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In this edition you will find:

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- Some theoretical problems of popular literature of Guatemala and Central America.
- Ethnomusicological research made in Guatemala.
- Colonialist Systems of Indian Definition and the Attribution of their Nationality.

The corn in popular culture of Guatemala

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THE CORN IN POPULAR CULTURE OF GUATEMALA

Ofelia Columba Déleon Meléndez.

I would like to begin this work by quoting some thoughts of the Guatemalan poet Luis Cardoza y Aragón, about the corn.

“Corn is the heart of America”. “Corn makes man’s life possible. It is man himself, in myth and reality”.

Before addressing the topic that has been designed to me for this forum, it is essential to conceptualize, briefly, popular culture. Popular culture, is defined as the culture produced by the people or popular classes of a specific country. Some authors prefer to use the term “Popular Cultures”, since they consider that popular culture is not a single one but there are several within the same society. For example, in Guatemala, the existence of “the Quiché culture”, “the Cakchiquel”, “the Mam culture”, “the Ladina culture”, “the Garífuna culture”, etc., is accepted.

The popular cultures of Latin America were formed with the contributions of:

- Pre-Columbian cultures.
- The European heritage, in particular Spanish and Portuguese.
- African presence and influence.

In the particular case of Guatemala and other countries (México and the Andeans), for the study of popular cultures, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the existence of socioeconomic classes but also the numerous indigenous ethnic groups that make up these societies.

The author presented this work at the forum about corn in Guatemala culture, which was part of the **III Festival Centroamericano del Maíz** held in Guatemala City.

In order to facilitate the study of popular cultures, the following classic ethnographic division is used:

Material culture: Includes everything that man, as a cultural factor, adds to the physical environment in which he lives.

Social culture: Encompasses human behavior in relation to all the activities of the group that condition its structure and functioning.

Spiritual culture: Includes the best-known psychic phenomena occurring within popular culture. Covers three areas: the artistic, knowledge and belief.

According to the previous classification, in general terms, I will place corn within each of the above aspects.

CORN IN MATERIAL CULTURE:

Agriculture is considered as a procurement technique. It is known that corn is the main crop in the agriculture of the popular classes.

In indigenous ethnic groups of Maya origin, the system of cropping corn is the same that has been practiced for the last three millennia. It is known as “milpa agriculture”, derived from the Aztec word “milpa” which means cornfield. This term is used because the Spaniards first encountered this system of cropping corn in Mexico in the 16th century, this word has been generalized in Mesoamerica.

Milpa agriculture has been divided into eleven stages: 1) Field location; 2) Forest and undergrowth clearing 3) Vegetation burning (roza: agriculture technique); 4) Field fencing; 5) Field sowing; 6) Field weeding; 7) Bending of reeds; 8) Corn harvest; 9) Corn storage; 10) Corn shelling; 11) Driving the corn to the village.

Culinary is considered as a transforming technique.

It is well known that corn is the basis of the food supply of the popular classes, corn is used to prepare the main meals that make up their diet.

Here are some of the ways of preparing and cooking corn: Boiled corn, roasted corn, tortillas (variety), totoposte (tortilla chips), corn atol (warm corn gruel), atol blanco, atol blanco with chilli (hot, thick, nutritious beverage made from white corn, salt and water), beans and (chilate; typical beverage made from corn, cacao and ash water), atol shuco o agrio (hot, thick, nutritious beverage made from fermented purple corn, salt and water), posole o posol (corn soup), tamales de viaje (balls of corn dough with salt, cooked in corn leaves, do not have any filling or extra ingredient), meat and sauce tamales (various types depending on the region), tamalitos de chipilín (balls of dough with chipilín which is a leguminous plant originally from Central America and Mexico); tamalitos de cambray (red and sweet corn dough ball), corn tamalitos, loroco tamalitos (loroco is an edible flowering plant), chuchitos (balls of corn dough with tomato sauce and meat or chicken inside), etc.

75 to 80% of what each indigenous individual of Mayan origin eats is made up of foods prepared with corn, in any of its forms.

Agricultural and culinary activities do not exist on their own, they are only possible within a cultural system that gives them their meaning.

Material culture also includes handicrafts, which are made up of objects that meet utilitarian needs. In this sense, there are numerous utensils that are used in the various stages of corn preparation, from its cultivation to its consumption as food: nets, baskets, cloth napkins, pots, griddles, escudillas (earthenware bowls), batidores (earthenware mugs), jicaras (bowls made from the rind of the fruit of the güira), etc. (all of which can be seen in the exhibition that is part of this festival).

CORN IN SOCIAL CULTURE

Social culture comprises many aspects of the life of the people, from language, languages, organizations, personal relationships, social stratification, economy, customs, festivals, etc.

Corn is present in most of these aspects. Since there is not enough time to deal with all of them, I will only refer, in broad outline, to some of them.

The Language:

Corn is present in the daily discourse. From this perspective, a series of possibilities of significance can already be grasped. Corn plays an identifying role in the indigenous world in the external world. On the other hand, within the community, it is proposed as a regulator of existence and interpersonal relations.

Likewise, in the lexicon of all the languages of Mayan origin there are words to name the different stages of corn agriculture and the foods prepared with it.

The economy of the popular classes is based on corn cropping, both the subsistence and peasant economies.

Festivals and Ceremonies:

This area of social culture deserves to be discussed in greater detail, which is why I will describe some of the main festivals and ceremonies. Many ceremonies of thanksgiving for the harvest are still in force in many Guatemalan communities and families. There are two modalities, the first one is the celebrations in which a professional prayer leader is sought or appointed to carry out the festivity. The other takes place within the family.

Almost all homes of indigenous communities (and some ladinas communities) ("ladinas" refers to a Central American person of predominantly mixed Spanish and indigenous ancestry) there are altars dedicated to corn, usually with corncobs accompanied by a foliated cross.

The first home altar is made in the courtyard of the house where the corn is to be dried, the corncobs are laid on the ground in a square pattern, and in the center stands a totem pole covered with corncobs, which is called “heart of corn”.

In the interior altars, the corncobs that are the reason for adoration are placed in a place that imitates or recalls the rustic rock where the corn appeared. In San Pedro Sac. San Marcos, it is called “risco” and in almost all of the other towns in the country it is simulated by a small wooden cubicle of easy transportation that they call “the house of the present”.

The corn altars made in the cantons of San Pedro Sac. and San Marcos stand out, as there are abundant samples of corn hearts and paachs (“paachs” are cult items), which are exhibited as the main decoration and they surround the ridge and appear with 2 or 3 corncobs and double, triple, quadruple corncobs and some bouquets of 3 or 4 of them. These bouquets are the most appreciated because they are considered to be a message from **Mother Earth** in response to the requests made to her during planting.

The Harvest festival

In San Pedro Sac., San Marcos, Champollap, Tonalá, El Mosquito y Soché, from San Marcos Department, annual festivals are held in honor of the corn harvest. The culminating event of this festival is the **Paach** dance. This dance also marks the beginning of the sowers' rest period.

The **Paach** dance corresponds to a modality of harvest rites.

The last in the chain of five rites that must have been celebrated cyclically throughout the whole territory in which corn was basically the axis of socioeconomic life. It is possible that there are still communal groups or families that rigorously celebrate this chain of rituals. (one of the publications being tonight contains a complete and detailed study on the **Paach** dance).

CORN IN SPIRITUAL CULTURE

Within the spiritual culture, corn occupies a prevailing place. In popular literature there are myths and legends, and it is also present in religious rituals, dances, beliefs, etc. In general, in the cosmovision of the popular classes, particularly the indigenous ethnic groups.

Many manifestations of popular art are also linked to corn, as is the case of indigenous textiles that contain symbolic representations of the grain, and in ceramics that contain manifestations of it.

Corn is attributed a divine origin; therefore, it has a role that transcends the nutritional function and is established as a privileged emissary of the message from the gods.

The presence of corn in the home ensures the physical and spiritual well-being of the family.

A full mill is considered an effective defense against the “envy” of men and the “works” of sorcerers.

An empty mill, on the other hand, is synonym of family dispersion, of weakness, of absence of defenses.

The corncobs are protective objects, so when someone gets sick, they are placed under the bed or at the side of the petate (“petate” is a kind of woven carpet made of palm or plant fibers, which can also be used as a mattress.) to “take care” of the person.

Considering corn as of divine origin is due to the importance it had in pre-Hispanic religion. The corn sowing is ruled by the ritual calendar **Tzolkin** or holy year. The **Uinal Kankin**, points out the season to proceed to the burning or roza of the land to be planted. The seeders take as an average the kin (day), **can kankin** (four yellow Sun) that is, April 15th for the burning.

Also, the post-conquest texts such as the Popol-Vuh and the Memorial de Tecpán Atitlán or Anales de los Cakchiqueles, consider corn as a sacred element. Both tell how the last men, the definitive ones, were created from corn dough.

There are a number of beliefs about the origin of corn. Among the Mames (“The Mames are an ethnic and linguistic group that lives in Mexico and Guatemala.”), for example, it is said that the appearance of the sacred grain took place in a place called Pashil (Paxil).

One of the many legends about the origin of corn is told in San Idelfonso Ixtahuacán. It is said that the ancient inhabitants of that place fed on the root of a plant called textxina (mother corn), they did not eat corn, they went through great difficulties to find food; until once some neighbors discovered some grains in the feces of a wildcat that made them curious. When they asked the wildcat what it was, it answered that it was corn grains that it ate, which was brought from a cave outside the village. The neighbors asked the wildcat to show them the place, to which it agreed.

Because the wild cat ate so much, the neighbors designated a louse to accompany it. The louse climbed onto the wildcat's back, but it could not stand the shaking of its body, so it fell to the ground and lost the wildcat's course. Then, it was arranged that a flea would accompany the wildcat on the new journey, also the flea fell to the ground, but with a leap it attached itself to the wildcat, and they arrived at the rock where the wildcat satiated its appetite with corn.

The whole village went to the cave, but since the opening was small, they had to call on the woodpeckers to use their beaks to extract the corn, but they were unable to do so because of the hardness of the stone.

The neighbors turned to the “white lightning” for its power to do so. It did not succeed in destroying the rock that covered the cave. Then they called the “dark red lightning”, younger brother of the previous one.

The small lightning launched its charge and destroyed the rock, leaving free access to the grains. The neighbors took as much corn as they could and took it to their homes, planted it, and when they harvested it, they abandoned the **texetxina** to feed only on corn.

As can be seen, corn is closely linked to nahualismo. (“Nahualismo” is the belief that humans can transform themselves into animals at will.)

Nahualismo constitutes one of the most important aspects of indigenous magical-religious thought.

The Memorial de Sololá, in relating the creation of man, made of corn, indicates that he was in the site called Paxil, which was guarded by guardian animals, the coyote and the crow. Its protective animals

In the current legends about the origin of corn, we can find the presence of protective animals.

Conclusions

- Corn is present in the entire field of popular culture.
- Corn is a cultural element of identity in the ethnic groups of Mesoamerica.
- Corn can be an element of the various ethnic groups that make up Guatemalan society, and therefore could become one of the factors in achieving national identity.

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Some theoretical problems of popular literature of Guatemala and Central America.

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SOME THEORETICAL PROBLEMS OF POPULAR LITERATURE OF GUATEMALA AND CENTRAL AMERICA.

Celso A. Lara Figueroa

In societies that are familiar with writing, the oral tradition becomes a channel of expression of subaltern cultures, as opposed to what happens in the case of unwritten people, where the oral tradition, with nuances, is a collective heritage.

When hegemonic classes appropriate writing, the signifying practices of verbal orality acquire the capacity for cultural resistance, as a redoubt, reservoir and trench. This explains their marginality in relation to the official culture and an existence viewed with disdain or contempt from the upper spheres of knowledge. The spontaneous historical testimonial discourse, ancestral medicine and the different discursive genres including the literary ones of fictional and aesthetic interest have an unofficial life and are developed with a parodic and carnival attitude, on the margins of the "legal" discourses invested with power by writing.

It is interesting to address here the scope of this particular way of meaning, which has been called, since not so long ago, **Literature** and which refers to a specialized activity in the discursive order, not because it is specialized, exclusive or invested with any sacredness. When we speak of Literature, we refer to a social discourse, among others, whose specificity lies in the creation of fiction, reality and aesthetic effects, as Balibar and Macherey rightly point out. However, the dominant aesthetic ideologies confer on it a certain aura of mystery and sacredness.

In modern societies, this activity of verbal creation has chosen written expression, gradually adapting its procedures to the new vehicle. In contemporary literary theory it becomes synonymous of "writing". Clearly, acts are forgotten with the word **artis**.

* The author presented this paper as a lecture at the **II Encuentro de Expertos en Tradiciones Orales**, sponsored by UNESCO-ORCALC, in the city of Havana-Cuba, March 20th-24th, 1989.

Then, orality and its texts are starting to look like foreign and even eccentric. Folk literary practices as a whole have become a non-functional triviality and, of course, get little or no recognition in the field of literary studies, occupied with recognized authors and their written works.

Popular texts were not always ignored. There have been times and groups especially sensitive to their considerations and analysis. A sector of German romantics, in particular those who produced fantastic literature during the 19th century, so it was proposed to investigate folkloric sources in order to base their own creative work, which in many cases was recreation. Something similar occurs in Guatemala with costumbrismo and nativism. ("Costumbrismo" is a literary genre which emerged in Spain in the 1830s.) It is not surprising, then, that it is Vladimir Propp, who with Russian formalism internalized so deeply into the theoretical demands of the Jena Romantics, Fredric Schlegel around 1800, became interested in Russian folk tales. His sensibility matched, moreover, with the era, stimulated by the purposes of the 1917 revolution. As is well known, Propp's investigations gave rise to the structural analysis of the story, an instrumental analysis marked by disjunctive logic (i.e. organized in irreducible, excluding binary oppositions: Good/bad, happy/unhappy/, etc.), logic proper to the folk tales themselves and to medieval thought, as Julia Kristeva demonstrates in her work **Texto de la Novela**.

The play of aesthetic ideologies seems to infect the interest in folkloric texts with marginality. So, the authors and works of official literature are the object par excellence of academic studies. With the metaphysical orientation, the author and his biography are of interest; with the most recent neoformalism, the texts assumed in themselves, supposedly illusorily - illusions are very often involved in scientific work; moreover, as in the case of a proto-scientific work - their isolation from other social facts. Hence, in the last few decades, it has been necessary to "search for", as if the connections between text and society have ever really been lost.

It has been said that in Latin America we seem more inclined to capture scientific, technological and ideological currents than to create them. Cognitive habits resulting from cultural dependence and our situation of cultural crossroads? It can be. We writers and historians have followed, without much reflection, the procedures and theories produced in the metropolitan centers. This was already pointed out in the early seventies by Roberto Fernández Retamar. This condition has led us to ignore Latin American literary diversity and, mainly, the important presence of oral literature. It is not possible to speak of a homogeneous literature, but of Latin American literatures, different according to subregions and countries and, within them, according to social classes and ethnic cultures, and of course, their own civilizing processes.

The literature of subaltern cultures continues, therefore, in our continent, to use the **spoken** word as a priority, although written texts are beginning to be produced, for example in prisons or on walls. And they are, although we often forget it, the

literatures of the majorities. The scholar who does not recognize this reality and does not define his objects of study, his procedures and instruments, loses a lot.

