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FOLK MUSIC OF THE AMERICAS

Issued from the Collections of the Archive of American Folk Song

ALBUM XV

VENEZUELAN FOLK MUSIC

FROM THE ARCHIVE OF AMERICAN FOLK SONG

EDITED BY

JUAN LISCANO AND CHARLES SEEGER

In 1939, Juan Liscano, journalist and poet, provided himself with portable sound-recording equipment and began to record the folklore of Venezuela. He traveled, entirely upon his own initiative and resources, sometimes with considerable hardship, over most of the northern half of the country, including the states of Lara, Falcón, Miranda, Anzoátegui, Nueva Esparta, and Zulia, examples of whose music and speech are contained in this album.

The fame of Mr. Liscano's collection (to the best of our knowledge the largest made in his country) had preceded him. So that when at last, after several years' correspondence about the preservation and study of his recordings, he visited the Pan American Union in 1946, bringing his discs with him, the Library of Congress availed itself of the opportunity of making a complete set of copies, which are now part of its permanent collection. Selection from these hundred-odd discs was made by Charles Seeger, with the advice and cooperation of the collector, who provided ample notes and transcriptions of many of the texts.

Mr. Liscano undertook the collection of this material with a deep affection for and an understanding of his people and with a clear knowledge of the value of preserving its folklore not only for Venezuela but for the outside world as well. This album—the second issued by the Archive of American Folk Song dealing with the folk music of Latin America—should be of unusual interest to folklorists and musicologists and to the general public as well.

DUNCAN B. M. EMRICH,
Chief, Folklore Section.

71 A. 1. BAILE DE LAS TURAS (Dance of the Flutes)

Played by people of the village of San Miguel who were brought to Barquisimeto for the special purpose of performing this music. Recorded at Barquisimeto, Lara, December 24, 1940.

Like their forefathers, the descendants of the Ayama and Gayo Indians in the villages of San Miguel and Bobare, Lara, still hold at harvest time a beautiful ceremony.

When the corn is "jojoto," that is, still green but already showing signs of ripening, usually in August or the beginning of September, the Dance of the Flutes is presented, to the tune of reed flutes (generally called *turas*), of deer-skulls (*cachos*), from which the sound emerges by blowing through the occipital hole, and of sacred *maracas*.

When the corn is tender, it is time to dance the Dance of the Flutes, with the idea of expressing gratitude to Nature for the rains which made the harvest abundant. This also offers an occasion to ask the gods for peace and plenty and to elect the new overseers "who should reign in a civil period, from harvest to harvest."

The ceremonial of the Dance of the Flutes is described in a curious pamphlet published in 1890 by the publishing house El Comercio, at Coro, Falcón, under the title: "*Reglamento de la Tura en Quebrada Honda*." Even to this day, the country-people who dance the Flute Dance are guided by this curious document, which is jealously guarded by the *Cacique* (mayor) of the village.

This ceremony, moreover, has a politico-religious character.

The Dance of the Flutes is divided into two parts: the Dance of the Small Flute, which is performed in the courtyard of the overseer and which lasts a whole day and a whole night, and the Dance of the Big Flute, which is performed when the corn is ready for preparation of the *carato* (a refreshing drink).

This dance lasts four days and four nights, and in it participate all those particular groups of dancers who are specified by the instructions, namely: one superintendent, eight overseers (half men and half women), 64 hunters, 128 assistants (half men and half women), and 32 musicians.

The consumption of alcoholic drink is prohibited. The participants paint their faces with *bariquí*.

The dance is of collective character. Two long rows are formed by the dancers, facing each other, men and women alternating. In the middle, under a canopy of fruit offerings, the *Cacique* is seated. The dance begins with the overseers who, with *maraca* in one hand, dance up and down the long rows of dancers, who

take no steps. They bow and execute some fanciful gestures, pretending to "drive out the devil." The overseers terminate their dancing in front of the *Cacique*.

Then the long rows of dancers begin to move, slowly in time with the playing of the flutes and *maracas*, winding their way in graceful arabesques which, viewed from above, resemble the patterns decorating primitive pottery.

The following instruments are used:

TURA CHICA (Small Flute)	TURA GRANDE (Large Flute)
Small Flute (male) with 3 holes	Large Flute (male) with 4 holes
Small Flute (female) with 2 holes	Large Flute (female) with 3 holes
Small <i>cacho</i>	Large <i>cacho</i>
<i>Maracas</i> .	<i>Maracas</i> .

The two melodies, Tura Chica and Tura Grande, are recorded together on the accompanying disc.

71 A. 2. TROMPA GOAJIRA (Jew's Harp)

Played by H. González Palmar. Recorded in Caracas, 1940.

For reasons unknown to us, the European instrument known as *birimbao* (see *Nuevo Diccionario Ilustrado de la Lengua Española*) has become generally popular among the Indians who inhabit the Peninsula of Goajira, in the State of Zulia. I have heard it played with veritable mastery.

H. González Palmar, the performer, is a *mestizo* of keen intelligence who proposed to interpret the culture of Goajira in Caracas. Strange impulses of exaltation and vindication of his maternal Indian race filled his soul. He told me that with the *trompa goajira* the Indians express their most delicate sentiments in a purely musical idiom.

This tune is called "Music for Jew's Harp of the Boy Abandoned in the Mountains of Ipápuru."

71 A. 3. EL MAREMARE (Indian Pipes Song)

Played and sung by a family of Caribbean Indians living in the vicinity of the village of Cantaura, Anzoátegui. Recorded in Cantaura, Anzoátegui, February, 1941.

The *maremare* is a form of music widely known throughout the eastern region of Venezuela, from the coast of Barcelona, Anzoátegui, to the wilderness of the Delta-Amacuro Territory.

