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# THE SIGUIRIYAS SONG FORM IN FLAMENCO GUITAR: A HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE STUDY

A Thesis
Presented to
The School of Music
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts

by

Benett Thomas Zussman
August, 1995

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ABSTRACT

THE SIGUIRIYAS SONG FORM IN FLAMENCO GUITAR:
A HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE STUDY

by Benett T. Zussman

This thesis will discuss and analyze interpretation and structure of the *Siguiriyas* by two master flamenco guitarists, Mariano Córdoba (71) and Guillermo Ríos (49). The differences in their interpretation exemplify change in flamenco guitar style as a whole.

Flamenco is an oral tradition, improvised within a specific set of structures that dictate rhythm and mode. An important element of these structures is the *falseta*. *Falsetas* are both composed by the guitarist and passed down orally from teacher to student. They function as small units of the song structure and their arrangement depends on the context of their performance.

To prepare the reader for this discussion, a history of flamenco is presented includeing biographical information on the two artists. This research reveals that cross-cultural influence is a major catalyst for change in flamenco. This relationship is discussed in both historical and musical contexts.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis documents my discovery of the flamenco guitar tradition. It represents three years of study in San Jose, California with two master guitarists, Mariano Córdoba and Guillermo Ríos. I wish to express my appreciation to them for their permission to use recordings and written material from our lessons and discussions. They introduced me to a new way of playing the guitar and cultivated my understanding of flamenco.

I acknowledge my friends and family for their support. Lastly, I must thank Professor royal hartigan, a mentor, who has served as both my teacher and a friend.

## PREFACE

My motivation for this study is an effort to gain a better understanding of the flamenco guitar and share it with others. I was introduced into the flamenco tradition at the age of ten by performing *malagueña* in a school talent show. The thrill of that first performance is still influential in my academic and professional life.

I was eighteen when I first heard John Williams performing "Leyenda" by Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909). This piece blends flamenco and Moorish melodies in a solo classical guitar piece. John Dimmick, my first classical guitar instructor, taught me this piece which fed my interest to develop a repertory of solo guitar music.

Dimmick introduced me to the late Cuban guitarist José Rey De La Torre (1917-1994). De La Torre studied in Spain and developed into a world class perfromer. Latin composers like Julian Orbón, José Ardevol and Joaquin Nin-Culmell have been inspired to compose for him. He has recorded over twelve albums and was at the top of his career when he was crippled by rheumatoid arthritis. "He took all the pain in stride," said his wife Marianne, "but he resented that he was stopped at his height as an artist" (Lundstrom, obituary 6B). Michael Lorimer, a world class guitarist himself, remarked, "Mr. Rey De La Torre 's recording Spanish Music for Classical Guitar is itself a classic" (Lundstrom, obituary 6B).

With De La Torre's guidance, I earned my Bachelor of Arts degree in guitar performance at San Jose State University. The emphasis of my study was Spanish classical guitar repertory. Maestro De La Torre often discussed the cross-cultural musical relationships between flamenco and classical guitar practice. These discussions along with that first childhood experience enhanced my desire to study flamenco.

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# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## Description of the Study

My study addresses the use of improvisation in the flamenco guitar tradition. Flamenco is improvised music played within a specific set of structures that dictate rhythm and mode. This study will examine the elements of structure known as *falsetas* in the *Siguiriyas* song form. This form is arranged differently every time it is performed These differences depend on the context of the performance and the background of the musicians drawing from their experience to create new material within an old form.

Both Mariano Córdoba (b. 1924) and Guierllmo Ríos (b. 1946) perform and teach the *Siguiriyas* . I will compare their pedagogy and performance of this song form in the analysis section of this study. The ultimate aim of this document is to promote the art of flamenco through fieldwork and research.

## Previous Research

There are only five Ph.D. dissertations on flamenco dating from 1891 to the present (UMI catalogue). The only dissertation on flamenco guitar performance practice is William Wheeler's Practicing Flamenco Guitar in Madrid, Spain: An Event Centered Study of Accompaniment and Accompanists in Guitar Lessons and Dance, (Indiana University 1993). Wheeler's work is based on the guitar's traditional role as an accompaniment instrument for dance. My study is concerned with the solo flamenco guitar tradition that developed in the late 19th century. Like Wheeler's study, my fieldwork was done during guitar lessons. The depth of a student's understanding is gauged by his or her ability to demonstrate it on the guitar. My participation in guitar lessons was essential and I agree with Wheeler's observation, "Although I asked questions, attempted interviews on complex questions surrounding flamenco, and heard

philosophies of flamenco, the heart of all my learning was my ability to imitate what they showed me" (Wheeler 170). As a participant, I have played, discussed, and analyzed flamenco styles. The imitation Wheeler speaks of combined with the student's style, makes flamenco a unique art that fosters tradition and change.

As an introduction to flamenco we need to first look at its background. One recently published book is Flamenco Deep Song by Timothy Mitchell. His study effectively expresses the cultural trauma reflected in flamenco music. Comparable to African American jazz, it is the music of an oppressed minority living in segregated urban centers. The minorities of Andalusia consisted of fugitive Jews, Moors, and *Gitanos* (Spanish Gypsies). He suggests that the tragic lyrics therapeutically cleanse people's negative emotional states. The *letras* (verses) of the *Siguiriyas* chronicle *Gitanos* suffering prosecution. The verses of the *Siguiriyas* ventilate emotions like hatred, jealousy, and guilt. From these deep emotions stem the first song forms of flamenco called *Cante Jondo* that means "deep" or "profound" song. Like jazz, flamenco was first performed in saloons, bordellos, and prisons. Mitchell claims the conditions of the performances were "inseparable from alcohol abuse" (44). Through his translations and observations Mitchell has helped to bring flamenco into current academic study.

Musical Improvisation by Derek Bailey discusses various approaches to improvisation by interviewing native practitioners of world music. For flamenco, his main informant is guitarist Paco Peña, an advocate of the traditional *flamenco puro* (pure) style. Flamenco puro is distinguished by performing the typical repertory, within a *cuadro* (group) of singers, dancers, and guitarists. This particular interview was personally beneficial since my instructor, Mariano Córdoba also performs in the flamenco puro style. Bailey's concluding remarks are a connection to my own informants and flamenco performance practice. He says, "All improvisation takes place in relation to the known, whether it is traditional or newly acquired" (152). This "known" is all the facts and data that fuel our own search for understanding improvisation.

Due to the lack of previous research concerning flamenco guitar, my study fills a vacuum in one area of its heritage: a comparative examination of how flamenco changes. It is the first known comparative analysis of the *falsetas* (units of improvisation) in the performance practice of two professional

guitarists. Regenerating old falsetas and composing new ones is this study's perspective in understanding change.

## CHAPTER II FLAMENCO OVERVIEW

### East or West

There is a debate concerning the origins of the term "flamenco." One side argues that it was derived from the Flemish, while the other maintains it was from Arabic-speaking cultures. Master flamenco guitarists Córdoba and Ríos favor the latter opinion. Córdoba uses as one example the popular flamenco song form, *zhambra* , meaning 'celebration' in Arabic. The word is derived from the Arabic *zamara* which is plural usage for "musicians" or the singular, *zamir,* that translates as "singer." The *zhambra* is a festive song form. The *cante* (singing) is characterized by the large use of vocables (meaningless syllables) and Arabic texts. The *zhambras* is deliberately danced with *zils* (finger cymbals) to acknowledge the Moorish influence. There are other linguistic connections to Arabic terms such as; *felag-mengu* meaning "fleeing peasant", *fell-lah mengu* , "singing peasant" and *felah-en dum* , "songs of the Moors" (Serrano and Elgorriaga 30).

The Flemish argument is based more on philological rather than musicological grounds because the word flamenco translates literally as the word "Flemish." Carlos Almendros states that *flamenco* signifies a Flemish singer. In the 16th century Spanish music with the words *flamenco* and *first f lamenco* were placed at the beginning of the music staff (Zayas citing Almendros 13). When Charles V, emperor of Flanders invaded Spain he was accompanied by Flemish singers from his chapel known as *flamencos* . The music of the Andalusian Gypsies began as a vocal art, accompinied by hand clapping or finger snapping. Because flamenco began as a vocal music, it is possible it originated from the vocalists of Flanders

Flamenco scholar, Marion Papenbrook in "History of Flamenco" argues that these debates ignore the Gypsies' contribution at the end of the 18th century. For over three hundred years, the Andalusian Gypsies were the sole practitioners of the art. Papenbrook traces the origin to the Flemish soldiers of Charles V, "whose arrogant, ostentatious and dashing behavior expanded the

use of the word flamenco, from the regional [Flanders] to the general [attitude]" (Papenbrook 35); thus defining the extroverted nature of flamenco performance practice. For example, the proud *desplante* (fighting stance) of the dancers that imitate the bull fiughter. Others believe that the Jews who migrated to Flanders were allowed to sing their cantations unmolested and "these chants became referred to as flamenco" (Fairley 134).

Professional flamenco guitarist David Easley disagrees saying that the term is of Spanish Gypsy origin. He believes *'flamenco'* solely belongs to the Gypsies because it could be derived from the *Caló* term "flamér" that means "jest" or "fun" (interview 1995). Caló is the Spanish dialect of the Gypsy language called Romany and is discussed in more detail later in this study. Córdoba feels that this debate will never be settled; however he believes it is important to mention the synthesis of Jewish, Arabic and Byzantine influences in the creation of flamenco. I believe flamenco is not the sole creation of the the Andalucian Gypsies, but a fusion of Eastern and Western influences, and I wil support this theory in the modal analysis of the *Siguiriyas* .

## Islamic Spain

In 710 AD, four small ships set sail from Cueta on the coast of North Africa led by a Moorish officer, Tarifa ibn-Malik. This first military crossing of what is now known as the Strait of Gibraltar marked the beginning of a *jihad* or holy war in Spain. The Moor's conquest of Southern Spain marked the beginning of seven hundred years of Islamic occupation.

A general definition of the Moors is provided by Spanish historian Read who says, "Moors were simply the inhabitants of western Islam, or North Africa Magrib, which includes Arabs and Berbers" (Read 17). Arab and Berber (Moorish) dynasties ruled southern Spain from 711 until the fall of Granada in 1492.

This religious civilization is founded on the study of the Koran. Written in Arabic, the Koran is believed to be the actual word of *Allah* or God as revealed to the Prophet Mohammed in the 7th century. With Arabic for its vehicle, Muslim

culture of al-Andalus included education in music, mathematics, astronomy and philosophy.

The history of Middle Eastern art music revolves around a series of political centers that successively dominated large portions of the Islamic heartland: Damascus, Bagdad and Córdoba. In the middle of the ninth century Córdoba became the center of the first and only western Islamic empire. This was due to the patronage extended by Emir Abd ar-Rahman II of the Umayyed Caliphate.

