

# Music and Identity in Paraguay: Expressing National, Racial and Class Identity in Guitar Music Culture

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**Abstract** This article illustrates, with particular focus on Rolando Chaparro's rock fusion album *Bohemio* (2011), the way in which music operates in expressing Paraguayan national, racial and class identity. It first reviews the literature on music and identity generally, as well as more specifically in relation to Paraguay. It then explores expressions of nationalism and *paraguayidad* (Paraguayanness) in folkloric 'popular' musics (*música popular*) and the concept of *raza guaraní* (a widespread belief in a common ancestry based on Spanish and Guaraní ethnic identity) in the construction, maintenance and expression of identity. Finally, it examines the Agustín Barrios revivals in Paraguay and people's class consciousness as it is expressed in Paraguayan guitar music culture.

## Introduction

In current Paraguay, certain traditional and folkloric 'popular' musical styles (*música popular*), such as the Paraguayan *polca* and the *guarania*,<sup>1</sup> as well as two 'iconic' instruments, the guitar and the harp, evoke and reflect Paraguayan identity, often referred to as *paraguayidad* (Paraguayanness). *Paraguayidad* is closely interlinked with

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Alfredo Colman for clarifying that 'folkloric' usually refers in the context of Paraguayan music to composed music based on the folk rhythms and typical harmonic progressions of the *polca* and the *guarania*, even when a specific composer and (where there are lyrics) a specific author are involved. Personal communication, 21 May 2020.

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nationalism following the proclamation of independence from Spain in 1811 and the subsequent nation-building projects of the various Paraguayan governments during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During my fieldwork experience in Paraguay and throughout my past and current interactions with Paraguayans, I found that *paraguayidad* shapes people's consciousness in their everyday lives and provides many Paraguayans with an imagined shared sense of community and belonging, memory and heritage. This is not surprising, since *paraguayidad* was actively constructed and reinforced through the state's creation and promotion of local 'popular' traditions, including religious festivities, folk music, folk dances, crafts and food, which still today represent and evoke tangible elements of national identity. Moreover, nationalism continues to dominate the historiography which has, for at least the past century, narrated and constructed the myth of Paraguayan *desconocimiento* (unknownness),<sup>2</sup> and Paraguayan linguistic, cultural, geographical and historical *excepcionalidad* (exceptionalism).<sup>3</sup> Continued Paraguayan nationalism combined with the belief in Paraguayan exceptionalism and the notion of Paraguay's 'exoticness' and disconnection from the region more broadly continue to dominate the regional historiography and social science literature.

To most Paraguayans, certain musical genres, instruments and musical characteristics reflect Paraguayan national identity most directly: the *polca paraguaya* and the *guaranía*; the diatonic harp in performances of Paraguayan traditional and popular (folkloric) music (known as *música popular*); the use of the Paraguayan polka rhythm in 6/8 (*ritmo paraguayo*); the combination of harp and guitar; and the use of Guaraní and Jopará (a mixture of Spanish and Guaraní) lyrics. All these musical genres, instruments and characteristics embed a series of aural signifiers through which many Paraguayans today articulate a shared sense of identity as inherently linked to the nation of Paraguay. Besides the continuation of local 'popular' traditions in contemporary Paraguay and their constructed significance for expressing *paraguayidad*, I found through interviews and interaction with local performers that other musical styles and instruments too, including classical and rock music along with the guitar, are platforms for the articulation of national distinctiveness. Moreover, some rock music is used to reflect a certain political stance in opposition to mainstream societal values, while classical art music serves as a symbol of taste and for particular social groups to distinguish themselves from other, lower-status social groups. In other words, music reflects the hierarchical divisions of society, or its patterns of social stratification. Music reflects and

<sup>2</sup> That Paraguay is relatively unfamiliar to both Westerners and Latin Americans is reflected, for example, in tourism figures, and in the fact that there exists only one English-language tourist guide: Margaret Hebblethwaite, *Paraguay: The Bradt Travel Guide* (Chalfont St Peter: Bradt Travel Guides, 2010). A recent documentary made by Wojciech Ganczarek explores the idea of Paraguay's 'unknownness' within Latin America: *I Am a Paraguayan* (2019), <<https://youtu.be/9akqSuwSozY>> (accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Bridget María Chesterton, 'Paraguay as Borderland: Guaraní Territory? The Paraguay Guazú? The Southern Cone? Food for Thought', *Paraguayacademics*, 2 August 2018, <<https://paraguayacademics.wordpress.com/2018/08/02/paraguay-as-borderland-guarani-territory-the-paraguay-guazu-the-southern-cone-food-for-thought/>> (accessed 29 February 2020).

shapes the structural conditions that underpin social relationships in Paraguay today, and is an important signifier of class-based ‘imagined community’ at local, translocal and affective levels.<sup>4</sup>

Paraguayan identity is thus more encompassing than *paraguayidad*, and the purpose of this article is to illustrate the way in which music operates in creating, constructing, articulating, negotiating and reflecting Paraguayan identity as it is informed by nationalism and by racial and class-based beliefs and perspectives. Illuminating the ways in which Paraguayan identity is expressed in and through music, I take contemporary guitar music recordings that commemorate the work of Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885–1944) as a starting point in order to explore Paraguayan national, racial and class identity, specifically within the context of guitar music culture, spanning genres and styles from traditional and folkloric to art and popular music. Specifically, Rolando Chaparro’s rock fusion album *Bohemio* (2011), which contains rock arrangements of musical compositions by Barrios, helps to show the various ways in which Paraguayan identity is reflected in its various expressions, including national identity (via the inclusion of Barrios’s nationalistic pieces), ethnic identity (constructed as Guaraní) and class identity in contemporary Paraguay.<sup>5</sup> Chaparro’s album thus serves as an analytical lens through which to understand contemporary identity expressions in Paraguay. This article has grown out of my ethnographic fieldwork and continuing engagement with Paraguayan music, while featuring anecdotal evidence based on personal observations and informal interviewing, alongside musical and semiotic analyses.

This article opens with an extensive review of existing academic debates on music and identity generally, and on music and identity in Paraguay more specifically, in order to provide appropriate contextualization, as well as to address Timothy Rice’s critique of a general lack of critical engagement with literature on identity in ethnomusicology, whose scholars ‘seem to take for granted identity as a category of social life and of social analysis’.<sup>6</sup> The literature review thus contributes towards an understanding of the way in which identity is defined and discussed more generally in the social sciences and humanities, and builds on the publications of those who have written on this theme before. Secondly, the article introduces my ethnographic research, explores the way in which nationalism and *paraguayidad* are expressed in what I term here

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<sup>4</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

<sup>5</sup> The CD album *Bohemio* (2011) by Rolando Chaparro features ten tracks of Barrios’s best-known compositions: ‘Preludio en do menor’, ‘La catedral – Alegro solemne’, ‘Danza paraguaya’, ‘Caazapa (Aire popular paraguayo)’, ‘Madrigal’, ‘London carape’, ‘Julia Florida’, ‘Las abejas’, ‘Danza guarani’ and ‘Una limosnita por el amor de Dios’; and one piece by Chaparro himself entitled ‘Bohemio’. The pieces are arranged and produced by Chaparro for electric and acoustic guitar (Rolando Chaparro), drums and percussion (Luis Chaparro), bass guitar (Luis Tellechea) and keyboard (José Farías and Sergio Cuquejo), were recorded and mastered in Cuquejo’s Spirit and Sound Studios in Asunción and were supported by Carlos Salcedo Centurión (executive producer) and Martina Leclercq and Odalis Lepel (co-producers). The cover and album design were by Mister Co., printed by Blue Caps, Asunción, Paraguay. © Rolando Chaparro Producciones.

<sup>6</sup> Timothy Rice, ‘Reflections on Music and Identity in Ethnomusicology’, *Muzikologija*, 7 (2007), 17–37 (p. 20).

folkloric ‘popular’ musics (*música popular*) and goes on to discuss the role played by the concept of *raza guaraní* (a widespread belief in a common ancestry based on Spanish and Guaraní ethnic identity) in the construction, maintenance and expression of national and nationalist identity. In the final section, the article explores the Barrios revival in the early 2000s, and the role that that has played in people’s class consciousness, before presenting its general conclusions.

## Music and identity: a review of literature

It is widely accepted today that music is a primary means for people in cultures around the world to construct, express and transmit their identity, along with their cultural and societal values, belief systems, norms and behaviours. In music sociology, anthropology, ethnomusicology and popular-music studies, the role played by music in the formation and articulation of identity has been conceptualized in at least two ways.

### *Social individual and collective identities*

First, identity came to be regarded as a psychosocial category of analysis functioning at the individual (self-identity) and societal (group) levels, the latter focus having dominated music studies since the nineteenth century. This focus may have been shaped by the symbolic interactionist perspective, which regards meaning in music as a social product that emerges from interactions between people. People are social actors in the co-creation of collective meaning, including musical meaning. Music sociologists, anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, popular-music scholars and practitioners of other branches of musicology are therefore interested in people’s beliefs and thoughts about the world, on the basis that meanings are the result of the process of communicative interaction between people.

The specific term ‘identity’ has only recently emerged in public parlance and is generally attributed to the psychologist Erik Erikson’s work in the 1950s on psychological development.<sup>7</sup> Prior to this work, sociologists and anthropologists used other words to represent what would now be called identity to describe an expanding range of social and cultural concerns. For example, several foundational social scientists, including Max Weber and Theodor Adorno, were guided by a ‘grand’ focus on music as a mirror or reflector of social structure. Owing to art’s privileged position in both society and early academia, most of this early work was preoccupied with Western art music. Weber, for instance, analysed art music’s functional tonality as an expression of rationality in modern Western societies. Meanwhile, in the USA, early twentieth-century sociologists from the Chicago School focused on music as a by-product of broader analyses, including several early ethnographic studies of dance halls and musical careers within broader studies of labour and urbanization, while others

<sup>7</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers* (New York: International Universities Press, 1959). See also Roy E. Baumeister, *Identity: Cultural Change and the Struggle for Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

examined the 1950s recording industry and audience patterns within larger studies of mass culture, youth and deviance.<sup>8</sup> The American sociologist John H. Mueller contributed a major work on the American symphony orchestra.<sup>9</sup>

The 1950s and 60s witnessed significant cultural and intellectual shifts in Western societies, with consequences for the academic study of music, notably in the development of sociological and social-anthropological perspectives and concerns. For instance, the emergence of ethnomusicology in US academia in the 1950s advocated the inclusion of traditional music in the academic study of music, followed in the 1960s and 70s by jazz, rock, folk and popular music as legitimate objects of academic study, which challenged the exclusivity of art music that had dominated the academic study of music since the nineteenth century. Meanwhile, British cultural studies (particularly the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham) and its concern with subcultures, leisure and music's meanings for audiences became influential in British music sociology, anthropology, ethnomusicology, popular-music studies, new musicology and other disciplines with a focus on music. During the 1980s, music disciplines moved away from the 'grand' focus on music as a mirror of social structure and became increasingly concerned with how music is socially shaped, and how its production, distribution and consumption is mediated by the contexts in which these activities take place. Ethnography, interviewing and people-focused interactions became established research methods in the attempt to understand music's role in social life, as is evident in the social anthropologist Ruth Finnegan's account in *The Hidden Musicians* and in Sara Cohen's study *Rock Culture in Liverpool*; in the sociologist Deena Weinstein's *Heavy Metal*;<sup>10</sup> and in ethnomusicological writings of the time.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, the boundaries between music sociology, social anthropology, ethnomusicology, popular-music studies, cultural studies, feminism and some forms of musicology became increasingly blurred.

Intensive globalizing trends worldwide have supposedly led towards a more classless society, yet musical taste and preference still often indicate people's social identity and status. Indeed, the early work of Max Weber and Thorstein Veblen, while looking at the bifurcation of fine art and popular culture in the nineteenth century, developed a view that ranked status groups in terms of their appreciation of the arts and letters, their clothing style, their language and their leisure pursuits, while noting a close association

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<sup>8</sup> John Shepherd and Kyle Devine, 'Introduction: Music and the Sociological Imagination – Pasts and Prospects', *The Routledge Reader on the Sociology of Music*, ed. John Shepherd and Kyle Devine (New York: Routledge, 2015), 1–21. Other notable sociologists at the time included K. Peter Etzkorn, Paul Honigsheim, Max Kaplan, Karl F. Schuessler, Alphons Silbermann and Pitirim A. Sorokin, although they are rarely mentioned in music literatures.

<sup>9</sup> John H. Mueller, *The American Symphony Orchestra: A Social History of Musical Taste* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1951).

