INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ:

A BLACK CUBAN MUSICIAN IN THE DANCE MUSIC MILIEUS OF HAVANA, NEW YORK CITY, AND LOS ANGELES

by

DAVID F. GARCÍA

VOLUME I

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

2003

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

UMI Number: 3083665

Copyright 2003 by
Garcia, David Fernando

All rights reserved.

UMI®

UMI Microform 3083665
Copyright 2003 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

© 2003

David F. García

All Rights Reserved

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Music in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

April 21, 2003
Date

Chair of Examining Committee

April 23, 2003
Date

David Olan (pp)
Executive Officer

Peter Manuel

Stephen Blum

Juan Flores
Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ABSTRACT

ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ:

A BLACK CUBAN MUSICIAN IN THE DANCE MUSIC MILIEUS OF HAVANA, NEW YORK CITY, AND LOS ANGELES

by

David F. García

Advisor: Professor Peter Manuel

This dissertation documents and examines the music, career, and life of Arsenio Rodríguez (1911-1970), a prolific black composer and innovator of Cuban popular dance music. Although musicians and historians have recognized Rodríguez's importance to the development of *mambo* and *salsa*, little has been written on the exact nature of his musical contribution. This study focuses on the emergence and popularization of his *son montuno* style and its accompanying dance style among Havana's black working class in the 1940s, his music's role in the formation of *mambo* and early *salsa* in addition to *pachanga* and *boogaloo* in New York City, and his struggling performance career in New York's and Los Angeles's ethnically diverse Latin dance music settings in the 1950s and 1960s.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The data collected derives from over 80 interviews conducted with more than 50 of Rodríguez's family members, former band members, and other contemporaries, in addition to his recorded repertory, newspapers and magazines, musician's union records and local government documents, as well as documents from record companies and publishing companies and databases. Through extensive musical analysis and historical and social documentation, this study shows that Rodríguez's son montuno style was defined by principles and procedures characteristic of African performance and emerged in the distinct historical and social context of Havana, whose social relations both contributed to its identification as a "black" style and accounted for the racial discourse through which this was expressed. It also shows that the trajectory of his style and musical career as well as his experience as a black Cuban immigrant in New York City and Los Angeles were shaped by the condition of displacement, whereby he, his music, and style were subject to different aesthetic codes, dance forms, and forms of group identification. Finally, this dissertation redresses Rodríguez's (dis)placement in Cuban and Latin dance music historiography, whereby recognition of his significance is limited to the 1940s in Cuba and ignores both the coexistence of his music with mambo, pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa and the complex social relations that shaped the trajectories of his career, music, and these styles as well as the dance music milieus of Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Preface

Three factors led me to pursue research on Arsenio Rodríguez and his music. Firstly, Dr. Robin Moore, who was my teacher at the University of California at Santa Barbara (1995-1996), introduced me to the name Arsenio Rodríguez. He also informed me of both his importance to Cuban and Latin music history and the lack of research on particularly the latter part of his career and life. Secondly, the compilation *Cuban Counterpoint: History of the Son Montuno* (Rounder CD 1078), produced by Morton Marks, was the first CD I bought that contained recordings by Arsenio's conjuntos. I was especially blown-away by his 1966 recording of "Para bailar el montuno" for its melodic lyricism, funky bass line, and distorted tres. Thirdly, the first person I made contact with and interviewed was Raul Travieso, Arsenio's brother, whose encouragement was the decisive factor in convincing me to pursue research on Arsenio's life and music.

From the start of my research, I sought understanding of the social and especially the musical aspects of Arsenio's importance. I feel that detailed musical analysis and the analysis of the interrelationship of music and dance have been largely absent in recently published social histories of Latino and Latin American popular music. I hope that this work will be one of many soon-to-be published works that gives balanced attention to social history, musical style, and dance, which are obviously key components of the history of most if not all Latino and Latin American popular music. In this work the purpose of the musical examples is not to present a definitive representation of the music as heard on the recordings but rather to demonstrate important features expounded on in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the text. For instance, the subtle palm and fingertip strokes of the bongó and tumbadora players' left hands, which are inaudible on the recordings, are notated with slashes. The more audible attacks are notated with a note-head (for open-tone attacks) and an "x" (for slaps). Many of these attacks as well as many notes in the other parts (i.e., voices, trumpets, tres, piano, and bass) correspond with the steps of the *son's* basic footwork. I have identified these notes, attacks, and steps with numbers that correspond to the basic steps of the *son's* footwork. Finally, I have transcribed all of the brass and reed parts in C to facilitate easy reading.

I would like to thank the following individuals and publishing companies for graciously giving me permission to reprint excerpts of music from their respective catalogues: Oliver Berliner (Hall of Fame Music Co., Inc.), Juliette Perez (Warner Brothers Publications U.S. Inc.), and Jennifer V. Chartier (Hal Leonard Corporation representing Peermusic). Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain permission to reprint many examples for various reasons, including unacceptably high fee requests, disputed copyright ownership, and my inability to find the copyright owners.

There are many individuals and institutions whose support and guidance were vital to my research and completion of this work. First and foremost I would like to thank my wife Rose De La Torre for her loving companionship and, most of all, unwavering support during these last six years. I would also like to thank Sr. Raúl M. Travieso Scull (1920-2001) for welcoming me into his home and sharing with me his memories of his brother Arsenio and thoughts about his own lived experiences. Muchísimas gracias Señor por su ayuda, y por todo lo que me has enseñado sobre la vida y ser una persona más humana.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Thanks to all of the musicians and other individuals for agreeing and taking the time to being interviewed, especially Israel Berrios. David Carp, Raúl Fernández, Cristobal Díaz Ayala, Jaime Jaramillo, and others were extremely helpful in providing me with valuable sources, including interviews and recordings.

To my readers: Dr. Stephen Blum's shrewd suggestions and comments on earlier drafts of these chapters proved to be invaluable to the dissertation's completion; and Dr. Juan Flores's continuing enthusiasm in my work has been enormously motivating. Thanks also to my examiners Dr. Robin Moore, Dr. Dominique Cyrille, and, especially, Dr. John Graziano for accepting to be on my defense committee and for providing me with their invaluable suggestions. Thanks most of all to Dr. Peter Manuel for believing in me from the beginning and his unwavering guidance and support during my research and writing of the dissertation. Thanks also to my colleagues Elizabeth Wollman, Benjamin Lapidus, and Adonis Chacon for their friendship, advice, and emotional support.

I am grateful for the support provided by the MAGNET President's Fellowship (1997-2001), the MAGNET President's Dissertation Fellowship (2001-2002), and the Baisley Powell Elebash Dissertation Fellowship in the Music of New York (2001-2002).

Finally, I would like to thank my brother George García and sister Gabriella Dowling for their loving support, as well as to my mom and dad for a life-time of hard work and the encouragement they have given me in all of my endeavors.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE vi

LIST OF EXAMPLES xiv

LIST OF FIGURES xvii

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION 1
- Biography and Ethnomusicology . . . 5
  - The "individual" 8
  - Exceptional musicians and "stars" . . 13
  - Writing biography 19
  - Sources 21
- Arsenio and the Black Diaspora: Analytical and Interpretive Approach . . 23
  - The son montuno style 26
  - The social significance of the son montuno style in Havana . . . 32
  - The displacement of the son montuno style in New York City and Los Angeles 38
  - The black Cuban immigrant experience . 42
  - Outline. 49

Chapter 2 ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ AS A YOUNG BLACK MUSICIAN IN THE DANCE MUSIC MILIEU OF HAVANA, 1926-1939 52
- Arsenio's Background, 1911-1928 . . . 54
  - Rural origins 54
  - Urban migration 61
- Havana's Dance Music Landscape . . . 66
  - Sociedades 68
  - Cabarets 76
  - Academias de baile 79
  - Cervecerías and the salones de baile . . 80
  - Arsenio's first septetos, 1928-1939 . . 82
- Negotiating Havana's Stratified Performance Landscape 86

Chapter 3 CONTESTING THE DOMINANT DISCOURSES OF *MESTIZAJE* AND *AFROCUBANISMO*: ARSENIO'S *AFROCUBANOS*, 1937-1940 . . . 96
- Mestizaje and Afrocubanismo 98

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mestizaje and the ideal of "superación" . 98
Afrocubanismo and representation . . 101
Arsenio's Afrocubanos, 1937-1940 . . . 108
History and musical characteristics . . 109
Afrocuban oral traditions as strategic sources 113
Conclusion 123

Chapter 4 ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ Y SU CONJUNTO AND THE SON MONTUNO STYLE, 1940-1952 . . . 126
The Early History of Arsenio's Conjunto, 1940-1942 127
The "first" conjunto 131
The Son Montuno Style 133
Forms and arrangement scheme . . 136
Contratiempo 141
Call-and-response 153
Corresponding sound with movement. . 156
Arsenio's *Diablo* and the "Mambo" . . . 163
¡Diablo!: Arsenio's version of the mambo . 174
Luis "Lilí" Martínez Griñan . . . 190
Conclusion 192

Chapter 5 CHANGING THE VALUE ORIENTATION OF BLACKNESS: ARSENIO'S CONJUNTO AND THE BLACK WORKING CLASS OF HAVANA . . 194
Ritualizing Black Dance Music . . . 197
The political, economic, and social situation in Havana . . . 198
Arcaño, Arsenio, and the working-class sociedades de color . . . 201
The black "dancing class" . . . 206
Empowering the black working class . . 211
Kike's incarceration 221
Re-evaluating Blackness 226
Introducing the tumbadora . . . 227
Estilo negro y macho 231
The Politics and Economics of the Music Industry in Havana 243
Radio Mil Diez 244
RCA Victor and Peer International . . 253
Leaving Havana 254

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 6 CONTESTING THE DOMINANT DISCOURSE OF THE MAMBO: ARSENIO IN NEW YORK CITY, 1950-1955 257
Migrating to New York City 261
New York City via Tampa, 1947 . . 263
Commuting between Havana and New York City, 1950-1952 . . 267
The Conjunto de Estrellas in Puerto Rico, 1952 273
The Politics of Claiming Ownership Over the Mambo 276
Pérez Prado and the "creator" of the mambo 277
Pérez Prado and "authenticity" . . 286
Mambo in New York City and the Son Montuno's Displacement 290
The son montuno and mambo dance styles 291
The "modern" New York mambo style . 300
Arsenio's capetillos and mambos . . 307
Arsenio's chachachás 316
Conclusion 320

Chapter 7 FROM *ESTILO NEGRO* TO *TÍPICO CUBANO*: SHIFTING PERCEPTIONS AND ROLES OF ARSENIO'S STYLE 322
Returning to Havana, 1956-1957 . . . 324
Arsenio's political consciousness and national identity . . . 331
New York City's Latin Dance Music Milieu . . 334
The Latin dance music landscape . . 335
Local power networks . . . 341
Arsenio and the Puerto Rican and Cuban Communities in New York City . . . 345
The Club Cubano Inter-Americano . . 349
Re-configuring the conjunto and charanga relationship in the Bronx . 357
Arsenio and the post-1959 Cuban migration 361
Arsenio's Style in New York City . . . 364
Arsenio's recordings, 1958-1963 . . 366
La Pachanga and *Quindembo* . . 372
Leaving New York City, 1964 . . 384

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

VOLUME II

Chapter 8 THE FINAL YEARS IN LOS ANGELES AND NEW YORK CITY: STRUGGLE, IMAGE, AND RACE IN THE "PRE-SALSA" PERIOD, 1964-1970 . 386
Arsenio in Los Angeles, 1964-1965 . . . 388
The Latino population in Los Angeles . 389
The Latin dance music landscape in Los Angeles, 1960s . . . 392
Inter- and intra-regional power networks . 401
Arsenio's performances in Los Angeles, 1965 406
The reception of Arsenio's son montuno style in Los Angeles . . . 413
Arsenio and the "Pre-salsa" Milieu in New York City, 1966-1968 . . . 417
Boogaloo and Arsenio's son montuno . 418
Arsenio's last commercial recordings . . 426
Arsenio and the "pre-salsa" milieu . . 431
Arsenio's African Diaspora 438
Expressions of identity with the Black Diaspora 438
The Festival of American Folklife, 1969 . 441
Final Performances and Death in Los Angeles, 1969-1970 446

Chapter 9 SALSA AND ARSENIO'S LEGACY . . . 452
Resituating Arsenio and Cuban Conjunto Music in Salsa Historiography . . . 455
Deconstructing salsa's "típico" category 455
Salsa: genre or repertory of genres and styles? 462
Tracing the legacy of Arsenio's style in salsa's gendered discourse and "barrio" trope 464
The Son Montuno in the Early Salsa Repertory of New York City 473
The son montuno style and form . . 475
The son montuno and salsa dance styles . 493
The moña: Arsenio's definitive contribution to salsa . . . 500
Conclusion 510

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 10 THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ: CONCLUSIONS 511

APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Song Catalog 520
1. Songs Registered under Arsenio Rodríguez, a.k.a. Arsenio Rodríguez Scull 521
2. Songs Registered under Israel Travieso, a.k.a. Israel Rodríguez and Israel Rodríguez Scull (composed by Arsenio Rodríguez) 537

Appendix 2: Discography 538
1. Selected List of Arsenio Rodríguez's Compositions Recorded by Others, 1935-1957 539
2. Recordings by Arsenio Rodríguez's Conjuntos, 1940-1968 541
3. Recordings with Chano Pozo, 1947 575
4. Ralph Rinzler Fieldwork: Arsenio Rodríguez with Israel "Kike" Travieso, 1964 576
5. Rodríguez Brothers: Arsenio and Kike with Luis Salomé, 1969 577

Appendix 3: Lyric Transcriptions 578

Appendix 4: Tables 610

BIBLIOGRAPHY 701
Primary Sources 702
Interviews conducted by the author 702
Interviews conducted by others 706
Government, musician's union, and other official documents and publications 707
Newspapers and magazines 709

Secondary Sources 710

Discography 734
Commercial recordings by Arsenio Rodríguez . . 734
Non-commercial recordings by Arsenio Rodríguez archived at the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive. Smithsonian Institution . . 736
Other recordings cited 736

Videography 741

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

LIST OF EXAMPLES[1]

3.1 The tango-congo and Ogún rhythmic patterns
- a. The "tango-congo" pattern 113
- b. Ogún composite rhythm 113

4.1 Bass patterns
- a. The tresillo, bolero, and anticipated bass patterns . 144
- b. Variations of the "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration . 144

4.2 The son montuno texture
- a. "Camina a trabajá" (16 Nov. 1943) 145
- b. "Mi chinita me botó" (6 July 1944) 146
- c. "El reloj de pastora" (21 June 1946) 147
- d. "Soy el terror" (10 Jan. 1947) 148
- e. "No toque el guao" (22 June 1948) 149
- f. "Qué cosas tendrán las mujeres" (28 Jan. 1949) . 150

4.3 Off-beat accented refrain patterns
- a. "Cangrejo fué a estudiar" (21 June 1946) . . 152
- b. "Me boté de guaño" (2 August 1949) 152
- c. "Me dijo que sí y le dije que no" (13 February 1951) . 152

4.4 Off-beat accented patterns
- a. The "mambo rhythm" as sung by Humberto Cané . 169
- b. "Que lindo Bayamó:" traditional *son* with syncopated tres guajeo 169
- c. "Tribilín cantore" (29 April 1928), Septeto Habanero . 169
- d. "Yo no como corazón de chivo" (6 July 1944) . 169
- e. "Yeye" (5 July 1945) 170

4.5 The mambo section and rhythm of the same name
- a. "Arcaño y su Nuevo Ritmo" (1944), Arcaño y sus Maravillas 171
- b. "La última noche" (ca. 1945), Orq. Casino de la Playa 171
- c. "La rareza del siglo" (ca. 1944), Julio Cueva y su Orquesta 172

4.6 Interweaving parts and cross-rhythms in yuka . . 177

4.7 Ternary-phrased cierre: "Yo no engaño a las nenas" (March 1948) 179

[1] All commercialiy recorded examples by Arsenio's conjuntos, except where indicated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

4.8 Arsenio's diablos
a. "No hay yaya sin guayacán" (27 Nov. 1945) . . 182
b. "El reloj de Pastora" (21 June 1946) . . . 184
c. "Dame un cachito pa' huelé" (21 June 1946) . . 185
d. "Kila, Kike y Chocolate" (29 March 1950) . . 188

5.1 Arsenio's conjunto-style guaguancó
a. "A Belén le toca ahora" (19 Oct. 1948) . . 215
b. Off-beat accented coro patterns . . . 216
c. "El rumbón de Luyanó" (19 April 1950) . . 217

5.2 Guaracha as performed in the "black" and "white" styles
a. "Adivínalo" (10 Jan. 1947) 238
b. "Vive como yo" (ca. 1948-50), La Sonora Matancera . 239
c. "Vieja, flaca y fea" (ca. 1947), Conjunto Casino . 240

5.3 "Don Felipe" (3 January 1947), Conjunto Casino . . 242

6.1 The basic son montuno and mambo dance steps
a. "Esas no" (ca. 1951) 295
b. "Ran kan kan" (23 November 1949), Tito Puente . 296

6.2 The mambo section for big band arrangements
a. "Donde estabas tú" (1950), Tito Puente . . 303
b. "Tremendo cumban" (1953), Machito . . 304

6.3 Jazz-influenced elements in the New York mambo style
a. "Donde estabas tú" (1950), Tito Puente . . 306
b. "Barbara batibiri" (1950), Machito . . . 306

6.4 "Baila Simón" (2 April 1953) 312

6.5 Timbal patterns
a. "Mambo en la cueva" (16 March 1955) . . 315
b. Basic *baqueteo* pattern for danzón . . . 315

6.6 "Mi primer cariño" (16 March 1955), chachachá . . 319

7.1 "El reloj de Pastora" (late 1950s) 370

7.2 Son montuno texture and the pachanga
a. "El agua del clavelito" (1960), Johnny Pacheco y su Charanga 376

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

b. "Oyeme mulata" (1960), Johnny Pacheco y su Charanga 377

7.3 "Sabor de pachanga" (ca. 1960) 380

8.1 Variations of the "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration in boogaloo
a. "El pito" (1966), Joe Cuba Sextet . . . 421
b. "Bang Bang" (1966), Joe Cuba Sextet . . . 421
c. "I Like It Like That" (1967), Pete Rodríguez . . 421
d. "Gypsy Woman" (1967), Joe Bataan . . . 421

8.2 The "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration in Arsenio's *Viva Arsenio!*
a. "Baila con migo" (18 April 1966) . . . 422
b. "Randy" (28 April 1966) 422
c. "La bamba" (28 April 1966) 422
d. "Para bailar el montuno" (2 May 1966) . . 422
e. "La yuka" (2 May 1966) 422

8.3 The son montuno and boogaloo textures
a. "Hang on Sloopy" (18 April 1966) . . . 424
b. "I Like It Like That" (1967), Pete Rodríguez . . 425

8.4 "Daddy Give Me Candy" (27 June 1968), son montuno texture 429

9.1 The son montuno texture
a. "Me voy contigo" (mid 1950s), Chappottín y sus Estrellas 477
b. "Me voy contigo" (ca. 1968), Johnny Pacheco y su "Nuevo Tumbao 478
c. "No vuelvo a Morón" (ca. 1950) . . . 479
d. "No vuelvo a Morón" (ca. 1966), Johnny Pacheco y su "Nuevo Tumbao 480

9.2 The "Mi chinita me botó" and anticipated bass figurations
a. "Hachero pa' un palo" (ca. 1960) . . . 484
b. "Hachero pa' un palo" (ca. 1970), La Sonora Ponceña 485

9.3 Variations of Arsenio's "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration
a. "Café" (1964), Eddie Palmieri and La Perfecta. . 487
b. "Estrellas de Fania" (1972), Fania All-Stars . . 488

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

9.4 "Tumba y bongó" (1972), Orchestra Harlow . . . 490

9.5 The son montuno dance style
a. "Yo sí como candela" (early 1950s), Chappottín y sus Estrellas 498
b. "El terror" (1972), Orchestra Harlow . . . 499

9.6 Diablos with moñas
a. "Pa' huelé" (1970), Eddie Palmieri and His Orchestra 505
b. "Quitate tú" (1972), Fania All-Stars . . . 507

LIST OF FIGURES

2.1 Arsenio Rodríguez, ca. 1940 92

4.1 Conjunto Arsenio Rodríguez, ca. 1943 . . . 130

4.2 Son montuno dance style
a. Arm-raising at the diablo 161
b. Turns with raised-arms 161

4.3 Son montuno footwork
a. Accenting beat 4 of clave's "three-side" . . 161
b. Step 3 on "and-of-four" of clave's "two-side" . . 161

5.1 Raúl Travieso and Arsenio, Havana, ca. 1946 . . 223

5.2 Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto, Radio Salas, Havana, ca. 1950 252

5.3 Israel "Kike" Travieso, New York City, 1952 . . 255

6.1 Regla María's *quinceñera*, Pogolotti, Marianao, 8 September 1950 271

6.2 Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto de Estrellas, 1952 . 274

6.3 Arsenio and Dámaso Pérez Prado, 19 January 1952
a. Ad in *El Diario de Nueva York* for the "face-to-face" between Pérez Prado and Arsenio . . 280
b. Ad in the *New York Daily News* for the same "face-to-face" between Pérez Prado and Arsenio . 281

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

7.1 Luis "Wito" Kortwrite, Estela Rodríguez, and Arsenio, Havana, 1956 326

8.1 The Festival of American Folklife, "Black Music through Languages of the New World," Washington D.C., 5 July 1969 445

8.2 The Festival of American Folklife (reverse angle) . . 446

9.1 Using the son, bolero, and chachachá footwork patterns to dance son montuno 496

9.2 A vacunao-type gesture at the beginning of the diablo . 496

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 1

Introduction

> Usually, it is the winners who capture the history books. . . but it is astonishing how much more dramatic an issue becomes if the opponents' views are given equal play, and the contest is told as if the outcome were still in the balance.[1]
>
> —Barbara Tuchman

This dissertation is a study of the musical career of Arsenio Rodríguez (1911-1970), of the son montuno style that he popularized in Havana in the early 1940s and continued to perform throughout his career, and of the dance music milieus of Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles in which he lived and worked. Since the mid-1930s, Arsenio's[2] compositions have been recorded by internationally popular orchestras and musicians. He began his own recording career in 1940 with his *conjunto* ensemble, and by 1942 he had established a transformational style of *son* music known as "son montuno" which would play a pivotal role in the subsequent formation of *mambo*, *pachanga*, *boogaloo*, and *salsa*. His conjunto's popularity reached its apex by the mid-1940s throughout Cuba, especially among the black working class of Havana. Between 1950 and 1952, he made frequent trips to New York City where he organized another conjunto made up of mostly Cuban

---

[1] Tuchman 1981: 137.

[2] I will be referring to Arsenio by his first name because it is used out of affection by his closest friends and relatives, and it is the name used by almost everyone else to distinguish him from other artists named "Rodríguez," a surname which is very common in Latin America.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and Puerto Rican musicians of color, with whom he performed and recorded regularly. In 1952 he decided to stay in New York due to deteriorating social and political conditions in Havana.

Through the first half of the 1950s, Arsenio continued to compose, record, and lead his conjunto, which performed regularly in New York's most prominent Latino music dancehalls alongside internationally popular mambo big bands such as those of Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito. However, unlike these and other stars of mambo and Cuban music such as Dámaso Pérez Prado and La Sonora Matancera, Arsenio failed to obtain international stardom during this period of mambo mania. Yet, as in Havana, his conjunto remained active in and had a significant impact on the musical life of the local Puerto Rican and Cuban communities in East Harlem and, especially, the South Bronx. He returned to Havana in 1956 and attempted, in vain, to re-establish his conjunto and career, returning to New York less than two years later.

In the first half of the 1960s, a younger generation of musicians and entrepreneurs emerged in New York's Latin dance music milieu to popularize *pachanga*, which significantly drew its stylistic influence from Arsenio's son montuno style. With performing opportunities waning, Arsenio moved to Los Angeles in late 1964 where he attempted to create a niche for himself and his conjunto, which consisted of Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Mexican musicians. But once again his performances were largely relegated to peripheral locales, especially in East Los Angeles. In 1966 he returned to New York and reformed his conjunto as the nascent salsa industry was set to recast mostly Cuban *son* music from the 1940s and 1950s, including much of Arsenio's recorded repertory, into

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

more contemporary stylistic and instrumental formations. However, he and his conjunto were conspicuously overlooked by promoters and record producers. He returned to Los Angeles in mid 1969 to resume performing until his death on 30 December 1970.

Cuban and other Latino musicians readily admit to the significant impact Arsenio's music has had on their approach to performing Cuban and Latino dance music. Cuban pianist Rubén González, of the world-renowned film *Buena Vista Social Club*, performed and recorded with Arsenio's conjunto from about 1945 to 1946. In the liner notes to his recently released CD *Chanchullo*, González is quoted as saying: "I got my style from Arsenio who was not a piano player. He taught me many things; to always think about a solo before playing it, never to play the same thing twice and never depart from the rhythm."[3] Cuban composer and bandleader Adalberto Álvarez stated: "If I've had to regularly resort back to these masters it's because in the conception of the rhythm, of the *sabor* [feel; taste], in the secrets of son montuno, it was all in Benny [Moré], in Arsenio, in Chappottín, and for those who want to play this type of music they must drink from these fountains."[4] Puerto Rican composer and pianist Papo Lucca has similarly stated: "There's Arsenio Rodríguez, Chappottín, Benny Moré, Aragón, Casino; whoever wants to start playing the music has to start with that music, because if you don't start with that I don't think the schooling will be complete."[5] And New York-born Puerto Rican composer and

---

[3] Liner notes to *Chanchullo: Rubén Gonzalez*. World Circuit/Nonesuch 79503-2.
[4] Quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 179. All translations from Spanish are the authors (except where indicated).
[5] Quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 159.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pianist Eddie Palmieri continues enthusiastically to study Arsenio's recordings.[6]

Despite the profound impact his music would have on future generations of musicians, Arsenio's own career was characterized by an ongoing series of musical and professional contentions and resolutions, struggles and negotiations, failures and successes. As a black composer, he contended with broader social attitudes toward race and class, his responses to are most notably reflected in his musical and professional choices. As a Cuban musician, he struggled with musical, social, and political trends at the local, national, and international levels, occasionally and reluctantly modifying his son montuno style as he strove for commercial success and recognition. In short, Arsenio's life and music articulate a distinct perspective whose examination and interpretation herein will reveal new and historically significant insights into the tensions, alliances, and fissures that characterized his music, career, and life as well as musical life in general in Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles, from the 1930s through the 1960s.

In researching Arsenio's music, career, and life, issues of race, style, identity, and historiography of Cuban and Latino popular music emerged repeatedly in various interrelated ways. For instance, racial and class segregation openly defined the landscape of dance music locales in Havana in the 1930s and 1940s, while it less conspicuously, yet still circumscribed much of New York City's and Los Angeles's dance music landscapes in the 1950s and 1960s. Also, the son montuno style that he founded and that flourished among the black working class in Havana in the 1940s had a formative role in the

---

[6] Chris Washburne, personal communication.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

emergence of pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa in the 1960s; meanwhile, his own performance career and style lingered on in a state of displacement in the ethnically and nationally diverse Latin dance music milieus of New York City and Los Angeles. Finally, his (dis)placement in Cuban and Latin dance music historiography, whereby recognition of his significance is limited to the 1940s in Cuba, can be attributed to its reliance on the ideas of "tradition" and "progress" in conjunction with its linear orientation of the relationships of musical styles. By depending on these ideas and this historical orientation historians and musicologists have not been in the position to address the coexistence of Arsenio's music with mambo, pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa and the complex social relations that shaped the trajectories of his career, music, and these styles as well as the dance music milieus of Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles.

In the following section I will outline the components of this biography of Arsenio Rodríguez, arguing that the contents constitute an alternative historical perspective to that which is offered in conventional Cuban and Latino dance music historiography. After, I will discuss my analytical and interpretive approach, which draws significantly from black diaspora perspectives, on the issues of race, style, and identity as these concerned the trajectory of Arsenio's son montuno style, career, and life.

Biography and Ethnomusicology

Biographies and other types of studies of individuals written by ethnomusicologists have

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

only recently increased in number after decades of almost total neglect.[7] Hugo Zemp remarked on the discipline's lacuna of studies of individual musicians, pointing out that discussions of the role of autobiography, life history, as well as biography in ethnomusicology are absent in Alan Merriam's seminal ethnomusicological work *The Anthropology of Music* and the manual *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction.*[8] While these genres continue to constitute a relatively small proportion of the ethnomusicological literature, biography especially maintains a peripheral status. In 1968 and, again, in 1983 Bruno Nettl gave three explanations for the lack of interest in the study of individuals among ethnomusicologists: 1) their preoccupation of defending "non-Western" folk and popular music as worthy of study, and the consequent interest in the music used by a whole culture or by a large segment of a population, such that the role of the individual is thus overlooked; 2) a belief in the homogeneity of non-Western cultures, resulting in the idea that a picture of musical life in the population at large gives one a picture of music in the life of each individual; and 3) the assumption that music in non-Western and folk

---

[7] Jeff Todd Titon (1980) has outlined the differences between these types of study. Autobiography is basically written directly by the subject. Life history is collected, organized, and edited by the writer working in collaboration with the subject. Life story consists of a verbatim transcription of the subject's own telling of his or her story. As Titon explains, while the life history is concerned with factual accuracy, the life story has a fictional base, in which learning about the personality of and not the historical facts about the subject is the main goal of the reader. Oral history focuses on historical events, processes, causes, and effects recollected by an individual or individuals. Finally, biography, like life history, is concerned with the historical facts of the subject's life. But the biographer collects data not only from the subject but also from printed and recorded documents, accounts by other individuals which often include autobiographical statements and oral histories on relevant historical events, as well as other sources.

[8] Zemp 1995: 24-25 n2.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cultures is stable and unchanging until polluted by the West.[9] While Nettl's third explanation is no longer a valid assumption of ethnomusicologists, the first two continue to factor in ethnomusicologists' conceptions of the music and musicians they study. Virginia Danielson has additionally suggested that the lack of studies of individuals among ethnomusicologists may be attributed to "an effort to avoid interpretations of culture based on the works of 'great men,' so long in vogue in the history of European classical music."[10]

Recently, however, the role of biography in the ethnomusicological literature has gained increased attention, as witnessed in the publication of an entire issue of *The World of Music* entitled "Ethnomusicology and the Individual." In its introductory essay Jonathan Stock outlines three factors that have stimulated the rise of ethnomusicological studies of the individual.[11] They are (not in Stock's original order): 1) a re-conceptualization of "culture" as a mosaic of individual decisions, evaluations, actions and interactions, which consequently leads to the desire to draw attention to individual cultural agency; 2) a recognition that certain societies give exceptional attention to exceptional individuals; and 3) a reappraisal of representational stances in ethnographic writing. How biographies are written and what forms they assume can be much more complex and problematic. In the following sections I will discuss these factors as they pertain to my approach in conceiving

---

[9] Nettl 1968: 199 and 1983: 278. Nettl (1983) outlines three selected approaches to the study of the individual: biography (283-286), personal repertory (286-288), and personal performance practice (288-289).
[10] Danielson 1997: 15.
[11] Stock 2001: 10-15.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and writing this biography.

The "individual"

Echoing Bruno Nettl's critique of ethnomusicologists' excessive interest in studying and legitimizing the music of whole non-Western "cultures," Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman have recently added that although this commitment has broadened the landscape of musical research, ethnomusicology's continuing investment in rather fixed concepts of culture, ethnicity, and subjectivity is no longer consistent with contemporary approaches to understanding cultural difference advanced by humanistic studies.[12] For example, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson have questioned the way cultural difference has been mapped onto places, bounded by national boundaries, and, in turn, how this geographically bounded conception of culture areas and groups has functioned as a central organizing principle in the social sciences.[13] In addition to identifying the problems migrants, immigrants, and hybrid cultures raise to such conceptions of culture areas, Gupta and Ferguson also problematize the idea of "subcultures" as preserving the idea of distinct whole cultures, in opposition to a dominant culture, as it attempts to account for cultural difference within a locality. This approach is particularly evident, as they note, in those conventional accounts of ethnicity that rely on an unproblematic link between the ethnic group and its place of geographic origin. In short, as Arjun Appadurai states, "groups are

---

[12] Radano and Bohlman 2000: 3-4, 9-10.
[13] Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 6-9.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogenous."[14]

Although these perspectives have made inroads in the work of some ethnomusicologists, many continue to take for granted assumptions of the typical, internally consistent, and the consensual while overriding the idiosyncratic and asymmetrical power relations as these exist within local communities. Jonathan Stock stresses that although individuals are "always there" in the works of ethnomusicologists, their repertories, experiences, and personalities are conceptualized as representative of the entire "culture," thereby facilitating ethnomusicology's traditional project of considering and comparing "people on the level of what was once called the 'culture'."[15] Jane Sugarman adds that in defending the right of non-Western communities to formulate their views of the world, ethnomusicologists have unwittingly valorized whatever hierarchical relations based on gender, age, ethnicity, race, or class pertain within a community.[16]

These problems are particularly characteristic of the work of scholars of Latino music. For example, Stock's discussion of "cultural-average accounts" (or studies that are based on the representation of an entire "culture") is particularly relevant with regard to recent studies of Latino music in the United States, in which profiles of musicians and their repertories have merely provided the necessary historical and issue-oriented data to construct the musical life and history of "Mexican Americans" in Texas and East Los

---

[14] Appadurai 1991: 191.
[15] Stock 2001: 8.
[16] Sugarman 1997: 26.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Angeles and of "Puerto Ricans" and other "Latinos" in New York City. Such works tend to analyze power as this defines the relationship between Latino "subcultures" and the dominant Anglo mainstream, overlooking how ideas of race and color have structured intra-social relations among Latinos (see p. 42).[17] It is the individual, as Sugarman concludes, that potentially provides us with the most meaningful oppositional and idiosyncratic views of life:

> Indeed, the distinct subject positions that individuals occupy within a social formation often generate particularly contrasting accounts of "culture." Often we have seemed most willing to examine questions of power when they concern the relationship between the individual communities that we study and larger national or international processes. . . . But we also need to be cognizant of the dynamics of power relations as they unfold *within* localized communities, particularly as they are affected by national and global concerns.[18]

Although these perspectives emphasize the analytical and interpretive significance of the individual as opposed to the "culture," Jonathan Stock for example clarifies that individual action occurs in the social domain, and is informed by the individual's understanding of his or her relationship with and role in society.[19] James Clifford offered a similar redefinition of the biographical subject, pointing out that Western biographers (since the nineteenth century), in their fascination with individual lives as ends in

---

[17] See Reyes-Schramm 1975; Singer 1982; Loza 1993; Aparicio 1998. Peña (1985), however, focuses on how divisions of class and musical style shaped the history of music among Texas-Mexicans. Glasser (1995) is also a notable exception, whereby she discusses the intra-tensions among black and white Puerto Ricans and Latinos in New York City in the 1920s and 1930s.
[18] Sugarman 1997: 26 (emphasis added); see also Turino 1993: 9.
[19] Stock 2001: 10.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

themselves, have dichotomized the person and his or her social milieu into a kind of foreground-background relationship.[20] In formulating a less centered biographical subject, he draws from the traditional Melanesian conceptualization of personhood which understands an "individual" not as a single entity but rather as encompassing simultaneously a variety of dual, relational entities in the order of grandfather/grandson, maternal uncle/nephew, husband/wife, and so on. In this way Clifford suggests that we think of our biographical subject as a personage without a center that exists in social reciprocities with others. He goes on to write:

> We must not think of this cluster of couples as a crossroads, with a point of intersection located materially in the body and linguistically in a single name. We must attempt to imagine a being who is involved in a variety of names [or social roles], each of which is indicative of a different occasion [or social and historical context].[21]

Ethnomusicologist Regula Qureshi adopts a similar approach in her biographical essay on North Indian female singer of *ghazal* Begum Akhtar, focusing on Akhtar's distinct and contradictory social identities stemming from her roles as a courtesan singer and film and radio star in pre-Independence India, a national artist supported by public and governmental institutions, and a married woman in a patriarchal society.[22] Qureshi weaves together this biographical study through Akhtar's words as well as the recollections of teachers, patrons, musicians, poets, neighbors, connoisseurs and Qureshi herself, each of

---

[20] Clifford 1978; see also Langness and Frank 1986: 90-93, 101-113.
[21] Clifford 1978: 49; see also Popular Memory Group 1982: 235-236.
[22] Qureshi 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

whom through their experiences of Akhtar was able to comment on the contested nature of her public and private identities. Hence, instead of conceptualizing Akhtar's life as merely an intersection of influences and historical forces on a particular individual, Qureshi focuses on Akhtar's subjectivity and agency, as well as on those who projected her subjectivity through their own, to illuminate how she negotiated her career, personal life, and public persona in a patriarchal society. Similarly, ethnomusicologist Virginia Danielson accounts for the significance of Egyptian female singer Umm Kulthum and her music primarily through the recollections of her friends, family, associates, and musicians as well as the words of critics, writers, teachers, journalists, and others.[23] Danielson sees these individuals as historically situated, whose discursive and listening practices have in fact helped constitute and structure Umm Kulthum's musical style and its meanings.

My learning about and understanding of Arsenio Rodríguez has likewise been shaped significantly through conversations with his family, friends, band-mates, peers, and contemporaries, each of whom had shared in a unique reciprocal social relationship with Arsenio throughout various periods of his life and career. Each informant's history with Arsenio derived from his or her provocative emplacements or subjective positions within the broader network of social relations and ideas that defined the dance music milieus and societies of either Havana, New York City, or Los Angeles. Their reflections, therefore, offer insight into Arsenio's social roles as a composer, musician, and bandleader. Furthermore, focusing on the ways in which they described, understood, and experienced

---

[23] Danielson 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's style—as "black" in Havana and "típico cubano" in New York City and Los Angeles—provides further insight into the ideas and discursive practices that these individuals encompassed and that defined social relations (see p. 23). Such observations, including Arsenio's (collected from recorded and printed interviews made throughout his lifetime) pertaining especially to his role as an innovator, generate a particularly rich and socially and historically grounded account of a life and musical career in three cities over five decades.

Exceptional musicians and "stars"

To reconcile, as Bruno Nettl writes, the disparity in the interest ethnomusicologists have in the music of large populations with the individual musicians they have worked with, we ought to focus more research on "representative musicians, some perhaps outstanding, others more likely average or acceptable . . ."[24] He adds that "we also want to know whether a society distinguishes sharply, gradually, or perhaps not at all between the great and the typical."[25] Virginia Danielson most recently echoed Nettl's challenge to ethnomusicologists, stating that "one wants to account for the impact of exceptional performers—John Lennon, Elvis Presley, Duke Ellington, Carlos Gardel, Ravi Shankar, Joseph Shabalala, Edith Piaf, Umm Kulthum, and others—on the culture of their societies

[24] Nettl 1983: 278.
[25] Ibid.: 279.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

without losing track of them as participants affected by their societies."[26] However, Danielson seems to use the terms "exceptional" and "star" interchangeably, for instance, when she asks, "What effect do [musicians who seek and attain fame and fortune] have on their societies, if any? What is the role of the extraordinary individual, the 'star' musician?"[27] While the musicians that Danielson lists above were both "stars" and "exceptional," as she shows for Umm Kulthum, not all musicians who have been deemed exceptional have also been stars. For I see stars as constituting and operating from a powerful position within the local and international popular music and entertainment industries. In contrast, exceptional musicians, who tend to be recognized as such primarily by other musicians for their musical and artistic prowess, not always obtain star status.

There are at least four interrelated characteristics that were shared in the careers and music of the stars Duke Ellington, Carlos Gardel, Ravi Shankar, Umm Kulthum, and Tito Puente and that significantly contributed to their place in the "dominant memories" of their respective societies.[28] First, these artists fostered a persona that was inculcated through channels of the mass media and that resonated with a cross-cultural, cross-social, and international audience. Carlos Gardel, Tito Puente, and Umm Kulthum were particularly successful at advancing the values considered to be fundamentally representative of Argentinness, Latinoness, and Egyptianness, respectively, while

---

[26] Danieslon 1997: 15.
[27] Ibid.: 14-15.
[28] See Popular Memory Group 1982: 207.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

simultaneously appealing to broader pan-Latin, American, and pan-Arab audiences.[29] Second, these stars were also very mindful of their audiences' expectations for entertainment. Ravi Shankar developed his skills in stagecraft and showmanship as well as his distinctive stage presentation—skills that would determine his future as a stage artist—as an adolescent in his brother's dance troupe.[30] Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, and other famous black bandleaders of the swing era were forced to conform in various degrees to the stereotype of the black artist as entertainer in performing for white audiences.[31] Third, they developed stylistically diverse repertories, particularly early in their careers, to reach as many different audiences as possible. Early in her career Umm Kulthum sought to solidify and enlarge her audience by performing and recording a varied repertory of religious, sophisticated *qasa'id*, and light strophic songs to meet the demands of and enlarge her record-buying audiences. Ravi Shankar composed concertos for sitar and orchestra in addition to performing various music from the North Indian classical, folk, thumri, and South Indian classical repertories.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, these stars, drawing from their business acumen, attained access to powerful players who through their own business acumen helped secure increased exposure for these artists through various channels of the mass media. Tito Puente attained commercial success largely through the tutelage of José Curbelo, the most powerful booking agent in the 1950s and 1960s whose control over

---

[29] See Castro 1991; Loza 1999; Danielson 1997.
[30] See Slawek 1991.
[31] See DeVeaux 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

performance networks extended from New York City to Los Angeles. The Latin music industry at this time was not unlike that of swing during the 1930s, the components of which, according to Scott DeVeaux, included booking agencies, radio broadcasts, record contracts, steady location jobs, publicity, national tours, and film. As DeVeaux notes, Duke Ellington's rise to stardom depended significantly on the shrewd strategy of his manager, Irving Mills, who established Ellington's reputation through radio, recordings, aggressive press releases, and extensive national tours.[32] In contrast, DeVeaux shows that Coleman Hawkins (not unlike Arsenio) was an exceptional musician and composer but not the eager-to-please entertainer, commercially-minded recording artist, nor the business-minded bandleader, qualities which were necessary for stardom in the swing era.[33]

Arsenio too was an exceptional musician and composer who had a great impact on Cuban and Latin dance music history, but he never became a star. Based on the observations of musicians, Arsenio was considered an exceptional musician primarily because of his musical integrity and authority. Cuban trumpeter Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros, who performed and recorded with Arsenio's conjuntos in Havana and New York City, noted that "Arsenio Rodríguez was always honest with his music."[34] Puerto Rican vocalist and guitarist Israel Berrios, who performed with his conjunto in New York City through the 1950s and 1960s, stated: "Arsenio was a maestro among maestros, an encyclopedia of music. So, I followed what he would say, and I watched what he used to

---

[32] DeVeaux 1997: 122-123.
[33] Ibid.: 160-164.
[34] Arsenio Rodríguez siempre fue legal a su música (Armenteros, 6 July 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

do, and I listened to what he used to say."[35] And African-American percussionist Phil Newsum, who performed with several early salsa groups in New York City in the 1960s, acknowledged: "When it came to gettin' down to the roots and funk, Arsenio was the man. To me, if you didn't start with him you weren't going to grow properly. You had to try to master that approach to the music before you started playing Latin jazz and guarachas and everything else."[36]

Yet, Arsenio never fostered a marketable persona that could have been popularized through the mass media. Nor did his conjuntos regularly perform or record other Latin American dance genres such as merengue, plena, cumbia, big band-style mambo, or "Latinized" American pop and jazz tunes, all of which were indispensable to the performance repertories of successful Latin dance bands especially in New York City and Los Angeles. Instead, throughout his career, Arsenio's conjuntos specialized in several Cuban dance genres, while perpetuated his son montuno style he originated and popularized among the black Cuban working class of Havana. Finally, Arsenio was never known for his business acumen and, hence, was never successful at sustaining the backing of local powerful players, particularly, José Curbelo and Jerry Masucci, whose access to major record labels, national and international touring networks, and radio, television, film, and the major press played an underlying role in the popularity of such stars as Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Johnny Pacheco, and others.

---

[35] Arsenio era un maestro entre los maestros, enciclopedia de la música. Entonces, yo seguí lo que él decía, y veía lo que él hacía, y escuchaba lo que él decía (Berrios, 13 June 1997).

[36] Newsum, 15 August 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As Nettl observed, how musicians construct or self-fashion themselves may give additional insights into the structure of musical life in their societies.[37] Because of his marginal status, Arsenio was keen to express in his music, on stage, and, when accessible, through the local press his contempt for both stars such as Dámaso Pérez Prado and the various "dance crazes" they popularized, while also taking credit for originating the mambo, pachanga, and boogaloo. Had he lived into the 1970s he surely would have taken credit for originating salsa too, as many of his Cuban contemporaries have done on his behalf. Hence, Arsenio's antagonistic posture toward his star competitors and claims to being the creator of the mambo, pachanga, and boogaloo, whether valid or unfounded, give valuable insight into the dynamics and asymmetrical power relations of the highly competitive dance music milieu of New York City in particular.

Although Danielson was perfectly right to emphasize the need for the study of stars, it is equally important to study their exceptional contemporaries, who never really became stars but pursued a musical career trying. Studying these exceptional musicians is important for two interrelated reasons: 1) it provides insight into the power relations that shape the milieus in which they compete; and 2) it broadens our understanding of the contested nature of these local music milieus, whose histories otherwise depend greatly on the careers and music of the stars alone. This last point is especially significant because it entails researching those sources and private memories that remain unrecorded in Cuban

---

[37] For example, Nettl (1983: 283-284) states that in Iran there seemed to be a need for musicians to describe themselves as experts in order to maintain self-respect. Veit Erlmann (1996: 298) similarly remarked that Joseph Shabalala was prone to accommodate the demands of stardom by presenting scrupulously crafted life histories.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and Latin dance music historiography.

Writing biography

According to Jonathan Stock, the rise of ethnomusicological studies of individuals may be explained as a symptom rather than a direct result of the ongoing trend of reflexivity within the multidisciplinary field of ethnographic writing.[38] Stock discusses the problems of the selection of data, the act of writing, and, especially, authorial presence of which are shared among ethnographers and biographers. Some biographers have stressed the fundamental role selection and emplotment of facts have in biographical writing. Barbara Tuchman, for example, stresses the importance of narrative in writing biography, adding that the selection of facts—that is, distinguishing the significant from the insignificant—is crucial "if the narrative is to be kept moving."[39] Ira Nadel also emphasizes the literary nature of biography which frees the biographer to replace the compendious life with the shaped and interpretive life, where perspective, dimension, and a point of view control the material, not the day-to-day facts.[40] Hence, biographers and ethnographers fundamentally rely on narrative in their common roles as authors.[41]

The act of writing a biography, however, is not entirely controlled by the author. Above, I discussed how the conceptualization of the "individual" as a network of social

---

[38] See Stock 2001: 12-14.
[39] Tuchman 1981: 145.
[40] See Nadel 1984: 7-9, 154-157.
[41] See Titon 1997: 96-97.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

relationships is an effective alternative to essentialist conceptions of "whole" or "subcultures." Qureshi extends this notion of the "individual" in regards to the "authorial presence" in the biographical narrative:

> A biography is of necessity a construct from a mixture of voices, each with its own vantage point, audience, and representational agenda. They filter the voice of the artist and in turn are subsumed within that of the author.[42]

Conceived of in this manner, therefore, while the biographer is ultimately responsible for organizing and writing the narrative, the biographical subject and his or her contemporaries contribute significantly to the narrative's contents as well as to the meanings of the subject.

Researching the life of a musician often leads a biographer through a labyrinth of musical styles, musicians, and power brokers in addition to historical events, places, and periods. Therefore, this biography is as much a history of the local Latin dance music milieus of Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles as it is of Arsenio himself. Arsenio's life is particularly important because it introduces us to people, places, music, and ideas that have either been inadequately treated or overlooked altogether. It is woven from the memories of his family, friends, peers, and contemporaries, sometimes quoted, sometimes paraphrased, clustered around the chronology of his exceptional musical career and life. Hence, it looks at Arsenio through his musical, professional, and personal relationships, regarding them as prisms of a historical period and as vehicles for exhibiting and

---

[42] Qureshi 2001: 103; see also Popular Memory Group 1982: 216-217.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

encapsulating previously unknown social and musical history.

Sources

My primary source for data comes from the over 80 interviews I have conducted with more than 50 individuals (see "Interviews conducted by the author" under "Primary Sources" in the Bibliography). My most important contact was Arsenio's youngest brother Raúl Manuel Travieso Scull, with whom I conducted eleven formal interviews in addition to our numerous informal conversations.[43] My method for carrying out my interviews involved preparing questions, recording the interviews on tape, transcribing, and preparing follow-up questions for subsequent interviews. The questions that I prepared were aimed to gather factual data regarding dates, places, and names relevant to the interviewees' own experiences and their relationship to Arsenio; and issue-oriented data regarding the interviewees' thoughts on the trajectories of Arsenio's music, musical career, and life and his importance to the history of Cuban and Latino music.

In addition to these interviews, I have also consulted interviews conducted by other scholars and historians who graciously provided me with either their transcripts or audio and video copies of their interviews (see "Interviews conducted by others" under "Primary Sources"). The most significant interview I have consulted is one that was given by Arsenio with Colombian radio disc jockey José Luís Logradia in Los Angeles in 1964.

---

[43] Raúl unfortunately passed away on April 13, 2001, before the completion of this dissertation.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

A copy of this interview was given to me by Arsenio's brother Raúl. I also found two other interviews given by Arsenio that were published in Havana's *Bohemia* magazine and San Juan's *El Imparcial* newspaper.[44] In all of these three primary sources Arsenio discusses various aspects of his music and career, from which I quote throughout the chapters of this dissertation.

To substantiate and cross-reference the data collected from these interviews, I have referred to government documents such as Cuban and United States censuses, United States State Department records, and local governmental studies of Havana, Matanzas, the Bronx, and East and South Central Los Angeles; documents from Musician's Union Local 802 (New York City) and 47 (Los Angeles); and especially newspapers and magazines published in Havana, San Juan, New York City, and Los Angeles (see under "Primary Sources"). To compile Arsenio's song catalog, I have consulted the BMI Repertoire Song Title Database (bmi.com), the Library of Congress, Peermusic, and other unpublished sources (see Appendix 1). And, to compile his discography, I have consulted various sources including the BMG Archives and the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, Recording Department (see Appendix 2). Lastly, photographs of Arsenio and his conjuntos obtained from private collectors are additional sources for the documentation of the names of band members, the dates of their membership, and the places where Arsenio and his conjunto performed. These sources of data offered unique information and were good sources for cross-referencing dates,

---

[44] See Cubillas, Jr. 1952 and Nieves Rivera 1952.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

places, and names obtained in interviews.

Finally, I have collected almost all of Arsenio's original recordings. I have purchased every recording that, to my knowledge, has been re-released on CD, and I have acquired recordings by his predecessors and contemporaries whose musical contributions are also significant to the history of Cuban and Latin dance music and, thus, relevant to my musical analysis. I have also consulted with private record collectors, some of whom have furnished me with cassette copies of those recordings made by Arsenio (mostly the 78s he made with RCA Victor in Havana during the 1940s and 1950s) which have not been re-released on CD. Finally, I have obtained non-commercial recordings made by Arsenio which are archived at the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive of the Smithsonian Institution.

Arsenio and the Black Diaspora: Analytical and Interpretive Approach

I see Arsenio's son montuno style as defined by principles and procedures characteristic of African performance and as having emerged in the distinct historical and social context of Havana of the 1940s, whose social relations both contributed to its identification as a "black" style and accounted for the racial discourse through which this was expressed. I also see the trajectory of his son montuno style and musical career as well as his experience as a black Cuban immigrant in New York City and Los Angeles in the 1950s and 1960s as shaped by the condition of displacement, whereby he, his music, and style were subject to different aesthetic codes, dance forms, and forms of group identification.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Because the issues of race, identity, and style figure prominently in my analysis of Arsenio's music and life experience, my analytical and interpretive approach draws significantly from the perspectives of those who have treated these issues in other areas of the African diaspora.

One of the most pressing debates in this area of study concerns the constitution of black identities and the role music has in analyzing these formations as well as the black experience in general. Paul Gilroy has criticized what he characterizes as "two loosely organized perspectives" (i.e., essentialist and anti-essentialist) that have become an obstacle to critically theorizing about music of the African Diaspora. According to Gilroy, the essentialist perspective "identifies music with tradition and cultural continuity" and is animated by a mystical "Africentrism," which "perceives no problem in the internal differentiation of black cultures."[45] The anti-essentialist perspective avows a "pluralistic stance which is decidedly skeptical of the desire to totalize black culture" and "moves towards a casual and arrogant deconstruction of blackness while ignoring the appeal of the first position's powerful, populist, affirmation of black culture."[46] Ronald Radano and Philip Bohlman similarly challenge essentialist perspectives in regards to cultural continuity and racial authenticities, citing the role metaphysical properties associated with music, such as understandability, meaning, and ownership, have had in these formulations.[47] They state that such metaphysical properties enhance the "racial

---

[45] Gilroy 1993: 100.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Radano and Bohlman 2000: 6, 30-31.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

imagination"—or the shifting matrix of ideological constructions of difference associated with body type and color—, arguing that "discourses about music fundamentally derive from the construction and deployment of [modernity's] racial categories, just as these same categories grow ever more *complicated* and *confused* as a result of their sonic-discursive projection within the metaphysics of music."[48]

While Radano and Bohlman are ultimately concerned with the constitutive role of "racial imaginations" in the epistemologies of musical discourse, Gilroy is interested in black *responses* to modernity, arguing (from his self-coined "anti-anti-essentialist" perspective) that the "syncretic complexity of black expressive cultures" derives from a *coherent* and *common* experiential sense of black identity that, in turn, emerges from the legacy of slavery and modernity's logic of race and progress.[49] Hence, Gilroy sees black music and a "black Atlantic" sensibility as a matter of politics rather than a common cultural condition based on notions of racial essences and authenticities.[50] He further cites the components of black performance, such as dramaturgy, ritual, and gesture, and not merely "a purely sonic projection of black music" (as Radano and Bohlman claim Gilroy does), as valuable pathways into understanding the commonality of post-slave, black cultural forms.[51]

Despite their distinct concerns, these writers offer valuable insight into the discursive, political, and historical implications of the idea of black music and identity. In

---

[48] Ibid.: 5-6, 8 (emphasis added).
[49] Gilroy 1993: 73, 101, 102 (emphasis added). See also Monson 2000: 4-5.
[50] Gilroy 1993: 27.
[51] Ibid.: 75, 99, 101; cf. Radano and Bohlman 2000: 45 n12.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the following three sections I will discuss in greater detail my analytical approach to the musical, social, and historical dimensions of Arsenio's son montuno style and his experience as a black Latino immigrant, focusing on how the issues of race, identity, and style factor into my interpretation.

The son montuno style

I have analyzed Arsenio's extensive recorded repertory, focusing on his son montuno style as it persisted from 1942 to 1968. I use the term "son montuno" to refer to the particular structural arrangement scheme of the son montuno proper as well as to the overall *style* of performing Cuban popular dance music that Arsenio innovated and perpetuated throughout his career. My analytical aim is to understand the various dimensions of his son montuno style. As music it had a distinctive rhythmic feel, defined by African principles of music making, structural organization, and idiomatic procedures. As a dance it constituted an integral part of the music, the daily lives of the black working-class of Havana, and the social functions of Cubans and other Latinos of color in the South Bronx. As an object of aesthetic and social evaluation it engendered the validation of blackness among black Cubans and feelings of nostalgia and perceptions of Cuban identity among some Cuban and other Latino immigrants in New York City and Los Angeles. And, for musicians of later generations, his son montuno style has served at once as a marker of traditional and authentic Cuban music as well as a source for innovation.

To guide my analysis and interpretation of his son montuno style, I have

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

researched various sources of data. As Veit Erlmann cautions, "recordings are highly sensitive and fragmentary sources whose interpretation depends on a wide range of ancillary sources such as newspapers, photographs, record advertisements, archival documents, and performers' accounts."[52] Hence, while Arsenio's recorded repertory forms the backbone of my musical analysis, I draw especially on the accounts of musicians, dancers, and other constituents of the dance music milieus in which Arsenio operated to gain insight on the musical, dance-related, aesthetic, social, and historical significance of his son montuno style. The observations of musicians, in particular, helped me to identify and focus on the underlying principles and procedures that accounted for the innovativeness of his style in the 1940s and its continuing distinctiveness throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

I also draw on the analytical insight of various scholars of African and African-derived music of the Americas. In particular, I take J. H. Kwabena Nketia's recommendation that the analysis of African-derived music of the Americas go beyond identifying and explaining "survivals" and focus on the "mechanisms for the control of change, the integration of innovation based on African roots . . . and the diffusion of such innovation" as well as the creative and social processes that foster such persistence, change, and innovation of African musical principles and procedures.[53] The analytical problems that Nketia discusses concerning the stylistic continuity and creativity of the

---

[52] Erlmann (1991: 13) states this in discussing the role of recordings in reconstructing the history of black South African popular music.
[53] Nketia 1981: 83.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

African musical idiom in black music of the Americas are especially helpful in approaching my analysis of the musical dimensions of Arsenio's son montuno style.

The first problem Nketia discusses involves the "constituents of structure," which he classifies as units, elements, and features. The "units of structure" include time-lines, rhythmic patterns, and structural patterns such as call-and-response forms, while the "elements of structure" refer to the individual strikes and accented attacks of rhythmic patterns. Most important are the "features of structure" which refer to attributes or markers that are applied to the rendering of structural patterns and, ultimately, characterize or define a style. As Nketia emphasizes, it is not merely the presence of particular units and elements of structure such as off-beat, cross-rhythm, syncopation, and polyrhythm, which are not unique to African or African-derived music, but more importantly the *way* off-beat phrasing and polyrhythm are structured or emphasized, the *patterns* of syncopation that are emphasized, the *modes* of drumming that are employed, and the *kind* of rhythm section and the form of its organization. Hence, my analysis not only identifies the recurring structural patterns found in Arsenio's son montuno style but also describes the manner in which he and his musicians executed and organized these patterns.

Specifically, Arsenio was guided by the African principles of timbral heterogeneity and rhythmic power and fullness in incorporating a second (and, eventually, third) trumpet, piano, and tumbadora into the old septeto format (in Chapter 4). In order to achieve rhythmic power and fullness in particular, he and his musicians adopted the procedures of call-and-response at different architectonic levels, the interweaving of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

rhythmic patterns (in addition to polyrhythm), cross-rhythms, accentuating off-beats (known also as *contratiempo*), and, most importantly, corresponding the accentuation of attacks with the basic footwork of the *son* dance. Arsenio and probably most of his musicians gained an understanding of the musical value of these principles and procedures through their involvement in African-derived drumming and dance traditions such as *yuka* and *rumba*, which Arsenio learned as a youngster in rural areas of Matanzas and La Habana[54] provinces (in Chapter 2).

The second problem Nketia discusses is the nature and role in African music of rhythmic and melodic frameworks or models, which may be defined through the use of one or a set of fixed patterns. As he explains, frameworks in African music are often developed for the rhythm section and usually guided by the kind of dance movements to be correlated with the music. The particular patterns and periodicity of structure of a framework, therefore, characterize particular musical types. We can similarly conceive of the son montuno style as having a characteristic rhythmic framework or, as I will refer to it, a "rhythmic texture" consisting of a set of distinctive patterns and, most importantly, patterns of accentuation. With the exception of the clave pattern, which is not unique to the son montuno, the patterns that are executed by the bass, bongó, and tumbadora as well as the coro (chorus), piano, and tres are characterized not necessarily by fixity but by their tendency to accentuate and, therefore, correlate with certain steps of the *son's* basic footwork, which is itself fixed. Although Arsenio's conjuntos performed various types of

---

[54] I will be using the Spanish spelling to denote the province of La Habana and the English spelling to denote the city of Havana.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dance music, including son, son montuno (proper), guaracha, and guaguancó, their performances were distinguished by his distinct son montuno style or rhythmic texture.

Third, Nketia mentions the African practice of substituting "improvised" instruments for "regular" instruments, such as in the substitution of hoes for iron bells. He adds that rhythmic structures may also be shifted from the area of percussion to those of melodic instruments, giving one the impression of a formal organization closely akin to usages in traditional African drumming. As I mentioned above, Arsenio was guided by the African principles of timbral heterogeneity and rhythmic power and fullness in forming his conjunto ensemble and son montuno style. Nowhere in his arrangement scheme are these principles more evident than in the finale he called "diablo" (devil) in which the patterns of the conjunto's parts are organized into short 2- or 4-bar repeating cycles in call-and-response form. It is particularly his use of the trumpets—to create not melodic phrases but rather percussive-based patterns whose elements (attacks and accents) tend to interweave rhythmically with each other as well as with the piano, bass, and other parts—that is akin to "African modes of musical thinking." This, according to Nketia, "[plays] a dominant role wherever interest in . . . the creation of rhythmic densities or interplay of units [e.g., interwoven patterns] in multilinear [or polyrhythmic] structures of the African type persist."[55]

Finally, Nketia states that "the identification and evaluation of African roots can be greatly enhanced if the field of inquiry is . . . extended to modes of expression and

---

[55] Nketia 1981: 87.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

presentation [i.e., performance] as well as the values that govern the selection and use of musical materials and music making."[56] Of the modes of communication that Nketia lists, the gestures of dancers and the interaction between musicians and dancers in particular are most important in understanding the stylistic significance of the son montuno. In discussing several African-American performance traditions, Olly Wilson has argued that the relationship of music and body movement is one of many kinds of African conceptual approaches to music making that has been retained in black music of the Americas, adding that in sub-Saharan Africa the physical motion in dance and music making are viewed as interrelated components of the same process.[57] Whether through "metronome sense" or "apart playing," the movements of dancers in much African and African-American music provide the fundamental beats of the music, necessitate corresponding actions by musicians (and vice versa), and in general contribute to the polyrhythmic whole.[58] Charles Keil has emphasized that in many cultures music and dance are so tightly intertwined that cleanly separating the two seems impossible and fruitless; in these cases, then, dance is essential to an adequate musical analysis.[59] Recent analyses of Latin American dance traditions, however, have focused on the symbolic and social aspects of dance, while merely describing the movements of dancers without any consideration as to how the *interaction* between musicians and dancers might determine these movements, their social

---

[56] Ibid.
[57] Wilson 1981.
[58] See Chernoff 1981: 49-51, 66-67, 83-87, 145-147
[59] Keil 1994a: 56.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

meanings, as well as the stylistic aspects of the music.[60]

In contrast, my analysis demonstrates the central role the *son's* basic footwork had in determining the son montuno's rhythmic texture as well as the role Arsenio's son montuno arrangement scheme, in turn, had in shaping the dynamics of the son montuno dance style. The musical examples, therefore, include staves for the basic footwork patterns of the *son* and, for comparative purposes, other relevant dance styles that Arsenio encountered throughout his career, including the "mambo" footwork which forms the basis of the mambo and salsa dance styles in New York City. Such transcriptions, although limited to the basic footwork patterns, are nevertheless intended to indicate the fundamental relationship or lack thereof between the *actions* of dancers and musicians. The analysis of *statements* of performers themselves concerning these music and dance styles also leads to a more concrete understanding of the social resonance Arsenio's son montuno style had or lacked in the various local dance music milieus in which he operated.[61]

The social significance of the son montuno style in Havana

Several writers have commented that the meaning of music does not reside in its content or structure but comes from the actual experience of performing and dancing it. In his study of black performance in South Africa, Veit Erlmann argues that "the 'truth' of

---

[60] See Browning 1995; Daniel 1995; Savigliano 1995; Aparicio 1998: 95-103.
[61] See Blum 1992: 165, 194, 208, 212.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

isicathamiya songs would primarily reside not in their expressive content but in the unique, grainy texture" and, as he later shows, the bodily movements of the singers that generate them.[62] With respect to the broader black Atlantic, Paul Gilroy similarly suggests the following:

> Examining the place of music in the black Atlantic world means surveying the *self-understanding* articulated by the musicians who have made it, the *symbolic use* to which their music is put by other black artists and writers, and the *social relations* which have produced and reproduced the unique expressive culture [of the black Atlantic] in which music comprises a central and even foundational element.[63]

Therefore, I also focus on the statements of those who experienced Arsenio's son montuno style as musicians, dancers, and listeners in three distinct locations and historical periods. I analyze the symbolic uses to which his style was put, namely, to define ownership, racial difference, and stylistic authenticity, and the social relations that both contributed to his style's emergence and perpetuation and accounted for the discourses through which it was defined.

In Havana, the landscape of dance music locales during the 1930s and 1940s was significantly shaped by class and race (in Chapter 2). Racial difference, in conjunction with ideologies of progress and national identity, was also played out in the manner in and extent to which the musical traditions, performance practice, and material culture of the rural and urban Afro-Cuban working-class were acknowledged. Hence, while mostly

---

[62] Erlmann 1996: 187.
[63] Gilroy 1993: 74-75 (my emphasis).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

white art composers and other artists valued these traditions in terms of their potential as "modern" expressions of Cuban national identity, the black middle class and intelligentsia largely rejected these traditions and their associated bodily movements and instruments (i.e., African-derived drums) as atavistic and obstacles to the social and cultural "progress" or *superación* of Cubans of color. Arsenio, however, chose to contest these attitudes, beginning with several of his afrocubanos (recorded between 1937 and 1940) whose texts included proverbs and other oral material from *congo* traditional sacred and secular practices as well as those of *santería*. By drawing from these traditions that he learned in his youth, Arsenio simultaneously confirmed their viability and contested the legitimacy of the ideas of nationalism and *superación* (in Chapter 3).

He further pronounced his contestation of these dominant ideologies in forming his conjunto in the early 1940s and performing almost exclusively for dancers of the black working class, from which emerged a synergetic relationship rooted in the aesthetics and ethics of black performance. The clearest indication of the reappropriation of the discourses of racial difference and progress was in the way Arsenio's son montuno style was claimed and valued by those who engaged in the performance of Cuban conjunto music as constitutive of an *estilo negro* or a "black" style, in contrast to the *estilo blanco* or the "white" styles of La Sonora Matancera, Conjunto Casino, and other groups (in Chapter 5).

Understanding further the social and historical significance of Arsenio's son montuno style entails recognizing the roles space, ritual, and the body (as written about in other forms of black performance) had in the formation of its artistic and political potency.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Veit Erlmann, for example, explains that the fundamental tactic of isicathamiya performers is to transform physical locales (e.g., halls, lofts, and sheds) into counter-hegemonic "spaces" or "practiced places" by continuously subverting dominant (i.e., modern and Western) forms of organization and representation such as in the physical separation between performers and audience members.[64] Erlmann sees these spaces "foremost as embodiments of an imagined order, located in a heroic past beyond the here and now and constructed through multisensory communicative means such as sound texture, dress, and dance."[65] Black South African performers, therefore, exerted their power to shape and continually recreate counter-hegemonic worldviews through their words, music, and bodily movement in a society whose workings and structures they did not control.

Similarly, in performing for the black working class in Havana, Arsenio and his conjunto set out to transform the dancehalls of their social clubs and the dance-floors of public beer gardens into autonomous spaces of "black" dance music performance. This entailed the actualization of African-based principles and procedures of performance in addition to the incorporation of the African-derived tumbadora (conga drum). It also entailed dancers' reciprocation of the musical gestures of Arsenio's musicians accordingly with bodily movements, thereby contributing to a collective articulation of their counter-hegemonic aesthetic and worldview. Through the aesthetic and ethical values his son montuno style engendered, Arsenio's conjunto initiated and remained an integral part of ritualized performance through which the unity of the black Cuban urban working-class

---

[64] See Erlmann 1996: 97-99, 184-185.
[65] Ibid.: 98.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

community was reinforced and transcendence from daily life and social injustice was achieved, as has been the case in other forms of black ritual.[66] Paul Gilroy notes that a significant dimension of black political culture involves the liberation of music from its status as a mere commodity to a form of artistic and aesthetic experience and a vehicle for communal self-development and the reconciliation of art and life.[67] Hence, Arsenio's style also signaled the reconciliation of the black working-class with *son* music, which had been disseminated internationally since the 1920s as a commodity in recorded form.

It is important to reemphasize that the meaning of Arsenio's son montuno style is embedded in the memories and statements of those who participated in its performance in Havana either as musicians, dancers, or even listeners. These forms of experiencing his music obviously involved the body, which is as others have noted a vital vehicle of the internalization and embodiment of meaning. Erlmann observes that despite dominant forms of restrictions, the body in the performance of dance music has the capacity to organize experience beyond social control (e.g., as in ritual) and become a site of resistance.[68] Peter Wade similarly states that dance in particular lent itself to processes of embodied appropriation and the transformation of identity for black Colombians of La Costa.[69] And of black populations in general, Gilroy adds that distinctive kinesics is one of many forms and symbols of expression that descendents of slaves have drawn from in their

---

[66] See, for example, Gilroy 1993: 74-75, 101-102, 200; Floyd Jr. 1995: 20-26; and Jackson 2000: 56-59.
[67] Gilroy 1993: 124.
[68] Erlmann 1996: 23-24, 191-192.
[69] Wade 2000: 209-210.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

critique of the brutal historical conditions in which they lived.[70]

Thus, the identification of Arsenio's son montuno style as "black" cannot merely be attributed to the abstract properties associated with music that tend to "enhance the imagination of racial difference."[71] It should more importantly be understood as deriving from the power his style had in engendering a new understanding of what blackness *meant*, *felt*, and *sounded* like in that particular social context and historical period. For praising his style as "black" also entailed the reevaluation of the tumbadora, which was rejected by the black middle class in particular as a vestige of "primitive" Africa and had even been derided by some in the black working class as a symbol of decadent Afro-Cuban performance traditions such as rumba and conga. Nevertheless, the conjunto format, including the tumbadora, was eventually adopted by other former septetos (septets), such as La Sonora Matancera and Conjunto Casino, who performed almost exclusively for the black and white middle and upper classes. Black musicians, in particular, identified the styles of these conjuntos as "white," evaluating this as "weak" and "simple" while associating the related dance style with bodily inhibition. Ultimately, the social significance of Arsenio's son montuno style demonstrates his role as a "cultural broker," negotiating the meaning of the tumbadora and most importantly changing the value orientation of blackness, particularly among the black working class.[72]

---

[70] See Gilroy 1993: 56, 75.
[71] See Radano and Bohlman 2000: 6.
[72] See Adams 1975: 50-51.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The displacement of the son montuno style in New York City and Los Angeles

In my analysis and interpretation of the significance of Arsenio's son montuno style in New York City and Los Angeles, I draw from Paul Gilroy's observations on how aesthetic codes and meanings of authenticity and identity change in black styles and genres in their movements from their locations of origin to other geographical locations and historical times.[73] What is particularly important for Gilroy is understanding the contradictions that emerge in the transmission and adaptation of black styles as well as the ways their origins are valued. He suggests that these contradictions and changes are engendered either by their displacement and relocation or by the passage of time. Arsenio's son montuno style can be thought of as a displaced black style in two significant ways—in its displacement as a performance style in New York City and Los Angeles in the 1950s and 1960s and in its (dis)placement in the historiography of Latin dance music, particularly of New York City—both of which focus attention on the kinds of changes it underwent and contradictions it engendered.

First, Arsenio's style persisted in New York City and Los Angeles, taking on a tenuous status as a viable dance music form in the broader Latin dance music milieus of both cities. What is more, the mostly working-class Cuban and Puerto Rican community of color in the South Bronx valued his style and music, as the black working-class in Havana had done the decade before. Though this suggests that his style followed similar social trajectories in Havana and, in particular, New York City, musicians and dancers,

---

[73] See Gilroy 1993: 75-76, 80.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

including Cubans of color, in New York City as well as Los Angeles understood and articulated its significance not through the discourse of racial difference but rather in terms of national identity, authenticity, and "traditional" music. Specifically, Latino and non-Latino musicians and dancers characterized his style not as "black" but as quintessentially "Cuban" and "típico."

Perhaps the most contradictory aspect of his style's characterization as "típico cubano" rests in the fact that the vast majority of Latino and non-Latino dancers were unfamiliar with the son footwork and son montuno dance style. Instead, they used other dance patterns and styles, particularly, the mambo footwork and mambo and salsa dance styles, that proved incompatible with the son montuno's rhythmic texture and overall aesthetic principles. Therefore, the structures of feeling through which Arsenio's son montuno style was experienced in New York City and Los Angeles differed significantly from that through which it originally emerged and was experienced in Havana—hence, its displaced status as a performance genre in the former cities.

Second, while the correspondence of its texture and the dancer's movement was for the most part no longer a viable procedure, the son montuno's other defining procedures, including its off-beat accentuating bass patterns, were adapted by Puerto Rican and other Latino musicians according to their aesthetic interests and, thus, contributed significantly to the formations of pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa. Historians and musicologists have organized the development and relationship of these styles linearly in space and time, thereby characterizing the styles of mambo and salsa, in particular, to be the "modern" New York versions of their "traditional" Cuban

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

antecedents. The aspects of these styles that have been signified as "progressive" and "modern" include "jazz" voicings, chord progressions, phrasing, and instrumentation.[74] Consequently, because of its linear orientation and reliance on a "traditional-modern" dichotomy, this historical paradigm (dis)places Arsenio's music as one of these antecedents in Cuba in the 1940s, thereby, erasing the history of his music and career in New York City throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The son montuno style's displacement in the Latin dance music milieus of New York City and Los Angeles and its (dis)placement in the historiography of the mambo, pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa can be attributed primarily to the concept of "tradition." Raymond Williams has argued that "tradition" is not an inert survival of the past but rather "an aspect of contemporary social and cultural organization, in the interest of the dominance of a specific class. It is a version of the past which is intended to connect with and ratify the present. What it offers in practice is a sense of *predisposed continuity*."[75] In this way, "tradition" is often contrasted, as Williams notes, with "innovation" and "the contemporary" (or "modern"), whereby " 'traditional habits' are isolated, by some current hegemonic development, as elements of the past which have

---

[74] Performance techniques and repertories associated with jazz have been particularly effective in rendering musical styles as "modern" and "progressive." In Africa, Latin America, and the United States since at least the 1930s, aspects of big band swing music and jazz have been fused with local forms, resulting in styles considered as "progressive" and cosmopolitan (see Austerlitz 1997: 56, 58-59; Erlmann 1991: 43, 53, 60-62; Turino 2000: 559, 571; Wade 2000: 87, 124).

[75] See Williams 1977: 116.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

now to be discarded."[76] In the field of music Thomas Turino has shown that the black Zimbabwean middle class, inspired by cosmopolitanism and cultural nationalism, beginning in the 1960s, organized symbolic activities such as rallies and festivals to fashion a Zimbabwean "national culture."[77] These public activities featured "traditional" dance-drumming groups and "modern" "concert" ensembles, which were represented as the "old" and "new," respectively, of Zimbabwe. In a footnote Turino adds the following: "Although contemporary (modern) in their own right, Zimbabwean indigenous arts were typically conceived as 'being of the past' by middle-class Africans, and this operates as a self-fulfilling social definition when these same individuals come to direct state cultural programs . . ."[78] Veit Erlmann similarly notes that "[t]radition has little to do with the persistence of old forms, but more with the ways in which forms and values are linked together," adding that "in no known society can musical change be constructed as a linear succession of neatly separated [e.g., traditional-modern] performance categories."[79]

Analyzing Arsenio's music as coexisting in place and time with the mambo, pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa, therefore, offers new insight into the contested nature of the histories of these styles and the Latin dance music milieus in which they emerged and were popularized. As I outlined above, this entails researching private memories and other sources that remain unrecorded in Cuban and Latin dance music historiography.

---

[76] Ibid.
[77] See Turino 2000: 568-571.
[78] Ibid.: 579 n3.
[79] Erlmann 1991: 10-13.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The black Cuban immigrant experience

In the early 1970s sociologist Roy Simon Bryce-Laporte indicated that "the large majority of mainstream social scientists and historians" had ignored the black immigrant's perspective of the immigrant and American experiences.[80] Bryce-Laporte employed the concepts of double invisibility and double visibility to characterize the experience of black immigrants in the United States. Double invisibility describes the twofold neglect black immigrants have endured as "immigrants" and "black immigrants" by the larger society in regards to their presence and problems, while double visibility refers to the perceptions of black immigrants as "black" in the eyes of whites and "foreigners" in the eyes of blacks born in the Unites States.[81] Although Bryce-Laporte's discussion focuses on West Indian black immigrants, his observations can still be applied to the current state of research on the black Latino immigrant experience in the United States.

For example, Juan Flores recently noted that the diversification and geographic dispersal of the Latino population in the United States beginning in the 1980s has generated the need to substitute the cultural nationalism of earlier Latin Studies perspectives with new conceptual approaches developed by feminist, postcolonial, and race theory as well as gay and lesbian studies. In regards to race, Flores states that "the specific identity positions of 'black Latinos' and of mixed Latino backgrounds . . . have drawn increasing attention and have done much to sunder the more or less monolithic and

---

[80] Bryce-Laporte 1972: 30-31.
[81] Ibid.: 54 n2.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

essentialist tenets of inherited conceptualizations [i.e., Latino cultural nationalism]."[82] Yet, the black Latino immigrant experience, particularly prior to the onset of globalization (i.e., 1970s), continues to be ignored.[83] Extremely scarce is the historical literature on the black Cuban immigrant experience in the Unites States prior to 1959.

One notable exception is the memoir *Black Cuban, Black American*, which was written by Evelio Grillo, a black Cuban who grew up in Ybor City, Tampa, in the 1920s, attended all-black colleges in New Orleans and Washington D.C., and served in an all-black regiment of the United States army during World War II.[84] Kenya Dworkin y Méndez, writing in the introduction, describes his memoir as an "intimate account of his costly but effective triumph over racial and ethnic ambiguity and disempowerment—a journey from Afro-Cubanness to African-Americanness. This is a journey many have made, but few, if any, have heretofore written about. Grillo's sophisticated memoir sheds light on seldom-discussed issues of Hispanicity with relation to blackness and the black experience in the United States."[85] Although Arsenio's and Grillo's lives as black Cubans in the United States took on divergent trajectories, they confronted the same issues of racism, assimilation, and identity that have sustained the experiences and cultures of the

---

[82] See Flores 2000: 208-211.

[83] Pam Sporn's video documentary *Cuban Roots/Bronx Stories* is a wonderful exception to the otherwise lack of documentation on the black Cuban immigrant experience after 1959. It highlights the historical journey of a black Cuban family, revealing that the Cuban-American experience (post-1959) is more diverse racially and ideologically than is popularly understood.

[84] Grillo 2000.

[85] Dworkin y Méndez in Grillo 2000: viii.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

African diaspora.[86]

First, racism and segregation kept black Cubans "doubly marginalized" (or, in Bryce-Laporte's words, "doubly invisible") in American society as well as Cuban and Latin society. For example, Grillo discusses how racial segregation in Tampa alienated black Cubans from both white American and Cuban society. Subtle yet persistent forms of racial segregation similarly affected the landscape of dance music locales in New York City, while the racist attitudes of many white American and Latin power brokers—namely, agents, record executives, and dancehall owners and managers—determined the professional trajectories of many black bandleaders. Hence, Arsenio was "doubly marginalized" by the recording industries and in the interrelated Anglo and Latin mainstream dance music milieus, whereby he perpetuated his performance career in the peripheral dance music milieus of the South Bronx, among primarily working-class Cubans and Puerto Ricans of color, and East Los Angeles, among an even smaller Cuban dance music audience.

Second, one of the few options available to black Cubans to escape their doubly marginalized status and pursue upward mobility was assimilation to African-American middle-class society. In the following, Grillo describes the stark reality most first generation black Cuban immigrants, such as Arsenio, faced living in the Latino barrios of New York City and the role higher education had in his attempt to assimilate to and, hence, achieve upward mobility in African American middle-class society:

---

[86] Paul Gilroy (1993: 101, 122, 127, 198) describes this defining condition of the black diaspora as the "changing same."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The relatively small number of black Cubans who entered college achieved nearly full integration, socially, into black American life: the language the same, their accents the same, their dress the same. Those who did not attend college went to live circumscribed lives in the Latin ghettoes of New York City, to which my generation largely migrated along with their parents. . . . Our choices became clear: to swim in black American society or drown in the Latin ghettoes of New York City, never to be an integral part of American life. This is why the experience of black Cubans who joined with black Americans is so different from that of black Cubans who remained loosely tethered to the white Cuban [or in general Latino] society. Integration presented us with simple options: join the black American society, with its rich roots deep in this country, or have no American roots at all.[87]

Similarly, many white and black Latin bandleaders such as Tito Puente, Machito, and René Touzet facilitated their professional advancement and cross-ethnic and racial recognition in New York City and Los Angeles by assimilating jazz performance practices into their repertories. Ethnomusicologist Steven Loza points out that the convergence of performance practices between Latino and African American musical repertories has characterized the emergence of various Latin music styles and genres beginning with mambo and Latin jazz in the 1950s through hip hop in the 1980s.[88] It is true that those musicians such as Arsenio for whom assimilation of jazz and other African-American musical elements proved to be either undesirable or unsuccessful were doomed to circumscribed performance careers in the periphery of New York City's and Los Angeles's Latin dance music milieus. Racist attitudes that power brokers harbored, however, cannot be discounted as a determining factor in the marginalization of black

---

[87] Grillo 2000: 12.
[88] Loza 1999: 222-223; see also Flores 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Latino musicians, whose careers remained loosely tethered even to white Cuban and in general Latino society.

Third, the issue of identity was a complex matter whereby prevailing social divisions forced second generation black Cubans such as Evilio Grillo to continue to chose between black American, Hispanic, and Cuban identities. As Dworkin y Méndez writes, "Sadly, only by subordinating his Cuban identity was Evilio Grillo able to buy a one-way-ticket out of the barrio and into the black [American] mainstream."[89] For first generation black Cubans, however, differences in language and culture became formidable impediments to full integration within the black American community.[90] Although Arsenio never "integrated" into African-American society in New York City or Los Angeles, he did identify with the common struggles that black Cubans and Americans shared against racism and social injustice. Throughout his recording career, Arsenio expressed in his lyrics his identity as a Cuban, black Cuban, and African. In addition, his speaking-out against racial discrimination in Latin America as well as the United States countered "the myth of no racial problem," which, as Bryce-Laporte explained, has been disseminated by white and lighter-skinned immigrants to the disadvantage of their black fellow nationals who are hence discouraged "from responding to subtle racist abuses directly or publicly lest *they* be considered *racist and unpatriotic*."[91] While he remained fiercely proud of his Cuban identity, Arsenio's choice to express his empathy with the black struggle and pride

---

[89] Dworkin y Méndez in Grillo 2000: xiv.
[90] See Grillo 2000: 11.
[91] Bryce-Laporte 1972: 39.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in his blackness and Africanness had a particularly strong political significance in light of the racial and class makeup of the majority of post-1959 Cuban immigrants to the United States.

Such issues transcend the monolithic and essentialist tenets of Latino nationalism and ethnic absolutism, particularly in regards to the history of black Latino immigrants in the United States before the late 1960s and early 1970s, which Flores defined as "the watershed years in the construction of a new language of Latino identity."[92] Accordingly, Roberta Singer, in her early ethnographic study of Latino music in New York City in the 1970s, focuses on the political and aesthetic concerns of second-generation Puerto Rican and Latino musicians.[93] Adelaida Reyes-Schramm discusses the various musical activities and local organizations of Puerto Ricans, "Hispanos," and African Americans in East Harlem during the 1970s.[94] Both Singer and Reyes-Schramm, however, leave unexplored how the legacy of racial and class tensions and divisions between black Puerto Ricans and Latinos and their white fellow nationals might have persisted in this otherwise "pan-Latino" ethos in New York City beginning in the late 1960s. Ruth Glasser, for example, discusses the racial schisms and tensions that developed among Puerto Ricans and other Latinos during the 1920s and 1930s, whereby the career paths of musicians were bifurcated along the racially segregated structure of the entertainment landscape of New

---

[92] Flores 2000: 201.
[93] See Singer 1982: 7-8, 34-35, 47-54, 60.
[94] Reyes-Schramm 1975.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

York City.[95] Glasser also gives ample attention to the interactions of black Puerto Rican and African American musicians in New York City, including their participation as members of segregated United States military bands such as James Reese Europe's during World War I as well as their performance activities with African American dance bands. Instead of theorizing the black Puerto Rican experience within the framework of the African diaspora, however, Glasser subsumes this history as a contested, yet ethnically integral part of the "Puerto Rican" migration experience.

It is my contention that the issues that have shaped the experiences of black Latino immigrant musicians in the United States and their music remain to be defined, analyzed, interpreted, and brought to bear on the limitations that have characterized the analytical and interpretive scope of both Latino Studies and African Diaspora Studies.[96] Such issues as racial discrimination, nationalism, class conflict, migration, the globalization of the recording industry, and others have all had a converging impact on the black musical experience throughout the Americas and the rest of the African diaspora.[97] Hence, examining Arsenio's music, career, and life provides valuable insight into the difficulties that black Latino musicians, especially bandleaders, encountered in the socially stratified,

---

[95] See Glasser 1995: 52-83.

[96] For example, of the ten essays collected in *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*, edited by Monson (2000), none focuses on the music and experiences of black Latino musicians, let alone the music of the Latin American, including the Spanish Caribbean, African diaspora. According to Paul Gilroy (1993: 35-36, 191) an overriding nationalism and ethnocentricity has similarly characterized the work of some African-American writers, circumscribing their analytical and interpretive scope of an otherwise culturally differentiated and geographically extensive black diaspora.

[97] See Gilroy 1993: 195 and Monson 2000: 1-2.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

hierarchically structured, and ethnically diverse dance music milieus of New York City and Los Angeles of the 1950s and 1960s, thereby expanding our understanding of the music and experiences of the black diaspora.

Outline

While the issues and themes introduced above are the focus, this dissertation is organized chronologically. Chapters 2 through 5 cover Arsenio's life, musical career, and music in Havana, from the 1920s through the 1940s, while Chapters 6 through 9 cover his life, musical career, and music in New York City from 1950 to 1968 and Los Angeles from 1964 to 1966 and 1968 to 1970.

Chapter 2 documents Arsenio's early life and musical career, from the 1910s through the 1930s. It situates Arsenio and some of his colleagues in a dance music milieu highly stratified by race, ethnicity, and class, focusing on the various tactics musicians utilized in negotiating a professional musical career locally and in the mass media. Chapter 3 focuses on Arsenio's own critique of modernity's ideas of mestizaje, which had alienated altogether lower-class rural and urban Afrocubans and Afrocuban culture, and afrocubanismo, which had marginalized black working-class musicians to the realm of popular entertainment. He did this by incorporating deep rhetorical components from the mythological foundations of particularly the palo monte belief system into his afrocubano songs of the late 1930s. Chapter 4 traces the formation of Arsenio's conjunto, defines the musical principles and procedures of his son montuno style, and describes the relationship

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

between his style and the "mambo." Chapter 5 documents the performance career of Arsenio's conjunto in Havana during the 1940s, focusing on how racial segregation and ideologies limited his opportunities of professional advancement and, in turn, how he, his colleagues, and the black working class negotiated these social and ideological barriers through music, dance, and discourse.

Chapter 6 documents Arsenio's participation in the local "mambo" scene in New York City and his contestation of the stylistic legitimacy of the "mambo" that was being popularized and disseminated in New York City and internationally in the 1950s. Its purpose is not to prove whether or not Arsenio was the "true creator" of the mambo nor to argue that his style was more "authentic" but rather to suggest that the mambo's history should be conceived as a fundamentally contested one. Chapter 7 outlines the trajectory of Arsenio's performances and recordings in Havana and New York City from 1956 to 1964, focusing on the political and national dimensions of his identity, the nature of his relationship with the Puerto Rican and Cuban population of the Bronx, and the role his repertory and style had in this peripheral area of New York's Latin dance music milieu. Chapter 8 documents the last and least known period of Arsenio's life and career, exploring the ways Latino national identities and social functions, the emergence of second and third generation Latino musicians and dancers, dominant Latin dance music styles, and the power of Latin music industry personnel in Los Angeles and New York City all contributed to the professional and musical trajectory of Arsenio's final years. It also discusses Arsenio's expressions of identity with the African diaspora throughout his career. Finally, in aiming to answer the question, What is the legacy of Arsenio's music

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and style in salsa?, Chapter 9 puts forward the musical and social history of Arsenio's son montuno style, as documented and analyzed in the previous chapters, against which the development of salsa might be measured. After outlining some of the problems of salsa historiography, I compare re-recordings of son montunos made by early salsa groups with their originals made by Cuban conjuntos, including Arsenio's, focusing on the formers' treatments of the subtle stylistic and procedural aspects of the son montuno style as established by Arsenio. I then argue that the fundamental principles and procedures of Arsenio's son montuno style, encapsulated in the diablo, constitute his definitive contribution to the music and aesthetic of salsa.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 2

Arsenio Rodríguez as a Young Black Musician in the Dance Music Milieu of Havana, 1926-1939

In 1912, less than a year after Arsenio was born, deadly racial violence spread throughout Cuba, after erupting in the eastern province of Oriente. The conflict involved the protest by some black political leaders against the ongoing injustice and inequality facing black Cubans in the recently liberated nation, which they had helped to free from Spanish colonial control. The racial tensions came to a head when their political party, the Partido Independiente de Color (PIC), was banned by the white elite government, and their subsequent protest was ruthlessly attacked by the military and police. In the aftermath, thousands of black Cubans, members and non-members of the PIC, were murdered and executed in a hysteria of anti-black racism. As Aline Helg notes, the events leading up to the 1912 "race war" showed that "Cuba was a nation in which race remained a fundamental social construct and in which racism was still enough of an ideology to galvanize people into action."[1] The "race war" led to increased oppression of black Cubans and Afrocuban cultural traditions into the 1920s.

Cuban society in the early twentieth century was also stratified along class and ethnic lines. These social divisions were particularly prevalent in the cultural realm in which race, class, and ethnicity played fundamental roles in the organization of dance

---

[1] Helg 1995: 237.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

music locales, audiences, and musical groups. Social clubs, for example, were not only racially segregated into white social clubs and *sociedades de color* but also divided by ethnicity, namely, among Spanish ethnic groups such as *asturianos* (Asturians) and *gallegos* (Galicians). Black social clubs were further subdivided by class and racial ideology. A three-tiered structure divided cabarets, whereby *cabarets de primera* (first-tiered cabarets) were accessible only to white upper-class Cubans while *cabarets de tercera* (third-tiered cabarets) were accessible to lower-class blacks and whites. For musicians, particularly those of color, negotiating one's way through such a complexly stratified society involved various tactics including claiming one's Spanish heritage, occupying powerful positions in musician's unions, establishing relationships with musicians in greater positions of power as well as entrepreneurs and other individuals of the music industry, and satisfying the stylistic expectations fostered by the recording, radio, and film industries and patronized by upper-class audiences.

Arsenio's career and music in the 1930s illustrate the professional and musical tensions and negotiations that were involved for young musicians and composers of color from a working-class background in establishing a musical career in Havana. This chapter focuses on Arsenio's professional choices in the 1930s. It begins with an introduction to his youth. The second section outlines Havana's dance music landscape, focusing on the roles race, ethnicity, and class had in its structure and organization. The final section situates Arsenio's early performance career in this milieu and discusses the tactics he and some of his colleagues utilized to negotiate opportunities to perform and disseminate their music in more lucrative locales as well as through mass mediated channels.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's Background, 1911-1928

This section outlines Arsenio's early life in the rural areas of the provinces of Matanzas and La Habana. The examination in this section combines the oral data I have collected on the family's background and Arsenio's childhood, published interviews with Arsenio, and historical data on early twentieth-century society and culture and the legacy of nineteenth-century African culture in the areas of his childhood. Then, I describe the circumstances involving the family's migration in 1926 to the suburban city of Marianao, and the early impact of its musical milieu on the fifteen-year-old teenager.

Rural origins

Dorotea Scull Rodríguez (d. 29 Oct. 1956) had fifteen children, fourteen boys and one girl.[2] She had her last six children with Bonifacio Travieso (d. 1933). Of these six, the first three, Julio (b. 1902), Aurelio "Yeyo" (b. 1906), and Ignacio Arsenio (b. 1911), were born in the small rural barrio of Güira de Macuriges in the municipality of Bolondrón in the interior of the province of Matanzas.[3] Bonifacio worked in the *campos* (fields) of Bolondrón as a farm worker. Bolondrón and the neighboring municipality of Unión de Reyes were agricultural areas whose rich red soil was considered the very best kind for the cultivation of sugar cane, banana, coffee, maize, *malanga*, orange citrus, sweet potato,

---

[2] Raúl, the youngest and only surviving child of Dorotea, remembers the names of his six siblings and the names of only two half-siblings, Samón and Emelián, whose father was named Justo Trava.

[3] In 1919 the population of Güira de Macuriges was only 1,333, while the population of the entire municipality was 12,516 (Cuba, Dirección General del Censo 1919: 396).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and *yuca*.[4]

By the time Arsenio was four years old (1915) the family had moved about forty miles west of Bolondrón to the large agricultural municipality of Güines, in the south coast of the province of La Habana. They rented a small two-bedroom house in the barrio of Leguina where the remaining three children were born: Estela (b. 1915), Israel "Kike" (b. 1917), and Raúl "Cesar" (b. 1920) (see Figs. 4-6).

Güines produced sugar cane and many types of fruits and vegetables, the quantities of which were sufficient to supply the Havana markets and to furnish a portion for export to the United States.[5] Also, the capital city of Güines experienced great industrial development during the 1910s, with an increase of 235 new industrial and commercial establishments, including several packing houses for produce and fruits for export to the United States.[6] In addition to Bonifacio, there were other family members who worked in Güines's agricultural and sugar industries. For example, Dorotea's brother Yingo worked as a truck driver for a North American exporter, transporting produce from Güines to the docks of Havana and Matanzas, where it was later shipped to the United States. Arsenio's older brother Aurelio worked in the Centro Amistad, a large sugar factory. Despite these large industries, however, the living conditions in all rural areas of Cuba were inadequate. Official concern in the improvement of either housing or public hygiene was almost non-existent.[7]

---

[4] Cuba, Oficina Nacional del Censo 1909: 61; Dollero 1919: 374-376
[5] Cuba, Oficina Nacional del Censo 1909: 57
[6] Cuba, Dirección General del Censo 1919: 919
[7] Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Economicas 1963: 397.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Several years after moving to Güines Arsenio suffered a tragic accident, which would eventually leave him totally blind. The accident occurred when the youngster mischievously poked a mule on the backside with a stick, causing the animal to deliver a violent kick to the boy's head. It is unclear exactly how old Arsenio was when the accident occurred. His daughter Regla believes that he was around seven or eight years old (ca. 1918), while his brother Raúl remembers that he was around twelve years old (ca. 1923). It is certain, however, that Arsenio was old enough to remember having sight. Just as tragic was the inadequate medical resources in Güines which otherwise might have alleviated the young boy's painful and persistent headaches, and might even have saved his left eye, which had to be removed, and his sight in his right eye. It was as a result of this tragedy that he and younger brother Kike would initiate an extraordinary, brotherly bond that would last for the rest of Arsenio's life. Kike bore such a particular concern for Arsenio that he stopped going to school to remain constantly at his older brother's side.[8] In his pain and fear Arsenio turned to the music that penetrated his darkened world. The traditions that would form his musical upbringing were those most associated with Afrocuban rural musical culture in central western Cuba.

According to the 1919 census, the population of "color" (which included black, mixed, and "yellow") in Bolondrón amounted to 31.6 percent of the population, while in Unión de Reyes it made-up 50.1 percent.[9] These percentages of Cubans of color were particularly high compared to their percentage for the entire province of Matanzas which

---

[8] This was despite the fact that Kike was a very good student, mathematics being his favorite subject (Xiomara Travieso, 14 June 1999).
[9] Cuba, Dirección General del Censo 1919: 314.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

totaled 11.8 in 1919.[10] Güines also had a sizable percentage of Cubans of color totaling 21.8 percent, which was about the average for the entire province of La Habana.[11] The concentration of Afrocubans in the interior of La Habana and Matanzas was linked to its demography during slavery, which had officially ended in 1880 (thirty-one years before Arsenio's birth).[12] There were two periods in the nineteenth century that saw the introduction of an extraordinary number of African slaves to Cuba. Forty-seven percent of the total number of slaves who were brought to the island during the entire nineteenth century were introduced between 1821 and 1840. Another large number of slaves were introduced between 1851 and 1860, seventy-three percent of whom were concentrated in the interior of Matanzas and La Habana. Güines and Matanzas were two of the nine provinces with the largest slave populations, the majority of which were rural slaves.[13] It has been estimated that the ethnic composition of the Africans in this part of Cuba during this time was predominately *congo* (35 percent), followed by *lucumí* (23 percent), *gangá* (13 percent), *carabalí* (9 percent), and *macuá* (4 percent).[14]

These figures support Arsenio's assertion that his ancestry and ethnicity was *congo*.[15]

---

[10] Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Economicas 1963: 392.
[11] Cuba, Dirección General del Censo 1919: 313.
[12] The law that abolished slavery in Cuba finally took effect on 29 July 1880, but the eight-year tutelage it established set the terminal date for slavery in 1888 (Knight 1970: 177).
[13] In 1857 Matanzas had 6,208 urban slaves compared to 38,468 rural slaves. Güines, considered a province in the mid-nineteenth century, had 645 urban slaves compared to 15,885 rural slaves (Knight 1970: 135).
[14] Guanche 1996: 61-62. For explanations of these names see Brandon (1993), Castellanos and Castellanos (1987, 1992), Guanche (1996), Howard (1998), and Knight (1970).
[15] In Cuba the name *congo* was used to designate those peoples who came from the large

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> My family, I come from the Congo. So as a child I knew many things that my grandfather taught me and many other things that I no longer practice, things that are no longer necessary.[16]

In Güines Dorotea's father, who died before Arsenio had his accident, taught him "things" that most likely included the sacred traditions, collectively known as *palo monte*, which were introduced by the *congo* in Cuba. He also must have learned *palo monte* from his father, who was a practitioner. The central aspect of *palo monte* is the invocation of ancestral spirits.[17] Arsenio's identity with *palo monte* would manifest not only as a practitioner, which he remained late in life,[18] but also in his music, beginning in 1937 with his *afrocubanos* (analyzed in detail in Chapter 3).

Arsenio was also immersed in *congo* and *congo*-derived secular traditions such as *yuka* and *rumba*. While the origins of rumba in the late nineteenth century are not well documented, some Cuban scholars believe that of all the African ethnic groups in Cuba the *congo* and *gangá* were the most influential in the development of rumba in Matanzas.[19] It

---

cultural area sometimes referred to as the "Lower Guinea," which roughly encompasses southern Cameroon down to southern Angola. All of these peoples spoke Bantu languages belonging to the Bantoid group, Benue-Congo subfamily. As a result, the terms *congo* and *bantú*, when referring to culture, became and remain interchangeable in Cuba (Castellanos and Castellanos 1987: 101-105).

[16] Mi familia, yo vengo del *congo*. Pues, yo de niño sabía muchas cosas que me enseñó mi abuelo y mucha más que no me ocupe de ella, que ahora no son necesaria (Rodríguez ca. 1964). One published account identified Arsenio's great-grandfather as his nearest African-born ancestor (Salazar 1994: 12). This is yet to be documented.

[17] "Biyumba" (released on *Sabu Palo Congo* Blue Note LP-1561 1957) is an example of a *palo monte* ritual song, in which Arsenio invokes the spirits of his mother Dorotea, his father Bonifacio, and Justo Trava, the father of Arsenio's older half-brothers.

[18] Xiomara Travieso, 14 June 1999.

[19] See Urfé 1977; Martínez Rodríguez 1995: 143.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

is widely accepted, however, that beginning in the twentieth century the performance of rumba was concentrated in cities in Matanzas and Havana, including Unión de Reyes, Güines, and Marianao.[20]

During days off Yingo Scull borrowed his North American boss's truck to take his young nephews Arsenio and Kike on regular trips throughout the interior of Matanzas to go to and participate in rumbas. These were festive and often spontaneous reunions that took place in homes, cafes, street corners, parks, etc., and featured couple and solo dancing accompanied by drummers, soloists, and choruses. The young boys learned how to play *tambor* (drums) in Matanzas from legendary *rumberos* such as Malanga, Mulence, Roncona, Cesario, Tanganico, and Andres Baró,[21] as well as in Leguina, Güines, which was also known for its famous *rumberos*.[22] They also learned the similar but older drumming tradition known as *yuka*, which was especially associated with the rural interior areas of Matanzas.[23]

In Leguina the young Arsenio absorbed other sacred and secular traditions. A neighbor of theirs who was a *santero*, a practitioner of the Yoruba-based *santería* religion, hosted an annual celebration for Changó (or Santa Barbara) on the fourth day of every December. These celebrations, which would sometimes last for more than two days, were

---

[20] Acosta 1999: 54.
[21] "Malanga" (also known as José Rosario Oviedo) died tragically and mysteriously in the 1930s (Martínez Rodríguez 1995: 144). Arsenio and Tata Gutiérrez commemorated his death in "Llora timbero," which Arsenio recorded on 16 May 1941 and had published on 7 June 1941. It quickly became a standard in the popular Cuban dance music repertory, and remains so to this day. Arsenio also commemorated Mulence in "Mulence" (rec. 1953) and Roncona in "Adiós Roncona" (rec. 5 October 1956) (see Appendix 2).
[22] Orovio 1985: 15.
[23] León 1984: 71.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

attended by people from near and far. Finally, he engrossed himself in *son*, a secular genre of dance music, by learning to play the *marímbula* (a large box resonator with tuned metal tongues which are plucked), the *botija* (an earthenware vessel whose side hole was blown into, and whose top hole was covered and uncovered by the hand), and the *tres* (a traditional Cuban guitar with three double-coursed strings). The *marímbula* and *botija* were used to provide bass accompaniment, usually the roots of the tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords, by early rural and urban *son* groups.[24] Arsenio learned to play on a *marímbula* that older brother Julio made out of a wooden *guayaba* crate. He learned to play the *botija* at rural festivals known as "guateques."[25] Lastly, he first learned to play the *tres* from a man named Victor who gave him several lessons. But he was forced to continue on his own after Victor became too ill to continue giving the young boy lessons.

In the years that Arsenio was immersed in Afrocuban sacred and secular traditions in Güines and rural Matanzas, action was being taken by the Cuban government to repress forms of Afrocuban traditional practices. As Helg notes, the "[racist] killings of 1912 did not fully exorcize whites' fear of blacks." In 1919, speculations that a murdered white girl in Matanzas was killed and eaten by black *brujos* (or Santería priests) led to more racial violence. Later that year a black Jamaican man in Regla (near the city of Havana) was tied to the back of a horse and dragged until he died after he was arrested and accused of planning to kidnap a white girl for the purposes of "brujería."[26] On 21 November 1922

---

[24] León states that the *marímbula* derived from the smaller "zanza" or "mbila" (lamellaphone) of the "congos" (see ibid.: 120, 122, 139, 240).
[25] *El Imparcial* (San Juan), 19 September 1952.
[26] Helg 1995: 238-239.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Secretary of State Ricardo R. Lancís enacted a ban on the celebration of Santería ceremonies, including *bembés*, and all other Afrocuban ceremonies throughout Cuba. The renewal and enforcement of this resolution was made and continued by President Gerardo Machado on 16 October 1925.[27] Such resolutions, perceived racial threats, and real racial violence articulated the moral norms of the nation, which contributed to the marginalization of traditional Afrocuban culture in rural as well as urban areas. These actions also drove the black middle- and upper-classes to reject Afrocuban traditional culture wholeheartedly, in their attempt to become more integrated in the social, cultural, and political mainstream of the country (discussed further below and in Chapter 3).

Urban migration

In the early morning hours of 20 October 1926 the western half of the island was struck by a powerful and deadly hurricane. It began its path of destruction over the southern island of Isla de Pinos (renamed Isla de la Juventud in 1978), crossing into the southern part of the province of La Habana, directly over Güines. Three days after the hurricane hit, news from Güines reported that in the city industrial and public buildings were completely destroyed or suffered considerable damage. The situation in rural Güines was even more distressing, as the following reporter described:

> What is certain is that Güines, which hoped to avenge something of itself from the great crisis suffered, bears a new and rough blow. It remains in misery, and hundreds of its inhabitants will go hungry . . . Today, many

[27] Moore 1997: 229-232

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

güinero families find themselves without a livelihood . . .[28]

Among these families whose homes were destroyed and whose circumstances were uncertain were the Traviesos. Luckily, Arsenio, Kike, and their uncle Yingo were on one of their trips to Matanzas when the hurricane hit. Several days later, they returned to rejoin the family. The Traviesos and many other homeless families were temporarily housed in schools and other public facilities which withstood the power of the hurricane. Soon after, Bonifacio and Dorotea decided to move the family to Marianao, near the capital of Havana. Marianao was also hit hard by the hurricane, the damages of which totaled about four million pesos.[29] Los Hornos, Pogolotti, Los Angeles, Buena Vista, and other working-class sections of the city suffered the worst damages.[30] Despite the destruction, however, the family's best opportunity for living a better life seemed to be in Marianao, which was the fastest growing city in the province of La Habana. Older brother Julio had already been living and working in Marianao before the rest of the family arrived.

From 1907 to 1943 Marianao's population grew 648 percent, from 18,156 to 135,815.[31] The growth of the local economy, with the building of an electric plant, beer

---

[28] Lo cierto, lo que sí es verdad, que Güines que esperaba desquitarse algo ahora de la gran crisis sufrida, sufre un nuevo y rudo golpe. Se queda en la miseria, y que centenares de sus habitantes pasarán hambre . . . Hoy mismo, muchos hogares güineros se ven ya sin el sustento . . . (Marcelino Suárez, "Horas de angustia pasó toda la comarca de Güines, azotada con furia inusitada por el huracán," *Diario de la marina* [Havana], 23 October 1926).

[29] The following historical data on Marianao was taken from Inclán Lavastida (1943), except where indicated.

[30] Inclán Lavastida 1943: 149.

[31] During the same period, the city of Havana's population grew only 133 percent, from 290,065 to 676,376, while the province of La Habana as a whole grew only 129 percent,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

distilleries, and furniture, ice, and gasoline factories,[32] coincided with the country's rising sugar prices and a booming economy which began in 1901 and peeked in 1920. During this period and throughout the 1930s and 1940s immigrants from rural areas settled in large numbers in Havana and neighboring Marianao.[33] To accommodate its population explosion, numerous wards known as *repartos* were built in various *barrios* throughout Marianao. The construction of some *repartos* was authorized by the local and federal governments to furnish inexpensive housing for the growing number of working-class families.[34] Other neighboring *repartos* were built by private investors for Havana's nouveau riche who wished to leave Havana's crowded downtown area for the suburb of Marianao.

The result was a social landscape whose juxtaposition of *repartos* and barrios magnified the divisions between rich and poor as well as black and white. While working-class blacks and whites lived together in the low-income repartos of Marianao, the high-income repartos were almost completely white.[35] Yet, the link between race and class was indissoluble for most blacks in Marianao. As Raúl, Arsenio's brother, remembered:

> So, I couldn't pass by [their neighborhoods] because I was black. They had their private police who would arrest me and accuse me of attempted robbery, not at night, but during broad daylight for simply walking by their neighborhood. They built clubhouses at the beach where they and their kids swam. But [a white person] who was poor and had nothing couldn't enter that area because [neither he] nor his father had the money. And I, a black

---

from 538,010 to 1,235,939 (Republica de Cuba 1943: 30-31).
[32] Cuba, Dirección General del Censo 1919: 919.
[33] See Luzón 1987: 104.
[34] An example was *reparto* Pogolotti, in the barrio of Redención.
[35] Amaro and Mesa-Lago 1971: 348.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

person, couldn't even get close to their clubhouse door.[36]

In addition, cultural activities such as the performance of dance music were largely separated by race.

From 1926 through the 1930s Arsenio and his family lived in several working-class *repartos*. The family first settled in Los Hornos (established in 1907), in the barrio of Quemados, which by 1931 was the third most densely populated barrio (14,632) of the eleven in Marianao. In Los Hornos the fifteen-year old Arsenio did not have to go far to meet famous musicians, most of whom were black. For example, the family lived several blocks away from Felipe Neri Cabrera, the singer and *maraquero* (maraca player) with the popular black group Sexteto Habanero. This *son* group had just returned from New York City where they made twelve recordings for RCA Victor on 2 and 3 September 1926, about one month before the hurricane. Raúl remembers that he, Arsenio, and Kike regularly observed Habanero's rehearsals from the window of Cabrera's home. In one occasion Kike told the musicians that Arsenio played *tres* and wanted to learn more. The musicians obliged his request and invited Arsenio in to play. After, Raúl remembers the following: "When we left, Arsenio told us, 'My brothers, I'm going to play better than [Carlos Godínez].' My other brother asked him, 'Why do you say that?' [Arsenio] 'You

---

[36] Entonces, en esos lugares, yo no podía pasar por ahí porque yo era negro. Entonces, esos tenían una policía que eran mandada por ellos. Entonces me arrestaban, me acusaban atentado de robo, nada más que yo, porque yo, no de noche, de día pasé por allí por el barrio de ellos. Hacían en la playa un club, una casa. Ahí se bañaban ellos, los hijos de ellos. Tú, pobrecito pobre que no tenía nada, no podías entrar por ahí porque tú no tenías recurso ninguno ni tu padre. Y yo como negrito no podía ir ni por la puerta (Raúl Travieso, 15 April 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

know why? Because he plays [the *tres*] in only two chords, and that can be played with more chords. I'm going to play more than he does'."[37] Evidently, Arsenio's interest in breaking the mold took root early in his life.

Shortly after, the family moved about fifteen blocks north of Los Hornos to the *reparto* of La Serafina (est. 1913), which was also in the barrio of Quemados. It was here that Isaac Oviedo, *tres* player and director of Sexteto Matancero, heard people talk about a young, blind *tres* player who had recently arrived from Güines.[38] Oviedo met Arsenio and subsequently gave him several lessons on the *tres*. Exactly what impact, if any, Oviedo had on Arsenio's style of playing *tres* would be difficult to determine. It is safe to say, however, that Oviedo's predilection for both *tres* solos (his were the first to be recorded) and unconventional chord progressions appealed to the young musician.[39]

Arsenio and his brothers would also walk to nearby Pogolotti, a *reparto* in the barrio of Redención, where another famous *son* group, Septeto Boloña, frequently performed at *sociedad* (social club) Club Casadores. This *sociedad*, whose members were mostly Jamaican, held its social functions in a backyard patio, which was surrounded by a wooden fence. His brothers, however, were able to peer through the many holes of the fence, as they and Arsenio listened to this popular septeto perform. One of the musicians Raúl remembers seeing was trumpet player Félix Chappottín, who would later join

---

[37] Cuando salímos de ahí, Arsenio nos dijo, "Mis hermanitos, yo voy a tocar mejor que [Carlos Godínez]." Le dice mi otro hermano, "¿Y por qué tú dices eso así?" [Arsenio] "¿Tu sabes por qué? Porque él toca [el tres] no más que en dos tonos, y eso se puedo tocar en más tonos. Voy a tocar más que ese" (Raúl Travieso, 19 June 1996).

[38] Oviedo had formed his sexteto in the city of Matanzas in early 1926, and moved the group to Marianao later that year.

[39] See Avalos 1992: 18 and 1995: 21-22.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's *conjunto* in 1949.

In all likelihood, Arsenio's encounters with these black working-class *soneros* and their music had a profound impact on the teenager in terms of his musical interests and identity. In the first place, these musicians incorporated aspects of sacred and secular Afrocuban cultural traditions in many of their recordings of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Secondly, extraordinary opportunities for economic and professional gain opened up to them as a result of their success as recording artists, which was in itself extraordinary. For example, Septeto Habanero's popularity grew as they became established performers in exclusive nightclubs and "*encerronas*" (or exclusive parties in private residences of wealthy white politicians and business leaders), to the extent that their performance for working-class audiences declined.[40] Hence, for Arsenio, playing music was not simply one of the very few occupations available to a blind, black working-class individual. It was a powerful means by which he could achieve artistic and personal recognition. He undoubtedly was aware of the social challenges he faced. But as his musical accomplishments reflect, he was committed to overcoming what to others might have seemed to be insurmountable odds.

Havana's Dance Music Landscape

Stratification was a central aspect of the entire dance music milieu of greater Havana. Musicians whom I interviewed often made the distinction not only between black and

---

[40] Moore 1997: 94-101.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

white spaces of dance music performance, but also rich and poor spaces. Referring to racial and class segregation, Raúl remarked, "I lived three blocks away from the Tropicana [*cabaret de primera* in Marianao]. I didn't know what it was like inside!"[41] And as La Sonora Matancera member Humbero Cané stated, "The black social clubs were in Marianao. The wealthy social clubs, white social clubs, were in the center of Havana."[42] Indeed, the dance music milieu of Marianao and Havana was distinctly stratified by race, ethnicity, and class.[43]

In the following section I outline the types of locations that defined Havana's dance music milieu: *sociedades* (social clubs), cabarets, *academias de baile* (dance academies), and *cervecerías* (beer gardens). I also situate Arsenio's early performance career as well as the careers of La Sonora Matancera, Miguelito Valdés, Belisario López, René Touzet, Manolo Suárez, and Gilberto Valdés in this milieu. All of these musicians, along with Arsenio, continued their careers in New York City and/or Los Angeles. Focusing on these groups will provide a broader interpretive framework linking his and their experiences in Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles.

---

[41] Yo vivía a tres cuadras de La Tropicana [*cabaret de primera* en Marianao]. ¡Yo no sabía lo que existía adentro de la Tropicana! (Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998).
[42] Marianao era sociedades de negros. En el centro de Habana era donde estaba todas las sociedades de gente de dinero, de blancos (Humberto Cané, 8 March 1999).
[43] In her history of the musician's union, Valdés Cantero (1988: 42-53) outlines the musical milieu of Havana, including Marianao, which she orders into three spheres of musical activity: "las actividades bailables" (dance music), "labor musical en teatros, cines y radio" (theaters, cinemas, and radio), and "actividad laboral en las bandas de música y en la música de concierto" (municipal bands and concert music).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Sociedades

Because of their sheer numbers, Havana's *sociedades* (social clubs) provided more groups with work than did any other type of performance locale. And because of their prevalence and importance in the social lives of Cubans from all backgrounds, they provide the clearest evidence of the extent to which class, race, and ethnicity determined the ways in which people in greater Havana's dance music milieu organized themselves and their social-musical events.

At the most general level, there were two types of *sociedades*, the *sociedad regional española* (regional Spanish social club) and the *club social y deportivo* (social and sport club).[44] The former were primarily mutual aid organizations, most of which were organized by Spanish immigrants along ethnic lines. The latter were largely recreational organizations, which were organized by Cubans based on class and race. The sociedades españolas were located predominately in the barrios of downtown Havana, while the *club sociales y deportivos*, black and white, were located in the barrios west and south of downtown Havana and throughout the barrios of Marianao. Sociedades españolas were the most economically and socially powerful type of social club. Initially, while the directors of these sociedades were required to be Spanish-born, the members, which were predominately Spanish-born, eventually included white Cubans. From the 1930s onward more and more upper-class white Cubans became members. Nevertheless, through the 1940s, Spanish clubs continued to be distinguished along ethnic lines as well as from white

---

[44] Data on the *sociedades españolas* and *club sociales y deportivos* were taken from Miguel Roldan Viñas (1954: 724-730) and Luís de Posada (1954: 731-741), except where indicated.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(Cuban) social clubs.[45]

As cooperative and mutual organizations, the objectives of the sociedades españolas were to offer educational and recreational services and provide health care for their members only, all for a regular quota. Centro Gallego, which was founded in 1879, was originally organized in order to provide educational services for immigrant Galicians. But because of growing epidemics and Havana's lack of adequate health care, the members put into operation a health care center named La Benéfica in the barrio of Luyanó, south of downtown Havana, in 1895. Asociación de Dependientes del Comercio was organized in 1880 to provide the families of Spanish businessmen with education and health care. They also operated a health care center named La Purísima Concepción, which was opened in the barrio of Cerro, west of Luyanó, in 1884. Centro Asturiano was founded in 1886 to collect and send aid to family members back in Asturias, Spain. Their La Covadonga, one of the most prestigious health clinics in Cuba, was inaugurated in 1895, also in the barrio of Cerro. Although these barrios were racially mixed, the health clinics that the sociedades españolas operated did not admit black Cubans.[46]

As their membership grew, the sociedades españolas grew in prestige. By 1954 Centro Gallego had 54,609 members, Asociación de Dependientes del Comercio had 74,321 members, and Centro Asturiano had 76,756 members. Spanish immigration constituted the main source of the Spanish-born population in Cuba. It grew through the first quarter of the twentieth century, constituting 16 percent of the population in 1931.

---

[45] See Nelson 1950: 58-59.
[46] Amaro and Mesa-Lago 1971: 348.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Immigration played an especially significant role in Cuba's population growth between 1899 and 1931 and in the country's booming sugar industry by supplying cheap labor. As a result, from 1902 to 1919 Spanish immigrants (from Spain and the Canary Islands) made up 66 percent of all foreign immigrants, while Haitian and Jamaican immigrants totaled 14 percent.[47] With this substantial number of Spaniards in Cuba these sociedades grew in number and in power. Nearly all the salaried and wage earning people belonged to these societies.[48] From 1931 to 1943 Spanish immigration rose to 62 percent of the total foreign immigration, even though immigration as a whole declined considerably due to the massive unemployment brought about by the Depression.

Their musical organizations ranged from choral societies[49], to music academies, to recreational committees, which were responsible for organizing the clubs' carnival celebrations and other social functions. Such activities took place in grand "palaces," which many of these sociedades owned. Centro Gallego, for example, constructed its own "Gran Palacio" (completed in 1915), which occupied an entire block in downtown Havana, on the west-side of Parque Central.[50] Centro Asturiano constructed its *palacio* (completed in 1927) on the east-side of Parque Central. Asociación de Dependientes del

---

[47] Subsequent immigration legislation encouraged immigration by white Europeans, and prohibited immigration by other races and nationalities. For instance, Decree No. 999 passed in 1913 promoted the immigration of white European workers whose employment in the construction of the Panama canal had just concluded. At the same time, Chinese immigration was being regulated (Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Economicas 1963: 376).

[48] Phillips 1959: 80-81.

[49] The *sociedades regionales españolas* that had choral societies included the centros Catalán, Gallego, Asturiano, and Vasco. By 1943, however, these choral societies had been disintegrated or were inactive (Republica de Cuba 1943: 632).

[50] The block was comprised of Prado, Consulado, San José, and San Rafael.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Comercio also constructed a *palacio* (completed in 1907), which was located four blocks north of Centro Gallego's on Prado. In the 1930s and 1940s the *sociedades* that regularly organized dances included Asociación de Dependientes del Comercio, Asociación Canaria, Centro Asturiano, Centro Castellano, Centro Gallego, Centro Montañés, Club Deportivo Asturias, Club Español de Almendares, and Club Hispano Habanero. For their social functions, male members paid an entrance fee of .40 cents to $1, while their wives entered free of charge. Non-members could only attend with an invitation.

While the most powerful sociedades españolas were located in downtown Havana, the majority of the white middle- and upper-class *clubes sociales y deportivos* were located in Marianao.[51] Riding on the booming economic years of the 1910s, private investors constructed extravagant and exclusive *repartos* such as Miramar (established 1911), Country Club Park (est. 1916), and Alturas de Almendares (est. 1918). Miramar, for instance, flaunted beach-front properties, which only the city's wealthy could afford. Residents of these *repartos* also organized opulent social clubs. The Habana Yacht Club (founded in 1886), in the coastal barrio of Playa, was one of the oldest and most moneyed white social club in Marianao. This club provided its members and families with a segregated section of the beach in Playa, prohibiting access to all black Cubans.[52] The Habana Biltmore Yacht and Country Club, which was founded in 1927 by both US and Cuban capitalists, also maintained a segregated section of the beach in Playa, until 1941

---

[51] Additional data on the *sociedades* in Marianao taken from Inclán 1943: 131-135, 194-195.

[52] White *sociedades* also maintained private beaches in Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba (*Adelante* January 1938: 3).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

when the entire beach was made public by the Marianao city government. Other aristocratic social clubs in the barrio of Playa included Círculo Militar y Naval and the Caserío de Jaimanitas.

Another group of US and British capitalists established Havana Country Club in 1911, which owned a mansion with large meadows, a golf course, a court for lawn tennis, and other sport facilities. By the 1950s the club had grown from an initial membership of only 23 to 1,630. Havana Country Club's initial membership fee by the 1950s was $750, while the annual fee was $180. The *reparto* itself, Country Club Park, boasted beautiful, winding streets and a man-made lake. Casino Español de La Habana required that new members be 21 years of age, pay both the admittance fee of $250 per person or $500 per family and fees for social functions, usually $5 for youths and $13 per family, and be "socially well regarded."[53] Sociedad Jockey Club, which was located on the grounds of Oriental Park, a race horse track in the outskirts of barrio Quemados, was considered "a refined social club which completes the image of the various types of individuals who enjoy the preference of Havana's high, worldly society."[54]

Because of their economic power these sociedades españolas and white Cuban social clubs were able to organize elegant and elaborate social dances, and to pay musical groups well. The carnival season, beginning in late January and lasting through February, was an especially busy time of the year for musical groups who performed for these social clubs. Such groups who performed almost exclusively for these two types of social clubs

---

[53] . . . bien conceptuado socialmente (de Posada 1954: 735).
[54] . . . un club social refinado que completa el cuadro de las entidades de variado tipo que disfrutan de la preferencia del alto mundanismo habanero (ibid.: 741).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

throughout the 1930s and 1940s included *charangas* (a string- and woodwind-based ensemble which specialized in *danzón*, a traditional Cuban dance genre) such as Orquesta Antonio María Romeu, Orquesta Belisario López, Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig, Orquesta Paulina Álvarez, and Arcaño y Sus Maravillas; big bands such as Orquesta Havana Swing, Orquesta Los Hermanos Castro, Orquesta Casino de la Playa; and *son* groups such as Septeto La Sonora Matancera, Septeto La Gloria Matancera, and Septeto Casino, all of whom would convert over to the "conjunto" format after Arsenio's group in the early 1940s. Quinteto Tomé, whose members were all Spanish and specialized in Spanish music, was particularly popular among the sociedades españolas.[55]

Upon observing the prevalence and nature of Cuban social clubs in the late 1940s, one writer wrote:

> The clubs which are so important in the social life of Cuba are segregated strictly on a color basis. The various yacht clubs are exclusively white. If the colored people are to have any club life they must provide their own, also on an exclusive basis.[56]

The history of *sociedades de color* is linked to the *cabildos de nación*, which date as far back as the 16th century in Cuba.[57] These associations, which were recognized by the Spanish colonial government and fostered by the Cuban Catholic Church, were organized by Africans and their descendants by ethnicity, including Yoruba, Bantu or Congo, Egba,

---

[55] Acosta et al. 1999: 44-45.
[56] Nelson 1950: 67.
[57] Ortiz 1921. Ortiz discusses the institution of "cabildos" in Spain beginning in the 14th century (9-14).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Oyo, Ife, Mandinga, Carabalí, and others.[58] As Philip Howard notes, "These language- and ethnic-based associations not only provided a sense of community to members and cushioned them from the blow of cultural dislocation, but they also provided a forum for the transmission of African cultures in Cuba."[59]

Beginning in the 1880s sociedades de color began to replace the ethnically-organized *cabildos de nación*. Black intellectual leaders such as Martín Morúa Delgado argued that education was the most effective means by which leaders of black social clubs could integrate their members and, in general, the black population into mainstream social and political life, thereby achieving social and economic equality. Morúa Delgado condemned Afrocuban cultural traditions such as *tumbas* (*cabildo*-related celebrations) in which African-derived music and dancing were performed. He insisted that members rid themselves of their African heritage and customs which he regarded as culturally and socially backward.[60] Such views shared by Morúa Delgado and his supporters, as Howard argues, reflected their internalization and acceptance of the racial inferiority of blacks constructed by whites.[61] After Independence in 1898 leaders of particularly black middle-class social clubs continued to advocate the interrelated ideologies of *mejoramiento* and *superación* (social and cultural advancement) as well as *mestizaje* (racial miscegenation) (discussed further in Chapter 3).

Unión Fraternal (organized in 1886) was one of several black middle-class social

---

[58] See Brandon 1997: 70-74.
[59] Howard 1998: xiv.
[60] See Wurdemann (1844: 112-113) for an account of an early nineteenth-century *tumba* celebration in a *cabildo* in the Ciudad de Matanzas.
[61] Howard 1998: 165-171.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

clubs which formed at this time. It was located in barrio Ceiba (Revillagigedo and Misión), about ten blocks south of the sociedades españolas Gallego and Asturiano in downtown Havana.[62] Club Atenas, organized in 1917, was located in barrio Arsenal (Zulueta and Apodaca), near Unión Fraternal. Their first president, Dr. Pantaleón Julián Valdés, established the purpose of this institution, which was to lead its members toward cultural and social *mejoramiento* in order to bring Cubans of color in general into the mainstream of Cuban society. Their social functions that took place in their *salones* (banquet rooms) included conferences given by Cuban intellectuals and artists, including Fernando Ortíz and Nicolás Guillén.[63]

The types of ensembles that Unión Fraternal and Club Atenas hired, however, did not reflect the interests of all "Cubans of color." Throughout the 1930s and 1940s these black social clubs refused to allow *son* groups—that is, sextetos, septetos, and conjuntos—to perform in their ballrooms because of the music's association with working-class Afrocuban culture.[64] Instead, the members of these and other black middle-class social clubs preferred Western European art music, *danzones* performed by *charangas*, and US swing music performed by Cuban big bands. Club Atenas, who hosted Marian Anderson in 1947, was especially important in the patronization of classical music.[65] The all-black *charangas* Orquesta Maravillas de Arcaño, Orquesta Ideal, and Orquesta Melodias del 40 were particularly popular among the younger members of black

---

[62] *Nuevos Rumbos* Jan.-Feb. and June 1946.
[63] *Nuevos Rumbos* Sept. 1947; *Hoy* (Havana) 10 April 1948; Verez de Peraza 1954: 68.
[64] See Moore 1997: 96.
[65] Republica de Cuba 1943: 634; *Nuevos Rumbos* September 1947.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

middle-class social clubs. Dances were organized in honor of patriotic Afrocubans, and to celebrate national holidays.

In contrast, black working-class social clubs, beginning in the early 1940s, would play a vital role in the formation and popularization of various dance and music styles, including the danzón-mambo and Arsenio's son montuno. During the 1930s, however, Arsenio's performance career was limited to the socially marginal locales of third-tiered cabarets and dance academies.

Cabarets

There were three categories of *cabarets*: *primera*, *segunda*, and *tercera*. The first two types were patronized by tourists as well as the white Cuban middle- and upper-classes. Between 1934 and 1941 tourism accounted for 13 percent of the nation's gross national product (third to the sugar and tobacco industries), averaging $12,337,825 per year. After a brief lull during World War II tourism rose back to its pre-war levels.[66] The majority of tourists, who were from the United States, visited Havana from December to about February.[67] These cabarets offered tourists and the elite nightly elaborate shows which, throughout the 1930s and 1940s, generally featured three types of dance acts: a solo female dancer, a dance couple who specialized in the latest international dance fad, and a couple who danced commercial "rumba." These acts were accompanied by tuxedo-clad all-white Cuban "big bands," most of which were established and popular nationally and

---

[66] Otero et al. 1954: 710; Republica de Cuba 1943: 696-697.
[67] René Touzet, 27 February 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

internationally. These big bands also performed dance music for the audience, usually US popular music by Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and others.[68] Septetos, which played Cuban popular dance music, especially *son*, were also included in the night's entertainment.

The Tropicana, which opened on 31 December 1938 in the barrio of Buena Vista in Marianao, was (and still is) the most prestigious and internationally-known *cabaret* in Cuba. By the 1950s it consisted of two cabarets: the "Arcos de Cristal," which was indoors and covered by crystal arches; and the "Paraíso Bajo las Estrellas," which was an outdoor facility surrounded by palm trees and bamboo, and lit by multi-colored lights. In addition to the choreographed dance acts, the Tropicana featured moveable stages and the most popular national and international stars of theater, radio, film, and, in the 1950s, television. The international stars that regularly performed at the Tropicana included Josephine Baker, Xavier Cugat, Los Chavales de España, and Nat "King" Cole. Its quality entertainment along with its architectural splendor attracted tourists from around the world as well as Havana's elite.[69]

Sans Souci was another well-known *cabaret*, which was located in *reparto* La Coronela, in barrio Lisa, on the outskirts of Marianao.[70] It also featured dance acts, Cuban big bands, and *septetos de son*. Manolo Suárez, a white vocalist, sang with Orquesta Los Hermanos Palau, Orquesta Riverside, and Orquesta Bellamar, all of whom were all-white

---

[68] Padilla 1983; René Touzet, 27 February 2000; Valdés Cantero 1988: 43.
[69] Otero et al. 1954: 718 and Ruf 1997. For descriptions and analyses of the Tropicana's entertainment in contemporary socialist Cuba compared with pre-1959 Cuba see Ruf 1997 and Manuel 1991: 302-304.
[70] *Diario de la Marina*, 28 December 1940.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

big bands that performed in Sans Souci successively from about 1935 to 1942. Black septetos, however, performed in a segregated section of this cabaret.[71] Another famous *cabaret* located in Country Club Park was the Casino Nacional.[72] It had hired only white musicians until the late 1920s when Antonio Machín, a mulatto, was featured as the star vocalist of Don Azpiazu's orchestra.[73] Sexteto Casino, an all-white *son* group (later known as Conjunto Casino), performed here in 1937.[74] René Touzet, the director of an all-white big band, was contracted to perform at the Casino Nacional from about 1939 to 1940. From 1940 to 1944, his big band performed in Montmarte, a *cabaret* in the upper-class barrio of Vedado in west Havana.[75]

While the majority of *cabarets de primera* were located in Marianao, many *cabarets de segunda* were located in and around downtown Havana. These included Casablanca, Zombie Club, El Kursaal, and the Edén Concert.[76] In stark contrast to the first two categories of cabarets were the *cabarets de tercera*, especially those such as El Niche, La Choricera, La Playa, Las Fritas, El Pompilio, and La Verbena, which were located along the beaches of Marianao, in barrio Playa. These cabarets were patronized primarily by black working-class Cubans, and occasionally individuals with criminal records, bad repute, and predilection for violent fights. The entertainment, while sometimes having the reputation for being "vulgar," included *son* groups and dance routines featuring female

---

[71] Manolo Suárez, 31 July 1996 and 11 September 1996.
[72] Acosta et al. 1999: 19.
[73] Díaz Ayala 1999: 46.
[74] Acosta et al. 1999: 43.
[75] Touzet played at Montmartre until October of 1944 when the cabaret was destroyed by a hurricane. It was at this time that Touzet decided to move to New York City.
[76] Valdés Cantero 1988: 44; Moore 1997: 247 n40, 266 n29.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

solo dancers.[77] During the 1930s and early 1940s many musicians, who performed with these *son* groups, had recently migrated from the interior in search of work and better salaries, although this last goal was difficult to achieve performing in the *cabarets de trecera*.[78] One of these musicians, of course, was Arsenio who performed regularly with his Septeto Bóston at La Verbena in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Academias de baile

Unlike cabarets and *sociedades*, *academias de baile* were not overtly categorized by class, race, or ethnicity. They were, however, exclusive locations where male patrons, usually middle- and upper-class, could go and dance with women, who oftentimes doubled as prostitutes.[79] For each song a man was required to purchase one ticket worth about .10 cents from a woman whom he wished to dance with.[80] The performance of the music alternated usually between a big band, a *charanga*, and a *son* group. The length of a song was generally shortened to about a minute, and the groups alternated without breaks between sets, thus maximizing profit. The quality of the music was sometimes questionable. On the other hand, the strict working conditions brought forth cohesion among musicians, and served as a testing ground for many *charangas* and *son* groups that

---

[77] Acosta et al. 1999: 19; Martínez n.d.: 219; Moore 1997: 184-185; Valdés Cantero 1988: 43.
[78] Valdés Cantero 1988: 44.
[79] Valdés Cantero 1988: 43.
[80] Agustín Caraballoso, 11 December 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

would later become nationally and internationally popular.[81] According to Robin Moore, *academias de baile* ultimately served as one of three important institutions (the others being *cervecerías* and private dances of the elite) contributing to the popularization of *son* music in the 1920s.[82]

La Sonora Matancera was one future internationally-known *son* group which on weeknights performed at the *academia* Marte y Belona in Centro Habana from 1932 to about 1950. This *academia* employed up to 200 to 300 women, doubling as prostitutes, at a time.[83] Other well-known *son* groups that performed here included Jóvenes del Cayo and Septeto Habanero. Septeto Jóvenes del Cayo's bassist Miguelito Valdés, who would later record Arsenio's "Bruca maniguá" ("Witch from the Bush") in 1937, met Arsenio, who was playing with Septeto Bellamar, in the *academia* Sport Antillano, where both groups performed in the early 1930s.[84] Despite the *academia de baile's* significance in the history of *son* music and performers, it was a relatively "closed" and, in fact, stigmatized location of dance and music performance.

Cervecerías and the *salones de baile*

Salones de baile in the *jardines de cervecerías* (beer gardens) were outdoor dance floors which the owners of Cuba's two largest beer factories maintained on their factory

---

[81] Valdés Cantero 1988: 44-45.
[82] Moore 1997: 98-100.
[83] Humberto Cané, 8 March 1999; Ramírez Bedoya 1998: 54-55, 168; Alfredo Armenteros, conversation with author, 25 January 2000.
[84] Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

grounds. La Tropical, which was the oldest and largest, was founded in 1888 in the barrio of Ceiba, Marianao. By 1929, the factory complex consisted of the actual breweries and warehouses, an office building, a 15,000-seat baseball stadium, and outdoor *salones*. Economically, it grew to constitute one of the most vigorous companies in the Cuban national economy, controlling about 50 to 60 percent of the beer market by the 1940s. La Polar, whose parent company was Compañía Cervecera Internacional (est. 1911), was the second largest beer manufacturer in Cuba. It also was located in Marianao.

Besides their economic importance, La Tropical and La Polar provided public and private organizations such as *sociedades* and worker's unions, in addition to dance impresarios, facilities including beer and dance floors with bandstands on a daily basis to conduct their cultural and social activities and functions, which almost always included music and dancing. Types of dances that were organized in the cervecerías included *giras*, *verbenas*, and *merenderos*. A gira was a dance that was organized by an individual impresario, worker's union, or a sociedad. They took place on Sundays only, and each could last anywhere from 1 pm to 4 am. In contrast, a verbena referred to the numerous dances that took place simultaneously in a cervecería's salones. A verbena could be organized by one or more impresario, sociedad, and worker's union, and either in addition to the beer company would set-up stands at each salón to sell food and refreshments. Verbenas took place usually on the weekends, and lasted all day into the early morning hours. Finally, merenderos were dances that took place on weekday afternoons, usually Mondays, from 1 pm to the early evening. They were usually organized by impresarios only. The entrance fee for a gira, verbena, and merendero was usually one dollar for men

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and ten cents for women, although merenderos were sometimes free.[85]

Some of the better-known salones included "Mamoncillo," "Ensueño," and "Tropical" in La Tropical, and "Merendero Criollo," "Patio Sevillano," "Polar," "Terraza China," and "Trimalta" in La Polar.[86] The primary aim in organizing a dance was usually to collect money to fund services that *sociedades* and unions provided for their members and, in the case of the former, to purchase or construct club houses in their barrios or other locations such as in beach areas. For these occasions, in particular, invitations were not only sent out to members and their families but also members of other *sociedades*, usually of the same class and race. For verbenas all of a cervecería's salones were rented, and as many as ten musical groups were hired to perform. *Sociedades españolas*, white upper-class *club sociales*, and middle- and working-class *sociedades de color* alike utilized the *cervecería* facilities for their social functions. Accordingly, the ensembles they hired were the same *charangas*, big bands, and *son* groups that they hired to perform in their private ballrooms.