> A highly cultured man, he established a brilliant court and embellished the capitol by erecting fine mosques, palaces, bridges, and gardens. The Emir also developed a library that served many scholars and was the greatest in all of Europe. (O'Callaghan 158)

The Ultimate Source

The arrival of the Moors in Andalusia brought the oriental aesthetic to the Occident. Eight centuries of Moorish domination have allowed the Latin and Visigothic traditions to mix through the liturgies of Saint Isador of Seville (565-657) and Saint Eugene of Toledo, with the singings of the musician Ziryab of Córdoba (792-852).

Islamic Spain (*al-Andus* ) rivaled Bagdad as the cultural center of the Muslim world. The court of Córdoba was one of the first places where Persian, Indian and Chinese music were studied. The most influential courtier at this center was a musician named Ziryab. He was a Persian courtesan, who held high position in the court of Baghdad, but he fell out of favor and emigrated to *al-Andus*. There he gave instruction in Eastern music at the court of Abd Er Rahmann II in the ninth century AD. Spanish historian O'Callaghan remarked, "The Emir doted on him and loved to hear him sing and discourse on history, poetry, art and science" (158).

In the autobiography of flamenco guitarist Juan Serrano, the author recalls his father (a Gypsy guitarist) describing Ziryab:

> Ziryab was the extraordinary musician who came to Córdoba in the ninth century to teach music. He brought with him a number of oriental songs that formed the basis of Andalusian folklore and are perhaps the oldest roots of flamenco. (Serrano and Elogorriaga 8)

Ziryab founded a conservatory in Córdoba and originated the courts' conception of music education. He also taught and played the guitar and is credited for adding the fifth string to it. Córdoba, the guitar, and flamenco are interrelated and intimately linked to Ziryab. As Serrano says, "If flamenco has an ultimate source, it is he" (Serrano and Elogorriaga 8).

Although Muslims were expelled from Spain during the Spanish Inquisition, their legacy remains a lasting influence on Spanish music and western culture. Thiese contributions include translations, instruments and modal music systems.

One of the most lasting contributions of MuslimSpain was the transmission of Greek and Arabic thought to Mediaeval Europe and the Christian West. This century long process began in the ninth century under the Abbsid Caliph al-Ma'mün (riegned 813-33). He founded the *Bayt al-Hikmah* which translates as "the House of Wisdom." This institution was resposible for translateing into Arabic many Greek classics, includeing musical treasties by major Pythagorean scholars and works by Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus (Racy 9). The exposure to the classical past enriched Near-Eastern musical scolarship provideding an extensive nomenclature and elevateing music as one of the mathmatical sciences. On the whole the translators paved the way for the advances of the European Renaissance, rooted in a wider understanding of Classical thought and achievement.

The second most important contributions were the Arabic instruments that were introduced to the West through Andalusia. Stevenson finds more than twenty different types of instruments. This includes the ancestor to the flamenco guitar, the Persian *tar*, and the predecessor to the lute, the Arabic *úd*.

The *tar* is a long necked lute with a heavy waisted body carved from one piece of wood. It has six strings, and sixteen frets per octave. The frets are made from gut and are movable on the neck of the instrument. A fret is a strip of metal or gut that is placed across the fingerboard or neck, allowing the strings to be stopped at a predetermined pitch. This makes the performance of microtonc intervals possible.

The Arabic *úd*, from which the European lute is derived, has five courses of two strings. Like the guitar the *úd* is tuned in fourths but, it has no frets. The absence of frets makes the neck of the instrument like a violin that allows the player to implement microtonic intervals.

A third contribution includes the modes of the Near and Middle East which contain three-quarter and five-quarter divisons of an interval. This interval is called microtonic by Western theorists because it is smaller than a half step, the smallest interval in Western music. The Persian *dastgah* and Arabic *maqäm*, like the western scale, are heptatonic (based on seven degrees). However, the twelve tones of the western octave are insufficient for the performance of its modes. Persian music scholar Ella Zonis says, "In Iran, depending on the theorist, and his method of dividing the whole tone, there are from seventeen to twenty-four degrees in the octave" (Zonis 53). In the equal temperament of western music there is only twelve degrees in the octave.

The tuning and acoustical aesthetic are what gives Persian music its individuality. Persian scholar Hafez Modirzadeh believes "the temperament of the music reflects the temperament of the culture" (Modirzadeh, interview 1993). Dr. Modirzadeh illustrated this by performing a *gushe* (motif) of *dastgah-mähur*, (a mode that parallels the intervals of an ionian mode in western music) in western tuning. He then demonstrated the same melodic segment in Persian tuning observing microtonic intervals. The result was as if two completely different melodies had been played. The first sounded like western music with motivic sequencing. The second had all the salient features of the first, but featured intervals that included approximating tempered three-quarter and five-quarter intervals called a neutral thirds. By playing in Persian tuning he completely transformed a plain melody into an authentic Middle Eastern composition.

The Arabic maqäm has a scale and a hierarchy of pitches whose main characteristic is the distribution in the lower tetrachord (four notes of the mode). This modal system is more than a set of scales, it employs typical tone sequences, motifs, and cadences that are essential to the maqäm. Each of the maqäm is based on a theoretical scale with specific notes of emphasis, and a typical pattern of melodic movement. In many instances the maqäm begins around the tonic note of the scale, gradually ascending, and finally descending to the tonic (Racy 12).

In the perfromance notes of the recording <u>The Orient and the Occident</u>, Sufi musician Kudsi Erguner writes:

> The flamenco art remains at present the only musical expression of orient source in the Occident. It represents the continuity of the same

aesthetic through the Gypsy people. To be convinced, we just have to listen to the *Siguiriyas* and *Soleares.* (Liner notes, 1994)

*Cante* (sung) Flamenco uses these microtonic intervals with nasal voice timbre and ornate melisma. These salient features areinfluenced from the Islamic culture that flourished in Andalusia for over seven hundred years. Their legacy was adopted by the Andalusian Gypsys who created flamenco.

## The Andalusian Gypsy

The older established groups of Gypsies have a variety of names for themselves and their language. In Spain and southern France the Gypsies are called *Caló* which translates as "blacks." The language *Caló* is a blend of Gypsy Romany and indigenous Spanish. Romany was traced to the North Indian language of the *Luri* and the *Dom*.

This lineage supports the legend of Gypsy origin by the Arabian historian Hamza of Isphahan (950AD). The legend is about the Persian monarch Bahram Gur. He decreed that his subjects should work for one half of the day with the rest of their day dedicated to eating, drinking and listening to music. Once Hamza came upon a group of subjects that had food, wine, but no music. They explained that they were unable to obtain the services of a musician. The monarch persuaded the king of India to send 12,000 musicians who were distributed to various parts of the kingdom. Their descendants are still there, although in small numbers and are known as the *Zott.*. In modern usage *Zotti* and the plural *Zott* are Persian names for 'Gypsy' (Fraser 185). Indian music and flamenco share many similarities. Legends and linguistics reflect a greater certainty that the geographic origin of the Gypsies was India. Papenbrook believes they probably came from the Punjab in northwestern India, emigrating from there ca. 800-900 AD (37).

### Music

From their first appearance in 13th century Europe, Gypsies have been known as capable instrumentalists, singers and dancers. Because of the differnt countries and cultures they inhabitated, Gypsies have no common musical language, yet in Spain, Russia, and Hungary they rose to the status of professional musicians and became a part of their national identity. Musical talent became a powerful factor in winning a measure of tolerance from potentially unfriendly natives. When we notice the difference between Spanish Gypsy music and Hungarian Gypsy music, it becomes clear that neither are

Gypsy music, but both are inventive adaptations of the local music, to which the Gypsies have made essential contributions. This is evident when indigenous folk music is performed on native instruments. Gypsy historian Sir Angus Fraser points to the violin in Hungary and the guitar in Spain (Fraser 39). Gypsies did copy and borrow from other cultures, but through their genius they created a unique and original art form.

Most theorists agree that flamenco was adopted and developed by the Andalusian Gypsies. Until 1860, Andalusian Gypsies were the exclusive interpreters of flamenco for over three hundred years. When they settled in Andalusia they were exposed to almost eight centuries of Arabic influence which they adapted and synthesized with their cultural aesthetic. In *Al-Andus*, the Gypsies were the last wave of immigrants to arrive succeeding the Celts, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Visigoths and Moors. Professional flamenco guitarist Serrano writes, "The Gypsies entered a multi-ethnic society in which Jews, Muslims and Christians lived side by side for centuries" (Serrano and Elgorriaga 31).

The year 1492 is central to the history of Spain. In 1492 the fall of Islamic Granada marked the end of the coexistence of Jews, Muslims and Christians in Spain. The Castillian crown replaced Moorish tolerance with the Inquisition. The Spanish Inquisition was under the authority of the Pope to take testimony, decide sentence and enforce punishment on any enemy of the church. These enemies became the minorities and land owning women. Kings and nobles supported what amounted to organized persecution of Moriscos, Jews, and Gypsies. From 1478-1834, the Roman Catholic Church forced non-Christians to convert, leave Spain, or die.

There was also prejudice against the Gypsies of Spain which shaped the profound music that they play. Government penalty such as 'The Pragmatic Sanction of Medina del Campo' of 1499 prevented Gypsies from traveling and threatened their cultural identity. Music became a form of emotional survival. The Gypsies sang the traditional songs of Andalusia and the music of the Moriscos (converted Moors) with whom they shared persecution. Wheeler explains that, "The fertile mix of music, people, and conditions (oppression) in the late 15th century is usually given credit for the beginnings of flamenco (Wheeler 4; Pohren, Lives:16).

## Social Organization

Historically, Gypsies were considered wonderful entertainers, but they were low on the social scale. On this Fraser said, "Traditionally higher positions on the Gitano hierarchy had been occupied by blacksmiths, horse and mule traders, and antique dealers" (Fraser 32).

The professional Gypsy musiician emerged in the *cafés cantante* period. The cafés were known for improvised flamenco performances. These events were called *juergas.* The most common flamenco performance situation is the *juerga.* Juan Serrano wrote that to understand the *juerga* is to understand flamenco's origins and, more, to penetrate the heart of its mystery. He stresses the ritual aspects of the performance context:

> A *juerga* is a communal experience rooted deep in Gypsy tradition. The number of participants can vary between half a dozen and a couple of dozen. The purpose: to participate in a musical seance. (Serrano and Elgorriaga 21)

What might be called *juergas* management was a skill much sought after by flamenco professionals. Flamenco scholar Timothy Mitchell writes,

> It was a matter of survival for performers to be keen observers of human desire in general, the *señorito's* (the impresario's) desire in particular. A *cantaor's* (singer's) canny manipulation of alcohol-enduced emotions led him from one well-paid fiesta too another -even if it undermined his health and singing voice". (Mitchell 44)

Although the Gypsies were the primary interpreters of flamenco, in its first three-hundred years non-gypsies called *payos* adopted the art. *Payos* have contributed to the status of flamenco. Two examples of non-Gypsy contributors are Paco de Lucia and Paco Peña. The former is the leading guitarist in the modern style. The latter is a master of the traditional style. Due to the contributions of these two masters, in the last thirty years, flamenco has earned a major voice in the world music repertory.

