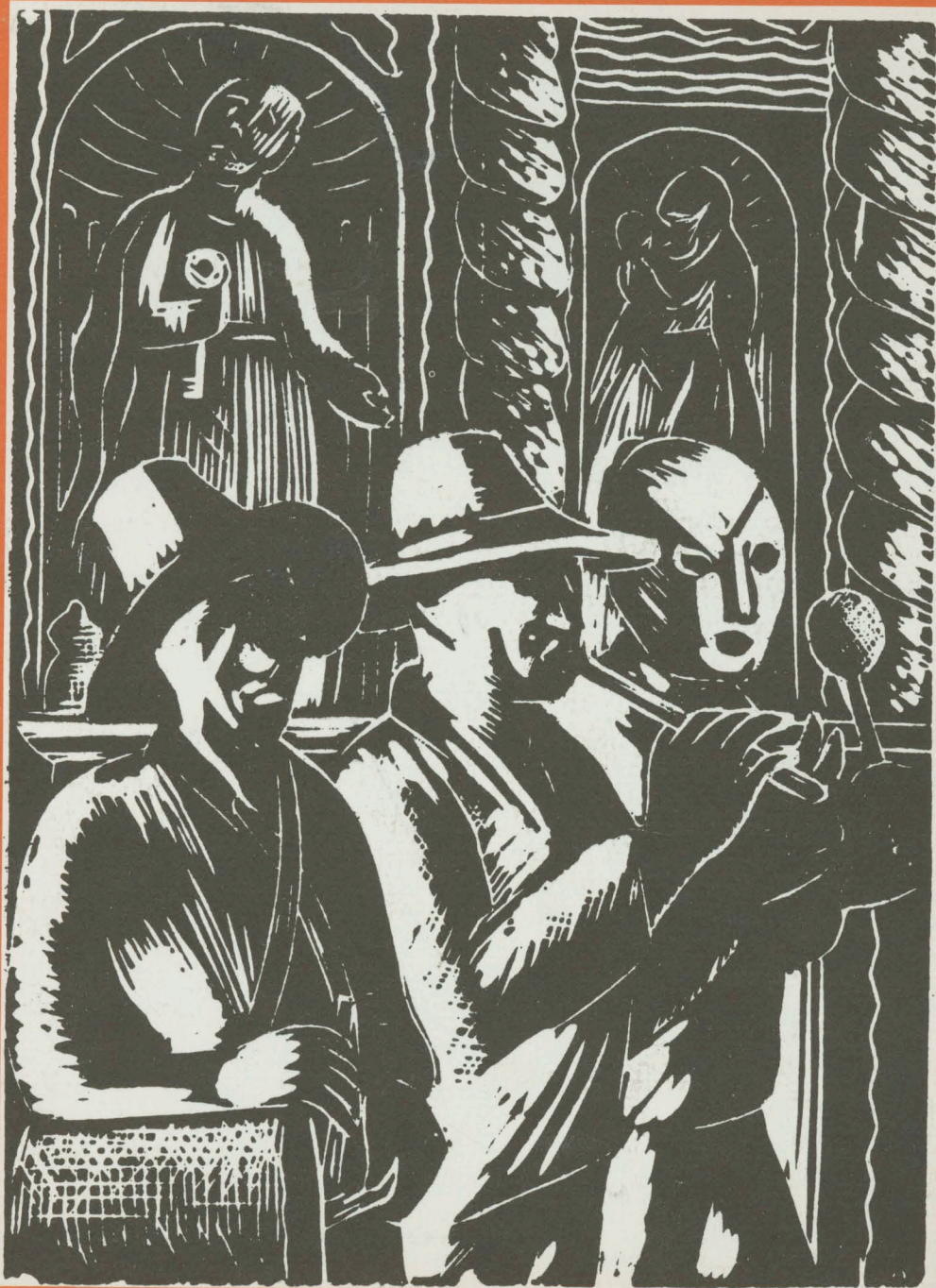


# SONGS & DANCES of HONDURAS



M  
1684  
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1955

WAYS RECORDS  
SERVICE CORP., N.Y.