It is a song of the Caribbean Indians prevalent among all the tribes of this great primitive family.

The instruments upon which the music of the *maremare* is performed are pipes of a distinctive kind known as the *mare*. The Caribbean family in Cantaura, from whose playing this record was made, accompanied the song and the tune of the pipes with *maracas* and a *cuatro*—a small guitar with four strings, an instrument of obvious European derivation.

The pipes are made of different numbers of reeds, as follows:

- First *mare*, of three reeds
- Mare* (male) of five reeds
- Mare* (female) of six reeds.

71 B. 1. PASAJE DE TAMBOR REDONDO "EL EGÍO" ("El Egío"—Music for round drum)

Played and sung by José Dolores Rivas, Ildefonso Rivas, Joaquín Rivas and Melitón Rivas. Recorded in Curiepe, Miranda, September, 1941.

In those parts of Venezuela which are inhabited by Negroes, the feast in honor of San Juan is celebrated with utmost splendor. It falls on June 24, generally beginning on June 23 and ending on June 25, and on this occasion the *bailes de tambor* (Drum Dances) are performed. The songs, and even the shapes of the drums, vary in the various regions in which the feast of San Juan is celebrated. Hence, not only one but many distinct types of drum dances, rhythms and drum songs, are staged throughout the coastal areas of Venezuela, from the Gulf of Maracaibo to the coast of the State of Sucre.

In the region of Barlovento, the feast of San Juan, with its drum dances and *toques*, displays to this day its traditional splendor. The region called Barlovento comprises the districts of Acevedo, Brión and Páez of the State of Miranda.

The village of Curiepe, where we collected the drum melodies in this album, is situated in the district of Brión.

Here we find two large groups of drum dances: the Big Drum Dances (*bailes de tambor grande*) and the Round Drum Dances (*bailes de tambor redondo*) also called Small Drum Dances (*bailes de tambores pequeños, tamborcitos, or tambores culo e'puyó*).

"El Egío" belongs to the group of the Round Drum Dances. The instruments used are three drums—*cruzado*, *corrido* and *pujao*. The *cruzado* measures 45 cm around and 95 cm high; the *corrido* measures 42 cm around and 95 cm high; the *pujao* is 67 cm around and also 95 cm high. One end of the drums is covered with a piece of goat-, deer-, or sloth-skin. The body of all the drums is made of *lano* wood. In order to play them, the player strikes

the hide with a little stick of *guácimo* and muffles the vibration with his hands. He places the drum between his legs, resting the bottom on the ground, giving an impression of straddling it.

The Round Drum Dances comprise a great number of songs (*pasajes*), each having its own choreography and rhythms, and are danced by couples. The dancers form a circle—hence the name Round Drum—and in the center of this tight circle dances a couple. Soon another couple enters, replacing the first, which immediately returns to the ring of the spectators. And so, on and on through the long, intense nights of the feast of San Juan. Only one couple dances at a time, and in this sense the Round Drum Dance is a dance of individuals as well, since it presents the best dancers with an opportunity to exhibit all their skill and agility to the raptly attentive, cheering and applauding audience.

The choreography of the Round Drum Dance is of great variety, plastic richness, suggestiveness and beauty. A soloist and a chorus, formed by the musicians and their audience, are required for this song. The soloist intones the chant, throwing it into the air like a ball, the chorus answering, catching the tune with an onomatopoeic singsong. Many of these ballads, or chants, are created on the spur of the moment; others are part of the oral tradition.

71 B. 2. PASAJE DE TAMBOR GRANDE "MEREURE" ("Mereure"—Music for large drum)

Played by Heriberto Cobo—*mina*; Felipe Rada—*curveta*; Lorenzo Rivas—*laures*; Marcos Rivas—*maracas*; sung by Isabel Rivas and José Dolores Rivas. Recorded in Curiepe, Miranda, September, 1941.

The Large Drums are the *mina* and the *curveta*. The *mina* is two meters high, made of the hollow trunk of the *aguacate* tree. One side is closed by a piece of goat-skin. The drummer, in order to play the instrument, places it on a little forklike stand and, facing the mouth, or opening, strikes the skin with two little sticks made of *guácimo*, about 30 cm long. Sometimes he uses his hand to muffle the vibration of the skin. Two other men, holding sticks 50 cm long, cut from the branches of the *araguaney* or the *pui*, accompany the hoarse sound of the drumming by a rhythmic beating of the body of the *mina*. These sticks are called *laures*. Each player uses a pair of *laures*. The *curveta* is a bulky drum, two meters high, made of *tasajo* wood, and is placed close to the *mina*. The *curveta* perches upright on the ground on three feet, which are carved direct from the wooden, cylindrical body. The mouth, or opening, of this instrument is covered by a piece of goat- or

deer-skin. It is played in exactly the same manner as the *mina*, but without accompaniment of *laures*. To the sound of these instruments, joined by the *maracas*, the Large Drum Dances are performed. They are, however, less beautiful and varied than the Round Drum Dances. Their principal characteristics consist in the fact that they are group dances in which a great number of couples participate.

The melody resembles that of the Round Drum Dance song.

<i>Soloist</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
O lo le lea, lo ló lé loe con el parque cambió mi corazón.	
Si viera mi corazón como lo tengo por tí.	Olo, le lea, etc. co, co, o, ó,
¿ Corazón, por qué está triste? Porque no puede sanar	Co, co co co, cojea,
... ha puesto un rayo, alúmbrame el camino.	idem.
	idem.

71 B. 3. EL CARÁNGANO (Music for the *carángano*)

Played by people of the village of Curiepe, Miranda. Recorded in Curiepe, September, 1941.

