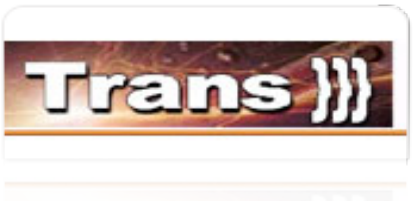

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The Charango as Transcultural Icon of Andean Music

Max Peter Baumann
University of Bamberg

Resumen
Lo local y lo global comparten una estrecha relación mutua de cambio e intercambio a través de la interculturalidad. A partir del ejemplo del charango boliviano, este trabajo centrará su punto de atención en la dinámica intercultural y desarrollo en la estructura de un instrumento de cuerda. Se investiga el complejo proceso de adopción y transformación cultural, al mismo tiempo que se lo describe desde la perspectiva de la aculturación durante el período colonialasí como a partir del sincretismo mental dentro de los procesos de transculturación modernos en el contexto de la globalización.

Abstract
The Local and the Global share a close mutual relationship of change and exchange in an intercultural way. Using the example of the Bolivian charango, the intercultural dynamics and development of a string instrument will be outlined in terms of its structure. The complex process of cultural transformation and adoption is investigated and described under the general viewpoints of acculturation during the colonial period and mental syncretism as well as of modern transculturation processes under globalization.

1. Intercultural and Transcultural Dynamics

The situational context of earlier forms of face-to-face acculturation is fundamentally different from that of today's individual cultural bearers, who enter into modern relationships of intercultural encounter and multicultural confrontation on a global scale. While individual elements can be rather easily identified within the early phases of historical acculturation until the end of

World War II, this is less often the case with the increased acceleration of cultural mixing and the spread of modern means of transcultural communication. In principle, the musician of today can call up any kind of information from any place without having to leave his or her four walls. Still, every person interested in music must make basic decisions concerning how they want to selectively form their own musical environment. In view of the behaviors of individual musicians, musical groups, listeners, creative artists and cultural managers, such pluricultural processes can be systematized in a somewhat simplified way in a model. This model (see Fig. 1) has a rather heuristic character and is an observational pattern in an operational sense, but it can also be understood as a model for action. It shows the dominant directions of negative, positive or flexible behavior in relation to the new phenomena of “the Other” or “the Strange.” By rejecting or accepting other cultural patterns or multicultural conceptions, a statement is simultaneously made about the own cultural values. As in all descriptions of dynamic processes, the transitions from one category to another are flexible, and it is not seldom that they are expressed in human and musical behavior in a contradictory way.

This simple bilateral and interactive process of confrontation between Cultures A and B may be historically described as acculturation or in a more general or operational sense as an intercultural situation. A situation becomes acculturative when two cultures clash. The situation becomes multicultural when more than two musical cultures (e.g., Music Culture A, B and C, or their various stylistic forms of expression) become interrelated with one another. The individual musician, music group, listener or manager, etc., confronts his/her own experience and self-image with experiences formed from the contact with one or more foreign images, that is, with one or more other cultural forms of expression. He/she reacts towards the “Other” either 1) negatively withdrawn, 2) discerningly selective or 3) positively open.

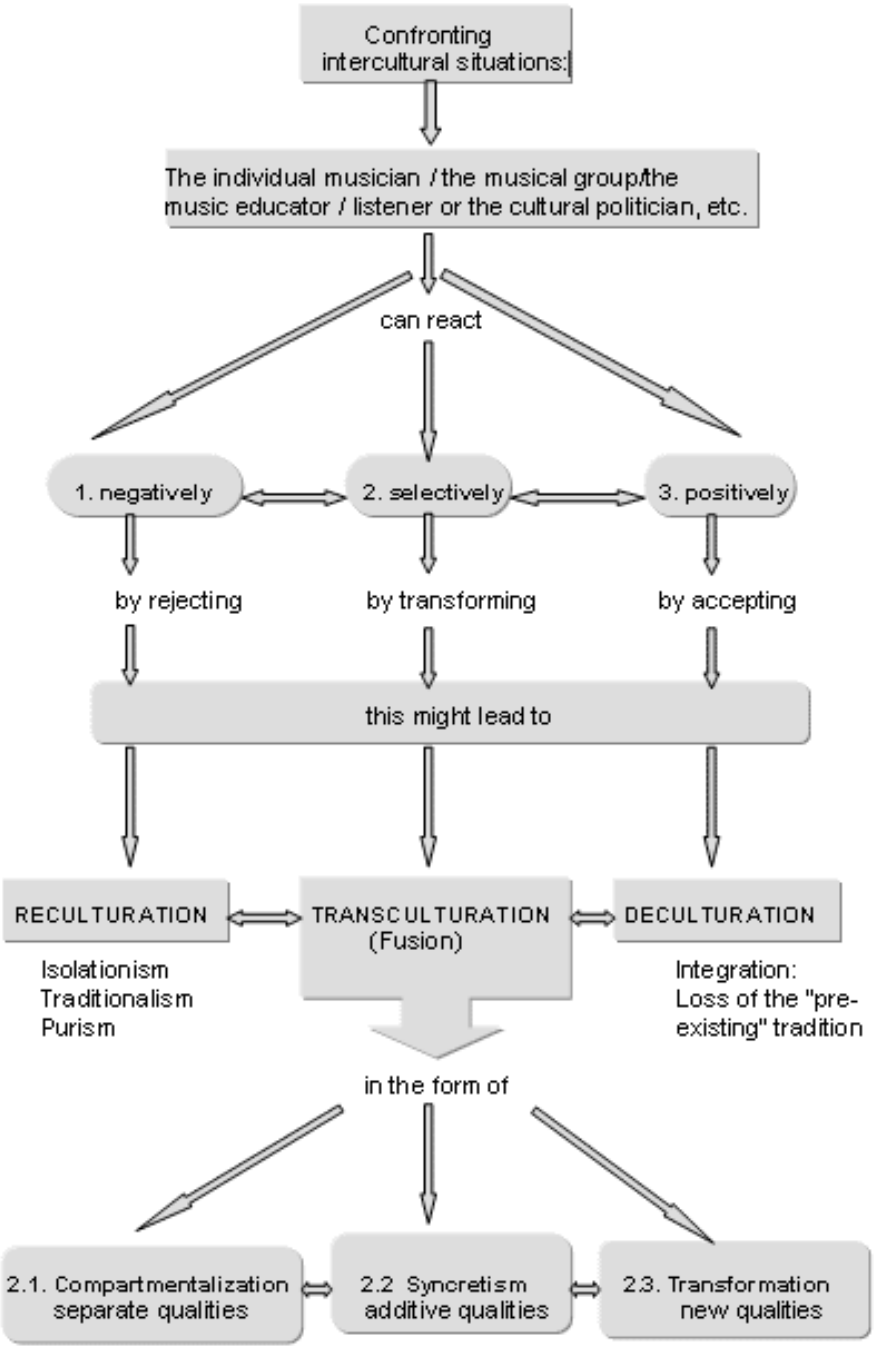

Fig. 1. Intercultural and Transcultural Dynamics (cf. Baumann 1997:15)

Processes of acculturation stretch over several generations and themselves can never be considered completely finished. Where elements of two or more cultures are exchanged over a longer time period, the affected cultures react with rigidity or flexibility:

1. When the ‘foreign’ culture is rejected, an exaggerated turning back to the own cultural values and behavior can follow, which often can lead to ghettoization or isolation. The own values are reinterpreted (e.g., *Taki Onqoy* as a messianic countermovement during the

Conquista of 1565). The progression of acculturative processes are naturally marked by the dominant and subdominant power relationships on both sides.