The negative connotation, through association with the poor Gypsy element in Spanish culture, changed due to the efforts Paco de Lucia. Peter Manuel writes, "By the mid-seventies, Paco de Lucia (b. 1947) was already becoming recognized as the leading flamenco guitarist and, in the eyes of many, as the most outstanding genius in the recorded history of the genre as a whole" (Manuel 124).

Within the past twenty-five years, flamenco was associated with the poor peasants of Southern Spain and the rich did not want to be associated with it. "Andalusians did not care for flamenco because it was Gypsy; the Gypsies' social alienation ensured its artistic segregation" (Serrano and Elgorriaga 34). "This attitude has changed due to the efforts of one man, Paco de Lucia" (Ríos, interviews 1994). His status and influence as an artist created a worldwide acceptance that inspired a whole generation to study the art, transforming public opinion and making it culturally acceptable within the past twenty years. "There is nothing glamorous about poverty and because flamenco is a peasant based music, many artists have emerged from abject poverty and never romanticize about the Gypsy lifestyle" (Ríos, fieldwork 1994).

A revitalization of flamenco began in the 1950's with contests and publications of books and the opening of flamenco museums. In the 1970's, the art consolidated and in the 1980's flamenco was exposed to more diversity. This occurred in the public festivities where flamenco was mixed with rock and jazz, two musics foreign to Spain.

According to flamenco guitarist Anita Sheer, the use of jazz harmony is the greatest difference between traditional and modern flamenco guitar. One example is Paco De Lucia's harmonic voicings that exploit the quartal tuning of the guitar, use of the whole tone scale, and non-traditional instrumentation. "Traditionally", comments Sheer, "the only forms of percussion are the footwork, castanets, and handclapping. Lucia was one of the first to use Latin percussion instruments in flamenco" (Sheer, telephone interview 1995).

These advances required a new approach to technique. Rios believes that "Before Paco's emergence, technique was considered to be an insurmountable obstacle that the guitarist wrestled with the rest of their lives" (Rios, interview 1994). Although the great guitarists Sabicas and Rámon Montoya could perform on the same technical level as Lucia, his ability to teach and articulate this approach has inspired a new generation of flamenco artists and transformed a negative public opinion into a positive one.

## Women in Flamenco

Female Gypsies known as *Gitanas* were the first professional performers of flamenco. *Gitanas* were primarily singers, dancers, and fortune tellers while many*Gitano* (male Gypsies) made their livelihood from underground livestock trading. "There were more than a dozen incarcerated in Madrid at any one time for the theft of horses and mules" (Mitchell 44). Flamenco scholar, Avila, believes that the "first perfromances of flamenco were primarily women who sang in public streets in exchange for coins" (Mitchell citing Avila 75). They merged popular Moorish and Spanish songs with dance and percussion that included finger snapping (*pitos* ), footwork (*zapateudo* ), handclapping (*palmas* ).

Women are central characters in the lyrics of the earliest forms of deep song. Most texts present a male perspective on the way men and women deal or should deal with one another. According to Mitchell,

> In the case of flamenco singers, male-female relationships had none of the stability or predictability of those that prevailed among the middle classes but instead contained considerable amounts of codependency, sadomasochism, self-destruction, and large amounts of transgressive ecstasy. (Mitchell 44)

Eroticism, ranging from sexually suggestive dancing to the display of jealousy and passion in song lyrics depict the woman's role in flamenco. Alan Lomax devised the *cantometrics* method of style analysis while directing fieldwork in flamenco He connected the "piercing, high pitched, squeezed vocal delivery" of flamenco with "the severity of prohibitions against feminine premarital intercourse" (Mitchell citing Lomax 29). Paradoxically, a singer who incarnates his group's normal level of sexual anxiety can actually produce pleasure in the listener, "since the song reminds him of familiar sexual emotions and experiences" (Mitchell 193).

Mitchell writes, "For much of its history, flamenco was intimately bound with the world of prostitution" (Mitchell 44). *Señoritos* and big spenders looking for a good time wanted their *juergas* (private flamenco parties) to have the right ingredients: alcohol, musicians, and *muchachas* (young women).

A recurring theme is that the singers who suffer the most, merit the most fame. This type of suffering exemplifies gender relations in Gypsy culture. Male singers needed to convey that their heart was wrenched by an unfaithful mistress. Female singers often portrayed seduced, abandoned, or physically battered women. This is heard in the lyrics of the *Siguiriyas* and other *Cante Jondo* (deep song) song forms. Flamenco folklorist, Núñez de Prado coins the phrase 'martyrology of the *Siguiriyas*..' He claims that to master this deepest song, the singer had to pay a terrible price because the voice, lungs, and heart were not designed to bear the stress of such a tragic melody. (Mitchell citing Prado 136).

Traditional women's roles singers and dancers are changeing. One example is guitarist Anita Sheer. She was the first student of Carlos Montoya (nephew of Ramon Montoya). In 1988 she earned her Master's of Music from San Jose State University and now teaches flamenco guitar at DeAnza College and performs internationally. She is the founding member and artistic director of The San Jose Flamenco Society which has been instrumental in making the Bay Area a center for flamenco perfromance. Sheer said that it is more common to see women singing and dancing than playing the guitar and that men are generally the featured performers in all aspects of the art.

**The Guitar**

The guitar became a part of art form late in flamenco's development. From 1500 to 1800 flamenco was only sung. The flamenco guitar developed from a monophonic four stringed *guitara morisco* to the present day polyphonic concert instrument.

Precursors of the guitar are traceable to early Babylonian and Egyptian instruments. There are bas-reliefs from the Eleventh and Twelfth Egyptian Dynasties (3702 BC) where the figure eight and the neck of a guitar can be seen. The Phoenicians colonized the Mediterranean in 1000 BC and brought the guitar from Tyre to Tarshish. Tarshish was a Phoenician city located in lower Andalusia.

The Gypsies entered Andalusia as it was conquered by the Christian *conquistadors* in the 16th century. Although the musical instrument of choice

in nearly all of Europe during this period was the lute, the Christian courts did not adopt it because of its association with the Moors.

Initially, the court musicians turned to the popular *guitarra*, but there were many problems to overcome. The *guitarra* had only four strings which were inadequate to meet the demands of Renaissance polyphony. In addition, the courtesans were disdainful of the *guitarra* because it was an instrument of the common people.

This drove the courts of Spain to invent a worthy substitute known as the *vihuela de mano.* They enlarged the body of the *guitarra*, expanded it to six double course strings, and tuned it comparably to the intervals of the present day guitar. Thus the vihuela was born out of the necessity to perform polyphonic music and to distinguish the nobility from the commoners.

It seems logical that Gypsies' flamenco guitar synthesized both the *úd* and *vihuela de mano* . The flamenco guitar captures the polyphonic harmony of the vihuela as well as the ornate modality and drone effects of the Arabic *úd.*

The flamenco guitar was originally a low cost instrument compared to the guitars of the 19th centuries which were inlayed with mother of pearl and made of exotic materials like ebony and rosewood from South America. Flamenco guitar luthiers started using the native Spanish Cyprus, which greatly reduced the price of guitars. This economic factor made the guitar available to poor people. The Spanish luthier Antonio de Torres Jurado (1817-92) is credited with establishing the guitar's present dimensions in 1850.

Originally the *cantador* (singer) had no accompaniment other than finger snapping (*pitos*), footwork (*zapateudo*), and handclapping (*palmas*). The guitar emerged later as simple accompaniment to the song and dance. Not until the early 20th century did the guitar become a solo instrument, due to the major contributions of classical guitarist Andrés Segovia (1893-1987) and flamenco guitarist Rámon Montoya (1880-1947).

## Andrés Segovia

Andrés Segovia was born on the 21st day of February, 1883 in the small mining town of Linares, an Andalusian province of Jaen. From early childhood

he was drawn to the sound of the guitar which in Andalusia was a fundamental aspect of daily life. It was from a strolling Gypsy that Segovia first heard his instrument. The guitar's familiarity and use by the Gypsies assured its negative reputation. Although Segovia disliked the low status of flamenco and its Gypsy subculture, his first teacher was a Gypsy flamenco guitarist. Segovia confessed, "Although more noise than music burst from the strings of the Gypsy's battered guitar, it felt as if the sound penetrated every pore in my body" (Segovia 13).

Although many sources state Segovia was self-taught, he himself admits the enormous influence of Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909). He said, "He was a great artist and a very good musician. And above all he was the first to put the guitar on its feet" (Clinton 20).

## Francisco Tárrega

Francisco Tárrega was a master musician, teacher and accomplished composer. He refined guitar techniques which became the fundamental building blocks for all classical and flamenco guitarists. There are four distinguishing features to the Tárrega school (Hoffmeister 19).

1) The method of attacking the strings with the right hand. It involves resting the plucking finger on the string immediately below that which has been plucked. This is called a rest stroke or *apoyando* and its effect is a different tone color and louder dynamic. The result is a refined balancing of melody and accompaniment.

2) The position of the right hand. Instead of being oblique or slanted when the finger strikes the string, Tárrega insisted the striking finger be perpendicular or parallel to the string. This frees the thumb and makes possible six-note harmonies.

3) The position of the guitar must be on the left knee with the use of a small footstool. This better balances the instrument and makes the four-octave range of the guitar easier to utilize.

This third point was never adopted by the flamenco guitarists because, as Córdoba said: "When you play guitar you must hold it like you hold your lover, securely in both arms and close to the heart" (Córdoba, lesson 1995). Many flamenco guitarists feel there is no dynamic power in the classical position.

To accompany a singer or dancer the instrument must project. The best position for this is on the right knee, with the right leg crossed over the left. This position also enables the foot to tap out the *compás* or rhythmic cycle.

4) Tárrega also stressed the wider use of the right ring finger. This digit is used primarily for arpeggiation, *rasguedo* and tremolo. The tremolo is used in classical and flamenco guitar music and consists of an arpeggio followed by a repeated attack of the melodic note. Classical guitar tremolo repeats the melodic note four times, while flamenco more often plays it five times. This repeated note is played consecutively by the ring, middle and index fingers. The affect is a sustained, mandolin-like melody, with bass accompaniment.

Segovia paid homage to Tárrega when he said, "Tarrega created the soul of the guitar and I vowed to walk in the steps of the sainted Francisco" (Wade 10).

Spanish flamenco scholar, Molina Fajardo credits Segovia with having saved the guitar from the squalor of the tavern; but confessed that the audience was not moved when Segovia performed at the opening of the festival of Cante Jondo in 1922 (De Falla 116). "Segovia's playing style was like a kiss," wrote flamenco enthusiast Eugenio Noel in 1916, "whereas the average *toccador* (flamenco guitarist) made the strings bite and bleed" (Mitchell citing Noel 296).

Regardless of his critics, Segovia exposed the concert stages of the world to solo Spanish guitar music. His virtuosity promoted greater interest in the instrument and encouraged flamenco guitarists to explore the expressive qualities through the refined technique developed by Tárrega.

Segovia never heard Tárrega play in person, but felt influenced by his compositions, etudes, and his students. One of his most notable students was Miguel Llobet (1878-1938) with whom he studied for a very short period. Segovia praised him, "Among all the pupils of Tarrega, the best was Llobet."