The *carángano* is an extraordinary instrument made of a palm-leaf, a trough and a gourd filled with maize kernels, a pair of thin, short sticks, and is played with the incomparable sense of rhythm of the Venezuelan *mestizo*.

71 B. 4. LOS QUITIPLÁS (Music for the *quitiplás*)

Played and sung by the people of the village of Curiepe, Miranda. Recorded in Curiepe, October, 1939.

The *quitiplás* are percussion instruments made of pieces of bamboo. One of them, called *pujao* or *macho*, is 50 or 60 cm high. Another, called *prima*, is 40 cm high and is cut from coarse bamboo. The others are just called *quitiplá* and are all of the same size, approximately 30 cm long, two pairs being used here.

The strange sound made by these instruments is produced in the following manner: the four players—one for the *pujao*, the other for the *prima*, and one for each pair of *quitiplás*—squat on

the ground and strike it, vertically, with their respective pieces of bamboo. When the ground is soft, they use flat stones or pieces of rock in order to produce the desired resonance. Those who play the small *quitiplás* hold one in each hand, striking them against each other at the same time that they hit the ground. The general effect obtained resembles the percussion of the round drums.

Above the dry, chopping sound of the *quitiplás* rises the singing, which is cast in the same form as the Drum Dance songs.

<i>Soloist</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
.	
oló lo lé	
no me corte leñador	Oló, lo, ló
	la, la (etc.)
que quiero crecer bastante	
olé, le lé	
yo quiero ser un gigante	
oló, le lé	
.	
ahí mismito pa calmar mi dolor	
olé, le, lé	
.	
oló, le lé	
y a un velorio que yo fui.	

72 A. 1. EL MAMPULORIO (Death Watch for an Infant)

Sung by Pedro Longa and Fortunato Sanz. Instruments: drum, *cuatro* and *máracas*. Recorded in Curiepe, Miranda, October, 1939.

When a Negro child of tender age dies—generally a newborn baby—the Negroes of the Barlovento region stand wake by the tiny corpse which is bedecked and surrounded with flowers and lighted candles.

It is upon such an occasion that the song of the *mampulorio* is sung.

The country-people believe and say that a dead child turns into an angel, and, therefore, this watch is called "watch for the little angel."

The "watches for the little angel" are not only celebrated by the Negroes but also by the people of the Andean region, who traditionally stand watch by newborn children who have died.

Among the Negroes of Barlovento (in the districts of Acevedo, Brión and Páez in the State of Miranda) and among practically all the peons in the neighboring cocoa plantations, the "watches for the little angel" have their peculiar characteristics.

The watch is celebrated on a chosen plantation. The dead child rests in a simple coffin, painted white, which is placed upon a table in the back of the room. Wild flowers, or flowers decorated with colored paper, ornamented candles and beadwork give the appearance of an altar upon which the coffin rests. The audience is seated in front of this improvised altar, and the musicians are gathered in a corner.

Suddenly, the monotonous song rises. A man steps forward into the center of the gathering, carrying a hat, which he places, successively, upon the knees of each of those present. Another man, who accompanies him, holds an elaborate candle in his hands. The first, after having put his hat upon the knees of one of the audience, commences to deposit in it a series of objects such as are enumerated in the accompanying song given below. The candle-bearer then takes his turn. He brings the candle close to the face of a member of the audience, twisting it in his hands, moving it back and forth. The member of the audience tries to blow it out. The song refers to this activity.

If the member of the audience does not succeed in putting out the candle, he must bring a gift which, at the end of the ceremony, he may redeem when he has complied with a previously imposed penance. In this way the *mampulorio*, a Negro funeral rite, may be compared with the "pledge games" which delighted our forefathers. This custom, however, is beginning to die out (repeated legal action has been taken to prohibit it)—particularly that aspect of the celebration involving the boiling of the corpse to delay decomposition, which affords opportunity to prolong the *velorio* for many days, in one ranch after another.

This death rite represents a profound sense of social protest. The people think, with bold reasoning, that the prematurely deceased child, through his death, escapes the bitter experience of having to grow up and become a man. Therefore, rather than with tears, they celebrate his death with joy, as if it were liberation.

(Spoken: ¡Tambora! ¡Tambora!)

Por las ánimas benditas
que están en el purgatorio
aquí está la vela
del mampulorio (*chorus*)
aquí está la vela
del mampulorio (*chorus*)
aquí está la caja de fósforos
del mampulorio (*chorus*)
aquí está la sortija
del mampulorio (*chorus*)

Throughout the song one hears outcries, suggestions of words and names. These are not, however, to be taken as an inherent part of the pattern of the *mampulorio*. The singers are not professionals; and it would be rather difficult to induce the inhabitants of Curiepe to submit to the discipline of a recording studio. This accounts for the initial cries of "*tambora*," and other similar sounds.

72 A. 2. FULÍA: "SE FUÉ VOLANDO" ("It Flew Away")

Sung by Ana Uribe of Caucaagua, Miranda. Recorded in Chacao, Miranda, 1942.

Ana Uribe, a woman of 23 when this song was recorded, is an excellent singer of *fulías*. While busy with her daily chores, she hums a *fulia* to herself, a song which reaches its greatest splendor during the *velorio de Cruz*, in the month of May.

While singing these *fulías*, Ana Uribe accompanies herself in the same manner as the chorus upon one of the above-mentioned occasions.

Todas las flores marcharon,
se fué volando,
una mañana de enero,
ole le lé, etc....
en busca del tulipán,
se fué volando,
y la flor de "Por tí muero,"
ole le lé, etc. ...

Todas la flores marcharon,
se fué volando
y una mañana de abril
ole le lé, etc. ...
en busca del tulipán,
se fué volando
que no estaba en el pensil
ole le lé, etc. ...

