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SPANISH FOLK-LORE IN NEW MEXICO

AURELIO M. ESPINGSA

One of the richest fields for the collecting and study of Spanish folk-lore is the southwestern part of our own country, particularly the states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. Some of these regions are very old in Spanish traditions, being some of the oldest settlements made by the Spaniards after the conquest and colonization of Mexico or Nueva España, and they have very tenaciously preserved many precious treasures of old Spanish folk-lore that other regions of the Spanish world and even Spain herself have completely forgotten. For the comparative study of Spanish folk-lore, and, therefore, ethnology and culture, the collection, publication and study of folk-lore materials from the above mentioned regions of the United States are of the greatest interest and importance to science.

Very little has been done in the collection and publication of really old and traditional materials of Spanish source from any of these regions with the single exception of New Mexico. In the all-important field of New Mexican Spanish language and folk-lore the author of this article has worked almost alone, but even so he has been fortunate enough to collect abundant materials that have been published in various American and European journals. Some of these materials, particularly the purely linguistic studies, the folk-tales, and the *romances tradicionales*, or traditional ballads, have been very welcome contributions to Spanish linguistics and folk-lore.¹ The traditional Spanish ballads, for example, that are ten in num-

1. *My Studies in New-Mexican Spanish* (studies in linguistics and dialectology) were published in Germany, in the *Revue de Dialectologie Romane* (Part I. *Phonology*, 1909, Part II. *Morphology*, 1911, and Part III. *The English Elements*, 1914.) A special article, *Syllabic Consonants in New Mexican Spanish* was published in the December, 1925, number of *Language*, journal of the Linguistic Society of

ber and are found in twenty-seven versions, furnish us one of the most interesting, important and most archaic collections of Spanish ballads that have been collected anywhere in the Spanish world. Some of them are versions of old Spanish ballads that were brought to the New World by the early Spanish settlers in the XVIth century, and are, therefore, some of the most precious materials of Spanish folk-lore that have been found in Spanish America.

But the New Mexican field has not been exhausted by any means. Much more material is available no doubt and it only awaits enthusiastic collectors and students of folk-lore who will appreciate its worth and save it from oblivion. New Mexican institutions unfortunately have taken little interest in the study or preservation of the Spanish language in New Mexico or in the collection and study of its folk-lore. The New Mexico Historical Society as now constituted is now to take the leading part in this great work and has asked the present writer to publish in the new journal of the Society articles on the Spanish language in New Mexico and on New-Mexican Spanish folk-lore. This is the first ray of hope for New-Mexican Spanish language and folk-lore and the plans of the New Mexico Historical Society will be seconded by all students of linguistics, folk-lore and ethnology. The present article, therefore, is an attempt to present to the readers of the *New Mexico Historical Review* an outline of New-Mexican Spanish folk-lore studies and to suggest the methods best suited to the pursuit of these.

America. Most of my articles and studies on New-Mexican Spanish folk-lore were published in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* during the years 1910-1916, with the general title *New-Mexican Spanish Folk-Lore*, as follows: Part I. *Myths*, Part II. *Superstitions and Beliefs*, Part III. *Folk-Tales*, Part IV. *Mexican Proverbs*, Part V. *Popular Comparisons*, Part VI. *Los Trovos del Viejo Vilmas*, Part VII. *More Folk-Tales*, Part VIII. *Short Stories and Anecdotes*, Part IX. *Riddles*, Part X *Children's Games*, Part XI. *Nursery Rhymes*. Fourteen more New-Mexican Spanish folk-tales were published in the *Bulletin de Dialectologie Romane*, Germany (1914.) My collection and study of the traditional Spanish ballads from New Mexico was published in the *Revue Hispanique*, Paris in 1915, with the title *Romancero Nuevomexicano*. As we have said above, there are ten ballads in twenty-seven versions, although Mr. C. F. Lummis in his work *The Land of Poco Tiempo*, New York, 1892, stated that no traditional Spanish ballads were to be found in New Mexico.

In California there are more collectors, according to reports, but very little has been published as yet that has any great value for Spanish folk-lore studies. The author of this article has collected and published a small number of traditional Spanish ballads, which like the New-Mexican are real gems on account of the archaic character of the versions. They are published unedited in the Memorial Volumes² published in Spain recently in honor of Don Ramón Menéndez Pidal, the greatest living authority on Spanish language and literature, and who is collecting for publication the Spanish balladry of the whole Spanish-speaking world. He has the theory that the Spanish ballads are found in oral tradition wherever the Spanish language is spoken, and thus far his theory has been upheld wherever folk-lorists have looked for such materials. The author also has an unpublished collection of folk-tales from Spanish California. As for Spanish popular songs and lyrics, the only interesting collection for the Southwest as a whole is the publication of Miss Eleanor Hague, *Spanish American Folk-Songs*, New York, 1917. These songs, however, are not very old. The recent publications of Mr. Lummis, *Spanish Songs from Old California*, are XIXth century songs, and of little interest to folk-lore.

