

Side A THE HISTORY
Band 1. The Land 2:23
Band 2. The Indians 2:07
Band 3. The Spanish Conquerors 3:06
Band 4. The Mining Economy 1:00
Band 5. The Sugar Cycle 1:12
Band 6. Decline Of The Sugar Cycle (Mercantilism) 2:17
Band 7. The Contraband Cycle 2:39

Side B THE HISTORY
Band 1. The 19th Century 8:53
Band 2. El Grito de Lares: Dr. Ramón Betances 2:40
Band 3. The Move For Autonomy 2:04
Band 4. The 20th Century: The U.S. Enters Puerto Rico 1:21
Band 5. Luiz Muñoz Rivera 1:21

Side C THE HISTORY
Band 1. Jose Celso Barbarosa 2:05
Band 2. Jose De Diego 1:40
Band 3. Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos 3:21
Band 4. Toward Modernization: Luis Muñoz Marín 2:51
THE CULTURE
Band 5. Puerto Rican Culture—Art and Literature

Side D THE CULTURE
Band 1. Puerto Rican Folklore: Indian and African Aspects 6:31
Band 2. The Puerto Rican and His Music 7:52
Band 3. 20th Century Literary Expressions 1:51
Band 4. Summary 0:55

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PUERTO RICO:
ITS HISTORY
Pre-1493
To The Present

Written and Read by Dr. Robert A. Martinez
Conceived and Produced by Charles Averett

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FH 5603

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RAFAEL TUFINO: VITA COLA, MUSEO DE ARTE DE PONCE - THE LUIS A. FERRE FOUNDATION

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

PUERTO RICO: An Historical and Cultural Approach

Written and Read By Dr. Robert A. Martinez

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Introduction

According to Stan Steiner, in his book *The Islands*, there are two Puerto Ricos. One is the small, densely populated island in the Caribbean. The other consists of the amorphous mass of almost two million Puerto Ricans living in the mainland cities.

An overwhelming majority of these mainland Puerto Ricans are a poor, politically unrepresented minority whose children attend mainland schools where every attempt possible is made to "Americanize" them. A mainland Puerto Rican child can spend 12 years in school and never know that there is such a thing as Puerto Rican culture and history, that there were and are great Puerto Rican statesmen, writers, artists, musicians, etc.

The purpose of this two volume set of records is to present the listener with a concise narrative of the island's rich historical and cultural past. It is especially intended for those thousands of mainland Puerto Ricans who have been cut off from their national heritage with the hope, thereby, of strengthening the bond between the two Puerto Ricos. It is also intended to help all Americans appreciate an important, unique ethnic group.

Dr. Robert Martinez

SIDE A

The Land — Band 1

Geographically, Puerto Rico is an island 100 miles long and 35 miles wide. It is the most easterly of the Greater Antilles, bounded by the Atlantic on the northern half of the island and by the Caribbean on the south. Lying 1050 miles southeast of Miami, this geographical position of Puerto Rico would greatly influence her historical development and, in turn, her cultural personality.

As Spain's empire spread in the new world she became the envy of Europe. Her ships thus became the prey of foreign pirates and needed protection on the high seas. Given Puerto Rico's strategic location, it was only natural that her primary importance to Spain would be that of a military outpost. This would account, in great part, as to why Puerto Rico had the unique rural cultural development she did.

The fact that the island developed into a rural, agrarian culture was also greatly due to the climate. Puerto Rico's twelve months of summer was ideal for raising sugar and later tobacco, coffee and a host of tropical fruits and vegetables. The lifestyle was likewise affected by climate. As early as

1765, Alejandro O'Reilly, the king's investigating agent, noted in his report that the mildness of climate did not demand more than the slightest of clothes or effort on the part of the natives. Without any economic incentive from Spain, the natives found that with a minimum of effort the land provided a maximum of produce and grazing for cattle which enabled them to engage in contraband with foreign traders. It was the hot, tropical climate that also helped repel the pirates and foreign invaders coming from the cool climates of northern Europe.

Today the climate is still wonderful but the land is not as fruitful. The pressure of Puerto Rico's population on a limited land mass, devoid of natural resources for the most part, has caused her to make drastic changes in her economic endeavors. The economic changes since the 1940's have brought about equally drastic changes in the political, socio-cultural development of the island. Along with these changes have come conflicts of varying orders and degrees. They stem from a deep rooted love of a traditional, Hispanic cultural past and the intruding, often contrasting modern American values and life style. To see this more clearly we must go back to the beginning of that rich cultural past.

The Indians — Band 2

On November 19, 1493 Columbus set foot on Puerto Rico and claimed it for Spain. Legend has it that Columbus was brought to Borinquen, the original Indian name of the island, by 12 Taino women and two boys. He is supposed to have met these Indians on the island of Santa Maria de Guadalupe. They were in flight from the man eating Caribe Indians. Upon seeing the Spaniards in Guadalupe, the Indians beseeched them for help for which they would in turn lead them to a larger, more beautiful island called Borinquen—the land of the noble lord. Columbus renamed the island San Juan Bautista or Saint John the Baptist in honor of the king's son, Prince John.

As the original inhabitants of Puerto Rico, one could easily describe the tribal culture of the Taino Indians as semi-primitive culture, the Tainos lived in villages called *yucayeques*. Their homes were simple, round huts called *bohios* which were made of palms, wood and bamboo poles. Their household utensils were simple and few. Some of them are still part of the Puerto Rican household today. The *guayo* or grater is widely used for grinding plaintains and tubers while the *pilon* is still used for crushing herbs and spices.

To describe the Taino culture as pre-capitalistic and cooperative in nature is to say that these Indians did not have money or a standard currency. Furthermore, they did not work for one's own profit motive. Rather they worked for the good of the tribal village. Thus they engaged in simple bartering and cooperated with each other in providing mutual needs.

Since religion played an important role in the lives of the Tainos, the *bohique* or village priest and witch doctor held a high position in the tribal social pyramid. Above him were the *caciques* or chiefs, while below him were the lesser chiefs and warrior class called *nytainos*. The island was ruled as a loose

BIOGRAPHY

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federation of *yucayeques* or tribal villages under the island wide rule of a supreme cacique.

