MUSIC



SAMPLE A

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: MUSTC					
(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)					
Title of the extended essay: Urbanization of Mariachi Music in Mexico: To what extent is the original flavour of traditional rural mariachi music retained in modern urban mariachi music?					
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Supervisor's report

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Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.
I'me candidate is a student of 1.B. music at Higher hevel. The area of research is a particular interest of his and his research has been particularly thorough. In addition to the more usual for has been particularly thorough. In addition to the more usual for has been particularly thorough. In addition to the more usual for of research he has undertaken considerable field work to samp of research he has undertaken considerable field work to samp the music of mariachi musicians in their urban and rune settings and also to interview them. He has also sought the academic and historical view of mariachi through interviews with frominent Mexican musicologists. His conduct throughout the process has been excellent and his research has provided some new and illuminating insights, into Mexico's musical culture.
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To the best of my knowledge, the extended essay is the authentic work of the candidate.
I spent
Supervisor's signature: Date: $\frac{7}{3}/2009$

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Extended Essay

Session: May 2009

Subject: Group 6 Music

Title:

Urbanization of Mariachi Music in Mexico

Research Question

To what extent is the original flavour of traditional rural mariachi music retained in modern urban mariachi music?

Word Count: 3648

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Abstract

Prior to the 19th century, mariachi in Mexico was simply one of countless types of traditional folk music in the state of Jalisco. Nevertheless, thanks to the advent of powerful radios stations, mariachi music rapidly spread to all regions in Mexico, and soon became a national symbol of the country. During this urbanization of the rural music, many musical elements were transformed significantly to accommodate the tastes of new audience. My research question is 'to what extent is the original flavour of traditional rural mariachi music retained in modern urban mariachi music?'. The research was carried out through comparing and contrasting rural and urban version of two pieces of music, *Jarabe Tapatio* and *Son de la Negra*, in terms of musical characteristics including structure, instrumentation, melody, harmony and tone colour.

Many sources had to be discarded, as they were more focused on the anthropological aspect of the mariachi music. There was virtually no material that analyzed the differences between the musical elements of rural and urban mariachi, so it was compulsory to rely on primary sources, such as the recordings and scores. I had several interviews with Professor Camacho at UNAM. Additionally, I went to Plaza Garibaldi, the centre of mariachi musicians to have interviews which allowed me to have a clear idea of what real modern urban mariachi think about the evolution of the genre.

Through this investigation, I found out that although the basic rhythm and melody are still present in modern mariachi, the vast change during urbanization rendered the genre much more professional and westernized. Hence, much of the original flavor of traditional mariachi is lost in modern mariachi. However, I realized that this very versatile characteristic of the genre is what allowed it to evolve and gain the reputation at a national and international level.

(299 words)



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Introduction

Research question: To what extent is the original flavor of traditional rural mariachi music retained in modern urban mariachi music?

As a symbol of Mexican culture, mariachi music is indispensable for the quotidian lives of Mexican people. All over the country, mariachi musicians are found in numerous settings and events such as weddings, funerals, birthdays, baptisms and countless other occasions. However, the history of mariachi music is not very long compared to its popularity nowadays. From the mid 19th century through the late 1930's, mariachi was simply another one of the hundreds of regional ensembles that existed in small villages and ranches in and around the state of Jalisco. Nevertheless, from the late 1930's, the emergence of movie studios and powerful radio stations in Mexico City disseminated mariachi to the entire country. Previously playing music for religion and pure entertainment in communal bases, many Mariachi musicians moved to Mexico City, as Mariachi music started to become widely commercialized. In order to accommodate the change and satisfy the audience, the urban mariachi musicians refined and systemized the genre in various ways such as improving their techniques and adding trumpet to the instruments so that the sound is more efficiently transferred to radios. In other words, the urban mariachi became more professional and virtuoso. On the other hand, the traditional or rural mariachi, although not as common now, still cling to the folkloristic aspect, conserving tradition.

This topic interested me because, despite the fact that I had lived in Mexico for almost seven years, I realized how little knowledge I had about mariachi music. Hence, it seemed a good opportunity to broaden my understanding of the Mexican culture. Moreover, this topic is worthy of study, as I later found out during my research, since there is virtually no material that analyzes how the musical elements were changed during the urbanization of mariachi music.

