

CONCLUSION

The bambuco as an example of tricultural music heritage

It has been demonstrated in the previous three chapters that the *bambuco* exhibits elements of Amerindian, Spanish and Black African music. Of these, the contribution of the Black African culture is the easiest to quantify, providing the basic rhythmic structure of the melody and of the instrumental accompaniment as two distinct influences in the form of specific rhythmic patterns:

1.

Archetypal bambuco pattern

African 'Signature-tune'

and:

2.

Bambuco accompaniment pattern

Aka pygmies' mò.nzòli dance as an example of a generic African rhythmic pattern

di.kpàpkà
ngúé

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			■			■			■		
▲				▲			▲			▲	

Each of these can be seen as separate influences which can be found in different regions of Latin America: elements similar to the archetypal *bambuco* pattern can be found in Peruvian *landós* and *marineras*, and the bambuco accompaniment pattern is present throughout the Andean regions. However only in the *bambuco* are these particular patterns commonly found together and played simultaneously.

It has been shown that a continuous cultural exchange existed between Spain and the New World colonies and it has been suggested that some apparent African influence may not necessarily have come directly from Africa. The absorption of African and Afro-Caribbean elements into Spanish music most probably resulted in the re-exportation of some of this rhythmic material as Afro-Hispanic influence; musical material coming directly to the New World, or returning to Spain, from Africa may have been subject to some Portuguese influence, as most slaves came from or through Portuguese colonies.

Even though an archetypal *bambuco* has been identified in this paper based on its melodic rhythm (see above), there are many *bambucos* which do not include this particular rhythmic pattern. These can, instead, be identified by the accompanying rhythmic configuration which includes, in the case of the string trio, the rhythmic patterns of the *triple* and guitar or, in the case of other ensembles, the *tambora*. The change of chord on the second beat is also an identifying rhythmic trait when it occurs. As all of these rhythmic structures can be related to African sources, the *bambuco* can always be associated with Black African origins. There is also a probability of African influence in the instrumental context of the *bambuco*. It has been shown that ensembles composed of string and percussion instruments were most probably the preferred accompaniment for the *bambuco* in its formative period. Ensembles of this nature are found in traditional music from Mali, a possible source for the *bambuco*, and such combinations are common in other Afro-Latin music including the *son montuno* in Cuba and the *samba* in Brazil.

Spanish influence manifests itself most identifiably in the language of the song texts and in their form as a development of the traditional Spanish *romance* text format. Further sources of influence in the performance of Colombian Andean music were the Spanish vocal and instrumental ensembles. Examples of these ensembles include:

1. the *ronda*, for stringed instruments together with vocalists, which is very similar in composition and function to the Colombian *estudiantina*;
2. the many types of flute and percussion ensemble which abound throughout Spain; and
3. wind bands similar to the Catalan *cobla*.

Furthermore the travelling orchestras which accompanied *zarzuela* troupes in the nineteenth century had a profound influence on development of music in Colombia, including the *bambuco*. The harmonic structure of the *jota* and its many related genres, the *seguidilla* and other Spanish forms are based on a tonic/dominant foundation. This most probably formed the harmonic basis of a Europeanised *bambuco* together with different harmonisations of ‘terraced’ melodic passages which developed from the Spanish descending ‘E-mode.’ Morales

Pino's system for notation of the accompaniment for the *bambuco* was also most probably of Spanish origin, derived from the piano accompaniment of the *seguidilla*.

Whether or not the *bambuco's* melodic structure has been based principally on Spanish or African sources would require a separate comparative study of Spanish, African and Colombian melodic structures. However given the strong African influence on the basic structure of the *bambuco's* melodic rhythm, it is possible that its early melodic forms may have been based on African models and that these were supplanted as European influence became stronger in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Amerindian cultural influence on the *bambuco*, though difficult to quantify, exerts itself most probably as in the form of cultural context, subject matter in song texts and, to some extent, in melodic elements as well as instrumental resources and techniques.