<sup>10</sup> Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music Making in an English Town* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Sara Cohen, *Rock Culture in Liverpool* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Deena Weinstein, *Heavy Metal: A Cultural Sociology* (New York: Lexington Books, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts*, 2nd edn (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 141–3.

with income, occupation and schooling.<sup>12</sup> This perspective has shaped subsequent studies (notably Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital) that regarded fine art as a marker of class position, while showing the way in which arts appreciation and other cultural indicators are used as a means to express and maintain the status hierarchy. An important strand within music studies of identity, including studies of musical taste and its role in the construction of social differences and social exclusion, thus began to focus on music's link to status; notable examples include William Weber's *Music and the Middle Class*, Bourdieu's monumental study *Distinction*, which reflects the way in which music can serve negative and exclusionary politics, and Paul DiMaggio's work on the musical canon in nineteenth-century America.<sup>13</sup> Examining the relationship between social (for example, class) identity and musical taste, Bourdieu argues that correlations exist between 'high culture' and a taste for art music, and that individuals of high social status tend to use displays of their musical taste – through 'cultural capital' – to distinguish themselves from those of lower social status. In other words, cultural capital is most closely associated with ideas of quality, refinement and authority, and is indicative of a high level of class status. Studies of 'univore taste' cultures defined by class were challenged by US-based sociologists, notably Timothy Dowd, who instead argued that high-status individuals also distinguish themselves through their omnivorous tastes (for example, their enjoyment of a wider variety of musics).<sup>14</sup>

Beyond studies of taste and exclusion, music studies have explored value and talent in music, their articulations and the link between status and musical 'politics' (for example, musical value and talent as socially shaped), with notable studies including Henry Kingsbury's ethnographic analysis *Music, Talent and Performance* and Tia DeNora's *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius*.<sup>15</sup> Hierarchies of talent and articulations of musical value have further opened up discussions on the connections between music and identity/differentiation, studying the way in which music helps to shape identity, social action and subjectivity. A growing interest in the study of music as the basis for the formation of social identities emerged out of earlier studies from the 1960s and 70s, but now with a more explicit character, including for

<sup>12</sup> Morten Michelsen, 'Music Criticism and Taste Cultures', *The Routledge Reader on the Sociology of Music*, ed. Shepherd and Devine, 211–19; Richard A. Peterson, 'Taste as Distinction', *ibid.*, 153–60; William Weber, 'Art Music and Social Class', *ibid.*, 221–9.

<sup>13</sup> William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1975); Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction: Critique sociale du jugement* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1979), trans. Richard Nice with a new introduction by Tony Bennett as *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 2010); Paul DiMaggio, 'Cultural Capital and School Success', *American Sociological Review*, 47 (1982), 189–201; DiMaggio, 'Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston', *Media, Culture and Society*, 4 (1982), 33–50.

<sup>14</sup> Timothy Dowd, 'The Sociology of Music', *21st Century Sociology: A Reference Handbook*, ed. Clifton D. Bryant and Dennis L. Peck (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007), 249–60, 440 and 505–12. See also Shepherd and Devine, 'Introduction: Music and the Sociological Imagination'.

<sup>15</sup> Henry Kingsbury, *Music, Talent and Performance: A Conservatory Cultural System* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1988); Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792–1803* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997).

instance studies on popular music and on gender and sexed identities. Fundamental to this intellectual interest is the work of Simon Frith, who argued that popular music serves as both a strong source of identity for individuals within society and a powerful force in forming collective cultural and group identities, through which individuals draw sustenance in constructing a sense of self.<sup>16</sup> Frith, like Adorno, focused on aesthetic judgment, but rather than making those judgments he focused on their understanding. Paul Willis's classic ethnographic study *Profane Culture*, for instance, had described a group of young men, the Bikeboys, in terms of how they used music both to articulate their self-notion and as a catalyst for action.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, Ellen Koskoff's edited volume *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Susan McClary's *Feminine Endings* and Sheila Whiteley's *Women and Popular Music* adopted a feminist perspective on the gendered provenance of music.<sup>18</sup> By the 1990s, the boundaries between ethnomusicology, social anthropology, music sociology and popular-music studies had become even further blurred, with a growing shared interest in issues surrounding ethnicity, difference, identity and globalization, including an interest in the concept of 'place' in the study of music, with Martin Stokes's edited volume *Ethnicity, Identity and Music* providing another landmark publication on the broader theme of music and identity.<sup>19</sup>

More recently, DeNora's *Music in Everyday Life*, which focuses on music's mediating role in relation to social action and experience, has helped us to understand how links between music and social life/social experience are forged.<sup>20</sup> Music helps people to experience socially constructed modes of subjectivity, and this has been the overarching focus in related studies on music and emotion, including Emilie Gomart and Antoine Hennion's study of the love for music and drug-taking and DeNora's aforementioned study of music's role in the daily lives of American and British women as they use music to regulate, enhance and change qualities and levels of emotion.<sup>21</sup> Other important studies, such as Weinstein's *Heavy Metal* (see above, note 10) and Sarah Thornton's *Club Cultures*,<sup>22</sup> have focused on music and identity in relation to genres and subcultures, which reflect the key concern with identity politics and the link between music and social status. More recent developments are marked by even more rigorous accounts of musical meanings and social identities, while Georgina Born's edited

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<sup>16</sup> Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

<sup>17</sup> Paul E. Willis, *Profane Culture* (London: Routledge, 1978).

<sup>18</sup> *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Ellen Koskoff (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989); Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Sheila Whiteley, *Women and Popular Music: Sexuality, Identity and Subjectivity* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, ed. Martin Stokes (Oxford: Berg, 1994).

<sup>20</sup> Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>21</sup> Emilie Gomart and Antoine Hennion, 'A Sociology of Attachment: Music Amateurs, Drug Users', *Sociological Review*, 47 (1999), 220–47; DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*.

<sup>22</sup> Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

volume *Music, Sound and Space* has made an important recent contribution that bridges musical identity, meaning and interaction, and is both deeply social and deeply musical.<sup>23</sup>

### *Identity as essential or constructed*

A second way in which the role played by music in the formation and articulation of identity has been conceptualized in music sociology, anthropology, ethnomusicology and popular-music studies is by identity being understood as essential or constructed. The essentialist position grew out of nineteenth-century biological determinism, which explained human behaviour through stable and durable, innate and biological human characteristics, such as sex and race. As explained above, one key theme explored by early music sociologists assumed that all human thought and action is socially constituted, and hence that music's structures and sounds are of social significance. In other words, music's meanings are themselves socially constituted. The work of early sociologists thus asked questions as to whether music mirrors or reflects social structures. Informed by the seminal work of the German sociologist and philosopher Adorno, who sought to show that aspects of society are embedded within musical structures, subsequent studies similarly explored the way in which musical form and structure (for example, harmony, themes, tonality, structure, timbre, instrumentation and performance) encode, for instance, 'male hegemony'.<sup>24</sup> These studies were based on the central idea that the character of social or cultural formations could find expression through musical structures and sounds. Yet this work has seen considerable criticism for its tendency towards essentialism, assuming that all people of a particular gender (or class or ethnicity) are perceived to be the same or ought to be the same.

Essentialism also influenced the identity politics of nationalism. With its roots in the romantic nationalism of Hegel and his contemporaries, national identity came to be understood as a nation's character or distinct genius, in which music played an important role. While in many continuing practices of nationalist discourses music is still often regarded as reflexive, symbolic and expressive of such a stable and durable, unitary identity of the nation, from the 1980s onwards the concept of the nation was opened up to refer to a symbolic construct of 'imagined communities' with 'invented traditions' of (often folkloric) rituals, symbols and practices.<sup>25</sup> Key literatures in the latter camp include Philip Bohlman's *Music, Nationalism, and the Making of the New Europe*, which regards nationalism, including 'national' and 'nationalistic' identities, as the key to understanding European music; and, in the specific context of Paraguay, Alfredo Colman's *The Paraguayan Harp*, which explores harp music – via analyses of the instrument, the popular repertoire with which it is associated and the techniques

<sup>23</sup> *Music, Sound and Space: Transformations of Public and Private Experience*, ed. Georgina Born (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, John Shepherd, *Music as Social Text* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), and McClary, *Feminine Endings*.

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities; The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

employed in playing it – as the heart of Paraguayan national identity and illustrates that the harp is one of Paraguay's national emblems.<sup>26</sup>

The constructivist position gained momentum from the 1970s, influenced by the 1960s feminist and anti-racist movements and the introduction of identity politics based on race, ethnicity and gender at American universities and elsewhere, followed by 1990s discourses surrounding fragmentation and deterritorialization as a consequence of globalization, postcolonialism, transnationalism and the formation of diaspora. Regarding identity as unstable, learnt and thus changeable owing to socialization, constructivist thinkers ask questions about the link between identity, agency and power, domination and subordination, and resistance and opposition to the powerful positions from subaltern ones defined by class, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, age, disability and so forth.<sup>27</sup> Music sociologists, anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, popular-music scholars and others have since examined the 'hybridity' of identities and movement between multiple identities, as these are beset with contradiction, fluidity and contestation. Thus, the constructivist position also posits that individuals have multiple and fragmented identities, while music is understood to participate in the social construction of these changeable and fragmented identities, with studies usually falling into two camps, one focusing on the way in which music *reflects* social identities, the other studying the way in which music actually helps to *construct* social identities.

### ***Music and national identity in Paraguay***

This article is underpinned by the constructivist position to explore the way in which music is an expression and reflection of collective Paraguayan national identity as it is informed by nationalism and racial and class-based beliefs and perspectives, spanning music genres and styles from traditional and folklore to art and popular music. In general, literature on the music of Paraguay is in short supply. There exist numerous titles, published exclusively in Spanish and often printed as limited editions, surveying Paraguay's musical landscape from musicological or historical perspectives. These include the writings of Juan Max Boettner, Florentín Giménez, Bartomeu Melià and Sergio Cáceres Mercado, Diego Sánchez Haase, Luis Szarán and Rafael Eladio Velázquez;<sup>28</sup> the proceedings of a 2019 symposium edited by the Secretaría Nacional

<sup>26</sup> Philip V. Bohlman, *Music, Nationalism, and the Making of the New Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010); Alfredo Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp: From Colonial Transplant to National Emblem* (London: Lexington Books, 2015).

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Simone Krüger Bridge, *Trajectories and Themes in World Popular Music: Globalization, Capitalism, Identity* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2018).

<sup>28</sup> Juan Max Boettner, *Música y músicos del Paraguay*, 4th edn (Asunción: Imprenta Salesiana, 2008). Florentín Giménez, *La música paraguaya* (Asunción: El Lector, 1997); Giménez, *Rasgos y pasiones* (Asunción: Editorial Tavaroga, 2007). Bartomeu Melià and Sergio Cáceres Mercado, *Historia cultural del Paraguay, 1a. Parte*, Colección La Gran Historia del Paraguay, 16 (Asunción: El Lector, 2010). Diego Sánchez Haase, *La música en el Paraguay: Breve compendio de su historia, acontecimientos y características más importantes*, Hacia un país de lectores, 5 (Asunción: El Lector, 2002). Luis Szarán, *Diccionario de la música en el Paraguay* (Asunción: Szarán la Gráfica, 1997); Szarán, 'Music in Paraguay', *Paraguay: 200 Years of Independence in the Heart of South America*, ed. Robert Munro (London: Munro, 2010), 61–5; Szarán, 'Historia de la música', *Historia del Paraguay*, ed. Ignacio

de Cultura;<sup>29</sup> more generic titles about Paraguayan culture and history;<sup>30</sup> and studies of notable individuals in Paraguayan music, including José Asunción Flores (1904–72) and Cayo Sila Godoy (1919–2014).<sup>31</sup> In the English language, there exist shorter chapters or encyclopaedia articles similarly providing general overviews on Paraguayan music and musical instruments,<sup>32</sup> including the piano,<sup>33</sup> as well as selected writings on the Paraguayan harp.<sup>34</sup> Some writings relate specifically to the music of the Jesuits.<sup>35</sup> And more recently, Paraguayan music has been explored by documentary presenters including the SOAS academic and journalist Lucy Durán (on the harp and classical

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Telesca (Santillana: Taurus, 2010), 411–24. Rafael Eladio Velázquez, *Breve historia de la cultura en el Paraguay*, 12th edn (Asunción: ServiLibro, 2011).