2. In the case of great pressure or very open behavior towards the foreign cultural power, a disintegration or deculturation can happen as (e.g., the Tierra del Fuego Indians, where the result was the obliteration of an entire culture). Also, when a foreign culture is quickly and unquestioningly accepted, then the disintegration of the own culture can occur. What is understood from the side of the weaker Culture B as deculturation is often interpreted by the dominant Culture A as integration. The interpretations of both sides are not congruent but are differentiated in the interpretation of reality concerning their points of reference. What is understood as deculturation through contact with the “foreign” by the native perspective will often be understood as the opposite—the integration of the “others” from the dominant perspective. The doubled readings and points of view of the same situation becomes deceptive.

As already mentioned, between the two rigid attitudes of rejection and complete openness toward the other is the selective or flexible position that leads to a cultural connection or blending of A and B, of the own and the other. This process of transculturation or fusion of cultural elements of different provenance can itself be divided into three basic types according to the principle of attitude: 1) the attitude of compartmentalization, 2) that of syncretism and 3) that of transformation. According to research of Alan Merriam (1967), compartmentalization is a possible solution within cultural fusion, that is, the music of the host culture survives practically untouched next to the other type of music. This results in a kind of bimusicality of the cultural bearers. Both cultural elements lead an existence on equal footing with the other, without mixing with each other; this represents the level of least cultural intertwining. In fact, there are musicians who are bimusical, trimusical or even polyglot. Musical characteristics are kept separate and are hardly, if at all, mixed with each other. A Bolivian musician may be able to play for example traditional *siku* panflutes in hocket technique, as well as the acculturated *charango* and the Western clarinet in a European-style orchestra. Sometimes he plays in a jazz group too, never mixing the different musical styles with each other.

This is a different case in syncretism. One understands syncretism as “the synthesis of two [or several] different cultural elements or two [or several]

cultures of different origins that undergo reinterpretation. Like assimilation or rejection, syncretism is a possible result of the process of acculturation" (Panoff/Perrin 1975:282f.). The musical syncretism mixes musical qualities of Culture A and Culture B (or musical styles of A and B) . Syncretism is particularly displayed in the religious field. A well-known example of musical syncretism is songs of foreign cultures that have been adopted and adapted into European choral arrangements. The South American pentatonic song, for example, is harmonized in the Western manner, or black rap music is adapted and made Peruvian. Instrumental ensembles place instruments from diverse cultures together. All kinds of musical instruments can be included, from the traditional *quena* to the African guitar to the country-like jew's harp and synthesizer. In Peruvian *chicha* music, rhythms, traditional instruments, charango and synthesizer are directly mixed with each other. Andean *huayno* rhythms are mixed with Oriental ones, urban and rural elements are played by the synthesizer. In the early phase of acculturative processes, foreign musical styles are first imitated, then later adapted to the own existing styles and texts. In the course of taking over foreign rhythms or musical instruments, one cultural pattern tends to dominate over the other, either the own or the foreign.

Usually we can speak of transformation during the later phase of intercultural encounter or acculturation. This involves as a rule a newly created mixed culture that has reinterpreted elements from the Cultures A, B, C, D, etc., in such a creative way that neither one nor the other element is dominant but rather a thoroughly new music style or genre emerges. This is the case for example when everything is integrated in a particular way and something creatively new results which leaves behind the independence of both Cultures A and B, etc. In this process, however, it often proves the case that the musician of today does not simply stick to his/her own tradition but rather feels him/herself confidently comfortable in more than one style. There are musicians who play in traditional folklore groups and have mastered on their instruments on a more-or-less equal level the languages of jazz, classical music or pop music. They have become also very often polyglot or multicultural in blending different styles and in transforming them to new creations.

Compartmentalization, syncretism and transformation are thus musical patterns of behavior which can exist simultaneously within one culture or one person. The level of mastery of a musicians comprises their particular and multicultural behavior.

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2. The Charango: An Acculturated Musical

Instrument

The charango as archetype is a product of the contact that resulted from the acculturation process in the encounter between Iberian and Andean cultural traditions. This early process of intercultural encounter, which in contrast to today's media- and transport-related globalization processes took place "face-to-face" and above all relatively slowly over time, has been correctly described as a kind of acculturation. Indeed, it implies in basic terms the colonial power gap between the Spanish on the one hand and the indigenous population on the other.

The term "acculturation" was first used in 1886 by William H. Holmes (1886:257-360) in American anthropology. However, problem-oriented research first began with the path-breaking essay by Richard Thurnwald on "The Psychology of Acculturation" (1932:557-69; 1966:312-26). A result of this work and of particular significance is the "Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation" published by R. Redfield, R. Linton and M .J. Herskovits in 1936 (1936:149-52). From this point on, under "acculturation" was understood the "process of adaption to new living conditions" that arise from cultural contact and mutual exchange between two or more ethnically different groups. Cultural objects, values and social relationships are thus transformed under the "pressure from outside." These are dynamic processes of cultural transmission and related problems of reinterpretation which, according to Herskovits (1948:553) refer to "the process by which old meanings are ascribed to new elements or by which new elements change the cultural significance of old forms." These complex processes are characterized, described and analyzed under the general viewpoint of "acculturation" or of "transculturation" (cf. Thurnwald 1932; Barnett 1954, Merriam 1955, Rudolph 1964; Laade 1971:41ff.; Baumann 1979; Günther 1987). In contrast to innovation, which represents a change that has taken place within the own culture, and thus is endogenous, acculturation (from Latin, *ad-colore*) is defined as a process of exogenous (direct) cultural contact (face-to-face). However, in later phases and with the increasing pluralism of multicultural societies, this process can hardly be directly observed anymore and is being increasingly displaced by processes of indirect, medial acculturation. The causes of the acculturation process, and of change and behavior development in general, are determined differently case by case due to demographic, historical-political, ecological, economic, technological, philosophical, religious, social and psychic factors in complex interaction (Fig. 2).

