CORRIDOS y TRAGEDIAS De La Frontera
An INTRODUCTION by Chris Strachwitz

Corridos and Tragedias (ballads and tragedies) have been sung for over 100 years in Mexico and especially along both sides of the Frontera, the border with the United States. Some of the corridos in this collection, although recorded in the USA, are Mexican in origin but are part of the common Mexican American heritage and tradition. Others are the result of the ongoing conflict which often results when the Mexican and Anglo civilizations come into contact. For these corridos the term “Border” should be taken in its broadest possible sense, extending often hundreds of miles from the actual line. These story songs range in content from factual newspaper-like accounts giving the date and place where a memorable event or tragedy took place, to purely fictional ones. Among the “true” corridos, are traditional stories from the last century as well as recent tales, often detailing heroic actions by brave individuals who stood up to authority in defense of their rights. Fictional corridos, on the other hand, although perhaps based on true events, have been enhanced for broadest possible popular appeal and maximum commercial exploitation. They have in recent times frequently served as scripts or texts for popular movies or hit records for stars of the Mexican American music world.

Corridos, both old and new, true and fictional, constitute a significant element of the popular music and literature of the community. Some corridos about local events appeal mainly to hard core fans of the genre, usually men alone or gathered at socials or in cantinas, while others become widely popular, sung by famous singers and conjuntos. The men in the cantinas are passionate about what they love and enjoy, and will frequently hire and spend considerable sums for conjuntos or mariachis to sing their favorite ballads at their table. If you appreciate corridos or have ever witnessed such performances you know how these stories affect the listeners who by their gritos and singing along
become active participants and relive these stories in a very personal way.

Old corridos about the heroes and events of the Mexican Revolution, the Mexican nineteenth century Robin Hood-like figure of "Hercilio Bernal," the ancient story of incest as told in "Delgadina," or the brave exploits of Texan "Gregorio Cortez" who in 1901 stood up to authorities to defend his rights and successfully evaded a huge posse of rinchecobardes, are all still popular evergreens with audiences and singers along the Frontera. Such old ballads may well alternate with more recent stories about famous race horses, exploits of notorious drug lords, the tragic killings of the Archbishop of Guadalajara and Mexican presidential candidate Colosio, or perhaps the latest problems resulting from US immigration rulings.

True corridos tell the story of heroic events or tragedies as singers and composers heard or perceived them and like all history, are very subjective. They must also be sung in the vernacular language of the people in order to be remembered. Although poetry has always been a popular literary form it has a very special appeal if put to music. As in the case of English ballads, the tunes are usually simple and basic. Most corridos were probably sung slowly in the past but the melodies were easily adapted to the up-tempo polka rhythms so popular in the dance halls of today. Although true ballads seem to be no longer a major element of English language popular music and culture, they certainly are alive and well along the Mexican American Border. One of the last true ballads from Texas in English which comes to mind is the story of plantation owner, "Tom Moore" whose treatment and exploitation of his workers was the subject of a commercial record made by blues singer Lightning Hopkins in the late 1940s.

In spite of the old saying that truth is stranger than fiction, many of the most popular and widely circulated corridos sung and heard today are fiction. This brings us to the role which recordings, radio, and commercial exploitation of songs has had on the field of balladry. To protect the composer, singer, record company, and publisher from possible legal action for slander or libel, or the subjects from revenge or prejuidegment, and to freely exploit the ballad commercially without problems, the fictional corrido has come, with the growth of the music business since the 1930s, to the forefront and almost restricted true corridos to private gatherings and the cantinas. When I was in Guadalajara asking for corridos about the recent Indian uprising in the state of Chiapas, I was told by musicians and shop owners that they had not heard of any, but that if one were to appear it would most likely not be the true story as the Indians saw it but one based only on official newspaper reports. In San Antonio, not many years ago, one of the major regional record companies was sued by the sheriff of Laredo because the firm had released a corrido about a jail break in his city, and unlike the newspaper report, had put some blame for it on the sheriff. Forced to pay large legal fees and to withdraw the recording from the market left the label's owner bitter about true or real corridos and he swore at the time not to record any more. The popularity of the genre however has since changed his mind. As the producer however he now probably checks all details with newspaper and radio reports before letting his artists sing or record such a ballad.

Some years ago when driving through Las Cruces, New Mexico, I inquired about local corridos. The gas station attendant who was filling my tank told me he had recently heard one on the local radio station about a killing in the area but had heard that the corrido had to be taken off the air because the family of the victim of the crime had objected to the public airing of such personal matters. Political censorship of corridos, especially in Mexico, is also a reality. When Jim Nicolopulos and I were recently visiting the conjunto Los Pingüinos Del Norte in Piedras Negras, Cohahuila, their new bass player, who came from Mexico City, told us about several edicts. In the early 1970s in the state of Guerrero during the insurgency led by Lucio Cabañas, the PRI government ordered the Musicians Union to prohibit its members from performing corridos favorable to the rebels. The Cabañas uprising was the last major outbreak of rural rebellion and guerrilla warfare prior to the recent uprisings in the state of Chiapas. In spite of such efforts at censorship, many corridos of the Cabañas revolt were not only sung widely but
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4886 Un Oído de Ti (Canción Yucateca)
Presentimiento (Canción Yucateca)
Arturo Larín con guitarra

4888 Jesús Cedeño—1a. Parte (Tragedia)
Jesús Cedeño—2a. Parte (Tragedia)

4889 Jesús Leal—1a. Parte (Tragedia)
Jesús Leal—2a. Parte (Tragedia)

4901 Me Abandonas (Canción)
Una Canasta (Canción)
Coro y Guitarros con guitarra

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Pages 6 & 7: Parts of a full column ad in La Prensa, San Antonio, January, 1930
did appear on records. A similar edict was announced recently in the state of Sinaloa where the state government has prohibited the performance of corridos celebrating the drug traffickers, but apparently with even less success.

In the days before records, radio, films, juke boxes, TV, or the invention of the amplifier, which have aided the massive commercial exploitation of songs, corridos were passed on and enjoyed on a more personal level. Singers entertained their audiences, as they had for hundreds of years, on the street, in restaurants, at small gatherings and celebrations, saloons, or at house parties. Until recordings (and some twenty years later the radio) suddenly brought voices from around the world directly into people's homes at the beginning of the 20th century, corridos were circulated mainly by itinerant singers traveling from market place to market place, from ranch to ranch, singing their verses for anyone willing to listen and pay. Sometimes these corridistas or trovadores, would have the texts of popular stories printed along with a picture illustrating the ballad and offer such broadsides for sale as well.

This collection brings you the original historic recordings of 27 important corridos from the Border. Many of these first commercial recordings, all made on the US side of the Border, are remarkably traditional, honest, uncensored, pure in their content, and complete. Many were originally issued in two parts, filling both sides of a 10" 78 rpm record, giving the singers just a little over 6 minutes to tell their story. The recordings were mainly made in the Southwest by singers from the Border country during a short decade, which I like to call the "Golden Era of the Recorded Corrido": 1928 to 1937. The most interesting ones were recorded during a four year period, starting in 1928, two years after the general introduction of the electrical recording process, when the national record companies began semi-annual field trips to San Antonio and El Paso. An era when many singers and composers to come up with more corridos as long as the public was responsive to their tales and bought the discs. Singers generally felt honored and delighted to be chosen to make records and the $25 to $50 fee per disc was at the time considered a nice reward for singing two parts of a song which might bring five or ten cents from a listener in the plaza.

During the first few years of recording regional musics in hotel rooms out in the hinterlands, away from the studios of New York or Los Angeles, the producers were apparently receptive to a wide range of material. The desire on the part of the record producers to find anything that would sell and the lack of understanding of the language of the repertoire they were recording probably kept the "record men" from attempting political correctness or censorship. Attempts were made however by several of the early Spanish-speaking intermediaries to "improve" some of the singers, whom they often considered to be of rather low class. The late Guadalupe Acosta of San Antonio was a professional musician and orchestra leader who also built and repaired musical instruments. He was hired to help in recording local musicians and once proudly told me that he helped several singers use proper Spanish and improve their pronunciation before making recordings!

Once voices could be heard clearly in homes emanating from a radio or phonograph, it quickly became apparent that vocal duets with guitar accompaniment were the most popular recording combination in the Mexican American music field. Duetos were also cheaper to record than a 20-piece orchestra. Duetos were also among the first recording combinations waxed in Mexico City around 1904 by Victor, Columbia and Edison visiting engineers from New York, although only about forty corridos were documented on cylinders and discs at that time. During the drawn out years of turmoil of the Mexican Revolution, recording activities ceased
in Mexico itself and were not resumed until 1926. They remained very limited until the early 1930s when Peerless became the first Mexican company to build recording and pressing facilities. “The Golden Era of the Recorded Corrido” was primarily documented in the US since the public in Mexico was either too poor to create a demand for such records or was not interested in that type of repertoire.

By the mid 1930s and the continuing Great Depression, all US record companies introduced cheap 35 cent records (they had previously cost 75 cents) with the hope of selling recorded music even to the poor and rural masses. The demand for corridos, however almost disappeared as far as the record-buying public was concerned. The brief “Golden Era of the Recorded Corrido” was over.

In Mexico, the 1930s saw the development of the Mexican film industry which was quick to discover that film stars who were also ranchera singers or ranchera singers who could also act in films, were a very popular commodity and the rural masses loved to see movies which featured new songs and new singers. Many of the biggest ranchera recording stars such as Jorge Negrete and Pedro Infante became famous via the films they made. Movies also eventually helped elevate rural mariachi music to become Mexico’s national music. During the late 1930s with the increased commercial exploitation of vernacular music, fictional corridos became increasingly popular via films which used the stories and songs to appeal to the masses.

During World War II, the major labels in the US who controlled the recording industry, just about gave up marketing regional music because of the shellac shortage. With the end of the war in 1945 however, a resurgence of corridos on records began with an upswing in the economy, and the increased buying power of the masses. Local entrepreneurs filled the vacuum left by the major labels by starting small record companies all over the country. During the 1950s, 60s and 70s real corridos once again became popular especially on records. The death of President John F. Kennedy, who was perhaps the most popular American president ever among Mexican Americans partially due to his Catholic minority status, gave cause for an amazing number of corridos on records. These corridos were almost without exception homages (homenajes) which praised their hero for his stand on what he believed was right including rights for the poor. Dan Dickey collected about 24 of them in his book The Kennedy Corridos: A Study of the Ballads of a Mexican American Hero (Austin: University of Texas, Center for Mexican American Studies, 1978).

The 1960s saw powerful corridos of protest such as “Rinches De Texas” by Willie López who produced the record on his ORO label in McAllen, Texas. It was a strong complaint against the then governor of Texas, John Connally, who called out the hated Rangers (rinches) to put down a melon field workers’ strike with brutal force. The 60s and 70s were also an era when pride in La Raza blossomed. It was also a time in the development of the recording business when you could, if I may paraphrase composer and record company owner, Salome Gutiérrez: “write the corrido in the morning, record it that afternoon, take the lacquer master to the pressing plant that evening and the next day have the 45s to take to the radio stations who would be playing the corrido within 24 hours of the event.” Most corridos recorded since the 1950s however, were short and fitted on one side of a record. Unlike the late 1920s when people would listen to records on their player at home and gladly turn the disc over to listen to part 2, the juke box and the radio had now become the prime outlets. Most older juke boxes would only play one side of a record and radio stations were reluctant to play any record over two minutes and 45 seconds because it would encroach on their time for commercials.

Today, in the 1990s, there are still plenty of true corridos being sung and even recorded. You hear them primarily in the cantinas and in places where the so-called respectable people don’t venture. After all, corridos are part of the literature of the common people and reflect their values which are often in opposition to the establishment or the wealthy classes. Although the early pioneer recording directors on this side of the Border documented even strongly anti-Anglo corridos or protest songs, several of which are heard in this collection, the recording industry today,
especially in Mexico, would be reluctant to release any anti-establishment corridos. Even fictional corridos are not without opposition. I've heard of citizens' groups here in California who would like to restrict the airing of any corridos glorifying the drug trade because they feel it reflects negatively on the Mexican American population and their culture. Popular singers, with some notable exceptions, are careful not to offend and are often reluctant to sing even traditional true corridos fearful of the wrath of wanna-be censors or the conservative elements in their audience. Yet some singers and conjuntos take great pride in being specialists in corridos and do not shy away from bringing their audience what they want to hear. Los Tigres Del Norte are perhaps the most enduring and hard core super stars of the corrido who have stayed on top of the charts ever since the 1970s when they recorded "Contrabando Y Traicion" and "La Banda De Carro Rojo" which became hit records and hit movies.

Today, in addition to conservatives' objections to many corridos, the medium or sound carrier itself has become problematic for the corrido composers and singers who require speedy release and distribution. The cassette is the only cheap sound carrier in use today which can be quickly produced. But most radio stations will not broadcast cassettes, juke boxes can not play them, and besides, they can be easily copied by anyone, thus taking away the potential profit incentive. Perhaps the broadside will make a comeback as it did a few years ago when visitors from New York told me about hearing a man sing a corrido on the bridge between El Paso and Juarez about the tragedy of illegals who had suffocated in a railroad car just east of El Paso. He was selling a computer generated sheet of paper with the lyrics which he had just composed.

(Chris Strachwitz – 1994)

The Singers:
The singers heard on these historic discs, like the Carter Family in Country music, Joe Falcon in Cajun music, or Blind Lemon Jefferson in Blues, were among the pioneer recording artists in the field of Mexican American vernacular music. The fact that many were already popular performers in their community, brought them to the attention of furniture and music shop owners who were used by the recording companies to act as talent scouts or intermediaries. In the plaza or in the street, singers had to be loud to be heard and survive. The public may have been boisterous but was also forgiving when they paid five or ten cents for a song delivered to them in person. However, when customers put down 75 hard earned cents for a phonograph record which they could play at home over and over and suddenly hear every nuance of the voices and every word of the song, they became much more demanding. The duetos heard on these records were successful because they had the right combinations of voices and the right songs to please the tradition oriented ears and emotions of their listeners.

In most cases we know very little about these singers besides their names, what instruments they played, where and when the record was made, what the catalog release number was, and perhaps the matrix number as well. These details are known to us almost entirely due to the long, dedicated, and persevering work of discographer Dick Spottswood who spent years collecting this data from the files and catalogs of the record companies who originally produced the records. With only a small grant to keep him going, Dick Spottswood published his complete data in a seven volume set entitled: Ethnic Music On Records - A Discography of Ethnic Music produced in the United States, 1893 to 1943 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

The singers considered themselves fortunate to have their names appear on the record labels, in newspaper ads, onflyers, handbills, and catalogs. This publicity, especially if the records proved to be popular, could help focus the public's attention on them.
and perhaps lead to better paying personal appearances and further recordings. Since the companies who recorded Mexican American music at this time had strong national and even international distribution in the western hemisphere, the discs by San Antonio, El Paso, or Los Angeles based artists, were available not only on their home turf, but in most areas in the US with a substantial Spanish speaking population.

During the 1970s when I became seriously interested in Mexican American music and its history, I met many artists in south Texas and San Antonio and I tried to locate relatives of some of the pioneers. Ernestina Arismendez, daughter of Pedro Rocha, and Espectación R. Martinez, widow of Lupe Martinez, (Pedro Rocha's partner) supplied me with photos and some information. I met and interviewed Martin and Alfonso Echavarria who recorded as Hermanos Chavarria. Andres Berlanga, who still lives in San Antonio, has been a long time friend whom I first met when he was singing and playing bajo sexto with accordionist Fred Zimmerle and his Trio San Antonio. Jesús Sánchez of Los Madrugadores was interviewed extensively by Philip Sonnichsen.

Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martinez were the best and most popular *dueto* to record in San Antonio from the late 1920s into the late 30s, specializing in *corridos*. The distinct lead voice of Pedro Rocha and the perfectly matching second of Lupe Martinez were especially successful on radio and recordings where every nuance could be clearly heard. According to Andrés Berlanga who encountered the duo not only in San Antonio's produce plaza but also in small towns throughout south Texas, Rocha and Martinez sang mostly in the streets and were especially successful with *corridos* although they sang other types of songs as well. Pedro Rocha was born 2/21/1888, in Matehuala, Coahuila, and died in San Antonio, Tx., 5/11/1964. He came to the United States in 1909 when he was already singing but not professionally. Lupe Martinez was born 1/15/1901, in San Luis Potosi but moved with his family to New Braunfels, Tx., in 1906. The two singers apparently met in the 1920s through neighbors in San Antonio and began singing together. Every afternoon they went to the Plaza de Menudo, as Ms. Martinez referred to the Plaza de Zacate, located at West Commerce and San Saba Streets. The duo appeared on early Spanish language radio programs in San Antonio and Corpus Christi.
Christi and they recorded over 200 selections between March 1928 and February 1937. On Pedro Rocha's last sessions, however, his new partner was José Angel Colunga since Lupe Martínez had died in 1936. Pedro Rocha, like most troubadors, tried to keep up with changing musical tastes and he made his last recordings backed by an accordion conjunto in the early 1950s for the Rio (note ARH CD 376) and Norteño labels. Pedro Rocha, along with Andrés Berlanga, was one of the few commercial recording artists recorded by John and Alan Lomax while documenting American regional traditions for the Library of Congress in 1934 and 36. A short article in San Antonio's newspaper, The Light of March 11, 1956, under a photo of Mr. Rocha tuning his guitar, announces: "Anniversary Near For Troubador." The article goes on to say that Mr. Rocha will that week be celebrating his 30th anniversary as a serenader at the Hay Plaza (Plaza de Zacate) and adds that Mr. Rocha as a youngster played catcher for the famous Monterrey Glass Works baseball team in Monterrey, Nuevo León.

The name Los Madrugadores denotes "early risers" and they were one of the first groups to make an impact via Spanish language radio as well as via recordings in the Los Angeles area during the early thirties. The history of the group begins with the two Sánchez brothers: Jesús (born February 6, 1906, in Guadalupe de los Reyes, Sinaloa) and Victor (born December 7, 1907, in Magdalena, Sonora). Their father came to Sonora with the opening of the mines in Cananea where the boys spent their early childhood. Eventually greener pastures of El Norte beckoned and the family came to the United States as renganchados (known as braceros in the 1950s) to work the fields of the companies that brought them over. Jesús was 14, Victor was 13 and Phoenix, Arizona was the first stop. Jesús had begun playing guitar at age six and was largely self-taught. According to Victor, Jesús' style was completely his own; he didn't copy anyone but soon after their successful records, many copied him. By 1927 the two brothers came to California and worked in the agriculturally rich Coachella Valley and later in Fresno. Music was a sideline, however and it was the orange groves and the fields of chile, onions, cotton, and melons that fed the brothers and kept them alive. This was the time of Prohibition and there were no cantinas in which musicians could practice
their craft. There was the home made variety of booze and parties and fiestas which required music but these brought in very little income. In Los Angeles Spanish radio began in the late 1920s. Initially these programs were heard in the early morning hours because it was cheaper to buy air time and it was the time when farm workers got up to go to work. Up in Fresno the Sánchez brothers did not have a radio but their friends encouraged them to go to Los Angeles and “get on the radio.” Victor and Jesús finally headed for the big city, first to La Casa de Música de Maurice Calderón, the music store that served as the principal outlet for all things musical to the Spanish-speaking in the area. There they met Pedro J. González who was also a political activist and had used his radio program to protest the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Spanish-speaking people. In 1934 Pedro J. González was sentenced from one to 50 years in San Quentin on trumped up charges of rape instigated by people who wanted him out of the way. Los Hermanos Sánchez kept going as Los Madrugadores on their own until around 1937 when on recordings they were replaced by other singers. The name had always included not only the original three but others who appeared on the radio programs. Between 1933 and 1941, when the last incarnation of Los Madrugadores of that era made records, the various combinations waxed over 200 selections. Los Hermanos Sánchez, still billed as Los Madrugadores, moved back to Fresno and appeared there off and on until 1941 when Jesús drowned in a canal near Fresno and Victor moved to Culver City to work in a die casting company.

Los Hermanos Chavarria consisted of Alfonso (born in January 1901, in Sacramento, Coahuila) vocal and guitar, and Martín (born January 2, 1908, in Parras, Coahuila). The family’s real name was Echávarria but throughout their recording career it was spelled Chavarria. The entire Echávarria family came to San Antonio in 1922 earning a living by working in the fields in the surrounding counties. The brothers learned most of their songs from both parents and an uncle and their father played bass with various orquestas típicas. Once the brothers started to record, people would approach them and give them poems which they would sometimes make into songs. Their first recordings (including a short version of “Gregorio Cortés”) were made in the summer of 1930 after the Chavarrias had seen an advertisement in La Prensa, the only Spanish language newspaper in San Antonio, requesting artists to audition for recordings. They continued to record until April 1938 during which time they waxed over a hundred selections. The Chavarria brothers frequently sang in the Plaza de Zacate and their career was aided when they joined Mr. Lozano’s radio program over KMAC in 1928. They recorded for all four major labels during the 1930s. Alfonso told me that they were initially one of the

**Otros Números Sensacionales por los Hermanos Chavarria**

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<td>4633X</td>
<td>“Te Amo en Secreto”</td>
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<td>4555X</td>
<td>“El Luz Arco”</td>
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<td>“Veracruz”</td>
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<td>“Almazán”</td>
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Ad in La Prensa, 1/3/1932
Los Hermanos Chavarria:
left - Martín; below - Alfonzo

very few Mexican artists under exclusive contract including even a royalty provision. Like Pedro Rocha, the Chavarria brothers found the older style of singing with only guitar accompaniment being slowly replaced in the mid-1940s by accordion conjuntos. Their last recording as a dueto was one single 78 of the corrido "Panchito" (note: ARH/FL 7041/4 - The Mexican Revolution) made in the early '50s backed by Fred Zimmerle who had been a long time admirer and fan of the brothers and the rural vocal tradition they represented. Martín Chavarria made a final appearance in 1974 on an album I recorded with Fred Zimmerle and his Trio San Antonio. In the 1970s Arhoolie Records released an album (LP 9037) of the best original recordings by the Chavarria brothers.

Andrés Berlanga was born in Northern Mexico on November 30, 1907, and came to the United States three years later when the Mexican Revolution began. His father worked in the fields not only near San Antonio but north as far as Corsicana. Often the children would go along and there young Andres heard singers with guitars and violins. By the late 1920s he heard his first accordion music which he feels originated in the Rio Grande Valley. In 1926 Andrés Berlanga married and became a construction worker. He had been singing all along but now he also picked up playing the guitar and later he switched to bajo sexto which he says came from Mexico and is more suitable to accompany the accordion. Music store owner, Tomás Acuña paired Andrés Berlanga with Santos Guerra for their first record in March of 1934. By August of that year Berlanga had teamed up with Francisco Montalvo who had been one of the very first troubadours to record in 1928 and they recorded over 80 selections together over the next three years. Tomás Acuña was one of several middle men hired by the recording firms in the mid 1930s to find and rehear talent. The pay was between $20 and $40 per selection and to have a record on the market was considered quite a status symbol and would generally lead to better jobs at hotels and on the radio. At the Plaza the fee per song was usually ten cents during the bad times of the Depression. Sometimes singers would get good tips but you could hire musicians for the going rate of 25 cents per hour at Ayala’s Drug Store on Laredo Street which acted as the cancioneros’ union hall. Berlanga and Montalvo traveled
all over south Texas mostly by hopping freight trains. They usually serenaded in the streets where people preferred *corridos* such as “Los Tequileros” or “Contrabando Del Paso.” Upon discharge from the armed services, Berlanga got a civil service job in 1951 at a near by Air Force base from which he retired in the early 1970s. During this period he became a part time member of Fred Zimmerle’s Trio San Antonio (note ARHCD 311). When I met Berlanga, he was working most Sundays with various musicians at an “ice house” on West Commerce and today he lives in retirement at his home not far from there. (Chris Strachwitz – 1994)

Corridos, the ballads of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, are the product of oral tradition, although they may be preserved and passed on via phonograph records, in *cancioneros* (song books) and/or on printed sheets (historically known as broadsides), radio, or TV. They keep alive the memory of important events and heroes, and those verses of lasting appeal are passed on from generation to generation, subject of course to changes and variants that may occur. The number of variants, incidentally, may well attest to the popularity of a given corrido’s theme or subject.

The term *corrido* comes from the Spanish verb *correr*, meaning “to run” or “to flow,” hence a corrido is, in effect, a running account of a particular story, that is a narrative ballad usually colored by the amount of information the corrido maker has at hand, his political views, his feelings about circumstances surrounding a given incident, and his emotional attitude. Some emotional involvement is assumed and expected, otherwise the corrido maker would never have formulated the verses.

At the time of the conquest of Mexico in 1521, the *romance* was at its height in Spain. Many of these *romances* (and the Andalusian *romances corridos*) were brought over to the New World by the Spanish. Bernal Díaz del Castillo (1492-1581), the principal writer of the conquest of Mexico, tells of the popularity of the *romances* among the soldiers of the army of Cortés. These *romances* kept alive the spirit of the old country in the hearts of homesick soldiers. Undoubtedly events in a new and strange land suggested new ballads. In time these *romances* became a part of the repertoire of the common people and through
the course of time developed into the corrido.

The first true corridos probably date to the period of the struggle for independence (c. 1810-20). Nonetheless, we have very few texts that all authorities will agree display the characteristics of the modern corrido from before the decade of the 1860s.

The late Vicente T. Mendoza defined the effective life span of the Mexican corrido (as an independent form in Mexico) as falling into three distinct stages: a period of ascent from 1875 to 1910 during which time the ballad heroes are Robin Hood-like outlaws in rebellion against Porfirio Díaz; a culminating period from 1910 to 1930; the epic period of the Revolution; and a period of decadence from 1930 to the present.

