

ARGENTINE FOLK SONGS



SUNG BY OCTAVIO CORVALAN WITH GUITAR

GATO · VIDALA · CHAYA · BAILECITO · CHACARRERA · BAHUALA

TOTEMIC MESTIZO and INDIAN Songs

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MUSIC LP

M
1687
A7
C832
A692
1953

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AY, PARA NAVIDAD
NOCHE DE LUNA
ANAHÍ
VAMOS A CHAYAR
(Let us go to the harvest)
MUCHO TE QUIERO
SUBO, SUBO (Bahuala)
(I climb up, I climb up)

TARIPAI-CHA-CUCHARATA (Chacarera)
(Pass me the spoon)
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EL HUMAHUAQUENO
PALA-PALA
LA LOCA
(The crazy one)

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Octavio Corvalan was born in Santiago del Estero, Argentina in 1923. After secondary school in Santiago he went to Tucuman to study Philosophy and Letters graduating in 1944. His great interest in folk-lore stems from the rural life he lived as a child. He learned to play the guitar while still in secondary school and later studied linguistics in order to track down the influence of indigenous languages on the Spanish mother tongue. These studies led to a fellowship at the University of Washington. He has been performing as a folk singer in personal appearances and on the radio for many years in many cities of his country and has lectured and written essays and articles on folk poetry and music.

CUANDO YO ME MUERA

This Gato is from Tucuman. The Gato is a dance popular in many parts of Argentina, each region having its own variations. The choreography is simple and it may be danced by one couple or many.

When I pass away, my darling,
I am sure you will cry,
Because you'll never find another
Who will love you more.

After the rain
Streams overflow.
So my love grows on
When I don't see you.

(This is the main idea. It is impossible to translate literally the complete song. Ed.)

Cuando yo me muera, Nanay,
mucho has de llorar.

Otro que te quiera, Nanay,
no lo encontrarás.

Será porque te amo tanto
todos andan con la tema,
yo no sé qué les importa
amor de vidas ajenas.

Dicen que los ríos crecen
cuando acaba de llover,
así crecen mis amores
cuando no te puedo ver.

Me pides que te olvide, Nanay,
como si fuera,
una cosa tan fácil, Nanay,
que se pudiera.

Mi vida, ya estoy cansado
de solicitar tu amor
y de ver que no procuras
remediarme en mi dolor.

Pucha, que soy desgraciado,
pucha que soy infeliz.
Si hasta para bautizarme
faltó el agua para mí!

AY, PARA NAVIDAD

A Christmas Chuntunki (song). The charango referred to in this song is a small guitar of the Indians in the table-lands of the North West.

Ay, when Christmas arrives,
I shall come to see you.

I shall come
Just about daybreak.

There will be "charangos" and guitars
Celebrating our wedding.

A star got lost
On Christmas Eve,

And I think it is
In the little chapel on the mountains.

And for sure it will be there
Waiting for us,

To see our happiness
When Christmas arrives.

Nochebuena, Nochebuena,
Ay, para Navidad...
Ay, mi Paloma, quebradenita
te vendré a buscar.

Te vendré a buscar
casi al aclarar.
Charangos y guitarras, Paloma,
para festejar.

Una estrella se ha perdido
Ay, para Navidad...
Y en la capilla de la quebrada
Seguro estará.

Seguro estará
para contemplar
ésta nuestra alegría, Paloma,
de la Navidad...

NOCHES DE LUNA

Vidala is a Mestizo song. Generally it has an epic character, telling the most important events of the year in a community. But it can also be a love song expressing subtle emotions. It is usually performed by a singer, accompanying himself with a caja, and a chorus answering after every copla with a refrain.

Your eyes are telling me
That you are not mine.
All the colors of the trail
Are dying in my soul.

On this trail, only companion
In my loneliness,
I am carrying my dreams;
Lost in my own darkness.

Moonlit night,
distance and love
have become 'vidalas'
that I sing for you.

Tus ojos me están diciendo
"ya tengo dueño."
Todo el verde del camino
en mi alma se va muriendo.

