SONGS FOR THE HOLY COYOTE:

CRISTERO CORRIDOS AND IMMIGRATION POLITICS

ON THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDERLANDS

by

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Songs for the Holy Coyote: Cristero Corridos and Immigration Politics on the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands

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This dissertation is a study of a new phenomenon of *corrido* (ballad) composition and performance that narrates the lived experiences of undocumented Mexican migrants and their miraculous encounter with the ghost of Saint Toribio Romo. According to migrant testimony and corrido texts, Saint Toribio Romo, a Cristero martyr who died in 1928 and who migrants have adopted as the Holy Coyote (Smuggler) and Patron Saint of Immigrants, smuggles migrants safely across the border, ensuring they survive their journey northward. Cristeros were post-Revolutionary Mexican Catholic rebels who participated in an armed rebellion against the Mexican government (1926-1929) in response to anticlerical laws and perceived encroachment on religious liberty, a resistance that would be encoded in corridos as forms of oral history. Cristero corridos have been continuously sung in Jalisco and the greater Cristero heartland of west-central Mexico as sources of inherited cultural memory. The Jalisco-based ensemble, Mariachi Los Cristeros performs Cristero corridos as part of their musical dramaturgy, including new Cristero corridos that reimagine and reinterpret inherited Cristero memory. While new corridos composed by Mariachi Los Cristeros take place in the 1920s like their historical counterparts, corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, which I define as *ghost smuggling ballads*, relay the experiences of present undocumented migrants, including themes of Saint Toribio Romo's ghost aiding in border-crossing and migrants promising to return to Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine in Jalisco in thanksgiving for his intercession. This dissertation explores

how ghost smuggling ballads function as survivor testimony, counter-narratives to imposed criminality, and religious devotion. Saint Toribio Romo corridos sanctify the transborder migrant journey as a pilgrimage that is protected by the Holy Coyote, contextualizing the migrant experience within the religiopolitical legacy of *La Cristiada*, the Cristero Rebellion.

To my dear *abuelitas,* Martha Estela Lowenberg Campos

and María de Jesús Valenzuela Lozano.

Dedicado con todo mi corazón. Siempre serán mi inspiración.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: A Study of New Cristero Corridos

The first time I heard "El Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra" (The Ballad of Valentín of the Mountains) (**Figure 1.1**) was not in any context associated with Cristero memory or the historically Cristero territory of west-central region Mexico, but rather during a busking performance at the Tres Margaritas restaurant in Boulder, Colorado. The ensemble, Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra, a Denver-metro-area professional mariachi comprised mostly of Mexican-born immigrant musicians and (on occasion) a few U.S.-born younger musicians with family ties to the group, was the subject of one of my graduate coursework ethnographies. A group of my peers, including myself, scheduled a fieldwork observation with Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra based on their schedule of non-staged performances in local restaurants around town. During the course of their three-hour busking at Tres Margaritas, a family proposed a special request to the ensemble, a gesture commonly seen among Mexican and Mexican American patrons and audiences. I distinctly heard the older man at the table ask, "Do you know 'Valentín de la Sierra?'" "Sí, señor," responded Juventino Romero, trumpetist and co-leader of the ensemble, as he nodded his head to Chino Rodriguez, the guitarrón player, indicating that he would take the lead on the vocals after playing an improvised instrumental introduction to the *corrido*, or ballad.

Figure 1.1 Excerpt from "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra"[1]

Spanish	English
Voy a cantar unos versos De un amigo de mi tierra Del valiente Valentín Que fue fusilado y colgado en la sierra Ni me quisiera acordar Si era una tarde de invierno Cuando por su mala suerte Cayó Valentín en manos del gobierno	I am going to sing a few verses About a friend from my homeland The valiant Valentín Who was executed and hanged in the mountains I do not wish to remember It was a winter afternoon When due to his bad luck Valentín fell into the hands of the government

As Juventino sang the ballad, an ornamented and full ensemble arrangement of the standard vocal-guitar performance practice typical of classic corrido performances, my peer, Chase Peeler turned to me and asked for a translation of the ballad narrative. I exclaimed, "I've heard this song! It's strange, however. I grew up always thinking this corrido was a Catholic or church-related song. At least that's what I remember from my grandmother. It's about *La Cristiada*." At the end of the performance, Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra took their scheduled break and walked to the back of the restaurant to rest, drink water, and split the tips received during their three-hour shift. I walked up to Juventino and asked him how he knew this corrido. Juventino smiled and said, in Spanish, "Oh! Well, it is pretty standard in traditional repertoire. It's a corrido from the Mexican Revolution, and everyone loves a good corrido, especially those older ones. I've known it forever, it seems." I looked at him, attempted to disguise any suggestion of confusion in my facial expression, and asked, "This corrido is from *La Cristiada*, right? I don't think it's from the Mexican Revolution, but several years later. Valentín de la

[1] Translated by Teresita Lozano. There are multiple versions of this corrido in different compilations of Cristero corrido literature. This particular excerpt is transcribed by the author from the full corrido text as performed by Angel Morales and Juan Manuel Morales. Refer to "El Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra," *Corridos de la Rebelión Cristera* (INAH), based on field recordings collected in Jalisco and Zacatecas by Irene Vázquez Valle and José de Santiago Silva. Originally released on vinyl in 1976, a CD version was released in 2002.

Sierra was a Cristero, right?" Juventino took a sip of iced water, leaned back against the wall, and asked, "What is *La Cristiada*?"

At the time, I had limited knowledge of the Mexican corrido tradition beyond my own inherited cultural knowledge from my family and educational experiences outside of my graduate coursework. During my Graduate Fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution's Smithsonian Latino Center (SCL) in Washington D.C., Eduardo Díaz, the Director of the SLC, gifted me a copy of the "*Corridos sin Fronteras*/Ballads Without Borders: *Cancionero*" songbook, a collection of corridos based on the Smithsonian's 2002 traveling exhibition on Mexican and Mexican American ballads from the 19th and 20th centuries. This songbook provided an invaluable introduction to the corrido, the emblematic ballad tradition of Mexico from which emerged narratives of Mexican epic heroes, revolutionaries, battles, bandits, and outlaws. The Mexican corrido became one of Mexico's most significant musical and literary genres after its standardization during the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, though many scholars believe the corrido's roots lie in the 19th-century Border corrido from the contested regions of the U.S.-Mexico Borderland. The corrido tradition continued into the 1917-1930 post-Revolutionary period, serving as an oral news source and musical documentation of Mexican history as experienced by marginalized communities.

