

### LEGEND OF "TATA LECHUZO

(...) "tells the tradition that existed in the mid-eighteenth century at the Alcalde Mayor hacienda, a tireless individual on the walk, and the same day and night, he was always walking, dealing with herding cattle, a site to another, occupation that seized him all his time.

The guajiros, who very often met him on those lonely sidewalks, late at night, named him Tata Lechuzo and with that nickname he was known throughout the region.

He was Tata Lechuzo, according to the chronicles of Cenaguer, from a small hamlet that later bore his name, which is currently known by Rhodes; tall, lean of meat, quite a few years old, when the fact that the legend remains, of very few words, and very determined in all its ventures.

Always on foot and without any company, or dogs to help him, without weapons, since he only used the traditional rib tie on the shoulders, he frequented in this way, the most solitary paths and trails in the region, the most impassable swamps, and the thicker mountains in search of lost cattle, or of jíbaros animals, for whose company he had a remarkable perception, because as light as the imprint imprinted in the dust of the road, or in the mud of the swamp, he knew the kind of animal that by she had passed.

In this way he was looking for a certain day, almost at dusk, by the coastal mountains of the swamp, some cattle escaped from the hacienda, when he noticed a trace of them in the bush; He went in and could observe a slight threshing, which continued in the middle of the swamp, inwards, and following him, he was able to convince himself that there was a recent trace of the crossing of large animals, knowing that not long ago the bulls that had been the objects of his investigations had stopped.

As it was already late, he preferred to wait for the new day, and marking the start of the threshing among the mountain bushes, to recognize him by day, he returned to the hacienda in search of a compadre, exclusive affection of his life, a person with whom he only showed affection and I appreciate.

(...) Tata Lechuzo intended to follow the path and record it to its end, anyway, and so the compadre participated, whose name is not recorded in the chronicles of the times. In accordance with everything, the excursion was prepared with great secrecy, and one

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cold morning, with a great mist, humid, the compadres left Juragua, where they had spent the night, heading for what is now known as the Paso de los Güiros, from where the path that he found with the cattle trails started.

At dusk they were already in the middle of the swamp, crossing the sidewalk, which despite having some water, proved to be of a solid bottom that made crossing easy; Before leaving the day they had reached the other waterfront, noting with surprise that there were high wooded highlands and thick bushy mountains.

They camped that night in the middle of the jungle, and when the day woke up they continued to recognize those lands; leaving marks on the most visible trees, that could indicate to him at the turn of the path that they should take, always walking through the lands of the waterfront, they came to a great clean, forming a great savanna, in whose center there was a wide lagoon, in which apparently were resting, countless animals: cows, bulls, pigs, deer and horses, in intimate consortium, unaware of the presence of the hikers who, on the other hand, absorbed in their contemplation, did not try to make their presence known.

... They carefully recognized the Bay of Pigs and the Ensenada de la Broa, all the lands adjacent to the swamp, and in all of them they did not find the least human footprint, the least vestige of life; and all that enormous expanse of unpopulated land, was occupied by a large number of animals, cattle of all species, wild, jíbaras, who expressed great fear of the mere presence of the compadres.

Going through the marks that they had been leaving in the mountains they crossed, they returned to Yaguaramas and the tradition tells that Tata Lechuzo addressed the authorities giving him an account of his discovery, and asking for the mercy of those lands he discovered, and since the Compadre renounced all benefits, uncomfortable because of the last discussion they had had in the middle of the mountain, he requested them alone.

The cienegueros refer, that as Tata Lechuzo did not know how to write, to make the request for a grant, he went to a priest of the Yaguaramas party, at the same time entrusting him with whatever steps were necessary to carry out, to get that grant, he retired while waiting of it, the Mayor Mayor hacienda, where he usually resided.

Despite the fact that in the historical chronicles of that time there is no priest with the last name Zayas, the blind people insist on ensuring that this was the name of that priest, who, remaining with the charge of Tata Lechuzo, achieved the mercy of those lands, but his

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exclusive name, thus mocking the ignorant Tata who had trusted him without any caution.

Tata Lechuzo was sad and dejected from this failure, to the extreme of a few years later, and when that priest owned those lands, he wanted to see them for the last time, and went to die at the foot of a lagoon that retains his name, and he is located in lands of the colony of Mr. Juan Plasencia, in the Santa Teresa estate, owned by the Australia sugar mill.

That lagoon known as Laguna del Lechuzo, preserves on its margins the remains of the unhappy hiker, and on the sidewalk that very close crosses it, the blinds say Tata Lechuzo comes out, with his typical bow in hand, to wait for him to pass by it some priest, in whom to avenge the inferred mockery, by which he stripped him of the fruit of his discovery.