

Indigenous Modernities and the Performance of the Music
of Bolivian Mission Archives by the Ensamble Moxos

by

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Abstract

During the seventeenth century the Jesuits established the missions of Moxos in what today is Bolivia. In these missions Western Baroque music was used as an instrument of evangelization, and after the expulsion of the Jesuits from Latin America in 1767 the Indigenous people continued performing this music and preserving the scores. This music can be found today in the archives of Chiquitos and Moxos, the only mission archives in Latin America (Nawrot 2000). Since 1996 young people of Moxos perform this repertoire at the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and its most important ensemble: Ensamble Moxos. Through the analysis of the repertoire performed by the Ensamble Moxos, I will explore the way in which their performance practices, which resist being labelled as either “traditional” or “modern”, express how the Indigenous people of Moxos experience modernity and what it means to be Moxeño in the context of globalization.

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Introduction

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Jesuit missionaries established the *reducciones* (missions) of Chiquitos and Moxos in what today is the Bolivian Amazon region. The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) founded and managed more than fifty missions in the Spanish colonies in America, mainly in present-day Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Bolivia. The missions were created by the forced relocation of Indigenous¹ people into newly-created towns with the goal of centralizing the population that was dispersed throughout the countryside and converting the Indigenous people to Christianity. These towns were located in areas that were isolated from the Spaniards and were under the control of priests.

In the missions of Chiquitos and Moxos music was one of the main instruments of evangelization. The Jesuits founded music schools where they taught the Indigenous people how to perform Western European baroque music, and they built workshops where they taught them how to make Western musical instruments. After the Jesuits were expelled from Spain and its colonies in 1767, the Indigenous people in Chiquitos and Moxos continued to carefully preserve the scores, and they produced new copies regularly. They also continued performing the music they had been taught by the missionaries, and constructing organs, violins and other Western musical instruments into at least the nineteenth century (Nawrot 2000).

Since the 1950s various musical scores have been found in church archives and collected from Indigenous groups in the region, and there has been a concerted effort to

¹ I capitalize the word “Indigenous” throughout the thesis because I believe it is a sign of respect for the Indigenous people. I also consider that capitalizing this term clarifies the sense in which I am using it. As was expressed in “Words First: an Evolving Terminology Relating to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada”: “Indigenous [with lowercase i] means 'native to the area.' In this sense, Aboriginal people are indeed indigenous to North America. As a proper name for a people, the term is capitalized to form 'Indigenous peoples.’” (INAC 2002: 12). However, in the case of direct quotations of other authors’ work lower case “i”s will be retained.

teach and perform this repertoire by local musicians and scholars alike. Since the 1972 discovery of additional scores during the restoration of the churches of Chiquitos, thousands more pages of manuscripts have been located, and in 1990 UNESCO declared six churches of Chiquitos as World Heritage Sites, drawing additional international attention to the music of the former missions of Chiquitos and Moxos.

The discovery of these manuscripts attracted the attention of many musicologists and Early Music performers. Complementing the academic interest in this material was the creation of spaces that showcased this repertoire and its performance. For example, in 1996 the *Festival Internacional de Música Renacentista y Barroca Americana “Misiones de Chiquitos”* (American Renaissance and Baroque Music International Festival “Missions of Chiquitos”) was created in Chiquitos as a space for the performance of this music, allowing this repertoire to become part of the transnational Early Music movement. This festival is held every two years in what today is locally referred to as the *Chiquitanía* region, which covers the former mission towns that are now located in the Santa Cruz Department. The American Renaissance and Baroque Music International Festival “Missions of Chiquitos” includes performances of music groups from various European and Latin American countries.

The increased interest in the music of the Mission Archives was also felt in the local communities, with the creation of music schools and youth orchestras and choirs in Chiquitos and Moxos. For example, in Moxos, the *Escuela de Música de San Ignacio de Moxos* (San Ignacio de Moxos Music School) was created in 1996 in order to offer music instruction to local students. This music school offers an after school program, which is free of charge and has no entrance examination, and although it offers music theory courses, the focus in the school is on learning how to play music instruments through performance in

ensembles. In the school students have the opportunity to learn how to perform local Indigenous musical instruments, as well as European instruments, and the training is designed to develop performance skills on several instruments, as well as singing and dancing. The *Ensamble Moxos*, the most important ensemble of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School performs the music of the Bolivian Mission archives, also drawing from other local music traditions that have been passed on by Indigenous musicians for generations, such as religious music and music of the town's festivals.

Most of the research that has been done about the music of the Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos is based on historical sources. Some scholars have focused on the role of music in the missions and the participation of Indigenous people in music performance in the Jesuit Period (See Nawrot 2000, 2004; Waisman 2004, 2011; Claro 1969). Other authors have discussed how this music was performed in the Jesuit period, and some of them have questioned how this music should be performed today, mainly referring to recordings and performances by European, North American and Latin American Early Music ensembles (Waisman 2004, Illari 1999, Grebe 1999, Prudencio 2002). However, these scholars have not examined in detail the current performance practices of the youth orchestras and choirs of Chiquitos, and there has been no research on the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and the *Ensamble Moxos*.

In this thesis I explore the ways in which the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos*, express how the Indigenous people of Moxos experience modernity and what it means to be Moxeño in the context of globalization. The concept of Indigenous modernity is often used in the analysis of the ways in which Indigenous cultural practices change and are redefined in the context of globalization, and this thesis engages with this concept vis-à-vis this repertoire and its performance. The discovery of the manuscripts and the creation of

the Mission Archives, the American Renaissance and Baroque International Music Festival “Missions of Chiquitos”, the youth orchestras of the SICOR² and the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School have reshaped the musical practices of the Indigenous people of Chiquitos and Moxos. In the specific case of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and the *Ensamble Moxos*, both the music education that is offered to the students and the performance practices of the ensemble reflect the influences of European models, mainly the Early Music movement, and *El Sistema*³, the Venezuelan system of youth orchestras that has recently become a global movement. However, the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and the *Ensamble Moxos* have produced local interpretations of these global movements and have redefined the Indigenous music traditions of the town, while still celebrating their Indigenous heritage. I will now address the way in which the music of Bolivian mission archives became part of the Early Music movement in order to position this repertoire in a global context.

The Early Music Movement, the Music of Colonial Latin America and the Music of Bolivian Mission Archives⁴

The term “Early Music” can be used to refer to art music of the past – usually Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque music, to a way of performing, and to a transnational movement. The Early Music movement began in the 1960s, when musicians of different countries, mainly European and North American, became interested in performing these repertoires by reconstructing musical instruments and performance techniques of these periods through historical research, in an attempt to create historically “accurate”

² *Sistema de Coros y Orquestas* (System of Choirs and Orchestras).

³ I will address the philosophies of *El Sistema* in Chapter 3.

⁴ The repertoire of the Mission Archives is known locally as “Mission Baroque”. I will use both terms interchangeably throughout the thesis.

interpretations of these repertoires, as they might have sounded at the time of their composition. According to musicologist Thomas Forrest Kelly the Early Music movement has two main trends: “first, the rediscovery of little-known and under-appreciated repertoires, and second, an effort to recover lost performing styles, in the conviction that such music will come to life anew using those performance practices” (2011: 1). These historically-informed performance practices often include improvisation and ornamentation that as Kelly notes “have been lost in the modern performers’ training to be an exact reproducer of the notes on the page” (Kelly 2011: 4). Thus, this movement also began as a reaction against the way in which “modern” symphony orchestras performed baroque repertoire, trying to perform this music in a more “authentic” way by using period instruments and historical performance practice documentation (Thom 2011: 91).

The Early Music movement has received criticism due to the claims of authenticity of its supporters. One of the strongest critics of this movement was Richard Taruskin, who challenged the notion that Early Music ensembles could achieve “true” historical authenticity in their performance; he wrote: “I am convinced that ‘historical’ performance today is not really historical; that a thin veneer of historicism clothes a performance that is completely of our own time, and it is in fact the most modern style around” (1995:102). Today Early Music movement supporters avoid the term “authentic” (Thom 2011: 92), and they now refer to their performance as Historically Informed Performance (HIP). Jonathan Shull (2006) states that this new term emerged in reaction to the multiple critiques of claims of “authenticity”; this led to self-reflection by Early Music performers and brought an awareness of the fact that Early music was a modern movement and that achieving historical authenticity is impossible. Shull notes that this reflection encouraged performers

of medieval repertoire, for whom no performance practice documentation is available, to find new ways of engaging with the past.

One strategy that performers of medieval music used was to look to living traditions⁵ to inform the performance of medieval repertoire. Some performers have turned to musicians that perform music that has continuity with medieval repertoire as a source of inspiration; others have collaborated with these musicians; and others have tried to establish common musical features in different cultures and develop methodologies for accompaniment. Shull also questions the power relations between Western performers and their informants, which leads us to the debate center-periphery power relations within the HIP movement, and the specific case of the music of colonial Latin America (2006).

Since the 1970s several Early Music performers started to travel to different places to gather sources to inform their performances with ethnographic data. Influenced by this trend, in 1970 the American musicologist Robert Stevenson published a comprehensive inventory of Renaissance and Baroque sources in Latin America, marking the beginning of the interest in studying the music of Colonial Latin America, and in 1969 the Chilean musicologist Samuel Claro published the first inventory of the music of the Moxos mission archive in Bolivia. However, it was not until the commemoration of the Fifth Centenary of the “Discovery of America” in 1992 that the music of Colonial Latin American became part of the transnational Early Music movement and a great number of ensembles from all around the world started to perform this repertoire (Bermúdez 2004; Páramo, 2009).

⁵ For example “In his work with the Boston Camerata and Camerata Mediterranea [Joel] Cohen has undertaken linguistically and culturally distinct projects, variously employing the resources of three singers of Provençal heritage, the only remaining Shaker community in the United States, New England college choirs, and the Abdelkrim Rais Andalusian Orchestra of Fès” (Shull 2006: 93).

Scholars and performers have used various terms to refer to the repertoire from Latin American cathedrals and missions. Since the 1970s in Spain and Latin America this music is usually referred to as *Música Colonial* (colonial music). More recently the term “Latin American Baroque” has gained currency; for example, it is used by the French journalist Alain Pacquier, who created the record label *K617 Le Chemins du Baroque* (K617 The Pathways of Baroque), which specializes in this repertoire. This term has also been used by scholars such as Geoff Baker (2008) and David Irving (2011) and by ensembles like Florilegium, which has recorded three volumes of this repertoire with the title “Bolivian Baroque”. For some Latin American scholars such as Carlos Páramo (2009) the term Latin American Baroque can be “more precise (and less ideologically conditioned)” (2009 paragraph 7) than the term *Música Colonial*. However, other scholars have contested the term; Prudencio (2002) says in Latin America there was no Renaissance and Baroque, just colonization. Waisman (2004) argues that it is almost impossible to distinguish “Latin American Baroque” from Spanish Baroque except in how it was performed at the time. I will refer to this music as “music of Colonial Latin America”, referring to the colonial period rather than to “colonial music” and also avoiding the use of the term “baroque”, which may not be appropriate for the Latin American context.

Similar to the medieval repertoire, the music of Colonial Latin America lacks performance practice documentation, so performers have looked to living traditions to inform their performance of these repertoires. Irving (2011) identified three distinct approaches to the performance of the repertoire composed in colonial Latin America by European and North American ensembles. The first approach is to conform to conventional European baroque music practices, modeled mostly on Spanish and Italian practices. The second approach is to add Latin American instruments such as plucked string and

percussion, and/or apply vocal or instrumental styles that currently exist in traditional music of the regions – what Irving would call imaginative improvisations. The third approach is the collaboration with Latin American musicians, who have backgrounds in art, traditional and/or popular music (Irving 2011: 295).

Soledad Sanchez (2006) describes two main trends in performance of music of colonial Latin America by European, North American and Latin American ensembles. The first trend is a pro-European performance where the European features of the music are privileged and there are no significant differences with the performance of European baroque music. The second trend what she refers to as “utopian historicist”, in which performers try to introduce vernacular elements, problematically entailing an idealized version of the “other”. Sanchez states that this latter style of performance often essentializes and exoticizes the vernacular elements, which reveals a veiled pro-European attitude. She highlights the need for a performance of this repertoire that reconciles the aesthetic and historical interest without ignoring Latin American contributions, and at the same time trying to have historical precision when it is possible (Sanchez 2006: 22-25 my translation).

As was mentioned above, the music of the mission archives of Chiquitos and Moxos has reached a global audience since the 1990s, and this repertoire and its performance have become part of the transnational HIP movement. In part the interest in this repertoire came from its discovery in the 1970s, augmented through the creation of the American Renaissance and Baroque Music International Festival “Missions of Chiquitos” in 1996 as well as the publication of manuscripts from these archives beginning in 2000. There has, however, been great debate about how this music should be performed and the political implications of the performance practices used for this repertoire. Many Latin American musicologists have been critical of the European models that have dominated its

performance (Waisman 2004, Illari 1999, Prudencio 2002, Grebe 1999). Prudencio has argued that Indigenous music has been totally ignored in the American Renaissance and Baroque Music International Festival “Missions of Chiquitos” (2002). Waisman has referred to the appropriation of this repertoire, which belongs to the Indigenous people, by the Bolivian government in order to promote tourism, and he views the exclusion of the oral traditions in the performance of this repertoire as a form of neocolonialism (2004). Illari addresses the power relations between center and periphery in colonial music in Latin America in general and in particular in the case of Chiquitos (1999).

Various Latin American scholars have also highlighted the need to look to historical sources to inform the performance of the music of the Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos. Waisman has referred to the particular elements that could be found in the performance practices of Indigenous people in the missions, based on historical documents (1999). He has found that the Indigenous people of the area do not conceptualize the notions of “work” and “composer” in the same way as non-Indigenous people, and he suggests that the most important contributions of Indigenous people to the music of the missions were in the field of performance. According to historical documents such as diaries and chronicles of the time, Waisman found that the Indigenous people did not use ornamentations in their performances. Also, the ensembles did not include lute, and instead included harp and Indigenous instruments such as *bajones* and Indigenous percussion instruments. The diaries of the Jesuits also talked about the way in which the sound of the voices of the Indigenous people were “less pure” than those of Europeans, which suggests that their sound was different (Waisman 1999: 54). Illari also addresses the need for taking into account existing oral traditions in the reconstruction of the historical performance of this repertoire (1999). The teaching philosophies of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music

School and the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* are informed by these oral traditions resulting in a local interpretation of this repertoire that is an expression of Indigenous modernity.

Chapter Overview and Methodology

In the first chapter, I develop a theoretical framework of Indigenous modernities for the specific context of San Ignacio de Moxos and the analysis of the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos*. I first address the changing meanings and historical and current debates around Indigeneity in the Bolivian context. I then discuss the concept of Indigenous modernities and how it can be used to analyze Bolivian Indigenous music. I also position the *Ensamble Moxos* in relationship to other Indigenous musics in Bolivia, specifically the Pan-Andean ensembles in order to provide a context for the analysis of the music of the Ensemble Moxos.

The second chapter provides the historical context for the music that the *Ensamble Moxos* performs. I address the complex negotiations between the Jesuits and the Indigenous people in the missions of Moxos, where some Indigenous cultural expressions were allowed and even encouraged and others were rejected. I also discuss how the continuity of music instruction and performance after the expulsion of the Jesuits and the active participation of the Indigenous people in music making can explain why today the music of the Mission Archives is part of Moxeño identity. I then describe how after Bolivian Independence there were significant changes in Moxos society, yet the music created in the Jesuit period flourished, and continues to be performed today.

In the third chapter I focus on the philosophies and teaching practices of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School, as they were explained in the interviews with the director

and the teachers of the school. I first indicate the how the creation of the Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos and the national and international interest in these archives motivated the creation of music schools in Chiquitos and Moxos. I also present the main principles of the *El Sistema* model and briefly describe the way in which it was implemented in Chiquitos by SICOR. I then focus on the San Ignacio de Music School, its history, its mandate, and what makes it different from European models of music education and to *El Sistema*.

The fourth chapter examines the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos*. I first provide a description of the ensemble, its members, its history, its repertoire, an overview of its performance practices and how they reflect the philosophies and teaching practices of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. I then analyze video selections of pieces performed by the ensemble that illustrate the varying degrees of resemblance of the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* to those of Early Music ensembles and Moxeño Indigenous musicians. Finally, I will demonstrate how the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* express Moxeño modernity.

The historical, cultural and theoretical framework for my analysis of the musical practices and philosophies of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School the *Ensamble Moxos* is largely based on print sources, through which I learned about the historical context of the missions, the current Bolivian context, and current discussions of “Indigenous modernities.” For the analysis of the performance practices (musical, artistic and visual) of the *Ensamble Moxos*, I used music videos to illustrate the wide range of cultural mixture in their music. Fieldwork was also a central source for the contents of this thesis, since there are few print sources that contain information about the music schools and the ensembles of Bolivian mission towns.

I traveled to Bolivia from September 6 to September 18, 2013, and conducted 16 interviews with directors, teachers and performers of both the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and SICOR, interviews which were essential to understand these people's perspective about their musical practices. Before starting my research I knew about the existence of the Mission Archives because in the past I had engaged with repertoire of colonial Latin America as a performer, which made it easier for me to make connections with the directors of SICOR and the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. I first contacted Raquel Maldonado and Rubén Darío Suarez Arana through email and Facebook, and they kindly agreed to participate in my project. I then travelled to Santa Cruz de la Sierra and San Ignacio de Moxos, and besides conducting interviews I visited the Mission Archive of Moxos and the workshop of the Indigenous luthier Miguel Uche, who makes string instruments for the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and the Ensemble Moxos; I had conversations with him that complemented the information that I collected in the interviews. I believe that even though I am a *mestiza* Colombian woman, being Latin American and speaking Spanish helped me to communicate better with the people in Bolivia and to better understand their perspective.