(Clinton 20). In Segovia's autobiography, he describes how he asked for copies of his transcriptions of the 'Granados Dances' and his original composition, "El Mestre." Llobet's reply was:

> Actually, I have not written them down yet. But why don't you come to my home in the mornings and learn them from me. Bring your guitar. I'll play the pieces on mine and pass the music to you phrase by phrase. Segovia got down on his knees, embraced him and said, "Thank you...Thank you." (Segovia 106)

In addition to being a phenomenal teacher, Llobet made the first electric recordings of the classic guitar. Although they are few and the sound quality is poor, they are an excellent record of how Llobet intended his transcriptions and compositions to be performed.

## Rámon Montoya

In addition to influencing Segovia, Miguel Llobet inspired one of the greatest flamenco guitarists, Rámon Montoya. Serrano writes:

> It was not until Montoya heard the great classical guitarist, Miguel Llobet, that he finally began to comprehend the full resources of the instrument. (Serrano and Elgorriaga 141)

Rámon Montoya Salazar was born in Madrid on the 2nd of November, 1880. He was considered the finest accompanist of his day and the first great master in the development of the modern virtuoso style. Montoya introduced *tocadores* (guitar players) to a new world of music.by using the techniques and melodies of classical Spanish composers to flamenco songs.

Spanish classical guitar had a powerful impact on Rámon Montoya. Serrano comments:

> He was extremely moved by the playing of Tárrega and Llobet, both classical guitarists. Before Montoya, the *tacador* relied more on his feelings than on technique. Montoya changed all that by applying classical techniques to what used to be simple rhythmic accompaniments. This required considerable practice, and the resulting improvement in technique opened the way for the solo guitar. From this point the *tocador's* independence was assured. (Serrano and Elogorriaga 56)

Although born in the nation's capitol, Montoya was a Gypsy and traveled with his family, trading in cattle at market fairs throughout the country. He met Andalusian Gypsies at these fairs who exposed him to the art of flamenco.

Montoya was one of the first professional flamencos. He also performed in the *cafés cantantes* (singing cafés) of Madrid. Performing in the *cafés cantantes*, Montoya recalls the meeting of "the greatest thing Spain has produced in the realm of *cante jondo* (deep song). Montoya adds, "For me and many others, Chacón was 'the master' (*el amo*) of all the *cante flamencos*" (Paco Peña citing Montoya, liner notes to CD).

Chacón introduced Montoya at Seville during a *fiesta* (party) at the April Fair. Chacón announced to the audience, "First I will sing and later I will perform to the accompaniment of Montoya. I guarantee that I will make every one cry. And so it was," says Montoya, "in the end everyone wept. I was his guitarist for the next fifteen years" (Paco Peña citing Montoya liner notes).

Montoya died in 1949 but the revitalization he began remained alive. Revitalization begins with competing ideologies that foster creativity and innovation. The elements of change occur in art, science and society when individuals step out of the paradigm created by canons. Individuals like Andrés Segovia and Rámon Montoya altered the instrument and the people who play it. Their genius as musicians, made the instrument respectable on the concert stage as well as the *fiesta.*

In 1983 Paco Peña was awarded Spain's celebrated Rámon Montoya Prize. On Montoya's legacy, he comments:

> When Montoya arrived on the artistic scene at the turn of the century he must have found an atmosphere of imminent change. True musicians among guitarists were beginning to want more than simply to accompany singers, however beautiful and demanding the art may be. They were attempting to bring the guitar into a position of greater prominence. From this atmosphere Montoya forged, through his musical genius, a new art form. He took traditional themes, and by means of an incredibly fertile imagination, created a wealth of new, ever more astonishing ideas. (Peña 1987)

## Duende

When Segovia brought the guitar to the masses, he helped create a division between traditional and professional. The latter being rehearsed and technically precise. The traditional is more spontaneous, and as guitarist Brook Zern says, it is "prone to a state of psychic possession called the *duende* (demon) which can generate unbelievable intensity of expression" (Zern 5).

In everyday usage, *duende* can mean a fairy, a poltergeist spirit, a goblin. But in the context of flamenco the word defies strict definition. To have *duende*

is to possess a state of being and the power to communicate the mystery and anguish of life and death.

Spanish poet Fredrico García Lorca writes:

> The *duende* acts on the body of the dancer like air on sand. It transforms with magical power a young girl into a paralytic of the moon, or fills with adolescent flushes a broken old man who goes begging in the wind shops, it gives the air the smell of nocturnal port, and at every instant moves the arms in an expression which is the mother of the dance of all times. (Burns citing Lorca 189)

Professionalism and repetition can suppress *duende* which is the hidden, mystical aspect of this art. David Easley, founding member and guitarist for the ¡caló flamenco! company of California believes *duende* and professional-ism can and do coexist:

> Professional players rehearse *falsetas* with an ear for improvisation, but the technical skill is enormous. Players often use the '*duende* excuse' for not having the chops [technical proficiency] to play these *falsetas*. The more one can rearrange beautiful *falsetas*, and even re-compose them spontaneously, and maintain *duende* along with good musicality, the more the myth is debunked. (Easley 1995)

To prove his argument, he points to the live recordings of artists such as Pepe Habichuela, Paco De Lucia, Manolo Sanlucar, Enrique De Melchor, Rafeal Riquini and Paco Peña. As he says, "These artists are doing something difficult and beautiful in a spontaneous and unedited recordings. This has *duende* " (Easley 1995).

# CHAPTER III FIELDWORK

My 'grass roots' approach to fieldwork examines the lives of two leaders in the flamenco community of San Jose, California. Mariano Córdoba and Guillermo Ríos embody the shared history, genealogy and wisdom of the flamenco guitar tradition.

## Mariano Córdoba

Mariano Córdoba was born in 1924, in a Castillian village of the province of Guadalajara to a family of seven brothers and sisters. When he was ten years old his family moved to Madrid, where he went to work doing odd jobs to help support his family. As he was walking past a barber shop one day, he heard a guitarist playing, and could not resist entering the shop. The barber was Manuel Santos and he became Córdoba's first teacher. The ten-year old Córdoba could not afford to pay for lessons, but the barber offered to teach him "with the generosity of those who are born poor but know how to give of themselves" (Córdoba 144).

In two months he learned all the guitar music of Santos, who then guided him to another barber who knew a little more, Esebio Diaz. Córdoba studied with him for four months and was then introduced to the *cantador* Pepe de Huelva, who said his playing was fine and the next day he would have his debut accompanying him.

> I knew what the score was, or at least thought I did. *Cantadores* and guitarists used to work in the center of Madrid, in the famous *calmos flamencos* (flamenco gatherings) and I felt in the height of my glory, with success before starting. How little I knew. (Córdoba 144)

The following day, Pepe de Huelva and Córdoba walked to the train and got off in one of the poorest districts in Madrid. They entered a tavern full of

workers who were talking, drinking wine and smoking. Pepe approached the counter and asked for two glasses of wine, one for himself and the other for Córdoba. Without wasting time he said: "Come on boy, take out your *Sonanta* (slang for guitar) and play some *fandangos.*" The *fandango* is a light song known as *cante chico.* Córdoba thought the request was a joke, but Pepe was serious. The boy pulled out his guitar and as he played, Pepe sang.

In the meantime, their audience continued to drink, smoke, and talk. Nobody paid any attention to the musicians. As soon as Pepe finished his song, he pulled out a little dish from his coat pocket and passed it around, appealing to the listeners' good will for contributions. Córdoba was ashamed and tears came to his eyes. De Huelva noticed and remarked, "Come on boy, in a few days you will get used to it." From there they went to other places until they had sung and passed the plate in all the taverns of that neighborhood. Finally at two o'clock in the morning they stopped and counted their money. The total amounted to five *pasetas* each. Pepe handed Córdoba his share and congratulated him on his debut in the artist's life. Córdoba recalls:

> The impact of that beginning -- in spite of having known no other life but a perpetual struggle for bare existence, (I had never before begged for money) had an element of brutality and ruthlessness in its lesson, even though the witness of that brutality, the street, the trees, the flowers and the moon, said nothing.
>
> I went home and could not sleep thinking all of what happened that evening and in my meditation I realized that the singer was mediocre, and I, as the guitarist, was even worse. I realized, I had neither the skill nor the experience to compare with the guitarists who played in the famous *calmas flamencos.*
>
> I had nowhere to turn and was unable to make a decision. I had no money to take lessons from a good teacher. The standard of living after the Spanish Civil War was so low, that some days it was difficult to find something to eat. (Córdoba 145)

Putting his pride aside, Córdoba resolved, "If this is what fate has to offer, having to beg in those taverns of the devil to begin a life in art, I accept." The following day continued as before, going from one tavern to another accompanying the singer. .

Córdoba expected to further his musical education by performing. At times, his earnings were so meager that only a sense of humor sustained him. The realization that he was performing for and begging from people who could not afford to be generous, bothered him. In some taverns no playing or singing was allowed. Nevertheless they played, hoping to be allowed to finish. In most places they were told to leave. Córdoba recalls that, "No matter how hardened we had become, these rejections always left us saddened" (Córdoba 145). When they were allowed to perform, they were not always well received. On one such occasion his guitar was destroyed by the drunken audience.

For another year, Pepe and Mariano continued their career in the taverns. During that time, Mariano met a young man who wanted to become a bullfighter. He convinced Mariano to join him and they entered a school for that purpose. They practiced with a small calf. Córdoba recalls that the calf was a veteran and had much more experience than they did.

> When I presented my *capote* (cape) and addressed the calf, it charged, got hold of me, tore my pants several times and threw me all over the place until I thought I was ready for the garbage can. (Córdoba 146)

Córdoba then told his friend:

> You are welcome to your career as a bullfighter, as for me I will stick to my guitar. Even if at times it frustrates me and gives me headaches from trying to master it, at least it does not punish me like that malicious cow! (Córdoba 146)

D. E. Pohren notes that flamenco and the spectacle of the bullfight are deeply related. Both aspects of Spanish culture stem from the beliefs of the poor as the two most probable ways that they can break out of a depressed social and economic level (Pohren 17). Pohren also notes that Mariano Córdoba is "one of the better guitarists and instructors" (Lives appendix).

In 1936, the first year of the Spanish Civil War, Cordoba's father died, leaving him to support his mother and sisters. He knew no other way to do this except to play the guitar. Struggling with his career, he realized that he wanted to be a professional, he needed lessons from an accomplished teacher.

In 1940, his mother took him to Rafael Nogales. He told his new teacher how he suffered with the guitar to no avail. He felt that he knew less than when he began. Nogales replied, "If you know that you do not know, you know enough, because there are many who do not know that much" (Córdoba 147).

After a year of study with Nogales, Córdoba practiced eight hours a day and began playing with small professional troupes.

