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Title

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Permalink

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Journal

Aleph, UCLA Undergraduate Research Journal for the Humanities and Social Sciences, 19(1)

ISSN

2639-6440

Author

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Publication Date

2022

DOI

10.5070/L619158737

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Composing Bolivia: The Politics and Perspectives of Mestizaje and Indigenismo in Atiliano Auza León's *Historia de la Música Boliviana*

Herman Chavez



Abstract: *Historia de la Música Boliviana* (History of Bolivian Music) was published by composer, violinist, and musicologist Atiliano Auza León in 1985, detailing the music and musicians of the country in what was considered the first Bolivian musical history of its kind. In this paper, I bring Auza León's *Historia de la Música Boliviana* to an English-speaking audience for the first time, critically engaging with his portrayal of Indigenous music in the context of 20th century mestizaje and Indigenismo among Bolivian composers and institutions. By interrogating his position in the creation of musical authority and cultural development in Bolivia at the time, I engage with Auza León's stature as a national composer. I explore the state's sponsorship of his music and scholarship while situating his productions within Bolivia's political and musical consciousness of mestizaje, or racial mixing. Then, I analyze a key chapter from his *Historia de la Música Boliviana*, placing his text within this trajectory. Auza León's epistemologization as a musical authority occurs as a result of the mestizo perspectives taken in his compositions and writing, constructing an identity around Bolivian music predicated on mestizaje.

Keywords: Atiliano Auza León, mestizaje, Indigenismo, Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, Bolivia

1. Composing Bolivia: The Politics and Perspectives of Mestizaje and Indigenismo in Atiliano Auza León's *Historia de la Música Boliviana*

Atiliano Auza León, composer, violinist, and musicologist was born in 1928 in Sucre, Bolivia (Seone 2001).¹ After his years as a choirboy at the Sucre Cathedral, he graduated from the Escuela Normal de Sucre in 1950 as a music teacher before completing studies in music theory and violin at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música in La Paz while performing with the National Symphony Orchestra (Seone). He eventually won a fellowship to study at the Instituto Torcuato di Tella del Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales (CLAEM) in Buenos Aires, Argentina with notable composers, such as as Alberto Ginastera (Garzón 2018, 13). He returned to Bolivia to teach at various institutions, including his alma mater, the La Paz Conservatory, as a professor of composition (Garzón 2018, 13). The roles that Auza León held at varying musical schools and orchestras across Sucre, Tarija and La Paz reveal his institutional power in shaping the musical development of Bolivian practitioners and audiences alike, who interacted with his musical instruction.

Auza León was not only a pedagogue and performer, but also a scholar — he has published several authoritative books on Bolivian music throughout his lifetime, most notably the *Historia de la Música Boliviana*, or the *History of Bolivian Music* in 1985. In this paper, I take Auza León's defining publication alongside his compositions and institutional affiliations to explore how sites of discursive contact — whether that be the musicological page or the traffic of the institution — are contradictory locales in which a distinct Bolivian musical identity is posited but not fully realized. I think dialectically about the presentation of Auza León's works and the reality they serve in the consciousness around Bolivian music. What gives Auza León authority on Bolivian music? What makes art music Bolivian? I offer this paper as an exploration into the politics of mestizaje that run through Auza León's works and the constructions of a Bolivian art music identity in the twentieth century, using close reading

and dialectical thinking as approaches to critiquing and understanding mestizo perspectives in Auza León's musical and written works.

Year	Location	Description
Oct. 5, 1928	Sucre, Bolivia	Born.
1946	Sucre, Bolivia	Began preparatory studies at the Academia de Música de la Sociedad Filarmónica de la ciudad de Sucre.
1947 - 1951	Sucre, Bolivia	Continued education at the Escuela Nacional de Maestros de la Normal de Sucre.
1953 - 1955	La Paz, Bolivia	Studied at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música de La Paz. His professor of counterpoint and composition was the German musician Eric Eisner, who was the director of the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional. He studied violin with Maldonado.
1965 - 1966	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Studied at the Instituto Torcuato di Tella del Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales with director Alberto Ginastera as well as Gandini, Suarez Urtubey, and Davidovsky.
1971 - 1972	Sucre, Bolivia	Taught at the Escuela Normal in Sucre.
1976	La Paz, Bolivia	Taught at the Escuela Normal Simón Bolívar and was composition teacher at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música de La Paz.
1992	La Paz, Bolivia	Elected vice-president of the Bolivian Society of Composers and Authors.

Figure 1. A partial timeline of educational milestones in the life of Atiliano Auza León. See Seoane 2001 and Garzón 2018.

Auza León is renowned and respected among high-ranking Bolivian figures, specifically for his ability to stake claims about the Bolivian identity in his work, positioning him critically to understanding mestizo perspectives in Bolivian music. In the forward to Atiliano Auza León's 2018 biography, then-Governor of Tarija Adrian Oliva Alcázar places Auza León among the advances in articulating regional identity, descri-

bing him as “a memorable person whose cultural products are fundamental for the delight of the citizens and the growth of our cultural heritage” (Garzón, 13).

The governor, who names himself twice in the foreword, becomes an approving voice for the particular cultural expression of Auza León and identifies the biography as having worth, as it inscribes the country’s prospective success to the type of creative output developed by one individual. Key actors in the government decide what to value — through publication, funding, and public associations between composer and institution — as representative of the region’s culture. This is a political act: Alcázar is a sponsor for defining Tarijan culture through the value ascribed to Auza León’s work.

As he begins the 100-page biography, José Paz Garzón describes this valuation quite explicitly. In his first descriptions of Auza León, Garzón says that Auza

“glows as a stellar figure among the distinguished scholars and composers of music in Bolivia and deserves the recognition of the authorities, musical and cultural institutions of Tarija, and of the nation for his constant efforts and efficient contributions to renovate the music of our nation” (Garzón, 11).

