

To Sell or Not to Sell the Pomade: Andean Music Boom Stories and Bolivian Nationalism

Michelle Bigenho (Hampshire College)

In August 2005, a Bolivian ensemble was returning home from a one-week performance tour of Colombia. The Bolivian consulate in Colombia organized the tour, covering the travel expenses of seventeen musicians, but not extending their largesse to include remuneration for the musicians' work. This arrangement is not unusual for folklore musicians who have remained outside a general process of commercialization. On the connecting flight from Lima to La Paz, Evo Morales happened to be on the same flight. At the time, Morales was a candidate for the Bolivian presidency with MAS (*Movimiento al Socialismo*, Movement Towards Socialism). Running with a campaign against neoliberalism, against US-imposed coca eradication policies, for a constituent assembly, and for reclaiming Bolivian control over hydrocarbon resources, Morales went on to win the presidency in December 2005, bringing in a record 54% of the vote. On the August plane trip, members of the ensemble quietly joked: "Now we have a new trumpet player" –in reference to Morales' purported skills on this instrument. Morales used to play in a band in Oruro. As we were waiting in the aisles to deplane, the joking banter continued with "¡*Qué no bloquee!*" (Don't let him block!), a side reference to road blocks that are standard fare in popular Bolivian politics, and that become a concern for musicians who might have performance contracts in the interior of the country when a road block is in place. Among members of this ensemble, I have always sensed ambivalence about Bolivian electoral politics, a general frustration with the endless promises that have resulted in no changes in the struggles of their everyday lives. Their playful jibes were not necessarily against "Evo," as Bolivians call him, but against one jet-setting politician among others.

Initial reports from Bolivia registered a tremendous level of optimism about what Morales might accomplish. Needless to say, great hopes rested heavily on the shoulders of this man. But I want to rewind to that shared moment on an international flight. The folklore musicians did not exchange words directly with Morales; but what they shared with him was a particular subject position of going out into the international sphere—shared jet-setting even if their conditions, motivations, objectives, and outcomes were quite distinct. A facile reading of this transnational travel might invoke the big "g" word, "globalization," and its accompanying metaphors of "flow"; but I heed Mary Louise Pratt's warnings about this vocabulary—that explains little while obfuscating the conditions under which people move through the world (n.d.; also see Turino 2000: 6-7). Not all jet-setters are created equal. Bolivian musicians, like other "Andean" performers (see Meisch 2002: 135), often travel at the invitation of foreign governments, municipalities, and schools, and these invitations come with preset expectations. These musicians traveled from their country in representation of Bolivian national folklore—a set of staged performances that, since the 1930s, has included indexical representations of an indigenous world, even if mestizo performers have dominated the stages where these

representations unfold.¹ Throughout this article I will slip back and forth between the terms “Bolivian folklore music” (a national reference) and “Andean music” (a regional reference linked to the real and imagined geography of the Andes mountains and the indigenous peoples believed to live within them). Rather than drawing a clear separation between these phrases, I want to call attention to the very slipperiness that characterizes how Bolivian musicians and their audiences use these terms, in reference to both national signifiers and international imaginings of an exotic world. While “globalization” is often associated with a shrinking of nation-states, Bolivian folklore groups still depend on the ideological weight of *national* imaginaries, even if these become regional associations—that is “Andean”—in their international work. While many discussions of globalization and world music focus on ethical issues that may be framed as cultural borrowing or cultural appropriation (Feld 2000; Feld 1994; Erlmann 1999), I want to focus on how musical globalization and nationalist frames are mutually constitutive (also see Turino 2000). Globalization, as Peter Wade reminds us, can bolster rather than undercut nationalisms (2000: 12). An attempt to unpack the meanings of the Andean music boom must grapple with national, international, and transnational articulations—often slipping between these terms of reference. While the “national” and “international” assume practices based on nation-state forms, the “transnational” alludes to the oblique or transformative connections that are not always subsumed within the workings of the nation-state (see Ong 1999: 4).

While Morales has experienced encounters with global heads of state, his transnational connections are also thought to operate through indigenous issues that may potentially work at the interstices of nation-state boundaries, even though indigenous issues are still very much shaped within nation-states. For example, when Morales framed his own victory as one for indigenous peoples in response to over 500 years of oppression (Morales 2005), he drew on a narrative that resonates with indigenous peoples throughout the Americas. Both Bolivian folklore musicians and leaders like Evo Morales have appealed to a global circulation of indigeneity—a multifaceted discourse, deployed within institutional practices and market-driven processes, that champions those who have lived in a position of marginality; as a discourse, indigeneity is also shaped by different colonial forms, by post-coloniality and by a sense of “first-ness” (see De la Cadena and Starn 2007; Canessa 2006; Clifford 2001: 472). The degree to which Morales has played off his indigenous background is a point of contemporary reflection and debate, but there is little doubt about the global reverberation of Morales’ indigeneity, as many news articles about him include the phrase “first indigenous president of Bolivia.”² Key moments globally frame the contemporary landscape of indigeneity: the marking of the quincentennial (1492-1992) as 500 years of indigenous resistance (Hale 1994), the 1990s as the decade of indigenous peoples, the awarding of a Nobel peace prize to a woman who has become a global icon of indigenous peoples (Rigoberta Menchú), and