These mariachi musicians believed this corrido was about the Mexican Revolution, which in retrospect is an understandable assertion considering (as I would soon learn) many Mexican corridos from the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution and 1917-1930 post-Revolutionary period have been adapted and absorbed into traditional and popular repertoire. Did this include Cristero corridos, ballads containing narratives of the people and events from *La Cristiada*? *La Cristiada,* or the Cristero Rebellion, refers to the 1926-1929 armed-religious rebellion of Cristeros, or

Mexican Catholic militants, against the Mexican government in response to the enforcement of the 1917 Mexican Constitution's anticlerical laws[2]. Cristero corridos written and performed during the Cristero Rebellion are encoded with themes of Cristero identity, religious and political values, and triumphs of heroes and martyrs who died for the Cristero cause of protecting and defending religious liberty. As a result of this encounter with Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra, I began developing a series of questions that, over the next few years, would guide me toward my current project. Have all Cristero corridos from the 1920s been decontextualized when performed in the current day? Are there musicians and families in Mexico and the United States who have knowledge of *La Cristiada* and the ballads associated with the events that transpired? Are there people who still remember *La Cristiada* based on oral histories passed down to them by those who were alive to witness the rebellion? I continued to keep these important questions in mind as I increasingly familiarized myself with Mexican and Mexican American corrido traditions and their intersections with inherited memory, migrant memory, religion, and politics.

Approximately five years after hearing Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra perform a Cristero corrido at a restaurant, I witnessed the invocation of Cristero memory by a family who had retained the religiopolitical contexts of the same ballad, passed down to them from their family and hometown's collective inherited memory of the Cristero Rebellion. While conducting my fieldwork at the Martín-Alcalá family home in Orange County, California, María "Prieta" Martín Alcalá and her sister recounted childhood memories of growing up in Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. I met

[2] The Mexican Constitution of 1917, overseen by President Venustiano Carranza, contained several Articles meant to establish a clear separation between Church and State by reducing the social, political, and economic power of the Catholic Church. These Articles included restrictions on public display of worship, ritual, and procession; secularization of marriage and education; limitations on the number of clergy per state. The Mexican Catholic Church denounced laws as anti-Catholic and antagonistic. Cristeros rejected these laws as intentional suppression of their religious liberty and Mexican Catholic identity, leading to their eventual uprising in response to the militant enforcement of these laws by Carranza's successors (Meyer 1976: 17-21).

Prieta through her aunt, Carmen, during my first trip to Santa Ana de Guadalupe in the highlands of Jalisco, whose house was right next door to the Martín summer house. The summer house is empty for many months of the year except when the Mexican American members of the family return home for summer vacation and the August Feast Day celebrations for the Virgen de La Asunción (Our Lady of the Assumption), the Catholic patroness of the town. Prieta's sister, Teresa poured me a cup of *café de olla*, cooked over a stove with essences of clove and cinnamon, and asked me, "So, Prieta tells me you like corridos about Cristeros?" I smile up at her, "Well, I guess that's right. They're a very important part of my thesis work. Did both of you grow up singing these corridos?" Both Prieta and Teresa nodded enthusiastically and smiled at each other. "Oh yes," Prieta exclaimed. "You don't grow up in Jalos and not know at least two or three from the Revolution and *La Cristiada*." Prieta began humming a tune, tapping her spoon to her coffee mug, looking up at the ceiling as if the notes and lyrics were written above her head.

Teresa laughed, "Of course you would start singing 'Valentín de la Sierra." Everyone knows that one. He was a Cristero martyr and a hero. The government tried to get him to betray the Cristero army, but he never said a word. It really is a very sad story. Teresita, do you know that song, *tocaya*?" (*Tocayo* is a term of endearment when referring to another person with a similar name as yours.) I nodded my head only slightly, "I've heard it. I don't know it by heart, but I have heard it twice before. One of those times was in a restaurant in Colorado back in the United States! A mariachi group performed it, and the lead trumpet player had never heard of *La Cristiada*. He thought the corrido was from the Mexican Revolution." Teresa scoffed, "What?! How can he sing a Cristero corrido and not know it's about a Cristero? What a shame. Perhaps he doesn't know his history, or his family didn't tell him about that terrible time in our country. I hope you know your history, Teresita."

As I sat there, I reflected on my family's inherited lore and oral history from the Mexican Revolutionary period. My late paternal grandmother María's stories still echo in my childhood memories of resting my head on her lap as she painted pictures of revolutionary women, uncles getting murdered by the government for their land, and aunts hiding artillery beneath their skirts. My grandmother was born in the west-central state of Zacatecas a few years after the end of the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, but you would never guess by the elaborate details she described in her narratives and memories, memories that were passed down to her by older family members. I described to Teresa that one my grandmother's most vivid stories was the tale of her witnessing her uncle Bernardino's murder by a Mexican Federal solider who, after shooting him, hopped on his horse and began singing a corrido about retribution. Although my grandmother claimed this event took place during the Mexican Revolution, my father explained to me that my great-uncle Bernardino was a Cristero and was targeted, alongside other family members, during a military raid in our family's town of Jalpa.

After grabbing a cup of coffee for herself, Prieta walked back to the table and started the first stanza, "*Voy a cantar el corrido de un amigo de mi tierra, llámase Valentín que fue fusilado y colgado en la sierra*… [I am going to sing a corrido about a friend from my homeland named Valentín, who was executed and hanged in the mountains]."

Teresa's four-year-old daughter walked over and sat down next to me to hear her mother and aunt sing. Then Prieta stopped, looked at me, and rushed to her purse to grab her phone. "What are you doing? You were showing off, weren't you? You forgot the lyrics," Teresa yelled as Prieta returned with both her phone and Teresa's phone. "No, I didn't forget. I just don't want to miss a verse. Here! I have the lyrics from Antonio Aguilar. He was from *tierra de Cristeros* (Cristero territory). These look like the real words," Prieta reassured her sister. The two women,

intermittently glancing at their phones, began to sing the corrido with typical repetitive melodic phrasing and cadences, ending each verse with a descending contour. Teresa's little daughter tried to chime in by humming. Prieta's husband, her teenage daughter, and her younger nephew walked into the kitchen to listen.

