

# Corridos



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MEXICAN CORRIDOS

FOLKWAYS FW 6913

# Mexican Corridos

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## SIDE 1

- Band 1. CORRIDO DE CANANEA (Yucho)  
Guty y Chalin, Duo 3375X-96855
- Band 2. LA REJECA (Fandanguito) (D. Barceleta)  
Trovadores Tamaulipecos 3693-X (97363)
- Band 3. EL ARREGLO RELIGIOSO, Pts. 1 & 2 (Yucho)  
Cancioneros de Sonora 3650-X (97356), (97357)

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## SIDE 2

- Band 1. TOMA DE GELAVA Traditional  
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- Band 2. ANDAVA AUSENTE SIMON Traditional  
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A. Lorca 3255-X (109222)
- Band 4. LA VAQUILLA (Corrido de Pancho Villa)  
A. Lorca y S. Quiroz 3255-X (109220)
- Band 5. EL MINERO Macario y F. Gonzalez  
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# Corridos



## INTRODUCTION

by Henry Cowell

Mexican Corridos are stories told in song. The word comes from corrir, the Spanish verb meaning to run, and this indicates that there is to be a running narrative. The use is limited - not all tales are called corridos - usually love stories are not included. News stories with embellishments are the most customary; but these range from classical news items which become virtual sagas through retelling, and may deal with news of deeds of old, to the very latest newspaper item. The practice of singing the latest news is a vestige of the time when many Mexican peons could not read, and received news only through the telling of it. This practice is continued now because it is found to be most agreeable indeed to have the news digested, and have it sung to one mellifluously and musically while one lies back and lazes.

In almost all cases the melodies themselves are already known both to the singers and the listeners. They are traditional, picked up orally rather than by benefit of notes. There are nearly always some words or sets of words which are also traditional, dealing with stories of historical character. These words are subject to slight changes, but as a whole remain fairly exact. Some of them have been traced back to Spain, but for the most part they treat of earlier Mexican events and seem to be songs that once spoke of current events; but when these events proved to be historically important, the songs became important too, and have been demanded over and over ever since the time of the happening. The same tunes may be used for several different sets of words, including new words to sing of the latest events. While the sort of event suitable for a singing story includes almost everything, it usually must be dramatic, narrative in form, and climactic. The climax is not in the tune, but in the progress of the story. It is characteristic, as it is also of ballad-singing (which it resembles in many ways), that the voice does not project the drama - the singing must be kept on the same keel, while the listener responds to the words, and himself feels the impact of the story, rather than responding to it second-hand through the projected feelings of the singers.

The subjects chosen for corridos may be interesting events of the neighborhood, the country, or news of the world. The religious corridos deal with anything from a story of the life of Christ to a recent miracle,

or even a kindly act by a priest. Stories of traditionally-known bandits may be mixed in with reports on recent elections. Discoveries of oil wells, volcanos and ancient Aztec ruins may be found preserved in corrido words, sung to the old tunes. Current robberies, murders and visits of foreign dignitaries are told of in song, but usually die in favor of other similar news, since these subjects are apt to be topical rather than historically important.

Love stories which tell of hypothetical lovers, or even local real ones are not usually thought of as corridos, even though they are sung by the same singers. A classical or enduring love story, however, may become a corrido, if it contains a narrative plot, and concerns a historical event. Thus the story of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor has become a corrido (although we have never been able to find anyone who sings it).

