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SONGS & DANCES OF BRAZIL



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by Oneyda Alvarenga

CHORO A TEMPO DE SAMBA
EMBOLADAPENA VERDE
EMBOLADAEMBOLADA
CHORO A TEMPO DE SAMBAMARCHA DE RANCHO
SAMBA URBANO

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BRAZIL

"FOLK AND POPULAR MUSIC"

By Oneyda Alvarenga

FOLK MUSIC is that music which is used anonymously and collectively by the unlettered classes of civilized nations and either originates from these, also anonymously and collectively, or from the adoption and modification of popular or cultured works whose vitality is exhausted in the medium in which they originated.

This music derives from very simple formative technical processes, which are not conditioned by any theorizing. It is transmitted by means of practical and oral channels. Its growth and life are intrinsically linked to social activities and interests. It is conditioned by the deepest and most general trends of the collective sensitiveness, intelligence and temperament which give it a high degree of national connotations. It possesses the power to vary, transform, and substitute accepted or created works and it also has the strong tendency of adjusting these works to the continuous formative processes apt to give its structure a character of its own to establish its relative stability.

POPULAR MUSIC is the music which having been composed by a known author becomes popular and is used, more or less widely, by all strata of a collectivity. This music employs the simplest or even rudimentary means of musical theory and technique. It is transmitted through conventionally theoretic or technico-scientific processes of intensive diffusion, that is to say, musical notation and printing, recording and radio diffusion. Its birth, spreading and use are conditioned by both national and international fashion. Because of this a higher degree of permeability and mobility is found in it than in folk or cultured music (these qualities leaving it open to the most various influences) as well as a certain basic quality in accordance with the most spontaneous, deepest and characteristic musical trends of the collectivity which make it capable of virtually becoming folk music.

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

The music was recorded at Mar Grande in Itaparica, which is the largest island in the bay of Salvador. Its southeastern coast stretches from the city of Itaparica, the seat of the municipio (county seat) to Caixa Prego at the southeastern end of the island.

Itaparica is located at the northern tip, well inside the bay. The villages of Ponta d'Areia, Amoreira, São João, Manguinho, Porto do Santo, Bom Despacho, Buraco do Boi, Mar Grande all face the state capital; of these, Mar Grande with 1,250 inhabitants and Itaparica with 950 are the most important. After Mar Grande the island bends southwest into the open sea, and the scattered villages, past Barra Grande, are more and more tied up with the southern cities of the bay. The part of the coast facing Salvador maintains daily contacts with the state capital by means of sailing boats (saveiros); contacts between the villages are also easily maintained, for they are at walking distance from each other, the beach providing an easy road. Trade, work and social occasions indicate continuance of close ties. Fishing, farming (mainly mandioca) and trading with the bay are the main sources of income. Mar Grande and Itaparica, which are considered summer resorts, offer during the holidays, additional if sporadic work.

The songs recorded have a purely recreational character, that is to say, they are played after work in informal social gatherings. The instruments used during the recording were the cavaquinho (a four stringed lute played with hand, smaller than the guitar, of European origin - Portugal - with the intonation D-G-B-D); the pandeiro (tambourine), and the violão (guitar).

Before describing in detail the music recorded it seems necessary to make a brief sketch of the relationship between folk music and popular music in Brazil. The definition given by Senhora Oneyda Alvarenga, one of the outstanding scholars in the field, of these two types of music, precedes this.

According to what the experts say, it is almost impossible nowadays to find in Brazil any form of folk music either musically or literarily pure owing to the great amount of borrowing between this and popular music. Music, for example, which was originally played only during candomblé rituals is now part of the musical popular patrimony. An example of this is 'Pena Verde' (Side I, Band 3) which has definite ritualistic connotations but has become popular and is on the market as 'macumba' music. On the other hand, in the candomblé de caboclo (the most 'impure' form of the original African ritual), along with the traditional music, also non-ritualistic music is played. In one instance, during a candomblé ritual I heard the song which begins with the words 'Aqui nesta casa não vejo duelo' (Side 2, Band 1).