He lauds Auza León’s accomplishments by validating the national value, perhaps to the point at which his work becomes a defining factor for the culture of the region. He understands that the music had the need for renovation, suggesting it was in a lesser state than that which Auza León could offer in his own works.

Although one may consider Garzón’s initial description of Auza León and the written testimony of Alcázar as tangential to the text’s primary function as a biography of a composer, I see them as rife with the ideological underpinnings of Auza León’s works that reveal the institutional and discursive responses to his constructions of Bolivian music.² They are political acts. The discourses of Alcázar and Garzón engender a

particular rhetorical construction around national identity: Auza León's works come to define Tarija by virtue of their aesthetic presentation, institutional relationships, and discursive practices. I take this exploration of Auza León's biography as evidence for constructing a Bolivian musical identity as well as an example of the close reading methodology that informs my approach, in which I pay particular attention to the discourse that surrounds and is constructed by the text and its structures to derive its meaning.

In this paper, I explore aspects of Atiliano Auza León's musical works and scholarship that purport to define Bolivian art music under colonial epistemologies. Epistemology refers to systems of knowledge — in this case, ways of thinking that are structured by enduring coloniality. However, it must be clarified that this epistemology is not necessarily intentional: it is a product of the developments of Bolivian *mestizaje*, which will be further elaborated on in the next section of this paper. The politics of *mestizaje* insert an inherent coloniality to works that then become inherent to his — and the institutional — discursive claims towards a national musical identity. Rather than argue that Auza León is “appropriating” or inserting a specific ideology, I hope to provide a perspective to understand why and how his compositions and publications produce *mestizaje* and how the state reinforces such discourse, making it very difficult to remove aesthetics from colonial epistemologies that have become ingrained into this art music and its accompanying modes of thought.

2. The Indigenous Subject: *Mestizaje* and *Indigenismo* in Bolivia

Mestizaje is the maximum expression of nationalist ideology in Latin America.

- Carol Smith, *Memorias del mestizaje: Cultura política en Centroamérica de 1920 al presente*, 579.

Auza León began his studies at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música de La Paz at the same time the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario, or MNR) period of government began. The MNR sought to achieve modernization in the

country, and its governments from 1952-1964 saw mestizaje as the primary tool for modernization as it would address the divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities (Rios 2020, 102-103). Yet, mestizaje has a much longer history in Bolivia than the 1952 revolution — a history necessary to comprehend the discursive contexts in which Auza León's works are produced. For my analysis of Auza León's text to be understood, we must first understand the histories of mestizaje, both politically and artistically, that allow such discourses to have been compounded. I will present the constructions of mestizaje and Indigenismo in Bolivia to both situate Auza León within a distinct historical trajectory and to understand how we might perceive such strains in his work. Then, I will explore the Indigenista composers and institutions following the Nationalist Revolution before turning to Auza León's *Historia de la Música Boliviana*.

Mestizaje is a term used to refer to racial mixing in Latin America, beginning during the colonial era and transforming through the current day. Lourdes Martínez-Echazábal defines it as “the process of interracial and/or intercultural mixing” (Martínez-Echazábal 1998, 21), which, for Paul K. Eiss, engages in “offering a basis for the construction of distinctive national identities” (Eiss 2016, 214).³ Eiss suggests that rather than view the mestizo as belonging to a race, we might approach mestizaje as a set of acts that impact social realities (Eiss 2016, 217). This perspective allows us to understand mestizaje not merely as a developing group of people who fall under a certain lineage or biological phenotype, but rather as a variety of actions and practices that position an identity to be socially and politically constructed.

In Bolivia, the case of mestizaje is particular. Bolivian scholar Huascar Rodríguez García, in his illuminatory text on the social formations of mestizaje to the construction of the Bolivian national identity, reveals much of this difference. The derogatory term cholo — still used today — was first developed to refer to mestizos closer to their Indigenous heritage, whether culturally or biologically, beginning in the 1550s (Rodríguez García 2011, 149). Mestizaje was not only difficult to determine by skin, but also fundamentally by literacy and clothing, creating an

identification around social traits that were not easily categorized. This led to contradictory state policies on mestizaje throughout its development in the latter centuries. As a result, the mestizo was placed in a bargaining state:

“The mestizos became individuals who inspired disloyalty because they could navigate two social norms and value systems differently, and from there they are linked with the possibility of traversing political, geographic, and cultural policies” (Rodríguez García 2011, 151).⁴

From 1848 to 1855, the populist general Isidoro Belzu’s mestizo policies resulted in a “chola emergency:” the first of widespread protests from the working class Indigenous masses against the economic and social interests of the mixed class (Rodríguez García 2011, 154).⁵ For Rodríguez García, processes of “cholofication” during the late 19th and early 20th century are important, as they refer to a channel of social mobility for Indigenous people subjected to the colony — processes which have changed during the 20th century due to industrialization, mining, urbanization, migration, and the market economy, among others (Rodríguez García 2011, 156). However, upon observing the high amounts of cholos and their growing power, Bolivian intellectual elites sought to challenge the exaltation of such an identity. Paceño philosopher Franz Tamayo in 1910 wrote that mestizaje was “a fatality that needed to be taken with much seriousness” and that cholos should “stop being cholo to convert into a new being that will collect Indigenous will and energy as they will White intelligence” (Rodríguez García 2011, 159).⁶ This perspective continued until the 1940s, at which point the mestizo began to be exoticized (Rodríguez García 2011, 169-170). Prominent Bolivian authors from 1936-1946 claimed that a clear Bolivian identity had not yet been articulated and that the only way to arrive there was through mestizaje (Rodríguez García 2011, 171-172). Rodríguez García points to such essentialism occurring in the publications and operations of the MNR, such as Gualberto Villarroel’s successful ability to gain the support of cholos through

the creation of a mestiza holiday (Rodríguez García 2011, 173). As many Bolivianist scholars have widely acknowledged, Rodríguez García identifies the Nationalist Revolution in 1952 as the turning point in which narratives around mestizaje are solidified: the government changed the official designation of Indigenous people to Campesinos, or farmers, and purported mestizaje as the foundation for a new national consciousness (Rodríguez García 2011, 174). He concludes that the impact of such stark government perspectives on mestizaje essentially resulted in the pursued annihilation of the subaltern cholo, seeking to quell any possibility of Indigenous rebellion (Rodríguez García 2011, 177).

