

## REPENTISTAS

Francisco Nazareno (age 14) and Jose Nazareno (age 12) migrants from the Brazilian Northeast to Rio de Janeiro, who earn money today in public squares in Rio de Janeiro as repentistas or performers of traditional song contest.

REPORTER faz o desafio (Globo TV reporter challenges the two repentistas with a verse that he has brought and memorized. The desafio or challenge is made to the repentista who replies with a rhymed verse that has a satiric or ironic surprise ending meant to provoke yet another response, i. e. "Try to top this." The words are sometimes modified to fit a rhyme. It is performed to the rhythm of a tambourine instrument called a pandeiro, although another instrument may be used.)

Olha seu moço, esses dois na minha frente,  
Lá das bandas donde vieram,  
Fazem piada e poesia,  
Desafio e companhia  
Mas hoje nem que de repente  
Comigo aqui na praça,  
Vão aprender a fazer repente

(Look at these two in front of me,  
In the place from where they came,  
They make jokes and poetry,  
Challenges and camaraderie  
But today by chance,  
With me here in this square  
They will learn to do repente\*)

[\* repente is the art of responding to a verbal challenge in wit, irony and rhyming verse song.]

FRANCISCO (1st response)

Eu cheguei da Paraiba,  
Já tô batendo pandeiro,  
Cheguei lá do Nordeste,  
Dentro do Rio de Janeiro,  
Vou provar à esse safado,  
Que eu vou dar nesse puleiro

I came from Paraiba  
Already playing the pandeiro  
I arrived from the Northeast  
To Rio de Janeiro  
And I'll prove to this rascal  
That I'm the rooster in this hen house.  
(Outburst of laughter from group of surrounding people)

JOSÉ (2nd response)

Vou tocar tambú agora,  
Que saquei numa cultura,  
Tô pegado no pandeiro,  
Isso é regraditura,  
Que você só tá cantando,  
Porque está na estrutura.

(Now I'm going to play the tambor,  
That I brought from my culture,  
I'm holding the pandeiro,  
This is the rule of the game,  
But you are only singing,  
Because it's fixed in the structure\*)

[\*"structure" meaning the words written out before  
in the challenge verse of the reporter, and not improvised as  
is done by repentistas, i. e. the reporter doesn't know how to  
improvise repente]

FRANCISCO to REPORTER

E você agora  
(now your turn)

REPORTER

Eu já desistí de cantar  
(I already gave up)

FRANCISCO third response to close the desafio or challenge

Você pegou o papel,  
E já cantou decorado,  
Eu vou provar prá você,  
Que eu canto improvisado,  
Se você não sabe nada,  
É melhor ficar calado.

(You brought the piece of paper  
And sang it memorized,  
I'm going to prove to you  
That I sing improvised,  
And since it's clear you don't know anything  
It's better to shut your mouth and not to sing.)