The Spanish Conquerors — Band 3

At the time the Spaniards arrived in Puerto Rico it is estimated that there were anywhere from 30 to 70,000 Indians. The Spaniards were quick to Christianize and subjugate the Tainos. Indians would become the enslaved labor force of the *encomienda* or feudal land grant system in the new world. They would now be forced to do hard labor in the fields and mines with the severe code of Christian morality replacing the moral habits of the Indians. Slavery, coupled with cruelty, detribalization or the stripping the Indians of their tribal culture and a realization that the Spaniards were not immortal led the Tainos to rise up against their European masters in 1511.

Although the Indians outnumbered the Spaniards by at least 30 to 1, they were no match for the technology of the Europeans. Bows and arrows against plate armor and gun powder were hopeless. The uprisings were easily suppressed and thousands of Indians were killed or escaped to neighboring islands and into the interior of Puerto Rico. Many more would be worked to death or would commit suicide to escape the white man's cruelty. This, along with diseases brought in by the Europeans and for which the Indians had no natural immunity, caused the extinction of the Taino Indian in Puerto Rico. In 1514 Sancho Velasquez, the king's census taker, reported, "Counting all of your highness's Indians, there are not even 4,000." In the subsequent centuries the few pure blooded Indians left would be absorbed into the population by intermarriage. Today only traces of their tribal culture have persisted.

Those traces of the Indian culture left are few when compared to the overwhelming Spanish and abundant African inputs. Yet Puerto Ricans often do things, unknowingly, that are strictly Indian in origin. The old custom of sprinkling rum on the ground from a newly opened bottle and intoning "para los muertos" or "this is for the dead" is a case in point. Other cultural aspects of the Indian are very evident in the language of Puerto Rico as well as the names of towns and cities like Humacao, Utuado and Caguas to name a few. Many of the foods and dishes that are part of the Puerto Rican diet today are also Indian in origin. And the music of Puerto Rico, though heavily African in origin, has its Indian inputs. The *guiro*, a hollow gourd with notches, and *maracas* or rattles, also made from gourds, are widely used in Puerto Rican music.

With the near extinction of the Indian, the Spaniard was faced with the need for a new source of labor. Contrary to popular belief, the black African was not brought into the new world because the Indians could not learn agricultural skills or were lazy or unsuitable for work in a tropical climate. It was because the Indians were simply killed off and the feudal set up in the new world was nothing without slave labor. And so as early as 1510 black slaves were introduced into Puerto Rico.

The Mining Economy — Band 4

Slave labor, first Indian and then black African, was initially used to work the gold mines. When the Spaniards noticed the Indians wearing gold ornaments they immediately asked to be shown where there was gold in the island. The little gold that Puerto Rico had was found in the valley of Luquillo or in river beds. Spreading the Gospel was the justification for colonization, but gold was, nevertheless, the primary motivation for empire. The mining of gold was among the earliest economic activities in Puerto Rico.

Ironically, with the arrival of the Franciscan monks in 1510, the first gold smelter was brought to Puerto Rico. In that year its first yield was 100,000 pesos, of which one fifth went personally to the king. It is for that reason, when in 1511 the colonists got permission to move from the original

settlement at Caparra across to what is now San Juan, it was renamed Puerto Rico or rich port. It would later become known as San Juan while the island would be called Puerto Rico. This switching of names resulted from a mixup incurred by the English.

The Sugar Cycle — Band 5

The gold, however, didn't last forever. By 1535 the greedy Spaniards had depleted the island of all its gold resources. With the loss of this major activity the colonists turned to the raising of sugar.

Raising sugar cane made sense to the colonists. The climate was excellent, black slave labor offered cheap labor and besides, the neighboring islands were living prosperously from raising sugar. Experts in sugar cane processing were called in from the Canary islands. Soon Puerto Rico experienced a period of prosperity. The colonial society changed drastically as a result. It changed from primarily miners and get rich quick, soldiers of fortune to one of a new stable class of landowners. A merchant class grew up as well. With the development of trade and prosperity artisans were in demand. The thriving port of San Juan was fast becoming the fortified port of San Juan. By 1539 the construction of El Morro at the entrance to San Juan Bay was underway while the governor resided at the first fort built in San Juan, La Fortaleza. That fort still serves as the governor's residence and the seat of the Commonwealth government today.

Decline of the Sugar Cycle (Mercantilism) — Band 6

The period of prosperity from raising sugar would be short lived however. As early as 1572 the newly arrived bishop to Puerto Rico reported back to Spain that he found, "Such poverty that there was neither oil for the lamps of the church, nor wax for the candles." People were so poor they barely had clothes to come to church or money to make an offering. Now lengthy periods—sometimes years—passed before a ship came to San Juan's harbor. Why did this prosperity from sugar end so abruptly?

Several factors account for the rapid decline of the sugar cycle. To begin, the cost of slaves had risen where it became too expensive to own slaves. With the increased cost of slaves and diminishing returns from raising sugar, land owners not only stopped buying slaves but found it wise to start freeing those they had. Slavery, thus, never achieved the economic prominence in Puerto Rico that it did in the other islands. Added to the high costs of buying and keeping slaves was the inefficiency and decay of Puerto Rico's sugar mills in comparison to those of the newer and more efficient mills of the non-Spanish islands. Furthermore, transportation of goods on the high seas became dangerous after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Spain was more concerned about the shipment of gold, silver and precious stones rather than sugar. It is here that we see fully the play of Spain's rigid mercantilistic policy and its impact on Puerto Rico's cultural and historical development. According to this economic theory, the colony existed solely for the needs of the mother country and was to be exploited fully to meet those ends. This also meant that the colony could produce only what they were told to by the mother country and only trade directly with the mother country. Trade even with other Spanish colonies was strictly forbidden.

Mercantilism, then, was greatly responsible for the demise of the first sugar cycle. When Spain no longer wanted sugar from Puerto Rico, the island found itself locked in with no means for economic survival. With the exception of the military, a few wealthy families and the little world of colonial officialdom, most people found they had to live by their wits.

