



FOLKWAYS ETHNIC RECORDS FE 4378

MEXICO SOUTH: **Traditional** **Songs and Dances from** **THE ISTHMUS** **OF TEHUANTEPEC**

Recorded by HENRIETTA YURCHENCO,
assisted by Peter Yurchenco, Meryl Gordon and Jennifer Sookne



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SIDE 1

Band 1 La Llorona 4:54
Band 2 La Sandunga 4:30
Band 3 La Miguelena 2:23

Pablo Castanejo, vocal with guitar

Band 4 La Sandunga 3:36
Band 5 La Petenera 2:23
Band 6 La Micaela 4:40

Benjamin Betanzas, vocal with guitar

SIDE 2

Band 1 La Petenera 6:09
Band 2 La Tortuga 3:47
Band 3 La Petrona 6:12

Milo Cortes y Conjunto "Lira San Vicente"

Band 4 Jarabe Tehuano 1:28
Band 5 Rasca Petate 1:33
Band 6 Son de la Media Noche 1:13
Band 7 Son de Lavar el Maiz 2:40

Julian Hernandez H., reed flute

Roberto Hernandez, drum

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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MEXICO SOUTH: Traditional SONGS and DANCES from the ISTHMUS OF TEHUANTEPEC

Recorded by Henrietta Yurchenco

Assisted by Peter Yurchenco, Meryl Gordon and Jennifer Sookne

Liner notes and translations by Henrietta Yurchenco

Musical transcriptions by Jennifer Sookne

This album, recorded in the 1960's and 1970's, is a selection of traditional songs and dances from Juchitan and Tehuantepec, two of the principal cities of the Isthmus. Side I includes songs with guitar accompaniment; Side II offers instrumental music played by a brass band and a flute and drum combination. Some of the songs, especially Sandunga and Llorona, are known throughout Mexico in standard versions. In the Isthmus, however, they are heard within a brilliant instrumental setting unique to the area. This recording provides a number of typical examples demonstrating the area's musical diversity and imagination.

The notes include information on individual selections, the Spanish text, translations in English, and melody lines. Zapotec words are omitted.

INTRODUCTION: THE ISTHMUS AND ITS PEOPLE

When I first visited the Isthmus in 1942, I was so intrigued that I vowed to return some day. In 1971 and again in '72, accompanied by my son and two students from City College in New York, I went back to do research in the music and dance.

My mind is crowded with recollections of my experiences in the Isthmus and I would like to share them with my readers. It may be true that first impressions are never forgotten, but memory plays tricks. Fortunately, I kept a diary and have gratefully consulted it in the preparation of these lines.

The people of Tehuantepec and Juchitan are a mixture of European and Zapotec stock. The French Intervention and the construction of the Tehuantepec Railroad brought the French, Irish, British and Americans there, and it is not surprising to find blonds with dark skin and pale green eyes. Unlike other mestizos, they are proud of their Indian heritage, preserve the Zapotec language and many customs of pre-hispanic times. They are a sophisticated people concerned with national politics and social reform, but they are provincial as well, intensely involved in the town or the barrio where they live. The ongoing rivalry between conservative Tehuantepec and liberal Juchitan dates back to the struggles of the mid-nineteenth century between conservatives and liberals led by Benito Juarez, but that is history! Today most antagonisms erupt over minor issues, but some do get out of hand.

I recollect vividly the afternoons spent at the banks of the Tehuantepec River watching the men lead their ox-drawn carts across the shallow water. The women, naked to the waist, unperturbed by male presence, bathed in the cool water, and washed their clothes by beating them on the stones as their ancestors had done before them.

But most of all I remember the people and their busy social life. During my first visit in 1942 I recorded a marimba band, and a famous old Indian flute player. A blind octogenarian bent almost double, Zenobio played his sones (instrumental tunes, generally for dancing) accompanied by drum and a turtle-shell, an ancient pre-hispanic instrument struck with deer antlers. Zenobio is long dead now and I never saw a turtle-shell again in Tehuantepec.

My diary reminds me that I danced the Sandunga to marimba music at a wedding. I was given a traditional costume for the occasion because my own New York clothes were considered too ugly to wear. It was a gala dress, a stunningly embroidered short blouse and long velvet skirt with a wide stiffly starched ruffle reaching to the floor. Around my neck I wore a necklace of real gold coins. As my partner danced zapateados (foot work) in circles around me, I twisted and turned, extending my voluminous skirt first to one side, then to the other.