72 A. 3. GUASA "PETRONILA" ("Petronila")

Played and sung by a group of country-people. Recorded in Curiepe, Miranda, October, 1939.

Tunes such as "Petronila" are frequently heard in the area of Barlovento, on Saturday and Sunday nights, or at small festivities which are held on saints' days, birthdays or anniversaries. Under the influence of the city, this music moves farther and farther away from the fertile soil of folklore. Its rhythms are used by

the composers of popular music in their *merengues* and other types of commercialized music. There is no doubt that we find in this song influences which are alien to folk tradition, apparent, for instance, in the allusions to the *rumba*. Nevertheless, this *guasa* has nothing to do with the Cuban *rumba*, which, on the other hand, bears no relation to the music of the same name which is offered today by the jazz orchestras of all nations.

Mi mujer se pone brava
cuando salgo a "parrandéa."
Yo no quiere disgustarla
porque me viene a buscá(r)
(bis)

Petronila
ay, Petronila de mi vida
no te pongas nerviosa (*chorus*)
ay, Petronila de mi vida
no te pongas nerviosa (*chorus*)
Está la rumbita prendía
está la rumba sabrosa (*chorus*)
Petronila de mi vida
no te pongas nerviosa (*chorus*)
está la rumbita prendía
está la rumba sabrosa (*chorus*)
etc. ...

72 B. CANTO PARA MATAR LA CULEBRA (Snake-Killing Song)

Sung and spoken by Pablo Madrid of Curiepe, Miranda; chorus of people of Curiepe. Recorded in Caracas, 1940.

The Snake-Killing Song is a pantomime performed by the country-people during the carnival. The character of the show is strictly humorous. The personalities involved are: The Sorcerer Francisco, Arico, the Snake, and the chorus. The musical accompaniment is given by *cuatros* (four-stringed guitars), drum and *maracas*.

The pantomime can be divided into three parts. In the first part, all of the characters make their appearance, led by the Sorcerer, who is the drum-player, wearing a top-hat, red cravat and frock-coat. He carries, on a strap over his shoulder, as is the custom in the country, a *mapire*, or satchel, containing all the instruments necessary for healing. The other actors and the musicians follow in a single file. One of the actors appears, a big snake coiled around his neck, made of cotton material stuffed with rags; the eyes are made of green or red beads. The appearance of this masterpiece is really impressive. Everybody begins to

sing and dance. Suddenly, the actor with the snake around his neck pulls it off and throws it at the feet of one of his companions, who pretends to be bitten and drops to the ground as though dead. Everybody stops singing; they surround the fallen body and commence to weep and moan.

The second movement begins when the Sorcerer is called to save Arico, the wounded man. The Sorcerer appears with affected gravity, intones his chant and, after a long monologue and other picturesque details, heals Arico. This part is left to the imagination of the actor who plays the role of the Sorcerer, and constitutes the most important moment of the pantomime. With Arico again part of the group, as a result of the miraculous healing, all return to their dancing and singing as before, but now around the snake which lies twisted on the ground. The music and singing make them drowsy until finally, the Sorcerer, with a loud cry, kills the snake with a stick.

<i>Sorcera</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
¡Qué animal de montaña!	Saranmanmulé (Sarambambulé)
que me quiere comer	“
que me quiere comer.	“
No me deja gallina	“
no me deja cochino	“
no me deja patico	“
no me deja naíta (nadita)	“
si me pica la mato	“
si me pica le doy	“
¡San Antonio Bendito!	“
¡Que dame un valor	“
pa matá(r) este animal!	“
¡Qué animal tan feroz!	“
No me deja vivir,	“
nos tiene arruinao	“
¿ Por dónde le dentro ?	“
¿ Por dónde le doy ?	“
¿ Por dónde le dentro ?	“
¿ Por dónde le doy ?	“
¡San Antonio Bendito!	“
¡Que dame un valor!	“
¡Que mírale la pinta!	“
¡Que parece zaraza!	“
¡Que mírale los ojos!	“
¡Que parece(n) dos cuenta(s)!	“
¡Que mírale los diente(s)!	“
¡Que parece(n) alfilé(res)!	“
Si me pica la mato	“
si me pica le doy	“
¡San Antonio Bendito!	“
¡Que dame un valor!	“
¡San Antonio Bendito!	“

Sorcera

¡Que dame un valor!
¿Por dónde le dejo?
¿Por dónde le doy?
¡Que me dan los temblor(es)!
¡Que me dan los temblor(es)!
Pa matá(r) este animal
¡Qué animal tan feroz!
No me deja vivir
¡Qué animal tan feroz!
No me deja vivir
Pa matá(r) este animal
¡Matá(r) serpiente!

¡Este lo curo yo!
¡Este lo cuyo yo!
Yo he curao a treinticinco
me faltan cinco pa cuarenta,
me faltan cinco pa cuarenta.
Aquí cargo la albahaca morá (morada)
aquí cargo el gengibre morao (morado)
aquí cargo el mastranco (mastranto) morao,
aquí cargo toa (toda) la planta morá.
¡Yo soy el Brujo de Curiepe!
con la Oración de San Pablo
y la Oración de San Miguel.
Con la Oración de San Pablo
y la Oración de San Miguel.
Ahora yo le voy a dá(r) una toma.
Esta es una toma muy buena.
Voy a machucá(r) esta toma
a vé(r) como está.
No tome(s) mucho po(r) que te muere(s)!
Te estoy cazando!
Ahora este muchacho ya está bueno.
Ahora yo le voy a hacé(r) una repregunta.

¡Arico!
¡Arico!
¡Arico!

¡Que me dan los temblores!
¡pa matá(r) este animal!
¡Qué animal tan feroz!
No me deja vivir
Puede sé(r) que la mate
puede sé(r) que la mate
puede sé(r) que le puye.
¡Maté serpiente!