In order to determine to what extent the flavour of the original mariachi music is retained in the modern urban mariachi music, I am going to compare and contrast the characteristics of urban and rural mariachi in terms of structure, duration, tempo, instrumentation, melody, texture, tone colour, volume, rhythm, technique, harmony and modulation. This process would be carried out through analyzing several pieces of music played by urban and rural mariachi. Among the countless pieces of music in the repertoire of mariachi, this essay will concentrate on Son de la Negra and Jarabe Tapatio, also widely known as Mexican Hat Dance, which come from the genre Son Jaliscience and Jarabe, respectively.

Jeff, N. (2002), Virtuoso Mariachi, USA: University Press of America, Inc.

Structure

As the rural folkloristic mariachi music was brought to Mexico City and started becoming commercialized, there was a need to systemize the structure of numerous different versions of the same music coming from different rural regions of Mexico. Consequently, different characteristics of several regions blended together to form a representative urban version. Urban rendition of music ranged widely in its length depending on the region with structural freedom; improvisation was an integral part like many other folk music in the world. Moreover, rural mariachi learned new pieces of music solely resorting to their ears, without any transcription or recording. The traditional music they played were those that were passed down through generations by unknown composers, and hence each rural mariachi saw it as their goal to develop a unique style as distinguishable as possible from other existing groups. On the other $\,$ $\,$ $\,$ hand, urban mariachi always sought to imitate the interpretation of famous mariachi that became prevalent through the mass media. The famous rearrangements of the traditional pieces have now gained copyrights under the authority of the musicians who carried out the transcription. Therefore, the structures of mariachi music, once open to different possible interpretations, became more rigid with fixed verses in the city and, as a result, the duration of music was generally shortened. For instance, the rendition of Jarabe Tapatio by a rural mariachi group, named Mariachi Tequileño, (Track 1) starts with an introduction lasting for ten measures, which is no longer found in the urban rendition of the music.



Figure 1. Introduction in the rural version of Jarabe Tapatio

Due to this structural freedom and consequent inclusion of various melodies, the rural version lasts for more than ten minutes, while the urban version by one of the most famous professional mariachi groups, Mariachi Vargas, (Track 2) lasts for only two minutes and thirty seconds. The following is the sheet music of urban Jarabe Tapatio. The rural version introduces a new melody at bar 53 at 01:38, and its variation replaces the bars 53-80 (highlighted by red lines), lasting for eight minutes.

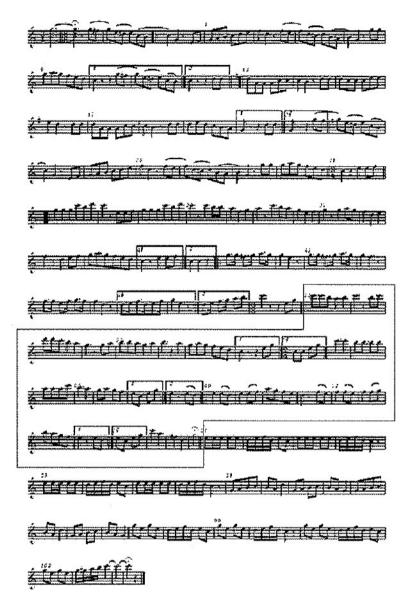


Figure 2. Structural differences in rural and urban renditions of Jarabe Tapatio

This noticeable difference in the lengths of the two interpretations can be further explained by considering the nature of the genre "Jarabe". Jarabe originally means syrup in Spanish. This word is used figuratively, as the genre comprises medleys of favourite regional melodies. Hence, it can be inferred that the long variation that replaces the middle section of the fixed urban version is a combination of other favourite regional melodies from the following songs which comprises *Jarabe Tapatio*: *Jarabe de Jalisco*, *Jarabe del Atole*, son del Palomo, *Jarana Yucateca*, *Jarabe Moreliano* and *La Diana*.²

http://www.mexfoldanco.org/jarabe.shtml Not & Bib:

Although the structure of rural and urban renditions vary in general, as shown above in the case of *Jarabe Tapatio*, in certain cases, the same main structure is found in both versions. For instance, *El Son de La Negra* is one of the few songs that preserved the main structure of the original rural interpretation. Typically, a *son* has an instrumental introduction, which is then ensued by *estrofas* and instrumental sections, *intermedios*, finishing with a *stock de cajón*, which means a stock out of a drawer or a large box.³ The same lyrics present in both renditions in the *estrofas* substantiate this point.

The lyrics of the piece *El Son de la Negra* is in the form of a *copla*. A *copla*, or couplet, is a poetic style that was brought by the Spaniards. ⁴ Consisting of stanzas that are commonly four lines with eight syllables each, the *copla* follows the rhyme scheme *abab*.

