CUBAN CHARANGA: CLASS, POPULAR MUSIC AND THE CREATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

By

RUTH M. “SUNNI” WITMER

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For my parents, E. Earl and Dora M. Witmer
y mis abuelos, Manuel y María Margarita García
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<td>Ca. 1930 audio recording of Orquesta Ideal performing the danzón, “Paella,” by Machito and Joseíto Valdés, with Joseíto Valdés on flute. (WAV file 30.6 MB)</td>
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<td>Ca. 1937 audio recording of The Orquesta Antonio María Romeu performing the danzón, “Partiendo Coco” by Antonio María Romeu with Francisco Delabart on flute. (WAV file 30.5 MB)</td>
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<td>1986 live audio recording of Rene Lorente performing “La Cantina” by Richard Egües, with Orquesta Aragón. (WAV file 50.0 MB)</td>
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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>CHC</td>
<td>Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Díaz Ayala Collection at Florida International University</td>
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<td>LAC</td>
<td>Latin American Collection at the University of Florida</td>
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Recent literature on class, race, identity, nationalism, and transnationalism has opened up new theoretical territories that continue to move us closer to better understanding the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of culture. In few instances is this more evident than in the evolution of musical organology, genres, and ensembles created in the Caribbean via the interactions of ongoing socio-cultural influences from the colonization of the New World. The origins and development of modern Cuban charanga—a term that describes both a popular Cuban musical ensemble; identified through its primary instrumentation of flute, violin, bass, piano, and Cuban percussion; and the music it performs, such as contradanza, danza, danzón, mambo, and cha-cha chá—is a specific case in point.

Beginning in 1791, the arrival into eastern Cuba of several thousand elite-class Franco-Haitian refugees fleeing the Haitian Revolution brought cosmopolitan French culture to Cuba. This migration changed the cultural panorama of Cuba in less than fifty years and it was into this milieu that the modern charanga ensemble (the successor to the extant brass, military-style orquesta típica), and its associated musical genres and styles, developed. Charanga then ostensibly moved west to Havana in the nineteenth
century, certainly to New York in the early twentieth century, and later to Miami after the Cuban Revolution of 1959. Further, as was the case one-hundred years ago, it remains the case today that charanga continues to migrate out, creating points of comparison between home and host country while defining the social boundaries of Cuban identity. By examining the ability of class to shape national identity, as well as the transnational and translocal nature of the transmission of charanga’s instrumentation and musical and dance forms from Europe to the New World colonies, from colony to colony, and from the colonies to the rest of the world, we can substantiate the ways in which identities are formed through imagination, nostalgia, and the construction of authenticity.

To date, I have found no scholarly or popular publications written exclusively, or extensively, on charanga. Certainly, little work has been done to tie charanga to larger theoretical constructs. Research on charanga has been limited to the historical and descriptive. My work centers on the theoretical concepts of class and national identity as the basis for investigation into the formation and development of charanga. The transcription of representative songs from associative musical genres and the analysis of charanga performance practices proved critical for linking these theoretical, historical, and descriptive aspects of charanga. Also essential was the analysis of the role of the flute in the charanga ensemble as a primary identifier of the charanga sound. I propose that an in-depth analysis of charanga, informed by analyses of national identity and class is relevant, original, and a solid contribution to the field of ethnomusicology. Investigating the role of class, national identity and the transnational and translocal characteristics of the origins and development of charanga is the focus of this research.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

The primary purpose of this research is to describe and interpret Cuban charanga, to ascertain its origins and evolution, to assess the impact the theoretical construct of class had on its development, and to explain the role charanga played in the affirmation of Cuban national identity. Charanga is a subject of importance in the formation of Cuban national identity because it is an exemplary illustration of the ways in which societies use expressive culture to create national consciousness.

In my research, one of the things that most interested me about charanga was how it seemed to be so ubiquitous throughout Cuba, and how easily identifiable it was as “Cuban music” throughout much of the rest of the world, yet how so little had been written about its history and evolution and how few scholars (or anyone else, for that matter) had examined charanga in its totality, i.e., as an ensemble as well as the musical genres it performs. Even noted Caribbean scholar Michael Largey commented to me after a presentation I made on charanga at a conference once (and loosely paraphrased here), “Gee, I never thought about the role of the charanga ensemble in the performance of this music. I think you’re on to something.”

Another aspect that made this lack of scholarly attention to charanga so interesting to me was the fact that the musical genre for which the ensemble is most noted, the danzón, is the national music and dance of Cuba. In addition, other genres of music played by the charanga ensemble, such as the mambo and the chachachá, are international in scope. A fair amount of information had already been written about these musical genres. Logically, wouldn’t someone have already done extensive study
on the ensemble responsible for bringing us this popular music? Didn’t anyone wonder why this ensemble is seemingly so important to the Cuban people? Surprisingly, this had not been the case. Mentions of charanga have been limited to brief explanations of its historical and descriptive aspects and most of what has been written has been about the musical genres. So why then, was so little written about charanga on a deeper level, even by Cuban scholars?

It appeared to me that one of the reasons was because charanga had been naturalized, i.e., that charanga was taken for granted by Cuban society. I suspected that the charanga ensemble, and its music, had become so familiar, so central to the Cuban experience, that awareness of charanga was considered simply common knowledge. Charanga was an integral part of Cuban identity and did not need explanation. There was no need to elaborate. My conversations about charanga with Cubans and other scholars reinforced my contemplations. Charanga was often seen as comprised of essential elements in Cuba’s musical complex, but not as a complete entity unto itself. I felt that no one was critically analyzing charanga because Cubans already ‘know’ what charanga is, just like everyone ‘knows’ what music is, until they try to define it.

What I discovered was that despite the fact that many individuals both in and outside of Cuba claim to be able to tell you anecdotally that they can define charanga, in the final analysis they are often in disagreement over details, both cultural and musical, and many find it difficult to articulate their understanding of exactly what charanga constitutes, i.e. there is no affirmative portrait. That said, establishing a range of definitions or conceptualizations about charanga was not the ultimate goal of my
research, especially given the fact that it has proven impossible to do so given the vast number of musical, social, and cultural elements embedded in people’s perceptions of *charanga* that are by nature open to interpretation. Rather, I looked towards theoretical concepts regarding national identity formation and class constructs for a greater understanding of *charanga* and what it means when an ensemble or the music it performs is identified as “*charanga*.”

At first, just articulating the terminology, its meaning, and the significance of the term *charanga* within Cuban society was a daunting task. What I discovered is that *charanga* stands not only for the name of a distinct ensemble and as a term used to describe the music performed by this ensemble, but it is also a contrived verb, *changar*, a slang term used to describe the desire to play *charanga* music, to dance to *charanga* music, to party to *charanga* music. I was confronted with the notion that *charanga* is so integral to Cuban national identity that Cubans have even transformed the noun ‘*charanga*’ into a verb; to ‘be’ or to ‘do’ *charanga*. This is revealing in terms of Cuban identity construction: *charanga* is important enough to become an action, something to do, or be, and not just a ‘thing’ in Cuba.

Analysis of the evolution of the instrumentation of the ensemble also proved telling. Throughout the course of approximately the last two hundred and fifty years, the word *charanga* has come to describe a fair number of instrumentation combinations. Just figuring out, through the analysis of historical documentation, what defined the *charanga* ensemble was complicated. Determining a direct evolutionary line from the earliest ensembles defined as *charanga*, to the modern ensemble we are familiar with today served no purpose. There is no direct evolutionary line. Determining a time-line
for the evolution of the ensemble and categorizing the different manifestations and
instrumentations of these ensembles did, however, provide a greater understanding of
the contemporary ensemble and the musical genres for which it is most famous. It also
tied the ensemble to other historical evolutions, especially those regarding the music.

What was also of interest to me, was the fact that the principal instrument in the
ensemble, and the sound that most identifies this ensemble as Cuban, is the flute,
specifically, the five-key wooden French Baroque flute. Of added significance, was the
fact that the ability to play this instrument is quickly becoming a lost art. I wanted to
learn as much as I could about playing this unique instrument before the last of the
charanga flute masters died. Interestingly, it is notable that now that charanga flute
playing is considered ‘endangered,’ that three doctoral dissertations will be published on
charanga in the spring of 2011. Two of these dissertations deal primarily with the
performance practices of the charanga flute, where prior, there had been no
dissertations written on charanga, ever. Clearly, the analysis of charanga performance
practices is just beginning to receive the intellectual recognition it deserves.

Regarding performance practices, charanga flute virtuoso Rene Lorente states
that from the 1940s through the 1960s, during the golden age of the modern charanga,
most ensembles played according to the stylistic attributes established by violinists
Enrique Jorrín and Rafael Ley, the directors of Orquesta Aragón, they themselves
developing their stylistic traits from the performance practices of earlier ensembles such
as the orquestas típicas (typical orchestras)\(^1\) (Personal interview 2010). It was Jorrín
and Ley who set the rules for modern charanga performance practice that charangas to

\(^{1}\) All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.
this day still emulate. The performance practices created by Jorrin and Ley are often referred to as playing “in the típico (typical) style” and are considered by contemporary musicians to be the most authentic trademark of charanga performance. My analysis of these performance practices in turn raised deeper theoretical questions, such as how charanga creates notions of authenticity and nostalgia, and it was this multi-layered nature of charanga that I wished to uncover.

I also worked to understand how Cuban charanga is imagined and positioned within Cuban society, as well as within the international communities of Cuban exiles and expatriates, both historically and in a contemporary context, and how charanga demonstrates that music can effectively be used to generate national sentiment in the service of nation building. As mentioned, charanga, as a subject of importance in the formation of Cuban national and musical identity, illustrates the ways in which societies use expressive culture to create and maintain a national consciousness. It is well documented that the elite of many societies have historically used music as a tool for creating a unified national character. Indeed, national identity ideas have been long-studied and rooted in many works on romantic nationalism by art music scholars. Recent work by ethnomusicologists on the role of popular music in the creation of national identity has also contributed to our understanding. Robin Moore (1997) has chronicled how afrocubanismo, the early twentieth-century Afro-Cuban artistic movement, helped shape Cuban national identity via greater social acceptance of Afro-Cuban expressive culture. Gage Averill (1997) likewise explained the role popular music played in creating national identity and maintaining political power in Haiti, and Paul Austerlitz (1997) has showed how the merengue was realized as a potent symbol
of Dominican identity. I point out that it was Cuban intellectuals and the elite class that were first responsible for placing charanga in the national spotlight, but it was not without significant contributions from the underclass as well. What is interesting to note in this case is that charanga was chosen to be the pivot point between the upper and lower classes and that this class structure dichotomy was abetted using the charanga ensemble, especially when it came to the common practice of including musicians of differing race and social class within the ensemble.

One could ask why charanga—as opposed to perhaps other musical traditions that were more closely associated with the romantic notion of the folk—was socially elevated by Cuban intellectuals and the elite class. Was it because it served to further separate the elite from the proletariat in public social venues? Was the use of expensive European instruments such as the flute, piano, and violin a status symbol of social rank and prosperity? Was it the desire to depict the national character of Cuba as predominately white and of Iberian descent, i.e., Spanish criollo (creole)?

Answers to these questions are unequivocally, yes. In other words, there appear to be several reasons why charanga was chosen as a symbol of national identity and the international representation of ‘Cubanness.’

In an effort to understand these reasons, I turned to Peter Wade (1998) and his work on the creation of national identity and the heterogeneity of social processes.

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2 According to Thomas M. Stephens, the term criollo (creole) has several meanings, and all of them imply a racial construct and describe differing phenotypes for human beings. The common denominator is that all definitions of criollo define a person born in the Americas, particularly in the Caribbean. In essence, the term criollo is defined as a person of European (primarily Spanish) heritage, a person of African (black) heritage, or a person of mixed-heritage (any combination of phenotype) born in the New World. The term mulato, a bi-racial person of African and European heritage, is sometimes used interchangeably with criollo (1989: 86). The term criollo can also define or describe the material and expressive cultural products, such as music, of persons born in the Americas.
among elite classes in nationalist movements, as well as Thomas Turino (2003), who identifies two distinctly different phases of national and cultural identity building in Latin America from the 1820s to the 1970s. Following Wade and Turino, whose work I cover more thoroughly later in this chapter, I have observed that the formation of the charanga ensemble and the invention of the musical genres and styles it performs have been historically linked in Cuba to both the nineteenth-century romantic nationalism phase of Cuban national identity creation—primarily a criollo-based independence movement as described by Turino—as well as Cuba’s modern twentieth-century populist movements. Charanga has also migrated out, primarily to the U.S., and is located within a hemispheric, transnational, and global community, making it an important site for understanding and identifying Cuban national identity. We find in charanga a good example of how music from throughout the Caribbean has historically challenged dominant notions of class, race, ethnicity, nation, and geopolitical boundaries and how in the post-colonial Caribbean, music still plays a formative role in the articulation of nationalism, especially in the face of globalization’s tendency to homogenize identity and reinforce a pan-Latin culture.

It has been written in the literature on Cuban music (Alén Rodríguez 1998; Díaz Ayala 1994, 1999, 2003, 2006; Manuel 1985, 1988, 1991, 1995, 2009a, 2009b; Roberts 1999; Sublette 2004) that late eighteenth-century charanga ensembles first performed contradanzas (contradances) from Spain in the ballrooms of the Cuban elite and that the performance of this music was influenced by African musical practices. These criollo dance genres formed the basis for the creation of later Cuban musical genres such as the contradanza, danza, and ultimately, the danzón. The ensemble most
associated with the performance of danzón, Cuba’s official national music and dance genre, is the charanga. Charanga ensembles are also the primary ensembles involved in the performance of other popular genres and styles of music, such as the mambo and the cha-cha-chá that, beginning in the 1940s, likewise came to represent ‘Cubanness’ on an international scale.

In my research, I examine the historical, social, and cultural factors that facilitated the movement from Europe into the New World of charanga’s antecedent ensembles and musical forms, styles, and genres. I identify the major charanga ensembles and most important charanga flute players from the nineteenth through the twenty-first century. I give special attention to the flute because it became the virtuosic solo instrument in the ensemble as well as the idiomatic representation of charanga musical style. Analysis of the type of flute used in charanga ensembles—the preferred five-key, French Baroque flute, as opposed to the silver Boehm-system flute—yields insights regarding the notion of tradition versus modernity and progress, a critical element in the construction of national identity. By studying charanga ensembles, I show how performance practices and the choice of the instruments themselves intersected with notions of class in the shaping of Cuban national identity and through this analysis of both material and expressive culture, I provide a deeper understanding of the way identity is constructed.

I have also researched how and why elements of charanga moved from Spain, France, and Africa, to Haiti, then to eastern Cuba and from eastern Cuba to Havana, and later to the U.S. I argue that charanga, as a tradition and nostalgic symbol of authentic national identity, has endured because of the ways in which its translocal and
transnational character is reinforced. In my analysis of the musical genres associated with charanga, I illustrate how music can serve as a means by which people create a marker to recognize place and how they establish the physical, social, and cultural boundaries that separate societies and/or groups within societies. In conclusion, I ascertain the ways, and to what extent, charanga has been used within Cuban society to construct national and class identity and how this identity is imagined and articulated.

**Theoretical Framework**

Several theoretical orientations inform my analysis of charanga: the neo-Marxist concept of class, as well as issues of identity and nationalism. I focus on the concept of class as presented by Anthony Giddens (1973) in my analysis of Cuban social structure. I turn to Martin Stokes (1994) and Thomas Turino (1999) regarding notions of identity as it relates to music. I refer to definitions of nationalism as posited by Benedict Anderson (1983)—including Turino’s (2003) and Peter Wade’s (1998) articulation of issues regarding national identity in Latin America—for explanations of how music can create imaginings of identity and nationalist sentiment. Combining these orientations and approaches demonstrates how charanga operates as a site where multifocal identities are created and maintained.

In *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*, Giddens states that the generic concept of class includes a variety of different analyses of the ways in which societies are structured. He posits that in addition to the most prominent notion of class structure, the socio-economic structure articulated by Karl Marx, that other premises exist as well. For Giddens, ideas about class and social stratification also encompass neo-Marxist concepts such as the manual/non-manual labor model (1973: 82), i.e. elite privileging for non-manual labor, and the role of authority and power (or lack thereof) in
the determining of one’s social status (1973: 118). The concept of a ‘closed’ social system is also a factor in the establishing of class hierarchy (1973: 120). It describes the propensity of social groups to exercise inclusionary and exclusionary practices based upon criteria such as phenotype, religion, level of education, morals, language, etc. The social closure equation also determines access to opportunities and rewards through a process of privileging and subordination. Consequently, the rights to determine what material culture is created and what manifestations of expressive culture are allowed to predominate within society privileges the ideologies and modes of elite intellectual thought—and therefore, the ability to create and maintain social, economic, political, and ideological power—of certain social groups over others. It is this sense of class that informs my work.

Initially in colonial Cuba, the European elite held sway over almost all representations of expressive culture within the greater society. All other forms, such as African-derived or Spanish folkloric expressions, were marginalized. Over time, this position changed as Cuba looked to the expressive culture of the subaltern as potential symbols of national identity in the early twentieth century. Inclusion, however, was still brokered by the upper classes. For example, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that Cuban elite began to develop the notion of a criollo nation, made manifest by the recognition and inclusion of expressive cultural forms from various segments and classes within society. The syncretizing of African-derived rhythmic elements with the melodic and harmonic elements of Spanish European musical genres such as the waltz and the contradance was a slow process of acceptance on the part of the elite. Over time, the elite and upper classes began to view Cuban identity as comprised of
expressive cultural elements from all members of Cuban society, yet the public articulation of the concept of a *criollo* nation was not fully realized until the early twentieth century by elite artists and intellectuals such as Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980) and Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969). This example, in substantiation of Giddens, shows that it is through hierarchical social class structure that social groups obtain the power to determine the role of expressive culture within society, and this is especially true in terms of the history and evolution of *charanga*.

Discourse on the concept of class in Cuba should also encompass, to some extent, the role of race within Cuban society. The notions of race and class in Cuba are essentially inseparable and the interchanges between them are critical factors to consider when analyzing the creation of a Cuban national identity. To fully factor in race as a component of Cuban identity construction, however, would go far beyond the scope of this dissertation, especially given that there already exists within the literature several important works on the role of race in the construction of Cuban national identity, Robin Moore’s *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940*, being a prime example. Nonetheless, there are key points to be made about race in Cuba that directly correlate to an understanding of class and identity. These correlations are implied whenever analytical statements are made about class in Cuba.

Throughout its history, Cuba has undergone several transitions whereby preexisting notions of class and social stratification have been challenged and/or altered due to changes in social, economic, or political forces. Some of the most dramatic changes in social structure came about in the nineteenth century—when *charanga’s*
musical genres were first beginning to manifest—due to the expansion of sugar production and the necessary introduction of enslaved Africans into Cuban society.

Louis A. Pérez, Jr. states that:

The successful use of slave labor relied on more than force and violence [in altering Cuban society]. It rested, too, on a number of ideological formulations, all of which had as their central premise the notion of unequal social evolution. Whites proclaimed themselves innately superior to non-whites. Race not only served as a useful justification of slavery but it was used to justify both the exclusion of people of color from political participation and the imposition of barriers to social mobility… Cuban society was divided by class and color (1995: 92).

Determining the criteria for establishing racial and class divisions within Cuban society took on heightened importance due to the privileging that social, economic, and political power granted to certain groups. Important to this study is the realization that barriers of class and race within Cuban social structure were pervasive, but not exclusive. Class and racial lines were often crossed due to economic and political expediency. “But to say that they were crossed frequently is not to suggest that they were crossed equally freely by all parties or that such crossing challenged the premises upon which they had been constructed” (Pérez 1995: 92). This was all the more reason for the lines of social stratification to remain as stable as possible. This historical stability later again came under fire as Cuba sought to establish a national identity in the late nineteenth century.

Robin Moore states that by the early twentieth century, it was Cuban intellectuals and elites such as Alejo Carpentier and Fernando Ortiz and their work on the valorization of African-derived culture within Cuban society, who served as the intellectual foundation for the formation of modern Cuban thought and the imagining of a new criollo nation. Moore writes:

…Cuban intellectuals, politicians, and artists… defined their culture and society in terms of creole or mulatto imagery. The mulatto nation metaphor
[referred] to a physical process—the racial mixing of Caucasians, Africans, and indigenous peoples over the centuries—but, more important, [it also referred to] a cultural one involving the fusion of once distinct systems of language, religion, artistic forms, and other expression into a unique composite (1997: 1).

Carpentier, Ortiz, and other members of the Grupo Minoristas (The Minority Group)—a social faction comprised of the artistic, intellectual, and elite minority—“demonstrate[d] a significant break with previously held conceptions of Cuban society, from which African-influenced culture was almost entirely excluded” (Moore 1997: 2). The Grupo Minoristas challenged the decades-long social practices of strict class hierarchy and racial discrimination in Cuba, and in turn, fostered the rise of the afrocubanismo (Afro-Cuban) movement which recognized the cultural contributions of all members of Cuban society, especially those of African descent. “The arts of socially marginalized blacks, for centuries ignored or dismissed by Cuba’s [elite and] middle classes, took on new significance as symbols of nationality” (Moore 1997: 2). Contemporary scholarship seeks to better understand this change in Cuban national identity by clearly identifying how that identity was comprised. In the case of charanga, it is important to determine how the ensemble and its music have been tied to identity creation, and for clarification of this development, one must consider theoretical concepts of identity.

Ethnomusicologists Thomas Turino (2008) and Martin Stokes (1997), have articulated how identity is constructed and maintained especially in terms of its relationship to music. Stokes states that “music is meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognize identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them” (1997: 5). Turino, in support of Stokes, likewise emphasizes the associations between identity, place, and boundaries when analyzing the role of music in identity construction. Turino presents a model for defining ‘self,
identity, and culture: “what is suggested is ongoing dialectical interactions between individuals and their social and physical surroundings realized through observable practices” (2008: 94). He posits that theories about expressive cultural practices should first begin with an understanding of the self and individual identity. Turino conceptualizes the

“self as comprising a body plus the total sets of habits specific to an individual that develop through the ongoing interchanges of the individual with her physical and social surroundings. Identity involves the partial selection of habits used to represent oneself to oneself and to others by oneself and by others; the emphasis on certain habits and traits is relative to specific situations. Finally, what is usually referred to as culture is defined here as the habits of thought and practice that are shared among individuals (2008: 95).

Undoubtedly, class identity is a major distinction in an individual’s concept of self, especially one’s positioning within the social hierarchy relative to others. Styles and genres of music favored by groups or individuals reveals one’s place within the social hierarchy and further privileges or discriminates individuals based upon the music with which they are associated. This is certainly true when discussing charanga beginning in the nineteenth century.

Analysis of class and identity articulates how the Cuban elite historically preferred Western art music’s melodic and harmonic influences—for this is what they were familiar with in Europe—while the African rhythmic components were first seen as distasteful and uncultured, as were Afro-Cubans themselves. Popular music genres performed by the charangas in the salons and ballrooms of the elite reflected a European social identity and made clear the dissimilarities between elite European (white) criollo identity and anything Other. In the slow journey to becoming a racially mixed criollo nation, this perspective changed, but the change was gradual and the
musical inventions adopted—primarily African-derived rhythmic components—were at first subtle so as to be made palatable to the elite and middle classes before being allowed to flower fully into main society unaltered (which the afrocubanismo movement helped to foster).

Important to this study, Stokes further defines identity has having a multiplicity of constructs (1997: 13). For example, rural-urban identity is described as one factor of the theoretical construct of ‘cosmopolitanism’ in both of its forms, the ‘one-world’ notion of a single humanity, as well as the ‘elite-privileging’ notion used to describe urban sophisticates. Racial identity has been determined to be a social construct and not a biological mandate, and other identities such as gender and ethnic identity inform us of the myriad of ways in which individuals as well as nations and nation-states are involved in the construction of a sense of self and social connection (individual and social identities). Transnational identity establishes a dialectic between home and host country and national identity describes identity formations involving nation-states.

Historian Benedict Anderson, in his highly revered Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983), presents the idea that the nation is not only a geo-political entity (the nation-state), but that it is a symbolic identity construct as well. He states that the nation is an “imagined political community… It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (1983: 5-6). In the instance of Cuba, we understand the nation-state to not only be the geographic boundaries of the island, but the national identity imaginings—in our case, imagined through Cuban music, particularly charanga,
and discourse about Cuban music—of Cubans who live both in and outside of that geo-political boundary, primarily in Miami and New York.

The more recent work of ethnomusicologists such as Paul Austerlitz provide further example. Austerlitz writes that music, specifically *merengue*, was purposely used by the Trujillo government in the Dominican Republic to promote the idea of nationhood and that this case is no isolated example (1997: 52). The move to institute *merengue* as a symbol of Dominican national identity was calculated and deliberate on the part of Trujillo, causing a major shift in how the elite self identified. The elevation of the *merengue* to that of national music is also a good example of what Anderson considers the fluidity of national identity construction. He states that nation-states, like individuals within society, are constantly shifting orientations as people define them. As individual identity is always evolving, likewise the cultural identity linked to the nation-state evolves as well. Identity is not a static construct.

Historian Franklin W. Knight states that “by the middle of the nineteenth century, Cubans had already begun to manifest a rebellious sense of national identity more precocious than any found elsewhere in the Caribbean” (1990: 227). Indeed, if we look at Cuba’s social and political history over the last one hundred and fifty years, we find a nation set on establishing a distinct identity with the goal of complete sovereignty. Understanding how Cuban *charanga* is imagined and positioned within Cuban society,

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3 Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina (1891-1961) was president of the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1938 and again from 1942 to 1952. He was from modest beginnings and resented the elite’s distain for the expressive culture of the subaltern. In response, he declared that the *merengue*, a musical genre of the lower classes, would be the national music of the Dominican Republic, much to the initial horror of the elite and upper classes.

4 For more information on Cuba’s political history in the twentieth century, see “Chapter 16: Cuba During the 20th Century,” in Rogoziński, 2000: 225.
as well as within the international communities of Cuban exiles and expatriates—both historically and in a contemporary context—demonstrates how music can be effectively used to generate nation building. *Charanga*, as a subject of importance in the formation of Cuban national and musical identity, illustrates the ways in which societies use expressive culture to create and maintain a national consciousness.

Knight posits that geography had a lot to do with the fact that Cuba has always been politically conscious. Its position as the largest island in the Caribbean, combined with its strategic maritime location, made Cuba a focal point in the “transatlantic communication network.” In addition, a large network of colonists from Spain exercised strong administrative functions within a well-run civil society in Cuba’s urban centers. Ample trade, strong governance, and access to international influences allowed Cuban society to achieve a well-developed social class hierarchy.

After the advent of sugar cultivation in the 1750s, population numbers boomed on the island. The birth of a stratified society featuring an emerging middle class in Cuba began shortly thereafter. Over time, various groups of emancipated people of color, primarily peasant farmers, were aspiring to, and even joining, the ranks of middle-class European immigrants. Many settled in Cuba’s urban centers and established themselves as teachers, artisans, musicians, merchants, bankers, military officers, politicians, shopkeepers, etc. (Moya Pons 2007: 307). Santos Gracia adds,

Durante este período, en los salones de bailes de los centros y sociedades—perfectamente definidas por estamentos sociales y color de la piel—continuaron practicándose la danza, el rigodón, el vals y el danzón, este último con fuerte incidencia hasta esta fecha como el baile nacional de Cuba (2002: 38).

[During this period, in the dance salons and social centers of the elite—clearly defined by social class and skin color—the (elite) continued to practice the danza, the quadrille, the waltz and the danzón, the latter with]
great enthusiasm until such time that it became the national dance of Cuba.]

The combination of these important historical factors helped to make Cuba the shining symbol of social, political, and civic achievement in the Caribbean, especially in terms of the accomplishments of individual members of the elite. Knight states that:

The individual achievements of the Cuban Creole elite were not, in the great majority of cases, unique in the history of the Caribbean or of the mainland colonies. What appears exceptional in the Cuban case, however, is the relatively large size, cohesiveness, and self-confidence of this group. While political astuteness encouraged the Cuban settler elite to support Spanish government, it identified increasingly with its homeland—and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, that homeland was unmistakably Cuba (1990: 232).

Considering Knight’s assessment of Cuba’s emerging criollo national identity in the mid-nineteenth century, and what we know about expressive culture in Cuba during this time, particularly the music, what we can deduce is that the Cuban creole elite were well on the way to building a distinct national identity and that Cuban music, a unique combination of popular music genres influenced by art music styles and vice versa, served as a part of that effort.

For example, in Cuba, the contradanza—the antecedent popular music genre to the danza and later, danzón—was both a rural, planter-class paired dance, as well as inspiration for the elite-class art music genres composed in the conservatories and cultivated by art music composers such as Ignacio Cervantes Kawanagh (1847-1905), Manuel Saumell Robredo (ca. 1817-1870), and Ernesto Lecuona y Casado (1895-1963). Not only was the incorporation of popular music genres into the art music compositions of the elite a substantial step towards adopting popular genres and styles as symbols of national identity, but as Carpentier argues, the very compositions
themselves were a product of the composer’s personal Cuban identity reflecting a national sentiment. He states:

Cervantes poses the question of a national character as a problem that can only be solved by the peculiar sensibility of the individual composer. His Cubanness came from within. It was not a stylized reworking of a received notion, nor speculation over what existed in the environment. Thus, he was one of the first musicians in the Americas to see nationalism as resulting from idiosyncrasy (2001 [1946]: 212).

In essence, according to Carpentier, Cervantes was the first Cuban criollo composer to confirm that a sense of national identity was inborn and not taught (2001 [1946]: 124). This essentialist ideology links up with the romantic nationalist notion that somehow the soul of a people springs ‘naturally’ from the land or local environment. In other words, Carpentier is espousing the idea that ‘Cubanness’ comes from within, a view very much aligned with the ideology of romantic nationalism. This position therefore gains strength by claiming that identity is something that is naturalized. Carpentier further states:

“the genres known today as the [son] clave, the criolla, and the guajira were born from the considerable Cubanized contradanza in 6/8. And from the 2/4 contradanza came the danza, the habanera, and the danzón with its ensuing more or less hybrid offshoots” (2001 [1946]:147).

In this statement, Carpentier is ideologically linking African rhythmic elements and the sphere of Afro-Cuban culture to romantic nationalist ideas.⁵ He states that a move

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⁵ Orozco González writes: “La mezcla de rasgos y expresiones de la acción bailable y del disfrute popular vinculada al complejo son con formas inusitadas del pensamiento abstracto, resulta una de las características más interesantes, importantes y sorprendentes no solo de lo musical en este complejo sino también de su vinculo con otros aspectos extra-musicales dados en el modo de vida y en las necesidades expresivas: estos rasgos incluyen formas del sentimiento cotidiano, de concepciones filosófico-populares, de un sentido sutil de lo irónico conjuntamente con un sentido específico del goce y gracejo populares, todo ello mezclado con reflexiones analíticas vinculadas con intenciones dinámicas de marcada singularidad y, a su vez, asociadas a un sentido popular y a la vez arraigado del sentimiento patrio” (1992: n.175). [The mix of features and expressions of dance and popular enjoyment of the son complex, linked with forms of abstract thought, is one of its most interesting, important, and surprising characteristics, not only for the music in this complex but also because of its link with other extra-musical aspects conveyed in the way of life and Cuban expressive attributes: these features include daily sentiments, philosophical and popular conceptions with a subtle sense of irony in conjunction with a specific sense of enjoyment and popular wit, all mixed with analytical reflections related to dynamic]
towards triple meters in creolized Cuban musical forms such as the *contradanza* came from the influence of, and preference for, neo-African/Afro-Cuban two-against-three polyrhythmic structures. What Carpentier is claiming is that a preference for creolized musical genres directly led to the establishing of a distinct, *criollo* musical identity. What lends support to Carpentier’s statement is that throughout the evolution and development of these genres, the creation of a specific genre, the *danzón*, was to become the national dance and music of Cuba. What established this music—performed by the *charangas*—as distinctly Cuban, was its acceptance and perpetuation by all classes of Cubans.

Indeed, “one of the most important features of the contradance… was the way its popularity cut across social classes” (Manuel 2009a: 4). The *contradanza* was so popular in Cuba that it was the only musical and dance form at home both in the salons of the Cuban elite and in the clubs of the black and creole districts. Its popularity stemmed from its combination of socially acceptable and upwardly-mobile European salon genres with Afro-Cuban rhythmic flair. The *contradanza* cut across class lines and its direct descendent, the *danza*, was played and danced by all social classes in the salons and in the streets. Shortly thereafter, the next music genre in the evolution of *charanga* music, the *danzón*, became the national dance and music of Cuba.

Carpentier’s statement about how musical genres reflect national identity demonstrates that the notions of nation and identity are complex, varied, and intertwined. Turino contributes yet another perspective. He posits that in conjunction with theoretical analyses of the social and cultural complexities inherent in establishing intentions marked individuality and, in turn, associated with popular thought, and yet rooted in national sentiment.]
nationalist sentiment, scholars must also look to the historical complexities that have directed nations in their moves to create national identity. This is particularly important in Latin America given its historical associations with colonialism.

Turino identifies two distinctly different phases of national and cultural identity building in Latin America from the 1820s to the 1970s (2003: 169). The first phase Turino identifies is characterized by the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century criollo-based independence movements that were preoccupied with territory, economic vitality, and establishing political principles. In this phase, the elite of the individually emerging nations were privileged in their control over the processes of nation building, and this was certainly true in Cuba. The second phase identifies twentieth-century nationalist movements in Latin America. These events are categorized by Turino as populist movements intent on linking formerly disenfranchised and subaltern populations to the state. Unlike the first phase that privileged the elite citizenry, the second phase is characterized by a need for a more inclusive notion of the nation that features combinations of elite/subaltern groups. The Cuban Revolution of 1959 is a good example. In addition, Turino identifies two basic types of musical nationalism that existed and/or currently exist in many Latin American nation-states: 1) the state-generated and elite-associated forms; and 2) the ‘reformist-popular’ or the folkloric styles (2003: 170). Both types of music nationalism are historically layered in relation to the elite as well as the inclusive or populist nationalist periods in Latin America.

Wade, in “Music, Blackness and National Identity: Three Moments in Colombian History” (1998), argues that there is a tendency among scholars to view the construction and maintenance of a national identity as an effort on the part of the elite to create a
common vision among members of a nation-state. He points out that current scholarship on nationalism supports the idea that 'principles of equivalence' constitute nation-states. Wade argues for a broader approach, however, stressing that class homogeneity works, in fact, in a way contrary to the construction of national identity. He states that "analysis focuses on what nationalist discourse itself defines as ideal—homogeneity—with little attention to the evident paradox that total homogeneity would entail the obliteration of the differences of hierarchy within the nation that even nationalist elites struggle to maintain" (Wade 1998: 2).

Wade does not mean to imply, however, that the concept of heterogeneity in class construction has been ignored in the scholarship. Heterogeneity, however, is conceptualized as 1.) either as a set of resistant strategies or hybridities enacted by the masses which are then set against the homogeneity of the imagined modern nation established by the elite, or 2.) the struggle of one potential 'nation'—and in this sense, he is referring to a social identity subset, be it ethnic, racial, religious, etc.—within the nation-state. For example, Bruno Nettl states that "if music expresses personal or group identity, it plays a role in negotiating relationships between unequals, as a way for a dominant group to reinforce its hegemony, or for a subordinate population to fight back at some level" (2005: 256). This common oppositional paradigm is one that sets an homogenizing national elite against a heterogeneous subaltern culture that is

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6 According to Aparicio and Jáquez (2003), cultural hybridity is primarily a postmodern theoretical construct (which can also be applied to historical situations) that refers to two distinct concepts: 1) the transculturation of the traditional by new technologies and other forces of modernity; and 2) the inclusion of traditional culture into modern spaces, as would have been the case in colonial Cuba as well as modern Cuba today. Cultural hybridity is conceived as a binary construct that encompasses multiracial, multiethnic, intergenerational, and multi-class elements. It operates by juxtaposing folkloric/traditional icons/instruments with modern elements, merging traditional performance practices with modern concerns.
perceived to be resistant or in opposition to the elite. As Wade maintains, “The recent literature on hybridity… tends to fit this mould by seeing new hybrid cultures or cultural elements as resistant, counter-hegemonic, or contestatory forces which challenge the modernist project of the nation-state” (1998: 2).

Wade posits that rather than understanding nationalist discourse as a simple dichotomy of a cohesive elite versus a varied resistant populace, we instead should look at how nationalism is constructed within a liminal space inside of itself. According to Wade, dominant power has always worked best when it is classifying and differentiating. This is how hierarchies are constructed and maintained. The elite class, in trying to create national sentiment and establish its characteristics, uses heterogeneity to resignify the meaning of diversity. Importantly, it is only through the recognition of diversity—and I would add that it does not matter if it is positive or negative recognition—that a unity can be imagined. Positive recognition of diversity is seemingly positioned as good and inclusive and therefore it seems, would naturally establish unity. Negative recognition of diversity, however, is used to perpetuate exclusivity. Ironically, exclusivity often creates a desire within the excluded, i.e., the subaltern (and in Cuba’s case, the black and poor), to strive towards assimilation. It is the idea of assimilation, the hope of assimilation and acceptance that creates an imagined unity.

The rise in status of the Cuban musical genre, the danzón, to that of national musical genre is a good example of this process. Describing the attitude of the elite toward the nascent danzón in the late nineteenth century, considered at that time to be the emergent national music and dance of Cuba, Vasquez and Zayas state:
Los ataques que recibió el Danzón en sus inicios fueron totalmente de corte racista y colonialista. Los libelos de la época, al servicio de la clase dominante, lo consideraban una manifestación de la plebe, pues decían que era música propia de los negros y mulatos… Aunque en Matanzas las bailadores negros y mestizos ya disfrutaban de una pieza de cuadro la que llamaban Danzón, esta carecía de una música específica. Tuvieron que esperar a que se produjera un proceso de integración nacional bien asimilado por la familia Failde, para que apareciera este género de indudable corte nacional y popular. Es por ello que el Danzón es considerado como contribuyente a la formación de una conciencia nacional (1998: 19).

[The attacks that the Danzón received in the beginning were totally racist and colonialist. The pamphlets of the time, written in service to the ruling class, considered the danzón a manifestation of the people, and claimed that it was the music solely of blacks and people of mixed race. Although in Matanzas, black and mixed-race dancers were already enjoying a square-dance they called Danzón, this dance was not associated with a specific genre of music. They had to wait for a process of national integration to occur, the one assimilated through the Failde family, for there to be no doubt that this kind of music was both nationalist and popular. That is why Danzón is regarded as contributing to the formation of a national consciousness.]

In this case, the charanga—the ensemble that performs danzón—acted as a symbol of the elite, yet most of the musicians who performed in charangas and orquesta típicas were black or of mixed race, most often directed by a white, educated, musically literate member of the elite or upper classes. Inclusion in the ensemble most likely led to a belief by the members of the underclass that they too could join the ranks of the elite and middle class through assimilation into the symbol (the charanga) of a unified nationalist identity.

Regarding the use of music by the elite in signifying national sentiment, Wade also warns that we must not fall in to the trap of thinking that specific sounds are mechanically linked to such things as class division. The sociologist, Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) also concurs that researchers should not blindly accept the simplistic notion that identity, especially class identity, could be cleanly matched to any element of
musical expression. Adorno (1976) points out that all music carries aspects of the contradictory or opposing tendencies and characteristics of society as a whole. Indeed, this is an inherent dialectic that in Marxist-inspired analysis is associated with class. Keeping this in mind, the idea that social boundaries, identities, and negotiations of the space between them can only occur in the context of relativities and opposition is an important consideration. There is also a tendency to see the creation of ‘nationalist music’ as a homogenizing action of the elite to which the masses either resist or conform. That is, they really play no part in the creative enterprise of nation building but only respond to that which is initiated from above. Wade calls again for a more broad approach. “If music is seen as a means of imagining communities—and thereby constituting them—then this opens up flexibility in grasping its representational role” (1998: 16).

Like Wade, Christopher Waterman (1990) suggests that popular musical ensembles and genres (such as charanga) are not a simple manifestation of cultural hegemony by the elite or, in dialectical opposition, a protest by the masses against social dominance. “Popular styles have rarely [only] trickled down from the Western-educated elites or bubbled up from an autochthonous wellspring… (1990: 8). Waterman has shown that ideas and actions regarding the hegemony of the elite versus the resistance by the masses operate within a field of subtle negotiation. Understanding who plays major roles in establishing identity within societies and what that means for all members of that society is critical for understanding class as it relates to charanga. What is also important to consider is the idea that musicians are constantly adopting new musical practices, transforming them according to their own social influences, and
then reinterpreting them as symbols of their own identities manifest onto larger cultural constructs. Charanga musicians are a solid example of this phenomenon.

In addition, this notion that charanga as a social institution came about through a ‘top-down’ (elite to subaltern) process is overly simplistic. In reality, the elite first rejected the primarily Afro-Cuban musical and rhythmic influences of the subaltern. In an effort to establish a distinct criollo national identity, the elite found socially acceptable ways of gradually accepting these musical influences, such as African-derived rhythmic elements, as long as they were made palatable through syncretization with European art music practices. The importance of charanga is that it was one of the primary routes through which the national music and dance genre, the danzón, became acceptable as a cultural identifier to the upper classes as “charanga musicians were considered ‘educated’ musicians...charanga musicians performed in ‘legitimate’ establishments” (Gerard 2001:66). With trained musicians and mainly European instruments figuring prominently in the ensemble, the Eurocentric elite class of Cuba could eventually relate to and begin to accept music such as the danzón. Importantly, what this established was an avenue for the elite in creating and expressing a national identity through music.