¹ Some authors link the 1952 Revolutionary state to the rise of Bolivian folklore music as a national project (Céspedes 1993), and other authors focus on a cultural process that began in the 1930s, at the end of the Chaco War (Sánchez Patzy 2002; Rojas Rojas 2005; Bigenho 2005), the moment that historians point to in relation to an incipient national community (Arze Aguirre 1987; Montenegro 1943: 235-239; Rivera Cusicanqui 2003 [1984]: 93).

² I would also add that stories about Morales, particularly those published in the US press, also framed his victory within the narrative about Latin America’s “turn to the left.”

the Zapatista uprising in Mexico that, in its public representation, has put on a distinctly indigenous face. Framing Morales' victory as one for indigenous peoples places Bolivia within this transnational circulation of indigeneity.

The Andean music boom also referenced an earlier representation of indigeneity through what has been called the "Pan-Andean" style (Céspedes 1984), or the "neo-folklore" group (Sánchez Patzy 2002)—the five or six-person band, ubiquitous on streets and in subway stations all over the world. These ensembles might include a *quena* (notched flute), *zampoñas* (pan pipes) and *charango* (small plucked string instrument)—what might be called the trio of Andean musical indigeneity. The ensemble is completed with a *bombo* (large goat-skin-headed drum) and a guitar. Band members tend to dress in something that suggests an indigenous origin—an elaborate rendition of indigenous pants and top, or fringed ponchos. Sometimes they also don *lluch'us* (woven hats with flaps that cover the ears). The images and sounds of these groups have become fixed in a transnational imaginary of Andean indigeneity, even as most of these ensembles' musicians do not self-identify as indigenous. Unlike some of the later Ecuadorian, and particularly Otavaleño, ensembles whose members more clearly self-identified as indigenous (Meisch 2002: 138), most internationally touring Bolivian ensembles have been and continue to be constituted by mestizos.

While Morales' victory is read locally and globally as a triumph of indigeneity, the Andean music boom—another representation of indigeneity—is over. The rise of Morales and the decline of the Andean music boom seem to mark a shift in the symbolic world of representing indigeneity, as those who self-identify as indigenous are carrying greater weight in the machinations of national electoral politics. As a thought experiment, I want to consider musicians' narratives on the life and death of this boom, and I want to place these stories in relation to the national and transnational politics that created the historical-political juncture in which Evo Morales emerged victorious in 2005.

Musicians' perspectives on the boom reflect that Bolivian folklore musicians have never acted as mere puppets of nation-state politics; their national sentiments are personally located and genuinely expressed. However, they have felt and continue to suffer the whims of the global market. Musicians' stories about Bolivian folklore usually place the height of the boom in the '60s and '70s and the decline of the boom in the '80s and '90s. Mapping the rise of Morales with the death of the Bolivian folklore music boom might too easily result in an interpretation that over-emphasizes the top-down role of elites and the nation-state. Like Peter Wade's discussion of the nationalization of *costeña* music in Colombia (2000), the nationalization and transnationalization of Bolivia's indigenous genres is a more complex process and cannot be encompassed by an interpretation that simply portrays these stagings as national elite manipulations. In fact, I will focus on how transnational connections were crucial to the Bolivian folklore music boom. In viewing together the success of Morales and the death of the Andean music boom, I am not looking for causal relations between these two narratives of transnationality, but rather asking how one might inform the other. What do narratives about the death of Andean music reveal about narratives of Morales' indigenous victory and vice versa?

The stories about the Andean music boom form part of a larger project I am conducting on the intercultural nexus of Bolivian music in Japan. Through perspectives of both Bolivian musicians and Japanese who are involved in the performance of Bolivian music, the larger transnational and inter-area project explores how “Andean music” emerged through globalization processes. The stories referenced here have emerged within open-ended interview contexts in which I asked musicians about the details of their own careers.³ Musicians’ stories followed distinct trajectories but they all expressed an anxiety about the future of their work in this field. I want to emphasize that these stories came from individuals who identify themselves *as musicians* and who consider their musical activities as *work*. Many of them are self-taught and have varying levels of professionalization, but they all share this subject position of laboring as musicians, even if they may have other jobs on the side. They are literally in the “culture business.” As one musician put it, he does “service work in culture” (see Bigenho 2006a). They also dream as artists and compose their own works, but an overly romanticized view of the “creative musician” can lose sight of these activities as labor. They are working in music, but they also hold strong personal commitments and feelings about playing Bolivian national music—the kinds of nationalist sentiments (Turino 2003: 174-176) that are not necessarily linked directly to the State. Through an interpretation of these Andean music boom narratives, I will show how “Bolivian folklore” took shape in relation to transnational influences. Then I want to look at the life and death of the boom in relation to contemporary political junctures. I argue that the Bolivian folklore music boom ends at a moment when a particular staging of indigeneity no longer does the trick in transnational venues shaped through both neoliberalism *and* a rising indigenous consciousness. A topography of Bolivian music demonstrates that long before the rise of Evo Morales, musical alternatives already were appearing to replace the now bankrupt model of the Pan-Andean band. But not all of these alternatives traveled well. First, I will highlight two specific boom stories.