MUSIC LP

LOS INDITOS (The Little Indians)  
FANDANGO  
SOS UN ANGEL (You Are An Angel)  
MI VIDA (My Life)

CORRIDO A HONDURAS  
(Ballad to Honduras)  
EL BANANERO (The Banana Vendor)  
RIO LINDO (Beautiful River)  
EL SIQUE  
CANCION DE CUNA (Lullaby)

# SONGS & DANCES of HONDURAS



## INTRODUCTION and NOTES by Doris Stone

The golden age of Spain was an era of romance: epic poetry to tell of great deeds; ornate and inspired church art to carry the spirits and emotions of man to the margin of the world ever-after, away from the exacting tools of human living; and with it all, the magic glory of fifteenth and sixteenth century discoveries and conquests in unknown horizons. The story of Spanish America is not surprising when we remember this, its European heritage.

There was no reason why Spain, whose king was at the same time the Holy Roman Emperor, should sit while rival England took advantage of the new-found land. The territory was large. It had to be governed and

defended from the English crown. And in an effort to do this more efficiently, the King-Emperor took part of the Vice-royalty of Mexico and created the Captaincy-General of Guatemala.

The Captaincy-General of Guatemala extended from Chiapas to Panama. But the most sought-after section was not the capital, Guatemala, neither the agricultural lands of Nicaragua or El Salvador, nor the un-explored Costa Rica. It was the gold-filled veins of the mountains of Honduras. Here was the focus for men of courage, or wealth, as well as the soldier of fortune.

The gold overlaid the carved altars of the churches; framed the sacred pictures of the saints; made chalices, rosaries, and necklaces for the Blessed Virgin. The gold paid the craftsman who welded the delicate grill-work of the colonists' homes; paid the poet

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for his song, and the musicians for the music to which the people danced.

In fact, the people often danced and played themselves without the pay of gold. Andalusian blood, so quick with a song, formed part of their heritage, and the blood of South and Central American tribes mixed with that of Mayan and Mexican people formed the other portion. Honduras was a meeting ground of nations from its earliest pre-Colombian days.

Colonial Honduras played an important role in the development of Central American culture. And culture is the part of the world that is made by man. Folklore is a close relation of culture. It is the popular lore that makes the fundamental over-all picture of each group of men and includes both reference to the past and the present. Folklore is found most frequently in the rural districts where survivals of mind and custom blend with actual living and no dominant environment controls the deeds and thoughts of men. It is because of this that much of the music and songs presented in this album are from outlying sections, although there are certain universal themes such as the lullaby which are as prevalent in the town as in the country.

Music by contemporaries is also included. It offers an indication of the trend that dominates the cultural and material pattern of the country and helps make up the background of the Honduras of today.

Instruments.- Most popular folk music of Honduras is played with guitars, both the regular six-string and a smaller or three-string guitar known in Spanish as the "tiple," and the violin which is rarely held in the normal manner but at the chest. In the urban sections, however, and near the Guatemalan border, the marimba is next in importance to the six-string guitar. The maraca, which dates from pre-Colombian times and is a pebble or seed-filled gourd fastened to a stick, is also used in the urban districts. With the exception of the marimba, which more often than not is brought from Guatemala, these instruments are usually home-made. Harmonicas and the accordion are fast growing in popularity. The appearance of this last being dependent on the size of one's purse.

The marimba in itself bears a brief description. It was brought to this hemisphere from Africa by negro slaves, but was quick to be adopted by the Maya and some of the Mexican tribes, perhaps because the method of playing resembled the Aztec teponaztli and the Maya tunkul. A good marimba is made of wood without metal and is usually between six and eight feet long. The one recorded here is played by eight men. The musicians stand and beat the keys with a crude rubber ball attached to sticks. As many as three or four sticks can be used by a player at one time. A rapid wrist movement is necessary to produce the treble tones.