The Contraband Cycle — Band 7

To live by one's wits required the colonists to do two things; one was to break the rigid rules prescribed by

mercantilism and the other was to get away from the supervision of the colonial authorities. Both requirements were met by the natives engaging in contraband trade with foreigners and by moving into the rural interior of the island. All the natives consisted of the poor whites of European background and the poor free blacks who both encountered the few remaining Indians living in the interior. The intermingling and intermarrying of these groups generation after generation gave rise to the *criollo* or native island population which was no longer Spanish, African or Indian but Puerto Rican. By the mid 18th century it was evident there was a unique native personality as opposed to that of the Europeans. Alejandro O'Reilly, investigating the contraband situation for King Charles III, noted this in his report. He describes the natives as living a simple and easy life with a minimum of wants—free of racial tensions and given to the practice of rustic social equality unmatched in the neighboring non-Hispanic islands. Fray Inigo Abbad laSierra, the writer of the island's first history, which was published in 1789, also describes this native, rustic population. His history presents Puerto Ricans as a people with distinct behavioral patterns permeating all segments of the population. The good monk saw the *jibaro* or country folk as the symbol of fortitude with a reluctance to become part of the impersonal institutional framework of the colonial world. The *jibaro*'s love for the island was part of his traditional way of life. It was the *jibaro* who helped save San Juan from the British attack under Sir Ralph Abercomby in 1797. Coming down from the mountains, they joined in the fight to save their island from foreigners. It was then that a national conscience was being born.

In the mid 18th century Charles III, one of the few enlightened kings regarding colonial policy, enacted a series of reforms to break away from the rigid mercantilism of the past. Unfortunately their impact was all but effective since they were enacted upon too late, still mostly restrictive and too few at a time. By the time he declared a free trade policy in 1788 he died and his inept son, Charles IV, reversed all that had been accomplished. The natives continued to engage in contraband and in so doing were declaring an economic independence that one day would lead to a cry for national independence.

SIDE B

The 19th Century — Band 1

This cry for independence eventually came in the 19th century, the period of political awareness and national identity. To understand how this awareness came about, one must look at what was going on in Europe and Spain in particular.

At this time Napoleon Bonaparte was marching through Europe, creating a French empire. Contrary to popular belief, he was not a monarch of the old regime. Instead he believed in the principles of the French Revolution—liberty, fraternity, and equality—and incorporated them into his administrative and legal institutions. An examination of the Code Napoleon, an enlightened legal code for its time, will attest to this fact. Also it must be noted that Napoleon had no designs for an overseas empire. He was mainly concerned with a French empire in Europe.

As part of his master plan for a European empire, he marched into Spain in 1808. Unable to cope with the corrupt, inept ruling family in Spain, Napoleon put his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne. These developments are important to note since they bring, as a consequence, a marked vitality toward political liberalism. Spain sees a national adaptation towards the French philosophical tendencies of the middle to latter part of the 18th century and the followers of the democratic ideals known as the Rights of Men conveyed during the French Revolution of 1789.

As a result of these impacts, inputs and reactions, the Spanish *Cortes* or Parliament wrote a liberal constitution in 1812 which was to be the rallying post for future events. After the French were driven out of Spain, the return of the Spanish king would see the return of absolutism and an attempt to reverse the liberal accomplishments under the French. In Spain this would mean continuous and prolonged civil wars while in the colonies it would mean rebellion. From Mexico to La Plata civil war was soon developed into a war for independence against the centralized domination of the mother country. The end result was total independence for the Latin American republics in 1823.

In the Caribbean, the flag of Spain would fly for many years. However, this in no way meant that the islanders were not politically active or desired independence any less. The reality was that an armed rebellion in Puerto Rico could not have developed until very late. Several reasons account for this fact. First, the island is small and was over militarized at the time. In fact Puerto Rico was a military prison. The lack of hiding places such as forests and wilderness from which to carry on guerrilla warfare did not permit an open, effective revolution. Also the wars in Spain itself and Latin America brought large numbers of immigrants to Puerto Rico who, for the most part, were conservatives loyal to the crown. Their presence in Puerto Rico further hurt revolutionary activities.

Thus the struggle for freedom in Puerto Rico polarized itself into two directions: the reformers versus the reactionaries. The Puerto Rican had to direct his liberating and emancipating fight into the political and legal arena. What was a triumphant revolution in Latin America would have to be a slow evolutionary process in Puerto Rico. This process was grossly dependent on the will and whims of the mother country.

The fact that Puerto Ricans would struggle for reform and freedom within the existing legal framework came about because of the liberal constitution of 1812 written under the liberalism of the French. This constitution made Puerto Ricans citizens of Spain and equals to the *peninsulares* or native born Spaniards. The *criollo* or native islanders could now have a voice in the *cortes* or parliament of Spain by electing delegates from the island.

The first representative elected by Puerto Ricans to go to Spain in their behalf was Don Ramon Power y Giralte.

Ramon Power distinguished himself by his work in the *Cortes*. He let the representative body know the needs of Puerto Rico. His personal qualities and tenacity made for a positive acceptance by the Senate of Spain on fundamental changes. Some of these changes included the annulment of the *facultad omnimoda* or absolute power granted to the governors by Charles II in the 17th century. This coupled with economic reforms in trade and commerce brought Puerto Rico its first effective reform and instilled in the island a sense of native pride that further enhanced the "they and we" syndrome—they the Spaniards and we the natives.

With the French driven out of Spain in 1813, The Spanish king, Ferdinand VII returned to the throne. Ferdinand would be appropriately called the Felon King because, after swearing to uphold and respect the constitution of 1812 while an exile in France, he abolished it, thus committing perjury in the eyes of his subjects. He restored the *facultad omnimoda* to colonial governors and, again, tightened royal rule over his empire. Politically, events would retrogress. Economically, however, things took a turn for the better.

This economic upswing in Puerto Rico resulted from Ferdinand's *Real Cedula de Gracias* or royal decree of concessions granted in 1815. It was the first positive economic plan for the island that would revitalize agriculture, industry and commerce by tax incentives and land grants. Also, for the first time non-Spanish immigration into Puerto Rico was encouraged. This brought in wealthy farmers and

entrepreneurs who would not only invigorate the economy but the island's political and cultural development as well.

One of the negative effects of this 19th century economic development was the resurgence of black slavery in Puerto Rico. Where it had been dying a natural death in the earlier centuries because of economic stagnation, it now took on a renewed importance in Puerto Rican society. This was due in great part to the *Real Cedula*. The more slaves one brought into Puerto Rico, the more acreage he was given by the crown. Slavery therefore, meant wealth and power and once again cruel treatments of blacks became the order of the day. It is for this reason that scattered slave uprisings are seen in the first quarter or so of the 19th century.