Other Bolivianist scholars of mestizaje point us in a direction that will connect mestizaje with Indianismo. Young Hyun-Kim writes about Fausto Reinaga's rejection of whitening mestizaje as one of Bolivia's most controversial 20th-century authors. Reinaga posits Indianismo through his theorization of two Bolivias that exist through "the oppression by 'the white-mestizo Bolivia' of 'the Indian Bolivia,' which perpetuates colonial domination" (Kim 2020, 392). Reinaga, a congressional deputy of the MNR party, believed only in an emancipation in which the Indigenous of Bolivia would overthrow their oppressors (Kim 2020, 392-393). Reinaga centered "Indian-Bolivian nationalism that considers Indian-ness to be the superior force of national emancipation" in his Indigenismo writings in the 1960s, thematizing the "complicity of Bolivian intellectuals with the colonial state of Bolivia" — including Tamayo (Kim 2020, 400). Hyun-Kim extends that there is a certain degree of utopia in Reinaga's work where "Indianists purposely romanticized Indian culture rooted in the pre-conquest past to define who the victims of colonial violence were, who victimized them, and what they should do to eliminate the victimizers" rather than to remain exclusively in a pre-colonial past (Kim 2020, 402). Thus, the Indianists in Bolivia from roughly the 1940s to the 1960s can be observed to center the Indigenous in manners both political and expressive. Rodríguez García and Hyun-Kim reveal not only that Bolivian mestizaje after the 1940s and especially after 1952 was explicitly connected to the MNR, but that the techniques of mestizaje differed. Whilst supposedly revolutionary politicians placed mestizaje at the forefront of

nation-building goals, Bolivia's first Indianist writers — Tamayo and Reinaaga critical among them — were clear that mestizaje was not enough to uplift the Indigenous, even if themes and motifs could be celebrated. Understanding the contradictory political and discursive environment in which Bolivian mestizaje developed is crucial to perceiving its manifestations in the aesthetic arts.

Javier Sanjinés, a contemporary scholar of mestizaje in Bolivian aesthetics and politics, provides the necessary insight into mestizaje's operations in the arts. He posits that the mestizo is always mediating in the conflict between the modern and the colonial, as any Bolivian “process of nation-building, of modernization, is and always has been inseparable from the active resistance of the indigenous Aymara and Quechua peoples” (Sanjinés 2014, 4). He acknowledges Tamayo's influence on mestizaje as an ideal and reveals how such an ideal was aestheticized. Sanjinés demonstrates that Tamayo's mestizaje rested on mimesis, a technique used to monumentalize the mestizo aesthetic and imbue it with capital and state power (Sanjinés 2014, 69-70). Bolivian artists of this strain, such as Gúzman de Rojas (1900-1950) and precursors Jaime Mendoza (1874-1939) and Alcides Arguedas (1879-1946), brought the Indigenous past “into the cultural space of the present,” exoticizing the Indian, placing them into an imaginary defined by its temporal and racial binaries (Sanjinés 2014, 77-97). For Sanjinés, mestizaje was politically aestheticized through an “aura of grandeur” following the Chaco War that created interpretations of revolutionary nationalism (Sanjinés 2014, 107-112). He asserts that although mestizaje was built “to justify the continued domination of the mestizo-criollos,” its aesthetics reveal an anachronistic-historical dialectic that may very well be hegemonic, but, may so too be an entry point for emancipation (Sanjinés 2014, 151).⁷

Rodríguez García, Hyun-Kim, and Sanjinés provide us with an understanding of mestizaje in Bolivia that places its historical development in terms of modernism beginning around the 1940s and draw attention to the incredible influence of MNR on Bolivian notions of mestizaje after 1952. Although this historical framework is indispensable for understanding Auza León's chronological development within Bolivian

mestizaje, it is necessary to understand how Indigenismo as a musical aesthetic practice was developed institutionally and the particular musical trajectory within which to understand Auza León.⁸

3. MNR and Musical Indigenismo

Michelle Bigenho defines Indigenismo as

“early 20th century cultural discourses through which Latin American Creoles and mestizos reflected on the position of indigenous populations in their respective countries. These reflections often became part of regional identity claims and nation-building projects” (Bigenho 2006, 257).⁹

However, Bigenho also cautions against a catch-all definition of Indigenismo that ignores social dynamics and transnational networks (Bigenho 2006, 270).¹⁰ This is why we cannot ignore Bolivia’s position within the currents of Indigenismo taking place in other Latin American countries. This fascination with the Indigenous among avant-gardes in Latin America largely began in the 1920s as a result of the aforementioned widespread searches for national identity following World War II (Quintero Rivera 1997, 60). Peru and Mexico are considered geographic leaders of Indigenismo, employing appropriation strategies in the early 20th century that romanticized “indigenous societies of the distant past over those of the present” and later Indigenismo “selectively valoriz[ed] the present-day cultural expressions of indigenous people” (Ríos 2020, 21). Bolivian critics, intellectuals, and governments — particularly MNR, to which we will soon return — saw these developments, with indigenista music beginning in the 1920s and moving through institutional actors.¹¹