I do remember a spectacular fiesta, of which there are many in the Isthmus, celebrated in honor of the patron saints of towns and barrios. That particular day was dedicated to the women as a reward for the part they played during the fiesta. Preceded by a brass band came the procession of women carrying the enormous banners that identify their cooperative societies. Balanced on their heads were painted gourd-baskets filled with toys, sweets and fruit topped by little colored flags. Ox carts, decorated with foliage and branches of willow trees, creaked along the sandy road, trailing banana branches in the dust. From within the carts came the sound of flute and drum. Observing an old-time tradition the women threw their offerings to the crowd, sometimes hitting people right in the face!

Later on the women gathered in one of the small plazas of the city. It was an amazing sight—a group of women holding bottles of mezcal, the local firewater, dancing and drinking until they were totally drunk. We joined the men watching nearby, obviously proud of their lively women. That was my undoing, because drinks were offered by the women and I couldn't refuse.

Suddenly, I was pushed towards the patio of the house of the mayordomo, the sponsor of the festival. A feast was going on and, as the only foreigner there, I was treated like an honored guest. I ate mountains of food—iguana stew, chicken mole, pastries and pineapple slices gushing with juice. The women forced me into the open patio where we danced and drank until I could no more. Somehow, I managed to escape back to the hotel—with a splitting headache!

I must tell you about the women of the Isthmus. Unlike the painfully shy country women of Mexico, the Tehuanas are big, bold and independent. They are so striking that one hardly ever notices the men.

The market place is the women's private world, and men are seldom seen there. The women do the buying and selling of local produce throughout the Isthmus. Tough and businesslike, they are nonetheless proud of their traditions, their sumptuous clothes and their authority.

In 1972 we went to a dance in the middle of a hot afternoon. It was attended mainly by women and children. Upon my approach they crowded around us--Meryl, Jennifer and Peter, and the questions flew. Were all those young people mine? Were we going to stay in Tehuantepec with them, wear their clothes and learn their language? Unlike the kids in the center of town, they had no interest in English. Immediately, a toothless old hag was teaching us our first Zapotec. "Tu lalú." What's your name?

We exchanged remarks. "Do you know," I asked, "about the women's liberation movement in the United States?" "We have heard," they said, "and it's about time! Here we are equal with the men!" the old lady said, "we share the work. In the morning we prepare breakfast, then do the washing." She flexed her emaciated arms. "Then comes the ironing and sweeping." Here she jumped out of her chair swinging her arms to show how the broom sweeps across the floor. "Yes, everybody works!"

"Then comes the night," she continued. "That's for....." she grinned, and left the sentence dangling in the air. Crooking her finger and cackling, she poked each child in the navel.

The women freely talk about sex unlike elsewhere in Mexico. In the crowd was a young woman with a swollen belly. "What month are you in," I asked. She smiled and shook her head, obviously embarrassed by my question. "Nothing is the matter with her," the old hag burst in. "She's been married eight years, and nothing. Her husband's got no balls!" She laughed, showing her pink gums until a fit of coughing stopped her. The other women looked sympathetically at the young woman as she murmured, "I've even been to Mexico City, but nothing does me any good."

We danced with the women to the playing of the band until the heat overcame us. The women, on the other hand, even the old, seemed unaffected by the temperature. Ignoring the rhythm they simply glided around the dance floor effortlessly, conserving their strength for other activities. When we left they were still dancing; we were exhausted. "You will come tomorrow to dance with me," the old lady insisted as we left. "If not, I'll burn your bed down." I promised, but I don't remember going back.

Is there machismo in Tehuantepec? I asked a young man that evening as we cooled off in the lovely tropical garden behind the hotel. "Yes," he admitted, "but a man has to have respect. If a wife runs away, the man finds her and beats her up, or even kills her. What other satisfaction does a man get?"

So, has the Isthmus really changed since my first visit so long ago? It's still the world of the double standard. Even music is still the male's province. There are no women instrumentalists or singers (except for "artistas"). Women sing at home or perform religious music in church, at funerals and memorials. They are not composers either; at least there is no evidence of it. The songs on this album are traditional. They are about women, sung and written by men.

But, the Isthmus has changed, at least superficially. A new paved highway takes you through the mountains from Oaxaca City to Tehuantepec in less than four hours. Juchitan is more bustling than ever. Tehuantepec has a sanitary new market, air-conditioned banks and hotels and a record shop selling jazz, rock and contemporary Latin music. The old train, El Tehuano, no longer crosses the Isthmus with its burden of seafood swinging from the coathooks, its aisles piled high with baskets of food. The air is no longer filled with the shrill cries of the Tehuana trader as she hawks her wares at every whistle stop along the way.

