioned and premiered by the Bloom Duo of the United States in 1985 during a tour in Colombia. Composed of two movements to be played without pause, the most important characteristic of this musical work is the usage of thematic references to the *currulao Mi Buenaventura*, introducing the rhythms of the Pacific region of Colombia to the nationalistic violin and piano repertoire.

The first movement consists of a slow introduction (*andante*) that anticipates musical elements of the second part. The compositional processes involve the transformation and development of themes from the famous *currulao* composed by Petronio Álvarez Quintero, named *Mi Buenaventura*. *Currulao* is one of the most characteristic dances from the Pacific region of Colombia and employs the rhythm that inspired Petronio Alvarez—a composer originally from the Cascajal island, which is located close to Buenaventura City, the main port of the Pacific region of Colombia. Throughout his piece, Andrés Posada explores the colorful sonorities of major and minor seconds, major and minor sevenths, tritones, fourths, and perfect fifths. Quite often these intervals appear juxtaposed, creating clashes that result in interesting sonorities. Although this work cannot be placed within a tonal context, the chord of F# major appears as a harmonic pillar in both parts of the piece, thus playing the role of the main tonal center. D is also a note that Posada uses in several and important moments in the music, creating

the secondary tonal center. These intervals suggest the keys of F# major and D, the latter of which is the original key of *Mi Buenaventura*.

Currulao

The earliest reference of the *currulao* was found by Harry C. Davidson. He traced the term back to certain eighteenth-century historical documents, the main source being the *Compendio de Antioquia*, which affirms that “the popular dances of the black people were the *Mapalé* and *Currulao*.”¹ There are several sources from these times that describe this dance and its characteristics, although at times they do so with the bitter language of discrimination, reflecting the animosity of the society of the time towards those of African descent.

The article *Análisis de especies folklóricas*² exposes two different hypotheses about the origin of the word *currulao*: the first one, and most accepted by different folklorists (Javier Ocampo López, Guillermo Abadía Morales, and Rosni Fontalvo among others), links its origin to the drum used for the *cununo*, a dance which comes from the *Quechua* word *cunununun*, which means thunder. Based on the word *cununo*, people began using the adjective *cununao*, which would eventually become *currulao*. The second hypothesis refers to one of the steps of this dance where the man corners the

¹ Harry C. Davidson, ed., *Diccionario folklórico de Colombia: música, instrumentos y danzas*, Vol. 1 (Bogotá: Publicaciones del Banco de la República, 1970), 151-157, Manuel Uribe Ángel, *Compendio de Antioquia*, 151.

² Nidia Zoraya Colmenares and Clara Inés Sánchez “Análisis de Especies Folklóricas Latinoamericanas: El Currulao,” *Boletín interamericano de educación musical* 10 (1988): 33-37.

woman in an attempt to flirt; this step is called *acorralao* (cornered), and possibly came to be *currulao*.

The *currulao* comes from the Pacific coast of Colombia, where many African slaves were brought in to work during the Colonial period in the several mines found in the territory. This area is made up of four states of the Colombian region: Chocó, the west part of Nariño, Valle, and Cauca.

In the *currulao*, both the man and woman dance separately, even if he is always looking for the attention of the woman through different gestures and movements. It is a very passionate type of dance with an intensely ritualistic nature. The instruments used in this dance are the marimba de chonta (of west African origin), which carries the melody, and the *cununos* (drums), which are divided in *cununo macho* and *cununo hembra*. The *macho* is the bass drum and bears the charge of calling the *hembra*, a smaller and higher pitched drum, to start the dance. Other drums are also used in this dance: the *bombo* and *redoblante* are played by a choir of female voices called *cantadoras*, which are also known as *gusaceras* since they perform the *guasá* as well. The *guasá* is a type of shaker that supplies a contrasting timbre to the sound of the drums. There is also a female soloist that sings the verses along with the *bajonera*, a second voice and a choir that always sings the refrain. The rhythm of the *currulao* is 6/8 although the drums can also perform ternary rhythms at the same time. This rhythm's hypnotic effect is due to its constant repetition and to the basic melodic patterns of the marimba that are closely associated with the rhythm.