La Paz had been the locus of state-sponsored folklore departments before the 1940s when the first state musical entities were formed. Ríos indicates that Bolivia’s loss to Paraguay in the 1932-1936 Chaco War was significant for intellectual, artistic, and political changes regarding

the country's Indigenous population (Ríos 2020, 33). The war spurred the need for the country to develop a national identity, as a key factor to the loss of the war was unconsolidated control of Indigenous populations on the nation's periphery, as well as national cohesion during the conflict. Antonio González Bravo was a key figure of the Indigenista movement by the early 1930s due to his musical impact as well as presence at state-sponsored concerts (Ríos 2020, 34-35). He is widely considered to be Bolivia's first ethnomusicologist by various scholars, including Auza León (Ríos 2020, 34-35).¹² González Bravo is an example of Indigenismo in that his writings — published regularly in Bolivia's major newspapers throughout the 1940s and 1950s — influenced how the public was to consider Indigenous identities (Ríos 2020, 39). Around the same time, José María Velasco Maidana advocated for and directed the nation's first state-funded National Symphony Orchestra in 1941, while Eduardo Caba became the director of the National Conservatory of Music in 1943 (Ríos 2020, 45-47). These composers were placed in these positions due to the success of their art music. Ríos gives the example of their two landmark compositions:

“Caba's *Aires Indios* and Velasco Maidana's *Amerindia* bore almost nothing in common with Andean indigenous musical styles, but the esteem these works enjoyed in Bolivia must have prodded even socially conservative elite criollos to entertain the possibility that the indigenous expressions that Caba and Velasco Maidana creatively reference in their music constituted valuable Bolivian national resources” (Ríos 2020, 47).

Up through this point, Indigenista Bolivian art composers can be observed to find the motifs and references of Indigeneity to be at the core of Indigenous representation in their music.

To return to Auza León, we must first understand where Indigenismo and modernity lie in the state-sponsored musical relations surrounding the time of his output. Victor Paz Estenssoro was the Bolivian

president during the MNR period, in which he sought to create solidarity and authenticity to achieve his nationalist revolution (Dunkerley 2013, 334). It was only during this period, and under the critical leadership of anthropologist Julia Elena Fortún in the Department of Folklore, that local agencies would support music-dance traditions in the same regard as the state had in the aforementioned years (Ríos 2020, 115). It was Fortún who appealed folk music to art composers in Bolivia. She encouraged art classical compositions that used folkloric materials by promising that they would be played on state-run radio programs and the National Symphony Orchestra, and were thus incorporated into music education (Ríos 2020, 116-117). Art music that used folk music was subsequently lauded. From 1953 to 1955, Auza León studied at the National Conservatory of Music (Garzón 2018, 14) among Fortún's establishment of traditional musical archives and compelling requests to composers. Auza León also played for the National Symphony Orchestra at this time — the very ensemble Fortún promised would record compositions of the Indigenista tradition. Auza León's compositions after this period reveal the same investments, drawing significantly from folk genres. We might see Auza León, interacting and learning from the institutions that benefited from Estenssoro's state funding and Fortún's Indigenismo impulses, within this strain.

4. Auza León's Precolumbian Cultures in *Historia de la Música Bolivia*

Now, I turn to “La Música en las Antiguas Culturas Precolombinas”, or “Music of the Ancient Precolumbian Cultures,” the first of Auza León's chapters in *Historia de la Música Bolivia*. The composer begins by drawing the main musical periods of the country: before colonial contact, the colonial era, the republican era, and the 20th century. I seek to not only provide an English-language introduction to a text that has been published solely in Spanish, but to also produce careful, critical thought around Auza León's particular historiography of Bolivian music. I will

provide an annotated summary of the chapter, guiding the reader through an abridged version of this 46-page section of Auza León's book. Then, I will provide a critical analysis of the themes presented in Auza León's research, reflecting primarily on epistemological themes of mythology, orientalism, and structuralism. I see my analysis of this chapter in his text as an in-depth example of Auza León's perspectives, manifested in his hallmark publication. Let us recall the composer's institutional history and the dominating political and discursive attitudes at the time, framing his training, writing, and musical works.

5. “La Música en las Antiguas Culturas Precolombinas:” An Overview

Auza León begins the chapter by acknowledging the historiography of the Andean region before proceeding with the large civilizations he provides musical insight towards. He indicates that the Tiwanaku civilization was the foundation of Colla-Aymara culture from 700 to 1200 CE, followed by the Chimú empire until the beginning of the Incan empire in 1438 (Auza León 1985, 9).¹³ He identifies Collasuyo, a Quechua-Aymara patrimony that merged with the Guaraní, as the beginning of his musical study of pre-Columbian Bolivia due to its oral history (Auza León 1985, 10).¹⁴ Garcilazo de la Vega, Guaman Poma de Ayala, and Santa Cruz Pachacuti are identified as the primary Indigenous historians from which Auza León draws from to illustrate the musical practices of this time period (Auza León 1985, 10). Before the Incan Empire, Auza León acknowledges the Kolla Aimara Empire as a preceding musical culture, but due to the lack of archaeological or comparative records, he can only presume the triple function of pre-Incan music as either a moralizing, religious, or social force that was sung monophonically (Auza León 1985, 11).