Arsenio's first septetos, 1928-1939

Not long after he arrived from Güines, Arsenio began to perform with small groups around Marianao. One such group, which included Kike, his cousin Esteban Reguira Dovigny, and two or three other musicians, performed at the traditional, annual festival for "Jesús Nazareno" in barrio Arroyo Arenas. By 1928, at the age of seventeen, he had

---

[85] Dandy Beltrán, 11 September 1996; Raúl Travieso, 25 January 2001.
[86] Inclán Lavastida 1943: 190; Republica de Cuba 1943: 455; Otero et al. 1954: 765-770.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

formed Septeto Bóston, which at various times included relatives, friends from the same and nearby *repartos*, as well as childhood friends from Güines. Cousins Jacinto Scull[87] and Esteban Reguira Dovigny sang first and second voice, respectively. "Curiquito," who also sang second voice, was a childhood friend of Arsenio's from Güines. Mario Agudín, who played trumpet, lived in Los Hornos, and was an army sergeant stationed in the nearby fort of Columbia in Marianao. He was later replaced by Serafín Terry, who was also from Güines.[88] Even Arsenio's oldest brother Julio briefly played contrabass. At this time Arsenio was living in the working-class barrio of Pogolotti.[89]

Initially, Septeto Bóston performed regularly in the rough, working-class *cabarets de tercera*, especially La Verbena, in Playa, Marianao. According to contemporary reports, musicians who worked in the third-tiered cabarets in Playa were the worst paid (averaging about $1 to 1.20), most overworked (usually having to play from 9pm to dawn), and the least appreciated by managers.[90] By 1934 Arsenio had dissolved the failing Bóston to join Septeto Bellamar,[91] whose director and trumpet player was his uncle-in-law José Interián, and whose first vocalist was his cousin Elizardo Scull. On 7 September 1936 the members of Bellamar officially registered the group as a "Musical Association" with the Governor's Office of the Province of La Habana. The core members and associates,

---

[87] Méndez Bravet and Pérez (1991/2: 10) state that Jacinto Scull was the director. Raúl, however, indicated in numerous interviews that Arsenio was the director (Raúl Travieso, 17 February 1997; 3 August 1998; 7 February 2000; 15 February 2000).
[88] Serafín Terry recorded with Sexteto Matancero on 23 June 1930 (Ávalos 1992: 2).
[89] See Chapter 5 for a discussion on the historical background of the *reparto* of Pogolotti, to which Arsenio dedicated a *guaguancó*.
[90] See Valdés Cantero 1988: 45-48.
[91] Not to be confused with the all-white big band Orquesta Bellamar, which was active in the major tourist cabarets in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

who had approved the group's bylaws on 10 August 1936, were now Esteban Regueira Dovigny (president, director, guitarist, and second voice), José Ramón Ortíz (secretary and treasurer), Luís Regatillo (voting member and bassist), Mario Carballo (voting member and *bongosero*), Arsenio Rodríguez (voting member and *tresero*), Manuel Manrique (voting member, first voice, and clave player), and Oscar Velazco O'Farrill (voting member). The septeto's headquarters was on Gervasio No. 132, just west of downtown Havana.[92]

Septeto Bellamar had a steady gig throughout the 1930s at Sport Antillano, an *academia de baile* which was on the border of the working-class barrios of Cayo Hueso and Pueblo Nuevo (Zanja and Belascoain), west of downtown Havana. Like the third-tiered cabarets, the working conditions at academias de baile were excessive; groups were forced to perform one-minute fragments of songs with no breaks to increase turnover for the female dancers who were paid by male dancers "per song."[93] Also, academias de baile as well as third-tiered cabarets were patronized by certain sectors of society, middle- and upper-class males in the case of the former. On the other hand, there were several significant advantages for Arsenio in performing with Bellamar. First, Interían, the group's first director, had recorded with the famous Septeto Habanero in 1930,[94] and probably had connections to important people in the recording industry. Second, compared to performing at La Verbena which was in the periphery of Marianao and Havana, Arsenio

---

[92] Archivo Nacional de Cuba. *Registro de Asociaciones*. Fondo 54, legajo 206.
[93] See Valdés Cantero 1988: 43, 45.
[94] See the recordings for 14 February 1930 in *Sexteto y Septeto Habanero: Grabaciones Completas* Vol. 4, *1928-1931* (Tumbao Cuban Classics, TCD 304).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was able to gain much more attention and recognition in Sport Antillano, especially among important musicians such as Miguelito Valdés and Antonio Arcaño who were regularly passing by the Musician's Union office (about three blocks away), and who would meet at the popular musician's hang-out Café El OK, next door to the office. Third, playing with Bellamar also brought some economic stability for the now twenty-four-year-old Arsenio, who was supporting his first wife Manuela Montecino Herrera and their daughter Regla María (b. 8 Sept. 1935) in an apartment in the barrio of Peñalver, about ten blocks from the Sport Antillano.[95]

In addition to the exposure in downtown Havana, playing with Septeto Bellamar had its musical advantages. For by 1938 Arsenio had taken control over the musical direction of the septeto (even though Reguira was still the official "president" and "director" of the group), and began to establish the foundations for what would soon become his conjunto.[96] Meanwhile, his song "Bruca maniguá," which was recorded by Orquesta Casino de la Playa on 17 June 1937, had become internationally popular. Nevertheless, although the Sport Antillano offered more advantages than the third-tiered cabarets in Playa, Marianao, the *academia de baile* was also a socially peripheral performance locale in comparison to the sociedades de españolas, white social clubs, and first-tiered cabarets where other *son* groups such as La Sonora Matancera performed.

In fact, most of those groups who performed actively for the sociedades españolas, upper-class social clubs, and *cabarets de primera* also performed on radio and in films as

---

[95] Montecino Herrera and Travieso Montecino, 25 June 1999.
[96] See Ruíz et al. 1995: 335-336.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

well as toured internationally throughout the 1930s and the 1940s. In the next section I discuss the role access to musician's unions, the publishing and recording industry, and radio had in the ability to effectively negotiate a professional musical career in an otherwise rigidly stratified dance music milieu. I will also show how claiming Spanish ancestry by mulatto musicians was often effective in negotiating otherwise strict racial boundaries.

Negotiating Havana's Stratified Performance Landscape

Comparing Arsenio's early career with La Sonora Matancera's in Havana forces us to look at factors related to but not dictated by race that enabled the leaders of the latter group to establish a powerful position. La Sonora Matancera's weekly schedule in the late 1930s and early 1940s typically consisted of regular recording dates on weekdays, performing at *academias de baile* on weeknights, and performing for upper-class *sociedades* on the weekends. Despite the fact that these social clubs were racially segregated, their recreational committees regularly hired inter-racial and all-black groups. The opportunity, however, for black groups to be hired was usually contingent on the group's established celebrity and reputation, and, in the case of sociedades españolas, even claim to Spanish descent. For instance, the inter-racial *son* group Septeto Nacional began to receive invitations from these *sociedades*, from which they had previously been excluded, after the group was given a prize for their performance at the Exposición Ibero-Americano in Seville, Spain, in the summer of 1929, and after they performed at the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chicago's World Fair in 1933.[97] Rogelio Martínez of La Sonora Matancera convinced Centro Gallego's committee members that his group had a right to perform for their *sociedad* because his father was, in fact, from Galicia.[98] Similarly, the black charanga Arcaño y Sus Maravillas was able to perform in sociedades españolas such as Centro Asturiano because their director Antonio Arcaño was a descendant of Asturianos.[99]

Performing for such prestigious sociedades brought with it a legitimization that affected these musical groups' social standing and professional opportunities. And, because of the quantity and quality of work La Sonora Matancera had, its members were able to live by playing music alone. Most other musicians had to substantiate their income by working in other fields. Humberto Cané, who was a member from 1937 to 1945 and whose father Valentín was the director, stressed that the Cuban elite were a crucial part of their success, thereby drawing resentment and jealousy from other musicians, particularly black musicians.[100]

Indeed, competition, favoritism, and feelings of "superiority" were rampant among musicians, directors, and union officials. For example, the Unión Sindical de Músicos de Cuba (USMC), which was formed in the city of Havana in September of 1933, organized the following three sections, according to types of ensembles, in which musicians were assigned: theater musicians, big bands, and *charangas*. As a result of this structure, feelings of superiority existed among theater musicians, who often took jobs from jazz

---

[97] Moore 1997: 105.
[98] Cristóbal Díaz Ayala, 11 July 2000 (electronic mail communication).
[99] Antonio Arcaño, 28 November 1988.
[100] Humberto Cané, 28 August 1996 and 8 March 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

musicians, who, as a result, were in bitter competition with *charanga* musicians for the few remaining jobs.[101] Evidently, the USMC excluded *son* musicians because representatives felt that only those musicians with formal training and who could read music had a right to membership.[102] Favoritism also encouraged bitter competition and resentment among musicians, as the following two statements suggest:

> Favoritism [typified] the union: 'So-and-so is my friend, the secretary. I'm going to talk with him so he can,' You know what I mean?[103]

> The union functioned as a close-knit group. Dance impresarios were going to the union to look for orchestras, and at this moment the competition began, because—and I'm going to give you an example—during the 1940s, Sebero Sofora was the secretary of [the union] [as well as] the bassist for Orquesta Gris. [H]e always proposed his and his buddies' orchestras. . . . His and a few other groups were the only ones that worked.[104]

Valentín Cané was another union official whose *son* group was also very busy. He served as Second Vice President for the Federación de Sextetos Musicales (Sones) de la Habana (FSMH), beginning on the date it was established, 14 April 1930.[105] In the 1940s

---

[101] Valdés Cantero 1988: 56.
[102] Moore 1997: 97.
[103] Ahí lo que estaba [era] la influencia: "Fulanito es mi amigo, el secretario. Yo voy hablar con él para que," ¿tú sabes? (Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999).
[104] El sindicato funcionaba en forma de piña. A él iban los empresarios de baile a buscar orquestas, y era este el momento en que comenzaba la lucha, porque—y te voy a poner un ejemplo—en los años cuarenta, Severo Sofora era el secretario del trabajo pero también era el contrabajista de la Orquesta Gris, por lo que siempre "metía" a su orquesta y a la de sus socios. . . . Su orquesta y la de unos pocos eran las únicas que trabajaban (Neno González quoted in Valdés Cantero 1988: 56-57).
[105] The Federación de Sextetos Musicales (Sones) de La Habana formed to organize sextetos, estudiantinas, tríos, and other groups which specialized in *son* music (*Diario de la Marina* [Havana] 15 April 1930).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

he served as director of the Musical Directory of the Asociación Cubana de Conjuntos Típicos.[106] His position as a union official in all likelihood played an important role in La Sonora Matancera's ability to get work performing for upper-class *sociedades* beginning in the early 1930s. He was also in a favorable position to provide future international stars such as Celia Cruz and the Puerto Rican Daniel Santos with a back-up group for their recording sessions in the late 1940s, after which the group's popularity spread throughout Latin America.[107]

Arsenio became a member of the FSMH in the early 1930s when he was directing Septeto Bóston. At no time did he hold an appointment in this or any other musician's union; therefore, he never was in a position to benefit from the advantages that came with being a union representative. He did, however, strive to draw attention toward his song-writing ability by demonstrating his music to musicians in powerful positions. If he and his septetos were going to be relegated to performing in marginal and "closed" locations such as *cabarets de tercera* and *academias de baile* because of stiff competition and rivalry, not to mention race and class segregation, then maybe he could overcome such boundaries with his music.

Following the extraordinary national and international popularization of Cuban popular music in the 1920s, a US-dominated publishing and recording industry emerged in Havana during the following decade. Among the first publishing firms, which included Robbins Music, All American Music Co., and Edward B. Marks Co., Peer International

---

[106] Valdés Cantero 1988: 71 n6.
[107] Raúl Travieso 15 March 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Corporation became the most powerful, not only in Cuba but in all of Latin America. By 1931 Peer, a subsidiary of the US-owned Southern Music Corporation, had begun operations in an office in downtown Havana.[108] Meanwhile RCA Victor had become the dominant recording company, and by the late 1930s and 1940s Peer and RCA were publishing and recording most of Cuba's popular artists including Arsenio Rodríguez.[109] These channels of US-owned mass media enabled Cuban composers to make their music accessible to record-buyers as well as sheet-music buyers such as musicians and musical directors in other Latin American countries, the United States, and Europe.

It was common for young composers who were not signed with a publisher to demonstrate their songs for directors of groups who were performing for prominent *sociedades*, at *cabarets de primera*, and on radio, and who were signed with recording and publishing companies. In the early-1930s Arsenio began to meet with directors and members of established groups to demonstrate his songs by singing them as he accompanied himself on the *tres*. One of these directors was Valentín Cané of La Sonora Matancera. Arsenio met Cané in his office as regularly as every two weeks to demonstrate his newest songs.[110] Eventually, his efforts bore fruit in 1935 when Antonio Machín, the first non-white vocalist to perform in Casino Nacional (the segregated *cabaret de primera*), recorded the following four songs for Black Swan Records in New York City:

---

[108] Ruíz et al. 1995: 334.
[109] José Carbó Menéndez, 6 March 1998. Ralph S. Peer (1892-1960) founded Southern Music Publishing Company in the late 1920s. Peer initiated a working relationship with RCA Victor when he toured the southern United States in 1926 in search of new talent to record and publish. By the early 1930s Peer had visited Puerto Rico and Mexico on recording missions from RCA Victor (peermusic.com/ralphspeer.html).
[110] Humberto Cané, 28 August 1996.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"Amargos sufrimientos" ("Bitter Sufferings") and "No he mentido Aida" ("I Haven't Lied Aida," rec. 22 Oct. 1935); "No vuelvas por aquí" ("Don't Come By Here," rec. 25 Oct. 1935); and "Pobre mi Cuba" ("My Poor Cuba," rec. 1 Nov. 1935).[111] The recording of his songs by an international star such as Machín was the exposure he needed to draw the attention of other performers and directors looking for new material.

He succeeded in early 1937 when he impressed his old friend Miguelito Valdés (whom he met while both musicians were working in the *academia de baile* Sport Antillano in the early 1930s) with the future internationally popular *afrocubano* entitled "Bruca maniguá." Valdés and several other former members of the all-white big band Orquesta Hermanos Castro had just formed Orquesta Casino de la Playa, and were performing at the *cabaret de primera* Casino de la Playa in Marianao. They had also secured a recording contract with RCA Victor, with whom the band ultimately recorded dozens of songs, including ten of Arsenio's (most of which were *afrocubanos*), between 1937 and 1940. On 24 December 1937 Arsenio published seven songs with the United States-owned Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc., thereby initiating a long-term relationship with Southern Music and its subsidiary Peer International that lasted through most of his career (see Fig. 2.1 and Appendix 1).

Because of their success with "Bruca maniguá" and his other songs, and because of the availability of the sheet-music through Peer, popular New York Latin bands such as Xavier Cugat and his Waldorf-Astoria Orchestra, Cuarteto Caney, and Nilo Menéndez and his Stork Club Orchestra added some of these songs to their repertory, and even recorded

---

[111] See Appendix 1: Song Catalog and Appendix 2: Discography.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 2.1. Arsenio Rodríguez, probably a publicity picture for either Peer International or RCA Victor, ca. 1940 (photograph courtesy of Xiomara Travieso).

their own versions of at least five.[112] His songs were also performed live for audiences and musicians in Barranquilla, Colombia by Casino de la Playa in 1939.[113] Thus, Arsenio

---

[112] See Appendix 2: Discography.
[113] See Wade 2000: 77-78.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

succeeded in reaching audiences beyond those in Havana. More importantly, he established himself as a composer capable of writing commercially successful songs with Peer International and RCA Victor, with whom his conjunto would record over one hundred and fifty songs beginning in 1940. Radio, however, was a different medium whose barriers proved to be more difficult to overcome.

Live performance on radio was the most effective means by which performers or groups could promote themselves, their records, and their upcoming engagements. Most importantly, it gave groups, despite their race, access to audiences who otherwise were not accessible because of the segregated policies maintained by some *cabarets* and *sociedades*. Like the USMC, however, musicians who could not read music were gradually passed over for those who could during the 1930s, the reason for which involved the radio stations' insistence on "quality" musicians.[114] Furthermore, radio directors tended to hire only groups who were established and well-known in the dance music milieu.[115] Therefore, many musicians and directors such as Arsenio found themselves in a Catch-22, whereby access to a mass promotional tool such as radio was contingent on their established and broad popularity, especially within the prestigious *cabarets* and *sociedades* of Havana and Marianao.

Indeed, the groups who performed exclusively for these *sociedades* and *cabarets* also performed on radio. Examples include Orquesta Belisario López, a charanga, who performed for numerous radio stations throughout the 1930s and 1940s, including CMBC

---

[114] Díaz Ayala 1981: 151.
[115] Valdés Cantero 1988: 50.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in 1931, CMQ-COCQ in 1938, and RHC-Cadena Azul in 1942.[116] Gilberto Valdés and Ignacio Villa "Bola de Nieve" directed a group which performed on CMCF in 1935.[117] Orquesta Casino de la Playa performed on CMK and COCH in 1937, and CMCA and COCA in 1938.[118] The young Celia Cruz won the title "Reina de la Conga" in a competition held by Radio Lavín in 1938.[119] La Sonora Matancera and Orquesta Antonio María Romeu performed regularly on Radio Progreso in 1939.[120] René Touzet's big band performed on COCO and CMQ during the late 1930s.[121] Finally, Manolo Suárez sang with Orquesta Los Hermanos Palau, and substituted for Joseíto Valdés, who was singing with Belisario López's charanga, on CMCB during the early 1940s.[122] Eventually, Arsenio with his conjunto secured a long working relationship with the small communist party-owned CMX "Radio Mil Diez," beginning in 1943. Many of his colleagues, however, had already moved on to going on international tours, and appearing in films.

Orquesta Hermanos Castro traveled to New York City to perform in 1932, and they appeared in several films including Warner Brothers's "Havana Cocktail."[123] On 5 February 1939 Orquesta Casino de la Playa's performance for *sociedad española* Club Hispano Habanero was filmed for a Cuban movie.[124] Later that year they performed in

---

[116] *Diario de la Marina* 20 November 1931, 2 January 1942, 31 May 1938.
[117] *Adelante* October 1935: 13; see also Moore 1997: 145.
[118] *Diario de la Marina* 4 September 1937; Collazo 1987: 175.
[119] Fernández 1997: 105.
[120] Ramírez Bedoya 1998: 71.
[121] René Touzet, 6 March 2000.
[122] Manolo Suárez, 11 September 1996.
[123] Acosta et al. 1999: 15.
[124] *Diario de la Marina* 3 February 1939. Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig and Septeto Casino also performed at this social dance.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Venezuela, Curaçao, Colombia, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. Casino de la Playa became so popular that in Barranquilla, Colombia, for example, the group was mobbed by fervent crowds.[125] Sexteto (later, Conjunto) Casino appeared with star vocalist Rita Montaner in the film *Romance del Palmar* in 1938.[126] Manolo Suárez with Orquesta Riverside toured Venezuela, after completing their engagement at Sans Souci, in 1939.[127] La Sonora Matancera appeared in numerous films, beginning in the late 1940s when they recorded with Daniel Santos, Celia Cruz, and others.[128]

While Arsenio did not share the same advantages, he nevertheless made professional and musical choices through which he successfully accessed spheres of power in the dance music milieu and commercial music industry in Havana. This section described those professional choices he made in the 1930s. His musical choices, exhibited in his *afrocubanos* that Orquesta Casino de la Playa recorded in the late 1930s, are the topic of the next chapter.

---

[125] Collazo 1987: 185; Ramírez Bedoya 1998: 71; Wade 2000: 77-78.
[126] Acosta et al. 1999: 43.
[127] Manolo Suárez, 11 September 1996.
[128] See Ramírez Bedoya 1998.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 3

Contesting the Dominant Discourses of *Mestizaje* and *Afrocubanismo*: Arsenio's *Afrocubanos*, 1937-1940

The ideological and artistic milieu of Havana in the 1930s was characterized by conflicting views of race and its role in the definition of Cuban national identity. As racism and racial segregation continued to structure the lives of most black Cubans, a new ideological conception of Cuba as a "mulatto nation" was emerging.[1] Cuban intellectuals, white and black, proclaimed that the "alma" (soul) of the Cuban people had become "mestiza" or "mixed" after centuries of miscegenation between the "two fundamental races."[2] At the same time, artists, poets, and composers initiated a cultural movement referred to as afrocubanismo, whereby they valorized all forms of Cuban expression, namely Afrocuban, for the sake of defining a national culture.[3] As afrocubanismo artists increasingly singled-out Cuba's African heritage, however, black intellectuals in particular became more critical of their work which they saw as exploiting decadent cultural traditions and, therefore, contradicting and threatening the goals of mestizaje.

In his book *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940*, Robin Moore discusses the various artistic facets and goals of the afrocubanismo period, focusing on its contradictory and ambivalent relationships with the

---

[1] Moore 1997: 1; de la Fuente 1999: 51.
[2] See Urrutia 1937: 13.
[3] See Moore 1997: 132-135.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

social reality of many musicians, entertainers, and, in general, Cubans of color.[4] For instance, he shows that afrocubanismo composers such as Amadeo Roldán, Alejandro García Caturla, Ernesto Lecuona, Gilberto Valdés, and others were white from a middle- and upper-class background and had little personal understanding of black rural and urban working-class culture from which they nevertheless drew much of the inspiration for their symphonic compositions and theatrical works. Moore also explains that working-class Afrocuban musicians' participation in the afrocubanismo movement was largely relegated to the sphere of popular entertainment. Finally, he briefly discusses black middle-class reactions to "afrocubanista modernism" which were largely characterized by suspicion and rejection.

In this chapter I look closer at the black upper-class rejection of black rural and urban working-class cultural traditions and, by extension, afrocubanismo artistic works. I then focus on Arsenio's own critique of both mestizaje, which had alienated altogether lower-class rural and urban Afrocubans and Afrocuban culture, and afrocubanismo, which had marginalized black working-class musicians to the realm of popular entertainment in *cabarets de tercera* and *academias de baile*. In spite of modernity's dominant discourses of racial superiority and national identity, Arsenio incorporated deep rhetorical components from the mythological foundations of particularly the palo monte belief system into his afrocubano songs of the late 1930s. What is also remarkable of these songs is that these rhetorical components were embedded among other musical and stylistic elements that had been used to signify "blackness" in the popular theatrical traditions of

---

[4] Moore 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

bufo and zarzuela dating back to the nineteenth century. Analyzing these songs will put into perspective Arsenio's ideological position with respect to mestizaje, afrocubanismo, and, in general, representations of "blackness" in popular entertainment at a time when he was struggling to establish himself as a composer, musician, and, eventually, bandleader in Havana in the late 1930s.

Mestizaje and Afrocubanismo

The purpose of this section is to outline the primary assumptions and tenets which characterized mestizaje and afrocubanismo discourse. It highlights the alienating ideals of mestizaje, as expounded by black intellectuals, and the relational position of afrocubanismo artists to their subjects and themes; thereby situating Arsenio and his afrocubanos in a discursive landscape defined by both dominant and resistant ideologies of race and national identity.

Mestizaje and the ideal of "superación"

In the pages of *Adelante*, the monthly magazine published from 1935 to 1939 by the *sociedad de color* of the same name, black intellectuals and political leaders expressed their views on a wide range of issues affecting black Cubans and the nation as a whole. Such issues included social displacement, racism, job discrimination, and class divisions and prejudice among Cubans of color. With respect to this last issue, *Adelante* published several essays in 1937 in response to an inquiry put forward by the editors into the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

problem of racial divisions between blacks and mulattos (particularly in the eastern province of Oriente). According to at least two of the respondents, the social and ideological implications of mestizaje were at the core of this division.[5] Ernesto Pinto Interián, for instance, believed that the source of the problem was the inculcation of feelings of "superiority over blacks" by parents of mixed marriages into their children. Gustavo Urrutia agreed with this explanation, but added that a more contemporary cause of this division was socio-economic.

As a corollary to mestizaje, writers also referred to the ideals of "superación" and "mejoramiento" or economic, social, and cultural advancement. Urrutia explained that the social ramifications of these ideas among Cubans of color included skin color hierarchies, in which lighter-skinned Cubans were often regarded as "adelantados" (advanced) while darker-skinned Cubans were regarded as "atrasados" (backward). He warned, "[T]he division between blacks and mulattos is calamitous for the black race—that is, for everyone who is not white."[6] He restated that, "[T]he source of prejudice among blacks and mulattos is in white prejudice, and this historical vice lies in the unjust economic and social structure in which we suffer."[7] Other writers considered education as the primary means by which black Cubans in general could "superar" (overcome) their social, economic, and cultural predicament, hence, charging *sociedades de color* with improving

---

[5] Dr. Ernesto Pinto Interián, "Contestando nuestra encuesta," *Adelante*, March 1937, 15; Gustavo G. Urrutia, "Contestando nuestra encuesta," *Adelante*, June 1937, 13-14, 20.
[6] [L]a división en negros y mulatos es calamitosa para la raza negra, quiero decir para todos los que no figuran como blancos (Urrutia, 1937: 13).
[7] [E]l fondo del subprejuicio entre negros y mulatos está en el prejuicio blanco, y que este vicio histórico radica en el régimen de privilegios económico-sociales que padecemos (ibid.: 20).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the social and political lot of their members.[8]

Ultimately, the assumption implicit in the related ideas of "mestizaje" and "superación" was that whiteness and Hispano-Cuban culture were superior, socially advantageous, and more aesthetically pleasing. As a result, these ideals directly marginalized rural and urban lower- and working-class Afrocubans, who would not have had access to public education or to those middle-class *sociedades* capable of providing educational services. Furthermore, the cultural implications invariably encompassed traditional and popular Afrocuban cultural practices, which were explicitly targeted as atavistic, markers of cultural denigration, and, therefore, barriers to "superación." Thus, the ideological position of a majority of black intellectuals was firmly entrenched in the dominant, interrelated discourses of white supremacy and modernity.

Unsurprisingly, then, the acknowledgment of Cuba's African heritage in the term "afrocubanismo" and its implications in the national culture were, to some black and mulatto intellectuals, unacceptable and antithetical to what they conceived as a Cuban nation and nationality born from the process of mestizaje.[9] The fact that the exponents of afrocubanismo were primarily white middle-class intellectuals and artists probably stimulated more resentment and suspicion on the part of their critics.

---

[8] See "Club Artístico Cultural," *Adelante*, December 1935, 18; Amado León Ibañez, "Por la confraternidad social," *Adelante*, March 1936, 18; Pedro Oliva Acosta, "Santos Carbo," *Adelante*, August 1936, 13; "Despues de las comparsas," *Adelante*, April 1937, 1; Angel C. Pinto, "Una aclaración," *Adelante*, June 1937, 10-11; Mariano Salas Aranda, "Posición actual y futura de las sociedades negras," *Adelante*, February 1938, 5.

[9] Alberto Arredondo, "El arte negro a contrapelo," *Adelante*, August 1937, 5-6, 20.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Afrocubanismo and representation

I use the term "afrocubanismo" broadly to refer to the work of popular and avant-garde artists whose work drew from Afrocuban cultural expressions for various ends from the late 1920s through the 1930s. Salon music, *zarzuelas* (light opera), and dance band music were three representative categories in which Afrocuban-inspired popular music flourished. Ernesto Lecuona, Moisés Simons, Eliseo Grenet, Gonzalo Roig, Margarita Lecuona, and Gilberto Valdés figured prominently among white middle-class composers, and Rita Montaner and Ignacio Villa "Bola de Nieve" figured prominently among mulatto and black performers who represented the composition and performance of salon music and *zarzuelas*. The musical themes of salon music related in large part to black working-class culture, but from the perspective of white, middle-class composers. Most *zarzuelas* were set in colonial Cuba and presented romanticized stories of slave culture. Character-types of the *zarzuela*, including the sexually desirable *mulatta*, the Jim Crow-like *negrito*, and the Zip Coon-like *catedrático*, reinforced dominant, negative stereotypes of Afrocubans. Lastly, all-white big bands became the exponents of Afrocuban-inspired dance music that was performed in segregated establishments such as in many *cabarets de primera*.[10]

The *minoristas* or avant-garde artists, on the other hand, were a group of mostly white, well educated composers, visual artists, and poets whose creative interests promoted "new vernacular art" through modern, European aesthetics in the form of cubism, serialism, atonality, and other compositional styles. The contents of their

---

[10] See Moore 1997: 45-53, 135-146

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

publications (such as *Social*, *Carteles*, *Musicalia*, *Atuei*, *La Revista de Avance*, and *Diario de la Marina*) advanced and valorized mostly Afrocuban-inspired drawings, poetry, dance, and modern, experimental compositions. But, although Afrocuban culture was their favored subject, most minoristas as well as popular composers and performers had little personal understanding of the musical traditions and social realities of lower-class blacks and whites. Instead, painters Andrés Nogueira, Carlos Enríquez, Amelia Peláez, and Eduardo Abela, and composers Carlo Borbolla, Alejandro García Cartula, and Amadeo Roldán studied in Europe in the 1920s, and received direct exposure to the influence of the international avant-garde.[11] As Cuban music critic and historian Alejo Carpentier noted:

> [D]eprived of scientific work from which they can study the modal and rhythmic laws that govern black music, contemporary Cuban composers work with materials that they have randomly captured at ceremonies they have attended, without really understanding the diverse characteristics of that sonorous heritage.[12]

He goes on to state that in the afrocubanismo symphonic works of Roldán and García Caturla practices and elements from discrete African-derived traditions "are all mixed together."[13]

While Carpentier embraced the persistence of Afro-Cuban traditions, no other black writer was more emphatic in his or her rejection of Afro-Cuban traditions and the tenets of afrocubanismo than Alberto Arredondo, who as usual evoked the ideals of

---

[11] Ibid.: 191-214
[12] Carpentier 1987c: 452-453.
[13] Ibid.: 453.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"mestizaje" and "superación" in his critiques: "It is logical that what began to be known as 'Cuban music' during the colonial era, was a mix of African and Spanish rhythms, *although the former's marked improvement continued to get stronger.*"[14] With respect to Ortiz, Arredondo stated: "The Cuban nation can not afford a Fernando Ortiz who, on the one hand, flatters the hispanophiles with the . . . *Hispano cubana de cultura*, and, on the other, flatters blacks and mulattos with *Sociedad de estudios afrocubanos*. . . . [O]ur nation . . . has given up being the nation of the Africans or the nation of the Spanish."[15] Finally, on the music of Gilberto Valdés, Arredondo believed that, "The rhythms that Valdés revives were from a bygone era of our musical development. Those rhythms integrated with others [i.e., "Spanish rhythms"] in a process of *superación* and synthesis, which today is called Cuban music."[16]

Others, however, pointed out the contradictions and hypocrisy of the ideas of "mestizaje" and "superación." For example, Cloris Tejo, a female black writer, published an essay strongly criticizing the congress of the 1938 Convención Nacional de Sociedades Cubanas de Color for failing embarrassingly to address the real social and economic

---

[14] Es lógico que lo que en la Colonia se empieza a conocer como "característica musical de Cuba," sea un mezcla de ritmos africanos y españoles, *aunque con una marcada superioridad de los primeros que cada vez se robusteceria más* (my emphasis; Alberto Arredondo, "Eso que llaman afrocubanismo musical," *Adelante*, April 1938, 5).

[15] La nacionalidad cubana no se puede permitir el lujo de un Fernando Ortiz que por un lado halaga a los españolizantes con la . . . "Hispano Cubana de Cultura" y por el otro lado halaga a los negros y mestizos con la "Sociedad de Estudios Afrocubanos." . . . [N]uestra nación . . . ha dejado de ser la nación de los africanos o la nación de los españoles (Arredondo 1937, 20).

[16] Esos ritmos que resucita Valdés, fueron un grado de nuestro desenvolvimiento musical. Con ellos y otros, se fué integrando en proceso de superación y síntesis, lo que hoy se llama música cubana (Arredondo 1938, 5).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

causes of child poverty in the black community.[17] The congress blamed the parents (not social and economic injustice) for permitting their children to sell newspapers and beg, and sought to remedy this problem by prohibiting children under the age of twelve to sell newspapers! Tejo rightfully called this "measure" absurd and foolish, and accused the members of the black congress of being misogynists, prejudiced against and out of touch with the black working class: "[The black mother] is discriminated against by not only the ignorant white man but also the black man who aspires to advance in the areas of politics and education."[18] She concluded her essay by protesting the convention on behalf of all women, black and white, who "are forced to send their children to sell newspapers and, what is more, to send or permit their daughter to go in search of vices and prostitution, forced by their economic situation and not by moral denigration . . ."[19]

Tejo also raised the issue of urban Afrocuban music when she declared child poverty a much more pressing social issue than the inclusion of groups of black working-class performers or "congas" in the city's carnival celebrations. Indeed, Havana Mayor Beruf's re-authorization of the Saturday night *comparsa* parades up Prado (Centro Havana's main avenue) for the 1937 carnival season was much criticized by black intellectuals who once again evoked the ideal of "superación."[20] Many feared that the

---

[17] Cloris Tejo, "En torno a la Convención de Sociedades Negras," *Adelante*, March 1938, 5.

[18] [La madre negra] recibe no sólo la discriminación de parte del blanco ignorante, sino también del negro que escala los peldaños de la política y el saber (ibid.).

[19] tienen que mandar a sus hijos a vender periódicos y es más, mandar a su hija o permitir que vaya en pos del vicio y la prostitución obligadas por la situación económica y no por la degeneración moral . . . (ibid.).

[20] In the end, the black working-class and well-organized *comparsas* El Alacrán, Las

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

participation of working-class Afrocubans would lower the otherwise well organized, artistic *comparsa* to the level of a "conga."[21] The distinction between "comparsas" and "congas" has not been adequately defined and described by some writers.[22] Cuban musicologist Emilio Grenet, however, made a clear distinction between the two: "The conga . . . is an overflowing of African merriment, without any preconceived formality; in the comparsa, which utilizes costumes and lanterns, and whose songs are arranged with a certain artistic intention, the enthusiasm is directed in a formal manner." "Congas," therefore, were regarded by the black intelligentsia as undisciplined, disorganized, anti-artistic, uncivilized, embarrassing, and uncultured.[23] This distinction and *Adelante's* position were explicitly stated by Angel C. Pinto: ". . . neither the magazine nor the association *Adelante* has fought against the *comparsas*, but instead against the so-called *congas*."[24]

Nevertheless, other writers were critical of the entire affair. Arredondo questioned the *comparsa's* utility and benefit for the "masses," and came to the conclusion that it

---

Boyeros, Los Dandys de Belén, and Los Marqueses de Atarés were allowed to participate (Carreras 1989: 107).

[21] For example see "Las comparsas," *Adelante*, March 1937, 3; Mariano Salas Aranda, "Sr. Alcalde Municipal," *Adelante*, March 1937, 4; "Despues de las comparsas," *Adelante*, April 1937, 1; Mariano Salas Aranda, "Posición actual y futura de las sociedades negras," *Adelante*, February 1938, 5; Tomás Acuña Lazcano, "A la nación cubana," *Adelante*, March 1938, 7-8, 20.

[22] See, for example, Moore 1997: 64.

[23] [L]a conga . . . es un desbordamiento del regocijo africano, sin formalidad alguna preconcebida; en la comparsa, que utiliza trajes y farolas, y cuyos cantos están confeccionados con cierta intención artística, el entusiasmo está encauzado ya en una dirección formal (Grenet 1939 in Giro 1995a: 105).

[24] . . . *Adelante*, ni la revista ni la asociación, han combatido las comparsas, sino las llamadas congas . . . (Angel C. Pinto, "Una aclaración," *Adelante*, June 1937, 10-11).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

represented all blacks in a negative way; it was identified by white racists as proof of black inferiority; it was a means by which politicians exploited the black masses; it was an anomaly to national (i.e., mestizo) art forms; and it corresponded to the bygone era of colonial Cuba.[25] María Luisa Sánchez echoed Arredondo's perspective, stating that, "The *comparsa* is a drug, the opium of the masses uncovered once more!"[26] She also made a significant distinction not between *comparsas* and *congas* but rather between the onlookers—that is, tourists—and the celebrants:

> The tourists laugh [and] smile unsympathetically, with banal commentaries, with vulgar discriminations, while proud of their clothes. The tourists sip the liquor of their successes [and] look over the streets full of people, who do not notice the noise because they are hungry! . . . who forget that they have masters, that they are slaves . . . All of the black people in their comparsas forget their dreary, humid small rooms . . . All for tourism and comparsas and oblivion![27]

Sánchez's portrayal of the 1937 carnival celebrations corresponded in many ways to the power relations that characterized the context of the *cabaret de primera*. Here, white composers and performers (e.g., big bands) presented stylized versions of black carnival music, which included the use of traditional percussion instruments and exaggerated, Afro-Hispanicized Spanish (also known as "bozal") for lyrics. Stereotyped

---

[25] Arredondo 1937, 6.

[26] ¡La comparsa es la droga, es el opio del pueblo descubierto otra vez! (María Luisa Sánchez, "Zafra y comparsas," *Adelante*, April 1937, 13).

[27] Los turistas ríen [y] sonríen incomprensivamente, con comentarios banales, con vulgares discriminaciones, haciendo gala de sus refinamientos. Los turistas sorben el licor de sus exitaciones, recorren las calles repletas de gente que no comprenden que hay ruído porque tienen hambre! . . . que olvida que tiene amos, que son esclavos . . . Todas las comparsas de los negros olvidan sus cuartuchos tristes, sus cuartuchos húmedos . . . ¡Todo por el turismo y las comparsas y el olvido! (ibid.).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

images of the carefree nature of Afrocuban culture permeated these compositions and performances to the delight of audiences in Paris, London, New York City, and eventually Havana's elite in segregated *cabarets de primera* and theaters.[28]

Even Arredondo commented on the generally banal and trivial character of Cuban popular music:

> Our *sones*, *danzones* and *danzonetes* are still too sentimental, dripping with sighs, sobs, and romantic images. There are only some *guarachas* and [other] compositions that make the connection between social reality and the drama of the black sugar-cane worker in confrontation with the foreman, who orders people around and beats them.[29]

Based on his assessment, Arredondo might have recognized the socially contentious nature of Arsenio's *afrocubanos*, particularly those which address the strife between the oppressed and the oppressor, and employ the imagery of the plantation to criticize contemporary social injustice. As I will discuss below, however, Arsenio veiled his social critique by using rhetorical aspects of Afrocuban oral tradition both unknown to the musicians who performed his *afrocubanos* and the audience who listened to them, and rejected by many in the black middle-class and intelligentsia, such as Arredondo. In the end, Arsenio shared Gustavo Urrutia's perspective, quoted as follows, on racial pride and self-determination:

---

[28] See Moore 1997: 77-80.

[29] Aquí todavía nuestros sones, danzones y danzonetes están en la etapa de un sentimentalismo que se agota día a día entre suspiros, sollozos e imágenes románticas. Es solo en algunas guarachas y composiciones . . . que apunta lo social, con el drama de negro trabajador del azúcar, enfrentado al Mayoral que manda y apalea (Arredondo 1938: 6).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The New Afrocuban is one who has liberated himself or herself from the inferiority complex imposed on him or her by the pressures of slavery. . . . [I]f he or she, out of spite, aspires to rub out all racial discrimination, the New Afrocuban will proudly assert himself or herself as a black person.[30]

Arsenio's Afrocubanos, 1937-1940

In his essay on the ethnographic significance of "ethnic autobiographies," Michael M. J. Fischer found that in telling their stories writers employed effective linguistic and textual strategies with which they expressed the vitality and complexity of their ethnic identities. Inter-references to "past" and contemporary, folk and modern cultural traditions, especially when using dominant modes of expression, often translated into powerful and subversive perspectives on dominant ideologies.[31] In Arsenio's case, to draw from the secular and sacred oral traditions of his youth meant that the fallacies inherent in the ideologies of "superación" and "mestizaje" would be exposed.

Following an account of Arsenio and Casino de la Playa's relationship leading to the recording of his afrocubanos, I will present an analysis and interpretation of the lyrics, which are based on commentaries by Arsenio and Raúl, and exegeses of various passages by Felipe García Villamil, a high ranking practitioner of the Afrocuban sacred traditions of *palo monte* (or Regla de Palo), *santería* (or Regla de Ocha), and Abakuá.

---

[30] El Nuevo Negro es aquél que se ha librado del complejo de inferioridad impuesto sobre él por la presión esclavista. . . . [S]i a despecho de que aspira a borrar toda discriminación racial, el Nuevo Negro empieza por ubicarse como negro (Urrutia 1937: 7).
[31] Fischer 1986.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

History and musical characteristics

Arsenio had composed at least one of his afrocubanos, "Yo son Gangá" ("I'm a Gangá") as early as 1931, during the time he was directing Septeto Bóston. He had composed "Ven acá Tomá" ("Come Here Thomas") by early 1935, about a year after he had met vocalist Miguelito Valdés while both were working at the *academia de baile* Sport Antillano. Evidently, it was here or, perhaps, earlier on radio that Arsenio heard Miguelito sing for the first time, as he recounts in the following:

> I fell in love with Miguel's voice. Miguel sang a style that was called *danzonete*. And when I heard that voice I said to myself, "That's the voice I need for the afrocubano."[32]

While Arsenio continued composing and performing with Septeto Bellamar, Miguelito joined Orquesta Hermanos Castro around 1936. Upon joining this big band, Miguelito felt that their repertory did not include enough Cuban music. After pianist and arranger Anselmo Sacasas joined the band, their repertory began to include more Cuban music and less US popular music.[33] This "transition," as Sacasas referred to it, naturally led to a demand for new Cuban material, which benefited Arsenio who had been searching for groups to perform his music. As a result, in early 1937, Miguelito agreed to record "Bruca maniguá" ("Witch from the Bush") with his newly formed big band Orquesta Casino de la

---

[32] Yo me enamoré de la voz de Miguel. Miguel era cantante de [un estilo de] música que se llamaba danzonete. Y [cuando] yo oí esa voz dije, 'Esta voz me sirve para el afrocubano.' Él no cantaba [afrocubanos] (Arsenio Rodríguez ca. 1964).

[33] Padilla 1983. The typical Cuban big band performed US swing music, Spanish pasadobles, as well as Cuban popular dance music, except for *danzones* (Díaz Ayala 1981: 157-158).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Playa, which included Sacasas and other former members of Hermanos Castro. Arsenio would meet Sacasas at his home in Vedado, an upper-class barrio in west Havana, and dictate the songs to the pianist and arranger. At this time, Casino de la Playa's instrumentation was violin, two alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, two trumpets, trombone, piano, guitar, contrabass, and lead vocalist, who doubled on clave, maracas, or conga drum. Ultimately, Casino de la Playa recorded ten of Arsenio's songs between 1937 and 1940, seven of which were afrocubanos. Arsenio even played *tres* on the recording of his *pregón* "Se va el caramelero" ("The Candy Man is Leaving").[34]

Although Arsenio used the term "afrocubano," Peer International, RCA Victor, and other institutions used other names.[35] "Bruca maniguá" alone was labeled five different ways on documents produced within eight months from Casino de la Playa's original recording. The first three recorded versions of "Bruca maniguá" were labeled *conga* (17 June 1937, by Casino de la Playa), *son* (12 Oct. 1937, by Cuarteto Caney), and *tango congo* (7 Feb. 1938, by Nilo Menéndez and his Stork Club Orchestra). It was labeled a *canto-congo* when it was registered with the Centro Nacional Derechos Autor in Havana on 23 November 1937. Finally, it was labeled a *son-afrocubano* when it was published with Southern Music Publishing on 24 December 1937. The other afrocubanos recorded by Casino de la Playa are labeled *son-afros*, except for "Yo 'ta namorá" (I'm in Love) which is labeled an *afro*. Nilo Menéndez's version of "Funfuñando" (Griping) is even labeled *Afro Cuban Rhythm Style*. Labels for previously recorded songs by other

---

[34] Raúl (Travieso, 3 August 1998) suggests that Arsenio may have also played the *tumbadora* (conga drum) for the recordings of "Bruca maniguá" and "Yo son Macuá."
[35] See Appendix 1: Song Catalog and Appendix 2: Discography.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

composers, such as "Meta caña" and "La negra cachá" (8 May 1934, by Cuarteto Machín), and "Pobre Lucumí" (15 June 1937, by Orquesta Belisario López), included the word "afrocubano" as in *capricho afrocubano* and *motivo afrocubano*, respectively. What these labels and song titles have in common, however, is the imaging of Afrocuban traditional and urban popular music and culture, at a time when it was both faddish and subject to controversy. Hyphenated varieties of the Afrocuban urban popular genre *son*, as indicated by the labels *son-afrocubano* and *son-afro*, were recorded and performed extensively.[36] Whether labeled a *son-afrocubano*, *son-afro*, or simply *afro*, Arsenio's afrocubanos had the same basic form consisting of four sections: instrumental introduction, verse, bridge, and *montuno* (or call-and-response).

The introduction, verse, and bridge sections are marked by the *tango-congo* pattern (see Example 3.1.a), hence, the "tango congo" label for Nilo Menéndez's version of "Bruca maniguá." The final call-and-response section constitutes the *son* portion of the afrocubano. Prior to its use to denote the genre of the same name in *zarzuelas*, beginning in the early 1910s, the term "tango-congo" had various meanings in Afrocuban traditional culture during the colonial period. Fernando Ortiz explains that the name "tangos" referred to groups of slaves and free blacks, representing their respective *cabildo de nación*, who performed music and danced as they paraded down the streets of Havana during the annual celebration of Día de Reyes (or the Epiphany, celebrated on January

---

[36] Other hyphenated varieties of *son* included *bolero-son*, *son-pregón*, and *guaracha-son* (Robbins 1990: 187; Ruiz et al. 1995: 330).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

6).[37] Eduardo Sánchez de Fuentes adds that, "[O]nly in the rare theatrical work where [character-types of] our legendary slaves appear do you hear this rhythm that they cultivated in their [Día de Reyes] celebrations."[38] Evidently, the "rhythm" that Sánchez de Fuentes refers to became the rhythmic basis of the genre that took on the name "tango-congo," which became a fixed part of the *zarzuela* by the 1930s.[39]

The afrocubano's stylistic affinity with the *zarzuela* tango-congo is unmistakable, given the prominence of its underlying rhythmic pattern for the first three sections and the exaggerated Afro-Hispanicized speech of the protagonist (analyzed below). But another viable source of the tango-congo pattern itself might be found in the composite rhythm and melody played for Ogún (a Regla de Ocha or Santería deity) on the Afrocuban batá drums. I have noted one cycle of the tango-congo pattern as it is generally played in the afrocubano (see Example 3.1.a) along with the composite rhythm of the batá prayer for Ogún (see Example 3.1.b).[40] The relationship between the tango-congo pattern and the batá prayer is particularly evident in the final four attacks of both.

Casino de la Playa's version of "Bruca maniguá," therefore, is not a "conga,"

---

[37] See Ortiz 1920 and 1992: 31-32.

[38] [S]ólo en alguna que otra obra teatral, en la que aparecen nuestros legendarios esclavos, se oye este ritmo que ellos cultivaban en sus peculiares fiestas (Sánchez de Fuentes in Ortiz 1924: 448). Unfortunately, neither Ortiz or Sánchez de Fuentes includes transcriptions of the "rhythm" the latter writer refers to. Another viable source of this rhythmic cell may have been the rhythm and melody associated with Ogún (a santería deity), which are played on the Afrocuban batá drums. For transcriptions of this rhythm see Ortiz (1993: 220, mm. 11-12) and Amira and Cornelius (1992: 52, Variation 1-B). For a recorded example of the prayer for Ogún see "Oggún," *Grupo Afrocuba de Matanzas: Rituales Afrocubanos* (Egrem 58).

[39] Grenet 1939 in Giro 1995a: 104.

[40] From Ortiz (1993: 220, mm. 11-12) and Amira and Cornelius (1992: 52, Variation 1-B).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 3.1. The tango-congo and Ogún rhythmic patterns

(a) The "tango-congo" pattern

(b) Ogún composite rhythm

despite its initial labeling as such by RCA Victor. Ultimately, I have decided to use "afrocubano" because it is the term Arsenio used in referring to "Bruca maniguá" in the quote given above. More importantly, there is a substantive distinction to be made between his afrocubano and similarly labeled and sounding songs, which on the surface are stylistically alike but are different, according to Arsenio and Raúl, in significant ways.

Afrocuban oral traditions as strategic sources

Less than two years after the recording of "Bruca maniguá," Casino de la Playa recorded Margarita Lecuona's "Babalú" (27 Feb. 1939), which, like four of Arsenio's songs, was labeled a *son afro* by RCA Victor. It was later recorded in New York City by Miguelito Valdés with Xavier Cugat in 1941, and then again by Desi Arnaz in 1946, which became

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the most recognizable version internationally and Arnaz's trademark song.[41] To the average audience in Havana and New York's elite cabarets and nightclubs these songs and their performance probably evoked similar exotic images of Afrocuban culture. Raúl, however, made the following distinction between these two songs:

> My brother wrote "Bruca maniguá," in which he uses many words in *congo*. After, . . . [Margarita] Lecuona wrote ["Babalú"], which she said was an *afrocubano*, but which had nothing "afro" [i.e., African] about it. But, fine. . . . And it was a hit. And after that, people were calling [Miguelito Valdés] "Mr. Babalú"! But he's not singing anything in *congo*. He's singing in Spanish.[42]

On another occasion Raúl added:

> Miguelito would play the conga drum and sing. For the people, the North Americans, ["Babalú"] was easier to understand because it was in Spanish. It was not in *congo*. . . . He would flip his hair forward, which lent itself more to the show.[43]

Raúl situates Miguelito Valdés and Casino de la Playa within the context of the tourist *cabaret de primera* and New York nightclub, which corroborates this big band's (and other all-white big bands') historical relationship with this type of locale and

---

[41] Roberts 1999: 108, 112.

[42] Mi hermano hiso "Bruca Manigua," que allí esta hablando muchas palabras en congo. Pero despues, . . . [Margarita] Lecuona hiso ["Babalú"], que dice ella que era afrocubano, de que afro no tenía nada. Pero bueno. . . . Y pegó. Y ya con eso la gente [le decían a Miguelito], '¡Mr. Babalú!' Pero él no esta hablando nada en congo. Él esta hablando en español (Raúl Travieso 19 June 1996).

[43] Miguelito [cogía] la tambor [y] cantaba. A la gente, los americanos, se le hacía más facil entender eso porque eso estaba en español. Eso no estaba en lengua de congo. . . . Se hechaba el pelo para adelante, [que] para el show, se prestaba más eso (Raúl Travieso 8 February 1997).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

performance context. More importantly, he contests the authenticity of "Babalú," on the grounds that it lacks African lexical items, which, based on Arsenio's remarks, are the primary textual component of his afrocubano:

> [Miguelito] hadn't sung *afrocubanos*. I had to teach him the words . . . [because] the lyric in "Bruca maniguá" is African, from the Congo.[44]

The title "Babalú" and its thematic content do reference aspects of the Yoruba-derived religion of *santería*, which Raúl acknowledged.[45] But the language (i.e., Spanish) with which it is rendered evidently lacks resonance with actual santería practice, a distinction, nevertheless, which could not have been made by Casino de la Playa's audiences. The following textual analysis of Arsenio's afrocubanos will reveal how rooted he was in the culture of his upbringing, and an interpretation of the meanings of the lyrics will offer a deeper insight into Arsenio's sense of self.

The name "congo" was used to designate peoples coming from the wide cultural area, sometimes referred to as the "Lower Guinea," which roughly encompasses southern Cameroon down to southern Angola, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All of these peoples spoke Bantu languages belonging to the Bantoid group, Benue-Congo subfamily. In Cuba, however, the terms "congo" and

---

[44] Él no cantaba [afrocubanos]. Yo tuvo que enseñar a él de eso para que él lo dijera . . . [porque] esa letra que tiene "Bruca maniguá" es africana, es del Congo (Arsenio Rodríguez ca. 1964).

[45] Babalú Ayé of the *santería* pantheon is an earth god and equalizes people rich and poor by punishing moral transgressions with disease (Amira and Cornelius 1992: 7).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"bantú," when referring to culture, have become interchangeable.[46] *Congo* lexical items in Cuba are still used primarily in the performance of religious events in *palo monte*.[47] Accordingly, studies have focused on compiling the *congo* lexicon and comparing it etymologically and orthographically with words in languages such as Kikongo, Lari, Monokotuba, and Lingala, which are spoken in the Lower Guinea.[48] Regarding the syntactic legacy left by African-born slaves in nineteenth-century Cuba, linguist John Lipski states: "Among the linguistic strategies employed by . . . *bozal* [African-born slave] speakers was the free creation of hybrid structures, employing a Spanish (or pidgin Spanish) morphosyntactic frame with an African lexical core [e.g., *congo*]."[49] The result was an Africanized Spanish, sometimes referred to as "bozal Spanish," which remained prominent in the speech of, for example, practitioners of *palo monte* well into the twentieth century.

Bozal Spanish was also parodied by composers and librettists of nineteenth-century Cuban *bufo* (comic opera) or *teatro vernáculo* as well as popular music of the 1920s and 1930s such as salon congas.[50] In teatro vernáculo productions, in particular, bozal speech was appropriated to index the black slave's lack of education and slow thought process, attributes thought to be comic. Most zarzuelas of the 1920s and 1930s,

---

[46] See Castellanos and Castellanos 1987: 101-105.
[47] See Lipski 1994: 103.
[48] See González Huguet and Baudry 1967 and de Granda 1973.
[49] Lipski 1993: 18-19. Slaves in nineteenth-century Cuba were divided into *bozales*, those recently brought from Africa; *ladinos*, those who were imported before the passage of the law in 1821, prohibiting the slave-trade; and *criollos*, those born on the island (Wurdeman 1844: 249).
[50] Moore 1997: 20, 46, 80.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

however, while incorporating Afro-Cuban themes from the colonial period, depict rather sympathetically the suffering of black slaves under colonial authorities. As Moore argues, such picturesque representations of slavery in Cuba nevertheless "could be freely reinvented on the stage with little or no regard for sociohistorical authenticity," adding that "[i]ssues pertaining to Afrocuban oppression could be alluded to in slave songs without implying that they still existed or needed to be addressed in the present."[51] Like the lyrics of "Babalú," slave songs in either teatro vernáculo productions or zarzuelas, while superficially alluding to Afro-Cuban imagery, in all likelihood lacked African lexical items and, more significantly, proverbs actually used by practitioners of palo and santería.

Arsenio's lyrics, particularly in "Adiós África" ("Goodbye Africa"), "Bruca maniguá" ("Witch from the Brush"), "Yo son Macuá" ("I'm a Macuá"), and "Ven acá Tomá" ("Come Down Tomás"), and Miguelito's singing style and pronunciation initially evoke the parodied speech of the *bozal* slave as well as the picturesque imagery of plantation life typical of the teatro vernáculo and zarzuela (see full transcriptions and translations in Appendix 3). Felipe García Villamil identified this parodied speech when listening to Arsenio's "Fufuñando" ("Griping"): "[I]t's the way the African-born slave spoke in Cuba. He [i.e., the character type] does not speak properly."[52] García Villamil further commented on the artificial and exaggerated nature of the following phrase's syntax from the bridge in "Ven acá Tomá"[53]:

---

[51] Moore 1997: 138-139.
[52] [Es] la forma de la *persona nación* en Cuba como hablaba. Él [el personaje] no habla fino (Felipe García Villamil, 26 November 1997).
[53] See also "Yo son Macuá," first verse.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> *Yo quiero que tú 'tá cuerda / lo que yo te va decí* (I want that you are remember, what I is going to tell you [singing]). Notice that I don't speak that way because that's a lie of theirs.[54]

But while his opening verses introduce the conventional character type and imagery, a transformation of these components in the bridge sections occurs such as in "Bruca maniguá" in which the slave condemns the *mundele* (*congo* for "white man").

Arsenio's treatment of the subject matter and use of language are both socio-historically and socio-linguistically consistent. For instance, his portrayal in "Bruca maniguá" of the badly treated *negro de nación* (also, *bozal* or African-born slave) who does not understand what his owner is saying coincides with Knight's explanation of the two reasons why *bozales* tended to end up on rural plantations:

> [T]here the greatest demand for workers existed; and there they could most easily be adapted. For not being able to speak or understand Spanish, the bozales performed best jobs where they could be constantly supervised. . . . As a general rule, therefore, the rural slaves were predominately bozales, while the urban slaves were criollos.[55]

More importantly, by inserting *congo* lexical items (in bold in the transcriptions) within a "Spanish syntactic frame," the *bozal's* speech becomes a more accurate representation of nineteenth-century African speech in Cuba. His outspoken criticism of and confrontational approach toward his oppressors break with the conventional representation of particularly the negro bozal of the teatro vernáculo.

---

[54] *Yo quiero que tú tá cuerda, lo que yo te va decí* [cantado]. Fijate que yo no puedo hablar así porque eso es mentira de ellos (Felip García Villamil, 30 January 1998).
[55] Knight 1970: 48.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio also uses proverbs and other passages with *congo* lexical items, associated with *palo monte*. García Villamil's translations into Spanish demonstrate the complex subtlety which characterizes such passages which Arsenio uses. In "Adiós África," for example, the protagonist, speaking the line *ya son las hora* (it is time), orders his "ganga" (the cauldron where the spirit that the *palero* "owns" resides) to resolve his problems. Cuban folklorist Lydia Cabrera provides ample ethnographic descriptions of the uses of a *palero's* (*palo* priest's) *ganga* and its contents, which include sticks and roots of various types of trees, herbs, dirt, animals, and other natural elements.[56] The line *quien rabo mono 'mara mono* (who [*sic*] monkey tail ties monkey) is a traditional *palo* proverb, which warns that any deception or ill will toward somebody on your part will have negative ramifications. The literal translation of the line *ahora si que casilla 'garra coronise* is, "Now my bird trap works." But in this context, García Villamil translated "casilla" (pigeon-hole) as "ganga" and "[a]garra coronise" (to grasp a Cornish hen) as the viable power of the *ganga*. The word "kiyumba" refers to an animal and human skull, which was used for *palo* rituals, but is no longer practiced.[57] Finally, García Villamil identified the name "Kindimbyola" as a powerful *ganga* which is well-known among *paleros*.

There are subtle translations of other words that also refer to the *ganga*, such as "caravela" and "kimbisa" (see "Yo son Gangá"). García Villamil explained that in the past the decomposed body of a "caravela" or "kimbisa" (e.g., a sworn brother from the same religious sect), was kept in a sack, and used as a spiritual source, which would then be

---

[56] Cabrera 1992: 118-138.
[57] Castellanos and Castellanos 1992: 391.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

called interchangeably "caravela," "kimbisa," or "ganga."[58] Also, these spiritual sources were often ridiculed by priests, as in the lines *¿qué dinga bobo? ¿qué kuendá?* (what are you saying, idiot? when is it going to grow?) in "Yo son Gangá" ("I'm a Gangá"), in order to provoke their power.

The examples above demonstrate not only the extent of Arsenio's knowledge of *palo* culture, but also an assertive position on his part in opposition to historical and contemporary discourses of African and Afrocuban inferiority, atavism, and powerlessness. His knowledge of and identification with other African-derived cultural traditions such as the Yoruba-derived santería religion, and his application of that knowledge in his afrocubanos further exemplify the importance of his African heritage in the formation of his sense of self. In "Bruca maniguá," García Villamil pointed out that "Yeyeo" is a Yoruba word and another name for the god "Ochún" of the santería pantheon.[59] The *palo* equivalent to this deity is "Mama Shola."[60]

Arsenio also references the names of various African ethnic groups, such as *carabalí* in "Bruca maniguá," *ganga* in "Yo son gangá," and *macuá*, *mandinga*, and *gangá* in "Yo son macuá." In discussing these afrocubanos, Arsenio stated, "I tried to

---

[58] Ortiz (1952: 423) explains that the word "caravela" is *congo*, and was commonly used during the nineteenth century among African-born *congo* priests of the Kindembo sect to refer to each other as sworn brothers (i.e., "caravelas").

[59] In Cuba, "Yoruba" and "Lucumí" are used interchangeably to denote those peoples who originated from what is now southwestern Nigeria and southern Benin. See Waterman (1990: 12) for a concise historical review of the word "Yoruba" and the construction of a pan-Yoruba identity, beginning in the late nineteenth century.

[60] Lachatañeré (1950) lists the names of ten "santos" (or gods), including Ochún or Shola or Ashola Aguengue, each of which are recognized in palo monte, santería, and catholocism under different names. His purpose is to show that palo monte and santería share common aspects, and he adds that many paleros are also practitioners of santería.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

describe all of the ethnic groups that I knew about."[61] Arsenio enumerates other ethnic names after explaining the meaning of *carabalí* as it appears in the verse of "Bruca maniguá":

> *Carabalí* is a tribe. They still exist. Among the *congo* are *real*[62], *mosungo*, *gangá*, *mandinga*, *carabalí*, and *macuá*. There are distinct *congo* races.[63]

In Cuba, the *macuá*, associated with the people in eastern Africa (i.e., Mozambique), and the *mandinga*, of the Mande subfamily from Northwestern Sub-Sahara, are often considered subgroups of the *congo*.[64]

The classifications based on these names had a social reality within Cuba, regardless of their geographical or ethnic relevance (or lack of it) in Africa. These ethnic designations became descriptors for groups of African peoples having similar languages, cultural attributes, physical characteristics, and ways of behaving. Accordingly, slave owners developed stereotypes for each of these groups, which determined the selection and purchasing of slaves.[65] Slaves and their descendants also used ethnic names to classify each other, to regulate social relationships, and to trace ancestry.[66] Such stereotypes,

---

[61] Traté de hablar de todas las razas que yo conocía (Rodríguez c.1964).
[62] Castellanos and Castellanos note that the Angunga, descendants of the Ngumba from the Lower Guinea, were called Congos Reales in Cuba (1987: 110, n60).
[63] [Carabalí] es una tribu que se llamaba Carabalí. Todavía existe. Entro de los Congos hay Congo Real. Hay Congo Mosungo. Hay Gangá. Hay Mandinga. Hay Carabalí. Hay Macuá. Hay distintas razas de Congo (Rodríguez c.1964).
[64] Castellanos and Castellanos 1987: 101-102.
[65] A contemporary sample of the stereotypes of various ethnic groups can be found in Wurdemann (1844: 257).
[66] Brandon 1997: 56-57. See also Fraginals (1977) who provides population estimates for the larger ethnic groups in Cuba during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

characterizations, and classifications remained active through the twentieth century in the historical memories of some Cubans, as demonstrated by Arsenio in his afrocubanos, as well as by García Villamil in his discussion of the *mandinga* (after having listened to "Yo son Macuá"):

> The *mandinga* are a race, but of the *congo*. The *mandinga* were people who were secretive and very rebellious. They had a way of [committing suicide by] strangulating themselves with their two fingers.[67]

Obviously referencing *afrocubanismo* composers, García Villamil explains that black Cubans including himself resented the often capricious appropriation of Afrocuban sacred elements by many white composers. He suggests that many participated in sacred ceremonies in order to use musical elements in their popular and art compositions.

> This would often upset us because of . . . racism and that whole mess. They made arrangements and the majority of those who sang them were white. Also, they gave the impression that they didn't understand what they were singing, which they sang anyway according to what they felt. So black Cubans were a little hurt because of this. . . . There were many white Cubans that were mixed up in the religion in order to use the music [for their orchestras].[68]

Although García Villamil did not specify, his characterization may readily be applied to

---

[67] *Mandinga* es una raza pero de *congo*. *Mandinga* era gente que no hablaba y era muy rebelde. Ellos tenían un sistema de estrangularse con dos dedos (García Villamil 1998).
[68] Nosotros mucha veces poníamos un poco molesto por que . . . el racismo y la jodienda. Ellos areglaban y mayormente lo que cantaban ese eran un blanco. Le daban la impresión que ellos no sabían lo que quería decír el papel ni nada de eso, a su sentir ¿ve? Entonces, el negro se sentía un poco lastimado por eso. . . . Había muchas personas de ese que estaban en enbolado en la religión, blancos, para poder hacer las cosas de música ¿ve? (García Villamil 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

afrocubanismo composers such as Amadeo Roldán, Alejandro García Caturla, Ernesto Lecuona, and Margarita Lecuona, whose music may have been "Afrocuban-inspired" but, as Raúl declared, had nothing "Afro" or African about it.

Conclusion

Despite its contradictions and ambiguity, the ideology of mestizaje has been a master narrative for much of Latin America. For example, Peter Wade shows that in Colombia mestizaje is ideally undifferentiated by hierarchies of color, ancestry, or cultural tradition, while often overshadowed by a hegemonic principle based on an ideological link between whiteness and modernity.[69] In regard to the role of music in the conceptualization of mestizaje, Wade states, "[T]he music [e.g., cumbia] is seen as a symbol of fusion, of the overcoming of difference, but the representation of that symbol involves the continual reiteration of difference [i.e., between the indigenous, the African, and the Spanish]."[70] Frances Aparicio discusses the ambivalence that characterizes the writing of Tómas Blanco, a white Puerto Rican intellectual active during the 1930s, in regard to mestizaje, plena, and Puerto Rican national identity. She states that Blanco's reaffirmation of racial mestizaje may be read as an argument for the recognition of the black sector in Puerto Rico and, simultaneously, as the sign for whiteness, the rationale for the denial of pure

[69] Wade 2000: 16, 135.
[70] Ibid.: 66.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

blackness.[71] According to Aparicio, Blanco maintains the binary between the European-derived danza (iconicized as the "white woman") and plena (iconicized as the "mulatta"), which he says was born of the process of mestizaje, thereby marginalizing and excluding the more Afro-Puerto Rican cultural traditions such as bomba.[72]

People of the African diaspora have utilized various forms of expression not only to improve their situations but also to implicate modernity's contradictions. During slavery, rhetoric, music, and dance were some of the few powerful forms of expression available to black individuals and their communities. As one North American traveler observed on a plantation in Güines, La Habana in the early nineteenth century:

> On all the plantations [in Güines] the Negroes, also, pass the day in dancing to the music of their rude instruments . . . Songs are often combined with the dance, *and in their native dialects they ridicule their owners before their faces* . . .[73]

A century later, in Bolondrón, Matanzas, as well as Güines, Arsenio immersed himself in Congo-derived religious and musical traditions, from which he would draw musical influence and a sense of self throughout his career and life. In his afrocubanos, Arsenio contested the denial of Cuba's African heritage and especially its vitality in the discourse of mestizaje by referencing and embracing aspects of his cultural upbringing; and, second, he contested conventional representations of "blackness" by metaphorically asserting

---

[71] Aparicio 1998: 40.
[72] Aparicio goes on to conclude that "Blanco's veiled racist discourse can only be mediated by gender constructs. . . . Blanco dismisses the historical evidence of sexual violence and rape against indigenous women and African female slaves, the real beginnings of mestizaje throughout Latin America" (Ibid.: 39-40, 43).
[73] Wurdmann 1844: 84 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

himself as the *bozal* protagonist in confrontation with his oppressor and recasting stereotyped signifiers of "blackness" with a deeper, critical purpose. Beginning in the early 1940s Arsenio continued to draw from Congo-derived expressive traditions and aesthetics, cultivating in synergy with the black working class of Havana a new style of performing and dancing *son* music.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 4

Arsenio Rodríguez y Su Conjunto and the Son Montuno Style, 1940-1952

Arsenio was the genius of the *conjuntos*. . . . He revolutionized the *son*. He added a *tumbadora*, . . . a piano, and three trumpets, and he called it a "conjunto." He was the originator of that name, "conjunto."[1]

—Humberto Cané

Arsenio was the one who organized the *conjunto orquestal*. . . . He was the founder of that. He was very intelligent.[2]

—René Álvarez

I admire him, I shall always admire him, and when I die I will continue admiring him. . . . He created a style [son montuno], and I learned a lot from playing with him.[3]

—Alfredo Armenteros "Chocolate"

He was a great figure of Cuban music, of *conjunto* music. He was the founder of that. And the force that Arsenio's *conjunto* had? Forget about it.[4]

—Julián Cabrera

---

[1] Arsenio fue el genio de los conjuntos. . . . Arsenio revolucionó el son de su epoca para acá. Arsenio puso una conga, . . . un piano y tres trompetas, y le llamó "conjunto." Él fue el inventor de ese nombre, "conjunto" (Humberto Cané, 8 March 1999).

[2] Arsenio fue el que formó el conjunto orquestal. . . . Fue el creador de eso. Era muy inteligente (René Álvarez, 4 April 1994).

[3] Lo admiro, lo admiraré, y moriré, y lo seguiré admirando. . . . Hizo un estilo, y con él aprendí mucho (Alfredo Armenteros "Chocolate," 6 July 1996).

[4] Ése fue grande en la música cubana, de la música de conjunto. Él fue creador de eso. ¿Y la fuerza que tenía el conjunto de Arsenio? Olvídate hermano (Julián Cabrera, 27 June 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

These accounts of Arsenio's importance to modern Cuban and Latin dance music history were given by contemporaries, some of whom were also seminal figures. According to every account, his importance, above all, was as an *inventor*, *creador* (creator), or *fundador* (founder) of the conjunto ensemble and of the son montuno style. This chapter traces the formation of Arsenio's conjunto and defines the musical principles and procedures he implemented in his conjunto's performance of various Cuban dance styles, including *son* (analyzed below) as well as guaguancó and guaracha (analyzed in Chapter 5). The musical evidence presented here will substantiate my analysis in Chapter 5 of the reception of Arsenio's style among his contemporaries in Havana in the 1940s as well as provide the basis from which changes in his style later in his career can be assessed.

The Early History of Arsenio's Conjunto, 1940-1942

The years 1940 and 1941 were turning points for Arsenio's career. On 12 September 1940, he made his first two recordings for RCA Victor with the newly formed group he called "Arsenio Rodríguez y Su Conjunto." The generic meaning of the word "conjunto" is "group" or "ensemble." In the context of Cuban popular music, after the popularization of Arsenio's conjunto, the name "conjunto" became associated with a specific ensemble type, which between 1940 and 1946 consisted of two first voices or *primas*, with one doubling on clave and the other on maracas, two trumpets, piano, tres, guitar (doubling on second voice), bass, bongó, and *tumbadora* (conga drum). This format was an extension of the septeto's instrumentation, with the addition of a second trumpet, piano, and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tumbadora. Arsenio continued to use the septeto format, after the 1940 recording session, when his group "Conjunto de Arsenio Rodríguez" performed at Sans Souci from 28 December 1940 to 1 February 1941.[5] Evidently, Arsenio transformed this septeto into a "conjunto" by adding a second trumpet, piano, and tumbadora for his first recording session. He used the same "conjunto" again for his second recording session on 31 March 1941.

The fact that Arsenio succeeded in getting contracts with RCA Victor and Sans Souci, a *cabaret de primera*, suggests that by 1940 he had established himself as a successful composer and bandleader. As in *academias de baile*, septetos formed part of the regular entertainment in cabarets. But, unlike the Sport Antillano, where Arsenio performed through most of the 1930s, Sans Souci was an "aristocratic" and "exclusive" *cabaret de primera*, whose guests typically included tourists and "distinguished families" of Havana's "elegant society." Guests were advised to have reservations and were to pay the relatively expensive cover charge of 7 pesos (compared to the average fee of 1 to 2 pesos which *sociedades* charged). It was located in *reparto* La Coronela, in barrio Lisa, on the outskirts of Marianao, and it was usually open two nights a week, Thursdays and Saturdays. The evening's entertainment began regularly at 12:30 am.[6]

From December 1940 to February 1941 the show included four dance acts. The

---

[5] *Diario de la Marina* (Havana), 28 December 1940—1 February 1941. According to Raúl, the name of Arsenio's septeto that played at Sans Souci was "Segundo Conjunto de Arsenio" (15 April 1998, 3 August 1998, 15 March 1999, 15 February 2000; see also Fernández 1998: 124-125). His group was referred to as a "septeto" in at least one advertisement put out by Sans Souci (*Diario de la Marina*, 3 January 1941).
[6] *Diario de la Marina*, 5 and 28 December 1940.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Stadlers were billed as a dance couple from Hollywood who performed an original dance routine they called "The Mickey Mouse." Hugo y Tyra was a Mexican dance couple famous for their dance number "Baile de la serpiente" ("The Serpent Dance"). Phyllis Addison danced classical ballet. And, finally, the obligatory rumba dance act was performed by Elpidio y Margot.[7] Australian singer Monica Moore, who debuted on 16 January 1941, sang US popular songs.

The big band Orquesta Bellamar, directed by Armando Romeu Jr., provided the musical accompaniment for the dance and singing acts, which, based on the descriptions of their routines, required a diverse repertory of international genres and styles. Arsenio's septeto was "contracted to perform vernacular [dance] pieces," the genres of which would have included *son*, *afrocubano*, *bolero*, *guaracha*, *pregón*, and *conga*.[8] He also accepted requests from the audience. On a number of these occasions, Arsenio asked Manolo Suárez, who was singing with Orquesta Bellamar at the time, to sing certain internationally popular lyrical songs such as "Martha," "Siboney," "Rosa la china," "María la O," "¿Y tú qué has hecho?" ("And What Have You Done?"), and "Aquellos ojos verdes" ("Those Green Eyes"), the style in which Manolo specialized (Manolo was a member of Arsenio's conjunto in Los Angeles, from 1969 to 1970).[9]

According to Raúl, Arsenio was performing only with his septeto at Sans Souci at this time, and he did not begin to use his conjunto format for public performances until

---

[7] Elpidio y Margot was replaced by Estela y René, the internationally famous "pareja de rumba" ("rumba couple"), on the night of 4 January (*Diario de la Marina*, 7 January 1941; see also Moore 1997: 186).
[8] *Diario de la Marina*, 28 December 1940.
[9] Manolo Suárez, 31 July 1996 and 11 September 1996.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

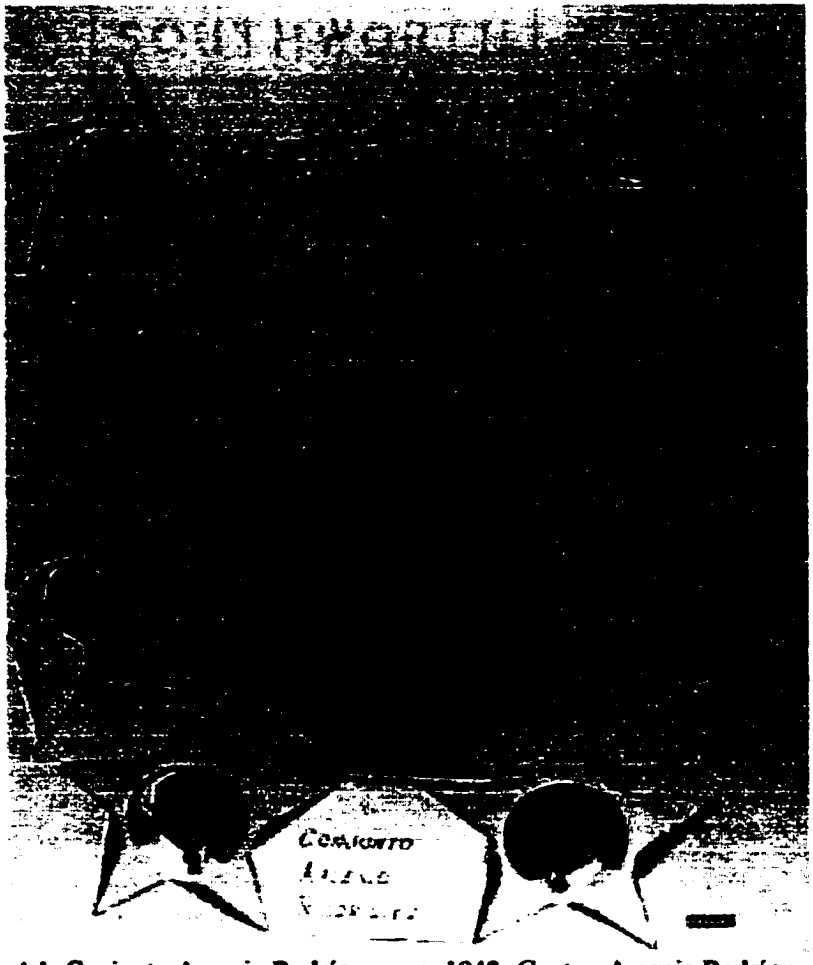


Figure 4.1. Conjunto Arsenio Rodríguez, ca. 1943. *Center*, Arsenio Rodríguez, tres. *Clockwise from top-center*: Benetín Bustillo, trumpet, Rubén Calzado, trumpet, Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and clave, Marcelino Guerra, guitar and second voice, Adolfo O'Reily "Panasea," piano, Nilo Alfonso, bass, Israel Rodríguez "Kike," tumbadora, Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas, Antolín Suárez "Papa Kila," bongó (photograph courtesy of Raúl Travieso).

after the contract at Sans Souci had ended in February 1941.[10] However, he may not have made this transition for at least another year. In February 1942, for example, Social Club Buena Vista, a *sociedad de color*, printed an advertisement announcing its carnival season

[10] Raúl Travieso, 15 April 1998, 3 August 1998, and 15 February 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dances, the music of which was to be performed by "el septeto de Arsenio Rodríguez."[11] Finally, in May 1942, his group had started to be referred to as "el conjunto de Arsenio Rodríguez" (see fig. 4.1).[12] The timing of this change, from being referred to as a "septeto" to a "conjunto," coincides with a notable change in style that is evident in the songs that the conjunto recorded at its third recording session, which took place on 18 June 1942. Through the end of 1942, however, other *son* groups such as Septeto Sonora Matancera, Septeto Casino, and Septeto Gloria Matancera, who had been performing for elite sociedades since the 1930s, were still using the septeto format for their public performances.[13]

The "first" conjunto

Despite popular belief, Arsenio's conjunto was probably not the "first" to incorporate a second trumpet, piano, or tumbadora. According to various sources, other *son* groups before 1940 had attempted to incorporate at least one of these three instruments. For instance, La Sonora Nacional de Piñón was advertised as "el Dúo de Trompetas del Sexteto Sonora Nacional de Piñón" for their program on radio CMCG in May 1938.[14] Evidently, in addition to La Sonora Nacional de Piñón, Carabina de Ases and several other

---

[11] *Hoy* (Havana), 24 and 26 February 1942.
[12] *Hoy*, 22 and 24 May 1942.
[13] *Diario de la Marina*, 2 November 1940—6 June 1942; *Hoy*, 25 December 1941—11 April 1943.
[14] *Hoy*, 31 May 1938. Here, "sexteto" refers to this *son* group's instruments (i.e., two vocals with maracas and clave, guitar, *tres*, bass, and *bongó*), not including the two trumpets.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

son groups were regularly using a two-trumpet format and, in the case of Sexteto Gloria Cubana, a piano by 1938.[15] Some have credited Sexteto Afrocubano with incorporating the tumbadora in 1936, while others have credited Conjunto La Llave with being the first to do this in 1940.[16]

Raúl asserted that Arsenio began to use a tumbadora around 1935, while on other occasions he suggested that this addition did not occur until after the Sans Souci gig.[17] The only one of the conjunto's recordings from 1940 and 1941 in which a tumbadora is audible is the *conga* "Todos seguimos la conga" ("Everyone Follows the Conga," rec. 31 March 1941).[18] Whichever septeto was the "first" to add either a tumbadora, second trumpet, or piano, Arsenio's importance was in his successful assimilation of these three instruments for the distinct purpose of originating his son montuno style. Specifically, by incorporating the tumbadora as a vital component of his son montuno style, Arsenio contributed to the drum's resignification as a vital part of black Cuban music. It is for these reasons that his colleagues consider him the "first" to add the tumbadora, second trumpet, and piano or, in short, "the creator of the conjunto."

---

[15] Blanco Aguilar 1992: 34; Collazo 1987: 177-178; René López, 11 February 1995. Moore (1997: 155) provides a photo of Sexteto Gloria Cubana with pianist and director María Teresa Ovando.

[16] Blanco Aguilar 1992: 125; Mongo Santamaría in Fernández 1998: 125.

[17] Raúl Travieso, 31 July 1996 and 8 February 1997.

[18] Composed by Arsenio, the lyrics of this *conga*, like his *afrocubanos*, criticize those who reject traditional Afrocuban culture and accuse its expressive traditions of being atavistic (see Appendix 4: Song Lyrics).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Son Montuno Style

Cuban musicians active in the 1940s have distinguished Cuban conjuntos by utilizing various dichotomous terms, including negro (black) and blanco (white). As Raúl noted:

> Those who bought Arsenio's records [and hired his conjunto] were mostly black people because whites had their orchestras, like Casino de la Playa, La Gloria Matancera, La Sonora Matancera, and Belisario López. Those [conjuntos and charangas played] *white music*. . . . The black man didn't buy records by Casino de la Playa, very rarely. What he bought were the records by people that had *the black swing*—Arcaño, Arsenio, or Melodias del 40.[19]

By analyzing the meanings and applications of these terms, considerable insight can be gained into the social dimension of Cuban conjunto styles in the 1940s. My analytical aim here is to define the musical principles and procedures of Arsenio's son montuno style or "black swing."

In expanding the old septeto format into a conjunto and in originating his new son montuno style, Arsenio was guided by the principles of timbral heterogeneity and rhythmic power and fullness. As Arsenio himself put it:

> I organized a *new system* for the conjunto. I thought that the septeto with the one trumpet, the guitar, and the *tres* couldn't produce the necessary *harmony*, and so I added a piano and three trumpets.[20]

---

[19] Los que compraban más los discos de Arsenio era la gente negra porque los blanquitos tenían sus orquestas como Casino de la Playa, La Gloria Matancera, La Sonora Matancera, y Belisario López. Esas [orquestas tocaban] *música de blanco*. . . . El negro no compraba discos del Casino de la Playa, muy poco. Lo que compraba era la gente que tenían *el swing negro*—Arcaño, Arsenio, o Melodias del 40 (Raúl Travieso, 13 December 1999 [emphasis added]).

[20] Organicé un *nuevo sistema* de conjunto. Pensé que el septeto con la trompeta, la guitara

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

We should interpret his reference to "harmony" as meaning something more than just the harmonic potential of a piano and trumpet section. In fact, he incorporated the trumpet section (the third trumpet was not added until 1946), piano, and tumbadora in order to add more contrasting timbres and produce a more rhythmically dense and, thus, harmonious and powerful sound. Raúl's remarks in this regard substantiate this interpretation:

> DG: What were Arsenio's reasons for and intentions in putting into practice the tumbadora and more than one trumpet?
>
> RT: To fill up the orchestra because it sounded *weak*. It sounded *empty*. It was lacking instruments [or contrasting timbres?]. Arsenio used to say, "No, no, no. I have to give this [music] more *force*. I have to add more instruments." But it occurred to him that the tumbadora was the instrument that was missing *inside* [the rhythmic texture].[21]

Similarly, in regards to the "heterogeneous sound ideal" in African music, Samuel Floyd, Jr. writes that "drum, rattle, bell, voice, and hand claps not only contrast but commingle—*harmonize*, in their own way—in a heterogeneous fusion that is unequivocally African."[22] In commingling the instrumental parts of the conjunto, Arsenio implemented procedures also typical in the performance of Afro-Cuban and West and Central African music, including call-and-response at different architectonic levels, the

---

y el tres no tenía la armonía necesaria, y le agregué un piano y tres trompetas (quoted in Cubillas Jr. 1952: 25 [emphasis added]).

[21] DG: ¿Cuales fueron sus razones y intenciones de poner en practica la tumbadora y más de una trompeta, para Arsenio? RT: Para llenar más la orquesta porque sonaba *débil*. Sonaba *vacío*. Faltaba instrumentos. Arsenio decía, "No, no, no. Hay que dar le [esta música] más reacción. Hay que poner más instrumentos." Pero, dentro se le ocurrió que la tumbadora era la que hacía falta *adentro* (Raúl Travieso, 19 June 1996).

[22] Floyd, Jr. 1995: 28 (emphases added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

interweaving of patterns (in addition to polyrhythm), cross-rhythms, offbeat accentuation or *contratiempo*, and, most importantly, the correspondence of sound and dancers' bodily movements.

This last procedure of corresponding sound with dancers' movements is particularly important to my discussion below and in the following chapters because it ultimately accounts for how Cuban musicians and dancers fundamentally experienced Arsenio's style and why they described it as "negro" (black) and "macho" (masculine). In contrast, analyses of salsa music have focused on the role of clave as the fundamental reference point for arrangers and performers.[23] In Cuban *son* music as well as salsa, clave is a two-bar pattern in duple meter (there are other clave patterns in 6/8), which is produced by striking the two resonant wooden sticks, also called "claves," together. Compared to the basic footwork used to dance salsa, however, the basic *son* dance step is more akin to the clave pattern and, as I will argue below, had more of a determination on the phrasing and overall rhythmic texture and "swing" of Arsenio's son montuno style than just the clave alone.

After outlining the structural aspects of Arsenio's new style system, I will discuss his conjunto's use of offbeat accentuation or *contratiempo*, call-and-response, and the correspondence of patterns with the *son's* basic footwork. The final section of this chapter analyzes the diablo, the finale of Arsenio's arrangement scheme and his most original contribution to Cuban *son* dance music, focusing on its defining procedure—the

---

[23] For general discussions on the role of clave in salsa performance see Gerard and Sheller (1988), Mauleón (1993), Manuel (1998), and Washburn (1998, 1999).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

interweaving of patterns—and comparing this with the elements of the "mambo" sections as performed by Cuban charangas and big bands in the 1940s.

Forms and arrangement scheme

In my interviews musicians regularly used the term "son montuno" to identify not just the son montuno proper but Arsenio's overall style. For his sones, Arsenio used two basic types of structures: a one-part form consisting of one harmonic cycle (usually two or four bars) and alternating sequences or call-and-response, otherwise referred to here as the son montuno proper; and a two-part form, which includes a "canto" or verse section (not based on a short harmonic cycle). Apart from the addition of a canto section, however, these two forms utilize the same arrangement scheme. Therefore, I will also use the term "son montuno" to refer to his overall style and the terms one-part and two-part to make the appropriate structural distinctions.

In pre-1940 commercially recorded *son* music, the two-part *son* form was far more common than the one-part. The canto sections in these earlier recordings usually consist of two subsections (AB) with twelve-, fourteen-, sixteen- or eighteen-bar phrases over distinct harmonic progressions. In many cases, the A and B subsections of the canto are each repeated more than twice, resulting in extended cantos and brief montunos.[24] In contrast, the one-part form rarely appears in pre-1940 *son* recordings. Two examples include "Tribilín cantore," recorded by Septeto Habanero (29 April 1928), and "Bururú

---

[24] For example, the *sones* recorded by Sexteto Boloña between 1926 and 1928 (ARH CD 7003).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

barará," recorded by Sexteto Nacional (ca. 1928). These particular examples are based entirely on a two-bar cyclic tonic-dominant harmonic pattern. Arsenio utilized both forms equally. What distinguishes his one- and two-part *sones* from earlier *son* music, however, is the unique arrangement scheme he introduced and standardized in the early 1940s.

One-part form with five subsections (see Table 4.1 in Appendix 4)

Introduction	Montuno	Solo (tres or piano)	Cierre (break)	Diablo

Two-part form with six subsections (see Table 4.2 in Appendix 4)

Introduction	Canto (verse)	Montuno	Solo (tres or piano)	Cierre	Diablo

There are five and six distinguishable subsections in the one-part and two-part forms, respectively (see Appendix 4, Tables 4.1 and 4.2). Both forms begin with an introduction, initiated by Arsenio on the tres, followed by a pre-composed trumpet phrase. Arsenio begins by usually playing the tumbao (pattern) that he also plays during the estribillo (refrain) in the "montuno" section. The trumpets begin by introducing either a distinct tune, a tune similar to the *cuarteta* (quatrain) or estribillo tune, or a phrase from one of these tunes.

The "canto" section of the two-part form (Table 4.2 in Appendix 4) consists of a verse which is usually in a one part form, or sometimes in an AB or ABC form. Verses are sung in duo by the first and second voices, and repeated sometimes by the trumpet section. A verse may also alternate with an estribillo sung in duo, in which case the verse is sung

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by the first voice only. Most of his verses in the two-part son montunos include non-diatonic chords, particularly standard secondary dominants. In "Soy el terror" ("I'm the Terror," 10 Jan. 1947), however, the fourth note of the descending bass line, which is based on the B flat major diatonic scale for the first twelve bars, is harmonized with a D major chord. Elsewhere, the verse in "La sandunga del son" ("The Feeling of Son," 29 June 1950) is partly based on a descending chromatic bass line, the first two bars of which constitute the cyclic pattern in the montuno section.

The "montuno" section follows the introduction in the one-part form and the canto in the two-part form. This section is basically call-and-response, in which the "call" consists variously of trumpet improvisations, *glosas* (short riffs pre-composed for the trumpets), *coplas* (2-line stanzas) and *cuartetas* (quatrains) sung by the first voice, and *guías*[25] (single-line improvisations) also sung by the first voice; and the "response" consists of an estribillo sung by the first and second voices or a *coro* (chorus), which is usually a shorter version of the estribillo.

What also distinguishes the montuno section is its harmonic and cyclic structures. For example, the majority of Arsenio's montunos in his two-part forms consist of two- and four-bar harmonic cycles. The two-bar patterns consist of two chords, which alternate

---

[25] "Guía" has been defined as an improvised text sung by the first voice in alternation with the coro (chorus) during the montuno section (e.g., Galán 1983: 307; Robbins 1990: 190). Others have used the name "pregón" (which is also the name for a style of *son* music) in referring to the lead, improvised vocal (e.g., Mauleón 1993: 186, 191). In the context of salsa music, however, guía is another name for the canto or verse section (e.g., Gerard 1989: 34). I am using "guía" to mean the solo vocal part that alternates with the coro during the montuno section, as it is used by Peer International, the copyright owner of most of Arsenio's catalog, in his lead sheets.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in one-bar sequences. When the alternating chords are the tonic and dominant, a subdominant or supertonic are commonly used as passing-chords. The tunes of an estribillo, cuarteta, and copla, however, may consist of one, two, or three sequences of the two-bar harmonic pattern. In four-bar harmonic patterns, chords other than the tonic, subdominant, and dominant are usually included. Other montuno sections of the two-part form consist of single-chord cycles ("¿Quién será mi amor?" ["Who Could Be My Love"], "Sacando candela" ["Dancing It Up"], "Kila, Kike y Chocolate," and "La sandunga del son" ["The Feel of the Son"]) and cycles beginning with the subdominant, submediant, or supertonic ("A buscar camarón" ["Let's Look for Shrimp"], "Soy el terror" ["I'm the Terror"], and "Llévatelo todo" ["Take Everything"], respectively). See Table 4.2 in Appendix 4.

The one-part form is further distinguished from the two-part form because it essentially consists of a continuous harmonic cycle uninterrupted by a canto (verse) section. Many of these two- and four-bar cycles involve the alternation of tonic and dominant chords or two chords a whole-step apart. While both types of patterns are common among older styles of *son* music, the latter is particularly noteworthy of Arsenio's recordings because of its rarity in pre-1940 commercially recorded *son* music.[26] In at least six one-part son montunos the alternation is between a minor and a major chord one whole-step apart or two major chords one whole-step apart. In "Dundumbanza" the alternation between the minor chord and the major chord a whole-step below is

---

[26] See *Antología integral del son* (EGREM LD-286 and LD-287) for examples of *nengón*, *montuno-cruzado*, and other older styles of *son* music that use these patterns.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

interpolated by two other major chords a minor third above and a major third below the first chord (see Table 4.1 in Appendix 4). Although such patterns, as some have argued, are tonally ambiguous, they are nevertheless indicated by the symbols i VII or I bVII in Table 4.1 if at least for consistency with the remaining harmonic analyses in Appendix 4.[27]

The solo section, which is always taken by the tres or piano, follows the montuno section. Next, a brief *cierre* (break), consisting of from one to eight bars, is executed by the entire conjunto, which leads directly to the final climactic section Arsenio called "diablo" (devil). The diablo's arrangement is similar to the montuno's, whereby alternations take place between the sung estribillo, trumpet glosas, and brief trumpet improvisations. Also, in his two- and one-part son montunos dating from 1942 to 1945, the cyclic harmonic patterns and alternation-scheme between the estribillo and the glosas, trumpet improvisations, and guías that were initiated in the montuno section continue in the diablo section. Beginning in 1946, however, Arsenio incorporated a new alternation-scheme, whereby the complete cycle of the two alternating parts established in the montuno was truncated to half of its original length in the final diablo section (this diminution is indicated by a "/" between the alternating parts in the tables in Appendix 4). "Cangrejo fue a estudiar" ("Crab Went to School"), "El reloj de pastora" ("Pastora's Watch"), and "Dame un cachito pa' huele" ("Give Me a Piece to Smell"), all of which were recorded on 21 June 1946, were the first son montunos to incorporate this schematic

---

[27] Ven der Merwe (1989: 205-212) calls a pattern that is a tone apart "double tonic," and suggests that for analytical purposes the alternation should be understood as a "shift of level" instead of a "change of chord." Peter Manuel (2002) also stresses that such tonally ambiguous patterns should be understood as consisting of two tonal centers.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

diminution (see Table 4.1 in Appendix 4). Most importantly, the diablo is a crystallization of all his transformative stylistic aspects, in which the parts of the conjunto come together to create simple, yet syncopated, interlocking, and exciting rhythmic weaves in 2- or, less frequently, four-bar repeating cycles (discussed in detail below). Hence, as I will argue below, the diablo is Arsenio's foremost original contribution to Cuban dance music.

Contratiempo

Several musicians identified contratiempo as the primary characteristic of the bass tumbaos or patterns in Arsenio's conjunto. This characteristic also applies to the sung refrain and coro, piano, and tres parts. Generally, contratiempo refers to the entrance of any pattern or phrase on the weak beat of a measure.[28] It also refers to a pattern whose attacks fall consistently on the off-beats.[29] Richard Waterman described the same phenomenon common in much African music, which he called "off-beat phrasing of melodic accents." It takes place when a sufficient number of notes, particularly, accented ones, of a melodic pattern, occur between the main beats, or on the "weak" beats, which threaten the listener or dancer's subjective orientation to the main beat.[30] He considered this a primary factor in the dynamic rhythmic tension produced in African and African-derived music of the Americas. Rather than mere syncopation, or the off-beat occurrence

---

[28] Della Corte and Gatti's (1949) definition of "contratiempo" reads as follows: "Term used to indicate the entrance of a part on the weak beat of a bar" (Término usado para indicar la entrada de una parte sobre el tiempo *débil* del compás).
[29] Villafranca 1996: 7.
[30] Waterman 1952: 212-214.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of a single note, as in the tresillo bass pattern (see Example 4.1.a), he identified the more extended off-beat phrasing patterns as giving to the melodic line of jazz, for example, its characteristic impelling rhythmic quality. David Locke, in discussing the frequent use of off-beat positions in Ewe dance drumming, states that on-beat and off-beat accents in rhythm patterns can be placed either asymmetrically, which "create wonderfully varied interactions with other rhythm patterns," or be equidistant and regular, "thus establishing the feeling of a contrasting stream of accents that pulls against the main beats."[31]

Likewise, Arsenio's preference for patterns in contratiempo resulted in extraordinarily complex and dynamic rhythmic textures. According to several musicians, his use of bass patterns in contratiempo in particular distinguished his style from the styles of earlier and contemporary *son* groups. Pianist, composer, and arranger Bebo Valdés commented in this regard:

> The original *son* in its beginning, as played by Septeto Habanero, Septeto Nacional, Septeto Boloña, and La Sonora Matancera, never had syncopation, and it consisted of . . . bass lines that accented strong beats. Arsenio's bass [patterns] in the son montuno are almost always syncopated in combination with the tumbadora and the bongó.[32]

Raúl added that in addition to the accentuation of off-beats Arsenio would insist that his bass players make the bass "sing":

---

[31] Locke 1982: 227.

[32] El son original como el Septeto Habanero, Septeto Nacional, Septeto Boloña, y La Sonora Matancera en su principio no tenía nunca sincopa y era . . . de bajos naturales a tiempo. Los bajos de Arsenio en el son montuno casi siempre son sincopados en combinación entre la tumbadora y el bongó (Bebo Valdés, 20-21 September 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> The bassists used to say, "No, Arsenio, you're crazy! How can the bass sing?" And he used to answer, "The bass *will* sing, because if it doesn't sing this [i.e., the texture] will be *cojo*" [lame; crippled; weak]. . . . He no longer used that, *tun-tun-tun* [sings tresillo pattern]. [Arsenio used to say], "No, no, no, no. Now, the bass has to work."[33]

As Bebo Valdés and Raúl emphasized, Arsenio's bass lines were distinct rhythmically and melodically from the tresillo as well as bolero patterns (see Example 4.1.a), which were standard among Arsenio's predecessors and contemporaries through the early 1940s. Indeed, these patterns do accent the downbeat of each bar, although, the tresillo pattern includes one syncopated attack on the "and-of-two." Also, the pitches in these patterns almost invariably accented the corresponding triad, especially the root and the fifth. Early indications of Arsenio's preference for skillful and clever bass players date as far back as the late 1920s with his Septeto Bóston. For example, Arsenio fired his older brother Julio, the septeto's first bass player, because he was not satisfied with Julio's playing. Raúl remembers Arsenio telling Julio, "Listen, go find something else to do because you weren't born to be a bass player."[34] Later, with Septeto Bellamar, Arsenio's bassist was Luís Regatillo, who, in Raúl's opinion, was the most agile bass player he had *ever* seen. As Raúl recounts, "Arsenio used to tell him, 'Let's jam!' And Arsenio would play a thousand things on the tres, and he would answer on the bass. Man, he was some

---

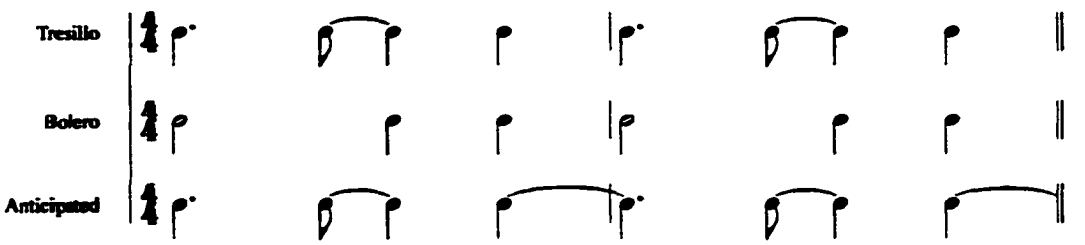
[33] Los bajistas decían, "¡Nah, Arsenio, tú estas loco! ¿Como el bajo va a cantar?" Y dijo, "El bajo va a cantar, porque si el bajo no canta esto esta cojo." . . . No era aquello, *tun-tun-tun* [sings *tresillo* rhythm]. "No, no, no, no. Ahora, el bajo tiene que estar trabajando" (Raúl Travieso, 8 February 1997).

[34] "Oyeme, ponte hacer otra cosa porque tú no nacistes para contrabajista" (Raúl Travieso, 15 February 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.1. Bass patterns

(a) The tresillo, bolero, and anticipated bass patterns



(b) Variations of the "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration

guy."[35] Unfortunately, Regatillo died before 1940. Nevertheless, Arsenio was undoubtedly inspired by his skill and style.

The conjunto's first six recordings, made in 1940 and 1941, do not reflect the use of contratiempo or the other procedures introduced above. Specifically, Nilo Alfonso, who was Arsenio's first steady bass player (1940 to 1946), plays the "anticipated bass" pattern and other, less syncopated patterns (see Example 4.1.a), accenting beats two and four of every bar. By 1942 Nilo's patterns began to change with the appearance of accents

[35] Arsenio le decía, "¡Vamos a fajarnos!" Y Arsenio le hacía mil cosas en [el tres], y él le contestaba en el bajo. Muchacho, era un chavo el tipo (Raúl Travieso, 26 June 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.2. The son montuno texture

(a) "Camina a trabajá" (16 Nov. 1943): montuno

"Camina a trabaja." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1946 by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

on the off-beats. In addition, his bass lines began to follow the melodic content of the sung *estribillos* (refrains). For instance, in most of "Como traigo la yuka" ("How I Bring the Yuka," 18 June 1942) Nilo plays a simple pattern which accents beats three and four with

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.2. *Continued*

(b) "Mi chinita me botó" (6 July 1944): montuno

"Mi chinita me boto." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1971 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

the root note of the corresponding chord. For the guía/coro alternation (see Table 4.1 in Appendix 4), however, nearly all of the off-beats of the new two-bar cycle are accented in combination between his bass pattern and the coro response, thus, changing the entire "feel" of the music.

In the following two years, the conjunto recorded two son montunos in which Nilo's patterns are closely interrelated with the melodic and rhythmic accents of the sung refrain. First, in "Camina a trabajá, Aragón" ("Go to Work, Aragón"), the bass as well as

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.2. *Continued*

(c) "El reloj de pastora" (21 June 1946): montuno

"El reloj de Pastora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1965 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

the tres and piano parts match the refrain's melodic line almost note for note (see Example 4.2.a). The bass part begins on the first fourth beat of the two-bar harmonic pattern, and crosses over into the next bar where it supplies the root of the dominant chord on beat one and the root of the tonic chord on beat four. Second, in "Mi chinita me botó" ("My Little Girl Left Me"), Nilo plays an extraordinary bass pattern that consists of mostly off-beat attacks (see Example 4.2.b). It begins two-and-a-half beats after the refrain begins, while Arsenio's tres part accents both the refrain in the first bar of its pattern and the bass part in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.2. *Continued*

(d) "Soy el terror" (10 Jan. 1947): montuno

"Soy el terror." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1972 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

the second bar. Hence, all three of these patterns (unfortunately, the piano part is largely inaudible) create a wonderfully dense texture of interacting and off-beat accenting patterns. Compared to "Camina a trabajá, Aragón," therefore, the texture in "Mi chinita me botó" is much more polyrhythmic.

Nevertheless, the bass patterns in both of these examples were unprecedented for their rhythmic and especially melodic qualities. As Raúl noted, Arsenio's insistence that his

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.2. *Continued*

(e) "No toque el guao" (22 June 1948): montuno

"No toque el guao." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1947 by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

bass players make the instrument "sing" was initially met with skepticism by other bassists. Based on the recorded repertory, these bass patterns were not used in other performances, although variations of the pattern in "Mi chinita me botó" was favored by Lázaro Prieto, who replaced Nilo in 1946 and stayed with the conjunto until 1952 (see Example 4.1.b). Although the variations involve less off-beat accentuation, they nevertheless accent the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.2. *Continued*

(f) "Qué cosas tendrán las mujeres" (28 Jan. 1949): montuno

melodic content of the sung refrain patterns (see Examples 4.2.c, e, f), many of which are also in contratiempo. Other significant qualities of the bass in Arsenio's music, which I will discuss in the following two sections, include its percussive attacks (which interact with the call-and-response figures played by the bongó and tumbadora) and its accentuation of the basic *son* footwork.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As I noted above, the piano and tres parts tend to accent fragments of the melodic content of the refrain (or chorus) and bass parts. This is a very distinctive aspect of Arsenio's son montuno style compared to what many writers have defined as the "standard" piano *montuno* (pattern) as used in Cuban popular dance music and its derivatives such as salsa.[36] Whereas the piano patterns in Arsenio's music and the "standard" piano montuno accent off-beats, the relationship of the former to the melodic line of the sung parts outweighs its harmonic function, while the "standard" piano montuno functions primarily as harmonic and rhythmic support. For example, in "No toque el guao" ("Don't Touch the Guao"[37]) the piano part clearly follows the top line of the sung chorus, which itself consists of mostly off-beat accents. In "Qué cosas tendrán las mujeres" ("What Things Women Might Have") the tres part accents the sung refrain while the piano adds overlapping fragments, which outline the two chords of the harmonic pattern.

Two types of refrain and coro figurations predominate in Arsenio's son montunos. The first is based on the cinquillo pattern, which can constitute the entire refrain with the addition of an anacrusis or one of a two- or four-bar pattern. For example, in "Soy el terror" the first bar of the refrain, which is based on the cinquillo pattern (without the tie from the "and-of-two" to the third beat), is preceded by an anacrusis and followed by two bars of additional material (see Example 4.2.d). The second type of refrain and coro

---

[36] For examples of "standard" piano montunos see Gerard and Sheller 1989: 36-41; Mauleón 1993: 117-120; and Manuel 1998: 134.

[37] Guao is a poisonous tree common in Cuba; it is also used as a warning to someone threatening to do one harm (Sánchez-Boudy 1999: 337).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.3. Off-beat accented refrain patterns

(a) "Cangrejo fué a estudiar" (21 June 1946)

"Cangrejo fue a estudiar." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1975 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

(b) "Me boté de guaño" (2 August 1949)

"Me bote de guano." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1975 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

(c) "Me dijo que si y le dije que no" (13 February 1951)

"Me dijo que si y le dije que no." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

figuration, like the "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration, consists of many off-beat attacks (see Examples 4.2.c, e, f). Many of these refrains result in a similar two-bar pattern, which consists of accents on beats 1 and 2 of bar one, followed by accents on most of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

remaining off-beats of bars one and two. This pattern is often repeated for four-bar refrains (see Example 4.3). As I will discuss in the final section, this particular pattern, by the late 1940s, became the predominant marker of both the final section of the danzón, as played by charangas, and the so-called "mambo" section of the "mambo," as played by big bands in Havana and New York City.

Through the 1940s, many conjuntos including La Sonora Matancera continued to favor the standard "bolero" bass pattern, while others such as Conjunto Casino adopted the "anticipated bass" pattern.[38] In contrast, as the examples here demonstrate, off-beat accentuation or contratiempo predominated in the bass, refrain, tres, and piano patterns of Arsenio's son montuno style.

Call-and-response

Above, I outlined the arrangement schemes of Arsenio's son montunos, including the use of call-and-response between sung refrains and choruses, trumpet solos, and the trumpet section. In addition to this, the procedure of call-and-response was utilized by Arsenio's percussionists and bass players to coordinate their patterns of notes and percussive attacks. Raúl explained why the coordination of the tumbadora and bongó patterns in particular were important to Arsenio's style:

> It's one thing to play [the tumbadora in a] *rumba*, *comparsa*, or *conga*. [It's] very different playing it in an orchestra. Arsenio had to make that

[38] See Manuel (1985) for an analysis on the possible sources (i.e., habanero, tresillo, and cinquillo) of the "bolero" and "anticipated bass" patterns.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> modification in order to be able to put the tumbadora *inside* [the rhythmic texture] so that it wouldn't clash with the bongó riffs.[39]

A major part of this modification involved the bongó player. For instance, bongó players in the early sones of the 1920s alternated between playing the basic pattern known as *martillo*, the purpose of which was to maintain an eighth-note pulse, and playing auxiliary attacks in freer passages. Because earlier son groups did not include a second drummer (i.e., tumbadora player), bongó players did not have to take into consideration the relationship between their auxiliary attacks and the patterns of another drummer. Some son groups, such as Septeto Habanero, were known for employing a freer, more improvisational style of bongó playing than others, such as Septeto Nacional.[40] Nevertheless, in general, bongó players regularly alternated between freer passages and the standard martillo pattern.

In Arsenio's conjunto, the standard martillo pattern (described below) continued to be used. The freer passages, however, were dramatically curtailed. Auxiliary attacks, namely slaps, by the bongó player had to be carefully placed in relationship to the tumbadora's open-toned attacks such that interrelated weaves of accents or sequences of call-and-response figures would predominate over conspicuous individual playing. In fact, such call-and-response figures often involved certain accented attacks in the bass and tres parts. Arsenio's son montuno style, therefore, required much discipline and listening, and,

---

[39] [Es] una cosa tocar [la tumbadora en una] rumba, o tocar en una comparsa, o una conga. [Es] muy distincta a tocar en orquesta. Esa modificación Arsenio tuvo que hacer para poder poner tumbadora *adentro* de eso para no chocar con los golpes del bongó (Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998).
[40] Santos, 14 February 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as it turned out, his most stable musicians were the core members of his conjunto's rhythm section.

From 1940 to 1952 Antolín "Papa Kila" Suárez Ferro was Arsenio's only bongó player. Originally from Los Palacios, Pinar del Río, Papa Kila moved to the barrio of El Cerro, in Havana, shortly after 1933. He played the bongó with various septetos, including the official septeto of the military quarters in Columbia, Marianao, before joining Arsenio's newly formed conjunto in 1940.[41] Arsenio had only two tumbadora players in Cuba. His original tumbadora player, brother Kike, played with the conjunto from its formation until 1945. Félix "Chocolate" Alfonso replaced Kike, and remained with the group until 1950, when Kike rejoined the conjunto. The conjunto's regular bassists were Nilo Alfonso (1940 to 1946) and Lázaro Prieto (1946 to 1952).

As mentioned above, the basic pattern played by the bongó player is called the martillo. It is a one bar repeating pattern which consists of a sequence of palm and fingertip strikes (notated with slashes) on the macho or smaller drum (upper ledger line in the musical examples) and one strike on beat four on the hembra or larger drum (lower ledger line). The tumbadora also plays a repeating one-bar pattern which consists of a sequence of palm and fingertip strikes (slashes) as well as a slap on beat two (notated with "x") and an opened-tone attack on beat four (notated with note-head). In playing these patterns, however, Arsenio's drummers regularly supplied auxiliary slaps and opened-tone attacks, which with the addition of certain accented notes in the bass parts created wonderful sequences of accented attacks in call-and-response.

---

[41] Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998 and 7 February 2000; Pedro Ferro, 20 October 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

For example, in "Mi chinita me botó" such a sequence of accented attacks (in brackets; see Example 4.2.b) occurs, beginning with the sixth and seventh notes of the bass pattern, the latter of which is played staccato, followed by two slaps on the bongó's hembra (larger drum) and an opened-tone attack on the tumbadora. Although simultaneous attacks occasionally occur, similar sequences of accented attacks in call-and-response between the bass, bongó, and tumbadora predominated in Arsenio's son montuno style (see brackets in Examples 4.1.e and f). As I will discuss in the next section, many of these accented attacks, particularly those in the bass and tumbadora patterns, also accented steps in the *son's* basic footwork.

Corresponding sound with movement

Because of the predominance of contratiempo, Bebo Valdés states that dancers had to "feel" Arsenio's son montuno style in a new way:

> [Arsenio's] bass is syncopated. For the one that doesn't understand music or wasn't raised with that kind of music [i.e., son montuno] doesn't feel "the beat from below." You have to *feel* "the beat from below" with your body. And you dance [to Arsenio's music] in *contratiempo*. . . . Listen, one-two-three-four, one-two *un dun tun-tun, un tun-tun* [sings the bass pattern transcribed in Example 4.2.e]. There's no "beat from below" for the dancer. It's never there. . . . You have to know how to dance it well. You dance it, better yet, with the body and with the feet too.[42]

---

[42] [E]l bajo [de Arsenio] es sincopado. El que no sepa música, no se creado en eso, no se siente "el tiempo de abajo." "El tiempo de abajo" lo tiene que llevar tú en tu cuerpo. Y se baila contratiempo. . . . Mira, un-dos-tres-cuatro, un-dos [see transcription]. No hay "tiempo de abajo" para el bailador. No va, nunca. . . . Hay que saberlo bailar bien. Se baila más bien con el cuerpo y con los pies tambien" (Bebo Valdés, 20-21 September 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As Valdés suggests, dancers no longer could rely on the bass to mark the downbeat of each bar for their footwork. Evidently, *son* dancers had depended on the tresillo bass pattern, in addition to the clave, to accent the downbeats (see Example 4.1.a). But, because Arsenio's bass patterns elided the downbeat and accented off-beats, dancers had to substitute the bass with the conjunto's collective accentuation of steps in the *son's* footwork (transcribed on the bottom staff of each example). In this way, the dancer moved from feeling the music primarily with the feet to involving the entire body.

In addition, the slower tempos of Arsenio's new style, although not an "innovative" aspect, was a welcomed change on the part of dancers. As Raúl noted:

> Well, first of all, the climate in Cuba is very hot. So, when people would go dancing, after five minutes, they would look like they had been working on the docks; sweating a lot because they were dancing quickly. They would leave the dances all wet and . . . many of them would say, "You can't dance to La Sonora [de Piñón and Matancera]. Not a chance!" . . . [Then], Arsenio came along with that new style, slower and fuller.[43]

Fast tempos characterized the style of the popular septetos of the late 1930s and early 1940s, including Septeto La Sonora de Piñón, who were one of the earliest two-trumpet "septetos," Septeto El Bolero del '35, Septeto La Sonora Matancera, Septeto Habanero, and Septeto Nacional.[44] Their tempos contrasted sharply with the tempos of the first commercially recorded *sones*. For example, Habanero and Nacional's *sones* recorded in

---

[43] Bueno, primeramente, Cuba es un clima caliente. Pues, cuando la gente se iban a bailar, en cinco minutos, parecían que estaban trabajando en los muelles. Sudando mucho porque bailando rapido. Salían de los bailes todos mojados y . . . mucha gente decían, "¡No se puede bailar con La Sonora! ¡Qué va!" . . . Arsenio vino con ese [nuevo estilo], más despacio y más lleno. (Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999).

[44] Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the late 1920s range around the 130s (beats per minute), while those they made in the early 1940s range from the 150s up to and over 200.[45] Arsenio's conjunto, however, retained the slower tempos of the earlier *son* style. The six recordings Arsenio made in 1940 and 1941, which include one *pregón*, one *afrocubano*, two *boleros*, one *guaracha*, and one *conga*, are performed in markedly fast tempos.[46] Beginning with "Como traigo la yuka" (18 June 1942), however, his tempos slowed considerably to around the 120s and 130s, which again were the average tempos of the *sones* of the 1920s.

The first two steps of the *son's* basic footwork coincide with the two attacks of the clave on beats 2 and 3 (i.e., the "2-side"), followed by the third step taken on the "and-of-four" of the same bar (see Examples 4.2.a-f).[47] In the second bar of the clave pattern the fourth step is taken on the "and-of-two," coinciding with the clave's fourth attack, followed by the fifth and sixth steps on beats 3 and 4. With the tresillo bass pattern, the downbeats of both bars are accented, thus further orienting the dancer to the strong beats. Arsenio's son montuno style, however, transformed the feel, look, and experience of dancing *son* music in two ways.

First, dancers were challenged with rhythmically dense textures consisting of off-

---

[45] Compare the recordings in *Sexteto y Septeto Habanero: Grabaciones Completas* Vol. 1, *1925-1927* (TCD-301) and *Sexteto Nacional: "Cubaneo": Primeras Grabaciones, 1927-1928* (TCD-097) with those from 1940-1942 in *Cuban Sextetos & Conjuntos* (HQ CD 64).

[46] "Todos seguimos la conga" (rec. 31 March 1941) is by far the fastest, averaging around 300 beats per minute.

[47] The footwork pattern was transcribed from several demonstrations, including one executed by Arsenio's niece Cheché in Havana which I filmed (see figs. 4.2 and 4.3) and another executed by son dancers in *Ignacio Piñeiro*. n.d. (see the Videography in the Bibliography).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

beat accentuating parts, especially in the bass. When Arsenio began to use bass patterns in contratiempo, according to Bebo Valdés, the dancers' orientation to the "beat from below" changed from relying on the footwork to including more of their body. This was facilitated through the conjunto's collective accentuation of the basic footwork, particularly steps 3 and 4, both of which are syncopated. For example, in "No toque el guao" and "Que cosas tendrán las mujeres" the refrain and accompanying piano and tres patterns accent steps 3 and 4, while the bass consistently marks steps 4, 5, and 6 (see Examples 4.2.e, f). In other examples, the tumbadora regularly accents step 3, in addition to step 6, with an open-tone attack (see Examples 4.2.d, e).

In addition to coinciding attacks with steps, Arsenio's bass and tumbadora players also "accented" steps by interweaving their patterns with the basic footwork. In "Mi chinita me botó" Kike's two-bar pattern includes open-tone attacks consistently placed on the "and-of-three" and "and-of-four" of the first bar and the "and-of-four" of the second bar (see Example 4.2.b). The first bar's open-tone attacks fall in-between steps 5 and 6 while the second bar's open-tone attack coincides with step 3. Evidently, the integrity of this pattern was significant to Arsenio since, at one point, Kike plays an open tone on the "and-of-three," instead of on the "and-of-four" of the second bar. Arsenio promptly shouts out "Kike!" to alert his brother to his error. The relationship between the bass pattern and *son* footwork in "Soy el terror" is particularly noteworthy (see Example 4.2.d). For the first three bars of the four-bar cycle the bass and footwork are strictly interwoven, completely avoiding simultaneous attacks and steps. In the fourth bar of the cycle the bass and footwork finally come together. The bass, with the exception of the first downbeat of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the four-bar cycle, could not be depended on by the dancer for accenting either the downbeats or their basic footwork. Instead, the "beat from below," as Bebo Valdés described above, is facilitated in the refrain and tres pattern, which accent steps 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 in the second and third bars of the four-bar cycle.

Second, Arsenio carefully plotted an arrangement scheme in which the dynamics of musical energy steadily increased to the final cierre (break) before the climactic diablo section (described in the following section). It is in these two sections that dancers experienced heightened tension and eventual elation, expressing these emotions in words as well as through various gestures and movements.

On 8 July 1999, at the home of Arsenio's niece Mercedes Scull "Cheché" in barrio Lawton, Havana, I video-taped a rehearsal by a *son* group called "Conjunto Arsenio Rodríguez." This conjunto specializes in Arsenio's repertory and style. I asked Cheché to demonstrate the son montuno dance style. As the conjunto reached the montuno section of Arsenio's "Dame tu yoyo, Ma' Belén" ("Let Me Have You, Ma' Belén"), Cheché and her partner began to dance, executing the *son's* basic footwork. As the conjunto went through the montuno's sequence of alternations, Cheché and her partner alternated between dancing embraced and apart, all the while maintaining the basic footwork. Following the piano solo, at the climactic finale of the arrangement, Cheché separated from her partner and began to utilize livelier gestures and movements including hand-clapping, smooth arm thrusts outward from her chest, and shoulder movements. Ending this climactic sequence of body movements, she raised both arms as she circled around her partner, who joined in with his arms raised (see figs. 4.2.a and b). The partners embraced

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 4.2.a. Arm-raising at the diablo.

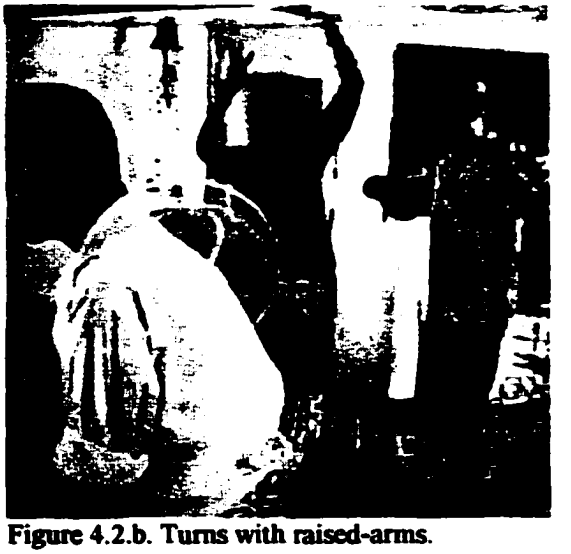


Figure 4.2.b. Turns with raised-arms.

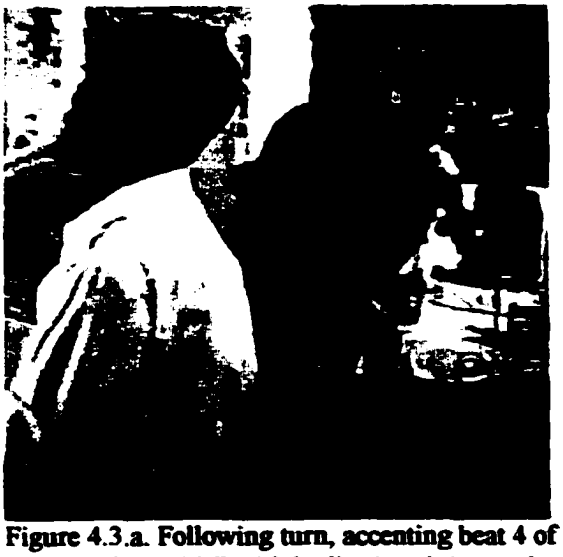


Figure 4.3.a. Following turn, accenting beat 4 of clave's "three-side" with bodies in mini-crouch position.

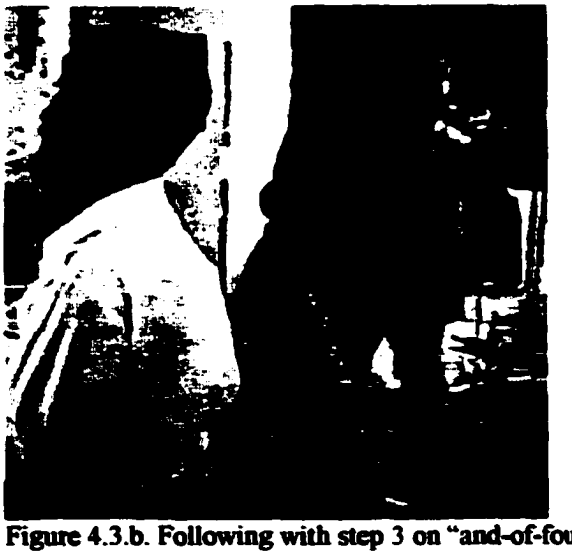


Figure 4.3.b. Following with step 3 on "and-of-four" of clave's "two-side."

once more only to part again as Cheché executed a full turn, at the end of which she was met by her partner in a mini-crouch position on beat 4 of the clave's "three-side" (see fig. 4.3.a). The couple held this position for the next three beats at which point they took step

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

3 on the "and-of-four" of the clave's "two-side," thereby recommencing the *son's* basic footwork (see fig. 4.3.b).

As demonstrated by dancers in the video *Ignacio Piñeiro*, the older *son* dance style of the 1920s was somewhat more stately, stressing the footwork more, while upper-body movements and gestures were less conspicuous or absent altogether.[48] As Cuban music historian Radamás Giro opined, the son montuno dance style, as engendered by Arsenio's conjunto, differed from the classic *son* dance style made popular by Cuban septetos of the 1920s.[49]

Since his music was fundamentally dance music, approval from dancers determined much of what Arsenio and his musicians could and could not do. Rubén González, Arsenio's pianist from about 1945 to 1946, emphasized two things that Arsenio did to insure the approval of his dancing audience. First, he insisted that his musicians keep the fundamental son montuno groove. Second, he focused on developing those aspects that the dancers favorably reacted to.

> Practically all of Arsenio's fans were very good dancers; that's why, although he did not object to his musicians playing something different, he always insisted that they maintain the structure [i.e., collective groove] already established in the conjunto. . . . He knew what people liked. He was sensitive to the public's opinion. He couldn't see, but he did listen to their comments: "Did you hear what Arsenio did? That was a great number." The same thing would happen when he would play something to his own liking, and in the middle of the dance the people would shout, "Arsenio!!!" That's how he knew the people liked his ideas. . . . Because

---

[48] For examples of the early *son* dance style see *Ignacio Piñeiro*. n.d.
[49] Radamés Giro, 30 June 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of this, he knew what to focus his music on . . .[50]

From this synergy developed the fundamental characteristics of the son montuno music and dance style and arrangement scheme. In Chapter 5 I will describe in greater detail the dynamics between dancers and musicians as these defined the context of black working-class dance music performance and ritual in Havana during the 1940s.

Arsenio's *Diablo* and the "Mambo"

By 1952, the international "mambo craze" was in full swing, but most of these "mambos" sounded different from Arsenio's diablos or the "mambo" as popularized by Cuban charangas in the 1940s.[51] Nevertheless, what these styles shared was the use of off-beat accented patterns particularly in the section of the arrangements which came also to be known as the "mambo." In Chapter 6 I will compare the stylistic differences between Arsenio's diablo and the "mambo" as played by New York big bands. This section analyzes the defining structural and stylistic aspects of Arsenio's diablo as performed in the 1940s. First, however, I will discuss the word "mambo," its genesis in the context of

---

[50] Prácticamente todos los fanáticos de Arsenio eran muy buenos bailadores; por eso, aunque él no se oponía a que hiciera cosas diferentes, exigía que siempre se terminara dentro de lo que estaba establecido en el conjunto. . . . Sabía lo que le gustaba a la gente, era un individuo sensible a la opinión público. Él no veía pero escuchaba los comentarios: "¿Viste como está Arsenio, qué bueno ese número?"; lo mismo cuando hacía algo que para su gusto estaba muy sabroso y en el medio del baile la gente gritaba, "¡¡¡Arsenio!!!," así se daba cuento de que sus ideas gustaban. . . . Gracias a eso, supo hacía donde enfocar su trabajo . . . (Rubén González, quoted in Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 16-17).

[51] The charanga ensemble consists generally of two violins, flute, piano, bass, güiro, timbal, and tumbadora.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

popular music in Havana, and what it came to refer to musically by 1948.

"Mambo" is a *congo* word which means "song." Sacred mambos, which are more commonly known as *cantos de fundamento* or *cantos de palo*, are chanted by priests of the *palo* religion to begin a ceremony and to persuade a spirit or spirits to participate. These songs consist of short phrases that are sung by the priest (*gallo* or *insunsu*) and the participants (*vasallo* or *muana*) in call-and-response form.[52] The word "mambo" is also used in secular contexts, in which it commonly appears in the phrase, *abre kuto güiri mambo* or "open your ears and listen to what I'm going to tell you." In two interviews, Arsenio explained the context in which this phrase was commonly used:

> In the Province of Oriente, the descendants of *congos* play a type of music that is called *tambor de yuka*, and in the *controversia* [challenge] that is formed between two singers, the one that is to sing [first] will say to the other: *abre kutu güiri mambo*, or 'open your ears and listen to what I'm going to tell you.'[53]

> It's a challenge that is made between two *congos*, similar to the *controversias* performed by *décima* singers. One *congo* thinks of a riddle to ask another: "Since you're a chauffeur and you speed on the roads, I want you to tell me 'what kind of turn a wheel makes'." . . . The other one tells him, "*Gallero* [singer], *abre kutu güiri mambo*.'[54]

By 1948, the word "mambo" had gained currency in the popular music contexts in

---

[52] See León (1984: 67, 78-81), Thompson (1984: 110-111), and Cabrera (1992: 127-129) for transcriptions of sacred mambos.

[53] In Cubillas 1952: 24 (my translation).

[54] Eso es una controversia que los *congos* forma, como decir los cantadores de décima. [El] congo piensa hacer pregunta al otro: "Ya que tú eres chófer y 'corrites' [?] carreteras, yo quiero que tú me digas la vuelta que da una rueda." . . . [E]l otro le habla y dice, "Gallero, ¿qué? *abre kutu güiri mambo*" (Arsenio Rodríguez, 1964).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Havana and New York. In Havana it became the name for the rhythmic pattern that defined the sections, also named "mambo," of the danzón as well as the guaracha as played by the charanga ensemble and big band, respectively.[55] Similarly, in New York "mambo" referred to a section of the arrangement and the overall style as played by big bands. Some argued that the structural basis and contents of this "new" section had been used in other forms of music. For example, in 1948, Cuban musicologist Odilio Urfé wrote that the "popular musical phenomenon" that has come to be known as "mambo" had already existed under the names "guajeo," "montuno," and "estribillo."[56] In 1952, Arsenio was quoted as saying that the "mambo" had four antecedent names: "chivo," "capetillo," "son montuno," and "diablo."[57]

In actuality, these names refer to distinct styles of music found in various parts of Cuba. What these styles, in addition to *congo* forms of music, in general, have in common is their basic structure, which consists of brief, alternating parts between two soloists, or a soloist and a chorus. For example, most styles of *tambor de yuka* are based on six- or twelve-beat time cycles. One alternation between the soloist (or *gallo*) and chorus can occur within one, two, and, sometimes, four cycles.[58] Many rural styles of *son* music are

---

[55] Cuéllar Vizcaíno 1993; Urfé 1993. "Danzón" is a Cuban music genre for ballroom dance that originated in the late nineteenth century. It is typically played by the charanga ensemble.

[56] Urfé 1993: 31.

[57] In Cubillas 1952: 24.

[58] For examples of *yuka* listen to "Gavilán pollero" and "Ma Lutgarda" in *Antología de la música afrocubana: Tambor yuka*, vol. 5 (EGREM LD-3994); "Tambor yuka" in *Cuba: Les danses des dieux* (Harmonia Mundi HM 83); and "Baile de yuka" in *Early Afro-Cuban Song* (Albatros VPA 8445). While all these examples are clearly in a 12/8 meter, Ortiz (1993: 323-324) transcribes an example of *yuka* in 2/4.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

based on two-bar cycles (in duple meter), and consist of the alternation between a short estribillo and verse such as a copla, which are sung by a chorus and soloist, respectively. Examples include *regina*, which is also known, generally, as "son oriental" or "son montuno," *nengón*, *kiribá*, and *changüí*.[59] In addition, "guajeos" refer to the picking patterns that tres players use, some of which are based on the principle of on-beat and off-beat accentuation and are, thus, not unlike the rhythm pattern that became particularly associated with the "mambo" as performed by New York mambo big bands as well as Cuban charangas (see Example 4.4).

The word "chivo" (young goat) was the name given to an early style of *son* music in Cárdenas, in the province of Matanzas, at the turn-of-the-century. These "chivos" also consisted of short, cyclic alternations between a soloist and chorus in call-and-response.[60] And, the word "capetillo" was the name given to the second part of older styles of *rumba*, in which the alternation between a soloist and chorus in call-and-response form took place.[61] Accordingly, Arsenio identified the "diablo" or the final section of his arrangements as an antecedent of the "mambo" because it too is based on a two-bar time cycle and characterized by short alternations between the *coro* and trumpet section.

Likewise, the new final section of the danzón was based on a two-bar time cycle, during which the flute player improvised short phrases in a dialogue with the off-beat accenting patterns that the strings and rhythm section played. In 1948, Manuel Cuéllar

---

[59] Benjamin Lapidus (personal communication). See also Orozco González n.d.; Gómez Cairo 1995: 129.
[60] Giro 1995b: 222.
[61] León 1984: 156.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Vizcaíno and Odilio Urfé published, to my knowledge, the first two articles on this "new style" of danzón music which was called "mambo."[62] Cuéllar Vizcaíno characterized its performance as a "conversation" that takes place between the piano, flute, violin, güiro, timbal, and cowbell, while the bass and tumbadora "quarrel" over establishing order in the music.[63] Urfé described the "mambo" as "anarquía dentro de un tempo" or "structured anarchy." He added that flautist and director Antonio Arcaño, among other charanga musicians, standardized the practice of "mamboing," or establishing a dialogue between his improvisations and the syncopated tumbao, during the final section of the new three-part danzón.[64] He also claimed that charanga musicians were the "first" to use the word "mambo" to "order," "make," and refer specifically to their syncopated tumbaos. Cuéllar Vizcaíno added that once charanga musicians standardized the third or "mambo" section they incorporated the tumbadora to give the music a solid rhythmic base.[65]

Out of this naming and standardization process, variations of one particular syncopated tumbao became identified by some as the "mambo rhythm." According to Arcaño's bassist Israel "Cachao" López, for example, the process of standardizing the "mambo rhythm" began as early as 1937:

> In 1937 . . . what we did was modernize [the danzón], and in doing so we began to use the ***mambo rhythm***, which was the tumbao [pattern] over which solos were taken in the final section. It could last as long as you wanted, as long as the people continued dancing. . . . That first "mambo"

---

[62] These two articles are reprinted in Giro 1993.
[63] Cuéllar Vizcaíno 1993: 23.
[64] Urfé 1993: 31-33.
[65] Cuéllar Vizcaíno 1993: 29-30.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was too fast and the following ones ought to have been slower.[66]

But in 1944 and 1945 the rhythm that would become associated with the "mambo" in a few years was still "nameless" among some big band and *son* musicians. For example, pianist and big band director René Touzet, who left Havana in 1944 for New York City, stated, "[We were playing] Cuban music exclusively: boleros, guarachas, and mambos were starting. It was with a mambo *flavor* but we didn't call it 'mambo'."[67] Before leaving Havana for Mexico City in 1945, Humberto Cané, La Sonora Matancera's *tresero*, remembers, "I would hear that *riff* being played by Arcaño's orchestra [sings riff (see Example 4.4.a)], but it wasn't being called 'mambo.' It wasn't being called 'mambo' at all."[68]

Cuban musicians had, indeed, been playing off-beat accenting patterns not only in rural styles of *son* music, as is the case in some tres *guajeos* (see Example 4.4.b), but also in urban styles since at least the late 1920s. For example, trumpet player Félix Chappottín, a member of Arsenio's conjunto from 1949 to 1952, plays a similarly off-beat accenting pattern on the trumpet during the fifth and sixth refrain of "Tribilín cantoré," recorded by Septeto Habanero (see Example 4.4.c).[69] There are also instances in which the "mambo rhythm" appears in Arsenio's early recorded repertory. For example, Benetín Bustillo, Arsenio's trumpet player from 1943 to 1946, includes the pattern in at least two of his

---

[66] Cachao in Padura Fuentes 1997: 130-131 (emphasis added).
[67] René Touzet, 6 March 2000.
[68] Yo oía tocar ese *riff* con la orquesta de Arcaño [sings riff], pero no se llamaba "mambo." No se llamaba nada de "mambo." (Humberto Cané, 28 August 1996).
[69] *Sexteto y Septeto Habanero*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-303.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.4. Off-beat accented patterns

(a) The "mambo rhythm" as sung by Humberto Cané

(b) "Que lindo Bayamó"[70]: traditional *son* with syncopated tres guajeo

(c) "Tribilín cantore" (29 April 1928), Septeto Habanero

"Tribilin cantore." Words and Music by Carlos Godinez. Copyright (c) 1978 by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

(d) "Yo no como corazón de chivo" (6 July 1944), Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto

"Yo no como corazon de chivo." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1947 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

---

[70] *Antología integral del son*. EGREM LD-286 and LD-287.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.4. *Continued*

(e) "Yeye" (5 July 1945), Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto

solos (see Examples 4.4.d and e). According to several sources, including Arcaño, Benetín would transcribe the *floreos* (improvised phrases) that Arcaño would play on the flute during the "mambo" section.[71] This may explain these particular solo passages, but as René Touzet stressed, Cuban musicians, in general, were playing with a "mambo flavor" during the early 1940s. Unlike the "mambo" as played by Cuban charangas and big bands, however, Arsenio's diablos were not based on the "mambo rhythm" alone but rather on a combination of off-beat accented patterns.

By 1948, the "mambo rhythm" had become so ubiquitous that Urfé criticized contemporary danzón musicians for lacking variety in the rhythm patterns they played in the final section.[72] Evidently, dating back to at least 1944, arrangers for charangas as well as big bands favored what came to be known as the "mambo rhythm" as the basis for the section known by the same name. In "Arcaño y su Nuevo Ritmo" ("Arcaño and His New Rhythm"), recorded by Arcaño y Sus Maravillas, the string section plays a typical example of this two-bar pattern, which consists of one or two attacks on the first two strong beats, followed by consecutive attacks on almost every off-beat until the end of the second bar,

---

[71] In Boudet 1974: 33; see also Salazar 1994: 17.
[72] Urfé 1993: 33-34.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.5. The mambo section and rhythm of the same name

(a) "Arcaño y Su Nuevo Ritmo" (1944), Arcaño y Sus Maravillas: mambo section

(b) "La última noche" (ca. 1945), Orquesta Casino de la Playa: mambo section

while Arcaño improvises on the flute (see Example 4.5.a).[73] The same pattern is performed by the sax section in Casino de la Playa's "La última noche" ("The Last

[73] *Antonio Arcaño y sus Maravillas*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-029.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.5. *Continued*

(c) "La rareza del siglo" (ca. 1944), Julio Cueva y Su Orquesta: mambo section

"La rareza del siglo." Words and Music by Bebo Valdes. Copyright by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

Night"), arranged by Dámaso Pérez Prado (see Example 4.5.b), and the trumpet section in Bebo Valdés's "La rareza del siglo" ("The Rarity of the Century"), recorded by Julio Cueva y Su Orquesta (see Example 4.5.c).[74] According to Humberto Cané, "The first mambo with the name 'mambo' that I ever heard I was already living in Mexico. . . . It was called "La rareza del siglo" by Bebo Valdés."[75]

In the conclusion of his article, Urfé emphatically differentiates between a "written mambo" and a "genuine mambo." Only those, he says, who arrange for "jazz bands" and

---

[74] *Orlando Guerra "Cascarita" con la Orquesta Casino de la Playa, 1944-1946.* Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-033. *Julio Cueva y su Orquesta: La butuba cubana.* Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-032.

[75] El primer mambo con el nombre de "mambo" que yo oí en mi vida ya yo vivía en México. . . Se llamaba "La rareza del siglo" de Bebo Valdés" (Cané, 28 August 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

conjuntos write "mambos," and in the case of the latter, the arrangements are called "diablos," not "mambos." He asserts that he has never heard a danzón in which a "mambo" was written, and that the only standard that charanga musicians have perpetuated is creating the "mambo atmosphere," and not the "mambo" as something written. The following is his interpretation of what an "authentic mambo" is, and how it is produced:

> In order to produce a mambo it is required, fundamentally, that everyone who participates in its formation play in a way that has nothing to do with what is written. In other words, everyone should play "what is not written within what is written." What is more, in order to produce a genuine mambo the instrumentalists should employ, only in the "climax" or "crux," rhythmic effects: rhythm against rhythm; no tunes or distinct melodies. No instrumentalist should play a fixed rhythm. Anarchy should rule. A syncopated *guajeo* [i.e., the "mambo rhythm"] is one thing, which is what the majority of orchestras [i.e., charangas and big bands] do, such as Arcaño's. The *diablo* is another thing. And, the *mambo* is yet another thing. The culmination of the true mambo is "Manzanillo," which is played by Joseíto Valdés with his charanga Orquesta Ideal. It is here that with most frequency a true mambo is achieved. Valdés has created a style of playing the mambo on the flute, by means of [placing] notes against notes, many times, just one note in one bar. And, he guides his musicians in doing the same on their instruments until that "rhythmic anarchy" is produced.[76]

Clearly, Urfé was objecting to those danzones whose final part was based on the "mambo rhythm." In 1951, in response to Urfé's interpretation, Cuban folklorist and anthropologist Fernando Ortiz gave his own interpretation of the mambo, in which he underscored the actual rhythmic scheme, in the form of parts that interweave and are in

---

[76] Urfé 1993: 34.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

counterpoint, which he believed was the actual essence of the mambo.[77]

> In reality, and this is the marvelous thing, there is no so-called "anarchy." It is all nothing more than a *link* of lines coordinated in a *weave* that is composed of the spontaneity of each rhythm, individually played to each musician's whim, but whose *threads* are *crossed* and *interlaced* into one *warp*. . . . [A]though arbitrary and capricious, there is no "anarchy" or "lack of order," but rather a wonderful concert of individual freedoms taken to the maximum within a minimal but unshakable structural arrangement. . . . Also, this occurs only in the "crux" or "climax," as Urfé says, or, in other words, in that precise paroxysmal moment characteristic of *música afrocubana* . . .[78]

As the following analysis will show, Arsenio's version of the mambo was not based on the "mambo rhythm" that had become so trite to some Cuban critics by 1948 and that would be the predominant signifier of the "mambo" of the 1950s. In fact, the diablo consisted of an exciting composite of interweaving parts. The trumpets, in particular, avoided distinct tunes, employing instead rhythmic effects of which Urfé defined as crucial to producing a "genuine mambo." In short, the diablo produced the kind of interaction and excitement that Ortiz identified as fundamentally characteristic of the Cuban mambo and, in general, *música afrocubana*.