To give a fully valid status to popular folkloric and recent oral texts, even if for this it was necessary to break in, not without difficulty and with a certain opposing force, from the field that is still called "**paraliterary**". Oral literary texts give an account of a collective consciousness, of a transindividual subject, in our case, Guatemalan and in particular, originating from the popular sectors of the countryside and the city. These texts speak of their values and cognitive needs, their behaviors and practices. Their products generously show, even without the broadcaster's own knowledge, their own conception of the world. It is up to social scientists to pay attention, to listen, to look behind the scenes, if they are to act with ever greater certainty and effectiveness. It says a lot, for example to psychology and sociology, that in Guatemala the legend of the Siguanaba has several basic versions; of them we remember the one in which the evil spirit is a woman; in another, a young girl. Certainly, the versions refer to two different orders of prohibition in the moral field. How much more can the legendary texts suggest? Little, if it remains in that marginalized space reserved for it by the official culture.

On the other hand, since the beginning of folklore studies around the middle of the 19th century, anthropologists, philologists and historians interested in the methods of collection of folk narratives, from European countries, as well as from India, China and Arabia; and by the transmission of stories and other narratives, the studies of M. Muller (Germany), E.B. Tylor (England), M. Gorki (Russia), J. Krohn (Finland), Pitré (Italy) and others such as the brothers J. and W. Grimm (Germany), Ch. Perrault (France), H. C. Andersen (Denmark), who promoted the development of oral traditions, recreated and projected them in children's literature.

In Guatemala, these folkloric species, typical of the oral tradition, have not been considered as a source for the knowledge of the history and conception of the world, nor have they been included in official literary histories, which demonstrates the predominance of a restricted conception of culture, which has an impact on our cultural identity.

In addition, between the problems raised in the study of popular literature, is to know the location of the genres and species with respect to the traditionally recognized classifications and texts. As well, as to know the relationships between the nature of texts and the social conditions of their production, use and function.

One of the most important components of the oral tradition of people are the stories, and among them, the legend.

In the course of our years of experience, we were able to perceive a greater presence of lyrical folklore as opposed to narrative. In addition, this last one has little generic variety. It is remarkable, for example, in our country, the interest in the legend, in its animistic variety.

Paraphrasing Paulo de Carvalho-Neto, we understand by legend an unreal narration, but with traces of truth; the legend is linked to an area, region or society and its themes refer to the origins of diverse facts, mythological beings, supernatural beings, historical facts, heroes, etc., and the characters are determined individuals acting in a precisely indicated place.

The legend shows great similarity with other types of stories that are also part of the oral tradition and literary folklore of people, such as: The fable, the myth, the tale and the case.

Sometimes, the distinction between these species is difficult because there are intermediate cases, in which elements such as the characters, the plot and the place of the action are intertwined.

With Van Gennep we consider that a psychological distinction can be established between the genres mentioned above, since in myth, legend and case, the magical-religious acts that are the object of faith on the part of the person who narrates them are the most common; while in tales and fables, imagination is more important.

We can also add a difference in that, in the legend and the fable, besides entertaining, a moral or lesson is given, while in the story, the primary objective is to delight and distract the listener.

The word legend comes from the Latin **legenda**, which means “what is to be read”. At the beginning of the Middle Ages, it was customary in European convents and later in America to read stories about the lives of saints and martyrs. Subsequently, the reading of legends, as these stories were called, transcended the religious realm and made incursions into profane life, with themes related to relevant historical feats or events.

Nevertheless, its etymological meaning, which would exclude ungrammatical societies, what we now call legend has a universal character, both in societies of oral and written tradition. People all over the world, since ancient times, have expressed their aspirations, their desires and feelings, through the narration of marvelous stories such as legends, with the passage through the different groups in which these stories have been transmitted and enriched, at first orally and then in writing, preserved as documents that provide a sample of information about popular interpretations of the natural and supernatural world.

With the origin and formation of the legend, something similar happens as with the rest of the manifestations of traditional popular culture, as we try to look for sources in the collective inspiration of people (conception that governed in the first folklore studies) or in the individual creation.

The truth is that if the starting point for the formation of the legend is personal, from an anonymous or known author, in order for it to be an authentic folkloric expression,

it must interpret the feeling of a community that adopts it, feels it as its own and transmits it.

The transmission of the legend involves a slow process of transformation, in which it acquires new elements and undergoes reinterpretations as it passes through different groups and places, which explains the existence of different versions and variants of the same theme.

Among the stories collected we find reinterpretations in line with the technological changes of our time. For example, an informant from San Juan Mixtán, Escuintla told us that the Siguanaba appears in a "Willis" jeep on the Interamerican Highway and the girl's gesture of conquest begins with the request for a "jalón" ("Jalón" is a Guatemalan expression used when someone who is waiting on the road asks for help and the other person can pick them up and take them in a vehicle.). The time has passed when the gentleman rode a horse and the beautiful woman appeared in dark places, insinuatingly alone.

Thus the versions are adapted to the era. The versions and variants found are multiple. To cite a few examples: The Elves, not the Elf or Sombrerón, they wear bright colors, usually blue or red; the common denominator is that they lose or take away children, although adults may be in the same danger, as reported in Cubulco, Baja Verapaz.

The role of music in the legend of the Sombrerón varies, for some its notes help to find the missing, while for others, in addition to the gifts it offers as a lure, it is the resource used by the elders to scare them away.

The variants in the legend may even contradict each other. For example, in the legend of the Cadejo, one version presents him as "the cursed son" turned into a dog, who frightened to those who stayed up all night. But to a large extent, the Cadejo is, contrary to what commercial folklorists have spread, a beneficent being, that turns out to be a protective companion for the extremely drunk person returning home, as we have so often pointed out in our studies.

One of the hypotheses of our work is that popular literary texts fulfill ludic, moralizing, educational and social cohesion functions. Among the older generation, traditional moralizing, educational and social cohesion expressions are more common; while among the younger generation, playful and social cohesion expressions predominate and are influenced by mass culture, being used mainly on special occasions. For most young people, the legend is no longer part of their daily life, but is "something of the past" or "from others", something they do not know and do not believe in. So far, and without having carried out the exhaustive analysis we have proposed, we can point out that in the rural population we have studied, the experts of legends or reporters of a case are people over 50 years of age, among whom the legend has a unifying social function. On the one hand, it helps group cohesion among those who know and live a certain experience around a common problem;

on the other hand, it serves as an entertainment medium and distraction during daily tasks or at the end of the day. It would be interesting to know what their role is among the inhabitants of the new city neighborhoods. It would be a study similar to the one conducted by the author in **Por los Viejos Barrios de la Ciudad de Guatemala**.

It is also suggestive of the relationships that exist between this type of oral tradition and other aspects of the culture of the group that practices it, since these aspects are linked, with a certain coherence, to the socioeconomic and ideological environment. For example, the religious festivities of the Virgin of Solitude, the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Christ of Esquipulas, Jesus of La Merced, etc., which have links to the legend.

Ethnomusicological research made in Guatemala.

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ETNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH MADE IN GUATEMALA

Alfonso Arrivillaga Cortés

Introduction

The following work has as its main objective to present an overview of the ethnomusicological research made in Guatemala, as well as the location of the different research currents and the results and contributions provided to clarify the ethnomusicological reality of the country. ¹

It is important to note that the advances and work done in organology will not be included in this report, since it is probably in this field of ethno music where most achievements have been obtained, and therefore, it deserves a separate attention.

²

At the same time, an overview of the ethnomusicological research carried out by the Centro de Estudios Folklóricos of the University of San Carlos de Guatemala, through its Ethnomusicology area, is presented in order to show the results of our research in the light of the method and theories used. Finally, we try to give a brief overview of the traditional folk songbook of Guatemala.

It is important to clarify that this work is only a first approach to the recognition of scholars of Guatemalan traditional folk music and the relationship it establishes in the field of erudite music mainly addressed by musicology. However, due to the characteristics that musical studies have acquired in Guatemala since the end of the 19th century, it is very difficult to epistemologically separate the fields of musicology and ethnomusicology: we will mention both fields when the texts and the reality under study require it. The most obvious example of this is the close link between contemporary composers of Guatemala and the music of oral tradition. We are sure that many of the scholars of this discipline escape this first review, which will be covered in a later work.

It is worth pointing out that the emerging field of ethnomusicology has gone through various circumstances that have, if not prevented, at least made it difficult to clearly define and characterize its subject of study, this is why the areas of interest within this field frequently exhibit intersections and overlaps with other fields of the social sciences and the humanities.³

"Regardless of the definition, techniques, and methodologies employed, the primary difficulty lies in the fact that ethnomusicology, while aspiring to be a single discipline, in reality encompasses two well-established fields, struggling to find a *modus vivendi*. The two principal disciplines are undoubtedly musicology and anthropology; however, with minimal effort, one could easily incorporate several other fields into this amalgamation we refer to as ethnomusicology—history, psychology, physics, physiology, sociology, philosophy, and perhaps a few others".⁴

Ethnomusicology as a discipline:

Ethnomusicology as such originated in Europe in the field of Comparative Musicology (a term coined in 1885 by the German musicologist **Guido Adler**), being at that time a subfield of comparative musicology, with its main focus on the analysis of musical works, especially folk music. The German School of Berlin, at the beginning of the century, stood out for its methods and techniques in comparative musicology, possessing a deep musical training and a great capacity for historical and cultural analysis, which **Graebner** would later develop in his thesis on cultural connections, a method characteristic of the Berlin School. The leading figures of this school are **Erich María Von Hornbostel (1877-1935)** and **Curt Sachs (1899-1959)**, who believed that both musicology and anthropology had close kinship ties, which is why they employed the methods of both disciplines in order to clarify the characteristics of their object of study.

"The science of the music of exotic cultures deals with the musical manifestations of non-European peoples, regardless of their level of civilization. It only touches the soil of Europe in those regions where, far from the particular forms of Western musical life, traces of an archaic musical practice similar to that of non-European cultures have been preserved. The old name for this science, "comparative musicology", leads to confusion and has generally been abandoned. It does not "compare" any more or less than any other science: it has already begun to establish historical divisions and to unravel the main lines of an evolution that ascends from its crude beginnings to the plain upon which the mountain range of modern European musical art stands".⁵

Let us remember that we are at a time when the influence of evolutionary and diffusionist ideas is the main concern of scholars, and in the field of music, this translates into the question of what the origin of music has been.

Many of the contemporaries of these scholars, who emigrated to the United States of America after the Second World War, founded ethnomusicology. The new

American ethnomusicologists conducted research on primitive music under an anthropological approach. They systematize the field collection, to later study and analyze it, but without the preparation of the Germans. The anthropologist **Franz Boas (1858-1942)** stands out as a pioneer of these studies, strongly influenced by the functionalist currents, with a deep historical base; and later **Melville Herkovits**, a well-known North American anthropologist, who defines more precisely the object and methods of study. Under his leadership, two great ethnomusicologists appear on the scene, among others, whose contributions are worth mentioning: **Allan Merriam**, who develops a great field work, especially studying the music of African cultures, is the author of an important book for the development of ethnomusicology,⁶ in it he defines the object of study as follows:

“This implies that ethnomusicology comprises the ethnological and the musicological and that musical sound is the result of human behavior in processes constituted by the values, attitudes and beliefs of a people, of a given culture. A group of people cannot produce music for another, and although we may separate the two concepts (people-music), they do not occur in reality one without the other. Human behavior is formed to produce music, that is why the study of one lead to the other”.⁷

Bruno Netti, for his part, defines ethnomusicology as the “science that deals with music foreign to Western civilization, when referring to what he calls primitive music” and he says:

“It is a different and rich, source of experimentation for western musicians and composers, used as an educational medium, primitive music tends to make a student more tolerant of different styles and languages. A knowledge of primitive musical styles is a good aid to the psychology of music, anthropology and cultural history should find through the examination of European rural music and thus be able to trace its distant origins: the historian of musical instruments will often find prototypes of European forms; and the linguist discovers ethnolinguistic material”.⁹

From the 1950s onwards is when a true integration and balance between musicological and anthropological analysis was achieved, with different methodological approaches, among them **Mantle Hood's**,¹⁰ who referred to musicological and anthropological analysis:

“Ethno-musicology, he alludes, is the field of knowledge that has as its object the investigation of musical art as a phenomenon”.¹¹

For his part, **George List** also joined the field of traditional popular music scholarship, establishing his major contributions in the field of sound transcription.¹²

Much earlier than the work done by the Americans, we find the work of the Hungarian **Bela Bartok (1881-1945)**,¹³ who basically has been known for the quality of his compositions, which in this case, we must emphasize that they are supported by a deep and solid research work on popular music. His writings on popular music are

to a large extent the exciting story of Bartok's search by way of descriptive folklore and comparative folklore, up to the identification of Hungarian song characters in the Middle East, in Turkey, among the ancient Mongols thrown into Pannonia during the 18th century, even in Finland. Three are the initial considerations implicit in Bartok's work:

"1) The impossibility of advancing a single step on the basis of the above assumptions.

2) The equal importance of text and music in folk songs.

3) The necessity of the sound recording and transcription of such songs, and let us say that until very late 1937, everything would be done starting from a simple Edison phonograph".¹⁵

The bulk of his work is large and what is treated within it is of great importance in the development of musicology and comparative musicology, referring to comparative musical folklore, he says:

"We call comparative musical folklore to that very young scientific discipline placed between musicology and folklore, and which has only been widely practiced for a few years by scholars of popular music. The aim of this discipline is to establish the original types of the respective popular songs, as well as the common elements and the reciprocal influences between the different popular music. This, naturally on the basis of comparisons between the collections of the various related or neighboring ones".¹⁶

We cannot fail to mention Zoltan Kodaly, contemporary of Bartok and with whom he shares ideas and lines of research, making this last researcher and composer another important figure in the development of popular music studies. Bartok refers in his work to how and why we should collect popular music, clarifies what is related to comparative musical folklore and the study of popular songs and nationalism. From this perspective he identifies music and its relationship with the pure race and the influence of peasant music on modern cultured music and many other topics, being his work much broader than described here, so it deserves separate attention.

Ethnomusicology in Latin America and the Caribbean

Also in South America, achievements are being made in terms of ethnomusicological research. Perhaps, the most outstanding of them is **Carlos Vega** in Argentina who is formed under the postulates of the Historical-Culturalist School, he has been making recordings of aboriginal music since 1933 and his work is fundamental for the formation of later generations that will develop the work of ethnomusicology in Latin America.¹⁷ His closest disciple and follower is **Isabel Aretz**, who later moved to Venezuela where she developed most of her work until the present day.¹⁸

Quite at variance with a current trend that claims that there is only one music, we believe that there are as many music as there are cultures. In the music of tradition, oral music that is transmitted by ear, without a score accordingly, the performer gives his own version of a short piece, heard by him before, and it will be all the more appreciated as long as it does not cease to conform to the known work, even if it produces variations...¹⁹

In 1970, the Organization of American States and the Consejo Nacional de la Cultura of Venezuela founded the Inter-American Institute of Ethnomusicology and Folklore, which promotes courses and study programs to prepare young Latin Americans in the promotion of ethnomusicology and folklore. Isabel Aretz is responsible for the coordination and direction of this study center.