Two Boom Stories

I interviewed Luis Carlos Severich over a very long lunch in Shinjuku, Tokyo. He told me a story of being born into a family of 10 children, of attending primary and secondary school in Santa Cruz, of learning cabinetry, and of dreaming about music. As a student in the 1960s he said he was listening to the Bolivian groups *Los Chaskas*, and *Los Payas*, admiring the members of these groups who “manifested the Andes” and who were *young*. He compared the hairstyles, dress, and presentation of *Los Chaskas* with that of the Beatles, adding, “We [weren’t] going to play the Beatles better than the Beatles... But Bolivian music, we [were] going to interpret better than anybody.” Against his family’s wishes, in 1970 he left Santa Cruz, heading for Lima, Peru with his small band whose members played guitar, quena, and charango. Severich and his friends had heard of Andean folklore music successes in Peru, and after their own success at home at folklore festivals like *Lauro* in Cochabamba, they were anxious to try their luck in Peru. They were told “You’re going to make money!” But on the way to Peru, they met a delegation from Argentina and were persuaded to change their course of travels. Severich then

³ Many of these musicians have public names for themselves as artists and they wanted me to use their names. For privacy, I have kept some comments anonymous.

described a trajectory of being “discovered” by Argentines, first in Salta, then at the festival in Cosquín,⁴ and finally in Buenos Aires. In Buenos Aires, they settled into nightly gigs, and in that city they recorded their first album—under the auspices of an Argentine harmonica player who, I was told, had attended music competitions in Germany. From Buenos Aires they received their first invitation to tour Japan. The subsequent years were filled with numerous international tours and extensive work in Argentina.

Severich talked about why he left his band in 1982. While it was not the sole reason he gave, he said the working conditions in Argentina were no longer what they used to be, and he twice mentioned how the politics of the Malvinas War interfered with folklore work in Argentina. Of course, Argentine history of the late 1970s and early 1980s was marked by systematic state repression known as “the dirty war.” In summary, Argentina loomed large in this man’s story about how he came to play *Bolivian* folklore. Ercilia Moreno Cha wrote about the importance of Argentine folklore festivals in the development of the traditional Argentine repertoire (1987: 96), but these festivals were also principal sites where Bolivian folklore musicians sought validation. At the time, instruments of indigenous or rural association, like the quena, zampoña, and charango, were still viewed by urban Bolivians in very racist terms. They were *cosas de indios* (Indian things). Thus folklore musicians left Bolivia, not only to make names for themselves, but also to validate their performances on these Indian instruments.

Let me turn to another story of transnational connections that fortified a Bolivian folklore legend. Ernesto Cavour is a charango player who developed a unique performance style and who was a member of the path-breaking group *Los Jairas*. I interviewed Cavour twice at his museum of musical instruments on the colonial street of Jaén in La Paz. Cavour came to music first through his experiences in Chela Urquidi’s folklore ballet which he entered in 1962.⁵ Cavour said he was discovered as a musician, as he switched back and forth between dancing and playing music. He told me that in 1965 he won a prize as a solo instrumentalist at the Festival of Latin American Music in Salta, Argentina. During these years, he played music at Radio Méndez in La Paz, on “El show de los sábados de Mickey Jiménez.” It was here that Cavour met a Swiss man, Gilbert Favre, the quena player who would become known as “El Gringo,” and who, along with Cavour, would form part of *Los Jairas*.

Today, Bolivian musicians talk about how *Los Jairas* (1967/1978) marked a milestone in Bolivian music. Formed in the mid 1960s, they were one of the first nationally and internationally successful small Bolivian bands that performed the “Pan-Andean” style (Céspedes 1984: 224). The form of the ensemble, usually featuring only four or five musicians, was completely different from other ensembles that preceded it. For example, *estudiantinas* that were very popular through the first half of the 20th century, would feature 15-25 players on guitars, mandolins, charangos, and sometimes violins and

⁴ According to several interview sources and also as detailed in web sites, Japanese musicians, fans, and hobbyists of Andean music hold their very own “Cosquín Festival in Japan.”