Analyzing the role of class in creating identity through expressive culture, primarily music, informs us of the myriad ways in which class is articulated and identity constructed. Understanding the concept of nation and nation-state is also critical to in the analysis of the function of music within society and the way it operates within spheres of negotiation to establish national identity. Applying theoretical concepts of class, identity, and nationalism to the analysis of charanga provides a clearer portrait of
charanga and helps us to understand how Cuban national identity is constructed and affirmed through expressive culture.

Methodology

Three primary methodologies of data gathering and analysis constitute the basis for my research: fieldwork, historical research, and the musical analysis of scores, transcriptions, and recordings. Fieldwork included the collection and analysis of ethnographic data, primarily in Cuba. Historical research was undertaken in several archival collections of Cuban documents and music. I then created full-score musical transcriptions of select recordings for the purpose of analysis.

The two most important geographic sites for my research were Cuba and South Florida. By observing charanga musicians and ensembles in the field, I was able to gather sufficient data to support my hypotheses. The gathering and analysis of this data allowed me to describe the role of class, and the transnational and translocal characteristics of the origins and development of charanga, as it helped to shape Cuban identity.

Fieldwork in Cuba was critical to investigating charanga. Four trips to Cuba, from 1992 to 2009, informed my research. Two key urban centers, Havana and Santiago de Cuba, were important research sites because it was in these urban centers that charanga was first created and is still being actively performed. In Havana and Santiago de Cuba, I met with famous charanga musicians, such as the flutist, Alberto "Pancho El Bravo" Cruz Torres (1928-2009).

Fieldwork in South Florida was also of critical importance due to the fact that many important charanga musicians have migrated to Miami and surrounding vicinities during the last fifty years. Flutist René Lorente from Orquesta Aragón, arguably the
most famous and influential twentieth-century charanga ensemble, now lives in Miami. Lorente performed with Orquesta Aragón in Havana from 1984 until 1990, replacing Aragón’s most famous flutist, Richard Egües in 1984. Flutists Eduardo “El Rubio,” also from Orquesta Aragón, and Joaquín Oliveros “El Jilguero de Centro Habana” both now live in the U.S. Flutist Eduardo Aguirre also lives in Miami and is the leader of the Charanga Típica Tropical ensemble. Prior to moving to the U.S., Aguirre led La Original de Manzanillo in Havana, another very famous charanga ensemble.

The remaining charanga musicians from the height of modern charanga’s popularity in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, are of advanced age. It was my goal to locate and interview as many of these charanga masters as possible before we lose more of this important knowledge base. Most of what these musicians know about charanga has only been superficially documented, usually in magazine articles, etc. One of the primary objectives in my fieldwork was to record their oral histories in an effort to document their knowledge and experience before it is lost to history.

Interviews consisted of intensive, structured, multi-session discussions with select charanga musicians, as well as short, impromptu interviews with associated individuals such as other musicians, audience members, and ensemble support personnel. Both the structured and impromptu interview formats were integral to my investigation due to the different types of information typically gathered using this methodology. The objective of the interview process was to understand the lives of these individuals from their own perspective.

During the structured interviews, I asked for narratives (oral histories), descriptions and/or definitions of selected terminology, and identification of important
social actors. In both the structured and impromptu interviews I looked for central social and cultural themes and for the repetition of critical incidents. I also repeated back to individuals the information I have gathered from them for verification purposes. Whenever conflicting information was revealed, I asked for further clarification from my informants, and if still conflicted, I noted any discrepancies in my analysis. I then looked to the literature for elucidation and discussed these variants with other Cuba scholars.

Another important component of my fieldwork was the video and audio documentation of charanga musicians and ensembles. Almost all structured interviews were video recorded. Audio and video recordings were made of select public performances by established charanga ensembles.

Written documentation was made of each interview and recording session. The purpose of creating this logged account was to structure collected data in such a way that facilitation of analysis would be achieved with less effort and without error. Applying techniques I learned from visual anthropology, I catalogued each encounter with charanga musicians and ensembles and tagged key terms and concepts in the data. This allowed me to search for key words and gave me instant access to identified video and audio recordings. Written field notes were also logged according to date and key words.

Half of the work to be done in participant-observation fieldwork is participation, and for ethnomusicologists that frequently means participating in the performance of the music one studies. Indeed, I have always recognized the importance of adopting what Mantle Hood first termed as a bi-musical approach to my research. Over the last years, I have become more acquainted with charanga flute players and their performance
practices. I have taken lessons in charanga flute playing from several of the players I interviewed. Discovering which charanga musicians prefer and/or play the five-key, wooden French flute, and who plays the modern Boehm-system flute likewise provided for a more in-depth analysis of charanga performance practices.

Historical research into the charanga tradition presented insights and revealed data that contemporary participant-observation and oral history could not. Through careful research of the archival records found in repositories such as the University of Miami’s Cuban Heritage Collection, the University of Florida’s Latin American Collection, and the Biblioteca Nacional José Martí and Museo Nacional de la Música in Havana, I was better able to substantiate the propositions I present in my research, such as charanga’s relationship to the creation of class and national identity and the role of class in that process. Indeed, much of the information I researched about charanga is decidedly historical in nature. However, it is this tie of the present to the past that provided me a necessary and solid basis for description and analysis.

I gathered as much data as is feasible from the repositories of historical data mentioned above, among other sources. I verified the authenticity of my sources by cross-referencing the literature. I catalogued data on charanga musicians, ensembles, scores, transcriptions, and recordings and organized this evidence in order to draw reasonable conclusions.

Access to this data was relatively easy in the U.S. The University of Miami’s Cuban Heritage Collection holds a vast wealth of material central to my research, including newspaper articles and other types of periodicals such as magazines. The University of Florida’s Latin American Collection is likewise world-renowned for its
resources on Cuba and includes similar, and complementary, types of materials to those found at UM. It was my experience collecting data in Cuba, however, that was more problematic. While I was able to access materials in the Biblioteca Nacional José Marti in Havana, there were precious few resources to examine, and most of what was available was limited to books and periodicals that I was able to obtain in the U.S. The situation was similar for the Museo Nacional de la Música in Havana and the Universidad de Oriente Biblioteca Central in Santiago de Cuba. I understand from my colleagues in Cuba that things have been getting better regarding the amount of material available in these collections. A number of books I needed for my research were provided by my contacts in Cuba who have been very generous in acquiring requested materials for me.

Much like the methodology I used in my research on historical data, I also investigated musical scores, transcriptions, and recordings in order to draw better conclusions about the musical evolution of charanga. To my benefit, more recordings of charanga are now being produced and many important recordings are available for purchase over the internet. In addition, I conducted research in the Cristóbal Díaz Ayala Collection at Florida International University and corresponded directly with Sr. Díaz Ayala, who now lives in Puerto Rico. The assistance I received from Sr. Díaz Ayala was invaluable. The Díaz Ayala Collection is the largest collection of recorded Cuban music in the world featuring over 25,000 LPs, 14,500 78 rpm recordings, 4,500 cassettes containing radio interviews with composers and musicians, 4,000 pieces of sheet music, 3,000 books, and thousands of CDs, photographs, videocassettes and paper files. Among the collection’s rarest items are recordings made in Cuba from the
early half of the twentieth century. Most of my research of Cuban musical recordings occurred at this site.

Once fieldwork was completed and all relevant data collected, I began the process of data analysis. This process was conducted using three techniques for presenting qualitative data: the interpretive analysis of all extra-musical phenomena; explanations of the how and why—in addition to where, what, and when—an event occurs; and the musical analysis of recorded sounds and written transcriptions and scores. The final product of this analysis is the researched presented in this dissertation.

**Literature Review**

Compared to other Cuban ensembles and genres of Cuban music, little has been written about *charanga*, and relatively little has been written about the subject within the last ten years. What *has* been written has been relegated to brief mentions of the subject in larger works on the music of Cuba or of Latin America. These semi-encyclopedic or ‘general information’ works provide only historical and/or descriptive information and constitute the majority of what has been published on *charanga* in any language.

Ethnomusicologist Peter Manuel has arguably published the most information about *charanga* in English. He provides several resources that define the instrumentation of the ensemble and he cites examples of the music the ensemble performs. Manuel’s most comprehensive treatment of *charanga* can be found in two volumes he edited: “Cuba: From Contradanza to Danzón,” in *Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean* (2009a: 51-112), and; “Latin America and the Caribbean” in *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (1988: 24-83). Manuel’s third edited volume, *Essays*

Cuban scholar Olavo Alén Rodríguez has published in both English and Spanish on the subject of charanga. Like Manuel, he too covers the topic as tangential to the larger picture regarding Cuban music, yet he does provide substantial historical and descriptive data. Two works stand as example: Géneros Musicales de Cuba: De lo Afrocubano a la Salsa (1992), and; “Cuba” Part 3, Section 5, in The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 2, edited by Dale Olsen and Daniel Sheehy (1998: 822-839). Another important Cuban scholar is Cristóbal Díaz Ayala. His works, titled Discografía de la Música Cubana: Volumen I, 1898 a 1925 (1994), Cuando Salí de La Habana: 1898-1997, Cien Años de Música Cubana por el Mundo (1999), Música Cubana del Areyto al Rap Cubano (2003), and Los Contrapuntos de la Música Cubana (2006), have been essential to my research on Cuban music and musical recordings.
Other important Cuban scholars of note informed my research: Radamés Giro, the author of El Mambo (1993), Panorama de la Música Popular Cubana (1998), and El Diccionario Enciclopédico De La Música Cubana (2007); Helio Orovio, who wrote El Danzón, el Mambo, y el Chachachá (1994), as well as the English-language book, Cuban Music from A to Z (2004); María Teresa Linares and Victoria Eli Rodríguez, co-authors of La Música entre Cuba y España, and; Zoila Lapique Becali, the author of Música Colonial Cubana (1979) and “Aportes Franco-Haitianos a la Contradanza Cubana: Mitos y Realidad,” in Panorama de la Música Popular Cubana, edited by Radamés Giro (1995).

I have found no PhD dissertations dedicated exclusively to charanga although I understand that there are two dissertations on charanga performance practices currently being written: Sue M. Miller’s The Creative Process of Improvisation in Cuban Charanga Performance, with a Specific Focus on the Work of Richard Egües and Orquesta Aragón (at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom), and; Jessica L. Valiente’s "Siento una Flauta": Improvisational Idiom and Performance Practice of Charanga Flutists from 1937 to 2000 (at City University of New York). There are, however, two masters’ theses already published on charanga. The first is John Murphy’s thesis, The Charanga in New York, 1987-88: Musical Style, Performance Context, and Tradition (1988). Murphy’s work focuses on Cuba’s típico style, the role of the charanga ensemble in performing típico, and the potential for new stylistic fusions in the U.S. Danilo Lozano’s thesis (1990), The Charanga Tradition in Cuba: History, Style, and Ideology, does provide historical and descriptive information—he is, after all, the son of the famous Orquesta Aragón charanga flute player, Jose “Rolando” Lozano—but
there is little critical analysis in Lozano’s work, as the title would imply. Lozano’s importance to my research is still of great value, however, but more for his role as a principal charanga musician in California where he has performed charanga for twenty years.

Regarding journal articles: there are very few scholarly articles written that focus on or mention charanga. One notable exception is Cristóbal Díaz Ayala’s “La Invencible Charanga Cubana,” published in Encuentro de la Cultura Cubana 2002-03(26-27): 295-308. Also of note is Lise Waxer’s “Of Mambo Kings and Songs of Love: Dance Music in Havana and New York from the 1930s to the 1950s,” published in the Latin American Music Review 15(2): 139-176. In Waxer’s work, what is important to my research is her treatment of issues of transnationalism and the social and cultural impacts of the movement of musicians and communities between Cuban and the U.S., primarily New York.

Arguably the most important contemporary scholarship on Cuban music in general has been written by ethnomusicologist, Robin D. Moore. Moore is the leading American scholar in the field of Cuban music and his two books, Nationalizing Blackness: Afro-cubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940 (1997), and Music and Revolution: Cultural Change in Socialist Cuba (2006), in addition to his numerous articles and other publications, provide the foundation for current scholarship on Cuban music. One simply cannot do research on Cuban music today without consulting Moore’s work.

And, while not intending to imply criticism for the lack of in-depth work done by ethnomusicologists on the specific subject of charanga—for all efforts to date serve an
important function as the jumping-off point for further investigation—I must point out that what is currently published on *charanga* is very far from comprehensive and most certainly does not tie *charanga* to important social or cultural issues to any significant degree. As mentioned prior, the goal of my research is to fill that lacuna by moving past descriptive and historical treatments of *charanga* and to analyze the concept from broader socio-cultural perspectives. In order to expand past the historical and descriptive when analyzing *charanga*, groundwork on ethnomusicological theoretical orientations and methodological processes must be established. There were several publications I chose that best provided me with the information I needed on how to conduct ethnomusicological work based on key critical theoretical and methodological concepts.

theoretical concept of class and class structure. I then looked to Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* for a greater understanding of nationalism from a sociological perspective. Combined, these books and journal articles formed the cornerstone of the publications on music and social theories central to my research.


In order to analyze charanga within larger social and cultural constructs, it was also necessary to review literature not only on charanga and Cuban music in general, but the body of critical writing about Cuban culture composed by Cuban intellectuals and literary scholars as well. Literature about music, and literature that includes substantial musical references, has long been a common practice in Cuban literary arts, especially in terms of popular music. The “idea of popular music functioning as social record [per se] is not new, but it is particularly appropriate in the context of Latin America, and specifically the Caribbean, where popular song has historically had a significant social role in cultural life” (Costello 2008: 4). Latin American popular music such as charanga is important in that it serves to reinforce the construction and preservation of individual and communal identity and social agency. Analyzing works
written by both contemporary and historically eminent Cuban intellectuals and literary scholars gave me a solid basis for understanding charanga within a greater cultural context. Kathleen Costello’s work on the connection between music and the literary arts, *The Composition of Culture: Popular Music and Social Identity in Contemporary Novels of the Hispanic Caribbean* (2008) provided information important for understanding this close and complex relationship.

What I learned was that semiotic domains such as visual art, music, dance, and literature are often effective in creating social change (and a sense of national identity) because they have the potential to generate great emotion. Artists and intellectuals, as well as national leaders, have intuitively grasped the power of this emotion to shape nationalist movements and have been quick to use the literary, visual, and performing arts as preferred modalities when attempting to influence national thought in the enterprise of nation building. Throughout history, nationalist movements have been both initiated and perpetuated by the works of artists and intellectuals. In turn, political discourse has also influenced musical production.

The political and intellectual movements established to define national character in Cuba beginning in the nineteenth century were no exception. The official state effort by intellectuals and social critics such as José Antonio Saco (1798-1879)\(^7\) to describe and define *Cubanidad* (Cubanness) that began in the 1830s continues today through the work of musicians, artists, and intellectuals, such as the *nueva trova* musician Silvio Rodríguez Domínguez (b. 1946), the visual artist “Kcho” Alexis Leyva Machado (b. 1970), and the poet Pablo Armando Fernández (b. 1930). Popular music in particular—

\(^7\) See: (Moore 1997: 117).
especially in the twentieth century—has been an exceptionally powerful tool for helping to structure nationalist ideologies. Given the power of music to shape national sentiment, it is important to examine and understand the role popular music has played in the establishing of Cuban social and national identity.

The creation of Cubanidad, as imagined by the Cuban people, has been an ongoing and complicated process especially given colonialism’s historical stronghold on the island over the last several centuries. Prior to the twentieth century—during the first phase of national and cultural identity building in Latin America, as described by Turino—colonial concerns over economic vitality and establishing a political ideology separate from Spain prompted the white criollo Cuban elite, acting in their own self-interest, to portray the fledgling nation as a unified cultural whole. There was power in creating and controlling a unified collective consciousness mindfully established to further the goals of a newly-formed dominant Cuban authority structure. Cubanidad was initially imagined, defined, and characterized by the Cuban elite and it came to represent a society identified as homogenous—especially in terms of race—despite its deep racial and class divides.

In the mid-nineteenth century, early nationalist forms of musical expression such as the teatro vernáculo (popular musical theatre) as well as the contradanza compositions of Saumell—considered Cuba’s first nationalist composer, according to Carpentier (2001 [1946]: 179)—began to rise in popularity. A gradual shift in national identity formation was taking place, but it was very subtle. Dominant (white, elite) European cultural aesthetics still held sway although musical elements of a more criollo nature, such as the cinquillo (five-part) rhythm, were to be found in popular musical
expressions. A preference for European aesthetics and cultural modes of representation were also predominant in other media. It was not until the twentieth century that expressive cultural links between la alta sociedad (elite society) and las clases dirigidas (the masses) were to merge into what could be considered a socially inclusive Cuban national identity.

In the early twentieth century, Cuban artists and intellectuals known as the Grupo Minoristas (Minority Group)—anthropologist Fernando Ortiz Fernández (1881-1969), the writers Alejo Carpentier y Valmont (1904-1980) and Juan Marinello Vidaurreta (1898-1977), the poet Nicolás Cristóbal Guillén Batista (1902-1989), the painter Wifredo Óscar de la Concepción Lam y Castilla (1902-1982), and music composers Ernesto Lecuona y Casado (1895-1963) and Alejandro García Caturla (1906-1940)—had all began to recognize Cuba’s social heterogeneity. In an effort to establish their own, more socially inclusive notions of Cubanidad, the Cuban cultural elite began the systematic process of researching, publishing, and broadcasting through the mass media the cultural contributions of Cuba’s disenfranchised and subaltern populations, primarily the Afro-Cubans and the guajiros (rural peasants), as well as including the expressive elements of these socially underrepresented populations into their own works.

It was not until the mid-twentieth century, and partly as a result of the efforts of these artists and intellectuals, that the Cuban nation-state officially recognized the diversity inherent in the mix of African, European (and to some extent, Amerindian) heritages of Cuba’s people. This paradigmatic shift in cultural and social imagination that first began to come about through the work of these scholars and artists, among
others, in the early twentieth century, found its full expression in the ‘triumph of the Cuban Revolution’ of 1959. The Revolution—a populist movement intent on linking formally disenfranchised populations to the state during the second phase of national and cultural identity building in Latin America, as described by Turino—helped to erase some of the legacy of the white, elite, European definition of what it meant to be Cuban by embracing the ideology of solidarity through diversity. The extent to which the Revolution was ideologically (and practically) successful in eradicating racial and class divides, as was one of its stated goals, remains to be seen. Nonetheless, the imagining of a heterogeneous Cuban society had been established and Cuba has not looked back.

Perhaps more than any other individual, it is the poet and essayist José Martí Pérez (1853-1895) who is held up as the political and intellectual leader of Cuba’s independence movements and a creator of Cuban national identity. Considered the father of the Cuban nation, Martí was one of the early Cuban social architects who first espoused the popular, anti-racist, anti-imperialist, social-equality ideology that continues to hold enormous resonance in Cuba to this day. While best known for his poetry and critical writings on visual art and literature, as well as his political essays (Martí 1982, 2007), Martí also wrote several articles on Western art music in the Mexican periodical, La Revista Universal and in the Cuban newspaper, Patria, which he founded as a venue for the publication of his political writings. Martí espouses a nationalist sentiment throughout his writings on music and he uses music to help illustrate and foster his concept of Cubanidad (Chirino 2009).
Martí’s scholarship and contribution to the establishing of Cuban intellectual thought are paramount for understanding Cuban culture. Two edited volumes of Martí’s work, *On Art and Literature by José Martí: Critical Writings* (1982), and *José Martí Reader: Writings on the Americas* (2007) provided me with the information needed for further analysis of Cuban thought. In each of these volumes, articles and writings by Martí reveal his thoughts on Cuban independence from Spain and the establishing of Cuban sovereignty, Cuba’s relationship to the U.S., his ideas for the creation of Cuban identity, and his creative writings, including the *Versos Sencillos*, a series of semi-autobiographical poems recounting what Martí believes—on a spiritual as well as an intellectual level—is the essence of ‘Cubanness.’ In the essay, “Our America,” Martí creates a touchstone for Latin American populist movements intent on declaring Latin America as different, yet equal, to the more politically and economically powerful nations of Europe and the U.S. He writes:

> There is no prow that can cut through a cloudbank of ideas. A powerful idea, waved before the world at the proper time, can stop a squadron of iron-clad ships, like the mystical flag of the Last Judgment. Nations that do not know one another should quickly become acquainted, as men who are to fight a common enemy. Those who shake their fists, like jealous brothers coveting the same tract of land, or like the modest cottager who envies the esquire his mansion, should clasp hands and become one... We can no longer be a people of leaves, living in the air, our foliage heavy with blooms and crackling or humming at the whim of the sun’s caress, buffeted and tossed by the storms. The trees must form ranks to keep the giant with seven-league boots from passing! It is the time of mobilization, of marching together, and we must go forward in closed ranks, like silver in the veins of the Andes (2007: 120).

There is no doubt that the regional and nationalist sentiments espoused by Martí, articulated in the most poetic of literary prose styles and contexts, were instrumental in bringing about change in the political and social ideology of the Cuban people, and by extension, other nations within Latin America.
In addition to the writings of Martí, there is a canonical literary work on Cuban music that was critical to my investigations: Alejo Carpentier’s *La Música en Cuba* (*Music in Cuba*) (1946). The book was finally translated into English by Timothy Brennan in 2001. Nothing like *Music in Cuba* had ever existed in terms of Latin American music criticism and analysis prior to its publication, and to its credit, even after over sixty years of academic scrutiny this book still maintains its usefulness and credibility as a work of major importance on Cuban music.

“Carpentier’s artistic enterprise in the forties became a search for origins, the recovery of history and tradition, the foundation of an autonomous American consciousness serving as the basis for a literature faithful to the New World” (González Echevarría 1977: 107). In *Music in Cuba*, Carpentier espouses the idea that music and culture should be studied according to geographic zones and not sovereign boundaries hence he includes the greater Caribbean in his analysis. This inclusive form of analysis reinforces the mutuality of a pan-Latin expressive culture, further supporting the idea that Cuba, with the rest of the Caribbean, shares a stock of similar expressive cultural forms under a plurality of names. Throughout *Music in Cuba*, Carpentier consistently draws parallels between these related musical and cultural forms and the process of their creation: the creolization of the entire Caribbean from the fusion of Iberian and African cultures.

Another central and overarching premise of the book is the role of African-derived and Afro-Cuban expressive culture\(^8\) in the creation of a creolized New World and

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\(^8\) Although the importance of the cultural contributions of Cuba’s enslaved and their descendants is expressed in almost every chapter of *Music in Cuba*, there are two chapters dedicated solely to the role of blacks in the development and evolution of Cuba’s performing arts: Chapter Seven, “Blacks in Cuba;” and Chapter Sixteen, “Afro-Cubanism.”
ultimately, the establishing of a Cuban national identity. *Music in Cuba* was written in 1946, during the height of the *negrismo* (black pride) movement, and Carpentier, highly concerned with authenticity in all aspects of art and culture, tried to illuminate the reality of racism when building a nationalist movement. The *negrismo* movement, though composed mainly of white intellectuals like Carpentier and Ortiz, stressed *afrocubanismo* and the idea that it was African-derived practices merged with European practices (rather than European practices alone), i.e., *criollo* practices, that were the principal source of Cuban national identity, especially when it came to popular musical genres such as the *son* and Afro-Cuban percussion instruments. He writes:

> The *son* has the same constituent elements as the *danzón*. But both became so different because of their trajectory: the *contradanza* was a salon dance; the *son* was a thoroughly popular dance form. The *contradanza* was played with an orchestra; the *son* was a song accompanied by percussion. This, without a doubt, comprises the best guarantee of its originality. Thanks to the *son*, Afro-Cuban percussion, confined to the slave barracks and the dilapidated rooming houses of the slums, revealed its marvelous expressive resources, achieving universal status. Lest we forget, dance orchestras before 1920, in terms of percussion, were only aware of the *timbales*... the *güiro* or *calabazo*, and the *claves*—from Havana... We still remember the marvelous stupor with which the people of our generation greeted, one fine day, the [African-derived] instruments that came from the eastern provinces, and that today are heard, poorly played, in all of the world’s cabarets (2001 [1946]: 228).

What is important to note regarding *charanga* and its relationship to the *criollo* Cuban national identity espoused by Carpentier, is that the expressive elements of African and European practices continued to develop within the *charanga* ensembles and the musical genres they played. For example, the *son montuno* was eventually inserted into the final section of the *danzón* form, and black and bi-racial musicians became the largest demographic among *charanga* musicians.
Besides the numerous articles he wrote in various journals and periodicals on the subject, Carpentier also articulated in *Music in Cuba* the arguments and theories surrounding negritude as well as the indigenous *mestizaje* movement (folkloric movement) in Cuba’s national discourse. To stress his point, Carpentier writes that “…attempts to create a work of national expression always return, sooner or later, to Afro-Cuban and *mestizo* genres or rhythms” (Carpentier 2001 [1946]: 267). As one of Cuba's most important intellectual figures of the twentieth century, Carpentier—as novelist, musicologist, classically trained pianist, producer of avant-garde radio programming, and influential theorist of politics and literature—was uniquely situated to validate this claim.

In his chapter on blacks in Cuba, Carpentier also articulates his views on popular music and its Afro-Cuban connections. Defense of popular culture came in many forms during the early-twentieth century in the Caribbean and Carpentier’s work was no exception. *Music in Cuba* was written during a time in history where people living in the Caribbean colonies, who were also attuned to European cultural influences, did not distain popular mass culture because it was still closely identified with white European styles. In support, Carpentier wrote that popular music and art music were, through theoretical analysis, both complicit and interdependent and secondly, that music should be analyzed for its social role and not purely by its commercial success. He also revealed popular music’s African influences, thereby legitimizing both. According to Carpentier, it was the African-derived and Afro-Cuban cultural influences in Cuba that helped erode the distinction between elite and popular music. His innovative genius
helped to pioneer the serious study of popular music in Cuba and lay the foundation for acceptance and respectability for all Cuban musical genres.

Carpentier also includes chapters on Cuba’s most important composers and musical genres in *Music in Cuba*, yet it is the overarching themes of the role of blacks in the formation of a national identity, the idea of a pan-Latin expressive culture that exists throughout the Caribbean, and the validity and value of popular music that have continued to shape the thoughts of countless scholars who have been fortunate enough to read this book and afford Carpentier all the intellectual credit this work merits.

In addition to Carpentier, Fernando Ortiz stands as another of the most significant Cuban intellectuals in history. Ortiz’s *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* (*Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*) (1940 [1995]) is considered one of the most important works in Cuban intellectual history and is a key source for research on Cuban culture. *Cuban Counterpoint* is noteworthy for introducing two core principles in modern Latin American intellectual thought. First, through observation made about the effects of colonialism in the Caribbean, Ortiz coined the term/concept ‘transculturation’ to describe what happens when societies—in this case, European, African, and to some extent, Amerindian—merge through direct contact (1995: 97). Ortiz offers the term ‘transculturation’ in Cuba as a meta-text for the English word ‘acculturation.’ He writes:

*Acculturation* is used to describe the process of transition from one culture to another, and its manifold social repercussions. But *transculturation* is a more fitting term. I have chosen the word *transculturation* to express the highly varied phenomena that have come about in Cuba as a result of the extremely complex transmutations of culture that have taken place here, and without a knowledge of which it is impossible to understand the evolution of the Cuban folk, either in the economic or in the institutional, legal, ethical, religious, artistic, linguistic, psychological, sexual, or other
aspects of its life. The real history of Cuba is the history of its intermeshed transculturations (1995: 98).

Second, and important for music, Ortiz was among the first Cuban intellectuals to espouse the importance of incorporating the expressive culture of the subaltern and disenfranchised—in this case, the Afro-Cubans—in the establishing of Cuban national identity. It was Ortiz’s anthropological work within the Afro-Cuban communities in the 1930s that caused him to consider the artistic realms and merits of these populations—primarily, their musical contributions—in the defining of Cuba’s national character.

Ortiz, by using a musical metaphor in the title of his book, *Cuban Counterpoint*, offers the musical term ‘counterpoint’ as a synonym for transculturation. ‘Counterpoint,’ literally note-against-note, represents two opposing social structures in Cuba, each associated with the cultivation, processing, and exportation of either tobacco or sugar. It is these binary opposites, tobacco and sugar, that Ortiz claims shaped Cuban national identity. Tobacco, representing the indigenous, the ‘dark’ substance (both figuratively and literally), produced through small-scale cultivation, is juxtaposed—note-against-note—with sugar, the ‘white’ exogenous product requiring mechanization and massive amounts of forced labor from the enslaved. The use of the term ‘counterpoint’ in the work of Ortiz alludes “to an African subtext and rhythm in a more general contrapuntal relationship to all of western music and culture. In the end, it is this expanded, transcultural notion of ‘counterpoint’ that operates in Ortiz’s texts” (Spitta 1997: 163).

The history of Cuban writings involving music takes a new turn towards the end of the twentieth century. This period is represented by a major shift in the way Cuban artists and intellectuals talk about or use music in their work. Prior to the last three decades of the twentieth century, memoirs and autobiographies by Cuban writers and
intellectuals—especially those in exile—did not constitute a large portion of Cuban literature. Since the late-1970s and early-1980s, a substantial number of Cuban writers have written autobiographical and semi-autobiographical poems, novels, and essays, primarily about their lives in exile. Two important examples are Guillermo Cabrera Infante (1929-2005) and Gustavo Pérez Firmat (b. 1949). Rafael Rojas writes that "the emergence of this genre in the most recent writing of Cuban exiles without the support of a national or continental tradition is astonishing" (2008: 116). What is also important about these writers is that they are, for the most part, activist intellectuals who at one point supported the triumph of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, but have since denounced it in their writings, especially Cabrera Infante, who is particularly critical of current Cuban politics. For example, in “Una Historia Inaudita” (The Unprecedented Story), the prologue to Natalio Galán’s Cuba y sus Sones, Cabrera Infante writes that Galán is the musicological heir-apparent to Carpentier, and lambasts the Cuban government for not recognizing him as such. He writes:

La misma labor la podría haber hecho también el Gobierno de Cuba (que gasta por ejemplo fortunas en hacer dicionarios especiales compilados para la revancha mezquina contra los exiliados, o para la exaltación de burócratas de la cultura en Cuba), con sus cuadros de encuesta folklorica, sus investigaciones colectivas y sus escritores pagados por el Estado cubano y a cuenta de la propaganda política. No lo han hecho ellos porque la historia de la música (la más necesaria a la felicidad, la más exportable y la más popular de las artes in Cuba) ha terminado, como la historia misma, con el poder totalitario y la fuga de casi todos los músicos creadores al extranjero. Es ahí, fuera de Cuba, donde las ha encontrado Galán de nuevo para siempre (1983: xix).

[The same work could also have been done by the Government of Cuba (which spends a fortune, for example, on making special dictionaries compiled for petty revenge against the exiles, or for the glorification of the bureaucrats of culture in Cuba), with its surveys of folklore, its research projects carried out collectively, and its writers who are paid by the Cuban state and the political advertising account. They have not done this because the history of music (the most necessary to happiness, the most
exportable and the most popular of the arts in Cuba) has ended, as the story itself, with totalitarian power and the flight abroad of almost all creative musicians. It is here, outside of Cuba, where Galán is found again and for always (Galán 1983: xix).

Literarily speaking, in the work of contemporary Cuban writers such as Cabrera Infante, the emphasis of music in their work shifts from the more descriptive or anthropological and/or musicological perspective, like that of Carpentier, to the use of music and musical metaphors as creative elements, often to espouse political ideology. Cabrera Infante’s most famous work, *Tres tristes tigres* (Three Trapped Tigers) (1967)—translated into English in 1971 and again in 2004 by Donald Gardner and Suzanne Jill Levine—is, in the broadest of terms, a nostalgic look at Havana nightlife in the years prior to the Revolution. “The study of characters in *Tres tristes tigres* initiates an analysis of how Caribbean popular music mediates racial identity and plays out across classes…” (Costello 2008: 17). The opening scene of the book, about pre-revolutionary nightlife in Cuba, is filled with jazz imagery made more reflective by its setting in the Tropicana, Havana’s legendary nightclub. It is written bilingually and in Spanglish, and the narration flips and code-switches back and forth between Spanish and English, emphasizing the sarcasm of the narrator who welcomes foreign guests—primarily Americans—with one hand (in English), while he metaphorically slaps them across the face with the other (in Spanish) (2004: 3). Puns, tongue-twisters and palindromes are used frequently in the narrative, which is constructed much like jazz is composed, with an improvisational lilt. Costello states:

*With Tres tristes tigres*, Cabrera Infante reformulates literature’s position in relation to Cuban society, weaving popular culture into a text otherwise characterized by elaborate literary stylistics. In the end, by establishing a relationship between literature, popular music and social identities, Cabrera Infante succeeds in laying the groundwork for future generations of writers
who will continue to explore this relationship and push the limits of its implications (2008: 36).

One of those important writers is Gustavo Pérez Firmat (b. ca. 1950s). Like Cabrera Infante, he was born in Havana, yet Pérez Firmat was raised in Miami. His *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (1994) is a tale of this cultural hybridity and in the work he describes his feelings of identity as being both and either, or neither Cuban and/or American. What is interesting about *Life on the Hyphen*, aside from the politics of identity in exile, is its relationship to music. The six chapters of the book have titles with revised subtitles: “Mambo No. 1” through “Mambo No. 6,” with the conclusion titled “Last Mambo in Miami.” Throughout the work, Pérez Firmat draws parallels between what it’s like to grow up between two cultures, using music to describe how he makes sense of his place in society. He weaves personal observances of musical cultural icons, such as Gloria Estefan (b. 1957), Desi Arnaz (1917-1986), and Dámaso Pérez Prado (1916-1989), with scholarly analysis of the way in which assimilation and cultural appropriation affect identity.

Jorge Mañach y Robato (1898-1961) was also born in Cuba but lived in the U.S. and taught at Columbia in the 1930s. A master essayist, his analyses of the writings of Jose Martí are considered to be the best literal and political interpretations of Martí’s works. Like Martí, Mañach wrote critically about what it meant to be Cuban from a literary and intellectual perspective. The essays of *Frontiers in the Americas* (1975), analyze cultural frontiers between Cuba, the U.S., and Latin America in general and the notions of national and regional identity created between them. Regarding the arts, in his chapter on the “Cultural Frontier,” he describes the differences between what he terms the “particularity and universality” of culture (Mañach 1975: 43). What he argues
is that each society contains within it certain unique characteristics (identity)—including artistic qualities—as well as elements of certain universal values. He recalls a story told to him by Federico García Lorca to illustrate his point. As an example, he writes:

A group of gypsies had gathered to hear the singing of a girl from their tribe whose voice they considered marvelous. Everyone applauded the performance except one very old gypsy who, on hearing the clear trills, uttered with muffled severity a single word of judgment: “Paris.” The voice did not seem to him anything that belonged to his people, but to the Parisians. The young gypsy understood. She went to the back of the cave and downed a glass of whiskey. Then with scalded voice, she drew from her throat the hoarse pantings that the patriarch was missing—to which the latter responded with a kiss on her forehead (1975: 44).

Mañach is joined by the poet Cintio Vitier (1921-2009) in his efforts to define *Cubanidad* when Vitier asks, ‘what is Cuban in poetry,’ in the same-titled work, *Lo Cubano en la Poesía* (1998). In his fifth chapter, “Quinta Lección,” Vitier states that the only true and genuine popular poetry of the Cuban people comes from the *romances* (ballads) and the *décimas* (lyric song genres) of the rural Spanish peasants in Cuba. He writes that Cuban poetry is filled “con el sabor y los temas de la vida campesina hasta fijar la peculiar *décima guajira*, cantada al son del tiple y el güiro, el laúd, el tres o la guitarra” (1998: 105). [Cuban poetry is filled with the flavor and themes of country life and set by a peculiar *décima guajira* (ten-line, country song), sung to the sound of the *tiple* (small, guitar-like instrument) and the *güiro* (gourd scraper), the *laúd* (lute), the tres (a three-stringed Cuban guitar), or the (Spanish) guitar.]

Antonio Benítez Rojo (1931-2005) is perhaps the most innovative modern Cuban intellectual in his theoretical approach to cultural analysis. In *The Repeating Island* (1996), Benítez Rojo uses elements of chaos theory to analyze the legacy of colonialism in the Caribbean. What he illustrates is that identity in the Caribbean is a complex socio-cultural phenomenon, both joining and fracturing histories, ethnicities,
and political tenets. His synthesis of theoretical constructs provides a powerful context for understanding identity in the Caribbean in modern times.

When writing about music and national identity, Benítez Rojo refers to a lecture given to Cuban school children by Fernando Ortiz—regarding the inclusion of Afro-Cuban elements in popular music—to illustrate his point. He writes:

It is impossible to know whether any of the music students present at this convocation took Ortiz’s words to heart. What is certain is that ten years later Cuba would experience a musical revolution which, beginning with the popularization of the son, would continue with that of the rumba, conga, mambo, cha-cha-cha, and other rhythms. This era of musical hyper-creativity, which saw a proliferation of orchestras and combos, interpreters and recordings, would forever denote Cubanness. From then on, the cultural expression that best defines what is Cuban to a foreigner is Cuban popular music (1998: 179).

The writings of Cuban artists and intellectuals over the last one hundred and fifty years have provided a well-spring of critical thought on issues of national identity construction. Indeed, they are part and parcel of the process to create national identity and music has been central to their espoused concepts. Together, works written on the subjects of charanga and Cuban music in general, ethnomusicological theories and methodologies, anthropology, sociology, Caribbean history, and Cuban intellectual thought, all informed my research. By including writings from various disciplines and by adopting a more comprehensive approach in my analysis, I was able to relate descriptive and historical treatments of charanga to analyses of charanga in broader socio-cultural perspectives.
CHAPTER 2  
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHARANGA ENSEMBLE

Etymological Origins of the Terms ‘Cuban Charanga’ and ‘Charanga francesa’

The term ‘charanga’ is most commonly used today to define the instrumentation of a Cuban popular dance music ensemble consisting primarily of flute, piano, violin, contrabass, and Cuban percussion (with variations that may include guitar and brass instruments). In the nineteenth century, the term ‘charanga francesa’ was also used to describe ensembles with this instrumentation. The term ‘charanga’ was also used to define the instrumentation of the modern charanga’s antecedent ensembles such as the military-style brass band charangas comprised primarily of brass and percussion, as well as the orquesta típica, which added strings and Cuban criollo (creole) percussion to its brass band instrumentation, and the bungas, any ensemble with a few instruments.

Historically, the various terms applied to these charanga ensembles with their evolving instrumentation, began simply with the term ‘charanga,’ a term that defined the military-style brass band charangas found throughout Spain and her colonies beginning in the sixteenth century. When strings and Cuban criollo percussion were added to the ensemble in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Cuba, the ensemble became better known as the orquesta típica. [See: Figures 2-1 to 2-4.]