First Movement: Andante

This first movement has the important characteristic of starting from almost nothing and grows considerably in texture, rhythmic motion, range, and dynamic. This andante is composed of two sections separated by a bridge section. The onset of the piece features the piano, which plays long note values where F# is followed by a G, thus forming a minor second. The violin enters in the seventh measure with a long A that starts developing into a chromatic musical idea which coincides with the *calmo e misterioso* marked by the composer. The texture of the music thickens until it arrives to a climactic F# major chord with a D in the violin (measure 23) which Posada uses to give color and to drive the listener away from a tonal atmosphere.

The F# is played continuously from the beginning until measure 24, functioning as a pedal for this section. From this point a countermelody starts in the piano, serving as a bridge between the two sections of this first movement. This transitional passage decreases the intensity reached in the previous section and introduces the character of the beginning of the piece. The bridge, however, also has the same characteristics of both of the sections and of the movement overall: growing from a soft dynamic, thin texture, and long rhythmic values to a climactic point in measure 33 achieved by the increasing of the dynamic, an ascending melody and faster rhythmic values. In this case, it finishes on an F# major chord, as did the previous section, but this time the odd note is the F natural.

Measure 34 introduces the last section, which is longer than the first one and starts with a D, which in this case forms a minor second with a C#. The sequence of F# - A# - D from the beginning of the bridge now returns, providing a sense of duality

between F# major and the D, which we can associate with the original key (D minor) of the *currulao Mi Buenaventura*.

In measure 42, both instruments introduce quarter- and half-note triplets that reveal the triplet feeling of the *currulao*. These new rhythmic elements add certain musical ideas that will increase the rhythmical motion (especially in the violin), to reach another climactic point in measure 48, where the bass plays F# and the violin sustains a B-flat (enharmonic to A#), which represents an interesting relation of notes that can be viewed as common tones of F# major and D minor keys. In fact, measure 52 has the feeling of a strong cadence in which the voices merge to a D after a *poco ritard*. The violin again insinuates in measure 56 the *currulao* theme that will develop completely in the second movement. Measure 56 also introduces for the first time a glissando will be used on many occasions ahead, especially in the second movement with the theme. These glissandi are popularly used in the interpretation of the *currulao* in orchestral arrangements and any chamber ensembles with violin.³

The first movement of this piece finishes on a fortissimo dynamic that corresponds with the ascending register and the more agitated rhythmic motion, preparing the atmosphere of the second movement.

³ See, Petronio Alvarez, *Mi Buenaventura*, arranged by Blas Emilio Atehortua (1966).

Second Movement

From a formal perspective, this movement is clearly highlighted by three contrasting sections:

1. The first (fast) section goes on from measure 1 to measure 76.
2. Second section (slow) from measure 77 to 110.
3. Third section (fast) from measure 111 to the end.

The movement begins with one perfect fifth (F# - C#), after which it presents another (D - A). In my conversations with the composer, he stated that he often enjoys using a pattern of notes or chords as reference points, a practice which gives unity and provides a structural basis to his music. From this perspective, Posada uses two musical ideas that do not have the characteristics of overall themes; however, they have thematic qualities since they appear several times in the piece, developing at the same time in a variety of ways: in a fragmented manner or changed from the initial idea. The first idea, for example, is characterized by the constant use of the perfect fifth F# - C#, which consequently becomes the motif of the first musical idea. Posada also develops a very interesting dialogue between the diminished and perfect fifths, which gives the sensation of tension and release. He especially uses the F# and C# perfect fifth as a point of stabilization throughout the piece, where the F# is a tonal center.

The second musical idea is the *currulao*. Here, Posada uses the rhythmic formula of this folkloric dance, which establishes the character of the piece while also quoting the popular tune *Mi Buenaventura*.