- <sup>29</sup> *La música en el Paraguay: Situación actual y perspectivas de futuro: Ponencias presentadas en el 1er. Simposio de la Música en el Paraguay 'Iporãve baña nane remiandu'* (Paraguay: Secretaría Nacional de Cultura, 2019), <<http://www.cultura.gov.py/documentos/la-musica-en-el-paraguay-situacion-actual-y-perspectivas-de-futuro/>> (accessed 15 February 2020).
- <sup>30</sup> Efraim Cardozo, *Apuntes de historia cultural del Paraguay*, Biblioteca de Estudios Paraguayos, 11, 6th edn (Asunción: Editora Litocolor S.R.L., 1998); *Historia del Paraguay*, ed. Ignacio Telesca (Santillana: Taurus, 2010).
- <sup>31</sup> Armando Almada Roche, *José Asunción Flores: Compañero del Alma, Compañero* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones el Pez del Pez, 2004); Elisa Concepción Godoy Álvarez, *Cayo Sila Godoy en programas de concierto: 8 décadas de música y guitarra clásica* (Asunción: Policarpo Centro de Servicios Culturales, 2007).
- <sup>32</sup> Timothy D. Watkins, 'Paraguay', *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: South America, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean*, ii, ed. Dale A. Olsen and Daniel E. Sheehy (New York: Garland, 1998), 452–65; Daniel Luzko, 'Paraguay', *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, iii: *Caribbean and Latin America*, ed. John Shepherd, David Horn and Dave Laing (London: Continuum, 2005), 323–6; Alfredo Colman, 'Avanzada', 'Compuesto', 'Galopa', 'Guaranía', 'Nuevo cancionero (Paraguay)', *The Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, ix: *Genres: Caribbean and Latin America*, ed. John Shepherd and David Horn (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 23, 212, 333, 339, 550; Alfredo Colman and Evandro Higa, 'Polca paraguaya', *ibid.*, 606; Alfredo Colman and Héctor Luis Goyena, 'Rasguido doble', *ibid.*, 648; Colman, 'Paraguay', *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2016, <<https://www.mgg-online.com/article?id=mgg15875&v=2.1&rs=mgg15875>> (accessed 22 February 2022); Colman, 'Arpa paraguaya' (2014), *Grove Music Online*, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.L2267865>> (accessed 10 December 2021); Mark Brill, 'Paraguay', *Music of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2018), 382–4; Simone Krüger Bridge, 'Paraguay: History, Culture, and Geography of Music' and 'Paraguay: Modern and Contemporary Performance Practice', *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Music and Culture*, ed. Janet Sturman (New York: Sage, 2019), 1661–3 and 1664–7.
- <sup>33</sup> Nancy Luzko, 'An Annotated Bibliography of Paraguayan Music for Piano' (DMA thesis, University of Miami, 2005).
- <sup>34</sup> Alfredo Colman, 'The Diatonic Harp in the Performance of Paraguayan Identity' (Ph.D. dissertation University of Texas at Austin, 2005); Colman, 'El arpa diatónica paraguaya en la búsqueda del tekorã: Representaciones de paraguayidad' ('The Paraguayan Diatonic Harp in the Search for the Tekorã: Representations of Paraguayanness'), *Latin American Music Review*, 28 (2007), 125–49; Colman, 'The Paraguayan Diatonic Harp', *Folk Harp Journal*, 145 (winter 2009), 14–20; Colman, 'The Paraguayan Diatonic Harp: Performance Techniques' and "'El sueño de Angelita" (Angelita's Dream): Arrangement for Two Harps', *Folk Harp Journal*, 148 (autumn 2010), 26–30 and 31–7; Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*.
- <sup>35</sup> Luis Szarán and Jesús Ruiz Nestosa, *Música en las reducciones jesuíticas* (Asunción: Missions Prokur S. J. Nürnberg, 1996); Piotr Nawrot, 'Teaching of Music and the Celebration of Liturgical Events in the Jesuit Reductions', *Anthropos*, 99 (2004), 73–84, <[www.jstor.org/stable/40466307](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40466307)> (accessed 15 February 2020).

guitar), the television presenter David Attenborough (on cowboy music from the Misiones region) and the radio producer and presenter Betto Arcos.<sup>36</sup>

Literature on the theme of music and identity in Paraguay is particularly scarce, being limited to Colman's aforementioned research on the Paraguayan harp and cultural identity, Robert Wahl's research on Barrios and musical identity,<sup>37</sup> and a few studies of Paraguayan identity, nationalism and *paraguayidad* more generally.<sup>38</sup> This article will address this lack of academic research, with specific focus on the way in which Paraguayan national, racial and class identity is actively reinforced through the classical guitarist and composer Agustín Barrios Mangoré, whose music has been resurrected and revived during three waves as a major contribution to the national cultural heritage of Paraguay: in the 1950s with the commissioned collections of his works by Cayo Sila Godoy; in the 1970s with John Williams's recording of the 1977 LP *John Williams Plays Music of Agustín Barrios Mangoré*;<sup>39</sup> and in the early 2000s, as will be shown below. There exist numerous Spanish-language publications on the life, works and musical 'genius' of Barrios,<sup>40</sup> while his achievements as a composer and a virtuoso guitarist have also led to the proliferation of English-language research

<sup>36</sup> 'The Baroque and Beyond – Paraguay', presented by Lucy Durán, *World Routes*, BBC Radio 3 (3 March 2013), <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b01r0yx1>> (accessed 25 November 2014); 'David Attenborough – World Music Collector', *Sunday Feature*, BBC Radio 3 (18 December 2016), <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b0857wv1>> (accessed 1 July 2021); 'Paraguay', presented by Betto Arcos, *Music Planet: Road Trip*, BBC Radio 3 (5 October 2018), <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p06n0w4b>> (accessed 1 July 2021); 'Paraguay – Guaranía', presented by Betto Arcos, *Music Planet: Road Trip*, BBC Radio 3 (27 May 2020), <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p08f9czy>> (accessed 1 July 2021).

<sup>37</sup> Robert J. Wahl, 'Agustín Barrios and Musical Identity: Tangos in Early Twentieth Century Guitar Repertory' (MA thesis, San Diego State University, 2012).

<sup>38</sup> Peter Lambert and Ricardo Medina, 'Contested Discourse, Contested Power: Nationalism and the Left in Paraguay', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 26/3 (2007), 339–55; Lambert, 'History, Identity and Paraguayidad', *Paraguay*, ed. Munro, 15–22; Lambert, 'History, Identity, and Paraguayidad', *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, ed. Lambert and Andrew Nickson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 385–93; Lambert, 'Paraguayan National Identity', *Latin American History*, Oxford Research Encyclopaedias (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.013.88>>.

<sup>39</sup> Vinyl LP, CBS Masterworks, catalogue no. 76662 (1977).

<sup>40</sup> Bacón Duarte Prado, *Agustín Barrios: Un genio insular* (Asunción: Editorial Araverá, 1985); *Mangoré: Edición especial con auspicio del Comité de Homenaje al Centenario del Nacimiento del Maestro Agustín Pío Barrios – Nitsuga Mangore, 5-Mayo-1885/5 de Mayo-1985*, ed. Desiderio Enciso *et al.*, Colección Sila Godoy (Asunción: Centro Cultural Paraguayo-Americano & Centro Social y Cultural Sanjuanino Misionero: Organo de Difusion del Centro Sanjuanino Misionero de Residentes en Asunción, año 3, no 4, 1985); Cayo Sila Godoy and Luis Szarán, *Mangoré: Vida y obra de Agustín Barrios* (Asunción: Editorial Don Bosco/Nanduti, 1994); José Cándido Morales, *Agustín Barrios Mangoré: 'Genio de la guitarra'* (San Salvador: Fundación María Escalón de Nuñez, 1994); Nicolas T. Riveros, *Dos almas musicales: Agustín Pío Barrios y José del Rosario Diarte (Misioneros)* (Asunción: Ministerio de Educación y Culto, San Juan Bautista de la Misiones, 1995); Luis Szarán, 'Agustín Pío Barrios [Nitsuga Mangoré]', *Diccionario de la música hispano americana*, ed. Emilio Casares Rodicio (Madrid: Sociedad de Autores y Editores, 1999), 266; Carlos Salcedo Centurión, *El inalcanzable: Agustín Barrios Mangoré* (Asunción: Paraguayan National Congress, 2007); Manuel José Aracri, *Agustín Pío Barrios Mangoré: La guitarra y su genio* (Asunción: Arandurá Editorial, 2009); Victor Manuel Oxley Ynsfrán, *Agustín Pío Barrios Mangoré: Ritos, culto, sacrilegios y profanaciones* (Asunción: ServiLibro, 2010); Richard Stover in collaboration with the Centro de Proyectos Barrios Mangoré, *Séis rayos de*

and publications.<sup>41</sup> For example, the historian Carlos Salcedo Centurión, who has dedicated his life to researching Barrios's history, published his vast collection of artefacts and facts in an impressive art book, and also directed, produced and wrote the only documentary ever produced on Barrios's life, history and musical significance.<sup>42</sup>

Yet none of the research to date connects Barrios to discussions on music and identity, even though 'popular' pieces of his such as 'Danza paraguaya' (based on the *polca paraguaya*) are hugely relevant to discussions concerning music and Paraguayan national identity. The *polca paraguaya*, along with the *guarania*, epitomizes the nationalist dimension of Paraguayan identity as an exemplar of the 'typical' Paraguayan musical folklore, born of the nationalist movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that sought to construct and reinforce the sociocultural values associated with *paraguayidad*. Nationalist efforts also promoted the concept of *raza guaraní* as a signifier of an indigenous racial identity directly representative of the Guaraní people that came over time to serve as an ultimate expression of the Paraguayan national identity and nationalism which Barrios represented both musically and visually. Relevant literatures exist that explore Paraguay's traditional folklore repertoire often, but not exclusively, within the context of an idealized (imagined) Guaraní culture,<sup>43</sup> yet none of these are concerned with identity construction. The celebratory treatment of Barrios's classical repertoire reflects the widespread romanticized belief in Barrios as a 'Paraguayan genius' and a 'lost national treasure' in need of being collected, preserved and promoted worldwide, through which displays of class-based social status hierarchy are being achieved among certain social groups, a theme that has not yet been explored in the literatures on Paraguayan music.

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*plata: La vida y obra de Agustín Barrios Mangoré*, 2nd Spanish edn (Asunción: Centro de Proyectos Barrios Mangoré, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> Richard D. Stover, *Six Silver Moonbeams: The Life and Times of Agustín Barrios Mangoré* (Clovis, CA: Querico Publications, 1992; 2nd Paraguayan edn in collaboration with Carlos Salcedo Centurión and Odalis C. Lepel, Asunción: Barrios Mangoré Project Centre and Guitars from the Heart Association, 2012); *The Complete Works of Agustín Barrios Mangoré for Guitar*, ed. Stover, 2 vols. (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay, 2003); Anthony McKenna Ward, 'Agustín Barrios Mangoré: A Study in the Articulation of Cultural Identity' (MA thesis, University of Adelaide, 2010), <<https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/61957/8/02whole.pdf>> (accessed 16 July 2015); Nicholas Regan, 'Agustín Barrios Mangoré: Paraguay's Pre-eminent Guitarist-Composer', *Paraguay*, ed. Munro, 73–6; Wahl, 'Agustín Barrios and Musical Identity'; Justin Hoke, 'The Guitar Recordings of Agustín Barrios Mangoré: An Analysis of Selected Works Performed by the Composer' (Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, College of Music, 2013).

<sup>42</sup> Centurión, *El inalcanzable*; Centurión, *Santo de la guitarra: La historia fantástica de Agustín Barrios Mangoré*, *Forgotten Masters and Lost Guitars: The Incredible Story of Agustín Barrios Mangoré* (Next-Level Film Productions, 2009), <<https://gloria.tv/post/NoMCP8we9s3T2LzKbtNEENMET>> (accessed 10 December 2021).

<sup>43</sup> Carlos Lombardo, *Folklore guaraní – interpretación: Desquite de Guaranía* (Asunción: El Lector, 1998); Mario Rubén Álvarez, *Folklore paraguayo: Selección e introducción*, *Hacia un país de lectores*, 3 (Asunción: El Lector, 2002); Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo, *Mundo folklórico paraguayo*, 3 vols. (Asunción: ATLAS Representaciones, 2005); José Zanardini and Walter Biedermann, *Los indígenas del Paraguay*, 2nd, rev. edn (Asunción: ITAIPU, Binacional, 2006); Colman and Higa, 'Polca paraguaya'.

## First encounters with Paraguayan music

I first travelled to Paraguay in 2011, during the country's bicentennial of independence from Spain, when I met the classical guitarist Luz María Bobadilla (b. 1963). At the time, she was in the process of recording and releasing (under the musical direction of the Paraguayan jazz guitarist and composer Carlos Schwartzman) the album *Barrios Hoy: Luz María Bobadilla guitarra* (2011), which pays tribute to Barrios.<sup>44</sup> The album was premièred as part of the official bicentennial celebrations on 9 May 2011 during a televised performance in the Teatro Municipal Ignacio A. Pane, Asunción,<sup>45</sup> which is, along with the Centro de Convenciones del Banco Central del Paraguay, the Club Centenario and the Centro Cultural de España Juan de Salazar, one of the main venues for the performance of classical music, including concerts and opera. The televised performance was attended by urban Paraguayans from higher-status groups, including politicians, professionals, guitar aficionados and others, who actively support or patronize the 'high' arts in Paraguay. The performers received standing ovations, particularly in tribute to Bobadilla for her contributions to Paraguay's classical guitar culture for the duration of her career, which has spanned some 40 years.

I knew that Paraguay was inextricably linked to the classical guitar, and many Paraguayans take great pride in the world fame of Barrios. When I arrived in Paraguay, I found that his works and status were undergoing a massive revival, which in fact had already begun with commissioned collections of his works in the 1950s and continued with John Williams's recording of 1977. From the 2000s, the Barrios revival proliferated through the performance practices of La Escuela de Mangoré (the School of Mangoré) under the direction of Cayo Sila Godoy, who is credited with the preservation of Barrios's legacy, and it has continued in the work of Bobadilla, Berta Rojas and Felipe Sosa. There is also a growing younger generation of contemporary classical guitarists, notably Rodrigo Benítez, Diego Guzmán and Diego Solís, who specialize in the performance of Barrios's classical guitar repertoire. Since the 2000s, the Barrios revival has been strengthened by growing interest in his musical heritage on the part of government officials, scholars, historians, patrons and guitar enthusiasts, as is evident in the vast proliferation of Barrios-themed musical and extramusical activities involving live and mediated guitar concerts and festivals in commemoration of him; recordings in different musical styles dedicated to his life and times; public displays and museum exhibitions; cultural tours to sites of relevant heritage; and scholarly and journalistic literature about his life and music.

This third wave of the Barrios revival saw an exciting increase in mediated performances via recordings based on his compositions and arranged in eclectic musical styles.