CHAPTER 1

Indigeneity, Mestizaje and Moxeño Modernity

The *Ensamble Moxos* has recreated the repertoire of the Bolivian mission archives of Chiquitos and Moxos for a global audience, and their performance of this repertoire resists being labelled as either “traditional” or “modern”. The concept of Indigenous modernities suits well this analysis since it does not conceive Indigeneity and modernity as opposites, but it rather redefines the concept of modernity to include the ways in which Indigenous populations experience modernity. A concept like Indigenous modernities does not have a fixed definition, but instead its meaning changes according to specific contexts. In this chapter I will address the specific characteristics of the Bolivian context in terms of Indigenous identities and the relationship with the non-Indigenous. I will then discuss more generally the Indigenous modernities concept focusing on the Latin American context and the analysis of Indigenous music. Finally I will address how two different types of Bolivian Indigenous music, pan-Andean ensembles and the *Ensamble Moxos*, have redefined Bolivian Indigenous music in very different ways in order to enter the global market, and I will explore their different relationships with Indigenous identity.

Indigeneity and *Mestizaje* in Bolivia

A number of scholars have argued that Indigeneity is a relational and historical concept, which varies according to specific contexts. In this section I will discuss the concept of Indigeneity, both as a globalized discourse and in the Latin American and Bolivian contexts, in which Indigenous identities intersect with class and regional identities. Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Starn state that “indigeneity emerges only within larger social fields of difference and sameness; it acquires its “positive” meaning not from

some essential properties of its own, but through its relation to what it is not, to what it exceeds or lacks” (2007: 4). Thus, Indigeneity is defined in relationship with what is considered non-Indigenous in a particular context. However, Mary Louise Pratt states that the very diverse people who may identify as Indigenous share what she calls “prior-ity in time and place”, which means that they have suffered an invasion; they were in a place before somebody else came (2007: 398). Andrew Canessa adds that “a claim to indigeneity is a claim to justice based not simply on historical priority but a sense of historical injustice” and that Indigenous people today are “inheritors of a colonial situation which has continued over time even though the symbols of power and oppression may have changed considerably” (2008:355).

In recent years the transnational contacts between Indigenous people, academics and activists from different parts of the world, have led to the emergence of an Indigenous global movement and “the global circulation of the discourse and politics of indigeneity” (De la Cadena 2007: 2). This globalized discourse of Indigeneity is closely related to global struggles for Indigenous rights based on the idea that Indigenous peoples have in common a history of colonization and an ongoing marginalization in the nation states which they inhabit in the present (Tsing 2007, Canessa 2008). The differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within a nation state are produced by power relations between them and thus, as Nancy Postero notes “Who counts as ‘indigenous’ is a fundamentally political question, since such representations emerge from struggles over particular social, cultural and economic matters during particular moments” (2013:108).

In the Latin American context the processes of *mestizaje* (race mixture) have been central in the construction of national identities, and Indigenous identities have been defined in relation to these nationalist ideologies. In the colonial era the term *mestizo* was

“a racial label created by the colonizers, both Spaniards and Portuguese, to identify the offspring [sic] of European white men and Amerindian women” (Amado 2012: 447). At the end of the 19th century, with the independence and the creation of most Latin American nation states, “*mestizaje* turned into a myth of nationhood” and “*mestizo* became synonymous with Latin American” (Amado 2012: 448). Marisol de la Cadena states that in the early 20th century Latin American governments promoted cultural assimilation based on the ideology of *mestizaje* and had “the aim of absorbing indigenous people into homogenized modern nation-states” (2007: 8).

The negotiation of Indigenous identities today in Latin America involves complex power relations, and as Canessa notes, defining “who is and who is not indigenous and what it *means* to be indigenous is highly variable, context specific and changes over time” (2008: 354). The fluid character and the mobility of racial identities in Latin American countries are also related to the way in which ethnic and class identities intersect. Zoila Mendoza states that:

While it is true that white, mestizo and cholo [the category between Indian and mestizo] were categories that formed part of the legally established racial hierarchies during colonial times, and that were extralegally reinforced during the republic, it is equally true that, at least since the eighteenth century, phenotype has had less to do with these categories than, for example, occupation and clothing have. (2000: 10).

As Mendoza notes, in the Peruvian Andes, as in most Latin American countries, today the words Indian and *cholo* are pejorative terms and are associated with lower social strata, and with an incomplete transition from rural to urban, while *mestizo* is associated at a national level with a higher economic status (2000: 13-15).

As in other Latin American countries, in Bolivia the variability of racial identities and their intersection with class identities complicates the meanings of Indigeneity.

Michelle Bigenho states that “Indigeneity in Bolivia is not about blood quantum” (2012: 10), but it is closely related to self-identification and also to the relationship with the non-Indigenous. According to the 2001 census 62% of the Bolivian population self-identifies as Indigenous; this population is comprised of the Aymara and Quechua in the highlands and more than thirty-three ethnic groups in the lowlands. However, in spite of being the majority of the population in Bolivia, Indigenous people have been marginalized historically and treated as a minority (Yashar 2005) probably due to their heterogeneity.

Specifically in the Bolivian context, regional identities and divisions have also shaped Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities and politics. Miguel Centellas states that in Bolivia “class, ethnic and regional cleavages often overlap, but sometimes they intersect and identities are rearticulated in surprising ways” (Centellas 2010: 162). Historically, there have been great divisions between the population of the western highlands and eastern lowlands, divisions which have their origins from before colonization, were encouraged in colonial times, and continue to exist (Stearman 1985). Today these divisions are expressed in the terms used by highlanders and lowlanders refer to each other: *camba* (lowlander) and *kolla* (highlander). Stearman explains that the term *camba* is thought to have its origins in a Guarani (a lowland Indigenous language) word meaning “friend”, but in the present it is used to refer to both mestizos and Indigenous lowlanders. She writes: “Camba became an all-inclusive term for lowland society, both peasant and aristocratic. It also became a means by which lowlanders could demonstrate their cultural as well as geographical distance from highlanders, whom they refer to as Kollas (from the Quechua word *Kollasuyo*, the Bolivian sector of the Inca Empire)”. (Stearman 1985: 20) These regional divisions have also been expressed in the creation of distinct Indigenous movements which have remained divided, due to the very different demands they have for the state (Yashar 2005, Canessa 2008).

Since the creation of the Bolivian republic there have been changes in state policies regarding the Indigenous population, from the assimilationist approach of *mestizaje* to the neoliberal multiculturalism; however these policies have not produced significant changes in the situation of Indigenous people and their relationship with the state. After Bolivian independence from Spain in 1825, the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century were characterized by Bolivian intellectual elites' application of European ideas of scientific racism (Bigenho 2012). The Indigenous people were considered by the state as “obstacles to national progress”, and thus were “targets of biopolitical interventions with the goal of disciplining, improving or assimilating them” (Postero 2013: 109). With the 1952 Revolution, in which “miners and peasants overthrew the government, nationalized the mines and enacted a far-reaching agrarian reform (Canessa 2009: 17) *mestizaje* became the center of a nationalist project. It was presented by the state as a way of including the “Indians”, who would now be called “peasants”, in a *mestizo* nation, substituting a category of ethnicity by one of class (Bigenho 2012).

The category “Indigenous” gained strength again in the 1980s and 1990s, and was adopted by both highland and lowland Indigenous movements, in part inspired by the international discourse of Indigenous rights. Postero notes that highland movements were focused on “cultural recognition and political participation”, while lowland communities privileged demands for territory (Postero 2013: 109). She explains how the 1990 “March for Territory and Dignity”, in which a large number of lowland Indigenous people marched from the Amazon region to La Paz, had a central role in resurgence of Indigenous movements at a national level, “as groups who had previously identified as peasants began to self-identify as indigenous ” (2013: 109). However, the multiculturalism promoted by the Bolivian state as a response to these demands did not bring significant changes for

Indigenous peoples. Bigenho states that “From the perspective of some indigenous peoples, neoliberal multiculturalism ends up looking not all that different from liberal mestizaje, as both seem to reinforce the power of non-indigenous elites.” (2012: 136). She states that multiculturalism was seen by Indigenous communities as simply celebrating ethnic differences but not recognizing Indigenous people as political actors.

The twenty-first century brought great challenges to state-led multiculturalism with the strengthening of Bolivian Indigenous movements expressed in popular uprisings such as the Water War and the Gas War, in which Indigenous people demanded the end of the privatization of water by multinational companies and the renegotiation of contracts for the extraction of hydrocarbons. These uprisings ended with the ousting of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in 2003 and the election of the Aymara Indigenous leader Evo Morales in 2005, the first Indigenous president in Bolivia’s history (Bigenho 2012). In 2006 the Constituent Assembly met to write a new constitution for what would now be called the plurinational state of Bolivia, and thus, as Nancy Postero notes, “indigenous rights and the language of decolonization are central elements of new plurinational Bolivia” (Postero 2013:109).

The Morales government has faced strong opposition especially from the non-Indigenous elites of the departments of the eastern lowlands where the majority of hydrocarbon resources are located (Bigenho 2012). The Bolivian sociologist Marxa Chavez has noted that this right-wing opposition to Morales has become a separatist and racist movement (2009). Bigenho states: “Precisely as Morales’s government challenged the structured racism of the Bolivian state, attempting to move forward with a Constituent Assembly and the renegotiation of resource contracts that would economically benefit the majority of Bolivians, racism and regionalism took center stage in Bolivian political

discourse.” (Bigenho 2012: 138). The current government, however, has also faced the opposition from lowland Indigenous communities, whose territory has been affected by economic growth and development policies of the national government (Canessa 2012).

In Bolivia Indigenous discourse has shifted from being a discourse of resistance to one of governance (Canessa 2012). The current president has defined his government as an Indigenous government, aiming to create a new nationalism based on a homogenous Indigenous identity, which privileges highland Indigenous cultural expressions. This is evident in the fact that in the new Constitution there is no reference to “Indigenous” people but to “indigenous ordinary peasant peoples and nations”, a category created by the Constituent Assembly; this category is given in reference to highland coca growers and farmers, while the term “Indigenous” has been historically associated with lowland forest dwellers. The government’s homogenized view of Indigeneity in reference only to highland people has resulted in further marginalization of the lowland Indigenous people, who are a considerably smaller population than the highlanders, and are also divided into a great number of small communities with different cultural practices (Canessa 2012). Thus, in Bolivia race, class and Indigeneity have been and continue being central in shaping contemporary political debates. I will now discuss the concept of Indigenous modernities and how it has been used to analyze Indigenous music specifically in the Latin American context.

Indigenous Modernities

The term “Indigenous Modernities” has recently gained prominence in academic circles and has been used mainly by scholars and activists. The origins of this concept can be traced back to the emergence of the “Alternative Modernities” perspective proposed by

authors such as Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar as a response to scholars who were “proclaiming the end of modernity” (2001: 14). Gaonkar argues that “modernity today is global and multiple and no longer has a governing center of master-narratives to accompany it” (Gaonkar 2001: 14); further he states that “modernity always unfolds within a specific cultural or civilizational context and that different starting points for the transition to modernity lead to different outcomes”; that “modernity is not one, but many” (2001: 17). Thus, the idea of modernity not being exclusively Western has been central in the emergence of the concept of “Indigenous Modernities”. The concept of “indigenization of modernity” proposed by Marshall Sahlins has also been related to the emergence of “Indigenous Modernities”. Sahlins uses this concept to account for the way in which Indigenous people were “asserting their cultural distinctiveness” in the context of globalization but did not resist new technologies and “the conveniences of modernization” (Sahlins 1999: 410). The concept of Indigenous modernities has been used to analyze various cultural expressions such as architecture and literature in different parts of the world. Here, I will focus on how scholars have used this concept in ethnomusicology.

Indigenous modernities is often characterized as an exploration of the way in which Indigenous cultural practices change and are redefined in the context of globalization. However, a number of authors consider “globalization” to be a new name for a process that has been happening for centuries, and, for Indigenous people, a process that started with colonization. For example, the ethnomusicologist Raúl Romero, who conducted fieldwork in the Mantaro Valley in Peru, argues that globalization is not new, asserting instead that it started in the sixteenth century when the Spaniards arrived in Peru; he writes: “In fact, globalization has influenced Andean peoples, in variable degrees, since the sixteenth century, when the Spaniards brought ships, horses, cannons, rifles, swords, and diseases,

along with music and cultural conventions.” (Romero 2001: 134). Romero suggests that the only difference between globalization of the sixteenth century and that of today is the presence and ubiquity of mass media, as the Indigenous people in the Mantaro Valley have been familiar with Western culture for centuries. With a similar view, Penny Dransart refers to the long history of intercultural contact in Latin America saying “‘Globalisation’ is just a modern term for what has been occurring for at least 500 years in Latin America and the Caribbean, starting with the invasion by Europeans of lands owned by native American peoples.” (Dransart 2000: 147). Sociologist Anibal Quijano also states that “What is termed globalization is the culmination of a process that began with the constitution of America and colonial/modern Eurocentered capitalism as a new global power” (2000:133)

Thus, while a number of authors consider the context of globalization as being postmodern, scholars such as Mary Louise Pratt highlight the need to produce new ways of understanding modernity in order to address the power relations between center and periphery that have been present in the diffusion of modernity through colonialism and are present in the new global context, rather than closing the discussion about it and moving on to postmodernity (2002). She writes:

...intellectuals now confront a collective challenge that is also an imperative and a possibility: that of creating a *global and relational* account of modernity...Until such account exists, the term *postmodern* has no referent and remains a gesture of premature closure on modernity, foreclosing the decolonization of knowledge and the decentering of the center. A global account of modernity will provide necessary historical and conceptual grounding for inquiries about globalization in the present and for reflection on the institutions of knowledge in which such inquiries take place. (Pratt 2002: 22, Italics in the original)

In her writing Pratt explains how modernity has been a “*diffusionist* project” (2002: 27, italics in the original), which has served the West to construct itself as the center and the rest of the world as the periphery. Thus, within this logic the center considers

periphery to be “*outside and behind*” (Pratt 2002: 29, italics in original), and terms such as “primitive” and “traditional” mark the distance from the project of modernity. About the use of these terms she says:

Again, note the centralizing, monopolistic use of these categories [outside and behind]: given the interpretive power, the interpreter can read anything that fails to correspond to preconception as an instance of either outsideness or behindness, rather, say, than as an instance of alternative, emergent, diasporic, or counter-forms of modernity. Nor can the schema recognize phenomena that participate simultaneously in modernity and some other historical trajectory, as with post-conquest indigenous social formations in the Americas, for example. (Pratt 2002: 29)

Latin America has regularly been considered peripheral to Western culture and as being outside and behind Western modernity. After their independence from Spain, the creole elites in Latin American countries conceived of a modernity in which they saw themselves as enlightened subjects who governed unenlightened masses (Pratt 2002: 36). Pratt notes that in these contexts the diffusion of modernity had the effect of reproducing and deepening the divisions that were present in colonial structures. She states:

In particular, in the heterogeneous societies of the Americas, modernity’s need for reified Others had the effect of widening dissociations between the elites (seen as governed by modernity) and masses (seen as governed by tradition, tribalism, or barbarism)...The categories of modernity legitimated, and indeed imposed, what in modernity’s own terms was a social regression. There was no space in the modernist imaginary of the center for the heterogeneous social formations that were the norm wherever European expansionism had left its mark. (2002: 36)

In the Latin American nation-states constructed by white creoles, however, even though Indigenous people were marginalized their cultures survived, without being assimilated into the white-creole dominant culture (Yashar 2005). As a result, “the reality of Latin America is one that combines and merges traditional and modern, precapitalistic and capitalistic systems, democracies and dictatorships, Western and non-Western worldviews, all along the same national frontiers” (Romero 2001: 24).

The concept of Indigenous modernity goes beyond the theoretical opposition between “Indigenous” and “modern”, since it implies that it is possible to be Indigenous and modern at the same time. Even though not used explicitly, the concept of Indigenous modernities has been invoked by ethnomusicologists such as Michelle Bigenho, who examines the search for authenticity nationalist ideologies in Bolivia and the staging of Indigenous music by non-Indigenous musicians (2002, 2012). Lynn Meisch has addressed issues of Indigenous empowerment in her work about Otavalo Indigenous musicians who travel around the world performing Indigenous music, and how these musicians have been able to redefine power relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in their town (2002). In his work about highland Indigenous rappers in Bolivia, Mark Goodale emphasizes that Indigenous people do not just create “alternative modernities” or “alternatives to modernity”, but instead he states that “indigenous cosmopolitanism is a way of *reclaiming* modernity, a way of redefining both what modernity as a cultural category means and what it means to be modern in Bolivia” (2006: 646 italics in the original). Goodale writes:

...indigenous movements in Latin America are increasingly destabilizing the meanings of modernity itself. It is one thing to challenge the order of political or legal or cultural priority that locates modernity on one side of an invisible line and authenticity or tradition or indigenusness on the other (while taking the meanings of these categories as given); it is quite another thing to challenge the meanings of the categories themselves...By envisioning new categories of inclusion, by constructing an alternative moral universe in which indigenusness represents a set of principles that are *both* cosmopolitan and uniquely Bolivian, indigenous leaders and others in Bolivia do not simply “vernacularize” modernity or strike a “bargain” with it. (Goodale 2006: 646 italics in the original)

Ethnomusicologist Gabriel Solis states that “Indigenous modernities” should not be understood as an “adoption and adaptation of a set of cultural structures (the modern and cosmopolitan) to aspects of its antithesis (the Indigenous)”, as was proposed by Marshall

Sahlins (Solis 2012: 88). Instead, it should conceive Indigenous people's distinct histories as part of a larger modernity and a global context (Solis 2012: 89). I will use the concept of Indigenous modernities in my analysis of the *Ensamble Moxos* and the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School using the approach taken by Goodale and Solis, and recognizing that Indigenous movements and cultural expressions can conceive of "modernity" as inclusive of peoples who had been marginalized in Western modernity.

