THE MUSICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE NATION. MUSIC, POLITICS AND STATE IN COLOMBIA 1848 — 1910

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities

2014

Alejandra Isaza Velásquez

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures
# Contents

LIST OF FIGURES ................................................................................................................. 6  
DECLARATION ......................................................................................................................... 8  
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT ......................................................................................................... 9  
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ............................................................................................................ 10  
INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................................... 12  
  Importance of this research ................................................................................................. 14  
  Research questions and objectives ................................................................................... 17  
  Method and Concepts .......................................................................................................... 20  
  Sources .................................................................................................................................. 21  
  Chapter structure ................................................................................................................ 23  
CHAPTER 1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW ................................................................................... 25  
  Population and territory ...................................................................................................... 25  
    Regional fragmentation ...................................................................................................... 25  
    Urban society .................................................................................................................... 29  
  Politics and Economics ........................................................................................................ 33  
    Political conflicts and the search for prosperity ............................................................... 33  
    The war of a Thousand Days (1899-1902) and its aftermath ....................................... 37  
  Cultural process .................................................................................................................. 39  
    Elite culture and its projection as “national culture” ....................................................... 39  
    Unified “national culture” ................................................................................................. 42  
    Subaltern cultures ............................................................................................................ 43  
CHAPTER 2: MUSIC AND EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA .................................................... 45  
  Educating Colombians ........................................................................................................ 45
The price of arias.................................................................................................................. 137

“¡Viva la libertad de oído!” (¡Long live the free ear!) ......................................................... 140

“Vamos a la opera”? .......................................................................................................... 144

Conclusions......................................................................................................................... 148

CHAPTER 6. THE PLEASURES OF MUSIC (II) THE PIANO AND SCORES ...................... 150

The piano............................................................................................................................ 150

To sit at the piano............................................................................................................... 158

The piano students........................................................................................................... 164

The scores......................................................................................................................... 166

First-sight reading............................................................................................................ 166

The scores market ............................................................................................................ 174

Musical texts: scores and musical criticism................................................................. 179

Conclusions......................................................................................................................... 186

CHAPTER 7: MUSIC OF THE NATION ............................................................................. 188

A cause for celebration....................................................................................................... 188

Music to celebrate ............................................................................................................ 191

Festive music: the music military bands ......................................................................... 193

The music of the Centenary ............................................................................................ 201

And the band played on .................................................................................................. 206

Conclusions......................................................................................................................... 206

CONCLUSION..................................................................................................................... 208

APPENDIX 1 TIMELINE .................................................................................................. 216

PRIMARY SOURCES .......................................................................................................... 219

Government documents................................................................................................... 219

Press and Periodicals....................................................................................................... 222
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Colombia from 1858 to 1908. 27
Figure 3: Bridge over the Magdalena River, 1898. Photograph by Melitón Rodríguez. 28
Figure 4: Medellín, tipos de la provincia. 31
Figure 5: Santafé de Bogotá, Calle Real del Comercio, ca. 1880. 33
Figure 6: El Escudo de la Regeneración, 37
Figure 7: Estudio de Palmas, by Henri Price, 1852. 40
Figure 8: Cover and exercise from Texto para enseñar música por nota, por el sistema objetivo, al alcance de los niños by José Viteri, 1876. 53
Figure 9: Page from the newspaper La Armonía, Periodico musical, critico i noticioso 61
Figure 10: "Ñapangas", young women from Cauca Valley (southwest of Colombia) 69
Figure 11: "Bailes de Antaño", "Bailes de Ogaño" 76
Figure 12: "Baile de campesinos (bambuco)" (Dance of peasants) above; "El bambuco de salon" (Ballroom bambuco), inferior. 80
Figure 13: Burial of a child in the Tenza Valley. 85
Figure 14: streetmap of central Santafé de Bogotá in the 1890s. 94
Figure 15: Berrio Square (left, 1892). Berrio Park (right, 1898). 123
Figure 16: Advertisement in the newspaper El Buen Tono, ca. 1910. 124
Figure 17: Un domingo oyendo retreta del Parque, Medellín, 1922. 125
Figure 18: Teresa Tanco Cordovez (1859 - 1946) 132
Figure 19: First two pages of the libretto from La Fille du Regiment - La Hija del Rejimiento, 145
Figure 20: Advertisement of the sale of a piano published in the Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3411, April 29, 1884. 152
Figure 21: "Interior santafereño", painting by Ramón Torres Méndez, ca. 1880 161
Figure 22: Honorio Alarcón, pianist. 164
Figure 23: El Neogranadino. 167
Figure 24: Waltz "Mi Triste Suerte" 168
Figure 25: Excerpt of a handwritten copy of a score for chamber music by composer Daniel Salazar (1840 - 1912). 169
Figure 26: Second page of newspaper El Proscenio, periodico de teatros y variedades. Serie 1 No. 2, Bogotá, February 25 of 1890. 171
Figure 27: La Constitución Granadina, polka por la señorita Rafaela Laiseca (left). Crepuscular, Romanza by Gonzalo Vidal (right). 173
Figure 28: Detail of the first page of the prelude to the Third Act of María, zarzuela by Gonzalo Vidal, published in the magazine Lectura y Arte, No. 3, 1903. 174
Figure 29: Redova "Marietta" by R. García 175
Figure 30: Advertisement for the pasillo "El Canal" by composer Rosa Echeverría 176
Figure 31: El Hogar Musical, No. 19, April 1909, front cover. 177
Figure 32: Advertisement published in the newspaper El Espectador, Medellín, July 23 1892, No. 176. 180
Figure 33: Portrait of composer Carlos Escamilla ("El Ciego") and score his waltzes "Ester" for piano. 181
Figure 34: Advertisement by Carlos A. Molina 183
Figure 35: Liszt fantasazing at the piano (1840) by Josef Danhauser. 185
Figure 36: Abel Martínez, photograph by Melitón Rodríguez, 1893 (Medellín). 195
Figure 37: Banda Departamental de Antioquia. 200
Figure 38: Concert Pavilion in the Forest of Independence, Bogotá, 1910. 205
ABSTRACT

In this thesis I explain how Western art music gained a political, social and cultural role in Colombia during the decades that spanned from 1848 to 1910. This analysis engages the different attributes that Colombian political and cultural leaders of the time ascribed to art music in order to integrate it as part of their projects of Nation and confronts them with what is known about traditional music practices. In doing so, I explain discourses and social practices that developed around and because of the integration of art music to urban life in Colombia during the period of research. The purpose of this analysis is to elucidate the processes and contradictions that characterized the social practice of art music in Colombia as well as the limitations of the implementation of art music as an inclusive practice during the second half of the nineteenth century. This last notion underlies cultural policies implemented during present times and highlights the contradiction between art music as an exclusive social practice and the political discourse about art music as a space for learning democratic republican values.
DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trade marks and other intellectual property (the “Intellectual Property”) and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables ("Reproductions"), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DoculInfo.aspx?DocID=487), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library’s regulations (see http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library/aboutus/regulations) and in The University’s policy on Presentation of Theses.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The achievement of a PhD is not a solitary effort. Many people have helped me consciously and inadvertently and in doing so, they have kept me sane while I read and wrote.

I start by thanking my supervisors Doctor Patience Schell and Doctor Peter Wade. Their warmth, their knowledge and their experience made my research adventurous and joyful. Their fierce work ethics as mentors and researchers offer a priceless example that I will take with me into my professional life. Their brilliance as experts in Latin American Studies manifested in challenging questions that forced me to look beyond my usual analytic frame and allowed me to build my subject with increasing critical sharpness. As my panel supervisor, Barbara Lebrun helped me to achieve precision and to integrate different theoretical tools that I did not contemplate at the beginning of my work and that I will explore further. It is a great joy for me to say that I can thank my mentors not only for the answers that they helped me to elaborate, but also for the questions they have helped me to build. Although Doctor Parvathi Kumaraswami was not part of my team of supervisors, in her role as co-director of the Centre of Latin American and Caribbean Studies she was always willing to help me and her joyful energy was always comforting. Professors Karl Posso, Lucia Sa and Doctor James Scorer also provided a welcoming atmosphere.

The possibility to make a home in Manchester has been one of the most challenging and empowering experiences I have ever had and it was an important piece that enabled my academic work. I have to thank then the many friends that I have made in this city and that helped me to call Manchester “home” forever. Marco, Sarah, Shatha, Tania, Laura, Becky, Kieran, Juli, Mahsa, Patty, Ignacio, Miquel, Gustavo, Felipe, Ani, Carolina, Patrick, Félix, Hugo, Angélica, Aurora, Fabi, Giulia, Viktor, Alejo, Rocío, Tania, Adrián and the rest of the happy, committed and vibrant group known as Collective Political Learning were my friends, brothers and sisters in this crazy adventure called “PhD in the United Kingdom”. Our passionate debates about Latin American politics and history were food for my mind and the wonderful afternoons of asados, conversations, hikes, dancing, tea, wine and films were food for my soul. You have no idea how much you have helped me grow up. The Colombian contingent also had an important role in my “becoming of age”: Andrés and Catalina, Angélica, Pedro Luis, Jaime, César, Jorge, Sofia, Alejandro, Germán, David, Lina María, Yuly and Marcela, all of you have been crucial in reminding me of that inspiring, diverse, heart-breaking and jaw-dropping place that is Colombia, my home country. You were important not just as an emotional haven, but also as intellectual stimulus.

My family in Colombia was always with me. They encouraged me in this endeavour and their faith in my abilities and strength to overcome the intellectual and emotional obstacles implied in this process was a force that kept me going. No ha sido fácil, pero sé que nos ha fortalecido como familia; muchas de las preguntas que respondo en esta tesis se las debo a ustedes. Friends and colleagues in Colombia also helped me with their support and their love, with their smiles and welcome every time I emailed or visited them (Catalina and Alvaro, INTERDIS, Diana Luz, Catalina Granda, Andrea, Diana, Felipe, Carlos and a long, et cetera). Carlos Andrés, my partner in life, also toiled with me, even at a distance. Desde hace
varios años, con tu amor, me has ayudado a hacer posible mucha música; gracias por estar aquí. Esta tesis tiene mucho de ti.

Gracias, gracias, gracias. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I analyse the social networks in which art musicians and their work were active elements in the construction of an urban culture and urban society that political elites promoted as the model of what Colombia had to become. This social and cultural role was part of the process of nation-building in Colombia that spanned from 1848 to 1910. By researching the dynamics that formed the practice of art music\(^1\) in Colombia in this period, I want to analyse the historical processes that shaped discourses and practices that still underlie those related to the promotion of art music in Colombia today.

In 2002 the Colombian government launched a development plan under the slogan “Hacia un Estado Comunitario” aimed to build institutions that would enable the consecution of an “Estado participativo que involucre a la ciudadanía en la consecución de los fines sociales”.\(^2\) Among the strategies proposed in this plan to ensure stability and prosperity for Colombia, there was a plan called “Fortalecimiento de la convivencia y los valores”; with this strategy the government wanted to strengthen the social nexus in order to retrieve the trust of citizens in democratic institutions “[…] mediante el respeto a los derechos humanos, el fomento del pluralismo y la participación ciudadana. De este modo, se facilitará la recuperación de la gobernabilidad y la legitimidad, para la consolidación del Estado Comunitario.”\(^3\) The “Plan Nacional de Música para la Convivencia” was one of the plans designed to turn this national strategy into a reality, the goal of which was to make music a tool for community development.

The “Plan Nacional de Música” aimed to help with the education of musicians, the formation of networks of music schools, circulation and expansion of repertoires, and with researching, promoting and disseminating Colombian musical patrimony, as well as in the formation of audiences.\(^4\) The target population was children and adolescents. In this plan music was understood as an active element in the construction of cultural identities beyond its instrumental capacity as a tool for granting peace and social cohesion. This plan stated that music, as all the arts “por sí mismas no contrarrestan las expresiones violentas del conflicto, [pero] sí posibilitan un mejor desarrollo perceptivo, cognoscitivo y emocional de los individuos y contribuye a fortalecer valores sociales.”\(^5\) The tenets of the “Plan Nacional de Música” are the backbone of Fundación Nacional Batuta – Sistema Nacional de Orquestas Juveniles e Infantiles de Colombia, which was organized around the official promotion of the idea of music as a transforming force

---

1. Art music is defined by musicologists as music that is produced by a musician trained in theoretical and technical procedures of western music, such as written notation. This category is opposed to traditional and folk musics.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 86
that contributes to the wellbeing of Colombians. This transformation is possible through the educational and socializing effects of orchestral practice.\textsuperscript{6}

This initiative by the Colombian government is not unique in Latin America; in Venezuela the \textit{Sistema Nacional de Orquestas y Coros Juveniles e Infantiles} — led by musician José Antonio Abreu — has been promoting art music with the same goal since 1975. Venezuela’s \textit{Sistema} achieved international fame during the 1990s\textsuperscript{7}, not only through the support of Venezuela’s government, but also through the support of famous musicians like Claudio Abbado (orchestra conductor), Plácido Domingo (opera singer and conductor) and Sir Simon Rattle (orchestra conductor). Like the Colombian \textit{Plan Nacional de Música}, the \textit{Sistema} promotes musical education among children and teenagers as an opportunity for spiritual, personal and intellectual development with a strong pedagogical element: “rescatando al niño y al joven de una juventud vacía, desorientada y desviada”.\textsuperscript{8} The \textit{Sistema Nacional de Fomento Musical} promotes art music in Mexico as an ensemble activity through which children and adolescents of poor communities obtain not only entertainment, but also develop “actitudes y valores como el trabajo en conjunto y la responsabilidad, con las cuales, pueden visualizar nuevas oportunidades de desarrollo.”\textsuperscript{9} While these programs in Venezuela and Mexico emphasize the pedagogical effect of orchestral and choral practices, the Colombian plan emphasizes the political role of musical education as a practice that enables the strengthening of communication between communities and governmental institutions, and while it promotes orchestral, choral and brass music practices, it also promotes traditional popular music.

Colombian political and cultural leaders promote this understanding of Western art music ("classical music") as a pedagogical and political tool in a context of deep political conflict and social inequality that endangers peaceful coexistence between citizens. The key association made by government institutions is between music practice and coexistence, making the latter the main goal in the promotion of music. This discourse resembles those from the nineteenth century given in a context of political conflict and debate about the building of Colombia as a nation. Since the enactment of the Constitution of 1991, mechanisms for the achievement of political peace have been at the centre of discussions about how to build a more stable and inclusive Colombian nation. However, there have not been efforts to investigate how politicians and cultural institutions in Colombia came to this understanding and these definitions of the role of music (art or traditional). In this thesis I address this issue by asking about the political role that the promotion and the practice of art Western music had in Colombia in the decades between 1848 and 1910, for in this period debates and plans for the establishment of Colombia as a nation forged ideas and

\textsuperscript{6} "Batuta," http://www.fundacionbatuta.org/#.
\textsuperscript{7} The Sistema (as it is called internationally since the late 1990s) is managed by the Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar, which is part of the Ministerio del Poder Popular. It has been taken as the model for similar initiatives in the United Kingdom and Europe, due mainly to the enthusiast promotion by Sir Simon Rattle (currently conductor of the Berliner Philharmoniker). Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel is one of the most successful alumni of El Sistema.
practices where music was understood as a mechanism to guarantee the learning and the exercise of social and political rules.

The second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth saw Colombian political and cultural leaders try to launch a process that would achieve political stability, social coherence and economic strength. These conditions would pave the way towards progress and would ensure the inclusion of Colombia into the group of “civilized” nations. The musical practices that literate urban elites promoted were part of a cultural and political process aimed to revolutionize the whole of society but was trapped in the social dynamics that were inherent to Colombian society and that were going through a process of redefinition. What was revolutionary in the development of elite musical practices in Colombia was the scope that elites gave to music: it had to display a powerful pedagogical effect. This is a notion that still underlays most of the promotion of art music in Colombia.

**Importance of this research**

Historical research about musical practices in the nineteenth century in Colombia has been an uncoordinated effort. Prior to the 1980s, research focused on a few biographies and on accounts of concerts and people who promoted concerts, opera and the National Academy of Music. The works of José Ignacio Perdomo provide extensive data about composers, musicians and music critics of the time; Perdomo’s short biographies about musicians and their families help to locate musicians in a general social context. He chronicles the creation of the National Academy of Music and its evolution as well as the concerts and theatre functions that constituted musical activities in Santafé de Bogotá in the nineteenth century. Egberto Bermúdez is one of the most respected musical researchers in Colombia. His works about musical practices in the nineteenth century approach data provided by Perdomo with a more sociological outlook and complement it with different sources, like newspaper advertisements and chronicles written by travellers. Bermúdez provides then a deeper set of reflections and questions about the social dynamics that were implied in urban music activity. Ellie Anne Duque has researched the musicological features of the work of some composers and has provided important data about the influences and learning processes of musicians of that time, when musical composition was something

---


non-standardized in Colombia. Rondy Torres\textsuperscript{13} has reformulated research about opera in Colombia with his musicological inquiry about the operas by José Ponce de León and the social networks that enabled the development of opera in Colombia during the second half of the nineteenth century; in this way, he has complemented previous research about opera companies and musicians who arrived in Colombia with them and stayed in Colombian cities, thus forming part of urban musical practices (most of the time, associated with elites). Marina Lamus Obregón has provided extensive data about opera companies, their repertoire and the reception they had by opera aficionados in Santafé de Bogotá in the nineteenth century, although her work does not focus on opera but on the role of theatre.\textsuperscript{14} Juan Fernando Velásquez has opened the field of musicological and historical research by enquiring about the effects on social dynamics that musical education and the dissemination of repertoires and music publication have had in Antioquia since the beginnings of the twentieth century,\textsuperscript{15} but still very little is known about the same processes in other regions of the country. The work of Luis Carlos Rodríguez\textsuperscript{16} about some of the major events in art music in Antioquia also illustrates some aspects of the development of urban music activity.

Works about the role of \textit{bambuco} in the process of nation-building by Ana María Ochoa, Carlos Miñana and Carolina Santamaría Delgado provide analyses about the spread of this music form, the ways in which it was “constructed” and “presented” by Colombian elites and the ways in which it was enthroned as “national music”.\textsuperscript{17} These researchers have gathered data about music of the time from newspapers, magazines and music scores printed in those years; however, data found in concert and opera reviews, or advertisements of music lessons and musical instruments has not been analysed to provide a richer depiction of the role of music in the constitution of an urban society in Colombia in the period covered in this research. The mention of some prominent musicians of the time does not lead to detailed analyses of the social networks in which they worked or of the social hierarchies in which they participated.

\textsuperscript{13} Rondy Torres López, "Le rêve lyrique en Colombie au XIX siècle. Prémisses, œuvres et devenir" (PhD diss, Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), 2009); "Tras las huellas armoniosas de una compañía lírica: La Rossi-D’Achiardi en Bogotá," \textit{Revista del Instituto de Investigación Musicológica "Carlos Vega"} XXVI, no. 26 (2012).

\textsuperscript{14} Marina Lamus Obregón, \textit{Teatro siglo XIX. Compañías nacionales y viajeras}, Páginas de Teatro Colombiano (Medellín: Tragaluz, 2010).


\textsuperscript{16} Luis Carlos Rodríguez Alvarez, \textit{Músicas para una región y una ciudad: Antioquia y Medellín 1810-1865, aproximaciones a algunos momentos y personajes} (Medellín: Instituto para el Desarrollo de Antioquia IDEA, 2007).

Research about brass bands, choirs and orchestras in the nineteenth century is much scarcer; historians and musicologists have not gathered enough data to provide studies about the social networks and roles that these institutions had in their communities. There is also a great lacuna about the consumption of scores, musical instruments and about the wages of urban musicians; the difficulty of gathering these data means that there are not studies about the economic role of music and musicians in Colombia during the nineteenth century. Also, the lack of data and of studies about the nineteenth century urban economy that can provide indexes of prices and wages, and thus provide instruments for comparison, hinders efforts to locate the economic role of music consumption in social dynamics that contributed to the construction of Colombian society, and also makes it difficult to explain the role of musicians as a part of the urban working classes. There is also the absence of historical studies that contribute to thought about the role of music as part of material and symbolical systems of exchange in Colombia during the nineteenth century; this implies that music as a practice has not been analysed integrating dynamics of distinction and redefinition of social identities that are built with it. Another area of study that has not been addressed yet is the relationship between Colombian cultural process and Latin American cultural processes. The alleged isolation of Colombia makes its cultural history a territory that is still in need of further mapping so its contribution to the history of culture and ideas can be better appreciated. The development of an urban culture of art music in Colombia was a process that had a strong pedagogical tone.

This process was not exclusive to Colombia, since in Latin America the same process was taking place although with different nuances. The main characteristic of this process in Colombia was the urgency with which it was carried out. This urgency can be explained and related to a general process of nation-building in the continent: the promotion of patriotic songs in schools, art music and brass bands in Chile during the nineteenth century have been approached as historical processes in which musical practices were fostered to create and to enhance nationalism; the promotion of brass bands in México to integrate communities and the appropriation that these communities made of brass bands has been studied to understand hybrid processes of creation of nationalism in this period; studies of Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Caribbean musical practices have inquired about the valuation that elites made of them in order to integrate them in projects of nation-building; research about opera in Mexico, Argentina, Brazil and Chile has explained how opera was understood by elites in these countries as a civilizing force; and finally, research about drawing-room music in Venezuela and Mexico has explained how constructions of gender were linked to the promotion of art music and in turn, how these two dynamics were strongly linked to

discourses about citizenship and nation-building. These topics have also been explored by historians and musicologists in the United Kingdom and Europe, including the importance of choirs, brass bands, public concerts and composers in the cultural process of nation-building.

Research questions and objectives
As noted above, the resemblance of current discourses about the pedagogical and political roles of music with discourses originated in the second half of the nineteenth century on the same topics leads to questioning the role of music in the political projects designed and deployed for the building of Colombia into a nation in which republican and democratic principles manifested in social practices. The period covered in this thesis coincides with the liberal regime and the transition to the Conservative centralist government. These regimes set to build the Colombian nation, using different political projects that included the planning of education and other cultural politics which established the necessity of musical education for the citizens through academic and extracurricular means. Art music (known to us as “classical music”) and traditional music were debated in their social and political relevance but so far, there has not been extensive research into these debates nor about the values that were associated with musical practices in the process of nation-building.

I chose to analyse sociocultural practices associated with art music as published sources are more eloquent about them than about other musical practices of the time. This eloquence is related to two processes: the emergence of urban society after independence and the consolidation of a literate culture in the cities. The musical practices that literate urban elites promoted were part of a cultural and political process that aimed to revolutionize the whole of society and finally deploy republican and civil virtues, but that was trapped in the social hierarchies that were inherent to Colombian society and that were going through a process of redefinition. This did not mean that political and cultural leaders overlooked the diverse musical traditional cultures that were part of Colombian society during the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginnings of the twentieth. These elites approached these musical practices

---


with a double perspective: on the one hand, they valued traditional music practices as the source of the particular cultural identity of the nation; on the other, these traditions were identified as part of that culture that had to be left behind in order to build a modern nation.

In order to trace the dynamics of the political and pedagogical role of art music in the Colombian process of nation-building, I formulate a series of questions that help me to discuss the points that structure this thesis. The first questions allude to the political role of music in the process of nation-building: How can musical practices be articulated with a political discourse about citizenship? How can an equivalence between the social music practice and the social practice of politics be established and legitimated? Is it possible to talk about an imagined community in a specific musical culture? At the same time, these questions are founded on the premise that the link between musical practices and political discourses can be traced in discourses about public utility and the pedagogical role of art music. Through these discourses, the uses and meanings of music are controlled by political leaders who seek to create a set of values that are considered "appropriate" to the exercise of democracy in a republic. Thus, citizenship was defined as an ideal behaviour and music as a pedagogical tool that enabled the individual to achieve it. Republican democracy and its institutions formed the arena to perform this citizenship. After independence from Spain, not only did institutions have to be built, but the people who were going to develop those institutions had to be trained. Liberal governments were set in this task and when the Conservative party reassumed positions of power, they also deployed what they thought was necessary to turn Colombians into citizens who would use their institutions in a "proper" way. This process was led by political elites in the strong belief that they were fulfilling the requirements to build a civilized country, by firstly civilizing themselves and then others through all means at hand; as Cristina Rojas argues “The self-consciousness of civilization authorized bringing civilization to others by violent means”. 

Legitimation of art music as a useful social practice was an element of civilization that implied subtle symbolical confrontation. The construction of this practice as a display of other prerogatives that were related to class and lineage meant a redefinition of exercises of distinction that had been frequent from the colony. It also implied the representation of a segment of the population that was not included in this cultural practice and that ‘had to’ go through an educative process in order to be included. This mechanism of representation dismissed peculiarities and histories that were part of Colombia’s cultural diversity. Based on these premises, I want to inquire about the formation of an “imagined community” through the constitution of a musical culture that could be used as a foundation for national unity.

The pedagogical role given to music poses a group of questions directly linked to the main purpose of this study. This means not only finding out about institutions for musical education, but also about the implications that musical education had; thus, we have to inquire about the process of professionalization for musicians, but also about the hierarchies that could have been triggered by this process. It also leads

---

21 Cristina Rojas, *Civilization and Violence. Regimes of representation in nineteenth-century Colombia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnessotta, 2002). xiii
to questions about musical training in scholarly education, and its role in the formation of citizenship. Music as an element of pedagogy was promoted with a rhetoric of betterment, all the while implying a programme of disciplining towards the formation of a specific type of society. A premise that underlies these questions is that education is not restricted to academic spaces and regulations; although academic processes were an important means to gain education in Colombia during the nineteenth century, non-academic education, which trained the individual in the activities, values and behaviours that were traditionally upheld by the community, was on many occasions the only education that a person could receive. Another form of non-academic education was that received through social encounters in which the participants exchanged their knowledge; this was also a non-regulated type of education and in literate urban elite society, tertulias and other gatherings in which such exchanges could take place became frequent. Thus, the question about the role of music in these educational processes locates it within a social context of the intense circulation of ideas.

A third set of questions about the links between music and audiences in Colombia during the period of research emerge from the initial questions: is it possible to trace the formation of socio-musical groups? Is it possible to find out about processes of training of audiences and networks of sponsors? These questions help me to approach concerts and events related to art music as a complex practice with its inherent social dynamics. By doing this I inquire about the possible meanings that Colombian urban society of the time might have associated with music. Nevertheless, this was a complex process that involved intermediaries with different ideas and agendas about the role of music. The action of these intermediaries contributes to the way they “construct” music and to the way in which music constructs them. This underlying notion leads me to another set of questions: was there a difference between amateur and professional musicians? What kind of institutions were there for music education? Were there musical textbooks? How regular were concerts? Did musical education constitute a difference between musicians and their audience?

Another premise in this study is that music, as a social practice, is an active element in material culture as an object of exchange; as an object and an activity that can be exchanged, music can articulate several meanings that have complex relationship with material culture and its economic context. This notion leads me to another set of questions with which I try to unpack the role of music as an activity and as an object in a context of consumption: was there any domestic music? Can we trace the domestic consumption of music? Can we find out the prices of music lessons and of music scores? Was there a market for musical instruments? This last question leads me into the symbolical capital that is implied in material culture; thus, questions about the social reception of musical instruments and about their role as elements of social distinction emerge.

Traditional popular musical practices must not be overlooked. Although this thesis is not focused on them, their role in the musical practices of urban elites and middle class as well as their role in the discourses of nation-building contributes to understand how the notion of “folklore” became important in debating the social characteristics that, according to political and cultural leaders of the time, were welcome in the new democratic republican society they were building. Also, those musical practices came to symbolize what had to be overcome with the help of education and order.

**Method and Concepts**
I use a combination of sociological approaches that allow me to locate social agents and their musical activity. The concept of “art worlds” allows me to identify the social networks that constituted an enabling environment for the emergence of concerts and other spaces and events related to art music. The interactions between these networks serve to identify particular dynamics of musical activity in Colombian nineteenth-century society. Through this concept I can explain not only successful cooperation between networks, but also their mutual rejection or indifference. Bourdieu’s critical theory helps me to unpack the meanings and sets of values associated with the practice of art music; the debates about the moral and pedagogical effect of music that were implied in the deployment of policies and initiatives towards the development of musical activities were imbued with discussions about the moral values that political leaders and thinkers of the time thought should act as the compass of the country. All this was part of the cultural capital that many promoted when they promoted art music.

The process of nation-building meant the re-signification of social groups in order to explain their new roles and the scope of their rights and their duties. This was indeed a process of construction of identity in which the practice of music was a tool that contributed to formulate those new identities and their possible interactions. This approach permits to unravell the different discourses and practices that configured social identities in their relationship to music. In close association with this notion, concepts which developed through studies of material culture provide tools to understand the impact that the insertion of musical instruments had in urban Colombian society in the period of research. This impact was characterized by a circulation of objects and meanings that, in turn, was nuanced by the economic context of the country, which can be explained with the help of economic history.

One of the underlying premises of an approach that identifies mediators and identities is the notion of music as a communicative process. When musical practices are approached as communicative processes, it is possible to identify how music can work not only as the messenger of specific political or pedagogical codes, but also how it can function as a disciplining tool. In this way, analyses of musical practices promoted by social agents in nineteenth-century Colombia can provide a rich view of how Colombian urban society wanted to shape itself – and shape those they considered “different” - through
musical practices. Music then can be understood as practice that helped to locate behaviours associated to gender, race and social position.

Although the focus of this research is the practice of art music, popular traditional music cannot be overlooked. I define popular traditional music as the group of music practices that were not structured by the know-how of western art music and that made part of the sociocultural relationships that characterised coexistence between social groups. This is different from popular music, which can be understood —for the purposes of this research— as the set of music practices that have a wide acceptance and that included traditional non-western music and western art music. The process of the entrance of bambuco as a central element in Colombian popular music and as one of the symbols of the Colombian nation exceeds the scope of this research, but bambuco made part of music practices that developed in Colombia during the nineteenth century. Western art music is therefore understood as the set of musical practices that were structured by the scholar know-how of western European art music developed since the Middle Ages.

Sources
Traditional history of the practice of art music in Colombia during the nineteenth century has produced an inventory of concert dates, musicians, composers, sponsors and musical works that help to locate the most visible aspects of this musical practice as well as the most visible characters in the networks that comprise this story. However, there is little discussion of the relationship between such events and characters; thus, art music appears as a simplistic act of imitation, alien to the social context in which it takes place. These collections of data do not provide the possibility to formulate links to traditional popular musical practices; therefore, the scenario that they present places art music as an activity completely isolated from other musical practices. As noted before, the works of Egberto Bermúdez, Juan Fernando Velásquez and Ellie Anne Duque provide analyses that inquire into the relationships between the practice of art music and their social, cultural and economic contexts, but they do not inquire deeply enough into those relationships to explain their dynamics.

In this study I use published and unpublished sources not only to provide useful data —as is the case in Bermúdez’s works— but to question the more visible dynamics of the practice of art music in Colombian urban society during the nineteenth century. The first group of published sources comprises press reviews of concerts and opera functions as well as advertisements for music lessons and the sale or lease of musical instruments, sales of piano, violin and guitar strings, and the sales of music scores. Reviews of concerts and opera functions were frequent in newspapers and literary magazines during the nineteenth century in Colombia. In them, their authors described the audience and their behaviour, the skill of the performers, the works performed and the quality of the performance. The analysis of the language used in these assessments provides clues to understand the aesthetic criteria that literate music aficionados used to evaluate art music, and it also helps to understand how they associated ethical values to it. The aforementioned advertisements were also frequent in Colombia’s nineteenth-century
press and provide a glimpse into the hitherto unexplored Colombian music market. However these data do not provide complete enough information about prices to enable analysis of the dynamics of the market for musicians and musical services. Articles and booklets written by musicians and music critics of the time, although less frequent, provide information about the impact that art music had on its audience and about the expectations that many musicians and music aficionados shared when promoting it. Memoirs and chronicles by travellers also provide valuable data about musical practices, not only regarding urban art music but also traditional music. However, this information cannot be taken as a snapshot of Colombian music in the nineteenth century. The remembrances that travellers and chroniclers chose to publish and the comparisons they made between past and present events reveal their values and their criteria when observing musical practices and their performers.

The Ministry of Public Instruction at the time issued legislation in which music played a specific role. Inspections to public schools were ordered by this ministry and in the reports made by inspectors there is information about the success and the failure of legislation that made the instruction of music a compulsory assignment in schools; these reports where printed and published either individually or in the Anales de Instrucción Pública. Also in the Anales, intellectuals published articles in which they explained why music should be one of the more important school topics. Henry Wilson Price founded the National Academy of Music in 1882 and produced annual reports of its activities that provide ample details about the regulations of the Academy, its concerts, its curriculum and its problems. There are also records of civic festivities where music was an important element and the official records of the celebration of the centenary of independence in 1910 inform us of the elements used in this celebration and about how the planners of the festival wanted those elements to interact with each other and with the public.

Unpublished documents found in archives provide data that not only complement what is found in published sources, but also challenge that information either by contradicting it or by presenting data that were not considered worth keeping by the authors of articles, memoirs and chronicles. Wills found at the General Archive of the Nation (Santafé de Bogotá) and at the Historical and Judicial Archive (Medellín) provide data about the activities of urban popular musicians and sometimes about the prices they charged for their services and about the monetary value of musical instruments that were made part of family patrimony. Archives of criminal cases provided cases in which music was either a circumstantial element or the trigger of the event. These data, however, are difficult to find and therefore the sample that can be gathered will always be smaller in comparison to that of published sources. This is due to the organization of archives in Colombia; institutions in charge of safekeeping documents (like the aforementioned archives in Santafé de Bogotá and Medellín) do not have enough resources to apply all the standards needed to the appropriate storage, classification and conservation of documents. This leads me to acknowledge the services of the Centre of Musical Documents (Centro de Documentación Musical) in the National Library; at this centre they have gathered valuable documents about musical practices in Colombia that otherwise would be lost. Their efforts in applying techniques of conservation to
original music scores and other documents produced in the nineteenth century have now made possible a well-constituted musical archive where research about music of this period in Colombia can be undertaken.

Other sources used to explain the role of music in processes of nation-building and construction of social identities are etiquette manuals and photographs. Etiquette manuals that circulated in Colombia during the nineteenth century provide important information to understand the strong relationship between the emergence of the practice of art music and the establishment of urban society as a code of conduct for Colombian society. Photographs from the late nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth help to understand the complex process of change that was redefining Colombian society at the time by illustrating the emergence of new public spaces and some of the characters that had prominent roles in them.

Although several works by Colombian composers from the nineteenth century survive – either as a manuscript score or as printed scores – I do not use them as sources to provide analyses about their musical features. This analysis could provide information about the learning processes that Colombian composers used and could also contribute to understand how they developed musical procedures in order to compose on themes from traditional popular music, but requires musicological techniques that I do not possess.

As noted, the sources that I gathered relate to musical practices in the capital, Santafé de Bogotá and Medellín as one of the important secondary cities of the country. Limitations of time limited the search for other sources that could provide more information about musical practices in other secondary cities during the period. Sources found at the National Archive in Santafé de Bogotá and at the Universidad de Antioquia provide fragmentary data about musical education and other activities related to the promotion of art music, therefore, I constrained my conclusions to Santafé de Bogotá as the capital from which policies aimed to build the nation projected to the rest of the country, and to Medellín, as a secondary city that gained importance after the process of Independence from Spain as regional centre of political and economic leadership.  

Chapter structure
Chapter 1 provides a historical overview of Colombia during the years from 1848 to 1910. This overview presents historical processes that form the frame for the specific process that is the focus of this study. I also use a comparative approach to similar cases in Latin America in that period. In Chapter 2 I explore the purposes for the inclusion of music in basic public education. I start by analysing what was

23 Those sources are reports from the Secretaries of Public Instruction from Tolima (1884), Santander (1886 and 1892), and reports from the Governors of Santander (1892), Boyacá (1896), and Cauca (1896) to the central Government. Sources found at the Archives of the Universidad de Antioquia are newspapers *El Atlántico*, from Cartagena de Indias (year 1874) and *La Armonía*, from Neiva (year 1882) and constitute a few opera reviews and articles about musical education.
understood as education by political leaders and intellectuals in nineteenth century Colombia; after this I engage in the analysis of the role that the Government and thinkers gave to music in education and how they tried to make sure that all Colombians learned music and from music. In this chapter I also explore the effects that the standardization of musical education had in the definition of music as a profession. In Chapter 3 I analyse discourses about traditional popular music in the nineteenth century; I start by exploring the segment of the population that can be called "subaltern classes" and the interactions and clashes they had with other social groups, as well as within themselves. This social process is related to the “inaudibility” and “invisibility” of subaltern groups and their musical practices and is compared to the discourses produced by intellectuals about those musical practices and how they used the concept of “folklore” to classify them. In the end I analyse the process of integration of bambuco as the symbol of national music. Chapter 4 explains the construction of an urban musical culture and illustrates how urban musicians and their supporters developed this culture.

Chapters 5 and 6 analyse four musical practices that are specifically urban and directly linked to art music. Chapter 5 focuses on concerts and opera as musical practices that were seen by music aficionados and political and cultural leaders as spaces and activities where civic virtues could be learned and put into practice, while Chapter 6 focuses on the piano and musical scores as musical practices that redefined the boundaries between private and public as well as social distinctions. Chapter 7 focuses on the role of music as part of an agenda towards the construction of the identity of the nation as a stable and coherent unity.
CHAPTER 1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This chapter outlines the complex social, cultural and political relationships that defined Colombia during the decades spanning from 1848 to 1910 and that played an important role in the process of formation of a culture of art music. After political independence from Spain was won in 1821, political leaders sought to devise and deploy institutions and mechanisms to consolidate the republic. The political and social dynamics that started in 1848 are recognized in Colombian historiography as the turning point from which Colombian political and cultural leaders sought to enable a clear rupture from many of the institutions and mores that they identified as inheritance from the colony.

Population and territory
According to Marco Palacios six civil wars (1839-1842, 1851, 1876-77, 1885-86, 1895, 1899-1902) show the frequent disagreements among the Colombian elite about how to organize relationships between the state, the individual, the Catholic Church and the regions. At the same time, these conflicts shaped the social constitution of the country and were a way to form a series of collective memories that each time configured generational bonds between Colombians; with each war, the hardships suffered by Colombians of different social positions added to the non-official history of the country. If regional elites responded to the aftermath of civil wars by rebuilding relationships and creating new identities, subaltern groups had the alternatives of geographical displacement or joining a guerrilla movement. In times of relative peace, many left their cities and villages to settle in new spaces where they could establish their crops and new commercial networks; this dynamic enabled the emergence of new cities and regions in the late nineteenth century.

Regional fragmentation
Civil wars triggered the populating of territories that were scarcely inhabited, like the provinces of Caquetá and Amazonas to the west and southwest of the country as well as the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Towards the 1850s the country had a population of 2,300,000 inhabitants, and by the 1870s this number had increased only by 400,000 new inhabitants, due to the civil wars. After 1851, part of the population that was concentrated in the western Andes began to move towards the central Andes and new

4 Diana Luz Ceballos Gómez, "Desde la formación de la República hasta el Radicalismo Liberal (1830 – 1886)," in *Historia de Colombia: todo lo que hay que saber* (Bogotá: Taurus, 2006).
settlements started to appear; centres of development started to emerge, for the arrival of population boosted the formation of new regional axes: for example, Cartagena de Indias lost importance while Barranquilla gained strength on the Atlantic coast, and Popayán entered a long process of decadence while Cali bloomed in the south of the country. This reorganization of the territory “[…] se constituyó en un elemento central que caracterizó tanto los nuevos procesos de apertura de fronteras, mediante las colonizaciones; como los conflictos y rivalidades locales, regionales e interregionales.”

The colonization of minor regions that had been considered “natural frontiers” (e.g Caldas) was stimulated either by the central government or by regional elites, who wanted to promote a new role for their region (and for themselves) through the imposition of social and economic models that they thought were closer to the western ideal of production and progress.

---

5 Olivier Bernard and Fabio Zambrano, Ciudad y Territorio, el proceso de poblamiento en Colombia (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo, 1993). Nancy Appelbaum, Muddied waters: race, region and local history in Colombia, 1846 – 1948, 12
7 Appelbaum, Muddied waters: race, region and local history in Colombia, 1846 – 1948. 54–55
Both maps show the territorial evolution of the country from 1858, when it was called Confederación Granadina, to 1908, five years after the independence of Panamá, when it was called República de Colombia. In 50 years, the country had been reorganized by several governments to enhance the efficiency of regional and national management. Borderlines with Venezuela, Panamá, Ecuador, Perú and Brasil were finally settled during the first half of the twentieth century.

---

Figure 1: Colombia from 1858 to 1908\(^8\).

Communication between regions was difficult, consisting mainly of perilous bridle paths. Navigation through the Magdalena River became important to Colombian governments during the nineteenth century and steamers started to cover several routes from the hinterland towards the Atlantic coasts; this helped to shorten the time of travel from the interior of the country towards the Atlantic ports, an advantage to travellers and merchants. However, it did not contribute to strengthening the connection between regions. The construction of railroads became the most advertised method to remedy the relative regional isolation: the railroad in Panama was finished in 1856; the railroad between Barranquilla and Sabanilla was finished in 1870; the railroad between Cúcuta and El Zulia was finished in 1888; and the railroad between Bogotá and Facatativá (shortening the trip from the capital to the river port Honda in the Magdalena) was finished in 1889. These were small railroads that helped regional connections and that sometimes took a long time to build, such as the Antioquia railroad, construction of which began in 1874 and was finalised in 1929.9 However, these railroads were not built with the support of the central government but by private investors that sought to provide a very specific and local need.

The federal system of governance deployed by Liberal elites in power during the Olimpo Radical (1863-1886) enhanced the regional autonomy that structured the different relationships between the regions and central government and promoted the discourse of regional differenciation to identify and organize the national space.11 This gave strong undertones to processes of population and management which

---

10 Biblioteca Pública Piloto de Medellín, Archivo Fotográfico.
11 Appelbaum, Muddied waters: race, region and local history in Colombia, 1846 – 1948. 19
reflected regional interests. At the same time, regional conflicts were linked to national conflicts as a manifestation of the understanding by regional elites of political power as a mechanism to channel resources distributed by the central government towards their interests. This is why every region provided a special context in which Liberal or Conservative ideas were interpreted and appropriated in the process of supporting different national projects. With the victory in 1885 of the Regeneration led by Rafael Núñez, the transition from federalism to centralism attempted to turn regional interests into a common purpose, thus strengthening the political coherence of the nation. Many disagreed with this, for they feared an excessive strengthening of executive powers at the expense of the traditional regional autonomy. However, such centralization was promoted by Núñez and his closest collaborator, the santafereño ultraconservative linguist Miguel Antonio Caro, as necessary to take the country into a new era of maturity and progress.

Urban society

Although the dynamics of civil wars and the colonization of vacant territories provide the image of a population in constant movement, there were no major processes of urban growth between 1850 and 1870. This trend was reinforced between the 1890s and 1910, due to the War of a Thousand Days (1899-1902) in which 300,000 combatants perished. However, some cities experienced a small increase in their population before this war: Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla and Bogotá were, according to Zambrano and Bernard, “ciudades que concentran actividades económicas, de servicios y culturales que las convierten en epicentros de sus regiones”. This growth was small and regular during most of the nineteenth century and to the eyes of urban elites, it became a sign of the need for material progress that could reflect Colombia’s development. Since the 1880s urbanite elites sought to transform Colombian cities, with the perspective of erasing the traces of the colonial past that persisted in their physical structure. Both institutional and private initiatives promoted new street nomenclature, the building of facilities and places for public entertainment, and the installation of aqueducts and sewerage systems to guarantee cleanliness. Local administrations began to understand public space as a way to mark and commemorate progress and supported the emergence of societies that assumed the task of cleaning and embellishing the city. Imports of textiles, furniture, glass, porcelain, beverages, books and tools, regular since the 1850s, tell of a group of urban consumers that was able to raise its standard of living through the display of these new habits of consumption and that adopted these habits as part of its social identity. As for the poor urbanites, their poverty became a problem that led to debates about its causes, how to remedy poverty and how to provide health care, education and basic food.

12 Fernán González, Partidos, Guerra e Iglesia en la construcción del Estado-Nación en Colombia (1830-1900) (Medellín: La Carreta, 2006).
13 Bernard and Zambrano, Ciudad y Territorio, el proceso de poblamiento en Colombia., 69 The most common economic activities of urban nineteenth-century Colombians were agricultural production and distribution, transports, crafts, trade, services (domestic work), and in cities that were also centers of governmental power, government officials and clerks.
The new generations of intellectuals that formed part of the urban elites who led the transformation of cities, constituted a new breed of Colombian politicians known for their feverish activity in what they considered important for fostering the nation’s political, social and economic strength since they thought of themselves as the generation with the calling to remedy what their forefathers had not been able solve. These men became political and social leaders either at a national or a regional level. Their status as active politicians formed part of their social status as members of extensive regional networks that were grounded on kinship, family lineage, race, property and similar education.

Their expectations for Colombia were born of the concern for the reality that they lived in and that they knew it marked a poignant contrast with the ideals — and some of the realities — of American and European progress and civilization; as Germán Colmenares explains, the Colombian scenario presented a poignant contrast of social groups organized in a vertical hierarchy founded on influence, discrimination and exploitation, all inherited from the colonial period.

This vertical hierarchy was founded in an understanding of racial identity, although as James Sanders explains, “Race was not a sharply defined concept in nineteenth—century Colombia, but, rather, a fluid idea involving notions of phenotype, culture, class, language, legal categories, history and geography.”

Mestizo being the most problematic of racial identities and the most common within the Colombian population, Colombian elites of the second half of the nineteenth century saw themselves as white and promoted Western whitened culture as the paradigm of civilization; to them, part of the obstacle to achieve civilization and progress lay in the mestizaje of the Colombian population that had to be controlled in order to stimulate its “white” features. With notions derived from Darwinism and eugenics, the elites tried not only to explain mestizaje as a social dynamic, but also tried to propose methods to enhance its “better” qualities. Thus, the ideal of equality — racial and social — was understood as the ascent, via education, to the ideals proposed by Western culture.

Subaltern groups assumed different identities that sometimes united them to a political party, all the while marking differences between them — and within them. For example, craftsmen felt proud of their

---

17 Such ideals were learned by these elites through the reading of European literature and politics (Sue, Lammartine, Spencer) which provided them with a feeling of intimacy with what they perceived of European society. With the changes introduced by steam navigation, soon the experience of the trip to Europe added new facets to that intimacy born from books. Frederic Martínez, El nacionalismo cosmopolita: la referencia europea en la construcción nacional en Colombia, 1845-1900 (Santafé de Bogotá: Banco de la República – Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos, 2001).
18 German Colmenares, Partidos Políticos y Clases Sociales (Santafe de Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1997). 6-7
independence towards land owners and government employees, since they did not depend on a salary and their manual work did not mean that they were inferior to other urban professionals.\textsuperscript{20} Intellectuals and students that did not belong to urban elites identified themselves as owners of culture and as mediators that could teach other subalterns and thus, guarantee their access to education and citizenship. Small traders sought the legitimation of their profession by promoting their work as productive and morally righteous, especially since their social ascent was paved by the stimulus given to them by the Liberal regime in power during the decades spanning from 1850 to 1870.

\textbf{Figure 3:} Medellín, tipos de la provincia.

Watercolor by Henry Price elaborated for the Chorographic Commission (1852). The variety of colours (variedad de colores) of Colombian population captured the attention of European travellers during the nineteenth century and was a great concern for Colombian political leaders.\textsuperscript{21}

The rest of the urban subaltern classes comprised an illiterate and racially mixed group that lived in the periphery of the cities. They were excluded from the legal category of citizenship for nearly all of the nineteenth century, and the many attempts to achieve the political ideal of sovereignty anchored on the active political participation of all citizens was constantly put into doubt by political conflict that was interpreted by these political elites as the necessity of reserving political democratic participation to men qualified as owners of property and that had a basic level of literacy. Their poverty and habits shocked the elites which many cultural and political leaders did not hesitate to call “barbaric”. These subaltern groups were part of an extended low working class without a strong technical and social division of labour and therefore, their habits and culture were closer to rural society.\textsuperscript{22} The constant migration from the

\textsuperscript{20} Alberto Mayor Mora, \textit{Cabezas duras, dedos inteligentes: estilo de vida y cultura técnica de los artesanos colombianos del siglo XIX} (Medellín: Hombre Nuevo, 2003).

\textsuperscript{21} Image taken from \textit{Acuarelas y dibujos de Henry Price para la Comisión Corográfica de la Nueva Granada}, (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 2007).

\textsuperscript{22} Mesa, “La sociedad colombiana en el siglo XIX.”
countryside to the cities of part of this segment of the population, contributed to the permanence of many of their old social habits and enabled the coexistence as well as the fusion of many new urban rituals (imported and developed by the elite and upper middle classes) with old rural habits. The line that separated Colombian cities from Colombian countryside in terms of society and habits was very blurred; towards 1886 only 20% of the total population (3,000,000 approximately) lived in the most important cities and bigger towns in the western and central Andes (Bogotá, Medellín and Cúcuta had over 30,000 inhabitants, while Barranquilla, Manizales and Cali had over 15,000), while the rest was scattered in the rest of the territory and in smaller villages (Cartagena de Indias, Santafé de Antioquia and San Gil, just to name a few major provincial towns, each had less than 10,000 inhabitants).

The cities and their zones of influence were scenarios where elites and subalterns developed a complex relationship. Colombian political and intellectual leaders of the time associated Urbanity, to the ideas of civilization, comfort and progress; therefore, urbanity became one of the major goals for Colombian political and cultural elites during the second half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, it was during the 1880s and early 1900s that these elites were able to deploy this desire with the construction of new public spaces like parks, theatres, cafes and clubs. Older public spaces like chicherías, squares and streets gained new meanings as spaces for political debate and individual expression. Chicherías had been the target of control by civil and religious authorities from the colony; republican urban authorities continued this tendency, identifying them as anti-hygienic places of low morality where social boundaries were challenged, thus implying the possibility of social revolt.²³ The main difference between chicherías, cafés and clubs was the organization of social distinction that they implied: if clubs were exclusive to a segment of the population (the elites), cafes, chicherías, streets and parks were open to the public and enabled the interaction of all the inhabitants of the city.²⁴ This was the start of a new social urban culture that had a strong contrast with the traditional habits that were exercised not only by rural population, but also by many subaltern and elite urbanites.

²³ The stigmatization of chicherías implied the stigmatization of urban craftsmen, Indians, peasants, urban workers (e.g. ambulant musicians, laundresses, etc.). In the capital, many of them were located in neighbourhoods that were affiliated to the artesanos movement. The chicha (the alcoholic drink that was sold there) was also associated to public scandal and to the indigenous population that, according to political elites, either clung to their colonial privileges or remained “uncivilised”, thus hindering the progress of many parts of the country. Sanders, “Belonging to the Great Granadan Family: Partisan Struggle and the Construction of Indigenous Identity and Politics in Southwestern Colombia, 1849–1890”. Germán Rodrigo Mejía Pavony Los Años De Cambio: Historia Urbana De Bogotá, 1820 - 1910. (Bogotá: Ceja, 2000.)

Figure 4: Santafé de Bogotá, Calle Real del Comercio, ca. 1880.

Today called “La Séptima” (The Seventh), it had been the most important street in the capital during the colony and continued to be so in the nineteenth century by concentrating shops, banks and government offices.25

Politics and Economics
Colombian political and intellectual elites in the nineteenth century debated about the role of the population as citizens and about the appropriate means to ensure wealth and economic stability. These discussions framed the formation of the two political parties — Liberals and Conservatives — that tried to integrate different political interests in their plans for nation-building. These projects were not exempt from the contradictions spawned by the social and racial stratification inherited from the colony,26 which formed the resistance of some social groups to these projects; another characteristic of this process was the effort that part of the elites invested in disseminating ideas and concepts that they thought were useful to integrate the rest of the population in political debate.27

Political conflicts and the search for prosperity
Colombian elites planned roles for subaltern classes in the process of nation-building, those of citizens and workers, although this classification implied the elites’ ambivalence towards that population that, while designated by republican principles as the source of sovereignty, were the bearers of traditions and habits that the elites thought of as contrary to civilization.

25 Image taken from Historia de Bogotá, p. 8
26 Colonial legislation specified the professions and types of work that an individual could practice according to his or her racial background. This means that whites, Africans (slaves or freed), and natives had a specific place. This intention extended to the increasing miscegenated population as a mean to preserve “good government” and “peace”, all the while being contested by the complex reality and relative isolation of each province within the viceroyalties, which contributed to create specific contexts that challenged the ideals imposed by colonial laws.
27 Colmenares, Partidos Políticos y Clases Sociales.
This ambivalence from the elites manifested itself in the constitutions that were proposed each time as the path to civilization; in the period covered in this thesis there were four constitutions, all of them the outcome of civil political wars: 1853, 1858, 1863 and 1886. In the constitution of 1853 the Liberal party confirmed their position by establishing full male suffrage, full religious tolerance, the enactment of the abolition of slavery granted in 1851 and the federalization of the country. The constitution of 1858 confirmed this Liberal federal system, to which the Conservatives voiced their resistance on repeated occasions, leading to another civil war from 1860 to 1863. The Liberal elites in power during the period known as Olimpo Radical (1863–1886) deployed measures to enable the openness of the country to foreign markets believing that this would stimulate the freedom of internal markets and production. Colombian exports expanded and diversified, although they did not achieve enough stability in the international market, while most of imports arrived to the country through direct trade with Great Britain, the United States and France.

The Liberal support of a more secular and individual way of life and the Conservative support of authority and Catholic values were the two main forces that contributed to the debate about the core values that should form Colombian society in order to achieve progress and civilization. For the Conservatives, the Jacobin image of the furious, wild and vindictive populace, drunk with political power, served to ignite the Conservative concern of preserving the moral principles needed to prevent the disappearance of moral order and all the foundations of Christian civilization; the Syllabus of Pius IX provided the tools to do this by condemning liberalism, religious tolerance, secularism and freedom of thought.

Subaltern groups worked mostly in agriculture, mining, basic crafts, commerce and transport; women worked in agriculture, as artisans, and as domestic servants. Some middle class women worked as school teachers and set up schools in their homes for young children. Although statistics of the time about population and economic activities are not accurate, we can say that mid-nineteenth-century subaltern groups in Colombia had to dedicate most of their time to work for their livelihood. These subaltern groups were perceived by the liberal elites as a possible anchor for their political ascendance, and therefore, they oriented part of their efforts to educate politically urban workers of different backgrounds, grouping them under the name of artesanos (artisans). Some of the Liberal leaders thought that artisans had to be taught the concepts derived from the processes of politicization of worker's groups and the Revolutions of 1848 in Europe so they could participate in political debate; however, the appropriation that both political leaders and artisans made of it, did not produce or even depict a reality similar to the European, but it made clear what constituted the core of their confrontation. As Cristina Rojas explains: “The encounter between artisans and laissez-faire, represented by political economists as an opposition between enlightenment and ignorance, was perceived by artisans as an encounter between ‘theory and reality’”. 28 This dis-engagement between the political thoughts and ambitions of the Liberal political thinkers and the

28 Cristina Rojas, Civilization and violence. Regimes of representation in nineteenth-century Colombia (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2002).
ambitions and needs of the heterogeneous Artesanos movement led to the insurrection led by General José María Melo in 1854 against the measures instituted by the Liberal government.

When General Melo was deposed by a Liberal-Conservative coalition, many of his supporters were either exiled or imprisoned. After this conflict, the gap between Liberal politicians and their followers in the popular front grew deeper. In contrast, the Conservative party won new accolades and confirmed their tenets: “[…] una libertad racional, por la legalidad, la moral del cristianismo, la igualdad y el orden constitucional, por la civilización en contra de la barbarie, por el orden, la tolerancia y la defensa de la propiedad”.29 They understood and explained many of the Liberal measures as attacks on property, for they could support the emergence of new social and economic actors that endangered the privileged social position of many members of the party. In regards to the participation of the subaltern classes in politics, they considered it dangerous if it was not mediated through moral education provided by the Catholic Church. Thus the Conservative party chose to support the traditional mechanisms of charity and mutual help to promote their politics. Another factor that added to the political turmoil was the formation and strengthening of regional and local circles of political power that mediated between localities, regions and national political elites; thus, the figure of the gamonal or caudillo local emerged, who enhanced the links between party identity and community, which formed the core of a shared local legacy.30

During the 1870s and 1880s the political unrest was complemented by persistent economic weakness that translated into poverty for most of the population, urban and rural. Craftsmen (both urban and rural) combined their production with other occupations in order to resist the demand of manufactured imports. Exports of tobacco, quinine and coffee underwent a deep crisis that impoverished national finances. All the while, most of the agricultural production continued to be produced and traded through labour relationships that had changed unevenly in the country; the persistence of these outdated economic relationships prevented the mobility of a great part of the population towards new territories or their seeking of new economic activities.31 This situation of rural poverty was somewhat similar to that in the cities, where, apparently, the purchasing power of salaries did not increase while the price of foodstuffs did.32 This increased material and economic inequality strengthened social hierarchies.