In 1945, he was drafted into the military service. He was stationed in Morocco (then under Spanish rule) where he stayed for three years. He recalls:

> While in Morocco I was appointed as an aide to a Lieutenant who happened to like flamenco guitar and was on my side when it came to liberty and special assignments. I also became friendly with some local Arabs and learned something of their music. This undoubtedly had some influence and helped me capture some of their styles of music. Arab music has a strong influence on flamenco. After all, they were in Spain for 800 years! You'll find Arabic themes in the *Siguiriyas, Soleares*, and many other *toques.* (Córdoba 14)

In 1948, after serving three years as a draftee in the Spanish Army, Córdoba returned to Spain and began playing for the flamenco dance school of maestro Rafael Cruz. Cruz was a disciple of La Quica and Frasquillo, two famous flamenco dance teachers.

In 1950, he accompanied the *cantador*, Antonio Molina, and the dancer, Flaora Albaicin. With them he made some of the first flamenco recordings on Odeon Records in Barcelona. In 1952 he was engaged to play at the Cabaret Sacromente in Barcelona. That year, 'Antonio', considered one of the greatest flamenco dancers, was in Barcelona. Antonio listened to Córdoba's playing and organized a large company with him as a guitarist. Córdoba returned to Madrid where the company was being organized and discovered that an additional guitarist had been added. It was his former teacher, Rafael Nogales.

Two months later, he made his debut with the group in the *Teatro Espánol* in Madrid. Looking back, he says, "For me it was unbelievable to be playing in the best theater in Madrid for the greatest dancer of all time. That evening is so treasured that I would not exchange it for all the money in the world" (Córdoba 147).

For the next five years Córdoba performed with Antonio's company in theaters of Europe and the Americas. During this time he met his future wife Carmen Ruiz, who danced in the company. She was a native of San Francisco, California and after the tour Córdoba settled there to teach and perform. In 1958, he opened a night club in San Francisco called "El Patio Andaluz." This became a center of the San Francisco flamenco culture where local and international performers met.

In 1960, Córdoba sold his night club so that he may devote more time to recording, performing, and teaching. In December of 1960, he signed a contract to record for Fantasy Records and another in 1961 with Capitol Records. At the time of this writing he is recording his 5th album for Highland Recording company. At the age of seventy-one he is in semi-retirement, teaching only a select group of serious students and performing two or three concerts a year.

## Guillermo Ríos

Guillermo Ríos took a different path to the mastering of flamenco. He was born in 1946 to Andalusian parents in the United States. Unlike Córdoba, Ríos did not begin the study of the guitar until he was an adult.

In Vietnam, he had served as a combat Marine. On his return from the war, he attended a concert of Juan Maya at the Montreal World's Fair in 1971. This concert changed the life and disposition of Ríos.

He was so attracted to solace in flamenco guitar that after the concert he approached Maya asking for lessons. Maya replied that he was going back to Spain after the concert. If Ríos wanted a teacher, he would have to move to Madrid. Ríos contacted an aunt living in Madrid, and within a month he moved to Spain. He remembers:

> I studied hard with Jaun five days a week. That meant I had to practice ten hours a day. That was the only way to go. I didn't know I wanted to be a professional; I just wanted to learn the music.
>
> It was an uncertain point in my life. Juan said you didn't have to start young but you have to do the required amount of work. 'I will guide you but I can't do the work for you.' You can come here every day and you will learn something even if you don't practice. However, I'm not interested in teaching someone who is not ready to work. If you go to bed every night with your fingers about to bleed, you will be doing the required amount of work. (Smith/Case 3)

After three years of intense practice, Ríos spent six more years performing as an accompanist in the *tablaos* (flamenco clubs) of Spain's capital.

During a total of twenty years of studying and performing in Spain, his reputation grew, awarding him invitations to perform with some of the most respected singers and dancers.

His compositional and technical mastery brought him back to the United Sates in 1983 where he has been a featured guitarist and soloist with the companies of José Greco, La Tania Flamenco, Maria Benitez, José Molina, Maria Alba and Rosa Montoya. From his initial exposure to flamenco guitar in

Montreal, to the intimate *tablaos* (flamenco night clubs) of Madrid, Ríos has performed as a soloist and accompanist on the great stages of the world.

These performances include three critically acclaimed concerts at Carnegie Hall. After his 1990 performance there, a critic for the New York Times wrote:

> "Guillermo Ríos is an unusually inventive flamenco guitarist: he plays with exhibitionist flair and an underlying sense of drama." (The New York Times 3/12/90)

In1994, Ríos signed a contract with IMA record company to record seven new Compact Discs, which add to the two previously recorded, Sol Y Sombra, Sun and Shadow and Soul of Spain. Ríos also recorded an instructional video, Mastery of the Flamenco Guitar. At the time of this writing, Ríos has left the Bay Area and is now teaching and performing in Ventura, California.

**A Comparison of Teaching Methods**

The art form began as, and continues to be, a predominantly oral tradition requiring a long term apprenticeship with a reputed master. Flamenco has never been institutionalized, or written down extensively until the 1970s. In flamenco pedagogy, written transcriptions are not customary. This isn't because of a high non-literacy rate among flamenco guitarists, but because reading music may obscure the spirit of the flamenco.

Ríos and Córdoba have opposite teaching philosophies. Ríos teaches the traditional way by imitation in the oral tradition. Córdoba teaches from written transcriptions of his arrangements.

Both teachers insist on strict adherence to the *compás*. Ríos believes the sound of the heel, tapping out the rhythmic cycle is "another voice" in the music. Córdoba prefers notation to visually communicate the *compás* in his arrangements that range from a simple *Sevillanas* in triple meter to the complex twelve beat *Siguiriyas.*

Oral tradition for a student trained in reading music can be slow and tedious. In my lessons with Ríos we did not progress until I played each falseta

perfectly. This is because Ríos feels that written notes obscure the spirit of the music (Ríos, lessons 1994). Unlike Córdoba, he allows his students to record the lessons on video or audio tape.

Ríos pedagogical approach requires students to develop two seemingly contradictory skills: a strong power of imitation, and the ability to create spontaneously. First the student must memorize a group of *falsetas* and its structure exactly as the teacher performs it. Then, the student is encouraged to invent variations without abandoning any rules of *compás*.

My study with Ríos began with the *Siguiriyas*, considered one of the most difficult forms because its twelve beat *compás* that must convey the depth of suffering and oppression. It is in the genre of *cante jondo* (deep song), and will be analyzed in the following chapter.

In contrast, Córdoba transcribed three volumes of arrangements. His students must purchase these arrangements before they begin their studies. He rarely allows students to record his lessons or concerts. He has a recorded tape of the transcriptions and does not see a need for students to tape sessions.

Córdoba transcriptions are precise and with competent reading skills, a guitarist could perform a difficult song like the *Siguiriyas*. He began our studies with a simple *Sevillanas* in 3/4 and slowly progressed to the more difficult song forms, preparing the student for the more difficult *cante jondo.*

Table 1
Teaching Comparison

| | Córdoba | Rios |
|---|---|---|
| Material | Traditional Arrangements | Jazz Harmony Original Compositions |
| Method | Written Transcriptions | Oral Tradition |

Córdoba learned flamenco by way of oral tradition, spending many hours on one *falseta*. He understands that his students do not have the time that he had to learn each *falseta* by imitation and repetition. His transcriptions offer

the literate guitarist an expedient and effective introduction to traditional flamenco guitar.

Ríos does not read music or advocate its use in a performance context. He began our lessons with one of the oldest forms, the *Siguiriyas.* He started with simple *falsetas* characteristic of the song form. Only after I could perform these flawlessly, did he introduce his original *falsetas.* These *falsetas* use non-traditional harmonies which reflect the cross-cultural trends that have become a part of modern flamenco. Jazz harmony in fusion with flamenco song forms can be heard in his many of his *falsetas* .

Córdoba has said the first criterion for the *falseta* is an adherence to the *compás* (rhythmic pattern). When Ríos teaches, the first step is to internalize the *compás.* This is done with the tapping of the accents with the right foot in a continuous, slow tempo.

The best results occur when the music is met on its own terms. Ríos believes the student must learn Spanish, go to Spain and live and work alongside the musicians. He told me, "You can never learn to really play unless you're out there in front of people in a performance situation."

# CHAPTER IV THE *SIGUIRIYAS*

## *Cante Jondo*

The traditional forms of flamenco dancing and guitar playing (*baile* and *toque*) seek to replicate the emotive, intense style of the *Siguiriyas* and all forms of *cante jondo*. Flamenco scholar Cristof Jung writes "*Cante jondo* is the essence of the art of the seventy different forms of flamenco and is the foundation from which a multitude of other styles developed" (Jung 57).

The *Siguiriya* (*Siguiriyas* plural) was first called the *Seguida*. Later the diminutive suffix *-illa* was added making the making the *Seguidilla*. Through a phonetic deformation the *Seguidilla* became known as the *Siguiriyas*. For this reason, both *Seguidilla* and *Siguiriya* are found in source studies.

An early reference to Gypsy presence in Spain and the *Sieguidillas* (an ancestor of the *Siguiriyas* is to be found in a short story by Cervantes published in 1613 called *The Little Gypsy Girl*.

> Preciosa turned out to be the most accomplished dancer in all the Gypsy world...she acquired a rich heritage of carols, songs, Seguidillas and Sarabands, and other verses especially ballads, which she sang with great charm. For her cunning grandmother realized that these tricks and graces, along with the youth and great beauty of her granddaughter, would contribute to the increase of her fortune. So she sought out and got hold of these poems in any way she could, and there were plenty of poets to produce them: for there are poets who condescend to deal with Gypsies and sell them their works, just as their are poets who write poems for the blind, and invent miracles for them to get a share of the profits. It takes all sorts to make the world, and hunger can drive clever people to do unheard of things. (Burns citing Cervantes 193).

It is considered one of the essential forms of *cante jondo*. *Cante jondo* is commonly translated in English as "deep song." The *Siguiriyas* is considered to be the most dramatic and serious of flamenco songs. It is most suited to the spirit of *duende*. The themes of the *Siguiriyas* are sad,

sentimental, and reflect human tragedy, their suffering, and pain. In relation with the eternal themes of love, life and death. This form is one of the most difficult to interpret because of the quality of nuances. At times they must be shadowed, desolate but also dramatic and fierce.

The *Siguiriyas* appeared at the end of the 18th century and rose in popularity throughout the 19th. According to Zern (4) and Thompson (71) the *Siguiriyas* evolved from the *tonás* which are vocal chants that are neither danced nor accompanied by guitar.

The lyrics of the *Siguiriyas* lament the pains of love and death and usually begin with a complaint. Easley remarks that many *falsetas* are derived from the melodies of the *cante* (singing). The *cante* of the *Siguiriyas* may be described as a wailing lament with lyrics containing long sections of vocables or nonsense syllables, such as *aye, ah,* and *oh.* Although vocable syllables have no translated meaning, they are meaningful in expressing the emotions of the music.

The verses of the *Siguiriyas* reveal a Gypsy obsession with death and fate, as well as the alienation and despair that are a part of Gypsy character, "I called out to death, but it would not come, even death pities me" (Zern 4). Mitchell writes that death and grieving are the most common themes of the *Siguiriyas.* Manuel Garcia Matos believes the *Siguiriyas* originated from the singing style of professional female mourners (Mitchell citing Matos 127).

