

Whose ‘Better World’? Reflections on Applied Music Interventions in the Andes

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We have discovered that the oppressed too are riven by factionalism and that the criteria for a ‘better world’ may be hotly disputed at the local level.¹

In anthropology we are continuously slaying paradigms, only to see them return to life, as if discovered for the first time... As each successive approach carries the axe to its predecessors, anthropology comes to resemble a project of intellectual deforestation.²

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The field of applied (ethno)musicology often seems to be presented as a new and forward-looking approach with which ethically-minded music scholars should engage. Indeed, in light of Jeff Todd Titon’s characterisation of the field as a ‘music-centered intervention in a particular community, whose purpose is to benefit that community’, or other practitioners’ definitions that stress its role in “problem-solving”, the value of applied ethnomusicology appears almost indisputable.³ However, viewed from a Latin America perspective, it quickly becomes evident that applied methods are far from new.⁴ Indeed, ‘problem-solving’-focussed approaches are evident in the *indigenismo* movement that swept the region over much of the twentieth century, as well as sometimes connected with foreign aid programmes, modernisation, and development. Today’s perspectives on these historical interventions, which aimed to solve the so-called “Indian problem” (i.e. how to integrate indigenous people into “national societies”), are by no means always celebratory. Rather, they often stress paternalism, divergent values, and social inequalities, alongside concerns over agency, cultural dispossession, and the use of culture as a (national) resource. This leads us to question how we understand the supposed benefits of applied interventions, including the forms these might take and the identities of the supposed community of beneficiaries.

¹ Olivia Harris, ‘Comment’, in Orin Starn, ‘Rethinking the Politics of Anthropology: The Case of the Andes’, *Current Anthropology*, 35/1 (1994), 27.

² Eric Wolf, ‘Facing Power – Old Insights, New Questions’, *American Anthropologist*, 92/3 (1990), 588.

³ Jeff Todd Titon, ‘Applied Ethnomusicology: A Descriptive and Historical Account’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology*, ed. Svanibor Pettan and Jeff Todd Titon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 4. The emergence of an applied approach as a recognisable force within ethnomusicology is conventionally identified with a 1992 special issue of the journal *Ethnomusicology*. Its early emphasis on cultural conservation soon shifted to the solving of concrete problems affecting people and communities, as also reflected in the definition adopted in the 2007 founding meeting of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) Study Group on Applied Ethnomusicology. See Timothy Rice, ‘Ethnomusicology in Times of Trouble’, *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 46 (2014), 194; and Klisala Harrison, ‘The Second Wave of Applied Ethnomusicology’, *MUSICultures*, 4/2 (2014), 15–33.

⁴ See Anthony Seeger, ‘Changing Praxis and Ethical Practice: Lessons for Ethnomusicology from Applied Anthropology’, in *Transforming Ethnomusicology: Methodologies, Institutional Structures and Policies*, ed. Beverley Diamond and Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 25–42.

However, we also wish to stress how Latin America's 'hotbed of theoretical and methodological innovations in the social sciences and arts' contributed to twentieth-century critical thought (especially around the 1970s) and to applied and activist research.⁵ We need look no further than Orlando Fals Borda from Colombia and his role in the development of Participatory Action Research (PAR), the Brazilian Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Jorge Sanjinés and Grupo Ukamao's participatory indigenous cinematic productions in Bolivia, and Bolivia's Andean Oral History Workshop (THOA, f. 1983).⁶ While some accounts of Latin American 'applied ethnomusicology' seem to fixate on the need for scholars in the region to urgently 'catch up' with Anglophone ethnomusicology,⁷ we instead emphasise reappraisal and acknowledgement of the rich contributions of Latin American scholars, thinkers, and activists. Thus, in embracing applied (ethno)musicology, we argue for proceeding with humility, caution, and an ear to the past. Many people have trodden these paths before, with the same aim of solving problems and bringing benefits to marginalised and discriminated people, and have encountered similar challenges and contradictions. As Eric Wolf's quoted epigram reminds us, what we are doing, and the spirit with which we are undertaking it, may not be so new, just as the outcomes may be no better or more predictable.

In this chapter, we explore applied approaches to music projects and scholarship in the Andes, focussing in particular on the two authors' work among indigenous groups, in Bolivia and Ecuador respectively. Both countries are notable for the dynamism of their indigenous movements,⁸ and for the high profile given to cultural politics over recent decades, especially in Bolivia under Evo Morales (2006–19).⁹ While Henry's extensive research in highland Bolivia, over more than 35 years, has included facilitating events that have brought together Bolivians from diverse backgrounds to debate issues such as music piracy, intellectual property, the fair use of indigenous music, and heritage making, he sees himself primarily as an ethnographer dedicated to documenting and analysing music-related phenomena. By

⁵ Jafte D. Robles Lomeli and Joanne Rappaport, 'Imagining Latin American Social Science from the Global South: Orlando Fals Borda and Participatory Action Research', *Latin American Research Review*, 53/3 (2018), 597.

⁶ See Olivia Harris, 'Introduction: The Andean Oral History Workshop (THOA) of La Paz, Bolivia', in 'The Indian Santos Marka T'ula, Chief of the ayllus of Qallapa and General Representative of the Indian Communities of Bolivia by Andean Oral History Workshop', trans. Emma Gawne-Cain, *History Workshop Journal*, 34 (1992), 101–03; Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* [1970], trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2000); Orlando Fals Borda, 'Participatory (Action) Research in Social Theory: Origins and Challenges', in *Handbook of Action Research*, ed. Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (London: SAGE, 2001), 27–37; Marcia Stephenson, 'Forging an Indigenous Counterpublic Sphere: The Taller de Historia Oral Andina in Bolivia', *Latin American Research Review*, 37/2 (2002), 99–118; and Jeff D. Himpele, *Circuits of Culture: Media, Politics and Indigenous Identity in the Andes* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008, 127).

⁷ See, for example, Marina Alonso Bolaños, 'Applied Ethnomusicology: A Critical History of Indigenous Music Studies in Mexico', in *A Latin American Music Reader: Views from the South*, ed. Javier F. León and Helena Simonett (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 393–405.

⁸ See Deborah Yashar, *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Andrew Canessa, 'Todos somos indígenas: Towards a New Language of National Political Identity', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 25/2 (2006), 241–63; Marc Becker, *Indians and Leftists in the Making of Ecuador's Modern Indigenous Movements* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); and Robert Andolina, Nina Laurie, and Sarah Radcliffe, *Indigenous Development in the Andes: Culture, Power and Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

⁹ See Linda Farthing and Ben Kohl, *Evo's Bolivia: Continuity and Change* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014); Michelle Bigenho and Henry Stobart, 'The Devil in Nationalism: Indigenous Heritage and the Challenges of Decolonization', *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 23 (2016), 141–66; and Michelle Bigenho and Henry Stobart, *Heritage Fever: Law and Cultural Politics in a Decolonizing State* (book manuscript, under review).

contrast, Xabier began his 15-year engagement with the indigenous people of Sicalpa in Ecuador in an explicitly applied role as the facilitator of a PAR project in which local participants documented their own music. Despite these differences, we bring out many shared dynamics, concerns and critical perspectives regarding the potential impact and benefits of music-focussed interventions. In particular, we both stress the value of personal relationships and long-term engagement, contrasting—although not reproaching—a common tendency in ethnomusicology for researchers to undertake relatively short-term projects in multiple contrasting music cultures.

Looking Back: Enduring Power Imbalances and Cherished Heritage

Often implicit to the idea of applied ethnomusicology is the existence of social and/or economic disparity, in other words a power imbalance between those facilitating an intervention and its supposed beneficiaries. Compared with the group receiving the intervention, the ethnomusicologist or facilitator is typically connected with economic and educational advantage, greater opportunities—including for travel—and, in turn, a more cosmopolitan outlook. Thus, the facilitator is likely to be an “outsider”, such as a foreigner or a person from a different social class. If we look back a century, the situation was not so very different among certain early *indigenistas* in the Andes who facilitated music interventions with local indigenous groups. The Latin American *indigenismo* movement has often been connected with the interests and cultural values of elites and intellectuals, whose tutelary approach typically aimed to bring indigenous people under state or institutional control, celebrating them and their traditions while, at the same time, calling for ‘their modernization, assimilation, and “improvement”’.¹⁰ Nonetheless, some *indigenistas* were undoubtedly sympathetic to the struggles of indigenous people.