From the school of Carlos Vega, we must also mention **Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera** who, in addition to conducting research on the popular and traditional music of Venezuela, is an active part of the teaching staff of the aforementioned Institute.²⁰ Contemporary with Aretz are the works carried out by **Lauro Ayestaran** in Uruguay and **Alvaro Fernaud** in Venezuela. Later generations include **Klena Fortuny** in Bolivia, **Carlos Coba**²¹ in Ecuador, **Jorge de Carvalho**²² in Brazil, **Max Brand**²³ in the United States, **Benjamín Yepes**²⁴ in Colombia, **Irma Ruiz**²⁵ in Argentina, **Terry AgerKop**²⁶ in Suriname and **María Ester Grebe Bicuna**²⁷ in Chile, the last one being formed by Mantle Hood.

In the northern hemisphere, the Mexican **Vicente Mendoza**²⁸ stands out for his detailed research work on traditional Mexican popular music. Later, with emphasis on the organology study, the work of **Samuel Marti** appears.²⁹

Also, for some years now, **Thomas Stanford**,³⁰ as well as the new generation of ethnomusicologists, among them **Arturo chamorro**³¹ and **Manuel Alvarez Boada**,³² have made valuable contributions to the understanding of the Mexican sonorous reality. (Actually), there are many more authors and we mention the most outstanding ones and the works we know best.³³

In the Caribbean area, we cannot fail to mention the work carried out by **Luis Manuel Alvarez**³⁴ at the University of Puerto Rico. **Marta Elena Davis**,³⁵ has also been concerned with this type of research on the island of Santo Domingo. However, the most outstanding person in this research and whose contributions have been fundamental to consolidate this discipline are the works carried out by the Cuban **Alejo Carpentier**.³⁶ Likewise, **Argelis De León**³⁷ y **Fernando Ortiz**³⁸ have contributed in a special way to clarify the panorama of Afro-American and specifically Afro-Cuban music.

Similarly, there are innumerable contributions in the field of musical creation for the understanding of traditional popular music as in the previous example of Bela Bartok. For Latin America the most important Works in this sense are those of the Brazilian **Heitor Villalobos**, **Alberto Ginastera** in Argentina and **Chaves y Revueltas** in

México. It would be very useful to deepen the connections that exist between research and musical creation and how this plays a profound role in the conformation of a Latin American sound identity. ³⁹

Pre-Columbian music in Mesoamerica and its research:

In this regard, there are considerable achievements in the study of the music of that time. Samuel Marti ⁴⁰ works exhaustively on the sonic reality of pre-Columbian Mexico and his studies constitute an important legacy for the musical understanding of this period. In the organological field there are also some achievements, being the most representative, in my opinion, the work of **Flores Dorantes**. ⁴¹ In this line of research I have tried more than the description of the pre-Hispanic sound fact, the search for representative musical structures of this period. ⁴² Although this field is still to be initiated, we believe that with the understanding of the pre-Hispanic fact and the study of the present evidence, we can find better explanations for the understanding of the sonorous phenomenon in the past.

Information about music in indigenous texts:

After the archaeological evidences, it is the indigenous texts that can give us information and corroborate in a good way, the sonorous reality of the indigenous groups that inhabited the Mesoamerican territory prior the arrival of the Spaniards.

In the Yucatan region, we find the book of Chilam Balam which, among other passages, refers to the following:

“Perfumed bouquets will come down from the sky. The atabal will sound, the rattle will sound (...) at a time Yaxal Chuen will be beheaded ... dispersed throughout the world will be the women who sing and the men who sing and all those who sing. The child sings, the old man sings, the old woman sings, the young man sings, the young woman sings...” ⁴³

The **Popol Vuh** considered the sacred book of the Quichés and of profound importance even today, both for the aborigines of Guatemala and the world, has several passages where it mentions music, which also plays an important role in the context of their stories.

“They were divine here on earth, of good nature and good manners. All the arts were taught to Humbatz and Hunchouen. They were flute-players, singers, sculptors, jewelers, silversmiths ...” ⁴⁴

The Title of the Señores de Totonicapán and the Memorial de Sololá also have precious passages that provide information about the music:

“There came, at last, the sign of the Zakbin, the sound of a pumpkin and a flute of call... Great is their power and they are dancing a magnificent dance... Thus, they said and soon after entered to serve carrying the bows and drums”. ⁴⁵

There are other titles that provide information about the music, among them the Título de Coyol, which offers the following information:

“They had their parasols with bone flutes and small flutes... The drum dance with the war dance... Songs accompanied by the lords' flute”.⁴⁶

The Covalchaj manuscripts present a series of pictograms among which appear instruments of war and music, the latter being the tun and the Chirimía.⁴⁷

The Rabinal Achí deserves special attention, an indigenous text discovered by the abbot Brasseur de Bourbourg, which specifically develops the description of a dance-drama. In the performance that took place on January 20th, 1856 in the Parish of Rabinal, the musical realization was annotated (the melodic and rhythmic base) by Colash López. In the preface of the edition of this text made by George Raynaud, the following is noted:

“In 1856, the orchestra of the Rabinal Achi, comprised only two trumpets and a tun (tunkul, in Yucatan and teponaztli in Mexico) or great sacred drum. They also had other instruments made of wood or clay, such as flutes (Xul), whistles of different sounds, hollow pumpkins or filled with grains or pebbles, with a handle to shake them or serving as a sounding board for a rudimentary stringed instrument mounted on a kind of bow”.⁴⁸

Due to the musical transcription presented in this text, its contribution is considered fundamental in the development of Guatemalan ethnomusicology.

Music in the Spanish Chronicles:

The work carried out by the monks who accompanied the conquistadors left an invaluable legacy of descriptions in various areas concerning the society being conquered. Music is no exception to this analysis, so most chroniclers provide us with information about the musical phenomenon. These descriptions are clearly influenced by the thinking of their time. However, we must also be aware that, although their exhaustive writings cover a broad panorama of what was happening in this society, their treatises are not specifically about music. Therefore, these descriptions refer mainly to what was closest to them as a sound phenomenon, leaving out, on one hand, surely many important musical phenomena; and much less do they include transcriptions of these musical manifestations or even detailed records of the acoustic and timbral qualities of the instruments.

Due to the quality of his work, Father Friar Bernardino de Sahagún must be mentioned, who produced exhaustive descriptions of the Mexican highlands at the time of the conquest. The Dominican friar, referring to musical aspects, states the following:

...They had at hand all the accoutrements of the areito, the drum and small drum with their instruments to play the drum, and some rattles (...) and flutes with all the

master players and singers and dancers, as well as the attire for the areito for any song....⁴⁹

Although Sahagún's work refers to central Mexico, it provides us with some insights into musical events. Closer to our geography are the accounts of Friar Diego de Landa, who refers to the southern lowlands of Mexico (Yucatán), a region that shows greater historical and cultural similarity to the Guatemalan highlands. Regarding music, Landa states:

"They have small drums that they play with their hands and another drum made from a hollowed-out log, producing a heavy and mournful sound, which they play with a long stick coated with tree sap. They have long trumpets made from crooked gourds; they also have another instrument made from a whole turtle shell, with the flesh removed, played by striking it with the palm of the hand, producing a mournful and sad sound".⁵⁰

Among the accounts of warriors, the work of Bernal Díaz del Castillo stands out with true mastery. He provides us with interesting information about music, referring to it especially in the context of warfare, and corroborating the information about music obtained from other authors.

"And as I have said, there came upon us two squadrons, numbering six thousand, with great shouting, drums, and trumpets... And with many voices and cries and whistles and howls, and drums and conch shells, which was a kind of chant that would have struck fear into anyone unfamiliar with them...."⁵¹

Fray Bartolomé de las Casas also took care to record some passages about the dances and music among the Indigenous people.

"And among other celebrations held for him were those in the afternoons: throughout the neighborhoods and plazas of the city, they would perform dances and festivities... which they call *mitotes*, as on the islands where they are called *areyotes*... for it is their principal form of rejoicing and celebration. And the most noble knights of royal blood, according to their ranks, held their dances and festivities closer to the houses where their powerful lord resided."⁵²

The information about music is also extensive and varied in the archives, which have not yet been subjected to in-depth research by scholars. Therefore, we are aware that these repositories contain a vast amount of information on the history of both classical and popular music. It will not be until a meticulous archival investigation is undertaken that this information will shed new light on our understanding of musical history. Let us consider the example of the *Actas del Cabildo de Guatemala*, found in the General Archive of Central America:

"1...) In the council meeting of January 26, 1573, the arrival of President Villalobos was announced, and Licenciado Vásquez was appointed to go and receive him (...) It was also ordered to adorn the city and the road with leaves, branches, and other

customary decorations, and that trumpets, flutes, drums, and other music instruments possessed by the natives be used".⁵³

By the 17th century, chroniclers also contributed to the description of the sonic phenomenon. Such is the case of the illustrious Antonio de Fuentes y Guzmán with his work "*Recordación Florida*", which mentions, among other passages:

"They come with a large troupe of dancers to the square where the celebration and the public theater of that festive performance take place, dancing to the sound of the *teponaztli* and other instruments such as flutes and conch shells.".⁵⁴

Between 1625 and 1637, Thomas Gage, in his book *Thomas Gage in New Spain*, dedicates an entire chapter to instruments and dances. He refers to them in the following way:

"During all that time, nothing else could be heard at night but people singing, howling, beating on their shells, and playing bassoons and flutes".⁵⁵

It is clear from this description the deep prejudices that the chroniclers had when observing, and therefore analyzing, the customs of the indigenous people.

Friar Antonio de Remesal, with his book *General History of the West Indies*, and in particular *The Government of Chiapas and Guatemala*, makes reference to the music of the indigenous people:

"...The order of having boys and girls sing the catechism with the tones of the psalms and hymns of the church... It is also very worthy of note how much the indigenous people, once the villages were established, devoted themselves to music, both vocal and instrumental.".⁵⁶

In this regard, it should be clearly understood that the indigenous people adopted the music of the conquest with such ease that it allowed them, from very early on, to recreate these musical expressions. In the field of classical music... the indigenous people demonstrated great and significant advancements.

Similarly, Martin A. Tovilla (1635) provides information about the music of the indigenous people.

"... The whole town was adorned with bows, dances, and festivals in their own style, with no lack of trumpets or shawms, which would always go half a league outside the town to welcome their chief magistrate..."⁵⁷

Archbishop Pedro Cortés y Larraz, in his *Geographical and Moral Description of the Diocese of Guatemala*, refers to music on countless occasions. Among these mentions, the following stands out:

"That in this parish the abuse of vigils for deceased children is widespread, in which sumptuous altars and music are arranged, where people of both sexes gather, also attracted by the presence of drinks.".⁵⁸

INFORMATION ABOUT MUSIC IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Chroniclers and travelers

It is the priest Domingo Juarros who first mentions the marimba when he notes that in 1680 it appeared on the occasion of the blessing of the Holy Church of the Cathedral of Guatemala.

"Ahead went a group of drums, clarinets, trumpets, marimbas, and all the instruments used by the indigenous people." ⁵⁹

It was not until 1878 that the first specific treatise on Guatemalan music appeared, written by José Saenz Poggio. Although it focuses more on the study of classical music, it also provides some information about popular music, particularly that of the indigenous people. However, its details are mainly in the field of describing the musical instruments used by the indigenous communities. Likewise, it mentions the existence of Military Bands and the places where they could be found. Chapter VIII of his book is dedicated exclusively to the music of the indigenous people and largely refers to the instruments:

"The atabal or gathering of seven drums, whose volume decreases from one quite large to another very small." ⁶⁰

Saenz also mentions the tecomate whistles, the donkey's jawbone, the sambumbia, the trumpet, and, as a particularly interesting detail, the caramba:

"An instrument shaped like a bow, whose string is made of wire, kept taut rather than loose. It is played with a rod also made of wire, and the performer brings their mouth close to the metal string to transmit the inflections of their voice without letting the listeners hear them. The lower part of the caramba is held by the player's left foot fingers, to apply it as needed on a guacal that acts as a sounding box." ⁶¹

At the end of the 19th century, the book *Tiempo Viejo* by Don Ramón A. Salazar appeared, offering information about the music and dances of that mestizo culture, already established by then. In his accounts, he refers to the *loas* and Easter festivities, which were accompanied by *chinchines* and water whistles, as well as drums playing carols and songs. Among the dances, he mentions the *barreño*, the *jarabe*, and the *zapateado*. He also alludes to the *tonadas* accompanied by guitars and small guitars (*guitarrillas*), characterized by the improvisation of sung texts performed by the spectators. ⁶² From the content of Salazar's writings, it is clear that we are dealing with sound expressions resulting from a strong process of mestizaje, whose manifestations are also implicit in the music.

Among the travelers, we cannot fail to mention John L. Stephens (1839), who refers in his writings to violins, cane whistles, the *tamborón*, and other musical instruments used in popular festivities. Meanwhile, Jacobo Haefkens, in his book *Journey to Guatemala and Central America*, describes the following:

“Monotonous chords from some shawms and small drums made from hollowed-out blocks of wood”.⁶⁴

Because contributions in the field of ethnomusicology have been greater during the present century, the historical data mentioned earlier have not been described in greater depth.⁶⁵

ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE ETHNOGRAPHY AND ANTHROPOLOGY OF GUATEMALA IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Referring to the development of ethnography and anthropology in Guatemala is not an easy task, and even less so when it comes to ethnomusicology, a subfield of anthropology. While it is true that our countries have been studied from an anthropological perspective by researchers of different nationalities and, consequently, under the guidance of various methodological approaches, there is still no document that explicitly addresses the development of this discipline in the country, nor the achievements and scope attained through fieldwork.⁶⁶

The musicological perspective:

The work of German ethnography (diffusionist) began at the end of the last century when the country was visited by a series of German ethnologists and naturalists who conducted research in Guatemala between 1880 and 1935. Guillermo Pedroni, regarding this, notes:

“In our view, the breadth of investigative interest was (consciously or unconsciously) linked to the neocolonial interests of the metropolis.”⁶⁷

An example that must be carefully analyzed, due to the special nature of his work, is that of Franz Termer. He made the first cylinder recordings registered in the northwest by Wilhelm Heinitz, which were published in Hamburg, Germany, in 1933.⁶⁸

At this time, German ethnologists had begun their research in Guatemala and other parts of the continent. Their contributions were fundamental to the development of the discipline, such as the fieldwork carried out in the Roraima and Orinoco areas by the German ethnologist Theodor Koch-Grünberg, who handed over his field material to Kurt Sachs, who in turn used it in his organology studies.⁶⁹ We also owe Karl Sappers information and data about indigenous music, which he collected and properly transcribed in his book about Central America, published in Germany in 1897.⁷⁰ We are confident that the work carried out by the Germans in the field of music is much more extensive than what is described here, but unfortunately, we have not been able to access the primary sources that contain more detailed information on the subject.

Following the presence of German ethnologists in the country, American anthropologists—strongly influenced by the culturalist school—emerged on the scene. We are confident they also conducted fieldwork collecting sound-related data. However, as in the previous case, we do not have access to these materials. Nonetheless, both the German and American presences established guidelines and lines of work that were often carried out by nationals (although heavily influenced by foreign approaches), thereby contributing to the development of the ethnomusicological discipline.⁷¹

Adrián Recinos refers to musical aspects in the early decades of the 20th century. Evidence of this is his essay *The Musical Instruments of the Indigenous People of Guatemala*, a work that is basically historical in nature and does not delve deeply into other elements of the sound phenomenon.⁷²

After the work carried out by Saenz Poggio, it was not until the writings of Rafael Vásquez that another document specifically addressing the history of music in the country appeared. Vásquez's book includes, among other topics, the religious influence on music, the presence of European schools in the country, nationalism in music, popular songs, and Christmas carols. Chapter III is of special interest to our work as it refers to indigenous musical art, our musical future, and stylized indigenous music.

