

THE MYSTICAL MUSIC



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OF ANDALUCIA

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Submitted to Professor Steven Gellman

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PRIMITIVE CANTE ANDALUZ

Primitive cante andaluz was a product of Andalucia and is considered to be the oldest and most characteristic of Ancient Andalucian music. It possessed its own intimate and unmistakable character even though its roots, according to the great Andalucian Spanish composer, Manuel de Falla, could have been connected to the primitive songs of India.¹ Its essence was reflected in the phrase “Ser y estar seria.”² (*translation?*)

Cave paintings found at the mouth of the Caves of Altamira in Spain dating back to 15,000 B.C. have indicated that Primitive cante andaluz was also a part of the magic religious rituals practiced on the Iberian Peninsula.³ Rock art discovered outside of the caves, a popular mode of expression at that time, portrays realistic figures of men dancing.⁴ Since Primitive cante andaluz was thought to have been intimately linked to the dance, the cave paintings would seem to substantiate its association with the pre-historic ritualism of the Iberian cave-dwellers. Pre-historic ritualistic rites involved magic, dance and incantation.⁵

Described as an orgiastic lament, primitive Andalucian song was a monodic, vocal melody that advanced by undulating semitones and microtones. As its narrow range rose and fell it cast a spell over its listeners.⁶ An outstanding characteristic of primitive cante andaluz was the obsessive repetition of one sound.⁷ Stammering and wavering as it progressed, this oldest and most pure of Ancient Andalucian music conveyed naked, spine-tingling emotion. Imbued with the mysterious colours of primordial ages, it evoked a profound spirituality.⁸

Pre-historic cave paintings have, as well, reflected two primitive instruments which were in use around 15,000 B.C. Percussion instruments were found in the Cave of Hiedra at Quesada⁹ on the walls and bronze bells dating back to the Neolithic Age were discovered in the interior of the Cave of Lobera at Castellar de la Santisteban.¹⁰

The instruments were used in the ritual procession to a designated place and to accompany the dance and incantation. They also had a special function during the religious ritual itself.

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- ¹ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p.4
- ² M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion a cante flamenco,
(Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, p. 28
- ³ Rafael Altamira, A History of Spain,
Translated by MunaLee, (D. Van Nostrand and
Company, Inc., New York), 1966, p. 1
- ⁴ Ibid, p. 1
- ⁵ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 10
- ⁶ Ibid, p. 10
- ⁷ Pedro Jimenez Cavalle, La Musica en Jaen,
(Sopra argra, S.A. Jaen), 1991, p. 16
- ⁸ Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Mauer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 25
- ⁹ Pedro Jimenez Cavalle, La Musica en Jaen,
(Sopra argra, S.A. Jaen), 1991, p. 15
- ¹⁰ Ibid, p. 16

ANCIENT CANTE ANDALUZ

As civilization on the Iberian Peninsula advanced and moved from the mountain caves to types of dwellings on the plains, so did the Ancient Music of Andalusia evolve. The Iberian Peninsula was subjected to many invasions. Each invasion brought its own cultural differences and left its own influences. The evolution of primitive cante andaluz was due then to the particular result of the fusion which took place between it and the various influences that passed through Andalusia over a period of several centuries. Initially without form or style it slowly evolved to become known as the Ancient Song of Andalusia – Ancient cante andaluz. The ancient songs were the first songs to be sung in the pueblos of Andalusia.

Now marked by elements of *explain + qualify* Hindu chant and Primitive Oriental influences that had also penetrated Spain the songs soon began to take on a form and a style.¹ There were many qualities of Primitive Oriental music that influenced the form and style of ancient cante andaluz.

An outstanding musical quality of Primitive Oriental music was its enharmonism. The use of enharmonic intervals in order to modulate was very typical of the Primitive Oriental modes and had to do with the division and subdivision of the interval of the 7th.² The melody of the song followed the sounds of Nature – birds, forest, water, etc.³ The prime purpose of enharmonic modulation was to impart a specific quality of expressiveness to the melody.⁴

Another quality of Primitive Oriental music which influenced the form and style of ancient cante andaluz was the mode. In the Primitive Oriental musical system, many new modes could be created simply because four out of the seven notes which comprised a mode could be altered.⁵

Also characteristic of Primitive Oriental music was vocal portamento. Vocal portamento involved the technique of sliding the voice from one note to another through gradations of sound. It was, as well, another way to modulate and had a profound impact on the style of ancient cante andaluz.⁶ Since there was no fixed metrical rhythm for the melodic line and modulation was by small interval (a semitone) the range of the melodic line never exceeded a 6th.⁷

A marked quality of Primitive Oriental music was the obsessive repetition of a sound. In Primitive cante andaluz it has been noted that obsessive repetition of a sound was first linked to the religious ritualism practiced by the early Iberian cave dwellers (15,000 B.C.). It took the form of archaic incantation and was one of the three elements associated with the primitive religious rites.

Obsessive repetition of a sound in Primitive Oriental music continued to influence ancient cante andaluz. The music was accompanied by inflected appoggiaturas above and below the repeated sound. Like Primitive cante andaluz, this quality was also associated with certain forms of magic and enchantment rituals.⁸

The falling cadence was yet another prominent characteristic of Primitive Oriental music. That influenced the form and style of ancient cante andaluz. The notes or sounds were “lah, sol, fa, mi.” The cadence was heard both vocally in the song and by the instrument.⁹

Ornamentation in Primitive Oriental music greatly influenced the form of ancient cante andaluz and later became part of the sophisticated, refined style of cante jondo. The complicated arabesques and infinite gradations of pitch induced a deep emotion for the words of the song.¹⁰

Shouting and handclapping were most characteristic of Primitive Oriental music. Shouting was employed to urge the singers and dancers on, to higher moments of ecstasy while handclapping was used to accent the conflicting rhythms of the dance.¹¹ These two elements were also to become part of the form and style of cante jondo.

While Primitive cante andaluz had no form or style as has already been mentioned, its evolution led to the Ancient Andalucian copla. The copla was a verse which consisted of no more than three or four lines. The lines expressed a profound experience. There has been no other form that has excelled the Ancient Andalucian copla.

The copla was always accompanied by an instrument. As ancient cante andaluz evolved, a guitar-like instrument became the favoured one for accompaniment. At the end of the copla there was an interlude played by the instrument which later became called the falsetta. The falsetta was a

melodic variation that was inserted and departed from the usual strumming or rasgado. The rhythms of the copla were three-four and three-eight and these too, were influenced by the rhythms of Primitive Oriental music.¹²

ANCIENT ANDALUCIAN COPLA

Cuando termine la muerte
Si dicen a levantarse
A mi que no me despierten.

Que yo no acostumbro siempre
Y una vez acostumbrado
A mi que no me despierten.¹³

} translation?

A most important characteristic of the Ancient Andalusian copla was its fatalism.

¹ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion a cante flamenco, (Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, p. 31

² Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians, Translated by: David Urman and J.M. Thomson (Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p. 101

³ Ibid, p. 101

⁴ Ibid, p. 101

⁵ Ibid, p. 105

⁶ Ibid, p. 106

⁷ Ibid, p. 105

⁸ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 51

⁹ Lucille Armstrong, Dances of Spain: South, Centre and Northwest, Volume I, (Chanticleer Press Inc., New York), 1950

¹⁰ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 14

¹¹ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians, Translated by: David Urman and J.M. Thomson (Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p. 105

¹² M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion a cante flamenco, (Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972.

¹³ Ibid, p. 27

THE SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS AND DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF ANCIENT CANTE ANDALUZ

Ancient cante andaluz was a specific product of Andalucia. As such it had specific characteristics and distinguishing features which identified it and set it apart from the rest of Spain. The outstanding characteristic that marked ancient cante andaluz was tragedy. Its fatalistic essence was reflected in the phrase "Ser y estar seria."¹ *too much like first paragraph - redundant*

Even though the ancient Andalucian civilization was at a very high level and the land itself a Paradise with splendid palaces as well as a tradition of legends and heroic poems,² a sense of deep sadness and hopelessness permeated every aspect of its life and culture. This was partly due to the fierce, barbaric tribes which continually overran Southern Spain and partly due to the fatalistic attitudes that the Ancient Andalucians held, most particularly towards Death.