## Cross-Cultural Relationships

Spain's influence on other Hispanic cultures can be observed in the *Siguiriyas.* This is exemplified in the music of the Quichua Indians who live in the Andes of Ecuador. The lament performed at the Quichua funeral uses the same tonality (A phrygian) as the *Siguiriyas* with emphasis on the descending progression (D-C-A).

Another resemblance occurs in the playing of the *golpeador.* This term is used in both cultures with different meanings. In Imbabura harp music it is a musician, but in flamenco it is a plate used to protect the face of the guitar when struck with the fingernails of the right hand. In the performance of the Imbabura

harp two musicians are required: a harpist and percussionist. The harpist plucks the instrument, while the *golpeador* (from *golpear* 'to hit'), beats the time cycle on the soundbox of the harp (Schechter 403). The *golpeador* in flamenco is the plastic tapping plate placed on the face of the body of the guitar and is struck sharply with the fingernails of the strumming hand. These percussive taps called *golpe* double the role of the guitar as a chordophone and idiophone. Unlike the Imbabura harpists, flamenco guitarists perform both roles simultaneously.

Venezuelan conductor, Lorena Táriba notes that the *golpe* is pervasive in South American folk music. As many musicians trained in Venezuela, her first instrument was the *cuatro.* The *cuatro* is a four stringed miniature guitar tuned A-D-F# and B below F#. Like the flamenco guitar, the *cuarto* is used to accompany the voice and has a solo repertoire.

The *golpe* in Venezuelan music and the *compás* in flamenco classify song forms by their rhythms. There are four common types of *golpe* performed on the *cuatro.* They are classified by their meter and geographical area in Venezuela. Similarly, many flamenco song forms are classified by geographic origin, such as the *Malagueña* from Malaga and the *Sevillanas* from Seville.

Ex. 1

Venezuelan *Golpes*

*Golpe Tuyero*: From the central coast in 6/8.

*Golpe Oriental*: From the east coast in 5/8 (3+2).

*Golpe Larense*: From the Midwestern in 4/4 .

*Golpe Llanero.* From the Central Plains in 3/4.

Flamenco *Compás*

*Siguiriyas, Soleares, Bulerias.* 12 beats:

*Zhambra, Rumba, Farruca.* 8 Beats

*Fandangos, Malagueñas, Sevillanas.* 3 Beats

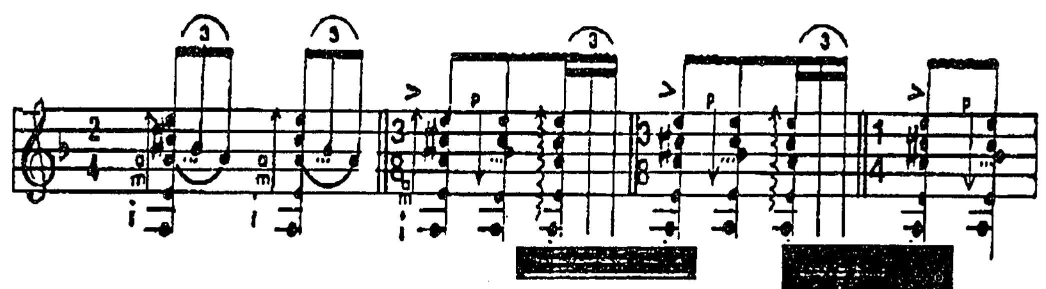
## The *Compás*

The *compás* is a rhythmic cycle of accents. The word is the union of *com* and *pás*. *Com* translates as "devide" and *pás* means "to pass"; therefore, *compás* is the division of passing time. The term may be applied in flamenco in two ways. First as a classification of song forms. For example, the *Siguiriyas* is known for its twelve beat *compás* which is devided in groupings of 2+2+3+3+2. (Ex. 2)

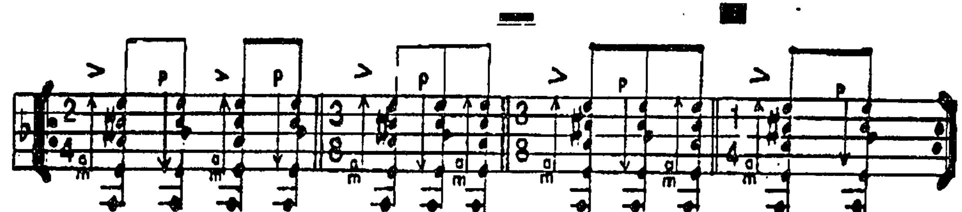
Ex. 2 *Siguiriyas Compás*
Time Line **1** 2 **3** 4 5 6 7 **8** 9 10 **11** 12
Accents > > > > >

Also, the term refers to a standard *falseta* that is typical to the song form. (Trans. 1 and 2)

Transcription 1
Siguiriyas Pattern



Transcription 2
Basic Siguiriyas Pattern



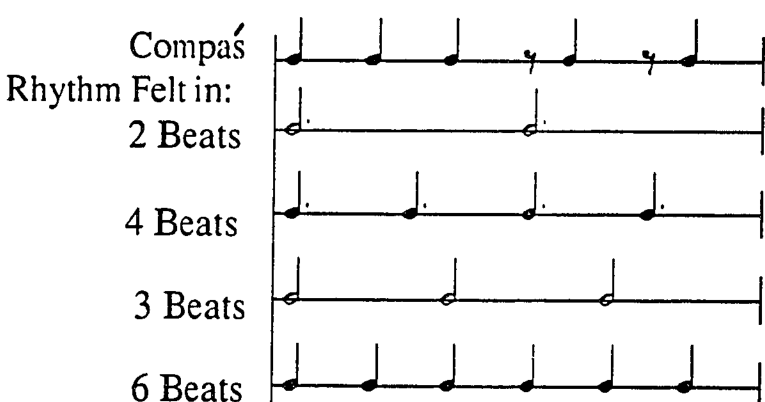
Everything played, danced or sung must be within the *compás.* The *compás* of the *Siguiriyas* is an accented rhythmic pattern of twelve continuous beats. Traditionally it is played with a slow *compás* which is often paused creating a wandering rhythmic affect. A sonorous *golpe* often cues the advances and retreats of the dancers. The dance is characterized by fighting stances called *desplantes* and a middle section of quick footwork called *escobillas..* The first dancer of this style was Vincente Escudero. Later castanets were introduced by Pilar Lopez.

Córdoba calls this *compás* above the identifying rhythm of the *Siguiriyas.* (Interview, 1995). In the song form structure, this identifying rhythm is the first and usually the last *falseta.* The accents of the *compás* are most prominent in the identifying rhythm and both guitarists either return to this recurring theme or the more basic version below (Trans. 2).

## Multiple Beat Perspectives

The *compás* in flamenco can is simple and straightforward; however, counter rhythms expressed by the guitar, hand-clapping, or footwork can make the underlining rhythmic pattern difficult to follow for the student. Flamenco is rhythmically active music with counter rhythms woven into one another createing a complex web of interlocking patterns. This creates tension and movement. David Locke describes this phenomenon as 'multiple rhythmic gestalt'. It is the existence and perception of more than one simultaneous beat grouping in a given rhythm or ensemble of rhythms. Lockes' principle can be applied to flamenco rhythm. The *Siguiriyas* is in 12/8 and can be perceived in duple or compound meter with beat groupings of two, four, three or six. (Table 2)

Table 2
The Siguiriyas Compas
With Multiple Beat Perspectives




These beat perspectives serve to better understand the division of time within the *compás*. This table only outlines the infinite variety of rhythmic interplay for the Siguiriyas.

## Mode

There is a debate concerning the origin of modality in flamenco. One side supports the liturgical influence of Byzantine chant; the other from the Arabic *maqäm*. Thiel-Cramér wrote, "Most of the roots of flamenco can be traced to the rich blend of liturgical and secular music of the East that met the Gypsies when they came to Andalusia in the fifteenth century" (Thiel-Cramer 23). Thompson agrees, stating "The Andalusian cadence, based on the phrygian mode, is derived from the Byzantine liturgy preserved by the Mozarabic church in Córdoba" (Thompson 68).

Manuel De Falla, the Spanish composer, affirms noting three salient features that relate to Byzantine liturgical music: First is the modality that includes the medieval Phrygian and bi-modal note collections. This mode is found both in flamenco and Byzantine chant and may be called "flamenco phrygian," (Ríos, 1994: fieldwork) or "harmonic phrygian" (Sheer 12). With E as its tonic, this mode is composed of the notes E F G# A B C D. Sheer mentions that the G# serves as a harmonic function, because when E is in the melody, it is typically harmonized by an E major chord.

Second, is the subdivision of the intervals between the seventh degree and the tonic. This creates the microtonic intervals discussed previously. The intervals are a part of tuning and mode in Middle and Near Eastern music.

Finally, the use of free rhythm found in Byzantine chant and the *Tonás*. This flamenco song genre is considered one of the first and is performed without any fixed *compás* or guitar accompaniment.

De Falla found two additional influences in the creation of flamenco: the influence of Islam and the Gypsy settlement in Southern Spain. Sárosi (1971) and Manuel (1986) relate flamenco modality to Spain's Moorish legacy. What De Falla called "bi-modal note collection," is more accurately called the *hijaz* mode of the *maqäm*.

Arab urban, classical, and to some extent regional folk musics are based upon the use of approximately a dozen *mäqämät* of which *hijaz, hijaz kar* and *bayati* are among the most common. Sárosi writes that the "*Hijaz* occurs in large areas and with great frequency from India through Persia and Turkey to the Balkans and even Hungary, and it is obvious that it was by way of the Moors--not the Gypsies--that it came to the Iberian Peninsula" (Sárosi 44).

Peter Manuel links the *hijaz kar* mode to the harmonic phrygian mode found in flamenco (Manuel 48).

Ex. 3 shows the most common flamenco modes starting on E.

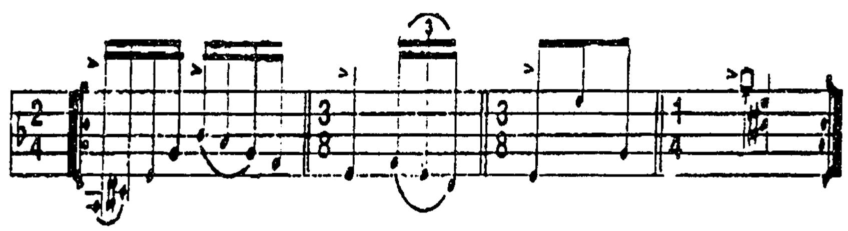
Ex. 3
Flamenco Modes with E Tonic

Manuel's *maqäm* explanation is supported by seven centuries of Arabic rule in Spain. De Falla's Byzantine theory may also be supported by historical rule. The Byzantines commanded the cultural life of Visigothic Spain and controlled major trade routes between Europe and Asian countries. However,

the strongest argument is the Arabic origin of flamenco modality. Sárosi and Manuel support this theory because the exact notes of *maqäm hijaz kar* (second mode in example 3) are found in the *Siguiriyas.*

Ríos remarks, "The mode is lurking behind the corner of all flamenco music, even if a piece seems to be in a major or minor mode it is typical to hear elements of the phrygian, even slightly alluded to" (Ríos, fieldwork 1994).