... His zarabanda is a form of European composition, built upon melody, harmony, and rhythm. He has individualized each of these elements and framed them within the established form. The rhythm is regional, the harmonization plain and simple. Corresponding to racial hieraticism, the melody is clear and clean, imbued with that inherent sadness that characterizes conquered and humiliated races."⁷³

The Beginning of Ethnomusicological Research

It was not until the early 1940s, in the 20th century, that the first systematic studies of traditional indigenous music appeared. Indeed, Jesús Castillo marks the beginning of a new stage with ethnomusicological studies in Guatemala. His book titled **Maya-Quiché Music** provides information about the origin and history of indigenous music, its organology, and some records of dances, which are inseparable from the music. His area of study is basically located in Quiché and Quetzaltenango, as well as the Pacific coastal region and the Quiché-Achí area—information we deduce from his reports, since his work reflects a broader study area if we pay attention to the musical transcriptions he presents.

"Currently, the indigenous drum is reduced to three sizes, each with a different use. The largest, commonly called the "tamborón," is used to accompany the "Zu," a guiding device of the Moros Dance. The medium-sized drum is the inseparable companion of the chirimía, a Moorish instrument imported by the conquistadors that marks the steps and scenes of the Dance of the Conquest. As for the smallest one,

which is truly tiny, it can still be seen in Chichicastenango: it sometimes accompanies the Tz'ujolaj".⁷⁴

His work runs parallel to that of María Barata in El Salvador⁷⁵ whose research is of great importance for understanding the popular music of eastern Guatemala, due to the cultural similarity this area shares with El Salvador. Additionally, there is the work carried out by the Panamanian Modesto Garay a decade earlier. It is important to note that, at this time, in the Central American region, there is a growing need and concern to clarify the reality of traditional popular music.

Jesús Castillo defines his ethnophonic work and includes within it the first proposals for the organological classification of instruments. Although his work is quite questionable in its assertions regarding the anthropology of music, Castillo's work represents an initial approach to phenomenological appreciation. In his studies, he presents some musical transcriptions of traditional popular music and also recognizes the decisive influence established between sounds produced by nature and those recreated by humans.

Let us remember that we are addressing a clear moment when nationalism colors many of the works of intellectuals throughout Latin America; in Mexico, Chávez and Revueltas; in Brazil, Villalobos had already demonstrated this; and in Argentina, Ginastera. Similarly, in Venezuela, Sojo and the disciples of the Chacao and Petare schools followed this trend. In the fields of painting, literature, and other branches of art, remarkable results were also achieved. Therefore, the very appreciation of the sound phenomenon is often debatable, given the awareness of nationalist romanticism. This helps explain why Castillo presents a score of the *Baile del Rabinal Achí* different from the one presented by Yurchenco, despite both being contemporaries and, consequently, working with different musicians.⁷⁷

With all this, Castillo's work should be studied in depth, and I believe that greater contributions will be found, especially in the realm of his aesthetic production. Probably Castillo's misfortune is that he traveled the least and, therefore, is the least universal of the nationalists.

Although Castillo's creative work is much clearer than his research itself, his contributions are fundamental and mark the beginning of a new era in the musical research and reality of Guatemala. His contemporaries from Quetzaltenango stood out at that time due to their achievements in creative work with the marimba, both in its acoustic and interpretive aspects. Moreover, it is important to understand that these investigations were supported by the positivist thought of the late 19th century, which strongly influenced the intellectuals of that time, as well as by the development of anthropological research carried out by the Americans, who in one way or another shaped the work of the nationals.

During this period, the National Indigenist Institute was also founded, and therefore, there was a clear concern to clarify what was happening among the indigenous

peoples. In this regard, the review of the bulletin and the magazine *Guatemala Indígena*, both official publications of the National Indigenist Institute, as well as the magazine of the Geographical and Historical Society of Guatemala, constitute an important source for the comprehensive understanding of musicological development. This period also corresponds to a series of other publications such as *Revista Electra*, *Revista Pensamiento Centroamericano*, and others I may have overlooked, which present abundant and interesting information about music. For example, the *Bulletin of Museums and Libraries* from the Section of History and Fine Arts includes among its many articles a work by its director, Humberto Castellanos, entitled “Brief History of the Music of Guatemala.” The work is divided into several chapters, referring to the music of the indigenous peoples, music during the colonial period up to 1773, then music during the independence period, followed by the revolutionary period, and finally, it addresses the musical form known as “Son” and the marimba.⁷⁸

Henrietta Yurchenco is, in my opinion, the most important foreign researcher who worked in Guatemala. She conducted ethnomusicological research in Chiapas and the highlands of Guatemala. She carried out in situ field recordings in the Quiché-Achí area, reporting the first field recordings of the *Baile del Rabinal Achí*, and in the Ixil area, the *Baile de Las Canastas*.

... As this was the first comprehensive recording expedition in Indian Guatemala, an overall survey was made of various musical styles rather than in-depth study of any one locale”.⁷⁹

It is worth noting that, at that time, the recordings were less complicated than those made by Franz Termer, but still involved a certain degree of difficulty due to the challenging access to locations as well as the weight and size of the recording equipment. In addition to the IN SITU field recordings, she carried out transcription and ethnomusicological analysis work. She also released a record with her recordings and field notes. A large part of her transcriptions has been published, as is the case with the book *Marimbas de Guatemala* by Vida Chenoweth.⁸¹

Henrietta Yurchenco, for her part, responds to the American concern for this type of study in Latin America. Unfortunately, her written work—which must be extensive—is largely unknown to us. Her fieldwork and the notes she publishes is commendable for the seriousness with which she approaches them, although her work lacks a comprehensive explanation of the country’s overall musical reality.

As we mentioned earlier, Vida Chenoweth began research on the marimbas of Guatemala starting in 1957. Her work is of great importance because it clarifies certain myths and taboos constructed around this instrument. Although it has often been considered a national instrument, it has been mistakenly attributed a false origin that historical documents have not been able to support.

... In order that the marimba may be viewed as a part of its culture, some attention is given to local custom and practices in which it figures: this treatment, however, does not aim at completeness. Finally, the last chapter surveys briefly the probable line of development of the marimba in the Old World and examines its history in the New with particular notice to the question of its origin here".⁸²

Despite the concerns expressed in the introduction of her book regarding the scope of her work, a review of it is enough to reveal the importance of her research. She discusses the chromatic or double marimba, contrasting this characterization with what she calls the primitive marimba or marimba of tecomates, and from this contrast she defines the transition from the simple marimba to the double marimba. Her work includes a series of illustrations that help provide a clearer idea of the different parts and characteristics of the instrument, as well as how it is played. Of great importance in her writings is the description of the features used in the construction of this instrument. Finally, she addresses the universal history and development of the marimba and that of Guatemala. Equally significant for ethnomusicology are the musical transcriptions she presents and her analysis of the forms, rhythms, and melodies evidenced in the performance of this instrument. The reading is engaging, and due to the quality of its content, her contributions to understanding the development of the so-called national instrument are undeniable. Like the work of many researchers, Chenoweth's book contributes to the academic field, to creativity, and to performance.⁸³

Among foreign researchers, it is also important to mention Linda O'Brien, who made significant contributions to the study of the music of the Cakchiquel and Tzutujil areas around Lake Atitlán. She devoted an extensive work to the Tzutujil titled *Songs of the Face of the Earth*, which discusses the music of the Rilaj Mam, or Francisco Sojuel.

"The style of the lyrics and the meaning of the Tzutujil songs have preserved an indigenous character, but their musical style shows extensive foreign influence. Elements from the late 16th and 17th centuries are evident, including Spanish ecclesiastical and secular forms such as modal practice and rhythmic and harmonic conventions, forms, and melodies... The songs are performed in an indigenous vocal style, very different from the Western one. In this sense, the interpretation of the emotional content and the meaning of the text is the most important aspect".⁸⁴

O'Brien also refers to the organological qualities and phenomenological characteristics of the Tzutuhil guitar. He also discusses the composition of the texts, the spiritual world in which they are immersed, as well as a complex analysis of the sound phenomenon of this music. It is important to mention that his work is supervised by Mantle Hood. Additionally, he conducts field recordings (which have been distributed on records and cassettes).⁸⁵

In the early 1960s, Jacques Jangoux carried out several field recordings in different regions of the country: the Tzutuhil area, the Chorti area, the Mam area, and the

Chuj area. In 1964, he released some records featuring material from these recordings, without offering much insight in terms of ethnomusicological analysis, including only informational notes about the recorded phonograms.⁸⁶

After some time, national researchers continued to contribute. By 1951, Dr. Paret-Limardo de Vela began her research on violin and harp melodies in the departments of El Quiché, Las Verapaces, and Huehuetenango. Although her ethnographic descriptions are not exhaustive, she conducted valuable field recordings and, in her book *Folklore Musical de Guatemala*,⁸⁷ she published a large number of musical transcriptions. However, these do not reflect the advances in musical transcription proposed by the ethnomusicologists of her time.

In 1967, the University of San Carlos of Guatemala founded the Center for Folkloric Studies, although its origins date back to November 7, 1953. By 1973, this institution was reorganized and more clearly defined its basic objectives and functions. It was not until 1977 that a temporary program was initiated with the fundamental goal of promoting research dedicated to traditional Guatemalan music, quickly becoming a permanent program. The credit for systematizing ethnomusicological studies at this university goes to Professor Manuel Juárez Toledo.

Like previous researchers, Juárez Toledo conducted field recordings and studies of the socio-cultural context in which the sound phenomenon occurs. In his various publications, he presents transcriptions of the collected material and systematizes the first proposal for creating a traditional popular songbook of Guatemala. Among the areas he investigated are San Marcos and Huehuetenango in the Mam region; Chimaltenango and Sacatepéquez in the Cakchiquel area; as well as the Verapaces in the Kekchí area, among others. His contributions are truly fundamental, but unfortunately, due to his early passing, his work remains unfinished. Juárez Toledo, attempting to clarify the genre of tonada found in the southeastern region of Guatemala, states:

“The custom of singing songs for recreational and romantic purposes is present in all towns and many villages of Guatemala. Singers and listeners alike seek comfort and relaxation by enjoying music after the day’s work or on the occasion of a family or community social event”.⁹¹

Juárez Toledo’s work also contains debatable contributions in the field of musical creation, and it is very likely that he is the one to whom we owe the emergence of folkloric projection music in Guatemala, guided and supported by meticulous fieldwork. This situation gives great validity to his contributions in the field of musical creation.

In 1851, Olga Vilma Schwartz published a book titled *Música de Guatemala*, in which, as a compiler, she included a series of transcriptions of both traditional music and works by popular composers. These transcriptions were made by various outstanding musicians of the time, among whom Wotzbelí Aguilar, Antonio Vidal,

Alberto Mendoza, and Julián Paniagua Martínez stand out, among others.⁹² This work also includes a list of famous marimbas, marimba makers, notable marimba players, great musicians and popular composers, music publishers, artistic companies, and more.

In 1981, I joined the Folklore Studies Center at the University of San Carlos as head of the Ethnomusicology section. This position allowed me to continue the work of Juárez Toledo, as well as to seek new theoretical and methodological perspectives in the study of the country's traditional popular music. Field recordings continued to be made, along with efforts to contextualize traditional popular music, with the aim of contributing to the enrichment of the institution's sound archive.

Moreover, an attempt was made to more concretely formulate an overview or songbook of musical expressions from the popular tradition. In both the phenomenological and organological fields, the first guidelines were sought to define a line of work and understanding of the musical reality under study. Noteworthy among the areas investigated are the Garífuna ethnic group on the Atlantic coast, the mestizo music of the Lake Petén Itzá basin, and the focus on other ethnic groups such as the Pocomam, Cakchiquel, and Quiché, among others.⁹³

I must also mention the contributions of Maestro Enrique Anleu Díaz⁹⁴, who in 1994, was head of the Musicology Section at the Folklore Studies Center of the San Carlos University from Guatemala, although his main focus lies in the field of musicology, he works closely to clarify the phenomenological aspects of traditional popular music and its relationship with the written music developed in Guatemala.

Indeed, there has been a profound connection between the field of so-called "art music" and "traditional popular music." Although the relationships expressed between these musical forms are fundamental to fully and comprehensively understanding the development of music in our country, this topic will not be addressed here, I only wish to acknowledge its importance.

The work of Anleu Díaz is framed from a multifaceted perspective, as his legacy as a painter, writer, musician, music educator, and orchestra conductor has been of crucial importance for the development of the arts in Guatemala. Among the proposals made by Anleu Díaz, in collaboration with Lic. Celso Lara and Anaité Arrivillaga, the formulation of projects aimed at creating a University Symphony Orchestra stands out as an initiative that undoubtedly would greatly encourage the development and study of music in this country.

The observations and contributions of Lic. Celso Lara to the research team at the Folklore Studies Center (Ethnomusicology section) have been highly valuable. It is important to mention that Celso Lara is the only musicologist in Guatemala who, in a systematic manner and at a general information level, approaches Western music from the perspective of musicological pedagogy through his columns in the newspaper *Diario La Hora*. Due to Guatemala's historical circumstances, where are

no specialized books or libraries on music, the column *Temas Musicales* ⁹⁵ has become essential material for music students within the national education system.

Among the young musicians who have shown concern for and conducted research on Guatemala's traditional popular music, Manuel de Jesús Toribio stands out. In 1970, he won the Jesús Castillo composition prize awarded by the Dirección General de Bellas Artes, which motivated him to continue his research into traditional music. He aims to compose his works drawing on the country's musical roots. Additionally, the influence of Maestro Jorge Sarmientos' work is evident in his creations.

Jorge Sarmientos, Enrique Anleu Díaz, and especially Joaquín Orellana are the names of academic musicians whose work reflects a recognition of the musical roots of our country, resulting in original compositions of great aesthetic quality for the nation. ⁹⁶

It is to Fernando Morales Matus that we owe the academic development the marimba has had in the country. Building on and continuing the work carried out by the marimba instructors at the National Conservatory of Music, and supported by his study and interpretation of this instrument, he has admirably brought the marimba to the concert hall.

Beningo Mejía also conducts research in the indigenous areas of Guatemala, contributing important elements for the understanding of the sound phenomenon and establishing fundamental guidelines for organological analysis, as well as for the construction of traditional musical instruments, primarily concerning indigenous flutes and whistles.

Recently emerged but equally important are the contributions of researchers Jesús Amauri Angel and Antonio Consenza, ⁹⁷ who have also been concerned with understanding the country's sound reality. Samuel Franco joins the ethnomusicological work, highlighting his contributions in the field of IN SITU collection of the sound phenomenon. He founded the Casa de Música Kojom, where indigenous music is preserved, disseminated, and revitalized.

Among the folklore groups supported by effective fieldwork is **Grupo Guayacán**, which, although initially influenced by Andean traditional popular music, ultimately became interested in and focused on studying Guatemala's oral musical traditions.