Indigenous Music in Bolivia: Positioning *Ensamble Moxos*

There are a large number of Indigenous communities in Bolivia, each with its own unique cultural and musical expressions. As was mentioned, there is a strong division between Bolivian highland and lowland Indigenous people. This division has also been expressed in the two different types of Indigenous music that have reached the global market: pan-Andean ensembles from the highlands and music of the mission archives of the lowlands. Pan-Andean ensembles comprised of panpipes, *charango* (small guitar), *bombo* (bass drum) and *quena* (Indigenous flute) emerged on the international scene in the 1960s (Bigenho 2002, 2012), whereas the music of the mission archives of Chiquitos and Moxos, associated with the lowlands, has only garnered international audiences since the 1990s (Nawrot 2000).

Bolivian highland Indigenous music has had an important role in the construction of a national identity. This process has been marked by *indigenismo*, which has been defined by Michelle Bigenho as "a political and cultural current found in many Latin American contexts, in which mestizo-Creoles have used references to indigenous cultures to bolster a national or regional identity" (Bigenho 2002: 97). As in other Latin American countries, *indigenismo* started gaining strength in Bolivia in the early twentieth century and was

closely related to ideologies of *mestizaje*. *Indigenismo* usually glorified the distant past of Indigenous cultures such as the Incas and the Aztecs, but had little to do with contemporary Indigenous expressions. Canessa states that *indigenismo* “was rarely much concerned with contemporary Indians beyond a paternalism that sought to civilize and modernize them; it was much more about creating a regional or national identity with the glories of indigenous civilizations securely in the past; and, indeed, most members of indigenista circles were mestizos and whites” (Canessa 2005: 13).

In the second half of the twentieth century Indigenous musical instruments and sonorities gradually started gaining prominence in the national imaginary through staged representations of Indigenous worlds by non-Indigenous musicians. However, even though the Bolivian elites began to favor these cultural artistic expressions, Indigenous people were still considered as a separate world (Bigenho 2012). In the 1960s and 1970s Andean music became internationally popular with the creation of what Bigenho has called pan-Andean ensembles, which are small ensembles usually of four musicians. These ensembles were different from other ensembles that had existed previously in La Paz, as well as from the Indigenous Andean troupe (traditional wind ensemble), as the pan-Andean style emphasized virtuosity, and the small size of the ensembles facilitated touring and travelling. Bigenho states that the pan-Andean ensembles that started touring in the 60s and 70s, as well as the ones who continue touring today, were not formed by self-ascribing Indigenous people, but instead by mestizos and sometimes foreign musicians.

The Andean Boom of the 1960s and 70s also brought political topics to Andean music. Some performers in the *Nueva Canción* (New Song) protest movement from Latin American countries took Indigenous names for their groups and used Andean instruments in their music, contributing to the internationalization of Andean music. In Bolivia some

“folklore” groups took a similar protest style to engage with ideas of the highland Indigenous political movement called *Katarismo*. This movement was named after Tupac Katari, an Indigenous hero of Bolivian independence, and its goal was to fight against the exploitation of Indigenous peasants by white-*mestizos* (Bigenho 2012). Today the pan-Andean style has great commercial success in Bolivia, frequently being labeled as “national music” (Bigenho 2002). However, there is a great distance between the staging of Indigenous music and contemporary Indigenous politics in Bolivia, and as Bigenho has noted “Musical nationalism has not changed much and it continues to follow indigenismo’s path” (2012: 171).

The pan-Andean ensembles associated with the highland Indigenous populations use Indigenous instruments and draw from Indigenous genres; however the performers have usually been non-Indigenous people. In contrast, the *Ensamble Moxos* has entered the global market with a different type of Bolivian Indigenous music performed by Indigenous musicians. As was mentioned earlier, the term Indigenous modernity refers to the ways in which Indigenous cultural practices are redefined in a global context, and how Indigenous people reclaim being part of a larger modernity. The repertoire of Bolivian mission archives entered the global market as part of the Early Music movement, and most of the Latin American and European ensembles that perform it conform to global standards. In their choice of repertoire, the Indigenous instruments they include in their performances, and in the way they dress, the members of the *Ensamble Moxos* demonstrate the respect accorded to the local musicians and to the traditions they are showcasing. However, their performance of this music is not identical to that of the elders of their town, nor to that of other ensembles. Raquel Maldonado, the director of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music

School and the *Ensamble Moxos* explained the ‘positioning’ of this ensemble and the music it performs in an interview:

I think from the moment that the Jesuits left and the Indigenous people decided to preserve this music, and appropriate it, then it is ours. Even though the sonata or the mass can sound very European, it has already gone through many years of appropriation, and it’s ours. On the one hand we can feel we own this music, but on the other hand we also value, and it is more valued abroad, the new: the mixture that has been done with these two styles. The work of the ensemble is absolutely creative. If we showed you how we received the pieces that we performed in the concert yesterday, and then what we did... it is a recreation. We create them again, and we own this music, which is an advantage that we have... Other musicians may be jealous, because, since it is our music we can do whatever we want and that is what we are here for, because culture has to be dynamic. It is not simply a reproduction of what happened in the past, but a recreation of what is happening now.⁶

As Raquel suggests, for the *Ensamble Moxos*, Indigenous modernity can mean redefining the music that was brought to them by colonizers that they have transformed, made their own, and performed for a global audience. As will be examined in chapter 4, the interpretations of the different styles of music performed by *Ensamble Moxos* demonstrates how the musicians of the ensemble have drawn from different music traditions and performance practices and have created their own approach in performing this music that they claim as their own. In its performance practices, the ensemble also reflects the philosophies of the music school it belongs to.

As will be discussed in chapter 3, the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School has also drawn from different models of music education, such as the European conservatory model and the Venezuelan *El Sistema* model, and has created a unique approach that suits the specific context of San Ignacio de Moxos. The music school has taken from the conservatory model the idea of dividing the training in different subjects, and has taken from the *El Sistema* model the idea of learning through performing in ensembles. However,

⁶ Interview conducted by the author on September 10, 2013 at 10:00 AM, my translation.

it has also drawn from the music traditions of San Ignacio de Moxos, by teaching Indigenous instruments and repertoire to its students. The director and teachers of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School have created their own approach to teaching music, based on encouraging breadth and versatility in its students, who perform multiple instruments, sing and dance.

In this chapter I have discussed the contested meanings of Indigeneity and how ethnic identities have historically interacted with class and regional identities in the Bolivian context. I have addressed the concept of Indigenous modernities as a way of understanding Indigenous cultural expressions in the context of globalization and their possibilities of giving new meanings to “modernity”. I have also addressed the cases of two Bolivian Indigenous musics that have reached the global market: the pan-Andean ensembles and the *Ensamble Moxos*, in order to illustrate the differences between their approaches in performing Bolivian Indigenous music. I have developed a framework of Indigenous modernities defined as ways in which Indigenous cultural practices can redefine the meanings of modernity to include expressions that had been marginalized. This framework will inform my analysis of the philosophies and teaching practices of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos*. In the next chapter I will provide a historical background of the use of Western music in the missions of Moxos and after the Expulsion of the Jesuits, in order to better understand how the music of the mission archives became part of Moxeño identity.

CHAPTER 2

The Music of the Missions of Moxos:

How a Tool for Conversion Became Part of Moxeño Identity

The music of Bolivian Mission Archives that the *Ensamble Moxos* performs today has a long and complicated history. The historical sources that are available today only allow us to trace it back to the founding of the missions, and these sources give a European perspective of the events. However, the diaries, letters and chronicles written by European Jesuits and visitors reveal the complex negotiations between the missionaries and the Indigenous people of Moxos. What happened to Indigenous populations in Moxos was not simply the imposition of European music on Indigenous people; some Indigenous dances and musical instruments were tolerated and even encouraged by the Jesuits, and there is evidence that the Indigenous populations were active and willing participants in European-style music-making at the time. Shortly after the Jesuits left Moxos Spanish governors continued encouraging these cultural expressions, and in later years it was the Indigenous people themselves who decided to continue performing this music and preserving the scores.

In this chapter I provide an overview of the history of Moxos, since the establishment of the Jesuit missions, emphasizing the impact that events such as the expulsion of the Society of Jesus and the independence of Bolivia from Spain, had on the Indigenous population of Moxos. Parallel to this historical context I examine the use of Western music in Moxos in each period, concluding with a description of the main current musical practices in Moxos. I conclude the chapter describing how the Indigenous elders of San Ignacio de Moxos and of rural communities of the Beni Department continue performing this music today. Providing the historical context of what is locally known as

“Mission Baroque” will help to understand the meaning of this music for Moxeño people today.

The Missions of Moxos

The missions of Moxos were located in what today is the department (province) of Beni in north-eastern Bolivia. This region covers approximately 200000 square kilometers, where 150000 are a tropical savanna called *Llanos de Mojos* (Moxos Plains), and 50000 are forested lands (Block 1994). The missions of Moxos were surrounded by natural borders: the slopes of the Andes to the south-west, the Chiquitos Uplands to the south-east, the right bank of the Guaporé River, which marked the border with Brazil, and the Madre de Dios River to the north-west. Within the Moxos plains there are three main rivers, all of which are tributaries of the Amazon: the Beni, the Guaporé and the Mamoré. During the rainy season that starts in October and ends in April, these rivers often overflow causing extensive flooding in the area (Livi Bacci 2010).



Figure 2.1 Map of Bolivian Departments. Map by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA World Factbook)⁷

During the sixteenth century, a century before the arrival of the Jesuits to Moxos, there were several expeditions of Spaniards coming from Cuzco (today Perú), Cochabamba and La Paz, who traveled to what today is the Beni region in search of the kingdom of the Grand Moxo, also known as Grand Paititi. This was a legend similar to El Dorado, about a land rich in precious metals and stones; the legend was created by Spaniards based on Guarani myths about a land without evil and stories told by Incas from Cuzco. However, the Spaniard explorers were not able to find in Moxos the wealth and gold for which they were searching (Block 1994, Livi Bacci 2010, Lehm 1999). After their failure to find the

⁷ CIA Website, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/cia-maps-publications/Bolivia.html>.

Gran Moxo, the expeditions changed their objective and departed instead from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the closest urban center, aiming to enslave Indigenous people and take them to work in this city. David Block refers to these expeditions as part of “a period of contact rather than conquest”, because these Europeans stayed in the region only for short periods of time, leaving the conquest of Moxos to what he calls the Third Wave of Europeans: the Jesuits (Block 1994: 31).

After some preliminary contacts and expeditions in the region of Moxos, without being accompanied by Spanish army, the Jesuits established the first mission, Loreto, in 1682. From 1683 to 1700 they continued their expansion through the upper Mamoré River and the western savanna, and between 1700 and 1720 they expanded down the Mamoré and through the Guaporé to the north-east. Founding a total of 24 missions in Moxos, and through contact with the Indigenous populations of the region, the Jesuits identified approximately thirty native groups in the area, from which they distinguished six major groups, “based on their knowledge of the Indians’ population size, political power and resource base” (Block 1994:16). These six groups were: Moxo, Baure, Kayubaba, Canisiana, Mobima and Itonama. The first major native group with whom the Jesuits established contact in the 1660s spoke the Arawak language and the Jesuits gave it the name Moxo (Block 1994). This name made reference to the legend of the kingdom of the Grand Moxo that was described above (Van Valen 2013).

The establishment of missions in Moxos brought significant changes in the social, political and economic organization of the Indigenous population. According to historian Gary Van Valen before colonization the communities that inhabited the Moxos plains were “nonranked kinship-based societies with no authority above the individual community” (Van Valen 2013:11). There was a chief, the *achiaco*, whose leadership was exercised

mainly during wars or hunting expeditions, and there were shamans who were in charge of communicating with spirits for curing and divination purposes, but “the division of labor was determined by age and sex, not by any class system” (Van Valen 2013: 12). Upon their arrival, the Jesuits divided the Indigenous population into two groups: the *familia*, which was a group of families who had access to administrative positions and performed specialized crafts, and the *pueblo*, the rest of the people who performed mainly agricultural work (Waisman 2004, 2011; Van Valen 2013).

The political organization of the Jesuit missions allowed some Indigenous people to participate in the government of the town, while the greatest authority was held by the priests (Waisman 2004, 2011; Block 1994). Thus, a hierarchy was created that allowed pre-mission Indigenous leaders such as shamans and *achiacos* to be part of the *familia*, and the *pueblo* was under their guidance. As had been done in the missions of Paraguay and following the model of government of Spanish municipalities, in 1701 the Jesuits established in Moxos the *cabildos indigenales* (Indigenous councils), which were comprised of Indigenous members of the *familia*, who were in charge of mediating between the Jesuits and the *pueblo*, and organizing the religious feasts of the town. The members of the *pueblo* had to obey the rules established by the cabildo and if they failed to do so, both Jesuits and Indigenous leaders endorsed the use of corporal punishment by cabildo officers to enforce these newly-established rules (Van Valen 2013).

The cabildo also had an important role in the economy of the missions. The cabildo traded *temporalidades*, which were the agricultural production and other material goods made in the missions, such as furniture, textiles and musical instruments with the Jesuits, in exchange for exotic products such as iron tools. The redistribution of these goods benefited the entire population of the mission in varying ways. Some of these goods were also

exported and sold in Jesuit colleges in the Andes and in Spanish markets in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. Besides the earnings from the mission exports, the Jesuits founded the missions with profits of sugar estates in Peru, with contributions received from the Spanish crown and other donations (Van Valen 2013).

As was mentioned earlier, music was used as a tool for evangelization and had great importance in the everyday life of the missions. According to musicologist Piotr Nawrot music's function in the Jesuit *reducciones* "was not limited to divine worship but rather extended to many other areas of life, and was successfully applied at schools, work and social events" (2004: 74). Nawrot writes: "Sending of gifted musicians to the missions, founding of music schools, building of workshops where the whole range of musical instruments could be made, organizing music libraries, and financial resources spent on music witness loudly that music in the missions was meant to occupy a privileged sphere." (2004: 74). When the music schools were first established the priests were in charge of the music instruction; however, this task was soon taken over by talented Indigenous musicians who became *maestros de capilla* (chapel masters). The chronicles written by priests and visitors at the time emphasize the talent of local Indigenous people to perform on instruments and to sing, as well as to copy scores, but they denied their ability to compose music (Claro 1969, Nawrot 2000). According to these descriptions Indigenous people in Moxos were also very skilled in constructing European instruments, as well as traditional Indigenous instruments such as the *bajones* (see figure 2.2), which are large panpipe-like instruments made of palm leaves with a sound somewhat similar to the bassoon. Musicians and instrument makers were members of the *familia*, and the *maestros de capilla* "were considered to be the intellectual elite of the *reducciones*" (Waisman 2011: 217).



Figure 2.2 Bajón. Photo by the author.

Music was also used by the missionaries as a way of enforcing a European sense of time (Waisman 2011). Historian David Block states that “religious observance did serve as the mission clock and calendar. Catholic ritual ordered the neophytes’ daily activities. In the stations the workday began and ended with a tolling of church bells and brief worship services directed by the priest and his Indian spiritual assistants and musicians” (Block 1994:90). Musicologist Leonardo Waisman also notes that music was not only used to accompany Catholic rituals but also daily activities such as agricultural work. However, the music used in religious ceremonies was more elaborate and could include up to forty musicians singing in choirs and playing various instruments in orchestras, while the music that accompanied the work in the fields was usually performed only with a few flutes and drums (Waisman 2011). The weekly and yearly rhythms of the missions were organized according to “musico-liturgical” celebrations such as masses, feasts and processions, instead of the traditional seasonal and ceremonial patterns of the local Indigenous people (Waisman 2011: 214).

Even though most of the pieces that survive in Bolivian mission archives today are of European baroque style, Indigenous contributions to the music in the missions were especially strong in Moxos (Waisman 2004). The descriptions written in diaries and letters by Jesuit priests at the time have been an important source that has allowed us to learn about these Indigenous contributions (Nawrot 2000, Waisman 2004). Waisman says “especially in the case of Moxos the participation of the neophytes resulted in a hybrid musical practice where the Indigenous tradition left a strong imprint. More than in any other area in South America, the participation of native instruments, dances and games in the liturgical-musical life of the *reducciones* of Moxos was massive and constant” (2004:18 my translation). Waisman notes that there is a much greater number of texts describing Indigenous dances, clothes and musical instruments in Moxos than in other *reducciones*. For example, even though there are descriptions about the dances used in processions in the missions of the province of Paraguay, there is complete silence about any possible incorporation of Indigenous traditions in them. However, in the nineteenth century Moritz Bach, a German visitor to Chiquitos (located in the province of Paraguay), described in his chronicle a “monstrous orchestra” that included Indigenous flutes and percussion instruments, European wind and string instruments, two harps and an organ. According to Waisman “without a doubt this practice was not an invention following the expulsion of the Jesuits, but the continuation of a long-established hybridization” (2004:19 my translation).