¡Diablo!: Arsenio's version of the mambo

In 1952, after he had left Havana to live and work in New York City, Arsenio was interviewed by San Juan's daily newspaper *El Imparcial* and Cuba's entertainment

---

[77] The first edition of *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba* was published in 1951. I am quoting from the third edition published in 1993.
[78] Ortiz 1993: 100 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

magazine *Bohemia*. In both, he explained what the "mambo" was, its origins, and why he "created" it:

> The mambo is composed of the tambor de yuka, which the Congo play and [which] is the basis of the rhythm [off-beat accents?] and the part that the trumpets play [in the diablo]. Something similar to this rhythm was played by the *orientales* [people from the eastern part of Cuba] on the tres [e.g., Example 4.4.a].[79]

> The tambor de yuka is played with three drums, measuring about five feet. The drummers stand astride the drums, and, with a piece of rope, they tie them to their waist. . . . On the back of each drum are three men with two pieces of wood, and they play on the available space. The rhythm they play produces a tapping noise or "controversy" [cross-rhythm?]. The singers ask each other questions, following the rhythm [time cycle?], and he who can't answer the questions is defeated. That's the true origin of the "mambo."[80]

> I got the idea [for the diablo] because since something unusual had to be done to bring about *el cocimiento* [a kick in the ass[81]]. I thought that by joining the [procedures of performing?] tambor de yuka with [those of?] the chivo [early style of *son* music in Cárdenas, Matanzas] something new for dancing would result.[82]

---

[79] El "mambo" esta compuesta del "tambor de yuka" que tocan los congos y es la base del ritmo y la parte que tocan los trompetas. Algo de este ritmo lo tocaban los orientales en el tres (in Cubillas 1952: 24).

[80] El "tambor de yuka" se toca con tres tambores de cinco pies y poco. Los que lo tocan se montan sobre ellos como a horcajadas y se lo amarran con un pedazo de soga a la cintura. . . . En la parte trasera de cada tambor se ponen tres hombres con dos pedazos de madera y tocan en el sobrante del instrumento. El ritmo que llevan viene a ser un sonsonete o controversia. Los cantantes se hacen preguntas siguiendo el ritmo y aquél que no puede contestar las, queda derrotado. Esa es la base verdadera del "mambo" (in Cubillas 1952: 24).

[81] According to Sánchez-Boudy (1999: 195), the word "cocimiento" is a Cubanism, from the rural parts of the island, which means "a kick in the ass," such as in the phrase, *Dale cocimiento de zapatón* (Give him a kick in the ass).

[82] La idea vino porque, como había que hacer algo raro para buscarse el "cocimiento," pensé que, uniendo el "tambor de yuka" con el "chivo," podría resultar una cosa extraña

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

What is especially significant about his statements is the procedures of producing polyrhythm and the strict periodicity, which I believe he was alluding to, that underlie the performance of yuka and which are common to many Central African musical traditions.[83] Simha Arom's analysis of the technique of strict and partial interweaving of rhythm patterns in various Central African dance traditions is particularly insightful in understanding the fundamental procedures involved in the performance of yuka and the diablo.[84]

As Arom notes, the interweaving of parts in Central African polyrhythmic music takes on one of two forms: strict interweaving and partial interweaving. The former technique involves the superposition of two or more parts whose attacks do not coincide. A more common technique, partial interweaving involves the superposition of different rhythm patterns in which the accents of some of the parts do not coincide while others do. Specifically, this means that two parts may create strict interweaving while simultaneously accents of one or both of these may coincide with accents of a third part. In addition, all of these parts share a common temporal reference unit, while their periods may be of different lengths, thus creating cross-rhythms of simple ratios such as 3:2. Similarly, in

---

para bailar (in Cubillas Jr. 1952: 24).

[83] Example 4.6 is my transcription of "Tambor yuka" from *Cuba: Les danses des dieux* (Ocora C 559051). Because of the variation of styles of yuka (not to mention its relative obscurity), it is difficult to determine the one that Arsenio had in mind. For example, in *Antología de la música afrocubana: Tambor yuka*, vol. 5 (LD-3994), there are at least two distinct rhythmic schemes employed (cf. "Gavilán pollero" and "Ma Lutgarda" with "Llora, llora Magdalena" and "Se formó un dilema," which employ the clave pattern).

[84] See Arom 1991: 215-217, 278-306.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.6. Interweaving parts and cross-rhythms in yuka

yuka strict interwoven patterns are created between the sticks and between the cachimbo and mula drum parts, while partial interwoven patterns are created between the second stick and mula parts (see Example 4.6). Also, 3:2 cross-rhythms are created between the second stick part, the chorus, and the lead voice's anacrusis, which are in duple, and the other parts of the ensemble, which are in triple.

As discussed above, Arsenio's bassists and tumbadora players used the same technique of interweaving their parts with the *son's* basic footwork (see Examples 4.2.b, d). But the ultimate effect of this procedure occurs in the diablo when all the parts of the conjunto are interwoven to create complex textures. Before looking at some examples, let

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

us discuss the diablo's structure and the events that lead up to it.

Like the Central African traditions that Arom analyzes as well as yuka drumming, the parts of the diablo are set in a strict periodicity that yields short cycles of four and, most frequently, two bars. The effect of the short, successive alternations within this cycle was enhanced by truncating the refrain or coro to half its length from the montuno section. As Raúl explains, *this* was the fundamental structural aspect of Arsenio's version of the mambo:

> RT: The entire phrase is sung in the montuno [section]. After, [in the diablo], the coro sings half of the phrase and the trumpets play the other half. That's mambo.
>
> DG: So, mambo [in the context of the diablo] wasn't a rhythm?
>
> RT: No, no, no. It's the second part [i.e., the alternation]. . . . Arsenio used to yell, "¡Diablo!"[85]

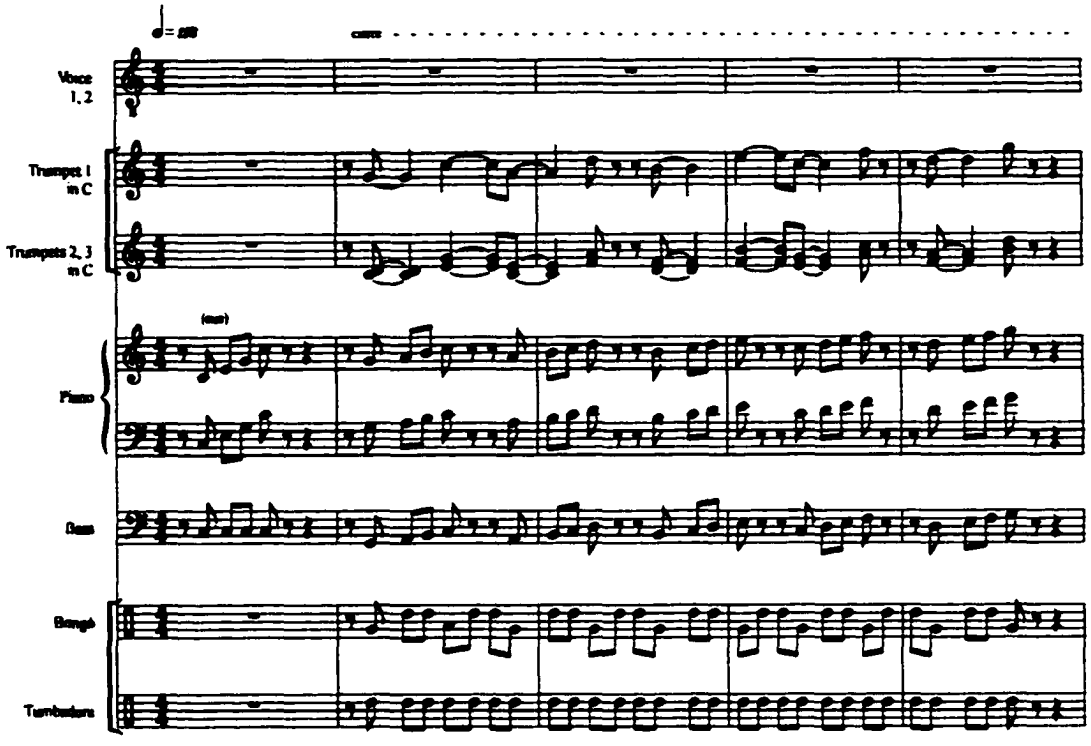
Before Arsenio would yell out "¡Diablo!," which he did only in live performances and not in the recordings, the conjunto would play a pre-composed syncopated cierre (break), which the pianist often cued by playing the four notes of the tonic or dominant triad in ascending motion (see bar 2 of Example 4.8.c). The cierre propelled the music and dancers into the diablo section by way of temporal, metric and rhythmic ambiguity. First, while the tempo gradually accelerates through the introduction, canto, montuno, and solo sections (an increase averaging about 2 to 10 beats per minute), the cierre decelerates the

---

[85] [C]uando estan cantando [en el] montuno contesta la frase completa. Despues, [en el diablo] dice la mitad la frase y la otra la completa las trompetas. Eso es mambo. DG: ¿Entonces, mambo no era ritmo? RT: No, no, no. Eso es la segunda parte. . . . Arsenio gritaba, "¡Diablo!" (Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.7. Ternary-phrased cierre: "Yo no engaño a las nenas" (March 1948)



Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

tempo (anywhere from about 2 to 6 bpm). Thereby, the diablo, initiating at a tempo slower than that which concludes the solo (from 2 to 6 bpm), accelerates back to that tempo or close to it in a relatively shorter amount of time. In terms of meter and rhythm, many cierres occur within one, two, or four bars and maintain the sequence of the established harmonic and metric cycle (see bar 2 in Example 4.8.a), although some of these, while accenting the dancer's basic footwork, can still be rhythmically clever (see bars 3-4 in 4.8.c). Other cierres, however, deviate from the duple meter and, as a result, intensify expectations for the diablo section. The cierre in "Yo no engaño a las nenas" ("I

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.7. *Continued*

Don't Deceive Girls"), for example, consists of a harmonic sequence in which the chords move up a fourth and down a third in ternary units, thereby, "threatening" the dancer's orientation of the duple meter for four bars (see Example 4.7). Even the eighth-note pulse played by Papa Kila on the bongó is phrased in ternary units. The last two bars of the cierre re-establish the duple meter, yet in a very syncopated manner.[86]

After the cierre, the entire conjunto enters at the start of the diablo, commencing the tempo acceleration and re-establishing the harmonic pattern and time cycle from the montuno section. The first and second voices and trumpet section resume their alternating

[86] Other examples with ternary phrased cierres include "No vuelvo a Morón" (8 April 1948), "Lo dicen todas" (27 Feb. 1948), "Llevatelo todo" (19 Feb. 1949), "El rincón caliente" (24 April 1950), and "Te mantengo y no quieres" (9 Nov. 1950).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

scheme, maintaining it for several cycles (Examples 4.8.a). In many diablos, however, after the singers and trumpet players execute one full cycle of the original alternating scheme, they truncate their pattern, so that the singers sing only half of their phrase and leave the other half open for the trumpet section (cf. Examples 4.2.c and 4.8.b). This is what Raúl identified as the quintessential structural aspect of Arsenio's version of the mambo. After several cycles, the trumpet section drops out of the alternation, and is replaced by the lead trumpet player who plays short improvisations during his half of the cycle. The diablo concludes with the restatement of the estribillo in its original form or with the cierre that preceded the diablo.

The "crux" or "climax" of the diablo occurs in the first segment when all the parts of the conjunto superpose and interlace their patterns into one "weave" (see Urfé's and Ortiz's descriptions above). Specifically, the guitar, bell (played by the bongó player), and maraca maintain the eighth-note pulse (bell only transcribed), while the remaining parts produce interwoven patterns and, in some cases, cross-rhythms. In "No hay yaya sin guayacán" ("There's No Yaya Without Guayacán"[87]), the two trumpets create a partially interwoven pattern whose rhythmic effect is reminiscent of the "mambo" rhythm, yet clearly unique and more complex. The interwoven trumpet parts, along with the bass part, also accent, harmonically and melodically, the coro in the first bar and form a response in the second bar (bars 5 through 8, Example 4.8.a). In addition, the phrase figuration that

---

[87] "Yaya" is a type of tree, which in the Palo religion, is considered to be female, and whose branches, bark, leaves, and other parts are considered powerful natural objects. "Guayacán" is another type of tree, which is considered to be male and also very powerful (Cabrera 1992: 439-441, 555-556).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. Arsenio's diablos

(a) "No hay yaya sin guayacán" (27 Nov. 1945): cierre and diablo

"No hay yaya sin guayacan." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1974 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

the coro, trumpet, and bass parts collectively create accentuates the dancer's basic footwork. This two-bar cycle repeats four more times, at which point the lead trumpet player plays short improvisations in alternation with the coro.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. *Continued*

(a) "No hay yaya sin guayacán" (continued)

Arsenio first used the three-trumpet format for a recording session on 21 June 1946. Six numbers were recorded at that session, including three son montunos which are the first to have the truncated alternating scheme (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2). The cycle in the diablo of "El reloj de Pastora," for example, is truncated from four bars to two bars (Examples 4.8.b). For each two-bar cycle, the lead trumpet part consists of triplet eighth-notes, which in addition to the second and third trumpet part can be interpreted as creating

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. *Continued*

(b) "El reloj de Pastora" (21 June 1946): diablo with cross-rhythms

"El reloj de Pastora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1965 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

3:2 cross-rhythms. This is in addition to the tumbadora which adds its same 3:2 cross-rhythm figure from earlier in the montuno section (see Example 4.2.c).

In "Dame un cachito pa' huele," the first two-bar cycle of the diablo consists of the full two-bar estribillo (bars 5-6 in Example 4.8.c). The trumpets begin the next cycle (bar 7) with their partially interwoven patterns, while the truncated coro, which is accented by

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. ***Continued***

(c) "Dame un cachito pa' huelé" (21 June 1946): piano cue, cierre, and diablo

"Dame un cachito pa huele." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1971 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

the bass part, answers in the second bar of the cycle (bar 8). In all, the cycle in this segment is repeated seven times. The tres and piano parts, while outlining the triads (C, G,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. *Continued*

(c) "Dame un cachito pa' huelé" (continued)

C, D) of the two-bar harmonic cycle, also accent the diminished coro fragment. Finally, the tumbadora part includes open tones on beats four and the "and-of-four," accenting steps 3 and 6.

The final example, "Kila, Kike y Chocolate," exhibits, perhaps better than any

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. *Continued*

(c) "Dame un cachito pa' huelé" (continued)

other, the full effect of the "mambo" style that Ortiz characterized as "a wonderful concert of individual freedoms taken to the maximum within a minimal but unshakable structural arrangement [which] occurs only in . . . that precise paroxysmal moment characteristic of *música afrocubana*" (see full quote, p. 174). In this case, the three trumpets, tres, piano,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. *Continued*

(d) "Kila, Kike y Chocolate" (29 March 1950): diablo

"Kila, Quique y Chocolate." Written by Arsenio Rodríguez Scull. Published by Unichappell Music Inc. All rights reserved. Duplicated by permission.

and bass, affect the climactic intensity of the diablo by creating an intricately woven rhythmic texture, within a two-bar cycle, while the bongó and tumbadora execute flams in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 4.8. ***Continued***

(d) "Kila, Kike y Chocolate" (continued)

call-and-response form (bars 1-4 in Example 4.8.d). The diablo increases in intensity in the next four bars when the second and third trumpets produce a hocket-like effect, as is the case in "No hay yaya sin guayacán" (see Example 4.8.b), while the first trumpet continues to add its one note to the entire texture.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Luis "Lilí" Martínez Griñan

In late 1945 Arsenio hired a new pianist and arranger from Oriente named Luís "Lilí" Martínez Griñan. Although Arsenio had already established the primary characteristics of his style, he and Lilí would form a seven-year partnership during which they would produce some of the conjunto's most enduring music. Lilí, whose father was Spanish, was born in Guantánamo on 19 August 1917.[88] Although he was essentially self-taught, he did receive some training informally from José Gallard and Inciarte Brioso, who were classically trained musicians. During this period he also played popular music from the United States, most likely early jazz, and Cuban music, except for *son*. He later acknowledged that if he had not played with Arsenio, "an authentic *sonero*," he would not have learned as much about *son*.

Arsenio depended on his pianists to write out the vocal melodies and refrains as well as most of the parts for his trumpet section. Lilí recounted a typical scenario: "When he was inspired, at any hour, he would come to my house so that he wouldn't forget the song. He'd sing it to me, and I would copy it."[89] On other occasions:

> We'd go to a bar, he'd sing and I'd transcribe. Then, I'd ask him, "Do you want the arrangement today?" Upon saying yes, at two in the afternoon we were at Mil Diez [radio station] for rehearsals, and at five in the afternoon we'd debut the new number. We were able to do this because of the quality of the musicians in the conjunto.[90]

---

[88] The following data is taken from Martínez 1993: 216-222, except were indicated.
[89] Cuando se inspiraba, a cualquier hora, iba a buscarme a la casa para que no se le olvidara el número. Me lo cantaba y yo lo copiaba (Martínez 1993: 218).
[90] Arsenio sacaba la música y venía a buscarme, nos íbamos para un bar, él cantaba y yo copiaba. Entonces le decía: "¿Tú la quieres para hoy mismo?" De ser así, a las dos de la tarde estábamos en Mil Diez, empezábamos a ensayar y a las cinco presentábamos el

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In contrast with his former pianists, however, Arsenio entrusted Lilí with composing more of the trumpet parts himself.[91] In this regard, Raúl described the musical and spiritual kinship that Arsenio and Lilí shared:

> Lilí was the pianist who most complemented Arsenio. They were one. They thought identically. . . . Lilí felt he couldn't connect spiritually with anyone else because they had a way of thinking musically such that one read the thoughts of the other. He'd say, "Arsenio understands me. He'll do things that I'm about to do before I even think about it." He was offered very good contracts. Conjunto Casino, who had power, had better contracts, and they offered one to Lilí, to which he responded, "No, no, no. I'm not interested. I play with Arsenio because I live for what I play with Arsenio."[92]

Lilí's contribution to the modern piano style deserves a separate and thorough analysis. Here, I will mention that his improvisational style, comprised of a synthesis of elements from impressionist, atonal, jazz, *son*, and other repertories, was an important component of the conjunto's overall texture and sound. Specifically, his solos in the conjunto's recordings (1946-1952) exhibit all eight of the "modern" style's common patterns, as outlined by Peter Manuel, especially no. 4 (syncopated patterns repeating

---

número en primera audición, como se decía. Esto era posible por la calidad de los intérpretes del conjunto (quoted in Depestre Catony 1989: 76).

[91] Raúl Travieso, 15 April 1998; Martínez 1993: 219.

[92] Lo que más compló con Arsenio hasta espíritualment fue Lilí. Lilí y Arsenio eran uno. Ellos tenían un modo de pensar que era idéntico. . . . Él sentía que con otro no había la cople espíritualmente porque tenían una clase de pensamiento que el uno le leía el pensamiento al otro musicalmente. Decía, "Arsenio me entiende a mi. Yo voy hacer una cosa y todavía no la pensado porque Arsenio." A él se le presentaron muy buenos contratos. La gente del Conjunto Casino, que tenían control, tenían mejores contratos, y le ofrecieron a Lilí, y él, "No, no, no. A mi no me interese a eso. Yo con Arsenio voy y toco porque yo vivo lo que hago con Arsenio" (Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

short, double-octave right-hand phrases with left-hand chords), no. 7 (quasi-atonal, and often a-rhythmic riffs), and no. 8 (single-note right-hand runs, with occasional left-hand "comping" chords, as in mainstream jazz piano).[93] Yet, while some have already credited Lilí, among a handful of other pianists from this period, with codifying the modern Cuban accompanimental and improvisational style for piano, his piano accompaniment and solo style remains to be adequately analyzed. As salsa pianist Eddie Palmieri stated, "Lilí? Well, he just blew it away! What he did in the '40s is still trying to be comprehended now."[94]

Conclusion

Cuban music historian Radamés Giro, on the subject of the mambo, made several observations, underscoring Arsenio's most enduring contribution, the diablo, which, as this chapter shows, encompasses the principles and procedures that define his son montuno style. Giro concluded:

> In reality, the mambo [as popularized by big bands] has more elements from the son than from the danzón, and Arsenio Rodríguez was the musician who had the most influence in its emergence. And as he noted, the mambo came from *congo* ritual sources [i.e., yuka].[95]

Nevertheless, as Giro continued, the subsequent internationally popular style of mambo,

---

[93] Manuel (1998).
[94] Palmieri, 26 February 2002.
[95] "En realidad, el mambo tiene más elementos del son que del danzón, y fue Arsenio Rodríguez el músico que más influyó en su surgimiento; pero si como este apuntó, el mambo procedía de las fuentes rituales congas" (Giro 1993: 17).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

perpetuated most by Dámaso Pérez Prado, took on "different" characteristics, rendering Arsenio's original diablo sounding "too attached to its folkloric sources." Indeed, Arsenio continued to favor his unique son montuno style in New York City and Los Angeles despite the fact that most dancers were unaware of the son montuno dance style, which as I will discuss in the following chapter originated and flourished among black dancers of the working class in Havana.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 5

Changing the Value Orientation of Blackness:

Arsenio's Conjunto and the Black Working Class of Havana

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s Cuban conjuntos such as Conjunto Casino and La Sonora Matancera were able to broaden their recognition by performing in films and touring Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Curaçao, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia.[1] To make films and go on international tours were contingent on a number of factors, the most important of which involved a conjunto's ability to access international channels of the Latin American entertainment industry as these intersected with the local landscape of Havana's popular music industry. Raúl noted that for La Sonora Matancera this involved their director Valentín Cané's position as a union director (see pp. 88-89), not to mention their established reputation among the Cuban elite and popularity on radio:

> Since Valentín was the one that had the *control* he went around making himself known when La Sonora Matancera was still playing in the *academias de baile* [through the mid 1940s]. So, Daniel Santos came [to Cuba] first [in 1948] and they made a recording. Myrta Silva arrived and they made another recording. These were [Puerto Rican] singers who were at the height of their popularity, and they made La Sonora Matancera [internationally] successful. After, Leo Marini [Argentinean], "El Negrito del Batey" [i.e., Alberto Beltrán, Dominican], and others [e.g., Colombian Nelson Pinedo] came [to Havana]. Every time an [internationally] famous singer would come, since [Valentín] had the *control*, he would make a recording, and that's how these singers gave [La Sonora Matancera] a lot of [national and international] publicity. They took [La Sonora Matancera]

---

[1] See Ramírez Bedoya 1998; Pérez Cassola n.d.; Waxer 1998: 87-90; Acosta et al. 1999: 43; and Wade 2000: 267, n7.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to Central and South America.[2]

An interrelated factor was a conjunto's interest in appealing to dominant local and international aesthetic tastes, which during the 1940s largely rejected aspects perceived as "African." Peter Wade, for example, remarks that before the 1950s those who could afford to contract Cuban groups in Colombia—that is, the elite of La Costa (the Caribbean coast)—preferred "white" Cuban groups whose styles they perceived as not "vulgar" or free of the overly "African" aspects they associated with Cuban music.[3] In short, recordings, radio, and film were the central channels of access to international recognition and audiences that conjuntos vied over for control. By producing popular styles while not offending dominant aesthetic tastes, conjuntos further facilitated their control over these channels of access and, in turn, increased the power these groups exerted over the definition of popular tastes locally and internationally.

Although Arsenio maintained a recording contract with RCA Victor as well as secured daily performances for his conjunto on Cuban radio throughout the 1940s, his conjunto never toured internationally or appeared on film, nor did his son montuno style obtain recognition internationally. The reasons for this involved not merely racism and Arsenio's lack of business acumen but most importantly the inextricable link aesthetically

---

[2] Como el Valentín era que tenía el control fue a que se dio a conocer y La Sonora ya estaba de academia [de baile]. Entonces, primero llegó Daniel Santos y hicieron una grabación. Llegó Myrta Silva y hicieron otra grabación. Eran gente que estaban en el grito y levantaron a La Sonora. Despues, Leo Marini, El Negrito del Batey y así [llegaron]. Cada ves que llegaba un cantante famoso pues él tenía el *control*, y hacía una grabación, y así le daban mucho conocer. Lo llevaron para Centro y Sud América (Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999).

[3] Wade 2000: 77-78.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and ethically between his son montuno style and the black working class of Havana. Before 1942 Arsenio's groups played for audiences that often included ruffians, in the case of the cabarets de tercera in Playa, Marianao, and prostitutes, in the case of the academias de baile in Havana (see pp. 83-84). After his brief contract playing at Sans Souci (a cabaret de primera) in late 1941 and early 1942, he and his newly formed conjunto began to perform almost exclusively for various worker's unions and especially black social clubs or "sociedades de color" of the working class. Besides mere patronage, however, this relationship fostered a counter-hegemonic relationship in which black dancers, Arsenio's conjunto, and other black musical groups obtained transcendence from dominant aesthetic norms and forms of social injustice. This transcendence emerged and was reenacted not only through the performance of music and dance but also in the reappropriation of racial discourse by Cuban musicians of the 1940s who valued Arsenio's style as "black" and contrasted it from the "white" styles of other conjuntos such as La Sonora Matancera and Conjunto Casino.

This chapter documents the performance career of Arsenio's conjunto in Havana, focusing on how racial segregation and ideologies limited his opportunities of professional advancement and, in turn, how he, his colleagues, and the black working class negotiated these social and ideological barriers through music, dance, and discourse. In analyzing these issues, I draw upon the analytical and interpretive frameworks of space, ritual, and the body to arrive at a more politically-oriented understanding of the significance of Arsenio's *estilo negro*. Based on these ideas, I will argue that Arsenio and the black working class, as social agents, reciprocated their power to establish control over the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

physical locales in which they performed and the bodily movements and discourse through which they ultimately changed the value orientation of "blackness" and black performance practices and principles.

Ritualizing Black Dance Music

Ritual has had an important place in the constitution of black cultural traditions, communities, and experiences.[4] The potency of black forms of ritual in particular derives from its performative components, including musical sound and bodily gesture, and its capacity to organize experience, reinforce the unity of the community, and affect transcendence from daily life. The performance of dance music by black Cuban musicians and dancers of the working class entailed similar performative and social aspects, linking it to other forms of black ritual activity.[5] These aspects included: 1) the demarcation of locales such as black social clubs and cervecerías (beer gardens) for the performance of dance music; 2) the centrality of performers, which in this case included musicians *and* dancers, in those locales; and 3) conventional expectations regarding the behavior of these performers. As I will show in this section, it was in this ritualized milieu in which Arsenio's conjunto and son montuno style originated, thrived, and remained rooted throughout the 1940s. And, through this synergy, black dancers, Arsenio's conjunto, and other black groups secured an autonomous space from which they exerted their power in

---

[4] See Gilroy 1993: 74-75, 101-102, 200; Floyd Jr. 1995: 20-26; and Jackson 2000: 56-59.
[5] See Jackson 2000: 58.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

transcending the injustices that characterized their daily lives.

The political, economic, and social situation in Havana

By early 1942, World War II had begun to affect Cuba's political and economic situation with the loss of foreign markets, particularly in the sale of sugar to Europe and Asia. As a result of this dependence on foreign markets, unemployment and budget deficits grew. But by 1944, Cuba's economy had started to rebound as a result of its increased trade with the United States and its attempts at diversifying the economy to make up for the scarcity of imports from nations affected by the war.[6] Nevertheless, inflation and higher taxes continued to affect the daily lives of all Cubans, but especially the lower class.[7]

The war also had an effect on Havana's tourist industry by impeding tourism from Europe and the United States. Specifically, this caused a pronounced decline in the patronage of cabarets de primera, which were crucial for the steady employment of many, mostly white, musicians. René Touzet, for example, immigrated to New York City in 1944 because he could not find work in other cabarets de primera after the Montmartre, where he had been playing, was destroyed by a hurricane.[8] The year 1941 was to be the last tourist season for several years. In addition, street comparsas were suspended, although sociedades continued to celebrate carnival in their private dancehalls.[9]

---

[6] Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Económicas and Álvarez Díaz 1963: 782-783, 1272.
[7] See Pérez, Jr. 1995: 283.
[8] René Touzet, 6 March 2000.
[9] See Otero González 1953: 54; Phillips 1959: 208; Fernández 1997: 106. Some statistics show that tourism declined from 127,000 visitors in 1940 to 12,000 in 1943 (Pérez, Jr.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Following the war, Cuba's situation declined. Embezzlement, fraud, corruption, and the misuse of public office permeated every branch of national, provincial, and municipal government. The public trust was transformed into a private till, and politics passed under the control of corrupt politicians. By 1948 attempts to diversify the economy had succumbed to the sugar industry, which had come to constitute a record 90 percent of the island's total exports.[10]

In this broader environment of political and economic instability divisions based on class and race grew more distinct. After seven years of provisional government (following the Revolution of 1933), an elected constitutional convention passed a new Constitution on 5 July 1940.[11] Included in the constitution were two articles that banned all forms of discrimination based on gender, race, color, or class. These articles, however, were left unenforceable after a bill that aggressively protected civil rights failed to make it to the floor of the House of Representatives. Communist party representatives Blas Roca, Salvador García Agüero, and Lázaro Peña and others introduced this bill in 1941.[12] Without any legal means with which to enforce the non-discrimination articles of the constitution, Cuban society became increasingly polarized along lines of class and race. In the words of one contemporary writer, "[I]n subtle ways the upper class (composed mainly of whites) keeps the door closed as far as possible against the Negro."[13]

According to studies of the 1943 census, persons of color were underrepresented

---

1995: 283).
[10] Pérez, Jr. 1995: 284-285.
[11] Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Económicas and Álvarez Díaz 1963: 562-564.
[12] Carreras 1989: 109-111.
[13] Nelson 1950: 65.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in the professional groups, other than teachers, and over represented among skilled, unskilled, agricultural, and personal service workers. Furthermore, within each occupational category, their income was systematically lower than that of whites. For example, in the province of La Habana, the percentage of musicians of color in their population totaled .12 percent, while the percentage of white musicians in their population amounted to .05 percent. The average monthly income of musicians of color totaled $42.75, while that of white musicians totaled $55.17. In sum, discrimination accounted for both the overrepresentation of Cubans of color among musicians (and, in general, the lower income sectors) and, specifically, the difficulty in getting better paying jobs in relation to white musicians.[14]

While the white elite dominated the governing class, blacks and mulattoes served as leaders of agricultural and industrial labor organizations as well as the communist party.[15] These leaders and organizations, therefore, were the only forms of representation in the political and social domains that were available to working class blacks and whites. That the black working-class, in particular, found ultimate transcendence from social injustice in the cultural domain underscores the unique power music and dance had in their daily lives.

---

[14] Valdés Cantero 1988: 15, 35, 39; see also Amaro and Mesa-Lago 1971: 347, 365; de la Fuente 1995; Nelson 1950: 61-68.

[15] In 1945 there were five senators of color out of a total of 54, and there were twelve congressmen of color out of a total of 127, totaling less than half of what would be considered proportional representation (Nelson 1950: 65-68).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arcaño, Arsenio, and the working-class sociedades de color

Antonio Arcaño was the flautist and director of the charanga Arcaño y sus Maravillas. This charanga was originally formed in 1936 by vocalist Fernando Collazo under the name La Maravilla del Siglo. Collazo and his charanga specialized in performing *danzonetes* (a sub-genre of the danzón with added vocal melodies) and boleros, and became one of the most popular charangas in Havana. By 1937 Arcaño and most of Collazo's musicians had left La Maravilla del Siglo to form La Maravilla de Arcaño. In 1941 the charanga changed its name to Arcaño y sus Maravillas.[16] In contrast to most charangas of the late 1930s, Arcaño's did not feature a vocalist. Instead, he, Orestes López (pianist, cellist, arranger, and composer), and brother Israel "Cachao" López (bassist, composer, and arranger) began to formulate a new style of playing danzón music which included a final section they called "mambo."[17]

By 1942 Arcaño y sus Maravillas, the musicians of which were mulattoes, had performed for both sociedades españolas such as Centro Asturiano and middle-class sociedades de color such as Unión Fraternal.[18] These sociedades only hired groups with an established reputation to perform for their elegant and elaborate social dances. In Arcaño's case, Gonzalo Roig, the well-known composer of famous zarzuelas such as *Cecilia*

---

[16] Boudet 1974: 33; Torres 1995: 197-198; Ruíz, González-Rubiera, and Estrada 1995: 327-328, 336.
[17] Torres 1995: 198-199.
[18] *Diario de la Marina* 31 December 1940; *Hoy* 28 December 1941. Bassist Cuco Sánchez was the first "black" musician to play with Arcaño's charanga. Sánchez replaced "Cachao" in 1949 (Antonio Arcaño, 16 July 1992).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Valdés, endorsed his charanga.[19] But even though Arcaño y sus Maravillas was an established charanga, the racially exclusive sociedades españolas, in particular, rarely hired black or mulatto groups. In such cases the opportunity for these groups to be hired was sometimes contingent on the director's claim to Spanish descent, which was the case for Rogelio Martínez of La Sonora Matancera and Antonio Arcaño.[20]

Nevertheless, Arcaño began to have difficulty finding work due to a group of vocalists who had presumably convinced dance impresarios not to hire his charanga because he did not employ a vocalist. In order to gain advantage over his detractors, Arcaño's strategy was to ally his charanga with a good conjunto and get work playing for the dozens of black working-class social clubs, worker's unions, and other groups in the working-class, largely, black barrios; all of whom regularly organized dances in their homes, club houses, and at the beer gardens (cervecerías) of La Tropical and La Polar. Arcaño eventually chose Arsenio's conjunto because he believed that it was one of the best in Havana. He also felt that he could help his blind friend further his career, just like Gonzalo Roig had helped him.[21]

It is unclear exactly when Arcaño began to help Arsenio. The beginning of their alliance, however, may have coincided with Arsenio's decision to convert his septeto into a conjunto for public performances, beginning around 1942. In any event, the initial stage of their professional relationship was probably between 1942 and 1944, by which time

---

[19] Antonio Arcaño, 16 July 1992.
[20] Antonio Arcaño, 28 November 1988.
[21] Ibid.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

they had become very popular among the black working class.[22] Arcaño also attempted to introduce Arsenio's conjunto into the sociedades españolas. Before 1946, however, he was unsuccessful at convincing them to hire Arsenio because La Sonora Matancera, Conjunto Casino, Los Jóvenes del Cayo, La Gloria Matancera, and other conjuntos, almost all of which were all white, had established control in performing for these social clubs.[23] And the black upper-class social clubs such as Unión Fraternal and Club Atenas refused outright to hire any *son* group, because they associated the *son* with degenerate black working class culture and its drums (e.g., bongó and tumbadora) with atavistic African practices. Only after Arsenio's conjunto had gained national popularity through their performances in the provinces of Havana, Matanzas, and others, and through their daily live performances on radio station "Radio Mil Diez" (discussed below) did some sociedades españolas hire his conjunto. For example, Arsenio and Arcaño performed for Centro Asturiano in their "palacio" on 6 September 1947 and Club Deportivo Candado on 22 January 1949. Arsenio also performed for Centro Gallego in its "palacio" on at least six occasions between 1947 and 1950, including its 1949 carnival celebrations.[24]

In contrast, throughout the 1940s, Arcaño's, Arsenio's, and other black groups were hired on a regular basis by numerous black working-class social clubs, including Social Club Buena Vista (in Almendares, Marianao, now immortalized in Ry Cooder's CD and Wim Wenders's film), El Bouquet Cubano (in Cerro, Havana), Minerva Club, Club de

---

[22] López and Kaufman 1974.
[23] Antonio Arcaño, 28 November 1988; Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 18-19.
[24] *Diario de la Marina* 1 March 1947, 10, 14, 17, 22 August 1947, 3-5 September 1947, 27 December 1950; *Hoy* 28 April 1948, 13 May 1948, 10 December 1948, 22 January 1949, 1 February 1949.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

las Aguilas de Luz 56 (in Víbora, Havana), Club Artístico Cultural (in Redención, Marianao), Marianao Social (in Marianao), Deportivo de la Fé (in Cerro, Havana), and Jóvenes del Vals (in Luyanó, Havana). As the sociedades españolas, white upper-class social clubs, and black middle-class social clubs provided for the social and cultural needs of their members and families, working-class sociedades de color served the same functions for their members and families. These functions included education, athletics, and recreation. Most importantly, they imparted an ethos of black pride and cooperation among all black working-class social clubs, though they couched it in racial egalitarian terms. Social Club Buena Vista, for example, outlined such aims in their official bylaws, which were registered with the provincial government of La Habana in 1945[25]:

SOCIAL CLUB BUENA VISTA
Article 2: Aims

1. To diffuse graciously education among its members
2. Elevate the moral and intellectual level of its members
3. Provide the practice of all types of sports as a way to prepare physically and to contribute to the development of the youth
4. Provide entertainment by way of recreation, especially for its members
5. Maintain the best relations with the authorities as well as among other institutions of like character
6. Remain separated from all political partisan tendencies and all religious practices
7. Establish cultural, ideological, and patriotic interchange with all those organizations and institutions that sincerely share these aims
8. Fight against theories and false concepts regarding inferiority and superiority of the human races through all of the mediums of diffusion

---

[25] Archivo Nacional de Cuba. *Registro de Asociaciones*. Libro 22, folio 235, número 13232. In September 1946 Social Club Buena Vista initiated La Cooperativa Intersocial (Pro Casa Club En La Playa), which included eight black working-class social clubs, for the purpose of acquiring a beach house that would be used for recreational purposes by the members and families of these social clubs.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

9. Work to make disappear from our nation all practices of racial prejudices and discrimination

As I will argue in the following sections, Arsenio, his conjunto, and son montuno style played a pivotal role in facilitating not merely "entertainment" but particularly a mode by which black working-class musicians and dancers could express their black identity.

Arcaño and Arsenio also played for worker's unions such as Los Yesistas (plaster workers), Sociedad Tropicalina (La Tropical workers), and Asociación Nacional de Cronistas Sociales, as well as the butchers', bakers', and trash collectors' unions. In addition, while Arcaño and Arsenio charged the sociedades españolas an average of 70 and 60 dollars per dance, respectively, they accepted whatever the black social clubs, unions, and other groups could afford, which usually amounted to about 20 to 35 dollars per dance. This meant that divided among the ten musicians in Arsenio's conjunto each was paid around 2 dollars, not counting Arsenio's larger share for being the director. On some occasions, Arsenio's conjunto was paid as little as 8 to 10 dollars total![26]

But, whereas the white social clubs tended to organize dances on the weekends only, the black social clubs, in particular, organized dances throughout the week and weekend, thus providing musical groups with more work. For this reason, according to Arcaño, it was more important to maintain the patronage of the black social clubs and, in general, working-class groups and perform on a regular basis rather than to insist on higher fees. In contrast, conjuntos such as La Sonora Matancera and Conjunto Casino did

---

[26] Martínez 1993: 219.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

not lower their fees to accommodate the working class. Instead, during the week, they played at academias de baile and exclusive cabarets de primera and, on the weekends, they played for the white social clubs, who could afford to pay their higher fees.[27] More important than the frequency of black working-class dances, however, was the artistic and political autonomy that these dances afforded for dancers and musicians alike. As Raúl succinctly stated: "They [whites] didn't dance where we were. They had their places for dancing; *we had to have ours*."[28]

The black "dancing class"

In an unjust society such as Havana in the 1940s, dancing was one of the few means by which the black working class, in particular, the youth, could express themselves on a regular basis in an artistically and socially meaningful way. In Arcaño's words, dancing had an integral part in the daily lives of black Cubans:

> Blacks went dancing everyday. The dance would end, he would have Chinese soup, he would go home, he would take a shower and then go to work. The next day he would do the same. Whites went dancing on Saturdays and went to sleep Sunday mornings. So, I would play for blacks during the week and whites on Saturday.[29]

---

[27] Antonio Arcaño, 28 November 1988 and 16 July 1992; Raúl Travieso, 8 February 1997 and 15 April 1998; Julián Cabrera, 27 June 1998; Humberto Cané, 8 March 1999; Valdés Ginebra, 10 July 1999; Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 18-19.

[28] Ellos no bailaban donde estabamos nosotros. Ellos tenían sus sitios para bailar; nosotros *teníamos que tener el nuestro* (Raúl Travieso, 15 April 1998).

[29] El negro bailaba todos los días. Terminaba el baile, se tomaba una sopa china, se iba para su casa, se bañaba y se iba para el trabajo. Al otro día hacía lo mismo. El blanco bailaba el sábado para dormir el domingo por la mañana. Entonces yo le tocaba entre semana al negro y al blanco el sábado (quoted in Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 18-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Contributing to the ritualization of dancing in the lives of black Cubans included the demarcation of spaces, the centrality of both musicians and dancers in these spaces, and the conventional expectations regarding the behavior of dancers and musicians.

These dances took place in black social clubs and the dance floors located in the beer gardens of La Tropical and La Polar.[30] These social clubs as well as other working-class groups and dance impresarios also organized *giras*, *verbenas*, and *merenderos* at the beer gardens. Generally, giras took place on Sundays, lasting all afternoon and evening. Verbenas also took place all day and evening long, but it was a larger affair, often featuring more than ten musical groups who would perform in adjacent dance floors two or three at a time. Merenderos took place during the week, lasting from about one to six in the afternoon. Entrance fees for these dances averaged one dollar for men, while women were often times given free entrance.

Whether in a social club or at beer gardens, however, the performance of dance music was the principal reason why these events were organized. And because this was *dance music* both musicians and dancers were central to its manifestation as ritual. Pianist and arranger Alfredo Valdés Jr.'s detailed remarks in this regard are especially insightful:

> All the dancers had was the assurance that the band was gonna play *this type of thing* they wanted to hear in order [that they could] show how to enjoy dancing and also enjoy showing off. There was a lot of showing off, how good [and] how creative [you were]. You find that everywhere you go. Dancing is a very important art form. And back then it was nothing if

---

19).

[30] Boudet 1974: 34; Arcaño, 28 November 1988; Beltrán, 11 September 1996; Travieso, 8 February 1997, 15 April 1998, and 25 January 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> the music was not there. . . . It's a service, music as a service for the dancing public, the dancing class. . . . And Arsenio was a true musician of this *género porque él se mantuvo siempre* (genre because he always stuck to his style). [He] was always very conscious of the need of the dancer. And the dancer was usually black, the ones that danced *this type of thing*.[31]

By "this type of thing," I believe that Valdés, Jr. not only meant the son montuno style but, more specifically, that which was required in successfully performing black Cuban dance music as ritual. Valdés, Jr. adds the following:

> Arsenio to the connoisseur [of dance] was such an important figure because he understood what it meant to dance, what it meant to play music for the dancing public. . . . There [was] a close tie between the things that Arsenio [did musically] and what the dancers required. Dancers were very demanding in Cuba. You had to play what they wanted to hear or there would be fights, there would be problems. . . . This is all pure functional music for dancing. . . . [Dancers] didn't go to look at the band, or look at the musicians—how good they looked, or how young they were, or this or that. They were just going there to dance.[32]

In discussing the *materiality* of the black musical experience, Samuel Floyd, Jr. similarly tells us that, "When dancers are dancing, it is how they relate to what the musicians play and how the musicians react to their movements, gestures, and urgings that make the dance a success. . ."[33] Hence, as "Cachao" emphasized, black Cuban dancers keenly listened to musicians perform, *expecting* to engage in a dialogue between their body and what and how the musicians played:

> Dancing was very important for blacks. . . . Look, the dancers nourished

---

[31] Alfredo Valdés Jr., 4 December 1999 (emphasis added).
[32] Ibid.
[33] Floyd, Jr.: 1995: 97.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> the musicians—and not only our stomachs. The thing is that at that time one knew how to dance. The dancer would listen, and if there was any breakdown among the musicians the dancer would immediately detect it. They were keen listeners.[34]

The fact that dancers and onlookers were noticeably silent during performance further emphasizes the importance dancers placed on listening to what the musicians were playing. As "Cachao" added:

> In those dances there was always a noticeable silence, not like today when everybody talks. All that could be heard was the rustling of the feet. Plus, there were no microphones or nothing like that. The singer sang entirely with his chest, and now if there's no microphone they can't sing.[35]

The musicians' concern to meet the expectations of black dancers significantly accounted for important stylistic innovations such as those credited to Arcaño, Orestes López, Israel "Cachao" López, and Arsenio. As Arcaño explained, the final section of the danzón-mambo was added for dancers who reciprocated with inventive dance steps. And, like Arsenio's son montuno style, the danzón-mambo style engendered in dancers increased reliance on their bodies:

> The dancer created new steps, movements. They marked the accents [e.g., of the clave] with the body. They created a furor. The mambo was added

---

[34] [P]ara el negro, bailar es algo muy importante. . . . Mira, los bailadores alimentaban a los músicos—y no sólo por el estómago. El problema es que en esa época se sabía bailar, y el bailador escuchaba y si había algún desajuste en la orquesta enseguida lo detectaba, tenían muy buen oído (Israel López "Cachao" in Padura Fuentes 1997: 133).

[35] Siempre en aquellos bailes había un silencio enorme, no como ahora que todo el mundo habla, nada más se oía el murmullo de los pies, pues además no había micrófonos ni nada de eso: el cantante era a puro pecho y hoy si no es con micrófono no pueden cantar (Israel López "Cachao" in Padura Fuentes 1997: 133).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

as the final section for them.[36]

Arsenio similarly explained that his diablo was added to give dancers "a kick in the ass." And as Rubén González noted, Arsenio focused on developing those aspects that dancers favorably reacted to, including the conjunto's collective accentuation of the footwork, which facilitated an increased emphasis on the dancer's body (see p. 162).

Ultimately, despite the poor pay, Arcaño, Arsenio, and other musicians preferred performing for *and with* black working-class dancers because of the counter-hegemonic aesthetic and ethic elements that were involved. As Arcaño himself explained:

> I didn't like to play for white social clubs, in spite of the fact that the black social clubs paid less. You'd be playing a danzón for the white dancers and they'd ask you for a *pasodoble* [a Spanish dance genre]. Blacks went to dance as if they were going to church . . . [T]hey felt proud. They would dance next to a window so that they might be better seen. They weren't like white dancers who would hide in order to hold a woman close to them.[37]

Situating the danzón-mambo and son montuno styles within the context of black working-class culture and the framework of ritual, therefore, gives us better insight into the origins,

---

[36] El bailador creó nuevos pasillos, contorsiones. Marcaba los golpes con el cuerpo. Creó una inquietud. En la última parte se le agregaba el mambo (Arcaño in Boudet 1974: 35). Torres (1995: 209) similarly states, "The development of the danzón-mambo was limited, to a certain extent, to the black and mulatto dances; musicians and dancers from this period confirm that the rhythmic complexities of this style used to prevent it from being well danced in the white sociedades" (my translation).

[37] A mí no me gustaba tocarle a los blancos, a pesar de que el negro pagaba menos. Tú lo estabas tocando un danzón a los blancos y te pedían un pasodoble. El negro iba a bailar como si fuera a una iglesia . . . [S]e sentía orgulloso, buscaba una ventana para que lo vieran mejor, no era como el blanco que se escondía para apretar a una mujer (Antonio Arcaño in Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 18-19).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

development, and meanings of these styles. It also reemphasizes the extent to which the dance music milieu of Havana was divided along the lines of class and race as well as aesthetic and ethic preferences.

In sum, Arcaño, Arsenio, and the black working class forged a mutually beneficial relationship in which they controlled the performance of their dance contexts and the development of new interrelated music and dance styles. To go dancing, a black couple from a working-class background could not go to a cabaret de primera or an academia de baile, or may not have wanted to go to the seedier cabarets de tercera. Instead, they would have gone to a black social club or a cervecería (beer garden), which were the only types of dance locales that were family oriented and that they could afford. Therefore, the organization of dances, the performance of dance music, and dancing by the black working class in their own locales were all powerful forms of expression in a larger social milieu in which dancing was one of the most segregated cultural activities.

Empowering the black working class

In the words of Cuban musicologist Leonardo Acosta:

> The *guaguancó* . . . has served in the cities . . . as *a social chronicle of the dispossessed*, of the humble and marginalized, like a chronicle of home or tenement, of the barrio and the hearth, in which familiar everyday events are related . . .[38]

Guaguancó is one of the three principal song and dance forms of rumba (the other two are

---

[38] Acosta 1991: 54-55.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

yambú and *columbia*). The traditional instrumentation used to perform guaguancó is a set of three tumbadoras (or congas, from lowest to highest: tumba, llamadora, and quinto) and claves. The form consists of three parts. In the *diana*, or introduction, the lead vocalist sings a relatively short phrase consisting of vocables, while the rhythm parts establish their two-bar interlocking patterns.[39] Following the diana is the extended *canto* or *inspiración* in which the lead vocalist (sometimes improvising) sings a long narrative in one of many variations of the décima form.[40] The guaguancó concludes with a montuno, which consists of alternations between a chorus and the lead vocalist.

The three primary forms of rumba were associated especially with the urban black working-class barrios of Matanzas and Havana.[41] In Havana the barrios most famous for their rumberos (rumba musicians) included Cerro, Cayo Hueso, Belén, Los Sitios, Pueblo Nuevo, Víbora, Atarés, and Jesús María.[42] In Cayo Hueso, for example, "Alambrito" was its most famous rumbero, and Rancho Grande (on the corner of San José and Marqués Gonzalez) was the most popular *solar* (tenement) where rumba was performed.[43]

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s Arsenio lived in various working-class barrios in Marianao and Havana, including Buena Vista (in Marianao), Cerro (on Agua Dulce and in Carraguao, a neighborhood in Cerro, Havana), and Los Sitios (in Havana). His interactions with individuals and groups of people in these barrios, in addition to formal performances, included regular neighborhood get-togethers. For example, in the evenings

---

[39] For transcriptions of these patterns see Gerard and Sheller 1989: 62-68.
[40] See Pasmanick 1997.
[41] See Martínez Rodríguez (1995) for a description of rumba in the province of Matanzas.
[42] Acosta 1991: 63.
[43] Colectivos de Autores 1990.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

neighbors gathered at the corner of 6th Street and Primelles in Buena Vista (down the street from where Arsenio lived) where Arsenio sang about the day's news. Every day on radio station CMQ a news reporter known as "La Guantanamera" sang in décima form about local news events (e.g., a murder, injury, car crash), using the popular "Guantanamera" tune. Arsenio, however, sang about the same stories using his own tunes while accompanying himself on the tres for those who might not have heard "La Guantanamera's" report that day. More than anything, the purpose of Arsenio's evening news reports was to reunite and entertain his neighbors after their long day of work.[44]

In other occasions, groups of young adults approached Arsenio with lyrics they had written about their barrio, and asked him to adapt them to music that could be performed by his conjunto. Apparently, one of the first groups to make such a request was from Amalia, a reparto in the barrio of Belén. Arsenio accepted and chose to adapt these lyrics to his son montuno style, but which included musical references to the traditional guaguancó.[45] The first of these, "Juventud amaliana" ("The Youth of Amalia," rec. 13 Dec. 1946), became so popular that groups from other barrios asked him to adapt music

---

[44] "Francisco," 9 July 2000. This interview was conducted at "Recordando el Mamoncillo," a Cuban festival that takes place annually in Astoria, Queens. This event, marked by traditional Cuban music, dance, and food, commemorates the dances that used to take place in La Tropical's salón "Mamoncillo." The majority of Cubans who attend this celebration are black and middle-aged from a working-class background.

[45] Before "Juventud amaliana," Arsenio's conjunto had recorded "Pilla con Pilla" (29 Nov. 1943), which reflected some of the features that would characterize his conjunto-style guaguancós. They had also recorded "Timbilla" (5 July 1945), and would later record "Anabacoa" (8 Aug. 1950), both of which consist of the traditional "guaguancó" pattern (i.e., rhythmic ostinato) played by the tumbadora. I have included these in Table 5.1.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to lyrics that praised their barrios as well.[46] From 1946 to 1952 Arsenio recorded nine guaguancós, which I am calling "conjunto-style" guaguancós, the texts of which praised the people of Amalia, Cerro, Belén, Pueblo Nuevo, Los Sitios, Colón, Luyanó, Cayo Hueso, and Pogolotti (see Appendix 3 for transcriptions of the texts). In addition he composed "Amores de verano" ("Summer Loves," rec. 29 May 1951) at the request of Vicente Amores, a local dance impresario, to publicize one of his summer dance festivals.[47]

In regard to the structure of the conjunto-style guaguancó, only the first three sections are reminiscent of the three parts of the traditional guaguancó (i.e., diana, canto, and montuno), while the final three sections (solo, cierre, and diablo) are the same as in his son montunos (see Table 5.1 in Appendix 4). The only significant difference between the son montuno and conjunto-style guaguancó is the latter's moderately faster tempo, averaging from the 140s to the 170s. Apart from this, the arrangement scheme and rhythmic texture proceed from his son montuno style. For instance, the introduction or "diana" section involves a relatively long melodic phrase, which in traditional guaguancó is sung in vocables by the lead singer but in the conjunto-style it is played by the trumpet section. With the exception of "Juventud de Cayo Hueso" ("The Youth of Cayo Hueso"), the trumpet lines in the "diana" sections are characterized by *contratiempo* or mostly off-beat accentuation (see Example 5.1.a). Accordingly, almost all of the coros in the conjunto-style guaguancó are characterized by off-beat accentuation (see Examples 5.1.b

[46] Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999.
[47] Valdés Ginebra, 10 July 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.1. Arsenio's conjunto-style guaguancó

(a) "A Belén le toca ahora" (19 Oct. 1948): trumpet arrangement ("diana" section)

"A Belen le toca ahora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1968 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

and 4.3). It also involves the fundamental procedures of metric ambiguity, partial interweaving of parts, and cross-rhythms. The diablo section of "El rumbón de Luyanó" ("The Big Rumba from Luyanó"), for example, is preceded by a three-bar ternary phrased cierre (break). In the diablo section itself, notice both the almost strict interweaving of the bass part with the tres and coro parts and the 3:4 cross-rhythm created by the trumpets (bracketed) against the rest of the conjunto (see Example 5.1.c). Contained in such complex rhythmic textures were clear accents of the dancer's footwork. In the diablo of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.1. *Continued*

(b) Off-beat accented coro patterns

"Pueblo Nuevo se pasó" (19 February 1949)

"Pueblo Nuevo se pasó." Written by Luís Martínez Grifian. Published by Unichappell Music Inc. All rights reserved. Duplicated by permission.

"Juventud de Colón" (13 January 1950)

"Juventud de Cayo Hueso" (12 September 1950)

"Pogolotti" (18 March 1952)

"Pogolotti." Words and Music by Eloy Oliva. Copyright (c) 1950 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

"El rumbón de Luyanó" steps 1 and 3 are accented in the coro and tres parts, while steps 4, 5, and 6 are accented in the bass part.

The residents of these barrios were of a working class background and a majority

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.1. *Continued*

(c) "El rumbón de Luyanó" (19 April 1950): diablo section

of them were black.[48] Cayo Hueso (enclosed by Neptuno, Zanja, Infanta, and Belascoaín, west of Centro Habana), for example, was a working-class barrio whose residents were mostly *tabaqueros* (cigar workers). Workers from Cayo Hueso had a long history in Cuba's labor movement since the late nineteenth century. Hence, many workers' unions were located here, including The Society of Cigar Rollers of the Province of Havana, The

[48] While blacks and whites lived together in lower-class barrios, the high-income residential areas were almost completely white (Masferrer and Mesa-Lago 1974: 372).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cigar Worker's Union of Havana, The Worker's Federation of the Province of Havana, The Shop Assistant's Union of the Tobacco Branch, and The Association of Helpers of the Unemployed Worker.[49]

Luyanó was probably the poorest and most neglected by city and government officials. A dreary, industrialized barrio south of downtown Havana, Luyanó was plagued by heavy smog, which poured out of the hundreds of smokestacks from the factories located throughout the barrio. Most of its streets were in very bad condition, and many of the homes lacked running water. An article published in 1948 by the communist newspaper *Hoy*, in addition to describing the poor conditions in Luyanó, criticized the local and federal governments for their negligence and poor management of funds destined for various improvements in the barrio. The article's headline read, "Luyanó has been the Target of the Most Vile Joke by the Previous Administration, Government Leaders: Your Attention for Luyanó!"[50] Even the mainstream magazine *Bohemia* published an article in 1953 that described Luyanó's desperate conditions, including its heavily contaminated river, as well as its poorly funded fire station and clinics. In addition to criticizing the newly "installed" government (i.e., the Batista dictatorship) for its negligence, the author chastised the people who lived in Vedado, Medina and other upper-class barrios in Havana for their indifference to the living conditions of their "neighbors" who lived in Luyanó,

---

[49] Fidel Castro represented Cayo Hueso as an Ortodoxo Party delegate in 1951 (see Colectivos de Autores 1990).
[50] Luyanó ha Sufrido la Burla más Infame del Pasado Gobierno; ¡Señores Gobernantes: Atención Para Luyanó! (see *Hoy* 17 October 1948).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cerro, and other lower-class barrios.[51]

Pogolotti was yet another working-class reparto in the barrio of Redención, Marianao that suffered official neglect. This reparto was originally built with government funds, which were authorized in July of 1910. The 2,000 modest houses were to be sold to and paid for in installments by male workers with families. The overall plan, however, was a failure. Corruption, bribery, and government delinquency followed. This led to the passing of an amendment in 1919 that authorized the suspension of payments until the state provided for the most basic public services. These included a sewer system, which was finally finished in 1938, improving the health of the residents, and well-maintained streets, which continued to be in very poor condition in 1943.[52]

Life in these repartos and barrios was undoubtedly difficult. Whether a union stronghold like Cayo Hueso or a poverty stricken barrio like Luyanó, the standard of living in these sections of Havana and Marianao was markedly lower than in neighboring wealthier sections. Expectations of improving one's standard of living were continuously thwarted by government neglect and, in general, an unjust socio-economic structure. Some have suggested that during the 1940s the educational situation of blacks and mulattoes deteriorated due to both their overrepresentation among the poor and the degradation of the public education system.[53]

---

[51] Herminio Portell Vila, "Barrio Suburbano," *Bohemia* 45/11 (1953), pp. 46-47, 114. See also Butterworth (1980: 5-17) for a description of Las Yaguas, a squatter settlement in Luyanó which developed in the early 1930s and continued to grow through the 1950s.
[52] Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Economicas 1963: 397; Inclán Lavastida 1943: 126-127.
[53] de la Fuente 1995: 149-153.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Therefore, to have Arsenio Rodríguez compose a "guaguancó" praising the youth and spirit of these barrios, and perform it for them at their dances as well as on record and radio must have given these young people a strong sense of pride and identity. Furthermore, as dancers identified with these lyrics in praise of their respective barrios, they simultaneously embodied the son montuno feel in their footwork and body movements, thereby experiencing the music at multi-sensory levels. Despite the gloomy social situation, one former resident of Marianao and dancer of Arsenio's conjunto recollected:

> That was a great time, and the young people were something else. I think that there has been no other group of young people in the world that enjoyed themselves more than the Cuban young people at that time, from 1940 to 1960.[54]

With themes such as the youth, enjoyment, dancing and singing, and praiseworthiness, Arsenio captured the hearts and affection of the dispossessed, humble, and marginalized (see Appendix 3 for lyrics). The following remarks by Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros sum up what Arsenio, his guaguancós, and, in general, his son montuno style meant to the black working class of Havana:

> He was the one who took pride in the guaguancó, because the guaguancó was danced in the streets or in private homes. He adapted and introduced it to the social clubs. He was a genius in doing that. . . . Arsenio composed a guaguancó for each barrio. . . . That was the greatness that he always had, because he was a musician, from head to toe. God took away his sight, but

---

[54] Eso era un fenómeno, la juventud como era. Yo creo que en el mundo no hay juventud que se había divertido como la juventud cubana en la época, desde la 40 hasta la 60 (José Frías, 9 July 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

He gave him talent.[55]

Kike's incarceration

Despite these themes of fraternalism, violence was nevertheless a fact of life throughout Havana. Even the performance of traditional guaguancó often led to fistfights or worse; and because of this, middle-class and elite Cubans continued to condemn all forms of rumba, including guaguancó, through at least the early 1940s.[56] Stabbings were not unusual. And, as a result of one particular incident Kike's life would change forever.

Despite (or because of) being blind, Arsenio was prone to getting into arguments and even physical confrontations, especially when he felt he was being belittled.[57] On 14 June 1945 the conjunto was performing in Los Sitios when an altercation ensued between Arsenio and several men in the audience. One of these men, whose name was Wilfredo Mayo, struck Arsenio with his fist and knocked him to the ground, at which point Mayo pulled out his knife. At that moment, Kike struck Mayo over the head with his tumbadora, knocking the knife out of his hands. Kike picked up the knife and chased after Mayo who had proceeded to run away. When Kike caught up to Mayo, he stabbed him. Mayo

---

[55] Él fue que vistió de gala el guaguancó, porque el guaguancó es una cosa que se bailaba allá, callejero o en las casas particulares. Y él lo adoptó y lo trajo a las sociedades. Él era un genio en eso. . . . Y Arsenio escribía a cada uno de acuerdo de los barrios, un número que sucede guaguancó del barrio. . . . Esa era la grandesa que siempre tenía él, porque era un músico de verdad, de arriba a abajo. Diós le quitó la vista, pero le dio un talento (Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros, 19 January 1997).

[56] See Acosta 1991: 63, 69; and Moore 1997: 168-171.

[57] See Rubén González in *Buena Vista Social Club* (video) 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

continued to run and, eventually, he bled to death near the corner of Reina and Lealtad, not too far from Los Sitios.[58]

Kike was charged with murder, and initially sentenced to fourteen years, which he began to serve in 1945 at the Castillo del Principe in Havana.[59] Tormented by his beloved brother's absence, Arsenio expressed his feelings in a bolero he entitled "Me siento muy solo" ("I Feel Very Lonely"), which the conjunto recorded on 22 June 1948.

While Kike was in prison Raúl took on the responsibility of guiding and accompanying Arsenio to his performances, recordings sessions, as well as on most of his daily activities (see Fig. 5.1.). In the summer of 1947 he accompanied Arsenio on their first trip to New York City to seek medical advice on whether it would be possible to restore his sight. Earlier a friend of Arsenio's who was a doctor suggested that he go to New York City to visit a friend of his named Dr. Ramón Castroviejo who was an eye specialist. With the hope of possibly having his sight restored, Arsenio agreed to go to New York and see the doctor.

He first had to raise enough funds to pay for the travel expenses and the operation, in case his sight would indeed be able to be restored. Through the early part of 1947 Arsenio with the help of Arcaño and others organized a series of benefit dances in Havana and Matanzas, including Güira de Macuriges, were he was born. For this occasion he composed a bolero called "Güira de Macuriges," in which he describes his desire and hope

---

[58] Raúl Travieso, 12 October 1998; *Diario de la Marina*, 15 March 1946, p. 19.
[59] *Diario de la Marina* 15 March 1946.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure. 5.1. Raúl Travieso and Arsenio, Havana, ca. 1946 (photograph courtesy of Raúl Travieso).

for having his sight restored, as well as his love for his place of birth (see lyrics below).[60] The largest and most successful benefit dance was titled "Un Rayo de Luz" ("A Ray of Light") and took place in La Polar, in Havana. People enthusiastically attended these dances, many of which contributed more money in addition to the entrance fee. In all, about 8,000 dollars were raised, which was more than enough for his expenses.[61]

Arsenio and Raúl arrived in New York City in late June 1947. Unfortunately, Dr. Castroviejo told Arsenio after the examination that his blindness was irreversible. The

---

[60] Arsenio's conjunto never recorded this bolero. The lyrics were recited to me by Raúl Travieso (26 June 2000).

[61] Antonio Arcaño, 28 November 1988; Raúl Travieso, 26 June 2000; Radamés Giro (personal communication).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

doctor explained that the latest procedure that he was involved in was cornea transplants, and that Arsenio's right cornea was healthy (his left eye had been removed shortly after the accident). It was his optical nerve that had been permanently damaged.[62] Once again, Arsenio expressed his deep disappointment in a bolero entitled "La vida es un sueño" ("Life is a Dream," rec. 27 Feb. 1948), which would become one of his most well-known and recorded compositions (see Appendices 2 and 3).

Güira de Macuriges	**Güira de Macuriges**
Güira de Macuriges, eres tú mi pueblo natal. Güira de Macuriges, no puedo olvidarte jamás. Güira de Macuriges, que hasta a ti llegue mi triste cantar. Que en ti se en rayó la luz primera, No he visto tus calles, tus plantas. Mi tierra querida no se como esta. Quisiera que Diós se apiadara. Y en un triste clamo oyera mi ser, Y permitiera, mi pueblo querido, Que mis ojos podiera verte otra vez.	Güira de Macuriges, you are my place of birth. Güira de Macuriges, I'll never forget you. Güira de Macuriges, so that even you will hear my song of sadness. In you the first light was rubbed out, I have not seen your streets, your plants. Beloved hometown, I don't know how you are, I wish that God would have pity. And in a sad appeal he would hear my soul, And allow, my beloved hometown, That my eyes would see you again.

Arsenio and Raúl returned to Havana on Arsenio's birthday, 30 August, to an emotional homecoming. As Raúl's account and the lyrics to "Guaguancó en La Habana" demonstrate, the people of the working-class barrios of Havana had won a special place in Arsenio's heart—and vice versa:

> When we departed from New York Arsenio composed "Todos los barrios de La Habana" [or "Guaguancó en La Habana"] on the plane. . . .

[62] Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's conjunto was playing in "Mamoncillo" [in La Tropical] . . . waiting for him. And when all the people there heard that Arsenio was arriving they all went to the airport to wait for us. Well, from the airport we went to the dance to play. . . . So, Arsenio sang and played it for Lilí, and Lilí arranged it, and then they played it. . . . The place went crazy! Some were yelling and others were crying! That was incredible![63]

Guaguancó en La Habana	Guaguancó in Havana
Señores, pongan atención. Que escuchen este lindo guaguancó, Que traigo del extranjero, Directo de Nueva York.	Ladies and gentlemen, your attention please. Listen to this beautiful guaguancó. That I bring from abroad, Directly from New York.
A mi llegada envío mis saludos, cubanos; A todos los barrios de la Habana: Amalia, Jesús María, Cayo Hueso y San Leopoldo, El Cerro tiene la llave, Pueblo Nuevo se pasó, A Belén le toca ahora, a los chicos del Vedado, Los Sitios acere, Atarés con el Pilar, saludamos a Luyanó.	Upon my return I give my greetings, Cubans; To all the barrios of Havana: Amalia, Jesús María, Cayo Hueso, and San Leopoldo, El Cerro has the key, Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself, It's Belén's turn, to the youngsters of Vedado, Los Sitios, my friend, Atarés and Pilar, we greet Luyanó.
[chorus] ¡Para que gozen bailando todos los barrios, bonkó!	[chorus] So that all the barrios will enjoy themselves dancing, my friend!

"Guaguancó en La Habana" was eventually recorded around 1953 by Conjunto Modelo,

[63] Cuando nosotros salimos de Nueva York en el mismo avión fue que Arsenio compuso "Todos los barrios de La Habana" ["Guaguancó en La Habana"]. . . . Entonces, el grupo de Arsenio estaba tocando en el "Mamoncillo" . . . esperando a Arsenio. Cuando toda esa tumba oyeron que Arsenio llegaba, salieron toda esa tumba para el aeropuerto a esperarnos a nosotros. Bueno ya te digo, del aeropuerto nos fuimos para el baile a tocar. . . . Entonces, Arsenio le cantó y le dijó a Lilí, y Lilí coordinó, y arrancaron a tocar. . . . ¡Coño, se cayo abajo chico! ¡Gente gritando y otros llorando! ¡Eso fue de madre! (Raúl Travieso, 5 April 1997).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

many of the musicians of which had been members of Arsenio's conjunto.[64] The lyrics encapsulate the primary themes of his guaguancós and, in general, the nature of Arsenio's relationship with the black barrios of Havana.

After several appeals, Kike was released in early 1950, having served five years. After Kike's release, Arsenio expressed his renewed optimism in "Vuelvo a la vida" (I Return to Life), which the conjunto recorded on 29 March 1950 (see Appendix 3). Nevertheless, Kike harbored regret and repentance the rest of his life, even to the extent of writing letters to Mayo's family asking them for forgiveness.[65]

Re-evaluating Blackness

I have previously discussed the role of mestizaje and afrocubanismo in the definitions of Cuban identity and Arsenio's contestations of these dominant ideologies in the 1930s. I focused particularly on the ambivalence held by black Cuban intellectuals over the place of black rural and urban working-class cultural expressions as these threatened their aspirations for social and cultural "superación." Contrary to such efforts to occlude Cuba's African cultural heritage and, hence, obfuscate modernity's dominant constructions of racial difference, Arsenio drew from the mythological foundations of primarily the palo

---

[64] According to BMI records, the composer of "Guaguancó en La Habana" is Lázaro Prieto, who was Arsenio's bassist. It is likely that Arsenio gave Lázaro composer credit; Arsenio gave credit for other songs to other musicians including Alfredo Armenteros ("Me boté de guaño") and, especially, Kike (see Appendix 1).
[65] Pedro Luís Ferro, 20 October 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

monte belief system for the lyrical content of many of his afrocubanos, the music of which was, nevertheless, embedded within the typical soundscape of the Cuban blackface theater. His intentions with the conjunto and son montuno style, however, were unmitigated by concerns for meeting the expectations of a broader national and international audience. Instead, he was intent on brokering the dominant meaning of blackness not by obfuscating or denying Cuba's African heritage but in fact by elucidating racial differences and changing the value orientation of blackness.

In the following section I will review the politics of racialized difference in Cuban music in the first half of the twentieth century, focusing on the initial reception of the tumbadora among some in the black working class. After, I will discuss the ways Cuban musicians characterized and distinguished Arsenio's son montuno style and how these distinctions were, in turn, engendered by the performance of son montuno.

Introducing the tumbadora

Throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century the musical styles and material culture of the black rural and urban working class were repressed by local government and police officials. And no other aspect of these traditions were signified more definitively as racially distinct and threatening than the drum. For example, Fernando Ortiz quoted an official police edict, released in 1913 in Havana, that advised all police officers to prohibit "congas" or groups of parading musicians and dancers in use of "African drums" to

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

perform on the streets.[66] Also prohibited was dancing or "movements with the body to the sound of the music." Robin Moore discusses the condemnation of *son* music by some white as well as black intellectuals and the outright prohibition of the bongó throughout the 1910s.[67] During the *afrocubanismo* period, however, some sacred and secular drums, which were once widely vilified and suppressed, were now the objects of interest among mostly white intellectuals and artists. For instance, on 30 May 1937, black singers and *batá* drummers performed santería music outside of a traditional context in a conference on Yoruba music organized by Fernando Ortiz and attended by a white audience.[68] Just a few months earlier local officials in Havana reauthorized the participation of congas, primarily to attract more interest from tourists in the city's carnival celebrations. And, since at least the late 1920s, audiences in cabarets in Europe, New York City, Havana, and other Latin American cities reveled in and danced to stylized "congas" and *son* (known commercially as "rhumba"), the performance of which often included the Afrocuban bongó and tumbadora or "conga" drum.[69]

Yet, through the 1940s, black intellectuals continued to hold suspicion over Afro-Cuban drums and black working-class dance styles, characterizing congas, for example, as uncivilized, embarrassing, and, hence, antithetical to the goals of "superación." This suspicion also accounted for the refusal of black middle-class sociedades to allow conjuntos and *son* dancing in their dancehalls. Hence, in their attempts at integration into

---

[66] Ortiz 1921: 37-38.
[67] Moore 1997: 95-97.
[68] *Ultra* June-July 1937. According to Martínez Furé (1991: 37), this event took place in 1936.
[69] See Moore 1995.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

mainstream Cuban society, the black intelligentsia and middle class were especially concerned with distancing themselves from all markers of "Africanness." Even the black working class was not immune to the discursive power of African "degeneracy" and racialized difference as signified through the drum.

For instance, Arsenio's initial attempts at using the tumbadora for his performances for certain black working-class social clubs were met with suspicion. In the following, Arsenio describes the tension and conflict that the tumbadora caused for some:

> They used to kick us out of the sociedad because before those drums were used to play African music, [and] nothing more. So, when my brother [Kike] was about to go in [the hall, they'd say], "Hey *negrito*, where do you think you're going with that drum? There's no celebration for a saint here." They would kick me out. I had to explain to the president of the sociedad: "No, no, no. It's the truth. I have a new [style] that I've come up with and it requires a drum." [One guy would say], "Well, those drums are not allowed inside. So, we're gonna wait until the president [of the sociedad] arrives." So, until the president arrived [Kike] had to wait outside with the tumbadora. The president would scratch his head, think, and say, "Well, let's try it out." After [we would play], the president would say, "You know what? That 'little drum' sounds good." And then they all went allowing the 'little drum' [to be played in their dance halls] until all of the [conjuntos] started to use that 'little drum'.[70]

---

[70] Nos botaban de la sociedad porque esos tambores usaban antes para tocar música africana, [y] nada más. Y cuando mi hermano llegaba que iba a meterse [al salón, decían], 'Oye negrito, ¿donde vas con ese tambor? Si aquí no hay fiesta de santo.' Me botaban. Yo tenía que hablar con el presidente de la sociedad: 'No, no, no. De verdad que tengo un nuevo ritmo que yo e sacado y que necesita tambor.' [Uno decía], 'Bueno, aquí no se para los tambores esos. Entonces, vamos a esperar que venga el presidente.' Entonces, cuando se apareció el presidente tenía que estar pobrecito con la tumbadora allá afuera hasta que llegaba el presidente. El presidente allá se rascaba la cabeza, pensaba y decía, 'Bueno, vamos a probar.' Entonces, el presidente decía, '¿Saber que? Suena bien el tamborcito.' Y fueron dejando el tamborcito hasta que todas [los conjuntos] pusieron el tamborcito (Arsenio Rodríguez 1964).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Although Arsenio did not specify, this event must have taken place at a black working-class social club since he did not perform for sociedades españolas until after 1945, by which time most *son* groups including Conjunto Casino and La Sonora Matancera had incorporated the tumbadora into their ensemble format. What is clear is that in the early 1940s, despite more than a decade of afrocubanismo, the tumbadora still signified "Africanness" or "backwardness" rather than "Cubanness" or "progress" even among the black working class. Officers of this sociedad, perhaps sarcastically, associated the tumbadora with African-derived sacred performance traditions and, therefore, refused to allow it into their dancehall. Arsenio challenged this perception by convincing the president that the tumbadora could be used for modern musical styles other than what was commonly perceived by many as atavistic African-derived sacred music.

On other occasions, guests associated the tumbadora with "congas" and comparsas, as Arsenio recalled: "When I would finish playing at any party people would murmur, 'There's the "Black Pirate" with his *chambelona*."[71] Musicians also expressed suspicion over Arsenio's use of the tumbadora, as Raúl recounted:

> Musicians used to laugh at Arsenio . . . because the drum was only played in comparsas, parties, rumbas, and *solares* [urban tenement buildings]. It was almost always looked down upon because it was low class. So, they would laugh and say, "Arsenio, you're crazy!" Arsenio would say, "Well, then, you're going to have to go crazy too and do the same because this is the future. There will be a time when they're going to take away a trumpet, a violin, and a saxophone. But you're not going to be able to take away

---

[71] Cuando terminaba de tocar en cualquier fiesta se formaba el murmullo, "Ahí está el 'Corsario Negro' con su 'Chambelona' " (in Cubillas Jr. 1952: 25). "La chambelona" is a political comparsa associated with the Liberal Party (see Moore 1997: 74-77 for a brief discussion on the history of this and other political comparsas).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

this drum that I'm putting in here."[72]

As Arsenio noted, the initial ambivalence over the tumbadora that leaders of some black working-class social clubs expressed was soon after replaced by acceptance. This was surely facilitated by the artistic and musical synergy that was fostered by his conjunto and dancers of the black working class. Soon, the conjunto format and his style had become popular among audiences beyond the black working class, such that conjuntos that performed for white social clubs incorporated the tumbadora and, in some instances, attempted to approximate Arsenio's son montuno style. The following section will discuss how the styles of La Sonora Matancera, Conjunto Casino, and others during the 1940s were differentiated and how such differentiations in racialized terms were engendered by Arsenio's conjunto and son montuno style.

Estilo negro y macho

In my interviews with former conjunto musicians, the following sets of dichotomous terms were most frequently used by them to distinguish the styles of the most popular conjuntos of the 1940s: negro/blanco (black/white), macho/hembra (masculine/feminine or "strong"/"weak"), and sonero/guarachero. While each musician alone did not always refer

---

[72] Los músicos se reían de Arsenio . . . porque el tambor se tocaba nada más que en la comparsa, la fiesta, la rumba y los solares. Casi siempre se miraba fajado porque era elemento. Entonces, se reían y decían, "¡Arsenio, tú estas loco!" Arsenio decía, "Bueno pues, van a tener que volver loco y hacer esto porque esto es lo que va venír. Va ver un momento que van a quitar una trompeta, van a quitar un violín, van a quitar un saxofón. Pero no van a poder quitar ese tambor que yo estoy poniendo aquí" (Raúl Travieso, 15 April 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to all three sets of terms, collectively they applied "negro," "macho," and "sonero" to describe Arsenio's style. Conjuntos whose styles were also considered either "negro," "macho," or "sonero" include René Álvarez y su Conjunto Los Astros (active in the late 1940s) and Conjunto Modelo, Conjunto Estrellas de Chocolate, and Chappottín y sus Estrellas (all of whom formed around 1952, after Arsenio left Havana). In contrast, they applied "blanco," "hembra," and "guarachero" to describe the styles of La Sonora Matancera, Conjunto Casino, La Gloria Matancera, Los Jovenes del Cayo, Luís Santí y su Conjunto, and Conjunto Nueva América.[73]

By far, musicians most often invoked the racialized set of terms to make their differentiations. For instance, Raúl stated that:

> [Whites] had music by Antonio María Romeu, Belisario López, La Gloria Matancera, La Sonora Matancera—who now play black music; before [i.e., 1930s-1940s] they didn't—[Orquesta] Riverside, Casino de la Playa. Those groups played music for whites. . . . Conjunto Casino, who [Roberto] Faz played with, was a white conjunto. That was not a conjunto of blacks, no, no, no. That's what they [whites] had. So we had black social clubs where we danced.[74]

Humberto Cané stated that "La Gloria Matancera . . . was an all-white conjunto which played in the white style."[75] José Carbo Menéndez (a white Cuban composer) declared

---

[73] See also Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 5-6.

[74] Tenían la música que era Antonio María Romeu, Belisario López, La Gloria Matancera, La Sonora Matancera—que ahora toca música negrera; antes no era así—La Riverside, Casino de la Playa. Esos eran música de blanco. . . . El [Conjunto] Casino, que tocaba Faz, [era] conjunto de blanquito. Ese no era conjunto de negrero, no, no, no. Eran lo que tenían ellos. Entonces nosotros teníamos las sociedades de negros donde [bailabamos] (Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998).

[75] La Gloria Matancera . . . eran de blancos con el estilo de blanco (Humberto Cané, 8

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that Arsenio "created the black style of dance music . . . black Cuban music of the common people, son montuno."[76]

Their racialized differentiations were often intertwined with other observations, including characterizing Arsenio's black style as complex. Humberto Cané gave the following, rather candid, assessment of the white style of La Sonora Matancera, with whom he played *tres* (1937-1945) and the group that his father (Valentín Cané) had founded:

> There were two styles: a simple style [i.e., white] and an *afro* [i.e., black] style. Arsenio began to play in an *afro* style, which was more difficult and had more *sabor* [flavor]. La Sonora [Matancera] had a very simple, passé . . . style. That was one of the reasons why I left La Sonora Matancera [in 1944], because they didn't want to improve, modernize more, and play new things.[77]

Cané added that "[Pablo Vázquez] of La Sonora Matancera was a man who played [bass] simply, but he was very comical dancing [as he played bass]."[78]

Some musicians applied the words macho (masculine) or hembra (feminine), "strong" or "weak," and other analogous terms to describe a conjunto's rhythmic density and sonic power. For example, Agustín Caraballoso described the rhythm patterns played

---

March 1999).

[76] Creó el estilo de la música bailable negroide . . . la música negroide cubana, de la gente del pueblo, son montuno (José Carbo Menéndez, 6 March 1998).

[77] Son dos estilos: un estilo fácil y un estilo afro. Arsenio empesó a tocar con estilo afro, más difícil y con más sabor. La Sonora [Matancera] era un conjunto muy simple, muy atrás . . . musicalmente. Esa fue una de las razónes que yo me fui de La Sonora Matancera, que no quisieron renovar, no quisieron modernisar más y no quisieron hacer otras cosas nueva (Humberto Cané, 8 March 1999).

[78] [Pablo Vázquez] de La Sonora Matancera era un hombre que tocaba fácil, pero era muy cómico bailando (Cané 8 March 1999).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by "other groups" (i.e., "white" conjuntos) as "easy" and "more simple" than Arsenio's.[79] In Raúl's opinion:

> The conga player [in La Sonora Matancera] was not good. He only . . . kept time . . . and [that style] was what they used to call "hembra," which meant that it had a small [or weak] sound. . . . [Arsenio's] conjunto was "macho," but La Sonora [Matancera] was not.[80]

According to Patato Valdés, Conjunto Kubavana (a black and mulatto group), with whom he played tumbadora in the early 1940s, liked to play "romantic boleros . . . simple, not hard."[81] Raúl felt that Kubavana's style was similar to La Sonora de Piñon's, a black conjunto that preceded Arsenio's but who played in a faster style.[82]

By the mid 1940s, faster tempos had also become associated with the "white" style, while slower tempos, as performed by Arsenio's conjunto, had become associated with the "black" style. Patato Valdés, who became Conjunto Casino's only black member after leaving Kubavana, claimed to have requested that the group play in slower tempos, hence in a more "black" style.

> [Conjunto Casino] played too fast, and when I joined I slowed the tempo

---

[79] Caraballoso, 11 December 1999.

[80] El conguero [de La Sonora Matancera] no era bueno. No más . . . llevaba el tiempo . . . y [ese estilo] era lo que le decían "hembra," que quiere decir que [tiene] un sonido chiquito. . . . [Arsenio] era el conjunto macho, pero La Sonora [Matancera] no (Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999).

[81] [Kubavana] era bolero romántica . . . sencillo, no tocar duro (Patato Valdés, 18 September 1995).

[82] Raúl Travieso, 15 March 1999. Conjunto Kubavana played regularly at the Zombie Club, a tourist and elite cabaret in Centro Habana, after they replaced Conjunto Casino in November 1943. They rarely performed for sociedades, white or black (Patato Valdés, 18 September 1995; Acosta et al. 1999: 37).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> down. Before I joined, they played like a "white" conjunto, and I used to say, "No way!".[83]

However, Roberto Espí, who was Casino's director and second voice, maintained that, compared to Arsenio's, his conjunto and La Sonora Matancera played in faster tempos.

> [Arsenio] had his style, his sound. Our [style] was a little faster—like the older people say—, but he maintained the same rhythm [tempo?] like the older, mellower *son*, the *son criollo* [native, i.e., to Cuba]. He maintained that stability. La Sonora Matancera also played a little faster.[84]

Conjuntos who played in faster tempos were also known as "conjuntos guaracheros," particularly because of the dominance of faster-paced guarachas in their repertoire, while Arsenio's and other conjuntos like his, who played in slower tempos, were referred to as "conjuntos soneros." Cuban music historian Fidel Valdés Ginebra stated:

> La Sonora Matancera dedicated itself fundamentally to the guaracha. They were more *guarachera*. But La Sonora Matancera had a different sound than Arsenio's.[85]

The guaracha originated in the nineteenth century and was popularized in Cuban bufos, in which it was typically performed in a moderate tempo by a vocal duet between

---

[83] [Conjunto Casino] tocaban demasiado rápido, y cuando yo entré con el Casino le cambié la "moña" para atrás. Antes que empesé, tocaban como conjunto de blanquito, y yo decía, "¡Que va!" (Patato Valdés, 18 September 1995).

[84] [Arsenio] tenía su sello, su timbre. Lo nuestro era un poco más a'lante—como dicen los viejos—, pero él mantenía el ritmo ese de lo que es el son rancio, el son criollo. Mantenía esa estabilidad. La Sonora Matancera era un poquito más adelantado también (Roberto Espí in Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 49).

[85] La Sonora Matancera se dedicó a la guaracha fundamentalmente. Eran más guarachera. Pero La Sonora Matancera marcaba un aspecto timbrico diferente de Arsenio (Valdés Ginebra, 10 July 1999).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the "mulata" and "negrito" character types.[86] By the 1930s, big bands and septetos had started to perform guarachas in a faster tempo and with an added, *son*-influenced, montuno section. What remained of the nineteenth-century guaracha was its typically playful, roguish, and sometimes bawdy lyrics. The guaracha's popularization in tourist and theatrical entertainment of the afrocubanismo period in Havana must have factored into the dominance of this genre in the repertories of "white" conjuntos, who after all continued to perform regularly in tourist cabarets in addition to touring Latin America throughout the 1940s. More importantly, its association with black character types of Cuba's blackface theater of the nineteenth century, in addition to popular music of the afrocubanismo period, must have played a role in the perception of the guaracha, as played in a fast tempo by "white" conjuntos, as indicative of "white"- and tourist-style music.

How these styles were experienced in performance significantly engendered how and why they were distinguished in these terms. A comparison of three guarachas recorded by Arsenio's conjunto, La Sonora Matancera, and Conjunto Casino clearly demonstrates their stylistic differences. Between 1940 and 1952, Arsenio with his conjunto recorded seven guarachas. Structurally, they are in the typical two-part form, verse followed by montuno (see Table 5.2 in Appendix 4). The three he recorded during the first stage of his style development (1941-1943), however, do not fully incorporate his new style's arrangement scheme (cf. Table 4.2). But by 1944 he had begun to use this arrangement scheme, including the diablo section. In fact, the five guarachas he recorded after 1943 are performed in the son montuno style, with one exception. While Arsenio's

---

[86] See León 1984: 166-184 and Moore 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

sones average in the 120s and 130s, most of his guarachas (like his guaguancós) are faster, averaging in the 140s. The exception is "Sacando candela" ("Dancing It Up," rec. 1 June 1948), whose verse is in the high 130s, but whose montuno decelerates to the 100s! Nevertheless, these tempos are significantly slower than those in which "white" conjuntos performed guarachas.

In the montuno section of Arsenio's "Adivínalo" ("Guess"), for example, the bassist accents the melody of the coro pattern, which itself accents the off-beats (see Example 5.2.a). In addition, the tumbadora part accents the final two notes of the coro pattern. And, the bongó part incorporates freer, yet sparse passages, including a 3:2 cross-rhythm figure. In contrast, La Sonora Matancera's guarachas reflect none of the stylistic principles and procedures of Arsenio's son montuno style. For example, in the montuno section of Matancera's "Vive como yo" ("Live Like I Do," rec. ca. 1948-1950), none of the patterns are in contratiempo (see Example 5.2.b).[87] Instead, the piano pattern accents every strong beat, as the bass, which plays an abbreviated tresillo (see Example 4.1.a), similarly accents the downbeat of each bar. Furthermore, the tumbadora part simply keeps time throughout by accenting beat 4. As Raúl noted (p. 233), this style of playing tumbadora—that is, merely "keeping time"—was referred to as "hembra" or having a "small" sound, which characterized as well the piano and bass parts. Finally, Matancera's guaracha averages in the 220s, compared to Arsenio's "Adivínalo," which averages in the 140s.

The montuno section of Casino's "Vieja, flaca y fea" ("Old, Skinny, and Ugly,"

---

[87] *La Sonora Matancera*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-045.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.2. Guaracha as performed in the "black" and "white" styles

(a) "Adivínalo" (10 Jan. 1947), Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto: montuno

"Adivinalo." Words and Music by Jose Luis Forest. Copyright (c) 1977 by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

rec. 1947) similarly consists of "simple" (see Caraballoso's remarks, pp. 232-233) patterns (see Example 5.2.c).[88] The bass player plays the "bolero" pattern (see Example 4.1.a), outlining most of the time the respective triad. In addition, the tumbadora part rather mechanically accents beat 4, while the bongó rarely strays from the basic martillo pattern. The piano part, however, involves off-beat accentuation, yet it continues to support the vocal parts harmonically more so than melodically (cf. Example 4.2.e).

---

[88] *Conjunto Kubavana de Alberto Ruiz*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-034.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.2. *Continued*

(b) "Vive como yo" (ca. 1948-50), La Sonora Matancera: montuno

Based on these stylistic differences, therefore, dancing to these guarachas must have felt completely different. While the guaracha and *son* both included a montuno section, the guaracha dance style was different from the *son's*. According to one contemporary writer: the guaracha dance style "is not subject to predetermined steps or movements. As the name guaracha indicates (joke), the dancer can move and contort himself as he pleases . . . It's what one might call the *son* in pantomime. Couples rarely

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.2. *Continued*

(c) "Vieja, flaca y fea" (ca. 1947), Conjunto Casino: montuno

dance holding hands."[89] Nevertheless, I included a staff of the *son* footwork in the examples above to demonstrate how dancers, who might have employed it, would have

[89] Ruíz 1949: 30.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"felt" the styles. In the montuno section of Arsenio's "Adivínalo," feeling the "beat from below" with the body, as Bebo Valdés described it (see pp. 155-156), was facilitated by the coro and bass parts in contratiempo and the tumbadora part, whose open-tone attacks accent step 3 and interweave with steps 5 and 6. The parts in the montuno sections of Matancera's and Casino's guarachas, however, accent mostly strong beats and, most importantly, correlate little with the steps of the *son* footwork.

Many of the arrangements of Matancera's and Casino's guarachas include a "mambo" section, consisting of a four-bar phrase, which is arranged for the trumpets and repeats four times without any alternation with a coro (see Tables 5.3 and 5.4 in Appendix 4). None of these arrangements, however, end with the diablo section. When "white" style conjuntos did incorporate the diablo, it was for their arrangements of the son montuno proper, that is, the one-part *son*. It is in these son montunos, in particular, that the stylistic differences between the "black" and "white" styles are most readily observable. According to Agustin Caraballoso and Humberto Cané most of these "white"-style conjuntos, including Conjunto Cubaconga, with whom Caraballoso played trumpet during the 1940s, tried to imitate Arsenio's style.[90] In actuality, these conjuntos attempted to approximate Arsenio's principles and procedures of his son montuno style in their performances of the son montuno proper only and not, for example, the guaracha, as the examples above show.

Arsenio's conjunto realized his principles of rhythmic power and fullness through the use of contratiempo (or off-beat accentuation), call-and-response, interweaving of

---

[90] Caraballoso, 11 December 1999; Cané, 8 March 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 5.3. "Don Felipe" (3 January 1947), Conjunto Casino: diablo section

"Don Felipe." Words and Music by Armando Dobal. Copyright (c) 1954 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

patterns, and corresponding accents and patterns with the son's basic footwork. These principles and procedures culminated in the diablo section and ultimately accounted for the characterization of his style as more "difficult" and complex, having more "sabor" (flavor), "macho," and, most importantly, "black" (see Examples 4.8.a-d and 5.1.c). In contrast, Conjunto Casino's performance of the diablo in the son montuno "Don Felipe" lacks the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

off-beat accentuation and interwoven patterns characteristic of Arsenio's diablos and son montuno style (see Example 5.3).[91]

The following by Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros is an apt summation of the social significance Arsenio and his style had for many Cuban musicians and dancers of the black working class of Havana:

> In my opinion, the essence of *son* is, was Arsenio Rodríguez. There were many groups, but for me there was no other like Arsenio's. I learned from him because he played the truth—*son* as it should be played. It's a very black thing. *Son* is black like jazz and blues. Those are black styles, which were later played by everyone, imitating it, which is fine.[92]

Through such statements, musicians and dancers have articulated more than just a purely sonic projection of black music. More importantly, they have expressed in the dominant discourses of that time and location the meanings performing with Arsenio's conjunto and dancing to his son montuno engendered.

The Politics and Economics of the Music Industry in Havana

This concluding section discusses Arsenio's relationship with Radio Mil Diez, RCA Victor, and Peer International. Unlike the local dance music milieu, Arsenio had much less

---

[91] *Conjunto Casino*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-030.

[92] Para mi, la esencia del son es, fue Arsenio Rodríguez. Habían muchos grupos, pero para mi como Arsenio Rodríguez no hay dos. Lo aprendí de él porque ese sonaba de verdad, son como es. Es una cosa bien negroide. El son es negroide como el jazz y el blues. Esos son cosas negroide que despues todo el mundo lo haga, lo imite, que esta muy bién (Alfredo Armenteros, 8 February 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

power in the domain of the mass media, the workings of which were contingent on larger structures of power. His access to radio, beginning in 1943, was especially subject to local and international networks of political control.

Radio Mil Diez

In February 1943 the Unión Revolucionaria Comunista, which would change its name to the Partido Socialista Popular in 1944, began a grassroots campaign to collect funds from workers and professionals in urban and rural areas throughout Cuba to purchase a radio station. On 10 March 1943 the communist party had collected the $118,000 necessary to purchase Radio Lavín's two stations.[93] The first, 1010 CMX, was a long wave station whose frequency was the only international channel that Cuba possessed. The other, 9273 COCX, was a short wave station with 1,000 watts of power. The studios of CMX were located on Reina (no. 314) and Gervasio, in Centro Habana. On 1 April CMX "Radio Mil Diez" (the station's name was initially "Radio Popular Onda Colectiva Hoy") began regular programming for eighteen hours a day.[94] Ibrahim Urbino was the first general manager and was later replaced by Joaquín Ordoqui, a communist party member who was also an elected representative from the province of Las Villas.[95] On 10 April, nine days after going on the air, the directors of Mil Diez organized their first public event, which took place at La Polar's baseball stadium, in celebration of the station's inauguration. The

---

[93] *New York Times*, 28 April 1946. According to López (1981: 302) the station was purchased for $75,000.
[94] López 1981: 301-304.
[95] García Montes and Alonso Avila 1970: 305, 318; López 1981: 305.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

musical acts, which were also Mil Diez's first regular artists, included Trío Matamoros, Conjunto Camacho, Julio Cueva y su Orquesta with Orlando "Cascarita" Guerra, Las Maravillas de Arcaño, and Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto. The guest speaker was Dr. Juan Marinello, the president of the Unión Revolucionaria Comunista.[96]

From the beginning, Mil Diez's artistic orientation was proletarian and nationalist, while their political and social orientations were pronouncedly pro-communist and pro-union. For example, the station's slogans were "Todo lo bueno al servicio del pueblo" ("All the best in the service of the people") and "La emisora del pueblo" ("The radio station of the people").[97] On Sunday afternoons a program entitled "Orientación e Ideas" was dedicated to the fight against and education on prejudice and racial discrimination. Musical programming included lectures on and performances of traditional Cuban music such as punto guajiro, rumba, and comparsa. Also, they chose the patriotic song "La Bayamesa" for the station's theme song.[98] The guitar groups Trío Matamoros, Mil Diez's most internationally popular musical group, and Dueto Guevara-Barbaru were presented as interpreters of "our musical folklore" and "Cuban vernacular music."[99] Moreover, Mil Diez's hiring of Arsenio's conjunto reflected their commitment to include black groups whose primary audience, especially for 1943, was the black working class.

Mil Diez's political and social programming was in the control of the communist party and the Confederación de Trabajadores de Cuba (The Confederation of Workers of

---

[96] *Hoy* (Havana), 21 March 1943 and 4 April 1943.
[97] *Nuevos Rumbos* 1/7 (1946): 22.
[98] López 1981: 311, 317; *Nuevos Rumbos* 1/8 1946. The station also devoted time to semi-classical and symphonic music.
[99] *Hoy* 28 March 1943.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cuba).[100] Various daily programs were aired for the purpose of providing their listeners with education in communism. For example, a daily quiz show provided a course in Marxist theories and their application. Every night at 9 p.m. an open forum was aired consisting of political and intellectual speakers, both communist and non-communist although the former was more represented.[101]

Some of Mil Diez's musicians, actors, and technicians were members of the communist party, but many were not.[102] Despite their "tolerance," however, the directors of Mil Diez did try to convince, sometimes even intimidate their employees into joining the party. For instance, Raúl was present during one occasion when the station's directors approached Arsenio with respect to his political affiliation:

> On one occasion the people from Mil Diez told Arsenio that they wanted to talk to him. So, they started to talk about how everyone who worked for the station had to belong to the party, when Arsenio told them, "No, no, no. I don't belong to any party. I play for both the conservatives and the liberals. And if they'd pay me I'd play in a cemetery. My [politics] is music." There was one from the party whose name was Joaquín Ordoqui who asked him, "Arsenio, why don't you play ball?" Arsenio answered, "I don't believe you've ever heard of a blind ball player. Talk to the members of the conjunto, and whoever wants to join the party, fine. That's their business. But me, Arsenio, no." Another chimed in and said, "No, because you know that everyone who works here has to belong to ," Arsenio interrupted, "Then, pay me right now and I'm finished." [Another said], "No, no, no. Arsenio, don't get upset. What we want is," [Arsenio] "I'm telling you that I don't belong to any party." And since Arsenio was very popular, and his conjunto was heard throughout Cuba, they let Arsenio

---

[100] García Montes and Alonso Avila 1970: 304.
[101] Phillips 1945: 675-676.
[102] García Montes and Alonso Avila 1970: 305.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

work for the station without belonging to the party.[103]

Arsenio, in his response (as recollected by Raúl) to their demands, poignantly stated his contempt for political affiliation, even to the party that had given his conjunto access to their radio station and had fought for the protection against discrimination. On the other hand, he remained artistically and professionally dedicated to the working class of Havana.

By 1946 the directors of Mil Diez had eased their position on pressuring their artists to become members of the communist party, and had begun to contract other popular artists in order to attract more listeners and, thus, compete with CMQ and RHC-Cadena Azul, Havana's most popular radio stations.[104] They included vocalists Bienvenido León, Miguelito Valdés, Celia Cruz, Olga Guillot, and Conjunto Jóvenes del Cayo. They also continued to hire black groups such as Las Melodias del 40 and René Álvarez y Su

---

[103] [E]n una ocasión la gente del Miel Diez le dijeron a Arsenio que querían hablar con él. Entonces, estaban hablando de que todos que pertenecían a trabajar en la emisora tenían que pertenecer al partido donde Arsenio les dijo, 'No, no, no. Yo no pertenezco a ningún partido. Yo lo toco lo mismo a los conservadores que los liberales. Que si me pagan toco en el cementerio. Lo mío es música.' Hubo uno del partido que se llamaba Joaquín Ordoqui [que] le [dijo], 'Arsenio, ¿Por qué tú no juegas pelota?' Arsenio le contestó, 'Yo creo que ustedes nunca han visto un pelotero ciego. Ustedes les hablan a la gente de la orquesta, y el quién quiere pertenecer, bien. Eso es suyo particular. Pero yo, Arsenio, no.' Sale otro y dice, 'No, porque tú sabes que aquí todos que trabajan tiene que pertenecer' Dice Arsenio, 'Pues, me estan dando mi cheque ahora mismo y ya terminé.' [Otro dice], 'No, no, no. Arsenio, no te molestes. Lo que queremos es' [Arsenio] 'Ya les digo que yo no pertenezco a nadien.' Y como que Arsenio era muy famoso, y se oía en Cuba entero, ellos permitieron de que Arsenio trabajara ahí sin pertenecer (Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998).

[104] García Montes and Alonso Avila 1970: 305.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Conjunto "Astro," who performed regularly for the black working class.[105]

However, Mil Diez's association with the communist party and overall leftist and anti-imperialist political tone did not diminish. This drew the concern of not only the Cuban government but also the United States government. For instance, as early as 1944, Joaquín Ordoqui, Lázaro Peña, Blas Roca, and other key associates of both the communist party and Mil Diez were under surveillance by operatives working for the United States State Department. The surveillance involved covert operations as well as listening to speeches given by party and union leaders on Mil Diez.[106] In 1947 the United States Federal Communication Commission became concerned over Mil Diez's signal strength and direction. In a State Department memorandum, a "Mr. O'Connor" wrote:

> Since . . . CMX is entitled to use a power as high as 50 kilowatts, the possibility exists of this station, at some time in the future, making ideological broadcasts to the United States. Mr. McNaughten [a FCC employee] said that when he was in Cuba recently, the Cuban officials [of the Ministry of Communications] told him that they were trying to do something about the situation, but he is not certain that they really mean to do anything.[107]

In fact, on 1 May 1948, the Cuban government closed down Mil Diez after the station had aired a pre-recorded speech given by Jesús Menéndez, a communist member of the House of Representatives and head of the Sugar Worker's Union. The speech,

---

[105] *Hoy* 3 October 1946, 8 October 1946, 4 March 1948, and 6 April 1948; *Nuevos Rumbos* 1/7 1946 and 2/2 1947; López 1981: 313.
[106] U.S. Diplomatic Post. 1940-1945. *Cuba*. Frederick: University Publications of America.
[107] U.S. State Department. 1945-1949. *Cuba: Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs*. Frederick: University Publications of America.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

denouncing the bourgeois sugar industry and United States imperialism, was originally given on 6 January 1948 when José Tabío and Sergio Nicolas, who were Mil Diez technicians, recorded it. Hours after the pre-recorded speech was aired the police closed Reina, and occupied the Mil Diez office and studios.[108] The day after, the communist newspaper *Hoy* declared that the Ministry of Communications had ordered the closure of Mil Diez because it had allegedly used a signal power exceeding its authorized amount, which was 10,000 watts.[109] The government's shut-down of Mil Diez was denounced and criticized by government representatives such as Senator Eduardo Chibás, the secretary of the Federación de Sociedades Negras Serafin Portuondo Linares, and student leaders of the University of Havana, as well as mayors, union leaders, and other groups across the island.[110]

The loss of Mil Diez was a severe setback for the Cuban communist party because the radio station had been one of its principal instruments of propaganda not only in Cuba but also in the entire Latin American region.[111] It was also an obvious loss for musicians and audiences. Apart from his confrontation with the directors regarding his political non-affiliation, Arsenio had a favorable relationship with Mil Diez and its personnel. Manolo Ortega, who was an announcer, coined Arsenio's nickname "El Ciego Maravilloso,"

---

[108] López 1981: 331-333.
[109] *Hoy* 2 May 1948. Others believe that the Minister of Labor, and the subsequent Cuban president, Dr. Carlos Prío Socarrás ordered the closure of Mil Diez (García Montes and Alonso Avila 1970: 383).
[110] See *Hoy* 4, 9 May 1948.
[111] Phillips 1959: 246.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

which he would affectionately be known as for the rest of his life.[112] More importantly, Mil Diez gave Arsenio, his conjunto, and other black groups and musicians access to audiences across social, regional, and national boundaries, in addition to artistic freedom.

While there was a shortage of radio receivers during World War II, by 1947 it was estimated that 87 percent of the homes in greater Havana had radios.[113] Throughout the 1940s, however, CMQ and RHC-Cadena Azul dominated the ratings. For example, surveys in 1947 and 1948 estimated that out of more than 30 stations CMQ and RHC attracted about 80 percent of Havana's listening audience. Mil Diez came in at fourth, totaling about 5 percent of the audience.[114] Nevertheless, Mil Diez's transmissions reached audiences in regions such as Oriente, for example, where Arsenio's conjunto would never perform. Mil Diez also reached the Caribbean and Latin America, thus introducing musicians in Puerto Rico, for example, to Arsenio's music through the conjunto's live performances.[115] Therefore, unless one lived in Havana and was able to go to a sociedad de color or a cervecería, the only way one had access to the conjunto's live performances was through radio.

More importantly, the station played virtually no pre-recorded music, and their proletarian and non-commercial orientation gave musical groups a mass medium to perform live on the air and thus disseminate their original and progressive popular

---

[112] Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998. The similar nicknames "El Ciego Prodigioso" and "El Ciego Extraordinario" were used by Mil Diez in their initial advertisements (see *Hoy* 21, 28 March 1943).
[113] República de Cuba 1943: 684.
[114] See *New York Times*, 28 April 1946; Gutiérrez Serrano 1947: 66-67; *Newsweek* 31/12 (22 March 1948); see also Salwen 1994: 9.
[115] Phillips 1945: 675; López 1981: 315.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

music.[116] This was especially significant for Arsenio who had begun to develop his new style only a year or two before his new conjunto began to perform live on Mil Diez in April 1943. As Arcaño noted:

> In an era in which capitalism gagged the inspiration of musicians of popular music, Mil Diez, acquired through public funding, gave us the facilities that no other radio station could have given us. We played music that was more technical, and there was an incredible frankness and freedom. Mil Diez contributed a lot to the development of my orchestra.[117]

Young arrangers such as Dámaso Pérez Prado, Bebo Valdés, and René Hernández were known to attend Arsenio's live performances at the studios and wait around after Arsenio's shows to ask him questions about his new style.[118]

After the closure of Mil Diez in May 1948, Radio Salas (950 CMBZ) contracted many of Mil Diez's former artists including Arsenio's conjunto, Las Melodias del 40, and Arcaño y sus Maravillas (see Fig. 5.2.). Recognizing their popularity among dancers, the programming directors at Radio Salas started a daily show during the week entitled "Los Tres Grandes" ("The Big Three") that featured these three groups. The show began at 4:30 in the afternoon with Las Melodias del 40, followed by Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto at 5:00, and ending with Arcaño y Sus Maravillas from 5:30 to 6:00.[119] While the entire show became extremely popular throughout Cuba, Arsenio's conjunto,

---

[116] *New York Times*, 28 April 1946.
[117] En una época en que el capitalismo amordazaba la inspiración del músico popular, la Mil Diez, adquirida por suscripción pública, nos dio las facilidades que no podía darnos otra emisora. Hacíamos la cosa más técnica, y había una franqueza y libertad increíble. La Mil Diez contribuyó mucho al desarrollo de la orquesta (in Boudet 1974: 35).
[118] Cubillas Jr. 1952: 25.
[119] Dandy Béltran, 11 September 1996; Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 6.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 5.2. Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto, Radio Salas, Havana, ca. 1950. *Top row from left*: Félix Chappottín, trumpet, Oscar Velazco "Florecita," trumpet, Alfredo Armenteros "Chocolate," trumpet. *Middle from left*: Luis Martínez Griñan "Lilí," piano, Lázaro Prieto, bass, Arsenio Rodríguez, tres, René Scull, first voice and maracas, Miguelito Cuní, first voice and clave, Carlos Ramírez, guitar and second voice. *Bottom from left*: Félix Alfonso, tumbadora, Antolín Suárez "Papa Kila," bongó, Israel Rodríguez "Kike," tumbadora (photograph courtesy of Julio Jaramillo).

according to ratings in April 1949, attracted the most listeners.[120] Even Cuban-music fans in Puerto Rico and New York City tuned in to hear "Los Tres Grandes." Meanwhile, other conjuntos such as La Sonora Matancera and Conjunto Casino continued to perform daily on Cuba's most popular radio stations CMQ, RHC Cadena Azul, and Radio Progresso.[121]

---

[120] *Carteles* (Havana), 19 April 1949.
[121] Acosta et al. 1999: 43.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

RCA Victor and Peer International

Although the pay was not good, many musicians were able to eke out a living by playing for the black working class.[122] For directors and composers such as Arsenio, additional income came in the form of a higher percentage of performance and recording fees as well as record-sale royalties. As the leader of the conjunto, Arsenio dictated how the payment for each recording was distributed among his musicians. From 1940 to 1944, the conjunto made only 26 recordings, while from 1945 to 1952, during the height of the conjunto's popularity, it made 107 recordings, averaging only 13 per year.[123] Thus, his musicians' earnings from recording sessions totaled an insignificant amount compared to the revenue from their almost daily performances for the sociedades de color. Despite his conjunto's regular performances and popularity, the amount that Arsenio paid his musicians was not enough for some. For example, trumpet player Agustín Caraballoso turned down an offer by Arsenio to join his conjunto because Caraballoso was making more money playing with Conjunto Cubaconga, Conjunto Los Jóvenes del Cayo, Nueva América, Joseíto Fernández, and others.[124] (He would subsequently perform and record with Arsenio's conjunto in New York City after 1957.)

Arsenio also earned additional money from royalties. His checks, which were issued every six months, averaged around $135.[125] In the 1940s one record (i.e., 78 rpm)

---

[122] José Carbo Menéndez, 6 March 1998.
[123] These figures do not include the eight 78s (recorded in 1948) and one 10" LP (recorded in 1950) Arsenio's conjunto made for the Spanish Music Center (SMC), a New York label, in breach of his RCA Victor contract (see Appendix 2).
[124] Agustín Caraballoso, 16 March 1998.
[125] Raúl Travieso, 13 December 1999. The following figures were given to me by José

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

cost $1, of which .02¢ was paid by RCA Victor to Peer. From those .02¢, Peer paid the composer .01¢, which equaled 1 percent of each record sold. This means that on average 2,250 recordings of Arsenio's music (made by his conjunto and other groups) were being sold a month. The promotion of most RCA recording artists and their recordings were limited to radio and advertisements in newspapers. Arsenio's along with other artists' recordings were regularly listed in the *Diario de la Marina*, Cuba's main newspaper. Based on a less than thorough review, however, other more internationally popular artists and their recordings (e.g., Casino de la Playa and Conjunto Casino) tended to receive more promotional attention in the form of lists of the artist's recordings alone and "Record of the Week" spotlights. In any event, Arsenio and his musicians depended mostly on their performances to make a living.[126]

Leaving Havana

There were at least three reasons why Arsenio chose to start a new career in New York City in 1950 and, eventually, stay in 1952. First, upon his release from prison in early 1950 Kike was apparently in danger of reprisals by Wilfredo Mayo's relatives or friends. For the sake of his safety Kike moved to New York City, and never returned to his native Cuba (see fig. 5.3).[127] Second, in comparison to Havana, the pay in New York was much

---

Carbo Menéndez, who in addition to being a composer worked for Peer in Havana through the 1940s and 1950s (6 March 1998).

[126] Raúl Travieso, 13 December 1999.

[127] Ray Coen, 26 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 5.3. Israel "Kike" Travieso, New York City, 1952 (photograph courtesy of Xiomara Travieso).

greater, even for small groups who played for local social clubs. For instance, Raúl joined a small group as the bongó player, after he was paid $26 for a five-hour gig at the Club Cubano Inter-Americano in the Bronx.[128] Twenty-six dollars was at least ten times the amount that Arsenio's musicians in Havana got paid, even for playing for upper-class white sociedades. Lastly, the political situation in Cuba and the general mood of the nation was worsening. In August 1951, during a live radio broadcast on CMQ, Eduardo Chibás

[128] Raúl Travieso, 8 February 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of the Ortodoxo party committed suicide over his despair of Cuba's corrupt political situation. Mass disillusionment followed and found expression in increased cynicism, resignation, and indifference.[129] On 10 March 1952 former president Fulgencio Batista seized power through a military coup, thereby ending constitutional government in Cuba. The communist leaders Juan Marinello, Blas Roca, and Lázaro Peña, who were also associates of Radio Mil Diez, were jailed soon after and within a few months fled the island.[130] Eight days after the coup, on 18 March 1952, Arsenio's conjunto in Havana made its last two recordings for RCA Victor. Before leaving, he handed over the leadership of the conjunto to his lead trumpet player Félix Chappottín. Just four days later, on 22 March, Arsenio was in New York City performing with his new Conjunto de Estrellas at the Park Plaza in East Harlem.[131] He would not return to Havana to perform or record until 1956.

---

[129] Phillips 1959: 255-256; Pérez, Jr. 1995: 287.
[130] Phillips 1959: 263.
[131] *La Prensa*, 22 March 1952.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 6

Contesting the Dominant Discourse of the Mambo:

Arsenio in New York City, 1950-1955

> Now, I'm trying to introduce the "capetillo" in New York. I want to destroy that damned mambo which is putting an end to Cuban composers, since no one wants to buy their boleros and guarachas. We are possessed by mambo mania. I was the Dr. Frankenstein who created the monster, and now that same monster wants to kill me. . . . What Pérez Prado did was to mix the mambo with American music, copied from Stan Kenton. And he did us irreparable harm with it. I'll never forgive him for that or myself for creating that damned mambo!
>
> —Arsenio Rodríguez, *Bohemia* (December 1952)

In 1950, Arsenio, who was now 39 years old, began the third decade of his musical career by forming a new conjunto, "Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto de Estrellas" in New York City. For the next two years, however, he returned to Havana on a regular basis to perform and record with his "Havana" conjunto. Eventually, by the spring of 1952, he decided to settle in New York and focus all of his efforts with his Conjunto de Estrellas. In that same year, on at least three different occasions (one of which is represented in the above epigraph), he vehemently expressed in public his criticism of "mambo mania" and its most prominent proponent, Dámaso Pérez Prado. Specifically, what he was contesting was an international musical phenomenon that in his view had 1) monopolized the Cuban popular music market, 2) diluted the stylistic accomplishments that he, in particular, had made in the early 1940s, and 3) spawned a distorted discourse that had virtually erased the Cuban origins of the mambo and his role in its development.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The dominant understanding of the mambo's history and evolution, as perpetuated by most historians and critics, is based on a linear orientation in which performance styles are neatly categorized into historical periods.[1] According to this history, the first stage begins with Orestes López's "Mambo," a new style of danzón that he reportedly composed around 1937 and performed with the charanga Arcaño y sus Maravillas.[2] It featured an added final section in which the flute improvised over a two-bar syncopated rhythmic pattern, identified here as the "mambo rhythm," which is played by the violins and piano (see Example 4.5.a). The second stage commences in the early 1940s with the adaptation of this final section to the *son*, which is credited to Arsenio, followed by René Hernández, Dámaso Pérez Prado, and Bebo Valdés, who adapted it to arrangements for Cuban big bands such as Orquesta Casino de la Playa, Orquesta Riverside, and Julio Cueva's (see Examples 4.5.b and c). The final stage of the mambo's evolution is associated with its international popularity through the styles of Dámaso Pérez Prado, Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodríguez. While these musicians did utilize the basic *son* structure with an added mambo section for many of their recordings (in Pérez Prado's case, in his recordings with Beny Moré), it was the use of arranging techniques characteristic of jazz performance, that, for some, constitutes the mambo's stylistic culmination.

Because of its linear orientation, encapsulated by one writer as "conceived in

---

[1] See for example Acosta 1993b and 1993c; Betancur Álvarez 1999; Díaz Ayala 1993: 192-196; Galán 1983: 342-345; Giro 1993; Orovio 1981; Pérez Firmat 1994; Roberts 1999: 124-130; Rondón 1980: 3-14; Salazar 1992; Urfé 1979.

[2] Although all agree that "Mambo" was composed in 1937 the earliest recorded evidence of this composition is 1950 (Tumbao TCD-029).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cuba, nurtured in Mexico, and brought to maturity in the United States,"[3] the dominant historical narrative of the mambo introduces at least two problems. First, it (dis)places Arsenio as one of the originators of the so-called "Cuban-," "traditional-" or "authentic"-style mambo of the 1940s. He and his music are rarely talked about, however, in the context of the New York mambo scene, even though his Conjunto de Estrellas recorded in New York City and performed regularly in the most popular mambo dancehalls along with all of the major mambo big bands, including Pérez Prado, throughout the 1950s.[4] Hence, what this narrative can not accommodate is the co-existence of the mambo and Arsenio's son montuno style in place (New York City) and time (1950s).

Second, Tito Puente, Machito, Tito Rodríguez, and Pérez Prado are summarily identified as the "modern mambo practitioners of the fifties."[5] The idea of a "modern" mambo style raises the problem of the ideology of ***modernity***, which in this case involves the signification of "jazz" harmonies, voicing, phrasing, and big band instrumentation as "progressive."[6] As Thomas Turino has stated, "The very use of the 'traditional-modern' dichotomy—so common in nationalist discourse, reformist programs, and academic writing—is itself a product of the ideology of ***modernity***, which asserts its own features and modus operandi as the inevitable, logical present and future while relegating

---

[3] Pérez Firmat 1994: 81.
[4] Examples of the erasure of Arsenio from the history of mambo in New York include Pérez Firmat 1994: 80; Loza 1999: 163; Roberts 1999: 123. Gálan (1983: 344), however, does list Arsenio along with other mambo big-band leaders of New York City (see also Manuel 1988: 47).
[5] See for example Loza 1999: 163.
[6] For the signification of jazz techniques as "progressive," see Galán 1983: 342, 344; Rondón 1980: 3; Roberts 1999: 102; Loza 1999: 135, 141-142.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

alternative lifeways (the 'traditional') to an outmoded past."[7] Hence, Arsenio's son montuno style, specifically, the diablo, is typically relegated to "traditional" status, despite the fact that his style was crystallized just eight years prior to the formation of his conjunto in New York City in 1950, and despite the signification of his style's defining principles and procedures as "black," "complex," and even "modern" (see Humberto Cané's quote on p. 232) in Havana not long before New York mambo big bands were forming. Arsenio himself contested the ideas that the mambo styles of Pérez Prado and of "The Big Three" in New York City constituted the culmination of the mambo's evolution and that the jazz performance techniques which they incorporated constituted musical "progress" (see epigraph above).

This chapter documents Arsenio's participation in the local "mambo" scene in New York City and contestation of the stylistic legitimacy of the "mambo" that was being popularized and disseminated in New York City and internationally in the 1950s. The first section describes Arsenio's migration experience to New York City (including his first trip in 1947), his conjunto's formation in 1950, and its early performances between the years 1950 and 1953. The second section focuses on previously unexplored aspects of the history of the mambo in New York City, namely Arsenio's public contestations of Pérez Prado's recognition as the "creator" of the mambo. The third section offers an alternative to the "traditional-modern" dichotomy by documenting the ways in which some musicians and dancers described Arsenio's style and suggesting that the condition of displacement rather than "tradition" ultimately rendered his style extraneous in the broader mambo

---

[7] Turino 2000: 578-579 n3.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

milieu in New York City. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is not to prove whether or not Arsenio was the "true creator" of the mambo nor to argue that his style was more "authentic" but rather to suggest that the mambo's history should be conceived as a fundamentally contested one.

Migrating to New York City

In 1950 Arsenio's music and conjunto were known to some Latinos living in New York City, particularly Cuban and Puerto Rican musicians (Chapter 7 details Arsenio's relationship with the Puerto Rican population in New York). His music was initially propelled onto the international level by Miguelito Valdés and the Orquesta Casino de la Playa, who between 1937 and 1940 recorded at least ten of his compositions, several of which were also recorded by other internationally popular Latin orchestras. The most popular of these recordings was the afrocubano "Bruca maniguá" ("Witch from the Bush"), which was subsequently recorded in New York by Xavier Cugat's orchestra, the most popular Latin band at the time, Nilo Meléndez and his Stork Club Orchestra, in addition to others (see Appendix 2). Also, Arsenio's recognition as a talented tres player was first established in Cuba and Puerto Rico with Casino de la Playa's recording of "Se va el caramelero" ("The Candyman is Leaving," rec. 15 September 1938), in which he plays one of his best-known tres solos. In addition to their records, Casino de la Playa's almost daily live broadcasts were heard on radio throughout the Caribbean and were especially popular in Puerto Rico. The orchestra, whose repertory must have included at

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

least "Bruca maniguá," eventually toured Latin America, including Puerto Rico, at the height of their popularity in 1939.[8]

Arsenio's conjunto also became known in New York and Puerto Rico during the 1940s. The conjunto's recordings that were especially popular included son montunos such as "Dile a Catalina" ("Tell Catalina," rec. 18 June 1942) and "El reloj de Pastora" ("Pastora's Watch," rec. 21 June 1946), as well as boleros such as "Triste lucha" ("Sad Fight," rec. 14 September 1943), "Oye mi consejo" ("Listen to My Advice," rec. 6 July 1944), and, especially, "La vida es un sueño" ("Life is Like a Dream," rec. 27 February 1948).[9] The conjunto's daily live performances on Mil Diez were also heard and very popular among many Puerto Ricans on the island. They included some musicians, such as Luís Berrios Serralta, Candido Antomattei, and Israel Berrios, who later joined his conjunto in New York, as well as other well-known Puerto Rican musicians such as Moncho Leña, El Boy, and Leo Fleming.[10] In New York, Ray Coen, who was Arsenio's pianist and arranger from about 1951 to 1954, remembers that he and his friends, including Manny Oquendo, listened to Arsenio's radio broadcasts from Radio Salas on short wave in the late 1940s.[11]

While he, his music, and conjunto were familiar to mostly Cuban and Puerto Rican musicians, his overall recognition was limited in scope, relative to the numerous Latin big bands in New York whose audiences encompassed various class levels and racial, ethnic,

---

[8] Rivera, 26 February 2000.
[9] Rivera, 26 February 2000; see also *El Imparcial*, 19 September 1952.
[10] Berrios Serralta, 14 February 1999; Antomattei, 4 November 1998; and Berrios, 13 January 2000; see also Carp 1996: 3.
[11] Coen, 26 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and national backgrounds. He nevertheless attempted to broaden the scope of his audience in New York and internationally by actively performing, recording, and declaring himself the original creator of the mambo. The following sections document and analyze what was entailed for Arsenio in establishing a new career in New York.

New York City via Tampa, 1947

Arsenio and Raúl made their first trip to the United States around 20 June 1947.[12] The purpose of their trip was primarily to visit Dr. Ramón Castroviejo, an eye specialist in New York City. With the help of friends in Havana like Antonio Arcaño, Arsenio raised enough money for his trip and an operation, if one was possible, by performing benefit concerts in Havana and Matanzas. On their flight to New York the two brothers had a stopover in Tampa, Florida, where they expected to stay only a few hours. They were forced to stay for about a week, however, because according to customs officials there was a problem with their visas.[13]

While in Tampa, the brothers stayed at a hotel in the segregated black section of the city.[14] One afternoon, Arsenio called Raúl to his room, and told him to write down the lyrics he had just composed, which described the following humorous incident. He entitled

---

[12] The following information in this section (except where indicated) was collected over many interviews with Raúl Travieso (19 June 1996, 31 July 1996, 8 February 1997, 5 April 1997, 3 August 1998, 15 February 2000, and 27 March 2001).

[13] Raúl suspects that Arsenio's association with the communist-owned Radio Mil Diez played a role in customs' decision to keep them in Tampa for several days.

[14] See Grillo (2000) for a first-hand account of race relations among white and black Cubans and African-Americans in pre-World War II Tampa, Florida.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the song "Pasó en Tampa" ("It Happened in Tampa"). That morning, Raúl tried to order coffee with milk for himself and Arsenio, but none of the hotel employees spoke Spanish. He tried asking one employee, who responded by asking, "What are you saying? What are you saying?" Raúl resorted to giving him physical gestures, after which the employee brought him a glass of milk instead of coffee with milk and sugar. Then, Raúl tried in vain asking the receptionist, who decided to call their travel agency for a Spanish interpreter. The agency sent over a Cuban, who when he arrived was enthusiastically greeted by Raúl and Arsenio. Raúl told him what had happened, after which the interpreter explained that "café con leche" in English is "coffee and milk" (see Appendix 3 for lyrics). In the following evenings, the two brothers were invited to the homes of local Cubans, for whom Arsenio played his tres, including his newest guaracha "Pasó en Tampa." Based on its enthusiastic reception, he decided he would record it, having the opportunity to do so after he arrived in New York.

They were also given a party by Sociedad La Unión Martí-Maceo, which was established in Ybor City in 1900 by black Cubans, mostly cigar workers. The history of Cuban social clubs and political organizations in Tampa and other parts of Florida goes back to at least the fight for Cuban independence during the late nineteenth century. While many of these earlier organizations were inter-racial, the history of segregated social clubs in Cuba and Jim Crow laws in the South contributed to the eventual segregation of these clubs soon after independence was achieved in 1898.[15] In the early 1930s, members Pedro

---

[15] See Greenbaum 1986. This social club was formed mainly to provide its members and their families with social and medical services, which were largely unavailable to citizens

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Millet and Joaquin and Clara Maldonado emigrated to New York City, where they helped establish Club Julio Antonio Mella on 115th Street and 5th Avenue, in East Harlem. In 1945, they helped establish another social club named Club Cubano Inter-Americano on 914 Prospect Avenue and 116th Street in the South Bronx. Most of the members of both of these clubs were working-class Cubans and Puerto Ricans of color. (Arsenio's close and long-term relationship with the Club Cubano Inter-Americano is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.)[16]

The brothers were finally allowed to leave Tampa around 26 June, but they were required to deposit $1,000 each with United States Customs (presumably, to prevent them from staying illegally), which they were to reclaim on their way back to Havana. Once in New York, they rented a room in an apartment building on Westchester Avenue, in the South Bronx. Many of Arsenio's musician friends, such as Cubans Miguelito Valdés and Chano Pozo and Puerto Ricans Bobby Capó and Daniel Santos, made frequent visits to chat and play music. On 28 June the Club Cubano Inter-Americano held a dinner in honor of their special guests, Miguelito Valdés, Olga Guillot, and Arsenio Rodríguez.[17] On 12 July his friends Miguelito Valdés, Marcelino Guerra (who sang second voice in Arsenio's conjunto from 1940 to about 1943), and others organized a much larger event in honor of Arsenio at the Diplomat Hotel on 43rd Street in Times Square. Marcelino Guerra and Machito's orchestras as well as Sexteto Puerto Rico performed and accompanied featured

---

let alone immigrants.

[16] Alvarado, 3 March 2000.

[17] *La Prensa* (New York City), 28 June 1947.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

artists including Bobby Capó, Noro Morales, Olga Guillot, Jack Sagué, Juan Boria, Trío Johnny Rodríguez, and the guest of honor Arsenio Rodríguez, who performed "Bruca maniguá," "Camagüey," "Creo en tí" ("I Believe in You"), and his newest song "Pasó en Tampa."[18]

In addition to performing, Arsenio participated in eight recordings, which were led by Chano Pozo, for the recently formed independent record company Coda Records.[19] For these recordings, Arsenio was careful not to have his name appear on the label, since he was still under contract with RCA Victor in Havana. As a result, three group names were used for the three respective sessions: Orquesta Chano Pozo con Tito Rodríguez, Chano Pozo y su Conjunto con el Mago del Tres (or the Magician of the Tres), and Chano Pozo y su Conjunto (see Appendix 2). The musicians included members of the Machito and Marcelino Guerra orchestras and a young Pablo "Tito" Rodríguez, who formed his own conjunto (the Mambo Devils) later that year.[20] Nevertheless, word got back to executives of RCA's international division in New York that Arsenio had participated in recordings with another company. They contacted him for an explanation, to which he responded that he was only trying to make some extra money. They threatened him with a lawsuit if he recorded with another company again.

The brothers flew back to Havana on Arsenio's birthday, 30 August, where they

---

[18] *La Prensa*, 10, 12, and 17 July 1947.
[19] According to John Storm Roberts (1999: 112-113, 120-121), the formation of Coda in 1945 and the Spanish Music Center (SMC) in 1948 by local dance promoter, record producer, and record store owner Gabriel Oller was an important development in the spread and diversity of Latin music, particularly the less commercial styles compared to those which were largely disseminated by American-owned companies.
[20] Ibid.: 125.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

were met by waiting admirers at the airport and later at La Tropical (see pp. 223-224). Apart from the fact that nothing could be done about restoring his eyesight, his 1947 trip to New York City was nevertheless a turning point in his career as well as Raúl's personal life. In 1948 Raúl returned to New York City to marry a Puerto Rican woman named Adelaida whom he had met the year before. Soon after, Raúl began to make preparations for Arsenio to move to New York and begin performing with a new conjunto. Upon his return to New York in 1950, Arsenio was surprised, as he later recounted in 1952, to find that, "[New York] was filled with 'mambo kings,' 'emperors of the mambo,' 'rajas of the mambo.' And I said to myself, 'then, I'm just a soldier of the 'mambo'."[21] Indeed, Tito Rodríguez and Tito Puente had formed their conjuntos in the period between August 1947 and 1950, and by 1952 they and numerous other big bands were proclaiming themselves "kings of the mambo."[22] Thus began the third phase of Arsenio's musical career and life, attempting to create a niche for his conjunto and musical style in a new city engulfed in "mambo mania."

Commuting between Havana and New York City, 1950-1952

Because of the American Federation of Musicians nation-wide ban on foreign orchestras working in the United States, foreign international stars such as Dámaso Pérez Prado, who began to travel and perform in the United States in 1951, were forced to hire musicians

---

[21] Cubillas Jr. 1952: 25.

[22] According to Roberts (1999: 125), Tito Rodríguez and Puente formed their conjuntos in 1947, while according to Loza and Max Salazar (in Loza 1999: 7, 56-57) Puente formed his conjunto around 1948 or 1949.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from local unions in order to perform.[23] But for some relatively "low-profile" emigrant musicians, such as Arsenio, it was possible to perform in New York, at least in locales that were peripheral to the union's scope, without being a member. Nevertheless, Arsenio too was forced to use local musicians so as not to attract suspicion among union delegates and other musicians. Therefore, he could not have brought his entire conjunto from Havana to start a new career in New York.

His new conjunto performed for the first time at a theater called the Teatro Triboro (123rd Street and 3rd Avenue), in East Harlem, on 17 February 1950. The conjunto, which was billed as "Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto de Estrellas," performed at least two more shows at the Teatro Triboro, on 25 February and 2 March. The conjunto also performed for two dances at the St. Nicholas Ballroom (66th Street and Columbus Avenue), in Manhattan, on 11 March and 1 April.[24] In the months leading to these performances Raúl recruited various musicians, most of whom were Puerto Rican, to join his brother's conjunto, including pianist Héctor Pellot. Trumpet player Edil Rivera, who was living with Pellot at the time, accompanied his roommate to a rehearsal that Raúl had scheduled at the Club Cubano Inter-Americano, in the Bronx. When the third trumpet player failed to show-up, Raúl invited Edil to join the conjunto. The other two trumpet players, Pablo Díaz and "Robertico," were eventually replaced by Hector "Venezuela" Vidal, who was from Venezuela, and Luís Berrios Serralta. Edil, "Venezuela," and Luís

---

[23] See *Variety* (15 August 1951). Local unions went so far as to ban traveling domestic bands, the lifting of which was eventually supported by James C. Petrillo, the president of the AFM (*New York Times*, 10 June 1955).
[24] *La Prensa*, 9 and 25 February, 2 and 11 March, and 1 April 1950.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

became Arsenio's steady trumpet players for the next several years.[25] The vocalists included his old friend Marcelino Guerra, who was leading his own popular orchestra at the same time in New York, and Willie Capó, who was the cousin of the popular Puerto Rican singer Bobby Capó.[26]

The contracts to perform at the Teatro Triboro and St. Nicholas Ballroom were not approved by the Executive Board of New York's musician's union Local 802, presumably because these locales were outside the surveillance of union delegates. Other, more high-profile locales, such as the Palladium, were regularly watched by the union for employment of non-union musicians.[27] Therefore, before Arsenio's conjunto could perform at the Palladium and other popular locales, all of his musicians would have to become members of Local 802. Six were already union members, but the remaining five were not. They included Arsenio and his brothers Kike (tumbadora) and Raúl (bongó), as well as his cousin and lead vocalist René Scull and bassist Lázaro Prieto, both of whom had left his conjunto in Havana to join him in New York.

Because of Local 802's strict regulations against "outsiders" (domestic and foreign), Arsenio recruited the help of Candido Antomattei, a Puerto Rican vocalist, guitarist, and bandleader, who had connections with powerful members of the union. Arsenio first met Candido in the early 1940s while the latter was visiting Havana. Arsenio

---

[25] Rivera, 14 January 2000. Also, by 1952, Héctor Pellot had returned to Puerto Rico to join Moncho Leña and Mon Rivera in forming Los Ases del Ritmo, who soon after popularized the conjunto-style *plena* (Carp 1996: 4-6).
[26] Serralta, 14 February 1999.
[27] American Federation of Musicians Local 802. "Minutes of the Executive Board." Reel No. 5278.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

heard him sing as a guest vocalist with Orquesta Casino de la Playa on Radio Progreso, and later asked him to join his conjunto. But the seven to eight dollars that his musicians were making a week was not enough for Candido to begin a new career in Havana. Instead, he moved to New York in 1945 and started his own conjunto, which worked regularly for the next five years at the Concord Hotel, a resort in Kiamesha Lake, New York. Upon his arrival in New York in early 1950, Arsenio again asked Candido to join his new conjunto. But Candido was unable to join until after his contract at the Concord Hotel was complete, following the summer season. Meanwhile, he agreed to help Arsenio and his other musicians to get their union cards. He did this by appealing to Sam Suber, Local 802's vice president, whom Candido had campaigned for during union elections.[28]

Arsenio's application was submitted sometime around June 1950, at which point he had to wait the required six-month period before he and his conjunto could begin working. He had already returned to his conjunto in Havana to participate in three recording sessions on 29 March and on 19 and 24 April. He returned once more and participated in five more recording sessions between 29 June and 15 November (see Appendix 2). He also continued to perform in Havana. For instance, on 8 September, the charanga Las Melodias del 40 and Arsenio's "Havana" conjunto performed for his daughter Regla María's *quinceñera*, which took place in Pogolotti, Marianao (see fig. 6.1). For this special occasion, he composed the bolero "Si me voy" ("If I go") and performed it in dedication to his daughter.[29] The lyrics poignantly express Arsenio's

---

[28] Antomattei, 4 November 1998.
[29] Travieso Montecino, 25 June 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 6.1. Regla María's *quinceñera*, Pogolotti, Marianao, 8 September 1950. *From left to right*: Manuela Montecino Herrera, Regla María Travieso Montecino, Arsenio, and Emma Lucía Martínez (photograph courtesy of Regla María Travieso Montecino).

feelings over his impending departure from his beloved daughter. (He would later record it with his Conjunto de Estrellas in New York on 9 April 1952.)

He was finally installed officially as a member of Local 802 on 28 December 1950. The other musicians who were not yet members had applied much later than Arsenio. Lázaro Prieto became a member on 24 May, Raúl on 7 June, and Kike on 28 June 1951. Evidently, René Scull was the only member who did not apply for union membership. Despite this, the conjunto performed in New York at least three times in December 1950. On Christmas day, for instance, the conjunto performed at the Palladium along with Tito

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Puente's orchestra and several other groups.[30] By New Year's Eve, Arsenio was back in Havana to perform for Centro Gallego.[31] In fact, between the winter of 1951 and spring of 1952, Arsenio returned to Havana on at least seven separate occasions to participate in eleven recording sessions with his "Havana" conjunto and to perform at various sociedades (see Appendix 2).

Si yo me voy **(rec. 9 April 1952, New York City)**	**If I go**
Si yo me voy y tú te quedas, me voy penando	If I go and you stay, I go in sorrow
Si yo me voy y tú te quedas, me voy pensando	If I go and you stay, I go wondering
Si te volviera a ver	If I would ever see you again
Si volveré otra vez	If I would ever return again
Si yo me voy y tú te quedas, me voy llorando	If I go and you stay, I leave in tears
Quiero que te recuerdes siempre en la vida, querida	I want you to always remember, my dear
Que no te e separado del corazón	That my heart has not forgotten you
Y aunque pase mucho, pero mucho tiempo	And although a lot of time may go by
De mi alma no se quita tu tierno amor	Your tender love will not leave my soul
Pobre corazón, pobre corazón.	My poor heart, my poor heart.

While in New York, his Conjunto de Estrellas performed in various locales, including the St. Nicholas Ballroom (3 March 1951 and 19 and 26 January 1952), in Manhattan, the Park Plaza (April 1951 and 22-23 March 1952), in East Harlem, and the Palladium Ballroom (20 May, 8 September, 22 November, and 31 December 1951) and Manhattan Center (15 September 1951), in Midtown. Some of the groups who performed with the conjunto included the orchestras of Noro Morales, Marcelino Guerra, Miguelito

[30] *La Prensa*, 23 December 1950.
[31] *Diario de la Marina*, 27 December 1950.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Valdés, Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito.[32]

The Conjunto de Estrellas in Puerto Rico, 1952

On 17 September 1952 the Conjunto de Estrellas made their first trip to Puerto Rico (Arsenio's conjunto made a second trip to Puerto Rico in 1960). José Antonio Purcell interviewed Arsenio shortly after his arrival in San Juan.[33] Two days later, on Friday, 19 September, Arsenio's conjunto began a one-month contract at the Escambrón Beach Club, which was located on the northeast corner of San Juan Antiguo, next to Parque Sixto Escobar. The contract had been arranged in advance from New York, probably by Candido Antomattei, who had joined the conjunto as its second voice, guitarist, and "contractor."[34] The conjunto performed every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday night for the next four weeks, while lodging in the hotel section of the club (see Fig. 6.2). Through the 1940s the Escambrón was a high-class cabaret and hotel that featured internationally popular acts such as Xavier Cugat, and catered to the upper class and tourists.[35] By 1952, however, it had become open to all classes, only to be shut down shortly after Arsenio's contract ended.