It is interesting to note that this struggle for the emancipation of slaves was closely associated with the nationalist struggle for greater freedom and eventually independence from Spain. Since all efforts of the colonists for change were strongly dependent on the whims of the crown and the political climate of the Cortes, progress was slow and the process fully frustrating. With every effort for reform becoming a major crisis for the colonial representatives to deal with, some of them changed from liberal tendencies to radical beliefs.

Such a person was Dr. Ramon Emeterio Betances. Betances, the father of Puerto Rican nationalism, along with Segundo Ruiz Belvis, later to be known as the Emancipator, and Julio Vizcarrondo were very instrumental in bringing about the legal emancipation of slaves. Their struggle began around 1860 when they would help slaves buy the freedom of their children from their masters before they were baptized. Vizcarrondo founded *La Sociedad Abolicionista* or the secret Abolitionist Society in 1864. Ruiz Belvis the lawyer, would present the case before the Cortes of 1866. For speaking against crown policy in the Cortes at a time when the government was in the hands of conservatives under the despotic Isabel II, Ruiz Belvis and his two compatriots Jose Julian Acosta and Francisco Mariano Quinones were exiled from Puerto Rico. Betances had already been exiled earlier for his nationalistic and anti-slavery activities in Puerto Rico.

But the Puerto Ricans were steadfast in the struggle to abolish slavery. In 1868 a revolution in Spain overthrew the tyrannical queen and reactionary forces. September 17th of that year became the starting point of free births. From that day on any child born to slave parents was free. This accomplishment signaled the eventual death of slavery in Puerto Rico.

Still not satisfied, the Puerto Ricans pushed further for the freedom of all slaves at that time. Another outstanding patriot at the time, Ramon Baldorioty de Castro, went to Spain for this purpose. He succeeded in getting one of the Spanish delegates to present such a bill to the Cortes. Known as the *Ley Moret* or Moret Law it finally was enacted into law on March 22, 1873.

El Grito de Lares: Dr. Ramon Betances — Band 2

Clearly this lengthy struggle of 13 years to achieve one goal is an example of the frustration the islanders had to cope with. For some, working at a snail's pace within this framework was intolerable. Dr. Betances, foremost among those liberals who found this intolerable, became the spokesman for Puerto Rican independence. Exiled in 1860 and again in 1864 for his political activities, Betances decided that Puerto Rico should go its own way. The time to end dependence on a restrictive, regressive mother country had come.

While in exile, Betances went about raising funds and support for a revolution in Puerto Rico. In the island, small revolutionary committees were organized in the western half of the island, centered around Mayaguez. These committees, very similar to the committees of correspondence in the North American colonies, were headed by Manuel Rojas. Both Betances and Rojas were working very hard toward the goal of a free Puerto Rico. Unfortunately there was an informer

among their ranks and the Spanish authorities were fully aware of the rebellious plans in the making.

With only two alternatives, disband and flee or stay and fight, the patriots chose to remain and fight. They left Mayaguez and moved into the interior to a small town called Lares. It was here that they attempted what must be called an abortive or premature revolt. Historians estimate that there were anywhere from 400 to 1,000 men with only 500 guns and 6 cannons among them. Off the coast an old, small ship called "*El Telegrafo*" was waiting for the word which it never got. The natives easily took the town of Lares and declared the free Republic of Puerto Rico. Francisco Ramirez Medina was named the provisional president. Their flag, a white banner, read "liberty or death—long live free Puerto Rico." It flew proudly but for only a short time. After the parish priest, Padre Jose Vega, was forced to say a Mass of thanksgiving for the revolutionaries, they marched on toward the town of San Sebastian where the well trained and equipped Spanish army was waiting for them. It was only a matter of time before this revolution was crushed. Yet September 23, 1868, the day of this uprising which is known as *El Grito de Lares* or the Shout of Lares is important to all Puerto Ricans today, regardless of their political feelings. It is the day that the Puerto Rican personality fully came of age. Although an historic failure, *El Grito de Lares* is seen as a symbolic triumph.

The Move for Autonomy — Band 3

In the months following *El Grito*, the Spaniards effectively crushed all evidence of the radical or pro-independence movement in Puerto Rico. There was no alternative but to bring the movement for reform back to the liberal versus the conservative forces within the framework of Puerto Rico's colonial status. The Puerto Rican liberals realistically saw autonomy or home rule as their goal now.

Progress toward this goal was first realized in 1887 and then finally achieved in 1897. The liberal reformed politicians began to see autonomy as their only hope after 1883. Autonomism meant greater self determination or home rule for the island. In March of 1887 the leaders of autonomism met in Ponce, under the leadership of the now elder, Puerto Rican statesman, Ramon Baldorioty de Castro, at the Teatro la Perla. Each town from the island sent delegates to this assembly. The fruits of their labor was the publication of a reform plan which called for an autonomous government for Puerto Rico.

After this assembly, the autonomists suffered serious set backs. The new governor, Romualdo Palacios considered the most tyrannical and cruelest of the crown's appointees, persecuted the autonomists. Many were tortured, threatened or imprisoned. Among those imprisoned was Baldorioty de Castro. The governor had intended to execute them but due to the efforts of allies in Spain, the patriots were saved at the 11th hour. Don Ramon died in 1889 which hurt the movement even more for now they moved about without an able leader. It wasn't until 1897 that Don Luis Munoz Rivera made autonomy a reality for Puerto Rico. This came about through his compromise plan which called for an alliance with the liberal parties in Spain. In exchange for the support given to the liberals which enabled their candidate, Mateo Sagasta to become Prime Minister, a charter of autonomy was granted on September 25, 1897.

20th Century—The U.S. Enters Puerto Rico — Band 4

The autonomous government in Puerto Rico had a short life. Two months after its inauguration, The Spanish-American war began. The focus of that conflict was between the United States and Spain over the question of Cuban independence. Puerto Rico, being a political part of Spain, unwillingly became a part of that drama. On May 12, 1898 Admiral Sampson bombarded San Juan. The people of Puerto Rico were extremely surprised and shocked since they

were not part of the ongoing war. On July 25, 1898 the island was invaded through the southern part. The Americans landed at the coastal town of Guanica. By August 13, 1898 the war was over. In December, 1898 the results of the Treaty of Paris which ended the hostilities were announced. Puerto Rico, the Phillipine Islands and Guam were given to the United States in payment for indemnities incurred by Spain. The island now moved into the hands of a new mother country.