In the case of Moxos, it was the Jesuit priests who wrote about the presence of Indigenous music in the missions. Waisman explains that “apparently some Moxeño music traditions impressed the Europeans due to their vigor, their order, and in some cases, even their aesthetic quality” (2004: 19 my translation). The strategy used by Jesuits to incorporate Indigenous traditions in the daily life of the missions is evident in the

anonymous *Descripción de los Moxos que están a cargo de la Compañía de Jesús en la Provincia del Perú* (Description of the Moxos who are under the care of the Society of Jesus in the Province of Peru) (Waisman 2004), which was written in 1754 probably by a missionary, and can be found today in the *Archivo Jesuítico de la Provincia de Toledo* (Jesuit Archive of the Province of Toledo) in Spain (Limpías Ortiz 2011). According to this description, the Jesuits accepted the Indigenous musical instruments and dances with few changes, but they completely rejected Indigenous vocal music because they considered it pagan. However, according to historical documents, in Moxos there were choirs of young Indigenous women who sang in front of a congregation of men and women, contrary to restrictions for female public performance imposed by the Catholic Church at the time. For this reason, Waisman proposes that perhaps this practice was related to an Indigenous tradition of women singers that existed before the arrival of the Jesuits writing: “I do not know any other examples, American or European, of such a transgression to the centuries-old *mulier taceat in ecclesia* [let the woman be silent in church]; this is why it is possible to suspect the pressure from a local culture that included female singing in its pre-Jesuitical expressions” (2004: 21 my translation).

During the period of Jesuit colonization in Moxos, the missions were fairly isolated from European influence. The Spanish Crown had not sent military troops to Moxos as it had done in other missions; according to Block the “proximity to Spanish centers, lack of formidable rivals, and the perhaps perceived value of the territory all may have mitigated against sending military forces to the South American frontier” (1994: 177) Moxos was located in the border with Brazil, which was the limit between Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and the confrontations between these colonies were the result of conflicts between Spain and Portugal (Block 1994). It was not until 1760, with Portuguese westward

expansion into and confrontations along the Guaporé River, that Moxos became “a theater of war” (Block 1994: 177). The Indigenous people were asked to shelter and provide for the Spanish army, and also to fight against the Portuguese. This increasing contact with the Spanish world was traumatic for the Indigenous population; their numbers were reduced significantly, and the economy of the missions was also compromised seriously.

When these hostilities between Spain and Portugal ended in 1767, Charles III decreed the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and all its colonies in the Americas. The reasons for the expulsion were not made clear by the Crown at the time; since then “the whole history of the expulsion has ... been shrouded in an air of mystery” (Mörner 1966: 156). Charles III ordered the expulsion of the Jesuits on February 27, 1767. The decree arrived in Lima in August, and established the date of September 4, 1767 for the removal of all the Jesuits of the empire; however, due to various complications, the Jesuit removal was completed only in May 1768 (Livi Bacci 2010, Block 1994).

The expulsion of Jesuits from Moxos did not result in immediate changes in the social and economic organization of the missions and what David Block has called “mission culture” did not disappear when they left. Music was not the exception; musicologist Samuel Claro states that the Jesuits destroyed almost all the documents of their archive shortly before their expulsion, leaving only diaries, letters and chronicles written by Jesuits and visitors as the only sources for a historical account of the missions. However, he notes that the missionaries did not destroy the music manuscripts, but instead preserved them. These manuscripts are still preserved and performed in Moxos today.

This period of colonization and missionization in Moxos, is characterized by a “Europeanization” of culture and music-making, yet various aspects of Moxeño musical practices remained intact; clearly there was a significant Indigenous contribution to music

making, which is documented in descriptions written by the Jesuits themselves. Thus, the music that was created during the mission period in Moxos is the product of complex negotiations between the Jesuits and the Indigenous people, which resulted in the appropriation of this music by the Indigenous people, who considered it their own.

Moxos after the Expulsion of the Jesuits

The departure of the Jesuits marked the end of almost a century of Jesuit rule in Moxos, and the beginning of a secular administration. From the perspective of the Crown, this change was part of a process of secularizing the Spanish colonies in the Americas and increasing its control over them. Locally, it brought significant changes to the missions, which were viewed at this time as a source of wealth, such as cattle and agricultural production, to be extracted and used outside their territories (Block 1994). Immediately after the expulsion the Jesuits were replaced by priests who did not belong to any religious order, some of whom had not yet been ordained; this period is known as *gobierno de los curas* (government of the priests), a period marked by exploitation and corrupt governance by the priests. According to historians Olga Merino and Linda Newson the priests “broke ethical and religious codes, appropriated the greater part of the missions’ income, encouraged contraband trade with the Portuguese in Mato Grosso and diverted produce from the Indian communities to merchants in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba” (Merino and Newson 1994: 25).

The priests continued trading mission products for their own benefit with little intervention from Spanish officers until 1786 when Governor Lázaro de Ribera came to power (Van Valen 2013). Ribera proposed a new Government Plan, implemented in 1790, which sought to improve the conditions of the missions after twenty-two years of the

gobierno de los cura;, to do this Ribera sent in Spanish officers to administer each of the former missions and he restricted the power of the priests to religious affairs (Merino and Newson 1994, Block 1994, Van Valen 2013).

Lázaro de Ribera's administration also promoted music education, performance, and the construction of musical instruments by the Indigenous people of the former missions of Moxos. Historian María Gembero-Ustárrroz states that in the reform proposed by Ribera "music was not only a tool for evangelization or a playful entertainment, but also a fundamental element of social cohesion, economic development and political propaganda" (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012: 237). According to the inventories that Ribera ordered upon his arrival to Moxos in 1786 there was a significant musical infrastructure, including musical instruments and scores. In the same year he also organized a feast in the king's honour, to which he invited Indigenous leaders and their wives; this celebration featured music and dancing (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012).

The social stratification that was imposed by the Jesuit missionaries, with distinct class divisions between the *familia* and the *pueblo*, continued to exist despite the changes in governance and administration until at least the 1830s; at this time the French visitor Alcide d'Orbigny "found that all of the Jesuit religious and administrative institutions were still intact" (Van Valen 2013: 19). Ribera continued to reaffirm the high status that the musicians held in the missions; as members of the *familia* they continued to act as intermediaries between the Indigenous people and the Spanish governors (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012).

As part of his Government Plan, Ribera sought to commercialize the musical instruments built by Indigenous people of Moxos, mentioning organs, violins, *violones*, flutes, harps and guitars, which were of good quality and were appreciated in the

viceroyalty of Peru. Similarly, he rewarded the artistically talented Indigenous men and their wives, by giving them fabrics to make dresses of Spanish style and improving their pay. He also proposed that each village should have a good orchestra to perform during new festivities such as the king's birthday and saints' days (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012).

During his administration Ribera also established a network of schools in Moxos. In each village there were two schools; in one of them Indigenous interpreters taught Spanish and in the other one the Indigenous *maestros de capilla* taught music to groups of approximately ten or twelve boys. There were also two schools in San Pedro, Moxos's capital, for the entire region; one of them was a drawing school and the other was a school where students would learn how to read, write and count in Spanish. Spanish officers selected two boys from each town to attend these schools, and when they finished their training, these boys would become teachers. The measures taken by Ribera were successful, since by the 1790s all the churches of the region had good musicians who performed for free (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012).

Ribera sent various reports about his Government Plan to Spain, which included descriptions, drawings, and even musical compositions: in his writings he made reference to Indigenous musical instruments and dances. In 1790 nine compositions written by Indigenous musicians using European music notation and texts in their native languages were dedicated to King Charles IV and his wife María Luisa de Borbón, and Ribera sent these scores to Spain. Today these manuscripts and their Spanish translation can be found at the General Archive of Indies in Seville. Among the compositions there are eight anonymous vocal pieces; one is an aria for six voices with parts for violins and accompaniment, and three of the others have some instrumental parts included. The aria

was attributed by Ribera to Indigenous composers Francisco Semo, Marcelino Ycho and Juan José Nosa (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012).

According to historian Gembero-Ustárrroz, Ribera held contradictory ideas about the creativity of Indigenous musicians. On the one hand he suggested they did not have talent for inventing but they were able to imitate perfectly. On the other hand he recognized the presence of Indigenous composers and described their works as product of their “simple imagination”, tacitly acknowledging that they had their own composition style (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2012: 246). Gembero-Ustárrroz states that “It is difficult to maintain that Indian musicians of Moxos were not capable of composing creative music, given knowledge of their constant musical activity, their social relevance and their presence in numerous administrative documents” (2012: 247). Both the European music introduced by the Jesuits twenty years earlier and Indigenous musical expressions were encouraged by Ribera, and according to Gembero-Ustárrroz, he “did not intend to undermine that rich heritage, but rather sought to strengthen it and transform its significance within a new political framework” (2012: 247).

Lázaro de Ribera’s administration lasted only six years, and shortly after his Government Plan was approved he left Moxos to be the intendant in Paraguay (Block 1994). The years that followed his departure were full of tensions between governors, priests and Indigenous people. There were conflicts between priests and governors, since the priests resented their ongoing loss of autonomy (Gembero-Ustárrroz 2011, Block 1994). Similarly, there were conflicts between the Indigenous population and both priests and governors mainly because Indigenous people were required to work harder than they had done in the time of the missions, but received less in return for their work. This situation caused various reactions in the Indigenous population: some people left the former missions

and settled in Brazil, Santa Cruz or in rural areas; whereas others sided with the priests or the governors to fight against one another. There were also Indigenous people who actively resisted Spanish governors and there were violent confrontations since 1801, under the leadership of *caciques* (Indigenous authorities) such as Juan Marasa and Pedro Ignacio Muiba (Van Valen 2013). The shooting of Juan Marasa by Governor Francisco Javier Velasco in 1819 led to a general uprising in Moxos, and it was not until 1824 that an army coming from Santa Cruz ended the uprising, only one year before the Declaration of Independence of Bolivia (Block 1994). The Indigenous people of Moxos resented the changes brought by the expulsion of the Jesuits; however, the independence would bring additional shifts in the administration and priorities of the former missions.

Moxos in Bolivia: the Beni Department

The years immediately following the creation of the Republic of Bolivia in 1825 did not bring significant changes to Moxos. After its independence Bolivia became a centralist state divided into departments and governed by local whites, also called *criollos* (creoles), who were either descendants of Spaniards born in Bolivia or people of mixed race (Van Valen 2013). The descriptions written by the French visitor Alcides D'Orbigny in the 1830s indicate that there had been little changes in the economic, political and social organization in Moxos, compared to the Jesuit period. He also noted that the Indigenous people of Moxos devoted a great amount of time to Catholic practices, more than the Indigenous people of Chiquitos and the local whites, and he also observed that they continued performing the music taught by the missionaries and carefully preserving the scores (Van Valen 2013, Waisman 2004).

It was not until 1842 when President José Ballivián created the Beni Department, which covered the territory of the former missions of Moxos that the former missions started to be seriously affected by new governmental policies, which would eventually lead to “the end of mission culture in Moxos” in the 1880s (Block 1994: 173). The Presidential Decree of 1842 extended the rights of citizenship to the inhabitants of this region, but at the same time it privileged individual property ownership, established annual taxes, and gave immigrants the same rights to claim lands as the native population. Block states that “By favoring private over communal ownership and by instituting a system of tax payments as the basis for landholdings, Ballivián’s decrees undermined the Indian conception of property rights. At the same time they opened Moxos to domination by those able to take advantage of new legal structures” (Block 1994: 153). The government also promoted an increase of population by opening the region to European (whites), *criollo* (local whites), and *mestizo* (mixed race) immigrants and “providing them [whites, criollos and mestizos] with a legal basis for the alienation of community lands and animals” (Block 1994: 149).

Immigration into Bolivia grew stronger in the middle of the nineteenth century, and Moxos entered the market of international capitalism first when the pharmaceutical industry became interested in cinchona bark, the vegetable base of quinine. A decade later, Moxos men left to work in the rubber industry of the Madeira River forest, becoming the most important source of workforce for rubber extraction in the region. Some worked as boatmen who paddled through the Madeira River to Manaus (Brazil), while others worked in the extraction for Bolivian or Brazilian patrons; many were forced to do so in brutal working conditions. The rubber boom caused a significant decrease in population, social disintegration and exploitation in Moxos (Block 1994, Van Valen 2013). Block notes the significance of this shift in economy for Moxeños culture, saying: “cinchona and rubber

gathering took place at the end of a hundred-year continuum of economic decline and political marginalization. The rubber boom, which completed the process of native dispossession begun under Spanish administration, marks the end of mission culture in Moxos” (Block 1994: 173).

The most common form of Indigenous resistance against this situation was their departure from the former missions to establish new settlements, which were small and distant from each other. In these new settlements Moxeños sought to recreate the social organization of the missions free from the influence of whites and mestizos. The Indigenous people left their belongings but usually brought religious icons and music scores, and music instruction and performance were central activities in the new settlements (Lehm 1999, Antezana 2012).

Music was a very important element for the construction of these settlements; the music taught by the Jesuits was considered sacred, so the Indigenous people copied the scores regularly in order to prevent them from being lost. The first settlement was founded in 1887 by the Christian shaman Andrés Guayocho, who attracted a great number of Moxeños from Trinidad (the present capital of the Beni department) to move to the backlands in San Lorenzo. Guayocho and his followers were violently repressed and were forced to leave San Lorenzo by local white-mestizo authorities, mainly because of their fear of losing labour force for the rubber extraction (Lehm 1999, Van Valen 2013). A new group of Indigenous people from Trinidad led by the Moxeño José Santos Noco reoccupied the territory of San Lorenzo in approximately 1892 (Van Valen 2013). Santos Noco and his followers sought to reproduce the social organization established by the Jesuits and were very religious. They created a *cabildo*, constructed a church, and appointed a chapel master to teach music, using scores and songbooks they had been preserving for more than a

century (Antezana 2012). An account by a visitor in 1912 also refers to the existence of a school where forty boys were taught how to read and write in Spanish and were given music instruction; girls were not allowed to attend and were only taught to pray and perform household chores (Van Valen 2013).

The rubber boom ended around 1910, with the drop of the prices of rubber in the world market in 1910. From this time until at least the 1980s, hundreds of Indigenous people of Moxos have continued to abandon urban centers to search for a place where they could be free from white-mestizo influence, founding a great number of new settlements. This practice has been called the *Búsqueda de la Loma Santa* (Search of the Holy Hill) (Lehm 1999). Lehm comments on this period, writing:

The Loma Santa is perceived as a space located somewhere in the jungle, mainly in the forested areas of the south-east of the Beni Department. But more than a place, it represents the utopia of a better situation for the Moxeño people. It fosters the establishment of a society free from the pressures that white-mestizos put on the indigenous people. It is thought that white-mestizo society, the source of evil, will be destroyed by a cataclysm. Simultaneously, the Moxeños will find their paradise, and a time of abundance, tranquility and freedom for them will begin. (1999: 131)

The Indigenous people who stayed in towns that had been missions during the Jesuit period such as Trinidad and San Ignacio de Moxos had less autonomy from white-mestizo influence than the more recently created settlement of San Lorenzo. However, San Ignacio de Moxos was located at a greater distance from river networks than other towns, which made its access more difficult for the white-mestizo population. As a result of this relative isolation, San Ignacio has a greater percentage of Indigenous people, and Ignacianos (the people from San Ignacio de Moxos) were able to maintain their traditions and their language, the Moxeño Ignaciano, more than other towns. This is evident in the continuing existence of *cabildo*, as well as church musicians and Indigenous dances (Van Valen 2013).

Moxos Today: The Music of the Missions of Moxos performed by Indigenous Elders

Today, San Ignacio de Moxos is the town with the greatest number of Indigenous people in the Beni department. According to the 2001 census San Ignacio de Moxos has 21643 inhabitants (8803 in the urban area and 12750 the rural area) and 81.66% of the population older than 15 self-identify as Indigenous. The five main Indigenous languages that are spoken today in the larger Moxos region are: Moxeño-Ignaciano, Moxeño-Trinitario, Yuracaré, Chimán and Mobima (Guzmán 2004). In San Ignacio de Moxos there are currently three race/class groups: *carayanas* (white-mestizo), *kollas* (highlanders) and Moxeños (Yashar 2005). The *Cabildo Indigenal* continues to exist in Moxos, but its main duty is organizing feasts and preserving the traditions of the community (Guillén 2003).

The music that was created during the period of the missions is still being performed in San Ignacio de Moxos. For centuries the *Cabildo* has preserved a large number of manuscripts of music and produced new copies regularly; these scores can be found today in the Mission Archive of Moxos. The *taitas* (male Indigenous elders) have been performing this music for many years and continue performing it every Sunday in the church choir, as well as for the feasts of the town. They also perform songs that have been orally transmitted for which there is no known score (Ensamble Moxos 2012). The *taitas* are Indigenous men who used to farm, harvesting crops in their *chacos* (plantations) and exchanging their products with cattle breeders, usually at a loss. In their later years they looked for the protection of the Church, and this is why they became church musicians⁸.

The church ensemble where the *taitas* perform is called the Musical Choir, also called Celestial Choir in some sources (Waisman 2013) and it includes singers, Indigenous

⁸ Interview with Raquel Maldonado conducted by the author on September 10, 2013 at 10:00AM, my translation.

flutes, clarinets, violins and *bajones* (Ensamble Moxos 2012). Waisman describes a recent performance of the *taitas* of San Ignacio de Moxos highlighting the unusual approaches to tuning that have come to characterize *taitas* performance practices:

The song used to be a merry villancico in honor of San Francis Xavier, with martial rhythms and fanfare-like figures rejoicing in the saint's victories over the Devil. Today's performance, instead, is slow, steady and, from a Western point of view, devoid of appropriate expression of the affections. Since the occasion was the feast of St Ignace of Loyola, it is liturgically inappropriate. As in all performances by the San Ignacio music chapel, no attempt whatsoever is made to tune the instruments to a single reference pitch: the voice, the violin, the flutes and the *bajones* (which are trumpets in pan-pipe disposition) go each in its own separate way, keeping roughly together in rhythm but paying no heed to consonance. (Waisman 2013: 14)

This description coincides with what can be observed in the performances of the *taitas* in Sergio Raczko's documentary "Misiones Jesuíticas en América: Pueblos Vivos" (Jesuit Missions in America: Living Peoples). All the instruments and voices sound the same melody but the instruments have different tuning, resulting in a sound that does not align with Western notions of monophony or intonation⁹. The Argentinean musician Gabriel Garrido, director of the Ensemble Elyma similarly describes a performance of the *taitas* that he saw when he visited San Ignacio de Moxos in the 1990s; the French journalist Alain Pacquier recounted Garrido's commentary:

Many things have disappeared or have been transformed over the years, emphasizes Gabriel Garrido, the Moxos like the Chiquitos no longer have organs or chirimias, nor the harp they still played in 1940; a modern clarinet has appeared and they have lost the sense of tuning. But the fervor is there, intact, proud guardian of a time that is gone, of a culture that the Indians and the Jesuits had bequeathed to them and will disappear with these last elders (Pacquier 1996: 156-157 my translation).