⁹⁸ Very recently emerging, yet with an admirable strength, there are a number of folklore groups that we hope will channel their energies and concerns in the right direction in order to create a coherent musical folklore projection that does not distort the original music, as has often happened in the past. Within this line of work, special mention should be made of the recent groups of singer-songwriters, or proponents of the *nueva canción*, who have also shown concern for scientifically recognizing the musical expressions of traditional popular culture—an effort that, in my opinion, has been better executed than that of the folklore projection groups. Nonetheless, we

hesitate to provide a detailed description of their work, as only time will reveal the outcomes.

The genres of Ladino music have been little studied in the country, probably due to the prevailing belief that the roots of music are found only in indigenous traditions. Nevertheless, the work done in this field has been valuable in clarifying the genre of the song known as the “corrido.” The most important example of these contributions is the work carried out by the Guatemalan anthropologist Carlos Navarrete.⁹⁹ In the field of research and especially in the promotion of this musical genre, special mention is due to the work carried out by the ensemble “Melesio & Chocano y Cía. Limitada.”

I must also mention the work done in the field of so-called “art music” from the colonial period. Diefer Lehnhoff and his group Capella Antigua, founded in 1983 to perform specifically Guatemalan and Latin American music from the colonial era, have done excellent work. Additionally, Lehnhoff has begun meticulous research aimed at clarifying the state of polyphonic music in Guatemala during the 16th century.¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, Jorge Pellecer, as director of the group “Ars Nova,” later undertook efforts to rescue Guatemalan colonial music. Although recognizing these lines of research is not a primary focus of this work, we mention them because we consider it impossible to sharply separate the two fields of music.

Conclusions

Initially, we should consider this work as a first approach to the history of ethnomusicological research in Guatemala. It does not aim to be exhaustive or to provide the final word on our musical reality.

It is very likely that some authors, especially foreign ones and contemporary nationals, excluded from the overview presented here, as unfortunately we have not had access to those studies. However, it is important to highlight that concern for the discipline of ethnomusicology began early in the century and currently has a solid body of work to support future research.

Only through a deeper analysis of these authors’ works, combined with the field research conducted and to be conducted by nationals, will it be possible to form an initial picture of the country’s ethnomusicological reality, and, more importantly, to clarify the sound phenomena and the various historical-cultural aspects it presents, which constitute part of the heritage and identity of today’s Guatemala.

On the other hand, there remains a need for work that coherently connects the development of musicology and ethnomusicology in Guatemala and broadens the

framework of understanding to include what is known as “mass music” and other areas of musical activity.

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NOTES

1. This document is based on the presentation "investigación etnomusicológica y organológica realizada en Guatemala de 1977 a 1982" presented at the second-round table conference on ethnomusicology and folklore held in Mexico City in 1983.
2. Arrivillaga Cortes, A. "Apuntes sobre la clasificación organológica de los silbatos mayas prehispánicos y contemporáneos de Guatemala". En **Tradiciones de Guatemala**. No. 23 CEFOL-USAC-1986-1987. In this work, I devoted an introduction to the development of organology as a subfield of ethnomusicology. Additionally, I refer to the most prominent scholars of this topic in Latin America.
3. Merrian, Allan. "Reinscripción de la Etnomusicología". En **Ethnomusicology** No. 2, Vol. XIII. Mayo 1969. USA. Cabe mencionar que la Revista Ethnomusicology probablemente es el órgano de divulgación con mayor especialización en distintos temas de esta disciplina.
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Colonialist Systems of Indian Definition and the Attribution of their Nationality.

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COLONIALIST SYSTEMS OF INDIAN DEFINITION AND THE ATTRIBUTION OF THEIR NATIONALITY

By: Demetrio Cojtí Cuxil.

In Guatemala there are several objective criteria, and systems based on them, to determine the nationality of the Indian: the place of birth (Jus Soli), the nationality of the parents (Jus Sanguini), the features of their objective culture, the economic situation, the profession or trade, the linguistic competence in a specific language, the racial features, etc. It will be seen here that the criteria and formulas that resort to them are substantially partial and incomplete, and therefore inaccurate and inoperative. Because, they are inaccurate in identifying the Indian, they cause, in part, ethnic injustices at the ethnic level since they classify as ladino the Indio and as Indio the ladino. This inoperability is mainly due to the fact that they do not include ethnic self-identification as a criterion for identifying nationality of indigenous people.

Self-identification is a determining criterion since the ethnic fact or the national phenomenon has two dimensions: the objective dimension, (language, clothing, customs and traditions, organization, various arts, etc.) and the subjective dimension (consciousness and feelings). Self-identification evidences, precisely, the subjective dimension of the ethnic fact, as it is lived, thought and felt by each person, while at the same time that it allows to understand their ethnic loyalty and solidarity.

1. The official system: The place of birth (Jus Soli) and the nationality of the parents (Jus Sanguini).

In general, states determine and confer nationality to a person on the basis of the place of birth (the territory of the Republic) and the paternal affiliation

(nationality of the parents of the family). Thus, the current Political Constitution of Guatemala, in its article 144, recognizes Guatemalan nationality to those born in the territory of Guatemala, Guatemalan ships, Guatemalan aircrafts; and to Guatemalan fathers or mothers born abroad.

This procedure presupposes that there is coincidence between State and Nation, i.e. that the principle of nationality is complied with, which stipulates that to each nation corresponds a State and vice versa. The coincidence between State and Nation occurs when there is an essential similarity between the values of the State and those of the Nation (history, religion, culture, language, etc.), which converge in the conscience of the citizens (azkin B., 1968, pp. 88-91) (1). This overlapping makes for a national unity understood as uniformity of character, and consequently, that there is an identification between the citizens of the State-Nation and the natives of the Nation-State.

It is obvious that this type of recognition of nationality does not present problems in the case of single-national States, since the political-administrative unity coincides with the objective and subjective features of the nation. This would be the case of countries like Puerto Rico and others that are now culturally uniform. This type of national recognition also presents no problems in multinational societies where the various nations that constitute them enjoy different types and degrees of autonomy, so that there are few or no relations of domination between people and between ethnic communities. This is the case of states with federal or semi-federal structures such as Switzerland, Belgium and Canada, and States under whose jurisdiction there are autonomous regions such as Spain. But it does present problems of internal colonialism and natiophagy or ethnophagy in multinational states in which "nationality" and its representation is attributed to the dominant people (Stavenhagen R., September 3, 1985. (3) In effect, this situation implies the negation of the people and of the dominated nationalities, and therefore, the impossibility of recognizing them a specific national identity. A nationality is imposed on these colonized peoples, i.e., a foreign national identity and character, as well as a foreign government and law.

This is the case of the Mayans of Guatemala, for whom the Political Constitution decreed in May of 1985, establishes that they are Guatemalans of born in the territory of the Republic and for being children of Guatemalan fathers and mothers. In this way, Guatemalan nationality is imposed on them, understood as ladino nationality, which leads to multiple violations of their national rights. Thus, they must endure the imposition of Ladino culture and language, Ladino public administration and Ladino national identity. In fact, the Guatemalan Political Constitution recognizes and grants Guatemalan

nationality to the natives of the Indian people in order to justify the assimilation it prescribes for them. Thus, it uses the equality of civil and political rights between people (individual level) and makes the State ensure that the ruling class of the Ladino people make use of constitutional rights and freedoms to the detriment of the rights and freedoms of the Mayan people.

It is clear then that the Jus Soli and Jus Sanguini system, as a formula for determining and recognizing the national membership of each of the Guatemalans is not operative since, at the national level, it imposes the identity and character of the Ladino people on the Mayan people. Moreover, it is a formula that evidences the practice of an ethnocidal policy by the State, since it assumes the existence of a single-national State or the execution of a project aimed at obtaining such a State.

2. Informal systems based on objective indicators

In addition to the above formal system, there are informal systems for the identification and measurement of the national affiliation of the Indian. All of these have in common to be based predominantly or exclusively on one or more objective traits, and to exclude or give a secondary role to subjective traits of nationality. Most of these criteria and systems are used in today's colonialist Guatemalan society.

2.1 Systems based specifically on objective criteria:

A first group of informal and colonialist systems of national identification is constituted by those based strictly and exclusively on objective criteria: racial traits, the language most commonly used, cultural traits, productive activity, surnames, etc. These identification systems operate either by resorting to a single criterion or to combinations of objective criteria.

2.1.1 *El criterio biológico-racial*

This is a formula that asserts that race, in the biological sense of the term, is the factor that delimits and determines national communities. Thus, its users take for granted that people who possess physical and somatic Indian features are indeed Indians regardless of whether or not they agree to be so. Among the physical features that are used as indicators of Indianness are: aquiline nose, straight black hair, brown or copper skin, small stature, broad body, slanted brown eyes, lack of body hair, etc.

This criterion, however, is little used by social scientists because it is very ambiguous as a phenomenon and, therefore, highly debatable as an indicator of nationality. However, as Paz y Paz R. (1968, p. 40) (3) indirectly points out, there are literary, political and diplomatic personalities who use it. Likewise, most of the State institutions do not use it openly either, except in marginal situations and for the exaltation of "Guatemalan nationalism" (national holidays, "national" folklore) and in school textbooks, etc. Thus, in some primary and secondary school textbooks, it is held that the human species is subdivided into four races: black or African, white or European, yellow or Asian, and the copper or American. According to this racial-chromatic ordering, the Ladino people would be of white race and the Maya people of copper race. It is also asserted that the Guatemalan population is made up of three racial categories: the mestizo race (numerous), the indigenous race (numerous) and the white race (minority). According to this classification, the Ladino people would be of mixed race (mestizo), while the Mayan people are of pure race.

However, the racial criteria we have already mentioned could serve as effective indicators of the nationality to which people belong, provided that the races (human sub-species) are differentiated among themselves, in an established and unmistakable way, by the external, peculiar and measurable physical appearance of each of its members. But, in fact, this clear racial differentiation no longer exists now due to the generalized and growing miscegenation of humankind. Moreover, within the human species, perhaps never existed pure and uniform races because they all come from a common stock (African man), are interbred, are in constant evolution, and present great variety in their distinctive physical traits (Vidyarthi, P.L., 1984, P. 56). (4)

In the case of the Guatemalan population, the broadening and deepening of the mestizaje caused by the Spanish invasion has meant that the initial and predominant morpho biological differences between Mayans and Castilians are now less exclusive and pronounced. Therefore, racial criteria can only serve as secondary and provisional indicators. They cannot serve as conclusive and primary indicators, nor can they operate as isolated indicators of nationality, because they would cause numerous ladinos to be classified as Mayan and vice versa: there are ladinos with the physiognomy and appearance of Indians and Indians with the physiognomy and appearance of ladinos.

The fact that some personalities and public or private institutions still use these classifications and racial criteria is due to their profound ignorance of the biological

state of the human species or to the deliberate political will to deny national rights to the Mayan people by reducing them to the condition of race.

Thus, this procedure of identification of the Indian functions as an instrument of ladino colonialist domination: a race has no rights, people have them.

2.1.2 *Ethnic or cultural characterization*

Several Guatemalan (Ladino and Mayan) and foreign authors have tried to describe and enumerate the objective peculiarities that typify the Mayan. Thus, Epaminondas Quintana, Antonio Gobaud Carrera, Sol Tax, Marcial Maxía, etc. can be mentioned. These authors based their inventory on external and perceptible traits and behaviors belonging to the current culture of certain segments of the Indian people.

Thus, according to Epaminondas Quintana, “an Indian is one who has more or less the following characteristics” (1974) (5): he is gregarious par excellence, inhabits peremptory and inflammable ranches, ignores and fears the legislation of the country; he is quiet, respectful and submissive to his superiors and to the authorities; his sexuality is moderate and apparent; he knows how to bear with resignation the discrimination, wears the distinctive regional costume, speaks a vernacular language, treats his illnesses with healers, practices two religions, etc.

The Indian is also characterized by what he is not, does not have or does not do. Thus he does not own clothes, he does not wear shoes but “caites”, his house does not have running water and sanitary services, he does not know how to communicate by means of writing.

This national identification system is, of course, tendentious and inoperative. Its main flaws are the following:

- a) Based on objective criteria or features, present and absent, which also belong to the socio-economic field and to the individual level. Its only advantage over the previous system is that it excludes biological criteria as indicators of national belonging.
- b) To take as cultural traits the effects of the political oppression and physical repression that the Indian people throughout their colonial life as cultural traits. Thus, the fact that the Indian does not know and fears the country's legislation is only the consequence of the oppressive policy that the Ladino ruling class has implemented against him so that he does not know - neither in Spanish nor in Mayan - his individual and collective rights. It is also the effect of the repression and massacres he has suffered every time he has claimed his rights. If this “cultural trait” were an effective indicator of Indianness, then the Mayas who know and claim their social and national rights would cease to be Indians.
- c) Assume that Indians speak a vernacular language. However, Mayan traders speak up to three Mayan languages, in addition to Spanish, due to their itinerant way of making a living from municipality to municipality.

According to the Quintanian typification, these polyglots could no longer be considered Mayabi. On the other hand, some Mayan professionals, due to circumstances beyond their control, do not speak their native Mayan language, but one or more imported and international languages. According to the guidelines of this typification, these Indians cannot be considered as such either.

In fact, the number of languages a Mayan speaks and the fact that he does not speak his own national language, alter little his identity and national identity and membership to the extent that he considers himself a member of the Indian people and manifests himself as such through other indicators.

- d) To give a static and stereotyped profile of the Indian and serve as a filter to discriminate those who still are from those who are not. This characterization, like the others of the same species, overlooks the fact that all cultures are dynamic, whether or not they are in contact with others. Consequently, such inventories may be valid but only for a fraction of the Indian people and for a moment in their cultural history. Indeed, even without foreign influences, the objective culture of a people is subject to continuous modifications, which do not indicate a surrender of one's own national specificity. No one can preserve national originality without modification, for every culture evolves.
- e) To neglect that some of the objective indicators of Indianness that he mentions exist more because of the extreme poverty in which the traditional Maya live, than because of authentic and current cultural patterns. It follows that (if these criteria are applied with impartiality) Some ladinos can be considered as Indians because they “do not possess clothes of remuda” and “do not possess running water or sanitary services in their houses”. They could also be classified as Indians, the ladinos who, for work and circumstantial reasons, have to wear, temporarily or permanently, the Mayan costume or costumes: employees of the Guatemalan Institute of Tourism, candidates for Miss Guatemala folkloric groups, restaurant waiters, etc.
- f) To simply ignore the existence and determining role of subjective factors in the identification of national membership. This formula ignores the fact that 'objective criteria imply only certain assumptions and possibilities of connection between members of a people', which, in order to become a reality, must first of all be subjectively actualized and lived. (Heller H., 1974, p. 174) (6). Thus, it is fundamentally for subjective reasons that the Mayan ethnic groups constitute a single nation, since its members have

only one constitute a single nation, since its members have a single representation of their people. In fact, in the current spiritual culture of the Maya, there is no Guatemalan people, but there is an “our people” (qawinaqil), etc. and a “people of foreigners” (xexa', q'eq'a, caxlan, mozo', mo'oz,). Also, it is more for subjective than objective reasons that Guatemalan society cannot be considered as a nation, because there is no such thing as a nation, because there is no spiritual community between Mayas and Ladinos. This particularity of the national consciousness of Guatemalan citizens (Mayan and Ladino) is evidence that this Republic is binational and not mononational.