From Arizona and Texas I do not know of any important published documents of traditional Spanish folk-lore. Now that interest in the Spanish language is spreading over our country, thanks to the just appreciation on the part of Americans for a language that is spoken on this continent by some fifty million people with whom we must live in continual commercial and cultural relations, and that is one of the great languages of the world, it is to be hoped that professors and teachers of Spanish in our universities and colleges will make an earnest effort to interest their students in Spanish folk-lore, an almost virgin field that lies at our doors.

The American Folk-Lore Society, thanks to the efforts

2. *Homenaje a Don Ramón Menéndez Pidal*, 2 volumes, Madrid, 1925.

of Professor Franz Boas of Columbia University, has taken a very active interest in the collecting and publishing of Spanish folk-lore from every possible source. But the funds of the society are limited, and unless material aid is constantly received from persons of wealth it is very difficult to carry on these investigations. In order to have a large collection of peninsular Spanish folk-tales for our comparative studies the American Folk-Lore Society decided several years ago to send a special investigator to Spain. The generosity of Mrs. Elsie Clews Parsons, past president of the society, and one of the most eminent American folk-lorists, made possible the expedition to Spain, and the result was most fortunate. We came back from Spain with some three hundred folk-tales that will be of inestimable value to our comparative studies.³ We have in these Spanish materials conclusive proof of the theories we formerly held about the general character of the Spanish-American material, namely that it is for the most part traditional and very old. For the ballads the creative period ended in the XVIth century. From that time to the end of the XVIIIth century they came to the New World through various channels of tradition. In other fields the creative period has had a longer life. In the case of the *coplas*, the *décimas*, or ballad-like compositions of a narrative, amorous or philosophic character, the vigor of modern tradition vies with the old.

And to collect these materials from the Spanish-speaking Americans of our great Southwest a work really herculean is necessary. To cry for funds to carry on these researches may seem, in our commercially mad age, like a voice that cries in the wilderness. But it does not matter. For even without funds some of this precious material may be collected by some of us.

In the following pages we give samples of genuine

3. These materials are now being published in the Stanford University Publications, with the title, *Cuentos Populares Españoles*. Volumes I and II appeared in 1923 and 1924. Volume III is now in press.

New-Mexican Spanish folk-lore, for the most part taken from my various studies already published. For the sake of brevity and because I am here reprinting in part from my own articles I shall omit all references to source.

As already indicated the most precious materials for the study of comparative literature and folk-lore are the *romances tradicionales* or old Spanish ballads. According to a theory of Ramón Menéndez Pidal the old Spanish *romances* were derived from the old *cantares de gesta* or old epic poems. From all the evidences derived from the Spanish chronicles of the XIIIth, XIVth and XVth centuries the old Spanish jongleurs and troubadours recited and sang the national epics to the people during those centuries. "*Como dicen los juglares en sus cantares y en sus fablas,*" is a commonplace expression to be found in the old chronicles when they wish to indicate the sources of the national legends. And more than that, the prose accounts very often reveal the old verse epic by copying down whole passages of prosified verse from the *cantares*. The *cantares*, however, were handed down in the mouths of the people and from these are derived the first *romances* or ballads. The old Spanish ballads, so admirably appreciated and translated into English by Lockhart and Longfellow, are pieces of the old epic songs. These historical ballads were handed down in oral tradition from the XIIIth and XIVth centuries to the XVIth and XVIIth centuries when the ballad collectors and the national dramatists like Lope de Vega and Guillén de Castro saved them from oblivion and gave them dramatic form. Some, however, have survived in oral tradition even to the present day, and they may be found in the oral tradition of Castile and other parts of Spain, in the Balkan Peninsula among the Jews that were exiled from Spain in 1492, in Chile and Mexico, and in our own New Mexico.