Garrido's description differs from Waisman in that Garrido attributes the lack of tuning to an ability that has been lost, while Waisman states that there is no attempt to tune

⁹ See video "MISIONES JESUITICAS EN AMERICA-Pueblos Vivos 1a Parte" YouTube video, 9:00 from Sergio Raczko's documentary 2014, posted by Sergio Gabriel Raczko March 13, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8LGTuqRpSA>, accessed on August 27 2014.

the instruments according to a common point of reference, which he believes could be related to Indigenous practices. He writes: “Considering the utter incorrectness of the Indian ensemble’s performance within a Western ritual framework, the search for non-Western roots seems an unavoidable task for the researcher. The combination of numinous songs introduced centuries ago by the Jesuits with performance practices of even older vintage and American origin seems a plausible hypothesis to account for some aspects of these extraordinary renditions by the Celestial Choir of San Ignacio de Mojos.” (Waisman 2013: 14).

The Moxeño Indigenous communities that abandoned the urban centers in the nineteenth century during the rubber boom taking with them their music scores have also preserved them for centuries and continue performing this music today. They are located in the (TIPNIS)¹⁰ and most of them speak the Moxeño Trinitario language (Lehm 1999). The primary source for information on the Indigenous musicians of the TIPNIS are the liner notes that accompany *Tras las Huellas de la Loma Santa* (“On the traces of the Holy Hill”), a CD released in 2007 by the *Ensamble Moxos*, written by Raquel Maldonado, the director of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and Antonio Puerta, the producer of the ensemble. Raquel and Antonio made an expedition through this region and collected thousands of manuscripts that had been preserved by these communities and now have become part of the Mission Archive of Moxos. They describe how even today the new generations have continued the practice of copying the music even though they do not know how to read or write it. According to Raquel and Antonio many self-taught elderly musicians in the TIPNIS play violins they made with their own hands, usually singing in

¹⁰ *Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Securé* (Indigenous Territory and National Park Isiboro Securé).

unison at the same time, and they are sometimes accompanied by traditional drums and rattles.¹¹ The Indigenous people of these communities continue performing some of this music in their religious ceremonies; however, none of the musicians knows how to read the scores, so they have preserved and transmitted this repertoire orally.

Both the *taitas* and the Indigenous musicians of the TIPNIS have taught the members of the *Ensamble Moxos* songs for which there is no known score, and the ensemble members have created arrangements for them. The *taitas* have also taught students and teachers of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School how to perform Indigenous instruments. This is why knowing the history of how the Indigenous people of Moxos made this music their own is essential to understand the meaning this music has today for the Moxeño teachers and students of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and the performers of the *Ensamble Moxos*.

In this chapter I have discussed the way in which the music created in the period of the missions became part of the Moxeño identity. Since the foundation of the Jesuit missions in Moxos, music performance and instruction were given a privileged space, and Governor Lázaro de Ribera continued to encourage the musical expressions that already existed in Moxos and supported the creation of music schools. After Ribera's administration it was the Indigenous people who decided to continue performing this music and preserving the scores, as they did when they created the new settlement of San Lorenzo. The fact that this repertoire is the product of negotiations between European missionaries and Indigenous people makes this music different from European baroque music and can be a reason for the value this music has for the Moxeño people and for their

¹¹ To see a performance of this repertoire, see video "YARE YARE en el TIPNIS Bolivia" YouTube video. 2014, posted by Samy Schwartz March 19, 2012 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91MX5hGCufk>.

decision to continue performing it today. The performance of this music by the Moxeño people is an expression of Indigenous modernity, in which Indigenous people have transformed and redefined the music of the colonizers to make it their own, blurring the divisions between tradition and modernity. In the next chapter I will address the philosophies and practices of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School in order to have a better understanding of how these philosophies and practices have shaped the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos*.

CHAPTER 3

The Music of Bolivian Missions Today:

The Mission Archives, SICOR and the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School

The music performance of the *Ensamble Moxos* has been shaped by the training that its members have received at the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. The musical training offered at the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School emphasizes the cultural specificity of San Ignacio de Moxos and celebrates the heritage and the music traditions of the town. The school promotes inclusivity and the main goals of the musical training are breadth and versatility. This school has developed a model of music education which can be viewed as an expression of Indigenous modernity, as it does not reproduce globalized models of music education; rather, the director of the school, Raquel Maldonado, has created a curriculum where she draws from different approaches to music education and includes Indigenous instruments and repertoire, in order to suit the specific context of San Ignacio de Moxos. In this chapter I will first address the creation of the Bolivian Mission Archives and how the discovery of musical manuscripts motivated the creation of the music schools of Chiquitos and Moxos. I will continue with an overview of the main principles of the Venezuelan *El Sistema* model, and how it was adopted in Chiquitos by the *Sistema de Coros y Orquestas* (System of Choirs and Orchestras) also known as SICOR. I will then focus on the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School, its history, philosophies and teaching practices, all of which inform the performance practices and repertoire of the *Ensamble Moxos* and are expressions of Moxeño modernity¹².

¹² It is important to note that the information about SICOR and the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School that will be provided in this chapter is based on interviews that I conducted with teachers and directors of both institutions in September 2013. All the interviews were conducted in Spanish and the quotes are my translation.

The Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos

The use of the music in the Jesuit missions throughout Latin America was known in academic circles through the descriptions found in historic chronicles and diaries of Jesuits and visitors; however, for many years this music was thought to be lost. In the 1950s the Chilean musicologist Samuel Claro visited the region of Moxos and found more than 270 scores of music that had been preserved by the *Cabildo Indigenal* of San Ignacio de Moxos, most of which had been copied during the twentieth century. He is the first scholar who wrote about the scores, and since his initial discovery, this archive has been growing with the addition of recent copies found in the homes of the people of the area. As was mentioned earlier, in 2006 the bishop of the region authorized an expedition through the Mamoré River and the TIPNIS¹³, in which Raquel Maldonado, the current director of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School, and Antonio Puerta, the producer of the *Ensamble Moxos*, recovered manuscripts which had been kept by Indigenous people in remote areas, and as a result, a total of approximately 7000 pages of manuscripts have been found in Moxos (Ensamble Moxos 2007).

Complementing the archive in Moxos are the materials that were discovered in the 1970s, during the restoration of the churches of Chiquitos. In 1972, Swiss architect Hans Roth found approximately 5000 pages of manuscripts with music that had been composed or copied in the colonial period. In 1990 UNESCO declared six of the churches of Chiquitos world heritage sites and by this time more than 10000 manuscripts had been found in the former missions of Chiquitos and Moxos. The Polish Jesuit priest and musicologist Piotr Nawrot has edited and published 22 volumes of works from the archives

¹³ *Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Securé* (Isiboro Securé National Park and Indigenous Territory)

of Chiquitos and Moxos, the only documented mission archives in Latin America (Nawrot, 2000).

The archives of Chiquitos and Moxos are located in the same region, the Bolivian lowlands, and in both archives many anonymous pieces were found that are believed to have been written by people at the missions (Nawrot 2000). Despite similarities in the contents of these two archives, there are significant differences between them in terms of their content and their history. A large number of manuscripts found in Chiquitos are works by the Italian composer Domenico Zipoli (1688-1726), who joined the Society of Jesus and spent his last years in Argentina. Furthermore, in the Jesuit period the missions of Chiquitos were located in the province of Paraguay, while the missions of Moxos were located in the province of Perú, and since they were closer to populated areas, there was a greater presence of *criollos* (children of Spaniards born in Latin America). According to Waisman this is why there is more music with Spanish texts in the Moxos archive than in the archive of Chiquitos, where most of the music has texts in Latin (Waisman, 2011). Another significant difference between the two archives is that some of the anonymous pieces of the Archive of Moxos were written after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, which suggests that they could have been written by Indigenous people (Waisman, 2004).

The Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos gained international prominence in the 1990s, when six churches in Chiquitos were declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and the Bolivian government started promoting tourism in the Chiquitos region. A few years later, in 1996 the creation of music schools and youth orchestras and choirs in Chiquitos and Moxos, and of the “American Renaissance and Baroque Music International Festival “Missions of Chiquitos”” provided a space to perform the repertoire of the mission

archives. I will now describe the different approaches taken in the music schools that offer training to children and adolescents in Chiquitos and Moxos.

SICOR and the *El Sistema* model

El Sistema, the Venezuelan system of youth symphony orchestras, was created in 1975 by Jose Antonio Abreu, as an after-school program conceived as a social project that offers alternatives to children and adolescents living in marginal contexts to keep them away from drugs and crime. This music education model was adopted by many countries of Latin America, among them Bolivia, during the 1990s and more recently has been exported to many countries in Europe and North America. One of the main principles of *El Sistema* is accessibility: there is no entrance examination and the program is offered free of charge. The program focuses on learning through playing in ensembles and meeting several times a week and all the orchestras constitute a national network (Govias 2011).

El Sistema is based on the philosophy that performing in symphony orchestras and choirs develops students' musical abilities while fostering a sense of community and belonging. As Abreu noted in one of his speeches, *El Sistema* conceives these ensembles as models of community:

In its essence, the orchestra and the choir are much more than artistic structures. They are examples and schools of social life, because to sing and to play together means to intimately coexist toward perfection and excellence, following a strict discipline of organization and coordination in order to seek the harmonic interdependence of voices and instruments. That's how they build a spirit of solidarity and fraternity among them, develop their self-esteem and foster the ethical and aesthetical values related to the music in all its senses Abreu (2009)

In the United States and other non-Latin American countries, the *El Sistema* music education model is seen as linked to classical repertoire, although this has not been the case in Venezuela (Pedroza 2014). The Venezuelan youth orchestras perform classical music,

but also Latin American folkloric music or music of Latin American composers arranged for symphony orchestra, sometimes adding local Indigenous instruments. As Pedroza notes, there is a particular performance style of Venezuelan youth orchestras:

The sonic picture that emerges ... is one where *classical music* stands not merely for the standard repertoire of Beethoven, Mozart, and Mahler, but also for a variety of vernacular musics, all of which emanate from the ensemble of the symphony orchestra. Furthermore, perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of *El Sistema's* flagship orchestras and of its most famous graduate, Gustavo Dudamel, is their performative style, which by all accounts subverts the stereotypical contemplative ambience of the traditional concert hall. ...*El Sistema's* image excels in adaptive versatility, its orchestras firmly rooted in the classical music category but notably capable of speaking with powerful vernacular and popular voices. (Pedroza 2014 paragraph 4, italics in the original)

Pedroza explains that these orchestras have established a different relationship with the audience, in which the audience is not expected to remain as passive as it usually has been in concerts of classical music, and the musicians of the orchestras sometimes stand and dance while playing their instruments.

In Chiquitos, SICOR started in 1996 as an initiative of the German Franciscan priest Walter Neuwirth and the Bolivian musician Ruben Darío Suárez. Suárez was trained in Argentina and Venezuela as a violinist and conductor and brought the model of *El Sistema* to Bolivia. Following this model, SICOR consists of a network of youth orchestras and choirs where the most advanced students train younger musicians and form new orchestras. The after-school music instruction offered by SICOR is free of charge and has no entrance examination. There are orchestras in many mission towns as well as in Plan 3000, a poor neighborhood in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the largest city in the eastern lowlands. The advanced students are sometimes given scholarships to study in Santa Cruz, and in return they have to teach others what they have learned. Arturo Molina¹⁴, vice-president of

¹⁴ Interview conducted by the author on September 13, 2013 at 11:00 AM.

SICOR, expressed in an interview that the orchestras of the former mission towns are usually string orchestras, because of the lack of resources to buy wind instruments. According to Arturo there are currently no choirs in SICOR, probably because in the towns the majority of singers abandon their musical training, while in Santa Cruz de la Sierra the choir ended because all of its members started playing instruments in the orchestra.

The youth orchestras of SICOR perform standard European classical repertoire, arrangements of Bolivian folk music for symphony orchestra, and repertoire of the Chiquitos archive largely relying on the scores, and conforming to the European standards of symphony orchestras. According to Arturo, the orchestras usually include folkloric music in their performances; he notes: “Music helps preserve cultural identities...We have worked a lot in this, in almost all of our concerts you will find at least one folkloric piece...it is a matter of identity”¹⁵. Rubén Darío Suárez Arana¹⁶, president of SICOR, expressed in an interview that the repertoire of the youth orchestras of SICOR is chosen according to the degree of technical difficulty and to accommodate the learning process of the students, rather than according to musical genre. In the first stage of their learning process the students perform “folklore” songs (which can be traditional songs or religious songs from the mass); in the second stage they perform music of the mission archives, and if they reach a higher level they start to perform music of what Rubén Darío calls “universal composers”. He says most of the works of the mission archives require a basic level of technique because in the Jesuit period the music was performed by children and teenagers. Also, the majority of the music of the archives is for voice (solo or choral), so orchestral arrangements of these works are created for SICOR ensembles to perform.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Interview conducted by the author on September 13, 2013 at 10:00AM.

Rubén Darío says the main goal of the public performances and recordings of the orchestras of SICOR is to show the students' learning process, and should be seen as “part of an education system”, in the same way as the repertoire choices. Thus, the training offered by SICOR follows closely the *El Sistema* model and is based on learning through performing in symphony orchestras.

In Moxos, there are no networks of youth orchestras as in Chiquitos and the most important music school of the region is located in San Ignacio de Moxos. The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School is similar with SICOR in that it offers a free after school music program that has no entrance examination, and although it offers music theory courses, the focus in the school is on learning how to play music instruments through performance in ensembles. In contrast with SICOR, however, in the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School the students have the opportunity to learn how to perform local Indigenous musical instruments, as well as European instruments, and the training is designed to develop performance skills on several instruments, as well as singing and dancing, instead of proficiency on a single instrument. The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School has various ensembles of students and teachers, but the *Ensamble Moxos* is the most important and prominent ensemble of the school. It performs the music of the Bolivian Mission archives, and it also draws from the oral tradition of the town, which includes traditional music and dances of the festivals of the town, as well as religious music learned from elderly Indigenous musicians from the town and from rural communities.

The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School

The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School is located in a building that was designed according to mission-style architecture, and is one of the largest buildings in the town (see

Image 3.1). Besides the classrooms, the school has an auditorium with lights and sound equipment, where the ensembles of the music school perform, and the auditorium is also used in the creation of recordings and as a rehearsal space. The school provides all instruments that are used by students and members of the ensemble, including *bajones*, Indigenous flutes and percussion, orchestral strings and woodwinds, the harpsichord, and positive organ. The infrastructure of this music school in a town like San Ignacio de Moxos is unusual, especially due to the lack of significant government funding; some funding is secured through donations from foreign NGOs, as well as through money raised through tours of the *Ensamble Moxos* and the CDs.



Image 3.1: Image of front entrance to San Ignacio de Moxos Music school, photo by author.

The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School was created in 1996 as an initiative of the Basque nun María Jesús Echarri. She was compelled to start the music school with the goal of ensuring that the repertoire that was being performed by the *taitas* who perform every Sunday morning in the church of San Ignacio de Moxos, was passed on to new generations. At the time, Echarri, who is also a professional pianist, taught the students how to play the

recorder, and also brought the students to the church to learn from the *taitas*. With the arrival of new teachers and the growth of the music school the *taitas* have been less involved in the music school and the school has become independent from the church. Today the senior students and teachers of the school have a close relationship with the *taitas*, who teach them songs, teach them how to perform Indigenous instruments, and sometimes they perform together. However, the students of the music school do not intend to become *taitas* themselves.

Raquel Maldonado has been the director of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School since 2004. She was born in La Paz, in the Bolivian highlands, and started her musical training at the *Conservatorio Nacional de Música* (National Conservatory of Music), where she studied piano for ten years, and then she earned a Bachelor degree in Composition and Orchestral Conducting at the Catholic University of La Paz. Her first contact with the music of the Mission Archives was when she was part of the choir *Coral Nova* in La Paz, which includes works from the mission archives in its repertoire. She also studied organ and harpsichord with the Polish priest and musicologist Piotr Nawrot, who later recommended her for the position of director of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School.

Raquel also participated in the *Orquesta Experimental de Instrumentos Nativos* or OEIN (Experimental Orchestra of Native Instruments) in La Paz; she says this experience has been essential for her work in San Ignacio de Moxos. The OEIN, directed by Cergio Prudencio, performs contemporary music using highland Indigenous instruments. She participated as performer and also as a guest conductor, and she directed the youth group of this institution until she went to San Ignacio de Moxos. About the OEIN Raquel says:

This orchestra was founded more than 20 years ago, and it really is a totally modern musical project, but also with very important philosophical foundations, because through the use of Native music they aim to de-colonize the image of the musician,

create new music, break ground, and not just follow the European way, which is predominant in the training of musicians in Latin America¹⁷.

In her comment Raquel expresses how she believes the use of Indigenous repertoire and instruments can lead to create new ways of performing music, without necessarily following a European model. The way in which she refers to this ensemble clearly resonates with the concept of Indigenous modernity.