Yet, the old Isthmus prevails through its fiestas and ceremonies, its dances, songs and poetry.

Notes and translations by
Henrietta Yurchenco

Musical transcriptions by
Jennifer Sookne

SIDE I, BAND 1 - La Llorona

This Llorona, from Juchitan, is one of Mexico's most beloved songs. There are others, however, with the same title and mood. Many years ago, I was fortunate to hear a great Mexican folksinger, Chavela Ledesma, sing a Llorona from the State of Jalisco. It was totally different from the Isthmus song, but both had the same haunting refrain, and were love songs of desire, yearning and guilt.

Inspired by the tonadilla escénica, an 18th-19th century Spanish dramatic form popular in Mexico, Chavela's Llorona begins with a series of Ay(s). Compare them with Pablo's words:

Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay Llorona
Lloroncita cielo lindo

Yo tenía una barca de oro
para irme a la Havana
y por seguirte mi tesoro, Llorona
perdí mi guadalupana

Ay, ay, ay, ay Llorona
Lloroncita heavenly beauty

I had a golden boat
To take me to Havana
And for following you, my treasure, Llorona
I lost my guadalupana*

And who is Llorona? She is the Weeping Woman, the legendary ghostly figure who haunts the lonely places of Mexico. According to one story, a rich young man sets up a "casita" (the house of a man's mistress) for a simple poor girl with whom he shares his life. She has three children by him. At the appropriate time his family marries him to a rich society girl and the affair comes to an end. Maddened with grief, she stabs her children to death. Horrified, she runs wildly through the streets of the city. To this day, people claim to see or hear her as she wails for her children, and takes revenge on men.

Although a story of colonial times, there is a striking similarity to a pre-hispanic tale in which a goddess dies after the birth of her first child and returns to earth to assault adults and children.

Actually the song has no direct reference to the legend, but the name Llorona has come down to us as a symbol of the tragic aspect of life.

*She lost the protection of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico.

SIDE I BAND 1 - La Llorona**

Played and sung in Spanish and Zapotec by Pablo Castañejo. Recorded in Juchitan, Oaxaca, 1964.

No se si el corazon peca, Llorona
en garras de un tierno amor
de una linda juchiteca, Llorona
más hermosa que una flor,

CHORUS

Ay, de mi Llorona
Llorona tu eres mi *shunca

Me quitaran de quererte, Llorona
pero olvidarte nunca

Si porque te quiero quieres, Llorona
que yo la muerte reciba

que se haga tu voluntad, ay Llorona
por suerte de dios no viva.

CHORUS

Ay de mi Llorona
Llorona de la alta cumbre

Yo soy como los arrieros, Llorona
llegando y haciendo lumbre

Additional verses:

Dicen que no tengo duelo, Llorona
porque no me ven llorar
hay muertos que no hacen ruido, Llorona
y es más grande su pena

*shunca - a girl (in Zapotec)

**Only the Spanish text is given

I don't know if my heart sins, Llorona
In the clutches of a tender love
Of a lovely Juchiteca, Llorona
More beautiful than a flower

Ay mi Llorona
Llorona you are my *shunca

They may stop me from loving you, Llorona
But never will I forget you

If you wish, because I love you, Llorona
That death take me

May your desire be fulfilled, Ay Llorona
Through God's destiny I shall not live

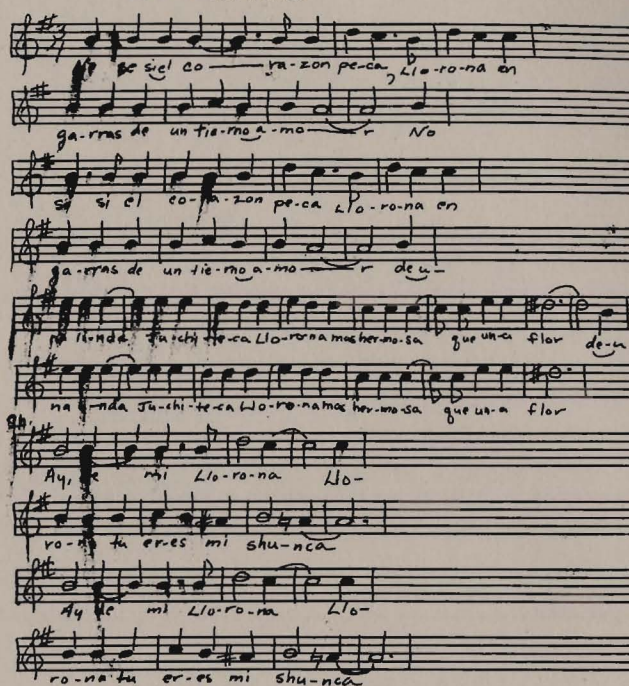
Ay mi Llorona
Llorona of lofty heights

I am like the mule-drivers, Llorona.
Arriving and lighting the fire.