⁵ Urquidi’s folklore ballet was one of the first of its kind in Bolivia, and it was born in the 1950s as part of a music and dance review called *Fantasia Boliviana* (Bolivian Fantasy) (see Bigenho 2006b).

quenas. These ensembles often formed around guild organizations, and in La Paz *estudiantinas* were a vital part of the social tapestry of urban artisans. At the same time, the pan pipe troupe was another ensemble form that gained popularity among some sectors of the city—for example, among Aymara migrants who were establishing a precarious first foothold in La Paz. Featuring 12 or more players, ensembles with names like *Los cebollitas* (The Little Onions) and *Los choclos* (The Ears of Corn) emerged from the organizations of *los canillitas* (a term that refers to those who sold newspapers and shined shoes). These ensembles reconstructed in the city a standard rural practice whereby musicians performed en masse on a single kind of wind instrument—a troupe style that later would return as a main musical index of Bolivian indigeneity (Bigenho 2002: 109-113). The four-to-five person band, which came to represent Bolivian folklore in an international sphere, marked a major social and aesthetic break from these larger groups.⁶

In 1969, Los Jairas left Bolivia to work in Europe and reside in Switzerland. After two years of performing in Europe, Cavour left the group. When he spoke about touring outside of Bolivia, he talked about “escaping” back to Bolivia, of not really adjusting to the rhythm of life outside his country. “Why were Los Jairas so popular in Bolivia?” I asked. Without skipping a beat, he immediately responded, “Because the foreigners were interested in their music. So the Bolivians said, ‘well, it must be something good.’” Others have commented to me about Gringo Favre’s influence on the scene, telling me that this foreign musician “dressed the quena in gala clothes” and thus attracted Bolivians’ attention to “their own” instrument (also see Céspedes 1984: 225). Back in Bolivia, Cavour continued a trajectory of performance with an invitation to Buenos Aires in 1973, and it was in Argentina that a company first approached him about a tour of Japan. According to Cavour, the Bolivian music boom was felt first in France, then in Italy, Switzerland, and Japan. “But there is no interest in the music anymore. *Ya pasó* [It’s over]... And everyone was saying the boom was going to hit the United States, but the boom never happened there.” As musicians reflected on the life and death of the boom, they clearly marked the U.S. as a country where the boom has never occurred. When Bolivian musicians tour the U.S., they usually play for Bolivians who reside there.

Cavour’s international trajectory includes a significant moment in Argentina, and his story of the boom highlights European audiences in the 1970s and Japanese ones in the 1980s. Even the first invitation to Japan came through a contract offer he received while performing in Buenos Aires. I want to emphasize how an acceptance by a foreign audience became a key point in securing a prominent *national* position for Bolivian folklore music that indexed indigeneity.

Music and Politics at Home

As Argentina became a Latin American launch pad for musicians on their way to the Andean music boom, what was happening in Bolivia during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s? Between 1964 and 1982, military figures played principal roles in state

⁶ My perspective on this break has developed through interviews and through informal discussions with Rolando Encinas (personal communication, 2005-2006).

governance, often clashing with popular mining sectors. As of 2006, the image of Ernesto “Che” Guevara was experiencing a major revival in Bolivia, particularly when he reappeared in Morales’ pantheon of heroes and martyrs as detailed in his inaugural address. But in 1966, Che entered Bolivia with his imported revolutionary dream, failed to gather peasant support for his project, and died in 1967. The peculiar military-peasant pact that General René Barrientos first initiated in the mid-1960s did little to throw support in Che’s direction; the pact was designed to co-opt and control the agricultural sector and to pit peasants against popular urban sectors and miners. On the other hand, the 1970s brought student protests and Bolivia’s short-lived Che-style guerrillas of Teoponte. Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, Bolivian politics were articulated through military state repression and labor organizing spearheaded, in many instances, by the miners.

Prior to these political articulations, the state ideologies of the 1952 Revolution had papered over the indigenous question with inclusive but assimilationist policies of citizenship (Rivera Cusicanqui 1993), a land reform that threatened indigenous ways of organizing around usufruct land use, and a shift from the terminology of “*indio*” (Indian) to the class-based label of “*campesino*” (peasant) (Albó 1987). In spite of these official homogenizing narratives, in the 1970s, the indigenous question was pushed center stage through the politics of the Kataristas. In 1781 an indigenous Aymara man led an insurrection that held the city of La Paz under seige for three months. His name was Tupac Katari and his rebellion represented a protest against abuses of the colonial system, abuses that were more acutely experienced after the Bourbon Reforms that were supposed to tighten the screws on the colonial economy and administrative system. Tupac Katari’s rebellion, along with others of the period, presented alternative emancipatory projects that in some cases featured a return to indigenous rule (see Thomson 2002). Although Tupac Katari was publicly executed by troops sent from Buenos Aires—quartered by four horses—he has lived on in the collective political memory of some Bolivian Aymaras.