Chorus

Saranmanmulé (Sarambambulé)

“
“
“
“
“
“
“
“
“
“

¡Picó culebra a Arico!
¡Llamá a Francisco!

(Moaning of the chorus)

¡Resucitó Arico!
¡Viva Arico!

Saranmanmulé (Sarambambulé)

“
“
“
“
“

73 A. FULÍA "LA PARAULATA"

Sung by Ana Uribe of Caucagua, Miranda. The *décimas* are spoken by Cruz Avila, born at San José de Río Chico, Miranda, and Edmundo Hernández, born at Tacarigua de Mamporal, Miranda. The accompaniment is played by people of Curiepe, Miranda. Recorded in Chacao, Miranda, March 20, 1943.

The *fulía* is a song of religious character which the people of Venezuela sing on the occasion of the *velorio de Cruz*, all through the month of May, or at the *velorios de Santo*, which are celebrated on certain fixed dates.

Velorios are celebrated throughout Venezuela, although the songs which are sung on these occasions are not all called *fulías*. They may be *cantos de velorio*, *tonos de velorio*, *fulías* or *folías*.

In the area of Barlovento they are called *fulías*, and it is here, in the land of endless cocoa plantations and cornfields, that this festival flourishes with unusual beauty. Spoken *décimas** are woven into the songs—an odd feature which causes Barlovento to be known as the land of the *velorio* songs.

The *fulía* has the following peculiarity: there is no dancing. As a result, it offers an opportunity for unusual skill in both singing and spoken recitatives. These deal with both profane and religious subjects. The *décimas* "to the divine," for instance, are dedicated to Golgotha, Mary, the Cross, and other subjects; while those "to the human" deal with love and flowers, with debate, mythology, Bolívar, and so on, according to the whim of the speaker.

Men and women celebrating a *velorio* meet at some ranch house where a simple altar, adorned with candles, flowers and other decorations, is set up on a table well toward the back of a room. The image of Mary, of the Cross or of a saint to whom homage is to be rendered, has a place of honor and is illuminated by the glow of candles from the simple altar.

To the tune of the *cuatros*, *maracas*, guitars and drums rises the song of the *fulía*. It is a group song; yet, at the same time, individuals play their part. Each of the participants, one after the other, pronounces his couplet. The chorus repeats certain phrases. Suddenly the cry "*hasta ahí*" silences the instruments and the song. Then, in the midst of respectful silence on the part of those present, the speaker of the *décimas* appears and recites what is called the "first foot" of his *décima*. After he finishes, another reciter of *décimas* rises and answers him, also with the "first foot"

*The "decima" is a highly elaborated poetical form which was cultivated in Spain during the 17th century, but is now archaic there, surviving as folklore in many parts of Hispanic America, from the southwest of the United States to Argentina.

of his *décima*, which must match the subject matter determined by the first. At the end of the *décimas*, regardless of whether the two wish to continue or not, the cry "*Ya es tiempo*" marks the end of the contest. Now the sound of song and music takes the place of the recited words and increases in intensity.

Soloist

Ay, por debajo con escamas
y por encima las espumas (bis)

Ay, debo correr a mi cama (bis)
porque no tengo ninguna

¡Hasta ahí!

First Foot (First speaker of
décimas: Edmundo Hernández)

Este canto de fulía
ya yo lo tengo olvidado
porque lo tienen ajado
los cantos de fantasía.
Nunca han tenido teoría
ni saben argumentar
ni se saben expresar
ni dar una relación;
para más satisfacción:
Señores, llegó el turpial.

Chorus

Ay, y por encima las espumas (3)

Ay, porque no tengo ninguna (3)

First Foot (Second speaker of
décimas: Cruz Avila)

Cesa trovador, tu canto
que te quiero contestar,
aunque acabo de llegar
de los confines de un campo.
Yo sé que causas espanto
con tu cantar placentero;
pero probarte yo quiero
que no he tenido rival;
*Donde canta toro real
no canta cucarachero.*

Second Foot

Para ser sabio poeta¹
se necesita de práctica;
estudiar bien la gramática
y parte de la aritmética;
por eso digo sin réplica:
Salga quien quiera versar
sobre lo más natural
si me saben entender:
y para más complacer:
Señores, llegó el turpial.

¹ The correct version should be: "Para hacer sabia poética," on the basis of "réplica" and "aritmética," with which the end of this verse should rhyme.

Soloist

Third Foot
Agudo de entendimiento
si dices que eres poeta
dime cuál son los planetas
que hay en el firmamento,
registra tu entendimiento
si quieres argumentar;
y le hace gramatical²
la sílaba en la novela
que a mandar en esta escuela:
Señor, llegó el turpial.

Fourth Foot
Párate, sabio poeta
y no te vaya(s) en retirá(da)
que te vengo a preguntá(r)
de las 29 letras
quiero que me des contesta
si eres náutico o naval,
Dios me ha puesto en natural
de lo que te estoy hablando
y alegre te voy cantando:
Señores, llegó el turpial.

¹ The *décima* speaker Cruz Avila forgets at this point the *décima* he intended, confusing it with another. The audience, which knows this *décima* by heart, repeats in unison the last word of the line "cucarachero." This is proof that the *décimas* are not improvised on the spur of the moment, but rather that the *decimistas* memorize them. The interrupted and forgotten *décima* ends thus:

pero el Continente entero
se alegra con mi cantar:
Donde canta loro real
no canta cucarachero.

² This verse, of obscure significance, may also be written: "y leáse gramatical ..."

Chorus

Second Foot

Soy nacido en San José
perteneciente a Miranda
y por todas partes anda
mi fama no sé por qué.
Para cantar no estudié
porque no tenía dinero;
mi padre fué un triste obrero¹
y yo digo al parar ...
(Voices are heard saying:
"cucarachero.")