Many aspects of the *bambuco* are difficult to associate with any one cultural source alone. The Amerindians, the Spanish and the Africans all appear to have used flute and percussion instruments together. Indians in the Cauca area used *flautas de carrizo*, many Spanish regional ensembles are composed of flutes with drums, and the *pito* used in Colombian *costeño* ensembles was of African origin and was used in Mali, one of the more probable sources for African influence on the *bambuco*. Spanish and African musical ensembles united string instruments with percussion: the Spanish use *bandurrias* and guitars in diverse ensembles while African *jalou* bards accompany themselves on various kinds of lutes. The *bandurria* must have been a four course instrument on its arrival in Colombia due to the fact that Colombian innovators added fifth and sixth courses to it as the *bandola*. The modern Spanish *bandurria* possesses six courses which must have been added after its export to the New World colonies. This may have been influenced by instruments returning from the colonies, or it may have been influenced by the 'ud of which six course examples began to appear in the late nineteenth century (Poché 1984, 691). Although Poché (1984, 691) cites a tuning of C-E-A-d-g-c', the author of this thesis has seen an 'ud tuned in fourths, f#-b-e'-a'-d''-g'', like the *bandurria* and the *bandola* (Balastides 1995). The larger form of the *bandurria*, the *laúd*, takes its name from the 'ud, suggesting an ongoing influence on the *bandurria* from North Africa. There also remains the possibility of an etymological relationship between the Mande culture or the *mbanza* and the *mandurria*/*bandurria*.

The varying degrees of influence on the *bambuco* of its contributive cultural elements.

The degree of influence of cultural elements depends to some extent on location in Colombia. Compositions from the Cauca and Nariño regions, where the indigenous Amerindian presence is more significant, display more affinity with the music from the southern Andean cultures, while *bambucos* from the central Colombian Andes, where the *mestizo* and Spanish *criollo* cultures predominate, tend to favour Spanish influences. It was shown how in the Cauca *bambucos* ‘El miranchurito,’ ‘La guaneña’ and ‘El sotareño,’ some fragments of Amerindian melodic elements can be identified. In particular, the melodies tend to be pentatonic and there exists a strong cultural association with Amerindian cultural sources. ‘El sotareño,’ which appeared later than the other two examples, displays more European influence in its modulatory scheme. In comparison, the *bambuco* ‘Palo negro’ from central Colombia could be considered a *criollo* version of the Spanish *tirana*, as it displays characteristics typical of Afro-Hispanic music.

All *bambucos* have rhythmic patterns of African origin in their instrumental accompaniment and the general rhythmic structure common to most *bambuco* melodies is also based on the African bell pattern described by Jones as the African ‘signature tune,’ while the texts of all *bambuco* are in the Spanish language. Therefore it appears that the predominant influences are African and Spanish, with varying degrees of Amerindian influence. It would seem that greater Amerindian influence is, to some extent, at the cost of Spanish.

The bambuco as a regional or national genre

While the *bambuco* has been considered to be a national genre and *bambucos* from the different regions of Colombia generally display similar musical characteristics, some characteristics vary to some degree from region to region. For example, even though the string trio and the *estudiantina* are found throughout Colombia, the *chirimía* ensemble is usually found only in the Cauca region. It has already been noted how *bambucos* from the south of Colombia demonstrate affinities with music from other Andean countries in South America. Similarly, the *bambuco* ‘Las brisas del Pamplonita,’ from the Santander region close to the border with Venezuela, shares some characteristics with the *tonada*, a form from the *llanos* shared between Colombia and Venezuela. These are the use of four distinct melodic motives in the space of a relatively short song and syncopation of the form:  which differs from the standard *bambuco*'s . In the Huila and Tolima regions the *bambuco* can be danced to the *sanjuanero* which, it will be recalled from Chapter Two, describes itself in one

instance as a *joropo*, and therefore is associated with the Colombo-Venezuelan *llanos*. On the Pacific Coast where the Afro-Colombian and Afro-Amerindian cultures predominate, the innovations of the central Andean *bambuco* were not adopted and the *bambuco viejo* (or *bambuco bozal*, meaning of directly African origin) continued to evolve independently.

Even though the *bambuco* is rarely listened to and even more rarely performed or danced on the Atlantic Coast, it has influenced some *costeño* music. In Chapter Three it was noted that some composers of Andean music turned to *porros* and *cúmbias* when these began to achieve popularity. Some influence from the *bambuco*'s melodic structure found its way into some popular *cúmbias*. For example in the following excerpt from the *cúmbia* 'El alegre pescador' similarities with the phrase structure of the *bambuco* can be observed.



Fig. 8-1 Excerpt from the *cúmbia* 'El alegre pescador' (50 canciones, n.d., 16) and its basic melodic rhythmic pattern.