When I visited the school in September 2013, the teachers of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School had all been students at the school themselves, and some of them had the opportunity to receive additional training in countries such as Spain and Argentina for short periods of time. The teachers have played various instruments throughout their learning process; most of them have changed their principal instrument several times according to the resources that are available in the school, the needs of the ensembles, and their own preferences. Even though none of the current teachers has a professional degree in music, music has become their profession, allowing them to make a living with music by teaching in the music school and performing in the *Ensamble Moxos*. The school currently has 17 teachers whose ages range between approximately 17 and 25; most of the teachers self-identify as Indigenous (Moxeño).

The student body of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School is very diverse, and it includes children and teenagers from different ethnic groups and social classes. The number of students is in constant flux, but the teachers estimate there are normally between 150 and 180 students. Raquel notes that there is more racial diversity in the younger student groups, but in the older age groups there is a tendency for Moxeño Indigenous students to make up the majority. Raquel explains: “when they grow up you notice that, really, the ones who

¹⁷ Interview conducted by the author on September 10, 2013 at 10:00 AM.

find that the school gives them more possibilities, and the ones who really find it inspiring, are the Indigenous students. This is because definitely the education and the way in which we salvage this cultural legacy, makes them reflect upon their culture.”¹⁸ Raquel also speculates that one of the main reasons for the drop-out of *carayanas* (white-mestizos) is that “when they reach a certain age, they no longer want to mix. While they are children they can be friends with anybody; but when they are 13 or 14, and they realize there are differences, their parents start to talk in a certain way and society influences them”¹⁹. About the reasons for drop-out of *kollas* (Indigenous or mestizo highlanders), Raquel says when these students become adolescents they are required to help with their family’s stores and businesses after school, so their parents usually do not let them go to the music school.

One of the objectives of the music school, according to Raquel, is giving the students the possibility of having a profession and of making a living with music. Even though Raquel values the legacy that the *taitas* have preserved and encourages the students to learn from them, the objective of the music school is not to train the students to become *taitas* themselves. She explains that belonging to the Musical Choir, the church ensemble where the *taitas* perform, also requires the musicians to be very religious, since they consider their job as a divine commandment; this is explained in the liner notes of the Ensemble Moxos’ CD *Piesta Moxos*:

The Music School of San Ignacio de Moxos was born to recover the ancient knowledge, but it does not intend to re-create the music schools of the times of the Jesuits. In fact, it is not based on a religious philosophy. Well into the 21st century it would be anachronistic to force the indigenous people to embrace the Catholic religion as their only creed (Ensamble Moxos 2010)

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Being a church musician is a full time job, and Raquel says that it would be impossible for her students to devote themselves completely to this work. Raquel notes that the conditions and aspirations of the students of the music school are different from those of the *taitas*, saying: “I am working with young people who want to have a life; a life in the twenty first century. They are not the Indigenous people of the time of the Jesuits. They want to have a profession and a good job, to have access to the internet, to travel around the world... They are now in the age of taking on the world, and who can take this right from them?”²⁰ Thus, the school does not intend to train its students to become church musicians; rather, the training offered by the school provides them with the skills to teach and perform different kinds of music.

The music school also has the objective of giving the students the opportunity to know, preserve and promote their culture. Raquel notes that the *taitas* have been preserving a legacy for centuries but they are sometimes taken for granted in the town. She highlights the importance of making the students aware of the need of nurturing Moxeño cultural expressions, and of valuing the work that the *taitas* have been doing for centuries. Thus, besides the European instruments and repertoire that are taught in the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School, the school offers training in Indigenous wind and percussion instruments and the students learn to perform popular music of the town such as the music and dances of the feast of the patron saint, called in the Moxeño language *Ichapekene Piesta*. As was mentioned earlier, the *taitas* and other Indigenous people are not employed by the music school but often informally teach senior students and teachers how to perform Indigenous instruments. In this way the music school encourages the students to know and

²⁰ Ibid.

value the musical expressions of their town, to continue performing traditional instruments and repertoire, while motivating them to re-create this music.

The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School also seeks to develop critical thinking and creativity in the students. As is written in the liner notes of the CD *Piesta Moxos* “The Music School fosters [the students’] creative abilities and reclaims their right to express them; their right to make music, of course, without belittling the legacy they inherited from their grandparents” (Ensamble Moxos 2010). Also, being an after-school program, Raquel conceives the music school as a complement of the education that the children receive in elementary and high school, which she sees as restrictive of creativity and critical thinking. Raquel says: “This education [elementary and high school] is good to create people who are prepared only to receive orders.”²¹ She also says that even though the current government has very progressive educational policies it has been difficult to implement them due to the lack of people who are well prepared to do so. The music school offers its students a wide range of music making opportunities providing them with tools to express themselves and to re-create different repertoires.

One of the main objectives of the music school is to include girls and women in music training and performance opportunities, which contrasts with what Raquel perceives as a very sexist society in the town. She describes how hard it has been for her and the teachers of the school to fight against the patriarchal mindset that had been instilled in the girls since their youth. The school offers girls and women a different vision of the world, where both men and women can make music. Raquel says:

But of course this is part of a bigger picture, it is not only about getting mothers to give permission to the girls; we are fighting against a history that degenerates us and we assume a role of a self-sacrificing woman, almost without being aware of it,

²¹ Ibid.

because it is socially accepted. Then, why would you be different? Socially it is more acceptable that you are Miss San Ignacio than that you are the best violinist of the school or the concertino of the ensemble; that [being a musician] makes no difference for their parents or their parents' friends. But if you are Miss San Ignacio, everybody would kiss the floor where you walk. Why would the girls think in a different way? It doesn't matter how hard we try to get a discourse into their heads every day in the school, at the end the society grabs you; it drags you down. But we are fighting, and we are having good results; maybe not the results we would like to have, but you can see there are results.²²

Frank Vaca, a cello and music theory teacher, also refers to the way in which the music school has contributed to the fight against machismo and violence against women in the town. He says:

Music makes us more sensitive...music can make you happy or make you cry, and I think the kids perceive this. For example here we have a very strong characteristic in this region, which is machismo; that the men have to beat the women...but the feeling of music...it is like it changes this mentality; if women play the violin and men too, why wouldn't we be equal? In the past it was pure *machismo* because the ones who performed were only men; you can even see and feel this in the elderly people because it was always like that. The ones who entered the choir were men; the ones who played instruments were men; women were always discriminated against. In this sense we are somehow contributing to the society too, to make machismo gradually disappear.²³

By giving women the opportunity to perform music that they were not allowed to perform in the past the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School is offering new possibilities for girls and women in San Ignacio de Moxos and by extension, potentially shaping social mores and gender conventions.

The main goal of the curriculum of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School is offering the students breadth and versatility in their training process. Raquel states that when the school was first opened, the curriculum they were using was a European model, so they adapted it to suits their own needs, by combining the European model of conservatory training, the *El Sistema* model, and including Indigenous instruments and

²² Ibid.

²³ Interview conducted by the author on September 9, 2013 at 4:30PM.

repertoires in the curriculum of the school. She highlights the need of having their own way of teaching music instead of importing a European curriculum. She says:

I think especially in America, and in Latin America in particular, this is what is done: try to import a model of training made in Europe for the Europeans. And what are the results? We always have to be in the second row; we do not obtain the same results; there will always be a European who will do better than us. That is why we are trying to find our own way, a way that works for us, and helps us develop what we have, but in order to do so we have to be really clear about our possibilities and what we can do with them. We are talking about totally reinventing the musical training, and seeing how much we can take from the European training and how much we can cast aside. But what is clear is that we do not want to import a foreign curriculum. We do want to learn about it, and determine what we want and what we do not want.²⁴

The musical training at the San Ignacio de Moxos music school is divided into different subject areas. The youngest children have instruction in recorder, choir and orchestra, and later they start learning music theory, music history and harmony. The school offers training in orchestral instruments and it also offers training in piano, organ, harpsichord, and some basso continuo. All the students learn how to play native instruments such as the *bajón*, Indigenous flutes such as the *flauta de bato* and *flauta de tacuara*, and percussion instruments. Also, all the students are required to learn how to play the recorder, to sing and to dance. Raquel says:

Clearly the level is not the same as if they had focused just on one thing, but...every day we are more convinced that multiple skills are the best way of training a musician, because it is like doctors, they specialize in the right lung and then they don't know how to cure a cold. I think the experience of a musician should be broad and as rich as possible. I think this is essential when it comes time to make music, which is not only knowing music, or knowing how to play your instrument...We are aware that it is a strange experiment and there can be people who criticize it, and there can be violinists who play much better, but I think the experience that these kids are having when they make music is richer, more interesting and more gratifying.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Thus, by offering a unique model of education, which includes Indigenous instruments and repertoire in the curriculum, the school has been successful in training musicians who are able to play multiple instruments and fulfill different artistic roles.

Throughout their learning process, the students of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School not only perform on multiple instruments but they also perform different types of repertoire. Raquel states that in the school the students learn the “universal” repertoire, referring to Western classical music, plus the local repertoire, referring to both the music of the mission archives and the folkloric music of oral tradition. The teachers consider the music of the Moxos and Chiquitos archives (“Mission Baroque”) as the main repertoire of the ensembles, but during the learning process the students also perform other kinds of music. For example, Abraham Cuellar, a piano and music theory teacher says the teachers of the music school perform popular music such as soundtracks of movies, nursery rhymes and traditional music especially with younger students. He says: “We need to motivate the kids; you cannot bore them with Mission Baroque all the time...you need to give them music they know and they like...Sometimes even in theory class they want to play the *Machetero Loco* and we do it”²⁶. The *Machetero Loco* is a song that accompanies the traditional Indigenous dance of the *Macheteros*, which is performed in the local feast *Ichapekene Piesta*.

Performing in various ensembles comprised of students and teachers is central to the learning process of the students of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. The main ensemble of the school, the *Ensamble Moxos*, has twenty musicians who are teachers and advanced students of the music school, who perform on strings, woodwinds, Native instruments and they sing. There are also two children’s choirs: the *Pre-Infantil* Choir, for

²⁶ Interview conducted by the author on September 9, 2013 at 7:30 PM.

children who have been there for one year or less, and the *Infantil* Choir, for older students. The school also has a children's orchestra, where the most advanced students play the "official" score, while the other performers play easier adaptations of the music, guided by the more advanced students. These student orchestras and choirs perform mainly in the town, usually in the auditorium of the music school.

The San Ignacio de Moxos Music School does not follow the *El Sistema* model; however, the director and teachers of the music school have drawn from its philosophies and adapted them to their needs. Raquel states that, beginning in 2012, in order to motivate the young children they began to introduce the orchestral experience in the students' first year. Raquel explains the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School's relationship with *El Sistema*:

We are not part of it, and we do not intend to be part of it. We like our autonomy and we like being able to explore in our own way. But we do take into account what is done outside. Any reference is useful for us, to make us think, to reflect, to change. So we have tried introducing the orchestra the first year; we make adaptations to the music. But then, what would we do with the pianists? Some say okay, send them to the choir; but what we have done is have keyboards and place them behind the orchestra so they play a piano part in six hands. We have three kids per keyboard, so that they can be part of the orchestra. We want all the kids to have the experience; all of them have to be in the orchestra, and all of them have to be in the choir.²⁷

Instead of adopting an established model of musical training, the director and the teachers of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School have created their own curriculum, which includes music theory, music history and instrument lessons besides the work in the ensembles, and have developed a model that suits their resources and their needs. This model is based on the respect for the musical traditions of their town, but it allows the students to re-create these musical expressions according to their own possibilities and

²⁷ Ibid.

experiences, and it allows girls and women to perform music they were previously not allowed to perform. The main goal of the musical training of this school is to create breadth and versatility in its students, which enriches the experience of performing in ensembles. Finally, the training of the music school offers the students the possibility of having a profession and making a living as musicians as teachers and performers in their town or elsewhere.

In this chapter I have addressed the way in which the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School offers a unique model of music education, which can be considered an expression of Indigenous modernity. The individuality of the experience of this school is evident in the creation of a curriculum that combines European and Native instruments and repertoire. From the *El Sistema* model of instruction teachers implement the idea of learning by performing in ensembles but it does not limit that performance to the structure of the symphony orchestra, since it includes Indigenous instruments and dances. Also, even though the school teaches European instruments it does not follow the European model of training by specializing in one instrument; as was mentioned earlier the goal of the school is to develop versatility and multiple skills in its students. Finally, the cultural specificity and the respect for local music traditions is central for the training of offered by the San Ignacio de Moxos Music school; these traditions are re-created to allow creative expressions of the students of the school, but also to include girls and women who had been excluded from these traditions. In the next chapter I will analyze the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* and the ways in which they express Indigenous modernity.

CHAPTER 4

The Music of the *Ensamble Moxos*

The *Ensamble Moxos* cannot be easily classified as a baroque ensemble, as a youth orchestra or as a traditional Indigenous ensemble. However, its performance practices have been influenced by two main models of performance: Early Music ensembles and Moxeño Indigenous musicians. The performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* involve a mixture of elements borrowed from these two models, resulting in various degrees of *mestizaje*. In order to better analyze the music of the *Ensamble Moxos*, in this chapter I will first provide a description of the ensemble, its members, its repertoire, and an overview of the performance practices of the ensemble, and its relationship with the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. I will then provide an analysis of the music performed by this ensemble, which will involve the examination of five pieces, conceiving them as part of a continuum between the two models of performance, which I will call here “European” and “Indigenous”. Finally I will analyze how the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* express Indigenous modernity.

The *Ensamble Moxos*

The *Ensamble Moxos* is the most important ensemble of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. Most of the members of the ensemble are teachers of the music school with the inclusion of some advanced students; their ages range from approximately 15 to 25. The director of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School, Raquel Maldonado, is also director of the ensemble, and she also performs with it. Since 2003 the *Ensamble Moxos*, has performed throughout Latin America and Europe. The ensemble has released five CDs and one DVD, materials which are promoted in their tours. The ensemble includes Indigenous

instruments such as *bajones*, drums, rattles and flutes, and European instruments such as strings (violins, cello and double bass), woodwinds (flute, bassoon recorders), positive organ and harpsichord, and all the members of the ensemble sing and dance.

Since their first recording *Tasimena Ticháwape Jirásare* (which translates to “The song already returned from the mountain” in the Moxeño language) in 2005 to their most recent work *Ichasi Awásare* (“Old Town” in Moxeño language) in 2012, the Ensemble Moxos has been moving from exclusively performing music of the Mission Archives of Moxos and Chiquitos, the performance of which relies on scores, to include more pieces of oral tradition that members of the ensemble have learned from Moxeño Indigenous people, and for which there is no score known. The latter repertoire not only gives the ensemble freedom in performance and space for creativity, it also gives them the opportunity to celebrate their Indigenous heritage, which makes them unique and different from Early Music ensembles and youth orchestras. However, they have not abandoned the repertoire of the mission archives because they also claim this music as their own, and it is part of the musical training offered by the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School.

The group itself has changed from a membership forty musicians to only twenty, which brought a change in their name, from *Coro y Orquesta de San Ignacio de Moxos* (Choir and Orchestra of San Ignacio de Moxos) to *Ensamble Moxos*. A smaller ensemble makes touring easier, which was expressed in interviews with the director, but also, I believe, allows for closer communication and interaction between the members of the ensemble; it does not rely exclusively on the conductor as in larger ensembles. Both the smaller size and the change in the name make the group similar to Early Music ensembles, which usually have more space for collective creation and individual expressions through ornamentation and improvisations, than a symphony orchestra.

The concerts, or “shows” as the director and the musicians of the ensemble refer to them, include music, dances and theatrical representations, requiring several changes of costumes throughout a performance. The members of the ensemble also wear different types of dress according to the repertoire they are performing. When they are performing music from the Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos²⁸ they wear two types of dress: they all wear golden robes; or men wear gray pants below the knee and $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve jackets with golden shirts while women wear long dresses with a large golden ruffle around the neck (See figures 4.1 and 4.2).



Figure 4.1 Ensemble Moxos performing repertoire of the Mission Archives wearing golden robes. Photo by the author.

²⁸ There are exceptions; for example, the piece *Ara Vale* is from the Archive of Chiquitos but it is written in an Indigenous language so they wear a different type of dress.



Figure 4.2 Ensemble Moxos performing repertoire of the Mission Archives (second type of dress). Still from YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas.²⁹

To perform the rest of the repertoire they wear either white cotton tunics or *tipoy* and *camijeta* (See figures 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5), which are typical dresses that the people of the town wear for the *Ichapekene Piesta*, the biggest festival of San Ignacio de Moxos. For all types of repertoire the members of the ensemble wear sandals and necklaces made of seeds, and all women braid their hair and adorn it with seeds. According to interviews with the director and performers of the Ensemble Moxos, performers want to evoke the time of the missions with their dresses, and also to show they are Moxeño; as a performer of the ensemble, Sandra Yaca, says “We want to show an image of our town... We don’t want to deny that we are from San Ignacio de Moxos and we are Indigenous; we want to show this to many people; we want them to know us.”³⁰

²⁹ “Moxos : Jesu Corona Virginum” YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in October 2013, posted by Fredy Thomas, October 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJTAQ21fJsk>.

³⁰ Interview conducted by the author on September 10, 2013 at 9:00 AM, my translation.



Figure 4.3 Tipoy. Photo by the author.



Figure 4.4 White cotton tunics. Still from YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas.³¹

³¹ “Moxos : Gracias a Dios” YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in October 2013, posted by Fredy Thomas, October 2013 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ut9MI-JQiY>.