En la senda compañera
de mi soledad,
llevo en pedazos mis sueños
perdidos en mi oscuridad.

Noches de luna,
distancia y amor,
se han hecho vidalas
pa' cantarte a vos..
Te lleva mi canto,
vas con mi dolor.

Aunque al paso mi caballo
vaya subiendo
como agüita de los cerros
desciende mi alma llorando.

Entre las hondas quebradas
me lleva tu amor,
y una tormenta de penas,
errante me aleja de vos.

ANAHI

This is an Indian song. The Guarani are the Indians of Corrientes, Argentina. Referred to are Aguahí, a refreshing drink of water and honey; and Ceibo, the national flower of Argentina which is called in Guaraní language, Anahí.

Anahí...
The suffering harps
Are now crying their cords
Only for you...

Anahí
Do you still remember
Your immense courage,
Queen of the "Guarani?"

Anahí...
Little Indian princess
With a voice so sweet
As the "aguahí".

Anahí... Anahí...
Your race hasn't died;
It lasts in the beauty
Of the red flower that has your name.

Haughty, defending
Your fierce tribe,
You were taken prisoner;
Condemned to death

Your body was lying
 Wrapped by the flames,
 But as it was burning
 Became a red flower....
 The night, merciful,
 Covered your pain,
 And the human soul, astonished,
 Saw your torment,
 That was already blooming "Ceibo".

Anahí...
 Las arpas dolientes
 hoy lloran arpegios
 que son para ti.

Anahí...
 Recuerdas acaso
 tu inmensa bravura,
 Reina Guaraní?

Anahí...
 Indiecita fea
 de la voz tan dulce
 como el aguahí...

Anahí... Anahí...
 Tu raza no ha muerto
 perduran tus fueros
 en la flor rubí.

Defendiendo altiva
 tu indómita tribu
 fuiste prisionera.
 Condenado a muerte
 estaba tu cuerpo
 envuelto en la hoguera.
 Y mientras las llamas
 lo estaban quemando,
 en roja corola
 se fue transformando.
 La noche piadosa
 cubrió tu dolor
 y el alma asombrada
 miró tu martirio
 hecho ceibo en flor...

VAMOS A CHAYAR
 (Let us go to the harvest)

Chaya is the Indian name for Carnival, and also
 for this special type of song composed to be sung
 during the Carnival. The words and melody are
 gay, it has an interesting rhythm, and is usually
 sung with caja (little drum) and guitar. Chicha
 referred to is a highly alcoholic drink made of
 corn.

Bring out your drums, singers,
 The "chaya" is about to arrive.

I'll take you on my horse, if you please,
 And we'll meet it on the way.

If the river is overflowing,
 It's no matter, my darling.

I know it very well, and I don't fear it.
 Let's go and meet the "chaya" on the way.

I have "chicha" in my saddlebag,
 I have wine and wine to celebrate.

Because the "chaya" my darling,
 Lasts very little, it comes and it goes.

It comes and it goes every year...
 Hurrah! The "chaya" is here.

Saquen las cajas cantores
 dicen que la "chaya" ya está por llegar.
 Y enancada en mi caballo
 si querís, vidita, yo te'i de llevar.

Yo te'i de llevar, yo te'i de llevar
 que viva la "chaya, que viva el "pujllay!"

Traigo "chicha" en las alforjas,
 vino y aguardiente para festejar.
 Porque la "chaya", Vidita,
 nos dura poquito, se viene y se va.

Se viene y se va
 al año cabal,
 que viva la "chaya" el pago'i. Pomán!

SIDE II

MUCHO TE QUIERO

This is a bailecito, a dance native to Jujuy, as
 is the carnavalito. It was collected by the dis-
 tinguished composer and musicologist Manuel
 Gómez Carrillo, more than thirty years ago.
 Its theme is highly romantic. Its refrain repeats
 again and again "I love you very much," and the
 'coplas' that even if she does not correspond to
 his great love, he does not complain, and does
 not blame her. He says at the end:

"I hope you will never suffer
 As much as I have suffered for you."