According to several members of the conjunto, their performances were well attended by musicians and dancers alike. Raúl remembers that the young Rafael Ithier,

---

[32] *La Prensa*, January 1951—March 1952.
[33] *El Mundo*, 19 September 1952.
[34] In the "Minutes of the Executive Board" of the American Federation of Musicians Local 802 Candido appears as Arsenio's "contractor."
[35] See for example *El Imparcial*, 7 July 1949.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

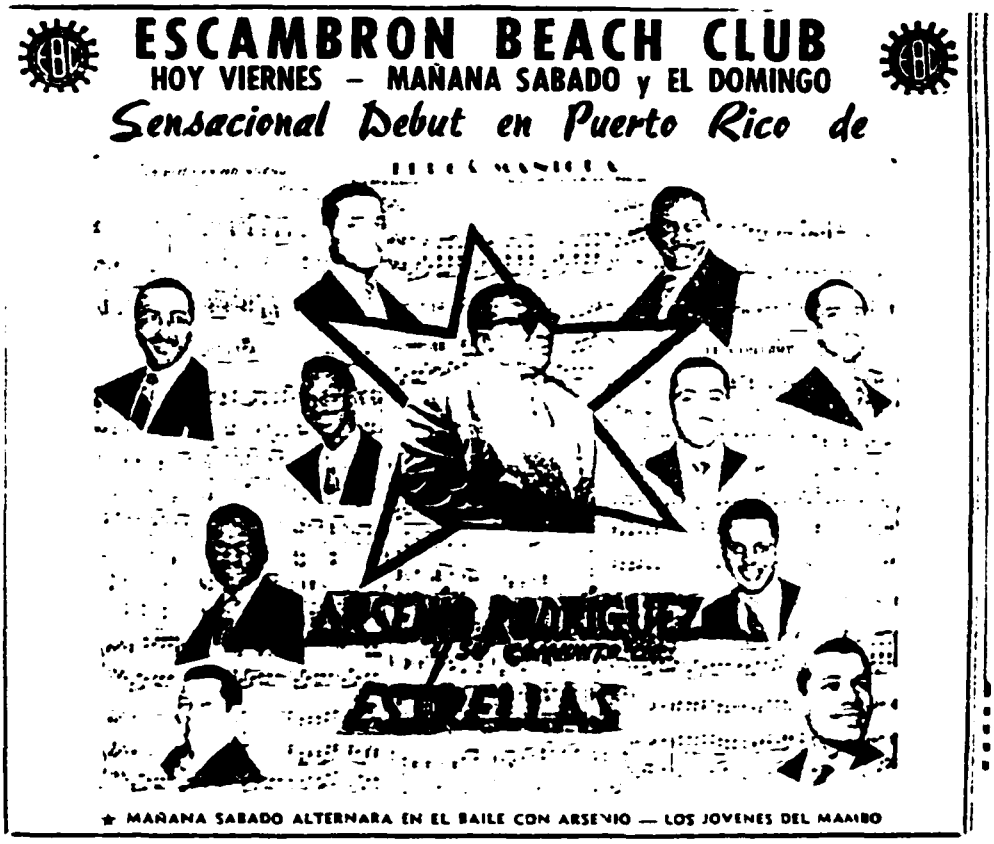


Figure 6.2. Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto de Estrellas, 1952. *Clockwise from bottom left*: Manolo Morales "El Barroso," first voice, Raúl Travieso, bongó. René Scull, first voice, Lázaro Prieto, bass, Ray Coen, piano, Kike Travieso, tumbadora, Candido Antomattei, second voice and guitar, Edil Rivera, trumpet, Héctor "Venezuela" Vidal, trumpet, Luís Berríos Seralta, trumpet, and Arsenio (center), tres (*El Imparcial*, 19 September 1952).

Martín Quiñones, Rafael Cortijo and other future members of Cortijo y su Combo and El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico attended many of these dances.[36] At least one of their performances, their debut on 19 September, was transmitted on radio station WKAQ.[37] Pianist Ray Coen remembers that many other performances were also transmitted on

[36] Raúl Travieso, 19 June 1996.
[37] *El Mundo*, 22 September 1952.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

radio.[38]

According to other contemporary reports, however, not all of the conjunto's performances were well attended or successful. Germán Negroni, who wrote a daily column for *El Mundo*, gave two reports on the conjunto's performances at the Escambrón. For its debut, he wrote:

> The debut of the Cuban conjunto of Arsenio Rodríguez was very pleasing but weak in attendance. And I don't see why, since Arsenio's conjunto, in my opinion, is playing as good as ever and really deserves the backing of the public. I think that for those who like to dance to the authentic feel of lively and romantic Cuban music must not miss this fleeting opportunity to dance to Arsenio Rodríguez.[39]

Less than two weeks later, Negroni had some criticisms for Arsenio and the conjunto:

> The Cuban Arsenio Rodríguez [will continue to be] poorly attended if he continues, as he did last Sunday, avoiding very politely the request of his admirers to please them with one or more [popular] songs from his repertory. The director of this conjunto is not going to tell me that his musicians are not prepared to play and sing one of his own guarachas [*sic*] so utterly trite as "Bruca maniguá." This reminds me of the old saying of the theater that "when business is going bad, attract the public more with your affection and graciousness." Here, regretfully, the Cuban "Ciego Maravilloso" has failed.[40]

Evidently, the conjunto had only rehearsed his latest numbers, including his "capetillos," that they had recorded in the previous months back in New York and that he was attempting to popularize as an alternative to the mambo in New York and abroad (see this

---

[38] Coen, 26 April 2000.
[39] *El Mundo*, 22 September 1952 (my translation).
[40] *El Mundo*, 3 October 1952 (my translation).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chapter's epigraph). Based on Negroni's reports, however, Arsenio's latest numbers were not attracting much excitement.

Despite the apparent low turnouts, however, the conjunto was subsequently contracted to perform at the Guaraquibel nightclub, in the Carolina section of San Juan, and at Cobian's Teatro Puerto Rico, in Santurce, where they played on 2 through 5 October.[41] The conjunto's stint in San Juan ended on 12 October with a special event in honor of Arsenio, which took place at the Escambrón. Some of the musicians and groups who attended and performed included César Concepción y su Orquesta, Myrta Silva, Miguelito Miranda y su Combo, Trío San Juan, and Cuarteto Marcano.[42]

This and the other *homenajes* Arsenio received in New York attest to the fact that he was recognized as an exceptional composer and musician among many popular Latin artists in New York and Puerto Rico. Yet, recognition across a broad spectrum of audiences remained elusive. In attempting to advance his public recognition, Arsenio sought out to establish himself as the "true originator" of the mambo in interviews and on stage.

The Politics of Claiming Ownership Over the Mambo

In his article entitled "¿Quién inventó el mambo?," Cuban musicologist Leonardo Acosta states that "mambo . . . is not the product of the invention of only one individual, but a

---

[41] Rivera, 14 January 2000; *El Mundo*, 2-4 October 1952.
[42] *El Imparcial*, 8 October 1952.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

product of a process in Cuban music in which numerous creators and interpreters intervened, although there are some that at a certain point acted as foundations to this process."[43] Prior to stating this, Acosta maintains that the antecedent innovations of prior contributors, nevertheless, crystallized in the mambo of Pérez Prado. Colombian sociologist Fabio Betancur Álvarez similarly asserts that "the mambo did not have one creator [rather] a sonic convergence . . . created a mambo phenomenon and Pérez Prado was its greatest catalyst."[44] Despite the fact that both writers acknowledge different innovators and styles of the mambo, they hold Pérez Prado as the "greatest catalyst" and his style as the "crystallization" of the mambo. Their assessments, however, are tenuous and take for granted the powerful role mass marketing had (and continues to have) in creating the image of Pérez Prado as the "King of the Mambo." This section documents Arsenio's contestations of this image and declarations that his style constituted the crystallization of the mambo.

Pérez Prado and the "creator" of the mambo

On 9 April 1952, less than a month after making his final recordings with his conjunto in Havana, the Conjunto de Estrellas made four recordings, one of which was a "son capetillo" entitled "No quiero" ("I Don't Want To"). In the next five months the conjunto recorded three more "son capetillos" (see Appendix 2). As indicated in this chapter's epigraph, Arsenio's intentions with his "new" style of *son* music was to "introduce" it in

---

[43] Acosta 1993a: 38 (my translation).
[44] Betancur Álvarez 1999: 212.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

New York, and "destroy" the immense popularity that the mambo had gained. As my musical analysis below will show, however, his capetillo was not much different than his son montuno, in terms of its form, arrangement scheme, and overall style. In addition to proclaiming his capetillo as the answer to the mambo, he expressed his indignation over what he believed to be the dilution and mass commercialization of Cuban dance music. And, finally, rather than allow the mass mediated perception of Pérez Prado as the "king" and "creator" of the mambo to proceed unabated, Arsenio took every opportunity to assert himself as the true originator of the mambo.

One of Arsenio's earliest and most confrontational assertions occurred on 19 January 1952 when his conjunto "faced-off" with Pérez Prado's big band on the stage of the St. Nicholas Ballroom in Manhattan. At one point during the show promoter Federico Pagani invited Arsenio and Pérez Prado to come up to the stage and asked the two musicians, Who was the true "creator" of the mambo? In his 1964 radio interview in Los Angeles, Arsenio described what happened next:

> Federico Pagani, asked [us], "So, we all want to know who is the owner of the mambo?" [Pérez Prado] answered, "Well, ladies and gentlemen, the mambo belonged to Arsenio. That's the truth. Arsenio created the mambo. But I am the one who has made all the money."[45]

Given that this is Arsenio's account, it is impossible to recover what Pérez Prado actually said that night. What is clear, however, is what was at stake: public recognition

---

[45] Federico Pagani, [nos] dijo, "Bueno, ¿queremos sabar aquí quién es el dueño del mambo?" [Pérez Prado] dijo, "Bueno señores, el mambo era de Arsenio. La verdad es. El mambo lo hizo Arsenio. Pero que ha ganado la plata soy yo (Rodríguez 1964).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and commercial and financial success. It is questionable whether Arsenio was successful in changing the audience members' attitudes toward the question of "Who was the creator of the mambo," since he was unknown to at least most of the non-Spanish speakers. Instead, the audience probably perceived their face-to-face confrontation as part of the entertainment, since pitting bandleader against bandleader, band against band was a widely used promotional tactic.[46]

The promoter Federico Pagani advertised the event in *El Diario de Nueva York* as a "frente a frente" or face-to-face between "El Rey del Mambo" Pérez Prado and Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto de Estrellas.[47] In contrast, in the *New York Daily News*, he advertised it as "The King of the Mambo" Pérez Prado's "first New York appearance," without mentioning Arsenio's conjunto (see figs. 6.3.a and b).[48] This demonstrates that Pérez Prado was the only viable draw among the non-Spanish speaking public of New York, while Arsenio's relevance, in terms of his public recognition, was limited to the Spanish-speaking public. In fact, by 1950, RCA Victor had switched Pérez Prado from its specialized international label to its American mainstream pop label, making him the only Latin recording artist on the company's pop label. He had also been on a hugely successful tour of the United States, which began in Los Angeles in August of 1951. Meanwhile,

---

[46] In 1954, for example, another "frente a frente" took place at the St. Nicholas Ballroom, but this time it was between two equally renowned "kings of the mambo," Pérez Prado and Tito Puente (Loza 1999: 60).

[47] *El Diario de Nueva York*, 16 and 18 January 1952.

[48] *New York Daily News*, 19 January 1952. In actuality, Pérez Prado first performed in New York without his band at the Teatro Puerto Rico, in the Bronx, in late April 1951. On 12 April 1951, Local 802 officials received a request from Pérez Prado for permission to join Local 802. His request was denied (American Federation of Musicians Local 802. "Minutes of the Executive Board." Reel No. 5279).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

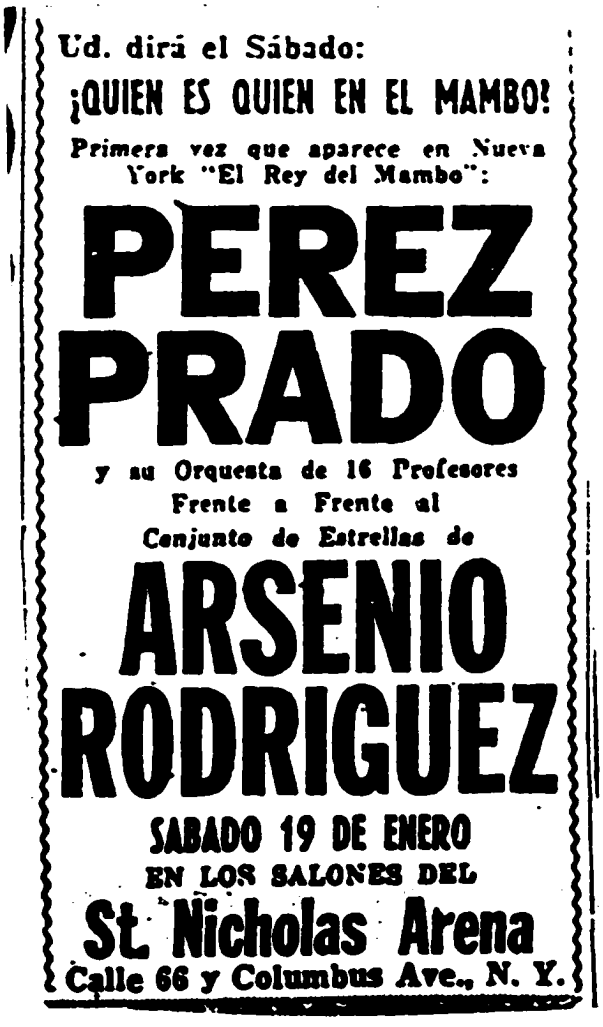


Figure 6.3.a. Ad in *El Diario de Nueva York* for the "face-to-face" between Pérez Prado and Arsenio (16 January 1952)

mainstream American magazines such as *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Life*, *Variety*, and *Downbeat* were publicizing him as the "creator" and "king" of the mambo.[49]

---

[49] *Newsweek*, 4 September 1950; *Time*, 9 April 1951; *Variety*, 15 August 1951; *Time*, 6 September 1954; *Life*, 20 December 1954; see also Pérez Firmat 1994: 91-97.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

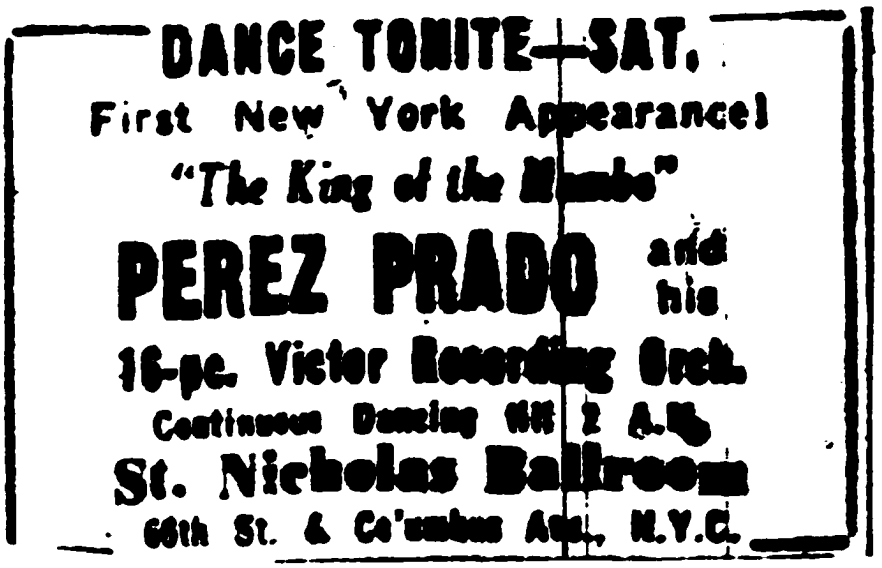


Figure 6.3.b. Ad in the *New York Daily News* for the same "face-to-face" between Pérez Prado and Arsenio (19 January 1952)

In contrast, Arsenio's conjunto in Havana remained on RCA Victor's specialized international label into 1952. And in New York the conjunto's recordings were made with smaller and independent companies, beginning with SMC in 1950, Tico in 1951 and 1952, and Seeco in 1952 and 1953, all of which catered specifically to the local Latino community in New York. In 1955, he renewed his contract with RCA Victor's international division for two years. Furthermore, Arsenio did not have access to the kinds of magazines Pérez Prado had. Instead, he was only able to get interviews published in two sources: one was *El Imparcial*, a newspaper published in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and the other was *Bohemia*, a relatively larger magazine published in Havana.

While he and his conjunto were in San Juan in September 1952, *El Imparcial* published an interview with Arsenio, which was entitled "Cubiche en Borinquen: Arsenio

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Rodríguez dice es creador del mambo" ("A Cuban in Puerto Rico: Arsenio Rodríguez Says He's the Creator of the Mambo"). In it Arsenio discussed his relationship with Pérez Prado in Havana, his opinion on Pérez Prado's style of mambo, as well as what was said at the St. Nicholas Ballroom:

> I was the creator of the mambo, and not Dámaso Pérez Prado, as most people believe. . . . In 1939 Pérez Prado was a copyist for Southern Music Corporation [the parent company of Peer International], in Havana . . . when I composed my first mambos "So caballo" and "A buscar camarón." [He] was the first to tell me that people were not going to like the mambo for its difficulty, and that they would consider it a crazy musical idea. Nevertheless, during one of his trips to New York to sell the [stock] arrangements of those mambos, in seeing the public acceptance that they received, he moved to Mexico, and in every place he performed he proclaimed himself the "King of the Mambo." Later, in order to make his mambos distinct, he used melodies from Stan Kenton, Benny Goodman, and others to make his mambos easier for North Americans to understand. About six months ago [January 1952], I encountered Pérez Prado at the St. Nicholas Ballroom in New York, and, at my request, he admitted publicly that I was the creator of the mambo, and not he, upon which the audience gave me a roaring ovation.[50]

Edil Rivera, who was Arsenio's lead trumpet player, recounts a slightly different version:

> ER: They stood there face-to-face, and Arsenio spoke about when Pérez Prado worked for the music publisher Peer International [in Havana in the early 1940s]. He was the copyist who transcribed Arsenio's music in order to register it. And, apparently, [Pérez Prado] had a hit later on with the mambo, and he became the "creator of the mambo." But, it was Arsenio's. All that was discussed that night in front of the audience. . . . Arsenio asked him, "Tell them who the mambo belongs to. Don't you remember when you use to copy my music?" [Pérez Prado] didn't answer. Instead, he acknowledged him with his head.
>
> DG: And what did the audience say, what was their reaction?

---

[50] *El Imparcial*, 19 September 1952 (my translation).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ER: There was no reaction.[51]

It is possible that Arsenio and Edil are describing two different nights, since there were two shows, one on 19 January and the other on 26 January. In any event, as I have already suggested, Arsenio's proclamation probably had little or no affect on the audience. There are other clarifications that could be made with more certainty. First, the songs that he recorded in Havana during the 1940s, including "So caballo" ("I'm a Horse") and "A buscar camarón" ("Look for Shrimp"), were never labeled with the term "mambo."[52] What he was actually referring to, though, was the diablo section of those arrangements, which in fact constituted his version of the mambo. Also, dancers were indeed unfamiliar and, perhaps, uncomfortable initially with his new style, which he had developed by 1942, mostly because of its extraordinarily syncopated bass lines (not unlike the "mambo rhythm" itself), which called for a new approach among Cuban dancers. Lastly, Pérez Prado did work for Peer as a copyist and arranger in Havana during the early 1940s. He also traveled to New York on at least one occasion in 1946 where he worked as an

---

[51] ER: Ellos se pararon ahí enfrente, y Arsenio contó cuando Pérez Prado trabajaba por la editorial de música Peer International. Èl era que le copiaba los números a Arsenio para registrarlo. Y, aparentemente, [Pérez Prado] pegó con el mambo más tarde, y se quedó como el "creador del mambo." Pero, era de Arsenio. Aquella noche eso se preguntó ahí adelante de la gente. . . . Pues, Arsenio le dijo, "Diles de quién es el mambo. ¿Acuerda cuando tú me copiabas a esto?" Pues, entonces, [Pérez Prado] no habló. Sino que aceptó con la cabeza, pero no habló. DG: ¿Y que decían la gente, como era la reacción? ER: No, no hubo reacción (Rivera, 21 January 2000).

[52] The sheet music for Arsenio's "Quisiera besarte," which was copyrighted by Peer in 1951, is the earliest document I have been able to recover that contains the term "mambo" in the song's label. It is actually labeled a "bolero mambo." His "Qué pasará," another bolero mambo, was published in the same year and was soon after recorded by Beny Moré.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

arranger for popular Latin orchestras. Upon his return to Havana, he began to work on developing a "new" style of *son* he called "son mambo," during which time he made at least two recordings, "Mambo caén" and "So caballo."[53] It is unclear if these recordings still exist and if Pérez Prado's "So caballo" is the same as Arsenio's son montuno of the same name, which Arsenio's conjunto recorded on 29 November 1943. In any event, his son mambo's style was apparently too different, failing to catch the acceptance of Cuban dancers and attention of record executives. In 1949, he moved to Mexico City, where he eventually developed and recorded his first commercially popular mambos.

Arsenio, once again, asserted himself as the "father" of the mambo in an article that was published in the 7 December 1952 issue of *Bohemia*, Cuba's most popular entertainment and newsmagazine. It was entitled "Habla Arsenio Rodríguez: ¡Ese maldito mambo!" ("Arsenio Rodríguez Speaks: That Damned Mambo!").

> [In 1943] I began to perform on a radio program [Mil Diez]. Mr. Pérez Prado, Bebo Valdés, the creator of the "batanga," and René Hernández, who is now the pianist [and main arranger] for Machito's orchestra, use to go to the station to see [my conjunto] and listen. They use to stay for the entire program and wait around to ask me what music my conjunto was playing, because they didn't understand it. After, these kids began to write mambos and send them to New York and other cities, without ever telling me, the father of the "creature" [i.e., mambo].[54]

After 1952, as Pérez Prado and mambo mania became a more familiar and accepted part of American popular culture, Arsenio's involvement in the mambo scene in New York moved further into the periphery. On 20 February 1954, Arsenio, without his

---

[53] See Acosta 1993c: 63; Pérez Firmat 1994: 85.
[54] *Bohemia*, 7 December 1952.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

conjunto, participated in a concert entitled "The Mambo Concert" at Carnegie Hall. The concert featured a variety of well-known Latin performers including Pupi Campo, Justi Barreto, Noro Morales, and Myrta Silva. Although the title of the show reflected a "mambo" theme, the music that was performed seemed to be more varied, including original compositions by Cuban light-classical and popular composers Gilberto Valdés and René Touzet, Afro-Cuban folkloric numbers, and contemporary popular styles such as Tito Puente's "Mambo la roca" ("Mambo the Rock") and Enrique Jorrín's "La engañadora" ("The Cheater") which was probably one of the earliest performances of a chachachá in New York. Arsenio with pianist José Curbelo performed the first piece of the concert entitled "Mosaico," which presumably consisted of a medley of popular Cuban tunes, perhaps including some of Arsenio's. In any event, his participation was clearly peripheral to the show itself, even though its program suggests that it was a musical journey through the various antecedent and contemporary styles of the mambo.

Later that year, on 22 October 1954, Carnegie Hall, again, was the site of a mambo concert entitled "Mambo U.S.A.," which was the opening show of a 56-city tour across the United States. This time Arsenio was not asked to participate, even though one of the organizers of the tour, Tico owner George Goldner, had recorded Arsenio's conjunto in 1951 and 1952. The other organizer, Lenny Greene, was a powerful manager and agent for many mambo big bands. At this time, both Goldner and Greene figured prominently in the careers of Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito, who was one of

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the headlining acts of the tour.[55] (In Chapter 7 I discuss in further detail how Arsenio was pushed out into the margins of the Latin dance music milieu in the Bronx, and how powerful agents, dance promoters, and record company owners played a role.)

In addition to contesting Pérez Prado's recognition as the "creator" of the mambo, Arsenio and other musicians expressed their skepticism regarding his style's authenticity.

Pérez Prado and "authenticity"

In 1948 in Havana, Odilio Urfé described an "authentic" mambo as being produced at the moment of performance (and not written on paper) and consisting of independent notes played indiscriminately without forming a tune or melody.[56] Just a few years later, Fernando Ortiz described an "authentic" mambo as consisting of a rhythmic weave, which is created by the interlocking parts of the ensemble.[57] Both agree that a "true" mambo should constitute the climax of the piece. More importantly, both descriptions suggest that the defining aspect of the mambo should not be one rhythm only—such as the "mambo rhythm"—but rather the interlocking of many rhythms. Arsenio's diablo satisfied particularly Ortiz's criteria (see p. 173).

In the quotes given above, Arsenio contested the authenticity of Pérez Prado's mambos. He noted that Pérez Prado had "mixed" elements from Stan Kenton's style of big band music with Cuban music and that, in his opinion, Pérez Prado and the internationally

---

[55] David Carp, personal communication; see also *The New York Times*, 23 October 1954.
[56] Urfé 1993: 34.
[57] Ortiz 1993: 100.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

popular styles of mambo, in general, had done "irreparable harm" and put "an end" to Cuban composers. Elsewhere, he added that Pérez Prado had incorporated elements from American big band music in order to make his mambos more familiar (hence, more marketable) to North Americans.[58] And, he made sure to differentiate the Cuban mambo, "music that is authentically ours," from the mambo that developed and was played by big bands in New York.[59] Clearly, Arsenio was expressing both his skepticism over the musical merits of Pérez Prado's mambos and his nationalist attitude toward the mambo's development in New York.

Arsenio was not the only musician who based his skepticism of Pérez Prado's commercial and musical intentions on the notion of "authenticity." Tito Puente, too, distinguished Pérez Prado's commercially-inspired musical novelties and showmanship from what he believed to be the more "authentic" New York mambo:

> [The mambo in New York] was authentic. Not artistic [gimmicky?]. It was more authentic music we [i.e., Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito] were trying to play, from the Caribbean, while Prado didn't go into that. His was more commercial, more pop, with the "huuhh" and the gimmicks and the high-note trumpets and all that.[60]

Not unlike Pérez Prado's style, however, the "authentic" mambo that New York big bands played included the ubiquitous "mambo rhythm" and was infused with various elements

---

[58] *El Imparcial*, 19 September 1952.
[59] *Bohemia*, 7 December 1952. Galán (1983: 344) notes that Pérez Prado's typical use of minor seconds in a high register for the trumpets, which become one of his stylistic trademarks, was first used by Stan Kenton in his arrangement of "El manisero" (recorded in New York City in 1947).
[60] Puente in Loza 1999: 37-38.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from the jazz repertory, including big band-style voicings and phrasing for the brass and reed sections. For Arsenio, these and other aspects distinguished the international styles of mambo from the true Cuban mambo. Puente, on the other hand, felt that musical commercialism and gimmickry, and not the use of jazz elements, jeopardized what he considered otherwise to be an "authentic" *approach* to playing Cuban music.

There are two particular aspects to consider regarding Pérez Prado's style of mambo. First, his arrangements abolish both the basic structural elements that define the Cuban *son*, particularly a definable montuno section, and the climactic mambo and diablo sections as performed by Arcaño's charanga and Arsenio's conjunto, respectively (see Table 6.2 in Appendix 4). Instead, Pérez Prado's arrangements proceed with a succession of sections, consisting of mostly four-bar riffs and phrases played by the reed and brass sections, interrupted only by short two- to four-bar breaks. After the sections have been played once, most, if not, all of the sections are repeated in their original order. In addition, the harmonic content is restrained largely to the tonic and dominant, although jazz-influenced harmonic sequences (e.g., "Mambo a la Kenton") as well as harmonic extensions (usually on the final chord) occasionally appear.

Second, the opinion that Pérez Prado's mambos were not danceable is perhaps the most revealing assessment of his "inauthenticty." Orestes López pointed out that Pérez Prado's mambo was for show and the stage, whereas the mambo played by Cuban charangas was for ballroom dancers.[61] While many of Pérez Prado's earliest recordings with Beny Moré are danceable and his most Cuban-sounding dance music, his mambos

---

[61] Orestes López in Giro 1993: 11.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that became popular internationally beginning around 1950 were, as others suggest, simple and not particularly danceable, due especially to his use of very fast tempos. As Puente remarked, "My mambos were danceable, while Prado's were more for listening."[62] Edil Rivera (Arsenio's trumpet player) remembered that most of the audience members that attended Arsenio and Pérez Prado's face-to-face in January 1952 did not dance during the latter's performance, but rather sat and politely applauded after each number.[63]

Like most commercially successful figures, Pérez Prado has attracted much debate and controversy over his musical importance. Some musicians do not hesitate to call him a "big phony," while others are quick to point out that many of his detractors, perhaps including Arsenio, were envious of his fame and fortune. What most people agree on, however, is that he "put the mambo on the map," regardless of whether or not he was the "creator" of the mambo or whether his mambos were "authentic," in either the Cuban or New York contexts.

Despite its peripheral position, Arsenio's conjunto continued to perform and record, both of which were his only viable avenues to disseminate what he considered to be the authentic and original style of mambo. Yet, those recordings that he labeled "capetillo," "mambo," and "chachachá" reflect an ambivalence on Arsenio's part to maintain his characteristic style, while satisfying popular expectations and commercial demands.

---

[62] Quoted in Smith 1976a: 16. See also Roberts 1999: 128; Puente in Loza 1999: 37.
[63] Edil Rivera, 21 January 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mambo in New York City and the Son Montuno's Displacement

Natalio Galán has stated that Arsenio, whose style he credits as an important predecessor to the mambo, "remained in the periphery of what would be in 1946 'mambo a la Pérez Prado,' the style of which would subsequently continue to transform itself."[64] He attributes Arsenio's fate to his style's "excessive dependence on folkloric sources"—that is, "ritual congo sources"—and inability to take on new elements, namely "progressive jazz" harmonies and voicings. Indeed, I have argued that Arsenio's son montuno style was defined by principles and procedures characteristic of African and Afro-Cuban performance traditions. His style remained in the periphery of New York City's mambo milieu, however, not because of its "inability" to fuse "jazz elements" but rather its condition of displacement, which was effected by the unawareness of the son footwork and son montuno dance style among the vast majority of dancers and their use of other dance patterns that were incompatible with the son montuno's rhythmic texture.

This section focuses on the initial reception that Arsenio's son montuno style had in New York City and the effects the broader aesthetic and commercial expectations that defined New York's mambo milieu had on his music from 1952 to 1955. While his style has been categorized as "traditional," terms such as "innovative," "complicated," "raunchy," "free flow," and "very deep," which some musicians used to describe their experience performing and dancing to his style, not only problematize the "traditional-modern" dichotomy but also lead to a more profound understanding of the aesthetic effect

---

[64] See Galán 1983: 342-344.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's style had on some musicians and dancers. Although Arsenio may have contributed to the perception of his style as "traditional" and "authentic" by repeatedly expressing his concern for the integrity of Cuban music in reaction to the international commodification of the mambo and, later, chachachá, he never remained creatively static. In fact, the compositions and recordings he labeled "mambo" and "chachachá" reflect his will, however reluctant, to adjust his stylistic predilections to meet some of the stylistic expectations that the New York mambo big bands engendered.

The son montuno and mambo dance styles

While many musicians were familiar with Arsenio's son montuno style and the conjunto ensemble before his arrival in 1950, others as well as most dancers were not. Pianist Ken Rosa, for example, was initially uneasy with his style and the conjunto's instrumentation.

> I would go [to The Royal Mansion, in the Bronx] and Arsenio's group was there. It was a combination of instruments that I was really not accustomed to. I liked the combination, which was the big band: saxophone, trumpets. That's what I was used to. Arsenio had trumpets, himself on tres, and then he had more than one vocalist. The rhythm section sounded different from what our New York Cuban rhythm sections were sounding like. I was not familiar with it. I wasn't really comfortable with it at that time.[65]

Percussionist Joe Torres, on the other hand, welcomed the freshness of his style.

> A lot of people were not exposed to conjunto style of music. So it was really innovative to a lot of people in New York because most of the [Latinos] in New York were Puerto Rican. So we had a different style of

---

[65] Rosa, 1 December 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> playing it [i.e., Cuban dance music]. We were more used to the big bands, like Sacasas, . . . Marcelino Guerra, Machito. That's what we were used to. So when you heard a conjunto like Arsenio's it was really a novel thing and really exciting.[66]

Percussionist Ray Romero also emphasized that the son montuno style was entirely unique in New York.[67] According to these observations, Arsenio's conjunto and style were clearly distinct from the more familiar big band approach to playing Cuban dance music in New York.

While many musicians were attracted to the son montuno style, dancers had difficulties with it. According to percussionist Frankie Malabe, the conjunto "had a tough, no nonsense way of performing the music, and people complained that they couldn't dance to it."[68] Ray Romero added that while Arsenio's style was noticed by many musicians, it was not popular among most dancers or the general audience.[69] It is worth restating that when Arsenio introduced his style in Havana in the early 1940s, Cuban dancers, namely, of the black working class, were similarly faced with a new style of *son* music. Specifically, while the basic footsteps of the *son* dance style remained the same, these dancers were forced to adopt a new approach to *feeling* his style, since they no longer had the bass to depend on to accent the downbeat of every bar. His use of slower tempos was particularly welcomed and favored by black Cuban dancers because it, as well as the conjunto's collective accentuation of the son's basic footwork, facilitated this new approach to

---

[66] Torres, 17 February 2000.
[67] Romero, 25 June 2000. Romero played bongó with Tito Rodríguez's conjunto and big band in the mid 1950s.
[68] Quoted in Gerard 1988: 78.
[69] Romero, 25 June 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dancing *son*. Furthermore, although Arsenio initiated these stylistic innovations, the fruition of his style was ultimately dependent on the acceptance of his primary audience, the black working class of Havana.

In contrast, for a majority of dancers in New York his style was unfamiliar and not understood. As Ray Coen explained:

> Arsenio's music was very complicated. To be able to dance to Arsenio's music you *really* had to dance. You have to know how to dance [son montuno]. So, not everybody could dance that laidback thing, especially son [montuno] and guaguancó. You have to really dig it.[70]

New York-born Puerto Rican pianist Hector Rivera gave a description of the distinctive approach to dancing son montuno that is similar to that given by Bebo Valdés (see pp. 155-156):

> To me he was playing the truth—what I call the truth, the real music. It wasn't watered down for other consumers. But not everybody understands Arsenio's music. You play Arsenio for a lot of people and for lack of a better word they think it's too raunchy for them. They really don't *feel* that drive of that music. See, most people, they need the rhythm accented for them and Arsenio played son montuno. Son montuno is not like that. It's free flow. There's no ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR. You have to *feel* it ["from below"] and it goes to your body. It's something very deep.[71]

As one Cuban musician simply concluded, "Whoever couldn't dance to Arsenio's music didn't know how to dance [son montuno]!"[72]

---

[70] Coen, 26 April 2000.
[71] Rivera, interviewed by Henry Medina (1993) and quoted in Carp 1999: 17 (emphasis added).
[72] El que no podía bailar con la música de Arsenio porque ¡no sabía bailar! [son montuno]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

At the root of that "laidback," "raunchy," and "free flow" feel was the basic footwork which, as Cuban pianist Alfredo Valdés, Jr. described it, was "synchronized with the clave. This is something that is a requirement."[73] Dancers in New York, however, used a different kind of footwork to dance mambo. In comparing the Cuban and New York styles of dancing, with respect to clave, Julián Cabrera stated:

> Look, in Cuba, when you are playing for the dancer type, if you make a mistake, he'll tell you, "Hey, what's wrong?" because you are playing and they are dancing in clave. They know. They're with you. They're in tune with you. If the bassist makes a mistake, they say, "Hey, what's wrong?" Here [in New York], it's not like that. . . . It's something else. . . They dance outside of the clave.[74]

In actuality, the basic steps for the mambo are executed on the same three strong beats of each bar, totaling six steps, three of which coincide with clave strokes.[75] In contrast, out of the six steps of the son's basic footwork, four coincide with clave attacks, including steps 3 and 4 which are both syncopated (see Examples 6.1.a and b). In addition, the son montuno's rhythmic texture, marked especially by the bass, tended to accent step 3, thereby lending the dance and style a greater degree of syncopation (see Examples 6.1.a and 4.1.g and h). In many mambos, however, the bass pattern in particular accents strong

---

(Beltrán, 11 September 1996).

[73] Valdés, Jr., 4 December 1999.

[74] Mira, en Cuba, cuando tú estás tocando el tipo bailador, si tú te equivocas, te dice, 'Ay, ¿qué pasa?' porque estás tocando y están bailando en la clave. Saben. Están contigo. *They're in tune with you*. Si el bajista se equivoca, dicen, 'Ay, ¿qué pasa?' Acá, no. . . . Ya es otra cosa. . . . Bailan fuera de clave (Cabrera, 27 June 1998).

[75] According to contemporary sources (Byrnes and Swanson 1951: 29, 36, 38; Luis 1958: 67; Ohl 1958: 68) the basic mambo footwork started either on the first or second strong beat (see Chernoff 1979: 145 for a transcription of the "mambo on 1" pattern). These basic patterns are also used for salsa's basic footwork (see Chapter 9).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.1. The basic son montuno and mambo dance steps

(a) "Esas no" (ca. 1951), Arsenio Rodríguez y Su Conjunto de Estrellas: diablo

"Esas no." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1946 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

beats, coinciding with the mambo footwork (i.e., of mambo on 2). Hence, by applying the "mambo on 1" or "2" patterns to dance to Arsenio's music, mambo dancers would not have shared in the kind of "free flow" engendered by the synergy of the son footwork and

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.1. *Continued*

(b) "Ran kan kan" (23 November 1949), Tito Puente y Su Conjunto: montuno

"Ran kan kan." Music by Tito Puente. Copyright (c) 1957 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

son montuno rhythmic texture and dance style.[76]

[76] The bass pattern in "Ran kan kan" (*Cuando suenan los tambores*, BMG Music 3226-2-RL) can also be heard in Machito's "Barbara batibiri," "Tumba el quinto," and "Vive

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Of course, the mambo, as danced especially by exhibition dancers at the Palladium, was itself aesthetically vibrant, which some described as "wild, free and expressive," involving a "hodge-podge" of eccentric steps and intricate routines borrowed heavily from tap and the swing repertory.[77] According to Robert Farris Thompson (an avid mambo fan and writer during the 1950s) and other contemporary observers, to dance mambo one must have "great stamina," a "forceful personality," and a "hyperkinetic" feel, while taking a "basic callisthenic approach."[78] I asked Cuban trumpet player (and former member of Arsenio's conjunto in Havana) Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros to compare the mambo as it was danced at the Palladium with the son montuno as it was danced at sociedades de color in Havana, to which he responded:

> Completely different! In Cuba the music such as son montuno is slower. The only genre that is more or less fast is guaracha, and maybe guaguancó. One sweats too much in Cuba. It's too hot. That's why Pérez Prado wasn't a hit in Cuba because [his style] was too fast. In New York the music is faster, life is faster; everyone walks quickly to work, wherever. They told Arsenio that he had to play faster.[79]

---

como yo" (*More than Mambo*, Verve 314 527 903-2), all of which were recorded in 1950.

[77] The mambo dance repertory and stylistic development are areas that have not been comprehensively documented and analyzed. See Stearns (1979: 360-361) for a brief description of the inter-influences between Afro-Cuban and jazz dancing styles during the 1940s and 1950s in New York City; Byrnes and Swanson (1951) for a brief explanation of the origin of the mambo dance style in New York City; and Luis (1958: 66-67), Ohl (1958: 67-68), and Thompson (1958 and 1959) for contemporary descriptions of mambo dance styles.

[78] Thompson 1959: 73; Byrnes and Swanson 1951: 36.

[79] ¡Completamente diferente! En Cuba la música como el son montuno es más lento. El único genero que es más o menos rápido es la guaracha, y tal vez el guaguancó. Se suda mucho en Cuba. Hace mucho calor en Cuba. Por eso Pérez Prado no pegó en Cuba porque [su estilo] era muy rápido. En Nueva York la música es más rápida, la vida es más rápida; todos camina rápidamente al trabajo, a donde quira. Lo dijeron a Arsenio que tenía

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

One individual who suggested to Arsenio that he play in a faster tempo was Machito's band director Mario Bauzá.

> I warned him: he played in a tempo that in order to dance to you had to be Cuban, a dancer, and black, because it was too slow. He played that way in Cuba for blacks only at the Tropical and places like that. But Arsenio didn't want to pick-up the tempo, and that's why he never had the success here [in New York] that he deserved, since his style of music was never fully understood.[80]

In regards to the significance of tempo to the mambo atmosphere in New York City, Puente recalled the following: "We changed the tempo during the early '50s to keep the dancers moving, and the dance halls were alive all the time."[81]

Some social dancers, however, preferred Arsenio's "laidback" tempo. Compare Arsenio's "Esas no" ("Not Those Women"), whose tempo averages around the mid 140s, to Tito Puente's "Ran kan kan," which averages slightly over 200 (Examples 6.1.a and b). As Joe Torres noted:

> [W]hen [the conjunto] got into a groove, look out, man! Because, I never heard a band swing like that. . . . His music was not tiring for a dancer. They got a nice tempo [that] you could dance [to] all night. You wouldn't get tired, you would fall into this groove and it was beautiful.[82]

Nevertheless, apart from those who adopted an appreciation for Arsenio's son montuno style, it was in a state of displacement in an otherwise dominant dance milieu characterized

---

que tocar más rápido (Armenteros, 25 January 2000).
[80] Quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 41 (my translation).
[81] Quoted in Smith 1976a: 16.
[82] Quoted in Carp 1999: 18-19. See also Carp 1999: 9.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by distinct footwork patterns and an overall "forceful," "hyperkinetic," and "callisthenic" approach to dancing.

Arsenio's Conjunto de Estrellas recorded "Esas no" along with several other son montunos and guaguancós in 1951 and early 1952 in New York with Tico Records (see Appendix 2). These son montunos and guaguancós were arranged and performed in his typical son montuno style (see Tables 6.1.a and b in Appendix 4). Like the son montuno, Arsenio's conjunto-style guaguancó was also unfamiliar among audiences in general in New York. Edil Rivera, Arsenio's trumpet player in the early 1950s, stated, "Guaguancó wasn't played much. When I came [to New York in 1950] it wasn't played there in the way Arsenio played it. So, from then on it more or less became known."[83] As he had done in Havana, Arsenio dedicated two guaguancós to the people living in El Barrio (East Harlem) in "Como se goza en El Barrio" ("El Barrio is A Lot of Fun") and the Bronx in "La gente del Bronx" ("The People of the Bronx"). See Appendix 3 for lyrics. As I will discuss in Chapter 7, the Cuban and Puerto Rican populations of color in the South Bronx in particular became Arsenio's primary audience in the early 1950s and remained so throughout the decade.

But he was unsuccessful in establishing his conjunto and style in the broader mambo-dominated milieu of Manhattan. As the statements above reveal, Arsenio's style, which was shaped in step with the aesthetic tastes of black Cubans of the working class, was irrelevant to a broader Latin and non-Latin dancing audience who had developed its

---

[83] El ritmo guaguancó no tocaba mucho. Cuando yo llegué allá [Nueva York en 1950] tampoco allá lo tocaba mucho, con el ritmo que sabía tocar Arsenio. Entonces, de ahí adelante pues se cogio más o menos (Rivera, 14 January 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

own understanding of "modern" Cuban dance music as played by big bands in New York. The following sections will define the stylistic aspects that signified the New York-style mambo as "modern" and the effects these stylistic expectations had on Arsenio's music from the years 1952 to 1955.

The "modern" New York mambo style

In Chapter 4, I showed that the diablo was Arsenio's definitive innovation and contribution to Cuban *son* music. The quintessential aspects of the diablo were the repeated call-and-response figures between the coro and trumpets, whose alternation sequence was truncated to half its original length from the montuno section; and the interweaving of parts, sometimes including the spontaneous interlocking of trumpet parts (see Examples 4.8.a-d and Tables 4.1 and 4.2 in Appendix 4). And, as I argued, he derived the idea for these short alternating sequences and interlocking parts, which occurred usually within a two-bar cycle, from the yuka's characteristically short time cycles, polyrhythmic and interwoven textures, and, especially, simple alternating schemes.

Arrangers in New York, however, chose early on not to incorporate the diablo or its associated techniques. Puente and Tito Rodríguez, for example, began to eliminate the diablo in their *son*-based arrangements as early as the late 1940s, even though they maintained other features of Arsenio's arrangements.[84] As New York Latin music

---

[84] See the four tracks, that were recorded on 13 April 1951, in *Cuando suenan los tambores: Tito Puente y su Orquesta, 1949-1951* (CD RCA 3226-2-RL) as well as *The Best of Tito Rodriguez and his Orchestra* Vol. 2, *1953-1955* (CD RCA 74321-15944-2).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

historian Max Salazar notes, Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito visited Havana frequently during the early 1950s, and bought stock arrangements arranged for the Cuban conjunto format.[85] Eventually, arrangers for New York groups settled on two kinds of musical structures. First, many of Puente's and Tito Rodríguez's earliest mambos, recorded between 1949 and 1951 with their three-trumpet conjuntos, consist of instrumental arrangements that, not unlike Pérez Prado's mambo arrangements, feature a succession of arranged brass riffs and trumpet, percussion, and piano solos (see Table 6.3.a in Appendix 4). Second, for many of their arrangements for big band, they continued to incorporate the basic *son* structure, consisting of the optional *canto* section and the montuno section (see Table 6.3.b in Appendix 4). These arrangements in particular were essentially based on the model established by Cuban big bands in the early 1940s, the "mambo" section of which consisting usually of a phrase played by the brass section over the "mambo rhythm" played in octaves by the reed section (see Examples 4.5.b and c and 6.2.a and b). The big band format eventually rendered the three- and four-trumpet conjunto somewhat anachronistic and obsolete until the 1960s.

As previously indicated, by 1948, the name "mambo" had become associated not only with a rhythm and the final section of the danzón, but also with the section of the arrangement scheme that big bands in Havana popularized by 1944 and that was soon after adopted by Latin big bands in New York City. In his book *Arranging Latin American Music Authentically*, which was published in New York in 1948, Carlos Diamante (also known as Charlie Diamond) gives the following definition of the

---

[85] See Loza 1999: 59-60.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"mambo":

> The mambo, a comparatively new innovation in Latin American music, maybe considered an instrumental montuno. With the mambo, a part of the arrangement rather than of the song, the arranger is allowed greater freedom for originality. It is constructed by writing a rhythmic figure for the brass and a contrapuntal of legato [i.e., the "mambo rhythm"] for the saxes, always conforming to the clave. The sax figure is usually in unison. The mambo [section] may be played between montunos and repeated as often as desired.[86]

Thus, the most striking differences between Arsenio's diablo and the New York big band's mambo section are the actual placement of the sections in the arrangement schemes and musical contents. While the diablo constituted the final, climactic section of Arsenio's arrangements, New York arrangers placed the mambo section about two-thirds of the way through, following it with a solo section and either a return to the introduction and/or a coda. The mambo section itself consists of two- or four-bar cycles, which are repeated several times, during which the reed section plays the ubiquitous two-bar "mambo rhythm" in octaves, while the brass plays a counter-phrase. Most importantly, the arranger determined the material that was played by the reeds and brass, hence limiting especially the freedom of the brass players to spontaneously create interlocking parts. As a result, although the texture of the typical mambo section is polyrhythmic, it nevertheless lacks the collective interweaving and off-beat accentuation created in the diablo.

But it was the regular use of diatonic and, especially, altered extensions as well as other jazz arranging techniques that differentiated the New York big bands' arrangements

---

[86] Diamante 1948.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.2. The mambo section for big band arrangements

(a) "Donde estabas tú" (1950), Tito Puente

"Donde estabas tu." Words and Music by Ernesto Duarte Brito. Copyright (c) 1950 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.2. *Continued*

(b) "Tremendo cumban" (1953), Machito

"Tremendo cumban." Written & (c) 1953 by Orlando Peña. Published by Hall of Fame Music Co. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in general from Arsenio's. Because Arsenio maintained the three-trumpet conjunto format, the voicings for the trumpets were largely limited to the pitches of the triad, although diatonic extensions do occur. In contrast, the big band format afforded Puente, Machito, and Tito Rodríguez a much richer harmonic vocabulary to implement. For example, in Puente's "¿Donde estabas tú?" ("Where were You?") the ensemble pyramid in the cierre (break), preceding the mambo section, forms the minor tonic chord (F minor) with a ninth, eleventh, and sharp thirteenth (see Example 6.3.a).[87] The coda in Tito Rodríguez's "This is Mambo" consists of a very characteristic ii V I jazz chord progression with a tritone substitution (bII7).[88] A similar chord progression with the tritone substitution also occurs in the A' section of the verse (see Table 6.3.b in Appendix 4). And, in the cierre following the mambo section in Machito's "Barbara batibiri," the reeds and trumpets play a line whose phrasing is jazz-influenced (see Example 6.3.b).[89]

The predilections for these jazz performance techniques shared among mambo bandleaders such as Mario Bauza (of Machito's orchestra) and arrangers such as Aaron Sachs and Harold Wegbreit (who performed and arranged for Tito Rodríguez's band) stem from their experience performing and arranging for jazz big bands.[90] According to Ray Santos, Mario Bauzá and Tito Puente, like Pérez Prado, were particularly influenced

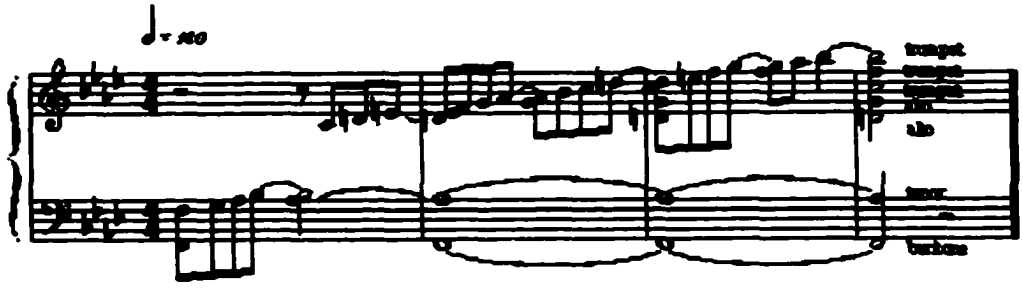
---

[87] *The Best of Tito Puente and His Orchestra* Vol. 1, *1950-1960*. BMG Music 3369-2-RL.
[88] *The Best of Tito Rodríguez and His Orchestra* Vol. 1, *1955-1956*. BMG Music 3419-2-RL.
[89] *More than Mambo*. Verve 314 527 903-2.
[90] Boulong, 24 January 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

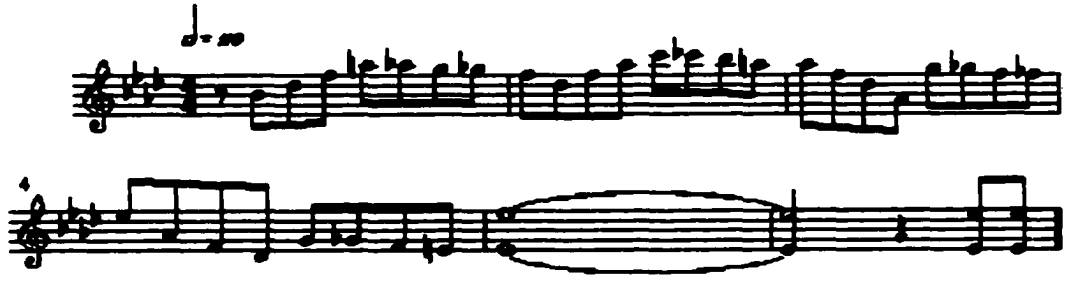
Example 6.3. Jazz-influenced elements in the New York mambo style

(a) "Donde estabas tú" (1950), Tito Puente: diatonic and altered extensions (piano reduction)



"Donde estabas tu." Words and Music by Ernesto Duarte Brito. Copyright (c) 1950 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

(b) "Barbara batibiri" (1950), Machito: jazz-influenced phrasing for trumpets and reeds (piano reduction)



"Barbara batiri." Words and Music by Antar Daly. Copyright (c) 1950 by Editorial Mexicana De Musica Internationales S.A. Copyright Renewed. All Rights Administered by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

by Stan Kenton's use of big band voicings and "screaming high brass."[91] Arsenio's use of

[91] Quoted in Loza 1999: 88.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the trumpets, however, was, for Wegbriet, not influential or even noticed.[92] Instead, mambo arrangers preferred jazz harmonic extensions for their brass and sax voicings, the use of which, according to Puente, was considered "hip":

> [T]he Latin arrangers were not studying enough to be able to do that. We were always with our tonics and triads and sixths, you know. All of a sudden we got hip.[93]

The ideology of jazz harmonic techniques as "progressive" and "modern" and Latin or Cuban rhythms as "traditional" or "authentic" is particularly evident in Puente's following remark: "In our arrangements we use some of the *modern* sounds in the manner of Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Kenton, but we never lose the *authenticity* of the Latin rhythm."[94]

In the end, although few musicians and dancers in New York City found Arsenio's style to be aesthetically satisfying, Arsenio was eventually forced to negotiate his style accordingly be adapting to dominant stylistic predilections and commercial pressures.

Arsenio's capetillos and mambos

Arsenio's stated purpose for "introducing" the capetillo in New York was to "destroy" the mambo's popularity. It would constitute his musical pronouncement regarding the mambo's authentic Cuban style and his involvement in its origins. He made six recordings that were labeled "capetillo" in 1952 and 1953 (see Appendix 2). In the lyrics to his first

---

[92] Harold Wegbreit, personal communication, 25 June 2000.
[93] Quoted in Loza 1999: 130.
[94] Quoted in Loza 1999: 135 (my emphasis).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

recorded capetillo, "Ahora, capetillo" ("Now, Capetillo") he expresses his intentions very clearly.

According to some sources, "capetillo" was the name for the montuno section of older styles of rumba, as well as one of the many popular dance steps that was executed during the final "mambo" section of the danzón.[95] This is, perhaps, the "dance" that Arsenio refers to in "Ahora, capetillo." In any event, the style that he introduced as "capetillo" in New York was not much different from his son montuno style. It

Ahora, capetillo (rec. ca. 1952)	**Now, Capetillo**
coro: Oye, chiquita te gusta el mambo, ¿Y qué me dices del capetillo?	chorus: So, little girl, you like the mambo, And what do you have to say about the capetillo?
guía: En Argentina se baila el tango, Y en mi Cuba el capetillo.	guía: In Argentina they dance tango, And in my Cuba the capetillo.
Oye, nenita, tú bailas swing, Ay, pero prueba mi capetillo	Hey, little girl, you dance swing, Oh, but tryout my capetillo.

encompasses the same arrangement scheme, including the diablo (see Tables 6.4 and 6.5). The tempos, however, like his guarachas and guaguancós, are somewhat faster than the son montunos, averaging in the 140s. In addition, several of the capetillos contain additional stylistic anomalies.

Perhaps the most original of the recorded capetillos is "No quiero" ("I Don't Want To"), whose canto section is marked by a succession of short sung verses and nine-bar

[95] León 1984: 156; Cuéllar Vizcaíno 1993: 29.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

breaks arranged for the entire conjunto. Each successive break consists of lengthier rests, beginning with eighth- and quarter-note rests in the first break, and ending with three quarter- and whole-note rests in the final break, such that the dancer's orientation to the basic duple meter must have been severely hampered. The components of the remainder of the arrangement, however, are quite familiar, including alternations among the coro, guía, and trumpet section, the bass's melodic accent of the coro, and the truncated alternation sequence, which marks the beginning of the diablo section (see Table 6.5 in Appendix 4).

Throughout most of "Ahora, capetillo," the piano, tres, and bass play the "mambo rhythm," which never constituted a defining aspect of the diablo section or, in general, Arsenio's style. It was, of course, characteristic of the big band mambo section, but here too it rarely appeared throughout the arrangement. Another anomaly includes the humorous spoken "vamp" sections in "El dolorcito de mi china" (My Girl's Little Pain), in which the male protagonist (sung by René Scull) sings about his girlfriend who always seems to be ill in the most inopportune moments, while the girlfriend (singer is unidentified), who is speaking at the same time, disparages her boyfriend for being overly caring.[96]

Finally, isolated instances of jazz-influenced chord extensions and progressions occur in several recordings. The final chords in "El dolorcito de mi china" ("My Girlfriend's Little Pain") and "No quiero" contain thirteenths and ninths. The trumpet lines in the fourth alternation with the coro in "Cambia el paso" ("Change the Dance Step") and

---

[96] A similar spoken "vamp" section occurs in the son montuno "Se formó el bochinche" (The Gossip Has Started; 9 April 1952), in which members of the conjunto act out a mock argument over which member started a particular rumor about another musician.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

second alternation in "Ahora, capetillo" are based on a chromatically descending progression which ends with ii V I. Similarly, the piano solo (played by Ray Coen) in "Ahora, capetillo" is based on a ii V I chord progression with a tritone substitution (see Tables 6. 4 and 6.5 in Appendix 4). These stylistic anomalies do not occur with any regularity such as to render the capetillo a "new" style distinct from his son montuno. Instead, they reflect instances in which Arsenio and members of his conjunto make an effort to include some of the characteristics of the New York mambo and even, perhaps, Pérez Prado's style.

The role of Arsenio's arrangers is another important factor to consider in the subtle changes that began to emerge in his conjunto's sound. One of his first arrangers was René Hernández, who had played with Arsenio's conjunto in Havana in the early 1940s and who had afterwards become one of the most important and sought-after arrangers in New York from the late 1940s through the 1950s. He wrote the arrangements as well as played piano for Arsenio's first two recording sessions with Tico Records (see Appendix 2).

By January 1952, eighteen-year-old Ray Coen replaced Hernández and became the conjunto's pianist and arranger.[97] Ray, who was born and raised in New York, was the stepson of the famous Puerto Rican bandleader and arranger Augusto Coen, who had performed with Latin and African-American jazz bands mostly in Harlem throughout the 1930s.[98] He was asked to join the conjunto by Arsenio himself. Ray was living on Kelly

---

[97] Coen, 26 April 2000.
[98] See Glasser 1995: 79-83.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Street, in the Bronx, until he joined the conjunto, at which point he moved in with Arsenio in his apartment on 116th Street and Lexington Avenue, in East Harlem. For the next three months, they worked on new arrangements, including those that were recorded in the final Tico session in 1952 and all of the songs that were recorded with Seeco Records in 1952 and 1953 (see Appendix 2). Arsenio also taught Ray the various intricacies of playing his style, including how to play his complicated cierres or break sequences. Meanwhile, Ray taught Arsenio different chords, chord progressions, and modulations, which he had learned from his exposure to his father's jazz and classical records. Ray's knowledge of jazz phrasing and chord progressions is clearly evident in his solo on "Ahora, capetillo," as well as the jazz-influenced trumpet arrangements in the capetillos discussed above.

Despite these subtle changes, however, Arsenio perpetuated the integrity of his overall son montuno texture, as demonstrated in his conjunto's recording of "Baila Simón" ("Simon, Dance"; see Example 6.4). But by 1955, changes in the conjunto's instrumentation and the overall arrangement schemes were becoming more noticeable. In March and June 1955 the conjunto recorded two "mambos" and two "chachachás" for RCA Victor's international division.[99] It is probable that Arsenio was given another contract with RCA with the agreement that he would record "mambos" and "chachachás," which had begun to take over the mambo in popularity in 1954. More so than the capetillos of 1952, these recordings reflect Arsenio's will to comply with commercial

---

[99] Although labeled a "chachachá," "Sobre el arco iris" (rec. 21 June 1955) is an arrangement of "Over the Rainbow" in a bolero style.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.4. "Baila Simón" (2 April 1953), Arsenio Rodríguez: diablo section

"Baila Simon." Words and Music by Israel Rodriguez. Copyright (c) 1959 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

stylistic expectations, yet on his own terms.

For these sessions, Arsenio added a timbal player to the conjunto. While these recordings were the first to include a timbal, his conjunto had been performing with a

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

timbal player since at least 1952. The conjuntos of Tito Puente and Tito Rodríguez had included timbales since their formation in the late 1940s. And, it had been a standard instrument in New York Latin big bands since at least the early 1940s. Unlike his New York counterparts, however, Arsenio insisted that his timbalero not play the standard "cáscara" pattern on the sides of the drums, but instead to play on top of the heads.

Arsenio's first timbalero was José Valiente from Oriente, Cuba, who immigrated to New York in 1948.[100] In 1950, José began to spend a lot of time with Raúl and Kike, helping them carry their instruments to and from rehearsals and gigs. He also hung out at Arsenio's apartment, offering to play the tumbadora while Arsenio worked on new material. The Travieso brothers also taught José how to play various traditional Afro-Cuban styles, including guaguancó, conga, toques de santo, and bembé. By 1952, he had volunteered to play the timbal after Arsenio expressed interest in adding the instrument to his conjunto. Arsenio eventually added José on timbal, instructing him to play in a style that in other contexts is referred to as "baqueteo" or "tapao." José described it in the following manner:

> JV: Instead of playing on the sides, like cáscara, I played on top. So, I used to put my hand [on the head] and I would play as if you were to play a danzón. And Arsenio wanted it that way, . . . emphasizing the rhythm . . . with the bell "closed."
>
> DG: So, he wanted a more Cuban style [of playing], danzón-style?
>
> JV: Exactly. He never liked the cáscara pattern on the timbal. . . . In that kind of conjunto, I had to play that way in order to maintain that "closed" rhythm. Every now and then I would hit the sides, and when they gave me

---

[100] Valiente, 9 July 2000 and 28 March 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> a solo I would play it. But most of the time I always maintained the rhythm.[101]

By "closed" rhythm, José is referring to Arsenio's preference for coordinated and interlocking tumbaos or patterns, instead of conspicuous individual playing. This approach to ensemble playing factored significantly in his successful incorporation of the tumbadora into the conjunto, thus constituting one of the ways in which he transformed Cuban son music in the early 1940s. In adding the timbal, Arsenio required that its pattern match that of the tumbadora and be played as muted strokes with the stick on the head of the larger drum (also called *hembra*) (see Example 6.5.a). Joe Torres, who also played timbales with Arsenio in the early 1950s, remembers that he insisted on thicker sticks, instead of the thinner sticks that most other timbaleros used, in order to produce a fatter and louder sound.[102] Yet another timbal player, Abe Liman, who played with the conjunto in the early 1950s, remembers:

> With Arsenio, [the] first night [I made a] big mistake. I'm used to playing with Tito [Rodríguez] and regular timbales. So . . . I have one stick in one hand and I'm playing . . . Arsenio says, "No, no, no! Play on top!" I says, "What?" "Play on top!" . . . So for the first time in my life I had to play what they call baqueteo or timbales on top. I mean it was a whole new

---

[101] JV: En ves de tocar *on the sides, like* cáscara, yo lo hacía arriba. Y entonces ponía la mano y tocaba como se va a tocar un danzón. Y Arsenio quería así, . . . marcando el ritmo . . . con el cencerro "cerrado." DG: Entonces, él quería más estilo cubano, danzón? JV: Exactamente. Él nunca le gustaba mucho la questión de la cáscara en el timbal . . . En el conjunto de esa índole tenía que hacerlo porque para poder mantener ese ritmo "cerrado." De ves y cuando lo daba en la cascara, y cuando me daban un solo yo lo hacía. Pero siempre lo que hice es mantener el ritmo, la mayoría de veces (José Valiente, 9 July 2000 and 28 March 2001).

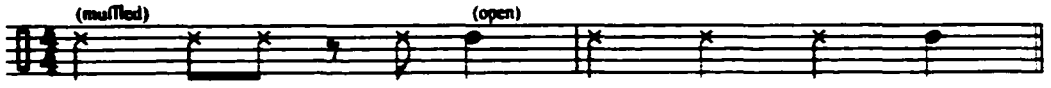
[102] Torres, 17 February 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.5. Timbal patterns

(a) "Mambo en la cueva" (16 March 1955), Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto

(b) Basic *baqueteo* pattern for danzón (played on the head)



concept for me and man, it was like liberating.[103]

Although the patterns were not the same, the strokes on the drum-head were much more akin to the "baqueteo" style of timbal playing in danzón music (see Example 6.5.b) than the standard cáscara pattern, which was played on the sides of the drum and favored

[103] Liman, 26 August 1994.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

by New York groups (see Example 6.1.b).

The most significant change in Arsenio's "mambos" is in the arrangement scheme, which included a "mambo section" arranged for the trumpets. Also, absent were both the cierre prior to the "diablo" section and the clearly defined arrangement scheme of the diablo section itself (see Table 6.6 in Appendix 4). Instead, the endings flow relatively uninterrupted from the montuno section. Although alternations between the coro and trumpet section do occur, they are nevertheless limited to only two repeats (at least on the recording) and, more importantly, the familiar order of alternations between the coro and trumpet section, the coro and trumpet solo, and the coro is absent.

Arsenio's chachachás

In addition to the three chachachás that he recorded for RCA Victor in 1955, Arsenio recorded another four in the previous year for Puchito, a Cuban-owned record label. The charanga Orquesta América originally popularized the chachachá in Cuba in 1953 with it recording of "La engañadora," composed by Enrique Jorrín. Its simple and catchy rhythm and melodies were soon after popular among dancers throughout Latin America and the United States. The following underscores the origins of its widespread appeal:

> Enrique Jorrín, who is considered the creator of the chachachá, told us that he noticed a certain difficulty that dancers were having in the final section of the danzón-mambo. To resolve this problem he decided to compose melodies that were rhythmically simple, making sure to use the least amount of syncopation. . . . In general, the rhythmic complex of the chachachá is distinguished by its simplicity, an aspect that made it possible that this genre could be more easily danced to than the danzón mambo,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> resulting in its enormous popularity.[104]

Not unlike Arsenio and Arcaño a decade before, Jorrín set out to develop a new style of music that would appeal especially to dancers. However, Arsenio's and Arcaño's development of the son montuno and danzón mambo styles, respectively, hinged on the demands and acceptance of a local dancing public who had a predilection for rhythmic power and complexity. In contrast, as the quote above suggests, Jorrín's aim for developing a simpler (or "whiter"?) style of the danzón mambo led to its viability and popularity among Cuban and non-Cuban dancers.

In New York the chachachá was adapted by the mambo big bands and soon became popular among dancers, who found it much easier to dance in comparison to the faster and more demanding mambo.[105] Because of its mass commercial appeal, record companies demanded that their Latin bands record entire albums consisting of chachachás.[106] This was, in all likelihood, the main reason why Arsenio's conjunto recorded chachachás for RCA and Puchito. Like the mambo, the chachachá was in Arsenio's opinion a dilution of Cuban dance music, or more specifically, the styles that he and Arcaño were primarily responsible for developing in the early 1940s. In August 1955 New York's *La Prensa* summarized his criticism:

> Arsenio Rodríguez, the "Great Arsenio," thinks that the "chachachá" is a musical style that [has] deeply [damaged] Cuban music. He finds it counterproductive (musically speaking) and of little interest, rhythmically

---

[104] Torres 1995: 210-211 (my translation).
[105] Luis 1959: 70; Butler 1975: 49; see also Roberts 1999: 131-133.
[106] See, for example, Tito Puente in Loza 1999: 40.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and melodically.[107]

In 1961, Robert Farris Thompson similarly characterized particularly the chachachá's "avoidance of the off-beat melodic phrasing" as a "Creole regression and infinitely easier to dance than mambo."[108]

Arsenio was averse to creating music for the sole purpose of commercial appeal, as evident in his criticisms of the mambo and chachachá. Yet, understanding its importance in maintaining his viability with record companies and, particularly, dance promoters and audiences, he did make some musical concessions, including recording and performing an arrangement of the American popular tune "Over the Rainbow," titled "Sobre el arco iris" (21 June 1955), in addition to several chachachás.[109] Along with his pianist and arranger René Hernández "El Latigo" (who had replaced Ray Coen by 1955), Arsenio produced arrangements that still incorporated some of his characteristic stylistic aspects.[110] The arrangement schemes, however, deviated from his typical format, with the absence of cierres, solos, and the diablo (see Table 6.7 in Appendix 4).

The conjunto's first recorded chachachá, "Mi primer cariño" ("My First Love," rec. 16 March 1955), is more like his son montunos than the typically simpler chachachá. It opens with a two-bar phrase, in which the coro singers articulate the main and simple

---

[107] *La Prensa*, 31 August 1955 (my translation).
[108] Thompson 1983: 48.
[109] Arsenio heard Edil Rivera, his lead trumpet player, play the melody to "Over the Rainbow" during a rehearsal and liked it. Puerto Rican pianist and arranger Ray Dávila subsequently arranged the piece as a bolero and added a montuno section (Rivera, 26 February 2000).
[110] "El Latigo" is not to be confused with Machito's arranger and pianist René Hernández.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.6. "Mi primer cariño" (16 March 1955), Arsenio Rodríguez: chachachá

"Mi primer carino." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1958 by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

steps of the chachachá footwork (see Example 6.6). Following this somewhat tongue-and-cheek reference is a much more syncopated phrase played together by the trumpets, piano, tres, and bass. In addition, at the opening of the montuno section, the bass accents the melodic phrase of the coro in typical Arsenio fashion. Other features in "Mi primer cariño" that are uncharacteristic of the chachachá include three-part instead of unison singing, intermittent attacks on the bell instead of continuous attacks on every quarter-note beat, as well as the absence of the flute and güiro.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 6.6. *Continued*

For his Puchito recordings, however, Arsenio incorporated the more standard features of the chachachá. Sections with unison vocals interchange with two- (duo) and three-part (trio) singing. Most prominently is the addition of a güiro player and flutist, which with the timbal player constitute three of the most typical instruments of the chachachá as played by the charanga ensemble. For these recording sessions, Arsenio enlisted the services of Puerto Rican percussionist Francisco Angel Bastar "Kako" on timbales and Gilberto Valdés on the five-key flute.

Conclusion

Ultimately, Arsenio did not succeed in overcoming the popularity of the mambo with his

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

capetillo. Furthermore, he failed to attract an ethnically and socially broad audience that accepted and understood his son montuno style and that recognized him as the originator of the mambo. By documenting his contestations of the mambo in the popular press, however, he enabled future researchers to refute its dominant lineal history as well as contradict scholars such as Cuban American Gustavo Pérez Firmat who asserts that the mambo is "a kind of music that does not know its place" and that "has little to do with roots."[111] In the end, what mattered to Arsenio most was performing and recording music, whether it was capetillos, mambos, chachachás, son montunos, or guaguancós, in a style that met his own musical expectations. And while his expectations may not have been in accordance with mass popular tastes, his music nevertheless resonated, as we will see in Chapter 7, with the working-class Puerto Rican and Cuban population of color, especially in the Bronx.

[111] Pérez Firmat 1994: 81.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 7

From *Estilo Negro* to *Típico Cubano*: Shifting Perceptions and Roles of Arsenio's Style

By the second half of the 1950s the decline in popularity of the mambo and chachachá had created stiff competition among big bands for fewer jobs in the dancehalls of Manhattan. As a result, Arsenio's conjunto had become more reliant on peripheral locales, particularly in the Bronx, for work. Such locales included the social club Club Cubano Inter-Americano and the Tropicana nightclub, both of which provided local residents of the Bronx with mostly Cuban conjunto and charanga music. For Arsenio this milieu in some ways resembled that of black working class society of Havana. First, his audience in the Bronx consisted of primarily working-class Cubans and Puerto Ricans of color. And, second, his audience favored music, like son montuno, that facilitated social dancing, in contrast to the frenetic mambo milieu of Manhattan's dancehalls, which tended to favor exhibition dancing. Similarly, in Havana, the black working class favored his slower son montuno style over the faster styles of other conjuntos, which performed mostly for the white middle- and upper-classes. But while his style constituted racial difference for musicians and dancers in Havana, his audience in New York City conceived it in terms of Cuban national identity.

For instance, Puerto Rican Silvio Alava noted:

> Most of the groups in New York played in a faster tempo than the típico Cuban groups. Arsenio played mostly sones and son montunos, which are in medium tempos and start to swing in the second half of the tune. His

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

style did not change and remained típico and true to his Cuban roots.[1]

Cuban Melba Alvarado, member and former president of the Club Cubano Inter-Americano, stressed that the club always hired groups who performed "música típica cubana."[2] Puerto Ricans Ray Coen and Joe Torres, both of whom played with Arsenio's conjunto in the early 1950s, confirmed that his style was characterized not racially but in terms of his "típico" Cuban repertory.[3] In short, Arsenio's style fulfilled the need for "típico" Cuban dance music in the Bronx and resonated with the nostalgic feelings shared among many Cuban and Puerto Rican immigrants.

In this chapter I outline the trajectory of Arsenio's performances and recordings in Havana and New York City from 1956 to 1964. I also discuss the lyrics to several of his songs in which he expresses the political and national dimensions of his identity. I then discuss the nature of his relationship with the Puerto Rican and Cuban population of the Bronx and the role his repertory and style had in this peripheral area of New York's Latin dance music milieu. Finally, I show that even though his style was perceived as "típico cubano" and even non-changing, in fact, Arsenio continued to negotiate his style to meet commercially popular styles, namely, pachanga. In this way, Arsenio served as a crucial source of what Raymond Williams defines as "residual" culture, that is, that which "has been formed in the past, but is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at

---

[1] Alava, March 2000. Alava was a photographer in New York from 1953 to 1960; he attended and photographed Arsenio's dances.
[2] Alvarado, 15 March 2000.
[3] Coen, 26 April 2000 and Torres, 4 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present."[4]

Returning to Havana, 1956-1957

In 1955 Arsenio reestablished his contract with RCA Victor's international division in New York. The conjunto made four recordings on 16 March and three more on 21 June (Appendix 2). Several of these recordings subsequently became very popular in Cuba. Arsenio's new lead vocalist, Puerto Rican Luís "Wito" Kortwrite, became particularly popular for his performance on the bolero "Acerca el oido" ("Come Closer").[5] Consequently, Arsenio decided to travel to Havana in February 1956 with his wife Emma and Wito to perform his new RCA material, as well as to record more new material for RCA in Havana. Upon their arrival, Arsenio and Wito went to the musician's union to hire new musicians, since most of his former members from the 1940s were already playing with the popular Chappottín y sus Estrellas and Conjunto Modelo. One of the conjunto's first performances was on 26 February at La Polar, a cervecería (beer garden) in Marianao. The dance was entitled "Llegó Arsenio, Procedente de New York con su Conjunto" ("Arsenio has Arrived from New York with his Conjunto") and featured the very popular Orquesta Aragón, Arcaño y sus Maravillas, Las Melodias del 40, Chappotín y sus Estrellas, and Arsenio's conjunto, which in fact was formed in Havana.[6] His conjunto also performed for Social Club Buena Vista, one of the first sociedades de color

---

[4] See Williams 1977: 121-127.
[5] The following, except were indicated, is taken from my interview with Luís "Wito" Kortwrite (25 January 1999).
[6] Travieso Montecino, 25 June 1999; Méndez Bravet and Pérez 1991/2: 22.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that hired his new conjunto in May 1942.[7] On 16 April 1956 the conjunto made six recordings for RCA Victor in the studios of CMQ radio station. The vocalists included Wito Kortwrite and Arsenio's sister Estela Rodríguez (see Fig. 7.1). Estela had already made two recordings, including "Aquí como allá" ("It's the Same Here as Over There"), with the conjunto in November 1950. According to Raúl, his sister had both a forceful alto voice, which complemented Arsenio's "macho" and black style, as well as an aptitude in learning songs quickly and singing different genres of Cuban popular music.[8]

Soon after these recordings were made, Wito returned to New York because of his apprehension over the escalating violence and government repression. Violent opposition against Cuba's dictator Fulgencio Batista, who took power in March 1952, was affecting the entire country and caused the government to regularly declare martial law.[9] Stiff penalties were incurred for propaganda or any sort of public demonstration against the government. Bombings and other forms of anti-government sabotage were common. Wito remembers feeling especially uneasy performing with Arsenio's conjunto at large outdoor dances, such as those at La Polar, because of the ever-present threat of public demonstrations forming spontaneously. Arsenio, however, remained in Havana, despite having scheduled performances with his Conjunto de Estrellas in New York. It is unclear whether he returned to New York in the following months, or if he remained in Havana through the fall. In any event, his conjunto made six more recordings for RCA Victor in Havana on 5 October 1956. He replaced Wito with Anastasio "Tasio" Vila, although he

---

[7] *La Prensa*, 21 May 1956.
[8] Raúl Travieso, 8 February 1997.
[9] See Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Economicas 1963: 789-793 and Phillips 1959: 270-275.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

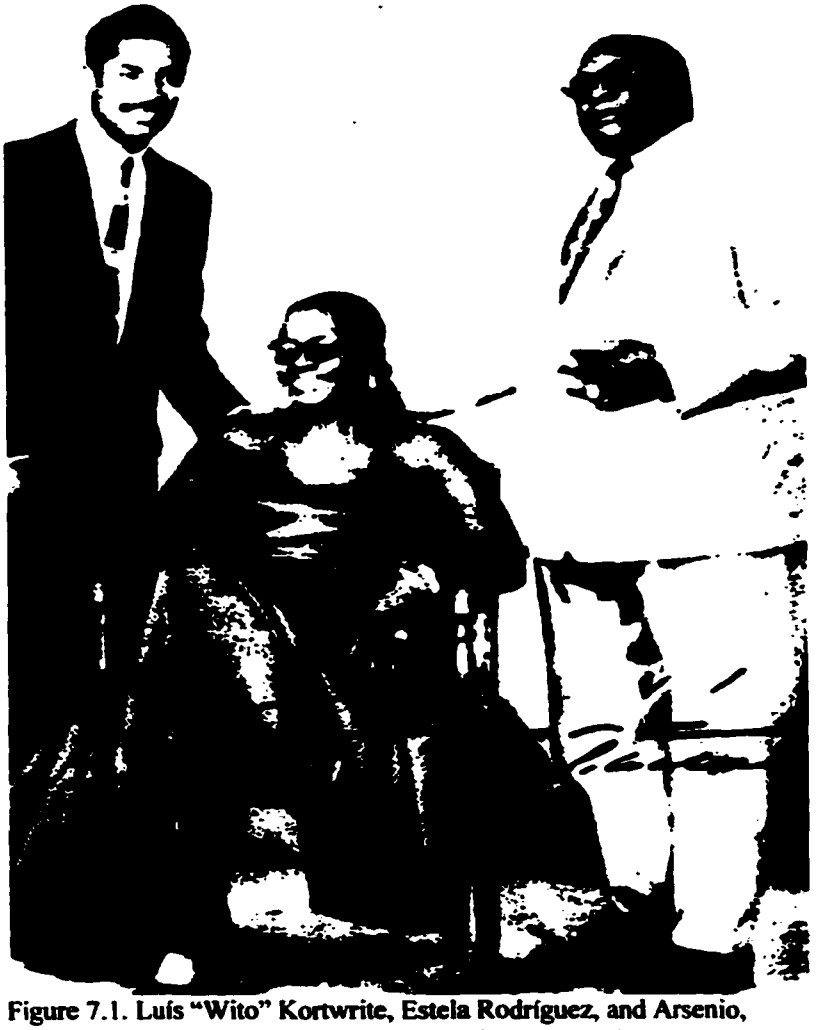


Figure 7.1. Luís "Wito" Kortwrite, Estela Rodríguez, and Arsenio, Havana, 1956 (courtesy Regla María Travieso Montecino).

had Estela sing lead on two guaguancós and one bolero. In addition, Arsenio added his daughter Regla María to form part of the chorus for the guaguancós (Appendix 2).[10]

Arsenio's primary audience in Havana continued to be the black working class. For instance, prior to his return to Havana, his conjunto recorded two guaguancós for two

[10] Travieso Montecino, 25 June 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

predominately black working-class barrios in Havana: the first was "Buena Vista en guaguancó" ("Buena Vista is in Guaguancó"), which was dedicated to Social Club Buena Vista, in Marianao; and the second was "Carraguao a'lante" ("Caraguao Forward"), which he dedicated to the neighborhood of Carraguao, in the barrio of El Cerro, Havana. In fact, little had changed in Havana's musical landscape since the 1940s. For example, Havana's cabarets de primera (first-tiered cabarets) still tended to hire mostly all-white Cuban groups, although they regularly featured African-American performers from the United States. Beginning in the mid 1950s, Havana's tourist, entertainment, and gambling industries flourished, following the concomitant legalization of gambling by Batista and massive investments in hotels, casinos, and nightclubs, primarily by organized crime from the United States.[11] Havana's three main cabarets de primera, the Tropicana, Montmartre, and Sans Souci, where Arsenio's septeto performed briefly in 1941 and 1942, now included casinos and featured lavish entertainment and name performers from the United States and Europe, such as Maurice Chevalier, Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, Dorothy Lamour, Tony Bennett, and Nat "King" Cole.[12] The mostly all-white Cuban groups who performed in these cabarets included Orquesta Casino de la Playa, José Fajardo y sus Estrellas, and Conjunto de Senén Suárez.[13]

Meanwhile, violent opposition to Batista's government continued. On 2 December 1956 Fidel Castro and a group of eighty-two rebels landed on Playa Las Coloradas, in Oriente, recommencing their revolution, which he had begun on 26 July

---

[11] Grupo cubano de investigaciones economicas 1963: 1124 and Phillips 1959: 282-283.
[12] See Steam 1956.
[13] *Diario de la Marina* (Havana), February-October 1956.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1953, to overthrow the Batista regime. Castro's return sparked increased government opposition and violence, which even affected movie theaters and cabarets, thus exacerbating the uneasy atmosphere that Wito had felt in the previous months.[14]

In the midst of this increasing social and political uncertainty, Gaspar Pumarejo, Cuba's most recognized radio and television entrepreneur, organized a music festival entitled "Cincuenta años de música cubana" ("Fifty Years of Cuban Music"), which took place on 23 and 24 February 1957 in El Cerro Baseball Stadium, Havana. The objective of the event was to honor Cuban musicians living in other countries for their roles in popularizing Cuban music abroad.[15] In addition, Puerto Ricans Tito Puente and Catalino Rolón (a theater impresario, dance promoter, and musician) received special invitations from Pumarejo for their roles in popularizing Cuban music in New York City.[16] More than one hundred Cuban musicians and other personalities living in France, Spain, Mexico, the United States, and other countries were invited, the transportation and lodging for which was paid for by Pumarejo. Audiences for the two concerts were estimated at 40,000 each in addition to the estimated two million television viewers.[17] Yet, while the theme of the festival was Cuban music and musicians in foreign lands, the star of the concerts was Lucho Gatica, an internationally popular bolero singer from

---

[14] Phillips 1959: 318, 331. Tony Bennett, who performed at Sans Souci in January 1957, describes one particular incident in which a bomb, which was planted by rebels, went off in front of the Sans Souci stage, injuring all of the chorus line dancers who were performing a number (Bennett with Friedwald 1998: 142-145).
[15] See *La Prensa*, 20 February 1957.
[16] See *Bohemia*, 17 February 1957 and 10 March 1957; *La Prensa*, 11 February 1957.
[17] *La Prensa*, 1 March 1957.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chile.[18]

Cuba's most popular entertainment magazine *Bohemia* and New York's Spanish language newspaper *La Prensa* publicized the event and reported on the arrivals in Havana of certain invited musicians as well as on the concerts themselves. Such musicians whose names and arrivals appeared in the press included: from France, Guillermo Fellové (who played trumpet in Arsenio's conjunto in 1948); from Spain, Marino Barreto López, Miguelito Valdés, and Zenaida Manfugáz (a pianist who was known for her interpretations of Ernesto Lecuona's music); from Mexico, Everardo Ordaz and Gilberto Urquiza; and from the U. S., Lázaro Quintero, Germán Lebatard, Mario Bauzá, Machito, René Touzet, Gilberto Valdés, and Vicentico Valdés.

Given its scope and purpose, this festival and the publicity on it serve as a microcosm of the relationship between Arsenio and other Cuban and Latin musicians in terms of their mass appeal in the mid 1950s. Although the festival organizers invited him, Arsenio's name was not mentioned in any of the announcements or reports that were published in Havana's *Bohemia* or New York's *La Prensa*. It is also unclear whether he actually performed at the two concerts, though it is unlikely, since most of the invited musicians did not play.[19] Therefore, while Arsenio was recognized as a national figure in Cuba, his popularity still did not reach the level of stars such as Lucho Gatica, Machito, Vicentico Valdés, and Tito Puente in the Havana, New York, and international contexts.

Furthermore, his exposure in Havana remained peripheral to that of Conjunto

---

[18] See Ibid.

[19] One such musician was René Touzet, who traveled from Las Vegas, where he was playing piano with Xavier Cugat, to New York and then Havana to attend the festival (Touzet, 27 February 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Casino, La Sonora Matancera, who had been featuring Celia Cruz since 1950, and other Cuban groups. For instance, on 30 October 1956, his conjunto performed on the "Bar Melódico" television show on channel 2, which was owned by Gaspar Pumarejo. The show was described as "a show dedicated to the Afro-Cuban music in honor of the blind composer Arsenio Rodríguez, author of 'Bruca maniguá' and 'Funfuñando'."[20] Evidently, this was the only television appearance that Arsenio ever made throughout his career in Havana. Apart from this appearance, Arsenio's performances were concentrated in the black social clubs, as they had been in the 1940s. Meanwhile, La Sonora Matancera with Celia Cruz, Conjunto Casino, Jóvenes del Cayo, Orquesta Riverside, and Belisario López, who were associated with white social clubs throughout the 1930s and 1940s, continued to perform regularly for the elite sociedades españolas such as Centro Gallego and Centro Asturiano in the 1950s. They also performed regularly on radio and television programs, and continued to tour Latin American countries.[21]

By April 1957 Arsenio had returned to New York. Although it is not for certain, his trip to Havana in February 1957 was probably his last. Evidently, he had concluded that the musical and social barriers he faced in Havana continued to be greater than those in New York, although he would soon face similar barriers in New York in the coming

---

[20] [U]na trasmisión dedicada a la música afro-cubana en homenaje al compositor ciego Arsenio Rodríguez, autor de "Bruca maniguá" y "Funfuñando" (*Diario de la Marina*, 30 October 1956). Although this announcement does not specify that Arsenio's conjunto was scheduled to perform, Regla María, his daughter, confirms that the conjunto with Estela Rodríguez singing lead did perform for Pumarejo's television station in October 1956 (Travieso Montecino, 25 June 1999).

[21] *Diario de la Marina*, February-April and October-November 1956 and February 1957. In April 1956 La Sonora Matancera performed in Medellín, Colombia, while in May 1957 they made their first trip to New York (Fernández 1997: 111; Ramírez Bedoya 1998: 142-144).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

years. Furthermore, his beloved brothers Kike and Raúl had resigned themselves to staying in New York with their families. Arsenio's wife Emma, as well, had her family in New York. As for his daughter Regla María, she decided to stay with her mother Manuela in Havana, even though Arsenio frequently tried to convince her to live with him in New York and, later, in Los Angeles.[22]

Arsenio's political consciousness and national identity

In previous chapters I have focused on the racial dimensions of Arsenio's music and identity, from his contestation of the alleged atavisms of Afro-Cuban culture, which he expressed in his afrocubanos of the late 1930s, to the professional and artistic relationship between his musical style and conjunto and the black working class of Havana in the 1940s. He also composed and recorded songs in which he expressed his views on contemporary political matters in Cuba. From the time he began his professional career as a musician and composer in the late 1920s to his final visit to Havana in 1957 Cuba underwent frequent periods of political instability and economic hardship.

One of his earliest politically-oriented songs was "Pobre mi Cuba" ("My Poor Cuba"), a *lamento guajiro* which was published on 10 April 1935 and first recorded later that year on 13 November by Septeto Machín in New York (for transcriptions of the following songs see Appendix 3). Arsenio wrote this song during two difficult and overlapping periods in Cuba, the dictatorship of Gerardo Machado (1928-1933) and the Depression. During the dictatorship, strikes, violent labor demonstrations, and acts of

---

[22] Travieso Montecino, 25 June 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

brutal government repression became commonplace. Further, with the onslaught of the Depression in October 1929, the Cuban economy entered into extreme crisis, resulting in unemployment for hundreds of thousands, and desperate living conditions, especially for the country's poor.[23] Fittingly, in "Pobre mi Cuba," Arsenio describes the hardship of the *guajiro* or rural peasant farmer, whose cacao, tobacco, and sugarcane crops are either worthless or ruined. It is important to note that this song was published and recorded after the fall of the Machado dictatorship, considering that the government during the dictatorship was known to send into exile composers whose material was suspected of being subversive.[24] Arsenio's conjunto recorded it more than a decade later, on 25 October 1951, in Havana. Although Cuba's economic situation was not as desperate as it was in the early 1930s, its political situation was again unstable and primed for a dictatorship.

Following the rise of the Batista's dictatorship and the beginning of Castro's revolution, Arsenio composed and recorded the bolero "Adórenla como Martí" ("Love Her as Martí"), perhaps his most well-known and candid political song. In it, he appeals to all Cubans, namely, the warring factions, to resolve their differences in peace and love, and to unite the country so that the sacrifices of the Cuban independence patriots would not have been in vain. He eventually recorded it with his conjunto in New York around 1954. He once again pleaded for peace in "Cuba llora" ("Cuba is Crying"), which he published on 12 June 1958 and recorded in the early 1960s. The lyrics characterize the

---

[23] Moore 1997: 77-78.
[24] For example, in 1932, the composer Eliseo Grenet was exiled to Spain by government authorities who perceived his "Lamento cubano" as subversive (Moore 1997: 78).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

burning of sugarcane, tobacco, and coffee fields—a tactic which was carried out by Castro's rebels in Oriente and the Sierra Maestra to destabilize Cuba's economy and, hence, Batista's power—as well as war in general as acts of "capricious vanity."

As evidenced in the words of these songs, Arsenio's sole concern was for peace. He did not affiliate himself with any one political party or orientation, as was also evidenced in his rejection of the pressures put on him by Mil Diez's directors to join the Communist Party in the mid 1940s. In two other songs, however, he did make unambiguous statements against the colonial and imperialist relationships Puerto Rico and Cuba had with the United States. In the bolero "A Puerto Rico" ("To Puerto Rico") he expressed his empathy with the island's colonial status, blaming its unhappiness on "a foreign reason." He composed this song upon returning to Havana from New York in 1947, and recorded it with his conjunto on 22 June 1948.[25] The following year, on 12 March 1949, three drunken American sailors urinated on the statue of the nation's father José Martí, located in Havana's *parque central*. An angry crowd threatened to lynch them, but the Cuban police intervened and arrested the sailors. The next day, however, they were effectively released when they were turned over to navy officials. Cubans were disgusted not only by the sailors' desecration of the statue but also by their government's submissive attitude toward the United States Navy and government.[26] Arsenio expressed his own condemnation of this incident in the bolero "Amor a mi patria" ("Love for my Country"), which the conjunto eventually recorded in Havana on 11 December 1951.[27]

---

[25] Raúl Travieso, 15 February 2000.
[26] Phillips 1959: 251.
[27] See also Acosta's discussion of a rumba composed by Gonzalo Asencio Hernández or

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Throughout his life and career in Havana Arsenio expressed unambiguously his pride in his African heritage and Cuban national identity. He would continue to express this in New York.

New York City's Latin Dance Music Milieu

In the first half of the 1950s Arsenio's conjunto performed regularly in Manhattan's most popular dancehalls. By 1957, however, the conjunto's number of performances had waned markedly, particularly in the Palladium, due to increasing competition among Latin big bands as well as increasing control by fewer agents and promoters. As his conjunto's performances declined in dancehalls, it performed more and more in the South Bronx, particularly for the Club Cubano Inter-Americano and at the Tropicana Club. The Cuban conjunto and charanga music that these local establishments featured constituted an alternative milieu to the mambo- and chachachá-dominated dancehalls of Manhattan and would significantly shape the musical and aesthetic predilection of the next generation of Latino musicians, particularly from the Bronx.

This section begins with an outline of the Latin dance music milieu of the 1950s and Arsenio's initial position and subsequent transition in it. It then discusses the role local power relations had in the trajectory of Arsenio's career in the local Latin music industry.

"Tío Tom", which criticizes the same event (in Manuel 1991: 63-65).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Latin dance music landscape

The American Federation of Musicians Local 802 organized locales into types and in hierarchical order. Nightclubs, for example, were organized into three classes, A, B, and C, while dancehalls were organized into two, B and C. Theaters comprised another type of locale that was also hierarchically organized, one level of which included "Spanish Theaters." Pay scales were set according to the type as well as the level of the locale. In general, class A and B nightclubs were assigned higher scales, averaging around $85 and $70 for four hours, respectively, than class C nightclubs and dancehalls, averaging around $35.[28] "Spanish Theaters" were probably assigned the lowest scales. Inevitably, some lower-level locales and other types of locales, such as the numerous ethnic social clubs found throughout the city, drew less attention from the musicians union, such that union scales and the hiring of union members were regularly overlooked.

Historians and musicians have characterized the landscape of New York's Latin dance music milieu by using two symbolic dichotomies. First, "downtown-uptown" has been the most widely held representation of Manhattan's Latin as well as jazz milieus. According to John Storm Roberts, for example, the Latin music scene in Manhattan developed from the 1930s onward in two regional trajectories: "downtown" (i.e., the Theater District), which centered on the fashionable hotels and nightclubs and catered to Anglo-Americans; and "uptown," which catered to Latinos and was the result of the

---

[28] These scales are for "leaders"; scales for "sidemen" are lower. The class A and B scales are for January 1951 (American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, *Minutes of the Executive Board, 1922-1985*, Reel No. 5278), and the class C scale is for 1953 (American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, *Minutes of the Trial Board, 1922-1966*, Reel No. 5329).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

growth of East Harlem as a Latino barrio.[29]

For others, the Latin dance music milieu of the 1950s was separated into a "nightclub world" and a "dancehall world," where definitions encompassed aspects of the union's categorization of locales.[30] The "nightclub world" consisted of class A nightclubs located in "downtown" and "uptown" Manhattan. They included the Chateau Madrid (58th Street and 5th Avenue), the Martinique (57th Street and 6th Avenue), the Havana-Madrid (Broadway and 51st Street), the China Doll (51st Street and Broadway), Hernando's Hideaway (135th Street), Old Europe Café (100th Street and Broadway), and the Broadway Casino (149th Street and Broadway). In contrast, the "dancehall world" consisted of class B and C dancehalls located also throughout Manhattan as well as in sections of the Bronx with high Latin populations. They included, in Manhattan, the Palladium (53rd Street and Broadway), the Park Palace (110th Street and 5th Avenue), the Audubon Ballroom (166th Street and Broadway, Harlem), the St. Nicholas Ballroom (66 Street and Columbus Avenue), and the Manhattan Center (34th Street and 8th Avenue); and, in the Bronx, the Royal Mansion (Boston Road, Morrisania), the Hunt's Point Palace (E. 163rd Street and Southern Boulevard, Hunt's Point), and the Grand Plaza (South Bronx).

With the exception of Sans Souci in late 1940 and early 1941, Arsenio's conjuntos in Havana never performed in cabarets de primera. Instead his performances were largely relegated to cabarets de tercera and academias de baile in the 1930s and sociedades de color in the 1940s. Class, race, and musical style were the primary factors

---

[29] Roberts 1999: 86.
[30] Rosa, 1 December 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that accounted for the limitation of his septetos and conjuntos to these socially marginal types of locales. Similarly, Arsenio's conjuntos in New York performed in the dancehall world and not in the nightclub world largely because of constraints based on class, race, and musical style, which in general accounted for the distinction between the nightclub and dancehall "worlds." Like their cabarets de primera counterparts in Havana, the class A nightclubs listed above catered to elite audiences and mainstream commercial Anglo-American tastes and featured elaborate staged shows, accompanied by internationally-known Latin show bands such as José Curbelo, Pupi Campo, Xavier Cugat, and others. Also, many of these nightclubs were segregated and discriminated against black groups.[31] Both John Storm Roberts and Ruth Glasser stress, however, that the divisions between downtown nightclubs and uptown dancehalls were not watertight.[32] For instance, from its formation in the early 1940s, Machito and His Afro-Cubans performed in both uptown dancehalls and downtown dancehalls and nightclubs. Evidently, the downtown nightclubs The Beachcomber and La Conga, where Machito's band played, did not adhere strictly to the all-white policy that most class A nightclubs maintained. In other cases, black Latin bandleaders were forced to replace their darker-skinned musicians with lighter-skinned ones, and asked to play in a more "subdued" style. For instance, in 1946, Cuban bandleader Marcelino Guerra (who was a member of Arsenio's conjunto between 1940 and 1943 in Havana) was offered a contract to perform at the Martinique on the condition

---

[31] Coen, 26 April 2000; Newsum 15 August 2001; Carp (personal communication), 14 October 1998.

[32] Roberts 1999: 101-102. See Glasser (1994: 52-83) for a detailed description of what she calls a "bluntly bipolar racial situation" in musical and daily life among Puerto Rican and other Latino musicians in New York during the 1920s and 1930s.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that he replace his darker-skinned members.[33] In any event, these two examples were exceptional to the otherwise discriminatory practices maintained by class A nightclubs, most of which continued to be segregated through the 1950s and even into the early 1960s.

Pianist Ken Rosa stressed that Arsenio's conjunto would not have "fit" in Manhattan's nightclub milieu because it demanded a varied repertory, which in addition to various styles of Cuban music included pasodobles, tangos, foxtrots, and waltzes—in short, "the tunes that were popular at the time."[34] He also explained that work in the nightclub world, unlike that in the dancehall world, was steady. With The Carbia Brothers, for example, Rosa worked six nights a week and was paid a regular salary with social security taken out "like any other regular job." The contracts, which were for months at a time, had to be approved by Local 802, whose stipulations included a two-week notice to fire a group. In contrast, although Arsenio performed in dancehalls on an almost weekly basis, his contracts were probably for days but certainly not weeks or months at a time. In the first half of the 1950s, two of the most popular dancehalls where his conjunto performed most often were the Palladium in Midtown Manhattan and the Park Palace/Plaza in East Harlem.[35] Despite their common class C dancehall status, however, the Palladium and Park Palace/Plaza differed in significant ways, thus constituting a distinction within the dancehall world itself.

---

[33] David Carp (personal communication), 1 April 2000.

[34] Rosa, 1 and 8 December 1999. Throughout the 1950s Rosa played piano for two local popular Latin bands (Eddie Forestier and The Carbia Brothers) who performed mostly Latin music in New York's most exclusive nightclubs.

[35] The Park Palace was the second story hall, and the Park Plaza was the somewhat smaller hall underneath.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

During the 1950s the Palladium was known as the center of mambo mania in New York City. By 1952, when the dancehall changed to an all-mambo policy, mambo big bands and conjuntos were performing every Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On Wednesdays the Palladium offered dancers from diverse ethnic backgrounds, especially Italian- and Jewish-Americans, free mambo dance lessons and held mambo dance contests and exhibitions.[36] In general, it catered to an ethnically diverse as well as an upscale and moneyed audience.[37] But while the Palladium's featured mambo big bands of Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito performed on Wednesdays and weekends, Arsenio's conjunto played mostly on Sundays. According to mambo dancer Ernie Ensley, Sundays would have more of a black crowd, that is African Americans and Latinos of color.[38]

In contrast, audiences attending Latin music dances at the Park Palace/Plaza in East Harlem tended to be primarily local Latinos from East Harlem as well as the Bronx.[39] Some Jewish-Americans were also known to attend these dances.[40] In its initial days of operation in the 1930s the Park Palace/Plaza catered to upwardly mobile patrons of diverse ethnic backgrounds. By the early 1950s, however, it had become known for its pimps, prostitutes, drug dealers, and ruffians as much as for its more jazz- as well as Cuban-oriented Latin dance music. Luís Flores (also known as "Luís Máquina"), who is

---

[36] See *The New York Daily News*, 16 January 1952.
[37] Boulong, 24 January 2000.
[38] Boggs 1992: 147-148.
[39] The following data on the Park Palace/Plaza is taken from Carp 1999 (except where indicated). The Park Palace was also rented out to West Indians of Brooklyn and to almost all of East Harlem's ethnic groups.
[40] Alvarado, 15 March 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

considered to be one of the greatest dancers of the Palladium era, characterized the differences between the Palladium and the Park Palace/Plaza in the following manner:

> Machito, Arsenio, all of these bands—you never heard these people swing like they swung when they were playing at the Plaza. Because, the music belonged to the ghettos. And the people that spent the money and went to the dances in droves were the people from the ghettos. . . . So all these musicians knew that they could not pull the wool over these people's eyes. . . . The Plaza had a soul of its own, it had the heart of the barrio itself, it had the essence of the poor people. . . . You could not have the same feeling in the Palladium; when you went to the Palladium you were more starchy, you know, a little more phony.[41]

Indeed, according to others, of the Palladium's three "mambo kings"—that is, Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, and Machito—only Machito performed at the Park Palace/Plaza with any regularity.[42] Arsenio's primary audience, according to Ray Coen (Arsenio's pianist and arranger from about 1951 to 1953), continued to be working-class Cubans as well as Puerto Ricans of color in East Harlem and, especially, the South Bronx, as well as on Sunday nights at the Palladium.

> RC: He used to play for the Cubans and Puerto Ricans in New York City, which were poor people and dark-skinned people. Of course, there was white people coming down, dig it, but basically they used to play for dark-skinned people.
>
> DG: So, not all Puerto Ricans, not all Cubans, but a certain group of Puerto Ricans and Cubans?
>
> RC: That's right.[43]

---

[41] Flores quoted in Carp 1999: 13.
[42] Boulong, 24 January 2000. According to Carp (1999: 15) the Park Palace/Plaza was where Machito developed his first real following.
[43] Coen, 26 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Although it is unclear, the Park Palace/Plaza probably closed its doors in the late 1950s. Concomitantly, the mambo and chachachá had begun to decline in popularity. As a result, while the more popular mambo big bands secured the few remaining jobs in Manhattan's dancehalls, Arsenio's conjunto was left almost completely shut out.

Local power networks

As the following first-hand accounts suggest, by the late 1950s, Arsenio's conjunto had been moved into the periphery of the local Latin dance music milieu. Puerto Rican Israel Berrios, who was Arsenio's second voice and guitarist from 1955 to 1968, recounts:

> IB: I don't know what happened. The conjunto wasn't getting any contracts; the conjunto hardly ever performed. And I think that was another reason why he decided to leave New York [in late 1964] because there was a lot of competition among big bands and conjuntos and a lot of control by the impresarios. And, well, since racism is always present, well, you know.
>
> DG: Was there a problem between Arsenio and the other big groups like Machito and Tito Puente?
>
> IB: Yes but it was for that reason. The impresarios of the day had a select group [of bandleaders]. . . . There was one impresario named José Curbelo. That man always had an excuse so that Arsenio wouldn't play. He would hire any group as long as it wasn't Arsenio's. He hired bands for the Palladium, La Bamba, Park Palace, Palm Gardens, and a lot of other places. But, I don't know what problem he had with Arsenio; he would hire any group as long as it wasn't Arsenio's.[44]

---

[44] IB: No se qué pasó. Ya no llegaba contratos para el conjunto; casi el conjunto no tocaba. Y creo que fue otra de las razones que él decidió irse de Nueva York porque había mucha competencia de orquesta y conjunto y mucho monopolio por culpa de los empresarios que habían. Y, pues, como el racismo nunca se termina, pues, ya tú sabes. DG: ¿Hubo algo entre Arsenio y los otros grandes como Machito y Tito Puente? IB: Sí pero era por esa razón. Los empresarios que habían en esa epoca tenían un grupo

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cuban vocalist Julián Cabrera, who left Havana and moved to New York City in 1959, added:

> Well, they [i.e., José Curbelo] closed him out. . . . He played, but he didn't have recognition like he once had. He played mostly in the Bronx, because there was a lot of racism here [Manhattan?].[45]

Graciela Pérez, Machito's sister and vocalist, also remembers:

> The only thing I can tell you is that many persons tried to do him harm, a lot of jealousy. . . . After he started to have difficulty he did anything to work; this is after he had a lot of success when he first arrived.[46]

From the late 1950s through the 1960s José Curbelo, co-founder of the booking agency Alpha Artists of America, Inc., had a near monopoly on the top Latin music talents in New York. His shrewdness as a businessman, toughness as a negotiator, and all-around power in the industry were responsible for much of the success of most of his clients, particularly Tito Puente.[47] Puchi Boulong, who started playing trumpet

---

escogido. . . . Había un empresario que se llamaba José Curbelo. Ése señor siempre trataba de buscar una excusa para que Arsenio no tocara. Mientras él podía traer otra orquesta que no fuera de Arsenio él no metía a Arsenio. Él contrataba para el Palladium, La Bamba, Park Palace, Palm Gardens, y muchisimas lugares. Pero, yo no sé que erróña él tenía con Arsenio, que mientras él podía llevar otra orquesta no llevaba la del Arsenio (Berrios, 11 October 1998).

[45] Bueno porque aquí lo ceraron hermano. . . . Si tocaba, pero no tenía reconocimiento como lo había tenido. Aquí lo que tocaba era en el Bronx, porque aquí había mucho discriminación (Cabrera, 27 June 1998).

[46] Lo único lo que te puedo decir es que muchas personas trataron de hacerle daño a él, mucha envidia. . . . Después que tuvo dificultad hacía lo ultimo para trabajar aquí, despues que tuvo mucho éxito cuando llegó (Pérez, 26 September 1998).

[47] David Carp, personal communication.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

professionally with Arsenio's conjunto around 1954 and later played in Puente's band from 1959 to 1970, compared Curbelo's power at that time with that of contemporary salsa mogul Ralph Mercado, saying that Curbelo "had some places so sewed up, he almost dictated who played where. And [he controlled] the better places because he had the better bands."[48] Although Arsenio's conjunto may have been signed with Curbelo's agency, as Berrios noted above, he deliberately set out to impede Arsenio's career.[49] Curbelo may have had personal reasons for his contempt for Arsenio; as Berrios and Cabrera insinuated, racism may have been one factor. In fact, some former members of Machito and Puente's bands felt that Puente and Tito Rodríguez received preferential treatment by Curbelo because of their lighter hues. As flautist Mauricio Smith explained:

> Machito only got token gigs from José Curbelo. He was pushing Tito Puente and Tito Rodríguez, the lighter bands. But the black artists? Forget it. Black musicians? Very, very little. He had the power, he had the connections.[50]

Boulong, who played with both Machito and Puente's bands, added:

> From what I felt, [Machito] couldn't have gotten some of the gigs [that Puente got] even though it was a great band . . . When I played with Tito, there was a difference. We played some of the same places with Machito, but I felt in traveling especially, when we went out of town, we went to places where I never saw Machito.[51]

---

[48] Boulong, 24 January 2000.
[49] At the "African Roots, Latino Rhythms" conference in East Harlem on 13 November 1999 bandleader Johnny Colón confirmed that Curbelo deliberately "kept certain musicians out of the business."
[50] Smith, 30 April 1999. Flautist, saxophonist, and arranger Mauricio Smith is a Panamanian of color, whose musical career in New York began in the early 1960s.
[51] Boulong, 24 January 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(In Chapter 8 I will discuss in more detail Curbelo's network of control, which extended beyond New York City all the way out to Los Angeles.)

In addition to Curbelo, other, less "visible" entities exercised a significant degree of control on the trajectory of some bandleaders' careers and, on the whole, the industry. According to several sources, George Goldner, Morris Levy, who was suspected of being a front man for organized crime families, and other associates of Tico Records were instrumental in the careers of Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Joe Loco, and Machito, all throughout the 1950s when these groups were recording regularly for Tico.[52] Arsenio also recorded for Tico—sixteen 78s in 1951 and 1952 and two LPs in 1963 and 1968—but significantly less than the other four bands (see Appendix 2). In any event, as jobs for mambo big bands were decreasing, the owners of Tico, who had an "in" at the Palladium and other popular dancehalls, made sure that their main recording artists got the few available jobs in Manhattan as well as in the various ethnic resorts in New Jersey and upstate New York during the summers.[53]

Such social barriers and power networks, coupled with Arsenio's own personal shortcomings contributed to the decline in his performance career. Raúl ultimately attributed his brother's failure to achieve commercial success to his stubbornness and lack of business acumen:

---

[52] Valdés, 4 December 1999; Max Salazar, personal communication; see also Dannen (1991: 31-57) for a description of Levy's involvement in the record industry (i.e., pop, rock, R&B, Latin, etc.) and ties to organized crime in New York.

[53] David Carp, personal communication. Both the involvement of organized crime in the Latin music industry and the role of the ethnic resorts in New Jersey and New York are two significant areas of Latin music history that are in need of research.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> [Arsenio] had a lot of vision and a lot of intelligence as a musician. But as a businessman? No. . . . Arsenio would've been a millionaire, a millionaire! But, it's no one's fault but his. . . . A person who composes and does what he did without having gone to school is not stupid. You can't say that he was stupid, but he was capricious. . . . What he didn't want to accept were the conditions that they [i.e., promoters and agents] put on him.[54]

By the late 1950s Arsenio was depending increasingly on the local Cuban and Puerto Rican community in the Bronx for work. The following section outlines the emergence of the Puerto Rican and Cuban population in the South Bronx, Hunts Point, and Morrisania sections of the Bronx. It then discusses the significance of the Club Cubano Inter-Americano and the Tropicana Club in Arsenio's performance career and musical production in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It then concludes with a brief discussion on the social, racial, and ideological relationship between Arsenio and the Cuban immigrants fleeing Castro's Cuba.

Arsenio and the Puerto Rican and Cuban Communities in New York City

Throughout the 1950s Arsenio lived in East Harlem or "El Barrio" and the South Bronx. In El Barrio he lived with his wife Emma at 152 E. 116th Street, between Third and Lexington Avenues. He also regularly stayed in the Bronx with Kike and his family, who

---

[54] Tuvo mucha visión y mucha inteligencia para la música. ¿Pero como comerciante? No. . . . Millionario se hubo hecho Arsenio, ¡millionario! . . . [Pero] no es culpa de nadie, es culpa de él. . . . No es bruto una persona que compone y hace lo que hizo él sin haber ido a la escuela. No se puede decir que era bruto, pero era caprichoso. . . . Lo que él no quería aceptar era las condiciones que lo ponían (Raúl Travieso, 8 February 1997).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

lived at 811 Tinton Avenue, between E. 160th and E. 161st Streets.[55] Raúl also lived in the Bronx, and between 1956 and 1958 he and his wife owned the El Dorado restaurant on E. 163rd Street and Intervale Avenue.[56] Throughout the 1950s Arsenio performed regularly at several locales in East Harlem and the Bronx. As he had done among the black working class of Havana and Marianao, he established a close relationship with the local patrons of these establishments, a majority of whom were working-class Puerto Ricans and Cubans of color. For example, he praised the people of El Barrio and the Bronx for their lively dance music milieus in "Como se goza en el Barrio" ("El Barrio is A Lot of Fun") and "El elemento del Bronx" ("The People of the Bronx"), two conjunto-style guaguancós which he recorded around 1951 (see Appendix 3).

The Puerto Rican population in New York City grew from an estimated 61,500 in 1940 to 612,574 in 1960, an increase of almost 900 percent. Puerto Ricans accounted for the overwhelming majority of Latinos living in New York City, growing from an estimated 45 percent of Latinos in 1940 to 80 percent in 1960.[57] Thus, from 1945 through the 1950s neighborhoods with an established Puerto Rican population, particularly East Harlem as well as the South Bronx, Hunts Point, and Morrisania sections of the Bronx, began to grow and expand. The Cuban population of New York City also grew, but in significantly lesser proportions than the Puerto Rican population. From 1940 to 1960 the

---

[55] Raúl Travieso, 3 August 1998; Xiomara Travieso, 14 June 1999; Alfredo Valdés Jr., 18 October 1997; Coen 26 April 2000. In the contract Arsenio signed with Peer International in 1958 his address is listed as 152 E. 116th Street, but in Local 802's 1957 directory of musicians his address is listed as 151 E. 116th Street.

[56] Raúl Travieso, 26 June 2000.

[57] See Haslip-Viera 1993: 8-18. Haslip-Viera defines four broad phases in the evolution of the "Latino community" in New York City: 1820-1900, 1900-1945, 1945-1965/70, and 1965-present.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cuban population increased by 84 percent, from an estimated 23,124 to 42,694. Cubans in New York City did not form any outstanding core of settlement. Instead, they resided primarily in Puerto Rican sections, although class and race often dictated in which neighborhood Cubans settled.

In the first two decades of the 1900s Latino neighborhoods in the Bronx were unknown.[58] By 1930, however, the Puerto Rican population in this borough was estimated at 1,500 and grew to about 62,000 by 1950, a more than 4,000 percent increase.[59] While Puerto Ricans living in the Bronx in 1950 accounted for about 25 percent of the Puerto Rican population living in New York City, they only represented about 4 percent of the Bronx's entire population. Their population in the borough, however, steadily grew from 6 percent in 1953 to 10 percent in 1957. By 1957 almost 83 percent of Puerto Ricans living in the Bronx lived in the "South Bronx," Hunts Point, and Morrisania sections of the borough, where they constituted from a tenth to a third of these neighborhoods' populations.[60]

In 1959 the Community Council of Greater New York defined the boundaries of the South Bronx as consisting of roughly E. 161st Street to the north, the Harlem River to

---

[58] Iglesias, ed. 1984: 12.

[59] See *The New York Times*, 23 February 1953, Community Council of Greater New York 1959, and Jonnes 1986.

[60] According to Jonnes (1986: 8-9) the term "South Bronx" developed its notoriety in the late 1960s and early 1970s when it began to be attached to each new neighborhood (e.g., Melrose, Mott Haven, Hunts Point, Morrisania, West Farms, Tremont, Concourse, Highbridge, and Morris Heights) stricken by the vicious cycle of poverty, drugs, crime, and arson. Evidently, the term "South Bronx" encompassed many of these same neighborhoods prior to the 1960s and the development of its notoriety (see Community Council of Greater New York 1959).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the west and south, and Prospect Avenue and Southern Boulevard to the east.[61] Hunts Point was roughly enclosed by Prospect Avenue to the west (bordering with the South Bronx), the East River to the south, the Bronx River to the east, and Longwood Avenue to Bruckner Boulevard to the north. Finally, Morrisania was roughly encompassed by 163rd Street to the south, Webster Avenue to the west, Tremont Avenue to the north, and the Bronx River to the east. Commerce, industry, and transportation absorbed a large proportion of the geographic landscape of these sections of the Bronx. While a majority of Puerto Rican residents in the South Bronx and Hunts Point were working class, a significant number in Morrisania were middle class. One observer in 1953 noted that "middle-class Puerto Ricans had been moving from Manhattan and buying two-family homes, and estimated that there were at least 1,500 Puerto Rican homeowners in Morrisania and Mott Haven."[62]

As was the case in East Harlem, Cubans constituted the second largest Latin population living in these sections of the Bronx. Concentrations of Cubans of color, in particular, existed around 167th Street and Stebbins Avenue in the Morrisania district and on Prospect Avenue on the South Bronx and Hunts Point border.[63] For example, in 1941 Melba Alvarado, who would become president of the Club Cubano Inter-Americano in 1957, moved with her parents to 679 Prospect Avenue, where her father bought a house and opened a drycleaners nearby.[64] The area in and around Westchester Avenue, Southern

---

[61] Community Council of Greater New York 1959: 1. These coordinates encompass the contemporary districts of Concourse, Melrose, The Hub, Mott Haven, and Port Morris.
[62] *The New York Times*, 23 February 1953.
[63] Jonnes 1986: 329; Greenbaum 1986: 20.
[64] Alvarado, 15 March 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Boulevard, Prospect Avenue, and E. 163rd Street, which adjoined the South Bronx and Hunts Point, was particularly known for its numerous resident Latin musicians, which in the 1950s included Arsenio, Marcelino Guerra, René Hernández, Fernando Storch, Alfredo Valdés, Joe Loco, and Tito Rodríguez, as well as Eddie and Charlie Palmieri, Manny Oquendo, Ray Barretto, Alfredito Valdés Jr. and many more musicians of the next generation.[65] Also located here were the Club Cubano Inter-Americano and the Tropicana Nightclub where Arsenio and his conjunto regularly performed.

The Club Cubano Inter-Americano

From 1946 to 1960 the Club Cubano Inter-Americano was located at 914 Prospect Avenue, off of Westchester Avenue, on the border of the South Bronx and Hunts Point. Although the majority of its members were Cubans and Puerto Ricans of color, the club welcomed, as Raúl emphasized, "whites, blacks, everyone!"[66] And although the club's cultural leaning was Cuban, Puerto Ricans who regularly attended the club's functions and who were not already related to members felt nevertheless accepted as "family." For example, Sarah Martínez Baro, Arsenio's sister-in-law and the wife of his Cuban bassist

---

[65] Marin, 20 January 2000; Boulong, 24 January 2000, Valdés, 4 December 1999, David Carp, personal communication. In the 1930s Fernando Storch was the leader of the very popular Cuarteto Caney, which recorded a version of "Bruca maniguá" (12 October 1937) in New York and performed regularly in East Harlem. Its members consisted of both Cubans and Puerto Ricans. Among Caney's featured vocalists were Panchito Riset, Alfredo Valdés, whose son Alfredito Valdés, Jr. would become Arsenio's pianist from 1960 to about 1963, Machito, and Manolo Suárez, who occasionally sang with Arsenio's septeto at the cabaret de primera Sans Souci in Havana in late 1940 and early 1941 as well as his conjunto in Los Angeles in the late 1960s, discussed in Chapter 8 (see Glasser 1994: 90; Díaz Ayala 1999: 47-48).

[66] Raúl Travieso, 7 February 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Evaristo "Cuajarón" Baro, remarked that, "It was a delightful environment, one that felt as if we were all family. Everyone knew each other."[67] In fact, Latino social clubs with nationally mixed members and audiences had existed in New York City since at least the 1920s. For their social functions these clubs as well as the more regionally-based clubs often offered mixed musical repertories, including the latest popular styles from throughout Latin America.[68]

Other Latin social clubs, however, discriminated against Latinos of color through the 1950s. For example, the Ateneo Cubano, whose club was located at 2824 Broadway, between 109th and 110th Streets, in Manhattan, allowed only white members and associates to attend their social functions.[69] One way in which they indicated their all-white policy was through a coded disclaimer "Se reserva la derecha de entrada" or "Rights of admission are reserved," which they printed at the bottom of dance advertisements. Yet, as was the case in many all-white social clubs in Havana, the Ateneo Cubano often hired black and inter-racial musical groups to play for their dances. Such groups and musicians who played for the Ateneo Cubano included Arsenio's conjunto (9 August 1958), Benny Moré (31 May 1958), and Gilberto Valdés y su Orquesta (31 May

---

[67] Era un ambiente divino, un ambiente que parecíamos familia. Eramos conocidos todo el mundo (Martínez Baro, 19 February 2000). Evidently, in the 1950s a falling-out occurred among the Club Cubano Inter-Americano's officers, upon which one group left and formed the Circulo Social Cubano on 125th Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues, in East Harlem. Arsenio's conjunto performed several times for this social club (José Frias, July 9 2000; Raúl Travieso, 7 February 2000).

[68] Glasser 1995: 102-103. Research on the social history of Latino social clubs in New York City is largely limited to the pre-1940 period. See Sánchez Korrol (1983: 131-166) for a good overview of the formation of Puerto Rican political, social, and cultural associations of the 1920s. See also Glasser (1995: 101-107) for a brief description on the role of music in Latino and Spanish social clubs of the 1920s and 1930s.

[69] Berrios, 20 May 2002.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1958).[70] Other social clubs with similar segregationist policies during the 1950s included the Puerto Rican regional association Club Caborrojeño.[71]

The idea to form the Club Cubano Inter-Americano was originally conceived following a celebration of black Cuban patriot Antonio Maceo's centennial, which was organized by several former members of the Club Julio Antonio Mella, including Pedro Millet.[72] The event took place on 16 June 1945 at Town Hall in midtown Manhattan and featured guest speaker Salvador García Agüero, a black Senator and leader of the Socialist Party in Cuba.[73] Because of the celebration's organizational and financial success, some of the organizers, including Julio Cardenal and his wife Francisca Navarro de Cardenal, who was Puerto Rican, decided to form a new Cuban social club that would be open to all Latin nationalities regardless of race, color, and class. The club's original membership included many former residences of Tampa, Florida and members of the Unión Martí-Maceo, as well as several Cubans whose spouses were Puerto Rican and Dominican.[74] The club was officially established on 27 September 1945 and its location at 914 Prospect Avenue was inaugurated on 20 May 1946.

The majority of the members were skilled workers, including barbers and

---

[70] In one instance, several black members of Gilberto Valdés's charanga were not allowed to dance on the dance floor during a break. Angered by this, Valdés, a white Cuban, refused to play for the rest of the night (Carp 1999: 29).

[71] Carp 1999: 29. By 1960 the Club Caborrojeño had transformed from a social club to a dancehall, the new owner of which discontinued its past discriminatory policies (David Carp, personal communication).

[72] The following, except where indicated, is from my interview with Melba Alvarado, 15 March 2000.

[73] García Agüero was a well-known orator, essayist, and outspoken critic of discrimination and racism in Cuban society through the 1940s and 1950s (see Fernández Robaina 1994).

[74] See also Greenbaum 1986: 18-20.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

accountants, from middle- and working-class backgrounds. Members had to pay a five-dollar initiation fee and a monthly membership fee of one dollar. The purpose of the club was to provide members and their family and friends with social and recreational activities, mostly involving the celebration of Cuban patriotic holidays. Such annual celebrations and formal dances included "La Cena Martiana" (January), which commemorated José Martí's birthday, Antonio Maceo's birthday (July) and death (December), Cuban Independence Day (20 May), carnival (February), "Baile de la ginga," "Baile de blanco y negro," and "Homenaje al excursionista" (August), which was a dance whose guests of honor were invited from Cuba. The club also hosted birthday parties for members and their families and King's Day and Easter celebrations for their children. Members also organized a folkloric dance troupe that specialized in *son* and *danzón* dancing. The founding members stressed, however, that the club should never affiliate itself to any political party in Cuba or New York, a principle that was at times difficult to uphold, especially during the politically turbulent 1950s and 1960s in Cuba.

Most of these events were held at the club, whose size could only accommodate about one hundred persons total. As a result, club officials were unable to hire orchestras because of the club's limited capacity, the funds from which would have been needed to pay for such orchestras. The club did, however, present solo piano and poetry recitals and, on occasion, small musical groups. For example, in the late 1950s Alfredito Valdés Jr. had one of his first piano recitals in which he performed music by Ignacio Cervantes and Ernesto Lecuona. Impressed with Alfredito's talent, Arsenio, who was present at the recital, asked his father, the famous Cuban singer Alfredo Valdés Sr., for permission to hire his son to play in his conjunto. By 1959 Alfredito had joined the conjunto as its

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pianist and arranger.[75] On other occasions Arsenio performed for the club for a modest fee, as he had done for the black social clubs in Havana. He varied the size of the conjunto according to how much the club was able to pay. Sometimes, he even performed for no fee at all. The club's officials recognized Arsenio's cooperation by regularly hiring his full conjunto to perform for the club's larger events, which it usually held at the Hotel Diplomat at 108 W. 43rd Street in Times Square, Manhattan.

On 28 January 1953 the Club Cubano Inter-Americano held one of the most important events of its history, the commemoration of the centennial birthday of José Martí. The celebration took place at Carnegie Hall and featured speeches given by Dr. Emilio Núñez Portuondo, President of the Cuban delegation to the United Nations, Babby Quintero, a columnist with *La Prensa*, Vicente Cubillas Jr., a correspondent for Cuba's *Bohemia*, Zonia Ellis, a journalist with the *Diario de Nueva York*, and club members Dr. Narciso Saavedra, a dentist, and Julio Cardenal. Also featured were performances by flautist Alberto Socarrás, classical pianist Nicolás Rodríguez, tenor Rafael Hernán, soprano María Agustina Pereira, and Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto de Estrellas, who performed the patriotic songs "La Bayamesa" and "Maceo y Martí" as well as "Popurrí cubano," composed by Arsenio himself. The patriotic objective of the event, however, was somewhat overshadowed by the less-than one-year-old Batista dictatorship, which some members supported and others did not. In the end the organizers carried out the club's commitment to political impartiality by not including any politically-oriented speeches on the program.

---

[75] Valdés, 18 October 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The club's celebration of Martí's birthday in January 1957 was smaller in scale, taking place in their club in the South Bronx. The political situation in Cuba, however, had worsened after Fidel Castro in the prior month began the second phase of his revolution against the Batista dictatorship. Arsenio attended the club's celebration and played "Adórenla como Martí" ("Love Her as Martí Did"), in which he pleads for peace and reconciliation for Cuba (see p. 331). The audience was moved emotionally and enthusiastically applauded Arsenio's message of reconciliation. Less than a month after this celebration Arsenio was in Havana for the "Cincuenta años de música cubana" ("Fifty Years of Cuban Music") festival (see p. 7).

The Club Cubano Inter-Americano's celebrations always involved Cuban music, whether it was played on a record player or by Arsenio alone on his tres in the Bronx, or by his conjunto and a charanga at the Hotel Diplomat in Times Square. The social club's objective in celebrating important Cuban holidays and, with it, Cuban music made it one of the very few locales in New York City during the 1940s and 1950s that featured Cuban *son* and *danzón* music *and dancing*. Israel Berrios stressed the fact that, apart from most Cubans, most dancers in New York City, including Puerto Ricans, did not know how to dance son:

> Not everyone knew how to dance montuno because that's a Cuban dance. . . . [Many people in New York] weren't familiar with that rhythm and they could hardly dance it. . . . In [the Cuban social] clubs ninety percent of the dancers were Cuban [but] the Puerto Ricans didn't know the son footwork.[76]

---

[76] Todo el mundo no sabía bailar montuno porque eso es un baile de los cubanos. . . . [Mucha gente en Nueva York] no conocían ese ritmo y casi no lo podían bailar. . . . En esos *clubs* [cubanos] noventa porciento de los bailadores eran cubanos [pero] los

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Nevertheless, as Ray Coen pointed out, the Club Cubano "was like an outlet for our type of music."[77] The fact that the music was invariably Cuban did not detract non-Cuban members and musicians, such as Ray Coen and others in Arsenio's conjunto, from embracing it as "ours." Regardless of their nationality and the knowledge of the dance steps, the music and dance engendered nostalgia for their native countries, as Puerto Rican Sarah Martínez Baro explained:

> DG: Was there a Cuban nationalistic mood that Arsenio's music brought out in dancers?
>
> SB: That nationalistic mood existed, *música típica cubana*, when Arsenio was playing. That is what the dancers reflected.
>
> DG: And what did you, as a Puerto Rican, think about that? How did it make you feel?
>
> SB: I felt good because if you watch it carefully it's a beautiful style, a graceful style, a style that invariably takes a person back home, as do plena, danza, danzón, bomba, and bolero. So, Cuban music brought out happiness, it brought out that purity. [When] a person danced that guaguancó [it seemed like] he or she was transplanted to their native country, to Cuba.[78]

New York-born Puerto Rican and percussionist Joe Torres remembers participating in a

---

puertorriqueños no conocían los pasos del son, no (Berrios, 20 May 2002).

[77] Coen, 26 April 2000.

[78] DG: Hubo un pensamiento cubano nacionalista que en la música de Arsenio traía? SB: Ese pensamiento nacional lo hubo, de la música típica cubana, cuando Arsenio estaba tocando. Eso es lo que reflejaba en [los bailadores]. DG: Y usted, como puertorriqueña, ¿Qué pensaba de eso? ¿Como se sentía? SB: Yo me sentía bien porque creo que si usted lo miras bien es un estilo bonito, un estilo con gracia, un estilo que lleva a la persona a ese sitio, invariablemente, igual que la plena, la danza, el danzón, la bomba, el bolero. Pues, la música cubana lo que traía era alegría, traía esa pureza. [Cuando] la persona bailaba ese guaguancó [se sentía que] estaba allá en la tierra, allá estaba en Cuba (Martínez Baro, 19 February 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

performance of a comparsa by Arsenio's conjunto:

> I played with him in the Bronx on Prospect Avenue. And we played there and they played a comparsa that I thought would never end. But I didn't care because I was having so much fun. We must have played that comparsa for a half an hour. Oh man, they [audience] were doing the conga line! Oh man, they were having a party! That's why we wouldn't stop. It was just great. That was one of the highlights of my career, playing with Arsenio. I think they were mostly Cubans, but they were mixed with Puerto Ricans because it was a social club and when they threw dances they'd have other people.[79]

In short, the music and dance performed at the Club Cubano Inter-Americano's events represented an alternative to the frenetic mambo music and dance styles that dominated the dancehalls of Manhattan. As Melba Alvarado stated:

> We always danced a lot of bolero, danzón, and son. These are three típicas [traditional Cuban genres]. We didn't care too much for mambo. Mambo was played a lot, orchestras played mambo, but it wasn't something that we did with much gratification.[80]

As a result, this Bronx social club gave Arsenio the opportunity to perform Cuban music for a largely Cuban of color dancing audience at a time when jobs for his conjunto were scarce in the dancehalls of Manhattan.

---

[79] Torres, 17 February 2000.

[80] Siempre se tocaba mucho el bolero, mucho el danzón, y el son. Son tres típicas [músicas cubanas]. Nosotros no seguimos tanto el mambo. El mambo se tocó bastante, las orquestas tocaban mambo, pero no era cosa que hacíamos con gusto (Alvarado, 15 March 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Re-configuring the conjunto and charanga relationship in the Bronx

About one block east of the Club Cubano Inter-Americano's location at 914 Prospect Avenue was the Tropicana Club, located at 915 Westchester Avenue, off of 163rd Street. The club was owned and operated by Cubans Tony and Manolo Alfaro, who were brothers, and Pepe Sánchez. Like the Club Cubano Inter-Americano, the Tropicana's core audience consisted of local Cubans and Puerto Ricans, and its entertainment featured mostly local groups as well as some famous groups from Cuba and Puerto Rico.[81] One of its most celebrated bookings was Conjunto Casino from Havana, who played its first show of a two-week stint at the nightclub on 10 October 1953. Those who were booked to perform with Conjunto Casino during the two weeks included local Cuban groups Gilberto Valdés y su Orquesta (i.e., charanga) and Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto, both of whom had been performing as the club's house bands since about 1951 and mid 1953, respectively; and local Puerto Rican conjuntos Luís Cruz y su Conjunto Marianaxis, José Luís Moneró y su Conjunto, and Toñito Ferrer y su Conjunto.[82]

Conjunto Casino's debut at the Tropicana Club was well-attended, with local Latin musicians, a majority of whom were Puerto Rican, making up about half the audience. Local 802 delegate Frank Ugarte was also in attendance to enforce the union's strict regulations, allowing the "foreign" Cuban conjunto to perform only as a show attraction and not for dancing. The union also stipulated that if the club's management allowed the audience members to dance they would be fined and Local 802 musicians would not be allowed to perform. Audience members, however, did dance, and after

---

[81] Carp, 1999: 27.
[82] *La Prensa*, 12 October 1953.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Conjunto Casino's set was finished Arsenio's musicians began to take the stage when Ugarte ordered all union members back off the stage. Arsenio told his musicians that whoever did not want to play did not have to. Everyone except he, Kike, Raúl, and Candido Antomattei followed Ugarte's instructions. When Arsenio reached the stage, according to Raúl, he went to the microphone and addressed the audience, asking, "Why is this, for they [Conjunto Casino] are our fellow countrymen? Why shouldn't we play?"[83] According to columnist Babby Quintero, Arsenio said that "He, as a Cuban, will play even if the union terminated his membership, and if that was to happen he would return to Havana and play in the cabarets de tercera in Playa, Marianao."[84] He and his other three musicians along with Conjunto Casino's director and lead singer Roberto Espí proceeded to perform, but nobody in the audience got up to dance.

On 29 October Arsenio and Kike appeared before the Executive Board of Local 802 to answer for their violation of Ugarte's instructions. Arsenio pleaded guilty but explained that "He was brought up with the boys in the Cuban orchestra [i.e., Conjunto Casino] and out of sympathy, he accompanied the singer only; he did not play for the dancing."[85] The board held their decision pending further investigation. Meanwhile, several days later, Tony Alfaro reapplied to the union for permission to re-engage Conjunto Casino. The union informed Alfaro that "He would be violating union regulations if he engaged this foreign band and this local would protest to the immigration authorities; and take any further and necessary action to enforce union rules

---

[83] Raúl Travieso, 31 July 1996.
[84] *La Prensa*, 14 October 1953.
[85] American Federation of Musicians, Local 802. *Minutes of the Executive Board, 1922-1985*. Roll No. 5281.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and regulations."[86] Apparently, Alfaro heeded the union's warning and heavy-handed threats. Finally, on 3 December, the union imposed a $50 fine each on Arsenio, Kike, Raúl, and Candido for failing to observe the union's rules and regulations.

Another significant aspect of this bill was the addition of Gilberto Valdés's charanga. From 1951 through 1955 his charanga, the only one in New York City, and Arsenio's conjunto performed together regularly at the Tropicana Club and the Hunts Point Palace, while they continued to perform together for the Club Cubano Inter-Americano through 1961.[87] In Havana during the 1930s Valdés contributed to the afrocubanismo movement by composing Afro-Cuban-inspired popular and art music. He also performed in and composed for all-white jazz bands, such as Los Hermanos Lebatard. He was best known for introducing Afro-Cuban sacred and secular percussion instruments to the symphonic orchestra for a series of concerts in 1937. In New York during the 1950s Valdés dedicated himself to the flute and leading his charanga, which consisted of black and white Cubans and other Latinos. Although his charanga never recorded he participated as the flute player on Arsenio's *Sabroso y caliente* (LP Puchito 586), which was released in 1957. In addition he continued to compose Afro-Cuban-inspired art music. For instance, he was the featured composer in the 1954 "Mambo Concert" at Carnegie Hall. He performed at Carnegie Hall once more on 20 September

---

[86] Ibid. Evidently, the union did in fact send letters of protest to the Department of Immigration against the importation of foreign musical groups for unfair competition to union members; on 12 November 1953 such a letter of protest was sent in reference to another visiting Cuban group Ñico Saquito y sus Guaracheros de Oriente, who performed at the Palladium on 7 and 8 November (ibid.).

[87] Valdés and Arsenio's groups also performed at least once at East Harlem's Park Plaza on 1 January 1955 (*La Prensa*, 1 January 1955).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1959 for a benefit concert to raise money for Fidel Castro's agrarian reform in Cuba.[88]

As I discussed in chapters 2 and 5, the performance of dance music and the characterizations of musical style in Havana were sharply defined along class and racial lines. The landscape of New York's Latin dance music milieu was also defined and characterized by class, race, and musical style, but with different results. In Havana, Arsenio's conjunto performed almost exclusively with black charangas for black working-class social clubs and other organizations. Conjunto Casino, Gilberto Valdés's bands, and Belisario López's charanga, however, performed for white upper-class social clubs and in cabarets de primera for the white elite and tourists. In New York, however, throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, Arsenio's conjunto and Valdés's and López's charangas performed together regularly, primarily for the Club Cubano Inter-Americano, other Cuban social clubs, and the Tropicana nightclub. There are at least two reasons why these Cuban groups, whose distinctions ran so deep in Havana, were able to re-configure their relationship in New York. First, for most of the 1950s, Cubans who desired Cuban charanga and conjunto music had only Valdés's and Arsenio's, respectively, to choose from; it was not until the late 1950s that Belisario and other charangas formed. Second, and most importantly, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and even some of the Cubans who made up these groups' core audience never lived in Havana and, thus, were unfamiliar with the social and musical barriers that had separated these Cuban groups.

Accordingly, Arsenio's style was never perceived among his audience in New

---

[88] Castillo 1961; Moore 1997: 83, 142, 145, 213; Díaz Ayala 1999: 135, 173, 180; Carp 1999. See Moore (1997: 201-210) for more on Valdés's career in Havana and a description of some of his more well-known compositions of the 1920s and 1930s.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

York as representing a "black" or "macho" style. Instead, his style was perceived almost exclusively as "típico cubano." Arsenio, himself, regularly invoked his Cuban national identity not only in his patriotic songs but also, for instance, in reaction to Local 802's anti-Cuban (i.e., anti-foreign) regulations and heavy-handed practices. Yet, as I will discuss next, Arsenio remained in the peripheries of the broader Latin dance music milieu, despite the significant influx of Cuban migrants to New York City following the triumph of the Revolution in 1959.

Arsenio and the post-1959 Cuban migration

From 1959 to 1972 close to 500,000 Cubans fled Castro's communist Cuba and migrated to the United States. While the overwhelming majority of these migrants settled in south Florida, roughly 9 percent migrated to New York City, nearly doubling the Cuban population there from 42,694 in 1960 to 84,179 in 1970. These Cuban migrants settled in various sections throughout the city in which other Latinos lived, such as Washington Heights and the Upper West Side in Manhattan and the Astoria and Elmhurst sections of Queens.[89] Nevertheless, despite the notable increase in the Cuban population in the greater New York City area (including northern New Jersey), the number of performances of Arsenio's conjunto, as has been already established, continued to decrease through the first half of the 1960s. The class and racial makeup of the Cuban migrant population of the 1960s may explain this lack of support.

Although the migrant population became more representative of Cuba's

---

[89] Aguirre 1976: 103; Boswell and Curtes 1983: 63; Haslip-Viera 1993: 14-20.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

occupational distribution with every new yearly influx, racially it became increasingly white. Benigno Aguirre explains that the early overrepresentation of white middle- and upper-class migrants from the years 1959 to 1965 facilitated a subsequent chain migration through extended family networks after the issuance of the 1965 Memorandum of Understanding, which gave priority to potential migrants with relatives in the United States.[90] As a result, potential black Cuban migrants, lacking the required sponsorship of close relatives living in the United States, were systematically excluded. The black Cubans who were able to migrate tended to reside in the northeast of the United States, while a majority of white Cubans settled in the southern states. As Aguirre shows, despite the idyllic perception of pre-1959 race relations in Cuba that white migrants tended to have, black Cubans were nevertheless discriminated against by, and largely isolated from, the larger white Cuban community. For example, one study concluded that, "Within the Cuban community [in Miami], black Cubans seem to be a highly at-risk group. Housing and housing discrimination appear to be unsolved problems for this group even in areas which are predominantly Cuban."[91] Such studies suggest that the racial and social attitudes that shaped social relations in Cuba were transplanted in the United States.

It follows then that, despite the doubling of the Cuban population in New York City, Arsenio's audience remained largely limited to the Bronx and virtually non-existent in Miami. As migration became a common experience throughout Cuban society through

---

[90] See Aguirre 1976 and Boswell and Curtis 1984: 103.

[91] Cortes 1980: viii. Aguirre sights Nicholas and Prohias (1973), whose conclusions are similar. As documented in Pam Sporn's video documentary *Cuban Roots/Bronx Stories*, the Fosters, a black Cuban family, left Havana in 1962 and arrived in Miami where they stayed in the segregated section of the city. Soon after, they moved to the South Bronx.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the 1960s, the black working-class population, which had constituted his primary audience in Havana in the 1940s and 1950s, participated in it less. Instead, Cubans settling in the greater New York City area helped to revitalize and sustain the nightclub world, giving work to older Cuban musicians and other groups who could back-up stage acts. Conjuntos and charangas, however, were not a part of this otherwise "Cuban atmosphere." Nightclubs such as the Alameda Room, Chateau Madrid, and others catered to a white Cuban middle- and upper-class clientele.[92]

Meanwhile, the Club Cubano Inter-Americano, which continued to hire Arsenio and his conjunto, became increasingly isolated from other Cuban-American organizations because of its commitment to remain non-political. According to Melba Alvarado (who was the club's president during the early 1960s):

> There's been no exchange [with other Cuban social clubs in the United States] because in reality those clubs are political. For example, I, the oldest member of our club, separate myself from that because I don't want to get involved in the politics.[93]

Similarly, in Raúl's opinion, Arsenio's commitment to remain non-political, as he had been in Havana during the 1940s, may have contributed to his isolation from the post-1959 Cuban migration population:

> My brother's attitude was always to please wherever he went: [paraphrasing Arsenio] "Wherever they call me, I'll go and play. I can't [however] affiliate myself to any one political party because my

---

[92] David Carp, personal communication.

