

# Chapter 227

## The musa project and the first female songbook of Pará

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### ABSTRACT

The "Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará" is the inaugural work for the creation of the entitled "MUSA-Mulheres na Música da Amazônia" (MUSA-Women in the Music Collection of the Amazon), an ongoing institutional research project linked to the School of Music of UFPA. The objective is to research women in the space of the musical arts of the Amazon of Pará, recovering their identities, practices, memories, experiences, knowledge, and artistic productions

through the publishing, critical review, phonographic record, and dissemination of handwritten songs of female authorship in Pará until the middle of the twentieth century, never before edited. The methodological path adopted is divided into four stages: the first refers to documentary research, the second to bibliographic research, the third consists of the description and musical study of the collected material, and finally, the fourth stage consists of the discussion and dissemination of results. The preliminary results point to the understanding of these productions of female authorship from the practices of consumption of cultural goods, social relations, and institutional structures of the time.

**Keywords:** Song, Female authorship, Cultural studies, Gender studies, Belle Époque in Pará.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The "Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará" is the result of the ongoing institutional research project linked to the School of Music of the Federal University of Pará. It is constituted in the inaugural work of the creation of the entitled "MUSA Collection: Women in the Music of the Amazon", focused on publishing, critical review, phonographic record, and dissemination of handwritten songs of female authorship in Pará until the middle of the twentieth century, never edited before.

In this perspective, the importance of the creation of the research project is sustained, for being a pioneer in a public institution of musical education in Belém, which intends to be a reference in the studies on women in the music of Pará, since there is no specific collection focused on the study and research on women in the field of music, the recovery of their practices, identities and artistic productions.

The songs of female authorship in Pará, which compose the first cancionero, are works that cover the period of the *Belle Époque* of Pará until the first half of the twentieth century. but also to broaden the artistic and sociocultural understanding of our region through the materiality of these songs.

Studies on the trajectory of women in the Brazilian and world-historical scenario in the field of music, it is perceived that these are recent. However, to enter the artistic universe of the woman who was

born or lived in Pará during the period of this research is to dialogue with rare materials, little explored and even unpublished.

The basic theoretical contribution of this research sought foundation in different disciplinary areas from authors such as Salles (1980; 2007; 2016) and Vieira (2001) for their research on culture and musical practices in Pará, Bourdieu (2017) for their sociological analyses and symbolic relations of power and domination, Del Priori (2013) for their studies focused on the history of women in Brazil, as well as Souza (2020) for his research on songs of female authorship in Pará.

Therefore, this research aims to foster academic-scientific development in the area of cultural and musical heritage, as well as to promote studies on memory, identity, documentation, preservation, and dissemination of the cultural heritage of the region, concerning the practices and musical representations produced by women in the Amazon of Pará.

## 2 THE COLLECTIONS SEARCHED

The first collection visited, known as "Vicente Salles Collection" or "Vicente Salles Collection" was incorporated in 1993 into the scientific heritage of the Federal University of Pará. In this, there is the musical account present in hundreds of scores, as well as sources of social history, literature, records, tapes, leaflets, and memories of the press represented in newspapers, magazines, and almanacs that circulated in the State of Pará from 1878 to recent years of today.

In addition to this collection, the body of work by Vicente Salles represents an important legacy for the artistic history of Pará, such as *Music and Time in Grão Pará* (1980) and *Music and Musicians of Pará* (2007; 2016). The latter is a dictionary first published in 1970 and expanded in two other later versions, with the inclusion of new entries, and which provides a vast overview of the characters who built the history of women in Pará music, referencing several authors, among them: Maria de Lourdes Rangel Antunes Antunes Antunes (1905-?), Simira Bacellar (1920-?), Júlia das Neves Carvalho (1873-1969), Madre Cordeiro (1867-1947), Marcelle Guamá (1892-1978), Helena Nobre (1888-1965), among others.

Another very rich collection is that of the Peace Theater. In it, there are prints of programs of the concerts held in the theater from 1894 to the present, whose data tell the historical trajectory of music, theater, and literature, which can reveal another dimension to the cultural expression in Belém and the presence of women in an important space of circulation and musical diffusion of the time.