Cuan-do me tra-es a mi ne-gra (9), que la qui-e-ro ver a-quí (8) Con su re-bo-zo de se-da (8), que le tra-je de Te-píc. (7)

Figure 3. Analysis of syllables in second estrofa of El Son de La Negra

The above analysis shows how the lyrics in *El Son de La Negra* consists of four lines with more or less eight syllabus, thus giving it a form of a couplet. ⁵

a - Cuando me traes a mi negra

b - que la quiero ver aquí

a - Con su rebozo de seda

b – que le traje de Tepíc

Figure 4. Rhyme scheme of second estrofa of El Son de La Negra

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Jessie M. (2007) "¡Fuerte, vivo, y alegre!": USA: Crane School of Music

Jessie M. (2007) "¡Fuerte, vivo, y alegre!": USA: Crane School of Music

Moreover, a rhyme scheme in the sequence of abab can be observed. It is interesting to note that the first and the third line start with the consonant "c" and end with the vowel "a". whereas the second and fourth line both start with the word "que" and end with the vowel sound of "i".

El Son de La Negra

The Song of My Sweetheart

Negrita de mis pesares, ojos de papel volando.

A todos díles que sí, pero no les digas cuando

Así me dijiste a mí, por éso vivo penando!

My sweetheart of my regrets,

Batting your eyes like paper,

You tell everyone yes, but you never tell them when.

You said the same to me, and now I'm suffering.

Cuando me traes a mi negra, que laquiero ver aquí

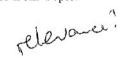
Con su rebozo de seda, que le traje de Tepíc.

When will you bring me to my sweetheart, whom I

Want to see here.

With her silk shawl, that she wears from Tepic.

Figure 5. Lyrics and translation of El Son de La Negra⁶



Instrumentation

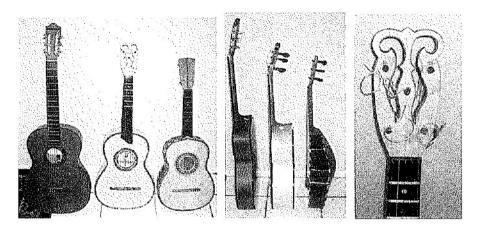
In the 19th century, the instrumentation of a mariachi group consisted of one or two violins, a harp, and one of numerous harmonic string instruments such as vihuela, jarana, or quitarra de golpe. On the other hand, the size of a modern urban mariachi is much larger; the instrumentation adopted by the modern urban mariachi are six to eight violins, a guitarrón, a vihuela, a guitar, and two trumpets. In other words, there were three major changes to the instrumentation; guitarrón, or the Spanish guitar, took the place of harp, guitarra de golpe was replaced by vihuela, and most importantly, trumpets were introduced.

The harp played an important role in rural mariachi music, especially in the genre, son, as heard in Son de La Negra by Mariachi tequileño. (Track 3) A son only consisted of the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords in mainly C and G major. Therefore, although the harp was a diatonic instrument, it could play all the harmonies required without much difficulty. Its sound was also audible among the other instruments, due to the fact that mariachi at that time only had a small number of string instruments. Nevertheless, the harp, despite its significance in the

⁶ Jessie M. (2007) "¡Fuerte, vivo, y alegre!": USA: Crane School of Music /



traditional mariachi, dropped out of use by the modern mariachi for several reasons. Firstly, as the mariachi music rapidly became polytonal, it was necessary to have a bass instrument capable of efficient modulation, transposition, and execution of chromatic bass lines. Secondly, it was inefficient for urban mariachi group, who became increasingly mobile, to carry a harp due to its bulky size and weight. Additionally, due to its limitation in dynamics, the sound of the harp was often overpowered in the urban mariachi by additional violins and trumpets. Consequently, chromatic and relatively light *guitarrón* supplanted the harp in the modern mariachi.