Cities were not defended since to-morrow, one would surely die, anyway. The results of this kind of fatalistic thinking led to horrible massacres. Plague and famine ran rampant, forcing mothers to eat their own children. The priests forsook the people and the cities. Violence and cruelty were sanctioned by the laws of the invaders who failed to recognize the beauty and value of what they had conquered. Life, as perceived by the Ancient Andalucians was one great conflict, filled with pain, frustration and suffering. It ended only with the finality of Death, tragically and without hope.

Tragedy, the outstanding characteristic of ancient cante andaluz was not only the result of ancient Andalucian fatalism, it was also linked to something called the duende. The duende was a mysterious power that could be felt but could not be seen and was peculiar only to that part of Spain known as Andalucia. The duende could, without warning, take full possession of the Soul and under its spell, draw from the Soul, through the ancient songs and dances, the most profound expression of suffering and death.³

In the music, the duende was identified by its “black sounds”.⁴ In the dance, it was a powerful force that was sensed through the changes that took place in the dancer’s body and visage, but it was never seen. The duende usually focused on some particular obsession and from that obsession, it provoked a whole tragedy. Although tragedy could be profoundly poetic, most of the time it evoked deep sadness, despair and utter hopelessness in its listeners.

Violence was another specific characteristic of ancient cante andaluz. Violence was expressed through its poetry and stood for the Dark and Tragic Forces that were a part of the mystical belief system held by the Ancient Andalucians

The Ancient Andalucians perceived mysticism as a conflict between positive and negative forces. The negative forces were known as the Dark and Tragic Forces or the Duende. They believed that it was the Soul’s harsh and unalterable Destiny to participate in this conflict. The Soul’s fate was its struggle with the Duende or Dark and Tragic Forces which always ended in violence and ultimately death.

The knife and the bull were the symbols of violence. Both shed blood. The slaying of the bull with a knife was part of the cult of Mithras. The mystical belief attached to this violent act was that the Life Force would again rise once the bull had been killed.

A third characteristic of ancient cante andaluz was solitude. Solitude was the expression of the tragedy and torment the Soul felt when it was not remembered, forgotten, forsaken by all. Solitude represented deep suffering and unspeakable loneliness.

The most significant characteristic of ancient cante andaluz was death. So obsessed with this real life element were the Ancient Andalucians, that death took on and had its own personality. It was closely associated with the moon and for the ancient peoples, the Moon had a tremendous influence over human Destiny. A full moon meant that death was not far behind. It was symbolized through the tambourine whose shape was like that of the full moon. The tambourine was used in all of the religious rituals especially those which involved human and animal sacrifice.

For Ancient Andalucians, the mystery of life and its finality were uppermost in their thoughts.⁵ Much of the poetry of ancient cante andaluz and later cante jondo, centered on this subject. As a result death became an obsession with the people. Many mystery cults and strange rituals arose because the formal worship system no longer fulfilled the individual's spiritual needs or consoled his fears about mortality.⁶

The ancient Andalucian guitar, at first shaped from a gourd, was also closely associated with death. The music contained cesuras, pauses, commas and specific accents. Since these elements provided the imagery which heralded the presence of death, they were given very special attention.⁷

} 2 different topics in same paragraph

THE FOUR DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF ANCIENT CANTE ANDALUZ

According to the great Andalucian composer, Manuel de Falla, the ancient music of Andalucia, cante andaluz, had four distinguishing features that set it apart from other music in Spain. Firstly, the music was always intimately linked to either a dance or a poem, so much so, that the one could not function without the other. When the Romans came to Spain in 218 B.C. to begin their long conquest of the Peninsula, among its many peculiarities especially in Southern Spain, they found a highly developed civilization which included poetry with its own rules, music and dance.

The poetry expressed intense and profound emotions and these were reflected through the music. Dance had always been an inherent part of the Iberian Peninsula and was used to express every facet of life – to celebrate victories, religious rites, etc. It provided recreation for the ladies and it was used to intimidate one's enemies. Its intimate link to the music was not just through its rhythm, so characteristic of other cultures, but also through certain elements directly related and found only in Andalucia, most especially in cante andaluz.⁸

Secondly, the melody of ancient cante andaluz could easily be sung and lay well within the normal range of the voice. It was a peculiarity of ancient cante andaluz that the melody did not exceed the interval of a 6th.

While in European music, this interval contained nine semitones, through the use of enharmonism (especially the enharmonic interval), the singer was able to produce substantially more sounds.⁹

An essential element of this fact of ancient cante andaluz was modulation by means of the enharmonic interval. The word “modulation” does not have the same meaning in ancient cante andaluz as it would have in modern European harmony. In modern European harmony, modulation is the simple movement from one tonality to another, without changing the key. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, European key structures were composed of a series of tones and semitones whose position was immutable.¹⁰

However, the primitive Indian systems and those derived from them, did not consider that places occupied by the smallest interval within a melodic series or mode were invariable. In the primitive Indian systems and that of primitive cante andaluz, the production of intervals obeyed a rising or lowering of the voice.

This obedience originated in the expression that was given to the word being sung. It was also the reason why there were so many primitive modes in India. Each mode could be theoretically determined by altering four of its seven sounds.¹¹ Furthermore, each of the four alterable sounds could be divided and subdivided so that the start and finish notes within the fragments of a phrase were not the same.

Modulation was also the usage of the voice as a means of expression which was a far more exacting kind of modulation compared to that as conceived by European theorists. This procedure meant taking the voice through the infinite nuances that existed between two notes. Enharmonic modulation was a consequence of the primitive harmonic genre, whereby the sound could be modified according to its natural needs and functions.¹² The peculiarity of ancient cante andaluz (its range) suited this sound modification perfectly.

Thirdly, some aspect of Primitive Oriental music was always present in ancient cante andaluz. Most importantly was the aspect of enharmonism as discussed in the foregoing feature of ancient cante andaluz. Other aspects of Primitive Oriental music were as follows:

Obsessive repetition of one note
Complex rhythms based on alternating time signatures (three-eight and
three-four)
Shouting
Handclapping
Use of appoggiatura
Vocal portamento¹³

As with all Oriental music, the elements of sadness and remoteness were important elements and were present in ancient cante andaluz.

Fourthly, in ancient cante andaluz, there was always the sound of the guitar. Its influence represented two clearly defined musical values. The first was the rhythmic value. External and immediately perceptible, it was used in a particular cadential phrase known as the falling cadence (lah, sol, fah, mi). This particular phrase was easily assimilated and for centuries continued to be the only one used.

The second musical value was the tonal-harmonic value that was pure and remained unrecognized up until the time of Domenico Scarlatti.¹⁴

The internal harmonic phenomena of ancient cante andaluz and later, cante jondo, was known as “toque jondo”, (touch jondo).¹⁵ The harmonic effects achieved by the ancient guitarists using this technique on their kithras (forerunner to the Spanish guitar), were both marvellous and phenomenal.

In the time of ancient cante andaluz, there were two ways to play the guitar or kithra. The most ancient way was to strum. With strumming, only chords were formed. The chords were considered barbaric but in reality, they were a wondrous revelation of sound and could be closely associated with the cante.¹⁶ The function of the guitar in this instance was harmonic.

The other mode of playing was to pluck. The function of the instrument in this capacity was melodic and its sound was like that of the lute or the bandurria, sweet, soft and melodious.¹⁷

¹ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion al cante flamenco, (Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, p. 28

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- ² J.P. de Oliveira Martins, A History of Iberian Civilization,
Translated by: F.G. Bell
(Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., New York), 1969, p. 36
- ³ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 4
- ⁴ Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Mauer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 43
- ⁵ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies
of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 65
- ⁶ Leonard A. Curchin, Roman Spain,
(Routledge, London), 1991, p. 163
- ⁷ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 43
- ⁸ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians,
Translated by: David Urman and J.M. Thomson.
(Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p. 106
- ⁹ Ibid, p. 104
- ¹⁰ Ibid, p. 103
- ¹¹ Ibid, p. 104
- ¹² Ibid, p. 104
- ¹³ Ibid, p. 104
- ¹⁴ Ibid, p. 110
- ¹⁵ Ibid, p. 110
- ¹⁶ Ibid, p. 111
- ¹⁷ Ibid, p. 111

THE EVOLUTION OF CANTE JONDO

According to Manuel de Falla, there were three main factors that contributed to the evolution of cante jondo from ancient cante andaluz. The first factor was the adoption of certain elements of the Byzantine Chant by the Roman Church of Spain.