Additional verses:

They say I do not mourn, Llorona
Because they don't see me cry
The dead don't make noise, Llorona
And their sorrow is greater

La Llorona



SIDE I, BAND 2 - La Sandunga

La Sandunga, throughout Mexico is considered the symbol of Tehuantepec - its tropical charm, colorful fiestas, statuesque women, and gently sensuous song and dance. To the tehuano, it is his identity expressing his pride and joy, and his sense of tragedy, a duality acquired from his Spanish and Indian heritage. For more than a hundred years since the song first appeared, poets and musicians have changed and adapted it, adding or eliminating improvisations, orchestral arrangements, verses and melody. As sung and played in our time it is an astounding amalgam of past and present, of stable traditions and changing folklore.

The history of Sandunga is a combination of fact and fiction. The following remarks come from available published evidence.

In 1850 a Spanish theatrical company directed by Maria Cañete concluded its program at the Teatro Nacional de Mexico (City) with a dance called La Sandunga, claimed to be from Andalusia. Two years later the company repeated the program in Oaxaca City, the capitol of Oaxaca State. There, Maximo Ramon Ortiz, a young poet-musician (or guerrilla fighter) from Tehuantepec, heard it, and came away inspired by the melody. Just then Ortiz received news of his mother's illness and returned to his home in the Isthmus. In happy anticipation of seeing his mother, he composed the first verses of Sandunga. Upon arrival he found his mother already dead, and subsequently wrote about his tragedy. Within a short time, the song was on everyone's lips as it spread throughout the Isthmus.

Is the story true? Likely; - the following verses attributed to Ortiz, refer to his mother's death.

Que Sandunga vana, que Sandunga, miren!
Mama murió! Sandunga
también mátame
Cielo de mi corazón!

What a Sandunga, what a Sandunga, look!
Mama died, Sandunga
Kill me, too
Heaven of my heart!

The word Sandunga has multiple meanings: it is a song, a dance and a descriptive word for the graceful, winsome Tehuantepec girl. Sung as a solo, played by brass band, marimba, or by flute and drum, Sandunga is performed at weddings, funerals, public and family celebrations. As a dance, it is lithesome and gay; as sung in Tehuantepec it is brooding and melancholy, just like the version on this recording.

Pablo's guitar style, at its best in this Sandunga, imitates the brass band arrangements. The zapateados and his own variations, alternating solo lines with harmony in thirds, demonstrates skill and imagination. His composition is divided as follows: 1. guitar introduction. 2. two stanzas and chorus. 3. First guitar break - zapateado. 4. two stanzas and chorus. 5. Second guitar break - zapateado. 6. One stanza and chorus.

Note the use of bass notes as drones, and constant shift from 6/8 to 3/4 time. (See Side 1 Band 4 for Benjamin Betanzas' version.)

SIDE 1 BAND 2 - La Sandunga

Sung and played by Pablo Castañejo, Juchitan, Oaxaca, 1964.

Sandunga, mande a tocar
ay, mama por dios
Sandunga cantaba cielos
Cielos de amor

Al oírte cantar
Sandunga de oro por dios
las lagrimas me brotaron
y en mi pecho sentí dolor.

Ay Sandunga, que Sandunga
vana y mama, mama
Sandunga tu eres tehuana
clavel de Tehuantepec,
ay, Sandunga

Si dios me diera licencia
ay, por dios, por dios
de abrir esta sepultura
prenda de mi corazon

Sacaría mis dos hermanos
ay, mama, mama
Maximo Ramon Ventura
Sandunga del corazon

Ay, Sandunga, que Sandunga
plata y mama, mama
Sandunga no seas ingrata
mama de mi corazon
ay, Sandunga

Tus trenzas causan despecho
no por negras y sedosas
sino porque son dichosas
porque ruedan por tu pecho

Ay Sandunga, que Sandunga
vana y mama, mama
Sandunga tu eres tehuana
mama de mi corazon
ay, Sandunga

Sandunga, I asked them to play
Ay mama, for the love of God
Sandunga sang heavenly,
Heavens of love