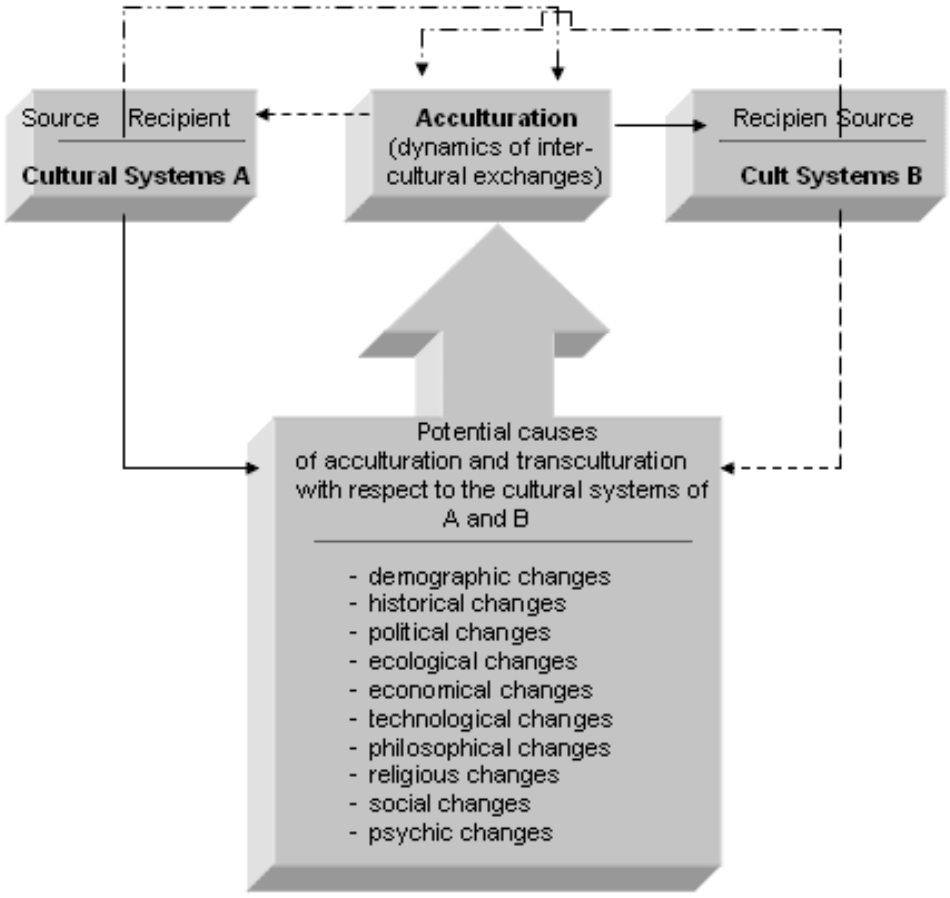

Fig. 2. Acculturation, Dynamics of Intercultural Exchanges. *Explanation of the model:* ⟶ *signifies the impact of Culture A on Culture B;* ◂- - - - *is the impact of Culture B on A.* ◂- - - - ▸ *feedback of acculturation processes with dominant elements from Culture A or from Culture B. Of special interest is the intensity and the divide between the two cultures.*

Wherever one or more musical systems come into contact directly or indirectly (that is, through the media), processes and phenomena of acculturation ensue. Such changes can be, for example, the effects of Western music on non-Europeans, or of city music on that of the countryside, or the other way around. Such changes are seen in their:

1. musical manifestations, by looking at tonal scales, intonation, arrangements, and new techniques of construction and "composition" and with regard to
2. performance practices, by observing functional transformation, shifts in sustaining strata, ways of playing and, particularly, the related new vocal and instrumental playing techniques. Further effects can be demonstrated directly
3. in instrument construction and ensembles,
4. in musical behavior and
5. in the transformation of informal musical life to that of its

> institutionalized existence. We would do well to note that the individual musician or musical group begins to adjust to endogenous innovations in their own tradition as well as to the exogenous acculturation processes and can react by rejecting, accepting, selecting, eliminating or transforming.

In order to study the process of musical acculturation, one must have at least a fair knowledge of the one as well as the other culture in order to comprehend in their typologies the mutual interpenetrations of the two. In this sense, acculturation research represents a methodological hypothesis concerning a process of dynamic historical change. Evidence can be found in the comparison of two or more musical systems seen as types from which a new, acculturated musical system emerges as a result of reciprocal influences. The goal of acculturation research is primarily to point out causes and effects within the entire musical culture.

Without doubt, a classic instrument of musical acculturation is the charango, which is well-known not only throughout South American but also worldwide, having become a true icon of South American music since the 1980s. This instrument was adopted by Andean countries, where, with the exception of the musical bow (*arco musical*), no stringed instruments had been previously known (cf. Balfour 1899; Baumann 1979; 1985). The charango is a bowl-shaped, long-necked lute. The acculturated instrument derives indirectly from the Spanish family of *vihuelas*. The *vihuela* originally corresponded to the aristocratic plucked instrument of Spanish art music of the 16th and 17th centuries and had similar significance as the lute in Germany and France, though it was much smaller. In Spain it was taken over at the end of the 17th century by a newer popular instrument, the *guitarra española*. In contrast to the *vihuela*, on which the strings were plucked individually (*punteado*), this instrument could be strummed in chords (*rasgueado*). At the end of the 16th century and beginning of the 17th century, the *guitarra española* still had four, then five double strings. It thus corresponded to the Venezuelan and Colombian *cuatro* or *tiple*, and the Mexican *jurana*, as well as to the Andean *guitarrilla*, also known as *charango mediano*.

As far as is known today, the *vihuela* and the *guitarra española* were brought to South America by the Spanish, together with the violin and harp. A major center of distribution was certainly the mining town of Potosí, with its Cerro Rico, where around 1610 over 160,000 people lived, as well as later Chuquisaca (later called Sucre). On the facade of the San LorenzoChurch in Potosí (built from 1728-1744) one finds two mermaids (*sirenas*) chiseled in stone, each playing a *vihuela* or charango. A charango-playing *sirena* can

also be encountered above the doorway of the Church of Salinas de Yocalla (1747), which is located only a few kilometers from Potosí. An additional relief with this motive was also installed in the entrance doorway to the cathedral of Puno, finished in 1755. Based on these and additional evidence, it is generally assumed that Potosí, as a wealthy trading center for silver and gold, was the birthplace of the charango. Here *vihuelas* and *guitarras* had taken over an important role in urban music life, and new instruments were copied as soon as they were imported (Cavour; Vallejo et al. 1977). Manuscripts and copies of guitar instructional books made the long journey from Spain to South America, as evidenced in the treatise *Explicación de la guitarra* (Cadiz, 1773) by Vargas y Guzmán (Medina Álvarez 1994:XIII). Through the migration of musicians and instrument makers, the instrument spread quickly through the various social classes.

The old Spanish *vihuela de mano*, a plucked “guitar” with sides and a curved back that comes in different sizes, was used to accompany songs. It had five, six, or seven double courses and underwent a fusion with the baroque guitar of that time, which had four to five double courses. One of the first written sources in colonial Peru is documented by Guaman Poma de Ayala (1936) in his chronicles of 1610. He mentions the *vihuela* as an instrument of the Spanish (*criollos*) that was brought to the Andes. The drawing represents more or less the older Renaissance instrument with only four strings.

Fig.3. Vihuela de mano, according to Guaman Poma de Ayala ar. 1610 (1936: fol. 756).

Wide variation can be discerned in the stringing of *vihuela* instruments of the 16th and 17th centuries. However, a standard of five double courses of strings increasingly gained acceptance. This type is described by Athanasius Kircher in 1650 under the Latin title "*Typus Cytharae Hispanicae*." The tuning of this *guitarra española* is the same as also described in Marin Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle* (Paris 1936).