The Byzantine Empire was, in reality, the Roman Empire and comprised of Southern Italy, Sicily, the North African coast, Egypt, Syria and Greece.¹ These regions all came under the rule of Constantinople. The former name of Constantinople was Byzantium. Byzantium was actually considered to be more Greek than Roman mainly because of its two great centers of Greek culture, Alexandria and Antioch and because of the inordinately large number of Greek speaking civil servants.²

? Byz. empire?

The conquest of Spain by the Greeks and other cultural influences that comprised the Byzantine Empire took place between the 4th century B.C. and the 5th century A.D. In the 4th century A.D., the Byzantine Empire became Christian. Conversion throughout the Empire was not always complete and pagan worship was allowed to continue in the temples that had been converted into churches up until the 6th century. Some of the eastern churches continued to retain the Coptic and Syrian languages, the Jews clung to Hebrew and Aramaic while the Zoroastrians kept to the Persian language in their scriptures.

The absorption of these many cultural influences by Ancient Andalusia was inevitable, largely because the Andalusian civilization was already so advanced and well prepared to receive the “gifts of the gods.”

As a result of these conquests, the Byzantine Chant was also brought to Spain. It exerted a strong influence on ancient cante andaluz and in time certain elements were formally adopted by the Roman Church of Spain. It remained the recognized liturgy throughout Spain from the time of the Visigoths (7th century) up until the 11th century.³

The Byzantine Chant had its origins in the incantations and casting of spells associated with pagan worship. As it evolved the more elevated rhymes and rhythms of ancient Arabic poetry were added.

Many of the same elements which were a part of the Primitive Oriental musical influence were also elements of Byzantine Chant. Both contained the influences of the Hindu and primitive tonal modes. Both shared inherent harmonism. Neither influence reflected a metrical rhythm in the melodic line. Common to the Primitive Oriental influence and Byzantine Chant were the wealth of modulating inflexions, the enharmonic modulation by semitone and obsessive repetition of one sound.⁴

An outstanding feature of Byzantine Chant was its very ornate embellishment. This type of ornamentation was not extraneous embellishment but rather the result of lyrical expansion which was induced through the emotion of the words and the Turkish influence.

The fusion of the elements of Byzantine Chant to ancient cante andaluz was of enormous importance since it permitted the preservation of the Primitive Oriental influence in Ancient Andalusian Song to continue over the centuries.⁵

INVASION OF THE ARABS

When the Arabs came to Spain in 711 A.D. they found cities that were refined and cultured. As well, they found a fully-matured civilization in Andalusia that had rules about its poetry as has already been mentioned. The Arabs discovered a type of poetry that was sensitive, spiritual, artistic and strongly reflected the Andalusian character.⁶ *delete*

The Arabian poets brought with them their own highly developed poetry which was eventually fused to the existing folklore and resulted in an exquisite genre known as Andalusian Love Poetry. A common characteristic that both ancient Andalusian and Arabian poetry shared was fatalism.

The Arabian oriental musical influence was another significant contribution made by the Arabs to ancient cante andaluz. In the ongoing evolution towards cante jondo, both influences, poetical and musical, were fused to the ancient Andalusian element over a period of nine centuries. Ancient cante andaluz shaped by the Arabian influence and other influences

eventually began to evolve into the highly sophisticated, stylistic, musically refined song form known as cante jondo.⁷

THE COMING OF THE GYPSIES TO SPAIN

ancient origins in India

In 1447 a great number of gypsies arrived at Cataluna in Spain. From their initial entry into Spain, they suffered terrible persecution and were labelled “gitanos Andaluces.” Eventually they made their way to Andalucia where they settled in the wine-making barrios of Triana, Sevilla, Jerez de la Frontera and Santiago.⁸

In the barrios they were reminded of their own origins. They found that they shared the same intense feelings as the Andalusian people – fatalism, melancholy, profound sadness.⁹

has this been established in your essay?

One of the greatest contributions the gypsies made to ancient cante andaluz was rhythm, which they had brought with them from India. Their second greatest contribution was the ability to imitate that which had already been created. Their ability to assimilate influenced ancient cante andaluz enormously in three ways.

Firstly, in Spain, they could identify with their own origins since Spain was a strong memory of where they had come from. Secondly, they recognized the beauty and abundance of the land to which they had come and thirdly, they truly understood the emotions of the lower class people. It was because of this affinity that the gypsies had with the poor people of Andalucia that cante jondo really began to evolve. There, in the barrios, was authenticity and stark truth. Once the gypsies had absorbed the Andalusian style they transformed it to suit their own needs.¹⁰

weak word.

While there were many things the adoption of the Byzantine Chant, the Arabian poetical and oriental musical influences and the gypsy contribution were the three main factors out of which cante jondo became the end result.¹¹

¹ Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples. (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, New York), 1991, p. 7

² Ibid, p. 7

³ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians.

Translated by: David Urman and J.M. Thomson
(Marion Boyars, London),

1979, p. 101

⁴ Ibid, p. 101

⁵ Ibid, p. 101

⁶ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion al cante flamenco.
(Ediciones Istmo, Madrid), 1972, p. 27

⁷ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians.
Translated by David Urman and J.M. Thomson
(Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p. 102

⁸ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion al cante flamenco.
(Ediciones Istmo, Madrid), 1972, p. 31

⁹ Ibid, p. 31

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 31

¹¹ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians.
Translated by David Urman and J.M. Thomson
(Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p. 102

THE GYPSY CONTRIBUTION TO ANCIENT CANTE ANDALUZ

*established in
former chapter ∴ redundant here*

The gypsies (arrived in Spain from India around 1447 and) gave to Ancient Andalucian Song a new form which eventually became known as cante jondo or Deep Song.¹ This was accomplished not by trying to alter or impose but rather by assimilation of their own musical idiom with what they had found. Through interpreting and shaping that idiom (which was not unlike the ancient Andalucian idiom), to suit their particular needs, they provided a lyrical channel which enable them to express their personal pain and ritual gestures.² The assimilation made an enormous contribution to the final form of cante jondo and transformed both the songs and dances of Andalusia.

Another major contribution the gypsies made to cante jondo was mysticism. Mysticism had also been one of the essential elements of ancient cante andaluz. Ancient Peninsular mysticism embodied the belief that the Soul was transported to a level where it recognized the Remote Past, a place where emotion and intuition overcame all reason, a place haunted by the fears, violence and tragedy of that Past.³

Ancient Peninsular mysticism also believed that deep within the Soul there was a conflict which took place between Positive and Negative Forces. It was the Soul's unalterable and harsh Destiny to participate in this conflict, since it was the only way the Soul could accept its Fate with dignity, self-assertiveness and determination.

Fate was perceived as the Soul's struggle with the Dark Forces or Duende. This struggle had to take place in order for the soul to attain the realization of the Higher Realm.⁴

Gypsy mysticism had its roots in Shamanism. Shamanism was the ancient practice of using an altered state of consciousness to get in touch with various gods and spirits of the natural world. Art, magic and incantation were all commonplace in its practice.⁵

Like Ancient Peninsular mysticism, gypsy mysticism believed in good and bad spirits. The heart of gypsy mysticism was the journey of the Soul since through the journey the mind could travel to the inner worlds.⁶

In both mysticisms, the transcended state of the Soul was reached through dance, song and a particular instrument (ie. a drum) which were used as part of the mystical rites. The song had to imitate the sounds of birds and animals while the instrument had to produce an incantation effect to induce a hypnotic or trance-like state. The identification of the song with things of Nature was absolutely necessary as this symbolized the link between God and Man.⁷

Some of the mystical beliefs held by the gypsies were as follows:

Sickness – the Soul had been captured by a ghost

Guardian Angel – the Duende

Journey to the underworld – a place where evil demons lurked⁸

Magical essence – a special power given to a person so that they felt superior in all situations (gypsies still feel extremely superior to other races).⁹

Taboos – tribal customs that had to be strictly observed.