Moreover local composers of popular music borrowed from folk music and elaborated the melodic structure and the rhythm to suit fashion and popular tastes. For example, when the picture 'O Cangaceiro' appeared a local composer of popular music claimed the authorship of 'Ole mulher rendeira' and filed a claim against the supposed author. It seems though, that three versions of this song had been transcribed as far back as 1928, some twenty years before the film was made, by Mario de Andrade, one of the outstanding literary figures of Brazil. The above applies also to musical forms. These are rarely pure as far as the melodic or rhythmic structure is concerned.

In other words there has been a steady intermingling and borrowing between folk music and popular music, so that it is practically impossible to be sure whether any given music is absolutely original, either musically or literarily. In consequence, the music recorded may be interesting as an example of musical syncretism.

As regards the literary forms, although these too have been modified, they have a tendency to remain more constant. We have not attempted to make a translation of the text. We have merely tried to relate as far as possible the story they tell and this because of the following reasons. First, in many cases the words have no meaning for they have been chosen according to their phonetic value; secondly, it is difficult at times to understand the singer's pronunciation and the jargon common to their class; thirdly, since the recording was done during a social gathering (and an informal one indeed), the abundant libations did not help at all to clarify the already blurred diction of the singers.

From 'Musica Popular Brasileira' by Oneyda Alvarenga (Ed. Globo - Porto Alegre - 1950) describing the musical forms recorded:

"CHORO - In its widest meaning the Choro is an instrumental urban band, with a soloist and a group of accompanying instruments. It is also called 'chorinho'... "The dominating instruments, whether or not there is a soloist, are woodwind instruments (flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone) guitars and cavaquinhos. Apart from being a concert ensemble, the choro plays at dances and is employed as an accompaniment for urban vocal music. This type of band, characteristic for its treatment of the European instruments used and for the extremely interesting contrapuntistic employment of instruments in general, 'dates back to the last days of the Empire and to the starting days of the Republic (Mario de Andrade)'. The music composed for this type of band is also called choro. It preferably adopts the forms of national waltz and, as regards rhythm, the forms nearest to maxixe and samba.

Exclusively instrumental up to a few years ago, the choro has recently begun to adopt vocal pieces connected with samba, characterised by a leaping melodic line in which the voice is practically a substitute for the soloist woodwind instrument. These vocal choros preferably retain the form of instrumental choro... "Moreover they also adopt the cut in strophe and refrain borrowed from urban samba, and in this case they are called 'samba-choro' (p. 299).

"EMBOLADA - "The embolada originated in the north-east of Brazil where it is much used all along the coast and less in the interior. It has the following characteristics: declamatory melody, a quick movement and small intervals; the text is usually comic, satirical or descriptive; it may also be made up of a succession of words linked merely by their phonetic value. In the last two cases the text is often full of alliterations and onomatopoeic words of difficult pronunciation; this is increased by the rapidity of the musical movement. For the poetic structure verses of seven or five syllables are used. In the first instance, which is the most used, the strophes are quatrains and octaves; the verses, respectively 1st and 1st/5th, have four syllables.

Although it lives an independent life, the embolada is more of a poetic-musical method than a specific form or genre. In the first case it is found in various dances, for instance in the Cocos, which, as those called Cocos de embolada, are in two parts, one lyrical and rapid (with a refrain sung by the chorus), and the other, the soloist strophe, with a declamatory precipitate rhythm and a melodic line in small intervals. Gustavo Barroso, moreover, maintains that it is just in the Cocos that the most celebrated emboladas are sung. At first the embolada was only known in the country; however, it spread rapidly in the urban zones and became a part of the repertoire of radio and record singers. Owing to this transference it became even more verbally complicated and rapid since its urban edition lost the lyrical elements by which it was originally characterised in the northeastern rural zones" (p. 278).