The music of the Mexican corrido shares its style with many other sorts of folk songs, particularly love songs. It is most commonly sung by two men together, who accompany themselves on a guitar. While the music is often dubbed "Spanish", the style is only in part related to the music of Spain today. It preserves a music which has largely died out in Spain, but which is related to the practice of fauxbourdon, a cultivated musical scheme of the 15th century, that was picked up by ear by folk singers. This consists of having the entire melody followed by the musical interval of the third (three notes along the scale from the melody) and the sixth (six notes along the scale from the melody). In Spain this has become for the most part absorbed in more varied practices; in Mexico, the two men sing together, not both in thirds and sixths, but either in one or the other. This is fitted into a very simple harmonic scheme, in which the guitar plays either the tonic chord (on the first tone of the scale) or the dominant chord (on the fifth note of the scale). Seldom are any other chords added to complicate matters, and when this does occur, it is a sign of outside influence. The rhythm is always in a moderately-flowing three, like a waltz, and in many corrido melodies the final tone is held over the barline, so that there is a mild syncopation. There are certain well-known spots in the melodies where the voices always slide from one tone to another (for the benefit of musicians, this is when the leading tone slides down to the subdominant, and, as an answer, the submediant slides down to the mediant).

The corrido style may be found outside of Mexico - we have heard it from Central America and Cuba, and to a limited degree from South America, but it seems to flourish particularly in Mexico.





# SIDE I, Band 1: CANANEA

Voy a dar un pormenor  
de lo que a mi me ha pasado,  
que me han agarrado preso,  
siendo un gallo tan jugado.

Me fui para el Agua Prieta  
a ver quien me conocia,  
y a las once de la noche  
me aprehendio la Policia.

Me aprehendieron los gendarmes  
al estilo americano,  
como era hombre de delito,  
todos con pistola en mano.

La carcel de Cananea  
se edifico en una mesa  
y en ella fui procesado  
por causa de mi tropeza.

Ya con esta me despido  
por las hojas de un granado,  
aqui se acaba el corrido  
de este gallo bien jugado.

Singing Translation (with a few liberties for  
rhyming, etc.)

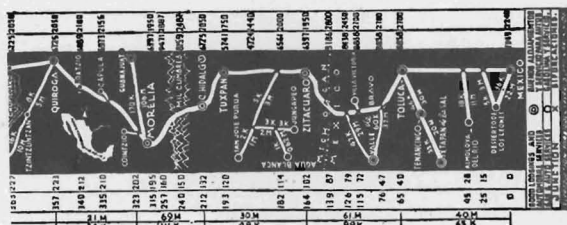
Gather round, I'll tell you my story  
By the leaves of an avocado <sup>1)</sup>  
And it's all about the capture  
Of this reckless desperado.

I went off to Agua Prieta  
Just to see if they would spot me,  
And the bells were tolling midnight  
When the four policemen got me. <sup>2)</sup>

Yes they quickly took me captive  
In the famous Yankee fashion, <sup>3)</sup>  
For their guns were cocked and ready  
And their eyes were filled with passion.

The Cananea prison,  
Stands upon a lonely prairie,  
And they tried me there that morning  
Just because I was unwary.

Now it's time for me to leave you  
By the leaves of the avocado,  
And I'll close my sad corrido  
Of this reckless desperado.



- 1) Avocado: in the original it's a pomegranate
- 2) In original: cops arrested me
- 3) In the American style

## SIDE I, Band 2: FANDANGUITO (LITTLE FANDANGO)

A languid, southern rhythm characterizes the  
"Cupido corrido". The slow movement of the jarana  
dance on moonlit nights beside the mango grove. It  
is easy to place the origin of this because of the  
clever use of place names in the song: Tierra Blan-  
ca, Misantla, Papantla.

In the middle of the song there is a sudden shift  
from the romantic to the very practical -- love is  
after all secondary, there are many other satisfac-  
tions in life: a flourishing cornfield or a fine horse...  
or even other loves, if this one fails.

Ay cupido chiquito tirano, (2)  
Ay cupido dame la mano

Fandanguito de tierra caliente  
que bailan todos los del manglar.

Fandanguito que en noches de luna  
por sus ventanas iba yo a cantar.

Que me importa que ya no me quieras,  
que al cabo la milpa ya va a jilotear.



## TRANSLATION

Ay, little tyrant Cupid, (2)  
ay, Cupid, give me your hand.

Fandanguito of the tropics,  
that all danced beside the mango grove.

Fandanguito, that on moonlit nights  
by her window I would sing.