Third Foot

Tú cantas con fantasía;
yo canto triste y sincero,
pero todo caballero
aprecia mi poesía.
No hay público que se ría
ni me diga majadero,
porque saludo primero
al público en general.
*Donde canta loro real
no canta cucarachero.*

Soloist

Chorus

Fourth Foot

Hay que aprender en la vida
para tratar con decencia,
para crear influencia
en parte desconocida,
tener amigo y amiga
así no tengan dinero;
porque tú eres el primero
que habla solo por hablar.
*Donde canta loro real
no canta cucarachero.*

¡Dáale al cuatro!

Ay, a las orillas de un río
y a la sombra de un laurel (bis)
Ay, me acuerdo de tí, bien mío (bis)
viendo las aguas correr.

y a la sombra de un laurel (3)
viendo las aguas correr (3)

Ay, Señores, llegó el turpial
al pie de la cuna blanca (bis)
Ay, con la lira en la garganta
y con el pico a troval(r)

al pie de la cuna blanca (3)
y con el pico a troval(r) (3)

73 B. POLO MARGARITEÑO (*Polo* from the Island of Margarita)

Sung by Pedro Ramón Deffit, Julián Guevara and José Silva. Played by Julián Guevara—mandolin; Aniceto Rojas López—guitar; Domingo Guzmán—*cuatro*; José Silva—*maracas*. Recorded in the port of Por-lamar, Nueva Esparta, Island of Margarita, December, 1941.

The *polo* is one of the most popular tunes among the inhabitants of the Island of Margarita. In spite of its name it has no direct relation to the Spanish tune of the same name. The Margaritan *polo* is sung to the accompaniment of *maracas*, *cuatros*, and other stringed instruments, and is popular with the Margaritan sailors, who sing it on any occasion.

The words for the music of the *polo* are in general very beautiful. Quatrains of eight-syllable, six-syllable, and, frequently, eleven-syllable lines are used. The *polo* offers the listener the rare opportunity of hearing, from the lips of the people, eleven-syllable lines, some of them belonging to the best Spanish poetic tradition. The Margaritans are very graceful in their speech and have retained in their language the beautiful and archaic expressions of the Castilian idiom. On one occasion I heard a Margaritan sing the first quatrain of the famous sonnet attributed to Santa Teresa de Jesús which begins as follows: "*No me mueve mi Dios para quererte ...*"

The *polo* does not require a fixed number of singers. On the contrary, anybody may participate. The *polo* singers sing the verses to each other.

The Venezuelan composer Antonio Estévez detects in the music of the *polo* "a harmonic formula closely resembling the so-called Andalusian cadence." "Joropo rhythms" are also noticeable.

(Pedro Ramón Deffit)

Que el cantar tiene sentido
que el cantar tiene sentido
entendimiento y razón;
que el cantar tiene sentido
dále duro
entendimiento y razón:

bis { la buena pronunciación
oye Julián
del instrumento al oído.

(Julián Guevara)

bis { La noche me enamora más que el día
y mi ánima sutil nunca se sacia

bis { de gustar su inefable poesía
y encarecer su excelsa aristocracia.

(José Silva)

bis { Estoy sin madre, huérfano y sin nombre
.

bis { Que le hace falta el hombre en esta vida
. y pa hacerle el favor.

(Pedro Ramón Deffit)

Para cantar este polo
para cantar este polo
me trajeron equivocado
oye Julián
para cantar este polo
dále duro
me trajeron equivocado

bis { El cuatro con la maraca
José Mir, dále duro que se estaca.

(Julián Guevara)

bis { Los perros ladran a la luna fría
que contemplé en las nubes su figura

bis { jauría
. espesura.

74 A. GALERÓN MARGARITEÑO (*Galerón* from the Island of Margarita)

Sung by Julián Guevara. Played by Julián Guevara—mandolin; Aniceto Rojas López—guitar. Recorded in the port of Porlamar, Nueva Esparta, Island of Margarita, December, 1941.

The music of the *galerón* contains distinctive cadences reminiscent of the *quantanamera* of Cuba. The islanders of Margarita combine it with sequences of *décimas*, which in Spanish literature were called *glosas* and were used by the poets of the *siglo de oro*.

The *glosa* consists of a quatrain and four *décimas*, altogether 44 verses. Each *décima*—called a “foot”—ends, respectively, with a verse of the quatrain. *Glosas* are called *trovas* on the Island of Margarita.

The ballad accompanied by this *galerón* relates to an incident of the wars between the Moors and the Christians, in which the hero was a certain Brother Luis Luz—monk, highwayman, warrior and suicide. This *glosa* is perhaps not as old as the subject theme, which is, of course, earlier than the 15th century.

*En la tumba de un suicida
pusieron esta inscripción:
aquí reposa un ladrón
que nunca estimó su vida.*

1

Una crónica troyana
dice que en tiempo pasado
un escrito muy sagrado
hallaron, una mañana,
debajo de una campana
que a los moros fué vendida
y dicen que fué fundida
para cruz de un mausoleo
al fué puesta, según creo,
en la tumba de un suicida.

2

Un moro interpreta entonces
lo que el escrito decía:
que, por disposición, había
esa campana de bronce
al fundirse, letras once
cincelaban en Albión
formaran, en conclusión,
este nombre: Fray Luis Luz;
y luego, en aquella cruz,
pusieron esta inscripción.

3

Una noche, según creo,
quitan a la cruz el nombre
y pusieron, no te asombres,
un letrero al mausoleo.
Aquello era obscuro feo,
pues era un negro borrón,
pues en aquella inscripción
decía al pie de la cruz:
Aquí no reposa Luz,
aquí reposa un ladrón.