Guitarra, Guitarra de Golpe, Vihuela (front and side view) guitarra de golpe peg head 7

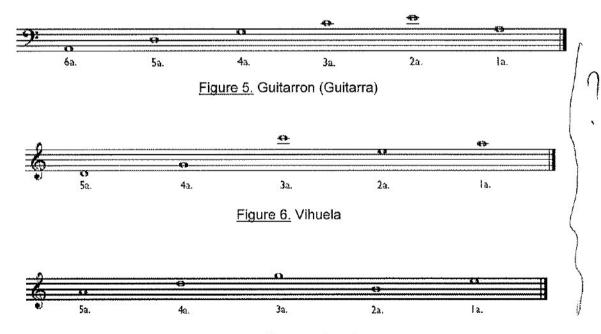


Figure 7. Guitarra de golpe

⁷ http://www.jaliscoharp.com/golpe.html http://www.jaliscoharp.com/golpe.html http://www.jaliscoharp.com/golpe.html

Guitarra de golpe, another traditional instrument, can be heard in the rural mariachi (Track 1,3,4). It has several other names such as quitarra colorada, quitarra quinta, quinta and jarana. Having a distinct sound from vihuela and gultarra, guitarra de golpe was widely used by the rural mariachi for the "armonia", or harmony, section. Guitarra de golpe was especially fitting to their instrumentation as it was a good accompaniment to the harp; it had less sustain than a guitar and a lower pitch than a vihuela, as seen above, so it did not overpower the delicate sound of harp. However, similar to the harp, guitarra de golpe is rarely used by the urban mariachis, who prefer to use vihuela and guitar for rhythmic and chordal accompaniment. One of the reasons for its disappearance is the instrument's distinct and relatively unknown tuning and left hand positions. It is also important to note the visual effect that guitarra de golpe had with its elaborate peghead, since the visual element was important for the rural mariachi along with its musical aspect. Hence, quitarra de golpe and the harp were a perfect combination that contributed to creating a visual impact for a rural mariachi.

Lastly, the addition of trumpets is perhaps the most radical change that the mariachi genre has faced during the urbanization of the genre. Trumpets are known to be first used in mariachi with the advent of the powerful radio station XEW, "La Voz de América Latina desde México" (The Voice of Latin America from Mexico) in the 1930's. In order to compensate for the weak sound produced by the string instruments, especially the violins that played the melody, trumpets were added to duplicate the main tune. Although Mexicans thought something was wrong with their radio sets when they first heard broadcasts of mariachi with trumpets have now become one of the most integral instruments in urban mariachi. The urban renditions of Jarabe Tapatio and Son de la Negra (Track 2, 4) both have trumpets as their leading melody instruments.

Tempo and Rhythm

Tempo and rhythm in the mariachi music is characterized by its typical exuberance and continuity. The backbone of the rhythmic time in both Son de la Negra and Jarabe Tapatio remains the same in both traditional and modern mariachi. For instance, both versions of Son

^{*} http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/projects/mariachi04/history/history4.html

de la Negra preserve the basic pattern of rhythm which is an alternation between 6/8 and 3/4, a typical characteristic of Son Jaliscience⁹.



Figure 8 Typical rhythmic pattern in sones

Moreover, they both end with the conventional tag ending of a son, which repeats the tonic chord twice, thus giving a sense of closing.

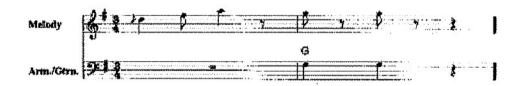


Figure 9 Conventional tag ending of a son

Typical rhythmic pattern in the body of the music does not vary much either.



Figure 10 typical rhythmic pattern in the body of a son

Another interesting rhythmic feature in *El Son de la Negra* is the use of *sesquiáltera*, or changing sixes, brought by the Spaniards during the colonial period. This joyful and energetic rhythmic pattern and lively fast tempo make up the driving force of the music.

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http://www.sobrino.net/mer/The_Son.html



Figure 11 sesquiáltera in the opening of El Son de La Negra

Similarly, the two different versions of *Jarabe Tapatio* have the alteration between 6/8, 3/4 and 2/4 which is a typical rhythmic pattern in *Jarabe*. 10



Figure 13 example of 3/4 in Jarabe Tapatio (Bar 29-)



Figure 14 example of 2/4 in Jarabe Tapatio (Bar 61-)

However, despite their similarities in the basic rhythmic structure, there is a fundamental difference between urban performance and rural performance in that the rhythm in rural rendition is much more precarious and unstable. Whereas the tempo and rhythm of the urban mariachi is meticulously exact like a metronome, in rural mariachi music, virtually every note is slightly off-beat with the use of syncopation. This is one of the most important characteristic in rural mariachi music that helps to create its typical folkloristic mood.

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http://www.sobrino.net/mer/The_Jarabe.html

Melody, Harmony, and Texture

The melody in urban mariachi is mainly carried by two trumpets, although it is played by the violins or the voice in some parts. For example, in *Jarabe Tapatio*, the trumpets play exactly the same melody at a third interval, as shown below.