One such *indigenista* was Natalio Calderón, a *vecino* (*mestizo* town-dweller) from a landowning family in the Conima area of Peru who has been discussed by Thomas Turino.¹¹ Calderón’s ideas seem to have been shaped by attending *indigenista* gatherings of intellectuals and artists in the nearby city of Puno in the 1920s, and from reading pamphlets by Marx, Engels, and local *indigenistas*. At the time, a violent struggle was underway in which landowners opposed a peasant initiative to create a new town independent of *vecino* control. This conflict resulted in increased oppression of the peasants by the *vecinos*, including confiscation of their land and animals. Although not taking a truly activist role in support of the peasants, Calderón’s expression of sympathy for their struggle nonetheless led him to be ostracised by other *vecinos*. Against this backdrop, his *indigenista* interests, his experience as a harpist, and his sympathy for the peasants’ need to defend their land coalesced in a musical intervention. In the late 1920s, he became involved in organising a *sikuri* panpipe ensemble of indigenous players from various *ayllus* of the district, directing the group (as its ‘president’) and later naming it Qhantati Ururi (‘morning star’). Unlike *ad hoc* community-based ensembles that came together for festive performances, Calderón hand-picked the most proficient players, instituted regular mandatory rehearsals, and tested individual players. He also seems to have been involved in innovating the tuning of the panpipes to play in parallel thirds, ‘to sound like an organ’.¹²

¹⁰ Laura Giraud and Stephen E. Lewis, ‘Introduction: Pan-American Indigenismo (1940–1970): New Approaches to an Ongoing Debate’, *Latin American Perspectives*, 39/5 (2012), 3.

¹¹ See Thomas Turino, *Moving Away from Silence: Music of the Peruvian Altiplano and the Experience of Urban Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 127–30.

¹² Turino, *Moving Away from Silence*, 130.

Calderón was motivated, at least in part, by a regionalist desire to defend indigenous territory and panpipe music from external exploitation and cultural imperialism. He glorified panpipe music in the face of the foreign brass instruments being introduced at the time, the buying of which he said would ‘fill the pockets of the rich with money’.¹³ Despite imposing these class-based musical values, Calderón probably felt that he was making musical improvements that would “benefit that community”, perhaps alongside the common *indigenista* aims of bringing modernisation and greater assimilation. In retrospect, his interventions clearly had various consequences, some of which can be viewed as opportunities or benefits for members of the local communities; for example, the recognition of Qhantati Ururi and its style of playing beyond the region, including among *mestizo* classes, in part thanks to a 1965 LP recorded in Lima by the Odeón company.¹⁴ The style became iconic and was eagerly embraced by urban-based ensembles and migrant groups, albeit this created tensions with players in Conima.¹⁵ Nevertheless, fundamental to this trajectory and iconic status was class differential: *Vecino* interventions and networks not only provided opportunities to perform in far-flung locations, including to the president, and to record an LP, but also shaped the music to accommodate *mestizo* ears and values, while maintaining an indigenous image.¹⁶

How, given the fashion for applied approaches, should we view Calderón’s musical intervention today? On the one hand, this story charts how a hybrid genre, developed through intercultural dynamics, became nationally and internationally celebrated, thereby putting Conima on the musical map as a cradle of a cherished musical heritage.¹⁷ In this context, it is notable that having heard this ‘particularly prominent’ style of panpipe music in a festival in Lima in 1984, Turino observes that he considered it ‘the most beautiful and powerful music I had ever heard in Peru’.¹⁸ Indeed, it was this immediate attraction, presumably resulting from the genre’s appealing hybrid aesthetics, that motivated him to undertake research in Conima. On the other hand, to what extent might the aspects of this music that appeal most to external audiences and their hegemonic modes of listening threaten or displace local musical values, aesthetics, and forms of sociality?¹⁹ This kind of question and its underlying contradiction often emerge, as we shall now see, from applied initiatives dedicated to the promotion and sustainability of indigenous music.

¹³ Turino, *Moving Away from Silence*, 128.

¹⁴ Conjunto Qhantati Ururi de Conima, *Lucero del amanecer* (Odeón, Perú, LD 02 01 857, 1965).

¹⁵ Turino, *Moving Away from Silence*, 139–66.

¹⁶ The Conima style of panpipe music is not alone as regards receiving *vecino* or *indigenista* influence. The same appears to have been true for the Italaque and Charazani (Kallawayaya) styles of nearby Bolivia, which also found special favour among *mestizo* and international audiences. See Daniel Castelblanco, ‘Dos intelectuales indigenistas y su influencia en la popularización del estilo musical de los sikuris de Italaque (1926–1963)’, *Revista Mundo Sikuri*, 2 (2017), 32–38; Sebastian Hachmeyer, ‘The Qantu and Music Therapy in the Kallawayaya Heritage Context’, *Transcultural Music Review* (2018), 11; and Fernando Rios, *Panpipes and Ponchos: Music Folklorization and the Rise of the Andean Conjunto Tradition in La Paz, Bolivia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 52–53.

¹⁷ A heritage bill proposing Conima as Peru’s ‘Cradle of Sikuris’ was received by the National Congress in 2021 (https://leyes.congreso.gob.pe/Documentos/2016_2021/Proyectos_de_Ley_y_de_Resoluciones_Legislativas/PL_07983-20210701.pdf). On the theme of heritage cradles, see Michele Bigenho and Henry Stobart, ‘Grasping Cacophony in Bolivian Heritage Otherwise’, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 91/4 (2018), 1329–64; and Bigenho and Stobart, *Heritage Fever*.

¹⁸ Turino, *Moving Away from Silence*, 15.

¹⁹ These kinds of sociality, in the form of *participatory* (as opposed to *presentational*) *performance* style, have subsequently been theorized by Turino himself. See Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). For discussion of aspects of these musical values, aesthetics and forms of sociality see Henry Stobart, ‘Beyond Pulsating ‘Dissonance’: Reflections on Andean Sonorities’, in *Flower World: Music Archaeology of the Americas/Mundo Florido: Arqueomusicología de las Americas*, vol. 7, ed. Matthias Stöckli and Mark Howell (Berlin: Ekho Verlag, in press).

Indigenismo, Applied Anthropology, and Safeguarding Culture

The *indigenismo* of 1920s Peru that spurred Calderón's musical intervention took diverse forms, sometimes stressing indigenous agency and political participation. Radical voices of the time included José Carlos Mariátegui, founder of Peruvian socialism, and Luis E. Valcárcel, whose 1927 book *Tempestad en los Andes* called for the expulsion of the European invaders.²⁰ Yet, by the time Valcárcel was appointed as the inaugural director of the Peruvian Indigenist Institute (Instituto Indigenista Peruano, or IIP) in 1946, he was calling for 'orderly development' and indigenous integration into Peruvian society.²¹ This shift in approach was partly shaped by Peru's strengthening ties with the United States and by Valcárcel's participation in the 1940 Inter American Indian Conference in Pátzcuaro, México, where the Inter-American Indian Institute (Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, or III) was created (national chapters were subsequently established in several countries). Despite tensions within the III between the competing aims of preserving and promoting indigenous cultural specificities, and of development and socioeconomic modernisation, applied anthropology was widely embraced as the "scientific" solution.²²

In 1953, the International Labour Organisation, having taken over leadership of this mission to address the "Indian problem" at the international level, launched an ambitious rural development programme in Bolivia, Perú and Ecuador.²³ Undertaken in close co-operation with regional governments and UN Specialised Agencies, and with the active involvement of the Catholic Church, particularly in Ecuador,²⁴ the Andean Programme was conceived as a mechanism to promote economic development policies, as well as an anthropologically informed exercise in social engineering.²⁵ To this end, in a 1954 Bolivian newspaper article about the role of applied anthropologists in acculturating indigenous people of the Andes, Gonzalo Rubio Orbe described how these alien researchers studied all aspects of indigenous 'reality' and became 'true social promoters'. This involved identifying key problems and efficient methods, gaining the trust of local people, and setting an example for 'work, punctuality, honesty, and detachment'.²⁶ Today, such an account may make us cringe, but should we necessarily assume that these anthropologists were any less committed to improving the quality of life and opportunities of the people with whom they worked than we

²⁰ See Giraudo and Lewis, 'Introduction: Pan-American Indigenismo (1940–1970)'; and Osmar Gonzales, 'The Instituto Indigenista Peruano: A New Place in the State for the Indigenous Debate', *Latin American Perspectives*, 39/5 (2012), 33–44. Valcárcel's celebrated folklore ensemble, the Mission of Peruvian Incan Art, had toured Andean cities including La Paz in the early 1920s, sometimes presenting indigenous music as Incan survivals and inspiring a fashion for musical *indigenismo*. See Rios, *Panpipes and Ponchos*, 26–27.