Despite the existence of these collections, when going through the bibliography about studies already carried out in Pará on the woman composer in the period of the *Belle Époque* until the first half of the twentieth century, it is observed that there is no specific inventory of the production of songs written by these women. The work of these historical characters is scattered in the collections of the library of the Carlos Gomes State Institute in Belém, in the Vicente Salles collection (from which the vast majority of the works for this songbook were obtained), and other archives that remain kept by the families of the authors represented here, most in handwritten scores and without phonographic record.

### 3 SONGS OF FEMALE AUTHORSHIP IN PARÁ

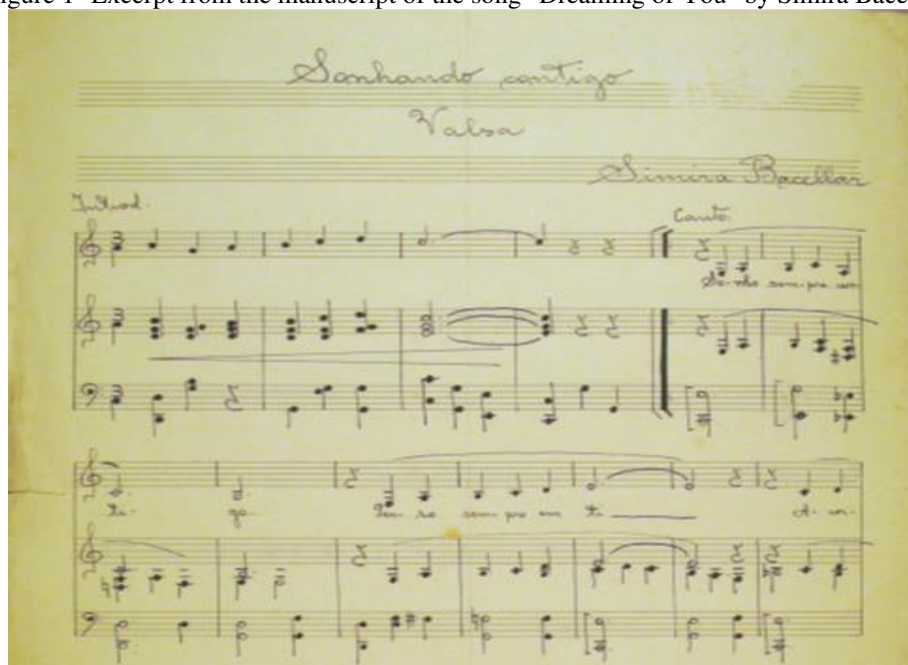
The study on the song of female authorship until the middle of the twentieth century started from the survey of different documentary sets that comprise the main *corpus* of this research.

Among the particularities observed in the collections surveyed, there are compositions of male authorship, but with the text of female authorship, as well as the opposite, songs of female authorship with the text of male authorship. Another situation noted in the vocal compositions of female authorship concerns the language, because, in addition to our vernacular language, works were found set to music with texts written in Latin and French.

It is noteworthy that the focus of this research is the compositions for singing and piano (songs) with text in Portuguese, selected after collection in several documentary collections in the city of Belém, whose largest concentration of scores is in the "Vicente Salles Collection". However, some duplicates of handwritten scores in the "Vicente Salles Collection" were also located in the library of the Carlos Gomes State Institute, but they are not added in number to the existing contingent.

Regarding the scores found in the "Vicente Salles Collection", the songs of female authorship attributed to composers, without biographical references and that are not included in the dictionary Music and Musicians of Pará (SALLES, 2007; 2016), were left out of the cut now proposed, because it is not possible to ensure that the authors were from Pará or that they lived in Pará during the period of the research section.

Figure 1- Excerpt from the manuscript of the song "Dreaming of You" by Simira Bacellar



Source: Vicente Salles Collection

In addition to the manuscripts collected in the "Vicente Salles Collection", other collections were used, as previously stated, belonging to the library of the Carlos Gomes State Institute, to relatives of the investigated composers and the collections of private individuals, expanding the number of manuscripts selected by women in another 4 (four) compositions.

Thus, for comparative purposes, it is noteworthy that, only with the number of handwritten scores of the "Vicente Salles Collection", 587 (five hundred and eighty-seven) scores are of male authorship and 104 (one hundred and four) of female authorship, which ratifies the male hegemony in the compositional field. Hence, the need to give visibility to the female artistic productions of that time.