The opening lines of the best versions of the ten traditional Spanish ballads found by me in New Mexico, and which may be useful to those who wish to seek other versions, are the following:

1. Delgadina se paseaba por una sala cuadrada.
2. Gerineldo, Gerineldo, mi camarero aguerrido.
3. Una niña en un balcón le dice a un pastor :-Espera.
4. Francisquita, Francisquita, la del cuerpo muy sutil.
5. Andábame yo paseando por las orillas del mar.
6. En una playa arenosa una blanca sombra vi.
7. Catalina, Catalina, paño blanco de lino es.
8. Chiquita, si me muriere no me entierres en sagrado.
9. Atención, señores míos, Membruno se va a casar.
10. El piojo y la liendre se quieren casar.

There is an eleventh New Mexican Spanish version of a traditional Spanish ballad, the one found by Miss Barbara Freire-Marreco of Oxford, England, when studying ethnology among the New-Mexican Pueblo Indians and published by me in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, in December, 1916, with a comparative study. Later I myself obtained another version of the same ballad from Taos (see *Revue Hispanique*, Paris, 1917.) The complete list to date, therefore of traditional Spanish ballads found in New Mexico contains eleven ballads in twenty-nine versions. There are, of course more ballads, but they are not really old and traditional.

I now give versions of two of the old ballads in full.*

LA APARICION

(Recited by Gregorio García of Socorro, New Mexico)

En una playa arenosa una blanca sombra vi,
 y entre más me retiraba más se acercaba de mí.
 —¿Dónde vas, caballero, alejándote de mí?
 —Voy en busca de mi esposa, que hace días no la vi.
 —Ya tu esposa ya está muerta, con mis ojos yo la vi;
 cuarto duques la llevaban a la ciudad de Madrid.
 El coche en que la llevaban era de oro y carmesí;
 la tapa que le pusieron era de oro y de marfil.
 Cásate, caballero, y no te quedes así,
 y al primer niño que tengas ponle nombre como a mí.

4. Since we are not concerned at present with the peculiarities of New-Mexican Spanish I shall transcribe all the folk-lore materials in the standard Spanish alphabet.

Ya murió la flor de mayo, ya murió en el mes de abril;
ya murió la que reinaba en la ciudad de Madrid.

CAMINO DEL CALVARIO

Por el rastro de la cruz que Jesucrito llevaba
camina la Virgen Pura en una fresca mañana.
Como era tan de mañana la hora que caminaba
las campanas de Belén todas tocaban el alba.
Encontró a San Juan Bautista y de esta manera le
habla:
—¿No me has visto por aquí al hijo de mis entrañas?
—Por aquí pasó, señora, antes que el gallo cantara.
Cinco mil azotes lleva en sus sagradas espaldas.
Tres clavos lleva en sus manos con que ha de ser en-
clavado,
y una corona de espinas con que ha de ser coronado.
Una cruz lleva en sus hombros de madera muy pesada;
tanto el peso le rendía que caía y se levantaba;
una sogá en su garganta, que era una pena doblada.
Cada estirón que le daban mi Jesús se arrodillaba.
Al punto que oyó la Virgen cayó al suelo desmayada.
San Juan, como buen sobrino, luego acudió a levanta-
tarla.
—Levántese, tía mía, que no es tiempo de tardanza;
que el martirio de Jesús es libertad de las almas.

This last ballad, which is the Taos version of a very old traditional Spanish ballad dating from the XVth century or earlier, is a very vivid account of a traditional episode of the tragedy of Golgotha. My father tells me that it is part of the repertoire of religious songs that describe the Passion of the Saviour and form the Holy Week ritual of the Hermanos Penitentes, the New Mexico flagellants, the last and degenerate sons of the Third Order of St. Francis that still exist and practice their rites in New Mexico and Southern Colorado. Their organizers and leaders in the New World were the early Franciscan missionaries. Other interesting old religious ballads may be found in the ritual of this society.⁵

5. For a general account of the history of the New-Mexican flagellants see my article, *Los Hermanos Penitentes*, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

Just as important as the old *romances*, in some respects even more important, are the New-Mexican Spanish folk-tales. The number of these must be very large. In all my collections already published the number does not reach fifty. In fact I have published only some thirty really long traditional tales. The study of the New-Mexican Spanish folk-tales has always been important because it helps us to trace very definitely the Indian influence, if any. The New-Mexican materials are, for the most part, Spanish and traditional. The Indians have been influenced by the Spanish in the folk-tale transmission, but the reverse influence has been found to be negligible. My trip to Spain in 1920 has convinced me of this fact absolutely, although before the Spanish expedition I had expressed the same view. The New-Mexican Spanish version of the *Tar-Baby story*, for example, is one derived from the Spanish *Sansón* story found by me in Spain, and the Spanish tale as well as the well-known negro tales of similar character are all in fact modern versions of the old Hindu tale of the *Demon with the matted hair*. The English folk-lorist Joseph Jacobs is substantially of the same opinion. In fact it is very probable that the tale has travelled from India to Europe and from Europe to Africa and America through Spanish and Portuguese versions, as Dr. Elsie Clews Parsons has very well shown.⁶