During this time, the instrumentation of these ensembles was altered again—to accommodate performances in indoor venues—to include strings, piano, and flute (and excluding most of the brass) and they then became better known as danzoneras or charangas francesas. As more strings and brass were added in the twentieth century, the name of the ensemble reverted back to simply, charanga. The tables below outline the evolution of the ensemble’s instrumentation and nomenclature.
### Table 2-1. The instrumental evolution of the *charanga* ensemble: 16th-21st centuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation in Cuba</th>
<th>Instrumentation in Spain/Latin Amer.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth through Twenty-first</td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Variations including:</td>
<td>Variations including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centuries in Spain and Latin</td>
<td>[Antecedent</td>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>Fife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>ensemble]</td>
<td>Piccolo</td>
<td>Piccolo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>Flute</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>Clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td></td>
<td>Saxophone</td>
<td>Saxophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flugelhorn</td>
<td>Flugelhorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth through Mid-Eighteenth</td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Cornet</td>
<td>Cornet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centuries in Cuba</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trombone</td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Baritone</td>
<td>Baritone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Euphonium</td>
<td>Euphonium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ophecleide/Tuba</td>
<td>Ophecleide/Tuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Snare Drums</td>
<td>Snare Drums</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bass Drums</td>
<td>Bass Drums</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kettle Drums or</td>
<td>Kettle Drums or</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tympani</td>
<td>Tympani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2-2. The instrumental evolution of the *charanga* ensemble: 18th century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation in Cuba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth</td>
<td><em>Banda</em></td>
<td>Coronet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Century</td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Ophecleide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td><em>Pailas Criollas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td><em>Güiro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in Eastern Cuba)</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Occasional addition of a chordophone (cello/bass) and/or other brass instruments]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Antecedent ensembles]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2-3. The instrumental evolution of the *charanga* ensemble: 19th century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation in Cuba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nineteenth</td>
<td><em>Orquesta típica</em></td>
<td>Violins (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Century</td>
<td><em>Orquesta folklórico</em></td>
<td>Clarinet (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Coronet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Bunga</em></td>
<td>Ophecleide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Euphonium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td><em>Pailas criollas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in Eastern</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Güiro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Antecedent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensembles]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2-4. The instrumental evolution of the charanga ensemble: 19th-20th centuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation in Cuba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nineteenth and Early</td>
<td>Charanga francesa</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twentieth Century</td>
<td>Charanga típica</td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charanga</td>
<td>Violins (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danzonera</td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bunga</td>
<td>[Occasional addition of Pailas criollas and Güiro]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-5. The instrumental evolution of the charanga ensemble: 20th-21st centuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation in Cuba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twentieth and Twenty-First Century</td>
<td>Charanga francesa</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charanga</td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danzonera</td>
<td>Violins (two to four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trumpet (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trombone (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass (or electric)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guitar (electric/acoustic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pailas criollas/Timbales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Congas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2-1. Pen drawing of clarinetist and bandleader, Juan de Dios Alfonso Armenteros (1825-1877), by Cuban painter Juan Roberto Diago Querol (1920-1955). Alfonso Armenteros directed one of the most famous orquesta típicas in nineteenth-century Cuba, the Orquesta Flor de Cuba, established sometime around 1869 (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967:35). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
Figure 2-2. 1869 photograph of the *orquesta típica*, Orquesta Flor de Cuba: *Trombón* (trombone), *pailas criollas* (creole tympani), *bombardino* (euphonium), two *violines* (violins), two *clarinetes* (clarinets), *corneta* (coronet). Not shown: *figle* (ophiclede), *contrabajo* (contrabass), and *Güiro* (gourd scraper) (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967:34). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)

Figure 2-3. Enrique Peña Sánchez (1880-1922), cornetist and director of the Orquesta Típica de Enrique Peña [See: Figure 4-5.] (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 67). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
The Spanish word, *charanga*, is defined as a brass band with percussion and several woodwinds. It typically describes a small, military-style (or regimental) band.\(^9\)

Prior to the invention of the saxophone,\(^10\) the clarinet was the preferred woodwind

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9 Similar to Cuba, Haiti also had military-style bands. *Kò mizik* (military music corps) and *fanfa* (school wind band) have “trained many of the best musicians in Haiti and have been responsible for generations of seasoned musicians who performed not only military and art music but dance music as well. In a *fanfa*, one typically finds brass instruments (trumpets, horns, and trombones), woodwinds (clarinets, flutes, and more recently saxophones), and percussion instruments such as the snare and bass drums” (Averill 1997: 35). The history and evolution of the musical ensembles and the lives of musicians in both Cuba and Haiti hold many parallels, as will be discussed further in this dissertation.

10 Belgian instrument maker, Aldophe Sax, patented the saxophone in 1846 and designed it to be played in military bands. Being a brass instrument that produces sound by vibrating a reed, it was created to bridge the gap between the brass and woodwind instruments. It first became popular in the French and
instrument. The term *charanga* is still used in Spain and other parts of the Spanish-speaking world to describe brass band ensembles comprised of local, amateur musicians who gather to lead religious processionals and/or play for festivals and carnivals, much as they have done for centuries. These ensembles play while walking through the streets, giving impromptu performances of popular and patriotic songs and are led by a ‘drum major’ of sorts. The term is also used to describe a certain type of informal dance or party, implying a social event popular with the general population.

In addition, a *charanguero*—a person who plays in or leads a *charanga*—is also defined as a hawker, peddler, or lucky person, which loosely fits with the idea of someone who participates in an informal celebration or festival. The amateur nature of these ensembles is also related to the term *charanguera*, which describes a clumsy, bungling, unpolished, artless person, imbuing a pejorative connotation.

**Cuban charanga**

Spanish colonists brought early *charangas*, i.e., military-style brass band ensembles, to the New World as early as the sixteenth century (Fernández de Latorre 1999: 66). The term *charanga* was being used in Cuba to define smaller versions of these ensembles in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century as evidenced by

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Belgian military bands of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The Hornbostel and Sachs classification of the instrument is ‘clarinet’ (Raumberger 2010). A photograph from 1896 of a military band in Spain clearly shows saxophones being played (Fernández de Latorre 1999:353). The saxophone is a descendent of the ophicleide, which we find in *orquestas típicas* (the term later used to describe these ensembles) in Cuba during the same time.

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11 In Colombia, the word *charanga* is an archaic term used throughout the Department of Nariño to describe musical ensembles that play for religious processions. In other regions of Colombia, this ensemble is referred to as *chirimia* and consists of wind instruments and percussion. This ensemble is also understood to be a twentieth-century instrumental popular dance-music ensemble that performs *salsa* using the same basic wind and percussion instrumentation with the addition of violins and flute. Among the most famous of these groups in Colombia is the Charanga de la Candela, de Santafé de Bogotá (Davidson 1970).
the writings of Cuban intellectual Esteban Pichardo (1799-1879), who wrote in his 1836 lexicon, *Diccionario Provincial Casi Razonado de Vozes y Frases Cubanas*—considered to be the most important Cuban lexicon of the nineteenth century—that a charanga was a “cosa pequeña, reducida o fraccionada, como la Charanga [ó orquesta de pocos instrumentos músicos] [small thing, reduced or divided, like the charanga, an orchestra with few musical instruments]” (1976 [1836]). In his dictionary, Pichardo defines the charanga ensemble as a ‘small thing’ implying its informal character and giving it a connotation of something inconsequential.

Further proof of the existence of early charanga ensembles and their popular nature in Cuba can be seen in the first publication of the periodical *La Charanga* (Villergas 1858). *La Charanga* clearly depicts in its logos and cover page the instrumentation of these early charangas. [See: Figures 2-5 to 2-8.] What the 1858 and 1859 logo illustrations reveal is that the clarinet player is the only member of the ensemble reading music. This substantiates what we know about the personnel in these ensembles: they were most likely directed by a trained musician who could read music, while the other members were musically non-literate and learned their parts from the director, who also acted as composer and/or arranger. Their clothing is typical of that of the upper class and the use of the book and pen in the 1858 logo implies that at least the director was literate. It could also imply that the periodical was dedicated to writing, certainly a privilege of the elite at that time. (In the 1859 logo, the significance of the bells, mortar and pestle, and other items is unclear.) Another thing to note in the 1858 logo is the figure holding the baton. He is either a bastonero (baton holder), the person who ‘calls’ the contradances at the balls of the elite, or the drum major of a
carnival charanga. I speculate that he is some of both. Depiction of this figure as a jester ridicules the elite and their employ of a bastonero. The figure could also represent a charanguero (acting as the drum major), a member of the lower classes.

La Charanga was a satirical literary periodical that leaned towards sentimentality and jesting in its articles and cartoons. The title of this periodical is a clear reference to the informality of the charanga ensembles as well as to their popularity. According to Ned Sublette, “in the 1830s much prose writing in magazines and newspapers was in a style inherited from Spain: costumbrismo, which entailed the minute description of
popular scenes and customs. Much of what we know about daily life in Cuba in the nineteenth century comes from these writers” (2004: 131).

Figure 2-6. This photograph depicts a bastonero (baton holder), the person who announced dances, as well as ‘called’ the contradances and other salon dances at elite balls during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Cuba. The date of this photograph is unknown but, it appears to be from the late nineteenth century. (Source: (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 31). CHC. Public Domain.)
What is interesting to note about *La Charanga* is that despite its satirical, seemingly ‘low-brow’ and informal nature, it is clearly a publication that caters to, and parodies, an educated upper class. The dress of the characters in the logos, on the cover, and in the cartoons, is the dress of the elite. The cover illustration [See: Figure 2-8.], as well as the illustrations included within the periodical, were made by a member of the elite, Víctor Patricio Landaluze (1827-1889), a Spanish-born illustrator and painter considered to be the father of Cuban national painting.12

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12 Landaluze is still considered the father of Cuban painting despite the fact that he held strong ties to Spain, espoused highly conservative political views, and took a strong stance against Cuba’s struggle for independence at the turn of the twentieth century.
For example, in Figure 2-8, we see Landaluze’s illustration for the cover page of the first publication of *La Charanga*. It is full of symbolism and irony. In the illustration, the bastonero/charanguero is more prominent than the members of the elite class whom he dangles like puppets, perhaps a statement about how the elite are manipulated by the norms of high society. The *charanga* instruments are also more prominent. The lettering on the bass drum reads: Gazzanigos Frezzolinos, Sociedades Anónimas, Galería de Personajes Ilustras [Fans of Gazzaniga and Frezzolini, Gallery of Famous Personalities Corporation]. This minor inscription, seemingly added only for artistic interest, is a clever reference to a particular cultural and political phenomenon occurring at the time. In his memoir, *Notes of a Pianist*, Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869) reveals the meaning behind Landaluze’s vague message in his recounting of the Cuban public’s reactions to Marietta Gazzaniga (1824-1884) and Erminia Frezzolini (1818-1884), two famous Italian sopranos known for their overly dramatic operatic performances. Gottschalk writes:

Two years ago [1858], Gazzaniga, whose gestures and acting are somewhat violent, and often exaggerated and adapted to a southern audience, had become the idol of the feminine public of Havana. The enthusiasm she excited bordered on madness. The gentlemen threw their hats to her, the ladies their embroidered handkerchiefs and bracelets. Two factions were formed whose disputes, begun in the theatre, were kept up in the streets, and often threatened to become riots. One of the factions took the part of Frezzolini, it was the enlightened and conservative party. The other, for Gazzaniga, was composed of the ladies and the Havanese. The young girls were gazzaniquistas or frezzolinistas, and at the aristocratic balls of one or the other faction the unfortunate dancers who belonged to the opposite party were snubbed mercilessly (2006 [1881]: 29).

In this clear example, we see that Landaluze’s illustration makes a bold satirical statement about the preoccupations and social customs of the elite in colonial Cuba. There are numerous other similar illustrations by Landaluze within the pages of *La
Charanga. Landaluze’s illustrations and the articles, commentaries, and literature written within the pages of *La Charanga*, provide some of the best documentation of Cuban social life and expressive arts of the nineteenth century. What we can glean from *La Charanga* and from Landaluze’s depictions—in regards to charanga—is that amateur, military-style brass band ensembles were certainly present in Cuba in the mid-nineteenth century and that class associations regarding the charanga ensemble (however defined) were also clearly established by this time.

Figure 2-8. This is the 1858 cover illustration for *La Charanga* drawn by Landaluze (Villergas 1858). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
**Charanga francesa**

Establishing the origins of the term *charanga francesa* points towards several speculations given that there is little documentable evidence regarding how, why, and when this ensemble first became to be known as ‘*francesa,*’ especially evidence that defines exactly what the term connotes musically given that it is not at all a ‘French’ ensemble but one rather uniquely Cuban. There is tangential evidence—from what we know about performance practices, sales of Europeans musical instruments, and even diasporic migration patterns—that the predominantly brass instrumentation of antecedent Cuban *charanga* ensembles was altered as early as the eighteenth century to include chordophones and *criollo* percussion. These ensembles were also called *bandas,* or *bungas,* or *charanga francesas* in Eastern Cuba.

Fuentes Matons writes that the late eighteenth-century arrival of Franco-Haitians into Santiago de Cuba were known to “*introducir en su particular costumbre de contradanzas y valses cantados, la Gavotte, el Passepiede [sic] y el minuet*” [introduce into their particular practice of contradances and sung waltzes, the Gavotte, the Passepied, and the minuet] (1981 [1893]: 124). According to Lapique Becali, the ensembles that performed this music were comprised of one or two clarinets, two or three violins, two trumpets, a contrabass and a drum [most likely the *pailas criollas*] [See Figures 2-10 to 2-12.] (2008: 69). Bacardí Moreau writes that “*había seis violines y guitarras, y con la música de la trova que se componía de pífanos y tambores se bailaba el minué, la contradanza francesa y el rigodón*” [they had six violins and guitars, and flutes and drums accompanied this guitar music, and they were dancing the minuet, the French contradance, and the quadrille] (1973 [1908]: 33).
In the nineteenth century, most of the brass instrumentation was removed from these ensembles (only to be reinstated in the twentieth century). Scholarly consensus believes this change in instrumentation was done in the nineteenth century to accommodate the sonic requirements of indoor versus outdoor venues (Manuel, Bilby & Largey 1995). These brass band ensembles with their loud instrumentation and musical repertoire of military marches, patriotic music, and popular songs, were eventually replaced in indoor venues—such as ballrooms and salons—by the softer sounds of flute and string ensembles known as *charangas francesas* and their repertoire of *contradanzas* and other popular dance music.

Díaz Ayala offers that perhaps adding the term ‘*francesa*’ to the term ‘*charanga*’ in the late eighteenth century helped to signify that these ensembles were now more refined and sophisticated—as most things ‘French’ were considered culturally superior—in effect, reducing or eliminating the historically somewhat pejorative connotation of the *charanga* as something trivial, particularly when the *charangas* performed for the elite (1994: 134). In essence, the term ‘*francesa*’ added an air of respectability.

Sublette suggests, in support of Díaz Ayala, that the “pretty sound” of these small piano, woodwind, and string ensembles could also be characterized as sounding culturally ‘French,’ primarily due to the inclusion of the piano, an essential symbol of elegance, refined taste, and upward social mobility. Sublette states that *charanga francesas* “had been around in one form or another in Cuba probably since the first piano came from Paris to Santiago de Cuba in 1810” (2004: 307). While Sublette does not reference where he obtained this information, Carpentier also states (without
reference) the same information (2001 [1946]: 167). Other evidence, however, of the appearance of pianos in Cuba in the late eighteenth century does exist to support their claims. What I believe is the first classified advertisement for a pianoforte in Cuba was placed in a periodical from Havana—Papel Periódico de la Havana—dated September 9, 1792.\(^{13}\) It reads in part, “un Fuerte-piano de esquisitas voces fabricado en Londres, en precio cómodo.” [For sale: a pianoforte with exquisite sound, made in London, for an affordable price.] What this tells us is that pianos were indeed being sent from Europe to Cuba by the late eighteenth century. In addition, another advertisement in the Papel Periódico de la Havana was placed in May, 1794 for “dos flautas transversales hermosa, a un precio justo” [two lovely transverse flutes, at a fair price]. The appearance of this advertisement shows us that transverse flutes were also present in Cuba during the same time period. This is important regarding charanga because it was the change in instrumentation to include the flute and piano that first identified the charanga or charanga francesa as an ensemble of the elite.

The claims of musicians within the charanga tradition also points to the critical addition of the piano. The legendary charanga flute player, Antonio Arcaño Betancourt (1911-1994) also believes that the term ‘francesa’ was given to the charanga ensemble precisely when it incorporated the piano. He states, “They called them charanga a la francesa… because before… it had no piano” (Hernández 1986: 64).

Another important and influential charanga flutist, José Antonio Fajardo (1919-2001)—who studied under Arcaño and took over as flutist for Arcaño’s charanga, Arcaño y sus Maravillas—claims that the charanga francesa ensemble evolved from the

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\(^{13}\) The first publication of Papel Periódico de la Havana was in 1790. It was a semi-weekly periodical published from 1790 to 1805.
quinteto haitiano (Acosta 2006), an ensemble with instrumentation much like that of the francesas and orquestas típicas (albeit, somewhat modified).\textsuperscript{14} Haitian musicians claim that these Haitian ensembles, in fact, were influenced by similar Cuban ensembles (Averill 1997: 53). Indeed, many of these ensembles in Cuba and in Haiti were reciprocally influenced by nature of their transcultural relationship. One can speculate that Fajardo came to his conclusion due to the fact that the elite of Port-au-Prince, Haiti were also entertained at their private balls and bastrengs (public dances) by ensembles with similar instrumentation to that of the charangas. Averill writes:

The instrumental accompaniment for these events typically included either a piano or a small, French-inspired string orchestra called òkès bastreng, which comprised cello, bass, violin, clarinet and/or trombone. The repertoire included popular European couples and figure dances: mazurkas, polkas, waltzes, lanciers (lancers), contredanses, quadrilles, as well as mereng. Relatives of the bastreng ensemble could be found throughout the Caribbean region (e.g., the Cuban charanga francesa or the New Orleans Creole string orchestra” (1997: 35-36).

Rodríguez Domínguez presents perhaps the most interesting argument. He asserts that the term ‘francesa,’ when applied to certain Cuban music and ensembles, signifies that they possess musical influences from the southern United States. Rodríguez Domínguez is referring to Louisiana in general and New Orleans in particular, when he writes that:

Es probable que al tomar esta última denominación “Orquesta Francesa” derive de la influencia o cambio recíproco que estableció entre la música del Sur de los Estados Unidos y la música cubana, todo vez que la música de este región norteamericana está matizada de la influencia francesa (1967: 94).

\textsuperscript{14} The instrumentation of Haitian quintetos and sextetos included combinations of the instruments listed here: keyboard (usually harpsichord); piano; flute; drum set; trumpet; voice; and, malinba, “a large box-like lamellaphone (related to the Cuban marimbula)” (Averill 1997: 39). Bongos, more trumpets and vocalists, saxophones, and bass were later added (ibid: 53).
[It is likely that the taking up of this latest appellation "Orquesta Francesa" derives from the influence or reciprocal exchange established between the music of the southern United States and the music of Cuba, as the music of this North American region is always colored by a French influence.]

There are historical circumstances that support Rodríguez Domínguez’s claim. After the 1730s, France could no longer make Louisiana profitable through the sale of sugar, so it relinquished the colony to Spain in 1763. Spain took control of the territory until 1803 (Moya Pons 2007: 131). During this time, Spain consistently sent Cuban musicians to Louisiana to play in military bands. These Cuban musicians then returned home with cultural and musical influences from the southern U.S.\(^{15}\) (Din & Harkins 1996). What this shows is that there were musical ties between Cuba, San Domingue, and New Orleans as early as the eighteenth century. In the forward to Rodríguez Domínguez’s book, *Iconografía del Danzón*, Cuban folklorist Argeliers León also states that without a doubt, transcultural influences existed between all three locations and for the most part, they were predominantly shaped by French cultural aesthetics (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 5).

Alén Rodríguez offers yet another perspective. He states that all creole Haitians, whether they were free or enslaved, were referred to as *franceses* when they arrived *en masse* in eastern Cuba after the Haitian Revolution (1986: 9). Given that they also brought with them to Cuba very similar musical traditions, and performed in similar ensembles, suggests that the music and ensembles in which they performed could

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\(^{15}\) A letter dated October 1, 1783 from Louisiana Governor Esteban Rodríguez Miró y Sabater (1744-1795) to Cuba’s Captain General José Manuel Ignacio Timoteo de Ezepeleta Galdeano Dicastillo y del Prado, Conde de Ezepeleta de Beire (1739 – 1823) states that Miró does not have enough musicians in his regiment because they have returned to Cuba with the other troops and he needs Ezepeleta to send him some more. "He asks for clarinetists, trumpeters, and a *maestro*" (Din & Harkins 1996: 25n).
easily been referred to as ‘franceses’ in order to differentiate them from the comparable Cuban musics and ensembles.

The probability that the origins and evolution of the term ‘charanga francesa’ is indeed a combination of all the above factors is, in my opinion, quite high. All the arguments presented here hold validity and in truth, written and photographic evidence discovered through this research supports most of these scenarios.

The existence of multiple points of reference for identifying and defining similar cultural expressions found across tangentially related societies underscores the inherent complexity, and inaccuracy, of considering any one view as singularly legitimate. In support of this notion, further evidence of the multifaceted origins and evolution of charanga can be found in the historical organology of charanga ensembles.

**Historical Organology of Charanga Ensembles**

Outlining how the military-style brass bands of the eighteenth and nineteenth century in Cuba—who performed for carnivals and other outdoor events—evolved into the more refined, twentieth-century modern charanga flute- and violin-based ensembles—best known for performing popular dance music in salons and nightclubs—is somewhat complex. This is partially due to the informal nature of the ensembles and their subsequent capacity to slightly adjust their instrumentation (throughout the past two centuries) for any given performance. The ability to draw a clear, direct line of historical evolution is hampered by the fact that most eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century antecedent ensembles to the charanga, such as the orquesta típica, often comprised musicians gathered together ad hoc from the military bands, the ranks of amateur and professional musicians, and the music conservatories. It can be assumed, therefore, that ensemble directors would have altered the instrumentation and
performance practices of an ensemble depending on who might be available to perform. There are, however, broad generalizations that can be made about the gradual evolution of the *charanga* from its band-like instrumentation to that of a dance orchestra’s due to some consistency in the written and pictorial documentation. Similar evidence regarding the music performed by these ensembles, such as the *contradanza*, *danzón*, and *chachachá*, also provides parallel substantiation.

Scholars of Cuban music typically divide the evolutional history of the modern *charanga* ensemble into two periods: 1) the era of antecedent ensembles such as the *orquesta típica* (sometimes referred to as the ‘folkloric orchestra’) and the *charanga francesa* or *charanga típica*, from the 1790s to 1902, and; 2) the republican period from 1902 until the present, where we see the emergence and development of the modern *charanga* ensemble. What follows is an outline of the sources of that history.

Since the nineteenth century, there have been numerous publications on Spanish and Hispano-American music describing and defining *charanga* (brass band) ensembles and the music they perform. Pedrell i Sabaté’s 1894 *Diccionario Técnico de la Música*, a Spanish dictionary of music, is but one example. Likewise, there is also clear documentation and photographic evidence of the antecedent Cuban *charanga* ensembles referred to as *orquesta típicas* as well as photographs of the *charanga francesas*.

As previously stated, these early Spanish-derived military-style ensembles consisted only of wind and percussion instruments and it is noted that they performed for outdoor functions such as military pageants, informal religious processionals, festivals, and carnivals. Scholars define these late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-
century ensembles in Cuba first as *bandas* (bands) consisting of nine to twelve musicians (Díaz Ayala 2003b: 295). Early instrumentation consisted primarily of the following brass and woodwind instruments, with the occasional addition of a chordophone: *cornetines de llave* (valve coronets), *trombones* (trombones), *clarinetes* (clarinets), a *figle* (ophicleide),\(^{16}\) a *bombardino* (euphonium), and a contrabass.

Percussion instruments included the only *criollo* instruments: small tympani-like instruments called *pailas criollas*;\(^ {17}\) and the *güiro* (gourd scraper) [See: Figures 2-9 to 2-13] (ibid 2003b: 295).

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\(^{16}\) An ophicleide is an early nineteenth-century brass, keyed bugle. It is the predecessor of the saxophone and was replaced by the euphonium and tuba (Morley-Pegge 2010).

\(^{17}\) *Pailas criollas* evolved into the modern instrument, the *timbales*. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Cuba, they were creolized versions of small tympani with half-round closed bottom bodies instead of the cylindrical open bottomed *timbales* of today. They were constructed in male and female pairs.
Rodríguez Domínguez states that this early twentieth-century photograph is of the *pailas criollas*, played by Demetrio Pacheco, the *timbalero* for the *orquesta típica* of Félix González and arguably the most important Cuban *timbalero* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Ledón Sánchez 2003: 52). Contemporary *charanga* musicians, however, refer to these instruments as *timbales pequeños* (small tympani). The use of the *pailas criollas* is currently undergoing a revival. (Source: (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 90). CHC. Public Domain.)
Figure 2-11. Famed Cuban percussionist Amadito Valdés states that these instruments are the true *pailas criollas*, information verified by many of the *charanga* musicians I interviewed. Note that they are smaller than tympani and *timbales*, with a more shallow body. (Source: Photo courtesy of Amadito Valdés. [http://www.percussioncuba.com/Instrumentos.htm](http://www.percussioncuba.com/Instrumentos.htm). Used with permission.)

Figure 2-12. 1999 photo of the *pailas criollas* (Leymarie 2003: 27). (Source: Photo courtesy of Patrick Glaize. Used with permission.)
In analyzing archival photographs of these instruments, it appears that the small, shallow, ‘pan-like’ instruments were the first to be called *pailas criollas*, and that later, the instrument seems to have undergone gradual transformations that deepened the body and widened the head of the drum. This was done perhaps, in an effort to gain a louder sound and/or to emulate the orchestral tympani. In personal interviews with *charanga* musicians such as Rene Lorente, they claim, like Valdés, that the smaller instruments are the *pailas criollas* and the larger instruments are *timbales*. What is certain is that the *pailas criollas* were the instrumental precursor to the *timbales*, the instrument codified in *charanga* ensembles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Figure 2-13. Photograph of a *güiro* (gourd scraper). The instrument is ubiquitous within Cuban ensembles today. (Source: Photo, “El Mago de las Maracas,” courtesy of Liset Cruz: [http://www.cuba-photography.com](http://www.cuba-photography.com). Used with permission.)
In the *Diccionario de la Música Española e Hispanoamericana* by Cásares Rodicio, the following instrumentation is also documented as the standard instrumentation for *charanga* ensembles throughout the nineteenth century:

El conjunto instrumental que forma la charanga es: requinto, flautín, flauta, clarinetes, saxofón, fiscornos, cornetines, trompas, trombones, barítonos, bombardino y bajos. La charanga tuvo vida sobre todo a lo largo del siglo XIX, dando lugar a numerosas composiciones para este conjunto (1999: 572).

[The instrumental ensemble that forms the brass band is: fife, piccolo, flute, clarinets, saxophone, flugelhorns, cornets, trumpets, trombones, baritones, euphonium and bass. The brass band existed throughout the nineteenth century, resulting in numerous compositions for this ensemble.]

Specifically in Cuba (but also elsewhere throughout Latin America\(^\text{18}\)) during the nineteenth century, ensembles that included similar instrumentation began to be referred to as *orquestas típicas* (typical ensembles). Storm Roberts describes these ensembles that performed primarily outdoors in Cuba as “cornet-led bands supported by clarinets and trombone, with tympani predominant in the percussion” (1999: 8).

When referring to the popular convention amongst pianists in the nineteenth century of performing Cuban *danzones* from piano scores, Manuel states that while this was indeed an accepted performance practice and recognized by popular music composers, most *danzones* were composed originally as dance music to be performed by some type of *charanga* instrumental ensemble. He writes that these ensembles might consist merely of a fiddle or flute accompanied by harp or guitar [See Figure 2-15] [Also see: Bacardí Moreau 1973 [1908]: 33.], but ideally it would constitute an *orquesta típica*, which might comprise two clarinets, four violins, a flute or piccolo (*flautín*), trombone, *figle* (ophicleide, a sort of bass bugle), contrabass, timbales (small kettledrum), and other percussion

\(^{\text{18}}\) John Storm Roberts makes reference to the fact that in Mexico, *orquestas típicas* are based on “nineteenth-century village dance bands, which mixed strings and wind instruments, and in turn probably developed from the military bands maintained by various Mexican regiments, playing both light classical music and popular Mexican tunes” (1999: 20).
instruments, such as the güiro gourd scraper or even a quijada (jawbone of an ass), scraped like the güiro” (2009a: 71).

Figure 2-14. Photograph of a quijada (donkey jawbone), an African-derived idiophone found throughout the Americas (especially where there exist descendants of enslaved Africans). The bones are dried so that the teeth become loose and rattle (an African aesthetic) when the jawbone is shaken or struck with the palm of the hand. A small stick is also used to scrape a rhythmic pattern against the teeth. (Source: http://www.crashandboom.com/photos.cfm. Photo courtesy of Kelly Creedon. http://kellycreedon.com/. Used with permission.)

Acosta likewise refers to the instrumentation and importance of the role of the orquesta típicas and their evolution into the charanga francesa ensembles in the performance of popular dance music. He writes:

Entre las agrupaciones orquestales más representativa y de perfil más definido, podemos mencionar la orquesta típica del siglo pasado, en la que, junto a la percusión acompañante, sobresalía la sonoridad de los instrumentos de viento (dos clarinetes, cornetín, figle, trombón). En el propio siglo XIX surgió poco más tarde la llamada charanga francesa, en la que predominan los violines y las flauta, que desplazó a la anterior y constituye el antecedente directo de las actuales orquestas de danzones y chachachá (1998: 102).
Among the most representative and high profile ensembles we can mention from the eighteenth and nineteenth century is the ‘typical ensemble.’ In this ensemble, accompanying percussion helped to project the sound of the wind instruments (which typically consisted of two clarinets, cornet, ophicleide, and trombone). Later in the nineteenth century, the instrumentation changed slightly and the ensemble came to be called the French-style ensemble, an ensemble dominated by violins and flute. This ensemble replaced the ‘typical ensemble’ and is the direct antecedent of the current big-band orchestras that perform danzones and cha-cha-châs.

References to instrumentation for charanga ensembles from the nineteenth century can also be found in Cuban literature. Set in 1812-1831, the novel Cecilia Valdés o la Loma del Angel (Cecelia Valdés or Angel Hill), written by Cirilo Villaverde (1812-1894), is considered to be “the most important novel of nineteenth-century Cuba… and without equal in nineteenth-century Spanish American literature” (Villaverde 2005 [1882]: xi). An early version of the novel was first published in Havana in 1839. Villaverde, later exiled in New York for his political activism and his role in the fight for Cuban independence from Spain, published the completed edition in New York in 1882. The novel was so popular that the story has been retold and rewritten by other novelists, made into a film, and set to music in Cuban composer Julio Gonzalo Elías Roig Lobo’s (1890-1970) extremely popular zarzuela (a lyric-dramatic genre using popular music) Cecilia Valdés. Roig’s zarzuela—with libretto by Augustín Rodriguez and Jose Sánchez Arcilla—was first performed on March 26, 1932 in the Teatro Martí in Havana (Gíro 2007, Tomo 4:68).

19 According to Sibylle Fischer, professor of Spanish Literature at New York University and editor of the 2005 publication of Cecilia Valdés, “Cecelia Valdés is the most important novel of nineteenth-century Cuba. It is a story of masters, slaves, and free people of color, of sugar plantations, torture, adultery, incest, contempt born out of racial prejudice, and murderous revenge: a vast canvas of life in a slave-holding colony, at times horrifying, at times quaint, but extraordinary nevertheless, and without equal in nineteenth-century Spanish American literature” (Villaverde 2005 [1882]: xi).
In one particular scene in the novel, the protagonist, Cecilia Valdés, is attending a baile de cuna (creole social dance party referred to as a ‘cradle dance’). Valdés, a beautiful mulata from the lower class, raised in the Real Casa de Cuna (Royal Orphanage), is considered the “queen of the bailes de cunas” because musicians were inspired by her “unequaled beauty” (González 1993:205). Villaverde describes the setting:

In the drawing room were many ordinary wooden chairs lined up against the walls, and on the right as one entered from the street, a settee, with various music stands in front of it. As our story begins, it was occupied by seven black and mulatto musicians, three violinists, a bassist, a flutist, [a musician playing] a pair of kettledrum[s]. The musician who was to play the clarinet was a young mulatto, well turned out and not bad-looking, who despite his youth was the director of that little orchestra. He was standing at the end of the settee nearest the street. His fellow musicians, almost all of them older than he, called him Pimienta, and regardless of whether that was a nickname (for it means ‘pepper’) or his real surname, that is what we shall henceforth call him (2005 [1882]: 29).

What this excerpt gives us is a glimpse into the social practices, especially in terms of race and class, of colonial Cuba. Also important, is the depiction of the instrumentation of the salon ensemble as a charanga.

Further documentation of nineteenth-century antecedent charanga ensembles can be found in the written accounts of colonists from Europe, including reports by military leaders. In his 1831 description of a social ball and gambling venue in Havana, British Major General James Edward Alexander (1803-1885) recounts that “the band,

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20 Gíro states that there are many discrepancies regarding the etymology of the term ‘bailas de cuna’ but that scholars agree that it was a type of popular creole dance in nineteenth-century Cuba (2007, Tomo 1: 82). Picardo states that: “Sólo se recuerda hoy la expresión baile de cuna, usada antiguamente con referencia a ciertas reuniones modestísimas de gente criolla, de color generalmente, tanto para bailar como para otras diversiones o juegos: casita reducida, pocos músicos, arpa y guitarra, etc., todo que pequeño y nada de etiqueta” (1976 [1836]: 143). [The expression ‘cradle dance’ was used to describe certain informal gatherings for creoles, generally people of color, to dance and often gamble: small private house, few musicians, harp and guitar, etc., all small and without etiquette.]
consisting of nine performers, three violins, two violoncellos, hautboys [oboes], and French horns, would play in a most animating and excellent style, a waltz, fandango, or contradananza, the latter a combination of the waltz and quadrille…” (1970 [1833]: 349).

Several sources state that on July 31, 1890, the first ensemble consisting of the prototypical instrumentation of a charanga francesa, La Unión Armónica, performed in the Glorieta Saratoga (an outdoor venue akin to a bandshell) on the beach of Matanzas (Díaz Ayala 1994: 134, Giro 2007:9; Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 98, Suárez Hernández 2007). Instrumentation consisted of flute, violin, piano, and bass. Giro writes:

En el siglo XX surgió el otro prototipo de formato instrumental del danzón: la charanga francesa (su antecedente fue la Unión Armónica, de Matanzas, que en 1890 tocó en la Glorieta Saratoga, con los instrumentos siguientes: piano, flauta, violín y contrabajo) integrada por flauta de madera de cinco llaves, piano, violín, contrabajo, timbal criollo y güiro o calabazo; posteriormente se agregó un segundo violín, y cuando las circunstancias lo permitían, incluían un cello y una viola (2007: 9).

[In the twentieth century came another prototypical instrumental format of danzón: charanga francesa (its predecessor was the Unión Armónica, of Matanzas, that in 1890 played on the Glorieta Saratoga, with the following instruments: piano, flute, violin and bass) composed of the five-key wooden flute, piano, violin, bass, pailas and güiro or calabash; a second violin was subsequently added, and when circumstances permitted, a cello and a viola were included.]

Suárez Hernández (as well as Manuel and Bacardí Moreau, among others) states that at times, the instrumentation for similar ensembles might have even included the Cuban harp, a descendent of the Peruvian and Mexican harp (2007). The photograph in Figure 2-15 is of the Charanga de José Doroteo Arango Padrón “Pachencho.” This ensemble was the last “charangaguita con arpa” (small charanga with harp) performing in Havana at the turn of the twentieth century. Instrumentation included two violins,
cello, piano, flute, and the Cuban harp played by “Pachencho” (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967:98).

Figure 2-15. The Charanga de José Doroteo Arango Padrón “Pachencho.” (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967:98). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)

Like Díaz Ayala, Giro, and Rodríguez Dominguez, Suárez Hernández refers to this ensemble as a *bunga* (Díaz Ayala 1994: 134, Giro 2007:9; Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 98). According to Sublette, *bunga* is “an old Bantu word to which Cubans gave a wide variety of meanings” (2004: 307) leading to a certain amount of ambiguity regarding the most commonly used term for this ensemble. Rodríguez Domínguez states that *bungas* were late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century ensembles consisting of piano,
flute, violin, and clarinet, a slightly different instrumentation than the *bungas* described by Díaz Ayala, Giro, and Suárez Hernández (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 97), leading to the speculation that most small ensembles during this time period, that consisted of any combination of piano and woodwinds or chordophones, were commonly referred to as *bungas*.

By the 1910s, some twenty years after the celebrated performance by La Unión Armónica, and with the inclusion of the *pailas criollas* and the *guiro*, these ensembles began to be referred to exclusively as either *charangas* or *orquestas francesas* (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 94). By 1920, the *charanga* had replaced the *orquesta típica* in popularity and included a varying instrumentation of flute, piano, *pailas criollas*, *claves*, *güiro*, *tumbadora* (conga), and two violins, and sometimes one or more of the other various brass or reed instruments. The contrabass was also sometimes included. The piano was permanently added to the *charanga*’s instrumentation in 1910 when pianist Antonio María Romeu (1876–1955) established his own *charanga francesa* (Giro 2007, Tomo 4:85). From then on, the piano became essential to the instrumentation. The contrabass then too became a permanent addition and the number of violins was doubled (to four) and another *conga*, and sometimes cello, were added.

Analysis of commercial recordings from Cuba also allows us to identify certain changes in the instrumentation of the *charanga* ensembles. Beginning as early as 1918, but especially during the 1930s—and in conjunction with the advent of the nascent recording and broadcast industries—voices were also added to *charanga* ensembles. In the 1920s and 1930s, many *charanga* ensembles were performing and recording—both on Cuban recording labels such as Panart as well as on American
labels such as Columbia and RCA Victor—primarily in Havana and New York. Charangas such as the Orquesta Antonio María Romeu, Orquesta Aniceto Díaz, Charanga de Paulina Álvarez, Orquesta Belisario López, and Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig were all performing with singers during this time. Other Cuban ensembles that included voices, such as the sextetos (six-member son ensembles) and septetos (seven-member son ensembles), were also recording and enjoying popular appeal through the mass media. In response to the massive appeal for popular song and dance music, the charangas modified their repertoire to include vocals (and ushered in a modified form of the danzón called the danzonete).

The RCA Victor label released numerous 78-rpm recordings of Cuban ensembles featuring singers (who quickly gained a celebrity status): including the 1930s recordings of Alberto Aroche (1902-1968) singing with the Orquesta Neno Gonzalez, Fernando Collazo (1909-1939) singing with the Orquesta Maravilla del Siglo, and Barbarito Diez (1909-1995) singing with the Orquesta Maria Antonio Romeu (Fagan 1983). American ethnomusicologist Charley Gerard, in his writings regarding the transcultural nature of musical development between Cuban and American musicians as they travelled between New York and Havana to record, describes this new charanga ensemble with voices added to its instrumentation:

It... comes as a surprise when we hear music from other parts of the globe in which strings are successfully integrated into an exciting dance music. From Cuba comes such a music; it is called charanga. The ensemble that plays this body of music is itself called charanga, and it consists of a string section with at least a pair of violins and sometimes a cello, a solo flute and a rhythm section with timbales, bass, güiro, piano and congas. Although charanga is traditionally an instrumental form, it has evolved into a vocal music, typically featuring two male voices singing in unison (2001: 65).
In addition to recordings, broadcast radio especially helped to foster the popularity of the voice in *charanga* ensembles. Before the 1940s, radio stations relied more on live studio performances rather than recordings for their broadcasts because recordings were more expensive to produce. The *charanga*’s suitability for broadcast fidelity increased its popularity while the demand for the loud, more unrefined, horn-dominated *orquesta típicas* disappeared. In addition, electric amplification for the singers eliminated the need for a strong vocal capacity and a smoother, more suave style of singing became preferred. Most importantly, radio diminished racial barriers, for while black performers were not allowed to perform in certain social clubs and salons, they could be *heard* in those venues, because no such discrimination existed on the radio (Moore 1997: 101-104).

With the inclusion of voices in the 1930s, the current standard instrumentation of the *charanga* was established and the line-up of flute, violins, piano, contrabass, voices, *conga*, *güiro*, *timbales*, and *cencerro* has, for the most part, remained unchanged. What is interesting to note is that the *charanga* ensemble had continued to evolve to circa the 1930s, the time at which it became standardized. I posit that perhaps this was due to the fact that *charanga* had reached its place as a symbol of a Cuban national identity at this point and was no longer treated as something in need of development. Since the 1960s—parallel with the invention of amplified instruments—some *charanga* orchestras have added electric instruments, several brass instruments, and a drum set to their instrumentation (Alén-Rodriguez 1998). The one instrument whose inclusion and role has remained unchanged throughout the history of the *charanga* ensemble, however, is the five-key, wooden *charanga* flute.
The Five-key, Wooden Charanga Flute

The eighteenth century in Europe ushered in a greater sophistication in the art of musical instrument making and it was during this time that we first find evidence of the instrument known today as the archetypal orchestral Baroque flute used in the performance of charanga. Due to the instrument's overwhelming popularity in France, it soon came to be referred to as the ‘French Baroque’ flute. By the very early nineteenth century, enthusiasm for this ‘French Baroque’ flute was substantial all throughout Europe and by the 1830s art music composers were regularly scoring works for symphony orchestras that required these flutes in their wind sections (Montagu 2010).21

In England, just prior to this period, flutes were routinely added to the instrumentation of chamber ensembles consisting of violin, oboe, recorder, and keyboard. These chamber ensembles then began appearing before paying audiences in public concerts. These same chamber ensembles in France and Germany, however, were still performing primarily in private setting in the salons of the upper classes (Kreitner 2011). It was this tradition of playing chamber works for the salon dances of the elite, including the use of similar instrumentation to that stated above, that the French colonists brought to the New World.

Held transversely and made of various types of wood, early Baroque-era flutes featured only one key, the E-flat key, played by the right hand fifth finger. This key was

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21 That said, military bands and fife and drum corps, however, were still more common. Regimental bands that played in outdoor plazas were, as previously stated, more common in Cuba during this time as Cuba had yet to establish sufficient conservatories and concert halls needed to support a thriving Western art music tradition (Martinez-Fernandez 1998).
introduced in order to improve the instrument’s overall intonation and in so doing, made the one-key flute the standard instrument of that time.22 [See Figure 2-16.]

Figure 2-16. Photo of one-key flutes marked FLORIO/LONDON (c.1795), G. ASTOR & Co./LONDON (c.1800), H. GRENSER/DRESDEN (c.1810), and GRIESSLING & SCHLOTT (c.1805). The last flute includes a corps de rechange. (Source: Photo courtesy of Richard M. Wilson. http://www.oldflutes.com/. Used with permission.)

Powell offers a more detailed description of this early Baroque flute:

The cylindrical bore of the...instrument has become wider at one end than the other; the new instrument is built in several sections, instead of in one piece; its embouchure and fingerholes have altered their shapes and sizes, and are made in tube walls of increased thickness; and the new instrument has a key for the player’s right hand fifth finger, controlling a seventh hole added to the six of the sixteenth-century flute (1996: 68).