Transcription 3
Hijaz Kar-Phrygian Siguiriyas Cadence



Transcription three shows one of Córdoba's cadential formulas for the Siguiriyas. The mode with an A tonic is A Bb C# D E F is the mode *hijaz kar* of the *maqäm.*

## Harmony

Flamenco harmony cannot be considered independent of the guitar. Since the 1600's the guitar has become the standard instrument that developed flamenco's harmonic system. The open strings of the guitar without *cejella* (capo) are tuned in fourths except for the major third beween the G and B. From the first E below middle C, the notes are E A D G B E. This research supports Manuel's hypothesis for evolution and structure in flamenco harmony:

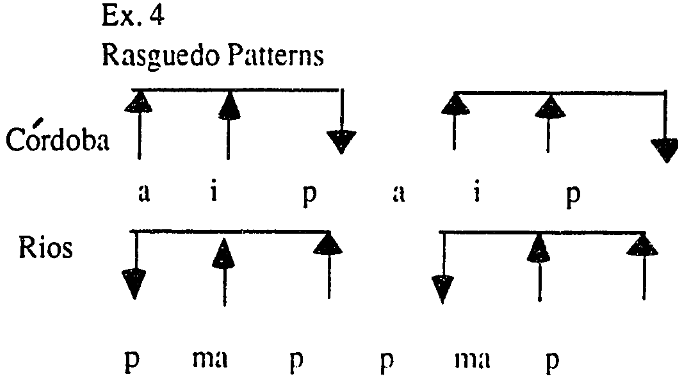
> First, flamenco harmony is a syncretic product of Arab modal practice and European harmony. Secondly, many of the most distinctive features of the harmonic system, and in particular the uses of altered chords, have

arisen in direct connection with idiosyncratic characteristics of the guitar. (Manuel 46)

## Flamenco Guitar Techniques

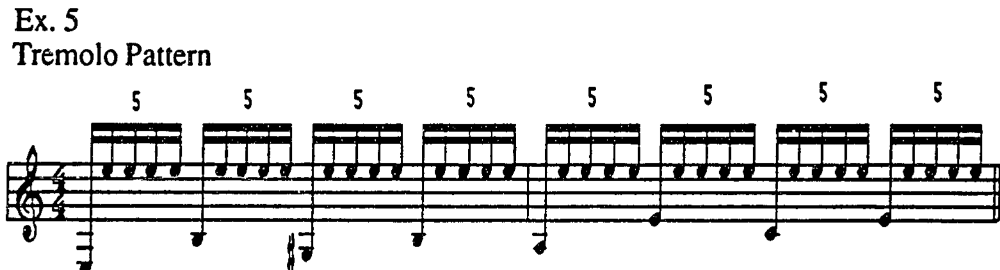
The symbols used in the examples are from classical guitar notation with modifications for techniques found exclusively in flamenco. In classical guitar notation, the letters *p, i, m,* and *a* indicate the striking fingers of the right hand. They represent; thumb-*p*, index-*i*, middle-*m* and ring-*a* fingers. The arrow is a flamenco modification that shows the up and down directions of the strum known as the *rasguedo.* The square is another symbol used in the Córdoba transcriptions to indicate the *golpe* percussion.

1) The *rasgueado* is a primary technique for rhythm. The Spanish verb *rasguear* means "to stroke." Therefore *rasgueado* indicates the stroking of two or more strings with up and down combinations. If pointed upward, the stroke sounds the higher strings of the instrument first. Córdoba and Ríos have an extensive repertoire of *rasgueados*, yet both favor a continuous triplet pattern. Córdoba prefers the upper example because it can be played as a fast explosion of sound with universal applications to various song forms. Ríos prefers the power of the thumb accenting the first and third beats of the triplet (Ex. 4).



2) Tremolo: This technique serves a both melodic and harmonic functions. An arpeggio followed by a repeated attack of the melodic note four of five times sustains a melody. The fingers maintain a mandolin-like sustained melody, while the thumb plucks accompaniment (Ex. 5).

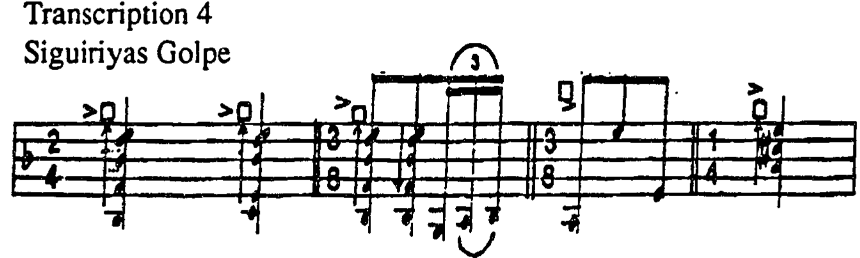
Ex. 5
Tremolo Pattern



3) The *picado* and *ligado* are used in the articulation of the melodic line. Hammering and pulling are often a display of speed called picado (pick). It is often stepwise within a two octave mode. The finger nail of the index and middle fingers strike the string alternately. With correct pressure and angle of the wrist, it will produce an *apoyando*. In English this term means rest stroke because the finger nail is resting on the adjacent string. The *apoyando* produces a full and percussive timbre. Also common is the ligado (slur) technique in which the right hand is at rest and the left fretting hand slurs two to five notes creating a melismatic ornamentation.

4) The *golpe* emphasizes the accents in the meter. In notation, Córdoba uses the square symbol to indicate the *golpe* percussion that outlines the rhythmic cycle of the *Siguiriyas*.

Transcription 4
Siguiriyas Golpe



These basic techniques will be found in all aspects of flamenco guitar practice. They are combined and modified to suite the style of the guitarist.

**Tune Families**

*Falsetas* serve a dual function: as an improvisational unit that is arranged based upon the context of performance, and as a pedagogical model. In my fieldwork Córdoba insisted I perform the first *falseta* from memory before approaching the next *falseta.* By dividing the song form in *falsetas,* the piece is easier to learn and arrange.

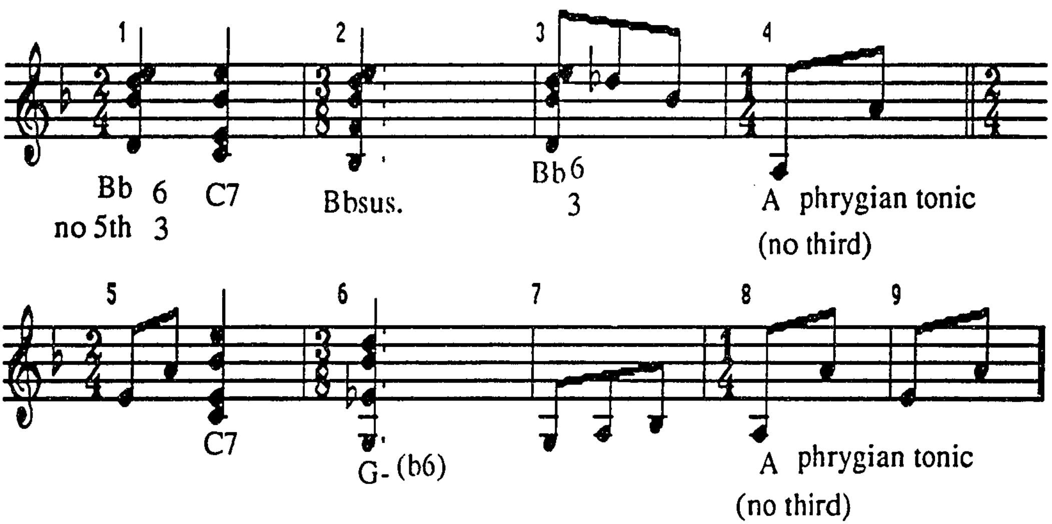
Córdoba and Ríos were trained in Spain with a master guitarist by oral tradition. Each developed their perspective of flamenco in different generations. Mariano Córdoba is seventy-one years of age and performs in a traditional style, as compared with the forty-nine years of Guillermo Ríos who uses a modern treatment of harmony and rhythm. Regardless of these differences they use the same approach in ordering the *falsetas* in performance. Each guitarist performs the song differently and rarely creates completely new material in performance because the *falsetas* are prepared before the perfromance. They may be either composed by the guitarist, or it may be a falseta of a former teacher or perfromer.

"A given culture may be predisposed to certain kinds of melodic contours, but the actual process of composition is suggested by complex permutations based on melodic pools" (Cowdery 499). These melodic pools in flamenco are precomposed segments called *falsetas.* A *falseta* is an improvisational unit played on the guitar *"en compás"* [in time] (Wheeler 196).

Tune families can function on a macro and micro level. (Cowdery 502) The macro level is a general grouping of song forms grouped by a rhythmic cycle. The micro level is the precomposed *falsetas.* The performer recombines *falsetas* to fit the context of performance. There are three principles to tune family methodology:

1) Classification of *falsetas* or tunes by overall contour; this relates to the descending harmonic contour of the Siguiriyas: the chords D minor, C, Bb and A. Measures 3 and 7 are in the key of Bb and emphasize the *hijaz*- phrygian cadence.

Transcription 5
Descending Progression
and Harmonic Analysis



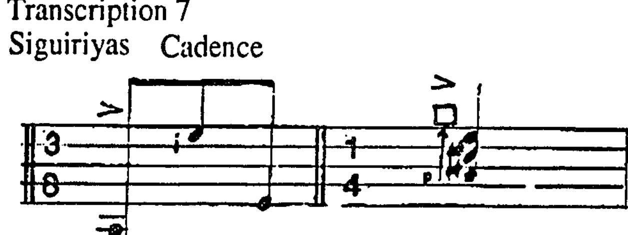

2) The conjoining principle where tune families have sections in common while other sections differ. This can be applied when comparing *Siguiriyas* to other twelve beat song forms like the *Solares.* In Transcription six, Córdoba transposes this falseta into two other twelve beat song forms, the *Soleares* and the *Serraña* that are typically in the key of E phrygian.

3) The recombining principle is elements of one variation may appearing in another. This is evident in the cadential formulas by Ríos:

Transcription 6
Cadential Formulas

Ríos explained that this cadence is typical for this song form. Córdoba prefers the cadence A-E-E-C# with the E repeated in octaves.

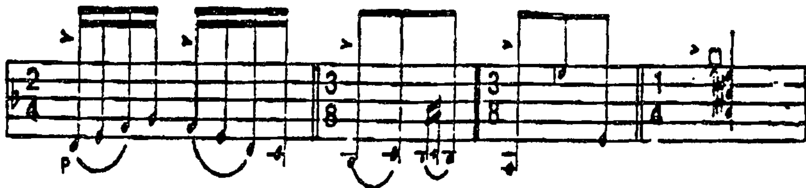
Transcription 7
Siguiriyas Cadence



Córdoba often uses a specific cadential formula for longer falsetas. The flexibility of the *falsetas* in Transcription 8 makes its order interchangeable. These changes are dependent upon the mood of the guitarist and the context of performance .