This is evident if the same excerpt is hypothetically contracted to a $\frac{3}{4}$ time signature, conserving the rhythm of the initial two quavers [* in Fig. 8-2] and the final syncopation across the bar line [** Fig. 8-2], which are the strongest rhythmic effects. It can then be observed to coincide with the shifted $\frac{3}{4}$ version of the archetypal *bambuco* phrase:

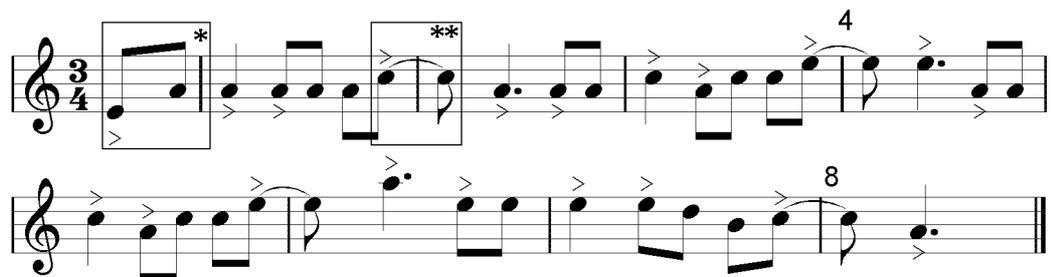


Fig. 8-2 The same excerpt from 'El Alegre Pescador' contracted to a $\frac{3}{4}$ time signature. The notes which are accented are those which correspond to the Afro 6x8 bell pattern, also known as Jones 'African signature tune.'

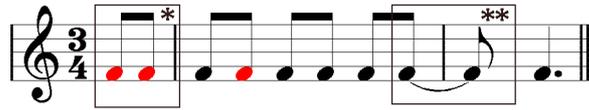


Fig. 8-3 Shifted $\frac{3}{4}$ version of the archetypal bambuco phrase.

This contraction of ‘El alegre pescador’ can also be seen to have the same rhythmic structure as the corresponding eight bars of the *bambuco* ‘El vaquero’:

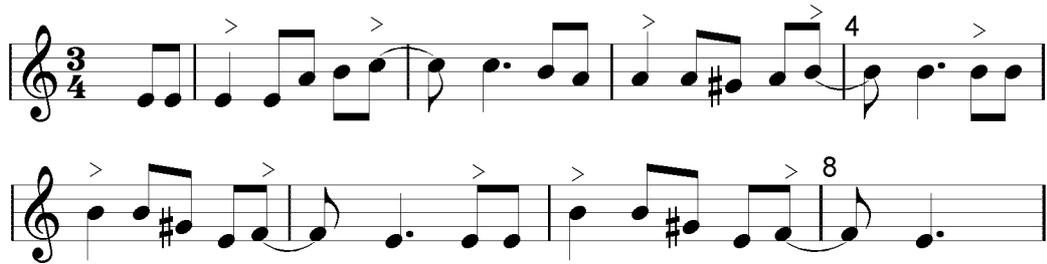


Fig. 8-4 The first eight bars of the bambuco ‘El vaquero’

Traditional folkloric *cúmbias* tend to have much freer melodies than commercial compositions similar to ‘El alegre pescador’ and so this system of syncopations and phrasing can be attributed to influence from the Andean *bambuco* on the *cúmbia*. In addition, ‘El alegre pescador’ is harmonised using the I-III-V⁷-I chord sequence found in many Andean compositions, including the noted *bambucos* ‘La guaneña’ and ‘El miranchurito.’

Of further interest is the study of possible influence by the *bambuco* on accent patterns in the *cúmbia*. If one considers the contracted ($\frac{3}{4}$) version of ‘El alegre pescador,’ one can identify accented notes which result from comparison with the *bambuco* ‘El vaquero’ and the *bambuco* archetypal phrase (See Fig. 8-2). The identification of these accented notes and their application to the $\frac{4}{4}$ version results in the following accent pattern:



Fig. 8-5 Resultant $\frac{3}{4}$ bell pattern accents from the contracted version of ‘El alegre pescador’ as applied to $\frac{4}{4}$ version.

This would result in a clave pattern of the following form:

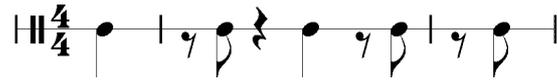


Fig. 8-6 Cúmbia clave pattern from bambuco influenced cumbia.

Which differs from the Afro-Cuban $\frac{4}{4}$ son clave pattern:



Fig. 8-7 Standard Afro-Cuban son clave pattern.