[93] No habido intercambio [con otras sociedades cubanas en los EEUU] porque realmente hoy día los clubes son políticos. Por ejemplo, yo mismo, que soy la más vieja en el club, me aparte de esa cosa porque no quiero entrar en el político (Alvarado, 15 March 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> responsibility is to play for those who will pay me and to please them." So, since we were not affiliated with any political party, well, in part it affected us.[94]

The class and racial attitudes that defined social relationships in pre-1959 Havana were largely transplanted in the United States in general with the wave of post-1959 Cuban migrants. Thus, the existing social structure of the broader Latin dance music milieu and, specifically, social relationships among the Cuban population in New York City were perpetuated and amplified after 1959. Such social relationships played a major role in not only defining Arsenio's audience but also shaping how musicians characterized his style in Havana during the 1940s. Yet, although Arsenio's primary audience in New York consisted similarly of working-class Puerto Ricans and pre-1959 Cuban migrants of color, his style was characterized not as "black" but as "típico cubano." In fact, based on his recorded material from this period and oral testimony, Arsenio pursued various stylistic trajectories, owing to commercial and personal motivations.

Arsenio's Style in New York City

When Arsenio first arrived in New York City, his son montuno style initially engendered various characterizations, including "unfamiliar" and "novel." Eventually, most

---

[94] El sistema de mi hermano siempre fue estar bien en donde quiera: "Donde quiera que me llaman, yo voy y toco. Yo no me puedo afiliar me en cualquier partido porque mi negocio es tocarle al que me paga y llevar me bien con todo el mundo." Entonces, como nosotros no tuvimos afiliación en ningún partido, pues, a nosotros en parte nos afectó (Raúl Travieso, 19 June 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

musicians and listeners characterized it as "típico cubano." Israel Berrios, Arsenio's second voice and guitarist, even claimed that his style and repertory of genres never changed:

> Arsenio never changed his style. He always played his compositions because the music that was played by his conjunto was his music. So, he played son montuno, which is what he [most] liked to play, and he played guaguancó, and he played bolero. But he never changed his style.[95]

To some Cubans, however, Arsenio's sound and style in New York had somewhat changed. In Dandy Beltrán's opinion, his arrangements and, in particular, the "sound" of the trumpets had become more "commercial" and fashioned for the broader Latino audience of New York.

> Well, when Arsenio recorded in New York his sound changed a little. It became a little more commercial than the sound he had in Cuba. . . . His arrangements were prepared a little more for the sound, ear of the Latino. The trumpet had another sound.[96]

These two seemingly contradictory characterizations of Arsenio's style are in fact representative of how his style was received by different populations in different historical and social contexts. As Berrios notes, Arsenio did indeed continue to favor the son montuno format and style. Yet, as Beltrán detected, the more subtle stylistic aspects

---

[95] Arsenio nunca cambió su estilo. Él siempre tocaba su música porque la música que se tocaba en ese grupo era la música de él. Entonces, él tocaba son montuno, que eso era lo que él le gustaba [más] tocar, y tocaba guaguancó y tocaba bolero. Pero él nunca cambio su estilo (Berríos, 11 October 1998).

[96] Bueno, cuando Arsenio grabó en Nueva York su sonido cambio un poco. Se hiso un poco más comercial que como el sonido que tenía en Cuba. . . . Los arreglos que se lo hiso [eran] un poquito más para el sonido, oído del Latino. Ya la trompeta era otro sonido (Beltrán, 11 September 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

that had characterized his style and arrangements in Havana in the 1940s were at times omitted or tempered for commercial purposes.

Arsenio's recordings, 1958-1963

From 1957 to 1963 Arsenio recorded seven LPs. The first two were recorded on jazz labels. First, *Palo Congo* (recorded on 27 April 1957), which was produced by Alfred Lion for Blue Note (LP 1561), was actually led by Puerto Rican percussionist "Sabu" Martínez and included Arsenio, Kike, Raúl, Evaristo Baro (one of Arsenio's regular bass players), and Sarah Baro (Evaristo's wife and Arsenio's sister-in-law). It contains performances of traditional Afro-Cuban and Puerto Rican music, including a palo sacred chant ("Biyumba") sung by Arsenio, a traditional guaguancó ("Asabache"), a toque de santo ("Aggo Elegua"), and a plena ("Choferito"). By the mid 1950s Latin and jazz musicians, along with some producers, had initiated a "roots" movement by recording "folkloric" and percussion-based LPs.[97] In some cases, Latin and jazz musicians collaborated on the same projects. For example, Art Blakey's *Orgy in Rhythm* LPs on Blue Note (BLP 1554 and 1555; rec. on 7 March 1957), which were also produced by Alfred Lion, feature jazz percussionists Blakey, Jo Jones, Arthur Taylor, Specs Wright, and Ray Bryant and Latin percussionists Sabu Martínez, Patato Valdés, José Valiente (Arsenio's regular timbal player), and Evilio Quintero, the last two of whom participated

---

[97] For example, in 1955 Mongo Santamaria recorded *Chango* (re-released as *Drums and Chants*), which includes Gilberto Valdés, Patato Valdés, and Julito Collazo. In April 1957, the same month that Sabu and Arsenio recorded *Palo Congo*, Tito Puente recorded *Top Percussion* (RCA Victor LSP-1617), which also includes Mongo Santamaria, Julito Collazo, and Evaristo Baro.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in the recording of Arsenio's *Quindembo* LP in 1963 (discussed below).

Teddy Reig, who owned the jazz label Roost, also had an interest in recording Afro-Cuban "folkloric" music. He developed a particular interest in Arsenio, after having listened to his 1948 and 1950 recordings with SMC (see Appendix 2). Reig made it a point to "get to know Arsenio" and eventually, in 1958, contracted him to record an LP consisting of Cuban *son* music in its most basic or "primitive" style.[98] In fact, Arsenio prepared twelve new songs (six son montunos, four guaguancós, and one bolero) for a conjunto consisting of two trumpets (Arsenio had not used the two-trumpet format to record since 1944), three vocalists, two of whom doubled on clave and güiro, guitar, bass, tumbadora, timbal, and himself on tres. Absent from his conjunto's otherwise standard instrumentation were the piano and bongó. In addition to the slightly reduced instrumentation, the music does deviate stylistically from his original son montuno style. Most noticeable are the faster tempos. Agustin Caraballoso (who played trumpet on this LP) explained:

> In *Primitivo* he recorded the *son* in its basic and original style from Oriente. Arsenio introduced that other style of *son lento* in Havana. That was an innovation of Arsenio's and his own style was established. But the son montuno from Oriente is fast, lively.[99]

The tempos of the son montunos, in particular, are indeed faster, averaging from

---

[98] Reig with Berger 1990: 65. Reig also was responsible in producing Patato Valdés's 1967 LP *Patato & Totico*, containing mostly traditional guaguancós, and bringing Arsenio in to participate in the recording (see Chapter 8).

[99] En *Primitivo* él hizo el son básico, el original, porque el son es oriental. Arsenio introdujo ese otro tipo de son lento en La Habana. Eso fue una inovación de Arsenio y entró su propio estilo. Pero el son montuno oriental es rápido, movido (Caraballoso, 11 December 1999).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the 150s to the 210s. Also, the arrangements of the son montunos and guaguancós are condensed, particularly in the diablo sections (Tables 7.1 and 7.2 in Appendix 4). Specifically, the diablos consist of only one set of alternations between either the coro and guía or the coro and trumpets, unlike the two sets of alternations in his earlier arrangements (cf. Tables 4.1-2, 5.1-2, and 6.3-5 in Appendix 4). Also, with the exception of "Guaguancó de Puerta de Tierra," the diablos are not preceded by cierres, whose function had been to heighten the dancer's expectation for the final climactic section. Finally, with the absence of the bongó, the rhythmic textures of the recordings are less dense than when it had formed a principal part of his earlier rhythm sections.

Primitivo was finally released in 1965 by Roulette records on the Roost label and re-released in 1968 on Roulette's Latin subsidiary Tico.[100] Nevertheless, in the spring of 1958, following the recording of the LP, Arsenio along with a similar version of the conjunto on the LP went to Chicago where they performed for at least several months at the Teatro América, Teatro El Senate, El Capri, the Bass Line, and other locales.[101] The group consisted of Arsenio (tres), Chewi Rivera (first voice), Marcelino Guerra (second voice and guitar), Raúl Díaz (bass), Raúl Travieso (bongó), Kike (tumbadora), Agustin Caraballoso (trumpet), and a second trumpet player from Chicago. Even Daniel Santos, Puerto Rican star vocalist, joined the group for several performances.

Upon Arsenio's return to New York City, however, steady performance contracts remained elusive. Yet, he continued to record, making five LPs between 1960 and 1963!

---

[100] It was re-released and re-titled *Arsenio y Kike: canta Monguito* by Tico (LP-1173) in 1968. It was then re-released on CD and re-titled *Primitivo* by Tico (SLP-1173) in 1999.
[101] Caraballoso, 16 March 1998 and 11 December 1999; Raúl Travieso, personal communication.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The first of these was *Cumbanchando con Arsenio: Fiesta en Harlem* (Partying with Arsenio: Party in Harlem), which was recorded in 1960 with Gabriel Oller's faltering label SMC. The next two LPs were recorded with the more reputable company Ansonia, who had a much broader catalogue of artists.[102] For these three LPs he restored the three-trumpet conjunto format, along with the piano. He also used his customary arrangement schemes from the 1940s for son montunos such as "Errante y bohemio" ("Wanderer and Bohemian"), "Papa upa" ("Boss"), "Suéltala" ("Let Go of Her"), and "Hachero pa' un palo" ("Axe Man for a Stick"). But for others, such as "Quiero mucho a mi suegra" ("I Love My Mother-In-Law A Lot"), "No he visto a Caridad" ("I Haven't Seen Caridad"), "Adiós, Carmelina" ("Goodbye, Carmelina") and "El divorcio" ("The Divorce"), he continued to use abbreviated schemes, similar to those he used in *Primitivo* (see Table 7.3 in Appendix 4). Furthermore, the tempos remained somewhat faster, while the bongó continued to be left inaudible, as is the case in *Cumbanchando con Arsenio* and the first Ansonia LP. It was not used at all in the second Ansonia LP. This is in stark contrast to the dominance of the three fundamental rhythm-section instruments—the bass, bongó, and tumbadora—in his recordings from the 1940s. In place of the bongó is the timbal, whose contribution to the rhythmic texture is limited to quarter-note attacks on the cha bell and the obligatory riff at the end of a short break.

Such structural and stylistic alterations are particularly evident when comparing the re-recordings of "El reloj de Pastora" (Pastora's Watch; late 1950s) and "Lo dicen

---

[102] Its catalogue included well-known artists and groups from Cuba (e.g., La Sonora Matancera), Puerto Rico (e.g., Daniel Santos and Ramito), and the Dominican Republic (e.g., Joseíto Mateo and Luís Quintero).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 7.1. "El reloj de Pastora" (late 1950s recording): diablo section

"El reloj de Pastora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1965 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

todas" ("All the Women Say It," rec. 1960) with their original versions (1946 and 1948, respectively). The arrangements of both sets differ in their overall layouts as well as in the alternating sequences within each section (see Table 7.4 in Appendix 4). The re-recording of "El reloj de Pastora," for example, includes additional verses (i.e., a five-line verse and two cuartetas) and an abbreviated diablo section, although the length of the phrase and, thus, the harmonic cycle is twice as long as in the original (see Examples 4.8.b and 7.1). In the 1946 version, the bass's tumbao leaves much more space open for the tumbadora's

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

freer use of open-toned attacks, which includes a 3:2 cross-rhythm figure. In contrast, the bass and tumbadora tumbaos in the later version are much more predictable, lacking any cross-rhythms. The pattern arranged for the trumpets in the later version, however, begins with a 3:2 cross-rhythm of its own, hence maintaining one of the central procedures of Arsenio's son montuno style. "Hachero pa' un palo" (recorded in 1960) also demonstrates Arsenio's continued use of the core aspects of his son montuno style, such as the truncated harmonic cycle in the diablo (see Table 7.3 in Appendix 4) as well as bass patterns in contratiempo and a relatively slow or moderate tempo (see Example 9.2.a).

In addition to many of his son montunos, the arrangements and rhythmic texture of his guaguancós also became increasingly simplified through the 1950s. The many guaguancós he recorded in the early 1950s differ little from those from the 1940s, compared to the few he recorded in the late 1950s and early 1960s (cf. Tables 5.1, 7.2, and 7.5 in Appendix 4). Despite such stylistic alterations, not least of which were the faster tempos, Arsenio's son montunos still did not draw broad popular and commercial recognition. As one musician emphasized, his son montuno style never reached the same level of popularity among dancers as the mambo or chachachá (as played by Latin big bands):

> Although he's one of the pioneers from Cuba and one of the pioneers of the son montuno and that type of song [style?], that never became big, per se. Nobody said, "Oh, let's go dance son montuno." The big thing that hit here [New York City] was the chacha and the mambo.[103]

Yet, in 1960, a new musical and dance style called "pachanga" had overtaken the

---

[103] Marin, 20 January 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

mambo and chachachá in popularity. And, the music it was danced to, although popularized initially by the charanga, was significantly akin to Arsenio's son montunos, stylistically and structurally.

La Pachanga and Quindembo

In November 1958 José Fajardo y sus Estrellas, one of Cuba's most popular charangas, performed at the Palladium. According to Cesar Miguel Rondón this performance initiated a widespread "euphoria" for the charanga in New York, leading directly to the popularity of the pachanga, a musical style initially popularized in Cuba by Eduardo Davidson.[104] Indeed, many young musicians from the Bronx—for example, Charlie Palmieri, Johnny Pacheco, Ray Barretto, and the Zervigón brothers of Orquesta Broadway—did form charangas in New York City in the late 1950s and early 1960s. These musicians, however, had been exposed to charanga music long before Fajardo's 1958 performance. Johnny Pacheco, for example, used to listen to Gilberto Valdés's charanga (and undoubtedly Arsenio's conjunto) play at the Tropicana Club in the early 1950s. During the mid 1950s he even played timbales temporarily with the charanga at the Puerto Rico Casino on 138th Street and Willis Avenue, in the South Bronx.[105]

In 1960 Pacheco formed his own charanga and quickly became the "prime popularizer" of the New York-pachanga dance and music style, introducing it at the

---

[104] Rondón 1980: 13, 19. See also Thompson (1983: 48) and Gelb (1961) for concise histories of the pachanga's interrelated yet distinct developments in Cuba and New York.
[105] Carp 1997: 7.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Tritons social club on E. 163rd Street and Southern Boulevard in the Bronx.[106] It became extremely popular among the mostly New York-born Puerto Rican teenagers and young adults who attended the Tritons's dances. In addition to their social club, organizers had dances regularly at local dance halls such as the Hunts Point Palace, and hired mostly young local bands such as Orlando Marin's.[107] Other young musicians including Pacheco, Charlie Palmieri, Eddie Palmieri, and Barry Rogers participated in "after-hours" jam sessions every Tuesday night at the club. (In addition, Eddie Palmieri's conjunto La Perfecta originated from these jam sessions at the Tritons, thus ushering in the trombone sound that would largely define salsa music.)[108] According to Ken Rosa, the pachanga was initially a Bronx phenomenon, separate from the nightclub and dancehall scenes in Manhattan.[109] Soon, however, it became particularly associated with the Palladium, where it became popular among Latinos and non-Latinos.[110]

For many of the new generation of New York-born Latinos, particularly those from the Bronx, the pachanga music style as performed by charangas was a welcomed alternative to the brasher and increasingly jazz-oriented sound of the mambo. Orlando Marin observed:

> No Latin jazz nonsense. None of this fancy stuff, and the people loved it. Puente, [Tito] Rodriguez, and Machito, in a way, took a back seat to this, and they were forced eventually to record something that said "pachanga" in it.[111]

---

[106] Thompson 1983: 48; Carp 1997: 10-11.
[107] Marin, 20 January 2000.
[108] Carp 1998: 15-16.
[109] Rosa, 8 December 1999.
[110] See Thompson 1983 and Gelb 1961.
[111] Marin, 20 January 2000. For example, Machito had released the heavily jazz-

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

As I discussed above, the charanga ensemble and its related musical styles had been an intimate part of the local Cuban and Puerto Rican dance music milieu in the Bronx since at least the early 1950s. By the end of the decade, many Latino musicians of the next generation continued the charanga tradition and popularized the new pachanga dance style. Its musical style, however, variously labeled "charanga" and "pachanga," was not particularly "new." These charanga groups were not known for recording danzón music, although it is possible that they performed it in live situations. Rather, the pachanga's harmonic-cyclic form, arrangement scheme, and use of bass lines in contratiempo evoke comparison to Arsenio's son montunos.

In 1960 Johnny Pacheco recorded his first LP entitled *Pacheco y su charanga* (Alegre LPA 801), which immediately became commercially successful, selling over 100,000 copies.[112] A year later Ray Barretto recorded his first LP entitled *Pachanga with Barretto* (Riverside 7506). Both LPs became two of the earliest and most recognized "pachanga" records recorded in New York City. Of the twenty-one recordings in both LPs seventeen are pachangas.

First, like Arsenio's one-part son montunos dating from the early 1940s, all of these are based on a continuous harmonic cycle of two or four bars (cf. Tables 4.1, 7.1,

---

influenced *Kenya: Afro-Cuban Jazz* LP in 1957 before releasing *The New Sound of Machito* in 1963. Tito Puente had released jazz-influenced LPs such as *Night Beat* in 1958 and *The Revolving Bandstand Sessions* in 1960 before releasing *Pachanga con Puente* in 1961.

[112] Carp, 1998: 16.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

7.3, and 7.6.a-b in Appendix 4). Also, the harmonic patterns consist of simple alternations between the tonic and dominant, with occasional uses of secondary dominants, or, less frequently, the tonic and subtonic. Second, the arrangement schemes are markedly similar, consisting of an introduction, montuno, solo, an optional cierre, and the final climactic alternating sequence, which Arsenio called diablo. In particular, the alternating scheme between an estribillo (refrain) and cuarteta (quatrain), which follows the introductions in Pacheco and Barretto's pachangas (with the exception of the latter's "Pachanga suavecito" ["Soft Pachanga"]), is especially reminiscent of Arsenio's customary son montuno arrangements. Third, although the tempos of Arsenio's son montunos of the 1940s averaged in the 120s and 130s, his son montunos of the 1950s and early 1960s ranged from the 140s to the 200s. Similarly, while the tempos of Pacheco's and Barretto's pachangas characteristically range from the 170s to the 200s, some are played at much slower tempos.

Finally and most importantly, many of these pachangas consist of bass lines (sometimes doubled by the violins and piano) based on the "Mi chinita me botó" figuration and its variations (see Examples 7.2.a and b and 4.1.b). As I discussed in Chapter 4, certain attacks in these bass lines as well as in other parts such as in the coro correspond with steps in the son footwork, including steps 3 and 4 which are syncopated. But the pachanga dance footwork and style was completely different from the son montuno dance style.

From 1960 to about 1963 the pachanga captivated dancers and record buyers alike. According to Orlando Marin, "You had to go with it because this is what everyone

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 7.2. Son montuno texture and the pachanga

(a) "El agua del clavelito" (1960), Johnny Pacheco y su Charanga

"El agua del clavelito." Words and Music by Miguel Angel Pozo. Copyright (c) 1961 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

wanted. You could go and play [something else] but no one would pay attention."[113] Although pachanga was stylistically similar to son montuno, the dance style was extremely energetic, not unlike the mambo dance style. "Killer Joe" Piro, who gave dance lessons at the Palladium on Wednesday nights, described the dance in the following manner:

> It was all jumping at first. . . . The flow went up and down, the floors shook, because everyone was hitting the same step, on 2 and 4.[114]

---

[113] Marin, 20 January 2000.
[114] Quoted in Thompson 1983: 48.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 7.2. Continued

(b) "Oyeme mulata" (1960), Johnny Pacheco y su Charanga

According to another observer:

> [T]he man pirouettes around the woman, waving a handkerchief. In any case, it's done mainly by young people; it's much too strenuous for anyone else.[115]

Robert Farris Thompson noted that former mambo dancers such as Ernest Ensley began to give the pachanga dance style "a sense of direction and refinement in contrast to lesser pachangueros who thrash about with pathetic eagerness but who have yet to learn that greatness is consonant not with superhuman effort but natural grace."[116] In any event, the basic footwork for pachanga, as described by Killer Joe, does not correlate to the overall

[115] Quoted in Gelb 1961.
[116] Thompson 1983: 49.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

son montuno texture the way the son footwork does.

The relationship between Arsenio's son montuno and the pachanga, particularly as played by Ray Barretto's charanga, went beyond just stylistic similarities. As pianist and arranger Alfredito Valdés Jr. explains he and bassist Enrique Jackson were playing simultaneously with Arsenio's conjunto and Barretto's charanga, from about 1960 to 1963. Vocalist Wito Kortwrite, who had been Arsenio's lead vocalist since 1955, had left the conjunto around 1958 and joined the charanga around 1960. Furthermore, Alfredito was arranging for both groups. He explains:

> The original band was an offshoot of the Arsenio orchestra, an extension of Arsenio's sound because we were the backbone of Arsenio's band, the piano player, the bass player, and the singer. And we left Arsenio to join Barretto. Actually, Wito had left the band before I joined Arsenio, but we came to work with Ray for a little bit over a year. It was a charanga, but it was very "Arsenio" in its feel, very son montuno and guaguancó. We [were] actually *disciples* of Arsenio. . . . The arrangements I wrote for Ray Barretto were very "Arsenio." [They] were all "Arsenio" ideas. Rather, [they] had that approach. . . . I was actually playing with both bands. I was playing with Arsenio and I was playing with Ray.[117]

Another *disciple* of Arsenio's, pianist and arranger Hector Rivera, arranged "Pachanga suavecito" ("Soft Pachanga"), which incorporates some of Arsenio's core stylistic elements. They include a slow tempo (110s), a melodic bass line in contratiempo, and, most noticeably, the customary piano cue (i.e., an arpeggiated dominant-seventh chord) followed by a four-bar syncopated cierre, which practically breaks all sense of meter or pulse. Instead of following the cierre with the final alternating sequence, however, a violin solo follows.

---

[117] Valdés, 4 December 1999 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Of Pacheco, Barretto, and Rivera, Robert Farris Thompson stated:

> Most salutary, it seems to me, of the developments connected with the pachanga has been the breakthrough of a fresh generation of *informed* band-leaders . . . who have emerged from the anonymity of personnel work to challenge *their former masters*.[118]

Indeed, as Valdés Jr. indicates, these and other "pachanga" musicians, who were *disciples* of Arsenio and well *informed* in his son montuno style, popularized a music style very much rooted in the son montuno.

Arsenio himself remarked on the stylistic similarities, in addition to the pachanga's popularity among the younger generation, in "Sabor de pachanga" ("The Flavor of Pachanga," rec. ca. 1960) and "¿Qué te parece, Juana?" ("What Do You Think about That, Juana?," rec. in 1963) (see Appendix 3). Eventually, Arsenio as well as many of his contemporaries, such as Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodríguez, were forced commercially to record "pachanga" albums. In late 1963 Tico contracted Arsenio to record such an album, which was predictably entitled *La Pachanga* (Tico LP 1092). Israel Berríos, who sang second voice on this LP, explains what happened next:

> This record was controversial. It so happened that when the Americans [i.e., producers, probably George Goldner] explained to Arsenio what they wanted it seems as if the interpreter didn't interpret it correctly to Arsenio. So, Arsenio began to rehearse guaguancós and son montunos [with the conjunto], his regular repertory. When we went to [Tico] to audition [the material] for the Americans they said, "That's not what we want"—after having rehearsed for about four months. So, now the musicians were upset over having to rehearse different numbers. The record didn't come out that bad, but it could've been better with more preparation.[119]

---

[118] Thompson 1983: 48 (emphasis added).

[119] Este disco fue controversial. Resulta que cuando vinieron los americanos

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 7.3. "Sabor de pachanga" (ca. 1960), Arsenio Rodríguez

Given the structural and stylistic similarities between the son montuno and pachanga, it is possible that Arsenio actually believed that George Goldner simply wanted son montunos in faster tempos. Indeed, the recordings in this LP, including "Sabor de pachanga," which was released on the first Ansonia LP, consist of his customary son montuno structural scheme (cf. Table 7.7, 7.3, and 7.6 in in Appendix 4). And, the

---

[productores] a decirle a Arsenio lo que ellos querían parece que el intérprete no le explicó bien a Arsenio. Y Arsenio se puso a ensayar guaguancós y son montunos [con el conjunto], su repertorio normal. Entonces, cuando fuimos al [Tico] a darles la audición a los americanos para la grabación ellos dijeron, "No, eso no es lo que queremos"—despues de estar ensayando como cuatro meces. Entonces, ya los musicos estaban disgustados para empezar otro ensayo más con diferentes números. Este disco no salió tan mal, pero pudo haber quedado [mejor] con más preparación (Berrís, 13 June 1997).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

tempos range from the 170s to the 220s! In addition, the bass in many instances plays patterns in contratiempo that accentuate the coro and son footwork (see Example 7.3). Nevertheless, the recordings in *La Pachanga* in addition to some of his son montunos from the late 1950s and early 1960s do lack the degree of rhythmic ingenuity and density that distinguished his style in the 1940s.

As Alfredito Valdés stressed, Arsenio had to meet the expectations of Tico's officials in order to record the LP:

> Remember that this [*La Pachanga*] was probably something to do with the producers. They wanted to make Arsenio more up-to-date with the [times]. Pachanga was hot, everybody was dancing pachanga. . . . Again, [the music in *La Pachanga*] is not traditionally "Arsenio." This is Arsenio trying to catch up with what everybody else was doing. . . . This is why Arsenio was gradually pushed into playing faster in an attempt to make his music more appealing to a wider audience, not because it was better. It was just commerce, just business. This [*La Pachanga*] is business. *Le decían* [They'd tell him], "You got to pick up the tempo because the *bailarines* [dancers] are falling like flies."[120]

Despite the commercial concessions that he made in *La Pachanga*, namely, the much faster tempos, the LP did not lead to more work or recognition. Nevertheless, it did give Arsenio an opportunity to contest his marginal position in the pachanga and, in general, the Latin dance music milieus, as Alfredito Valdés noted:

> What Arsenio is saying [in "¿Qué te parece, Juana?"] is that there's nothing new about pachanga, really. What ever you're doing now I've been doing for 40 years, and I don't know why I'm not busy!.[121]

---

[120] Valdés, 4 December 1999.
[121] Valdés, 4 December 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

In the same year he recorded *La Pachanga*, Arsenio recorded another LP entitled *Quindembo* (CLT 7049) for Columbia Records. Pedro Rosaly, A&R for Epic Records (a subsidiary of Columbia), contracted Arsenio to record his "new" style of music, which he called "quindembo."[122] In fact, the LP consists of nine arrangements of various Afro-Cuban folkloric chants and rhythms and three swing-son and swing-bolero hybrids. What was undoubtedly unprecedented, however, was the instrumentation that he used on the recordings, which included tres (Arsenio), tumbadora (Kike), bass (Evaristo Baro), flute and tenor saxophone (Mauricio Smith), alto saxophone (Walter Gene Jefferson), trap set (Evelio Quintero), percussion (José Valiente), and vocals (Raffi Martínez and Israel Berríos).

Unlike the folkloric LPs of the 1950s, including *Palo Congo*, the Afro-Cuban-based recordings in *Quindembo* were not "traditional" or "authentic" renditions. Instead, Arsenio's aim was to arrange folkloric tunes for a new ensemble and present them as one new style of music. For example, "Canto abacuá" ("Abakuá Song") based on an abakuá chant, "Compay cimarrón" ("Cimarrón My Friend," published as "Quindembo cimarrón"), based on a congo tune, and "Mona," a swing-bolero hybrid, were all published as "quindembos" (see Appendix 1). Panamanian Mauricio Smith transcribed and helped arrange the music for the woodwinds. He recounts what his initial reaction was to the music:

> When I heard it the first time it was kind of funny to me. But it was

---

[122] According to Fernando Ortiz "quindembo" was the name of a pre-twentieth century sacred Congolese drum and the name of an old secret brotherhood of African-born *congo* priests (Ortiz 1952: 423-424).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> swinging. It was really swinging. . . . He didn't say anything about trying to crossover. He was just going for something totally different.[123]

In fact, Arsenio's goal was to attract a new audience with the music, but he was unable to promote it, as he explained during his 1964 radio interview with Colombian José Luís Logradia in Los Angeles:

> AR: I'm struggling to introduce [a new style of music] that I call "quindembo." But I've been unable to because here [Los Angeles and New York City] one can't give it exposure by playing it live on radio like it was done in Cuba, like it's done in Colombia, like it's done in our [Latin American] countries. Here, almost everything that is played on radio is from a record. I haven't been able to give it much exposure.
>
> JL: Have you recorded it, Arsenio?
>
> AR: Yes! I recorded several quindembos with Columbia [Records]. I'm thinking about recording more quindembos with my own money, to see if I can get ahead.[124]

Indeed, his conjunto's almost daily performances on Radio Mil Diez and Radio Salas had played a central role in not only the commercial exposure but also the local popularization of his music in Havana during the 1940s. The lack of such a crucial promotional tool in New York City and later in Los Angeles accounted for Arsenio's inability to capitalize on his recordings, especially in regard to his capetillos, mambos,

---

[123] Smith, 30 April 1999.

[124] AR: Estoy luchando para imponer uno que le llamo "quindembo." Pero no he podido porque como aquí no hay la manera de transmitir por radio como se hacía en Cuba, como se hace en Colombia, como se hace en los países de nosotros. Aquí, casi todo en el radio se hace en disco. No e podido darle calor. JL: ¿A grabado algo con ese ritmo, Arsenio? AR: ¡Si! Tengo hechos unos quindembos que los grabé con Columbia [Records]. Ya estoy pensando a grabar por mi cuenta [más] quindembos, haber si puedo luchar adelante (Rodríguez, 1964).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

chachachás, pachangas, and quindembos, with which he attempted to create a niche for himself in the commercial mainstream.

Leaving New York City, 1964

Some time around 1960 Arsenio, at the age of 49, and Kike became Jehovah's Witnesses. Agustin Caraballoso (who was one of Arsenio's trumpet players) and Bobby Rodríguez (who was Tito Puente's bass player), both of whom had become Jehovah's Witnesses around 1959, were the first to give Arsenio and Kike Bible study. Before their conversions, Arsenio and Kike actively participated in and organized santería ceremonies. For instance, on 4 December 1959 Arsenio and his wife Emma hosted a celebration for Changó, his *santo*, in their apartment in East Harlem.[125] Although he never had Changó "made" (i.e., he never became an "official" initiate of santería), Arsenio believed, according to his niece Xiomara (Kike's daughter), that "he was born [with Changó], so he didn't need to get crowned" and "he had the blessings from the santos."[126] Arsenio and Kike also practiced palo, the congo-based religion taught to them by their grandfather (see Chapter 2). As Xiomara remembers, "I think he liked that more than santería because I remember as a child when we lived on Tinton Avenue [in the South Bronx] I would see him work *con el caldero* [with the cauldron (where the spirit resides)] that he had here."[127] According to Agustin and Raúl, however, both Arsenio and Kike gave up

---

[125] *La Prensa*, 14 December 1959. Changó is the god of fire, thunder, and lightening.
[126] Xiomara Travieso, 14 June 1999.
[127] Ibid.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

santería and palo completely to become Jehovah's Witnesses.[128]

In 1963, after more than twelve years of marriage with Emma Martínez, Arsenio married Anadina Rodríguez, a Dominican woman who belonged to the same Jehovah's congregation as Arsenio. They lived in her apartment on Columbus Avenue and 104th Street in Manhattan Valley, Manhattan.[129]

Despite his new marriage and newly found faith, Arsenio remained unfulfilled, musically and professionally. By 1964 Arsenio's conjunto was playing less than ever before. Alfredito Valdés Jr. described Arsenio and his conjunto's bleak situation:

> Arsenio's gigs didn't pay that much. He was struggling, trying to make ends meet and trying to keep the band together. And I helped, I was all over with the band, always with the band. We were doing the New York scene and we were getting the crumbs. We were getting something like 15 dollars a gig, 10 dollars a gig, you know, like shit! So to me it was a disappointment, which led to my disenchantment with New York and my decision to leave New York altogether. That's one of the reasons why I moved to L.A. because I didn't feel that I would ever be able to get a fair share of what was happening here.[130]

By the fall of 1964 Arsenio too had decided to move with Kike to Los Angeles and join their brother Raúl, who had arrived the year before.

---

[128] Caraballoso, 7 April 1998; Raul Travieso, April 15 1998.
[129] Berríos, 11 October 1998.
[130] Valdés, 4 December 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ:

A BLACK CUBAN MUSICIAN IN THE DANCE MUSIC MILIEUS OF HAVANA, NEW YORK CITY, AND LOS ANGELES

by

DAVID F. GARCÍA

VOLUME II

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

2003

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 8

The Final Years in Los Angeles and New York City:

Struggle, Image, and Race in the "Pre-salsa" Period, 1964-1970

> Since I'm so young, well, the cold in New York is bothering my bones. So, I came to California hating the cold, and I'm planting my flag here again and starting [to perform]. I've been here barely three months.[1]
>
> —Arsenio Rodríguez

> Well, I was here [in Los Angeles], and I brought him over here. The cold [in New York] was bothering him. He wasn't working that much. He got involved with Jehovah Witnesses, and so for many holidays he didn't play because the religion didn't permit it. And he looked for gigs, but the people didn't hire him, and that's when [his career] began to fall.[2]
>
> —Raúl Travieso

In 1964, at the age of fifty-three, Arsenio moved to Los Angeles, beginning the third and final phase of his career. He formed a new conjunto and attempted to establish himself in Los Angeles's Latin dance music milieu. After some success, however, offers for his conjunto to perform began to wane. By early 1966 he decided to return to New York City and re-organize his conjunto; he would remain in New York until early 1969. During this time, the Latin dance music milieu in New York was dominated simultaneously by the

---

[1] Como soy tan jovencito, pues, ya el frío en Nueva York me esta molestando los huesos. Y entonces, vine para California odiendo el frío, y aquí estoy plantando bandera de nuevo y empezando [a tocar]. Yo llevo aqui apenas tres meses (Rodríguez, 1964).

[2] Pues, yo estaba aquí, y yo le agarré para acá. Ya, el frío le estaba molestando. Ya no estaba trabajando tanto. Allá se metió con la gente de Testigo Jehovah, y entonces ya muchos días festivo no iba a tocar porque la religión no se lo permitía. Y él buscaba contrato para tocar y la gente no [lo contrataba], y ahí empezó a caer (Raul Travieso, 3 August 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

soul- and rhythm-and-blues-inspired boogaloo music and dance craze and a burgeoning interest, shared among some young musicians and record executives, in Cuban conjunto-based music of the 1940s and 1950s. The various styles that developed out of this revival of sorts would by the early 1970s be categorized and marketed under the rubric of "salsa." Although Arsenio's conjunto recorded two LPs in 1966 and 1968, which were to be its last, it rarely performed, despite the fact that some of the most important figures of this "pre-salsa" milieu in New York drew their stylistic inspiration as well as much of their material from Arsenio's recorded repertory. With no prospects for a rejuvenation of his performance career in New York, he moved back to Los Angeles in the spring of 1969.

This chapter documents the last and least known period of Arsenio's life and career, thus contributing to the almost non-existent state of research on one of salsa's most important historical figures. It focuses on his relationships to the social and musical conditions that defined and, to a certain extent, linked the "pre-salsa" milieu in New York City and the Latin dance music milieu in Los Angeles. Specifically, I am concerned with the ways Latino national identities and social functions, the emergence of second generation Latino musicians and dancers, dominant Latin dance music styles, and the power of Latin music industry personnel in Los Angeles and New York City all contributed to the professional and musical trajectory of Arsenio's final years. I also consider how Arsenio's identity as a black Cuban and identification with the plight of peoples of African descent in the Americas clashed with the political and cultural concerns of second-generation Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos and resonated with the endeavors of other cultural institutions of the African diaspora in the United States.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio in Los Angeles, 1964-1965

Arsenio and his brother Kike moved to Los Angeles around October 1964, and joined their younger brother Raúl, who had moved there the year before. They moved into an apartment at 960 W. Vernon Avenue, less than two miles west of S. Central Avenue, in the Exposition area of South Los Angeles. From 1969 to 1970, when Arsenio returned from New York, he again lived in South Los Angeles as well as in Westlake, just west of downtown. In 1965 African-Americans totaled about 81 percent of the population in South Los Angeles, while Latinos totaled only 10 percent of this section's population.[3] Westlake, however, consisting of higher concentrations of Latinos (up to 90 percent of the populations of some tracts), was in the 1950s and 1960s a point of entry for immigrant groups, including Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and South Americans, as well as Asians.[4] In any event, Arsenio did not encounter an audience, namely a significant Cuban or Puerto Rican population, in Los Angeles that could have supported his performance career as had occurred in the South Bronx. Instead, he had to depend on a largely Mexican and Mexican-American audience in a city whose Latino population, in general, was distributed throughout this sprawling metropolis.

In this section I will discuss Arsenio's relationship to and performances in Los Angeles's Latin dance music milieu in 1965, focusing on the factors that accounted for his failure to establish a viable performance career, which are: 1) a geographically disjointed and numerically insignificant Cuban and Puerto Rican population; 2) a nationally diverse,

---

[3] Fair Employment Practice Commission 1966.
[4] Chinchilla, Hamilton, and Loucky 1993: 56.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

yet Mexican- and Mexican-American-dominated Latino population; and 3) his musical style, which did not appeal to most club owners, dance promoters, radio disc jockeys, or the broader Latino population.

The Latino population in Los Angeles

Mexicans and Mexican-Americans overwhelmingly dominated Los Angeles's Latino population. In 1970, the Mexican population in the city of Los Angeles was approximately 228,000, totaling 41 percent of the Latino population, while the Mexican-American population was about 230,000, totaling 42 percent of the Latino population.[5] In contrast, Central and South Americans together were estimated at 57,000, totaling 10 percent of the Latino population. The Cuban and Puerto Rican populations were also relatively small. Although the state of California had the fourth largest Cuban population (47,000) in the country, after Florida (250,000), New York (89,000), and New Jersey (68,000), only about 20,000 lived in Los Angeles, totaling 3 percent of the city's Latino population.[6] Los Angeles's Puerto Rican population was estimated at 10,000, less than 2 percent of the Latino population.[7]

Significant concentrations of predominately Mexicans and Mexican-Americans existed in various areas of the city, particularly the "East Los Angeles" area

---

[5] The following figures are from Abler and Adams 1976, except where indicated.
[6] See also Boswell and Curtis 1984: 62.
[7] According to a report published by the United States Commission on Civil Rights (1980: 6), the Puerto Rican population in the greater Los Angeles-Long Beach area (i.e., Los Angeles and Orange counties) in 1970 was estimated at 21,752.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(encompassing Boyle Heights, East Los Angeles proper, and City Terrace).[8] Cubans and Puerto Ricans, however, had no comparable concentrations in any one neighborhood in the city.[9] Instead, relatively small concentrations of Cubans and Puerto Ricans existed throughout the city. For example, according to the 1970 United States Census Cubans and Puerto Ricans living in East Los Angeles totaled about 600, compared to this area's estimated 57,000 Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Somewhat larger concentrations of Cubans were reported in Glendale (1,800) and Pasadena (700), north and north east of Los Angeles.[10] Even in 1980 the Cuban and Puerto Rican populations continued to be "spatially distributed throughout Los Angeles," although some significant clusters had formed along the Culver City and Torrance corridor, south of West Los Angeles toward Long Beach, and the Bell-Huntington Park area, east of South Central and south of East Los Angeles.[11]

According to other studies, in the 1960s "invasion areas"—that is, neighborhoods characterized by high levels of transiency—dominated most Latino neighborhoods in the cities of Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, and even New York.[12] In the Pico-Union section of Westlake, Los Angeles, for example, adjacent to where Arsenio lived in 1969 and 1970, most residents surveyed for a 1971 report indicated that "few or none of their friends lived there, and a majority (55 percent) thought of it as 'just a place' they happened to be living

---

[8] Western Economic Research Co. 1972; Fair Employment Practice Commission 1966.
[9] United States Commission on Civil Rights 1980: 19; Modarres 1994: 49.
[10] U.S. Department of Commerce 1973.
[11] Modarres 1994: 49.
[12] Bean and Tienda 1987: 167-168.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

rather than a place where they belong."[13] The exceptions, of course, included the Latino populations in East Harlem, the South Bronx, and East Los Angeles, whose respective Puerto Rican and Mexican-American populations had transformed from *colonias* (or migrant neighborhoods) to settled communities soon after the end of World War II.[14]

As we have seen, Arsenio's career and music thrived in Havana in the 1940s, not simply as a result of his conjunto's almost daily live radio performances and numerous RCA Victor recordings. More importantly, the relationship that he and dancers, in particular, of the black working-class forged fueled Arsenio's musical creativity as well as supported his local performance career. In addition, he lived in the same neighborhoods and barrios where some of the black social clubs, workers' unions, and other groups who regularly hired his conjunto were located. Similarly, in New York City, after performing frequently in Manhattan's most popular dancehalls in the early 1950s, his performance career was sustained by local Cubans and Puerto Ricans of color in the South Bronx in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Again, Arsenio lived among those who constituted his primary audience and with whom he had established a personal, in addition to a professional, relationship. In both cities, but in particular Havana, he expressed his identification with and admiration for the people of these barrios, most poignantly in his conjunto-style guaguancós.

In Los Angeles in the 1960s, however, a Cuban and Puerto Rican community with which Arsenio could have established a personal, artistic, and professional relationship

---

[13] See Chinchilla, Hamilton, and Loucky 1993: 56-58.
[14] See Sánchez Korrol (1995: 51-84) and Loza (1993: 36-43) for outlines of the settlement patterns and community development of the Puerto Rican and Mexican-American populations in New York City and Los Angeles, respectively.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

remained elusive. Instead, Los Angeles's Latin dance music landscape consisted of various types of locales that were patronized by a nationally diverse Latino population. And although Cuban-based dance music was popular across this population, musical groups who performed in this milieu had to include other regional styles, such as cumbia, in their performance repertories. While this milieu was located primarily around downtown and Hollywood, another, quite distinct musical scene, consisting of rock-based bands, low-rider car clubs, street gangs, and Mexican-American teenagers, dominated East Los Angeles throughout the 1960s. The music that emerged from this milieu became known as the "Eastside sound" and was based (not unlike boogaloo in New York City) on adaptations of primarily rhythm and blues, soul, and rock.[15] Concomitantly, many young Mexican-Americans were taking part in the Chicano movement, which was characterized by political activism and an awareness of national roots and self-determination. In the remaining parts of this section, I will outline Los Angeles's Latin dance music landscape, discuss its network of dance promoters, club owners, and radio personalities, and document Arsenio's activities in Los Angeles in 1965, which included performances in Hollywood, downtown, as well as East Los Angeles.

The Latin dance music landscape in Los Angeles, 1960s

Like the musician's unions in Havana and New York City, Los Angeles's Local 47 organized locales into "schedules" and by scale.[16] In 1965 schedule 2 locales, which

---

[15] See Loza 1993: 95-98.

[16] The following data on Local 47's schedules and scales were collected from interviews

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

encompassed upper-class nightclubs and lounges, were assigned the highest scales, reaching up to $75 a night for bandleaders. Meanwhile, schedule 8 and 9 locales, which included basic nightclubs and bars, were assigned scales averaging $27 a night for bandleaders and $20 for sidemen. Apparently, the Million Dollar theater and the Hollywood Palladium ballroom were not assigned specific scales because the majority of the acts that were contracted to perform in these locales were non-locals. Nevertheless, Local 47 required that at least half of the musicians in the bands that accompanied these out-of-town performers had to be Local 47 musicians.

Most of the schedule 2 locales that included Latin dance music entertainment were located on the fashionable Sunset Strip and Hollywood Boulevard in Hollywood. Beginning in the 1940s, Ciro's, Mocambo, El Trocadero, Crescendo, the Latin Quarter, Interlude, and other schedule 2 locales, like the cabarets de primera in Havana and class A nightclubs in Manhattan, were patronized by famous Hollywood actors and, in general, upper-class, predominately Anglo-American, audiences (or upper-class white Cubans and Anglo-American tourists in the case of the cabarets de primera). Accordingly, during the "rhumba" and mambo crazes of the 1940s and 1950s, these schedule 2 nightclubs featured internationally popular Latin acts such as Xavier Cugat, Enrique Madriguerra, Desi Arnaz, and Dámaso Pérez Prado as well as local, predominately Mexican-American Latin big bands such as Sal Cervantes's, Phil Carreón's, and Carlos Molina's.[17] According to Paul

---

with Alfredo R. Rubalcava (31 July 2001), Business Representative for Local 47, AFM, and Rudy Macías (16 August 1999).

[17] See Loza (1993: 54-72) for an overview of the Latin music scene or "nightclub circuit" in downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood from the 1930s through the 1950s.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

López (Mexican-American trumpet player and arranger) most of these local Latin or "commercial" bands copied their arrangements from recordings made by internationally popular Latin bands, hence appealing to the musical tastes that these nightclubs catered to.[18]

While upper-class, predominately Anglo-American, audiences patronized the nightclubs on the Sunset Strip, middle- and working-class Latinos attended performances and dances at theaters, ballrooms, lower-scheduled nightclubs, and dancehalls in downtown and East Los Angeles as well as Hollywood. The most prominent theater was the ornate Million Dollar, located on the corner of S. Broadway and 3rd Street, in downtown, which, like the Teatro Puerto Rico in the South Bronx, was the Latino equivalent of the Apollo.[19] The Million Dollar theater opened in 1918 and featured American variety shows. Beginning in 1949, however, it became the hub of *la farándula* when the new owner Frank Fauce began to cater to Latinos, but especially Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. *Farándula* was a vaudeville-like presentation that began with singing and musical groups, followed by stage performers such as acrobats, magicians, and contortionists, and ending with a movie double feature. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the Million Dollar theater featured international stars from throughout Latin America, but especially Mexico, for one-week engagements. They included mariachi stars Pedro Infante, Jorge Negrete, and José Alfredo Jiménez as well as Cubans Miguelito Valdés and

---

[18] López, 22 August 1996. López has performed with and arranged for Latin and jazz big bands in Los Angeles since the 1940s; he also performed with Noro Morales (with whom he co-composed "110th St. & 5th Ave.") and Miguelito Valdés in New York City during the late 1940s and early 1950s.

[19] See Loza 1993: 58, 65-67.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Celia Cruz and Puerto Rican Daniel Santos.

For dancing, Latinos flocked to various ballrooms in and around downtown, including the Embassy Auditorium (843 S. Grand Avenue, between 8th and 9th Streets) and the Rodger Young Ballroom (936 W. Washington Boulevard, between Oak and Toberman) as well as ballrooms in hotels such as the Alexandria (5th Street and S. Spring Street), the Statler-Hilton (W. 7th Street and S. Figueroa Street), the Clark (S. Hill Street, between 4th and 5th Streets), and the Ambassador (3400 Wilshire Boulevard, between S. Normandie and S. Vermont Avenues). Local dance promoters such as Gabby Cancel, Ray Rodríguez, and Freddy Dávila, in addition to Latin social clubs organized these dances. While Mexican-American and regional Mexican social clubs outnumbered other Latin clubs, virtually every Latin American nation was represented by at least one social club. Examples included Club Social y Deportivo El Salvador, Club Social y Deportivo Guatemala, Sociedad Hondureña de Los Angeles, Centro Cultural y Social Ecuador, El Club Chileno, and Centro Social Colombiano.

Because of the relatively small population of Cubans in Los Angeles, Cuban social clubs were not common. According to Pedro Ferro, who became Arsenio's manager in Los Angeles, "there were very few of us Cubans who were arriving [in exile from Cuba], there were very few Cubans. We were mostly concerned about finding a way to open a path to fight for human rights."[20] In addition, as in New York City and other areas in the United States, black Cubans tended to be discriminated against by, and largely isolated

---

[20] Eran muy pocos los cubanos que estabamos llegando, eran muy poco los cubanos. Mas la preocupación de los cubanos era a buscar la manera de abrirse camino de luchar por las derechas humanas (Ferro, 2 September 1997).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from, the white Cuban community in Los Angeles. Rocky Moran, a Nicaraguan pianist who played briefly with Arsenio's conjunto in the late 1960s, remembers the following response one black Cuban musician gave to Moran regarding the opportunity to perform for a Cuban social club: " 'Rocky, I don't want to work with those guys.' I said, 'Why not?' Because they were these white Cubans, that they were so prejudiced and stuff. She said, 'I don't want anything to do with them'."[21] Regardless of their political orientation or racist inclinations, Cuban social clubs alone did not constitute a sufficient source of performances, which emphasized the importance of other Latin social clubs to their performance careers.

While many of these social clubs (particularly the regional Mexican associations) favored musical groups who specialized in their region's musical traditions, many others hired groups who could perform, in addition to their regional popular styles, a variety of popular Latin American styles, particularly mambo and cumbia. René Touzet and Dandy Beltrán, both of whom were Cuban bandleaders, and Rudy Macías, a Mexican bandleader, led three of the most popular local Latin groups that performed regularly for Latin social clubs in the 1960s. They all agreed that having a stylistically varied "book" that included mambos, chachachás, merengues, cumbias, boleros, valses, and rancheras was essential for playing for Latin social clubs and, hence, developing and maintaining a strong local following.

Rudy Macías, for example, recalled regularly performing "La naranja," a *tonada*, for Ecuadorians, "La múcura," a cumbia, for Colombians, and "Ansiedad," a vals, for

---

[21] Moran, 25 May 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Peruvians. He explained:

> Here in L.A. we had to play a little bit of everything to [stay] alive. I can play for Italians, for Jews, you name it; swing music, rock n' roll, música ranchera. If they ask me, I'll play it because I have it in my book—mambos, chachachás, salsa, merengues, swing—lo *que tú quieras* (what ever you like). . . . We had to copy the music [from] the record. They'd [i.e., social club representatives] give us the record, "Rudy, we want you to play this music." So we'd [copy] the arrangements [from the record].[22]

Dandy Beltrán's "La cumbia de Ecuador" became extremely popular among local Ecuadorians:

> I had the good fortune to play almost every "Batalla de Pinchincha" [celebration of the Independence of Quito, Ecuador's capital]. From those dances I composed "La cumbia de Ecuador" for the enthusiasm that the Ecuadorian public had for the music that I played. I played Cuban music, but I played cumbia too. You know I played more Latin American stuff, bolero, chachachá, cumbia. That's why I had a lot of acceptance.[23]

In addition to these Latin social club dances, which were attended predominantly by club members and fellow-nationals, Latinos of diverse nationalities patronized numerous nightclubs and dancehalls located in the downtown and East Los Angeles areas as well as Hollywood. Some of the most popular of these were the Ramona Gardens (727 Sunset Boulevard, between S. Grand Avenue and S. Hill Street, in downtown), the Club Havana, which changed its name to the Continental Ballroom Nightclub in 1968 (2905

---

[22] Macías, 16 August 1999.

[23] Yo tuve la suerte de tocar casi siempre la "Batalla de Pinchincha." De esos bailes salí con "La cumbia de Ecuador" por el entusiasmo que tenía el publico ecuatoriano por la música que tocaba. Yo tocaba música cubana, pero tocaba cumbia también. Tú sabes, tocaba más latino americano, bolero, chachachá, cumbia. Por eso yo tuve bastante aceptación (Beltrán, 11 September 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Sunset Boulevard and Silver Lake Boulevard, in Silver Lake), Virginia's (W. 7th Street, west of S. Alvarado Street, in Westlake), the Paramount Ballroom (2706 Brooklyn Avenue, now E. César E. Chávez Avenue, and S. Soto Street, in Boyle Heights), and especially the Hollywood Palladium (6215 Sunset Boulevard, east of Vine Street, in Hollywood). Unlike the swanky, schedule 2 nightclubs on the Sunset Strip, these locales were open to all audiences, including working-class Latinos. Both the Ramona Gardens and Club Havana featured local groups such as René Bloch's and well-known international groups, including Mexican artists Tito Guizar, Fernando Fernández, and Lobo y Melón as well as Cuban performer Miguelito Valdés.[24]

Virginia's, the Paramount Ballroom, and the Hollywood Palladium, however, were especially known for featuring popular Latin dance bands from New York City, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. In fact, from 1957 through the early 1970s Jackie Thorne, the owner of Virginia's, a schedule 9 nightclub, was the central figure in Los Angeles in contracting groups from New York City, namely Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Machito, and others, to perform not only at her nightclub but in other locales throughout the Los Angeles area, California, and the southwest.[25] Some of the local clubs to which she "leased" her contracted acts from New York included the Paramount Ballroom and the Hollywood Palladium.

The Paramount Ballroom, a schedule 9 dancehall, was the East Los Angeles equivalent to East Harlem's Park Plaza/Palace. The building consisted of two floors, a

---

[24] *La Opinion*, 10 July 1964 and 28 January, 26 June, 16 July, and 20 August 1965.
[25] Rabora, 6 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

small nightclub downstairs and a large dance floor and stage upstairs.[26] Its audience consisted of mostly local Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, with some Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and South Americans. Boyle Heights, where the dancehall was located, was considered dangerous and avoided by outsiders. Silvio Alava, a Puerto Rican from New York who attended dances in both East Harlem's Park Plaza/Palace during the 1950s and East Los Angeles's Paramount Ballroom in the 1960s, described the similarities:

> The Plaza in New York City [i.e., East Harlem] and the Paramount Ballroom in East Los Angeles were very similar in that the people that went there were of the lower and middle economic level. I think this was because of the neighborhoods in which they were located. In both cases the area was considered a tough place to visit so that many folks stayed away and waited to see the bands in better venues.[27]

Evidently, its owner Mitch Rodriguez, a Mexican-American, was the only dancehall owner in East Los Angeles to feature, on a weekly basis, local Cuban-based dance groups such as Johnny Martinez's, Albertico Pérez's, and Arsenio's (discussed below). Tito Puente also performed here on at least two occasions (in 1964 and 1965).[28]

While the Paramount Ballroom attracted a local audience, the five-thousand-capacity Hollywood Palladium, the most popular dancehall for Latin dance music in Los Angeles, attracted a nationally diverse Latin as well as non-Latin audience from throughout the city. In fact, the Hollywood Palladium played a central role in the transformation of Los Angeles's Latin dance music landscape beginning in the early 1950s. Hence, if the Paramount Ballroom was the equivalent of East Harlem's Park Plaza/Palace,

---

[26] Sánchez, 11 August 1999.
[27] Alava, 2000.
[28] *La Opinion*, 6 June 1964 and 11 June 1965.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

then the Hollywood Palladium was the Los Angeles equivalent of Manhattan's Palladium. Through the early 1940s the Palladium, like almost all of the nightclubs on the Sunset Strip, did not admit African-American guests and rarely employed African-American bands.[29] Evidently, the Palladium's ban on guests of color, which included Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, continued into the early 1950s until local Mexican-American DJ Lionel "Chico" Sesma (like his Puerto Rican counter-part Federico Pagani in New York) began to rent the Palladium to promote Latin music dances. As Sesma himself explains:

> Before I engaged the Palladium I was discouraged by most quarters saying, "Lionel, our people don't even cross 7th and Broadway [downtown] . . . much less into Hollywood." You really seldom saw any Chicanos in Hollywood. And they would say, "I don't think they're gonna let any Mexicans into the Hollywood Palladium." . . . I responded, "Well, they let this Mexican in. We'll find out what happens." . . . I changed the sociological movement of the entire city. Our people in fact very seldom crossed 7th and Broadway, which was [located in east] downtown, much less than go into Hollywood. The Hollywood Palladium? Forget it.[30]

Apparently, as was the case with the owners of the Palladium in Manhattan, the Hollywood Palladium's owners were persuaded to allow guests of color on a regular basis after Sesma's dances proved to be financially successful.

Sesma's first dance, which he promoted as "Latin Holidays," took place in 1953 at the Zenda ballroom in downtown.[31] He moved it west to the Hollywood Palladium in 1954, and by 1955 it had become a monthly event. From the 1950s through the 1960s his "Latin Holidays" featured the most popular bands and artists from New York City, Cuba

---

[29] Eastman 1998: 94-95.
[30] Sesma, 27 March 1997.
[31] See also Loza 1993: 74-75, 84-85.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

(before 1959), and Puerto Rico, including Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Machito, Celia Cruz, La Sonora Matancera, Benny Moré, Cortijo y su Combo, El Gran Combo, and Daniel Santos. He also engaged Mexican groups who specialized in Cuban-style conjunto music such as La Sonora Santanera and Lobo y Melón as well as local Latin dance bands, including those led by René Touzet, Manny López, Johnny Martínez, Eddie Cano, Rudy Macías, and René Bloch. In addition to having a major impact on Los Angeles's Latin dance music landscape, Sesma's radio show "Sabor Latino" was practically the only show through the 1960s that played Latin dance music from New York, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.

Los Angeles, through the 1960s, had a vibrant Latin dance music milieu that stretched from West Los Angeles, through Hollywood and downtown, and into East Los Angeles. In fact, as I will discuss next, access to the most popular venues, especially the Hollywood Palladium and the Million Dollar theater, was controlled by a small network of agents, dance promoters, club owners, and radio disc jockeys, which extended beyond Los Angeles into the entire southwest and across the country back to New York City.

Inter- and intra-regional power networks

Jackie Thorne was an enterprising, shrewd businesswoman and, in addition to Chico Sesma, a central figure in bringing the top Latin dance bands from New York City to play for the Latino population in Los Angeles in the late 1950s and 1960s.[32] In 1957, at age 17, she bought her first nightclub, Virginia's, located in Westlake, just west of downtown Los

[32] The following, except where indicated, is taken from my interview with Jackie Thorne, whose last name is now Rabora (Rabora, 6 April 2000).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Angeles. She began featuring local Latin musicians such as Mexican-American Latin jazz pianist Eddie Cano. By 1959 she set her sights on contracting the "best Latin band in the country," which according to her friends and acquaintances at that time was none other than Tito Puente's. Although she "didn't know anything" about bringing Latin bands from New York to Los Angeles, Thorne nevertheless contacted Puente's agent in New York, José Curbelo:

> I told him that I wanted Tito and [asked him] how much does he charge. You know, he saw me coming. He said it was $10,000 for a week. . . . So I said, "Do you care where he plays during that week?" and he said, "No. He can play every day and a double on Sunday." So I said, "I'll call you back." Plus, I had to pay for hotel [and transportation]. . . . I called ballrooms across the country, starting with Chicago and then Phoenix and Tucson. And I sold Tito to them along the way. So that paid for the whole band's transportation. And then...after they opened for me on a Thursday [and performed through Sunday] . . . I got these other places [in Los Angeles] to go with "Latin nights." And I booked [Tito in these places on] Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. So by the time I got Tito it cost me really the same as had he been a local band.[33]

Through the 1960s Thorne and Curbelo continued to work together to send his top Latin acts to Los Angeles where she would then book them in various locales, in addition to her club, Virginia's. Of all of Curbelo's artists, Tito Puente with his entire big band performed more in Los Angeles, at least once a year. He became particularly popular among Mexican-Americans.[34] Therefore, he benefited most from Thorne and Curbelo's network. According to Pedro "Puchi" Boulong, who was one of Puente's trumpet players at this time, "[Thorne] was the one that met the plane at the airport. She was the one who

---

[33] Rabora (Thorne), 6 April 2000.
[34] See Loza 1993: 83.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

booked the [New York] bands for L.A. Virginia's was our base. They made money hiring out the band."[35] Thorne contracted many of Curbelo's other top artists, including Tito Rodríguez, Machito, La Playa Sextet, and Orlando Marin.

Typically, Thorne would engage groups such as Puente's for one or two weeks, booking them at Virginia's for Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Then, on the groups' off-nights, she would "sell" them out to the Crescendo (on the Sunset Strip), Casa Escobar (on S. La Cienega, just south of Beverly Hills), or other west-side nightclubs as well to the Million Dollar theater downtown. She would also "sell" the groups to Chico Sesma and other promoters at the Palladium for Saturday and/or the Paramount Ballroom on Sunday afternoons. By the early 1960s her network extended out to clubs in San Francisco and Oakland as well as the Stardust Hotel and the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, for which she had become the "house booker." Impressed by her success as a booking agent (in addition to a nightclub owner), Curbelo asked her to become his partner and head an Alpha Artists office in Los Angeles. She agreed, thus gaining complete access to New York's most popular Latin dance bands for significantly lower rates. As she noted, "[Curbelo] had all of the Latin bands that were worth anything. . . . They were all his bands. At that point he had the monopoly on them."[36]

Between 1959 and 1964, when Arsenio was still living in New York City, he was not marketed by Curbelo, assuming that he was even signed to Alpha Artists at that time. Thus, during these years, he was never engaged by Thorne to perform in Los Angeles. As several musicians have noted, Curbelo did next to nothing to support Arsenio's career,

---

[35] Boulong, 24 January 2000.
[36] Rabora (Thorne), 6 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

some even suggesting that Curbelo's apathy toward his "darker-skinned" clients may have been a factor (see p. 342). After returning to New York in 1966, Arsenio continued to be ignored by Curbelo. Once in Los Angeles, however, Arsenio's conjunto was in fact engaged by Thorne, due to the efforts of his manager Pedro Ferro, to perform at Virginia's for at least two weeks in 1965. Nevertheless, the amount of interest that Thorne had in his conjunto was not enough to warrant hiring it out through her network of locales throughout California and the southwest.

Thorne's network also involved powerful players in Los Angeles, including local disc jockey and dance promoter Lionel "Chico" Sesma, through whom she promoted her nightclub and bookings. Sesma hosted a three-hour nightly show called "Sabor Latino" on KALI.[37] Extremely popular among Latinos of all nationalities, his was the only radio program in Los Angeles that aired Latin dance music—otherwise known as "música tropical" among Mexicans and Central and South Americans—from New York, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. In addition, although KALI was an all Spanish-language station, Sesma broadcasted in English, thus spreading his appeal to second generation Latinos, particularly Mexican-Americans, as well as non-Latinos. While Sesma did play the records of La Sonora Matancera and Cortijo y su Combo, for example, some musicians recalled that he favored the records of veteran New York artists such as Tito Puente, Tito Rodríguez, Machito, and Joe Loco as well as younger ones such as Joe Cuba, Ray Barretto, and Johnny Pacheco. Yet, he rarely played Arsenio's records on "Sabor

---

[37] Sesma, 27 March 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Latino."[38] According to Sesma himself: "I wouldn't [play] any . . . records unless I approved of it, unless I liked it. This may sound a little arrogant, but I was flexible only to the point where I thought that a record would be appreciated by our listeners."[39] In fact, in regards to even having knowledge of Arsenio's presence in Los Angeles, Sesma admitted, "I'm ashamed to say I was not aware that he was here in Los Angeles, or I certainly would have made an effort to have contracted him [to play at the Hollywood Palladium]."[40]

In addition to "Sabor Latino," Sesma chose who performed at his "Latin Holidays" dances at the Palladium. For instance, for the Latin Holiday of 5 September 1965, the lineup consisted of Celia Cruz, Pablo Beltrán Ruiz (leader of a popular Mexican swing band), and Joe Loco, with local bandleader Johnny Martínez.[41] In addition to Sesma's Latin Holidays, the Hollywood Palladium hosted other Latin dance music events. In the summer of 1965, for example, the city's Latino population went to the Palladium to dance to Tito Rodríguez, Miguelito Valdés, Bienvenido Granda, La Sonora Matancera, Carlos Campos (a Mexican bandleader who specialized in Cuban danzón music), and Carmen Rivero (a Mexican singer who specialized in cumbia). The local bands that were contracted to open for these acts were Rudy Macías, Albertico Pérez, René de la Rosa, and René Touzet.[42]

Through the efforts of Jackie Thorne, José Curbelo, Chico Sesma, and others, audiences in Los Angeles had access to a steady stream of popular Latin dance music

---

[38] Macías, 16 August 1999; Beltrán, 11 September 1996; Moran, 25 May 1997.
[39] Sesma, 27 March 1997.
[40] Sesma, 27 March 1997.
[41] *La Opinion*, 29 August 1965.
[42] *La Opinion*, July-October 1965.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

bands from throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, and New York City. For local dance bands these dances represented opportunities, in addition to performing for local Latin social clubs, to work and gain further exposure. Arsenio's conjunto, however, while experiencing some success initially as a local group, ultimately fell through the cracks of this network.

Arsenio's performances in Los Angeles, 1965

Cuban dance music had been popular among Mexican and Mexican-American audiences in Los Angeles since at least the 1930s.[43] In the 1960s Cuban music continued to be popular among Latinos in general, as seen in the number of local groups, headed by both Cuban and Mexican-American bandleaders, who specialized in Cuban music as well as mambo and other Cuban-derived styles. Cuban bandleaders who were active at this time included Rolando Lozano, Mazacote, Marianao Mercerón, Albertico Pérez, and Dandy Beltrán. The most popular group, however, was led by Cuban pianist René Touzet, who began his career in Havana in the late 1930s leading an all-white jazz band at the Casino Nacional and Montmartre, both of which were cabarets de primera. He moved to New York City in 1944 where he continued to perform primarily in class A nightclubs in Manhattan with his own group as well as other society bands such as Enrique Madriguera. He decided to settle in Los Angeles in 1958 after two LPs that his four-trumpet conjunto had recorded with the local GNP/Crescendo record label had become hits. From this time through the 1960s Touzet's conjunto, which at various times included such notables as Francisco

---

[43] Loza 1993: 83-84.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Aguabella, recorded eleven more LPs for GNP/Crescendo, while performing regularly for Latin social clubs as well as at the Crescendo and Casa Escobar on the Sunset Strip and the Hollywood Palladium.[44]

His recorded repertory consisted mainly of originally composed mambos, chachachás, boleros, and pachangas, in addition to jazz ballad standards. His style, however, while very popular among Los Angeles's Latino population, sounded, according to some, "more like Americanized Cuban music."[45] In contrast, Johnny Martínez, who was among the most popular Mexican-American bandleaders, performed Cuban-based dance music in the style of New York mambo bands, namely Tito Puente and Tito Rodríguez. In Arsenio's case, musicians in Los Angeles, like those in New York, who were familiar with his music characterized his style as "típico" Cuban music. Unlike in New York City, however, Los Angeles lacked a population whose social functions and cultural values might have supported his conjunto and "típico" style.

Arsenio formed his new conjunto in Los Angeles soon after he arrived in the fall of 1964. There are some indications, however, that his "conjunto" did not include a trumpet section. According to Rudy Macías, for example, Arsenio's group did not have any trumpet players for one dance that both groups performed at in May 1965. In fact, for seven out of the ten dance numbers in his LP *Viva Arsenio*, recorded in New York in April 1966, Arsenio did not use any trumpets or even a piano. Nor is it clear who were the members of the group in Los Angeles, apart from his brothers Kike on tumbadora and

---

[44] Touzet, 6 March 2000.
[45] Torres, 4 April 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Raúl on bongó.[46]

The conjunto's first performance in Los Angeles was on Christmas night 1964 at the unknown Old Dixie dancehall, which was located at 4269 S. Western Avenue, in Exposition, South Los Angeles. The advertisement announcing the dance in the local Spanish-language newspaper *La Opinion* included the heading, "Recordando el pasado con el Cieguito Maravilloso Cubano, por primera vez en Los Angeles" ("Remembering the past with the Marvelous Blind Cuban, for the first time in Los Angeles").[47] Another announcement, published a few days prior, stated that Arsenio was going to play "authentic music from the Caribbean as well as many of his newer songs," which probably included some from his recently released Ansonia LPs.[48] Unfortunately, the advertisements and Arsenio's name failed to attract a sizeable audience. Several of those Cubans who did attend his performance notified Pedro Ferro, a black Cuban leader of the local Cuban "exile" community, of Arsenio's unsuccessful debut, and encouraged him to help the elder composer and musician.[49] Ferro, who indeed was an admirer of Arsenio and whose cousin, Papa Kila, was Arsenio's bongó player in the 1940s, sympathized with his difficult situation and agreed to be his manager.

Despite the fact that he had never managed a musical group, Ferro succeeded in getting contracts for Arsenio's conjunto in prominent locales by drawing on contacts he had made as a local Cuban political leader. Evidently, these included dance promoters and

---

[46] Both Raúl Travieso and Pedro Ferro, Arsenio's manager at the time, could not remember the names of the musicians that formed Arsenio's first "conjunto" in Los Angeles in 1965.
[47] *La Opinion*, 23 December 1964.
[48] *La Opinion*, 20 December 1964.
[49] Ferro, 2 September 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

club owners and not other local Cuban social and cultural leaders of, particularly, social clubs. The conjunto's first two contracts under Ferro's management, however, were in marginal and obscure locales: the Paramount Ballroom, in Boyle Heights (on 7, 13, and 14 February 1965), and the little known Blarney's Castle Ballroom, at 607 S. Western Avenue, just north of Koreatown (on 12 through 14 February), with Cuban bandleader Mariano Mercerón, Mexican crooner Alberto Vázquez, and cumbia bandleader Tony Camargo.[50]

Eventually, Arsenio's conjunto got a contract to perform on 21 February at the popular Hollywood Palladium. The bill included the headliner Alberto Vázquez and four local groups, led by René Touzet, René Bloch, Albertico Pérez, and Rudy Macías. The promoters and MCs of this dance, Antonio de Marco and his wife Rita, were Ferro's friends and apparently agreed to add Arsenio's conjunto to the bill. Ferro also convinced another acquaintance of his, Frank Fauce, to include the conjunto as part of the farándula of the week of 22 to 28 March at the Million Dollar theater downtown.[51] Others in the variety show included Hermanos Martínez Gil and Lilia Guizar (Tito Guizar's daughter). According to one reviewer, Arsenio's conjunto "performs Afro-Cuban music excellently. The audience enjoys itself and applauds after every one of his numbers."[52] At the same time, the conjunto also performed nightly for two weeks at Jackie Thorne's Virginia's nightclub, just west of the Million Dollar in the Westlake area of downtown.[53]

Ferro also succeeded in engaging Arsenio's group in the most popular hotel

---

[50] *La Opinion*, 5, 10, 11, and 13 February 1965.
[51] *La Opinion*, 21 March 1965.
[52] *La Opinion*, 24 March 1965.
[53] Ferro, 2 September 1997 and 20 October 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

dancehalls in downtown. On 17 April the group performed for promoter Gabby Cancel's "Spring Dance" at the Statler Hotel, the entertainment of which included two other dance bands along with Puerto Rican singer Hilda Morales.[54] Then, on 7 and 8 May, Arsenio's group participated in a show, which was promoted as a "battle" between La Sonora Santanera from Mexico City, Arsenio Rodríguez from Cuba, and Rudy Macías from Los Angeles, at the Hotel Alexandria.[55] Established in 1956 in Mexico City, La Sonora Santanera was a Cuban-type "conjunto" which derived its name and style from La Sonora Matancera's.[56] In the months prior to and following its "battle" with Arsenio's group, Santanera performed in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and throughout the southwest United States as well as in Mexico and Central and South America.[57]

Arsenio's recognition, much less popularity, among the largely Mexican audience paled in comparison with Santanera's. In addition, because the bands were scheduled to perform practically simultaneously in adjacent ballrooms inside the hotel, Arsenio's performance was not well attended. He, thus, decided to take things into his own hands, attempting to draw people from Santanera's audience into his ballroom. Macías, who had just finished his set and entered the ballroom where Santanera was playing, described what happened next:

> We were there for about five minutes. All of a sudden, I [heard] another

---

[54] *La Opinion*, 15 and 16 April 1965.
[55] *La Opinion*, 6 May 1965; Macías, 16 August 1999; Ferro, 2 September 1997 and 20 October 2000.
[56] As Héctor Ramírez Bedoya (1998: 107-108) notes, La Sonora Matancera's style was emulated by dozens of popular "conjuntos" that formed in the 1950s and 1960s in countries such as Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, and especially Colombia.
[57] *La Opinion*, 7 June 1964 and 13 June 1965.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> rhythm from the [back] of the ballroom. I was close to the bandstand, to Santanera. Little by little, the music was getting closer and closer, and I saw people, [who] were dancing, [make way on the dance floor]. So, here comes Arsenio, his brother, and the rest of the musicians [playing a conga]. Everybody stopped and looked at them. Then, the director of Santanera just stopped the music completely. And then when [Arsenio] came to the bandstand he said, "*Ya que estamos tocando aquí, los tres, tanto La Sonora Santanera, como Rudy Macías y yo, les queremos dar la bienvenida aquí a Los Angeles. ¡Un aplauso para La Santanera!*" (Now that the three of us are playing here, La Sonora Santanera, Rudy Macías, and I, we want to welcome you to Los Angeles. An applause for La Santanera!). Everybody [applauded] *y empezó a tocar* (and he began to play) [on his way] back to his ballroom. Some of the people followed him to the ballroom. But I think he used a little gimmick, [thinking], "I'm gonna bring some of their people over here." And he did. It was funny![58]

The fact that Arsenio, through Pedro Ferro's work, was contracted to perform at the Million Dollar and with La Sonora Santanera in the first place suggests that awareness of him and his music did extend, however tenuously, into the Mexican population of Los Angeles.

Following the Santanera dance, Arsenio began an eight-month contract, performing every weekend through December 1965 at the Paramount Ballroom in Boyle Heights.[59] Both Arsenio and Albertico Pérez's groups performed Cuban music for a local audience made up of Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and some South Americans. As I mentioned above, East Los Angeles was the site of an emerging rock-based "Eastside sound," the audience of which consisted of primarily young Chicanos, many of who were becoming politically active. In 1965, however, the Paramount

---

[58] Macías, 16 August 1999.
[59] Ferro, 2 September 1997; *La Opinion*, May-December 1965.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ballroom seems to have not been a part of this musical milieu.[60] In addition, audiences from other parts of the city avoided the Paramount because of the area's notoriety. Therefore, exposure from performing here was limited to its primarily local Mexican and Mexican-American audience.

Nevertheless, Arsenio's group managed to impress Ray Rodríguez whose brother Mitch owned the Paramount Ballroom. Ray was a local dance promoter who engaged mostly Mexican and Mexican-American rock and pop bands for the Mexican and Mexican-American populations in East Los Angeles and downtown. Ray contracted Arsenio for two events. The first, which took place on 13 June, was promoted as another "mano a mano," this time, however, between Arsenio and Tito Puente at the Hollywood Palladium.[61] The bill included Mexican crooner Rubén Reyes and the East Los Angeles rock band, Thee Midniters, both of whom were extremely popular among local Mexicans and Mexican-Americans.[62] Even Puente had developed a strong following among Mexican-Americans. According to Rudy Macías, for example, while Mexicans tended to favor the mambo style of Pérez Prado, Mexican-Americans favored the "more jazzy, more Americanized" style of Tito Puente and Tito Rodríguez.[63] Evidently, Arsenio's "típico" Cuban style did not resonate as much. Ray engaged Arsenio once more for a dance on New Year's Eve, 31 December 1965, at the Rodger Young Ballroom in downtown.[64] Again, Arsenio's group was billed with a Mexican group, Los Moonlights, and a Mexican-

---

[60] See Loza 1993: 95-98.
[61] *La Opinion*, 11 and 12 June 1965.
[62] See Loza 1993: 78-79, 99-102.
[63] Macías, 16 August 1999. See also Loza 1993: 83.
[64] *La Opinion*, 31 December 1965.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

American rock band, Los Románticos (probably The Romancers). This performance was probably his last before leaving for New York City in early 1966.

The reception of Arsenio's son montuno style in Los Angeles

Through his contacts and diligence, Pedro Ferro succeeded initially in getting Arsenio's group to perform in Los Angeles's most prominent locations, namely the Hollywood Palladium and the Million Dollar theater. As one musician noted, "In order to get into the Million Dollar, you needed connections."[65] Soon, though, Arsenio's performances were relegated to the Paramount Ballroom, a peripheral location compared to locales in downtown and Hollywood, with a largely local audience. Most importantly, while Jackie Thorne did contract his group to perform at Virginia's, Arsenio never entered into the broader network of performance locales and events that she and others controlled. Ultimately, his style and repertory did not permit him to successfully maintain a performance career among Los Angeles's mostly Mexican and Mexican-American Latin dance music audience or in its nationally diverse Latin social club milieu.

For example, Cuban singer and bandleader Dandy Beltrán explained:

> [In Los Angeles] not everyone is Cuban and ninety percent of the people who like Arsenio's music are Cubans, Puerto Ricans, but not South Americans. They listen to that music and they don't understand exactly what it is. And, as it is here, the Latino is so divided.[66]

---

[65] Moran, 25 May 1997.

[66] [En Los Angeles] todo el mundo no es cubano, y la música de Arsenio le gusta noventa porciento los cubanos, puertorriqueños, a los caribeños, pero no a los sudamericanos. Oyen esa música y no entienden exactamente lo que es. Y como aquí [Los Angeles] el Latino es tan dividido (Beltrán, 11 September 1996).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mexican bandleader Rudy Macías also noted that Arsenio's style was "entirely different; it was more like real Cuban style, old Cuban style."[67] When asked if he thought Arsenio was "out of place" in Los Angeles, Macías responded:

> I don't think the Mexican-American people went for his style because it wasn't too popular here. See, it all depends what they play over the radio. . . . Arsenio had his own crowd, let's put it that way, like any other band. . . . So, here in L.A. there's a crowd for everybody and I'm sure that there were people that went for his style.[68]

In René Touzet's opinion, however, Arsenio "didn't make a big hit in Los Angeles," stressing, for example, that the audience that Arsenio evidently had at the Paramount Ballroom represented a distinct and marginal section of the broader Latin dance music audience.[69] When asked what were the difficulties that Arsenio encountered in Los Angeles, his manager Pedro Ferro answered:

> Logically, for example, [Los Angeles] was a large Mexican market, a large market for René Touzet—he had a great orchestra—and, more than anything else, [a large market for] Mexican music. And all of the nightclubs were Mexican. Cubans didn't have popular nightclubs.[70]

Therefore, although there was a market for "Cuban dance music" among, in particular, Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, it was the more "Americanized," "commercialized," or

---

[67] Macías, 16 August 1999.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Touzet, 27 February 2000.
[70] Lógicamente, por ejemplo, [Los Angeles] era gran mercado mexicano, un gran mercado para René Touzet—tenía una gran orquesta—y sobre todo [un gran mercado para] la música mexicana. Y los nightclubs, todos eran mexicano. Los cubanos no tenían nightclubs famosos (Ferro, 2 September 1997).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

jazz-oriented styles that Touzet and Latin bands from New York, like Puente, for example, performed that appealed to the broader Latino population of Los Angeles.[71]

Repertory, in addition to style, was an important factor in Arsenio's failed performance career in Los Angeles. As I mentioned above, Latin social clubs constituted an important market for local Latin dance bands. The addition of songs from respective regional repertories, in addition to Cuban and Cuban-derived dance music, however, was obligatory. While Arsenio probably performed versions of the Mexican standards "La bamba" and "Cielito lindo" (he adapted these two songs into his son montuno style and recorded them for his 1966 LP *Viva Arsenio!*) in Los Angeles, there is no evidence that he added other styles such as cumbia to his repertory. Neither is there evidence that he performed for any Latin social clubs, including the few Cuban ones, in Los Angeles. In contrast, those bands that reached out to the Latino population, even in their lyrics, increased their marketability. Above, I mentioned the popularity of Beltrán's "La cumbia de Ecuador" among local Ecuadorians. Nicaraguan pianist Rocky Moran, who briefly played with Arsenio's conjunto in 1969, describes a similar example:

> There was a fine [charanga], still very active in Miami, and the principal arranger was Rolando Lozano—La Típica Tropical. They came up with a tune here [in Los Angeles] called "Guatemala": *Guatemala que linda eres, Guatemala como te quiero, porque me diste la mujer que en el mundo yo más quiero* (Guatemala, how beautiful you are; Guatemala, how I love you, because you gave me the woman who I love most in the entire world). Oh man, they hit gold! I'm sure if Arsenio would have come up with something like that [pauses], but he refused. He wanted to stay with his same thing. Can't blame [him], but it's a gimmick.[72]

---

[71] Boulong, 24 January 2000; Macías, 16 August 1999; Torres, 4 April 2000.
[72] Moran, 25 May 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Based on his experience performing with New York's top mambo bands throughout the country, Pedro "Puchi" Boulong emphasized the importance of appealing, stylistically as well as in terms of repertory, to a broad Latin and non-Latin audience.

> You have to please different people; it just wasn't one crowd because we played for all kinds of people. We had real square people sometimes, and you played a nice and easy chachá, a "Tea for Two"-type thing, and they loved it. And for the more hip people you played something up [beat], "Ran kan kan," for dancers. It was mixed. . . . You have to play for different people, otherwise you stay in one place. We had mixed crowds back then, and those were the people who were buying records.[73]

In the end, Arsenio's exposure in Los Angeles was very limited, such that even some former members of his conjunto in New York in the 1950s who were living in Los Angeles in 1965 were unaware of his presence in the city. For example, Joe Torres, who briefly played timbal for Arsenio in the early 1950s, could not "recall him being in L.A. *at all*, if he lived there. I don't recall."[74] At the time, Torres was playing with most of the top bands in Los Angeles, including Johnny Martínez and René Touzet, in addition with his own Latin jazz group, Latino con Soul. Torres's statements confirm that Arsenio's presence in Los Angeles went largely unnoticed in the downtown and Hollywood milieu in which popular bandleaders Touzet and Martínez worked regularly.

Unlike the resonance his music and style had among the disenfranchised black working class youth of Havana in the 1940s and the middle-aged Cuban and Puerto Rican working-class community of color in the South Bronx, Arsenio was unable to capture the attention of Los Angeles's Latino population. Soon after his New Year's Eve gig at the

---

[73] Boulong, 24 January 2000.
[74] Torres, 17 February 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Rodger Young Ballroom in downtown, Arsenio decided to move back to New York City.

Arsenio and the "Pre-salsa" Milieu in New York City, 1966-1968

Arsenio returned to New York City in early 1966 and moved back with his wife Anadina in her apartment at 115 W. 104th Street in Manhattan. By 1968, he would move in with Kike in an apartment at 847 Kelly Street in the South Bronx.[75] For Arsenio, the Latin dance music milieu in New York at this time must have seemed very promising. For one, Cuban conjunto-based groups were now replacing mambo big bands of the 1950s and charangas of the pachanga craze of the early 1960s. Secondly, some of these newly formed conjuntos included in their repertories a significant number of tunes that were originally recorded by La Sonora Matancera, Conjunto Casino, and Arsenio himself in the 1940s and 1950s. Other conjunto-based groups had popularized the newest music and dance craze known as boogaloo, which was a hybrid consisting of R&B and soul stylistic components within a rhythmic framework based on the son montuno.

Yet, while Arsenio's conjunto was able to record two LPs, it was overlooked by his agent José Curbelo as well as other entities of the "pre-salsa" period such as Fania, the founders—Johnny Pacheco and Jerry Masucci—of which chose to sign younger and more dynamic groups. The following section describes Arsenio's final recordings and discusses how his "image" was incompatible with that which was being marketed in the pre-salsa milieu.

---

[75] AFM Local 802 Phonograph Recordings Contract Form, Nos. 97376 and 415215.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Boogaloo and Arsenio's son montuno

In his insightful essay on this short-lived, yet commercially successful musical phenomenon, Juan Flores describes the social and musical context in which Latin boogaloo emerged and burgeoned.[76] Flores points out that boogaloo, as played by Latin groups, was the latest musical development emerging from a multicultural context of which African Americans had been a part of since at least the mambo period. Unlike its Latin music predecessors, however, boogaloo was distinguished by its overt incorporation of stylistic elements from rhythm and blues and soul, as Flores explains:

> Popular Latin bands thus found themselves creating a musical common ground by introducing the trappings of Black American culture into their performances and thus getting the Black audience involved and onto the dance floor. . . . Latin boogaloo music in general was intended to constitute this meeting place between Puerto Ricans and Blacks, and by extension, between Latin music and the musical culture of the United States.[77]

And in the context of Latin dance music history in New York City, he states that:

> [Boogaloo] was both a bridge and a break [between mambo and salsa], for with all the continuities and influences in terms of musical style, the boogaloo diverged from the prevailing models of Latin music in significant ways.[78]

In addition to its propensity for English-language lyrics, its divergent aspects included African American stylistic trappings such as group handclapping on the

---

[76] Flores (2000: 92) explains that "Latin" boogaloo took its name and direct crossover impulse from its immediate source, "Black" boogaloo, which was the foremost name for funky soul music through the mid 1960s.
[77] Flores 2000: 81.
[78] Ibid.: 80.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"backbeat" (i.e., beats 2 and 4), shouting, and chanting. Montuno figurations played by the piano as well as tumbadora, bongó, and timbal constituted its Cuban trappings. What is left is its basic bass figuration, which, like those used in many pachangas, was modeled on the "Me chinita me botó" bass pattern that Arsenio had introduced as early as 1944 and continued to use as a defining aspect of his son montuno style through the 1960s. This bass tumbao was distinct from the so-called "anticipated bass pattern" that would come to define most salsa recordings, nor was it common to the mambo or chachachá of the 1950s. Hence, the boogaloo's bass figuration, which is indispensable to its underlying groove (as the "anticipated bass pattern" is to salsa in general), served not as a bridge between mambo and salsa but rather a break. As in the pachanga, it represented a "residual" musical element, originally introduced by Arsenio in his son montunos of the early 1940s, which continued to be used as an effective musical element of the present.[79] As my discussion of his last two LPs will show, Arsenio detected and, thus, remarked musically and rhetorically upon the kinship between the boogaloo and his son montuno style.

On 18 April 1966 Arsenio conducted the first of three recording sessions at Mira Sound Studios (145 W. 47th Street) in Manhattan for an LP that was to be released by the pop label Bang Records.[80] He had managed to receive a contract to record this LP

---

[79] Raymond Williams (1977: 122) defines a residual cultural practice as "effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present."

[80] The following documentation on *Viva Arsenio!* and Bang Records is from American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, *Phonograph Recording Contract Form*, Microfiche Nos. 97376, 97378, and 223329; "A Stereo Retrospective on Bang/Shout Records," *Both Sides Now: The Story of Stereo Rock and Roll* 15 (June 1990): 151, 156-160; and "Bob Feldman, Erstwhile Australian . . . ," *Both Sides Now: The Story of Stereo Rock and Roll* 15 (June 1990): 154-155.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

probably from Bert Berns, who had just started the label in New York in 1965 with the backing of Ahmet Ertegun, Neshui Ertegun, and Gerald Wexler of Atlantic Records, Bang Records's distributor. Berns evidently wanted to record a Latin boogaloo version of "Hang on Sloopy," the label's first number one hit, which was released by the McCoys in 1965.[81] It is not clear why he signed Arsenio to record the single and LP. In any event, his rendition of "Hang on Sloopy," sung in English by Arsenio himself, was released as a single, but apparently it went nowhere. The LP, which was eventually released as *Viva Arsenio!* in 1967, contained an eclectic collection of newly-composed son montunos, son montuno-versions of the Mexican standards "La bamba" and "Cielito lindo," and re-recordings of his own standards "La yuka (de Catalina)," "Tres Marias," and "El elemento del Bronx" (see Appendix 2).

In terms of their rhythmic and melodic contour, the bass lines in the earliest and most popular recorded boogaloos are quite similar to the "Mi chinita me botó" figuration which was also used in many pachangas (cf. Examples 8.1, 4.1.b, 4.2.b, 7.2.a-b). Arsenio undoubtedly noticed, yet again the prevalence of this bass figuration in the latest Latin recordings that were hitting the national *Billboard* charts. It is logical, then, that the majority of his son montunos in *Viva Arsenio!* would be entirely or partly based on it (see Examples 8.2 and 8.3.a). Yet, as with the pachanga dance style, the boogaloo footwork did not correspond with this bass line, while the son montuno footwork did.[82]

---

[81] The first five LPs released by Bang between 1965 and 1967 were recorded by the Strangeloves, McCoys, and Neil Diamond.

[82] Documentation on the dance footwork and style of the Latin version of the boogaloo is the same as the African-American version. For documentation on the latter see Butler (1975).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 8.1. Variations of the "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration in boogaloo

(a) "El pito" (1966), Joe Cuba Sextet

(b) "Bang Bang" (1966), Joe Cuba Sextet

(c) "I Like It Like That" (1967), Pete Rodríguez

(d) "Gypsy Woman" (1967), Joe Bataan

There are two other basic similarities between the boogaloo and son montuno. First, the boogaloos in Example 8.1 are played at moderate tempi, noticeably slower than most pachangas of the early 1960s. Many son montunos in *Arsenio Viva!*, too, are played

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 8.2. The "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration in Arsenio's *Viva Arsenio!*

(a) "Baila con migo" (18 April 1966): during the estribillo

(b) "Randy" (28 April 1966): during coro/guía alternation

(c) "La bamba" (28 April 1966)

(d) "Para bailar el montuno" (2 May 1966): during montuno section

(e) "La yuka" (2 May 1966): during montuno section

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

at moderate to slow tempi, ranging from 110 to 148, although two, "Randy" and "La bamba," are played at 175 and 200, respectively. Second, the boogaloo's basic arrangement scheme is based on a repeating two-bar cycle over which call-and-response (between coros and improvised vocalizations), group sung and chanted refrains, and ensemble breaks and build-ups occur in regularly repeated sequences; there is little or no use of verses (i.e., canto sections), like Arsenio's one-part son montunos.

Despite these similarities, however, Arsenio's son montunos in *Viva Arsenio!* retain that rhythmically dense quality which he had introduced in the early 1940s and that ultimately distinguished his style from boogaloo. For example, the interwoven and percussive patterns of the baritone, two trumpets, and trombone in Arsenio's "Hang on Sloopy" contrast sharply with the unison and legato trumpet lines in Pete Rodríguez's hugely popular "I Like It Like That" (see Examples 8.3.a and b).

At the same time, seven out of the ten son montunos in *Viva Arsenio!* do not include a horn section, while none appear to include a piano. This instrumentation amounts to a "sexteto" (not unlike the Joe Cuba Sextet)—that is, vocals, guitar, tres, bass, bongó, and tumbadora—which he apparently used in Los Angeles on at least one occasion. For those son montunos with no trumpet section the arrangements and rhythmic textures take on a different character, most notably in the absence of the diablo section (see Tables 8.1 and 8.2 in Appendix 4). Even in the three son montunos that do include horns—"Hang on Sloopy," "La yuka" ("The Yuka"), and "Baila conmigo" ("Dance with Me")—they are not used in call-and-response with the coro in the diablo sections, which also lack the typical sequence of alternations (i.e., coro/tpts., coro/tpt., coro). In addition, while "La yuka" and "Baila con migo" feature two trumpets and one baritone saxophone

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 8.3. The son montuno and boogaloo textures

(a) "Hang on Sloopy" (18 April 1966), Arsenio Rodríguez: montuno section (finale)

(he had used saxophones before, beginning in his *Quindembo* LP in 1963 and Ansonia recordings the following year), "Hang on Sloopy" includes one trombone. Mon Rivera and Eddie Palmieri had already standardized the trombone section in Latin dance music; this, however, was Arsenio's first recorded use of a trombone.

Arsenio had been altering his typical son montuno arrangement schemes since the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 8.3. ***Continued***

(b) "I Like It Like That" (1967), Pete Rodríguez

mid 1950s, beginning with his "mambos" and "chachachás" (see Tables 6.6 and 6.7 in Appendix 4), in attempting to meet mainstream popular tastes. His will, however reluctant, to alter this scheme is evident in his re-recordings of his own music. Earlier examples of this include "El reloj de Pastora" (late 1950s) and "Lo dicen todas" ("All the Women Say It," rec. 1960) (see Table 7.4 in Appendix 4). For *Viva Arsenio!* he re-recorded the son montunos "Como traigo la yuka" (orig. rec. 18 June 1942) and "Las tres Marías" ("The Three Marias," orig. rec. ca. 1950) as well as the conjunto-style guaguancó "La gente del Bronx" ("The People of the Bronx," orig. rec. ca. 1951). "Como traigo la yuka" and "La gente del Bronx," which he re-titled "La yuka" and "El elemento del

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Bronx," respectively, consist of the same basic structures as the original versions, but the arrangement schemes differ, particularly in the use, or lack thereof (in the case of "El elemento del Bronx"), of the horn section (see Table 8.3 in Appendix 4). In "La yuka" the horns are arranged to provide a background to the alternations between the chorus and lead vocalist, and not to constitute an alternating entity in itself, as is the case in the original. The foremost difference in "La yuka," compared to the original, is the fluid nature of Cachao's bass tumbaos, the figurations of which are nevertheless consistent with Arsenio's use of contratiempo (see Examples 8.2.e, 4.1.b and 4.2.b). Notwithstanding such variations, namely in the arrangement schemes, Arsenio always tried to maintain the core texture of his son montuno style.

Arsenio's last commercial recordings

To make what were to be his final recordings, Arsenio got the support of Teddy Reig and Morris Pelsman, also known as Pancho Cristal. Arsenio had first worked with Reig in 1958, when the latter produced Arsenio's *Primitivo* for Roost. It was not released, however, until 1965 by Roulette records on the Roost label (RST 2261).[83] It is likely that Reig, who was working for Roulette and its Latin subsidiary Tico at the time, got the parent label to release *Primitivo*, seven years after it was recorded.[84] In 1966 Reig joined the Verve record label and with Peter Spargo produced the historic LP *Patato y Totico*, which was recorded on 19 September 1967 in Manhattan. Carlos "Patato" Valdés, who

[83] See *Both Sides Now Stereo Newsletter* (bsnpubs.com).
[84] See Reig with Berger 1990: 116-117.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

was the leader of the session, brought in an ensemble of Cuban vocalists, percussionists, and Cachao on bass to record folkloric Cuban music, including guaguancós and cantos de abakuá. During rehearsals, however, Reig felt that "there was something *missing*."[85] As he recounts, "So I told Patato I would record it, but I wanted to bring in Arsenio Rodríguez. He went along with it."[86] Indeed, Arsenio and Cachao reinforced the music by blending their tres and bass tumbaos, respectively, into the percussion-dominated texture, rendering a fresh quality to the traditional guaguancós in particular. Although not the first folkloric Cuban LP—for example, Sabu Martínez and Arsenio had recorded *Palo congo* in 1957—*Patato y Totico* would become an influential source of traditional Afro-Cuban music for the following generations.[87]

In the following year, 1968, Arsenio's *Primitivo* was released once more, re-titled *Arsenio y Kike: Canta Monguito*, by Roulette, but this time on the Tico label.[88] Apparently, Pancho Cristal, who had been Reig's assistant before Reig joined Verve, devised the re-release of this LP, which contained son montunos and conjunto-style guaguancós performed in the most basic form of Arsenio's style, because of the revival of and emerging market for Cuban conjunto music, also referred to as the "típico" salsa style. In addition, Cristal re-titled the LP by adding the name of the Cuban vocalist Ramón Quián, better known as Monguito, who by 1968 had become one of the featured vocalists with the conjunto-based groups of Johnny Pacheco and Larry Harlow, two of Fania's

---

[85] My emphasis; Reig with Berger 1990: 67.
[86] Ibid. Reig's story is corroborated by "Patato" Valdés (Valdés, 18 September 1995).
[87] For example, Andy and Jerry González, founders of Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Nuevayorquino (see Singer 1982: 148-149).
[88] See *Both Sides Now Stereo Newsletter* (bsnpubs.com).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

earliest proponents of re-recorded Cuban conjunto music.[89] Pacheco and Harlow utilized Monguito for his ability as a "sonero" as well as the timbre of his voice, which was uncannily similar to that of Miguelito Cuní, Arsenio's longtime lead vocalist in Havana during the 1940s.

Along with the re-release of *Primitivo*, Tico released what was to be Arsenio's final LP, entitled *Arsenio Dice*. The recording sessions, which were produced by Cristal, took place on 13 and 27 June 1968 at Incredible Sound Studio (126 W. 42nd Street) in Manhattan. For these recordings Arsenio reinstated his full conjunto, including three trumpets, a tenor saxophone, and timbales. The LP consists of two son montunos, one guaracha, four boleros, one conjunto-style yambú, and two hybrid "swing-sones," one of which he entitled "Quindembo jazz." Both "Mi corazón no tiene quien lo llore" ("My Heart Has No One who Cries for It") and "Ven mi mora" ("Come my Love") consist of the familiar syncopated bass figuration and arrangement scheme, including the diablo section, that define Arsenio's son montuno style (see Table 8.4 in Appendix 4). In fact, the bass line and harmonic cycle of "Mi corazón no tiene quien lo llore" are exactly the same as those used in "Mi chinita me botó," recorded in 1944 (cf. Examples 8.2.g and 4.2.b). "Ven mi mora" is particularly noteworthy for its boogaloo-tinged introduction, which includes handclapping and cymbal attacks on the backbeat. After the sixteen-bar introduction, the rhythmic feel changes to a son montuno.

Arsenio's spoken messages inform the dancer that "¡Esto es son montuno!" ("This

---

[89] For example, in 1967 Monguito was featured as the lead vocalist on Pacheco's *Te invita a bailar* (Fania LP 327) and Harlow's *Gettin' Off/Bajandote* (Fania LP 334). In 1968 he was featured again on Harlow's *Heavy Smokin'* (Fania LP 331).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 8.4. "Daddy Give Me Candy" (27 June 1968): son montuno texture

is son montuno!") and exhort the dancer to "¡Baila son montuno!" ("Dance son montuno!"), throughout various sections of "Mi corazón no tiene quien lo llore," "Ven mi mora," and even the more guaracha-like "Kiko Medina." The coro vocalists in the swing-son "Daddy Give Me Candy" shout repeatedly "teenager"! following the "swing" part and leading to the final montuno section, which again consists of the son montuno texture

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

characteristic of Arsenio's style (see Example 8.4). During the mambo and pachanga crazes, Arsenio similarly urged dancers to substitute the capetillo for the mambo or informed them about the son montuno origins of the pachanga. Having been a professional musician, composer, and bandleader for almost four decades in three distinct cities, Arsenio understood that dance crazes came and went, and in order to continue to record and be professionally viable he had to, at times, resort to such gimmicks, as long as the music remained rooted in his son montuno style.

In the months leading up to the recording sessions for *Arsenio Dice*, Cristal included Arsenio in two well-publicized concerts featuring Tico and Alegre's top recordings acts. The first "Tico-Alegre All-Stars" concert of 1968 took place in February at the Village Gate and the second on 4 May at the Manhattan Center.[90] The All-Stars for the May event included Joe Cuba and Pete Rodríguez, who were the top boogaloo acts at the moment, future salsa starts Eddie Palmieri, Ismael Rivera, Monguito, Cheo Feliciano, Ray Barretto, and Johnny Pacheco, and veteran musicians Tito Puente, Machito, Celia Cruz, Cachao, and Arsenio. Apart from these two events, Arsenio's performances in New York City, from 1966 to 1968, were rarely publicized in *El Diario-La Prensa* (New York's major Spanish-language newspaper). As the next section will show, promoters, musicians, and audiences, particularly younger dancers, largely met Arsenio's return to New York City with indifference. Evidently, some of the younger generation of musicians were particularly apathetic to Arsenio, as the following quatrain from "Kiko Medina" (from *Arsenio Dice*) suggests:

---

[90] Pabon 1968; *El Diario-La Prensa*, 5 May 1968.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Kiko Medina	Kiko Medina
Yo no canto con muchachos Porque me faltan respeto [2x]. Yo canto con hombres viejo, Que si me faltan [respeto] les meto.	I don't sing [play] with kids Because they disrespect me [2x] I sing with old men, Who if they disrespect me I'll let them have it.

Arsenio and the "pre-salsa" milieu

In the January and March 1968 editions of *Latin New York* José Curbelo printed advertisements listing the artists and groups that were signed with his Alpha Artists agency. His top three artists, whose names are set in bold type and centered, were Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, and Ricardo Ray. Other artists, listed below, from the top-down, include Machito, Celia Cruz, Cortijo, Larry Harlow, Joe Bataan, Miguelito Valdés, Orlando Marin, Willie Rosario, La Sonora Matancera, and Arsenio Rodríguez. As previously indicated, Curbelo held a near monopoly on the top veteran and new Latin acts and exercised almost complete control over each artist's prospects for work. Consequently, he was largely responsible for the continued success of some of his veteran acts through the 1960s. For example, Miguelito Valdés toured Panama with Machito's big band in 1966, hosted his own Thursday night variety show on television in the New York area in 1968, and continued to perform regularly in nightclubs and dancehalls in New York City and Los Angeles.[91] In addition to performing regularly at the Club Caborrojeño in Manhattan, Tito Puente hosted his own biweekly Sunday night variety show, called "El

[91] *El Diario-La Prensa*, 11 March 1966, 5 and 19 January 1968, and 22 February 1968.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mundo Latino de Tito Puente" ("Tito Puente's Latin World"), on television in early 1968.[92] The show, which was produced by Curbelo, featured a wide variety of entertainers and musicians, such as Xavier Cugat and Alpha Artist Richie Ray.[93] Finally, Celia Cruz, known as the "Queen of the guaracha," successfully toured throughout Mexico in 1967.[94] (By 1974, Johnny Pacheco would establish Vaya records for Cruz and transform her into the "Queen of salsa.")

At the same time, Curbelo was notoriously indifferent to the careers of some of his other acts, such as Arsenio's. Curbelo's notoriety led Johnny Pacheco to refuse to sign with Alpha Agency, opting instead to work with Richard Bonilla, who in 1968 also managed boogaloo acts Pete Rodríguez, Joe Quijano, and Willie Colón.[95] And Larry Harlow explained that his group began to work more often only when Curbelo, after much prodding from Harlow, demanded that club owners add Harlow's group to the bill if they wanted Puente to play.[96]

In the late 1960s, most of Curbelo's and Bonilla's artists were performing regularly at cabarets and hotels in Manhattan and dancehalls in the South Bronx and Brooklyn. The Club Caborrojeño on W. 145th Street and Broadway in Manhattan and the Bronx Casino on E. 149th Street and Westchester Avenue in the South Bronx were two particularly prominent locales that offered live music on a weekly basis. Originally a Puerto Rican regional social club established in the 1920s, the Club Caborrojeño by the

---

[92] *El Diario-La Prensa*, 22 December 1967.
[93] *El Diario-La Prensa*, 5 January 1968 and 11 February 1968.
[94] *El Diario-La Prensa*, 22 January 1968.
[95] Pacheco, 2 April 1997. See *Latin New York* 1/4 (March 1968): 13 for a list of Bonilla's roster of artists.
[96] Harlow, 2 December 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1960s had become a dancehall that presented dances every weekend, including Sunday matinees, for a primarily older Puerto Rican audience.[97] In 1968 and early 1969 the Club Caborrojeño featured regular performances by veteran artists Yayo el Indio, Daniel Santos, and Tito Puente as well as popular boogaloo performers Richie Ray, Joe Cuba, and Pete Rodríguez. Meanwhile, the Bronx Casino also presented dances every weekend, catering, however, to a primarily younger audience. Regular performers at the Bronx Casino included future salsa stars Ismael Rivera, Johnny Pacheco, Eddie Palmieri, Ray Barretto, Larry Harlow, Pete Rodríguez, and Richie Ray.

Despite the popularity of boogaloo, particularly among the younger generation, a renewed interest in Cuban conjunto music of the 1950s had emerged between 1966 and 1968. As Pacheco noted: "We had more gigs than anybody else because [we played Cuban music], to break up the monotony of the boogaloo."[98] Arsenio's conjunto, however, rarely if ever performed at the Bronx Casino or the Club Caborrojeño, despite the fact that his recorded repertory, particularly of the 1940s and early 1950s, was a source of *son* music for many of the above mentioned conjunto-based groups. Even the Club Cubano Inter-Americano, whose directors provided regular employment for his conjunto throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, tended to hire younger groups such as Johnny Pacheco's, Larry Harlow's, Ray Barretto's, Willie Rosario's, Orquesta Típica Novel, and Orquesta Broadway more regularly than Arsenio's in the late 1960s.[99] Evidently, the Club's directors, who were Arsenio's contemporaries in age, began to hire groups who would

---

[97] David Carp, personal communication.
[98] Pacheco, 2 April 1997.
[99] Most of these dances were not publicized in *El Diario-La Prensa*. See Club Cubano Inter-Americano 1946-1996.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

attract more younger dancers to its dances.

A contemporary of Arsenio's, Graciela Pérez (Machito's sister and co-vocalist), articulated the seemingly conflicting nature of the residual state of his music and his exclusion from the emerging salsa milieu with a series of rhetorical questions:

> Larry Harlow copied him. Pacheco copied him too, in the beginning. So, if they played like Arsenio Rodríguez, why then wasn't Arsenio Rodríguez able to play here [in New York City]? . . . In Cuba he was very good. So, then, why would other musicians copy and play his style if he wasn't good? You understand me?[100]

Many of these younger groups indeed re-recorded and performed many son montunos from Arsenio's and other black Cuban conjuntos' recorded repertory. Their stylistic interpretations, however, differed from Arsenio's original son montuno style, owing primarily to the fact that younger dancers employed the "mambo on 1" or "2" footwork in place of the son footwork, with which they were unacquainted.

More importantly, perhaps, Arsenio lacked the image that evidently dance promoters and record executives, in particular, were marketing. Cachao, who moved to New York City in 1962, offered the following explanation:

> Although much of his music has been recorded and some have rendered him tributes, he was never recognized in the United States, nor did he have the success he had in Cuba, because in order for a musician to distinguish himself in New York in that era he had to polish the music and have someone to support him. *Arsenio's image didn't sell*. He was like a

---

[100] Larry Harlow lo copió. Pacheco lo copió también, al principio. Entonces, [si] tocaron como Arsenio Rodríguez, ¿Por qué entonces Arsenio Rodríguez ya despues no podía tocar aquí? . . . En Cuba era muy bueno. ¿Y por qué, entonces, otras personas van a copiar y tocar el estilo de él si no era bueno? *You understand me*? (Pérez, 26 September 1998).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> museum piece and it was more profitable to loot his music than to support him. That's the truth.[101]

When Johnny Pacheco, for example, formed his conjunto in 1964 he had in mind "a younger looking group [that was] thin." Also, he was attracted to his lead vocalist Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez's ability to sing and dance.[102] Accordingly, the earliest recording artists on Pacheco's Fania label—Larry Harlow, Ray Barretto, and Willie Colón—in fact led young groups with dynamic, thin, and talented frontmen—Monguito, Ismael Miranda, Adalberto Santiago, and Hector Lavóe. In contrast, Arsenio had kept the same core of now middle-aged musicians—Julián Llanos, Israel Berrios, Marcelino Guerra, Agustin Caraballoso, and Kike—that had been members of his conjuntos in the 1940s in Havana or since the 1950s in New York. Despite the association of youth and dynamism with the "pre-salsa" as well as "salsa" periods, Phil Newsum, who was a member of Larry Harlow's group, approached Pacheco around 1968 with an idea to record an LP with Arsenio for Fania, but to no avail:

> I went to Johnny Pacheco one night and I said, "Gees, Johnny, you know what you ought to do? You got to get the money together, get all of Arsenio's old charts, hire a bunch of guys, bring Arsenio and his brother and everything with a good bongosero in the studio and re-record all of his best tunes with a good modern band, a collection of all of his music before it's all gone, before everybody dies." [Johnny] didn't seem to be particularly interested in it. I thought as an archive it would've been an enormously valuable piece of work.[103]

---

[101] My emphasis; Israel "Cachao" López, quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 138-139.
[102] Pacheco, 2 April 1997.
[103] Newsum, 15 August 2001. Soon after Arsenio's death in 1970, Newsum would participate in Larry Harlow's *Tribute to Arsenio*, recorded with Fania.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Other aspects of the conjunto's appearance and, specifically, Arsenio's identity were apparently inconsistent with the values of the "pre-salsa" milieu. Alfonso "El Panameño" Joseph, an Afro-Panamanian who played bass in Arsenio's conjunto for much of the 1960s in New York, identified the lingering existence of racism as an underlying factor in Arsenio's exclusion.[104] For example, José Curbelo, who was notoriously unhelpful particularly to some of his darker-skinned acts, apparently continued to harbor some ill-will toward Arsenio, probably because of Arsenio's strong will over the direction of his music and career and, perhaps, his outspoken identification with his black heritage. Alfredito Valdés Jr. noted that Arsenio often "expressed [in lyrics] the injustice that was being committed that his people were being subjected to."[105] Yet, according to El Panameño, many Latin musicians at this time denied the existence of racism, and "if someone, such as myself, would talk about it, because we were living it, they would say that we had an inferiority complex."[106] Hence, in addition to age and lack of showmanship, Arsenio was apparently excluded from taking part in the "pre-salsa" milieu not simply because of his race—several young front men, for example, Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez and Monguito, were black Latinos—but, more accurately, because of his vocal and unabated identification with his African heritage.

The next section will show how Arsenio expressed in song, particularly in the 1960s, his pride and identification with his African heritage as well as empathy with the social plight of African descendents throughout the Americas. In addition, it will show

---

[104] Joseph, 29 November 2001.
[105] Valdés, 18 October 1997.
[106] Si uno como yo hablabamos de eso, porque estabamos viviendo!, decían que teníamos complejo de inferioridad (Joseph, 29 November 2001).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

how his knowledge of Afrocuban cultural traditions and languages, while not pertinent in the Latin dance music milieus of Los Angeles and New York City, was in contrast very much valued by other unrelated cultural entities.

It is therefore important to conclude this section by noting that Arsenio's experience in the final years of his life in Los Angeles and New York contradicts certain representations of salsa history that have been taken for granted and, hence, become canonic to much of its literature. For example, in his seminal history of salsa, César Miguel Rondón situates the "definitive" and "authentic" formation of salsa's musical style, values, and social significance in the context of the "barrio Latino de Nueva York," stating that salsa is a reflection of the "violence" and "bitterness" of the "barrio."[107] He adds: "All of them [i.e., Latinos of New York] form one single community, a community united by a cultural root [i.e., Caribbean music, most notably Cuban *son*] that is common to and identical in all of these people."[108] Similarly, other writers have stated that salsa music assumed an identity representing the cultural symbols, beliefs, and values of all New York "Latinos" and "Latin culture," hence adding to the construction of a culturally and socially homogenous "Latino barrio."[109] Divisions of race and nationality as well as age, showmanship, and other social and musical considerations persisted and, in fact, contributed to the exclusion of one of salsa's forbearers from the early-salsa milieu.

---

[107] See Rondón 1980: 26-34.
[108] Ibid.: 30.
[109] Baron 1977: 216-217 and Padilla 1989: 43-44.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's African Diaspora

From the earliest period of his career Arsenio expressed not only his pride in his African heritage but also his contestation of social and racial injustice as well as dominant discourses of racial superiority. In Chapter 3 I analyzed the lyrical content of his afrocubanos that were recorded and performed by Miguelito Valdés with Orquesta Casino de la Playa in the late 1930s, arguing that Arsenio drew from *congo* secular and sacred cultural traditions—which he had learned in his youth—in order to contest the dominant discourses of "superación" (racial uplift) and "mestizaje" (racial "whitening") whose ideological tenets held Afrocuban traditional culture as inferior and of a bygone era. In Chapter 7 I briefly discussed two songs—"A Puerto Rico" (rec. 22 June 1948) and "Amor a mi patria" (rec. 11 December 1951)—in which he made unambiguous statements against the colonial and imperialist relationships Puerto Rico and Cuba had with the United States. These examples demonstrate the racial, political, and national dimensions of Arsenio's consciousness and identity. There are additional musical examples and events, however, that demonstrate yet another dimension of his consciousness and identity.

Expressions of identity with the Black Diaspora

On 9 November 1950, in Havana, Arsenio's conjunto, with his sister Estela singing lead, recorded "Aquí como allá" ("It's the Same Here as It Is Over There"). In the verse section Arsenio writes of the pain and inequality that Blacks in Africa, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, the South (United States), New York, Argentina, Mexico, and Venezuela experience and sing about in song (see Appendix 3 for full transcriptions and translations of the following

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

songs). In the montuno section he emphasizes the shared experience of pain and inequality sung in song by people "here" and "there," that is, of the Black Diaspora. It is important to remember that in 1947 he had visited Tampa, Florida, lodging in the segregated section of the city, on his way to New York City. While experiencing racism first-hand in the South, Arsenio makes clear here the undifferentiated experience of racism throughout the Americas and in Africa.

In the United States, following the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by the United States Supreme Court, the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum. In 1960 and 1961 sit-inners and Freedom Riders were countering segregation in lunch counters and interstate travel in the South. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech at the march on Washington in 1963. Civil rights laws were passed in 1957, 1960, and 1964. Yet these were enforced poorly or ignored altogether. Furthermore, a disproportionate amount of the black population was unemployed and living under the poverty line.[110] During this period Arsenio expressed his identification with Africa as well as his views on the racial and social problems that African descendents in the Americas were facing.

For his *Cumbanchando con Arsenio* LP, recorded in 1960 in New York, Arsenio composed "Yo nací de África" ("I Was Born of Africa") in which he speculates as to what his true African name and ethnicity might be, while rejecting Spanish surnames. He finally resolves his uncertainty during the montuno section by embracing his African and Congolese roots. On commenting on the significance of these lyrics, Alfredito Valdés Jr.,

---

[110] Zinn 1980: 441-450.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

who is the pianist on this LP, succinctly stated that Arsenio expressed his African identity not only in words but also in the musical principles he upheld:

> Arsenio, being a direct descendant of Africans, *siempre lo dijo en su música* (always said it in his *music*). He always acknowledged that he was *cubano* and that he was *afrocubano*. And then, to widen his view of his life and his situation, he acknowledged a common denominator between he and African-Americans because of the extraction, the origin of their ancestors, their roots.[111]

He then expressed the growing frustration and impatience among African-Americans in "La democracia," which he performed for Ralph Rinzler of the Newport Festival Foundation in Kike's apartment in the South Bronx in May 1964 (the circumstances of this recording session are discussed below). He expressed these same sentiments in "Vaya pa'l monte" ("Go to the Mountain"), which the conjunto recorded on 18 April 1966 for his LP *Viva Arsenio*, adding once more that racism and inequality affected the Black Diaspora "here" (New York) as "over there" (Carolina, Puerto Rico).

Several months after Arsenio recorded "La democracia," in summer 1964, riots erupted in African-American neighborhoods in New York City, Jersey City, and Chicago. And on 11 August 1965, eight months before the recording of "Vaya pa'l monte," riots erupted in the African-American areas of South Los Angeles, including Watts. At this time Arsenio was living nearby, in Exposition, while performing every Saturday night at the Paramount Ballroom in East Los Angeles. It is uncertain whether or how often he performed any of these songs in live performances in Havana, New York City, or Los Angeles. What is clear, however, is that Arsenio shared a deep empathy for and expressed

---

[111] Valdés, 19 August 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

a broad identification with the Black struggle against racial discrimination.

The Festival of American Folklife, 1969

Shortly after his return to Los Angeles in the spring of 1969, Arsenio and Kike traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the Smithsonian Institution's third Festival of American Folklife, which took place from 1 to 6 July. The main goal of this festival, according to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution at the time, S. Dillon Ripley, was to celebrate the "separate and collective cultural heritages" of Americans.[112] In 1968 Alan Lomax characterized it as a "Festival of the Common Man where people brought the art that they had made up out of their own experience."[113] Artists and craftsmen, in addition to musicians, were featured in the programs.

Arsenio was invited to participate by the festival director, Ralph Rinzler, who originally conceived of the festival and brought it into being in 1967.[114] Rinzler was described as having a "clear idea of how to bring great tradition-bearers together with the larger public audience by finding within their work the vitality of their cultural inheritance and the genius of the individual artist operating within that tradition."[115] Although he worked mostly with local Anglo- and African-American musicians and craftsmen, his interest in tradition-bearers did include those from other regions of the Americas. He first came into contact with Arsenio in May 1964, when he recorded Arsenio and Kike

---

[112] Ripley 1969: 5.
[113] Ibid.
[114] The following information on Rinzler is taken from Abrahams 1995 and Gagné 1996.
[115] Abrahams 1995: 325.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

performing Cuban and Afro-Cuban folk music on tres and tumbadora, respectively. The session, which probably took place in Kike's apartment on 811 Tinton Avenue, in the South Bronx, included performances of son, bembé, yuka, and other folkloric Afro-Cuban music (see Appendix 2).

At this time Rinzler was working for the Newport Festival Foundation as Director of Field Research. In addition, he was also working as an impresario and agent. Having made many contacts with booking agents and concert producers in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Rinzler actively promoted many of the musicians he had come into contact with in the field. For example, between 1960 and 1966, he helped Doc Watson, a blind "old-time musician," on his way to recording five albums and touring extensively across the country. At the same time Rinzler helped revive the performance and recording career of Bill Monroe, the "father of bluegrass music," who by 1962 had become bitter over the decline of his popularity and the success of younger bluegrass musicians.

The similarities in Bill Monroe's and Arsenio's professional status in the early 1960s are very significant. Clearly, Rinzler saw in both tradition-bearers their value to their respective musical tradition yet precarious position in the professional and commercial contexts of those traditions. He, therefore, considered it important not only to record these forgotten musicians in the "field" but also to help revive their professional careers. As he himself stated, "So working with those kinds of artists, who were really among the greatest musicians of their time, was an exercise in getting the best out there."[116] In Monroe's case, Rinzler helped him back into the performance and recording

---

[116] Gagné 1996: 27.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

scene in Nashville just "long enough to get him rolling," yet the music business in Nashville, according to Rinzler, "was a world that I could not adjust to."[117] Therefore, while Rinzler maintained his interest in Arsenio, inviting him to perform for the 1969 Festival of American Folklife, it seems highly unlikely that he would have even considered helping Arsenio revive his "commercial" career in the Latin dance music "world" or recording industry, which he probably knew nothing about.

As the director of the Festival of American Folklife, Rinzler often delegated the choice of materials and performers, with his supervision, to members of the cultural tradition itself as well as other organizations. For instance, he delegated the African-American presentations to the African Diaspora Advisory Group, who sought to present demonstrations of African, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean cultural traditions. Therefore, Arsenio and Kike, along with Cuban bassist and long-time friend Luis Salomé, were scheduled in the program entitled "Black Music through Languages of the New World" (see Figs. 8.1 and 8.2). Their first performance took place on the afternoon of 5 July at the Toby Show Tent, on the mall of the Washington monument.[118] Bernice Reagon, who introduced Arsenio, characterized the music he was about to perform as "Black music of Africa by way of Cuba." Arsenio followed her introduction with his own:

> Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, the few of you who speak Spanish who understand me. I am Arsenio Rodríguez, the composer of many songs, principally African, that you have heard. I have composed all of those *afros* that you used to hear Miguelito Valdés sing, "Bruca maniguá,"

---

[117] Ibid.: 28.

[118] Arsenio's performances at this festival were recorded, the tapes of which are archived at the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive, Smithsonian Institution. The following quotes were transcribed from these recordings.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> "Fufuñando," and "Adios África," which Xavier Cugat recorded, and many songs which are sung all over the world, all of which have an African influence from [my] heritage. Today I am here with my brother and my very close friend Luís Salomé playing for you, and I hope that you like what we are going to play.[119]

Their second performance took place in the evening at the Main Stage of the Departmental Auditorium at the center of the mall. It opened with a somewhat impromptu collaboration between Bernice Reagan, singing the spiritual "One More Time," with Arsenio accompanying her on tres. Following this, Reagan introduced Arsenio, Kike, and Salomé, stating:

> The first brothers you'll hear tonight are African brothers. These are brothers who were lucky enough to know from where in Africa they came. . . . These people, these brothers, were under Spanish oppression. They were born in Cuba. Somehow their oppressors didn't care very much that the drums rolled, and the drums still roll today. And it is through the Rodriguez brothers that tonight we hear the Black music created by Black people who lived in Cuba, the Rodriguez brothers, Arsenio and Kike, and their childhood friend, also from Cuba, Luis Salome. It's very strange for me to be in the company this afternoon of about five or six Black people, all of whom were from Cuba, all of whom could tell me about their different gods. These are people who say, "I'm African, and I know it." The Rodriguez Brothers!

Altogether Arsenio performed three times. His repertory consisted of several yukas, a maní, and a palo from the *congo* tradition; toques de santos, a bembé, and

---

[119] Buenas tardes damas y caballeros, los pocos que hablan español aquí que me entiendan. Yo soy Arsenio Rodríguez, el compositor de muchas cosas que ustedes han oído, principalmente africana. He compuesto todos aquellos afros que ustedes lo oían cantar Miguelito Valdés, "Bruca maniguá," "Funfuñando," "Adios África," que grabó Xavier Cugat, y muchas cosas de la que se cantan en el mundo, todo con influencia africana por herencia. Aquí estamos mi hermano, mi intimo amigo Luís Salomé y yo tocando en el día de hoy para ustedes, y ojalá que les gusten lo que vamos hacer.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 8.1. The Festival of American Folklife, "Black Music through Languages of the New World." Washington D.C., 5 July 1969. *Left to right*: Kike, Arsenio, and Luis Salomé (photograph courtesy of the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution)

Figure 8.2. The Festival of American Folklife (reverse angle)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

another secular song from the *lucumí* tradition; an abakuá; and a pregón and son montuno (see Appendix 2). Other Black performers who performed with Arsenio on the 5 July "Black Music through Languages of the New World" program in the evening included Ed, G.D., and Lonnie Young, fife and drum performers from Como, Mississippi; Ardoin Family and Canray Fontenot, zydeco musicians from Louisiana; Moving Star Hall Singers, performers of shouts, jubilees, spirituals, and ring games from South Carolina; and First Church of God and Christ Gospel Choir from Georgia.

Final Performances and Death in Los Angeles, 1969-1970

Prior to going to the Festival of American Folklife Arsenio was approved on 3 June 1969 for full membership to Musician's Union Local 47 of Los Angeles.[120] After the festival, Arsenio returned to Los Angeles and formed a new conjunto, many of the members of which were Cuban, including vocalists Manolo Suárez and Oscar López.[121] Suárez first met and occasionally performed with Arsenio in 1940, when both were performing at the cabaret de primera Sans Souci. López, who started to sing professionally with Cuban groups in Mexico City in the early 1950s, was a young adult in Havana during the 1940s when he regularly attended dances at Social Club Buena Vista, Marianao Social, and other black social clubs where Arsenio's conjunto perform regularly. Also, Alfredito Valdés Jr.,

---

[120] On 10 February 1965 he and Kike were approved by Local 47 as "transfer members" from New York's Local 802.
[121] López, 30 March 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

who had moved to Los Angeles in 1963, occasionally sat-in on piano.[122] Arsenio also had two Puerto Rican musicians, guitarist and singer Frank "El Morro" and bassist Gene Morales. Finally, unlike his first "conjunto" or sexteto in 1965, he had a three-trumpet section, the musicians of which he hired on a regular basis from the union.

As before, Arsenio's conjunto was not working very often. Pedro Ferro, who had been his manager in 1965, was now unable to work for Arsenio fulltime because of his other responsibilities, including his role as a leader of the Cuban "exile" community in Los Angeles.[123] Nevertheless, he did try to find Arsenio work, free-of-charge, when time allowed. Without proper representation, therefore, Arsenio continued to struggle as a bandleader. In characterizing this final period of his career, Alfredito Valdés Jr. stated that, "He was already in his retirement years, looking to live more peacefully, and he was at an advanced age. He wasn't understood here [New York City] much less over there [Los Angeles]."[124] Pianists Mark Levine and Rocky Moran, both of whom also had very brief stints with the conjunto at this time, added that the Latin music establishment as well as dancers and even most musicians in Los Angeles were indifferent to Arsenio and his music.[125]

Because of Pedro Ferro's unavailability, Arsenio worked as his own agent. It is unclear whether or not the conjunto performed that summer. Finally, it played its first significant dance on 11 October, not in Los Angeles but at the Jacktar Hotel, which was located at the corner of Van Ness Avenue and Geary Boulevard, in downtown San

---

[122] Valdés Jr., 18 October 1997.
[123] Ferro, 2 September 1997.
[124] Valdés, 18 October 1997.
[125] Levine, 31 March 1997; Moran, 25 May 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Francisco.[126] The next night the conjunto performed in Oakland. According to Oscar López, who was the conjunto's lead singer, these dances were well attended by a diverse audience, including Cubans and Puerto Ricans. And the repertory consisted of primarily Arsenio's hits from Cuba, including the boleros "La vida es un sueño" ("Life is a Dream"), "La ultima carta" ("The Final Letter"), and "Triste lucha" ("Sad Battle"), and the afrocubano "Bruca manigua.[127] The conjunto's first advertised performance in Los Angeles did not take place until New Year's Eve, 31 December 1969. According to the advertisement, this performance was the "debut" of the "new conjunto." It took place at the Embassy Auditorium in downtown and was apparently organized and promoted by Arsenio and Kike themselves. Meanwhile, Chico Sesma had promoted at least one dance at the Hollywood Palladium, which took place on 31 October, featuring La Sonora Santanera, Thee Midnighters, and Rudy Macías. And Tito Puente performed twice at the Hollywood Palladium, once with Celia Cruz on 14 November and a second time with Thee Midnighters and Al Escobar on 26 November.

After its New Year's Eve gig, Arsenio's conjunto did not have any performances that were advertised in *La Opinion* until September 1970, when it performed at Casa Caribe restaurant (7422 S. Vermont Avenue) in South Central Los Angeles. From 23 October to 20 November the conjunto performed on Friday nights at La Canasta Restaurant (1133 N. Vermont Avenue) in Silver Lake, north of downtown. Then, on 27 November, Arsenio performed for the Club Alianza Hispanoamericana at the Hotel Clark

---

[126] The following performances are advertised in *La Opinion*, 7 October 1969-27 November 1970.
[127] López, 30 March 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

in downtown. This was probably his last public performance.

Despite the lackluster quality of his conjunto's gigs, Arsenio had, according to several informants, secured a contract to record an LP in 1970. Israel Berrios remembers that he began to rehearse the numbers with Arsenio for this new LP in New York City, but Arsenio had to return to Los Angeles to meet some contractual agreements, presumably the gigs in San Francisco and Oakland in October 1969.[128] Arsenio told Berrios that he would return at the end of 1970 to do the recordings. Alfonso "El Panameño" Joseph remembers that Arsenio returned to New York City for about one week in early December 1970, during which time Arsenio tried to convince El Panameño to return to Los Angeles with him to record an LP there. "El Panameño" told Arsenio that he would think it over and call him when he returned to Los Angeles.[129] Finally, Oscar López also remembers that Arsenio's conjunto was to record an LP in Los Angeles, but on the day of the recording officials from Los Angeles's Local 47 cancelled the session because Arsenio had not paid his union dues.[130] According to Berrios, the material that Arsenio was rehearsing to record included some songs by Ernesto Lecuona, while "El Panameño" remembers that they rehearsed new material that he and Arsenio had composed together. While the dates and circumstances of these musicians' recollections do not coincide perfectly, it is clear that sometime within the last two years of his life Arsenio was planning to record another LP.

During the week of 21 December 1970 Arsenio was rehearsing with the conjunto

---

[128] Berrios, 11 October 1998.
[129] Joseph, 29 November 2001.
[130] López, 30 March 2000.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

to perform on New Year's Eve at Virginia's.[131] On Monday, 28 December, however, Arsenio suffered a fatal stroke and was taken to Queen of Angeles Hospital in Echo Park, just north of downtown.[132] The stroke was brought on by Arsenio's diabetes, which he had been suffering from since at least the early 1960s. Less than two days after he suffered the stroke, Arsenio stopped breathing and was pronounced dead at 1:43 am, Wednesday, 30 December 1970. Immediately following Arsenio's death, Raúl made arrangements with Pierce Brothers to have Arsenio's body buried at Rosedale Cemetery on Washington Boulevard, just west of downtown Los Angeles.[133] But Arsenio's estranged wife, Anadina Rodríguez, who flew to Los Angeles from New York upon hearing the news of his death, requested that his body be taken to New York City to be buried. Angered over her insistence that his body be flown to New York, Raúl let her take the body, refusing nevertheless to pay to transfer Arsenio's body.

On Sunday, 3 January 1971, Arsenio's body was flown to New York City. His wake took place two days later at Manhattan North Chapels on 107th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, where, according to historian Max Salazar, who was present, funds were solicited by Anadina from the mourners to bury his body and, presumably, to pay for the transfer fees.[134] Arsenio's body was eventually laid to rest at Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, Westchester County, New York, on 6 January 1971.[135]

---

[131] Raúl Travieso, 19 June 1996.
[132] The following information on Arsenio's death is taken from an official copy of his death certificate from the County of Los Angeles (no. 7097-054578).
[133] Raúl Travieso, 5 April 1997.
[134] Salazar 1994: 17.
[135] Other notables who are buried in Ferncliff Cemetery include Malcolm X, Thelonious Monk, and Paul Robeson.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's financial situation in the final years of his life has been the subject of much speculation, characterized mostly by allegations of poverty. The circumstances surrounding his burial in New York undoubtedly contributed to this perception. In stressing that Anadina's solicitation for money to bury Arsenio's body was unnecessary since he had already paid for his grave in Los Angeles, Raúl, I believe, was trying to correct the impression that Arsenio left no money for his wife to bury him with. Clearly, Arsenio was not wealthy, but as Mario Bauzá noted, "the royalties from his compositions was enough for him to live well, and it's a myth that he died poor and forgotten, a total lie."[136] Although in many ways Arsenio was in fact "forgotten," as the last two chapters have shown, he was not living in "poverty."

In addition, Arsenio had found peace of mind through his faith in and study of the Bible. He expressed his renewed and positive outlook on life in "La verdad" ("The Truth"), a bolero which he recorded for his final LP *Arsenio Dice* (see Appendix 3). He begins the lyrics by quoting a stanza from his "La vida es un sueño" (recorded in Havana on 27 February 1948), which he composed in New York City in 1947 after being told that his blindness was irreversible. The despair he felt and expressed then had now been replaced by spiritual fulfillment and satisfaction, which he found by becoming a Jehovah's Witness. Perhaps his renewed hope in life also overshadowed what was a difficult final years of his nevertheless extraordinary musical life.

---

[136] Bauzá quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 41-42.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 9

Salsa and Arsenio's Legacy

> We know little about the New York history of this kind of music. Hence, we lack a developmental dimension against which the present revolution in barrio music might be measured.
>
> —Robert Farris Thompson

Art and Latin music historian Robert Farris Thompson made this observation in 1967 in an article he wrote on Eddie Palmieri's conjunto La Perfecta, which at the time he considered to be "artistically the most promising dance band now performing in the United States."[1] According to Thompson, the name of the new music of which Palmieri and his lead trombonist and arranger Barry Rogers were "chief proponents" had not yet stabilized. While we know now that this music would by the early 1970s become known as "salsa," we still know little about its history in New York City in the 1960s. What Jorge Duany noted in 1990 continues to be relevant today:

> The historical sources of *salsa* have yet to be tapped in-depth. Future research should assemble written documents such as personal memoirs, original recordings of *salsa* songs, films of live performances, and interviews with key musicians to reconstruct the origins and development of *salsa*.[2]

Duany goes on to state that researchers have employed either textual analysis or musical analysis rather than a combination of both strategies, from which he suggests the study of

---

[1] Thompson 1967: 53.
[2] Duany 1990: 295.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

salsa would benefit.

In fact, an overwhelming majority of the writings on salsa consists of historical narratives and studies that focus on issues concerning salsa and the commercial music industry and Puerto Rican and pan-Latino identity as these have prevailed in New York City and Puerto Rico.[3] More recent studies on salsa have focused on its emergence in other regions and as a global phenomenon in addition to issues concerning gender, race, and class, thus broadening the geographical and theoretical terrain of the study of salsa.[4] Contrary to what some have stated, however, neither the history of "salsa's Cuban roots" nor the musical and stylistic "origins" of salsa in New York City have been comprehensively documented or *subjected to serious musical analysis*, at least in terms of examining and comparing recordings and other primary sources of early salsa performance (e.g., film) in conjunction with oral testimony.[5]

Besides the lack of musical analysis, the study of salsa's development in New York City and its relationship to its stylistic antecedents has been hindered by two prevalent aspects of salsa historiography. First, writers have used the "traditional-modern" dichotomy to distinguish salsa's origins, namely, conjunto music of the 1940s and 1950s,

---

[3] See Rondón (1980), Boggs (1992), and Padura Fuentes (1997) for historical narratives. See Baron (1976), Cortes, Falcón, and Flores (1976: 124-133), Blum (1978), Singer (1982), and Manuel (1991) concerning the salsa industry. See Duany (1984), Padilla (1989, 1990), and Manuel (1994) concerning salsa and identity. See the essays in Waxer (2002a) concerning salsa and its various contemporary local and global sites. See also Waxer (1998: 19-24) and Washburne (1999: 25-29) for more detailed reviews of the state of research of salsa.

[4] See Aparicio (1998, 2002) for analysis on identity, race, and gender; Waxer (1998) for a social history of salsa, including all-women salsa groups, in Cali, Colombia; and the various essays in Waxer (2002) dealing with salsa in its local and global manifestations.

[5] See Waxer 2002b: 11 and Berríos-Miranda 2002: 25.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

from more "modern" styles of early salsa, such as that of Eddie Palmieri, thereby overlooking other modes of comparing salsa to its antecedents. Second, the debate over salsa's origins has been frustratingly limited to defining its national origins, the obsession over which has detracted from studying, for example, the styles and repertories of *individual* groups and musicians and the *local* social milieus in which these styles and repertories developed. My aim, therefore, is to answer the question, What is the legacy of Arsenio's music and style in salsa?.

The most obvious manifestation of the relevance of Arsenio's music is the notable presence of his compositions in the recorded repertories of early salsa groups. In addition, salsa musicians have employed and adapted Arsenio's son montuno and conjunto-style guaguancó schemes for their own arrangements. However, the oppositionality that Arsenio's conjunto and music signified and constituted, particularly in Havana, and the *fundamental musical principles* of rhythmic density, tension, and climax through collective interaction that defined the essence of his son montuno *style* have not been recognized. Some salsa musicians, like Eddie Palmieri and Barry Rogers, perpetuated these two aspects more readily than other musicians. Hence, I will show that a careful and historically informed listening, particularly to Palmieri's and Arsenio's recordings, substantiated with documentation from interviews with key salsa musicians including Palmieri himself, provides substantial grounds for relating the two.

In the first section of this chapter, I reevaluate some of the constructed aspects of salsa historiography, particularly its use of the "traditional-modern" dichotomy to distinguish between salsa and its antecedents, thereby suggesting a more historically informed understanding of the relationship between Cuban conjunto music and salsa. In

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

the second section, I compare the performance of son montuno by early salsa groups with that of Cuban conjuntos, focusing on the formers' treatments of the subtle stylistic and procedural aspects of the son montuno as established by Arsenio. I then present musical examples along with oral testimony in identifying Arsenio's definitive contribution to the music and aesthetic of salsa.

Resituating Arsenio and Cuban Conjunto Music in Salsa Historiography

In Chapter 6 I offered an alternative understanding of the dominant lineal orientation of the mambo's history, represented by its reliance on the "traditional-modern" dichotomy. Writers and musicians have similarly articulated the differences between salsa (in its various local manifestations) and its stylistic antecedents. They have also misrepresented Arsenio's contribution to salsa. In this section, I will first assess how salsa's "Cuban roots" have been conceptualized and distinguished from salsa and where Arsenio has been (dis)placed in this constructed paradigm. Second, I will assess for the purposes of comparative analysis whether salsa itself should be defined as a genre or a repertory of genres. Finally, I will argue that the terminology that was used to describe and evaluate the styles of Cuban conjuntos in Havana in the 1940s is central to our understanding of the origins and stylistic developments of salsa in New York City.

Deconstructing salsa's "típico" category

The recorded repertories of Cuban conjuntos of the 1940s and 1950s had a complex

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

impact on most early salsa musicians, particularly in their appreciation of Cuban dance music. The full extent of this impact, however, has been obscured by writers' chronological ordering of the first two decades of salsa, the 1960s and 1970s, and their distinction between a "modern" salsa style and its "traditional" "Cuban" antecedents. When such attempts are made, Cuban conjunto repertories in particular are concomitantly 1) said to pertain to the so-called "típico" strain of salsa that became commercially successful beginning in the early- to mid-1970s and 2) pigeonholed into a stylistically homogeneous category, often labeled as "1950s Cuban dance music" or the "conjunto" and "típico" style.

First, Cesar Miguel Rondón characterizes the music of salsa's earliest period from about 1965 to 1970 as developing "spontaneously" and as an "authentic"—that is, "non-commercialized"—expression of the "barrio Latino" of New York City.[6] Similarly, Felix Padilla states that "Salsa was established as a music form in the late 1960s-early 1970s by a group of Puerto Rican musicians whose aim was to create a cultural sound distinctively representative of their New York *barrio* experience."[7] In distinguishing this period from the next, the 1970s, Rondón states:

> Of all those diverse styles, themes, and influences that were cultivated in the final years of the 1960s, only two [stylistic tendencies] remained in the beginning of the 1970s: the experimental and *innovative* vanguard [i.e., progressive]—of which Eddie Palmieri and Willie Colón, despite their particular [stylistic] differences, are the best examples—and the *classical* tendency [i.e., traditional], or better yet, the tendency *trapped in the típico*, which accepted Arsenio Rodríguez as a fundamental inspiration and which would barely go beyond that which had already been established in *the old*

---

[6] See Rondón 1980: 30-34.
[7] Padilla 1989: 33.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cuban music.[8]

Rondón goes on to identify the repertories of Larry Harlow and Johnny Pacheco as constituting the opposite poles of the "típico" tendency. In doing so, he further limits the relevance of Arsenio's "influence" on salsa to one end of the "típico" spectrum:

> While Harlow made the most of Arsenio's influence, contributing sonic combinations that were suitable and interesting, Pacheco for his part progressively lowered his musical expectations and ambitions, ending up trapped, in the long run, in what many dancers classified as "a modernized Sonora Matancera" or a "modern-day Sonora Matancera."[9]

Hence, Rondón ends up constructing a stylistic spectrum with "innovators," that is, "authentic" and "modern" producers of salsa, on one end and those "trapped in the típico" on the opposite end.