If they were not, the whole tribe could expect to be penalized through sickness, death, revenge or some kind of havoc wrecked by Nature. They believed for example, that the Wind

Could destroy a whole Caravan.

While the Duende was a mysterious power that could be felt but could not be seen in Ancient Peninsular mysticism, in gypsy mysticism, the Duende represented one's psychic counterpart on the inner plane (the Guardian Angel). The relationship was very precarious since the Duende did not always appear when it was wanted and at other times it took too much control.¹⁰

The Ritualistic Rites were important in both mysticisms since they symbolized the outer enactment of an inner event. They were regarded as extremely sacred and often took the form of a drama. The rite was a mysterious event that demanded one's total participation in it as this would then permit the Soul to leave the realm of reality for a special place in the Cosmos.¹¹

Peninsular mysticism believed that the Soul could go to various places throughout Andalusia in order to carry out its Spiritual Battle with the Duende. For this reason, the ancient Andalusians attached a mystical significance to each of their cities. In Gypsy mysticism, the transcended state allowed one to become the embodiment of whatever they chose.¹²

An element found in both mysticisms was the obsessive repetition of a sound. In Peninsular mysticism the obsessive repetition of a sound was associated with certain forms of enchantment and the casting of spells. In Gypsy mysticism, it was used to carry the Soul from one world to another.¹³ When fused to ancient cante andaluz and later, had become a part of cante jondo, this element gave intense expression and a barbaric strength to the sound of both song forms.

A further contribution made by the gypsies to cante jondo was the use of Gypsy words in non-gypsy songs. These were picturesque and often grammatically incorrect but were direct and primitive in their expression of emotions and ideas.¹⁴

As well, the gypsies contributed some specific musical points. In some cases while they have been borrowed, they have nevertheless been attributed to the gypsies and considered to be a further major contribution to cante jondo. The musical elements included the use of multiple and cross rhythms, complex yet fluid melodies, the use of microtones, appoggiaturas, the flowing glide, an indifference to the quality of tone, no harmonized accompaniment and a high degree of embellishment.¹⁵

¹ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians,
Translated by :David Urman and J.M. Thomson.
(Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p. 102

² Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Mauer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 28

³ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 82

⁴ Ibid, p. 82

⁵ Nevill Drury, The Elements of Shamanism,
(Element Books Limited, Dorset), 1989, p. 2

⁶ Ibid, p. 2

⁷ Ibid, p. 8

⁸ Ibid, p. 19

⁹ Ibid, p. 19

¹⁰ Ibid, p.24

¹¹ Ibid, p.28

¹² Ibid, p. 33

¹³ Ibid, p. 7

¹⁴ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco,
(Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984, p. 99

¹⁵ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies
of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 53

EARLY CANTE JONDO

Like ancient cante andaluz, early cante jondo was also shrouded, for centuries, in mystery. Upon hearing it, it was described as a “howl”, or orgiastic lamentation on life with a melismatic melody.¹ Sung well it was powerful. Sung poorly, it was pitiful and grotesque.²

While, eventually, it was the result of many factors, early cant jondo began as the historical and artistic descendant of the original Andalucian element, ancient cante andaluz. It was called Deep Song because of the deep affinity it had with the remote races of Andalucia and their past centuries.³

Imbued with the mysterious, spiritual colour of primordial ages,⁴ early cante jondo was profound and intimate music which described the tragedy of life as experienced by the Soul. Its predominant mood was tragic, nostalgic and sad, yet it also expressed defiance and human courage.⁵

Early cante jondo was about the Unconquered Soul and even though that Soul was ravaged and broken, it found a way to survive. It reflected the hope and expectation of survival amidst the blackest sorrow or deepest loss. Essentially tragic, like ancient cante andaluz, early cante jondo also unfolded under the inspiration of the duende. Under the power of the mysterious muse it became an expression of suffering and death, characterized by a constant interaction between Man and the Cosmos,⁶ Man and Nature.⁷

The poetry of early cante jondo had no middle road. It consisted of extremes. Intense and deep, its main content was pain and sorrow taken to their finest degree pure and exact.⁸ Its most outstanding characteristic was its spirituality, at times so profound that it seized the heart.⁹ The following two lines reflect the spiritual profundity of the Eternal Enigma of Death in their simplicity and genuineness.

Cerco tiene la luna The Moon has a halo
Mi amor ha muerto. My love has died.¹⁰

In cante jondo poetry certain elements were given or took on their own personality. For example, the moon represented Death close by, long dark hair was the tragedy of the situation and the triumph of love meant death defeated. A spectre was Death itself.¹¹

The music of early cante jondo was of a nocturnal nature. It was modal and based on a harmonic system of false relations. It continued to use the falling cadence found in ancient cante andaluz while some of the more languorous melodies could be attributed to the Arabian influence. There were at least twenty varieties of rasgado technique with sounds that encompassed thunder, lightning, rain or castenets.¹²

define

} define
rasgado
first

The purpose of the rasgado was to announce the character of the harmony while the rhythm determined the melody. Ornamentation continued to be very significant as did the use of the guitar for accompaniment. Hand clapping and finger snapping, elements of ancient cante andaluz and a primitive oriental influence continued to be used as part of the accompaniment as well.¹³

¹D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco,
(Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984, p. 48

²Ibid, p. 48.

³Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Mauer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 30

⁴Ibid, p. 25

⁵Bertha B. Quintana, Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies of
Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 60

⁶Ibid, p. 60

⁷Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 10

⁸Ibid, p. 15

⁹Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Mauer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 30

¹⁰Ibid, p. 31

¹¹Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 15

¹²M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion a cante flamenco,
(Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, p. 90

¹³Ibid, p. 99

FORM OF CANTE JONDO

*This is not about form
but mood + character*

Cante jondo was haunting and monotonous, yet it had a pronounced dramatic rhythm. At times it was tragic, grave, at other times it was feverish, swank, While it had some lyricism, it tended to be profoundly sad, like Primitive Oriental music. Its most prominent characteristic was the falling cadence, “lah/ sol, fah/ mi” heard in both the guitar and the voice.¹

Its songs were of a most intimate nature. Intonation ranged from a whisper to a howl. They were at the same time lyrical and passionate, a deep song of the soul.²

Cante jondo was profound, expressive, intimate music that described the tragedy of life as experienced by the Soul.³ Its predominate mood was tragic, nostalgic and sad. It also expressed defiance and human courage. Cante jondo was not about designation but rather about the Unconquered Soul.⁴ It was about violence, passion and the survival of the Soul. It was expectation and hope. In the fact of disaster one remained invulnerable because invulnerability was the measure of one’s integrity.⁵

The musical elements of cante jondo included the following:

- Multiple and cross rhythms (borrowed) *3?*
- Complex yet fluid melodies (from the Arabs) *)*
- Use of microtones
- Grace notes (appoggiaturas from ancient cante andaluz)
- The flowing glide
- Indifference to quality of tone
- No harmonized accompaniment
- A high degree of embellishment – (Byzantine influence)

TRADITIONAL THEMES

As cante jondo continued to evolve, it began to reflect certain traditional themes or recurring ideas. Many of these themes were contributed by the gypsies.

1. *Faithfulness* – There were Gypsy laws which pertained to the subject of fidelity. They were as follows:
 - (a) a gypsy woman had to remain faithful to her husband
 - (b) gypsies could not associate with non-gypsies
 - (c) debts owed within the tribe had to be paid.

Poem

The false Juanito day and night
Had best with caution go
The Gypsy cards of Yena height
Have sworn to lay him low.
Borrow 1908:293⁶

Punishment for infidelity was public whipping, facial disfigurement, mutilation or death. Gypsy laws of fidelity were very ancient and were respected and supported. They were strictly enforced to demonstrate Gypsy superiority.⁷

Prostitution or going to the marriage bed defiled were two more examples of infidelity.

Poem

You are not called Carmen
Nor Maria, nor Pilar
Each day you may be called
Whatever they wish
For being a woman of the street.
Cimorra 1943: 114⁸

2. *The Mother Theme* – was a most outstanding theme of cante jondo. A mother was considered to be far more important than a wife or a father. Great, great sorrow was felt when a mother died.