In fact, a certain commonality of objective cultural traits between modernized Indians and Ladinos (clothing, food, housing, language, etc.), does not indicate or guarantee that the two form a single spiritual community because, if this were so, it would be enough to transvestite or culturally disguise the people to make them part of another nationality. Therefore, the fact that Mayas and Ladinos speak Spanish does not mean that both people are one nation and feel they belong to the same spiritual community.

These limitations of the Quintaniana characterization are also present in the other typification, not so much because of the superficiality and propensity with which they make their inventories, but by resorting exclusively to objective elements. This type of determination of national affiliation is thus inoperative, because it does not inform on the self-consciousness of the Maya, and therefore, on their effective national identity and loyalty. Nor does it report on the status of the Indians who do not fit this enumerative and verifiable profile, such as the bilingual, professional and affluent Mayans in urban areas. Finally, because of the stigmatizing and fractioning function that these typification play, it can be said that they play a negative political role for the interests of the Mayan people.

2.1.3 “Scientific” ethnic evolutionism

In Guatemala, the State, the rulers and some intellectual circles believe that colonialism between Mayas and Ladinos can be resolved by converting the former into Ladinos. To do so, their ladinización must be implemented and stimulated, which implies a passage from the worst to the best, from barbarism to civilization. It is a long-term process that we call here “scientific” ethnic evolutionism and that others call the current of acculturation.

This evolutionism asserts that there is a gradual change from Mayan into Ladino, which is observed through the changes in objective features of its

culture. These transformations are also accompanied by changes in the subjective traits, which means that there is indeed a change in the subjective traits, which means that there is effectively a change in their national self-image and self-consciousness.

At the beginning, it was the founding members of the “Seminario de Integración Social” of Guatemala who, since 1955, acted as “intellectual apostles” of this assimilationist version: Skinner Klée J., David Vela, Hugo Cerezo Dardón, etc. Today, most of these apostles of assimilation have corrected and reoriented their approaches. Thus, Skinner Klée J., at some point in his intellectual and political history, defended the thesis of the necessary ladinización of the Indian as “the only effective way to reach the creation of a Guatemalan nationality” (1959, p.p. 155-151) (7). Later in 1985 - this author recognized the failure of integration and, defended, in the National Constituent Assembly, the right to “self-determination and self-organization of indigenous groups”, (1985, p. 13). (8).

This assimilationist trend served to reinforce the State's traditional national policy, which further technified and institutionalized its programs for the ladinización of the Indian. Now, it is the same State that has proposed to eradicate the Mayan ethnic groups from its territory through the implementation of national conversion programs (Castilianization programs, bilingual and bicultural education programs, etc.), support for research and publications on supposed syncretisms and ethnic fusions achieved voluntarily (the official ladinocentric history, the official “national culture”, the adulation of ladino biological miscegenation), and the approval of ladinocentrism as a national formula: the ladinos are the incarnation and personification of the current and future “Guatemalan nation”, while the Mayas were only the “first stone” and are the “authentic but dying symbol” of it.

Demonstrations and justifications of the gradual and inevitable ladinization of the Indian people had always existed, but they had not been as official and “scientific” as from the 1950s onwards. Several “social engineers” have theorized and systematized this process, such as Richard Adams, Joaquín Novaly and Sol Tax. For the purposes of our analysis, it is sufficient for us to analyze the assertions of Adams R., the most notorious exponent of this assimilationist school.

According to this author, ladinización can take place at the level of individuals and localities (villages, municipalities, regions). He argues that it is collective transculturation, individual social mobility and the geographic diffusion of cultural traits that produce, in the end, the ladinización of the Indian. He also affirms that the process of cultural extinction of the last one takes place in stages and along a continuum that goes from the “traditional indígena” to the

“new ladino”, passing through the “modified indigena” and the “ladinized indio” (1959, pp 123-132) (9).

The first stage is that of the “traditional Indian” which is characterized, mainly in that the Indians speak the Mayan language, wear the Mayan costume, use the “temascal” or native steam bath, and use the “cacaste” to transport delicate and numerous objects, they respect the indigenous political and religious organization.

The second stage is that of the “modified Indian” in which the Indian males are bilingual (Mayan and Spanish) and no longer wear the distinctive Mayan costume, women speak and prefer their mother tongue in the home and use the Mayan costume, the social organization remains strong. At this stage, the people and localities are more transculturated than the traditional ones but are still remain Indigenous.

The third stage is that of the “Ladinized indigenous person.” Here, only elderly Mayan women wear the distinctive skirt, while adult and young women no longer wear traditional clothing but instead dress in European-style clothing. There are still survivals of the Mayan languages. In this stage, the indigenous people are still aware that they are indigenous.

The fourth stage of this evolution is that of the “new ladino,” where the indigenous person completely abandons the habitual patterns that distinguish them from the ladino and ceases to consider themselves indigenous. To move from the “Ladinized indigenous” stage to that of the “new ladino,” one or two generations are needed.

As can be seen, for Adamcist evolutionism, the process of ladinización is a long-term one and includes subjective factors such as national self-awareness. Only in the final stage does the transformation from indigenous person to ladino take place, through their self-identification as non-Maya.

However, Adams was not a radical assimilationist, since for him, integration and unity did not imply a mathematical identity between the “coexisting groups,” but rather a mutual adjustment. According to him, an integrated society does not necessarily mean uniformity, as it can be organized in such a way that its constituent “groups” preserve and develop their individuality—just as a garden fosters the growth of diverse species of flowers. However, this author developed and published little on this pluralist version of integration, and for that reason, he is better known as a scientific stronghold of ethnic assimilationism than as a promoter of pluralist thesis in this field.

On the other hand, the descriptions and theories developed by Adams regarding the objective ladinización of indigenous peoples were transformed and used as guidelines by the assimilationist ladinos of the country, as they

provided a proven formula for building “their Guatemalan nation” without Indigenous people. Today, this involuntary ideologue of indigenous ladinización has acknowledged that the rate of ladinización is declining and, therefore, that his theory is losing relevance in Guatemala (Adams R., July 27, 1988) (10).

The following observations can be made regarding his assertions about the ladinización of the indigenous person:

- a) Ethnic conversion at the subjective level can never be fully achieved, not even after two or more generations—either at the level of individuals or entire localities. A clear example is the case of San Pedro Sacatepéquez (Department of San Marcos), a municipality of Mam Indians who were stripped—even by legal decree—of their cultural distinctiveness since the past century. Today, its inhabitants still identify as Mam Indians and compete as such with their ladino neighbors from San Marcos. This national self-identification persists despite the fact that they possess few or no distinguishing features that have marked them as Maya for several generations.
- b) The renunciation of one's original ethnic identity can be temporary, meaning that the original nationality can be recovered through a process of national awareness, depending on the pressures and favorable stimuli encountered by the individual. Such is the case of some indigenous people from the eastern region of the Republic, who have been forced to suppress or blur their Maya identity, or who abandoned their original indigenous identity several generations ago. However, due to contact with and the national reaffirmation of the indigenous peoples from the northwest, they are beginning to recognize and reclaim—in their own way—their original Maya identity, and thus recover and/or generate their own objective culture. This is happening despite the fact that they no longer possess any distinguishing features that would identify them as non-ladinos.
- c) Tangible and measurable ethnic evolution can only be a temporary or transitional phenomenon, as it depends on other factors such as the State's indigenous policy, the active or passive resistance and the degree of national consciousness among the Maya themselves, internal migrations—whether massive or isolated—and the relative economic self-sufficiency of indigenous communities. These factors, as they gain or lose relevance and interact with others, cause such evolution to halt, increase, remain stable, or change its terms of realization. Thus, the tangible ladinización phenomenon that Adams observed in the 1950s and 60s now occurs at a different pace and under different conditions, and may even

have regressed, as suggested by the 1973 census (43% indigenous) compared to that of 1964 (42.20% indigenous).

Likewise, the embryonic rural education and bilingual bicultural education programs of the State, although they aim to shift indigenous people from Mayan monolingualism (considered negative) to Spanish monolingualism (considered positive) (Hamel R.E., 1984, pp. 118-120) (11), may, through their indirect and unpredictable effects, actually encourage a process of regression or stabilization in the objective ladinización process. For this reason, the enthusiasm for the tangible ladinización of indigenous peoples is weakening or is no longer accompanied by a change in national membership. Furthermore, in localities that could be classified as “modified indigenous” and “ladinized,” the ladinización process can be reversed or halted by promoting national self-esteem. This experience has not yet been attempted in Guatemala, but there are living examples from other countries that support this assertion (nationalist movements, etc.).

- d) However, the gravest mistake made by Adams was mixing two phenomena of different natures into a single process. He conflated a predominantly techno-economic phenomenon—being traditional or modernized in one aspect or another of life—with a predominantly historical-anthropological-political phenomenon—being Maya or being ladino. Thus, his process of ladinización begins with the traditional indigenous person and ends with the new ladino. This conception implies that there can only be traditional indigenous people and modernized ladinos, and that there can be no modernized indigenous people nor traditional ladinos.

This is his gravest mistake and the one most often repeated by the majority of social science practitioners in Guatemala, and consequently, the most widespread and professed.

2.1.4 *Empirical ethnic evolution*

Most ladinos, including some social science scholars, have a simplistic understanding and make a superficial application of Adamcist ethnic evolutionism. Thus, they do not take into account the self-identification of the individual and consider the indigenous person ladinizable within hours, days, or years based on the adoption of minimal ladino and European cultural traits (buttons, scarves, footwear, belts, etc.). According to them, the indigenous person becomes ladino if they abandon their traditional clothing and language, learn Spanish, dress according to European fashion, develop competitive and individualistic values, migrate, become wealthy, study, and so on. This profane and biased version of Adamcism regarding the

identification of the indigenous person's national membership is what is usually reflected in the everyday life of Guatemalan society.

The following errors can be pointed out to the supporters and practically lay practitioners of this ethnic evolutionism:

- a) Assuming the existence of a correlation or concomitant relationship between the objective and subjective factors of nationality. In fact, this correlation does not exist because national consciousness and identification are not necessarily tied to the objective traits of the specific culture that nurtures them and that they, in turn, reinforce. Just as a nation can survive the lack of political unity and independence (Hayes C.J.J., 1960, p. 7) (12), subjective elements of the nation can also endure without the objective ones.

Even the adoption of traits from another culture can be done to strengthen one's own national identity rather than to deny or weaken it, since the adopted foreign traits can be embraced as their own and, in doing so, are distinguished from those of the culture from which they originated by their different meanings. For example, Falla R. (1978, pp. 545-548) (13) noted that for the K'iche' of San Antonio Ilotenango, religious conversion was the only way, under oppressive circumstances, to rescue and reaffirm their own indigenous identity. Thus, a person or a people can modify one, several, or all of the objective traits of their culture without this meaning, for them, a change in national membership.

- b) Considering that social mobility, both vertical and horizontal, implies a change in national membership for the indigenous person. Vertical social mobility refers to upward and downward movement that causes an individual to change their situation and social position within the social hierarchy—that is, to change social strata. According to them, this change in the indigenous person's social category implies a change in their national membership. In fact, this assertion is mistaken because national identity, especially in its subjective aspects, is not tied to a social stratum or class. (Cabarrus, C.R., 1973) (14).

Horizontal social mobility is the change of occupation or place of residence. According to them, this mobility also causes a change in national membership. In fact, this change occurs almost exclusively within the realm of objective culture and only under certain conditions. The change in national indicators depends on the type of productive activity the indigenous migrant adopts or engages in, as well as the degree or type of colonialism present in their new context. For example, if their activity is that of a "self-employed" worker, this change occurs less than if they are

a dependent laborer. Likewise, if their productive activities take place in areas or sectors “reserved for indigenous people” (such as domestic work, for instance), it is also likely that little or no such change will occur.

The change of national identity, understood as a shift from self-awareness to external identification (*alloconcia*), has little or no chance of occurring because an individual cannot be indigenous in one place and ladino in another. National identity is not a fluctuating phenomenon.

- c) Applying a ladino-centric approach to the process of national metamorphosis, which causes only the indigenous person to change national affiliation, but not the ladino. Thus, they consider as ladino an indigenous person who speaks Spanish, but do not consider ladino someone who learns or speaks an indigenous language. If assimilationist ladinos were to apply this recognition system to themselves, they would inevitably discover its partiality and ineffectiveness. For instance, on one hand, a ladino who has learned North American English after spending some years in the USA cannot be identified as a “gringo”; and on the other hand, it is impossible to identify and distinguish Chileans, Uruguayans, Salvadorans, and Costa Ricans (all gathered at an international congress, for example) based solely on the objective traits of their respective cultures.
- d) Another error is neglecting that self-identification is also one of the factors involved in determining national affiliation. Nowadays, changes in the outward traits of indigenous people are more due to structural and circumstantial pressures than to freely and sovereignly made choices: negative connotations associated with openly expressed indigeneity, extreme impoverishment, the positive functionality of some adopted foreign traits, insurmountable circumstantial pressures, and so forth. Consequently, it cannot be inferred that completed changes in nationality result from forced changes in objective cultural peculiarities.

In fact, no person or people abandon their culture and language freely and voluntarily; rather, they are forced to abandon them or have them taken away through coercive and conforming methods (Calvet J.L., 1979, pp. 132-154) (15). This is the case of Maya women who, in order not to lose scholarships or to be admitted as students in educational centers or as workers in factories and workshops, are compelled and pressured to give up their traditional Maya attire. Here, colonialism practiced by educators and employers, respectively, is the cause of this forced abandonment of an objective trait of Maya culture.

- e) There is also the mistake of ignoring the phenomenon of national apprehension, which consists of a people, when its members are not alienated on the national level, adapting imported and borrowed cultural elements to their own peculiarities. Over time, a nation assimilates cultural elements from other nations, but it does so by adapting them to its national character. Therefore, cultural similarity or standardization does not necessarily mean the elimination of national specificity or the uniformity of national consciousness. This is the case with the Maya *cofradías* in Guatemala, which have Hispanic origins but, from the beginning, bore no resemblance to their Castilian counterparts. In fact, even if two cultural elements are objectively common and identical to two peoples, this does not imply that they have the same meaning and function for both.

2.1.5 *Socioeconomic criteria.*

Economists are the ones who most frequently resort to this formula of national identification. This formula takes into account the type of productive activity, the relationship with the means of production, the level of income, place of residence, social class, social marginalization or integration, etc., as criteria for determining the national affiliation of the Indigenous person.

Thus, for some anthropologists like Mishkin, B. (1960, pp. 159–220), an Indian is a person who belongs to the "rural proletariat" or the "peasantry." To identify them, it is enough to consider their productive activity (agriculture) and place of residence (the countryside). For other authors such as Vellard, J. (1953, p. 42), an Indian is a person who belongs to the lowest class of society (peasants, monolingual Indigenous people, illiterate individuals, etc.), and even includes anyone from the lower class of the non-Indigenous group (bilingual individuals with limited primary education, workers in unskilled or informal occupational sectors, etc.).

