

Los Iyesá

The Iyesá form one of the Yoruban subgroups¹ and inhabit the region of Ilesha, in Western Nigeria. During the centuries of the slave trade, Africans from this region entered Cuba under the generic name of Lucumí, a vague term which included the most diverse peoples of the Coast of Guinea. Towards the beginning of the 19th century they were able to recreate their rituals and other cultural manifestations, adjusting them to the new colonial environment.

In the provinces of La Habana, Matanzas and Las Villas there existed various cabildos of this African "nation", but always closely linked with those of the other Yoruba subgroups, with which they were often confused. Although there were differences in aspects of ritual, language, music, etc., between the groups, the pressure of the slave system facilitated the agglutination and fusion of their cultural forms.

Iyesá, Iyesa, Iyecha, Ireacha, Iecha, Ichesa, Yecha, Yesá, Yesa Modu and Yesa Modu Ibokú are the many names by which are presently known the musical manifestations and rituals brought to our country by these captives, and which survive today in "cubanized" fashion, as one more piece of evidence of the resistance offered by the Africans and Creoles that preserved these traditions, against the process of forced transculturation imposed by the dominant classes of the colonial and pseudo-republican period.

The Iyesá Modu cabildo San Juan Bautista: its foundation, Traditions. Initiation Rites. Present condition.

According to the tradition preserved by its members, this cabildo was founded on 24 June 1845 in the city of Matanzas

¹The other subgroups are the Ahoiri, the Egbá-awori, the Ekiti, the Ekó, the Iyebú, the Yekri and the Oyó (Amaury Talbot. *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*. London, Oxford University Press, 1926, p. 5).

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by fourteen *babalawos*, priests of Orula, the divination god, and seven *Osainistas* (*Olósain*), worshippers of Osain, goddess of the herbs of the forest.²

The organization of this group had begun around 1830, to satisfy the desire of Iyesá captives for their own *cabildo*, in which they could celebrate the festivities of religious character of their "nation" and could unite to achieve the relative social and economic advantages that these institutions represented to their members: the monetary aid in case of sickness or death, the chance to worship their ancestral gods, the sense of ethnic solidarity and the possibility of subsequent liberation through the *cabildo*, were the many reasons that they struggled for fifteen years to establish the *cabildo*.

The men of the Lucumí *cabildo* Santa Teresa, already established in Matanzas were the ones who "sponsored the flag", following the tradition that each one had this characteristic feature.

The number of the founders, 21 in total, corresponded to the *marca* or symbolic number of Ogún, god of metal, forest and ironworks, who, together with Oshún (*Osún*, *Osú*, *Esú* in Iyesá dialect),³ goddess of the rivers and springs, would govern the new *cabildo*.⁴

²I have found it impossible to find the act of constitution of this *cabildos* in the Matanzas archives. The informants insist that, until a few years ago, they had a copy, which sadly was destroyed.

³The first form is how the name most frequently appears in the songs collected in the *matanzas cabildo*; the other two, "as the name should be pronounced", "like it was pronounced by the Iyesá of the sugar mill (*ingenio*) La Rosa" (*Lydia Cabrera, Anagó, vocabulario lucumí. La Habana, Ed. C.R., 1957, p. 125*).

⁴This information is interesting in that it can form a line of investigation into the founding of other *colonail cabildos*. That its founders were *babalawos* and *osainistas* (*olósain*), and that they employed the symbolic number of the sponsoring god are unique facts that we have not seen in studies done on other *cabildos*.

At first, due to insufficient funds, they had to worship in the ceremonies of public liturgical character of Saint John the Baptist, The Virgen of Mercedes and the Virgen of la Caridad del Cobre, catholic saints with whom were identified Ogún, Obatalá (the *orisha* who created Earth and humans), and Oshún, respectively, as a consequence of the religious "syncretism" which occurred in Cuba between certain Yorubá cults and elements of popular Catholicism. (A better term would be "juxtaposition", since the syncretic elements are evident only in external manifestations of the cult; to the extent that we get deeper and deeper into the *mysteries*, the African elements are expressed with an extraordinary purity, for example, in the rituals of initiation, divination. or funerals.) But years later, all the members were able to collect sufficient funds to commission a sculpture of Saint John the Baptist from an Italian (!) sculptor living the city. All of which -liturgy and sculpture- were appropriately baptized.

In their secret rites, far from the presence of the colonial government or the church, they continued worshipping the African representations of their gods.