Mendoza's view may apply to the corrido in central Mexico. Along the Border and further north into what is now the American Southwest, the development, impact, and sustaining power of the corrido was and is somewhat different. Probably the earliest narrative ballad to be collected in the Southwest is "La batalla de los tulares," collected by the late Aurelio M. Espinosa. Though the work is neither a romance nor a corrido, Espinosa designates it by the title romance and explains that it dates from a battle in 1824 "when the Indians of Santa Barbara, California, rebelled against the Spanish government struggling with the soldiers of the Presidio."

Arthur L. Campa, the late distinguished New Mexican scholar, unearthed "El condenado a muerte" (To Be Condemned to Death), which he regards to be a true corrido (although not grouped in stanzas). It gives the date "Wednesday, the twentieth of July, 1832." The author explains that on this date he will be taken to be executed, although he does not explain the crime and claims to be free from guilt.

From Nuevo León, the earliest work appears to be the "Corrido de Leandro Rivera," dating from 1841 and collected in 1939 near Brownsville, Texas, by John and Ruby Lomax.

Américo Paredes, the noted Texas scholar, speaks of "the corrido century," that is, that period from 1836 to the late 1930s as the life span of the corrido on the Lower Border. He places the starting point at 1836 as civil war, Indian raids, and the English-speaking invasion all began on the Border in that year.

Paredes feels that the favorite subjects in the ballads of the early part of this "corrido century" must have included the Indian raids, the struggle to establish a Republic of the Río Grande, and the guerrilla warfare against Zachary Taylor's troops. He also feels that the Indian fighter, Antonio Zapata; Antonio Canales, a Federalist and guerrilla against Taylor; ranchers such as Blas Falcon; and Juan Nepomuceno Seguin, the disillusioned Texas patriot, as among the subjects of ballads. Paredes has talked with informants who, as children, remember hearing ballads about these situations and individuals.

Juan Nepomuceno Cortina was apparently the earliest Border corrido hero that we know of. In 1859 he shot the Brownsville, Texas, city marshal who had been mistreating a servant of Cortina's mother. Cortina and his followers occupied Brownsville briefly before being forced out. He fled across the Mexican Border establishing a pattern that would be followed by countless other corrido heroes for decades to come.

GREGORIO CORTÉZ

(SA 283 & 284, Yo 8351) San Antonio, Tx. October 1929.

The most significant Border hero, Gregorio Cortez, came along forty years after Cortina. The man, and the legend which surrounds him, sustained by a corrido and its variants, continues to live among the Spanish-speaking along the lower Texas Border. Américo Paredes wrote of the man, the legend, and the corrido in his book With His Pistol in His Hand.

They still sing of him—in the cantinos and the country stores, in the ranches when men gather at night to talk in the cool dark, sitting in a circle smoking and listening to the old songs and the tales of other days. Then the guitarreros sing of the Border raids and the skirmishes, of the men who lived by the phrase, "I will break before I bend."

They sing with deadly-serious faces, overthrowing the words of the song like a challenge, tearing savagely with their stiff, calloused fingers at the strings of the guitars. And that is how, in the dark quiet of the ranches, in the lighted noise of the saloons, they sing of Gregorio Cortez.

Gregorio Cortez was born on a ranch between Matamoros and Reynosa on the Mexican side of the Border, on June 22, 1875,
according to the best available information, the son of Román Cortez Gara and Rosalia Lira Cortinas. In 1887 the family moved to Manor, Texas, and two years later Gregorio and his older brother Romaldo began working as farm hands as vaqueros for farmers and ranchers in Karnes, Gonzáles, and adjacent counties.

He married Leonor Diaz at an early age, their first child, Mariana, coming along in 1891 when Gregorio was only sixteen. After years of wandering, Romaldo and Gregorio finally decided to settle down in Karnes County. It was 1900; Gregorio was twenty-five.

The following year, June 12, 1901, Sheriff T. T. (Brack) Morris came out to the Cortez place seeking a horse thief described only as a medium-sized Mexican with a red broad-brimmed Mexican hat. "Paredes seems to have been one of those men who build up a reputation for knowing the Mexicans better than they know themselves on a few bits of broken Spanish and a lot of 'experience.' A number of people might not have died had Choate either known more Spanish or known enough to know what he did not know."

Through Boone Choate, Sheriff Morris questioned several Mexicans finally arriving at a man by the name of Andres Villarreal, who recently had traded a horse for a mare from Gregorio Cortez. Later investigations proved that Cortez had legally acquired the mare.

Accompanied by Boone Choate and John Trimmell as deputies, Morris drove out to discuss the mare with the Cortez brothers. Romaldo spoke with the three visitors first, later calling Gregorio over. Choate asked Gregorio if he had traded a horse to Villarreal and Gregorio replied "no" (he had traded a mare). When Gregorio said "no," Sheriff Morris approached and told Choate to inform Romaldo and Gregorio that he was going to arrest them.

Morris apparently misunderstood Gregorio's reply, for in the next few seconds Morris shot Romaldo, shot at Gregorio and missed, and was, in turn, shot and mortally wounded by Gregorio. Boone Choate wasted no time running into the charparral and joining up with deputy Trimmell where together they continued a hasty retreat back to the town of Kenedy.

Gregorio knew the posse would be along shortly. He and a feverish Romaldo waited in the brush until dark, finally making their way into Kenedy, where Gregorio left his brother with the Cortez family on the outskirts of town.

The San Antonio Express reported "The trail of the Mexican leads toward the Rio Grande," as the posse headed in that direction. In reality, Cortez began his flight by walking north (some eighty miles Paredes estimates) in about forty straight hours. Near Ottine he hid out with another friend, Martin Robledo. Cortez probably felt he was pretty safe and would have been except for Robert M. Glover, sheriff of González County and a good friend of Morris. Glover "pressured" a Mexican woman into revealing Gregorio's destination, and shortly thereafter a posse surrounded the Robledo house. A gunfight ensued in which Henry Schnabel, a member of the posse, was killed by a drunken deputy; Cortez escaped.

This time he headed south toward the Rio Grande. Still on foot, his first stop was at the home of Ceferino Flores who gave Gregorio a pistol and a mare. Pursued by bloodhounds leading a posse, the chase led across the Guadalupe River to the San Antonio River, a distance of some fifty miles as the crow flies, but Gregorio and the mare covered many times that distance. After two days and one night of steady riding, the durable little mare fell over and died. After dark Cortez located another mare and began the last lap of his ride. The little brown mare earned herself quite a reputation. For three days (pursuers estimated she covered some three hundred miles) she outran posse after posse. Hundreds of men were out looking for Cortez. Special trains moved up and down the tracks bearing men, dogs, and fresh horses. "The only hope," observed the San Antonio Express, "seems to be to fill up the whole country with men and search every nook and corner and guard every avenue of escape..."

Finally, the little brown mare gave out. In broad daylight Cortez walked into the town of Cotulla and from there followed the railroad tracks to the outskirts of Twohig, and where, by a water tank, an exhausted Gregorio Cortez lay down to sleep all night, all day, and all the next night as well.

Around noon on June 22, 1902, his twenty-sixth birthday, Cortez walked into the sheep camp of Abrán de la Gárza. He was spotted by
a man named Jesús González, known as "El Teco." No doubt inspired by the one thousand dollars in reward money contributed by the governor, González led Captain J. H. Rogers of the Texas Rangers and K. H. Merrem, a posseman, to the sheep camp and shortly thereafter Gregorio Cortéz, caught completely off guard, was arrested.

He was jailed in San Antonio. A long legal fight began. Funds were collected by the Miguel Hidalgo Workers' Society of San Antonio and other workers' organizations through special benefit performances, and through the sale of a broadside in Mexico City. The fund raising campaigns united Mexicans, rich and poor, throughout South Texas. Even a number of Anglo-Americans came to admire the courage, skill, and endurance of Gregorio Cortéz, adding their contributions to his defense.

His first trial, for the murder of Henry Schnabel, posseman at the Robledo house confrontation, began July 24, 1901. The quick guilty verdict that was expected did not materialize because one man, juror A. L. Sanders, believed Cortéz innocent. (Schnabel was actually killed accidentally by another member of the posse.) Family illness forced Sanders to agree to a compromise; fifty years on a charge of second-degree murder. The charge satisfied no one, especially defendant Cortéz. Juror Sanders was not satisfied either. He told his story to the defense lawyers who promptly filed a motion for a new trial. The judge denied the motion.

The next trial was in Pleasanton, Cortéz being sentenced to two years for horse theft, a conviction later reversed. At Goliad, Cortéz was tried for the Morris murder, but the trial resulted in a hung jury. The next attempt to try the case was in Wharton County, but the district judge dismissed the case for want of jurisdiction. Finally, on April 25-30, the case was tried at Corpus Christi. The jury of Anglo-American farmers found Cortéz not guilty of murder in the death of Sheriff Morris, agreeing that Morris had attempted an unauthorized arrest and that Gregorio had shot the sheriff in self-defense and in defense of his brother. The verdict was a victory, not only for Cortéz, but for all Mexicans in Texas. Meanwhile Cortéz had been found guilty of the murder of Sheriff Robert M. Glover of González County. The trial was conducted at Columbus and resulted in a life sentence for Cortéz. He entered the Huntsville Peniten-
tiary on January 1, 1905.

Eight years later, Cortez was given a conditional pardon by Governor O. B. Colquitt. His release was met with mixed emotions. Two months later he was in Nuevo Laredo apparently to establish residence, but the Mexican Revolution was gripping the north.

Cortez joined the Huerta forces, possibly out of gratitude for those he saw as his benefactors. In the course of things he was wounded and subsequently returned to Manor, Texas, to convalesce. After his recovery he left for Anson, Texas, where he died at the home of a friend. The year was 1916; Cortez was forty one. He is buried in a small cemetery eight miles outside of Anson.

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GREGORIO CORTÉZ - Part I:

In the country of the Carmen
look what has happened
The sheriff died leaving
Román wounded.

The following morning
when the people arrived
Some said to the others
they don't know who killed him.

They were investigating
and about three hours later
They found out that the wrongdoer
was Gregorio Cortez.

Cortez was wanted
throughout the state
Alive or dead may he be apprehended
for he has killed several.

Decía Gregorio Cortez
con su pistola en la mano,
—No siento haberlo matado
al que siento es a mi hermano.—

Decía Gregorio Cortez
con su alma muy encendida,
—No siento haberlo matado
la defensa es permitida.—

Venían los americanos
que por el viento volaban,
porque se iban a ganar
tres mil pesos que les daban.

Siguieron con rumbo a Gonzáles,
varios sheriffs lo vieron,
no lo quisieron seguir
porque le tuvieron miedo.

Venían los perros jaunes
venían sobre la huella
Pero alcanzar a Cortez
era alcanzar a una estrella.

Decía Gregorio Cortez—
Pa' qué se valen de planes,
si no pueden agarrarme
ni con esos perros jaunes.—

Said Gregorio Cortez
with his pistol in his hand,
"I'm not sorry for having killed him,
It's for my brother that I feel sorry."

Said Gregorio Cortez
with his soul aflame
"I'm not sorry for having killed him,
self defense is permitted."

The Americans came
they flew like the wind,
Because they were going to win
the three thousand pesos reward.

They continued toward Gonzáles
several sheriffs saw him
They did not want to continue
because they were afraid of him.

Came the hound dogs
they came on his trail
But to reach Cortez
was to reach a star.

Gregorio Cortez said
"What's the use of plans
If you can't catch me
Even with those hound dogs."
GREGORIO CORTÉZ - Part II:

Declan los americanos

-Si lo vemos que le haremos si entramos por derecho muy poquito volveremos.-

En el redondel del rancho lo alcanzaron a rodear, poquitos más de trescientos y allí les brincó el corral.

Allá por el Encinal a según por lo que dicen se agarraron a balazos y les mató otro sheriff.

Decía Gregorio Cortez con su pistola en la mano, no corrán rinches cobardes con un solo mexicano.

Giró con rumbo a Laredo sin ninguna timidez, siguime rinches cobardes, yo soy Gregorio Cortez.

Gregorio le dice a Juan, muy pronto lo vas a ver, anda habla a los sheriffs que me vengan a aprehender.-

Cuando llegan los sheriffs Gregorio se presenta, por la buena si me llevan porque de otro modo no.-

Ya agarraron a Cortez ya terminó la cuestión, la pobre de su familia la lleva en el corazón.

Ya con esto me despidi con la sombra de un Ciprés, aquí se acaba cantando la tragedia de Cortez.

JOAQUIN MURRIETA


Separating the man from the legend is frequently a major concern of the folklorist. In writing his book on Cortez, America Paredes was able to refer to newspaper articles, eyewitness accounts, and interviews with Gregorio's son, Valeriano Cortez. With our next hero, the situation is much more complex. Indeed there is question, in the minds of some, if the man ever existed at all. Joaquin Murrieta is the complete legend. He has been dead over one hundred years, yet older Mexican-Americans with whom I have spoken continue to believe in the man and what he continues to represent to his people. In 1927,
at the University of California, Berkeley, Richard G. Mitchell wrote his master's thesis on "Joaquin Murrieta: A Study of Social Conditions in Early California." That thesis is reprinted, in part, in Furia y Muerte; Los Banditos Chicanos. In their introduction to Mitchell's study, editors Pedro Castillo and Albert Camarillo observed:

"Joaquin Murrieta is the Chicano social bandit whose exploits have enjoyed the greatest notoriety... The legend of Joaquin Murrieta has endured as story, drama, and corrido for over a hundred years. But Murrieta and the social environment alone did not create the legend. A primary factor in the evolution of his story was supplied by the Chicano people. The Mexican population believed that Joaquin was their champion and avenger, and out of this belief legends were created about him. His life and legend of his story was supplied by the Chicano people. The study, according to one version, the hate engendered by insults fanned into a frenzy, a desire for revenge, and led him to adopt a career of brigandage and murder."

About this time an American was found dead near the town of Murphy's Diggins, cut to pieces with a knife. The victim was later recognized as being a member of a gang that had once insured Joaquin. Fear ran high and other corpses were found. By 1851 it was evident that the chief of a band of highwaymen was Joaquin Murrieta. His two principal lieutenants were sixteen-year-old Reyes Feliz, Rosita's brother and Joaquin Valenzuela known as "Three-Fingered-Jack." There was also a man by the name of Claudio.

In 1852, a horse was stolen from Judge Carter of Amador County. The trail led to a public house kept by Mr. Clark. Carter's horse was tied at the door. Informed by Carter that the horse had been stolen, Clark offered to arrest the thief. He walked into the dining room and placed his hand on Joaquin's shoulder. Murrieta turned, drew his gun, and shot Clark dead.

There was another side to Murrieta, however, as attested by the following incident. Jack Sutherland who lived on Dry Creek near Plymouth was absent from his ranch leaving his son in charge. Murrieta rode up. To save his life and money, young Sutherland pretended not to know the notorious bandit and invited him to stay the night. Mitchell relates the story this way:

"Joaquin called to his men in Spanish. He told them they had found a friend and to unsaddle while Sutherland prepared the supper. Joaquin asked him if he was not afraid to keep so much money in this house he could get it there. The officer consented. The story was told that as the pair approached a thicket at the side of the road, Murrieta drew a knife and stabbed the officer in the heart. Apparently the story was spread by confederates of Joaquin in hopes of frightening the inhabitants of the city. From San José, Murrieta and Rosita moved to the Sonorian Camp, a Mexican settlement near Marysville. A gang of twenty men under Three-Fingered-Jack began working in the area. Various murders were attributed to them.
From Marysville the bandits rode into the mountains near Mount Shasta. With the help of a number of Indians, they spent the winter stealing horses. The settlers rose to action, located the thieves, and managed to hem them in between some perpendicular cliffs and a deep, swiftly flowing stream. The settlers opened fire upon the thieves who leapt into the water. Although a few succeeded in crossing the river, the majority were killed by the pursuers.

Before the spring of 1852 the remaining bandits had driven stolen stock into Sonora only to return to an area known as Arroyo Cantoova, a large pasture of some eight thousand acres which served as home to a large number of wild horses. Catching these horses now occupied the Murrieta gang. The arroyo was located the thieves, and managed to hem them in between some perpendicular cliffs and a deep, swiftly flowing stream. The settlers opened fire upon the thieves who leapt into the water. Although a few succeeded in crossing the river, the majority were killed by the pursuers.

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GENERAL JOSH BEAN, older brother of Roy Bean (who later set himself up as the infamous judge of Langtry, Texas) had apparently done rather well for himself in California. C. L. Sonnichsen tells the story in Roy Bean, Last West of the Pecos:

"The assassination of General Bean is a famous episode in early California history and has been carefully examined in several books, not so much because of the importance of the General himself as because of his opposition. The murder was probably planned by the great Joaquin Murrieta. There was a woman in it, of course. Some say she was Joaquin's own querida. Others...believe that she belonged to Joaquin's right-hand man, Felipe Read. [Read is not mentioned in the Mitchell account]...It happened about eleven o'clock of a Sunday evening. The day had been a lively one—Sundays always were at the [Bean] headquarters—and the final treat was a performance of the Maromas, a sort of Mexican circus. About eleven o'clock the General applauded the last performer, got his horse, and started home. As he approached the Mission two shots were fired at him from the darkness, one taking him in the breast and passing entirely through his body.

"...A poor Mexican cobbler, Cipriano Sandoval was accused of the killing, and it was made to appear that he was taking revenge for Bean's attentions to an Indian girl who had become interesting to both of them. With two others Cipriano was railroaded to the gallows, but the wise ones felt then, and still feel, that Murrieta was behind it all. Anyway, it was the beginning of the end for Murrieta. Posses were organized at once to run his band to earth...Ranger Harry Love...brought back Joaquin's head (or what some people thought was Joaquin's head) - the head which was preserved in alcohol in a San Francisco saloon until 1906 when fire and earthquake destroyed it along with other precious relics.

There are many versions of the "Corrido of Joaquin Murrieta," each contributing to the legend. The version here is no exception. It was recorded in 1934 by los Hermanos Sanchez and Linares known and remembered as the original "Los Madrugadores." In a 1975 interview, Victor Sanchez had this to say:

"The corrido was written before I was born; it is from the last century. I heard it as a child in Mexico, sung during the time of the Revolution, and later in Arizona.

"We had many requests for this corrido, at parties, and then after we began to sing it on the radio, people would send us cards to the station and ask that we record it so they could have the disc. Felipe Valdéz Loel added three or four verses to make it fit both sides of the record—I don't remember which ones but possibly the one about coming from Hermosillo.

"This story was famous because to the people of Sonora, he [Joaquin Murrieta] was as Robin Hood of England. The people of California were more concerned with what happened to him. They killed his brother; they tied up and violated his wife. He was a worker paying gold—and his brother later becoming a bandit. He robbed to give to the poor and the Indians. The pueblo thought of him as a Robin Hood."
Joaquín Murrieta – Part I:

Yo no soy americano pero comprendo el inglés. Yo lo aprendí con mi hermano al derecho y al revés. A cualquier americano le hago temblar a mis pies.

Cuando apenas era un niño huérfano a mí me dejaron. Nadie me hizo ni un cariño, a mi hermano lo mataron, y a mi esposa Carmelita, los cobarde asesinaron.

Yo vine de Hermosillo en busca de oro y riqueza. Al indio pobre y sencillo le defendí con fiereza y a buen precio los sheriffs pagaban por mi cabeza.

A los ricos avarientos, yo les quité su dinero. Con los humildes y pobres yo me quité mi sombrero. Ay, qué leyes tan injustas fue llamarme bandolero.

Joaquín Murrieta no le gusta lo que hace no es desmentir.

I am not an American but I understand English. I learned it with my brother forwards and backwards. And any American I make tremble at my feet.

When I was barely a child I was left an orphan. No one gave me any love, they killed my brother, and my wife Carmelita, the cowards assassinated her.

I came from Hermosillo in search of gold and riches. The Indian poor and simple I defended with ferocity and at a good price the sheriffs would pay for my head.

From the greedy rich, I took away their money. With the humble and poor I took off my hat. Oh, what laws so unjust to call me a highwayman.

Murrieta does not like to be falsely accused.

Joaquín Murrieta – Part II:

Vengo a vengar a mi esposa, y lo vuelvo a repetir. Carmelita tan hermosa, como la hicieron sufrir.

Por cantinas me metí, castigando americanos. —Tú serás el capitán que mataste a mi hermano. Lo agarraste indefenso, orgulloso americano.—

Yo soy aquel que domino hasta leones africanos. Por eso salgo al camino a matar americanos. Ya no es otro mi destino ¡ón cuidado, parroquianos!

Las pistolas y las dagas son juguetes para mí. Balazos y puñaladas, carcajadas para mí.

I come to avenge my wife, and again I repeat it, Carmelita so lovely how they made her suffer.

Through bars I went punishing Americans. “You must be the captain who killed my brother you grabbed him defenseless you stuck up American.”

My career began because of a terrible scene. When I got to seven hundred (killed) then my name was feared. When I got to twelve hundred then my name was (really) feared.

I am the one who dominates even African lions. That’s why I go out on the road to kill Americans. Now my destiny is no other, watch out, you people!

Pistols and daggers are playthings for me. Bullets and stabblings big laughs for me.
Ahora con medios cortados ya se asustan por aquí.

No soy chileno ni extraño en este suelo que piso.

De México es California, porque Dios así lo quiso,

Y en mi sarape cosida traigo mi fe de bautismo.

Que bonito es California con sus calles alineadas,

Donde pasaba Murrieta con su tropa bien formada,

Con su pistola repleta, y su montura plateada.

Me he paseado en California por el año del cincuenta,

Con mi montura plateada, y mi pistola repleta,

Yo soy ese mexicano de nombre Joaquín Murrieta.

With their means cut off they’re afraid around here.

I’m neither a Chilean nor a stranger on this soil which I tread.

California is part of Mexico because God willed it that way, and in my stitched serape, I carry my baptismal certificate.

How pretty is California with her well-laid-out streets, where Murrieta passed by with his troops, with his loaded pistol, and his silver-plated saddle.

I’ve had a good time in California through the year of ’50 [1850]. With my silver-plated saddle and my pistol loaded I am that Mexican by the name of Joaquín Murrieta.

EL DEPORTADO (The Deportee)
Disc 1: #3. Los Hermanos Banuelos: David N. and Luis M. Banuelos - vocal duet with guitars. (Vo 8287) Los Angeles, Ca. 1929.

Ballads are frequently the products of an individual’s experiences and aspirations. And certainly no experience can be more frightening than tearing up one’s roots to make a new life in a new land. America’s experience is the migrant experience and each immigrating group has gone through its own set of experiences. Clearly no group has felt rejection more than have our neighbors to the south. In rejecting the Mexican, all too frequently the Anglo has never stopped to consider the feelings and emotions of the man (or woman) who was the object of his derision. Writers such as Paul S. Taylor (“Songs of the Mexican Migration” in Puro Mexicano) have recognized the importance of this type of ballad as providing valuable documentation into the problems of migration. This widely sung corrido is slightly unusual in form in that the first and third lines are repeated twice, a technique that serves to add certain emphasis. There are also a number of elements that are worth observing, among them the reference to the train in the second verse with its “lonesome whistle,” and the following two verses which speak of leaving one’s mother. As in the US, a marvelous body of folklore and folksong surround the “iron horse” and its contribution to the building of the United States as well as Mexico. And significantly, one never seems to have one’s father at the station, it is invariably one’s girl friend—or one’s mother. The sixth verse (if part of the original corrido) as well as the seventh and eighth, are significant as these verses permit us to trace the route of travel and therefore suggest that the individual either came from southern Jalisco or Colima. Part one concludes with a reference to the confusion of Mexican customs inspection.

And where the first part of the corrido might well be called “the migration,” the second can only be called “the indignation.” To avoid the problems of (and not infrequently the indignation and ultimate rejection by) immigration and public health officials as expressed in the second part of the corrido, many Mexicans have been forced to choose “the illegal route” into this country. Our subject, despite his suffering, was more fortunate than many of his countrymen and women although he too is finally deported. He tests that “we are not bandits, we came to work.” At least the Mexican Revolution is now over and he can return to his country and again find his place in his beautiful nation.

“El Deportado” is sung here by Los Hermanos Banuelos. They are one of the early groups to record. To this listener, their approach is more melodic—there is more of a trained quality in their voices in this version of this corrido—a trained voice quality somehow reminiscent of Vernon Dahlhart or Carson Robison in early American country music.
EL DEPORTADO - Part I:
Voy a contarles señores, (2X)
todo lo que yo sufrí,
Desde que dejé mi patria, (2X)
por venir a este país.

Serían las diez de la noche, (2X)
comenzó un tren a silbar.
Oí que dijo mi madre,
—Ahi viene ese tren ingrato
que a mi hijo se va a llevar.—

—Adiós mi madre querida, (2X)
échame su bendición.
Yo me voy al extranjero, (2X)
donde no hay revolución.

Corre, corre maquinita, (2X)
vámonos de la estación.
No quiero ver a mi madre
llorar por su hijo querido,
por su hijo del corazón.

Al fin sonó la campana, (2X)
dos silbidos pegó el tren.
—No lloren mis compañeros, (2X)
que me hacen llorar también.—

Pasamos pronto Jalisco, (2X)
ay que fuerte corría el tren.
La Piedad, luego Irapuato,
I'm going to tell you, gentlemen, (2X)
all about my sufferings.
Since I left my country, (2X)
to come to this nation.

It must have been about ten at night, (2X)
the train began to whistle.
I heard my mother say,
"There comes that ungrateful train
that is going to take my son."

Good-bye my beloved mother, (2X)
give me your blessings.
I am going abroad, (2X)
where there is no revolution."

Run, run little train, (2X)
let's leave the station.
I don't want to see my mother
cry for her beloved son,
for the son of her heart.

Finally the bell rang, (2X)
the train whistled twice.
"Don't cry my friends, (2X)
for you'll make me cry as well."

Right away we passed Jalisco, (2X)
my, how fast the train ran.
La Piedad, then Irapuato,
Silado luego La Chona,
y Aguascalientes también.