This reality posed serious problems for the Puerto Rican politicians. What was to be their reaction to this new reality? For some it was a welcomed change. For others it had various aspects that could be both bad and good while for others it was definitely seen as a disastrous turn of events for the island's future.

Luis Munoz Rivera — Band 5

Prominent political spokesmen began to emerge, each voicing sentiments of these varying degrees. Munoz Rivera would be one of these leading spokesmen. Born in Barranquitas in 1859, he was the man who had dominated the transition period between the radical *independentistas* toward the end of the Spanish colonial administration in the form of an autonomous charter. A renown poet, journalist and politician, he would now seek an autonomous relationship with the United States. To achieve this goal he founded the Federalist Party which would later be known as the Unionist Party and finally the Liberal Party. With the passage of the Foraker Act in 1900, Puerto Rico's first form of civil government under the U.S., he would be elected the island's first Resident Commissioner in Washington. In this post he pushed for greater representative government for Puerto Ricans which meant serious revisions of the unpopular Foraker Act which was seen as unrepresentative. Some of these revisions came about with the passage of the Jones Act in 1917. Don Luis had pushed very hard for passage for this bill. In 1916 he made an impassioned speech before the U.S. Congress, his last public act. He did not live to see the Jones Bill become law. Suffering from a liver ailment, he returned to his home town where he died on the 15th of November, 1916.

SIDE C

Jose Celso Barbosa — Band 1

At either extreme of Munoz Rivera's political philosophy was Jose Celso Barbosa, who advocated statehood for Puerto Rico, and Jose de Diego, the ardent spokesman for Puerto Rican independence.

Jose Celso Barbosa was born in 1857 in the town of Bayamon. Raised by his maternal aunt, Lucia Alcalá, Jose received his early education in Bayamon. His extraordinary cleverness had attracted attention and he was urged to go on for higher education. In 1875 at the age of 18 he received his bachelor's degree from the Theological Seminary in San Juan. The following year Barbosa sailed for New York to study engineering at the Fort Edwards Institute. A year later he went to Ann Arbor, Michigan where he studied medicine. In 1880 he graduated as a doctor of medicine. He returned to San Juan and obtained the appointment of physician of a mutual aid society. The success with which he used new methods to combat a smallpox epidemic made the young doctor very popular with the people. Prior to the United States entry into Puerto Rico, Barbosa was an active member of the autonomist movement.

In 1899, with the change of ruling power in Puerto Rico, Dr. Barbosa began a new phase of his political career. He now enthusiastically urged cooperation with the Americanization of Puerto Rico in the hope that the island would one day become part of the American Union as a sovereign state. On July 4, 1899, Barbosa founded the Republican Party. His party called for acceptance of the American annexation of Puerto Rico and the granting of

territorial status to the island until it should become a state of the Union. President McKinley rewarded Celso Barbosa's pro-American sentiments by appointing him to the executive council of the first civilian government in Puerto Rico provided for in the Foraker Act in 1900. Barbosa continued in his republican statehood efforts until his death on September 21, 1921.

Jose de Diego — Band 2

In direct contrast to the views of Munoz Rivera and Celso Barbosa was Don Jose de Diego. His nationalist sentiments were as deep and ardent as those of Betances. Jose de Diego was a great poet as well as a great politician, orator, prose writer, legislator, social reformer and educator. His magnetic personality and fiery speeches moved many. Born April 16, 1866 in Aguadilla, de Diego received his primary schooling in Mayaguez and his higher education in Spain at the Polytechnical College in Logronno. Later he studied law at the University of Barcelona. He finally obtained his law degree and doctorate from the University of Havana in 1891.

Jose de Diego began his early political career in the autonomist party and when autonomy came to Puerto Rico in 1898, he was elected Under-Secretary of Justice of the insular government. Under American rule, de Diego was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and President of the Criminal Court in Mayaguez in 1899. He joined the Federalist Party of Munoz Rivera and represented this party in the Executive Council. He resigned from the Council, protesting its policies and joined the *Union de Puerto Rico*. From this party he was elected to the House of Delegates in 1907. Later, when he saw that the United States was not acting on Puerto Rico's independence, he broke with the party and devoted himself freely to the struggle for his country's freedom. He continued in that struggle until his death on July 7, 1918.

Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos—Band 3

Such an ardent nationalist as Jose de Diego would not be seen in Puerto Rico until the 1930's in the person of Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos. Born in Ponce, September 12, 1891, Albizu attended the local schools and then came to the mainland. He studied engineering at the University of Vermont and went on to Harvard where he studied philosophy and literature and obtained a doctorate in law. At Harvard the influence of the Irish independence movement strengthened his own nationalist views. There he met Laura Meneses, a Peruvian student with progressive ideas, who later became his wife.

His studies were interrupted by World War I. Albizu Campos enlisted in the United States Army. Because of his African blood from his mother, he was assigned to the segregated units for Negro soldiers where he experienced for the first time the indignities of discrimination. The humiliations he suffered left a lasting impact on his mind. He finished his military service with the rank of first lieutenant.

In 1921, his studies completed, Albizu returned to Puerto Rico. He practiced law mostly among the poor and devoted a great deal of his energies to the independence cause of Puerto Rico. As an active member of the Nationalist Party he was elected its vice-president in 1925. By 1930, as the party's president, he was the undisputed, dynamic leader of the nationalist cause. For Albizu, the liberation of Puerto Rico could only be achieved by revolutionary means. He would say that "When tyranny is the law of the land, revolution is the order of the day." He carried his convictions to extremes and willingly accepted the consequences.

A series of disorders in the economically oppressed 30's, in particular, uprisings at the University of Puerto Rico in October of 1935 and the assassination of the American police commissioner, Colonel Francis Riggs in February of 1936, led to Albizu's arrest. On July 31, 1936, he and his closest associates were sentenced to long prison terms. He served seven years in the federal prison at Atlanta, Georgia.

Although he was released from jail in 1943, he was not allowed to return to Puerto Rico until 1947.

By the time Albizu Campos returned to Puerto Rico, the island began experiencing new post war economic recovery and the burning zeal of nationalism had cooled down somewhat. With the coming of Commonwealth status, the ardent nationalists, anxious and frustrated, erupted again. On October 30, 1950 various Nationalist uprisings occurred. Because of this, hundreds of Nationalists were arrested, including Albizu Campos. He was sent to jail but due to his failing health was released again in 1953. The following year he was imprisoned again because other nationalists, led by Lolita Lebron, shot at Congressmen from the visitor's gallery in the House of Representatives in Washington. Sentenced to 60 years in prison, he was set free only a few months before his death. On April 21, 1965 Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos's suffering in this world ended.