Poem

When a mother dies
Four columns of
marble break
When a father dies, only one.
Quintana 1960: 189⁹

In cante jondo, the Mother theme was most often expressed through the words “Ay, mi madre.” It was the universal cry of one deeply wounded in the heart.¹⁰

3. *Loyalty* – was one of the principal themes of cante jondo. Its fierce bonds kept the tribe apart from outsiders and kept their secrets safe. For the Gypsy, loyalty was the whole basis of everything. A betrayal of friendship was worse than a sexual demeanor.¹¹

mis ?

4. *Fatalism* –

Poem

I hope God never gives,
Even to those I hate,
Such sorrows as He sent to me
Such evil, evil fate.
Brown 1929: 155¹²

Gypsy fatalism took two forms:

- (a) joys and sorrows of the past were related to those of the present
- (b) pre-occupation with Death (this fatalism was the same as that of Ancient Andalucian fatalism).

Gypsy fatalism believed that things of the past were inseparable from things of the present. This belief gave them the ability to survive extreme situations without complaint. “Only dogs and Gajos (non-gypsies) get mad.”¹³ Because they perceived the ongoing repetition of events in the same manner as that of the Ancient Andalucians, the gypsies also did not plan for to-morrow. The theme of fatalism always carried an undercurrent of sadness and tragedy.¹⁴

The obsession with Death which both the Gypsies and Ancient Andalucians held, was the only solution to fatalistic ponderings on the mystery of life. Fatalism imbued cante jondo just as it had cante andaluz with a deep sadness and despair.

5. *The Wind* - A particular theme of cante jondo was the wind. In much of the poetry of cante jondo, the wind materialized in a very strange manner. The wind took the form of a character who emerged at a highly emotional moment. It was depicted as a giant who was obsessed with one thing – to pull down the stars from Heaven and scatter the nebulae. Only in cante jondo did the Wind speak and at times it even offered consolation.¹⁵
6. *Weeping* – A special theme most often associated with a siguiriya was the Weeping theme. The siguiriya was a Poem or Song of Tears in which the melody and the poetry both cried.

Poem

De noche me sargo ar patio
Y me jarta de lloira
En ver to quiero tanto
Y tu, no me quieres na.

At night, I go to the courtyard
And cry my fill of tears
I love you so much
And you, you don't love me at all.¹⁶

7. *Night* – Most cante jondo poetry was set in the blue night of the Andalucian countryside. The nocturnal theme gave to the setting of the

poetry a profound intimacy which knew neither morning or evening. The night theme also provided the poetry with a landscape that had no mountains or plains which could withdraw unto itself or into the darkness of the night.¹⁷

8. *Hair* - Hair, particularly, long, black hair was another theme used to express an obsession. The following three lines are profoundly poetic yet evoke once again the deep sadness of cante jondo and obsession.

Poem

If I should happen to die
I order you to tie up my hands
With the tresses of your black hair.¹⁸

MOTIFS

Cante jondo could be identified by eight conspicuous thematic elements or motifs.

1. *LOVE* – Love was a frequent motif in cante jondo. Songs of love were very passionate and usually focused on unrequited love or the trials and sorrows of lovers. Characterized by hope and despair, songs of love were very sad and clung to illusion and memory. One's own happiness was always subordinate to that of love.

Poem

I became marble
When I heard you were to marry.
But I wish you well.
Quintana 1960: 191¹⁹

2. *JEALOUSY* – The motif of jealousy described a jealous, sexual hunger kind of love that inevitably ended up in loss of freedom or in death. Here is a chilling siguiriya gitana.

I killed her. She belonged to me.
I killed the woman that I loved.
And should she come to life, I know
A hundred times I'd kill her so
She'd never deceive me here below.
Borrow 1929: 207²⁰

The jealousy motif was also reflected in the dance which accompanied the song. Dominated by a surface gaiety, the underlying current betrayed asceticism mixed with melancholy, violence, sexual hunger and jealousy.

Lomax 1959: 935-936²¹

3. *REVENGE* – The revenge motif occupied the prominent place in cante jondo. There were two kinds of revenge, personal and tribal.

I sallied forth upon my gray,
With him, my hated foe,
And when we reached the narrow way
I dealt a dagger blow.
Borrow 1908: 293²²

Revenge songs were not sung in public places except on very rare occasions. They were confined to exclusive gatherings of Gypsies only. The songs were full of warnings, imprecations and curses and were associated with intimations of painful death or some kind of awful affliction.²³

4. *PRIDE* – The motif of pride in cante jondo was of extreme importance since it was through pride that the Andalucian gypsies viewed the tribe. Pride coloured the entire culture of the tribe and shaped its individual lives. The motif of pride was most always internalized and was the gypsies stock answer to many things “it is our way.”²⁴

Don't speak wrongly of the Gypsies
Who have the blood of Kings
In the palms of their hands.

Pride was also reflected in the dance with the high carriage of the head, straight back, lifted shoulders, arrogant strut and penetrating gaze. The Gypsy belief in their superiority was due to centuries of wandering and negative experiences. Persecution and betrayal by non-gypsies only served to intensify their belief in this superiority and heightened their fierce pride.

5. *FREEDOM* – Freedom was the most romanticized motif in cante jondo and was written about by many poets. Totally dependent upon pleasure and idleness, any kind of bindings to conventional ideas or situations represented a term in prison for a gypsy. The freedom motif was not only reflected in gypsy songs but also in the traditional occupations that permitted the gypsies to move from place to place without restraint.²⁶
6. *PERSECUTION* – The persecution motif also occupied a prominent position in cante jondo. As with cante andaluz, it was rooted in the past when violence and cruelty were sanctioned by the law.²⁷ Victims of excessive brutality, the gypsies expressed their grief, frustration and unconquerable Will through their Songs of Persecution.²⁸ The following Gypsy Ballad is an excellent illustration of the persecution motif.

Their deadly faces are leaden,
Therefore they never weep;
Hearts of patent leather
They come along the road.

Through the shadowy streets
The Gypsy old women flee.

Rosa de los Camborios
Sobs on the steps of her door,
With both breasts cut away
And placed on a serving tray.

O City of the Gypsies
Flames encircle the town:
Through a tunnel of silence
The Guardia Civilia departs.
Humphries 1954: 49-52²⁹

7. *PAIN AND SORROW* – The pain/sorrow motif was the essence of cante jondo just as tragedy was the essence of ancient cante andaluz. Sorrow was the most frequently used motif in cante jondo and often took the form of a dark woman with long, black, flowing hair who could consult with Nature.

Every morning I go
To ask the Rosemary
If Love's disease can be cured
For I am dying.³⁰

8. *DEATH* – The pre-occupation of the mystery of life and death were expressed in both ancient cante andaluz and cante jondo through the death motif which evoked obsession, fear and finality.³¹

In Ancient Andalusia, death was associated with an Oriental personage known as the Cybele. The Cybele was considered to be the true Sphinx of Andalusia and was one of three Oriental gods to be worshipped there. A Phrygian deity, the cult's most spectacular rite was baptism in the blood of a bull. Entry into the priesthood required self castration. Both of these rites took place in the temple at Cordoba.³²

The Cybele was described as having "inspired lips that uttered mirthless words" that were "without ornamentation, without perfume."³³ She symbolized the Triumph of Death. Upon Death's arrival, she did something – closed a door, raised a plinth, promenaded around an urn or wrote an epitaph.³⁴ Death was finally, the solution to all of life's unanswerable questions.³⁵

There is no greater truth in this world
Than that of a deep grave;
There, money is ended,
Power and beauty
And the cloak of nobility.³⁶

.....

ACCOMPANIMENTS TO CANTE JONDO

Original cante jondo had no accompaniment. The singer improvised dramatically to a rhythmic tapping of a stick on the ground.³⁷ The style stick, as it was called, was a short rod sometimes tipped with iron and was used to rap out the rhythms.

As cante jondo evolved, accompaniments known as jaleo became a necessary and intricate component of jondo and consisted of the following:

Palmas – Palmas were hand claps that were used in early cante jondo to mark out the rhythms.³⁸ There were two forms of palmas. The first was dry and brittle. The middle three fingers were slapped against the palm and produced a penetrating sound that was used for the faster rhythms. The second form had a hollow, muted sound that was produced by slapping one palm against the other. This form of palmas was used in the slower rhythms and was generally accompanied by a clacking sound of the tongue.