I care not if she no longer loves me  
after all, my corn patch is coming up fine.

Tengo mi cuaco tordillo radado,  
y mis chaparreras de buen material.

Ay chonita, chinita, chiquita, chula y charrita

. . . (section unintelligible) . . .

Fandanguito del Rio Papaloapam  
que en cada verso canta un amor.

No me importa que me andes tanteando  
a ver si me encuentras con otra mujer.

....amores....cambiar  
.....tu querer...

Tierra Blanca, Misantla, Papantla  
Zacahuistla, Toteco y Jalapa,

Fandanguito

Al compas de las armas lloronas  
y la jarana de Tiltepec.

Y ahora que ando corriendo la vida,  
y se lo que cuesta y duele el amor.

I've got a nice grey horse  
and riding britches of good material.

Ay, little curly-haired, lovely chonito (2)

Fandanguito of the Papaloapam River  
that sings a song of love with each verse.

I don't care if you're spying on me  
to see if I'm out with another woman,

(There are many more loves to exchange for yours.)

Tierra Blanca, Misantla, Papantla  
Zacahuistla, Teteco y Jalapa.

Fandanguito, that in my little town I danced,  
marking rhythm with the weepy harps  
and the jarana of Tiltepec.

Now I'm out in the world and know the worth and pain  
of true love.

It doesn't much matter what happens to me,  
After all, I'm a man and can take it.

SIDE I, Band 3: CORRIDO DE LA PERSECUCION  
RELIGIOSA

(CORRIDO OF THE RELIGIOUS  
PERSECUTION)

TRANSLATION

Esta es la historia, senores,  
del problema religiosa,

((and how before things improved  
many sad days went by...)))

tras muchos dias amargos,  
en que no hubo religion,

ya nadie por las iglesias  
y despues la rebelion.

Ya no hay tiros ni trancazos,  
Toditito esta arreglado,  
Ora si puedo casarme,  
Por la iglesia y el estado.

Las leyes de la Reforma,  
que habian sido letra muerta,

tomaron vigor y forma  
al terminar De la Huerta.

Vino como consecuencia  
una cruel persecucion

no hubo libre conciencia,  
ya nien la constitucion.

Ya no hay tiros ni trancazos,  
Toditito esta arreglado,  
Ora si puedo casarme,  
Por la iglesia y el estado.

This is the story, gentlemen,  
of the religious troubles.

(unintelligible section)

And how before things improved  
many sad days went by.

Those were difficult times  
in which religion was banned.

No one was seen at the churches --  
and then the rebellion began.

There are no more shots or blows now,  
Everything has been arranged,  
Now I can get married  
by the church and by the state.

The Reform Laws for long  
had not been enforced,

but when De la Huerta left  
they took on vigor and form

and cruel persecution  
consequently came,  
there was no liberty of conscience  
nor support from the Constitution.

There are no more shots or blows now,  
Everything has been arranged,  
Now I can get married  
by the church and by the state.

Fue en el ano de veintidos,  
que tuvo principio el mal,

al decretar la expulsion  
de un delegado papal.

En el ano veintiseis,  
floreccio la intransigencia.

al declararse la guerra  
a la fe y a la conciencia.

It was in '22  
that all the trouble began.

When the Papal delegate  
was expelled from town.

In the year '26  
intolerance was in flower,

when war was declared  
against faith and conscience.

Ya no hay tiros ni trancazos,  
Toditito esta arreglado,  
Ora si puedo casarme,  
Por la iglesia y el estado.

There are no more shots or blows now,  
Everything has been arranged,  
Now I can get married  
by the church and by the state.



Y en la lucha fratricida  
Por valles, montes y llanos,  
Nunca pude ser vencida  
La fe de los mexicanos.

Y es que nuestra religion  
Por la que damos la vida,  
El alma y el corazon,  
Nunca puede ser vencida.

Ya no hay tiros ni trancazos,  
Toditito, esta arreglado;  
Ahora si puede cantarles  
Por la iglesia y el Estado.