²¹ Gonzales, 'The Instituto Indigenista Peruano', 41.

²² See 'El Primer Congreso Indigenista Interamericano', *Boletín Bibliográfico de Antropología Americana*, 4/1, (1940), 12–13; Andolina, Laurie and Radcliffe, *Indigenous Development in the Andes*, 13; and Laura Giraudo, 'Neither "Scientific" nor "Colonialist": The Ambiguous Course of Inter-American Indigenismo in the 1940s', *Latin American Perspectives*, 39/5 (2012), 27.

²³ See Jef Rens, 'The Andean Programme', *International Labour Review*, 84/6 (1961), 423–61.

²⁴ See Jorge Mencías, *Riobamba (Ecuador): Estudio de la elevación socio-cultural y religiosa del indio* (Friburgo and Bogotá: Oficina Internacional de Investigaciones Sociales de FERES, 1962); and Luis Alberto Tuaza, 'Las huellas de la Misión Andina en las comunidades indígenas de Chimborazo', *Ciencias Pedagógicas e Innovación*, 1/2 (2013), 33–42.

²⁵ See Mercedes Prieto, 'The State and Indigenous Women in Ecuador, 1925–1975', in *State Theory and Andean Politics*, ed. Christopher Krupa and David Nugent (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 142–64.

²⁶ Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, quoted in Robert Matthew Gildner, *Indomestizo Modernism: National Development and Indigenous Integration in Postrevolutionary Bolivia, 1952–1964* (D.Phil. diss.; University of Texas at Austin, 2012), 402; our translations.

are today? Or, is it that, armed with hindsight, we are able to identify paternalism and prejudice more easily?

Applied ethnomusicologists have tried to distance themselves from these kinds of applied-anthropological interventions, precisely because of their “social engineering” stain,²⁷ which also contradicts many ethnomusicologists’ aspiration for cultural sustainability. If we take the example of Bolivia after the 1952 revolution, we discover applied anthropologists on the frontline of state efforts to modernise rural communities and turn indigenous people into homogenous *mestizo* citizens.²⁸ Many such interventions in this era, and even into the 1980s, tended to view culture as an obstacle—one that ‘development wanted to eradicate’.²⁹ According to Julia Elena Fortún (a leading Bolivian music scholar and then-director of the state Folklore Department), this was the effect of such new, applied anthropology-led ‘socio-political reforms’; they were ‘creating a new mentality among peasant people which made them abandon their age old customs and traditions’.³⁰

Fortún responded by creating a state folklore archive of music recordings and transcriptions. She wrote a 100-page manual, published in 1957, instructing teachers, priests, public functionaries, and *vecinos* how to systematically collect and document ‘anonymous’ folklore, including music.³¹ Despite being, in effect, a participatory documentation project, indigenous collectors were notably absent. Moreover, the archived music would become the property of the state, with collectors entitled to a proportion of any royalties; the musical material would be put ‘at the disposal of those interested in elevating these samples of our shared artistic heritage to the level of grand works’.³² In other words, the process was strongly reminiscent of other nationalistic folklore collection projects around the world: indigenous people were dispossessed and their identities erased. Meanwhile, the collected music became a symbolic expression of Indian-ness as well as the raw material for creating a national folklore repertoire,³³ as Bolivia sought to embrace liberal modernity. As we shall see, the dynamics surrounding this history and the fair use of indigenous music have remained highly contentious.³⁴

²⁷ See Titon, ‘Applied Ethnomusicology’, 21.

²⁸ See Gildner, *Indomestizo Modernism*, 404.

²⁹ Sarah Radcliffe and Nina Laurie. ‘Culture and Development: Taking Culture Seriously in Development for Andean Indigenous People’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24 (2006), 240.

³⁰ Archivo Central del Ministerio de Culturas, La Paz, Bolivia (ACMC), Dirección General de Cultura (DGC), Informes, 1956–64, Reynaldo Urquiso Sossa, Oficialía Mayor de Cultura Nacional, ‘Resumen de Labores, Junio 1961–Junio 1962’, 1; quoted in Gildner, *Indomestizo Modernism*, 383.

³¹ See Julia Elena Fortún de Ponce, *MANUAL para recolección de material folklórico* (La Paz: Ministerio de Educación, Departamento de Folklore, 1957), 4–5.

³² Fortún, *MANUAL*, 88. Translation in Rios, *Panpipes and Ponchos*, 116.

³³ See Michelle Bigenho, ‘Embodied Matters: Bolivian Fantasy and Indigenismo’, *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, 11/2 (2006), 267–93.

³⁴ According to Fernando Rios, during the 1950s Bolivia’s two state agencies dedicated to the study of indigenous culture, (applied) anthropology and folklore, were in direct ‘conflict on the issue of whether indigenous people should either maintain or “modernise” their cultural traditions’. Rios, *Panpipes and Ponchos*, 118. This contradiction was still evident when Henry started undertaking research in Bolivia 25 years later. However, by the late 1990s, indigenous culture and identity had become the ‘holy grail of indigenous development projects’, an approach nonetheless permeated with contradictions derived from neoliberalism. Radcliffe and Laurie, ‘Culture and Development’, 240.

Caution: Development in Progress

Henry's research among indigenous rural communities in the Northern Potosí region of Bolivia began in 1986. A year earlier, President Paz Estenssoro introduced neoliberal policies intended to curb galloping inflation and Decree 21060, which left some 30,000 state-employed miners jobless.³⁵ The largely rural Northern Potosí region, with its important mining centres, was especially badly hit, as the harsh policies compounded the hardships of a devastating drought (1982–83). This humanitarian disaster escalated the influx of multiple internationally funded NGOs with aid and development programmes. However, as noted by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, the food donations and assistance provided to rural communities or *ayllus* by these NGOs were often accompanied by the promotion of alien union organisations and their revolutionary discourse, which sought to displace existing communal structures and systems of resource allocation.³⁶ Although NGOs aimed to benefit communities, a sense persisted that their interventions involved limited local consultation, cultural awareness, or respect for the supposed beneficiaries (or for their knowledge). Indeed, the prejudice of certain *mestizo* NGO workers, travelling around the countryside in their jeeps, was sometimes painful to witness, so it was hard not to view the supposed benefits offered by outsider interventions with a degree of caution.³⁷

NGO interventions also included indigenous music-making in the form of competitive festivals in which individual groups performed to an audience, often with judges and prizes. Such events involved quite different performance dynamics and musical values from the more participatory calendrical fiestas in the communities.³⁸ On the one hand, NGO-organised festivals provided a space for celebrating and promoting previously ignored or disparaged rural music, albeit often transforming performance practices as they adapted to a staged context.³⁹ On the other hand, as a new and potent vehicle for political expression, competitors were sometimes actively encouraged to incorporate the NGOs' ideological messages into their lyrics. While these musical interventions were fascinating to observe, it was evident that they tended to prioritise *mestizo* musical values, ignore calendrical performance conventions, and reflect political manipulation that sometimes threatened indigenous institutions and values.

³⁵ See Benjamin Kohl and Linda Farthing. *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance* (London: Zed Books, 2006), 71.

³⁶ See Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, 'Liberal Democracy and ayllu Democracy in Bolivia: The Case of Northern Potosí', *Journal of Development Studies*, 26/4 (1990), 111. Bitter tensions between indigenous *ayllu*-based and *sindicato* or union-type organisations, sometimes supported by NGOs of differing political persuasions, have continued in the region to this day. See Claude Le Gouill, 'La otra cara del katarismo: la experiencia katarista de los ayllus del Norte Potosí', *T'inkazos*, 35 (2014), 95–113.