Pitos – Pitos were finger snaps and were used to imitate castanets.

Zapateons - Zapateons were rhythms set out by the feet. They were usually performed from a sitting position. Added to all of the above were shouts of encouragement such as “ole, asi se baile,” or “asi se cante”, (that’s the way to dance or sing).³⁹ ?

Eventually, the song itself became the main accompaniment to the dance and recitation. Accompanied by the guitar the song became part of the sophisticated, refined, final expression of cante jondo known as flamenco.⁴⁰

¹ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies

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- of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 52
- ² Ibid, p. 52
- ³ Ibid, p. 60
- ⁴ Ibid, p. 60
- ⁵ Ibid, p. 60
- ⁶ Ibid, p. 31
- ⁷ Ibid, p. 36
- ⁸ Ibid, p. 40
- ⁹ Ibid, p. 41
- ¹⁰ Ibid, p. 41
- ¹¹ Ibid, p. 42
- ¹² Ibid, p. 46
- ¹³ Ibid, p. 46
- ¹⁴ Ibid, p. 47
- ¹⁵ Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose.,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Maurer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 35
- ¹⁶ Ibid, p. 35
- ¹⁷ Ibid, p. 33
- ¹⁸ Ibid, p. 38
- ¹⁹ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies
of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 61
- ²⁰ Ibid, p. 62
- ²¹ Ibid, p. 62
- ²² Ibid, p. 62
- ²³ Ibid, p. 62
- ²⁴ Ibid, p. 29
- ²⁵ Ibid, p. 29
- ²⁶ Ibid, p. 43
- ²⁷ Ibid, p. 63
- ²⁸ Ibid, p. 64
- ²⁹ Ibid, p. 64
- ³⁰ Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose.,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Maurer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 34
- ³¹ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies
of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 65
- ³² Leonard A. Curchin, Roman Spain,
(Routledge, London), 1991, p. 164
- ³³ Federico Garcia Lorca, Deep Song and Other Prose.,
Translated and Edited by: Christopher Maurer
(New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York), 1980, p. 140
- ³⁴ Ibid, p. 140
- ³⁵ Ibid, p. 49
- ³⁶ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano:
Gypsies of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois),
1972, p. 65
- ³⁷ Angus Fraser, Cante jondo,
(Blackwell Publishers, Oxford), 1992, p. 206
- ³⁸ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies
of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 57
- ³⁹ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco, (Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984, p. 80
- ⁴⁰ Bertha B. Quintana and Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies of Southern Spain,
(Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 57

THE GUITAR

By the 18th century, the most important accompanying instrument for cante jondo andaluz was the guitar. Over a period of time, the guitar became an essential motif of cante jondo andaluz. As a motif, it was associated with both the untruthful aspect of love and death.¹

The guitar expressed the dark spirit of cante jondo. The fingers were said to represent five swords. The guitar represented the heart. Vicious strumming of the strings called rasgado symbolized the tearing apart of the heart and the wounding of it by the swords.² Other outstanding effects were drumming on the sound board and dazzling improvisation.³

Of oriental derivation, the guitar was thought to be the descendent of the kithara. The kithara was first introduced to Spain in the 9th century by a famous Arabian musician known as Ziryab. Ziryab added a fifth string to the guitar-like instrument. Later, another string was added and the early guitar became the accompanying instrument for cante jondo andaluz.⁴

In its accompaniment role, the sound was its most important feature and was considered to be an art in itself.⁵ The guitar was held on the right thigh with the wrist at a very sharp angle to the right. While this position proved to extremely awkward and difficult, it was the proud way of the gypsy and became known as the “flamenco position.” The position was said to influence the sound.

The gypsy guitar also had a capo or cejilla that was used to raise or lower the tuning of the guitar without having to re-tune each string. The use of a capo was also thought to have improved the sound and made it much more flamenco.⁶ In the 19th century, hand clapping was added to guitar accompaniment for flamenco.

¹ Edward F. Stanton, *The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo*, (University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 33

² Ibid, p. 33

³ Bertha B. Quintana, Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 58

⁴ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco, (Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984, p. 74

⁵ Ibid,, p. 74

⁶ Ibid, p. 76

THE SONG FORMS OF CANTE JONDO ANDALUZ

The main differences between the original songs that made up true cante jondo and its final hieratic form of flamenco were antiquity, structure and spirit.¹ These differences were clearly evident in one of these old and pure Andalucian song forms called the siguriya.

The siguriya has been the only original Andalucian song form to preserve the essence of primitive oriental music found in ancient cante andaluz and was considered to be its most direct descendent. It was unique and its music had a special poetic quality that was not merely a transplant of Oriental music to Spain.²

The structure of its melody followed the primitive tonal modes of ancient cante andaluz. It progressed by undulating semitones and like ancient cante andaluz melody, it imitated the “singing of birds and the natural sounds of the forest and water.”³

The melodic structure of the siguriya also continued to move within the reduced boundaries (interval of a 6th) of ancient cante andaluz. The primitive tonal modes provided a modal wealth for the ancient scales to do this.

The melodic structure of flamenco, on the other hand, tended to move by leaps and followed the patterns of steps and half steps of the Western scale. The reduced boundaries were clumsily expanded and replaced by tonal poverty which consisted of two modes only, the major and minor modes of the European scales.⁴

The structural form of the siguriya continued to adhere to the sober vocal modulation of ancient cante andaluz whereby the natural inflexions of the melody caused the intervals to be divided and subdivided.⁵ In flamenco, sober vocal modulation was replaced by artificial ornamentation and as time passed, it became totally decadent.⁶

The greatest structural beauty of true cante jondo , also reflected in the siguiriya, was the rhythmic flexibility of the phrase. In flamenco, the phrase became crudely set to verse and over the centuries a most beautiful aspect of the ancient song of Andalucia was lost.⁷

The spirit of true cante jondo especially that of the siguiriya was so profound and emotional which is why it was never heard outside of Andalucia. Flamenco, once the dignified, hieratic form of true cante jondo was (and still is) performed outside of Spain on a regular basis. Through adulteration and modernization, it has become a ridiculous shadow of what it once was.⁸

Today with the exception of the odd cantaor who still knows the spirit of true cante jondo the ancient song of Andalucia is only a sad, lamentable song of the past.⁹ It was partly because of the dreadful deterioration of something so precious from Spain's past, that two gentlemen from Andalucia, Federico Garcia Lorca, poet and Manuel de Falla, musician, decided to revive the Ancient Song of Andalucia.

THE EARLY SIGUIRIYA

The early siguiriya was sung and played. Its opening bars were deeply sad and began with a high pitched scream, signifying the Soul's defiance against its Fate or Destiny. The strophic copla consisted of four lines and was very intense. The purpose of the copla was to introduce the theme of the song.¹⁰

When the gypsies came to Spain, they added a new character to the siguiriya. It became known as the siguiriya gitana and was danced, played and sung. Eventually the siguiriya gitana became part of the group of songs that were known as cante jondo andaluz. From cante jondo andaluz, flamenco was to evolve.

The gypsy siguiriya was the most gypsy of cante jondo andaluz. Richly varied, it was also extremely difficult to dance because of its character and slow paced compas. The compas was composed of 12 beats with the accents as follows: 8 9 10 11 12 / 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
The siguiriya was danced using only the upper torso.¹¹ ? why this order

The significance of the gypsy siguiriya was a release of pent-up hate, persecutions, denied liberty, love, tenderness and the relentless stalking of Death. Unleashed, it permitted a rare glimpse of the world as the Soul saw it, with all the hopelessness, despair, tragedy and cruel happenings.¹² The outstanding characteristic of its copla was the third line which was the longest.