Don Emilio Portes Gil,  
Presidente, mexicano,  
Ya arreglo las diferencias  
Que habia con el Vaticano.

Hoy por eso las campanas  
Repican con tanta prisa,  
Llamando a los mexicanos  
A la iglesia y la misa

Ya no hay tiros ni trancazos, etc....

Paso ya la intransigencia,  
Volvio la paz a reinar;  
De libertad de conciencia  
Podemos ya disfrutar.

Mexico ha reconquistado  
Su gloriosa religion,  
La fe del gran cura Hidalgo  
Y Morelos y Pavon.

Ya no hay tiros, etc.....



## TRANSLATION

Even in the fratricidal war  
Through valleys, mountains and plains,  
Never could there be victory  
Over the faith of the Mexicans.

The truth is that our religion  
For which we give our lives,  
Our souls and our hearts,  
Can never be conquered.

Now there are no shots nor blows,  
Every little thing is all arranged,  
For the Church and the State  
The song can now be sung.

His Honor Emilio Portes Gil,  
President of Mexico,  
By now has arranged the differences  
That existed with the Vatican.

That is why today the bells  
Are ringing on in such a hurry,  
Calling to all the Mexicans  
To come to church and hear the mass.

Now there are no shots nor blow, etc..

A thing of the past is all intransigence  
Peace once more has come to reign.  
Liberty of Conscience once more  
We are permitted to enjoy.

Mexico again has regained by war  
Its religion so glorious;-  
The faith of the great curate Hidalgo,  
And of Morelos y Pavon.

Now there are no shots, etc.....

## SIDE II, Band 1: CORRE, CORRE, MAQUINITA! (RUN, MY LITTLE LOCOMOTIVE!)

El dia primero de abril,  
Jueves Santo en la mañana.  
Salio Villa de Parral  
A expedir una campana.

Ya se va Francisco Villa,  
Se llevo todos los trenes  
Hasta llegar a Celaya;  
Alli formaron cuarteles.

Corre, corre, maquinita,  
Sin dejarle ni un wagon  
Hasta llegar a Celaya  
A combatir a Obregon.

Entre las tres y las cuatro  
Se comenzo el tiroteo;  
A las siete de la noche  
Ya se oia el bombardeo.



## TRANSLATION

In April, the first of the month,  
On Holy Thursday in the morning,  
Villa went forth from Parral  
To launch and speed up a campaign.

There's Francisco Villa a-marching,  
Takes away with him every train  
Till all get to Celaya -  
And there they make their headquarters.

Run my little locomotive,  
Don't leave him a single car  
Till at last you reach Celaya  
For the fight with Obregon.

Between the hour of three and four  
There began the round of shooting.  
Then at seven in the evening,  
There was heard the first bombardment.



Gritaba Francisco Villa,  
Pues de perder, yo me vaya.  
El combate lo he perdido  
en este Plan de Celaya.

Gritaba Francisco Villa:  
Ah! Que malas estan las cosas  
Ya estan cayendo soldados  
Del batallon de Zaragoza.

Por este lado del Sur  
Brillaban los horizontes:  
Pelea con mucho valor  
La brigada de Agramonte.

El 16 de septiembre,  
Formaron un simulacro,  
Mataron tres cabecillas  
Del estado guanajuato.

Cried aloud Francisco Villa:  
"If I lose, away I'll go!  
For me the battle has been lost,  
In this campaign of Celaya."

Cried aloud Francisco Villa,  
"Oh how badly things are going!  
Already soldiers are falling from  
The battalion of Zaragoza. (Saragosa)."

All along the Southern line  
Brightly gleam the far horizons;  
Heroic indeed is the struggle  
Of the brigade from Agramonte.

In September, on the 16th,  
They feinted a sudden sally;  
Three enemy chieftains they killed  
From the State of Guanajuato.

Al rugir de la metralla,  
Al rugido de un canon,  
Pero mas recio se oia  
Un redoble de un tambor.