³⁷ Outsiders were typically viewed with suspicion, and often imagined to be terrifying *llik'ichiri* (*kharisiri*), who used machines to extract human body fat, causing the victim to develop a debilitating illness. As an apt metaphor for coloniality's plunder, the fat nefariously extracted by the *llik'ichiri* was said to be used for various purposes in the industrial world, such as making medicines or lubricating machinery. See Henry Stobart, *Music and the Poetics of Production in the Bolivian Andes* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 44–45. See also Andrew Canessa, 'Fear and Loathing on the Kharisiri Trail: Alterity and Identity in the Andes', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 6/4 (2000), 705–20.

³⁸ See Michelle Bigenho, *Sounding Indigenous: Authenticity in Bolivian Music Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 64–72; and Thomas Solomon, 'Performing Indigeneity: Poetics and Politics of Music Festivals in Highland Bolivia', in *Soundscapes from the Americas: Ethnomusicological Essays on the Power, Poetics and Ontology of Performance*, ed. Donna A. Buchanan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 143–64.

³⁹ Hans Buechler has argued that the festival of Compi, established on the shore of Lake Titicaca in 1965 with the support of the Bolivian Tourist Bureau, led to a 'renaissance of types of traditional music which had almost been forgotten' and a strengthening of the 'traditional fiesta system'. Hans Buechler, *The Masked Media: Aymara Fiestas and Social Interaction in the Bolivian Highlands* (The Hague: Mouton, 1980), 334.

Henry often heard anthropologists working in the region voice concern or cynicism about NGO interventions, and came to feel that his role was to try to understand and document local realities and perspectives through long-term, participant-observation field research. In the early 1990s, he spent several years living in a single Quechua-speaking community trying to do this.⁴⁰ Unlike Turino's study of Conima,⁴¹ Henry's host community was not recognised for its music; indeed, one of his objectives was to explore how music fitted into the lives of a group of (in some respects "ordinary") herders and agriculturalists. Attempting to participate in daily chores, communicate in Quechua, and navigate complex social relations presented immense challenges, as did building up a sense of mutual trust, respect, and honesty. Henry sometimes felt that his greatest contribution was probably entertainment, where his cultural and practical ineptitude—alongside alien ways, looks, and stories—was often a source of bemusement and hilarity (Figure 1). This did not stop him building enduring friendships and personal commitments that are maintained to this day.



Fig. 1. Henry as a source of bemusement. Participating in Kalankira (Cayanqira) community's *siku* panpipe ensemble during the Feast of Exultación. Macha, Northern Potosí, Bolivia, September 1991

However, the idea that Henry could "benefit that community" in significant concrete ways, besides through impacting external attitudes, often seemed unrealistic, naïve, or even arrogant and patronising. Nonetheless, like several other ethnographers working in the region, and as observed by Olivia Harris, he came to feel a deep commitment to local processes and struggles, where his primary loyalties tended to be with the people of the region, rather than with any particular academic discipline. He also shared an awareness that 'struggles for basic

⁴⁰ Stobart, *Music and the Poetics of Production*.

⁴¹ Turino, *Moving Away from Silence*.

rights are accompanied by and to some degree encompassed by a politics of identity’,⁴² and came to realise that music had a key role to play in this. Might this strange foreigner’s interest, and efforts to study and understand the community’s music-making, have contributed to giving value to these little recognised or disparaged practices, and, in turn, to empowering and affirming local identities? Perhaps, but we should not overlook some of the complexities surrounding his presence, especially in contexts of coloniality and deep social inequality.

Fear of arousing *envidia* (envy), a common local explanation for illness caused by sorcery, meant that Henry’s host family was reluctant to accept remuneration for accommodation and food. Indeed, individuals who benefit from commodities or relationships outside the rural subsistence economy are widely seen to risk *envidia* in the rural Andes.⁴³ When Henry expressed a desire to make a gift to the entire community, it was agreed (following several meetings) that a large metal gate was needed for the newly constructed junior school. Henry travelled to Potosí, had the gate made to measure, and transported it to the small town of Macha on the roof of a bus. After making the six-hour walk up to the community and announcing the gate’s arrival, a group of men set out to collect it. As they carried the enormous, brightly painted gate by foot along the path, people they encountered on route enquired if this was a gift from Henry. Fearing inter-community jealousy, they insisted that the community had simply commissioned Henry to procure the gate; they were paying for it themselves. Sure enough, next day, a mound of potatoes, *chuño*, and *oca* appeared in Henry’s hut. Family after family arrived with brimming bags of tubers and Henry was firmly told that he had *not* paid for the gate. (His host family were delighted; it kept them in food for weeks.)

Arguably, researching and writing about this community has had little direct or concrete benefit on its quality of life, hence Henry would be hesitant to call his work “applied”. Such a label appears grandiose, suggesting a plan or project to *be* applied, compared to the reality of muddling along and responding to eventualities, albeit as sensitively, compassionately, and as generously as possible.⁴⁴ When Henry’s research shifted its focus to urban-based indigenous music video production, with an 11-month project based in the city of Sucre in 2007/08, an opportunity appeared for a more conventionally applied intervention. This research opened up different perspectives on media piracy and an awareness of the lack of mutual understanding of the issues faced, respectively, by artists, producers, vendors, and consumers. Following rapid changes in technology, certain groups were now being cast as criminals or as benefitting unfairly, while others were being accused of appropriating indigenous music. With the aim of promoting dialogue, Henry convened a public roundtable entitled “Music Piracy and the Fair Use of Native Music”, which was generously hosted by La Paz’s Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF).⁴⁵

⁴² Harris, ‘Comment’, in Orin Starn, ‘Rethinking the Politics of Anthropology’, 27.

⁴³ See Krista Van Vleet, *Performing Kinship: Narrative, Gender and Intimacies of Power in the Andes* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 29.

⁴⁴ The community undoubtedly knew that Henry was an ally, who would stand up for local people and share respect, affection, and care. A few individuals, as perhaps in any such community, took a more opportunistic approach, not hesitating to make demands or take advantage, sometimes with unrealistic expectations.

⁴⁵ “Piratería musical y el uso justo de la música nativa”, roundtable hosted by the Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore (MUSEF), La Paz, 18 June 2008. The idea for the initiative emerged during field research. Costs for participants who needed to travel to La Paz from other parts of the country were covered by the project’s British Academy and AHRC funding. A full transcript of the roundtable (in Spanish) is available at: https://www.academia.edu/30634961/PIRATER%C3%8DA_MUSICAL_Y_EL_USO_JUSTO_DE_LA_M%C3%9ASICA_NATIVA_Mesa_Redonda_La_Paz_Bolivia_18_junio_2008_.

The invitation and programme included this quote, taken from an interview with a Potosí music vendor, who suggested that it was not just vendors who were involved in “piracy”:

Our authorities are not giving enough importance to native music, which is the foundation... Folk ensembles and also electronic ensembles are based on this music... The creations come from the rural provinces and building on this—they inspect, analyse, and change the form a bit, right?... In other words, they make this native art more sophisticated, right?... Sometimes our own [Bolivian] artists tell us that we [music vendors] are pirating, right? Maybe we’re all taking part in that business of piracy.⁴⁶

The roundtable was divided into two parts, one focussed on media piracy—a hot topic at the time—the other on the ‘fair use of native’ music. (‘Native’ (*nativa*) is a problematic term, nonetheless it reflected the language used by the Potosí music vendor and comes closest to the term *originario* preferred by highland Bolivians.)⁴⁷ The diverse participants—artists vendor unions, record producers, the state’s intellectual property service, the national copyright collection society (Sociedad Boliviana de Autores y Compositores de Música, or SOBODAYCOM), and native people—hardly saw eye-to-eye, but to air their perspectives and have them listen to one another in the same room was an achievement. Wide social inequality was evident between the participants, whose backgrounds ranged from rural indigenous to wealthy elites. As an outsider, but one greatly committed to Bolivian music research, Henry was able (to an extent) to bridge this gulf, enabling multiple voices to be heard: the greatest criticism was reserved for SOBODAYCOM’s perceived failure to provide support or benefits for native artists, even when such artists were registered members of the society.