This would suggest that the binarisation of rhythmic elements found in the *bambuco* would result in different patterns from those found in similar processes in Cuban music.

The current popularity of the *bambuco* and its acceptance by the community at large.

The perception of the *bambuco* as a nationally representative genre probably originated from the time of the wars of independence in the early nineteenth century and, as it spread through the Andean region, this status was reinforced by Colombia's strongly centralised media which emanated principally from Bogotá. In fact Abadía Morales (1970, 84) defines the *bambuco* as follows:

El bambuco. Es la expresión musical y coreográfica más importante y representativa de nuestro folklore. Y lo es, precisamente, porque su dispersión abarca todos los departamentos de la región andina colombiana.

The bambuco. It is the most important and representative musical and choreographic expression in our folklore. And this is so, in fact, because its distribution embraces all the departments of the Colombian Andean region.

This would imply that the acceptance of the *bambuco* as the most important Andean genre automatically meant it also had to be the most important national genre. The inhabitants of Colombia's non-Andean cultural divisions, as described in Chapter Two, would never accept the substitution of their regional characteristic genres by a *bambuco*. However an Andean Colombian would, in appropriate circumstances beyond Colombia's borders, probably feel that a *cumbia* or a well known *joropo* represented his national culture just as well as a *bambuco*, and in fact, Colombia is far better known throughout Latin America for the *cumbia* than for the *bambuco*. In summary, it can be said that as the central Andean area dominates culture and communication in Colombia, and the *bambuco* is traditionally the most characteristic genre of the Andean region, the *bambuco* must also be considered to be the country's most representative genre, even though some Colombians may dispute this.

The *bambuco's* Afro-Caucan origins were built upon as the genre acquired popularity throughout the Andean region. Its recognition as a national emblem probably stemmed from early use by military bands in contexts of patriotic importance such as the battle of Ayacucho (see Chapter Three). This strengthened an identity, based on its musical content, as music with military associations which was distinct from (and consequently opposed to) Spanish culture (Miñana Blasco 1997). Its acceptance by urban patrician society required modifications as that group changed its identity from that of the overthrowers of the ruling group to that of the new ruling group itself. Nineteenth century Colombian *criollo* patrician society now wished to be seen as the Latin American equivalent of European society with which it identified itself and which it saw as a cultural model. The *bambuco* was chosen to represent Colombia in this cultural comparison and to this end was subject to Europeanisation. The recognition given to the *bambuco* by the visiting musicians Coenen and Lübeck and the publication by Breitkopf and Härtel of Párraga's 'Bambuco' (see Chapter Three) are examples of how this aspired to status was, to a degree, achieved.

This modification of the *bambuco* saw its introduction to the concert hall, an increase in virtuosity, written scores, the inclusion of European classical repertoire accompanying *bambucos* and other Colombian Andean forms in programmes, and the wearing of European concert dress for performances (Ochoa n.d.). In its musical development, this stage saw Morales Pino adopt the left hand accompaniment patterns used in piano arrangements of *seguidillas* in his piano scores for the *bambuco*, and poetic texts similar to those of Rafael Pombo based on the Spanish *romance* form which replaced the less sophisticated *coplas*. This progressive gentrification of the *bambuco* was paralleled by its alienation from its popular roots and the polyethnic elements which constituted its traditional sources (Ochoa n.d.). The consequences of this were many. It led to the development of a style of *bambuco* which went beyond the tastes and comprehension of the general public. A national image projected principally by white *criollo* society had no place for Black African or Amerindian representation, so the recognition of the contribution of these cultural groups was vigorously denied by authors who followed the line of Añez (1962), Davidson (1970) and more recently Restrepo (1987).

Rather than the *bambuco* being "the soul of our people made into melody" (Samper, cited in Restrepo 1987, 146), it had become a melody which expressed that part of the people's soul which was socially acceptable to those responsible for the moulding of the Colombian image in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One reaction against this was the development of simpler *bambucos* within the *guasca* repertoire (Restrepo 1987, 276) (see Chapter Three). Another was the complete abandonment of the *bambuco* as a representative

of popular culture by the general population and the progressive adoption of other musical forms in its place. These included the tango and jazz in the 1920s and 30s, *cúmbia* and *porro* in the 1940s and 50s, and rock and *salsa* in the 1960s and 70s. Similarly *criollo* society, disillusioned by the fact that the *bambuco* never reached the European cultural heights expected of it, gradually, during the mid-twentieth century, shifted their support instead to Colombian interpretations of the standard repertoire of European classical music and Colombian compositions in this style (Ochoa n.d.).