Figure 15 trumpets playing the melody at a third interval

Similarly, the three violins move at a constant interval



Figure 16 violins playing the melody at a constant interval

Thus, the urban mariachi music is generally homophonic. On the other hand, the main melody is always played by the violins and the voice in traditional rural mariachi music. These melodies are relatively more contrapuntal, consequently rendering it polyphonic.



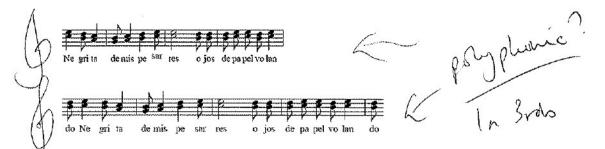


Figure 17 Melody sung by the voice

However, in both types of mariachi music, the repetition of melodies contributes to creating a feeling of continuity. Augmentation is frequently found when the melodies are repeated in the form of variation with an alteration in pitch or rhythm.



<u>Figure 18</u> The first melody starting from bar 82 is repeated with alterations to rhythm. [*El Son de la Negra*]

Harmonies in mariachi music tend to be relatively simple in both rural and urban renditions. The most common chords used are tonic, subdominant, dominant and dominant seventh. Complex chords such as 9th or 11th found in some contemporary music are very rare in mariachi music. For example, the sheet music below of *El Son de la Negra* for the bass instrument that plays *armonia*, or the harmony, shows that in the key of G, the chords G, C, D and D 7th are used. It is important to notice how the rhythm is broken down into small beats for *armonia*. The actively repeated strumming on the same chords, along with the variation in the direction of strum (up ad down), contributes to creating a dense texture along with emphasizing the sense of harmony and tonality.



Figure 19 armonia in El Son de la Negra

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The sheet music for *guitarrón* below shows how simple harmonies are used in *Jarabe Tapatio*. When the key is in C major, the chords used are the dominant chord (C), subdominant chord (F), and dominant chords, (G, G_7). Similarly, when the piece of music modulates to G major, the dominant chord(G), subdominant chord (C), and the dominant chord(G_7) are used. It is important to notice the role of *guitarrón* which, unlike *armonia*, provides the bass notes in the harmonies on only the beats that are accentuated. For instance, in the sections where the time signature is in 6/8, the *armonia* plays on the first and the fourth beat.

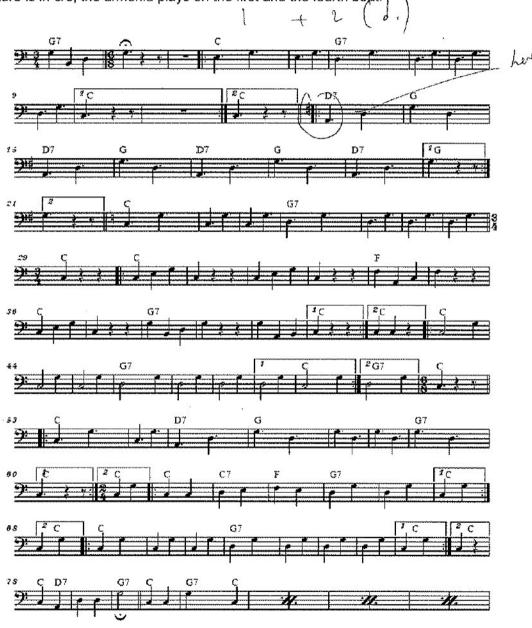


Figure 20 guitarrón in Jarabe Tapatio

Another unique element found in both types of mariachi music that contribute to building its thick texture and lively tone colour is the use of *grito*, or yell, at aesthetically pleasing moments. Examples of grito can be heard in both types of *El Son de la Negra* at 0:58 in track 3 (rural version), and 0:15 in track 4 (urban version). During a performance, it is common to see not only the performers but also the members of the audience let out *grito*, consequently making mariachi music more interactive between the performers and the audience. This unique feature was originally found in rural mariachi, as in a secular environment, the music was played for pure enjoyment in various events. However, despite the massive transformation the genre underwent, this characteristic still continues to exist in the modern form of the mariachi music.