On hearing you sing
Golden Sandunga, for the love of God,
My tears gushed forth
And in my heart I felt pain

Ay Sandunga, what a vain Sandunga
Ay, mama, mama
Sandunga you are a Tehuana
Carnation of Tehuantepec
Ay, Sandunga

If God would grant me permission
Ay God, for the love of God
To open this tomb
Jewel of my heart

I would remove my two brothers
Ay mama, mama
Maximo Ramon Ventura
Sandunga of my heart

Ay Sandunga, what a Sandunga
Of silver, mama, mama
Sandunga don't be ungrateful
Mother of my heart
Ay, Sandunga

Your braids cause despair
Not because they are black and silken
But because they are fortunate
To encircle your breast

Sandunga, what a vain Sandunga
Ay mama, mama
Sandunga you are a Tehuana
Mother of my heart
Ay Sandunga

La Sandunga

Zan-dun-ga man-de a to-car
ay ma-ma por dios
Zan-dun-ga can-ta-ba cie-los
Cie-los de a-mor
Al oír-te can-tar Zan-dun-ga de oro por dios
Las la-gri-mas me bro-ta-ron y en mi pe-cho sen-tí do-lor
Ay Zan-dun-ga que Zan-dun-ga va-na y ma-ma, ma-ma
Zan-dun-ga tu e-res te-hua-na cla-vel de té-huan-te-pec,
ay Zan-dun-ga

SIDE 1 BAND 3 - La Migueleña
Sung and played by Pablo Castañejo, Juchitan,
Oaxaca. Recorded 1964.

Escuchen la Migueleña
Autentico son del istmo
Te cantan los corazones
linda Migueleña, porque son de amores

San Miguel Chimalapa es mi tierra
donde nacen las flores mas bellas
es por eso que siempre te canto
linda Migueleña duena de mi vida

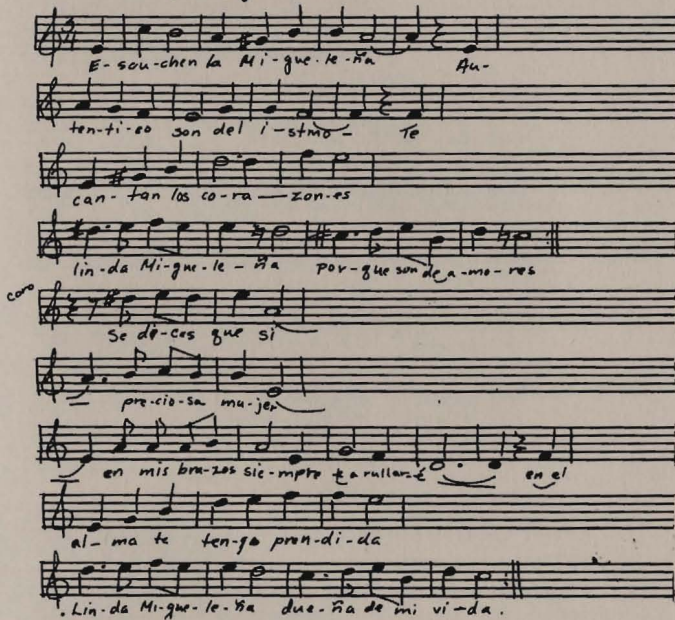
Si dices que sí
preciosa mujer
en mis brazos siempre te arrullaré
en el alma te tengo prendida
Linda Migueleña, duena de mi vida.

Listen to la Migueleña
authentic song of the isthmus
Hearts sing to you
Lovely Migueleña
Because they are full of love

San Miguel Chimalapa is my home town
Where the most beautiful flowers grow
That's why I always sing to you
Lovely Migueleña, mistress of my life

If you say yes
Precious woman.
I will always rock you in my arms
I have you clasped in my soul
Lovely Migueleña, mistress of my life.

La Migueleña



SIDE 1 BAND 4 - La Sandunga
Sung and played by Benjamin Betanzas.
Recorded in Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, 1972.