Al recordar estas horas, (2X)
me palpita el corazón.
Cuando deséase lo lejos, (2X)
a ese mentado Torreón.

Silado, then La Chona,
and Aguascalientes as well.

When I remember these hours, (2X)
my heart beats.
When I saw from afar, (2X)
that infamous city of Torreón.

When we passed Chihuahua, (2X)
we noticed great confusion.
The employees from the customhouse, (2X)
who were checking things out.

We arrived at Juarez last, (2X)
there I ran into trouble.
"Where are you going,
where do you come from?
How much money do you have
to enter this nation?"

“Gentlemen, I have money, (2X)
so that I can emigrate.”
"Your money isn't worth anything, (2X)
we have to give you a bath."

Oh, my beloved countrymen, (2X)
this is idle conversation.
They were making me feel, (2X)
like going right back.
Left: Cover page of 130-page catalog printed by Mauricio Calderón’s music shop (located at 408 N. Main Street, Los Angeles) ca. late 1928. Most of the catalog listed all available Mexican records on all major labels by label and alphabetically by song title. Catalog also included a number of song texts (as seen at right) as well as about a dozen pages of instruments and guitar chord diagrams. (Catalog courtesy George Roblin)

REPERTORIO MUSICAL MEXICANO
M. CALDERON, Prop. 408 N. MAIN ST. LOS ANGELES, Calif.

DISCOS COLUMBIA


JESUS CADENAS

Andaba Jesús Cadenas por las orillas de Guatavo diciéndole a sus amigos a esa giera yo la mato.
Decla Jesús Cadenas abrochándose una esquila, cuando yo llegue a ese baile he de bailar con Chabela.
Llegó Jesús a la puerta con ganas de echar balazos, sale Chabela y le dice:
venga mi prieto a mis brazos.
Contesta Jesús Cadenas quitale de aquí Chabela, estás tratando con hombres no con muchachos de escuela.
Les dijo Jesús Cadenas en esta prenda yo mando, y si alguno no le gusta aquí lo estoy esperando.
Decla la comadre Antonio: Isabel no andes bailando, mira que hay anda Cadenas y no mas te anda tanteando.
Chabela le contestó con una fuerte risada, no tenga miedo Comadre sus herzeg de mi manana.

Se metió Jesús Cadenas y gritó "Manos arriba" luego sacó su pistola para quitarle la vida.
Decla la comadre Antonio: Cadenas pasa p’ dentro, a tomar una cerveza, que se te borre ese intento.
No quiso endesceder, pues por ninguna razón, cinco balazos le dió al lado del corazón.
Decla Chabela al morir: aconsejo a mis amigos no comprometan los hombres por que les cuesta la vida.
Salió su Papá de adentro como queriendo llorar, Isabel que te ha pasado, parece que oigo quejar.
No llores Padre de mi alma, que me atormenta tu voz, ruego por tu hija querida que sea feliz ante Dios.
Ya con esta me despido porque estoy en tierra ajena aquí se acaban los versos de ese Jesús Cadenas.

Jornalero. Vals. Banda.—Flor de la Tentación .... 4039-C
Josefin. Vals. Banda.—Gloria Nacional .... 4098-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Jesúsita en Chihuahua .... 4053-C

Josefin. Vals. Banda.—Flores de Tentación .... 4039-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Gloria Nacional .... 4098-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Jesúsita en Chihuahua .... 4053-C

Jornalero. Fox. Orquesta.—El Pavo Real. Canción .... 447-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Gloria Nacional .... 4098-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Jesúsita en Chihuahua .... 4053-C

Jornalero. Fox. Orquesta.—El Pavo Real. Canción .... 447-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Gloria Nacional .... 4098-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Jesúsita en Chihuahua .... 4053-C

Jornalero. Fox. Orquesta.—El Pavo Real. Canción .... 447-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Gloria Nacional .... 4098-C
Josefin. Fox. Orquesta.—Jesúsita en Chihuahua .... 4053-C
Cruce por fin la frontera, (2X)
y en un renganche salí.
Ay, mis queridos paisanos, (2X)
fue mucho lo que sufrí.

Los güeros son muy malorás, (2X)
se valen de la ocasión.
Y a todos los mexicanos, (2X)
nos tratan sin compasión.

Hoy traen la gran polvadera, (2X)
y sin consideración.
Mujeres, niños y ancianos
los llevan a la frontera.
Nos echan de esta nación.

Adiós paisanos queridos, (2X)
y no van a deportar.
Pero no somos bandidos, (2X)
venimos a camellar.

Los espero allá en mi tierra, (2X)
ya no hay más revolución.
Vámonos cuates queridos,
seremos bien recibidos
de nuestra bella nación.

At last I crossed the Border, (2X)
and left in a group.
Oh my beloved countrymen, (2X)
I suffered a lot.
The light skinned men are very wicked, (2X)
they take advantage of the occasion.
And all the Mexicans, (2X)
are treated without compassion.

There comes a large cloud of dust, (2X)
with no consideration.
Women, children and old ones
are being driven to the Border.
We are being kicked out of this country.

Good-bye beloved countrymen, (2X)
we are being deported.
But we are not bandits, (2X)
we came to work.

I will wait for you in my homeland, (2X)
there is no more revolution.
Let’s leave my dear friends,
we will be welcomed
by our beautiful nation.

"La Elena"—also known as "La desdichada Elena," or the unfortunate Elena—deals with adultery. The text develops from a romance known as "La amiga de Bernal francés," the tune from other corridos, "Arnulfo" being the most probable source. The indiscretion described in this corrido has always been far more serious when the guilty party is a woman and for Elena to meet her demise at the barrel of a pistola is not only acceptable but traditionally accepted. With a man, on the other hand, the situation is entirely different. When the culprit is of the male gender, the songs are generally humorous in nature.

LA ELENA—Part I:
Estas son las mañanitas,
que yo les voy a cantar,
que dan razón de mi Elena
que la vengo a saludar.

—Abreme la puerta, Elena,
sin ninguna desconfianza,
yo soy Fernando el francés
que vengo desde la Francia.—

—¿Quién es ese caballero
que mi puerta manda abrir?
Mis puertas se hallan cerradas,
¡Muchacha encienda el candil!—

Al abrir la media puerta,
se les apagó el candil,
They took each other’s hand and went out into the garden.

On a bed of flowers they lay down to sleep. Around eleven o’clock at night Elena spoke up:

“What is the matter, my Fernando, why won’t you come closer, you must have lovers in France whom you love more than me?”

“I don’t have any lovers in France and there is no one I love more than you, I am just nervous that your husband might just be coming by here.”

“Don’t worry about my husband he is off travelling far away,” They took each other’s hands and continued on.

While riding in Plan de Barrancas without knowing exactly how, Don Benito came upon Elena and don Fernando.

Fly, fly little dove, alight over on that cypress tree, Go and see what happened to Don Fernando, the Frenchman.

He reached for his pistol, and his sixteen caliber rifle, ready to shoot Don Fernando, the Frenchman.

“Don’t shoot me, don Benito, for the love of God, It is false what you are thinking, I don’t know your wife.”

“I won’t shoot you, don Fernando, so don’t call me a tyrant, How is it that you don’t know her if you are standing there holding her hand?

“Forgive me, my husband, for my lacking good judgement, If not for my sake, then for this child.

“You won’t get any forgiveness from me you won’t get anything of the kind, The only thing you’ll get from me are three shots from my pistol.”

Poor Elena, the agony with which she died, With three shots from the pistol which came from her husband.
—Toma, que lleva esa criatura, y víasela a mis padres. Si te preguntan por mí, tú los digas que no sabes.

—Tú les dirás que no sabes, yo quedaré por aquí, y las mujeres casadas que agaren ejemplo en mí.—

Vuela, vuela palomita, dale vuelo a tu volado, anda a ver cómo le fue a Elena con su marido.

Vuela, vuela palomita, pirrate en aquella higuera, anda a ver cómo le fue a Elena por traidora.

Come, take this child and take her to my parents, if they ask about me tell them that you know nothing.

Tell them you know nothing and I will remain here, so that married women will take an example from me.

Fly, fly little dove, go make your rounds, go and see how it went for Elena and her husband.

Fly, fly little dove, alight in that fig tree, go and see how it went for Elena who cheated on her husband.

LA CIUDAD DE JAÚJA

Part I:

Del se la sal de Jaúja me mandan solicitar que me vaya y que me vaya de un tesoro a disfrutar.

(Se repite)

—¿Qué dices amigo, vamos a ver si dicen la verdad si es verdad de lo que dicen nos quedamos por allá.—

Es una ciudad muy buena, una ciudad sin igual, porque allí te dan de palos al que quiera trabajar.

Las calles no son como estas, son de muy finos metales, Las muchachas que hay allí son acocinas cordiales.

Hay pilas llenas de aceite llenas sin, sin derramar, vienen los patos asados repletos con su pan relleno y su sal.

Tómala, lleva esa criatura, y víasela a mis padres. Si te preguntan por mí, tú los digas que no sabes.

—Tú les dirás que no sabes, yo quedaré por aquí, y las mujeres casadas que agaren ejemplo en mí.—

Vuela, vuela palomita, dale vuelo a tu volado, anda a ver cómo le fue a Elena con su marido.

Vuela, vuela palomita, pirrate en aquella higuera, anda a ver cómo le fue a Elena por traidora.

Come, take this child and take her to my parents, if they ask about me tell them that you know nothing.

Tell them you know nothing and I will remain here, so that married women will take an example from me.

Fly, fly little dove, go make your rounds, go and see how it went for Elena and her husband.

Fly, fly little dove, alight in that fig tree, go and see how it went for Elena who cheated on her husband.

LA CIUDAD DE JAÚJA

Part I:

Desde la sal de Jaúja me mandan solicitar que me vaya y que me vaya de un tesoro a disfrutar.

(Se repite)

—¿Qué dices amigo, vamos a ver si dicen la verdad si es verdad de lo que dicen nos quedamos por allá.—

Es una ciudad muy buena, una ciudad sin igual, porque allí te dan de palos al que quiera trabajar.

Las calles no son como estas, son de muy finos metales, Las muchachas que hay allí son acocinas cordiales.

Hay pilas llenas de aceite llenas sin, sin derramar, vienen los patos asados repletos con su pan relleno y su sal.

"La Ciudad de Jaúja" writes Américo Paredes in A Texas-Mexican Cancionero, "is related to American songs such as 'Oleana' and The Big Rock Candy Mountain." All of them go back to French medieval poems called fabliaux, about a wondrous land (Cockayne, Cach-brand, Cucufia) where everything is good to eat. The Valley of Xauxa or Jaúja in Peru was incorporated into humorous Spanish romances which spoke of this marvelous area of the new world as Cucufia. Frequently, Jaúja is pictured as an island with an idyllic quality of life and more than plenty to eat. This particular version, while maintaining the illusion, speaks of Jaúja as a city. Paredes notes that although it is anomic song, the humor became "a bit pointed" during hard times on the Border. He adds that for many generations, Border Mexicans have gone north in search of jobs and better living conditions. In a tongue-in-cheek way, they sometimes have described their journeys as a quest for the mythical land of Jaúja.

LA CIUDAD DE JAÚJA

Part I:

 Desde la sal de Jaúja me mandan solicitar que me vaya y que me vaya de un tesoro a disfrutar.

(Se repite)

—¿Qué dices amigo, vamos a ver si dicen la verdad si es verdad de lo que dicen nos quedamos por allá.—

Es una ciudad muy buena, una ciudad sin igual, porque allí te dan de palos al que quiera trabajar.

Las calles no son como estas, son de muy finos metales, Las muchachas que hay allí son acocinas cordiales.

Hay pilas llenas de aceite llenas sin, sin derramar, vienen los patos asados repletos con su pan relleno y su sal.

"for many generations, Border Mexicans have gone north in search of jobs and better living conditions. In a tongue-in-cheek way, they sometimes have described their journeys as a quest for the mythical land of Jaúja." The city of Jaúja is calling me to come I must go, I must go and enjoy the treasure there. (repeat)

"What do you say, my friend, shall we go to see if what they say is true? If it is true what they say we should remain there."

It is a very good city, a city beyond compare, Because there they give a beating to anyone who wants to work.

The streets are not like ours, they are made of precious metals, And the girls that one finds there are (like) cordial olives.

There are tubs filled with oil, filled without spilling over, Roasted ducks fly over replete with pepper and salt.
¿Qué dices amigo, vamos, a ver si dices verdad?
Si es verdad de lo que dices nos quedamos por allá—

LA CIUDAD DE JUAJA – Part II:
Hay árboles de tortillas, ramos con jarros de atole, Hay barricas de menudo bien surtidas de pozole. (se repite)

—¿Qué dices amigo, vamos a ver si dicen la verdad?
Si es verdad de lo que dicen nos quedamos por allá—

Válgame la cruz de queso con sus piñas de tortilla, los brazos de requeson, y el cuerpo de mantequilla.

Con tlaco compran zapatos, con cuartilla pantalón, con medio compran corvete y chaleco de baibazón.

No hay ni un hombre de huaraches ni tampoco de huichol, Porque allí todo es barrato y con tan de lo mejor.

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“¿Qué dices amigo, vamos, a ver si dices verdad?
Si es verdad de lo que dices, nos quedamos por allá—

There are tortilla trees
their branches loaded with cups of atole,
(a corn-flour drink)
There are barrels of menudo (a tripe stew)
and good quantities of pozole. (hominy soup)
(repeat)

“What do you say, my friend, shall we go to see if what they say is true? If it is true what they say, we should remain there.”

My goodness, the cross is made of cheese, with its base of tortillas, The arms are of cottage cheese, and the body is made of butter.

One can buy shoes for a penny, with a quarter, trousers, for a half, one buys a tie and a vest of baibazón.

No one there wears sandals, nor güichel. (straw hat)
Because there everything is inexpensive and of the best quality.

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En todo puse cuidado,
en todo lo que yo vi,
No andan de tal honrado
como las de por aquí.

With everything I was careful in everything that I saw,
People there are not dishonest
As they are here.

EL CORRIDO DE TEXAS (Ignacio M. Vallee)


Probably the oldest Border corrido to come down to us in complete form is “El corrido de Kiansis” which documents the first cattle drives to Kansas in the late 1860s and early 1870s. The theme is the hardships of the trail; thirty Mexicans to keep five hundred wild steers herded. The foreman is given the ungrateful task of explaining to one boy’s mother that a steer killed her son on the gate of a corral. “Thirty pesos were left over,” the foreman continues, “but it was all owed. And I put in three hundred to have him buried.”

EL CORRIDO DE TEXAS
Mi chinita me decía
—Ya me voy para esa agencia, pa’ pasearme por el norte y pa’ hacerle su asistencia.

Fifty years later the migration of men moved from the trail to the railroad. The railroad to many of us represents a tie with a romantic past. To the mexicano in the thirties, it represented the great hope, the escape from the poverty, the prejudice, and the backbreaking field work which was his life in Texas.

Of the many corridos composed about the men who headed north, none are more famous than “El Corrido de Texas” and “Corrido Pensilviano.” Both were widely sung in their time and remain classics in the genre.

My little china doll told me,
“I’m going to that agency, so that I can travel north and take care of you.
—De la parte donde estés me escribes no seas ingrato, y en contestación te mando de recuerdos mi retrato.—

Adiós estado de Texas con toda tu plantación, Me retiro de tus tierras por no pisar algodón.

Esos trenes del T.P. que cruzan por la Louisiana, Se llevan los mexicanos para el estado de Indiana.

El día veintidós de abril a las dos de la mañana, Salimos en un renganche al estado de Louisiana.

EL CORRIDO DE TEXAS – Part II:

Adiós estado de Texas con toda tu plantación, Me despio de tus tierras por no pisar algodón.

Adiós Fort Worth y Dallas, Poblaciones en un lado Nos veremos cuando vuelva de por Indiana y Chicago.

“Wherever you are write to me; don’t be ungrateful, and in reply I’ll send you my picture as a remembrance.”

Good-bye state of Texas with all of your fields, I leave your land so I won’t have to pick cotton.

Those trains of the Texas and Pacific Railroad which cross Louisiana, They take the Mexicans to the state of Indiana.

The twenty-second of April at two o’clock in the morning We left in a work gang to the state of Louisiana.

Good-bye state of Texas with all of your fields, I leave your land so I won’t have to pick cotton.

Good-bye Fort Worth and Dallas, towns that are side-by-side, I’ll see you when I get back from Indiana and Chicago.
El renganchista nos dice que no llevemos mujer, Para no pasar trabajos y poder pronto volver.

Adiós estado de Texas, con toda tu plantación.
Me retiro de tus tierras por no pizar algodón.

Esos trenes del T.P. que cruzan por la Louisiana, Se llevan los mexicanos para el estado de Indiana.

The recruiter tells us not to take women So we won’t have any trouble and can return soon.

Good-bye state of Texas with all of your fields, I leave your land so I won’t have to pick cotton.

Those trains of the Texas and Pacific which cross Louisiana, They take the Mexicans to the state of Indiana.

CORRIDO PENSILVANIO

Disc 1: #7. Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez - vocal duet with guitar; (C 3653, Vo 8278) Chicago, Ill. 6/19/1929.

In “Corrido Pensilvano,” our friend also says a sad farewell to his lady love. She is apparently more than willing to go along but the contractor has the final say. It is a lonely life and in this corrido, as in the previous one, entreaties are made to write. Letters and pictures become very precious under such circumstances. However, las italianas may help ease the burden on the heart.

CORRIDO PENSILVANIO

El día 28 de abril a las seis de la mañana, Salimos en un enganche pa’l estado de Pensilvania.

The 28th day of April At six o’clock in the morning, We left under contract For the state of Pennsylvania.

Mi chinita me decía, —Yo me voy en esa agencia, para lavarle su ropa para darle su asistencia.—

El enganchista me dijo, —No llves a tu familia para no pasar trabajos en el estado de West Virginia.—

—Pa’ que sepas que te quiero me dejas en Fort Worth, Cuando ya estés trabajando me escribes de donde estés.

—Cuando ya estés por allá me escribes, no seas ingrato, En contestación te mando de recuerdo mi retrato.—

Adiós estado de Texas con toda tu plantación, Ya me voy pa’ Pennsylvania por no pizar algodón.

Adíos, Fort Worth y Dallas, pueblos de mucha importancia, Ya me voy pa’ Pensilvania por no andar en la vagancia.

Al llegar a ese Milwaukee cambiamos locomotora,

My little china doll said to me, “I’m going to that company to wash your clothes and take care of you.”

The contractor said to me, “Don’t take your family so as not to pass up any jobs in the state of West Virginia.”

“So that you’ll know I love you when you leave me in Fort Worth, When you’re already working write me from where you are.

“When you get there write me, don’t be ungrateful, In reply, I’ll send you my picture as a remembrance.”

Good-bye, state of Texas with all of your fields, I’m going to Pennsylvania to keep from picking cotton.”

Good-bye, Fort Worth and Dallas, towns of much importance, Now I’m going to Pennsylvania to avoid becoming a vagrant.”

On arriving in Milwaukee we changed locomotives,
De allí salimos corriendo ochenta millas por hora.

Cuando llegamos allá que del tren ya nos bajamos, preguntan las italianas.
—¿De dónde vienen mexicanos?

Responden los mexicanos los que ya hablan inglés, —Venimos en un enganche del pueblo de Fort Worth.—

Estos versos son compuestos cuando yo venía en camino, Son poesías de un mexicano nombrado por Concestino.

Ya con ésta me despido con mi sombrero en la mano, Y mis fieles compañeros son trescientos mexicanos.

Then sped out of the city at eighty miles an hour.

When we got there and got off the train, the Italian women asked us, “Where are you Mexicans from?”

The Mexicans responded, those who already spoke English, “We come on a contract From the town of Fort Worth.”

These verses were composed when I was on the road. They are poems of a Mexican by the name of Concestino.

Now with this I take my leave with my hat in my hand, And my faithful companions are three hundred Mexicans.

**CORRIDO DE LOS HERMANOS HERNÁNDEZ** (Alonzo)


“Casa Grande, Arizona, January 22, 1933: Two eager bloodhounds, one sandy and the other black, tonight are seeking two killers in an attempt to unravel the remainder of a story of wanton and cruel murder committed in the desert near here last night, the first chapters of which are inscribed in mud and blood.”

So reported the Arizona Daily Star, The
victim was Charles P. Washburn, variously reported as a sixty-five or a seventy-two year old prospector who had described his home as nowhere in particular. According to the Arizona Republic, the only means of identification was a Christmas card addressed to Washburn.

The victim had been living alone in a "rude shelter erected by himself just south of the Tucson highway three miles east of Casa Grande" (near Camp Sahuaro). Washburn had apparently been struck over the head with an automobile spindle bolt, dragged about seventy-five feet, shot twice with a twelve gauge shotgun, and then dragged another three hundred feet to a fifteen-foot well where the body was thrown and covered with dirt. It was assumed that the assailants apparently had been after the prospector’s car and what cash he may have had.

During the next two weeks a number of suspects were arrested and released. On February 2nd, Sheriff Walter E. Laveen reported that two brothers, Manuel (age 17) and Fred (real name Fernando, age 19) Hernández, had confessed planning the murder for the purpose of robbing Washburn of a large sum of money they thought he carried. The robbery netted $35.00. A shotgun found near the scene of the slaying was traced to the boys resulting in their arrest.

They were tried separately in Pinal County, Judge E. L. Green presiding. The trial of Fred Hernández, the older boy, began May 8, 1933, with the verdict returned May 16, 1933. His brother Manuel’s trial began May 18, 1933, the verdict returned May 22, 1933. Both were found guilty and sentenced to "Death by Hanging." Date set for execution was August 11, 1933. On July 18, 1933, however, a stay of execution was granted for each of the two young men. Nine months later, on April 28, 1934, a new trial date was set, July 6, 1934. At their respective trials, both said while Manuel had engaged Washburn in conversation, Fred struck the first blow after which Manuel fatally shot their victim.

Shortly before the sentence was to be carried out, Manuel presented a statement to H. G. Richardson, the attorney representing the two brothers, in which Manuel claimed full responsibility for the death of Washburn maintaining that his brother was not even present at the time of the murder. In his statement, Manuel asserted that both had been drinking and that he had emptied the remains of a bottle of bootleg liquor just before the crime was committed. The brother’s use of liquor had not been mentioned previously.

However, the appeal was to no avail. For his part, the prison warden, A. G. Walker "went to extremes," the Arizona Daily Star reported, in easing the strain on the boys and their family. A generous meal was spread for the entire family as they gathered in death row. "Fred ate heartily but Manuel ate little. With fervid zeal he expressed his coming death as a warning to others."

After the meal the family assembled in the visitors’ quarters of the prison. Manuel then produced a confession "dictated in his faltering English" and written for him by another condemned young man, George Shaughnessy, whose death sentence was scheduled to be carried out a week later. The message in part read:

"I am giving this warning to the outside world, as I sit in my cell awaiting my turn to come, and hoping that Jesus Christ, our Saviour, will spare me from death."

"I, Manuel, am guilty of a crime but my brother Fred is not, but still the laws of Arizona say we have to pay with our lives."

"Anybody who reads this warning please do not drink or steal or do anything bad. Do God’s work instead of Satan’s work. I am about to meet God at 6 o’clock this morning with His word on my lips."

The boys’ older sister, Dolores, then attempted to translate the note into Spanish for the benefit of their mother, Alexandra López, but the ordeal was too much for the distraught woman and she broke down, weeping. The Daily Star continued the report.

"Manuel arose and exhorted them not to re­pine his death. He was guilty and not afraid to die, having made his peace with God, but he was sad on account of his brother whom he declared to be innocent. With his arms and face raised to the sky, he led them in prayer. Afterwards a wheelbarrow full of watermelons and a big container of lemon­ade was brought in. Spirits rose and the boys went among their relatives kissing and hugging them and saying the final ‘good-bye.’ They waved their hands as they passed through the gate.”

That night the family, the mother, stepfather, nine brothers, four sisters, and two aunts, lay upon the grass in front of the prison under a starlit sky. As dawn appeared, the family realized the end was near. They gathered in a circle on their knees and with their arms and
faces raised out in grief-stricken anguish, they said their final prayers.

At 4:55 the morning of Friday, July 6, 1934, Manuel and Fred Hernández marched the few steps from their cells to the iron stairway and mounted the thirteen steps to the gas chamber. Previously these thirteen steps had led to the gallows, but death by lethal gas became effective, by law in Arizona, on October 28, 1933.

When the boys reached the top of the iron stairway, Manuel stopped to confess his guilt to Father Patrick Murphy, his family's parish priest, and to say his final prayers. He was led to his seat in the gas chamber, a small room about six by six feet. Fred followed and was seated beside his brother. Fred was asked if he had anything to say. In reply he stated flatly, "You are killing an innocent man. I did not do it."

Attendants then strapped the boys' arms and legs to the chairs, blindfolded them with gauze bandages, and attached stethoscopes to their chests. At 5:09 AM, after the door had been sealed, the cord was cut to sacks containing fifteen cyanide eggs. As the eggs dropped gently into an acid solution a grayish gas arose. Within a few seconds the heads of the boys fell forward. The attending physicians pronounced Manuel dead at 5:16; Fred one-half minute later. The two brothers were the first to be executed by this method in the state of Arizona and the first double execution by lethal gas in the history of the United States.

After some time, two plain pine boxes were brought to the prison gates where the waiting family followed the funeral car to services at the Catholic church in Casa Grande. Warden Walker's instructions were for immediate burial after the 9:00 church ceremony. The family disregarded the instructions. Instead the family issued a community-wide invitation with the result that "a large part of the Mexican population of Casa Grande" joined the family and "made all-day lamentations and recited incantations before putting them (Manuel and Fred) into a double grave in the Casa Grande cemetery as the sun sank to the horizon. It was an unusual ritual for executed criminals."