This does not mean that the *bambuco* remained without followers dedicated to its conservation, promotion and propagation, but these were divided between those who wished to conserve it in the form established in the 'Golden Age,' and others who saw it as a continuously evolving genre which should be open to innovation in composition, interpretation and instrumentation. Ochoa (n.d.) reports conflict between the traditionalists and innovators, of whom she identifies the former with the organisers of the 'Mono Nuñez' Festival in Ginebra, Valle. However the competition which forms part of this festival was won in 1997 by a quintet of saxophones, showing a marked divergence from traditional interpretations.

An aspect of the perception of the *bambuco* by contemporary Colombian musicians can be observed from the following anecdote: when the author of this thesis had the opportunity of meeting musicians from the extremely successful Colombian dance band (*orquesta* in Spanish), 'La Sonora Dinamita' he was interested in discussing aspects of dance band repertoire with them, but they were curious to know if he was aware of Colombia's Andean folk music, such as the *bambuco*, which they clearly identified as Colombia's 'real' music and which they were almost all involved in. The musicians with whom the author of this thesis played Andean music in Colombia were principally conservatorium trained professionals who worked on this repertoire because they saw it as artistically and culturally fulfilling. The ensemble was often considered as one with something of a missionary rôle in conserving and promoting Colombia's unique musical heritage. This point of view was particularly held by the Conservatorio del Tolima, where the ensemble was based and by El Banco de la Republica, a national entity which organised art music concerts throughout the country. Performances were generally to packed auditoria, churches, libraries and wherever the ensemble could be placed to audiences who were delighted to see that Colombia's cultural values were being upheld. There was a similar ensemble based in Bogotá founded by an Italian flautist and composed of musicians who played in the capital's symphony orchestras but which played less often because of the professional commitments of its members.

The general perception of the *bambuco* and related genres by the Colombian community in different places can be quite distinct. In Brisbane, where the author of this thesis resides, the Colombian community do not see the performance of Colombian Andean music as a professional activity and would not pay to attend a performance, whereas in Sydney, there is a significant proportion of the community who perceive it not only as a valid professional activity but also as a major cultural one. The author's Brisbane based ensemble "Colombia Linda" was last invited to perform for the Brisbane Colombian community in 1991, whereas it has performed in Sydney in 1996, 1998 and 1999 on invitation of different cultural groups within the Colombian community, including by the Colombian Consulate itself, and all of its performances incorporated the participation of Sydney based dancers. There could be many reasons for this, one of which is probably that in a larger community the minority who champion the *bambuco* and other Colombian Andean music constitute a sufficient number to be able to support each other in their defence of it. In a smaller community, however, this minority simply disappears or aligns itself with other Latin American cultural groups, among whom Colombia is more easily identified by commercial *cúmbia* and modern Colombian salsa, whose exponents, such as Fruko, Joe Arroyo and more recently La Sonora Carruseles, are among the most popular. In other words, the larger community can derive pride from saying "This is our Colombian music which we Colombians are proud of," whereas the smaller can only pride itself in declaring "That music which we Latin-Americans enjoy together is from my country and culture."

In summary, it could be said that the *bambuco*, although no longer an object of mass appeal in Colombia, is still loved by many for its musical qualities and respected by others for its past status and its enduring distinction as a national emblem. This serves to assure its continued existence and development, both conserving its traditional forms and introducing innovations.

The implications of the research findings

The most important consequence of this study for its author has been the identification of specific elements which associate the *bambuco* with Black African roots, partly through the application of the hypothesis which demonstrates that African rhythmic patterns identified as bell patterns and *clave* patterns may manifest themselves as melodic rhythmic patterns even when these patterns do not occur in rhythmic accompaniments. The fact that the basis of this African identity is a *clave* pattern provides information which will facilitate its interpretation for musicians of a non-Colombian background, through giving an understanding of the rhythmic structure of the *bambuco*'s melody. The most satisfactory notation for the *bambuco* is