The performance in Prieta's kitchen in California reveals that, for families with cultural and regional ties to *La Cristiada* and its history, contemporary performances of Cristero corridos express an oral historiography that continues to resonate with generations with no living memory of the rebellion. The lyrical texts serve as inherited collective memory and intangible culture that remains relevant through oral transmission and reinterpretation of the events and experiences from the time period. These ballads constitute a repository of cultural, historical, and religiopolitcal memory of *La Cristiada*, transmitted across generations and geographical borders, by those who regard their performance as an archive of Cristeros and post-Revolutionary Mexican society.

My hearing the performance of "El Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra" in Boulder, Colorado was pivotal for me, piquing my curiosity regarding the significance of Cristero corridos performed in present day, eventually leading me to the Martín family home in California. These two performances frame a period of ethnographic discovery of contemporary performances of Cristero corridos composed during the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion and, more significantly, of new Cristero corridos, ballads composed decades after *La Cristiada*, specifically corridos composed and performed by the Jalisco-based ensemble Mariachi Los Cristeros and corridos composed by undocumented migrants as testimony of the miraculous intercessions of Cristero martyr, Saint Toribio Romo. New Cristero corridos, a label I created to distinguish between their historical counterparts, reiterate and reinterpret the inherited memory of the Cristero experience.

Discovering New Cristero Corridos and Ghost Smuggling Ballads

In the Fall of 2013, while researching a possible topic for a graduate seminar paper on Mexican music, I took a break from online preliminary research to listen to music and watch videos on YouTube. I had just heard Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra's performance of the Cristero corrido, "El Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra," a performance that, along with my recalling childhood memories of my paternal grandmother's stories, inspired me to search YouTube for videos on *La Cristiada*. I came across a clip from a 2002 documentary film[3] about *La Cristiada* in which an older woman was prompted by the interviewer to retell her experiences about her encounters with those who were martyred during the religious rebellion. I was about to close the video to continue watching it later when suddenly, the older woman began to sing at the camera. It was unmistakably a Cristero corrido, narrating the life and death of a Cristero martyr like the corrido I had heard at the Tres Margaritas restaurant. However, unlike Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra's secularized performance, this performance was specifically employed in the contexts of invoking Cristero memory from the post-Revolutionary period in Mexico. It only took a few clicks for me to find quite a few Cristero corridos about martyrs, epic heroes, and battles associated with *La Cristiada*, audio tracks uploaded by YouTube users from a 1976 vinyl recording produced by Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), the National Institute of Anthropology and History. These findings inspired me to center my research paper on Cristero corridos, initiating the journey to my current study.

[3] The clip I viewed was derived from the 2002 multi-series documentary film, *La Guerra de los Cristeros*, directed by Enrique Krauze, presented by ClíoTV via Televisa. I first became aware of this documentary film through multiple videos by the YouTube Channel Arandas Vision, who uploaded excerpts from the documentary. Arandas Vision's video excerpts were first uploaded October 2012. See Bibliography for the original documentary's full citation.

Following the end of the semester, I noticed that the algorithms on my YouTube account continued to reflect the previous month's searches on Cristeros and Cristero corridos, including uploads that featured news reports and footage of a shrine dedicated to a man named Toribio Romo, a Cristero martyr recently canonized by the Catholic church in May 2000. Why would a Cristero martyr be the subject of current news topics? My eyes were drawn to two music videos recommended to me by YouTube on the side of the screen, both featuring the title "Santo Toribio Romo Corrido," uploaded only a few years earlier in 2010 and 2011 (**Figure 1.2** and **Figure 1.3**). These two corridos introduced me to a saint whose face I vaguely remembered from visits to my hometown of El Paso, Texas, on holy cards and novena booklets. The corridos to Saint Toribio Romo were not like the corridos about Cristero epic heroes and martyrs that I had researched for my class paper. While they incorporated historical detail, they were not necessarily narrating the life and death of a Cristero from the 1920s. Instead, these ballads were telling the story of a priest who saves migrants from death and smuggles them across the border to safety, narrating current activities of a man long dead. I asked myself, "Are these *new* Cristero corridos? Are these ballads telling the story of a Cristero ghost?"

Figure 1.2 Excerpt from "Santo Toribio Romo"[4] (Luis Gutiérrez Valdivia, 2010)

Ya son muchos testimonios Muchos milagros cumplidos Por Tijuana y Mexicali Ya son varios testigos El Santo Toribio Romo Su misión: cruzarlos vivos	There are so many testimonies So many miracles granted Near Tijuana and Mexicali There are several witnesses Saint Toribio Romo His mission: to smuggle them alive

[4] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Santo Toribio Romo," composed and performed by Luis Gutierrez Valdivia. There is no evidence of commercial availability without contacting the user directly. To listen to full corrido see Luis Gutiérrez, "Santo Toribio romo Pollero Toribio Romo," (2010) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86-sc2aJEU ; For re-post featuring video imagery, see [Fernando Arturo Chavez], "Toribio Romo (corrido)," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbUBAxIRDfA.

Un apodo se ha ganado Le dicen Santo Pollero Se escuchan los comentarios Les ayuda con dinero Forma de pago que exige: Lo visiten en su pueblo	He has earned a nickname They call him the Holy Smuggler You can hear the accounts He helps them with money And the only repayment he asks: To visit him in his hometown

Figure 1.3 Excerpt from "Santo Toribio Romo"[5] (Los Originales de San Juan, 2007)

El Padre Torio Romo Nació y fue muerte en Jalisco Lo matan los agraristas Por ser seguidor de Cristo Desde entonces se aparece Mucha gente ya lo ha visto … Ya son miles de ilegales Que lo empiezan a adorar Le piden al Padre Romo Que los ayude a cruzar Fronteras, ríos y desiertos Para su sueño alcanzar Como un ángel o un fantasma Se aparece al ilegal Los cuida y hasta los cura Pa'que puedan continuar Y luego desaparece Señal que van a llegar	Father Toribio Romo Was born and died in Jalisco The *agraristas* [agrarian soliders] killed him For being a follower of Christ And since then he appears So many people have seen him … There are now thousands of "illegals" Who have started to adore him They ask Father Romo To help them cross Borders, rivers, and deserts In order to fulfill their dream Like an angel or ghost He appears to the illegal He protects them and even heals them So that they can continue on And then he disappears A sign that they will soon arrive

After following recommended links on the sidebar of the screen, I came across more corridos dedicated to or about Saint Toribio Romo, who, according to their lyrical text, was