Toward Modernization: Luis Munoz Marin—Band 4

While most of Puerto Rico's politicians argued over the question of status for the island or struggled for control of an almost powerless legislature, a young politician appeared on the scene in the late 30's to address the social-economic needs of the people. He was Luis Munoz Marin, the son of Luis Munoz Rivera. Young Luis had an early exposure to the mainland's world of politics while his father served as the island's resident commissioner. As a poet and journalist, he would meet some of the greatest minds of his time and would have access to circles unknown to most Puerto Ricans. Among those who would make a lasting impression on his political thought would be Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt.

Munoz Marin returned to Puerto Rico in the 1930's. In 1932 he was elected to the Puerto Rican senate from the Liberal party. In July of 1938 he founded his own party, the Popular Democratic Party, to address the social-economic needs of the people. In 1940, competing in the island wide elections for the first time, Munoz Marin's Party was very successful. Within the first four years of office the *populares* fulfilled many of their campaign promises and achieved such gains which led them to be the most powerful and popular party for years. When Puerto Ricans were allowed to elect their own governor for the first time in 1948, Munoz Marin was their overwhelming choice. He was governor until 1964, when he decided that four terms were enough. He ended his public career in 1968 when he finished serving his last term as a senator.

It was Munoz Marin who had legislation enacted that enabled Puerto Rico to switch her economy to industrialization. This was the beginning of modernization for the island. Like his father, he secured an almost autonomous situation for the island in 1952. This Commonwealth Status continues to be the governing set up in Puerto Rico today.

Recently Munoz Marin's party has been challenged by the statehooders. It was first in 1968 that the New Progressive Party of Luis Ferre challenged the Popular Democrats. Taking advantage of a split among the *populares*, they won the governor's seat. Again in 1976, after the return of a popular democrat as governor, Rafael Hernandez Colon, the statehooders challenged the *populares* and won again. Their candidate, Carlos Romero Barcelo, the former mayor of San Juan, won the election.

Today people are not clear about the future of Puerto Rico. Again the questions of economic problems and alternatives to the status situation are discussed. But no matter what one's political feelings are in Puerto Rico, no one will deny that Luis Munoz Marin has been probably the most important political personality in the 20th century, if not in all of Puerto Rican history.

Puerto Rican Culture—Art and Literature — Band 5

The early manifestations of literary expression in Puerto

Rico, for the most part, are historical in nature. They are primarily concerned with the events of discovery, conquest, colonization and important happenings of the colonial period. Three outstanding examples of this kind of writing are Bartolome de las Casas's *History of the West Indies* in which he describes the early arrival of Columbus into Puerto Rico, Alejandro O'Reilly's *Memorandum Concerning the Island Of Puerto Rico* written in 1765 and Fray Inigo Abbad Lasierra's first history of Puerto Rico published in 1789. Though all three works are important chronicles of the island's early history and cultural development they are not truly native pieces of literature. It isn't until the 19th century that Puerto Rico produced a native school of writers and artists. Their writings are filled with native themes derived from the tropical environment and the rich folklore of the inhabitants.

In the annals of our literary history, *El Jibaro*, by Dr. Manuel A. Alonso (1823-1889), starts out as the first significant book written by a Puerto Rican author. *El Jibaro* was published by Alonso in the year 1849. It is written in prose and verse and deals with the customs, the traditions and the character of the people, intermingling the anecdotal with the historical and social aspects of life.

During the last 25 years of the 19th century there was a great flourishing in all the arts. Many critics and historians consider this period to be the Golden Age of Puerto Rican cultural life. Three of the best lyrical Romantic poets of that period were Jose Gautier Benitez (1851-1880): *El Caribe*, whose real name was Jose Gualberto Padilla (1829-1896) and Lola Rodriguez de Tio (1883-1924). Three of the best prose writers who cultivated the essay, the novel and the drama, were Alejandro Tapia y Rivera (1826-1882): Eugenio Maria de Hostos (1839-1903) and Salvador Brau (1842-1912). In the realm of the fine arts, besides Jose Campeche (1752-1809), who really belongs to the 18th century, the two outstanding painters in the latter part of the 19th century and the early 20th century were Francisco Oller (1883-1917) and Ramon Frade, who was born in the year 1875 and lived until 1954.

SIDE D

Puerto Rican Folklore: Indian and African Aspects — Band 1

Besides the works by individual writers, musicians and artists, the past history of the culture of Puerto Rico offers a wealth of anonymous artistic expressions embodied in its folklore. By the folklore of Puerto Rico we mean the creative achievements of the people in all realms of life. Folklore is the accumulation of the wisdom of the illiterate peasant and the poor dwellers who inhabit the remote mountain regions, the villages and small towns of the island. It includes the *decimas*, *coplas*, *aguinaldos*, *seis chorreo*, *bomba*, the stories of Juan Bobo, the images of Santos and all the rituals inherited from Spain and mingled with Indian and Negro influences in our pattern of culture. Folklore is the secret and mysterious ingredient which gives a special character to the traditional festivities inspired by the patron saints, the religious ceremonies and the social family events so dear to the heart of the Puerto Rican people, such as the baptism or the *velorio* or wake to celebrate the two most important dates in the life of a human being; his birth—since baptism is the recognition of the birth of the soul—and death, since the wake in the Puerto Rican's mind is the farewell to the person who departs from this world to eternity. In many cases, the folklore of Puerto Rico has influenced the poetry, the music and the art of the best known writers, composers and painters of the island.

Indian Aspects of Puerto Rican Folklore

Aspects of the Taino culture upon the folklore of Puerto Rico are most evident in the form of religious expression, and religion, more widely expressed than language, it is no wonder they are deeply rooted in the culture.