The following day the Arizona Daily Star reported that Mexican newspapers (July 7th) expressed indignation over the lethal gas execution of the two Hernández brothers. Two editorials suggested the Mexicans had been chosen deliberately to test the new form of execution in Arizona, "although gunmen and others are awaiting the death penalty." A headline in Excelsior stated the youths had been executed for a crime "they possibly did not commit" while El Universal Gráfico said the execution of the brothers, "minors who committed a crime while drunk," proves the necessity for more Mexican consulates in the western part of the United States "to defend the interest of Mexicans."

CORRIDO DE LOS HERMANOS HERNÁNDEZ

Estos eran dos hermanos, pero hermanos de verdad,
Que cogidos de las manos los mataron sin piedad.

Eso fue en el mes de enero
Del año del treinta y tres,
Marchaban por un sendero,
Cazando liebres tal vez.

Los Hernández les decían a Federico y Manuel,
Ninguno de ellos sabía
Lo que había de suceder.

Con una escopeta al hombro,
Iban los dos caminando,
A un anciano con sombrero
Lo encontraron descansando.

Ay, ay, ay, ay, quizás sería su destino,
Pues con un golpe mataron al anciano gambucino.

These were two brothers, but true brothers
Who with their hands clasped were killed without pity.

This was in the month of January of the year (19) thirty-three,
They were walking on a path perhaps hunting rabbits.

The Hernándezes, they were called, Federico and Manuel,
Neither one of them knew what was about to happen.

With a shotgun on their shoulder they both went walking.
Astonished, they found an old man resting.

Ay, ay, ay, ay, perhaps it was their destiny,
That with one blow they killed the old man.
Tal vez sería por robarlo,
un arranque de locura.
Lo arrastraron para darle
en un hoyo sepultura.

Para no ser aprehendidos
la escopeta abandonaron,
Y como estaban perdidos
distintos rumbo tomaron.

Federico a Casa Grande
y a Chandler se fue Manuel,
Aunque el peligro era grande
creyeron estar en el.

Ay, ay, ay, ay,
pajarito volando,
Anda y dile a los Hernández
que ya los andan buscando.

Ya los llevan muy bien presos,
no se puede remediar,
Les pusieron grillos gruesos
por si tratan de escapar.

A la pena capital
los sentenció el gran jurado.
En la horca del penal
por haber asesinado.

Ay, ay, ay, ay,
la madre pide piedad.

Perhaps it was to rob him,
or maybe in an outburst of anger,
They dragged him to a hole
to bury him.

So that they wouldn't get caught
they left the shotgun behind,
And since they were lost,
they each took a different course.

Federico to Casa Grande
and to Chandler went Manuel,
Even though they were in great danger
they thought they were safe.

Ay, ay, ay, ay,
fly little bird,
Go and tell the Hernándezes
that they are being sought.

They are now prisoners,
it cannot be helped,
Heavy chains have been put on them
in case they try to escape.

Capital punishment
was the grand jury's decision,
They would be hung on the gallows
for having done the killing.

Ay, ay, ay, ay,
their mother asks for pity.

Al comité de perdonas
que existe en la capital.

CORRIDO DE LOS HERMANOS HERNÁNDEZ - Part II:
La pobre madre afanosa
le pide a toda su raza,
Sus firmas pues que otra cosa
y así va de casa en casa.

—De rodillas, excelencia,
te pido, gobernador,
Para mis hijos clemencia
que es muy grande mi dolor.—

—Señora ya todo escucha
ya te puedes levantar,
Pero yo lo siento mucho
yo no puedo perdonar.

—Ya no los pueden colgar
ya no hay horca en la prisión,
Pero tendrán que estrenar
el gas los dos en unión.—

—Ay, ay, ay, ay,
yo no llores mamacita,—
Y también ellos lloraban
al ir a la campana diez.

Dicen que habían de probar
el gas con los mexicanos,

From the board of pardons
in the capital city.

“On my knees, your excellency,
I ask you, governor,
Grant clemency to my sons
for my sadness is so great.”

“They cannot be hung,
there are no more gallows in the prison,
They will be the first to use
gas in a double execution.”

“Ay, ay, ay, ay,
don’t cry dear mother,”
And they also cried
upon going to the gas chamber.

They say that they should try out
using gas with the Mexicans'
Con gases tendrían que ahogarse a los dos pobres hermanos.

En esta grande desgracia y para calmar su pena, 
Piden como última gracia para todos una cena.

Ay, ay, ay, ay, 
las cuatro quizás serían,
Cuando por última vez 
piedad al cielo pedían.

Bello rato fraternal fue 
de Manuel el más chico, —
—Yo cometi todo el mal 
que se salve Federico—

Los Hernández ya murieron 
ay, qué suerte tan fatal, 
Las vidas les suprimieron 
por medio del gas leal.

Ay, ay, ay, ay, 
pobre madre adolorida, 
Dos de sus hijos queridos 
que den hoy juntos la vida.

With gas they would be the first to kill 
the two poor brothers.

In this big misfortune 
in order to calm their grief, 
They ask a last favor, 
a big supper for all.

Ay, ay, ay, ay, 
about four o’clock it must have been, 
When for the last time 
they begged heaven for mercy.

In a moment of brotherly compassion 
by Manuel the younger one, 
“I committed the crime, 
let Federico go!”

The Hernándezes are dead, 
oh, what fatal luck, 
Their lives were suppressed 
with lethal gas.

Ay, ay, ay, ay, 
pobre madre adolorida, 
Two of her beloved sons 
today died together.

“El deportado” (the third selection on this 
CD) deserves our understanding as a document 
of the problems of thousands of individuals 
who suffered the humiliation and the degradation 
of being an unwanted individual. 
With “Jesús Cadena,” often known as 
“Chavela”, on the other hand, we have an 
individual unwanted for an entirely different 
reason—the spurned lover. This corrido, still 
very popular to this day, has been widely 
sung and recorded.

In this tale, Chavela shows she is clearly 
her own woman and is not about to assume 
the role of the subjugated woman. As a result, 
she pays with her life. To this male observer, 
Chavela (and perhaps by extension women 
like her) represents a challenge to men who 
would try and dominate her. Jesús tried and 
failed, his failure underscored by his “solution.”

JESÚS CADENA (Chavela) 
(SA 271 & 272, Vo 8284); San Antonio, Tx. ca. October 1929.

Gentlemen, I will sing for you 
twenty verses, 
To recall a man 
named Jesús Cadena.

Jesús le dice a José, 
—Vamos al baile a La Parra, 

a cantar una canción 
al compás de una guitarra.—

Salieron de San Antonio 

llegaron a San Andrés, 
Se tomaron unos tragos 
y volvieron otra vez.
Llegaron a San Andrés y se fueron acercando,
A ese baile de La Parra
que se estaba principiando.
Por toda esta calle arriba corre una piedra linterna,
Y esta noche voy al baile
a bailar con mi Chavela.

Jesús le dice a José,
—Pues hombre yo aquí me quedo,
Son las doce de la noche
y la verdad yo tengo miedo.—

Decía doña Manuelita
—Comadre, no andes bailando,
Por aquí paso Jesús
dice que te anda tanteando.—

Y le contestó Chavela
con una fuerte risada.
—No tiengas miedo comadre
que al cabo no me hace nada.—

Un baile se celebraba
de mucho pompa y corrido,
Chavela andaba en los brazos
de un hombre desconocido.

Cuando Jesús llegó al baile
a Chavela se dirigió,

They arrived in San Andrés and they got closer,
To that dance at La Parra,
which was just beginning.
Along this uphill road
runs a firefly stone,
Tonight I am going to the dance,
to dance with my Chavela.

Jesús dice a José
“Well, man, I’m staying here
it’s twelve o’clock,
and truthfully, I’m scared.”

Doña Manuelita dice,
—Intimate friend, don’t run around dancing,
Jesús is around
and he says he’s spying on you.”

Chavela answered
with a strong laugh.
“Don’t be afraid my intimate friend,
hewon’t harm me.”

A dance was celebrated
with much pomp and festivity,
Chavela was in the arms
of a stranger.

When Jesús got to the dance
he went straight to Chavela.
Como era la más bonita
Chavela lo desigual.

Yo desigual no quedo
porque ni nunca he quedado,
Pues que pensaría Chavela,
¿que yo soy un desdichado?

JESÚS CADENA — Part II:
Jesús le dice a Chavela,
—Tú no vayas a bailar.
Si sigues en tus caprichos,
te puedes perjudicar—.

Cuando anunciaron la pieza
Chavela ya estaba en ansia,
Como a nadie le temía
todo lo tiraba en chanza.

Jesús sacó su pistola
para darse de balazos,
Chavela le respondió
—Véngase prieto a mis brazos—.

Y le contestó Jesús,
—Quitate de aquí, Chavela,
No creas que tú estás tratando
con un muchacho de escuela.—

Chavela lo agarró el brazo
metiéndole para adentro,

Since she was the prettiest one,
she neglected him.
I am not disgraced,
nor have I ever been
Well, what would Chavela think,
that I am a miserable one?

Jesús dice a Chavela
“You’d better not dance,
If you continue with your flirting,
you can get yourself in trouble.”

When they announced the next piece
Chavela was most anxious,
Since she feared no one
and tossed everything to chance.

Jesús sacó su pistola
prepared for a shootout,
Chavela answered him,
“Come to my arms you swarthy one.”

Jesús replyed,
“Get out of here, Chavela,
Don’t think that you’re dealing
with a schoolboy.”

Chavela grabbed his arm
and took him inside,

Brindándole una cerveza
para borrarse el intento.

Jesús sacó su pistola
tres tiros le disparó,
Dos se fueron por el viento
y uno fue el que le pegó.

Decía la guía Chavela
cuando estaba malherida,
—Esto de querer a dos
comadre cuesta la vida.—

Decía la guía Chavela,
cuando estaba agonizando,
—Mucho cuidado muchachas
con andarlos mancormando.—

Un balazo lo tenía
al lado del corazón,
Y entre todas sus amigas
la llevaron al panteón.

Ya con ésta me despido
abrochándome una espuela,
y les canté los versitos
de la traidora Chavela.

Ranchito de San José,
estado de Nuevo León,
Murió la guía Chavela,
por jugar una traición.

Y se echó a los brazos
su píosa pistola
y le disparó tres tiros,
que el uno se metió en el vientre.

Decía la guía Chavela, cuando estaba malherida,
—Esto de querer yo a dos
comadre estázhla vida.—

Decía la guía Chavela, cuando estaba agonizando,
—Mucho cuidado muchachas
con andarlos mancormando.—

Un balazo lo tenía
al lado del corazón,
Y entre todas sus amigas
la llevaron al panteón.

Ya con ésta me despido
abrochándome una espuela,
y les canté los versitos
de la traidora Chavela.

Ranchito de San José,
estado de Nuevo León,
Murió la guía Chavela,
por jugar una traición.

Toast him with a beer
to erase his intentions.

Jesús took out his pistol
and fired three shots,
Two went into the air
And one hit her.

Said the fair Chavela,
when she was badly wounded,
“This business of loving two,
my intimate, can cost your life.”

Said the fair Chavela,
when she was in agony,
“Be very careful,
girls, when you two-time them.”

One bullet she had
at the side of her heart,
And by all her friends
she was carried to the graveyard.

Now with this I take my leave
fastening my spur,
I’ve already sung to you the little verses
of the fickle Chavela.

Little ranch of San José,
state of Nuevo León,
The fair Chavela is dead
for playing a deception.
EL HUÉRFANO (The Orphan)

Disc 1: #10. Parts 1 & 2. Trio Matamoros: Núñez, José Romero, & Gilberto Guerra - vocal trio with bajo sexto and guitar (W 402674 & 75, Ok 16382); San Antonio, Tx. June 18, 1929.

Of the stories of men, perhaps none is so sad or has greater effect on the emotions than the story of the lost, the abandoned, the rejected, or the forgotten child. The orphan was a particularly important theme in English as well as in Spanish ballad literature and “El Huérfano” continues to be a popular corrido to this day.

These verses confuse me which are very true and very notable,
It is a great misfortune in this world if you don’t have your parents.

Like a feather in the air goes the son, already lost,
Orphan and helpless he loses honor and decorum.

The tears that I shed remind me of my mother,
With each step I take I reflect it is already too late.

In bad times and in worse my mother cried for me,
With tears in her eyes she gave me much advice.

I remember her telling me when I went out,
No te vayas a tardar, 
no acortes la vida mía.—

Se ha de llegar el día
que te acuerdes de tu madre,
Y tu pecho se taladre
de dolor y sentimiento.

No te cubras de contento,
Dios mío, tú bien lo sabes,
Causa mucho sentimiento
no tener uno a sus padres.

Varías veces de soldado,
otras veces en prisiones,
Mi madre ya tribulada
me llenaba de oraciones.

Para el huérfano no hay sol,
no hay frío tampoco nieve,
De tu pérdida y tu honor
todos se muestran tirolos.

Tíos, parientes, hermanos,
o vergüenzan en la calle,
Dice apretando sus manos
—Ay, si viviera mi madre.—

EL HUÉRFANO - Part II: 
Las madres en este mundo
es faro de la existencia,

"Don’t stay out too long,
don’t shorten my life."

The day will come
when you’ll remember your mother,
Your heart will ache
of pain and sentiment.

Don’t be so content,
my God, you know well.
It causes much grief
when you don’t have your parents.

Sometimes as a soldier,
other times in prison,
My mother already troubled
prayed for me.

For the orphan there is no sunshine,
there is no cold or snow.
Once he loses his honor
everyone treats him like dirt.

Uncles, relatives, brothers,
shame him in the streets,
(He) says, wringing his hands,
―Oh, if only my mother lived.―

The mothers in this world
are the lanterns for existence,

Del hijo que con paciencia
le ama con amor profundo.

Los hijos que están presentes
pongan bastante atención,
En estos tristes lamentos
que dirijo en la ocasión.

Mi madre era mi consuelo,
era toda mi alegría,
Era mi encanto y mi anhelo,
—¿Adónde estás madre mía? —

Cuando mi madre vivía
me daba muchos consejos,
Con cariño me decía
—No me hagas tantos desprecios! —

―Ay, madre, madre querida
tu hijo llora amargo llanto,
Te fuiste y me dejaste
en tan amargo quebranto.—

Cuando uno tiene a sus padres
goza de dicha y placer,
Mientras que cuando ellos faltan
todo es puro padecer.

O Dios mío, no hallo qué hacer,
Mi madre me ha abandonado
y huérfano me ha dejado
en el mundo a padecer.

And the son with patience
is loved with profound love.

Those of you here present
pay close attention,
In this sad lament
I address you on this occasion.

My mother was my consolation,
she was my complete happiness,
my charm and my longing,
"Where are you my mother?"

When my mother lived
she gave me lots of advice,
With affection she told me
“Don’t be so disrespectful!”

Oh, my beloved mother,
your son cries bitterly,
You went and left me
in such bitter grief.

Some have their parents
and enjoy happiness and are pleased,
But when they are missing
all is pure suffering.

Oh, my God, I don’t know what to do.
My mother has abandoned me.
I have been left an orphan,
left to suffer in this world.
LA CRISIS

The Crisis (F. Miranda)

Disc I: #11. Duo Latino: C. Mendoza & F. Miranda - vocal duet with guitars;
(BRC 72219, Vi 30664); New York, N.Y. March 31, 1932.

By March 31, 1932, when “La Crisis” was recorded by Duo Latino in New York, the depression was in full swing and was being severely felt throughout the nation. Work was extremely difficult to find by US citizens; virtually impossible by foreign nationals. The composer clearly sympathized with the plight of his Mexican countrymen.

In this corrido, the subject has crossed the Border intending to find work in San Antonio, Texas. What few things he has with him are rapidly being depleted and he is clearly worried. In part, he attributes his employment problems to the fact that he is constantly moving around.

But in “the Crisis, Sir the Crisis” he doesn’t want to hear about the depression; he doesn’t want to even think about it. All he really wants is a full belly. Interestingly, the number of weddings has dropped off, simply because a man cannot support a wife. The corridista concludes by noting that the only ones who have any money are

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and Henry Ford.

There are a number of variants of “La Crisis.” All are concerned with the economic conditions resulting from the Depression to which is added the worry of deportation back to Mexico.

Gentlemen, I am going to sing
Some small verses that I have,
Of that which is going to happen
And of that which will follow.

Well, I came from my homeland
Intending to work,
In San Antonio, Texas,
And I could not stay.

The money that I brought with me
Began to be used up,
And because of my movements,
I couldn’t get a job.

The Crisis, Sir, the Crisis,
Everyone says as they go by,
Now I am frightened,
And I don’t want to hear anything more.

What I want is to work
At whatever comes along.
y no me importa La Crisis
si tengo la tripa llena.

Ya no hay muchos matrimonios
pues Crisis no los deja,
en el trabajo hay dinero
para mantener la vieja.

Yo digo con los demás
¿pues qué será bueno hacer?
y mientras estamos pensando
no dejamos de comer.

No se asusten camaradas
por las tinieblas eternas,
que yo toco mi guitarra
aunque me tiemblen las piernas.

Todos buscamos dinero
y le tenemos amor,
pero el dinero lo tiene
Rockefeller y Henry Ford.

Ya con ésta me despido
todos han de despensar,
pues con eso de La Crisis
la vamos a terminar.

The Crisis is of no importance to me
If I have a full belly.

Now there aren’t many weddings
Because the Crisis won’t permit it,
In working there is money
To maintain the old lady.

Now I tell you with the others
Well, it is good to do,
And meanwhile we are thinking
We have nothing to eat.

Don’t be frightened my companions
Because of the eternal darkness,
That I play my guitar
Although my legs are shaking.

We all look for money
And we all love money,
But the money belongs to
Rockefeller and Henry Ford.

Now with this I leave you,
Everyone will excuse me,
Because of the Crisis
We have to finish our song.

Another view of the problems for Mexicans
during the Great Depression, was “La Crisis Actual,” recorded one year earlier, on March 11, 1931, in Los Angeles by Los Cancioneros Alegres. Here the writer, C. Cuevas, points out that even though they didn’t necessarily speak English, Mexicans could make good money. But now, with the depression, everything has changed and the jobs are being taken away and given to US citizens. Sr. Cuevas, speaking on behalf of his countrymen, is concerned about returning to Mexico without being deported because even in the pool halls they have started holding court and taking to jail anyone without a passport. Cuevas also commends the Mexican consul as well as other distinguished individuals who have given brotherly help with food and provisions.

Listen up everybody,
I’m going to sing to you
about the sad reality
with which we are faced.

Crisis and deportation
have us all worried.
All of us Mexicans
that now live here.

Before, on this side,
one could come and work
and after a period of six months
one could easily return.
Aquí antes en los talleres mexicanos ocupaban, sin que supieran inglés muy buenos sueldos ganaban.

Pero ahora todo ha cambiado con todos estos paisanos, que les quitan el lugar p'a poner ciudadanos.

Por dondequiera que he andado, por dondequiera he perdido, Pues por no ser ciudadano buen trabajo no he tenido.

A todos los extranjeros, excepto a los mexicanos, aquí les dan protección porque se hacen ciudadanos.

Uno que otro de la raza ese camino ha seguido, pero para más desgracia de nada les ha servido.

Mas los buenos mexicanos los hombres trabajadores,
Por las esquinas se ven, están manzanas vendiendo.

Nuestro buen consuls también con personas distinguidas, Los ayudan como hermanos con provisión y comida.

Adiós calle M. Mercada, adiós plaza concurrida, Por muchos que me esperan, encontrar pronto salida.

Eso tiempos han pasado, no se volverá a mirar, Los re-enganchistas buscando quien quisiera trabajar.

Ya con ésta me despojo de toditos mis amigos, Vamos en deportación, ¡Adiós Estados Unidos!

One can see them on street corners selling apples.

Our good consul, as well as other distinguished persons, Provide brotherly help with food and provisions.

Farewell M. Mercada street, good-by central plaza, For many who await me we’ll find a way out soon.

Those times have passed, I can no longer think Of going to work for those recruiters.

So with this I bid farewell to all my friends, We’re being deported, Good-by United States!

thing of the arrest and the two highly charged murder trials of this man. It is a tragic story, but one that deserves to be remembered and retold. As a measure of the importance of the event, at least six corridos were written about him two of which are presented here to conclude the first of this two CD set.

Conflicts between Mexican-Americans and "the law" have existed from the time Anglo Americans moved west and imposed their set of values, ethics, and morals on the existing population. To the Mexican-American, the Anglo has done this leaving his "own house" corrupt and in disorder. The case of Juan Reyna is apparently one of a man willing to cooperate initially, but finally was pushed too far.

The incident occurred toward evening on the eleventh of May, 1930. Juan Reyna and his brother-in-law, Jesse Fountain, apparently had "a couple of beers" at a house near the corner of Adams and Central near downtown Los Angeles. The two men got into Reyna's car, started the engine, and proceeded to back up in order to allow room to make a "U" turn. As they were backing up, an unmarked police car with three detectives, Verne Alden Brindley, L. E. Williams, and Laurin L. Miller (along with a police "operative," Ansel Bartlett) struck the rear of Reyna's car (or Reyna's car, in backing up, struck the front bumper of the police car). Officer Miller explained the matter this way:

"...we had pulled on around the corner and he [Reyna] was driving a Chrysler coach. He was making a "U" turn about twenty-five feet east of Central on Adams, and he started up and would back up a couple of times and you could see that he could not handle the car so we got out of our car and went over and started talking to him and told him to get out of the car which he refused to do, and he acted very much like he had been drinking."

When asked if he could smell liquor on Reyna's breath, Miller replied that he could not. Reyna gave a slightly different version of the incident:

"Well, I was parked in a car by a house there where we had a couple of drinks of beer and we were just ready to pull out...me and my brother-in-law Jesse Fountain...And we were ready to turn to the left, see. I went forward and then went backwards and when I was going backward to get room enough to turn to the left, the officer's car came around and bump [sic] into my car...car was on Adams...It was heading west, 'twel it was heading west, but ready to turn east. I was going to turn
The three officers were attached to the vice detail and had come to a house in the area with the “operative” Ansel Bartlett to arrest two women on morals charges (prostitution). One of the women, Mrs. Ethel Atkinson, offered this statement:

"The officers came around the corner of Adams and this fellow started backing up and I was standing downstairs at the time and backed into this police car and then I went upstairs and was up there for five minutes and the officers came upstairs and got me and brought me downstairs. When I came back downstairs my girlfriend was in his car."

Officer Miller told what happened next:

"We took a statement from the defendant on Sunday [May 12] about 11:00 AM in the General Hospital, Ward 110 and he said ... the officers pulled him out of the car and put him in the police car and put two colored women on his right and Officer Brindley then got in the car and there were two other officers in the front of the car and he said that he was pretty mad. They called him a Mexican and some other names and this officer swung around and he said that he had a gun in his right hand pocket and that he watched his chance and he said the officer turned again and he reached and grabbed the gun and stuck the gun up in the officer’s face and told him to put his hands up and he was asked why he did that and he said that he guessed he wanted to get away and that the officer made a grab at him and he shot him and emptied the gun and kept pulling on the gun until the gun was taken out of his hand."

The transcript of that interrogation revealed that Reyna said considerably more:

"I didn’t know they were officers and they came along and bump [sic] into the car and first thing they did was try to get tough with me ... Well, next thing I wanted to try and get away because they were cussing me every time he turn around he was keeping an eye and cussing me every chance he had ... That’s why I did the shooting. I wouldn’t have done any shooting if they didn’t do any hitting ... I don’t know how many times they hit me ... there were three of them ... Every chance he had he hit me with the butt of the gun ... the one I shot was always turning around and hitting me every chance he had ... he was arguing with the other guy for just a second ... that’s right when I got his gun ... I don’t claim I did any crooked business on that stuff ... I told him to stick them up and he wouldn’t do it and I shot him ... Stick them up I hollered and at the same moment he jumped on me and I started shooting."

The wounded officer, L. E. Williams, was hospitalized and later released. Officer Brindley died at Georgia Street Hospital in Los Angeles later that night. He was given a funeral with full police honors and was buried on May 13th in Rosedale Cemetery. Reyna was charged with murder as well as assault with a deadly weapon with intent to commit murder (on Officer L. E. Williams).

The trial began August 18th. Originally scheduled to be tried by Superior Court Judge C. P. Vicine, the case was transferred to Superior Court Judge Charles S. Fricke. Because of the interest generated by the case, Judge Fricke’s courtroom proved too small and the proceedings were transferred to the court of
Superior Court Judge Marshall F. McComb who had the largest courtroom on the eight floor of the Hall of Justice in Los Angeles. The prosecution was represented by Assistant District Attorney Eugene W. Blalock; the defense by attorneys C. V. Rude and Jerome O. Hughes. The defense attorney’s fee was set at $2,500 and immediately the Uniones Obreras Mexicanas began the collection of a defense fund to cover the fee.

After two days of questioning, the defense and prosecuting attorneys agreed on a jury of six men and six women, none of whom, incidentally, were of Spanish surname (one was questioned, but was excused). The Spanish language newspaper in Los Angeles, La Opinion followed the case meticulously, reporter L. F. Bustamante giving extremely detailed coverage of the trial, even to the questioning and response of the prospective jurors. (Limited coverage was given in the Los Angeles Times; none in the Los Angeles Herald Examiner.)

Beyond concern over the prospective jurors’ impartiality, feelings regarding the death penalty, etc., the defense was very concerned with the attitude of the jurors towards race and ethnicity. Consistently the question was asked, “Do you have any racial prejudice against Mexicans?” Assistant District Attorney Blalock was more concerned with any possible prejudice against the police.

The first prosecution witness was the slain officer’s brother, F. D. Brindley who asked for a first degree murder conviction and the death penalty. Detective Miller testified that Reyna tried three times to get his car to go west in reverse and three times struck the bumper of the police car. Miller stated that the detectives asked Reyna to get out of the car which initially he refused to do. The detective also denied the allegation that any of the officers struck or insulted Reyna.