Other writers and musicians have similarly conceptualized early salsa as consisting of two dichotomous streams, the "Cuban," "típico," "conjunto" stream and the "innovative" and "modern" stream. For example, in the early 1980s, Cuban musicologist Leonardo Acosta pointed out that most contemporary salsa musicians were "unable" to overcome the "confines of Cuban music of the 1940s and 1950s."[10] Then, in a footnote, Acosta mentions that Cuban musician Armando Romeu has "shown accurately" that there are two principal currents in salsa:

> One that *duplicates* in all its [musical] parameters our music of the 1940s and 1950s, and another more innovative [current] which maintains the

---

[8] Rondón 1980: 89 (emphasis added).
[9] Ibid.
[10] Acosta 1983: 32-33.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> traditional rhythmic base together with a harmonic and orchestral concept that is much more advanced [i.e., progressive].[11]

In discussing the commercial and stylistic implications of salsa's second period, Peter Manuel similarly states:

> Much of the remaining Fania output [in the 1970s]—especially the records of Johnny Pacheco and Celia Cruz—was devoted to reiteration, however tasteful, of the traditional-style Cuban *son*, in the vein of the Sonora Matancera of the 1950s. Aside from crossover ventures, Fania seemed to have forsaken innovation [i.e., progress] for standardized, reliable formulae, and chose to celebrate a mythically idyllic Cuban past rather than to continue confronting barrio reality in all its complexity. . . . Meanwhile, innovative, *jazz-oriented* salsa (like Eddie Palmieri's) and provocative songs which embraced and confronted barrio culture (like those of Rubén Blades and Willie Colón) were largely confined to the margins of the record industry . . .[12]

According to this dominant paradigm, therefore, Cuban conjunto repertories pertain to a socially irrelevant (in the context of the "Latino barrio" of New York City) and dated, yet commercially viable strain as well as historical period of salsa music.

In fact, recorded repertories of Cuban conjuntos had a much more seminal role in the *stylistic* formation of early salsa musicians from across the "modern" and "tipico" spectrum. Palmieri began to study the records of Chappottin and other Cuban conjuntos in the mid 1950s, only to find out later that the conjunto format and son montuno style were founded by Arsenio[13]:

---

[11] Ibid.: 33 n18 (emphasis added).
[12] Manuel 1991: 166 (emphasis added).
[13] In Carp (1998: 11) Palmieri lists other Cuban groups, including La Sonora Matancera, Conjunto Modelo, and Conjunto Casino, whose recordings he began to listen to in the mid 1950s.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> I knew about Arsenio but what I didn't know was his complete contribution to the orchestra [i.e., conjunto]. When he leaves Cuba [in early 1952] the trumpet player that was in his orchestra, Chappottín, is the one that forms Chappottín y Sus Estrellas, and that's when I started listening to Cuban music, which was brought to my attention in 1956, mainly because of Manny Oquendo. . . . And then when I realized that it was Arsenio who started that orchestra [and style] then the credit had to be given to the genius of Arsenio.[14]

For Papo Lucca, pianist, arranger, and leader of the Puerto Rican salsa group La Sonora Ponceña, recordings from Cuba and New York City played a direct role in the formation of the group's repertory and style during its first decade of existence in the 1960s:

> I'm referring to those initial [years] during which we directly copied the records that came to us from Cuba, the United States, whatever recording we liked and that more or less corresponded to the style that we wanted to end up having.[15]

Before his recordings with Celia Cruz, beginning in 1974, Johnny Pacheco began to perform and re-record Cuban conjunto material in the early 1960s:

> I had the opportunity to grow up with Arsenio Rodríguez, Chappottín and La Sonora Matancera. So I started copying Sonora Matancera [i.e., its style] and then I added the tres and the bongó because of the Chappottín influence. And I did it because of the World's Fair which was like the whole year [i.e., 1964].[16]

Even Willie Colón admitted:

> I always listened to [Arsenio's] records and he was our principal teacher.

---

[14] Palmieri, 26 February 2002.
[15] Quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 157.
[16] Pacheco, 2 April 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> From him we took the feeling of Cuban music, of the orthodox *son*, for the lack of a better word.[17]

In addition to limiting the relevance of recorded Cuban conjunto repertories to the so-called "típico revival" of the 1970s, some writers have placed too much emphasis on the perceived national origins of salsa. This debate has centered mostly around two often cited articles written by Jorge Duany and Peter Manuel.[18] Although Duany emphasizes salsa's "Puerto Rican" origins and Manuel emphasizes its origins in the "Cuban" *son*, their references to "típico," "Cuban music of the 1950s," or the "Cuban conjunto sound" (as opposed to salsa proper) tend to obscure the internal heterogeneity of these categories.

For example, Jorge Duany lists several stylistic characteristics that he says distinguish salsa from "Cuban music of the 1950s."[19] However, what Duany lists as a "smoother" and "subdued" sound under the category of "Cuban music of the 1950s" actually pertained to "white"-style conjuntos such as La Sonora Matancera and Conjunto Casino as described by contemporary Cuban conjunto musicians. Unlike the "smoother" and "simple" styles of "white"-style conjuntos, "black"-style conjuntos like Arsenio's were praised for their powerful rhythm sections and rhythmic complexity, including the use of metric ambiguity in cierres (see Example 4.7) and cross-rhythms in diablos (see Examples 4.8.b). Similarly, Peter Manuel lists some of the same differences as well as additional characteristics distinguishing salsa from the "1950s-Cuban conjunto sound."[20] In particular, what Manuel characterizes as the conga style for salsa also pertained to the

---

[17] Quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 53.
[18] Duany 1984 and Manuel 1994.
[19] Duany 1984: 197-198.
[20] Manuel 1994: 270.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"simpler" style of specifically Matancera's tumbadora player; while his characterization of Cuban tumbadora players pertained specifically to Arsenio's style.

More importantly, what we must take note of is how writers and salsa musicians have used the concept of "típico" in their discourse on the origins of salsa. Veit Erlmann has discussed the constructed nature of "tradition" as a particularly effective mechanism for musicians to make sense of their immediate social and musical conditions via images of the past.[21] In such cases, "tradition" has had little to do with historical continuity, but more with the ways in which forms and values have been linked together in discourse and in recordings to substantiate the immediate goals (musical and commercial) of musicians in the present. Erlmann is particularly careful in emphasizing that recordings are "far from constituting 'neutral' documentary evidence," listing marketing strategies and the interests of intermediaries such as talent scouts and engineers among other factors that have affected the meanings and content of what has actually been recorded.[22]

Likewise, the "típico" concept has served as a multi-faceted mechanism for salsa musicians and writers, particularly, to make sense of the early history of salsa and its relationship to its musical antecedents and, in the case of musicians, producers, and record executives, as a marketing tool for their recorded products. As my comparative analysis below will show, early salsa re-recordings of son montunos originally recorded by Cuban conjuntos, while constituting the core of the "típico" category, reveal subtle, yet significant differences in rhythmic style. Besides the differences in stylistic content, the obscurity of the son montuno dance style, particularly among young salsa dancers,

---

[21] See Erlmann 1991: 10-14.
[22] Ibid.: 13.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

rendered the performance of the son montuno an utterly distinct phenomenon in New York City from that which involved the complete embodiment of Arsenio's son montuno style in the steps and movements of Cubans dancers of the 1940s. I will finally argue that the *principles* of rhythmic tension and climax that Arsenio first initiated in the early 1940s were *adopted* by Eddie Palmieri and Barry Rogers and constituted the stylistic essence of their conjunto beginning in the early 1960s.

Salsa: genre or repertory of genres and styles?

There have been many debates over whether the term "salsa" denotes a distinct genre of music or whether it has been used strictly as a label for marketing a repertory of Cuban and Puerto Rican genres. In one of the earliest essays on this issue, Robert Baron outlined the development of the term's significance in New York City in the early 1970s from a commercial label to "a music of Latin New Yorkers, an identification usually considered to be superordinate to an identification with any particular Latin ethnic group" or, as he subsequently states, Latin genre.[23] He nevertheless stressed the ideological and musical tensions between musicians who refused to use the label "salsa," claiming that they played Cuban music, and those who pursued commercialization as an imperative which necessarily involved the "diminution of *tipico* [i.e., as Baron elsewhere specifies, "Cuban *tipico*"] qualities of the music."[24] Later, in the 1980s, Jorge Duany and others, while acknowledging the marketing uses of "salsa," argued that the music itself was a "hybrid

---

[23] Baron 1977: 216-217.
[24] Ibid.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

genre," "an amalgamation of Afro-Caribbean musical traditions," and a "music form" distinct from its antecedents.[25] Marisol Berríos-Miranda has recently argued that, based on the descriptive and evaluative terms used by Venezuelan salsa musicians, "salsa," whether defined as a genre, rhythm, or style, is "stylistically and sonically distinctive."[26] Berríos-Miranda goes on to state that stylistic distinctions, however slight, between salsa and its antecedents are qualitatively significant and have become regarded, in time, as the essence of a new music.[27]

While salsa may have come to constitute a distinct genre of music with regionally defined styles,[28] writers and early salsa musicians through at least the mid 1970s in New York City still considered the term as a marketing tool for a repertory of established genres and not yet a "new music." As Ray Barretto stated in 1976:

> To any knowledgeable Latin who has any kind of background in Latin music, salsa is nothing new. People like Tito Rodriguez, Noro Morales, Machito, all have been doing it for years. . . . You see, salsa has become a commercial term. Somebody realized that we are comfortable with labels, a name, a tag.[29]

As of 1975, according to John Storm Roberts, "salsa" was essentially a repertory of Cuban genres and styles that included mambo, chachachá, guajira, guaracha, son montuno, and guaguancó.[30] Considering salsa as a repertory of genres, therefore, is warranted not

---

[25] Duany 1984: 187; Padilla 1989: 33.
[26] Berríos-Miranda 2002: 25, 45.
[27] Ibid.: 27.
[28] Berríos-Miranda (2002) and Waxer (1998, 2002c) have argued this in the case of Venezuela and Colombia, respectively.
[29] Quoted in Smith 1976b: 18.
[30] Roberts 1975: 52.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

only for its historical accuracy, in the context of New York City, but most importantly it enables us to focus analytically on the son montuno and conjunto-style guaguancó, the only two genres of the salsa repertory whose origins can be directly attributed to Arsenio. What is more, breaking-down salsa music into genres facilitates the comparison of styles of a particular genre such as son montuno or guaguancó as performed among contemporary salsa groups from the same or different regions as well as between salsa groups and their predecessors.

In addition, writers, including those cited above, who have attempted to distinguish salsa as a genre independent of its antecedents, have overlooked the common musical procedures and general stylistic predilections that musicians in Cuba, Puerto Rico, New York City, Venezuela, and elsewhere before the 1970s and after have identified and signified with particular descriptive and evaluative terms and metaphors. In comparing the uses and meanings of these descriptive and evaluative terms in their social and historical contexts, we are forced to consider not only the stylistic heterogeneity of both salsa and its antecedents but most significantly which styles of salsa relate musically and historically to which antecedent styles.

Tracing the legacy of Arsenio's style in salsa's gendered discourse and "barrio" trope

The current commercially dominant style of salsa referred to as "salsa romántica" or "salsa monga" ("limp salsa") has spurred intense debate among musicians and scholars regarding issues of aesthetic value and stylistic authenticity. In addressing these issues, salsa musicians, particularly those of the previous generation, distinguish salsa romántica from

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

earlier styles of salsa from the 1970s, which scholars have categorized under yet another seemingly homogeneous category they have entitled "salsa dura" ("hard salsa"). According to Chris Washburne, for example, salsa romántica is generally characterized by its laidback beat, subdued and restrained percussion and brass parts, smooth and mellow vocals, slick studio production techniques, and overall homogeneous sound, while salsa dura is distinguished simply for its hard driving and powerful sound.[31]

Frances Aparicio suggests that gender lies at the very heart of this discourse, arguing that the masculinity attributed to salsa dura emerged as a central discursive tactic of dispossessed Puerto Rican males living in the barrios of New York City in the 1970s in their negotiations of power with dominant institutions.[32] In contrast, Aparicio continues, the salsa romántica style, initially conceived of by the music industry in the 1980s, has been deemed homogenized, depoliticized, and, ultimately, feminized, signaling a shift from:

> [salsa dura's] working-class, black/mulatto, male oppositionality that is indexed by *strong* sounds of drumming and percussion and that exhorts a *dialogic relationship* with its audience, to a music [i.e., salsa romántica] that is meant to attract passive, middle-class audiences in concert-hall settings and that is not perceived as socially threatening or as chaotic, disturbing "noise."[33]

As we can see, therefore, discursive binaries including gendered signifiers, like those that Cuban musicians used to distinguish conjuntos *negros* (black) and *machos* (masculine) from conjuntos *blancos* (white) and *hembras* (feminine), have played a central

---

[31] See Washburne 1999: 131-139.
[32] Aparicio 2002: 136-140; see also Rondón 1980: 29-34.
[33] Ibid.: 140 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

role in musicians' and scholars' evaluations and orderings of the characteristics distinguishing salsa dura from salsa romántica. The tensions and power relations between both artistic expression and cooptation by the recording industry as well as socially and politically dispossessed and dominant populations have ultimately formed the basis from which these stylistic trajectories and their evaluations and orderings have been manifest.[34] Hence, we ought to consider the legacy of Arsenio's style as particularly relevant to the "salsa dura" category because of the oppositionality and authenticity these styles had articulated and signified in their respective historical and social contexts. Likewise, we ought to consider the "típico," namely, the "matancerizante" strain, and salsa romántica categories in the legacy of La Sonora Matancera, the styles of which were in their respective historical and social contexts emblematic and constitutive of commercialization and the aesthetic predilections of the dominant classes.

These significations, as has already been established, have been articulated particularly in terms of race, gender, and class. When I asked Phil Newsum (percussionist for Larry Harlow during the 1960s) if racialized characterizations were used in New York City during the 1960s as they had been in Havana during the 1940s, he initially answered:

> No. In fact, if you would have asked me then, What made the difference between these bands [i.e., Cuban conjuntos]? I wouldn't have articulated it. I couldn't have told you. All I can tell you is, "Oh man, these guys [i.e.,

---

[34] See Cortes, Falcón, and Flores (1976: 127-130) who discuss salsa as a medium for the expression of cultural autonomy and political consciousness by the Puerto Rican working class and a commodity for the commercial exploitation of the recording industry in New York City up to the mid 1970s. See also Baron (1977), Blum (1978: 144-147), Padilla (1989: 30-33) and Manuel (1991) who discuss the dialectical interplay between the Latin music recording industry and the musical creativity of salsa musicians in the 1970s and 1980s

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> Arsenio's conjunto] have so much *feeling*." But I didn't define it in terms of race. I didn't even define it in terms of African influence in the music. I didn't even think of it that way. I just said like, "Wow, this is *strong*. This [has] *so much feeling*." But later on, as I grew up, [I] began to say, "Oh, that's why it's that way," because I had a lot of African records.[35]

As Newsum continued, Africanness and authenticity began to emerge as subtexts signified at first by the concept of "roots":

> The idea was to reach to the *roots*. We were looking for the roots, "Where did all of this come from?," cause that's where we wanted to go. All of my life I strove to find music that had *the most powerful roots*.[36]

Eventually, Newsum's discussion of "feeling," "rhythm," and "power" led him to distinguish salsa romántica from Arsenio's style:

> A lot of what they call "salsa" today has absolutely no relationship to Arsenio—what he did, how his music was manifested. The *feeling* isn't there. It's a completely different thing. . . . What's seemed to happen, salsa has gone into another direction, a direction of romance. They *play down the rhythm* and play up the romance. You got male singers and female singers. They are the stars, and the bands and the musicians are just support services. Nobody could say that René Scull [Arsenio's cousin and lead vocalist from about 1946 to 1952] was the star of Arsenio's band. *That whole band, the power of it, they were all equal*. . . . A lot of the salsa now is all story. It's like beginning to end, the singer is telling you a story. And if there's call-and-response in the middle, it's very short; it's meaningless next to the story itself. There's no comparison. *The African element is gone*.[37]

Eddie Palmieri echoed Newsum's sentiments about rhythm, adding that the central role of climax in Arsenio's arrangements also distinguishes his style from salsa romántica:

---

[35] Newsum, 15 August 2001 (emphasis added).
[36] Ibid (emphasis added).
[37] Newsum, 15 August 2001 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> But after [the 1970s] it's been completely downhill, and what we have right now is a tragedy, a rhythmical, lyrical, compositional tragedy. They removed the *tension and resistance* from the arrangements. So you have a minimum *climax* or no climax at all, which is a rhythmical, sacred sin in our music. . . . It's been a total dishonor to the great percussionists that crystallized and did the evolution of these rhythmical patterns to be put into a structure [i.e., the son montuno texture] like Arsenio did. We totally have destroyed that.[38]

Signifiers of masculinity have had a more prominent role, as Aparicio argues, than those of race in the evaluation of styles in salsa, although in either case what is usually evaluated are rhythm and performance style. In discussing Palmieri's "Vámonos pa'l monte" ("Let's Go to the Mountain," rec. 1971), one of the most typical examples identified with the "innovative" or "salsa dura" category, César Miguel Rondón states:

> ["Vámanos pa'l monte"] in every way irreverent and rude would have an identification with all those who would prefer *strong* and *aggressive* salsa instead of *weak* and *commercial* salsa. . . . [Its] montuno . . . would become classic, the example par excellence of an authentic montuno, *aggressively attacked*.[39]

In characterizing Arsenio's style as *macho* (masculine), Cuban musicians also employed the terms "strong" and "aggressive" to describe his conjunto's "rhythmic force," in particular, the partially and strictly interwoven textures it created and the cross-rhythms it used, especially in the diablo section. According to Arsenio himself, the bass patterns had to "sing," that is, play melodic lines in contratiempo, otherwise the music would be *cojo* or "weak" (see p. 142). Newsum equated Arsenio's rhythmic "power" with that of Manny

---

[38] Palmieri, 26 February 2002 (emphasis added).
[39] Rondón 1980: 85 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Oquendo (Palmieri's timbal and bongó player through the 1960s), identifying their simple, yet powerful rhythmic prowess as a common denominator:

> Guys are always saying, "Oh, [Manny Oquendo] plays the same thing over and over." Yes, he does, but *how* he plays it, *how* he lays it down *against the time*, it'll eat you up inside if you're sensitive to it. I've never been bored listening to Manny play, even though you might say that his style has not developed in twenty years. Every solo he takes, I'm all ears. Just to listen to him to keep time is *powerful*. And Manny has the *power* that Arsenio's band had.[40]

Yet another component of Arsenio's *macho* style, in Newsum's words, was the forcefulness of his vocalists:

> PN: If you listen to any of Arsenio's traditional recordings with his traditional conjuntos [i.e., from the 1940s] the guys in the chorus were actually singers. They had voices that really stood out *full and strong*. I wanted a chorus like that. I didn't want a whole bunch of nasal guys in the back.
>
> DG: Something kind of like what Pacheco tried to duplicate with the Sonora Matancera sound?
>
> PN: Oh, I didn't want that. That has its place, but that wasn't what I wanted. I wanted music with *cojones* ["balls"], really *powerful cojones*. And to me Arsenio was the epitome of that kind of music.[41]

Finally, salsa dura's hard driving and powerful sound has been described as not only associated with but actually constitutive of the violence and bitterness of life in the barrio. As Rondón states:

> The barrio is the common thread. The lyrics return to impart the

---

[40] Newsum, 15 August 2001 (emphasis added).
[41] Ibid.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> authenticity that had been substituted by glamour. The arrangements, far from imbuing itself in showy beauty, increasingly try to reproduce the sounds of the street, noisy sounds that conform to everyday life.[42]

In reiterating Rondón's characterization, Lise Waxer mistakenly states that salsa's working-class orientation was absent in Cuban conjunto music:

> Unlike its Cuban prototypes, salsa is identified with the street, with life in the urban barrio. Aggressive lyrics, rugged trombones, and heavy percussion became sonic indices for the accelerated pace and harsh edges of city life.[43]

Salsa's "Cuban prototypes," however, that is, Arsenio's son montuno style was not only associated with but constitutive of the poverty, injustice, and pride that members of the black working class of Havana experienced in their lives. This is particularly evidenced in the lyrical and musical contents of Arsenio's conjunto-style guaguancós.

In contrast to the strong and aggressive performance approach characteristic of Palmieri's group or, in general, salsa dura, Johnny Pacheco promoted (musically and commercially) a style unequivocally drawn from La Sonora Matancera's. Hence, the differences between Arsenio's and La Sonora Matancera's styles paralleled the differences between Palmieri's and Pacheco's styles. After stating that "nobody [in New York City in the 1960s] was playing anything *heavy* except for Eddie Palmieri," Newsum suggested the following explanation:

> The people that followed [Arsenio], that appreciated him, were probably the only ones who really *understand* him, like Eddie [Palmieri]. Pacheco

---

[42] Rondón 1980: 32.
[43] Waxer 2002c: 225.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

> understood [Arsenio] but he had to carve out his own niche for himself.[44]

Therefore, instead of simply reproducing Arsenio's style, as Pacheco attempted with Matancera's, Palmieri and members of his conjunto, Manny Oquendo and Barry Rogers in particular, studied the *principles* of Arsenio's style and used these to fashion their own unique and, hence, *strong* and *aggressive* style.

Larry Harlow's group, with whom Newsum performed and recorded from about 1965 to the early 1970s, devoted a noticeable amount of its recorded repertory to covers of Arsenio's material. However, like Pacheco's style, Harlow's has occasionally simply been distinguished as "tipico" (see p. 457) and not "strong," "aggressive," or "powerful." About a year following Arsenio's death, Harlow's group recorded a tribute album to Arsenio for Fania Records. As Newsum recounted, however, it was difficult to get Harlow to play with the "funkiness, the soul of Arsenio's style."[45] As the analysis below will show, the changes Harlow's arrangers made to the arrangement scheme of Arsenio's son montunos added to the complete transformation of the dynamics and, hence, soul of the original music. In addition, while salsa's so-called "tipico" boom was beginning, spearheaded by Pacheco's work with Pete "El Conde" Rodriguez and, later, Celia Cruz, Arsenio's music, however poorly interpreted, was, according to Newsum, not commercially viable:

> When we recorded [the *Tribute to Arsenio* LP, released in 1972] there was still nobody that really appreciated Arsenio, except Eddie [Palmieri], [Ray] Barretto, just the musicians. But the general public?, that wasn't their

---

[44] Newsum, 15 August 2001 (emphasis added).
[45] Phil Newsum (personal communication).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

thing.[46]

Both salsa and Cuban conjunto music constitute stylistically diverse and complex repertories. Lumping all Cuban conjuntos together under the category of "típico" or all early salsa groups together under the category of "salsa dura" inevitably reifies socially and musically complex repertories of music. Unfortunately, salsa scholarship continues this process of reification of both salsa and its antecedents, even though the musical and professional trajectories of, for example, Puerto Rican groups of the 1950s such as Cortijo y Su Combo and Mon Rivera's remain to be comprehensively documented and analyzed. This dissertation, however, has focused on how Arsenio negotiated the conflicting musical and social forces he encountered at the local and global levels of the Latin dance music industry. Relating the descriptive and evaluative terminology of Cuban conjunto and salsa styles is particularly central to transcending the nationalist debates about the origins and authorship of salsa.

In the following analysis, I will compare re-recordings of son montunos by early salsa groups with their originals, showing that the so-called "típico" stream of salsa did not encompass "duplications" of Cuban conjunto recordings (see p. 457), namely those made by *negro* and *macho* conjuntos. Hence, I will argue that Arsenio's legacy in salsa is not merely a question of his music's presence in the recorded repertories of early salsa groups such as Harlow's but ultimately the impact his rhythmic and aesthetic principles have had on primarily Eddie Palmieri and Barry Rogers.

---

[46] Newsum, 15 August 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Son Montuno in the Early Salsa Repertory of New York City

In Chapter 4 I detailed how Arsenio changed certain aspects of the flavor and feel of Cuban son music. According to his contemporaries of the 1940s, he accomplished this in four ways: 1) adding instruments, coordinating the rhythm patterns of all the parts, and, most notably, amplifying the rhythmic density and power of the conjunto; 2) using patterns for the bass with an unprecedented amount of off-beat and melodic accentuation; 3) engendering a new approach to dancing *son* that involved the body more and whose choreography was synchronized with the energy dynamics of the music; and 4) introducing a new arrangement scheme with a climactic finale he called "diablo."

Because these components of Arsenio's son montuno style have not until now been documented and analyzed in detail, the nature of his legacy in salsa has never been clarified. For instance, musicians and writers have often made vague claims portraying Arsenio as having an all-embracing "influence" on salsa. The following statement by Cuban music historian Cristóbal Díaz Ayala is typical of the extent to which writers have been able to articulate his significance:

> The great part of the subsequent musical development that Latin music has in New York, the revival of groups [i.e., conjuntos] in the decades of the 1960s and especially the 1970s, is due to Arsenio. Salsa was in the legacy of Arsenio.[47]

Defining what "part" of salsa's musical development, besides the "revival" of conjuntos, has eluded musicians and writers alike. A significant reason for this, as I outlined above,

---

[47] Díaz Ayala 1993: 174.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

has been the "típico" concept, whereby Arsenio's relevance has been limited to a constructed stylistic stream and historical period of salsa.

My analysis has two main goals. First, I want to compare the "reproductions" by so-called "típico" salsa groups such as Johnny Pacheco's, Larry Harlow's, and others of son montunos originally recorded by Cuban conjuntos including Arsenio's, showing that the re-recordings took on distinct qualities that I attribute to both musical and social factors. In the first section below, I will give examples of the subtle, yet significant differences in rhythmic quality between the original and re-recorded versions. I will also discuss how Arsenio's characteristic "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration and its variations (see Example 4.2.b) continued to be utilized for originally composed son montunos by, for example Eddie Palmieri, but was replaced with the anticipated bass pattern in re-recordings by other so-called "típico" groups such as Johnny Pacheco's and La Sonora Ponceña. In the second section I will argue that such musical differences coupled with the relative obscurity of the son montuno dance style rendered the meanings and values of the son montuno in the context of New York City of the 1960s and early 1970s distinct from those that defined it in Havana in the 1940s. These aspects of the son montuno's place in salsa's early history offer more evidence of the constructed nature of the "típico" category.

Finally, for my second analytical goal, I want to identify the definitive musical aspects of Arsenio's contribution to salsa. In the third section I will argue that the rhythmic principles of tension and power, culminating in the climactic section referred to as the moña, which has constituted much of salsa from New York City, are *central to the legacy* of Arsenio's son montuno style and arrangement scheme.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The son montuno style and form

According to some musicians, Arsenio's son montuno style is inimitable and unmistakably distinct from salsa in general, especially in terms of its rhythmic texture and bass patterns in contratiempo. As Israel "Cachao" López stated:

> [H]e was a great creator, a founder of a style that many people today have copied. But the difference [between his style and salsa] is enormous. Arsenio had something like an indisputable clarity, an inimitable feel, which salsa can't come close to.[48]

Eddie Palmieri confirms Cachao's assessment, adding that Arsenio's "structures" or rhythmic patterns and texture, are distinct from those of contemporary salsa musicians:

> DG: So you would agree then that the music that they're playing now, that you're talking about, there's really no relevance to what Arsenio did?
>
> EP: Oh, no, no, no. After the structures that he laid down, because not even in Cuba do you have what Arsenio's structures were. Chappottín and the Arsenio-style band, that's nonexistent, and if you tried to put it together it's a terrible mimicry because you can't even imitate it.[49]

Although it can be said that the procedure of coordinating all the parts of the conjunto continue in salsa, *how* Arsenio used this procedure to create the son montuno texture remains inimitable. This process began with the coordination of the slaps of the bongó and open-toned attacks of the tumbadora to create interlocking patterns. Papa Kila and other former percussionists of Arsenio's conjunto continued this style of playing into the 1950s as members of the conjuntos of Chappottín, Chocolate, and others. For

---

[48] Quoted in Padura Fuentes 1997: 138-139.
[49] Palmieri, 26 February 2002.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Palmieri, it was Chappottín's recording of "Me voy contigo" ("I'm Going with You," composed by Arsenio's cousin Jacinto Scull), made in the mid 1950s, that introduced him to this style of coordinating patterns which Arsenio had established in the prior decade.

> It was "Me voy contigo" by Felix [Chappottín] and that did it. That was my direction and my dedication from that moment on. I couldn't believe what I was hearing: the *question and answers* between instruments, conga and bongo, *it's not just putting it* [i.e., either bongó or tumbadora] *in between your legs and hitting it.*[50]

Phil Newsum and many of his contemporaries carefully studied Arsenio's recordings from the 1940s, especially Papa Kila's bongó style:

> That's a style that was followed by almost everybody that came after [Papa Kila]. Manny [Oquendo] does it, I did it. It's directly descended from him. The stuff that he's doing is very simple. We used to call that *golpe seco* [dry hit]. There were no double stroke rolls [i.e., flams]. . . . *It was more than martillo* [basic bongó pattern], *but you had a vocabulary of licks*. . . . So I copied as many of those licks that I could get down. . . . That's what these guys [Arsenio's percussionists] did with the rhythm. *They threw away all the bullshit and just kept the essential lick itself*. You're using time and space to make the statements. A lot of nervous guys, neurotic guys, they feel like they got to fill up every measure with licks. There's no space. Part of the fun of it is in the anticipation, leaving the holes.[51]

The "question and answer" sequence or call-and-response that Palmieri refers to in "Me voy contigo" takes place between the bass, bongó, and tumbadora during the initial alternations of the montuno section (marked off with brackets in Example 9.1.a).[52] The bongó player, in particular, executes the most common sequence of slaps or "licks" found

---

[50] Palmieri in Roberts 1976: 42 (emphasis added).
[51] Newsum, 15 August 2001 (emphasis added).
[52] *Chappotín y Sus Estrellas*. Antilla CD-107.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.1. The son montuno texture

(a) "Me voy contigo" (mid 1950s), Chappottín y sus Estrellas: montuno

in the son montuno style (see also Example 9.1.c). Notice, also, how the bass and piano parts overlap, hence adding to the interwoven and dense texture of parts which collectively accentuate the *son's* basic footwork, especially the syncopated steps of 3 and 4. Similar sequences of interrelated patterns as executed by the bass, bongó, and tumbadora as well as the overall texture and accentuation of the *son* dance appear in Arsenio's recordings beginning as early as 1944 (see Examples 4.2.e, f; see also 4.8.d).

When comparing Chappottín's recording to Pacheco's re-recorded version,

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.1. *Continued*

(b) "Me voy contigo" (ca. 1968), Johnny Pacheco y su "Nuevo Tumbao": montuno

however, subtle, yet significant differences appear (see Example 9.1.b).[53] First, question and answer sequences between the percussion and bass parts are absent. Instead, these parts proceed relatively independent of each other, particularly the bongó, which executes rather nervous and anxious sequences of slaps and flams (or "double-stroke rolls"). Second, the piano and bass parts are rhythmically in unison, which creates a rather transparent and, hence, weak texture compared to the partially interwoven piano and bass

[53] *Pacheco Presents Monguito*. Fania SLP 341.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.1. *Continued*

(c) "No vuelvo a Morón" (ca. 1950), Arsenio Rodríguez y Su Conjunto: montuno

"A Moron." Words and Music by Orilio del Portal. Copyright (c) 1947 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

parts in the original recording. Lastly, the overall rhythmic feel created by Pacheco's conjunto seems to be better suited for the basic dance footwork of "mambo on 2," given the emphasis on steps 2, 3, 4, and 6 (none of which are syncopated) in the piano, bass, and tumbadora patterns.

Pacheco's conjunto again dilutes the same characteristics of the son montuno style in its re-recording of Arsenio's own "No vuelvo a Morón" ("I'm Not Going Back to Morón"). In Arsenio's 1950 version (his conjunto had recorded it first in 1948) the "question and answer" sequences take place between the bass, bongó, tumbadora, and the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.1. *Continued*

(d) "No vuelvo a Morón" (ca. 1966), Johnny Pacheco y Su "Nuevo Tumbao": montuno

"A Moron." Words and Music by Orilio del Portal. Copyright (c) 1947 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

tres, while the bass and refrain unambiguously accent the syncopated steps of the *son's* footwork (see Example 9.1.c). In Pacheco's rendition, however, the bongó and tumbadora merely keep time by executing their basic tumbaos (martillo, in the case of the bongó) which along with the bass part accent beats 4 or steps 3 and 6 of the "mambo on 2"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

footwork (see Example 9.1.d).[54]

Such sequences of dialogue involved a repertory of not only bongó "licks," as Newsum noted, but also bass patterns. Arsenio and his Cuban successors favored three related bass patterns in particular that were modeled on the bass pattern introduced in "Mi chinita me botó," recorded in 1944 (see Example 4.2.b). The main characteristics of this pattern and its two variants involve the simultaneous melodic and rhythmic accentuation of the sung refrain parts and the *son's* footwork. Besides these melodic and rhythmic qualities, particular notes of the bass lines, especially the note coinciding with step 5 of the footwork, were attacked in a staccato manner, lending the bass lines an added percussive effect.

According to Alfonso "El Panameño" Joseph (Arsenio's bassist in New York City throughout much of the 1960s), Arsenio continued to favor these bass patterns and required that they be executed correctly:

> He taught me his repertory and, at the same time, he taught me how to play the Cuban [i.e., son montuno] tumbao. It's different from the tumbao that we used playing with Puerto Rican groups. It was more complicated . . . more syncopated. . . . He made me shorten the attack of each note. . . . I started to learn the Cuban tumbao by imitating Cachao. That's why I had some preparation when I met Arsenio, and I was willing to change.[55]

Such shortened or staccato attacks coincide with step 5 in "Me voy contigo" (see Example

---

[54] *Johnny Pacheco: Viva Africa*. Fania Records SLP 330.

[55] Él me enseño el repertorio de él y, a la misma vez, me enseño a tocar el tumbao cubano [i.e., de son montuno]. Es diferente que el tumbao que usabamos tocando con grupos puertorriqueños. Era más complicado, . . . más sincopa. . . . Él me hacía cortar las notas. . . . Fue imitando a Cachao que yo empese a entender el tumbao cubano. Entonces, por eso que ya yo tenía preparación cuando yo conocía a Arsenio, y estaba yo *willing to change* (Joseph, 29 November 2001).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

9.1.a) and steps 2 and 5 in "No vuelvo a Morón" (see Example 9.1.c). The bass players in these recordings use variations 1 and 2, respectively, of the "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration. The bassists in Pacheco's re-recordings, however, use not only different bass patterns but more notably favor connecting their attacks, lending their bass lines a smoother feel instead of the more percussive quality engendered by the staccato attacks of Arsenio's bass lines (see Examples 9.1.b and d).

Echoing Cachao's and Palmieri's sentiments, "El Panameño" ultimately attributed the inimitability of Arsenio's style to his bass patterns, distinguishing these from the "anticipated" and guaracha bass patterns, which as in many repertories of "white"-style Cuban conjuntos of the 1940s, became the standard patterns for the entire salsa repertory of genres:

> AJ: Salsa consists of only two tumbaos, that's it. And they don't play that tumbao in the way that we would play it playing Cuban music. That's why when Arsenio died many Puerto Rican bandleaders began to disfavor me, they began to scorn me because they didn't like the tumbao that I would play for them. They wanted me to play the older style, that simple tumbao.
>
> DG: [Sings the "anticipated bass" tumbao]
>
> AJ: That's it! And I would just play that, but it would bore me after a little while. And all of the numbers that you play have the same tumbao. One gets bored, especially someone like myself. . . . For example, some would tell me "*don't sing, don't sing*!" when I would play rhythms [i.e., bass patterns] that Arsenio had taught me.[56]

---

[56] La salsa se consiste solamente de dos tumbaos, nada más. Y no tocan ese tumbao en la manera como lo tocaría nosotros tocando música cubana. Por eso cuando se murió Arsenio muchos de los líderes puertorriqueños empezaron a desfavoreserme, empezaron a despreciarme porque no les gustaban el tumbao que yo les ponían. Querían que yo volviera a tocar al estilo de antes, ese tumbao sensillo. DG: [Sings the "anticipated bass" tumbao] AJ: ¡Eso es! Y yo me quedaba con ese, pero ese aborrecía despues de un tiempo. Y todos los números que tú tocas es del mismo tumbao. Uno se aborrece, especialmente

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

These musicians' reaction, as recounted by "El Panameño," is noteworthy, considering the initial comments Arsenio received from Cuban bassists after he had instructed them to make the bass "sing" beginning in the early 1940s. As Raúl recounted: "The bassists used to say, 'No, Arsenio, you're crazy! How can the bass sing?' And he used to answer, 'The bass *will* sing, because if it doesn't sing [the music] will be *cojo* [weak]' " (see p. 142).[57]

In some cases, Arsenio's original bass lines were replaced with the anticipated bass pattern. For example, in Arsenio's "Hachero pa' un palo" (recorded in New York City, ca. 1960), the bassist (probably Raúl Díaz) uses the "Mi chinita me botó" figuration (see Example 9.2.a). Melodically, the bass line accents the first half of the coro, while also accenting steps 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the *son* footwork. In La Sonora Ponceña's re-recording, however, the anticipated bass pattern, characterized by its tied notes, is substituted for the original pattern in the montuno and diablo sections (see Example 9.2.b).[58] Whereas the bass, coro, and tres patterns in the original recording collectively accent the *son* footwork, the piano montuno and anticipated bass pattern in Ponceña's version create a schism against the original coro pattern, hence disrupting the collective accentuation of the *son* footwork. Other examples in which the original bass lines in contratiempo are substituted include Pacheco's re-recording of "El kikiriki"[59] (originally recorded by Conjunto Estrellas de Chocolate in the early 1950s), in which the anticipated bass pattern is used in the diablo

---

uno como yo. . . . Por ejemplo, algunos me decían "¡no cantes, no cantes!" cuando yo tocaba ritmos como lo que me enseñó Arsenio (Joseph, 29 November 2001).

[57] Raúl Travieso, 8 February 1997.

[58] *Lo mejor de La Sonora Ponceña*. Inca I 1045.

[59] *Cañonazo: Johnny Pacheco*. Fania SLP 325.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.2. The "Mi chinita me botó" and anticipated bass figurations

(a) "Hachero pa' un palo" (ca. 1960), Arsenio Rodríguez y Su Conjunto: montuno

section, and Willie Rosario's version of "Con un amor se borra otro amor"[60] ("With One Love You Forget Another Love," originally recorded by Arsenio's conjunto in 1950), in which the guaracha pattern is used in the diablo section. As Arsenio warned, by not making the bass "sing" along with the refrain or coro, the son montuno feel or texture would be weakened.

In some originally composed son montunos of the early salsa period, bassists

---

[60] *Willie Rosario: Más ritmo.* Inca LP 1025.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.2. *Continued*

(b) "Hachero pa' un palo" (ca. 1970), La Sonora Ponceña: montuno

execute patterns approximating the "Mi chinita me botó" figuration and its variants. The bass pattern in Palmieri's "Café," for example, exhibits some of the key features of Arsenio's bass lines, particularly the accentuation of the syncopated steps 3 and 4 and the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

staccato attack coinciding with step 5 of the *son* footwork (see Example 9.3.a).[61] The second half of the refrain as well as the piano part, which although rhythmically in unison with the bass part, further engender the son montuno feel by accentuating the key steps of 3 and 4 of the *son* footwork. Another example is "Estrellas de Fania" ("The Stars of Fania") in which the bass part accents, along with the piano part, steps 3, 5, and 6 of the *son* footwork.[62] Also note that the harmonic cycle (a minor and major chord a whole step apart) and the refrain's melodic contour of "Estrellas de Fania" are found in Arsenio's "Que cosas tendrán las mujeres" ("What Things Do Women Have," see example 4.2.f) and "Esas no" ("Not Those Women," see Example 6.1.a).

Thus far, I have shown that renderings of son montunos in the early salsa repertory did not involve literal reproductions but rather approximations of its original defining rhythmic texture and bass parts. More significantly, despite the fact that the diablo section constituted the culmination of the son montuno arrangement scheme and, in general, style, its import to salsa arrangers was ambiguous at best. Instead, Johnny Pacheco, Larry Harlow, Eddie Palmieri, Barry Rogers, and other arrangers favored the mambo section over the diablo, even in their rearrangements of son montunos originally recorded by Cuban conjuntos.

Johnny Pacheco stayed closest to the original schemes, varying only some of the alternating sequences and occasionally omitting the diablo section (see Table 9.1 in Appendix 4). In his recording of "Campeón" ("Champion"), for example, Pacheco

---

[61] *Eddie Palmieri: Echando pa'lante (Straight Ahead)*. Tico SLP 1113. See also Palmieri's recording of "Reparto Hornos" (in *Eddie Palmieri: Lo que traigo es sabroso* LPA 8320), which features a similar bass line in contratiempo.
[62] *Fania All Stars: Recorded Live at Cheetah*. Fania 748.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.3. Variations of Arsenio's "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration

(a) "Café" (1964), Eddie Palmieri and La Perfecta

shortens the montuno by omitting the alternation between the sung refrain and trumpet improvisations. Following the solo and cierre (break) he adds a mambo section, arranged for two trumpets, and then substitutes the original diablo section with a return to the montuno, which consists of alternating sequences between the trumpet and coro (sung

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.3. *Continued*

(b) "Estrellas de Fania" (1972), Fania All-Stars

chorus) and the guía[63] (vocal improvisation) and coro. Pacheco similarly alters the

[63] "Guía" has been defined as an improvised text sung by the first voice in alternation with the coro (chorus) during the montuno section (e.g., Robbins 1990: 190). In the context of salsa music, however, "soneo" or "inspiración" is used to indicate these improvised vocal lines, while guía is used as another name for the canto or verse section (e.g., Gerard 1989:

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

arrangement scheme of his re-recording of "Fania" by adding a mambo section and omitting the diablo.[64] In other cases he alters the diablo's typical sequence of events by omitting the alternating sequence between the trumpet and coro ("Prefiero el son") or adding an alternating sequence between the guía and coro ("Oye canuto," "A Morón," and "Me voy contigo").

While Pacheco occasionally added the mambo section, Larry Harlow almost always used it in his re-arrangements of Arsenio's son montunos (see Table 9.2 in Appendix 4). And, like Pacheco, he continued to use the diablo section but altered its typical sequence of events by adding an alternating sequence between the guía and coro ("El terror") or omitting a particular alternating sequence ("No me llores"). In "Tumba y bongó" (originally "Kila, Kike y Chocolate"), however, Harlow omitted the diablo altogether, adding a mambo and coda section and additional alternating sequences.[65] Hence, in terms of the arrangement's energy dynamics, the mambo section replaces the diablo as the climactic section. What is more, in comparing the diablo in Arsenio's original recording (see Example 4.8.d) with Harlow's mambo section (see Example 9.4), we see that the defining rhythmic and procedural aspects of the original diablo and, with it, Arsenio's son montuno feel are consequently erased altogether.

First, the original bass line is set in Variation 2 of the "Mi chinita me botó" figuration (see Example 4.1.b), while Harlow's bassist uses the notably less syncopated

---

34). I will use "guía" as it is defined by Robbins and used by Peer International, the copyright owner of most of Arsenio's catalog, in his lead sheets.

[64] Pacheco got the name for his and Masucci's record company from the recording "Fania," which was composed by Reinaldo Bolaños.

[65] *Orchestra Harlow: Tribute to Arsenio*. Fania SLP 00404.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.4. "Tumba y bongó" (1972), Orchestra Harlow: mambo section

"Kila, Quique y Chocolate." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Published by Warner Brothers Publications U.S., Inc. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

guaracha tumbao. Second, the "question and answer" sequence between the bongó and tumbadora in the original recording is absent in Harlow's mambo. Third, the strict interwoven patterns created by the tres (Arsenio) and piano (Lilí) parts in the original contrast with the rhythmically unison patterns of the cuatro (Yomo Toro) and piano (Harlow) in Harlow's version. Finally, the hocket-like effect spontaneously created by

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's three trumpets differs dramatically from the smooth and "orchestrated" parts performed by Harlow's trumpets and trombone. In addition, while the tempo progressively increases in the original performance, Harlow's performance begins at about 147 beats per minute, and from there on slowly decelerates to about 134 in the coda, thereby counteracting any sense of climax. By Arsenio's standards, Harlow's re-recordings of "El terror" and "No me llores," too, drag on because the tempo either decelerates or remains static.

The diablo section also proved to be expendable in Eddie Palmieri's and Barry Rogers's arrangements of son montunos, including Arsenio's. For example, in "Con un amor se borra otro amor" and "Si las nenas me dejan que" the original diablo sections are omitted (see Table 9.3 in Appendix 4). In "Pa' huele," however, Palmieri sticks to the original arrangement scheme, although the diablo section is noticeably expanded, including an alternating sequence between the coro and guía, which is atypical of Arsenio's diablos. Nevertheless, its harmonic cycle remains truncated to half (i.e., two bars) its original length from the montuno section, while every alternating sequence involves a response from the coro. Furthermore, as I will detail below, the entire diablo section, which lasts for about 2 minutes and 10 seconds, constitutes a continuous climax that peaks at several points, particularly when the trombones, not unlike the trumpets in Arsenio's "Kila, Kike y Chocolate," spontaneously create interlocking patterns, the technique of which is referred to in salsa jargon as "moña" (see Example 9.6.a).

Ultimately, the diablo section proved to be inessential to salsa arrangers, even in originally composed son montunos (see Table 9.4 in Appendix 4). Nevertheless, the typical salsa arrangement scheme, as defined by Palmieri in 1976, consisted of an

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

introduction, verse, break (cierre), montuno, solo, break, mambo, and montuno.[66] Although the number of alternations was greater, the actual scheme itself, with the exception of the mambo section, was not much different from the one-part and two-part (i.e., verse-montuno) schemes Arsenio standardized in the early 1940s (compare Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 9.4).

Besides the adaptation of its arrangement scheme, the son montuno in the early salsa recorded repertory incorporated some of the key structural features of Arsenio's son montuno style, yet the *ways* in which these features were put together engendered distinct "feels." In Phil Newsum's opinion, early salsa bands of the 1960s who could successfully produce Arsenio's son montuno feel, which he described as engendering a "backward and forward" motion, were few and far between:

> PN: I loved that feeling that many people call *pa'lante/pa'tra'* [backward/forward]. It's a feeling that you can't miss if you listen to Arsenio's music or Chappottín's or any of those groups.
>
> DG: How much of that feeling was in the New York bands?
>
> PN: Hardly any.[67]

Christopher Washburne suggests that in reinterpreting Cuban traditions in general:

> Puerto Rican musicians transformed originally *fluid* practices into stricter forms dictated by austere guidelines [i.e., those dictated by clave]. Cuban percussionist Mongo Santamaria, responding to a question about clave, corroborates: 'Don't tell me about 3-2 or 2-3! In Cuba we just play. We

---

[66] Roberts 1976: 43. In his schema of the typical salsa arrangement, Washburne (1999: 48) includes an instrumental interlude following the verse after which the verse repeats and a moña section to the contemporary typical salsa arrangement.
[67] Newsum, 15 August 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

feel it, we don't talk about such things.'[68]

As I have argued, the main and recurring accents of Arsenio's son montuno feel were not "just played" or a result of "fluid practices," but specifically executed to accent the main steps of the *son* footwork, which were in turn embodied in the dancer's movements. The obscurity of the son montuno dance style in New York City was, as I will discuss next, a key factor in the lack of that "pa'lante-pa'tra' " feel in early salsa groups' performance of son montuno and salsa in general.

The son montuno and salsa dance styles

Most young salsa dancers lacked interest in or knowledge of the son montuno dance style. After saying that Arsenio's music constituted no more than 20 percent of Harlow's repertory during the 1960s, Phil Newsum explained:

> We couldn't afford to load the book with Arsenio's stuff because the kids didn't like that stuff. They couldn't relate to that feeling, that slow stuff, because Arsenio's stuff was relatively slow. It didn't appeal to the neuroticism of the city. It was more country, roots-oriented stuff. I remember playing in the Club Cubano in the Bronx and I remember all those old people dancing when we were playing Arsenio's stuff. I could have stayed with that forever.[69]

As I discussed in Chapter 6, the son montuno dance style differed from the mambo dance style of the 1950s in terms of their respective basic footwork and temperament. The son montuno dance style is likewise distinct from the salsa dance style, which shares the

---

[68] Washburne 1999: 85 (emphasis added).
[69] Newsum, 15 August 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

mambo's basic footwork, both the "on 1" and "on 2" versions. In the following, Willie Colón describes the "on 2" pattern for dancing salsa:

> The basic steps are the same *for all the different rhythms* [i.e., genres] *of salsa*, and the basic beat is always four-quarter-time—four beats to the measure. That's important because you move your feet on three of these [strong] beats, the second, third and fourth, and you hold on the first.[70]

Dancing salsa, though, does not require nearly as much of the "callisthenic approach" attributed to dancing mambo. As Colón adds:

> The hand movements flow naturally from the body movements; no fancy gyrations or wild stuff. Keep them up around chest height. Basically, it's anything that's comfortable and doesn't look grotesque.[71]

Nevertheless, the same "mambo on 2" pattern was used, as Colón noted, to dance to the "different rhythms of salsa," including son montuno. Hence, by using the mambo's basic footwork, young salsa dancers, as Newsum suggested, could not have related to the son montuno feel as originally intended. Furthermore, dancing son montuno involved much more than just the basic footwork. It comprised of a processual dimension in which the anticipation and climactic arrival of the diablo section was marked and celebrated with increased upper-body, leg, and hand gestures by dancers. In Chapter 4 I described a demonstration of the son montuno dance given by Arsenio's niece Mercedes "Cheché" Scull in Havana. I highlighted her and her partner's movements in the cierre and diablo as

---

[70] Colón and Roberts 1976: 93 (emphasis added). Although the "mambo on 2" pattern has been favored by mambo and salsa dancers, particularly from New York City, the "on 1" pattern was also used by mambo dancers in the 1950s and continues to be used by contemporary salsa dancers (see Bamford 1995, Terrace 1995, and Navarro 2000).
[71] Colón and Roberts 1976: 97.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

well as the *son's* basic footwork.

On 9 July 2000, at "Recordando el Mamoncillo," a Cuban festival that takes place annually in Astoria, Queens, I video-taped three couples dancing to the original recording of Chappottín's son montuno "Yo sí como candela" ("I'm the Best," rec. ca. early 1950s).[72] As the canto section began, the first couple on the dance-floor, couple A, executed the *son* footwork as they embraced, separating briefly just before the beginning of the montuno section (see Fig. 9.1). Throughout the montuno couple A added some auxiliary steps and turns. Then, still in the montuno section, couple C reached the dance-floor and began to execute the chachachá's footwork instead of the *son's*. The juxtaposition of couples A and C accentuated the contrast between the flowing body movement as well as footwork of the son montuno and the relatively upright movement and choppy footwork of the chachachá (see Example 9.5.a for transcriptions of the music and dance patterns).

At the beginning of the tres solo, couple B reached the dance-floor and began to execute what looked like to be a bolero-type dance pattern. Soon after, at the cierre before the diablo, the male of couple A separated from his partner, extended his left foot outward, and then circled around his partner, as she continued to execute the *son's* footwork (captured in Fig. 9.1). Then, right when the music was about to reach the initial alternation of the diablo, the male executed an animated full-turn, followed by a thrust of his torso, legs, and arms toward his partner, a gesture which was very reminiscent of the vacunao of the guaguancó dance (see Fig. 9.2). After his climactic body movements in

---

[72] *Chappotín y Sus Estrellas*. Antilla CD-107.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Figure 9.1. Using the son (A), bolero (B), and chachachá (C) footwork patterns to dance son montuno.

Figure 9.2. A vacunao-type gesture (male partner of couple A) at the beginning of the diablo.

synchrony with the arrangement, couple A rejoined in an embrace and recommenced the *son's* footwork. Meanwhile, during the cierre and diablo's initial alternating sequence, couples B and C remained embraced, separating and animating their body movements only after the climactic portion of the diablo, suggesting they had sensed an increase in the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

energy, though acting on it after the fact.

In addition to demonstrating the son montuno dance style and performance in comparison to other dance styles, this event gives us some indication as to how young salsa dancers might have negotiated the son montuno style without knowing either the footwork or dynamics of the dance. In this case, couples B and C opted for dance styles that accompany other moderate to slow tempo styles (i.e., bolero and chachachá, respectively). And, although couples B and C seemed to be enjoying themselves, they nevertheless lacked embodiment of the son montuno feel, which in "Yo sí como candela" is engendered through the concurrent attacks/steps of the coro, piano, bass, tumbadora, and footwork on the "and-of-four" in the first bar and the "and-of-two" in the second of the two-bar cycle (see Example 9.5.a).

As I showed above, many re-recordings by early salsa groups of son montunos featured changes in the rhythmic textures, bass patterns, and original arrangement schemes. Such changes were obviously inconsequential to the musicians and those dancers unfamiliar with the *son* footwork and son montuno dance style, let alone the original recordings themselves. Yet, from a musical, social, and historical perspective, such changes are indeed significant. In yet another example, Arsenio's "Soy el terror" ("I'm the Terror," rec. in 1947), the bass pattern and the *son's* basic footwork strictly interlock for the first three bars of the four-bar cycle (see Example 4.1.f). Such musical and terpsichorean interrelatedness is uniquely characteristic of the innate musical and social relationship that existed between Arsenio's conjunto, son montuno style, and dancing audience in Havana in the 1940s. In Harlow's re-recording, re-titled "El terror," the bass pattern in the same section of the arrangement (i.e., the montuno) is characteristic of the

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.5. The son montuno dance style

(a) "Yo sí como candela" (early 1950s), Chappottín y Sus Estrellas: diablo

son montuno style by rhythmically and melodically accenting the coro (see Example 9.5.b).[73] Nevertheless, the musical and social spirit of the original recording was irreproducible, even if Harlow's bassist had implemented the original bass line note-for-

---

[73] ***Tribute to Arsenio Rodriguez: Orquesta Harlow***. **Fania Records SLP 00404.**

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.5. ***Continued***

(b) "El terror" (1972), Orchestra Harlow: montuno

"Soy el terror." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1972 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

note.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The moña: Arsenio's definitive contribution to salsa

In 1967 Robert Farris Thompson described the music in Eddie Palmieri's LP *El molestoso* (*The Annoying One*; rec. in 1962) as "outwardly simple and uncomplicated, and inwardly rich and complex."[74] We will recall that contemporaries of the 1940s similarly characterized Arsenio's son montuno style as rhythmically complex. In summing up his report on Palmieri's "new sound," Thompson stated:

> [Palmieri's] *sonido nuevo* is a new form of New York Latin music, founded on fresh drumming, an astringent bass, a piano mixing *fixity* of form with *counterpoint*, and a trombone extracting a *maximum* of emotion from a *minimum of notes*.[75]

This statement should likewise remind us of Odilio Urfé's and Fernando Ortiz's descriptions of the Cuban style "mambo" of the late 1940s (see pp. 172-173). They similarly identified the importance of playing spontaneously within a minimal structural arrangement or "what is not written within what is written," creating contrapuntal and interwoven textures or "a link of lines coordinated in a weave," and, most importantly, producing a maximum of energy with a minimum of notes, thereby affecting a climactic and paroxysmal moment that Ortiz identified as characteristic of "música afrocubana."

Such spontaneity, interwoven textures, and climactic energy were especially characteristic of Arsenio's diablos. In the early 1960s, trombonist and arranger Barry Rogers of Palmieri's conjunto began to incorporate the same techniques of spontaneity and interweaving parts that Arsenio had used in the diablo to produce a similarly climactic

---

[74] Thompson 1967: 54.
[75] Ibid.: 68 (emphasis added).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

section. This section and its associated techniques, referred to collectively as "moña," is what Thompson was alluding to in describing Rogers's use of the trombone as "extracting a *maximum* of emotion from a *minimum of notes*." Thus, although the schematic of the diablo did not remain a vital aspect of salsa arrangements, the function it ultimately served endured in the "moña," which became a standard part of salsa arrangements by the early 1970s.

Unlike the mambo section, the "moña" shares a clear kinship with the diablo in terms of its place in the arrangement, its techniques of production, and the ultimate effect it aims to have on musicians and dancers alike. In the contemporary salsa arrangement, according to Christopher Washburne, the moña typically occurs toward the end, following the mambo and montuno sections and preceding a repetition of the montuno before the final coda.[76] It too, like the mambo, is an instrumental section, but consisting of spontaneously improvised riffs, also known as "moñas," as performed usually by the trombones. The spontaneous improvisation of trombone riffs during either a solo section or the moña section itself, in addition to other orchestrational techniques, serves to heighten the level of energy of the arrangement. As a result, the "hard driving swing" affected by moñas constitutes the climax of the salsa arrangement.

Barry Rogers is credited with introducing the moña with Eddie Palmieri's conjunto La Perfecta as early as 1962. Since at least the mid 1950s, both Rogers and Palmieri had been astute students of Cuban conjunto recordings, from which they learned the importance of the dynamics of energy and climax in an arrangement. As Palmieri noted,

---

[76] See Washburne 1999: 48-49, 65-69, 128, 135.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

"That's when I really started to learn my structures—how to present a composition, how to build it up to the exciter, to the high climax."[77] Use of the moña became an integral technique with which Rogers facilitated the climactic energy of La Perfecta's arrangements. In 1967 Robert Farris Thompson described the technique in the following manner: "Rogers has elaborated a splendid usage involving two trombones—one to chant, the other (Rogers) to invent."[78] Undoubtedly, Rogers took note of similar processes occurring in Arsenio's diablos. David Carp, who has done extensive research on Rogers's life and career, states, "Barry's understanding of Cuban musical structures was further deepened through the intense listening to the music of Arsenio Rodriguez and study of tres playing."[79] Trombonist and arranger Mark Weinstein adds:

> If you know enough about Cuban 78s from the '40s and early '50s you hear a lot of Eddie's arrangements. . . . But it wasn't really a matter of stealing [i.e., copying]. Because Eddie's band, bizarrely, was Cuban revivalist, and the model of the trombone improvisation came from the way Chappottín, the soloist, would play against the trumpets [i.e., during the diablo section].[80]

Carp corroborates: "As much as Barry Rogers respected and loved the Cuban models he studied so assiduously, copying them was not enough."[81] And as for Palmieri, he also stressed, trying to reproduce Arsenio's structures would only result in a "terrible mimicry because you can't even imitate it" (see p. 475). Unlike Pacheco and Harlow, therefore, his

---

[77] Quoted in Roberts 1976: 21.
[78] Thompson 1967: 54.
[79] Carp 1999: 13.
[80] Quoted in Carp 1999: 10. Weinstein arranged for and performed and recorded with Larry Harlow and Eddie Palmieri in the 1960s.
[81] Carp 1999: 13.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

and Rogers's aim was to *adopt the fundamental principles of rhythmic tension and climax* that guided Arsenio to develop their own unique style. As Palmieri has stated:

> On my records, there's a minimum of Cuban *music*, though there's Cuban *structure*. I stayed away from Cuban compositions because of the tremendous respect and love that I have for them. I couldn't even think of doing them equally as well, much less any better, unless I felt I could do something with the arrangement of a particular composition.[82]

We will recall that in several of Arsenio's recordings of the 1940s the trumpets at the first alternating sequence of the diablo take part in creating partially interwoven patterns (see Examples 4.8.a and d). In other diablos two trumpets are involved in "chanting" a repeated phrase while the lead trumpet, in call-and-response form, "invents" figures, parts of which are interwoven with the phrase of the other trumpets (see Examples 4.8.b and c). Furthermore, Arsenio created and incorporated the diablo into his arrangement scheme to give the dancers, in his own words, "*el cocimiento*" [a kick in the ass] (see p. 175). Moñas had the same effect on dancers, as Mark Weinstein recounted: "When Barry would start to move through a sequence of improvisations [i.e., moñas] there was nothing in the world that was more exciting and the dancers loved Barry Rogers."[83]

Arsenio's diablos, however, were not the only source from which Rogers drew. Carp notes that in addition to Cuban music Rogers studied and, in fact, began his professional career performing rhythm and blues music, such as with the Hugo Dickens

---

[82] Quoted in Roberts 1976: 42.
[83] Quoted in Carp 1999: 11.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Group, in New York City in the 1950s.[84] Several of Carp's informants remember that in the Dickens Group "one trombone would play repeated riff figures and the other one would respond to these figures by soloing in a call-and-response style."[85] According to Rogers himself, "When I came out of [the Dickens Group] I ran into Eddie [Palmieri] and I just threw in there what I had learned in the past three or four years with Hugo's group."[86] This of course included what in salsa parlance became known as "moñas." In short, as trombonist Mark Weinstein stated: "what [Rogers] was doing was playing a rhythm and blues kind of shout against a salsa vamp."[87] For this reason, as Carp persuasively suggests, "Hugo Dickens and his colleagues can lay claim to no small portion of salsa's patrimony."[88]

With Palmieri's La Perfecta, Rogers executed moñas on the trombone typically during flute solos, either by himself (e.g., "Ritmo caliente" ["Hot Rhythm"], rec. 1962) or in combination with a second trombonist (e.g., "Sin sabor, nada" ["Without Feel It's Nothing], rec. 1964), as well as just with a second trombonist, that is, in the moña section proper (e.g., "Los cueros me llaman" ["The Drums are Calling Me"], rec. 1965). Although Rogers departed from La Perfecta around 1968, Palmieri's brass players continued to utilize moñas in originally composed material (e.g., "Se acabo la malanga" ["There's No More Malanga"], "Revolt/La libertad, lógico," and "Vámanos pa'l monte") and in rearrangements of Cuban conjunto material.

---

[84] Carp 1999.
[85] Ibid.: 7.
[86] Rogers in Carp 1999: 7.
[87] Weinstein in Carp 1999: 13.
[88] Carp 1999: 8.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.6. Diablos with moñas

(a) "Pa' huelé" (1970), Eddie Palmieri and His Orchestra

"Dame un cachito pa huele." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1971 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Duplicated by Permission.

For example, in "Pa' huelé" ("To Smell"), as I discussed above, Palmieri remains faithful to Arsenio's original arrangement scheme, including the diablo section (see Table

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.6—*Continued*

(a) "Pa' huelé" (continued)

9.3 in Appendix 4).[89] The only significant alteration is the additional alternating sequences in the extended diablo. In the second sequence between the coro, trumpet, and two trombones (halfway through the diablo), the two trombones play interlocking moñas (the lowest pattern of which doubles the bass) for six bars while the trumpet adds ternary-phrased figures for four (see Example 9.6.a). In Arsenio's original recorded version, the

[89] *Eddie Palmieri and His Orchestra: Super-Imposition*. Tico SLP 1194.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Example 9.6—*Continued*

(b) "Quitate tú" (1972), Fania All-Stars

two lowest trumpets play a two-bar phrase while the lead trumpet punches in single note attacks, creating partially interwoven patterns (see Example 4.8.c). A more similar instance of interlocking parts, however, occurs in the diablo of "Kila, Kike y Chocolate,"

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

also discussed above (see Example 4.8.d).

On 26 August 1971, at The Cheetah in Manhattan, the Fania All Stars performed what was to be one of the defining concerts in salsa's history. The core members of the group consisted of the leaders of Fania's best selling salsa groups, Johnny Pacheco (musical director and flute), Ray Barretto (congas), Larry Harlow (piano), and Willie Colón (trombone), in addition to other musicians including Barry Rogers (trombone). According to César Miguel Rondón, the music performed at the concert marked the culmination of the salsa sound of New York (or salsa dura), and via the film, entitled *Our Latin Thing (Nuestra cosa latina)* and four-LP album of this concert, this sound was disseminated and popularized throughout the Caribbean region of Latin America.[90] Rondón also suggests that the commercial and artistic success of the music was due to the shrewd marketing of the film and album by Jerry Masucci (Fania's co-owner) and the "freshness," "spontaneity," and "accessibility" of the actual performances.

Of the ten tracks released on the album, five follow the son montuno arrangement scheme, marked especially by the predominance of alternations between refrain and quatrains, many of which are improvised, in the montuno sections (see Table 9.5 in Appendix 4). Also, the bass patterns in four of these (i.e., "Ahora vengo yo," "Estrellas de Fania," "Ponte duro," and "Macho cimarrón") "sing"—that is, they accent the refrain—instead of being set in the guaracha or anticipated patterns. The bass pattern in "Estrellas de Fania," in particular, approximates Arsenio's "Mi chinita me botó" bass figuration (see Example 9.3.b).

---

[90] See Rondón 1980: 51-52.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Expectedly, the diablo is largely absent, appearing only in its defining truncated cycle and sequences of alternation in "Quítate tú" ("Make Way, You"; see Table 9.5 in Appendix 4). After the two initial alternating sequences of the diablo of "Quitate tú," the trombones, initiated most likely by Barry Rogers, execute moñas, creating partially interwoven patterns with the trumpets (see Example 9.6.b). This brings the climax of the diablo section as well as the entire arrangement to its highest point. The heightened level of energy is simultaneously indicated by the audience's explosive and sustained applause and, most graphically, in the fast sequential cutaways between the band and dancers in the film.[91]

Either the diablo or moña section involves the full participation of the ensemble toward the same goal, fulfilling the climax of an arrangement. Christopher Washburne's statement that "communitas" in salsa performance in general "requires every member of a group to work as a unit to achieve an optimum performance: a coming together of feels to groove with the hippest of swing " is especially pertinent to accomplishing climax.[92] Not having a climax or having only a minimum climax, as Palmieri emphasized, is "a rhythmical, sacred sin in our music" (see p. 468). And it was Arsenio who first standardized this principle in the conjunto format beginning in the early 1940s.

---

[91] *"Our Latin Thing" (Nuestra Cosa)*. 1993. Produced by Jerry Masucci and directed by Leon Gast. Movies & Pictures International, Inc. Videocassette.
[92] Washburne 1999: 130.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Conclusion

While the musical characteristics of Arsenio's son montuno style proved to be inimitable for early salsa musicians, the aesthetic and social meanings it signified and constituted in the context of Havana in the 1940s endured in the music that has been categorized as "salsa dura," particularly Eddie Palmieri's. I base this interpretation of his music's legacy on two factors: first, the discourse of Cuban conjunto and salsa musicians and writers who have characterized Arsenio's style and salsa dura in terms primarily of masculinity and class; and, second, the fundamental principle of rhythmic tension and climax, which based on oral testimony and musical analysis defines the essence of both Arsenio's and Palmieri's styles.

Because the impact of Cuban conjunto styles on salsa was not a unique, localized occurrence, it is thus critical that we focus on comparing the local histories, meanings, and styles of salsa with its antecedents if we are to begin to understand the complexity of salsa music and its history. This chapter has focused on Arsenio's legacy in salsa, yet other important predecessors, particularly the Puerto Rican groups Cortijo y su Combo and Mon Rivera y su Orquesta, and the local milieus in which their music developed and engendered social and musical significance, are in desperate need of documentation, social *and musical* analysis, and comparison with their salsa progeny. Only by comparing the local histories and styles of salsa with its antecedents' local histories and styles will we finally stop constructing stylistically homogeneous and a-historical categories of music.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Chapter 10

The Music, Career, and Life of Arsenio Rodríguez:

Conclusions

This biography has had three broad goals in studying the music, career, and life of Arsenio Rodríguez: 1) document his place in the local dance music milieus of Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles; 2) analyze the components, emergence, and significance of his son montuno style in Havana and its displacement in New York City and Los Angeles; and 3) redress Arsenio's (dis)placement in Cuban and Latin dance music historiography. Arsenio lacked commercial success and broad international popularity during his lifetime. Yet, his music continues to be performed, recorded, and revered by musicians from Havana (e.g., Bebo Valdés), New York City (e.g., Eddie Palmieri and Marc Ribot), Los Angeles (e.g., Danilo Lozano), Puerto Rico (e.g., La Sonora Ponceña), Senegal (e.g., Orchestra Baobab), and other regions of the world. As several musicians, quoted throughout this study, have stated, Arsenio's music (via his recorded repertory) exudes an artistic integrity which, based on the reach of his musical appeal, resonates with musicians across barriers of time and space. Future studies of Arsenio's long-term musical legacy might look at the nature of this resonance, focusing on how the various local adaptations of his style and music compare with the social and musical milieu in which it originated. This study, however, has been particularly concerned with documenting and analyzing the social and musical circumstances that defined the emergence and trajectory of his musical style and performance career during his lifetime. I would like to conclude by summarizing the major

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

points of this study and comparing them with similar findings in studies of other musicians, musical styles, and musical landscapes, particularly of the mid-twentieth century.

Arsenio's lack of commercial success and broad international recognition was due in large part to his reluctance to modify his repertory, instrumentation, and especially son montuno style in order to meet the expectations of diverse Latin dance music audiences as well as the record and entertainment industries. Concomitantly, racial barriers as well as the power relations that controlled access to lucrative performance venues and channels of the mass media hindered his performance career. Based on various studies of music and musicians of the mid-twentieth century, accessing channels of the mass media, negotiating patronage networks, and appealing to the musical tastes of ethnically and socially diverse audiences were among the most common requisites of musicians who wanted to attain broad recognition. For example, both Daniel Neuman and Scott DeVeaux, in studying the landscapes of Hindustani music in North India after 1947 and swing in New York City during the 1930s, respectively, show that musicians had to adapt to the demands of their changing and expanding musical and social milieus in order to achieve a successful local performance career, let alone commercial success.[1] Accordingly, those who negotiated the networks of patronage and access that sustained and controlled the local mass media and, especially, popular performance locales secured a successful performance career and, sometimes, broad international recognition.

First, records and radio had an integral role in the popularization and dissemination

---

[1] Neuman 1990 and DeVeaux 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

of musical styles, as various social histories of popular musical styles have shown.[2] In the day-to-day lives of musicians, however, recordings tended not to be a viable source of income nor an assurance of increasing popularity. Although Arsenio's conjuntos made recordings in almost every year from 1940 to 1968, they proved to be minimally important as a source of income and less so for his performance career. (Nevertheless, his recorded repertory would secure his musical legacy for future generations of musicians.) Similarly, for black swing musicians, recording contracts were unpredictable and recordings were an uncertain source of income, although they were important in accessing audiences "without the inconvenience of social contact."[3] Recordings were also marginally significant as a source of patronage for North Indian musicians of Hindustani music as well as early jùjú musicians, with the exception of the most famous stars.[4]

In contrast, live performances on radio proved to be much more important as a source of patronage and especially as a mode of dissemination. This was certainly true for Arsenio's conjunto in Havana where it performed regularly during the 1940s. Because his conjunto performed primarily for black working-class social clubs and functions, radio allowed other sectors of Cuban society as well as audiences throughout the Caribbean to listen to his conjunto on an almost daily basis. The extent to which regular live performances on radio contributed to the broad popularity of musicians elsewhere is readily observable in the career of Umm Kulthum, whose monthly live broadcasts from the 1930s through the 1960s enabled her to reach large audiences throughout Egypt and the

---

[2] See, for example, Waterman 1990: 92; Erlmann 1996: 243-260; Pacini Hernandez 1995: 84-102; Austerlitz 1997: 71-72, 98-100; Wade 2000: 91-93, 94-96.
[3] DeVeaux 1997: 149.
[4] Neuman 1990: 215 and Waterman 1990: 77.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arab world, thereby solidifying her place in Egyptian culture and the pan-Arab world.[5] In New York City and Los Angeles, however, regular life performances on radio during the 1950s and 1960s were not common for even the most popular stars of Latin dance music. Thus, for Arsenio, the lack of live radio performances accounted significantly for the curtailing of his listening audience.

Second, regular performances at locales proved to be the most important source of patronage for many musicians. Obtaining contracts to perform on a regular basis, however, was contingent on the ability to cultivate relationships with the networks of dance organizers and promoters, club owners, and agents that controlled access to performance locales, particularly the most prestigious ones.[6] Negotiating various social divisions including class, race, ethnicity, and gender was also important in accessing broad patronage in socially stratified and ethnically heterogeneous cities. We saw that in Havana during the 1930s and 1940s Valentín Cané and Rogelio Martínez of La Sonora Matancera were able to access Spanish as well as elite white and black Cuban social clubs through not only the group's repertory and "white" style but more significantly their claims to their Spanish heritage. Cané's powerful position as an official of the musician's union also factored into Matancera's opportunity to record with Latin America's most popular solo vocalists, hence spreading the group's popularity internationally. Similarly, early jùjú musician Tunde King consolidated a patronage network consisting of the ethnically diverse black elite of Lagos during the 1930s and 1940s to become one of the first stars of

---

[5] Danielson 1997: 86-87, 138.
[6] See, for example, DeVeaux 1997: 122-123

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

jùjú.[7] Central to securing this powerful patronage network was King's ability to adapt musically to the black elite's ambivalence over cosmopolitan and autochthonous cultural expression by creatively juxtaposing aspects of Christian hymnody, Yoruba praise song, and other preexistent popular styles. Through the 1980s the success of jùjú bands continued to rest largely on the ability of bandleaders or captains to secure the support of powerful patrons.[8] Umm Kulthum's concern for establishing, maintaining, and increasing control over her artistic and financial circumstances led her to cultivate relationships with influential and wealthy Egyptian patrons, journalists, and administrators of the entertainment industry.[9] As a result she attained unprecedented power over her own career as well as Cairo's entertainment industry itself, which for a woman in a patriarchal society shows the importance of cultivating relationships with powerful players in order to transcend dominant social barriers.

In Arsenio's case he was able to sustain a productive performance career through primarily the social institutions of Havana's sizeable black working class, which also provided a performance milieu in which his son montuno or "black" style emerged and flourished. He was reluctant, however, to alter his son montuno style's defining elements—which he fashioned in response to the aesthetic predilections of black dancers in Havana—as well as expand his repertory to better appeal to the assorted stylistic and musical tastes of dancers of diverse social, ethnic, and national backgrounds in New York

---

[7] Waterman 1990: 64-69.
[8] Ibid.: 156-160.
[9] Danielson 1997: 13, 56-58, 78-91. Neuman (1990: 195-196, 218) also discusses the importance of cultivating relationships with judges on radio evaluating committees, newspapers music critics, and government officials as a strategy for succeeding as a public performer of Hindustani music.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

City and Los Angeles. As members of the most successful Latin dance bands (e.g., Puente's and Touzet's) in these cities emphasized, having both an eclectic repertory and the shrewdness to perform in various styles—that is, "hip" or "square"—were required to reaching as many different audiences as possible. Racial barriers and discriminatory practices, particularly in New York City during the 1950s, as well as the image of the suave, youthful, and light-skinned or white Latin bandleader or singer nevertheless constituted an obstacle that proved to be insurmountable for Arsenio to overcome. Although similar barriers inevitably limited the potential economic rewards of leaders of black swing bands during the 1930s, they too realized the professional advantages in having an eclectic musical repertory, including waltzes and tangos, in order to reach as many different audiences as possible.[10]

Instead, Arsenio attempted in vain to popularize his son montuno style in addition to claiming that the mambo, pachanga, and boogaloo were essentially derivatives of it. After his initial success in New York City's most prominent dancehalls in the early 1950s, his performance career was limited to peripheral areas of New York and Los Angeles throughout the late 1950s and 1960s. His conjunto remained popular among first generation Cuban and Puerto Rican immigrants of color in the South Bronx. The frequency of their social functions nevertheless was inadequate for him to sustain a lucrative performance career. And because he was reluctant to expand his repertory to include popular dance styles from other Latin American countries, his conjunto did not appeal to the extensive network of Latin American social clubs, particularly in Los

---

[10] DeVeaux 1997: 119, 123-125.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Angeles. In contrast, many jùjú musicians masterfully manipulated diverse musical techniques and modes of discourse as well as incorporated non-Yoruba African songs in their repertory and various Yoruba dialects and non-Yoruba languages in their lyrics, all as a strategic attempt to construct patronage networks in the ethnically heterogeneous urban setting of Lagos.[11] Even black South African isicathamiya groups whose members originated from different geographical regions exploited the links they had with their "home towns," thereby providing their groups with more work and recognition.[12] Whereas, those groups whose members originated from the same region and performed in the same neighborhood did not get exposed to other audiences and, therefore, often faded out.

Finally, this study has attempted to redress Arsenio's (dis)placement in Cuban and Latino dance music historiography. The pervasiveness of his (dis)placement in this historiography was most recently demonstrated in The Museum of the City of New York's 2002 exhibition *Raices: The Roots of Latin Music in New York City*. According to its official brochure, the exhibition's purpose was to pay "homage to the recognized pioneers and the overlooked individuals whose vibrant music has left an indelible imprint on American culture." Focusing primarily on mambo and salsa, the "pioneers" that the exhibition "recognized" included Tito Rodríguez, Machito, and Tito Puente or "The Big Three," while the "overlooked individuals" included Graciela Grillo Pérez, Miguelito Valdés, Vicentico Valdés, Angel Villoria, and José "Pin" Madera. Biographical profiles,

---

[11] Waterman 1990: 54, 73, 102, 115. He adds that although many jùjú musicians concentrated on developing substyles influenced by and associated with local traditions, most groups emulated the mainstream postwar style established by Ayinde Bakare (95).
[12] Erlmann 1996: 149-150.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

pictures, and other memorabilia of these artists were displayed in individual cases and marked-off spaces on the walls.

Arsenio was also recognized with two photographs, which were displayed with six other photographs of musicians, including Mongo Santamaría, Noro Morales, Rafael Cortjio, and Eddie Palmieri. One photo, entitled "Block Party" and dated in the 1960s, depicts Arsenio and Marcelino Guerra (along with Israel Berrios and several other musicians) performing on the street for a small crowd in East Harlem. The second photograph depicts Arsenio's conjunto in the late 1950s. In addition, Arsenio's image appears in another photograph, entitled "Oh What a Night!" and dated 1952, which depicts Machito receiving an award on the stage of the Palladium, while Arsenio, his brother Kike, Tito Rodríguez, and Julio Andino stand behind. While these photographs confirm Arsenio's active presence in New York City's Latin dance music milieu throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the exhibition's biographical profile of Arsenio (which was displayed next to the photograph of Arsenio's conjunto of the late 1950s) tells a much more curtailed story. It reads as follows:

> Cuban born Arsenio Rodríguez (1911-1970) learned to play the tres, bass, maracas, and bongos. He formed his own conjunto in 1940. He is credited with reintroducing to the son many African-based elements that had been eliminated by earlier groups. He moved to New York in the late 1940s.

This representation can be attributed not only to the lack of historical data on Arsenio but, as I have tried to show throughout this study, to the linear orientation of Cuban and Latin music historiography and, in particular, to the ideas of "traditional" and "modern" styles. By adopting this orientation and these ideas, writers have (dis)placed

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio's music as an important antecedent to the mambo, pachanga, boogaloo, and early salsa. In contrast, by seeing his style and him as coexisting in place and time with these styles and their originators, we uncover the contested nature and asymmetrical power relations which characterized the emergence of these styles as well as the dance music milieus of Havana, New York City, and Los Angeles from the 1930s through the 1960s. We particularly see how power relations contributed to the professional trajectories of exceptional musicians such as Arsenio and those of his "star" contemporaries such as La Sonora Matanera, Dámaso Pérez Prado, Tito Puente, Johnny Pacheco, Larry Harlow, and others. Biographical studies of other exceptional musicians, especially those of color such as Antonio Arcaño, Marcelino Guerra, Rafael Cortijo, and others, whose careers fell short of "stardom," would surely expand our insight into the deeply contested nature of Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Latino dance music history.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Appendix 1

Song Catalog

Sources:

BMI	Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) Repertoire Song Title Database (bmi.com).
LC	Library of Congress. James Madison Memorial Building, Copyright Office, Card Catalog, 101 Independence Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C.
PM	Peermusic. 810 7th Avenue, New York, New York.
RG	Radames Giro. "Relacion de obras de la carpeta autoral de Arsenio Rodríguez Scull que aparecen registrados en el CENDA (Centro Nacional Derechos Autor)." Unpublished manuscript.

The following is a comprehensive list of Arsenio Rodríguez's songs that have been registered by Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI), the Copyright Office of the Library of Congress, Peermusic, and Centro Nacional Derechos Autor in Havana. The blank boxes indicate the information (e.g., date of publication and claimant) that I was unable to document. Songs are listed alphabetically, and those with alternative titles appear in parentheses. Some titles were registered by different organizations (i.e., BMI, LC, PM, and CENDA) on different dates, while others were composed and recorded much earlier than their publication date indicates. For example, "Cangrejo fue a estudiar" was recorded in 1946, but the earliest publication date that I have been able to document is 16 January 1975. In all cases, I have listed the earliest documented publication date. Some titles show more than one or the original and current "claimants" (publishers). Finally, Arsenio Rodríguez composed the titles registered to his brother's name, Israel Travieso, Israel Rodríguez, and Israel Rodríguez Scull.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1. Songs Registered under Arsenio Rodríguez, a.k.a. Arsenio Rodríguez Scull

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
A bailar mi bomba		02/13/59	Peermusic	LC
A buscar camarón (Vamos al río a buscar camarón)	son guaracha	06/28/45		RG
A gozar mujeres		06/21/65	Sanada Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC, BMI
A Graciela		06/25/58	Peermusic	LC
A Puerto Rico	bolero		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Acerca el oído	bolero	05/23/67	Peermusic	RG, LC
Acúsame	canción-bolero	07/12/42	Peermusic	RG, BMI
Adiós África	lamento-congo afro-son	10/22/41		RG
————		12/31/45 02/02/46	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Adiós Carmelina (Dime adiós Carmelina)	son montuno -bugaloo	11/30/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Adiós Cuba		08/09/47	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Adiós mi amor		11/28/60	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Adiós Roncona			Peermusic	BMI
Adivinanza		01/22/53	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Adórenla como Martí		10/15/57	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
África canta y llora		05/22/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Agonia			Peermusic	BMI
Aguanta la bronca comadre	rumba	12/08/41	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Ahora capetillo			Peermusic	BMI
Aida, yo siempre te he querido	son	04/10/35		RG

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Alabanciosa		07/03/63	Edward B. Marks Music Corp.	LC, BMI
Alegria cubana	guajira	12/24/37	Peermusic	PM, BMI
Alicia, mi tormento	son	05/18/36		RG
Amargo sufrimiento			Peermusic	BMI
Amor a mi patria	lamento		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Amor en cenizas		06/27/58	Peermusic	LC
Amor y misterio	bolero	02/15/50		RG
Amores en verano			Peermusic	BMI
Apurruñenme mujeres		06/10/59	Peermusic	LC
Aquí como allá	lamento	11/17/77	Peermusic	RG, LC
Arrollando			Peermusic	BMI
Ay, que prieta	guaracha	04/03/42	Peermusic	RG, BMI
Batista y su mortero	rumba	07/12/42	Peermusic	RG, BMI
Besame aquí	chachacha	07/14/55 12/27/55	Edward B. Marks Music Corp. Peermusic	LC PM
Bruca maniguá	canto-congo conga son afro-cubano	11/23/37 12/24/37 12/24/37	 Southern Music Pub. Co. Southern Music Pub. Co. Ltd., London.	RG LC
Camina a trabajar, Aragón	guaracha son montuno	12/30/44 1946	 Peermusic	RG BMI
Caminante y Laborí	son montuno	04/06/65	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Candito			Peermusic	BMI
Cangrejo fue a estudiar		01/16/75	Peermusic	LC, BMI

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Canta montero		11/17/77	Peermusic	LC
Canto abacua	quindembo	07/03/63	Edward B. Marks Music Corp.	LC
Cárdenas	bolero		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Casera mira que caña	pregón son		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Catalina (Como traigo la yuka, Dile a Catalina)		04/28/60, 10/14/66	Paroles francaises de Alvys. Arrgt: Leo Negre [Fr.] and parts. French lyrics Societe d' Editions Musicales *Inter-nationales* Peermusic	LC BMI
Catalino (Catalino fue a Guayama)	plena	03/28/66	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Celos de mi mujer			Peermusic	BMI
Chango pachanga		03/24/64 01/14/93	Frost Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Chupa		11/13/64	Frost Music Corp. *EMI Longitude Music* Co.	LC *BMI*
Chupa el piruli		10/25/77	Fania Publ. Co. FAF Publ.	LC BMI
Cochino jabali		08/09/47	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Como le gusta el chismecito a Caridad	guaracha		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Como se goza en el barrio	guaguancó		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Como traigo la yuka			Peermusic	BMI
Como traigo las viandas	pregón	04/09/43	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Compay cimarron			Edward B. Marks Music Co.	BMI
Complejo		09/22/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Con flores del matadero			Peermusic	BMI
Con un amor se borra otro amor		06/04/51	Rumbalero Unichappell Music	LC BMI

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Confórmate	guaguancó	07/14/55 12/27/55	Edward B. Marks Music Corp. Peermusic	LC PM, BMI
Conozco al mundo	bolero	02/15/50		RG
Contéstame	bolero	08/17/48	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Contigo		04/21/54	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Coplas de España		06/21/65	Sanada Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Corazón de chivo	guaracha	06/28/45	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Corazón de hielo			Peermusic	BMI
Cosas que vendran		04/19/63		LC
Cuando ella se fué (Ven otra vez)			Peermusic	BMI
Cuba cha-cha-cha		07/14/55 12/05/55	Edward B. Marks Music Corp. Peermusic	LC PM, LC, BMI
Cuba llora		06/12/58	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Cuqui	bolero-son		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Daddy Give Me Candy		03/09/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Dame el último adiós	bolero	02/12/39		RG
Dame tu yoyo ma belen			Peermusic	BMI
Dame un besito	son montuno		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Danzón de los flores (Y Pedro Flores, jugando gallo)		05/10/61 07/15/65	Peermusic. Paroles francaises de Jean Eigel (pseud. Julien Bruyninx), paroles espagnoles et musique de Arsenio Rodríguez. Societe d' Editions Musicales Int.	LC, BMI LC

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Delia, si yo pudiera	son	05/18/36		RG
Desvario	bolero	07/17/41 08/08/41	Peermusic	RG PM, LC, BMI
Deuda			Peermusic	BMI
Dile a Catalina (Como traigo la yuka, Catalina)	guaracha	06/28/45	Peermusic	RG, BMI
Dime adiós Carmelina (Adiós Carmelina)			Peermusic	BMI
Dundumbanza		01/30/50	Rumbalero Unichappell Music	LC BMI
El Cerro tiene la llave	guaguancó			RG
El dolorcito de mi china			FAF Publ.	BMI
El dulcero	pregón	04/29/69	Peermusic	LC, BMI
El dulcero de Güines			Peermusic	BMI
El elemento del Bronx (La gente del Bronx)	guaguancó	03/23/67	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
El hombre dice que no hace nada la mujer		06/27/58	Peermusic	LC, BMI
El hombre esta hablando bien		02/18/60	Peer Int. Corp. Morro Music	LC BMI
El lema del guaguancó		06/21/65	Sanada Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
El palo tiene curujey	son montuno			RG
El pirulero no vuelva más			Peermusic	BMI

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
El que lo dijo se fué		02/07/55	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
El quijiconar (Kijis Konar)			Peermusic	BMI
El reloj de pastora	son montuno	12/20/65	Peermusic	LC, BMI
El rincon caliente		07/19/50	Rumbalero Unichappell Music Inc.	LC BMI
El seis es pachanga	pachanga	12/15/64	Peermusic	LC, BMI
El tejo	trabalengua-son montuno	05/22/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
El terror			Peermusic	BMI
El último adiós			Peermusic	BMI
El último amor	bolero			RG
Ella sola se engancha		11/13/64	Frost Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
En Camagüey	bolero	12/10/42	Southern Music Publ. Co.	LC
En Tampa (Pasó en Tampa)		09/23/47	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Eres la canela	bolero			RG
Esa china tiene coimbre	son montuno			RG
Esas no son	son capetillo		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Esas son las cosas			Peermusic	BMI
Esclavo triste	lamento negro	03/23/67	Peermusic	RG LC
Falso desprecio	bolero			RG
Féliz viaje	bolero	07/21/58	Peermusic	LC
Fiesta en el solar		06/21/65	Sanada Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC
Flor de canela		01/30/50	Rumbalero	LC

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Flor de canzia			Unichappell Music	BMI
Flor perfumada	son	02/04/35	Peermusic	RG BMI
Fuego en el 23	son			RG
Fufuñando		03/17/38 07/27/38	Southern Music Pub. Co., Inc. Peermusic	RG PM, LC PM, BMI
Gloria, eres divina	son	08/24/38	Peermusic	RG BMI
Graciela, tú lo sabes	cha-cha-chá	07/11/56	Peermusic	RG BMI
Guaguancó de Puerta de Tierra		06/21/65	Sanada Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Guaragui		05/06/68	Peermusic	LC
Guira de Macurijes	bolero-son	12/31/42 03/05/43	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI RG
Hasta nunca	bolero	09/22/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Ilusiones muertas	son	05/18/36		RG
Jagüey	son capetillo		Peermusic	RG BMI
Jamas te perdonare			Peermusic	BMI
Juegame limpio	son capetillo	10/12/59	Peermusic	RG, LC, BMI
Jugando al silo	ritmo bugaloo	11/30/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Jumba			Peermusic	BMI
Junto al bambu			Peermusic	BMI
Juventud amaliana	guaguancó	12/20/74	Peermusic	BMI
Juventud de Cayo Hueso	guaguancó			RG
Kijis konar		12/08/64	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Kiko Medina		03/19/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Kila, Kike y Chocolate			Unichappell Music	BMI

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
La cartera			FAF Publ.	BMI
La conga de Arsenio	conga	12/24/37 03/19/38	Peermusic	PM, BMI RG
La pasión		06/21/65	Sanada Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
La ruñidera	rumba			RG
La última canción		06/25/58	Peermusic	LC, BMI
La última carta			Peermusic	BMI
La vida es un sueño	bolero	12/20/48 02/15/50	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI RG
La yuga			Peermusic	BMI
Lamento afro			Peermusic	BMI
Llora timbero* (Malanga murio timbero)	rumba	06/07/41	Candido G. Galdo Peermusic	LC BMI
Lo dicen todas	son	10/28/60	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Lo mío es tuyo (Lo tuyo es mío)		08/24/71		LC
Lo que dice usted			Peermusic	BMI
Lo que le paso a Luisita	guaguancó	12/13/68	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Lo sabía	bolero	02/15/50 12/13/71	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Los perros del curro		11/13/64	Frost Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Lugubres noches		11/28/60	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Mambo abacua			Peermusic	BMI
Mami me gustó			FAF Publ.	BMI
Matanzas	son			RG
Maye santa			Peermusic	BMI
Me alborotan	guaracha	11/26/74	Peermusic	LC, BMI

*Tata Gutiérrez is listed as co-composer

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Me alejo de ti			Peermusic	BMI
Me bote de guaño	montuno	04/11/75	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Me contaron de ti		08/15/51	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Me dijo que sí y le dije que no	son montuno	07/31/68	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Me duele aquí		08/09/47	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Me engañastes Juana		06/21/65	Sanada Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Me enteré de todo	bolero	06/02/69	Peermusic	RG, LC, BMI
Me equivoque			Peermusic	BMI
Me equivoque contigo		06/21/65	Sonada Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Me estoy comiendo un cable	guaracha	07/14/55 12/05/55	Edward B. Marks Music Corp. Peermusic	RG, LC PM, BMI
Me ire contigo			Peermusic	BMI
Me lo imagino		06/25/58	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Me pica		08/09/47	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Me quede sin ti			Peermusic	BMI
Me siento muy solo	bolero	02/15/50 06/25/58	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Mejor contigo			Peermusic	BMI
Menos que cenizas		01/25/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Meta y guaguancó	guaguancó		Peermusic	BMI
Mi alborota	guaracha	04/03/42		RG
Mi china me botó	son montuno		Peermusic	RG, LC, BMI
Mi comuco			Peermusic	BMI
Mi corazón no tiene quien lo llore		01/25/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Mi primer cariño		04/17/58	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Mi último amor			Peermusic	BMI
Mira, cuidadito			Peermusic	BMI
Mira que soy chambelon	guaguancó	12/12/66	Peermusic	LC
Mirada subyugante	bolero-son	03/17/38	Peermusic	RG BMI
Mona	quindembo	07/03/63	Edward B. Marks Music Corp.	LC
Monte adentro		06/10/59	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Montuno oriental			Peermusic	BMI
Mujeres enamórenme	guaracha	06/28/45	Peermusic	RG BMI
Mulence	guaguancó		Peermusic	RG BMI
Nada me agobia	bolero	02/15/50		RG
Nadie más que tú	bolero			RG
Necesito una mujer cocinera	son montuno	09/07/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
No hay cáscara peor	mambo bolero-son	12/18/68	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
No hay mano franca	bolero	04/13/71	Peermusic	LC, BMI
No hay yaya sin guayacán	son montuno		Peermusic	LC, BMI
No he mentido, Aida	son	02/04/35	Peermusic	RG BMI
No he visto a Caridad	son montuno	09/07/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
No llores	bolero			RG
No llores más	son montuno			RG
No lo niegues		06/21/65	Sanada Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
No me llores			FAF Publ.	BMI
No nos entendemos	cha-chá-bolero			RG

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
No puede ser			Peermusic	BMI
No puedo comer vistagacha	guaracha	01/30/50	Rumbalero Peermusic Unichappell Music Inc.	LC BMI BMI
No toque el guao			Peermusic	BMI
No vuelvas por aquí	son	02/04/35	Peermusic	RG BMI
Ñaña seré*	afro	08/06/45	Peermusic	RG BMI
Ogunde			Peermusic	BMI
Oiga mi guaguancó			Peermusic	BMI
Olga	bolero	12/24/37	Peermusic	PM, BMI
Orgullo inútil	bolero			RG
Oye Catalina†			Peermusic	BMI
Oye ella sola se engancha			EMI Longitude Music Co.	BMI
Oye mi canto			Peermusic	BMI
Oye mi consejo	bolero-son	06/25/58	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Pa' que gozen	son montuno		Peermusic	RG, BMI
Pachanga time		03/24/64	Patricia Music Pub. Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Papa upa			Peermusic	BMI
Papacito (Catalina)‡		09/25/69	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Para gozar Belén (A Belén le toca ahora)	guaguancó		Peermusic	LC, BMI
Parece bobo		03/24/64	Frost Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Inc.	LC BMI

*Guillermo Valdés listed as co-composer
†Gerard González listed as co-composer
‡English lyric by Jeane Tronti, original Spanish w & m Arsenio Rodríguez. Appl. states previously registered 4/28/60. A. Rodríguez, Geraldi Enderli, and Jeanne Puchalski listed as co-composer.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Pasión extrana		01/25/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Inc.	LC BMI
Paso en Tampa (En Tampa)			Peermusic	BMI
Pobre chinito	mambo			RG
Pobre mi Cuba		04/10/35	Peermusic	RG BMI
Pobre sitiero			Peermusic	BMI
Por donde andaras	canción	03/11/65	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Por qué la trajiste	bolero	02/15/50	Peermusic	RG BMI
Porfiando el gallo muere		03/24/64	Nom Music, Inc. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Préstame el cubo	son capetillo	09/10/71	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Prestame la olla, Teresa		11/13/64	Frost Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Pueblo Nuevo se pasó	guaguancó		Peermusic	BMI
Que feliz yo fuera		09/25/57	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Que habrá pasado	bolero-cha			RG
Que mal es querer		03/24/64	Nom Music, Inc. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Que mala suerte		06/21/65	Sanada Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Que me falta		08/15/51	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Que negra pá celerá	montuno-mambo	07/11/56	Peermusic	RG BMI
Que no quede nada		11/28/60	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Que pasará	bolero-mambo	02/21/51	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Que susto		07/19/50	Rumbalero Unichappell Music Inc.	LC BMI

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Que te castigue Dios		06/27/58	Peermusic	LC, BMI
¿Que te parece, Juana?		03/24/64	Patricia Music Pub. Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Quien ama no traiciona			Peermusic	BMI
Quiendembo jazz		04/21/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Quindembo			Edward B. Marks Music Co.	BMI
Quindembo cimarron		07/03/63	Edward B. Marks Music Corp.	LC
Quisiera besarte		08/15/51	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Realidad	bolero-son	12/24/37	Peermusic	PM, BMI
Recuerda aquella noche			Unichappell Music Inc.	BMI
Recuerdo de la laya			Peermusic	BMI
Recuerdo Lucumí	son afro-cubano	02/04/35 12/24/37	Peermusic	RG PM, BMI
Regresa		08/09/47	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Rumba guajira		06/21/65	Sanada Music EMI Longitude Music Inc.	LC BMI
Sacale brillo al piso		03/26/64	Patricia Music Pub. Corp.	LC
Sacando candela		09/15/64	Tito Music Co.	LC
Se ama una vez	bolero		Peermusic	RG BMI
Se va el caramelero	pregón son		Peermusic	RG BMI
Se va el manguero	son pregón		Peermusic	LC, BMI
Se va la comparsa			Peermusic	BMI
Señor, que se acaba la guerra	bolero	03/11/65	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Si ella vuelva	bolero	02/15/50		RG

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Si las nenas me dejan que		10/31/68	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Siento una flauta*			FAF Publ.	BMI
Simbale		05/22/63	Edward B. Marks Music Co.	LC
So, caballo!	son montuno	04/17/46	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Son laborí			Peermusic	BMI
Soy el terror	son		Peermusic	RG BMI
Suéltala	son montuno	03/23/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Suéltame	cha-cha-cha-mambo			RG
Swing y son			Peermusic	BMI
Ta Benito			Peermusic	BMI
Tarangombe ya cayo (Quindembo no. 3)		05/22/63	Edward B. Marks Music Co.	LC BMI
Te contare	bolero	02/21/51	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Te mantengo y no quieres			Peermusic	BMI
Te vas como la esperanza	bolero	02/16/65	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Te vuelve un dengue		03/26/64	Nom Music, Inc. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Ten valor		06/04/51	Rumbalero Unichappell Music Inc.	LC BMI
Timbero mayor			Peermusic	BMI
Timbilla			Peermusic	BMI
Tintorera			FAF Publ.	BMI

*José Alberto Fajardo listed as co-composer.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Titi, tu kundunga quiere papá*	chachachá	09/18/56	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Tocoloro (Tocoro, El pajaro que nunca vuela)	son montuno		Peermusic	LC, BMI
Todo es mentira			Peermusic	BMI
Todo termino	bolero	03/11/71	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Todos seguimos la conga	conga	02/16/65	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Toma cognac		03/26/64	Frost Music Corp. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Tres Marias		05/22/67	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Triste lucha	bolero	10/30/42	Peermusic	PM, LC
Tú, ella y yo	bolero	07/12/42	Peermusic	RG LC, BMI
Tú estas en el swing mami		03/26/64	Frost Music Pub. EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Tumba palo cocuyé	son			RG
Tumba y bongó			FAF Publ.	BMI
Un cachito pa' mi (Dame un cachito pa' huele)	son montuno		Peermusic	BMI
Un sueño		09/23/47	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Una experencía más	bolero	02/15/50	Peermusic	RG BMI
Vacuno	son montuno			RG
Vaivén		08/09/47	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Vamos al río a buscar camarón		06/05/74	Peermusic	LC
Ven acá Tomá (Ben acá Tomá)	son son afro	04/10/35 12/24/37	Peermusic	RG PM, LC, BMI

*Areglo de José Claro Fumero piano-conductor score and parts [For orchestra].

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Ven mi mora		01/25/71	Branston Music EMI Longitude Music Co.	LC BMI
Viens, caballo (So caballo)*		10/22/65	Societe d'Editions Musicales Int.	LC
Vive en el recuerdo	bolero		Peermusic	LC, BMI
Vuelvo a la vida			Unichappell Music Inc.	LC, BMI
Yá lo verás	bolero			RG
Ya me lo dió			Peermusic	BMI
Yimbilla		05/22/63		LC
Yo me cuelda	canto afro-cubano	07/12/42	Peermusic	RG BMI
Yo no como corazón de chivo			Peermusic	BMI
Yo no engaño a las nenas			Peermusic	BMI
Yo saludá	afrocubano	07/18/42	Peermusic	LC, BMI
Yo soy chambelon			Peermusic	BMI
Yo soy Gangá	son	11/19/31	Peermusic	RG BMI
Yo soy macuá	son	12/02/37	Peermusic	RG BMI
Yo ta' namorá		12/06/57	Peermusic	PM, LC, BMI
Yo tuve la culpa			Peermusic	BMI
Zenaida	bolero			RG

*Paroles francaise de Alvys (pseud. Albrecht Marcuse), Paroles espagnoles et musique de Arsenio.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

2. Songs Registered under Israel Travieso, a.k.a. Israel Rodríguez and Israel Rodríguez Scull (composed by Arsenio Rodríguez)

TITLE	GENRE	DATE	CLAIMANT	SOURCE
Baila Simón		10/12/59		LC
Cambia el paso		10/12/59		LC
El dolorcito de mi china			Peer Int. Corp.	LC
Esto es yambú		01/25/71		LC
Hipocresia			Peer Int. Corp.	LC
No quiero		10/12/59		LC
Orgullesida		03/19/71		LC
Pimienta		10/12/59		LC
Pobre chinito		10/12/59		LC
Que me mande la niña		10/12/59		LC
Se formó el bochinche		10/12/59		LC
Si me voy			Peeer Int. Corp.	LC

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Appendix 2

Discography

Sources:

AFM	American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, Recording Department, 322 West 48th Street, New York, New York
BMG	BMG Archives, 1540 Broadway, New York, New York
CDA	Cristobal Díaz Ayala
RDRI	Rigler & Deutsch Record Index of Pre-LP Commercial Discs Held by the Associated Audio Archives. NYPL for the Performing Arts, 521 West 43rd Street, New York, New York
RG	Radames Giro
TICO	Tico Label Discography (bsnpubs.com/tico.html)

This discography consists of five parts: (1) a selected list of Arsenio's compositions recorded by others; (2) a comprehensive list of Arsenio's conjuntos' commercial recordings, dating from 1940 to 1968; (3) recordings of Chano Pozo with Arsenio from 1947; (4) field recordings of Arsenio and Kike in 1964 made by Ralph Rinzler; and (5) Arsenio's performances at the 1969 Festival of American Folklife. In parts two and three the recordings that were originally released as 78s are listed in tables which are organized by the date of the recording session. Those recordings that were originally released on an LP are listed in the same table. Also, the musicians who participated in the recordings, where known, are listed. (Raúl Travieso and Israel Berrios were my main sources in identifying these musicians.) Other sources are identified after the lists of musicians. Finally, the name of the genre (indicated in parentheses following the title) for each title is the name used by the recording company and that appears on either the record label or the recording log sheet.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

1. Selected List of Arsenio Rodríguez's Compositions Recorded by Others, 1935-1957

COMPANY	MATRIX	TITLE	GROUP	MADE	CAT. NO.
Black Swan	BS 955 52-1	No he mentido Aida (son)	Cuarteto Machín	10/22/35 (NYC)	Vi 32604
Black Swan	BS 955 56-1	Amargos sufrimientos	Cuarteto Machín	10/22/35 (NYC)	Vi 32729
Black Swan	BS 955 82-1	No vuelvas por aquí (son)	Cuarteto Machín	10/25/35 (NYC)	Vi 32721
Black Swan	BS 980 21-1	Pobre mi Cuba	Septeto Machín	11/1/35 (NYC)	Vi 32666
RCA Victor	BS 010933	Bruca manigua (conga)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	6/17/37 (Cuba)	82114-A 82403-B
RCA Victor	BS 010937	Ven acá Tomá (son afro)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	6/17/37 (Cuba)	82121-A
Columbia	Co 5641-X	Bruca manigua (son afro)	Cuarteto Caney	10/12/37 (NYC)	CO 21851
Decca	De 1688	Bruca manigua	Nilo Meléndez and His Stork Club Orchestra	2/7/38 (NYC)	632 48
Decca	De 10326	Fufuñando	Nilo Menéndez and His Stork Club Orchestra	2/7/38 (NYC)	632 76
RCA Victor	BS 021968	Fufuñando	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	4/12/38 (Cuba)	82343-B
RCA Victor	BS 021961	Yo son Macuá (son afro)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	4/12/38 (Cuba)	82404-A
RCA Victor	B 027836	Yo son Gangá (son afro)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	9/15/38 (Cuba)	82514-A
RCA Victor	B 027837	Se va el caramelero (pregón)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	9/15/38 (Cuba)	82514-B
RCA Victor	BS 037049	Mirar subyugante (son)	Augusto Coen y sus Boricuas	7/13/39 (Cuba)	82957-B

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

COMPANY	MATRIX	TITLE	GROUP	MADE	CAT. NO.
RCA Victor	BS 045732	Todos seguimos la conga (conga)	Orquesta Cheo Belén Puig	12/7/39 (Cuba)	82915-B
RCA Victor	[Not found]	Adios África (afrocubano)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	n.d. (Cuba)	82738-A
RCA Victor	BS 048514	Como le gusta el chismecito a Caridad (guaracha)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	3/35/40 (Cuba)	83033-A
RCA Victor	BS 050256	Kuki (bolero son)	Orquesta Havana Riverside	5/1/40 (Cuba)	83227-B
RCA Victor	BS 056776	Yo 'tá namorá (afro)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	10/16/40 (Cuba)	83334-A
RCA Victor	BS 056777	Junto al bambú (canción rítmica)	Orquesta Casino de la Playa	10/16/40 (Cuba)	83436-A
RCA Victor	BS 068918	Llora timbero	Pepito Torres y su Orquesta Siboney	1/2/42 (Cuba)	83732-B
RCA Victor	BS 071992	Llora timbero	Orquesta de Mercerón y sus Muchachos Pimienta	2/27/42 (Cuba)	83788-A
RCA Victor	D3-XB-105	Dile a Catalina (danzón)	Orquesta de Belisario López	8/16/43 (Cuba)	23-0040-B
RCA Victor	D3-XB-53	Triste lucha (bolero)	Trío Hermanas Márquez	3/19/43 (Cuba)	23-0103-A
RCA Victor	MBS 079445	Yo saluda (afrocubano)	Conjunto Casino	2/23/45 (Cuba)	23-0328-A
RCA Victor	MBS-091076-1	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	Hermanos Martínez Gil y Orquesta Miguel Angel Pazos	12/16/48 Mexico	23-1148-A
Mercury	2466-1	Llora timbero	Machito and His Orchestra	1949-50 (NYC)	5304
RCA Victor	MBS-093952	Señor, que se acabe la guerra (bolero)	Toña la Negra y Orquesta Rafael de Paz	5/26/53 (Mexico)	23-7065
RCA Victor	E4XB-5643	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	Pedro Vargas y Benny Moré con la Orquesta de Benny Moré	11/30/54 (Cuba)	23-6574

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

COMPANY	MATRIX	TITLE	GROUP	MADE	CAT. NO.
RCA Victor	MBS-095670	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	Pancho (Charro) Avitia con el Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán†	5/21/56 (Mexico)	23-6994
RCA Victor	MBS-095673	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	Laura Rivera con el Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán	5/28/56 (Mexico)	23-7003
RCA Victor	MBS-096725	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	Virginia López con el Trío Los Angeles y Orquesta de Chucho Zarzosa	10/18/57 (Mexico)	23-7357

†The composer is mistakenly listed as José Alfredo Jiménez on the recording card.

2. Recordings by Arsenio Rodríguez's Conjuntos, 1940-1968

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE
CU 561	El pirulero no vuelve más (pregón)	A. Rodríguez	9/12/40	83314-A	CUCD 1703
CU 562	Yo 'ta namorá (afro)	———	———	83314-B	———

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Marcelino Guerra, second voice and guitar; Rubén "El Sentimental" Calzado, first trumpet and arranger; Miguel Molinet, second trumpet; Lino Frías, piano; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Nilo alfonso, contrabass; Israel "Kike," Rodríguez, tumbadora; Antolín Suárez Fierro "Papa Kila," bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 723	Corazón de hielo (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	3/31/41	83530-A	CUCD 1703
CU 724	Yo tuve la culpe (bolero)	———	———	83562-A	———
CU 725	No hace na' la mujer (guaracha)	J. J. Gutiérrez	———	83562-B	———
CU 726	Todos seguimos la conga (conga)	A. Rodríguez	———	83530-B	———

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Conrado Cepero, first voice and clave; Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Marcelino Guerra, second voice and guitar; Rubén Calzado, first trumpet and arranger; Miguel Molinet, second trumpet; René Hernández or Adolfo "Panasea" O'Reilly, piano; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
CU 120	Llora timbero (rumba)	A. Rodríguez*	5/16/41	Co 30789
CU 121	El dulcero de Güines (pregón)	————	———	Co 30795
CU 122	Si volvieras (bolero son)	LF	———	Co 30794
CU 123	Triste soledad (bolero son)	G. García	———	Co 30790

Recorded for Columbia in Havana. Probably the same personnel as 31 March 1941. Source: CDA.

*Israel Rodríguez Scull is listed as composer on the Library of Congress copyright card dated 7 June 1941. Arsenio Rodríguez and Tata Gutiérrez (director of Septeto Bolero) are listed as co-composers on the current BMI song catalog (see Appendix 1 Song Catalog).

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 945	Sediento de amor (bolero son)	Jacinto Scull	6/18/42	83948-A	
CU 948	Como traigo la yuca (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	———	83948-B	HQ CD 64
CU 949	Con un solo pie (conga)	Bienvenido J. Gutiérrez	———	83963-A	————
CU 950-1	Intranquilidad (bolero son)	Mercedes Valdés	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 31 March 1941. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 950-2	Intranquilidad	Mercedes Valdés	6/24/42	83963-B	HQ CD 64

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 31 March 1941. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1077	Sin tu querer (bolero son)	Pablo Cairo	9/14/43	23-0050-A	CUCD 1703
CU 1079	Sandunguera (guaracha)	Luís Piedra & Marcelino Guerra	———	23-0050-B	———
CU 1080-1D	¡So caballo! (son)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———		
CU 1081	Triste lucha (bolero son)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0061-A	

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Marcelino Guerra, second voice and guitar; Rubén Calzado, first trumpet and arranger; Benetín Bustillo, second trumpet; Panasea, piano; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
CU 1082	Ñaña seré (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez & Guillermo Valdés	9/21/43	23-0061-B

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 14 September 1943. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1101-1D	A buscar camarón (son)	A. Rodríguez Scull	11/16/43		
CU 1102-1D	Pilla con pilla (guaracha-rumba)	Guillermo Valdés	———		
CU 1103-1D	Oye como dice (guaracha)	Félix Chapotín	———		
CU 1104	*Camina a trabajá*, Aragón (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———	23-0082-B	
CU 1105	¿Quién será mi amor? (bolero son)	Mercedes Valdés	———	23-0078-B	CUCD 1703

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Orlando "Güichichi" Sirial, second voice and guitar; Rubén Calzado, first trumpet and arranger; Benetín Bustillo, second trumpet; Panasea, piano; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1080-1AD	¡So caballo!	A. Rodríguez	11/29/43		
CU 1101-1AM	A buscar camarón	———	———	23-0076-B	
CU 1102-1AD	Pilla con pilla	Guillermo Valdés	———		
CU 1102-1BM	———	———	———	23-0082-A	
CU 1103-1AM	Oye como dice	Félix Chapotín	———	23-0078-A	CUCD 1703
CU 1103-1BD	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 16 November 1943. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
CU 1080-1BM	¡So caballo!	A. Rodríguez Scull	12/7/43	23-0076-A

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 16 November 1943. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE
CU 1101-1BH	A buscar camarón	A. Rodríguez Scull	12/8/43

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 16 November 1943. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1226-1M	Quien ama no traiciona (bolero son)	A. Rodríguez	7/6/44	23-0173-B	CUCD 1703
CU 1226-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1227-1M	Mi chinita me botó (son guajiro)	———	———	23-0173-A	
CU 1227-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1228-1M	Oye mi consejo (bolero son)	———	———	23-0193-A	
CU 1228-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1229-1M	Estás equivocada (bolero son)	Osvaldo Farrés	———	23-0182-A	
CU 1229-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1230-1M	Mujeres, enamórenme (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0182-B	
CU 1230-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1231-1M	Yo no como corazón de chivo (guaracha son)	———	———	23-0193-B	
CU 1231-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Same personnel as 16 November 1943. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
CU 1326-1	Tú no eres culpable (bolero)	Pepe Robles & Marcelino Guerra	7/5/45	
CU 1326-1AM	————	————	———	23-0362-A
CU 1327-1M	Mi guane (guajira)	Rafael López	———	23-0350-B
CU 1327-1A	————	————	———	
CU 1328-1M	Nadie más que tú (bolero)	Jacinto Scull	———	23-0373-B
CU 1328-1A	————	————	———	
CU 1329-1M	Timbilla (rumba de cajón)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0362-B
CU 1329-1A	————	————	———	
CU 1330-1M	Agonía (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0373-A
CU 1330-1A	————	————	———	
CU 1331-1M	Yeyey (pregón)	Emilio Sanso & O. Gainza	———	23-0350-A
CU 1331-1A	————	————	———	

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Güichichi, second voice and guitar; Terry "Mapi," first trumpet; Benetín Bustillo: second trumpet; Rubén González "El Bonito," piano and arranger; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1379-1L	Deuda (bolero)	Luis Marquetti	11/27/45		
CU 1379-1	———	———	———		
CU 1379-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1380-1L	No hay yaya sin guayacán (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———		
CU 1380-1	———	———	———		
CU 1380-1AM	———	———	———	23-0401-B	CUCD 1703
CU 1381-1L	Ya lo verás (bolero)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———		
CU 1381-1M	———	———	———	23-0401-A	
CU 1381-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1382-1L	Canta, montero (guajira son)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———		
CU 1382-1	———	———	———		
CU 1382-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1383-1L	Inspiración (bolero)	Pablo Pérez Chorot	———		
CU 1383-1M	———	———	———	23-0428-A	
CU 1383-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1384-1L	El último amor (bolero)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———		
CU 1384-1M	———	———	———	23-0428-B	
CU 1384-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Joseíto Nuñez, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Güichichi, second voice and guitar; Terry "Mapi," first trumpet; Benetín Bustillo, second trumpet; Rubén Gonzalez "El Bonito," piano and arranger; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1379-1B	Deuda (bolero)	Luis Marquetti	5/20/46		
CU 1379-1CM	———	———	———	23-0452-A	TCD-043
CU 1382 -1B	Canta, montero	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1382 - 1CM	———	———	———	23-0452-B	TCD-031

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Álvarez, first voice and clave; Miguelito Cuní, first voice and maracas; Güichichi, second voice and guitar; Terry "Mapi," first trumpet; Benetín Bustillo, second trumpet; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Rubén Gonzalez "El Bonito," piano and arranger; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1431-1L	Chicharronero (son)	Luis Martínez	6/21/46		
CU 1431-1M	———	———	———	23-0492-A	TCD-031
CU 1431-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1432-1L	Una experiencia más (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1432-1M	———	———	———	23-0519-B	
CU 1432-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1433-1L	Dame un cachito pa' huelé (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1433-1M	———	———	———	23-0492-B	TCD-031
CU 1433-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1434-1L	El reloj de pastora (son)	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1434-1M	———	———	———	23-0470-B	———
CU 1434-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1435-1L	Cero guapos en Yateras (son)	Luis Martínez	———		
CU 1435-1M	———	———	———	23-0519-A	
CU 1435-1A	———	———	———		

continued below

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1436-1L	Cangrejo fué a estudiar (son)	A. Rodríguez	6/21/46		
CU 1436-1M	———	———	———	23-0470A	TCD-031
CU 1436-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Álvarez, first voice and clave; René Scull, first voice and maracas; Güichichi or Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Terry "Mapi," first trumpet; Guillermo Fellové or Domingo Corbacho, second trumpet; Juan "El Gordo" Rogert, third trumpet; Luis "Lilí" Martínez Griñan, piano and arranger; Nilo Alfonso, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1568-1L	Tengo que olvidarte (bolero son)	Jacinto Scull	12/13/46		
CU 1568-1M	———	———	———	23-0755-B	TCD-043
CU 1568-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1569-1L	Celos de mujer (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1569-1M	———	———	———	23-0655-A	
CU 1569-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1570-1L	Juventud amaliana	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1570-1	———	———	———		
CU 1570-1AM	———	———	———	23-0655-B	TCD-031
CU 1571-1L	Semilla de caña brava (guaracha)	Luis Martínez	———		
CU 1571-1M	———	———	———	23-0755-A	TCD-031
CU 1571-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1594-1L	¿Por qué la trajiste? (bolero son)	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1594-1M	———	———	———	23-0734-B	
CU 1594-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and maracas; Güichichi or Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Terry "Mapi," first trumpet; El Gordo, second trumpet; Domingo Corbacho, third trumpet; Lilí, piano; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 1595-1L	Mi convicción (bolero son)	Luís Martínez	1/10/47		
CU 1595-1	———	———	———	23-0766-A	TCD-043
CU 1595-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1596-1L	Adivínalo (guaracha)	José L. Forest	———		
CU 1596-1	———	———	———	23-0766-B	TCD-031
CU 1596-1A	———	———	———		
CU 1597-1L	Soy el terror (son)	A. Rodríguez	———		
CU 1597-1M	———	———	———	23-0734-A	
CU 1597-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and maracas; Güichichi or Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Domingo Corbacho, first trumpet; Terry "Mapi," second trumpet; El Gordo, third trumpet; Lilí, piano; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Félix "Chocolate" Alfonso, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 37-1L	Lo dicen todas (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	2/27/48	23-0828-B	
CU 38-1L	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0828-A	TCD-031

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Guillermo Fellové, first trumpet; Terry "Mapi," second trumpet; El Gordo, third trumpet; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
[Not found]	Yo no engaño a las nenas (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	3/48	1205-A	TCD-017
[Unreadable]	Tocoloro (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	——	1205-B	————
[Unreadable]	Tumba palo cucuye (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	——	1206-A	————
[Unreadable]	Tintorera ya llego (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	——	1206-B	————

Recorded for Spanish Music Center (SMC) in Havana under the name Estrellas de Ritmo. Personnel probably the same as 27 February 1948. Source: RDRI.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 39-1M	El tabernero (bolero)	Rafael Ortíz	4/8/48	23-0888-B	TCD-043
CU 40-1M	El Cerro tiene la llave (guaracha)	Fernando Noa	———	23-0888-A	TCD-031
CU 41-1L	Te esperaré (bolero son)	Luís Martínez Griñan	———	23-0897-A	
CU 42-1L	No vuelvo a Morón (son montuno)	Otilio del Portal	———	23-0897-B	

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 27 February 1948. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 86 -1	Esa china tiene coimbre (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	5/26/48	23-0946-B	TCD-031
CU 88 -1	Soy tu destino (bolero)	Isolina Carrillo	———	23-0946-A	TCD-043

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 27 February 1948. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 90-1L	Sacando candela (guaracha)	Gervacio Kessell	6/1/48	23-0995-B	

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 27 February 1948. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 85-1L	A Puerto Rico (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	6/22/48	23-0995-A	
CU 87-1L	No toque el guao (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0975-B	
CU 89-1L	Me siento muy solo (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-0975-A	TCD-043

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Pedro Luís Sarracent, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Domingo Corbacho, first trumpet; Terry "Mapi," second trumpet; El Gordo, third trumpet; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
SMC-34	Monte adentro (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	7/48	1209-A	TCD-017
[Unreadable]	Apurruñenme mujeres (son montuno)	———	——	1209-B	———
SMC-36	Ya me lo dio (son montuno)	———	——	1210-A	
SMC-37	Masango (son montuno)	———	——	1210-B	

Recorded for SMC in Havana under the name Estrellas del Ritmo. Personnel same as 22 June 1948. Source: RDRI.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 131-1	A Belén le toca ahora (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	10/19/48	23-1072-A	TCD-031
CU 131-1A	———	———	———		
CU 131-1	Los tres Juanas (bolero)	Bienvenido J. Gutierrez	———	23-1072-B	CUCD 1703
CU 131-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 22 June 1948. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
D8-XB-3958-1	Luna al amanecer (bolero)	Luis Martínez Griñan	10/27/48	23-1105-A	
D8-XB-3958-1A	———	———	———		
D8-XB-3959-1	Dame un besito (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-1130-B	CUCD 1703
D8-XB-3959-1A	———	———	———		
D8-XB-3960-1	Orgullo inútil (bolero)	Rosendo Ruiz, Jr.	———	23-1130-A	———
D8-XB-3960-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 22 June 1948. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
D8-XB-3961-1	Lo que dice VD. (son montuno)	Jesús Guerra	10/28/48	23-1105-B	TCD-031
D8-XB-3961-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 22 June 1948. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 187-1	Feliz viaje (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	1/12/49	23-1147-A	
CU 187-1A	———	———	———		
CU 184-1	No me llores más (son montuno)	Luis Martínez Griñan	———	23-1147-B	TCD-043
CU 184-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 235-1	Flor del fango (bolero)	Cristóbal Doval	1/28/49	23-1171-A	
CU 235-1A	———	———	———		
CU 236-1	Que cosas tendran las mujeres (son montuno)	Luís Martínez	———	23-1171-B	
CU 236-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 12 January 1949. Source BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 185 -1	En su partir (bolero)	Jacinto Scull	2/19/49	23-1180-B	TCD-043
CU 185 -1A	———	———	———		
CU 186-1	Pueblo Nuevo se pasó (guaguancó)	Luís Martínez Griñan	———	23-1180-A	———
CU 186-1A	———	———	———		
CU 188-1	Llévatelo todo (son montuno)	Luís Martínez Griñan	———	23-1194-A	TCD-043
CU 188-1A	———	———	———		
CU 189-1	Mírame más (bolero)	Enrique Hernández	———	23-1194-B	
CU 189-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personnel same as 12 January 1949. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 301-1	Me boté de guaño (montuno)	Alfredo Armenteros	8/2/49	23-1336-A	TCD-031
CU 301-1A	———	———	———		
CU 302-1	Es mejor olvidarte (bolero)	René Scull	———	23-1336-B	
CU 302-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros, second trumpet; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 300-1	El palo tiene curujey (son montuno)	Pascuel Bueno Griñan	8/19/49	23-1367-B	CUCD 1703
CU 300-1A	———	———	———		
CU 303-1	Finaliza un amor (bolero)	Raúl Díaz	———	23-1367-A	———
CU 303-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Conrado Cepero, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Rafael Corbacho, first trumpet; Chocolate, second trumpet; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
CU 298-1	Los Sitios aceré (guaguancó)	Silvio A. Pino	9/6/49	23-1382-A	TCD-043
CU 298-1A	———	———	———		
CU 299-1	Sagrado amor (bolero)	Lázaro Prieto	———	23-1382-B	———
CU 299-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Conrado Cepero, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Félix Chappotín, first trumpet; Chocolate, second trumpet; Oscar "Florecita" Velazco, third trumpet; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
D9-XB-2805-1	Dundumbanza (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	12/29/49	23-1488-A 51-5022-A	TCD-043
D9-XB-2805-1A	———	———	———		
D9-XB-2804-1	Flor de canela (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-1488-B 51-5022-B	CUCD 1703
D9-XB-2804-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 6 September 1949. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
D9-XB-2803-1	Pero yo no se (bolero)	F. Chappottín	1/13/50	23-1504-A 51-5029	
D9-XB-2803-1A	———	———	———		
D9-XB-2803-1	Juventud de Colón (guaguancó)	Federico Gayle Suárez	———	23-1504-B 51-5029	
D9-XB-2803-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 6 September 1949. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
D9-XB-2807-1	No puedo comer vistigacha (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	1/26/50	23-1518-A	TCD-043
D9-XB-2807-1A	———	———	———		
D9-XB-2806-1	Por tu bien (bolero)	Luís Martínez Griñan	———	23-1518-B	CUCD 1703
D9-XB-2806-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 6 September 1949. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-3955-1	Kila, Quique y Chocolate (son montuno)	Isreal Rodríguez	3/29/50	23-1583-A	TCD-031
E0-XB-3955-1A	———	———	———		
E0-XB-3956-1	Vuelvo a la vida (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-1583-B	TCD-043
E0-XB-3956-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. René Scull, first voice and clave; Conrado Cepero, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Félix Chappotín, first trumpet; Carmelo Alvarez, second trumpet; Florecita, third trumpet; Lilí, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike or Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-3957-1	El rumbón de Luyanó (guaguancó)	Lázaro Prieto	4/19/50	23-1591-A 51-5093-A	TCD-043
E0-XB-3957-1A	———	———	———		
E0-XB-3958-1	Recuerda aquella noche (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-1591-B 51-5093-B	
E0-XB-3958-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 29 March 1950. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-3959-1	El rincón caliente (son)	A. Rodríguez	4/24/50	23-1604-A 51-5106-A	TCD-031
E0-XB-3959-1A	———	———	———		
E0-XB-3960-1	Qué susto (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-1604-B 51-5106-B	CUCD 1703
E0-XB-3960-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 29 March 1950. Source: BMG.

TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE
Side A 1) Cumaye / Semilla de caña brava / So caballo	A. Rodríguez	5/10/50
2) Los guapos de Yatera / La yuka de Catalina / El reloj de Pastora	———	———
Side B 1) No vuelvo a Morón / Las tres Marías / Apurruñenme mujeres	———	———
2) Que caña / Mi china / Cangrejo fue a estudiar	———	———

Recorded for SMC in New York City.[1] Released on the 10" LP *Montunos cubanos: Estrellas del Ritmo* (SMC Pro Arte C-508) and re-released on *Legendary Sessions: Chano Pozo & Arsenio Rodríguez* (TCD-017). René Scull, first voice; Marcelino Guerra, second voice; René Hernández, piano; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Lázaro Prieto, bass; Raúl Travieso, bongó; Kike, tumbadora. Sources: RG, CDA.

---

[1] According to Radamés Giro these recordings were made on 10 May 1950; according to the linear notes to CD TCD-017 these recordings were made in 1953. It is more likely that the 1950 date is accurate, based on the musicians who appear on these recordings (i.e. Marcelino Guerra and René Hernández had been replaced, the latter by Ray Coen, by 1952) and the fact that Arsenio, between 1952 and 1953, was recording new songs he was marketing as "capettilos" (see Exito recordings, 1952-1953). Furthermore, in 1950, Arsenio was still under contract with RCA, hence the surreptitious name "Estrellas del Ritmo" for the SMC recordings. His contract with RCA ended by June 1952 and did not resume until 1955.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-4968-1	La sandunga del son (son montuno)	Raúl Díaz	6/29/50	23-5205-A	
———— -1A	————	————	———		
E0-XB-4969-1	Con reciprocidad (bolero)	Bienvenido J. Gutiérrez	———	23-5205-B	
———— -1A	————	————	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 29 March 1950. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-5215-1	Anabacoa (guaracha)	J. Ramírez	8/8/50	23-5209-A	
———— -1A	————	————	———		
E0-XB-5216-1	Cárdenas (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5209-B	
———— -1A	————	————	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 29 March 1950. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-4967-1	Todo terminó (bolero)	Israel Rodríguez	9/12/50	23-5219-A	
———— -1A	————	————	———		
E0-XB-4966-1	Juventud de Cayo Hueso (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5219-B	TCD-031
———— -1A	————	————	———		
E0-XB-4965-1	Con un amor se borra otro amor (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5237-A	TCD-043
———— -1A	————	————	———		
E0-XB-4964-1	Ten valor (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5237-B	
———— -1A	————	————	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal same as 29 March 1950. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-5792-1	Ta benito (afro)	A. Rodríguez	11/9/50	23-5299-A	TCD-043
E0-XB-5793-1	Aquí como allá (lamento)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5299-B	TCD-031
E0-XB-5794-1	Te mantengo y no quieres (son montuno)	Rafael Ortíz	———	23-5300-A	
E0-XB-5794-1A	———	———	———		
E0-XB-5795-1	Cree lo que tú quierás (bolero)	Jacinto Rodríguez	———	23-5300-B	
E0-XB-5795-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Estella Rodríguez, first voice on "Ta Benito" and "Aquí como allá"; René Scull, first voice and clave; Conrado Cepero, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Félix Chappottín, first trumpet; Florecita, second trumpet; Carmelo Alvarez, third trumpet; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike or Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó; Lilí, piano; Lázaro Prieto, bass. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E0-XB-5796-1	El que no tiene no vale (bolero son)	Félix Chapottín	11/15/50	23-5304-A	
E0-XB-5796-1A	———	———	———		
E0-XB-5797-1	Quizás con los años (bolero)	Lazaro Prieto	———	23-5304-B	
E0-XB-5797-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 9 November 1950. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-124-1	Me dijo que sí y le dije que no (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	2/13/51	23-5365-A	
E1-XB-124-1A	———	———	———		
E1-XB-125-1	Falso desprecio (bolero)	Antonio Alonso	———	23-5365-B	
E1-XB-125-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 9 November 1950. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-126-1	Caminante y Laborí (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	3/6/51	23-5383-A	
E1-XB-126-1A	———	———	———	———	
E1-XB-127-1	Jamás te perdonaré (bolero)	Enrique Pérez Poey	———	23-5383-B	
E1-XB-127-1A	———	———	———	———	

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 9 November 1950. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-128-1	Tu faz morena (bolero)	Juan Limonta	4/3/51	23-5405-A	
E1-XB-128-1A	———	———	———		
E1-XB-129-1	Jumba (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5405-B	
E1-XB-129-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 9 November 1950. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-130-1	Murumba (rizo negro)	Félix Chappottín	5/1/51	23-5432-B	
E1-XB-130-1A	———	———	———		
E1-XB-131-1	Negrita (guajira son)	Marcelino Guerra	———	23-5432-A	
E1-XB-131-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Miguelito Cuní, first voice and clave; René Scull, first voice and maracas; Carlos Ramírez, second voice and guitar; Félix Chappottín, first trumpet; Florecita, second trumpet; Carmelo Alvarez, third trumpet; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Kike or Chocolate, tumbadora; Papa Kila, bongó; Lilí, piano; Lázaro Prieto, bass. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-132-1	Amores de Verano (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	5/29/51	23-5461-A	
E1-XB-132-1A	———	———	———		
E1-XB-133-1	Te contaré (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5461-B	
E1-XB-133-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-134-1	Amor en cenizas (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	6/22/51	23-5481-A	
E1-XB-134-1A	———	———	———		
E1-XB-99-1	Mira . . . cuidadito (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5481-B	
E1-XB-99-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1-XB-2076-1	A Graciela (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	8/14/51	23-5520-B	
E1-XB-2076-1A	———	———	———		
E1-XB-2077-1	Mira que soy chambelón (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5520-A	
E1-XB-2077-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1XB-0991-1	Pobre mi Cuba (lamento guajiro)	A. Rodríguez	10/25/51	23-5593	TCD-043
E1XB-0991-1A	————	————	———		
E1XB-0992-1	Guaraguí (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5593	TCD-043
E1XB-0992-1A	————	————	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E1XB-4437-1	Ya se fué (bolero)	Marcelino Guerra	12/11/51	23-5624	
E1XB-4437-1A	————	————	———		
E1XB-4437-1	Amor a mi patria (lamento)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-5624	
E1XB-4437-1A	————	————	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
TR 222	Esclavo triste (lamento)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-040-A
TR 223	Mulence (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-041-B
TR 224	Pa' que gozen (mambo son)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-041-A
TR 225	La gente del Bronx (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-040-B

Recorded for Tico in New York City. Released in 1955 on the 10" LP *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Orquesta: Authentic Cuban Mambos*, vol. 1 (LP-135) and re-released on the CD *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto: "Como se goza en el Barrio"* (TCD-022). René Scull, first voice; Manolo "El Barroso" Morales, first voice; Candido Antomattei, second voice and guitar; Edil Rivera, trumpet; Luís Berríos Serralta, trumpet; Héctor "Venezuela" Vidal, trumpet; René Hernández, piano and arranger; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Lázaro Prieto, bass; Raúl Travieso, bongó; Kike, tumbadora. Sources: RDRI, CDA.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
TR 271	Jaguey (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-074-A
TR 272	Meta y guaguancó (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-074-B
TR 273	Esas no (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-075-A
TR 274	Como se goza en el barrio (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1951	10-075-B

Recorded for Tico in New York City. Released in 1955 on the 10" LP *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Orquesta: Authentic Cuban Mambos*, vol. 1 (LP-135) and re-released on the CD *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto: "Como se goza en el Barrio"* (TCD-022). Personnel same as above, except René Scull replaced by Juán Olano, first voice. Sources: RDRI, CDA.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E2XB-5115-1	Burundanga (montuno afro)	Félix Chappottín	1/22/52	23-5644	
E2XB-5115-1A	———	———	———		
E2XB-5155-1	Injusta duda (bolero canción)	Enrique González	———	23-5644	
E2XB-5155-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
E2XB-5771-1	Mi conuco (guajira son)	A. Rodríguez	3/18/52	23-5694	
E2XB-5771-1A	———	———	———		
E2XB-5772-1	Pogolotti (guaguancó)	Eloy Oliva	———	23-5694	
E2XB-5772-1A	———	———	———		

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Personal probably same as 1 May 1951. Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
TR 357	Swing y son (swing-son)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-121-A
TR 358	Oiga mi guaguancó (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-122
TR 359	Ahora capetillo (son capetillo)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-123-B
TR 360	Oye mi cantar (guajira)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-123-A
TR 361	Yo soy chambelon (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-120-A
TR 362	Maye santa (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-121-B
TR 363	Arpegio por Arsenio (solo de tres)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-120-B
TR 364	Se va el comparsa (conga)	A. Rodríguez	ca. 1952	10-122

Recorded for Tico in New York City. Released in 1955 on the 10" LP *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Orquesta: Authentic Cuban Mambos*, vol. 2 (LP-136) and re-released on the CD *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto: "Como se goza en el Barrio"* (TCD-022). Personnel same as above, except Ray Coen replaces René Hernández on piano. Sources: RDRI, CDA..