In the 1970s, an indigenous political movement began to gather momentum, and its members took the name of this 1781 hero. What has come to be called “Katarismo” was articulated on the one hand by university-educated Aymara intellectuals. On the other hand, Katarismo was also associated with the peasant union organization called the CSUTCB (*Confederación Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*). In their published political thesis of 1983, the CSUTCB renamed the heroes of independence—not San Martín, Bolívar, and Sucre, the Creoles of 19th century independence fame, but rather Tupac Katari, along with a list of other rebel leaders of the 18th century uprisings: Tupac Amaru, Bartolina Sisa, Micaela Bastidas, Tomás Katari, etc. (Rivera Cusicanqui 2003 [1984]). They declared that the Creole-sponsored formation of an independent republic had given them no benefits whatsoever. Their interpretation of Bolivian history emphasized two axes of exploitation: exploitation as a class and exploitation as distinct ethnic/racial groups (see Sanjinés 2004). Their political thesis was in direct contestation to the post 1952 state-sponsored peasant unions, the homogenizing ideologies of mestizaje, and the on-going military-peasant pact. In the contemporary juncture, the Kataristas represent an array of political projects, but their

symbolic weight should not be underestimated. Even though Morales emerged politically through coca politics rather than through the Kataristas, his victory as “an indigenous president” and his alternative inauguration at Tiawanaku all point to the long-term historical memory that Kataristas have actively cultivated over the past thirty years (see Rivera Cusicanqui 2003 [1984]).

While the 1970s’ Katarismo articulated a politics that addressed both class and ethnic demands, official state politics veered between the abuses of ruling generals, their responses to labor unrest, and the utopian promises of socialist projects. While prevailing Bolivian politics were being battled out on a symbolic field of left and right, Bolivian musicians of the 1970s were finding their protest voices in Nueva Canción (New Song) and finding the international audiences’ attraction to Bolivian indigeneity as represented in folklore. According to the work of Mauricio Sánchez Patzy, “neo-folklore” groups, (like Los Jairas) when they first emerged, were operating within a framework of generational resistance; as young people took on the embodied symbols of indigeneity, students challenged their parents’ perspectives on “a decent life” (2002: 282). “A decent life” is a thinly veiled racialized euphemism that often refers to expressions of cultural whiteness or the non-indigenous. Even if Bolivian folklorization, since at least the 1930s, has attributed new value to represented indigeneity, particularly as it came to stand for the nation, the more privileged classes still resisted fully embracing indigenous representations. Nationalist sentiments could be melded with indigenous expressions, even as deeply felt racism continued to reinforce social divisions and hierarchies. So, middle class mestizo youths resisted their parents by growing their hair long, wearing ponchos and peasant sandals, and becoming virtuosos on the quena, zampoña and charango. Sánchez Patzy remarks on the leftist tendencies of neo-folklorists in their initial stages, but concludes that the musician Benjo Cruz was the only one who remained true to this ideal (2002: 283); but Benjo Cruz died with the guerillas of Teoponte.

In the musical world at home, lines were drawn between those who created and performed Nueva Canción—or who were at least politically inspired to alternative musical expressions—and those who created and performed the supposedly apolitical *música folklórica* (Sánchez Patzy 2002: 284; also see Monroy Chazarreta 2005: 98-102). National folklore music, as embodied in Los Jairas and subsequently in *Kjarkas* (the long-lasting and commercially successful Cochabamba version of the Pan-Andean band), may have appeared apolitical in relation to a conscious politics of the left, but these ensembles were ultimately successful in articulating a national sentiment through indices of indigeneity (Sánchez Patzy 2002: 280; Céspedes 1984; Céspedes 1993). To further complicate the picture, the imaginary around international solidarity movements like those that protested the Pinochet regime in Chile (from 1973) and supported the Sandinistas in Nicaragua (from 1979) shaped a transnational performance context in which listening to Andean music was in some ways a political statement. Global performances of Bolivian music carried these multiple meanings—those of mestizo youth rebelling against their parents at home, those of mestizos exalting indigenous representations *sans* Indians, and those of international audiences feeling themselves, through sound, in solidarity with popular struggles for justice that were occurring throughout Latin America.

Death of a Boom

Musicians talk about the end of the boom in terms of audience saturation and a devaluing of the music itself. Musicians have lamented the fact that Andean bands seem to be installed in subway stations all over the world. Why should anyone pay to hear Bolivian music in a theater if you can hear it, or something like it, in the street or at a subway stop? Or so the argument goes. Those who make this comment usually have had to play “in the street” at one time or another, and they are very aware of the painful contradictions between what they might wish for their music and the economic realities of working as a musician in the global context. As the boom decrescendoeed in the 1980s, democratically elected governments entered the Bolivian political scene. The neoliberal economic policies became national law with the 1985 Supreme Decree 21060 that promised so much and has produced so little for the majority of Bolivians. In a context of increased international demand: coca production went through a boom; the U.S. applied greater pressures for eradication and “alternative development” (see Spedding 1997); and *cocaleros* (coca growers), like Evo Morales, developed a national political voice precisely through a politics in defense of coca. Leading into the early 1990s, a different kind of indigenous politics took the lead—an official politics began to privilege, at least in theory, the social actors who actually self-identified as indigenous, even if this project was still stuck in a neoliberal multiculturalism that attempted to round off any radical edges of an alternative indigenous project.