De Guaja que yo he venido
ay mama, por dios
pisando espinas y abrojos
cielo de mi corazón

Y sabes porque he venido
ay mama, por dios
por ver tus divinos ojos
cielo de mi corazón

Ay Sandunga
Sandunga mama por dios
Sandunga tu amor me mata
cielo de mi corazon

Si dios me diera licencia
ay mama por dios
de abrir esa sepultura
prenda de na corazon

Sacaria mis dos hermanos
ay mama por dios
Maximo Ramon Ventura
cielo de mi corazon

Ay Sandunga
Sandunga mama por dios
Sandunga no seas ingrata
cielo de mi corazón

Si al cielo subir pudiera
ay mama por dios
las estrellas te bajara
cielo de mi corazón

La luna a tus pies pusiera
sandunga mama por dios
con el sol te coronara
cielo de mi corazon

Ay Sandunga
Sandunga mama por dios
Sandunga tu eres tehuana
cielo de mi corazón

The melody sung here is the one popular through-
out Mexico.

From Guaja I have come
Ay mother, good God.
Walking on thistles and thorns
Heaven of my heart

And do you know why I have come
Ay mother, good God
To see your divine eyes
Heaven of my heart

Ay Sandunga
Sandunga, mother, good God
Sandunga, your love is killing me
Heaven of my heart

If God would grant me permission
Ay mother, good God
To open that tomb
Jewel of my heart

I would remove my two brothers
Ay mother, good God
Maximo, Ramon Ventura
Heaven of my heart

Ay Sandunga
Sandunga, mother, good God
Sandunga don't be ungrateful
Heaven of my heart

If I could climb to the heavens
Ay mother, good God
The stars I would bring to you
Heaven of my heart

The moon I would place at your feet
Ay mother good God.
With the sun I would crown you
Heaven of my heart

Ay Sandunga
Sandunga, mother, good God
Sandunga you are a Tehuana
Heaven of my heart.

SIDE I, BAND 5 - La Petenera

By the end of the 16th century a new race of people, a mixture of Indians and Spaniards, was born. These mestizos (as they were called) were taught the old ballads (romances), religious songs and Children's game songs then popular in Spanish towns and cities. Later on, in the 19th century Mexicans drew their inspiration from the salon dances of Europe (like the waltz) and the songs and dances of the Spanish tonadillas escenicas which eventually took on national and regional characteristics.

In their beginnings in Madrid, the tonadillas were short interludes of song and dance presented between the one-act plays customary of theatrical evenings of the time. Written by the great composers of Spain many were based on old Spanish folk tunes and dances. Polos, fandangos, seguidillas, boleros, malagueñas and Peteneras were among the forms used. Finally the tonadillas became long and more complex and were superseded by the Zarzuela, the Spanish operetta.

In time a Mexican identity began to assert itself. The Spanish songs as well as the European salon dances changed as mestizos, Africans, and native Indians adapted them to their own traditions. Sometimes only the original titles remained! Nevertheless, many songs of this era still preserve melodies (and words) unmistakably Spanish as in this Petenera.

The Mexican peteneras must not be confused with the flamenco (which evolved from the ancient folklore of Andalusia). Words and music are entirely different. The Mexican verses are romantic and sensual; the Spanish express the dual attitude towards women as both the perdition and the salvation of men, and often include unsentimental commentary on the state of the world and the dark side of life. The Mexican melodies are Spanish-tinged but their performing styles are Mexican. Benjamin's is more Spanish because of the guitar, which, by the way, is not typical of the Isthmus.

SIDE 1 BAND 5 - La Petenera

Sung and played by Benjamin Betanzas.
Recorded in Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, 1972.

Ví a mi madre llorar un día
cuando supo que yo amaba
Ví a mi madre llorar un día
cuando supo que yo amaba

Quién sabe quien le diría
que eras tu a quien yo adoraba
después que lo supo todo
la ví llorar de alegría
Después que lo supo todo
la ví llorar de alegría

Ay soledad, soledad
soledad de la vera
Aquí empiezo a cantar
mi adorada Petenera

Dos besos tengo en el alma
que no se apartan de mí
~~dos besos tengo en el alma~~
que no se apartan de mí

El ultimo de mi madre
y el primero que te dí
El ultimo de mi madre
y el primero que te dí

Petenera, Petenera
Petenera que haré sin tí?
recuerdo de tus carisias
y del beso que te dí
recuerdo de tus carisias
y del beso que te dí.

I saw my mother cry one day
when she discovered I was in love
I saw my mother cry one day
When she discovered I was in love

Who knows who told her
That it was you I adored
After she knew everything
I saw her cry with joy

Ay solitude, solitude
Solitude of the hillside
Here I begin to sing
My adored Petenera

Two kisses I keep in my soul
That never leave me
Two kisses I keep in my soul
That never leave me

The last one of my mother
And the first I gave you
The last one of my mother
And the first I gave you

Petenera, Petenera
Petenera, what shall I do without you?
I recall your caresses
And the kiss I gave you
I recall your caresses
And the kiss I gave you.