As the instrument evolved throughout the eighteenth century, keys were added to meet ever more challenging technical demands. The growing acceptance of equal temperament as a Western art music theoretical standard exacted further refinement of the instrument and so the body of the flute—now constructed primarily of ebony or grenadilla wood23—was also lengthened and divided into four sections to accommodate

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22 The instrument was also the type of flute upon which Frederick the Great of Prussia performed. Frederick, a great patron of flute music, was a former student of Joachim Quantz, the composer of one of the most detailed manuals of eighteenth-century flute performance practice currently recognized (Powell 1996: 88).

23 The five-key flutes preferred by charanga flute players are made of granadillo (blackwood) grenadilla wood: Dalbergia melanoxylon, also called African blackwood, African ebony, African ironwood, or Mpingo. The wood comes from a deciduous, shrubby tree grown in the savannah grasslands of southeast Africa.
this new requirement. By the end of the century it was possible to find instruments with up to nine keys. And, despite having been given the moniker of ‘French’ flute, the instrument was in fact German, invented by Johann George Tromlitz (1725-1805) of Bavaria in 1785 (Powell 1996).²⁴ [See Figures 2-17 and 2-18.]

Figure 2-17. Photo of French five-key ebony flute with silver keys. (Source: Photo courtesy of Berkel Muziek. http://www.berkelmuziek.nl/img/oldflutes.htm. Used with permission.)

Figure 2-18. French five-key flutes constructed out of different woods such as ebony and the various colors of grenadilla wood. They are identified from bottom to top: Tulou (Paris, c.1835), Sax (Brussels, c.1845), Noblet (Paris, c.1860), and Noë (Paris, c.1900). Richard M. Wilson’s website, http://www.oldflutes.com/, is particularly helpful regarding information on historical flutes. (Source: Photo courtesy of Richard M. Wilson. Used with permission.)

The information below was provided primarily by Rene Lorente (Personal Interview 2010) and through direct observation of his five-key flutes. The flutes were made by the

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It is prized for its density and resistance to moisture. Other European woodwind musical instruments such as clarinets and oboes are also now made from the grenadilla’s purplish-black heartwood. The tree is extremely rare and now endangered (Agroforestry Tree Database. International Center for Research in Agroforestry 2010).

²⁴ Tromlitz's flute evolved from the two-key Baroque flute (Powell 1996).
Henri Selmer Company who began crafting high-quality musical instruments in Paris, France beginning in 1885. [See: Figures 2-19 to 2-21.]

Figure 2-19. The Selmer logo on the five-key flute of Rene Lorente. The stamp reads: Selmer, Paris, Made in France. (Source: All images in this document are my own unless otherwise stated.)

Figure 2-20. Three views of the Selmer five-key flute of Rene Lorente.
In terms of construction, the five-key flute is built in the key of C. There are also flutes made in keys of B♭ and E♭, but most flutes are in C. The B♭ flute sounds a major second below the concert piccolo in C, and the E♭ flute sounds a major fifth below the B♭ flute. The instrument has a conical bore and a cylindrical headjoint. The headjoint is heavy compared to the almost fragile lightness of the body of the flute. This is perhaps why the instrument resonates loudly. Most flutes have metal-lined sockets and tenons are also partially metal and wrapped in cork.

The keys of the flute are E♭, F, G♯, C, and B♭ and are usually made of some type of metal. [See: Figure 2-22.] Some keys are silver-plated, but given their age, most of the silver plating has worn off extant flutes. Replacement corks and pads are designed specifically for the keys of this instrument.
With only five keys, the ‘French Baroque’ flute is fully chromatic and has an approximate range of D4 to G6. It has a forked fingering system and there can be as many as nineteen alternate fingerings for a single note, each altering the pitch in small degrees. [See: Appendix B – Five-Key Flute Fingering Chart.] The tone holes of the instrument are small, are placed much farther apart than they are in the Boehm flute, and can be played open-hole, closed-hole, or half-hole.

For the most part, A440 pitch had not been completely standardized during the nineteenth century, so the ‘French Baroque’ flutes built during that time vary in temperament and intonation with other instruments is a challenge. The instrument typically spans the range between 390Hz to 460Hz (McGee 2010) and charanga flute players have created performance practice techniques to assist them in playing in tune (which will be discussed in Chapter Four).

This five-key ‘French Baroque’ flute as described above was in all likelihood the same type of flute first taken to Cuba by the Franco-Haitians in the late eighteenth century. Grossman writes that

since the primary migration from France to Cuba via Haiti took place in the late 1700’s and since the development of charanga orchestras mainly took place throughout the 1800’s and early 1900’s, it’s not surprising that the flute mostly used in charanga is the Tromlitz wooden 5-key flute. Even today, many still prefer this 5-key flute because of its warm sound, its subtlety, and its facility in the fourth octave, as well as a desire to keep with tradition. However, many flutists, (including the great Richard Egües of Aragón fame) have converted to the Boehm system flute for its ease in facility and more tempered scale (1999: 34).

Indeed, a number of flutists who play charanga music today—some, beginning as early as the mid-twentieth century—have switched completely to the modern Boehm
silver flute. Other flutists perform charanga music utilizing both the Boehm flute and the five-key charanga flute depending on their particular preferences and performance practices for any given composition or performance. Most charanga flutists, however, still prefer the wooden charanga flute’s warmer tone despite its complex fingering system and difficulty in playing in tune.

In interviews with charanga musicians such as flutist Rene Lorente, I have been told that it is the distinct sonority of the charanga flute (that is, the wooded five-key instrument) that most defines the sound of the charanga ensemble. Upon hearing the sound of the flute in performance, cognoscenti and dilettantes alike have been able, for the most part, to identify the music as Cuban (Personal interview 2010). The combination of the flute with the violins and the piano leaves no doubt in their minds that the ensemble is a charanga.

What also informs them is the unique repertoire of musical genres played by the charangas. The genre most associated with early charangas is the danzón, while the more contemporary charangas are more likely to be associated with ‘nightclub’ genres such as the mambo and the chachachá. Information regarding the history and development of these genres follows in Chapter Three.

25 The modern silver flute, now the standard for the performance of Western art music, was invented by German instrument maker Theobald Boehm (1794-1881) in the mid-nineteenth century. Boehm finished refining his cylindrical silver flute in 1847 after the Paris Academy of Science had rejected it in 1832 (Powell 1996).

26 Anecdotal evidence places the renaming of this instrument from the ‘French Baroque’ flute to the ‘charanga’ flute in the 1950s in Cuba by charanga musicians.
CHAPTER 3
THE CHARANGA REPERTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC

It wasn’t until the 1760s, after Spain had eased trade restrictions within her Caribbean colonies, that Cuba began to develop a systematized plantation structure, and with it, the immigration of Spanish Europeans to own and manage Cuba’s sugar plantations. African slaves from west and central Africa, casualties of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, were imported to provide labor (Rogoziński 1999). With this increase in transnational social connections came rapid cultural changes in Cuba, especially in dance and music. Spanish planters brought urban, genteel, aristocratic dances and European conservatory art music to the New World. Middle-class Iberian Peninsula and Canary Island immigrants imported rural, rustic peasant songs and a musical culture already accustomed to the incorporation of foreign stylistic elements such as North African Berber and other African musical styles. Enslaved Africans miraculously managed to preserve and promulgate their highly complex, polyrhythmic drumming traditions despite being routinely subjected to their captor’s attempts to erase these cultural retentions. European and African musical and cultural influences were considerable in colonial Cuba, both in the rural areas, as well as within Cuba’s urban centers. Put in the simplest terms, the music of Cuba owes its richness and diversity to the convergence of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic traditions primarily from

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27 “The role of the French colonial émigrés in the expansion of the Cuban sugar industry was [also] very important. They brought with them the secrets of the trade including sugar mill administration techniques and experience in disciplining masses of slaves” (Moya Pons 2007: 224).

28 Canary Island immigrants were first brought to Cuba in the 1550s to cultivate tobacco (Rogoziński 1999).
Europe and Africa.²⁹ The syncretic fusion of two basic musical components—for the most part a European melodic/harmonic structure and an African rhythmic structure—came to define the highly syncretic criollo (creole) genres then forming in Cuba. According to Manuel and Carpentier, among others, charangas and the music they perform are the distilled essence of this fusion (Carpentier 2001 [1946]; Manuel 2009a; Manuel, Bilby & Largey 1995; Roberts 1998).

The first formal European music to be played in Cuba was sacred music performed primarily in the cathedrals of Havana and Santiago de Cuba beginning in the sixteenth century.³⁰ The study and performance of secular music composed by the European masters soon followed. Outside of the churches, the rural Spanish immigrants—the guajiros and the campesinos, primarily in the eastern part of the island—also added their traditions of melodic Spanish folk music and folk dances to the mixture of styles played by white and creole colonists in Cuba. Spanish military music was also present on the island. The continued importation of Africans for the slave market in the early-to-mid nineteenth century brought a constant influx of African music and dance to Cuba, especially the highly rhythmic sacred and secular drumming,

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²⁹ The absence of any major type of Carib-Amerindian cultural and/or musical influence (save perhaps, for the maracas) is attributable to the fact that shortly after the arrival of the Spanish in the late fifteenth century, almost all Carib-Amerindians societies were destroyed. This occurred primarily due to disease and enslavement by the Spaniards (Knight 1990:26). For more information, see Chapter One, “The Political Geography of the Pre-Hispanic Caribbean” (Knight 1990: 3-26).
³⁰ In 1523, the position of choirmaster for the cathedral of Santiago de Cuba was posted and a choir was created by the Spanish colonial government. The building of the present-day cathedral was begun in 1528 and the organ was installed some years later (Carpentier 2001 [1946]: 69). In addition, some of the most important musical events in early Cuban colonial life were the Catholic religious festivals of the sixteenth century (Lapique Becali 2008: 22). It was through participation in these festivals that members of the cabildos (Afro-Cuban mutual aid societies) were able to syncretize their pantheon of African deities with Catholic saints to create neo-African religions such as santería.
singing, and dancing traditions from West Africa (Linares & Nuñez 1998; Mikowsky 1973).

When French colonists arrived in the New World beginning in the sixteenth century, with them also came their bourgeois way of life. By the 1770s, wealthy French colonists from Saint-Domingue, on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic)—who had long maintained close ties to the France—had established musical arts theatres in a number of French colonial cities. Although the composition and performance of instrumental art music was highly respected, Saint Domingue had no conservatory of music. None-the-less, French colonists continued to pursue musical interests through their theatres and the dances they held in their salons and social clubs (Largey 1991). During this time, the Spanish colonial elite in Cuba were becoming less attracted—both politically and culturally—to Spanish cultural influences and the inefficient and corrupt government Spain was imposing upon them, and more attracted to the bourgeois cultures flourishing in other European countries, particularly Italy and France. Beginning in 1791, refugees fleeing the Haitian Revolution brought cosmopolitan French culture to eastern Cuba and this arrival of several thousand Franco-Haitian colonists and their slaves changed the social and cultural panorama of eastern Cuba in less than fifty years.

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31 “…Music was linked to notions of national character for the French. Previously available only to the aristocracy, the arts, and specifically musical arts, provided members of the bourgeois class a claim on the French cultural patrimony” (Largey 1991: 56).

32 In the 1790s, the first theatre for opera production in Santiago de Cuba was established at the Calle de Santo Tomás. Operas from the contemporary French repertory were produced beginning in 1800. The Coliseo de Marina y Barracones served as the town theatre from 1823 to 1844. In 1851 the Teatro de la Reina opened and Mozart’s Requiem was sung in the cathedral for the first time, with an orchestra of 60 and a chorus of 42 (Stevenson & Moore 2010).

33 The immigration of Haitians into Cuba occurred at two important times: the first being during the Haitian Revolution of 1791, and for the second time in 1920 when Haitian laborers migrated to Cuba for jobs in...
After the Haitian Revolution, sugar production in Cuba brought unprecedented wealth and increased social stratification (Moya Pons 2007: 225). According to Peter Manuel, “musical life blossomed accordingly and profited especially from being a ‘safe’ form of cultural expression in an environment tense with growing nationalism and despotic censorship” (2009a: 57). There was also a great vogue during the early nineteenth century to publish piano scores of popular compositions for the hoards of pianists and other instrumentalists created by the habitual importation of increasing numbers of pianos\(^{34}\) and other symphonic instruments. Theatres, concert halls, salons, and conservatories were created and most flourished. Social dances of the \textit{contradanza}, or \textit{danza criolla} were all the rage, especially in Santiago de Cuba with its fashionable francophone cultural and French social influences.

In Oriente de Cuba (the providence of Eastern Cuba) during the nineteenth century, the use of flutes, pianos, and violins to perform \textit{contradanzas} was a common practice of the Franco-Haitian elite and the free blacks of Cuba. Imitating Parisian bourgeois society life, the elite and merchant class in eastern Cuba wasted no time in recreating and fostering the kind of cosmopolitan social life they had experienced in Haiti and Europe in the late eighteenth century. Black musicians in Oriente de Cuba excelled in the performance of Western European art music instruments as a sign of

---

\(^{34}\) The piano was a symbol of good taste and refinement and so it quickly became the preferred instrument of the bourgeois class. In the beginning of the twentieth century “with the American intervention, large numbers of American-manufactured pianos—uprights—were imported into Cuba” (Sublette 2004: 307).
their elevated social status. The cultural creolization process that was already occurring throughout the island, and the Caribbean as a whole, became the catalyst for the creation of popular Cuban musical and dance forms and styles.

Not all refugees fleeing the Haitian Revolution, however, were members of the elite creole class and many of them arrived in eastern Cuba in relatively dire straits. In fact, many of those who possessed adequate resources opted to book passage to New Orleans, Louisiana. In Cuba, educated Franco-Haitian ladies began to establish schools for drawing, sewing, French language, dance, and music (Maria Callejas 1911: 68). Money from these efforts at self-sufficiency began to flow into their households. This money was used to raise the standard of living, including the establishing of theatres and orchestras that had been so important to the French colonists in Saint-Domingue (Carpentier 2001 [1946]). The dancing of minuets and contradances was considered a compliment to a good education and they quickly became a favorite pastime. It was into this milieu that the creole genres of Cuban popular music and dance, especially the contradance—considered the first creole genre in Cuba—were developed, spreading their popularity throughout all social classes.

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35 Quoting the Franco-Haitian historian Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry (1750–1819): “Blacks, imitating whites, dance minuets and contradanzas. Their sense of attunement confers on them the first quality needed by a musician; for this reason many are good violinists, since this is the instrument they prefer” (1808 [1797]).

36 “In Haiti, the preponderance of women in market trade is well known” (Mintz 1971: 248). “Haitian market women vary from the peasant wife who sells a handful of produce at irregular intervals in the market place to obtain cash for needed commodities, to the large-scale, full-time urban and rural wholesaler, retailers, and stallholders who handle large amounts of trading capital” (ibid: 256). Mintz goes on to show how this cultural norm of having women dominate the market place comes from a long tradition originating in Dahomey, the African homeland of the descendants of the enslaved in the New World. It therefore stands to reason that Haitian women in Cuba, after the Haitian Revolution, would begin the process of acquiring capital and goods soon after their arrival on the island.
The musical genres that form the body of criollo dance music in Cuba can be classified into two groups: one group is strictly instrumental and includes the contradanza criolla (or contradanza), the danza, and the danzón. The second group is a set of genres that also incorporate voice, including the danzonete, the mambo, the chachachá, and the tira tira. The ensembles most associated with the performance of these genres of music in Cuba were the orquestas típicas and the charangas. The following tables outline the genres, their approximate time periods, the ensembles that most often performed the genre, and the ensembles' instrumentation.

Table 3-1. Contradanza musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Period:</td>
<td>Contradanza</td>
<td>Orquesta típica</td>
<td>Violins (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca.1720-1850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clarinet (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of Popularity:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coronet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1790-1870</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ophecleide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later Period:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Charanga francesa</td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1850-1890</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Euphonium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pailas criollas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-2. Danza musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1830-1900</td>
<td>Danza</td>
<td>Charanga francesa</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Violins (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pailas criollas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3-3. Danzón musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First danzón: 1879</td>
<td>Danzón</td>
<td>Charanga</td>
<td>Instrumental:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charanga francesa</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Viols (two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pailas criollas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of Popularity:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1880-1920</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Some instrumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>variations of the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>orquestas típicas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>were also used in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>early years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still performed today</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as the national dance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and music of Cuba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3-4. Danzonete musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First danzonete: 1929</td>
<td>Danzonete</td>
<td>Charanga</td>
<td>Instrument and Voice:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charanga francesa</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Viols (two to four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Timbales (or Pailas criollas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Congas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height of Popularity:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Voices (one or two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1930-1950</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3-5. Mambo musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height of Popularity:</td>
<td>Mambo</td>
<td>Charanga</td>
<td>Instrument and Voice:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1937-1960</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the formal variant of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the danzón as well as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Viols (two to four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the dance genre)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Occasional addition of cello)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass (acoustic or electric)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Timbales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Congas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Voices (one to three)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guitar (acoustic or electric)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-6. *Chachachá* musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height of Popularity:</td>
<td><em>Chachachá</em></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td><em>Instrument and Voice:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1950-1970</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Violins (two to four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>(acoustic or electric)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Timbales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Güiro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Congas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Voices (one to three)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Optional:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guitar <em>(acoustic or electric)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-7. *Tira Tira* musical genre: time period, ensembles, and instrumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height of Popularity:</td>
<td><em>Tira Tira</em></td>
<td><em>Charanga</em></td>
<td><em>Instrument and Voice:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 1965-1980</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Violins (two to four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>(acoustic or electric)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Timbales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Güiro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Congas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Voices (one to three)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Optional:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trumpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trombone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guitar <em>(acoustic or electric)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contradanza

Figure 3-1. Illustrations by Eduardo Arrocha of costumes worn by the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional (Cuban National Folklore Ensemble) (Fernández 1974). Through the staging of historic dances, costumes inform us about socio-cultural aspects such as race and class. By analyzing dancers’ attire we are informed about how popular music evolved in Cuba. In the example above (and in following examples), we can see that as time progresses, the dancers’ dress changes to reveal shifting social attitudes, especially regarding class as characterized by the clothing worn when dancing to Cuban popular music. Most noticeable is the evolution of charanga from a symbol of only the elite-class, as illustrated by their dress, to that of iconic statement of national identity, one representative of all classes, where the clothing is more like that worn by the middle class. (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)

In his recently published edited volume on contradance and quadrille culture, Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean (2009), Manuel writes that:

. . . a region as linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse as the Caribbean has never lent itself to being epitomized by a single music or
dance genre, be it rumba or reggae. Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century a set of contradance and quadrille variants flourished so extensively throughout the Caribbean Basin that they enjoyed a kind of predominance, as a common cultural medium through which melodies, rhythms, dance figures, and performers all circulated, both between islands and between social groups within a given island (2009a: 1).

I posit that the same can be said of several Caribbean ensembles such as the orquestas típicas and the charangas that performed these musical genres, especially since their performance venues also served as a site where race and class mixing could occur to some extent. Given that musicians, musical styles and genres, dancers, and musical instruments, the cultural manifestations of tangential social practices, moved throughout the Caribbean with such ease and were so universally adapted, leaves little doubt that trans-social and transcultural influences would have also affected the creation and development of similar instrumental ensembles, each with comparable instrumentation and comprised of musicians from various segments of these societies. Also similar were their dances and associated dance music. Evidence is found in the instrumentation and performance practices of the ensembles that performed at Caribbean social dances such as Cuban contradanzas and Haitian bastrengs.

Manuel also challenges conventional notions about the tendency to describe the contradance popular music and dance forms and the variants they produced as having one shared, singular history and evolution, particularly the notion that they originated from one common source. He states:

. . . despite its centrality to Cuban cultural history, many aspects of the contradanza’s career remain obscure and contentious. Just as some European scholars disagree as to whether the contradance originated in England, France, or elsewhere, so do some Cuban musicologists differ as to whether the contradanza in Cuba should be traced primarily to input from Spain, Saint-Domingue (Haiti), France, the English West Indies, or elsewhere (2009a: 51).
This perspective confronts the idea that historical genealogies of popular music and dance forms can be easily traced back through a ‘family tree’ of genres, and further, underscores the complexity of likewise drawing clear (uni)evolutionary lines for related ensembles such as the charanga and the musical genres these ensembles played.

In relation to nineteenth-century Cuba, Manuel also states that:

…by far the most predominant and distinctively national music was the contradanza, [and] the diverse forms it took over the course of its extended heyday. The contradanza (or ‘danza,’ as it was later called) was also the era’s most seminal genre, parenting the habanera that graced European opera and music theatre, the elegant figures of the tumba francesa’s masón dance, and, albeit ultimately, the mambo and the chachachá themselves, which evolved from the danza’s direct descendant, the danzón… Finally, while the roots of the Cuban son itself have customarily been ascribed to rural folk music of eastern Cuba, considerable evidence suggests that they are better sought in 1850s urban contradanzas of Havana and Santiago, thus calling for a revision of standard Cuban music historiography. Indeed, it is in some respects easier to enumerate those Cuban genres… which were not generated by or directly related to the contradanza (2009a: 51).

These are strong statements, especially the idea that the son37 did not come from the guajiro (peasant) music of Spanish descendants in Oriente de Cuba—a long-held belief by almost all Cuban musicians and scholars—but rather from the contradance. Yet, Manuel presents compelling arguments to substantiate his claims. He writes:

While it is often claimed that the Cuban son emerged from rural Oriente and “invaded” Havana in the early 20th century, serious Cuban musicologists have clarified that the true consolidation of the genre took place in Havana after around 1910–1920. Examination of 19th-century sources can help us trace with greater specificity the origins of the particular musical features that distinguished the traditional son. Editions and descriptions of 1850s–1860s Havana contradanzas illuminate much about urban popular dance music of that milieu. In particular, they reveal the presence of features typically associated with the son, such as melodies in duet format, the

---

37 The Cuban son is a late nineteenth-century musical genre. It is one of the most widespread and influential musical genres throughout the Americas and in Cuba it embodies the amalgamation of Afro-Cuban and European-derived musical forms and styles. Its form and rhythmic structure, based upon the clave rhythm —and to some extent, its melodic and harmonic structures as well—serve as the foundation for the mambo, chachachá, (among others) and even modern salsa from the U.S.
presence of clave as a structural rhythmic principle, certain distinctive syncopations, short vocal refrains, and a bipartite structure consisting of a “song”-like first section followed by an ostinato-based montuno-like second section, sometimes including a vocal refrain. Perusal of early recordings also suggests that the distinctively “anticipated” rhythms of the son existed in Oriente in only a seminal fashion, and evolved on the whole in Havana as the genre matured (2009b: 184).

In support of Manuel’s statements—and through my own analysis, I agree—current scholarship by Manuel and other scholars such as León, Lapique Becali, Mikowsky, and Galán does indeed show that the rhythmic structure and stylistic élan of the contradanza is most likely the seed from which the majority of popular Cuban musical genres grow, including the son.

Conclusions are drawn from the forms and rhythms of the contradanza. The earliest contradanzas, written between 1720 and 1850, were comprised of two simple sections, each contrasting in character. The A section, referred to as the primera (first), consisted of eight measures repeated; the B section, the segunda (second), also consisted of eight measures repeated for a total of thirty-two measures in AABB form. The first known contradanza, an anonymous composition titled “San Pascual Bailon,” written in 1803, is a good example. [See: Figure 3-2 and 3-3]

Later forms of the contradanza incorporated a C section: the A section in a major/minor key, the B section in the parallel minor/major key, and a C section in the relative major/minor of the B section for a complete form of AABBC or AABAC. This is an important development because in it we start to see the basic form often used in later popular Cuban music genres such as the danzón, mambo, and chachachá. In these later genres, we find a move towards simplifying the form. The evolution involved reducing the form to two sections. The first section was a danzón, mambo, or chachachá, while the second section was a dance section more like a son montuno.
Figure 3-2. The A section of “San Pascual Bailon,” the oldest known contradanza (Rodríguez Domínguez, 1967:29). It was written anonymously in 1803 (Orovio 2004: 58). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
Figure 3-3. The B section of “San Pascual Bailon” (Rodríguez Domínguez, 1967:30). The habanera (Havana) rhythm is clearly seen in the bass. (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
So distinctive are creolized contradance rhythmic patterns such as the *habanera* (Havana rhythm), they stylistically overshadow the relatively simple melodic and harmonic structures of the contradance. Throughout the Caribbean, the melodies of the contradance complex are comprised of simple diatonic phrases, and harmonic structures are composed without intricacies such as modulations or complicated chord progressions. Again, the “San Pascual Bailon” *contradanza* is a fine example.

Regarding the choreography of the *contradance* complex: long-standing scholarship generally agrees that the probable origins of the Cuban *contradanza* can be traced from the English ‘country dance’ in the 1650s, to the French *contredanse* and Spanish *contradanza* around 1685, then to the Haitian *contredanse/kontradans*, and finally to the Cuban *contradanza* in the late 1700s\(^3\) (Mikowsky 1973: 29). Several sources state that in Cuba, as in Saint-Domingue, it is believed that the *contradanza* evolved from a rustic, country line dance into a more genteel, light-classical couple’s dance preferred by the bourgeoisie. The Cubans considered the Spanish *contradanza* (a round dance) too old-fashioned, so they adopted and then modified the French *contredanse* (a line dance) and eventually transformed it from a group dance to a couple’s dance (Manuel and Bilby and Largey 1995). These new Cuban *contradanza* dance figurations were based on the Afro-Haitian *calenda* described by Moreau de Saint-Méry (1958 [1797]: 44).

The choreography of the *contradanza* consisted of a figure dance comprised of four well-defined routines: the *paseo* (stroll), the *cadena* (chain), the *sostenido* (holding

\(^3\)“The *pasapié* [passepied] and the *contradanza* [contradance] were played [and danced publically] for the first time at the Tivolí, a thatch and limestone theatre built at the end of the 18th century in Santiago de Cuba by the French seeking refuge during the Haitian Revolution” (Fernandez 1995: 22). The Tivolí neighborhood is where Spanish and French immigrants congregated (Padrón 1997) and where I observed in my fieldwork the largest population of Haitian descendents still residing in Santiago de Cuba.
of partners), and the cedazo (passing through) (Alen-Rodriguez 1998). It was the responsibility of the bastonero (baton holder) to announce the changes in dance sections, in tandem with the changes in the music, and to ‘call’ the contradances. Popular publications such as the one shown in Figure 3-4 outlined this choreography and illustrated the proper dance steps for an eager and enthusiastic public.

Figure 3-4. 1758 brochure cover of Arte del danzar a la francesa by Pablo Minguet é Irol (1700-ca. 1775), a Spanish engraver who published a series of popular brochures on various subjects including magic, religion, dancing, and musical instruments. His manuals helped to bring an appreciation of the fine arts to the general public in Cuba. In this particular document, Minguet é Irol also illustrates dance steps for the contratiempo del minuete (contradanza). The musician in this illustration is a violinist. (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
In Cuba, before the 1790s, the elite were the only social groups dancing salon genres such as the waltz, mazurka, and minuet (Manuel and Bilby and Largey 1995). With the arrival of the Franco-Haitians, the performance of forms such as the gavotte, the passepied, and the contradance, rose quickly in popularity to all segments of society39 (Carpentier 2001 [1946]). Indeed, “one of the most important features of the contradance… was the way its popularity cut across social classes” (Manuel 2009a: 4). The contradanza was so popular in Cuba that it was the only musical and dance form at home both in the salons of the Cuban elite and in the clubs of the black and creole districts. Its popularity stemmed from the fact that it combined socially acceptable and upwardly-mobile European salon genres with Afro-Cuban rhythmic flair.

By the 1830s, many black and creole musicians were performing Western art music (and stylized, popular music with art music themes, etc.), having honed their skills in the military bands and popular theatres (often performing in ensembles that served as musical accompaniment to the zarzuelas). Initially, elite conservatives condemned the use of Afro-Cuban rhythms in their parlor pieces and the controversy over the use of these ‘Africanisms’ caused the performance of these styles to be banned in select society clubs. By the 1890s, however, members of the middle-class black and creole social clubs had transformed these creolized musical forms into respectable ballroom dances.

More importantly, beginning in 1898 with the end of the War of Independence—and with U.S. occupation impending—the Cuban elite began to look for new symbols of

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39 One can speculate that Cuban acceptance of the contradanza was because the dance was recognized primarily as being characteristically French, and anything French was considered culturally superior to things Spanish. In fact, throughout the 19th century and into the 20th, Cuban elite society still looked to Paris for expressive cultural influences (Mikowsky 1973).
national sentiment and identity. Suddenly, these dance forms and their music took on new meaning. The elite, still cautious about their tentative acceptance of ‘undesirable’ African cultural retentions, chose to associate notions of national identity more towards Cuba’s white, elite, European heritage. Descriptions of the *contradanza* stressed its European origins while references to its African influences all but disappeared⁴⁰ (Moore 1997). In addition, the beginning of the rise in the tremendous popularity of the *danzón*—a true fusion of African and European musical characteristics, and soon to become Cuba’s national dance and musical genre—was looming just on the horizon, inviting the elite to accept and promote a creole national identity.

As a dance, *contradanza* remained popular from the end of the eighteenth century to the 1870s (Mikowsky 1973). It became so popular that in the early nineteenth century, the most important *musical* genre in the emerging Cuban creole culture was the *contradanza*. The *contradanza* also “became the first autochthonous genre included in the concert-hall repertoire” (Alen-Rodriguez 1998: 833). Composers such as Manuel Saumell Robredo (ca. 1817-1870) [See: Figure 35],⁴¹ Ignacio Cervantes Kawanagh (1847-1905) [See: Figure 36], and Ernesto Lecuona y Casado (1895-1963) [See: Figure 37] routinely incorporated elements of popular music such as the *contradanza* and *danza* into their concert repertoire.

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⁴⁰ The emancipation of the slaves in 1886 encouraged their migration into the urban areas and it was in the large cities, specifically Havana and Santiago de Cuba, where new styles of music and dance began to emerge. The imposition of African rhythms onto Spanish melodies gave rise to such forms as the *contradanza*, *danza*, *danzón*, *danzonete*, *guaracha*, *criolla*, *canción*, *bolero*, *son*, and *pregón*. An inverse musical process also occurred. The imposition of Spanish melodies onto African rhythmic structures gave rise to the *conga*, the *rumba*, the *clave*, and songs played in *comparsas*. In rural areas where blacks and whites were less exposed to each other's influences, white Spanish peasants continued to create musical forms, such as *punto*, *guajira*, and *zapateo*, that retained Spanish characteristics. Likewise, blacks maintained a strict adherence to the musical requirements—drumming, chanting, and dancing—of their neo-African religious traditions such as *santería* and *palo monte* (Mikowsky 1973).

⁴¹ See page 136 of this document for more information on Saumell.
Figure 3-5. Circa 1860s photo of Manuel Saumell Robredo (ca. 1817-1870). Famous for composing *contradanzas* as well as art music, Saumell is recognized as Cuba’s first nationalist composer (Cañizares 1992: 25). (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-6. Ignacio Cervantes Kawanagh (1847-1905), Cuban nationalist composer of popular and art music (Cañizares 1992: 27). (Source: LAC. Public domain.)
Haitians had also adopted the French contredanse with enthusiasm, imbuing it with rhythmic elements from their own culture. Hence, the dance form was already undergoing a creolization process by the time it reached Santiago de Cuba in the 1790s. The Haitian immigrants that settled in Santiago in the late eighteenth century called their creolized style of contredanse, kontradans (Averill 1997).

Roberts states that “the Cuban contradanza was largely European in inspiration, and there is no proving whether its extra panache came from the more percussive attitudes of black music, the more percussive attitudes of southern Spanish dance music, or the kind of general New World ‘oomph’ that pervaded the marches of Sousa” (Roberts 1998:105). It could be argued, however, that the pervasive influences of black
African or creole culture on all aspects of colonial society, especially expressive culture, would lend credence to the idea that it was indeed the addition of a neo-African polyrhythmic structure—as most others, including Carpentier, Manuel, and Ortiz would suggest—that altered the *contradanza* from a purely European form into a highly creolized form. The effects of Spanish dance music and Sousa marches were probably factors, but the incorporation of African rhythms is paramount in the creolization, and hence the creation of *contradanza* in Cuba, especially since we know that this process of the Africanization of rhythm structures is a pan-Caribbean phenomenon.

Manuel in particular makes compelling arguments in support of the 'neo-African rhythm' theory. First, he states that African slaves were still being brought to Cuba as late as 1873, providing the colony with a constant influx of African culture after most of the rest of the Caribbean region had discontinued their slave trade. Secondly, most of these slaves were sent to work on large, rural plantations, isolated from outside cultural influences and free to practice their musical traditions without concern from their masters. Third, the slaves and free blacks that worked in the urban centers had quickly organized *cabildos* (mutual aid societies) where, among other benefits, expressive culture flourished, particularly the music and dances created for *comparsas* (parades) and carnivals. 42

Finally, and I believe importantly, many blacks had become professional musicians due to the fact that the white middle class considered the music profession too *déclassé*

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42 Spanish colonial authorities brought with them to the New World a cosmopolitan tolerance of different races. This tolerance was most likely due to the long association with the peoples of North Africa. The Spanish were not as concerned with the daily private lives of their slaves as were the Northern European colonists who had settled in North America (Manuel 1988)(Mikowsky 1973). Due to this practice, sacred African rhythms were retained and drumming survived in those colonies where authorities permitted musical practice. Portuguese, Spanish, and French (Catholic) colonists permitted the continuation of slaves' singing, dancing, and drumming. British (Protestant) colonists did not (Lopes-Cancado 1999).
and few other professions outside of tailoring were open to blacks and creoles.\textsuperscript{43} It would stand to reason that these musicians would eventually incorporate their individual and collective stylistic impressions into any music that they played. That is what musicians do. Indeed, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, the popularity of these creole genres grew to the point that the bourgeoisie preferred that black or creole musicians play at their balls because the music they performed was imbued with that certain creole essence, i.e. Afro-Cuban rhythmic swing. The popularity of this music even came to surpass imported European genres (Manuel 1988).

As mentioned, manumitted slaves were attracted to the music profession because they were barred from the other 'higher' professions such as law and medicine. In the 1827 census of Havana, there were 44 musicians out of 16,520 white males. Of the 6,754 free males of color (creole), 49 were musicians; a percentage three times as large (Carpentier 2001 [1946]:153). Further, from 1800 to 1840, the clear majority of professional musicians were black or creole. The black militia in Santiago de Cuba accommodated a full band and the city also hosted a number of dance bands. Almost all of the musically literate black and creole musicians were composing \textit{contradanzas}.\textsuperscript{44} The period was also marked by a strong desire to keep up with all the new expressive influences that were being brought to the island at that time (Carpentier 2001 [1946]). The blacks and creoles formed dance orchestras and began to perform styles of music for white audiences that were infused with African rhythmic syncopations that they

\textsuperscript{43} See Franklin W. Knight’s Chapter Five, “Social Structure of the Plantation Society,” for more information on the interactions between the social roles and cultural lives of Europeans, creoles, and Afro-Caribbeans in the New World (Wright 1990: 120).

\textsuperscript{44} Habanera, danzón, contradanza, danza, chachachá, and mambo are the creation of Cubans of African descent, the pardos (mulattos) and morenos (blacks). Each genre is a synthesis of French or Spanish melodic styles with rhythms of African origin (Martínez Fure 2000).
played on various Afro-Cuban percussion instruments in addition to European wind and string instruments. The white elite preferred these orchestras of black musicians because the incorporation of subtle rhythmic changes made the music more appealing, more popular, to social club patrons and dancers. These rhythms, superimposed upon traditional European salon music, gave this new music in Cuba a certain creole quality identifiable as uniquely Cuban (Mikowsky 1973).

In addition to the *habanera* rhythm used in the *contradanzas*, another defining primary rhythmic structure used in popular dance styles—most especially in the emerging *danzón*—was the *cinquillo*. [See: Figure 3-8.] A good example of a *contradanza* written using the *cinquillo* rhythm is an anonymous composition titled, “El Sungambelo” (Alén Rodríguez 1999, Vol. 4: 1).

![Cinquillo Rhythm](image)

Figure 3-8. The *cinquillo* rhythm, so named because of the five-note per measure rhythmic structure (*cinco*, meaning ‘five’).

Carpentier states that while the *cinquillo* had long been popular in Oriente de Cuba, it had taken over fifty years for it to reach Havana from Santiago, arriving in the western part of the island sometime during the 1830s to 1840s. He claims that this circumstance occurred because in Cuba, the modification of European genres by African rhythms functioned by “modalities of interpretation,” (2001[1946]:150), i.e., that the *contradanzas* performed in the eastern part of the island were performed using certain stylistic techniques that were not written down and yet, when played or heard, were easily recognized as modalities of the *contradanza*. Similar genres, performed in
the western part of the island, would not have had the exact same performance practices.

Therefore, according to Carpentier, in the first half of the nineteenth century, two styles of *contradanza* existed, one in Santiago and one in Havana. The *contradanza habanera* (Havana contradance), performed in Havana, was a literate form composed closer to classical forms, in the style of the minuet (with a section in triple meter), which would later evolve into the *danza* and the *danzón*. The *contradanza* performed in Santiago, whose evolution began in Haiti, had become a more popular, non-literate style before reaching the capital (2001 [1946]).

This is where Manuel begins to find fault with Carpentier’s claims. Manuel states that “serious problems afflict Carpentier’s historiography, starting with the contradiction between the supposed origin of the mainstream Havana *contradanza* in Santiago and the alleged contrast between the two regional styles” (2009a: 53). A lack of documentable evidence is Manuel’s most important concern. Indeed, the lack of a verifiable body of documentable evidence regarding most aspects of musical life in Cuba during this time makes any research challenging. Importantly, Manuel states that there is a complete absence of extant *contradanzas* from Santiago until circa 1850, over fifty years after the Franco-Haitians arrived in Oriente, as well as approximately fifty years after the publication of the first *contradanzas* in Havana (beginning with “San Pascual Bailon” in 1803). In Manuel’s opinion, this fifty-year gap renders pointless any speculation about the differences between *contradanzas* from Havana and Santiago in the early nineteenth century. By the 1850s, when publications of *contradanzas* can be

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45 The *cinquillo* is the same rhythm as the Haitian *kata*, a syncopated five-beat pattern used by Haitian *rara* bands during carnival, as well as the Haitian *mérinque* (Averill 1997).
documented to actually be from Santiago, Manuel states that musical analysis shows them to be not much different in form and style from their Havana counterparts.

Manuel particularly challenges Carpentier’s claim that the *cinquillo* rhythm was the defining rhythm in the *contradanzas* of Santiago beginning in the 1800s, while it was not present in the *contradanzas* of Havana until the 1830s. Manuel also states that Carpentier’s musical examples of two contradanzas from Santiago are too few and that the occurrence of the *cinquillo* rhythm is near absent. In fact, Manuel points out that one of Carpentier’s examples, Antonio Boza’s “La Santa Taé” (Carpentier 2001 [1946]: 150), rather than containing the *cinquillo* as a distinctive feature, “is a remarkable precursor of subsequent genres, especially the *son*, in the way its second section outlines what could be regarded as a twice-repeated four-bar chordal ostinato (*// I / iv / V / I ://*), reiterating a rhythm cohering with the *clave* pattern pervading rumba and later Cuban popular dance music” (2009a: 53). What Manuel also concludes, is that while there is insufficient evidence to support Carpentier’s claim that there existed a distinctive, *cinquillo*-based Santiago style of *contradanza*, that the cultural influences of the Franco-Haitians in Oriente beginning in the late 1790s, would have ‘invigorated the contradanza in Santiago,’ stimulating whatever *contradanza* traditions there were occurring in Havana. On what Carpentier and Manuel both agree, however, is that by the 1830s, the *contradanza* was indeed flourishing in Havana, rapidly becoming a conventional tradition, while the *contradanzas* of Santiago were deemed to be a lesser, provincial, regional variant.

In my opinion, Manuel does indeed provide compelling arguments backed by rigorous scholarship and research on documentable evidence. In Carpentier’s defense
however, given that Carpentier was Cuban, living in Cuba, highly educated (with opportunities and means to conduct thorough study), and was born in 1904, he would have intimately understood Cuban society at that time. Theoretically, he would have had the opportunity to talk to musicians and members of the most recent prior generations, people who most certainly would have been alive in the 1850s, people who also would have interacted personally with their prior generation. It is likely that Carpentier, in the execution of his research, was able to glean important socio-cultural information, especially extra-musical information about the “modalities of interpretation” of these *contradanzas* from his compatriots. Perhaps his interpretations, based on ‘fieldwork,’ are what informed Carpentier, an advantage in experience now unavailable to Manuel and other contemporary researchers.

Another point, on which Carpentier and Manual both agree however, is that Manuel Saumell Robredo (1818-1870) was the first Cuban composer credited with creating the variant *contradanza habanera* in Havana. Saumell's *contradanzas*, inspired by Cuban folk themes, were considered to be works of delicate sensibility and good formal structure. Saumell, long considered Cuba’s first nationalist composer, had desired to give a creole accent to all his works and he strove to create in the *contradanza habanera*, a form that was essentially Cuban. Indeed, Saumell's works are considered to be some of the first musical attempts at establishing Cuban nationalism.