As new politics of indigeneity emerged—a process that has been called “the return of the Indian” (see Albó 1991)—the Andean music model came under ample critique. Politically conscious musicians turned to alternative fusions, looked for ways to be political, and tried to represent the nation through other references to indigeneity, but without the supposed bastardization that folklorization brought in its abundance and repetition. Sánchez Patzy summarizes the anti-folkloric feeling, when he writes about the Bolivians who “folklorize everything they play, but not so much according to the national-folkloric project on a grand scale, but almost like a group-level [nervous] tic” (2002: 299). In previous work (2002), I focused on the Arawi Music Workshop and the ensemble *Música de Maestros* (Music of the Masters) as two examples of musical proposals that, in the 1980s, began to work against the classic folkloric model as embodied by groups like Kjarkas. The Arawi Music Workshop, run as a cultural non-governmental organization, developed music education projects in indigenous, urban popular, and avant-garde genres. Music of the Masters, as an orchestra of some 25 musicians, developed a repertoire that emphasized Bolivia’s “master composers.” Under the rubric of this term they included mestizo-Creole genres as well as indigenous expressions from Bolivia’s highlands and lowlands.⁷ Both of these musical projects

⁷ In this work I analyzed the political implications of policing authenticity. Rather than explain some essence called “authenticity,” I argued that the very debates over authenticity provide a lens into cultural politics and the differentiated power relations that let some subjects speak about the authenticity of others; central to this interpretation was a theorization of authenticity in the realms of musical experience, representation, and commodification (Bigenho 2002).

were on a mission of presenting alternatives to the most predominant musical model of the time: Kjarkas and the pan-Andean band.

Bolivian musicians told me that through the late 1980s and into the 1990s, they had a more difficult time finding audiences and contracts for performances in Europe and Japan. At home, the soundscapes have shifted as well. In the Sopocachi (upper-middle class neighborhood in La Paz) night clubs about which I wrote in relation to my 1990s' fieldwork (2002: 100-104), Bolivian national folklore and fusion bands have been replaced by groups playing rock, heavy metal, hip hop, or "Latin American Music." By the 2000s, Bolivian folklore music moved into the more popular barrios of the center of town, into large locales that: attracted all sectors of Bolivian society, invited "native music groups" from the countryside, set aside most of the night for playing recorded music for dancing crowds, sold beer by the bottle and case, and inevitably fought pressures to shut them down as neighbors complained about 4:00 a.m. fights by departing patrons. In La Paz, musicians talked about how the Kjarkas/Jairas model is worn out, and many of these musicians' artistic projects have attempted to shape the next successful model of Bolivian music-making. They talked about how the Bolivian folklore boom is over, referring to both national and international venues. But they did so with a hope for new creative models that might go beyond national folklore as a collective nervous tic.

The Tough Sell of New National Sounds

What new sounds emerge as the Andean music boom fades? With Jacques Attali's suggestion that music may herald other social changes (1985), I point to alternatives to the Kjarkas/Jairas model that were already emerging at the height of the boom, in the late '70s and early '80s. Musicians sought new ways to express Bolivian national sentiment, and in these expressions indigeneity became positioned in a different way. Some strategies included the formation of fusion bands, the emphasis on playing indigenous instruments in troupe style, and the excavation of Bolivia's musical past (the pre-Jairas moments). In the city of La Paz, the troupe-style performance practice associated with indigenous wind instruments has taken on greater symbolic weight in a representation of indigeneity. For those who take this route, the instrument itself, like the zampoña, is no longer sufficient to index indigeneity; the instrument must be accompanied by its "appropriate" performance practice—the troupe style of at least 12 musicians, all playing the same kind of instrument (see Bigenho 2002: 109-113). In the late '70s and early '80s, *Wara* emerged as an Andean rock fusion band that experimented with a modified troupe style and a conscious mixing of aesthetics (1975). More recently, urban youth, sometimes sons or daughters of indigenous migrants, bring the troupe-style performance to fusion experiments in rock, hip hop, and reggae (see Roza López 2004; Archondo 2000; Sánchez Patzy 2002: 288-292). New creative projects like *Parafonista* (2002) are capturing local and transnational attention through a musical proposal where center stage is not occupied by indigeneity, but rather by a general emphasis on creative and artistic expressions that may draw on "traditional" aesthetics.