Este tambor que se oia  
Era de los carrancistas  
Que combatian con valor  
A los traidores villistas.

El dia primero de abril,  
Jueves Santo en la manana  
Salio Villa de Parral  
A expedir una campana.

As the shrapnel kept on roaring,  
As the cannon roared its blasts,  
Even louder there resounded  
A mighty beating of a drum.

This rolling drum that then resounded  
Came from ranks of Carranzistas,  
Who valorously fought the fight  
Against the treacherous Villistas.

In April, the first of the month,  
On Holy Thursday in the morning,  
Villa went forth from Parral  
To launch and speed up a campaign.

SIDE II, Band 2:

SIMON

Andaba cuete Simon  
cuando callo muy rendido,

vino a encontrar a su Elena  
con un traidor bien dormida.

....y luego que es mi amistad.

Me fui para Piedras Negras  
para poderla olvidar,

Me fui para San Antonio  
me devolvio el extranjero.

Como echar al olvido  
el amor primero?

Tenia los ojos negros  
y el cabello encarrujado

((((consuelo a su amante  
ye le sale lo apasionado)))

Que tienen esos ojitos?  
Porque me miran asi?

Contentos para otras partes  
y enojados para mi.

Soy como agua del rio  
todo se me va en correr.

Como con nadie me engrio  
a nadie siento el perder.

Mi novia mando una carta  
donde me manda decir,

que si no la sigo amando,  
ella prefiere morir.

Yo no canto porque se  
ni por que mi voz es buena.....

Canto por que tengo gusto  
en mi tierra y en la ajena

TRANSLATION (also found in "El quelite" - well-  
known Mexican folk song, sung here  
in N. M.)

Simon was just a bit tight  
when he fell into a faint,

for he found his Elena  
with a betrayer fast asleep.

....and then he says he's my friend.

I went off to Piedras Negras,  
to see if I could forget her.

I went off to San Antonio  
but homesickness sent me back.

How could I forget my first love?

Her eyes were black  
and her hair curly.

What's the matter with those eyes?  
Why do they look at me so?

They're happy if they glance elsewhere  
but angry if they light on me.

I'm like the flowing river water  
all I do is swiftly glide;

and as I'm never attached to anyone  
I don't mind if I lose them all.

My girl sent me a letter  
and in it she said to me.

that if I no longer loved her  
she'd much rather not live.

I don't sing because I know how,  
or because my voice is good.....

I sing because I like to,  
in my land and in other lands.





SIDE II, Band 3: NO TE ASUSTES, MI PRIETITA  
(DON'T BE SCARED, MY DARK BEAUTY)

Ay, prietita de ojos negros!  
No te des a conocer  
Que por ahí andan diciendo  
Que te tengo en mi poder.

Ojala y que fuera cierto  
Que me habría de suceder -  
No sería yo el primer hombre  
Ni tu la primera mujer.

Ay morenita de mi corazón -  
Si te vienen a buscar,  
No tengas miedo, no te entregare  
Aunque me quieran matar.

No te asustes, mi prietita,  
Que lo que digan, los dos  
Que aunque mucho nos creminen,  
Es tan solo puro ardor.

Me han contado que tu papa  
Se ha enojado con Miguel,  
Porque te fuistes conmigo  
Sin que fuera gusto de él.

Y ahora digo como chenchá,  
Que nos citemos los dos -  
No haya al cabo ya remedio  
Ni por el amor de Dios.

Ay morenita! si eres mi mujer,  
Eso a muchos va a pesar,  
Tuvo la culpa solo el querer -  
Y al querer no hay que mandar.

REPEAT: (COMPLETE TEXT ABOVE)

TRANSLATION

Ah, my dark beauty with deep black eyes!  
Don't go telling anyone  
That around here the folks are saying  
That I have you in my power.

Would to Heaven it were certain  
What is going to happen with me!  
Certainly I would not be the first man,  
Nor you the first such woman.

Ah my lovely nut-brown sweetheart -  
Should they come to look for you,  
Don't get scared, I won't let you go  
Should they want to kill me for it!