Saumell was a prolific composer of *contradanzas* and each of them represented Cuba’s uniquely *criollo* character. The combination of Western art music formal structures, European melodies and harmonies, and a jaunty African-derived rhythmic structure made Saumell’s compositions the essence of Cuban national identity.
By the 1830s, the contradanza habanera (Havana contradance) had also become popular in Europe where it was called habañera. In Cuba, contradanza habaneras were cultivated as light-classical instrumental pieces played by pianists or by an

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46 The popularity of the habañera in Europe provides a clear example of Ortiz’s notion of transculturation (Ortiz 1995: 97).
*orquesta típica* or *charanga*, and were performed at formal social occasions, at the end of the evening, after the quadrilles, rigadoons, lancers, and minuets. At present, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether the *contradanza habanera* played in western Cuba was performed primarily by the refined, flute and strings, European influenced, chamber orchestra version of the *orquesta típica* (early form of the *charanga*) in the salons and ballrooms of the elite, while the more creolized *contradanza* performed in the eastern provinces was played for outdoor festivals by the more folkloric *orquesta típica* with its inclusion of military brass instruments, as Carpentier suggests.

Giving credence to the hypothesis that this was indeed the case, however, is a mention by Lapique that there were ‘two unique orchestras’ in Santiago in the late eighteenth century, although she provides the instrumentation for only one ensemble. The instrumentation she gives for this ensemble associates it with an *orquesta típica*: one or two clarinets, two or three violins, two trumpets, a bass they called *violín*, and the *tambora*. She mentions that this ensemble—consisting of black and creole musicians—played the gavotte, *passepiede*, and minuet (1995: 69). Alén Rodriguez also states that *contradanzas* were played by two similar, yet distinct ensembles: the *charanga*, and the *orquesta típica*, or ‘folkloric orchestra’ (1998: 825). He defines these ensembles in approximate terms, characterizing their instrumentation as ‘models’ for the typical ensembles of that time. A 1983 Cuban recording of “El Sungambelo,” found on Alén-Rodriguez’s CD compilation of Cuban Music, represents the piece as one of the most famous *contradanzas* of its time. It is performed by an ensemble including two violins, contrabass, clarinet, trumpet, ophecleide, *timbales*, and *güiro*, a ‘typical’ nineteenth-century ensemble (1999, Vol. 4: 1). It must be noted, however, that this kind of
recording represents a kind of revivalist reconstruction of the past and is not proof of the ensemble’s historical formation. Nonetheless, it does provide us with a good representation of what we know about the ensemble’s instrumentation and performance practices based on related historical sources.

There were also two stylistic meter differences between the contradanzas performed in the eastern and those in the western provinces of the island. Through the analysis of extant contradanzas, we find that almost all contradanzas composed in the western provinces were written in 2/4 (duple) meter, but several were written in both 6/8 and 3/4 (triple) meter, mostly by Saumell and a small number of other composers in Havana. “The genres known today as the clave [son], the criolla, and the guajira were born from the considerable Cubanized contradanza in 6/8. And from the 2/4 contradanza came the danza, the habanera, and the danzón with its ensuing more or less hybrid offshoots” (Carpentier 2001 [1946]:147) such as the mambo and the chachachá.

This is significant because the clave (son), criolla, and guajira are genres that sprang from the musical traditions of Afro-Cubans and peasant Cubans of Spanish descent and from the creole synthesis of musical elements from both groups. The incorporation of triple meters is especially important because it implies a preference for neo-African/Afro-Cuban ‘two-against-three’ polyrhythmic structures, such as is found in clave (son). I posit that Saumell, and other composers of Western art music, incorporated these ‘folkloric’ elements into their compositions in an effort to establish a distinct Cuban creole national identity.
Of the various genres and “hybrid offshoots” of popular music and dance outlined by Carpentier above, it is the danza that most closely resembles the contradanza in almost all musical and choreographic respects. The danza follows the contradanza in the historical development of Cuban popular dance music and is the precursor to the danzón. Importantly, it preserves the musical elements of the contradanza and foreshadows musical elements of the danzón, all while imbuing its own distinctive style.

Danza

![Figure 3-10. Illustrations by Eduardo Arrocha of costumes worn by the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional (Cuban National Folklore Ensemble) (Fernández 1974). (Source: Photo courtesy of Sunni Witmer. Public Domain.)](image)

While not usually regarded to be as culturally significant as the contradanza and the danzón in the history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Cuban popular music
and dance, the *danza* nonetheless deserves mention for its important role as the bridge between the *contradanza* and the *danzón* in the evolution of Cuban popular dance music from the 1830s to the 1900s. And, although it is a widely held belief that the term *danza* is merely a contraction of the term *contradanza* and that there is no substantial difference between their respective musical genres and dances, there are indeed differences between these musical genres, primarily in their performance practices—as the *danza* uses more creolized rhythmic structures—and especially in their choreographies. Simply put, for the most part, the music of the *danza* is *basically* the same as the *contradanza*, but it is the choreography that is distinctly different. More specifically, regarding the *danza*’s choreography, it was a change in the choreography of the *cedazo* section (the final of the four sections) of the *contradanza* that gave rise to the *danza* (Galan 1983: 46).

The *danza* was also more creolized than the *contradanza* in several ways, probably because it evolved later and had a longer time to absorb, and modify, creole stylistic nuances—such as improvised ornamentation in the melodic instruments—and rhythmic elements such as the *habanera* and *cinquillo* rhythms. Like the *contradanza*, the *danza*’s form is AABB, but while the *contradanza* was composed in either 2/4 meter or 6/8 meter in its entirety, Galan points out that the A section of the *danza* would often be in 2/4 meter while the B section (the *cedazo*), would be in either 3/8 or 6/8 and danced more like a waltz, allowing couples to embrace while they danced (1983: 48).

The *danza* also marks its distinction by slowing its tempo relative to the *contradanza*. Thus, the stylistic and formal elements that distinguish the *danza* from the *contradanza* include slower tempos and the use of ternary meter in the final section of

We also find more danzas performed by ensembles with instrumentation less like that of the orquesta típicas—ensembles used more for the performance of contradanzas—and more like the instrumentation found in early charangas. For example, the recording of “La Bohemia,” is performed by an ensemble including piano, flute, four violins, güiro, pailas, and conga (Alén-Rodriguez 1999, Vol. 4: 2).

What was also significant about the danza was its popularity with composers of Western art music, such as Saumell, Cervantes, and Lecuona who used elements of the danza in their compositions. It is commonly believed they employed these musical elements to create and reinforce a sense of Cuban national identity within the general public. Likewise, “while danza composers freely incorporated popular songs and opera hits into their pieces, their own compositions, if sufficiently catchy, were immediately taken up by the ‘informal sector’ of the local music scene” (Manuel 2009a: 59). New danzas were debuted at a rapid pace and one could hear danzas being played by salon ensembles such as the early charangas and even by organ grinders in the streets of Havana at all hours of the day and night. It appeared that a link between popular music and national identity was indeed occurring.

What is also noteworthy about the danza is the way it too easily crossed racial lines and hierarchies of social class. Pichardo defines the danza: “Baile favorito de todo esta Antilla y generalmente usado en la función más solemne de la capital, como en el más indecente Changüi del último rincón de la Isla” (Pichardo 1976 [1836]). [The
favorite dance of this Antillean isle, generally used everywhere from the most solemn function in the capital to the most indecent Changüí (dance party) in every last corner of the island.]

The high level of popularity the danza, enjoyed by all social classes, laid the groundwork for the next and most important development in the evolution of Cuban popular dance music, the danzón, especially in terms of Cuban national identity. Specifically, it was in the choreography of the final section of the danza, the cedazo (altered from the contradanza) where we begin to see the emergence of the danzón, the next genre in the evolution of Cuban popular dance music. This change in choreography had a profound effect on the formal structure of the music as well. [See Figure 3-11.]

Figure 3-11. The Paseo Básico en Cajita [The Basic Box-Step] of the danza. “Esta cajita o cajón suele hacerse también en el danzón cuando lo bailamos acentuando el tiempo fuerte del compás con el primer paso” [This box-step is usually also danced in the danzón where we dance it by emphasizing the downbeat of each measure with the first step] (Fernández 1981: 60). (Source: LAC. Public domain.)
At the end of the nineteenth century in Cuba, significant transitions were occurring in popular dance music. The instrumentation of dance music ensembles began to evolve as the popularity of the orquestas típicas waned and that of the charanga’s grew. Creolized rhythmic structures were becoming the norm. New variants in popular musical forms were giving rise to new genres. The contradanza choreography had also undergone a shift from sequence dancing, such as in the two-line figure dance (with men on one side and women on the other) or the square dance, to incorporate the danza’s sprightly couples'-dance choreography (in its second section). As couple dancing became more popular, the faster tempo of the danza was still considered too
fast for comfortable dancing and a slower tempo began to be preferred. Because of all these reasons, by the turn of the century, the lively danza was eventually replaced by the most important genre of Cuban popular dance music of the period, the danzón. The danzones, with their memorable melodies, slower tempos, and rhythmic flair—performed primarily by the trendy charangas—became an instant success. Salazar depicts an historical scene of the late nineteenth century in Havana, one that heralds in the golden age of the danzón:

Havana during this era was picturesque, with two- and three-story white, Spanish-style houses, horses and carriages, cobblestone streets, and the breathtaking sight of sails inflating on tall schooners that crawled through blue waters of Havana Bay. It was an era in which white Cubans were full of grandiose ideas. Lovely women wore long dresses and bustles, and waved hand fans. Men strutted in elegant waistcoats, tapered trousers, fluffy white shirts, and boots. [See: Figure 3-1.] During the 1860s, the European bluebloods of Matanzas congregated nightly at El Liceo Artístico y Literario to watch dancers perform the minuet, rigaudon, quadrille, contredanse, and contradanza española (2002: 175).

It was in Matanzas, on January 1, 1879,47 when bandleader Miguel Failde Pérez (1853-1921)—a Cuban creole of French and Spanish heritage—introduced a new song,48 “Las Alturas de Simpson”49 to a group of party-goers at El Liceo Artístico y Literario de Matanzas50 where his orquesta típica was performing.51

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47 “Y así, esa noche del 1º de enero de 1879, en el “Club Matanzas,” se vio a Failde tocando: “Las Alturas de Simpson”” (Castillo Failde 1964: 99). [And so, on this night of January 1, 1879, Failde was seen playing: “Las Alturas de Simpson.”]

48 The song was originally composed by Failde in June of 1877. [See: Figures 3-15 and 3-16.]

49 Las Alturas de Simpson (Simpson Heights) was a bohemian district in Matanzas at the time.

50 The Liceo de Matanzas is currently the site of the Casa de la Culture “José White” (José White House of Culture).

51 The instrumentation for Failde’s orquesta típica included two clarinets, two violins, cornet, trombone, ophicleide, contrabass, timbales, and güiro (Castillo Failde 1964: 53). [See: Figure 3-14.]
Figure 3-13. Cornetist and director Miguel Failde (1852-1921) wrote the first danzón, “Las Alturas de Simpson” (Castillo Failde 1964: 11). (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-14. 1903 photograph of the Orquesta Típica de Miguel Failde. Standing, left to right: Eulogio Garrido, contrabass; Miguel Failde, cornet; Eduardo Betancourt, trombone; Pascual Carreras, ophicleide; Isidrio Acosta, güíro. Seated, left to right: Juan Cantero, first violin; Alfredo Hernández, second violin; Eduardo Failde, first clarinet; Magdaleno Rodríguez, second clarinet; not shown, Benito Oliva, timbales (Castillo Failde 1964: 187-188). (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)
In this composition, Failde slowed the tempo of the *danza* to facilitate couple dancing and arranged the piece into three formal parts, each separated by a long (and sometimes erotic) musical pause (in an ABACA rondo form). He introduced a clarinet solo section in the first of the three sections (A), a violin solo in the second section (B), and a brass solo in the third (C) (Castillo Failde 1964: 29). He also incorporated a more complex cinquillo-based rhythmic structure based on the *habanera*. [See: Figure 3-3 and 3-8.] Failde then announced to his audience that his new tune was called a *danzón* and on that night, a new Cuban music and dance phenomenon was born.

Figure 3-15. The 1877 manuscript copy of Failde’s “Las Alturas de Simpson.” The inscription, written by Odelio Urfé, states: “*Danzón Las Alturas de Simpson (1877)* el cual fue escrito por Failde para cumplimentar el baile del mismo nombre tan popular en la ciudad de Matanzas desde años atrás. Su forma es idéntica a la de las contradanzas, danzas, habaneras y otras formas binarias instrumentales. Su célula rítmica determinante es idéntica a la de la habanera” (Castillo Failde 1964: 88). [The *danzón*, Las Alturas de Simpson, was written by Failde in order to compliment the dance by the same name so popular in the city of Matanzas some years ago. Its form is identical to the *contradanzas*, *danzas*, *habaneras* and other binary instrumental forms. Its rhythmic cell is identical to the *habanera*.] (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)
Figure 3-16. Printed piano score of Miguel Failde’s “Las Alturas de Simpson” (Eli Rodríguez 2002: 71). The distinctive *cinquillo* rhythm of the *danzón* is also prominent beginning in measures three and five. This piano score does not include the C section, only sections A and B. (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
In discussing the creation of this new popular music phenomenon, Failde was quoted as saying: “De la danza al danzón había un simple paso” (1964: 28). [From the danza to the danzón was a simple step.]\(^{52}\) And indeed, there are shared musical and choreographic elements between the two genres, including the fact that they were both sequence dances with sections for couples dancing, they continued to slow the tempo of the music, and they incorporated criollo rhythmic elements like the cinquillo and the habanera.

But while the similarities between genres are apparent, there are real differences as well. For example, while the danza may include a second section in ternary meter, the danzón is composed only in duple (usually 2/4) meter. In addition, the danzón, over time develops a more complex formal structure. It includes a distinctive A section (an eight-measure introduction, which is repeated for a total of sixteen measures) featuring the main melody. In the B section, the flute or clarinet improvise the melody, followed by a return to A. The next section, C, is slower and lead by the violins for thirty-two measures, with another return to A, including improvisation by the brass (if present), forming a rondo of ABACA (Grenet 1939: xxxii).\(^{53}\) In later danzones, a faster D section, influenced by the son, was added to give the composition the form of ABACAD. Some danzones then dropped the C section for a form of ABAD (which denotes the preference for the faster tempo in the final section as opposed to a slowed C section), while others were written in a simple ABD form. Over time, the tempo of the danzón

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\(^{52}\) Osvaldo Castillo Failde is the nephew of Miguel Failde Pérez.

\(^{53}\) In a 1995 recording of “Las Alturas de Simpson” by the Orquesta Folklórica Cubana, the form of the piece is a modified seven-part rondo ABABACAC form, with the final C section acting as a coda (Almendra con Sabor a Danzón 1995).
slowed even more and the repetition of its A section continued to provide a place for the dancers to rest.

Indeed, among the stylistic changes that made the danzón so popular were the formal changes made to the choreography. The danzón begins with an introduction (four measures) and paseo (four measures)—the A section—which are repeated and followed by a sixteen-measure melody, the B section. The introduction and paseo repeat before a second melody is played. The dancers do not dance during these first two sections. Instead, they choose their partners then stroll onto the dance floor and all begin to dance on the final beat of measure four of the paseo, which has a very distinctive accented (sometimes syncopated) rhythmic pattern, i.e., the pick-up to the third section. When the introduction is repeated, the dancers stop to flirt and chat with their friends. They then begin to dance again at the end of the paseo. At the turn of the twentieth century, the danzón was still considered a sequence dance, but its configurations were more complex than the contradanza (Alén Rodriguez 1998).54

Other musical stylistic characteristics of the danzón that began in the 1880s included musical performance practices that favored a European light-classical orientation with more complex harmonies. The ABACA rondo form of the danzón accentuated the A section as the non-danced paseo between danced sections. A coda consisting of instrumental solos over a harmonically static isorhythmic vamp was eventually incorporated. The music was played from written scores, was generally played at festive outdoor gatherings, and was performed by instrumental variations of the orquesta típica in the early years and later by the charangas.

54 The following video of Estrellas Cubanas performing with dancers in Cuba illustrates the choreography: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qK9UXfFTGk.
The most important stylistic characteristic of the *danzón*, however, is its distinctive creolized rhythmic structure based upon the *cinquillo* rhythm. [See: Figure 3-8.]

Carpentier states that "the melodies of the first songs in creole patois brought by the 'French blacks' to Santiago were all constructed on the basis of the *cinquillo*" rhythmic pattern (2001 [1946]: 149). Manuel too claims that the *cinquillo* “is the most distinguishing feature of the *danzón*” (1988: 27). Indeed, Cubans and *cognoscenti* alike know immediately upon hearing the distinctive *cinquillo* rhythm that the song being performed is a *danzón*.

The *cinquillo* is in fact one of the fundamental rhythms of Cuban music and dance forms and is an elaborated version of the African *tresillo* rhythm, upon which the *son clave* is also based (Lopes Cancado 1999). [See: Figure 3-17.] *Clave* forms the rhythmic foundation for almost all popular Cuban music.

![Tresillo Rhythm](image)

**Figure 3-17.** The *tresillo* rhythm: it is the ‘3-side’ of the *son clave*.

The *clave* rhythm is a primary Cuban rhythmic structure and is comprised of two rhythmically opposed cells (or measures), one antecedent, the other, consequent. *Clave* can be written in what is termed ‘3/2 clave’ or in ‘2/3 clave,’ dependent on which rhythmic cell is played in the first measure, the antecedent, or the consequent. In ‘3/2 clave,’ the *tresillo*, the antecedent rhythm, is played first and is called the ‘3-side.’ [See: Figure 3-18.] The consequent rhythm is a two-stroke rhythm and is called the ‘2-side.’ [See: Figure 3-19.]
As the danzón evolved, it incorporated the son clave rhythm into the last of its three sections, changing the rhythm of the characteristic cinquillo pattern. Eli Rodríguez writes:

[One of the most significant phenomena of interinfluence that can be seen in Cuban music is that which occurs between the son and danzón complexes. And while their mutual incorporation and assimilation were frequently alluded to in the compositions of the danzoneras, the presence of the son montuno, with its more upbeat tempo, introduced a new section in the structure that fully defined the genre and its subsequent evolution. Alternating sections were not just modified, they further expanded the form, including in the final trio, a son montuno, which contributed to a choreographic climax for the dancers].
This moment of formal and rhythmic change came about specifically in the 1910 composition of *El Bombín de Barreto* (Barreto's Bowler Hat), written by composer and clarinetist José Urfé (1879-1957).

In this composition, Urfé changed the rhythmic structure of the final section (section D) by including rhythmic elements of the *son*, thereby also changing the form of the *danzón*. This concluding section, which Urfé called the *estribillo* (refrain), was an up-tempo, syncopated section patterned after the *son montuno* form. In Figure 3-21, the *estribillo* can be clearly seen in the last two full lines of the score of Urfé's *El Bombín de Barreto*. Urfé also played the *estribillo* section in a faster tempo.
By far, the most important development in Cuban popular dance music at the turn of the twentieth century, however, was a change in the instrumentation of the ensembles that performed the *danzón*. Clearly, the relatively harsh sound of the military band-style *orquesta típicas* was falling out of fashion and the more refined, smoother sound of the nascent salon *charangas* was growing in popularity. By the 1910s, the public’s growing preference for an ensemble of *charanga* flute or clarinet, two or three violins, piano, contrabass, *timbales*, and *güiro*, helped the *charanga* to become the preeminent popular dance music ensemble, without rival. In the 1920s, sometimes *congas* and/or voice would become part of the ensemble. After 1940, the number of violins was doubled and another *conga*, and sometimes cello, were added. Since the
1960s, some charanga orchestras have even added electric instruments and replaced the timbales with a drum set (Alén Rodriguez 1998).

The piano first appeared in charanga ensembles as early as 1898 when Antonio “Papáito” Torroella added the instrument to his Charanga Papaíto Torroella. This type of instrumentation was not common at the time and this fact makes La Charanga de Antonio “Papáito” Torroella that much more important. In 1906—with Papaíto on piano, Faustino Valdés on charanga flute, David Rendón and Octavio “Tata” Alfonso on violin, and

Figure 3-22. An 1898 photo of La Charanga de Antonio “Papáito” Torroella. From left to right: Octavio “Tata” Alfonso, violin; Faustino Valdés, flute; “Papáito” Torroella, piano; David Rendón, violin; Evaristo Romero, bass. According to Rodríguez Domínguez (1967: 97), the first ensemble to be officially referred to as a Cuban charanga was the Charanga de Antonio “Papáito” Torroella. It performed in Havana at the beginning of the twentieth century. (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
and Evaristo Romero on contrabass—the Charanga Papaito Torroella recorded eight tunes on wax cylinders for the Edison label (Díaz Ayala 1994: 143) (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 97). It wasn’t until composer and pianist Antonio María Romeu Marrero (1876-1955) [See: Figure 3-23] joined the Orquesta de Leopoldo Cervantes in Havana in the early 1900s, however, that the piano was permanently added to the *charanga*’s instrumentation (Giro 2007, 4: 85).

![Figure 3-23. Circa 1920s photo of the Orquesta Antonio María Romeu performing during a radio broadcast for the Cuban Telephone Co. Left to right: Feliciano Facenda and Antonio María Romeu, Jr., violins; Juancito, *güiro*, Francisco Delabart, flute; Antonio María Romeu, piano (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 102). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)](image)

It was Romeu who vastly increased the popularity of the *charanga* by incorporating a piano solo into the *estribillo* section of the *danzón* and from then on, the piano was essential to the instrumentation of the *charanga*. In 1910, Romeu formed the Orquesta
Antonio Romeu, which arguably became the most famous charanga for more than thirty years. He accomplished this great popularity by softening the style of the danzón, by including melodic and harmonic references to Western art music. He had the violins play in pizzicato to accentuate the rhythm. He also mellowed the timbre of the ensemble by removing the brass and clarinet and permanently adding the wooden charanga flute. Romeu also called his orchestra a charanga francesa, giving the ensemble an air of sophistication. Díaz Ayala writes that “ese fué el primer gran acierto de Romeu: poder sintetizar la esencia del danzón en las 88 teclas del piano” (2003b: 299). [This was Romeu’s first great success: to be able to synthesize the essence of the danzón on the eighty-eight keys of the piano.] Romeu was also important for composing and arranging more than five hundred danzones and for making stars out of his vocalists, Fernando Collazo and Barbarito Diez. [See: Figures 3-25 and 3-26.] The golden age of the charangas had begun.
Figure 3-25. Barbarito Díez singing with the Orquesta Gigante de Antonio María Romeu, a larger charanga Romeu established for performing radio broadcasts (Ledón Sánchez 2003: 54). (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)

Two important *charanga* flute players during the time period of the 1920s also deserve mention because of their importance as leading musicians in both the popular and art music realms. They are Miguel Vasquez “El Moro,” and Baldomera Rodríguez.

Figure 3-27. 1920s photo of Miguel Vasquez, “El Moro”, one of the best *charanga* flute players of the period and director of the Charanga de Miguel Vasquez “El Moro.” Notable musicians in “El Moro’s” *charanga* included Orestes López on contrabass, Virgilio Diago on violin, and Ricardo Reverón on piano (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 115). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-28. 1920s photo of Baldomera Rodríguez, considered the first Cuban woman to play both the Boehm flute for opera performances, as well as the *charanga* flute in which she played *danzones* for silent films (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 119). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
Historically, beginning in the 1880s, the danzón had easily replaced the contradanza and danza in popularity, and until the 1920s, it remained the most popular Cuban dance genre, eclipsed only by the son. It was so popular—and universally accepted as a symbol of Cuban national identity—that the danzón was publically deemed the national music and dance of Cuba. The danzón was officially recognized as such in the mid-twentieth century.

In Havana on August 26, 1954, the Instituto Musical de Investigaciones Folkloricas, under the general direction of Odilio Urfé González, designated the first Sunday in August as the Dia del Danzón (Danzón Day) to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the debut of Miguel Failde’s “Las Alturas de Simpson” (recognized as the first danzón). A competition was established (and prizes awarded) so that musicians would strive to preserve the musical heritage of the danzón. In 1960, President Fidel Castro signed a law establishing the danzón as the national music and dance of Cuba (Castillo Failde 1964: 247-253).55

Yet, as important as the danzón was, and still is, to Cuban national identity, its popularity with the general public did indeed fade beginning in the early twentieth century. Of course, no popular music or dance has ever remained at the top of the charts forever. This common occurrence also befell the danzón.

What did remain hugely popular were the charangas. We have seen that the orquesta típicas, the bungas, the bandas, the danzoneras, the charangas and charanga francesas, all played contradanzas, danzas, and danzones, but it was the charangas and only the charangas that played the popular dance music genres we will examine

55 See (Castillo Failde 1964: 247-253) to read the official documents in their entirety.
next—such as the *danzonete, mambo, chachachà, and tira tira*—musical genres that really gave Cuban music its internationally recognizable sound, especially during the glory days of popular dance music in Cuba beginning in the 1940s until the 1960s.

**Danzonete**

Circa 1910, *charanga* and *orquesta típica* musicians, now playing dozens of *danzones*, had already added the *son* rhythm to the final section of the *danzón* to make the dancing more lively. Yet, the public wanted more. Synchronically, the popularity of the *son* and its associated ensembles—the *son sextetos* (sextets) and *septetos* (septets)—was growing rapidly, as that of the *charangas* and the *orquesta típicas*—the ensembles that played *danzones*—was waning. In an effort to again increase the popularity of the *danzón* and the *charangas*, the flutist, composer, maestro, and *danzonero*, José Manuel Aniceto Díaz (1887-1964) decided to add vocals to the final *son* section of the *danzón*. In so doing, a new genre of popular dance music, the *danzonete*, was created.

![Figure 3-29. Aniceto Díaz, the “Father of the Danzonete” (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)](image_url)
Aniceto, also known as ‘The Father of the Danzonete,’ was first a musician in the orquesta típica of Miguel Failde where he mastered the art of performing danzones. In 1914, he formed his own ensemble, Orquesta Aniceto Díaz [See: Figure 3-30], and on June 18, 1929 at the Casino Español de Matanzas (Spanish Casino of Matanzas), Aniceto premiered the first and most famous danzonete, “Rompiendo la Rutina” (“Breaking the Routine”), the title, a nod to the change he created in the danzón by adding voices. [See: Figure 3-31.] The instrumentation for the Orquesta Aniceto Díaz included two male voices: one of them was Arturo Aguilo. In September, 1929, Aniceto recorded “Rompiendo la Rutina” on the Brunswick label (Ledón Sánchez 2003: 58).

Figure 3-30. 1930s photo of the Orquesta Aniceto Díaz. From left to right: Aniceto Díaz, Jr., güiro; Domingo Becerra, timbales; José Claro Fumero, trombone; Mira and Juan de Armas, violins; Pedro Diez, contrabass; Aniceto Díaz, flute, and; René Oliva, “Jinigua,” trumpet. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
Figure 3-31. The piano score for the danzonete, “Rompiendo la Rutina” (“Breaking the Routine”) (Eli Rodríguez 2002: 76). (Source: LAC. Public domain.)
The lyrics—that which distinguishes the *danzonete* from the *danzón*—to "Rompiendo la Rutina" ("Breaking the Routine") are imbued with references to the social preferences, the playgrounds, and the pastimes of the elite. They speak of a ballroom in Matanzas, a popular neighborhood just outside of Havana, where the elite liked to go to socialize. The word "good," used to describe the harmonies, imply that they are tasteful because they are styled after those found in Western art music. The "great" rhythms refer to the trendy Afro-Cuban rhythmic variations in the song contributed by the black and creole members of Díaz’s ensemble. Figure 3-30 of the Orquesta Aniceto Díaz clearly shows musicians from different racial (and by extension, class) backgrounds. The lyrics state further that the parties where the *danzonete* is performed are parties of elegance and distinction, traits of a formal character displayed by the elite. What is also interesting to note, is that the refrain states that the dancers want to dance to the "rhythm" of the *danzonete*. What this implies is that the jaunty *son* rhythms, added to the final section of the *danzón*, were gaining in popularity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Rompiendo la Rutina”</th>
<th>“Breaking the Routine”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Allá en Matanzas se ha creado*  
*un nuevo baile de salón,*  
*con un compás muy bien marcado*  
*y una buena armonización.* | Over in Matanzas there has been created  
a new ballroom dance,  
with a great rhythm  
and good harmonies. |
| *Para las fiestas del gran mundo*  
de la elegancia y distinción,*  
será el bailable preferido*  
por su dulce inspiración* | For the best parties in the world  
with elegance and distinction,  
it is the preferred dance  
because of its sweet inspiration |
| *Estribillo*  
*Danzonete, prueba y vete,*  
yo quiero bailar contigo*  
al compás del danzonete.* | Refrain/Chorus  
*Danzonete*, try it and see,  
I want to dance with you  
to the beat of the *danzonete*. |

Figure 3-32. The lyrics to the first sung *danzón*, a *danzonete* titled "Rompiendo la Rutina" ("Breaking the Routine"). (Source: Giro 2007, 2: 12.)
And while it was male voices that dominated the sung genres of Cuban popular music at the time—singers such as Miguel Matamoros y Siro Rodríguez, Guyún (Vicente González Rubiera), and Fernando Collazo—the creation of the danzonete opened the door for the first female singer of Cuban popular dance music, Paulina Álvarez (1912-1965). In the 1930s, Álvarez was enjoying great success and was well known for her performances as a singer for radio, particularly the broadcasts she made with the Orquesta La Elegante—directed by the flutist, Edelmiro Pérez—with whom she sang almost exclusively beginning in 1931.

Figure 3-33. Paulina Álvarez. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-34. 1931 photo of Orquesta Elegante with singer Paulina Álvarez, directed by the flutist Eldemiro Pérez (Rodríguez Dominguez 1967: 168). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
In 1938, Álvarez formed her own *charanga*, and became known as the “Empress of Danzonete.” She went on to have a long and successful career singing various popular music genres with her *charanga* and other ensembles such as those directed by Romeu, Belisario López (1903-1969), and José “Cheo” Belén Puig (1908-1971) [See: Figures 3-37 and 3-38].

Figure 3-35. A circa 1940 photo of the Charanga de Paulina Álvarez, possibly taken in the recording studio of CMQ-FM, Radio Rebelde. Nipper, the mascot for the RCA Victor label is featured in front. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-36. Circa 1937 photograph of the Orquesta Belisario López, founded in 1928. by the flutist Belisario López (on the right). The pianist was Facundo Rivero, and standing between the two violinists is the singer Joseíto Núñez, famous for his interpretations of *danzones* (Díaz Ayala 2010). (Source: DAC. Photo courtesy of Benito González. Used with permission).
Figure 3-37. Circa 1930s photo of La Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig with singer Alfredito Valdés. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-38. The CD cover for the 2004 remastering by Tumbao Cuban Classics of the 1937-1940 recordings by the Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig, featuring vocals by Alfredito Valdés and Alberto Aroche. (Source: Original recordings in DAC. Public Domain.)
Barbarito Díez Junco (1909-1995) [See: Figure 3-26], another great vocal danzonero, first came to fame in 1935 as the soloist for Antonio Maria Romeu's charanga. After Romeu's death, Díez took over the ensemble and the charanga become known as the Orquesta Barbarito Díez. During this time, Díez recorded more than forty hit songs and fourteen albums. To this day, Díez is still referred to as the “Golden Voice of the Danzón” (Barbarito Díez 2011).56

The musical characteristics of the danzonete featured a steady rhythm, simple harmonies and melodies, with a solo voice alternating with the other voice (or a chorus of ensemble musicians) in call-and-response, as in the son montuno. Like the danzón, the danzonete was composed without breaks or bridges between sections.

The casualness and simplicity of the danzonete and other sung genres had great popular appeal. Stylistically, singers of danzonetes had a much sweeter and smoother sound than those who sang son and most of the broadcast and recorded hits during this period were produced by charangas such as the Orquesta Belisario López, directed by the flutist Belisario López with Joseíto Nuñez as vocalist [See Figure 3-36]. Other popular charangas included La Orquesta Antonio Romeu with the famous singer Barbarito Diez [See Figure 3-25], Las Maravillas del Siglo with singer Fernando Collazo [See Figures 3-39 and 3-40], and La Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig with singer Alfredito Valdés [See Figures 3-37 and 3-38]. These charangas, fronted by popular vocalists, who therefore made them commercially profitable, were responsible for helping to usher in the nascent recording and broadcast industries.

56 The following video is a recording of Paulina Álvarez and Barbarito Diez singing the danzonete, “Esas Si Son Cubanas.” They are accompanied by a charanga in a classic danzonete style: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJysq2fNiWU
The radio also helped to foster the popularity of the music played by the *charangas*. Before the 1940s, radio stations relied more on live studio performances rather than recordings for their broadcasts because recordings were more expensive to procure. The *charanga*'s suitability for broadcast fidelity increased their popularity while
the demand for the more unrefined, horn-dominated orquesta típicas disappeared. In addition, amplification (microphones) for the singers eliminated the need for a strong vocal capacity and a smoother, more suave style of singing became preferred. Most importantly, radio diminished racial barriers, for while black performers were not allowed to perform in certain social clubs and salons, they could be heard in those venues because no such discrimination existed on the radio (Moore 1997: 101-104).

The charangas continued to enjoy great favor throughout the 1930s and 1940s, due in part to their ability to incorporate vocalists into their instrumentation. More importantly, it was because they were able to play more than just danzones. Over time, older musical genres such as the danzón, even with its stylistic and formal variants, grew to be perceived as no longer trendy and the dancing public clamored to hear new popular dance music that had more panache. They found it in the mambo.

*Mambo*

Figure 3-41. Illustrations by Eduardo Arrocha of costumes worn by the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional (Cuban National Folklore Ensemble) (Fernández 1974). (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)
The creation of the *mambo* and its emergence as a popular dance music genre has been the subject of considerable controversy since its inception. The debate stems from the confusion over the identification of the *mambo* as the final section of the *danzón* form (the *son montuno*) versus the *mambo* as a dance genre. Much has been said in an effort to not only lay claim to its creation, but to categorize any performance of *mambo* as either ‘authentic’ or ‘inauthentic’ based upon who performed it, and how it was perceived and historically identified. Recent scholarship, however (Díaz Ayala 2006; García 2006; Lozano 1990; Rodríguez Domínguez 1967; Salazar 2002, Sublette 2004), has made great inroads towards ascertaining dates and facts surrounding the creation and evolution of the *mambo* and establishing it as both form and genre.

The primary dispute involves the three “Mambo Kings” and which of the three holds the title as originator, including what stylistic influences they individually contributed to the form and/or genre. They are flutist, Antonio Arcaño (1911-1994) [See: Figure 3-42], *tres* (three-string Cuban guitar) player, Arsenio Rodríguez (1911-1970) [See: Figures 3-43 and 3-44], and pianist Dámaso Pérez Prado (1916-1989) [See: Figures 3-45 and 3-46].

Disagreements were fueled by the fact that each of these musicians came from different social classes, they were of different races, they led different types of ensembles, they performed different genres, and they all vied for the income-generating potential the title of ‘originator’ would bring. In addition, they operated within a transnational context, all factors that initially led to dissent between musicians and confusion among music historians when it came to determining what was what regarding *mambo*.
Figure 3-42. Circa 1943 photo of Arcaño y sus Maravillas with flutist Arcaño in the center, and pianist Orestes “Macho” López and bassist Israel “Cachao” López on the left. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-43. Photo of Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto in Havana, Cuba. (Source: DAC. Photo courtesy of Marcelino Guerra. Public Domain.)
Figure 3-44. CD cover for the 2005 remastering by Tumbao Cuban Classics of “Dancing the Montuno with Arsenio Rodriguez and his Band: 1946-1950.” (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-45. Circa 1950s photo of the big band of Damaso Pérez Prado (Díaz Ayala 1999: 144). (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
For example, Arcaño was white, he directed a *charanga*, he played *danzones*, and his performance style reflected the ‘classical’ bourgeois milieu in which he lived and worked in Havana. Rodríguez was black, he led a *son conjunto* (*son* ensemble that includes a brass section), he performed *sones*, and his music incorporated many more African-derived rhythms. Pérez Prado was a *mulato* living as a Cuban expatriate in México and leading an *orquesta* fashioned after the big jazz bands in the U.S. (which imbued Pérez Prado’s *mambos* with an international flair), and he performed the *mambo* dance genre. So, in order to understand *mambo*, given this diversity of musicians and music, one must first consider each of these important musicians and their individual contributions to the creation of the *mambo* both as form and as genre.

Arcaño studied music with Romeu and performed with several *charangas* in Havana during the 1930s, including playing flute for the Orquesta Las Maravillas del
Siglo (Marvels of the Century Orchestra) with the singer Fernando Collazo, one of the most popular charangas at the time. [See: Figure 3-40.] In 1937, he formed his own charanga, Arcaño y sus Maravillas (Arcaño and his Marvels) [See: Figure 3-42], which included Orestes López (1908-1991) on piano [See: Figure 3-47], and his brother Israel “Cachao” López (1918-2008) on contrabass [See: Figure 3-48]. It is the López brothers who are credited with introducing a syncopated rhythmic variant, given the name “nuevo ritmo” (new rhythm) by Arcaño, into the son montuno section (the final section) of the danzón that we now describe as the mambo form. Rene Lorente, a flute player with Orquesta Aragón and a student of Arcaño, states that Arcaño had been playing long danzones with four sections and a son montuno at the end called a mambo. This format was too long for recording or radio broadcasts so he decided to change the form (Personal interview 2010).

Figure 3-47. Photo of Orestes López circa 1940s. Orestes played contrabass, cello, piano, and flute (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 234). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
In a May 2008 interview with Chico Alvarez Peraza for *Latin Beat* magazine, “Cachao” elaborates on his role in changing the form of the *danzón*:

I had been composing music since 1935, but it wasn't until I joined Arcaño y Sus Maravillas in 1937 that I begin to write *danzones*. I mean really write... Between that time and now, I have written around 1,500 *danzones*. In fact, between my brother and I, we have written over 3,000 *danzones*... My brother Orestes and I were assigned the task of writing all the material for the band. Through our efforts, the *danzón* took a 180 degree turn, acquiring a totally new dimension. For example, we would take the music of Mozart, so beautiful and simple, and give it a whole new twist, all the while trying to enrich it both harmonically and rhythmically. We introduced the previously unheard concept of syncopation and expanded on the existing theory of counterpoint. These were revolutionary ideas back then, and we were young and eager to experiment with new ideas and concepts. Arcaño's band offered us a vehicle in which to do our thing. That's how the "mambo" came about, through the relaxing of traditional taboos. We were in the 20th century, and all around us new things were being invented. It was an era of inventiveness, and we dared to make changes (Alvarez Peraza 2008: 28).
In a personal interview with Cuban music scholars Enrique Zayas and Eduardo Rosillo—Rosillo, the Cuban radio announcer known as the *Dorada Voz de la Radio Cubana* (Golden Voice of Cuban Radio)—both friends of Orestes and “Cachao” López, details about the López’s brothers’ role in the creation of the *mambo* corroborate the story. Rosillo, also a good friend of Arcaño, spoke to Orestes López about the creation of the *mambo*. Rosillo states that Orestes told him that in 1937, he wrote a *danzón* with Arcaño titled “Mambo,” and that it had a “*nuevo ritmo*” (new rhythm) in the final section (Rosillo and Zayas: Personal Interview 2002).

Initially, this new rhythmic structure, the *nuevo ritmo*, was deemed too ‘African’ for the salons of Havana. Nonetheless, in less than ten years this new formal variant now called *mambo* had become a global phenomenon in the ballrooms of Cuba, Europe, and the United States primarily because of the transnational stylistic influences created by Pérez Prado.

In 1944, in response to the *mambo*’s popularity—and also due in part to its new suitability for the radio—Arcaño expanded his *charanga* to accommodate this new rhythm and performance medium, changing the instrumentation by adding more Afro-Cuban percussion including the *cencerro* (cowbell), and *conga*. He also added extra stringed instruments such as the cello, viola, and contrabass to the violins and interlocked the rhythmic structure of the percussion with that of the piano and contrabass. According to Lorente, even the tunings of the *conga* and the *timbales* were changed to give the ensemble a different sound, a different color. A small *cencerro* was added to the *timbales* in the *charangas* of Arcaño57 to accompany the piano (Personal

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57 According to Lorente, the *cencerro* was also added (during the same time) to the *timbales* in the *charanga* of flute player José Fajardo y sus Estrellas.
interview 2010). Arcaño renamed his charanga the Orquesta Radiofonica de Arcaño y sus Maravillas (Radiophonic Orchestra of Arcaño and his Marvels) and began performing for the Mil Diez radio station (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 239).

Figure 3-49. 1940s photo of La Orquesta Radiofonica de Arcaño y sus Maravillas, the charanga Arcaño established to perform for radio broadcasts. There were approximately fifteen musicians in the ensemble (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 239). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)

Figure 3-50. CD cover for the 2004 remastering by Tumbao Cuban Classics of “Danzón Mambo” by Antonio Arcaño y sus Maravillas: 1944-1951. (Source: Original recordings in the DAC. Public Domain.)
Before 1944, according to Lorente, Arcaño’s charanga was only a danzonera with eight musicians. It did not have singers or a conga player. When Arcaño incorporated the conga, the Cuban youth really liked it and started calling his mambo section “el mambo al Arcaño” (Arcaño’s mambo). The word mambo was then turned into the verb mambiar because it applied to almost every style and form played in the son montuno section. Vamos a mambiar (let’s mambo) came to mean, “let’s ‘jam’ (improvise) in the mambo rhythm, let’s have a party,” much like how the word charanga was also used then and how the term timba is used today, i.e., vamos a charanga (let’s party to charanga music) or vamos a timbiar (let’s party to timba) (Personal interview 2010).