Auza León dedicates the majority of the chapter to pre-Columbian music theory, detailing the musical systems, melodies, and rhythms of the Incan Empire. He finishes by describing the period preceding the Incas where the music of various indigenous populations is identified as

melodically bitonic, titronic, and tetratonic (Auza León 1985, 12). He details that the Incan musical system was pentatonic, creating five descending modes — these are illustrated most clearly in the melodic content of the quena, a signature Andean flute (Auza León 1985, 21).¹⁵ The evidence he presents for the Incan pentatonic music system is both Andean oral history and the analytic classifications of musicologists, particularly French scholars Raúl and Margarita Beclard d’Harcourt (Auza León 1985, 21).¹⁶ The minor modes are particularly of note since the pentatonic modes have become a musical system recognized as so fundamentally Indigenous that they are employed by contemporary Andean composers and musicians — many mestizos — to signal Indigeneity (Mendivil 2018).¹⁷ He provides notated examples of the modes, but makes it clear that the Incas did not have notated music, harmony, or string instruments before colonial contact (Auza León 1985, 22-30).¹⁸ Following his explanation and examples of Incan pentatonic modes, he turns to melodic and thematic structure. Here, Auza León is very clear about systematizing the types of music and melodies performed by the Incas. He gives three types of music: agricultural (for its freshness and vitality), ritual (for its tonal profundity and expression), and sentimental (for its expressive and poetic force) (Auza León 1985, 30).¹⁹ There are two types of melodies: the sacred — which was not limited to religious figures and belonged to the community — and the profane (Auza León 1985, 30).²⁰ He continues with the Incan rhythmic criterion, which is typically in binary meter with various rhythmic forms — often syncopated — connected to animist beliefs (Auza León 1985, 33).²¹ Ending the section on theory, Auza León explains the quipus, a system of knotted strings used for teaching music, poetry, language, law, and philosophy, as well as to keep government records (Auza León 1985, 34-35).²²

Auza León proceeds by detailing Incan and Quechua musical genres and instruments. He identifies three Incan genres: pure song, pure instrumental music, and accompaniment for dance (Auza León 1985, 36).²³ Of the poetic Quechua music genres, he identifies the Jailli, Wawaqui, and Taki as sung verse, the Wayñu, Kaluyo, and Qhashua as dance songs, and the Arawi as a sentimental love song (Auza León 1985,

37).²⁴ Auza León's organological explanations — or the study of musical instruments — end this chapter. Although he has mentioned the prevalence of aerophones and membranophones as primary pre-Columbian instruments, here he solidifies the absence of chordophones in the period preceding colonial contact before continuing to the details of the instrumental categories used (Auza León 1985, 39).²⁵ He cites the archeological centers and scholars that are important for pre-Columbian organology before focusing on the importance of wind instruments (Auza León 1985, 39-40). Auza León ends the chapter by detailing the dual idiophone and membranophone categories of percussion instruments, concluding that the drum and flute, with their variations, are the two instruments that best represent this period (Auza León 1985, 43).²⁶

6. A Critical Perspective

There is much to say about Auza León's discourse in terms of how he presents the aforementioned information about pre-Columbian Bolivian music. I will focus on epistemological concerns as I navigate through themes in the chapter. Auza León reveals a certain organizing epistemology at the beginning of the chapter. He acknowledges — in a perhaps more circuitous way than one would hope — that due to processes of colonization, “even gods and beliefs were supplanted. Nevertheless the sweet language of the runasimi remained: the Quechua and the Aymara” (Auza León 1985, 10).²⁷ We witness his awareness of the loss of Indigenous ways of thinking as well as the persisting strains of language that engendered cultural survival. This process has been termed epistemicide by Indigenous scholars who note that the destruction and replacement of Indigenous ways of life is a key aspect of colonization (Muñoz, Enrique, and Grisales 2014). Yet, it is essential that Auza León immediately afterward notes the individuals that provide much of the knowledge about pre-Columbian ways of life that his chapter draws from. He dedicates the chapter to Garcilazo de la Vega, Guaman Poma de Ayala, and Santa Cruz Pachacuti as the three major cronistas, or historians, that give light to early Andean music, and he references them throughout the chapter,

especially in the major section about poetic song forms (Auza León 1985, 10).²⁸

Yet, the knowledge of myth and legend that is given is intrinsically tied to those historians by Auza León. His phrases such as “according to the legends transmitted by the first historians” (Auza León 1985, 9)²⁹ and “with the myths and legends stitched across incommensurable time” (Auza León 1985, 11)³⁰ give a certain authority to these figures that is not complete and produces an aura of wonder around such knowledge. He seems to address this dialectic with an aside — “we will try to avoid isolations and empty assumptions to the scarce and partial testimonies that we possess about Bolivian art music” — but this does little to produce bibliographic or citational security in the reader (Auza León 1985, 10).³¹ As these writers did have citable texts, it appears that the label of myth and legend serves as a justification for omitting such texts. One might argue that the impulse to cite is an academic one that overlooks Indigenous epistemologies around scholarship, but I would argue that Indigenous scholarship is citationally rigorous, if not in the traditional academic sense, especially with oral histories. Auza León does mention oral histories a few times in the chapter, but not the critical Indigenous perspective around the epistemology of literature that does not only consider fixed texts as sites of literature (Muñoz, Enrique, and Grisales 2014). The actual content or structures of these myths — such as the binary oppositions theorized by Lévi-Strauss (Lévi-Strauss 1995) — go completely unmentioned, meaning that the reader struggles to derive meaning from the mythic orientation around the only identified Indigenous sources at play.