The civil wars of 1876 and 1885 were the catalysts for a new political transition, although in terms of economic policies this did not imply deep changes. The result of the 1876 war was the acknowledgement by a growing sector of politicians of the limitations of radical Liberalism, which had not achieved economic development or national unity. The war of 1885 was the final blow to the political networks that supported radical Liberalism and who saw how Rafael Núñez — one of the critics of radical Liberalism, albeit a

29 Gómez, "Desde la formación de la República hasta el Radicalismo Liberal (1830 – 1886)."
30 Ganarse el cielo defendiendo la religión. Guerras civiles en Colombia, 1840-1902.
Liberal — won that year the presidency for the second time, backed by a Liberal and Conservative coalition. Núñez promoted the new political project, called Regeneration, based on the analyses of the successes and failures of former political projects in which he combined “[...] [principles of economic liberalism, state intervention along the lines of the eighteenth-century Bourbon colonial administrations, an antimodernism identified with Pius IX, and Hispanophile cultural nationalism].” This new project was launched through a new political constitution in 1886 in which administrative decentralization and political centralization combined in guaranteeing unity, while allowing each department (the former sovereign states of the federalist regime) to manage part of their income from taxes. Like many of their contemporaries, Núñez and his government thought that the economic role of Colombia in the world economy was to be the producer of source materials to be exported; therefore, his government deployed a relative protectionism towards this production while implementing a detailed control over manufactured imports, thus trying to reduce contraband of some final goods. There was also stimulus to new industries that implied the implementation of modern technology and knowledge (engineering), such as mining, textiles and some consumer goods that were produced in the cities, such as soap, chocolate, cigars and beer, which implied the diversification of jobs for men and women in the city and the countryside.

The Regeneration project used a definition of the role of “citizen” which can be summarized as a process: citizenship was acquired to specific means and meant an understanding of citizens as subjects with rights and duties that were homogeneous to the whole of the population. This homogeneity also implied the subjection of regional interests to what was “best for the nation”, to the dismay of many who considered this an excessive strengthening of executive powers at the expense of the traditional regional autarchy. To Núñez and his collaborators, the social diversity that founded such regional autonomy was something that progress and education would help to overcome, to achieve a much more homogeneous society that was ready for modernity. In the case of the colonization of “vacant” territories, this implied the inclusion by right and by might of population that was classified with categories adapted from social Darwinists which put them on the lower steps of the social ladder, like the native communities that lived in the Amazon, Darien (border with Panama) and the Estearn Plains or the population that lived scattered throughout the northern coastline. To remedy this situation, Colombian thinkers of the time recommended disciplinary methods to educate the Colombian population and turn it into a productive nation according to the Western model of social organization of production. The imposition of these methods caused the clashes

---

33 Rafael Núñez was President of Colombia four times: 1880, 1885, 1887 and 1892.
34 Palacios, Between legitimacy and violence: a history of Colombia 1875 – 2002.
35 José Antonio Ocampo, "El sector externo de la economía colombiana en el siglo XIX," in Economía colombiana del siglo XIX ed. María Teresa Ramírez Adolfo Meisel Roca (Bogotá: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010). Mesa, "La sociedad colombiana en el siglo XIX."
that triggered the war of 1895, which put in evidence the conflict between the centralist model imposed by the Regeneration and the reality of the geographic and social diversity of the country.  

Figure 5: El Escudo de la Regeneración,

Cartoon by Alfredo Greñas published in the newspaper El Zancudo, July 20, 1890. This cartoon is a parody of the national emblem that had been launched in those years. Political cartoon became a way to express political disagreement while trying to avoid censorship.  

The war of a Thousand Days (1899-1902) and its aftermath

The atmosphere of discontent finally turned into the last civil war of the nineteenth century, which marked the country with bloodshed, economic ruin and the independence of Panama: the War of a Thousand Days (1899-1902). The plans deployed by the national government to build a centralized and cohesive nation and the events that had given to many the impression that Colombia was finally moving into modernity were not enough to placate the dissatisfaction of many citizens with the authoritarianism of the government of Miguel Antonio Caro and with the lack of leadership in both parties. This made possible the triumph of extreme positions within the Liberals and Conservatives, which precipitated the war that claimed the lives of one fifth of the masculine population of the country, and reshaped entire regions.

36 Rojas, Civilization and violence. Regimes of representation in nineteenth-century Colombia; González, Partidos, Guerra e Iglesia en la construcción del Estado-Nación en Colombia (1830-1900).
38 Caro was Vicepresident to Nuñez in Nuñez’s second presidency, but he acted as president when the latter resigned. Caro never used the title of President, but he governed until 1898 and tried to give continuity to his power by designating Manuel Sanclemente and Jose Manuel Marroquin as President and Vice President. It did not work.
David Bushnell explains one of the political outcomes of the War of a Thousand Days as the demonstration that “[...] Colombia could not be governed peacefully when one of the two parties was totally excluded from power and subjected to intermittent harassment.” However, not all the Conservatives were ready to admit the need for political negotiations and not all Liberals were ready to admit defeat without retaliation. This resulted in outbreaks of brutality on both sides and constituted the source of local unrest throughout the country. To this we have to add the economic ruin that the war brought to all regions, not only in terms of the loss of human life, but also in the loss of property during and after the war due to punitive forced loans upon the "losers" and because of the chaos that engulfed productive and commercial activities.

The new post-war government led by President General Rafael Reyes had to organize the national economy. Among those measures was continuity with protectionism and the stimulus of coffee, banana and sugar exports to Europe; there was support for the establishment of industries similar to those before the war (textiles, foodstuffs, glass and paper), the improvement of some major roads and the first concessions for the exploitation of oil. Looking to improve the nation’s finances, Reyes’ government created the Central Bank (Banco de la República) and in an attempt to prevent new violent conflicts, Reyes led the modernization of the Colombian Army and reinforced the monopoly of weapons held by the State. These measures originated in the notion — shared by most of the Colombian political leaders at the beginning of the twentieth century — that the central function of the State was to generate all conditions necessary to achieve a lasting internal peace that would attract foreign capital.

Another facet of peace was to develop nationalism as a way to unify the country and the celebration of the centenary of Independence in 1910 was taken by the political elite as the opportunity to do that. However, the efforts to showcase the centenary as the grand civic festival of unity were challenged by the reality of a population that, as part of their shared memories of the War of a Thousand Days, had integrated the two-party system as one their predominant ways to relate to the State. Fernán González argues that this enhanced a split citizenship: instead of enabling a horizontal solidarity common to all, the system enabled two different types of citizenship in which adhesion to a political party defined the sense of belonging to a community which was identified as the absolute opposite of the other.

Political identification, the shared memory of the war and cultural diversity were the main elements of an unofficial sense of nationalism from the population, which had alternative ways of expression. However,

---

39 Bushnell, *The making of modern Colombia: a nation in spite of itself*.
40 José Manuel Marroquín, a Conservative leader, was president of Colombia from 1900 to 1904. Rafael Reyes, another conservative politician, was president from 1904 to 1909. The War of a Thousand Days ended officially in June of 1903, after the Conservative Party (victorious) and the Liberal Party (defeated) signed the peace treatises of Neerlandia and USS Wisconsin in October and November of 1902.
42 González, *Partidos, Guerra e Iglesia en la construcción del Estado-Nación en Colombia (1830-1900)*.
the plans for the celebration of the centenary did not include this nationalism as part of the celebration. Although the bipartisan conflict was still unresolved, the preparations focused on the deployment of a set of symbols aimed to create a sense of belonging and of community among the Colombian population: marches, patriotic songs, and the national anthem written by Rafael Núñez and set to music by Oreste Sindice in 1887.

**Cultural process**

During the period covered in this research, Colombians were the agents of several cultural dynamics that joined in the process of formation of a multifaceted national culture. Through the different forces that built this image, we can identify three major lines: the formation of a subaltern culture, of an elite culture and the process of formation of a “national” culture.

**Elite culture and its projection as “national culture”**

The writing of history was used by Colombian lettered elites to explain the demographic and cultural diversity of the country. This implied the re-engagement with the colonial past and, joined with archaeology, it helped the elites to confront the indigenous past as much as the current presence of indigenous communities. The lives of natives in the vast eastern and southern territories of the country as well as the lives of the mestizo and mulato populations that lived out of the jurisdiction of the government and of the Church, became a problem to the political leaders and thinkers of the time, who constantly demanded renovated efforts to spread civilization and destroy the ‘barbaric’ mores of that population.

The Chorographic Commission (1850–1859), approved by congress in 1849 and led by the Italian geographer Agustín Codazzi, was the first effort to present a comprehensive image of the country; among his helpers, Codazzi counted with several talented Colombian artists and scientists. Diana Ceballos summarizes the task of the Chorographic Commission as follows:

> […] un mapa general de la Nueva Granada (al final de la expedición se llamaría Confederación Granadina) que incluyera la división administrativa –estados y distritos-, la cordilleras, el curso de los ríos y sus afluentes, una tabla sinóptica de las distancias, una vista comparada de las alturas de los principales cerros, nevados y volcanes, una vista sinóptica del curso de los ríos navegables, una de la altura absoluta y relativa de las ciudades y villas, cuadros de población, de

---

44 Similar works with similar outlook were undertaken by explorers in South America during the middle nineteenth century: the Italian geographer Antonio Raimondi (1824 – 1890) travelled through the Peruvian Andes and the Peruvian Amazon and the German phisician Karl Friedrich Phillip von Martius (1794 – 1868) explored the Brasilian Amazon and the Atlantic coastline.
The work also included detailed information about the population, their traditions, cultural practices, racial types and “monuments”. This was an intellectual and scientific effort oriented to integrate the diversity of the country in a way that could explain the best means to exploit all of its wealth and thus, achieve a position of strength among the other nations of the continent. The works of the Chorographic Commission were contemporary to many theories that Colombian thinkers of the time proposed to explain what they called the “tropical character” of the Colombian territory; this feature and its effect on the population was, to many of them, one of the major obstacles to national progress. In their effort to propose solutions to what they considered a problem, they started to elaborate the category “tropical” as a way to summarize what they considered the negative features of that part of Colombia and of its population: insalubrious, primal, subject to a wild nature, indolent and lazy; the higher lands, by contrast, were compared to regions that had seasonal changes and therefore their population was depicted with kinder words.

Figure 6: Estudio de Palmas, by Henri Price, 1852.
This is one of the scientific illustrations that formed part of the work of the Chorographic Commission.

All these technologies (history, botanic, geography, archaeology) used to know and to diagnose the country were available to Colombian elites through education and specifically through their close contact with Western, European culture via the imports of books and trips to Europe. This meant that the cultural universe in which Colombian urban elites moved was deeply European; they not only absorbed what they

---

45 Gómez, "Desde la formación de la República hasta el Radicalismo Liberal (1830 – 1886)."
could get (information, theories, literature, and fashion) but also elaborated a set of references derived from their knowledge of European reality. In this sense, as argued by Frederic Martínez, Colombian nineteenth-century elites used European references to explain and justify their political position\textsuperscript{46} and in doing so, they transformed concepts, examples and ideas in order to adapt them and make them useful to the Colombian context.

Academic education was then one of the prerogatives of mid-nineteenth-century Colombian elites. Many families that had an active and preponderant role in politics (at a regional and even national level) as well as economic power promoted the establishment of schools that were managed by the Catholic Church or by Liberal pedagogues. The final ritual of this education was the trip to Europe, made easier during the decades of 1850 and 1860 by steamer through the Magdalena River. Those who travelled did it mostly with the purpose to observe and to learn so they could bring back to Colombia knowledge and experiences that could be applied to improve the country.

Members of the elites who returned to Colombia with these experiences felt the need to lead processes of social and cultural transformation that could enable progress and civilization, and with the foreigners who had settled in the regional capitals, they formed networks from which they promoted the formation of groups and spaces that would replicate some of the rituals and practices that were part of European urban life. Concerts, opera seasons, theatre, painting, photography (in the late 1800s), literary competitions and other cultural and social activities were supported as signs of civilization; the press of the time informed the public about them through advertisements and reviews that were published in literary magazines and newspapers by many of the participants. Although intellectuals and other cultural leaders of mid-nineteenth-century Colombia thought that the promotion of these activities would help to increase the interest of the general public in them, the reality of a population that was mostly illiterate and the fact that most of the promoting societies had a restricted subscription enhanced the restrictions on the impact that urban cultural activities had for the rest of the population.

Education, and above all what was to be taught, was one of the matters of most agitated discussion among Conservatives and Liberals. The Liberal party, in power from the 1850s until the 1880s, designed a project of education to finally create a lay culture rooted in republican and rationalist principles that would include all of Colombian society in the process of secularization; this project of public and mandatory education was launched in the Organic Decree for Public Instruction in November 1870, which sought to integrate all children between the ages of 6 and 14 and excluded Catholicism as part of the curriculum. Teacher training schools were created in each state, directed by German educators (most of them Protestant) brought to Colombia for the purpose. In these schools future teachers were to learn how to instruct their pupils with practical knowledge and to instil the values of discipline, hard work and respect

\textsuperscript{46}Martínez, El nacionalismo cosmopolita: la referencia europea en la construcción nacional en Colombia, 1845-1900.: 101
for the nation and its institutions. The organization of National University in 1867 was another part of this educative plan; in its classrooms, the students were supposed to learn how to apply scientific knowledge in order to change the traditional methods of thinking and of producing knowledge (both practical and theoretical), but in the end it was a space for the training of professionals for a restricted group of necessities as well as for the dissemination of imported concepts and methods that were used to diagnose Colombian reality.

The Conservative party, with the help of the Catholic Church, assumed their position as the alternative to the lay culture proposed and deployed by the Liberals by promoting traditions that cemented community links through charity, favours and the preservation of the corporate and collective character of social relationships that had been inherited from the colony and that still defined social relationships among most of subaltern groups. To conservative thinkers like Sergio Arboleda (1822–1888), the Catholic Church had a civilizing mission for they were imbued with the purpose of honouring God and to do so, they had to induce everybody to perfect themselves through the exercise of Christian virtues.

Unified “national culture”

As it had happened during the Olimpo Radical, education became the focus of new reforms during the Regeneration (1880s), this time to transform it into the mechanism that would produce obedient, productive and patriotic citizens. The first step was taken during the presidency of Miguel Antonio Caro (1892–1898), through the measures recommended by Liborio Zerda, Minister of Public Instruction: it was the total submission of the National University and all educational institutions to the authority of the executive power, as it was instituted by the new constitution; laws followed soon that organized regular inspections to schools and the final plan of organization, supervision, administration of primary schools by the departments (the former states) of secondary and professional institutions by the national central government.

Rafael Núñez found a way to reconcile Liberal secularism with the Conservative defence of the Catholic Church in the new constitution promulgated in 1886: although the existence of other religions was recognized, Catholicism was declared as the cornerstone of Colombian nationality. Religion, as well as the exaltation of ‘cultural tradition’ (especially its Hispanic elements) such as language, were the new cultural ideal proposed by the leaders of the Regeneration. The need to replace regional languages, or as the Latin American scenario puts it, the need to discourage the use of regional idioms, as well as to finally integrate isolated Indian communities through the teaching of Spanish, was one of the sources for the focus on language as the core of a national public culture in Colombia. The promotion of a “proper” use of language became one of the milestones of the Conservative project for a national public culture.  

47 Malcolm Deas, *Del Poder y la Gramática y otros ensayos sobre historia, política y literatura colombianas*, (Santafé de Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1993)
The Civic Festivities were another element of that national public culture to which the leaders of the Regeneration devoted time and planning. During the Liberal federalist government of the Olimpo Radical, civic festivities were left mostly to the agency of each state of the confederation, but under the new centralized republic, the civic festival was understood by politicians and thinkers as part of a process oriented to the consolidation of a republican culture, in which the construction of national symbols became one of the goals of many educational reforms. As the central government started to plan civic festivities more carefully, the participation of social groups with specific roles and the use of specific elements were included: schools were called to participate; there were parades with portraits of the Heroes of Independence; and allegorical carriages were the central feature in the celebrations as part of the scenic display.

The War of a Thousand Days did not change much of the cultural process in Colombia. High academic culture continued to be the field of expression of urban elites; writers, painters, musicians, journalists and scientists went on producing works and debates in which the question about the progress of the country was still approached through the lens of cultural mediation, although this cultural mediation between European ideas and Colombian realities was not shared with the majority of the population. Many of the cultural and academic institutions that were born of this mediation reopened their doors after the war (the National Academy of Music, the National University and in Medellín, the Institute of Fine Arts which joined the School of Music Saint Cecilia and the workshop of painter Francisco Antonio Cano) and reassumed their work with renovated efforts, for they believed that they could offer a better future to their society. However, the hierarchical structure and economic exclusion of most of Colombian society made the impact that these cultural efforts could have made something very restricted.

Subaltern cultures
The formation of urban subaltern cultures is difficult to trace. Subaltern groups did not possess nor used the same mechanisms as the elites to create and reproduce a shared legacy. This does not mean that they were silent or inactive. Urban subaltern groups participated in politics, and those who were not involved in the political turmoil, surely experienced the impact that political activity had in their daily activities. They got in contact with the ideas and vocabulary that lettered elites used to address the issues that were subject of debate, either by reading popular versions of novels and treatises or through collective reading.

A part of the urban subaltern groups was experiencing change in their culture due to political involvement. This contrasted with the majority of rural population whose habits resembled those inherited from the colony, in which religious belief and notions of deference towards hierarchy combined. The continuity of lifestyles that had formed since the colony was one the main features of rural life in Colombia during the nineteenth century, specially in those communities isolated from towns; this implied that community rhythms of life remained untouched by modern notions of time and efficiency, like on the Atlantic coast,
where many of its inhabitants still used nature (the stars, bird song or other animal sounds) and religious festivals to mark the passage of time.\textsuperscript{48}

Clashes between the culture of urban (or semi-urbanized) Colombians and rural Colombians increased with each civil war and with the processes of titling ‘vacant’ lands promoted by the government in the 1870s. Some regional elites promoted the colonization of territories by enabling the arrival of new population who clashed with the former inhabitants. The isolation that characterized the lives of many small rural settlements was disturbed with the arrival of troops or landowners that imposed social and labour relationships that were alien to the inhabitants of those remote regions. This triggered processes of change, adaptation and creation of life styles that characterised the formation of new rural communities and of new urban centres that restructured regional relationships from the beginning of the twentieth century.

\textsuperscript{48} Sergio Paolo Solano, "La percepción del tiempo en los orígenes de la clase obrera en el Caribe colombiano," \textit{Historia Caribe} 1, no. 2 (1996).
CHAPTER 2: MUSIC AND EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA

In this chapter I explore the dynamics that characterised the deployment of musical education in Colombia. I start by unpacking the term “education” to explain how the insertion of music in curricula and the foundation of academic institutions for the teaching and learning of music were not the only mechanisms in which music education was one of the tools for the construction of a modern urban culture in Colombia. There was also musical education through social encounters, where materials and subjects could have a more fluid treatment through social interaction. In mid-nineteenth-century Colombia these two types of education not only coexisted, but also were part of a general debate about the proper methods of transforming the population into citizens. The role of music education and the value of musical knowledge were part of this debate, sometimes explicitly and sometimes in a more subtle way.

Educating Colombians
The works of Ellie Anne Duque, Egberto Bermúdez, José Ignacio Perdomo, Martha Barriga Monroy and Luis Carlos Rodríguez49 give ample description of the institutions and individuals that founded academies for the teaching of music and promoted the inclusion of music in public schools as well as of music teachers (men and women) that developed their pedagogical activities without a strict system, yet with enough continuity to train both amateur and professional musicians. However, these descriptions do not present these data with a more analytical perspective. The fact that the teaching of music became frequent in mid-nineteenth century Colombia helps us pose the question of why this knowledge became important for urban Colombia society.

Education, although valued by political elites as the principal tool for the transformation of Colombian population into politically aware citizens, was not extended to all of the population. Before the Decreto Orgánico de Instrucción Pública of 187050, efforts to establish an efficient system of public education had


50 The Decreto Orgánico de Instrucción Pública was issued with the purpose of organizing all aspects of education in the country. At the same time, this organization became the providence of the President, who would appoint the Director of Public Instruction. According to Jaime Jaramillo Uribe, “El decreto aspira igualmente a incorporar a la enseñanza y a la práctica educativa el método de las ciencias experimentales y los principios de la pedagogía filantrópica del pensamiento ilustrado de los siglos XVIII y XIX”. Jaime Jaramillo Uribe, "Decreto Orgánico
failed, and therefore schools had become part of the efforts by the Catholic Church or educated individuals who founded private schools in the capital of the country and in the villages. Even after the decree, and in spite of all the precautions taken by the Government to organize public education through it, education was still a privilege in Colombia, granted by money and lineage. Although many political leaders promoted the benefits of public education, in practice, these political leaders made all possible efforts to send their children to private schools where the fees guaranteed a continuous education and the learning of skills that required literacy. Sources show that foreign languages and music were among the most advertised subjects.

According to Colombian political leaders of the time, the education of the Colombian population had to create appropriate conditions for the development of the country and its final inclusion in the realm of civilization, therefore, its organization was the centre of the debate about the relationship between the Catholic Church and the State. As noted by Zandra Pedraza, nineteenth-century Colombian politicians and scholars used the word civilization to depict the ways in which the country should be moulded and the way the country should be viewed by the European society that elites took as a model: as a Christian, civilized, bourgeois and urban society. The deployment of plans for education during this period in Colombia had, then, a double purpose: transformation inside and outside of the country. Through this process, Colombian elites thought that they would be able to close the gap between the political ideals of republicanism and the reality of a fragmented society. In this sense, the faith of Colombian leaders in education paired their belief in European pedagogical systems with their faith in Colombians' good qualities; this led the Conservative politician Sergio Arboleda (1822–1888) to write in the 1880s:

En el seno de esta sociedad, mezcla de todas las razas, que sufre hoy una crisis complicada y difícil, bulle el genio y se agitan en aparente desconcierto la imaginación, la inteligencia y las pasiones, como hierven los diferentes elementos en una cuba de fermentación alcohólica; pero esto mismo revela la energía de sus fuerzas vitales: no está muerta.

Like many Colombian politicians at the time, Arboleda had an ambivalent attitude towards the racial miscegenation of the Colombian population: while trying to present it as a condition for social harmony, it

---


52 Deas, Del Poder y la Gramática, 28


54 Sergio Arboleda, Las letras, las ciencias y las bellas artes (Bogotá: Editorial Minerva, 1936). In all citations from published and unpublished sources of the time, I chose to keep the original spelling.
did constitute an “obstacle” in the process of representing Colombian society as different yet worthy and capable of achieving the goals of Western culture.\textsuperscript{55} The affirmation of racial mixture with the predominance of “white” features as the condition that endowed Colombians with all the qualities necessary to embrace Western education and to be transformed by it; it was the core of the explanations that fuelled the enthusiasm of Colombian leaders for educational and pedagogical experiments. This notion was still present in the celebration of the first centenary of Colombian independence, as voiced by General Rafael Uribe Uribe, one of the most prominent Liberal leaders: the Colombian population was the product of three good races, predominantly white, and all its defects could be corrected.\textsuperscript{56}

Education implied the learning of some habits, beliefs, knowledge and practices that appeared as privileged over those that did not fit in the ideal of civilization. Colombian elites had access to education as identified with European civilization and in their role as leaders of the country, they decided that it was the more appropriate for Colombian society to enable their access to Western civilization while, at the same time, it allowed to downplay the role of race in Colombian republican society.\textsuperscript{57} This implied the interplay of representations of the “educated” and of the “ignorant” that emerged in the discourses about education produced by Colombian intellectuals and politicians in the nineteenth century and that they used to classify the rest of the Colombian population and to identify their educational needs. All the while, these representations worked as symbols of class identification and cohesion that redefined Colombian social groups. As Marco Palacios explains, this process is more traceable in the discourses and practices of elites and in their relationship with the rest of society:

\[\ldots\] la “cultura culta” difunde imperceptiblemente una mentalidad peculiar, el estereotipo nacional conformado por ideas, aspiraciones, hábitos y modos de ser, empieza en ese instante a representar un principio activo que, en última instancia, encubre la colonización de una clase social sobre las demás. No se trata de la mera imposición de la dictadura de clase, […] sino de la aparición de símbolos de cohesion e identificación profundos y duraderos […]\textsuperscript{58}

The redefinition of class distinction based on education in Colombia was a process that started in the 1850s with the estrangement between the subaltern classes and the Liberal elites. We must remember that the Liberal faith in the political participation of the people had taken the form of democratic societies (\textit{sociedades democráticas}) in which the working classes could be educated by political Liberal leaders to become citizens with knowledge of the values and ideas that would enable them to perform a democratic

\textsuperscript{55} Marixa Lasso, \textit{Myths of harmony. Race and Republicanism during the age of Revolution 1795-1831} (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2007).
\textsuperscript{56} Gómez, “Señales en el cielo, espejos en la tierra: la Exhibición del Centenario y los laberintos de la interpelación.”, 245
\textsuperscript{57} Rojas, \textit{Civilization and violence. Regimes of representation in nineteenth-century Colombia}.
\textsuperscript{58} Marco Palacios, \textit{Estado y clases sociales en Colombia}, Nueva Biblioteca Colombiana de Cultura (Bogotá: Linotipo Bolivar, 1986).
role. The Sociedades Democráticas are identified in Colombian historiography as groups of artisans, and their political action is also identified as the "role of the artisans". However, “artisan” in this context refers to urban workers of different professions. We also have to bear in mind that young students, intellectuals and Liberal land owners also participated in democratic societies. The lack of cohesiveness within the groups of artisans and other groups that were called to form these societies came from their traditional social and ethnic positions. The Liberals’ perception of the role of the people in politics changed after the coup led by General José María Melo against the government of Liberal General José María Obando: it was necessary to lead the popular classes, for their insurrection showed that they did not understand what was necessary to achieve progress and modernity. The coalition between a segment of the Liberal party and the Conservative party that followed this uprising deployed repressive measures against the leaders of this revolt, widening the distance between the elites and subaltern groups.

According to mid-nineteenth century Colombian elites, the project of building a unified nation through the exercise of political rights had failed. The option of education began to gain more appeal from 1853, when the Liberal politician and military leader José Hilario López won the presidency. The combination of the Liberal faith in education and the elitist fear of the people fostered the search of a strong and systematic way to legitimize the republican institutions that Colombian politicians wanted to develop. The first step taken by the Liberal party in power to readjust the educational system was to challenge the moral supremacy of the Catholic Church by promoting religious freedom, freedom of thought and the separation between Church and State. However, the radical Liberalism of those years also proved to be contrary to a systematic reform of education as it did not provide an official support for schools or universities, which resulted in the spread of private schools and in the official statement of invalidation of all university diplomas as qualification for any profession. The Decreto Orgánico de Instrucción Pública issued in 1870 marked a shift in the Liberal approach to education by laying the foundations of an organized management and supervision of schools, teachers and curricula to promote national public free education. This plan was reformulated by the arrival to power in 1880 of the Conservative party with the Regeneración led by the coalition between Rafael Núñez (Liberal leader) and Miguel Antonio Caro (Conservative leader); the subsequent reforms implied a complete reform of the educative system, fully reoriented to consecrate Catholicism and the Spanish language as the basis of the nation.

Music education for Colombians
This process leads to enquiry about the types of education that Colombians of the time could aspire to and the role of musical education in that process. In her work about musical education, Martha Barriga

---

59 Colmenares, Partidos Políticos y Clases Sociales.
60 González, Legitimidad y cultura: educación, cultura y política en los Estados Unidos de Colombia 1863-1886; Gilberto Loaiza Cano, "El maestro de escuela o el ideal liberal de ciudadano en la reforma educativa de 1870," Revista 34(2007).
Monroy differentiates between types of musical education, thus helping the reader to understand general education in Colombia in the second half of the nineteenth century. Firstly, she defines formal education, which comprises educational institutions that are regulated by curricula and that reproduce those curricula. Secondly, she defines informal education as education through social encounters, without the direction imposed by curricula.  

During the years 1853 to 1870, Liberals and Conservatives supported private education for different reasons. Liberals supported it as a way to contest the network of Conservative pro-Catholic schools and as a way to promote what they advertised as practical and progressive knowledge, while Conservatives supported private education as a way to keep Catholic morals at the core of society and to contest what they called materialistic and atheist Liberal teachings. The schools founded by Liberals promoted their curricula as knowledge that was necessary for the advancement of Colombian society and as paths towards the achievement of happiness and freedom. In some advertisements for new schools a few years before 1853, this belief was presented as the motto of the new institution: teach useful things to Colombian society. The Liberals’ belief in freedom of thought translated into freedom to teach and to learn, as shown by the advertisement of the school La Constancia: its founders offered their curriculum to those interested in a literary career (“carrera literaria”) or just in perfecting their knowledge of literature and included the teaching of piano and singing. These advertisements show that music was understood as a necessary subject in the space of formal education because it was deemed as useful. The latter was understood by Colombian intellectuals and politicians firstly and foremost as a tool to discipline mind and body, as explained by Alejandro Agudelo in his text book Lecciones de Música published in 1859:

[… ] su dominio abraza a un tiempo mismo la educación física i jímástica, puesto que desenvuelve los órganos de la voz i aumenta el vigor de los pulmones, i la moral e intelectual, porque despierta en el corazón humano sentimientos de benevolencia i de amor, i porque confiere a su inteliçencia un grado superior de movimiento i vivazidad.

This belief of Colombian musicians, politicians and intellectuals was common during the second half of the nineteenth century not only in Latin America, but also in Europe; contemporary French politicians supported the notion of art as imitation of nature, as the most perfect form of thought and therefore as a powerful pedagogical tool. The art of music had these qualities that were activated when audiences

61 Monroy, "La educación musical en Bogotá 1880-1920."
62 González, Legitimidad y cultura: educación, cultura y política en los Estados Unidos de Colombia 1863-1886. 30
64 "Colegio La Constancia," El Neogranadino, No. 70, October 19 1849.
65 Alejandro Agudelo, Lecciones de Música precedidas de una Introduccion Historica (Bogotá: Imprenta de Pizano i Perez, 1858), 5
66 Joan Passler, Composing the Citizen: Music as public utility in Third Republic France (California: University of California, 2009), 58 - 59
enjoyed it and appreciated it; therefore, according to Colombian political and cultural elites, it was necessary to educate Colombians into the enjoyment and appreciation of art music. Many musicians and intellectuals believed that the Colombian character was suitable for the learning of Western art music, and that this would lead to the improvement of the best qualities of Colombians. It would also lead to the realization of musical works that could rival those of European composers; in order to get to this point, Colombians needed to learn to value their own achievements more, as Francisco Boada explained in his music text book published in 1854:

¿es por ventura que carecemos de brillantes producciones, o intelijencias capaces de crear? No; no consiste tal vez sino en que se respeta mas de lo necesario la superioridad del estranjero sobre nosotros, en que se le presta un ascediente ecsajerado que anonada en vez de servir de estimulo, que ahoga el fruto de nuestros esfuerzos en vez de servirle de guia.67

This was a call to value national talent as much as the national production of art music. Boada insisted that this attitude was necessary to promote the learning of art music through simple methods which provided students with precise explanations. The publication during the 1850s of several methods for the self-teaching of music reflected this petition for clarity and simplicity. Many of these methods used an explanatory system of simple questions and answers. This agreed with the pedagogical system created by Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi that had been adopted by Colombian governments since the late 1840s and that was constantly readjusted throughout the nineteenth century. This system aimed to develop with simplicity the natural intellectual abilities of the student and it was adopted in Colombia to complement the Lancaster system; with the arrival of the Liberal party to power during the 1850s, the Pestalozzi system was widely promoted instead of the Lancaster system, for while the first one promoted the teacher as a facilitator that helped students within their capabilities, the latter was much more focused on the authority of the teacher and on the memorization of knowledge.68 The Pestalozzi system agreed more with the notion of self-improvement promoted by Liberal leaders at this time; the direct effect of this notion on education was the promotion of self-teaching and music was one of the fields that reflected this impulse.

During the 1850s the ruling elite’s experimentation with liberal ways of governance became more radical as the decade came to a close. Public lay education was one the most debated causes of the Liberal party and the policies deployed to guarantee it show this belief and the change of attitude of the ruling Liberal elites towards the subaltern classes: inclusion after education. The foundation of the National University in 1867 was the first step in this new approach to education and it implied the organization of

67 Francisco Boada, Teoría de Música puesta al alcance de los Educandos (Bogotá: Imprenta de Torres Amaya, 1854), 2
higher education controlled by the centre of power, Santafé de Bogotá. This new system stipulated that education was to be the province of national government, and school attendance would be obligatory for children between the ages of 6 and 14. Teacher training schools were created to be directed by German educators who would teach students the skills and knowledge of what was considered a modern education, focused in practical knowledge and values such as discipline, hard work and respect for the nation and its institutions. The Liberal federal government hoped that this would be the most efficient way to integrate Colombian society to the modern culture of rationalism and that it would plant the seeds for a unified national culture. The Decreto Orgánico de Instrucción Pública from 1 November 1870 set the rules and procedures that the executive power could exercise to organize bureaucratic staff that would administer public primary schools, high schools, teachers and teacher training schools.

The bureaucratization and nationalization of education under one administrative initiative marks a point of rupture with the first Liberal approach of the 1850s, which was guided by the principle of no intervention from the national government in regional affairs. In the decree of 1870, the government stipulated that singing had to be taught in every boy’s school in the country, while in the girls’ schools this instruction and others were left at the discretion of the headmaster; as for high schools, the same instruction was to be taught in depth. Although the decree granted certain flexibility to headmasters and regional authorities in the fulfillment of its regulations, the conditions of public education were extremely precarious in many parts of the country, so much as to even try to benefit from this flexibility, causing pessimistic reports as the one given by the President of the state of Cauca in 1871, in which he declared that although there were many schools, their shortcomings prevented them from educating the people appropriately.

The problem of scarcity of resources also hindered the proper operation of schools for the instruction of teachers (Escuelas Normales). In 1872 the Director of Public Instruction of the state of Boyacá explained in his report that the lack of texts and materials necessary for the instruction of future teachers made them unprepared to teach the subjects that were stipulated as part of the curriculum by the Organic Decree. This implied that there was no musical instruction in the seven public schools of this state. In the reports from the early 1870s given by the authorities in charge of implementing the decree, these complaints are as constant as is the absence of any report about musical instruction. It seems that, if

---

69 González, Legitimidad y cultura: educación, cultura y política en los Estados Unidos de Colombia 1863-1886., 14 - 15
71 “Decreto Orgánico Instrucción Pública Nov.1/1870”.
72 Informe Especial sobre Instrucción Pública del Presidente del Estado Sobrano del Cauca a la Legislatura de 1871, (Popayán: Imprenta del Estado, 1871).
73 Informe Anual del Director de Instrucción Pública en el Estado de Boyacá al Señor Director General del Ramo, (Tunja: Imprenta de Torres Hermanos i Compañía, 1872).
there were no resources or staff properly trained to teach reading or mathematics, there was much less material or fewer staff available to teach music.

In the capital of the country the search for an efficient way to organize education institutions and curricula according to the decree led to the official approval by the Board of Elementary Instruction of Bogotá in 1875 of the Guía para la Enseñanza en las Escuelas by Alberto Blume. In this guide, Blume recommended a distribution for all the subjects in the curriculum; for the singing lesson he recommended the most appropriate times — the second hour of schoolwork, immediately after the writing and drawing lessons, the extension of each lesson and the progressive difficulty of each lesson, which would lead the student to the progressive learning of the intricacies of music. This learning process was supported in the teaching and learning of singing, praised by Blume as necessary as reading, writing and mathematics.\footnote{Alberto Blume, Guía para la enseñanza en las escuelas (Bogotá: Imprenta Echavarría Hermanos, 1875).}

Although these recommendations were very precise, the question about their effect still remains. While the Liberal government tried to organize public music education, private schools continued to offer music as part of their curriculum, such as the Colegio de San Antonio de Padua in Ubaté (north of Santafé de Bogotá)\footnote{"Colegio San Antonio de Padua," El Hogar No. 103, February 14 1870.} for boys or the Colegio de las Mercedes in Santafé de Bogotá for girls, where the Italian Oreste Sindici (future composer of the music of the national anthem) was the singing teacher.\footnote{"Colegio de las Mercedes," La América No. 161, February 14 1874.} Musicians also offered their services as private music teachers and kept publishing methods for the self-teaching of music: José Viteri published in Medellín in 1876 his Texto para enseñar música por nota, por el sistema objetivo, al alcance de los niños in which he offered to teach not just the theory, but the technical advice to play several instruments, and also complained about the lack of support that music education had from the Government.\footnote{José Viteri, Texto para enseñar música por nota, por el sistema objetivo, al alcance de los niños (Medellín: Imprenta de Gutierrez Hermanos, 1876).}
The insistence of the Colombian government on imposing the instruction of singing in public schools during the 1870s echoed the debates in France’s Third Republic where politicians, musicians and thinkers also insisted on the importance of singing instruction in schools: if students learned to sing, schoolwork would become more amiable and the atmosphere inside of the school would be happier; also, through singing, the students could absorb republican values in an activity that reinforced solidarity towards a common interest. In his guide for schools, Blume also recommended singing as a powerful element to provide a positive atmosphere for schoolwork.

Putting together the legislation on music instruction with sources that complain about the lack of support from the government to implement it, indicates that in spite of the good will of politicians and musicians, public music education in schools was not the most successful educational endeavour of the Liberal government. The continuity of private music teaching and concerts were two activities that reinforced music education through social encounter. This kind of music education relied on sociability; therefore, concerts and specifically tertulias were its principal media. In these events the attendees could learn from each other through observation and discussion about composers, works, current tastes and performance styles. Also, concert reviews were one of the most widespread tools of music education, since their authors commented in them about the quality of the performances, the works that were performed and about the etiquette required for tertulias and concerts. Articles about composers, international musicians and musical genres and about the beneficial effects of art music were published, promoting its appreciation.

---

78 Passler, Composing the citizen: Music as public utility in Third Republic France. 69
From the late 1840s to the 1870s Colombian Liberal elites saw art music as a powerful medium with a very specific utility: to help in the construction of character that should be the basis of citizenship. During these decades this process was aimed at the formation of an individual capacity for critical judgement that was to be the general characteristic of Colombians, so they could assume their role as the source of democratic power. In the 1870s this goal changed and, from the construction of critical judgement there was a transition towards the construction of a homogeneous response that was to be understood as the mark of proper citizenship; patriotism and democracy were no longer about individual judgement, but about common interest manifested through the learning of mass singing. Sources suggest that the regulation of singing patriotic songs and patriotic anthems in schools was to be a form of secular prayer (since religion was not compulsory during the Olimpo Radical) that had to help form secular morals and that, taught by the teacher, instructed in the appropriate manifestation of emotions stirred by the music: identification with one’s community, fellowship and respect for national institutions.

As stated above, the political star of the Conservative party changed with the coalition which supported Rafael Núñez to win the presidency in 1885; Núñez’s right hand was the ultraconservative linguist Miguel Antonio Caro, one of the leaders of the Conservative party. Caro was elected President for the years 1892 to 1898 and was able to lead a process of reforms that attacked the core of the Liberal measures deployed during the Olimpo Radical. One of these measures was the reform of education, which was organized by the Minister of Public Instruction Liborio Zerda through the laws promulgated in decree No. 0429 of January 1893; the fifth article of this decree re-established the link between the teachings of the Catholic Church and Colombian society through the educational system. Under the Conservative government patriotism and love for one’s country were closely associated to religious faith, and such faith should be understood as something unquestionable. The regulations on what was to be taught in public schools were also restructured and redistributed; the teaching of singing remained in the school curriculum but by 1904, through decree number 491, the teaching of singing in public primary schools was limited to urban schools and it was restricted to easy hymns and the national anthem. The School of Arts and Crafts and the Escuela Normal also had music and singing in their curricula.

Colombian music critics, musicians and other cultural leaders during the second half of the nineteenth century used abstraction to talk about the effects of music in articles and books. This can be understood as a way to acknowledge cultural hierarchies: art music promoters thought that the ethereal world of music (and of music-making) had very little to do with reality. This ran parallel to efforts to include music as part of the curricula in public schools; nevertheless, the references to the abstract world of music

---

echoed the notion, very common among art music aficionados at the time, that appreciation of art music was not something that could be taught or done in a daily environment, but that it had to take place in a special space and that it had to be enabled by special individuals (trained musicians). Only in these moments, separated from daily occupations, the listeners could understand what the music and musicians were trying say. Was there a contradiction between the teaching of singing in public schools and the claims that the understanding and enjoyment of art music was exclusive to those who could have these separated encounters with music? Perhaps not. The cultural hierarchy implied in the separate promotion of both approaches to music was articulated in terms of difference and complementarity. Sources suggest that the separated individual enjoyment of all genres of art music was understood by many Colombian music critics as a learning process; what was learned through the enjoyment of art music was the love of harmony and the ambition to achieve a better life — if not materially, at least spiritually, as argued by Carlos Olivera in 1879:

La disposición del ánimo, el carácter de la música, su gusto predominante, sus rasgos vivaces o sombríos, melancólicos o dulces, pueden despertar sentimientos idénticos o producir el equilibrio por medio del choque. Un espíritu que siente pasión por la melodía, sabe vencer, sin embargo, esa tiránica expresión del presente que le arrastra hacia lo prosaico; hace un esfuerzo, olvida lo que le llama a la tierra y se eleva a las regiones del más puro idealismo.82

If someone could learn to fight the tyranny of his/her prosaic existence through the appreciation of art music in an individual experience, scholarly instruction could provide a public orientation to that individual skill through the teaching of singing; in that way, individuals could learn to work in harmony — as they sang in harmony. Thus, musical education was not only a luxury, but an ability that people had to develop with the help of scholarly instruction in order to exercise their public civic role.

Retretas: music education for all?
The retreta was an attempt to spread the culture of concerts and its educational benefits to all of the population. Data suggest that they started earlier than 1880 and that they became regular during that decade. Articles and reviews written about retretas during that time show that they were welcomed and praised as a sign of cultural improvement and that the proper performance of a retreta was something that had to be planned by the government. In the article “Las retretas barbarisonantes”83 published in 1881, its anonymous author gave several examples of the proper place to perform a retreta and

82 Carlos Olivera, “La Música,” El Zipa, No. 25, January 23 1879.
83 This title could be translated as The Barbarian-like concerts. The word “barbarisonante” is a fusion of the two Spanish words bárbaro (barbarian) and sonante or even better, sonido (sound). The author of the cited article refers then to the “wild” and “uncivilized” sound that he and other attendees had to suffer at the retreta.
explained that by having the *retreta* away from the presidential palace, the Government showed itself as caring for the common interest of all parties involved, that is, the music bands and the audience; at the same time, it made sure that other music bands different from the presidential battalion could play and provided the audience with a comfortable place to enjoy the music. In this way, the correspondent said, the Government fulfilled an exemplary act: “[...] es un acto que se deriva del espíritu de igualdad, de fraternidad i de democracia porque se distingue el desarrollo de la civilización moderna.”

This notion of *retreta* as an example of democracy given by the government was taken very seriously, as shown by the reviews published in the Medellín newspaper *El Espectador*; in one of them published in 1893, its author insisted that *retretas* were a present from the Government to the people and praised that they were not only performed beside the houses of the city’s political leaders, proposing the vicinity of other prominent figure’s houses ─ such as the palace of the Archbishop ─ and other places strongly associated to power, like the squares of churches and the central park of the city, as suitable sites.

But the behaviour of the attendees to the *retreta* was something else to be considered, for the vulgarity of the audience added insult to the inconvenience of the place:

Aquella esquina es llena de jentes que obstruyen el camino para concurrir a las funciones del teatro, las cuales tienen lugar las mismas noches. Varias de estas jentes forman allí un desorden que da a la retreta el aspecto menos galano que se pueda imaginar. Allí se grita, se vocifera, se profieren las interjecciones mas vulgachas, i muchas veces se acaba por riñas a bofetadas o a piedras. Hai de ordinario muchos individuos ebrios o achispados en aquel concurso heterojeneo.

We see that although the *retreta* was understood by its supporters as a sign of culture and democracy, the fact that it was performed in a public place and for a heterogeneous audience, made it problematic; it seems that the same people that supported *retretas* wanted to train their attendees. However, it was not enough to educate them; it was also necessary to educate people that happened to be in the park at the time of the *retreta*. The author of the review also complained that the government had not understood that there were better places for the *retreta* in which a more respectful audience could gather to listen to the music without producing loud and “vulgar” noises. The part of the audience that was loud and vulgar demonstrated that they had not had access to the etiquette manuals that were printed and used in Colombia since the 1850s; the most disseminated of these manuals was written by Manuel Antonio Carreño in 1853 and in it he established that any loud noise outside of the allowed moments in a public concert (after the end of a musical piece) was a display not only of bad behaviour, but of lack of civil and

---

84 “Las retretas barbarisonantes,” *Diario de Cundinamarca*, No. 2972, October 8 1881.
Christian virtues. The desire of making the *retreta* a public spectacle where public spirit and good manners were the biggest contribution from the audience was at painful contradiction with the reality of the mixture of at least three types of audience: the audience of music aficionados who knew how to behave in a concert; the group of attendees that followed the behaviour that they saw from the first group, so they would not be excluded from this social event; and the part of the audience that happened to be there — talking, drinking alcohol, gambling or passing by — and that could manifest their pleasure, curiosity, disgust or dismissiveness in any way they saw fit. The participation of these audiences in the *retreta*, with expressions described as “vulgar”, “coarse” and “uncivil”, challenged the rhetoric of the civilizing effects of art music and also confronted the supporters of the *retreta* as urban entertainment with their class prejudices by highlighting the cultural differences that constituted social hierarchies in Colombian society at the time.

According to the reviewer of *retretas* in the Bogotá newspaper *Diario de Cundinamarca*, all the improvements that the government deployed for the performance of *retretas* (gas lamps in parks, kiosks for brass bands, transformation of old squares into parks) were, in truth, improvements in the urban manners of the inhabitants of the capital. These improvements included the behaviour of musicians, who had to be reminded to wear their gala uniform at these performances. The reviewer set brass bands in Europe and the US as examples: the musicians wore their best uniforms and were punctual. These recommendations were a constant undertone in reviews of *retretas*, when reviewers praised the quality of performance. The *retreta* as a pedagogical tool for the general public raised several issues that challenged political and cultural elites in their most ardent desire: to transform Colombians through the deployment of the public utility of music.

**Can everybody learn art music? — Or learn to appreciate it?**

In spite of the faith that political and cultural leaders had in the “natural” musical talent of Colombians and in its academic training, the question of how all Colombians might be able to learn music or, at least, to learn to enjoy it and appreciate it, underlaid many writings about musical education at the time.

It is possible to answer this question if we analyse the problem of music education through the construction of gender as part of citizenship. Public and private education was not the same for both sexes. Music education given to boys gave them more technical knowledge about music, as shown by the curriculum of a school cited at the beginning of this chapter and advertised in the newspaper *El Neogranadino* in 1849: music theory, melody, harmony, composition, singing, instrumental music.

---

88 “Hechos Diversos: Las retretas para el público”, *Diario de Cundinamarca*, No. 51, June 24 1883.
89 "Programa de un colegio para muchachos."
Almost twenty years later and on the eve of the radical Liberal government, music remained part of an ambitious curriculum for male education, as we can see in the advertisement for the Colegio de Escobar:

*Además de las materias que hoy se enseñan, se darán lecciones practicas de gimnastica, botánica, química, agricultura, dibujo y música y de ciencias políticas, literatura, jurisprudencia y algunos ramos de medicina.*

In curricula like these, music shared space with mathematics, algebra, grammar, languages (Latin, Greek, English, French, sometimes Italian or German), and bookkeeping. For girls’ schools, the curricula started to include from the 1850s subjects like home economics, sewing and needlework, mathematics, geometry, cooking, French, grammar and, in one special group, sacred history, Colombian history, morals, etiquette and music, specifically singing and piano. Eighteen years later, this curriculum was almost the same.

In the 1880s curricula for boys sometimes did not specify if they were instructed in instrumental music while curricula for girls did. We can explain this difference in the orientation of musical training by remembering what Cristina Rojas explains about female education in mid- and late-nineteenth-century Colombia:

Women were not excluded from a role in the civilizing mission. But their role was such that it did not require public intervention, although it did require male protection. [...] The limited role in the civilizing task assigned to women explains the concern among creole men for improving the situation of women, especially with regard to their capacity as moral guardians of civilization. [...] Improving the condition of women through education was seen as requisite for civilization [...]*

The role of women in the civilizing process was, in reality, made effective by a small percentage of the Colombian female population at the time which had access to private education; for public education for girls was not welcomed by the entire population. Families that could afford private schools and boarding schools for their daughters hoped that this education would turn them into the embodiment of the qualities that identified the female sex: sweetness, gentleness, kindness, candour, spiritual beauty, angelical grace, dignity and culture. Music education for women had to reinforce these qualities and had to give them another tool to accomplish their biggest role: that of mothers and first educators of society (of men).

The fruits of music education for women could be contradictory. Many critics and musicians of the time did not spare women who displayed ‘bad musical taste’ or a lack of musical talent. In 1882 José Caicedo

---

Rojas, *Civilization and Violence. Regimes of representation in nineteenth-century Colombia.*: 33 - 35
Rojas chastised the superficial music education that many women received and almost blamed it and them for spreading "bad" repertoire and "incorrect" performance practices (such as playing the piano at Church during Holy Week); in 1899 the composer Gonzalo Vidal displayed his poetic talents in the Medellín magazine *El Montañés* when he depicted the lack of musical skills of a lady:

- Pianista de pacotilla,
- Cantatriz sin vocación,
- Como objeto de irrisión
- Es usté una maravilla
- Digna de exposición.

[...]

Me revienta, si señora
Que con tan pésimo oído
Ser artista haya querido
Cuando usted misma no ignora
Que a usté le falta un sentido.  

To Vidal this horrible display of musical insufficiency was caused by a lack of understanding of the rudiments of the art, but also by a pretentious ambition to display music as a social skill. Situations like this fuelled debates about the music taste of the public, which was mostly modelled after what women learned to play and performed in private concerts. The fact that it was women who taught music to girls was one of the matters of discussion when it came to the formation of what connoisseurs called "good musical taste". However, since musical knowledge was defined as appropriate to the "feminine nature", it is not surprising that music was one of the subjects imparted in teacher training schools for women; after all, teaching was a profession that also reinforced the "natural qualities" of the female sex and the reports to the Ministry of Public Instruction during the 1880s and 1890s show that there were women school teachers that taught music in schools and sometimes in teacher training schools. In 1887 the Director of

---

97 *Informe del Ministerio de Instrucción Pública al Congreso Nacional en sus sesiones de 1898*, (Bogotá: Imprenta Zalamea Hermanos, 1898). In the section dedicated to Antioquia, we learn that the woman that taught music at
the National Academy of Music created a section for young ladies (señoritas) to provide the Colombian woman with "[…] una nueva profesión […] que la pone al abrigo de las vicisitudes de la vida y de la fortuna." Two years later, Jorge Wilson Price lamented that this section did not have enough students and had reported financial losses; the cause of this, he explained, was that parents preferred to pay a private teacher without the guarantee of academic rigour. It seems that the sight of young women going to classes in a place that was known for professional training — since that was how Price liked to advertise the National Academy of Music — had a bad social implication: women were to learn music for their spiritual improvement and the exercise of their ‘natural’ qualities, which would be displayed in the privacy of their home, not as a source of employment in the public arena.

the teacher training school for women also taught drawing and sewing. This situation was common in other teacher training schools for women. The promotion of teaching as a career for women agreed with the ideas promoted by some Colombian thinkers at the time, who promoted women’s education as a way to give them “proper” jobs and to promote virtues like temperance and economy.

This periodical was published in Neiva in 1880 and offered music lessons and music transcriptions from notation to alphanumerical system, like this "Polka."  

For men, music education was oriented to the construction of character to be displayed in public. Education in general was aimed to form individuals with morals, obedient to the law, respectful of authority and with skills to behave themselves in the city. Music education was to reinforce this training, as declared by the correspondent who praised the foundation of the Colegio Ribón in Barranquilla in 1881, which included music in its curriculum: the alumni would be "[...] jóvenes de instrucción sólida, de principios republicanos, ciudadanos útiles, hombres libres". Many thought that music instruction was a serious matter and called to reflect on the ambition of popularizing musical education through public schools. One example of this concern is the article by one Olimpo Barrera published in the Neiva newspaper La Armonía in 1882:
Hai muchos seres humanos que desconociendo su vocacion, o creyendola poco honorífica, pretenden descollar en aquello para lo cual Dios no les ha concedido intelijencia. [...] Enseñar a un individuo de ningunas o de mediocres aptitudes para la música, es robarle i robarse a sí mismo un tiempo que se podría emplear mejor [...] 103

Barrera also denounced that the lack of materials and staff to teach music in a proper way to those who had the talent for it, made music education detrimental. José Caicedo y Rojas said in his essay “Estado actual de la música en Bogotá”, published in 1880, that the problem was not the lack of talent, but lack of discipline in the study of music; according to Caicedo, the men that had talent and could devote themselves to a serious study of music did not care enough to do it, and those who did, did not have enough encouragement. This criticism to the uneven effects of music education in Colombia (either private or public) made the calls for proper music education more insistent, for if not everyone developed a “musical ear” at least music learning could instil ways of relating to others in public. The first effect of music education should be, as has been noted, a modification in behaviour; those who learned music could aspire to improve themselves through the education of their instincts. This educative process was identified as a relationship with the beautiful through aesthetic enjoyment of music; this, however, was not a free exercise, for it had to be supervised by those who had not only the proper education to do it, but also natural talent: the artists. If this process was successful then one of the most evident modifications of character could be observed: an improvement in speech. In a circular addressed to all Director of Public Instruction in 1881, the Secretary of State Ricardo Becerra called upon the directors to promote the teaching of music in schools to instil good qualities against violence and alcoholism and to correct “bad speaking” habits of part of the population. 104 This belief persisted among Colombian elites, as shown in the article “La enseñanza de la música como element de educación” by Eduardo Braña, published in 1901:

Si la música vocal estuviese universalmente difundida en el pueblo, modificaria con el tiempo lo desagradable del acento provincial y contribuiria a la unidad de entonación en la pronunciación castellana, mejoraria insensiblemente la prosodia, y daría más melodía a la lengua. 105

103 Olimpo Barrera, "Enseñanza Música," La Armonía: periodico musical, critico i noticioso, No. 5, October 15 1882.
104 Ricardo Becerra, "Circular a los Directores de Instruccion Publica de todos los Estados por la que se les recomienda fomentar e impulsar ciertas enseñanzas," in Anales de la Instruccion Publica en los Estados Unidos de Colombia, Tomo III (1881).
Sources indicate that the key to the educative process that Colombian political elites wanted to deploy through music education was the supervised aesthetic enjoyment of music. In their research about the formalization of music education in Colombia, Martha Barriga Monroy, Ellie Anne Duque and Juan Fernando Velásquez\(^{107}\) agreed in that the first step to achieve this was the education of musicians, not only as professionals but also as moral compasses of society. This moral definition of musicians was something relatively new in mid-nineteenth-century Colombian society.

We must remember that during the Liberal governments from 1853 to 1880, Liberal discourse emphasized the lack of hierarchy among professions. This had a contradictory effect in the social reception of musicians, for they still carried part of the social and economic classifications that had been inherited from the colonial period: in the city they lived in the same neighbourhoods as other artisans, their education was a combination of traditional and academic training carried out inside their families and in some cases they combined their activities as musicians with another occupation.\(^{108}\) With the arrival of Liberal and Romantic ideas about the individual, musicians as talented individuals managed to gain a different kind of social reception: their talent and skills were supported and promoted by the elites that formed closed networks which included some musicians as their avowed leaders, while excluding others. In that group of elite musicians we must include the well-trained amateur (also a member of the social elites), for sources show that there was a close interaction between the two groups. This interaction and the fact that some musicians were not part of a specific artistic network contributed to the mixed social valuation of music as a profession: there was not a definitive notion of what a “professional musician” was or an “artist”, and some musicians developed their careers – and lives – in bohemian urban circles that sometimes involved itinerancy, thus earning a bad reputation.