To give even a brief account of the folk-tales of Spanish provenience that may be found in New Mexico would take us far beyond the limits of this article. I may give a comparison to illustrate the abundance of the traditional material that I confidently believe is still waiting in New Mexico for the pious sympathy of some scholar. During my six months stay in Spain in the year 1920 collecting Spanish folk-tales I collected some three hundred old tales of the greatest interest for comparative folk-lore studies. It is my guess that a similar number of old Spanish folk-

6. See Joseph Jacobs, *Indian Fairy Tales*, London, 1892, page 9, and *folk-Lore*, vol. XXX, pages 227-234, London, 1919.

tales could be collected yet in New Mexico in the same length of time. New-Mexican tradition represents a very archaic epoch with very little foreign influence since the beginning of the seventeenth century. A collection of some ten or more versions of the well-known picaresque tale of *Pedro de Urdemalas* alone would be at present a very desirable project. My few New-Mexican versions published in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* awakened a genuine interest in the genre throughout the Spanish-speaking countries and recently some have been published from Chile by Ramón A. Laval.⁷

Comparative studies in the folk-tale material reveal to us surprising procedures in folk-loristic psychology. Without entering into a detailed comparative study of the material I give below versions of a Spanish tale, both modern versions of an old tale from India, one found in the *Pantschatantra* and the *Calila and Digna*. Both Spanish versions, the one being one found by me in Spain in 1920, the other in New Mexico and recited to me by my mother many years ago and recorded for publication in 1912, date, no doubt, from a time when the *Calila and Digna* popularized the Arabic versions in Spain in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries.⁸ Both are excellent examples of the vigor of Spanish tradition in isolated districts in Toro, Spain, and New Mexico.

The two Spanish versions follow. I may add that the Spanish version from Toro, Spain, was the very first tale collected by me in Spain. The reader can imagine the joy and surprise I received when I heard this my first peninsular Spanish find of what was to be a collection of some three hundred, and recalled the similar, almost identical version that I had heard when a child from the lips of my mother. Perhaps other and longer versions may yet appear from New Mexico.

7. *Cuentos de Pedro de Urdemalas*, Santiago de Chile, 1925.

8. See Theodore Benfey, *Pantschatantra*, Leipzig, 1859, vol. I. pages 609-610.

A. Version from Toro, Spain

LA PEGA Y SUS PEGUITOS

(The magpie and her little ones)

Había una vez una pega que vivía en un ponjo donde tenía un nido con varios peguitos. Todos los días venía un zorro y le decía a la pega:

—Peguita, dame un peguito,
que si no te corto el ponjo.

La pega, con grande dolor de su corazón, le tiraba del ponjo un peguito y el pícaro del zorro se lo comía. Volvía el zorro y pasaba siempre lo mismo. El zorro le decía a la pega que le diera un peguito y que si no le cortaba el ponjo, y la pega, con grandé dolor de su corazón, le tiraba uno.

Ya el zorro acababa con los peguitos, cuando llegó un día a visitar a la pega su primo, el alcaraván. Cuando éste se enteró de lo que pasaba le dijo a su prima, la pega:— Si el zorro viene otra vez no le des un peguito. Y si te dice que te corta el ponjo le dices tú:

El hocil sí corta el ponjo,
pero no el rabo (d) el raposo.

Se fué el alcaraván y a poco llegó el zorro y le dijo a la pega:

—Peguita, dame un peguito,
que si no, te corto el ponjo.

Y la pega le respondió como le había dicho su primo, el alcaraván:

—El hocil sí corta el ponjo,
pero no el rabo (d) el raposo.

El zorro le dijo entonces a la pega:—¿Quién te ha dicho que me dijeras eso? Seguramente fué tu primo, el alcaraván. Pues yo le pillaré culo arriba en un cascajal. Y con efecto el zorro se dió maña para coger al alcaraván. Lo cogió y se lo tragó vivo. El pobre del alcaraván le decía desde la tripa:—Suéltame, hermano zorro. Déjame salir. El zorro se negaba a ello y por fin le dijo el alcaraván:— Ya que no quieres dejarme salir por lo menos vete delante del ponjo de mi prima, la pega, y grita desde allí bien alto para que todos se enteren: ¡Alcaraván comí!