In terms of his structure, Auza León seems interested in identifying the functions of the music in pre-Columbian societies, and yet does so without qualifying such functions. He says that we can “assume” that pre-Incan music served moralizing, religious, and social functions, for example, but does not explain how such can be assumed (Auza León 1985, 9).³² In the case of the Incan Empire, he does explain at multiple points how musical functions related to the worship of the sun and the moon, but again he does not mention the actual dances, rituals, ceremonies, or other social life practices in which this pre-Columbian music

seems to be so key. However, there is much more detail when Auza León mentions the sources from which his archeological evidence is derived (Auza León 1985, 11).³³ He explains relatively early in the chapter that archeological research and comparative studies are another foundation for his historical work. An example in the chapter that gives the audience a strong understanding of how he derived his argument around the use of the trumpet in pre-Columbian music is Tiwanaku, a ritual religious figure whose references reveal the connection to music in dance and other art forms. He showcases five archaeologically discovered plates that demonstrate how the Puerta del Sol (Door of the Sun) and Isla del Sol (Island of the Sun) imagery visualizes trumpets and cornets with the sun, represented by Tiwanaku (Auza León 1985, 13-19). Unfortunately, this analysis does not extend to the archeological evidence in the organological section of the chapter (Auza León 1985, 39).³⁴

To return to his language, I would like to note the manner in which Auza León discusses the Indigenous subjects that constitute the pre-Columbian culture he writes about. He consistently uses the word “primitive” to refer to the pre-Columbian civilizations, creating a hierarchy not only between the Indigenous subject and himself, but also with the contemporary reader he seeks to garner sympathy from. He refers to the reader with collectivity to create a unified perspective of primitivism several times, saying “they served as forms of spiritual expression for our protagonists, in this case, our primitive Indians” and that their music “would have been monotone and inconsequential to our ears, now used to an advanced evolution of musical audiation” (Auza León 1985, 12).³⁵ He also romanticizes the Indigenous peoples at various points throughout the chapter, on one occasion connecting such romanticism to simplicity: “the Indigenous poetry and song distinguish themselves for their freshness and simplicity; they are of a notable purity and sincerity that spans their lyrical lines and melodies to all beings that belong to nature” (Auza León 1985, 30).³⁶ This dual primitivization and romanticization of Indigenous peoples can be read as orientalism, where the Indigenous population, as Other, is portrayed in a manner in which they are always beneath the contemporary, the mestizo.

Auza León's reference to *Ollantay* also bears consideration. *Ollantay* is a foundational Incan epic play that has a choir in the first section. He lists it as a fundamentally Incan text, but we can see the difficulties of ethnic categorization more pronounced here, particularly when engaging with the secondary literature. It is no surprise that he would give a section in his chapter talking about its musical qualities since it is the oldest surviving secular Quechua play. The central debate around *Ollantay* is whether its production is truly Indigenous, or rather Spanish in origin (Brokaw 2006; Font Bordoy 2003). Most would deem it inconclusive, yet Auza León believed that the play is a fundamental example of Incan aesthetic expression as it provided him an opportunity to musically insert his aside about the choir — despite acknowledging that the colonizers copied down the play, he ascribes it the Incaic quality (Auza León 1985, 30-31).³⁷ Such examples, from *Ollantay* to his orientalist descriptions to his citational (mis)practices, demonstrate how a book that is meant to so completely represent a population may have epistemological nuances in which we cannot entirely consider its history as fully representative of the nation.

In the prior section of this paper, I presented my critical insertion to the chapter I analyzed and summarized, positing that Auza León's writing produces certain discourses around the pre-Columbian Indigenous subject. A review of Auza León in a 1992 edition of the *Inter-American Music Review*, however, is more direct:

Apart from an introductory section devoted to what passes for indigenous musical life antedating the sixteenth-century arrival of the Spaniards, this history gives Aymara, Quechua, and other tribal musics no berth (Stevenson 1992, 112).

And later,

How limited was his access to current international music literature comes to light in a bibliography listing only

Spanish titles, many of them containing ‘erroneous’ information uncritically copied into the text. The volume lacks even a table of contents, much less any name- or subject-index... he usually forgoes dates and all else except titles. No Latin American country of its size boasts so rich a musical history as Bolivia. Laudable as were the present writer’s intentions, his nation deserves far better of him than this haphazard ‘second edition’ (Stevenson 1992, 112).

I agree that this chapter is not a full consideration of the Bolivian music of the pre-Columbian era and Auza León’s haphazard-at-best citation practices make it difficult for the reader to be assured that they are truly learning a thorough overview of the *history of Bolivian music*. It was difficult for me as a researcher to learn about his own discursive position from his citations as he did not engage with them. Yet, I do think this book teaches us what we still need from Bolivian music history: one simultaneously ethnographic and historically informed that engages seriously with the vast historical materials of Bolivian music and also engages with Indigenous epistemologies and informants that would give a much fuller picture of such a rich tradition.

7. Concluding Towards A Bolivian Music Studies

Atiliano Auza León is critically positioned as a composer, pedagogue, and writer whose works and life are necessary to fully understand the Tarijan and Bolivian art music historiography. From his books — like *Historia de la Música Boliviana* considered here — to his many compositions, as well as the books and articles about him, we know that Auza León takes an important role in our world’s appreciation and critique of the art music in Bolivia. And yet, we must also take care to consider what the implications in his works reveal to us beyond the music: that *mestizaje* and *Indigenismo* are at play, and that our understanding of what his works do for Bolivian representation is nuanced by these paradigms.

In studying the Auza León, we come to understand a facet of

Bolivia and the construction of racial identity through institutional and expressive means. When *mestizaje* and *Indigenismo* are revealed as paradigms in published and composed works, we realize that music and its histories rarely exist on their own — there are discourses that surround and shape them, and that subsequently contribute to their place in trajectories of racial and ethnic nation-making. In this present inquiry, I have begun the attempts at naming *mestizaje* and *Indigenismo* so as to make their influence on Bolivian representation known. The questions about representation are numerous: What makes Atiliano Auza León's music truly Bolivian? Who can represent Bolivia through music? What is Bolivian music? In tracing key developments in *mestizaje* and *Indigenismo* alongside Auza León's professional trajectory and written texts, the resulting critique nuances how we approach these questions, and hopefully the performance and education of his work in and outside of Bolivia.