This was supposed to change with the foundation of the National Academy of Music in 1882 in Santafé de Bogotá. Ellie Anne Duque explains that Jorge Wilson Price, founder of the Academy “[…]

---


\(^{108}\) Bermúdez and Duque, Historia de la Música en Santafé y Bogotá 1538-1938. 167 - 181
firmemente que la música tenía el potencial para moldear el espíritu y a través de guías de comportamiento estricto, podía alejar al músico colombiano del consumo del alcohol y de la fiesta. Moral education was, then, part of the new education that Price, his colleagues and supporters wanted to develop for Colombian musicians, and that is why he strongly supported spiritual retreats (retiros espirituales) supervised by the Catholic Church. The man who wanted to study music at the Academy had to assume this moral as a commitment from the start of his enrolment: the student signed a contract in which he promised to follow the courses of the Academy with discipline and irreproachable conduct; this contract was supported by a guarantor who agreed to pay a fine of 200 pesos if the student failed or was expelled from the Academy. The stagnation of urban salaries during the nineteenth century suggests that the fine aimed to prevent violations against the discipline of the Academy, for it compromised the guarantor’s finances. According to complaints from Price, this was not fearsome enough for many:

Mucho tengo que luchar […] con la inconstancia y falta de aplicación o estudio de parte de muchos discípulos, pues parece que en Bogotá se cree que el aprendizaje de la música en la Academia es un pasatiempo, y no un trabajo y estudio constante como en realidad es y debe ser; y de aquí el que muchos alumnos que se matriculan con la ilusión de estar tocando valses, pasillos y polkas, a los dos meses se desalientan al ver que la Academia no tiene por fin tal objeto y que la ciencia de la música no se aprende sino después de muchos años de estudio y de constante trabajo.

These complaints show that Price and at least part of the social and artistic network of musicians and music aficionados had a very different view of what music education implied for the musician: it was not to satisfy the demands of music fashion and of the audience, or for pleasure, but to become artists who could lead their audiences because of the devotion and discipline to their art. Such devotion and discipline had been at the centre of the debates about musical taste and the role of musicians in its construction and promotion. José Caicedo y Rojas argued that one of the major causes of the bad musical education and musical taste in Bogotá was the lack of discipline of musicians; some musicians, agreeing with Caicedo’s opinion, started newspapers and magazines in order to educate both musicians and audiences, such as the one planned by musicians Julio Quevedo and Orestes Sindici in 1879 in

---

109 Duque, "Instituciones Musicales." 139
112 "Academia de Música," in Anales de la Instrucción Pública en los Estados Unidos de Colombia, Tomo IX No. 52 (November, 1886).
113 Rojas, "Estado actual de la música en Bogotá."
which musicians would have the chance to learn the secrets of their art in order to produce musical works
with solid academic foundations that would contribute to the formation of a national repertoire.\textsuperscript{114}

According to these ideas, a properly trained musician was the embodiment of impeccable conduct —
borne out of excellent morals — and of constant study. The constant study of music, according to Price,
implied an obedient disposition towards a hierarchy of knowledge in which the National Academy of Music
had to play the role of centre and arbiter of all musical learning and musical activities. As for learning
music, Price initially allowed his students to learn and practice music outside of the classrooms of the
Academy; in 1898, Price changed his mind based on what he judged as counterproductive results,
detrimental to the goals of the Academy and forbid its students to study with teachers who did not belong
to the Academy and without previous authorization from him and the board of directors:

\begin{quote}
Si los que atacan y critican al instituto tuvieran el patriotismo suficiente para apoyarlo y ayudar a su progreso y buena marcha, los resultados serian más satisfactorios aun y no se notaría el desaliento tan frecuente en los alumnos que llegan al grado superior de estudios, tiempo en que conocidos del publico sus habilidades y sus conocimientos artisticos comienzan los desafectos, con el dulce canto de las sirenas, a insinuareles desconfianza hacia sus maestros, estimulando en ellos la vanidad para convertirlos en instrumentos de insubordinación y frutos perdidos para la Academia […]\textsuperscript{115}
\end{quote}

We must remember that by establishing an \textit{Academia}, Price and others put into practice the belief that
there was a hierarchy in the world of art: those who produce it, those who perform it, those who support it.
This hierarchy also implied a vertical organization of stages in the learning process. Those who went
through this learning process earned the title of "musicians" for they had accomplished the goals of the
curriculum posed by their teachers and had obeyed the discipline implied in this process. The flexibility of
learning through social encounter, through self-teaching and through experimentation had no role here.
Music as an art form was now the exclusive field of academically trained musicians and if amateurs
wanted to learn music and to improve their knowledge, they had to go to them. This also meant that there
was a hierarchy inside of the music profession, a notion explained in an article published in 1901; first,
there was the composer: "Me habla en una lengua extraña. Esas letras que él emplea no están en el
alfabeto que conozco. Necesito, pues, que me traduzcan sus ideas."\textsuperscript{116} The composer sits at the top of
this hierarchy as the sole owner of the technique required to express something with this language. After
the composer there are the "translators", that is, the performers:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{114} "Periódico musical," \textit{El Zipa}, No. 48, July 10 1879.
\textsuperscript{115} Jorge Wilson Price, "Disciplina," in \textit{Anuario de la Academia Nacional de Música, Año escolar de 1898, Año XI}
(Bogotá: El Mensajero, 1898). 30
\end{flushright}
El compositor musical, para ser apreciado por los profanos, por los que no conocen el alfabeto de ese idioma garabatoso o geroglífico, necesita, hasta en su propio país, de colaboradores inteligentes, de correctos traductores. Ha menester del ejecutante o del cantante. Y el ejecutante y el cantante para transmitirnos la idea o el sentimiento del autor, necesita hacer suya esa idea o ese sentimiento.\textsuperscript{117}

According to the author, the goal of this artistic collaboration had to be the memory that the musical work and the performance left in the heart of the audience. The search for this psychological experience was linked to the institutionalization of music education (teaching and learning), which deployed pedagogical mechanisms supported by aesthetic discourses to carry out the civic ideal of properly educating an individual so he or she could be a "citizen". Institutions like the National Academy of Music and its alumni were the spaces as well as the intermediaries between civilians and "the beautiful", that which would remain as a permanent impression in the heart of civilian audiences and that would make them better citizens.

It seems that the centralization of music teaching in the Academy curtailed the production of textbooks for the self-teaching of music. The textbooks that were generally promoted were those either produced or translated from foreign languages for the use of the students of the Academy; these textbooks were written by Jorge Wilson Price and by other prominent teachers at the Academy. It is in one of the textbooks published outside of the Academy that we find a comment that might exemplify opinions contrary to the Academy. As we read in the last citation by Price about the discipline of the Academy, there were those who did not agree with the policies and the work of the Academy. Data do not give indications about who might have voiced their disagreement with the methods employed at the Academy, but in the Prologue to the \textit{Arte de Leer, Escribir y Dictar Musica ─ Sistema alfabetico} by Diego Fallon, the writer said that

\begin{quote}
[...] la vulgarización de la música hasta donde debe y puede serlo, es poco menos que imposible con el sistema de notación actualmente en uso, sistema que hace complicadísimo un arte de suyo sencillo y que por lo mismo retrae, aún a las personas que pudieran disponer del tiempo necesario, de consagrarle el importante lugar que le corresponde en todo plan de educación.\textsuperscript{118}
\end{quote}

The prologuist also explained that the system invented by Fallon was to end all complications in the learning of music and that it was going to reduce the costs of printing music scores and textbooks.

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{118} Narciso González Lineros, "Nuevo sistema musical," in \textit{Arte de leer, escribir y dictar música - Sistema alfabetico por Diego Fallon comparado con la notación conocida}, ed. Diego Fallon (Bogotá: Imprenta Musical de Diego Fallon, 1885).
making them more affordable and thus, expanding their impact on the public. The pedagogical exclusivity that was one of the banners of the Academy could be understood as an obstacle to the access to musical knowledge. In his annual report of 1889, Price denounced the complaints that many had made against the Academy: it was a burden to the small national budget, since there were more urgent matters to take care of; it was a waste of money and time, since there were no talented musicians; it was a private venture that favoured Price and other musicians; it was pointless, since the Academy did not aim to produce musicians that flattered the public music taste. To these complaints Price responded with complete faith in the civilizing and artistic mission of the Academy and with the firm conviction that not everyone was suited to be a musician: "La ciencia artística no puede cultivarse en su esencia sino por un número limitado de genios privilegiados."119

Conclusions
Sources show that there were different types of musical education in Colombia during the second half of the nineteenth century. In the process of organizing Colombian society, led by political and cultural leaders from the elite, music did not escape the classification of practices and knowledge that were to be included and deployed to form an ideal Colombian citizen. As with many institutions that were emulated by Colombian leaders, music education was subject to debate to understand its contributions to the project of nation-building. The fact that Colombian political leaders after 1854 started to define citizenship as a goal achieved through education, had an effect in the reception given to music education that, albeit subtle, had a powerful meaning. If education was the process that a Colombian had to go through to be accepted as "citizen", music education became another filter. This filter was linked to the achievement of physical and emotional discipline, for singing helped to regulate breathing and to control posture and learning to sing with others, was supposed to train the student in attentive listening and work towards a common goal; the relationship of this instruction with the emphasis on speech implies the disciplining of individual thoughts to produce a specific social behaviour. In the mind of Colombian leaders of the time, if a person learned to sing, they learned to express themselves in public properly, "musically", that is with harmony and aesthetic effect. Learning to read music contributed to training observation and learning to play a musical instrument helped to coordinate mind and body; and as stated earlier in this chapter, music enhanced ‘natural’ qualities that were understood as positive in the formation of character for men and women, thus enabling them to fulfil their social role.

Nevertheless, the promotion of art music as something too far away from reality, that needed a specific (strange) vocabulary to be explained and enjoyed, resulted in presenting art music as an alien element to the life of subaltern classes, which had a different approach to music-making. This can be understood if

119 Jorge Wilson Price, "Discurso del Director de la Academia Nacional de Música en el concierto del 17 de Septiembre de 1892," in Anuario de la Academia Nacional de Música, Año escolar de 1892, Año V (Bogotá: Imprenta de la Luz, 1892). 21
we consider that most of nineteenth-century Colombian society was illiterate and was not immersed in Western modern culture, thus privileging forms of oral culture in which music had an important role as marker and transmitter in situ. The teaching methods used in traditional music (not inscribed in the Western art music tradition) implied a flexible way of developing skills through social encounters that did not need to be exclusively academic or musical. In contrast, the methods used in art music teaching implied the seclusion of the student from the social environment until he/she was ready to appear as musician. Seclusion enabled institutions and social networks to operate a control device to produce human and material elements that they thought were necessary to develop art music as a separate field of production. Nevertheless, the association between music-making, musicians and a set of values which justified its presence in Colombian society at the time gave art music a place of relevance that created a tension between the autonomy that many might have expected from it as art and the public utility that was demanded of it as a social activity.

Art music in mid- and late-nineteenth-century Colombia formed part of social encounters that, as with those found in traditional non-art music, were neither specifically musical nor academic. Tertulias and domestic concerts can be seen as hybrid spaces in which art music was transmitted via learning processes that were more flexible than those of academic instruction. I think that it is possible to consider that tertulias and the learning of art music formed a social and cultural practice in which emulation and tradition combined: Colombian urban elites wanted to emulate the domestic music of European soirées while at the same time recreate the tertulia that had emerged in the late decades of the colonial period as a space for debate, learning and leisure in which the musical repertoire was organized according to its function and not its origin, thus integrating different genres from a traditional (non-art) source.  

It is possible to say that different cultures of music production started to coexist with the promotion of art music education during the second half of the nineteenth century. Urban art music production privileged the methods of Western art music, thus stimulating the creation of hierarchies within the profession as well as supporting those who produced musical works according to the academic canon. Non-art methods of music-making endured and since they were also part of urban society, musicians adapted them, thus making possible to produce works where both ways of music-making met. Non-Western practices of music-making (indigenous music, music of African descent and traditional music formed during the colonial period) continued to exist in regions where Western urban culture did not arrive and travellers’ chronicles bear witness to them.

CHAPTER 3: MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE (ACCORDING TO THE ELITES)

In the process of writing a history about the musical construction of Colombia, it is easy to forget that it can become, effortlessly, a history about elitist cultural practice. Published sources from the nineteenth century seem empty of data from subaltern classes about their musical practices and unpublished sources only render fragments of their lives in specific situations. On the other hand, we cannot fully understand the complexity of the development of art music in Colombia during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth without understanding the relationships and tensions that elites and subaltern groups developed through the practice of art music. The latter becomes important when we remember that urban Colombian elites and subaltern groups were going through a process of redefinition during this period.

**Figure 9:** “Napangas”, young women from Cauca Valley (southwest of Colombia)

Drawing by A. De Neuville based on a sketch by Charles Saffray, French physician who travelled through Colombia in the 1860s.\(^{121}\)

**The people**

As explained in Chapter 1, Colombian urban society in the nineteenth century underwent a process of reorganization triggered by political and economic agitation; this reorganization included a lack of social and economic mobility of large segments of the rural population and accentuated regional characteristics.\(^{122}\) During the period covered, education continued to be a privilege for those among the

---

\(^{121}\) Image taken from *Colombia en La Tour du Monde, 1858-1898, Tomo I* edited by Pablo Navas Sanz de Santa María (Bogotá: Ediciones UniAndes, 2013), 134.

\(^{122}\) Bushnell, *The Making of Modern Colombia: a nation in spite of itself.*
urban population that could afford tuition and textbooks.123 Because of their cultural and social heterogeneity, each subaltern group had a different link to the ruling elites; this was more evident in urban subaltern groups, linked to the two political parties — Liberals and Conservatives — and which developed forms of political representation, such as the artesanos movement that was linked to the Liberal party. As for the elites, their ambivalence towards the political participation of subaltern groups was a constant characteristic.

Political conflict added to social and economic reorganization, made possible the coexistence of urban and rural lifestyles since 1848. Civil wars triggered migratory dynamics that resulted in the encounter of rural traditions — most of the time tied to colonial traditions — and urban rituals that Colombian elites started to deploy during the 1850s, thus changing the organization of the city and its inhabitants.124 One that became a common feature in this coexistence of rural and urban ways of life was music; popular music of the time travelled within regions of the country and became a feature of community life through the migrations that changed the distribution of property and turned old farms and empty spaces into new neighbourhoods and new streets. Old colonial villages slowly transformed into republican towns with places where popular music born of the colonial music and the new popular genres of European art music (dance music, song and drawing room music) brought by foreigners and cosmopolitan Colombian elites could meet and produce new musical forms. Rural migration in the period implied the expansion of life styles and social relationships. The case of antioqueño migration into the territories that formed Caldas and into the north of Cauca shows how settlers and inhabitants either clashed or created new laws and relationships to ensure their livelihood.125 These rules implied the respect for property, hard work and the stimulation of progress, the latter being understood by the settlers as a patriotic duty. One of the elements of moral and material progress was musical practices promoted in the cities and that began to arrive in small villages via brass bands, liras and popular musicians. As Egberto Bermúdez explains:

Desde un punto de vista global, las transformaciones sociales y económicas que el país experimentó en dicho periodo fueron el telón de fondo en el que a un nivel puntual, específico y muchas veces con un alcance solamente local, se enmarcó la actividad de los músicos colombianos y de algunos comerciantes, exploradores, técnicos y aventureros extranjeros, aficionados a la música y algunos de ellos músicos ellos mismos, quienes quisieron desarrollar en su nuevo entorno el tipo de cultura musical que había matizado su educación cultural.126

---

123 See Chapter 2 for more details about education in Colombia during the nineteenth century.
Music of the people

The amalgam of musical formats inherited from the colonial period and the drawing room music and opera styles imported from European urban culture became a prominent characteristic of musical practice in Colombia from the 1840s; this happened in the cities that started to become the regional centres of political and economic mobility. The permanence and differentiation of traditional musical forms depended on the continuity of several of the old community rituals, such as carnivals and religious festivities. Traveller’s chronicles, memoirs and short stories written by costumbrismo writers give account of traditional non-art music practices among subaltern groups; another source to trace these musical practices are unpublished sources, such as criminal cases of that period.

A case dated in 1850 helps to explain the circumstances which contributed to the permanence of some musical formats in musical practices by subaltern groups. The events took place at a dance, hosted by a woman in honour of Saint Rita (26 May 1850) in Santa Marta (northern Atlantic coast of Colombia). The hostess, Micaela Peralta, had organized a private party with musicians or at least neighbours who could play music. One of these was Eusebio Rodríguez, the plaintiff, who was playing the redoblante (drum) when Bernardino Martínez — the defendant, already drunk, burst into the party and hit Rodríguez. The summary of the case presented to the judge establishes that Martínez chased Rodríguez to the street where they started to fight. Because of this incident, both Martínez and Rodríguez were accused of causing public disorder. This case suggests that the music that celebrated this saint shared characteristics in theme and structure with music used for these kinds of religious festivities and, therefore, it had a special meaning to the community which allowed its permanence; this music helped the community to mark the time devoted to celebration. However, we must ask if this music, played by what seems "plebeian" people, was the same type of music that urban artisans and middle classes played to celebrate their patron saints in the mid nineteenth century. The arrival to Colombian cities of Western, European drawing-room music implied a powerful change in the tastes and habits of the population that was exposed to it and that integrated it as part of their social identity. A second element provided by this case is the popular festival in which this music appears, an event that expressed community bonds in ways that were criticised by elites: through non-art music, drunkenness and possibly dancing (because of

128 Lesiones personales de Bernardino Martínez a Eusebio Rodríguez, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Asuntos Criminales, Legajo 90, Carpeta no. 2 F198(1850).
129 Saint Rita of Cascia is commonly known as the patron saint of impossibilities and for the hopeless; her festivity is celebrated on May 22. Was the devotion to this saint a way to channel the sadness and frustration of poor people in nineteenth-century Santa Marta?
130 There is no reference to her social background or origin in the file case. Presumably, she was of “plebeian” origin, that is, another member of Santa Marta’s subaltern classes.
the presence of the drum). Numerous sources from political and cultural Colombian leaders on this matter suggest that popular festivities caused worry and disgust to many members of the elite, who thought these celebrations, as many of the traditions of subaltern groups, were an obstacle for material, cultural and spiritual progress.

However, neither music nor dance was the focus of the legal proceedings recorded; the main subject was the escándalo (commotion and noise), which was punishable by law. Though the intention of this document strays away from documenting what kind of music was played, the associations that documents like these formulated — music, traditional popular festivities and scandalous behaviour — coincides with what the elites expressed about musical practices of subaltern groups. The attitude displayed by the elites in the acknowledgement of the music practices of subaltern classes was characterized by shifts in which popular traditional music and its performers acquired different meanings.

“Bulla” and bambuco

According to the Diccionario de la lengua española by the Real Academia de la Lengua, the term bulla comes from the Latin bullir, which means noise and yelling produced by one or many people; it also means boisterousness. Colombian elites in the nineteenth century displayed an attitude towards the musical practices of subaltern groups in which they used this word to describe, in a summary way, what they saw and heard. But this was not the only word that they used; through the published work of many writers and politicians of the time, it is possible to see that bulla gained strength as a synonym for the names used to differentiate the traditional dances of the people; an example of this attitude appears in the article “El tiple” by José Caicedo y Rojas published in 1849:

[…]. Nuestras parejas rústicas, vestidas toscamente, dejan a un lado la mochila, la coyabra y los plátanos, y, arremangándose la ruana al hombro, emprenden al compás de la música sus estúpidas vueltas y extravagantes contorsiones, con las cuales más parece que van a darse de mojicones que a bailar.

Caicedo was not the only sceptical about the legitimacy of traditional popular dances and their music; a second example can be one found in the story "El ciego de paseo", published in the antioqueño newspaper La Estrella de Occidente in 1850; in the following fragment, the narrator tells what he thought of another traditional dance, the bunde:

[...]

132 Rojas, "El Tiple.".: 25
No sé qué admirar más, si la constancia de los bundeadores para gritar i moverse al ruido monótono de un tambor, o la paciencia i dureza del timpano de los moradores de una ciudad que tienen sus casas inmediatas al lugar de la bulla. [...] Permita dios que este año sea el último en que se tolera un desorden tan espantoso, tan inmoral i tan ajeno de un pueblo civilizado.133

The writer replicates here what had been said about bundes since the eighteenth century, when the Catholic Church had preached against them without success. This fragment shows an overlap of notions that were part of the familiar language used to talk about popular music in nineteenth-century Colombia: the rhythm of bunde is both monotonous and annoying and the sound of its principal musical instrument — the drum — is deafening; people do not sing the bunde, they yell, and therefore, their performance has no order or discipline. With these characteristics, it is no surprise then that the author thinks that the bunde is unworthy of civilized people. To him, the barbaric effect of the bunde is that it promotes absence from work, and therefore:

La riqueza publica pierde i la pobreza se hace general en la clase más numerosa de la sociedad. Si yo fuera cura de esta ciudad haría levantar una catedra en la mitad de la plaza i de continuo predicaría contra la inmoralidad de los bundes i la necesidad de trabajo; [...]134

This was not the only attitude towards the music of subaltern groups. Another short story published by the writer Jose David Guarín in the newspaper El Mosaico in 1859 shows the elite’s positive perception of some of the musical practices of subaltern classes: traditional music and dances are depicted with superlatives, making them superior in happiness and innocent simplicity to those found in grand ballrooms.135

The atmosphere of each musical activity is described in different colours: from the noise and darkness of bunde, we go into the light and harmony of bambuco. The effect of bunde is intoxicating; it drives people away from good behaviour while the effect of bambuco is ecstasy. The singers and dancers of bunde are seen as a disordered group that indulge in noise and drunkenness while the singers of bambuco produce beauty and harmony; as for the dance of bambuco, Guarín describes a dance in which the dancers display order and morality, an elegant dance that represents courtship and the behaviour of the dancers as polite and simple. A few lines later, Guarín tells us that bambuco was not the only music that was

133 “El ciego de paseo - Al dia siguiente al bunde,” La Estrella de Occidente, No. 182, February 24 1850.
134 Ibid.
135 José David Guarín, "Un dia de San Juan en tierra caliente (conclusion)," El Mosaico, No 28, July 9 1859. Juan David Guarín (1830 – 1890) was a prolific writer who wrote in the costumbrista style in several magazines and newspapers of the time. Like many Colombian journalists of the time, he also had a diplomatic career.
played and danced to at this party, for there were other dances: torbellino, caña and waltzes, all of them with joy and elegance.

These stories show that in ten years there had been a shift in the attitude of the elites towards some aspects of popular music: elites went from repulsion of traditional popular music in performance to a selected approval of some of these musical formats and performances. However, the acceptance of bambuco was not unanimous. Another short story published in 1859 shows an ambivalent attitude towards the popular traditional origins of bambuco. Its title, “Un baile de tono en mi pueblo”, provides a small preview of the subject: a musical-dance celebration in a small town near a big city. The author starts explaining how the celebration of New Year’s Eve prompts a group of young men of the town’s elite to set up the dance, which started with a pasodoble that the musicians had played that same morning at church; then they played a redova, then a contradanza and then, a polka; it is this dance that started the fight between the organizers of the event and the mothers of the young ladies who were invited:

\[
[...]
\]

The argument continues about the requirement made by the young men to embrace and jump around with their dance partners; to the sarcastic remark made by one of the mothers that Congress ordered the girls to jump in order to dance, one of the young men replied that it was not ordered by Congress, but by “La civilización, mi señora, que echa por tierra la manta, el torbellino i el bambuco, como el vapor echa por tierra los champanes...” To the insistence of the mothers in the correctness and joy provided by bambuco, one of the young men says: “Mil gracias, mi señora; esos bailes muertos no los sabemos nosotros, como no sabemos el latín por ser lengua muerta.”

---

137 Ibid.
138 The champán is a small sailing boat that was used in the Magdalena River in the transportation of people and merchandise.
139 “Un baile de tono en mi pueblo.”
140 Ibid.
This literary piece combines elements of *costumbrismo*\(^{141}\) with a pro-modernity discourse. We know that the location of the event, although unmentioned, is near Santafé de Bogotá; as the capital of the country, Santafé de Bogotá was one of the major receptors of European drawing room music and other objects of consumption that were hailed as “modern” and as examples of civilization. The dance depicted in this story also shows a confrontation between what segments of the elite might have called “old fashioned” tastes and modern pleasures; it also shows the generational gap that became one of the characteristics of Colombian urban societies. The *bambuco* is called a “baile muerto”, a dead dance that was a symbol of isolation, stagnation and of the refusal to accept progress and modernity; the *bambuco* was like a stranded *champán* by the side of the Magdalena River, the most important way of communication within the regions and with the rest of the world. In this story, the Magdalena was a metaphor for time: unavoidable and passing, that left things behind to move forward, like the slow *champanes*. The *polka*, by comparison, is fast and shows the acceleration of time; with its vibrant new rhythm, it is the symbol of progress that moves at a greater speed and that shows new ways of relating to the world, new ways of being alive; like a steamer, the *polka* was a symbol of modernity.

\(^{141}\) *Costumbrismo* is a literary genre formed in the nineteenth century that depicts the local daily life, mannerisms, and customs. It was mostly developed by Spanish and Latin American writers and is linked to Romanticism and Realism. It also draws on folkloric detail.
The end of the dance in this short story is not a proclamation of the victory of progress; the polka is to be danced with adaptations. Those who defended the rules of the new dance had to give in to those who still defended the old mores of society. As this literary piece shows, many members of the modern and cosmopolitan elites wanted to establish a clear rupture with the old society, which showed a capability for resistance to “modernity”, and calling the traditional bambuco a dead dance was one of the ways to make that rupture. However, to proclaim the death of bambuco as the death of the old Colombian social dynamics was more a wish than a reality. The progressive acceptance of bambuco and its association with a positive perception of popular traditional culture began in the 1850s but, as we have seen, it coexisted with the negative perception that elites still had of popular traditional music. How to explain this transition? The answer is in the political context of these years. As argued in Chapter 1, the relationship between the political elite and the rest of the population in the second half of the nineteenth century was

---

142 Image taken from Efraín Sánchez, Ramón Torres Méndez, pintor de la Nueva Granada1809 – 1885 (Bogotá: Fondo Cultural Cafetero, 1987). 119
characterized by the channelling of the energies of subaltern groups into party allegiances. This desire of inclusion was ambivalent, as the strife between political leaders and the subsequent division of the two political parties quickly demonstrated; to part of the political elites, the “problem” of including the subaltern groups in political debate was that such inclusion could cause social “disorder”.

The promotion of bambuco by poets and thinkers marks the attempt to establish a link between the political leadership of the elites and the power that, according to republican principles, subaltern groups had to delegate to them; it is possible to think that the promotion of bambuco was an attempt to build a space of social encounter that had to contribute to the political unity and coherence for which political elites yearned. Also, the blurred line between urban and rural societies enabled the inclusion of bambuco in the elite’s music practices as part of art-music concerts reported in the newspaper El Pasatiempo in 1852 and 1853. The first bambuco composer was Manuel María Párraga, whose compositions were published by the German house Breitkopf & Hartel possibly in 1859 or at the end of 1858; among the pieces published (polkas, redovas, waltzes) there were two based on aires nacionales neogranadinos: “El Tiple” and “El bambuco, baile nacional trascrito”. The promotion of bambuco is evident in the work of Rafael Pombo (1833–1912), one of the most laureate literary characters of his time. Pombo’s admiration for bambuco was developed in a poem titled El bambuco, which was published in the newspaper El Tiempo in 1857 to pay homage to his friend, the composer Julio Quevedo, who was going to Europe. The introduction of bambuco as a cultural feature of Colombian society was established by 1860, while the other musical formats that might have existed in the life of subaltern groups were not mentioned as often or with that tone.

Does this mean that bambuco was completely absorbed by the elites and lost its connection with subaltern cultures? As I argued in Chapter 1, Colombian subaltern groups were diverse, comprising not only the urban groups of workers — some literate, some illiterate — but the rural population scattered in the territory of the country, mostly illiterate and which included indigenous people and populations of African descent. Thus there was a variety of subaltern cultures in which music made part of a rich oral cultural legacy. What happened was a double process: for subaltern groups, bambuco had different continuity than for the elite, who fabricated their own bambuco. This process of fabrication was marked by a constant abstraction of bambuco, promoted by writers like José María Samper, Rafael Pombo, Jorge  

---

143 John Varney, "Colombian Bambuco: the evolution of a national music style" (PhD diss, Griffith University, 1999).
144 "Catalogo de composiciones para piano por Manuel M. Parraga que se hallan de venta en el almacén de Parraga y Quijano," El Mosaico, No. 22, May 21 1859.
145 Rafael Pombo, "El Bambuco (Al distinguido señor Julio Quevedo, en su proyectado viaje a Europa," in Textos 5: Musicología en Colombia, una introducción, ed. Egberto Bermúdez and Jaime Cortés (Santafé de Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Artes, 2001). Rafael Pombo (1833 - 1912) is considered one of the most important poets and writers in Colombian literature. He worked as a journalist and as a diplomat. Although a fervent Liberal, he joined forces with Conservative intellectuals like the linguist Rufino José Cuervo (1844 – 1912) to promote cultural activities.
Isaacs and José María Vergara y Vergara\textsuperscript{146} during the second half of the nineteenth century; the principal characteristic of this abstraction was the emphasis in describing \textit{bambuco} as an ubiquitous music that is impossible to define. To these authors — as for many others — \textit{bambuco} was everywhere because the people who sung it and danced to it had travelled the country as soldiers, fighting for their nation; therefore, it was no surprise that this music, from the south centre region of the country, was now known and accepted by all \textit{Granadinos} (Colombians).\textsuperscript{147}

The more abstracted \textit{bambuco} was, the more it became a suitable symbol of national unity, for it summarized the idea of national unity through diversity. This process implied a legitimization of “racial mixture” and of the “races” that constituted that mixture, implied that all racial elements should result in a harmonious \textit{mestizo} product (\textit{bambuco}) in an equally harmonious \textit{mestizo} environment.

**Folklore**

The emergence of the concept “folklore” in Colombia during the 1880s enabled lettered urban elites to establish a less problematic link with the traditional culture of subaltern groups. In an article published in 1887 we can see how “folklore” and “progress” appeared as two facets in what was understood by elites as the natural social process that Colombia was to follow:

\begin{quote}
La vida nueva en que el vertiginoso progreso moderno hace entrar a la mayor parte de los pueblos, los obliga a variar sus usos, necesidades, aspiraciones y costumbres, les hace perder su carácter y tipo propios, y por la influencia niveladora del ferrocarril, el buque, el periódico y el comercio, les hace mudar sus diferencias cardinales y les da fisonomía común. En el punto en que esta transformación se verifica, conviene fijar las tradiciones y costumbres que se van, antes de que el olvido las haga desaparecer por completo: he ahí el objeto del folklore, que si no es una ciencia nueva, es por lo menos una nueva dirección científica.\textsuperscript{148}
\end{quote}

A few lines later, the author explained \textit{folklore} as an English word which meant “[…] ciencia, doctrina o saber popular[…]” which comprised festivities, ceremonies, rituals, religious beliefs, myths, idioms, songs, dances and oral traditions; this compilation was used by science to gather the materials necessary for historical reconstruction. The author ended with an invitation to those who are able to collect these manifestations of popular knowledge to do it with much fidelity as possible and to send him that material

\textsuperscript{146} These men also shared an active role in politics, which in the case of Isaacs, manifested in his participation as a soldier against the coup of General Melo. While Samper and Pombo were active Liberals, Isaacs and Vergara y Vergara were active Conservatives, though their political allegiances always changed in respect of which political faction they were supporting.

\textsuperscript{147} José María Vergara y Vergara, “Poesía popular, carácter nacional. (Conclusion),” in \textit{Textos 5: Musicología en Colombia, una introducción}, ed. Egberto Bermúdez and Jaime Cortés (Santafé de Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Artes, 2001).

\textsuperscript{148} “Definicion de Folklore,” \textit{El Espectador}, No. 13, May 30 1887.
in order to start a compilation of Colombian folklore “[...] donde apenas empieza la transformacion del progreso a hacer olvidar las tradiciones”\textsuperscript{149}. We can see that the author of this article used notions of popular culture as the true recipient of the national character in the face of a modernization process that threatened to eradicate what formed the most positive aspects of Colombian society: its traditions.

“Folklore” had been preluded by the development in Colombia during the years of the Olimpo Radical (1863–1880) of the intersection between Romanticism and Naturalism, which contributed to the construction of costumbrismo. The latter appeared as the perfect synthesis of concepts which provided the vocabulary and the notions needed to articulate diversity and unity. The irony of this articulation was that it implied the positive legitimization of racial mixture, while political and medical speeches preached the supremacy of the white Iberian element in the construction of Colombian character. Now, was this irony in conflict with the fact that bambuco was hailed by prominent Liberal figures like Rafael Pombo, and that the explanations for this praise were founded on the fact that bambuco was known outside its supposed region of origin — Cauca?

We must remember that the Liberal party identified themselves with the republican ideals that were associated to the process of independence. It is fair to say that there was a link in the legitimization of bambuco by Liberal cultural and political leaders and their search for elements of national unity: this music format was widely spread in the most populated regions of the country — Cauca, Cundinamarca and part of Antioquia, which were also regions of strong Liberal influence; therefore, it could be used as a way to ensure the horizontal solidarity that political projects could not offer.\textsuperscript{150} The progressive legitimization of bambuco as an expression of national unity was one of the marks of the Liberal project for unification of the country. The Romantic approach that authors like Jorge Isaacs, Rafael Pombo and José David Guarín used implied an idolized view of traditional subaltern culture while at the same time privileged the individual and intimate experience of it, using abstraction as the best form of language to connect with their audience. José María Samper argued that:

\begin{quote}
Todos los himnos nacionales tienen alguna significación patriótica pero exclusive; pero no así el bambuco. Siendo este obra de todos los colombianos, en vez de ser la unidad musical de Colombia es su variedad; pero una variedad llena de armonía [...] El bambuco es de todos y para todos, verdadero símbolo de nuestra democracia sentimental y turbulenta [...] Como canto, el bambuco no admite diferencia de sexo, edad ni condición [...]\textsuperscript{151}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{150} González, "Folklore, Música y Nación. El papel del bambuco en la construcción de lo colombiano."

\textsuperscript{151} José María Samper, "El Bambuco," in Textos 5: Musicología en Colombia, una introducción, ed. Egberto Bermúdez and Jaime Cortés (Satafé de Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Artes, 2001). 61 - 62
Here we see reconciliation between ubiquity, diversity, individuality and unity: to Samper, as a promoter of national unity, *bambuco*’s ubiquity made it the appropriate medium to relate to many in diverse regions through their individual experience of it.

![Image](image1.png)

**Figure 11**: “Baile de campesinos (bambuco)” (Dance of peasants) above; “El bambuco de salon” (Ball-room bambuco), inferior.\(^{152}\)

Both lithographs were elaborated by Ramón Torres Méndez (1809 – 1885) and depict bambuco in two different scenarios. It is difficult to tell if Torres Méndez reproduced facts, but his representation of *bambuco* was received by his contemporaries as genuine representations of what *bambuco* meant to Colombian society.

Conservative elites shared the abstraction that Liberal leaders associated to *bambuco* as an element of national unity. However, Conservative leaders like Sergio Arboleda and José Caicedo y Rojas preferred to emphasize the importance of hierarchy in their valuation of traditional subaltern culture. Thus, for Arboleda, who understood the moral leadership of the Catholic Church as one of the key elements to

restore unity to Colombia, the permanence of faith, the permanence of culture and the permanence of wealth were other important elements to ensure national unity that would enable the ascendance to ‘true art’. As for José Caicedo y Rojas, in his text “El Tiple” he did not hesitate to acknowledge the link between the Colombian *tiple* and the Spanish guitar, as well as the link between Colombian dances and Spanish dances:

El tiple, decíamos, es una degeneración grosera de la española guitarra, lo mismo que nuestros bailes lo son de los bailes de la Península. Para nosotros es evidente, que nuestros bailes populares no son sino una parodia salvaje de aquellos. Comparemos nuestro *bamboo*, nuestro *torbellino*, nuestra *caña*, con el fandango, las boleras y otros, y hallaremos muchos puntos de semejanza entre ellos; elegantes y poéticos estos, groseros y prosaicos aquellos. Pero hermanos legítimos y descendientes de un común tronco.

Although Caicedo characterised the link between Iberian traditional music and Colombian traditional music as a degenerative one, this did not prevent him from admiring *bamboo* using a similar vocabulary as well as similar levels of abstraction, as can be seen in this paragraph:

Placer intenso, alegría, recuerdos indescifrables de épocas pasadas y de lugares lejanos, melancolía, ternura, propensión al baile y al bullicio. [...] nos da la idea perfecta de la grandeza de la soledad, nos transporta, como el canto de la rana, a regiones extrañas y solitarias, nos hace saborear algo tan apacible y tan dulce como un amor puro. [...] si alcanza a oír a lo lejos el canto triste y expresivo de un bambuco femenil acompañado de un par de tiples, cree uno percibir en medio del silencio y de la calma de la naturaleza algo que no es de este mundo.

The mixture of feelings that Caicedo used to describe the effect of *bamboo* was typical of the way in which this music format was depicted; in this context, the feelings and intimate impressions that Caicedo used to relate to his readers formed a common language used to emphasize the universal appeal attributed to *bamboo*; this universal quality was the key to build unity around this new musical symbol, for it could transcend regional and political differences. But the contradiction and mixture of qualities were also related to the evocative powers of *bamboo*, as well as to the diversity that is represented in it. *Bamboo* was known and loved by large and diverse sectors of the population living in three regions of the country; this was known by people like Caicedo y Rojas, so the use of this figure of speech reinforced the unifying effect that was attributed to this music.

---

153 Arboleda, *Las letras, las ciencias y las bellas artes*.
154 Rojas, "El Tiple.", 25.
155 Ibid., 26
The notion of “folklore” as a way to include subaltern musical practices began to be accepted through the adaptation of cultural theories and trends in vogue during the nineteenth century. The adoption of “folklore” can be understood as one of the cases of intellectual cosmopolitanism by Colombian thinkers of the time, who used their political and cultural leadership as a filter for the dissemination and deployment of theories learned abroad or through their reading of European thinkers. Concepts like “folklore” allowed the elites to elaborate the link with subaltern groups in a way that granted inclusion, but that at the same time, allowed their cultural and social practices a limited role in the project of nation. If Uribe Uribe claimed that Colombian people’s flaws could be corrected, José María Samper and José María Vergara y Vergara articulated their theories from a racial-geographical determinism that sometimes included — as in the case of Samper — the influence of political and religious institutions that could be perfected, thus changing community behaviour.

Musical practices of the subaltern population were represented as a phase that needed to be surpassed by progress; in “Definicion de Folklore”, specifically, we see this concept applied to all things relative to traditional popular culture that were going to be inevitably lost due to progress. This is seen as something inevitable and also as something regretful, since traditions form the singularity of a nation in the face of the “influencia niveladora” of material and technological advancements. The duty of folklorists is to collect and preserve these ancestral traditions through scientific methods; this implies that, if left to the natural flow of time among the people that performs them, these traditions will be lost. Academically trained folklorists were the real custodians of the traditions of their nation. This implicit understanding of the concept of folklore as an academic product gave a nuance to the understanding of traditional popular music towards the end of the nineteenth century, as the following paragraph by Narciso Garay (1876–1953) indicates:

Pero al par que la Habanera, rodeada de una atmosfera superior, se purifica y se acendra bajo la influencia abstseriva de la composición y del gusto europeos, el bambuco retrogradara día por día en manos de inéditos compositorzuelos que forjan sus reputaciones lugareñas al calor de ese molde original, único en la forma. [...] El bambuco, debemos reconocerlo, es un aire bajo y plebeyo; para redimirlo de esta condición se necesita un genio poderoso capaz de acometer la labor, se necesita un Chopin que depure los aires nacionales como el gran clásico del Piano depuró los cantos polacos, y a fin de conseguirlo conviene el trato constante con los autores clásicos y los modernos más renombrados para procurar asimilarnos la esencia de la belleza musical.156

Narciso Garay was a Panamanian musician who had studied in Paris at the Schola Cantorum; for him, as a student of Vincent D’Indy and Eugene Ysaye (two of the most distinguished professors at the Schola

---

Cantorum), the model of music was that of the academic European canon, which had to be adopted by Colombian musicians if they wanted to form national Colombian music. For Garay and other musicians and intellectuals, the idea of folklore as the product of a centralized academic institution had been common since the 1870s and persisted into the twentieth century, when the debates over the legitimacy of Colombia’s “national music” became more heated.\textsuperscript{157}

The hierarchical association used by Colombian intellectuals that put traditions at the bottom and folklore at the top, with academic knowledge as mediator, influenced the intense discussions about the proper ways to produce national music and to produce \textit{bambuco} at the start of the twentieth century. The confrontation between composers Guillermo Uribe Holguín and Emilio Murillo — two key figures of the Colombian art music world of the time — is an example of this. As Jaime Cortés has argued, this confrontation was, in truth, the confrontation of two different practices of art music: Murillo’s call to transcribe "national" musical themes versus Uribe’s attempts to elaborate art music based on those themes. Whilst these two composers and other Colombian art musicians debated, Pedro Morales Pino and his group \textit{La Lira Colombiana} enriched urban musical practices with their performances, in which \textit{bambuco} was presented as an art music genre, alongside waltzes and opera arrangements. This might suggest that the academic debate about \textit{bambuco} would have been distant from the music produced by Morales Pino and other similar music groups, but perhaps it was the attempt by Colombian urban intellectuals to understand the dissemination of \textit{bambuco}; thus, they could present it as a comprehensible fruit of the progressive path of the arts, a progression that that was understood by art musicians and intellectuals as the appropriate way in which national music should emerge.\textsuperscript{158} Nevertheless, the \textit{bambucos} composed by Murillo, Morales Pino and other Colombian composers at the time not only challenged the academic canon that Uribe Holguín and his supporters wanted to deploy from the National Academy of Music, but also represented an urban musical practice sprung out of the idolization of rural traditions and therefore, of the reduction of these traditions.

\section*{Conclusions}
Musical traditions formed part of the debates in which nineteenth century Colombian intellectuals tried to understand what could make Colombia a strong nation. Through the notion of \textit{folklore} they were able to approach these traditions as a positive element, instead of dismissing them as a part of a barbaric past. Nevertheless, I think that Colombian thinkers and politicians from the second half of the nineteenth century had a wide — albeit imprecise — understanding of \textit{folklore} and of popular traditional music. The

\textsuperscript{157} Jaime Cortés, "La polémica sobre lo nacional en la música popular colombiana: 1878 - 1930" (paper presented at the III Congreso Latinoamericano de la Asociación Internacional para el Estudio de la Música Popular Bogotá, 2000).

acknowledgment by Colombian cultural and political leaders of the cultural diversity which was the main characteristic of Colombian society in nineteenth century was one of the most frequent aspects of the debate about national unity. The hope that academic knowledge would centralize and help to promote one music format (bambuco) as the national music is the most striking feature of this process since it seems that while academic discipline promised one standardized form of music that could relate to all the inhabitants of the country, the rhapsodic ways of popular traditional culture challenged this idea which was regarded as a necessity by Colombian political and cultural elites. Colombian popular traditional culture had to be disciplined by folklore, understanding the latter as the standardized unequivocal product of centralized academic knowledge.

In this line of thought then, what was the approach to traditional popular music deployed by Colombian thinkers and politicians? Did it imply the creation of a primitive "Other" from which new modern Colombian society — in the last decades of the nineteenth century — could learn? Music was defined by Colombian thinkers as a universal practice among the diverse cultural and ethnic elements that formed the Colombian nation. Because of the racial and cultural mixture that operated during the colony, traditional non-art music also appeared as something changing, but as I have shown, for Colombian leaders the "white-Spaniard" element was more prominent and had to be the one with most support, since the logic of racial and geographical determinism made it the most "likely to succeed".\(^{159}\)

Popular traditional music, as an element of popular traditional culture, was then understood by nineteenth-century Colombian leaders as something that could be perfected. The aesthetic paradigm for such perfectibility was bambuco as composed by art musicians, that is, a fabricated and abstracted musical format that could unify with its universalist expression of feelings. The "primitive Other" that was implicitly created by these leaders was a character that had to be exceeded and traditional popular music was something that could also be perfected and succeeded through academic knowledge. The understanding of folklore as a tool for historical reconstruction given in the article also helps us to grasp what this concept meant to Colombian intellectuals at this time: it was something alive, but something that was going to die soon, when Colombia turned into a modern unified nation.

Figure 12: Burial of a child in the Tenza Valley.

Drawing by Ramón Torres Méndez, ca. 1890
CHAPTER 4: MUSICIANS AND NATION

In this chapter I explain the process of construction of a national musical culture in Colombia from 1848 to 1910 via data about the work of musicians. In doing so, I also explain the elements that formed this musical culture. To do this, I will use the approach proposed by Howard Becker when analysing an individual "art world": to look for its characteristic type of workers and the tasks they perform.\textsuperscript{160} I will analyse the following elements in chronological order: the role of musicians in this process; the role of the concert as a space and as an activity in which musicians and audiences defined their identities in a cultural practice;\textsuperscript{161} and the role of support networks which stimulated musicians’ work through their expectations about artistic production. The formation of a national musical culture during the period of research is coterminous with the formation of an urban musical culture, since archival sources about the dynamics of this process in the cities are more abundant. Since many of the Colombian thinkers, intellectuals and politicians of the time had experienced urban life in Europe and the United States before returning to Colombia to exercise a role of social, economic and political leadership, we can understand how they observed and compared the urban life of Santafé de Bogotá and other Colombian cities with their experiences of cities in Europe and United States: they could not help but notice all that was necessary in order to turn urban Colombian society into a modern society.\textsuperscript{162} Whether Conservative or Liberal, the promotion of art music fell under what they considered appropriate entertainment for a civilized society.\textsuperscript{163} Their similarities can be explained through their shared past as colonial elites that served as an identity for these new republican elites; this was projected in their notion of Europe as the ultimate authority in matters of culture and education and found application through their conviction of the need to impose such culture and education on Colombians.\textsuperscript{164}

The development of a national urban musical culture implied an exercise of power in which the politically and culturally literate urban elites sought to empower themselves with the moral legitimacy to promote art music, thus fashioning another element to add to their social identity. Musicians with academic training also displayed their own exercises of power and redefinition in their search for legitimation of their artistic activity.\textsuperscript{165} Thus, the promotion that musicians and their supporters made of urban music culture — with its rituals and paraphernalia — can be understood as one of the facets of an educational process in which concerts, as well as musicians, acquired a pedagogical mission. Through this pedagogical effort, urban

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{160} Howard Becker, \textit{Art Worlds} (California: University of California Press, 1982). \\
\textsuperscript{161} I will analyse the concert as a consumption habit that implies a redefinition of the audience in Chapter 5. \\
\textsuperscript{162} José Luis Romero, "Las ciudades patricias," in \textit{Latinoamérica: las ciudades y las ideas} (Argentina: Siglo XXI, 2001). \\
\textsuperscript{164} Martínez, \textit{El nacionalismo cosmopolita: la referencia europea en la construcción nacional en Colombia, 1845-1900}. \\
\end{flushright}
music life should have been made into a model for the rest of the country. Musicians had a specific role in this process as filters and teachers, for they had to refine the natural musical talent of their students and audiences and turn them into a cultivated public.

During the *Olimpo Radical* the Liberal party tried to start a change of social values that put Colombian society on the path to modernism and secularism. Policies to establish lay education went hand in hand with the support of many of the Liberal leaders for urban art music activity and the search for a unified musical culture that produced a musical symbol. Conservatives also supported activities related to art music, but they understood them as something that showed the precariousness of the whole nation, now immersed in a Liberal revolution; if Colombians wanted to develop the culture of art music, they had to confirm the hierarchical society that had Catholicism as its basis. In practice, concerts of art music remained tied to extra musical purposes and art musicians worked in a musical practice promoted as secular and progressive but that confirmed social hierarchies. The last decades of the nineteenth century were the backdrop of a growing social gap between Colombian subaltern groups and elites. This was more evident in the capital, Bogotá, which was still a small city with a slowly growing population that oscillated between old colonial values and change brought by cosmopolitan modernity.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the political project deployed by the president Rafael Núñez, called *Regeneration*, became the new charter for the nation. The critical eye with which Núñez and his collaborators analysed the years of the *Olimpo Radical* presented the result of years of radical liberal government as a failure, for Colombia was still a country with deep regional divisions and social instability. The measures taken during Núñez’s successive presidencies tried to remedy this situation, due to the repression led by the successive Conservative government of Miguel Antonio Caro and persistent economic instability, the political turmoil reappeared and thus Colombia ended the nineteenth century and began the twentieth century with the most devastating of its civil wars: the War of a Thousand Days (1899–1902). The first ten years of the twentieth century were post-war years for Colombia. Political leaders of both parties agreed on the urgent need to forge and promote national unity, in order to prevent another devastating civil war. Colombia’s post-war society was immersed in doubt and fear, for the official peace had not brought an end to military conflict. In 1904 General Rafael Reyes became President of Colombia and started to launch a series of measures aimed at rebuilding the country. The celebration of the centennial in 1910 brought hopes of reinforcing the desire for unity and peace under the symbols of unified nationalism.

Throughout 1848 to 1910 art music became regulated through professionalization, which implied a strong shift in the relationship between musicians and audiences. At the same time, this shift marked the redefinition of the roles that art musicians and their supporters had observed in art music as a social and cultural practice. The increasing professionalization of art music was linked to the emergence of musical

practices in urban scenarios that fused art music and traditional non-art music; this enabled urban musicians to participate in the redefinition of music practices as well as in the redefinition of social identities.

**The beginnings of an urban musical culture, 1848 – 1863**

The previous historical context allows me to locate the activity of academically trained musicians and their impact on their society, since they formed part of a network which created and reproduced a type of urban culture. We can see the beginning of this process with a review published in 1848 in the Bogotá newspaper *El Neogranadino*:

> [...] La orquesta... lo diremos? Nos dio pesar ver al señor Bello solo, en presencia de la adversidad, luchando, no a brazo partido, si no a varilla infatigable contra el vacío de la orquesta. Es lamentable que la discordia se haya introducido entre nuestros profesores y el señor Bello, de donde sin duda nace la soledad de este señor, de otra manera gozáramos de mas buena música en el Teatro.\(^{167}\)

The reviewer depicted the orchestra of the Theatre, conducted at the time by the Venezuelan violinist and composer Atanasio Bello (1800–1876); however, he did not explain whether the musicians that played in the theatre also played in the concerts sponsored by the Philharmonic Society of Santafé de Bogotá, founded in 1846. These musicians represented one of the key elements of a cultural life that Santafereño elites viewed as a requisite for a modern society. In the memoirs of José María Cordovez Moure, the Philharmonic Society of Santafé de Bogotá was a meeting space for "[...] lo más selecto de la sociedad. [...] los primeros eran los ejecutantes; los segundos, eran los altos funcionarios civiles y militares, el cuerpo diplomático y los eclesiásticos, y los últimos, las personas que tenían honrosa posición social […]\(^{168}\). The formation of the Philharmonic Society was taken by citizens like Cordovez Moure as one of the signs of culture and progress that were brought to Colombia by those who travelled abroad and made good use of this experience by learning “conocimientos útiles y hábitos de cultura y buen gusto”;\(^ {169}\) this culture and progress implied for him — and others — the confirmation of a social hierarchy that separated those congregated in the Society from the rest of the population. Cordovez Moure also described the musicians who played in this orchestra:

> En la orquesta tomaban puesto los caballeros que tocaban algún instrumento, acompañados por profesores notables como Juan Antonio de Velasco, que era el decano, y que perteneció a la banda de música del batallón español

---


\(^{168}\) José María Cordovez Moure, *De la vida de antaño* (Bogotá: Minerva, 1936), 30

\(^{169}\) Ibid., 29
The fact that these quarrels between musicians were reported by one of the most read newspapers of the time indicates that concerts were held as an important part of urban social life and that many of the music aficionados of the time craved them, while taking these conflicts as something that endangered the regularity of concerts and thus, endangered the possibility of promoting this modern social practice.\textsuperscript{171}

The theatre review discussed above relates to one of the groups of musicians that I identify as one of the elements of the network of this emerging musical urban culture: the academically trained musicians.\textsuperscript{172}

The difference between them and the traditional popular musicians was the use of musical academic language — such as written notation — in order to practice their craft. But neither the theatre review nor Cordovez Moure’s memoir specifies whether these musicians fulfilled the requisites that we understand today as part of professional training; specifically, the professional academic training which led to specialization in their craft. Besides Cordovez’s memoir, other sources suggest the presence — or at least, the formation — of different types of audiences: those who performed with the Philharmonic Society’s orchestra and those who listened. Together, these audiences constituted another element of the network that ensured the permanence of concerts; nevertheless, they were able and willing to pay the subscription to the Society to have the pleasure of listening to art music as a distinct activity. The absence of official governmental support for art music organizations also worked as an element of the network. This was explained by members of the Liberal party as the Government’s support of the right of free assembly; for Conservatives, the fact that concerts went on without the support of a higher civil authority was a manifestation of divine intervention that preserved music amidst a chaotic environment.\textsuperscript{173}

Another concert review published in 1848 provides more clues about the relationships between musicians and their sponsors:

\begin{quote}
En cuanto a la parte instrumental, ella fue ejecutada con aquella esactitud y pureza que distinguen la música dirijida por el S. Quevedo – Se dice que este señor es intolerante, y que por esto no dirije, como sería de desearse, la orquesta de la Filarmónica. Este carácter es una garantía para el auditorio, pues su oído mas ejercitado, mas delicado que el nuestro, previene las
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{170} Ibid., 30
\textsuperscript{171} Becker, Art Worlds. 39
\textsuperscript{172} Concert reviews published in Colombian newspapers in the nineteenth century usually did not provide information about the location, time or length of the concert. Perhaps this information was matter of public knowledge that reviewers and newspapers editors did not feel it was necessary to repeat in the newspapers, which circulated locally and sometimes only were available by subscription.
\textsuperscript{173} Arboleda, Las letras, las ciencias y las bellas artes; Manuel Ancizar, Editoriales del Neogranadino (Bogotá: Minerva, 1936). See also Henry Raynor, A social history of music from the Middleages to Beethoven (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972).
Nicolás Quevedo Rachadell (1803–1874) was a Venezuelan composer who arrived in Santafé de Bogotá in 1827 as part of the troops that followed Simón Bolívar. As a sign of his loyalty to Bolívar’s legacy, he offered annual concerts on Bolívar’s birthday and his cuartetos — concerts held in his living room — were one of the most highly regarded social and musical events in the city. He remained in the capital and built a career as an esteemed music teacher and composer and, as we can see, many aficionados wanted him to be at the helm of the newly founded Philharmonic Society. Quevedo’s concerts demonstrate some characteristics of musical culture in Bogotá at the start of the second half of the nineteenth century: concerts were mostly in private homes,175 with a selected group of musicians and an even more selected audience, and the works played were part of the most known repertoire of art music, that is, the most known repertoire for drawing room and chamber music. Concerts as a social practice marked the privacy of some households with public recognition as the exclusivity of attendees and music highlighted the prominence of some families that also had an important role in politics and that acted as hosts and sponsors of these activities. Art music and domesticity were merging in the formation of a cultural and social identity.176 The tone of the review also suggests that at least part of the audience had high expectations of the work of the musicians led by Quevedo: these concerts offered the opportunity to participate in a musical culture which was the prerogative of a small social group gathered in Quevedo’s house. Such privilege was based on the confluence of two factors: education as a privilege of class and the access to the experience of cosmopolitan Western urban culture that such education made possible, especially when those educated had travelled to Europe or the United States; these factors also encouraged the sociocultural distinction that identified the urban elites and cemented their joint ventures towards the continuity of cultural practices such as concerts.