According to tradition preserved in Matanzas among the descendants of the old founders of the cabildo San Juan Bautista, Iyesá women were from Ulesha, the capital, and the men from Ibokún, the countryside.⁵ If the night surprised a man in the territory of the women, he had to take refuge in the trees until dawn to avoid being killed by them.

⁵"Ilesha is the capital of the Iyesha section of the Yorubá" and means the house of the *oricha* (*ilè òrisà = Ilésà*), and "Ibokún is a place to the east of Oshogbo" (R.C. Abraham. *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*. London, University of London Press, Ltd., 1958, pp. 303 and 269).

"Ibokún is an old Yorubá village from where the sub-tribe Iyesha claim to be from.." (Ulli Beier. *A year of Sacred Festivals in one Yoruba Town*. A special "Nigeria Magazine" production. Nigeria, 3rd edition, 1959, p. 92). This shows the amazing permanence of certain Yorubá traditions in Cuba.

The peasants they called *Iratón*. The men worshipped Ogún and the women Oshún.

This strange legend, behind which lurks an old battle of the sexes, and about which informants have not been able to provide further details, and the consideration of woman as an "impure being" due to menstruation, determined the existence of certain divisions between men and women, within the activities of the *cabildo* and its rituals, which in many aspects have survived to the present day.

Among the Cubans of the *Iyesá* *cabildo* of Matanzas there are not complex initiation rites, in those that perform ceremonies which require days of seclusion, the use of sacred drums and great propitiatory (appeasement) sacrifices. Only the men "transmit blood", a type of secret pact which is made between the neophyte and the elder members to seal the bonds of brotherhood. The women "have a place in any *casa de santo Lucumí*", that is, they pass through initiation rites of the form of *santería*⁶ most common in Cuba, in which are determined the elements of Oyó origin, the most powerful of the Yorubá subgroups.

Presently, the *cabildo Iyesá* of Matanzas is clearly in a state of decline; its members stevedores, laundry workers, bricklayers, domestic workers, homemakers, employees of small businesses, cobblers) are limited to celebrating each 24 June the festival of San Juan, in their location on Calle Salamanca no. 187. On occasion, they perform the religious music characteristic of their group in ritual festivals celebrated in the provinces of Matanzas, La Habana, and Las Villas.

⁶Among the popular Cuban cults called *santería* there should be a distinction made between the *Regla de osha*, of Yorubá origins, with its diverse rites (*Oyó*, the most widespread, *Iyesá* and *Egbado*) and the *Regla Arará*, with two great branches, *Dajomenó* (Dahomean) and *Magino* (*Mahy*).

Their gods

Lydia Cabrera was told by one of her informants the "the Yesas did not say orisha but rather orissa",⁷ to designate the supernatural entities considered the intermediaries between Olofi (Olodumare or Olorun), Supreme God, and humans. This we have corroborated during our own investigations. Analyzing the texts of many Iyesá songs in Cuba we observe, almost always, the use of the *s* for the Yoruban *sh* (orisá, Sangó, Osún, Orisá Oko, Esú) as well as other dialect variants that are preserved today in our country – although this sound tends to get confused with the Spanish *ch* sound, as in the song:

Orisá lade
orisá lade
oni má peterí
ko ko ko io io ro ró,

Dedicated to all the orisá. Also:

Solo: *Bogbo ruma le irodé*
bogbo ruma le isodé.

Coro: *Irabá irabá*
bogbo ruma le i Sangó,

"Which expresses the ire of Aramufe after a struggle with Ogún and end up "tête à tête" (*sic*). also:

Bembelere awó
abembe Osún
bembelere awó
abembe Osún,

dedicated to the goddess of the rivers.

⁷Lydia Caberea. *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

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The orisha or orisá the Matanzas Iyesá worshipped were the same as the other groups of ancient Yoruban origin:

Elegbá (Eshu, Elegbara), lord of pathways and crossroads.

Ogún, lord of war, metals, forest, and metalsmithing.

Oshosí, lord of hunting and hunters.

Shangó, lord of lighting and fire.

Babalú Ayé, lord of plagues and sicknesses.

Inle, orisha of (fluvial (?) p. 1550 fishing.

Ibeyi, the child twin gods.

Agayú, boatman orisha, father of Shangó.

Orula (Orúmbila, Orúmila), god of divination.

Orisha Oko, god of farmland.

Osain, lord of the herbs of the forest, a great healer.

Oke, the hills, "bastón (walking stick) of Obatalá".