Figure 4.5 *Camijeta*. Still from YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas.³²

The music performance of the *Ensamble Moxos* is also a mixture of Indigenous and European sonic markers. The ensemble performs the music of the mission archives using modern string and woodwind instruments, period instruments such as harpsichord and positive organ and Indigenous instruments such as *bajones* and percussion instruments. The voices of the solo singers and the instruments of the orchestra have a restricted use of vibrato and use baroque ornamentation. For the oral tradition repertoire the members of the ensemble have learned from Indigenous elders; there is no score for this repertoire, so the musicians use the main melody of each piece, adding instruments, such as the harpsichord or positive organ, new melodies, accompaniments, and sometimes baroque ornamentation, creating arrangements that are unique and reflect local aesthetics.

In its performances, the *Ensamble Moxos* also reflects the philosophies and teaching practices of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School. One of the main objectives of the music school identified by Raquel is to give the students the opportunity of knowing, preserving and promoting their culture. In their choice of repertoire, the Indigenous instruments they include in their performances, and in the way they dress, the members of

³² “Moxos : Velorio & Final” YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in October 2013, posted by Fredy Thomas October 2013 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iowmN-vvhkc>

the *Ensamble Moxos* demonstrate the respect accorded to the local musicians and to the traditions they are showcasing. Also, the liner notes of all the CDs include very detailed information about the music traditions of San Ignacio de Moxos, the names of the Indigenous people who taught their music to the members of the ensemble, as well as information about the town. The members of the ensemble have also contributed to the growth and preservation of the Moxos Mission Archive by collecting scores in remote rural Indigenous communities and bringing them to the archive and performing it.

Another way in which the ensemble reflects the philosophies of the music school is by encouraging originality in the students. This is evident in the inclusion of improvisations, theatrical representations, staging, and other resources, especially in the music of oral tradition, which allows more freedom of interpretation. The performances of the *Ensamble Moxos* also reflect the goal of inclusion of women in the music school. This is evident in the entire repertoire performed by the *Ensamble Moxos*. There are women and girls performing all kinds of instruments, in the same roles as their male counterparts. Women play drums, men sing and dance and they have the chance to do this in part because they do not have fixed roles in the ensemble. Probably the most significant example is the presence of women in the dance of *Macheteros*, which has historically been performed mainly by men (Van Valen 2013, Olsen 1998).

The musicians of the *Ensamble Moxos* mix sonic and visual aspects of other musicians and ensembles after which they have modeled the interpretation of their repertoire. For the Mission Archives repertoire, they look to Early Music ensembles from different countries, such as the ensemble *Elyma*, which is based in Switzerland but directed by the Argentinean Gabriel Garrido, and the British ensemble *Florilegium*, among others. For the repertoire of the oral tradition, members of *Ensamble Moxos* look to local

musicians and *taitas* as models for their interpretations. These models inform the performance of the *Ensamble Moxos* to varying degrees to create a wide range of possibilities.

The “European-Indigenous” Continuum

In the repertoire of the *Ensamble Moxos* performers use Indigenous and European elements both visually and musically and there are pieces that have such a complex mixture of elements that it would make it very difficult to say definitively that they are “European” or “Indigenous”. In order to analyze the various degrees of resemblance with these models I will use the approach taken by Fernando Ríos in his analysis of folkloric representations. He states that “a folkloric musical representation’s sonic resemblance to the rural genre or style it is said to be chiefly derived from can be conceptualized along a continuum and that this approach elucidates the feasibility of musical borrowings from a folkloric enactment back to its so-called root form” (2012: 6) In the case of the music of the *Ensamble Moxos*, the continuum goes from what is closer to the Early Music ensembles’ performance model to what is closer to that of the Moxeño Indigenous musicians. I will call it here the European-Indigenous continuum, with European referring to Early Music ensembles and Indigenous referring to Moxeño Indigenous musicians.

In order to illustrate this continuum and the wide range of *mestizaje* that can be found in the repertoire of the *Ensamble Moxos*, I analyzed five pieces that have varying degrees of use of European and Indigenous musical and visual markers. First I chose two pieces that had a close resemblance to each of the two models, in terms of source of repertoire and musical and visual markers, and therefore could be placed at the two ends of the continuum. Following the same criteria, I chose three pieces where there is more

mixture of European and Indigenous elements; the piece located in the center of the continuum is where the mixture is the most evident. It is important to note that although these five pieces stand on different points of the continuum, all of them, even the ones located at the ends, involve a mixture of elements and do not reproduce any of the models. In the tables 4.1 and 4.2 there is a summary of the musical and extra-musical aspects of the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* in these pieces that I considered relevant to define their place in the continuum. Based on the information of the chart, I will now refer to each piece and its place within the European-Indigenous continuum. For the analysis I used YouTube videos; the links for the videos can be found in a footnote next to the title of the song.

*Beatus Vir*³³



Figure 4.6 Ensemble Moxos performing Beatus Vir wearing the second type of dress. Still from the YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas.

The performance of this piece by the Ensemble Moxos is located at the European end of the continuum because, of the five pieces it is the one most clearly modeled in European standards of performance. It is also the only piece attributed to a European

³³ See video “Ensamble Moxos 2.MP4” YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in September 2011, posted by Fredy Thomas, September 21 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KfQmwXJ-E0>.

composer, Domenico Zipoli, while the others are anonymous. *Beatus Vir* is a piece from the Mission Archive of Chiquitos; its text is a psalm in Latin; *Beatus vir qui timet Dominum* translates “Blessed is the man who fears the Lord” (Nawrot 2004).

Repertoire	Performance Practices								
	Musical					Extra-musical			
	Size of the Ensemble	Texture	Rhythm	Melody	Harmony	Dress	Use of Scores	Interaction	Text
<i>Beatus Vir</i> Author: Domenico Zipoli Psalm for Soprano, three voice choir, two violins and continuo (First Movement) Archive of Chiquitos	Total: 16 and conductor Choir (9 people) Instruments: 3 violins, cello, double bass, traverse flute (modern), positive organ	Polyphonic	Binary 2/4 Fast tempo Eighth notes and sixteenth notes	Mainly step motion or thirds; occasionally fourths and fifths. The melodic pattern of the violins changes in the second verse of the psalm (Potens in terra)	Tonal F Major. Key areas: F major, C Major, F Major, D minor, A minor, F major.	Men: Gray pants below the knee, $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve jackets and golden shirts Women: long dress with golden ruffle	All the members of the ensemble use scores	Raquel conducts the orchestra and choir and all the musicians follow her. Layout of a symphony orchestra.	Religious text in Latin (Psalm 111)
<i>Ara Vale</i> Anonymous Written for tenor, two violins and continuo Archive of Chiquitos	Total: 9 2 violins, cello, double bass, recorder, <i>bombo</i> , rattle, positive organ, solo soprano voice	Polyphonic.	3/4 slow tempo, quarter notes and eighth notes	Leaps (octave, fourths and fifths) the rest in step motion. The melody range is within an octave. Violins use baroque ornamentation	Tonal G minor No modulations but it has secondary dominants	Men: <i>Camijeta</i> Women: <i>Tipoy</i>	All the members of the ensemble perform from memory	There is no conductor	Religious text in the Guarani language

Table 4.1 Music Analysis of *Beatus Vir* and *Ara Vale*.

Repertoire	Performance Practices							
	Musical					Extra-musical		
	Size of the Ensemble	Texture	Rhythm	Melody	Harmony	Dress	Interaction	Text
<i>Aquel Monte</i> Anonymous Taught by <i>taita</i> Marcial Jare (no score known)	Total: 11 harpsichord, double bass, cello, 3 violins, 2 <i>bajones</i> , <i>bombo</i> , rattles, solo soprano recorder, solo soprano Singer	Polyphonic (continuo and counter-melodies)	3/4 slow tempo, quarter notes and eighth notes	Step motion and thirds but there is a seventh minor leap. Recorder uses baroque ornamentation and improvises variations of the melody	Tonal, B minor No modulations	White cotton tunics	There is no conductor	Religious text in the Moxeño language
<i>Señora Doña María</i> Anonymous Taught by Moxeño Indigenous people of the TIPNIS (no score known)	Total: 17 3 traditional drums, hand drum, tambourine, different kinds of rattles, double bass, 2 cellos, positive organ, 5 recorders, 3 violins, solo soprano voice	Monophonic with a pedal. The piccolo recorder sometimes plays a third above	The meter is an alternation of compound time (6/8) with simple time (3/4)	The melody is modal: in A Phrygian. The piccolo recorder ornaments the melody	Modal. There is only one chord throughout the song (F Major) and the melody is in A Phrygian	Men: <i>Camijeta</i> Women: <i>Tipoy</i>	Musicians move around the stage and sometimes smile	Christmas Carol In Spanish
<i>Machetero Dance</i> Anonymous Music and dance performed during the <i>Ichapekene Piesta</i> (no score known)	Total: 9 2 traditional drums (<i>bombo</i> and <i>caja</i>) <i>flauta de bato</i> , six <i>Machetero</i> dancers with rattles in their ankles. The rest of the ensemble dances	Monophonic. There is only one melody played in the <i>flauta de bato</i>	2/4 Starts slow like a march and then the tempo is faster until the end	Step motion, thirds and occasionally fourths and fifths. It moves within one octave (from D to D) The flutist uses various ornaments	There is only one melody and it is modal In F mixolydian	<i>Machetero</i> dancers: <i>Camijeta</i> and headdress Rest of the women: <i>tipoy</i> Other members dressed as characters of the <i>Ichapekene Piesta</i>	Performers dance, sometimes smile, and interact with the audience asking them to dance with them	No text

Table 4.2 Music Analysis of *Aquel Monte*, *Señora Doña María* and the *Machetero Dance*.

This piece for was written for solo soprano, three voice choir, two violins and continuo (Nawrot 2004), and it is the most complex in terms of texture, with many simultaneous melodic lines and in harmony with several modulations. *Beatus Vir* has six movements but here I will focus on the first movement, because I believe this movement illustrates the European and Indigenous elements of its performance.

The performance of *Beatus Vir* by the *Ensamble Moxos* follows common European performance practices and the sound results in a mixture between the sound of an Early Music ensemble and the one of a youth orchestra. The piece is performed by 17 musicians, including a soprano soloist, a three-voice choir, an orchestra, with Raquel as the conductor. The choir has nine singers and the orchestra has three violins, cello, double bass, a traverse flute (modern), and a positive organ. The instruments of the orchestra are modern but the inclusion of the positive organ and the restricted use of vibrato in the orchestra, the choir and the solo singer, make the sound of the *Ensamble Moxos* similar to that of an Early Music ensemble.

Of the five pieces selected this is the only one that has a conductor and the typical layout of a symphony orchestra, where the members of the orchestra are seated with the members of the choir standing behind them; the conductor is in front of these performers, and the solo singer stands next to the conductor facing the audience. The presence of the conductor, which is not common in Early Music ensembles (Kelly 2011), might be related to the complexity of the music and to the fact that it is the only piece in which there are contrasting dynamics in the performance, and the only one in which members of the ensemble use musical scores; a conductor would facilitate coherence in a relatively complicated piece. The size of the ensemble is smaller than a symphony orchestra with

some parts doubled or tripled, and a traverse flute is added in this performance, allowing all the members of the ensemble to perform and the use of all of the resources that are available for their performance.

For the performance of this piece, the male and female members of the *Ensamble Moxos* wear different clothes: men wear gray pants below the knee and $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve jackets with golden shirts and women wear long dresses with a large golden ruffle around the neck. This type of dress is not common in the Early Music ensembles that perform the repertoire of Bolivian mission archives, compared with, for example, the Holland-based ensemble *Musica Temprana* where musicians dress in black or dark formal clothes (See figure 4.7).



Figure 4.7 *Musica Temprana* performing *Beatus Vir* wearing black formal clothes. Still from YouTube video posted by Kanaal van musicatemprana.³⁴

As was mentioned earlier, in the interviews the members of the ensemble said the dress evoked the life in the missions. Even though their dress is formal, for example the long dresses of the women and the golden clothes of men and women, the sandals, necklaces and the braided hair with seeds of the female members of the ensemble are Indigenous markers.

³⁴ “Beatus Vir” YouTube video from Live registration of the Iyaî Jesucristo concert of 5 July 2007 at the Lutheran Church, Utrecht (NL) posted by Kanaal van musicatemprana March 30, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvMO9C9qxaU>, accessed on August 27, 2014.

Thus, in this piece the markers of Indigeneity are found mainly in the dress and not in the music performance. *Ara Vale*³⁵



Figure 4.8 Ensemble Moxos performing *Ara Vale* wearing *Tipoy* and *Camijeta*, Still from YouTube video posted by Cecilia Constantini.

This is an anonymous piece of the Archive of Chiquitos with text in the Guarani language, which is a language that was spoken by the Indigenous people of the missions of Chiquitos and today is spoken by some communities in this region. It may have been written by a missionary or it could have been a collective creation, but it is not definitively European. The idea of the existence of Indigenous composers before the expulsion of the Jesuits has been rejected by most scholars, who state that the main contributions of the Indigenous people in this period was in the performance. However, after the expulsion, in Moxos there are works attributed to Indigenous composers such as the songs sent to Spain in 1790 by Governor Lázaro de Ribera (Waisman 2004).

The text of *Ara Vale* is religious: the first verse, *Ara vale hava pehendú Ava, pehendú kuña* translates “On the Judgement day, listen you men” (Dufault 2014). It was written for tenor, two violins and continuo and it has a less dense texture than “*Beatus Vir*”,

³⁵ See video “ENSAMBLE MOXOS DE BOLIVIA EN LA CATEDRAL DE BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA” YouTube video from concert in Buenos Aires November 2010, posted by Cecilia Constantini in November 2010 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H65nJThyoHQ>, accessed on August 27, 2014.

as it is scored for solo singer with a small ensemble accompanying him. In terms of harmony, the piece does not have modulations, only secondary dominants, while *Beatus Vir* has multiple modulations.

The performance of *Ara Vale* by the *Ensamble Moxos* includes: the two violins for which it was written; the cello, double bass and the positive organ play the continuo; there is a solo soprano voice instead of the tenor soloist; and they also include recorder, *bombo* (traditional bass drum) and rattles. As in *Beatus Vir*, the solo singer and the string instruments restrict their use of vibrato, and the violins use baroque ornamentation, which, along with the use of positive organ, resembles the sound of Early Music ensembles. Also, the size of the ensemble is smaller, with nine performers; there is no conductor and all the musicians are standing except the organist and the cellist. For this piece the musicians of the *Ensamble Moxos* likely used the score to learn the music but they perform it from memory. They are wearing *tipoy* and *camijeta*; the dress used in the *Ichapekene Piesta*. In this piece Indigenous markers can be found in the dress, the language of the text, and the inclusion of the *bombo*.

*Aquel Monte*³⁶



Figure 4.9 Ensemble Moxos performing *Aquel Monte* wearing white tunics. Still from YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas.

The melody and text of *Aquel Monte* were taught to a member of the ensemble by the *taita* Marcial Jare, the current *maestro de capilla* (chapel master) of San Ignacio de Moxos; the arrangement here was done collectively by the ensemble. It is a religious song dedicated to the Virgin of Mount Carmel with text in the Moxeño language. *Aquel Monte* is located in the center of the continuum because of the five pieces it is the one that has the most clear mixture of European and Indigenous elements. It is a song of oral tradition in an Indigenous language for which there is no known score, and the arrangement created by the *Ensamble Moxos* includes both Indigenous and European instruments and sonic markers. The arrangement of this piece does not have modulations and the texture is polyphonic but the counter-melodies are less independent than that of *Beatus Vir* and *Ara Vale*, and the melody sometimes is performed by all the strings and woodwinds in unison. Thus, there is

³⁶ See video “Moxos : Aquel monte”, YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in October 2013, posted by Fredy Thomas, October 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftJe4JSw9L0>.

a mixture of polyphony, which is commonly used in European baroque music, and of unison, which is inspired in the performance practices of Moxeño Indigenous musicians.

The performance of “Aquel Monte” by the Ensamble Moxos includes harpsichord, double bass, cello, three violins, two *bajones*, *bombo*, rattles, a solo soprano recorder and a solo soprano singer. The ensemble is slightly larger than in *Ara Vale*, with eleven musicians, but there is no conductor. The musicians are all standing and the ensemble is a mixture of European period instruments such as the harpsichord and the recorder, European modern string instruments, and Indigenous instruments such as the *bajones*, *bombo* and rattles. The soprano recorder line is in dialogue with the soprano singer and he improvises variations of the melody; he also uses baroque ornamentation. For the performance of *Aquel Monte* the musicians of the *Ensamble Moxos* wear white cotton tunics that are similar to the *camijeta*. The Indigenous markers in this piece are the unisons of the entire ensemble, the use of *bajones* and Indigenous percussion instruments, the dress and the language of the text.

*Señora Doña María*³⁷



Figure 4.10 Ensemble Moxos performing Señora Doña María wearing tipoy and camijeta. Still from YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas

³⁷ See video “Ensamble Moxos 1.MP4” YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in September 2011, posted by Fredy Thomas, September 21 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oM3NJRsj1Zo>.

As in *Aquel Monte*, the *Ensamble Moxos* made an arrangement of the melody and text of *Señora Doña María*, which were taught to the members of the ensemble by Indigenous musicians of the TIPNIS. It is a Christmas Carol in Spanish usually performed for the feast of the Epiphany. The arrangement of this piece is monophonic; it has one modal melody, which is accompanied by a pedal in the organ and sometimes the piccolo recorder plays the melody a third above the rest of the ensemble which is sometimes ornamented. The harmony is less complex than in the previous pieces since there is only one chord in the entire piece. The *sesquiáltera* (alternation between 6/8 and 3/4 meter) is also used throughout the song; the use of this metric alternation is of Spanish origin but it has gone through various processes of appropriation and *mestizaje* and it is present in many Latin American genres (Agostini, Olsen and Soto 2010).