La Petenera

SIDE 1 BAND 6 - La Micaela

Played and sung in Spanish and Zapotec by
Benjamin Betanzas. Recorded in Tehuantepec,
Oaxaca, 1972.

Si quieres que no te olvide
si quieres que te recuerde
cantame un lindo son, ay mi vida
que alegra los corazones

No me llores, no
no me llores, no
porque si llores, me muero
en cambio si tu me cantas
yo siempre vivo
y nunca muero

If you want me not to forget you
 If you want me to remember you
 Sing me a lovely song, oh my darling
 To gladden our hearts

Do not cry, no
 Do not cry, no
 Because if you cry, I will die
 But if you sing to me
 I will forever live
 And never die.

La Micaela

La Micaela, as appears on the record, is first sung in Zapotec. It is from these first verses that the musical transcription was taken. The music for the Spanish verses varies to accommodate the words. This explains any difficulty in fitting the Spanish text exactly to the music as shown.

SIDE II, BAND 1 - La Petenera

Milo Cortes y Conjunto "Lira San Vicente."
 Recorded in Juchitan, 1972.

The petenera played here is only faintly reminiscent of the sung version on Side I Band 5 but is typical of band arrangements for traditional tunes. As an instrumental piece it consists of 1. zapateados, or variations, played by the entire group. 2. melody - solos on saxophone, trumpet and marimba backed by the rest of the band. 3. special ending. The rhythm constantly alternates 6/8 with 3/4. Musicians used to know many zapateados but Milo Cortes band plays the same one for all the traditional sones. The form is dictated by the dance, as follows:

1. Zapateado - the men do intricate footwork
2. Trumpet solo- couples dance together, the man goes around the woman, approaches her and retreats. The woman holds one end of her voluminous skirt to chest level, the other in natural position and alternates. Her steps are languid and slow.
3. The same Zapateado - footwork
4. Saxophone solo - The women, first indifferent, become more involved with the men as the dance proceeds.
5. The same zapateado. Footwork

6. Marimba solo - with some improvisation, couples dance again.

7. The same zapateado ending with a rhythmically free cascade of descending notes. Such endings (or introductions) are found in Indian flute music of Chiapas and Guatemala (Example: Indian Music of Mexico, Folkways 413 Side I Band 3).

Milo Cortes' dance band is typical of those which evolved from the military band of the 19th century. They not only played marches and European salon dances but also airs and overtures of Italian operas, then the rage in Latin America. After independence from Spain, all of Spanish America, even in remote towns, danced mazurkas, polkas, contradances and waltzes, and soon wrote their own versions. The brass band blared forth its music on every social occasion, performing even in church for the most solemn ceremonies. Frances Calderon de la Barca, the Scottish-born wife of the first Spanish ambassador to the newly independent Mexico, in her famous diary *Life in Mexico* (1840-42) describes a sumptuous ceremony as a wealthy Mexican girl took the veil. Frances, a fine musician herself, observed, amazed, that upon entering the church the band played a Strauss waltz!

By 1870, the playing of local Isthmus sones had begun to supplant the European dances. In that year Cándido Jimenez made the first arrangement of *La Sandunga* for his band. Many arrangements followed, and other Mexican songs also became part of the band repertory in the Isthmus and elsewhere.

SIDE II, BAND 2 - La Tortuga

Milo Cortes y Conjunto "Lira San Vicente."
 Recorded in Juchitan, 1972.

About the turn of the century the marimba came to the Isthmus from Guatemala via Chiapas. A new kind of ensemble (a rival to the brass band) was formed with the marimba as chief instrument plus drum or string bass. Often two marimbas played together each with two, three or four men. One played the melody (or tiple), another the second voice (segundo) or doubled on the melody; and the third, the bass (or armonia). These marimbas tuned to our Western scale, like the piano, could play anything. The technical possibilities were extensive, and the sound agreeably percussive.

Now rarely heard in the Isthmus as ensemble, the marimba has joined the brass band. Even though no longer the supreme instrument, it is still sentimentally and romantically associated with Tehuantepec. Today, two-manned marimbas are still heard elsewhere in the market-places of Mexico where musicians play for pesos.

Originally an African instrument, the marimba spread to many Latin American countries. It is performed by black people in Colombia and Ecuador, by Indians in Guatemala, and by mestizos in both Guatemala and Southern Mexico. The African marimba was made of tuned wooden slats, with a gourd resonator for each tone. A vibrating membrane was placed over a hole in each resonator to produce the characteristic buzz. Guatemalan Indians have preserved the old African, but they play only European music. In the cities the gourds have been replaced by octagonal wooden resonators, and the "keyboard" now resembles our piano with raised slats to represent the black notes.