Arcaño’s charanga, with the rhythm axis anchored by the three López brothers—now with Jesús on cello, Orestes on piano, and "Cachao" on bass—played the mambo section of the danzón in repeated sections, using an ostinato and making way for improvisation within each section. Lorente state that at this point, Arcaño’s mambo was referred to as a mambo-descarga (mambo-jam) (Personal interview 2010).

In the mambo crafted by the López brothers, harmonic tension was created by using the dominant chord as a pedal point and then delaying its resolution. [See Figure 3-51.] The bass added to this tension by outlining the dominant chord, often using octave displacements, and employing a modified anticipated bass rhythm like that found in the son. [See: Figure 3-52.] The syncopation was heavy with the strong beat functioning as an articulated pick-up to the upbeat of the measure. Stress remained on the second eighth-note of the measure, unbalancing the anticipation of the downbeat. The violins played in pizzicato the same rhythm as the piano, [See: Figure 3-51], and the congas

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58 This idea of improvisation was carried over by the Orestes brothers, specifically “Cachao,” to create jazz descargas (jam sessions), which continued to develop stylistically over the following decades.
played a heavily syncopated repeated eighth-note and two sixteenth-note ostinato pattern. Hence, polyrhythmic structure was created, giving the *mambo* its unique style.

![Danzon-Mambo Chord Progression](image)

Figure 3-51. *Danzón-Mambo* chord progression with unresolved dominant chord.

![Danzon-Mambo Bass Pattern](image)

Figure 3-52. *Danzón-Mambo* anticipated bass pattern.

Other changes to the form of the *danzón-mambo* in the 1940s included the elimination of the B and C sections and introducing the D section (the *son montuno*) much earlier in the *danzón* than was customary. The formal and stylistic changes Arcaño made to the *danzón* to create the *mambo* were then picked up by other ensembles in Cuba, adding to its popularity. Further stylistic changes were made by Pérez Prado, helping to make the sound of his ensemble even more distinctive.

It was Arsenio Rodríguez, however, who had always claimed that he was the true originator of the *mambo* because it was he who performed *son*: it was he who helped to codify the use of the *son montuno* in popular music. Of course, to some extent this was true, but the popularity of the *mambo* as a formal variant of the *danzón*, as well as an internationally recognizable dance genre, had more to do with the appeal of the big-
band-style ensembles like Arcaño’s and Pérez Prado’s than Rodríguez’s smaller, more guajiros-(rural) sounding, more provincial septetos (septets) and son conjuntos (son ensembles).

Rodríguez began his career in the 1920s as a tres player in several son conjuntos. As a composer in the 1930s, he provided the Orquesta Casino de la Playa with many hit songs, but was unable to perform with them because he was black and the casino only allowed white musicians to perform. In 1937, the same year the López brothers created their mambo, Rodríguez perfected his mambo sound while leading his own brass-filled conjunto.

To create his mambo, Rodríguez incorporated the more complex diablito rhythms of the Abakuá neo-African religion into his sones, thereby contributing more Afro-Cuban rhythmic elements to the form (García 2006: 50). Lorente states that Rodriguez’s mambo was actually a son played on the piano and incorrectly called a mambo-montuno. Rodríguez’s mambo also had accents on different parts of the rhythm than would normally be heard in a danzón-mambo, and he included the tres and the bongos into his ensemble (as is common in most son conjuntos), while the charangas did not have these instruments (Personal interview 2010).

The choreography and overall dance aesthetic was also much different, with the slower son montuno contrasting significantly with the faster, more choreographically elaborate ballroom dance mambo. García writes:

But for Arsenio the mambo merely constituted the rhythmic patterns that he and Arcaño’s charanga popularized among black Cuban social dancers in the early 1940s. For most audiences of Latin music in the United States or tropical music in Latin America, however, Pérez Prado embodied the

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59 These rhythms had been taught to Rodríguez by his grandfather, a former slave.
mambo. His trademark grunt, zoot suit-like dress, kicks and unconventional dance movements on stage, and blaring big-band sound constituted the mambo as much as its musical components (2006: 78).

Pérez Prado’s genius was to take the son (D) section of the danzón-mambo form and establish it as a separate genre accompanied by choreographed dance steps. Lorente confirms that Pérez Prado’s mambo had a different form (the one mentioned above) and a faster 2/4 or 4/4 rhythm. His ensemble was also more like a big band rather than a charanga and harmonically, it had a very North American sound, especially in the piano (Personal interview 2010). Many Cubans felt that in doing this, Pérez Prado had turned their national music into mere entertainment and they viewed his mambo style as unauthentic, giving it little respect and a lack of popularity (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 229). Yet others, such as “Cachao,” felt that Cuba had only to benefit from the international acclaim Pérez Prado received (Alvarez Peraza 2008: 30).

Indeed, Pérez Prado brought great international recognition to Cuba when he moved to Mexico in 1948 to record for the RCA Victor label and introduce the mambo to the rest of the world.60 Through the release of a number of Pérez Prado’s hit songs—with Cuban singer Beny Moré (1919-1963) on vocals—RCA Victor launched the worldwide ‘mambo craze’ and it was Pérez Prado who paved the way with his big-band, instrumental arrangements favored in Mexico, the United States, and to some extent in Cuba. This vast popularity was due in part to Pérez Prado's antiphonal sectional writing and big-band charanga instrumentation with predominant brass and saxophone sections clearly influenced by contemporary U.S. swing bands and their music. So

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60 Lorente claims that the confusion over the term mambo was an intentional marketing ploy devised by RCA Victor to sell more Pérez Prado records (Personal interview 2010).
popular and pervasive in popular Latin music throughout the years, the *mambo* remains an active international genre. Pérez Prado's legacy orchestra, La Mundial Orquesta Damaso Pérez Prado, still performs throughout the world today.

And as mentioned, despite the *mambo*’s great success as a dance genre, it was not as popular in Cuba as it was in other parts of the world. The Cubans preferred the more delicate and romantic *chachachá*. In the 1950s in Cuba, the *chachachá* replaced the *danzón* and *mambo* in popularity and became the quintessential genre of the *charangas*.

**Chachachá**

Figure 3-53. Illustrations by Eduardo Arrocha of costumes worn by the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional (Cuban National Folklore Ensemble) (Fernández 1974). (Source: LAC. Public Domain.)
The 1950s are considered the *Epoca de Oro* (Golden Era) of Cuban popular dance music and it was the *charangas* that glittered most during this time. Their fame as the purveyors of *danzón, danzonete*, and ‘*mambo mania,*’ provided *charanga* composers and musicians the perfect avenue for introducing novel musical ideas. Building upon the success of previous genres and forms, *charanga* musicians strove to create the next latest dance craze. They struck gold with the *chachachá*.

The creation of the *chachachá* as a dance genre is credited to composer and violinist, Enrique Jorrín (1926-1987). [See: Figure 3-54] In 1948, Jorrín—at that time, a violinist with Arcaño's *charanga*—left Arcaño's ensemble to join the then more commercially popular Orquesta América, directed by Ninón Mondéjar. [See: Figure 3-55.] With Orquesta América, Jorrín was given greater license to write his own compositions and develop his unique sound, and so in 1953, Jorrín composed “La Engañadora,” a *rumba-mambo* with a slower tempo and less complex rhythmic

Figure 3-54. 1940s photo of violinist Enrique Jorrín, composer of “La Engañadora,” the first *chachachá* (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 247). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
structure. [See: Figure 3-56.] Lorente states that “La Engañadora” was first called a *rumba-mambo* because the *chacha* (the term most Cuban musicians use to denote the *chachachá*) did not have a name at this point (Personal interview 2010). The first section was the *rumba* and the second section was the *mambo*.

![1951 photo of Orquesta América, founded in 1942 by Ninón Mondéjar. This *charanga* was later led by violinist Enrique Jorrín and is still performing today (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 251). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)](image)

What motivated Jorrín to incorporate these rhythmic changes was his observance of the difficulty some dancers were having with the syncopated complexity of the *mambo*. He decided to create a more danceable genre with a new rhythm that would place emphasis on the downbeat, using the *güiro* to set the rhythmic foundation. [See: Figure 3-57.] When asked why this new genre was called *chachachá*, Jorrín stated that he got the idea for the name through onomatopoeia, from the sound of the dancers’ feet as they shuffled across the dance floor (Linares 1970: 119). Lorente states that “La
Engañadora” was named a *chachachá* because the singer in Orquesta América said the sung section was not a *mambo*, it was a *chachachá* because people were actually saying the word *chachachá* as they danced. So, Jorrín announced on the radio that “La Engañadora” was not a *mambo*, but rather a *chachachá* (Personal interview 2010).

![Manuscript copy of the A and B sections of “La Engañadora”](image)

Figure 3-56. Manuscript copy of the A and B sections of “La Engañadora” (The Tricky Woman). Considered the first *chachachá*, it was composed by Enrique Jorrín and recorded by Orquesta América (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 248). It was released in 1953 on the Panart label. Its form includes an introduction, section A (*rumba*) repeated, section B (*mambo-chá*), and a return to A followed by a short coda. (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
What also made Jorrín’s *chachachá* unique was the incorporation of short vocal sections—in a call-and-response style—in the *son montuno* section. During the performance of "La Engañadora," the musicians were instructed to sing the *son montuno* (chorus) in unison, and alternate singing the chorus with the public. The technique became an instant success (Giro 2007: 281). This was important because it motivated composers to write simple, original melodies based on the *chachachá* rhythm and to not be constrained by the complexity of the *danzón* form.

![Cha-cha-cha Rhythm](image)

Figure 3-57. The *chachachá* rhythm created by Enrique Jorrín.

In “La Engañadora,” Jorrín—as well as other subsequent performers and composers of *chachachá*, such as Arcaño—sought to establish the *chachachá* as a genre distilled from the *danzón* yet distinctive in form and style. Jorrín eventually did away with the introduction (formally found in the *danzón*) and moved quickly into the *chachachá* rhythm in the *son montuno* section. The omission of the introduction also did away with the *paseo* (the promenade section of the *danzón*), giving the *chachachá* a less formal character than the *danzón*. Jorrín changed the rhythm of the *güiro* part (formally played in the *danzón*) [See: Figure 3-57] and introduced a new rhythmic cell between it, the *conga*, and the *timbales*. He also composed the violin parts in unison with the voices and made significant changes to the rhythm and performance practices of the piano [See: Figure 3-58] and contrabass [See: Figure 3-59].
What came next was a flurry of new chachachás written for the charangas, and international fame for these ensembles soon followed. Many ensembles benefited greatly from this increase in international recognition. The increase in popularity also spurred an increase in the number of charangas being formed and the number of musicians making a living from performing in charangas. Many charangas were showcased in Cuba’s famous cabaret nightclubs such as the Tropicana and the Sans Souci. [See: Figure 3-63] Charangas such as Orquesta América [See: Figure 3-55], Orquesta Ideal [See: Figure 3-60], Orquesta Enrique Jorrín [See: Figure 3-61], Orquesta Neno González [See: Figures 3-62 and 3-63], Pancho El Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira [See: Figure 3-64], Orquesta Fajardo y sus Estrellas [See: Figures 3-65], Orquesta Sublime [See: Figure 3-66], Charanga Rubalcaba [See: Figure 3-67], and Las Estrellas Cubanas [See: Figures 3-68 to 3-71] all enjoyed tremendous popularity, coupled with numerous recording contracts and international tours.
Figure 3-60. 1938 photo of Orquesta Ideal. Standing left to right: Miguel Angel Colombo, contrabass; Pedro Hernández, violin; José Dávila Quintero, güiro and unidentified member. Seated: Humberto Bello, piano; Joseíto Valdés, flute and director; and Angel López, timbales (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 242). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)

Figure 3-61. 1950s photo of Orquesta Enrique Jorrín (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 258). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
Figure 3-62. A 1928 photo of the Orquesta Neno González with flutist José Antonio Díaz (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-63. Album cover, “From the Danzón to the Cha Cha Chá” with the Orquesta Neno Gonzalez, performing at the famous Sans Souci nightclub in Havana, Cuba in the 1950s. The flute player is Alberto “Pancho El Bravo” Cruz Torres. (Source: DAC. Public domain.)
Figure 3-64. 1950s Promo photo of Pancho El Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira. (Wild Pancho and his Go-Get-'Em Hotshots). (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-65. The original Orquesta Fajardo y sus Estrellas, founded in 1949 in Havana (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 252). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
Figure 3-66. 2000 CD cover of Bembe Records’ recording of Orquesta Sublime, founded in 1955 by flutist Melquiades Fundora Dina. (Source: DAC. Public domain.)

Figure 3-67. Guillermo Rubalcaba is the director and founder of the legendary Charanga Rubalcaba, which he founded in 1962. He was also the cabaret pianist for the Sans Souci nightclub. Rubalcaba is now performing with the Buena Vista Social Club (Personal Interview 2002). Rubalcaba is fourth from left. (Source: Photo courtesy of Sue Miller. http://www.charangasue.com)
Figure 3-68. Estrellas Cubanas (Cuban All Stars). Founded in 1956. Popularized the *chachachá*. (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 257). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)

Figure 3-69. Album cover for 1961 recording of Las Estrellas Cubanas. (Source: CHC. Public domain.)
Figure 3-70. Estrellas Cubanas performing for the live “Domingo con Rosillo” program at Radio Progresso on June 23, 2002. Instrumentation in photo: flute, three vocalists, güiro, piano, and bass.

Figure 3-71. Estrellas Cubanas performing for the “Domingo con Rosillo” program at Radio Progresso on June 23, 2002. Instrumentation in photo: güiro, congas, timbales, and four violins circled around the microphone used for the live radio broadcast.
Many of these ensembles, such as Orquesta Sublime and Estrellas Cubanas are still performing today. The most famous and widely recognized charanga—considered the epitome of all charangas—is the Orquesta Aragón, still going strong for over seventy-two years. [See: Figure 3-72]

Figure 3-72. 1939 photo of the legendary Orquesta Aragón (when the name of the charanga was still Rítmica 39) with founder and bassist Orestes Aragón Cantero and flutist Efraín Loyola. Loyola was the flutist from 1939–1952. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Havana's Orquesta Aragón, founded in Cienfuegos in the south-central Province of Las Villas in 1939 by violinist Orestes Aragón, was later directed by violinist Rafael Ley beginning in 1948. [See: Figure 3-73.] Orquesta Aragón has remained the most popular charanga to date and has had the widest influence on popular Cuban music, more than any other pre-Revolutionary ensemble. Orquesta Aragón is still recording and performing regularly in Cuba, as well as internationally, and in the United States on occasion. [See: Figures 3-74 and 3-75.]
Figure 3-73. 1950s photo of Rafael Ley, violinist, singer, and director of Orquesta Aragón (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 254). (Source: CHC. Public domain.)

Figure 3-74. 1960s album cover for Orquesta Aragón with flutist Richard Egües. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
The ensemble’s success can be partly attributed to the unique stylistic sounds of its flutists over the years, especially Richard Egües, who joined the ensemble in 1955. As composer, Egües’s hit songs such as “El Bodeguero” and “La Cantina” have remained in the repertoire and has been covered by other charangas too numerous to mention. The flute players for Orquesta Aragón are considered to be the absolute best charanga flute players Cuba has ever produced. Their roster includes: Efrain Loyola, flutist with Aragón from 1939-1952 [See: Figure 3-72]; José “Rolando” Lozano, 1952-1954 [See: Figure 3-76]; Richard Egües, 1954-1984 [See: Figures 3-77 and 3-78]; Rene Lorente, 1984-1990 [See: Figures 3-79 and 3-80]; and Eduardo Rubio, 1990 to present [See: Figure 3-75].
Figure 3-76. 1950s photo of José “Rolando” Lozano. Lozano was the flute player for Orquesta Aragón from 1952-1954. He is the father of Danilo Lozano, a charanga flute player in California. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-77. 1950s photo of Richard Egües, flutist with Orquesta Aragon from 1954-1984, playing the charanga flute. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
Figure 3-78. 1990s photo of Richard Egües, flutist with Orquesta Aragon from 1954-1984, playing the Boehm system flute. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-79. 1980s photo of Orquesta Aragón in Cuba with flutist Rene Lorente (front center). (Source: Photo courtesy of Rene Lorente. Used with permission.)
Another famous *charanga* composer and flute player, well respected by all *charanga* musicians in Cuba but little known outside of Cuba, was Alberto “Pancho El Bravo” Cruz Torres (1928-2009). Cruz is important in the history of *charanga* not only for being a consummate *charanga* flute player, but also for creating a popular rhythm called the *tira tira* (go-go rhythm).

**Tira Tira**

Pancho El Bravo y sus Candelas del TiraTira (Wild Pancho and his Go-Get-‘Em Hotshots) [See: Figure 3-81]—a hold-over ensemble from the glory days of the nightclub *charangas*—was deemed one of the most popular dance bands of the 1960s and 1970s in Cuba, due in part, to the popularity of the music he composed, but especially because of the incorporation of a rhythm he devised called *tira tira*. While relatively unknown in international circles, the legacy of Pancho El Bravo and his *tira tira*
rhythm lives on in Cuba to this day. Whenever I asked Cubans about Pancho El Bravo, almost all knew who he was and they could also articulate the tira tira rhythm, even members of younger generations. Lorente even went so far as to state that Pancho El Bravo was one of the best charanga flute players of all time (Personal interview 2010). Whatever the reason for the lack of international acknowledgment of Pancho El Bravo and the tira tira, it is prudent to now consider and analyze this significant rhythm in the list of popular Cuban dance music genres of the twentieth century due to its historical importance among the Cuban people.

![Pancho El Bravo album cover](image.jpg)

**Figure 3-81.** Album cover for Pancho El Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira (Wild Pancho and his Go-Get-’Em Hotshots). The original recordings on this album were made in 1949, and later in 1960, in Havana, Cuba. The Caney label remastered these recordings into a CD in 2004. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
It is a mystery why the *mambo* and the *chachachá* became so internationally well known and the *tira tira* rhythm did not. Perhaps it was because the *mambo* and the *chachachá* had already become famous world-wide before the Cuban Revolution of 1959, while the *tira tira* rhythm was created during a time in Cuba history, early in the beginning of the Revolution, when there were precious few resources dedicated to things considered secondary to the welfare of the new nation (such as popular music recordings for international distribution or international touring of Cuban popular music ensembles).

The role of music in helping to promote and reinforce the new Cuban government’s agenda of cooperation and solidarity in the 1960s could have also been a factor. During the early 1960s in Cuba, international musical influences were slowly being rejected in favor of autochthonous popular Cuban music that reinforced Cuban identity and sovereignty. Gone were the more fun-loving, internationally-influenced tunes of the nightclub *charangas*. Instead, popular music composers and performers began presenting music with a decidedly more political and social consciousness message.\(^{61}\) What I believe to be the only extant video of Pancho El Bravo performing live, demonstrates this new role for Cuban musicians. The title of the song he performs is titled “¡Organizate!” (Organize!), recorded in 1969.\(^ {62}\) In 2002, I conducted a personal interview in Havana with Pancho El Bravo. Pancho gave me a brief history of his life as a musician and explained to me what musical influences he used to create the *tira tira* rhythm for his *charanga*.

\(^{61}\) For more information on Cuban policies towards the arts since the beginning of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, see Moore 2006.

\(^{62}\) A video of “¡Organizate!” (Organize!) can be found at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeaY0w69RfM
Figure 3-82. 2002 photo of Alberto “Pancho El Bravo” Cruz Torres (1928-2009), and his son, Alberto Cruz Ramos, playing the *tira tira* rhythm on the *güiro*.

Figure 3-83. Memorabilia of Pancho El Bravo.

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Pancho was first taught to play the flute when he was eight years old by his father, Tomás Cruz Martínez, who was a sergeant in the Musical Municipal de Marianao military band. When Pancho was about seventeen or eighteen years old, he began performing in a popular orquesta his father had organized in Havana called Ritmo Juvenil (Youthful Rhythm). His brother Antonio played the piano, his cousin played the güiro, and other young friends and family members played the pailas, contrabass, conga, and two violins, all fronted by two singers.

Sometime around 1950, Pancho was hired to play flute with the famous Orquesta Neno González. [See: Figure 3-63.] In 1957, Pancho was awarded a Disco de Oro (Gold Record) for his composition of “A Caballo (Te tumbó el caballo)” (Knocked off the horse) recorded with Gonzalez’s charanga. The song was composed using the a caballo, a rhythm very popular in Cuba at that time.

The Orquesta Neno Gonzalez actually played a good number of pieces using the a caballo rhythm, and its eight or nine variants, so Pancho had much experience performing a caballo in sections of danzones, mambos, and chachachas. Supporting Pancho’s claim, Rene Lorente states that it was the a caballo rhythm, with its heavy accent on the downbeat—mimicking the sound of a horse’s hooves clomping on the ground—that served as the basis for the tira tira (Personal interview 2010). [See: Figures 3-84 and 3-85.]

63 Marianao is a suburb of Havana.

64 It is very common practice in Cuba to compose mixed-genre popular songs. Many songs are classified as hybrid genres, such as danzón-chá, danzón-mambo, danzón-tira, guaracha-mambo, bolero-son, etc.

65 To hear the a caballo variant closest in structure to the tira tira, see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDtjbapt1_Y. This URL also provides links to video examples of eight other a caballo variants.
What made Pancho’s *tira tira* different from the *a caballo* rhythm, according to Pancho—and analysis bears this out—was the way in which he interlocked the rhythmic structure of the piano, violins, and contrabass, and placed the most rhythmic emphasis on the pattern given to the *güiro* and the *conga*. In fact, Pancho said that the most important identifying rhythm in the *tira tira* was the simple quarter- and two eighth-note *güiro* pattern combined with the eighth-note *conga* rhythm. [See: Figure 3-84 and 3-85.]

As shown in Figures 3-84, 3-85, and 3-86, the *tira tira* rhythm has no syncopation in the percussion. All of the syncopation is played by the piano, violins, and contrabass. [See Figure 3-86.] The full score of Pancho El Bravo’s “Tira Tira Callejero” (You Go, Boy) from his *Bòtate Na’ Ma’ (I’ll Never Leave You Again)* album, recorded in 1960-1961 using the *tira tira* rhythm, is provided in Appendix D – Musical Transcriptions. A section of the score follows. What it shows is this simple, non-syncopated percussion pattern interlocked with the syncopated rhythm in the melodic and harmonic instruments.
Figure 3-86. Syncopated rhythms in the melodic instruments interlock with the straight rhythms in the percussion to create the *tira tira* rhythm.

The case of Pancho El Bravo, as well as other musicians, modifying extant rhythmic structures to create a new musical genre, has always been a common practice.
in Cuba. Many Cuban musicians fine-tuned their craft while composing and performing under the direction of the older masters of Cuban popular music genres. Most musicians, especially the charanga musicians, performed with several ensembles during their careers, gaining various experiences in understanding the vast array of genres, forms, and performance styles. Many formed their own ensembles after acquiring mastery of their art.

Several important charanga musicians left Cuba during the 1950s and 1960s and formed charangas of their own abroad, primarily in the United States, thereby adding a transnational aspect to the historical trajectory of the development of the charanga ensemble and its musical genres and styles. Below are some of the most important transnational Cuban charanga ensembles in Cuba and the United States.

Figure 3-87. 1950s photo of Farajo y sus Estrellas (Fajardo and his All-Stars) in Cuba. Flutist and director José Fajardo is in white on the left. (Source: Photo courtesy of the Fajardo Family. Used with permission.)
Figure 3-88. 1950s photo of José Fajardo in Cuba. (Source: Photo courtesy of the Fajardo Family. Used with permission.)

Figure 3-89. 1960s photo of Fajardo y sus Estrellas in Miami, Florida. José Fajardo is center in the light jacket. (Source: Photo courtesy of the Fajardo family. Used with permission.)
Figure 3-90. Circa 1960s photo of Orchestra Broadway in New York, led by flutist Eddy Zervigón. (Source: Photo courtesy of Orchestra Broadway. Public Domain.)

Figure 3-91. The CD cover for Orquesta Broadway’s 40th Anniversary release in 2003. Eddy Zervigón is center in black. (Source: Photo courtesy of Orchestra Broadway. Public Domain.)
Figure 3-92. Eddy Zervigón, flutist with the oldest charanga in the U.S., Orquesta Broadway. (Source: Photo courtesy of Eric González. Used with permission.)

Figure 3-93. Flutist Eduardo Aguirre, the original director of Original de Manzanillo (shown here in the Teatro América in Havana circa early 1990s), is now the director of Charanga Típica Tropical in Miami, Florida. (Source: Public Domain.)
Figure 3-94. 1968 photo of flutist Eduardo Aguirre, then the director of Original de Manzanillo in Havana, Cuba. (Source: Photo courtesy of Eduardo Aguirre. Used with permission.)

Figure 3-95. 2000 photo of Charanga Típica Tropical from Miami, Florida, led by flutist Eduardo Aguirre, the director of Original de Manzanillo from Havana. (Source: Promotional photo courtesy of Charanga Típica Tropical. Used with permission.)
Figure 3-96. 2008 photo of flutist Eduardo Aguirre, now the director of Charanga Típica Tropical in Miami, Florida. (Source: Photo courtesy of Eduardo Aguirre. Used with permission.)

Figure 3-97. Left to right: Eduardo Aguirre, Rene Lorente, and Eddy Zervigón in Miami, Florida in 2010. (Source: Photo courtesy of Rene Lorente. Used with permission.)
Non-Cuban devotees of the charanga tradition have also, within the last few years, formed charanga ensembles outside of Cuba, primarily in Europe. These European charanga musicians study with Cuban charanga masters, learning to develop performance practices as true to the charanga sound as possible. Some, like Sue Miller of Leeds, England, travel often to Cuba to work with Cuban musicians and to learn not only performance practices, but compositional techniques as well.

Figure 3-98. 2009 photo of London-based Charanga del Norte, led by flutist Sue Miller. (Source: Photo courtesy of Sue Miller and Charanga del Norte. Used with permission.)

Figure 3-99. La Charanga Central is an international group of professional musicians from the Netherlands. (Source: Photo courtesy of La Charanga Central. Used with permission.)
To better understand the roles and relationships of Cuban popular dance music composers and musicians, and the musical genres they performed, it is helpful to view historical documents such as archival photographs. Photographs, used for analytical purposes, also provide documentation to substantiate scholarly claims. Towards that end, the brief pictorial history of Cuban charanga popular music composers and musicians provided in this chapter offers valuable insight into the instrumentation and history of charanga. Equally important for understanding charanga is what the combination of photographic documentation and recordings tells us about the performance practices of the charanga ensembles and the unique contributions of individual charanga musicians. Analysis of charanga performance practices follows in Chapter Four.
CHAPTER 4
PERFORMANCE PRACTICES OF CHARANGA POPULAR MUSIC

While performance practices for the various charanga ensemble instruments, and the genres of music performed by the charangas, as well as idiosyncratic stylistic differences between various charanga ensembles has varied somewhat throughout their evolution, there remain stylistic constants in almost all forms of twentieth-century charanga performance practice. Through review of the literature, examination of transcriptions, careful aural analysis of recordings, and interviews with charanga musicians such as Guillermo Rubalcaba, Pancho El Bravo, and Rene Lorente, these constants are revealed. In addition, the specific performance practices of the charanga flute also follows in this chapter.

Charanga flute virtuoso Rene Lorente believes that from the 1940s through the 1960s, during the golden age of the charanga’s popularity, most ensembles played according to the stylistic attributes established by violinists Enrique Jorrín and Rafael Ley, the directors of Orquesta Aragón. It was Jorrín and Ley who set the rules for charanga performance practice that charangas to this day still emulate. The performance practices created by Jorrín and Ley are often referred to as playing “in the típico (typical) style” and are considered by contemporary musicians to be the most authentic trademark of charanga performance.

The flutists that have played with Orquesta Aragón over the years are considered to be the titans of charanga flute playing, especially Richard Egües, and they have consistently set the benchmarks for performance practice as they created the modern style and sound of charanga flute playing—and it could be argued, the sound of charanga itself—and most contemporary charanga flute players will first emulate the
sound of these *charanga* flute champions before developing their own unique style of playing.

The list of flutists for Orquesta Aragón, since its inception, includes: Efraín Loyola, flutist with Aragón from 1939-1952; José “Rolando” Lozano, 1952-1954; Richard Egües, 1954-1984; Rene Lorente, 1984-1990; and Eduardo Rubio, 1990 to present. As is easily observed, this list of legendary, elite flute players is extremely small given the comparatively large number of *charanga* flute players Cuba has produced over the last one hundred years. The individual performance practices and characteristic styles of each of these performers represent the evolutionary stylistic changes Orquesta Aragón has undergone throughout its history and in many ways they also mirror the changes in the development of *charanga* in general.

Orquesta Aragón’s first flutist, Efraín Loyola, performed in the style most associated with the early *charangas*; a smooth style, fashioned after the melodic and harmonic qualities of Western art music and made famous by one of *charanga*’s first and most iconic flute players, Antonio Arcaño. Orquesta Aragón’s second flutist, José “Rolando” Lozano, originally from Cienfuegos and a friend of Orquesta Aragón’s founder, Orestes Aragón Cantero, was the flute player for Orquesta Aragón for only a short time, from 1952-1954. Yet, in many ways, he can be viewed as the important bridge between the Arcaño style of *charanga* flute playing and the more popular, contemporary style of Richard Egües, arguably the most famous of all *charanga* flute players. It is Egües who is credited with creating the style of *charanga* flute playing that revolutionized *charanga* in the mid-twentieth century. Lozano, as predecessor to

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66 Lozano is the brother of Clemente Lozano and the father of *charanga* flute player Danilo Lozano.
Egües, played with a much smoother, softer, more ‘art music’ sound, much like Arcaño’s. He achieved this by playing with the flute headjoint pushed in much farther than did Egües and his successors. Lozano’s smooth style and art music performance practices nonetheless helped Orquesta Aragón first rise to stardom. He is famous for being the charanga flute player on four of Orquesta Aragón’s most popular songs: “Pare Cochero,” “La Agua de Clavelito,” “Yo se que Nunca,” and “Mentira Criolla.” When Lozano left for Mexico in 1954 to play with Orquesta América, Richard Egües became the flute player for Orquesta Aragón and considerably changed the sound of the ensemble by performing in his own distinct style (Lozano 1990).

Richard Egües, Orquesta Aragón’s third flutist, is largely considered to be the ensemble’s most famous and influential of all its musicians. All charanga flute players that have followed Egües have emulated his style, especially his direct successor in Orquesta Aragón, Rene Lorente. Egües’ genius was in his improvisatory skills. He could invent improvised phrases without repeating ideas (Miller 2008). Egües also played with a high, brilliant sound from the upper registers of the flute that soared over the other instruments in the ensemble. This sound helped form the típico sound of charanga performance in the mid-twentieth century.67

Indeed, Lorente states that what is most distinctive about charanga is the undisputedly unique sound of the charanga flute itself. The flute, playing in tandem with the violins, gives the ensemble a distinct sonority. This charanga sound is very well-

67 For more information on Richard Egües, please see Sue Miller’s unpublished Music Performance PhD dissertation from the University of Leeds, The Creative Process of Improvisation in Cuban Charanga Performance, with a Specific Focus on the Work of Richard Egües and Orquesta Aragón. It will be available online in mid-2011.
defined stylistically. People immediately recognize the ensemble as a charanga when they hear the flute (Personal interview 2010).

A high, brilliant sound is a desired attribute of the charanga flute and in the charanga ensemble in general. In charanga, violins tend to play in their higher registers, while the piano will play in the center of its range. The contrabass provides the low foundation. The overall intention of musicians in the charanga is to highlight only one melodic instrument at a time and it is most important to hear the flute play above all the other instruments (Rubalcaba: Personal interview 2002).

Figure 4-1. Measures 21-25 of “Paella,” written by Machito and Joseíto Valdés, illustrate the Violin I playing in the high register. The full transcription is provided in Appendix D – Musical Transcriptions.

Another characteristic is the striking of the drum-head edge of the pailas or timbales to produce a brilliant sound in the percussion and to also have the violins play pizzicato to accentuate that rhythm. These techniques of percussive attack help articulate and emphasize the rhythmic vitality of the music. In addition, the piano and violins liberate the flute from having to play harmony, allowing it to perform highly virtuosic, improvisatory melodic passages (Galan 1983: 203-204). [See: Figure 4-2.]
Figure 4-2. Measures 59-76 of “La Cantina,” written by Richard Egües, illustrate the violins playing pizzicato against the percussion section, the piano playing in its middle register, and the harmonic rhythm played by the violins and piano, allowing the flute to improvise. The full transcription is provided in Appendix D – Musical Transcriptions.
Regarding form, the violins play a harmonic accompaniment in the first section(s) of charanga’s associated musical genres (such as the danzón, mambo, and chachachá), but then they switch to rhythmic accompaniment—interlocking in synchrony with the piano and bass—in the son montuno section (the final section) as shown in Figure 4-2 above. Lorente revealed to me that Enrique Jorrín had told him that the job of the violins is to support the flute harmonically. Violins are not to compete with the flute or complicate the melody. This is why the violins play a rhythmic vamp underneath the flute while it is improvising in the son montuno section. Lorente clarifies:

Un arreglo de Charanga es basado en la tónica y dominante. Hay arreglistas que utilizaban armonías bitonales algo mas complejas, pero sin que se llegue a grandes complicaciones. Los arreglos se basan en la sincopa y el cinquillo cubano. El piano, el bajo y el ritmo mantienen una base para que el solista: la flauta, a la hora de inspirar tenga una libertad de improvisación por varios compases, ventajoso para la música bailable. Los tonos que se escogen para los temas son tonos brillantes. La flauta es un instrumento que tiene que tocar de la media a la alta escala, incluso se le escribe una octava más alta en los papeles musicales. Las voces se estila hacerla al unisono, los violines adoran sin molestar el cuerpo del tema y en su montuno mantienen un tumbao brillante para que la flauta inspire (E-mail interview 2010).

[A musical arrangement for a charanga is based [harmonically] on the tonic and dominant. There are arrangements that utilize more complex bitonal harmonies, but without leading to major complications. Rhythmically, the arrangements are based on syncopation and the Cuban cinquillo rhythm. The piano, bass and their combined rhythm serve as the basis for the soloist: the flute, who is inspired to improvise for several measures, something that is very beneficial for dance music. The flute tones chosen for the songs are brilliant tones. The flute is an instrument that has to play in the mid to high register, including playing an octave higher than what is written in the score. It is customary for the voices to sing in unison, the violins add ornamentation without disturbing the main melody, and the montuno section maintains a brilliant rhythm that inspires the flute.]

The improvisations played by the flutist are responsible for maintaining the energy of the dance and the flute works with the rhythm section to push the music forward for the dancers. The flute is also responsible for creating calmer sections in the son
montuno so that dancers may relax a bit, i.e., the flute is responsible for the pacing of the composition. Lorente states that the flute is “el capitán del son” y “el caballo delante del carro” [the “captain of the son” and the “horse in front of the cart”] (Personal interview 2010). Lorente also states that in the 1940s and 1950s, the sonority of the charanga flute—the high, brilliant, piercing sound—was so important to the sound of a charanga that there were rivalries between ensembles to secure the best flute players (Personal interview 2010). Because the flute is so integral to the sound of the charanga, it was necessary for me to carry out more in-depth research on the instrument and the musicians who play it in order to present the most accurate statements regarding charanga performance practice.

By far, the most well-respected and professionally accomplished charanga flute player I was able to work with was Rene Lorente, formerly with Orquesta Aragón of Havana, Cuba, but now living in Miami, Florida. Lorente was instrumental in advising me of charanga performance practices, the history and physical properties of the charanga flute, and the historical accounts of charanga ensembles, for he is one of the last few remaining central figures in the history of Cuban charanga as it developed in pre-revolutionary Cuba. For Lorente, the charanga sound is closely tied to concepts of nostalgia as well as issues of authenticity, modernity, and Cuban national identity. So much so, that exiled Cubans in South Florida, such as Lorente, have established organizations and events that serve to revitalize and reinforce notions of nostalgia, based on what they consider to be symbols of authentic Cuban identity, such as charanga.
Figure 4-3. The caption on the CubaNostalgia website reads: “CubaNostalgia, in its 13th year, the premier Cuban event outside of Cuba, is a journey back in time for those who remember the island’s glamorous times – and for those who never experienced them. There will be live Cuban exhibits, artists and vendors, traditional Cuban foods, and of course music.” [http://www.cubanostalgia.org/](http://www.cubanostalgia.org/)

Lorente is involved with the well established CubaNostalgia organization which hosts events targeted to the Cuban exile population in South Florida. Their website
clearly states their goal of maintaining ‘authentic’ Cuban traditions and they organize their events to have a high impact on feelings of nostalgia. Lorente is active within the organization, often performing charanga for recurring events and special occasions. The organization’s website provides information regarding activities such as expositions, festivals, conferences, and other cultural events. The website also provides information on acquiring Cuban memorabilia, where to go to eat Cuban food and buy Cuban books, jewelry and artwork, and where one can purchase and hear Cuban music.

Figure 4-4. The Music page for CubaNostalgia’s website lists musical genres most associated with charanga, genres considered to be the most authentic and important for maintaining tradition and invoking feelings of nostalgia. Lorente is seen performing charanga, on the right, in the photograph at the bottom.
Lorente has also established a FaceBook presence, announcing up-coming CubaNostalgia events. Through social networks such as FaceBook, exiles stay connected and reinforce ‘traditions.’ Networking also serves to inform others about these ‘traditions,’ such as charanga music, and to provide information about the important charanga musicians in the area.

Figure 4-5. Rene Lorente’s FaceBook page, announcing the sale of his music at a CubaNostalgia event. Lorente also performed charanga at this exposition.

A closer look at the photograph on Lorente’s FaceBook page reveals other details about charanga’s ties to nostalgia, tradition, authenticity, and Cuban identity. In the photograph, Lorente is holding his charanga flute against a backdrop graphic of the Cuban flag. The phrase, “A lo cubano” (What it means to be Cuban), is printed along the side of the flute. The graphics, words, and image of the charanga flute situates Lorente as authentic, reinforces Cuban identity as imagined by the exile community, and ties charanga to their feelings of nostalgia.
Importantly, Lorente and other contemporary charanga flute players with whom I interacted frame their discourses about charanga performance practices in terms of this notion of nostalgia and authenticity. All of these charanga flute players learned to perform charanga in Cuba during the height of charanga’s popularity in the 1940s and especially in the 1950s. Almost all of them adopted many of the performance practices of Richard Egües, as he was—and in many ways has remained—the shining example of the popular charanga sound. These musicians have continued to incorporate elements of Egües’ style to this day, especially in the U.S. where the execution of particular performance practices, sonorities, and the performance of specific popular musical compositions link these musicians to the golden days of charanga in Cuba during the 1950s and establish them as authentic and their performance styles untainted by living in exile. It is this nostalgic view of a pre-revolution Cuban identity that is constructed and reinforced by maintaining the Egües style of performance.

Since the 1950s and 1960s, in Cuba as well as abroad, there have been any number of charanga ensembles—comprised of both Cuban musicians as well as
musicians from other countries interested in charanga—that have established themselves as either revivalists or modernists, i.e., those who seek to revive or 'modernize' the charanga sound. According to Livingston, revivalists such as Miller, Aguirre, Lorente, and Zervigón:

...position themselves in opposition to aspects of the contemporary cultural mainstream, align themselves with a particular historical lineage, and offer a cultural alternative in which legitimacy is grounded in reference to authenticity and historical fidelity. Music revivals are middle class phenomena which play an important role in the formulation and maintenance of a class-based identity of subgroups of individuals disaffected with aspects of contemporary life. Thus revivalist ideologies tend to be constructed on certain modes of thinking and structuring of experience that are shared by middle class people in consumer-capitalist and socialist societies. These include the categorization of culture into 'modern' and 'traditional,' the privileging of exchange value over use value, the objectification, commodification and rationalization of various aspects of life, participation in the 'cult of consumerism,' an ideology of modernity, and the imagined community of the nation, among others. All of these belief structures and ways of thinking play an important role to a lesser or greater extent, in music revivalism (1999: 66).

The modernist charangas, according to revivalists like Lorente, are not really charangas and he states that unlike the revivalist groups, the modernists seek to change the 'authentic' charanga sound. Indeed, several of these ensembles, such as the legendary Cuban group, Los Van Van, have altered the 'traditional' instrumentation of the charangas by incorporating electronic instruments such as bass and guitar and have also included trombones, trumpets, and other wind instruments. They also play a myriad of other musical genres besides danzón, mambo, chachachá, and tira tira, for example. Lorente states that other ensembles such as David Calzado’s Charanga Habanera isn’t even remotely a charanga at all and he echoes the opinions of other revivalist musicians who express distain for the manner in which contemporary musicians such as Calzado are appropriating charanga as a way to signify Cuban
musical authenticity and legitimacy. Nonetheless, ‘charangas’ such as Charanga Habanera are hugely popular, especially with a younger audience since the music the ensemble performs is heavily influenced by rap, hip hop, and other contemporary musical genres.