We read in the same review about the animosity that some of the supporters of Quevedo’s cuartetos had for the Philharmonic Society:

El fuego de las fabricas, los golpes aterradores del martillo, y el ruido atronador de las ruedas, pueden dar a los Yankees aquellos cuerpos de fierro necesarios para transformar la naturaleza ruda y material, jamás la organizacion sensible y

174 “Los cuartetos del señor Quevedo,” El Dia, No. 545, September 13 1848
175 Sources suggest that the Philharmonic Society had their concerts at the Theatre when it was available but there is no precise information about where they held their performances when they could not use the Theatre. The launch of a plan to build a proper concert hall indicates that neither the Theatre nor other locations fulfilled the requirements established by the founders of the Society in order to perform.
delicada, que comprende todos los sentimientos y que saboreando las mas suaves melodías da a cada nota su valor, y a cada relación su fuerza, unico medio de elevar a la música a la altura de los mas profundos y de los mas delicados sentimientos del alma.\textsuperscript{177}

This confrontation was viewed in light of the associations made by the groups of music aficionados around the repertoire that each music group played: Quevedo’s repertoire was associated with refinement, finesse, elegance and deep emotions while the repertoire played by the Philharmonic Society was identified with the roughness, practical mentality and physical skill which were more akin to the hard work of the Industrial Revolution — in an allusion to the Briton Henry Price, its cofounder and director.\textsuperscript{178} However, if we look at the repertoire played by both organizations, we find many similarities; the cited review is the only documentary evidence of the repertoire that was played by Quevedo’s cuartetos, while the press reviews and advertisements published in \textit{El Neogranadino} between 1848 and 1850 provide a good amount of information about the works and composers most frequently played by the Philharmonic Society. The major Italian composers of the time — Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi and Rossini — were a permanent presence in the programs as well as other Italian composers that were popular at the time and that today are known as minor — Bosissio, Paccini and Ricci; German music was represented with works by four major composers, Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Weber, although their works were less frequent than that of minor but more famous German composers of the time — Ries, Kalkbrenner, Herz, Czerny, Gattermann, Thalberg, Pixis, Hulnenn, Neuman; there were Austrian composers Straus, Labitzky, and Lanner. Works by English composers Cross, Newland and Hunter were perhaps a contribution made by Price and other British members of the Society. The Philharmonic Society promoted the performance of music by its performers/members and that is how the names of Joaquin Guarin and Henry Price appear in the programs. The repertoire played by Quevedo’s cuartetos included the same composers with the exception of two names: Gondois and Tadolini.

Both music organizations promoted the same urban musical culture, composed of the art music that circulated in drawing rooms and smaller ensembles in Europe and the US and that arrived in Colombia either through imports or in the suitcases of foreigners and returnees; it was music appropriate to be performed by small ensembles and the practice of intercalating instrumental and vocal pieces also echoed the musical soirées that the audiences of both music groups had experienced in their travels — or at least, read about in novels and foreign newspapers. Therefore, the rivalry between the supporters of Quevedo and the associates of the Philharmonic Society might have been organized around the fact that Henry Price, the most recognizable leader of the Society, had “just arrived” in Santafé de Bogotá in 1841

\textsuperscript{177} “Los cuartetos del señor Quevedo.”
\textsuperscript{178} The term “anglo-yankee” seems to have described other foreigners that participated in the foundation of the Philharmonic Society. The review seems to imply that a Yankee and a Briton held the same attitudes: pragmatism, efficiency, roughness and lack of elegance.
and apparently, had enjoyed the welcome of the new generation of cultivated — and politically committed — santafereños who sought to modernize society; the fact that he was able to coordinate the creation of the Philharmonic Society in 1846 is evidence of his great social success, possibly due to his connections to the Liberal party, then in power and in which many new elements of the capital’s elites militated. Quevedo, although avowed as one of the cultural leaders of the capital, might have been associated with the past, especially in light of his personal reverence towards the legacy of Simón Bolívar.

As noted above, Henry Price was one of the founders and the most active members of the Philharmonic Society, while working with the Chorographic Commission. The Philharmonic Society became a common feature of republican civic festivities since it was one of the institutions that received approval from the Government, though not direct financial support. This relationship was established in 1849, when the Liberal president General José Hilario López assumed power, as this program for the celebration of the anniversary of Independence on the 20 July indicates:

Dia 20

A las 9 de la mañana – […] En seguida marchará la procesión a la plazuela de San Victorino con el objeto de solemnizar la colocación de la piedra fundamental del edificio que va a construirse para la celebración de conciertos de la Sociedad Filarmonica.

[…]

Por la noche – Concierto en la Sociedad Filarmonica.

The laying of the first stone for the Concert Hall for the Philharmonic Society was led by President General José Hilario López and included a special concert, in which were scheduled "[…] dos coros alusivos a la Independencia […]." The project to give the Philharmonic Society a venue worthy of its social role was promoted repeatedly in the newspaper El Neogranadino, edited by the liberal journalist Manuel Ancízar; in these exhortations the gathering of financial support needed to build the Concert Hall.

---

179 Henry Price (1819-1863), a musician and painter, travelled to Colombia in 1841 as an assistant accountant. His work for the Chorographic Commission aimed to increase knowledge of the country among both Colombians and foreigners. See Chapter 1 for more about the Corographic Comission and Gómez, "Desde la formación de la República hasta el Radicalismo Liberal (1830 – 1886)."

180 President José Hilario López was elected on 1849, with the support of the Liberals, the artisans from the Sociedades Democráticas, and some disengaged conservatives. With such a political background, Lopez started the turn towards the Liberal period of the country, known as the Radical Olympus.

181 "Programa acordado por la Sociedad Filantrópica para las fiestas que tendrán lugar en los días 20, 21 i 22, 23, 24, 25 i 26 del presente mes, en celebracion del aniversario de la Independencia, El Neogranadino, No. 55, July 14 1849.

for the Philharmonic Society was promoted as a manifestation of "[…] patriotismo de los granadinos progresistas" and was cheered with a “Go Ahead!” (in English) at the end. Although the Concert Hall for the Philharmonic Society was never completed, the insistence on its importance by supporters of the Philharmonic Society can be explained through the importance that public spaces like these, rather new in Colombian society at the time, held for the segment of urban elites who understood them as physical signs of a modern and progressive society. The Concert Hall was one of the attempts to promote a social diversification through the establishment of a secular and independent space, but the fact that it was promoted by elites and that its construction needed their economic support enabled the elaboration of new social differences which confirmed social hierarchies.

We have to remember that the government lacked financial resources to build public facilities such as hospitals, government offices, and schools; the solution was to adapt older buildings that had been expropriated from the Church and to sublet buildings to accommodate different functions. The Philharmonic Society usually rented the Theatre for their concerts. However, the absence of a concert hall is linked to another dynamic of the Colombian capital which lasted until the late nineteenth century: the lack of new construction of public spaces and the subsequent re-signification of the old centre of the city, whose order and appearance had been inherited from the colony. This old centre concentrated the symbols of power: the Cathedral, the Presidential House, government offices, military buildings and the most important schools, such as the Colegio Mayor del Rosario. The two theatres (the Coliseo and the Teatro Municipal) were located in this neighbourhood. Supporters of art music lived here — José Caicedo y Rojas lived near the Colegio Mayor del Rosario and a few streets away from the Cathedral — and data about urban musicians of the time locates their houses in San Victorino, a neighbourhood of artisans and small traders a few streets away from the Cathedral and the Presidential House. Art music as a practice and as a craft overlapped the old meanings that urban society linked to urban space: elites and power inhabited the centre of the city and art music developed as another practice with to them, inhabiting the same urban space and marking it as an act of public power and of private leisure.

This map shows some of the principal buildings of government, churches, schools, universities and squares that composed the central area and historic centre of Santafé de Bogotá. Some of the musical agencies as well as musical instrument shop have been located, as well as the houses of prominent promoters of art music. **Purple:** Agencia Musical Pedro Morales Pino, String Factory Francisco Pérez, Instituto Santa Cecilia (Singing and music school), Santos Quijano and Olimpo Barrero Music School, Agencia Musical La Lira, Oreste Sindi Agencia Musical, Manuel Montoya (Piano Builder), F. Román Pereira (Piano Repair), House of José María Vergara y Vergara, House of José Caicedo y Rojas, House of Vicente Vargas de la Rosa. The dates in parenthesis correspond to the date when these establishments were advertised. **Green:** La Rosa Blanca (restaurant), Jockey Club. **Streets East — West:** Green: The Third. Grey: The Fifth. Orange: The Seventh or Calle Real Del Comercio. Red: The Eighth. Turquoise; the Ninth. **Streets North — South:** Fuscia, 13th Street. Purple, 12th Street. Brown, 11th Street. Black, 10th Street. Lime Green: 8th Street.185

The musical culture that urban art musicians and their supporting networks participated in was part of that set of cosmopolitan behaviours and consumptions that the Colombian urban elite associated with progress and modernity, although political allegiances gave these associations nuances that implied differences in its role. The fact that these concerts also were an activity restricted to the literate elites also gave them value as an element of social distinction. This restriction was, as I have already pointed out, based on access to scholarly education, but we can add the allure of participating in an activity involving the handling of elements that appeared exotic — musical instruments, musical scores, books about music in foreign languages, the use of music’s technical language, the knowledge of music history, references to current international music affairs, artistic currents and styles — in a society defined by cultural and political leaders of the time as lacking civilization and not integrated into the political, economic and cultural movements viewed as characteristic of life in the big capitals of the Western world. This shared culture — made of experience as well as of references — between musicians and audiences allowed the reception of music works as well as the debates about the quality of music that developed between musicians and learned members of the audience. As the nineteenth century progressed and urban classical music culture continued in Colombia, these debates continued to be a part of the shared culture between musicians and their closest sponsors.186

This process was not exclusive to the Colombian capital. A provincial city like Medellín, capital of the province of Antioquia (in the northwest of the country), also experienced a similar dynamic triggered by the agency of a foreigner:

El que suscribe profesor i compositor de música alemán, tiene la honra de informar al ilustrado publico de Medellín de que en el próximo mes de julio se presentará en esta ciudad para hacer retratos iluminados por el Daguerrotipo

[...]

En el tránsito temporal también enseñará música por principios en todos sus ramos; a saber: todos los instrumentos de cuerda i viento, sociedades militares bandas militares i de concierto, i compone música en cualquier forma de harmonia.

Hemilio Herbruger, antiguo miembro de la Opera Italiana de Nueva York.187

Hemilio Herbruger was Emil Herbruger (Westphalia, 1808 – Panamá, 1894), a German musician and daguerreotypist who arrived in Medellín in 1849, after reaching Cartagena de Indias in 1848; Herbruger had co-founded the Philharmonic Society of Cartagena that same year and then, for unknown reasons, decided to travel to Medellín, where he found a fertile environment for both of his trades. Herbruger was

186 See Becker, Art Worlds. 30
187 “Avisos,” La Estrella de Occidente, No. 151, July 22 1849.
very successful in Medellín: shortly after his arrival, he joined the social network that promoted the creation of the Philharmonic Society. In their first concert, given on 10 February 1850 at the house of the governor of the Province of Antioquia, Doctor Jorge Gutiérrez de Lara, Herbruger conducted the musicians. So far I have not found any information that can cast more light on the kind of associations and contacts that an artist or artisan such as Herbruger might have made in Medellín. However, I think that the fact that he was able to work in a small city like the capital of Antioquia shows that the fertile environment which I mentioned before, welcomed — even expected — this type of working artist. Of course, Herbruger was not alone in his musical success, for the review of the inaugural concert given by the Philharmonic Society, mentions “[…] demás músicos” and one in particular, Juan N. Mejía, who played a violin duo with Herbruger. It is possible then that some of those musicians might have had another source of income, like Herbruger. As for their possible jobs as musicians, wills provide information about their activities and earnings. The number of wills that I gathered at the Archivo Histórico y Judicial de Medellín shows the activity of musicians in Medellín before 1860 working as funeral musicians, that is, musicians who played and sung at funeral services.

Herbrugger’s biographers show that he was an itinerant character. Both of his professions allowed him the possibility of finding means of subsistence in each city that he visited. The lack of a competitive marketplace for his artistic skills increased his chances of profit, a factor that might have prompted him to settle in Medellín for almost two years. Medellín’s elite shared the ambitions of Bogotá’s elite about the progress of their city. Although the rise in the population of the city would not be so dramatic for another ten years, the slow growth of the region and the consolidation of Medellín’s elite provided a good environment for Herbruger and his music-making.

**Living and working as a musician**

The documentary sources discussed so far do not allow explaining in detail how the activity of working urban musicians was related to the general economic context of the time. The Colombian economy during the nineteenth century was a curious balance of the old and the new, with its particular interaction of symbolic and economic value; this had an impact on music activities. If we go back to the accounts of Cordovez Moure about the musicians that worked in the Philharmonic Society of Santafé de Bogotá, we find a very particular behaviour:

---

188 “Remitidos - Sociedad Filarmónica,” *La Estrella de Occidente*, No. 181, February 17 1850.

189 Archivo Histórico y Judicial de Medellín, Documents 1411, 7640, 7504, 7551, 7630, 7632.

190 I found a total of seven cases: two in 1850, one in 1855, one in 1857, and three in 1858. In the case of 1857 the price of hiring musicians and singers at the funeral was not specified and in none of the cases there is mention of repertoire. At the Archivo General de la Nación I found five wills: one in 1867, one in 1891, one in 1894 and two in 1895.
Todos eran pobrísimos; pero se imponían el deber de tocar sin remuneración en la sociedad, que los trataba con cariño, y por toda recompensa les daba un frugal refrigerio después del concierto, consistente en una copa de cerveza, emparedados, queso de Flandes y cigarros de Ambalema.\textsuperscript{191}

Data found at the Archivo General de la Nación and at the Archivo Histórico y Judicial de Medellín show that musicians charged for their services and that they were paid in money, while press archive findings show that in four months of 1850 a few musicians deposited their savings in the Caja de Ahorros of Santafé de Bogotá.\textsuperscript{192} Moure’s account shows that the Philharmonic Society of Santafé de Bogotá resorted to a form of payment which resembled that which had been the most frequent in the colony, when “employers” paid for any given service in kind.\textsuperscript{193} It is possible that this form of payment was understood as a symbolical retribution for the honour of playing for the Philharmonic Society, since many of its members are depicted by Cordovez Moure as belonging to the social elite of the capital. If this was so, the musicians employed by the Society entered into a relationship characterised by a strong hierarchical structure where honour, noble-like (\textit{señorial}) behaviour and symbolical retribution were its principal features; there was no modern employer-employee relationship, characterised by the payment in money.\textsuperscript{194} If we turn to newspaper and magazine advertisements posted by musicians offering their services, we rarely find an exact price. Instead, we find indications like those given by the musicians associated under the name \textit{Septeto Lirico-Filarmonico} in 1868: “La agencia para cualquier negocio relativo a nuestra profesion, es en el almacén del señor Silvestre Escallon frente a la Rosa Blanca, […] i allá se informarán de los precios.”\textsuperscript{195} This could be reinforced by the fact that many of those who belonged to the intellectual and cultural elites who championed concerts, had limited financial means or were poor;\textsuperscript{196} therefore, the payment in kind was a convergence of poverty and of the persistence of a pre—modern economic relationship.

This practice by Bogotá musicians was similar to the one carried out by musicians in Washington, as explained by Katherine Preston. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Washington musicians relied more on reputation and word of mouth than on advertisements, even if in the advertisements they

\textsuperscript{191} Moure, \textit{De la vida de antaño}. 30
\textsuperscript{192} \textit{El Neogranadino}, No. 86, 8 of February of 1850; No. 90, 8 of March of 1850; No. 107, 5 of April of 1850; No. 98, 3 of May of 1850.
\textsuperscript{194} Musicians in Chile also had this type of employment during the nineteenth century. Luis Merino Montero, "La Sociedad Filarmónica de 1826 y los inicios de la actividad de conciertos públicos en la sociedad civil de Chile hacia 1830," \textit{Revista Musical Chilena}, no. 206 (2006).
\textsuperscript{195} “Septeto Lirico-Filarmonico,” \textit{El Hogar}, No. 12, April 18 1868. The “Rosa Blanca” was a famous deli and restaurant in Santafé de Bogotá until the 1880s, also known for its sale of fine liquors.
\textsuperscript{196} Deas, \textit{Del Poder y la Gramática}, 32–33
listed the names of musicians known by their skill. Preston divides Washington’s musicians into three groups: those with unsteady positions that had an alternative profession to fall back upon if they were not working as musicians; full time musicians; and the prestigious performers, recognized not just by their skill, but by their singular talent. If we apply this division to the musicians of Santafé de Bogotá, we see the particularities of this working community.

Newspaper and magazine advertisements of the second half of the nineteenth century show a segment of the community of musicians that also worked as artisans. Many of these musicians chose carpentry and the repair of musical instruments like guitars, *tiples* and wind instruments as part-time jobs. With the abundance of pianos — bought by the urban elites — some of them learned how to tune and repair them. An advert published in 1860 by a musician shows that piano tuning, teaching skills and copying could be crafts that a musician could use to survive:

[...] Las materias que ofrezco enseñar son las siguientes: el conocimiento jeneral de la musica teoricamente, el canto y ejecutar los instrumentos piano, flauta y guitarra. El precio de enseñanza sera convencional segun los ramos que se deseen aprender [...] tambien ofrezco templar los pianos que esten desafinados y copiar con claridad y perfeccion piezas de musica por un precio modico. La casa de habitacion donde se me encuentra en la Carrera del Majagual [...] 

This advertisement was posted by musician Vicente Vargas de la Rosa (1833–1891), apparently soon after his arrival in the capital from Mompox, which explains the variety of musical crafts that he lists in order to attract customers. Vargas de la Rosa was successful in Santafé de Bogotá, but as we can see in the advert, he started as a part-time music teacher, probably because he still needed to make a name for himself before appearing as a performer. The border between groups was not so strict and musicians could go from one group to the other or even belong to two groups at the same time: in 1867 the composer and performer Santos Quijano advertised his services as a music teacher after he overcame an illness that forbid him to make a living for a year.

The few details known about a *medellinense* popular musician in this period can cast more light on the group of musicians—artisans—teachers. We know about Pedro León Velásquez (a.k.a. “Santamarta”), through the biography of his son, another famous popular musician, Pedro León Franco (a.k.a. “Pelón Santamarta”). The adoptive son of slaves, Velásquez was born in Santa Marta (on the North Atlantic coast of the country) and settled in Antioquia after 1850, probably looking for better sources of work in a region where the stigma of his parents’ former condition could be ignored. In Medellín he was trained as a

---

197 Preston, *Music for hire*. 36
198 Ibid. 32
200 Santos Quijano, “A los padres de familia,” (Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 948, 1867).
tailor and musician; he worked in the choir of the Cathedral and performed with a *zarzuela* company in 1867. Although there is no data about from whom or where Velásquez got his musical training, he was praised as an excellent musician in art and traditional music. Velásquez’s learning of tailoring shows a close association between the profession of musician and artisan, something that was frequent during the colonial period among traditional popular musicians in Medellín. The lack of other sources that can provide similar information for other musicians either in Medellín or Bogotá prevents me saying with certainty that all musicians also worked as craftsmen.

The *bogotano* musician Nicomedes Mata [c.1830 -?], who lived in San Victorino along with Santos Quijano and other renowned musicians, is another example of how flexible the group of urban musicians was in mid-nineteenth-century Colombia. He was not just an accomplished guitar player, but also a violinist with the Philharmonic Society and performed with art musicians. Mata’s skill as a guitar player earned him praise and fame among his contemporaries, who hailed him as one of the best interpreters of *bambuco* in the city and as an excellent art musician. Mata and Velásquez illustrate how blurred the line was between art musicians and traditional musicians, which suggest that the groups of urban musicians—artisans—teachers represented a space of encounter in which different musical practices met and, therefore, musicians could create and adapt musical formats.

Sources show that private schools included music as part of their curriculum, especially when it came to women’s education; this confirms the growing and close association between musical literacy and the elites and explains its restrictive effect on the construction of an urban musical culture. The pedagogical work of musicians as teachers in these schools was restricted to a segment of society that could afford private education. The musical knowledge that was crucial to this culture was confined then to a selective social circle, where the market for the musician’s activities was tight and relied on the continuation of the relationship between the musicians and elites. Advertisements published in Bogotá newspapers *El Neogranadino* and *El Día* offered to parents the possibility of having their children learning music as part of their regular education: in his Colegio del Espíritu Santo, Lorenzo María Lleras (one of the leaders of the Liberal party) offered his male students the teaching of instrumental music and singing by Julio Quevedo (son of Nicolás Quevedo Rachadell), while Dolores V. de Urdaneta offered her female students eight piano lessons per month. It seems that music was seen by a segment of society as an instruction that improved morals, as it was explained by a correspondent for the Medellín newspaper *La Estrella de Occidente*:

> [in music] encontrarán los desvelados padres un pasatiempo honesto para su familia, los jóvenes siempre incautos un fuerte escudo contra la relajación de

---

201 Velásquez, *Suite para los sonidos. Música en Medellín siglos XVII y XVIII*. Tailors were among the most politically committed and organised artisans of Medellín, which translated into social prestige. Perhaps this motivated Velásquez’s choice of craftsmanship.


las costumbres del siglo, i cultivaran en fin sus relaciones tratando de aumentarlas.\textsuperscript{204}

Notwithstanding these data, the question remains whether musicians and their supporters thought that there was a hierarchy within the profession and whether this had any impact in the monetary valuation of their work; it seems that, at least until the creation of the National Academy of Music, such a hierarchy was not so clear. Bermúdez argues that art music as a profession was a factor for social mobility that enabled some musicians to ascend from subaltern groups to the elites, but that generally the economic uncertainty of the nineteenth century frustrated the attempts of musicians to establish a more robust market for their work.\textsuperscript{205} If we add to this that many members of the elite performed as musicians but without the intention of working as professional musicians, then we have a dynamic of the music profession that emerges in the late 1840s and is firmly established during the mid-nineteenth century: the freelance musician—music teacher—artisan. This multitalented character was one of the driving forces behind musical life in Colombian cities at the time, performing in private concerts, philharmonic societies, and as support personnel for opera companies. The fact that the price of their work was agreed on by word of mouth alerts us to the tightly closed market that depended on a small group of sponsors that could afford the musicians’ multiple services.

\textbf{The Olimpo Radical (1863 – 1880): the flourishing of urban music}

Data from the decades of the \textit{Olimpo Radical} show that there was an increase in urban art music activity. The shared culture between musicians and audiences necessary to support this activity was more established and the formation of musical groups that were able to provide music for small social gatherings was frequent through the 1860s in Santafé de Bogotá due to the dissolution of the Philharmonic Society in 1857. It seems that this trend was supported by the success of the \textit{Sesteto La Armonía} co-founded in 1866 by the most prestigious musicians of Santafé de Bogotá: Daniel Figueroa (piano), Dario D’Achiardi (first violin), Enrique D’Achiardi (second violin), Cayetano Pereira (\textit{pistón}), Vicente Vargas de la Rosa (flute), and Julio Quevedo Arvelo (double bass).\textsuperscript{206} A similar ensemble called \textit{Ajencia Lirica I Mortuoria} was a peculiar combination of services which sought to provide not just a decent funeral, but a luxurious one if the employers — relatives of the deceased, of course —, desired it:

\[\text{[\ldots]}\]

La parte lirica desempeñará toda clase de trabajos musicales que se le encomienden, a cualquiera hora del día o de la noche; i enseñará canto i toda

\textsuperscript{204} “Remitidos - Sociedad Filarmónica.”
\textsuperscript{205} Bermúdez and Duque, \textit{Historia de la Música en Santafé y Bogotá 1538-1938}. 168
\textsuperscript{206} Perdomo, "Maestros, compositores y ejecutantes."
clase de instrumentos pues cuenta para ello con muy buenos profesores, así nacionales como extranjeros, i con escojido repertorio.

Las personas que quieran asegurar un entierro decente para si i para sus parientes, conseguirán este objeto suscribiéndose en esta Ajencia a pagar la pequeña cuota de 1 peso mensual, seguras de que cualquiera que sea el tiempo corrido de la suscricion, obtendrán para ellas i para sus allegados todos los servicios todos los servicios que arriba se mencionan.

Another similar ensemble, the *Septeto Lirico Filarmonico* acknowledged their debt to the *Sesteto La Armonia*, but they also explained that they did not wish to “[…] establecer ruines competencias”; this group offered their services for every kind of concert and religious event that needed music and they did not doubt that the citizens of Bogotá were able to employ them. There are no more data about the performances of these ensembles, but since they were formed by famous musicians in the capital it is possible that they counted on their joint reputations to get as much work as possible. These musicians tried to work in a tight market as independent operators and thus, they stimulated concert life in the capital in order to expand their audience. The growing secularism of the urban elites also boosted the ambitions of musicians to work as entrepreneurs, for opportunities to link concerts to any occasion increased since, as Weber says: “Concerts accordingly proved responsive to many social and cultural needs”. One of the media used by some musicians to promote the necessity (and usefulness) of their craft was the publishing of text books for the self-teaching of music; one the musicians that performed in the *Septeto Lirico Filarmonico* was José Viteri, who published in 1868 a “Método completo para aprender a tocar tiple i bandola sin necesidad de maestro” and in 1876 he published the “Texto para enseñar música por nota, por el sistema objetivo, al alcance de los niños”.

There are not many writings of musicians from the time that can illustrate their self-promotion. Press reviews, written — as far as I know — by knowledgeable aficionados, can be counted as the most frequent means of promotion of the urban culture of art music. The article by Juan Crisóstomo Osorio (1836–1887), a composer, music teacher and editor, provides information about the views on music and musical culture that an art musician of the time could promote and share with his audience. The article was “Breves apuntamientos para la Historia de la Música en Colombia” and in it Osorio made a list as well as a summary description of the traditional music of several Colombian regions; he also wrote about other art musicians who contributed to the dissemination of good taste and art, like José Caicedo y Rojas. Osorio’s text confirms that in those years art musicians and traditional/popular musicians worked together: he

208 “Septeto Lirico-Filarmonico.”
recounts that the composer Joaquín Guarín (1825–1854) composed a set of variations to a waltz by guitarist Nicomedes Mata. In his account Osorio also refers the arrival to the country of two German musicians, Franz Coenen (violinist) and Ernest Lubeck (pianist). Both musicians included the Colombian capital in their tour through South America in 1852 and performed bambucos for bogotano audiences as part of their repertoire. Other European musicians also included Bogotá in their long tours through Central and South America, bringing new repertoire and technical knowledge of the interpretation of their instruments; with their performances, the concert life of Santafé de Bogotá gained more lustre and many aficionados and musicians — like Osorio — felt included in the modern way of music-making.

Press reviews published in Santafé de Bogotá in the 1880s show how benefits and charity concerts were developed by urban art musicians and their supporters. In these events we see, firstly, the association of agents who assume a role in their community: the charity organization, the amateur musicians who also form the charity association, the musicians who play in the concert, government officials who support these concerts and the press. Women of the elite exercised a double role in charity concerts as amateur musicians and sponsors, which gave them an opportunity to shine in society as performers and moral leaders. One of the reviews of these concerts, published in the Bogotá newspaper Diario de Cundinamarca in 1881, tells how one of the matronas of the capital “[…] tuvo ella la feliz idea de fomentar un gran concierto que fuse a la vez recreacion para la major parte del vecindario i fuente de recursos para subvenir los gastos piadosos de aquella institucion”, all with the cooperation of the Italian musician Oreste Sindici.211 This marks the continuity of the two principal characteristics of concert life since its establishment in the Colombian capital in the 1840s: its close association with urban elites and the cooperation of art musicians.

By this time, the presence of European musicians in Colombian urban concert life had acquired different meanings. Not only were they in contact with the network of elite sponsors, but they could also work with some of the musicians who handled traditional and art music repertoires. I suggest that these European musicians taught new performance practices to Colombian musicians and amateurs. Data from newspapers and memoirs locate most of these foreign musicians in elite circles, so it is possible to think that their presence at their concerts, in close collaboration with the amateur musicians and aficionados from the elite, constituted another element of distinction. The article by José Caicedo y Rojas entitled “El estado actual de la música en Bogotá” — published in 1880 — explains that by the 1880s there was competitiveness and division among the musicians of the capital. Caicedo y Rojas complained in his article about the rivalries among art musicians which endangered the progress of art music in Colombia. Caicedo also denounced in this article that bogotano musical ensembles forbid their musicians to perform outside the group they had associated with; according to him, this was the cause of the poor level of performances in public and religious occasions, which gave way to inappropriate displays of music knowledge by the aficionados.

211 “Hechos diversos - Gran concierto," Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2997, November 22 1881.
The Regeneración
As I explained in Chapter 1, the political project Regeneración proposed by presidential candidate Rafael Núñez had originated in the desire common to Latin American intellectuals and politicians of the late nineteenth century of leading their countries into an era of material and spiritual progress. This new era was to be launched through new institutional symbols that enabled new meanings and relationships through republican festivities which were seen by political leaders as powerful vehicles to forge a new identity among citizens.212

This institutional nationalism was a new source of work for the academically trained urban musicians: those who worked in military bands and those who performed in orchestras or smaller ensembles. The National Academy of Music, founded in 1882, was one of the banners of institutional nationalism; the link between the Academy and the Government was evident even in its location in the city: the neighbourhood of the Cathedral, in which the Capitol, ministries, and almost all the printers and banks were located.213 The orchestra of the Academy joined civic festivities of the 20 July — the official Independence Day since 1873, 7 August and the birthday of Simón Bolívar and performed concerts, so these performances could have been a source of employment for urban musicians. The decree 1360 of March 1892 reinforced the association between the National Academy of Music and the government, as it created a special board with the responsibility to examine and rate the competence of musicians that wanted to play in the orchestra of the National Theatre or in any of the National Bands.214 This decree had been demanded since 1891 by Jorge Wilson Price, founder of the Academy and son of Henry Price; in his petition, Jorge Wilson Price asked for the official support of the government to make the Academy the absolute musical authority of the country.215 He also sought to raise the social perception of the musician as a teacher and as a performer:

[...] Con ese decreto cambiará virtualmente la faz de la carrera de profesor de música y el arte ganará inmensamente, puesto que estimulará a los verdaderos artistas a la par que colocará en su justa posición a los que degradan el noble título de ARTISTA con sus pretensiones y vanidades, propias de la ignorancia que los anima.216

---

213 Pavony, “Los itinerarios de la transformación urbana, Bogotá 1820-1910." 117
214 “Informe que el Ministro de Instrucción Pública presenta al Congreso en sus sesiones ordinarias de 1892," (Bogotá: Papeleiría y Tipografía Samper, 1892). 34
216 Ibid. 8. the capital letters appear in the original text.
The foundation of the National Academy of Music implied a drastic change in the lifestyle of urban musicians at the time through the imposition of a hierarchy built upon training. The versatility that Colombian urban musicians had deployed would have to disappear, for now the Academy (with Price at the helm) was the place where the craft of music and all its conventions had to be learned. This process was not carried out without obstacles, but the example of music-making that foreign musicians brought to Colombia when they performed in Santafé de Bogotá and other cities reinforced the idea of the necessity of a hierarchy within the profession.

The arrival in the country in 1898 of Cuban violinist Claudio Brindis de Salas was a major event for music lovers in Bogotá and Medellín and must have been taken as an example of what division of tasks within the profession of music should produce. His way of programming his recitals in Colombia shows that he used the way of programming that was in vogue in European concert halls: focus on the virtuoso, coherence in the selection of pieces and pleasing the audiences. Brindis de Salas also devoted two months to the National Academy of Music as a teacher, donated one of his compositions to this institution and premiered in Colombia the Sonata Kreutzer (Beethoven) and the finale of Mendelssohn’s Violin concerto. Brindis de Salas said farewell to the capital in April of that year and arrived in Medellín in July; he included in his performances in this city works by two Colombian composers of the time: Gonzalo Vidal (1863–1946), who was the most esteemed musician, composer and music critic of the city and Pedro Morales Pino (1863–1926), another acclaimed composer and interpreter of traditional music. Brindis de Salas was not the only foreign art musician to visit Colombia in the nineteenth century, but since he was Latin American and internationally famous, he confirmed many Colombians in the romantic cult of the artist as well as in their faith of the Latin American artistic character, which for many was as full of promise as the European.

To the aficionados and cognoscenti among Colombian audiences, the virtuosity of Brindis de Salas gave a taste of what a highly trained musician could do as instrumentalist. He confirmed what many thought was needed in order to produce that type of musical skill: disciplined training and a division of tasks within the music profession. Through his teachings in Santafé de Bogotá and Medellín he shared his experience of “proper art musical training and thus, he left among his disciples and supporters the desire for a much more established and standardized academic training that would enable Colombian art musicians to achieve the heights of their talent. Through Brindis de Salas, Colombian musicians and aficionados saw the fruits of an organized hierarchy within the musical profession and started to debate how to get them.

---

217 Weber, Music and the Middle Class. The social structure of concert life in London, Paris and Vienna. Brindis de Salas was preceded by his international fame as a violin virtuoso; he had been praised in Europe and was made Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in Paris.

218 “Chevalier Brindis de Salas,” in Anuario de la Academia Nacional de Música, Año escolar de 1898 (Bogotá: Tipografía El Mensajero, 1899).

219 “Mesa Revuelta - Brindis de Salas,” El Espectador, No. 400, September 14 1898.

220 Becker, Art Worlds. 15 - 18
Maybe the elites and art musicians saw that this would change the quality of music-making and would improve the taste and sensibility of Colombian audiences.

 Colombian musicians trained in Colombia and abroad also received attention from the Colombian press. Pianist Honorio Alarcón, guitarist Pedro Morales Pino, composers Gonzalo Vidal, Teresa Tanco and others were the subject of press reviews and articles where their talent and works were commented on and praised as the fruit of talent, art, good taste and dedication to their craft, although the conditions in the country did not favour music as a profession in the nineteenth century. Honorio Alarcón had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory and Teresa Tanco had studied in Paris; both of them were examples of what Colombian art musicians could do, if trained properly. Gonzalo Vidal and Pedro Morales Pino had been completely trained in Colombia, and, as far as sources can tell, their musicianship was the product of family and self-teaching. It is not clear if this translated into a hierarchy between them. However, while Alarcón and Tanco succeeded in propagating the European academic repertoire and teaching, Vidal and Morales Pino succeeded in composing music that fused Colombian traditional musical motifs with those learned through the European repertoire. This might have highlighted this group of musicians as examples of the versatility of Colombian musicianship, for sources suggest that audiences praised all of them as examples of Colombian art and of Colombian music. Through their music-making they showed that a Colombian school of music was possible and that what was needed was the support of institutions that could improve the taste of the audiences for it, namely, the National Academy of Music and the theatre. In the case of Pedro Morales Pino, this success might have stimulated him to take his ensemble *La Lira Colombiana* on tour through the north of Colombia in 1898, which became an extended tour through Central America and finally the United States; as a composer and interpreter of *pasillos*, *bambucos*, waltzes and arrangements of classical pieces, Morales Pino became one of the key figures of the emerging “national music”. Reviewers of his concerts praised his talent, saying that he communicated the sorrowful and powerful emotions of American music while showing the true talent of an artist.  

The growing promotion of Colombian music as national music and as art music produced by Colombian art musicians was then a dynamic sustained by elites linked to institutional power. However, the fact this support implied the mixing of two different music practices did not cater to the taste of some music aficionados and musicians who wished to establish a much clearer boundary between them. This desire might have been linked to a phenomenon explained by researchers of Colombian urban history: the overcrowding of Bogotá during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, manifested in the continuous dividing up of the old big houses in the neighbourhoods close to the centre to make space for new inhabitants and their music. This overcrowded coexistence translated into the closeness of hybrid

---

urban music practices and art music practices, manifested in the performances practices of the elite, which mixed genres of art music with hybrid urban music.

Living and working as a musician II

Had the situation changed for urban musicians at the close of the nineteenth century? We can answer this question by surveying the groups of musicians that the data show. We find the first group in press reviews; they were the most famous musicians in their cities: composers, instrumentalists and foreign musicians that had arrived with opera companies and had settled in Colombia. They were often quoted by columnists in articles about music and their concerts were subject of complimentary reviews. Simultaneously, some intellectuals began to publish in newspapers and magazines articles where the concept of art and its utility were defined and explained. In 1896 a correspondent by the pen name of P.N.G. published in the Medellín magazine El Repertorio an article entitled “Arte” in which he explained the concept:

[…] nosotros debemos considerarlo como la expresión del sentimiento noble, grande, que nos eleva a cada paso, y que contrario a todo lo que es miseria, hace vivir al hombre en una esfera superior a la que se respira en nuestro medio […] no es la simple habilidad para una cosa, ni profesión determinada, ni tampoco conjunto de profesiones o conocimientos […] él es una cosa muy superior a todo eso […]

According to this writer, music — as an art — should not be the exclusive territory of a learned few, but should be accessible to all, at least as a possibility of enjoyment, since it was so difficult to turn it into a profession in an environment that forced all human energies to work for survival. This opinion seemed opposed to the one that the founder of the National Academy of Music, Jorge Wilson Price, had expressed in his speech on the 9 December 1893, where he stressed that

[…] la tarea de formar verdaderos artistas no es labor de pocos años, y mucho menos en un país como el nuestro, en el cual no tenemos necesidad de una lucha titánica para subvenir las primeras necesidades de la vida, como sucede en Europa, y nos falta, además, el estímulo lucrativo para darnos aliento en esta ardua tarea […]

Both P.N.G. and Price were referring to art music, since in his article P.N.G. talks about the effect of the music in the listener that transcends what is written on the score. To P.N.G. and to Price the problem revolved around the fact that art music did not provide the financial certainty that other professions could.

---

224 “Arte,” El Repertorio, No. 1, June 1896. 28
To P.N.G. the problem was the adverse economic context of the country, which forced its inhabitants into constant and profitable labour; to Price, the problem was that a profession as demanding as music was not as remunerative as other less demanding professions or crafts. Both are depicting the same problem from different perspectives; the fact that choosing music as an academic profession of complete dedication was an economic risk for the individual who wanted to be a musician according to the canon promoted by the Academy and its supporters put this profession at odds with the social and economic context of the time. Art musicians were above the rest because of their talent and their training, but this did not translate into a stable economic position.

Data found at the General Archive of the Nation and at the Historical and Judicial Archive of Medellín show a group of urban musicians who made a living by playing at funerals. There is no reference to the type of training that these musicians had — either academic or traditional — and the rates of their services also remain imprecise; funeral musicians were accounted for in the overall expenses made by relatives of the deceased and without specifying the number of musicians, their instruments or the number of singers hired. There are no data about the rates that a musician trained at the National Academy could charge, or about the price of tickets to their concerts. There are also no data about the price of tickets to the concerts of Brindis de Salas, Teresa Tanco, Honorio Alarcón or Pedro Morales Pino perhaps because these concerts often were charity concerts held at the National Academy or private concerts. We see then that musicians from the “higher ranks” as well as those with less pedigree shared the economic uncertainty of the time; it was even worst for the academically trained musicians, for they were expected not to join the group of musicians for hire.

If not much had changed for urban musicians financially, their reputation had gone through a significant diversification. In the late 1890s and the early 1900s more distinctions were drawn between the musician as artist and the musician as a popular character. Colombian instrumentalists and performers that were praised as artists can be classified among the promoters of the Western academic repertoire; among them there was the composer Julio Quevedo Arvelo, celebrated in a special edition of the magazine *El Artista* in 1908. The short biography published in this special edition depicts Quevedo with all the Romantic themes: child prodigy as performer and composer, extreme sensibility, devotion to the study of his art, the overcoming of a physical handicap (his legs were crooked, which earned him the nickname of *chapín*), responsible teacher, energetic and tenacious character, poverty and a monastic dedication to his profession. To the author, these were the marks of a truly artistic character. The events of Quevedo’s life and the way he coped with them while leaving musical works of great value was, to the biographer, another example of Quevedo’s superior genius which placed him in the immortal world of art. Musicians like him were exemplary not only to other musicians, but to all Colombians. The reverse of this figure had

---


been depicted by Francisco de Paula Carrasquilla in a short literary portrait entitled “El músico de cuerda” which had been published in 1886 in his book *Tipos de Bogotá* and was reproduced in 1900 by composer Gonzalo Vidal in his magazine *Revista Musical*. In this picaresque portrait, the itinerant life of the string musician is described as constant flux of dissimilar environments (churches, salons, taverns, funerals) that, when compared to the monkish life of Julio Quevedo, renders a strong contrast:

Como ente pasivo y corredor de música se deja conducir humildemente de uno a otro sitio; [...] sin que tan súbitas transiciones alcancen a alterar en lo mínimo su habitual indiferencia ni a grabar la más leve contracción en su rostro sereno, el cual se muestra lo mismo en un entierro que en un baile de baja clase, sin que lo uno le conmueva el espíritu ni lo otro le mancille el carácter.

So, if Quevedo’s extreme sensibility and isolated life were marks of his artistic soul, the agitated life and the indifference of the itinerant string musician are marks of an incurable laziness that highlights his mediocrity. If Quevedo led a life of study that, according to his biographer, drove him to seek solace in convent life twice, the string musician “Tiende establecido su despacho, y a disposición de quien quiera ocuparlo, en las fondas de mala vida y mala muerte [...]”; here he finds an audience of alcoholics, rebellious students, gamblers and ill-fated professionals with whom he eats and drinks without temperance. The taverns mentioned by Carrasquilla had become more frequent as places of social encounter in the last decades of the nineteenth century; they were places where all social groups could meet (albeit elite women would not dare to go into them, fearing shame) and musicians and their supporters were among their regular customers. The life of the itinerant string musician was also full of financial hardships, for the economic uncertainty of the times, according to Carrasquilla, made his craft something dispensable and therefore poverty and penury hounded him.

We see that, if their social network and music-making separated an art musician like Quevedo from the itinerant string musician, their destiny was not so different. If talented composers and art musicians could be misunderstood and face financial difficulties, the traditional non-art musicians that played for hire were not exempt from this. It was their musical practice that made them different and that made their lives a cruel destiny for the art musician and fate for the itinerant string musician, who was not taken as an artist by the audience, but as an artisan (with all the backwardness that this social label implied).

**The war of a Thousand Days and the new century (1899–1910)**

The War of a Thousand Days (1899–1902) had a double impact on Colombian urban musical practices, as Ellie Anne Duque explains:

---

229 Ibid.
En años de la guerra, el toque de queda influyó en el cese de las temporadas de ópera, en los conciertos y en la vida social de los clubes y restaurantes en donde se llevaban a cabo importantes eventos de la vida musical. Sin embargo, muchos músicos de provincia acudieron a la capital durante los aciagos mil días y debido a dicho exodo se encontraron en Bogotá músicos talentosos, en busca de educación y oportunidades de trabajo [...]

Amidst the atmosphere left by the war, musicians in the capital went back to work. The review of a concert held in the Colón Theatre in November 1905 describes the performers as "juventud llena de savia, amor y sentimiento"; theirs was a new generation of artists, ready to assume the cultural leadership of the country. The review described the audience as "lo más selecto de la sociedad bogotana", indicating that the traditional exclusivity of concerts was still alive. The war had not challenged such social distinctions, and if there was a new generation of Colombian artists, they were to be understood and supported by an elite that replicated the customs of their fathers in reaffirming their social standing through the promotion of concerts. By 1907 the void left by the Philharmonic Society de Santafé de Bogotá was filled by other groups and institutions, such as the orchestra of the Beethoven Academy, directed by one of the most famous musicians and composers of the time, Santos Cifuentes (Bogotá, 1870 - Buenos Aires, 1932), who also was one of the most prestigious alumni of the National Academy of Music and the first to graduate with a degree in composition. The National Academy of Music was the main provider of musical entertainment outside the home through its staging of concerts as part of civic festivities, academic events belonging to their school year or related to the National University (which the Academy was part of) and concerts for charity and public welfare.

Musicians like Pedro Morales Pino produced urban popular music which fused elements from art music and popular traditional music. The support and promotion of this type of music linked several elements: the elite’s faith in the civilising effect of music; the consolidation of a musical practice where traditional and art music formed one repertoire; the invention of a musical tradition that represented the rural part of the country in order to include it in the project of a unified nation; and the promotion of a musical symbol that — according to the urban elites — could unify the whole country. The pianist and composer Emilio Murillo (1880–1942) insisted in promoting this music as a relevant element in the celebration of the first centennial of independence; he and many others thought that this music, born out of the music culture that had developed in the cities in the nineteenth century, was the right basis for a national music. The editors of the magazine Colombia Artística promoted this idea with the publication of bambucos and...
pasillos as well as portraits of Colombian composers and musicians, and in 1910 published the polka entitled “Patria” by composer Carlos Escamilla, who had played with Pino in his group Lira Colombiana.234

At the beginning of the twentieth century, two musical practices that formed part of the urban musical life in the capital (as in other Colombian cities) could now challenge one another through words, sounds and preferences of Colombian urban musicians and audiences. However, these two groups that debated the pertinence of a Colombian school of music remained within the social, artistic and political circles of urban elites. The music-making of the traditional popular non-art musicians, though a relevant part of urban music practice at the time, was not evoked in them. The debates around the management of the National Academy of Music emphasized the understanding that Colombian music was an academic matter and therefore, the learning space that had to be protected from backwardness was the National Academy of Music.235

Art music practice was then the space that, to a segment of urban Colombians at the time, deserved to be acknowledged as where urban musical culture was, and most of all, should be, made. Art musicians then were assigned a protagonist role in this process, but in truth, they shared the stage with musicians that had turned the theoretical gap between art music and popular traditional music into a space of creativity and that from there, produced music which most Colombian urbanites could identify with. Colombian urban spaces at the start of the twentieth century were slowly integrating the notion of urban public life; therefore, the spaces for urban public art-music were not many. In Santafé de Bogotá, the two most important theatres (Teatro Municipal and Teatro Colón) were built in the 1890s and, with the Graduation Hall at the National University, were the favourite spaces for art-music concerts; as for benefit concerts, the clubs founded by members of the elite opened their doors to the performances of well-trained amateurs of the elite and to and musicians that performed in them; the most respected of them, the Gun Club, operated in the centre of the city (the Cathedral neighbourhood), close to the elites. This restrictive quality of art music as an element of urban life was a reflection of how this art form had developed as a prerogative of class, for it reaffirmed social identities linked to the meaning of urban space.

Art music practice in Santafé de Bogotá was an established tradition among urban elites when it was challenged by composer Guillermo Uribe Holguín soon after his return to Colombia from France in 1910, where he studied at the Schola Cantorum since 1907. He was nominated as director of the National Academy of Music and it seems that many of those who supported art music and national music hoped


235 The magazines Colombia Artistica and El Artista were the arena where those concerned by the future of the Academy debated who was the most suitable for the position of Director during the last months of 1909. Through these magazines we learn that Jorge Wilson Price and the pianist Honorio Alarcón were the two characters around whom supporters developed the debate; for some, Price was associated with the bad memory of an outdated way of music-making and his criticisms were dismissed as the fruit of ignorance, while Alarcón was exalted as a force that had raised the level of the Academy and benefited its disciples with his knowledge, acquired in Europe.
that Uribe was going to keep the process as it had developed from his position of leadership. Uribe’s ideas though, were quite different, for once appointed as Director of the National Academy he challenged the musical culture that had been one of the highlights of urban life in Santafé de Bogotá by establishing a strict difference between what was considered “classic” according to the European musical canon and what was not; the music that had been played and praised by Colombian urban musicians and their audiences did not fit into this canonical categorisation. Uribe Holguín changed the academic repertoire and declared that traditional Colombian musical motifs were not interesting enough with which to “make music”. Needless to say, other musicians and composers did not agree with him; Emilio Murillo challenged Uribe Holguín’s arguments at every opportunity.

The fact that the genres of art music that had been disseminated in Colombia since the nineteenth century (waltzes, marches, and opera excerpts) had been adopted by the urban middle classes, was another facet of the process of appropriation of art music by Colombian urban society; the result was a flexible repertoire elaborated by musicians who fused different musical practices with the help of their audiences, and in spaces that also had flexibility as their marker: retretas in the squares, spontaneous dances, chicherías, pulperías, and other social encounters. During the first decade of the twentieth century, these spaces still provided a scenario for urban musicians and their flexible repertoire. Audiences of this music practice were just as mixed, for records of that time show how musicians like Pedro Morales Pino and Nicolás Mata met and befriended members of the elite with prominent political and cultural roles, like the poets Rafael Pombo and Julio Flórez. In the case of Rafael Pombo, his knowledge and love for urban music (and his beloved bambuco was a genre of it) did not prevent him from writing the libretti for two operas by José María Ponce de León, Ester and Florinda. Pombo, like many others, was the antithesis of what many art music supporters and art musicians wanted: a clear separation and a clear hierarchy between two ways of making music for a nation.

**Conclusions**

The development of urban musical culture in Colombia during the second half of the nineteenth century implied the interaction of interpretations about culture and society that were at the core of the narratives...

---

236 Ellie Anne Duque, *Guillermo Uribe Holguín y sus 300 trozos de sentimiento popular*, (Bogotá: Hierbabuena, 1980)
238 Although major Colombian intellectuals of the time could be regular clients of chicherías, sources indicate that this was not a type of sociability that they admitted in public. The stigma that surrounded chicherías seems to have prevented these intellectual figures to promote them openly as places where cultural and political debates took place, and much less as places where they could meet with subaltern groups. This marks a contrast with other bohemian circles of Latin America at the time and during the fin-de-siècle, who promoted their encounters with “popular culture” as positive experiences opposed to the hegemonic westernized culture of the urban elites. Cfr. Deborah Poole, *Vision, Race, and Modernity. A visual economy of the Andean image world.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997)
used by elites to explain Colombian reality at the time, but also to propose alternative futures. Colombian elites elaborated these narratives from their experiences of and references to European urban life and through that elaboration they adapted them to the social and material reality; such adaptation implied the elaboration of another narrative to explain Colombian society and above all, to explain the “necessity” of that type of musical culture in Colombia. The narrative used by Colombian elites to explain this offered an interpretation where Colombians were “a work in progress” that could benefit from the promotion of art music. Musicians had a role in this narrative as part of that group that assumed the duty of leading a process of moral and cultural change. This, however, came at a price: their work and their social identity had to be transformed.

With the problem of transforming the social persona of musicians, the question of the social reception of their art was open. Data suggest that musicians had an ambiguous status during the nineteenth century, something that Jorge Wilson Price and his collaborators tried to change with the foundation of the National Academy of Music. This ambiguity placed musicians in a category of urban workers that comprised skilled artisans who produced ornaments for their society; such appraisement of the musicians’ work was formed during the colony and did not change after Independence. The promotion of art music implied the confrontation of the modern appraisement of the musicians’ talent, skill and work and this traditional reception.

The ambiguous status of musicians is one of the factors that contribute to explain the blurred line that separated art musicians from traditional musicians until the 1880s: this blurred line constituted a territory where skills, repertoire and musical knowledge had a fluid interaction through a rich learning process in which Western academic process and tradition (Western pre-modern and non-Western) met. Nevertheless, with the increasing promotion and emulation of the practice of Western art music, this fluidity became problematic and a joint demand from supporters and a segment of musicians for an exclusive learning process and exclusive spaces for display became stronger. This meant that boundaries within the world of musicians and audiences started to be demanded, as the criticism published in reviews and articles of the time suggest; thus we can speculate that if traditional musicians could circulate among groups that supported art musicians, they had to learn to display a conduct that was similar to those groups. This behaviour would be different from that displayed in more bohemian circles or among audiences of subaltern groups.

Towards the 1860s art music activity in Santafé de Bogotá and other cities like Cartagena and Medellín had some of the characteristics that Colombian elites saw in the musical urban culture of the major cities of Europe and the US. Organizations like Philharmonic Societies and private sponsors (like Quevedo and Caicedo y Rojas) contributed to establish a new social ritual: the concert. I will address the capital culture associated with the concert in the next chapter, but urban musicians found a new meaning given to their traditional social role in the years leading to the 1860s. This new meaning was slowly emerging and marking musicians as well as repertoire and, I suggest, was also marking audiences and spaces. Art
musicians and their supporters started to develop art music as a practice that added to those associated to the social identity of urban elites; the scarcity of public spaces for art music helped to continue the spatial closeness between art musicians and elites, thus turning art music into another marker of social hierarchy. Although there is no evidence to say how the rest of urban society might have felt about this closeness, I venture to think that such cultural exclusivity contributed to enhancing the social gap that had been reformulated by the exercise of political power, restricted to a few families and their political machines. Nevertheless, urban musicians found their own new role as the producers of new hybrid urban music practices that turned the distance between art musicians and non-art musicians and their repertoires into a new creative space; the gap remained as a desire of a segment of urban society that feared the flexibility of this hybrid urban music, for it implied a type of homogenization that threatened the system of distinction that legitimized their social identity.

The celebration of the first anniversary of Colombian independence brought to light the diversity of musical identifications that a segment of urban music aficionados could practice. When the elites concentrated the debates about Colombian music around the production and promotion of Colombian art music (with the tools provided by the Western canon) that was taking place at the National Academy and similar academic environments, they did not integrate other musical cultures that flowed between Colombian urban and rural societies. As Bermúdez explains, during the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century there was a combination of musical practices (dance music, arrangements and excerpts of classical music and opera, military brass bands and traditional music) that constituted a new type of popular music that was not related to the art musical tradition followed by the Academy. These music cultures were left out in these debates, in which elites and art musicians privileged the practice of urban art music as the symbol of spiritual progress of the nation.
CHAPTER 5 THE PLEASURES OF MUSIC (I) Concerts and Opera

Concerts
The emergence of concerts as part of social urban life reaffirmed several practices that had characterized urban society during the colonial period. Gatherings held at private homes — tertulias, dances and saraos — were the manifestation of a stratified private social world that depended on the official (vice royal) calendar as well as the religious calendar. These calendars were the mechanism used during the colonial years to establish what kind of gathering was appropriate according to the time, place and the attendees. Departing from this tradition, the practice of the concert in Colombia in the nineteenth century was established as a secular entertainment by that segment of Colombian society that wished to promote new social practices and spaces linked to modernity and civilization; these characteristics were understood by political and intellectual leaders both as achievements and processes that guaranteed an organized and improved social life which would be coterminous with political stability.\(^1\) Gilberto Loaiza Cano argues that tertulias worked as a cultural and political device: “Como elementos de difusión de ideologías y como escuelas de formación de opinión, su incidencia pública tenía que ser notoria.”\(^2\)

This flexible border between the private and the public was reinforced with the emergence, after 1848, of new social groups that found ideological support in Liberal secular principles and material support in the acquisition of wealth made possible by Liberal economic policies applied by the Liberal governments until the 1880s. The presence of these new urban middle classes altered the Colombian social scenario; these newcomers had access to material and cultural goods that contested the privileges of old lineages, and thus they were not very well received in the concert venues, even though they formed part of the social groups that promoted concerts. The development of a concert social scene in Santafé de Bogotá and Medellín from the second half of the nineteenth century into the beginnings of the twentieth implies a complex social dynamic through which in the space of the concert old and new ideas about society either changed or resignified ways of interaction and of distinction.\(^3\)

Tuning
The practice of the domestic concert in Colombia in the second half of the nineteenth century was the manifestation of new values in which the ideas of comfort, urbanity, luxury, sensibility and progress were interconnected. Articles and reviews in which journalists praised or critiqued concerts concurred that they

---

\(^1\) Raymond Williams, *Keywords. A vocabulary of culture and society* (London: Fontana, 1983).
\(^3\) Colmenares, *Partidos Políticos y Clases Sociales*. Palacios, *Estado y clases sociales en Colombia*. 11 and 37
were unequivocal signs of material and spiritual progress. However, many costumbrista authors were keen to mark out those who wanted to participate in them without having the cultural and financial credentials to do so. The story “La tertulia en casa” by José David Guarín shows how the attempts of some middle-class families to host concerts and soirées could backfire, thus demonstrating their lack of experience in this new secular ritual. In this short story, Guarín’s sarcasm illustrates how to reach the standards of nineteenth century Bogotá a family needed servants, “proper” furniture and an ingenious wife to manage everything in order to perform a refined hospitality on par with everybody else. As the story progresses, Guarín (narrating in the first person) tells us how his wife’s attempt to organize a fashionable tertulia showed all the signs of failure: there was no fine liquor, no delicious hors d’œuvres and the worst, there were no musicians who played to make the evening pleasant. Faced with the danger of social ridicule and the threat of losing his guests, Guarín starts to improvise:

Salí corriendo a mandar donde Blanchard i a este tiempo llegó la guitarra, pero estaba sin prima ni cuarta, i a todas estas eran las diez de la noche. Mi señora entraba i salía llevándose dos o tres muchachos por delante con la crinolina […] Por fin, acomodaron con pita las cuerdas que faltaban i cuando entré vi el cuadro más encantador! Don Carpófaro Cipagauta tocaba los armadores, mi tia tocaba el triángulo en las llaves i cantaba para que se oyera algo parecido a música, i los demás bailaban al son del taburete que tocaba una abuela […]

Guarín’s story demonstrates the connection between the ideas of comfort, urbanity, luxury, sensibility and progress that made concerts a part of Colombian urban life. We can start with the details given by Guarín about the way his wife had re-arranged the furniture and other decorative accessories to present their house as fashionable, when in truth, they did not have those things: bedroom drapes and quilts hanging in the corridor as curtains, drinking jars used as flower vases. This image was the antithesis of the recommendations on decoration of living rooms and drawing rooms given by magazines and etiquette manuals of the time. Moreover, these recommendations had been taken very seriously by Colombian urban middle classes and elites from the 1850s, for the social changes triggered by Independence were starting to match the economic changes stimulated by Liberal governments; thus “new” families and individuals started to ascend the social ladder while those belonging to the “old” social circles who had survived the turmoil of Independence struggled to reaffirm their social predominance. One of the battle fields of this social confrontation was the home, thanks to the new wealth that many found in trade.