Other alternative music projects have turned back to a pre-Jairas musical soundscape. The work of Rolando Encinas (founder and director of *Música de Maestros*) and Jenny

Cárdenas (singer-songwriter and anthropologist) emphasized a turn to music of the Chaco War period of the 1930s. This nostalgic turn included a focus on the genres of *cueca*, *bailecito*, *bolero de caballería* and on works by mestizo indigenista composers of the early 20th century, who drew inspiration from indigenous melodies and perceived Andean landscapes (see Bigenho 2002: 114-127; listen to *Música de Maestros* 1993, 1998, 2004). The retro-nostalgic turn also brought renewed interest in the brass bands that continue to be a vital part of contemporary urban folklore entrance parades. These bands were also associated with Chuquisaqueña (from Sucre) interpretations of cuecas or boleros de caballería. For example, Jenny Cárdenas recorded a compact disc that included significant work with a brass band (1999).⁸

The retro turn has also included a revival of *estudiantina* traditions. *Estudiantinas* were popular in Bolivia from the late nineteenth century through the 1950s, and were particularly featured in La Paz's Carnival season. In the 1980s, a small group under the direction of Jaime Arteaga founded *Los Olvidados* (The Forgotten Ones) as a Carnival troupe, and they have since become a major *estudiantina* of contemporary "Yesteryear Carnival" in La Paz. Although they began with only a few members, this *estudiantina* draws professional musicians from multiple ensembles and has become a forum for the interpretation of pieces composed specifically for the group. *Los Olvidados* operates almost solely within a long Carnival season. Its members dress up in blue overalls, a cap, and a mask representing an elderly person; they are supposed to look like railroad workers of the early 20th century. In Carnival 2006, *Los Olvidados* included approximately 30 musicians, not including those who accompanied the group with dancing and singing. While *Los Olvidados* record, produce, and distribute their work independently (2000, 2003, 2006), the commercial potential of revival repertoire was immediately exploited by *Discolandia*, one of Bolivia's major recording labels. In a trip to *Discolandia*'s store one can find this label's recordings of the Sucre-based *estudiantinas* *Los Artesanos* (2000) and *La Plata* (2003) as well as a collection of *Estudiantinas Bolivianas: Sajama de Oruro, Challapampa de La Paz, and Caja de Agua de La Paz* (2001). Even Kjarkas temporarily put aside their ubiquitous ponchos to cash in on the retro-nostalgic turn, recording with *Discolandia* "Kaluyos y Pasacalles...Que no muera la tradición" (2000). On the cover and in the liner notes of this compact disc, sepia photos of men in black pants, black vests, white shirts and black fedora hats evoke something between the standard concert dress of *Music of the Masters* and an *estudiantina*. Within Bolivia, nostalgia for the sound/image of a mestizo yesteryear has been selling quite well.

However, with the exception fusion bands, these new musical articulations of Bolivian national sentiments do not travel well. Nostalgia that rests on specificities within Bolivian nationalist frames of reference does not carry the same force on an international stage, where marked cultural difference—most easily signaled through indigeneity—becomes the coin of the realm. Furthermore, groups with 12, 17, or 27 musicians (a

⁸ Under the cultural politics of Evo Morales, plans for a new music school were underway as of 2009. Bolivian musicians reflected on this proposal with reference to Morales' experience as a band trumpet player, and with reference to Bolivia's absolute lack of formal music education institutions that fit the vast range of popular music expressions in this country.

troupe, an *estudiantina* or Music of the Masters) only tour with great difficulty and usually not with significant levels of remuneration for those involved. Economic necessity mandates that these ensembles take on a very different form if they manage to secure a major touring contract. The reduction in ensemble size necessarily changes the sound that is produced and the character of the music proposal involved. But the new sounds are also a tough sell because of international audience expectations. On the one hand the audiences are “tired” of the Andean band, but many Bolivian musicians on tour still complain about being expected to fill an exotic niche. Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel’s recording of “El condor pasa” had much to do with the Andean music boom in Europe. Today, this composition stands for a morass of contradictions that cannot be unraveled within the scope of this article. Indignant about Simon’s purported “theft” of the tune, Peruvians clamored to reclaim this composition as national patrimony. An entire website is dedicated to reclaiming the composition under the name of the Peruvian composer, Daniel Alomía Robles (www.geocities.com/e_pomareda/alomia.html, accessed 10/18/06). But Alomía Robles’ composition was supposedly inspired by melodies he heard while traveling in the Peruvian countryside (Llórens Amico 1983: 100-105), melodies that may not operate under the ideas of individual intellectual property that shape all these claims to authorship (see Bigenho 2002: 199-225). Is it theft? Is it appropriation? These are not necessarily the issues for Bolivian musicians who more often complain that the piece “isn’t even Bolivian” and who simply feel trapped by the on-going expectation that they perform this piece and other war horses of the boom (i.e. “El Humahuaqueño”).⁹ Bolivian musicians are still supposed to occupy the position of exotic other and this is often accomplished through Andean references like one more repetition of “El condor pasa.”