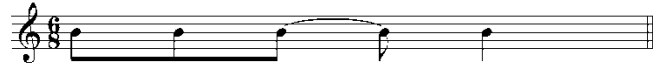


Figure 35. Rhythmic formula of the currulao, score.

The strong beginning exposes the first musical idea, which is very characteristic throughout the movement due to the constant use of perfect and diminished fifths. This part contrasts highly with the *tranquilo* marked in the piano and the *plácido* in the violin that enters at measure 11 in a *piano* dynamic. This part functions as a bridge between the thematic idea of the fifths that always come in forte or fortissimo dynamic. This sudden change of character anticipates the *currulao* in measure 35, where the first reference to *Mi Buenaventura* appears. In these references Posada explores new sonorities where he chooses interesting intervallic relations. However, the *Mi Buenaventura* themes can be clearly identified.



Figure 36. Alvarez, *Mi Buenaventura*, violin part from arrangement by Blas Emilio Atehortua (1996), mm. 1-7, score.

Figure 37. Posada, Dúo rapsódico con aires de currulao, mvt. 2, mm. 35-38.

A second reference of *Mi Buenaventura* follows with the violin and connects with the musical idea from the beginning. This time, however, both voices exchange the musical material, and it is developed through the glissandi that the violin constantly plays. Posada also uses pizzicati after these glissandi to give a more percussive feeling to the music. It resembles the aforementioned *marimba de chonta*, the typical percussive and melodic instrument of the *currulao*.

The violin plays another reference of *Mi Buenaventura* from measure 68 until measure 74. It precedes the slow section, which like the other slow passages of both movements is introduced by the piano. The music in this part is rhythmically stagnant and made up of long note values, reminding the listener of the first movement. It also revolves tonally around D minor because of the constant use of D, Bb, and C# notes of which C# appears as a leading tone to D in measures 80 and 95. A fortissimo subito anticipates a diminished B chord with a minor seventh/ninth and eleventh. An F# pedal appears in measure 102 that resembles the beginning of the piece.

The last section of this movement starts at measure 111, where the musical material from the opening appears again for the third time. Its distinctive fifths suddenly break the atmosphere of the slow section. We then are presented with commentaries of the *currulao* on the violin that are now linked with the thematic fifths of the beginning. In measure 145, a cadenza on the violin starts, reaching its peak in measure 165 and from there the piano enters and the violin line finally descends into a chromatic sequence that prepares for the most climactic point: measures 177 to 182, where the violin line also features another important reference of *Mi Buenaventura*.

After the cadenza, the *currulao* and the main theme are superimposed. In measure 197 the piano begins a new idea where the composer marks *tema* (theme) and it is in a forte dynamic on purpose so as to overpower the violin that plays motifs from the musical idea of the beginning of the movement in a *piano* dynamic. The part that the piano plays (*tema*) consists of strong chords played on the right hand and it concludes with a *ff* chord made up of the notes D-A-D-C#-F#-C#. Towards the end, the F# becomes more present as a tonal center. We can clearly see this in measure 215 where the violin and the piano play chords that only have the F# and C# perfect fifth while carrying the rhythmic formula of the *currulao*; all of this happening in fortissimo dynamic. The piece finishes in an F#-C# interval that goes to a long F# which fades away on the violin.

In contrast with the other works reviewed in this paper, this piece has the signature of a composer circumscribed to a contemporary musical language. In my conversations with Posada, he manifested his admiration towards the renowned composer Béla Bartók, through whose music we can see the innovative use of different intervallic relations. Bartók gives great importance to minor and major seconds and sevenths,

tritones, and perfect fifths and fourths. The influence of the Hungarian composer is present in Posada's work, which combines this intervallic use with the melodic and rhythmic quotes of the *currulao Mi Buenaventura*. Within this piece we are privy to the first use of this specific Colombian rhythm from the Pacific coast employed within the repertoire of a Colombian violin and piano ensemble. Thus the piece attests to the diversity of Colombian musical folklore and allows Posada to use the violin and piano as instruments capable of performing music of such highly rhythmic quality.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