---

4 Velásquez, "Los rostros de Euterpe: la práctica musical en Medellín vista a través del análisis de periódicos y revistas."
5 José David Guarín, "La tertulia en casa," El Mosaico, No. 41, September 15 1859.
6 Tertulias with music were also common in other countries of Latin America. They were the highlights of urban social life and their hosts were recognized as cultural and community leaders.
7 Guarín, "La tertulia en casa."
Furnishings became part of the weaponry. If people like Guarín wanted to be taken seriously by society, they had to make their best effort to possess fashionable furniture and decoration.\footnote{Patricia Lara Betancourt, "La sala doméstica en Santafé de Bogotá, siglo XIX. El decorado de la sala romántica: gusto europeo y esnobismo," Anuario colombiano de Historia Social y de la cultura, no. 25 (1998). 111 Moure, De la vida de antaño.}

One etiquette manual which gave precise instructions as how to furnish a living room appropriately for tertulias was the one written by the Frenchwoman Ermane Dufaux and translated into Spanish by Miguel de Toro y Gómez in 1883: \textit{El buen gusto en el trato social y en las ceremonias civiles y religiosas}. Dufaux gave instructions about furniture, how to arrange it according to the hierarchy of the family hosting the event, how the hosts — especially the ladies — should dress, what type of conversation was appropriate, how to distribute the chairs to resemble a concert hall.\footnote{Ermance Dufaux, \textit{El buen gusto en el trato social y en las ceremonias civiles y religiosas}, versión castellana de Miguel de Toro y Gómez (París: Librería de Garner Hermanos, 1883).} The instructions covered how to elaborate a program for the concert:

\begin{quote}
La música vocal debe mezclarse con la instrumental, y con frecuencia la poesía aumenta la variedad de los géneros. Las composiciones notables por su profundidad, alternan con páginas brillantes y las melodías sencillas y encantadoras con los \textit{tours de force} de los virtuosos [...] Los trozos mejores son ejecutados en el promedio de la velada pues el auditorio está completo y la atención se encuentra en su mejor periodo para apreciar bien el mérito del ejecutante. [...] Por medio de una gradación hábilmente calculada, a medida que el oído y el espíritu se cansan más, los oyentes se encuentran llevados nuevamente al punto de partida por medio de trozos que sólo exigen una atención distraída.\footnote{Ibid. 274-275}
\end{quote}

Etiquette manuals like Dufaux’s shared the teaching of urbanity and good behaviour with the \textit{Manual de urbanidad y buenas maneras para uso de la juventud de ambos sexos} published in 1853 by Manuel Antonio Carreño. This manual was generally accepted as the rule book for proper social conduct and a few years later, Carreño published a \textit{compendio} (summary) of his manual for schools, which the Colombian government adopted as a compulsory text book. If Dufaux’s manual stressed the detailed description of rules for behaviour and material equipment, Carreño “[…] presenta una urbanidad positiva, basada en los ideales del cristiano que perfecciona sus cualidades y quiere lucirlas en la vida social […]”\footnote{Pedraza, \textit{En cuerpo y alma. Visiones del progreso y de la felicidad: educación, cuerpo y orden social en Colombia (1830-1990).} 54} by emphasizing to his readers which acts were \textit{inciviles y groseros} and how to avoid them. These recommendations applied to concerts and other musical events:

\begin{quote}
Para los aplausos hai reglas especiales, las cuales no pueden desatenderse sin incurrir en graves faltas, que arguyen ignorancia y mala educación. [...]
\end{quote}
aplausos ruidoso es insoportable cuando no ha terminado aún la frase musical […] Es incivil e inconsiderado pedir a […] un ejecutante cualquiera, la repetición de una pieza de fuerza. 12

Although late nineteenth-century Colombian citizens might have read Carreños’s Manual at home and at school, some concert reviews show that they did not apply his rules to the letter. Sources indicate that 40 years later Carreños’s teachings had not been learned by art music aficionados, for when the Cuban violin virtuoso Claudio José Brindis de Salas played for Medellín’s audiences the applause got out of hand:

Los [aplausos] cosechados por el señor Brindis de Salas fueron tantos y tan nutridos y constantes, que por ellos se privó al público de muchas de las más bellas y delicadas armonías que el artista le daba con prodigalidad de potentado. Es de esperar que en los conciertos sucesivos no se le dé al artista mientras dure la audición otro aplauso que el del silencio, elocuentísimo en ocasiones tales, y que se reserven para la terminación de la velada o para los entreactos […] Mientras el toca, cualquier interrupción es sacrílega por lo que se refiere al arte, importuna y descortés para el artista […] 13

It seems that the concerts given by the Cuban musician presented an opportunity to see how Medellín’s audiences were ignorant of the set of manners expected at a concert, since other reviews of performances by Brindis de Salas shared the same reprimand: the audience was too noisy and had to learn to express their admiration for the artist in a way that showed their good taste appropriately.

From the 1850s, concert attendees were praised for their good taste, demonstrated in the display of appropriate manners and their respectful attention during the performances, and for those amateurs who played or sang in these events, their good taste was confirmed by the skill and the evocative power of their performance. 14 Good taste appeared in these reviews associated with the selected quality of the audience, their elegance and proper demeanour:

La concurrencia numerosa y selecta fue cumplimentada a porfía por el dueño de la casa y por los dos miembros de la sociedad nombrados para hacer los honores del salón. La elegancia de los vestidos y la moderación y compostura que ostentaban señoras y caballeros daban a la función un aspecto serio y respetuoso. 15

---

13 "Mesa Revuelta: Concierto," El Espectador, No. 393, August 16 1898.
The author of this review depicted a group that wanted to be different from the rest of society; this differentiation was through the display of a conduct in the concert that was described in etiquette manuals as elegant and moderate. The concert and the behaviour that etiquette manuals recommended for attendees can be understood as a complex ritual. As we have already seen, some social groups that attended concerts did not achieve the ideal behaviour preached in them. Zandra Pedraza explains that the discrepancies between the behaviour of people and the rules preached by etiquette manuals can be explained as a paradox:

[The true purpose of the etiquette manuals was] propagar las reglas de distinción social, no necesariamente para que todos las practiquen, sino para que las reconozcan, con lo que se activa el sistema de distinciones. Para quienes se interesan por participar en este ordenamiento, se describen además las minucias que lo componen, no la forma de apropiárselas. [...] quienes actúan únicamente con buenos modales sin compartir los cimientos éticos de las normas, están de antemano descalificados como legítimas personas urbanas, porque no disponen de la sensibilidad ni de la calidad moral para ser consideradas como tales.  

The insistence of music journalists on the elegance and good taste of the audience was another strategy to build a filter and secure a set of means for social distinction. In this sense, “elegance” acquired an additional meaning: it was an internal disposition to listen and to learn from the music which could be learned through education and that manifested itself in specific manners of behaviour. At the same time, this disposition and behaviour was shared among those who had been educated to listen passively while learning; this “elegance” was an ethical rule and an instrument of distinction. A similar process had been developing in Europe during the nineteenth century, in which a physically passive but mentally attentive type of listening was promoted as the indication of deeply spiritual and intellectual activity. This process was depicted with the vocabulary used to describe religious experience and that is the way in which many cultural figures of the time understood the activity of listening to music: it was a religious experience through which the listener could understand the sublime and learn from it. The attendees who managed to perform the etiquette’s rules that indicated a well-trained sensibility, also showed their intellectual depth. In this sense concerts of art music, the attendance by the elites and the behaviour rules that attendees were expected to understand and perform, created new parameters of social distinction in a context where material distinction was problematic and where social hierarchies were contested by democratic and liberal ideologies. Amateurs playing music to an audience in a group or as soloists was not

---

16 Pedraza, En cuerpo y alma. Visiones del progreso y de la felicidad: educación, cuerpo y orden social en Colombia (1830-1990). 108
18 Alvarez, Músicas para una región y una ciudad: Antioquia y Medellín 1810-1865, aproximaciones a algunos momentos y personajes.
something that anyone could do; there was the implication that the time needed to do this was time outside (or ‘stolen’ from) daily work. It is then fit to ask who could devote or ‘steal’ time from daily work to enjoy music. When we remember that Colombian society in the nineteenth century lived under economic uncertainty, and that many people had to perform different crafts to make ends meet, we see how leisure activities such as concerts could add to those social distinctions that differentiated people with a steady income from those who did not have such a privilege.

Concerts as strictly musical events (not for charity or for civic celebration) emerged in Colombian urban society as part of the activities of leisure that were understood by urban elites as proper urban entertainment. This implied the notion of “leisure time”, which was new in Colombian urban society at the time. Leisure time was to be used by its owner in a productive way; music was recommended by many pedagogues and intellectuals as an activity that contributed to intangible productivity, for the man or woman that undertook its study filled their leisure time learning a new skill while cultivating their sensibility. Thus, they also improved their social skills and made themselves able to participate in new forms of sociability such as political societies, scientific societies, reading groups and musical groups. These new activities were the product of a desire for social change that not only affected Liberal segments of Colombian society, but also prompted Conservative thinkers to use these new activities as spaces to debate how to challenge Liberal principles. Urban middle classes and elites replaced the forms of social interaction inherited from the colonial period with these new activities, in which concerts took a prominent role. In that sense, the promotion of concerts was not just about the Colombian elite posturing in front of the Colombian subaltern classes; it meant the promotion of another facet of a modern urban way of life, understood by cultural and political leaders as a set of practices that indicated the level of civilization that a people could display.

Therefore, we can understand why the reviews of concerts during the second half of the nineteenth century show that those who promoted concerts also saw them as a pedagogical tool; they were useful to pursue the education of the senses and the betterment of social manners among the attendees. The pedagogical role of concerts of art music might have been associated with their origins in domestic spaces, a practice that continued in parallel with concerts offered by philharmonic societies as discussed in Chapter 4, educational institutions and charity organizations that were also common in the rest of Latin America, Europe and the United States. However, the quality of social exclusivity that the Philharmonic Society reflected did not guarantee that the attendees to its concerts knew what to expect from it, since in a Society’s concert review, the correspondent describes how the ladies asked for a change in the rules: they wanted to dance, since the repertoire of the orchestra included waltzes and other dance pieces: “[…] pero el maldito reglamento de la Sociedad no permite tal pronunciamiento pedestre.” In this review, the correspondent also complained about the low attendance to the Society’s concerts; other reviews about

---

19 Weber, Music and the Middle Class. The social structure of concert life in London, Paris and Vienna.
20 “Concierto Sociedad Filarmonica,” El Neogranadino, No. 73, November 9 1849.
the Philharmonic Society indicate that such scarce attendance to the concerts was not exclusively due to the lack of payment of the subscription (it seems that many members were not punctual in their payments) but that it was also due to the fact that dancing was not allowed. It seems that listening attentively and passively to the music was a new form of entertainment for many of the members of the Society. In contrast, concerts and tertulias promoted by families usually included dancing.

The fact that families from the upper classes organized concerts at family gatherings and sponsored individual artists highlights the public cultural role that some families took on during this time; the concert became a social event with powerful implications, since families with political power could promote them as another way to introduce new members (by blood, marriage or political/economic association) to their circle of friends and relatives, and could use them as a way to confirm their moral (and material) ascendancy over the rest of society. We can see, then, that the family that sponsored a concert blurred the boundary between the private and the public, for they displayed notions of family and domesticity that were associated with high culture and power outside the home. However this was not a complete novelty, for it gave a new meaning to the public role that elite families had enjoyed during the colonial period, when sponsoring festivities (both inside their home and outside) constituted a display of political and economic power.

As I explained in Chapter 2, retretas started in the 1870s and were aimed at a wider audience as a pedagogical tool. But the reviews show other elements that made them important to their supporters. The first element was the possibility of enjoying music in a public park:

EL PARQUE DE LA PLAZA DE SANTANDER – Al fin, al fin es un hecho la música para el público en este sitio de recreo. […] Hace un mes que el parque ofrece un espectáculo tan alegre como culto bajo la impresión gratísima de las retretas. 

Colombia’s local governments started to build parks in the late nineteenth century based on European notions and experiences of these spaces. Public parks were widespread in Europe from the eighteenth century, but reached their heyday during mid-nineteenth century, when they were included by urban planners in the designs of cities not only to provide spaces for mobility and for the interaction of different social groups, but also to produce spaces from where inhabitants could observe their city and form an integrated image of it. In Latin America, parks started to be planned as a way to challenge the spatial distribution inherited from the colony; they became important as spaces to gather citizens together for

---

21 Music and the Middle Class. The social structure of concert life in London, Paris and Vienna.
civic and religious festivities, military parades and manifestations of popular culture. The local government of Bogotá started to build parks and to turn old colonial squares into parks in the 1880s, in an attempt to transform the city into a modern capital.  

24 Retretas were launched as a manifestation of urban culture in which all citizens were included and public parks became the stage for that purpose.

The author of the review about the retreta in the Park of Santander, brings out another element: the direct support of the government — President Eustorgio Salgar and his Secretary, José Eusebio Otálora — had been crucial for the realization of retretas in this park. The author then commended Secretary Otálora for what he considered was the fruit of a trip to Europe undertaken with the purpose that José María Cordovez Moure had mentioned in his memoirs: to bring back to Colombia useful knowledge and good habits. This correspondent also reminded readers that the proper public place for a retreta was the park (“los sitios de paseo”), a place where all social classes could meet to enjoy the music, not under the balcony of the Presidential House.  

25 This last point indicates that retretas had been performed in front of the Presidential House to the dismay of many, although it is not clear why this would have been a problem. A review of an 1881 retreta shows how some people felt about this display of music in this specific place:

Hemos jurado guerra a muerte contra la costumbre bárbara de las músicas militares al pie de la Casa de Gobierno los jueves y los domingos. […] Al parque de la plaza Santander pueden concurrir las señoras, los embajadores, los congresistas, los representantes de la prensa, los comerciantes, los literatos, todos los hombres de dignidad, a oír con delicia las retretas; […]

26 I suggest that the correspondent depicts retretas beside the Presidential House as a “barbaric” custom, perhaps relating to the colonial custom of having the military band playing beside the viceroyal palace. If retretas were to become part of modern urban entertainment, they should not be associated to political power, but taken instead as a politically independent social event.

Retretas became a ritual of public urban life in other cities of the country. The newspaper La voz de Antioquia published the program for retretas held at the Berrío park in Medellín on Sundays (the old colonial square was turned into a park during the 1890s) and at the Governor’s House on Thursdays. The

25 The actual Presidential Palace known as Casa de Nariño was built from 1906 to 1908 by architects Gastón Lelarge and Julián Lombana under orders by President General Rafael Reyes. Until then, the Palace of San Carlos and the house of Antonio Nariño y Alvarez, the first translator of the Rights of Men from French into Spanish in Colombia, had been the places of presidential power and dwelling.
26 "Hechos Diversos: Las retretas barbarisantes," Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2972, October 8 1881.
retretas in Santafé de Bogotá also took place on Sundays and Thursdays, suggesting that the retreta was another way to attempt a unification of the country in time through a public musical ritual.

The traditional squares inherited from the colony had different purposes: religious processions, viceroyal ceremonies, religious festivities, public punishment and market days; this use of the square came from a different approach to urban space. The modern approach to urban space asked for spaces where crowds could be and where crowds could see and be seen, such as parks, alamedas and paseos. As stated earlier, the public park was a novelty in Colombian urban structures during the last decades of the nineteenth century. It is no coincidence that during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth there emerged in Colombia many associations for the construction and betterment of public facilities. They undertook the transformation of the old colonial squares into modern parks: the location of trees, bushes, flowers, benches, the statue of an Independence hero and the kiosk for the music band that was to play at the retreta, probably emulating what they saw in European cities. The retreta was an event in which several political and pedagogical intentions converged: the musical performance in a public space served the ideals held by many that music should be made public in order to educate the people in the virtues needed by republican life (sensibility and sympathy). However, prescriptions for behaviour in public spaces taught by etiquette manuals posed specific requirements to those who wished to attend; those requirements were based on the comprehension of the virtues that one should possess to be with others, which implied another educational process. At the same time, the desire of some groups of urbanites to have music in public spaces triggered the action of political leaders to transform the physical structure of the city that had been inherited from the times of the colonial period and had not been dramatically changed.
Both photographs of the Central Square, then after 1898 central park of Medellín, were taken by Melitón Rodríguez and they show the accelerated change that Colombian cities were going through at the time.\(^{27}\)

The *retreta* was an element in the complex process of transforming Colombian inhabitants of cities into urban citizens who would appreciate and enact civic virtues and rituals. An element inherent of this process was the system of social distinctions which was confirmed as part of social interactions at a *retreta*. The display — or imposition — of parameters of musical taste from part of the audience to another was one of the manifestations of those social distinctions:

Señor Director de la banda de música del Batallón Bolivar: ¿hasta cuando, señor, estarán mortificados nuestros oídos con la *pantorrilluda guacharaca*, aborto filarmónico del infierno que vuestros subordinados ejecutan siempre y por todas partes? ¿Las felices concepciones de Weber, Rossini, Verdi y Mozart no son dignas de que vuestros músicos las ejecuten? Los valse y polkas sabaneros serán superiores a los de Lanner, Strauss, Labitzky, etc.? La respuesta, por sabida se calla y exitamos al señor Cansino a que se salga del genero *bufo* en que hasta ahora esta la música de esta ciudad […]\(^{28}\)

The author of this review of a *retreta* in Cartagena de Indias showed knowledge of the music of the time; specifically of the style that was performed at *retretas* (other composers listed in this article were Offenbach, Gounod and Liszt): marches, waltzes and opera transcriptions. His evaluation of the music that is played by the orchestra in comparison to the music he wishes that was played highlights the element of moral judgement that was implied in the promotion of *retretas* and concerts. If we go back to

\(^{27}\) Photographs taken by Melitón Rodríguez, Archivo Fotográfico Biblioteca Pública Piloto de Medellín.

\(^{28}\) “El colibri,” *El Atlantico*, No. 11, May 15 1874. Italics are in the original source.
In the previous review, we find another moral judgement, this time about the attendees: “todos los hombres de dignidad”; this type of attendee embodied the union of education and social position (equivalent to moral position) that were part of the cultural capital that many at the time assumed was essential in order to attend to a *retreta* or a concert. To these attributes other less “spiritual” qualities, which still revealed material superiority, were soon added as this advertisement shows:

![Figure 15: Advertisement in the newspaper El Buen Tono, ca. 1910.](image)

The fact that *retretas* were held in public open spaces made them an event where several audiences intersected: those who attended the *retreta*, those who walked by and stopped to listen, those who lived around the park and listened to the music from their windows, and those who were in the park and nearby and were not listening to the music.
Public concerts in the capital became more regular with concerts given by the students from the National Academy of Music from 1882 onwards. The Academy promoted these concerts in which “[…] ha dado a conocer al público el adelanto de los discípulos y el progreso que hace la Academia en el difícil sendero del arte.”

Until its closure in 1899 due to the start of the War of a Thousand Days, the Academy performed 43 public concerts and 19 private concerts called *sabatinas*; they were held on Saturdays and only family and friends of the students could attend. From 1894 to 1899 the Academy’s students performed mostly *sabatinas* dividing them in two sessions: one for the male students and one for the female students. Nevertheless, the Academy lacked a proper place to host concerts. The problem was made evident by its director, Jorge Wilson Price, in a petition published in the annual report of activities for the year 1896:

> [...] la falta en absoluto en Bogotá de un salón apropiado para conciertos públicos es una de las causas que mayormente contribuye al desaliento de los alumnos de la Academia, pues ellos no ven en lo futuro ningún estímulo para sus esfuerzos de hoy. [...] El salón al que me refiero debería contener fácilmente de mil quinientas a dos mil personas, colocadas cómodamente.

---


31 “Conciertos,” in *Anuario de la Academia Nacional de Música, Año VII* (Bogotá: Imprenta La Luz, 1894). P. 10

To make the petition more appealing, Price offered to make the concert hall available for dances and conferences and proposed a possible location that the provincial government would be able to facilitate in exchange for a share of the profits. In many of his speeches and petitions to the government in his post as director of the Academy, Price was emphatic in stating that all he and his staff did was for the advancement of the Academy in the realm of true art, and his petitions for a concert hall were no exception. It is possible that Price’s insistence was justified by the lack of concert life independent from private interests, those being the interests of families that fostered concerts as part of their social life and as a display of power. Perhaps if there were an independent concert hall, sponsored by the government, in which professional musicians (alumni of the Academy) could show their skills, Colombian composers would be stimulated to produce new works and instrumentalists would have a chance to improve their performance skills. The close relationships that many art musicians had with wealthy and powerful families resulted, when it came to concert performances, in a grey area that made it difficult to differentiate the well-trained amateur from the professional artist; the concert venue implied a specific area of performance which the professional musician could monopolize, and it also implied a different source of employment for musicians that could be related to the promotion of new music works, publication of music and teaching. The absence of an independent concert venue implied the absence of defined borders between amateurs and professionals, and it was one of the elements that prevented the formation of an independent and much more mobile music market.

The lack of a specific concert venue was partially solved by the emergence of new social spaces in Colombian cities during the last decades of the nineteenth century: hotels, restaurants and clubs. These new venues were advertised by their founders as places fit for concerts, since the Theatre was often unavailable because of the opera, theatre or zarzuela season; sometimes a concert was the best publicity to attract customers to the new venue:

CONCIERTO – Mañana se inaugurará, con uno magnifico, el nuevo salón de billar de El Casino. Tocaran los señores Salazar, Posada, Uribe, y cantaran los más aplaudidos artistas de la ciudad. El programa es variadísimo y escogido con el mayor esmero, y fuera de los goces musicales, hallará la concurrencia los que de costumbre ofrece El Casino a sus visitantes.

The social exclusivity that had been the feature of concerts was reinforced by the upfront social exclusivity of the club. These spaces guaranteed the homogeneity of their members and provided a space for highly differentiated forms of entertainment; to the middle class and elite societies of the time, the concert was one of those amusements associated with the etiquette requirements that only those of

---

33 See Weber, Music and the Middle Class. The social structure of concert life in London, Paris and Vienna.
34 "Mesa Revuelta: Concierto," El Espectador, No. 44, February 24 1888. Billiards arrived in Colombia as an elite sport, therefore they were offered by establishments such as clubs or restaurants – the latter being as selective as clubs.
high rank and proper education could display. That is why the usual vocabulary employed by journalists to review these events — elegance, refined taste, _buen tono_ — confirmed the system of distinction that joined the concert to the club:

> El Jockey Club obsequió anoche a sus miembros con un magnifico concierto al que concurrió un lucido grupo de señoritas y señoritas, algunas de las cuales tuvieron la fineza de amenizar la reunión cantando trozos escogidos que arrancaron prolongados y bien merecidos aplausos de la concurrencia. Reinó allí la cordialidad y el buen tono y a una hora avanzada de la noche se retiraron los concurrentes; complacidos, y deseosos de que el Jockey-Club continúe dando esta clase de fiestas que tan necesarias son en nuestra sociedad.

The Jockey Club was founded in 1874 and became one of the favourite places of the capital’s elite. In the cited review we can see how their concerts shared the characteristics of elite sociability as they had been promoted in the second half of the nineteenth century in Santafé de Bogotá: music, display of feminine talent in a familiar environment, and etiquette, plus the safety of a closed space where entrance depended on social rank. Concerts performed in spaces like clubs marked out the social and cultural capital of the segment of the population that participated in them and, at the same time, exercised all the barriers of social distinction that Colombian elites felt were necessary to reaffirm their social, political, economic and moral ascendance.

**Repertoire**

Data about the repertoire played in concerts comes from concert reviews and concert programmes from Medellín and Bogotá. Continuous data are provided by the repertoire of the National Academy of Music, followed by the programmes of _retretas_ in the aforementioned cities and, finally, reports about concerts performed in theatres, private homes and educational institutions.

The National Academy of Music started in 1882 and in 1887 opened a ladies' section. From this time until it was closed in 1899 due to the War of a Thousand Days, concerts were a regular activity in this institution, and therefore there was always the need for new musical pieces which combined pedagogical requirements of the curriculum with the musical taste of the time. The repertoire played by the students of the Academy shows that during its first decade most of the musical pieces came from the world of opera, either as excerpts or as adaptations for chamber ensembles, while other chamber and symphonic music was scarcely played. The other type of music that was frequently played was dancing music, such as waltzes, polkas and marches, usually performed by the orchestra or in adaptations for vocal soloist and piano or piano for four hands. There was also a tendency to repeat the same piece in consecutive

---

35 Monje, “Cafés y clubes: espacios de transitoria intimidad.”
36 It is difficult to translate this expression. Literally, it means “fashion” but its meaning relates both to the set of manners that elites promoted as essential to social life and to the good atmosphere that those manners enabled.
37 “Concierto,” _El Zipa_, No. 4, August 15 1878.
concerts and to elaborate programs with eleven or twelve performances of mixed genres divided in two sessions. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Academy maintained the length of the concert programs, but we can observe a certain division of the repertoire between the female and the masculine sections of the Academy: while women learned to perform vocal music, some chamber works and to play the piano, men learned to perform instrumental pieces and therefore their repertoire included more works for chamber ensembles and orchestra.\(^{38}\) It is important to mention two details about this repertoire: firstly, Colombian composers Santos Cifuentes, Julio Quevedo, José Manuel Ponce de León and Teresa Tanco de Herrera were part of the repertoire; and secondly, although the fashion of the time was to mix musical works with poetry set with music composed for it,\(^ {39}\) this kind of work only appears in the program of one concert by the Academy in 1892. The repertoire performed at retretas and by philharmonic societies was somewhat similar to that of the concerts with the Academy: an abundance of opera and operetta excerpts and adaptations, dancing pieces (waltzes, quadrilles, polkas), some military-inspired works (marches, piezas de desfile, paso redoblado) and pasillos were the staple musical diet of the attendees to these events, while symphonies ─ or excerpts of symphonies ─ were performed a couple of times.

The frequency of opera and vocal pieces indicates that the Academy’s audiences preferred them. This preference could be based on familiarity and popularity of the opera excerpts and specifically of their composers: Verdi, Bellini, Rossini and Donizetti were the most popular opera composers and their works were promoted by the opera companies that toured Colombia during the nineteenth century. The other genre preferred by Colombian audiences was dancing music (including the Colombian pasillo and bambuco), which supports the idea of close familiarity with this format, which combined melodies with rhythmic patterns that were easy to follow and remember. Therefore this repertoire had a good reception — according to concert reviews — among the Colombian public. However, music critics like José Caicedo y Rojas complained about the low quality of the musical arrangements of operas that were performed\(^ {40}\) at retretas and his complaint was more forceful when it came to judging the musical taste of his contemporaries: of women’s taste, he denounced the superficiality of many aficionadas who applauded any musical piece “[…] sin saber lo que aplauden […]”,\(^ {41}\) since they only learned to enjoy opera excerpts and drawing-room music. As for the men, Caicedo did not spare them:

¿Y qué diremos de nuestros apuestos jóvenes, tan gallardos y dotados de bellas disposiciones para todo, pero tan perezosos y tan frívolos? La mayor parte de ellos ─ perdónennos sus mercedes ─ extraños a las artes de recreo y a los inocentes goces de la culta sociedad, se diría que no conciben como en

\(^{38}\) Although women’s orchestras and ensembles were fairly known in Europe, the United States and Chile during this time, I have not found in the archives reviews or articles about performances by groups of women in Colombia.


\(^{40}\) Rojas, “Estado actual de la música en Bogotá.”

\(^{41}\) Ibid.
This suggests that for a segment of music aficionados and critics, there was a combination of ignorance, laziness and fashion in the extended promotion of a type of art music that, to them, did not require the development of "higher" listening skills that implied introspection and meditation. The laziness of these audiences drove them to the familiarity of the same genres time after time, and resulted in inappropriate displays and appraisals of music that they did not understand, thus annoying the ‘cultivated sensibility’ of those who, because of their training in the art of appreciating music, "knew" how to enjoy some musical works, and therefore, were an elite within the elite.

**Music for a “noble purpose” and feminine talent**

The modern concert could also be legitimized through its association to the collective wellbeing: from the tempering of habits (*suavización de las costumbres*), which implied the educative process of learning new habits that would enable an individual to live in a urban society, to its direct relationship with charity, understood not only as a religious virtue but as a civic duty. Data indicates that charity concerts became more frequent in Santafé de Bogotá and Medellín from the 1880s and that they were oriented towards raising funds for hospitals, churches and relief of the poor. The charity concert shared many of the characteristics of the private concerts and *tertulias*: it confirmed the social hegemony of the prominent families that sponsored it and it showed the political influence of the urban elites. It is not surprising then to see the repetition of family names from the years of the Philharmonic Society (1850s) to the concerts of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society (1880s); many of these families were joined through marriage and their members displayed specific roles in elite society, either as part of the government or as sponsors of cultural endeavors.

Charity concerts allowed elite women to appear as central figures of social and cultural life, for they directed organizations that promoted concerts and also appeared as performers. These events also open a window into the constructions of femininity of the time, since reviews praised the moral qualities of the ladies involved in charity concerts. If the presence of women was applauded and demanded at concerts given by the Philharmonic Society, at *retretas* and at the opera, journalists of the time lauded the activity deployed by women to carry out these events:

---

42 Ibid., 92
43 Eugenio Pereira Salas, *Historia de la música en Chile (1850 - 1900)* (Santiago: Universidad de Chile, 1957).
44 Desiree Agostini, "Las mujeres en la música del siglo XIX venezolano," *Revista de la Sociedad Venezolana de Musicología* (2003); Salas, *Historia de la música en Chile (1850 - 1900)*.
Encargada, por la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paul, una de nuestras más dignas matronas, la señora Hortensia Lacroix de Suárez Fortoul, de organizar i dirigir el bazar actual para el socorro de los pobres, tuvo ella la feliz idea de fomentar un gran concierto que fuese a la vez recreación para la mejor parte del vecindario i fuente de recursos para subvenciones a los gastos piadosos de aquella institución. Madre de una estensa familia en la que se cuentan señoritas tan agraciadas por los dones de la naturaleza como por los adornos de la educación i relacionada ventajosamente para serle fácil poner a contribución todo lo que hay en nuestra capital de meritorio así desde el punto de vista artístico como bajo otros aspectos, el concierto tenía que ser, como en realidad ha sido, un espectáculo primoroso.45

This review shows an image of femininity defined by lineage, motherhood, talent, education and social relations. Women like Hortensia Lacroix de Suárez Fortoul and the other performers were the embodiment of femininity as the product of a system of kinship that gave women their identity through socially approved relationships with men of the elite. This social persona was the protagonist in the charity concert, for this was the moment when these systems of relationships were at work in an atmosphere that was welcoming, albeit controlling. In this context, feminine talent reinforced a patriarchal construction of femininity that sustained the notion of womanhood as the set of qualities that allowed women to display their function as enablers of social relationships that boosted social structure. These displays of feminine talent confirmed the notion of women’s intellect as an exercise that did not question patriarchal order. As Lucy Green explains:

[…] the image of the paid female singer who puts body and voice on public display has inevitably been associated in practically all known societies with that of the sexual temptress or prostitute. Although not engaged in a fully intentional act of display, the singing woman in a public arena is dangerously, and tantalisingly, close to doing so. For this reason she is a threat and, as such, is open to abuse. […] this very association with public sexual availability is opposed to an alternative face of woman which has always been present as the corollary of availability: the image of the mother privately singing to her baby […]46

The cited review confirms Green’s argument: Hortensia Lacroix de Suárez Fortoul, as a mother, and as wife in an elite family, exercised her share of social leadership through public displays of her talents as an organiser and as an amateur musician. Through this link, both talents did not contradict each other but worked in an implicit hierarchy: her musical talent was at the service of her organization of charity. However, the depiction of her daughters as young ladies with natural attributes (physical, perhaps?) can

45 "Hechos Diversos: Gran Concierto," Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2997, November 22 1881.
render a problematic reading. The vocabulary used by journalists (assuming that they were all men) who reviewed these concerts, had all the conventions of the romantic canon when depicting the talent and the beauty of the performers and add to the problem of relating social constructions of feminine beauty and feminine talent:

¿Cómo pintar a la nerviosa, elegante, vaporosa i dulcísima Paulina Suarez con aquella manera de cantar i de sentir? ¿Qué pincel puede delinear a María del Río, i a Ema Gutiérrez Uricoechea, cuando se ve aquella juventud lozana, aquellos ojos chispeantes i se las oye cantar? ¿Dónde encontrar el lienzo o el buril para volver a ver en toda su belleza a María de Jesús Arias, i Ana de Brigard ejecutando la parte que les tocó en el concierto?47

Etiquette manuals and textbooks of the time for women’s education did not say much about the links between talent, morals and physical beauty. I think that the silence about feminine physical beauty was in inverse correlation to the emphasis on talent and morals. Colombian nineteenth century authors of books on women’s education insisted on the promotion of virtues that characterized women as civilizing agents and therefore they warned their female readers against values that were opposite to this effect; conservative thinker Rufino José Cuervo denounced in 1848 that

Observamos con sentimiento profundo que el bello sexo entre nosotros está desgraciadamente afectado de una superficialidad tan dañina que no puede menos de retardar grandemente los progresos de la cultura l de la moralidad en nuestro incipiente país.48

In the 1890s, Soledad Acosta de Samper (intellectual and writer in her own right and wife of Liberal politician José María Samper) echoed Cuervo’s ideas emphasizing the importance of women’s moral education, since women had the duty of civilizing society. Bearing this in mind, it is possible to understand how the reviewer’s expressions on women’s physical attributes were not at odds with his praise of their musical skill, but highlighted each other by equating physical beauty to spiritual beauty – manifested through musical talent. In that sense, the admiration that these women obtained through their performance did not lessen their social prestige but confirmed it.

It can be inferred that single women who performed at charity concerts saw an increase of their "stock" in the "marriage market", since these concerts were also social events in which possible marriage alliances could be agreed; this was another feature that charity concerts shared with private concerts and it formed

47 “La corona de los pobres,” *Diario de Cundinamarca*, No. 3487, September 9 1884.
part of the expectations that the bourgeois and elite had for these musical events.49 The fact that women of the elite were able to make a public display of their talent during this time has led some authors to the conclusion that this was an emancipatory dynamic for women. Given the context in which happened, in which middle class and elite women had a strict code of behaviour that restricted their activities to the interior of the home, the charity concert opened the doors – literally and metaphorically – to women and gave them a public role that did not challenge the social construction of femininity.

![Figure 17: Teresa Tanco Cordovez (1859 - 1946)](image)

She was one of the talented ladies who promoted charity concerts, since her social position (descendent of a prominent family from Santafé de Bogotá) qualified her to assume that social role. Charity concerts were the perfect showcase for her talents as a pianist and as a composer. She studied in Paris and performed at the Salle Pleyel.50

**Opera**

_¿Qué cosa mejor puede hacerse en todo tiempo, pero particularmente en estos lluviosos i fríos meses para la recreación del espíritu, que concurrir al teatro a presenciar esta espléndida muestra del poder del entendimiento humano que se llama una ópera?_51

According to Marina Lamus Obregón, the cultural and political leaders in Santafé de Bogotá had been curious about opera since the 1820s. This was manifested not only in discussions about the possibility to mount an opera production in Colombia, but also in debates about its utility:

50 Picture taken from Bermúdez and Duque, *Historia de la Música en Santafé y Bogotá 1538-1938.*
51 “Hechos Diversos: La Opera,” *Diario de Cundinamarca,* No. 2770, October 13 1880.
Era la expresión más completa y bella: drama y música juntas. Palabra y música, dos poderosos instrumentos unidos para darle goce spiritual al hombre, para hacerlo mejor. […] En contraposición a lo anterior se encontraba quien la veía como el lujo de las artes, lo cual quería decir lo “superfluo”, divertía sin enseñar, sin corregir, por lo cual los países pobres no podían pagarla.  

Curiosity about opera formed and was stimulated by those who had access to it. The first nexus suggested by archival sources is the performance of operatic excerpts in concerts. Since 1848 Colombian musicians were acquainted with the most famous operatic productions from Italy and Germany; reviews and advertisements of concerts given by the Philharmonic Society and by Nicolás Quevedo Rachadell show that opera was part of the staple diet of aficionados: arias, duos, cavatinas and overtures by von Weber, Rossini, Bellini, Mozart, Mercadante and Verdi were part of the usual repertoire. Following the custom of the time, these vocal performances shared the stage with instrumental chamber music and with adaptations of orchestral works.

The Bazzani Company arrived in Barranquilla after performing in Lima (Peru), one of the most important opera venues in South America. The manager of the Coliseo ─ the major theatre at the time in Santafé de Bogotá ─ was the intellectual, journalist, pedagogue and Liberal politician Lorenzo María Lleras; he signed the Bazzani Company for the season of 1858 to 1859. The arrival to Colombia of the first Italian opera company in 1858 must have been the trigger for the publication of articles that invited the public to go to the opera. The literary magazine El Mosaico published one in January 1859 written by another journalist and opera enthusiast, José María Vergara y Vergara, in which he assumed the identity of a cultured man that lived outside of the capital and whose curiosity about the opera is piqued during a conversation with one of his neighbours, whom he meets on the road to the market of Facatativá:

“El nuestro canto era más mejor…”

“Ramplan, carramplan!”

52 Marina Lamus Obregón, Teatro siglo XIX. Compañías nacionales y viajeras, Páginas de Teatro Colombiano (Medellín: Tragaluz, 2010). 28

53 “Programa acordado por la Sociedad Filantrópica para las fiestas que tendrán lugar en los días 20, 21 i 22, 23, 24, 25 i 26 del presente mes, en celebracion del aniversario de la Independencia..” “Los cuartetos del señor Quevedo.”

54 Opera companies that arrived to Colombia took several years to give a tour. Sometimes the opera company did not manage to close the tour they had planned, for the costs of transport were high and the profits could be low. If an opera company arrived in the capital through Cartagena de Indias, the trip could take a month and the season lasted almost six months; if there were any troubles with the theatre, local musicians or civil wars, the Company stayed in the city for a year. That is the reason why many foreign Italian musicians settled in Colombia: many of them found work, friendships and love in those long tours.

55 Lorenzo María Lleras (Santafé de Bogotá 1811 – 1868) had an active career working as a writer and editor of several newspapers and magazines. As a pedagogue, he was the director of the prestigious Colegio del Espíritu Santo in Santafé de Bogotá, hailed for its liberal curriculum oriented towards the teaching of “practical” and “modern” subjects. He studied in the United States and was also the founder of one of the most prominent families in modern Colombia.
- Qué es eso, vecino?
- La ópera. [...] vaya pronto. No se muera sin ver eso.
- Con que estamos, eh? – Por supuesto, va el domingo.
- No, lo que le digo es que si ya estamos convenidos en el precio de los novillos.
- Ah! Por lo que es eso, sí. [...] Pero dígame, cómo se dice mejor en italiano?
- Migliori o miglio, según necesite U. de un adjetivo o de un adverbio. Para qué quiere saber eso?
- Para decir en italiano: “el nuestro canto era mas mejor.”
- I eso de “mas mejor” qué es?
- Un verso de la Hija del Regimiento.56

The tone of praise is evident, but the context in which Vergara places his story is quite peculiar: an encounter with his neighbour, on horseback, on their way to a provincial market, where the usual conversations about the price of cattle and other agricultural matters await. This contrast between the simple and practical life in provincias is heightened by the two scenarios that Vergara portrays in his story to explain how powerful opera can be: the final emotional scenario of his sensibility, moved by the opera and the material scenario of the opera theatre, no less full of powerful impressions:

Las tres hileras de palcos llenos de mujeres bellas i lujosas; el patio casi lleno de hombres, el escenario con su gran telon, i sus retratos, de autores afuera de él, la abundante luz de las lámparas el ruido sordo de las conversaciones risueñas, festivas i galantes i de los saludos de las personas que se iban viendo; todo esto me tenía enajenado. […]57

Vergara shows in his story that opera was a powerful albeit complex spectacle, for it was not just about the power of music, poetry and drama joined, but also about the social gathering that could be just as entertaining and impressive — if not more so — than the drama on stage. But we must not forget another scenario: the capital city, Santafé de Bogotá, where the theatre is and where the opera takes place. Although Vergara’s alter ego had been to the city, he says that he had been able to avoid the temptation to go to the theatre until the strength of his curiosity takes him to the opera.

The link between urban life and opera is quite complex. Opera theatres became spaces of intense social interaction in the eighteenth century, when progressive lack of support for opera theatres from the

56 José María Vergara y Vergara, "La Opera," El Mosaico, No. 3, January 8 1859.
57 Ibid.
aristocracy made it possible for bourgeois audiences to participate actively as sponsors. This process led to the diversification of opera audiences that in turn, transformed the opera theatre into a space in which social distinctions were reformulated. Through this process the urban social scene gained a new space and opera seasons became a dynamic that enhanced the construction of urban cultural authority, for they convened not only opera aficionados, but other types of public that refashioned the links between opera and the ostentation of power, as explained by William Weber:

Operas leads us into this subject with particular vividness, displaying the new kind of cosmopolitanism that arose in relationship to the new order of regional patriotism – statist nationalism – that was beginning to appear at that time. Aggressive promotion of the state evolved together with aggressive assertion of elite cosmopolitanism. Central to all this was the assumption of high authority for the small world of the rich and powerful cosmopolitan world usually referred to as the beau monde […]

Weber takes as an example of this process the edition of a German magazine in the eighteenth century titled Paris und London, which published news, chronicles and gossip about the fashions and social life in these two cities; one of the most important subjects in this magazine was opera, not so much as a musical work but as a social event. In 1859 the Santafé de Bogotá magazine El Mosaico published a long article called “Revista de París” in which the correspondent shared with readers the current events in this European city and the functions at the Opera Comique, similar to the magazine cited by Weber. Other opera news in the report included: what kind of works were staged, their quality, the reception that they had, the preparations for the winter season and news about the prominent singers who would perform. In his account, the author of the “Revista …” deplored the light and comic quality of the operettas and acknowledged the almost immediate success of some of their excerpts among pianists. Almost ten years later, the magazine El Hogar published a similar article with the title “Revista Europea”, but this time the correspondent chose to focus on the Italian Opera of London. The article ended with the following judgment: “[…] Asi se notará que la música de contrastes y la que habla a los sentidos es la preferida, mientras que Mozart, Rossini y el incomparable Gluck, se ven relegados a los últimos puestos.” The author also shared some news about the soprano Adelina Patti (1843–1919), also passing judgment on her character: since Adelina Patti belonged to her generation, she preferred the splendid monetary earnings of her singing career to marriage.

59 “Revista de Paris,” El Mosaico, No. 43, October 29 1859.
60 “Revista Europea,” El Hogar - Periodico literario dedicado al bello sexo, No. 9, March 28 1868. It is very difficult to associate this comment on Patti’s behaviour to a general warning made to Colombian women at the time.
Colombian intellectuals thought that opera’s aesthetic power was the basis for its civilizing effect on its audience as well as its biggest contribution to the expansion of the urban way of life. One of the most passionate believers in the benefits of opera was the Colombian poet Rafael Pombo (1833–1912) who in 1874 wrote under the pseudonym Florencio about the deep links between the harmony of opera music and the harmony of politics:

Recomienda el ciudadano Presidente de la República al Congreso, en su mensaje histórico del año la Universidad Nacional, “Mirada con cariño y respeto porque corresponde con usura a aspiraciones de alto interés a saber: estrechar la unión, afirmar la integridad nacional y levantar el nivel intelectual de nuestros conciudadanos.” La opera merece idénticas recomendaciones pues los que a ella se aficionen no creerán jamás en capital sin opera, ni podran tenerle mayor cariño y respeto; antes bien, suspirarán por venir a este centro común a solazarse con ella. El nivel moral e intelectual subirá necesariamente en los que tal requieran, al suave influjo de un arte que aun a las fieras doméstica […]

Pombo argued that the lessons in unity and concord learned in opera could serve as an antidote for the marked regional rivalries that surfaced in political debates held at Congress — and that characterised the frequent civil wars. Opera could summon people from all the regions of the country to the capital city; thus, Pombo said, Colombians would be able to break regional isolation and find out that they had a lot in common. In this way, Colombians and foreigners could understand that Santafé de Bogotá was not a foreign entity ruling arrogantly over a vast yet estranged country, but that it was the sum of all the diversity that composed Colombia.

The two articles cited at the beginning of this section suggest that both correspondents knew that there were people in Colombia interested in the musical and social life of European capitals that were seen by many Colombians as the centres of modern culture. The lists of opera presentations and the anecdotes of famous opera singers satisfied the curiosity of those who linked opera to modernity and progress, so the readers targeted by these magazines were identified as people with education and sensibility for foreign culture and fashions. Another characteristic shared by both magazines is that they were aimed at women who belonged to the middle and high classes of urban society. In his article, Rafael Pombo argued that the political lessons learned through opera represented the path to national unity and to intellectual betterment. To prove his case, he posed the example of a man who attends the opera and then, returning home, tells his family about what he saw and heard and how this account causes curiosity among his wife and children, who ask for a trip to Bogotá to go to the opera. If opera brought people to the capital, it would contribute to create unity through topocentrism: the capital would be a general reference for all Colombians, for they would identify with what happens there. Journalists, intellectuals, opera aficionados

(men and women) and cultural pioneers saw a link between opera, the progress of urban life, education and national unity.

The emerging Colombian urban bourgeoisie expected to have opera as an entertainment; this new notion was a product of the progressive secularization of Colombian urban society and implied the implementation of new ideas about proper social activity, comfort and consumption. Germán Mejía Pavony relates to the Swiss educator Ernst Röthlisberger, who lived in Santafé de Bogotá, from the 1880s when he depicted the social group that led the display of these ideas:

La crítica de la ciudad colonial se alimentó de los gustos, deseos y pretensiones de un grupo de personas [...] compuesto por la aristocracia del dinero, por los altos funcionarios del Gobierno, por quienes cultivaban las llamadas “profesiones liberales” y, no menos importantes, por los ricos de provincia que migraban a la capital con el fin de pasar en forma tranquila el resto de sus días y dar a sus hijos una mejor educación. Estos sectores [...] se caracterizaban por el lujo con que adornaban sus casas y el derroche con el que manifestaban su posición social; advierte igualmente el educador suizo que en la ciudad los “cachacos” estaban siendo remplazados por los “pepitos”, jóvenes fatuos y de capital, que sólo encontraban diversión en la moda y en el lujo.62

The “better education” that many intellectuals and politicians promoted in the mid-nineteenth century was an education that contributed to lay the foundations of a deep cultural reformation in Colombia. According to politicians José Eusebio Caro and the brothers Miguel and José María Samper, this cultural reformation had to be aimed to erase the bad traces (if not all traces) of the culture inherited from Spain over four hundred years of colonial rule,63 thus enabling Colombians to build a stable political order. When Röthlisberger tells us that this education was also promoted by government officials and other professionals, we see how there was a hierarchy in Colombian society at that time based on accessibility to education: a better education implied the possibility of social mobility (upwards) and it also implied the ‘right’ and the ‘duty’ to display behaviours and consumption habits that were associated with higher social classes, such as opera. However, Röthlisberger also says that there some who had access to urban education that failed to display a cultivated sensibility: the “jóvenes fatuos” (young fools), who only found amusement in luxuries and fashion, perhaps displaying a superficial behaviour that was a symptom of a fragile morality.

**The price of arias**
The earliest source that I found dates from 1866: an advertisement published in the bogotano newspaper *El Nacional* on 21 November offered 16 opera functions by the Cavaletti Company (also known as Del

---

62 Pavony, "En busca de la intimidad (Bogotá, 1880 – 1910)." 22
63 Uribe, *El pensamiento colombiano en el siglo XIX.*
Diestro Company) for the season of 1867–1868; the theatre manager specified the prices per subscription and per function and insisted that they should be paid in advance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscribers</th>
<th>One function</th>
<th>Sixteen functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boxes first row</td>
<td>$3.20</td>
<td>$51.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxes second row</td>
<td>$4.80</td>
<td>$76.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxes third row</td>
<td>$3.20</td>
<td>$51.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asientos de parque</td>
<td>$0.60</td>
<td>$9.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunettes</td>
<td>$0.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For those who were not subscribed to the theatre, the prices of the boxes per function went from $4.00 to $6.00 and lunettes, park seats and general seats cost from $0.20 to $0.80. If we compare these prices to the price index given by Miguel Urrutia on potatoes (a basic foodstuff) we find that in 1866, 1 @ (14 kg or 32 pounds) of potatoes could be worth $1.50, thus making the price of the theatre boxes for the whole season a moderate investment; if the buyer only wished to purchase one night in a theatre box, the choice between potatoes and opera might have become a bigger debate. If the buyer could only afford a ticket to the seats, then the choice between potatoes and opera would have gone in favour of potatoes. This suggests that opera tickets could be afforded by those that did not have to ‘choose’ between one thing or the other, while those that bought the ticket ignoring the debate in which their financial circumstances put them, would have been labelled by Röthlisberger as “young fools”.

The other two articles about prices of opera tickets date from 1880, fourteen years later. Their anonymous author complains in the first one, published in the Diario de Cundinamarca, that the low audience number is due to the high prices and that the opera company (the De Sanctis Company) should take notice that “[...] moderando un poco el precio, el consumo será mayor”; therefore, the season would be more profitable for the company. In the next edition of the Diario, the correspondent reports that the De Sanctis Company took notice and lowered the prices of tickets, which made it easier to all

---

64 Obregón, Teatro siglo XIX. Compañías nacionales y viajeras. This company had a ruinous season in Santa Fe de Bogotá
65 "Opera Italiana," El Nacional, No. 61, November 21 1866.
66 Urrutia, "Precios y salarios urbanos en el siglo XIX."
67 "Opera italiana," Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2761, September 28 1880. The italics are in the original source. The De Sanctis Company did not have a very profitable season in Sántafe de Bogotá due to the low audience and the lack of financial support from the Government. To help their finances, the artists of the company resorted to teaching music and to getting involved with the concert programmes promoted by the urban elite, gaining in this way both money and friendships. See Obregón, Teatro siglo XIX. Compañías nacionales y viajeras.
aficionados to go. The last source of data about ticket prices takes us away from opera and into zarzuela, one of the Colombian favourites: the magazine Genero Chico, published by the company Zimmermann-Ughetti in 1899 advertised the prices of the seats for the next function. Although this evidence is scarce, it allows us to confirm the notion of opera as a luxury that a determined social group could afford. To this data we can add the costs of signing the companies and bringing them to Colombia; Colombian theatre managers started this effort in the 1850s and since some of those singers became permanent residents in the country, they joined forces to bring opera companies from Italy. However, as discussed before, Colombia was not an attractive venue, not only because of its remoteness, but because of the lack of government support for such endeavours since, in line with their creed, Colombian liberal governments of the Olimpo Radical thought that to be a true manifestation of modernity, Colombian theatre and Colombian opera should be self-financed. However, opera in the nineteenth century was a complex capitalist enterprise that involved artistic, political and economic links between Latin American countries and European opera artists looking for venues in which work. Colombian political instability also impacted on the economy, causing extended penury, stagnation of incomes and concentration of property, which translated into a poor economic dynamic that did not guarantee opera a bigger audience.

The high costs of opera prompted urban intellectuals to write into newspapers and magazines demanding a better environment: theatres had to be upgraded, local musicians and choruses (usually made up with local aficionados) also had to be better, and the set decorations had to be improved. Many opera lovers agreed with Rafael Pombo:

> En decoraciones, trajes de coros, &c., no nos fijamos, por que lo mejor que aquí se nos presente, tiene que ser mezquino en comparación con lo que se ve en otros teatros y cualquier gasto hecho para los ojos con reducción de gastos necesarios para los oídos significa un sacrificio de lo esencial a lo accesorio.

---

68 “Hechos Diversos: La Opera.” This could also imply that if the company made good profits out of the season, they would be tempted to come back.


70 The political turmoil that followed the Revolutions of 1848 drove many operatic companies to look for sources of employment outside of Europe. Also, the changes in opera promotion and operatic taste of European audiences forced many small itinerant Italian opera companies to cross the Atlantic. See John Rosselli, “The opera business and the Italian inmigrant community in Latin America 1820 - 1930: The example of Buenos Aires,” Past & Present, no. 127 (1990). Verónica Zárate Toscano and Serge Gruzinski, “Ópera, imaginación y sociedad. México y Brasil, siglo XIX. Historias conectadas: Ildegonda de Melesio Morales e Il Guarany de Carlos Gomes,” Historia Mexicana 58, no. 2 (2008).

71 Sources do not refer to the local costs of staging an opera, that is, the hiring of local musicians and the percentage that theatre managers received for the season. It seems that “high costs” referred to the costs of the trip for the company and everything related to it.

72 Rafael Pombo, “Bellas Artes: Cuarta Opera - Atila,” La América, No. 156, January 1 1874.
These difficulties turned every performance into a memorable event commented on in newspapers and magazines. The arrival of opera companies was announced and eagerly awaited and the behaviour of the audience was described, detailing either the elegancia and buen gusto or the lack of manners of many members of the audience that were not acquainted with the rules of behaviour in the theatre, like some Bogotá gentlemen who were reprimanded in 1864 in the pages of the magazine El Mosaico for smoking inside the theatre. But the scarcity of opera must have been a problem for the foreigners that settled in Colombia and hoped to replicate part of the urban life they had left in Europe; a manifestation of this desire is reflected in the legal process of division of common property requested in 1875 by the Malo O’Leary family, one of the most prominent bogotano families. In this petition, the Malo O’Leary heirs presented an inventory with the most valuable possessions of the legacy and among them, there is the box seat number two in the central row of the theatre. The ownership of a theatre box seat was a sign of high status and reminds us that opera was a social occasion, an opportunity to see and to be seen.

The difficulty posed by the costs of the opera is but one of the factors that made it a luxury for Colombian society in the second half of the nineteenth century. The social distinction that was manifested in the act of paying for the ticket was the preamble to the social distinction that took place inside the opera theatre, where listening to opera was not such an innocent act.

“¡Viva la libertad de oído!” (¡Long live the free ear!)

This exclamation appeared in the review of an opera night published in the Medellín newspaper El Espectador in 1892, in which the correspondent reviewed the opera Il Barbieri di Siviglia mounted by the company Zenardo-Lambardi. The author of this review began his account by defending the taste of the listener who, though not very well versed in the intricacies of music, enjoyed opera with sensibility: “¿Fueron unisonos el sonido de la laringe de los cantantes, el de las cuerdas de los instrumentos y el palpitar de las fibras intimas del oyente? Pues esas notas son para él magníficas.” Right after this defence of untrained musical taste the author said:

---

73 “Teatro,” El Mosaico, No. 18, May 14 1864.
74 The O’Leary family descended from the marriage of General Daniel Florence O’Leary (1802–1854) and Soledad Soublette. O’Leary was aid-de-camp to General Simón Bolívar.
75 La familia Malo O’Leary solicita la división de unos bienes comunes, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Notarías, Notaría Primera(1875). I have no more data about ownership of theatre boxes by families. In his memoirs José Cordovez Moure tells how the desire of many fashionable young men to own a theatre box led many of them into debts, for many of them could not afford them. Unfortunately I cannot explain the terms of ownership or if the ownership of a box theatre included any rights to the purchase of tickets.
76 This Italian opera company arrived in 1891 to Colombia with the following itinerary: Barranquilla, Bogotá, Medellín, Cartagena de Indias. Among its members there was Augusto Azzali, one of the key figures of operatic history in Colombia. Obregón, Teatro siglo XIX. Compañías nacionales y viajeras.
77 “Teatro: El Barbero de Sevilla,” El Espectador, No. 150, January 15 1892.
No tan en absoluto, por supuesto, que vaya uno a tenerle mucho respeto al gusto de los que aplauden ese montón de canciones que diariamente componen nuestros paisanos, surgidas las mas de las veces con los versos mas ramplones y música insípida, extravagante o de inadecuada imitación.\textsuperscript{78}

This criticism of local musical taste and musical production is complemented towards the end of the review with a reprimand to the opera company: some of the scenes were not appropriate for the opera stage, for they were reminiscent of more popular amusements. As for the part of the audience that applauded them,

\begin{quote}
Esos aplausos vienen de la parte desautorizada del público, que es por lo mismo la mas bulliciosa: de los muchachos y de la turba mas atrasada. Lo grotesco aplébeya demasiado los espectáculos y cuando se llega a ese resultado, mejor es no asistir a ellos.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

Those recreations of popular scenarios were frequently staged by many opera companies in small theatres in Italy, where they were a traditional performance practice; when itinerant companies that performed in those theatres crossed the ocean to work in the Latin American opera circuit, they brought those practices with them.\textsuperscript{80} But the fact that there was a part of the audience that enjoyed these interpolations indicates that the opera audience was not at all homogeneous. There was then another distinction: those who had \textit{buen gusto} plus the finesse of scholarly musical education (perhaps even training) and were able to enjoy and discuss opera in aesthetic and technical terms; those who had \textit{buen gusto} and \textit{espiritu sensible} but no training in art music and thus, commented on their enjoyment of opera from their subjective impressions; and finally, those who, apparently, did not have \textit{buen gusto}, nor \textit{espiritu sensible}, nor training in art music, but could afford the ticket. This last group was depicted by other opera aficionados who often happened to write the opera review for a newspaper or magazine or wrote comical short stories about those who went to the opera without knowing how to behave in it. One of these stories, titled “Vamos a la opera”\textsuperscript{81} was published in the magazine \textit{El Mosaico} in 1858, 34 years before the review in \textit{El Espectador}; this shows that the “parte desautorizada del público” (unauthorized part of the audience) had been an element in opera since the 1850s. In the story published in \textit{El Mosaico}, the author described the curiosity that opera causes in an old widower and his three daughters in the rural area of Duitama. The main focus of the story lies in two moments: how important it was for this family to go properly

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.\textsuperscript{80} Rosselli, “The opera business and the Italian inmigrant community in Latin America 1820 - 1930: The example of Buenos Aires.” Another of these traditional performance practices was the adaptation of the roles in the opera to the singers available in the company.\textsuperscript{81} Juan Francisco Ortiz, “Vamos a la Opera”, \textit{El Mosaico}, No. 1, December 24 1858
\end{flushright}
dressed to the opera and the proper manners at the theatre. For the three young ladies crinolines were essential to look elegant.