The marimba is tuned three semitones below ordinary pitch. The musical scale is achieved by two rows

of graduated slats held together by a cord. The strips of the bass tones are thicker than those of the treble. The back row is the highest and forms the sharps and flats. There are forty-five full tones and thirty half ones with a compass of five octaves. Under each set of keys there is a sounding board similar to an organ pipe and covered at the bottom with bladder fastened with wax. This is responsible for the buzzing sound of the marimba which makes it difficult to record. When the key-strip is hit the vibrations are transmitted to the bladder which vibrates simultaneously.

## POPULAR MUSIC

### Spanish-Colonial

The majority of the popular dances seen in the far countryside have roots in the Spanish colonial era, or more explicitly from the seventeenth through the eighteenth centuries. There is one important detail to remember in connection with this. They developed and reached their height at the time when the normal association of young people with one another was socially tabu. What with chaperones or the family itself, a couple had no chance to court beyond an occasional serenade or stolen flicker of the eye. The only manner to hold hands or to whisper endearing words was during the dance. Here forbidden notes were passed, promises made, and the man could even put an arm around his sweetheart's waist in the newly won freedom of dancing in couples instead of apart. Most of the Colonial pieces are accompanied by the tiple or by the true guitar and the violin. They are danced in the homes of the rural farmer on saints' days and other festive occasions. Many of them are still wide-spread over Latin America, but a few have a very limited distribution. Two of these dances are given in this album; the "quisique" or "sique" and the "fandango." The "destro," the "danza" and the "zapateado" are others belonging to the same general group.

The Quisique or Sique.- The most typical folk dance of Honduras is the "sique," a name that has evolved from the longer and older "quisique." It is vaguely reminiscent of the jota and even of a fast waltz. In fact, the beginning of the sique is a jota as far as the rhythm and tempo are concerned. The timing is the same in the second part but the rhythm is similar to that of a waltz. There is no question, however, that its distinct characteristics have developed locally, and the sique has become in its own right the most popular dance of the people of Honduras. In the remote countryside, the sique is danced in unison by couples and is marked by a pronounced shuffling of the feet. In the urban districts, however, a more sophisticated form has developed. Here the couples separate at intervals and carry out individual steps as well as clap their hands in time to the music. This version has undoubtedly been influenced by Mexican folk dances.

The Fandango. - Perhaps the most scandalous dance at the time of its first appearance in America, which took place around the end of the seventeenth century, was the fandango. In Spain, the home of its origin, the fandango was a courtship dance which developed from the Gypsies. The church took a violent stand against it in South America to such a point that in 1745 the archbishop of Buenos Aires condemned the dance, and it was denounced all over the southern continent as voluptuous and bestial. This reaction was not, apparently, too far-reaching for today the fandango is still a favorite in parts of Colombia, Venezuela, and in the country regions of Honduras where it has retained more of its early form. Needless to say, it cannot be judged as obscene or even risqué by the concepts of this century.

The Corrido. - The corrido is an American version of the Spanish fifteenth and sixteenth century ballads. They are similar to the United States barroom or popular ballad and cover a wide variety of themes ranging from the legendary to national or everyday events. The music of the corrido is an accompaniment serving only as a background or stress for the text. Consequently each stanza, which is composed of four

eight-syllable lines, has the same music.

The Rumba. - The origin of the rumba is Afro-Cuban. Technically it is the complete opposite of the corrido. The words take a minor part and have little or no meaning. Better said, they are used for sound and the emphasis is placed entirely on the eight-measure rhythm. In Honduras, the rumba is heard in urban, especially port, localities and over the radio. It is danced only in ball rooms or cafes and is never seen in the interior countryside. The movement is confined in particular to the body, the feet taking a minor or accompanying part.

The Waltz. - The waltz is a favorite dance throughout Honduras and there are several local derivations in the tempo. The one presented here is in the regular three-quarter time. In the rural areas, the dance is performed with wide hopping steps, while in the cities and towns both the swinging, gliding court form of Vienna and the modern ballroom manner are seen.

The Lullaby. - The lullaby is universal. In Honduras, the Spanish-Colonial ones are perhaps those remembered first and sung with most tenderness.