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<sup>44</sup> The album *Barrios Hoy: Luz María Bobadilla guitarra* (2011) was recorded under the musical direction of Carlos Schwartzman (pianist/guitarist/bassist, composer, arranger and educator) and the artistic direction of Luz María Bobadilla, and features jazz arrangements of selected compositions by Barrios. These include 'Maxixe', 'Choro da Saudade', 'Madrigal', 'Suite andina' (four movements), 'Mazurca apassionata', 'Julia Florida', 'La catedral' (three movements), 'Ha che valle' and 'Danza paraguaya'. The album was recorded in the Spirit and Sound Studio (Asunción) using Pro Tools HD.

<sup>45</sup> See <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OlblWnxMyc>> (accessed 16 January 2021) for the live performance of 'Danza paraguaya' by Luz María Bobadilla (guitar) and Manuel Obregón (piano).

For example, the album *Bohemio* – recorded by Rolando Chaparro, one of the best-known contemporary rock guitarists, singer-songwriters and bandleaders in Paraguay – pays tribute to Barrios, interpreted, however, in the style of rock-jazz fusion, based on 1980s ‘classical’ rock and characterized by melodic, harmonic and rhythmic alteration with jazz-induced influences. Chaparro and his band performed the music from the album live in his show *Bohemio: Tributo a Mangoré* (Bohemian: Tribute to Mangoré), held in the Cabildo Museum, Asunción, on 5 May 2012,<sup>46</sup> which attracted some Barrios aficionados along with the ‘typical’ crowd of younger, working-class rock-music fans. Rock music became popular in Paraguay during the 1960s as an underground movement influenced by American rock and the use of electronic instruments. This underground rock was targeted by the state, so a more Paraguayan *rock paraguayo* emerged ‘officially’ in 1980 with the band Pro Rock Ensemble. During the 1990s, and with the country’s transition to democracy, *rock paraguayo* enjoyed new opportunities, greater freedom to be performed in concerts and festivals, and new subgenres.<sup>47</sup> A distinct trend emerged among some rock bands to explore the roots of Paraguayan folk and traditional music, notably the *polca paraguaya*, *guarania* and songs in the Guaraní language. This continued to evolve into what is known today in Paraguay as experimental and fusion music (*rock fusión*), composed and performed by artists and bands like Chaparro, Dosis, La Secreta, Fauna Urbana and Made In Paraguay, who merged the 6/8 (compound triple) metre with hemiola features typical of Paraguayan folklore along with elements of jazz and other world-music ingredients in their fusion rock repertoire.

### Music, nationalism and *paraguayidad*

Music serves as a cultural resource in the formulation and articulation of individual and collective identities in contemporary Paraguay, and provides an interesting, even powerful means through which to understand the constructed notion of Paraguayan national identity. Schwartzman, the director and arranger of *Barrios Hoy*, explained in a personal interview the particular challenges that arose during the album’s production, and commented on Barrios’s ‘La catedral’ performed by Bobadilla, the pianist Pierre Blanchard and a chamber orchestra. Schwartzman emphasized that the pianist had no experience of playing traditional Paraguayan music, such as the *guarania*, which posed a challenge for him:

Paraguayan music is pretty difficult because ... it has a lot of rhythms or polyrhythm ... You can think it is in 6/8, but you can also think in 3/4 ... So there is a mix of 6/8 in the melody and 3/4 in the bass ... which is the basis of Paraguayan music [and] is a feature that has to be present always in Paraguayan music.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> See <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87peFLb736c>> (accessed 16 January 2021) for the live performance of ‘Danza paraguaya’ by Chaparro and his band.

<sup>47</sup> New rock styles to emerge in the 1990s included power metal, death metal, black metal and punk, followed in the twenty-first century by new heavy-metal substyles like black thrash metal and grindcore, as well as punk rock, ska reggae and punk ska.

<sup>48</sup> Personal communication with author, Asunción, 15 August 2011.

We continued to talk about any similarities between the Mexican and the Paraguayan *polca*, but Schwartzman re-emphasized that traditional Paraguayan music, such as the Paraguayan *polca*, is ‘very unique!’

Like Schwartzman, several other musicians and non-musicians to whom I spoke expressed strong views surrounding the unique characteristics of folkloric ‘popular’ music, and frequently spoke about the *polca paraguaya* with its ‘typical’ 6/8 rhythm (which Schwartzman and others described as *ritmo paraguayo*). Indeed, I found the *polca paraguaya* to be ubiquitous in Paraguay, and most Paraguayans to whom I spoke regarded it, along with the *guarania*, to be the most ‘authentic’ expression of Paraguayan music.<sup>49</sup> For their 2011 album projects, both Bobadilla and Chaparro chose to include the *polca paraguaya* via an interpretation of Barrios’s ‘Danza paraguaya’ (1926; see Example 1; see also Appendix). The piece is structured in rondo form, ABACA – effectively a version of the two-section *galopa* extended by adding a third section (C) in the relative subdominant key.<sup>50</sup> It reflects many of the ‘typical’ characteristics of folkloric (‘popular’) music in Paraguay: it is in triple metre<sup>51</sup> and contains the *sincochado paraguayo* – use of syncopation in the melodic line placed on the last beat of a bar and the first beat of the following, which creates the impression that the melody is lagging behind the rhythm<sup>52</sup> – in the second section (B) in bars 17–32 and in the third

<sup>49</sup> I am grateful to Alfredo Colman for highlighting to me that the acclaimed Paraguayan composer Florentín Giménez’s memoir similarly presents the idea of the *guarania* as the most authentic expression of the land and its cultural identity. See Florentín Giménez, *Historia sin tiempo* (Asunción: Editorial Salem, 2008). See also D. Luzko, ‘Paraguay’, 325.

<sup>50</sup> Contrary to Stover’s comment that the *polca paraguaya* contains two sections (A and B; see Stover, *The Complete Works of Agustín Barrios Mangoré for Guitar*, i, 204), the Paraguayan musicologists Alfredo Colman, Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo and Luis Szarán have shown that it contains only one section, but that the *galopa*, a substyle of the *polca paraguaya*, contains two. In other words, the *galopa* is essentially a *polca paraguaya* – dance music (deriving from the European gallop) which equally uses a lively rhythm in 6/8 metre incorporating hemiola rhythmic patterns – but divided into two sections (A and B), with the second half presenting significant rhythmic variations played by percussionists. See Timothy D. Watkins, ‘Paraguay’, *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, ed. Dale A. Olsen and Daniel E. Sheehy (New York: Routledge, 2000), 288–301 (p. 297), and Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 51. The *galopa* has also been likened to the *polca kyre-ÿ*, marked by fun and exciting ‘polyrhythms’ with varying accents, usually in the second part (see Szarán, ‘Music in Paraguay’). While being very similar to the *polca*, the *galopa* may be distinguished by its closer association with folk and traditional dancing to the accompaniment of a folk band (*banda típica*) comprising brass (two trumpets, two trombones, a tuba), wind (two saxophones or clarinets) and percussion instruments (snare drum, bass drum with two crash cymbals). There is thus a marked emphasis on percussion in the *galopa*, probably owing to its accompanying role for female *galopa* dancers (*galoperas*) performing in traditional attire while balancing clay pitchers (*cántaros*) or glass bottles on their heads during popular gatherings or religious festivals, such as the Concurso de Galopas (Galopa Dance Contest) held in early September in Yyysunú, Guarambaré. In some performance contexts, Paraguayans also refer to the *polca-galopa*, which is a *polca paraguaya* performed by *la banda* while adopting the rhythmic characteristics of the two sections of the *galopa* (see Ocampo, *Mundo folklórico paraguayo*, i, 71).

<sup>51</sup> Barrios wrote it originally in 6/8 compound metre, although later manuscript versions appeared in 3/4 (see Stover, *The Complete Works of Agustín Barrios Mangoré for Guitar*, i, 100, 204).

<sup>52</sup> Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 65, 71.

Example 1 Agustín Barrios Mangoré, ‘Danza paraguaya’, as edited in *The Complete Works of Agustín Barrios Mangoré for Guitar*, ed. Richard ‘Rico’ Stover (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay, 2003), 2 vols., i, 100–3.

The musical score is presented in two systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs. Fingering is indicated by numbers 1-4 in circles. Chord diagrams are shown above the staff, with Roman numerals (♯IV, ♯VII, ♯V, ♯IV, ♯IV) indicating the chord structure. A 'To Coda' symbol is present at the end of the piece. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 4, 7, 10, and 13 marked.

Example 1 (cont.)

The musical score is written for guitar in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It consists of four systems of two staves each. Measure numbers 16, 19, 22, and 25 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and fingerings. Above the first staff of each system, there are labels:  $\Phi$ II above measures 16-18,  $\Phi$ VII above measures 19-21,  $\Phi$ VII above measures 22-24, and  $\Phi$ II above measures 25-27. In the final system, the second staff has a label  $\Phi$ II above it and a bracketed section labeled "harm. 7" with circled numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 below it. The score concludes with a double bar line.

Example 1 (cont.)

The musical score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff (guitar) and a bass clef staff (bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into systems of four measures each, with measure numbers 29, 33, 36, 39, 42, and 45 marked at the beginning of their respective systems. Circled numbers (1-5) are placed above or below notes to indicate fretting positions. Chord diagrams are shown above the guitar staff, with labels CIV, CVII, and CV. The guitar staff includes various techniques such as triplets, slurs, and ties. The bass staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment with notes and rests.

Example 1 (cont.)

48

CV

52

56

CV

60

CIV

CIV

CIX CVII CVI

64

CVII

CVII

1. 2.

*D.C. al Coda*

Coda ⊕

♯VII

67

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It consists of five systems of staves. The first system (measures 48-51) features a melodic line with a circled 4 and 5, and a bass line with a circled 4. A bracket labeled 'CV' spans measures 49-51. The second system (measures 52-55) has a circled 3 above the melodic line and a circled 3 below the bass line. The third system (measures 56-59) includes a circled 3 above the melodic line and a circled 4 below the bass line. The fourth system (measures 60-63) contains a circled 3 above the melodic line and a circled 2 above the bass line. Below the bass line, there are three measures of chords labeled CIX, CVII, and CVI. The fifth system (measures 64-66) shows a circled 1 above the melodic line and a circled 1 above the bass line. It includes first and second endings, with the instruction 'D.C. al Coda'. The final system (measures 67-68) shows a Coda symbol and a circled VII above the staff, with a circled 7 below the bass line.

section (C) in bars 53–6. The piece is based on a characteristically steady rhythm consisting of broken chords performed on the guitar, and features typical parallel thirds or sixths in the harmony, particularly in section B (at bars 21–4). The piece is structured in rondo form, ABACA –effectively a version of the two-section *galopa* extended by adding a third section (C) in the relative subdominant key. In terms of voice leading, the rich harmonic texture of Barrios’s composition utilizes four voices (a melody, a harmony, a middle line and a bass line), but at times there appear to be only three.<sup>53</sup>

Even though ‘Danza paraguaya’ is clearly composed and performed in the style of classical guitar music, Bobadilla, Chaparro, Schwartzman and several other musicians with whom I spoke described it as ‘popular’ Paraguayan music (*música popular*). This is confirmed by the fact that, notwithstanding its status as Paraguayan concert music, the piece has entered the canon of Paraguayan folkloric music (*música popular paraguaya*), as is demonstrated in Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo’s *Mundo folklórico paraguayo* and Carlos Lombardo’s *Folklore guaraní – interpretación*; see Examples 2 and 3.

So far, I have argued that folkloric (popular) Paraguayan music like the *polca paraguaya* collectively evokes in many Paraguayans a strong shared sense of *paraguayidad*. This shared sense is rooted in the state’s initiatives actively to construct Paraguayan national identity, reinforced by the official creation and promotion of so-called local ‘popular’ traditions (*música popular*), and exemplified in the ‘officialization’ of religious festivities, folk music, folk dances, crafts and food. Indeed, Paraguayan identity has been intimately connected with the construction of the Paraguayan nation since its independence from Spain in 1811 and has been shaped by Paraguay’s geographical isolation, its history of war and immigration, its bilingualism (Guaraní and Spanish) and its strong regard for geographical territory.<sup>54</sup> Folkloric (popular) music traditions became the primary means for constructing and expressing Paraguayan national identity, and this musical nationalism can be traced along three broad historical periods following Paraguay’s colonial period, beginning in 1811. It is important to note here that other histories of Paraguay exist, and that there is no intention here of retelling the country’s history. For instance, Colman highlighted to me that there exists ‘a highly complex web of Paraguayan “histories” and their explanation’ which presents Paraguay’s history according to five historical events or ‘historic moments’ of major significance: the colonial period (from the mid-sixteenth to the eighteenth century); the process of independence (1811); the War of the Triple Alliance (1864–70); the post-war and reconstruction period (1870–1900); and the Chaco War (1932–5).<sup>55</sup> The tripartite structure of my article aims to simplify such complexities and to bring some order into the development of nationalist music styles

<sup>53</sup> Stover, *The Complete Works of Agustín Barrios Mangoré for Guitar*, i, 204.

<sup>54</sup> Lambert, ‘History, Identity and Paraguayidad’; Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 13–16.

<sup>55</sup> Alfredo Colman, ‘The Paraguayan Historical Memory and Cultural Identity’, unpublished paper kindly sent to me by email on 18 May 2020.

Example 2 Opening of Barrios's 'Danza paraguaya', as edited in *Mundo folklórico paraguayo*, ed. Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo, 3 vols. (Asunción: ATLAS Representaciones, 2005), ii, 253, where the piece occurs as a piano arrangement in 6/8 metre.