probably the clave based subdivision demonstrated in Chapter Seven over the traditional basic $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythm. In general the disjunct $\frac{6}{8}$ rhythm will be played by a *tiplista* player who needs a certain degree of study to acquire facility with the basic *rasgueado* patterns. While acquiring this ability, the *tiplista* will become accustomed to playing the patterns over a $\frac{3}{4}$ pulse. While agreeing with many of the principles behind the carefully considered arguments which would see the *bambuco* notated in $\frac{6}{8}$, this author believes that there has been a considerable Spanish or Afro-Hispanic influence on the music, which has created a new genre which should be notated in $\frac{3}{4}$. This may appear a contradiction because of the associations identified in this thesis of the *bambuco* with African bell patterns which are notated in $\frac{6}{8}$ and the many musical forms based on these patterns including the *currulao* and the *bambuco viejo*. While it is true that notating the *bambuco* in $\frac{6}{8}$ would simplify its rhythmic structure and make it easier for some to interpret, this simplification would cause it to lose some of its distinguishing character, because among the aspects that make the *bambuco* so interesting are the inherent rhythmic conflicts which are heightened by having to synchronise the $\frac{3}{4}$ rhythm with the disjunct $\frac{6}{8}$.

The continuing evolutionary relationship between Latin American music and its constituent cultural elements is clearly complex and the continuous interchange which has occurred in Latin America over the last half century, and prior to that through communication between the Iberian cultures and Africa, makes it difficult to identify specific contributing traits in this relationship. This thesis has contributed to the understanding of the processes involved in this communication by relating African bell patterns to melodic structures in Latin American music thus revealing African influence in genres where this influence has hitherto been less evident.

The tricultural *bambuco* that resulted from an evolution which may have covered up to five centuries is sufficiently different from its sources for Conrado del Campo, Professor of Harmony, Counterpoint and Composition at the Royal Madrid Conservatorium (cited in Añez 1952, 42) to have differentiated it from Spanish music stating:

Los bambucos, especialmente por sus inesperadas sorpresas de ritmo y sus cadencias, llenas de añoranza y leve melancolía, son para nosotros realmente originales y atraentes en verdad.

The *bambucos*, especially because of their unexpected rhythmic surprises and their phrasing, full of nostalgia and subtle melancholy, are for us really original and truly attractive.

John Storm Roberts (1974, 43-4) noted that although the *bambuco* was supposed to have Black African roots, this wasn't evident in listening to it. A noted local Bolivian exponent of Amerindian and Andean music, Miguel Ayma, whimsically observed to the author of this

thesis on hearing the *bambuco* 'El natagaimuno,' that it sounded like 'The Beatles.' Clearly he was stating that this was something quite different from what he was used to hearing as Latin American music and something with which he didn't easily identify. Thus the *bambuco* had become a form which was difficult to identify with music from its component Amerindian, Spanish and Black African cultures. This transformation of the component musical elements to form a completely new and distinct musical result would, according to the terminologies defined in Chapter One, see the *bambuco* as the synthesis of elements of Amerindian, Spanish and Black African music.

It has been shown that there are notable similarities in the musical instruments, ensembles and musical contexts commonly used in Black African, Spanish and Amerindian music: string instruments together with percussion feature strongly in traditional African and Spanish music and became a fundamental part of Amerindian inspired Andean music, and similarly wind instruments with percussion accompaniment have traditionally been found in all three musical sources. Diverse elements of these sources such as construction methods, rhythmic patterns and instrumental techniques can be traced to the three participating sources. This aspect, which enabled the instrumental elements to conceal each others' sources and caused, for example, the possibly African contribution of string instruments to be automatically construed as a European endowment, suggests a degree of syncretism in much the same way as African religious elements were concealed behind Christian identities. Syncretism also occurred in the way Black African rhythmic patterns became superficially concealed (but remained identifiable) in apparently European melodic structures. A degree of compatibility as discussed by Waterman (1952, 17) as a condition for syncretism probably existed between Spanish and Black African music due to prior African and Arabic influence on Spanish music and European and Arabic influence on Black African music.

Acculturation, referring to the action of one culture on another resulting in its modification, of the Amerindians by the Spanish is certain to have occurred through the importation of European musical education and fashions. Similarly the enormous rhythmic (and possibly melodic) influence of Black African music on Amerindian music could be considered part of an acculturative process.

The possible influence of Portuguese music on African music in the Portuguese colonies from where most slaves were brought to the New World was discussed in Chapter Six together with the subsequent influence of African music from the New World on the Spanish which was then re-exported to the Americas as Afro-Hispanic music. The ongoing cultural exchanges which took place between European, Afro-European, Afro-American and Euro-

African influenced Amerindian music would have led to an environment of unrestrained transculturation in which the *bambuco* evolved and developed into its modern forms.