Foremost among these is the *Velorio* or wake for the dead. Like their Indian forebears, Puerto Ricans give great attention to the ritual for the dead. The wake consists of the family sitting up for nine consecutive days. The home is open and people come and go while the woman keep vigil in deep prayer. A professional prayer woman or *rezadora* leads the prayers, in particular the rosary, while those involved in spirit worship or *espiritismo* may call upon the newly deceased's spirit for protection. All the significance of this ritual is keenly captured in Francisco Oller's painting entitled "El Velorio." For the burial of a child, the ritual employed is the *baquine*. The Indians, like their Christian conquerors, believed that if a child died his soul went straight to heaven since he had no chance to sin. They therefore wrapped the dead child in white and adorned the house in flowers and marched around the table with the child's body chanting hymns. For the Indian this was more an occasion of joy than sadness. Both the *velorio* and *baquine* are ceremonies that still persist in Puerto Rico today.

Faithhealing is another aspect of the folklore derived from the Tainos. Just as the Indian *bohique* or witch doctor blew the smoke of the mahogany tree leaves over the sick, the *curandero* or faith healer will exhale the smoke of a cigar over the sick with the hope that the evil spirit causing the illness will evaporate with the smoke. The use of certain herbs, potions and incantations for the purpose of healing are also Indian in origin.

(African aspects of Puerto Rican Folklore)

The Negro in Puerto Rico made an even greater impact on the island's rich folklore. He too affected the rural aspects of religious rituals. The Bantus, for example, brought with them to Puerto Rico all the superstitious elements of their religion. The strangest superstitions related to ancestor worship still persist. Necromancy or black magic communications with the dead, which is derived from the West African cultures also exists in many parts of the island. Guayama, a city in southern Puerto Rico, is known as the "town of sorcerers." Blacks and mulattoes in this area have passed down from generation to generation a host of legends dealing with the supernatural. They also have a reputation of being experts in the preparations of brews and potions to incur evil or good. Hence there is a need for amulets to protect children from the evil eye and forces of these sorcerers. Even today Puerto Rican mothers resort to *hanging la cabeza negra* or the black head, an amulet made of jet stone, on a baby's carriage or person to ward off evil forces.

Although the slave yielded to the vigorous Christianizing of the Catholic Church, he, nevertheless, continued to worship his ancestral gods and perform his witchcraft and magic. Free blacks living in the rural countryside imparted their beliefs to the poor whites, mulattoes and mestizos there. It is no wonder that even today when one goes into a typical Puerto Rican home he will see along with statues of Christian saints and the Virgin, a *chango* or black African god to whom, in many cases, offerings of fruit, wine or other items are present. Although Puerto Ricans are classified as 85% Roman Catholic today, it is not the institutionalized Catholicism *per se* of Europe. Rather it is home oriented with a rich folkloric tradition derived primarily from the African Influence.

The African influence is no less evident in Puerto Rico's music. The Negro is by instinct and experience a music maker. If one examines the African cultures carefully he finds that some tribes had full orchestras with rather sophisticated instruments. Since the Spanish gentlemen considered it beneath their dignity to play a musical instrument, blacks in Puerto Rico not only became their performers, but also the teachers and composers.

The language and literature were equally affected by the African tribal cultures in Puerto Rico. Words like *name*, *chango*, *bembe*, *mango*, *rumba* etc. are part of the Puerto

Rican's everyday speech. The up and down speech intonations in Puerto Rican Spanish are typically African as well as the grammatical practice of cutting endings (*Para nada* becomes *pa'na*), transforming or dropping consonants and various phonetic implications in the vernacular.

If one looks carefully into all aspects of modern Puerto Rican culture (the arts, politics, education, etc.) he finds those influencing factors derived from the African tradition in Puerto Rico. Luis Pales Matos, the 20th century poet, is a case in point. With his book of Afro-Antillean poetry *Tun Tun de Pasa y Griferia*, Pales mysteriously enters in the Negro's soul and feels its vitality in the innermost depths of the Puerto Rican people.

The Puerto Rican and His Music — Band 2

Puerto Rican music appears early in our history. As early as the 17th century, a native music, that could be distinguished from the music of Europe was developing. Native guitars of high, medium and low pitch, call *tiple*, *cuatro*, and *bordonua* were being made. The *cuatro*, for example, is a ten string guitar, paired off in sets of two strings, still used today. A Puerto Rican *decima*, an improvised ten line poem or song with rhyme tells a story or develops a point of view, evolved from the Andalusian *decima*. The *seis*, which became the backbone of Puerto Rican country music, also evolved from the musical forms of Southern Spain's Andalusia. From the Taino culture, practically destroyed by the Spanish, the peasant or jibaro music took the *guiro* and the *maracas*.

The West Africans, mainly from Ghana, Nigeria and the Guinea Coast, brought to Puerto Rico as slaves as early as 1510, introduced their musical forms into the island. Their music was very rhythmic. Some of these rhythms merged into the popular music of Puerto Rico. In 1798 a French naturalist named Ledru, visiting the island, observed a "drum commonly called bomba" played in a plantation dance of black, white and mulatto laborers. The *bomba* and *plena* of today descend primarily from the rhythms of the slaves.

By the last half of the 19th century, Puerto Rico had fully developed a national music with unique features. Different sectors of the population had their own musical forms. In the cities and town, Puerto Rican landowners, professionals, and intellectuals performed highly stylized dances to the playing of ballroom orchestras on a European model; the local *danza*, and other forms, also had European origins. In the countryside the jibaro created his own version of the *danza*, waltz and so on, along with many variations of the *seis* and other rhythms they themselves developed and made traditional. For example, they added to the *danza* a section at the end, called *merengue*, in which the tempo was picked up. And in the elite city folks' eyes, the jibaro's performance of the *danza*, which also had pattern steps, was "Scandalous" and "voluptuous." The blacks and poor whites of the towns had their own rhythms also, such as the *plena* and *bomba* and variations of these, as well as their own instruments. The *plena* and the *bomba* told of special events and daily episodes in the laborers' lives as seen through their own eyes.

Music had its flourishing counterpart in the 19th century's golden age. Among the composers of the 19th century all music lovers know the *danzas* and other musical compositions by such artists as Julian Andino (1845-1920), Julio Arteaga (1867-1923), Braulio Dueno Colon (1854-1934), Manuel G. Tavarez (1843-1883), Jose Quinton (1881-1925) and Juan Morel Campos (1857-1896). This period and these composers are fully discussed in a book published in 1915 by Fernando Callejo on *Musica y Musicos Puertorriquenos*.