"MARCHA - The majority of carnival music is in the rhythm of marchas and marchinhas... "Although their melodic line makes them different from the marches of other countries, our marchas and marchinhas do not usually provide any interesting musical feature. At times, something interesting appears... but almost always this happens in the group of the so called 'marchas de rancho', which have a less lively rhythm and a freer and richer melody." (p. 299/300). "The first carnival march of great success was 'O abre alas' (Open your wings) by Chiquinha Gonzaga, composed in 1897 or 1899 for the negro carnival group of dancers 'Rosa de Ouro' (Golden Rose). However, it seems that this type of song won definite popularity about 1922 due to the appearance in Brazil of North American rhythms such as the One-step, first, and Rag-time, afterwards. Before our march became popular the Rag-time was danced on social occasions with the same choreography the marcha has nowadays; also many Brazilian one-steps (generically and erroneously called here rag-time) were printed in the same period. It is worth of mention the case of 'O minha Carabu', which Renato de Almeida lists among the old carnival music, at the time when the present forms has not yet appeared. This in fact, is the north American one-step 'Caraboo' which, after the translation of the text, became extremely popular in Brazil. (p. 300)."

"SAMBA - Among the dances which are specifically called 'samba', the best known are those of Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In Rio de Janeiro the samba retains its original forms of 'danca de roda' (dance in a circle) among the poor people who live in the hills

which surround the city. The samba 'carioca' derives from this 'samba dos morros' (samba of the hills) which eventually became popular all over Brazil. (p. 133)" "The carioca urban samba ... has two more or less distinct forms. One of them is the samba danced in the hills (p. 293). " "There (in the hills) flourish the 'escolas de samba' (schools of samba) ... which are societies of dancers; their activity is exclusively devoted to the arrangement of public carnival parades. They have a director who teaches and directs dancing and singing... (p. 293). " "On the musical forms of this type of samba the following information is available: Renato de Almeida maintains that it is made up of one musical strophe only, sung by the director or by the men and repeated by the chorus as a poetic refrain; this is the form which was said to be, by the great composer of sambas Noel Rosa, '... a samba made according to the rules, without introduction and without a second part'. The soloist poetic strophe is 'often improvised' and 'frequently sung in a different tonality from that of the chorus'. According to Egidio de Castro, however, .. this form of samba is made of two parts; the choral one ... is composed in advance and is to be sung by an homogenous and practised ensemble; the soloist one ... is improvised, and is substituted during rehearsals by another improvisation ... the singers improvising may at times use a different tonality for their solos, but they always revert to the tonality used by the chorus ... The samba begins with the refrain and then goes on according to the chorus-solo pattern. The entrance of the chorus is preceded by an instrumental introduction by two guitars, a cavaquinho and a tambourine. The accompaniment to the singers is made by one big and one small tambour, by a tambourine and by a cuica ... The improvised soloist strophe (accompanied by the choral fixed refrain) and the chorus solo form are structurally of African origin and are now common to AfroBrazilian music (p. 293/294). " "When the samba born in the hills was adopted in town ... another version originated (p. 297)" "In this already urban version the samba carioca may be considered as deriving from maxixe, which substituted (p. 297)". "This version has now become the chief and most characteristic kind of Brazilian social dance (p.298)" "It has a strophe and a refrain which are preceded by a brief instrumental introduction. The accompaniment is made by guitars and percussive instruments, or by choro ensembles (p. 298). "

SIDE I

- Band 1 - Choro a tempo de samba (choro with rhythm of samba) Instruments only.
- Band 2 - Embolada
The form is pure because it has a refrain which might be taken up by the chorus. The soloist strophe is a sort of rigmarole or tongue twister without any meaning. Most of the words are chosen according to their phonetic value.
- Band 3 - Rhythm of samba - It is on the market with the name of 'Pena Verde'. It is by J. B. de Carvalho, a composer of popular music. The song has definite ritualistic connotations; it was originally only sung in the 'candomble de caboclo'. (Todamerica TA-5. 277-B)

- Band 4 - Embolada
The form is not pure because there is no refrain. The rhythm is orthodox.
- Band 5 - Embolada
Not pure in form (no refrain) but pure in rhythm. The instrumental introduction has a samba rhythm.
- Band 6 - Choro a tempo de samba (choro with rhythm of samba). Instruments only. Some of the musical phrases are clearly borrowed from known authors.
- Band 7 - Marcha de rancho
It may also be called 'marcha larga' (slow marcha).