What is interesting to note is that ideas about ‘authentic’ charanga performance practices among older charanga musicians appears to have frozen in time, specifically in the 1950s and 1960s. This is a revivalist mentality. Any evolution in the performance of charanga is seen as a move away from authenticity and national identity and a move towards a pan-Latin sound. Lorente and other revivalists, especially Cuban musicians in exile, struggle to keep established Cuban musical traditions alive and believe that the new image of Cuba, marketed to an international audience, leaves older traditions such as charanga to die out. He states:

Erudición de música no se hace lo suficiente en Cuba para preservar las tradiciones. Los cubanos creen que toda la música cubana reconocida por la comunidad internacional tiene más valor. Obras escritas por la comunidad internacional también son consideradas más valiosos y respetados más alta. Es raro que los cubanos reconozcan otros artistas cubanos hasta que sean reconocidas internacionalmente. Los cubanos creen que el reconocimiento internacional denota un nivel superior de arte (Personal Interview: 2010).

[Not enough music scholarship is being done in Cuba to preserve traditions. Cubans believe that any Cuban music recognized by the international community has more value. Works written by the international community are likewise considered more valuable and more highly respected. Rarely do Cubans recognize other Cuban artists until they are internationally recognized. Cubans believe that international recognition denotes a higher level of artistry.]

Ideas of progress and modernity also correlate with the notion of an ‘authentic’ charanga sound. This is especially true when it comes to the charanga flute. The five-key French Baroque flute has, for approximately the last one hundred years, been the
key sonic element in establishing the characteristic charanga sound. Among revivalists like Lorente, it certainly signifies authenticity, yet despite this strong tie to authenticity, during the 1950s several charanga flute players, even Richard Egües, began to perform charanga on both the charanga flute as well as the modern Boehm instrument. Eventually, almost all charanga flute players took up the Boehm flute, including Rene Lorente. Learning how to play the modern Boehm flute, according to Lorente, was a symbol of musical accomplishment. It showed that a charanga flutist had been trained in Cuba’s music conservatories and that they were able to perform with great virtuosity, something that is highly valued among charanga musicians and audiences alike. He states:

La música de la Charanga se nutre del son, y el danzón que dio lugar posteriormente al mambo y el chachachá, que son los géneros musicales más representativos de este formato de agrupación. Para interpretar estos géneros los músicos populares tenían un alto nivel técnico en la interpretación de su instrumento (Personal interview: 2010).

[Charanga music draws on the son, and the danzón, subsequently leading to the mambo and chachachá, the musical genres most representative of this type of ensemble. To interpret these genres, musicians who play these popular forms of music have a high level of technical proficiency on their instrument.]

In short, charanga flute players became masters of Western art music flute literature as well as consummate popular charanga performers.

For these musicians, playing the Boehm flute signaled not only elevated social status, but one’s ability to move forward with the times, embracing modern progress and innovations. This was especially important as Cuba continued to build upon notions of Cuban national identity in the 1960s at the beginning of the Cuban Revolution. It was essential to Cuba as a nation—now embracing ideas of total sovereignty—that the country was perceived internationally as a fully modern nation-state capable of socio-
economic sustainability and of possessing and implementing the latest in technology, even the modern technology of musical instruments such as the Boehm flute. Using the Boehm flute to perform charanga may have altered performance practices, especially when it came to timbre, but charanga flute players adopted the Boehm flute nonetheless, incorporating many of the other performance practices that would remain unaffected by the switch in instruments, such as the technical aspects of articulation, register, embellishments, etc.

Adoption of the Boehm flute by charanga musicians also reinforces the points articulated by Wade (1998) in Chapter One, that even though charanga had become a symbol of the elite, most of the musicians who performed in charangas were black or of mixed race, and they were most often directed by a white, educated, musically literate member of the elite or upper classes. Inclusion in the ensemble most likely led to a belief by the members of the underclass that they too could join the ranks of the elite and middle class through assimilation into the symbol (charanga) of a unified nationalist identity. Adopting Western art music virtuosic performance practices such as those taught in Cuba’s music conservatories, and learning to play the Boehm flute, directly relates to the desire on the part of charanga flutists to elevate their social class status and to reinforce Cuba’s modern national identity.

Further examples of these notions of class, nostalgia, authenticity, identity, and modernity can be witnessed in the life history of Rene Lorente. The following biographical sketch of Rene Lorente is based on interviews and conversations I had with him throughout 2010 and 2011. This is Lorente’s own recounting of events and provides insight into how certain events and elements are remembered in nostalgic
terms, as well as providing documentable evidence of the history and evolution of charanga from the 1950s until the present.

Lorente knew from a young age that he wanted to play music and so at first, he played any instrument he could find. Charanga flutist Richard Egües and violinist Enrique Jorrín from Orquesta Aragón were his heroes and Lorente used Aragón’s 45rpm recordings to commit to memory everything they played. He was first given a pan flute by his father. Then he was given a cane flute and he even made a flute from the tube of a TV antenna, so desperate was his need to make music. Lorente is not from a musical family, but his father understood his son’s aspiration and so, when Lorente was twelve years old, his father gave him an old ten-key English flute in very poor condition for Christmas. This was at a time when there were no five-key French Baroque flutes to be found in Havana. Lorente did not know the fingerings for the ten-key flute, but nonetheless, he taught himself to play the songs of Orquesta Aragón.

When Lorente was a teenager, he had a friend who led a charanga in Marianao, Cuba (a suburb of Havana) in the Playa Santa Fe neighborhood. Lorente wanted to play with the charanga but he did not know how to read music because he hadn’t yet studied music formally. He first asked to have a teacher show him how to play before he approached his friend about performing in his charanga. Lorente’s flute teacher, the flute player in Barbarito Diez’s charanga and the cousin of Antonio Arcaño, had a five-key flute. This was the first time Lorente had played the five-key charanga flute and within six months, he had mastered the instrument.

68 The practice of performing from recordings also links up with the revivalist trope of learning earlier styles through recordings of an earlier ‘authentic’ age.
Lorente wanted to then study with Arcaño but the maestro did not want to teach any more students. Arcaño wasn’t playing much in those days and he already had too many students, but Lorente’s flute teacher asked him to at least listen to the boy. Arcaño asked Lorente if he knew the song “Fefita” by José Urfé and Lorente said yes. Lorente played the danzón and Arcaño immediately asked Lorente if he could come back to play for him the next day.

Despite being Arcaño’s student, Lorente did not play like Arcaño. Arcaño’s style was from a different era, the era of danzón, and Arcaño had a much softer and more romantic style than the current popular method of playing. Lorente preferred to play more like his idol, Richard Egües, especially when it came to playing chachachá. He states that interpreting the feeling of charanga, the charanga style, is not something that can be taught in schools, but must be learned from the masters, like Egües. This statement is significant relative to the history of charanga performance practice. The issue regarding the development of the contradanza in nineteenth-century Cuba, raised by Carpentier and Manuel in Chapter Three, supports Lorente’s position that the evolution of charanga cannot be tied to any one single evolutionary aspect. Lorente, learning charanga from Arcaño, yet performing like Egües, is a perfect example.

Eventually, Lorente too wanted to learn to play the modern Boehm system flute. He then began studying the Boehm flute with Alfredo Portela while continuing to learn to play the charanga flute with Arcaño. During this time, the wood of Lorente’s five-key flute had cracked, so he started to learn to play charanga exclusively on the Boehm flute. Because of this ability to play both the charanga flute as well as the Boehm flute, he was made a member of the Orquesta América de Ninón Mondéjar in 1979. Lorente
played with Orquesta América in Santiago, Cuba for carnival seasons (from July through September) where many charangas gathered. At his first performance, according to Lorente’s wife, Rosamaría, all the charanga musicians stopped to listen to Lorente play the flute.

In the late 1970s, Rafael Ley, the leader of Orquesta Aragon, began looking for a successor for his flutist, Richard Egües. In 1984, Ley selected Rene Lorente because of his ability to play like Egües as well as in his own unique style. With the money from his new job, Lorente was able to purchase another five-key flute from Olga Castro, the original flute player from the all-female dance band, Orquesta Anacaona, for $200 Cuban pesos. Lorente performed with Orquesta Aragón on both the Boehm flute and the charanga flute until he moved to the United States in 1990. Upon arrival in the U.S., Lorente formed a charanga and released several recordings. His recording, “Concepto en Flauta” on the Hamelin Records label, was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award in 2005.

As of late, Lorente has been unable to form another charanga in the U.S. because almost all Cuban musicians have to work day jobs and have no managerial representation. Securing managerial support for the charangas is difficult because charangas are large ensembles, with a minimum of twelve to fifteen musicians, making them more expensive to hire than smaller ensembles with fewer personnel to pay. The best most of them can do is to gather in ad hoc groups to play low-paying gigs. The reality of the economics of directing a charanga in the U.S. also points towards notions of nostalgia and authenticity. Clearly, charanga musicians perform on a consistent
basis more for the love and preservation of what they consider ‘authentic’ charanga music than for any type of financial gain.

Lorente states that performing for low pay and limited recognition is extremely detrimental to the continuation of the charangas and the genres of music they perform because an ensemble must play together often, with a cohesive style influenced by the director, in order to form a distinct sound and musical identity. And not only is it important to charanga musicians to develop a distinct musical identity, many like Lorente feel an obligation to try to remain as authentic to the charanga sound as possible. The responsibility for maintaining the sound of charanga as a symbol of national identity is taken very seriously. Lorente has better hopes for the life and longevity of charanga in Cuba because in Cuba, these ensembles are financially supported by the government. This is not the case in the U.S.

Even so, Lorente states that most contemporary musicians in Cuba do not know the charanga sound. He states that the performance practices for charanga are completely different than playing classical or jazz or other popular forms. Charanga has a more brilliant sound, uses distinct improvisatory techniques such as employing a set of standard melodic riffs, and charanga flute players must also learn to pace the ensemble through the use of improvisation, resting in certain places in the montuno section, while also playing in an animated manner to raise the excitement of the audience in other places of the montuno. Many charanga musicians believe that learning the nuances of charanga performance practices can only come from learning to play charanga from other charanga musicians. For example, Lorente tells the story of being contacted by the international flute icon, James Galway, regarding charanga
performance practice. Lorente stated to me that the *charanga* style of flute playing is so unique that Galway realized that he needed Lorente to teach him how to play *charanga* in an effort to recreate the *charanga* sound for one of Galway’s recordings. This supports the notion that authenticity must come directly from the *charanga* masters.

Regarding performance practice, Lorente also states that the style of any piece, as well as the overall style of a *charanga* ensemble, really depends on the performance practice characteristics of each individual flute player. As stated prior, after the 1930s, all the major *charanga* flute players looked to Arcaño as the progenitor of contemporary *charanga* flute playing despite the fact that stylistically, Arcaño had a much sweeter, romantic, more ‘classical’ sound than that of the *charanga* flute players that followed (Giro 2007, 3: 43), most of whom fashioned their style of playing after Orquesta Aragón flutist, Richard Egües. Indeed, for many, Egües is considered the preeminent, archetypal modern *charanga* flute player. There are, however, performance practice constants and characteristics of the instrument that clearly demonstrate the general style of *charanga* flute playing linking the 'classical' sound of Arcaño to the modern sound of Egües. One such characteristic is the overall sweet and mellow timbre of the middle register and the brilliant quality of the upper registers (Pancho El Bravo: Personal interview 2002).

The practice of consistently performing in the higher registers makes the *charanga* five-key wooden flute a very difficult instrument to play. The tone holes are wide apart, making it almost impossible for many women (or men with small hands) to play the instrument because smaller fingers are unable to cover the holes completely. This is only one of the main reasons why it is men who typically play the *charanga* flute. Figure
4-7 below provides a good example of the distance between tone holes on the charanga flute. In this photograph I am holding the instrument, barely covering the tone holes with my fingers stretched as far as possible. It would take great effort and many hours of training for me to be able to develop the physical capacity to master the charanga flute and to play with the high level of virtuosity required of these musicians.

Figure 4-7. Sunni Witmer and Rene Lorente in Miami, Florida on December 18, 2010. (Source: Photo courtesy of Sunni Witmer.)

The embouchure needed to play the charanga flute is also different than that required to play the Boehm system flute. The charanga flute embouchure is tighter, smaller, and more force is needed to fill the instrument with a sufficient amount of air. A
charanga flute player needs a very strong embouchure to play the instrument. As Lorente puts it, “a que tener labios muy caliente” [one must have very “hot lips”] to play the charanga flute (Personal interview 2010). Lorente’s own embouchure is small, tilted down to the right, and off-centered. He states that this is because charanga flute players often have to play for up to thirty minutes at a time without resting, as well as play for almost the entire performance (often up to five or six hours) due to the fact that the flute is the solo instrument. Maintaining that kind of stamina is tiring, so charanga flute players will slightly lower their arms, thereby causing the flute to tilt downward to the right. Lorente also has a callus on his lip—something typically unheard of in Boehm-system flute performance practices—the result of having to force so much air through the instrument in order to play in the higher registers. He also says that having first played the charanga flute made it easier for him to learn to play the higher registers on the Boehm flute.

According to Lorente, almost all charanga flute players, if they are musically literate, will study from the Gran Metodo Complêto de Flauta Adoptado por el Conservatorio por Tolou, the Spanish version of Jean Louis Tulou’s Méthode de flûte, progressive et raisonnée: adaptée par le Comité d'enseignement du Conservatoire national de Musique (first printed in 1835) to facilitate their technique. The Tulou method book was also translated into English in 1995 by Janice Dockendorff Boland and Martha F. Cannon. The method book contains fingerings, etudes, scales, and exercises for articulation and ornamentation, all for the one-key to five-key French Baroque flute. For example, Tulou’s method book provides information on the proper execution of the two most important ornamentations in Baroque flute playing, trills and
turns. These techniques are also stock ornamentations for charanga flute players. Charanga trills or ‘shakes,’ are performed more like mordents with the primary note sounding first. Turns may consist of the traditional four-note pattern or a three-note pattern when played in a descending scale. Most mordents are played in sequence and can also include wide octave leaps. The ability to perform these techniques requires a high level of virtuosity.

Figure 4-8. Charanga Flute Trill/Mordent, fully notated.

Lorente states that Tulou’s method book is most useful to charanga flute players for the numerous exercises it provides illustrating alternate fingerings. Because of its complex fingerings, executing proper technique is cumbersome and notes on the charanga flute are difficult to play, especially in the higher register, the one most desired for performing the charanga style. With only five keys, the charanga flute uses a forked fingering and half-hole fingering system and there can be as many as nineteen alternate fingerings for a single note, each altering the pitch in small degrees. [See: Appendix B – Five-Key Flute Fingering Chart.] Alternate fingerings also affect the timbre and tonal color of any note.

Tulou’s method book also provides information on how to execute the four primary Baroque articulations: the simple tongue (tu), the staccato tongue, the double tongue (tu...
ku), and the louré (du). These are articulations also performed by charanga flute players, especially the staccato and double-tonguing patterns. There are also a wide variety of articulation patterns offered by Tulou and many are employed by charanga flutists. [See Figure 4-9.] Most often, however, the articulation preferred by charanga flutists is the staccato simple tongue or double tongue. Playing staccato adds a rhythmic element to the flute parts and accentuates notes played in the higher registers.

**VARIOUS TONGUING PATTERNS**

A wide variety of tonguing patterns exists. I think it is pointless to give examples of all of them. Let it suffice to show those patterns that are currently used most frequently.

![Various Baroque tonguing patterns used by charanga flute players.](source)

Figure 4-9. Various Baroque tonguing patterns used by charanga flute players. (Source: Tulou’s *A Method for the Flute*, written in 1851 and translated by Janice Dockendorff Boland and Martha F. Cannon in 1995: 8.)

Flute solos in charanga are most often played within the upper boundaries of the flute’s range, and astonishingly, according to Lorente, many solos frequently extend up to F8 (as he so easily demonstrated for me). These notes are obtained, as mentioned,  

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69 The louré is used for notes that have dots notated above them, but that fall under a slur.
through the use of various and complicated alternate fingerings as the typical written range of the charanga flute only extends to G#7. Due to the practice of playing in the extreme high register, the charanga flute is also very loud, as it would have to be in order to be heard above the rest of the ensemble. In fact, the charanga flute, played in the upper register, can compete in decibels with a modern trumpet.

Regarding the improvisatory technique critical for correct charanga flute playing, French Baroque influence is obvious in the performance practices used by many charanga flutists and often the figures played bear close resemblance to the florid ornamentation that typified the Baroque period. Generally speaking, improvisatory passages played by charanga flutists tend to be highly arpeggiated, less chromatic, and more straight rhythmically (versus 'swung') than similar passages played by improvisatory jazz flutists. Sue Miller also states that:

Compared to jazz, Cuban flute improvisation entails more arpeggiated figures and is less chromatic in nature. It is virtuosic in a different way. The rhythmic nature of Cuban music requires phrasing to be well placed—in fact, the Cuban solo style could be described as 'dancing with the rhythm.' The flute sound is clear, high and assertively articulated. The notes in general are short and tongued (2003).

Wide octave leaps on the dominant are characteristic and common. The ‘típico’ charanga players also use a stock of melodic phrases and rhythmic motives that have been passed down through the generations and feature the aforementioned characteristics (Murphy 1991: 122). The preference for playing in the extreme register using sharp articulations and marked phrasing, as well as the incorporation of florid Baroque ornamentations during improvisation are the hallmarks of charanga flute playing. The following example of an improvised solo by Rene Lorente notates these performance practices.
Figure 4-10. Measures 80-139 of Rene Lorente’s improvised flute solo in “La Cantina,” composed by Richard Egües, provide a clear example of staccato Baroque articulations, mordents, octave leaps, sequencing, and improvisation based upon the tonic and dominant. The full transcription is provided in Appendix D – Musical Transcriptions.

The manner of tuning the charanga flute is also distinct and is directly related to the purposeful manipulation of the instrument’s timbre. In order to achieve the desired high, brilliant sound characteristic of the instrument, charanga flute players who were trained to sound more like Egües (and less like Arcaño) will pull the headjoint as far out as possible from the barrel. This gives the charanga flute its unique, loud, penetrating sound.

When the headjoint is pushed in, as would have been the typical performance practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the flute has a much softer, almost muted, sweeter sound (as demonstrated by Lorente during a meeting I had with him). Indeed, the difference in timbre is striking and it provided an excellent example of the more ‘art music’ sound preferred by Arcaño. Figure 4-11 below reveals how Arcaño would play the charanga flute with the headjoint pushed in order to produce the sweeter, softer timbre of the instrument.
With the headjoint pushed all the way in and the tuning cork in the standard position, the flute plays at approximately A440. *Charanga* flute players will move the tuning cork as close as possible to the embouchure hole to create the distinctive *charanga* sound, therefore requiring that the headjoint be pulled out in an almost direct proportion in order to achieve A440. Because the headjoint is pulled out to acquire the characteristically brilliant sound, adjusting other sections of the instrument is necessary in order to play in tune. Today, in order to tune the instrument to A440, contemporary *charanga* flute players will manipulate the position of the headjoint of the flute by adjusting it in or out relative to the barrel, as well as manipulating the tuning cork in the
headjoint. As mentioned, the tuning cork is typically positioned very near the embouchure hole, which is another technique used to brighten the sound and alter the sonic properties of the instrument, but it also has a corollary regarding tuning. *Charanga* flute players will also move the tuning cork as close to the embouchure hole as possible in order to be able to play the higher registers with greater technical ease.

One of the more interesting manipulations of the instrument in order to achieve the desired *charanga* timbre is the altering of the mouthpiece. *Charanga* flute players will actually shave down the area surrounding the embouchure hole as much as a millimeter in order to affect the pitch of the instrument to play A440. Figure 4-12 below is a clear example of how Lorente has altered (shaved down) the headjoint of his *charanga* flute. Also notice how the headjoint is pulled out approximately an inch from the barrel. Another example is found in Figure 3-97, where we can see that Eddy Zervigón, the *charanga* flutist for Orquesta Broadway, has also shaved down the headjoint of his *charanga* flute to alter the timbre as well as for tuning purposes.

Figure 4-12. The altered headjoint of Rene Lorente’s *charanga* flute.

Permanently altering the instrument to achieve a desired timbre may seem a bit extreme, given the rarity and fragility of these instruments. It is done, however, not only because performance practices dictate that the timbre of the instrument be bright, high, and loud—much unlike the timbre for which it was originally invented; the sweet, soft
timbre of the Baroque chamber ensemble—but also because the instrument is notoriously difficult to play in tune. Until circa the eighteenth century, late in the Baroque period when these flutes were being made, equal temperance was not a universally accepted performance practice. In time, temperance became the standard practice and performers were required to manipulate their instruments to achieve it. Playing in tune on the charanga flute is extremely challenging as each note must be tweaked to achieve the desired pitch and tone. In an effort to mitigate problems with intonation, many alternate fingerings were developed and are now available to charanga flute players. Alternate fingerings facilitate technical passages as well as assist in playing the instrument in tune. Charanga flute players will also often half-hole notes to get them in tune. These performance practices can be seen in a video I recorded on December 18, 2010 of Rene Lorente.

Object 4-1. Video recording of Rene Lorente performing “Mira a ver quien es: Baila, Catalina” (Look Who it Is: Dance, Catherine), composed in the 1950s by Victor Marin. (MPG file 41.0 MB)
In this video, Lorente’s embouchure is skewed to the right and off-center. The improvisations he executes are perfect examples of the types of Baroque ornamentation used by charanga flute players. The timbre of the instrument is bright and loud and in the video, Lorente will manipulate the headjoint a few times to play better in tune. The composition Lorente performs is a tira-chá (tira tira-chachachá) titled “Mira a ver quien es: Baila, Catalina” (Look Who it Is: Dance, Catherine), composed in the 1950s by Victor Marin, the long-time composer for Orquesta Aragon. Lorente plays along to a recording made by Rene Lorente y su Charanga Cubana, who perform the song without the flute, which Lorente later adds live in order to practice his improvisations.

In many charanga performances I have witnessed, both live and video-recorded from the late 1940s to the present, the flutist is often elevated on a platform above the rest of the musicians and placed at either the right or left side of the ensemble, not the middle, which is where one would think an ensemble might position its soloist. Even if the flutist is not elevated, they are still typically placed to the side. The middle of the stage is reserved for the vocalists who will sometimes double on violin or güiro.70 This is an inherent characteristic of charanga performance practices. According to Sue Miller, this specific placement of instrumentation is due to the popularity of the vocalists and their ‘centrality’ to the ensemble beginning in the mid-twentieth-century in Cuba. Dancing is also a primary feature of the vocalists and the flutist is not included in this...

70 A YouTube video of a circa 1979 recording of flutist Richard Egües performing the iconic chachachá, “El Bodeguero” for the Show Del Mediodia, recorded live in Havana demonstrates charanga performance practices. Egües is placed on a platform to the side of the stage. Note how Egües’ embouchure tilts down to the right (just as does Lorente’s). Egües plays in the bright timbre desired by charanga flutists and the headjoint of his instrument is pulled out from the barrel. His improvisatory ornamentations are numerous and the rhythmic vamp played by the violins in the montuno section is pronounced. The singing is in unison, and together, this provides a perfect example of charanga performance practices: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZE4niTFIds4&feature=related
choreography, so it is the vocalists that must be placed front and center. *Charanga* flutist “Richard Egües was revolutionary in that he was often billed in larger print than the vocalists due to his virtuosic improvisation skills” (Personal E-mail: May 8, 2011). In addition, the flute is a transverse instrument and placing the flutist on a platform not only protects the player from accidental contact with the dancing vocalists, it also helps to transmit the sound of the instrument further back into the performance venue and over the volume of the other instruments and vocalists. Figures 3-63, 3-70, and 3-75 are good examples of this more contemporary configuration of instrumentation placement. Prior to the mid-twentieth century, and before the addition of choreographed vocalists, the flutist was placed next to the pianist, in front, and either to the side or in the middle of the ensemble depending upon the venue. This substantiates Miller’s conclusions. Figures 3-22, 3-23, 3-24, 3-36, and 3-37 are good examples of earlier *charanga* instrumentation placement.

In the United States, the *charanga* performance practices of Orquesta Aragón have been perpetuated by older *charanga* flutists Eddy Zervigón from Orquesta Broadway in New York, José Fajardo y sus Estrellas (who has since passed away), and Eduardo Aguirre, the director of Charanga Típica Tropical, in Miami, Florida.71 Orquesta Broadway, the oldest and one of the foremost *charangas* in the U.S., having performed for over forty years, plays in what is known as the *típico* style, seen as a traditional and therefore, authentic style of performance (Murphy 1991: 120). Zervigón studied with Richard Egües and while Egües has since passed away, Zervigón

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71 Each of these three *charanga* flutists also had very successful careers in Cuba before immigrating to the U.S.
continues to play in the Cuban típico style. See Figure 3-98 for a photo of Aguirre and Zervigón with Lorente in Miami.\textsuperscript{72}

To substantiate my observations regarding performance practices of charanga ensembles and musicians, I have analyzed five recordings that I believe to be worthy representations of different elements and historical phases of charanga performance. Each of the five was chosen because of its unique contribution to the history, style, and art of charanga. Three are early 78-rpm recordings of charangas that have not been widely heard since some time after they were recorded in the 1920s and 1930s.\textsuperscript{73} I discovered these recordings in the archives of the Díaz-Ayala Collection at Florida International University, the largest collection of recorded Cuban music in the world. The other two recordings are remastered compact discs of recordings made in Cuba: one is a 1960 recording of Pancho El Bravo performing a tira tira, and the other is a 1986 live recording of Rene Lorente fronting Orquesta Aragón. The analyses of these recordings are presented here in chronological order. My transcriptions are the most accurate approximations possible given the poor condition of the recordings and/or the limitations of the technology used to record the original performances, whether they were recorded live or in a studio. The improvisations of the flute performances are approximate due to

\textsuperscript{72} In Europe, the performance practices of Richard Egües and Orquesta Aragón are perpetuated by the charanga ensemble, Charanga del Norte, led by flutist Sue Miller from Leeds, England. Miller was fortunate to have studied with Egües before he passed away and so the legacy of the Egües-inspired performance practices of Orquesta Aragón continue through another generation. See Figure 3-98 for a photo of Charanga del Norte.

\textsuperscript{73} In researching recordings that have subsequently been remastered and commercially released, I have found several that may have had the same charanga performing the same song with the same title, but the recordings and performances from the Diaz-Ayala collection are, for the most part, different. Of the three 78rpm recordings, only two, “Linda Cubana” and “Partiendo Coco,” have just recently been professionally remastered, but in both cases, the tempo was increased from that of the original 78rpsms, thereby altering the original key and obliterating several sonic elements such as detailed instrumental parts in an effort to reduce hiss and pops.
the complexity of the solos and the poor quality of the recordings. Complete
transcriptions for all five recordings can be found in Appendix D – Musical
Transcriptions.

The earliest recording I analyzed was the danzón, “Linda Cubana,” written by
flutist Tata Pereira in 1924. The ensemble provides an interesting illustration of nascent charanga performance practices. It is a perfect example of early twentieth-century charangas who performed elegant danzones yet still incorporated some of the instrumentation of the orquesta típicas, whose sound was more of a military band performing popular music with art music style than that of a salon ensemble. Although called a charanga francesa, the ensemble is actually a hybrid orquesta típica due to the inclusion of the clarinet and the ophicleide in the instrumentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orquesta Tata Pereira</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78 rpm – Studio recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia 2247-X_A_“Linda Cubana”* (Tata Pereira)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia 2247-X_B_“Sandunguita” (Tata Pereira)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Date: 1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: 3:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre: Danzón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation: called charanga francesa but actually a hybrid orquesta típica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute – Tata Pereira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ophicleide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pailas criollas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Güiro</td>
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</tbody>
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Object 4-2. 1924 audio recording of Orquesta Tata Pereira performing the danzón, “Linda Cubana,” with Tata Pereira on flute. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.) (WAV file 34.5 MB)
Figure 4-13. Ca. 1910s photo of Juan “Tata” Francisco Pereira, flutist and director of one of the most popular charangas/orquestas típicas at the turn of the twentieth century. Tata also composed many danzones in a very criollo style (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 109). (Source: CHC. Public Domain.)
The form of this composition is that of a typical early danzón. The A section features the main melody played primarily by the flute and harmonized by the clarinet and violin. Beginning in measure 99, the B section begins with the flute and violin (playing pizzicato) in a rhythmic vamp. Measure 148 is another return to A. Measure 181 begins the C section for an ABAC form. Very little ornamentation is played by the solo instruments and there in only a little improvisation of the melody in the flute part in section C. The syncopation of a modified habanera rhythm is played in the percussion and the feel of the cinquillo (the defining rhythm of the danzón) is found in the interlocking rhythms between the percussion and the bass in the ophecleide and the left hand of the piano. There is an anticipated bass pattern in several measures in section C and the percussion begins to play the distinctive cinquillo pattern of the danzón beginning in measure 11. The flute performs most of the lead melody and employs some ornamentation. The clarinet and violins also assist with the melody, as does the piano. In measure 14, there is a good example of the ornamentation used by charanga flute players: a simple grace note which added interest to the straightforward melody.
Figure 4-15. Measures 1-19 of the transcription of “Linda Cubana” by flutist Tata Pereira.
The *danzón*, “Paella,” by Machito and flutist Joseíto Valdés is a piece written at a time (circa 1930) shortly after several formal changes were made to the *danzón*, the most important being the incorporation of the *son montuno* section, originating with José Urfé in 1910. We also begin to find much more elaborate piano parts in *danzones* of this era due to the Western art music influences of pianist Antonio María Romeu. The flute part, in contrast, is relatively simplistic with very little ornamentation and little or no improvisation.  

Object 4-3. Ca. 1930 audio recording of Orquesta Ideal performing the *danzón*, “Paella,” by Machito and Joseíto Valdés, with Joseíto Valdés on flute. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.) (WAV file 30.6 MB)

As in most *danzones* of this period, the melodies and harmonies in “Paella” are simple and straightforward and the chord progression alternates between the tonic and dominant in the *montuno* section. The instrumentation of this *charanga* is simple with only flute, two violins, piano, contrabass, *timbales*, and *cencerro*. Interestingly, the

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74 For more detailed information regarding the general formal characteristics of *danzones*, please refer to the section on *danzón* in Chapter Three.
güiro, an essential percussion instrument in almost all charanga ensemble performances, is not used in this recording. The flute performs most of the melody, except when the violins and piano are soloing. The cinquillo is found in the syncopation played in the percussion through interlocking rhythms between the percussion, the bass, and the left hand of the piano. The anticipated bass pattern is prominent in the montuno and the cencerro plays a straight quarter-note rhythm in compliment.

Figure 4-16. 1930s photo of composer and flutist Joseito Valdés. Valdés was also the director of Orquesta Ideal in the 1940s (Rodríguez Domínguez 1967: 241). (Source: Public Domain.)
“Paella” begins as a typical danzón with a distinctive introductory eight-measure (with two ‘pick-up’ measures) A section with the flute as the solo melody instrument. The B section begins in measure ten and features the violins and piano. This section is characteristically more flowing with longer note durations and slurs in the melody, arpeggiated chords in the piano, a very simple bass line, and no percussion, clearly revealing a Western art music influence. Measure 33 begins the pick-up to the return to the A section. Measure 44 signals to the dancers that section C, the montuno section, is beginning. During the montuno, the violins and piano play harmonic rhythm under the solo flute for most of the section and the violins will also play melody on occasion. Beginning in measure 64, the piano begins an eight-measure solo, employing triplets and syncopation against steady down-beat percussion parts and an anticipated bass pattern in the contrabass. The charanga flute returns as the primary instrument in measure 75 and performs what appears to be a slightly improvised melody until the end of the piece.

Figure 4-17. 78-rpm Panart recording label of the Orquesta Ideal performing “Paella,” by Machito and Joseíto Valdés. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
Figure 4-18. Measures 74-77 of the *montuno* section of “Paella” by flutist Joseíto Valdés and Machito, illustrating the anticipated bass pattern, the *cinquillo* created in the syncopation played in the percussion through interlocking rhythms between the percussion, the bass, and the left hand of the piano, the straight quarter-note rhythm in the *cencerro* and the violins playing a pizzicato rhythmic harmony.
The *danzón*, “Partiendo Coco,” written by the quintessential *charanga* pianist Antonio María Romeu, also incorporates the *montuno* in the final section of this composition. The form of “Partiendo Coco” is that of a typical *danzón-son*. There is a characteristic sixteen-measure (with pick-up) introduction, the A section, marking the main melody played by the flute. The B section begins in measure 18 and features the flute playing the melody, accompanied by the violins and piano playing harmony. The violins also play the melody towards the end of the section. The return to section A occurs in measure 50. And just as in the example we saw in “Paella,” measure 65 signals the beginning of the *montuno*. It also changes the key from A-Major to A-minor. There is little ornamentation in the flute part in the *montuno*—typically just triplets or a trill on the dominant—and there appears to be no improvisation. The *cincillo* rhythm is pervasive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orquesta Antonio María Romeu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78 rpm – Studio recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor_82830_A “Partiendo Coco”* (Antonio María Romeu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor_82830_B “De amor no se muere nadie” (Faustino Miró): Barbarito Diez, vocals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Date: ca. 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: 3:01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre: <em>Danzón-son</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation: <em>charanga francesa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute – Francisco Delabart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violins (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Timbales</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Güiro</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Object 4-4. Ca. 1937 audio recording of The Orquesta Antonio María Romeu performing the *danzón*, “Partiendo Coco” by Antonio María Romeu with Francisco Delabart on flute. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.) (WAV file 30.5 MB)
The style of Romeu’s *danzón* is light, and again like Valdés’ “Paella,” incorporates melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic elements of Western art music in its composition. The Afro-Cuban instrumentation in the percussion and the popular-song form are what define this piece as a *danzón*. The piano, flute, and violins sound as comfortable playing a *danzón* as they would a sonata.

The *güiro* has an important role in “Partiendo Coco.” It is responsible for presenting the *cinquillo* rhythm and working with the *timbales* and the bass, in the left hand of the piano, to establish the classic *danzón* rhythmic style. There is syncopation in all voicings but it is the *güiro* that adds rhythmic interest with periodic changes in the rhythmic pattern, such as the use of rapid sixteenth-note shimmers. As mentioned, the *cinquillo* rhythm is pervasive in “Partiendo Coco,” especially in the percussion in the *montuno* section.

![Figure 4-19. 78-rpm Victor recording label of the Orquesta Antonio María Romeu performing the *danzón*, “Partiendo Coco,” with Francisco Delabart on flute. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)](image-url)
Figure 4-20. The intro and beginning of the *montuno* section, measures 56-71, of “Partiendo Coco” by flutist Antonio María Romeu featuring the flute trill (notated), and the key change from A-major to A-minor.
The next composition I analyzed, “Tira Tira Callejero,” recorded in 1960 by Pancho el Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira, is a perfect example of the *tira-tira* genre, which is based on the *tira tira* rhythm created by Pancho El Bravo. The instrumentation for this *charanga* is the full instrumentation for a typical mid-twentieth-century *charanga*. It includes the *charanga* flute, three vocalists, two violins, piano, contrabass, and the Afro-Cuban percussion: *conga, timbales, cencerro*, and *güiro*. The percussion is prominent, playing the *tira tira* rhythm throughout the piece, while the melodic and harmonic instruments support the vocalists throughout each sung verse and refrain. During the *montuno*, which begins in measure 48, the *charanga* flute takes over as soloist while the violins and piano play a rhythmic vamp based on the melody over which the flute improvises. The vocalists return with the refrain towards the end of the song after a twelve-measure flute solo which begins in measure 64.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Pancho el Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD - Remastered in 2005 by Caney Records of Spain – Studio recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caney_CCD522_“Tira Tira Callejero” (Pancho El Bravo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Date: 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: 2:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre: <em>Tira Tira</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation: <em>charanga</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Flute – Pancho el Bravo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Violins (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Piano</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Contrabass</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <em>Conga</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>- <em>Timbales</em></td>
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<td>- <em>Cencerro</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>- <em>Güiro</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Voices (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Object 4-5. 1960 audio recording of “Tira Tira Callejero” by Pancho El Bravo featuring the *tira tira* rhythm and Pancho El Bravo on flute. (Source: Caney CCD522. Used with Permission.) (WAV file 25.2 MB)

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75 For more information on the *tira tira* rhythm and form, see the section on *tira tira* in Chapter Three.
Figure 4-21. Pancho El Bravo’s flute improvisations in the *montuno* section of “Tira Tira Callejero.” Techniques include rapid tonguing, syncopation, mordents (written out), octave leaps, grace notes, and other ornamentations and improvisations that alternate back and forth from the tonic to the dominant.

It is in the *montuno* section where we hear the sonic acrobatics displayed by skillful *charanga* flute players such as Pancho El Bravo. The performance practices for
the instrument by this time had been directly influenced by the charanga flute players from Orquesta Aragón and were designed to showcase the virtuosic technical abilities of the performer, a huge departure from the simple role the flute played in the ensemble in earlier years. Throughout the montuno, Pancho El Bravo performs octave leaps, a good amount of ornamentation such as mordents and grace-notes, high notes with rhythmic emphasis matching that of the violins, with everything improvised while playing in the highest register of the instrument.

Throughout the piece, the *tira tira* rhythm is prominent. The *conga* maintains heavy emphasis on strong beats. The *güiro* performs the distinctive quarter-note followed by two eighth-notes pattern. The *cencerro* plays straight quarter-notes and is paired with the *timbales* which play on beats one and three. Combined, this accentuates the straight rhythmic patterns in the percussion and its emphasis on the downbeats as it interlocks with the syncopation in the piano and contrabass parts.

![Figure 4-22. The *tira tira* percussion rhythms in “Tira Tira Callejero” by Pancho El Bravo.](image)
Regarding its formal structure, “Tira Tira Callejero” could be equated to the two sections of the Cuban rumba, the diana and the canto. Given that Pancho El Bravo had a strong association with Afro-Cuban musical traditions it is no surprise that he would incorporate musical elements into his charanga compositions from the other musical genres he performed. Below is a photograph that leaves clues to this possibility.

Figure 4-23. A clue to the fact that Pancho El Bravo had a strong association with Afro-Cuban musical traditions and that it would certainly be feasible for him to incorporate musical elements into his charanga compositions from Afro-Cuban musical genres such as the rumba, can be seen in the photograph taken of his ensemble. Pancho El Bravo is the gentleman in the center, the only one wearing a white hat, the specific type of hat worn by rumberos (rumba performers). (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)
“Tira Tira Callejero” opens with an introduction, called by one of the vocalists, much like the *diana* in *rumba*. The following sections begin with the refrain of the song, starting in measure six, which is sung by two vocalists. The first verse, beginning in measure 18, is the main melody sung by the solo lead vocalist. A second vocalist joins the soloist in unison for the second half of the first verse beginning in measure 25. In measure 34, a second refrain begins and signals that the piece is moving into the *montuno* section by acting as a vamp that is later repeated throughout the *montuno*. There is a six-measure bridge that begins in measure 42 and acts as a ‘call’ to begin the *montuno*, which starts in measure 48. Throughout the *montuno*, the three vocalists ‘respond’ to the ‘call’ in a call-and-response manner. These sung verses would be the equivalent to the *canto* section of the *rumba* which is a modified strophic form.