**Allegretto** (♩ = 104)

The musical score is presented in six systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The tempo is marked Allegretto with a quarter note equal to 104 beats per minute. The score includes various dynamics such as *mf*, *f*, *poco*, and *p*, as well as performance instructions like *cresc.*, *dim.*, and accents. The piece concludes with a decrescendo and a final flourish in the bass line.

Example 3 Barrios's 'Danza paraguaya', as edited in Carlos Lombardo's *Folklore guaraní – interpretación: Desquite de Guaranía* (Asunción: El Lector, 1998), 107, where it occurs as a single-line melody in 6/8 metre.

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. It consists of seven staves of music. Above the notes, guitar chords are indicated: D, A7, D, E7, A, E7, A7, D7, G, C#7, F#m7, Em7(b5), D, A7, D, Bm7, Bm6, Em7, A7, D, D, D.C. to, D7, G, D7, G, F#7, Bm. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

in Paraguay over the past two centuries, beginning with music and identity in the Nationalist Period (1814–70) and moving on to music and national identity in the Liberal Era (1904–40) and during Colorado Party rule (1940–89).

### *Music and identity during the Nationalist Period (1814–70)*

After independence in 1811, the systematic construction of Paraguayan national identity was part of the political project of the governments of the dictator José Gaspar

Rodríguez de Francia (1766–1840; ruled 1814–40)<sup>56</sup> and President Carlos Antonio López (1792–1862; ruled 1840–62), as well as the latter's successor and son, Francisco Solano López (1827–70; ruled 1862–70). The period 1814–70 is known as the Nationalist Period, and was marked by republican despotism, geographical isolation<sup>57</sup> and a perpetual post-colonial fear of Argentinian and Brazilian annexation. Paraguay was under continuous threat from other neighbouring countries in a succession of wars, notably the 1811 war against Argentina's General Belgrano, the War of the Triple Alliance (1864/5–70) consisting of Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay (which occupied Paraguay at the time),<sup>58</sup> and (during the Liberal Era) the Chaco War (1932–5) against the Bolivian invasion of disputed Chaco territory. Paraguay's isolation had a huge cultural impact in shaping *paraguayidad*, creating a more inward-looking society and fostering a stronger sense of shared cultural norms and identity, intensified by the shared suffering and collective memory of war that further strengthened a sense of solidarity and difference.

During the nineteenth century, fashionable dances like the polka, gallop, waltz and mazurka became popular in Asunción: they were first introduced at receptions organized by Francisco Solano López's lifelong companion Elisa Alicia Lynch (1835–86) and often performed at parties held at the National Club there.<sup>59</sup> Gradually, these dances were adopted and modified, and became incorporated into the repertoire of traditional folk dances of Paraguay.<sup>60</sup> An example is the aforementioned *polca paraguaya* (derived from the Bohemian polka), a rhythmically lively song and dance style in 6/8 metre featuring hemiola rhythmic patterns with juxtaposed groups of three notes in the bass against two in the melody<sup>61</sup> and syncopation that may have been used to accompany the *gato* dance. Musically, short melodic phrases feature a typical syncopation on the last beat of one bar tied to the first of the next. Harmonically, the instrumental accompaniment utilizes parallel thirds or sixths and the so-called 'Andalusian cadence' (a minor descending tetrachord in conjunction with a VI–V–IV–III progression).<sup>62</sup> Characteristic of the lively *polca* is a steady rhythm consisting of broken chords performed on the harp or guitar. Numerous anonymous *polcas* survive from the

<sup>56</sup> Even today, Dr Francia is celebrated for his successful, innovative and unique effort to destroy the power of the Spanish and, with it, the white ruling class following independence in 1811, which involved forcing white Spaniards to marry mestizos or indigenous people.

<sup>57</sup> Paraguay is geographically cut off from Bolivia to the north and west owing to the inhospitable nature of the Gran Chaco semi-desert, and from the sea by Brazil and Buenos Aires, which controlled its only trade route, the river Paraná.

<sup>58</sup> This alliance was bent on destroying Paraguay, which was then under the leadership of López's son, Francisco Solano López, and the conflict against it is considered to have been the bloodiest in Latin American history. The magnitude of the destruction was extraordinary: Paraguay lost more than 60% of its total population (including women and children) and 25% of its territory to Brazil and Argentina (including the Iguazú Falls). The war eradicated up to 90% of Paraguay's adult male population and led to a sustained period of repopulation fuelled partly by immigration.

<sup>59</sup> While it may well be a myth that Lynch was the person who first brought these dances/rhythms from Europe to Paraguay, this idea has been promoted by Paraguayan music historians and musicologists, including Boettner and Szarán.

<sup>60</sup> Szarán, 'Music in Paraguay', 63.

<sup>61</sup> D. Luzko, 'Paraguay', 324.

<sup>62</sup> Both represent Spanish influences on Paraguayan music. Note that the Andalusian cadence is not a cadence in a strict musicological sense.

Example 4 'El solito' (anon.), a Paraguayan dance (*polca paraguaya*) still frequently performed by *conjuntos* to accompany dancers in traditional costumes, as edited in *Mundo folklórico paraguayo*, ed. Mauricio Cardozo Ocampo, 3 vols. (Asunción: ATLAS Representaciones, 2005), i, 192. The boxed areas illustrate examples of 'typical' musical characteristics found in many *polcas*, including syncopation, parallel thirds and parallel sixths.

Musical notation for measures 1-4. The piece is in 6/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand features a series of chords, with a boxed area highlighting a syncopated chord in measure 3. The left hand has a steady eighth-note accompaniment, with a boxed area highlighting a syncopated eighth-note pattern in measure 3.

Musical notation for measures 5-8. Measure 5 is marked with a '5'. The right hand continues with chords, with boxed areas highlighting parallel thirds in measure 6 and parallel sixths in measure 8. The left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment, with a boxed area highlighting a syncopated eighth-note pattern in measure 6.

Musical notation for measures 9-13. Measure 10 is marked with a '10'. The right hand features chords, with boxed areas highlighting syncopation in measure 10 and parallel thirds in measure 11. The left hand continues with the eighth-note accompaniment, with a boxed area highlighting a syncopated eighth-note pattern in measure 11.

Musical notation for measures 14-17. Measure 14 is marked with a '14'. The right hand features chords, with boxed areas highlighting parallel thirds in measure 14 and parallel sixths in measure 15. The left hand continues with the eighth-note accompaniment, with a boxed area highlighting a syncopated eighth-note pattern in measure 15.

Musical notation for measures 18-21. Measure 18 is marked with a '18'. The right hand features chords, with boxed areas highlighting parallel thirds in measure 18 and parallel sixths in measure 19. The left hand continues with the eighth-note accompaniment, with a boxed area highlighting a syncopated eighth-note pattern in measure 19.

## Example 4 (cont.)

nineteenth century, such as ‘El solito’ (see Example 4). When the *polca* is presented as vocal music (as opposed to instrumental music intended to accompany dancing), performances are usually slower and are referred to as *polca canción* (in Guaraní *purahéi*). These may be sung in Spanish, Guaraní or a mixture of the two, while (under descriptive onomatopoeic titles) making reference to romance, nature, towns, nostalgia, epic topics, political parties and football clubs. The history of wars also often informs the lyrics of the *polca canción*. There are many variants of the *polca* and there exist numerous disagreements as to their classification, so the term *polca paraguaya* often refers to Paraguayan music in general.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Szarán, ‘Music in Paraguay’, 64. Moreover, Ocampo (*Mundo folklórico paraguayo*, i, 69–71) mentions the *polca paraguaya*, *polca syryry* (sung, danceable and slower), *polca kyre-ỹ* (instrumental, fast/lively/playful), *polca popó* (instrumental, jumping) and *polca galopa* (fast, for brass band), while also adding the *chamamé* (similar to *polca syryry*, but developed in northern Argentina, a territory previously occupied by Paraguay). Meanwhile, Szarán (*Diccionario de la música en el Paraguay*, 392) adds the *polca sarakí* (playful/fast) and the *polca jekutú* (plunging). Two further subtypes are proposed by Celia Ruiz Rivas de Domínguez, namely *polca corrida* (running) and *polca valseada* (waltzing). See Ruiz Rivas de Domínguez, *Danzas tradicionales paraguayas: Método de enseñanza: Reseña histórica de la danza en el Paraguay y nociones sobre el folklore* (Asunción: C. Ruiz Rivas de Domínguez/Impr.

### *Other nationalist musical styles*

A substyle of the *polca paraguaya* is the dance music termed *galopa* (deriving from the European gallop), which also uses a lively rhythm in 6/8 metre with hemiola rhythmic patterns, and is distinguished by its closer association with folk and traditional dancing to the accompaniment of a folk band (see above, note 50). While the *polca* consists of a single musical section, the *galopa*, as mentioned above, is divided into two, with the second half presenting significant rhythmic variations played by the percussionists as the music accompanies female *galopa* dancers. Another European-derived music style is the *vals* (also called the *valseado paraguayo*), which is characterized by short, repetitive melodic phrases; standard harmonic progressions (I–V–I–IV–I–V–I); and a steady triple metre. The ‘folklorized’ *valseado* showcases some distinctive features: the dancers’ foot movement alternates between side to side and back to centre, while guitar strumming (*rasgueo*) is used to accent the rhythm. The instrumental accompaniment is usually performed by harp and guitars.

Among the vocal styles to emerge during the nineteenth century are the *rasguido doble* (double strumming) and *compuesto*. The *rasguido doble* is a song style in simple duple metre, which derives from particular strumming patterns performed on the guitar (for example, a mixture of strumming techniques and slapping strings onto the fretboard with the fingernails of the right hand, thus creating a percussive snare-like sound in between *rasguaedo* strums<sup>64</sup>) and often emphasizes two *golpes* (strums) of semiquavers on the first half of the first beat. Otherwise, it shares the typical characteristics of folkloric music: tonal harmony; a melodic line enriched through parallel thirds or sixths; and short, syncopated melodic phrases. The *compuesto* is a storytelling style set either to the Paraguayan *polca* (in 6/8, compound duple metre) or the *rasguido doble* (in 2/4, simple duple metre). Two singers, who are accompanied by guitars, harp and accordion, as well as the *rabel* (spike fiddle, a form of ‘popular’ violin), perform descriptive balladry (usually by anonymous authors or poets) centred on a real dramatic, epic or tragic event (*suceso*), as well as on festive, humorous or religious topics. At times, it serves as satire to ridicule authorities, or alternatively as a means to extol politicians and military leaders. Usually structured in four-line verses (*coplas*) or ten-line verses (*décimas*), the ballads are sung in Guaraní or Jopará.

### *Music and national identity during the Liberal Era*

During the early twentieth century, efforts were made by the Liberal Party (1904–40; formerly the Centro Democrático) to restore a sense of national pride, identity and direction to a nation devastated by the War of the Triple Alliance. The Nationalist Period was reinterpreted as the ‘golden age’ of independent development, progress and prosperity, led by the ‘father’ of the nation (Francia) and the ‘builder of the nation’

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Makrografić, 1974), 163. Meanwhile, the composer Florentín Giménez (*La música paraguaya*, 117) disagrees with these systems of classification and instead argues that the *polca paraguaya* is a subgenre of the *polca kyre-ỹ* and a predecessor of the *guarania*. See also Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 51–2.

<sup>64</sup> A helpful short demonstration is available on YouTube at <<https://youtu.be/qlK0VgkcGWo>> (accessed 22 February 2022).

(López), and the War of the Triple Alliance was reconstructed as a heroic defence and glorious (even inevitable) defeat. The nationalist discourse also constructed the idea of *raza guaraní*, that is, the widespread belief in a common ancestry based on Spanish and Guaraní ethnic identity,<sup>65</sup> which rendered the Paraguayan nation unique and distinctive in terms not only of history, culture and land, but also of ‘racial’ identity. While the term itself suggests racial purity, it was used in the nationalist discourse to convey a sense of blended (mestizo) ancestry, which is not unique in the Latin American context.<sup>66</sup> Yet the foregrounding of the indigenous element in the hybrid social construction of the concept of *raza guaraní* is what is most unique in the Paraguayan case. I will return to the notion of *raza guaraní* below.

An important national tradition to emerge in 1925 was the *guarania*, created by the Paraguayan composer José Asunción Flores as an urban vocal and instrumental musical style on the basis of earlier experiments with the *polca paraguaya*. The *guarania* involved altering the tempo of the *polca* and slowing it down in order to facilitate a more accurate performance of the latter’s melodic accentuation and rhythmic syncopation. Originally composed as an instrumental musical style, the *guarania* was quickly adapted for vocal music, where it emphasized romance and nostalgic themes with a high degree of emotion. The significance of the *guarania* in Paraguayan identity resulted in its national recognition as an official Paraguayan musical genre when Flores’s composition ‘India’ (c.1930) was adopted as the *guarania nacional* in 1944, and when his birthday (27 August) became established in 1994 as the Día Nacional de la Guaranía. Other musicians and composers have embraced the *guarania*, which, with the development of the recording industry in the 1950s, spread both within and beyond Paraguay, where it was shaped by other Latin American musical styles.