4

Entonces se descubrió
que Fray Luis Luz había sido
aquel terrible bandido
que a los moros aterró.
Luego al panteón se rompió
y sacaron en seguida
los restos de aquel suicida,
el bandido sin segundo,
que se ahorcó y le probó al mundo
que nunca estimó su vida.

74 B. CORRIDO DEL PAJARILLO (Ballad of the Little Bird)

Sung by José Cornejo. Played by Julián González—*cuatro*. Recorded in Caracas, 1940.

This *corrido* presents interesting characteristics. In the first place, we must point out the impeccable performance of the player of the *cuatro*. There are two ways of playing the *cuatro*: it can be swept by the whole hand (*charrasqueado*) or picked (*punteado*). Only the very good *cuatro* players can "pick" (*puntear*) and so enter into competition with that magnificent instrument—the creole harp. It is the greatest ambition of a *cuatro* player to render the 32 notes of the harp on the *cuatro*. Julián González, descendant of Spaniards from the Canary Islands and a flower-vendor by occupation, is a true master of the *cuatro*.

In the second place, this *corrido* is a good example of the manner in which the Venezuelan country-people sing these songs during the long evenings which follow their daily toil. The *cuatro* player picks up his instrument, the singer seizes the *maracas*, and, accompanied by these two instruments, sings a long and romantic song, changing themes, improvising words in honor of the listeners and conversing with the "*cuatrista*."

In the third place, this *corrido* is a magnificent survival in the Western Hemisphere of one of the great Spanish ballads (*romances*) of the 15th century. Ramón Menéndez Pidal has published it under the title "Love More Powerful Than Death" ("*Amor más poderoso que la muerte*") in his book *Flor Nueva de Romances Viejos*. The ballad as sung here is prefaced by several lines whose significance and origin are unknown to us. They should perhaps be attributed to the improvisation of the singer, although the specific reference to the healing powers of the unicorn's horn certainly reverts to mediaeval tradition. This procedure of improvisation is traditional in Venezuela. The singers may begin their song with verses from a well-known *corrido* and, after this is finished, continue singing, improvising new verses that sometimes turn into new *corridos*, which other singers add to their varied repertory.

Country-people in Venezuela often confuse the "r" with the "l," or omit these letters in order to accent the word. For example: "cantal" instead of "cantar"; or "quitá" instead of "quitar." José Cornejo's manner of pronouncing the words has been transcribed faithfully, and the suppressed letters are shown in parentheses.

Bajan tó'os (todos) los pajarillos (bis)
 juntos en una mañana
 a esperar que el unicornio
 meta su cuerno en el agua. (bis)
 Apenas la cruz señala
 que ya el veneno se fué (bis)
 dicen todos a una vez:
 Jesús, qué animal tan bueno (bis)
 me le ha dado la virtud
 Dios en la punta de un cuerno (bis)
 Soy el anillo canela (bis)
 quinta . quinta
 con el recuerdo e' la vela. (bis)

(Here begins the Spanish Ballad)

Ha bajado el Conde Olivo
 la mañana de San Juan (bis)
 a darle agua a su caballo
 a las orillas del mar.
 —Mientras mi caballo bebe
 siéntome un poco a cantal(r). (bis)
 Aves que iban por el aire
 se han *proparado* a escuchal(r). (bis)¹
 Una madre y una hijita
 que vivían frente del mar, (bis)
 le dice la madre a la hija
 con cariño y con piedá(r), (bis)
 —Levántate, hija querida,
 levántate, hija, a escuchá(r), (bis)²
 las sirenitas del mar
 y su modo de cantá(r). (bis)
 Y le contestó la niña,
 cón cariño y con piedá(r): (bis)
 —Aquellas no son sirenas
 ni su modo de cantá(r);
 aquel es el Conde Olivo
 que a mí me viene a buscá(r). (bis)
 Y le contestó la madre
 que se pudo molestá(r): (bis)
 —Si el Conde Olivo viniere
 lo mandamos a matá(r). (bis)
 Le contestó la niña
 con carino y con piedá(r):
 —Si matan al Conde Olivo
 yo viva no he de quedal(r). (bis)³
 A él lo entierran en la iglesia
 y a mí debajo del altal(r); (bis)
 de mí saldrá una paloma
 y de él un bello gavilán. (bis)

¹ For "proparado" read "parado."

² The first time the singer says: "que levántate hija ... etc."

³ The first time the singer says: "que yo viva ... etc."

(Improvisation)

José Cornejo se encuentra
cantando, en la capital,
conjunto a Julián González
que bien me pudo invital(r), (bis)
en casa de unos amigos
que gente tan populal(r). (bis)
La gente, caballero,
no se le puede quitál(r). (bis)¹
Viva Dios, viva la Patria
que también se pué(den) nombral(r)
que la divinidad
que nos debemos lleval(r) (bis)
para libertar su suelo
yo quisiera bien lleval(r). (bis)
Sólo yo tener dinero
para dá la libertá. (bis)
En la capital Caracas
donde podemos gozá(r)
casa del amigo León,
he venido yo a cantá(r). (bis)
Con muchos y con tantos,
las gracias le voy a dá(r) (bis)
que gente tan caballero
que no se le puede quitá(r). (bis)
Al tiempo de mis cantares
esta es una buena unión (bis)
con usted, Julián González,
aquí en esta reunión (bis)
complaciendo a los amigos
porque llega la ocasión.

¹ This should perhaps read: "que el don de gente no se les puede negar."

75 A. 1. TONO DE VELORIO (Song to St. Anthony)

Played and sung by people of the village of Curarigua, Lara. Recorded in Barquisimeto, capital of Lara, January, 1941.