SIDE II

- Band 1 - Samba urbano
It begins as a samba, continues as a choro,

SIDE 1

- Band 1 - Instruments only.

Band 2 -

Ó embolé embolée, ó embolé embolá refrain

Embola pai, embola mai, embola filha rigmarole
Eu tambem sou da familia
Eu tambem quero embolá

Cinco filipa, cinco pipa rigmarole
cinco ripa, bota pipa
dentro o piri
para o pipa não pinga

Ó embolé embolée, ó embolé embolá refrain

and the words are in the style of the embolada. I heard it, only once, during a candomble de caboclo at the entrance of the 'eres' (infantile spirits which appear towards the end of the ritual).

- Band 2 - Tempo de samba (rhythm of samba).
- Band 3 - Embolada
The form is pure because there is a refrain. Same soloist strophe as side 1 band 2 (cinco filipa etc).
- Band 4 - Dance with tambourines.
- Band 5 - Embolada
Typical because of the refrain.
- Band 6 - Tempo de samba
Rhythm of samba, words of embolada. The music is that of side 2 band 5. To this the singer adapted for the recording words in the style of embolada trying to imitate the Forró de Mané Vito.
- Band 7 - Movimento de marcha (Rhythm of march).

Band 8 - Choro a tempo de samba (Choro with rhythm of samba). In this too some musical phrases have been borrowed from famous authors.

Ali Baba tem um filho que sta homem
'sta virando lobishomem
para pudé me pegá
(repeats)

Ali Baba has a son who is already a man, this son is turning into a werewolf to catch me.

Band 3 - Pena Verde

Band 4 -

No meu ranchinho
tem pra mais de vinte vacas
amarradas na estaca
so se solta de manhã
esta estaca tem um nome bem empregado
e o bezerro abestalhado
começou a mamar
este bezerro so qué tomá mama de tardinha
na hora que manha ele vai se viciar
a boca dele ja esta (... ?)
com beço de pendurado
com o vicio de mamá.
Ha pouco tempo deu-se um caso estranho
e eu com certeza vou lhe contar como foi:
o bezerro se enganou com a estaca
envez de mamá na vaca
foi mamá no boi
(repeats)

Band 5 -

E foi a vaca no corral
e o bezerro que mamá
no meu ranchinho tem pra mais de vinte vacas
amarradas na estaca
so se solta de manhã
esta estaca tem um nome bem empregado
e o bezerro abestalhado
pegou a mamá

Este bezerro so berra de tardinha
que na hora que manha ele vai se viciar
a boca dele ja esta (... ?)
com beco de pendurado
com o vicio de mamá.

Há pouco tempo o bezerro entristeceu
não queria nem a pila e chegou a emagrecer
e ia ficando com a costela de fora
o seu dono toda hora
que o garoto ia morré

Passando o tempo neste caso estranho
eu digo com certeza
vou contar mais como foi :
este bezerro ficando com a vacas
ia mamá nas vacas
e não ia mamá no boi.

Qual é o nome do homem ? Manoel Bahiano!
e o nome da mulher ? Maria Jacaré!
(repeats)

In my little ranch there are more than twenty cows which spend the night in their corral being freed only early in the morning. With them is a foolish and greedy calf. One day something peculiar happened and I am going to tell you what it was. One evening the calf entered the wrong corral and instead of feeding from one of the cows he fed from the bull.

When the cow entered the corral the calf wanted to be fed. In my little ranch I have more than twenty cows which spend the night in their corral being freed only early in the morning. With them is a calf which not so long ago, began to show his ribs so thin had he become. His owner kept saying that his calf was going to die. But I shall tell you what happened: the calf staying with the cows fed from them and not from the bull. Having thus answered to the first singer, the second one begins a rigmarole.