### *Music and national identity during the Colorado Party era (1940–89)*

The narrative of the Paraguayan nation that developed under the Liberal Party provided the subsequent ideological foundation of the Colorado Party (formerly the Asociación

<sup>65</sup> The idea of *raza guaraní* is a widespread belief based on ‘myth’, as Paraguay’s indigenous population is very small today (less than 3% of the population), and it is not Guaraní. First, Guaraní is a linguistic, rather than an ethnic term. Secondly, Paraguay’s Guaraní-speaking population during the arrival of the Spanish was present only in the east, with an array of other ethnic groups dominating other areas. Thirdly, Paraguay is actually largely mestizo, which is a result of (a) the Spanish colonial policy of encouraging intermarriage/interbreeding, (b) Dr Francia’s subsequent efforts to make intermarriage obligatory and (c) the repopulation efforts (fuelled partly by immigration) following the decimation of the population caused by the War of the Triple Alliance. See also Lambert, ‘History, Identity and Paraguayidad’, 16–17.

<sup>66</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century, most Latin American countries (with the exception of Brazil, Cuba and Puerto Rico, where slavery persisted until the 1880s) had become independent republics and had abolished slavery, while elites were keen to define their new nations’ identities in a positive light, even within the context of the period’s European-dominating views on white superiority. Towards the early twentieth century, some Latin Americans invoked a constructed notion of ‘progressive mixture’, although many countries encouraged European immigration to promote *blanqueamiento* (‘whitening’). For example, the Mexican state glorified the indigenous past via ideologies of *indigenismo* at the same time as promoting integration and mixedness.

Nacional Republicana), which ruled between 1940 and 1989, notably under the three-decade dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner. Self-imposed isolation continued to be a recurrent theme adopted for political convenience by the Stroessner dictatorship.<sup>67</sup> Paraguay's geographical and political isolation created a more inward-looking society while fostering a stronger sense of shared cultural norms and identity. The Colorado Party focused on formal education programmes to promote Guaraní grammar and Paraguayan history, to re-educate Paraguayans and to create the sentiment of an undivided nation where citizens adhere to the core values of the constitution – *libertad, unión e igualdad* (freedom, union and equality), values also expressed in the national anthem of Paraguay.<sup>68</sup> While Paraguay is a country of immigrants, Paraguayans are officially bilingual, Spanish being the language of the political and legal systems, the mass media and the public administration, while Guaraní is the preferred language of the majority of the population.<sup>69</sup> It was owing to the promotion of systematic instruction in and spoken use of the Guaraní language as part of nation-building from the 1920s until the 1970s<sup>70</sup> that Guaraní became 'the language of the people' and was constructed as a key defining characteristic of *paraguayidad*.<sup>71</sup>

Paraguayan identity was also constructed and reinforced through the state's creation and promotion of invented folkloric traditions exemplified by the propagation of religious festivities, folk music, folk dances, crafts and food. Colman, who experienced this period at first hand, explains:

Beginning in the late 1950s and until the mid-1980s, the state promoted artistic, musical, and popular expressions associated with *paraguayidad*. Among these 'officialized' expressions, the para-liturgical activities (dance, fair, food, games, music) connected especially to the festivities of San Blás (Saint Blas, Catholic patron saint of Paraguay) on February 3, Kuruzú Ara (the feast of the Cross) on May 6, San Juan (Saint John the Baptist) on June 21, and the Virgen de Caacupé (The Virgin Mary of Caacupé); and the choreographic productions offered by the newly created Ballet Folclórico Municipal (The Municipal Folkloric Ballet) and the folk music performances of the Banda Folclórica Municipal (The Municipal Folk Music Band), were of paramount significance in the

<sup>67</sup> It helped to maintain constructive relations with key economic partners (notably the USA) and avoid political condemnation for human rights abuses. Indeed, most Paraguayan governments of the twentieth century have been financially and politically corrupt, and have chosen to exploit the national wealth and resources for their own benefit, thus placing the country into immense external debt.

<sup>68</sup> Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 9. Colman also talks about *tekó*, a Guaraní term used to describe the constructed idea of 'being [a good] Paraguayan'. He suggests that owing to the systematic instruction of Guaraní in elementary and secondary schools, inherent ideas and values such as *rekó* (place/home), *tekojoká* (solidarity), *teko-katueté* (pride), *teko-ogaiguá* (family), *tekopoĩ* (honesty) and *tecopyty* (friendship) were instilled to support the notion of an ideal Paraguayan society.

<sup>69</sup> See also Robert Andrew Nickson, 'Governance and the Revitalisation of the Guaraní Language in Paraguay', *Latin American Research Review*, 44/3 (2009), 3–26.

<sup>70</sup> This was made possible by the Jesuit priests' efforts towards the study and notation of the Guaraní language during the time of Spanish colonization.

<sup>71</sup> According to the 2002 census, 59% of urban Paraguayans preferred at that time to speak in Guaraní, a figure that rose to 83% in rural Paraguay, while only 6% of the population (generally the elites) spoke only Spanish.

construction and reinforcement of popular expressions. Paraguayans take such expressions to be long-standing cultural traditions [...] [it] is crucial to recognize that this socio-constructed idea [*paraguayidad*], first inculcated by the state, has served as one of the main means of propagating invented traditions such as folk music festivals.<sup>72</sup>

In the 1970s, the Paraguayan composer Oscar Nelson Safuán (1943–2007) invented a new hybrid music style termed *avanzada* in an effort to innovate Paraguayan traditional music (notably the *galopa*, *guarania* and *polca paraguaya*) while expanding the traditional harmonic language also to include augmented, diminished and dominant-seventh chords, and encouraging the inclusion of acoustic, electronic and percussion instruments. The *avanzada* combines the rhythmic patterns of the Paraguayan *galopa* with those of the *guarania* in a ratio of two bars to one: within one bar of the slow (compound duple) *guarania* are placed two bars of the fast (compound duple) *galopa*. The result is a hybrid rhythmic structure in compound duple metre.

This era in Paraguayan nationalism was instrumental in constructing the belief that Paraguayan identity is part of the essence of *paraguayidad* which refers to a shared set of beliefs and values shaped by an ideal historical past (the ‘golden age’), and it explains why still today most Paraguayans use the terms identity and *paraguayidad* interchangeably. *Paraguayidad* is a constructed belief in a shared national experience, shaped by Paraguay’s relative isolation, its historical memory of war and immigration, its strong regard for land/geographical territory (*la tierra colorada*) and its unique language, which resonates with the stark differences between wealth and poverty, land ownership and landlessness, privilege and inequality still evident in Paraguay.<sup>73</sup> This belief is still reflected in much traditional and folkloric music, which is often sung in Guaraní, Spanish or Jopará.

Today, a large body of folkloric traditions represents and evokes national tangible elements of *paraguayidad*, including *ñandutí*, a weaving tradition from the town of Itauguá (see Figure 1); *chipá*, a corn starch and cheese bread; *tereré*, a yerba mate cool drink; *filigrana*, silver jewellery from Luque; and Paraguayan folkloric music (*música popular*). In music, *paraguayidad* is expressed most directly in *conjunto* (ensemble) performances by harp and guitars (including the *requinto* guitar) and the accordion, using the Paraguayan *polca* rhythm (*ritmo paraguayo*), with singing in Guaraní and Jopará. While Paraguayans regard the *polca paraguaya* and *guarania* as the most ‘authentic’ folkloric expressions of *paraguayidad*, other styles like the aforementioned *galopa*, *vals*, *rasguido doble*, *compuesto* and *avanzada* have entered the canon of Paraguayan folklore.<sup>74</sup> Numerous *conjuntos* (ensembles playing *música popular*) have performed them both nationally and internationally, notably Luis Alberto del Paraná and his *conjunto* Los Paraguayos, who travelled extensively in Europe and South America and recorded some 80 albums, as well as other popular *conjuntos* such as Los Indios, Los Carios, Los Gómez and Los Mensajeros del Paraguay. These ‘invented’ folkloric traditions most directly evoke and reflect *paraguayidad* today.

<sup>72</sup> Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 10.

<sup>73</sup> Lambert, ‘History, Identity and Paraguayidad’, 17, 22.

<sup>74</sup> Szarán, *Diccionario de la música en el Paraguay*; Ocampo, *Mundo folklórico paraguayo*; Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*, 48–63.



Figure 1 Paraguayan *nanduti* (a weaving tradition from the town of Itauguá) and other local crafts sold at the craft market in Asunción, 30 June 2011. © Simone Krüger Bridge.

## Music, *paraguayidad* and *raza guaraní*

While *paraguayidad* and Paraguayan identity are intimately connected and have been related to the construction of the Paraguayan nation since the early nineteenth century, the nationalist discourse also constructed the idea of *raza guaraní*, a founding ‘myth’ of common ancestry and common ethnic community based on Spanish and Guaraní ethnic identity, which rendered the Paraguayan nation unique and distinctive in terms of race and ethnicity.<sup>75</sup> I found the belief in *raza guaraní* to be still widespread among Paraguayans today, both in Paraguay and in the diaspora. For example, in November 2018, at the invitation of Nuno Vinhas, the president of the Anglo-Paraguayan Society, I presented a talk at the Instituto Cervantes in London, which was attended predominantly by Paraguayans living in the south of the UK. To my surprise, in attendance was also the (former) ambassador and plenipotentiary of Paraguay, His Excellency Mr Miguel A. Solano-López Casco, who made a speech after my talk, stressing the point that *raza guaraní* is a fact, and that Paraguayans have indeed evolved from the creolization of Spanish men and Guaraní women. The speech felt very powerful, and Paraguayans in the audience agreed unanimously, so I wondered, ‘Who am I to define and somewhat judge their shared (even if constructed) belief?’

In the context of contemporary music, the rock guitarist Chaparro evokes this shared belief in racial and cultural identity directly by emphasizing the Guaraní elements of Barrios’s concert persona during 1930–4 on the album cover of *Bohemio* (see Figures 2 and 3), where the overlaid image in the centre shows Barrios as the sixteenth-century Guaraní warrior Mangoré. Barrios would enter the stage in full ‘Indian’ dress, including headdress with feathers, surrounded by palm leaves and bamboo to evoke ideas of ‘the jungle’. Concert advertisements depicted Barrios as the exotic figure of Chief Nitsuga Mangoré<sup>76</sup> and described him as ‘the messenger of the Guaraní race [...] the Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay’.<sup>77</sup> As the figure of Mangoré, Barrios may also be regarded as expressing a strong sense of musical nationalism that aligned with the prevailing political movements towards independence from colonial Spain, and with it an assertion of the culture of the New World against the Old World<sup>78</sup> – yet it is important to stress that this is but one interpretation among others.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Nickson, ‘Governance and the Revitalisation of the Guaraní Language’; Lambert, ‘History, Identity and Paraguayidad’, 16.

<sup>76</sup> From the 1930s, Barrios adopted the stage name ‘Chief Nitsuga Mangoré’, ‘Nitsuga’ being Agustín spelled backwards and ‘Mangoré’ the name of an apparently legendary Guaraní cacique of the South American indigenous tribe the Timbúes (c. 1528; although this connection is tenuous and the choice of the name is probably better explained as a deliberate attempt to construct Barrios’s ‘exotic’ stage persona at the time).

<sup>77</sup> Stover, *Six Silver Moonbeams*, 153; Regan, ‘Agustín Barrios Mangoré’, 74; see also Szarán, ‘Agustín Pío Barrios [Nitsuga Mangoré]’.

<sup>78</sup> Ward, ‘Agustín Barrios Mangoré’, 7–8.

<sup>79</sup> I am grateful to Alfredo Colman for highlighting that Ward’s interpretation may be contested by some Paraguayans.

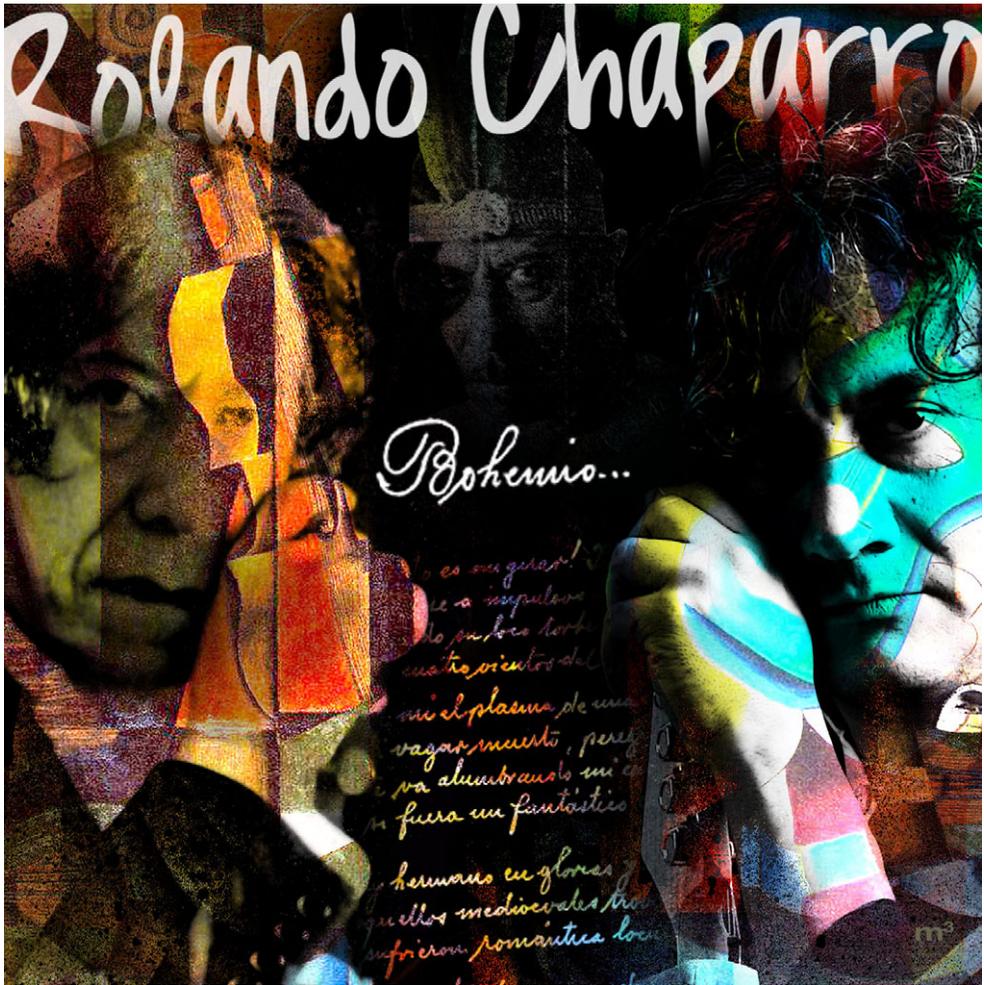


Figure 2 Album cover of Rolando Chaparro's album *Bohemio* (2011), which pays tribute to the Paraguayan composer and guitarist Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885–1944). © RCH Producciones. Reproduced by permission of Carlos Salcedo Centurión.