[5] "Santo Toribio Romo" composed and performed by Los Originales de San Juan for the 2007 album *Ojala que la vida me alcance* (EMI Televisa/Capitol), available on CD or MP3. I first encountered this corrido on a fan-made video by [07ELAPA], first uploaded to YouTube on August 31, 2011. For full video see Los Originales de San Juan, "Santo Toribio Romo.wmv," (2011) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZmLEtEhrQY.

referred to as the Patron of Immigrants, *El Santo Pollero*, and the Holy *Coyote*, or the holy smuggler. One of the ballads I encountered featured dramatic reenactment of the corrido narrative, functioning as a music video whose visual imagery amplified the themes of survival and religious devotion. Not all videos were titled as a Saint Toribio Romo corrido, but rather fit the same lyrical, literary, and thematic ballad structure as historical Cristero corridos and the Revolutionary corridos from the Smithsonian corrido songbook. What else could these corridos tell me about why Saint Toribio Romo, a Cristero martyr of the past, has resurfaced as a ghost and assumed the identity of a smuggler? What is the connection between a Cristero martyr and the migrant community? Smugglers are infamous along the Borderlands and associated with risking extortion, rape, violence, and murder. These corridos, however, describe a different kind of smuggler, one who gives you money instead of charging you, and guides you directly across without being seen or caught by Border Patrol instead of abandoning you, unaffiliated with corrupt smuggling rings.

I began collecting these new Cristero corridos, which I started to refer to as *ghost smuggling ballads*, by creating a personal playlist that allowed me to bookmark each audio and video upload, including videos featuring informal live performances outdoors and in people's homes, as well as audio tracks accompanied by a montage of relevant images of the migrant journey and of Saint Toribio Romo's shrine in Jalisco. As more corridos were uploaded to YouTube, I realized that only one upload was available as a commercial recording on other platforms—the 2007 corrido "El Santo Toribio" by the ensemble Los Originales de San Juan—signifying that nearly all of these new Cristero corridos were manifestations of the same traditional oral dissemination of historical Cristero corridos. These corridos, embedded with

Cristero memory and migrant testimony, were being shared through digital spaces unobstructed by distance, time or geopolitical borders, accessible to any listener regardless of location.

In January 2014, only one month after I created my Toribio Romo playlist on my YouTube user account, I noticed that some of the corridos in the playlist were disappearing. I no longer had access to four of the original ballads I had saved, marked by an error message stating that the video was deleted by the user, had been eliminated from public view, or had been privatized. Did these corridos threaten the safety of the *corridistas*, or balladeers? These narratives are specifically about the undocumented migrant experience, and regardless of whether or not these corridos are self-published, anonymous, or testimonial videos, I must consider that each user has assumed a risk when sharing these ballads on a public platform.[6] To this day, I do not know the reasons behind the disappearance of my early collection of corridos, nor did I attempt to contact the uploaders, identifiable only by their YouTube usernames. My speculations on whether these corridos were intended as ephemeral testimonies or whether the users felt vulnerable or exposed as undocumented migrants remains unconfirmed. The latter issue highlights why, during the course of this project, I did not reach out directly to any usernames associated ghost smuggling ballad uploads. Individual identities are not needed to comprehend and explore the significance to inherited Cristero memory, immigration, and religiopolitics.

Considering the recently deleted corridos and the fact that these corridos were not commercially available or documented outside of YouTube, I made the decision to transcribe and translate all of the lyrical content of each ballad I collected between December 2013 and

[6] As policies of protection, including DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), are continuously threatened by the current United States Presidential administration, undocumented persons, even those vocal about their status in activist performances, remain at risk for detainment and deportation.

January 2019. Fortunately, none of corridos that comprise my compilation of ghost smuggling ballads were ever removed or deleted by the user after completing the individual transcription.[7] As I continued collecting ghost smuggling ballads, I also came across a cover of a Saint Toribio Romo corrido performed by a group called Mariachi Los Cristeros, based in Acatíc, Jalisco. After listening to several of their recordings and digital albums on the YouTube page of their affiliated group, Mariachi Moya, I discovered three additional new Cristero corridos that were not associated with Saint Toribio Romo. These ballads, composed specifically for the group, were dedicated to the lives of Pioquinto Moya (the ensemble's family patriarch), Miguel Gómez Loza (a beatified Cristero martyr from the ensemble's hometown), and an unnamed Cristero epic hero. Each of the corridos had been composed within the last several years and presented contemporary interpretations of Cristero memory, particularly evident in the lyrical text of the corrido about the unnamed Cristero. These discoveries soon led me to the ensemble's video archive of live staged performances in Jalisco and surrounding regions, also found on Mariachi Moya's YouTube channel.

The Appendix (Appendix A and B) contains the resulting compilation of twenty-one new Cristero corridos, including eighteen ghost smuggling ballads, consisting of lyrical transcription, translations from Spanish to English, and bulleted lists of relevant information associated with each respective post on YouTube. This corrido compilation serves an important foundation for cyber-based research on new Cristero corridos, particularly those dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, as well as for continuing studies on Cristero corridos at large.

[7] The seven corridos that were deleted during the early course of my digital research had not yet been transcribed before their removal on YouTube.

Multi-sited and Multidimensional Study

My research methodologies for this project employed three levels of approach within multi-sited and multidimensional fields in Jalisco, California, and the digital spaces of social media. In order to collect, interpret, and understand contemporary performances and new compositions of Cristero corridos, I combined archival, conventional ethnographic, and cyber research practices. My experiences conducting fieldwork in the highlands region of Jalisco and in Southern California revealed the lack of live new Cristero corridos performances, resulting in an extensive excursion into cyber-based research and collection on social media. My cyber research required specific adaptations to participant-observation practices, framing my overall approach to include digital research and virtual ethnography.