The roundtable did not seek to make recommendations or necessarily to influence policy, but to motivate conversations among Bolivians. A few years later, building on this initiative, Henry joined forces with the anthropologist Michelle Bigenho, to organise a three-day workshop in Coroico entitled “Rethinking Creativity, Recognition and Indigenous Heritage”. This focused on IP and heritage issues, on which critical reflection had become urgent following the renewal of Bolivia’s constitution in 2009 (under Morales’s self-proclaimed “decolonising” government)⁴⁸ and a recent explosion of music and dance heritage declarations.⁴⁹ The workshop, its bilingual website, and further dissemination activities, such as a series of radio programmes, were developed in collaboration with the Bolivian musicians/researchers Juan Carlos Cordero and Bernardo Roza and Hampshire College student Phoebe Smolin.⁵⁰ A working group, ‘Alta-PI’ (‘Alternatives to Intellectual Property’),

⁴⁶ Ismael Escalante, interview with Henry Stobart, Mercado Campesino, Potosí, 30 November 2007; Stobart’s translation.

⁴⁷ Since the 2009 constitution, when Bolivia was re-founded as a pluricultural state, it has become common to use the three terms *indígena* (‘indigenous’), *originario* (‘native’), and *campesino* (‘peasant’) together as a kind of trinity. See Lorenza Fontana, ‘The “Indigenous Native Peasant” Trinity: Imagining a Pluricultural Community in Evo Morales’s Bolivia’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 32 (2014), 518–34.

⁴⁸ Many scholars have pointed to the gap between Morales’s “decolonising state” discourse and the reality—especially as the MAS party consolidated its power—of intensified resource extraction and barriers to indigenous self-determination and autonomy. See, for example, Nancy Postero, *The Indigenous State* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017).

⁴⁹ See Michelle Bigenho and Henry Stobart, ‘The Devil in Nationalism’; and Michelle Bigenho and Henry Stobart, *Heritage Fever*.

⁵⁰ Michelle Bigenho and Henry Stobart. ‘Rethinking Creativity, Recognition, and Indigenous Heritage’, bilingual (English, Spanish) website for workshop held in Coroico, Bolivia (7–20 July 2012), <https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/boliviamusicip/home.aspx> (2014).

also emerged from the workshop and has since remained periodically active among Bolivians (Figure 2). The aim of the intervention, again, was not to shape policy as such, but to open a space for reflection and discussion and to provide easily accessible resources to aid these processes.



Fig. 2. Participants from the workshop “Rethinking Creativity, Recognition and Indigenous Heritage”, following the final ‘Conversation with Experts’, at the Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF), La Paz, Bolivia (20 July 2012).

Participatory Action Research in Sicalpa, Ecuador

In contrast with Henry’s initial caution to applied approaches, Xabier’s engagement with indigenous people in the Andes involved participatory intervention from the outset. It was during a chance meeting with a worker from the local Catholic Diocesan Delegation of Missions in Bilbao, in May 2006, that it was first proposed that Xabier might lead music-related activities for Delegation-supported projects for indigenous people in Sicalpa, in the central Ecuadorian highland province of Chimborazo. A year later, Xabier made the first of many self-funded trips to Sicalpa, where the local priest, Carlos Vera, ignoring Xabier’s proposal to create a “Kichwa Centre for Musical Studies”, arranged for him to provide keyboard classes for local people.

Xabier felt uncomfortable with this role, given wider local concerns about the loss of traditions. Hearing about music revitalisation projects elsewhere in Ecuador, he facilitated several meetings giving rise to the design of a participatory music documentation project. This aimed to revitalise local vernacular musical traditions and to strengthen the identity, culture, organisation and self-esteem of the historically denigrated Puruwa-Kichwa people. Members of the local indigenous communities (settlements in the rural periphery of the town) would be encouraged to document their musical traditions using digital audio recorders provided by the project.⁵¹ The initiative began to receive regular support from the Delegation, channelled via Vera, in May 2009. Soon after, a musicologist introduced Xabier to

⁵¹ The Ecuadorian highlands have historically been divided along socially constructed racial lines, with mestizos living in and around the centre of town and indigenous people inhabiting the rural periphery.

Participatory Action Research (PAR), a framework that helped him account for the processes that were being unleashed in Sicalpa: local participants as researchers of their own practices; orientation towards social transformation; and the activist role of the external facilitator.⁵² PAR strategies also helped structure the project, from its definition and diagnosis, through fieldwork (music documentation), to systematisation, planning and implementing an action plan, and permanent participatory evaluation.⁵³

The meeting in the town of Sicalpa to set up the “research team” to embark on the music documentation process, which Xabier presumed to be a community assembly, turned out to be the monthly gathering of Sicalpa’s indigenous Catholic catechists. (Thirty of Sicalpa’s indigenous communities or villages—approximately half of the total—have catechists, community-based peasants, who, after receiving church training, are expected to manage and promote Catholic worship within their communities, which the priests could not regularly reach).⁵⁴ When Vera asked “who would like to be a music researcher?”, seven of the catechists, all married males, came forward. While this close involvement with the church might appear problematic, it had many advantages as regards infrastructure, acceptance, and generating local participation. Participatory research got underway properly in 2010, with indigenous researchers making recordings in people’s homes and during meetings and fiestas which they often actively promoted, sponsored, or organised (research as a form of action, a principal tenet of PAR). Each researcher was allocated a geographical sector, including his home community, and guidance was provided on recording technique and documentation (e.g. title, classification, date, place, occasion, performers, and context). See Figure 3.

To discuss the project and share recordings that were being made, researchers called occasional meetings, usually in community chapels and sometimes as part of wider religious programmes. A first participatory systematisation process took place in January 2011, producing a CD of Carnival recordings for the chief festive period in the central Ecuadorian Andes.⁵⁵ These processes were by no means smooth; confusion often remained about the

⁵² See Orlando Fals Borda, *Conocimiento y poder popular* (Bogota: Siglo XXI, 1985), 129–33; and David Selener, *Participatory Action Research and Social Change* (New York: Cornell University, 1997), 17–21. The “liberationist” tradition of PAR, consolidated by the 1977 Cartagena world symposium, provided this framework. Although there is a generalised claim of ancestry in Kurt Lewin’s social experiments in the 1940s USA, contemporary PAR derives from multiple strands around the world whose considerable differences—methodologically, epistemologically, politically—make PAR difficult to map. See Sara Kindon, Rachel Pain, and Mike Kesby, ‘Participatory Action Research: Origins, Approaches and Methods’, in *Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods Connecting People, Participation and Place*, ed. Sara Kindon, Rachel Pain, and Mike Kesby (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 11.

⁵³ Although these phases are not always clearly distinguishable, PAR is generally understood to involve a spiral of self-reflective cycles. See Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart, ‘Participatory Action Research: Communicative Action and the Public Sphere’, in *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (London: SAGE, 2008), 276.

⁵⁴ Latin American Indigenous catechists were first formed during the mid-twentieth century, although in Chimborazo, due to the persistence of the colonialist *hacienda* system, their naming did not begin until 1978. Carlos Vera, interview with Xabier Etxeberria Adrien, 14 June 2018. See also Juan F. Gorski, ‘El desarrollo histórico de la Teología India y su aporte a la inculturación del Evangelio’, in *Desarrollo histórico de la teología india*, ed. Pablo Suess, Juan F. Gorski, Beat Dietschi, Fernando Mires, and José Luis Gómez Martínez (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1998), 10; and Andrew Orta, *Catechizing Culture: Missionaries, Aymaras and the New Evangelization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 84. It is important to note that over the past five decades, an increasing number of people in the region have converted to evangelistic forms of Christianity. See Susana Andrade, *Protestantismo indígena: Procesos de Conversión Religiosa en la provincia de Chimborazo* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 2004), 161.

⁵⁵ See Carola Lentz, ‘De regidores a alcaldes: Cambios en la estructura socio-política de una comunidad indígena de Cajabamba/Chimborazo’, *Ecuador-Debate*, 12 (1986), 196–200.

meaning and objectives of the project not only in the communities, but also among Sicalpa's catechists and even within the research team itself. This problem was addressed, albeit with mixed results, by employing Melchor Muyulema, an indigenous young man from the neighbouring county of Guamote initially to transcribe and translate the lyrics of the recorded songs: he soon became the project's coordinator and "specialist researcher". Over the next few years, during which Xabier made return visits of various lengths, disagreements periodically erupted among Sicalpa's catechists: one particularly tense moment occurred when the project's economic report was circulated in their July 2012 monthly meeting, revealing to the other catechists the expenses paid to the indigenous researchers. As with Henry's aforementioned example of the school gate, the episode highlights the potential for *envidia* that can encircle benefits derived from outside the rural subsistence economy.