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
Ex 146	No quiero (son capetillo)	Israel Rodríguez	4/9/52	Ex 20-334	TRLP 5005 SCCD 9352
Ex 147	Si me voy (bolero)	Israel Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-334	———
Ex 148	Besarte quisiera (bolero rítmico)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———	Ex 20-335	———
Ex 149	Se formo el bochinche (son montuno)	Israel Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-335	———

Recorded for Seeco (Exito) in New York City. Released in 1958 on the LP *Exitos de Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto* (TRLP-5005). René Scull, first voice; El Barroso, first voice; Candido Antomattei, second voice and guitar; Edil Rivera, trumpet; Luís Berríos Serralta, trumpet; Venezuela, trumpet; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Ray Coen, piano and arranger; Lázaro Prieto, bass; Raúl Travieso, bongó; Kike, tumbadora. Sources: RDRI, CDA

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
Ex 154	Solo fué un sueño (bolero)	Felipe Goyco "Don Felo"	6/27/52	Ex 20-347	TRLP 5005 SCCD 9352
Ex 155	El dolorcito de mi china (son capetillo)	Israel Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-347	——— —
Ex 156	Hipocresía (bolero)	Israel Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-348	——— —
Ex 157	Cambia el paso (son capetillo)	Israel Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-348	——— —

Recorded for Seeco (Exito) in New York City. Released in 1958 on the LP *Exitos de Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto* (TRLP-5005). Personnel same as 9 April 1952. Sources: RDRI, CDA.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
Ex 186	Juégame limpio (son capetillo)	A. Rodríguez Scull	9/12/52	Ex 20-369	TRLP 5005 SCCD 9352
Ex 187	Vive en el recuerdo (bolero)	A. Rodríguez Scull	———	Ex 20-369	———
Ex 188	Ya voló (conga)	Neno González	———	Ex 20-370	
Ex 189	Se ama una vez (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-370	

Recorded for Seeco (Exito) in New York City. Ex 186 and 187 released in 1958 on the LP *Exitos de Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto* (TRLP-5005). Personnel same as 9 April 1952, except René Scull replaced by Juán Olano, first voice. Sources: RDRI, CDA.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
Ex 214	Que me mande la niña (son mambo)	I. Rodríguez	4/2/53	Ex 20-386
Ex 215	Pimienta (son capetillo)	I. Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-386
Ex 216	Pobre chinito (mambo)	I. Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-385
Ex 217	Baila Simón (son montuno)	I. Rodríguez	———	Ex 20-385

Recorded for Seeco (Exito) in New York City. Personnel same as 12 September 1952. Source: CDA.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE
	Carraguao alante (guaguancó)	Emma Lucia Martínez	ca. 1954
	Hay fuego en el 23 (guaguancó)	E. L. Martínez	———
	Buena Vista en guaguancó (guaguancó)	E. L. Martínez	———
	Devuelveme la ilusión (bolero)	E. L. Martínez	———
	Adórenla como a Martí (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———
	El homenaje esta hablando bien (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez	———
	Blanca paloma (chachachá)	E. L. Martínez	———
	Mami me gusto (son montuno)	E. L. Martínez	———
	Que feliz yo fuera (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———
	Besame aqui (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez	———
	La fonda de bienvenido (guaracha)	B. J. Gutierrez	———
	Recuerdo bien (chachachá)	E. L. Martínez	———

Recorded for Puchito in New York City. Released ca. 1957 as the LP *Sabroso y caliente* (Puchito 586) and re-released on CD (Antilla 586). Luís "Güito" Kartwrite, first voice; Julian Llanos, first voice; Candido Antomattei, second voice; Gilberto Valdés, flute; Pedro Luís Jackson, trumpet; Luís Berrios Serralta, trumpet; Mario Cora, trumpet; René "El Latigo" Hernández, piano; Evaristo "Cuajarón" Baro, contrabass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Francisco Angel "Kako" Bastar, timbal; Raúl Travieso, bongó; Kike, tumbadora.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
F2TB-2407	Mambo abacua (mambo)	A. Rodríguez	3/16/55	23-6696
F2TB-2408	Mi primer cariño (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6696
F2TB-2409	Acerca el oido (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6734
F2TB-2410	Mambo en la cueva (mambo)	Tata Gutiérrez	———	23-6734

Recorded for RCA Victor in New York City. Güito, first voice; El Barroso, first voice; Candido Antomattei, second voice; Edil Rivera, first trumpet; Luís Berrios Serralta, second trumpet; Venezuela, third trumpet; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Israel Berrios, guitar; El Látigo, piano and arranger; Cuajarón, bass; Raúl Travieso, bongó; Kike Travieso, tumbadora; José Valiente, timbales. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
F2TB-4950	Me estoy comiendo un cable (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	6/21/55	23-6811
F2TB-4951	Cuba cha cha cha (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6811
F2TB-4952	Sobre el arco iris (chachachá)	E.Y. Harburg-H. Arlen	———	23-6840
F2TB-4953	Conformate (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6840

Recorded for RCA Victor in New York City. Same personnel as 16 March 1955. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
CU 926	Lo sabía (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	4/16/56	23-6970
CU 927	Que negra pa' acelerá (rumba)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6985
CU 928	Me quedé sin ti (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-7000
CU 929	Titi, tu kundungo quiere papa (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6970
CU 930	Ayaca de maiz (son pregón)	Silvano Schueg "Chori"	———	23-7000
CU 931	Graciela, tú lo sabes (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-6985

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Güito, first voice; Estela Rodríguez, first voice; Orlando "Wichi" Sirial, second voice; Source: BMG.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
CU 988	Triste lucha (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	10/5/56	23-7129
CU 989	Dame tu yoyo Ma Belén (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-7129
CU 990	Contigo no soy feliz (bolero)	Jacinto Scull	———	23-7140
CU 991	Casera mire que caña (son pregón)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-7140
CU 992	Adios Roncona (columbia matancera)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-7120
CU 993	Con flores del matadero (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	———	23-7120

Recorded for RCA Victor in Havana. Probably the same personnel as 16 April 1956. Source: BMG.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER
	La pasión	A. Rodríguez
	Me engañastes, Juana	A. Rodríguez
	Lo que dice Justi	A. Rodríguez
	Rumba guajira	A. Rodríguez
	Coplas de España	A. Rodríguez
	Que mala suerte	A. Rodríguez
	Fiesta en el solar	A. Rodríguez
	Me equivoque contingo	A. Rodríguez
	A gozar mujeres	A. Rodríguez
	No lo niegues	A. Rodríguez
	El lema del guaguancó	A. Rodríguez
	Guaguancó de Puerta de Tierra	A. Rodríguez

Recorded for Roost in New York City in 1958. Released as *Primitivo* (Roost RST-2261) in 1965; re-released as *Arsenio y Kike: canta Monguito* (Tico LP-1173) in 1968 and *Primitivo* (Tico SLP-1173) in 1999. Ramón "Monguito" Quián, first vocal; Davy González, first vocal; Candido Antomattei, second voice; Israel Berrios, second voice and guitar; Agustin Caraballoso, trumpet; Johnny Malco, trumpet; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Abelardo Chacón, timbal; Kike, tumbadora. Source: Both Sides Now Stereo Newsletter (bsnpubs.com).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER
	Son pachanga (descarga)	A. Rodríguez
	Emilio y Dolores (plena)	A. Rodríguez
	La vida es un sueño (bolero)	A. Rodríguez
	Luís Cora (montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Yo nací en África (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez
	Corriendo fortuna (columbia)	A. Rodríguez
	Cumbancha mama (son pachanga)	A. Rodríguez
	La tina de María Elena (merengue)	A. Rodríguez
	Habla corazón (bolero)	A. Rodríguez
	Cruel destino (son)	A. Rodríguez
	Lo dicen todos (montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Guaguancó en el Remeneo	A. Rodríguez

Recorded in New York City in 1963. Released as the LP *Cumbanchando con Arsenio (fiesta en Harlem)* (LP SMC-1074).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE
CO 78556	Yimbila	A. Rodríguez	5/22/63
CO 78557	Hun hun	———	———
CO 78558	Baila simbale	———	———
CO 78559	Torongombe ya cayó	———	———
CO 78780	Compay cimarron	———	5/29/63
CO 78781	Canto abacoa	———	———
CO 78782	Alabanciosa	———	———
CO 78783	Bruca manigua	———	———
CO 78790	Los teenagers bailan changüi	———	6/5/63
CO 78791	Mona	———	———
CO 78792	Oración lucumí	———	———
CO 78795	Quindembo	———	———

Recorded for Columbia Records at 799 7th Avenue, New York City. Released as *Quindembo: Afro Magic La Magia de Arsenio Rodríguez* (CLT 7049). Re-released on CD as *Leyendas/Legends: Quindembo: Afro Magic La Magia de Arsenio Rodríguez* (CDL 81534/2-469742). Arsenio Rodríguez, tres, vocals, and percussion; Kike, percussion; Evaristo Baro, bass; Mauricio Smith, flute, tenor saxophone, and arranger; Walter Gene Jefferson, alto saxophone; José Valiente, percussion; Evelio Quintero, trap set and percussion. Source: AFM Phonograph Recording Contract Nos. 87088, 84468, 84466.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER
	El reloj de Pastora (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	No importa la distancia (bolero mambo)	Raúl Travieso
	Comprendo que sufres (bolero)	Candido Antomattei
	Yambú en serenata (yambú)	A. Rodríguez
	Linda cubana (danzón)	A. M. Roméu
	Hachero pa' un palo (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	El divorcio (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Frutas del Caney (son pregón)	Félix B. Cagnet
	Santa Cecilia (plegaria)	Manuel Corona
	Sabor de pachanga (pachanga)	A. Rodríguez
	Errante y bohemio (son montuno)	Rafael López
	Pucho Marquez (chachachá)	A. Rodríguez

Recorded for Ansonia Records in New York City, ca. 1959-1960. Released as *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto* (ALP 1337) ca. 1964. Chewi Rivera, first voice, Candido Antomattei, second voice, Israel Berrios, second voice and guitar, Chocolate, trumpet, Victor Paz, trumpet, Agustin Caraballoso, trumpet, Arsenio Rodríguez, tres, Alfredito Valdés Jr., piano and arranger, Raúl Díaz, bass, Evelio Quintero, timbal, Raúl Travieso, bongó; Kike, tumbadora.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER
	Necesito una mujer cocinera (montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Quien soy (chachachá)	R. Martínez
	Papa upa (montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Maldita droga (bolero)	J.P. Miranda
	Jugando al silo (montuno boogaloo)	A. Rodríguez
	Cuba llora (lamento)	A. Rodríguez
	Sueltala (montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Lo que le pasó a Luisita (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez
	La realidad (chachachá)	J. Barreto
	Quiero mucho a mi suegra (montuno)	Ana Rodríguez
	No he visto a Caridad (montuno)	A. Rodríguez
	Adios, Carmelina (montuno)	A. Rodríguez

Recorded for Ansonia Records in New York City, ca. 1960. Released as *Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto, vol. 2* (ALP 1418) ca. 1966. Santiago Cerrón, first voice; Marcelino Guerra, second voice; Israel Berrios, second voice and guitar; Chocolate, trumpet; Victor Paz, trumpet; Agustin Caraballoso, trumpet; Johnny Marco, trumpet; Bebo, tenor saxophone; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; El Látigo, piano; Alfonso "El Panameño" Joseph, bass; Evelio Quintero, timbal; Kike, tumbadora.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.
	Vaya pa'l monte (guajira)	A. Rodríguez	4/18/66	W-10102
	Bailen con migo (son montuno)		———	
	Hang on Sloopy (son montuno)	Bert Berns & Wes Farrell	———	W-10101
	Tres Marías (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	
	Manisero y Marta		4/28/66	
	Randy (son montuno)		———	
	La bamba (son montuno)		———	
	Que no llegue la noche (bolero)		———	
	El elemento del Bronx (guaguancó)	A. Rodríguez	5/2/66	
	Cielito lindo (son montuno)		———	
	Para bailar bailar el montuno (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	
	La yuca de Catalina (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	———	

Recorded for Bang Records in New York City. Released as the LP *Viva Arsenio!* (BLPS-216) in 1967. Produced by Bert Berns. Arsenio Rodríguez, tres, vocals, and director; Marcelino Guerra, second voice; Israel Berríos, second voice; Anita Delgado, voice; Israel "Cachao" López, contrabass; Evelio Quintero, timbal and drums; Kike, tumbadora; José Mangual, bongó. Source: AFM Phonograph Recording Contracts.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE
2877	Mi corazón no tiene quien lo llore (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	6/13/68
2878	Esto es yambú (yambú)		———
2879	Pasión extraña (bolero)	———	———
2880	Kiko Medina (guaracha)	———	———
2881	Ven mi mora (son montuno)	———	———
2880	Kiko Medina (guaracha)	———	6/27/68
2881	Ven mi mora (son montuno)	———	———
2882	Quindembo jazz (swing son or "quindembo")	———	———
2883	La verdad (bolero)	———	———
2884	Daddy Give Me Candy (swing son)	———	———
2885	Orgullesida (bolero)	———	———
2886	Menos que cenizas (bolero)	———	———

Recorded for Tico in New York City. Released in 1968 as the LP *Arsenio Dice* (LP 1175) and re-released in 1998 (CD SLP 1175). Produced by Pancho Cristal. Arsenio Rodríguez, tres and director; Julian Llanos, first voice; Israel Berrios, second voice and guitar; Marcelino Guerra, second voice; Victor Paz, trumpet; Agustín Caraballoso, trumpet; Bebo, tenor saxophone; El Latigo, piano and arranger; Kike, tumbadora; Alfonso "El Panameño" Joseph, bass. Source: AFM Phonograph Recording Contracts.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

3. Recordings with Chano Pozo, 1947

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
[not found]	*Porque tu sufres* (guaracha)	Chano Pozo	7/47	5057-A	TCD-017
[not found]	Rumba en swing (guaracha)	Chano Pozo	——	5057-B	————
1092	Cometelo tú (guaracha)	Chano Pozo	——	5053-A	————
1094	Pasó en Tampa (guaracha)	A. Rodríguez	——	5053-B	————

Orquesta Chano Pozo con Tito Rodríguez. Recorded for Coda in New York City. Tito Rodríguez, first voice; Machito, maracas; Mario Bauza, trumpet and bass clarinet; Frank Davila, trumpet; Bobby Woodlen, trumpet; Fred Skerrit, alto saxophone; Eugene Johnson, alto saxophone; José "Pin" Madera, tenor saxophone; René Hernández, piano and arranger; Julio Andino, bass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Ubaldo Nieto, timbales; Chano Pozo, tumbadora; José Mangual, bongó. Source: RDRI.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
1102	Contestame (bolero)	A. Rodríguez	7/47	5061-A	
1107	Sacale brillo al piso (son montuno)	A. Rodríguez	——	5061-B	TCD-307

Chano Pozo y su Conjunto con el Mago del Tres. Recorded for Coda in New York City. Panchito Riset, first voice; Jorge Alonso "Candy Store," vocal; Marcelino Guerra, vocals and clave; Mario Cora, trumpet; Frank Gilberto Ayala, piano; Julio Andino, bass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chano Pozo, tumbadora; Bilingüe, bongó. Source: RDRI.

MATRIX	TITLE	COMPOSER	MADE	CAT. NO.	ISSUE NO.
1104	Serende (guaguancó)	Chano Pozo	7/47	5059-A	TCD-017
[not found]	Seven, Seven (son montuno)	Chano Pozo	——	5059-B	————

Chano Pozo y su Conjunto. Recorded for Coda in New York City. Panchito Riset, first voice; Jorge "Candy Store" Alonso, vocal; Marcelino Guerra, vocals and clave; Mario Cora, trumpet; Frank Gilberto Ayala, piano; Julio Andino, bass; Arsenio Rodríguez, tres; Chano Pozo, tumbadora; Bilingüe, bongó. Source: RDRI.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

4. Ralph Rinzler Fieldwork: Arsenio Rodríguez with Israel "Kike" Travieso, 1964

TITLE	GENRE
El pescador/Cumayé	*son*
Diez perritos	canción de cuna
El gallo	son
La democracia	
Güanta golpe	mani
Ogún	bembé
Carretero	changüí
Tumba palo cucuyé	montuno
Yo le dije	
Torongombe ya cayó	
Baila simbale	makuta
Aggo Elegua	bembé
Diez perritos	canción de cuna
Medley: (a) Que guayacán (b) Aggo Eleguá (c) Oración Lucumí (d) Arara (e) Mamachule	 (a) yuka (b) bembé (e) bembé
Panadería cochina	

Recorded in New York City in May 1964 for Ralph Rinzler. Source: Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive, Smithsonian Institution. Tape catalogue number FP-RINZ-7RR -0813.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

5. Rodríguez Brothers: Arsenio and Kike with Luís Salomé, 1969

TITLE	GENRE
Yimbilá	yuka
Tan garuchá	yuka
Tribilín cantore	pregón
No he visto a Caridad	son montuno
Güanta golpe	maní
Que guayacán	yuka
Güeta cuerpo a mi comadre	yuka

Recorded in Washington D.C. at the Festival of American Folklife, 5 July 1969. Festival Recordings, afternoon, Toby Show Tent, Bernice Reagon, MC. Source: Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive, Smithsonian Institution. Tape catalogue number FP-1969-7RR-0049.

TITLE	GENRE
Yimbilá	yuka
Tan garuchá	yuka
Canto abakuá	Abakuá
Canción de cuna	Lucumí
Que guayacán	yuka

Recorded in Washington D.C. at the Festival of American Folklife, 5 July 1969. Festival Recordings, evening. Departmental Auditorium/Main Stage (Center of Mall). "Black Music through Languages of the New World," Bernice Reagon, MC. Source: Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive, Smithsonian Institution. Tape catalogue number FP-1969-7RR-0055.

TITLE	GENRE
Aggo Elegua	bembé
Mayombe	palo
Oración Lucumí	toques de santos
Ogún	toque de santo

Recorded in Washington D.C. at the Festival of American Folklife, 6 July 1969. Festival Recordings, morning. Source: Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive, Smithsonian Institution. Tape catalogue number FP-1969-7RR-0067.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Appendix 3

Lyric Transcriptions and Translations

Songs are ordered alphabetically. All transcriptions were taken from the original recordings. Unintelligible words are indicated by (?). Felipe García Villamil provided the Spanish translations for Arsenio's afrocubanos. The other transcriptions and translations are mine.

I thank Peer International for giving me permission to reprint lyrics of Arsenio's compositions. Permission to reprint the following titles was not obtained: "El rumbón de Luyanó," "Juventud de Cayo Hueso," "Juventud de Colón," "La verdad," "Los Sitios acere," "¿Que te parece, Juana?," "Sabor de pachanga," "Vaya pa'l monte," and "Yo nací del África."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

A Belén le toca ahora **(Para gozar Belén)** **(rec. 10/19/48)**	**Now It's Belén's Turn**
De esta forma saludamos lo' jóvenes de Belén: A la, a la, a la la A los barrio' de La Habana y a la sociedad también Nosotro' sólo queremo' armonizar Y olvidar eso' recuerdos de tradición Y dedicar a La Habana con muchisima razón Un saludo colectivo nacido del corazón Para que diga la gente ¡Belén, Belén, Belén! Yo sé que te toca ahora como dijiste' ayer Coro: Para bailar La Habana, para gozar Belén (2x) Para bailar lo' Sitios, para gozar Belén (coro) Para bailar todo los barrios, para gozar Belén ¡Belén! (4x) Para bailar La Habana, para gozar Belén	We greet the youth of Belén in this way: A la, a la, a la The barrios of Havana and also the sociedad We only want to harmonize And forget these memories of tradition And dedicate to Havana with a lot of reason A collective greeting from the heart So that the people may say Belén, Belén, Belén! I know it's your turn like you said yesterday Chorus: For Havana to dance, for Belén to enjoy itself (2x) For los Sitios to dance, for Belén to enjoy itself (chorus) For all the barrios to dance, for Belén to enjoy itself Belén! (4x) For Havana to dance, for Belén to enjoy itself

"A Belen le toca ahora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1968 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

A Puerto Rico **(rec. 6/22/48)**	**To Puerto Rico**
Puerto Rico tierra tropical En Cuba nació esta inspriación Que más tarde te ago llegar Con todo la (?) de mi corazón. Y era Diós que realice su sueño Borinquen querida, hermano país. Yo también llevo dentro esta pena Me produce un inmenso sufrir Te comenta de ti los poetas Que por razón ajena no eres feliz.	Puerto Rico, tropical land This song was born in Cuba Which one day I will deliver With all of the (?) of my heart. And it was God who realized your dream Dear Borinquen, brother country. I too carry inside this sadness That causes great suffering The poets write about you That for a foreign reason you are not happy

"A Puerto Rico." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1946 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Adiós África (n.d.)	**Adiós África**	**Goodbye Africa**
Ahora mimo yo tá llorá Po que me tá recordá Como nego me trae De África	Ahora mismo yo estoy llorando Porque me estoy recordando Como negro me traeron De África	Today I'm crying Because I am remembering As a black man they took me From Africa
Generemaronca sangra de la ma Ay, Dio. Ay, Dio Y pega toca la tambó	(?) Ay, Dios. Ay, Dios Y me pegan si toco el tambor	(?) Oh, God. Oh, God And they hit me if I play the drum
Bo no na trae mi tarro Cabildo tá vuele bilongo Así yo canta	Tú no me traes mi tarro En el cabildo estan preparando un maleficio Así yo canto	You don't bring my jar In the cabildo they're preparing a curse And I sing
Y cuando yo tá pone con tentos Aque tá bailá aque tá gozá	Y cuando me pongo con tento Aquél esta bailando, aquél esta gozando	And when I get happy He is dancing, he is joyous
El dice a la **mundele** adurunmi Entonce to mi **caravela**†	El dice al hombre blanco (?) Entonces todos mis 'hermanos jurados'	He tells the white man (?) So, all of my sworn brothers
Desti llorando, ¿a dónde yo va? Y nego contesta, 'a trabajá'	Preguntan llorando, ¿a dónde vas? Y el negro contesta, 'a embrujar'	Cry and ask, 'Where are you going?' And the black man answers, 'to work spells'
[coro] ¡Que malo pie que tengo yo!	[coro] ¡Que mala suerte que tengo yo!	[chorus] What bad luck I have!
Escucha cuento Ya son las hora‡ Escucha cuento por eso mimo	Escuche lo que digo [A su ganga] Resuelve ahora Escuche lo que digo	Listen to what I have to say [To his ganga*] Resolve this now Listen to what I say

†"Ese es muerto que ellos arrastraban para todo lados. Ese es su espiritualidad. . . Creían en eso. . . . Y ese muerto que se moría ellos seguían con ellos. Y tú ve gente con muerto en un saquito aquí arriba por que ya se esta seco completo. Ese su ganga. Y ese es caravela. Y ese es Kimbisa. Es lo mismo. Caravela es eso" (A person would take his *caravela* or dead person which was his source of spirituality. . . . They used to believe in that practice. . . . You would see people with a dead person in a sack because the body was completely decomposed. That was his *ganga*. And that is a *caravela*. And that is a *Kimbisa*. It's all the same. That's a *caravela*.).

‡This phrase can be used in general

**Nganga* is the cauldron where the spirit that the *palero* "owns" resides. The famous Cuban folklorist Lydia Cabrera provides ample ethnographic descriptions of the contents of a palero's nganga which includes sticks and roots of various types of trees, herbs, dirt, animals, and other natural elements (Cabrera 1992: 118-38).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Adiós África (continued)	**Adiós África**	**Goodbye Africa**
Que rabo mono 'mara mono°	Yo sabía que iba suceder esto	I knew this was going to happen to me
Po eso que leka leka nunca	Tiempo bueno que nunca llega	Good times that never come
Escucha cuento, por eso mimo,	Escuche lo que digo	Listen to what I have to say
Que arriba Palo no se juega	Toma en serio su creencia en Palo	Take your belief in Palo seriously
Por eso mimo, que arriba palo ya no amare	Por eso mismo, que tu Palo no tiene potencia	That's why your Palo doesn't have power
Ya son las hora.	Resuelve.	Resolve this.
Ahora sí que	Ahora si que	Now my ganga is resolving my problems
Casilla 'garra coronise†	Mi ganga esta resolviendo	
Por eso mimo yo ndinge ndinge Camarioca	Voy a Camarioca	I'm going to Camarioca‡
Escucha cuento muchacho mira	Escuche lo que digo muchacho	Listen to what I say lad
Pasao mañana yo van **güiri**, caramba!	Pasado mañana me voy a morir, caramba!	The day after tomorrow I'm going to die, for heaven's sake!
Güiri, güiri, güiri—cabeza pa **kiyumba**	Oye, oye, oye—mi cabeza es para kiyumba	Listen, listen, and listen—my head will be a kiyumba*
Escucha cuento muchacho mira	Escuche lo que digo muchacho	Listen to what I say lad
Que yo me llama **Kidimbyola**	Que yo me llamo Kidimbyola	My name is Kidimbyola°
¡Caramba, mira! En tierra vivo saca mueto	¡Caramba, mira! En tierra vivo sacas muerto	For heaven's sake, look! You take the dead from live soil
Escucha cuento, que malo pie que tengo yo!	Esuche lo que digo, que mala suerte que tengo yo!	Listen to what I say, what bad luck I have!

°Palo proverb.
†Lit. Now you'll see that my bird trap works
‡A small town on the east coast of the Bahía de Matanzas (Matanzas Province)
**Kiyumba* or skulls of animals and humans were often used for Palo Monte rituals (Castellanos and Castellanos 1992:391). This is no longer practiced.
°The name of a *ganga*

"Adios Africa." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1945 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Adórenla como Martí (rec. ca. 1954)	**Adore Her as Martí Did**
Cubanos, vamos a unirnos todos	Cubans, let us all unite
Y pensar nuestra patria debe ser feliz.	And believe that our country should be happy.
Hermanos, piensen que es (?)	*Brothers, think that (?)*
Tiene alma de patriota y sangre de mambí.	Has a patriotic soul and blood.
Solo nos falta pedirle a Diós	All is left is to ask God for
Un poco de paz y un poco de amor.	A little peace and a little love.
Y recordar los patriotas	And remember the patriots
Que murieron en los campos	Who died in the fields
Para darnos con su sangre democracia y libertad.	To give us with their blood democracy and liberty.
Amenla como Bermudez	Love her as Bermudez did
Cuidenla como Agramonte	Take care of her as Agramonte did
Defiendala como Bandera	Defend her as Bandera did
Y como Carlos Manuel.	And as Carlos Manuel did too.
Amenla como Aguilera	Love her as Aguilera did
Cuidenla como Moncada	Take care of her as Moncada did
Defiendala como Maceo	Defend her as Maceo did
Adórenla como Martí.	Adore her as Martí did.
Y recorda los patriotas	And remember the patriots
Que murieron en los campos	Who died in the fields
Para darnos con su sangre democracia y libertad.	To give us with their blood democracy and liberty.
Amenla como Bermudez	Love her as Bermudez did
Cuidenla como Agramonte	Take care of her as Agramonte did
Defiendala como Bandera	Defend her as Bandera did
Adórenla como Martí.	Adore her as Martí did.
Amenla como Aguilera	Love her as Aguilera did
Cuidenla como Moncado	Take care of her as Moncada did
Defiendala como Maceo	Defend her as Maceo did
Adórenla como Martí.	Adore her as Martí did.

"Adorenla como Marti." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1957 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Amor a mi patria (rec. 12/11/51)	**Love for my Country**
Ay, pobre mi patria Que estamos viviendo Epoca revolta Ay, Cuba querida Como soy patriota Me sangre el herida.	Oh, my poor country That we are living A rebellious time Oh, my dear Cuba Since I'm a patriot My wound bleeds.
¿Para que tantos comentarios De la lucha de aquel mambises? Si de Cuba ya puede decirse Que no queda nada.	Why so much commentary Of the struggle of patriots past? Since it can be said that Cuba Is left with nothing.
Si Martí y Maceo vivieran Y contemplaran las cosas de Cuba O de ver como nos (?) De pena murieran.	If Martí and Maceo were living And would contemplate Cuba's problems And see how they (?) They would die of sadness.
Ya es el colmo lo que pasa aquí En este pedacito de suelo Nos escupen los extranjeros Hasta la (?) de Martí.	It is the last straw what is happening here In this small piece of soil The foreigner spit on us Even on the (?) of Martí.
Ay, pobre mi patria Que estamos viviendo Epoca revolta	Oh, my poor country That we are living A rebellious time.

"Amor a mi patria." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1946 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Amores de verano **(rec. 5/29/51)**	**Summer Lovers**
Lo' setenta socio' y las trienta dama' A grito dicen, ¡Amores de Verano! Ya estamo' sonando en un lindo guaguancó, a la la la la! Y estamos escuchando por un ambiente mejor, a la la la la! Los setenta socios y las trienta damas A grito dicen que Amores de Verano soy yo Que Amores de Verano soy yo Ya muy pronto por La Habana este grito sonará, a la la la la! Gozando nuestra bandera por el progreso social, a la la la la! Lo' setenta socio' y las trienta dama' A grito dicen	The seventy friends and the thirty ladies They yell, "Summer Lovers"! We're singing in a beautiful guaguancó A la la la la And we're listening for a better atmosphere, a la la la la The seventy friends and the thirty ladies Yelling they say that I'm "Summer Lovers" That I'm "Summer Lovers" This yell will be heard very soon throughout Havana, a la la la la Enjoying our flag for social progress, a la la la la The seventy friends and the thirty ladies Yelling, they say
Coro: La juventu' dicen Amore' de Verano (3x)	Chorus: They youth say Amores de Verano (3x)
Ya muy pronto por La Habana sonará este lindo guaguancó (coro) Y (?) nuestra bandera por el progreso del cubano (coro)	This beautiful guaguancó will be heard soon throughout Havana (chorus) And (?) our flag for Cuban progress (chorus)
La juventu' (4x) La juventu' dicen Amores de Verano La juventu'	The youth (4x) The youth say Amores de Verano The youth

"Amores de verano." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1972 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Aquí como allá (rec. 11/9/50)	**It's the Same Here as Over There**
En África y en el Brasil	In Africa and in Brazil
Igual en Cuba como en Haiti	The same in Cuba as in Haiti
Igual al Sur que en Nueva York	The same in the South as in New York
El negro canta su dolor.	The black man sings his pain.
Ay, Dios. Ay, Dios.	Oh, God. Oh, God.
En la Argentina puedes pasar	In Argentina you can pass
En México (?) más	In Mexico (?) more
En Venezuela se burla	In Venezuela they mock
Aquel que condenan, que pesao.	The one they chain, how maddening.
El negro canta su canción	The black man sings his song
Lleno de angustia y de dolor	Filled with anguish and pain
Mirando que esto no esta igual	Seeing that this is not equality
Que para mi ya esta feo.	To me it's ugly
coro:	chorus:
Canta los negros su dolor.	Black people sing their pain.
Eh, están mirando	Hey, they're watching
Los negros, su dolor, ya estan llorando	Black people, their pain, they're crying
Eh, están mirando	Hey, they're watching
Eh, ya están llorando	Hey, they're crying
Aquí como allá ya están llorando	Here like over there they're crying
Allá como aquí ya están mirando	There like over here they're watching
¡Ay Dios!	Oh, God!
Aquí como allá ya están mirando	Here like over there they're watching
Eh, ya están llorando	Hey, they're crying
Eh, están mirando.	Hey, they're watching.

"Aqui como alla." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1977 by Peer International Corporation. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Bruca maniguá (rec. 6/17/37)	**Bruja de la manígua**	**Witch from the Brush**
Yo son Carabalí	Yo soy Carabalí	I'm a Carabalí
Nego de nación	Negro de África	A black man from Africa
Sin la libetá	Sin la libertar	Without freedom
No pueo viví	No puedo vivir	I can't live
Mundele† cabá	El hombre blanco me esta	The white man is breaking
Con mi corazón	Rompiendo mi corazón	My heart
Tanto matrata	Tanto es el maltrato que	From so much mistreatment
Cuepo van **fiiirí**	Mi cuerpo está muerto	My body is dead
Mundele con **bafioté**	El blanco con el maltrato	The white man with his ill will
Siempre tan **garchá**	Siempre esta engañando	He's always deceiving
Etá po *mucho que* lo **ndinga**	Esta diciendo muchas cosas que no entiendo	He's saying many things I don't understand
Siempre tá matratá	Siempre me maltrata	He always mistreats me
Ya ne me cabá	Ya me mató	He's killed me
Bafioté fiiirí	Con su maltrato	With his ill treatment
[coro]	[coro]	[chorus]
Ae, **checheré**‡ bruca manígua!	Bruja fuerte del manígua!	Powerful witch from the brush!
Abre kuto giiiri ndinga *bruca* manígua	Abre los ojos y los oídos, bruja del manígua	Look and listen witch from the brush
Mi lamento **súalo súalo**, bruca manígua, a mi **Yeyeo**	Mi lamento esta muy claro, bruja del manígua, a mi Yeyeo	My lament is very clear, witch from the brush, to my Yeyeo*
Coje en finda derechito bruca manígua	Camina derechito bruja del manígua	Stay on the right path witch from the brush
Un paso un paso de **lingüeña** bruca manígua	Con todo paso firme bruja del manígua	With every step, resolute witch from the bush
Ya, yo rico un mandembo bruca manígua	(?) bruja del manígua	(?) witch from the bush
Combo tiene **peremende**° bruca manígua	Mi mambo tiene maldición bruja del manígua	My chant carries a curse witch from the brush
Esta **kangando** lo **mundele** bruca manígua, a mi **Yeyeo**	*Esta cargando el blanco bruja* del manígua, Yeyeo	*It's putting a spell on the white* man witch from the bush, Yeyeo
Esa negra mi me engaña, bruca manígua, a mi **Yeyeo**	Esa negra a mi me engaña, bruja del manígua, Yeyeo	That black woman cheats on me, witch from the brush, Yeyeo

†"Dice que es Carabalí pero esta hablando en Congo. En Bantú es *mundele* y en Carabalí es *mukarará*" (He says that he's a Carabalí (from the Calabar) but he's using Congo words. In Bantu 'white man' is *mundele* and in Carabalí it is *mukarará*).

‡"Si tú dice checheré, tú sabes que es brujo. . . . *Bacheche* es 'hombre' en Bantú" (If you say *checheré*, you know that it has to do with witchcraft. . . . *Bacheché* is 'man' in Bantu).

*"*Yeyeo* es palabra Yoruba. No es Congo. Y *Yeyeo*, en Yoruba, es Ochún, La Caridad de Cobre, la Patrona de Cuba. Quiere decir entonces en Congo, Mamachola" (*Yeyeo* is a word in Yoruba. It's not a Congo word. And *Yeyeo*, in Yoruba, is 'Ochún,' *La Caridad de Cobre*, the Virgin Mary of Cuba).

°"Debe decir 'Mambo tiene coromende' " (It should say *mambo tiene coromende*).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Bruca manigua (continued)	Bruja de la manigua	Witch from the Brush
Esa negra que me engaña, bruca manigua, ae !	Esa negra que a mi me, engaña, bruja del manigua, ae!	That black woman that cheats, on me, witch from the brush, ae!

"Bruca manigua." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1937 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Como se goza en el Barrio (ca. 1951)	El Barrio is a lot of Fun
Oiga, bonkó, como se goza en El Barrio	Listen, buddy, El Barrio is a lot of fun
A la, la, la, la	A la, la, la, la
El Lenox y el 116	On Lenox and 116th St.
A la, la, la, la	A la, la, la, la
Igual que en la 110	As well as on 110th St.
Oigan decir	Listen to them say
Adios mi (?)	Goodbye my (?)
¿Que pasa brother?	What's happening brother?
¿Que pasa man?	What's happening man?
Toma un trago	Have a drink
Oiga, bonkó, como se goza en El Barrio	Listen, buddy, El Barrio is a lot of fun
Desde las 125	From 125th St,
Hasta la 98	To 98th St.
Al (?) le dice	(?) says to him
Te vendo el ticket	I'll sell you a ticket
Uno contesta, "how much?"	Someone answers, "how much?"
El otro dice,	Someone else tells him,
"¿en cuanto me lo das?"	"how much will you sell them to me?"
Y oye una voz que dice,	And you hear a voice that says,
"¿(?) que te pasa a tí?	"(?) what's wrong with you?
No te dejas bobo. Yo conosco eso."	Don't be a fool. I know that trick."
Oiga bonkó como se goza en El Barrio.	Listen, buddy, El Barrio is a lot of fun.
[Coro]	[Chorus]
En Nueva York todos dicen	In New York everyone says
como se goze en El Barrio	El Barrio is a lot of fun
Y quiere bailar lo bueno	If you want to dance to good music,
Camina y venganse al Barrio (coro)	Walk and come to El Barrio (chorus)
Los que viven en downtown	Those who live downtown
Vienen a gozar al Barrio (coro)	Come to have fun in El Barrio (chorus)
El Barrio para bailar. El Barrio para gozar. (3x)	El Barrio to dance. El Barrio to have fun. (3x)

"Como se goza en el barrio." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1946 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cuba llora **(rec. ca. 1960)**	**Cuba Cries**
Esa Cuba bulliciosa	That rowdy Cuba
La de los lindos paisajes	The one with beautiful sceneries
La que admiren el extranjero	The one that the foreigner admirers
Se esta muriendo.	Is dying.
Oy envuelta en penumbra	Today wrapped up in half-light
Se ve triste la (?)	The (?) looks sad
Cubierta en llamas,	Covered in flames,
Cubierta en llamas.	Covered in flames.
Sus grandes cañaverales	Its great cane fields
Sus inmensos tabacales	Its immense tobacco fields
Sus preciosos cafetales	Its precious coffee fields
Bañados en sangre.	Showered in blood.
Cuba la del cielo azul	Cuba, the one with blue skies
Y la del sol tropical	And the one with a tropical sun
Ahora por vanos caprichos	Now, for capricious vanities
No cesamos de llorar.	We don't cease to cry.
Cuba la del cielo azul	Cuba, the one with blue skies
Y la del sol tropical	And the one with a tropical sun
Hagamos una plegaria	Let's make a pledge
Para que vuelva la paz,	To bring back peace
Hagamos una plegaria	Let's make a pledge
Para que vuelva la paz,	To bring back peace
Hagamos una plegaria	Let's make a pledge
Para que vuelva la paz.	To bring back peace.

"Cuba llora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1958 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

El Cerro tiene la llave (rec. 4/8/48)	**Cerro Has the Key**
La bola se va extendiendo cañonazo, a la la!	The party is going to last, a la la!
La bola se va extendiendo cañonazo, a la la la la la!	The party is going to last, a la la la la la!
Con un grupito en el Cerro	With a little group in Cerro
Ello' saben compartir	They know how to share
Sin alabanza ninguna	Without any self-praise
Y le' cantan un rumbón	And they'll sing a great rumba
Calientico y sabrosito	Warm and tasty
El Cerro tiene la llave	Cerro has the key
¡Guarará! ¡La rumba!	Party! Rumba!
¡Guarará! ¡La llave pa' goza'!	Party! The key to enjoy!
[Coro]	[Chorus]
¡Guarará! ¡La llave! (4x)	Party! The key! (4x)
Con bom-bombón el Cerro y su llave (coro)	With beautiful women, Cerro and its key (chorus)
Arsenio Rodrígue' (?) (coro)	Arsenio Rodríguez (?)
El Cerro tiene la llave (3x)	Cerro has the key (3x)

"El Cerro tiene la llave." Words and Music by Fernando Noa Dominguez. Copyright (c) 1974 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

El rumbón de Luyanó (rec. 4/19/50)	**The Big Rumba from Luyanó**
Hay una gran multitud	There's a great crowd
Que se ha reunido' señore'	That has gathered, sirs
De buenos compositore'—A la!	Of great composers
Para brindar su cantare'	To offer their songs
A casi todos lo barrios	To almost all of the barrios
De término de La Habana	Of the district of Havana
Ya ahora a mi me tocó	And now it's my turn
Cantarle a mi Luyanó	To sing to my Luyanó
Este caliente rumbón	This hot, good rumba
Con muchisima razón	With very good reason
Para que canten y bailen mi bonito guaguancó	So that they may sing and dance to my beautiful guaguancó
Luyanó tiene rumbero'	Luyanó has rumberos
Tiene buenos cantadore'	It has good singers
Tambien tiene bailadore'	It also has dancers
Que nunca se enteró	That no one ever knew about
Para que canten y bailen mi bonito guaguancó	So that they may sing and dance my beautiful guaguancó
[coro]	[chorus]
Para que canten y bailen la gente de Luyanó (3x)	So that the people of Luyanó may sing and dance (3x)
Para que gozen y bailen ya tienen su guaguancó (coro)	So that they may enjoy themselves and dance, they have their guaguancó (chorus)
Yo le canto con el alma a mi bueno Luyanó (coro)	With my soul I sing to my good Luyanó (chorus)
La gente de Luyanó (4x)	The people of Luyanó! (4x)
Para que canten y bailen la gente de Luyanó	So that the people of Luyanó may sing and dance

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Funfuñando (rec. 4/12/38)	**Refunfuñando**	**Griping**
Rita cuerda tú, eh	Rita, recuerdas tú que	Rita, do you remember when
Yo fué casita Anakleto	Yo fué al casita del Anakleto	I went to Anakleto's little house
Se calla de Bolondrón	En el calle de Bolondrón	On Bolondrón street
Yo escucha una discusión	Yo escuche una discusión	I heard an argument
Mi comprale esta molesto	Mi compadre esta brabo	My friend is angry
Rita! A llora mamá	Rita! Llora mamá!	Rita! Cry!
Escucha cuento managüero	Escuche cuento managüero	Listen to the managüero†
Yo fué casita Anakleto	Yo fué al casita del Anakleto	I went to Anakleto's little house
Se calla de Bolondrón	En el calle de Bolondrón	On Bolondrón street
Yo 'cucha una discusión	Yo escuche una discusión	I heard an argument
Mi comprale esta molesto	Mi compadre esta brabo	My friend is angry
¿Qué pasa? yo *preguntá*	Yo les *pregunte* ¿Qué pasa?	*'What's wrong?' I asked them.*
¿Po' qué cosa tá peleando?	¿Por qué cosa estan peleando?	What are you fighting over?
¿Qué pasa? yo preguntá	Yo les pregunte ¿Qué pasa?	'What's wrong?' I asked them
¿Po' qué cosa tá peleando?	¿Por qué cosa estan peleando?	What are you fighting over?
Y né no me contesta	Y no me contestaron	And they didn't answer.
Né se queda fufuñando!	Se quedaron refunfuñando!	They continued griping!
[coro]	[coro]	[chorus]
Fufuñando, fufuñando	Refunfuñando, refunfuñando	Griping, griping
Ya son la sora	[A su ganga] Resuelve ahora	[To his ganga] Resolve this now
La cueva **ganga**	La casa del espíritu	The spirit's dwelling
Abre vera yo va cruza y...	Quiteme las cosas malas para poder cruzar [o vivír] y...	[To the spirit:] Take away any evil so I can cross [or live] and...
Cucha cuento manaqüero: que...	Escuchame manigüero lo que te voy a decir: que...	Listen manigüero to what I'm going to tell you: that...
E, **kuenda** sojo mi cumade; que...	Mis ojos estan mirando que mi comadre viene; que...	I see my comadre‡ coming; that...
E, cueta cara mi cumade; que..	La cuenta esta clara con mi comadre y yo; que...	All is well between my comadre and me; that...
Managüerito **lo-ndiambo, ndiam, ndiam, ndiam, ndiam***	Hermanito de la *manigua*, el ¡espíritu!	My little *manigüero* brother, the spirit!
¡Rita! llora mamá	¡Rita! A llorar mamá	Rita! Cry.
Ay Rita, que tumban coco y mata jicotea en el río, mamá	Ay Rita, si te han hecho un maleficio bañate con agua y tortuga de río	Oh Rita, if they've put a curse on you then cleanse yourself with river water and a terrapin
¡Sueltame! Rita (?)	¡Sueltame [del maleficio]! Rita (?)	Release me [from this curse]! Rita (?)
Ay, María mamá, sueltame	Ay, María mamá, sueltame	Oh, María, release me
Ya son la sora	Ya es la hora	The time has come

†Man from the *manigua* or bush.
‡*Comadre* is an initiate's female sponser into Santería or Palo.
*A Palo chant used to invoke a spirit.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Funfuñando (continued)	**Refunfuñando**	**Griping**
E, cuna valle Nkuyo° va cruza *Funfuñando, funfuñando*	(?) yo voy a cruzar el camino espiritual *Refunfuñando, refunfuñando*	(?) I'm going to cross that spiritual path *Griping, griping*

°García Villamil explains that the principal god Nkuyo consists of 21 paths (caminos), each having a name. The word "path" is a metaphor for natural phenomena. For instance, a bright star (Lucero), the four winds (Cuatro Vientos), and an eddy (Remolino) are all natural manifestations and paths of Nkuyo.

"Funfunando." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1938 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Juventud amaliana (rec. 12/13/46)	**The Youth of Amalia**
A lo' barrio' de La Habana	We dedicate this great rumba
Dedicamo' este rumbón	To all the barrios of Havana
A Amalia desde la' nube'	To Amalia from up high
Que brinda su corazón	Who offers its heart
[repeat]	[repeat]
Yo le' diré como llegó	I'll tell them how Amalia got to
Amalia la' nube', a la' nube', a la' nube'	The clouds, to the clouds, to the clouds
Se reunió la juventu' amaliana	The youth of Amalia gathered together
Para armonizar y para llevar	To harmonize and to carry
Amalia la' nube', a la' nube', a la' nube'	Amalia to the clouds, to the clouds, to the clouds
[Coro]	[Chorus]
Amalia en la' nube',	Amalia in the clouds
Ya llego Amalia a la' nube'	Amalia has arrived in the clouds
La juventu', Amalia en la nube (coro)	The youth, Amalia in the clouds
Para rumbiar llegó hasta la nube (coro)	They arrived all the way to the clouds to rumba
Para gozar Amalia (4x)	To enjoy Amalia (4x)

"Juventud amaliano." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1974 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Juventud de Cayo Hueso (rec. 9/12/50)	**The Youth of Cayo Hueso**
A la la la la (etc.)	A la la la la (etc.)
Pongan atención	Pay attention
Oigan el rumbón	Listen to the great rumba
Que dedico yo a Cayo Hueso señore'	That I dedicate to Cayo Hueso, gentlemen
Cayo Hueso me parece con todos lo que e cantado	It seems to me that of all (the barrios) that I've sang to
Que todavía no se dado todo lo que se merece	Cayo Hueso hasn't gotten everything it deserves
Y por eso te brindo este guaguancó	And that's why I offer you this guaguancó
[Coro]	[Chorus]
La gente de Cayo Hueso ya tienen su guaguancó (3x)	The people of Cayo Hueso have their guaguancó (3x)
Si tú lo vez que bonito con (?) (coro)	If you'd see how beautiful (?) (chorus)
Pa' que baile Cayo Hueso ya tienen su guaguancó (coro)	So that Cayo Hueso may dance, now they have their guaguancó (chorus)
Que lindo es tu guaguancó (4x)	Your guaguancó is beautiful (4x)
La gente de Cayo Hueso ya tienen su guaguancó	The people of Cayo Hueso have their guaguancó

Juventud de Colón (rec. 1/13/50)	**The Youth of Colón**
En Colón hay un grupito	There's a group in Colón
De muchachos jovencito'	Of young kids
Oiganlo bien caballero'	Listen to them closely gentlemen
Los jóvenes gozadore'	The good kids
Estan de nuevo en el grito	They're popular once again
Con su lindo guaguancó	With their beautiful guaguancó
Tiene mi barrio Colón	That my barrio Colón has
Una versión muy armonioso	A very harmonious version
Sin que se pongan celoso'	Without getting jealous
Para gozar juventud de Colón	So the youth of Colón may enjoy
[Coro]	[Chorus]
Los gozadore' 'stan en el grito	The good kids are popular again
Los Colonbiano' bailan bonito (3x)	The Colonbianos dance beautifully (3x)
Bailan columbia y bailan swing y tambien bailan el son bonito (coro)	They dance columbia and swing and they also dance son beautifully (chorus)
Aquél hay un grupito Colón son armoniosos y jovencito' (coro)	There's a group over there in Colón, they're harmonious and young (chorus)
Para gozar Colón. Colón. (2x)	So that Colón may enjoy. Colón. (2x)
Para gozar Colón.	So that Colón may enjoy
Los gozadore' estan en el grito	The good kids are popular again
Los Colonbiano' bailan bonito	The Colonbianos dance beautifully

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

La democracia (rec. 5/64)	**Democracy**
Tanto tiempo la gente mandando	It's been so long now that the people have been sending
A los negros a trabajar.	Blacks to work.
Tanto tiempo la gente mandando	It's been so long now that the people have been sending
A los negros a trabajar.	Blacks to work.
Y ahora que ya puedo pegar.	And now that I can fight back,
Ahora que puedo trabajar,	Now that I can work,
Casi puedo hacer na'.	I can barely do anything.
¿Por qué casi no puedo hacer na'?	Why can't I do anything?
Hace tiempo que me vienen diciendo	It's been so long now that they've been telling me
"Hay que esperar un poco más."	"You have to wait a little more time."
Hace tiempo que me vienen diciendo	It's been so long now that they've been telling me
"Hay derecho de igualdad."	"There are equal rights."
Y yo estoy viendo que todavia	And I'm seeing that still
Nos falta mucho, mucho, para llegar.	We have a long way, a long way, to go.
Si ya las cosas se han cambiado,	If things have changed,
Y hay derecho de igualdad,	And there are equal rights,
¿Por qué yo soy discriminado,	Why am I discriminated against,
Ay Dios, ay Dios,	Oh, God, oh, God,
Si todo el mundo somos igual?	If we are all the same?
[coro]	[chorus]
¿La democracia donde está?	Where's the democracy?
Nos falta mucho para llegar [repeats].	We have a long way to go.

Transcribed from *Rinzler Fieldwork: Arsenio Rodriguez*. Ralph Rinzler. 7RR. FP-RINZ-7RR-0813. Archived at the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive. Smithsonian Institution.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

La gente del Bronx **(rec. ca. 1951)**	**The People of the Bronx**
El elemento del Bronx	The people of the Bronx
El elemento del Bronx	The people of the Bronx
Igual bailan mambo que danzón	They dance mambo as well as danzón
Le gustan la rumba caliente y el guaguancó	They like their rumba hot as well as guaguancó
Y como me enteré	And now that I know
Ya les voy a cantar	I'm going to sing for them
Yo les voy a dedicar	I'm going to dedicate for them
Este bonito rumbón. ¡Ae, ea!	This lovely rumbón. Ae, ea!
[coro]	[chorus]
El elemento del Bronx	The people of the Bronx
Igual bailan mambo que danzón (3x)	They dance mambo as well as danzón
Igual bailan swing que guaguancó	They dance swing as well as guaguancó
Igual bailan mambo que danzón (coro)	They dance mambo as well as danzón (chorus)
Igual bailan rumba que danzón	They dance rumba as well as danzón
Iguan bailan mambo que danzón (coro)	They dance mambo as well as danzón (chorus)

"La gente del Bronx." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1967 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

La verdad **(rec. 6/27/68)**	**The Truth**
La realidad es nacer y morrir ¿Por qué llenarnos de tanta ansiedad? Todo no es más que un eterno sufrir El mundo esta hecho sin felicidad. Creyendo que la vida era un sueño Fué que yo escribí esa canción Ahora tengo nuevas esperanzas Y voy a darle paz al corazón. Buscando La Verdad, escudriñando Pude darme cuenta del error Y para este mundo envuelto de tinieblas Predico las palabras del Creador. El proceso lleva a un castigo Porque Adán profanó en el paraíso. Por eso arrepentirnos es preciso Si queremos hallar la salvación. Vendra nuevo mundo donde existe Paz, felicidad y vida eterna Ayudemos aquellos que blasfeman Dudando que existe La Verdad. Creyendo que la vida era un sueño Fué que yo escribí esa canción. Y ahora que estudié las Buenas Nuevas Comprendo que no es esa la razón. Comprendo que no es esa la razón.	The Truth is to be born and die Why fill ourselves with so much worry? Everything is nothing more than an eternal suffering The world is full of unhappiness. Believing that life was but a dream Is when I wrote that song. Now I have new hope And I'm going to give my heart tranquility. Seeking The Truth, searching I was able to notice my error. And to this world mixed up in uncertainties I preach the Word of the Creator. Life brings with it a punishment Because Adam profaned in the garden. That is why to repent is necessary If we want to find salvation. A new world will come where Peace, happiness, and eternal life exist. We shall help those who blaspheme, Doubting that The Truth exists. Believing that life was but a dream Is when I wrote that song. And now that I've studied the New Word I understand that that is not the reason. I understand that that is not the reason.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

La vida es un sueño (rec. 2/27/48)	**Life is a Dream**
Después que uno viva, Veinte desengaños, Que importa uno más. Después que conozca La acción de la vida, No debe llorar. Hay que darse cuenta, Que todo es mentira, Que nada es verdad. Hay que vivir el momento felíz, Hay que gozar lo que puedas gozar, Porque sacando la cuenta en total, La vida es un sueño, que todo se vá. La realidad es nacer y morir, ¿Por qué llenarnos de tanta ansiedad? Todo no es más que un eterno sufrir, El mundo está hecho sin felicidad.	After one lives, Twenty disappointing years, What does one more matter. After one learns Of life's deeds, One shouldn't cry. One has to realize, That everything is a lie, That nothing is true. One should live for the moment, One should enjoy what one can, Because in the end, Life is a dream, and everything is lost. The only certainty is birth and death, Why fill ourselves with so much worry? Everything is nothing more than an eternal suffering, The world is full of unhappiness.

"La vida es un sueno." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1948 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Los Sitios acere (Silvio Pino) (rec. 9/6/49)	**Los Sitios, My Friend**
Señore' pongan asunto Oigan que bonito e' mi guaguancó Señore' aquí presenten Le' decimo' de todo corazón Que en este barrio encierra la emoción La sublima inspiración Lo' Sitio' llaman O barrio alegre Lo' Sitio' acere O barrio alegre Lo' Sitio' acere Seguiremos guarachando Mientras el tiempo va pasando mi amor A Lo' Sitio' acere [coro] Vamo' a Lo' Sitio' acere (3x) Lo' Sitio' y su' lindas mujere' (coro) Allá en Lo' Sitio' se goza (coro) Vamo' a Lo' Sitio' acere Lo' Sitio' acere (3x) Vamo' a Lo' Sitio' acere	Gentlemen, pay attention Listen to how beautiful my guaguancó is Gentlemen, they present We tell you with all our heart That in this barrio they enclose emotion The sublime inspiration Los Sitios calls you Oh, happy barrio Los Sitios, my friend Oh, happy barrio Los Sitios, my friend We'll continue to have a good time While time goes by my love For Los Sitios, my friend [chorus] Let's go to Los Sitios, my friend (3x) Los Sitios and its beautiful women (chorus) You have a good time over there in Los Sitios (chorus) Let's go to Los Sitios my friend Los Sitios, my friend (3x) Let's go to Los Sitios my friend

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Me siento muy solo **(rec. 6/22/48)**	**I Feel Very Lonely**
Me siento muy solo, Hace más de tres años, Y nadie comprende, Lo que llevo en mi ser; No tengo en el alma, Nada más de amarguras, No siento ternura, Amor ni placer; No he encontrado en el dolor Quien me comprenda, Los días son años, Las noches son siglos, Y más que entristecido, Muchas veces lloro, Me encuentro abandonado, Me siento muy solo.	I feel very lonely, For more than three years, And no one understands, What I'm carrying inside; I have nothing but sorrow In my soul, I don't feel tenderness, Love, nor pleasure; In my pain I haven't found Someone who understands me, The days feel like years, Nights feel like centuries, And more than feeling sad, *Many times I cry*, I find myself abandoned, I feel very lonely.

"Me siento muy solo." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1958 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Pasó en Tampa **(rec. 7/47)**	**It Happened in Tampa**
Cuando a Tampa yo llegué, Tuve que hospedarme ahí, Y ahora me hacer reír, Recordar lo que pasé. Yo buscando que comer, Oh, que angustia para mi, Y no hay más que decir, What you said? What you said? Hasta que por la mañana, Por suerte llegó un cubano, Y me dijo, "dile hermano," "Coffee and milk, coffee and milk." Ahora lo aprendí a decir, Pero nunca olvidaré, Lo que me hizo sufrir, El what you said, what you said. Si no quieres pasar lo que pasé, [Coro:] Habla ingles, habla ingles. Le pido un beso me dice, what you said? (coro) Si no quieres quedarte sin comer (coro)	When I arrived in Tampa, I had to stay there for a while, And now it makes me laugh, Remembering what happened to me. I was looking for something to eat, Oh, what anxiety I went through, And I only got, "What you said? What you said?" Until that morning, Luckily, a Cuban arrived, And he told me, "tell him my brother," "Coffee and milk, coffee and milk." Now I know how to say it, But I'll never forget, How I struggled with, "What you said, what you said." If you don't want this to happen to you, [Chorus:] Speak English, speak English. I ask for a kiss, they say "What you said?" (chorus) If you don't want to go hungry (chorus)

"En Tampa." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1947 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Pobre mi Cuba **(rec. 10/25/51)**	**My Poor Cuba**
Ay, se oye decir al guajiro, Que mala están las cosechas De los campos de mi Cuba. No vale sembrar con maña No vale nada el cacao, Esta ruinado el tabaco, No vale nada la caña.	Ay, you hear the guajiro say, The harvests are so bad In the fields of my Cuba. There's no use sowing maña, The cacao is worth nothing, The tobacco is ruined, The sugar cane is worth nothing.
Al ver los lindos palmares Hermosos caña verales Se oye decir al guajiro, Pobre mi cuba.	Upon seeing the beautiful palm groves, Lovely You hear the guajiro say, My poor Cuba.
Cuba te daba el tabaco El cacao en abundancia. El café con arrogancia, Esta ruinada.	Cuba used to give you tobacco, Cacao in abundance. Coffee with arrogance It's ruined.
Ay, se oye decir al guajiro, Pobre mi Cuba.	Ay, you hear the guajiro say, My poor Cuba.

"Pobre mi Cuba." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1935 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Pogolotti **(rec. 3/18/52)**	**Pogolotti**
Ya casi todo' lo' barrio' tienen su guaguancó Ahora falta Pogolotti Que tambien se lo merece Con sus lindas calle' Y sus arboledas	Almost all of the barrios have their guaguancó Only Pogolotti is left Which it also deserves With its beautiful streets And its groves
A Pogolotti le toca por la justicia y razón Y le canto con agrado este caliente rumbón Pues uno de los soneros (?) guaguancó	It's Pogolotti's turn for justice and reason And I sing with pleasure this hot great rumba Well, one of the soneros (?) guaguancó
[coro] A Pogolotti le tocó y lo merece (3x)	[chorus] It's Pogolotti's turn, and it deserves it (3x)
Con sus lindas calles y sus arboleras se lo merece (coro) Pogolotti, Pogolotti (coro) A Pogolotti le tocó (5x) A Pogolotti le tocó y lo merece	With its beautiful streets and its groves, it deserves it (chorus) Pogolotti, Pogolotti (chorus) It's Pogolotti's turn (5x) It's Pogolotti's turn, and it deserves it

Words and Music by Eloy Oliva. Copyright (c) by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Pueblo Nuevo se pasó **(rec. 2/19/49)**	**Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself**
Hace tiempo están diciendo que Pueblo Nuevo se pasó A la, a la la Y ahora ellos me piden que lo repita en un rumbón Hevelio y su grupito están pidiendo con razón Que le diga todo el mundo que Pueblo Nuevo se pasó Con ese rumbón invita a gozar Oyelo bonkó [coro] La verdad que Pueblo Nuevo se pasó bonkó (3x) Lo dices tú, lo dice aquél, lo dice el otro, lo digo yo (coro) La verdad que yo sí son (?) bonkó (coro) La verdad que Pueblo Nuevo se pasó bonkó Se pasó bonkó (2x) La verdad que Pueblo Nuevo se pasó bonkó	For a time now they've been saying that Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself A la, a la la And now they ask me to repeat it in a great rumba Hevelio and his little group are asking with reason To tell everyone that Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself That great rumba invites you to enjoy Listen to it my friend [chorus] It's true that Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself my friend (3x) You say it, he says it, the other guy says it, I say it (chorus) The truth is that I'm (?) my friend (chorus) It's true that Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself my friend Outdid itself (2x) It's true that Pueblo Nuevo outdid itself my friend

"Pueblo Nuevo se pasó." Written by Luis Martínez Griñan. Published by Unichappell Music Inc. All rights reserved. Duplicated by permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

¿Que te parece, Juana? **(rec. ca. 1963)**	**What do You Think of That, Juana?**
[estribillo] ¿Que te parece, Juana? ¿Que te parece? ¿Que te parece? Que el son montuno es pachanga.	[refrain] What do you think of that, Juana? What do you think? What do you think? That the son montuno is [now called] pachanga.
[cuarteta] Porque les dieron la gana Pusieron violin y flauta Ahora, la gente se matan Bailandolo con charanga. (estribillo)	[quatrain] Because they felt like it They added a violin and flute Now, people are killing themselves Dancing it to a charanga. (refrain)
[cuarteta] Nadien se quieren 'cordar Que el son era prohibido *Que se escondía el individuo* Pa' tocarlo en el solar. (estribillo)	[quatrain] No one wants to remember That the son was prohibited *Musicians had to hide* In order to play it in the solar. (refrain)
[cuarteta] En Cuba habían musiquitos Orgullosos y (?) Y averlo pasar decían, "Ese tipo es un sonero." (estribillo)	[quatrain] In Cuba there were little musicians Full of pride and (?) And upon seeing them walk by they'd say, "That guy's a sonero." (refrain)
[cuarteta] La reina de los soneros (?) y regocijo Porque el son se lan cojido Los musicos pachangueros	[quatrain] The reign of the soneros (?) and joy Because the pachanga musicians Have taken the son.
[coro] Que jaleo, mama, Que jaleo.	[chorus] What confusion, mother What confusion.
Pachanga, na' má'	Pachanga, nothing more.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Sabor de pachanga **(rec. ca. 1960)**	**The Flavor of Pachanga**
[estribillo] La vida esta acelerada Hay que fijarse en el mundo. El que no baila pachanga Hay que tocarle montuno.	[refrain] Life is fast One must pay attention to the world. For those who don't dance pachanga One must play them montuno.
[cuarteta] Lo piden uno por uno Parado enfrente a la banda Hay que tocarle pachanga Hablarle del son montuno. (estribillo)	[quatrain] One by one they ask Standing in front of the band One has to play them pachanga [And] tell them about son montuno. (refrain)
[cuarteta] Lo piden perennemente Por donde quiera que handan Y son los adolescentes Que ese es la tumba que manda. (estribillo)	[quatrain] They ask for it constantly Wherever they go They are the adolescents That have control. (refrain)
[cuarteta] La juventud bailadora Cuando sale de parranda Hay que tocarle pachanga Para que gozan ahora. (estribillo)	[quatrain] The dancing youth When they go out on the town One must play them pachanga So they may enjoy themselves. (refrain)
[coro] La juventud dice, "Para bailar pachanga."	[chorus] The youth says, "To dance pachanga."

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Vaya pa'l monte **(rec. 4/18/66)**	**Go to the Mountain**
[estribillo]	[refrain]
Vaya pa'l monte	Go to the mountain
Guajira, vaya pa'l monte	Guajira, go to the mountain
Trabaja el negro, trabaja	The black man works, he works
Trabaja de sol a sol	He works day to day
Trabaja con el dolor	He works with the pain
Al comenzar la jornada	At the beginning of the workday
Trabaja con el temor	He works in fear
Piensa que no gana nada. (estribillo)	He thinks that he barely makes money. (refrain)
Siempre el negro protestando	The black man is always protesting
Siempre pidiendole a Dios	Always asking God (for strength)
El que vive en Carolina	The one who lives in Carolina (Puerto Rico)
Y el que vive en Nueva York	And the one that lives in New York
Decepcionado comenta	Disappointed, he comments
Y en verded, tiene razón	And, in fact, he has a point
Para un trabajo mejor	Even when he gets a better job
Si despues suben la renta. (estribillo)	They raise the rent. (refrain)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ven acá Tomá (rec. 6/17/37)	**Baja Tomás**	**Come Down Tomás**
Mayorá! Mayorá!	Mayoral! Mayoral!	Foreman! Foreman!
Mayorá! Mayorá!	Mayoral! Mayoral!	Foreman! Foreman!†
Kike, ya la tambora vá empesá	Kike, ya la tambor va empesar	Kike, the playing of the drums is going to begin
Y yo **simbá** a trabajá	Yo me voy a trabajar	I'm going to work
Pa punta va compra	Para comprar un terreno	So I can buy a plot of land
Pa comprá cosa bonito	Para comprar cosas bonitas	To buy nice things
Que a mi me gusta pone	Que a mi me gusta poner	That I like to wear
Pa comprá cosa bonito	Para comprar cosas bonitas	To buy nice things
Que a mi me gusta pone, dime negro!	Que a mi me gusta poner, dime negro!	That I like to wear, tell me black man!
Ya se va mayorá!	Ya se va el mayoral!	The foreman is leaving!‡
Yo quiere que te acueda	Yo quiero que tú te acuerdes	I want you to remember
Lo que yo te tá decir	De lo que yo te voy a decir	What I'm going to say to you
Yo quiere que te acueda	Yo quiero que tú te acuerdes	I want you to remember
Lo que yo te tá decí	De lo que yo te voy a decir	What I'm going to say to you
Ma que yo me va de aquí	Mira, yo me voy de aquí	Look, I'm leaving this place
¡Mayorá!	¡Mayoral!	Foreman!
[coro]	[coro]	[chorus]
Kende guá*, Tomá,	El espíritu esta viniendo, Santo Thomas	The spirit is coming, Saint Thomas
Tomá, **kende guá**	Santo Tomas, el espíritu esta viniendo	Saint Thomas, the spirit is coming
Cara cara oye **lemba**!	Hablamos cara a cara!	Let's talk face to face!
Ya yo reí como Mandengo	Yo voy a reír como Mandengo	I'm going to laugh like Mandengo
Kiako, kiako se mi lengua	Suave, suave, es mi lengua	Gentle, gentle is my tongue
Anda negra. Dime negra!	Anda negra, háblame negra!	Go on, speak to me black woman!
Abre kuto giliri ndinga, eh!	Abre los ojos y los oídos	Look and listen
E tira mento súalo suio!	(?) un poco, suio!	(?) a little, suio!
Tu tá **kangando** lo **mundele**	Estas cargando el hombre blanco	You're putting a spell on the white man
Paso un paso de **lingüeña**	Un paso para delante	A step forward [like a chamelean]
Esa negra son **malegua**	Esa negra es mala	That black woman is mean

†"En aquel tiempo el mayoral era que te daba trabajo o te quitaba el trabajo o que te daba azotes para que tú trabajabas" (At that time the foreman was the one that gave you work or he took it away from or he wipped you to make you work).
‡"Ellos tenían que esperar que el mayoral se fuera, para empezar la jolla de la fiesta" (They had to wait until the foreman left so that the party could begin).
*"El espíritu está compartiendo. Ya esta bien adentro de ellos" (The spirit is sharing his presence. He's taken possession of the participants).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ven acá Tomá (continued)	**Baja Tomás**	**Come Down Tomás**
Bicho malo no camina Eh! Ya voy reí como Mandengo **Kiako, kiako** se mi lengua **Kende guá**, Tomá, Tomá, **kende guá**	La persona buena nunca muere Yo voy a reír como Mandengo Suave, suave, es mi lengua El espíritu [o nganga] esta viniendo, Santo Thomas Santo Tomas, el espíritu esta viniendo	A good person never dies° I'm going to laugh like Mandengo Gentle, gentle is my tongue The spirit [nganga] is coming, Saint Thomas Saint Thomas, the spirit is coming

°Congo proverb

"Ben aca toma." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1971 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Vuelvo a la vida (rec. 3/29/50)	**I Return to Life**
Vuelvo a la vida para ser feliz No me siento solo, ya te tengo a ti. Muchas gracias a nuestro Señor Por haberse apiadado de mi dolor. No creí que un dolor de tantos años Lo pudiera resistir mi corazón. Pero todo ha pasado, Ahora vuelvo a la vida, Para darle a mi ser, La ilusión perdida. Aunque sea una vez, En medio de mi llanto, He podido reir, He podido cantar, He podido vivir a plenitud la felicidad	I return to life to be happy I don't feel lonely, I have you back. Much thanks to God For taking pity on my pain. I never believed that my heart could resist This pain for so many years. But now it is all over, Now I can resume living, To give back my being That lost hope. Although for just once, In the middle of crying I've been able to laugh, I've been able to sing, I've been able to live happily in abundance

"Vuelvo a la vida." Written by Arsenio Rodríguez Scull. Published by Unichappell Music Inc. All rights reserved. Duplicated by permission.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Yo nací del África (rec. 1960)	**I was Born of Africa**
Yo nací del África	I was born from Africa
Tal vez soy del Congo	Maybe I'm from the Congo
Tal vez soy del Ampanga	Maybe I'm from Ampanga
Tal vez del Río Congo	Maybe from the Congo River
Tal vez soy mosongo	Maybe I'm mosngo
Tal vez soy congo real	Maybe I'm congo real
Tal vez soy de Ampala	Maybe I'm from Ampala
Tal vez soy macuá	Maybe I'm macuá
Yo no soy Rodríguez	I'm not a Rodríguez
Yo no soy Travieso	I'm not a Travieso
Yo no soy Herrera	I'm not a Herrera
Yo no soy Fernández	I'm not a Fernández
Yo no soy Barroso	I'm not a Barroso
Yo no soy Terraza	I'm not a Terraza
Yo no soy García	I'm not a García
Yo no soy Morales	I'm not a Morales
Tal vez soy Amoto	Maybe I'm an Amoto
Tal vez soy Momomba	Maybe I'm a Momomba
Tal vez Casabubu	Maybe Casabubu
Yo nací del África, ¡sí!	I was born from Africa, yes!
[coro]	[chorus]
¡África!	Africa!
Pero mi tierra, mi tierra linda.	My land, my beautiful land.
Yo soy del congo, yo soy el congo.	I'm from the Congo, I'm the Congo.
Tú eres mi tierra, mi tierra linda.	You are my land, my beautiful land.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Yo son Gangá (rec. 9/15/38)	**Yo soy Gangá**	**I'm a Gangá**
Yo son **Gangá** Yo son **Gangá** **Kimbisa**, mi **caravela** Que yo tambien quiero bailar Ya tá la tiempo menguante Y mi conuco se acabá ¿E caravela, **Kindiambo** kangre? ¿Qué **dinga**, bobo? ¿Qué **kuendá**? ¿E caravela, **Kindiambo** kangre, Qué **ndinga** bobo, Qué **kuendá**? **Macate** palo **kisante** [coro] **Checheré** comadre Escucha cuento managüero Y **kiako kiako** son mi lengua E yo me cuerda yo me llora Cuando yo staba en **cunamansa** Para cura son cochino E sin bravicho con la mano Y matadero mucha **guano** La birijagua no tá fuera Yo baja pozo sin calera Y cara cara oye **lemba**! Managüerito mi **Yeyeo** mamá A mi **Yeyeo** son mi palo Ya yo me llevo a mi comadre	Yo soy Gangá Yo soy Gangá Kimbisa, mi caravela Yo tambien quiero bailar Ya es tiempo del menguante y El trabajo en mi conuco se termino ¿Caravela, Qué pasa con el kangre? ¿Qué dices, bobo? ¿Quando va a venir? ¿Caravela, Que pasa con el kangre, Qué dices bobo, Quando va a venir? Esa planta esta viniendo atrasado [coro] Fuerte comadre Oye, oye managüero Estoy hablando despacito Yo me recuerdo [de mi familiares] y lloro Cuando yo estaba en my tierra No dan gracias por mi ganga Haciendo cosa mala con su mano Y matadero hace mucho dinero La birijagua se esconde en el invierno Yo bajo el pozo sin escalera Hablamos cara a cara! Managüerito mi Yeyeo mamá! A mi Yeyeo es mi espíritu Ya yo me llevo a mi comadre	I'm a Gangá I'm a Gangá Kimbisa, my caravela I also want to dance It's time for [the moon's] waning And I've finished my work on my plot of land Caravela, What's the matter with my kangre root? What are you saying, idiot? When is it going to grow? Caravela What's the matter with the kangre root, What are you saying, idiot When is it going to grow? That plant is growing slowly [chorus] Strong woman Listen, listen managüero I'm speaking very slowly I remember [my relatives] and I cry When I was in my homeland They don't give thanks to my ganga Doing evil with his hand The slaughterhouse makes a lot of money The insect hides for the winter I descend into the well without a ladder Let's talk face to face! Managüerito my Yeyeo mamá! My Yeyeo is my spirit I take my friend with me

"Yo son ganga." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1946 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Yo son Macuá **(rec. 4/12/38)**	**Yo soy Macuá**	**I am a Macuá**
Y yo que son **Macuá** No quiere contá Lo que ya pasá En la esclavitu. (repeat)	Y yo que soy Macuá No quiero contar Lo que ya paso En la esclavitud. (repeat)	Even though I'm a Macuá I don't want to talk About what happened During slavery. (repeat)
Mandinga con **Gangá** Tá senta rei Y yo tá **güeta**	Mandinga con Gangá Estan sentados y riendo Y estoy esperando el tiempo que viene	Mandinga with Gangá Are sitting and laughing And I'm waiting for the time to come
Y no pue hablá La verinto maltrata Que yo no pue caminá	Y no puedo hablar (?) Que yo no puedo caminar	And I'm speechless (?) I can't walk
Tango füiri ya, ¡ah! Cuenta tá contá, ¡ah! **Susundamba**† y va Y **Macuá** la suelo Dormiendo como un **mbwá**	Me voy a morir, ¡ah! Mi muerto esta cumplido, ¡ah! La lechuza viene y se va Y el Macuá sobre el suelo Duerme como un perro	I'm going to die, ah! My death is complete, ah! The owl comes and goes And the Macuá on the floor Sleeps like a dog
[coro] Habre la verea **ndengue**‡ Verea **ndengue** Verea **ndengue** Ya son la sora	[coro] Habre mi camino ndenge *Camino ndengue* Camino ndengue Ya es la hora	[chorus] Clear my path ndengue Path *ndengue* Path ndengue It's time
Hablado: A cuevas Siete Esquina **Mayeyeo**, gogo mucho ago a **Mayeyeo**, Caltucilde mama tumbao*	(?)	Spoken: (?)
Verea **ndengue**	Camino ndengue	Path ndengue
Ye! Que keremenga tiene siete cinco kindiambo con motivo que no tiene son a mi no conoce. Mi madre son corturera santa Mi padre son sepulturero Yeyeo	Ye! Que sangre tiene siete cinco kindiambo con motivo que no tiene (?). Mi madre es corturera santa Mi padre es sepulturero Yeyeo	Ye! That blood has seven five kindiambo because he doesn't have (?). My mother is a seamstress My father is a gravedigger Yeyeo

†The owl is an important bird which symbolizes death in Palo (García Villamil 1998).
‡Ndengue is a name of a *prenda* or *nganga* (García Villamil 1998).
*This spoken passage is similar to a prayer used in Palo (García Villamil 1998).

"Yo son macua." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1938 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Yo `ta namorá (rec. 10/16/40)	**Yo estoy enamorado**	**I'm in Love**
E' que yo tava enamorá de un dumba	Es que yo estuve enamorado con una muchacha	I was in love with a girl
Que tava caramala vapacoa	Que estava encaramada en el entretecho	Who was above in the attic
E' que yo tava enamorá de un dumba	Es que yo estuve enamorado con una muchacha	I was in love with a girl
Que tava encaramala vapacoa	Que estava encaramada en el entretecho	Who was above in the attic
Hay que dipuesto una de la un bola	Hay que disponerse (?)	You have prepare yourself (?)
Cuando stá chico tá canblata su pasito	Cuando esta chico esta (?) su camino	When you're young your step is (?)
Que yo le visa que yo tiene un conuco	Que yo lo viso que yo tengo un conuco	*I'm going to tell her that I have* some land
Que yo le va a regalar mucho **anguno**	Que yo lo voy a regalar el (?)	I'm going to give her (?)
Que yo le va regalar mucho **nkombo**	Que yo lo voy a regalar muchos chivos	I'm going to give her young goats
Que yo le va a regalar mucho ¡**mbwá**!	Que yo lo voy a regalar muchos ¡perros!	I'm going to give her many dogs!
Hay que pregunta taka **nkobo** te sombe	Hay que preguntar los (?) caracoles (?)	You have to ask the (?) conch shells† (?)
Hay que tan chico **Congo** tá namorá	Hay que tan joven ese congo esta enamorado	That young "Congo" is in love
Ya me va cabar de tanto volu	Ya me voy a cabar de tanto (?)	I'm going to kill myself from so much (?)
[coro] Bandoki, Ndoki	[coro] Bandoki, Ndoki	[chorus] Bandoki‡, Ndoki*
Gueta costa paran seca	Mira (?) seca	Look (?) dry
Que bueno sta paran seca	Que buena esta el (?) seca	The dry (?) is very good
Güeta bemba paran seca	Mira bemba (?) seca	Look over here bemba° (?)
Yo len dale mi conuco	Yo le voy a dar mi conuco	I'm going to give her my land
Yo len dale mucho simbo	Yo le voy a dar mucho dinero	I'm going to give her lots of money
Que bebe **malafo manputo**	Que toma aguardiente	So she can drink alcohol
Mbwa perro mete mano en guerra	Él mete mano a peliar	He's looking for a fight
E, **güeta** cara para sico	Vire la cara para mirarte	Turn your face so I can see you
Imbula mi nena con me mato	(?)	(?)

†*Nkobo* or conch shells are used by priests of the Regla Kimbisa (Kimbisa Order) to predict the future (Cabrera 1986a:40-44).
‡*Bandoki* is another name for a Palo priest or sorcerer (Castellanos and Casellanos 1992:131).
**Ndoki* is the evil spirit associated with the negative force in Palo who has the power to kill and do physical harm according to the wishes of "his client" or sorcerer (*ibid.*:144).
°*Bemba* is a women with a "large" mouth.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Yo 'ta namorá (continued)	**Yo estoy enamorado**	**I'm in Love**
Que bueno tá paran seca	Que bueno esta el (?) seca	The dry (?) is realy good
Nángüe tá bemba paran seca	El nángüe esta para besar (?) seca	The nanqüe [tree] is for kissing, dry (?)
Yo len dale mi conuco	Yo le voy a dar mi conuco	I'm going to give her my land
Yo len dale mucho himbo	Yo le voy a dar mucho (?)	I'm going to give her lots of (?)
Que bebe **malafo manputo**, ¡ah!	Para que toma aguardiente, ¡ah!	So she can drink alcohol, ah!
E Ndoki, Ndoki bota fuera	Échale al Ndoki	Throw the Ndoki out
Anda dile mi comadre	Anda dile a mi comadre	Go and tell my friend
E que bueno tá paran seca	Que buena esta el (?) seca	That the dry (?) is very good
E, **qüeta** bemba para seca	Vire bemba para	Turn around bemba
E yo len dale mi conuco	Y yo le voy a dar mi conuco	And I'm going to give her my land
E yo len dale mucho yumbo	Yo le voy a dar muchos (?)	I'm going to give her many (?)
E, bota fuera mi comade	Sale para fuera comadre	Come outside (?)
E que tu bebe tá **malafo**	Que toma este aguardiente	Drink this alcohol
Anda dile mi comadre, eh	Anda dile a mi comadre	Go tell my friend
Anda dile mi comadre, eh	Anda dile a mi comadre	Go tell my friend
Mire madre que se caba, ¡eh!	Mira madre, que [el canción] se ¡cabo!	Look, the song has ended!

"Yo ta namora." Words and Music by Arsenio Rodriguez Scull. Copyright (c) 1957 by Peer International Corporation. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Appendix 4

Tables

Each of the following tables consist of either three or two songs whose arrangement schemes are outlined and arranged vertically. The first digit of the tables' titles (e.g., Table 4) indicate the chapter in which the songs are discussed. In addition to the names of the arrangement's sections (listed in the column on the far left) the tables outline the primary events of the arrangements, the harmonic patterns, and the number of repetitions these patterns take. Events in the arrangements include sequences of alternations between the *estribillo* (refrain) and the trumpet (abbreviated tpt.), the estribillo and *guía* (solo voice improvisation), and *cuarteta* (quatrain) or *coro* (chorus) and trumpets (abbreviated tpts.). One complete cycle between two alternating parts occurs either through one pass of the cyclic harmonic pattern, in which case the parts are separated by a slash (/), or through two passes, in which case the parts are separated by a long hyphen (—). The harmonic pattern of each alternating sequence is given below the names of the alternating parts. One bar, in which the corresponding harmony or harmonies are indicated with roman numerals, is demarcated by bar lines (e.g., | I |). The placement of the harmonies, however, does not reflect their actual rhythmic placements. Each cyclic harmonic pattern is marked off by double bar lines, and the number of repetitions that the patterns take is indicated in parentheses, as in the following example: || I | V || (4x). In a few instances the cyclic patterns consist of melodic material that do not suggest harmonic progressions, in which case the bars are empty (i.e., | |). There are two other symbols: * indicates a short break in the music; and ~ indicates a piano cue (usually, an arpeggiated tonic or dominant chord).

All compositions are by Arsenio Rodríguez and were recorded by his conjuntos, except where indicated. Some tables (Tables 7.4, 8.3, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3) consist of the original recording of a song and its re-recorded version. Finally, the arrangements of some songs extend over two tables.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—Son montunos (one-part)

	Como traigo la yuka **83948-B (6/18/42)**	**Camina a trabajá Aragón** **23-0082-B (11/16/43)**	**So caballo!** **23-0076-A (11/29/43)**
Intro.	tres | I | V | I | V |	tres | V | I | tpts | V | V | V | V | V | *V |	tres | I bVII | I bVII |
Montuno	estribillo—tpt. || I | V | I | V || (4x) estribillo—tpts. || I | V | I | V || (2x) estribillo—copla (duo) || I | V | I | V || (6x) estribillo | I | V | I | V | *guía/coro* || I | V || (4x)	estribillo—tpt. || V | I || (8x) 1. estribillo—guía || V | I || (2x) 2. estribillo | V | I | 3. copla | V | V | V | V | V | *V | repeats 1-3 estribillo | V | I |	estribillo—tpt. || I bVII | I bVII || (12x) estribillo—guía || I bVII | I bVII || (12x) estribillo | I bVII | I bVII |
Solo	tres || I | V || (18x) || V | V | V | V | | V | bVI | bVI | V || (2x)	tres || V | I || (9x)	piano || I bVII | I bVII || (16x)
Cierre			| | |
Montuno	tpt. | I | V | I | V | estribillo | I | V | I | V |		
Diablo		estribillo—tpt. || V | I || (2x) estribillo—tpts. || V | I || (2x) estribillo—tpt. || V | I || (2x) estribillo | V | I |	estribillo—tpt. || I bVII | I bVII || (2x) estribillo—tpts. || I bVII | I bVII || (10x) estribillo—tpt. || I bVII | I bVII || (2x) estribillo | I bVII | I bVII ||
Coda	tpts. | I vi - V ||	tpts. | V | V | V | V | V | *V ||	

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	Mi chinita me botó **23-0173-A (7/6/44)**	**No hay yaya sin guayacán** **23-0401-B (11/27/45)**	**Cangrejo fué a estudiar** **23-0470-A (6/21/46)**
Intro.	tres ‖ bVII | i ‖ (2x)	tres | I | V |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpts | I | V | I ii | *V |
Montuno	*estribillo/tpt* ‖ bVII | i ‖ (2x) tpt ‖ bVII | i ‖ (2x) estribillo ‖ bVII | i ‖ (2x) tpts ‖ bVII | *i ‖ (4x) 1. estribillo ‖ bVII | i ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta/tpts (glosas) ‖ bVII | *i ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2 (2x), 1 cuarteta/tpts (glosas) ‖ bVII | *i ‖ (6x) repeats 1	*estribillo/tpt* ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) estribillo/tpts (glosas) | I | V | 1. estribillo | I | V | *cuarteta/tpts (glosas)* ‖ I | *V ‖ (6x) estribillo/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1 cuarteta/tpts (glosas) ‖ I | *V ‖ (6x) repeats 1	*1. estribillo—tpt* ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (4x) 2. estribillo—guía ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 3. estribillo | I | V | I | V | 4. cuarteta/tpts (glosas) ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) repeats 3-4, 3
Solo	piano ‖ bVII | i ‖ (5x)	tres ‖ *I* | V ‖ (13x)	piano ‖ *I* | V ‖ (8x)
"Mambo"	tpts. ‖ bVII | *i ‖ (4x)		
Cierre		| I | *V |	| | |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ bVII | i ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. ‖ bVII | i ‖ (3x)	coro/tpt. | I | V | coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) coro/tpt. ‖ *I* | V ‖ (4x)	estribillo ‖ I | V | coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. | *I* | V | estribillo | I | V | I | V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	El reloj de Pastora 23-0470-B (6/21/46)	**Dame un cachito pa' huelé 23-0492-B (6/21/46)**	**Cero guapos en Yateras 23-0519-A (6/21/46)**
Intro.	tres ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) | i | V | VI V | V |	tres | IV I | IV V | tpt. | IV I | IV V |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. | I | V | I | V | I | V |
Montuno	1. estribillo—tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) 2. estribillo—guía ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) 3. estribillo | *i* | V | 4. cuarteta (tpt glossas) ‖ *i* | V ‖ (4x) repeats 2-4 estribillo | i | V |	estribillo—tpt. ‖ IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V ‖ (6x) estribillo—guía ‖ IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V ‖ (4x) estribillo | IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V |	estribillo—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) estribillo—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) 1. estribillo | I | V | | I | - | cuarteta ‖ I | - | V | - ‖ (2x) | V | I | repeats 1
Solo	piano ‖ i | V ‖ (7x) | i | ~V |	piano ‖ IV I | IV V ‖ (10x) | IV I | IV ~V |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) | IV | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | IV | - | bIV | - | III | - | | V/V | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | | *I* | ~V |
Cierre	| i | V |	| | |	| I | V |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (8x) coro/tpt. | i | V | estribillo | i | V | i ‖	estribillo | IV I | IV V | tpts./coro ‖ IV I | IV V ‖ (7x) tpt./coro ‖ IV I | IV V ‖ (2x) estribillo | IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V ‖	estribillo | I | V | tpts./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpt./coro | I | V | estribillo | I | V | tpts. | I | V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	Tumba palo cucuye (3/48)	**Tintorera ya llegó (3/48)**	**Tocoloro (3/48)**
Intro.	tres/tpts. | I bVII | I bVII |	tres | V IV | V | IV iii ii | I vi | tpts. | V IV | V | IV iii ii | I vi |	tres | V IV | I ii | tpts. | V IV | I ii |
Montuno	estribillo/tpts. || I bVII | I bVII || (2x) estribillo/tpt. || I bVII | I bVII || (7x) estribillo/guía || I bVII | I bVII || (4x) estribillo | I bVII | I bVII |	1. estribillo—tpt. || V IV | V | IV iii ii | I vi || (4x) 2. estribillo | V IV | V | IV iii ii | I V/vi | 3. verse | vi: i | - | bVII | - | i | - | bVII | - | | VI | - | V | bVII | repeats 2-3 estribillo | V IV | V | IV iii ii | I vi |	estribillo—tpts. || V IV | I ii || (6x) estribillo—tpt. || V IV | I ii || (10x) estribillo—guía || V IV | I ii || (6x)
Solo	piano || I bVII | I bVII || (13x) coro/tpts. || I bVII | I bVII || (3x) | I bVII | ~I |	piano || V | - || (7x) | V | ~V |	piano || V IV | I ii || (10x) | V IV | ~I |
Cierre	| | | | |	| | |	
Diablo	estribillo/tpts. || I bVII | I bVII || (4x) estribillo/tpt. || I bVII | I bVII || (4x) cierre | ||	coro/tpts. || E7-9 F7-9 F#7-9 G7-9 G#7-9 | | G7-9 F#7-9 F7-9 || (4x) estribillo | V IV | V | IV iii ii | I vi | tpts. | E7-9 F7-9 F#7-9 G7-9 G#7-9 | | G7-9 F#7-9 F7-9 ||	tpts./coro || V IV | I ii || (4x) tpt./coro || V IV | I ii || (4x) estribillo | V IV | I ii | cierre | | ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	Yo no engaño a las nenas (3/48)	**No vuelvo a Morón (Otilio del Portal) 23-0897 (4/8/48)**	**Aparruñenme mujeres (7/48)**
Intro.	tpts. | V | - | - | - | I | V/V | - |	tres | V | V |	tres | I | V | tpts. | I | V |
Montuno	estribillo—tpt. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x) 1. estribillo | V | I | V | I | 2. cuarteta | V | I | V | I | V | I | V/V | - | repeats 1-2, 1	1. estribillo | V | I | V | *I | 2. cuarteta | V | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | *- | - | repeats 1-2 (2x) coro—tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | I |	estribillo—tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) estribillo—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) estribillo—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) estribillo | I | V |
Solo	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (6x) | V | ~I |	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (7x)	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (13x)
Cierre	| I | ii iii | IV | V | bVI | V |	| ~ | | |	| ~I | V |
Diablo	3. estribillo | V | I | tpts./estribillo | V | I | tpts./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) tpt./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) repeats 3 tpts. | ii iii | IV | V | bVI | V ‖	coro—tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) coro—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) ensemble | V | V ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. | I | V | estribillo | I | V | I | *V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	Lo que dice Usted (Jesús Guerra) 23-1105 (10/28/48)	**No me llores más (Luis Martínez Griñan) 23-1147 (1/12/49)**	**Que cosas tendran las mujeres (Luis Martínez) 23-1171 (1/28/49)**
Intro.	tres | I | V | tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) | I | V | - |	tres | i | V |	tres | i | VII | tpts. | i | VII | i | VII |
Montuno	1. estribillo—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) 2. estribillo | I | V | 3. cuarteta ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) repeats 1-3 estribillo—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) estribillo | I | V |	1. verse | i | ii° | i | V | i | ii° | i | V | 2. estribillo | i | V | 3. tpts | i | V | iv | i | i | V | V | i | 4. estribillo | i | V | repeats 1-4 verse | i | ii° | i | V | i | ii° | i | V | estribillo—tpt ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) repeats 4	estribillo | i | VII | i | VII | i | VII | tpts. | i | VII | i | VII | i | VII | 1.estribillo | i | VII | i | VII | | i | VII | i | VII | 2. cuarteta | i | iv | - | i | - | V | - |*i | repeats 1-2 (2x) coro | i | VII |
Solo	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (7x) | I | V | ~I |	piano ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) | i | ~V |	piano | i | VII | | i | ~VII |
Cierre	| I IV | V |	| i | V |	| i VII VI | V VI V |
Diablo	estribillo | I | V | tpts./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1 | | | ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. | i | V | | i | V | i ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. | i | VII | i | VII | coro | i | VII | i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	Me boté de guaño **23-1336 (8/2/49)**	**El palo tiene curujey** **(Pascuel B. Griñan)** **23-1367 (8/19/49)**	**Dundumbanza** **23-1488 (12/29/49)**
Intro.	tres | i | V | tpts. | i | *V | i | *V | i | VII | VI | V | | i | VII | VI | V |	tres | I | V |	tres | i III | i VII | VI VII | i VII |
Montuno	trio ‖ i | ii° | i VII | VI V ‖ (2x) estribillo—tpts. ‖ i | VII VI V ‖ (4x) 1. estribillo | *i* | *VII VI* V | 2. cuarteta | i | VII | i | VII | | i | VII | i | VII | | i | VII | VI | V | repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo | i | VII VI V |	1. tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 2. (humming) ‖ I | IV | V | I ‖ (2x) 3. estribillo ‖ *I ii* | V ‖ (2x) 4. cuarteta | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | repeats 3, 1-4 estribillo—tpt. ‖ I ii | V ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ I ii | V ‖ (4x) estribillo | I ii | V |	estribillo—tpts. ‖ i III | i VII | | VI VII | i VII ‖ (6x) estribillo—tpt. ‖ i III | i VII | | VI VII | i VII ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ i III | i VII | | VI VII | i VII ‖ (4x) estribillo | i III | i VII | VI VII | i VII |
Solo	piano ‖ i | VII VI V ‖ (7x)	tres ‖ I ii | V ‖ (7x) | I | ~V |	piano ‖ i III | i VII | | VI VII | i VII ‖ (3x) | i III | i VII | VI VII |
Cierre	| ~V | - | - | - |	| | |	| VII i |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ i | VII ‖ (5x) coro/tpt. ‖ i | VII ‖ (2x) estribillo | i | VII VI V | tpts. | i | VII | VI | V ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ I ii | V ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ I ii | V ‖ (2x)	estribillo, tpts. | i III | i VII | VI VII | i VII | tpts./estribillo ‖ i III | i VII | | VI VII | i VII ‖ (3x) tpt./estribillo | i III | i VII | VI VII | i VII | estribillo | i III | i VII | VI VII | i VII | | i III | VII ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.1—*Continued*

	Te mantengo y no quieres (Rafael Ortíz) 23-5300 (11/9/50)	**Jumba 23-5405 (4/3/51)**	**Mira...cuidadito 23-5481 (6/22/51)**
Intro.	tpts. | i | V | i | V | i | - | - | V | *V i |	tres | V | I |	tres | | | tpts. ‖ | ‖ (2x)
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ i | bvii | ii°/V | V ‖ (2x) 2. copla | i | V | i | V | i | | V/III | III | V | repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo | i | bvii | ii°/V | V | | i | bvii | ii°/V | V | | i *V i |	estribillo—tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (10x) estribillo—tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) 1. estribillo | V | I | 2. cuarteta ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 estribillo | V | I |	1. cuarteta (duo) | | | | | | | | | 2. tpts. | | | repeats 1-2 (2x) cuarteta (duo) | | | | | | | | | coro—tpts. ‖ | ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ | ‖ (4x) coro | | |
Solo	piano ‖ i | V ‖ (5x)	tres ‖ V | I ‖ (8x) | V | ~I |	tres ‖ | ‖ (4x)
Cierre	| | | | |	| | | | |	| | | | | | | * | |
Diablo	coro—tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) coro—tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) coro | i | V | i ‖	coro | V | I | tpts./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) tpt./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) estribillo | V | I | *V | I ‖	coro | | | tpts./coro ‖ | ‖ (3x) tpt./coro ‖ | ‖ (2x) coro | | | * ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—Son montunos (two-part)

	Sandunguera (Luis Piedra-Marcelino Guerra) 23-0050-B (9/14/43)	**¿Quién será mi amor? (Mercedes Valdés) 23-0078-B (11/16/43)**	**A buscar camarón 23-0076-B (11/29/43)**
Intro.	tpts. ‖ vi | iii | V/V | V ‖	tpts. | vii°/ii | ii | vii°/I | I | | V/V | IV | V | V |	all | *V | V | V | I |
Canto	duo | I | V/iii | IV | V/vi | | V/ii | ii | V | I | | I | V/V | V | I | | vi | iii | V/iii | iii | | V/V | V | iv | I | duo | I | V/iii | IV | V/vi | | V/ii | ii | V | I | | I | V/V | V | I |	duo | I | - | ii | - | iii | - | | vii°7/ii | V/ii | ii | - | | V/vi | - | vi | vii°7/V | IV | V | duo | I | - | ii | - | iii | - | | vii°7/ii | V/ii | ii | V | | I | VI | ii | V |	tpts. | I | I | V | V | *V | V | V | I | duo | I | I | V | V | *V | V | V |
Cierre		| I | - |	| I | - |
Montuno	coro—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (8x) coro—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) coro | I | V |	coro—tpt. ‖ V | - ‖ (8x) coro—guía ‖ V | - ‖ (6x) coro | V | - |	1. coro—tpts. ‖ IV V | IV I ‖ (8x) 2. coro—guía ‖ IV V | IV I ‖ (2x) 3. coro | IV V | IV I | 4. copla ‖ IV V | IV I ‖ (*7x) [repeats 2-4] coro | IV V | IV I |
Solo	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (12x)	tres ‖ V | - ‖ (8x)	tres ‖ IV V | IV I ‖ (13x)
Diablo	tpts—coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpt—coro ‖ I | V ‖ (4x)	tpt—coro ‖ V | - ‖ (10)	tpts—coro ‖ IV V | IV I ‖ (6x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—*Continued*

	Yeye (E. Sanso-O. Gainza) **23-0350-A (7/5/45)**	**Celos de mujer** **23-0655-A (12/13/46)**	**Soy el terror** **23-0734-A (1/10/47)**
Intro.	tres/bass ‖ I | - | - | tpts. | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | V/V | - | V | - | - | | I | - |	tres | V | i VI V | V | tpts. | i VI V | V | i |	tres | III | - | - | tpts. | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | | V | - | iv | - | | i | - | V/VII | VII | *VII | III |
Canto	solo with "pregonero" (A) | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | V/V | - | V | *- | - | duo (B) | I | - | V | - | I | - | V | - | solo (C) | V | I | IV | V | IV | V | V/V | V | *V |	*duo* | V/III | - | - | III | | VI | - | - | V | | V/III | - | - | III | | VI | - | - | V i |	duo | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | | V | - | iv | - | i | - | III: | V/V | V | *V | I |
Montuno	coro/tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro/guia ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro | V | I |	coro—tpt. ‖ i | i VI V ‖ (4x) 1. coro | i | i VI V | 2. cuarteta ‖ i | i VI V ‖ (6x) coro—guía ‖ i | i VI V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2, 1	coro—tpt. ‖ vi | V | - | I ‖ (2x) coro—guía ‖ vi | V | - | I ‖ (2x) 1. coro | vi | V | - | I |
Solo	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (7x)	piano ‖ i | i VI V ‖ (3x) iii: ‖ i | i VI V ‖ (2x) iv: ‖ i | i VI V ‖ (2x)	piano ‖ V | - ‖ (7x) | vi | V | - | - |
Cierre	| V | I |	iii: | VI V | i: | VI V |	| vi | V | - | - |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (5x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x)	*my copy of this recording ends before the diablo	coro | vi | V | coro/tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | - ‖ (3x) coro | V | - | repeats 1

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—*Continued*

	Lo dicen todas **23-0828-B (2/27/48)**	**Esa china tiene coimbre** **23-0946-B (5/26/48)**	**Sacando candela** **(Gervacio Kessell)** **32-0995-B (6/1/48)**
Intro.	tpts. | I | - | - | - |	tres | I | ii | tpts. | I | ii | I | ii | I | | ii | V/V | V | - | I |	tres | I | - | tpts. | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | I |
Canto	duo | I | - | V | *I | - | - | | I | - | V | I | IV | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | I | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | tpts. | I | - | V | *I | - | - | duo | I | - | V | I | IV | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | I | - | - |	duo | I | ii | I | ii | I | | ii | V/V | V | V | I |	duo | I | - | - | V | - | I | V | I | | I | - | V/IV | IV | - | I | V | I |
Montuno	coro—tpt. || V | I || (4x) coro—guia || V | I || (4x) coro | V | I |	coro—tpt. || I | V || (6x) coro—guia || I | V || (4x) coro | I | V |	1. coro—tpt. || V | - || (6x) 2. coro—guia || V | - || (2x) 3. coro | V |* - | 4. cuarteta || V | - || (4x) repeats 2-4. 3
Solo	piano || V | I || (4x) | ~V |	piano || I | V || (6x)	piano || V | - || (2x) | V | ~ - |
Cierre	| | | |	| | | | | | |	| | |
Diablo	coro/tpts. || V | I || (2x) coro/tpt. || V | I || (2x) coro | V | I | V | I | - | - ||	coro | I | V | tpts./coro || I | V || (3x) tpt./coro || I | V || (2x) coro | I | V | cierre | | | | | | | | ||	coro | V | - | tpts./coro || V | - || (3x) tpt./coro || V | - || (2x) coro | V | - | - ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—*Continued*

	No toque el guao **23-0975 (6/22/48)**	**Monte adentro** **(7/48)**	**Dame un besito** **23-1130 (10/27/48)**
Intro.	tpts | I | iii | - | ii | - | I | V/V | V |	tres | I | tpts. | I | V | - | I | V/vi | | vi | V/V | V | V | I |	tres | IV | I | V | I |
Canto	duo | I | iii | - | ii | - | | I | V/V | V | *- | V I |	duo | I | V | - | I | V/vi | | vi | V/V | V | V | *I |	1. estribillo | IV | I | V | I | IV | I | V | I | 2. solo | V/IV | - | - | IV | V/V | - | | - | V | - | IV | - | iii | V/ii | | ii | - | *V | - | - | repeats 1-2 3. estribillo | IV | I | V | I | IV | I | V | | *I | V | - |
Montuno	1. coro—tpt. ‖ *I* | V ‖ (8x) 2. coro—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) 3. coro | I | V | 4. cuarteta | I | V | I | V | I | V | I | V | repeats 2-3	1. coro ‖ V IV | *I ii* | V IV | *I ii* | | V IV | tpt. | I ii | V IV | I ii | V IV | | I ii ‖ (2x) repeats 1 guía | I *ii* | V IV | I *ii* | V IV | | I ii | V IV | I ii ‖ (2x) repeats 1	coro/tpt. ‖ V | *I* ‖ (3x) coro/guía ‖ V | I ‖ (3x)
Solo	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (11x)	piano ‖ I ii | V IV ‖ (8x) | I ii | ~V |	tres ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) | V | I ~V |
Cierre	| V | - | - | - | - | V I |	| I | ii V | I |	| I ii | ii V |
Diablo	coro | I | V | tpts./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) coro | I | V | I ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V IV | I ii ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. ‖ V IV | I ii ‖ (2x) coro | V IV | I ii | V IV | ~V | cierre | I | ii V | I ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro | V | I ~V | I ii | ii V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—*Continued*

	Llévatelo todo (L. M. Griñan) 23-1194 (2/19/49)	**Kila, Kike y Chocolate 23-1583 (3/29/50)**	**El rincón caliente 23-1604 (4/24/50)**
Intro.	tres | I | tpts. | I | V | - | I | I | V | - | I | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - | - | - | I |	bongó	tpts. | i | - | - | i V/iv | iv | | - | i | - | V/V V | i |
Canto	duo | I | V | - | I | I | V | - | I | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - | - | - | I |	duo | I | - | V | I | bongó, tumbadora | | | duo | I | - | V | I | | V/ii | - | - | ii | | V | - | IV | - | - | V/VI V/II | | V/V V | I | V/ii | - | - | ii | | V | - | IV | - | - | V/VI V/II | | V/V V | I |	trio | i | - | - | - | VII V/VII | | VII | VII V/VII | VII | | VI | V | iv | i | | *V | - | - | - | - | - | | i ii° | i | tpts. | i | - | - | - | VII V/VII | | VII | VII V/VII | VII | | VI | V | iv | i | trio | *V | - | - | - | - | - | | i ii° | i |
Montuno	coro—tpt. ‖ ii V | IV I | ii V | IV I ‖ (6x) coro—guía ‖ ii V | IV I | ii V | IV I ‖ (4x) coro | *ii* V | *IV I* | *ii* V | *IV I* |	coro—bongó, tumbadora ‖ V | - | - ‖ (12x) coro | V | - |	coro—tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) 1. coro | i | V | 2. guía/coro ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2 coro | i | V |
Solo	piano ‖ ii V | IV I ‖ (10x)		*tres* ‖ i | V ‖ (5x) | i | ~V |
Cierre	| | | | |		| | | | |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ ii V | IV I ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ ii V | IV I ‖ (2x) coro | ii V | IV I | ii V | IV I ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (7x) coro | V | - ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) coro/tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) coro | i | V | i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—*Continued*

	La sandunga del son (Raúl Díaz) 23-5205 (6/29/50)	**Con un amor se borra otro amor 23-5237 (9/12/50)**	**Me dijo que si y le dije que no 23-5365 (2/13/51)**
Intro.	tpts. ‖ i | - ‖ (4x)	tpts. | I | V | V/IV | IV | | V/V | V I |	tpts. | V | - | I | - | vi | V/V | V | - |
Canto	duo ‖ i | - | i | V/iv iv | | iv | - | iv | III | | V | i | V/VII | VII | | i | - | - | - |	1. estribillo | V | I | I V/III | III | | V/ii | ii | V | V I | 2. solo | V | I | V | I | I V/III | | III | V/ii | ii | V | V I | repeats 1-2	duo (A) | V | - | I | - | vi | V/V | V | - | duo (B) | I | - | ii | - | V | - | V I |
Montuno	tpts.—coro ‖ i | - ‖ (8x) guía—coro ‖ i | - ‖ (4x)	estribillo—tpt. vi: ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (4x) estribillo | i | VII | V | i |	tpts.—coro ‖ V | I | bVII vi | V ‖ (2x) tpt.—coro ‖ V | I | bVII vi | V ‖ (4x) 1. copla ‖ V | I | bVII vi | V ‖ (2x) 2. coro | V | I | bVII vi | V | repeats 1 copla ‖ V | I | bVII vi | V ‖ (2x) coro | V | I | bVII vi | V |
Solo	piano ‖ i | - ‖ (13x)	piano ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (3x)	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) | V | I | bVII vi |
Cierre	| | |	| | | | |	| V | IV | - |
Diablo	tpts./coro ‖ i | - ‖ (4x) tpts. | V/iv | iv | V/III | III | | V/iv | iv | V/III | III | duo | V/iv | iv | V/III | III ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) | | ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro | V | I | bVII vi | V | *IV | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 4.2—*Continued*

	Caminante y Laborí	**Guaraguí**
Intro.	tres | I | V | tpts. | I | V | I | V | I | V | I | V |	tres | ii | V | I | ii | tpts. ‖ ii | V | I | ii ‖ (3x)
Canto	1. duo (redondilla) ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) 2. duo (décima) ‖ I | V ‖ (10x) 3. duo (copla) ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)	duo ‖ ii | V | I | ii ‖ (3x)
Cierre	| V | - |	| V | - | - | - |
Montuno	coro—tpt. ‖ V | vi | V | vi ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ V | vi | V | vi ‖ (4x) coro | V | vi | V | vi |	coro—tpt. ‖ V | IV I ‖ (6x) coro—guía ‖ V | IV I ‖ (4x) coro | V | IV I |
Solo	tres ‖ V | vi ‖ (8x)	piano ‖ V | IV I ‖ (11x) | V | ~V |
Cierre	| | |	| I V | V |
Diablo	coro | V | vi | tpts./coro ‖ V | vi ‖ (2x) tpt./coro | V | vi | coro | V | vi | V ‖	coro | V | IV I | tpts./coro ‖ V | IV I ‖ (3x) tpt./coro ‖ V | IV I ‖ (2x) coro | V | IV I | * | ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1—Conjunto-style *guaguancó*

	Ñaña seré **(A. Rodríguez-G. Valdés)** **23-0061-B (9/21/43)**	**Pilla con pilla** **(Guillermo Valdés)** **23-0082-A (11/29/43)**	**Timbilla** **23-0362-B (7/5/45)**
Diana	tres ‖ I | - | - | tpts. | I | - | - | - |	tpts. ‖ V | IV | V ‖ duo ‖ V | - ‖ tres ‖ V | - | I | - | tpts. | IV7 | - | - | V | I | - | - |	guaguancó pattern ‖ | ‖ (3x) tpts., duo | IV | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | IV | - | - | V | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - |
Canto	duo | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V/ii | ii | V | I | V/ii | ii | V | I |	duo | I | IV | I | - | - | - | | I | IV | I | - | - | - | - | | IV7 | - | - | - | I | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | I | | *- |	duo | V | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | | vi | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | vi | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | I | - | - |
Montuno	coro/tpt. ‖ I | - | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpts. ‖ I | - | - | - ‖ (7x) coro/guía ‖ I | - | - | - ‖ (6x) coro | I | - |	coro/tpt. ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (3x) coro/guía ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (4x) coro | I | V | - |	coro—tpt. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (10x) coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (8x) coro | V | - | - | - |
Solo	tres ‖ I | - ‖ (8x)	bongó ‖ I | V ‖ (14x)	bongó ‖ | ‖ (15x)
Cierre		| I |	
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ I | - | - | - ‖ (4x)	coro/tpt. ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (4x) coro | I | V ‖	tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpt . ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (3x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1—*Continued*

	Juventud amaliana **23-0655-B (12/13/46)**	**El Cerro tiene la llava (Fernando Noa)** **23-0888-A (4/8/48)**	**A Belén le toca ahora** **23-1072-A (10/19/48)**
Diana	tres | I | tpts | I | - | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | V/ii | ii V/ii | ii | - | | V | V V/V | V V/V | | V V/V | V | - | | I | - | - | - | - | - |	tres || I | - | tpts | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | IV | - | I | - | V | - | I |	tres || I | - | tpts | I | - | - | V/V | V | - | IV | | iii | - | ii | iii | ii | - | - | | V | - | I |
Canto	duo | I | IV | - | I | - | V | - | I | | I | IV | - | I | - | V | - | I | | I | IV | I | IV | I | - | | V | I | - | - | V | I | | I | IV | I | IV | I | - | V | I | | I *V |	duo | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | V | - | - | | IV | - | - | - | - | V | - | - | | IV | - | - | - | - | V | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | I | | V | - | - |	duo | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | | IV | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | IV | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | V | I |
Montuno	coro—tpt || V IV | I ii || (4x) coro—guía || V IV | I ii || (4x) coro | V IV | I ii |	coro—tpt || V | - || (4x) coro—tpts || V | - || (2x) coro—guía || V | - || (4x) coro | V | - |	coro—tpt || V | IV | - | V || (2x) coro—guía || V | IV | - | V || (4x) coro | V | IV | - | V |
Solo	piano || V IV | I ii || (4x) | ~V |	tres || V | - || (7x) | V | - | — |	piano || V | - || (3x) | V | IV | - | ~V |
Cierre	| I ii I ii | I ii | V | - |	| | | |	| | | | |
Diablo	coro—tpts || V | IV || (4x) coro—tpt || V | IV || (2x) coro | V | ~IV | I ii I ii ||	coro—tpts || | || (2x) coro—tpt || | || (2x) coro | | | ensemble | ~V | | | | V ||	tpts/coro || V | - || (2x) tpt/coro || V | - || (2x) coro | V | IV | - | V ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1—*Continued*

	Pueblo Nuevo se pasó (Luís Martínez Griñan) 23-1180-A (2/19/49)	**Los Sitios acere (Silvio Pino) 23-1382 (rec. 9/6/49)**	**Juventud de Colón 23-1504 (rec. 1/13/50)**
Diana	tres ‖ I | - | tpts. | I | V | I | V/ii | ii | - | I | - | V/V | - | | V | - | I | V | I |	tres ‖ i | - | tpts. | i | VII | i | - | VII | VI | | V | - | - | - | i | - |	tres ‖ I | - | tpts. | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | I |
Canto	duo | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | I | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | V | IV | - | - | | I | - | V | - | I | - |	duo | i | - | - | - | VII | VI | | V | - | i | - | - | - | | i | - | - | - | VII | - | - | - | | VI | - | - | - | i | VII VI | | V | - | I | - | IV | - | I | - | | IV | - | I | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | I | *V | - |	duo | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | IV | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | V | - | | IV | - | - | | I | - | V | - | I | *V | - |
Montuno	coro—tpt. ‖ I V | vi V | IV ii | ii V ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ I V | vi V | IV ii | ii V ‖ (4x) coro | I V | vi V | IV ii | ii V |	coro—tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) coro | V | - |	coro—tpt. ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | I |
Solo	piano ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) | I V | vi V | IV ii | ii ~V |	piano ‖ V | - ‖ (7x) | V | - |	piano ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (2x) | V | - | - | ~I |
Cierre	| | | | |	| | |	| | |
Diablo	coro | I V | vi V | IV ii | ii V | tpts.—coro ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) tpt. | V | - | coro | I vii | vi V | IV ii | ii V | V ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpt. | V | - | - | - | coro | V | - | - ‖	coro—tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. | V | - | coro | V | - | - | I | *V | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1—*Continued*

	El rumbón de Layamó 23-1591 (rec. 4/19/50)	**Anabacoa 23-5209-A (rec. 8/8/50)**	**Juventud de Cayo Hueso 23-5219 (rec. 9/12/50)**
Diana	tres ‖ I | - | tpts | I | - | - | V | - | IV | V | I |		tres | i | - | tpts | i | - | VII | - | VI | V | i | trio | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | - | | V | - | i | - | - |
Canto	duo | I | - | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | I | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | I | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | vi | - | - | - | | V | - | I | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | I | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | vi | - | - | - | | V | - | I | *- |		trio | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | - | | V | - | i | - | - | iv | - | - | - | | - | - | III | - | V | i | - | | VII | VI | i | - | VII | VI | i | #vi: | III | VII | VI | i |
Montuno	coro—tpt ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | I | - |	guaguancó pattern/tres ‖ | | | | | coro—tpts ‖ | | | | ‖ (6x) coro—guía ‖ | | | | ‖ (6x) coro | | | | |	coro—tpt ‖ i | VII | - | V ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ i | VII | - | V ‖ (4x) coro | i | VII | - | V |
Solo	piano ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) | V | - | *I |	piano ‖ | | | | ‖ (8x) duo ‖ | | | | | | | | | ‖ (3x)	piano ‖ i | VII ‖ (4x) | i | VII | *i |
Cierre	| | | | |		| | | | |
Diablo	coro/tpts ‖ V | I | - | V ‖ (2x) coro/tpt | V | I | - | V | coro | V | I | - | | V | - | *I ‖	coro | | | | | tpts/coro ‖ | | | ‖ (6x) tpts/duo | | | | | | | | | | ‖	coro/tpts ‖ VII | - | - | - ‖ (4x) coro/tpt ‖ VII | - | - | - ‖ (2x) coro | VII | - | | i | VII | - | V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.1—*Continued*

	Amores de Verano **23-5461 (rec. 5/29/51)**	**Pogolotti** **23-5694 (rec. 3/18/52)**
Diana	tes | I | - | tpts | I | - | ii | V/V | V | - | I |	tres | I | tpts | I | V | I | - | | IV | V/IV | IV | - |
Canto	solo/duo/trio | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | I | IV | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | | ii | - | V | - | I | | IV | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | *V | - |	duo | I | - | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | | I | V/V | - | V | - | | I | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - |
Montuno	coro—tpt ‖ V | IV | - | V ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ V | IV | - | V ‖ (4x) coro | V | IV | - | V |	coro—tpt ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | I | V | - | I |
Solo	piano | V | IV | - | V | | V |	piano | I | V | - | I | | I | V | - | *I |
Cierre	| | |	| | |
Diablo	coro/tpts ‖ V | - ‖ (3x) coro/tpt | V | - | coro | V | IV | - | V | V ‖	coro/tpts ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro/tpt | I | V | coro | I | V | - | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.2 Arsenio's Guarachas

	No hace na' la mujer (J.J. Gutiérrez) 83562-B (3/31/41)	**Oye como dice (F. Chappottín) 23-0078-A (11/29/43)**	**Mujeres, enamóreme 23-0182-B (7/6/44)**
Intro.	tres ‖ i ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ tpts ‖ i ‖ - ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ i V/III ‖ III ‖	tpts ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ ‖ I ‖ I7 ‖ IV ‖ bVI ‖ ‖ I ‖ V/II ‖ II ‖ V ‖ I ‖	tres ‖ I ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ tpts ‖ I ‖ I V/ii ‖ ii ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖
Canto	duo ‖ i ‖ - ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ i V/III ‖ III ‖ ‖ III V/iv ‖ - ‖ iv ‖ - ‖ i ‖ V ‖ i ‖(2x) tpts ‖ i ‖ - ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ i V/III ‖ III ‖ ‖ III V/iv ‖ - ‖ iv ‖ - ‖ i ‖ V ‖ i ‖ duo ‖ i ‖ - ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ i V/III ‖ III ‖	duo ‖ I ‖ - ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖ I ‖ ‖ I ‖ - ‖ I7 ‖ IV ‖ bVI ‖ ‖ I ‖ V/II ‖ II ‖ V ‖ I ‖ ‖ V/II ‖ II ‖ V ‖ I ‖	duo ‖ I ‖ I V/ii ‖ ii ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖
Cierre		IV: ‖ V ‖ I ‖	‖ I ‖ - ‖ - ‖ - ‖
Montuno	tpt ‖ V ‖ *coro* ‖ i ‖ V ‖ tpt/coro ‖ i ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ (3x) guía/coro ‖ i ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ (3x)	1. coro/tpt ‖ V ‖ - ‖ (4x) 2. *coro/guía* ‖ V ‖ - ‖ (2x) 3. copla ‖ I ‖ V ‖ - ‖ - ‖ [repeats 2-3]	coro—tpt ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖ (2x) 1. *coro* ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ *- ‖ cierre ‖ V ‖ I ‖ - ‖ - ‖ repeats 1 2. cuarteta ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ IV ‖ repeats 1-2, 1
Solo	piano ‖ i ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖ (5x)		piano (inaudible) ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖ (2x)
Cierre			‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖
Diablo	tpt/coro ‖ i ‖ - ‖ V ‖ - ‖	coro/tpt ‖ V ‖ - ‖ (10x)	coro—tpts ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖ (2x) coro—tpt ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖ (2x) coro ‖ V ‖ - ‖ I ‖ - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.2—*Continued*

	Yo no como corazón de chivo **23-0193-B (7/6/44)**	**Adivínalo** **(José L. Forest)** **23-0766-B (1/10/47)**	**Sacando candela** **(Gervacio Kessell)** **23-0995-B (6/1/48)**
Intro.	tres |I|-|-|-| tpts |I|-|V|-|-|-|I|-| |I|-|V|-|-|-|I|-|	tres |i|-|-| tpts |i|iv|V|i|i|iv|V|-| |i|iv|V|i|i|iv|V|i|	tres ‖I|-| tpts |I|-|-|-|V|-|-|-|I|
Canto	duo |I|-|V|-|-|-|I|-| |I|-|V|-|-|-|I|	duo |i|iv|V|i|i|iv|V|-| |i|iv|V|i|i|iv|V|i|	duo |I|-|-|V|-|I|-|-| |I|-|I7|IV|-|I|I V|I |
Cierre	|I|-|-|	|i iv|V|	
Montuno	coro—tpt ‖V|-|I|-‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖V|-|I|-‖ (2x) coro |V|-|I| *duo* |iii biii|ii|V|I| *|iii biii|ii|V|*I|-| coro |V|-|I|-|	coro/tpt ‖i|V‖ (4x) coro/guía ‖i|V‖ (4x)	coro—tpt ‖V|-‖ (4x) 1. coro—guía ‖V|-‖ (2x) 2. coro |V|-| 3. *cuarteta* ‖V|*-‖ (4x) [repeats 1-3] coro |V|-|
Solo	tres ‖V|-|I|-‖ (5x)	piano ‖i|V‖ (13x) |i|~V|	piano ‖V|-‖ (2X) |V|—|
Cierre		|i iv|V|	|V|-|
Diablo	tpt |V|-|I|-| coro |V|-|I|-‖	tpts/coro ‖i|V‖ (9x) tpt/coro ‖i|V‖ (7x) |i|-‖	coro |V|-| tpts/coro ‖V|-‖ (3x) tpt/coro ‖V|-‖ (2x) coro |V|-|-|-‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.2—*Continued*

	No puedo comer vistagacha 23-1518-A (1/26/50)
Intro.	tpts ‖ ii | V | V I |
Canto	duo | I | - | ii | - | V | - | - | - | | V | - | V | I | tpts | I | - | ii | - | duo | V | - | - | - | - | - | - |
Cierre	| I V |
Montuno	coro—tpt ‖ V/ii | ii | V | I ‖ (4x) 1. coro | V/ii | ii | V | *I | - | 2. copla | vi | V | vi | V | I | [repeats 1-2] coro | V/ii | ii | V | I |
Solo	tres ‖ V/ii | ii | V | I ‖ (3x) | V/ii | ii |
Cierre	| V | - | - | - |
Diablo	coro—tpts ‖ V | - ‖ (3x) coro—tpt ‖ V | - ‖ (2x) coro | V | - | V/ii | ii | V | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.3—Conjunto Casino's guarachas

	Quiquiribu mandinga guaracha (7/19/45)	**Viejo verde guaracha (ca. 1946)**	**Vieja, flaca y fea guaracha (9/2/47)**
Intro.	piano | i | - | - | - | - | tpts. ‖ i | - | - | V | - | - | - | i ‖ (2x) | VII | VI | V | - | | V | - | i | - | V | - | *i | | i | - | - | - |	tpts. | I | - | - | - | ii | - | - | - | | V | - | I | - |	1. tpts. ‖ I | - | - | - | - | - ‖ (2x) | I |
Canto	duo ‖ i | - | - | V | - | - | - | i ‖ (2x) | *VII | VI | V | - | | V | - | i | - | V | - | i |	duo (refrain) | V | - | I | - | V | - | I | - | | V | - | I | V | I | solo | V/iii | iii | V/iii | iii | | V/II | II | V/II | II | duo | I | V | - | I | | I | V | - | I | V | *I | - |	2. duo | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | | vi | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | V | I | I | - | V | I | repeats 1-2
Montuno	coro—tpts. ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x) coro—tpt. ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) 1. coro | i | V | - | i | 2. cuarteta III: ‖ I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I ‖ (2x) vi: | *VII | VI | V | - | | V | - | i | - | V | - | i | repeats 1-2 (ends)	coro/tpts. ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (4x) coro/guía | V | - | I | - | cuarteta ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) coro/guía ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) cuarteta ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x)	3. coro/guía vi: ‖ V | - | i | - ‖ (2x) 4. copla | VII | i | V | i | repeats 3-4 coro/guía | V | - | i | - |
Solo		piano ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (7x)	piano ‖ V | - | i | - ‖ (8x)
Mambo			tpts. ‖ V | - | i | - ‖ (4x) | *V |
Coda		tpts. (from intro.) | I | - | - | - | ii | - | - | - | | V | - | I | - |	duo V i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 5.4—La Sonora Matancera's guarachas

	***Vive como yo* guaracha (ca. 1948)**	***Esa si es cheque* guaracha (ca. 1949)**	***Se formó la rumbantela* guaracha (ca. 1948)**
Intro.	1. tpts. | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | *I | - | - | - |	tpts. | V | - | I | - | V | - | I | - | | V | - | I | - |	tpts. | i | - | iv | - | V | - | - | - | - |
Canto	2. solo | I | - | V | I | | I | - | V | I | 3. duo | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4. solo | I | - | V | I | | I | - | V | I | repeats 1-4	solo | I | V | I | - | | I | V | I | V/ii | | ii | V/ii | ii | - | | ii | V/ii | ii | - | | I | V | I | duo ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) solo | I | V | I |	1. duo | i | V | i | III | - | V/III | III | | iv | i | V | i | | iv | i | V | i | iv | i | V | i | tpts. | i | V | i | III | - | V/III | III | | iv | i | V | i | | iv | i | V | i | iv | i | V | i | repeats 1
Montuno	coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (6x) coro | V | - | - | I |	tpts. | V | - | I | - | coro—guía ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (6x) coro | V | - | I | - |	tpts. | i | iv | V | i | coro—tpt. ‖ i | iv | V | i ‖ (2x) coro—guía ‖ i | iv | V | i ‖ (4x) coro | i | iv | V | i |
Solo	piano ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (5x)	bongó ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (4x)	piano ‖ i | iv | V | i ‖ (4x)
Mambo	coro | V | - | - | I | tpts. ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (3x)	tpts. ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (5x)	tpts. ‖ i | iv | V | i ‖ (4x)
Montuno	coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (2x) coro | V | - | - | I |	coro—guía ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) coro | V | - | I | - |	coro—guía ‖ i | iv | V | i ‖ (2x) coro | i | iv | V | i ‖
Coda	1. tpts. | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | *I | - | - | - |	tpts. | V | - | I | - | V | - | I | - | | V | - | I ‖	

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.1.a—Son montunos recorded in New York City

	Pa' que gozen **10-041-A (ca. 1951)**	**Jaguey** **10-074-A (ca. 1951)**	**Esas no** **10-075-A (ca. 1951)**
Intro.	tres | I | - | tpts. || I | - | - | - || (2x)	bass, tres || V IV || (3x) tpts. || V IV | - || (5x)	tres | i | VII |
Montuno	coro—tpt. || I | - || (4x) coro—guía || I | - || (4x) coro | I | - |	1. cuarteta | V IV | - | - | - | 2. coro | V IV | - | - | - | repeats 1-2 (2x) | V V/V | V V/IV | | IV V/iii | iii V/ii | | ii V/V | V/V V | repeats 2 coro/tpt. || V IV | - || (2x) coro/guía || V IV | - || (2x) coro | V IV | ~V |	coro—tpts. || i | VII || (8x) coro—tpt. || i | VII || (4x) 1. coro | i | VII | 2. cuarteta || i | VII || (4x) repeats 1-2 coro—guía || i | VII || (4x) coro | i | VII |
Solo	tres || I | - || (20x) | I | ~I |		tres || i | VII || (8x) | i | ~VII |
Cierre	| | | |	| V bVI | VI #VI | | VII I | bII V/V V |	| | | | | | |
Diablo	coro/tpts. || I | - || (4x) coro/tpt. || I | - || (2x)	coro/tpts. || V IV | - || (2x) coro/tpts., tpt. || V IV | - || (2x) coro/tpt. || V IV | - || (2x) coro | V IV | ~V |	coro | i | VII | tpts/coro || i | VII || (4x) tpt/coro | i | VII | coro | i | VII |
Coda	| I | #I | I ||	| bVI V bVI V bVI | V | I ||	| i | ~VII | V i V | i V | i 9 13 ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.1.a—*Continued*

	Maye santa **10-121-B (ca. 1952)**	**Se formo el bochinche** **Ex 20-335 (4/9/52)**	**Baila Simón** **Ex 20-385 (4/2/53)**
Intro.	tpts | V | I | V/V | V | | V | I | V/V | *V | - | - | - | | 2/4: - |	tpts—pn/tres/bass ‖ ii iii | IV | V | - ‖ (2x) | ii iii | IV | V IV | V IV | | ii iii | IV | V | - |	tres | V | I |
Montuno	1. estribillo—copla ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) 2. tpts | V | I | V/V | V | repeats 1-2 estribillo—tpt ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) estribillo—copla ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) estribillo | V | I | V/V | V |	1. cuarteta ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) 2. duo | ii iii | IV ‖ repeats 1-2 (4x) spoken vamp ‖ V | - ‖ (11x)	coro/tpt ‖ V | I ‖ (5x) coro/guia ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | I |
Solo	piano ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (4x) | V | I | V/V | ~V |		tres ‖ V | I ‖ (29x)
Cierre	| V | bVI | - | VI | - | | bVII | IV #IV | V | - |		
Diablo	coro/tpts ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) coro/tpt | I | V | coro | I | ~V | V | bVI | V | I ‖	coro/tpts ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) coro/tpt | V | - | (fades)	coro/tpts ‖ V | I ‖ (10x) coro/tpt ‖ V | I ‖ (2x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.1.a—*Continued*

	Mami me gusto (ca. 1954)
Intro.	tpts. | i | - | VII VI | V |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | VII ii° | i ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V/III | III | II VI | V | | V/III | III V | i V | i | repeats 1-2 coro ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) guia—coro ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x)
Solo	tres ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x)
Cierre	‖ i | V | - | i | ~V ‖ (2x) | i | - | VII VI | V |
Diablo	coro—tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) coro—tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) coro | i | V |
Coda	| i | - | VII VI | V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.1.b—Guaguancós

	Mulence **10-041-B (ca. 1951)**	***La gente del Bronx*** **10-040-B (ca. 1951)**	***Meta y guaguancó*** **10-074-B (ca. 1951)**
Diana	tpts | i | - | V | - | - | - | i | - |	tpts | I | - | - | - | ii | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | I | - | - |	tres | I | - | tpts | I | - | - | V | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | V | - | I | - |
Canto	trio | iv | V | i | - | - | - | | VII | - | VI | - | - | - | | V | - | i | - | - | - | - | solo | i | VII | VI | V | iv | | i | V | i | - | - | duo | i | - | - | - | - | - | | VII | VI | V | - | | V/iv | - | iv | - | | V/II | - | II | - | | VI | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | V | - | - |	duo | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | I | | I | - | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | V/V | - | | V | - | - | - | | ~I | *V | - |	duo | I | - | - | V | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | V/vi | vi | - | - | | I | ii | - | - | - | - | V | | I | - | - | - | - |
Montuno	coro/tpt. || i | - | V | - || (2x) coro/guía || i | - | V | - || (2x) coro | i | ~VI |	coro—tpt. || V | - | - | - || (4x) coro—guía || V | - | - | - || (4x) coro | V | - | - | - |	coro/tpt. || IV | I | - | V || (2x) coro/guía || IV | I | - | V || (2x) coro | IV | I | - | ~V |
Cierre	| VI | - | - | - |	| | | | |	| V | - |
Diablo	coro—tpts. || VI | - || (5x) coro—tpt. | VI | - | coro | VI | ~VI | - | - | - | - ||	coro/tpts. || V | - | - | - || (2x) coro/tpt. | V | - | - | - | coro | V | ~V | | | ||	coro/tpts. || V | - | - | - || (2x) coro/tpt. | V | - | - | - | coro | V | - | - | - | percussion || | || (19x) tpts. | I #13-9 ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.1.b—*Continued*

	Como se goza en el barrio 10-075-B (ca. 1951)	**Oiga mi guaguancó 10-122 (ca. 1952)**	**Confórmate 23-6840 (6/21/55)**
Diana	tres | I | - | tpts. | I | - | ii | - | V | - | I | - | | vi | - | ii | - | V | - | I |	tres | i | - | tpts. | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | - | i |	tres ‖ I | - ‖ (2x)
Canto	duo | I | V | - | I | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | I | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | V/ii | ii | V/ii | ii | | V | - | - | I |	solo | i | - | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | - | | i | - | - | - | iv | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | i | - | VII | VI | V | - | - | duo | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | i | - | VII | VI | i |	tpt. | I | - | - | V | - | I | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | V | - | I | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | I | - | - | V | - | I |
Montuno	tpts. | V | - | - | I | coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | I |	coro/tpt. VII: | I | VII | I | - | coro/guía ‖ I | VII | I | - ‖ (2x) coro | I | VII | I | - |	tpts./tpt. ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (6x)
Solo	piano ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) | V | - | - | ~I |	tumbadora ‖ I | - ‖ (7x) | I | ~I |	piano ‖ V | - ‖ (12x)
Cierre	| | |	| | | | |	
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | - ‖ (2x) | I ‖	coro—tpts. ‖ I | - ‖ (6x) coro—tpt. ‖ I | - ‖ (2x) coro | I | - | IV ‖	tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) tres ‖ I | - ‖ (2x) tpts. | I | - | - | V | - | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.1.b—*Continued*

	Carraguao alante (ca. 1954)	**Hay fuego en el 23 (ca. 1954)**	**Buena Vista en guaguancó (ca. 1954)**
Diana	tpts. | I | - | - | V | - | I | - | tres/bass ‖ I | - ‖ (2x)	tpts. | i | V/iv | - | iv | - | V | - | i | diana (voices) | i | - | iv | - | - | - | V | - | | i | - | iv | i | - |	tpts. | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | - | diana | I | - | ii | - | V | IV V | I |
Canto	duo | I | - | V | - | - | - | | I | - | V | - | - | | IV | - | iii | - | ii | - | I | - | | I | - | V | - | - | - | | IV | - | iii | - | ii | - | I | - | | I | - | V | - | - | | *IV* | - | *iii* | - | *ii* | - | I | - | | I | *- |	solo voice | i | iv | i | VII | - | - | i | - | - | | iv ii°/iv | iv ii°/iv | | iv ii°/iv | iv | | iv ii°/iv | iv ii°/iv | | iv ii°/iv | iv | - | | VII | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | *i* | - | - | duo | V/iv | - | - | iv | - | | VII | - | - | - | - | - | i | - | *- | - |	solo | I | - | - | - | - | - | V | - | I | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | ii | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | IV | V | - | | I vi | IV V | I |
Montuno	coro—*guía* ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) coro—tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) coro | I | V |	*guía*—coro ‖ VII | - | i | - ‖ (4x)	coro—*guía* ‖ I | V | I | - ‖ (4x) coro | I | V | I | *tres* | V |
Solo	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (7x)	bongó ‖ i | - ‖ (10x)	tumbadora ‖ V | - ‖ (15x)
Cierre		| VII | - | i | ~VII | | V i V | i V i | V i |	| V | I | V | *I | ~V | | V | - | - | - |
Mambo	*tpts., tpt.* ‖ V | - ‖ (10x)	*tres* | VII | - | i | - | tpts. ‖ VII | - | i | - ‖ (2x)	
Montuno	coro | I | V | tpts. | V | iv | - | I | V | I ‖	tpt. | VII | - | i | - | coro | VII | - | i | ~VII | | V i V | i V i | V i ‖	Diablo: coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) | I | V | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.2—Mambos by Pérez Prado

	Mambo No. 5 **(rec. ca. 1949-1950)**	***Mambo No. 8*** **(rec. ca. 1949-1950)**	***Mambo a la Kenton*** **(rec. 1951)**
Intro.	1. band | V | - | - | - |	1. voices || V | - || (4x)	1. band | ii-7 | bII7 | I | - | bVII: | ii-7 | bII7 | I | - | | V/V | V |
	2. reeds (riff) || V | - | I | - || (2x) 3. brass (over reeds' riff) || V | - | I | - || (2x) 4. brass (over reeds' riff) || V | - | I | - || (2x) 5. break | V | - | * - | - | 6. reeds || V | - || (2x) 7. reeds and brass || V | - || (2x) repeats 1-2 | V | - | - | - | coro || V | - | I | - || (3x) break | V | - | - | repeats 2-3 break | V | - | reeds (mambo riff) || V | - || (4x) brass (over mambo riff) || V | - | - | - || (3x)	2. reeds (riff) || V | I | V | I || (3x) 3. breaks || V | I | V | I || (2x) 4. brass || V | - | i | - || (4x) 5. brass || V | - | i | - | V | - | - | - || (2x) 6. reeds (riff) || V | - | i | - || (2x) 7. brass || V | - | i | - || (2x) | V | - | - | - | *I | - | repeats 1-7, 1	2. reeds (riff) || V | - | I | - || (2x) 3. brass (over reeds' riff) || V | - | I | - || (2x) 4. brass | ii/IV | V/IV | ii/ III | V/III | | iii | bVI | ii | V | 5. reeds (riff) | V | - | I | - | 6. brass | bII | - | I | - | 7. reeds || V | - | I | - || (2x) 8. brass (over reeds' riff) || V | - | I | - || (2x) repeats 7-8, 1-5 brass | bII | - | I | I 9 13 ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.3.a—Mambos by early New York trumpet conjuntos

	Mama guela (ca. 1950) **Tito Rodríguez**	**Ran kan kan (1949)** **Tito Puente**	**Picadillo (1951)** **Tito Puente**
Intro.	tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x)	tpts. | V | - | - | - | - | - | - |	piano ‖ i | - ‖ (3x)
Montuno	1. coro/guía ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) 2. coro | V | - | tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) repeats 1	1. tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) | V | - | coro ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) tpts. (break) | V | - | repeats 1 2. coro/guía ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x)	tpts. ‖ i | - | - | - ‖ (2x) 1. piano solo ‖ i | - ‖ (4x) 2. tpts. ‖ i | - ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2
Solo	tpt. ‖ V | - ‖ (10x)	timbal (w/ tpts.) ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (6x)	piano ‖ i | - ‖ (25x) ‖ i | - | - | - ‖ (2x)
Montuno	tpts. (from intro.) ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) repeats 2	tpts. (break) | V | - | repeats 2	repeats 2 tpts. (break) | i | - |
Solo	piano ‖ V | - ‖ (17x)	timbal ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (6x) tpts./timbal ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) | V | - | - | - |	
Montuno	tpts. (from intro.) ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) *coro/guía* | V | - | - | - | repeats 2 tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) | V | - | - | I ‖	repeats 1 tpts. | *V | - | - | I ‖	piano (from intro.) ‖ i | - ‖ (3x) tpts. ‖ i | - | - | - ‖ (2x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.3.b—Mambos by New York big bands

	***Donde estabas tú* (1950) Tito Puente**	**Tremendo cumbao (1953) Machito**	***This is* Mambo (1956) Tito Rodríguez**
Intro.	| i | V | i | V | | i | V | - | i | - | *i |	| i ii° | - V13 | i | - |	|| | | | || (4x) || | | | || (2x) | | | | bII-7 +9 | I | I |
Canto	1. estribillo || i | V || (3x) 2. break: brass | i +13 | * - | cuarteta | i | V | i | V | *i | - | VI | | *V | - | V V7b9 | repeats 1-2 cuarteta | i | V | i | V | *i | - | VI | | *V | i | - | VI9 13 | V |	1. estribillo || i | - | VII | * i || (2x) 2. break: brass | i ii° | - V13 | solo voice | i | iv | i III | VI | i | iv | V | * i | | i | iv | V | i | i | iv | V | *i+13 9 | repeats 1-2 solo voice | i | iv | V | i | | i V/VII | VII | V | * i |	(A) solo voice | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | IV | iv | | iii | | ii | - | bVI | bII | | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | IV | iv | | iii | | ii | - | bVI | I | - | (B) | V/II | - | II | - | ii | - | V | - | (A') | I | - | iii | biii | ii | bII +9 | | I |
Montuno	reeds (riff) | i | V | - | i | trbs (joins reeds) | i | V | - | i | tpts (joins reeds, trbs) || i | V | - | i || (2x)	coro/guía || i | V || (10x) reeds (riff) || i | V || (2x) 3. brass (joins reeds) || i | V || (2x) tpt solo || i | V || (4x) repeats 3	*brass and reeds* || V | - | - | - || (2x) coro—guía || V | - | - | - || (6x) coro | V | - | - | - |
Cierre	| i +13 | - 9 | - 11 | - |	| i | * - |	
Mambo	reeds || i | V || (4x) brass (joins reeds) || i | V7b13 || (4x)	coro/guía || i | V || (5x) *brass and reeds* || i | V | i | V || (4x)	reeds || V | - | - | - || (4x) *brass (joins reeds)* || V | - | - | - || (4x)
Solo	piano || i | V || (6x)		coro/bongó || V | - || (20x)
Repeats	intro.	intro.	B-A'
Coda			| ii9 | - | bII7 +9 | - | | I+7 9 | - | bVI+11 | - | ii | | - | bII7 +9 | - | *I+9 +11 ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.4—Arsenio's capetillos (one-part)

	Ahora, capetillo **10-123-B (ca. 1952)**	***El dolorcito* de mi china** **Ex 20-347 (6/27/52)**	**Cambia el paso** **Ex 20-348 (6/27/52)**
Intro	tres | V | I | tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (2x) cierre | V | - | - | - |	tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x)	tres | V | - | tpts. | V | - | - | - | | V | - |
Montuno	1. coro | V | I | V | I | tpts. | V | - | - | cierre | V | - | - | - | - | [repeats 1] tpts. ‖ iii biii | ii V ‖ (2x) repeats 1 tpts. | V | I | coro—tpt. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x) coro—guía ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x) repeats 1	1. vamp ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V | vi | V | IV | III | | IV | I | V/V | V | - | 3. tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) repeats 1-3 vamp ‖ V | I ‖ (3x) cuarteta | V | vi | V | IV | III | | IV | I | V/V | V | - | coro | V | I | V | I |	duo ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (3x) coro/tpts. ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpts. ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpts. ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpts. ‖ I | V | iii biii | | ii V #9 b13 ‖ (2x) coro/guía ‖ I | V | - | - ‖ (2x) coro | I | V |
Solo	piano | ii bII7 | I+7 | ii bII7 | I+7 bI+7 | | ii bII7 | I | V | I | V | I |	tres ‖ V | I ‖ (4x)	piano | V | - | I | V | - | - | | I | ~V |
Cierre	| V | - | - | - | - | - |	| V | - | - | - | - | - | I | IV |	| I ii | iii IV V | V | V I |
Diablo	1. coro | V | I | V | ~V | | *I | ii | - | iii | V | - | | V | I | coro—tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro—tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) repeats 1	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. | V | I | V | I | coro | V | I | V | - | - | I13 ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) coro/tpt. | I | V | | I | ~V] | I ii | iii IV V | V | V I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.4—*Continued*

	Pimienta **Ex 20-386 (4/2/53)**
Intro	tres ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (4x) tpts. ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (4x)
Montuno	1. coro—tpt. ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (6x) 2. coro—guia ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (8x) repeats 1 coro—*guia* ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (6x) coro | i VII | VI V |
Solo	piano ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (14x)
Diablo	tpts. ‖ i VII | VI V ‖ (4x) tpt. | i VII | VI V | coro | i VII | VI V i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.5—Capetillos (two-part)

	No quiero **Ex 20-334 (4/9/52)**	**Juégame limpio** **Ex 20-369 (9/12/52)**
Intro.	tpts | V | | i VII i | VII i | VII VI VII | | VI VII | VI V VI | V VI | | V | i | i #VII | VII |	tres | I | V | tpts ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)
Canto	1. duo | i | III | V | i | V/VII | VII | V | 2. breaks | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | - | V i | repeats 1 3. breaks | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | - | V | V i | repeats 1 4. breaks | i | - | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | V i |	duo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) tpts ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) duo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) duo | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | | V | I | V | I | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - |
Montuno	coro—guía ‖ V | i | V | i ‖ (4x) coro | V | i | V | i |	coro | V | - | - | I | coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | I |
Solo	piano ‖ V | i ‖ (4x) | V | ~i |	piano ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (2x) | V | - | - | *I |
Cierre	| V7 9 | - | - | - | - | - |	| | | | |
Diablo	coro/tpts ‖ V | i ‖ (2) coro/tpt | V | i | coro | V | ~V | | i VII i | VII i | i 13 9 bii 9 ‖	coro/tpts ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) coro/tpt ‖ V | - ‖ (2x) coro | V | - | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.6—Adding the mambo section and omitting the diablo