By appearing in 'native dress' surrounded by jungle imagery as Chief Nitsuga Mangoré, Barrios used the concept of *raza guaraní* as a concert marketing strategy at a time when nationalist discourses continued to promote the belief that Paraguayans are 'the result of the mix of Spanish and Guaraní, the enlightened European and the noble savage, the "warrior farmer" [...] [which had] by the mid-1930s [...] become part of the official government line'.<sup>80</sup> It is therefore perhaps not surprising that most Paraguayans today believe Guaraní culture and language to be the essence of *paraguayidad*.

<sup>80</sup> Lambert, 'History, Identity and Paraguayidad', 16.



Figure 3 Image of Agustín Barrios Mangoré dressed as Chief Nitsuga Mangoré (c.1933). Photograph provided by the Barrios historian Carlos Salcedo Centurión and reproduced by his permission.

While Chaparro clearly makes visual references to *raza guaraní*, he goes even further by including a musical reference to Guaraní and its imagined connection to indigenous culture by framing his rock fusion arrangement of the classical tremolo work ‘Una limosnita por el amor de Dios’ (‘Alms for the Love of God’; track 10 on the album *Bohemio*) with a field recording of children singing a nursery rhyme in Guaraní, which is faded in and out before and after the piece proper. This is significant, because Guaraní has become *constructed* as the ‘language of the indigenous people’,<sup>81</sup> even though indigenous peoples have suffered a long history of racism, maltreatment and inequality under Spanish colonialism. Indeed, racism and discrimination persist in Paraguay even today, and the constitutional rights of native groups have not been translated into legislative, administrative or other measures.<sup>82</sup> Chaparro uses this Guaraní musical expression to denote his radical stance in opposition to such mainstream societal values, which is embedded within the wider rock aesthetic that provides the backdrop to his expressions of political and social values. Indeed, many Paraguayans regard Chaparro as a representative of ‘the people’, a title which he received on account both of his socio-economic (working-class) background and of the political activism expressed through and in his music, including his varied musical collaborations with Guaraní and African artists and musical representations of the ‘other’ in Paraguayan society.<sup>83</sup>

### The Barrios revival and class consciousness

The decision made (separately) by Bobadilla and Chaparro to arrange and record the music of Barrios, rather than, for example, Flores, is significant, even though it takes on different meanings and significance in each case. While Bobadilla herself conceived the idea for her album *Barrios Hoy* (see Figure 4), in Chaparro’s case it was the Barrios historian Centurión who encouraged (and organized the funding for) him to arrange and record the *Bohemio* album as part of his sustained efforts to promote Barrios and his works worldwide. While Barrios may have been forgotten in Paraguay during his lifetime, his work has been the object of constant revival efforts since the 1950s which peaked during my research visit in 2011 during the bicentennial of independence. This continued interest in Barrios among certain members of Paraguay’s elite and middle-

<sup>81</sup> It is important here to stress the ubiquity and role of the Guaraní language as the primary language among poor Paraguayans, the great majority of whom are not indigenous.

<sup>82</sup> See Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, ‘The Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Paraguay’, UN Human Rights Council report (2015), <[https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_30\\_41\\_Add\\_1\\_ENG-.docx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A_HRC_30_41_Add_1_ENG-.docx)> (accessed 10 December 2021).

<sup>83</sup> Chaparro is perhaps one of the most versatile instrumentalists among the new generation of Paraguayan musicians. He has written songs and composed music in diverse musical styles, notably rock, jazz fusion, folk fusion, music for theatre, commercial jingles, music for TV series, entertainment music and more. He also developed acclaimed collaborations with well-known folk artists such as Juan Cancio Barreto, Barni Chaparro, Efrén ‘Kamba’i’ Echeverría (for example, ‘El concierto guitarreros’) and the harpist César Cataldo, and has performed with the Asunción Symphony Orchestra on numerous occasions. He also played the guitar on his song ‘Espinás del alma’ and an arrangement of the popular song ‘Soy algo fácil de olvidar’ for the soundtrack of the Paraguayan film *Miramenomtokéi*. Meanwhile, as a singer-songwriter he is regarded as a lead figure in the second-generation Nuevo Cancionero movement.

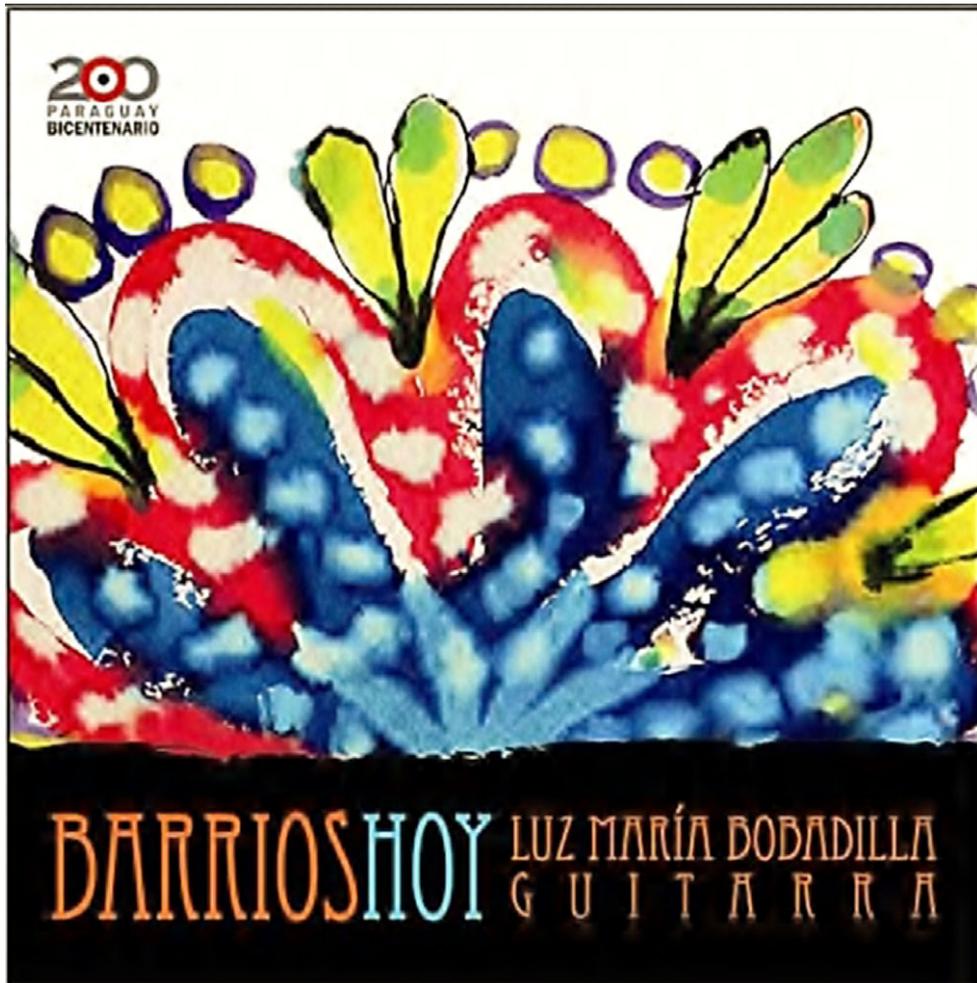


Figure 4 Album cover of *Barrios Hoy: Luz María Bobadilla guitarra*. © Luz María Bobadilla and Carlos Schwartzman, and reproduced by permission of Luz María Bobadilla and Carlos Schwartzman.

class groups reflects the strong class consciousness prevalent in contemporary Paraguay. Indeed, as I observed and confirmed through numerous interviews and casual conversations during and after my fieldwork experience, urban higher-status Paraguayans have always looked to Europe, and specifically to European ‘high’ art, for their perception of Paraguayan identity. This is clearly reflected in local revival efforts that continue to celebrate Barrios’s compositions, music recordings and elevated status as the ‘greatest guitarist-composer of all time’.<sup>84</sup> For example, during conversations with the Paraguayan singer and doctoral student in ethnomusicology Romy Martínez, I became aware that singing styles based on classical conventions are often more highly

<sup>84</sup> John Williams, quoted in Regan, ‘Agustín Barrios Mangoré’, 75.

**su legado**

Agustín compuso alrededor de 300 obras para guitarra de la que se conocen aproximadamente 140. Actualmente, sus obras se enseñan en los principales conservatorios del mundo e integran el repertorio formal de la guitarra clásica, siendo masivamente editadas y grabadas por cientos de intérpretes. Agustín Barrios es considerado un ícono panamericano por la cantidad de países que recorrió transmitiendo su arte musical, convirtiéndose en uno de los mayores compositores e intérpretes para guitarra clásica del siglo XX, y una fuente de inspiración para las presentes y futuras generaciones.

**Gira 2011 "CON BERTA ROJAS, HOY TOCA MANGORÉ"**

Idea original: Berta Rojas Project Manager: Gabriela Sabaté Producción general: Flora Sánchez Show: Celeste Prieto	Producción General: Eduardo Poyricos Prensa: Silvia Ruffinelli Berta Rojas España de Investigación: Cecilia Sisti Legel Carlos Salcedo	Ingeniero de Sonido: Marcelo Cornu Edición: Cesar Baez Audiovisual: Núclea Armeté Show: Publicidad Martínez	Berta Rojas Pianopromover: Silvia Kohnen Secretarías: Lucía Lane de Aguirre Queda: Carlos López
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AUSPICIOS

...una embajadora de la guitarra clásica...  
 Classical Guitar Magazine (Inglaterra)

"Berta Rojas, guitarrista extraordinaria."  
 Mark Adams  
 Washington Post (EEUU)

Figure 5 Outside cover of an educational/promotional pamphlet advertising the Paraguayan virtuoso guitarist Berta Rojas's 2011 performance tour (*Con Berta Rojas, hoy toca Mangoré*) of works by Barrios, provided to author by Berta Rojas and reproduced by permission of Berta Rojas.

valued than popular singing in Paraguay, since preferences for classical music are associated with sophistication and refinement, which are in turn closely linked to the notion of belonging to a particular social class.

Barrios's guitar compositions, however, are similarly adopted as a hallmark of the upper classes in Paraguay. For instance, I could not help but notice the vast proliferation of Barrios-themed musical and extramusical activities involving live and mediated guitar concerts and festivals in commemoration of him. Notable examples included the Paraguayan virtuoso guitarist Berta Rojas's 2011 performance tour (*Con Berta Rojas, hoy toca Mangoré*) showcasing works by Barrios (see Figure 5); and the tribute of the International Guitar Festival (Encuentro Internacional de Guitarra) 'Homenaje a Agustín Barrios' held at the Centro Cultural de España (CCEJS) in Asunción, 13–15 July 2011, featuring guitarists from Paraguay (Diego Guzmán, Rodríguez Benítez), Uruguay and Brazil (see Figure 6).<sup>85</sup> There was

<sup>85</sup> Interestingly, the festival programme did not focus extensively on Barrios's works and, in fact, only featured two of his compositions over the entire three days. Nevertheless, the event officially paid tribute to him, which reinforces and taps into the Barrios revival that dominates current cultural life in urban centres like Asunción.



Figure 6 Front cover of pamphlet advertising the International Guitar Festival (Encuentro Internacional de Guitarra) in tribute to Barrios ('Homenaje a Agustín Barrios') held at the Centro Cultural de España (CCEJS) in Asunción, 13–15 July 2011, and provided to the concert audience.



Figure 7 Exhibition of Barrios's original manuscripts, recordings, guitars, photographs and artefacts at the Cabildo Museum and Teatro de Municipal in Asunción. The guitar to the right is the instrument originally made in 1930 by the Spanish luthier Enrique Sanfeliú, which Barrios had decorated with his initials ABM (Agustín Barrios Mangoré) in 18ct gold. Photograph taken on 28 June 2011. © Simone Krüger Bridge.

also a wave of activity surrounding music recordings in different musical styles dedicated to the life and times of Barrios.