#### Recordings

SIDE I, BAND 1: LOS INDITOS (The Little Indians). - This sique was recorded at an hacienda in the department of Choluteca during a cattle round-up and amateur bull fights. The instruments heard are the marimba and accordion.

BAND 2: SOIS UN ANGEL (You are an Angel). - Sique. Recorded in the Yeguaré Valley, Tegucigalpa, Instruments: marimba and accordion. This sique originated in the department of Olancho, but the version heard here has been adopted by Doña Paca Navas de Miralda of La Ceiba. In grammatical Spanish the first word in the title would be "Sois" but the country people use the form "Sos." Siques like this are danced as any modern ballroom dance.

BAND 3: MI VIDA (My Life). - Waltz. Recorded in the Yeguaré Valley, Tegucigalpa. Instruments: marimba.

BAND 4: FANDANGO. - Recorded at Cacactare in the department of Valle at a dance in the village square. Instruments: guitars, both tiple and six-string, and violins.

SIDE II, BAND 1: CORRIDO A HONDURAS (Ballad to Honduras). - Recorded in the Yeguaré Valley, Tegucigalpa. Instrument: guitar. Written by Antonio Giron.

Que lindo nombre, señores  
El d'este Honduras sin igual  
Ella es mi patria querida  
Y tambien fue de Morazán.

Tiene su Virgen morena  
La cual venimos todos a adorar  
Por eso quiero que sepan  
Que aqui también sabemos cantar.

What a beautiful name, sirs,  
That of this Honduras without equal  
She is my beloved country  
And also was Morazan's. (1)

She has her dark Virgin (2)  
Whom we all come to worship  
Therefore, I want it known  
That here we also know how to sing.

Ay! Qué orgullo tengo yo  
de haber nacido aquí en esta tierra linda,  
Y por ella moriré si me toca pelear  
Yo siempre triunfaré.

Tiene sus bellas ciudades,  
en principal su capital,  
Ella que está bien guardada  
por nuestros cerros sin igual.

Tiene bandera y escudo,  
Un corazón que sabe amar  
a toditito sus hijos  
qu'ellos por ella velarán (3)

Ay! Qué orgullo tengo yo  
de haber nacido aquí en esta tierra linda  
Y por ella moriré si me toca pelear  
Yo siempre triunfare.

Oh! How proud I am  
to have been born here in this beautiful land,  
And for her I will die if I must fight  
I shall always triumph.

She has her beautiful cities,  
in particular her capital,  
which is well protected  
by our peerless mountains.

She has a flag and escutcheon,  
A heart that knows how to love  
everyone of her sons  
who will keep vigil for her.

Oh! How proud I am  
to have been born here in this beautiful land,  
And for her I will die if I must fight  
I shall always triumph.

- (1) Morazán is the national hero of Honduras. He fought for and was president of the Federation of Central American States. He was killed in Costa Rica in 1842.
- (2) The Virgin of Suyapa is one of the two great miracle Virgins of Central America. She is brown of skin and is the patroness of Honduras.
- (3) In singing, "que ellos" is contracted so that it sounds like "yo." This is especially true as it is not sung by a professional singer.

BAND 2: EL BANANERO (The Banana Vendor). \_ Rumba. Recorded in the Yeguaré Valley, Tegucigalpa. Instruments: guitar and maracas. This was written by Lydia Handal. It deals with a banana vendor taking his produce from the farm to the town to sell.

BAND 3: RIO LINDO (Beautiful River). \_ Corrido. Recorded in the Yeguaré Valley, Tegucigalpa. Instrument: guitar. Written by Antonio Castro. The theme of this corrido is centered around the Lindo river in northwestern Honduras. This river has long been noted for its beauty. It is a tributary of the Ulua river and its waters come partly from Lake Yojoa, the only lake in Honduras.

Río Lindo tus aguas de plata  
Modulando un canto corres hacia  
Sobre el pentagrama de tu catarata  
Tus ondas parecen hondo suspirar

Va callendo cual gota divina  
Entre tus espumas como sonatinas  
que en dulca concierto  
ríman su cantar.