Defense attorney Rude took the position that Brindley’s death was accidental. He contended that Reyna was repeatedly struck, a position supported, incidentally, by Ansel Bartlett (even though he was, according to La Opinion, a “stool pingeon” [sic] for the police).

Miss Mabel Brindley, a hospital secretary and Dr. Delbert Werden of the hospital staff testified that Reyna came to the hospital for treatment of the injuries. X-rays were taken, his wounds were dressed, and he was given an injection to calm his nerves. Attorney Hughes argued that the blows on Reyna’s
head rendered the defendant temporarily insane. Rude declared the homicide to be clearly justifiable and demanded a complete and absolute pardon. He further maintained the case showed a lack of discipline and organization in the police force.

Assistant district attorney Blalock, on the other hand, declared the death of Officer Brindley to be murder in cold blood, to be rationally justified and demanded a complete and absolute pardon. He further maintained the defendant to be temporarily insane.

Meanwhile, the defense fund continued to grow. A bakery donated three large cakes to be raffled off, an ice cream vendor gave ten percent of his sales one day, and every day La Opinion listed the names of hundreds of individuals who contributed what they could. Most contributions were under one dollar—ten cents, fifteen cents—and each individual was listed by name and the amount he or she contributed. La Opinion reported that by September 7th, some three weeks after the defense fund was initiated, $2,736.79 had been collected. Meanwhile, on the third of September, a second fund was started to see to the needs of Reyna's four children: Sara, Raquel, Ismael, and Edna. The eldest was eleven at the time; the youngest only four. (Reyna was a widower, his wife, Maria having been killed in an automobile accident on September 2, 1928) In addition to his children, Reyna lived with, and supported, his mother, Sra. Petra V. Reyna.

On Friday, September 5th after almost three weeks of testimony, the case went to the jury. They were sequestered at the Rosslyn Hotel. Concerned individuals from all over the city were constantly asking for information. La Opinion reported their telephones rang incessantly.

Reyna, serene and composed, made the following statement to La Opinion: (in Spanish and translated here)

"No matter what the verdict of the jury, I would like to make clear my most profound gratitude to the Mexican people who so spontaneously have contributed to the fund of the intelligent defense attorneys Mr. Jerome S. Hughes and Mr. Charles E. Rude, whom I esteem highly for all they have done in my behalf. At the same time I would like to express my gratitude to the Mexican press for the fairness with which they have treated me; to the Mexican consulate for their valuable efforts in my behalf, and to Mr. Judge McComb for his absolute impartiality and his criterion of justice during the arguments."

On Sunday, September 7th, the jury had deliberated more than thirty hours, reportedly concerned over the legality of the apprehension. By Monday the 8th, they had deliberated over sixty hours. Finally at 9:00 P.M., Tuesday, September 9th, Judge McComb dissolved the jury. He felt a reasonable amount of time had passed. The jury was split. Six felt Reyna was guilty; six had reservations, and one lone juror, Mrs. J. H. Courtright, held out for acquittal.

A second jury was impaneled. On Thursday, October 23rd, Reyna, along with defense attorneys Jerome S. Hughes and Nathan Freedman, appeared before Judge McComb. Hughes was held over from the previous trial, but Freedman was newly appointed. La Opinion's headline for October 23rd read "Golpe a La Defensa de Reyna" (Blow to Reyna's Defense). It added, "It is possible that this lawyer is as competent as Rude, but he does not have the preparation" (The law firm of Andriani, Fisher, and Carrey had moved attorney Rude to Chicago and turned the defense over to attorney Freedman.) Freedman declared, "I have read all of the transcript of the arguments of the first trial of Juan Reyna and I am ready for the new trial absolutely confident that my client will be absolved." District Attorney, Buron Fitts, on the other hand, said he would continue to press for the death penalty.

On October 27th, the case was transferred to Superior Court Judge Charles S. Hardy who presided over the second trial. By October 28th the jury was selected, a jury composed of twelve women (again, no Spanish surnamed individuals were on the jury). Perhaps some of the initial spirit had faded away; perhaps the trial was simply a "rehash" of the first; at any rate, the trial took only a few days. At 4:00 P.M. on October 31st, the case went to the jury. At 9:30 that evening the jury announced that it could not reach a verdict. At 5:00 the following day the jury announced it still could not reach a decision. At 3:30 P.M., Sunday, November 2nd, with still no verdict in sight, the jurors were taken by bus to the beach to "refresh their minds."

La Opinion reported that it appeared that the second jury probably would not be able to reach a verdict. The newspaper also noted that although there was no time limit on how
long a jury might deliberate, the vote spread of the first jury, 6-5-1, suggested that the second jury should also be dissolved. It also reported that if a third jury had to be impaneled and it could not reach a decision, the accused would be set free.

Finally, after seventy-one hours of deliberation, the jury reached a verdict. At 2:50 P.M., Monday, November 3rd, the jury foreman, Mrs. Marjory Schmid, announced:

"We the jury find the defendant guilty of manslaughter, and with assault with a deadly weapon."

On both counts the jury recommended clemency. It was reported by La Opinion that five of the twelve jurors had held out for acquittal until the very end.

On November 5th at 10:00 A.M., Judge Hardy sentenced the defendant from 1-10 years, the two sentences to run jointly, and on good behavior, Reyna could be considered for parole after one year. He was committed to the California State Penitentiary at San Quentin where he began his sentence on November 22, 1930.

It should be noted that during the course of the two trials, over $4,000.00 was collected, according to the November 2, 1930, edition of La Opinion. Of this amount, $2,500.00 covered defense attorney fees while the balance served to assist Reyna's mother and his four children.

CORRIDO DE JUAN REYNA - Part I:

Voy a cantar un corrido aunque con bastante pena, Es todo lo sucedido al compatriota Juan Reyna.

Dicen que el once de mayo apenas obscurce, cuando en el carro de Reyna choco el de la policia.

Un fuerte llegon le dieron en vehiculando las defensas,

I will sing a ballad although it pains me much, About all that happened to my countryman Juan Reyna.

They say that on the 11th of May it was just getting dark when Reyna's car collided with the car of the police.

It was a head-on collision the bumpers were dented,

Luego dos chotas bajaron diciendo a Reyna insolencias.

Querian bajarlo del coche y alli empezó la alegata, Y luego uno de las chotas lo estró de la corbata.

—¿Diganme quién son ustedes?— les dijo ya estando en tierra, Le respondieron con golpes, llamándolo "hijo de perra."

Como iban sin uniformes y haciendo mil tonterías, Reyna no estaba seguro de que fueran policías.

Querían subirlo por fuerza al carro en que lo llevaron, Como Reyna se opusiera entonces más lo golpearon.

Eran cuatro los gendarmes que al mexicano estrujaron, Y al subirlo al otro carro con un negro lo esposaron.

Luego el detective Brindley buscando cosa sencilla, Le dio una fuerte patada sangrándole la espinilla.

Then two cops got out of the car saying insolences to Reyna.

They wanted to get him out of the car and that's when the flap started, And then one of the cops pulled him out by his tie.

"Tell me who are you? " he asked them being on firm ground, They answered him with blows, calling him a "son of a bitch."

Since they were without uniforms and they were just fooling around, Reyna was not sure if they were policemen.

By force they wanted-to put him inside the car that would take him. Since Reyna opposed them, they gave him more blows.

There were four policemen who mistreated the Mexican, And as they put him in the other car he was handcuffed to a Negro.

Then detective [Vernon] Brindley looking for a simple thing to do, Gave him [Juan Reyna] a bloody kick which connected with his shin.
Y como en esos momentos
el auto empezaba a andar,
Sobre el pobre mexicano,
Brindley se vino a sentar.

Entonces el mexicano
con valor y con destreza,
Le arrebató la pistola
y le clavó la cabeza.

Pero el detective Miller
y el negro lo sujetaron,
Disparándole otros tiros
mientras que lo desarmaron.

CORRIDO DE JUAN REYNA – Part II:

Patadas, palos, moquetes,
dieron a granizar.
Por lo que tuvo Juan Reyna,
quedó al dar al hospital.

El consul de la colinda
y el vice-consul Quinones
Hablan luego por radio
mostrando sus opiniones.

Explicaron bien el caso
y la colonia atendió,
Porque al insultar a Reyna,
a México se insultó.

Since at about this time
the car began to move,
Brindley got in and seated
himself next to the Mexican.

Then the Mexican
with bravery and agility,
Snatched away the gun
and hit him on the head.

But Detective [Laurin L.] Miller
and the Negro caught him.
Other shots were fired
while trying to disarm him.

Kicks, blows, and more blows,
gave him like a hailstorm,
And because of what Juan Reyna received,
he had to go to the hospital.

The consul from the area
and vice-consul [Joel] Quinones
Spoke over the radio
expressing their opinions.

The case was carefully explained
and the colony paid attention,
Because in insulting Reyna,
Mexico was insulted.

Mandaron toda su ayuda
como buenos mexicanos,
Probando lo que nos duele,
el maltrato a los paisanos.

Muy pronto juntó dinero
el consul digno y argentino,
y a la defensa de Reyna
puso a un hombre competente.

Ya lo que el fiscal pedía
que ahorcaran al delincuente,
y el defensor le decía:
—Yo pruebo que es inocente.—

Tuvieron muchos testigos,
agentes de policías,
y el defensor luego dijo:
—Abranse que ahí va la mía.—

Algo dijo Mr. Rude,
con que al fiscal le dio tos,
y dicen por ahí las gentes
que hubo un encuentro de voz.

Se le hicieron dos jurados
y con toda claridad,
Unos pedían su castigo
los otros su libertad.

Por fin fallaron las damas,
las del segundo jurado,

They sent all their help
like good fellow Mexicans,
Demonstrating that mistreatment of
our countrymen, mistreats us all.

Right away money was collected
by the worthy consul,
And to defend Reyna
a competent man was selected.

The prosecutor was asking
that the delinquent be hanged,
And the defense attorney said,
"I'll prove that he is innocent."

They had many witnesses
who were police agents,
And the defense attorney said
"It is now my turn."

Mr. Rude said something,
the prosecutor coughed,
And now the people are saying
that their voices were raised.

Two juries were picked
and with all clarity,
Some asked for his punishment
and others for his freedom.

At last the ladies decided,
the ones on the second jury,
Por homicidio de culpa
Juan Reyna fue sentenciado,
De un año a diez,
el juez Hardy a Reyna le sentenció,
Salvándolo de la horca,
quien el Mr. Blalocks pidió.
Adiós Juan Reyna, supiste defender tu dignidad,
y hasta tu vida expusiste por tu nacionalidad.

For intentional homicide
Juan Reyna was sentenced.
One year to ten,
Judge Hardy sentenced Reyna,
Saving him from hanging,
which was what Mr. Blalocks wanted.
Good-bye Juan Reyna, you knew how to defend your dignity,
You even risked your life because of your nationality.

SUICIDIO DE JUAN REYNA (Juan Reyna's Suicide) (Flores Galindo)
(LA 1052 & 1053, Vo 8425); Los Angeles, Ca. July 1, 1931

Monday, May 4, 1931. 11:00 A.M. Señora Petra V. Reyna, mother of Juan Reyna, received a telegram this morning from James B. Holohan, Director of San Quentin prison stating that her son had committed suicide. Date of death was given as May 3rd, five months before he was scheduled to be released on parole. United Press placed the time of death at 1:30 A.M.

"When the guards had finished their watch, Reyna stabbed himself in the heart with a knife that he had made. He was taken to the prison hospital where he died."

"I was waiting for my son in five months and instead I receive his body," Mrs. Reyna told Sr. Rafael de la Colima, Consul of Mexico who telegraphed the Secretary of Foreign Relations in Mexico and the Mexican ambassador in Washington. An investigation was immediately requested.

In an interview with La Opinion, May 5th, Reyna’s sister, María Trinidad, said:
"Never a week went by that my mother or another member of the family did not receive a letter from him. His cards indicated he was doing well; they had put him to work as a mechanic and he liked it just fine. In every one of his letters he indicated a concern for his children and that he was anxious to return to see to the education of his children."

Two days later, Reyna’s mother expressed similar feelings to La Opinion.
"Never did I think my son could commit suicide... In all of his cards he expressed the thought that he was well and contented and he always waited, with God’s help, for his return to Los Angeles to attend to the education of his children.

"He always appreciated everything that people did for him and their funds for his defense. He also appreciated the help of Consul Rafael de la Colima and Vice Consul Joel Quiñones. On the tenth of April he wrote a letter that he wished he could be with his family for his daughter Sarita’s birthday. With only five months left, I don’t know why he killed himself. My daughter-in-law died just a little before Juan killed the detective. I am an old grandmother. What will happen to these children when I go? Only God knows!"

The body of Juan Reyna arrived in Los Angeles, Wednesday morning, May 6th aboard a Southern Pacific Railroad car. The casket was taken to the assembly hall of the Mexican Liberal Party of Watts, 116th Street and Compton Avenue for the wake. (Reyna had been affiliated with the Mexican Liberal Party of Watts for many years.) La Opinión noted that "women in particular came to view the body: "¡Era un buen mozo!" they exclaimed, tears streaming down their cheeks.

On Saturday, May 9th at 2:00 in the afternoon, the funeral procession left the Mexican Liberal Party assembly hall for the Watts Methodist Church, Santa Ana Blvd. and 106th Street. Funeral services were conducted by the Reverend Francisco O. Quintanilla, pastor of the church, who read messages from Pascual Ortiz Rubio, president of Mexico and James Rolph, governor of California. Five thousand people attended the service, most of whom followed the procession to the cemetery. The funeral cortège was four miles long. Graveside services concluded at 6:30 P.M. Reyna is buried at Woodlawn Memorial Park, 1715 West Greenleaf Blvd., Compton.
SUICIDIO DE JUAN REYNA — Part I:

Vuela, vuela palomita,
vuela, vuela sin cesar,
Ve y cuenta ya a mis paisanos
lo que acaba de pasar.

Voy a contarles señores
con el alma entristecida,
Esta tremenda tragedia
en San Quintín sucedida.

Faltándole cinco meses
pa' salir en libertad,
El mexicano Juan Reyna
se acaba de suicidar.

A la una de la mañana
un celador descubrió
En la celda de Juan Reyna
algo grave aconteció.

Era un cuadro doloroso
todo lo que estaba viendo,
Juanito en su propia sangre
se estaba allí debatiendo.

Con arma pulso cortante
se trozó la jugular,
Estando Reyna en la celda
pensando en su libertad.

Fly, fly little dove,
fly, fly without ceasing,
Go and tell my countrymen
what has just happened.

I will tell you, gentlemen,
with my saddened soul,
This tremendous tragedy
that happened in San Quentín.

Lacking only five months
to leave a free man,
The Mexican Juan Reyna
has just committed suicide.

At one in the morning
the jailer discovered
That something grave had
happened in Juan Reyna's cell.

It was a painful scene
everything that was seen,
Juanito in his own blood
was fighting for his life.

With a pulsing blade
he sliced his jugular vein
While he was in his cell
thinking of his freedom.

Pa' el hospital lo llevaron
tratando de darle auxilio,
Pero a los pocos momentos
ya Reyna había fallecido.

Como a las once del día
un mensajero llegó,
En la casa de Juan Reyna
un telegrama dejó.

Con lágrimas en los ojos,
la madre de él se enteró,
Viendo que su hijo querido
una herida se injirió.

En el segundo mensaje
que el alcalde le mandó,
Se daba cuenta que su hijo
en el hospital falleció.

SUICIDIO DE JUAN REYNA — Part II:

Con la rapidez del rayo,
por la cuidad se espacrió,
El triste acontecimiento
que en San Quintín sucedió.

Toda la gente de Watts
andaba muy afligida,
Diciendo que ya Juan Reyna
se había quitado la vida.

They took him to the hospital
trying to give him some help,
But in a very short while
Reyna had passed away.

At about eleven o'clock during
the day, a messenger arrived
And left a telegram
at Juan Reyna's house.

With tears in her eyes
his mother learned
That her beloved son
had self-inflicted a wound.

In the second message
sent by the mayor
She learned that her son
had passed away in the hospital.

All of the people of Watts
were very grieved,
They were saying that now Juan
Reyna had committed suicide.
Con su conducta intachable se granjó la simpatía de todos sus compañeros en la penitenciaria.

Las puertas de la prisión se abrieron un día temprano para sacar el cadáver del querido mexicano.

—Ah, hijo de mi vida,—decía la mamá de Juan,—Yo te esperaba con vida y hoy tu cadáver me traen.—

Esta es muy triste señores, hay que ponerse a pensar, ¿Qué harán los hijos de Reyna en su terrible orfandad?

Siempre que Juan escribía, a su madre le encargaba la instrucción de sus hijos que no los fanatizará.

Hoy las confederaciones piden investigación, Como se mató Juan Reyna adentro de la prisión.

Vuela, vuela palomita, vuela, vuela sin cesar,

With his blameless conduct he gained the sympathy of all his comrades in the penitentiary.

The prison doors opened up early one day to take out the corpse of one beloved Mexican.

"Oh, little son of my life," Juan’s mother would say, "I waited for you alive and today they bring me your corpse."

This is very sad, gentlemen, we should start thinking of what will become of Reyna’s children now so terribly orphaned.

Everytime Juan wrote, he would entrust his mother with the instruction of his children to not let them become superstitious.

Now the confederations ask for an investigation on how Juan Reyna killed himself inside the prison.

Fly, fly little dove, fly, fly without ceasing.

Ya contaste a mis paisanos lo que acabá de pasar.

Ya me despidío señores, y les pido una oración, Pa' el valiente mexicano que se mató en la prisión.

You already sang to my fellow countrymen of what just happened.

Now I take my leave, gentlemen, and I ask you for a prayer, For that brave Mexican who killed himself in prison.

Mexican lettuce harvesters in California’s Imperial Valley, 1928.

Photo by Paul S. Taylor, Professor of Economics at UC-Berkeley, who in the late 1920s studied Mexican labor in the United States. On a trip from San Antonio to Chicago, Mr. Taylor, who spoke Spanish, made the acquaintance of two Mexican troubadours on their way to record "El Corrido de Pennsylvania" among other songs. The two men turned out to be Pedro Rocha and Lupe Martínez.
Corridos y Tragedias de la Frontera, Disc II:
EL CONTRABANDO DEL PASO (The Contraband of El Paso)

Brownie McNeil, a student of Border folklore and for a time an agent with the United States Immigration Service, pointed out in his 1946 monograph on "Corridos of the Mexican Border," that "Of the thousands of miles of border between the United States and its two neighbors, probably no spot gave as much trouble to the officials of the United States government during Prohibition as El Paso, Texas."

The risks and rewards of smuggling provide wonderful grist for the ballad maker's pen. In the case of "El Contrabando de El Paso," we have one of the great, classic corridos of the Texas-Mexican Border. Here, the youthful smuggler, forsaken by both his beloved mother and his wife, finds himself chained to a number of other men and taken aboard a Southern Pacific Railway coach for the lonely ride to the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. But our young man's concern is more than just his train ride and an extended period behind bars. As the dean of Border scholars, Ángel Paredes has observed in A Texas-Mexican Cancionero, "one of the best-known Texas-Mexican corridos [it] has been in oral currency on the Lower Border since the 1920s. Its theme is more universal than smuggling along the Rio Grande; it is that of the wrongdoer who is caught and repents his past transgressions while he is on his way to prison."

Prohibition was established in 1918 with the passage of the eighteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The decade of the twenties provided innumerable opportunities for bootlegging on both the Canadian and Mexican borders, opportunities which essentially disappeared with the passage of the twenty-first amendment to the Constitution, passed in 1933, which repealed Prohibition.

There are numerous variants of the corrido, but the various versions are largely consistent with the first recordings of which this version is one of the first. The differences are largely transposed verses and minor internal verse changes resulting from the vagaries of human memory. The possibility also exists that this corrido was composed in response to the enormous popularity of similar prison songs in the field of American music (note: "The Prisoner's Song" by Vernon Dalhart). It could well be one of the first corridos to have entered popular folklore as the result of several successful and popular recordings as the origins of this descriptive ballad are not at all clear or documented.

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On the seventh day of August, we were feeling desperate. They took us from El Paso towards Kansas, chained together.

I direct my glances all around the station...
Looking for my beloved mother that she may give me her blessing.

They took us from the courthouse [jail] at eight o'clock at night.
They took us to the depot and put us on a coach.

But my mother was not there waiting, not even my wife, Good-bye to all of my friends, When will I see you again?

There comes the train whistling it will arrive shortly,
les dije a mis compañeros
que no fueran a llorar.

Ya voy a tomar el tren
me encoyendo a un Santo Fuerte,
y no vuelvo al contrabando
porque tengo mala suerte.

Ya comienza a andar el tren,
repica la compañía,
le pregunto a Mister Hill
que si vamos a Louisiana?

Mister Hill con su risita
me contesta:—No señor,
pasaremos de Louisiana
derechito a Leavenworth.—

Corre, corre, maquinita,
quitéle todo el vapor,
anda deja a los convictos
hasta el plan de Leavenworth.

Yo les digo a mis amigos
que salgan a experimentar,
quedan en la corte
se olvidan de la amistad.

¡es digo con razón
porque algunos compañeros,
en la calle son amigos
porque son convenencieros.

Pero de esto no hay cuidado
ya lo que pasó voló,
algún día se han de encontrar
donde me encontraba yo.

Es bonito el contrabando
se gana mucho dinero,
pero lo que más me puede
condenar un prisionero.

Vísperas de San Lorenzo
como a las once del día,
visitamos los umbrales
de la penitenciaria.

Unos vienen con un año,
o otros con un año y un día,

Do not trust your friends
who are self-serving hypocrites.

I lived up to the word
truly we were friends,
But when you land in jail
the friendship is forgotten.

I say with good reason
because some of my companions,
On the streets they are your friends
because it suits their interests.

But let us forget the past
that which happened is behind us,
One day they will find themselves
in the same position I am in now.

Contraband is very nice
one can make a lot of money,
But what happens is
a prisoner is condemned.

Vespers of Saint Lawrence
at about eleven o’clock in the morning,
We stepped on the threshold
of the penitentiary.

Some come with one year,
others with a year and a day,
others with eighteen months,
to the penitentiary.

The person who wrote these verses
they should grant him a pardon,
If they are not incorrigibles,
well, they have their opinion.

My little mother I am sending you
a sigh and an embrace.
Here we finish with the verses
of the Contraband of El Paso.

CONTRABANDISTAS TEQUILEROS (Tequila Smugglers)
Disc II: #2. Parts 1 & 2. Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martinez: vocal duet with guitar; (SA 7044/45, Vo 8430)
San Antonio, Tx. December 8, 1930.

We now move down-river, down the Rio Grande from El Paso to Del Rio, Texas. Where the previous corrido focussed on the train ride from El Paso to Leavenworth and admonishing one's countrymen to find a less risky profession, “Contrabandistas Tequileros” tends to focus more on the situation in Del Rio prior to boarding the train to the federal penitentiary in Kansas. The admonitions are still present; however, the writer advising his friends specifically to watch out for the informers that tend to profit by reporting on those who cross the Rio Grande. Moreover, where the nature of el contrabando was not specified in “El Contrabando de El Paso,” in this ballad, the contraband is tequila, the most common liquor smuggled across the Border from Mexico. América Paredes notes that Tequileros used many ingenious ways to bring their goods over, including the spare tires of cars crossing the Border. “Most often,” he writes, “they operated in bands of three or four, crossing the river at night by means of homemade boats, or swimming the river and pushing their cargo ahead of them in galvanized metal tubes or inflated skins. Sometimes they were surprised by U.S. Border patrolmen when they made it to the American side of the river. Many would surrender, ending up in the federal penitentiary. Others came prepared to fight, and they either shot their way out of ambush or died in the attempt.” In the case of our contrabandistas in this and in the previous corrido, our subjects accept their fate stoically and are prepared to serve their time in Leavenworth. Incidentally, the version of “Contrabandistas Tequileros” which appears here, performed by Pedro Rocha and Lupe Martinez, is entirely different from “Los Tequileros” which appears in Paredes’ classic work, A Texas-Mexican Cancionero.

In 1930, gentlemen,
your attention please,
In the jail of Del Rio
this song was made into poetry.

I would just as soon not remember
the jail of Del Rio
Where on the 17th of March
they were going to sentence us.

They took us out of the jail
straight to the Calle Real
And the Colorado told us
that he was going to take our pictures.

After they had taken our pictures
they took us to the jail,
And we didn’t know our sentence
because they didn’t explain it to us.
Bonita cárcel en Del Río
pero a mí no me consuela,
Porque dan puros frijoles
y un plátano de avena.

Bonita cárcel en Del Río
pero aún no se puede creer, 
Son contados los amigos 
que te quieren ir a ver.

Yo les digo a mis amigos 
cuando vayan a pasar, 
Fíjense en los denunciantes, 
no los vayan a entregar.

Yo les digo a mis amigos 
cuando estén al otro lado, 
Fíjense en las veredas 
por donde va el Colorado.

Quizá ya en el Naquevi 
aprehende a un compañero, 
Que vendió a un denunciante 
el día treinta de enero

Fíjate bien denunciante 
porque lo estoy diciendo, 
Que por amor al dinero 
us estuviste vendiendo.

Pero de eso no hay cuidado, 
ni tampoco hay que pensar,

A pretty jail in Del Río, 
but it doesn't console me 
Because they just give us beans 
and a little plate of oatmeal.

A pretty jail in Del Río, 
but it's still unbelievable, 
You can count the friends 
that want to go see you.

I tell my friends 
when they are going to cross [the river], 
Watch out for the informers, 
that they don't turn you in.

I tell my friends 
when they're on the other side, 
Be careful on the trails 
where the Colorado passes.

Perhaps in Naquevi 
they have already caught a comrade 
Who sold liquor to an informer 
on the 30th day of January.

Watch it, informer, 
because I am telling it, 
That for love of money 
you were selling us.

But of that there is no danger 
neither must one think,

We're going to drink some beer 
and later mess around.