Ogué, god of livestock.

Odudua (Odua), orisha of the underworld.

Obatalá, creator of the human race, "god of all heads", orisha of peace and justice.

Yemajá, goddess of the sea.

Oyá (Yansa, Yansán), orisha of the winds and lightning (centella).

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Oshún, goddess of rivers and springs.

Yewá, god of the world of the dead.

Oba, "conjugal fidelity", one of the wives of Shangó.

And others...

Many of these orisha have special names to designate some of their "paths" or avatars in "Iyesá land": thus, Shangó is also known as *Aramufe*, *Alami*,⁸ or *Aladdó*;⁹ *Oshún* is *Dodowá* or *Ododowá*; *Yemajá*, *Kediké*; *Oyá*, *Naé*. These last three goddesses are venerated by the African descendants of the sugar mills San Joaquín, Saca Piedra and Socorro, in a sacred pond in the south of Matanzas province.¹⁰ Also they worship *Obátalá Eddégu*, son of Olofi, "who made the human race";¹¹ *Ogún Ibokú Bokú*¹² and *Osain Aggúenniyé*, who "came from the land of the Yésa and is the protector, the benefactor of the whole world".¹³

However, in the cabildo San Juan Bautista they insist that *Oshún*, *Ogún*, *Orula* (Saint Francis of Assisi) and *Oshosi* (St. Norbert) are *Iyesá* orisha who passed into the pantheons of neighboring "tribes" in Africa.

⁸Lydia Cabrera. *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁹Lydia Cabrera. *Por qué... cuentos negros de Cuba*. La Habana, Ed. C.R., 1948, p. 248.

¹⁰Lydia Cabrera. *Op. cit.*, 1957, p. 186

¹¹Lydia Cabrera. *Op. cit.*, 1948, p. 262.

¹²Informant Lorenzo Urrutia, Matanzas, 1966.

¹³Lydia Cabrera. *El Monte, Ignbo Finda, Ewe orisha, vititinfinda*. La Habana, Ed. C.R., 1954, p. 70.

Although they assert that Oshún¹⁴ and Ogún are their "national gods", they also worship the legendary enemy of the latter: Shangó (Sangó), "the air of God, the thunder, the storm", calling him Aramufe. They worship him on the patio, since he can never be near Ogún, since "war" would result. This name is also known in Africa. According to R. C. Abraham,¹⁵ in Nigeria they believe "that Odùduwà was sent by Arà-m-fè also called Ayálóòrum the Creator". Talbot¹⁶ mentions as one of the minor Yorubá gods Aramife, the fire, and Ulli Beier¹⁷ affirms that another "form of the cult of lightning is practiced in Ifé and Ondó. There the god is called Oramfe. The cult of Sangó has been introduced and the two cults coexist".

Musical Instruments

The group of musical instruments used to create Iyesá music is formed by four drums (*ilú*), two *agongo* (*agogo*) and a *güiro* (*agbe*).

The drums are cylindrical and made from cedar trunks hollowed by hand. They are bimembroponic, with goat skins on each end fixed by hoops of a flexible wood called *tibisí*.¹⁸ They have a tensioning system consisting of various strands of "cáñamo isleño" in zigzag form, that pass one

¹⁴The cult of Oshún is the most important among the Iyesá of Nigeria. Each year they perform ceremonies to renew a legendary pact between the goddess, who is believed to inhabit the Oshún River, near the village of Oshogbo, and this Yoruban subgroup (Pierre Verger. *Dieux d'Afrique*. Paris, Paul Hartmann, 1954, p. 186). The Iyesá origin of Oshún is also maintained by the practitioners of the afrobrazilian cults, who equally preserve drums, songs and dances of this origin, similar to those of Cuba (Edison Carneiro. *Candonblés da Bahia*. Rio de Janeiro, Ed. de Ouro, 1969, pp. 32, 58-59, 184; Roger Bastide. *Les religions africaines au Brésil*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1960, pp. 269, 279; Pierre Verger. *Op. cit.*, p. 165-166, 185-186).

¹⁵R.C. Abraham. *Op. cit.*, p. 278.

¹⁶Amaury Talbot. *Op. cit.*, t. 2, p. 88.

¹⁷Ulli Beier. *Op. cit.*, p. 92.

through another until, in odd number, they fasten the hoops onto which the skin is rolled. A third order of transverse laces tightens the laces in the shape of an *N*, bringing them together two by two. The drums are completely closed. The bodies of the drums are painted a bright green, the color of Ogún Areré, and have a central yellow stripe, which symbolizes Oshún, to whom the drums are dedicated.