The following errors can be pointed out in these economic systems of defining the Indian:

- a) Considering that every peasant and agricultural laborer is, by definition, Indigenous, and therefore overlooking the fact that there are also small landowners and agricultural workers who are *ladinos*, referred to in Guatemala as "*ladinos de monte*" and "*poor ladinos*".
- b) And assuming that an Indigenous person changes their national affiliation simply by migrating to urban or semi-urban areas or by engaging in non-agricultural productive activities such as craftsmanship, commerce, the liberal professions, etc.

In fact, a person's national identity does not depend on, nor is it tied to, their geographic location or place of residence, nor to the type of productive activity they engage in. If there were a correlation between these variables, it would imply that Indigenous people, in order to maintain their affiliation with the Maya people, could not cease being agricultural laborers or small landowners, nor could they leave the countryside.

In Guatemala, there are also social scientists who have used these criteria to identify and define the Indigenous person. Thus, at a certain point in his intellectual and political career, Villagrán Kramer, F. (1979, p. 256) (18), asserted that the criteria for determining the percentage of Indigenous people in the country are not truly ethnic in nature but fundamentally socioeconomic: "There is no Indigenous problem as a racial issue; it is a socioeconomic problem, and as such, it should be addressed." Later on, this same author acknowledged the political, cultural, and spiritual differences between the Maya and ladino peoples, as he referred to the existence of "many Indigenous nations" during his campaign as vice-presidential candidate for the Frente Amplio (Iximché, February 18, 1978) (19). On that occasion, he stated that the Indigenous nations "must integrate," together with the ladinos, to form a single nationality, an assertion that reveals his assimilationist thinking (either ladinizing the Indigenous or indigenizing the ladinos), or alternatively, a syncretic view (that ladinos and Indigenous peoples should form a new, synthesized ethnicity).

The following errors can be pointed out in Villagrán's initial assertions:

- a) Denying the existence of the ethnic reality and issue in Guatemala is a widespread error among social science practitioners in the country, committed either out of ignorance or from a colonialist mindset. In both cases, the logic follows this pattern: the ethnic issue (cultural differences) is reduced or obscured by framing it as a racial or biological matter (white race, copper-colored race). Then, the principle of non-racial discrimination is used as a pretext to conclude that there are, and should be, no cultural or racial differences between Indigenous peoples and ladinos. For those who advocate for change, this leads to the belief that only socioeconomic differences exist between the two groups, differences that, evidently, must be eliminated.

Due to the underdevelopment of Guatemalan social sciences in the field of racial and national phenomena, and the fact that these topics are taboo for the majority of ladinos, there are numerous professionals who either do not distinguish between racial and ethnic realities or fail to acknowledge their existence altogether.

- b) Taking social position and status as indicators of national membership for Indigenous people and ladinos. Presumably, the Indigenous person would be from the lower class, and the ladino from the middle or upper class.

Thus, if this system of national recognition were correct, several ladinos who wander the streets of the cities as unemployed and marginalized individuals would have to be considered Indigenous, and members of the ladino proletariat and lumpenproletariat, whether rural or urban, would have to be classified as Indigenous against their will. Conversely, Maya professionals, legislators, and small business owners from the "middle class" would have to be considered ladinos, regardless of their self-identification and national loyalty.

This system of identifying and defining the Indigenous person leads to the consequence that, in Guatemala, in order to preserve their respective national identities, both Maya and ladinos cannot change their current social status or position. If they do, they must resign themselves to the inevitable change in ethnic membership that such a shift implies.

For his part, Martínez Peláez S. (1977, pp. 24–25) (20), goes even further in relying on socioeconomic criteria by asserting that, at present, the Indian is a remnant of the feudal mode of production, since it was the colonial system that created them. Today's Indigenous people are individuals who retain the cultural traits of colonial serfs, but are doomed to disappear as a culture (though not as a race), given that the feudal mode of production is no longer in effect and has been replaced by capitalism, a system that only recognizes proletarians and bourgeoisie as its main actors.

Some errors can be pointed out in Martínez's assertions, like:

- a) Limiting oneself to recognizing the existence of social realities (productive activities, social classes, modes of production) and racial realities (predominant biological subdivisions of the human species), but not acknowledging the existence of ethnic groups, nations, and peoples. In fact, from the perspective of non-colonialist dialectical materialism, the nation is a spiritual, cultural, and political phenomenon "not reducible to the economic or ideological," whose concrete form is the independent nation-state (Lowy, Michael, 1983, pp. 94–98) (21). One of the main forms of national oppression is the denial of a people's right to political independence—an oppression that Martínez implicitly enacts by denying the existence of the Indigenous people, the reproduction of their culture, and so on.

- b) Holding an evolutionist view of social change also entails an evolutionist perspective on ethnicity. Social evolutionism maintains that societies move linearly from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to socialism (Barre, Marie Ch. 1982, pp. 557–65) (22). This framework implies and demands a transformation of the Indigenous person, who must abandon their culture in order to join the ladino wage laborer in the class struggle. The necessary proletarianization and peasantization of the Indigenous person therefore requires, in practice, their ladinización, thus reproducing colonialism between Indigenous people and ladinos within the wage-earning class itself, and reinforcing ladino-centrism and national intolerance.
- c) Defining the Indigenous person solely by their typical objective culture and completely subordinating the formation and existence of that culture to one of the economic systems experienced by Guatemalan society (the feudal mode of production). As a result, this perspective anticipates the inevitable disappearance of that culture, since the Indigenous person becomes a wage laborer under the current capitalist mode of production. This type of analysis prevents the recognition of the existence of the Maya people across all social classes and modes of production. It also fails to assert that the ladino proletariat must recognize the Maya people's right to self-determination as a **Sine qua non** condition for any genuine alliance with the Indigenous proletariat.

Perhaps Martínez's principal error was ignoring the entire tradition that dialectical materialism has in the analysis and treatment of the national question. This oversight led him to make even more serious mistakes than those committed nearly a century ago by Rosa Luxemburg in relation to this issue.

2.1.6 *Linguistic criteria*

This form of identifying national membership is based exclusively on the **linguistic criteria**. For its proponents, an Indigenous person is someone whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language, and for whom Spanish, if they manage to speak it, is a foreign language. In this language, they cannot fully express their thoughts and use it only outside their familial, local, or regional universe (Favre, H., 1963, p. 455). (23) The Amerindian language is therefore considered the vehicle of a specific cultural and religious heritage, which clearly distinguishes its speakers from non-Indigenous or Spanish-speaking individuals.

This criterion is well known and used in Guatemala, as the 1964, 1971, and 1981 censuses employed it as a peripheral or additional criterion to determine the national affiliation of Indigenous people. In these censuses, the decisive and primary criterion was always the “social estimation” held of the Indigenous person within their locality, while additional criteria included usually speaking a Maya language and wearing Indigenous clothing and footwear. However, in practice, the census takers made the linguistic criterion the determining factor, since simply speaking Spanish was enough to register the person as ladino. This approach was likely due to the fact that this criterion allowed for quick identification and, therefore, saved work, as it spared them from having to find out what the neighbors thought about the national status of each individual. Consequently, the percentage of Indigenous people reported by these censuses is far from reflecting reality.

This formula faces several difficulties that make it ineffective for identifying and defining the Indigenous person. Among these difficulties are:

- a) Determining the extent to which an Indigenous person has lost their Maya language.
- b) Determining whether such loss is real or fictitious, voluntary or forced, temporary or permanent.
- c) Determining whether the loss of the Maya language also implies the loss of the corresponding Maya membership.
- d) Determining the effective national membership of the bilingual or multilingual Indigenous person.

In fact, to be Indigenous, it is not absolutely necessary to speak a Maya language, and conversely, one is not Maya simply because they speak an Amerindian language. Thus, most Indigenous people born in the capital city identify as such but have no opportunity to learn or practice their mother tongue or national language, since their parents, to help them survive in life, did not teach or raise them in that language but in the colonial language. Likewise, in Indigenous regions, there are landowners, facilitators, and merchants from the ladino community who, in order to advance their businesses and enterprises, speak the regional Maya language. Guatemalan citizens also recall former president General Romeo Lucas García, who spoke the Maya Q’eqchi’ language fluently and self-identified as a “Maya Indian.”

2.1.7 Last names criteria

The criterion of surnames as an indicator of national membership is rarely used and valued by scientists and census takers. It consists of identifying a person as

Indigenous if they have Maya surnames. However, it is a poorly functional criterion when used in isolation and as a conclusive indicator for the following reasons:

- a) Maya surnames are only partial and initial indicators of Indigenous nationality, as their occurrence tends to be more accidental than systematic due to the current Hispanic system of patronymic surname inheritance. This system even results in some ladinos having authentic or assimilated Maya surnames.
- b) The possession of Spanish surnames by Indigenous people is also due to the forced changes of names and surnames they have undergone throughout the five centuries of colonialism they have suffered. These forced changes consisted of the obligation for Indigenous people to adopt Spanish names or surnames upon baptism and upon becoming slaves and serfs. Therefore, their possession is not voluntary.
- c) Today, the substitution of Indigenous surnames with Spanish ones, as well as the Hispanicization of Maya or supposedly Maya surnames (Toje, Tzoquique, Yantuche, Parr, etc.) by the Maya people themselves, is carried out after the alienation of their national consciousness and through the corresponding payment in municipal courts and civil registries.

Notwithstanding the above, this criterion can serve as a peripheral indicator as long as it is kept in mind that there is a minority of ladinos with Maya surnames and a relative majority of Indigenous people with Spanish surnames or Spanish first names functioning as surnames.

2.2 Systems based on unequal combinations of objective and subjective criteria.

A second group of unofficial systems for identifying the Indigenous person consists of those based on combinations of objective and subjective criteria. Some of these systems take into account the subjective criterion of self-identification but mix it with racial and national prejudices, personal intuitions, and assign it a secondary and incidental role in determining the national affiliation of the Maya.

2.2.1 Ethnic prospecting

This is the most empirical and common miscellaneous identification system known. It consists of determining a person's national membership (an Indigenous person in our case) based on the impression one has of them. This impression is based on skin color, facial profile, height, the language they speak, the manner in which they speak that language, the clothing they wear, the quality of that clothing, their manners, the presence or absence of a Mongolian spot in the upper intergluteal region, the type of dwelling where the identifier encounters them, and so on. Also

included here are the so-called "cultural" criteria, such as the placement of the cooking fire on the ground, the type and arrangement of furniture in the home, the type of internal subdivisions within the house, etc.

This is the method used in some public administration offices (hospitals...), municipalities (Civil Registry), churches (Baptism Certificates), universities (beneficiary control records of social programs), and even the former General Directorate of Statistics. The accuracy or distortion of the national identification carried out through this procedure and recorded in these agencies does not have major consequences in the legal life of the Indigenous person, since it usually appears on their official adult documents (ID card, passport, etc.). However, it is the criteria used and the manner in which this identification is performed that are questioned here.

- a) It is an informal system since it relies on non-national criteria present both in the person being registered (racial, social, educational) and in the registrar (mood, prejudices, experiences, etc.) or as judged by the latter.
- b) It is an arbitrary system because its application depends on the tact, prejudices, experiences, predispositions, and pressures that the Indigenous identifier may have at the moment of recognition. Thus, there may be officials in these offices who, either to "do a favor" for the Indigenous head of the family or to "stay on good terms" with the ladino baptismal godfather, do not register the newborn Indigenous child as such, but rather as ladino.
- c) It is a ladino-centric system of national identification, since the "identifier," regardless of their own national identity, primarily operates based on ladino prejudices and unilaterally decides, one way or another, the national status of their subjects.

This miscellaneous system is closely related to empirical ethnic evolutionism: both prioritize being routine systems for recognizing national affiliation and are used by the majority of Guatemalan citizens.

2.2.2 The system of the prevalence of objective factors over subjective ones:

Alfonso Caso (1948, pp. 275-280) (24) is the proponent of this formula, to define and identify the Indigenous person, according to him, it is necessary to take into account four criteria:

1. Having predominantly non-European physical features (biological criterion).

2. Using distinctly Indigenous objects and techniques, or others of European origin that are outdated or out of fashion for the European population (cultural criterion).
3. Speaking and understanding an Indigenous language (the most important objective criterion).
4. Demonstrating being and feeling a member of an Indigenous community (subjective and psychological criterion).

Among these criteria, the most important is the last one, that is, the awareness of belonging to an indigenous community and perceiving oneself as indigenous. However, this ethnic consciousness "cannot exist" except on the condition of fully accepting the group's culture, meaning having and practicing its ethnic, aesthetic, social, and political ideals; participating in its collective dislikes and sympathies; and collaborating in its actions and reactions. Consequently, a person or group that lacks extensive political and cultural practice and physical traits that typify them as indigenous cannot be considered as such, even if they declare belonging to that community and see themselves as a member of it.

For this author, the important thing is to define the indigenous person as a member of a locality or community, not as a whole people or nation. Therefore, an indigenous person is someone who feels they belong to an indigenous community, and that community must be objectively indigenous based on its cultural and linguistic traits. According to this formula, as these objective and collective traits disappear, so too will the indigenous people disappear.

As we can see, in this system both objective and subjective criteria are taken into account, but the latter are subordinated to the former, just as the individual is subordinated to the collective. The qualifier of national membership is always a third party and not the indigenous person themselves. The main objections to this system are:

- a) To subordinate the definition of the indigenous person to the requirements of the state's indigenist policy leads to a definition aligned with official ethnic assimilation, and therefore to an erroneous definition. In fact, it is neither individual isolation nor the change of objective culture that causes people to change their national identity. For example, a ladino can live in a different social environment as an economic or political refugee and still consider himself ladino both to himself and to others. Otherwise, simply changing the social environment or deportations would be enough for people to change their national identity and loyalty.

- b) To confine the status of being indigenous to a rural locality with its respective localist identity. According to this formula, there cannot be indigenous people outside their village and municipality of origin, much less indigenous migrants in non-indigenous urban centers, either within or outside the current state areas. There cannot be Mayas studying at European or Asian universities, or working as "wetbacks" in North America. The indigenous national fact is tied to the geographic fact, according to this author.
- c) To subordinate subjective criteria to the objective criteria of nationality, instead of making them more or less independent or giving greater validity to the identificatory capacity of the former. Indeed, for reasons of survival and self-defense, the natives of dominated nations are forced to learn and speak well the colonial language, but that does not mean, for them, a renunciation of their nationality of belonging. It is possible, therefore, to have as the language of greater use and competence a language that is not that of the national community of belonging and identification. This is the case for the majority of indigenous professionals who have completed higher education in a language that is not their own, and for some indigenous workers as well.
- d) Taking for granted the disappearance of the indigenous peoples in a manner correlated to the disappearance of the local objective traits that identify them as such. This author seems to base his assertion on the effectiveness of ethnic assimilation, but nowadays, this belief is questioned—not so much because of the change in the State's indigenist policy, but due to the recognition of the volatile nature of the ethnic fact and the growing self-affirmation of the indigenous peoples themselves. Thus, today there is increasing consensus among social scientists to recognize that the national fact has both an objective and a subjective dimension (Stavenhagen R., September 3, 1985), and that the latter has relative autonomy with respect to the social-geographical environment and objective culture.
- e) Considering biological traits as criteria for national identity when, in fact, they can only serve as anticipatory and probable indicators. Furthermore, the social class stratification of society and the increasing biological mestizaje (mixing) reduce the scope of the racial criterion (Favre H., 1963, p. 454).