	Mambo abacua 23-6696 (3/16/55)	**Mambo en la cueva 23-6734 (3/16/55)**	**Que negra pa' 'celerá 23-6985 (4/16/56)**
Intro.	solo voice i iv V	| V | - | - | I |	tpts. | V | - | - | - | - | I | - | - | | ii | - | I | - | V | - | vi | - | | V | - | - | - | I | - | - | - |
Montuno	tpts./coro ‖ i | V ‖ (3x) tpts. cierre (A) | i | - | - | - | V | - | - | 1. coro | i | V | - | i | tpts. cierre (B) | i | - | V | - | repeats 1 tpts. cierre III: | I | - | V | I | V | I | | V | I | V | vi: | *V | - | i | coro—guía ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (6x) repeats 1	1. coro/guía ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) 2. cierre (A) | V | - | - | I | coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) cierre (B) | V | - | repeats 1-2	1. guía/coro ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (3x) 2. guía/coro | V | - | - | - | I | V | repeats 1-2 tpts. | V | - | I | - | guía/coro ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x)
Solo	tres ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x)	tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (5x)	bongó ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (3x)
Mambo		tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (4x)	guía/coro | V | - | I | - | tpts. ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (4x)
Solo		piano ‖ V | I ‖ (8x)	
Mambo	tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (4x)	tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (4x)	
Montuno	tpt./coro | i | *V ‖	tpt.—coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) | V | - | - | I ‖	coro | I | - | tpts./coro | V | - | I | - | | V | - | I | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.6—*Continued*

	Ayaca de maiz **23-7000 (4/16/56)**	**Dame tu yoyo Ma' Belén** **23-7129 (10/5/56)**
Intro.	tpts. | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | | I | - | V | I |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) | I |
Canto	solo voice | I | V | I | - | V | - | - | - | - | | I | - | V | I | V | I | | I | V/ii | - | ii | - | - | - | I | - | | V/V | V | - | - | I | V | I | - |	duo | I | - | IV | - | V | - | I | - | | I | I7 | IV | - | V | - | tpts. (cierre) | I | - | - |
Montuno	tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) guía ‖ I | V | I | V | guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)	1. guía/coro ‖ vi | V ‖ (4x) 2. tpts. (cierre) | V | - | coro—tpt. ‖ I | - | V/V | V ‖ (4x) coro | I | - | V/V | V | repeats 2, 1-2 tpt.—coro ‖ I | - | V/V | V ‖ (2x) *repeats* 2, 1
Solo	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (6x)	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (8x)
Mambo	tpts. ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (2x)	tpts. ‖ vi | V ‖ (4x)
Montuno	tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) coro | I | V | tpts. | I | V | - | I ‖	tpt./coro ‖ vi | V ‖ (3x) piano, bass | I | - | V | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.7—Chachachás

	Mi primer cariño **23-6696 (3/16/55)**	**Devuelvame la ilusión** **(ca. 1954)**	**Blanca paloma** **(ca. 1954)**
Intro.	‖ i V | V ‖ (2x) | i iv | i | V/III | III V | iv | V | i |	| iv | i ii° | i bII | V |	| I | bVI | I | ii bii | I | bVI | | I | - | - | - | V | - |
Canto	*1. solo voice* | i | VII | VI | V i | **trio** | V/III | - | III | - | VI | - | | V/V | V | iv | i | V | i | **repeats 1** **tpts** | V/III | - | III | - | VI | - | | V/V | V | iv | i | V | i | **repeats 1**	**trio** | i | i V/VII | VII | | VII V/VI | VI | VI | V | | iv | i | V | i | | i V/VII | VII V/VI | VI | | V | **unison** | iv | i | V/V | V | - | | VII | - | III | - | | VII | - | III | | ii° | i | ii° | i | vi V | **trio** | i | i V/VII | VII | | VII V/VI | VI | VI | V | | iv | i |	***solo*** | I V/ii | ii V I | ii V/ii | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | V | | - | I | **duo** | I ii | iii ii | *V | I | | I ii | iii ii | I ii | iii ii | | I ii | iii biii | ii bii | *I | **duo** | I | V | - | I | | V/ii | ii | V | *I |
Montuno	*2. coro (trio)* ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) **tpts.—coro (trio)** ‖ i | VII | VI | V ‖ (2x) **repeats 2** **tpts.** ‖ i | V ‖ (3x) **trio** ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) **tpts.** | i | - | V | i ‖	**coro/fl.** ‖ V | i ‖ (14x) **coro** | V | - | i | - ‖	*1. coro* ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) **cuartetas (2)** ‖ I | V ‖ (8x) **repeats 1** **décima** ‖ I | V ‖ (10x) **repeats 1** **2. bridge: tpts.** | IV vii° | iii V/ii | ii V | I | **tpt./tpts.** ‖ I V/ii | ii bII ‖ (4x) **tpt.** ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) **coro** ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) **repeats 2**

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 6.7—*Continued*

	Besame aquí (ca. 1954)	**Recuerdo bien (ca. 1954)**
Intro.	| I | ii V | I | V | | I | ii V |	| i | bII | I | V/II | II | V | I | III: | V |
Canto	unison | I | ii V | I | ii V | | ii | I | VII V/V | V | | iii biii | ii V | iii biii | ii V | | iii biii | ii V | I | V/IV | IV | | V/V | V | - | I | V | I | ii V | | iii biii | ii V | iii biii | ii V | | iii biii | ii V | I |	1. unison | ii | - | I | - | ii | - | I | - | | iii | IV | iii | V/ii | | ii | V | I | *V/vi | guía/coro || V/vi | vi || (4x) repeats 1 tpts. || V/vi | vi || (4x) repeats 1
Montuno	tpts. | I | V | - | I | 1. a cappella | I | - | - | - | piano | I | V | - | I | repeats 1 bass | I | V | - | I | repeats 1 coro/guía || I | V || (5x) coro/tpts./fl. || I | V || (5x) *tres* || I | V || (2x) tpts. | I | V | I | V | I | V | I | V I | repeats 1	

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.1—Son montunos in *Primitivo* (1958)

	Me engañastes Juana	**Rumba guajira**	**Que mala suerte**
Intro.	*tres* | iv | i | V | i | tpts. | iv | i | V | i |	*tres* i V i V VI V | i | V | i | V |	*tpts.* V tres, tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x)
Montuno	*estribillo—tpts.* ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) estribillo—tpt. ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) 1. cuarteta (trio) ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) cuarteta (solo) ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1	*1. estribillo* ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) | VI | - | - | V | repeats 1-2 (3x) estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x)	*1. copla* | I | V | I | V | 2. estribillo—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) 3. cuarteta | I | V | I | V | I | V | I | V | tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-3, 1-2 (3x), 3
Solo	tres ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x)		tres ‖ I | V ‖ (13x)
Montuno	tpt.—coro		
Diablo			coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (12x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.1—*Continued*

	A gozar mujeres	**No lo niegues**	**La pasión**
Intro.	tres ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x)	tres | V | I | V/V | V |	tres/tpts. ‖ IV V | I | IV V | I ‖ (2x) | *I | - |
Canto			| V | - | IV | - | V | - | IV | - | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | | IV | I | V | I |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1 2. copla ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2, 1	estribillo—tpts. ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) 1. cuarteta ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (3x) 2. estribillo | V | I | V/V | V | repeats 1-2 | *V | - | guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (8x)	1. coro—guía ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) 2. coro | V | I | 3. copla/coro ‖ V | I ‖ (6x) repeats 1-3, 1
Solo	tres ‖ iv | i | V | i ‖ (4x)	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (13x)	tres ‖ V | I ‖ (16x)
Diablo	tpts.—coro ‖ iv | i | V | i | | iv | i | V | i ‖ (4x) tpts. | iv | i | V | i | iv | i | V | i ‖	tpts., guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (15x; fades out)	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (16x +; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.2—Guaguancós in *Primitivo* (1958)

	Lo que dice Justi	**Fiesta en el solar**	**El lema del guaguancó**
Intro.	tres ‖ I | - ‖ (2x) | I | - | - | - | ii | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | I | - | - | - |	guaguancó tumbao ‖ i | - ‖ (3x) tres | i | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | i | - | - | - |	guaguancó tumbao ‖ i | - ‖ (2x) tres | i | iv | - | - | - | V | - | | i | - | - | - | - | - | - | diana | i | iv | - | - | - | V | - | i | - |
Canto	solo voice | V | I | V | I | V | - | - | - | | V/ii | ii | V/ii | ii | I | - | - | - | duo | V | I | V | I | V | - | - | - | | V/ii | ii | V/ii | ii | I | - | solo voice vi: | i | | III | IV | VI | V | | *i | - |	solo voice | i | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | i | - | - | - | - | trio | i | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | | i | - | V | - | - | iv | spoken vamp ‖ i | - ‖ (20x) tres | i | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V/iv | - | iv | - | - | - | | i | - | solo voice | i | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | I | - | iv | - | - | | - | i | - | - | - |	solo voice | i | - | - | - | - | VII | - | - | - | | VI | - | - | V | - | i | - | - | - | | iv | - | i | - | iv | - | i | - | | VII | - | i | - | trio | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | i | - | - | - | solo voice | V | - | i | - | V | - | i | - | | VII | VI | V | - | trio | V | - | i | - | - |
Montuno	*guía/coro* ‖ iv | V | i | - ‖ (21x: fades out)	tres ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) coro—guía ‖ i | V ‖ (30x; fades out)	tres | i | V | i | V | coro/guía ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (25x; fades)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.2—*Continued*

	Guaguancó de Puerta de Tierra (1958)
Diana	tres, guaguancó tumbao, tpts. | I | - | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - |
Canto	solo voice | I | - | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | | V/ii | ii | - | - | - | - | - | I | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | ii | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | V/ii | - | - | ii | - | - | - | | V | - | - | IV | - | iii | - | ii | - | - | V | - | | I | V/ii | ii | V/ii | ii | V/ii | ii | V | *I | | I | - | | IV | - | - | - |
Cierre	| V | - |
Montuno	coro—guía || V | - || (6x) coro | V | - |
Diablo	tpts./coro || V | - || (10x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.3—Son montunos, 1960-ca. 1962

	Luis Cora (1960)	**Cumbancha mama (1960)**	**Errante y bohemio (1960)**
Intro.	tpts. | ii V | ii V | I | I bIII | | ii/bIII V/bIII | ii/bIII V/bIII | | iv ii | I |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)	tpts. | VII | i | VII | i | | VII | i | VII | i |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ V IV | iii biii ii ‖ (3x) | V IV | iii biii ii bii | 2. cuarteta ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2, 1 | I | *ii | V | coro/tpts. ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (6x) coro/guía ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (4x) tres/tpts. ‖ I vi | ii *V ‖ (3x) cierre | I vi | V | coro | I vi | *ii V |	1. estribillo | I | V | 2. cuarteta ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) | I | V | repeats 1-2, 1	1. estribillo ‖ VII | i | VII | i ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ VII | i | VII | i | (3x) repeats 1-2 tpts. | VII | i | VII | i |
Solo		bass ‖ I | V ‖ (16x)	*piano* ‖ VII | i ‖ (9x) | VII | ~i |
Cierre			| VII VI VII | VI VII | - | | i | - | - |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (6x) coro/tpt. | I vi | ii V |	tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpts./tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x)	guía, tpts./coro ‖ VII | i ‖ (4x)
Coda	tpts. | I | - | ii iii | IV bvii°9 | | iii biii ii bII | I I7 I3 ‖	| I | V | (fades)	tpts. | VII | i | VII | i | V | i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.3—*Continued*

	Necesito una mujer cocinera (ca. 1962)	**Papa upa (ca. 1962)**	**Sueltala (ca. 1962)**
Intro.	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)	tpts. | i | VII | VI | V | | VII VI | V | i |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. | I | V |
Montuno	coro/tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (10x)	1. coro/guía ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (3x) 2. coro | i | 3. cuarteta | iv | - | i | - | V | - | - | - | i | repeats 1-3	1. guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - | - | repeats 1-2 (3x) tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (10x)
Solo	tenor saxophone ‖ I | V ‖ (10x)	tres ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (6x) | i | ~V |	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (7x)
Cierre		| V | - | - | - |	| I | ~V |
Montuno		coro ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x)	
Mambo	tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (4x)	tpts. ‖ i | V | i VII | VI V ‖ (4x)	tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x)
Montuno	coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) coro/spoken vamp ‖ I | V ‖ (9x) tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (6x; fades out)	coro ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) tpts. | V | i ‖	
Cierre			| I | V | I | *V |
Diablo			tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpt., tpts./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (6x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.3—*Continued*

	Quiero mucho a mi negra (ca. 1962)	**No he visto a Caridad (ca. 1962)**	**Adios, Carmelina (ca. 1962)**
Intro.	tres ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x)		tres | I | V | - | I | V/ii | ii | V | I
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ V/vi | vi | V/V | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2, 1 estribillo—tpt. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x) *estribillo—guía* ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x) estribillo ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x)	1. estribillo | I | V | IV | V | 2. tpts. | V/IV | IV | V/IV | IV | | V/V | V | V/V | V | repeats 1 3. cuarteta | V/IV | IV | V/IV | IV | | V/V | V | V/V | V | repeats 1-2, 1-3, 1 estribillo—tpt. ‖ I | V | IV | V ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ I | V | IV | V ‖ (4x) estribillo | I | V | IV | V |	1. tpts. | I | V | - | I | V/ii | ii | V | I | 2. estribillo | I | V | - | I | V/ii | ii | V | I | 3. cuarteta | I | V | - | I | V/ii | ii | V | I | repeats 1-3, 2 guía/coro ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (4x) tpts. ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (4x)
Solo	tres ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (5x)	piano ‖ I | V | IV | V ‖ (7x)	piano ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (7x)
Montuno	tpts./tpt. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x; fades)	tpts./tpt. ‖ I | V | IV | V ‖ (6x; fades)	tpts./tpt. ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (10x; fades)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.3—*Continued*

	El divorcio
Intro.	coro/tres ‖ VII | i ‖ (2x) tpts. | VII | i | V | i | VII | i | V | - i |
Montuno	1. copla ‖ VII | III | V | i ‖ (3x) 2. guía/coro ‖ VII | i ‖ (3x) repeats 1-2 | VII | i | VII | ~i | i | - | coro/guía ‖ VI | VII | i | - ‖ (2x)
Mambo	tpts. ‖ VI | VII | i | - ‖ (3x)
Cierre	| V | V i |
Montuno	guía/coro ‖ VII | i ‖ (3x) | VII | ~i | tpts. | i | - | V | i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.3—*Continued*

	Hachero pa' un palo (ca. 1960)
Intro.	tpts. ‖ i | VII | VI | V ‖ (2x) | i | - | i VII | VI V | *- | - | - | - |
Canto	duo ‖ i | VII | VI | V ‖ (2x) | i | VII | VI |
Cierre	| *V | - | i iv | V | i13 | - |
Montuno	coro/tpts. III: | V | I ii iii | IV V vi | V | coro/tpts. | V | I ii iii | IV V | V bV | IV I | I | coro/tpts. | V | I iii | biii ii | I | coro—guia ‖ V | I ‖ (6x) coro | V | I *V |
Cierre	| vi | - | #vi | - | vii | - | V | - |
Diablo	coro | V | I | tpts., tpt./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) tpt./coro | V | I | coro | V | I *V | | ii iii IV | V I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.4—Re-recordings of son montunos

	El reloj de Pastora 23-0470-B (6/21/46)	**El reloj de Pastora (late 1950s)**
Intro.	tres ‖ i	V ‖ (2x) tpts ‖ i	V	i	V ‖ (2x) | i	V	VI V	V		tpts | i	V	i	V | tres | iv	i	V	i	
Montuno	1. estribillo—tpt. ‖ i	V ‖ (6x) 2. estribillo—guía ‖ i	V ‖ (2x) 3. estribillo | i	V | 4. cuarteta/coro (tpt glossas) ‖ i	V ‖ (4x) repeats 2-4 estribillo | i	V		1. estribillo | i	V | 2. cuarteta/coro (tpt glossas) ‖ i	V ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2 estribillo | i	V | *cierre* | i	- | verse (abbcb) | i	-	VI V	i	V/iv
iv	VII	III	V	i	 coro ‖ i	V ‖ (2x) 	*i	-	 cuartetas (2) ‖ i	V	-	i
VII	VI	V/V	V ‖ (2x)
Solo	*piano* ‖ i	V ‖ (7x) 	i	~V		
Cierre		i	V			i	-	
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ i	V ‖ (8x) coro/tpt. 	i	V	 estribillo 	i	V	i ‖	tpts./coro ‖ i	V	i	V ‖ (3x) 	i	V	 intro. 	i	V	i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.4—*Continued*

	Lo dicen todas 23-0828-B (2/27/48)	**Lo dicen todas (1960)**
Intro.	tpts | I | - | - | - |	tpts ‖ I ii | iii IV | V IV | I ‖ (2x) ‖ I | ii V ‖ (2x)
Canto	duo | I | - | V | *I | - | - | | I | - | V | I | | IV | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | tpts. | I | - | V | *I | - | - | | I | - | V | I | IV | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | I | - | - |	duo | I ii | iii biii | ii V | I | - | - | | I ii | iii biii | ii V | I | - | - | | IV | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | | IV V/iii | iii V/ii | ii V | I | - | - | | I ii | iii biii | ii V | I | - | - | | IV | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | | IV V/iii | iii V/ii | ii V | I |
Montuno	coro—tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) coro—guia ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | I |	tpts. | V | I | coro/guia ‖ V | I ‖ (5x)
Solo	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (4x) | ~V |	
Cierre	| V IV | IV ii | V |	
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) coro | V | I | ~V | tpts | I | - | - ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | I ‖ (5x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) tpts. | V | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.5—Guaguancós

	Yambu en serenata (1960)	***Lo que le pasó a Luisita* (ca. 1962)**
Diana	tumbao ‖ | | ‖ (3x) *tres* ‖ I | - ‖ (2x) tpts. | I | - | - | - | - | V | - | I | diana (duo) | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | - | - | | I | - | ii | V | - | - | I | - | - |	tpts. | i | VII | - | i | voices | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | - | i | - |
Canto	solo ‖ I | - | V | I | - | - ‖ (2x) | ii | - | - | - | - | - | I | - | - | - | duo ‖ I | - | V | I | - | - ‖ (2x) | ii | - | - | - | - | - | I | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | tres | I | V | - | I | solo—coro ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (4x)	solo voice | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | - | i | - | | V/iv | - | iv | - | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | | i | - | V/iv | - | iv | - | - | VII | - | - | | i | - | - |
Cierre	| *I | - | - |	
Montuno	coro/tpts. ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (4x) percussion ‖ I | - | V | - ‖ (4x; fades)	coro—guía ‖ VII | - | i | - ‖ (6x) coro—tpt. ‖ VII | - | i | - ‖ (4x) coro—tres ‖ VII | - | i | - ‖ (2x)
Diablo		tpts./coro ‖ VII | - | i | - ‖ (6x; fades)

•

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.6.a—Johnny Pacheco y su Charanga, 1960

	Soy de batabano	Oyeme mulata	El agua del clavelito
Intro.	vlns, piano, bass | I | V | - | I | flute | I | V | - | I | | I | V | *- | I |	piano | V | V I |	vocals, vln i iv i iv V i piano | I | V |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) 1. estribillo ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (2x) 3. flute ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (2x) repeats 1-3, 1	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) 1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 3. flute ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-3, 1 vlns, flute ‖ I | V ‖ (4x)	1. estribillo ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) 2. flute ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2
Solo	flute ‖ I | V | - | I ‖ (4x)	flute ‖ I | V ‖ (7x)	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (11x)
Cierre		| I | V | I | V |	| I | V | I | V |
Montuno	estribillo | I | V | - | I | flute | I | V | - | I | | I | V | *- | I ‖	flute/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (5x; fades out)	coro/flute ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (3x) flute ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) cierres | I | - | - | - | V I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.6.b—Ray Barretto's La Charanga Moderna

	Cumbamba **(1961)**	***Pachanga suavecito*** **(1961)**	***Errante y bohemio*** **(1964)**
Intro.	vlns | I | V | - | I | flute || I | V | - | I || (2x) | I | V | *- | I |	violins, flute || i III | II bII || (12x) | *i | iv V | vlns || i | V || (2x)	bass, piano || VII | i | VII | i || (2x)
Montuno	1. estribillo || I | V | - | I || (2x) 2. cuarteta | I | V | - | I | | V/ii | ii | *V | I | repeats 1-2 estribillo—flute || I | V | - | I || (4x) estribillo | I | V | - | I |	1. estribillo || i | V | i | V || (3x)	1. estribillo || VII | i | VII | i || (2x) 2. cuarteta || VII | i | VII | i || (3x) repeats 1-2, 1
Solo	flute || I | V | - | I || (3x) repeats 1	piano || i | V || (7x) | i | V | i | ~V |	piano || VII | i | VII | i || (3x)
Cierre		*| i | iv | i | V |*	*| VII | i | VII | i | VII | ~i |*
Solo		vln || i | V || (9x)	tumbadora || VII | i | VII | i || (9x)
Montuno	flute || I | V | - | I || (2x)	estribillo || i | V | i | V || (2x) vlns || i | V | i | V || (2x) | i | V | - | i ||	3. estribillo—tpt || VII | i | VII | i || (2x) 4. estribillo—flute || VII | i | VII | i || (2x) repeats 3-4 estribillo || VII | i | VII | i || (2x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.7—*La Pachanga* (1963)

	Sabor de pachanga (ca. 1960)	**Que te parece Juana**	**Chango pachanga**
Intro.	tres | V | - | IV | I | tpts. | V | - | IV | I |	tres ‖ i | V | V | i ‖ (2x) tpts. | i | V | V | i |	tres ‖ V | IV ‖ (4x)
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ V | - | IV | I ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | vi | - | V | - | IV | - | - V/vi | repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo ‖ V | - | IV | I ‖ (2x) coro ‖ V | IV | - | I ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) coro | V | IV | - | I |	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | V | i ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | - | V | repeats 1-2 (3x) tpts. ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) coro ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x)	solo voice | V | IV | V | IV | V | | I | IV | IV | I | V | coro | V | IV | V | IV | V | | I | IV | IV | I | V | 1. guia/coro ‖ V | - ‖ (5x) guia—coro ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) repeats 1 guia—coro ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (10x)
Solo	tres ‖ V | IV | - | I ‖ (4x) timbal ‖ V | - ‖ (5x)		
Mambo			| V | - | - | - | tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (3x) | *V | - |
Montuno	tres | V | IV | - | I | tpts. | V | - | IV | I ‖	<u>Diablo</u>: tpts./coro ‖ i | V ‖ (8x) tpt./coro ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) tpts. | i | VII | VI | V | | i | VII | VI | V | i ‖	<u>Diablo</u>: coro—tpt. ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (6x) coro | V | - | I | - | tpts. | V | - | I | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.7—*Continued*

	Toma cognac	Tú estás en el swing mami	Pachanga Time
Intro.		tres ‖ | | | | | | tpts. | ii | V | iii | V/ii | ii | V | I | - |	tres ‖ IV | iii | ii | I ‖ (2x) tpts ‖ vi | ii | V | I ‖ (2x)
Montuno	1. coro/guía ‖ I | V | IV | V ‖ (3x) 2. cuarteta ‖ I | IV | V/V | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) coro ‖ *I* | V ‖ (3x) coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) coro | I | V | | I | V | | I | V | IV | V |	1. estribillo ‖ | | ‖ (4x) 2. cuarteta ‖ | | ‖ (5x) repeats 1-2 | V | - | - | - | - | - | coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | - |	1. estribillo | IV | iii | ii | I | | IV | iii | ii | I | | vi | ii | V | I | | vi | ii | V | I | 2. cuarteta | IV | iii | ii | I | | IV | iii | ii | I | | *vi* | *ii* | V | I | | vi | ii | V | I | repeats 1-2 | V | - | - | I | coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | I |
Mambo		tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x)	tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x)
Cierre	| V | - | - | - |		| *V | - |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (5x) coro/tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro | I | V | IV | V | tpts. | V | - | - | I | ii9 bii9 I9	coro/tpt. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (3x) tpts. | V | - | - | - | | iii | biii | tpts. | ii bII | I+7 ‖	| V | - | - | I | coro—tpt. ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | I | tpts. | IV | iii | ii | I | | IV | iii | ii | I | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.7—*Continued*

	Sacale brillo al piso	**Que mal es querer**	**Te vuelve un dengue**
Intro.	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ I | - | - | V ‖ (2x) | V | - |	tpts. | V | I | V | I |	tres | I | V | I | V | tpts. | I | V | I |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | I | I | V/IV | IV | | V/bIII | bIII | V | - | repeats 1-2 (2x)	1. estribillo ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V/IV | IV | V/IV | IV | | V/IV | IV | V/IV | IV | | iii | biii | ii | V | repeats 1-2 (2x), 1 tpts. | IV | - | V | - |	1. estribillo, solo voice ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (3x) 2. cuarteta | I | V | I | V | I | V | I | V | repeats 1-2 estribillo | I | V | I | V | tpts. ‖ IV | - | V | - ‖ (2x) | V | - | - | - | tres ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) tres ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x)
Diablo	tpts./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) tres/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) tpts./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) | V | - | - | I ‖	coro—tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (8x) coro—guia ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro/tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (2x; fades out)	coro/tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) coro/guia ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (8x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 7.7—*Continued*

	Un cachito pa' mi	**Parece bobo**	**Porfiando el gallo muere**
Intro.	tpts. | V | - | - |	tres ‖ I IV | V | IV ‖ (2x)	tpts. | IV | - | iii | - | ii | - | I | - | | IV | - | iii | - | ii | - | I | - | - |
Montuno	1. coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) | *V | I | 2. cuarteta | I | V | I | V | | I | V | I | V | | IV | - | - | V | repeats 1-2 (2x) coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) | *V | - |	tpt./coro ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (10x) guía/coro ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (6x)	1. estribillo | V | - | IV | - | | V | - | IV | - | | IV | iii | I | - | | IV | iii | I | - | tpts. | V | - | IV | - | | V | - | IV | - | | IV | iii | I | - | | IV | iii | I | - | repeats 1 coro/tpts. ‖ V | I | V | - ‖ (2x) coro/guía ‖ V | I | V | - ‖ (3x) *coro* | V | I | V | - | | V | - | I | - |
Solo		tres ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (15x)	
Cierre			‖ I | ii iii ‖ (3x) | iii biii | ii I | V | - |
Mambo	tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x)	tpts./tpt. ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (6x; fades)	tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x)
Diablo	coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) | *V | - | tpts. ‖ V | - | I | - | V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) coro/tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) tpts. ‖ V | - | I | - ‖ (2x) | V | I ‖		coro/tpt. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x) | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.1—*Arsenio Viva!*: Son montuno (one-part)

	Hang on Sloopy (4/18/66)	**Baila con migo (4/18/66)**	**La bamba (4/28/66)**
Intro	‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (2x)	tres | I | V | I | V |	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)
Montuno	1. estribillo—guía ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (4x) 2. "cuarteta" ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (8x) repeats 1-2 tpts., trb., bari. sax. ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (4x) build up | V | - | - | - | - | - |	estribillo | I | V | I | V | 1. cuarteta | V/IV | IV | V/IV | IV | | V/V | V | V/V | V | 2. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo | I | V | I | V |	estribillo ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) coplas ‖ I | V ‖ (9x) estribillo ‖ I | V ‖ (7x) coplas ‖ I | V ‖ (9x) estribillo ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)
Solo		tres ‖ I | V ‖ (6x)	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (22x)
Montuno	estribillo—guía (tpts, trb., sax.) ‖ I IV | V IV ‖ (6x; fades out)	estribillo/guía (tpts, sax.) ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (9x; fades out)	estribillo ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coplas (estribillo) ‖ I | V ‖ (9x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.1—*Continued*

	Randy (4/28/66)	**Vaya pa'l monte (4/18/66)**
Intro.	percussion | | | | | | I V | I7 vi | bVI+ I | IV I |	tres | I IV | V |
Montuno	1. estribillo/guía ‖ I | ii V | I | ii V ‖ (3x) 2. cuarteta | I V | I7 vi | bVI+ I | IV I | repeats 1-2 (2x) coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (18x)	1. estribillo ‖ I IV | V | I IV | V ‖ (2x) 2. sexteta ‖ I IV | V | I IV | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2, 1 3. octava ‖ I IV | V | I IV | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1
Solo	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (12x; fades out)	tres ‖ I IV | V | I IV | V ‖ (4x) ‖ I IV | V ‖ (3x)
Montuno		estribillo ‖ I IV | V | I IV | V ‖ (2x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.2—*Arsenio Viva!*: Son montuno (two part)

	Cielito lindo **(5/2/66)**	***Para bailar el montuno*** **(5/2/66)**
Intro.	tres | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I |	tres | i | V |
Canto	1. estribillo | I | IV | V | I | - | V | - | I | 2. coro ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (3x) 3. cuarteta | I | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | repeats 1-3 estribillo | I | IV | V | I | - | V | - | I |	coro—guía ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) coro | i | V | tres ‖ i | V ‖ (7x) tres | i | - | - | V | - | - | - | i | | i | - | - | - | V/III | III | V/III | III | | VI | V | - | - | duo | i | - | - | V | - | - | - | i | | i | - | - | V | - | - | - | i | solo voice | i | - | - | - | V/III | III | V/III | III | duo | VI | V | - | - |
Montuno	coro—guía ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (4x) coro | V | - | - | I | tres ‖ V | - | - | I ‖ (5x; fades out)	tres | i | V | coro/guía ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) coro ‖ i | V ‖ (5x) tres ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) bongó ‖ i | V ‖ (8x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.3—Arsenio's re-recordings

	Como traigo la yuka 83948-B (6/18/42)	**La yuka (5/2/66)**
Intro.	tres | I | V | I | V |	tres | I | V | I | V |
Montuno	estribillo—tpt || I | V | I | V || (4x) estribillo—tpts || I | V | I | V || (2x) estribillo—copla (duo) || I | V | I | V || (6x) estribillo | I | V | I | V | guía/coro || I | V || (4x)	estribillo—copla (duo) || I | V | I | V || (4x) estribillo | I | V | I | V | guía/coro || I | V || (3x)
Solo	tres || I | V || (18x) tres || V | V | V | V | | V | bVI | bVI | V || (2x)	tres || I | V || (18x) tres || V | V | V | V | | V | bVI | bVI | V || (2x)
Montuno	tpt | I | V | I | V | estribillo | I | V | I | V | tpts | I vi - V ||	tres | I | V | I | V | bottle/coro (tpts., sax.) || I | V || (10x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.3—*Continued*

	Las tres Marías† (ca. 1950)	Tres Marías (4/18/66)
Intro.		tres | V | - | IV | - | | V/V | - | - | V/V V |
Canto		| V | - | IV | - | | V/V | - | - | V/V V | *cierre | V | - |
Montuno	1. coro || V | - | IV | I || (2x) 2. cuarteta || V | - | IV | I || (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) 3. coro | V | - | IV | I | 4. tpts | V | - | IV | I | repeats 3-4 coro | V | - | IV | I |	1. coro || V | - | IV | I || (2x) 2. cuarteta || V | - | IV | I || (2x) repeats 1-2 coro | V | - | IV | I |
Solo		tres || V | - | IV | I || (9x)
Montuno		coro—guía || V | - | IV | I || (10x; fades out)

†This version of "Las tres Marías" was recorded as part of a medley; thus, it does not include the other sections of the arrangement (see Appendix 2).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.3—*Continued*

	La gente del Bronx **10-040-B (ca. 1951)**	**El elemento del Bronx** **(5/2/66)**
Diana	tpts | I | - | - | - | ii | - | - | - | V | - | - | - | | I | - | - |	tres (no diana) | I | - | - | - |
Canto	duo | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | I | | I | - | - | - | - | - | | ii | - | - | - | - | - | | I | - | - | - | V/V | - | V | - | - | - | | ~I | *V | - |	solo voice | I | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | | V | - | - | - | - | *I | - | | V/ii | V/ii ii | ii | - | V | I | | V/V | - | - | V | - | - | - | I | | *V | - |
Montuno	coro—tpt || V | - | - | - || (4x) coro—guía || V | - | - | - || (4x) coro | V | - | - | - |	coro—guía || V | - | - | - || (6x) coro | V | - | - | - |
Solo		tumbadora || V | - || (7x) bongó || V | - || (7x)
Cierre	| | | | |	
	diablo: coro/tpts || V | - | - | - || (2x) coro/tpt | V | - | - | - | coro | V | ~V | | | ||	montuno: coro/guía (timbal solo) || V | - | - | - || (7x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 8.4—*Arsenio dice*

	Mi corazón no tiene quien lo llore (6/13/68)	**Ven mi mora (6/13/68)**	**Kiko Medina (6/13 or 18/68)**
Intro.	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (3x) | vi | * V | * I |	tres, piano, bass ‖ V | - ‖ (4x) | I | V I | V I | V I | V IV | | V | - | V I |	tres ‖ i | V ‖ (4x)
Montuno	estribillo—guía vi: ‖ V | i ‖ (10x) tpts. | V | i | V | i | | V | i | 1. estribillo | V | i | tpts. ‖ V | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1 spoken | V | i | tpts. | V | i | V | i | repeats 1 | V | i | tpts. | V | i | V | i | repeats 1	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ IV | - | V | - ‖ (2x) repeats 1 tpts. | V | IV I | V/II | IV/II II | | V | IV I | *V | - | repeats 1 guía ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1 2. cuarteta ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) repeats 1-2, 1	1. tpts., sax. | i V | III | vi° | VI V | iv | V | 2. coro ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 tpts., sax. | V | - | - | - | |*V | - | 3. coro/guía ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) 4. cuarteta/coro ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) repeats 3-4 (3x)
Solo	tres ‖ V | i ‖ (18x)	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (16x)	tres ‖ i | V ‖ (14x)
Cierre			| V | - | - | - | - | - |
Mambo	tpts., sax, tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x)	tpts., tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (9x)	tpts., sax, .tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (15)
Diablo	estr.—tpts., sax, tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (6x) estr. | V | i | V | I ‖	estr. | I | V | I | V | | I | V | *V | - ‖	coro/tpts., sax, .tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (9x) tpts., sax, .tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (7x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.1—Johnny Pacheco's re-recorded son montunos

	Ya tú lo ves campeón (1950s) **Chappottín y Sus Estrellas**	**Campeón (1964)** **Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	piano, bass | I IV | V IV | tpts. || I IV | V IV || (2x) | IV | - | V | - | I | V | *IV | V I |	piano, bass | I IV | V IV | tpts. || I IV | V IV || (2x) | IV | - | V | - | I | V | *IV | V |
Montuno	estribillo—tpts. || I IV | V IV || (4x) cuarteta || V/vi | - | vi | - || (2x) | V/V | - | - | V/V V | estribillo—tpt. || I IV | V IV || (6x) estribillo—guía || I IV | V IV || (6x) estribillo | I IV | V IV |	estribillo—tpts. || I IV | V IV || (4x) cuarteta || V/vi | - | vi | - || (2x) | V/V | - | - | V/V V | estribillo—guía || I IV | V IV || (6x) estribillo | I IV | V IV |
Solo	piano || I IV | V IV || (7x) | I IV | ~V |	piano || I IV | V IV || (10x) | I IV | ~V |
Cierre	| *V | - |	| *V | - |
Mambo		tpts. || I IV | V IV || (4x)
Montuno		tpt./coro || I IV | V IV || (6x) guía/coro | I IV | V IV |
Diablo	estribillo | I IV | V IV | tpts./coro || I IV | V IV || (4x) tpt./coro || I IV | V IV || (2x) estribillo | I IV | ~V |	
Coda	| *V | - | I ||	| I IV | V IV | I IV | *V I ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.1—*Continued*

	Fania (early 1950s) **Conjunto Estrellas de Chocolate**	**Fania (1964)** **Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	|| I VII | I VII || (2x) tpts. | I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII | voice | I VII | I VII | tpts. | I VII | I VII |	|| I VII | I VII || (2x) tpts. | I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII | voice | I VII | I VII | tpts. | I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII |
Montuno	coplas || I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII || (6x) tpts. | I VII | I VII |	coplas || I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII || (6x) tpts. | I VII | I VII |
Cierre	| I | - |	| I | - |
Montuno	tpt./coro || I VII | I VII || (6x) guia/coro || I VII | I VII || (14x)	tpts./coro || I VII | I VII || (4x) guia/coro || I VII | I VII || (15x)
Solo	piano || I VII | I VII || (7x)	
Cierre	tpts. | I VII | I VII | | I | - |	tpts. | I VII | I VII | | I | - |
Montuno		tpts./coro || I VII | I VII || (3x)
Mambo		tpts. || I VII | I VII || (4x)
Montuno		guia/coro || I VII | I VII || (2x)
Diablo	tpts./coro || I VII | I VII || (5x) tpt./coro || I VII | I VII || (3x)	
Coda	tpts. | I VII | I VII | | I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII | | I VII | I VII | I VII | I VII | I ||	tpts. | I VII | I VII | I ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.1—*Continued*

	Prefiero el son Chappottín y Sus Estrellas	**Prefiero el son Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	tpts. |I|V|-|I| |I|*V|-|I|	tpts. |I|V|-|I| |I|*V|-|I|
Montuno	1. estribillo |I|V|-|I| |I|V|-|I| 2. cuarteta |I|V|-|I| |I|V|-|I| repeats 1-2 coro—tpt. ‖I|V|-|I‖ (8x) coro |I|V|-|I|	1. estribillo |I|V|-|I| |I|V|-|I| 2. cuarteta |I|V|-|I| |I|V|-|I| repeats 1-2 coro—guia ‖I|V|-|I‖ (6x) coro |I|V|-|I|
Cierre	|V|-|-|	|V|-|
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖I|V‖ (4x) coro/tpt. ‖I|V‖ (2x) coro |I|~V| |V|I‖	coro/tpts. ‖I|V‖ (4x) coro ‖I|V‖ (2x) coro |I|~V‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.1—*Continued*

	Ay, que canuto (ca. 1953) **Chappottín y su Conjunto**	**Oye canuto (ca. 1966)** **Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	tpts. | i | V | III | V | i | V i |	tpts. | i | V | - | i | | i | V | - | - |
Montuno	1. estribillo | i | V | - | i | 2. cuarteta ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 estribillo—tpt. ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1 cuarteta ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2, 1 tpt.—estribillo ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) cuarteta ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) estribillo | i | V | - | i |
Solo	piano ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) | i | V | - | *i |	piano ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (4x) | i | V | - | *i |
Cierre	tpts. | VI V/V | V V/IV | | IV VII | III V i |	| i bI VII bVII | ~VI | tpts | VI V |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ VI V | ii° i VII ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ VI V | ii° i VII ‖ (2x) coro | VI V | tpts. ii° V i	coro/tpts. ‖ i | VII VI ‖ (5x) coro/guía ‖ i | VII VI ‖ (8x) coro, tpts. ‖ i | VII VI ‖ (4x) coro, tpts./guía ‖ i | VII VI ‖ (4x; fades out)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.1—*Continued*

	No vuelvo a Morón (1948) Arsenio Rodríguez	**No vuelvo a Morón (ca. 1950) Arsenio Rodríguez**	**A Morón (ca. 1966) Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	tres | V | - |	tpts.	tpts. | V | - | - |
Montuno	1. estribillo | V | I | V | *I | 2. cuarteta | V | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | *- | - | repeats 1-2 (2x) coro—tpt || V | I || (4x) coro—guía || V | I || (4x) coro | V | I |	1. estribillo || V | I | V | *I || (2x) 2. cuarteta | *V | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | - | - | repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo || V | I | V | I || (2x)	1. estribillo || V | I | V | I || (2x) 2. cuarteta | V | - | - | - | - | | - | - | - | *- | - | repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo | V | I | V | I |
Solo	piano || V | I || (7x)		
Cierre	| ~ | | |		tpts. | V | - |
Diablo	coro—tpts || I | V || (3x) coro—tpt || I | V || (2x) ensemble | V | V ||		tpts./coro || IV | V | IV | V || (4x) guía/coro || IV | V | IV | V || (4x) guía, tpts./coro || IV | V | IV | V || (4x; fades)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.1—*Continued*

	Me voy contigo (ca. 1953) **Chappottín y su Conjunto**	**Me voy contigo (ca. 1966)** **Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	| i | - | iv | - | V | - | i | - |	| i | - | VII | - | VI | - | V VI | VI V |
Canto	| i VII | i VII | VI V/VI | VI | | VI | VI V | V | VI V | V | | V i | VII III | VI | V | | V | *V | i VI |	| i VII | VI V | VI | - | - | | VI | V | VI | V | | V i | VII | VI | V | | *V | i VI |
Montuno	coro/tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) coro/guía ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) cuarteta ‖ V | i ‖ (4x) coro/guía | V | i | sexteta ‖ V | i ‖ (6x) coro | V | i |	coro/tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) coro/guía ‖ V | i ‖ (2x) cuarteta ‖ V | i ‖ (4x) coro/guía ‖ V | i ‖ (2x) sexteta ‖ V | i ‖ (6x) coro/guía ‖ V | i ‖ (2x)
Solo	piano ‖ V | i ‖ (4x) | V | ~i |	piano ‖ V | i ‖ (5x) | ~V |
Cierre	| i | VII VI |	| VI | - | - | - |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (2x) coro | V | ~i | | i | VII VI | V i ‖	coro/tpts. ‖ V | i ‖ (4x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (2x) coro/guía ‖ V | i ‖ (7x) coro | V i | | ~V | VI | - | - | - | V ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—Larry Harlow's re-recordings of son montunos

	Soy el terror (1947) **Arsenio Rodríguez**	**El terror (1972)** **Larry Harlow**
Intro.	tres | III | - | - | tpts | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | | V | - | iv | - | | i | - | V/VII | VII | *VII | III |	cuatro, piano || VI | - || (2x) brass | i | - | VII | - | VI | | V | i9 | - |
Canto	duo | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | | V | - | iv | - | i | - | III: | V/V | V | *V | I |	verse | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | | V | - | iv | - | i | - | III: | ii | V | - | I |
Montuno	coro—tpt. || vi | V | - | I || (2x) coro—guía || vi | V | - | I || (2x) coro | vi | V | - | I |	coro—guía || V | - | - | - || (8x)
Solo	piano || V | - || (7x) | vi | V | - | - |	cuatro || V | - | - | - || (7x)
Cierre	| vi | V | - | - |	| V | - |
Mambo		trbs. || V | - | - | - || (2x) tpts., trbs. || V | - | - | - || (2x)
Cierre		| V | - |
Diablo	coro | vi | V | coro/tpts || V | - || (3x) coro/tpt || V | - || (3x) coro | V | - | coro | vi | V | - | I ||	coro/tpts., trbs. || V | - | - | - || (4x) coro/guía || V | - | - | - || (4x) | I | V | - ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—*Continued*

	No me llores más (1949) **Arsenio Rodríguez**	**No me llores (1972)** **Larry Harlow**
Intro.	tres | i | V |	brass | V | VI | VII VI | V |
Montuno	1. verse | i | ii° | i | V | i | ii° | i | V | 2. estribillo | i | V | 3. tpts. | i | V | iv | i | i | V | V | i | 4. estribillo | i | V | repeats 1-4, 1 estribillo—tpt. ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | V ‖ (6x) *repeats 4*	1. verse | i | VII | VI | V | i | VII | VI | V | 2. estribillo | i | V | 3. brass | i | VII VI | V | - | 4. estribillo | i | V | repeats 1-4, 1, 3 5. estribillo—guía ‖ i | V ‖ (8x)
Solo	piano ‖ i | V ‖ (4x) | i | ~V |	piano ‖ i | V ‖ (20x) | i | ~V | *i | ~V |
Cierre	| i | V |	| I | VII VI | V | - |
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. | i | V | | i | V | i ‖	coro/tpts., trbs. ‖ i | V ‖ (4x)
Montuno		repeats 5
Mambo		cuatro ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) trbs. ‖ i | V ‖ (2x) tpts., trbs. ‖ i | V ‖ (4x)
Montuno		repeats 5, 3

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—*Continued*

	Kila, Kike y Chocolate (1950) **Arsenio Rodríguez**	**Tumba y bongó (1972)** **Larry Harlow**
Intro.	bongó	bongó/tumbadora ‖ | | ‖ (2x) brass | VII | V13 | V9 | V9 | | I | - | - | | I | - | - | - | - | V | IV | - | iii | IV | IV V | | I | V | I | - | - | - | - | - | IV | V | I | - |
Canto	duo | I | - | V | I | bongó, tumbadora | | | duo | I | - | V | I | V/ii | - | - | ii | | V | - | IV | - | - | | V/VI V/II | V/V V | I | | V | - | IV | - | - | | V/VI V/II | V/V V | I *V |	duo | I | - | V | I | brass | I | - | - | - | *- | - | duo | I | - | V | I | V/ii | - | - | ii | | V | - | IV | - | - | | I V/ii | ii V | I | | V | - | IV | - | - | | I V/ii | ii V | I *V |
Montuno	coro—bongó, tumbadora ‖ V | - | - ‖ (12x)	coro—bongó ‖ V | - | - ‖ (20x)
Cierre		| V | - | - |
Solo		tumbadora ‖ V | IV vi | V | IV I ‖ (4x)
Mambo		trbs., tpts. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (3x)
Cierre		| V | - | *- | - |
Montuno		*coro/timbal* ‖ V | - ‖ (19x) | V | I | - |
Diablo	coro | V | - | coro/tpts. ‖ V | - ‖ (7x) coro | V | - ‖	
Coda		brass | I | - | - | - | - | V | IV | - | iii | | IV | IV V | I | V | I | - | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—*Continued*

	Sueltala (ca. 1962) **Arsenio Rodríguez**	**Sueltala** **Larry Harlow**	**Sueltala (ca. 1970)** **Tony Pabón**
Intro.	tres ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. | I | V |	cuatro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) brass | I | V |	tpts. | IV | I | V/V | V | | IV | I | V | - |
Montuno	1. guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - | - | repeats 1-2 (3x) tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (10x)	coro/brass ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) 1. cuarteta | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - | - | 2. coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2, 1 guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (7x) trb., trbs.("moña")/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (16x)	1. coro/guía ‖ I | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | | V/vi | vi | V/V | V | - | - | repeats 1-2 (2x) tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (14x)
Solo	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (7x)		piano ‖ I | V ‖ (15x)
Cierre	| I | ~V |	| I | ~V |	| I | ~V |
Mambo	tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) | I | V | I | *V |	tpts., trbs. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) | I | V | *I | V |	tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) | I | V | I | *V |
Montuno	tpt., tpts., sax./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (8x; fades out)	tpt., trbs./coro ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (7x) guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (7x) tpts., trbs. | I | V | I+7 ‖	tpt./coro ‖ I | V ‖ (13x) guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (9x) tpts. | V | V I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—*Continued*

	La cartera (rec. 1973) **Larry Harlow**	**Suéltame (rec. 1973)** **Larry Harlow**
Intro.	| i | V | - | i | tpts., trbs. | iv V/III | III V/V | ii° | V |	tpts., trbs. | I | - | vi | V/V | V | - | - | I V |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ V/III | III | V/III | III ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo ‖ *i* | V | - | *i* ‖ (2x)	1. estribillo—guía ‖ V | IV ‖ (2x) 2. estribillo | V | IV | 3. cuarteta ‖ V | - | - | I | - ‖ (2x) *repeats 1-3* (2x) estribillo—guía ‖ V | IV ‖ (10x)
Solo	piano ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (17x)	piano ‖ V | - ‖ (28x)
Cierre	tpts., trbs. | iv V/III | III V/V | ii° | V |	
Montuno	estribillo—tpt. ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (12x) coro—guía ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (6x)	
Solo	violin ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (13x)	
Mambo	trbs. ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x) tpts., trbs. ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (2x)	‖ V | - ‖ (2x) 4. tpts., trbs. | V | - | - | - | 5. trbs. | V/II II | V I | V/VII VII | V/V V | repeats 4-5
Montuno	coro—guía ‖ i | V | - | i ‖ (6x) coro | i | V | - | i |	estribillo—tpt. ‖ V | IV ‖ (14x) estribillo—guía ‖ V | IV ‖ (12x)
Coda	tpts., trbs. | iv V/III | III V/V | ii° | V ‖	tpts., trbs. | I | - | vi | V/V | V | - | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—*Continued*

	No quiero (1952) **Arsenio Rodríguez**	**No quiero (1973)** **Larry Harlow**
Intro.	tpts | i VII i | VII i | VII VI VII | VI VII | VI V VI | V VI | V | i | i #VII | VII	tpts., trbs. | i VII i | VII i | VII VI VII | VI VII | | VI V VI | V VI | V | V i | i #VII | VII |
Canto	1. duo | i | III | V | i | V/VII | VII | V | 2. breaks | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | - | V i | repeats 1 3. breaks | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | - | V | V i | repeats 1 4. breaks | i | - | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | V i |	1. duo | i | III | V | i | V/VII | VII | V | 2. breaks | i bVII iv | - | II iii | - | I bii | - | bVII i° | V#9 | - i | repeats 1 3. breaks | i | - | VII | - | VI | - | - | V | V i | repeats 1 4. breaks | i | - | - | VII | - | VI | - | V | V i |
Montuno	coro—guía || V | i | V | i || (4x) coro | V | i | V | i |	coro—guía || V | i | V | i || (4x) coro | V | i | V | i |
Solo	piano || V | i || (4x) | V | ~i |	trbs., tpts. III: || I | - | VII | - || (4x) tres. flute || I | - | VII | - || (11x)
Cierre		| | |
Mambo		VI: || I | IV | V | I || (2x) trbs., tpts. || I | IV | V | I || (2x)
Cierre	| V7 9 | - | - | - | - | - |	i: | iv | III | V/V | V |
Diablo	coro/tpts. || V | i || (2x) coro/tpt. | V | i | coro | V | ~V |	coro/trbs., tpts. || V | i || (4x) coro/guía || V | i || (10x)
Coda	| i VII i | VII i | i 13 9 bii 9 ||	| i VII i | VII i | VII VI VII | VI VII | | VI V VI | V VI | V | V i ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.2—*Continued*

	Guaraguí (1951) **Arsenio Rodríguez**	**Popo pa' mi (1973)** **Larry Harlow**
Intro.	tres | ii | V | I | ii | tpts. || ii | V | I | ii || (3x)	tres, piano, bass | V | - | IV | V | tpts., trbs. || V | - | IV | V || (2x) | I | II bII | I | - |
Canto	duo || ii | V | I | ii || (3x)	duo || V | - | IV | - || (3x)
Cierre	| V | - | - | - |	| V | - | - | - |
Montuno	coro—tpt. || V | IV I || (6x) coro—guía || V | IV I || (4x) coro | V | IV I |	coro—guía || V | IV iii ii || (12x)
Solo	piano || V | IV I || (11x) | V | ~V |	bass || V | - || (36x)
Cierre		| V | - |
Mambo		|| bVII VI | bVI V || (4x) trbs. || bVII VI | bVI V || (4x) trbs., tpts. || bVII VI | bVI V | bVII VI | bVI V || (2x)
Cierre	| I V | V |	| V | - |
Diablo	coro | V | IV I | tpts./coro || V | IV I || (3x) tpt./coro || V | IV I || (2x) coro	coro | V | IV iii ii | tpt./coro || V | IV iii ii || (11x) coro—guía || V | IV iii ii || (8x)
Coda		|| V | - | IV | V || (2x) | I | II bII | I | - ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.3—Eddie Palmieri's re-recordings of Arsenio's son montunos

	***Con un amor* (1950)** **Arsenio Rodríguez**	***Con un amor* (1962)** **Eddie Palmieri**	***Con un amor* (1972)** **Willie Rosario**
Intro.	tpts. | I | V | V/IV | | IV | V/V | V I |	trbs., fl. | V | - | - | - | - | | I | V/V V | I |	tpts., bari. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) | IV | - | bVI | - | V | - |
Canto	1. verse (duo) | V | I | I V/III | III | | V/ii | ii | V | V I | 2. verse (solo) | V | I | V | I | I V/III | | III | V/ii | ii | V | V I | repeats 1-2	1. verse (duo) | V | I | I V/III | III | | V/ii | ii | V | V I | 2. verse (solo) | V | I | V | I | I V/III | | III | V/ii | ii | V | V I | repeats 2	1. verse (solo) | V | I | vi V/III | III | | V/ii | ii | V | V I | 2. verse (solo) | V | I | V | I | vi V/III | | III | V/ii | ii | V | V I | repeats 2
Montuno	estribillo—tpt. vi: ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (4x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (4x) estribillo | i | VII | V | i |	estribillo—guía vi: ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (4x) 3. estribillo | i | VII | V | i | fl., trbs.—coro ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (3x) estribillo—trb. ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (2x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (2x) repeats 3	tpts., bari. vi: ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (2x) estribillo—guía ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (8x) estribillo | i | VII | V | i |
Solo	piano ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (3x)		
Mambo			tpts., bari. ‖ i | VII | V | IV7 9 ‖ (4x)
Montuno			tpt./coro ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (4x) guía/coro ‖ i | VII | V | i ‖ (3x)
Cierre	| | | | |		
Diablo	coro/tpts. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x) coro/tpt. ‖ V | i ‖ (3x)		
Coda	| | ‖	| i | VII | *V | i ‖	| i | VII | V | i ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.3—*Continued*

	Yo no engaño a las nenas **Arsenio Rodríguez (1948)**	**Si las nenas me dejan que** **Eddie Palmieri (1968)**
Intro.	tpts | V | - | - | - | I | V/V | - |	tres, tpt, trb ‖ I VII | I VII ‖ (6x) | VII 9 13 | - |
Montuno	estribillo—tpt. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x) 1. estribillo | V | I | V | I | 2. cuarteta | V | I | V | I | V | I | V/V | - | repeats 1-2, 1	1. estribillo—tpt., trb. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x) 2. estribillo | V | I | V | I | 3. cuarteta | V | V IV | V IV | V IV | V IV | | I | vi V/V | - | repeats 1-3 estribillo—tpt. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (4x) repeats 2
Solo	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (6x) | V | ~I |	piano ‖ V | I ‖ (9x) | ~V |
Cierre	| I | ii iii | IV | V | bVI | V |	| V | - | - |
Mambo		‖ V IV | V IV ‖ (2x) 4. tpt., trb. ‖ V IV | V IV | V IV | V IV ‖ (2x) | V IV | *V |
Cierre		| V | - | - |
	Diablo: 3. estribillo | V | I | tpts./estribillo | V | I | tpts./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) tpt./coro ‖ V | I ‖ (2x) repeats 3	**Montuno:** 5. guía/coro (changes clave) ‖ V IV | V IV ‖ (7x) tpt./coro ‖ V IV | V IV ‖ (8x) repeats 5, 4 cierre | V | - |
Coda	| ii iii | IV | V | bVI | V ‖	| V | I | V | I | ~V | - | - ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.3—*Continued*

	Dame un cachito pa' huelé **Arsenio Rodríguez (1946)**	**Pa' huele** **Eddie Palmieri (1970)**
Intro.	tres | IV I | IV V | tpt | IV I | IV V |	piano || IV I | IV V || (4x)
Montuno	estribillo—tpt. || IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V || (6x) estribillo—guía || IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V || (4x) estribillo | IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V |	estribillo—tpt., trb. || IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V || (4x) estribillo—guía || IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V || (4x) estribillo | IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V |
Solo	piano || IV I | IV V || (10x) | IV I | IV ~V |	piano || IV I | IV V || (9x) | IV I | IV V | IV I | ~V |
Cierre	| IV | V |	| I ii iii | IV V | - |
Diablo	estribillo | IV I | IV V | tpts./coro || IV I | IV V || (7x) tpt./coro || IV I | IV V || (2x)	coro/tpt., trb. || IV I | IV V || (4x) coro/tpt. || IV I | IV V || (4x) coro/guía || IV I | IV V || (4x) coro/tpt., trbs. || IV I | IV V || (8x) coro/tpt., trbs. ("moña") || IV I | IV V || (5x) coro/guía || IV I | IV V || (5x) coro/tpt., trb. || IV I | IV V || (4x) coro | IV I | estribillo | IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V |
Coda	| IV I | IV V | IV I | IV V ||	| I ii iii | IV V | V | V I ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.4—Originally composed son montunos

	***Reparto Hornos* (1964)** **Eddie Palmieri**	**Café (1964)** **Eddie Palmieri**	**Café (1998)** **Eddie Palmieri**
Intro.	| V I IV |	|| i | V || (2x) trbs. || i | V || (2x) | i | V | - | - |	|| i | V || (2x) tpts., trbs., bari. || i | V || (2x) | i | V | - | - |
Montuno	1. coro—piano (montuno) || I | V || (4x) 2. cuarteta || I | V || (6x) | *V | I | repeats 1-2 coro—piano (montuno) || I | V || (2x) coro | I | V |	1. estribillo—trb. || i | V || (4x) 2. cuarteta || i | V || (4x) repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo | i | V |	1. estribillo—tpt. || i | V || (4x) 2. cuarteta || i | V || (4x) repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo—tpt. || i | V || (2x) estribillo—guía || i | V || (10x) estribillo | i | V |
Solo	piano || I | V || (4x) tumbadora || I | V || (10x)	piano || i | V || (8x) tumbadora || i | V || (12x) trbs. | i | V | i | V | i | V | i | V | | i | ~V |	piano || i | V || (11x) tumbadora || i | V || (5x) tpts. | i | V | i | V | | i | ~V |
Cierre		| i VII VI | V |	| i VII VI | V |
Mambo	trbs. || I | V || (4x) fl., trb., trb. || I | V || (5x; fades out)	piano (montuno)/coro || i | V || (4x) trbs. || i | V || (4x) | i VII VI | V |	trbs., bari. || i | V | i | V || (2x) tpts., trbs., bari. || i | V | i | V || (2x) | i | V |
Montuno		estribillo—trb. || i | V || (4x) estribillo | i | V | | i | ~V | trbs. | i VII VI | V | i ||	guía/coro || i | V || (4x) guía | i | ~V | tpts., trbs., bari. | i VII VI | V | i ||

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.4—*Continued*

	Dakar, punto final (1964) **Johnny Pacheco**	**Soy del monte (1965)** **Johnny Pacheco**	**Que humanidad (1967)** **Johnny Pacheco**
Intro.	piano | i | V | i | V |	piano, bass ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. | I | V | I | V | | I | V |	piano, bass | i | V | i | V | tpts. ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) | i | V |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) 2. tpt. ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (8x) estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x)	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 2. décima ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (6x) repeats 1 cuarteta ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (3x) repeats 1	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) 2. sexteta ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (3x) repeats 1 décima ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (5x) repeats 1
Solo	bongó (with sticks) ‖ i | V ‖ (18x)		
Mambo	tpts. ‖ i | V ‖ (8x)	tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x)	tpts. ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (4x)
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) 2. tpt. ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (fades)	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1 tpts. | I | V | I | V | | I | V ‖	1. estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x) guía—estribillo ‖ i | V | i | V ‖ (2x)
			"Diablo": coro/tpts., fl. ‖ i | V ‖ (8x; fades)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.4—*Continued*

	Se traba **(Roberto Rodríguez)** **Ray Barretto (1972)**	**Con el cimarron** **(Rafael López González)** **Ray Barretto (1972)**	**Te traigo mi son** **(Ray Barretto)** **Ray Barretto (1972)**
Intro.	piano ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)	piano, bass | V | I | V | I | tpts. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x) | | | | |	piano | I | V | I |
Montuno	estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 1. cuarteta | I | - | - | - | | V | I | - | V | - | I | | I V | vi V | V | I | 2. estribillo | I | - | - | V | I | V | ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2, 1 estr. | I | - | estr.—tpt. ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) 3. estr. | I | V | I | - | - | - | estr.—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) repeats 3 4. estr. | I | V | 5. guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (8x)	1. estribillo ‖ V | I | V | IV ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V | I | V/V | V | | V | I | V/V | V | | IV V | vi IV | IV V | vi IV | | IV V | vi IV | V | I | repeats 1-2 (2x) tpts. (cierre) | V | - |	1. estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) repeats 1-2 (2x) estribillo ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x)
Solo			piano ‖ I |V ‖ (10x) bongó ‖ I |V ‖ (11x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.4—*Continued*

	Se traba (continued)	**Con el cimarron (continued)**	**Te traigo mi son (continued)**
Mambo	6. tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (4x)	3. tpts. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x)	tpts. ‖ I | V | I | V ‖ (2x) | I IV | V I |
Montuno	estr. | I | - | - | - | estr. | I | V | guía/coro ‖ I | V ‖ (8x)	estribillo—guía ‖ V | I | V | IV ‖ (4x) estribillo | V | I | V | IV | 4. tpts. (cierre) | V | V bVI |	coro—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (10x)
Vamp		piano, bass/tumbadora ‖ V | bVI ‖ (4x) tpts. ‖ V | bVI ‖ (4x) piano, bass/tumbadora ‖ V | bVI ‖ (2x)	
Mambo	repeats 6	repeats 3, 4	
Solo		piano ‖ V | vi ‖ (12x)	
Diablo		tpts./coro ‖ V | vi ‖ (6x) tpt.—estribillo ‖ V | vi ‖ (6x) guía—estribillo ‖ V | vi ‖ (6x)	coro | I | V | tpts. | I | V | coro/tpts. | I | V | tpt./tpts. ‖ I | V ‖ (4x) coro—guía ‖ I | V ‖ (6x) coro | I | V | tpts.—tumbadora ‖ I | V ‖ (2x)
Coda	estr. | I ‖ (fades)	tpts. ‖ V | I | V | I ‖ (2x) | | | | ‖	tpts. | I | V | I | V | I | | V | I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.5—Son montunos in *Fania All Stars: Recorded Live at Cheetah*

	Quitate tú (J. Pacheco/B. Valentín)	**Estrellas de Fania (C.C. Alonso/Pacheco)**	**Macho cimarrón (J. Pacheco)**
Intro.	tpts., trbs. | I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V | | I vi | ii V | I vi | *ii V |	piano, bass ‖ i | VII ‖ (4x) trbs. ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) tpts., trbs. ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x)	tpts., trbs. | I | - | | V | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
Montuno	1. estribillo ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (5x), 1 3. cuarteta ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (3x) repeats 1-2 (4x), 1, 3, 1 4. décima ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (5x) repeats 1, 3 (3x), 1	1. estribillo ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (4x) estribillo ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x)	1. estribillo ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1-2 (2x), 1 guía—estribillo ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (6x) flute ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (4x) repeats 1 flute ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) repeats 1 fl., tpts. ("mona") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) estr., fl., tpts., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) fl., tpts., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) estribillo ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) fl., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) estr., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.5—*Continued*

	Quitate tú (continued)	**Estrellas de Fania (continued)**	**Macho cimarrón (continued)**
Montuno (cont'd)			fl., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) 3. estr., tpts., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) fl., tpts., trbs. ("moña") ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) repeats 3
Solo	cuatro ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (18x) cuatro, coro ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (4x) cuatro ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (5x) | I vi | ii V | I vi | ii ~V |	flute ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (4x) estribillo ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) piano ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (14x)	piano ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (22x) | V | I | V/V | ~V |
Mambo		trbs. ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) tpts., trbs. ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (3x)	trbs., piano, bass ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x) tpts.—trbs., piano, bass ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (3x)
Diablo	coro/tpts., trbs. ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (6x) coro/tpt. ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (9x) coro/tpt., trb. ("moña") ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (4x) coro/tpt., tpts., trbs. ("moña") ‖ I vi | ii V ‖ (12x)		coro/tpts., trbs. ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (2x)
Montuno	estribillo ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (4x) estribillo/tpts., trbs. ‖ I vi | ii V | I vi | ii V ‖ (10x)	estribillo ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) trb. ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (4x) estribillo ‖ i | VII | i | VII ‖ (2x) | V | V i ‖	trb.—coro ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (8x) guía—coro ‖ V | I | V/V | V ‖ (6x) tpts., trbs. ‖ V IV V | V ‖ (5x) | V | - | V I ‖

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.5—*Continued*

	Ponte duro (J. Pacheco)	**Ahora vengo yo (Ricardo Ray/Bobby Cruz)**
Intro.	piano, cuatro, bass ‖ V | IV | V | IV ‖ (4x) tpts., trbs. ‖ V | IV | V | IV ‖ (4x)	piano, bass ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (4x)
Montuno	1. estribillo—tpts., trbs. ‖ V | IV | V | IV ‖ (4x) estribillo ‖ V | IV | V | IV ‖ (4x)	tpt. ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (10x) 1. estribillo ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x) 2. cuarteta | V | - | I | - | | V | - | I | V/V | - | - | V | - | repeats 1-2 estribillo/guía ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (8x)
Cierre	| | | | |	
Solo	piano, bass | IV | V | IV | V | bongó ‖ IV | V | IV | V ‖ (12x) coro/bongó ‖ IV | V | IV | V ‖ (12x) bongó ‖ IV | V | IV | V ‖ (10x) tpts., trbs. ‖ IV | V | IV | V ‖ (2x) bongó ‖ IV | V | IV | V ‖ (9x)	piano ‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (22x)
Cierre		‖ V | - | - | - ‖ (2x)
Mambo	trbs. ‖ IV | V | IV | V ‖ (2x) tpts., trbs.	

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Table 9.5—*Continued*

	Ponte duro (continued)	**Ahora vengo yo (continued)**
Montuno	estribillo | IV | V | IV | V | trb. || IV | V | IV | V || (4x) 1. estribillo || IV | V | IV | V || (2x) tpt. || IV | V | IV | V || (5x) repeats 1 tpt. || IV | V | IV | V || (2x)	piano, bass || V | - | - | - || (4x) estribillo/guía || V | - | - | - || (6x)
Mambo		tpts., trbs. || V | - | - | - || (4x)
Montuno		estribillo/guía || V | - | - | - || (8x) tpts., trbs./estribillo/guía || V | - | - | - || (2x)
Mambo		tpts., trbs. || V | - || (8x)
Moña	tpt./tpts. ("moña") || IV | V || (4x) tpt./tpts., trbs. ("moña") || IV | V || (23x)	
Montuno	estribillo || IV | V | IV | V || (4x) tpts., trbs. || IV | V | IV | V || (2x) | V | I ||	estribillo/guía || V | - | - | - || (4x) estribillo, tpts., trbs./conga || V | - || (20x)

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbreviations for Research Centers in Havana, Los Angeles, New Jersey, New York City, and Washington D.C. where the author has conducted research

AFM	American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, Recording Department, 322 West 48th Street, New York, New York
ANC	Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Compostela No. 906 e/ San Isidrio y San Parado, Habana Vieja, La Habana
BMG	BMG Archives, 1540 Broadway, New York, New York
BNJM	Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, Plaza de la Revolución, Plaza, La Habana
CA	Centro Archives, Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, New York, New York
CFPCSA	Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.
CHC	Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida
CIDMUC	Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Música Cubana, calle G No. 505 e/ 21 y 23, Vedado, La Habana
FIU	Steve and Dorothea Green Library, Florida International University, SW 107th Ave., Miami, Florida
IJS	Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 185 University Ave., Newark, New Jersey
LAPL	Los Angeles Public Library, Central Library, 630 West 5th Avenue, Los Angeles, California
MD	Museo de la Danza, Calle G No. 251, esq. Linea, La Habana.
MNM	Museo Nacional de la Música, Capdevila No. 1 e/ Habana y Aguilar, La Habana
NYPL-MML	New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Library, 455 5th Avenue, New York, New York

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

NYPL-PA New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 521 West 43rd Street, New York, New York

NYPL-SIBL New York Public Library Science, Industry and Business Library, 188 Madison Avenue, New York, New York

RA Raices Archive, Harbor Conservatory for the Performing Arts, 1 East 104th Street, New York, New York

RFWLA Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives of the Tamiment Institute Library, New York University, 70 Washington Square South, New York, New York

SCRBL Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcom X Boulevard, New York, New York

URL University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles

Primary Sources

Interviews conducted by the author

Alava, Silvio (Las Vegas, Nev.). Interview via the internet. March 2000.

Alvarado, Melba. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 3 March 2000.

Antomattei, Candido (San Juan, P.R). Interview via telephone. 4 November 1998.

Armenteros, Alfredo "Chocolate" (East Harlem, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. 19 January 1997.

————. Interview. Tape recording. East Harlem, N.Y. 18 February 2000.

Beltrán, Dandy. Interview. Tape recording. Torrence, Calif. 11 September 1996.

Berrios, Israel (Carolina, P.R.). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 11 October 1998.

————. Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 15 October 1998.

————. Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 13 January 2000.

————. Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 20 May 2002.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Boulong, Pedro (Manhattan, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 24 January 2000.

Cabrera, Julián. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 27 June 1998.

Calzado, Rudy. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 27 June 1998.

Cané, Humberto. Interview. Tape recording. Monte Rey Hills, Calif. 28 August 1996.

————. Interview via telephone. 8 March 1999.

Caraballoso, Augustín (Manhattan, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. 16 March 1998

————. Interview via telephone. 7 April 1998.

————. Interview via telephone. 11 December 1999.

Carbó Menéndez, José. Interview. Tape recording. Union City, N.J. 6 March 1998.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Union City, N.J. 5 April 1998.

Coen, Ray (Río Piedras, P.R.). Interview via telephone. 26 April 2000.

Ferro, Pedro (Miami, Fla.). Interview via telephone. 2 September 1997.

————. Interview via telephone. 4 September 1997.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Miami, Fla. 20 October 2000.

García Villamil, Felipe. Interview. Tape recording. Bronx, N.Y. 26 November 1997.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Bronx, N.Y. 30 January 1998.

————. Interview. Video tape recording. Bronx, N.Y. 1 May 1998.

Giro, Radamés. Interview. Marianao, La Habana, Cuba. 30 June 1999.

Golden, Gene. Interview. Palisades Park, N.J. 14 March 2001.

Hierrezuelo Ruíz, Eulalio H. Interview. Tape recording. Lincoln Heights, Calif. 2 November 1997.

Joseph, Alfonso "El Panameño" (Gaylordsville, Conn.). Interview via telephone. 29 November 2001.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Kortwrite, Luis "Wito" (Bronx, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. 25 January 1999.

Leicea, Calixto. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 24 October 2000.

Levin, Mark (San Francisco, Calif.). Interview via telephone. 31 March 1997.

Liman, Abby (Manhattan, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. 6 January 1999.

López, Oscar (Los Angeles). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 30 March 2000.

López, Paul. Interview. Tape recording. Lincoln Heights, Calif. 22 August 1996.

Macías, Rudy. Interview. Tape recording. Whittier, Calif. 16 August 1999.

Marín, Orlando. Interview. Tape recording. Queens, N.Y. 20 January 2000.

Martínez, Johnny. Interview. Video tape recording. Burbank, Calif. 11 August 1998.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Burbank, Calif. 3 January 2000.

Martínez Baro, Sarah. Interview. Tape recording. East Harlem, N.Y. 19 February 2000.

Montecino Herrera, Manuela. Interview. Tape recording. Barrio Obrero, La Habana, Cuba. 25 June 1999.

Moran, Rocky. Interview. Tape recording. Monrovia, Calif. 25 May 1997.

Oliva, Juan. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 9 November 1996.

Palmieri, Eddie (New York, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 26 February 2002.

Rabora (Thorne), Jackie (Los Angeles). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 6 April 2000.

Rivera, Edil (Mayagüez, Puerto Rico). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 14 January 2000.

Roma, Benny. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 27 June 1998.

Romero, Ray. Interview. Leonia, N.J. 25 June 2000.

Rosa, Ken "Leo" (Bronx, N.Y.). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 1 December 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

————. Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 8 December 1999.

Rubalcava, Alfred R. Interview. Hollywood, Calif. 31 July 2001.

Sabatar, Jimmy. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 27 June 1998.

Sánchez, David. Interview. Tape recording. Sun Valley, Calif. 11 August 1999.

Santos, John. Interview. Tape recording. Oakland, Calif. 14 February 1997.

Sesma, Lionel "Chico." Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 27 March 1997.

Smith, Mauricio. Interview. Tape recording. Brooklyn, N.Y. 30 April 1999.

Suárez, Manolo. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 31 July 1996.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 11 September 1996.

Torres, Joe (Las Vegas, Nev.). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 17 February 2000.

Touzet, René (Miami, Fla.). Interview via telephone. Tape recording. 6 March 2000.

Travieso, Mercedes. Interview. Tape recording. Lawton, La Habana, Cuba. 8 July 1999.

Travieso Montecino, Regla María. Interview. Tape recording. Barrio Obrero, La Habana, Cuba. 25 June 1999.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Lawton, La Habana, Cuba. 8 July 1999.

Travieso Scull, Raúl Manuel. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 19 June 1996.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 31 July 1996.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 8 February 1997.

————. Interview via telephone. 17 February 1997.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 5 April 1997.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 15 April 1998.

————. Interview. Video tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif. 3 August 1998.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

————. Interview via telephone. 12 October 1998.

————. Interview via telephone. 13 December 1999.

————. Interview via telephone. 7 February 2000.

————. Interview via telephone. 17 February 2000.

Travieso, Xiomara. Interview. Tape recording. Bronx, N.Y. 14 June 1999.

Valdés Jr., Alfredo. Interview. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 18 October 1997.

————. Interview. Tape recording. Queens, New York. 4 December 1999.

Valdés Ginebra, Fidel Aldo. Interview. Tape recording. Centro Habana, La Habana, Cuba. 10 July 1999.

Valiente, José. Interview. Tape recording. Queens, N.Y. 9 July 2000.

————. Interview via telephone. 28 March 2001.

Interviews conducted by others

Álvarez, René. Interview by Robin Moore. Tape recording. La Habana, Cuba. 4 April 1994.

Arcaño, Antonio. Interview by Jesús Blanco and René López. Video Recording. La Habana, Cuba. 21 November 1988.

————. Interview by Robin Moore. Tape recording. La Habana, Cuba. 16 July 1992.

Armenteros, Alfredo "Chocolate." Interview by Smithsonian Institution: Jazz Oral History Program. Tape recording. East Harlem, N.Y. 8-9 February and 6 July 1996.

Berrios, Israel with Riverita. Interview by Jaime Jaramillo. Video recording. San Juan, Puerto Rico. 26 July 1996.

Berrios, Israel. Interview by Cristóbal Díaz Ayala. Tape recording. Carolina, Puerto Rico. 13 June 1997.

Harlow, Larry. Interview by David Carp. Tape recordings. Manhattan, N.Y. 2 December 1997.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Lima, Abe. Interview by David Carp. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 26 August 1994.

López, Israel "Cachao." Interview by Smithsonian Institution: Jazz Oral History Program. Tape recording. Miami, Fla. 24-25 January 1994.

López, René. Interview by Jaime Jaramillo. Video recording. San Juan, Puerto Rico. 11 February 1995.

Pacheco, Johnny. Interview by David Carp. Tape recording. Manhattan, N.Y. 2 April 1997.

Rodríguez, Arsenio. Interview by Radio Caracol Colombia. Tape recording. Los Angeles, Calif., ca. 1964.

Valdés, Bebo. Interview by Smithsonian Institution: Jazz Oral History Program. Tape recording. 20-21 September 2000.

Valdés, Carlos "Patato." Interview by Smithsonian Institution: Jazz Oral History Program. Tape recording. 17-18 September 1995.

Government, musician's union, and other official documents and publications

Abler, Ronald and John S. Adams. 1976. *A Comparative Atlas of America's Great Cities: Twenty Metropolitan Regions.* Minneapolis: The Association of American Geographers and The University of Minnesota Press. [NYPL-MML]

American Federation of Musicians, Local 802. *Minutes of the Executive Board, 1922-1985.* Reel Nos. 5257-5335. [RFWLA]

————. *Minutes of the Trial Board, 1922-1966.* Reel Nos. 5257-5335. [RFWLA]

————. *Phonograph Recording Contract Form.* Microfiche Nos. 84466-486584. [AFM]

Archivo Nacional de Cuba. *Registro de Asociaciones.* Indice 1, 2, 3. [ANC]

Bean, Frank D. and Marta Tienda. 1987. *The Hispanic Population of the United States.* The Population of the United States in the 1980s: A Census Monograph Series. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Club Cubano Inter-Americano. 1941-1995. *Club Cubano Inter-Americano Photograph Collection.* 3 Boxes. [SCRBL]

————. 1946-1996. *Club Cubano Inter-Americano Records.* 2 Boxes. [SCRBL]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Community Council of Greater New York. 1959. *Bronx Communities: Population Characteristics and Neighborhood Social Resources.* New York: Bureau of Community Statistical Services, Research Department, Community Council of Greater New York. [NYPL-MML]

Cuba, Dirección General de Estadística. 1937a. *Movimiento de población: Año 1935.* Habana. [NYPL-SIBL]

————. 1937b. *Movimiento de población: Año 1936.* Habana. [NYPL-SIBL]

————. 1939. *Movimiento de población: Año 1938.* Habana. [NYPL-SIBL]

Cuba, Dirección General del Censo. 1919. *Census of the Republic of Cuba 1919.* Havana: Maza, Arroyo y Caso, S. en C. [NYPL-SIBL]

Cuba, Oficina Nacional del Censo. 1909. *Cuba: Population, History and Resources 1907. Compiled by Victor H. Olmsted, Director, and Henry Gannett, Assistant Director: Census of Cuba, Taken in the Year 1907.* Washington: United States Bureau of the Census. [SCRBL]

Fair Employment Practice Commission. 1966. *Negroes and Mexican Americans in South and East Los Angeles: Changes between 1960 and 1965 in Population, Employment, Income, and Family Status: An Analysis of a U.S. Census Survey of November 1965.* California: Division of Fair Employment Practices. [NYPL-SIBL]

Modares, Ali. 1994. *The Racial and Ethnic Structure of Los Angeles County: A Geographic Guide.* Los Angeles: Edmund G. "Pat" Brown Institute of Public Affairs. [LAPL]

Poyo Y Camus, Francisco A., comp. 1923. *Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento de La Habana.* Habana: Imprenta "El Fígaro." [NYPL-MML]

Republica de Cuba. 1931. *Dirección general del censo: Censo de 1931: Estados de habitantes y electores.* Habana: Carasa y CA., Impresores. [NYPL-SIBL]

————. 1943. *Dirección general del censo de 1943: Estados contentivos de habitantes y electores: Clasificados por provincias, municipios y barrios.* La Habana: Editorial Guerrero. [NYPL-SIBL]

Ripley, S. Dillon. 1969. "The Folklife Festival Program." In *1969 Festival of American Folklife: The Smithsonian Institution.* Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution. [CFPCSA]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Secretaría de Sanidad y Beneficencia. 1909-1921 *Informe mensual: Sanitario y demografico*. Prepared by the Jefatura Local de Matanzas. Matanzas: El Escritorio. [NYPL-SIBL]

United States Commission on Civil Rights. Western Regional Office. 1980. *Puerto Ricans in California: A Staff Report of the Western Regional Office, United States Commission on Civil Rights*. Washington D.C.: The Commission. [LAPL]

U.S. Department of Commerce. 1973. *1970 Census of Population*, Vol. 1, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 6, *California*, Section 2. Washington D.C.: Bureau of the Census. [NYPL-SIBL]

U.S. Diplomatic Post. 1940-1945. *Cuba*. Frederick: University Publications of America. [FIU]

U.S. State Department. 1945-1949. *Cuba: Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs*. Frederick: University Publications of America. [FIU]

Western Economic Research Co. 1971. *Negroes as a Percent of the Total Population in the Los Angeles Five County Area by Census Tracts, 1970 Census*. Sherman Oaks: Western Economic Research Co. [NYPL-MML]

————. 1972. *Persons of Spanish Language and Surname as a Percent of the Total Population in the Los Angeles Five County Area by Census Tracts, 1970 Census*. Sherman Oaks: Western Economic Research Co. [NYPL-MML]

Newspapers and magazines

Adelante (Havana) [SCRBL]

Allegro: Official Journal of Local 802, A.F. of M., Associated Musicians of Greater New York (New York City) [NYPL-SIBL]

Bohemia (Havana) [NYPL-MML]

Carteles (Havana) [NYPL-MML]

Diario de la Marina (Havana) [NYPL-MML]

Fundamentos (Havana) [BNJM]

El Diario-La Prensa (New York City) [CA]

El Imparcial (San Juan) [CA]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

El Mundo (San Juan) [CA]

Hoy (Havana) [NYPL-MML]

La Opinion (Los Angeles) [URL and LAPL]

La Prensa (New York City) [CA]

New York Dailey News (New York City) [NYPL-MML]

New York Times (New York City) [NYPL-MML]

Nuevos Rumbos (Havana) [BNJM]

Variety (Los Angeles) [NYPL-MML]

Secondary Sources

Abrahams, Roger D. 1995. "Ralph Rinzler (1934-1994)." *Journal of American Folklore* 108/429: 325-327.

Acosta, Leonardo. 1982. *Música y descolonización*. La Habana: Editorial Arte y Literatura.

————. 1983. *Del tambor al sintetizador*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

————. 1991. "The Rumba, the Guaguancó, and Tío Tom." *Essays on Cuban Music: North American and Cuban Perspectives*. Edited by Peter Manuel. Lanham: University Press of America.

————. 1993a. *Elige tú, que canto yo*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

————. 1993b. "¿Quién inventó el mambo?" In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *Revolución y Cultura* 42 (febrero de 1976).

————. 1993c. "Reajustes, aclaraciones y criterios sobre Dámaso Pérez Prado." In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *Bohemia* 39 (29 de septiembre de 1989).

————. 1998. "Música y cultura popular cubana." *La gaceta de Cuba* 36/5: 12-14.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Acosta, Leonardo, Olivier Cossard, René Espí, and Helio Orovio. 1999. *Fiesta Havana, 1940-1960: L'âge d'or de la musique cubaine*. Paris: Vade Retro. [NYPL-PA]

Adams, Richard N. 1970. *Crucifixion by Power: Essays on Guatemalan National Social Structure, 1944-1966*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

————. 1975. *Energy and Structure: A Theory of Social Power*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

————. 1981. "The Dynamics of Societal Diversity: Notes from Nicaragua for a Sociology of Survival." *American Ethnologist* 8/1: 1-20.

Aguire, Benigno E. 1976. "Differential Migration of Cuban Social Races." *Latin American Research Review* 11/1: 103-124.

Amaro, Nelson and Carmelo Mesa-Lago. 1971. "Inequality and Classes." *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*. Edited by Carmelo Mesa-Lago. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Ames, David W. 1950. "Negro Family Types in a Cuban Solar." *Phylon: The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture*. 11/2: 159-63.

Aparicio, Frances R. 1998. *Listening to Salsa: Gender, Latin Popular Music, and Puerto Rican Cultures*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press.

————. 2002. "La Lupe, La India, and Celia: Toward a Feminist Genealogy of Salsa Music. In *Situating Salsa: Global Markets and Local Meanings in Latin Popular Music*. Edited by Lise Waxer. New York: Routlegde.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1986. "Theory in Anthropology: Center and Periphery." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28/1: 356-361.

————. 1991. "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology." In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Sante Fe: School of American Research Press.

Arom, Simha. 1991. *African Polyphony and Rhythm: Musical Structure and Methodology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Austerlitz, Paul. 1997. *Merengue: Dominican Music and Dominican Identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ávalos, Michael Iván. 1991. Linear notes to *Sexteto Cubanos* Vol. 1, *Sones 1930: Sexteto Munamar, Sexteto Machin, Sexteto Nacional, Sexteto Matancero*. Arhoolie Productions, Inc. CD 7003. One CD, 1991.

————. 1995. Linear notes to *Sextetos Cubanos* Vol. 2, *Sexteto Boloña, Sexteto Occidente, Sexteto Nacional, Sexteto Matancero*. Arhoolie Productions, Inc. CD 7006. One CD, 1995.

Bamford, LeAnn. 1995. "Salsa Nightclub Style: Originally called Mambo." *Dancing USA* 13/4 (July/August): 4-5.

Baron, Robert. 1977. "Syncretism and Ideology: Latin New York Salsa Musicians." *Western Folklore* 36/3: 209-225.

Béhague, Gerard H. 1991. "Reflections on the Ideological History of Latin American Ethnomusicology." In *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology*. Edited by Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

————, editor. 1994. *Music and Black Ethnicity: The Caribbean and South America*. New Brunswick: Transaction Books.

Bender, Lynn Darrel. 1973. "The Cuban Exiles: An Analytical Sketch." *Journal of Latin American Studies*. 5/2: 271-278.

Bennet, Tony and Will Friedwald. 1998. *The Good Life*. New York: Pocket Books.

Berliner, Paul F. 1978. *The Soul of Mbira: Music and Tradition of the Shona People of Zimbabwe*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

————. 1994. *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Berríos-Miranda, Marisol. 2002. "Is Salsa a Musical Genre?" In *Situating Salsa: Global Markets and Local Meanings in Latin Popular Music*. New York: Routledge.

Betancourt, Lino. 1984. "Miguelito Cuní: Ese sonero impecable." *Bohemia* 76/11: 23-24.

Betancur Álvarez, Fabio. 1999. *Sin clave y bongó no hay son: Música afrocubana y confluencias musicales de Colombia y Cuba*. 2d ed. Medellín: Editorial Universidad de Antioquia.

Blum, Joseph. 1978. "Problems of *Salsa* Research." *Ethnomusicology* 22/1:137-149.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Blum, Stephen. 1992. "Analysis of Musical Style." In *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Boggs, Vernon W. 1992. *Salsiology: Afro-Cuban Music and the Evolution of Salsa in New York City*. New York: Excelsior Music Publishing Company.

Boswell, Thomas D. and James R. Curtis. 1984. *The Cuban-American Experience: Culture, Images, and Perspectives*. New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld Publishers.

Boudet, Ileana. 1974. "Arcaño y sus Maravillas." *Revolución y cultura* 25: 32-35.

Browning, Barbara. 1995. *Samba: Resistance in Motion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bryce-Laporte, Roy Simon. 1972. "Black Immigrants: The Experience of Invisibility and Inequality." *Journal of Black Studies* 3/1: 29-56.

Butler, Albert and Josephine. 1975. *Encyclopedia of Social Dance*. New York: Albert Butler Ballroom Dance Service.

Byrnes, Don and Alice Swanson. 1951. "Mambo: A Vest Pocket Analysis." In *Dance Magazine* 25/10 (October): 29, 36, 38.

Cabrera, Lydia. 1992. *El monte*. 7th ed. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

Campoamor, Fernando G. 1966. "Chori." *Bohemia* 58/13: 24-27.

Carp, David. 1996. "Profile: Who is Moncho Leña?" www.descarga.com

————. 1997. "Interview: A Visit with Maestro Johnny Pacheco." www. descarga. com.

————. 1998. "Profile: Eddie Palmieri: Form and Substance." www.descarga.com.

————. 1999. "Barry Rogers: Salsero, Searcher, World Musician." www. descarga. com.

Carpentier, Alejo. 1987a. *Obras completas de Alejo Carpentier* Vol. 10: *Ese músico que llevo dentro* 1. México: Siglo XXI Editores, S. A. de C. V.

————. 1987b. *Obras completas de Alejo Carpentier* Vol. 11: *Ese músico que llevo dentro* 2. México: Siglo XXI Editores, S. A. de C. V.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

———. 1987c. *Obras completas de Alejo Carpentier* Vol. 12: *Ese músico que llevo dentro* 3/*La música en Cuba*. México: Siglo XXI Editores, S. A. de C. V.

Carreras, Julio Angel. 1989. *Esclavitud, abolición y racismo*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

Castellanos , Jorge and Castellanos, Isabel. 1987. "The Geographic, Ethnologic, and Linguistic Roots of Cuban Blacks." *Cuban Studies* 17: 95-110.

———. 1988. *Cultura Afrocubana*. Vol. 1, *El negro en Cuba, 1492-1844*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

———. 1990. *Cultura Afrocubana*. Vol. 2, *El negro en Cuba, 1845-1959*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

———. 1992. *Cultura Afrocubana*. Vol. 3, *Las religiones y las lenguas*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

———. 1994. *Cultura Afrocubana*. Vol. 4, *Letras, Música, Arte*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

Castro, Donald. 1991. *The Argentine Tango as Social History, 1880-1955: The Soul of the People*. Lewiston: E. Mellen Press.

Chernoff, John Miller. 1981. *African Rhythm and African Sensibility: Aesthetics and Social Action in African Musical Idioms*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Chinchilla, Norma, Nora Hamilton, and James Loucky. 1993. "Central Americans in Los Angeles: An Immigrant Community in Transition." In *In the Barrios: Latinos and the Underclass Debate*. Edited by Joan Moore and Raquel Pinderhughes. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Clarke, Donald. 1989. *The Penguin Encyclopedia of Popular Music*. New York: Viking. Edited by Donald Clarke.

Clifford, James. 1978. " 'Hanging Up Looking Glasses at Odd Corners': Ethnobiographical Prospects." In *Studies in Biography*. Edited by Daniel Aaron. Harvard English Studies 8. Cambridge: Harvard University.

Colectivo de Autores. 1990. *Barrio de Cayo Hueso*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales. [NYPL-MML]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Collazo, Bobby. 1987. *La ultima noche que pasé contigo*. Puerto Rico: Editorial Cubanacan.

Colón, Willie and John Storm Roberts. 1976. "Salsa." In *Dancing Madness*. New York: Anchor Books.

Cortés, Carlos E., ed. 1980. *The Cuban Minority in the U.S.* 2 vols. New York: Arno Press.

Cortes, Felix, Angel Falcón, and Juan Flores. 1976. "The Cultural Expression of Puerto Ricans in New York: A Theoretical Perspective and Critical Review." *Latin American Perspectives* 3/2: 117-152.

Courlander, Harold. 1944. "Abakuá Meeting in Guanabacoa." *The Journal of Negro History* 29/4: 461-70.

Cubillas Jr., Vicente. 1952. "Habla Arsenio Rodríguez: ¡Ese maldito mambo!" *Bohemia* (7 diciembre): 24-25.

Cuéllar Vizcaíno, Manuel. 1993. "La revolución del mambo." In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *Bohemia* 40/22 (May 30, 1948): 20-1, 97-9.

Daniel, Yvonne. 1995. *Rumba: Dance and Social Change in Contemporary Cuba*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Danielson, Virginia. 1997. *The Voice of Egypt: Umm Kulthum, Arabic Song, and Egyptian Society in the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Davies, Richard Arthur. 1999. *Cuban Trumpet Playing: The Solo Performance Style of Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros*. Ph.D. diss., New York University.

de Granda, Germán. 1973. "Materiales léxicos para la determinación de la matriz africana de la 'lengua congo' de Cuba." *Revista Española de Lingüistica* 3: 55-79.

de la Fuenta, Alejandro. 1995. "Race and Inequality in Cuba, 1899-1981." *Journal of Contemporary History* 30: 131-68.

————. 1999. "Myths of Racial Democracy: Cuba, 1900-1912." *Latin American Research Review* 34/3: 39-73.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

de Posada, Luís. 1954. "Clubes sociales y deportivos." In *Libro de Cuba: Una enciclopedia ilustrada que abarca las artes, las letras, las ciencias, la economía, la política, la historia, la docencia y el progreso general de la nación cubana.* Edición Conmemorativa del Cincuentenario de la Independencia, 1902-1952 y del Centenario del Nacimiento de José Martí, 1853-1953. Edited by Juan Joaquín Otero et al. Habana: Publicaciones Unidas. [NYPL-MML]

Della Corte, A. and G. M. Gatti. 1949. *Diccionario de la música.* Translated by M. Ferraria and N. Lamuraglia. Buenos Aires: Ricordi Americana S. A. Originally published as *Dizionario de musica.*

Depestre Catony, Leonardo. 1989. *Homenaje a la música popular cubana.* Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente.

DeVeaux, Scott. 1997. *The Birth of Bebop: A Social and Musical History.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Diamante, Carlos. 1948. *Arranging Latin American Music Authentically.* New York: King Brand Publications.

Díaz Ayala, Cristóbal. 1993. *Música cubana del areyto a la nueva trova.* 3rd edition. San Juan: Editorial Cubanacan. Originally published 1981.

————. 1988. *Si te quieres por el pico divertir...(Historica del pregón musical latinoamericano).* San Juan: Editorial Cubanacan.

————. 1994. *Cuba canta y baila—discografía de la música cubana* Vol. 1: *1898-1925.* San Juan: Fundación Musicalia.

————. 1998. *Cuando salí de La Habana: 1898-1997 Cien años de música cubana por el mundo.* Puerto Rico: Fundación Musicalia.

Dollero, Adolfo. 1919. *Cultura cubana (La provincia de Matanzas y su evolución).* Habana: Imp. Scoaney Fernández. [NYPL-MML]

Duany, Jorge. 1984. "Popular Music in Puerto Rico: Toward an Anthropology of *Salsa.*" *Latin American Music Review* 5/2: 186-216.

————. 1990. "Review-Essay." *Latin American Music Review* 11/2: 286-296.

Dudley, Shannon. 1996. "Judging 'By the Beat': Calypso versus Soca." *Ethnomusicology* 40/2: 269-298.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Dufrasne-Gonzalez, J. Emanuel. 1985. *La homogeneidad de la música caribena: Sobre la música comercial y popular de Puerto Rico*. Ph. D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

Eastman, Ralph. 1998. " 'Pitchin' up a Boogie': African-American Musicians, Nightlife, and Music Venues in Los Angeles, 1930-1945." In *California Soul: Music of African Americans in the West*. Edited by Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Echevarría, Luís Alfaro and Juan Francisco de la Paz Pérez. 1981. "Elementos lexicales del Español en los rituales afrocubanos." *Islas* 68: 177-209.

Eli Rodríguez, Victoria. 1994. "Cuban Music and Ethnicity: Historical Considerations." *Music and Black Ethnicity: The Caribbean and South America*. Edited by Gerard H. Béhague. Miami: North-South Center Press at the University of Miami.

Erlmann, Veit. 1989. "Conversation with Joseph Shabalala of Ladysmith Black Mambazo: Aspects of African Performers' Life Stories," *World of Music* 31/1: 31-58.

————. 1991. *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

————. 1996. *Nightsong: Performance, Power, and Practices in South Africa*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Evans, David. 1981. "African Elements in Twentieth-Century United States Black Folk Music." *Report of the Twelfth Congress of the International Musicological Society*. Daniel Heartz and Bonnie Wade, eds. London: Bärenreiter Kassel.

Febles, Jorge. 1990. "Popular Song as Degrading Text: Two *Sones* by Miguel Matamoros." *Journal of Popular Culture* 24/1: 79-86.

Fernández, María Antonia. 1985. *Bailes populares cubanos*. La Habana: Editorial Pueblo y Educación.

Fernández, Raúl A. 1994. "The Course of U.S. Cuban Music: Margin and Mainstream." *Cuban Studies* 24: 105-122.

————. 1997. "Celia Cruz: Artista de América Latina." *Deslinde* 21: 103-121.

————. 1998. " 'Mongo' Santamaría: soñando en cubano." *Deslinde* 23: 121-33.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Fernández Robaina, Tomás. 1994. *El negro en Cuba 1902-1958: apuntes para la historia de la lucha contra la discriminación racial*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

Ferris Jr., William R. 1970. "Racial Repertories Among Blues Performers." *Ethnomusicology* 14/3: 439-449.

Figueroa, Frank M. 1995. *Encyclopedia of Latin American Music in New York*. St. Petersburg: Pillar Publications.

Fischer, Michael M. J. 1986. "Ethnicity and the Post-Modern Arts of Memory." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Flores, Juan. 2000. *From Bomba to Hip-Hop: Puerto Rican Culture and Latino Identity*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Floyd Jr., Samuel A. 1995. *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fogelson, Robert M., comp. 1969. *The Los Angeles Riots*. Mass Violence in America, Edited by Robert M. Fogelson and Richard E. Rubenstein. New York: Arno Press & The New York Times.

Freire Díaz, Joaquín. 1985. *Historia de los municipios de Cuba*. Miami: La Moderna Poesia, Inc.

Gagné, Richard. 1996. "Ralph Rinzler, Folklorist: Professional Biography." *Folklore Forum* 27/1: 20-49. [NYPL-MML]

Galán, Natalio. 1983. *Cuba y sus sones*. Valencia: Artes Gráficos Soler.

García, Armando and Ana María García. 1976. "El sentimiento de la música cubana." *Joven Cuba* (April): 14-17, 31-33.

García Montes, Jorge and Antonio Alonso Avila. 1970. *Historia del partido comunista de Cuba*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz*. New York: Basic Books.

Gelb, Arthur. 1961. "La Pachanga is New Dance Craze: Cuban Step Sweeps El Morocco and the Palladium but Versions Differ in Fad Inspired by Song Hit." *The New York Times* (May 9).

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Gerard, Charley with Marty Sheller. 1988. *Salsa!: The Rhythm of Latin Music*. Tempe: White Cliffs Media Company.

Gilroy, Paul. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Giro, Radamés. 1993. "Todo lo que usted quiso saber sobre el mambo..." In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First Published in *La gaceta de Cuba* (octubre-noviembre-diciembre 1992).

————. 1995a. *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

————. 1995b. "Los motivos del son: Hitos en su sendero caribeño y universal." In *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *La gaceta de Cuba* (abril-mayo-junio 1994).

Glasser, Ruth. 1995. *My Music is my Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and their New York Communities, 1917-1940*. California: University of California Press.

Gómez Cairo, Jesús. 1995. "Acerca de la interacción de géneros en la música popular cubana." In *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *Boletín de música* 83-84 (julio-octubre 1980).

González Huguet, Lydia and Jean René Baudry. 1967. "Voces 'Bantú' en el vocabulario 'Palero'." *Etnologia y Folklore* 3: 31-64.

Gradante, William. 1982. " 'El Hijo del Pueblo' ": José Alfredo Jiménez and the Mexican *Canción Ranchera*." *Latin American Music Review* 3/1: 36-59.

Greenbaum, Susan D. 1986. "Afro-Cubans in Ybor City: A Centennial History." Unpublished manuscript.

Grenet, Emilio. 1995. "Música cubana: Orientaciones para su conocimiento y estudio." In *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *Popular Cuban Music: 80 Revised and Corrected Compositions Together with an Essay on the Evolution of Music in Cuba*. Havana: Carasa y Cía, 1939.

Grillo, Evelio. 2000. *Black Cuban, Black American: A Memoir*. With an introduction by Kenya Dworkin y Méndez. Houston: Arte Público Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Grupo Cubano de Investigaciones Economicas and José R. Álvarez Díaz. 1963. *Un estudio sobre Cuba; colonia, republica, experimento socialista: estructura economica, desarrollo institucional, socialismo y regresion*. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press.

Guanche, Jesús. 1996. *Componentes étnicos de la nación cubana*. Ciudad de La Habana: Fundación Fernando Ortiz. [SCRBL]

Guillén, Nicolás. 1931. *Sóngoro cosongo: poemas mulatos*. La Habana: Ucar, García y Cia.

Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. 1992. "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." *Cultural Anthropology* 7/1: 6-23.

Gutiérrez Serrano, Raúl. 1947. "The Radio in Cuba." *International Journal of Opinion and Attitude Research* 1/2: 62-70.

Hall, Stuart. 1991. "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities." In *Culture, Globalization and the World-system: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*. Edited by Anthony King. Binghamton: SUNY Binghamton.

Harnish, David. 2001. "A Hermeneutical Arc in the Life of Balinese Musician, I Made Lebah." *The World of Music* 43/1: 21-42.

Haslip-Viera, Gabriel. 1993. "The Evolution of the Latino Community in New York City: Early Nineteenth Century to the Present." In *Latinos in New York*. Edited by Gabriel Haslip-Viera and Sheri Bauer. Indiana: Notre Dame Press.

Helg, Aline. 1995. *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Hernández, Erena. 1986. *La música en persona*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

————. 1993a. "Conversación con Pérez Prado." In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *La música en persona*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1986.

————. 1993b. "Orestes López responde a Pérez Prado." In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *La música en persona*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, 1986.

Howard, Philip A. 1998. *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Iglesias, César Andreu, ed. 1984. *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega: A Contribution to the History of the Puerto Rican Community in New York*. Translated by Juan Flores. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Inclán Lavastida, Fernando. 1943. *Historia de Marianao: De la epoca indigena a los tiempos actuales*. Prologo por el Dr. Ruben Alfonso Quintero. Marianao: Editorial "El Sol." [NYPL-MML]

Jackson, Travis A. 2000. "Jazz Performance as Ritual: The Blues Aesthetic and the African Diaspora." In *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*. Edited by Ingrid Monson. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Jacobs, Glenn. 1988. "Cuba's Bola de Nieve: A Creative Looking Glass for Culture and the Artistic Self." *Latin American Music Review* 9/1: 18-49.

Jameson, Frederic. 1995. "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism." In *Postmodernism: The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press. Originally published in *New Left Review* 146 (1984).

Jones, LeRoi. 1963. *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*. New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks.

Jonnes, Jill. 1986. *We're Still Here: The Rise, Fall, and Resurrection of the South Bronx*. Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press.

Keil, Charles. 1994a. "Motion and Feeling through Music." In *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. First published in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 24 (1966): 337-349.

————. 1994b. "People's Music Comparatively: Style and Stereotype, Class and Hegemony." In *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. First published in *Dialectical Anthropology* 10 (1985): 119-130.

Knight, Franklin W. 1970. *Slave Society in Cuba during the Nineteenth Century*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Kubik, Gerhard. 1994. *Theory of African Music*, Vol. 1. Intercultural Music Studies, no. 7. Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel.

Lachatañeré, Rómulo. 1950. "Rasgos 'bantú' en la santería." *Estudios Afro-Cubanos* 2 (1998): 183-191.

Lam, Joseph S. C. 2001. "Writing Music Biographies of Historical East Asian Musicians: The Case of Jiang Kui (A.D. 1155-1221)." *The World of Music* 43/1: 69-96.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Lam, Rafael. 1996. "Arsenio: el corsario negro." *Tropicana Internacional* 2: 25-8.

Langness, L.L. and Gelya Frank. 1986. *Lives: An Anthropological Approach to Biography*. California: Chandler & Sharp Publishers, Inc.

Lenneberg, Hans. 1988. *Witnesses and Scholars: Studies in Musical Biography*. Musicology: A Book Series, vol. 5. New York: Gordon and Breach.

León, Argeliers. 1984a. *Del canto y el tiempo*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

————. 1991. "Notes Toward a Panorama of Popular and Folk Music." In *Essays on Cuban Music: North American and Cuban Perspectives*. Edited by Peter Manuel. Lanham: University Press of America.

Lewis, Oscar, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon. 1977a. *Four Men: Living the Revolution: An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

————. 1977b. *Four Women: Living the Revolution: An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

————. 1978. *Neighbors: Living the Revolution: An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Lezcano, José Manuel. 1991. "African-Derived Rhythmical and Metrical Elements in Selected Songs of Alejandro García Caturla and Amadeo Roldán." *Latin American Music Review* 12/2: 173-186.

Lipsitz, George. 1994. *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place*. London: Verso.

Lipski, John M. 1993. "On the Non-Creole Basis for Afro-Caribbean Spanish." *University of New Mexico Latin American Institute Research Paper Series* 24. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico.

Livingston, Tamara E. 1999. "Music Revivals: Towards a General Theory." *Ethnomusicology* 43/1: 66-85.

Locke, David. 1982. "Principles of Offbeat Timing and Cross-Rhythm in Southern Eve Dance Drumming." *Ethnomusicology* 26/2: 217-246.

López, Oscar Luís. 1981. *La radio en Cuba: estudio de su desarrollo en la sociedad neocolonial*. Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. [NYPL-PA]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

López, René and Andy Kaufman. 1974. Linear notes to *Mano a Mano: Arsenio Rodríguez y Su Conjunto Orquestal Todos Estrellas y Antonio Arcaño y Sus Maravillas*. Cariño Records. DBM1-5800. One LP.

Loza, Steven. 1993. *Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

————. 1999. *Tito Puente and the Making of Latin Music*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Luis, Robert. 1958. "Rumba's Anniversary." *Dance Magazine* 32/6 (June): 66-67.

————. 1959. "Evolution of Cha Cha." In *Dance Magazine* 33/10 (October): 69-70.

Luzón Benedicto, José Luis. 1987. *Economía, población y territorio en Cuba (1899-1983)*. Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica del Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana. [NYPL-MML]

Maciszewski, Amelia. 2001. "Stories About Selves: Selected North Indian Women's Musical (Auto)biographies." *The World of Music* 43/1: 139-172.

Manuel, Peter. 1985a. "Formal Structure in Popular Music as a Reflection of Socio-Economic Change." *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 16/2: 163-80.

————. 1985b. "The Anticipated Bass in Cuban Popular Music." *Latin American Music Review* 6/2: 249-61.

————. 1988. *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World: An Introductory Survey*. New York: Oxford University Press.

————. 1991. "Salsa and the Music Industry: Corporate Control or Grassroots Expression?" In *Essays on Cuban Music: North American and Cuban Perspectives*. Edited by Peter Manuel. Lanham: University Press of America.

————. 1993. *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

————. 1994. "Puerto Rican Music and Cultural Identity: Creative Appropriation of Cuban Sources from Danza to Salsa." *Ethnomusicology* 38/2: 249-280.

————. 1998. "Improvisation in Latin Dance Music History and Style." In *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation*. Edited by Bruno Nettl and Melinda Russell. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

———. 2002. "From Scarlatti to 'Guantanamera': Dual Tonicity in Spanish and Latin American Musics." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55/2: 313-38.

Martínez, Mayra A. 1993. "Hacer el son como lo siento: Lilí Martínez." In *Cubanos en la música*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

Martínez Furé, Rogelio. 1991. "Tambor." In *Essays on Cuban Music: North American and Cuban Perspectives*. Edited by Peter Manuel. Lanham: University Press of America.

Martínez Rodríguez, Raúl. 1995. "La rumba en la provincia de Matanzas." *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

Masferrer, Marianne and Carmelo Mesa-Lago. 1974. "The Gradual Integration of the Black in Cuba: Under the Colony, the Republic, and the Revolution." In *Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America*. Robert Brent Toplin. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Masud-Piloto, Felix. 1996. *From Welcomed Exiles to Illegal Immigrants: Cuban Migration to the U.S., 1959-1995*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Mauleón, Rebeca. 1993. *Salsa Guidebook: For Piano and Ensemble*. Petaluma: Sher Music Co.

Menéndez, José Carbo. 1967. "Compositores Latinos: Arsenio Rodríguez." *Revista Zig-Zag* 12.

Méndez Bravet, Alina and Jorge Ignacio Pérez. 1991. *Arsenio Rodríguez: Del mito a las sombras*. La Habana: Universidad de la Habana. [MD]

Meyer, Leonard. 1956. *Emotion and Meaning in Music*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

———. 2000. *The Spheres of Music: A Gathering of Essays*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Monson, Ingrid. 2000. *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*. Edited by Ingrid Monson. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Moore, Robin. 1994. "Representations of Afrocuban Expressive Culture in the Writings of Fernando Ortiz." *Latin American Music Review* 15/1: 32-54.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

———. 1995. "The Commercial Rumba: Afrocuban Arts as International Popular Culture." *Latin American Music Review* 16/2: 165-98.

———. 1997. *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Morrison, Karen Y. 1997. "Civilization and Citizenship through the Eyes of Afro-Cuban Intellectuals during the First Constitutional Era." Paper presented at The First Cuban Research Institute Conference, Florida International University, Miami, Florida, October 1997.

Moreno Fraginals, Manuel. 1977. "Africa in Cuba: A Quantitative Analysis of the African Population in the Island of Cuba." Translated by Jean Stubbs. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 292: 187-201. Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies. Edited by Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden.

Murphy, John P. 1991. "The Charanga in New York and the Persistence of the Típico Style." In *Essays on Cuban Music: North American and Cuban Perspectives*. Edited by Peter Manuel. Lanham: University Press of America.

Nadel, Ira Bruce. 1984. *Biography: Fiction, Fact and Form*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Nasser, Amín E. 1994. *Benny Moré*. Ciudad de La Habana: Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba.

Navarro, Mireya. 2000. "Mambo Dancers' Rift Leaves Stepped-On Toes." *The New York Times Metro* (September 3): 1, 37.

Nelson, Lowry. 1950. "The Social Class Structure in Cuba." In *Materiales para el estudio de la clase media en la America latina* Vol. 2, *La clase media en México y Cuba: Cuatro Colaboraciones*. Theo R. Crevenna, ed. Washington D.C.: Union Panamericana, Departamento de Asuntos Cultuales.

Nettl, Bruno. 1968. "Biography of a Blackfoot Indian Singer." *The Musical Quarterly* 54/2: 199-207.

———. 1983. *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-nine Issues and Concepts*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Neuman, Daniel. 1990. *The Life of Music in North India: The Organization of an Artistic Tradition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Nieves Rivera, Rafael. 1952. "Cubiche en Borinquen: Arsenio Rodríguez dice es creador del mambo." *El Imparcial* (September 19): 26.

Nketia, J. H. Kwabena. 1981. "African Roots of Music in the Americas: An African View." In *International Musicological Society: Report of the Twelfth Congress Berkeley 1977*. Edited by Daniel Heartz and Bonnie Wade. Kassel: The American Musicological Society.

Ohl, Dorothea Duryea. 1958. "Mambo not a Dance?" *Dance Magazine* 32/6 (June): 67-68.

Orovio, Helio. 1985. "Arsenio Rodríguez y el son cubano." *Revolución y Cultura* 7: 14-7.

———. 1992. *Diccionario de la música cubana: biografico y tecnico*. 2d ed. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

Orozco González, Danilo. 1992. "Procesos socioculturales y rasgos de identidad en los géneros musicales con referencia especial a la música cubana." *Latin American Music Review* 13/2: 158-178.

Ortero González, Lisandro. 1953. "La comparsa en el ensayo: Lo que usted no ve en el Prado." *Bohemia* 45/8: 54-56, 81.

Ortiz, Fernando. 1920. "La fiesta Afro-Cubana del 'Día de Reyes'." *Revista bimestre cubana* 15/1: 5-26.

———. 1921. "Los cabildos Afro-Cubanos." *Revista bimestre cubana* 16/1: 5-39.

———. 1924. *Glosario de afronegrismos*. La Habana: Imprenta "El Siglo XX."

———. 1935. "La 'clave' xilofonica de la música cubana: Ensayo etnográfico." In *Homenaje a Enrique José Varona en el cincuentenario de su primer curso de filosofia (1880-1930)*. La Habana: Molina y CIA.

———. 1946. "Estudiemos la música afrocubana." *Estudios afrocubanos* 5: 7-18.

———. 1952. *Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana*. Vol. 3, *Los tambores xilofónicos y Los membranófonos abiertos A a N*. La Habana: Publicaiones de la Dirección de Cultura del Ministerio de Educación.

———. 1954. *Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana*. Vol. 4, *Los bimembranófonos abiertos Ñ a Z, los bimembranófonos y otros tambores especiales*. La Habana: Cardenas y Cia.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

———. 1965. *La africanía de la música folklórica de Cuba*. La Habana: Editora Universitaria.

———. 1985. *Nuevo catauro de cubanismos*. 2 ed. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

———. 1992. *Los cabildos y la fiesta afrocubanos del Día de Reyes*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

———. 1993. *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba*. 3d ed. La Habana: Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educacion, Dirección de Cultura. Originally published in 1951.

Otero, Juan Joaquín et al. 1954. *Libro de Cuba: Una enciclopedia ilustrada que abarca las artes, las letras, las ciencias, la economía, la política, la historia, la docencia y el progreso general de la nación cubana*. Edición Conmemorativa del Cincuentenario de la Independencia, 1902-1952 y del Centenario del Nacimiento de José Martí, 1853-1953. Habana: Publicaciones Unidas.

Pabon, Tony. 1968. "The Night of the All-Stars." *Latin New York* 1/4 (March): 10-13.

Pacini Hernandez, Deborah. 1995. *Bachata: A Social History of a Dominican Popular Music*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Padilla, Felix M. 1985. *Latino Ethnic Consciousness: The Case of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

———. 1989. "Salsa Music as a Cultural Expression of Latino Consciousness and Unity." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 11/1: 28-45.

———. 1990. "Salsa: Puerto Rican and Latino Music." *Journal of Popular Culture* 24/1: 87-104.

Padilla, Napoleón. 1983. "Anselmo Sacasas: La música cubana de ayer y la Orquesta 'Casino de la Playa'." *Replica* 14/664.[1]

Padura Fuentes, Leonardo. 1997. *Los rosotros de la salsa*. Ciudad de La Habana: Ediciones Unión.

Pasmanick, Philip. 1997. "*Décima* and *Rumba*: Iberian Formalism in the Heart of Afro-Cuban Song." *Latin American Music Review* 18/2: 252-277.

---

[1] Page numbers did not appear on the photocopy held by the Raices Archive.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Peña, Manuel H. 1985. *The Texas-Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Pérez, Jr., Louis A. 1995a. *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

————. 1995b. *Essays on Cuba History: Historiography and Research*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Pérez Cassola, Sonia. n.d. Linear notes to *Conjunto Casino "En Cumbanchoa."* Discmedi Blau DM 058CD. One CD.

Pérez Firmat, Gustavo. 1994. *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Phillips, R. Hart. 1945. "Cuba: Soviet Propaganda Center." *The American Mercury* 60/258: 671-676.

————. 1959. *Cuba, Island of Paradox*. New York: McDowell, Obolensky.

Popular Memory Group. 1982. "Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method." In *Making Histories: Studies in History-writing and Politics*. London: Hutchinson.

Portell Vila, Herminio. 1953. "Barrio suburbano." *Bohemia* 45/11: 46-47, 114-115.

Poyo, Gerald E. 1991. "The Cuban Experience in the United States, 1865-1940: Migration, Community, and Identity." *Cuban Studies* 21: 19-36.

Qureshi, Regula B. 2001. "In Search of Begum Akhtar: Patriarchy, Poetry, and Twentieth-Century Indian Music." *The World of Music* 43/1: 97-138.

Rabinow, Paul. 1986. "Representations Are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology." In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Radano, Ronald and Philip V. Bohlman. 2000. "Introduction: Music and Race, Their Past, Their Presence." In *Music and the Racial Imagination*. Edited by Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Radano, Ronald. 2000. "Hot Fantasies: American Modernism and the Idea of Black Rhythm." In *Music and the Racial Imagination*. Edited by Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ramírez Bedoya, Héctor. 1998. *Historia de la Sonora Matancera y sus estrellas*. 2d ed. Medellín: Héctor Ramírez B. Original edition, 1996.

Rees, Helen. 2001. "He Yi'an's Ninety Musical Years: Biography, History, and Experience in Southwest China." *The World of Music* 43/1: 43-68.

Reig, Teddy with Edward Berger. 1990. *Reminiscing in Tempo: The Life and Times of a Jazz Hustler*. Studies in Jazz, no. 10. New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press and the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.

Reyes-Schramm, Adelaida. 1975. *The Role of Music in the Interaction of Black Americans and Hispanos in New York City's East Harlem*. Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University.

Robbins, James. 1990. "The Cuban *Son* as Form, Genre, and Symbol." *Latin American Music Review* 11/2: 182-200.

Roberts, John Storm. 1975. "Salsa, the Sound of the City." *After Dark* (July): 50-55.

————. 1976. "Salsa's Prodigal Sun: Eddie Palmieri." *Down Beat* 43/8 (April 22): 21-22, 42-43.

————. 1999. *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States*. 2d ed. New York: Oxford University Press. Originally published, 1979.

Roca, Blas. 1960. *Los fundamentos del socialismo en Cuba*. La Habana: Ediciones Populares.

Roig de Leuchsenring, Emilio. 1939. *La Habana: Apuntes Históricos*. La Habana: Municipio de La Habana. [NYPL-MML]

Roldan Viñas, Miguel. 1954. "Las sociedades españolas: solidos pilares de nuestra nacionalidad." In *Libro de Cuba: Una enciclopedia ilustrada que abarca las artes, las letras, las ciencias, la economía, la política, la historia, la docencia y el progreso general de la nación cubana*. Edición Conmemorativa del Cincuentenario de la Independencia, 1902-1952 y del Centenario del Nacimiento de José Martí, 1853-1953. Edited by Juan Joaquín Otero et al. Habana: Publicaciones Unidas. [NYPL-MML]

Rondón, César Miguel. 1980. *El libro de la Salsa: Crónica de la música del Caribe urbano*. Caracas: Editorial Arte.

Ruf, Elizabeth. 1997. "Issues of Gender, Color, and Nationalism in Cuba's Tropicana Nightclub Performance." *The Drama Review* 41/1: 86-105. [NYPL-PA]

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Ruíz, Gervasio G. 1949. "Los bailes cubanos." *Carteles* 30 (March 20): 28-31.

Ruíz, Rosendo, Vicente González-Rubiera and Abelardo Estrada. 1995. "Los años treinta: núcleo central de la trova intermedia." In *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

Sachs, Curt. 1953. *Rhythm and Tempo: A Study in Music History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Salazar, Max. 1992. "Who Invented the Mambo?" *Latin Beat Magazine* 2/8: 9-14.

————. 1994. "Arsenio Rodríguez: Life Was Like a Dream." *Latin Beat Magazine* 4: 12-7.

Salwen, Michael B. 1994. *Radio and Television in Cuba: The Pre-Castro Era*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.

Sánchez-Boudy, José. 1999. *Diccionario mayor de cubanismos*. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

Sánchez Korrol, Virginia E. 1995. *From Colonia to Community: The History of Puerto Ricans in New York City*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Santana Archibold, Sergio. 1992. *¿Que es la salsa? Buscando la melodía...* Medellín: Ediciones Salsa y Cultura. [NYPL-PA]

Santana, Joaquin G. 1970. "Un son montuno para Benny Moré." *Bohemia* 62/39: 20-7.

Savigliano, Marta E. 1995. *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Shemel, Sidney and M. William Krasilovsky. 1990. *This Business of Music*. 6th ed. New York: Billboard Books. Originally published, 1964.

Singer, Roberta L. 1982. *My Music is Who I Am and What I Do: Latin Popular Music and Identity in New York City*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University.

Singer, Roberta L. and Robert Friedman. 1977. *Caliente=Hot: Puerto Rican and Cuban Musical Expression in New York*. New York: New World Records. CD NW 244-2.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Slawek, Stephen M. 1991. "Ravi Shankar as Mediator between a Traditional Music and Modernity." In *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*. Edited by Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Smith, Arnold Jay. 1976a. "Sounds from the Salsa Source: Tito and Machito." *Down Beat* 43/8 (April 22): 16, 42.

————. 1976b. "Ray Barretto's Crossover Crisis." *Down Beat* 43/8 (April 22): 17-18, 40.

Spottswood, Richard K. 1990. *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893 to 1942* Vol. 4 *Spanish, Portuguese, Phillipine, Basque*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Steam, Jess. 1956. "Las Vegas se vuelve hacia los trópicos: La Habana paraíso de jugadores." *Bohemia* 48/12 (18 marzo 1956): 38-39, 96-97.

Stearns, Marshall and Jean. 1979. *Jazz Dance: The Story of American Vernacular Dance*. New York: Schirmer Books.

Stock, Jonathan P. J. 2001. "Toward an Ethnomusicology of the Individual, or Biographical Writing in Ethnomusicology." *The World of Music* 43/1: 5-20.

Terrace, Michael. 1995. "Mambo Camouflaged as Salsa." *Dancing USA* 13/4 (July/August): 5, 7.

Thompson, Robert Farris. 1958. "Mambo with Pantomime." *Dance Magazine* 32/6 (June): 68-69.

————. 1959. "Palladium Mambo I." *Dance Magazine* 23/9 (September): 73-75.

————. 1966. "An Aesthetic of the Cool: West African Dance." *African Forum* 2/2: 85-102.

————. 1967. "New Voice from the Barrios." *Saturday Review* 50/43 (October 28): 53-55, 68.

————. 1983. "Portrait of the Pachanga: The Music, The Players, the Dancers." *Caribe* 7/1-2: 47-49. Reprinted from *Saturday Review* (October 28, 1961).

————. 1984. *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy*. New York: Vintage Books.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

———. 1990. "Kongo Influences on African-American Artistic Culture." In *Africanisms in American Culture*. Edited by Joseph E. Holloway. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Titon, Jeff Todd. 1980. "The Life Story." *Journal of American Folklore* 93/369: 276-292.

———. 1997. "Knowing Fieldwork." In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*. Edited by Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley. New York: Oxford University Press.

Torres, Dora Ileana. 1995. "Del danzón cantado al chachachá." In *Panorama de la música popular cubana*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. Edited by Radamés Giro.

Tuchman, Barbara W. 1981. "Biography as a Prism of History." In *Telling Lives: The Biographer's Art*. Edited by Marc Pachter. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Turino, Thomas. 1993. *Moving Away from Silence: Music of the Peruvian Altiplano and the Experience of Urban Migration*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

———. 2000. "Race, Class, and Musical Nationalism in Zimbabwe." In *Music and the Racial Imagination*. Edited by Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Urfé, Odilio. 1977. "La música y la danza en Cuba." In *África en América Latina*. Edited by Manuel Moreno Fraginals. México: UNESCO Siglo Veintiuno Editores.

———. 1979. "Danzón, mambo, y chachachá." *Revolución y Cultura* 1: 54-7.

———. 1982. "La música folklórica, popular, y del teatro cubano." *La cultura en Cuba socialista*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas.

———. 1993. "La verdad sobre el mambo." In *El mambo*. Edited by Radamés Giro. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas. First published in *Inventario: Mensuario Polémico de Arte y Literatura* 1/3 (1948).

Urrutia, Gustavo. 1937. "Contestando nuestra encuesta." *Adelante* (June): 13.

Valdés Cantero, Alicia. 1988. *El músico en Cuba: Ubicación social y situatión laboral en el periodo 1939-1946*. La Habana: Editorial Pueblo y Educación.

Van der Merwe, Peter. 1988. *Origins of the Popular Style: The Antecedents of Twentieth-Century Popular Music*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Vélez, María Teresa. 1996. *The Trade of an Afro-Cuban Religious Drummer: Felipe García Villamil*. Ph. D. diss., Wesleyan University.

Verez de Peraza, Elena Luisa. 1954. *Publicaciones de las instituciones culturales cubanas*. 2d edition. Habana: Ediciones Anuario Bibliográfico Cubano. Original edition, 1949. [BNJM]

Villafranca, Elio. 1996. *Piano Method for Traditional Cuban Music*. Philadelphia: Asociación de Músicos Latino-Americanos.

Wade, Peter. 1993. *Blackness and Race Mixture: The Dynamics of Racial Identity in Colombia*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

————. 2000. *Music, Race, and Nation: Música Tropical in Colombia*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Washburne, Christopher. 1998. "Play It *Con Filin*!: The Swing and Expression of Salsa." *Latin American Music Review* 19/2: 160-185.

————. 1998. *Salsa in New York: A Musical Ethnography*. Ph. D. Dissertation, Columbia University.

Waterman, Christopher A. 1990. *Jújú: A Social History and Ethnography of an African Popular Music*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Waterman, Richard Alan. 1952. "African Influences on the Music of the Americas." In *Acculturation in the Americas*. Proceedings of the 29th International Congress of Americanists Vol 2. Edited by Sol Tax. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 207-218.

Waxer, Lise. 1994. "Of Mambo Kings and Songs of Love: Dance Music in Havana and New York from the 1930s to the 1950s." *Latin American Music Review* 15/2: 139-76.

————. 1998. *Cali Pachanguero: A Social History of Salsa in a Colombian City*. Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

————, editor. 2002a. *Situating Salsa: Global Markets and Local Meanings in Latin Popular Music*. New York: Routlegde.

————. 2002b. "Situating Salsa: Latin Music at the Crossroads." In *Situating Salsa: Global Markets and Local Meanings in Latin Popular Music*. Edited by Lise Waxer. New York: Routlegde.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

———————. 2002c. "Llegó la Salsa: The Rise of Salsa in Venezuela and Colombia." In *Situating Salsa: Global Markets and Local Meanings in Latin Popular Music*. Edited by Lise Waxer. New York: Routlegde.

West, Cornel. 1999. "Race and Modernity." In *The Cornel West Reader*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.

Williams, Raymond. 1977. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, Olly. 1981. "The Association of Movement and Music as a Manifestation of a Black Conceptual Approach to Music Making." In *International Musicological Society: Report of the Twelfth Congress Berkeley 1977*. Edited by Daniel Heartz and Bonnie Wade. Kassel: The American Musicological Society.

Wolf, Eric. 1994. "Facing Power: Old Insights, New Questions." In *Assessing Cultural Anthropology*. Edited by Robert Borofsky. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc. First published in *American Anthropologist* 92/3 (1990).

Wood, Vicky. 1941. "Xavier Cugat: 'El rey de la rumba'." *Bohemia* 37: 74-76.

Wurdeman, John G. 1844. *Notes on Cuba: Containing an Account of its Discovery and Early History; a Description of the Face of the Country, its Population, Resources, and Wealth; its Institutions, and the Manners and Customs of its Inhabitants; with Directions to Travellers Visiting the Island*. Boston: J. Monroe and Co. [NYPL-MML]

Zaldívar, Mario. 1999. *El mito de la Sonora Matancera*. Costa Rica: Litografia IPECA.

Zemp, Hugo. 1967. "Comment on devient musicien: quatre exemples de l'Ouest-africain." In *La musique dans la vie*, I, *L'Afrique: ses prolongements, ses voisins*. Edited by Tolia Nikiprowetzky. Paris: OCORA.

———————. 1995. *Ecoute le bambou qui pleure: recits de quatre musiciens melanesiens ('Are 'are Iles Salomon)*. Paris: Gallimard.

Zinn, Howard. 1980. *A People's History of the United States*. New York: Harper & Row.

Discography

Commercial recordings by Arsenio Rodríguez

A todos los barrios: Arsenio Rodríguez. Cariño Records DBM1-5803. One LP, 1974. Re-issued BMG Music 3336-2-RL. One CD, 1992.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Arsenio dice. Tico Records. LP 1175. One LP, 1968. Re-issued on Tico SLP 1175. One CD, 1998.

Arsenio Rodríguez y su conjunto vol. 1. Ansonia 1337. One LP. Re-issued on Ansonia CD HGCD 1337. One CD, n.d.

Arsenio Rodríguez y su conjunto vol. 2. Ansonia 1418. One LP. Re-issued on Ansonia CD HGCD 1337. One CD, n.d. Re-issued on Ansonia CD-1418. One CD, 1999.

Arsenio Rodríguez y su conjunto: Tocoloro. Música Latina Nostalgia 55006. One CD, 1999.

Como se goza en el barrio. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-022. One CD, 1992.

Cumbanchando con Arsenio: Fiesta en Harlem. SMC. One LP, n.d.

Dundunbanza 1946-1951. Tumbao Cuban Classics. TCD-043. One CD, 1994.

El sentimiento de Arsenio. Cariño Records. One LP, 1974.

Exitos de Arsenio y su conjunto. Tropical. Re-issued as *Arsenio Rodríguez:Clasicas de un sonero*. Seeco SCCD 9352. One CD, 1998.

La pachanga. Tico Records TRSLP-1092. One LP, 1963. Re-issued on Tico CD TRSLP-1092. One CD, 1999.

Montunos cubanos. SMC. 1950. Re-released as *Legendary Sessions: Chano Pozo & Arsenio Rodriguez with Machito and his Orchestra*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-017. One CD, 1992.

Mano a mano. RCA Records/Cariño Records DBM1-5800. One LP, 1974.

Montuneando con Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto 1946-1950. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-031. One CD, 1993.

Palo congo. Blue Note LP-1561. One LP, 1957. Re-issued on Blue Note TOCJ-1561. One CD, 1998.

Patato & Totico. Verve V6-5037. One LP, 1967. Re-issued on Mediterraneo MCD-10065. One CD, n.d. and Verve POCJ-2777. One CD, 1999.

Primitivo. Tico Records LP-1173. One LP, 1958. Re-issued on Tico SLP-1173. One CD, 1999.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Quindembo: Afro Magic: La magia de Arsenio Rodriguez. Epic Records. One LP, 1963. Re-issued on Sony Tropical CDL 81534/2-469742. One CD, 1995.

Sabroso y caliente con Arsenio Rodríguez y su Conjunto. Antilla Records MLP-586. One LP, n.d. Re-issued on CD-586. One CD, n.d.

Viva Arsenio. Bang Records. One LP, 1967.

Non-commercial recordings by Arsenio Rodríguez archived at the Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies Archive. Smithsonian Institution.

Festival Recordings: First Church of Christ Choir; Jimmy Driftwood; Eva and Clarence Girvin; Rodriguez Brothers. Festival of American Folklife. 69.101.11. 10RR. FP-1969-10RR-011

Festival Recordings: Mono Dub of 1969-0012: Rodriguez Brothers; Moving Star Hall Singers; Ola Belle Reed, Alec. Festival of American Folklife. 69.101.67. 7RR. FP-1969-7RR-0067

Festival Recordings: Mono Dub of 69-0007: Rodriguez Brothers; Moving Star Hall Singers. Festival of American Folklife. 69.101.55. 7RR. FP-1969-7RR-0055.

Festival Recordings: Rodriguez Brothers. Festival of American Folklife. 69.101.49. 7RR. FP-1969-7RR-0049.

Festival Recordings: Rodriguez Brothers; Moving Star Hall Singers. Festival of American Folklife. 69.101.07. 10RR. FP-1969-10RR-0007

Festival Recordings: Rodriguez Brothers; Moving Star Hall Singers; Ola Belle Reed, Alec Campbell. Festival of American Folklife. 69.101.12. 10RR. FP-1969-10RR-0012.

Rinzler Fieldwork: Arsenio Rodriguez. Ralph Rinzler. 7RR. FP-RINZ-7RR-0813.

Other recordings cited

Abelardo Barroso con la Orquesta Sensación, 1954-1956: No hay como mi son. Caney CCD 514. One CD, 1996.

Antología integral del son Vol. 1, *Bases históricas: Familia Valera Miranda*. Siboney/EGREM LD-286 and LD-287. Two LPs, n.d.

Antonio Arcaño y sus Maravillas: Danzón mambo, 1944-1951. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-029. One CD, 1993.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

The Best of René Touzet. GNP/Crescendo Record Co., Inc. GNPD 2000. One CD, 1994.

The Best of Tito Puente and his Orchestra Vol. 1, *1950-1960*. BMG Music 3369-2-RL. One CD, 1992.

The Best of Tito Rodríguez and his Orchestra Vol. 1, *1955-1956*. BMG Music 3419-2-RL. One CD, 1992.

The Best of Tito Rodríguez and his Orchestra Vol. 2, *1953-1955*. BMG Music 74321-15944-2. One CD, 1993.

Boogaloos con el Gran Combo. Cantan Pellín Rodríguez y Andy Montañez. Gema 3044. One LP, n.d.

Cañonazo: Johnny Pacheco. Fania SLP 325. One CD, 1972. Originally recorded ca. 1964.

Celia Cruz con La Sonora Matancera en vivo C.M.Q. (1951-1952). Barbaro Records B230. One CD, 1995.

Celia, Johnny, Justo and Papo: Recordando el ayer. Fania Records VS-52. One Cd, 1976.

Chappotin y sus Estrellas. Panart Records 4072. One CD, 1994.

Chappotín y Sus Estrellas. Antilla CD-107. One CD, n.d.

Chappottin y sus Estrellas. Bongo Latino CDB-010. One CD, 1994.

Chappottin y sus Estrellas. Antilla Records CD-594. One CD, n.d.

Conjunto Casino Vol. 2. Panart Records 5169. One CD, 1994.

Conjunto Casino "En cumbanchoa." Discmedi Blau DM 058CD. One CD, n.d.

Conjunto Casino: Rumba quimbumba, 1941-1946. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-030. One CD, 1993.

Conjunto Kubavana de Alberto Ruiz: Rumba en el Patio. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-034. One CD, 1994.

Conjunto Modelo: Guaguancó en La Habana. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-059. One CD, 1995.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Cortijo en New York: Cortijo y su Combo con Ismael Rivera. Rumba Records CD 55515. One CD, n.d.

Cortijo y su Combo: "El alma de un pueblo." Seeco SCCD-9326. One CD, 1999.

Cuando suenan los tambores: Tito Puente y su Orquesta, 1949-1951. BMG Music 3226-2-RL. One CD, 1992.

Cuban Big Bands 1940-1942. Harlequin HQ CD 63. One CD, 1995.

Cuban Counterpoint: History of the Son Montuno. Rounder Records CD 1078. One CD, 1992.

Cuban Sextetos & Conjuntos. Harlequin HQ CD 64. One CD, 1996.

Eddie Palmieri: Echando pa'lante (Straight Ahead). Tico SLP 1113. One CD, n.d. Originally recorded in 1964.

Eddie Palmieri: Lo que traigo es sabroso. Alegre LPA 8320. One CD, 1996. Originally recorded in 1964.

Eddie Palmieri and His Orchestra: Super-Imposition. Tico SLP 1194. One CD, n.d. Originally recorded in 1970.

Eddie Palmieri y su Conjunto "La Perfecta" Vol. 2, *El molestoso*. Alegre LPA 8240. One CD, 1996. Originally recorded in 1962.

Fania All Stars: Recorded Live at Cheetah. Fania 748. One CD, 2001. Originally recorded in 1971 and released in 1972.

Go Go Mambo!: Pérez Prado and his Orchestra. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-013. One CD, 1992.

Guaguancó a todos los barrios: Conjunto Estrellas de Chocolate. Antilla Records CD-15. One CD, n.d.

Güiro, bongó y maracas: Cuban Dance Bands in New York, 1931-1938. Harlequin HQ CD 126. One CD, 1999.

Hot Music from Cuba, 1907-1936. Harlequin HQ CD 23. One CD, 1993.

Ismael Rivera con Cortijo y su Combo: Con todos los hierros/Everything but the Kitchen Sink! Tico TSLP 1158. One CD, 1971.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Julio Cueva y su Orquesta: La butuba cubana. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-032. One CD, 1994.

Johnny Pacheco: Viva Africa. Fania Records SLP 330. One CD, 1972.

José Curbelo and his Orchestra: "Live at the China Doll" New York, 1946. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-074. One CD, 1995.

La Gloria Matncera: El limoncito. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-071. One CD, 1995.

La Sonora Matancera: Se formo la rumbantela. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-045. One CD, 1994.

Las muchas Celias. Cubanacán CUCD 1710. One CD, 1998.

Los ineditos "en vivo" de Estrellas de Chocolate. DC Productions CD 9205. One CD, n.d.

Lo mejor de La Sonora Ponceña. Inca I 1045. One CD, 1975.

Mariano Mercerón y sus Muchachos Pimienta: "Negro ñañamboro." Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-050. One CD, 1994.

Memories of Cuba: Orquesta Casino de la Playa (1937-1944). Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-003. One CD, 1991.

Mi diario musical: Celia Cruz acompañada de la Sonora Matancera. Polydor 314 529 813-2. One CD, 1992.

Miguelito Valdés with the Orquesta Casino de la Playa. Harlequin HQ CD 39. One CD, 1994.

More than Mambo: the Introduction to Afro-Cuban Jazz. Verve 314 527 903-2. One CD, 1995.

Musicalidad en sepia: Cuni con Chappottin y sus Estrellas. Maype CD-110. One CD, n.d.

Orchestra Harlow: Tribute to Arsenio. Fania SLP 00404. One CD, 1972.

The Original Mambo Kings: An Introduction to Afro-Cubop. Verve 314 513 876-2. One CD, 1993.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Orlando Guerra "Cascarita" con la Orquesta Casino de la Playa, 1944-1946: El guarachero. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-033. One Cd, 1994.

Orquesta Casino de la Playa. Harlequin HQ CD 51. One CD, 1995.

Orquesta Casino de la Playa. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-037. One CD, 1994.

Orquesta Casino de la Playa: Fufuñando. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-054. One CD, 1995.

Pachanga with Barretto. Riverside 7506. Re-issued in *Ray Barretto*. Fantasy PR 24713. 2 LPs, 1973.

Pacheco Presents Monguito. Fania Records SLP-341. One CD, 1971.

Pacheco y Su Charanga. Alegre LPA 801. One LP, 1960.

Quitate de la vía, Perico: Cortijo y su Combo con Ismael Rivera. Rumba RLP 55548. One LP, n.d.

Recordando a Arsenio. Tico Records TRSLP 1231. One CD, 1971.

René Álvarez y su Conjunto Los Astros: Yumbale. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-062. One CD, 1995.

Sexteto Cubanos Vol. 1, *Sones 1930: Sexteto Munamar, Sexteto Machin, Sexteto Nacional, Sexteto Matancero*. Arhoolie Productions, Inc. CD 7003. One CD, 1991.

Sexteto Cubanos Vol. 2, *Sones 1926-1928: Sexteto Boloña, Sexteto Occidente, Sexteto Nacional, Sexteto Matancero*. Arhoolie Productions, Inc. CD 7006. One CD, 1995.

Sexteto Nacional: "Cubaneo": Primeras Grabaciones, 1927-1928. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-097. One CD, 1999.

Sexteto y Septeto Habanero: Grabaciones Completas Vol. 1, *1925-1927*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-301. One CD, 1998.

Sexteto y Septeto Habanero: Grabaciones Completas Vol. 2, *1927*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-302. One CD, 1998.

Sexteto y Septeto Habanero: Grabaciones Completas Vol. 3, *1928*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-303. One CD, 1998.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Sexteto y Septeto Habanero: Grabaciones Completas Vol. 4, *1928-1931*. Tumbao Cuban Classics TCD-304. One CD, 1998.

Top Percussion: Tito Puente. BMG Music 3264-2-RL. One CD, 1992.

Tribute to Arsenio Rodriguez: Orquesta Harlow. Fania Records SLP 00404. One LP, 1972.

Willie Rosario: Más ritmo. Inca LP 1025. One CD, 1972.

Videography

Buena Vista Social Club. 1999. Produced by Ulrich Felsberg and Deepak Nayar and directed by Wim Wenders. 105 min. A Road Movies Production. Videocassette.

Cuban Roots/Bronx Stories. 2000. Produced and directed by Pam Sporn. 57 min. Third World Newsreel. Videocassette.

Ignacio Piñeiro. n.d. Directed by Luís Felipe Bernaza, Jorge Haydu, Dolores Calviño, Ricardo Istueta, Alberto Menéndez, Barbara Hernández, and Joaquin Moreno. Distributed by El Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematograficos, Havana, Cuba. Video, ca. 20 mins.

"Our Latin Thing" (Nuestra Cosa). 1993. Produced by Jerry Masucci and directed by Leon Gast. Movies & Pictures International, Inc. Videocassette.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.