The drums are called: *caja* (36cm tall x 31cm diameter), *segundo* (31cm tall x 26cm) and *tercero* (31cm tall x 26cm diameter). The fourth drum, we are told, was added in Cuba; it is the same size as the *caja* and called the *bajo*. It is used to reinforce the largest drum and "play the role of the contrabass in the orchestras".

Despite being bimembranophones, only one head of the drums is played, with sticks of 30cm in length by 1 cm diameter, made of branches of guayabo, or of the wood called *madera de hueso* (bone-wood)¹⁹ and even crossbars of chairs. When the drummer feels it suitable, he changes the position of the drum, and plays the other head. The *bajo* is played with the hands.

The toques are started by the *caja*, and a changing and elaborate rhythmic pattern develops. It is said to "speak".²⁰

¹⁸ "Common name of various species of *Gramináceas silvestres* more or less climbing. Their leaves are eaten by cattle, and birdcages and baskets are made from their stalks. The true *tibisis* belong to the class *Arthrosylidium* and grow in forests and thickets principally in the mountain regions and near streams and other damp areas [...]." (see Juan Tomás Roig. *Diccionario botánico de nombres vulgares cubanos*. La Habana, Ed. del Consejo Nacional de Universidades, 1965, t. II, pp. 896-897.)

¹⁹ "This name is given, in all of the provinces, to various trees whose trunks or branches, of smooth bark and compact wood, white or yellowish, gives them a certain resemblance to bone." (See *Ibib.*, t. I, pp. 518-520.)

²⁰ Many African languages are tonal. According to Ulli Beier (*Yoruba Poetry*. Special publication of "Black Orpheus". Nigeria, 1959, p. 9), in Africa the Yoruba have drums capable of repeating all the sounds of their language, not in the manner of Morse, but rather repeating the

Its drummer is the most skilled. the other drums perform and accompanying function, playing ostinato rhythmic patterns.

In general the drummers play seated. The player of agongo, standing. The caja and the bajo are played between the legs of the players. The segundo and tercero are inclined on the thighs of their respective players, who with their left hands hold the drums in place or test the sound of the other skin. After a while, buoyed with enthusiasm, they play on the edge of the other head, but the musical value of these strokes are insignificant. Other times "the musicians play standing, or marching, and then all the drums are played with a stick and carried under the left arm".²¹

The Iyesá drums are sacred. Within them is believed to live the deity Añá, for which they are the object of special rites. Their skins cannot be tightened by fire, women cannot come near them, and they can only be played by drummers "initiated" into this function. Moreover, they are "fed" - they receive their own sacrifices.

To tune the drums, dry wine is sprinkled on the tensioning system and on the heads, or the rims are tapped with a wooden mallet. During the fiestas the largest drum is draped with a "yellow cloth that encircles it like a dress",²² in the style of the *ibanté*, a type of apron embroidered with cowries and multicolored beads which adorn the *batá* drums used in the *wemilere*, the sacred celebrations of groups with Oyó influence.

The agongo are called: *agongo primero* (first agongo), with the highest-pitched sound, and *agongo segundo* (second

ties and exact tonal levels of the language. These are so important that consonants and vowels can be eliminated the the sentence still be understood. So it is said that the drums "speak". In Cuba it is believed that some drums, such as those of the batá and the iyesá, can speak.

²¹*Fernando Ortiz. Los instrumentos de la música afrocubana. La Habana, Publicaciones de la Dirección de Cultura, vol. IV, 1954, p. 370.*

²²*Ibid.*

agongo), with a lower pitch. The measure some 30cm in length and are similar to the *ekón*, the bells used by the secret society Abakuá. They are made of two flat, triangular pieces of metal, fused together on two sides. They are played with a thick stick some 4cm in diameter and 30cm long.

The penetrating sound of the agongo is one of the characteristics of Iyesá music. Their timbres complement and dominate the rhythmic pattern.

The güiro is similar to the *shekeré*. They are made from the hollowed-out fruit of the "güiro cimarrón",²³ encircled by a net of dried seeds or glass beads in the intersections. Generally it is not used, except for the *toque* to salute Ogún when "the Cabildo is opened", during the performance of the particular rhythm dedicated to this orisha with which the public ritual celebration is started.