Ai em casa (... ?) a jurema preta
o marido e a mulher levando sua borboleta,
em cima do menino levando sua espoletz,
em cima do doutor lendo a sua gazeta,
em cima do major segurando a mão direita,
em cima do capitão tocando a sua corneta,
em cima do (... ?) jurema preta
deu um tapa cachaceiro que foi o fim do mundo,
deu um tapa na mulher (... ?) borboleta,
deu um tustão ao menino levando a espoleta,
deu um purrão no major segurando a mão direita
deu um tiro no tenente levando sua corneta
(... ?) jurema preta
em baixo do fogão so tem Maria Preta
botou fogo no menino (... ?)

iaia iaia iaia
tira o seu bode (?) que ha mais de quintá. (repeats)

Band 6 - Instruments only.

Band 7 -

O meu balão cor de malta
subiu e ninguem pegou
subiu, subiu, subiu e ninguem passou (repeats).
Na terra eu vou rezar
meu padroeiro vou me entregar
ofereço ao meu São João
que me afete o meu mesmo balão, meu balão.
(repeats).

SIDE II

Band 1 -

Aqui nesta casa
não vejo um duelo
que bata o martelo
do jeito qu'eu quero
pra eu vadeá.

E beira do rio,
e beira do mar (repeats).

Band 2 -

Respondeu o fazendeiro
vou mandar anunciar

(... ?) fazenda este touro pegar.
Quando eu quis namorar pense bem no seu futuro
cuidado com o pé de muro
prá não se desgraçar

iaia iaia iaia, para não se desgraçar (repeats)

De toda parte do mundo
via-se chegar vaqueiros
prá pegar aquele boi
ser um grande aventureiro

iaia iaia iaia, ser um grande aventureiro
(repeats).

iaia iaia iaia, prá ganhar o seu dinheiro

De toda parte do mundo
via-se chegar vaqueiros
de Piaí do Norte
Maranhão e o Cocqueiro
Aqui vou dar a nome de todo
prá pagar o meu dinheiro

On the day of São João it is a Brazilian tradition to
fly fire-balloons. The singer tells how his balloon
flew higher than any other and that he prays to São João
to look after it.

SIDE II

Band 1 -

The meaning is obscure.

Band 2 -

A fazendeiro offers a reward for somebody to catch
a bull. A list follows of people who came to tame the
bull in order to become rich and famous.

Refrain

iaia iaia iaia, pra pagar o meu dinheiro

Veio (... ?) Grande, Chico Preto
e Barriguinha, Manoel Chapeu de Couro
Chico Preto que ainda vinha
Manoel do Pau caído da fazenda de Lapinha (repeats).

Band 3 -

Ó embolé embolée, ó embolé embolá
Cinco filipa etc.

Eu foi no mato
prá cortar meu pau-linheiro
para ver se sou ligeiro
no porete pra brigar.

Ó embolé etc.

Eu dei um bejo no sobaque duma nega
pensando que era manteiga
quasi morro de lançar.
Nega danada do sobaque fedorento
este sobaque nojento
você me da prá cheira.

Ó embolé etc.

Muleque feio da cara de lobisomem
comigo você não come
da massa que eu penera.

Ó embolé embolée etc.

Band 5 -

Monta no jumento do seu Bunhe
Vamo logo
(repeats)

E dei um tapa, dei doie tapa
dei tres tapa, dei quatro tapa
na cara para o tapa tapar

Alí Babá tem um filho que está homem
está virando lobishomem prá puder me pegá.

Eu foi no mato
prá cortar o paulinheiro
para ver se são ligeiro
no porete prá brigar.

Este menino diz que é valente
mas aqui no meio da gente
ele tem que apanha

Monta no jumento do deu Bunhe
vamos logo

Band 3 -

Refrain
Rigmarole

I went into the bushes to cut wood, to see if I am
nimble to fight with a stick.