Fig. 3. Pedro Yépez recording Carnival music in the community of Anita, Sicalpa, Chimborazo province, Ecuador.

Conflicts within the catechists also led to the creation of a new research team, retaining only two of the original members. Two of the new members took a leading role and directed the team's energies towards promoting women's church choirs in the communities and organising musical instrument training workshops (for guitar, charango, quena, and keyboard). The new initiatives did not build on the original project's focus on vernacular music documentation or the promotion of festive performance. Nevertheless, in keeping with the initiative's participatory spirit, the new proposed activities were accommodated, and, indeed, became predominant. Meanwhile, Xabier continued to prioritise documentation and the team facilitated several radio programmes featuring indigenous music of the area and some of the choirs. As time passed documentation also included video recording, a more popular medium locally. Indeed, in 2013 ten Sicalpa communities specifically asked for their

Carnival festivities to be filmed.⁵⁶ (This request for video productions also caused some controversy because a former team member, who had filmed and edited video for the new project, began to produce his own professional videos of fiestas and choir performances at church-organised gatherings and other events).

From over 700 audio recordings that were made, 145 songs and instrumental pieces were selected for compilation across two CDs, which were published together with the transcribed Kichwa song lyrics and their Spanish translations in a 2015 book entitled *Sicalpapi kawsakkuna ñukanchik kikin tunukunata takikunatapishmi charinchik* (*We people of Sicalpa have our tones [tunings, modes, genres] and our songs*). Explicitly produced ‘by the people of Sicalpa for the people of Sicalpa’ (Pastoral Indígena de Sicalpa 2015:15), 500 copies were printed, using project funds, principally for circulation within the community (Figure 4). To celebrate the project’s formal culmination, publication was accompanied by a special event in Sicalpa’s parish church, featuring 48 of the featured musicians, 30 choirs, and the band Sumak Wayra (created from a project workshop), performing to an audience of approximately 700 people from the communities.⁵⁷



Fig. 4. Workshop participants inspect the songbook published by the music project. 20 de Agosto community, Sicalpa, Chimborazo province, Ecuador.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Holly Wissler, ‘Grief-Singing and the Camera: The Challenges and Ethics of Documentary Production in an Indigenous Andean Community’, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 18/1 (2009), 41–42. The film documented in this article, about the music of the Andean Q’eros of Peru, was made in response to a community member, who, after seeing his deceased relatives in John Cohen’s *The Shape of Survival* (1979), asked, “can we make something like this for my children and grandchildren to see?”

⁵⁷ See Gabriel Cisneros, ‘Del Kichwa al sánscrito, peligro en el patrimonio musical de Chimborazo’, *Chilca*, 1 (2015), 34–36.

Afterlife: An Intervention in Hindsight

Xabier had originally envisioned the project, with its aim to document and help sustain vernacular music, within the framework of indigenous struggles for rights and participation.⁵⁸ Ethnomusicologists have long highlighted music's critical and creative identity-affirming role in contexts of marginalisation and poverty,⁵⁹ and identity affirmation has been key to Ecuador's powerful indigenous movement since the 1970s.⁶⁰ Now, however, Xabier approaches this intervention and its afterlife with critical distance and a more reflexive eye. He has come to appreciate how his early idealised perceptions failed to grasp the concrete historical and social dynamics from which the project emerged, and how, in some respects, the initiative continued to reproduce them.⁶¹ He is therefore more cautious in his assessment of the project as having been unequivocally anti-colonial—as applied ethnomusicologists sometimes perceive their work to be.⁶² For example, he has become mindful of the extractive nature of folk music collection. Even if the documentation process in Sicalpa was a means—a vehicle to act on the reality being documented—rather than an end in itself, and was undertaken by indigenous people themselves, it was nonetheless a methodological framework established by the “external expert” directing the project.⁶³ In the context of the so-called Latin American decolonial turn, these observations raise important questions about respective knowledge systems and even whether, in the words of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, there can be ‘social justice without cognitive justice’.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ See Xabier Etxeberria Adrien, ‘La música de los kichwas de Sicalpa: etnomusicología e identidad’, in *Identidad y Patrimonio de los Pueblos de América Andina*, ed. Patricia A. Elías, Amanda R. Medrano, and María E. Lizárraga (San Salvador de Jujuy: Purmamarka, 2014), 36. Similarly, ethnomusicologist Jessie Vallejo has linked the community based music sustainability project in Kotama-Otavallo (Northern Ecuadorian Highlands), in which she collaborated, with indigenous claims for rights and the denunciation of structural racism against indigenous peoples. See Jessie Vallejo, Liner notes, *¡Así Kotama!: The Flutes of Otavallo, Ecuador* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings SFW 40564, Washington DC, 2013).

⁵⁹ In a Chilean context, for example, see Jorge M Martínez Ulloa, ‘La música indígena y la identidad: los espacios musicales de las comunidades de mapuche urbanos’, *Revista musical chilena*, 56/198 (2002), 21–44.

⁶⁰ See Pablo Dávalos, ‘Movimiento indígena ecuatoriano: Construcción política y epistémica’, in *Estudios y otras prácticas intelectuales latinoamericanas en cultura y poder*, ed. Daniel Mato (Caracas: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, 2002), 94; and Philipp Altmann, ‘Una breve historia de las organizaciones del Movimiento Indígena del Ecuador’, *Antropología Cuadernos de Investigación*, 12 (2013), 114. Ethnomusicologists have long highlighted music's critical and creative identity-affirming role in the contexts of marginalisation and poverty. In a Chilean context, for example, see Jorge M. Martínez Ulloa, ‘La música indígena y la identidad: los espacios musicales de las comunidades de mapuche urbanos’, *Revista musical chilena*, 56/198 (2002), 21–44.

⁶¹ Nonetheless, Xabier is probably not alone, as the facilitator of a music intervention, in failing to understand the wider political, ideological and historical contexts, structures and dynamics underpinning this kind of project.

⁶² See Jeff Todd Titon, ‘Sustainability, Resilience, and Adaptive Management for Applied Ethnomusicology’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology*, ed. Svanibor Pettan and Jeff Todd Titon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 171.

⁶³ This is commonplace in PAR projects, where ‘researchers contribute with their theoretical and methodological expertise and the people involved with their experiences and existential knowledge.’ Ezequiel Ander-Egg, *Repensando la investigación-acción participativa* (Vitoria-Gasteiz: Gobierno Vasco, 1990), 36; our translation.

⁶⁴ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *The End of the Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 6. A group of Latin America and US-based “decolonial turn” scholars came together in the 2000s to reveal and subvert ‘coloniality’, understood as the hidden agenda and darker side of modernity. However, Martínez Novo denounces these scholars for failing to avoid reproducing colonial dynamics themselves. See Carmen Martínez Novo, ‘Ventriloquism, Racism and the Politics of Decoloniality in Ecuador’, *Cultural Studies*, 32/3 (2018), 389–413.

Underscoring the intervention was a long history of pastoral practices in the region, which only in hindsight, revisiting the project after its completion, Xabier has been able to better understand. Key here is Leonidas Proaño (1910–1988), the long-serving bishop (1954–1985) of Ecuador’s largest indigenous diocese, Riobamba, in which Sicalpa is located. Proaño fought tirelessly for peasant land rights, creating many of the institutions on which Sicalpa’s music project was built.⁶⁵ Always attentive to progressive trends within the Catholic Church,⁶⁶ Proaño moved from echoing modernising assimilationist *indigenista* policies in the diocese in the 1950s and 60s,⁶⁷ to becoming Ecuador’s most prominent advocate of liberation theology from the late 1960s.⁶⁸ He was also deeply influenced by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, whose proposals and links with liberation theology have themselves been associated with the emergence of PAR.⁶⁹ In a further shift in the 1980s, Proaño embraced *inculturated* liberation theology practices.⁷⁰ Cultural identity was then adopted as the leitmotif of a broader struggle for a new social order,⁷¹ hence a music project focussed on identity empowerment was so well-suited to Sicalpa, and why Xabier was invited there in the first place.