Fernando Ortiz tells us also of other musical instruments which are used, or were to be used, by the Iyesá in Matanzas Province, such as the San Martín,²⁴ a percussion instrument made from a piece of rolled metal, a netted maraca,²⁵ similar to an *atcherà*, made of güiro and filled with peony seeds²⁶ or with flamboyant,²⁷ but redressed with a little net of beads which hit the güiro from the outside; the *okpele*,²⁸ an uncommon instrument used in rituals to evoke "the dead", and the tablets of San Lazaro²⁹ (catholic saint identified with Babalú Ayé, orisha of sicknesses and plagues), used by the

²³*Cucurbitácea cultivada, Cucurbita Lagenaria, L. (Lagenaria vulgaris, Sw.) (Juan Tomás Roig. Op. cit., t. I, p. 494.)*

²⁴*Fernando Ortiz. Los Instrumentos..., vol. II, p. 207.*

²⁵*Ibid., p. 116.*

²⁶*"Climbing plant of the Pailionáceas family, wild in the thickets and jungles throughout the islands. It is the Arbus precatorius Lin." (Juan Tomás Roig. Op. cit., t. II, p. 771.)*

²⁷*Delonix regia (Bojer), Raf. Great red-flowering tree originating in Madagascar (Ibid., t. II, p. 411.)*

²⁸*Fernando Ortiz. Los instrumentos..., vol. II, p. 29.*

²⁹*Ibid., p. 27.*

Iyesá for their toques, together with drums and maraquitas. However, in the cabildo of San Juan Bautista de Matanzas, we have not seen them. Perhaps they are secret instruments, or are used only in rural areas of the province, or, in the worst case, that their use has been discontinued, when they could have enriched the sonorous arsenal of Cuban popular music.

Ritual songs and rhythms

Iyesá songs, of those which I have collected to the present day around seventy, have a melodic line which is shorter and more segmented than those from other Yorubá groups. Their structure is antiphonal. They are dedicated to the different orisha, and make references to chapters of their history or praise their powers. The dialect is Iyesá. According to Lydia Cabrera,³⁰ *ainá yogo* " was the language spoken by the Yesás; it was spoken often in Matanzas".

Songs also exist which are bragging or innuendo called *puyas*, such as the one about the herb:

*Endi wé wé wé
oyú ama pá
orile wé*

in which a person is asked with which herb "they made saint" (which sacred herbs —ewe— were used during their initiation ritual).

Or the song of Añá,

*asé leyó
asé leyó Añá
asé leyó omi legba
asé leyó inka yá,*

³⁰Lydia Cabrera. *Op. cit.*, 1957, p. 40.

in which the drummers put on airs that their drums also have the sacred "secret" of the god Añá, just like the batá drums have. A vestige of an old African rivalry between the Iyesá and the Oyó.³¹

Many times songs are sung in honor of the festival's attendees:

*Eyó eyó eyó erú male
eyó erú male
orisa bogbo ni yero;*

or in remembrance of the old land of origin:

*Oli ri mi usu gba re yo
bo lo iya mi o
iyesa modu yeso ro.*

A great variety of rhythms does not exist among the Iyesá. Nor is there great variety in their dance steps. Nevertheless, they are happy and natural, like "rumbitas".

They have toques which are *suave* and *fuerte*, determined by their intensity and by the inclusion or not of the bajo. Those songs dedicated to the warrior saints (Elegba, Ogún and Ochosí), are examples of toques fuerte and this drum is not used.

"Toque" in the Iyesá cabildo San Juan Bautista

The development of an Iyesá religious festival —also called a *toque*— is similar to the *wemilere*, as the celebrations of *santeria* in honor of the *orisha* (in which sacred batá drums are used) are called. It starts with an *oro* or *oru* of only drums before the *canastillero* of the house, a small cabinets in which are kept attributes and *soperas*, the receptacles in which are kept the stones (*otán*) and items where the *orisha*

³¹*Ulli Beier. Op. cit., pp. 2-5.*

are fixed "fijados". "The *orisha*, after being "fixed", is not manifested in the sacred rocks or objects. These are simply carriers of their *ashé* [supernatural force]. The *orisha* remain incorporeal, a force, but a judgmental force, domesticated."³² This first *oro oru del igbodu*) is a succession of rhythms dedicated to each of the *orishas* in a fixed order determined by the ritual: after saluting *Elegbá* and the dead (*Egún*) , rhythms are played for all of the "gentlemen saints" (*santos varones*) and then to the "female saints" (*santos hembras*).