Conclusion: Depth, Silence, Sound

Claudio Lomnitz’s anthropological study of Mexican nationalism pauses to reflect on how nation-building projects often reference the depth of national sentiments “calling potential dissenters to order in the name of a shared trajectory” (2001: xiii). Along with the call to shared national depth comes the silencing of the voices that don’t fit the mold (2001: xiv). Musical sounds also form part of these national projects. And even as these folklore compositions may take many a listener for a flight of fancy, they also construct and reflect exclusionary realms in which some citizens seem to be granted more rights than others. Music of Kjarkas and their clones musically embodies the 1952 Revolutionary nation (see Céspedes 1993)—that is a model that glorifies the indigenous world while holding up *mestizaje* as the route to a common form of liberal citizenship. Morales’ 2005 victory can be read as part of larger processes through which a different model of citizenship may be emerging. Andrew Canessa, in a piece titled “*Todos somos indígenas*,” (We are all indigenous) goes so far as to suggest that indigeneity may be replacing *mestizaje* as the national ideal (2006). Whether or not indigeneity becomes the

⁹ The Aymara Bolivian musician and artisan, Adrian Villanueva, has been trying to build a case for the argument that “El condor pasa” was a Bolivian composition. Although the details of his claim are beyond the scope of this article, such a position brings to the foreground provocative questions about intellectual property, nationalist sentiments, and indigenous ethics.

dominant national narrative in Bolivia, the politics of representing indigeneity have shifted since the 1952 project. However, the linkages that have shaped this distinct panorama in which Morales is internationally heralded as an indigenous president are—like the linkages of mid-twentieth century Andean music boom—global and transnational in scope.

The Bolivian folklore or Andean music boom hardly formed as an isolated trend within Bolivia's borders, but rather developed through multiple transnational articulations in Argentina, France, Switzerland, Britain, Germany, Italy, and Japan. Similarly, stories of Morales' electoral victory, framed as a victory for indigenous peoples, also emerge from global articulations of indigeneity. Both the Andean music boom and Morales' "victory for indigenous peoples" developed through national and transnational junctures in which Bolivian musicians and Evo Morales became global actors.

The fade-out of Andean music drives home the contradictions that have always been present in the audiences' expectations of an indigenous exotic Other. People of the world now observe, literally and metaphorically, a meeting between the globe-trotting musician who represents indigeneity on stage and the jet-setting indigenous politician. Audiences fully recognize the costume that is put on for the choreographed performance and removed once the musician leaves the stage. The indigenous politician performs as well, but his or her performance has quite different stakes. And yet, on the international folklore tours in which I have participated in France and Japan, audiences still expect the musical show of indigeneity, perhaps as part of a collective nostalgia for the good old days of solidarity, when the lines of politics seemed more clearly drawn between left and right, between a socialist project and a capitalist one, and when learning about an indigenous world meant listening to music rather than seeing an indigenous president interact with other heads of state. As Diane Nelson has noted from her work in Guatemala during the 1980s and 1990s, "gringa positioning" and solidarity have become increasingly problematic within the new global regimes of indigenous politics that call for more fluid, less solid ways of approaching politically committed work (1999: 41-73). Solidarity drew a line between left and right, but both sides of that line shared a project of Western modernity that ignored the substantive issues of indigenous difference and that did not address the racism that pervades social interactions in Bolivia and abroad. This racism, I would add, is also experienced by touring mestizo musicians—felt through the customs official who harasses them or the shop-keeper who hovers over them as they make their consumer choices.

In 2006, a Bolivian musician, who is some 30 years younger than either Severich or Cavour, told me that the Andean music boom was completely over in Europe and that he was looking for alternatives so he could continue to work as a musician. He talked about musicians who were previously part of the boom, who were now dressing up to look more like the iconic image of a Native North American Indian, and who were selling a music that went along with a New Age aesthetic. He told me these musicians are "*vendiendo la pomada*" (literally "selling the pomade," figuratively "selling snake oil"). Bolivian musicians use this expression to refer to any musical performance in which musicians may fool the audience about their own expertise, skill, or knowledge about the

music. “To sell the pomade” usually has a negative connotation about the duping performer and about the duped audience. Furthermore, the person who accuses another of “selling the pomade” is also claiming that the performer is aware of the mild deception involved. Bolivian musicians might go along with one more rendition of “El condor pasa,” hoping to follow this tune with a performance of music with which they feel more connected. However, for this musician, impersonating sounds and images of North American Indians meant crossing the line between making music and selling the pomade. Here, Bolivian nationalism as expressed through indigeneity contradicted a transnational circulation of indigeneity; Bolivian indigeneity could not simply be substituted with New Ageism as inspired by expressions from Native North American Indians.

In a similar vein, within the more recent global staging of indigenous politicians, one might keep an eye on the potential conflicts between indigeneities as nationally framed and as transnationally articulated. In the case of staged music, international audiences may be caught up in the “ideological fantasy” (Žižek 1989: 32-33) whereby they know these staged representations are illusions of indigeneity, but they still want to see them staged. Bolivian musicians express optimism for the creative musical possibilities beyond the Andean music boom, and at home they have created an array of alternatives, even though these models do not always travel well. But Bolivian musicians remain very aware of the continued international desire that they play an exotic role, of the audiences’ desires that Bolivian musicians sell them the pomade. Many Bolivian musicians are searching for ways to continue working in Bolivian music without selling the pomade.

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