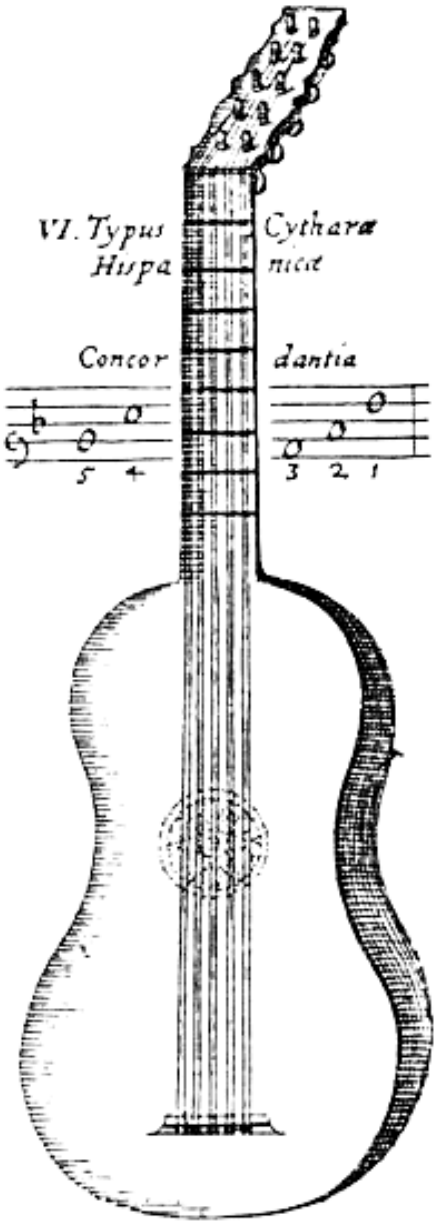

Fig.4.Typus Cytharae Hispanicae*, A. Kircher 1650: fol. 477, Iconismus VIII, fig. VI.* (*guitarra española*).


LE
PREMIER LIVRE DE
CHANSONS, GAILLARDES, PAVANNES,
Branſles, Almandes, Fantaiſies, reduictz en tabulature de Guiterne
par Maiſtre Guillaume Morlaye ioueur de Lut.

A PARIS.
De l'Imprimerie de Robert GranIon & Michel Fezandat, au Mont
S. Hylaire, à l'Enſeigne des Grandz Ions.
1552.
Auec priuilege du Roy.

Abb. 14: G. Morlaye, Le Premier livre de chansons, P. 1552, Titelblatt

Fig. 5. Title page: Le Premier Livre de Chansons, Gaillardes, Pavannes, Branfles, Almandes, Fantaisies… par Maistre Guillaume Morlaye iuoer de Lut. *Paris,* 1552.

Interesting enough in the Andes one still can find many of these small *guitarrillas*, and with a similar construction. A comparable *guitarrilla* can be found not only in the urban sphere of Quechua-singing mestizos, but also in rural areas such as the Bolivian Chipayas (Baumann 1981:192-6). The Chipayas, for example, have four small *guitarrillas* in three different sizes that provide the rhythmic accompaniment to their alternating singing. The tuning (*timplis*) also comprises the basic tones of the song (d'd'—a'a'—f'f'—c'c'—g'g'). With exception of the first and second pairs of strings, the most usual tuning of the modern charango corresponds to the tuning (*concordantia*) of Kircher.

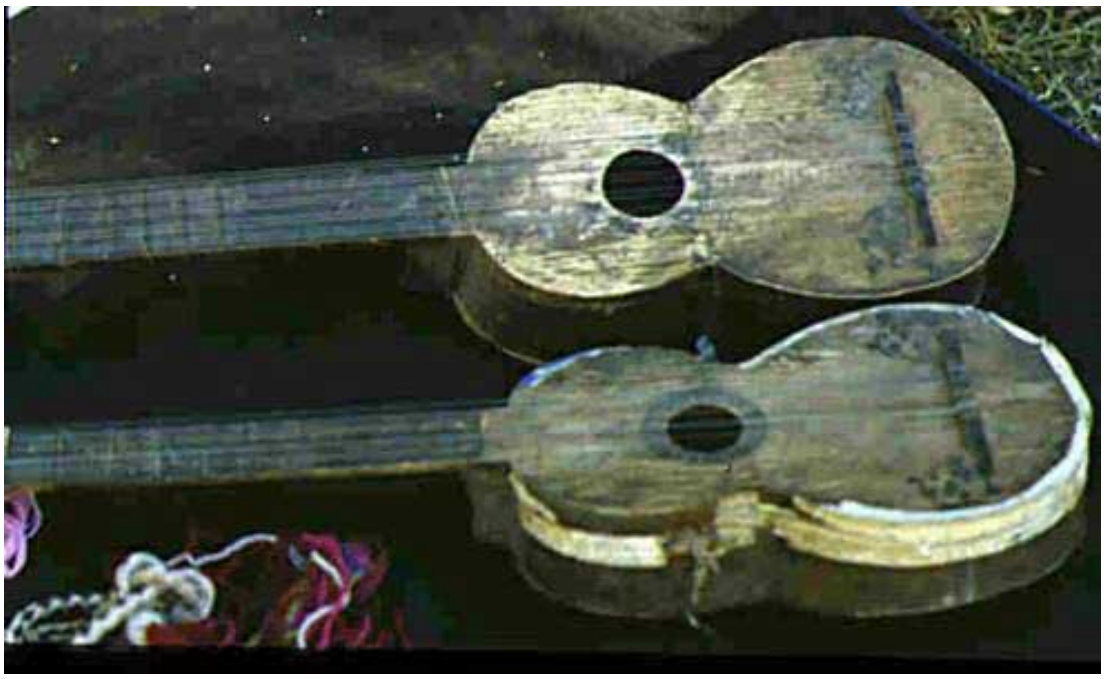

Fig. 6. *Guitarrilla* of the Chipayas with five double-coursed strings. Ayparavi, departamento de Oruro*(*photo: M.P. Baumann, 16 June 1980*)*.

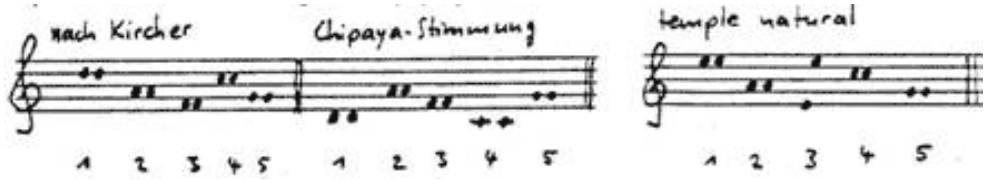

Fig. 7. String tuning of the *guitarra española(*left*)* in contrast to the tuning of the *guitarrilla* of the Chipayas *(*middle*)*, and the tuning of the modern charango in *temple natural(*right*)*.