Ortiz narrates this story as an anecdote and places himself in the role of “teacher”: he tells the family what to wear and then tells them that the elegant thing to do is to arrive at the theatre fashionably late and create a stir in the box seat in order to get the most attention from the rest of the audience. The portrait of this family, especially of the pater familias, is full of admiration for the simple mores of the countryside: they are described as living in a rustic house with simple furniture, twelve cows and six horses amidst the native flora of Duitama. This idyllic depiction renders a strong contrast with the noisy and backward crowd that ruined opera nights in the review of 1892, but even so, the family from Duitama and the crowd in a theatre in Medellín are not so far away from each other: they are the two sides of that part of the audience that consumes opera as a social requirement while ignorant of its artistic value.

The other two groups that listened to opera, enjoyed it and could identify its musical intricacies were an elite within the elite. To the distinction of paying for the ticket, they added the distinction of education and sensibility. These characteristics are important to understand how this group of people made opera a ritual to display their buen gusto by separating its social utility (to see and to be seen) from its musical qualities. The utility that these groups found in opera can be understood through the reviews of Rafael Pombo; as we saw in the review cited at the beginning, Pombo thought that opera contributed to the grandeur and importance of Santafé de Bogotá as the capital of the country and through this, turned the city into the ideal place of encounter for all citizens, while also providing a space where all people could learn to sympathize with their fellow citizen. As a reviewer of opera, Pombo showed knowledge of the Italian romantic school (Verdi, Bellini, Donizetti), which he shared in his articles with a dazzling vocabulary, and he also produced learned references of critics and anecdotes about the composers and operas; in his reviews published in the Santafé de Bogotá newspaper La América in 1874, he stressed the importance of paying attention to the beauty of the music and to its effect in the soul; for Pombo — and probably for other learned opera aficionados — the search for beauty in the music was the main purpose of going to the opera, for it had an uplifting effect in the listener. In his reviews, Pombo writes ironically about the people who go to the opera to socialize and do not pay attention to the music: “[…] habrían oído con las orejas, no con los oídos”. What was achieved by listening to the music attentively (“con los oídos”) was something intangible, but useful: happiness, which in this case was coterminous with beauty. Thus, the emotional and intellectual tools developed for attentive listening formed a subjectivity that was oriented to the search of good. Sensibility, sympathy and the desire to achieve what was good were attributes that citizens had to learn to cultivate through their taste for opera, according to Liberal leaders. If, as I argued in Chapter 2, music in schools was a tool to discipline mind and body, then opera should

be the opportunity to display what was learned in school and to take it to a deeper level in a public scenario in which etiquette — another powerful pedagogical tool — demanded unity in the expression of emotions.

Apart from some minor scandals (the dancers and their costumes shocked the good Christian ladies) Conservative intellectuals supported the arrival of opera companies to the country. It is possible that the fact that these companies were constituted by families — *prima donna* mama, *conductor* papa, *primo tenore* uncle, and so on — made them agreeable to the Conservative moral standards, since they did not challenge the family structure promoted by the Catholic Church. Sources suggest that Conservatives appreciated opera through its association with an idea of society hierarchically organized; for Conservative thinkers like Sergio Arboleda, this organization obeyed the inherent differences that identified each social group, differences which were product of God's order. Thus, opera was the product of a stable social system in which differences manifested through the talent of the artists and the capacity of audiences to appreciate it; for Arboleda and other conservative politicians, this system was centred on the moral tenets defended by the Catholic Church. I suggest that this attitude towards opera might have been reaffirmed in the late 1880s, when the Conservative party assumed key positions in powers due to the coalition with the Liberal party that supported Rafael Núñez and Miguel Antonio Caro to win the presidency and vice-presidency. As leader of the Conservative party, Caro promoted ideas that echoed Arboleda’s thought about society and democracy; these ideas complemented Caro’s notion that all works of art carried the seal of divine truth and beauty and that these markers had been taught to Colombians by the Catholic Church throughout history. At the end of the nineteenth century, the violinist and music critic Narciso Garay — son of the singer and painter Epifanio Garay — had similar ideas about music. In an article titled “Música Colombiana”, Garay argued that the music that should be learned and imitated by Colombian composers was the music of French academies, “[…] que es trasunto de la época de Luis XIV y que hasta nuestros días ha trascendido en las celosas manos de la nobleza”.

Conservatives and Liberals shared a taste for opera and promoted it as part of what was understood by Colombian thinkers of the time as "education": the set of instructions that formed moral sense and character. As I argued in Chapter 2, musical education in the school was aimed to model mind and body; it was about educating one’s instincts to prevent violence so civic collaboration could work. Opera was promoted as part of those educational activities that reinforced what was learned through scholarly music education. As we saw in Pombo’s appraisal of opera, this art form was understood as a social activity in which the individual could learn and practice skills that could make him or her a better citizen, more aware

---

85 Arboleda, *Las Letras, Las Ciencias y Las Bellas Artes*.
87 Garay, *Música Colombiana*.
88 “Algo sobre sociotecnia”, *La Miscelánea*, no. 4 and 5, (March – April 1906)
of his or her civic duties. In this way, opera contributed to national unity by working as a subtle, and at the same time powerful, tool to build national unity.

The fact that news about opera was published in magazines for women is another reminder of the importance of sensibility in this pedagogical discourse around opera, this time associated with the role of educators assigned to women at home during the nineteenth century: as mothers and wives, women could use their natural curiosity and sensibility to educate their families into the appreciation of this form of art. In the project of creating a new republic, women were included as keepers of home and family bonds via their 'instinctive predisposition' towards tenderness, gentleness and compassion, all qualities that were constituent of that sensibility that Liberal governments wanted to create. In addition to this, women were the most celebrated performers of opera, either as professional singers or as well trained amateurs; their skill as singers was praised as a manifestation of their refinement, good taste and sensibility.

"Vamos a la opera"?
Sources suggest that from a political perspective, there was no argument: opera was a sign of modernity, progress and social stability; therefore, it was worth promoting it and performing it. However, Marina Lamus Obregón shows in her work that intellectuals — music and theatre aficionados — discussed the fact that opera challenged the tradition of spoken theatre with its requirements and especially its performance in a foreign language. For the correspondent of the Revista de Colombia:

La opera es una diversión enteramente aristocrática; la opera es solo para las personas de esquisito gusto o de conocimiento en música, que puedan ir a deleitarse con las bellezas de Rossini o las armonias de Verdi; i estas personas forman un estrecho círculo en Bogotá.

Lamus Obregón explains that, to some intellectuals (and possibly, theatre entrepreneurs), the tradition of spoken theatre and its educational effects were about to be lost because of the arrival of opera, which also reinforced social discrimination with the requirements of foreign languages and familiarity with a type of music that was starting to be associated with a small group of santafereño society. The contradiction that some saw in opera activity in Colombia in the second half of the nineteenth century is explained by the operation of a double filter for its audience: not just the cost of bringing an opera company and of staging the work, but also having the necessary education to enjoy it and learn from it were marks of

89 Loaiza Cano, “El catolicismo confrontado: Las sociedades masons, protestantes y espiritistas.”
90 Revista de Colombia, No. 5 of May 27, 1869 cited by Lamus Obregón, Teatro en Colombia, 1831 1886. Práctica teatral y sociedad. (Santafé de Bogotá: Ariel, 1998). 65
91 Lamus Obregón, 63
belonging to the highest classes of Colombian society. For these elites, education in music and foreign languages was complemented with a trip to the United States or Europe, with the possibility to go to the major opera theatres; this exclusive education helped to establish a familiarity with opera and its symbolical value. But the group of opera lovers and artists had built, since the end of 1850s, a mechanism to try to include that part of the audience that could not understand Italian, French or German (the languages of opera): the translation of opera libretti and the explanation of the plots. This endeavour was carried out by journalists and writers like José María Vergara y Vergara, who translated into Spanish and then printed the libretti so the audience could understand what was happening on stage. Sources do not indicate if these translated libretti had an ample reception.

These efforts were an exercise in cultural divulgation: journalists and intellectuals like Pombo and Vergara hoped that this would facilitate the familiarization of the audience with opera as a form of art. Via translated libretti, new audiences could also learn to appreciate and to enjoy opera as more than another occasion for social activity and thus, a modern and cultivated audience could be constructed. But we can connect these translated libretti as a facet of an exercise in emulation: a cultivated and modern opera audience in Colombia could replicate the behaviour of cultivated, modern opera audiences in Europe and

Figure 18: First two pages of the libretto from La Fille du Regiment - La Hija del Rejimiento, opera by Gaetano Donizzetti, translated into Spanish by José María Vergara y Vergara in 1858.92

92 Photographs by Alejandra Isaza, Biblioteca Nacional, Centro de Documentación Musical.
the United States. Reviews and press articles that chronicled opera during the second half of the nineteenth century show that one of the manners that were replicated by Colombian opera audiences was the support for a specific opera diva. The fact that artists of opera companies sometimes sought an alternative source of income as singing teachers must have contributed to the formation of these ‘fan clubs’ among their students from the elites. The writers of reviews often praised the soprano of their choice: her talent, her sensibility and her beauty were hailed with superlatives; the male singers were also praised for their strength, aplomb, talent and power. All this admiration found a “natural” space at the opera during curtain calls, when bouquets were thrown to the diva and bravos were given to the tenors or baritones.93 Sometimes the emotion of the audience could get out of hand, as happened in Medellín in 1863: the voice of the soprano Assunta Mazzetti moved the heart of Colonel Joaquin Posada in such a way, that, in admiration, he threw at her his hat, his ruana and his purse until he was stopped by other gentlemen in the audience; then again, the use of bouquets for throwing at the opera singers was not known in Medellín at the time.94

During his second presidency (1884–1886), Rafael Núñez championed the idea of a national theatre; like many of his contemporaries, Núñez thought that the theatre had a civilizing effect on people through the implication of rules of urban etiquette that people had to learn if they wanted to be welcomed at the theatre.95 Although sources are not specific, official documents support the conclusion that this positive appraisal of theatre included opera and zarzuela. In 1885 President Núñez ordered the expropriation of the land belonging to the old Coliseo and Teatro Maldonado in order to build the National Theatre.96 Many Italian artists were hired by the government to turn this dream into a reality: the architect Pietro Cantini, the painter and set designer Antonio Facci, the painters Filipo Mastellari and Giovanni Mellarini, the prop technician Giorgio Toffaloni and the sculptors Luigi Ramelli and Cesare Sighinolfi. Another Italian was in charge of the music: Augusto Azzali (Rávena, 1863 – Atlantic City, 1907). Azzali arrived in Colombia in 1891 with the Italian opera company Zenardo-Lambardi and due to his musical talent and social graces he soon earned the admiration and trust of many opera aficionados who were close to the government. An official document that illustrates the inclusion of opera as one of the civilizing art forms is the contract signed by Azzali and the Minister of Development Juan De Brigard in 1894, in which Azzali committed to form an opera company and to mount an entire season with a specific repertoire and covering all the

---

93 Etiquette manuals advised on how the audience should demonstrate pleasure after the performance: the time that applause should take and when to applaud. As for bouquets, etiquette textbooks do not mention them, but perhaps this was learned via accounts of foreigners and Colombians who had experienced theatre abroad.


95 Lamus Obregón, Teatro en Colombia, 1831 – 1886. Práctica teatral y sociedad. Manuel Antonio Carreño, Manual de urbanidad y buenas maneras para el uso de la juventud de ambos sexos

96 In 1892, with the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America, the theatre was named Teatro Cristóbal Colón and it was opened in 1895 with the debut of the opera company led by Augusto Azzali which performed Verdi’s Hernani. Luz Stella Rey Córdoba, 100 Años del Teatro Cristóbal Colón 1892 – 1992, (Santafé de Bogotá: Teatro Colón, 1993)
requirements needed for the production; one of the clauses of the contract specified that “[...] hacer que se ejecute una Opera original sobre algún asunto patriótico que en todo caso indicará el Gobierno [...]”\(^{97}\). To attract bigger audiences, Azzali tried to lower the price of the tickets and also promoted the occupation of the orchestra section of the theatre by the ladies, since they would not be seen in this part of the theatre and therefore, they would not need to wear expensive dresses and jewellery that many thought were required to go to the theatre.

These efforts were aimed to make opera an inclusive art which all citizens could access. The real novelty was the direct participation of the government as sponsor; in this way the Colombian government placed themselves in line with other governments in Latin America who not only sponsored theatre and opera, but also exercised censorship over the works that were mounted.\(^{98}\) However, opera continued to be a glamorous event that marked social distinction through consumption; during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, it was common for retailers to advertise their merchandise using the title of a popular opera or to advise their customers to buy in their shops textiles, jewellery and accessories that were fashionable and elegant for a night at the opera.\(^{99}\)

In 1898 the project of national opera and of an integrated national audience that learned through it the goodness of political unity was discarded: the Cerruti case, which involved a diplomatic confrontation between Italy and Colombia, turned Santafé de Bogotá into an unwanted opera venue and the Italian opera companies that had been the providers of opera returned only after the War of a Thousand Days.\(^{100}\)

The backdrop of a growing social gap between subaltern groups and the elites in Colombia overshadowed the last decades of the nineteenth century. In a way, modernity and tradition coexisted in Bogotá as in many Latin American capital cities at the end of the nineteenth century; while the elites made display of their comfort built through profitable business — and confirmed by family ties with the old urban aristocracies — popular classes reproduced in an urban scenario much of the old material and

\(^{97}\) Ministerio de Fomento: Contrato numero 31 de 1894, celebrado con el señor Augusto Azzali para la organización de una Compañía de Opera Italiana que trabaje en el Teatro Cristóbal Colón. “, Diario Oficial, No. 9650 December 10 of 1894


\(^{99}\) “Avisos: ¡Para la opera!”, El Espectador, No. 159, March 26 1892

\(^{100}\) The Cerruti case was one of the biggest litigation cases that Colombia had to weather in international politics at the end of the nineteenth century. Cerruti had settled in the country during the Liberal governments and had made business with several prominent Liberal generals from the south of the country. When the Conservatives came into power (led by vicepresident Miguel Antonio Caro), he became the target of persecution and all his property was expropriated. Cerruti sued the Colombian government and the process lasted 13 years, involving the intervention of the King of Spain and the president of the United States as well as the presence of three Italian war ships outside of Cartagena de Indias. In the end, Colombia had to pay Cerruti for his lost property and cover his debts. The mismanagement of the case by the government added to the list of bitter complaints at the management of President Miguel Antonio Caro.
symbolical mores.\textsuperscript{101} This dynamic was part of the reception that opera had in Colombian urban society. The consumption of opera confirmed the permanence of a stratified society in spite of the desires for unity and democracy that politicians and intellectuals expressed when they promoted it. The paradox laid in sponsoring opera as an educational and inclusive art for the masses while, in a tacit way, the practice of going to the opera highlighted the differences that classified each member of the audience and that in turn excluded the large part of the population that could not go.

**Conclusions**

We can conclude from the first half of this chapter that Colombian cultural and political elites thought that, united in the enjoyment of opera, Colombians could see beyond their political differences and feel solidarity for each other. We can understand the promotion of this type of union through sensibility when we remember that political conflict turned into political instability and war was constant in the nineteenth century. This was seen by many politicians and intellectuals of the time as a big obstacle for the creation of a coherent and functional nation. For Liberal politicians specifically, this was something that the promotion of opera as another pedagogical tool could help to do, for it would help to develop sensibility as a crucial element of the horizontal solidarity that should be the common denominator of the nation; in this sense, sensibility worked as a medium towards the formation of this imagined community of Colombians\textsuperscript{102} in a way that also served to challenge the links with the colonial past that other political factions started to promote and that would be central to the reorientation of the country during the Regeneration in the 1880s. The way opera was received and supported by Colombian intellectual, economic and political elites, helped to turn it into a luxury performance not just because of its material requirements, but because of the aura of inaccessibility that was acquired through its association with an elite that was trying to demonstrate and legitimize their cultural and economic ascendance over the rest of the population.

The notion of public utility that Colombian political and cultural leaders elaborated during the second half of the nineteenth century contributed to the conception of the concert as a pedagogical tool, necessary and useful to the betterment of customs in a society that was frequently inclined towards civil war in order to find solution for political and economic problems. But this notion contributed to a paradox when confronted with the practices that constituted concert life, which in turn, were understood by the society that attended to them as the manifestation of civilization, progress, comfort and sensibility. The same can be said about opera, since, as a public spectacle, it was understood by its promoters as a tool that could enhance public education in the context of social encounter.

\textsuperscript{101} Romero, *Latinoamérica: las ciudades y las ideas* (Argentina: Siglo XXI, 2001)

The concert as space and as practice became a space where social conflict was expressed through aesthetics and social manners. Manners became ethical rules, as prescribed by Carreño and thus, they became a *sine qua non* to participate in public life. The skill that audiences had to learn through concerts was attentive listening, a skill that also formed part of political life within the role of citizenship. However, there is a subtle contradiction: sources suggest that this attentive listening was not promoted as something that led to critical thinking; its comparison to religious experience made it closer to a univocal learning process in which the skill of the ‘student’ was evaluated according his/her ability to assent in silence. The emphasis on the educational qualities of opera and concerts was not on the musical works, but on the individual and collective skills that their promoters thought were required to enjoy them and that, at the same time, they thought that could be useful in political practice. We see then how individual and collective education overlapped in the promotion and practice of these two musical activities.

The specific role of women in the promotion of concerts leads to the question of how feminine talent was valued in Colombian urban society during the second half of the nineteenth century. Feminine talent was legitimized through its dependence on activities that confirmed the dependent role of women in society. This legitimation circumscribed women’s talent (and their agency to display it) to highly defined spheres, therefore making invisible the talents that women of other social groups displayed outside the spheres of home and family. This constraint might have had a repercussion in the valuation of the musical taste women promoted.

At the same time, the association of femininity and the effects associated with music, confirmed the valuation that many calculated of the educational attributes of music; when music was promoted, supported and performed by women, there was a performative effect of the edifying values that audiences could gain and therefore, audiences came out of concerts as individuals better equipped to perform their political duties as citizens.
CHAPTER 6. THE PLEASURES OF MUSIC (II) THE PIANO AND SCORES

In this chapter I focus on two musical practices that contributed to redefine notions of comfort, domesticity and sensibility for urban elites in Colombia in the second half of the nineteenth century: the piano and musical scores. This process implied a change in consumption habits as the materialization of a new cosmopolitan sensibility which constituted a source of identity for Colombian literate urban elites. Through the insertion of the piano and scores as marks of domestic life, these elites launched a process of reconfiguration, creating new spaces and rituals where these two objects were displayed and manipulated. The reconfigured distinction worked not only in the relationship between elites and subalterns, but also within the elites through the application of categories to classify subjectivity and to present it as a social skill in a realm that, though inscribed as private, had a complex and close relationship with the public sphere in which many of these elites sought confirmation for their moral legitimacy and political power. This process took place in a society that was experiencing mobility and secularization that, albeit uneven, changed as well as strengthened forms of distinction. Economic inequality was one of the major characteristics in Colombian urban life and manifested through consumption of some objects as a privilege of class.103

The piano

Que hermoso, que elegante es mi piano!

[…] En mi piano se encierra algo más que la armonía:

El guarda silenciosamente las lágrimas de mi corazón,

El Tesoro más preciado que adorna mi salón,

Con lúgubre elegancia.104

The French physician and traveller Charles Saffray observed about the drawing rooms that he visited in Santafé de Bogotá at the end of the 1860s that: “Casi todas las mujeres aprenden un poco de música, la guitarra o el piano, con lo cual quiero decir que al cabo de cierto número de lecciones llegan a poseer un pequeño repertorio, compuesto de dos o tres romanzas, un rigodón105 y un vals.”106 The image and the

103 Palacios, Between Legitimacy and Violence: a history of Colombia 1875-2002.
105 The rigaudon was a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French dance of folk origin, originally rather crude and lively until taken up in courtly circles, when it became more elegant, though retaining its liveliness. French
sound of a young lady sitting at the piano were extremely familiar to him; this gendered musical culture
was part of his daily life as a European, closely associated with ideas of civilisation, modernity and
comfort. Colombian elites shared this idea since the early years of the Republic. In 1822, Francisco
Antonio Zea (1766–1822) published a book to educate Europeans about the sources of wealth that could
be found in the new independent republic of Colombia; intended to be a guide to travellers and traders,
the volume listed the piano as one of the commodities that British industry could sell to Colombians. It is
no coincidence then, that in 1825 the first pianos arrived in Colombia.107

During the period discussed here, the piano became part of social display and was a frequent literary
trope. Pianos were part of an economic and cultural relationship aimed to pave the way to modernization
for Colombia and its urban citizens. Their frequent presence in homes since the 1850s indicates that
Colombian aficionados and teachers who could afford one constituted part of the market for it. It is
possible that during the 1860s the importation of pianos increased, given the support by the Liberal
governments of free trade; however, the difficulties of transport still made them expensive. The buyer had
to pay all import costs and, once the piano had entered the country through the Magdalena River, the
buyer had to arrange for up to 16 porters to transport the piano along mule trails, ensuring that the piano
reached its destination safely, even if slowly.108

An advertisement published by the consignment house of Amador Fierro y Silvestre in 1874 in the
newspaper La América, shows the dynamic of Colombia’s piano market.109 This consignment house was
located in Honda, one of the major river ports and a very important commercial city, for all merchandise
that entered the country by steamboat had to be delivered to Honda’s warehouses, from where traders
like Amador Fierro dispatched them on their domestic journey. Amador Fierro offered his services for the
importation of a variety of scientific instruments, tools for agriculture, furniture and musical instruments
like the piano. A person wanting to buy a piano usually selected the model from a catalogue and had to
pay Fierro a commission, had to pay for the insurance on the piano and had to pay, in advance, half of
the price. Amador Fierro’s role was to represent the buyer in this major purchase. Through the services of
consignment houses some of the most important brands of piano builders sent their instruments to

baroque composers used it and it fell out of use after the mid eighteenth century until the late nineteenth. I do not
know how this dance format arrived in Colombia or if Saffray perhaps confused a dance format that he heard with the
107 Luis Carlos Rodríguez, Musicas para una region y una ciudad: Antioquia y Medellín 1810 – 1865, aproximaciones a algunos momentos y personajes.
108 Charles Saffray
109 “Anuncios – Casa de Consignacion de Amador Fierro y Silvestre”, La América, No. 173 March 30, 1874
Colombia: Erard, Pleyel, Herz and Sohmer appear in newspaper adverts by traders or piano owners who want to sell their pianos.

The piano market was not restricted to importation. During the second half of the nineteenth century many piano owners sold their pianos to recover part of their investment and thus be able to weather the economic instability of the time. In their advertisements piano owners sought to make the instrument appealing, either advertising the brand of the piano or offering a fair price of purchase: “Fabrica inglesa, por un precio sumamente equitativo”\(^\text{110}\) or, “[...] piano Erard. Se vende a precios módicos [...]”\(^\text{111}\) were common phrases used to tempt possible buyers. Given their high value, pianos were not just a fashionable or artistic object, but also a capital good. Testaments of the time show that pianos were important family heirlooms among the most valuable goods the legator possessed: in 1875 the heirs of the Malo O’Leary family petitioned for the legal partition of some goods left by their parents as a common legacy and among them, there was a Herz piano, worth 800 pesos.\(^\text{112}\) Even an old piano with evidence of extensive use — or neglect — could be of value for an heir, as shown by the 1884 will of Ramón Rosales, in which he left an old Winter piano worth 150 pesos to his heirs.\(^\text{113}\)

![Figure 19: Advertisement of the sale of a piano published in the Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3411, April 29, 1884.](image)

The high cost of a piano, the need to realise the investment and the need for immediate cash due to the unstable economy may have motivated a musical business: piano owners rented their pianos to those

---

\(^{110}\) “José Luis Cuevas vende un piano vertical.”, El Hogar, periódico literario dedicado al bello sexo, No. 35 September 26 1868.

\(^{111}\) “Anuncios”, La America, No. 170 March 19 1874

\(^{112}\) La Familia Malo O’Leary solicita la división de unos bienes comunes, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Notarías, Notaría Primera (1875). The total of the inventory (furniture, silverware, tableware, jewellery, glassware and family library) summed a total of $46,924.30, which places the piano as one of the most valuable items in this testament. This is also documented by other testaments of the time, in which the most valuable assets were listed beside their monetary worth and pianos (even old pianos) were among those valuable objects. If we remember that Colombian economy did not experience much diversification and growth during the nineteenth century, it is understandable that a piano was one of the most valuable and durable capital goods that a person could possess.

\(^{113}\) Causa de sucesión de Ramón Rosales, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Notarías, Notaría Primera (1984)
who were learning to play and could not afford one, or, in Bogotá, to families that were staying in the capital long enough to miss their piano, left at home. The advertisements seeking to rent a piano first appeared in 1880, like this one published in the Diario de Cundinamarca in February 1880: “SE ARRIENDE UN PIANO. Se paga bien y adelantado. Por informes, en la agencia de Quintana y Caballero.”

Yet it seems that these transactions could result in more expenses for the piano owner, since not everyone was careful. This 1882 denunciation published in the aforementioned newspaper indicates the problems that a piano owner could face when renting his/her piano:

Señor doctor José Cerbeleón Méndez, San Jil

Sirvase usted pagarme la suma de $ 23.50 cs que me debe por la composición que mandé hacer al Sr. Manuel A. Montoya de un piano que di a usted en alquiler para uso de su familia, con la condición de que se me devolviese en buen estado.

Hago a usted este cobro por la imprenta, por no haberme contestado las cartas que sobre el particular le he dirijido.

How was it that the piano found its way over the Atlantic Ocean and according to José Caicedo y Rojas, crossed the Andes like a titan, to climb the Andean heavens? The buyer — with an idea of what was good and necessary to make a modern and comfortable home — was another element in this process. This concept of comfort is central to understanding the acceptance of the piano by Colombian urban elite society. This notion was a novelty for nineteenth-century urban Colombians, used to the way of life inherited from the colonial period in which the functionality of domestic furniture and the close coexistence of the realms of home and work had been the rule; now the paradigms of comfort and privacy — separating home life from work life — merged and arrived in Colombia as signs of modernity. Colombian cities, although small, concentrated the arrival of imported goods (and people) associated with and advertised as signs of modern material comfort and this, along the desire to channel and mould social energies released by independence into modern citizenry, gave a boost to the burgeoning middle classes and elites that sought to distinguish themselves from the rest of the population through the display of objects and behaviour.

The notion of comfort arrived through foreign travellers and Colombians who

114 “Anuncios.”, Diario de Cundinamarca No. 2645 February 28, 1880. The advertisement does not explain who was renting to whom or if the agency Quintana y Caballero specialized in this type of lease.
115 “Señor doctor José Cerbeleón Meléndez”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3010 January 31, 1882
116 Jose Caicedo y Rojas (also as Caicedo Rojas) (1816–1898) was a journalist and prolific writer in all literary genres. His critiques about music were well received among the aficionados in the capital. He was one of the notable writers in the Costumbrismo style in the nineteenth century.
117 Aída Martínez Carreño, “La vida material en los espacios domésticos” in Historia de la vida cotidiana en Colombia edited by Beatriz Castro Carvajal (Santafé de Bogotá: Norma, 1996)
had experienced domestic music provided by the piano and its players, usually the women of the household. In the United States and Europe this idea of comfort had developed since the eighteenth century, evolving from the idea of physical wellbeing to the notion of a display of gentility. Since the eighteenth century, explanations given by economists and philosophers about the moral neutrality of comfort supported the growing consumption by the emerging middle classes of goods that emulated the lifestyle of the aristocracy; since the beginnings of the nineteenth century and with the boost given to consumption by the Industrial Revolution, comfort and luxury became more synonymous and lost their old association to ideas like greed and selfishness. The speech given by José Manuel Marroquín in 1879 at a formal meeting of the charity San Vicente de Paúl shows what Colombian urban elites of the time understood as comfort: the possession and use of precious and expensive objects. Marroquín did not see this as a social danger, for there were few families and individuals that could afford those consumption habits. With these ideas, to want a piano in order to emulate the cultivated life of Europeans, possibly incurring large debts to be able to buy it, was not such a crazy idea for the Colombian elites and middle classes. They wanted to participate in modernity and progress and to develop a cultural life that was not just a pale reflection of what many of them knew happened in European and US drawing rooms, but that would be a sign of the goodness and material progress of Colombia’s respectable urban society. It is easy to understand then, how the complaints of foreigners like Charles Saffray — who visited Bogotá and Medellín between 1869 and 1870 — were taken by these social elites as a confirmation in their quest for a modern and civilized way of life:

[...] El gusto al lujo no se ha desarrollado bastante aún para que prosperen las artes en Bogotá … [writing about Medellín] bien es verdad que tienen poco de que hablar en una población donde no hay bailes, ni conciertos, ni teatro, ni crónica, donde la vida de hoy es la misma de hace un año y de toda la existencia.

If Charles Saffray deplored the lack of entertainment that made Colombian urban life, for him, monotonous and backward, another traveller, Rosa Carnegie-Williams found a replica of that urban life that included domestic music (British style) in Bogotá in 1882: “En la noche fuimos donde los K_s para tomar te y escuchar música. Su casa está muy confortablemente amueblada […]” We see then that in twelve years (after Saffray’s visit) things had somewhat changed: there were enough foreigners in Bogotá to form a small community able to reproduce aspects of their European/US domestic life, including the

119 John E. Crowley, “The sensibility of comfort”.
121 Charles Saffray: 299 and 94
122 Rosa Carnegie-Williams, Un año en los Andes, o Aventuras de una lady en Bogotá, (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores – Academia de Historia de Bogotá, 1990). 56
material culture and associated rituals. In this way they could replicate in an ‘exotic’ environment the paradigms of family, comfort and domesticity that they thought were the basis for a civilized life.\textsuperscript{123}

For the Colombian elites and middle classes, this domesticity was another model of life and the material comfort that helped to make it possible was taken by Colombians as something to be imitated. The piano, music stands and other furniture and pieces of decoration that made the drawing room constituted a constellation of material based on imported taste and goods; the piano was part of that import trade but if we connect the piano to those objects that formed the stage for domestic music, we see that Colombian elites were emulating a lifestyle.

Durante el siglo XIX el tamaño de los muebles se redujo, se especializaron sus funciones y las piezas del mobiliario fueron más variadas, abundantes y delicadas. [...] Poco a poco se introdujeron los nuevos muebles franceses, más pequeños y variados, finamente trabajados y en estilos cambiantes que dan identidad a la casa del siglo XIX, atiborrada de objetos inútiles pero indispensables [...] \textsuperscript{124}

What did Colombian elites want to prove and to whom? As we have said before they wanted to participate in modernity and progress as seen through the lens of Europe and the US. This desire emerged from the conviction that they were part of modern Western culture and it was also born of the experience that many Colombians had of that culture through travelling. Cosmopolitanism was another element that helped form the positive reception of Colombian urban elites to the piano and other elements of material culture that arrived to Colombia through importation. The acquisition of an imported piano was then a powerful symbolical act that confirmed the buyer’s social status of power and of moral legitimacy. The possession of an imported piano meant that its owner was close to modernity, that he/she displayed culture and civilization and that those attributes made him/her different from the rest of the society that surrounded him/her: that is, the rest of the social elites and subaltern groups. The actual purchase strengthened this dynamic; as we said before, a piano could be worth $800, a large sum for the time and purchasing costs added to its value; therefore, the person who bought a piano and managed to get it home, confirmed his/her wealth and power.

The consumption of imported goods was not exclusive to Colombian elites. As Ana María Otero explains,

\begin{quote}
[...] el origen de los bienes parece haber sido reconocido explícitamente cuando este era “registrado” como un bien de lujo para el consumo de la clase alta, e ignorado intencionalmente cuando estaba destinado al consumo de las clases bajas. Esta diferenciación se debía al hecho de que la clasificación del objeto como “inglés” [...] era bastante flexible en otro nivel. En efecto, lo que
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{123} See William H. Beezley, \textit{Judas at the Jockey Club and other episodes of Porfirián Mexico}, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska: 1987).
\textsuperscript{124} Carreño, “La vida material en los espacios domésticos”. 346
realmente le importaba a la sociedad bogotana era que el objeto pareciera “inglés”, independientemente de si era o no auténticamente extranjero. Un buen ejemplo de la flexibilización de la categoría de “lo inglés” era el hecho de que la ropa confeccionada en Bogotá, con materiales extranjeros, seguía considerándose inglesa.\textsuperscript{125}

The piano — preferably made by a famous manufacturer — accompanied by the drawing room paraphernalia became an element of identity for Colombian elites as elites. The reception of these imported goods was a practice exercised by them as a form of distinction, and as a form of patriotism: they consumed these goods because they helped them to express their desire for progress and modernity for Colombia, their desire for culture and expansion for their cities and their desire to be included in the paradigm of Western culture that they claimed as theirs; through the acquisition of these goods they expressed their rupture with the colonial past.\textsuperscript{126} As a form of distinction, the purchase of a piano and other imported commodities related to it also implied the performance of a ritual: that of establishing oneself as a progressive patriot, in possession of culture and with the right sensibility to use it; it was the confirmation of the moral legitimacy needed to lead the country.

The arrival of pianos to the \textit{bodegas} and their dispatch to cities was announced in newspapers\textsuperscript{127} to alleviate the anxiety of those who had made such an investment. Traders advertised pianos not only for those who could buy the most famous brands, but for those of modest means who could afford a less expensive piano that was more practical — and cheaper — to transport:

\begin{quote}
El piano de los Andes.
\end{quote}

Divisible en cinco cajas, cada una de las cuales se puede transportar en una bestia, esta de venta en nuestra casa de Honda. Es muy solido y sonoro; tiene \textit{sordina} el cual permite que los principiantes lo usen sin incomodar a nadie y se dan los utiles para templar, encordado de repuesto y silleta. Ni padres ni novios podran ya disculparse con los caminos para no regalar este armonioso instrumento que apenas vale quinientos pesos de ley – Samper y Cia.\textsuperscript{128}

This model summarized the affordable and the transportable, but it was not the only one. In 1898, the arrival of Colibrí pianos was advertised by their importer through an advert on the first page of the newspaper \textit{El Espectador} with a usual tactic employed by piano makers in Europe and the United States:

\begin{quote}
“Anuncios: El Piano de los Andes”, \textit{Diario de Cundinamarca}, No. 2615, January 7 1880
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{125} Ana María Otero Cleves, “Jeneros de gusto y sobretodos ingleses: el impacto cultural del consumo de bienes ingleses por la clase alta bogotana en el siglo XIX” \textit{Historia Crítica} 38, (2009). 27
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid. 31. Mouré, \textit{De la vida de antaño}.
\textsuperscript{127} Mesa Revuelta: Pianos, Puerto Berrio 9 de diciembre de 1898”, \textit{El Espectador}, No. 425 December 10 1898
\textsuperscript{128} “Anuncios: El Piano de los Andes”, \textit{Diario de Cundinamarca}, No. 2615, January 7 1880
the association of famous musicians through a certificate of quality. In this case, the importers of Pianos Colibrí employed the services of renowned local musicians of Medellín:

Pianos Colibrí:

A $500 venden Manuel J. Alvarez y Cía. Lease el siguiente certificado:

Los suscritos profesores de piano certificamos: que hemos examinado y tocado los pianos Colibrí últimamente introducidos por los sres y los calificamos como muy Buenos para estudio, tertulias de familia, casinos, hotels y casas de educacion. Su precio de $500 nos parece justo y equitativo.

Medellin, Mayo de 1898

Jesús Arriola, Gonzalo Vidal, Daniel Salazar.

The price was tempting but for those who might have thought that a piano that cheap could not be good and the endorsement given by the most highly esteemed musicians of the city might have provided sufficient guarantee the instrument’s good quality. And if the piano buyer wanted to add patriotism to his/her purchase, in 1899 the newspaper El Espectador announced the arrival in Medellín of pianos designed by Colombian piano maker José Cicerón Castillo and made by M. S. Rachals & Co. of Hamburg. If there was any doubt about the quality of these pianos, the importers published with the advertisement the endorsement of Colombian pianist Carlos Umaña ─ alumnus of the Conservatoire of Paris ─ who praised their excellent sound.

The elite consumption of pianos enabled the emergence of a new source of employment for artisans that had knowledge about the instrument and even for musicians that had technical knowledge about the piano’s mechanism; both groups of workers offered their services to repair them and to keep them in fine working condition. An advertisement published in December of 1880 announced a new establishment in Bogotá where it was possible to find good quality repair service:

FRANCISCO GIGLIOLI

Maestro de música i fabricante de pianos, i Manuel Montoya N., tambien fabricante de pianos, asociados legalmente, ofrecen sus servicios en este interesante ramo que tan descuidado habia estado en tiempos anteriores. El primero de los socios acaba de llegar de Europa, trayendo un surtido completo

129 Siepmann, The Piano.
130 “Avisos: Piano Colibrí”, El Espectador, No. 379 June 25 1898
131 “Pianos hechos por J. C. Castillo”, El Espectador, No. 434 January 21 1899. The use of the endorsement of celebrated art musicians was another way to establish a hierarchy and a difference between them and the traditional-popular musicians. Pianists like Carlos Umaña would be expected to possess technical knowledge about the instrument and its musical possibilities, still rare among Colombian musicians at the time.
de útiles i máquinas para el trabajo, tomados en varias fábricas de Francia, Inglaterra, Italia i Alemania. Nuestros favorecedores tienen pues la garantía de que los pianos que se nos confían saldrán de nuestro establecimiento como al pié de fábrica, pues como queda dicho, contamos con materiales propios para cualquier clase de pianos.\textsuperscript{132}

This advertisement claims that the quality of the tools and materials needed for a proper piano maintenance and reparation had to be imported. This added another cost to owning the instrument and ensured the frequent presence of piano strings in many shops in the capital and other cities, such as Cartagena de Indias and Medellín; the shop owners advertised their arrival, for they knew that there was an expectant group of clients seeking to keep their pianos in the best shape possible.\textsuperscript{133} The \textit{Almanaque y Guía Ilustrada de Bogotá para el año de 1881} shows that Giglioli was not the only provider of material for piano repairs, for two names were listed as “reparadores y afinadores”, and one (Manuel Montoya) was listed as a piano builder.\textsuperscript{134} Unfortunately no more sources were found that can indicate how much they charged for their services or about the quality of their job.

\textbf{To sit at the piano}

Colombian elites and middle classes were very aware of the artistic qualities of the piano and of its value as an object. An 1899 article published in the newspaper \textit{El Cascabel}, from Medellín, shows the level of such awareness and, perhaps, the need to educate those who had not yet realized how important the piano was:

\begin{quote}
El piano es y será siempre el instrumento favorito de los salones. Se le encuentra en la mayor parte de las casas, se ha vuelto un mueble indispensable para las gentes de mundo y tiene también su utilidad si se le considera desde el punto de vista artístico. [...] en el piano se tocan desde los grandes aires de opera hasta los alegres cantos populares. Es preciso tener mucho cuidado al colocar el piano, de no ahogar los sonidos; si la pieza esta cubierta con tapiz, se le debe poner sobre aisladores para que quede completamente separado del suelo. En un salón bastante grande para disponer del espacio a sus anchas, se le coloca en un ángulo vuelto de manera que el teclado queda de frente a la pared. La espalda se cubre con una colgadura de seda, arreglada con todo el gusto con que saben hacerlo las mujeres elegantes. El piano instalado así, presenta todas las ventajas, es un adorno muy bonito. Para cuando es imposible colocarlo se le pone contra la pared teniendo cuidado de dejar siempre un espacio vacío para la emisión del sonido. Los artistas y los
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{132} “Francisco Giglioli”, \textit{Diario de Cundinamarca}, No. 2814 December 31, 1880.

\textsuperscript{133} “Avisos: Manuel Villareal M. acaba de recibir un magnífico surtido de cuerdas para piano que ofrece en venta.”, \textit{El Atlantico}, No. 20 November 6 1874.

\textsuperscript{134} Francisco Javier Vergara V. and Francisco José de Vergara B., \textit{Almanaque y Guía Ilustrada de Bogotá para el año de 1881}, (Bogotá: Imprenta de Ignacio Borda, 1881), 147
grandes diletanti no ponen nunca objetos de arte sobre el piano. […] No coloquéis absolutamente nada sobre él. El teclado debe ser sacudido todos los días y de vez en cuando limpiado con alcohol para quitar completamente el polvo y las señales de las manos. Es necesario hacer templar el piano por lo menos dos veces al año y en época fija […]

This article shows that the acceptance of the piano as a musical instrument and as piece of furniture by Colombian elites and middle classes was now complete. This phenomenon was similar across the Western world, for, since its invention in the late eighteenth century, the piano had been promoted and bought as the complete musical instrument with enough versatility to be used as multifunctional object: writing tables, bookcases, mirrors and even sewing machines were added to it. In addition to this versatility, piano makers added their artistry to the woodwork and other decorative embellishments that made the piano the star of a decorative ensemble, also offering good economic value, as we can see in a testament dated in 1879: “[…] a Fidel le di hace como mas de veinte años, un piano con su espejo […]”. This proves that the potential of the piano as part of an expensive arrangement of furniture made it even more attractive as part of a substantial inheritance.

This article indicates another facet of the Colombian piano market: the targeted population were women. Although many middle class and elite women were financially (and legally) dependent on men, this situation was contrasted by the independence that many women of these groups displayed, either as widows or as wives of absent husbands. When the author of this article wrote about women who owned a piano, he talked about elegant women, all of whom played music. The association of femininity and domestic music that became one of the characteristics of music practice in the nineteenth century also held true in Colombian urban society. As the advertisements suggest, pianos were advertised for schools, and many private schools for girls offered the teaching of piano as part of their curriculum. Musicians that advertised their services as private music teachers hoped to find a good clientele amongst the young women of elite and middle class households. Pianistic skills became part of the set of charms to which a respectable young Colombian woman aspired and were expected to be exercised in society with two principal goals: confirm the high status of her family and secure a good marriage. The piano was another element in the definition of proper Colombian womanhood in a relationship. Jeremy Siepmann argued that “the piano has always played a central role in the enforced domestication of the female

135 “El Piano”, El Cascabel, No. 153 August 23, 1899
136 Siepmann, The Piano.
137 Causas a la sucesión de José María Calvo, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Notarías, Notaría Primera (1874)
138 Civil wars and family businesses were the main causes for many husbands to leave their homes in the cities and put their wives in charge of family and local business. This was even more frequent in families of the subaltern classes. Ortiz, “La sociedad colombiana en el siglo XIX”.
sex. This domestication was presented as the display of natural feminine virtues that would become more evident through musical skills: if the woman was the angel of her home, she had to produce harmonious music — as angels do.

However, this troupe of domesticated piano players could be quite rebellious as well as heterogeneous. Among the group of women pianists, Colombian music critics soon made distinctions: there were those with "artistic souls", those with limited talent and those who pounded the piano with more ambition than talent. José Caicedo y Rojas left a colourful description of these three groups:

Hay una docena de señoritas que aman de veras la Buena música, la conocen, la interpretan, están familiarizadas con la estética del arte, juzgan y aplican un recto criterio, [...] Hay otra gran falange que se queda en la región inferior de las reveries, los nocturnos, y aun de los temas con variaciones, proscritos ya por entero de los dominios del buen gusto [...] Luego vienen las muchedumbres de polkistas, valsistas, pasillistas y bambuquistas, que nunca salen de la clase de cachifa, ni quieren aprender más que los nominativos. [...] Se despide al maestro con cualquier pretexto, y la niña se ingenia con alguna amiga para que la provea de un regular caudal de pasillos y danzas cubanas [...] que son suficientes para divertirse y bailar todo el año, que es lo que se desea alcanzar.  

All of these groups found occasion to shine, although some of those occasions were less than appropriate. Caicedo y Rojas complained of the improper display of pianism that many aficionadas made during Holy Week, since many of them considered that the piano repertoire that was fit for their salons was also good for the vigil of Good Friday. Rosa Carnegie-Williams was just as unimpressed as she visited the Monumentos during Holy Saturday: “En un nicho a la derecha del altar había un gran piano en el cual una mujer tocaba música brillante de salón, mezcla sumamente incongruente e irreverente de acuerdo con nuestras nociones.”

---

139 Siepmann, (1996): 160
140 Rojas, “El estado actual de la música en Bogotá”. 19 - 20
141 Carnegie-Williams: 109
The piano players of *danzas cubanas*, polkas, waltzes, *pasillos* and *bambucos* who were critizised by Caicedo y Rojas might have been the target of those who did not participate in the "piano mania" and who deplored the effects of the instrument: bad music inspired by bad taste. Writers like the author of the short story "Historia de un piano" published in the *Diario de Cundinamarca* were categorical in their hatred of the instrument:

Tengo compasión de ti, bella caja musical, i esta pena es tanto mas sincera i verdadera, en cuanto mi cólera mayor i mi mayor odio lo dedico a todos los seres de tu raza miserable. Yo admiro la música desde lo clasico hasta la gaita, las follas; pero el piano! Ah! El piano comienza por no ser un instrumento; es un mueble, es una especie de cómoda para guardar valses. No fue inventado por Orfeo, fue descubierto por un carpintero. Diferenciase de un escritorio en que no sirve para escribir; el piano es el arpa de los Americanos.\(^\text{143}\)

The author describes the piano as a cabinet for storing popular dances by the handful, not works of high musical art, which were not so popular and not so frequent. To this writer the piano was not the medium for the display of “truly artistic” sensibility. The writer associated the dubious character of the piano as a musical instrument with the possible origin of most of the pianos that could have been found in the drawing rooms of the Colombian elite and middle classes: the United States. This association had a political undertone: the *antiyanqui* feeling that many Latin American intellectuals shared since the 1850s.

\(^{142}\) Available in http://www.pintoreslatinoamericanos.com/2012/09/pintores-colombianos-ramon-torres-mendez.html,

\(^{143}\) "Historia de un piano", *Diario de Cundinamarca* No. 2732 August 7 1880.
in view of the policies of expansion through the region by the US; these actions from the US government were understood by many intellectual and political Latin American leaders as a danger to the region.\textsuperscript{144} As for these pianos, they were either made by the two most respected — and prolific — US houses of Steinway and Chickering or by smaller factories that did not have high standards of quality but that were less expensive.\textsuperscript{145} The fact that the author of this short story associates bad music with a US—made instrument has several implications, not just musical ones: the vulgarization of music, of art and culture and the subsequent loss of the civilizing effects of music was the unintended outcome of the acceptance of this instrument.

The piano accrued many meanings as its insertion in Colombian urban society grew. To many acolytes of progress, the piano was a marvel of modern industrial technology and was considered an example of technological, commercial and cultural superiority; its presence in the industrial trade fairs that many Colombians visited abroad — which set the example for the industrial and agricultural fairs in the country during the last years of nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth — was proof of the success of the piano industry. This was a realm that for many spokesmen of culture and art had nothing to do with the selective criteria that a truly educated and cultivated person learned to exercise through music.

The unrefined use of the piano continued to be the target of all kinds of criticism through prose, satire and verse during the first decade of the twentieth century. The poem “El piano de mi vecina” by Juan Ignacio Gálvez offers a good example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Cuando siento tu son desesperante,} \\
\text{Fatídico, espantoso, igual y eterno,} \\
\text{Piensó que este suplicio olvidó el Dante,} \\
\text{Y que hay un aprendiz en el averno} \\
\text{Que está tocando un piano semejante.}\textsuperscript{146}
\end{align*}
\]

Thus, there was no consensus on the code of conduct associated with the piano — its possession and its performance. It seems that the new comfort that the piano implied “[…] was something to be learned and

\textsuperscript{144} Michel Gobat, “The invention of Latin America: a transnational history of anti-imperialism, democracy and race”, \textit{The American Historical Review} 118, no. 5 (2013): 1345-75
\textsuperscript{145} Siepmann, \textit{The Piano.}
\textsuperscript{146} Juan Ignacio Gálvez, “El piano de mi vecina”, \textit{Revista Musical periodico de musica y literatura}, Nos. 4 and 5, February 1901.
expressed, not just afforded. The proper way to host a musical evening with the display of the piano was something that every respectable lady had to learn, as was the proper way to behave on such an occasion: how to dress, how to arrive, how to greet the hosts or one’s guests, how to start a conversation, how to join in the musical performance or how to listen to it, how to drink and eat what was served, how to talk to the company present, how to leave. The musical tertulia of the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, presided over by the piano and the piano player, was a new space and ritual in which Colombian elites and middle classes emulated a domestic model of civic behaviour: the British home. The manuals of urbanidad written by educators like Manuel Antonio Carreño provided this code of behaviour for a republican society where “Hierarchy was substituted by the notion of distinction.” It seems that there were many piano aficionados who did not learn the code of conduct that the piano demanded, since piano-playing was described as one of the best social graces that a person could display. Those who appeared in society displaying their piano and their pianistic skills were subject to judgement dispensed by music critics and other connoisseurs that had learned piano abroad — either professionally or as amateurs — and by foreign musicians that had settled in Colombia and worked as music teachers.

This concern about the “wrong” uses of the piano did not diminish the instrument’s popularity and for every individual who avoided the streets where he heard the sound of a piano, there was another – or many – who accepted the piano as part of their everyday culture and promoted it as the medium for social interaction in the home through music par excellence. Colombian newspapers of the time show abundant literary material where the piano is one of the central characters and defines key moments of subjectivity between the characters. Another kind of pro-piano literature is the one that tells anecdotes about famous European pianists of the time or about composers of famous piano repertoire, such as Franz Liszt and his pupil, the globally acclaimed Sophie Menter. Colombian professional pianists were publicised by Colombian newspapers of the time; Gonzalo Vidal — himself an acclaimed pianist and composer — was one of the most regular musical collaborators and in 1899 he published in the medellinense newspaper El Espectador his praise of Honorio Alarcón’s (1859–1920) pianistic skill, emphasizing the difficulties that Alarcón had to overcome in order to study in Colombia and then in Leipzig, where he was admitted at the Conservatory. Acknowledgments like this were also dedicated to Colombian pianistic talent abroad; in 1883 the Diario de Cundinamarca reproduced a small insert giving an account of a piano contest in Paris, held at the Salon Pleyel (one of the shrines of nineteenth century piano music) where a young Colombian

---

147 Crowley, “The sensibility of comfort”, 759.
148 See Chapter Five for more about tertulias.
149 Jesús Cruz, Patterns of Middle Class conduct in Nineteenth Century Spain and Latin America: The role of emulation, in Society, Economics, Politics & Public Policy, University of California, 2006. Conference papers available in www.iga.ucdavis.edu/Research/All-UC/conferences/2006-fall/Cruz.pdf
150 Gónima, Historia del Teatro en Medellín y Vejeces.
151 “Sofía Menter”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3014 January 14 1882.
152 “Un pianista colombiano.”, El Espectador, No. 486 July 30 1899
pianist was praised for her technique and sensibility: Teresa Tanco, one of the members of the elite of the Colombian colony in Paris.\textsuperscript{153}

Figure 21: Honorio Alarcón, pianist.

Photograph published in 1908 in the magazine Colombia Artística\textsuperscript{154}.

The piano students

The piano contest was not very common among Colombian aficionados, although they were occasions to show skill and sensibility. It is possible that in Santafé de Bogotá, the existence of the National Academy of Music could fill in the gap with its regular concerts in which the students showcased their pianistic skill. However, the aficionados in other cities might have felt that they needed to create this space for musical and social interaction. The few piano competitions that I have found in the archives took place in Medellín in 1905; they were sponsored by Enrique Gaviria,\textsuperscript{155} director of the newspaper \textit{El Cascabel} and they sought to reward the best pianist in Medellín from among the men and women who played the instrument. In the contest for the best male piano player, the piece used as evaluation was “una de las más difíciles sonatas de Beethoven.”\textsuperscript{156} For the best female piano player contest, the rules were different but the jurors were the same — the most highly regarded musicians of the city: Gonzalo Vidal, Germán Posada and Jesús Arriola:

\textit{[…] Pero como entre las damas es mayor el número de aficionadas y como hay entre ellas diferencias más grandes, dividí en dos secciones el concurso: con una pieza fácil para las menos fuertes o más tímidas la primera; la segunda con una pieza difícil para las más avanzadas o las más audaces. Los profesores

\textsuperscript{153} “Hechos Diversos – La señorita Teresa Tanco”, \textit{Diario de Cundinamarca}, No. 3257 April 6 1883.
\textsuperscript{154} “El Maestro Alarcón”, \textit{ColombiaArtística}, No. 6 November, 1908
\textsuperscript{155} Enrique Gaviria – also known as Henrique Gaviria I. – was a musician. An advertisement published in the newspaper \textit{La Voz de Antioquia} in the late 1880s informs us that he taught violin, cello, viola and the horn.
\textsuperscript{156} “A Granel”, \textit{La Miscelánea, revista literaria y científica} Nos. 11 and 12 July 1905
The presence of three professional musicians of recognized pianistic mastery as jurors suggests the desire from the audience and the organisers for an educated judgement of the competitors’ skills. The circle that promoted, participated and witnessed the contest had a high regard for the evaluation given by these maestros. At the same time, these maestros showed their credibility by choosing the form of evaluation: a sonata by Beethoven, one of the formats of the Western art music canon that was turned into a complex development of musical ideas by this composer. But it seems that female pianist skill was perceived in a different way. There is no more information about the piano contest for women, so we do not know what piano pieces were assigned for the two groups of contestants and therefore, I cannot determine how the jurors evaluated them.

The piano competitions implied the presence of the piano teacher to prepare the contestants. The piano teachers, man or woman, was another character in the history of the nineteenth century Colombian piano. From the 1860s the newspapers advertised the services of many piano teachers who worked in private schools or as private teachers. This was the case of Daniel Figueroa (d. 1887), who worked as piano teacher at the Colegio de Las Mercedes and advertised his services as private piano teacher in 1874. Colombian composers of the time found a good source of employment — and a steady income — as teachers, while facing social ideas about music and about the learning of music. Caicedo y Rojas wrote that piano/music teachers were constantly arguing with their clients about the importance of their teaching, while the clients wanted a practical effect from the piano lessons: to play beautifully without much effort. This practical effect was to be education and adornment. In this sense, the intangible character of the piano lessons acquired a tangible quality: the skill, the ability to play entertaining music was understood by Colombian elites and middle classes as a testimony of the good moral quality of the young lady or young man who learned to play the piano. But the piano teacher was also a great contributor to an updated form of socialization: the tertulia. The tertulia had been a social ritual since the end of the eighteenth century that allowed the acquaintance of people from outside the family home; during the nineteenth century, the Colombian tertulia was the ideal space for the reception of the piano as the new modern agent of socialization. At the piano and around the piano, Colombian elite and middle class youth found new ways of sharing their experiences and ideas, and of course, music was one of them. In this

157 “A Granel”, *La Miscelánea, revista literaria y científica* Nos. 1 and 2 September 1905

158 This facet of the piano competition in Colombia is, until further discoveries, still open to speculation. The fact that two of the most celebrated pianists of the late nineteenth century were women – Teresa Carreño and Sophie Menter – and that the Colombian pianist and composer Teresa Tanco was alive and working, adds to the question of how was feminine talent evaluated in Colombia at the time.


way, the tertulia also enabled the process of learning music and of expanding the individual piano repertoire.\textsuperscript{161}

**The scores**
Scores were another element in the construction of musical practices in Colombian urban society. We must remember that one of the implicit proposals of the civilizing and modernizing projects displayed by Colombian political and intellectual elites was the promotion of a ‘civilized’ and modern urban way of life as the parameter against which the rest of society had to be evaluated in order to be modern and educated. However, the arrival of the printed music score in Colombia in the mid-nineteenth century was connected not just to the cosmopolitanism of the elites, but to the economic context of the country and to the ideas that urban society had about music.