Así lo hizo el zorro. Fué y se puso delante del ponjo de

la pega y gritó muy alto:—¡Alcaraván comí! Pero al gritar abrió la boca tan grande que el alcaraván se escapó y exclamó:— ¡A otro, que no a mí!

B. Version from New Mexico⁹

LA PALOMA Y SUS PICHONES

Una paloma vivía en el monte y tenía un nido en un encino con cuatro pichoncitos. Un día llegó un coyote y le dijo:

—Paloma, dame uno de tus pichones.

Y la paloma le respondió:

—No, no te lo doy.

Entonces le dijo el coyote:

—Si no me lo das, te corto el encino y me los como todos.

Y comenzó colazo y colazo a darle al encino. La pobre paloma se espantó y de miedo le tiró uno de sus pichones y le coyote lo agarró y se lo comió.

Luego llegó el calvo (el palomo) y halló a la pobre paloma llorando y le dijo:—¿Por qué lloras? Y la paloma le respondió: —¿Como no he de llorar? Vino el coyote y me quitó uno de mis pichoncitos. —¿Pa qué se lo diste?—le dijo el calvo. Y la paloma le respondió: Porque me dijo que si no le daba uno me cortaba el encino y se los comía todos. Y el calvo le dijo entonces:—Si vuelve a venir no le des nada. Y si te dice que te corta el encino y se los come todos le dices:

Hacha, burro, corta encino,
no cola de raposino.

A poco que se fué el calvo vino de nuevo el coyote y le dijo a la paloma:

—Paloma, dame uno de tus pichones.

Y la paloma le respondió:

—No, no te lo doy.

Entonces le dijo el coyote:

—Si no me lo das te corto el encino y me los como todos.

Y la paloma le dijo entonces:

9. I am calling this a New-Mexican version because I believe it is really a tale that may belong to New-Mexican tradition, but just how long it has been divorced from a peninsular Spanish tradition I would not pretend to determine. My mother learned it from her mother, but beyond that we do not know from where it came. My mother's paternal grandmother came directly from Spain toward the end of the XVIIIth century and she may have brought the tale from her home in Castile.

—Hacha, burro, corta encino,
no cola de raposino

El coyote se fué muy nojao, maliciando que el calvo era el de la culpa y lo halló bebiendo agua en un ojito. Arriándose poco a poco y muy quedito, lo pescó y le dijo:— Ora sí te voy a comer, porque tú fuiste el que le dijiste a la paloma que no me diera otro pichón. Y el calvo le respondió:— No, manito coyotito, no me mates. Mira que yo soy el rey de todas las aves y yo te llevaré onde te las comas todas. Súbete arriba de aquella lomita y te paras en las patas de atrás y gritas: ¡Alcaraván comí! y todas las aves vendrán y te las comerás.

El coyote dijo que estaba bueno, que así lo haría. Y se fué como el calvo le dijo pa arriba de la lomita, se paró en las patas de atrás y abrió la boca muy grande pa gritar lo que el calvo le había dicho. Pero abrió la boca tan grande cuando gritó ¡Alcaraván comí! que el calvo se escapó y le dijo:— ¡M— comiste!

New Mexico seems to be particularly rich in traditional Spanish proverbs and riddles. Some of these are in assonance or rhyme and represent very archaic materials. A complete or fairly complete collection of the New-Mexican Spanish proverbs would be easy to compile among the Spanish pupils in the schools. They could be asked to collect them in their homes and some one could arrange them and publish them. The same might be done with the riddles. These last are often presented in the form of *décimas* or riddle-tales. My own published collection of proverbs contains six hundred and one and the riddles number one hundred and sixty-five. The proverbs are of the greatest possible interest. Of the entire six hundred and one in my publication exactly four hundred and twenty, or about seventy per cent are to be found in the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* published recently in the 15th edition by the Royal Spanish Academy. In other words seventy per cent of the entire collection (with here and there insignificant changes in words or dialectic changes) are part of the general store house of Spanish proverb tradition so skillfully used by the great Cervantes in the mouth of San-

cho Panza. The following, which I select at random from my published collection, may be given as examples:

A. In assonance or rhyme

El que se enoja no moja ni come maiz de la troja.
 El que tiene hijo varón que no dé voces ni pregón.
 El que nació para guaje haste jumate no para.
 El que da lo que ha menester el diablo se rie de él.
 El muerto al pozo y el vivo al negocio.
 El que a las ocho no se va a las nueve ¿qué espera? Que lo
 agarren de la mano y lo echen fuera?
 El que regala bien vende y el que lo recibe lo entiende.
 Eres come Juan Gómez tú lo das y tú te lo comes.
 El que da lo que tiene no desea lo que ve.
 El que de santo resbala hasta el infierno no para.
 El dinero del mezquino dos veces anda el camino.
 El martes ni te cases ni te embarques.
 Favor referido ni de Dios ni del diablo es agradecido.
 Haz bien y no acates a quién.
 Hace más el que quiere que el que tiene.
 La suerte de la fea la bonita la desca.
 No hay dolor que dure cien años ni enfermo que lo aguante.
 Natural y figura haste la sepultura.
 No prometas ni a los santos votos ni a los niños bollos.
 Piensa el ladrón que todos son de su condición.
 Recaudo hace cocina, no Catalina.
 Si quieres pasar mal día deja tu casa y vente a la mía.
 Tanto va el cántaro al agua hasta que se cae
 Vale más saber que tener.
 Vanidad y pobreza son de un pieza.
 Zamora no se ganó en una hora.

B. Not in assonance or rhyme

A palabras necias oídos sordos.
 A cada uno su gusto le engorda.
 Así le paga el diablo al que bien le sirve.
 Al que se hace de miel se lo comen las moscas.
 A la bondad le dicen salvajada.
 Al caballo y al amigo no hay que apurarles.
 Al que Dios se la tiene San Pedro se la bendice.
 Al que tiene manada le dan potrillito.
 Buen abogado mal vecino.
 Caras vemos pero corazones no.

Con la vara que mides serás medido.
 Con deseos no se hacen templos.
 Cada loco con su tema y yo con mi terquedad.
 Cuando el diablo reza engañar quiere.
 De tal palo tal astilla.
 Dígotelo a tí, mi hija, y entiéndetelo tú, mi nuera.
 El que busca el peligro cae en él.
 El que da un paso da dos.
 El que ha de ser real sencillo aunque ande entre los do-
 blones.
 El que está hecho al mal el bien le ofende.
 La esperanza no engorda pero mantiene.
 La caridad bien ordenada comienza por sí mismo.
 No hay mal que por bien no venga.
 ¿Para qué quiere lavandera el que no tiene camisa?
 Pájaros de una misma pluma se reconocen.
 Se espantan los muertos de los degollados.
 Vale más un toma-toma que un aguárdate-tantito.

The riddles, although not so numerous as the proverbs, are just as important for folk-lore studies. They are frequently more archaic, especially those preserved in poetic form. There is one type that is of special value for comparative folk-lore, the long and complicated riddle that is preserved in oral tradition in the form of a *décima*. A *décima* is in Spanish a poetic composition in hendecasyllabic or octosyllabic metre in five strophaic groups, the first of four verses and the last four of ten each. The popular *décima* is found in all Spanish-speaking countries and on almost any subject. Political subjects are frequently treated in the *décimas*. In Spanish literature they are very old. In the riddle-*décima* we have, therefore, a popular poetic composition of great interest and importance and a traditional genre that very eloquently gives testimony of the vigor of Spanish tradition. It is most surprising that such long compositions should be handed down in oral tradition and preserved so long unchanged. A collection of these riddle-*décimas* from New Mexico is published in my *Romancero Nuevomexicano* already mentioned. But that col-

lection is small and we need many more. The following one will serve as an example:

El día en que yo nací
ese día me bautizaron;
ese día pedí mujer,
y ese día me casaron.

Confieso que soy criatura,
y de la tierra nací;
y antes de formarme a mí
hicieron mi sepultura.
Y me vide en tal altura
que muchos me respetaron.
Con cuatro letras me hablaron;
y para más entender,
luego que yo tuve el ser,
en la hora me bautizaron.

Mi madre es una criatura
que no tiene entendimiento
ni luz ni conocimiento;
ni sabe hablar porque es muda.
Mi padre es imagen pura,
incomprensible, y así
que habiéndome criado a mí
con su poder sin segundo,
me nombró solo en el mundo
en el día en que nací.

Fuí en el nacer admirable,
porque no soy engendrado,
ni tampoco bautizado
en la iglesia, nuestra madre.
y para que más les cuadre,
tres y uno solo me criaron;
por mi nombre me llamaron,
y para más entender,
lueg que yo tuve el ser,
en la hora me bautizaron.