![Album cover for Pancho El Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira](Image)

*Figure 4-24. Album cover for Pancho El Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira. (Source: DAC. Public Domain.)*
| ¡Oye! ¡Por la calle!  | Hey! Let's go out!          |
| ¡Oye, Oye, Oye!     | Hey, hey, hey!             |
| Están tocando tira tira callejero. | They are playing “You Go, Boy!” |
| ¡Oye, Oye, Oye!     | Hey, hey, hey!             |
| Están tocando tira tira callejero. | They are playing “You Go, Boy!” |
| Todos los quieren bailar | Everyone wants to dance |
| ¡Porque es sabroso pa’ gozar! | Because it’s fun! |
| Ay, que contento me pongo | Oh, how happy it makes me |
| Cuando lo siento tocar, | When I hear it playing, |
| Y donde lo están tocando, | And wherever it is playing, |
| Que llego yo       | When I arrive |
| Lo empiezo a bailar. | I start dancing. |
| Ya ustedes ven     | Now you can see |
| Que yo estoy contento. | That I am happy. |
| Que yo también     | That I too |
| Lo bailo y me divierto. | Enjoy dancing. |
| Y los pollitos     | And the chicks |
| Piden a gritos     | Clamor |
| El tira tira para gozar. | To enjoy the Go-Go rhythm. |

| Mami, yo quiero bailar | Babe, I want to dance |
| Con el ritmo tira tira. | To the Go-Go rhythm. |
| ¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar! | What fun to enjoy! |
| ¡Si, si!    | Yeah, yeah! |
| ¡Von, von, von! | Boom, boom, boom! |

| Mami, yo quiero bailar | Babe, I want to dance |
| Con el ritmo tira tira. | To the Go-Go rhythm. |
| ¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar! | What fun to enjoy! |
| ¡Si, si!    | Yeah, yeah! |
| ¡Von, von, von, von! | Boom, boom, boom, boom! |

| ¡Eh! ¡Eh! ¡Eh! | Hey! Hey! Hey! |
| ¡Apártate! ¡Ahi viene Pancho! | Make way! Here comes Pancho! |

| ¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar! | What fun to enjoy! |
| ¡Si, si!    | Yeah, yeah! |
| ¡Von, von, von, von! | Boom, boom, boom, boom! |

| ¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar! | What fun to enjoy! |
| ¡Si, si!    | Yeah, yeah! |
| ¡Von, von, von, von! | Boom, boom, boom, boom! |

| Mami, yo quiero bailar | Babe, I want to dance |
| Con el ritmo tira tira. | To the Go-Go rhythm. |
| ¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar! | What fun to enjoy! |
| ¡Si, si!    | Yeah, yeah!! |
| ¡Von, von, von! | Boom, boom, boom! |

| Mami, yo quiero bailar | Babe, I want to dance |
| Con el ritmo tira tira. | To the Go-Go rhythm. |
| ¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar! | What fun to enjoy! |
| ¡Si, si!    | Yeah, yeah! |
| ¡Von, von, von, von! | Boom, boom, boom, boom! |

Figure 4-25. The lyrics to “Tira Tira Callejero” by Pancho El Bravo.
The lyrics to “Tira Tira Callejero” are filled with slang and idioms as they mimic the hipster attitudes of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The title of the song, written in 1960, is a slang term that refers to a free-spirited, fun-loving person who likes to go out and party, often without caring about the consequences (but not necessarily with any attached value judgments). The slang use of the verb “tirar” means to “kiss off” or “tell off” and the term “callejero” refers to someone who is street-wise. “Tira Tira” also refers to the rhythm created by Pancho El Bravo, loosely translated as a “go-go” rhythm, clear reference to the fun-loving times prior to the Cuban Revolution of 1959 when international jetsetters, celebrities, and party-goers would flock to the casinos and nightclubs of Havana to watch nightclub acts and enjoy activities that might have been illegal (such as gambling) in their own countries. The use of vocables, loosely translated as “boom, boom, boom,” a popular lyrical device at the time, displays international musical influences, giving a nod to the use of “yeah, yeah, yeah” by early American and British rock-and-roll artists. The idiom, “piden a gritos,” refers to how the “chicks” (girls) like to scream when they hear the music; another allusion to the way popular musicians would influence their audiences.

Figure 4-26. Pancho El Bravo performing live in 1969. (Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeaY0w69RfM.)
Figure 4-27. Measures 59-62 of “Tira Tira Callejero” provide a good example of the virtuosic flute part, the three vocalists singing in unison, the syncopated violin, piano, and bass parts providing harmonic rhythm, and the percussion playing the tira tira rhythm with its emphasis on the strong beats.
Figure 4-28. Compact-Disc cover for Rene Lorente y su Flauta con la Orquesta Aragón. In the photograph, Lorente is playing the Boehm flute (and is placed to the side of the ensemble). On the album cover, he is holding his charanga flute, a good example of how charanga flute players will perform on both instruments. (Source: Photo and CD courtesy of Rene Lorente.)

Recorded live in Havana in 1986, Orquesta Aragón’s “La Cantina,” written by flutist Richard Egües in 1957, is an exemplary model of a mid-twentieth-century charanga ensemble at its finest. The piece is a tira-chá, a combination of the tira tira rhythm and the chachachá, the genre for which Egües is most famous. Many of the chachachás
written by Egües have remained canons of the genre and “La Cantina” is an excellent example.76

### Rene Lorente y su Flauta con la Orquesta Aragón

CD - Remastered in 2005 by Hamlin Records of Coral Gables, Florida –Live recording
Hamlin Records_HR-2402_“La Cantina” (Richard Egües)
Recording Date: 1986
Time: 4:57
Genre: *Tira-chá (Includes elements of the tira tira and the chachachá)*
Instrumentation: *charanga*
   - Flute – Rene Lorente
   - Violins (3)
   - Piano
   - Contrabass
   - Conga
   - Timbales
   - Cencerro
   - Güiro
   - Voices (3)

Object 4-6. 1986 live audio recording of Rene Lorente performing “La Cantina” by Richard Egües, with Orquesta Aragón. This recording was made before a live audience during the “Domingo con Rosillo” program in the studio of Radio Progresso in Havana, Cuba in 1986. (Source: Hamlin Records HR2402. Used with Permission.) (WAV file 50.0 MB)

The instrumentation for “La Cantina” features Rene Lorente on *charanga* flute as well as three vocalists, three violins, piano, contrabass, *congas, timbales, cencerro*, and *güiro*. Although various members of Orquesta Aragón have changed since its inception in 1939, many are very long-time members whose performance practices have set the standard for contemporary *charangas*. For example, the *güiro* player has been with Orquesta Aragón for close to fifty years (Lorente: Personal interview 2010). That type of longevity of membership within this ensemble solidifies the overall style of the

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76 See the section on *tira tira and chachachá* in Chapter Three for more information.
charanga and firmly establishes consistent and popular performance practices over time. The familiarity of the sound of Orquesta Aragón is perhaps one of the reasons why it has been so popular for so long and why it is so well loved by the Cuban people. The ensemble is also seen as an authentic representation of ‘Cubanness’ and when Cubans in exile hear recordings of the ensemble, they have feelings of nostalgia and re-imagine what for them was a more simple, glamorous time (during the 1940s-1960s) in Cuba’s history (Lorente: Personal interview 1011). These notions of authenticity and tradition, that in turn support their notion of Cuban identity, is reinforced by what they hear as the recognizable and familiar musical elements of “La Cantina.”

The form of “La Cantina” is a simple tira-chá in the first section, followed by a montuno. The piece begins with a short twelve-measure introduction and includes thematic elements (i.e., variations on the main melody) played by the flute. The first section begins with the vocalists singing the chorus for sixteen measures starting in measure 13. The vocal soloist sings an eight-measure verse beginning in measure 29 and the chorus follows with the refrain again for sixteen measures. The soloist then sings a second eight-measure verse beginning in measure 53, followed by another return by the chorus in a modified strophic form. Throughout the first section, all the instruments play except for the flute which only adds embellishments between four- and eight-measure sections. The montuno, which begins in measure 65, is introduced by a rhythmic vamp in the piano, contrabass, and violins playing in pizzicato with the percussion entering in measure 71 after the six-measure bridge.

As in Pancho El Bravo’s “Tira Tira Callejero,” the montuno section in “La Cantina” also provides Rene Lorente the opportunity to improvise a virtuosic flute solo over
harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment in the violins, piano, and contrabass for the remainder of the piece. In the *montuno*, a typical I-V-I chord progression every two measures contrasts with the simple I-IV-V-I chord progression found in the first section.

The rhythmic structure is a combined basic *tira tira* and *chachachá* rhythm. They are both very similar in that the percussion plays straight beats with an emphasis on the downbeats and with no syncopation. Syncopation is found in the melodic instruments and the piano, including the anticipated bass pattern played by the contrabass. Melodic and harmonic syncopation thus interlock with straight (emphasis on the down-beat) percussion patterns.

![Figure 4-29. The *chachachá* rhythm.](image1)

![Figure 4-30. The *tira tira güiro* rhythm](image2)

The virtuosity of Lorente on the *charanga* flute is impressive in the *montuno*, as the audience’s reaction in this live recording attests. Lorente employs a variety of techniques to showcase his skill: wide leaps, ornamentation, sequencing of melodic
riffs, varied articulations, mordents, glissandos, and notes played in the extreme of the highest register. He also adds elements of contemporary flute technique to his performance, such as a flutter-tongue in measure 118, to the otherwise Baroque flute performance practices he exhibits throughout the piece. For Lorente, the addition of contemporary flute techniques such as flutter-tonguing is not seen as ‘modernizing’ charanga. His rational is that the Boehm flute is also used to play charanga and using these techniques merely signifies virtuosic training and does not alter charanga performance practices.

Lorente is also superb at pacing his solo, a technique he uses to build excitement. In “La Cantina,” he has been given a relatively long time to improvise his solo. He plays as soloist for 77 measures, and a time of approximately two and one-half minutes, starting his solo at 2:08 minutes into the piece and playing until 4:37, the duration of half of the five-minute song.

Lorente starts off his solo with a simple eighth-note melody, escalating the technical intricacy and difficulty of his improvisations with each phrase employing mordents, sequencing, and leaps to heighten the exhilaration of the crowd. He then further increases the syncopation and rhythmic complexity as well as the ornamentation and embellishments to continue to further the level of excitement. Lorente builds to a melodic and rhythmic climax and then begins to slow the pace in measure 107 to give dancers a rest. He then repeats this pattern of pacing the crowd, building excitement, and then closing with a climatic ending to the piece. Lorente’s virtuosity and ability to interact with the audience made him a star in Havana. His popularity continues within the exile community in Miami.
Figure 4-31. Measures 66 through 142 of Rene Lorente’s improvised flute solo in “La Cantina.”
Figure 4-32. The *tira-chá* rhythm structure in “La Cantina:” percussion playing on strong beats against syncopation in the piano, violins, and contrabass parts.
The analysis of the preceding musical examples, recorded between 1924 and 1986, provides documentation of the historical evolution of the performance practices of the charanga ensemble and the role its composers and performers played in using performance practices to maintain and reinforce Cuban national identity and class structure. Analysis also gives us clear indications of how Cuban national identity is imagined, situated, and maintained through the continuation of what are considered to be authentic and traditional Cuban musical performance practices. The charanga 'sound' is still as recognizable as it was almost a century ago and it remains a potent symbol of Cubanness today. Familiar musical forms, instrumentation, lyrical content, and improvisatory performance practices serve to remind Cubans both on and away from the island what it means to be Cuban… a lo cubano.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS: THE ROLE OF POPULAR MUSIC AND CLASS IN THE
CONSTRUCTION OF CUBAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

“La charanga es la orquesta mas cubana que todos.” [The charanga is the
most Cuban musical ensemble of them all.] ~ Rene Lorente

Throughout this study, the compilation and investigation of historical
documentation combined with current fieldwork has provided necessary information for
describing and interpreting charanga and for ascertaining its origins and evolution.
Analysis has demonstrated the impact of class in the creation and development of
Cuban national identity, and how charanga has served as a symbol of the mutable
nature of the historical construction of Cuban social class hierarchy. Recognition of the
role of class in the creation of Cuban identity has also shown how the Cuban elite
seemingly had a decisive hand in formulating national identity through the
implementation and perpetuation of Cuban expressive cultural styles and genres such
as charanga, yet it was not without the substantial musical contributions from the other,
less ‘officially’ recognized sectors of Cuban society.

It has also been shown that discourse about such matters is not restricted to
scholars and those whose job it is to analyze concepts of identity and nationalism. It is
also part of the discursive world of Cuban citizens and expatriates including the
musicians involved in creating the music. Charanga musician Rene Lorente states that:

La identidad es el perfil, la personalidad de un pueblo y su cultura, que se
manifiesta en todas las artes y una parte importante es la música. Cuando
se escucha cualquier género de la música cubana, se piensa en Cuba, creo que la música popular cubana ha sido nuestro primer renglón de
exportación para el mundo (E-mail interview 2010).

[Identity is the profile and personality of a people and their culture,
manifested in all the arts, the most important being the music. When one
hears any genre of Cuban music, one thinks of Cuba. I believe that popular
Cuban music has been our first line of export to the world.]
Indeed, most often when Cuba is imagined by the contemporary international community, two things first come to mind: the politics of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, and Cuban music prior to the Revolution. Expressive culture created on the island prior to the Revolution has been the benchmark for signifying an enduring Cuban national identity abroad and in many ways it has remained so despite the fact that new cultural genres and styles are being created in Cuba all the time, just as they are everywhere else in the world. The difference being that Cuba has been, for the most part, cut off from much of the rest of the world for several generations, and just as it would seem absurd to tie U.S. national identity only to those musical genres performed in the U.S. during the 1950s and 1960s, so too is it a fallacy to think of Cuba as not having evolved culturally over the last sixty years.

Nonetheless, the recent success of Cuban music ensembles that tour internationally—such as the Buena Vista Social Club (a modified charanga)—attest to the fact that nostalgia and a preference for the seemingly more ‘authentic’ Cuban ensembles and musical genres is what speaks most loudly to Cubans in exile as well as the international community. The fact that Cuba has been closed off to the rest of the world for decades paints an exotic and mysterious picture for the international community. Travelers and now tourists alike venture to the island to experience a culture they believe has been frozen in time. For Cuban exiles, the longing for a more ‘simple,’ happier, more romanticized time in Cuba’s history feeds into their notions that Cuban society and expressive culture at that time was somehow more authentic. Indeed, the period in Cuban history prior to the 1960s is highly romanticized in many imaginings by exiles and subsequent generations of Cubans raised away from the
island. This explains why *charanga* is still prevalent in Cuba, even though it is mostly enjoyed by the older generations and performed primarily for tourists. The fact that Cubans and tourists alike have both identified *charanga* as an expression of authentic Cuban national identity, and situated it as a site where tradition versus modernity, speaks to this romanticized notion of Cuban society happily situated in a more pure, untainted time despite the fact that the reality is to the contrary.

Indeed, *charanga* was intentionally crafted into, and remains, a potent symbol of Cuban national identity, both on the island as well as for the communities of Cubans living in the U.S. and throughout the world, precisely because it came to represent Cubanness and a romanticized notion of a proud *criollo* nation, albeit one with a national heritage that was predominately Iberian. *Charanga*’s tie to the upper classes has also played an important role in its longevity. For Cubans who remain on the island today, imagining a symbol of national identity like *charanga* is easy and it is seldom far from mind, especially with the older generations. *Charanga* ensembles are still prevalent and *danzones* and *chachachás* are still performed, albeit mostly for tourists and/or for weekend dances. Nonetheless, the sound of *charanga* remains a constant on the island.

For the Cubans who live abroad, primarily in Miami and New York, politics adds a complicated dimension to their notions of nostalgia and their quest for authenticity when imagining music of a national character. The case of the Cuban community in the U.S. is distinctive in that many still identify their community as a community of exiles, not a community of immigrants. Maintaining a glorified imagined national identity that denies contemporary reality is an on-going objective on the part of elite Cubans who migrated
to the U.S. from 1959 to 1962, and music of the charanga plays a pivotal role in supporting this effort. As evidenced by the numerous performances made by Rene Lorente y su Charanga and Charanga Típica Tropical in Miami, the preference on the part of many older Cubans in South Florida to have charanga ensembles perform at special gatherings and holiday events is a good example of how charanga ties national sentiment to notions of authenticity and how it maintains nostalgia. The longevity of Orquesta Broadway in New York—founded forty-nine years ago, and still performing regularly with many original members—is another good example.

Gema R. Guevara, in her essay titled “La Cuba de Ayer/La Cuba de Hoy:” The Politics of Music and Diaspora,” writes regarding the role of music in shaping Cuban national identity:

In the case of the Cuban exile community, it is music, in particular the internal dialogue between the musical genres and a discourse of nationalism that links the exile community to its ‘authentic’ cultural roots. Cuban music is thus inscribed with multiple layers of meaning, and the constant celebration of its various genres invokes nostalgia as both a ‘pure’ emotion and a very specific reading of the island’s history. The island’s history becomes indistinguishable from the development of its popular musical genres (2003: 38).

Guevara’s work demonstrates how the Cuban elite in the U.S., influenced by the ideology of music scholars such as Emilio Grenet and Eduardo Sánchez de Fuentes, are still concerned with “creating a single national musical patrimony that obscures, if not erases, the very diverse class and racial origins of the Cuban musical heritage” (2003: 34). And, I would add, that national musical patrimony is solidly situated as primarily white (or criollo) and of the upper classes. This phenomenon is not new. Issues of race and class as they represent national character through music have long been a recurring theme in Cuban intellectual thought. Cuban scholar Emilio Grenet’s
canonical work, *Popular Cuban Music: 80 Revised and Corrected Compositions*, Together with an Essay on the Evolution of Music in Cuba (a collection of popular piano scores with an introduction), was published in 1939 and therefore, is placed in the first historical phase of nation building by the elite in Latin America as defined by Turino. It begins with this sentence: “The Government of the Republic of Cuba desires to herein provide a guide to our rhythms and melodies which have awakened universal interest during the past decade” (Grenet 1939: ix). By this statement, it appears evident that the Cuban state was invested in privileging elite notions of national image by formally defining the characteristics of its music. It also appears that the book was written in part as a response to what the Cubans perceived to be a clear case of U.S. cultural and musical hegemony after the meteoric rise in popularity of Cuban music in the States.

Appropriations of formal and stylistic elements of Cuban music, especially as they were altered by jazz and transformed into big-band dance genres such as *rhumba*, were quite the insult to Cuban sensibilities. Grenet, translated to English (so there would be no doubt), not so discreetly criticizes the U.S. for appropriating and altering—or at best, misinterpreting—the nuances of Cuban music. He writes:

If our closest physical and spiritual neighbors, who are capable of making our music outstanding, Spain through its location in Europe and the United States through their powerful means of diffusion, such as the movies, the phonograph, and the radio, cannot understand us, then it is not to be expected that the rest of the world will appreciate the true spirit of our music any better. It should be made known, —and this we repeat is the underlying purpose of this work— that what is now presented to the jaded European taste, avid for new stimuli as something new, capable of providing new thrills, is not something which has been improvised as a tourist attraction, but a spiritual achievement of a people that has struggled during four centuries to find a medium of expression (Grenet 1939: ix).

It is precisely because of these sentiments regarding nationalism and identity, both the historical as well as the current as evidenced by the thoughts and actions of the
exiled Cuban population in the U.S. that positions charanga within a hemispheric, transnational, and global scope. As is evident in this study, nationalism looks both forward in time to embrace modernity, as well as back in time to reinforce imaginings of national identity through nostalgia and the quest for the pure. These notions of tradition and modernity, the authentic and the pure, are found in the imaginings of charanga both in Cuba and abroad, and the role of politics in shaping that identity has been substantial. Musically, they are manifest in the central role of the charanga flute, which exhibits both modern and traditional elements.

Historically, politics in Cuba has had a marked influence in the creation of national identity and a keen eye has been kept towards the role of class in shaping that identity. Louis Pérez, Jr., in *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution* (1995), investigates the roles issues such as race and class have played in Cuba’s historical struggle for self-determination. He writes:

Cuba passed successively from colonial status under Spain to a client role with the United States to dependency under the Soviet Union. These relationships, each at its own turn, each in its own way, penetrated Cuban society deeply. Each relied on and underwrote the ascendancy of quite different dominant classes; each produced a profound realignment in the internal balance of social forces. All exerted a decisive influence on Cuban economic policy, political institutions, state structures, and international relations (1995: ix).

I would also add to this the effects of social forces on expressive culture in the establishing of Cuban national identity. In many ways, the two—politics and culture—are closely aligned. As has been mentioned, the elite within societies have often used expressive culture to create national sentiment and Cuba was no exception, especially when it came to elevating charanga and the danzón to a national symbol. The first phase of Cuban political structure mentioned by Pérez, Jr.—the colonial relationship it
had with Spain—reflects what Turino described as the first phase of nation building in Latin America. Turino goes further to align these ‘first-phase’ characteristics of nation building—criollo-based independence movements preoccupied with territory, economic vitality, and establishing political principles—with nationalized products of expressive culture. Turino states:

In Latin America, state intervention in the cultural/artistic realm was most pronounced during populist periods. During the elite-nationalist period in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, cosmopolitan-style European military music, Italian-opera-inspired anthems, and art music with vernacular references were the main forms of musical nationalism. This music functioned to create iconicity with other established, legitimate states and to maintain elite distinction from the masses, underlining the restricted concept of ‘nation’ at that time. These types remain as an older strata of musical nationalism still operating in contemporary Latin American states alongside the newer reformist or ‘folkloric’ types of nationalist music” (2003:202).

What Turino has observed, is that the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century period of nation building in Latin America—the first phase—relied heavily on the expressive culture of the elite and upper classes for symbols of national identity. This form of internal hegemony, although calculated, was seen as a normal and necessary move on the part of the elite and ruling class to establish a national identity not so much interested in embracing the expressive culture of the entire nation, especially that of the subaltern, as they were in creating characteristic iconicity separate from other established, legitimate nation-states. Hence, the establishing of charanga and the danzón as national icons in Cuba was part of the normal progression for nation building in Latin America during that time.

In support of Wright (1990), Pérez, Jr. also states that beginning in the eighteenth century in Cuba, there was a preoccupation with the establishing of Cuban criollo identity and promotion of self-interests. "Creoles had developed a sense of the
singularity of their own interests, and were not at all slow to organize around the
defense of those interests. This was nothing less than a change of consciousness,
fundamentally a change in the way Cuban thought about themselves” (1995: 67). With
this rise in national consciousness, came the demand for institutions of higher learning.
This exhibited a desire for cultural diversity from Spain, growing criollo sophistication,
and an expression of material well-being, all important ingredients to an emerging
nation-state. The expressive arts also flourished during this period. Theatres were
founded and the literary arts conveyed a new Cuban criollo identity through numerous
periodicals and other publications, such as La Charanga. Early charangas and
orquesta típicas performed contradanzas in the salons of the Cuban criollo elite. The
role of the elite in directing a course of national development, assisted by
representations of Cubanness such as charanga, was clearly established.

The lasting effects of this tremendous paradigmatic shift in Cuban national
consciousness during the first phase of nation building are still evident in Cuba today.
This was certainly a factor in reinforcing Cuban national identity in the beginning of the
twentieth century, which fortuitously coincided with the advent of the recording and
broadcast industries. Mass mediation of national ideology took many forms during this
time. One of the most seemingly innocuous expressions of national character, Cuban
music, served to emphasize the uniqueness and wide variety of Cuban musical genres
not only throughout Cuba, but to the rest of the world as well, garnering much well-
deserved popularity. Thus, the broadcasting of popular ensembles such as the
charangas was instrumental in promoting Cuban national identity.
Turino also claims that state intervention in the cultural realms of Latin American societies was most pronounced during the twentieth century—the second phase of nation building in Latin America characterized by the rise of populist movements intent on linking formally disenfranchised populations to the state—and in Cuba, this correlates with the Cuban Revolution of 1959 which instituted socialism as its new form of government, after breaking ties with the U.S. This then resulted in Cuba’s growing economic and ideological dependency on the Soviet Union as illustrated by Pérez, Jr. Moore states that:

Socialist governments in the developing world [such as Cuba’s] often assume power in the wake of colonialist aggression. Because their local forms have been belittled or repressed for years (or centuries) in favor of an imposed culture from abroad [as was the case with the U.S.], the natural reaction of any new leadership is to dispense with internationalism and promote localism. Largely for this reason, the ‘rescue of cultural roots’ has been a fundamental component of Cuban cultural policy since 1959 (2006:13).

This is perhaps the primary reason that musical expressions such as charanga are still valorized within Cuba as well as among Cuban exiles and why they are looked upon with reverence and nostalgia. Despite the fact that the ‘elite’ in modern Cuba—and by this I mean the political oligarchy—still dictate what expressive cultural forms are supported or denied by the state, the notion that there is validity in ‘traditional’ music and that this music is representative of Cuban identity speaks volumes about the importance and emotional power of expressive culture.

Yet before we readily accept the notion that laudatory expressive forms are representative of all sectors of Cuba’s class hierarchy, we should consider Wade and his work on the relationship between the ‘powerful’ and the ‘powerless’ in the establishing and maintaining of national identity. Wade states that:
The study of music and national identity has been limited, in my view, by some underlying assumptions. The first is connected to some influential ideas on nationalism, while the second has to do with long-standing ideas about the relation between music and identity. On nationalism, many approaches place too much emphasis on the homogenizing tendencies of nationalist discourse, whereas, in my view, homogenization exists in a complex and ambivalent relationship with the construction of difference by the same nationalist forces that create homogeneity. In a related fashion, with respect to music and identity, several studies of Latin American musical styles and their socio-political context... display a tendency to set up a model of homogenizing elites versus diversifying and resistant minorities. This means that diversity always comes from outside official discourse on cultural identity and music and I think that this over-simplifies the situation... (1998: 1).

Indeed, especially when one considers the socio-political situation in Cuba, both historically and in present times, a complex and often changing relationship between those in the top sector of society's socio-economic hierarchy and those towards the bottom is revealed. Prior to the Revolution, class lines were clear and based upon phenotype and economic status. Unlike this first phase in Cuban nation building (beginning in the eighteenth century) that privileged the elite citizenry, the second phase of nation building in the twentieth century (articulated by Turino) has been characterized by a need for a more comprehensive notion of the nation, one that features the inclusion and combination of elite and subaltern groups. This was exactly what Carpentier and Ortiz and the other members of the Grupo Minoristas espoused in the 1930s and 1940s in Cuba. Take note, however, that even with the best of intentions, it is still the elite that dictate what cultural expressions become symbols of national identity. The work of Carpentier and Ortiz are often perceived as good and inclusive and noble in giving the subaltern a voice, but as Wade states, the relationship is more complex than that. The subaltern still have little say over what forms of expressive culture they wish to have represent them. This is true in Cuba and the case of charanga is a good example.
The elite, preferring European melodic and harmonic structures, were at first shocked to hear Afro-Cuban rhythmic elements in their salon genres such as the *contradanza*. It was not until they agreed to accept these rhythmic variances and to permit their performance in elite salons that expressive elements of the subaltern were given a voice. In order to mitigate the situation and pronounce acceptance for Afro-Cuban rhythms, the subaltern had to first assimilate into elite society by becoming members of *charangas*, and then make palatable these rhythms to the elite, i.e., to temper their rhythmic vitality, until such time as these rhythmic elements in their full essence could be expressed within the greater society. Becoming a *charanga* musician was also an important sign of social mobility. These are excellent examples of the subtle negotiations of which Wade speaks that exist between class sectors.

*Charanga*, cleanly situated where these subtle negotiations that exist between class sectors can manifest, is a powerful and compelling symbol of Cuban national identity. *Charanga* represents the historical relationship the elite had with the creation of a new Cuban nation in the eighteenth century and it further established *criollo* identity in Cuba in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, *charanga* has represented the acknowledgement and inclusion of the expressive cultural forms of the underclass and it now serves as a prevailing icon of Cuban national identity, not only for Cubans on the island, but especially for those Cubans in exile who romantically and nostalgically long for *patria* (the homeland).

Perhaps what is most telling about any symbol of national identity is its longevity. Rene Lorente states: “When Cubans in and out of Cuba hear *charanga* and *danzón*, they recognize it as the core of many popular styles and genres performed today. It is a
music that did not lose its place in musical history. It has withstood the test of time” (Personal interview 2011). Given that charangas still perform regularly throughout Cuba, as well as in other places around the world, and that the music performed by these ensembles remains relatively popular even today, leaves little doubt that charanga will continue to act as a nostalgic symbol of Cuban musical authenticity tied to notions of Cuban national identity.
APPENDIX A
DISCOGRAPHY


*Almendra, Con Sabor a Danzón: Danzones y Danzoneras de Siempre*. 1995. Orquesta Folklórica Cubana, Orquesta Maravillas de Florida, Orquesta de Arcaño, Charanga Típica Cubana, Charanga Nacional de Conciertos. EGREM: La Habana, Cuba. CD.


Charanga Típica Tropical. *Tanto Ayer como Hoy, Montuneando me Voy*. Canoa Productions. CD-T120. CD.


*Cuba: Contradanzas and Danzones*. Rotterdam Conservatory Orquesta Típica. Nimbus NI 5502. CD.


Fajardo Y Sus Estrellas. 1999. Musical Productions. CD.


Orquesta Cheo Belen Puig. *Me Han Dicho Que Tu Me*. CD.


Pérez Prado. 1990. *Havana 3 a.m.* BMG. BL2-2444. CD.


Ralph Font and His Orchestra: Bill Diablo and His Sextet. *The Best and Most Popular Cha Cha Cha of the Fabulous Fifties*. LP.


## APPENDIX B
### FIVE-KEY FLUTE FINGERING CHART

**French 5-Key Flute fingering chart: Alternate positions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>D#/Eb</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="D fingering chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="D#/Eb fingering chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="E fingering chart" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>F#/Gb</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="F fingering chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="F#/Gb fingering chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="G fingering chart" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### French 5-Key Flute fingering chart. Alternate positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>D#/Eb</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fingering Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fingering Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fingering Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>F#/Gb</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fingering Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fingering Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Fingering Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation:
- **D** key: Basic fingering with index finger on key.
- **D#/Eb** key: Fingering 1 with index finger on key.
- **E** key: Basic fingering with index finger on key.
- **F** key: Fingering 2 and 3 with index finger on key.
- **F#/Gb** key: Fingering 1 to 3 with index finger on key.
- **G** key: Fingering 2 and 3 with index finger on key.

Notes:
- Basic: No additional keys are pressed.
- Fingering: Additional keys are pressed as indicated.

P. Hutez
### French 5-Key Flute fingering chart. Alternate positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C# / Ab</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A# / Bb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Fingering Chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Fingering Chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Fingering Chart" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C# / Db</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Fingering Chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Fingering Chart" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Fingering Chart" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Page 4
French 5-Key Flute fingering chart. Alternate positions

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Note from the author:
Fingering positions are given in accordance with response in a J. Jerome Thibouville Lamy French 5 key flute for changing, circa 1855, @440 Hz, which means small tone holes and easy positioning near the embouchure.

Although they appear numbered and first is always named as "Basic", no intention was to establish preferences on which position to play for various given notes, knowing no standardization happened to take place in manufacturing prior to Boehm System flutes.

In the above mentioned flat or sharp note gives better results for another player it is because of flute response, player embouchure, tuning and some other possible facts like larger holes or different than 5 keys.

It is unlikely this chart would become the definitive one. No profit intention was when this chart was created. Fee free to distribute.

P. Rule (Composer) 2000 - Rev.
Acknowledgments: Many thanks to Joaquin Olivera (JO), Tad David (TD), Eddy organizer (ED) and Richard Wilson (RW) for their contribution.

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Closed hole or depressed key
Open hole
Shaded hole means finger close to it but not completely covering.

1. In first finger hole
2. In second finger hole
3. In third finger hole
4. In first finger hole
5. In second finger hole
6. In third finger hole

(Th. thumb) Bb key
(Th. first finger) C Key
(Th. third finger) F key
(Th. pinky finger) Eb key
APPENDIX C
INTERVIEWS AND CORRESPONDENCES

- **Acosta, Leonardo.** Cuban music scholar and jazz musician.

- **Chacoy, Jorge.** Guitarist for Chucho Valdés jazz ensemble, Irakere.

- **Cruz Torres, Alberto “Pancho El Bravo.”** Charanga flutist and the creator of the *tira tira* rhythm.

- **Díaz Ayala, Cristóbal.** Cuban music scholar and author.
  - E-mail correspondences: Numerous correspondences throughout October-December, 2010.

- **Delís Hechavarría, Esmerido.** Contrabass player and musician in Havana, performing with various musical ensembles.

- **Esquinazi Pérez, Martha.** Cuban music scholar and author.
  - Numerous e-mail correspondences between 2002 and 2011.

- **Giro, Radamés.** Cuban music scholar and author.

- **Lamas Fajardo, Diandra.** Niece of José Fajardo.
  - E-mail correspondence: February 25, 2010.

- **Linares, Santiago.** Violinist and director for the *charanga*, Estrellas Cubanas.

- **Lorente, Rene.** Flutist with Orquesta Aragón, 1984-1990.
  - E-mail interview: October 18, 2010.
  - E-mail correspondences: Numerous correspondences throughout October, 2010-February, 2011.

- **Miller, Sue.** Flutist and director of Charanga del Norte.
  - E-mail interviews and correspondences: Numerous correspondences and interviews from 2005-2010.
• **Orovio, Helio.** Cuban music scholar and author.
  o Personal interview: June 20, 2002. Havana, Cuba.

• **Petinaud Martínez, Jorge.** Musician and radio announcer for Radio Metropolitana in Havana. The host of two programs: “Supermusical Latina,” and “Un Domingo con Rosillo.”

• **Rosillo, Eduardo.** Radio announcer for Radio Progresso and host of “Domingo con Rosillo.” Known as the Dorada Voz de la Radio Cubana (Golden Voice of Cuban Radio).

• **Rubalcaba, Guillermo.** Director and founder of Charanga Rubalcaba.

• **Valdés Espinosa, Lázaro.** Singer and director for the charanga, Lázaro Valdés y su Grupo.

• **Vinueza, María Elena.** Director of the Music Department for Casa de las Américas, a major research center in Havana, Cuba.

• **Zayas Bringas, Enrique.** Cuban music professor, scholar, and author.
  o Numerous e-mail correspondences between 2002 and 2011.
“Linda Cubana” by Tata Pereira

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orquesta Tata Pereira</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78 rpm – Studio recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia 2247-X_A_“Linda Cubana”* (Tata Pereira)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia 2247-X_B_“Sandunguita” (Tata Pereira)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Date: 1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: 3:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre: Danzón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation: called <em>charanga francesa</em> but actually a hybrid <em>orquesta típica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute – Tata Pereira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ophicleide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pailas criollas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Güiro</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Paella” by Machito and Joseíto Valdés

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orquesta Ideal</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78 rpm – Studio recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panart_1033_A “Paella”* (Machito and Joseíto Valdés)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panart_1033_B “Guayacan” (Joseíto Valdés)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Date: ca. 1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: 3:02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre: Danzón-son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation: <em>charanga francesa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute – Joseíto Valdés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violins (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrabass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Timbales</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cencerro</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**“Partiendo Coco” by Antonio María Romeu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Orquesta Antonio María Romeu</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78 rpm – Studio recording</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor_82830_A_“Partiendo Coco” (Antonio María Romeu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor_82830_B_“De amor no se muere nadie” (Faustino Miró): Barbarito Diez, vocals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recording Date</strong>: ca. 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong>: 3:01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre</strong>: Danzón-son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instrumentation</strong>: charanga francesa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flute – Francisco Delabart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violins (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Güiro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Tira Tira Callejero” by Pancho El Bravo

Pancho el Bravo y sus Candelas del Tira Tira

CD - Remastered in 2005 by Caney Records of Spain – Studio recording
Caney_CCD522 “Tira Tira Callejero” (Pancho El Bravo)
Recording Date: 1960
Time: 2:30
Genre: Tira Tira
Instrumentation: charanga
  Flute – Pancho el Bravo
  Violins (2)
  Piano
  Contrabass
  Conga
  Timbales
  Cencerro
  Güiro
  Voices (3)
Tira Tira Callejero

Pacho El Bravo

\( j = 144 \)

Flute

Voice

Voice

Voice

Violin 1

Violin 2

Piano

Contrabass

Congas

Timbales

Cencerro

Gniro
je-ro!
Todos los quieras bailar, porque esa broso pa' gozar!
Ay! que contento me pongo.
Cuan do lo siento tocar.

Y
don de lo estú- n to- can do que lle- go yo lo em- piezo a baí- lar.
Ya u- ste- des
Ma-mi yo quie-ro ba-ilar con el rit-mo ti-ra ti-ra. Qué sa-bro-so pa’ go-zar! Si! Si! Vou! Vou! Vou!
Mami yo quiero bailar con el ritmo tira tira. Que sabroso pa' gozar! Sí! Sí! Vou! Vou! Vou!
vie-ne Pan-cho!
Qué sa-bro-so pa' go-
Qué sa-bro-so pa' go-
Qué sa-bro-so pa' go-
Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.

Mamí yo quiero bailar.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¡Oye! ¡Por la calle!</td>
<td>¡Oye! ¡Por la calle!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Oye, Oye, Oye!</td>
<td>¡Por la calle!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Están tocando tira tira callejero.</td>
<td>¡Están tocando tira tira callejero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Oye, Oye, Oye!</td>
<td>¡Están tocando tira tira callejero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todos los quieren bailar</td>
<td>¡Porque es sabroso pa’ gozar!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Porque es sabroso pa’ gozar!</td>
<td>¡Porque es sabroso pa’ gozar!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Ay, que contento me pongo!</td>
<td>¡Ay, que contento me pongo!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuando lo siento tocar,</td>
<td>Cuando lo siento tocar,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y donde lo están tocando,</td>
<td>Y donde lo están tocando,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que llego yo</td>
<td>Que llego yo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo empiezo a bailar.</td>
<td>Lo empiezo a bailar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ya ustedes ven</td>
<td>Ya ustedes ven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que yo estoy contento.</td>
<td>Que yo estoy contento.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que yo también</td>
<td>Que yo también</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo bailo y me divierto.</td>
<td>Lo bailo y me divierto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y los pollitos</td>
<td>Y los pollitos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piden a gritos</td>
<td>Piden a gritos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mami, yo quiero bailar</td>
<td>Mami, yo quiero bailar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con el ritmo tira tira.</td>
<td>Con el ritmo tira tira.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar!</td>
<td>¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Si, sí!</td>
<td>¡Si, sí!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Von, von, von!</td>
<td>¡Von, von, von!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Eh! ¡Eh! ¡Eh!</td>
<td>¡Eh! ¡Eh! ¡Eh!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Apártate! ¡Ahí viene Pancho!</td>
<td>¡Apártate! ¡Ahí viene Pancho!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Qué sabroso pa’ gozar!</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Si, sí!</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Von, von, von, von!</td>
<td>¡Von, von, von, von!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>¡Von, von, von, von!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hey! Let’s go out! Hey, hey, hey! They are playing “You Go, Boy!” Hey, hey, hey! Everyone wants to dance Because it’s fun!

Oh, how happy it makes me When I hear it playing, And wherever it is playing, When I arrive I start dancing.

Now you can see That I am happy. Enjoy dancing. And the chicks Clamor To enjoy the Go-Go rhythm.

Babe, I want to dance To the Go-Go rhythm. What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

Babe, I want to dance To the Go-Go rhythm. What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

Make way! Here comes Pancho! What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

Babe, I want to dance To the Go-Go rhythm. What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah!! Boom, boom, boom!

Babe, I want to dance To the Go-Go rhythm. What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!

Babe, I want to dance To the Go-Go rhythm. What fun to enjoy! Yeah, yeah! Boom, boom, boom, boom!
“La Cantina” by Richard Egües

Rene Lorente y su Flauta con la Orquesta Aragón

CD - Remastered in 2005 by Hamlin Records of Coral Gables, Florida
Hamlin Records HR-2402 “La Cantina” (Richard Egües)
Recording Date: 1960
Time: 4:57
Genre: chachachá
Instrumentation: charanga
  Flute – Rene Lorente
  Violins (3)
  Piano
  Contrabass
  Conga
  Timbales
  Cencerro
  Güiro
  Voices (3)
Toma un que se a chocolate
A mí lo que das a

Fl

Vln 1

Vln 2

Vln 3

Pno

B

Conga

Timb.

Cem

Oro
Ya llevo la canción, Ya llevo

Vla. 1
Vla. 2
Vla. 3
Pno
Bb
Congas
Tamb
Csn
Gsn
The lyrics to “La Cantina” by Richard Egües.

**Coro:**
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
A que no adivinas lo que viene arriba.
A que no adivinas lo que viene abajo.
A que tu no me adivinas como viene la cantina.
A que tu no me adivinas donde está el tasajo.
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
¡Ya llegó la cantina!

**Solista:**
Nunca dejes de comer
Aunque el amor te maltrate
Toma aunque sea chocolate
Así lo quedas a deber

**Coro:**
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
A que no adivinas lo que viene arriba.
A que no adivinas lo que viene abajo.
A que tu no me adivinas como viene la cantina.
A que tu no me adivinas donde está el tasajo.
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
¡Ya llegó la cantina!

**Solista:**
Y si bailas Rock 'n Roll
Ten un consejo presente
Tienes que comer caliente
Porque es mucha sofocación

**Coro y montuno:**
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
¡Ya llegó la cantina!
(Improvisación de flauta)

**Chorus:**
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
You'll never guess what’s coming up.
You'll never guess what’s going down.
I guess you don’t know what’s coming to the luncheonette.
I guess you don’t know where the beef jerky is.
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
It has arrived at the luncheonette!

**Vocal Soloist:**
Never stop eating
Even if love mistreats you.
Even have some chocolate.
You can pay for it later.

**Chorus:**
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
You’ll never guess what’s coming up.
You’ll never guess what’s going down.
I guess you don’t know what’s coming to the luncheonette.
I guess you don’t know where the beef jerky is.
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
It has arrived at the luncheonette!

**Vocal Soloist:**
And if you dance Rock ‘n Roll
Take this advice.
You have to eat it hot
Because it takes your breath away.

**Chorus and montuno section:**
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
It has arrived at the luncheonette!
(Flute improvisation)
LIST OF REFERENCES


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ruth M. "Sunni" Witmer received her Bachelor of Music in flute performance from the University of Florida and her Master of Music in flute performance from Louisiana State University. Ms. Witmer also received a Master of Arts degree in Latin American Studies at the University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies as well as a Ph.D. in music with a concentration in ethnomusicology from the University of Florida. Her area of focus is the music of the Caribbean and Brazil, primarily early twentieth-century urban popular genres with an emphasis on Brazilian choro and Cuban charanga.

In 2009, Ms. Witmer was awarded the University of Florida Graduate Student Teaching Award for excellence in teaching and was also awarded the Latin American Studies Doctoral Student Teaching Award for her course, Music of the Political and Social Justice Movements in Latin America. She has lectured on Caribbean music for various courses at the University of Florida and has presented at the Society for Ethnomusicology and the Brazilian Studies Association international conferences. Ms. Witmer is currently an Adjunct Professor of Music at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida and Adjunct Professor of Music and Latin American Humanities at Valencia College in Orlando, Florida.