I don't want her to know
She, who was only mine
That in my profound sighs for her
My life is wafting away.¹³

THE SOLEA

The solea was another old and pure Andalusian song that became part of cante jondo andaluz. The primitive solea was filled with torment and tragedy and was the most profound of the original cantes.¹⁴

Gypsy influences brought to the ancient solea a new idea. It became a plaintive song of sorrow, solitude and loneliness. The significance of the song was about one who is no longer remembered by anyone. Of particular significance was the dialogue within the song that reflected the conditions of those gypsies who worked in the wheat fields or olive groves and had lost their freedom.¹⁵

The short form of the solea, the solea corta, had a strophe that consisted of three or four lines. Each line had eight syllables that were either assonant or consonant and followed the style of 12th century Arabian poetry.¹⁶

The solea grande was the last to evolve and was the most profound of all the soleas. Sometimes called a soleares the solea grande was sung, danced and played. Like the siguiriya, it was difficult to dance because of the slow tempo. The strophes were four lines long and also exceedingly difficult to sing. The soleares were characterized by a solemnity that referred to wisdom, philosophy and death.¹⁷ Here is an example of a short solea.

I pass the hours of the night
Without sleep
Because of you.¹⁸

Here is an example of a soleares.

Sometimes I'd like
To be crazy and not feel
For being crazy takes away grief
Grief that has no end.¹⁹

In both the solea corta and the solea grande, dancer and singer must perform with great emotion and yet be totally independent of one another. The rhythm for the guitar is straightforward and allows for toque virtuosity.²⁰

THE TONA

Another original song form of cante jondo andaluz was the tona. The tona was sung only, it was not danced or played. A tona had no compas and was sung unaccompanied. It was extremely difficult to sing. Tonas usually related to stories, events or things of nature, such as birds.²¹

With the arrival of the gypsies the tona began to reflect violence and tragedy.²²

Ay – do not fight it, gypsy girl
I have sworn
To pay you with death.
They came and told me
How you have talked badly of me
And imagine my opinion of you
That I didn't think you capable of it.²³

EL POLO

A most pure and ancient song form that became part of cante jondo andaluz was el polo. El polo reflected strongly, the primitive oriental influences of ancient cante andaluz and the Arabian melodic influences of early cante jondo.²⁴ Its outstanding characteristic was the “aye” with which it began. It was the most difficult of all the jondo dances to perform. Very formal, it was danced in burial garments.²⁵ The significance of el polo was Equality after Death.

Everyone asks God
For health and freedom
I ask for death
And He will not grant it.²⁶

THE SAETA

The last ancient song that became part of the group of songs known as cante jondo andaluz was the saeta. The saeta was a most profound, religious manifestation of the ancient Andalusian pueblo. Produced in the spirit of the pueblo, it was most suitable for cante jondo andaluz.

Although the origin of the saeta has been lost, its significance was about wide open spaces and the heart of one who sought God. Like ancient cante andaluz, it too, was sung unaccompanied.

As a profound religious manifestation of the pueblo, the saeta had metaphysical connotations with respect to the mystical beliefs of the ancient Andalusian people. It was honest, dramatic, elamorous and objective. It was also an oration.

The oration was pathetic and deeply sad and was known only to the people of Andalusia. It revealed to Christ and His Mother, through the ritual customs that were at the time practised, the human condition with all of its pain.

Melodically, the saeta was extremely difficult to sing and the internal rhythm had to be set by the singer. In its most primitive form it was a simple tona with influences reminiscent of the Byzantine liturgy. Whether it was eloquent or pathetic, depended upon the pueblo in which it was sung. For many centuries, the saeta remained dramatic and profound.

Unfortunately, as with all the ancient cantes, the saeta eventually suffered transformation. Today, there are no original saetas that are sung. Those that are sung are so grossly adorned, the pure, aesthetic music of the primitive past is completely deformed and unrecognizable. One original manuscript by Manuel Torre does exist in Spain in la Catedra de Flamencology.²⁷

¹ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo, (University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 3

² Ibid, p. 4

³ Ibid, p. 3

⁴ Manuel de Falla, On Music and Musicians, Translated by David Urman and J.M. Thomson, (Marion Boyars, London), 1979, p.116

⁵ Ibid, p. 116

⁶ Ibid, p. 116

⁷ Ibid, p. 116

⁸ Ibid, p. 116

⁹ Ibid, p. 116

¹⁰ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion al cante flamenco, (Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, p. 75

¹¹ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco, (Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984, p. 142

¹² Ibid, p. 142

¹³ Ibid, p. 143

¹⁴ Bertha B. Quintana, Lois Gray Floyd, Que Gitano: Gypsies of Southern Spain, (Wavelana Press Inc., Illinois), 1972, p. 53

¹⁵ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion al cante flamenco, (Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, p. 76

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 76

¹⁷ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco, (Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984, p. 145

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 146

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 146

²⁰ Ibid, p. 146

²¹ Ibid, p. 154

²² Ibid, p. 154

²³ Ibid, p. 155

²⁴ Ibid, p. 111

²⁵ Ibid, p. 112

²⁶ Ibid, p. 112

²⁷ M. Rios Ruiz, Introduccion al cante flamenco, (Ediciones ISTMO, Madrid), 1972, pgs. 67-74

FLAMENCO, THE FINAL FORM OF ANCIENT CANTE ANDALUZ

Flamenco was thought to have evolved in Spain around the beginning of the 15th century when the Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, decided to rid the country of all the minority groups. The mass expulsion was carried out by the Inquisition.

As a result, three groups of these persecuted people, the Jews, Arabs and Gypsies, found themselves allied through cultural commonality. Joined by Christian dissenters, a fourth distinctive element was added to the cultural blend.¹

Originating from the song forms of cante jondo andaluz, early flamenco in its primitive state evolved in the dark atmosphere of subterranean caves outside of Granada. Created from the various elements and influences of the four outcast societies hiding from the dreaded Inquisition it continued to evolve into a highly sophisticated, musical form. This was largely due to the fact that both the Arabs and Sephardic Jews had advanced musical cultures as did some of Andalusia's earlier conquerors – Greeks and Romans. The sentiments of their situation were aired through song, dance and instruments.²

The early musical forms, created and developed in an underground atmosphere by the outcast societies made up much of flamenco's repertoire. These were added to by other folk forms that were developed in a straight and normal manner (not in the underground caves). As it has already been noted, the Gypsies from India and Pakistan did not bring flamenco to Spain, they shared only in its development by their Indo-Pakistani contribution.³

The main similarities between the Andalusian people and the Indo-Pakistani gypsies were language which was Sanskrit derived, legends and traditions. Some moments in flamenco resembled the instrumentation of the Indian ragas and Indian dance. The Gypsies who came to Spain had their own music and since they had come from countries that were well-developed musically, they were able to make a considerable contribution.⁴

During the 15th century, the main form of flamenco that perfectly expressed the suffering of the outlawed people, was cante jondo. It spoke of the years that they had been condemned to serve in the ships galleys or in chain gangs of the Spanish army in America. It spoke of their suffering because they were prohibited to talk their own language and of the death penalty inflicted upon them just for belonging to an outlawed tribe. It expressed their unbroken spirit and in so doing, flamenco developed into a magnificent art which culminated in the Café Cantante period of the 19th century. ⁵

'From talking'

Flamenco today, consists of four categories, profound or deep flamenco (jondo or grande), intermediate (intermedio) light (chico) and popular flamenco.

Jondo is the most profound of the four and is used to express manic depressive or black moods. Serious and melancholic it is the nobility of flamenco. Flamenco intermedio consists of a set of forms that tends toward flamenco grande. It is not so difficult to perform and is not so profound. Flamenco chico is gay, vivacious, frivolous, and sensuous, yet it has a serious side as well. ⁶ Popular flamenco is garbage. ⁷

- a rather strong statement!

Each category of flamenco is expressed through four creative mediums, singing, dancing, guitar playing and recitation. These are known as the Four Flamenco Arts. It should be noted here as well, that the bullfight is also considered to be a flamenco art especially since it has so many of the same elements that are associated with flamenco.