Refrain

Ugly boy with the face of werewolf, with me you'll
not eat the food I am preparing. (Here again there
is a double meaning: the insulted girl refuses to
have anything to do with him).

Band 5 -

Jump on the mare of Mr. Bunhe, let us go.

Rigmarole

Ali Baba has a son who is already a man, this son
is turning into a werewolf to catch me.

I went into the bushes to cut wood, to see if I am
nimble to fight with the stick.

This boy boasts about being brave but among us he
will be beaten up.

Jump on the mare, let us go.

Esta menina e prá bancar um figuarao
nesta, roupa de algodao
va pra rua se monstra
Quando estou muito sabendo
tira a roupa e o enchimento
cada corpo prá lavar.

Band 6 -

O meu bonde enquencou
até descer a miudela espedecou
iaia iaia iaia, meu Deus até descer,
a miudela espedecou.

Eu foi (... ?)
a enfermeira ela me examinou
quando puxou minha tripa
a tripa saiu cocó
iaia iaia iaia, a tripa saia cocó.

O doutor me disse que Comá o remedio
chamado melão
eu foi rogar a meu Deus
a meu São Bento
a meu São Bento
a meu Deus e meu São João
iaia iaia Meu Deus, meu Deus e meu São João

Eu dei uma facada na mia irmã
a facada foi no coração
iaia iaia iaia Meu Deus, a facada foi no coração

Meu camarada presta-me ouvido
presta atenção, presta atenção no que eu digo
iaia iaia iaia presta atenção no qu'eu digo

Tomei o bonde o bonde enquencou
e tambem a enfermeira e o doutor.
iaia iaia meu Deus a enfermeira e o doutor

Eu fui no hospital da clinica
e o medico me examinou
mandou tomá remedio
o nome do remedio é Norobió
iaia iaia iaia meu Deus, a remedio é Norobió

Não posso beber
não posso fuma
se eu beber
torna-se meu azar (repeat)
iaia iaia meu Deus, torna-se meu azar.

This girl puts on her cotton dress and goes in the
streets to show off; then, unexpectedly she takes
her clothes off and goes to bathe.

Band 6 -

My streetcar broke down and before I could
get off my guts went to pieces.
iaia iaia iaia my guts went to pieces.

I went (... ?)
the nurse examined me
when she tried to fix up my guts
'merde' (cocó) came out of it.
iaia iaia iaia 'merde' came out of it.

The doctor told me to take a medicine
called 'melao' (Momordica charantia, Lin.)
I went to pray the Lord
São Bento
São Bento
the Lord and São João
iaia iaia my Lord, my lord and Sao Joao.

I knifed my sister and
the knife entered her heart
iaia iaia iaia my Lord, the knife entered her heart.

Listen to me, my friend,
pay attention to what I am going to say
iaia iaia iaia pay attention to what I say.

I took a streetcar and it broke down
and so did the nurse and the doctor.
iaia iaia my Lord, so did the nurse and the doctor.

I went to the hospital
and the doctor examined me
he ordered a medicine called Norobió

iaia iaia iaia my Lord, the medicine is Norobió

I can't drink
I can't smoke
If I drink
it'll be at my risk.
iaia iaia iaia, it'll be at my risk.

Band 7 -

Nunca mais, mia nega, nunca mais
nunca mais eu vou na festa com você.
Esta nega só vive com gatimunha
so vai na festa prá me meter vergonha.

Nunca mais etc.

Esta nega vive imunda no fogão
por causa dela eu perdi meu bom patrão

Nunca mais etc.

Band 8 - Instruments only.

Band 7 -

I'll never again go to a party with you, nega (*)

You are too common
and you only go there to make me ashamed.

She lives in her dirty kitchen
and because of her I lost my good master.

(*) 'Nega' literally means 'black girl'; it may be
used either as a term of endearment or as an insult.

Recording and notes by Carlo Castaldi