Don't get frightened, my dark beauty,  
Let us face it, you and I;  
Whatever they may say about us,  
It is naught but passion pure!

People tell me that your father  
Is hopping mad about poor me  
Since you keep going out with me,  
A thing that goes against his will.

And now all I can say is just this:  
Let us two just go on meeting,  
For after all what's done is done -  
Nor love of God can quite undo it!

Ah, my dark one, be my own true wife,  
However many may object.  
The blame in this can fall alone on Love -  
And Love can never be commanded.

SIDE II, Band 4:

CORRIDO DE PANCHO VILLA  
(CORRIDO OF PANCHO VILLA)

La vaquita con el toro  
se metió ya a la ladera.

Ya le dirá Pancho Villa,  
que se mete donde quiera.

Ey, ey, ey .....

Por el filo de la Sierra, (2)  
viene un gavilán volando

Gallina que no me llevo  
la dejo cacaraqueando.

Ey, ey, ey .....

La vaca era colorada (2)  
y el becerrito era moro

Ey, ey, ey .....

Me puso a considerar (2)  
de que color sería el toro

Yo vide pelear un toro (2)  
con una vaca morena

No hay bocado más sabroso  
que el de la mujer agena,

No hay bocado más sabroso  
y aunque la propia este buena.

TRANSLATION

The little cow and the bull  
have gone off into the hills.

Pancho Villa might know where  
for he hides well anywhere.

Along the edge of the Sierra  
comes a falcon, flying.

Any hen that I don't carry off  
I leave behind, cackling.

The cow was red  
and the heifer, dun.

I began to wonder  
what color the bull might be.

There's no tastier dish  
than another man's wife.

There's no finer tidbit...  
even if one's own is nice.

Ey, ey, ey, bacalay, bacalay.

The above is a "corrido" with humorous picaresque notes based on the farmyard. There is in it an allusion to Pancho Villa, whose ability to hide himself in the hills after effecting his daring raids is proverbial.

The bandit chief is still popularly remembered in the North of Mexico with a certain amount of admiration, even of affection.







SIDE II, Band 5: CORRIDO DEL MINERO  
(THE MINER'S CORRIDO)

Tocan las seis y al tiro me presento  
con paso lento y agitadamente,  
Me conduzco a las selas de la muerte,  
donde me dicen que es un puro afanar.

Solo un recuerdo te pido para mi alma,  
y adonde este te mandare mi queja.  
Me voy querida, para la Mina Vieja.  
solo Dios sabe si ya no volvere.

Tocan los pitos del segundo. ....  
para bajar aquel escalereado,  
para bajar muchisimo cuidado  
donde el minero no lo designara.

Tomo la voz de su vida sombría,  
donde s'encuentra el hombre que te adora,  
alli s'encuentra el que suspira y llora,  
como un recuerdo a ti te lo enviara.

Solo un recuerdo te pido para mi alma,  
y adonde este te mandare mi queja.  
Me voy, querida, para la Mina Vieja,  
solo Dios sabe si ya no volvere.

TRANSLATION

At the stroke of six I come,  
slow of step and very much upset,  
I'm heading for the halls of death  
where they tell me all is a struggle.

I only ask a remembrance for my soul,  
and wherever I be I'll send you my lament.  
I'm off, my love, to work in the Old Mine:  
God only knows if ever I'll return.

The whistles blow to call the second shift,  
to send us down along the lengthy stairs,  
If you go down, be very very careful,  
or else the miner will not live to return.

I raise my voice to tell of the sad life,  
for there's a man who so adores you,  
there's one who sighs and weeps,  
and sends you this as a sad souvenir.

I only ask a remembrance for my soul,  
and wherever I be I'll send you my lament.  
I'm off, my love, to work in the Old Mine:  
God only knows if ever I'll return.

Recorded in Mexico, 1920-1930  
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Translations by Arthur Kevess  
Production Director, Moses Asch



Calavera of Monopolists by Mendez  
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