Thus the charango of today derives indirectly from the Spanish *vihuela* or *guitarra española*. Both its similarities to the *chitarra battende*, *laúd* and *bandolina* and as well as variations in form, stringing and construction imply the operation of complex interrelations between later construction, the admixture of elements and transformation in the development of the charango. The shift in the segment of the population supporting this instrumental tradition was brought about not only by demographic changes that ensued with the colonizing conquerors but also by the transfer of Indios to the mining centers soon thereafter. The charango was adapted to the construction materials available in the immediate surroundings. In some places it did not remain simply the smaller form of the five double-coursed *guitarrilla*. These were mostly districts near the tropical forests, where the charango developed so that the sounding body could be fashioned from one single wood block (*charango de madera*), though retaining its relatively complicated mode of production. In the Altiplano, an the other hand,

particularly in the Oruro district, the material used for the sounding body came from the shell of the armadillo (*charango de quirquincho or tatu*), in unusual cases even from pumpkin shells or permanently formed bulls' hides. The wooden pegs inserted from behind found in rural areas were generally replaced in urban areas with steel pegs with spiral screws inserted from the sides, and nylon strings displaced the steel ones. While the instrument used to be strung with animal tendons and gut in the villages for lack of metal wire, stringing with metal courses has since emerged predominant among the Indios, who prefer a metallic sound. The Indios' "failure" to adopt nylon strings stem not least from reasons of economy. Like the front pegs, synthetic strings were also imported from Argentina, and Andean Indios could hardly afford them. Criollos and mestizos in urban regions, however, play almost exclusively on synthetic strings. With its early adoption by the Indios, the *guitarrilla* got its new name: in Quechua, *charanku*, or charango in Spanish. (There is an explanation that this word derives from the Quechua *ch'ajwanku*, third person of the infinitive *ch'ajway*, meaning to scream or make noise "char..., char..."; or from Aymara-Quechua *chara-anku*: leg-tendon. Other explanations are that the word derives from the Spanish words *charanga* and *charanguero*, which were uses by authors at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century.)

Today's campesinos still play the charango as the musical instrument preferred in their own entertainment, not least on long treks through the Cordilleras in the Altiplano. The instrument leads the way for the donkeys carrying the loads (*burruqhatina: burru-qhatiy* meaning to drive a donkey and at the same time also the melody [*tonada*] of the charango).

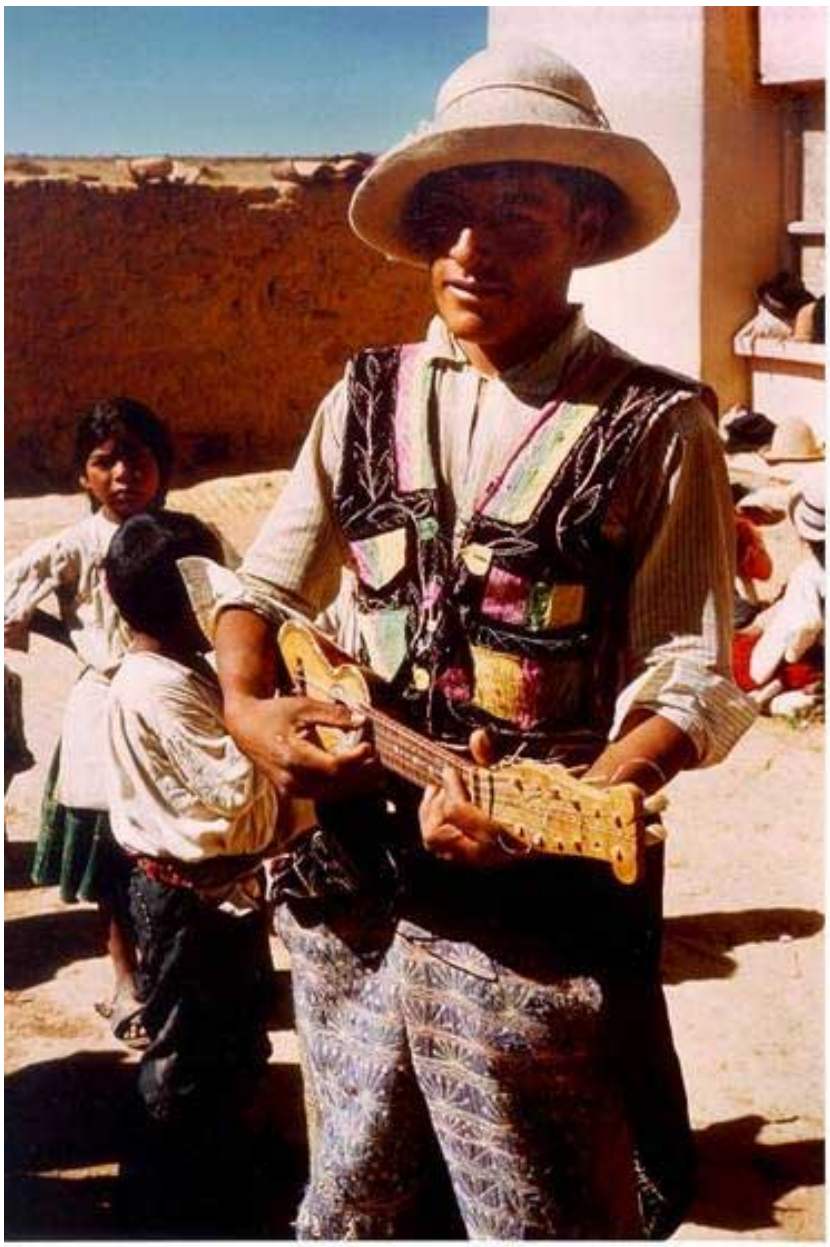

Fig. 8. Roberto Albarracín with the charango de madera*(*with metal strings and with wooden pegs inserted from the back side*)* from Rakaypampa, departamento de Cochabamba*(*photo: M.P. Baumann, 25 July, 1977*)*.

Aside from its use at weddings and burials, the charango plays a very important role at diverse fiestas. There one or more campesinos completely encircled by dancers make the accompanying music for rounds of song and dance with rhythmical chords (*takikuna/tusuna*). The charango also is performed for courting (*sacar chicas*) and for the traditional *kashwa* of pre-Columbian origin (Turino 1983:82-85). There are differences in rhythmical accompaniment, melody and text as well as most significantly in the tuning of the charangos, for example *temple de carnaval, de pascua, de Santa Vera Cruz, temple diablo, kimsa temple, runa temple, temple mailin, temple jalq'a*, etc.