However, there is much still to be done in understanding the Bolivian art music of Auza León and his contemporaries. There are several more of Auza León's books and scores left to experience and read closely. There are the various composers and ensembles that he names in *Historia* whose works might not yet be studied outside Bolivian conservatories and music schools. I believe we must take Auza León as a starting point, a learning ground for both foregrounding Bolivian music and for knowing how to deconstruct discursive approaches of ethnomusicological historiography. It is this approach that I commit to as I continue in my (ethno)musicological training: an open mind for learning, but a critical one for understanding. I hope this paper has been not only a clear first step in that direction, but also a contribution to the small but growing body of Bolivian music studies. This is a field whose development must come from the translation and dissemination of works by Bolivian scholars and others in the Global South involved in critically assessing music and sound. Together, we might proceed in filling a critical lacuna with vital scholarship by continuing on the difficult, yet necessary path of revealing the difficulties in representation found in the national art music of Bolivia and beyond.

Endnotes

¹ Interestingly, both Auza León and myself were born on October 5th, although I was born 72 years after.

² My analysis in this particular example can be best understood through Gérard Genette's concept of the paratext, which are the materials surrounding a given text, in which "they surround and extend it, precisely in order to present it ... to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book." A paratextual analysis is one that seeks to reveal the ideology embedded in a work's essence by its surrounding materials, much like what a close reading will achieve for the main body of a given text. Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1.

³ Although I provide a brief summary of mestizaje in this section, I suggest the reader explore Eiss and Martinez-Echazábal for more thorough histories and critiques of the term.

⁴ Original Spanish: "Los mestizos se convirtieron en individuos que inspiraban desconfianza porque podían manejar dos códigos sociales y sistemas de valores diferentes, y de ahí que estén vinculados con la posibilidad de atravesar fronteras políticas, geográficas y culturales."

⁵ Chola is an ethnic term used in Bolivia to refer to women, often Indigenous and rural, who wear traditional attire from the early period of colonial mixing. Cholo and chola are gendered versions of the same noun. Original Spanish: "De 1848 a 1855 el populista general Isidoro Belzu catalizó con su gobierno la primera gran emergencia chola en los Andes generando una inédita irrupción de las masas plebeyas."

⁶ Paceyño refers to a Bolivian from the area of La Paz. Original Spanish: "... una fatalidad que tenía que ser asumida con mucha seriedad. En opinión de Tamayo el mestizo debía dejar de ser cholo para convertirse en un

nuevo ser que recoja tanto la voluntad y la energía india como la inteligencia blanca.”

⁷ Criollo is another word for identifying social class in Latin America. It refers to an individual of full Spanish descent born in a Spanish colony.

⁸ For contemporary narratives on mestizaje and decolonization in Bolivia, see María José Murillo and Sylvia Rivera Cusicanqui.

⁹ Recalde 2008 and Choque Canqui 2014 provide other recent examinations of indigenismo specific to Bolivia.

¹⁰ Bigenho also provides a compelling argument for the embodiment of indigenismo and, although this does not merit further elaboration at this time, it will be referenced further in the thesis in the exploration of Auza León's opera “Incallajta.”

¹¹ One key intellectual was Carlos Montenegro Quiroga who preceded the MNR. He called for a revolution, believing that Bolivia in his time of the early 20th century, was still a semicolonial society. See Montenegro 376-381 for an excerpt of his book *Nation vs. Anti-nation*.

¹² For more on González Bravo, see <http://elias-blanco.blogspot.com/2012/01/antonio-gonzalez-bravo.html>

¹³ Colla-Aymara is a term used by the Incas to describe the people of the Colla Kingdom, which they later conquered. The Common Era (CE) distinction is one I use as the author of this paper. Auza León writes before or after “de JC,” or “of Christ.”

¹⁴ You will notice that Kolla Aimara is spelled differently than Colla Aymara on the previous page — this is due to the fact that many Indigenous Andean languages, particularly Quechua and Aymara, are primarily phonetic and do not rely on standardized spellings. Original Spanish: “La

música quechua y la aimará, perpetuada por la tradición oral, se constituyeron en patrimonio del Collasuyo (2), que junto a la ramazón oriental guaraní ... constituyen el arte musical primer del Alto Perú, hoy Bolivia.”

¹⁵ The quena was played by indigenous communities and continues to be performed in the Andes by contemporary mestizo groups (Stobart 2001), and perhaps is used by Auza León as an example due to this enduring impact which makes it especially representative of Andean music. It is important that Auza León mentions that the pentatonicism of Incan music is set in five distinct descending modes, as it distinguishes its pentatonic qualities from that of other pentatonic modes, particularly from the associations the pentatonic may have with Chinese or European modes (Day-O’Connell 2001, Van Khe 1977).

¹⁶ It is of note that he mentions oral history as a form of evidence, not only since it is qualified by the studies of the European d’Harcourts, but also due to the other moments in the chapter where he mentions evidence.

¹⁷ Fieldwork by Sergeant of melodies by Quechuan populations in the early 20th century also reveals that the minor pentatonic modes prevail (1934:239).