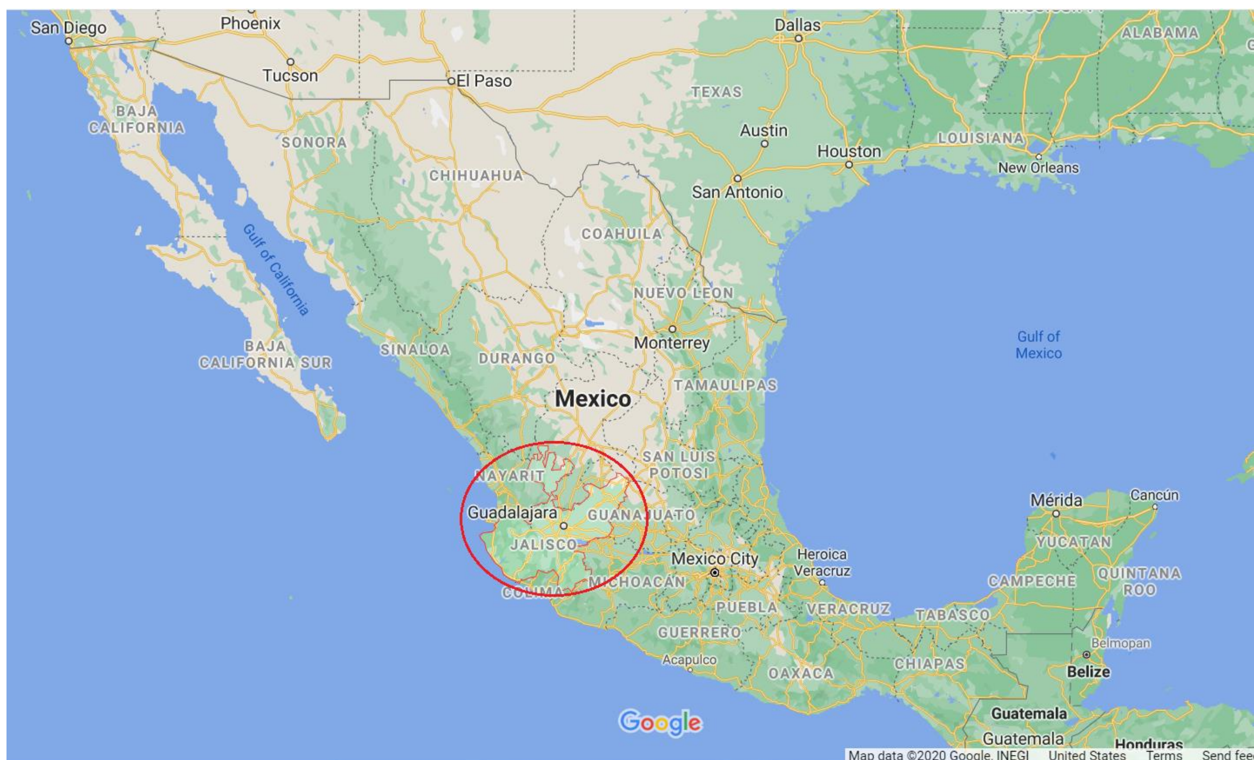
My archival research methods outside of social media drew from multiple historical works, collections, and literary projects to better comprehend the historical corpus of post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos composed and performed in the years surrounding *La Cristiada* (1926-1929). I engaged with the limited historical compilations and collections of creative literature associated with Cristero ideology and experience, paying particular attention to sections dedicated to documented corridos. Alicia Olivera de Bonfíl's *La literatura cristera* (1970; 1994), a detailed overview of Cristero literature and music, and Antonio Avitia Hernández's 2006 doctoral dissertation, which attempted to catalogue the entirety of documented Cristero plays, literature, and corridos, offered an invaluable foundation for examining the thematic content and structure of Cristero balladry. Additionally, I referred to the limited recordings of Cristero corridos, notably the Jalisco and Zacatecas-based field recordings of Irene Vázquez Valle and José de Santiago Silva compiled in the 1976 vinyl record *Corridos de la Rebelión Cristera* (produced by Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History

(INAH)), as well as Cristero corrido performances, each recorded during the 1920s and 1930s, included in the 1996 four-part CD anthologies *The Mexican Revolution: Corridos About Heroes and Events 1910-1920 and Beyond!* (produced by Folklyric/Arhoolie Records). The late Dr. James Nicolopulos and his University of Texas at Austin students' 2004 web project on Mexican Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary corridos provided invaluable bibliographic resources and historical context for select Cristero corridos found in the aforementioned recordings and other archival sound recordings early in the 20th century.

After my initial encounters with Saint Toribio Romo corridos and the new Cristero corridos of Mariachi Los Cristeros on YouTube, I traveled to the state of Jalisco (**Figure 1.4**), specifically the highlands regions just outside of Guadalajara (**Figure 1.5**), in attempts to apprehend and document live performances. The state of Jalisco is significant to my research on multiple levels associated with the relationship between Cristero corrido performance, inherited cultural memory, and Mexican migration. Jalisco was the location where *La Cristiada* was fought most intensely, recording the highest number of deaths in the conflict (Meyer 1976: 178), as well as subsequent refugee migration to the United States in the region during and after the rebellion (Young 2015). Jalisco, part of the historical heartland of Cristero territory, is the native region of fourteen of the twenty-five Cristero martyrs officially canonized by the Catholic Church in May 2000 by Pope John Paul II (Pimentel 2006). Today, Jalisco boasts important landmarks, regional museums, churches, and battleground sites relevant to *La Cristiada* history and cultural heritage. The ensemble, Mariachi Los Cristeros, is based in the city of Acatíc, Jalisco, where they perform Cristero corridos as part of their musical repertory, parody, and dramatic reenactment, dressed as archetypal characters from *La Cristiada*. The town of Jalostotitlán, approximately 125 kilometers outside of the state's capital of Guadalajara, is the