From this total of 104 (one hundred and four) compositions of female authorship of the "Vicente Salles Collection", 50 (fifty) songs (songs with text) were selected for the present research, added to another 4 (four) handwritten songs found in other collections.

From the set of handwritten scores of female authorship in Pará, for the creation of the first "Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará", only 13 (thirteen) handwritten songs of authors born until the 1920s and who, therefore, lived their youth until the middle of the twentieth century in Belém do Pará were selected.

#### **4 THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FEMALE SONGBOOK**

As for the construction of the Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará, the following stages stand out:

##### **Foreplay**

- Inventory of handwritten songs of female authorship until the first half of the twentieth century, stage supervised by the coordination of the project;
- Division of activities/functions among project members;
- Survey of priorities and criteria for the selection of files (scores) to be digitized to forward to the person responsible for the task;
- Digitization of the scores, to start the editing process.

##### **Publishing**

Stage of treatment of manuscripts and management of processes for publication. This phase requires collaborating pianists to monitor the entire process of revising the scores. This step comprises:

- Correction of the scores: the scores, after being digitized, are corrected, obeying the criteria established by the work team, which determined a model to be used as a reference, for the digitized scores to have, as far as possible, the same presentation and equal finish.

Figure 2- Excerpt from the song Sonhando Contigo, in the process of editing

(original em C)

**Sonhando Contigo**  
Valsa

Simira Bacellar

Introd.

Canto

Piano

Canto:  
5  
So - nho sem - pre con - ti - go. Pen - so

Source: MOSA Collection, 2021

- Sheet music review: All scanned sheet music undergoes two revisions (or more if necessary) before creating the final version. After this step, there will be the creation of a PDF version of each of them.

### **Edition**

This is the time to prepare for publication. Thus, the finished scores will be:

- Recorded in own file, in version *Finale 26.1*, transformed into PDF file, in addition to the virtual copy, to compose the MSA Collection;
- Recorded in audio (MP3), as well as recorded artistically, in the form of music clips of some selected works (MP4);
- After being edited, revised, and finalized, they will be organized and compose the first Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará, and will be accompanied by text with Phonetic Translation (IPA) and literal translation of the texts into English;
- Published and made available to the general public.

### **Critical review, registration, and availability of the final product**

This step should culminate with the finished product and be duly registered to be delivered to the general public. It is noteworthy that the critical review of the songs of female authorship selected for the first Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará encompasses the work of editing and editing scores.

As mentioned, the publishing phase concerns the technical preparation of the manuscripts for the songbook and implies the work of selecting the manuscripts, scanning in a music editing program, layout, revision, and repair of editorial notes. After this stage, we continue in the work of musical editing concerning the preparation for publication, and how this material will be made public for its dissemination and dissemination, that is, the choices made in the presentation of this material.

Therefore, these steps are fundamental, so all will be supervised by the coordination of the project because they result in the work that should be disclosed and delivered to society, a final product duly registered and accessible to the general public, interested in the area researched.

## **5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The social transformations experienced in the city of Belém during the rubber economy affected the process of construction of the musical universe and acted on social relations, the incorporation of different aesthetic values and the perception of our cultural assets, and the process of assimilation of European aesthetic-musical models to regional culture.

In this sense, this work about the first "Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará" makes up the research of primary and secondary documentary sources about women in the space of the musical arts of the Pará Amazon, to recover their identities, practices, memories, experiences, knowledge and artistic productions.

The documentary set gathered for the construction of the first "Cancioneiro Feminino do Pará" expands the understanding of the approach to the study of gender in the field of sociological and cultural analysis that incorporates different dimensions, enabling the understanding of the object beyond simple handwritten scores, revealing a system of social relations capable of elucidating a system of symbolic power defining a social order, which culminated in the invisibility of the woman composer in Pará. Reasoning that converges with the postulate of Bourdieu (2017), an author who also uses the history of women to substantiate his ideas about the symbolic mechanisms of social domination, which contributed to the exclusion of women from the so-called official history, in which the State, the family, religion and social entities, such as school, systematically guided ideologies and customs that formed a network of domination that became symbolic mechanisms of domination of the feminine and exclusion of women as productive and creative social beings.

Therefore, these results, although preliminary, point to the understanding of these productions of female authorship from the practices of consumption of cultural goods, social relations, and institutional structures of the time.

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