¹⁸ The musical examples are a matrix by Teófilo Vargas in Cochabamba, Bolivia: “Melodia Agricola” attributed to D.A. Robles, “Himno al Sol” notated by Daniel Alomías Robles in Jauja, Perú, “Melodia India Pura” cited by a Peruvian Huancavélica in Cattoi 1954, an unattributed Pastorelle from Lago Poopó, and “De Blanca Tierra,” an unattributed Yaraví from Copacabana, Bolivia. It is interesting how one song has a contemporary attribution, one has a notational contribution, and the others list only location. Auza León does not note where he obtained the majority of these examples, but he does say “The Incas did not know notational writing or some substitute of it ... neither did they know harmony or the musical forms prevailing in Europe; they also did not recognize string instruments.” Original Spanish: “Los Incas no conocieron la escritura no-

tacional o algún sustituto de ella ... Tampoco conocieron la armonía ni las formas musicales imperantes en Europa; además desconocían los instrumentos de cuerda” (AL 30). Klatovsky and Agate 1934 provide further details of the modes and the prevalence of melodies in Incan music (599). However, it must be noted for both Klatovsky and Agate 1934 and Sergeant 1934 that their positivist, Western perspectives and ethnographic methods do not engage directly with indigenous informants.

¹⁹ Original Spanish: “Como música agrícola (por su frescura y vitalidad), como música ritual (por su profundidad tonal y expresiva) y como música sentimental (por su fuerza expresiva y poética).”

²⁰ Original Spanish: “Asimismo, existieron dos variedades de melodías: la sagrada y profana. La música sagrada era una especie de liturgia dedicada al culto del Dios Sol, pero sin ser exclusivo de los sacerdotes, sino del pueblo. Celebraban a la Luna, aunando el canto y la danza.”

²¹ Original Spanish: “Los ritmos de origen incaicos se presentan en dos dimensiones: el pie binario... [y] por otra parte, la existencia de ritmos libre y variados debido a su ejecución casi por instinto en las que interviene el llamado panteísmo animista aimara-keswa, síntesis que define el ritmo de la línea melódica de la música incaica... siendo muy frecuentes los pasajes sincopados.”

²² For more on khipus, see Quispe-Agnoli 2005 and Brokaw 2006.

²³ Original Spanish: “El canto puro; la música instrumental pura y; la danza acompañada del canto y los instrumentos.”

²⁴ Original Spanish: “...el Jailli, el Wawaqui y el Taki eran practicados como exponentes del verso cantado. El Wayñu, el kaluyo y la Qhashua como exponentes de la danza y el acompañamiento instrumental. Finalmente el Arawi, como ejemplo de música sentimental y amorosa.” Jailli can also be spelled Haylli, and Wayñu is also often recognized as Huayño. This lat-

ter genre is particularly important as there have been many 20th century transformations: see Ferrier 2010, Gradante 2001, Medina Robles 1975, Thórrez López 1977 for more.

²⁵ Aerophones refer to musical instruments who require a vibrating mass of air to make sound. Membranophones refer to musical instruments who produce sound via the vibration of a stretched membrane. Chordophones refer to instruments who make sound through the vibrations of stretched strings. Original Spanish: “De los muchos instrumentos por largo tiempo ejercitados por los indígenas precolombinos en esa región geográfica que hoy día constituye la nación boliviana, se destacan los instrumentos de percusión (membranófonos) y los de viento (aerófonos). Los ‘cordófonos o instrumentos de cuerda,’ no participan de esta clasificación primitiva por no existir en la época.”

²⁶ Idiophones refer to instruments who make sound through the vibration of their own solid material and may be struck or plucked.

²⁷ Runasimi is the term used by the Quechua to refer to their own language family. Original Spanish: “...incluso dioses y creencias fueron suplantados. No obstante quedó en pie el dulce idioma de los runasimi: el quechua junto al aimara.”

²⁸ Additionally, “La variedad de estilos de composición poético-musicales existentes en la cultura de los incas, citados por los cronistas, Garcilazo de la Vega, Guman Poma, Cristóbal de Molina y Santa Cruz Pachacuti” and “Fue usado indistintamente por los cronistas para el canto y la danza” on 37.

²⁹ Original Spanish: “Según la leyenda transmitida por los primeros cronistas.”

³⁰ Original Spanish: “Con los mitos y leyendas tejidas a través del tiempo inconmensurable.”

³¹ Original Spanish: “Trataremos de evitar aislamientos y vacíos inherentes a los escasos y parciales testimonios que poseemos sobre el Arte Musical Boliviano.”

³² Original Spanish: “Conforme a las práctica y costumbres de las primitivas civilizaciones se supone que la música tenía triple función: moralizadora, religiosa y social.”

³³ Original Spanish: “Las investigaciones arqueológicas y los estudios comparados dan como el más antiguo periodo de la historia indígena pre-incásica el siglo iii de nuestra era.”

³⁴ Original Spanish: “El Museo Tiwanacota de La Paz, es uno de los metas importantes del continente y otros similares que existen en el país. Además, los importantes aportes del Centro de Investigaciones Arqueológicas de Tiwanacu.”

³⁵ Original Spanish: “No obstante sirvieron como formas de expresión espiritual de los propios protagonistas, en este caso nuestros primitivos indígenas” and “Hubiesen sido monótonos e intrascendentes para nuestros oídos, acostumbrado ya a una evolución avanzada de audición musical.”

³⁶ Original Spanish: ““La poesía y la canción indígenas se destacan por su frescura y sencillez: son de una pureza y candor notable abarcan en sus líneas líricas y melodías a todos los seres de la naturaleza.” Other examples can be found on page 13 (“El cancionero boliviano mantiene con fuerza e intensidad, cada vez creciente, las expresiones artísticas nativas casi con total originalidad y pureza, no obstante, la segregación cultural de occidente y otros flujos externos”) and the entire final paragraph on page 20.

³⁷ Original Spanish: “En suma tenemos que el Ollantay producto de la literatura incaica, ha llegado a nosotros con su contenido primitivo algo deformado por algún versificador o tal vez por los copistas coloniales, pero manteniendo intacta su fuerza dramática.”

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