Yo soy padre de mi hermana
y me tuvo por esposo;
pues Dios, como poderoso
me la dió por desposada.
Pues ella no fué engendrada,
Dios la crió con su poder.
De mi edad la quiso hacer
con su poder infinito;
y yo, por no estar solito,
ese día pedí mujer.

(Adán.

In the field of popular poetry New Mexico is indeed a veritable mine of folk-loristic materials, important both as traditional legendary material and as new native product. We have already spoken of the *romances tradicionales* or popular ballads, the proverbs and riddles. There are many other genres. Of those not yet discussed perhaps the most important is the *copla popular* or octosyllabic quatrain known in New Mexico as *verso*. *Echar versos*, to compose, sing or recite the popular *coplas* or *versos* was during the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries a popular pastime in New Mexico at almost any social gathering. Sometimes they took the form of poetic competitions and the *canta-*

dores or popular poets and singers, the jongleurs and troubadours of New Mexico, were held in high esteem among the people. These popular poets, of whom, let us hope, there may exist yet a few in New Mexico, are the same ones that compose and sing and recite any kind of popular poetic composition, but the *verso* was the most popular genre cultivated by them. At baptisms, at weddings, at the *prendorios* and other important social events, and between the *copitas de vino*, or something a little stronger, the *cantadores* were the center of attraction and interest. The monotonous tones of the *guitarrista* or the more melodious melancholy music of the New-Mexican *violinista* accompanied as a rule the popular *cantador* in his entertainment.

A very large and important part of the repertoire of *versos* of the New-Mexican *cantador* have always been traditional material that came from Spain, and it is therefore similar to that found in all Spanish countries. In fact the institution itself of *echar versos* is not of New-Mexican origin. The old Spanish *juglar* and *trovador* of the past ages that, at the courts King John II in the XVth century, or even earlier, sang in popular song the deeds of the old Spanish heroes or the tragic loves of the Provençal troubadours, is the direct ancestor of the New-Mexican *cantador* just as the Spanish Franciscan friar of the XVth century is the direct ancestor of the modern degenerate penitente who flogs himself in public despite the admonitions of his ecclesiastical superiors. The material of the *verso popular*, however, is not entirely old. These *versos* are a constant growth and new forms appear every day. Many of them are of a proverbial or sententious character and may be changed and adapted to fit almost any occasion. The *versos* are the philosophy of the people and express in beautiful and rhythmic verse the feelings and ideas of the Spanish people. The real character of the Spanish race may be very well studied in the popular *copla*. In it are expressed its joys and its sorrows, its hopes and its skepticism, its sentiments, feelings and ideas. In short it expresses the life of the people in artistic form. My collection of po-

popular *coplas* or *versos* contains about one thousand and is as yet unpublished. The collection being now so large it is desirable to make it as complete as possible and for that reason I hope that New-Mexican teachers and others who may be able to collect material may be good enough to send it to me. No doubt there will be many repetitions and duplicate versions sent, but the task is well worth while. Collections have been published of popular *coplas* from various parts of Spain by Rodríguez Marín in his five volume edition of *Cantos Populares Españoles* (Madrid, 1882-1884), Ledesma in his *Cancionero Castellano*, etc. Our New-Mexican collection promises to be even larger and more important than these if our New-Mexican friends will continue their active help.

The New-Mexican *verso* is an octosyllabic quatrain that expresses in its four short verses a complete judgment or idea. The verses are as a rule united by assonance or rhyme. When in assonance only the second and fourth verses are so joined. This metre is the Spanish national metre par excellence and is the verse of the Classic, and XIXth century drama. The following New-Mexican *versos*, taken at random from my collection, will serve as examples of this poetic genre known to all New Mexicans. I confidently believe that it would be difficult to find a New Mexican of Spanish descent who could not recite or sing at least a half dozen of them. The local newspapers printed in Spanish often publish a few of them and a small collection could be compiled from these newspapers alone.

1

Dicen que lo negro es triste,
yo digo que no es verdad;
tú tienes los ojos negros
y eres mi felicidad.

2

De tu ventana a la mía
me tirates dos abrazos;
uno se quedó en el aire
y el otro se hizo pedazos.

3

Antenoche fuí a tu casa
y vide luz en tu ventana;
era la luz de tus ojos,
lucero de la mañana.

4

De los chinos de tu frente
me darás una semilla,
para sembrar en l' oriente
una rosa de Castilla.

5.