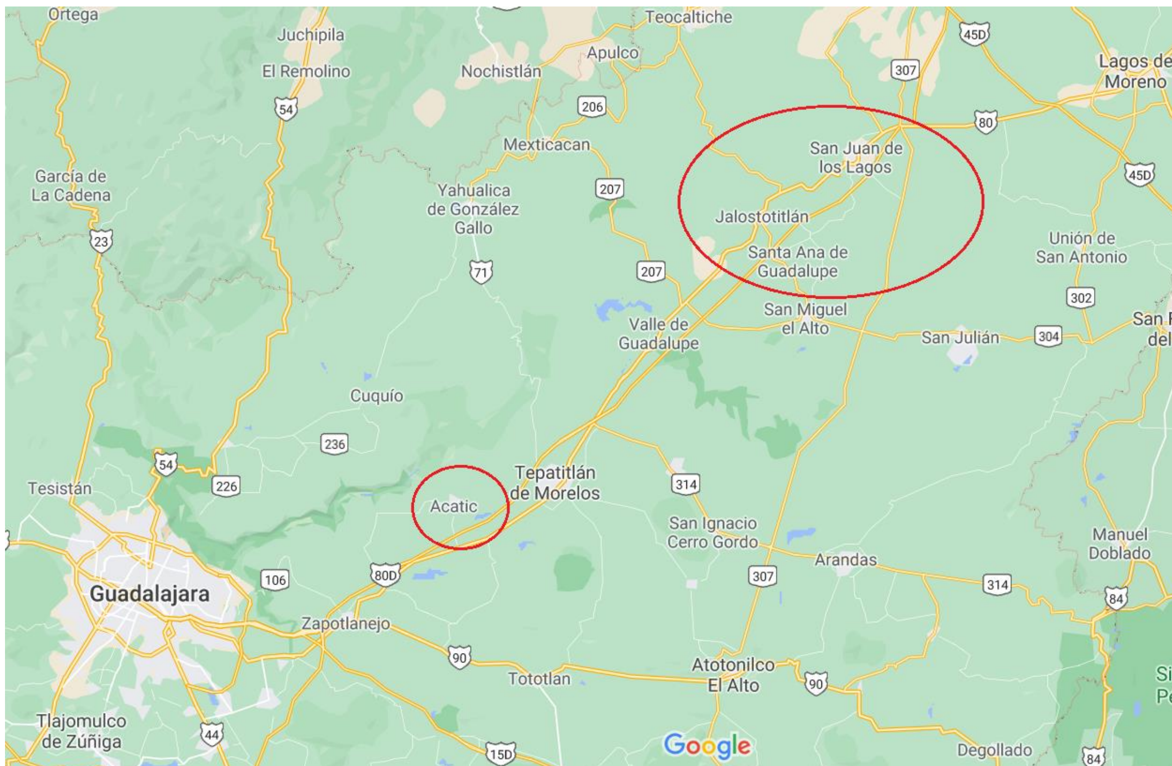
birthplace and center of devotion to Saint Toribio Romo, the epic hero and source of dedication in ghost smuggling ballads collected for this project. The ranch village of Santa Ana de Guadalupe, just outside of Jalostotitlán, is home to the Saint Toribio Romo Shrine. On any given weekend, the Shrine receives over 5,000 pilgrims, many of whom successfully journey back from the United States as a promise to their patron (Fitzgerald 2008: 70; Mirandé 2013: 96). Mexican and Mexican American migrants and devotees arrive to pay homage for guidance and protection, leaving items and votives as testimonies of Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercession during their transborder journey.

Figure 1.4 State of Jalisco in west-central Mexico[8]



[8] Image generated by Google Maps, accessed July 11, 2020.

Figure 1.5 Field sites in the highlands region outside of Guadalajara, Jalisco[9]

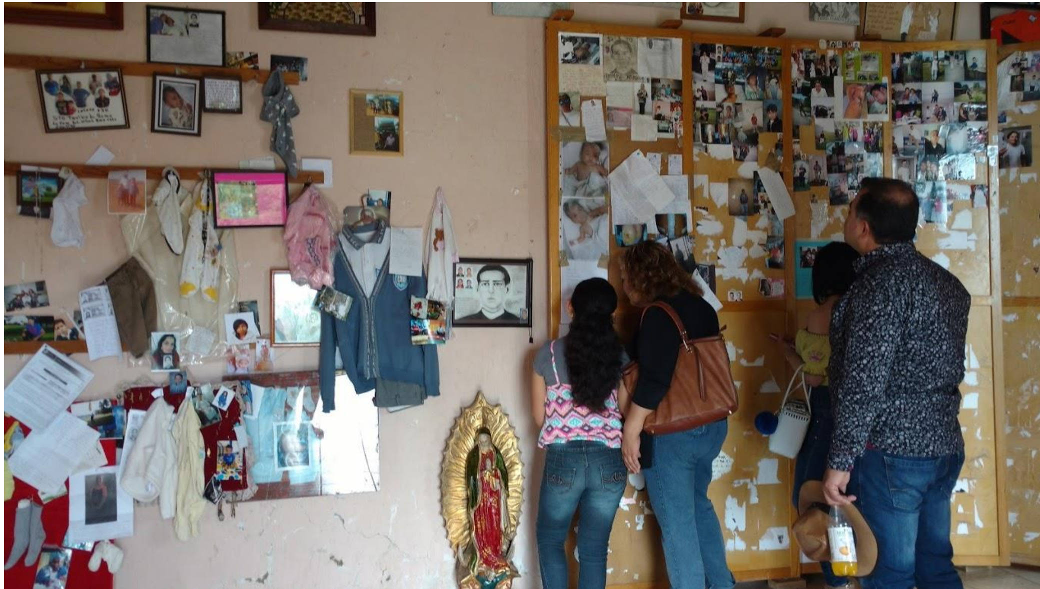


Over the course of two separate extended stays in Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe during the summer months of 2016 and 2017, I made several trips to the Saint Toribio Shrine and nearby Cristero historical sites along the *Calzada de los Cristeros*, or causeway of the Cristeros.[10] Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine is located in a larger, modern sanctuary constructed more than twelve years after his 2000 canonization in order to accommodate the vast influx of pilgrims that began to inundate the older *templo*, or chapel, on the famous *mesita*, or hilltop, where he is said to have experienced visions of Heaven as a child. The original chapel, now referred to as the Old Shrine, contains the *milagro* room, or the miracle

[9] Image generated by Google Maps, accessed July 11, 2020.

[10] The *Calzada de los Cristeros* is the pilgrimage trail linking historically significant churches, martyrdom memorials, shrines, and sites affiliated with miraculous occurrences, including the church of the Virgen de San Juan de los Lagos, northwest of Jalostotitlán.

room, a modified altar where pilgrims, seeking his intercession or making an annual promise to return, will leave votives and tangible testimonies of their respective miraculous experiences (**Photographs 1a and 1b**).



Photograph 1a. Families reading testimonies in the *milagro* room at the Saint Toribio Romo Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Jalisco. Photograph taken by Teresita Lozano, 2017.

Photograph 1b. Section of wall in the *milagro* room at the Saint Toribio Romo Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Jalisco. Photograph taken by Teresita Lozano, 2017.