Despite significant opposition from the diocese’s clergy, Vera was (and remains) strongly committed to Proaño’s philosophies. He was the first Principal of the Centro de Formación Indígena (Indigenous Training Centre, 1984–2006), established a few months before Proaño

⁶⁵ See Luis María Gavilanes del Castillo, *Monseñor Leonidas Proaño y su misión profético-liberadora en la iglesia de América Latina: Una aproximación crítica al pensamiento social y acción pastoral del obispo de los indios* (Quito: Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio, 1992).

⁶⁶ The Catholic Church in Latin America had been severely weakened by successive waves of independence and an anticlerical heyday in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Across the following century, and particularly after the 1930s, it sought ways to regain its presence by adjusting to prevailing political contexts. See Bonar L. Hernández Sandoval, ‘The Revival of Latin American Catholicism, 1900–1960’, in *The Cambridge History of Religions in Latin America*, ed. Virginia Garrad-Burnett, Paul Freston, and Stephen C. Dove (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 346–58.

⁶⁷ See Leonidas Proaño, *El largo caminar hacia la liberación: cronología de la promoción y desarrollo 1961–1983* (Riobamba: Fondo Documental Diocesano, 2010); and Leonidas Proaño *Abriendo surcos indígenas* (Riobamba: Fondo Documental Diocesano, 2011).

⁶⁸ See Leonidas Proaño, *Palabras de liberación: discursos y homilias de Monseñor Leonidas Proaño 1985–1987* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 2009), 85–89. In line with other calls for activist research, liberation theology strongly advocates for grassroots social activism, upon which theological reflection is built, while making deliberate use of social theory. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología de la Liberación. Perspectivas* (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1975), 387; and Clodovis Boff, ‘Epistemología y método de la Teología de la Liberación’, in *Mysterium liberationis: conceptos fundamentales de la Teología de la Liberación*, ed. Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino (Madrid: Trotta, 1990), 79–114. However, its initially rigid, Marxist-oriented economic analyses paid scant attention to cultural processes, resulting in an intensification of the attack on folk indigenous Catholicism. See Orta *Catechizing Culture*, 72; and Barry J. Lyons, *Remembering the Hacienda: Religion, Authority, and Social Change in Highland Ecuador* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 274.

⁶⁹ See Leonidas Proaño, *Por una iglesia liberadora* (Riobamba: Fondo Documental Diocesano, 2010), 205–08. See also Fals Borda, *Conocimiento y poder popular*, 14; James D. Kirylo, *Paulo Freire: The Man from Recife* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011); and Robles and Rappaport, ‘Imagining Latin American Social Science from the Global South’, 600.

⁷⁰ Derived from the anthropological term “enculturation”, as coined by Melville Herskovits, inculturation expresses the efforts to harmonise Christianity with different cultures, that is, ‘to safeguard the integrity of the Gospel and to encourage sensitivity to various cultural contexts.’, Dennis M. Doyle, ‘The Concept of Inculturation in Roman Catholicism: A Theological Consideration’, *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 30/1 (2012), 1.

⁷¹ See Proaño, *Abriendo surcos indígenas*, 165–77. See also Pablo Suess, *La nueva evangelización: Desafíos históricos y pautas culturales* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1993), 238; Diego Irazzával, *Inculturación: Amanecer eclesial en América Latina* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 2000), 128–34; and Stephen P. Judd, ‘The Indigenous Theology Movement in Latin America: Encounters of Memory, Resistance and Hope at the Crossroads’, in *Resurgent Voices in Latin America: Indigenous Peoples, Political Mobilization, and Religious Change*, ed. Edward L. Cleary and Timothy J. Steigenta (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 216.

retired. Its research-based study programmes to train indigenous lay ministers were meant to be the cornerstone in the building of an autochthonous indigenous Catholic Church, ‘with its own liturgy, theology, and social role based on indigenous culture.’⁷² From 1986 to 2004, when Vera was “exiled” to Sicalpa, he also led the coordination of activities relating to the indigenous Catholic communities in the diocese, further supporting their empowerment.⁷³ However, his views and approaches, like those of Proaño, were not without a degree of paternalism and essentialism—a common trend in inculturationist practices,⁷⁴ and also apparent in “ethnodevelopment” thinking of the 1980s.⁷⁵ Essentialising and homogenising tendencies also permeated the Centro’s research-based training programmes, which lacked rigorous ethnographic grounding.⁷⁶

Xabier’s initial contacts (in 2007), who largely defined the design of the project, were former students of the Centro. For these indigenous interlocutors of Sicalpa, the traditional vernacular music that the project would document represented a form of resistance. This was understood in the context of the colonialist *hacienda* system, that lasted until the 1970s/80s, and under which Sicalpa’s indigenous people lived and worked on large estates (*haciendas*) in serf-like conditions.⁷⁷ Indigenous rites provided the basis for a partial legitimisation of the *hacienda*, but also constituted a mechanism of resistance, cultural reproduction, and social redistribution.⁷⁸ For example, *haway* harvest songs have begun to be “re-signified” by indigenous activists as chants of resistance for the Puruwa-kichwa people.⁷⁹ Revitalising traditional vernacular music could therefore be an instrument to strengthen indigenous struggles for social transformation. On the other hand, through their training at the Centro, Xabier’s indigenous interlocutors had come to view Sicalpa’s vernacular music and Kichwa language, culture, and values as endangered, i.e. in urgent need of documentation and revitalisation. At the time, this perspective coincided with Xabier’s, which had been shaped by his folk music studies at the Conservatoire of Salamanca. This begs the question: was the original project formulation rooted in the demands and priorities of the people, or in the

⁷² Lyons, *Remembering the Hacienda*, 278.

⁷³ See Equipo Misionero Itinerante (EMI), *46 años caminando al servicio del Reino* (Riobamba: Editorial Pedagógica Freire, 2016), 109–11.

⁷⁴ See Orta, *Catechizing Culture*; Kristin Norget. ‘Decolonization and the Politics of Syncretism: The Catholic Church, Indigenous Theology and Cultural Autonomy in Oaxaca, Mexico’, *International Education*, 37/1, (2007), 90; and Carmen Martínez Novo, *Undoing Multiculturalism: Resource Extraction and Indigenous Rights in Ecuador* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021), 214–16, 222–24.

⁷⁵ Official *indigenismo* was at this time experiencing a significant transformation towards what has been called ethnodevelopment. *Indigenista* discourses accordingly began to embrace native social institutions as potential assets and to support cultural difference as a development goal. See Guillermo Bonfil, ‘El etnodesarrollo: sus premisas jurídicas, políticas y de organización’, in *América Latina: etnodesarrollo y etnocidio*, ed. Francisco Rojas (San José: Flacso, 1982), 133–45; and Rodolfo Stavenhagen, ‘Ethnodevelopment: A Neglected Dimension in Development Thinking’, in *Development Studies: Critique and Renewal*, ed. Raimon Aporthe and Andrés Kráhl (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), 71–94.

⁷⁶ See Andrade, *Protestantismo indígena*, 142.

⁷⁷ See Mark Thurner, ‘Peasant Politics and Andean Haciendas in the Transition to Capitalism: An Ethnographic History’, *Latin American Research Review*, 28/3 (1993), 49; and Lyons, *Remembering the Hacienda*.

⁷⁸ See Thurner, ‘Peasant Politics and Andean Haciendas in the Transition to Capitalism’ 66; and Lyons, *Remembering the Hacienda*, 124. The narratives of evangelical converts, however, only focus on their role as mechanism to subdue the indigenous population. See Thurner, ‘Peasant Politics and Andean Haciendas in the Transition to Capitalism’ 45; and Andrade, *Protestantismo indígena*, 166.

⁷⁹ *Haways* are responsorial songs found in various parts of central Ecuadorian Andes, but particularly identified with the province of Chimborazo. See Juan Mullo, *Música patrimonial del Ecuador* (Quito: Fondo Editorial Ministerio de Cultura, 2009), 93. They are led by a *paki*, traditionally sung from morning to evening while harvesting barley, and their verses narrate all sorts of life events.

discourses of a handful of indigenous leaders trained by the Catholic Church coupled with Xabier's own values and interests?