El río grande va crecido
y el chiquito va hecho un mar.
Manuelito en la otra banda
y yo sin poder pasar

6

Ya la luna tiene cuernos
y el lucero la acompaña.
¡Ay, qué triste queda un hombre
cuando una guera lo engaña!

7.

Vale más morir a palos
que de celos padecer;
vale más querer a un perro
que no a una ingrata mujer.

8

Cuatro palomitas blancas,
sentadas en un romero,
una a la otra se decían:
—No hay amor como el primero.

9

Dices que me quieres tanto
no me subas ran arriba,
que las hojas en el árbol
no duran toda la vida.

10.

Arbolito enflorado.
verde, color de esperanza;
mi corazón no te olvida
ni de quererte se cansa.

11.

Ninguno cante vitoria
aunque en el estribo esté;
que muchos en el estribo
se suelen quedar a pie.

12

Si Dios me diera dinero
como arenas tiene el mar,
gastaría como un loco,
todos los días un real.

13

Me han dicho que tienes otro
que lo quieres más que a mí.
Gózalo por muchos años;
no le pagues como a mí.

14

Cuando un pobre se emborracha
y un rico en su compañía,
la del pobre es borraquera,
la del rico es alegría.

15

La que se casa con viejo
ha de tener dos trabajos,
el sobarle las rodillas
y estirarle los zancajos.

16

¡Mal haya la ropa negra
y el sastre que la cortó!
Mi morena tiene luto
sin que me haya muerto yo.

17.

Cuando quise no quisites
y ahora que quieres no quiero;
llora tú tu soledad
que yo la lloré primero.

18

De tus hermosos cabellos
me darás para un cordón,
y yo te daré por ellos
la vida y el corazón.

A subject that has a direct relation to New-Mexican Spanish ethnology and folk-lore is New-Mexican music. We find here, of course, that Spanish tradition is also very strong. When I travelled through the villages of Old Castile during my trip to Spain in 1920 I was more than once

agreeably surprised to find that a New-Mexican *tonadilla* or tune known to me since childhood was practically the same as one yet current in Castile. In Salas de los Infantes, near Burgos, I heard a few Christmas carols sung by children and there was among these one,

Señora Santa Ana,
Señor San Joaquín,
Arrollad este niño,
Se quiere dormir,

that had the same words and practically the same tune as the New-Mexican one, showing evidently a direct relation. The history of Spanish popular music is a subject that is unknown to me, but I venture to suggest that in New Mexico there are important materials for its study in the New World. One thing is certain. There seems to be in the music and also in the development of the popular dances some native Indian influence. In the music of the popular, traditional poetic forms there may be little or no Indian influence whatever. The following, for example, are tunes to which are sung popular versos, and these, I believe, are really of Spanish source:

No 1



Di - cen que lo ne - gro es tris - te, yo di - go que no es ver - dad.



Tú tie - nes los o - jos ne - gros y e - res mi fe - li - ci - dad.

CHORUS: *prestissimo, marcato.*

La, la, la, la, etc.



NO 4



De los chi-nos de tu fren-te me dar - ás u-na se -



mi-lla, pa-ra se-mbrar en l'o-riente u-na ro-sa de Cas-ti-lla.

CHORUS: *prestissimo, marcato.*



La, la, la, la, etc.



The music of the following *indita*, however, betrays a very decided Indian influence. The term *indita* has a variety of meanings in New-Mexican Spanish. It may mean a modern type of ballad written either in the traditional octosyllabic *romance* verse or in octosyllabic *quintillas* or five verse strophies. But it also denotes a popular song and dance formed after the pattern of the Spanish *jota* that may be a song, a dance, or both. The following *indita* is one of the second type, and any one that has heard native New-Mexican Indian music will at once observe the Indian flavor of its notes. The way the Spanish octosyllabic verse with a perfectly well defined iambic accentuation and assonanced scheme has been combined and harmonized with music of Indian source (probably of the Pueblo type) or at least strongly influenced by it is explained only by the fact that primitive rhythm, the only indispensable and absolutely essential principle in verse or music, is not the special patrimony of any people or race.

LA INDITA DE COCHITI

¡Mal haya las indias Juanas
y el alma que las parió,
que como no son cristianas

reniegan de quien las crió!
 Indita, indita, indita,
 indita de Cochití;
 no le hace que sea indita,
 al cabo no soy pa ti.



Mal ha-ya las in-dias Jua-nas y el alma que las pa-



rió,



que co-mo no son cris - tia - nas re - nie-gan de quien las



crió



que co-mo no son cris - tia - nas re - nie-gan de quien las



crió