According to local clerical staff and residents of Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe, the summer months see the peak of migrant pilgrim processions to the Shrine, the location where I expected to hear and document live performances of Saint Toribio Romo corridos. After each pilgrim Mass, I would follow the group of congregants to the *milagro* room adjacent to the old sanctuary in hopes of hearing musical expressions of testimony alongside the collection of religious medallions, letters, photographs, locks of hair, candles, and even old medical equipment (no longer needed after miraculous healing). Despite the soundscape of audible prayer, conversation, children's cries, and chatter from the hordes of religious tourists making their way to the nearby *Calzada de los Mártires* (a monument dedicated to the twenty-five Cristeros canonized in 2000), I heard no music.

Initially, I felt my unsuccessful attempt to capture Cristero corridos was based on a rare observation, considering that some of the ghost smuggling ballads I collected on YouTube included footage of balladeers singing with the Old Shrine in the background. I was convinced that there had to be performances of corridos or some form of musical expression of devotion somewhere around the shrine or back in Jalostotitlán. After several informal conversations and formal interview with local families, I learned that there were no extensive musical performances dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo or other Cristeros in town. Carmen Martín, a native of Jalostotitlán and the matriarch of the Martín family living both in Jalisco and in California, informed me that the lack of music was not always the case. According to her, musical performances were more prevalent before an organization unaffiliated with the local community of Jalostotitlán took over religious tourism and pilgrim events at the shrine. Based on my discussions with Carmen, her extended family, and five neighboring families, as well as Francisco "Chisco" Pérez (an employee of Jalostotitlán's Ministry of Culture and Tourism),

residents of Jalostotitlán had a tumultuous relationship with the leaders of the religious tourism at Santa Ana de Guadalupe, intensified after the local community was no longer able to organize events associated with the longstanding Feast Day traditions that preceded the emergence of migrant devotion to Saint Toribio Romo.

Chisco Pérez had recently directed and produced a film on Saint Toribio Romo in order to reestablish the local community's historical and cultural authority over Saint Toribio Romo's significance to both the town and the migrant community. During a meeting with Chisco, I showed him videos of some of the corridos I encountered on YouTube that had sparked my journey to Jalostotitlán. He told me that the community might be aware of the corridos, but that I would not hear them in Jalostotitlán. "We believe Santo Toribio is the Holy Coyote, but the pilgrims are not allowed to play any music here. The church hires a band once a year for the Feast Day, but it is only a guitar, drums, and singers. They don't sing corridos." Carmen Martin and her neighbors confirmed Chisco's observations. "There was a young choir director. I can't believe I forgot his name. Rodrigo something?" Carmen shared with me, after I asked her about music performances before the increase in religious tourism. "He used to compose some beautiful songs to Saint Toribio, and I think some of them were corridos. He used to sing at the small church down the road and at the Shrine. But he died. I have not heard this music performed for years. You know where you might hear it? In California, where my children and nieces live."

With the help of Carmen Martín, I connected with her niece,"Prieta" Martín Alcalá (introduced earlier in this chapter), and continued my multi-sited fieldwork near Los Angeles in Orange County, California, where local churches had recently hosted the traveling relics of Saint Toribio Romo in 2014, drawing thousands of devotees to special Masses and procession. While I was met, again, with unsuccessful attempts to hear and document Saint Toribio Romo corridos in

California, my fieldwork in the United States provided significant insight into the transmission of Cristero inherited cultural memory within intersections of descendants from families hailing from Jalisco.

While in Jalisco, I also attempted to align my schedule to meet with members of Mariachi Los Cristeros and attend their live staged performances in Acatíc. Unfortunately, because of conflicting schedules during my residency in Jalisco, delays in communication, accessibility limitations, and financial constraints on return plans for the region, I was unable to observe and documented Mariachi Los Cristero performances firsthand through conventional field methodologies. My experiences during my residency in Jalisco would lead me back to the borderless regions of cyberspace, most importantly the YouTube platform, in order to continue my virtual and digital research, adapting a hybrid methodology that redefined my field site as multi-location and multidimensional.

The last ten to fifteen years have seen increasing publications based on cyber-based research and ethnography on social media platforms (Murthy 2008; Atay 2009; Jordan 2009; Hine 2015; Rotman et al. 2012; Postill and Pink 2012; Bonilla and Rosa 2015; Leurs 2015). These publications also include ethnomusicological and interdisciplinary studies in which ethnography was conducted specifically on YouTube as a space for social networking, learning, and sharing of cultural expression, including video dissemination of music, art, dance, and oral histories (Wachowich and Scobie 2010; Miller 2011; Pietrobruno 2013; ; Madrid and Moore 2013; Waldron 2013; Hsu 2014; Jung 2014; Caroso 2015; Ó Briain 2015; McDowell 2015; Dougan 2016; Hilder et al. 2017; Dieckmann and Davidson 2018; Bladow 2019). Drawing on Sheenagh Pietrobruno's "exploration of YouTube as an archive of intangible heritage" in which "user-generated heritage videos" of Turkish Mevlevi Sema ceremony performances produce

informal social archives (Pietrobruno 2013), as well as John McDowell's examination of YouTube's "three communicative modalities," specifically its "archival modality" and "YouTube-native modality" in which "content is created explicitly for YouTube dissemination" (McDowell 2015: 261), my research defines YouTube as a social archive repository for both contemporary performances and recordings of historical Cristero corridos and new Cristero corridos. Pietrobruno states that while "YouTube may not take shape as a traditional archive," it has been "very effective in disseminating popular culture" (Pietrobruno 2013: 1261). Uploads to the site serve as "popular archives by "storing videos and hence cultural memories of practices," functioning in the same capacity as diaries, family albums, and oral narratives (Pietrobruno 2013: 1262). Similarly, in his discourse on YouTube's role in creating, sharing, and consuming Latin American music (including corridos from Mexico's Costa Chica region and narcocorridos, or drug-trafficking ballads, by popular artists), McDowell defines YouTube as a "comprehensive institutional archive of vernacular artistic performance," ranging from digitized versions of records, tapes, and CDs to "raw" video footage of "spontaneous performance" to professional music videos (2015: 262). YouTube was and continues to serve as an invaluable and necessary source for collection, transcription, and analysis.