**First-sight reading**
The presence of the piano in Colombian drawing rooms promoted the emergence of a market for piano music that imitated the European collections and *albumblatter* (album pages) that were the typical formats for these. The Santafé de Bogotá newspaper *El Neogranadino* began in 1848 to publish pasillos, waltzes and *contradanzas* with beautiful drawings on the cover, thanks to the association between the editor of the newspaper Manuel Ancízar and the Venezuelan lithographers Jerónimo and Celestino Martínez, who had arrived in Santafé de Bogotá.\textsuperscript{162} Other magazines and newspapers also started to print small scores for piano (one or two pages): *El Mosaico* (1858–1860), *El Museo* (1849), *El Eco de los Andes* (1852–1853), and *El Pasatiempo* (1851–1854) were the most prolific in Santafé de Bogotá; in Medellín, *La Lira Antioqueña* (1886) and Gonzalo Vidal in his *Revista Musical* (1901).\textsuperscript{163} During the last years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, other magazines from Bogotá and from Medellín printed music as part of special editions, such as *Papel Periodico Ilustrado* (1881–1887), *La Miscelánea* (1894–1915) and *Colombia Artística* (1908–1910).\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{161} Barriga Monroy, *La educación musical en Bogotá 1880 – 1920*
\textsuperscript{162} Duque, “*La música en las publicaciones periódicas colombianas del siglo XIX (1848 – 1860)*”
\textsuperscript{163} I do not have data about the price of these publications.
\textsuperscript{164} Although historical and musicological research about musical publications is imprecise, sources suggest that lithography was the most popular system for printing music during the mid-nineteenth century. In the 1880s and 1900s the movable type printing machine was used in Medellín by the editors of *La Lira Antioqueña* (1886), Gonzalo Vidal in his *Revista Musical* (1901) and other printers. Velásquez, *Los rostros de Euterpe: la práctica musical en Medellín vista por medio del análisis de periódicos y revistas.*
This was one of the engravings that accompanied the publication of piano music printed in this newspaper. It seems that the illustration does not depict an actual person, but the idolized portrait of the young woman who would have been the muse of the composer.

The life of the periodicals named above was short and intense, like most of the periodical publications at the time;\textsuperscript{165} this suggests that scores were not published regularly during the nineteenth century, which prompted many Colombian composers to print and publish their works in Europe. The fact that most of the printed music scores were published in literary magazines, shows that music was understood by the publishers as well as by the buyers of these magazines as part of a culture that was thought of as linked to ideas of education, modernity, civilization, and material as well as intellectual progress; according to many thinkers and politicians of the time, literary magazines were the perfect media to disseminate this culture and make it accessible to many.\textsuperscript{166} Moreover, most of the aficionados who had a piano or another musical instrument and wanted to diversify their repertoire bought their music from importers. This desire emerged from contact with foreigners who had either settled in the country or who travelled the country and from the friendships that many Colombians had made during their travels abroad, which resulted in news, books, magazines and music being sent to them. Some newspaper editors and musicians managed to import specialist printing machines for the printing of music that allowed for them to launch literary and musical magazines. Also, in the new Schools of Arts and Crafts (Escuelas de Artes y Oficios) printing was one of the crafts taught to the students, usually poor young men or orphans who learned the printing craft and practiced their skills by printing scores at the school.\textsuperscript{167}

Colombian aficionados did not limit themselves to these mechanisms to get new pieces. Those who knew musical notation copied scores by hand and sold them at lower prices, while printed scores were more

\textsuperscript{165} Nineteenth-century Colombian intellectuals thought that print and free press were crucial elements in political and cultural life as a reflection of political independence opposed to the stagnation and cultural isolation of the colony. The abundance of magazines and newspapers during this period was in stark contrast to the illiteracy of most of Colombians; therefore, they were aimed at a literate urban public.

\textsuperscript{166} Velásquez, \textit{Los rostros de Euterpe: la práctica musical en Medellín vista por medio del análisis de periódicos y revistas}

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid.
expensive for they had to be purchased by paying the full price of subscription to the magazine in which they appeared. The bandola teacher José E. Suárez was one of these copyists, who in 1868 advertised that: “[...] copia en ambos sistemas, con esmero y puntualidad, toda clase de trabajos de música.” Unfortunately, there is no existing explanation of the two systems he used for copying music.

![Figure 23: Waltz "Mi Triste Suerte"](image)

By José María Ponce de León, published in the magazine *La Lira de los Andes* ca. 1880

Lithography (invented by Alois Senefelder in 1796) was the favourite method for printing music in Europe and the United States; it was easy, fast, cheap and versatile, since it allowed the combination of music notation, text and illustrations. Many composers resorted to this method in order to have more control over the printed versions of their works, since it made easy the direct transference of manuscript to the plates. Lithography and typography were the printing methods that allowed Colombian intellectuals and musicians to print music and to perform the civilizing role to which they aspired while, at the same time, they were able to provide a product that was similar to the imported scores that arrived in the country.

---

168 “Avisos”, *El Hogar – periódico literario dedicado al bello sexo*, No. 42 November 7 1868
169 Photograph by Alejandra Isaza. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Centro de Documentación Musical
Most of the music publications were oriented to female amateur pianists; therefore, the technical level of the pieces was not challenging and the editors of music magazines did not leave any specific indications about their readers’ technical levels. The scores published and sold in these periodicals had other characteristics in common: they promoted a few musical formats of piano music that were welcomed by the majority of aficionados as ‘proper entertainment’: waltzes, polkas, *redovas*, *danzas cubanas*, *reveries*, *preludes*, *bambucos* and *pasillos* for soloists and sometimes with the accompaniment of guitar, violin or voice. As I explained in the first section of this chapter, this amateurish level of piano-playing exposed some aficionadas to criticism and sneer.

This is the type of score that the editors of the literary magazine *El Mosaico* decided to add to the magazine as a musical section in 1859, perhaps to the dismay of aficionados and musicians that dismissed this type of repertoire and wanted to promote complex musical works. However, the editors of *El Mosaico* were applying a notion of patriotism that linked the promotion of national art with the stimulus to national artists. They advertised this new section as follows:

Desde la proxima semana aparecerá una publicacion lirica adjunta a este periodico. Esta obra que tendra por titulo: el mosaico, parte musical contendra una o dos piezas de musica, todas o casi todas granadinas y aparecera cada 15 dias. La empresa estara dirigida por el artista señor Santos Quijano y estara a cargo de el y de los socios Jeronimo Martinez y Ricardo Carrasquilla.

---

172 Photograph by Alejandra Isaza. Biblioteca Pública Piloto de Medellín, Sala Antioquia.
173 Duque, *La Música En Las Publicaciones Periódicas Colombianas Del Siglo XIX (1848-1860)*
174 Velásquez, “El encanto de las damas: las mujeres y la práctica musical a finales del siglo XIX en Medellín, Colombia”
175 “Avisos: Nueva Publicación”, *El Mosaico*, No. 36 September 3 1859
Here we see the union of artists and editors to promote music for all; they were joined in their aspiration by the consumers, music lovers who welcomed this initiative as a sign of cultural and material progress. In this way the editors of *El Mosaico* contributed to the creation of collections of scores that were common in the United States and Europe, where domestic libraries included nicely printed scores for the piano players and singers of the household. Colombian composer Santos Quijano was one of the most esteemed musical figures of Bogotá at the time, so his name was a guarantee of the good quality of this collection. The writer José David Guarín (1830–1890) – brother of composer Joaquín Guarín (1825–1854) – was one of the prominent intellectual figures of the time and one of the most assiduous collaborators of this magazine. Writers, editors, musicians and printers cooperated in this idea guided by the conviction of doing something useful for the country, something that would contribute to the education of their readers; such faith in the civilizing effect of print (printed text or printed music) was part of the creed that Colombian intellectuals displayed when they planned cultural endeavours like literary magazines and it was more visible since the 1880s, when the freedom of press was threatened by government decrees.

The printing of music also served to disseminate knowledge and ideas. Two examples of this are the periodicals *El Proscenio* and *El Hogar Católico*. The first began to be published in Bogotá in 1890 and, according to its manager, it would be published whenever there was to be an opera function at the Teatro Municipal. In *El Proscenio* readers found a summarized translation of the opera that was going to be staged as well as excerpts from the music adapted for piano or for a singer with accompanist (piano). I have only found one edition of *El Proscenio* and I don't know if it had a long life as a periodical, but I suggest that this periodical wanted to serve as an aid to impresarios and opera companies that wanted to advertise the function to new audiences that would be familiarized with opera after reading (and playing).

---

176 Velasquez, *Los rostros de Euterpe*.

177 Ceballos Gómez, “Capítulo IV: Desde la formación de la república hasta el radicalismo Liberal (1830-1886)”
Colombian editors of newspapers in the nineteenth century were, most of the time, politically committed individuals; therefore, their newspapers and magazines reflected their political ideas in the contents provided by the editor and his collaborators. *El Hogar Católico* is an example of this: published in Medellín during the first decade of the twentieth century, its editors not only promoted and spread the ideas of the Catholic Church, but also promoted the ideas of the Conservative party through news, sermons and educational stories that disseminated Catholic values. In a special edition in June 1908, this newspaper published a “Himno Latino en honor del Papa” for male choir and organ, perhaps to be performed by one of the Catholic societies of Medellín.\(^\text{179}\)

Efforts to print and publish scores were paralleled by endeavours by music teachers and pedagogues who assumed the teaching of music notation to those who could not take music lessons as part of their job. The printing of methods for self-teaching to read notation became frequent from the 1850s, when the German musician and daguerreotypist Emil Herbrugger visited Colombia and published his music text book *Doce Lecciones de Música o Corto Método para aprender la Música vocal e instrumental* in 1851.\(^\text{180}\)

---

\(^{178}\) Colección Digital Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia.

\(^{179}\) “Himno Latino en honor del Papa”, *El Hogar Católico*, Numero Extra, June 2 1908. See *Religion, culture and society in Colombia: Medellín and Antioquia 1850-1930*.

\(^{180}\) Emil Herbrugger, *Doce Lecciones de Música o Corto Método para aprender la Música vocal e instrumental* (Bogotá: Imprenta Echeverría Hermanos, 1851).
These textbooks usually had a small size and presented the reader with diagrams through which it was easy to learn the values in time of each musical note. In 1885 Diego Fallon published his notation system (Arte de leer, escribir y dictar musica. Sistema alfabetico) in which he used the alphabet as an equivalent to musical notation; in its introduction, its author proclaimed that since music is the art endowed with the power of softening and improving the uneducated human character, the popularization of music must be one of the most important goals of education. Fallon’s textbook was supposed to help those who wanted to have access to art music without the burden of learning a system of notation that was alien to written and spoken language. Other authors also helped music aficionados to decipher the code printed in the page, such as Juan Crisostomo Osorio, who had published in 1867 his Diccionario de Música\textsuperscript{181} in which, contrary to Fallon, he wished to instruct the reader in the musical code in Italian. These textbooks were a means towards the expansion of the numbers of musically literate; perhaps their authors — and those that advertised them — thought that the dissemination of musical literacy contributed to the general education of Colombians.

Another facet of printed music scores is the designs that adorned them. The custom of adding decorations related to the music became more frequent during the period of study and we can see different styles of illustration that went from the imitation of European illustrators to nationalistic themes:

\textsuperscript{181} Juan Crisóstomo Osorio, Diccionario de Música, precedido de la teoría jeneral del arte i especial del piano, (Bogotá: Imprenta de Gaitán, 1867)
The newspaper *El Neogranadino* had been one of the first to print music as a useful and beautiful object, worthy of being displayed as a work of art and decoration, accompanying the beauty of the piano and of other decorative objects of the drawing room. But it is too simplistic to consider the beautiful design of the musical scores of this time merely as a decorative effort; since music was understood by Colombia’s urban and lettered society of the time as the art most appropriate for the betterment of character, the engravings and designs that adorned music scores were aimed to emphasize the title of the score, as we see in the cover of the polka “La constitución Granadina” and on the first page of Vidal’s *romanza*, “Crepuscular” (see Figure 27). The nationalistic theme of the polka is emphasized by the flag that carries the colours that were used in Colombia’s flag, although the flag that we see was used by Francisco de Miranda, first leader of the Latin American independence movement; this flag is complemented by the Phrygian cap, an allusion to the Republic. These two symbols reinforced the dedication, “Al fundador de la verdadera República”, to General José Hilario López, a Liberal military leader whose presidency started the Liberal series of governments in 1849. The flag and the Phrygian cap symbolized the tenets of the Liberal party: independence (rupture with the colonial past) and republicanism. When Vidal premiered his *zarzuela María* in 1903 (based on the homonymous novel by Colombian writer Jorge Isaacs), emphasis was added by the flowers that adorned the title of the score of the Third Act’s Prelude as

---

182 This Romanza by Gonzalo Vidal was published in the magazine *El Montañés*, Medellín, No 7 March 1898.
published in the magazine *Lectura y Arte*: roses and lilies, flowers that symbolized the love between María and Efraín in the novel (see Figure 28).

![Figure 27: Detail of the first page of the prelude to the Third Act of María, zarzuela by Gonzalo Vidal, published in the magazine *Lectura y Arte*, No. 3, 1903.](image)

**The scores market**
The price of scores was an important factor in their insertion into Colombian urban society. Unfortunately, the data about prices are fragmentary; therefore, it is difficult to show their position in the habits of consumption of Colombian society during the period of study. Although recent works on urban wages from the nineteenth century cast some light onto the economic life of Santafé de Bogotá, these analyses also face the problem of a lack of complete series of data about prices of foodstuffs. Data like these could provide statistical instruments for comparison that could help to establish with more accuracy the position of scores in the system of consumption habits for this society. However, the data that we have can help us to pose some conclusions and questions about this facet of the Colombian urban music market.

We find the first data about prices of scores in the *bogotano* newspaper *El Mosaico*. As we cited previously, the editors of this newspaper started to publish a *parte lírica* in 1859, that is, a supplement to their regular editions which consisted of a musical score for piano; this supplement could also be purchased independently of the magazine, but through subscription, the same strategy used to sell the magazine. The rest of the aforementioned advert goes as follows:

> Para ponerla al alcance de todos, los precios serán sumamente modicos.
> Para los suscriptores anuales al Mosaico que tomen una suscripción anual a la parte lírica, valdrá esta un peso sesenta centavos.
> Para los suscriptores a El Mosaico, el semestre de la parte lírica valdrá noventa centavos.
> Los que se suscriban solamente a la parte lírica pagarán un fuerte por semestre.
Los numeros sueltos se venderan a 10 centavos.\textsuperscript{183}

The scores published in *El Mosaico* (see Figure 29) did not have an elaborate design, which probably made them cheaper to print and at the same time made it possible for editors to advertise them to a wider audience.

\textbf{Figure 28}: Redova "Marietta" by R. García

Printed and published in the magazine *El Mosaico*\textsuperscript{184}.

The works by Miguel Urrutia about urban wages and urban prices for the period 1800–1900 can help to put the data about score prices into context.\textsuperscript{185} We can compare Urrutia’s findings with data about scores and treat this comparison as a unique case. Urrutia’s most reliable sources are the wages list for government employees and Casa de la Moneda staff. In 1859, the year that the editors of *El Mosaico* launched their *parte lirica*, the monthly wages for the doorman at the Casa de la Moneda were $3.08. The annual subscription was then 1/3 of a month’s pay ($1.60). This indicates that people earning within this range of wages might have not chosen to purchase this subscription, since it compromised a considerable amount of their income. However, since each score was sold at $0.10, perhaps this might have been more affordable.

The second example of score prices is the list of works by composer and music teacher José Viteri published in the magazine *El Zipa* in 1878. In this list of works, which included musical works as well as textbooks, Viteri offered “[…] 40 piezas de bailes. Para piano $2 – […] 5 himnos, 5 cánticos y 12

\textsuperscript{183} “Avisos: Nueva publicación”, *El Mosaico*, No. 36 September 3 1859
\textsuperscript{184} Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda.
\textsuperscript{185} Urrutia, "Precios Y Salarios Urbanos En El Siglo XIX,"
melodías 1 – 20 [...] Colección de 5 piezas para Piano 1 - ... [...]. Viteri offered many pieces at one price but, instead of using subscription as a sales strategy, he sold his works in Medellín’s shops. In this case, when comparing these prices to the wages index provided by Urrutia, we find that the monthly wages of the doorman at Casa de la Moneda in that same year was $3.69, making any of the scores offered by Viteri too expensive, since they compromised more than half of a month’s pay.

Two years after José Viteri advertised his works, a Colombian female composer advertised one of her works, the pasillo “El Canal”, as we see in Image 6.10.

![Figure 29: Advertisement for the pasillo "El Canal" by composer Rosa Echeverría](image)

Published in the newspaper Diario de Cundinamarca No. 2636, February 13 1880.

In this case sources found by Urrutia allow further comparison. To Urrutia’s wages index, we can add the prices of foodstuffs for consumption of the students of the Colegio Mayor del Rosario in 1882; although not all products are listed with their price, we can theorize that this was the basic diet of upper middle class and elite students. According to data presented by Urrutia, a student’s weekly diet at the Colegio Mayor cost $8.08; Rosa Echeverría’s score cost $0.40, which made it affordable for this segment of the population. Another source dated in 1894 shows similar data illustrating the price of a weekly basic diet for carters and carriers: $2.71. If we compare the price of the score to this last data, we see that 12 years later the score would have been too expensive for a poor urban worker, who would have to invest almost half of his/her diet to purchase the score.

The third example is given by the Revista Musical published in Medellín by Gonzalo Vidal between 1900 and 1901. Annual subscription to this magazine cost $10 and each monthly edition cost $2.40. The closest data (chronologically) is the wages index for staff at Casa de la Moneda (Santafé de Bogotá) that indicates that in 1900 the doorman earned $24 per month. No sources have been found that indicate that urban workers were able to purchase this Medellín magazine in Santafé de Bogotá, but if this was

---

186 “Titulos de las obras de música de José Viteri”, El Zipa, No. 5 August 22, 1878
possible, we can see that the *Revista Musical* was worth the equivalent of two days’ wages. If we remember that this magazine not only comprised the score, but also articles and poetry, we see that the cost-benefit balance was in favour of the customer.

The fourth example is given by the Bogotá magazine *El Hogar Musical* published in 1909. We have to remember that the consequences of the War of Thousand Days, which had ended six years before, were still felt by Colombian population. Just one edition of this publication has survived and through it we know that the editor of this magazine published 19 editions that were available to the public through subscription. Number 19 was the last one of this publication (see Figure 31).

![Figure 30: El Hogar Musical, No. 19, April 1909, front cover.](image)

The style of publication is very decorative, although lacking some stylistic precision that could provide a more finished look; this edition included two pieces for piano. The price appears under the title in capital letters: $20. The closest data (in time) is the wages index for staff at Casa de la Moneda that indicates that in 1900 the doorman earned $24 per month. We see a similar tendency in the price of the score *El Canal*: the *Hogar Musical* was too expensive for a poor urban worker, almost all of his wages. In contrast, a secretary of state who earned $500 per month could afford this publication.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Biblioteca Pública Piloto de Medellín, Sala Antioquia
Scores like the ones above were purchased by a public defined by two main characteristics: they saw themselves as “cultured” and “educated” and thus, scores were an important part of their cultural consumption habits. To print scores was an effort towards the goal of progress and culture, as Gonzalo Vidal said when he was able to launch his Revista Musical with an advert in the newspaper El Cascabel at the turn of the nineteenth century: “[…] un periódico destinado a fomentar la composición y popularizar el arte en Colombia […]”\footnote{Revista Musical, El Cascabel, No. 188 October 21 1899}. To the editors of El Cascabel, the fame of Gonzalo Vidal was a guarantee of success for the publication and at the same time, an example of “[…] nuestro adelanto […]”\footnote{Ibid.}, of the progress of Colombian society. To buy these scores was to participate in the effort to extend education and to achieve progress. This made the purpose of disseminating music an endeavour restricted by a narrow market. This coexistence between printed and copied music was also frequent in Europe, where some publishing and printing houses combined both activities.\footnote{Music Publishing in Europe 1600 – 1900 Concepts and Issues, Bibliography, edited by Rudolf Rasch (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005)} Sources indicate that sometimes handwritten copies of scores were imported, perhaps because they were cheaper: in a cargo manifesto from 1909 at the customs office in Tumaco, the clerk listed ten kilos of “Música manuscrita en papel” to be sent to Pasto (southern Colombia).\footnote{Archivo General de la Nación, Sección Archivo Anexo II, Fondo Administración de Aduanas, Caja 025, Carpeta 002. “Manifiestos De Importación. Aduana De Tumaco.” 1909.}

Printed scores were one of the many necessities of the National Academy of Music. In the annual reports elaborated by its founder and director, Jorge Wilson Price, the list of donations of scores made by him, the Academy’s teachers and other people are a constant presence and were constituted either by full scores of operas, chamber music or religious music or by fractions of these works. These donations formed a steady flow of new repertoire for the Academy, since it was not always possible to count on help from the government to pay for the expense of the importation of scores. In this way, Price always tried to import new repertoire even at his own expense, supported in his belief that it was specifically through the study of scores at the Academy that Colombian musicians could achieve their highest level. The only documentary evidence of this are three documents that show the efforts of Price towards the upkeep of the Academy’s repertoire: the first one dates from 1886 and comprises an extensive list of expenses that Price had paid for several instrument repairs, the purchase of instruments and of other materials, and the expenses for the printing and repair of printed scores. At the end of this list, Price declares that he will incur more expenses, since he has commissioned the purchase of new repertoire in Frankfurt.\footnote{Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Miscelánea General, Legajo 50, Carpeta 2. "Secretaría De Instrucción Pública, Expediente 1.266, Bogotá 17 De Septiembre De 1886, El Director De La Academia N. De Música Envía Una Cuenta De Los Gastos Que Ha Hecho En Favor De La Misma." 1886. F. 966r} Another two documents that are proof of Price’s efforts are bills of importation, in which most of the items were
scores of opera and orchestral music.\textsuperscript{194} The price of both shipments (covering purchase, shipment, consignment commission and customs) was up to $200.00.\textsuperscript{195} These documents must have been typical in the bookkeeping of the National Academy, but it seems that not many like them survived to present day.

**Musical texts: scores and musical criticism**

Scores can be understood as an element in a pedagogical, material and ideological system. As one of the central elements in a pedagogical system, they were used to develop knowledge (and the projection of such knowledge into the future); scores form a space in which a musical work is prepared to enter a collection of works that deserve to be conserved for the present and taught to future generations. In this sense, the printing of scores in Colombia during the period of study marks the start of the construction of musical canons in which composers, music teachers and music aficionados were eager to gather the art music that they thought was appropriate as an element of culture. This is a process that can be explained through the use of the concepts reception and effect. Reception is understood as the welcome that the musically literate world gives to a musical work; this involves not just the number of performances after its premiere and the access to the work, but also the assessment that other composers, critics, journalists and writers give about the music. As effect, it is the process of change that can reshape a musical work following its premiere: changes in the score, performance practices associated to it, the interaction of other musical works with it, and the association of literary works to it.\textsuperscript{196} We can apply these concepts to three facets of the printing of scores in Colombia: the printing and circulation of opera scores; the printing and circulation of scores by European composers who had a privileged status in the European music canon (Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Weber, Chopin, and Liszt) and of "minor" composers; and the printing and circulation of works by Colombian composers.

So far, collected data shows that opera and zarzuela scores were not printed in Colombia but that they arrived as imports. Opera was understood by prominent intellectual figures of the time as one of the most emblematic activities of urban culture, since it was also one of the most revealing features of civilization.\textsuperscript{197} That is why musicians/journalists like José Vergara y Vergara translated the libretti of operas that were performed in Bogotá in 1858. Short stories written by recognized authors of the time

---


\textsuperscript{195} Reports given by inspectors from the Ministry of Public Instruction echoed speeches given by Price at concerts at the National Academy of Music in which he stressed repeatedly his belief in the civilizing effect that the Academy would have on Colombians. Whenever Price demanded from the Government that his expenses were recognized, he also stressed that he did it because of his faith in the educational mission of the Academy.


\textsuperscript{197} See Chapter 5.
were part of the reception that those with musical knowledge (not necessarily musicians) could display in order to promote opera as an art form relevant to Colombian society. All this activity not only accompanied the sale of opera scores, but I suggest that it acted as indirect publicity for them, as we see in Image 6.12:

![Advertisement](image)

**Figure 31:** Advertisement published in the newspaper El Espectador, Medellín, July 23 1892, No. 176.

A similar process occurred with *zarzuela* scores, but although there were good reviews of the companies and of the works, the data do not show the same abundance of reception that accompanied opera scores. The most striking examples of the good reception that *zarzuela* had by the musically literate public are the reception of Gonzalo Vidal’s *María* and of the *zarzuela* *Miguel Strogoff*. Vidal’s work was based on the homonymous novel by Colombian writer Jorge Isaacs and *Miguel Strogoff* was the adaptation of the Jules Verne novel by the Spaniard director of the *zarzuela* company that performed it in Medellín in 1888 (Larra and Pérez Escrich). Vidal’s *zarzuela* was premiered in 1904 and earned him not only praise, but detailed reviews by his contemporaries and friends (who were also part of the literate and musically learned elite of Medellín).

Scores of instrumental music show another facet of the process of reception and effect. As we have seen before, piano scores enjoyed the most popularity, since the piano was the most fashionable musical instrument in Colombia during the nineteenth century. Indeed, with the success of the piano, Colombian writers soon began to portray romantic heroines and heroes who expressed their emotions through their piano performances, and painters and photographers included the piano in their images. The editors of the magazine *Colombia Artística* emphasized the association between the print piano score and literature about music by printing biographical notes and portraits of Colombian musicians and composers whose work was published in the same edition (see Figure 33).

---

198 “‘Teatro – Miguel Strogoff’”. *La voz de Antioquia*, No. 52, October 18 1888
199 C.A.M, “‘María (impressiones personales)’”, *La Miscelánea*, No. 5 October 1903
Scores of symphonies and chamber music were part of the tools employed in private concerts, concerts given by philharmonic societies and concerts given by the National Academy of Music. In the annual reports of concerts given by the Academy we find the names of European composers that made part of both the scholarly and performing canon: Haydn, Weber, Beethoven, Clementi, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Wagner. Since the Academy had divided its students into a female and a male section, there was a tendency to assign some works more to one section than to the other: while both sections shared the study of Beethoven, male students performed his "major" sonatas while women performed earlier sonatas; in contrast, women performed more works by Chopin than men. It is also important to notice that Johan Sebastian Bach is mentioned for the first time in reports of concerts in 1898 (performed by the male section), the same year that Cuban violinist Brindis de Salas performed one of his works for solo violin at the Academy — and for the first time in Colombia. The scores by “major” composers that were performed in these concerts joined the scores by “minor” composers, such as Thalberg, Ries, Suppé, Pacini, Sarasate, Gottschalk and others.

200 Photographs by Alejandra Isaza, Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango.
203 “Conciertos”, Anuario Academia Nacional de Música Año XII, (Bogotá: Imprenta La Luz, 1898) p. 14
In light of these data, we have to ask if this scholarly and academic performing canon that classified musical works had any effect on Colombian aficionados in their consumption of scores and in audiences at concerts. In reviews about concerts, their authors praise the skill of the performers: Brindis de Salas was hailed by music connoisseurs in Bogotá and Medellín when he performed in these cities in 1898 and 1899; the cellist W. Zinkeisen was also praised by music critics; and Colombian musicians also earned the enthusiastic support of the aficionados, especially those who had enough credibility to be taken as erudite in music matters and published their critique in literary magazines and newspapers. However, when we put in contrast the data about scores that were performed in academic concerts with the data given by concert reviews about scores that were performed in charity and private concerts, we can detect a tendency in the latter reviews to summarize the depiction of the performances. Could it be that the music critics, composers and music teachers who attended these non-academic events were getting frustrated with what seemed to be the non-academic performing canon?

Three leaders of the Colombian art music scene criticized this tendency: José Caicedo y Rojas, Jorge Wilson Price and Gonzalo Vidal. Caicedo and Price, as musicians and teachers denounced the “bad taste” that art musicians had to fight against every day and spoke against the “bad taste” that reigned among the aficionados.204 Caicedo y Rojas gives us a clue in his critique about this ‘bad taste’ when he talks of the few amateur pianists who enjoyed playing symphonies arranged for the piano and sonatas; aficionadas like these would try to get scores of complex works. And if we read Price’s critique, we find that he considered as part of his mission as the Academy’s Director “crear el gusto por las obras clásicas de los grandes maestros y por el estudio de la estética musical”.205 We can infer from these critiques that part of the society that supported art music wanted to create an ideal audience that would not only enjoy, but also understand, symphonies and sonatas, the kind of music work that is taken as classical masterpieces (“obras clásicas”); thus, the arrival of scores of these works would increase – and so would increase the stimulus to studying them. In his Revista Musical, Gonzalo Vidal translated excerpts from books by European musicians that advocated for the respect towards instrumental music; he took one of these excerpts from the book Harmonie et Melodie in which Saint-Saens spoke against two forces that denigrated the prestige of instrumental music, which he calls serious music: the first being the criticism by writers who did not know about music and that through their critique made music an incomprehensible art form. These self-appointed music critics also constrained the development of music by condemning the work of contemporary composers. They also propelled the second force against instrumental music by supporting the “hypocritical and vulgar” preference for vocal music and melody, which made melody a travesty and forced the composer to hide his talent and his efforts to please the audience.206

205 Price, “Discurso”, 1889
In contrast to these recommendations by Colombian musicians and music critics, most of the performing canon in academic and non-academic concerts comprised works with programmatic titles that associated the music with the description of a person (mostly a woman), a place or an emotion. This implies that the most popular music pieces for Colombian audiences were those that evoked in them a familiar subjectivity; it is possible that these works were part of the musical library of many aficionados who expected them as part of any concert, even when the most learned musicians and music lovers would try to promote more complex pieces that implied a different way of listening and at the same time, a major level of abstraction, such as symphonies and sonatas.

Figure 33: Advertisement by Carlos A. Molina

In this advertisement we can see the publicity that booksellers like Carlos A. Molina used to promote scores among their clients: in a generic way he promoted his assortment of music, but he specified the supply of fantasies composed on motifs of the operas that had been presented by the Italian opera company that performed in Medellín at the time.²⁰⁷

The literary activity that promoted instrumental art music might have been a way to pave the distance between the non-academic canon and the scholarly canon. This literary activity comprised translations of anecdotes about composers that Colombian journalists took from the foreign press. Some booksellers as well as Colombians returning from abroad brought to the country books about the history of music with summarized biographies as well as lists of musical works by the “great composers”. As for the biographical anecdotes about European composers printed in the Colombian press, collected data shows that Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt were the favourite figures. These anecdotes depicted these composers as enlightened men, with superior sensibility, a solid education in their craft and a dismissive attitude towards the material world, all using a romantic vocabulary. When describing Beethoven, the journalist who translated (and perhaps summarized) the note writes:

Toda su existencia, pobre, relegado a la soledad por el menosprecio de los demás, y su carácter naturalmente selvático y agriado por la injusticia,
The romantic tones were stronger in the anecdote taken from the magazine *Review of Reviews* by the publisher of the magazine *Alpha* in 1907, in which the artist Felix Ziem tells how Chopin composed the famous “Marche Funèbre”, the third movement of his piano sonata Op. 35 No. 2 in B-flat minor; he begins telling how, one night in Venice, the most celebrated artists of the time (De Mussette, George Sand, Rossini, Delacroix, Chopin and himself) were having a poor yet happy dinner and how, in jest, Ziem had taken an anatomy skeleton to the piano acting as if the skeleton could play:

De pronto, una silla cayó con estrépito y me sentí arrancado del asiento del piano; Chopin […] se puso a tocar comme ange, comme diable, c’est égal. Mon Dieu. Qué maravilla! No se oía en todo el aposento otro sonido. […] Las bujías se extinguieron y la semiobscuridad de la noche estival se disipó, y el alba nos vino a sorprender inmóviles.  

This anecdote, though apocryphal, has all the Romantic elements that the readers of the magazine and music lovers could associate to that particular work. The scenario depicted by Ziem makes one remember the painting “Franz Lizst fantasizing at the piano” by Joseph Danhauser (1840) and perhaps that was the effect that this description had in those readers who had seen the painting (either in person, in a trip to a European museum or reproduced in a book) and listened to this work for piano. Some of Chopin’s works were part of the scholarly canon displayed by the National Academy of Music and they were also known outside of the Academia. Data shows that the *Marche Funèbre* was a familiar element in the cultural system that included art music (*música clásica*), knowledge about its composer and knowledge of images related to that period in the history of art.

---

208 “Últimos Momentos De Beethowen.” El Zipa, No. 19, December 1878. The spelling of the name Beethoven (Beethowen) is taken from the original source.

209 “La Marcha Fúnebre De Chopin.” Alpha, Nos. 23 and 24, December 1907. The words in French and italic are in the original source.
Franz Liszt was another frequent presence in the scholarly canon and it is possible to infer that the fact that the women’s section of the Academy played his works for piano also made him a frequent guest in the realm of domestic piano music. The anecdote of Liszt that Colombian publishers chose was, in fact, reprinted several times in magazines *La Miscelánea, Revista Musical* and *Colombia Artística*. In it Liszt not only proves his ‘credentials’ as a Romantic artist, but as one with deep appreciation of popular traditional music: the note tells how Liszt, while touring in Romania, enters into a contest with a popular musician (called *lautar*). In the end, Liszt gives the laurel of victory to the popular musician: “¡bebe, bardo lautar, mi señor, bebe, por que Dios te hizo artista y eres más grande que yo!”.

The vocabulary used in these anecdotes was kindred to the Romantic vocabulary of Colombian intellectuals; the authors chosen by Colombian journalists to be translated and published emphasized in these accounts (all of them apocryphal) the sensibility of the composers, a quality that highlighted their humanity and that at the same time, made them different from the rest of humanity. The moral superiority of the composer was marked by such high sensibility, which allowed him to compose musical works that could stand the test of time and show his fellow men how to achieve spiritual progress by evoking the divine (Beethoven), the sombre (Chopin) or by recognizing the power of tradition (Liszt). These anecdotes were the attempt of intellectuals and musicians to close the gap dressed as difficulty that instrumental music could pose to Colombian audiences, too accustomed to the drawing-room piece with programmatic title, the dance music and the opera overture; through the recognizing of the composer’s sensibility,

---


211 “Entre Músicos.” *La Miscelánea*, Nos. 6 and 7, February 1907.
Colombian audiences were called to welcome this type of music and feel united in listening to it. Of course, they also served to form a consensus about the qualities that would be associated to each composer and their work, and thus, could be used as the foundations of a general knowledge and taste for classical music.

Conclusions
At the beginning of this chapter, the analysis of the insertion of the piano as a commodity and as a social practice in mid-nineteenth century-Colombian urban society renders the notion of comfort as a close associate to those of civilization, progress and modernity. This association can be understood when we take the notion of comfort as the trigger of a set of processes through which a new social perception emerged. This realization allows us to understand how, to a segment of urban Colombian society in the second half of the nineteenth century, the expression of the individual was a crucial element of the development of civilization and progress – and therefore, of modernity. In this case, comfort expressed through the possession of a piano expressed the subjective qualities of its owner in a way that constituted his/her social persona. This overlapping of the private and the public spheres explains how the possession of a piano became another marker of social distinction, for it meant that its owner was qualified to have a public life in which he/she displayed social sensibility.

However, this translated into the exclusion of those who did not have the possibility to experience the piano – let alone to have one. In this way, the possibility of developing one’s sensibility through the piano experience was restricted to a segment of urban society. The fact that the effect of the piano as practice was not always concurrent to the positive association of music, sensibility and public life that many political and cultural leaders of the time promoted shows the diversity of appropriations that this practice experienced in nineteenth-century urban Colombian society; this diversity is a clue to understand the different social groups and their cultures and how they interacted in the context of a society that, albeit going through processes of change, also manifested the contradictions of its re-invention of social hierarchies.

The piano as practice also shows a process of genderization of art music in Colombia. Its insertion as one of the markers of feminine subjectivity and as one of the centres of private life, reinforced the association of a part of art music artistry with the “feminine sphere”. During the nineteenth and part of the twentieth century, this was the sphere where women could display their talents and skills without facing the ‘threats’ of the public world, which was the “masculine sphere”; the social reception that resulted from this division of the social world, resulted for art music in the underestimation of musical formats and practices that developed in the realm of domestic music which, as it turned out, resulted in the underestimation by most of society of the practice of art music in general as a “women’s thing”.212 Although women’s musical talent

was valued, the cited sources in this chapter show that feminine talent had to be supervised in order to
fulfil its responsibility as one of the moral compasses of society. When feminine talent and feminine
sensibility were associated to superficiality, this was taken by educators of both sexes as a reason for
alert, for the civilizing effect of music was in danger.\textsuperscript{213}

Through the analysis of the insertion of scores we can understand that the promotion of musical literacy
implied the possibility to enter a cultural system that had been restricted to a learned few. The promotion
of musical scores went hand in hand with the promotion of the self-teaching of musical notation. Thus, the
Liberal idea of bringing down the barriers that had kept knowledge from most Colombians (one of the
resentments left behind by the colonial rule) would be achieved. However, the impact of these efforts was
restricted by the general illiteracy of most of the population. The coexistence of the illiterate and the
literate cultures of music (of which scores form part) was the factual contradiction that challenged the
rhetoric that promoted music literacy. Such literacy implied the neglect of the oral musical culture that was
a functional element in the life of most of the Colombian population at the time, not just by ignoring its
present, but also by ignoring its rightful place in the future. If scores are the materialization of the musical
present and of the musical legacy that a community wishes to project into the future, the scores that were
treasured by Colombian urban mid-nineteenth-century society constitute a part of the narrative that this
society wanted to achieve as their destiny.

\textsuperscript{213} Londoño, "El Ideal Femenino Del Siglo XIX En Colombia: Entre Flores, Lágrimas Y Ángeles."
CHAPTER 7: MUSIC OF THE NATION

A cause for celebration
In this chapter I explain the role of music in the celebration of the centenary of Colombian independence in 1910. This civic festivity was to be the model for all civic festivities in Colombia; its importance was highlighted by the context in which it was celebrated, the decade after the War of Thousand Days (1899–1902), one of the most devastating civil wars up until that date. In the aftermath of this war, the celebration of the first 100 years of independence was imbued with a strong symbolism by the government: the centenary was supposed to be the celebration of national unity formed by a retrospective look towards "the past" and a hopeful look towards "the future". In this display of symbols, the music and its performers acted as pedagogical media to convey a message not only of unity, but also of hierarchy.

The regular celebration of Independence Day was something new to Colombian society. These civic festivities entered an invented tradition of secular festivities installed to commemorate the birth of the Republic and they were regulated by decrees by the central government.¹ The first was on the 20 July 1849 and was carried out under the leadership of the Liberal Party, then in power, although it was not sponsored by the central government but by the Philanthropic Society; in this way the Liberal government applied the principle of no intervention in initiatives from citizens. It involved the participation of the Philharmonic Society, founded in 1846, and was hailed by the Liberal press of the time as involving two signs of progress: first, a special concert; and second, the placement by the President of the first stone of what would be the Philharmonic Society’s Concert Hall. The programme of this festivity was a combination of official speeches celebrating the day and the abolition of slavery law, a concert by the Philharmonic Society, military music, a special mass and other amusements for "el pueblo": fireworks, bullfights, dancing and a fountain of chicha.²

However, the celebration of the 20th of July as Independence Day did not become regular during the second half of the nineteenth century. Not only was the federalist organization of the country an obstacle for this regularization, but there was also constant civil war, besides, not all the regional governments of the country agreed on the 20 July as the commemorative day and chose to promote what their governing elites thought was their own commemorative date.³ If we apply the general observations made by Hobsbawm about the character of invented traditions — and civic secular festivities are that type of tradition — the celebration of Independence Day in mid-nineteenth century Colombia was an attempt by

² Programa acordado por la Sociedad Filantrópica para las fiestas que tendran lugar los días 20,21 i 22, 24, 25 i 26 del presente mes, en celebracion del aniversario de la Independencia”
the central government and the political elite to both disseminate their belief in the necessity of republican values, to pave the way to political order, and to establish social cohesion around the notions of republican civic life and democracy; both dynamics were complemented by the “editing” of the past, a process through which Colombian leaders sought to find explicative links between a politically conflictive present and a not too distant colonial past. In a context of two-party confrontation that usually led to war, the celebration of Independence Day was an important way to try to build a consensus that would serve to build a common ground among all citizens, for all could feel invited and represented: those who promoted an urban literate culture and the populace that was still colonial in much of their lifestyle, as acknowledged by the organizers of the festivity in 1849 when they promoted bullfights, fireworks, public dances and chicha as part of the celebration. In 1859 the celebrations did not include these features, according to the correspondent who reported on them for the literary magazine *El Mosaico*: speeches, a mass, a procession, and gun salutes. The most memorable event was the inaugural concert given by the Sociedad Lírica where the artists of the Italian opera company that was performing in the capital at the moment sang. We see that ten years later the association between art music and political power was reaffirmed, as had happened with the Philharmonic Society. The lack of reports of any popular amusements poses a question: was there no manifestation from the subaltern classes? Or were these manifestations according to what the literate urban elites expected to see and therefore, there was nothing exceptional to report? What is clear is that urban elites created and monopolized this festivity as a way to present themselves and their cosmopolitan culture as the part of the country that was most devoted to the republican ideals. Through this self-definition, urban elites chose a way of celebration that was opposed to the ways of celebration of the rest of the population and thus, they reaffirmed social and political hierarchy.

The shift in the secular tradition of civic festivities started in 1873, when President Manuel Murillo Toro sanctioned in the Law of the 8 May that the 20 July was to be the official commemorative day of Colombian Independence. It is possible that this shift was taken in view of the new pedagogical outlook that the Liberal government took during this decade: in order to have a proper citizenship, the government had to create spaces and mechanisms in which the people could be educated to live in a republic. The civic festivity was one of such and it seems that in order to fulfil the pedagogical aims of the civic festivity, the Government started to appoint commissions to plan them. The newspaper *La América* reported on the 1874 celebration of Independence in Buga, a prominent city in the southern state of Valle del Cauca; according to the report, the celebrations included a commercial fair of regional products, fireworks, speeches and display of the flags. In its musical aspect, the programme promised the amusement of dancing as well as the performance of patriotic songs and of a national anthem in which local musicians

---

4 Hobsbawn, *Inventing Traditions*
5 Guss, *The Festive State*.
6 Cano, “Centenario de la Independencia de Colombia ...”
7 “Interior”, *La América*, No. 206, August 4, 1874
praised the local heroes of the Battle of San Juanito.\textsuperscript{8} Although this festivity aimed to commemorate \textit{national} independence, an undertone of conflict between the nation and the region was voiced by the author of the report through his complaints about the absence of memorabilia from the regional heroes in the celebrations (Generals José María Cabal and Pedro Murgueitio). Perhaps the “national” anthem was supposed to mend such slighting. Notwithstanding, the celebration of the national civic festivity went without any disruption and it included the commemoration of the bonds between Colombia and the other nations that had resulted from the independence process led by General Simón Bolívar.

The complaint about the symbolical absence of the regional/local Independence heroes alerts us to the uses of history that the planning of this festivity illustrated; the central government, although federal, was promoting a centralised understanding of the history of Independence. This understanding was debated within the regions, for the costs of Independence and the upheavals of republican life had had a huge effect on the vision elites had of themselves, their region and their role in the country. To some of the elites the price had been too high and, if they were to play a role in the Republic, the regional contribution to independence had to be acknowledged through the inclusion of their heroes and even through inclusion of their colonial past. As David Guss argues, “[…] the acknowledgement of history, or inversely, its denial is not about the accuracy of memory; it is about the relationship to power. […] history is primarily about the contemporary social relations of those who tell it […]”\textsuperscript{9}. We see then that two histories entered into a confrontation that implied acknowledgement and challenge at the same time: the regional-local history and the national general history. In this way, a regional identity and a national identity established a complex dialogue.

The irregular planning for the celebration of Independence resulted in a combination of popular amusements and official events. In 1880 a correspondent complained in the \textit{Diario de Cundinamarca} about the disorder that was caused by the festivity; to him, the celebrations were planned for the Santafé de Bogotá of the 1850s, not for a growing city that demanded a much better organized festival in which the popular amusements and the parties carried out in households did not cause chaos and ruin:

\begin{quote}
Las fiestas durarán siete días, en los cuales se consumirá mucho brandi, se quemará mucha pólvora […] perderán muchos individuos sus ahorros al juego y agotarán muchos más sus recursos en subvenir a los gastos de exhibición y ostentación. […] La ciudad ha progresado en habitantes, en costumbres y en ideas; pero las fiestas se dispondrán como para el número de habitantes, como para las costumbres y como para las ideas rancias de treinta años atrás.\textsuperscript{10}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{8} The Battle of San Juanito (Buga) was considered by the regional historians of the time as one of the highlights of the Independence process, since it marked one of the big defeats of the Spanish royalist army.

\textsuperscript{9} Guss, \textit{The Festive State}. 25

\textsuperscript{10} “Hechos Diversos: Las Fiestas” \textit{Diario de Cundinamarca}, No. 2709 June 22, 1880
For this correspondent, the few events worthy of positive review were the anthems sung by students from the Escuela Normal accompanied by an orchestra and the Agricultural Exhibition, the latter being a “testimonio incontrovertible del progreso material de la patria”.\textsuperscript{11} We see then that the combination of a planned celebration and of a spontaneous festivity was reminiscent — to a big segment of urban elites — of traditions that should have been set aside by the end of the nineteenth century. Some of the entertainments in these festivities were a continuation of those provided by the viceregal authorities during the colonial period: bullfights, fireworks, public dances (tablados), spirits and religious services had been the hallmarks of all civil and religious festivities. The announcement in 1888 of the celebration of Independence on the 20 July in Medellín had a different tone, for the promoters “[…] se muestran convencidos de que ‘los regocijos públicos abren fuentes a la industria y dan vida a las transacciones comerciales, trabajo y pan a las clases obreras’. Así sea.”\textsuperscript{12}

This advertisement shows that promoters of the festivity of Independence in Medellín appropriated this occasion to boost commercial activity in the city with the hope of providing a better atmosphere for the integration of the “clases obreras”, part of the population that did not belong to the elite and that had not been an active part of the preparations for the celebration. But the advert also relates to the traditional understanding that planned official urban festivities had: they were chances to gather the population and boost commercial activity; they provided work – at least for a few days – to those whose occupation did not rely on a steady activity, such as musicians, transporters, cooks, and they also provided rest from the usual activities. The novelties brought by the secular republican celebration were the cause for commemoration, the speeches and the participation of institutions and groups of citizens that, with the approval of the government, performed or carried out events that proclaimed the progress of the Republic.

We can understand, then, the imposition and appropriation of the festivity of Independence Day as a combination of the traditional ways to celebrate and the novelties of this new type of festivity, but this combination was not only the manifestation of the permanence of many of the old pre-republican social habits, it was also a way to provide ties between the social groups that met at the celebration; in other contexts, these social groups clashed in the strong confrontations that marked the civil wars that characterised Colombian political life.\textsuperscript{13}

Music to celebrate
Reviews of the celebration of Independence Day show the presence of two types of music performance: one that involved direct support from the Government and one that, although not officially disapproved by the Government, was the target of stigma voiced by the urban political elites. The institutions approved by the Government that gave concerts and performed as part of the planned segment of the civic festivity

\textsuperscript{11} “Hechos Diversos: El 20 de Julio”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2725 July 27, 1880
\textsuperscript{12} “Mesa Revuelta: Fiestas.” El Espectador, No. 67 June 5, 1888
\textsuperscript{13} See Hobsbawm, “Inventing Traditions”
were the students of the teacher training schools (escuelas normales), the military brass bands and, since its foundation in 1882, the National Academy of Music. Singing and music were part of the curriculum of the escuelas normales since the Organic Decree of 1870; therefore, the participation of groups of students from these schools was considered a manifestation of the cultural and civic progress that the nation was achieving. Choirs from both the women’s and men’s teaching schools also performed in other civic festivities such as concerts in commemoration of the birth of General Simón Bolívar on 24 July;14 the works they performed were in line with the musical taste of the urban elite and were a direct reflection of the music that was considered an aesthetic model by musicians and music lovers: opera excerpts and overtures, symphonic works, marches and patriotic hymns. In 1888 the National Academy of Music held one of these concerts on 20 July, in which they performed a repertoire consisting of opera and symphonic works.15 Sources do not clearly indicate whether the concerts given by the National Academy of Music on 20 July were public or, at least, open to a big audience; they were regular until the 1890s, when they were replaced by smaller concerts which only the parents of students and special guests could attend.16

The implantation of civic festivities in Colombia demanded the development of an aesthetic system that had difficult beginnings, not just in terms of its stability but in terms of how to carry it out. This system comprised elements in urban space, such as the parks and squares that were transformed into new public spaces in which activities of leisure and ceremonies added to the traditional public purposes (walking, meeting and trading).17 The transformation of the traditional colonial squares into modern parks called for the use of trees and flowers, benches, walking paths, night time illumination and specific spaces for brass bands. The installation of statues remembering the heroes of Independence came later, with the centenary of 1910, but until then, portraits of Bolívar and other military heroes were placed in the middle of the square and formed the principal focus of the procession that constituted the main official act of the ceremony in any civic celebration. Those portraits were another element in the system of the civic festivity; reports of the celebration of Independence before 1900 tell how the portraits of the national heroes sometimes were accompanied by the portraits of the regional heroes and how these images presided over the festivities; flags, floral offerings, triumphal arches and gun salutes had to enhance their mis en scene.18 The portraits were part of the historical memory that the organizers of the festivity wanted to celebrate and formed a secular iconography that was to be revered and respected by the citizens. The other elements (flags, floral offerings, etc.) were part of the long festive tradition that had thrived in Colombian society since colonial times. Among the new elements included by this secular festivity was

14 “Hechos Diversos: Concierto” Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3316 July 21, 1883
15 Anuario de la Academia Nacional de Música, Año de 1888, (Bogotá: La Luz, 1888), 15 – 16
16 The annual Academy report of 1894 explains that public concerts were replaced by sabatinas – Saturday concerts – because big public concerts were difficult to organize in terms of venue and the stage fright of some of the students.
17 See Passler, Composing the Citizen: music as public utility in Third Republic France.
the presence of the Army: they were summoned by the government to be there in their gala uniforms to guard the celebrations and they were to perform military exercises to demonstrate the power and the order of the Republic. Such display relates to the fact that during the 1880s President Rafael Núñez approved several laws aimed at the development and control of the army as a centralized and hierarchical institution that could be a point of strength for the Republic. The military brass band acquired importance within this system that was deployed by the government to develop a calendar of civic festivities embodying a link between the government and the people.

**Festive music: the music military bands**
The brass band became a regular presence in Colombia during the years of struggle for Independence. They were called *bandas de guerra* and they were formed by musicians without academic training who were assimilated into the lower military ranks. Army troops in their lower ranks were formed of men from subaltern classes (urban and rural); that indicates that this segment of the army was formed by a population that was identified by their economic activities and their ethnicity. Other Latin American countries were also organizing their military music bands in different political contexts: the Austrian Emperor of Mexico imported military bands from his country that were emulated by the Mexicans. However, not all musicians who played for the army were assimilated into the army as soldiers: in 1864 the Secretary of the Army and Navy reported that some of the musicians who had played in the army in 1862 had not been definitely enrolled and therefore could not aspire to enjoy all the benefits implied by a military rank, which included regular pay, the possibility of basic education and training in a line of work (musician) that could render profits if the musician left the army.

During the 1860s the organization and discipline of the military music bands was the responsibility of the General Commander. This high-ranking official was responsible for designating the number of musicians that every battalion needed, the amount of instruction that the musicians should get, when and where they had to perform and their discipline. The latter became a source of problems for the military, for sometimes musicians were not keen to follow army discipline; in 1859 the battalion musician Nicolás Quiñones went to trial on the charge of insubordination, as he had refused to go back to the barracks when he was ordered to by two superior officers. The case was serious, for not only did Quiñones refuse to follow orders, but he also insulted his superiors and caused a scandal in the middle of San Victorino.

---

19 *De milicias reales a militares contrainsurgentes. La institución militar en Colombia del siglo XVIII al XXI* edited by César Torres del Río and Saúl Rodríguez Hernández (Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2008).
20 Pedro Alejandro Sarmiento Rodríguez, “Influencia de la composición musical en el desarrollo de la música de banda en Colombia” in www.sarmientomusica.com, accessed on July 2012
22 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, Orden General de la 1a Columna del Ejército para el día 18 de Diciembre de 1864.
Square, where he was gambling at the time. The accounts of witnesses (all of them soldiers) insist that Quiñones was aggressive and disobedient and that it was necessary to call for support from the barracks in order to restrain him and force him to go with them.\textsuperscript{23} Sometimes insubordination added to other crimes, as shown by a case in 1869 when two musicians deserted their battalion and took their uniforms and music instruments with them; this case was published in the \textit{Diario Oficial} and included the Government’s ruling: all authorities were ordered to cooperate in bringing the deserters to trial and all news on the matter had to be communicated to the Secretary of the Army and Navy.\textsuperscript{24} This ruling was an attempt to publicize the punishment that these types of deserters could face when they went against military discipline. But why risk what appeared to have been a secure position in the army as a musician? It seems that the treatment given to soldiers and low rank officers was not very good; also, civil wars forced the army to be constantly moving away from their families that were left in poverty; by taking with them their uniforms and their instruments, these musician deserters took property that could help them and their families to alleviate their poverty. The reinforcement of military discipline during the second half of the nineteenth century was a constant concern for the government, which wanted to create a military institution that also served as a moral example to civilians. In 1898 one of the battalions in Tunja received a reminder about the virtues that every soldier should have:

\begin{quote}
Además de las comunes de todo ciudadano, deben brillar en un Militar las siguientes: 1\textsuperscript{a} la regularidad de costumbres = 2\textsuperscript{a} El honor = 3\textsuperscript{a} El Balor [valor] = 4\textsuperscript{a} La humildad = 5\textsuperscript{a} La obediencia = 6\textsuperscript{a} El sufrimiento = 7\textsuperscript{a} La instrucción [instrucción] = 8\textsuperscript{a} La buena educación y 9\textsuperscript{a} La economía = El infrascrito recomienda la practica de estas virtudes que […] formar miltares acreedores al nombre de tales, por su lealtad, y disciplina y trato social.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

Data about the band in Cartagena de Indias in 1903 show that the discipline became stricter in regards of their hours of study and the care they should take with their uniforms and instruments.\textsuperscript{26} The soldiers as well as the students of military schools were subject to a strict discipline in order to achieve that desired moral legitimacy. As Idelman Joaquín Mejía explains: “La intención de mantener encerrados a los alumnos [from the military school] era clara: impedirles que se relacionaran con ‘la plebe’ y evitar que buscaran diversión con ‘gente de baja esfera’ en las chicherías”.\textsuperscript{27} In this sense, obedience and discipline had to be embodied by the soldiers; if they formed a music band, these qualities had to be manifested in

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{23} “Contra Nicolas Quiñones, Músico del Batallon numero 1 de Infanteria, acusado por el delito de Resistencia para obedecer”. Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, Tomo 109 (1859)
\textsuperscript{24} “Secretaría de Guerra y Marina: Resolucion relative a la deseercion de unos musicos del batallon Zapadores”, \textit{Diario Oficial} No. 1453, February 3 1869
\textsuperscript{25} “Orden General de la Tercera Division para hoy Martes 22 de Marzo de 1898, Tunja” .Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Correspondencia Militar Guerra de los Mil Días y Ordenes Generales (1898)
\textsuperscript{26} Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, Cartagena, Agosto 24 y Diciembre 16, 1903
\textsuperscript{27} Idelmán Joaquín Mejía, “‘Una escuela para el apaciguamiento político’, el caso de la Escuela de Ingeniería Civil y Militar de los Estados Unidos de Colombia, 1880 – 1884” in Torres del Río and Hernández (2008), 262
\end{footnotes}
the production of music under the leadership of their conductor. I suggest that this was aimed as a powerful message to civilians: obedience and discipline were the foundations for harmony.