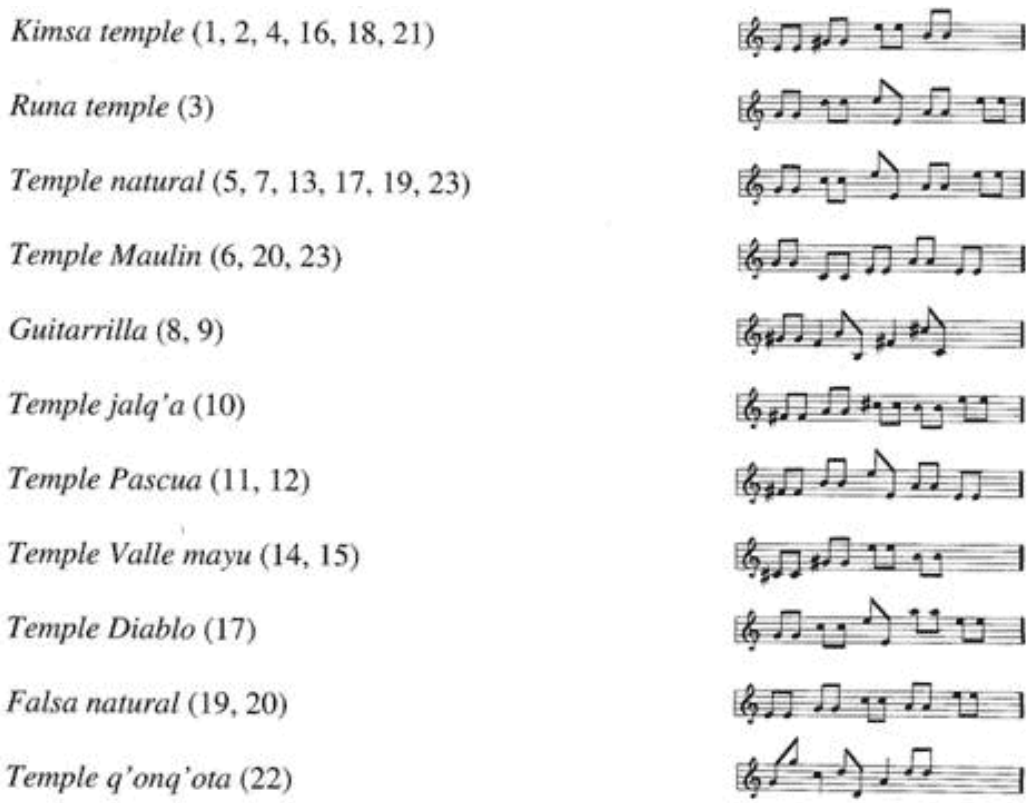

Fig. 9. Various tunings of the charango (*based upon Florindo Alvis:* Bolivie*. Charango*s et guitarrillas du Norte Potosí*, CD 1995:19*).

A variety of tunings exists, each related to a particular festival or event. Apparently, together with the instrument's acculturation in the course of time, specific functions were applied to the newly introduced instrument from the general rules of the given musical custom. The rural charango is also associated with a syncretistic motif of the mermaid, the Spanish *sirena*. It might be "that a pre-Columbian mythical or religious figure [a water spirit] predisposed the indigenous people to the rapid and widespread acceptance of the Greco-Roman mermaid." (Turino 1983:113). The *sirena* is a supernatural power, as Quispe explains: "When we get a new charango, we [the *cholos*] take it to the place by the river where the *sirena* lives. We leave it there overnight, and in the morning the charango is perfectly tuned and has a better voice. Once the *sirena* has played the charango, it has greater power for conquering the *cholas*." (cf. Torino 1983:107).

Most charango of the criollos and mestizos in the cities are of standardized types. The standardized instrument of today either has a body made of wood (*charango de madera*) or of the shell of an armadillo (*charango de quirquincho*). Many production centers can now be found in Bolivia (Aiquile, Cochabamba, Sacaba, Potosí, in the Vallegrande, etc.), as well as in Argentina, Peru, Mexico, even in Switzerland and Japan.

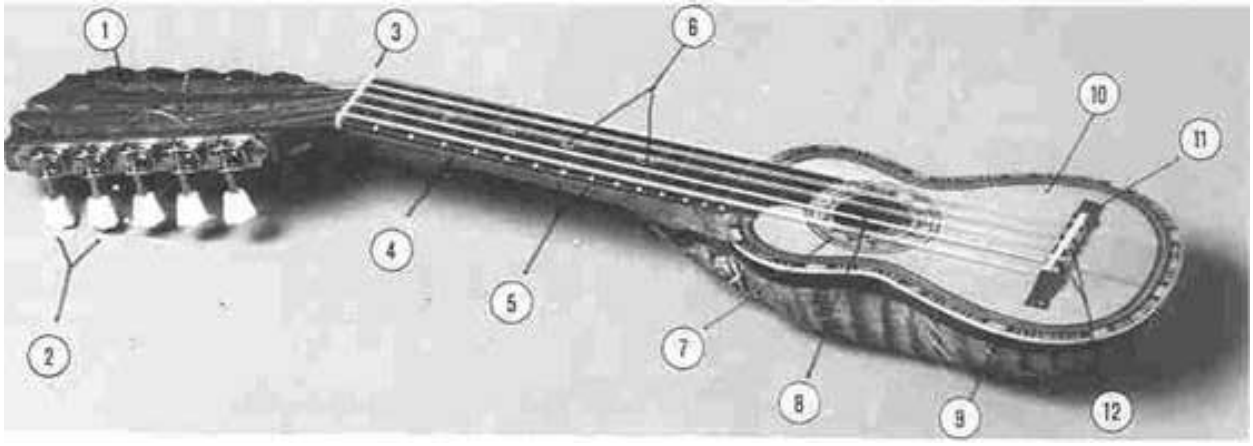

Fig. 10. charango de quirquincho: 1. clavijera (*pegboard*); 2. clavijas (*pegs*); 3. ceja (*"saddle" or nut*); 4. diapasón (*fingerboard*); 5.trastes (*frets*); 6. conchitas (*position markings with shell insets*); 7. roseta / incrustación (*rosette with decoration*); 8. boca (*sounding hole*); 9. filete / cintura / arco (*ornamented sides*); 10. cara (*resonating board*); 11. puente (*bridge*); 12. cuerdas (*strings*).

The standardized Western *temple natural* tuning (c2c2—aa1—d1d2—c2c2—g1g1) is predominantly used today. In comparing the campesinos' practice of *charanku* playing with that of urban *conjuntos,* it is immediately striking that the rural Quechuas use the charango almost exclusively as a solo or accompanying instrument. If they use it as an instrument of accompaniment, then it is played by one ore more campesinos to dancing. In the cities on the other hand, in addition to virtuoso solo playing, the charango is often played in duet with one or two guitars. More frequently, however, the charango appears in the instrumentation of the *conjunto* together with a large drum (*bombo*), notched flute (*qena*) and/or two pan flutes (*sikus* or *zamponas*). Such a mix of instruments in an ensemble is generally not found among campesinos. As a rule the rural campesinos employ the various instrumental types as a family in their group (*tropa*), that is, the same types of instruments are used in various numbers and sizes; this is also true of notched-, duct- or pan flute ensembles.

Unlike rural music, that of the modern urban *conjuntos* has become accessible in the media. Their music is no longer strictly limited to certain festivities, but rather can be "performed" for a public anywhere and at any time. The practice of performing for a public necessarily demands an aestheticizing of pieces and stereotyping. One may find elements of commercialization and new, more complex structures. While the campesino charango pieces and songs consist mostly of one- or two-phrase isorhythmic repetitions (e.g., AA BB... or AA BB AA BB...), the stylistic principle of urban *conjunto* music is strophic, often in the Spanish eight-syllable form (*copla*),

with the principle of completely repeating the heterorhythmic piece as *secondita.* The beginning and the end are precisely determinable.