Transcription 8

Cordobas' Cadential Formula for Longer Falsetas



Córdoba based the composition of the *falseta* in Transcription 9 on the *escobillas* (footwork) that the dancer may perform. Jerri Carmo, professional dancer for Rosa Montoya Dance Company said, "the *escobilla* is a term in flamenco dance that pertains to a passage of 'footwork' the dancer creates. It is not the same every time, but varies from dance to dance, and from dancer to dancer, like a *falseta*" (Carmo interview). The rhythm of the footwork imitates the rapid sweeping of a broom. Córdoba has said that he has never heard a *falseta* that has captured this step, so he composed the following example:

Transcription 9

Córdobas Escobilla Falseta

Escobillas

A(LA) Dm(REm)

Dm(REm)

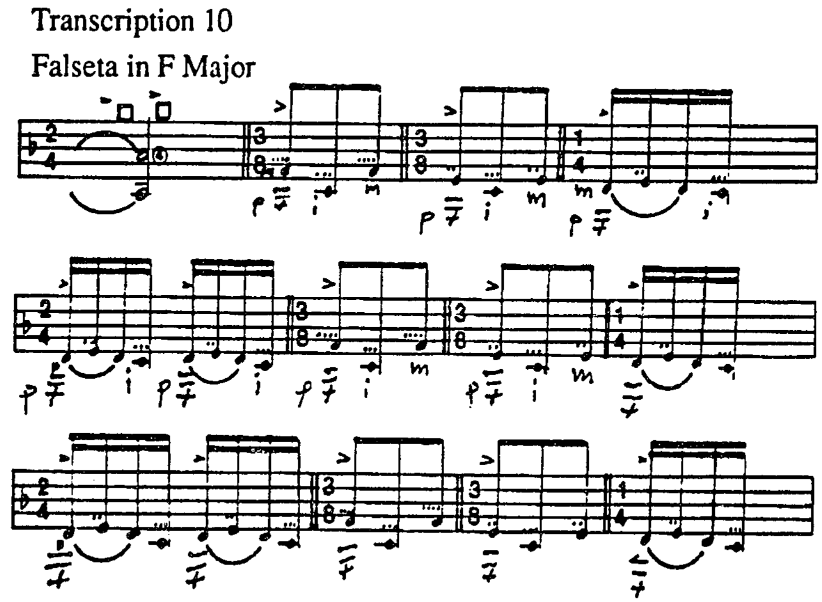
Dm(REm) C(Do)

C(Do)

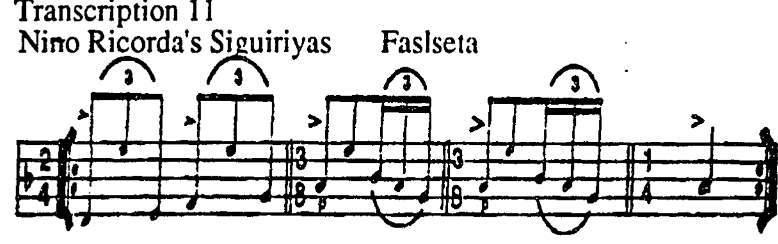
C(Do) B$^{b}$(Si$^{b}$)

B$^{b}$(Si$^{b}$) A(LA)

*Falsetas* are often used to modulate to the relative major harmony. This example moves to the key of F major:




*Falsetas* are passed down from teacher to student as well as composed by the guitarist, and in this way the art is constantly rejuvenating. Transcription 11 shows a *falseta* by Mariano's teacher Niño Ricorda:



The next example of Guillermo Ríos, twenty-two years younger, demonstrates another approach to *falseta* composition. Observe the D drone which serves as a harmonic anchor for measures six through eight. From measures 9 to 16 Ríos changes the drone to A. This drone along with quartal harmonic voicings, and modal mixtures exhibit modern characteristics.

Transcription 12
Siguiriyas Falseta by Rios
with Modal Analysis

1 D dorian 5 C dorian/D drone

6 10 A hijaz/phrygian

6 11 15

16 A locrian D aeolian 20 Bb lydian

21 A phrygian Ab locrian

The *compás* is well defined by the circled cadences at the end of the twelve beat cycles. After measure 22, Ríos would typically perform the traditional identifying pattern on the *Siguiriyas* as shown in Transcriptions one and two. The result is a non-linear structure that alternates between the identifying pattern and pre-composed falsetas.

I have discussed melodic pools of a tune family with Ríos and he agrees that flamenco guitar music continues to thrive and replenish itself through *falsetas* that may be called tune families. This is no attempt to trivialize the complexity of improvisation, but rather serves as a tool for an objective perspective of a student outside the culture.

## Improvisation

"Historically," writes Whitney, "flamenco is an oral art, improvised within a specific set of structures which dictate rhythm and mode" (Whitney 5). Bruno Nettl defines improvisation as the study of variability in performance practice (Nettl, "Improvisation" 23). What determines the choices a flamenco guitarist makes in interpreting and structuring a song form in a performance? Nettl makes the universal statement that improvisation is linked to oral tradition, and until the 1980's improvisation and composition have been viewed by academia as opposites. Many western composers now admit that improvisation is a pre-compositional step. Nettl urges the musical society to regard improvisation as one of the normal ways that humans make music regardless of its origin.

There are many contextual factors that influence the decisions of the musician as well as the substance and quality of the performance itself. One of the most common is the overt symbol of cultural security, money. Like Córdoba performing in a *tabloa* (bar), his motivation was not to promote flamenco, but survival. He chose to do this within the cultural expectations of a flamenco guitarist. Other factors include the physical properties of musician, as with Ríos's physical stamina to practice twelve hours a day until his fingers bled. The immediate physical surroundings such as size, temperature and acoustics of the room are another factor, as well as the audience for which the performance is directed. If the audience is composed of students or observers

not familiar with flamenco the musician may choose to demonstrate only the basic character of the song form. However, if the audience is more knowledgeable and shows a sophisticated appreciation, the musician may be willing to, through more extensive and elaborate *falsetas*, reveal the deeper aspects of the art.

The musical conditions surrounding the performance present further variables to the improviser such as:

1) The choice of which piece to play
2) The choice of the *falsetas*
3) How to arrange the *falsetas*
4) How to react to the response of the audience.

These variables are not conscious choices, nor are they pondered guesses. They represent problems that are solved by rapid-fire decisions in the heat of performance using a system based on formulas, with the *falseta* being the primary unit.

Ríos remarks, "As far as creating something right on the spot, I would not call what I do improvisation" (Ríos fieldwork). Ríos describes his perception of improvisation as recombining *falsetas*. The *falsetas* are variations or tunes precomposed and drawn upon to fit specific performance contexts.

> One rule with variations is that they must never be too long. The variations must always return to the descending progression. Also they must relate to the rhythmic pattern, always respecting the accents. At first I will teach my students to change chords on the accents, but later the student will learn to weave in and out of the hypnotic *compás* [rhythm]. (Ríos fieldwork)

Rarely will he repeat a cadential formula in exactly the same manner. By calling on his repertoire of melodic ideas, and recombining them, he always creates something original and unique to the time and space of the performance.

## Findings

The transcriptions reveal that the *falsetas* of Córdoba and Ríos are rhythmically and melodically modal. "Flamenco is modal music" (Ríos, lessons 1994). The rhythmic mode of the Siguiriyas is 2+2+3+3+2 and may be perceived as multiple subdivisions of the twelve beat cycles (table 2).

Arabic modes and Greek modes of European folk and art music mix in flamenco, creating what Manuel calls the *hijaz* / phrygian (Manuel 46). *Falsetas* define modern and traditional styles. Córdoba's modal mixture in these examples does not go beyond the ionian and *hijaz* / phrygian. Conversely, Ríos in Transcription 12 explores Dorian, Locrian, Aeolian and Lydian. The resulting harmonies of these modes create harmonies which parallel African American jazz harmonies. Culturally, flamenco and jazz both arose from an oppressed, urban society, that developed into a music of cultural identity. Furthermore, both musics are improvised and posses a rich oral tradition.

The prevalent difference between traditional and modern flamenco is the perpetuation of cross cultural synthesis. Flamenco was created by the fertile combination of cultures in Andalusia. This cross-cultural mixture continues to be the catalyst for change in modern flamenco. Modern flamenco (*flamenco nuevo*) has produced a host of innovative, eclectic and popular styles that coexist with traditional "puro" flamenco.

# CHAPTER V SUMMARY

From a general survey of the origins of flamenco to the specific interpretation of a model song, this investigation has arrived at the following conclusions. Flamenco is a reflection of cultures that inhabited Spain since the Byzantine Empire ruled in the 6th century AD, including Jewish, Moorish, Christian and Gypsy influences. With the fall of Granada in 1492, all the elements that created flamenco coalesced.

The music's ability to absorb different styles while maintaining its identity is a major factor in its past survival, present state, and future directions. One example is the cross-cultural musical relationships between traditional flamenco and classical guitar practice in the late 1800s. Another example is modern flamenco's assimilation of other musics, including jazz, rock and salsa.

This analysis illustrates that flamenco music is a unique grouping of song forms defined by rhythmic cycles (*compás* ) which are composed of melodic and harmonic variations called *falsetas*. *Falsetas* are not the only element in flamenco, but to understand their use and application it is essential. These *falsetas* are taught as pedagogical models and used as a basis for learning technique and structure in performance. Once learned by the student, *falsetas* are slightly altered to fit the musician's personal expressive behavior. In turn, these *falsetas* and variants are passed onto subsequent students. The model *falseta* taught by the teacher and the performance *falseta* influence one another. This interplay happens when a performer embellishes and elaborates an existing *falseta*, thus creating a new version that the guitarist may adopt as his or her own.

Since the *falseta* has a dual function, both as a theoretical model in pedagogy and as a unit of improvisation, its definition is extended in two directions. First, it is used as a pedagogical model for teaching students the musical tradition. For example in teaching, Córdoba and Ríos use similar *falsetas* from a common pool of segments that traditionally relate to the *Siguiriyas*. In addition, they also have individual repertories that they have composed themselves or learned from their teachers. Second, *falsetas* are improvised units arranged during a performance. For instance, if Córdoba sees

the dancer performing the *escobillas* (footwork), he will alter his accompaniment to inspire the performer and audience (transcription 9).

The art of improvisation in the flamenco tradition is a balance of pre-composition and variant structure based on performance context. Flamenco guitar playing in the traditional style of Mariano Córdoba is based more on simple harmonic progressions while Guillermo Ríos uses more parallel harmonic movement and jazz influenced harmonies.

**Future Implications**

I was drawn to world music studies by the cross-cultural components of the guitar. The guitarist John Williams said:

> The classical guitar has no solid repertory to talk of, but with the proliferation of world music, we realize that the guitar is an integral part of many cultures' repertories. My problem as a musician is that I can not participate in more of these cultures. (John Williams 1994)

My personal studies of music have been based in three cultures: European classical, African American jazz guitar, and the Persian *setär.* Flamenco parallels the musics I have studied in improvisation, modality, and harmony, yet has its own distinctive identity. This thesis has helped me realize the connection between these various styles, unfolding the many cultural traditions of the instrument.

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