It is a song of the mountain folk.

Cuando sepais que he muerto
 mi Negra, vuela al instante.

Palomitay,
 mucho te quiero,
 Veditay....

A recoger los restos
 mi Negra, del fiel amante.

Palomitay,
mucho te quiero,
Viditay....

Cuando me vaya, no has de llorar.
Ay, de tu Negro, donosa
te has acordar!

Has de penar un día
lo mismo que yo he penado.

Palomitay, etc. etc.

Has de llorar un día
lo mismo que yo he llorado.

Palomitay, etc. etc.

El mal que me haces
lo echo al olvido,
que nunca sufras, Donosa,
lo que he sufrido!

SUBO, SUBO (Bahuala)
(I climb up, I climb up)

The quena referred to in this Indian song, is an
Indian flute usually made from a "condor" leg
bone.

I am going to the high mounts,
To cry alone, far away.

Refrain: Perhaps there I'll get rid
of my sorrow.
I climb up, I climb up...

I play sadly my "quena"
And it cries telling me about you.

Refrain

All the houses remained far behind me.
The clouds are close to me now.

Refrain

Me voy a los cerros altos,
a llorar a solas, lejos.

A ver si se apuna el dolor,
Subo...Subo!...

La "quena" muy triste toco
y me habla llorando de vos.

A ver si se apuna el dolor,
Subo...Subo!...

Los "ranchos" quedaron atras,
Las nubes muy cerca están ya.

A ver si se apuna el dolor,
Subo...Subo!....

TARIPAI-CHA-CUCHARATA (Chacarera)
(Pass me the spoon)

Chacarera is a dance especially cultivated in San-
tiago del Estero, the only province where Quechwa
is still spoken in a few small villages. It is played
by the local trio -- guitar, violin and drum -- and
the guitarist sings while people are dancing. Most
often the words he sings have some humorous al-
lusion to the dancers.

Young lady, I am a poor man;
Do love me and I'll pay you for it.
To-day, I have no money;
When I get some, I'll give it to you.

Give me your hand, little dove,
I want to get on your nest.
As I knew you were alone,
I came to accompany you.

There, on the top of that hill
A parrot was sighing,
And while sighing, it said:
"Will you, please, pass me the spoon?"

.....

Once I fell in love with you,
And your mamma knew it.
But it was because I told her
You were going to marry me.

In the middle of the grove,
Some birds used to sing
Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays,
Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Señorita, yo soy pobre,
pobre pero cariñoso
como hueso'el espinazo
pelaíto pero sabroso.

Señorita, yo soy pobre,
quieramé le pagare;
agora no tengo plata
cuando tenga le dare.

Dame tu mano, Paloma,
quiero subir a tu nido;
sabiendo que estabas sola,
a acompañarte he venido.

En la falda de aquel cerro
suspírala una charata;
y en sus suspiros decía,
"taripai-cha-cucharata."

Andate, papel, volando,
andate donde te mando;
si te miran con desprecio
volvete, papel, llorando.

Una vez que te quisí
y tu mamá lo supió
fue porque yo le dijí
que te casabas con yo.

Arriba de unos árboles
cantaban unos pájaros
Lunes, Martes y Miércoles,
Jueves, Viernes y Sabados

BAILECITO DE PROCESION

The Reza-baile (Ed. -Bailecito (dance)) is the celebration in homage to the Virgin Mary. After prayers, there is dancing and festivities.

People leave the little chapel
-- They are going to the procession--
Banners and rockets in the air,
And the "tom-tom" of the drums.

They carry the virgin
With deep devotion.
The worshippers follow her
With the "tom-tom" of the drums.

Reza-baile, beautiful feast,
I won't miss it..
I will dance the whole night
With the one I know.

My goodness, her eyes,
How beautiful they are!
They burn with their glance
As if they were the sun.

The day will arrive
When everybody will know,
Because I promised her--
I would take her to the altar.