The aestheticizing of charango playing can be traced to school education in the urban centers. This has resulted in recent years in the mestizos developing charango courses oriented to a numbered-fingering tabulature, and even a course with the European notational system has been introduced (cf. Campos Iglesias 1978; Cavour s.a.; Díaz C. 1973). Yet such measures simultaneously render possible the “emancipation“ of the charango with respect to its improved construction and playing practices. For example, the goal of the Bolivian charango virtuoso Alejandro Cámara consists, he says, in bringing the charango as a concert instrument so far that its technical and artistic capacity could approach that of the classical guitar. E. Navia and G. Arias began in the 1980s to perform arrangements of compositions by Mozart, Schubert, Brahms for charango and guitar. With these developments, the charango is experiencing something like a new, secondary phase of acculturation: from this instrument, inherited earlier from Europe, developed the acculturated form of South America’s *charango de quirquincho*, upon which European compositions are now played again.

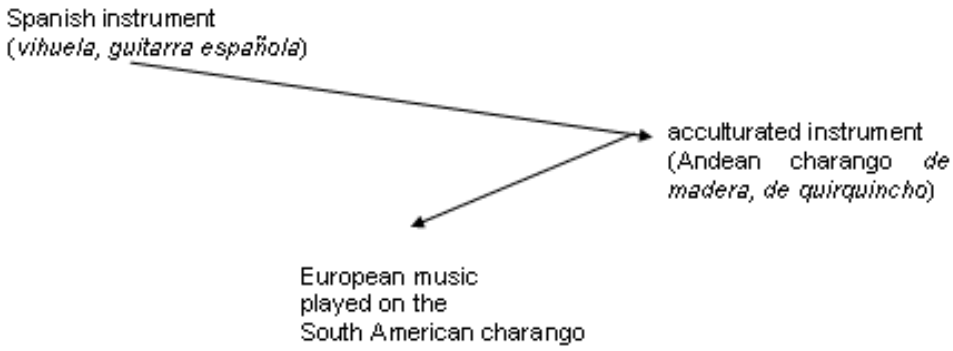

Fig. 11. The charango: primary and secondary phases of acculturation processes.

In the future, the musical life of the campesinos, mestizos and criollos could more closely investigated with respect to particular musical instruments and their types of ensembles, performance practices, musical styles, forms and functions.

The outline of the acculturation dynamics with respect to particular question complexes can be summarized in a schematic overview.

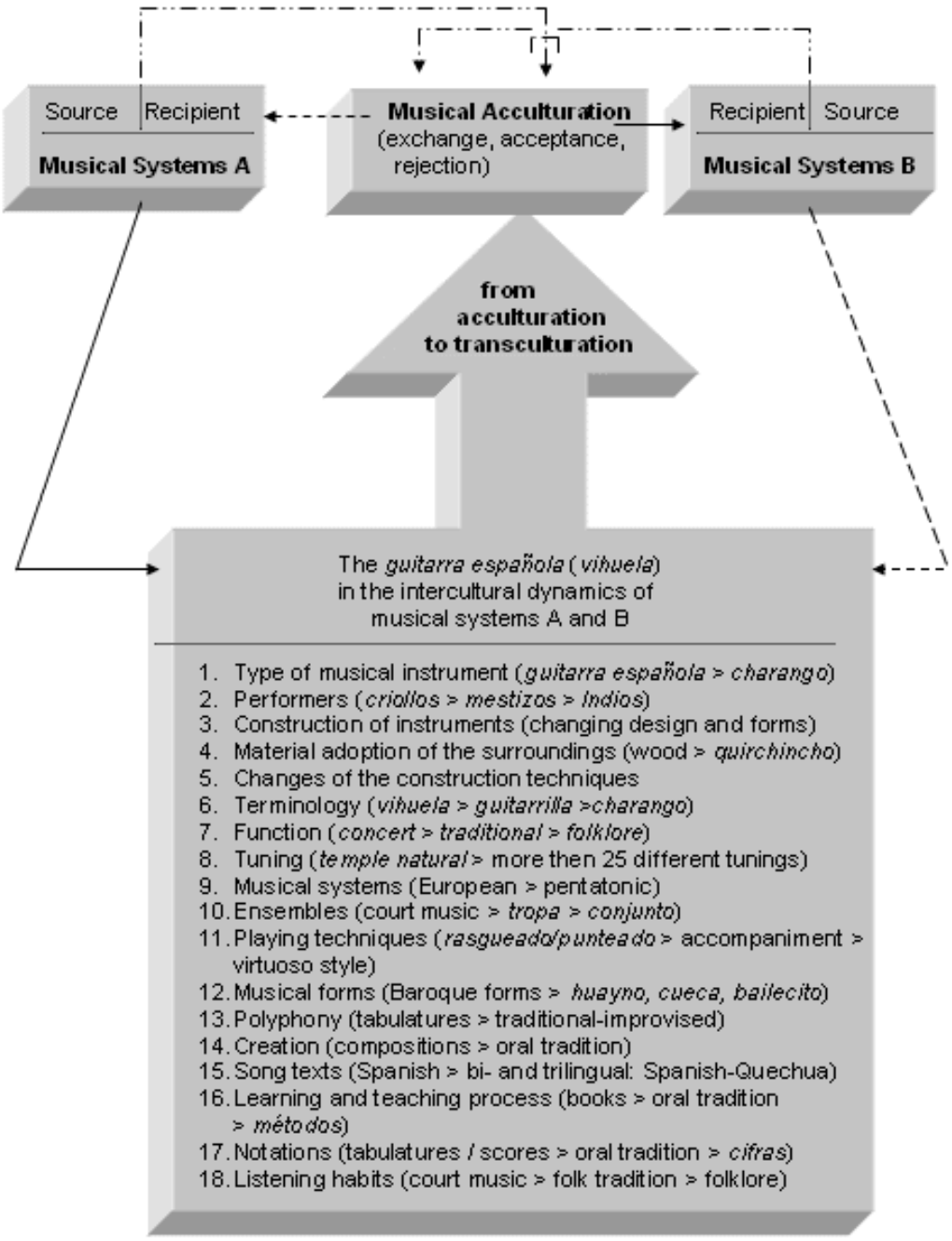

Fig.12. The guitarra española *and* the *charango in the intercultural dynamics of Musical Systems A and B*

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3. The Charango as Transcultural Instrument

The first phase of historical acculturation is the diffusion of instruments, in the case of South America by conquistadors. It seems that in the next phase of acculturation, an instrument can be directly adopted in material terms, with or without a teaching or learning system. With the material adoption of the musical instrument, the musical practice is not necessarily adopted as well. In

the next phase, an attempt is made—if the material preconditions for purchase of an imported instrument are lacking—to build as good a copy of the instrument as possible (for example, the *guitarrilla*s of the Chipayas). If the available materials or the economic situation do not allow such copies to be made, then other solutions are searched for. In this phase of adaption, experiments are made with alternative ways of construction in order to approach the original as close as possible. This phase is characterized by an endogenous innovation in the involvement with the acculturated musical instrument. The instrument is so-to-say integrated and developed from then on into an icon that no longer refers to an acculturated instrument but rather a new, independent product, in this fall the charango as national instrument of Bolivia. The instrument that once characterized Spanish music now characterizes in an independent way the evolving music of first Bolivian, then the Andean region. The instrument has obtained its important position particularly through virtuoso players who travel throughout South America as well as Europe, giving concerts and to some extent raising the charango to the status of an icon. In this way, it has been quickly attributed a new role as a part of pan-South American folklore. The charango made its way to Europe during the 1950s. First it was only used as an accompanying instrument in various kinds of folklore groups. None of these players, however, came from the Andean countries. Only as the charango gained recognition among the upper classes did it also gain respect in the Andean countries. Native folklore groups of the 1960s were decisive in this process. A new generation of hundreds of Bolivian charango players has emerged since this time. In Chile, the charango was introduced in 1960 by Violeta Parra. After the military coup of 1973 in that country, the charango was predominantly used to accompany political songs.