Sonora producen languidos acento (s)  
Y que se confunden en ala de viento  
a otro lugar.

Río Lindo (Beautiful River) your silver waters  
Modulating a song run toward the sea  
On the musical staff of your cascade  
Your ripples seem to sigh deeply.

Each divine drop goes falling  
Among your froth as sonates  
which in sweet concert  
rhyme your song.

Sonorous they produce languid accents  
And which they mix on the wing of the wind  
to another place.

En tu grada de cristal de belleza  
sin igual inspirado está me canto  
Ve (n) tus cuencas el ensueño  
se ha formado éste pequeño  
manatíal de nuestro encanto

Río Lindo tus olas semejan  
un avispa vibrante en cada ondulación,  
Que van murmurando canciones  
que dejan caricias de ensueños en el corazón.

Quisiera en tus aguas dejar yo mis penas  
Entre ese divino canto de sirenas  
Que forman tus ondas con leve murmur  
Ya que estoy sufriendo tan sólo a tu lado  
Podría olvidar olvidando el pasado  
Alunde la sombra que cubre mi amor.

Río Lindo en tu rível  
Crecen las enredaderas  
Versan tus aguas las flores  
Todo en esta tu naturaleza  
encendida en tu belleza con tus mágicos colores.

On your crystal steps of beauty  
inspired without peer is my song  
Your banks see the vision  
this small spring of our delight  
has formed.

Río Lindo your waves are like  
a vibrant wasp in each ondulation,  
that go murmuring songs  
which leave caresses of delight in the heart.

I would like to leave my troubles in your waters  
Among this divine song of sirens  
which forms your waves with light murmur  
Now that I am suffering all alone at your side  
I could forget forgetting the past  
Alluding the shadow that hides my love.

Río Lindo on your banks  
Grow the vines  
The flowers going around your waters  
All in this your nature  
burning in your beauty with your magic colors.

BAND 4: CANCION DE CUNA. - (Lullaby) Recorded at  
Tegucigalpa. Instrument: guitar. Sung by Adlofina  
Mejia. The cradle song heard here dates from Spanish  
colonial times and is sung throughout Central America,  
but in particular in Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa  
Rica. The words are an interesting combination of  
religious and "gendre" or daily motives typical of the  
Spanish colonial era.

Dormite niñoito  
que tengo que hacer  
lavar tus panales;  
sentarme a coser.

Dormite niñoito,  
cabeza de ayote,  
si no te dormis,  
te come el coyote.

La Virgen lavaba,  
San José tendía,  
El Niño lloraba  
del frío que hacía.

Arrú arrurru  
Arrú arrurru  
Arrú arrurru  
Arrurru rrrurru rru

Señora Santa Ana  
de que llora el Niño?  
de uan manzana  
que se le ha perdido.

Sleep little one  
I have something to do  
wash your diddies;  
sit me down to sew.

Sleep little one,  
pumpkin head  
if you don't sleep,  
the coyote (will) eat you.

The Virgin washed,  
St. Joseph spread out (the clothes),  
The Christ Child cried  
from the cold.

Bye-bye, bye-bye  
Bye-bye, bye-bye  
Bye-bye, bye-bye  
Bye-bye aye aye aye aye

Lady St. Anne  
Why does the Christ Child cry?  
For an apple  
that he has lost.

Manzanita de oro  
aparece luego  
para que el Niño  
deje de llorar.

Venite a me casa  
Allí tengo dos  
Una para el Niño  
Y otra para vos.

Arrú arrurru  
Arrú arrurru  
Arrú arrurru  
Arrurru rruurru rru.



Little apple of gold  
appear soon  
so that the Christ Child  
may stop crying.

Come to my house  
There I have two,  
One for the Christ Child  
And another for you.

Bye-bye, bye-bye  
Bye-bye, bye-bye  
Bye-bye, bye-bye  
Bye-bye aye aye aye aye.



Woodcut: (cover) Francisco Ameghetti

Recordings: Peter K. Smith

Photographs: Thomas W. Willard