2.2.3 The system of eventual self-identification preceded by systematic alter-identification.

This is the main system used by the former Dirección General de Estadística (General Directorate of Statistics) to determine the national identity of the person being surveyed. Gobaud Carrera A. (1943) (25) provided elements to construct this identification formula, which takes into account the following factors:

- a) The local awareness of what is indigenous.
- b) The social estimation of the censused person's ethnic belonging.
- c) The objective criteria used in each place or municipality.
- d) The eventual self-identification of the individual.

The reason for giving key importance to the municipal variations of nationality criteria is that there is no fixed criterion in time and space for identifying the indigenous person, and the common criteria do not hold the same order of priority in all localities.

Census takers were advised that, to consider a person as indigenous or ladino, they should rely on the social estimation held of that person in the census locality. Additionally, when dealing with servants, they were instructed to consult their employers about the servants' national identity. Only if doubts about the person's identity persisted were they to consult the individual themselves. This last-minute consultation with the censused person was because questioning them on this topic was considered bothersome, so their national status was determined based on allo-identification and only as a last resort on self-identification.

They were also explicitly advised to consider and record Afro-Guatemalans and Chinese or Asians as ladinos by default (Guerra Borges A., 1981, pp. 322–324) (26), and implicitly, the self-identified criollos of today as well.

Among the errors that can be pointed out in this form of national identification are:

Determining national affiliation primarily through extra-individual criteria that vary from one place to another. This formula may be operative in small localities where all the inhabitants know each other, but not in urban contexts with high population density, where mutual acquaintance is weak or nonexistent. Nor does it work for immigrants residing in each locality.

- a) Determining national affiliation primarily through extra-individual criteria that vary from one place to another. This formula may be operative in small localities where all the inhabitants know each other, but not in urban contexts with high population density, where mutual familiarity is weak or nonexistent. It also does not work for immigrants residing in each locality.

- b) Additionally, it presupposes that there is a homogeneity of criteria for determining or identifying national membership within each locality, when in reality, there may be cases in which a person is considered indigenous by the ladinos and ladino by the indigenous themselves. Everything depends on the criteria employed by each of these coexisting communities in each locality, or by the various sectors within them.
- c) To classify and register Chinese and Afro-Guatemalans as ladinos by default violates their right to self-identification and raises issues regarding the internal homogeneity and identification of the so-called 'Ladino nation.' Indeed, this approach introduces cultural and linguistic differences into the composition of that group and denies differences in national consciousness. Afro-Guatemalans speak a specific language (Arawakan) and possess distinctive cultural traits; the same is true for Taiwanese people, who speak Cantonese and actively preserve their original culture. The question that remains is whether individuals who do not consider themselves members of the ladino community can truly be regarded as members of the 'Ladino nation'.

2.2.4 *The system of situational relational identification.*

Méndez Rodríguez A. (1972, pp. 337–353) (27) is the one who puts forward this formula of definition and identification: the Indian is defined as an element within a relationship, and therefore is defined in function of that relationship or of its counter-term within it, and not in isolation. Thus, in Guatemalan society, there are different meanings of the term Indian, depending on the interests of the users and the circumstances of its usage: Indian is the “non-Ladino,” but it is also the ugly, black, and pimply; or the backward and ignorant; or the “national hero” who fought against the Spanish invaders, etc. And its counter-term in the relationship is the Ladino or “non-Indian,” but also the handsome, white, and curly-haired; or the modernized and sophisticated; or the “Spanish invader” and his descendants, etc.

According to this author, the variation in the meaning of the term Indian indicates that a substantive definition of the Indian cannot be given, because it is not a stable reality; anyone can be and not be Indian depending on the circumstances. Indeed, in some cases, Indians are all Guatemalans (when Ladinos present themselves as Indians before outsiders), while in other cases, they are those from whom the speaker wishes to distinguish themselves, such as those who live differently, those who are the target of someone's anger, the "underdeveloped and backward," the "peasants," or members of the "lower class," etc.

For this reason, the term *Indio* is a classificatory instrument with multiple uses, as it is employed to exclude oneself from groups one wishes to oppose or to include oneself in groups one wishes to belong to and defend. This diversified and circumstantial use means that the same Indian (in the national sense of the term) can be considered as such due to their biological traits or because of certain faults or mistakes they may make or express. However, they may also be considered non-Indian for being a university graduate or for not wearing traditional Indigenous clothing such as the *corte maya*. The same applies to the *Ladino*, who in some cases may be considered Indian and in others not.

This type of national definition and identification is ineffective due to the following errors:

- a) For failing to differentiate the pejorative meaning that the colonial ladino gives to the term "indio" from the national and general meaning given by any dictionary: "indio is the name given to the first inhabitants of America and their direct current descendants." Indeed, the fact that some ladinos use the term in a derogatory sense to name situations, acts, and states considered negative and undesirable, or take it as synonymous with terms of negative meaning (imbecile, stubborn, backward, etc.), is only indicative of their own prejudices against the indigenous people. Its use as a value judgment is a semantic deviation caused by ladino racism and chauvinism.

Certainly, there are Mayas who also give this term that usage, but they do so after having internalized that colonialist meaning, that is, after having alienated their national consciousness, replacing their self-awareness with awareness.

- b) For giving importance to the opportunistic use that some ladinos make of the term "indio," especially when they are in front of strangers and in European countries, to defend a supposed "we the indios." The defense of these ladinos of a supposed "we the indios" before foreigners is due more to their opportunism and national ambivalence than to their self-identification as indios. It is also due to the false idea they have of possessing something Indian because they have Indian biological roots, when in fact, their biological condition, like that of any member of the human species, is independent of their national identity. In this case, they have the impression of defending the indigenous part of their being and ancestry.

Moreover, national identity is not a fluctuating phenomenon: one cannot be indigenous for a while or in a specific place, and ladino at another time and place. It is clear that a citizen may lie about their true national status, but by doing so, they are aware of the lie they are declaring and the farce they are performing. Consequently, one either is or is not ladino, but one cannot be

ladino in Guatemala and indigenous in Europe, or alternately indigenous and ladino in various places.

- c) By generalizing the rare or exceptional occasions when the ladino himself self-identifies as indigenous. It is known that in Europe some ladinos (and Latin Americans in general) pass themselves off as indigenous due to the positive valuation given to the national identity of the American indigenous people in those countries. However, in their respective countries of origin, these ladinos do not get into "violent altercations" to defend the indigenous people or to command respect as indigenous among their family members and fellow nationals.
- d) For taking seriously the abnormal situations in which some ladinos declare themselves to be indigenous, such as when under the influence of alcohol ("I am more Indian than any little Indian"). These confessions may serve to relieve the speaker of feelings of guilt or to express a lyrical solidarity with the indigenous people as a form of compensation for injustices committed against them. These "confessions," made under abnormal circumstances, also serve the same functions as literary works by ladino authors on indigenous themes: providing imaginary excuses and palliatives to the colonialism suffered by the indigenous people.
- e) Finally, it can be pointed out that the author of this system of identifying an indigenous person fails to explain the derogatory, opportunistic, and occasional use of the concept of "indio" by the ladino. In fact, as Alejandro Deustua (1941) (28) notes, the "mestizo" attributes to the indigenous person the violent and irrational actions he himself commits, and therefore calls them by the expression "the Indian came out" ("le salió lo indio", "se me salió lo indio"). In other words, this pejorative and circumstantial use of the term "indio" is due to the fact that, out of ignorance or necessity, racism or chauvinism, some ladinos attribute the origin of all their faults to their indigenous biological roots, and consequently label as "indio" everything bad that their neighbor or they themselves do or say.

The relational and situational formula for identifying an indigenous person is the contemporary colonialist formula currently used in middle- and lower-class ladino social circles, who are concerned with distancing themselves as much as possible from the Maya. The closer the social proximity to the indigenous person, the greater the need for racism as a means of national hierarchy. Hence, being indigenous is associated with backwardness, ignorance, and inappropriateness, while being ladino is linked to progress, intelligence, and suitability.

3. Discussion of results

The review of colonialist criteria and systems for national identification and definition presented here is not exhaustive, as there are others that are less used and less known. The bibliography reviewed here is also not exhaustive, since there are studies on this topic that we were unable to access. For example, Friedlander J. (1979, p. 22) (29) mentions an excellent summary on the problem of identifying the indigenous population by Marino Flores A. ("Indian population and its identification"), which we were unable to access and discuss.

Despite the aforementioned shortcomings, we believe that the important aspect of this review of criteria and formulas or systems for determining the nationality of indigenous people is to demonstrate the following:

- a) The State, controlled by colonialist sectors of the dominant ethnic group, reflects and enforces assimilationist legislation in the area of assigning nationality to indigenous people.
- b) All systems of national recognition share a common denominator: they rely exclusively, primarily, or predominantly on objective factors of nationality and therefore blatantly disregard or ignore the subjective dimension of the ethnic fact, which is decisive in its formation. This partiality is what makes these formulas fundamentally inoperative for anti-colonialists but very functional for the assimilationist goals of the colonialists.
- c) Most identification formulas at the ethnic level belong to the category of allo-identification, meaning that the recognition of being indigenous is always made without the intervention or consent of the individual themselves. This predominant form of identifying the indigenous person reveals the continued relevance, in Guatemala, of two of the Rights of War: the right to identify and classify members of the conquered and colonized people. This exercise of both Rights of War is also manifested against the humanity of immigrants (the Afro-Guatemalan and Taiwanese communities), whose members are officially considered ladinos by default.
- d) There is a quantitative disproportion between the abundant number of formulas or systems devised to identify and classify the indigenous person and the almost total absence of systems or criteria to identify and catalog the ladino or non-indigenous person. This quantitative contrast reveals the official and unofficial persistence of national assimilation and ethnocide being carried out against the indigenous people. Indeed, it indicates that what has mattered so far is establishing the threshold for the disappearance of the indigenous person as a member of a historically constituted people, rather than establishing the modalities of their subjective survival (despite changes in their objective national traits), the modes of their ethnic reproduction, the different ways of being objectively indigenous, and the resignifications they make in the cultural "borrowings" they are forced to undertake.

- e) Colonialist systems for defining the indigenous person exist both in theoretical currents considered right-wing (racism, culturalism, etc.) and in those considered left-wing (economic determinism and others). Colonialism and assimilation can indeed occur in both capitalist and socialist systems; therefore, it is not surprising to find colonialist criteria and formulas for identifying the indigenous person within the doctrinal approaches of both categories of economic systems.

Due to their total or partial ineffectiveness, it is evident that these identification systems must be completed, modified, or replaced in order to achieve greater precision in identifying the national membership of indigenous people and to ensure greater respect for the human rights of indigenous peoples. Stavenhagen R. (September 3, 1985) asserts that identification criteria are important because that is where problems related to the respect or violation of human rights begin. He also states that, until now, very often it is the public administration that — by some obscure decree invented by some low-level official in some hidden office within a department of the State — decides who and how many indigenous people there are, without any scientific or political criteria.

For Guatemala, it is urgent to review these formulas, both due to the necessary enforcement of the national rights of the Maya people and to avoid the negative effects they have on the life and character of the two peoples that compose the country.

We will develop here only three of the negative effects caused by the continued use of these formulas: the inaccuracy of statistical data regarding nationality, the real and potential disloyalty of the Maya towards the interests of the Guatemalan State, and the fictitious image of cohesion of the ladino people, and consequently, of the "Guatemalan nation."

- a) In terms of statistics on the demographic density of the Guatemalan peoples, it is necessary to know with certainty the number of Maya and Ladinos in the republic. The lack of an operational formula accepted as valid by both census takers and the censused means that the former apply the official formula (occasional self-identification preceded and subject to systematic allo-identification) according to their impressions, personal criteria, moods, momentary pressures, or in the most economical way possible. Today, no one knows with certainty the demographic density of the Maya and Ladino nations nor their respective demographic evolutions. As a result, it is believed that among the total population of Guatemalans, between 42% and 87% are indigenous. This exaggerated margin of percentage fluctuation is due to the unreliability of official statistics;

therefore, each interested party, whether personal or institutional, ventures to estimate, through projections, the possible or approximate percentage.

The accuracy in determining the percentage of Mayas and Ladinos poses, of course, problems both at the level of the conception of Guatemalan society and at the level of the actual execution of the censuses. In effect, until now, and according to the prevailing assimilationist framework, efforts have been made to minimize the number of indigenous people and to demonstrate that this population is in decline. They have been minimized by reducing the counts to the "practicing" (or "traditional") indigenous people; and their demographic decline has been shown based on the disappearance of the objective criteria of indigeneity.

In addition to the previous ethnophagic procedures, there is now a movement of ideas that argues that no divisions should be made between indigenous people and Ladinos in order to "not further divide Guatemala." We believe that this "ostrich in danger" solution resolves nothing because, in the national reality, there will always be indigenous people and Ladinos. On the contrary, these solutions increase the gap and contradiction between what official laws and institutions say and do, and the anthropological, political, and spiritual reality of the peoples they are supposed to represent and serve. Furthermore, it is a solution that further conceals the national composition of each zone, canton, village, locality, or region within the Guatemalan state space, and therefore obstructs the implementation of policies recognizing indigenous rights in the educational and administrative fields.

- b) At the level of citizens' identification with the interests of the Republic, it is necessary to stop assuming that there is a correlation between national uniformity and republican unity and loyalty. On the contrary, the spiritual unity of a binational or multinational state is better guaranteed by the official recognition of national multiplicity and the consequent realization of the principle of equal rights for all the nations that compose it.

On the other hand, loyalty cannot be demanded from the natives of a people who are the object of persecution and eradication. In fact, no State can expect loyalty and fidelity from the natives of a nation that it itself denies, oppresses, and exterminates. It may attempt to do so, but only through force, repression, and the conditioning of consciences. Thus, it is a contradiction to expect patriotism, sacrifice, or even suicide from indigenous recruits because they serve in the military for a ruling class of a nation that is not their own and does not defend their national interests. It is contradictory to expect the Mayas to "love Guatemala" out of

obligation and discipline when there are no reasons for it. Therefore, for now, there are no real mechanisms that make them identify with and find fulfillment in that entity.

Moreover, it is absurd to conceive of and expect "love of the homeland" as the result of an act of will, faith, or a conscious decision. Love of the homeland is a feeling that develops spontaneously and naturally through the socializing institutions of citizens and as an effect of the quality of life and treatment that citizens and peoples receive. Nowadays, Maya parents instill rejection, distrust, and fear of the Ladino homeland in their children, rather than trust and identification. These considerations thus show that the courses and activities intended to instill "Guatemalan civic pride" among the Mayas are demagogic and ineffective because they run counter to their colonial and everyday social reality.

- c) At the level of Ladino national identity, the persistence of colonialist formulas for identifying the indigenous person produces national illusions. Indeed, it gives the impression that this community is growing increasingly in membership and cohesion, thanks to the supposed national conversion of indigenous people into Ladinos, and that the "Guatemalan nation," personified by it, is crystallizing and unifying through the visible disappearance of indigenous peoples. It also allows the belief that the Ladino community is the people in whom the harmonious and balanced fusion of indigenous tradition and Hispanic contribution occurs—that is, the fusion of American indigeneity and Spanish exoticism.

In fact, the Ladino people are only one of the two Guatemalan peoples, except that now their ruling class controls the State. This monopoly allows them to use all the power of the State to oppress and destroy the Maya people.

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