The group *Los Jairas* (1984: 226f.), together with Ernesto Cavour, made the charango famous around the world with a recording made after their success at the Latin American Festival of Folklore in Saota in 1969. Ernesto Cavour left the group and dedicated himself to virtuosic charango playing. Among the innumerable virtuoso at the end of the 20th century, only a few of the best known can be mentioned here: in Bolivia (in addition to Ernesto Cavour, president of the *Sociedad Boliviana de Charanguistas* [founded in 1973] and Mauro Núñez Cáceres [“*el obsipo del charango*,” 1902-1973]), Daniel Vallejo, José Llanos Murillo, Franz Valverde B., Guillermo Cuevas, Betty Suarez, Winner Candia, Mario Achu, Antonio Cadenas, René Bonifaz, Carlos Vasquez, and Fernando Arnez. The first charango contest won by a female *charanguista* was won in 1988 in La Paz by Betty Paz. She won the “Golden Charango” and was elected a national *ñusta* (first woman) in Aiquile (Pekkola 1996:169). Until then charango playing was rather a male domain. In Peru it was Julio Benavente Díaz who became an important charango musician.

Together with Pancho Silvia Cantal and Pancho Gomez Negron, he belongs among the most famous charango players. He gave solo concerts in Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, the U.S. and in Europe, and founded in 1985 a study center for the Peruvian charango (or *chillador*). Excellent players have also emerged in Chile (Jorgé Gajardo, Manuel Vargas, Horacio Duran) and Argentina (Daniel Navarro, Rolando Goldman), but even as far north as San Salvador, the charango has become a national instrument. Today the charango is played as an accompanying instrument in almost all urban folklore groups of Andean countries, together with guitar(s), flutes and rhythm instruments. Famous groups have fostered a kind of pan-Andean-style, introducing the charango together with other typical folklore instruments of the Andes. Well-known groups have included Chile's Inti-Illimani, Illapu and Quilapayun, the Bolivian Los Rhupay, Los Kjarkas and Savia Andina, Los Masis, and the Peruvian Conjunto Los Amigos del Ande, Los Chasquis de Cajamarca, Conjunto Los Reales del Cuzco, in addition to many more. As a solo instrument, the charango has undergone tremendous development since the mid-1970s, becoming a part of the urban folklore movement in the context of the folklorization of Indian, mestizo and criollo music. During this time, the instrument has experienced innovations that were based on the family of the Bolivian charangos, as for example the *ronrocos* in different sizes made by Gonzales Hermosa.

Fig. 13. New charango constructions by Gonzales Hermosa, Cochabamba: *Ronrocos* in different sizes *(*photo: M.P. Baumann*)*.

Transformations made on the instrument resulted from the need to obtain a steady tuning (with an iron peg), improved resonance volume in the body and

a larger sound volume. Twenty-five years ago, the charango-building business began to flourish. Having been transformed into a solo instrument, the instrument is now taught at conservatories and private music academies, though this also adds to the increasing pressure for players to take on a mostly Western-oriented musical attitude. The many tunings, numbering up to 25, that are used by Indios in the countryside, have been generally reduced to the *temple natural*, that is in adaption to the guitar, which plays in Western tempered tuning. Still, charango virtuosos demand an instrument that can hold its own as a concert instrument—comparable to the classical guitar—that would also conquer the concert halls of the world. Thus this transformation has increasingly fallen victim to the constructs of aesthetically conceived music-making, grounded in European-Western ways of thinking, that are promoted by individual musicians and concert organizers.

Without a doubt, it cannot be assumed that the process of transculturation can ever be considered finished. If acculturation was primarily a construct of attitudes in the clash of two cultures coming together, transculturation is a construct of mental attitudes that goes beyond this. It leaves behind the essentialistic point of view of a particular “authentic” concept. It has already developed an own dynamic, in which ethnically or nationally based concepts become less important. This always depends upon the idea of musicians that want to offer their product to a crosscultural audience and thus must find a way to leave behind them the narrow, sometimes also “narrow-minded,” local interpretations, and to speak a musical language that consciously lifts the dispersal of “monocultural” horizons to the level of a open principle. If the essentialistic construct of “ethnic” or “national” identification were more “puristic,” the mental construct of the cultural mixture acts rather with a “syncretic” cultural concept in relation to it. These are two fundamentally different mental conceptualizations. However, not only one concept is operative among musicians but rather, as a rule, different ways of thoughts exist simultaneously within a certain time and a certain space. They are each based upon different world views, beliefs and life concepts. These are no longer concepts that refer to the belief in “one” exclusive truth (as has indeed already been experienced in many forms of religion) but rather to the belief in the many “cultural truths.” The enriching stimulus is observed in the natural playing together in the sense of a crossover. Only in this way it will be possible to foster the entire creative human potential within a peaceful coexistence on the global level. Historically viewed, individual cultures seem to be the necessary prelude to a world society that has sworn off every form of religious, cultural and aesthetic essentialism. Cultural concepts might be no longer defined in terms of ethnicity, nationality, Western, Eastern, etc., but rather as a free flow and competition of capital, goods, ideas and human beings throughout the entire world.

Experimentation can be observed in the reworking of traditional, rural melodies in terms of the concepts of new age music as well as the ideas of mixing folklore instruments with classical strings, with jazz or also with the experimental music of the post-modern. Everything is in principle mixable. Culture seems to be no longer propagated within the borderlines of essentialistic concepts but rather in its open constructivism on a global scale. A charango player like Ernesto Cavour, who is known throughout the world and was already celebrated in the 1970s as the best charango player alive, is still developing new ideas and instruments. In this sense, he is himself living proof of how the transformation of a legendary instrument of the former conquista is brought about. For him, the emancipation of the charango first to a national instrument of Bolivia means also furthers an emancipation of his music into a communicating language between world cultures. And without doubt, this national aspect recedes more and more in the background during this age of globalization. Meanwhile several congresses of *charanguistas* have been organized, and the second one in La Paz of 1997 became an international encounter (*Encuentro Internacional del Charango*). The charango already has crossed all borders and is performed all over the world. In the conclusions of the conference it was declared: *Bolivia es la potencia mundial del charango* (Cavour; Vallejo et al. 1997). Bolivia as the cradle of the charango represents local history in the future potential of its global development. Roberto Sahonera of the group Los Masis put it in his own words: “Transformation is important, because the changes in global development should not only be directed towards the underdeveloped parts of the world, but also directed towards the changes in the industrialized world.” (Pekkola 1996:118).

Fig. 14. Ernesto Cavour with his “Little Star.”

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6. Internet:

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