One of the richest regions in Venezuela, from the standpoint of music, is the State of Lara, which is located between the *llanos* (plains) and the foothills of the Andes. The folk music of Lara has its own individual, varied and distinct expression. With their *golpes* and *gavilanes*, their *salves*, *tonos* and *décimas* of distinct European flavor, the extraordinary suite of *El Tamunangue*, which consists of eight different parts, each one with its own individual music and distinctive choreography, the people of Lara have given us the most authentic proof of the innate artistic sense of the Venezuelan *mestizo*.

Lara's privileged central location may account for the abundance and variety of the folk music of the State. It is at the door of the plains, populated by Andalusians, and its foothills are the first step on the great ladder of the Andes where the murmuring of Indian flutes blends with the flourish of Spanish guitars. Furthermore, the proximity of this State to the coastal region, which is inhabited by large contingents of Negroes, enriches its music with the sense of rhythm possessed by the Negro.

The *tono* published in this album is of religious character and represents a song to St. Anthony of Padua. The singers accompany themselves on small guitars—*cuatros*, or *quintos*—creating a vocal harmony full of plaintive ecstasy.

San Antonio de Padua
San Antonio de Padua
San José ...
... etc.

75 A. 2. GOLPE "AMALIA ROSA" (*Golpe* "Amalia Rosa")

Played and sung by people of the village of Curarigua, Lara. Recorded in Barquisimeto, Lara, January, 1941.

This *golpe*—accompanied by the beating of a drum (approximately 45 centimeters in circumference and one meter high), various *quintos* (small guitars with five strings) and *maracas*—can be contrasted with the slow and grave music of the *tono*, and demonstrates eloquently the varied music of the State of Lara.

Influences of the Mexican *huapango*, and of the Venezuelan *joropo*, are noticeable in this *golpe*, but in the richness and color of its music it is a thing in itself.

A very important characteristic of the songs of the State of Lara is the great frequency with which many voices join in the solo part. It is rare in the *golpes* and *tonos* to find songs for soloist and chorus, as in the *fulías*, or only for soloist, as in the airs from the Island of Margarita.

1

De Maracaibo salieron
dos palomitas volando
a La Guayra volverán (bis)
¡ay! ¿pero a Maracaibo cuándo?

2

María me dió una cinta
y Rosa me la quitó
Amalia peleó con ella
porque Juana
porque Juana se enojó.
(Verse 2 is repeated)

3

Ya se juntaron las cuatro
que son las que quiero yo.
Amalia, Amalia, Amalia,
Amalia, Amalia Rosa,
esa es la que yo me llevo (bis)
porque es la más buena moza.
(Verse 3 is repeated)

4

Tomás niña este puñal,
abréme por un costao
pa que veas mi corazón (bis)
¡ay! con el tuyo retratao.
(Verse 4 is repeated)

María me dió una cinta
etc. ... (Verse 2 is repeated)

Ya se juntaron las cuatro
etc. ... (Verse 3 is repeated)

75 B. FOLÍA MARGARITENA (Folía from the Island of Margarita)

Julián Guevara and Pedro Deffit, singers. Julián Guevara—mandolin; Domingo Guzmán—guitar. Recorded in Porlamar, Nueva Esparta, Island of Margarita, in December, 1941.

It is interesting to compare this *folía* with the *fulías* recorded in the Negro region of Barlovento (Miranda) which are also contained in this album. Although both melodies are played upon the same occasions (the *Velorios de Santo* or the Feast of *Cruz de Mayo*), there are notable differences in the musical order. While in the Margaritan *folías* the Spanish elements are predominant, new rhythmic action is introduced into the Negro *fulías* which serves to enhance their beauty. On the other hand, the Negroes of Barlovento call the *folía* "fulía," while the inhabitants of the Island of Margarita conserve the phonetic purity of the name. The *folía* is a melody of Spanish origin, to which numerous references exist. In Spain, however, the *folía* is a dance; in Venezuela it is only a song.

The recitative in this recording in our opinion is not important. Although the words are by a well-known author, we believe that the *folía* singers of the Island of Margarita were not in the habit of introducing recitatives into their songs. It would seem that Julián Guevara, the singer of this *folía*, has arbitrarily brought in this recitative, remembering, perhaps, the way in which the Negroes of Barlovento sing their *fulias*.

The sung words form a *décima*. After the recitative, when the song begins anew, we find again a *décima*, of which, however, our friends Guevara and Deffit, owing to the limited space on this disc, can only sing the first four verses.

(*Folía* Margariteña sung by Julián Guevara and Pedro Deffit)

- First voice: Cuantas veces los errores
 miramos como verdades (bis)
- Second voice: cuantas veces los errores
- First voice: o negamos realidades
 por delirios soñadores (bis)
- Second voice: por delirios soñadores
- First voice: tal vez son sendas de flores
 buscando un vergel eterno (bis)
- Second voice: buscando un vergel eterno
- First voice: del averno
 quién llegara hasta Dios mismo (bis)
- Second voice: quién llegara hasta Dios mismo
- First voice: Adán soñó un paraíso
 y despertó en un infierno (bis)
- Together: y despertó en un infierno.
- Recitative: Basta dirigir la mirada al firmamento o a cualquiera de las
 maravillas de la creación y contemplar un instante en los
 infinitos, bienes y comodidades que nos ofrece la tierra,
 para concebir, desde luego, la sabiduría y grandeza de
 Dios y todo lo que debemos a su amor, a su bondad y
 misericordia.
- First voice: Cuando los israelitas
 que de agua carecieron (bis)
- Second voice: que de agua carecieron
- First voice: la fortuna que tuvieron
 que Dios estaba a su vista
- Second voice: que Dios estaba a su vista . . .