But of that there is no danger, 
what has happened is over, 
Because of an informer 
I find myself a prisoner here.

I went on many spreads 
with friends in good cars 
And today they take me prisoner 
with no one to bring me a cigarette.

Don't cry, little mother, 
I carry you in my heart, 
For bringing in contraband, 
Prohibition agents have taken me.

Understand it my friends 
take much care, 
For going around selling drink, 
they're taking us to Leavenworth.

The Southern Pacific engine 
runs with much violence, 
And it takes the convicts 
straight to the penitentiary.

These verses are made by everyone 
in a get-together,
LA VOZ DE LA RAZA
El Programa del Anuncio Selecto

Todas las noches a las 10

Por la Estación KABC

— 1420 Kilociclos —

Para todos los asuntos relacionados con "La Voz de la Raza" llame al teléfono Mission 10-10, de 9 a 10 de la mañana.
Unos por el contrabando
y otros por la inmigración.

Adiós mi madre querida,
solo tú lloras mis penas,
Ya nos llevan prisioneros
mancomnados con cadena.

Adiós mi madre querida,
me voy a la penitencia,
Cuando salga nos veremos,
si el Señor me da licencia.

Adiós cárcel de Del Rio,
adiós torres y campanas,
Adiós todos mis amigos,
adíos lindas mexicanas.

Los que viven en Del Rio
gozan de tranquilidad,
Porque ellos toman tequila
con mucha facilidad.

Ya con ésta me despido,
porque siento mucho frío,
Aquí se acaba cantando,
del contrabando Del Rio.

Some because of contraband
and others because of immigration.

Good-bye my dear mother,
only you cry for my sorrows,
They are taking us prisoners
joined together with a chain.

Good-bye my dear mother,
I'm going to the penitentiary,
When I get out,
we'll see each other God willing.

Good-bye Del Rio jail,
good-bye towers and bells,
Good-bye all my friends,
good-bye beautiful Mexican girls.

Those who live in Del Rio
enjoy tranquility,
Because they drink
tequila with great ease.

Now with the time I say good-bye
because I'm feeling very cold,
And here we finish singing
of the Contraband of Del Rio.

CORRIDO DE LOS BOOTLEGGERS
Disc II: #3. Parts 1 & 2. Francisco Montalvo and Andrés Berlanga - vocal duet with guitars
(BS 94577 & 78, Bb 2381) Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx. August 15, 1935.

Bootlegging, by definition, is the unlawful transportation or distribution of any article, but particularly alcohol. The term goes back to colonial days in the United States when the sale of liquor to Indians was outlawed. Smugglers hid liquor-filled flasks in the legs of their boots and sold the alcohol to the Indians, hence the terms "bootlegger" and "bootlegging."

In the mid 1800s, bootlegging again became popular and profitable when state and local prohibition was adopted in parts of the country.

The temperance movement, an organized effort against the sale and use of alcohol, began in the United States as early as 1789 when two hundred farmers formed a temperance society in Litchfield, Connecticut, pledging not to give strong liquors to their workmen. In the nineteenth century many church groups formed temperance societies, at first committed to moderation and eventually total abstinence.

In the mid 1800s, state and local Prohibi-
Protestant denominations were campaigning for the abolition of saloons when the national Anti-Saloon League was formed in 1895. The league became one of the most powerful political forces of the era. Many states were persuaded to permit local-option elections by which counties and towns could vote to be “dry.” Eleven states were completely dry by 1915; the rest had local-option prohibition.

National Prohibition was established with the passage of the eighteenth constitutional amendment which took effect January 1920. Enforcement was difficult; speakeasies and bootleggers thrived. Perhaps most significant, an organization operating on various levels known as the “underworld” developed. This group dealt not only in illegal alcohol, but also in gambling, narcotics, and prostitution. In addition, many individuals felt the law was an infringement on their personal liberties and wine, “homebrew” (malt liquor), and “bathtub gin” (just about everything else) were commonly produced in “respectable” homes.

Finally, in 1929, President Herbert Hoover appointed a commission to study the American observance of the law and its enforcement. The commission reported that Prohibition was unenforceable, but should be retained. Hoover, who called Prohibition an “experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose,” did not favor repeal. The Democratic National Convention of 1932 demanded repeal and by February 1933, Congress had enacted the twenty-first amendment repealing the eighteenth. Ratification took effect on December 5th of that same year.

In “El Corrido de los Bootleggers,” our burleaga apparently got into the smuggling business because work was scarce, the crops were not good, and he had to make a living. He points out that those who cook the liquor wish evil on no one and that as long as the bars (speakeasies and the like) remain open, the poor will be in jail while the rich are enjoying themselves. After all, in San Antonio, it was said, they never catch the bootleggers, just the runners. To this day little has changed except the goods smuggled by los contrabandistas are no longer in liquid form!

CORRIDO DE LOS BOOITLEGGERS – Part I: 

Bien cuidado señores, lo que aquí voy a cantarles. Mi pase a rifar mi suerte con catorce federales.

Ya la siembra no da nada no me queda que decirles, Ahora la mejor cosecha es la que dan los barriles.

Los que están cocinando el trago, a nadie les piden mal, Pero van y los denuncian y le traen la federal.

Cuando iban a entregar el trago con peligro y muy barato, No más me echo dos o tres tragos y el miedo es no más un rato.

Be careful, gentlemen, what I will sing for you here, I ratified my luck with fourteen federal men.

I began thinking, gentlemen, that there was no more work, I had to make a living, if it was the will of Jesus.

The crops are not productive, I have nothing else to say, Now the best crop is the one from the barrels.

All the people who sow must wait until next year. Now it is not the barrels, once the first one comes out.

Those who cook the liquor to no one do they wish evil, But they are turned in and they bring the federal agents.

When delivering the liquor, with danger although it is cheap, I just take two or three drinks and my fear doesn’t last long.
Mientras sigan las cantinas así seguirá pasando,
Porque el pobre está en la cárcel
y el rico se ande gozando.

Pero el hijo no hace caso,
antes que lo hayan pescado,
La madre es la que sufre
siendo el hijo encerrado.

CORRIDO DE LOS BOOTLEGGERS - Part II:
Mi madre se encuentra triste,
mi padre con más razón,
De ver a su hijo encerrado en este triste prisión.

Pobrecita de mi madre,
a qué suerte le ha tocado,
En las puertas de este cárcel lágrimas se le han rodado.

Mi madre muy afanada
hablando con el abogado,
A ver si me saca en fianza
de la cárcel del condado.

Yo era bootlegger de marca
porque no me habían pescado,
Porque todos mis entregos
los hacía con cuidado.

As long as the bars remain
it will always be like this,
So that the poor are in jail
the rich are having a good time.

But the son never understands,
before he has been caught.
The mother is the one who suffers
when her son is locked up.

Mi madre, you will find her sad,
and my father with more reason,
To see their son locked up
in this sad prison.

Oh, my poor mother,
what luck she has had,
In the doors of this jail
she has shed her tears.

My mother very eagerly
talks with the lawyer,
To see if she can obtain my bail
from the county jail.

I was a successful bootlegger
because I had never been caught,
Because all of my deliveries
were done carefully.

Aquí en este San Antonio,
todos los alrededores,
Nunca pescan los bootleggers
más los trabajadores.

Cuando llegamos allí
me decían muy seguido,
—Aquí en esta penitencia
los sentencian sin delito.—

El que compuso estos versos
no es compositor de marca,
En el centro de este disco
su nombre como se llama.

Aí les va la despedida
no me lo tengan a mal,
Cuidado con los barriles
porque cae la federal.

CAPITÁN CHARLES STEVENS

Disc II: #4. Parts 1 & 2. Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martinez- vocal duet with guitar;
(SA 277 & 278, Vo 8280); San Antonio, Tx. ca. October 1929.

"We've lost one of the ablest, if not the
ablest enforcement man in the service. He
was well acquainted with conditions in this
territory and had a world of friends." So
commented Carl Jackson of Fort Worth, Prohibition administrator for the State of Texas
on hearing of the death of Prohibition agent
Charles Stevens.

Texas Rangers, deputy sheriffs, police,
Prohibition agents and other "peace offic­
ers," as they were commonly known forty­
five years ago, were generally not the most
popular individuals to those in the Mexican community. Yet to read through the text of the following corrido it becomes clear that Stevens was not of the ordinary mold. He was not only "brave" but, one gathers, fair.

Stevens was critically wounded in a gun battle early the morning of Wednesday, September 25, 1929, six miles from San Antonio. He died later that day at 12:35 P.M. in the Santa Rosa Infirmary. The corrido's composer implies that had Stevens survived, he would have cleared the names of the two Mexicans in the group involved in the ambush, Pedro and Luisa Guajardo. Pedro died at 7:00 A.M., Thursday, September 26th, maintaining to the end that he and his wife (who was also among those charged with Stevens' murder) were merely with the gang on an invitation to join them in a practical joke.

As Stevens lay on his death bed, the San Antonio Express reported "hundreds of persons crowded the corridors of the infirmary seeking an opportunity to visit his bedside or to inquire as to his condition." The Express continued:

"Ollie Stevens, the brother, described a pathetic incident that occurred Wednesday morning when an aged Mexican couple applied at the infirmary for permission to see the patient. When told they could not see him, the aged man and his wife broke into tears and pleaded with the infirmary attaches for what they believed would be the last chance to see him alive... The aged couple told him that Captains Stevens had been their friend in time of need and pleaded with him to let them visit the bedside. Moved with compassion by the sorrow of this old man and his wife the brother said he ushered them into the room and when they saw the still form of their benefactor both broke into sobs."

Charles Stevens gave the year of his birth as 1870, his birthplace being San Antonio, Texas. He began his career as a police officer at the age of 18, serving as a jailer under his father, E. A. Stevens, sheriff of Bexar County, at the time, and who like his son, also died from gunshot wounds. He was mortally wounded in 1885 while arresting Mexican outlaws about eighteen miles east of San Antonio. At twenty-three, Charles Stevens was elected a constable, an office he held for three consecutive terms of two years each. In 1898 he became a deputy sheriff and then ran for sheriff in 1908, but was defeated. After again serving a period as deputy sheriff, he became a captain in the Texas Rangers and two years later became police captain in San Antonio.

National Personnel Records Center information indicates that Stevens began government service as a Prohibition agent on March 26, 1920, for the Treasury Department, Internal Revenue Service in San Antonio. His annual salary was $1,800. Two years later he resigned to accept the position of Supervisor of Mounted Inspectors (at $2,800. annually) for the Treasury Department Customs Service in San Antonio. Three years later he was transferred back to the Internal Revenue Service (later the Bureau of Prohibition) and served as Prohibition agent in Fort Worth and New Orleans. He was with the Fort Worth division when he died.

The fatal shooting occurred early on the morning of September 25th, 1929. Stevens and two other Prohibition agents, J. P. "Pat" Murphy and R. H. Hirsche!, were returning to San Antonio from a raid on a still in Atascosa County. According to the story given by agents Murphy and Hirsche!, about eight miles from San Antonio on the Pleasanton Highway, they found a woman in an automobile blocking the road and apparently signaling someone with a spotlight. After questioning, Hirsche! got into the woman's car and started for San Antonio with Stevens and Murphy close behind. The two cars had gone about seventy yards and after Hirsche! and the woman had gotten a good distance beyond them, the agents' car approached a Mexican woman who was picking up cabbages spilled from two bushel baskets on the road. As Stevens slowed his speed, he and Murphy were ambushed by rifle and shotgun fire from both sides of the car. The officers returned the fire. Stevens was mortally wounded by shotgun slugs in his body. On hearing gunfire, Hirsche! turned the woman's car around and rushed to Stevens' aid, but the men involved in the ambush had escaped. Murphy and Hirsche! put Stevens in the woman's car and hurried him to the hospital.

"Revenge" was the motive in the shooting, according to Sheriff Alfonzo Newton, Jr., who believed the murder of the veteran Prohibition enforcement officer was intended as payment for the Prohibition raids he had made during recent months when he had broken up several distilleries.

Four persons were under arrest that night: Joe Hobrecht, Alice Smith (in whose car Stevens was taken to the hospital) along with Pedro and Louisa Guajardo (the woman who had spilled the two baskets of cabbage along
eral. Before his death, Pedro Guajardo said he and his wife were driving to
town with a load of vegetables when he was
stopped on the road by four men who gave
him a 30-30 rifle. They told him that some
friends of theirs were coming along and asked
him to hold them up with the rifle as a prac-
tical joke.

Louisa Guajardo’s written statement ex-
plained that she and her husband had gone
to the scene of the shooting early Wednesday
night where they met a gang of men who gave
Pedro a rifle and told Louisa to stand in the
way (in effect as a decoy) pretending to pick
up cabbages when Stevens’ car ap-
proached. As the vehicle slowed, the men,
concealed in ambush shouted: “Federal offi-
cers” and opened fire. Her husband was felled
by the first shot returned from the officers’ car.

On September 26th, Lee Cottle, alias Louis
Copeland, and Lynn Stephens were charged
with the Stevens murder and two days later,
on September 28th, McCullen “Red” Shank
was also charged.

The previous afternoon, federal Prohibi-
tion men raided the home of Lynn Stephens
to serve a murder warrant. They failed to find
Stephens but did discover 4,700 gallons of
whiskey which they destroyed. Fire broke
out, believed to have been a cigarette stub left
burning after the raid. The liquor was stored
in forty-three 55-gallon kegs in the attic along
with hundreds of jars and quart and pint
bottles in every room in the house. All of the
liquor was labeled, wrapped and packed in
boxes for shipment; the San Antonio Express
noted:

“The fire chief said that the dry agents should
have taken more precautions in handling the highly
inflammable material and expressed the opinion
that the police officials should prohibit the promis-
cuous dumping of seized liquor on the premises
where nearby property is endangered.”

The raids continued. By Friday of that
week, nearly 10,000 gallons of liquor with an
estimated market value of $100,000 had been
destroyed, the Express reported, and by Sat-
urday the total was up to 12,000 gallons.

County officers believed one of the largest
bootlegging rings in Texas was brought to
light with the killing of Stevens.

Agent Stevens was killed September 25,
1929. He died only two years short of repeal
of Prohibition.

CAPITAN CHARLES STEVENS—Part I:

Organ señores los que les voy a cantar,
estos sucesos yo los canto y no lo olviden.
Pues ya murió el jefe prohibicionista
y que en vida se nombraba Charles Stevens.

Este que tiene de “agüila los ojos”
y que dio medida en dondequiera,
Es el retrato mismo los despojos
de el que en vida le nombraban “la pantera.”

El no por eso perderá su alma
no maldijo jamás su ingrata suerte,
Como hombre soportó con toda calma
en el horrido campo de la muerte.

Mas debido al valor que éste tenía,
Charles Stevens el jefe que yo nombró,
Cuando buscaba la cerveza hacia
que todo el mundo le tuviera asombro.

Cayó herido y entonces con demuerto,
siguió Murphy con igual valor,
Peito intrépido y sin miedo,
sustuvo aquella lucha con honor.

Al lado siempre de su fiel amigo,
el mismo lo llevó hasta el hospital.
Debatió para hacer que otro enemigo
moviera el auto en el Camino Real.

Listen, men, to what I am about to sing,
these events, I sing about and don’t forget them.
Because the head prohibitionist is dead
and who in life was named Charles Stevens.

He who has “eagle eyes”
and who lived up to his name everywhere,
It’s the same picture as the despoilers,
He who in life was known as “the panther.”

Not for that will he lose his soul,
nor will he ever curse his ungrateful luck.
Like a man he withstood all calmly
in the horrible camp of death.

Owing to the courage that he had,
Charles Stevens, the man to whom I am referring,
When looking for beer, he astonished
everyone in the whole world.

He fell injured and then with boldness,
followed Murphy with equal courage.
Who fought gallantly and without fear,
continuing that struggle with honor.

At his side, always his faithful friend,
he took him to the hospital.
He fought to make the enemy
move the car out of the way.
Un mexicano, luego sin más cosa
lo meten en un lio porque oyó
como muere de pronto en Santa Rosa,
En silencio el secreto se incogió.

CAPITÁN CHARLES STEVENS - Part II:
Ahora en confusión queda pendiente
la esposa de Guajardo en el condado,
Si es que comprueba así ser inocente,
or la encuentra culpable el gran jurado.

Oír esta tragedia y triste historia,
por Dios que esto huele ya muy mal,
Si la falta de un padre es tan notoria,
that of a mother in prison has no equal.

Lo de siempre sucedió, lector querido,
los hechos a la historia ya pasaron,
Solo un pobre mexicano se ha perdido
y los otros matadores se han pelado.

La muerte del valiente Charles Stevens
ha venido a descubrir que en San Antonio,
It's not just the bootleggers who live there,
These trouble makers come from another place.

A Mexican, then, without further ado
get into a fix because he heard
how suddenly he dies in Santa Rosa.
In silence the secret was kept safe.

And now in confusion what is pending,
Guajardo's wife in the county jail,
Was waiting to see if proven innocent
or if the grand jury will find her guilty.

Listen to this tragedy and sad story,
for God's sake, this smells bad.
If the lack of a father is so notorious,
that of a mother in prison has no equal.

The usual thing happened, dear reader,
these deeds have now become history.
Only one poor Mexican has been lost
while the other killers have gotten away.

The death of the brave Charles Stevens
has made it known that in San Antonio,
It's not just the bootleggers who live there,
These trouble makers come from another place.

The law will continue to make efforts
to prohibit intoxicating drinks,
And I will continue singing verses,
even though the pedants don't like it.

Aunque se quiebren todas las botellas
por agentes de la ley que a todos pasos,
Relucirán las ilusiones bellas
a través de los vidrios y los vasos.

No olviden, por lo tanto estos alardes,
no hay a quien no le duela su pellejo.
Los mismos son valientes que cobardes
tal como el refrán lo dice un viejo.

Even if all the bottles are broken
by the agents of the law, in any case,
All the beautiful illusions will shine
through the glassware and the glass.

Meanwhile, don't forget this display,
there is no one whose own skin won't hurt.
The same who are brave are cowards
just as it's said by this old man.

LA TRAGEDIA DE OKLAHOMA
(Valle & Oro)

Disc II: #5. Parts 1 & 2. Silvano Ramos & Ortega - vocal duet with guitars; (W 113082 & 83, Co 4584x);
Chicago, Ill. August 1931.

"La Tragedia de Oklahoma," perhaps
more properly called "La Tragedia de
Ardmore," reminds us of another tragic inci-
dent that occurred many years ago and yet
has survived because of a recorded corrido.
In 1973 historian Abraham Hoffman became
intrigued with the incident and began his
own investigation which he published under
the title "The Ardmore Tragedy: Local his-
tory on an International Level in the
Chronicles of Oklahoma." The following is
based on his research:

Ardmore, Oklahoma, is a small city pres-
ently located just off Interstate 35, about half-
way between Oklahoma City and Dallas,

Texas. In 1931 it was the scene of an interna-
tional incident. Three Mexican students,
Emilio Cortés Rubio, Salvador Cortés Rubio,
and Manuel García Gómez, were driving
home to Mexico from the colleges they were
attending in the United States when they
stopped on the outskirts of Ardmore. One of
the students was standing in front of the car
intending to urinate when two deputy sheri-
iffs, in plain clothes, drove up and stopped.
Deputy Cecil Crosby delivered a reprimand
to the students and then walked up to the
driver. Hoffman described the incident this way:

"...the first deputy [Cecil Crosby], spotted an
automatic pistol on the lap of the driver [Emilio Cortés Rubio] and, suspecting the students to be other than what they claimed to be, reached in and grabbed the gun. There was a struggle; the third youth [Manuel García Gómez] got out of his car; so did the other deputy. The second deputy [William E. Guess] coming up to the right side of the student’s car, saw the student who had gotten out of the car raise an automatic. The deputy fired twice in rapid succession, killing the student almost instantly.

In the meantime, the first deputy had disarmed the driver and advanced toward the first student [Salvador Cortés Rubio] who was still standing in front of the car, prevented by the headlights from clearly seeing what was happening. The second deputy then noticed that the driver was in the act of producing another gun. The deputy fired his pistol for the third time.

A crowd quickly gathered. The county attorney, the sheriff, and an ambulance were called. Two of the Mexicans were students at St. Benedict’s College in Kansas, the third a student at the Rolla School of Mines in Missouri. Two of them, including one of the slain students, were related to Pascual Ortiz Rubio, the president of Mexico.

The news traveled fast. The Mexican charge d’affaires delivered a note to Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson protesting the incident. Stimson wired the governor of Oklahoma, William H. Murray, requesting a detailed investigation. Murray in turn began applying pressure on Marvin Shilling, the county attorney in Carter County. The Mexican consulate general in San Antonio appointed an experienced young Mexican-American attorney, Manuel Gonzales, to represent the Mexican government at the trial.

Governor Murray handled the incident personally. Having publicly declared his sorrow on behalf of the state as well as himself, he ordered the most expensive caskets available at state expense. He selected Charles Clowe, a personal friend and a colonel in the National Guard, along with Murray’s oldest son, Massena, to be the official escort for the slain students on the train trip back to Mexico. It was Murray’s view, according to Hoffman, that he “considered the deputies to be murderers who had shot the students down in cold blood.”

The preliminary hearing began immediately after the funeral. On the basis of the testimony presented, the judge ordered the
deputies held for trial on the charge of murder.

The funeral train left Ardmore for Morelia, Michoacan the day following the initial hearing. In addition to Colonel Clowe and Massena Murray, the slain students were accompanied by attorney Manuel Gonzalez and the lone surviving student, Salvador Cortés Rubio among others.

Governor Murray's "Memoirs" mentioned one interesting incident: "At one stop Massena and Salvador walked down the platform and in front of a large crowd of Mexicans, Massena put his arm around Salvador in a friendly manner. This won the approval of the crowd, and Massena repeated the gesture at subsequent stops."

When Murray—a veteran of the Bolivian colony he had tried to establish in the 1920s—learned of his son's actions, he credited the incident to his own ability to understand what he called "the peculiarities of the Spanish mind."

The trial was set for Wednesday, June 24, 1931. Five attorneys represented the prosecution; five the defense. The courtroom was filled to capacity. Extensive newspaper coverage was provided for readers in Mexico as well as the United States. Of the two deputies, only William Guess was tried, charged with the murder of Emilio Cortés Rubio, the young man seated behind the wheel of the car. Hoffman, drawing from the Daily Ardmoreite (June 24-25, 1931) and the Daily Oklahomaan (June 25, 1931), noted that County Attorney Marvin Shilling, serving as chief prosecutor, "...had hoped to prove that Emilio had not actually drawn the second pistol; that Guess in firing had acted hastily and with poor judgment. Throughout the trial the prosecution was handicapped by the fact that the students had in their possession a large quantity of weapons and ammunition. The third student, Manuel Garcia Gomez, had purchased the firearms with the intention of selling them in Mexico. Salvador Cortés Rubio, the surviving student, could offer little to aid the prosecution's case since his view had been obstructed by the glare of the headlights. Another factor working against the prosecution was difficult to measure. This was the atmosphere that came from the death of three Carter County peace officers in the preceding six months. At least one of the three had been killed in a situation similar to the one in which Guess and Crosby had found themselves—approaching an unknown car at night."

The case went to the jury on Friday evening, June 26th, 1931. Twenty-two hours later the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty." Considerable negative reaction resulted: the Mexican government, newspapers, government spokesmen, and students all protested as did Governor Murray.

A second trial was scheduled for November 20th. Once sequestered, the jury took only three hours to return a verdict of acquittal.

Again, Mexico responded with indignation. Secretary of State Stimson submitted a recommendation to President Herbert Hoover proposing that the United States pay an indemnity of $15,000 per victim as "an act of grace" without admitting responsibility for the incident. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs took the matter up late in 1932 and the bill came up for debate in the House on December 9th. Historian Hoffman noted, "The discussion that took place over this issue is interesting, since the congressmen who spoke possessed little firsthand information. Indemnity payments for both victims were approved by the House; Senate approval followed several weeks later.

In May of 1933, the United States delivered a check to the Mexican Embassy for $30,000 as payment to the families of the two victims. Almost two years had elapsed and the payment gathered little press attention.

This, essentially, is the story of the Ardmore tragedy. With this in view, it is interesting to note the somewhat one-sided approach taken by the writer of this corrido. However, one rather suspects that the writer was not only reflecting his own views but the views of indignant Mexicans and Mexican-Americans who followed the incident and the trial with considerable interest.

Night of the eighth of June, of the year nineteen thirty-one, Two students were killed for no crime at all.

Full of joy and contentment they headed for the capital [México].
A pasar sus vacaciones en nuestra tierra natal.

Por Oklahoma pasaron, un día de hermosa mañana, Ansiosos de regresar a la tierra michoacana.

En su carro iba corriendo con rapidez moderada. Sin imaginar siquiera que les tendían la emboscada.

En un pueblo de Oklahoma pararon para descansar, Se acercaron dos sheriff con intención de matar.

Ese Ardmore, pueblo chiquito, de triste recordación. Allí perdieron la vida, los mataron a traición.

A Cortez, Rubio, y García, los sheriffs se acercaron, Sin decirles —¿A qué va?— Allí los asesinaron.

En México la noticia causó gran indignación, Se levantaron protestas en toda nuestra nación.

To spend their vacation in our native land.

They passed through Oklahoma on a beautiful morning, Anxious to return to the land of Michoacán.

In their car they were going at a very moderate speed, Without even imagining that they would be ambushed.

In a town in Oklahoma they stopped to rest, Two sheriffs approached them with the intention of killing them.

The small town of Ardmore, it is sad to remember, There they lost their lives, they were killed as traitors.

Cortéz, Rubio, and García, were approached by the sheriffs, And without saying, “What are you doing?” Right there they murdered them.

In Mexico, the news caused great indignation, They raised protests throughout our entire nation.

La Presa de San Antonio, la gran noticia nos daba, Que en Ardmore, a los bolillos, el jurado los juzgaba.