Technique and Tone Colour

One of the most distinguishing characteristics between the traditional and modern mariachi is the use of technique. The violins in the rural mariachi do not use any vibrato or ornaments, and produce a crude and plain sound. On the other hand, urban mariachis show a high mastery in the use of different techniques; both the violins and trumpets demonstrate a rich vibrato. Moreover, whereas the voice of the rural singers is natural and unaffected, that of the singers in urban mariachi is much more studied and imposing with a clearer pronunciation. Nevertheless, both the traditional and modern mariachi are similar in that, compared to the violins in the western classical music, the bowing is stronger in both versions.

This difference in the use of technique is further highlighted by the different natures of the instruments. That is, whereas the instruments used by the modern mariachi are supreme in quality in most cases, the instruments played by the traditional mariachi are often home-made. These home-made instruments are limited in volume and are also difficult to tune. Consequently, the lack of sophisticated techniques and ornamentations along with improperly tuned instruments produce a crude tone colour in rural mariachi. On the other hand, the tone colour in urban mariachi is refined thanks to the use of virtuoso techniques and instruments with high quality.



The following is a table summarizing the main differences between urban and rural mariachi, which are apparent in *Son de la Negra* and *Jarabe Tapatio*.

	Urban	Rural	
Structure	More rigid e.g. fixed verses	Looser/ freer	
Lyrics	Fixed	Varies from group to group	
Duration	Shorter	Usually longer	
Tempo	Faster	Slower	
Rhythm	Stable	Precarious; more use of syncopation	
Instruments	Always the same instruments	May vary from group to group	
	-Spanish guitar	-Jarona Colorada/Guitarra de golpe	
	-Vihuela	-Arpa Jalisciense	
	-Trumpets	-No trumpets	
Melody	Similar motion at a 3 rd interval	Contrapuntal	
Harmony	Simple harmony: t	onic, dominant, subdominant	
Modulation	Generally from tonic to relative minor		
Texture	Homophonic/ Heterophonic	Polyphonic	
Tone colour	Refined	Crude; not properly tuned	
Volume	Larger	Smaller	
Technique	Virtuoso	Simple; e.g. no vibrato	
Voice	More imposing	More natural	
Repertoire	Commercialized	For religion and entertainment	



Conclusion

Research question: To what extent is the original flavor of traditional rural mariachi music retained in modern urban mariachi music?

During the last seventy years, the traditional rural mariachi music lost many of its unique characteristics during the process of urbanization. Although the basic rhythm and melody are still present, the vast change in the structure, instrumentation, tone colour and technique rendered the genre much more professional than before. Hence, much of the original flavor of traditional rural mariachi music is lost in modern urban mariachi music. In fact, there are many mariachi fans that criticize modern virtuoso mariachis, saying that these virtuosos no longer possess the elements that are so essential in mariachi. Therefore, the traditional mariachi is conserved thanks to those people who actually prefer to listen to common, less well-trained, out of tune, inaccurate, poorly rehearsed mariachis to listening to some of the modern virtuoso mariachis. However, it is important to realize that mariachi has always been a versatile genre and this very quality is what brought about the recognition and fame of the once regional folk music, both at a national and international level. Therefore, it seems likely that the highly adaptable genre of mariachi would continue to evolve in the future into a more novel and interesting music.

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Publica

Jessie M. (2007) "¡Fuerte, vivo, y alegre!": A classical violinist's exploration of global music education and her heritage through the study of mariachi violin, ÚSA: Crane School of Music

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Discography

Track 1

Rural Jarabe : Mariachi Tequileño, Tequila Jalisco, 3ª Congreso de Mariachi Tradicional, CONACULTA

Track 2

Urban Jarabe: Mariachi Vargas De Tecalitlan

Track 3

Rural Negra 1: Mariachi Tequileño, Tequila Jalisco, 3º Congreso de Mariachi Tradicional, CONACULTA

Track 4

Urban Negra: Mariachi Vargas De Tecalitlan

Interview

Prof. Gonzalo Camacho. 2008. [Personal communication] August 12, October 7, October 8.

Lizette Alegre Gonzalez. 2008 [Personal communication] August 12.

Juan Morales. 2008. [Personal communication] October 6.

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Assessment form (for examiner use only)

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Assessment criteria A	research question	2	2	
E	introduction	2	2	
C	investigation	3	4	
	knowledge and understanding	ng [3]	4	
E	reasoned argument	3	4	
F	analysis and evaluation	2	4	
(use of subject language	2	4	
H	conclusion	2	2	
Ĩ	formal presentation	2	4	
j	abstract	2_	2	
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Name of first examiner:(CAPITAL letters)	Examiner number:		
Name of second examiner:	Examiner number:		
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