The Barrios revival also proliferated by means of public displays and museum exhibitions, cultural tours to sites of relevant Barrios heritage, and scholarly and journalistic literature and publications on Barrios's life and music. For instance, the Cabildo Museum in Asunción has since 2007 housed a major exhibition of Barrios's original manuscripts, recordings, guitars, photographs and other artefacts within its larger exhibition on Paraguayan culture, while the Teatro de Municipal houses a smaller collection of original 78rpm recordings alongside publications and publicity material (see Figures 7–8).

Meanwhile, the recently established 'Ruta Mangoreana' (Barrios Trail), conceived and promoted by the Asunción-based Guitars from the Heart Association and its affiliated research group, the Barrios Mangoré Project Centre, reveals the origins and movements of the Barrios family in and around Paraguay (see Figure 9). During my stay in Paraguay, I was invited by María Selva Corrales and Dalila Corrales Martino on a tour of San Juan Bautista, where the Barrios family home, Casona Mangoré, has been turned into a museum and a monument has been erected (see Figures 10–11); the neighbouring town Villa Florida, which is believed to be Barrios's birthplace (although



Figure 8 Exhibition of Barrios's original manuscripts, recordings, publications and publicity material at the Cabildo Museum and Teatro de Municipal in Asunción. Photograph taken on 28 June 2011. © Simone Krüger Bridge.



Figure 9 'La Ruta Mangoreana' (Mangoré Trail). © Barrios Mangoré Project Centre and Guitars from the Heart Association. Reproduced by permission from Carlos Salcedo Centurión.

this is only one of at least two circulating theories) and where the Corrales family exhibit Barrios nostalgia in their private ranch house; San Bernardino, where the Hotel del Lago houses a 'Barrios Room' and other memorabilia and offers occasional guitar concerts by leading Barrios specialists like Bobadilla, Rojas, Sosa and other invited



Figure 10 Casona Mangoré, the former Barrios family home in San Juan Bautista, Misiones. Photograph by author (14 August 2011). © Simone Krüger Bridge.



Figure 11 Barrios monument in San Juan Bautista, Misiones. Photograph by author (14 August 2011). © Simone Krüger Bridge.

guests; the former Argentinian Consulate in Villa Florida, where Barrios's father, José Doroteo Barrios Falcon, worked as a vice-consul; and other places of Barrios-inspired nostalgia. I also took the boat tour of the Rio Paraná with members of the Corrales family to visit the infamous place where Barrios would have crossed the river.

Official efforts, meanwhile, were evident in 2009, 2010 and 2011, when the Paraguayan government of President Fernando Lugo Méndez (unsuccessfully) requested from El Salvador the repatriation of Barrios's remains on the basis of his Paraguayan citizenship and national identity, reflecting the fact that Barrios is considered today as a major figure in the national cultural heritage of Paraguay.<sup>86</sup> This fact is further exemplified by a new 50,000 guaraníes note that came into circulation in 2011 (see Figure 12), depicting (on the front) an image of Barrios and (on the back) a classical guitar owned by him from 1918 with the words 'Mangoré: popa su guaraní' ('Mangoré: fifty thousand guaraníes') beneath, an example of which survives in the private collection of Renato Bellucci.<sup>87</sup> Noteworthy here are similar initiatives by the Paraguayan government in issuing commemorating postal stamps with Barrios's image (one in 1985 and two in 1994), as well as a commemorating postmark in 2005.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, I could not help but notice the many commemorative posters in celebration of Paraguay's bicentenary on lamp posts throughout Asunción depicting well-known and influential personalities in Paraguay's history, including Francia, Benjamín Aceval, Carlos Frederico Reyes, Juan Bautista Rivarola and, not surprisingly, Barrios himself (see Figure 13). The year 2011 also saw the publication (in Spanish) of the revised, updated and greatly expanded biography of Barrios in Stover's 1992 edition of *Six Silver Moonbeams*, commissioned by the Paraguayan government under Lugo Méndez and supported by Margarita Morselli (the director of Cabildo Museum) and the Barrios Mangoré Project Centre, notably its founder, the music historian Carlos Salcedo Centurión, who became a key informant during my stay in Paraguay.<sup>89</sup>

The local newspapers seemed scattered with Barrios-related news about his life and work, while reinforcing the idea of the 'artist as hero' and the related concept of the 'artist as genius'.<sup>90</sup> In terms of my own presence in Paraguay, I often found myself

<sup>86</sup> Interestingly, in 1991 the remains of Flores – one of the most representative composers in Paraguay – were repatriated from Argentina. He was opposed to the dictatorial Stroessner government that ruled until 1989 and thus lived and worked in Argentina. Even so, his wish was to return to Paraguay and for his body to be buried in his home town of Asunción. See <<https://www.abc.com.py/espectaculos/a-15-anos-de-la-repatriacion-943185.html>> (accessed 1 September 2020).

<sup>87</sup> See <<http://www.mangore.com/my-barrios-guitar-7-29-107>> (accessed 5 October 2014).

<sup>88</sup> See Stover, *Six Silver Moonbeams*, 2nd edn, 410.

<sup>89</sup> Stover, *Séis rayos de plata*.

<sup>90</sup> For instance, Victor Manuel Oxley Ynsfrán's newspaper article 'Agustín Barrios: La cúspide del ultraromanticismo', *Ultima hora*, 2 July 2011, makes clear references to Barrios as 'genio de la guitarra' and 'uno de los representantes más universales de la cultura paraguaya' ('one of the most universal representatives of Paraguayan culture'). Interestingly, Ynsfrán's claim that Barrios was born in San Juan Bautista, Misiones, is fiercely contested by Centurión, but there is no concrete evidence to support either claim as Barrios's birth certificate has not been found.



Figure 12 The new 50,000 guaraníes note that came into circulation in 2011, depicting (on the front) an image of Barrios and (on the back) a classical guitar owned by him from 1918 with the words ‘Mangoré: popa su guaraní’. © Banco Central del Paraguay. Available at <<https://www.bcp.gov.py/monedas-y-billetes-en-circulacion-i513>> (accessed 15 January 2021) and reproduced for educational purposes.

instantaneously tied up in the Barrios revival, as if by default my informants assumed that I had travelled to Paraguay because of Barrios. For instance, following an interview (organized by Centurión) with the journalist Nancy Duré Cáceres (from the national newspaper *ABC Color*) about my research into guitar music cultures in Paraguay, I was surprised to discover that the extended article that resulted centred heavily on Barrios (witness its title and the Barrios-related images that featured throughout), even though he was clearly not the sole focus of my research.<sup>91</sup>

While the revival efforts clearly reinforce the widespread belief among urban middle-class and higher-status Paraguayans in Barrios as a ‘Paraguayan genius’ and a ‘lost national treasure’ that needs to be collected, preserved and promoted worldwide, they also reflect the relationship between class-based identity and musical taste. In the context of Paraguay, I observed a strong correlation between ‘high’ culture and a taste for ‘high’ art and classical music, and urban Paraguayans of higher social status tended to use displays of their musical taste to distinguish themselves from those of lower social status. There is indeed a huge gap there between the large lower-class population and

<sup>91</sup> Nancy Duré Cáceres, ‘Mangoré eterno: Agustín Pío Barrios, a sesenta y siete años de su fallecimiento, sigue siendo motivo de orgullo’, *ABC Color*, 18 September 2011, <<http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresa/suplementos/abc-revista/mangore-eterno-309336.html>> (accessed 16 July 2015).



Figure 13 Commemorative posters celebrating Paraguay's bicentenary appeared on lamp posts throughout Asunción, depicting well-known and influential personalities in Paraguay's history, including Barrios. Photograph by author (23 July 2011). © Simone Krüger Bridge.

the small wealthy group of Paraguayans. It was the latter group who patronized the Barrios revival, thereby displaying their taste in and preference for musical quality, refinement and authority, all indicative of a high-class status that has its roots in modern European societies, where the dominant musical expression is 'serious' art or classical music, reflecting the cultural preferences of the dominant social class of the bourgeoisie. Art music of the nineteenth century became seen as an expression of composers' own personal feelings, which marked a deliberate move away from ideas that regarded so-called 'primitive' or 'light' (popular) music as an expression of collective experience.

The 2011 Barrios revival efforts driven by individuals from Paraguay's elite and middle-class groups clearly reflect the idea that the only legitimate object of study is that of the classical art tradition, which renders other music, such as folkloric and popular styles, as being inadequate and inferior. I remember, for instance, a long conversation in July 2011 with the acclaimed pianist and composer Florentín Giménez (b. 1925) at his house in Asunción, to which I was invited by Colman, during which Giménez expressed strong views with regard to the lower status and value of folkloric 'popular' music as compared with classical art music. This shared understanding of musical value reflects a general, even if loose connection between socio-economic stratification and musical hierarchy, and, with it, links between music and value, taste and social class in Paraguay, which are actively reinforced through upbringing, education, music institutions and, indeed, music revival efforts.

## Conclusions

Identity is a fruitful concept for the social and cultural analysis of music in contemporary Paraguay. To focus on identity is to acknowledge the central position which the concept occupies in contemporary debates in ethnomusicology, music sociology and popular-music studies. In ethnomusicology particularly, the concept of identity has been of paradigmatic significance and has informed the intellectual history of the discipline. It has ignited endless juxtapositions with case studies of traditional and, more recently, popular musics and is articulated in numerous studies of musical styles and traditions. Here, the term typically refers to the ways in which groups and individuals define and represent themselves – as members of nations and groups and as individuals – through the music they perform and value. Identity is thus not merely reflected in and through music but also shaped by the constitutive or transforming role of music. In other words, music both constructs new identities and continues to reflect existing ones. Aesthetic meaning in music is therefore understood as being situated within its wider social and cultural contexts, which this article has sought to understand through a focus on guitar culture in contemporary Paraguay.

It is within this context that this research is situated, illuminating the ways in which Paraguayan identity is expressed in and through music. Taking two contrasting albums that commemorate the work of Agustín Barrios as a starting point, this article explores Paraguayan national, racial and class identity, specifically within the context of guitar

music culture, spanning music genres and styles from traditional and folkloric to art and popular music. Specifically, Chaparro's rock fusion album *Bohemio*, which contains rock arrangements of musical compositions by Barrios, has served here as an analytical lens through which to understand the various ways in which Paraguayan identity – national, racial, class – is expressed. My research is also intended to make an indirect contribution to recent studies surrounding the cultural identity of musical instruments, as instruments themselves become markers or icons of cultural significance.<sup>92</sup> Although the harp is regarded as the national instrument of Paraguay, the guitar occupies a prominent role in all spheres of life and transcends musical genres and styles. Yet while the Barrios revivals have provided a tremendous boost to the study of the classical guitar in Paraguay and worldwide, the central role played by the guitar in other Paraguayan music still deserves concentrated scholarly attention.

In Paraguay, identity expressed in music assigns significance through national, racial and class dimensions. National identity is evoked by tapping into the official construct of the Paraguayan nation, which is actively reinforced through the figure of Barrios, whose music, as I have shown here, has been resurrected as a major contribution to the national cultural heritage of Paraguay. In terms of the music, two types of repertoire – *música popular* and Western classical music – exemplify this, but evoke identity in quite different ways. On the one hand, an understanding and appreciation of the musical complexity and significance of Barrios's classical repertoire reflects a widespread romanticized and constructed belief in Barrios as a 'Paraguayan genius' and a 'lost national treasure' through which displays of social hierarchy are achieved. On the other hand, the significance of Barrios's Paraguayan 'popular' pieces (such as 'Danza paraguaya') epitomize the cultural dimension of identity as an exemplar of 'typical' Paraguayan musical styles, as these were born out of and constructed during the nationalist movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nationalist efforts to construct and reinforce the sociocultural values associated with *paraguayidad* also included the Guaraní 'race' as a signifier of an ethnic identity directly representative of the Guaraní people that came to serve over time as an ultimate expression of Paraguayan national identity. While nationalist discourses constructed the idea of *raza guaraní*, that is, the widespread belief in a common ancestry based on Spanish and Guaraní ethnic identity, Chaparro in particular tapped into this constructed and widely shared belief in powerful ways both musically and visually and within the rock aesthetic as an expression of political and social value in opposition to mainstream hegemonic values and ideology.

Yet besides their nationalist, racial and class-informed expression of Paraguayanness, both albums also add a further dimension to the expression of Paraguayan identity by way of musical hybridity and syncretism. The musical style of both albums is thoroughly eclectic, blending various ingredients – including classical music, *música popular*, Western rock and jazz – through which a more contemporary, globalized Paraguayanness is expressed and constructed, reflecting the recent impact of

<sup>92</sup> Colman, *The Paraguayan Harp*; Andy Bennett and Kevin Dawe, *Guitar Cultures* (London: Routledge, 2020), 1.

globalization mediated through mass communication. This has encouraged cultural interaction and worked to diminish national and ethnic boundaries. This eclectic musical style expresses an inclusive identity defined in terms of musical hybridity and collaboration, while also reflecting more complex globalized, transnational musical identity that extends beyond national boundaries and becomes entangled in the global circulation of people and musical practices.





*Autógrafo para el archivo musical de mi más querido amigo M. Berde y*

*Pagola.*

*En Quiebra Jugo. Enero 14 de 1926.*

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