In music, the panorama of the present offers a wonderful array of valuable performances of Puerto Rican artists. The most famous author of popular songs is Rafael Hernandez (1889-1965), whose *Lamento Borincano* will remain a landmark in the musical album of our times. And among the composers of the present the names of Hector Campos Parsi

and Amaury Veray seem to be already incorporated in the permanent files of Puerto Rican musical history.

The music that Puerto Ricans in New York produce and enjoy includes the traditional forms like the *plena*, *bomba*, *seis*, and others. Exponents of these forms who are part of the migrant flow keep these rhythms alive in the new setting. At times this music is taken to the streets by groups like the *Planeros de la 110*, the *Grupo Loiza*, and Corozo's *cuarteto*. The popular Latin music of New York, however, has basically Cuban origins first embodied in the *guaguanco* and *son montuno* rhythms of the *conjunto* band of trumpets, guitar, piano, and *tres*. These *conjuntos* brought together the Cuban peasant music (*son*) with dominant black rhythms. The *Grupo Folklorico y Experimental Nuevayorquino* mastered this music and merged it with Puerto Rican and New York elements. The drum music of Puerto Rican and Latin streets are also rooted in Cuban music, the rhythms of the *rumba* were first played in the black barrios of the Cuban cities. From the late 1950's, these forms developed into a distinct New York expression that groups such as the Lexington Avenue Express Percussion Ensemble integrated with the traditional Puerto Rican. The interaction with Afro-American people in New York is also reflected in the music. Soul music is directly appropriated as a part of Young Puerto Rican expression. And groups such as the *Conjunto Union* combined the directed free style and improvisation of jazz with the rhythmic base of Latin music.

In the early 1950's, with the enormous expansion of the migration, hometown clubs appeared as centers of social and cultural interaction throughout the Puerto Rican community. Large ballrooms with commercial ends in mind, such as the *Caborrojeno*, were set up, directed at this sector of the Puerto Rican community and later at other Caribbean and Latin American peoples migrating in large numbers.

Young Puerto Ricans in New York turned to Cuban rhythms that served as a recognizable expression to be appropriated. The popular, professional bands in New York performing this music since the 1940's (*mambo*, *son montuno*, *guaguanco*, *charanga*) were dominated in number by Puerto Rican musicians and included Cubans steeped in the culture of these rhythms. Joe Loco, Tito Puente, Tito Rodriguez, New York Puerto Ricans by birth or upbringing, organized musical groups in the late 1940's. The process of transformation of the purely Cuban rhythms in the new setting began. Their tempo was picked up, perhaps reflecting the "speedup" imposed on every aspect of life in New York. Later, influenced by rock and facilitated by the advanced application of electronics to musical instruments and to audio recording, the musical sound was amplified. The impression of a larger sound was achieved. In the early 1950's Tito Puente was among the first of Puerto Rican musicians to bring the big band jazz sound into Latin Music. These events were clearly marked by the nature of the Puerto Rican experience in New York City, especially the influence of Afro-American music. The impact of this influence was already prominent in Cuban musicians like Machito. This influence has worked both ways. Since Chano Pozo, the black *conguero* in the Dizzy Gillespie band of the 1940's and increasingly today, jazz, rock, and soul have merged a Latin rhythm section into their sound. Two other innovations in the original Cuban rhythms are made in New York during the 1960's. One is a technical innovation, Eddie Palmieri's introduction of the trombone into the very heart of Latin, making it an integral part of this music. The second innovation was sparked by the surge in Puerto Rican consciousness in the late 1960's and the community's demand for Puerto Rican culture. Willie Colon drew on Puerto Rican

and Caribbean music to infuse their rhythms into *la salsa*, the popular, commercial rhythm that had evolved from the Cuban.

Latin Music has been a profound cultural force in the Puerto Rican community. Certainly, it has been the most powerful, the most attractive of the cultural forms that move New York Puerto Ricans. On any weekend night, thousands of Puerto Ricans crowd into ballrooms to celebrate and dance to this music. It has served, much like the traditional music for the early waves of Puerto Rican immigrants, as a national form that Puerto Ricans in mainland cities view as *their* music.

20th Century Literary Expressions — Band 3

From 1898 to the First World War, the writers of Puerto Rico were primarily concerned with clinging to their heritage of the past. There is a feeling of "fear and trembling" in the literature of that period and it offers a wide range of information to understand the struggles and the dreams of the people of Puerto Rico, trying to adjust to its new role in history as a possession of the United States. The foremost poets of Puerto Rico during the 20th century, as well as the essayists and fiction writers, have reflected in their books the inner self of the people, with a clear awareness of its character and its destiny. Luis Llorens Torres (1878-1944) is an outstanding exponent of this feeling for the land and its people. The keynote of Llorens' poetry is his ability to capture the essence of the language and the mores of the jibaro, transforming them into poetry of high calibre, comparable to the transformation by the Irish poets of their folk heritage into poetry. Jose de Diego (1867-1918), Evaristo Rivera Chevrement (1896), Luis Pales Matos (1898-1959) and Julia de Burgos (1914-1953) are other great poets of Puerto Rico. Their language is full of vigor and is rich in imagery and their favorite themes are love, freedom and the homeland.

The year 1934 marks a highlight in the literature of Puerto Rico with the appearance of the most influential book published in this century in Puerto Rico: *Insularismo* by Antonio S. Pedreira (1899-1939). Pedreira studied the culture of Puerto Rico with a strong accent on self-analysis and with the courage to face the weaknesses and stumbling blocks in the development of the island.

Another leading Puerto Rican writer who has been inspired to write about the migration problems facing Puerto Ricans is Rene Marques. In *La Carreta* or the Oxcart, a play, and *La Víspera del Hombre* (The Eve of Man), a novel, Marques strikes upon this theme giving us a highly emotional rendering of the problem.

Summary — Band 4

Let us finish this summary by pointing out that Puerto Rico is now going through a very intense period in its cultural life. The Puerto Ricans are trying to save and retain their identity as a people of Spanish-American stock, with an emphasis on the values of their heritage and a sense of belonging to the free nations of the world who see the universal values rooted in their own language, traditions and customs. Since 1898 the cultural life of Puerto Rico, as well as all other aspects of its political, economic and social structures, has undergone various stages of change due to the political relationship it now has with the United States. But almost 80 years of Americanization have not affected the fundamental roots of the country's folklore, literature and art. The culture of Puerto Rico stands as the best testimony of the integrity and the pride of a nation that has been able to preserve its own personality and its own character.