Both stemmed from the common people. Both stirred the same emotions and passions. Both exhibited the erratic flashes of genius and both had a sense of indomitable steadiness and responsibility. Most important, both offered a way out of the commoner's social and economic level. ⁸

The poet, Federico Garcia Lorca, wrote of the inseparableness of flamenco and the bulls. There are both psychological and physical ties between the dance, song and the bullfight. On days of the bullfight, the air is charged with a certain electricity, anxiety and fear. The late afternoon sun slants more menacingly against the Andalucian houses, illuminating haphazardly, their stark whiteness beside the Moorish ruins and the Church. Somewhere a flamenco guitar sounds slowly, clearly, profoundly, then

grows louder and raspier and cruel as the blood of the man or the beast spills into the ground.⁹

A las cinco en la tarde.
Eran las cinco en punto de la tarde.
Un niño trajo la blanca sabana
A las cinco de la tarde.
Una espuerta de cal ya prevenida
A las cinco de la tarde.
Lo demás era muerte y solo
A las cinco de la tarde.
Que no quiero verla!
Dile a la luna que venga
Que no quiero ver la sangre
De Ignacio sobre la arena.¹⁰

At five in the afternoon.
It was five sharp in the afternoon.
A small boy brought a white sheet
At five in the afternoon.
A basket of lime was already prepared
At five in the afternoon.
Everything else was death and only death,
At five in the afternoon. I can't stand to see it!
Tell night to fall;
I don't want to see the blood
Of Ignacio on the sand.¹¹

After the bullfight, the guitar plays on eternally. Its duende sweeps over the aficionados, the walls, the wine, everywhere. The village becomes vibrant and explosive. Long after the bullfight, the guitar goes on. For the guitar is the soul of flamenco, the soul of the bullfight – the timeless essence of Andalucía.¹²

Pure flamenco was the deep song of the Soul. Through the duende, the Song exposed one's soul, its misery, suffering, love and hate, all offered freely without embarrassment or resentment. It was a cry of despair and a release of tortured emotions found only in real life situations, not in make-believe worlds of theatre, clubs or tourist caves.¹³ The following is an example of a deep song of the Soul. The poem by Federica Garcia Lorca is

about a singer, singing a song of deepest melancholy to a dancer. The dancer is robed in long trains of black silk. In cante jondo, long trains of black silk are the symbol for death.

Crystal lamps and green mirrors
Upon a Dark platform
La Parrala sustains a conversation
With Death.
She calls, Death does not come
And she calls again.
The people are enveloped by her sobs.
In the green mirrors, long trains
Of black silk move.¹⁴

The creation of an early form of Flamenco known as Andalucian cante jondo was partly the result of the belief system of the gypsies. It has already been noted that the entire gypsy culture was rooted in Shamanism and like the Ancient Andalucians, the Gypsies also believed that the daily life of each individual was controlled by a spirit or demon, the duende. Not a single thing happened or took place in all of life until the duende had entered the soul and filled it with the necessary inspiration.¹⁵ Ultimately, it was the emotion that flowed from this shared belief that led to the creation of early flamenco.

This same emotion was to give to early flamenco its tragedy, pena negra and revengeful aspects which later became its central motifs. It was to account for the predominant pre-occupation with Death that permeated flamenco. Just as tragedy was the outstanding theme in ancient cante andaluz, so Death became the outstanding theme for all flamenco.

The philosophy of flamenco was also the result of the belief system of the Gypsies. As has been noted, this belief system was perceived through the element of mysticism, which most often took the form of sound. Sound was absolutely essential to their mystical perception since this factor determined whether a particular spirit or demon was to be worshipped or feared.

Another philosophical belief was the element of seduction. To the gypsies seduction was the elemental truth that the sum total of life was birth, mating and death. Seduction was the embodiment of the teasing, the first

flirtation and the fatal impact when one succumbed to overwhelming desire. It was the climb to passion and the plunge to destruction.¹⁶

A dance of seduction was performed barefoot usually by a younger woman, while the other members of the clan sat on the ground in a circle around her. The dance demanded total participation of the whole body, physically and emotionally. This was also one of the characteristics of ancient cante andaluz (see Characteristics and Distinguishing Features of Ancient cante andaluz).

The feet prayed in their consuming desire. The knees were bent. Hips swayed under the surge of passion. Graceful arms reached out, seeking, undulating. Fingertips begged for sanctuary. Teeth and eyes flashed, black hair swung sensuously, shoulders enticed. At the end of the dance a white handkerchief was thrown into the lap of the chosen admirer

As has been mentioned in the foregoing, flamenco is now categorized as cante jondo flamenco and is expressed mainly through three creative mediums, singing, dancing and guitar playing. Here are some of the songs and dances that today comprise flamenco and have originated with the ancient song forms of cante jondo andaluz. .

EXAMPLES OF THE THREE MAIN CATEGORIES OF FLAMENCO

The *Playera* is a dance that is categorized as cante jondo flamenco and is expressed through three of the creative mediums. It is sung, danced and played. The dance evolved from one of the ancient song forms known as the *Siguiriyas*. The *Siguiriyas* was a Song of Tears or Lament which was sung unaccompanied to the graveyard and again at the gravesite. Its forlorn verses speak of the relentless stalking of Death and the hopelessness of living in a cruel and unkind world.¹⁷ Its melodic content reflects strong Arabian influences which were fused to ancient Andalusian music.

The verses of the cante for the *Playera* follow one of the poetic rhyme schemes of the Andalusian Love Poetry written by the Arabs who came to Andalusian in the 9th century. They are filled with that profound melancholy that pervades all flamenco.

Detras el carrito
Lloraba mi madre.
No lloraba aquita
Que lloraba sangre.

Behind the funeral cart
Sobbed my mother.
She didn't weep tears
She wept blood.¹⁸

An example of cante intermedio is the *Malaguena* which comes from the Province of Malaga. It is expressed through two mediums, that is to say it is sung and played, it is not danced.¹⁹

The *Malaguena* is a direct descendent of the fandango grande whose serious cante reflects strong Arabian melodic influences. Its verses encompass the most profound of human emotions.²⁰ They too, follow one of the poetic rhyme schemes of Andalusian Love Poetry.

The cante is sung freely, that is to say that there is no pre-determined beat. It has no accompaniment. Its central theme is also about Death.²¹

Ay-y! Yo vi a mi mare
En el carrito de la pena,
Y se me ocurrio a mi el deci,
Siendo mi mare tan buena
No se debia de mori!

I watched my mother arrive
In the cart of the dead
And I found myself crying,
My mother being so good,
Should not have had to die!²²

An example of cante chico is the *Zambra*. Considered to be the most artistic and famous of all the near Eastern dances, the *Zambra* originated with the Arabs. It was first known as a "zamra" which is Arabic for "flute."²³

Expressed through three of the creative mediums, it is sung, danced and played. Its characteristic foot stamps and hand claps reflect the grim

determination of the persecuted peoples hiding in the caves outside of Granada to keep up their courage.

Although categorized as cante chico flamenco the themes of the cante are overshadowed by fate and death. The three verse stanza again follows one of the poetic rhyme schemes of Andalucian Love Poetry.

No te metas con Adela
La Adela gasta cuchillo
Pa quien se meta con ella!

Don't provoke Adela
For Adela has a knife
For whomsoever meddles with her!²⁴

Flamenco was never intended just to be danced as it is often supposed. In truth, it is part of an immense, unspoken vocabulary. Pure flamenco is a way of communication and it is a strict code of behaviour. Pure flamenco is also the essence of an essential transformation which involves a transcended state.²⁵ The soul, in this transcended state, is then able to express itself and does so through the four creative mediums of flamenco.

¹ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco
(Musical New Sources Limited, England), 1984,
p. 15.

² Ibid, p. 39

³ Ibid, p. 40

⁴ Ibid, p. 40

⁵ Ibid, p. 42

⁶ Ibid, p. 45

⁷ Ibid, p. 46

⁸ Ibid, p. 30

⁹ Ibid, p. 30

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 30

¹¹ Ibid, p. 31

¹² Ibid, p. 31

¹³ Ibid, p. 23

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 22

¹⁵ Edward F. Stanton, The Tragic Myth: Lorca and cante jondo,
(University Press of Kentucky, Kentucky), 1978, p. 82

¹⁶ Lucille Armstrong, Dances of Spain: South, Centre and Northwest,
(Chanticleer press Inc., New York), 1950

¹⁷ D.E. Pohren, The Art of Flamenco,
(Musical New Sources Limited), England, 1984, p. 134

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 23

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 118

²⁰ Ibid, p. 126

²¹ Ibid, p. 126

²² Ibid, p. 127

²³ Ibid, p. 157

²⁴ Ibid, p. 157

²⁵ Karol Henderson Harding, The World's Oldest Dance: The Origins of Oriental Dance
From the internet.

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