Certain forms of ancestor worship are still preserved in Cuba in the different religions of African origin. Offerings, invocations, dances, songs and sacred toques make up essential aspects of these still little-studied practices. The memory of the principal deceased members of the *cabildo* remains alive and their names are invoked in all the important ritual ceremonies.

After the *oru del igbodu* the drums are taken into the main room and the part of the ceremony begins in which singing and dancing occur (*oro del eyá aránla*).

Each initiate who arrives must salute the sacred drums, dancing the ritual toque of the *orisha* to which he or she is devoted, and leaving a small sum of money as symbolic payment in a cup at the feet of the drummers.³³

The salute varies depending on whether it is to a male or female saint. In the first case, the believer lies on the ground, face down, with the arms extended the length of the body and the palms turned upwards. In the latter case, the arms are not stretched out, but rather are supported successively over the right and left elbows. Then the bodies

³²*Pierre Verger. Op. cit., p. 14.*

³³*The custom of making tributes of money to the drummers, or to stick them to the front of the dancers -so common in cuban religious festivals- also exists in many cultures of West Africa, such as the Yorubá, the Akán, and others.*

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of the four drums are touched with the fingertips, which are then touched to the lips. Some initiates even kiss or place their forehead on the drums, to receive the beneficial flow (ashé) they are believed to possess.

After songs and dances for all of the orisha, according to the order established in the second oro – which has certain variations with respect to the oru del igbodu – the last part of the celebration is devoted to the santo to which the particular ceremony is dedicated.

Whenever a new initiate arrives at the house, the toque is interrupted, as often as necessary, and the rhythms of their orisha are played; then they proceed to the corresponding ritual salutes.

IN these ceremonies, as in those of other religious groups of African influence, trance possession occurs ("darle santo", "subirse", "montarse"). A believer is suddenly possessed by a deity; he adopts the gestures and attitudes of the orisha's myths, and offers supposed prophecies or advice to those present. For the practitioners of these cults, the "mounted" person is converted into a "horse" (caballo) of the god, and loses their human personality, becoming the supernatural entity.

The possessed dancers use the special clothing of each orisha, as well as the attributes which characterize them, all of which, in shape, color, and materials, scarcely differ from those employed by the other groups of Yorubá origin.

Before ending the festival a *canto de cierre* (song of closure) in honor of Ogún is played, which tells when this orisha returned victorious from the war. A santera moves to the rhythm of the music with a cup of water in her hands. Then the water is thrown into the street, "to refresh", to keep away bad influences. Thus ends the celebration.

The Iyesá cabildo Modu San Juan Bautista de Matanzas is the only group known to possess today consecrated Iyesá drums "de fundamento", in Cuba. However, there is evidence that they existed in other parts of the country. Fernando Ortiz³⁴ states that "until the beginning of this (20th) century there was an Iyesá cabildo in Regla, a small town near Havana, with its special drums, but with the so-called "guerrita de los negros"³⁵ in 1912 the drums were burned by their owners and the cabildo was dissolved". A few years ago a group of believers in Havana built a set of drums similar to those in Matanzas, but were never able to reproduce the toques of the originals. Moreover, we are told that they did not possess Añá, for which they fell into disuse after a short time. Recently we have been informed of the existence of remnants of old Iyesá cabildos in Jovellanos, in Matanzas province (although we are told they have lost their traditional drums) and in Placetas and Sancti Spíritus, formerly the province of Las Villas. Incidentally, we have also seen a drum similar to the ones described in this study in the town of Trinidad, also from Las Villas, although of smaller proportions and painted a dark red. These areas will be the subjects of later investigations.

Many Iyesá songs have passed into the repertoire of the fiestas de santería with the accompaniment of batá drums, and their influence is also easy to identify in some genres of more worldly or secular Cuban music, such as *mozambique* and the *pilón*, but only the members of the Matanzas cabildo preserve the orthodoxy of these songs and toques, whose integration into the national archive is another of the contributions made by the captive masses to Cuban culture.

³⁴ Fernando Ortiz. *Los instrumentos...*, vol. IV, pp. 370-372.

³⁵ *Racist genocide perpetrated against the Cuban black population during the government of José Miguel Gómez. In just a few weeks, with the complicity of white racism instigated by the bourgeois and North American imperialist interests, the army killed more than three thousand members and non-members of the political party Independientes de Color, who merely protested for their rights as citizens.*