Salen de la capilla
a la procesión,
con banderas y estruendos,
"tum-tum" el bombo.

Con la Virgen a cuestas,
con gran devoción,
detrás los promesantes
"tum-tum" el bombo.

Reza-baile fiesta hermosa
yo no faltaré,
bailaré toda la noche
con la que yo sé.

Añuritay, sus ojos!
Qué alhajitas son!
Queman con sus miradas
cual si fuera el sol.

Y ha de llegar el día
que todos sabrán,
porque le he prometido
llevarla al altar.

SOY LIBRE

This is another Indian Bahuala (song) such as "Subo, Subo", its title meaning "I am free." The Bahuala is the lyric "genre" of the Calchaqui Mountains, Northwest of Argentina. It usually expresses the longing for a lost happiness.

I would like to cross the river
Without even touching the sand.

I am free, I am the master,
I am free to desire.

I'm looking at two dark eyes,
For those dark eyes I shall die.

I am free, etc.

I was told they belong to someone else,
But even so I love them.

I am free, etc.

Quisiera cruzar el río
sin que me sienta la arena.

Soy libre, soy dueño
y puedo querer..

Al Diablo ponerle grillos
y a tu amor una cadena.

Soy libre, etc.

Unos ojos estoy viendo
poresos ojos me muero...

Soy libre, etc.

Me han dicho que tienen dueño
y así con dueño los quiero.

Soy libre, etc.

EL HUMAHUAQUENO

Though it has some European features, they have been fused into the Indian patterns of this carnavalito. This is a Mestizo dance from Jujuy near the boundaries of Bolivia. The words are not of great significance since it is primarily a collective dance. Each couple dances in the center of a circle and improvises figures. The chorus sings different coplas to each couple, and repeats the refrain. The words here are:

Carnival is coming,
We'll have a feast in our village.
The erke, the charango and the
Bombo will sound together
Throughout the mountains,
And we'll dance the whole night long.

The erke is an Indian horn; the charango an Indian guitar; the bombo, the drum that marks the rhythm.

LLegando esta el Carnaval
quebradeño, mi cholita.

Fiesta de la Quebrada Humahuacueña
para cantar...
Erke, charango y bombo
Carnavalito para bailar.

Quebradeño humahuacueñito!
Quebradeno humahuacuenito!

Fiesta de la quebrada humahuacueña
para cantar...
Erke, charango y bombo
Carnavalito para bailar.

PALA-PALA

"Pala-pala" is the Quechwa Indian name of the raven. This dance is one of the few totemic traces in Argentine folk-lore. The dancers wear a "poncho" over their shoulders, and while dancing they imitate the raven in flight. Meanwhile the chorus accompanies the dancers, singing these verses, almost impossible to translate because they are bilingual, half Spanish and half Quechwa. The general sense of it is the description of a feast in the woods, attended by several animals, such as toads, turtles, iguanas, alligators, ravens etc. Each animal participates. Some play instruments, others are entertainers.

Pala-pala pulpero (3)
Chunã soltero (2)

Ampatu cajonero (3)
Utu guitarrero (2)

Icacu tacanero (3)
Hualu flautero (2)

Caray-puca tucumano (3)
Huiñi salteno (2)

Lara-lara-raí la-ra
Lara-raí-lara-la-rarái-lara

LA LOCA (The crazy one)

This is another Chacarera (dance).

I fought an old woman,
Because of her daughter.
She seized a broom,
I seized an ax.

What a devilish woman!
She hit me with the broom.

An old woman riding a burro
Running after a toad
Lost her snuffbox
Full of tobacco.

What a foolish woman!
She found her snuffbox
But she lost her saddlebag.

Pelié con una vieja
Por la muchacha.

Ella agarró la escoba
yo agarré el hacha.

Qué vieja pillá!
Me hizo andar con la escoba
Por las costillas.

Una vieja en un burro
corriendo un sapo,

perdió su tabaquera
llena'i tabaco.

Qué vieja sonsa!
Halló la tabaquera
y perdió la alforja..