LA TRagedia DE Oklahoma — Part II:

Los sheriffs del condado, el día que fueron juzgados, Como un premio de su crimen después fueron libertados.

Uno de los estudiantes que murrió como valiente, Era sobrino carnal de nuestro gran presidente.

Los jueces y los jurados de México se burlaron, Y a sus paisanos sheriffs luego, luego libertaron.

A México los llevaron con grandes pompas y honores, Luego allí los sepultaron en la tierra de las flores.

Los familiares de Rubio estaban muy disgustados, Pues los sheriffs matones nunca serán castigados.

La Presa of San Antonio made us big news, That in Ardmore, the gringos, would be judged by the jury.

The county sheriffs, on the day they were judged, Were later freed as a prize for their crime.

One of the students who died bravely Was a kindred nephew of our great president.

The judges and the jury mocked Mexico, And their fellow sheriffs were freed in due course.

They were taken to Mexico with great pomp and honor, Then they were buried in the land of the flowers.

The family of Rubio were very much disgusted, For the sheriffs, the killers, will never be punished.
Correa, chairman of the Pima County Board of Supervisors, added another $500 to the reward money as did the Morgan-McDermott American Legion post. For its part, the Tucson city council offered to raise the total to $2,000 but discovered the city statutes made no provision for making such expenditures.

When word got out of June's disappearance, according to La Opinión, some 2,000 men assembled to block roads and to search the surrounding desert. The Arizona Daily Star in Tucson placed the number at 500 armed volunteers "who combed the city in a house-to-house search." It was reported that "American Legion women set up soup kitchens" to feed the hungry volunteers. Sheriff John Belton and Police Chief Gus Wollard were joined by special agents of the United States Department of Justice as the search intensified.

For five days there was no word. Finally, a very distraught father placed the following notice in the Arizona Daily Star, which the newspaper printed on its front page:

"I do not wish to discredit the officers. God knows they have done all they could. But only one thing is left now. I must get in touch with the kidnappers. I cannot wait any longer. I want my baby back."

The child's grandfather, Don Bernabe Robles, owner of the Robles Electrical Shop and a rancher of considerable means, offered to talk with the kidnappers without police intervention. He offered $10,000 in small bills.

For days nothing was heard. There was much speculation as to who the kidnappers might be and the motive. Many suspects were brought in and interrogated. Some suggested the child was dead.

Don Bernabe wanted reassurance. He drove to Pitiqüito, Sonora, to consult with a highly respected and well-known adivina (a
psychic and a medium), Manuel Gamboa. Known as "the Prophet," Gamboa stated flatly: "She is surviving and will be found shortly." His words did indeed prove prophetic. On May 14th, nineteen days after she was abducted, Herbert H. Hotchkiss, secretary to Governor Moeur, opened a letter addressed to the governor. It read:

"Her body will be found in a buried box. Go out Broadway to Wilmot Road. Turn south to Rincon Way. Go one mile, then walk 150 steps into the desert."

Carlos Robles, Chief Deputy County Attorney, and June's uncle, was notified immediately. He, in turn, advised the County Attorney, Clarence Houston, and together the two men sped to the area as instructed in the note. Apparently they searched for some time before Houston "stumbled across the top of a small ranch nearby, knew too much."

Robles and Houston found a frightened, exhausted little girl. Covered with insect bites as well as open sores from the manacle on her leg, they rushed her back to Tucson. Once June's strength was restored and she could talk, she was asked about her kidnappers. She said she knew them only as "Bill" and "Will," and "became terrified at the mention of their names."

The following month, on June 8th, Alvaro Flores, a Papago Indian was found dead, close to the point where June was entombed. Authorities concluded that Flores, who lived on a small ranch nearby, knew too much.

Reporter Cole's investigation revealed that on August 16, 1937, a transcript was made of testimony given by a Phoenix woman "who admitted an intimate knowledge of the kidnapping. Her testimony was never made public," according to Cole, "because it could never be proved. Some of the people named in her confession are still alive. They cannot be named."

It was widely reported that the man responsible for the kidnapping was from Nogales and was working with two friends from Phoenix (presumably "Bill" and "Will"). According to Cole, the Nogales man was "extremely frightened" by public and law enforcement reaction and "Acting on the advice of his attorney, the kidnapper wrote a bogus check for a small sum, succeeded in having himself arrested, and was placed safely in jail in another Arizona city. The following year he committed suicide by swallowing poison tablets used in wolf bait," according to the Phoenix woman's transcript.

In a brief telephone interview in early February 1994, June Robles (married and using her married name) confirmed that no ransom was ever paid and no definitive arrests were ever made. Beyond telling me that she had no memory of the kidnappers and that "the papers were tied up in Washington," she did say that there was a great deal of misinformation that had circulated about the case. It was also clear that she had no desire to resurrect the memory of the incident and that over the years she had made a concerted effort to forget about the matter. I felt I should respect her wishes and we concluded our conversation.

An incident of the magnitude of the June Robles kidnapping—the abduction of the son of the American aviator Charles Lindbergh just two years earlier—generated the writing of a number of corridos, each with a different approach and interpretation, among them a corrido by the Tucson-born singer/composer, Lalo Guerrero. In an interview in February 1994, he mentioned having written his corrido about June Robles when he was a member of the Tucson-based vocal trio, Los Carlistas. Like many corridos of the period, it was never recorded and has long since been forgotten. It is through the recorded corrido that we remember certain events, (many of them tragic in nature) including this "Corrido de la Niña June Robles."

CORRIDO DE LA NIÑA JUNE ROBLES—Part I:

Año de mil novecientos
y treinta y cuatro presentó,
el veinticinco de abril,
plagiaron a una inocente.

In the year of nineteen hundred
and thirty four,
the twenty-fifth of April,
an innocent girl was kidnapped.
En Tucson, Arizona, esto fue lo que pasó, a una niña de seis años un vil hombre la plagió.

June salió de la escuela hacia su hogar caminaba, la inocente no sabía que aquel hombre la esperaba.

El se la quiso engañar pero ella no lo creyó, válido de la ocasión el tonto se la llevó.

He wanted to deceive her but she did not believe him, The stupid man saw his chance and took her away.

Y con su preciosa carga aquel hombre iba contento, a muchas millas corría hasta que llegó al desierto.

With his precious cargo that man went contented, And many miles he drove until he reached the desert.

Al pie de un alto saguaro de su automóvil bajó, en la tierra estaba un hoyo a la niña la metió.

At the foot of a tall saguaro the man got down from his car, In the dirt was a hole where he put the girl.

En una jaula de hierro que dura serían sus penas,

In a steel cage her suffering must have been great,

CORRIDO DE LA NIÑA JUNE ROBLES - Part II:

Arrastraban también los días para ella no estaba malo, porque los iba notando en la tierra con un palo.

Pasaron como seis días y ahí nadie la fue a ver, pobrecita de la niña ya deben de comprender.

A noche recordó parece que algo sentía, Y vio la luz de la luna en su cara le caía.

Los hombres la recordaron ella dice en dondequiera, Al instante le dijeron que la sábana los diera.

A ninguno de los dos pudo ella reconocer.

CORRIDO DE LA NIÑA JUNE ROBLES - Part I:

Al momento la agarró y le puso unas cadenas.

Allí la dejó sola ella dice la verdad, le tierra arriba la tumba y quedó en la obscuridad.

The days dragged by slowly for her it was tolerable, Because she was marking them off in the dirt with a stick.

Six days went by and no one came to see her, The poor little girl they should understand.

At night she remembered it seems that she felt something, And she saw the light of the moon as it fell on her face.

The men remembered her, she said wherever she might be, At that instant they said that she give them the bedsheet.

Neither of the two did she recognize.
Les nombraba "Billy" y "Will," pero no los pudo ver.

Dos pies y media de fondo y también dos pies de anchura, por ocho de longitud esa fue su sepultura.

Ya no quiero recordar ya me duele el corazón, ni aún en esa prisión.

Cuando a rescatarla fueron de aquella cueva maldita, su reporte de la escuela reclamaba la niña.

Ya me voy, ya me despido.Digieron y a pobres, aquí te termina el corrido de la niña June Robles.

INUNDACIÓN DE NOGALES (The Nogales Flood) (G. Guzmán)

Disc II: #7. Parts 1 & 2. Leonardo Sifuentes & Guadalupe Guzmán - vocal duet with guitar by Sifuentes and harp by H. Hernández; (BVE 67194 & 95; Vi 30381); Texas Hotel, San Antonio, Tx. January 28, 1931.

Nogales, Sonora, and its twin city across the Border, Nogales, Arizona, were inundated by a torrential rain the evening of August 7, 1930. The next morning, La Opinión announced the tragedy to its Spanish language readers in the Los Angeles area. "A furious tempest filled the arroyos that cross Nogales; the streets turned to rivers and telegraph offices, autos, animals, trees and homes were swept along in the currents." The catastrophe was said to be without precedent.

This corrido, recorded in January 1931, features the distinctive sound of the diatonic harp, played by H. Hernández. The composer of the verses, G. Guzmán, presumably the same Guzmán listed as one of the singers, focused his text on Nogales, Sonora, where seven people died and some one hundred homes were destroyed. Guzmán suggested that the situation was less severe in Nogales, Arizona, but the final tally showed that eight perished on the American side and 3,000 were left homeless.

The reporter for La Opinión noted that "Nogales, Sonora, famous for its nightlife, is completely dark and patrolled by soldiers." Cited among those who lost their lives in the Mexican city were Rafael Jarero, a well-known music teacher and Ramón de la Puerta, a barber who is cited in the corrido. "El señor presidente" probably refers to the Governor of Sonora, Don Francisco Elías, who contributed 6,000 pesos (just over $1,000 at the rate of exchange prevailing at the time) which initiated a similar successful fund raising effort on the American side. The Nogales flood was a disaster that was long remembered by those affected on both sides of the Border.

INUNDACION DE NOGALES - Part I:

A mil y novecientos treinta pongan muy bien su atención, pues en Nogales, Sonora, había una inundación.

A la una de la tarde un jueves tengo presente, azotó una tempestad donde murió mucha gente.

Era de dar compasión en tan crítico momento,
hasta que vino el auxilio
e el cuerpo de salvamento.

Al momento pidió auxilio
pues el señor presidente,
para salvar las familias
y que no muriera gente.

Y el José Valenzuela,
es el cónsul mexicano,
pidió auxilio a la Cruz Blanca
que también les dio la mano.

La Cámara de Comercio,
lav Cruz Roja americana,
también prestó sus servicios
to las ciudades mexicanas.

A las cuatro de la tarde
pues vuelve la tempestad,
se prolongó por tres horas
destruyendo la ciudad.

De lados de Santa Rita
esta tempestad azotó,
en Nogales, Arizona,
se cree que nadie murió.

Señora A. de Carrero
con su esposo quedó muerta,
y salen desesperados
también Ramón de la Puerta.

until the rescue team arrived
to give assistance.

Assistance was called for
by the president (Gov. Elias?)
to save the families
in order that no people would die.

Also José Valenzuela,
he is the Mexican consul,
asked for help from the White Cross
that also gave us a hand.

The Chamber of Commerce,
the American Red Cross,
also lent their services
to the Mexican cities.

At four in the afternoon
the tempest returns,
It lasted for three hours
destroying the city.

At the side of Santa Rita
this tempest lashed out,
In Nogales, Arizona,
it is believed that no one died.

Mrs. A. de Carrero
with her husband, was found dead,
And many left there quickly
and also Ramón de la Puerta

INUNDACION DE NOGALES – Part II:

Empezaron a sacar
a toditos los ahogados,
muchos estaban heridos
otros también desmayados.

Y también de muchas casas
se salió toda la gente,
porque se estaban cayendo
y así ordenó el presidente.

La Cruz Roja y los soldados
y también la autoridad,
la legión americana
registraba la ciudad.

Para no cantar a ustedes
les ha de dar compasión,
de ver la gente en la calle
corría sin dirección.

Hasta hoteles y tiendas
muchas estaban destruidas,
y también muchas personas
allí perdieron sus vidas.

Aquél momento tan triste
se presentó en la ocasión,
de ver todos los ahogados
era de dar compasión.

With the intent of removing
all of the homeless,
Many were wounded
others had fainted.

And also from many homes
the people came out,
Because their homes were collapsing
and because the president ordered them to go.

The Red Cross and the soldiers
and also the authorities,
The American Legion
examined the city.

So not as to sing to you
I want to offer compassion,
To see the people in the streets
running around in confusion.

Even hotels and stores
many were destroyed,
And also many people
there they lost their lives.

That moment so sad
the occasion presented itself,
To see all of the homeless
one wants to offer compassion.
Ayudó la Legion de Honor, la Cruz Roja americana, que fueron a dar auxilio a la ciudad mexicana.

Adiós José Valenzuela y también el presidente, que pidieron el auxilio para salvar mucha gente.

Vuela, vuela palomita párates en estos rosales, Señores ya les canté La inundación de Nogales.

CORRIDO DE BONIFACIO TORRES (Luis M. Bañuelos)

Disc II: #8. Parts 1 & 2. Hermanos Bañuelos - vocal duet with guitars; (LAE 859 & 860, Vo 8369); Los Angeles, Ca. ca. August 15, 1930.

The story of Bonifacio Torres is that of a sixteen year old boy who, for one day March 1, 1930, managed to stir up the town of Jarales, New Mexico. In the process he killed one deputy sheriff, wounded the sheriff and another deputy, and held two hundred men at bay for several hours. It is a pathetic story of a youth who, as the corridista phrased it, “preferred to die rather than to see himself a slave.” And when it was all over, Bonifacio Torres was dead.

Bonifacio, one gathers, never quite found his place in the scheme of things. Apparently, on the morning of March 1, 1930, the boy’s mother, Mrs. Juan Torres, called officers for help. The Santa Fe New Mexican, of March 1, 1930, reported that deputies “...believed Torres to be drunk and disturbing the peace when they received the call.” The New Mexican’s issue of March 3rd, however, reported that they came “to take the youth to a reform school” (which, incidentally comes to the corrido).

Three men came to the Torres home to arrest young Bonifacio: Sheriff Ignacio Aragón and two deputies, Charles Cunningham and Daniel Sánchez. According to the Santa Fe newspaper, Sánchez was shot as they arrived at the home. Aragón was then wounded in the back and Cunningham was shot as he broke into the house. The young Torres, concealed in the attic, fired through a hole in the ceiling, a shot which struck Cunningham. The deputy died the morning of March 3rd.

A posse was quickly recruited which headed directly to the Torres home. The men first tried tear gas but that failed to bring out the youth because of the open windows in the house. The posse then obtained dynamite to blow up the house (a rather desperate measure, to say the least). Finally, “It was not until two members of the posse, at the risk of their lives, threw gasoline torches into the house, igniting the structure that Torres was forced out.” (Assuming Mrs. Torres did call the officers in the first place, one wonders how she felt watching two hundred rather desperate men attempt to burn down her home?) The writer of the corrido called their efforts “an inhuman act.” Suffice to say that Torres “...came screaming and running from the house and fired directly into the band of posse men. They returned the fire and Torres was fatally wounded with a shot in the heart.”

It seems reasonable to assume that Torres was something of a problem before the incident (becoming a rather substantial problem as matters unfolded). The corridista who takes a rather sympathetic view, attributes Bonifacio’s problems to being poor. Yet what is most significant, as far as the corrido is concerned, is the writer’s admiration for the fortitude of this young Mexican-American. “In the historical records they’ll have him as a brave man,” reads (in part) the second verse. In the second part of the corrido, the writer observes that the deputies “were shooting against the young one and he gave them lessons in manliness.” And in setting fire to the place they were “...proving that they were dealing with a man.”

Bonifacio Torres has come and gone. He lived only sixteen years. This one corrido keeps his memory alive.
CORRIDO DE BONIFACIO TORRES – Part I:

El día primero de marzo
de mil novecientos treinta,
murió Bonifacio Torres;
no se les pierda la cuenta.

En el pueblo de Jarales,
Nuevo México su nombre,
de la historia en los anales
lo tendrá como el de un hombre.

El quiso la libertad
no la esclavitud sufrir,
y para verse de esclavo,
prefirió morir.

Muchacho que la pobreza
lo llevó a portarse mal,
y por esto lo llamaba
la escuela correccional.

Y cuando Ignacio Aragón,
el sheriff de aquel lugar,
lo fue aprehender Bonifacio,
quiso su vida jugar.

Porque él nomás vio al sheriff
que lo iba a aprehender y luego,
sobre él y los ayudantes
con valor les hizo fuego.

Y a los primeros disparos
hizo blanco en Aragón,
y desde aquellos momentos
comenzó la confusión.

Y después cincuenta hombres
allí se vieron reunidos,
resultando de entre ellos
también otros dos heridos.

Fueron Charles Cunningham,
Rafael Sánchez, policía,
que allí fueron por calientes
y solo encontraron frías.

CORRIDO DE BONIFACIO TORRES – Part II:

Luego doscientas personas
que no viene al caso el nombre,
disparaban contra el joven
que les dio lecciones de hombre

Temiéndole a un hombre solo
por su defensa inaudita.

Fearing one lone man
for his unprecedented defense,
They made a cowardly decision
to blow him up with dynamite.

In the first shots
he wiped out Aragón,
And from that moment on
the confusion began.

Afterwards fifty men
were united there,
and as a result, among them,
two men were wounded.

They were Charles Cunningham
and Rafael Sánchez, a policeman,
They went in hot to take him
but came out wounded and empty handed.

Seeing from all parts
such tremendous shooting,
People from everywhere
were witnessing that fight.
Un cartucho le pusieron para causarle la muerte, pero el cartucho fue en vano y él siguió haciéndose fuerte.

Luego pensaron rendirlo con los gases lacrimantes, pero el muchacho seguía haciendo fuego como antes.

Hasta que un hombre plomero y un sheriff del condado se prestaron para un acto de valor por lo arriesgado.

Y aunque era un acto inhumano, allí se quedaron chatos todos los que lo veían.

Iban a prenderle fuego al lugar donde el muchacho, ya les estaba probando que trataban con un macho.

Por lo que el joven ya viendo que lo querían quemar, mirando cerca la muerte su vida quisó salvar.

Y no temiendo a las balas no le importó perecer.

They put up a cartridge to bring him to his death, but the cartridge was in vain and he just kept on getting stronger.

Then they thought to subdue him with tear gas, but you could see him firing like before.

Until a man who was a plumber and a deputy sheriff from the county, volunteered for an act of daring courage.

Although it was an inhuman act what those men tried to do, everyone there was surprised at what they were seeing.

They were going to set fire to the place where the boy was already proving that they were dealing with a man.

The boy was beginning to see that they wanted to burn him, seeing death so close by, he wanted to save his life.

And not fearing the bullets he didn't care if he perished, creyó el pobre libertarse hechando luego a correr.

Y el día primero de marzo del mil novecientos treinta murió Bonifacio Torres—no se les pierda la cuenta.

He thought of escaping by trying to run away.

The first day of March of nineteen hundred and thirty Bonifikao Torres died; don't forget the date.

LUZ ARCOS

Disc II: #9. Parts 1 & 2. Los Hermanos Chavarria: Alfonso & Martín Echeverria - vocal duet with Martin - guitar and Alfonso - violin; (W 112920 & 21, Co 4555x); ca. April 1931.

"Luz Arcos" as sung by the Chavarria (Echeverria) brothers and recorded in San Antonio in April of 1931 was previously reissued on an album by Los Hermanos Chavarria (on Folklyric LP 9037). Prof. Jim Nicolopoulos has adapted the text and translation from those done by Will Spires, printed in the pamphlet in the accompanying Folklyric LP. These notes are by Prof. Jim Nicolopoulos.

This original version of "Luz Arcos" seems to have established this corrido in oral tradition throughout the Southwest. Numerous subsequent recordings have been made in a wide variety of styles and by many different groups.

All of these later recordings seem to have been made in the post-WWII period, and are abbreviated versions of that originally sung by the Chavarrias. The corrido concerns a shooting that occurred on the night of Christmas, 1928, in the little town of Hondo, Texas, about thirty miles west of San Antonio.

As Will Spires observed in the pamphlet accompanying the Chavarria Brothers' LP referred to above, the background of the feud that led to the shooting could not be determined from either the text of the corrido itself, the scholarly publication of a version collected in New Mexico or the articles concerning the case which were published in La Opinion (the major Spanish-language newspaper in Los Angeles). Further research, however, has disinterred from the dusty (literally), yellowed pages of San Antonio's La Prensa (August 24, 1930, pp.1, 11) Luz Arcos' s
own story as told to José F. Rojas, Jr., the San Antonio journalist who seems to have devoted himself to following the Arcos case. Arcos relates that he left his home town of Honda, Texas, at the age of fourteen to, as he put it, *para correr el mundo en busca de locas aventuras* ("to run around in search of crazy adventures"). After an unsuccessful love affair with a childhood companion he had run across in Houston, however, Arcos met the noble and self-abnegating woman who became his wife, and returned to his home town *a vivir con las mas y fijar aqui mi residencia definitiva* ("to live with my family and fix my permanent residence there"). Upon returning to Hondo he opened a billiard parlor called the Honda Athletic Club. This business thrived sufficiently to allow Arcos to put together a baseball team, Azteca, with which he traveled around Texas. Having accumulated further capital, Luz Arcos and his brother Vicente bought twenty quality milk cows and went into business as the Arcos Brothers Dairy. The Barrientos family had a store in Hondo and was also in the milk business. When the Arcos brothers did not have sufficient milk of their own for their customers, they would buy what they needed at the Barrientos’s store. This relationship proceeded amicably until December 25, 1928 (many other accounts, probably erroneously, say Christmas Eve), when Luz Arcos returned some milk his own customers had refused because it was sour. Ildefonso Barrientos tested the milk and put it behind the counter—no words were exchanged—and Luz Arcos left. When Arcos had finished delivering the milk he had in his truck, he passed by the Barrientos’s store and sent in his nephew to tell them he needed milk to replace that which he had returned in order to complete his deliveries for the next day. The Barrientos family replied they would no longer have milk to sell to the Arcos brothers. Luz Arcos went home, discussed the matter with his brother, ate dinner, and then set out in his truck to find a new supply of milk. Before heading out to a nearby ranch Arcos stopped by the Barrientos’s store to buy gasoline and cigarettes, for which he paid cash. Luz Arcos, however, also took the opportunity to remind the Barrientos of what they owed him for the returned milk. The Barrientos replied with palabras mal sonantes, haciendo alusiones a mi familia y mi manera de vivir ("bad words, making remarks about my family and my life way of living").
fired to protect his own life. When the sheriff arrived at the Barrientos’ store, however, Barrientos (68 years old), the father, came at midnight. Arcos drove directly to awake the sheriff and brother leapt behind the counter and opened a mistrosa Luciano Barrientos and his two sons coming times, but the weapon misfired. The other Arcos went directly to the sheriff’s house everything be brought to a friendly conclusion), Arcos returned once again to the Barrientos’ store. Luz Arcos had barely opened the screen door when he saw Don Luciano Barrientos and his two sons coming towards him in a menacing fashion. One of them pulled the trigger of his pistol several times, but the weapon misfired. The other brother leapt behind the counter and opened fire from there, putting a hole through Arcos’ head. At this point Luz Arcos went directly to the sheriff’s house to make a complaint, but was told that nothing could be done until morning. He then went to his billiard parlor, but no queriendo continuar con dificultades y animado de los mejores deseos para que todo terminara en una forma amistosa (“not wanting to continue with problems and inspired by the best wishes that everything be brought to a friendly conclusion”), Arcos returned once again to the Barrientos’ store. Luz Arcos had barely opened the screen door when he saw Don Luciano Barrientos and his two sons coming towards him in a menacing fashion. One of them pulled the trigger of his pistol several times, but the weapon misfired. The other brother leapt behind the counter and opened fire from there, putting a hole through Arcos’ head above the band. At the same time Luciano Barrientos (68 years old), the father, came at Arcos with a large knife. At this point Luz Arcos opened fire “in legitimate self-defense.” Arcos drove directly to awake the sheriff and turn himself in, insisting that he had only fired to protect his own life. When the sheriff arrived at the Barrientos’s store, however, ya manos misteriosas habían quitado las armas de las manos de mis agresores, borrando de esta manera toda prueba reveladora que sirviése de base para mi defensa (“mysterious hands had already taken the weapons out of the hands of my attackers, erasing in this way all proof that might serve as a basis for my defense”). A jury in Hondo sentenced Luz Arcos to death for homicide after a brief trial, and it was only during the appeals process that Arcos’ lawyers introduced the defense of hereditary insanity.

This account published in La Prensa betrays the obvious intervention of the journalist, Rojas, and should be taken as neither Arcos’ exact words, nor as the last word on the circumstances of this lamentable shooting. Nonetheless, it agrees in most respects with the very first published account of the event which appeared in La Prensa (December 27, 1928, pg. 2), where it is further specified that the milk in question was a “bottle of a quarter gallon” (i.e. a quart). Moreover, Rojas’ account is a valuable addition to the background of this historically accurate and durable Texas corrido, and provides the information with which the original audience would have been familiar; so much so that the corridista could go straight to the most intense moment, leaving the preliminary circumstances out of his narration.