The historical facts that determined the formation of Colombia as a nation and the legacy left by its nationalistic composers led to the analysis of a term that has been vaguely defined when used in a general context. This term is *identity*, a word that is widely used in both spontaneous and academic language. In fact, it has been used in different parts of this paper and has gnawed at my own sense of identity every time I pressed the letters of the keypad to write this apparently simple word. Social Sciences professor Michael Billig states that all people's minds are filled with different patterns of identity (i.e., religious, ethnic, national, sexual, etc.) waiting to be triggered by an external motivation.¹ In other words, identity is like a dormant entity that exists inside every one of us and takes a specific form when an external precondition defines it. This definition carries with it a responsible attitude towards identity in the sense that it encourages an informed decision when looking for models of identification. However, there are predetermined models that we can have no influence over such as nationality, because it is obvious nobody can choose his or her place of birth.

Nations as we know them today came about after the industrialization era, when rural lifestyles and ethnical particularities were dissolved or relegated to the contexts of bigger entities such as cities and metropolises. Therefore we are citizens of different countries circumscribed to an implicit national identity that is accepted by the majority but analyzed by few. Following this train of thought, this paper has focused on the

¹ Michael Billig, "El Nacionalismo banal y la reproducción de la identidad nacional," *Revista mexicana de sociología* 60, no. 1 (1998): 47.

analysis of national identity through the works of four Colombian composers who with their own music undertook the challenge to question and explore national identity. These pieces of music motivated research into the origins of Latin American nations, and specifically Colombia. The effort put forth by these individuals has made me realize as a Colombian myself the great cultural diversity that this country possesses and how much it needs to be explored. However, in terms of identity again, I saw how the people of Colombia lost their bearings, forgetting our antecessors and where our culture as a whole came from. The sense of emptiness is even deeper when the strong influences of developed countries, many of them moved by commercial purposes, overshadow local cultural manifestations.

Folkloric Colombian music still survives in rural areas, although the impact of violence and industrial development has evidently reduced this traditional manifestation. In the cities, folkloric Colombian music became the study of specialists and scholars who have been trying to collect the musical memory of a country in their writings, much in the same way that archeologists relinquished the native handcrafted pieces that remain in El Museo del Oro (The Gold Museum) in Bogotá. The relentless diminution of folkloric expressions in Colombia is one of the consequences of the great ability to forget from which the people of this country suffer, not only from culturally but also socially and politically. In this sense, poverty and violence have burrowed a hole in the hearts and minds of Colombian people and brought about a sense of complacency which has become the only way to live sanely. Paradoxically, this capacity to forget has held an important place in Colombian history, dating as early as the colonial period, when its native peoples were obliged to forget their traditions. Independence would also bring

along with it the rejection of Spanish manifestations by the Creole class, which left behind the development of religious music achieved in the cathedrals, convents, and monasteries. After Independence, the formation of Colombia as a nation left in its wake innumerable tragic results whose effects are still being felt today: the previously mentioned violence, injustice, and corruption which Colombians have grown accustomed to has led to a widespread indifference that allows people to plead a certain amount of ignorance of any implicit responsibility.

However, Colombia has many positive values to express through its folklore and through the works of our painters, writers, performers, and composers who have struggled to create an artistic memory for this country. In my opinion the salvation of Colombia and its people resides in the discovery of our cultural background and in the appreciation of our folkloric and artistic manifestations. As a Colombian I see the necessity of putting together the pieces of our lost past and perceiving inside every one of us the indigenous, African, and Spanish ancestors who formed this amalgamated nation. As a violinist I feel a responsibility to discover and perform the music that Colombian composers have written for the instrument, many pieces of which were inspired by Colombian folklore. The ubiquity of the violin allows any performer of the instrument or any composer to consider it a fundamental exponent of the nationalistic music of many countries in the world. In Colombia there is still much research to be done, and this paper is just an initial exploration into the nationalistic repertoire for violin written by Colombian composers.

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