The performance of “*Señora Doña María*” by the *Ensamble Moxos* includes two cellos, double bass, five recorders, three violins, three traditional drums, positive organ, hand drum, tambourine, different kinds of rattles, solo soprano voice and all the members of the ensemble sing in unison. Even though all the members of the ensemble perform, there is no conductor, and Raquel plays the positive organ. The musicians come gradually to the stage, walk and move while they are playing, make lots of eye contact and sometimes smile with each other. For the performance of this piece the members of the ensemble wear *tipoy* and *camijeta*. *Señora Doña María* stands close to the Indigenous side of the continuum because in the mixture between European and Indigenous elements, the markers of Indigeneity prevail: it is a piece of oral tradition; the melody is modal and is most of the time it is played in unison, and the members of the ensemble are wearing the dresses that are used in the local feast *Ichapekene Piesta*.

*Machetero Dance*³⁸

The *Machetero* dance is the most important dance of the *Ichapekene Piesta* and it is performed every year in San Ignacio de Moxos. It is a warrior dance of pre-Hispanic origins that was tolerated by the Jesuits, who transformed it to give it a religious meaning, resulting in a syncretic blend of Christian and Indigenous elements (Van Valen 2013, Olsen 1998). This dance is described on the UNESCO website: “The main representation of the victory of Saint Ignatius involves twelve sun warriors, wearing spectacular feathers, who battle the guardians of the holy flag – the original ‘owners’ of the forest and water – before converting them finally to Christianity. These rites are an act of faith and constant rebirth, allowing the Moxeños to be reborn into the Christian tradition in the presence of the spirits of their ancestors” (UNESCO 2012). The symbolism in the *Machetero* dance clearly resonates with the concept of Indigenous modernity, as gives new meanings to Christianity, by including in it Indigenous deities.

In the *Ichapekene Piesta*, the dancers are dressed with a white tunic called *camijeta*, and they wear a big semicircular headdress made of macaw feathers; they have in their hands a wooden machete and they have rattles made of seeds around their ankles. The music for this dance is performed with Native percussion instruments and a flute that can be made of *tacuara* (a local kind of cane) or with a bone of *bato* (an aquatic bird from the region) (Ensamble Moxos 2011).

³⁸ See video “Ensamble Moxos 5.MP4” YouTube video from concert in Sarrebourg in September 2011, posted by Fredy Thomas, September 21 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TuYOTKiIME>



Figure 4.11 Ensemble Moxos performing the Machetero Dance wearing camijeta, headdress and costumes of the Ichapekene Fiesta. Still from YouTube video posted by Fredy Thomas.

The *Ensamble Moxos* usually performs the *Machetero* dance at the end of its concerts. All the members of the *Ensamble Moxos* participate in the performance of this dance either as musicians or dancers. They come gradually to the stage: first the musicians, then the *Machetero* dancers and then the rest of the dancers. They often smile and there is a strong interaction between the members of the ensemble and also with the audience, since they ask people in the audience to dance with them. The beginning of the *Machetero* dance, which is a march, is very similar to the one performed traditionally for the *Ichapekene Fiesta*. For the second part of the dance the *Ensamble Moxos* creates a representation of the feast, and several members of the ensemble wear masks of different animals and other characters of the *Ichapekene Fiesta*, who dance with the audience while the *Machetero* dancers are on the stage.

All of the instruments used to perform this piece are Indigenous: *flauta de bato* (Indigenous flute), *bombo* (bass drum), *caja* (snare drum), *chacais* (ankle rattles). The *Machetero* dancers, men and women, wear camijeta and headdress; some female members of the ensemble wear *tipoy*, and some male and female dancers wear masks and costumes used in the *Ichapekene Fiesta*.

The members of the Ensemble Moxos learned the music and dance of the *Machetero* from the elders of the town. The piece is monophonic and it has one modal melody accompanied only by percussion; there is no harmony. The melody has various ornaments and the percussion played by the drums intertwines with the percussion played by the dancers who have rattles on their ankles. In the performance of this dance by the *Ensamble Moxos* the music does not have significant differences with that which is played during the feast and the dresses of all the dancers have only minor differences with the ones that perform in the *Ichapekene Piesta*.

The performance of this dance by the Ensemble Moxos resonates with the “folkloric musical representations”, which Fernando Ríos defines as “presentational versions of rural musical practices that in these new forms serve as self-conscious ‘cultural performances’ ... linked directly or indirectly to the tenets of nation-building projects and modernisation ideologies (e.g. the modern/traditional dichotomy)” (2012: 6). In this context presentational music making is music made to be listened to by an audience, which is clearly differentiated from participatory music making that predominates in Indigenous communities and reflects egalitarian principles (Turino 2008). This piece is located at the “Indigenous” end of the continuum because almost all of its elements are Indigenous: instruments, dress, dance, melody and rhythm. The main difference with the traditional performance of this dance is the staging and the shift from participatory to presentational.

Indigenous Modernity and the Ensemble Moxos

The Ensemble Moxos cannot be easily classified as an Early Music ensemble, as a youth orchestra, or as a traditional Indigenous ensemble. Even though the Ensemble Moxos follows two models of performance, none of the pieces coincide exactly with either of the

two models. The performance practices of the Ensemble Moxos are a mixture of both models including elements of both in a wide spectrum of degrees. The sonic markers of Indigeneity in general are the use of Indigenous instruments and the selection of the repertoire, which includes pieces that have modal melodies, some of them without harmony. In the pieces of oral tradition for which the members of the ensemble create accompaniments, the harmony is not very complex (e.g. *Señora Doña María* has only one chord and *Aquel Monte* does not have modulations) and there is frequent use of unison of all the instruments inspired by Indigenous performance practices. In the music of the archives the Ensemble Moxos sometimes includes Indigenous instruments such as bajones and percussion and, for example in *Ara Vale*, the recorder duplicates the voice of the soprano. However, all the pieces are performed according to Western standards of tuning and the musicians of the ensemble hold and play the violin according to Western standards instead of following Indigenous performance practices such as playing and singing in unison simultaneously.

The extra-musical aspects of the performance practices of the Ensemble Moxos are also a mixture between European and Indigenous elements, but the markers of Indigeneity prevail. Even when the musicians of the ensemble wear formal clothes such as robes or long dresses, all the members of the ensemble wear sandals and necklaces made of seeds, and the women have braided hair adorned with seeds; however, even though the necklaces and seeds can evoke Indigeneity they are not commonly used by the Indigenous people of San Ignacio de Moxos. In contrast, clothes such as the *tipoy*s and *camijetas* they wear are identical to the ones the people of the town wear for the *Ichapekene Piesta*.

The Ensemble Moxos has been very well received by audiences of different countries, which is evident in the large number of CDs they sell and the frequency of their

tours. According to interviews with ensemble members and teachers, the ensemble usually goes on tour every two years, and for example, when I visited San Ignacio de Moxos in September 2013, they were about to leave for a three-month tour throughout Europe, in which they had concerts every day. However, due to their particular approach they have not fulfilled the expectations of some specialized music critics who would expect them to adhere to a specific model of performance. For example, Early Music critics expect them to have a more “polished” sound; Brewer (2012) writes:

These performers, many of whom are apparently students of the musical school, San Ignacio de Moxos, lack the polish of others who have recorded this repertoire (for example, listen to Garrido's anthology of works by Zipoli, May/June 1994). Many of the vocal works are performed by instrumentalists from the ensemble doubling as singers, and the male alto and tenors have significant intonation problems. When the larger group performs the instrumental works there are a few too many moments of sour intonation in the strings. There is evidence of great potential for these young performers, but at the moment this release sounds like a recording from a good high-school ensemble. (Brewer 2012: 228)

Brewer is referring to the CD released in 2011, which is a compilation of works recorded in previous recordings by the ensemble; this CD was recorded with the label K617 *Les Chemins du Baroque*, owned by Alain Pacquier. In this review Brewer compares the *Ensamble Moxos* to the *Ensemble Elyma* which is directed by the Argentinean Gabriel Garrido, who was trained in Switzerland at the *Schola Cantorum Basiliensis*. The *Ensemble Elyma* has recorded various CDs featuring repertoire of the Bolivian mission archives with the record label K617, which makes possible the comparison between the two ensembles. Brewer criticizes the way in which the members of the ensemble who play instruments “double as singers” because he would expect them to specialize in order to sound more “polished”. However, he notes that the recording “includes various songs in native American languages or popular religious songs in Spanish, and those are among the high

points of this collection. The selections and variety of musical styles are among the plusses of this recording” (Brewer 2012: 228). Thus, the *Ensamble Moxos* is more successful performing Indigenous music than European music.

From a different perspective, ensembles such as the *Ensamble Moxos* have been criticized for not including Indigenous performance practices in their performance and not being faithful to historical findings about what a historically informed performance of the music of the mission archives should be. Leonardo Waisman writes:

Both in Mojós and Chiquitos, nets of youth orchestras have been created. In principle, this seems a great idea, for it gives opportunities to a large number of indigenous children. But they ignore local performance style and take no heed of local violin-making traditions, which retain features of the baroque instruments that were its first models. Rather, they foster a newly founded school of luthiers, taught by European masters and following modern shapes and technology. The orchestras and choirs play everything in early-Twentieth-Century style. What saddens me the most is that some of these ensembles go on tour, and their very poor performances are cheered and admired in Bolivia, in neighboring countries and in Europe. In this applause I find the worst sign of benevolent racism, the same racism that underlied Eighteenth-Century chroniclers’ praises of the Indian’s musical ability. This acclaim says, in effect: “It is wonderful that these little Indians can play European music, even though they are Indians!” (Waisman 2013: 15)

First of all, Waisman does not distinguish between the youth orchestras of SICOR and the *Ensamble Moxos*, even though there are significant differences between their approaches in performing the music of the mission archives. He also criticizes them for using modern instruments and for ignoring the “local performance style”, since they do not perform the music of the archives like the *taitas*. He accuses the audience of racism for applauding their ability to perform European music even though they are Indigenous. However, these critiques do not account for the fact that ensembles such as *Ensamble Moxos* do not exclusively perform “European” music but also perform Indigenous musics; furthermore what appears most appreciated, especially outside Bolivia, is the “Indigenous”

repertoire (Brewer 2012, Lebedinsky 2012). As such, it is important to view the performances of Latin American Indigenous ensembles more comprehensively, to account for the variety of music performed and the various purposes of their performances.

The *Ensamble Moxos* has reached a global audience by borrowing elements from the Early Music movement, a transnational movement that allows them to engage with music of the past, which in their case can be the music of the mission archives or the music of their grandparents. It was not their only choice; it could have been easier to just have youth orchestras, which are part of the training of the children and adolescents of the music school. In his work on highland Bolivian rappers, Goodale says they conceived their music as a “space for expression” beyond their town “but without sacrificing the meanings that locate their songs within a long indigenous tradition of musical and cultural hybridity” (2006: 644). For the members of the *Ensamble Moxos*, their music is also a way of expressing their Indigenous identity in a global context. As Raquel notes:

We have a powerful social factor, a very powerful cultural factor, the fact of being Moxeño-Ignaciano Indigenous people, the fact of having inherited such a vast culture, which allows us to do what we are doing...Also the fact that in the current politics being Indigenous is widely accepted, which allows us to have better opportunities, and to have access to things that had been historically neglected to our people, and now we have access to stages, to arenas where we can express who we are and what we do. In the past we could not do it and now we can allow ourselves the luxury of going to a tour in Europe for three months, through eight countries, and we have also sold thousands of CDs, so we can show everybody that this town exists and that it contributes, to the extent possible, to the music in the world.³⁹

In expressing this identity, they not only want to show the world they are Indigenous but also that they are modern; as ensemble member Sandra Yaca notes: “We are trying to make our identity known in other places and that the people do not misunderstand it thinking that if you go to San Ignacio de Moxos, or the East, or the Amazon, you will find us in the

³⁹ Interview conducted by the author on September 10, 2013 at 10:00 AM, my translation.

jungle wearing loincloths. No, we have a culture and we have an identity that represents us and in the concerts all the repertoire is based on this.”⁴⁰

The *Ensamble Moxos* also offers new ways to read and reinvent the past, not necessarily being faithful to historical findings, but imagining ways of including those who were excluded; the Indigenous and the women. Geoffrey Baker writes about what would be a post-colonial performance of Latin American baroque: “A post-colonial performance would entail creating something new, something that takes account of today’s aesthetic and political sensibilities rather than reproducing those of an earlier period: the emphasis would be not on how these works originally sounded but on how we would want them to have sounded...The ‘authenticity’ of the post-colonial performance would thus lie in the realm of politics rather than that of historical accuracy” (2008: 444). By allowing women to perform music and dances they were not allowed to perform in the colonial era, and by including Indigenous instruments in pieces that have been attributed to European composers, the *Ensamble Moxos* is re-creating the past to include the marginalized.

With their choices of repertoire, the members of the ensemble are also redefining the music of the colonizers; they are giving new meanings to what is understood as “baroque music”, to include repertoire of oral tradition. Baker writes: “The voices of subaltern groups have been lost because most of their music was not notated but was transmitted orally. A focus on elite, notated music perpetuates Western musical imperialism. By bringing lost popular music traditions back to life, by turning to reinvention and improvisation, performers may reinsert excluded cultures where they have been written out or they have vanished from texts” (2008: 444). By performing and re-creating repertoire of oral tradition taught by the Indigenous elders of their town and of

⁴⁰ Interview conducted by the author on September 10, 2013 at 9:00 AM, my translation.

rural communities of the Moxos region, the *Ensamble Moxos* is also reinventing the past to include the histories of Moxeño musicians. As Gabriel Solis writes in his work about Indigenous musicians of Papua New Guinea, “local and introduced, and traditional and modern...are not so much fixed points as they are moving targets” (2012: 104). Similarly, the performance practices of the *Ensamble Moxos* also destabilize and blur the divisions between European and Indigenous because all their music is a mixture of both; even if in varying degrees, everything is both Indigenous and modern.

Conclusions

Since the Jesuit colonization, Moxeño musical practices have been shaped by complex negotiations between Indigenous and European cultural expressions. The Jesuit missionaries used Western European baroque music as a tool for evangelization of the Indigenous people of Moxos; however, instead of this being just an imposition of a European musical expression, the Indigenous people of Moxos were very active in learning how to perform this music and to build Western musical instruments. The Jesuits also allowed some Indigenous music and dances, which were transformed to give them a religious meaning resulting in syncretic musical expressions, some of which survive today in the Moxos region.

After the expulsion of the Jesuits it was the Indigenous people who continued performing this music, which was first encouraged by Spanish officers such as Lázaro de Ribera, but later became a form of resistance against the abuses that the Indigenous people of Moxos were suffered during the rubber boom. This music continues to be performed today by the *taitas* of San Ignacio de Moxos and the Indigenous people of the TIPNIS, who have preserved the scores even though they are not able to read them, and have orally transmitted this music for centuries. The way in which these Moxeño musicians have redefined the music of the colonizers making it their own music can be regarded as an expression of Indigenous modernity.

The creation of the Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos and the creation of SICOR and the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School once again redefined the performance of this repertoire. The creation of the American Renaissance and Baroque International Music Festival “Missions of Chiquitos” allowed this music to become part of the transnational Early Music movement, and both SICOR and the San Ignacio de Moxos

Music School, even if in varying degrees, are informed by the teaching philosophies of *El Sistema*. However, in contrast with SICOR, the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School has not reproduced the *El Sistema* model. Instead, the director and teachers of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School have their own approach to teaching and learning music, by borrowing elements from the European conservatory model and from *El Sistema*, but also including Indigenous instruments, music and dances in the curriculum of the music school. Thus, they not only have created a model of music education that celebrates the Indigenous heritage of the students, but also a model that has as its main goals breadth, versatility and inclusion, which are evident in the students' ability to perform multiple instruments, sing and dance, as well as in the fact that boys and girls are given the same opportunities in the music school. The unique model of music instruction created by the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School is also an expression of Indigenous modernity.

The music performance of the *Ensamble Moxos* has been shaped by the philosophies and teaching practices of the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School and their performance practices reflect the goals of inclusion, breadth and versatility of the music school. The members of the *Ensamble Moxos* are also proud of their Indigenous heritage, and of the fact that Moxeño Indigenous elders have nurtured the music traditions of their town and their region; they want to show their music to the world. The fact that the repertoire of the Mission Archives of Chiquitos and Moxos had become part of the Early Music movement allowed them to find a way to go beyond their town and reach a global audience. However, they did not conform to the global standards of the Early Music movement. Like the San Ignacio de Moxos Music School, the *Ensamble Moxos* has a unique approach to perform the repertoire of the Bolivian mission archives, in which the historical accuracy and authenticity are not the priorities. Even though they borrow

elements from the Early Music movement such as the use of some period instruments, they also include Indigenous instruments and repertoire of oral tradition, while also showing the work of the students and giving them opportunities to perform.

I argue that the performance of the entire repertoire of the ensemble is a mixture of Indigenous and European markers, which challenges divisions such as European-Indigenous or traditional-modern. By blurring these divisions the members of the Ensemble Moxos feel their entire repertoire as *their* music; as music they own. By borrowing performing styles of the transnational Early Music movement, the members of the ensemble are also creating new forms of Indigeneity that enable them to express who they are and what they do in a global context. Through their re-creation of the repertoire of oral tradition of their town, the musicians of the *Ensamble Moxos* are reinventing the past to include Indigenous people and women, who had been historically marginalized or excluded. Finally, I believe that by re-inventing the past, the members of the *Ensamble Moxos* can also reshape the present and that the globalization of the Indigenous music of the Bolivian lowlands can empower the Moxeño people and change the perceptions and marginalization against them at a local and national level.

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