The case attracted a great deal of attention and dragged on for almost two years, due in part to widespread public support and a belated attempt to plead hereditary insanity after the initial conviction. This is clearly the mucho debate y mucho deliberar (“much debate and much deliberation”) referred to in the corrido. Several socially prominent women, including Mrs. H. C. Carter and Mrs. Dora Bossman, organized benefits and lobbied the governor and legislature on Arcos’ behalf (La Prensa September 7, 1930, p. 10 and November 4, 1930, p.1). Luz Arcos was finally executed November 6, 1930, at Huntsville. La Prensa (Saturday, November 8, 1930, section 2, p. 5) carried a headline which spanned the entire page, declaring: Valientemente murió Arcos en la Silla Eléctrica (“Arcos died bravely in the Electric Chair”). Both of the articles that followed state that Arcos died como un hombre (“like a man”), as befits the hero of a corrido. Unlike most other condemned men, Arcos required no assistance entering the dark, little room and seated himself in the electric chair, calmly and coolly adjusting the cuffs of his pants to accommodate the electrodes. According to these accounts, Arcos had the sympathy of the prison staff (and apparently, the reading public, as well). One of his final requests was that the prison orchestra come to entertain him while he was awaiting the fatal hour. The corrido accurately reports that his very last request was “La Paloma.” Los Hermanos Chavarria finish their recording of “Luz Arcos” with a few bars of “La Paloma” on violin and guitar. In fact, it is very probable that the corrido as sung by the Chavarrias was composed primarily from information obtained from the same newspaper accounts to which I have referred. The Chavarrias recorded “Luz Arcos” some six months after the execution, and almost all of the details in the corrido agree with those published in La Prensa. Of particular interest is the fact that an abbreviated version of this corrido, which is clearly descended from the Chavarria recording, was collected from oral tradition in New Mexico as “Luis Arcos” by the musicologist J. D. Robb in 1956 (Hispanic Folk Music of New Mexico and the Southwest [Norman: U of Oklahoma Press, 1980] 97-98). Although Robb appears to have been unaware of it, his find was an excellent indication of the seminal importance of the early recorded corrido in spread
ing news of significant events through key songs and texts—a process known as “sec-

LUZ ARCOS - Part I:
Luz Arcos fue ejecutado según era su sentencia, el día siete de noviembre de mil nuevecientos treinta.

Murió conforme a las leyes que gobiernan al estado; pagó con su propia vida tres vidas que había quitado.

Mil nuevecientos veinte y ocho, señores tengan presente, en este pueblo de Hondo mataron a los Barrientes.

Luz Arcos les había dicho cuando ya se fue enojado:
-En unos cuantos minutos todo quedará arreglado.

He died in accordance with the laws that govern the state; he paid with his own life for the three lives he had taken.

Nineteen and twenty-eight, gentlemen, please keep in mind, in this town of Hondo they killed the Barrientes.

Luz Arcos had told them when he left in anger:
"In just a few minutes everything will be taken care of."

He went to get his carbine and he returned immediately, and the first one he made sure of was Luciano Barriente.

When Ildéfonso came out to see what had happened, Luz Arcos was executed in accord with his sentence on the seventh of November of nineteen thirty.

Nineteen and twenty-eight, señor, please keep in mind, in this town of Hondo they killed the Barrientes.

Luz Arcos told them when he left in anger:
"In just a few minutes everything will be taken care of."

He went to get his carbine and he returned immediately, and the first one he made sure of was Luciano Barriente.

When Ildéfonso came out to see what had happened, Luz Arcos was executed in accord with his sentence on the seventh of November of nineteen thirty.

LUZ ARCOS - Part II:

Se siguieron disparando sobre los cuerpos tendidos; tuvo más suerte Luz Arcos; cayó José mal herido.

Dejando a los tres tirados Arcos se fue a presentar:
—Yo he matado a tres hombres, vayanlos a levantar.

José estaba agonizando, le trajeron el doctor;

They kept on shooting at each other across the stretched out bodies; Luz Arcos was luckier; José fell badly wounded.

Leaving the three bodies Arcos went to turn himself in: "I've killed three men, go and pick them up."

José was in his last agony; they brought him a doctor;

with another accurate bullet Arcos also laid him low.

Then José came in with his pistol in his hand and came and found already dead his father and his brother.

José told Luz Arcos: "So! You probably really are a tough guy! Here we will exchange our lives or my name isn't Barriente!"

They started shooting at each other and José was the quickest, he fired the first shot and put a hole through Arcos' hat.

with another accurate bullet Arcos also laid him low.

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They started shooting at each other and José was the quickest, he fired the first shot and put a hole through Arcos' hat.
dijo: —Me voy con mi padre, no me curen, por favor.

Sus pobrecitas familias daban mucha compasión; al ver a los tres tendidos enfermos ya el corazón.

Fue así lo habría dispuesto la Divina Providencia: los tres fueron al sepulcro, y Arcos a la penitencia.

Después de mucho debate y mucho deliberar lo condenó el Gran Jurado a la pena capital.

No mostró Luz Arcos pena ni mostró arrepentimiento; se mantuvo muy sereno hasta el último momento.

Le preguntan qué desea en sus últimos momentos:
—Que me toquen "La Paloma" para morir más contento.

he said: "I'm going with my father, don't try to save me, please."

Their wretched families aroused great pity; seeing the three bodies laid out sickened one's heart.

That was how Divine Providence had probably decreed it: the three went to their graves, and Arcos to the penitentiary.

After much debate and much deliberation the Grand Jury condemned him to capital punishment.

Luz Arcos showed no sorrow nor did he show remorse; he remained extremely calm to the very end.

They ask him what he wishes in his last moments: "That they play me 'La Paloma' so I'll die more contentedly."

NUEVO CORRIDO DE LAREDO

Disc II: #10, Parts 1 & 2. Salas & Mendoza: vocal duet with guitars; (SA 7051 & 7052, Mel 16084):
San Antonio, Tx. December 9, 1930.

Remembering the city or town of one's birth and/or residence invariably gives rise to nostalgia, and I know of no country that has had more songs written about its ciudades and pueblos than Mexico. The city of Guadalajara (coupled with the state of Jalisco of which it serves as the capital) has probably inspired the greatest number of songs, but others—including the companion Border cities of Laredo (Texas) and Nuevo Laredo (Tamaulipas)—have also served as a focal point for the song writer's pen. Recorded in San Antonio in December of 1930, singers Salas and Mendoza touch on a number of issues in this "New Corrido of Laredo," including smugglers, and the courage of Mexicans during World War I. The corrido concludes on a positive note by observing that the area offers many diversions, both night and day.

NUEVO CORRIDO DE LAREDO — Part I:

Este es el mero corrido de ese Laredo mentado, Cantando quiero decirles por lo que aquí hemos pasado.

Este puerto de Laredo es un puerto muy lucido, donde se encuentra la mata de esos hombres decididos.

Este pueblo de Laredo es un pueblo muy mentado. Los agentes de la ley andan siempre con cuidado.

This is the corrido about the celebrated town of Laredo. I want to sing to you about what goes on here.

This port of Laredo is a very brilliant port where you'll find the cradle of those determined men.

This town of Laredo is a very well-known town. The officers of the law always watch their step.
En este rancho de Brune varias cosas han pasado,
Contrabandistas y guardias sus vidas las han jugado.

Los malos éstos de Laredo nadie los puede negar,
Se cambian bala por bala y no los hacen rajar.

Si va al juego yo le encargo,
con tu dinero se trata,
se tiene que poner chango
porque el que pierde arrebata.

Como dice cierto dicho:
"El perico siempre es verde,
gallo bucho nunca canta,
y la raza nunca pierde."
(repeat)

**NUEVO CORRIDO DE LAREDO - Part II:**

No solamente en hazafías
porque será criminal
decir que no se lucieron
en esta guerra mundial.

Aquí hay muchos mexicanos
que en esta guerra pelearon;
Volvieron condecorados
por el valor que mostraron.

---

On the Brune ranch, various incidents have occurred. Where smugglers and officers of the law have gambled with their lives.

The bad men, those from Laredo, no one can defy them. They exchange bullet for bullet and they don't give up.

If you go gambling, I warn you, it is with your money that they deal, One must be careful because he who loses may get dangerous.

According to a certain saying:
"Parrots are always green, the rooster never crows, and the race never looses."
(repeat)

---

El que conoce a Laredo nunca lo puede negar
que en el puerto Río Bravo
hay mucho donde gozar.

El que le guste pasearse
goza de toda alegría,
que pase a Nuevo Laredo
y gozará noche y día.

Ya con ésta me despido,
iceniéndome un anisado,
aquí termina el corrido
de este Laredo afamado.

**EL MOSCO AMERICANO**
(The American Mosquito)


"El Mosquito Americano" is a "patter" song with chorus, the original of which pre-dates this recorded version (San Antonio, June 1930) by at least three decades. The famous Mexican artist, José Guadalupe Posada, did the illustration for the broadside.
which memorialized what were probably the original verses, as printed by Antonio Vanegas Arroyo in Mexico City in 1902. Broadsides (hojas or “leaves” in Spanish) provided an interested public with the text for the corridos they might hear at a mercado (open market) at the local plaza (town square) or at virtually any public gathering. These corridos were printed on cheap colored paper for sale to the average peasant in order that he might have an inexpensive recuerdo (remembrance) of the tale of a unique event or individual as told in story and song by a corridista (a wandering minstrel). The tradition of printed broadsides, even in this day and age of instant communications, still continues although on a more limited scale. Just a couple of years ago when a number of Mexican laborers were asphyxiated in a railroad car near El Paso, Texas, a couple from New York told Chris Strachwitz, the producer of this album, that they bought a broadside from a corridista singing about the event on the bridge between El Paso and Juárez. Significantly, this being the 1990s, the broadside was printed on a computer generated sheet!

Around the turn of the century, exterminating the “American” mosquito became a major battle for the United States Medical Corps in Cuba with a second campaign getting underway in Panama in 1904 with the construction of the Panama Canal. Probably because of the insect’s association with malaria and the efforts of the U.S. medical teams to eradicate the disease-carrying pest, the “American” mosquito became associated with Americans in general, their culture, their innovations, and their lifestyle, all of which were often felt to intrude on traditional Mexican values and way-of-life. Posada’s drawing shows the “America” mosquito attacking all classes, the gentleman in the silk hat as well as the Mexican peasant in the straw sombrero. In that the term “mosca” was used at the time as slang for “money,” Edward Laroque Tinker suggests that the term “American mosquito” may have also had reference to the American dollar.

Tinker has given us some wonderful reproductions of Posada’s work in his Corridos & Calaveras, published by the University of Texas Press in 1961. The version of “El Mosquito Americano” sung here by Cancioneros Picareños, retains the chorus printed on the Posada broadside, but the spoken portion, while retaining some-
thing of the structure of the original, is totally changed. Even the names of the communities visited by the mosquito on his travels are different.

The listener may find it difficult to grasp the humor of the spoken portion. The speaker was probably more after "effect" than actual meaning. Moreover, within the spoken portion, there are certain aspects to the "patter" which form a kind of prototype for Pachuco

EL MOSCO AMERICANO

El mosquito americano que acaba de llegar, dicen me vine a pasear a este pueblo mexicano.

Dízque que el domingo embarcó allá en el Laredo de Tejas, dízque a Monterrey llegó mordiéndoles las orejas; en el Saltillo unas viejas las hizo andar de rodillas Y a muchas las hacía gritar este animal veterano y gritaban sin cesar.

Coro

El rumbo de Aguascalientes este mosquito tomó, caló (a dialect using Spanish and English words, modified words derived from both languages, and created words spoken with certain stylistic mannerisms) which began to emerge in the mid-1930s. The dialect flourished in the 1940s as a youthful Mexican-American Pachuco subculture developed some prominence (and notoriety) throughout the southwest, particularly in Los Angeles with the so-called "Zoot Suit" riots.

The Mosquito Has Just Arrived; They say he came for a visit To this Mexican soil.

They say that on Sunday he got started there in Laredo, Texas, It is rumored that he arrived in Monterrey biting the ears.

In San Deo, he made some women walk on their knees; He made many cry out, this veteran animal, they were screaming without ceasing.

Chorus

In the direction of Aguascalientes went this mosquito, a todos los dependientes tanto que los aportó; mi burrito lo dejó sin orejas y sin cola, las muchachas de la bola y el rucito Donaciano les decían a Mama Lola.

Coro

A Zacatecas quería este mosquito llegar, a la pobre de mi tía se le metió entre el jacal, le mordió hasta el paladar las piernas, las pantorrillas, la barriga, los costillas; este animal veterano y gritaba sin cesar.

Chorus

To Zacatecas This mosquito wanted to go, To my poor aunt It went into her hut; It bit her down to the soft palate her legs, her calves, her stomach, her ribs; this veteran animal And she was yelling without ceasing.

Chorus

To the fair to dance and to the fiestas [parties] of Veracruz; but don't let that scare you.

Chorus
Por la Puerta de San Juan
Piedra Gorda y La Sandía,
una viejita decía:
—Jesús, que fiero animal,
¡gie¡me Ud., Don Pasqual,
no le ha llegado el mosquito
¿qué dice Ud. Don Pachito?—

Luego remontó su vuelo
a una rica capital,
por San Luis, por El Parral,
por Celaya y Chamacuero,
sobre rutas que hasta un arriero,
que iba llegando a Paseo,
dicen del susto "¡qué veo!":
—¡jalgígame San Severiano,
es muy bravo a seguir creí!—

En fin anduvo el mosquito
por la ciudad por San Juan,
 luego en la gran capital
a un muchacho papeleró
le entró por el agujero que
en el pantalón trónía,
declamó doña Lucía:
—¿Qué animal tan fiero!—

To Puerta de San Juan,
Piedra Gorda and La Sandía,
an old lady said:
"Oh, Jesus, what a ferocious animal,
Listen to me, Don Pasqual,
The mosquito hasn't reached you yet,
What do you say to that, Don Pachito?"

Later he soared in his flight
to a rich capital,
through San Luis, El Parral,
Celaya and Chamacuero,
Apparentely even a mule driver
who was arriving at Paseo,
was said to cry out in surprise:
"My goodness, save me Saint Severiano,
I believe he's very fierce!"

Finally this mosquito passed
into the city through San Juan,
Then in the great capital city,
it bit into a news boy
through the hole
in his pants;
Doña Lucía cried out:
"What ferocious animal!"

Cette case the home of Zenaida, four hundred
kilometers away.

Zenaida holds a special place in the hearts
of Mexicans who remember the 1930s. Again,
it is the train that takes us to far off places—in

Zenaida holds a special place in the hearts
of Mexicans who remember the 1930s. Again,
it is the train that takes us to far off places—in
Ya se vienen quedando los pueblos
ya parece que voy caminando.

Con las ganas que tenía de verla,
estrecharla en mis brazos quería,
Estaré que se hiciera de noche
para verla mejor que de día.

ZENAIDA - Part II:
Cinco meses duré sin mirarla,
trabajé con afán con esmero,
Esperando volver a encontrarla,
y ofrecerle todo mi dinero.

Cuando al fin tuvo mucho dinero,
otra vez en el tren me volvió,
Hasta el pueblo en que vive Zenaida,
y corriendo veloz por la vía.

Me bajé en la estación presuroso,
y a su casa corrió a saludarla,
Muy en vuelta en su lindo rebozo,
encontré a mi Zenaida de alma.

- Yo no quiero, - me dice Zenaida,
- el dinero que usted me propone,
Si le dije eso a usted en otro tiempo,
se lo dije por ver si era hombre —

- Ahora miro que usted se quiere
y sí son sus amores formales.

The cities are being left behind,
it seems as though we are moving.

Oh, how I wanted to see her,
to hold her in my arms is what I wanted,
I wished for the night,
so that I could see her better than in the day.

Deberá de pasar a mi casa,
y pedirle mi mano a mis padres.—

Yo me vuelvo en el tren pasajero,
y el permiso sus padres han dado,
Para nada sirvió mi dinero,
yo me llevo a Zenaida a mi lado.

LAS QUEJAS DE ZENAIDA - Part I:
Cuatro meses si no bien cabales
de casada duré con Zenovio,
porque dice que no me cumple
las promesas que me hizo de novio.

Deberá de pasar a mi casa,
y pedirle mi mano a mis padres.—

You ought to go to my home
and ask my parents for my hand."

I am leaving on that passenger train
her parents have given their consent,
My money was of no use,
I am taking Zenaida with me at my side.

Where "Zenaida" tells the story of a young woman more than willing to leave home if only the young man interested in her will buy her train fare, "Las Quejas de Zenaida" tells the story of the results of what can happen to a relationship.

Parodias (parodies) or follow-up canciones and/or corridos are very popular in Mexican (and Mexican-American) tradition. Where "Zenaida" was taken to an unnamed pueblo somewhere in Mexico, Zenovio takes his bride to San Antonio. There he shows no interest in working, preferring to be a gambler and a smuggler. Finally, after he becomes home drunk, having had an affair, he tells Zenaida to go away. She ends up leaving the wicked town of San Antonio to return to her parents.

Since the original version of "Zenaida" became a hit, parodies continued to be written and recorded. In the 1970s we had "La Nueva Zenaida" and thus the theme and the tune live on!

LAS QUEJAS DE ZENAIDA - Part I:
Cuatro meses si no bien cabales
de casada duré con Zenovio,
porque dice que no me cumplía
las promesas que me hizo de novio.

Four months exactly
I was married to Zenovio,
Because it was said that he did not fulfill
the promises he gave me when we were engaged.
Zenovio arranjó con mis padres y después que mi mano le dieron, me llevó pa’ el estado de Tejas y mis padres de mi no supieron.

En el tren pasajero salimos tan veloz parecía el demonio, otro día llegamos de noche a su casa que está en San Antonio.

Veinte días pasaron volando, veinte días que fue buen marido, luego a poco resulta borracho jugador, paseador y perdido.

—Yo pensaba que Ud. trabajaba y por eso ganaba los pesos,—
—Que trabajen los buyes,— me dijo—porque yo la verdad no soy de eso—

Y aguanté muchas veces sus ratos porque a un día la verdad no quería, y en las noches rezaba por él, y Zenovio no se componía.

LA QUEJAS DE ZENAIDA — Part II:

En la cárcel cayó muchas veces y hasta allí le llevó su comida, pero un día lo vide de brazo platicando con una querida.

In the jail he fell many times and it was there that I took him his food, But one day I saw him arm-in-arm speaking with a lover.

Con coraje le dije a Zenovio
—Era mucho los que haces conmigo, me haces menos por otra cualquiera y yo he sido muy buena contigo.—

Presurosa me fui pa’ la casa
y a mis padres les puse un correo,
—Yo quisiera que manden por mí pues volver con ustedes deseo.—

Me decía, llorando mis penas, les pintaba mi cruel sufrimiento, cuando llega Zenovio borracho y diciéndome cosas sin cuento.

—Anda, vete Zenaida,— me dijo,
—Ya me encuentro de ti fastidiado, ya gocé de tu amor las primicias ya no quiero vivir a tu lado.—

—Ya me voy de este pueblo maldito donde queden mis sueños dorados.—
Ya Zenaida se va pa’ su tierra a vivir con sus padres amados.—

With anger I said to Zenovio
“It’s too much, what you do to me, you cast me aside for other women and I have been so good to you.”

Promptly I went to the house and to my parents I wrote a letter,
“I would ask that you send for me for return to you is my desire.”

I said, crying because of my penalty, I painted my cruel suffering, And when Zenovio arrived drunk he was talking crazy.

“Go ahead Zenaida, go away,” he said,
“I now find you annoying, I’ve already enjoyed the first flower of your love, Now I don’t wish to live at your side.”

“Now I am leaving this wicked town where my golden dreams are left behind.”
Now Zenaida is returning to her homeland to live with her beloved parents.

(Phillip S. Sonnichson – 1974, with additional research and editing in 1994.)
A Selected Discography of some of the Corridos:

Disc 1 #1. GREGORIO CORTEZ:
Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez, (SA 238A/24A), VO 8351, ARH CD 7019
Hermanos Chavarria, CO 4260X
Timoteo Cantú & Jesús Maya, IDEAL 294, ARH CD 341
Hermanos Banda, DEL VALLE 347, ARH CD 7001
Hernandas Mendoza, SOMBRERO 2291

Disc 1 #2. JOAQUIN MURRIETA:
Los Madrugadores (Hermanos Sánchez & Linares), (DLA 368/37A), DE 10036, ARH CD 7019
Los Madrugadores (Hermanos Sánchez & Linares), (LA 245/246), VO/OK 8580, CO (M) 1811-C, CO 6643X
Juan Montoya, DEL VALLE 651
Lydia Mendoza, NORTENO 387

Disc 1 #3. EL DEPORTEADO:
Hermanos Bañuelos, VO 8287, ARH CD 7019
Luna & Gallegos, VO 4041X
as: El Enmigado by Hermanos Villa, TAXCO 220
note: El Deportado by María & Memo, AZTECA 356, is a different song entirely.

Disc 1 #6. CORRIDO DE TEXAS:
Silvano Ramos & Daniel Ramírez, CO 3905X, ARH CD 7019

Disc 1 #7. CORRIDO PENSIVANO:
Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez, VO 8278, ARH CD 7019
Trovadores Mexicanos, (402623), OK 16383, ARH CD 7001
Trovadores Mexicanos, (403230), OK 16383, CO 4858X
Duo Hureta & González, DISCOS UNIVERSAL 4077, GE 40293
Hermanos Vásquez, DEL VALLE 542
Los Cucarachos, SOMBRERO 2347

Disc 1 #8. CORRIDO DE LOS HERMANOS HERNANDEZ:
Hernán Sánchez & Linares (Los Madrugadores), (DLA 34/35), DE 10018, ARH CD 7019
Cuarteto México, (LA 263/4), VO 8559

Disc 1 #9. JESUS CADENA:
Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez, VO 8284, ARH CD 7019
Trovadores Mexicanos, (403037/8), OK 16367
Guerra & Guerra, BR 40840
Cancioneros “Acosta,” CO 3085X
as: Charla de by S. Ramos & D. Ramírez, VO 46502
as: La Güera Chiflada (Corrido de Jesús Cadena) by Trió Los Aguillillas, CO 6349X
Martín & Malena, COAST 407
Los Conquistadores, RCA 23-1247
as: La Güera Charla by Conjunto Longoria, CORONA 1001
Los Dos Rebeldes, BRONCO 147
Los Tremedos Galvanes, CAPRI 165
Lydia Mendoza, NORTENO 387

Disc 1 #10. EL HUERFANO:
Trio Matumoros: Núñez, Romero, & Guerra, (402674/5), OK 16382, ARH CD 7019
Hernández & Sifuentes, VI 8124
Dúo El Arte Mexicano, VO 8180
M. Rodríguez, BR 40662
Ibarra, Sambrano, Valles, & Fierro, CO 3048X
Pepe & Juanita, BB 337
Trio Costilla, (Mex-102), CO 1096-C
Hermanos Mier w/ Los Montanoses del Alamo, ID 025
Duo Estrella, FALCON 809
Los Galvanes del Norte, NORTENO 316
Conjunto Madrigal, De La ROSA 1212

Disc 1 #13. CORRIDO DE JUAN REYNA:
Hermanos Bañuelos, VO 8385, ARH CD 7019
Roca & Amador, CO 4339X
González & Hernández, (404415/6), OK 16759

Disc 1 #14. SUICIDIO DE JUAN REYNA:
Nacho & Justino, VO 8425, ARH CD 7019
as: La Muerte de Juan Reyna by Cancioneros de Chihuahua, (112983/4), CO 4526X

Disc 2 #1. CORRIDO DE LOS BOOTLEGgers:
Francisco Montalvo & Andrés Berlanga, BB 2381, ARH CD 7020
Trovadores Mexicanos (Rocha & Martínez), (403541/2, OK 16645)

Disc 2 #2. CAPITAN CHARLES STEVENS:
Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez, (SA 277/278), VO 8280, ARH CD 7020
Trovadores Mexicanos (Rocha & Martínez), (403541/2, OK 16645)

Disc 2 #5. LA TRAGEDIA DE OKLAHOMA:
Ramos & Ortega, (W113082/3), CO 4584X, ARH CD 7020
as: Los Estudiantes by Pedro Rocha & Lupe Martínez, VO 8442

Disc 2 #8. CORRIDO DE BONIFACIO TORRES:
Hermanos Bañuelos, (859/960) VO 8369, ARH CD 7020
Hermanos Bañuelos, (111873/4) CO 4288X

Disc 2 #12. ZENAIDA:
Los Madrugadores (LA 1016/17), VO/OK 8596, ARH CD 7020
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Los Quejues de Zenaida by Flores & Valdés, (61700/1), DE 10191, ARH CD 7020
Contestación a Zenaida by Gaytán & Cantú, (SA 2422/3), VO 8875
Parodia de la Zenaida by Luévano & Vera, BB 2916
Zenobio Ingrato (Cont. a Zenaida) by La Paloma del Norte, NORTENO 239
La Nueva Zenaida by Flaco Jiménez, DLB 560
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Includes the following: Belen Galindo, La Llegua y la Potranca; Isidro Romero, Alejandro Sierra, El Prófugo, Lamento a Kennedy, El Mojado, El Gíeoro Ceñurial, Corrido de Chessman, La Tragedia de Juanita, El Carnal, Máquina 501, Aventuras del West, Arnulfo González, Kilómetro 1160 (Arturo Garza Treviño), Corrido de Israel Ramos, Los Tequileros, José Dejó el Acorden, Asalto de Zamora, Corrido de Juan Meneses, among others. (Spring 1995)

**Delgadina** - sung by Lydia Mendoza (ARH 3012 and ARH/FL 7002)
**Corrido Pensilvanía** - sung by Rocha & Martinez (ARH/FL 7001, alternative)
**Gregorio Cortez** - sung by Maya & Cantú (late 1940s) (ARH 341)
**Gregorio Cortez** - sung by Hnos. Banda (1960s) (ARH/FL 7001)
**Gregorio Cortez** - sung by Los Pingüinos Del Norte (1970s) (ARH 311)
**Contrabando del Paso** - sung by Los Pingüinos Del Norte (ARH 311)
**Jacinto-Treño** - sung by Los Pingüinos Del Norte (ARH 311)
**Los Dos Hermanos** - sung by Los Pingüinos Del Norte (ARH 311)
**Benjamín Argumedo** - sung by Los Pingüinos Del Norte (ARH 311)
**Ramón Delgado** - sung by Valerio Longoria (ARH 358)
**Ranches of Texas** - sung by Dueto Reynosa (ARH CD 425 Sound Track to “Chulas Fronteras” and “Del Mero Corazón.”)
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