La Tortuga, a popular dance, pokes gentle fun at the Huave-Indians, a Pacific Coast primitive tribe of fisherman and weavers near Tehuantepec.

The dancers perform simple steps imitating Huave women as they sell turtle eggs to their Tehuano neighbors. The words mock the Huaves, (who are desperately poor) for their naivete and lack of education. "Watch out, turtle, the Sea People (Huaves) will dig you out of the sand, boil you with a little salt, and eat you!"

Heriberto Orozco, one of the best marimbists in the Isthmus, played with great gusto at our recording session, dancing from one end of the marimba to the other as he played.

SIDE II, BAND 3 - La Petrona

Milo Cortes y Conjunto "Lira San Vicente".
Recorded in Juchitan, 1972.

The same sequence and zapateado is used as in La Petenera Side II Band 1. Only the melody is different.

SIDE II, BAND 4 - El Jarabe Tehuano

Played by Julian and Roberto Hernandez on reed flute and drum. Recorded in Tehuantepec, 1972.

The jarabe is the national folk dance of Mexico known as The Hat Dance. A courtship dance, it has many regional variants. In Jalisco it is called jarabe tapatio, in Yucatan, jarana, in Tehuantepec, sandunga. The jarabe is a series of tunes played consecutively, each with its own rhythm, 6/8, 3/4, 2/4, 4/4. The steps come from 19th century European dances: the waltz, polka, mazurka, and the Spanish zapateado, the foundation dance step. Special features abound everywhere - a girl dancing in the wide brim of a man's hat, or a couple dancing over a bottle of tequila.

The jarabe emerged about the beginning of the 19th century as both dance and song. It is the most Mexican of all folk forms. The dance is dignified yet exciting, the tunes - enchanting, and the words - of life and love - even protest. Before independence, composers of jarabes were often persecuted by the Spanish Inquisition. It was a revolutionary era, and the songs spoke out against tyranny of state and church.

The jarabes popular today no longer recall the turbulent past; but they are still vital and alive in cities, towns and rural areas, all over Mexico.

Julian plays in 2/4 and 4/4 time repeating the tune without much variation. Like the band, he ends with a descending, freely performed cascade of sound.

SIDE II, BAND 5 - Rasca Petate

Played by Julian Hernandez, reed flute and Roberto Hernandez, drum. Recorded in Tehuantepec, 1972.

The literal translation in English is "scratch the petate". A petate is a woven straw mat used as a floor covering, or a bed, mostly by Mexico's poor. Rasca Petate is performed in two sections - 3/4 and 6/8 time.

SIDE II, BAND 6 - Son de la Media Noche (The Midnight Son)

Played by Julian and Roberto Hernandez on reed flute and drum. Recorded in Tehuantepec, 1972.

The pitro and his drummer play an important role in Indian communities. The sound of sones played on high-pitched reed flutes is as traditional as tortillas and frijoles. The night before musicians announce the fiesta playing drums and flutes as they roam through village streets. They play during rites and ceremonies, processions, and in the churchyard before and after mass. In general pipe and drum music is associated with religious rather than secular functions.

This son, called Guipi in Zapotec, is associated with the moon fiesta celebrated at the end of July in the barrio of Santa Maria (across the river from Tehuantepec center). El Shiveu, as the fiesta is known in Zapotec, is held when the moon is full. In the evening some people attend church services while others stand outside drinking and eating at food stands. The band plays intermittently, interrupted by the chiming of church bells and ear-splitting noise of exploding rockets. Julian performs El Son Guipi at the church before and after the midnight service, and again at the celebrations in the mayor's house. (Robert Garfias in notes from his records Marimba Music of Tehuantepec says Zapotec poems about the moon are recited at midnight to the accompaniment of a clay drum covered with the skin of an iguana.)

Julian plays most of the well known tunes of his region. He has his own way of improvising on Sandunga, Llorona, Petenera and La Petrona, but he also plays the sones for special fiestas and ceremonies, such as this one.

SIDE II, BAND 7 - Son de Lavar el Maiz - (Song For Washing the Corn)

This son is played during the fiesta of San Pedro. The rhythm is an alternating 6/8 and 3/4 time. Like all of Julian's pieces this one has the characteristic ending mentioned elsewhere.