Figure 35: Abel Martínez, photograph by Melitón Rodríguez, 1893 (Medellín).

There are no records of the brass band with which he played, but the fact that he was wearing his uniform and his musical instrument when he had this photo taken is proof of pride of his position.28

The role of military brass bands in the celebration of Independence changed from the mid-nineteenth century. Press reviews and military documents show the presence of brass bands as an important part of the festivities. On 18 July 1864 the brass bands of the Square Garrison in Bogotá were summoned to celebrate the eve of Independence Day with some musical pieces.29 This type of performance became a regular duty of military brass bands not only in the capital, but throughout the country. However, the constant state of political instability affected the organization and discipline of military brass bands; although it is reported that when and wherever possible, these groups performed retretas in their cities.30

The organization of the army into a disciplined body under the command of the civilian government implied the creation of specific units that, in turn, needed specific training that would enable them to fulfil the duties that an organized army needed in order to function; if the military brass bands were meant to

28 Archivo Fotográfico Biblioteca Pública Piloto, Medellín (Antioquia).
29 “Orden General de la 1a Columna del Ejército para hoy 18 de Julio de 1864”, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Correspondencia Militar. (1864)
30 Bermúdez and Duque, Historia de la música en Santafé y Bogotá 1538-1938. 72.
represent army discipline, they needed not only to be trained by experienced musicians, but also to enrol trained musicians. The shift towards more regular discipline in the military music bands began in 1882, two years after Rafael Núñez began his first presidency, when in October of that year the musician Dario Achiardi was hired as conductor of the First Music Band of the Artillery Battalion No. 1. This was an attempt to raise the musical skills and the performing standards of the music bands, since avowed music critics such as José Caicedo y Rojas thought that the musicians were not properly trained and the repertoire was inappropriate. To Caicedo y Rojas, the repertoire of polkas and pasillos played by military music bands was inappropriate, for its association with domestic music made by women was in disagreement with the masculine and martial character of the militia. The attempt to improve the organization of the military music bands received strong support in 1888, when the Italian musician Manuel Conti was hired by President Rafael Núñez as conductor of the National Band, a position from which Conti led the standardization of the music bands across the country. Then in 1892, Decree 1360 sanctioned the organization of an Examination Board that was directly linked to the National Academy of Music; this Board was in charge of approving the musicians who were to work with the national music bands or any other musical job in the country. We see then that the organization of the military music bands formed part of the general organization and centralization of all the provinces of the government structured under the flag of the Regeneration, a political project that called for a hierarchical and centralized method of governance.

The organization of the National Band, led by Manuel Conti from 1888, enabled this group to take a bigger role in all the official events where music was required and achieve more regular performances in retretas. Sources suggest that Achiardi reported every detail of the work of the band to the military officers in charge. He probably suggested shortly after his appointment that the musicians should report if they had any private engagements to play elsewhere and that they should ensure that such engagements did not interfere with their duties to the band; this was made effective through an order by the General Commander. A different order, given a few days later, stipulated that the band musicians should not enjoy a wage rise, for they could round out their income with work outside the band. In February 1883, surely after another suggestion by Achiardi, the Band was ordered to perform at the retretas in their dress uniform. The music bands of the capital soon started to perform in several official events: public exams at the teaching schools, religious ceremonies for charity, and receptions for foreign diplomats and

---

31 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, “Ordenes Generales del Ejercito, Miercoles 25 de Octubre 1882” (1882)
32 Rojas, “El estado actual de la música en Bogotá”
34 Barriga Monroy, La educación musical en Bogotá 1880-1920
35 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, October 11 1882
36 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, February 19 1883
ecclesiastical dignitaries. The military music bands had to demonstrate that all this effort was worthwhile in December 1882: President Francisco Zaldúa died and they were ordered to provide the music for the funeral honours. The protagonist role that the brass band achieved at the funeral of the president and civic festivities illustrates how music was seen by the government as a powerful medium to provide shared musical experiences and thus create a sense of community. Colombian political and cultural elites of the time shared the belief that music could influence human emotions and behaviour; with that notion in mind, the insistence on organizing military bands, and making them perform in every public official occasion available, was another way to build social and political consensus based on a kinder facet of government power. The music of the military music bands not only aimed to impress, it also aimed to produce love, fraternity and respect among the citizens-audience with the hope that these feelings would translate into the political exercise of citizenship. As Joan Passler explains for a similar process in Third Republic France:

> The key concept here is the order empowered by fraternity, something in music more felt than analysed, a physical experience as well as a model for the democratic ideal. The concept was powerfully normative but also, through its connection to the order of music, construed as natural.

Every department in Colombia was in charge of its military music band, and most cities also provided musical instruments and uniforms for a good music band. In 1895 the governor of Antioquia, Julián Cock Bayer raised the pay of the musicians that played in the band of Medellín (capital of the province since 1826) after they threatened to quit their posts since their pay had not been raised and the contracts they had signed with the provincial government were not advantageous for them. It seems that governor Cock Bayer had to justify this raise, as well as the renovation of the contract signed with the conductor of the band, Rafael D’Alemán, for a year later he stressed in his report to the provincial assembly that the press and music critics recognized the progress and good performance of the band. In July 1895 the elite of Cali pleaded to the Minister of War not to dismantle the music band, which was depicted as an ornament to the city and was financially supported by it. In December of the same year, the government of Popayán (one of the oldest and most respected cities in the south of the country and capital of the Department of Cauca) commissioned the musical instruments for the military band of Cali (the second most important city of the Department of Cauca) from Europe through one of the European traders that

---

37 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, December 22, 1883
38 Passler, *Composing the Citizen*, p. 88
39 Heriberto Zapata Cuencar, *Historia de la banda de Medellín*, (Medellín: Granamérica, 1971)
40 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, Tunja, Julio 30, 1895
41 After the constitutional reform of 1886, which terminated the federalist system in Colombia, all former states were now called “departments” and were subordinated to the central presidential authority located in Santafé de Bogotá.
lived in the city. Both actions show how important military music bands were to local governments as symbols of their regional status. In these specific cases, the music band in Popayán added lustre to the state identity that its elite was trying to build, while the music band of Cali added beauty to the regional importance that the city was achieving with every territorial reorganization imposed by the central government. Here we see how two local governing elites supported bands, which worked as a symbolic link between the local governments and the population; with the bands the local governments emphasized the importance of their city and region and showed their support for urbanity and culture, providing music as an entertainment for all the population – including people in the surrounding rural areas.

Regional governments also were in charge of assigning the place and time where the bands performed; this contributed to the standardization of civic festivities and to the standardization of the bands themselves, for the bands had to rehearse, prepare their dress uniforms and practice their military discipline in order to perform according to the solemnity of the occasion. A booklet published in 1898 provides more clues about this standardization; in *Instrucción de Campaña* there is a clear explanation of the duties of the music band within the battalion. They were to provide ‘musical signals’, a language for times of peace and times of combat that soldiers had to identify to ensure the efficiency of the battalion. The duties of the first drummer as leader were very specific:

> El tambor mayor tiene el deber de instruir a la banda en escuela formal en práctica de los toques marciales ó de Guerra: 1° Enseñará por sí mismo el uso del instrumento que maneje, y hará que los que toquen otro con perfección enseñen a los demás; 2° Reunirá con tal objeto diariamente la banda a las horas y por el tiempo que dispongan las ordenes del Cuerpo, y hará que la instrucción se dé tanto a pie firme como marchando; 3o Cuidará que no se desvirtúe la música militar ni los toques marciales con agregados ni sonatas impropias, sino que se conserven puros los hermosos toques marciales; […]

This standardization towards the “proper” performance of the military music bands gained importance towards the close of the War of a Thousand Days, as sources about the military band of Cartagena de Indias show: the repertoire had to be approved by military superiors before the program was published in the local press and in May 1901, the band of Cartagena added to their usual schedule of civic festivities performances in homage to the military heroes of the War:

> […] Son nuestros Jefes todos Titanes del progreso, en las horas despiadadas para nuestros derechos políticos tergiversados por apostatas de la genuina idea

---

42 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, Diciembre 27, 1895
43 Thomson, “Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism”, 55
44 Cándido Amezquita, *Instrucción de Campaña*, (Bogotá: Imprenta Eduardo Espinosa Guzmán, 1898), 70
45 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, Cartagena, Marzo 10, 1901
Republicana y cuando llegan a las ciudades Capitales hombres de las tallas de los Grales. Luis Morales Berti, Daniel Ortiz, Juan M. Iguarán y Eparquio Gonzalez, los servidores en servicio se descubren reverentes, la sociedad se admira y el entusiasmo hace voces de elocuente reconocimiento para quienes todo lo abandonan cuando el clarín toca a consecuencia de los buenos ciudadanos para salvar las instituciones de la causa común.46

The military band was commanded to perform a *retreta* of selected pieces in front of the house where the generals were staying, in a sort of serenade. These performances show that military bands were another emissary of the state. The military music band was in the process of becoming a complex instrument; it was not just an ornament to the regiment, it was an institution that educated its members and demonstrated to civilians how to be obedient to the state. It was not just an ornament to the city where it was stationed; it was also, as Susan J. Smith says, a force that helped to reorganize local open-air spaces; the sound of brass was a different way for the people to get acquainted with the State and to form a more positive image of it.47

Thus, the military music band became a distinctive element in all the events related and supported by the Government after the War of a Thousand Days. Music bands performed at celebrations in public schools, at public exhibitions promoted by the government, and in national and local civic festivities. It seems that the presence of the band was understood by political elites as a present from the Government to the people; the music provided by a government institution was the symbol of a pact, as well as a symbol of generosity. Or at least, this was the intention that guided the public performances of military music bands. It cannot be denied that through their performances, bands disseminated part of the repertoire that was performed in concerts held at the theatre or in the privacy of elite homes. With their constant presence in the important events of civic life, bands became a social necessity and thus were incorporated into the local life of every city, enabling new social practices and political identities.48 The repertoire of the band expanded as a sign of this appropriation: regional music formats were added to the anthems, patriotic songs, marches and operatic arrangements, and the Andean *bambucos* and *pasillos* gained new audiences and a new instrumental medium.49 It is not clear how *bambucos* and *pasillos* were included in band repertoires, but scores from the 1930s suggest that the inclusion of this type of music had developed during the first decades of the twentieth century. This process was not exclusive to Colombian music bands, as the military brass bands formed by the Chilean government in the late 1890s had a

---

46 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Ministerio de Defensa, Ordenes Generales del Ejército, Cartagena, Mayo 4, 1901
47 Smith, “Beyond Geography’s Visible Worlds: a cultural politics of music”.
49 Sarmiento Rodriguez, “Influencia de la composición musical en el desarrollo de la música de banda en Colombia”, 2.
similar process. One characteristic of the Chilean process of formation of brass bands relates to a similar condition in the Colombian army and its brass bands: the integration of individuals from the subaltern groups.

Figure 36: Banda Departamental de Antioquia.

At the centre, their conductor: composer Gonzalo Vidal. Photograph by Benjamín de la Calle, 1910. Notice the fact that the conductor does not wear a uniform, thus marking his civilian status, and that the musicians had clear ethnic (“racialized”) features.

Did this mean a positive inclusion of subaltern musical culture? Possibly not. In the years that spanned between 1870 and 1920 the references to subaltern culture were strongly racialized; the association between subaltern popular music and race made reference to the large quantities of mixed and African-descent population that had been labelled by the literate elites not just as the dangerous classes, but also as the carriers of the backwardness that hindered the progress of the country. The inclusion of elements from subaltern groups – musicians and music – was part of another outlook that was present in the identity proposed by the political and cultural urban elites since the mid-nineteenth century: the mestizo. Through the notion of mestizo the elites tried to legitimize the diversity of the population while imposing the ideals of progress and civilization; mestizaje was explained as a natural process through which cultures that did not function according to the rules of Western civilization would be absorbed by it and

---

51 Archivo Fotográfico Biblioteca Pública Piloto, Medellín (Antioquia)
transformed into something more "perfect". The military music band offered such redemption to its members and to its audience: by performing with discipline and by teaching through their performance a new way of listening to the music and behaving in public. Music was of great utility, for it enhanced discipline through a collective experience.

The music of the Centenary

As noted earlier in the chapter, the celebration of Independence on the 20 July was sanctioned by a law issued by President Manuel Murillo Toro in 1873. The organization of the state led by Rafael Núñez and his project of Regeneration had not been completely achieved; the authority of the central government was the cause of disagreements between the regions and capital, and the confrontation between the two parties was still at the core of Colombian politics. However, the Regeneration succeeded in proposing a set of foundations for the country that were to give it a structure for the future: language (Hispanophilia), religion (the supremacy of the Catholic Church) and the promotion of the figure of Simón Bolívar as the embodiment of a new authoritarian law. As the 20 July 1910 approached, there were preparations to celebrate these foundations as the pillars of the nation; committees were formed to prepare the civic festivity in the capital and other cities. There should be exhibitions of the products of the country, commemorative acts in schools and concerts by the National Academy of Music, other music schools and by the military brass bands. Music was integrated by the committees as one of the most active elements in this festive system in which the organizers planned official events with speeches that socialized the official version of national history and arranged the transformation of public urban space.

Musicians and aficionados of art music joined the celebration with different ideas, such as the one posed by composer Emilio Murillo of a music contest in which the subject would be any traditional musical theme. Murillo was a strong supporter of the notion of a national Colombian music and this implied his valuing of what he considered authentic musical motifs of the Colombian people. He thought that these motifs could be explored with the tools of Western art music and thus produce a national music that would be cosmopolitan and particular at the same time. With this in mind, Murillo proposed his competition as a way to showcase national music and national talent:

---

53 Marixa Lasso, Myths of Harmony. Race and Republicanism during the age of Revolution, Colombia, 1795-1831. David Guss, 60.
54 This understanding of brass bands was also widely spread in Europe and the United Kingdom, where it was promoted as a rational recreation and as a respectable and self-improving activity. Trevor Herbert and Arnold Myers, “Music for the multitude: accounts of brass bands entering Enderby Jackson’s Crystal Palace Contests in the 1860’s”, Early Music, Vol. XXXVIII (4), 2010.
56 Cano, “Centenario de la Independencia de Colombia”, 77.
Todos los países tratan de fomentar el desarrollo de los temas del pueblo, y quizá entre nosotros se han mirado con injusta negligencia, recurriendo nuestros compositores a trabajar en modalidades de otras razas o en facturas inescrutables para la mayoría de los oyentes, en detrimento siempre de la escuela nacional. Ninguna ocasión más propicia pues que la de nuestro glorioso centenario para alentar a los talentos musicales colombianos a que hagan una obra artística con temas del pueblo colombiano, que no por hallarse dichos cantos en estado primitivo por el rechazo — de nosotros, los mismos arrullados por ellos en la infancia — dejan de tener inmensa originalidad y revestir para los habitantes de esta desgraciada patria, los atractivos de todo lo que encarna el terruño.  

The intention expressed by Murillo in this letter can be taken as the echo of many among the cultural and political elites who felt the urgency of new ways of national integration after the disasters of the War of a Thousand Days, since the end of the war in 1902 brought neither total peace nor order in the country. These feelings of inadequacy marked the generation that took the helm of the country in those years, known in Colombian historiography as the Centenary Generation (Generación del Centenario), which took into their hands the celebration of the Independence in 1910. In 1907 Law No. 39 issued by the government of President Rafael Reyes approved the celebration of the Centenary of National Independence, thus giving the Centenary Generation the opportunity to present themselves as a force that was ready to lead the country into a new era: “Las fiestas del Centenario [eran] testimonio de que Colombia ha aprendido las lecciones del pasado y de que ha llegado el momento para la ‘resurrección del alma nacional’”.  

As noted before, the government designated a committee to organize all that was fitting to the big celebration. However, the atmosphere during the preparations was filled with disagreement and disorganization: none of the works that had been planned to transform parks and squares in Santafé de Bogotá for the commemoration had been carried out by January 1910 and there was not enough money to carry them out in such a short period of time. There was also dissent among the different regional elites about which heroes should be commemorated and about the meaning of the celebration, since it carried the implication of agreeing with policies established by the central government after the war. The Popayán elite saw how the territorial reorganization imposed by the central government during the first

decade of the twentieth century diminished their political, economic and symbolical powers through the fragmentation of the Gran Cauca into the departments of Popayán, Cali, Buga and Quibdó. To them, the commemoration of the Centenary was an opportunity to reaffirm their glorious past in the face of an uncertain and diminished role in the future of the country. To this end, the celebration of the heroes of Independence was used to present an identity strongly steeped in the past while reluctant to participate in the present. But while the elite of Popayán sought refuge in the past when faced with the 100th anniversary of the Republic, the elite of Caldas — in the centre of the country — welcomed the preparations enthusiastically, since the same territorial reorganization reinforced the autonomy of the region; to the Caldas elite, the preparations for the Centenary were the proof that their region was an alternative for the future. All the while, in the north of the country, the elite of Cartagena de Indias fought to change the celebration of the Centenary from 20 July to 11 November, arguing that it was on this date and not in the one imposed from the capital that Independence from Spain had been declared. For a small village like Concepción (Antioquia), the care taken in the preparations for the festivity meant a direct claim to the foundation of the Republic, for one of the Independence heroes was born there: General José María Córdova. The records of the festivity on 20 July explain that:

Concepción, que como patria de uno de nuestros grandes héroes, debía ser la primera población que en Antioquia diera la voz de alerta para despertar el fuego patrio en los corazones de sus hermanos, no debía quedarse en zaga en tan justa y simpática solemnidad, y sus hijos dieron, al efecto, alta nota de una fiesta que fue del todo intelectual, pues los planteles de educación tomaron la iniciativa y ayudados de un modo especial por el Señor Cura Párroco se propusieron dar a la mencionada fiesta cierto aire de seriedad y de belleza propio de poblaciones ya muy cultas e intelectuales.

We see then that the festivity that was thought of as the pivotal symbol of national unity was understood as an imposition from a central government that did not represent the general interest and that brought to light the claims that every regional elite had in the process of building the nation. At the same time, these different understandings of the festivity show that every region and population appropriated the Centenary as a way to build an image of themselves that was to be performed for themselves and their neighbours. The Centenary was also a way to reinforce the republican social hierarchy: those that planned the festivity

---

64 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, “Acta de la Fiesta del Centenario de la Independencia en Concepción”, F30
were members of the elite that managed either to ignore or to slight the popular manifestations of agreement or disagreement to the preparations or during the celebration.

The role of the military brass bands in these celebrations was, of course, associated with their belonging to the national army. In that sense, we can understand the performance of the brass bands as a manifestation of the power of the central government. They were the manifestation of a political and a cultural order; the presentation of an ordered and uniformed musical body directly dependant on the National Army reminded everyone of the power of the State; we have to remember that this celebration took place in a context where the wounds of the War of a Thousand Days were still fresh and, in some places, the conflict had not even ended due to the persecution that part of the population suffered because of their political allegiances in the war. The music that bands performed was another way to standardize the way of celebration as well as an attempt to calm the animosities and conflicts that the official peace had not been able to appease. Records of the official acts that were sent to the Ministry of Public Instruction indicate a shared repertoire: the national anthem, patriotic songs and opera excerpts.65 This relates to the repertoire played by the bands at the retretas, so it is possible to think that the dissemination of this repertoire was another mechanism of standardization and ‘urbanization’ of this specific celebration.

One of the biggest transformations carried out in the capital city to celebrate the centenary was directly related to the musical performances that were to be had there. The Bosque de la Independencia was the centre of the festivity, the stage where the principal events were to take place. The Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition66 was set up there to showcase natural products, artworks, crafts and the few industrial products that were manufactured in the country at the time. It was a chocolate factory that sponsored the Kiosko de la Música where the bands played to make the walks of the visitors to the exhibition pleasant.67 Other specific spaces in the ‘Forest of Independence’ were the Egyptian Pavilion, the Japanese Pavilion, the Kiosko de la Luz (to showcase electric light), the equestrian statue of Simón Bolívar and the monument to the Unknown Heroes. Bosque de la Independencia was a display of symbols and practices that had been designed by the planning committee to project an image of the country: capitalism, industry, exoticism and music were symbols and practices that constituted the ideal of a unified and pacific country. In this specific scenario, music provided by the military music bands

65 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Ministerio de Instrucción Pública. Expedients 4576, 4607, 4708, 4467.
66 This exhibition was supposed to be the most important event in the celebrations that took place at the Bosque de la Independencia. It was constituted by seven pavilions (Bellas Artes, de la Música, Agrícola, de la Industria, de las Máquinas, Egipcio and Japonés) in which the Comisión Nacional del Centenario – the planning committee – gathered samples of animals, crafts, machinery, agricultural products, and works of art to showcase Colombia’s promising future. Cano, “Centenario de la Independencia de Colombia” (2011)
enhanced the theatrical experience of nationhood that was offered by the government to the citizens in the Forest of Independence.

![Figure 37: Concert Pavillion in the Forest of Independence, Bogotá, 1910.](image)

The military brass bands were not the only musical entity in this celebration. Orchestras and *liras* shared the podium and performed the same instrumental repertoire as the military bands. The *lira* or *estudiantina* was a group of musicians using string instruments: guitar, *bandola*, *tiple* and *requinto*. This musical group had risen to success and popularity in Colombia during the 1880s, when the musician and composer Pedro Morales Pino formed the first *Lira Colombiana*. Pino and his fellow musicians in the *Lira Colombiana* were praised as the best interpreters of *bambucos*, *pasillos* and other dance formats that were part of the basic repertoire in the cities along with adaptations from European art music. The records of the Centenary celebration in Yarumal (Antioquia) show how the *lira* was a suitable replacement for the band: it was the *Lira Independencia* that played the patriotic songs, opera excerpts and the *Himno Antioqueño* (the provincial anthem of Antioquia) that, according to the record, had several encores.

The vocal music of the Centenary was performed by school students. This must have been a satisfying demonstration of musical education in public schools, instruction that had been ordered by decrees since

---

70 Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, “Acta de la celebración del Primer Centenario de la Independencia de Colombia en la Escuela de Varones de Yarumal.” Agosto 24 de 1910
the 1870s and that, according to reports and inspections could not be fully carried out in all schools due to the lack of resources. The Centenary was an opportunity for these schools to show what they had taught, as the students sang patriotic songs and the national anthem. In these schools the shared experience of singing together could offer instruction in the values implied in national identity and it also offered a possibility for the children to make an emotional connection to the foundational events narrated in the lyrics of the anthems; the singing class in school was not just about instruction, it was an act of socialization. The performance of the students singing in the celebration of the Centenary was then the ideal display of nationalism as it had been promoted by the political elites: an exhibition of sensibility, fraternity and discipline. As I argued in Chapter 2 (Music and Education), singing was an instruction that the government considered as an important tool to disseminate modern values among the children (the citizens of the future) and as a mental and physical exercise that improved health and intellectual capabilities.

And the band played on
What was left after this big celebration? The feeling of unity and hope that the national government wanted to disseminate had a different reception in each region of the country. As I mentioned earlier, each regional elite chose an image to project as their contribution to the idea of nationhood and sometimes such image implied a protest against the role that they were expected to enact in the country’s fate. However, the symbolic – human and material - means that were used to disseminate that notion of nationalism were appropriated in each city; military music bands were one of these elements and they remained an important part of their local communities. Military music bands were the model for civil music bands and both musical bodies disseminated and socialized musical repertoires, while at the same time giving a new element to popular entertainment.

Conclusions
The establishment of the brass band during the second half of the nineteenth century in Colombia was part of the process of creating the institutions and the symbols that, according to political elites, were supposed to create and disseminate the political culture of the Republic. Governmental supervision of the role of brass bands became stronger during the Regeneration, following the agenda of centralised government. This is suggested by the reorganization of the army and by the link that is established through Decree 1360 of 1892, between the National Academy of Music and the brass bands. Here we see country there is mention of the children singing the national anthem and patriotic songs, but there is no mention about how many children were singing.

how academic knowledge became an instrument of government that, in this case, was to supervise the correct display of military music as an important element of official nationalism. The National Army and the National Academy of Music were to work together as two of the main governmental institutions in charge of producing nationalism as a standardized display and as a standardized emotion.

Unfortunately, no more sources were found that may suggest the direct censorship by military authorities on the repertoire played by the brass bands. Therefore, it is not possible to say if there were concerns about specific musical works or whether there was a specific ‘musical message’ that the government tried to convey through music bands. The repertoire that was played does suggest that brass bands had an important role in disseminating a type of music that was associated with urban culture and that provided ways to standardize the social manifestation of emotion in public festivities and public places.

This role of music as deployed by the brass bands was part of a new outlook on festive practices which implied a new orientation of public celebrations. The participation of music in these new republican festivities was filtered through planning and control, which meant that many of the traditional festive practices of the population were not included in the design for the festivities by those who wanted to make of the Independence Day a date to celebrate a rupture with the colonial past. The question remains how subaltern groups that were not integrated into the urban culture in which those festivities took place coexisted with this new musical festive practice and if they integrated it at all – not only the music, but also the celebration.
CONCLUSION

In this thesis I wanted to analyse the discourses and practices that shaped the promotion and practice of art music in Colombia during the years spanning from 1848 to 1910 in order to explain the role of art music in the historical process of construction and promotion of a project of nationhood in Colombia. It is time to revisit the initial questions to formulate some answers and some questions for future research.

I started my enquiry by asking if it was possible to articulate a musical practice with a political discourse about citizenship. This question carried another two: how was the equivalence between a social music practice and a social practice of politics established and legitimated? And, is it possible to talk about an imagined community in a specific musical culture? One of the main dynamics that contributes to answer these questions comprises the relationship between art music and the construction of nationalism, understanding the latter as the set of practices and habitus that Colombian political and cultural leaders of the time wanted to promote and to deploy in order to form a republican society that was able to show political unity and social coherence. The promotion and dissemination of art music in Colombia implied the promotion of a set of values that privileged a way of life that was in strong contrast to the lifestyle of the majority of the population at the time. Rural and urban poverty was manifested through material precariousness and through the lack of mobility that constrained people to live and work within the same geographical confines during all of their existence. Colombian urban elites displayed not only their access to literate culture, but to a cosmopolitan lifestyle that provided them with cultural references which they integrated into their identity as a group and that manifested on occasions for social display as well as in their political role as leaders of the country.

During the period of research, Colombia was trapped in a constellation of social relationships in which many social boundaries inherited from the colony had not been either fully criticised nor fully surpassed. Thus, the implementation of institutions, consumption habits and behaviours associated with art music were among the contradictions of a process in which Colombian elites wanted to create an integrated and inclusive republic, but were sceptical about the implications of such inclusion of subaltern groups in the democratic process. However, this did not mean that Colombian elites dismissed the idea of basing the political legitimacy of the republic in the sovereignty of the people. To both Liberal and Conservative elites, the exercise of sovereignty could be mediated through education.

The important role of education enables me to demonstrate that musical training had a role in the formation of the citizen. As Cristina Rojas, Germán Colmenares, Marco Palacios and David Bushnell have explained, the notion of education was understood by Colombian political leaders of this period as a process through which the Colombian people would be perfected and transformed in a community of citizens fully aware of their responsibilities in the political project of strengthening Colombia. Nevertheless, the deployment of public education turned out to be a way to redefine social boundaries, as it implied the
inclusion of subaltern groups while confirming the moral authority of elites as models of education. Musical education participated in this process, as its deployment provided more tools for social distinction — and exclusion — since the possibility of accessing musical education was constrained to the possibility to access a regular education with the human and material resources that were prescribed for it. Therefore, the possibility to acquire the values promoted through musical education became another way of exclusion.

During the Radical Olimpus, the federalist system of government hindered the deployment of projects of nationhood that sought the integration of all of the population. The difficulties in implementing the Organic Decree for Public Instruction of 1870 are an example of this, and among the instructions it contained, the provisions issued for the instruction of music in public schools faced the constant challenge of a system that always lacked sufficient resources and support from the provincial governments. This insufficiency raises the question of the reception that public utility of musical education had among regional and local elites, as not only this provision could be interpreted as an interference from the national government — as the general provision of the Decree was interpreted in some sovereign states — but could also raise the debate about the usefulness of music education when the demands of economic development and progress asked for another type of education.

Art music in Colombia was then promoted by political and cultural elites as an educational activity with a strong public utility. This was an aesthetic education which, sources suggest, was oriented to the creation of spaces and mechanisms that would help to channel the energies of political confrontation. This implied the approach of cultural promotion as a political activity, a dynamic that characterised Colombian republican governments from the 1850s and that has not been studied in enough depth; I think that sources indicate a change in this approach from the decades of the Radical Olimpus into the Regeneration, since from the fostering of individual faculties that were enshrined by the pro-individual ethics of radical liberalism, cultural promotion was taken by political leaders that deployed a more cautious approach and preferred to implement the supervised creation of a homogeneous set of social skills through a controlled use of culture. We cannot forget that both outlooks on the promotion of art music were closely associated to reforms of the educational system: the Organic Decree of 1870, which consecrated the tenets of what the Liberal elites in power understood as a public, republican and lay education and the Decree 0429 of 1893, which consecrated the basis for a Catholic, republican and public education. Both education reforms were aimed to lay the rules for the deployment of an educational system in which the bodies and minds of Colombians were to be disciplined and transformed into the collective of citizens that was demanded by each project of nationhood. Music education was understood by the ruling elites of both political parties as one of the most important mechanisms to achieve this goal; the provisions for musical education in schools and the promotion of art music (concerts and opera) were the two sides of a same coin: the inclusion of subaltern groups into citizenship,
through their education – in this case, aesthetic education that had to result in the "appropriate" social display of emotions linked to democratic life.

However, this aesthetic education through music was carried out through the deployment of new social barriers, albeit with an inclusive rhetoric. These barriers were formulated by the premises of the aforementioned educational reforms and by the restrictions that new habits of consumption imposed in the context of Colombian mid- and late-nineteenth-century urban society (which were projected into the early 1900s). In both cases, the public utility of this music resulted as a good that confirmed the privilege of urban groups that had both access to regular education and access to these musical activities. These practices became the privilege of one segment of urban society, thus restricting the wider reception of this music and especially its effect as enabler of new spaces for social encounter.

We can see then that there was a confrontation between the musical nationalism that political and cultural elites promoted and the musical nationalism that emerged, the latter with a restricted reception due to the isolation between cities and regions during second half of the nineteenth century and the early 1900s. This leads us to a related phenomenon: the role of Colombian cities and villages as centres of encounter of different musical practices. This implies several processes: first, the deployment and display of urbanity by urban elites as discourse and as practice; through the disciplining tools of urbanity as a code of behaviour, urban elites tried to implement social-musical rituals (concerts, opera, retreta) that they had learned in their experiences in European cities; the dissemination of urbanity rules as part of education implied the attempt to include all of the population in the new rituals that characterised republican urban life, which included new public musical practices like concerts and retretas. The promotion of urban etiquette as a requirement to have a social public life implied the confrontation with the traditional ways of public life, which were part of daily culture of the vast majority of the population — not only rural, but also urban; this suggested that the city became a contested territory in which urban etiquette and older forms of social expression worked as ways to appropriate the space.

The second process comprises the ways in which public spaces enabled the encounter of musical practices: concerts, opera and retretas were spaces through which different urban social groups established their sense of belonging to the city; the exclusivity of concerts and opera was a way to stage social boundaries and was also a way to materialize the power of urban elites to transform the city via the construction of theatres and concert venues. The public character of retretas did not exclude this musical practice from manifesting the material and symbolical power of urban elites over the city, as they were the leaders of the construction of new parks and squares in which these public concerts could be carried out. However, these new public spaces were appropriated by subaltern groups who also formed the audience at retretas and established diverse forms of relationships with them; subaltern groups also appropriated other public spaces where their musical practices still had social relevance, such as chicherías.
The establishment of the civic public festivity is the third process where we can see how music and public spaces marked each other through the deployment of new rules for social behaviour and the display of a set of symbols that were oriented to the formation of republican community bonds. The reorganization of public festivities included a new outlook on festive practices in which music had a very specific role. Civic republican celebrations were more than a rest in the calendar; they were the commemoration of a rupture and of a transition as well as the commemoration of a social pact. The promotion of concerts and then in the 1880s the promotion of military music bands as part of the elements of civic celebration were part of a new tradition of community celebrations where music had the role to summon all the citizens, and especially, the role to evoke in them emotions of unity and respect. The message that military bands conveyed to their civilian audiences was no less powerful: discipline and respect were the elements needed for the harmonious functioning of the community.

A second set of questions aimed to elucidate the role of musicians, their work and the relationships between musicians and their society: what was the process of professionalization of musicians, and how did it develop? The deployment of music as a mechanism for creating nationalism was another exercise of power connected to the implementation of musical education and to the development of an urban music culture. The fact that urban art musicians of the time and their supporters concurred in the crucial role of academic knowledge for the construction of national music is another characteristic of the process of the musical construction of Colombia. For Colombian politicians and thinkers, academic knowledge was closely associated to the European cultural universe to which they identified themselves and which they recognized as one of the prizes of political independence from Spain. The development of new fields of academic learning was one of the ambitions of mid-nineteenth-century Colombian republicans and it remained so for the period of study of this research. Music was included as one of those new academic fields of development that, according to political and cultural elites, had to be developed as one of the forces that would give social coherence and cultural legitimacy to Colombia before the Western world. This triggered a process to establish clear boundaries between musicians; this classification was going to be structured from their learning process, the performance skills that they would develop, and would include the spaces where they should perform, their repertoire and their audiences. In this way, academically trained musicians were to be different from traditional musicians, but also from well-trained amateurs.

The question about the consequences of the implementation of professional training for musicians is related to this aspect of my research. With the aforementioned enthronement of academic knowledge, musical academic education became the measure against which all musicians and their practice of music would be measured against. If traditional musicians wanted to be included in the music practice that was promoted as national music, they had to learn and to practice music according to those standards. Sources indicate that a segment of art musicians and their supporters promoted this idea, but also indicate that there was a group of musicians that challenged that notion of musical practice with their own
production and with a growing number of audiences. Those musicians worked in the space enabled by the flexible encounter of repertoires where European academic drawing room music met with traditional dance and song forms. Their existence challenged the boundaries desired by some musicians and their network of support and the success of their production also challenged the type of music practice that was promoted as national music. Sources show that the music made by these hybrid musicians was at the centre of debates in the late 1890s and early 1900s, for many art musicians thought that this musical production should not be showcased as national music, although many intellectuals glorified it. The process of production of this hybrid music practice perhaps is similar to contemporary urban musical practices like the chisga\(^1\), where musicians learn by doing and their goal is to provide a music that will accompany another activity. This process might have been similar to the learning and production process of music during the colony and therefore, it was taken by the promoters of art music in Colombia in the nineteenth century as an uncomfortable reminder of social and cultural customs that, to political leaders of the time, hindered the entrance of Colombian society into progress.

The inclusion of traditional music in the category of folklore was an effort to integrate this tradition in the academic field; however, the Liberal leaders of the second half of the nineteenth century understood folklore as something that had to be surpassed with the arrival of progress and contributed to the association of musical traditions as part of the backward past that persisted, while the Conservative leaders of the 1880s approached folklore as the possibility given by academic knowledge, to establish a link with some elements of that musical tradition. This link, however, was not through inclusion and study of the particularities of Colombian musical traditions, but through the rehabilitation of the white (Iberian) elements that could be used as proximity to the Western culture that the Colombian urban elites claimed as their own. In the case of bambuco (the traditional music format most publicized at the time), sources do not indicate that the promotion of its universal appeal included allusions to its African origins as explained by the writer Jorge Isaacs.

Colombian thinkers during the second half of the nineteenth century, also used folklore to elaborate a cultural past that contributed to the narrative of Colombian history as presented by the urban elites; this cultural past explained the cultural elements that – according to Colombian academics and politicians – had contributed to the social cultural present of the country and therefore, could be counted as elements that would be inscribed in the country’s future. The rest of those social and cultural elements would be surpassed by the strength of progress – as Colombian leaders thought. This classification of Colombian musical practices was not the end of the debate on national music. The subtle confrontation between the accolades of art music and the traditional musical practices of most Colombians in that time gained a new field with the emergence of musical formats that combined academic knowledge with traditional music

---

\(^1\) See Beatriz Goubert Burgos, “La “chisga musical”: avatares de una práctica social en Bogotá”, in Música y sociedad en Colombia. Traslaciones, legitimaciones e identificaciones, edited by Mauricio Pardo (Bogotá: Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2009), 100 - 113
practices, such as *bambuco* and *pasillo*. In the late 1890s and early 1900s Colombian urban musicians – a group that shared knowledge of art music and its process of production - debated the legitimacy of those musical formats as musical representatives of the nation; the terms used in these debates reflected the use by musicians and critics of the categories of knowledge in Western academic knowledge, which they used to try to explain the social and musical phenomena of *bambuco* and *pasillo*, both formats of ample urban dissemination but that did not fulfil the standards learned from the Western musical canon. Thus, the forms of knowledge of the diverse Colombian musical practices were made invisible and inaudible, a process that integrated regional and local musical traditions as well as urban musical practices that did not conform to academic standards.

The professionalization of musicians, the new groups of urban musicians and the deployment of intellectual elites of the category folklore to classify non-Western musical practices not only caused tension within the group of musicians — or relegated other musicians to invisibility and inaudibility. It also had an effect on audiences, who in turn, reorganized themselves around a type of music practice. This process, however, is difficult to trace. Sources show that art music was strongly supported by urban elites and one of the manifestations of such support was the praise and promotion of the activities of some art musicians. The repertoire that mid-nineteenth-century Colombian art musicians promoted was related to the domestic and operatic repertoire of European middle-class and elite urban amateurs. Colombian elites had the means to provide spaces for the dissemination of such repertoire in concerts and through music teaching/learning; therefore, it is easy to trace their process as they shaped themselves into an audience with specific demands and conflicts. Audiences of hybrid urban musicians might have had the same process and through it, redefined their use of public spaces and moments of leisure, since most of this type of music was performed in public spaces and accompanied activities such as literary tertulias (with pulperías, chicherías and piqueteaderos as venues), spontaneous dances and traditional festivities. Musicians like Pedro Morales Pino and Emilio Murillo (who produced music using both Western academic and traditional musical knowledge) enjoyed the favour of audiences and their music was praised and disseminated. The criticism that many art musicians and music critics made of the new urban popular music during the late 1800s and early 1900s indicates that the wide acceptance of this music caused disgust in the supporting networks of art music and therefore, it indicates that part of that network desired that the gap between the two music practices and their audiences — if there was a gap - was bigger and served as a stronger distinction. The question remains about how audiences expressed their preferences.

The formation of socio-musical groups in Colombian society at the time and the processes of training and formation of audiences, as well as of networks of sponsors were processes that contribute to elucidate how the promotion of concerts and the insertion of the culture of art music in Colombian urban society implied the deployment of a new experience of music that detached music-making from other activities. However, this does not mean that music became absent from community rituals, for as civic festivities, charity and commemorative concerts show, the function of music as marker of rituals and community
rituals was renovated with the arrival of secularism. What this means is that now music-making was promoted also as an activity outside of daily activities; music-making (playing musical instruments, singing and listening) became a field of experience with value in itself. This was in strong contrast and even contradiction with the music practices of a big segment of Colombian population at the time, for which music-making was still associated to other activities. Therefore, music-making as a space for reflection became a marker of class and modernity while music that remained associated with other activities started to be associated with the past. The association of music and entertainment was redefined, for Colombian elites promoted the notion of useful entertainment, where music had a powerful role as a leisure activity that also worked as a learning process; musical entertainment was promoted as a mechanism to learn virtues that perfected the individual and that could be used to build a positive social life.

Thus, we arrive to the flexibility between musical practices. The city, with its possibility of encounter and challenge, enabled the coexistence and the hybridization of repertoires, performance practices, musical formats and musical instruments. This made the separation of art and popular (understood as of the masses) music something controversial, for the establishment of a difference between the art music canon and the popular performing canon implied the exercise of an aesthetic and social hierarchy in which the hybrid forms of urban music that were emerging in that period (bambuco, pasillo, waltzes, songs) were not integrated as contributing elements to musical nationalism.

Although the last process is a factor that has been the focus of some Colombian musicologists, there are not enough works about the reception of art musical works by Colombian musicians (academic and traditional) or about the learning processes that they might have in the process of formation of Colombian urban musical practices. Sources show that concerts, opera and above all retretas proved to be powerful disseminating mechanisms of the European art music repertoire; with the arrival of the gramophone in the early 1900s, this repertoire reached different audiences. Nevertheless, these dynamics have not been analysed in order to find out the learning processes that Colombian musicians might have implemented in their appropriation of this repertoire and its musical elements. The formation of Colombian urban popular music is a cultural process in which cosmopolitism and emulation are important mechanisms that allowed Colombian musicians to build a bridge between different musical practices.

It is very difficult to trace the social and economic position of urban musicians during this period and how this position translated in terms of social mobility and how it enabled dynamics of class distinction. What is confirmed by the data are the narrow economic conditions in which musicians lived and worked as part of the population of urban workers; these conditions were shared by the rest of Colombian society and contributed to increasing the differences between social classes when the access to specific commodities was involved. The question about the market for scores and musical instruments is also impacted by the aforementioned lack of data about the urban economy in Colombia during the period of research. The few samples about the price of scores cannot be compared with data about consumption of foodstuffs or
other commodities, so we cannot determine how scores ranked in a list of basic goods of consumption. The few data about musical instruments only render fragmented information about the price of pianos; therefore, we do not know how smaller musical instruments circulated as commodities. However, it is possible to speculate about both the insertion in Colombian markets of scores and musical instruments and about the musicians as working population if we take into account the continuity of some styles of labour relationships inherited from the colony. Thus we can understand how the lack of data about the monetary and economic aspect of the work of musicians reflects a type of labour that, up to the late 1800s, might have been taken by society as a craft and therefore, as a service/commodity that could be remunerated according to the needs of the client and local traditions. This would confirm the continuity of several economic and social relationships that formed during the colony and which persisted in spite of the projects of political leaders to modernize the Colombian economy during the second half of the nineteenth century; the effect of this dynamic in the social valuation of the work of musicians is still to be analysed, but we can infer that such valuation differed when it was applied to different types of urban musicians.

The historical analysis of political discourses and social practices triggered by the development in Colombia of art music shows that its promotion, as an exclusively pedagogical instrument, causes a contradictory effect. It hinders different appropriations that Colombian society can establish with this music, thus constraining its social relevance while confirming strategies of exclusion. Art music thus remains as a collectible and its possibilities to enable spaces for individual and collective reflection are not promoted as tools for the creation of social encounters that can contribute to democracy.
### APPENDIX 1 TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY DATES</th>
<th>KEY POLITICAL EVENTS</th>
<th>KEY POLITICAL PERIODS</th>
<th>KEY PERSONALITIES AND MUSIC INSTITUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td></td>
<td>Republic of Nueva Granada (since 1832)</td>
<td>Foundation of the Philharmonic Society of Santafé de Bogotá by Henry Price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nicola’s Quevedo Rachadell (1803 – 1874) gives private concerts. The Philharmonic Society gives concerts per subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Start of the Chorographic Commission</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emil Herbruger (1808 – 1894) arrives in Medellín and founds the Philharmonic Society of Medellín.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedro León Velásquez (popular musician) arrives in Medellín</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Franz Coenen (violinist) and Ernest Lubeck (pianist) perform bambuco in their recitals in Santafé de Bogotá in their tour throughout South America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>Coup against President José María Obando led by General José María Melo and supported by popular movements.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dissolution of the Philharmonic Society of Santafé de Bogotá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td></td>
<td>Confederación Granadina</td>
<td>Composer and teacher Vicente Vargas de la Rosa (1833 – 1891) arrives to Santafé de Bogotá.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Composer, teacher and writer Gonzalo Vidal is born. Composer Pedro Morales Pino is born. Italian musician and impresario Oreste Sindici arrives in Santafé de Bogotá with his opera company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>New federalist Constitution by radical Liberals. The country is called Estados Unidos de Colombia. The Chorographic Commission ends their work.</td>
<td>Radical Olimpus, succession of radical Liberal governments.</td>
<td>Formation of the Sesteto La Armonía and of the Ajencia Lírica i Mortuoria in Santafé de Bogotá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Foundation of the National University.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>The Liberal government issues the Organic Decree of Public Instruction in support of lay public education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Rafael Núñez wins his first Presidency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>New Constitution by the Regeneration government: centralization of power and support of the Catholic Church. The country is called Republic of Colombia.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Start of the Regeneration, led by Núñez.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>The government issues Decree No. 0429 in support of compulsory teaching of Catholicism in public schools. The ultra Conservative Miguel Antonio Caro (vicepresident to Núñez) assumes power due Núñez’s illness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Foundation of the National Academy of Music by Jorge Wilson Price.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>Italian musician and impresario Augusto Azzali arrives in Colombia.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Inauguration of Colón Theatre in Santafé de Bogotá, supported by the Government.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Augusto Azzali and Minister of Development Juan de Brigard sign a contract to form a National Opera Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Claudio Brindis de Salas, violin virtuoso, starts performances in Santafé de Bogotá. Pedro Morales Pino and his group Lira Colombiana are on tour thought the country.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Start of the War of a Thousand Days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Composer Gonzalo Vidal starts his Revista Musical in Medellín</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>End of the War of a Thousand Days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Government issues Law No. 39 approving the celebration of the centenary of Independence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Celebration of the First Centennial of Colombian Independence from Spain.</td>
<td>Composer Guillermo Uribe Holguín arrives to Colombia to work as the new Director of the National Academy of Music. Emilio Murillo records in New York the Colombian National Anthem, bambucos and pasillos.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PRIMARY SOURCES

Government documents
"Academia De Música." In Anales De La Instrucción Pública En Los Estados Unidos De Colombia, Tomo Ix No. 52. November, 1886.


Becerra, Ricardo. "Circular a Los Directores De Instruccion Publica De Todos Los Estados Por La Que Se Les Recomienda Fomentar E Impulsar Ciertas Enseñanzas." In Anales De La Instruccion Publica En Los Estados Unidos De Colombia, Tomo lii. 1881.


"Contra Nicolas Quiñones, Músico Del Batallon Numero 1 De Infanteria, Acusado Por El Delito De Resistencia Para Obedecer", Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, Tomo 109 (1859).


Informe Anual Del Director De Instrucción Pública En El Estado De Boyacá Al Señor Director General Del Ramo. Tunja: Imprenta de Torres Hermanos i Compañía, 1872.


"Informe Que El Ministro De Instrucción Pública Presenta Al Congreso En Sus Sesiones Ordinarias De 1892." Bogotá: Papelería y Tipografía Samper, 1892.

La Familia Malo O'leary Solicita La División De Unos Bienes Comunes, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Fondo Notarías, Notaría Primera (1875).

Lesiones Personales De Bernardino Martínez a Eusebio Rodríguez, Archivo General de la Nación, Sección República, Asuntos Criminales, Legajo 90, Carpeta no. 2 F198 (1850).


———. "Discurso Del Director De La Academia Nacional De Música En El Concierto Del 17 De Septiembre De 1892." In Anuario De La Academia Nacional De Música, Año Escolar De 1892, Año V. Bogotá: Imprenta de la Luz, 1892.

———. "Discurso Pronunciado En El Concierto Del 23 De Agosto De 1888, Pronunciado Por El Director." In Anuario De La Academia Nacional De Música, Año Escolar De 1888


Press and Periodicals

“A Granel”, La Miscelánea, revista literaria y científica Nos. 11 and 12 July 1905

“A Granel”, La Miscelánea, revista literaria y científica Nos. 1 and 2 September 1905

"Algo sobre sociotecnia", La Miscelánea, no. 4 and 5 (March - April 1906).


“Anuncios”, La America, No. 170 March 19 1874

“Anuncios.”, Diario de Cundinamarca No. 2645 February 28, 1880

“Anuncios: El Piano de los Andes”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2615, January 7 1880

"Arte." El Repertorio, No. 1, June 1896.

"Aviso." El Neogranadino, No. 16, November 18 1848.

"Avisos." El Mosaico, No. 20, May 23 1860.

"Avisos." El Nacional, No. 61, November 21 1866.

"Avisos." La Estrella de Occidente, No. 151, July 22 1849.

“Avisos: ¡Para la opera!”, El Espectador, No. 159, March 26 1892

“Avisos: Piano Colibri”, El Espectador, No. 379 June 25 1898

“Avisos: Manuel Villareal M. acaba de recibir un magnífico surtido de cuerdas para piano que ofrece en venta.”, El Atlantico, No. 20 November 6 1874.

“Avisos: El Colegio de las Mercedes”, La América, No. 161, February 16 1874

“Avisos”, El Hogar – periódico literario dedicado al bello sexo, No. 42 November 7 1868

“Avisos: Nueva Publicación”, El Mosaico, No. 36 September 3 1859

“Avisos – Carlos A. Molina”, El Espectador, No. 152 March 12, 1892


C.A.M. "María (Impresiones Personales)." La Miscelánea, No. 5, October 1903.


"Catalogo De Composiciones Para Piano Por Manuel M. Parraga Que Se Hallan De Venta En El Almacén De Parraga Y Quijano." El Mosaico, No. 22, May 21 1859.


"Colegio De Las Mercedes." La América No. 161, February 14 1874.

"Colegio San Antonio De Padua." El Hogar No. 103, February 14 1870.

"Colegio La Constancia." El Neogranadino, No. 70, October 19 1849.

"Concierto." El Zipa, No. 4, August 15 1878.

"Concierto Sociedad Filarmonica." El Neogranadino, No. 73, November 9 1849.


"Conciertos", in Anuario Academia Nacional de Música Año XII, Bogotá: Imprenta La Luz, 1898


Cuervo, Rufino José. "Las Mujeres." El semanario noticioso, No. 53, August 22 1848.

"Definicion De Folklore." El Espectador, No. 13, May 30 1887.

"Editorial: Sociedad Filarmónica." La Estrella de Occidente, No. 184, March 10 1850.

"El Ciego De Paseo - Al Dia Siguiente Al Bunde." La Estrella de Occidente, No. 182, February 24 1850.

"El Colegio Del Señor Lleras." El Dia, No. 570, December 9 1848.

"El Colibri." El Atlantico, No. 11, May 15 1874.

"El Maestro Julio Quevedo." El Artista, No. 80, May 2 1908.
“El Maestro Alarcón”, Colombia Artística, No. 6 November, 1908

"El Nuevo Colegio Ribon En Barranquilla." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2978, October 10 1881.

“El Piano”, El Cascabel, No. 153 August 23, 1899

"Entre Músicos." La Miscelánea, Nos. 6 and 7, February 1907


Guarín, José David. "La Tertulia En Casa." El Mosaico, No. 41, September 15 1859.

———. "Un Dia De San Juan En Tierra Caliente (Conclusion)." El Mosaico, No 28, July 9 1859.

"Hechos Diversos - Gran Concierto." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2997, November 22 1881.

"Hechos Diversos: Dificultad De Correjir Una Costumbre." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3008, January 11 1882.


"Hechos Diversos: Gran Concierto." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2997, November 22 1881.

"Hechos Diversos: La Opera." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2770, October 13 1880.

"Hechos Diversos: Las Retretas Barbarisonantes." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2972, October 8 1881.

"Hechos Diversos: Las Retretas Para El Público"." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 51, June 24 1883.

“Hechos Diversos – La señorita Teresa Tanco”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3257 April 6 1883.

"Hechos Diversos: Concierto" Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3316 July 21, 1883

"Hechos Diversos: Las Fiestas" Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2709 June 22, 1880

“Himno Latino en honor del Papa”, El Hogar Católico, Numero Extra, June 2 1908

“Historia de un piano”, Diario de Cundinamarca No. 2732 August 7 1880.

Interior”, La América, No. 206, August 4, 1874

“José Luis Cuevas vende un piano vertical.”, El Hogar, periodico literario dedicado al bello sexo, No. 35 September 26 1868.

"La Corona De Los Pobres." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3487, September 9 1884.

"La Marcha Fúnebre De Chopin." Alpha, Nos. 23 and 24, December 1907

"La Teoría De La Música Al Alcance De Todas Las Inteligencias." El Zipa, No. 48, July 10 1879.

"Las Retretas Barbarisonantes." Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2972, October 8 1881.

"Los Cuartetos Del Señor Quevedo." El Día, No. 545, September 13 1848

"Mesa Revuelta - Brindis De Salas." El Espectador, No. 400, September 14 1898.

"Mesa Revuelta: Concierto." El Espectador, No. 44, February 24 1888.


"Mesa Revuelta: Concierto." El Espectador, No. 393, August 16 1898.

"Mesa Revuelta: Pianos, Puerto Berrío 9 de diciembre de 1898", El Espectador, No. 425 December 10 1898

"Mesa Revuelta: Fiestas." El Espectador, No. 67 June 5, 1888

"Ministerio De Fomento: Contrato Numero 31 De 1894, Celebrado Con El Señor Augusto Azzali Para La Organización De Una Compañía De Opera Italiana Que Trabaje En El Teatro Cristóbal Colón." Diario Oficial, No. 9650, December 10 1894.

Mi Piano", El Artista – Literatura, variedades, noticias, anuncios, No. 51, May 25 1907

“Música Nacional”, El Artista, No. 145 January 20, 1910


“Opera Italiana.” El Nacional, No. 61, November 21 1866.

“Opera Italiana.” Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 2761, September 28 1880.


“Pianos hechos por J. C. Castillo”, El Espectador, No. 434 January 21 1899


"Programa Acordado Por La Sociedad Filantrópica Para Las Fiestas Que Tendrán Lugar En Los Días 20, 21 l 22, 23, 24, 25 l 26 Del Presente Mes, En Celebracion Del Aniversario De La Independencia.”. El Neogranadino, No. 55, July 14 1849.


"Remitidos - Sociedad Filarmónica." La Estrella de Occidente, No. 181, February 17 1850.

"Revista De Paris." El Mosaico, No. 43, October 29 1859.

"Revista Europea." El Hogar - Periodico literario dedicado al bello sexo, No. 9, March 28 1868.

"Revista Musical", El Cascabel, No. 188 October 21 1899

"Secretaría de Guerra y Marina: Resolucion relativa a la desercion de unos musicos del batallon Zapadores”, Diario Oficial No. 1453, February 3 1869

“Señor doctor José Cerbeleón Meléndez”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3010 January 31, 1882

“Septeto Lirico-Filarmonico.” El Hogar, No. 12, April 18 1868.

"Sociedad Filarmonica." El Neogranadino, No. 50, June 23 1849.

"Sociedad Filarmónica." El Neogranadino, No. 38, April 21 1849.

“Sofía Menter”, Diario de Cundinamarca, No. 3014 January 14 1882


"Teatro: El Barbero De Sevilla." El Espectador, No. 150, January 15 1892.

“Teatro – Miguel Strogoff”. La voz de Antioquia, No. 52, October 18 1888
“Titulos de las obras de música de José Viteri”, El Zipa, No. 5 August 22, 1878

Ultimos Momentos De Beethoven.” El Zipa, No. 19, December 1878.

"Un Baile De Tono En Mi Pueblo." El Mosaico, No. 35, August 25 1859

"Un pianista colombiano.", El Espectador, No. 486 July 30 1899

"Velada En El Colón." El Artista: Literatura, variedades, anuncios, No. 63, November 5 1905.

Vergara, José María Vergara y. "La Opera." El Mosaico, No. 3, January 8 1859


Published Sources


------------- Diccionario De Música, Precedido De La Teoría Jeneral Del Arte I Especial Del Piano. Bogotá: Imprenta de Gaitán, 1867.


--------. "Estado Actual De La Música En Bogotá." In Textos 5: Musicología En Colombia, Una Introducción, edited by Egberto Bermúdez and Jaime Cortés. Santafé de Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Artes, 2001


Viteri, José. Texto Para Enseñar Música Por Nota, Por El Sistema Objetivo, Al Alcance De Los Niños. Medellín: Imprenta de Gutierrez Hermanos, 1876

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Córdoba, Luz Stella Rey, *100 Años del Teatro Cristóbal Colón 1892 - 1992* (Santafé de Bogotá: Teatro Colón, 1993)


*De Milicias Reales a Militares Contrainsurgentes. La Institución Militar En Colombia Del Siglo XVIII Al XXI* edited by César Torres del Río and Saúl Rodríguez Hernández Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2008.


----------------------------------


———. "Maestros, Compositores Y Ejecutantes." *Boletín Latinoamericano de Música* IV (Diciembre 1938).


Salas, Eugenio Pereira. *Historia De La Música En Chile (1850 - 1900)*. Santiago: Universidad de Chile, 1957.