The project's new direction from mid-2012 may suggest the latter, and that it could have been more receptive to people's concerns and priorities from the outset. Xabier returned to Sicalpa in March 2018, three years after the project had "ended", as part of his research dedicated to reflecting critically on the project. Vera had relocated to another parish, but Sicalpa's indigenous Catholic communities and catechists' council still functioned quite autonomously and Xabier was able to renew old relationships. To his despair, however, he discovered negligible evidence of the project's impact, which most people barely seemed to remember. Instead, he found that profound changes to local performance practices were underway: many communities were replacing patronal fiestas (a primary context for vernacular and secular music-making, if largely overshadowed by wind bands and "mobile discos" or *discomóviles*) with Catholic *Convivencias*. For these competitive events, a community hires a large marquee and sound system to host multiple women's choirs (and, more recently, a few men's choirs) from different indigenous communities, each singing in turn to a panel of judges. Choirs usually wear matching uniforms that evoke indigenous dress, choreograph their movements, and—to a pre-recorded soundtrack (or sometimes a live band)—sing religious songs in Kichwa, typically to pan-Ecuadorian forms such as *sanjuanitos* and often from a songbook created by the Centro.⁸⁰ See Figure 5.

Xabier's openness to local people (in this case the renewed team) had led the project to prioritise the promotion of women's choirs, fuelling the popularity of *Convivencias*. Yet, as a context for choir contests, *Convivencias* threaten the fiesta and thus also the sustainability of the vernacular music that the original project had sought to promote and use to empower local people. This contradiction highlights how applied interventions can play out unpredictably and the difficulty of reconciling diverse community-driven priorities with facilitators' values. Armed with this hindsight, Xabier challenged the committee during a meeting of Sicalpa's catechists in 2018 to reflect on the original project. His provocation stirred up considerable debate and prompted a fresh intervention, with Xabier visiting Sicalpa's communities alongside Sumak Wayra to "re-socialise" the audio-visual materials generated by the project and to arrange new musical encounters. This spontaneous intervention became part of what Xabier had originally envisioned as "purely ethnographic" research into the past applied ethnomusicology project. It also posed deep epistemological, ethical, and methodological challenges, for which reflexivity was absolutely critical.⁸¹

⁸⁰ The first such event in the province was organised in 1994 and their popularity grew exponentially during the 2010s. Maximiliano Asadobay, interview with Xabier Etxeberria Adrien, 13 June 2018. They are modelled on events organised by Evangelical churches in the region, branded *Campañas* or *Conferencias*, dating back to the 1970s and deliberately developed as 'functional substitutes' to discourage indigenous participation in 'Catholic' fiestas, which evangelicals portrayed as a compendium of evils: drunkenness, dancing, wasting of money, idol worship, fights, violence, and so forth. See Andrade, *Protestantismo indígena*, 157.

⁸¹ Besides drawing on critical ethnography, Xabier was also inspired by Participatory Action Research strategies. Furthermore, his approach was also informed by Charles Hale's insights regarding activist research. See Charles Hale, 'Activist Research v. Cultural Critique: Indigenous Land Rights and the Contradictions of Politically Engaged Anthropology', *Cultural Anthropology*, 21/1 (2006), 96–120; and Charles Hale, Introduction', in *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, ed. Charles Hale (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 1–28. For critical ethnography see Jim Thomas, *Doing Critical Ethnography* (London: SAGE, 1993); Phil Francis Carspecken, *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research* (New York: Routledge, 1996); and D. Soyini Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012).



Fig. 5. Choir from the community of Labranza, Sicalpa, Chimborazo province, Ecuador.

At a *Convivencia* a month later, the catechists' council president announced that choirs should perform repertoire documented in the original project's songbook. Up to this point Xabier had resisted staged performances of these songs, but this now became unavoidable.⁸² When Xabier returned to Sicalpa in 2019 he facilitated further music revitalisation activities and events, including a documentary video featuring interviews and clips of past events revealing that the original project was better remembered than he had initially feared. Notable, too, was how his long-term commitment consolidated Xabier's relations with the Sicalpas. This highlighted the importance of making his own position, values and strategies as explicit as possible, alongside provoking and engaging in open discussions, and even confrontations. His new approach involved generating dynamics in which he could organise and encourage activities shaped both by his own interests, which were made explicit, and those of the participants.

Conclusions

⁸² Nevertheless, he always tried to avoid reproducing the kinds of practices denounced in Georgia by Nino Tsitsishvili, who recalls how 'ethnomusicologists based at the Tbilisi Conservatorium... implemented [a UNESCO-funded programme in 2006/07] to teach villagers authentic rural singing styles and genres' in order to "safeguard" Georgian polyphony. Nino Tsitsishvili, 'National Ideologies in the Era of Global Fusions: Georgian Polyphonic Song as a UNESCO-sanctioned Masterpiece of Intangible Heritage', *Music and Politics*, 3/1 (2009), 12.

Frontloading ethnomusicology or musicology with the word “applied” signals a welcome intention to achieve a better world and to yield wider extra-academic benefits through our research. However, it can also have the danger of creating the assumption, especially for students, that parachuting into potentially unfamiliar cultural situations with music-based interventions will necessarily be beneficial to local people. Examples from this chapter suggest that musical interventions in Andean indigenous settings are fraught with power imbalances, complications, contradictions, and unpredictability. Henry’s interventions, in particular, have usually emerged in response to particular situations he has encountered during his research. It is difficult to assess their tangible benefits, besides opening and informing conversations and reflections and building partnerships that might not have happened otherwise. Such interventions also remind us that we are by no means the first people wishing to improve the lives of marginalised people. Today’s applied ethnomusicologists are often at pains to differentiate their interventions from those of earlier ‘applied anthropology’,⁸³ but earlier interventions, and the spirit with which they were undertaken, should perhaps not be dismissed so hastily, nor the moral high ground assumed simply because we now articulate fashionable discourses of anti-colonialism or decolonisation.

In 1950s/60s post-revolution Bolivia, for example, many applied anthropologists were dedicated to improving the lives of indigenous people, as they aimed to provide them with some of the same modern living conditions, technologies, knowledge, and opportunities they themselves enjoyed. This was part of a larger nationalist plan, involving the abolition of peonage and the redistribution of *hacienda* land, to resolve the “Indian problem” by turning indigenous people into industrious *mestizo* citizens—a supposedly antiracist objective.⁸⁴ The project’s imposition of alien values, ignoring local culture, knowledge, and identities while often leading people to abandon their cultural practices and values, tends to dominate today’s perspectives on applied anthropology, which can now appear an historical aberration, or—in Eric Wolf’s words—a ‘paradigm’ to be ‘slayed’.⁸⁵ For all its flaws and dated ideological underpinning, many people involved in this project were deeply dedicated to improving the quality of life of marginalised people, and many recipients of these interventions were undoubtedly highly appreciative of the transformations and opportunities they provided. We are once again reminded of Olivia Harris’s epigram regarding differing ‘criteria for a “better world”’.⁸⁶ How, for example, should we interpret the musical transformations that resulted from Calderón’s *indigenista* intervention a century ago? It is likely that the subjectivities of local people concerning its benefits varied widely at the time, just as they are sure to have continued changing over time.

We all have baggage and interests, as do the people with whom we work. A key challenge, then, would seem to be to be upfront about this baggage and honest about our interests, so that a more balanced dialogue might emerge. At the same time, building relations and understanding takes time, decades in our cases, and is by no means always a smooth process. Indeed, it often entails sensitive working through misunderstandings and conflict. If we imagine that today’s applied (ethno)musicological efforts are free of flaws—including those yet to be recognised—or that we can easily jettison the baggage of coloniality, we are

⁸³ See Titon, ‘Sustainability, Resilience, and Adaptive Management for Applied Ethnomusicology’, 171.

⁸⁴ See Henry Stobart, ‘Bolivia’s Anti-racism Law: Transforming a Culture?’, in *Cultures of Anti-Racism in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Peter Wade, James Scorer, and Ignacio Aguiló (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London, 2019), 195.

⁸⁵ Wolf, ‘Facing Power’, 588.

⁸⁶ Harris, ‘Comment’, in Orin Starn, ‘Rethinking the Politics of Anthropology’, 27.

deluding ourselves. If we share more than we might wish to admit with those who have gone before us, then perhaps we should avoid resorting to intellectual deforestation when we plant our own projects, especially in Latin America where the forest is particularly rich and well-developed.

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