In my cyber-based methodology, I distinguish between virtual ethnography, which I used in my communication with Mariachi Los Cristeros, and digital research, which I utilized for both my analysis of Mariachi Los Cristeros' digital albums and archived video performances and my collection and analysis of Saint Toribio Romo corridos (ghost smuggling ballads) on social media. Virtual ethnography is based on the presence of direct and reciprocal interaction with the community of study. My definition of virtual ethnography is derived from Dhiraj Murthy's examination of "multimodal ethnography," combining participant observation with digital

research by defying “traditional physical configurations” (Murthy 2008: 849). Similarly, Christine Hine discussed the implementation of virtual ethnography as adaptation of how ethnographers present themselves and engage with participants in online studies (2015). I communicated directly with members of Mariachi Los Cristeros through virtual means, including email interviews, Facebook messages, file sharing, and link sharing of digital albums, recordings, and video performances. Additionally, members of the ensemble directed me to performances archived on the group’s YouTube channel, as well as fan-video uploads.

In addition to utilizing social media as an archival repository, my digital research methods for collecting and analyzing Saint Toribio Romo corridos also employed “lurking” methodology, an adaptation of participant observation approaches on social media (Hine 2005; Atay 2009; Jordan 2009; Waldron 2013). Lurking refers to a form of online participant observation within digital research praxis in which the ethnographer remains hidden or invisible. In digital research, lurking examines a community’s digital activity on public social media platforms and engages with media and discourse without posting comments or interfering (unlike my communication with Mariachi Los Cristeros).

> The ethnographer herself can do research as a lurker, that is to say, a participant who does not post to the community and does not disclose her or his research interests. In that case, she would simply log on and “lurk” silently…A lurking anthropologist is actually doing what her or his research subjects are doing: hanging out at a site without posting. (Jordan 2009: 187)

For example, Janice Waldron’s analysis of music teaching and learning within the Banjo Hangout online music community’s performance and educational videos on YouTube, described “lurker,” or “hidden observer,” ethnographic research as an effective method in the cyber field, facilitating the collection of musical data without visit interaction (2013). Waldron emphasizes that “lurking” to obtain information from an online community adheres to ethical standards as

long as the online community, like YouTube, is openly accessible to the public, does not require passwords to view materials, and is not based on site-specific prohibited content (Waldron 2013: 5). In creating a compilation of new Cristero corridos for analysis, I collected each corrido video without communicating with the username who uploaded the video or with the individuals who posted public commentary. The individuals who uploaded ghost smuggling ballads are not necessarily an integrated musical community, a stark difference from the online musical community in Waldron's work, nor do they participate in the same way as other social media-based case studies. Rather, these uploads are done individually, without any perceived collaboration or coordination with other users, and on separate YouTube channels. These Saint Toribio Romo corrido uploads share individual migrant narratives as part of a collective phenomenon like the Inuit storytelling YouTube videos discussed in the work of Nancy Wachowich and Willow Scobie (2010). Wachowich and Scobie explore "digital autobiographies" uploaded by Inuit youth and young adults through "self-produced videos posted" on YouTube, which both authors argue "bypass established rules of cultural representation" through "more multivalent," "provocative," and "spontaneous" uploads (Wachowich and Scobie 2010: 85). These Inuit video stories were discovered by search terms, hyperlinks, and algorithms, the same process of discovery I used in collecting new Cristero corridos online.

Digital research on social media platforms is complex, subject to constant technological change and development, and prone to content-based shortcomings that ethnographers must recognize. For example, while "[n]umerous user-generated videos uploaded on YouTube could be regarded as primary sources," uploaders and creators maintain authority over their content and can "delete their videos at any time" (Pietrobruno 2013: 1261), as was the case with some of the

corridos that were deleted or privatized when I first started collecting the ballads on YouTube. Accepting the possibility of ephemeral content continues to inform my digital research and transcriptions, and I have adapted to these setbacks by creating and continuing to save Cristero corrido videos to a curated, private YouTube playlist under my own username. Retaining the integrity of my "lurker" remote participant-observation, I keep my playlist strictly on YouTube's platform without violating the authority of any uploader who may decide to remove their content at any point. Although "lurker" methodology served as an effective component of my digital research and collection of new Cristero corridos, combining these practices with other methods in physical locations, archival work outside of social media, direct contact with members of relevant communities in Mexico and the United States (including virtual ethnography with Mariachi Los Cristeros) provided the necessary resources for substantial analysis of new Cristero corridos' significance.

Analytical Framework: New Cristero Corridos and Migrant Experience

My ethnographic and textual analyses of new Cristero corridos engages with critical theories associated with inherited cultural memory, immigration politics, and religious devotion in order to comprehend the corridos' cultural significance to post-*Cristiada* generations in and outside of Jalisco. Based on these analyses, I examine how these ballads relate to the transborder journey of undocumented Mexican immigrants to the United States, including their return to Mexico as religious promise. My multilayered analytical approach to new Cristero corridos, in particular ghost smuggling ballads, demonstrates how they participate within an overarching discourse of the Mexican migrant experience, contributing to and expanding on interdisciplinary studies on memory and migration.

In her work with the Syrian Jewish community in Mexico City, Kay Shelemay describes memory as a "social phenomenon shaped by collective experience," shared and transmitted to others through artistic expressions of speech, dance, and music. Musical and dramaturgic performance of cultural memory reflects a "symbiotic relationship between memory and history" (Shelemay 2006: 18), subject to adaptation and reinvention by both performer and listener. Similarly, in his study of the relationship between musical performance and memory within the HIV/AIDS community in Uganda, Gregory Barz refers to these processes of reinvention of collective cultural memory as "rememorying" (2008). As part of the Mexican ballad tradition, Cristero corridos actively weave historical events from the Cristero Rebellion with expressions of collective memory in contemporary performance, narrating the lives of Cristero epic heroes and martyrs, battles, resistance, feelings of persecution, and Cristero religious and sociopolitical values. Nearing one hundred years after the rebellion, nearly all persons with living memory of *La Cristiada* have died, their collective memory now found in retellings of oral histories. Thus, this collective memory has been passed down to post-*Cristiada* generations as inherited memory, evident in contemporary performances of post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos from the period and, most significantly, new Cristero corridos that invoke thematic content from their historical counterparts as part of the reinvention and adaptation process described above.

In analyzing multiple on-stage performances of Mariachi Los Cristeros (Chapter Four), I interrogate how the group invokes and transmits inherited cultural and familial memory of the Cristero Rebellion. When performing on stage, both in secular and religious settings, Mariachi Los Cristeros dress in costumes of archetypal characters from the Cristero Rebellion and participate in anachronistic dialogue with each other and their audience, blending each character's "memory" of *La Cristiada* with events of current day. Utilizing discourses on

religious parody (Lindvall 2015) and dramatic reenactment (McCarthy 2014), I examine how the ensemble reinterprets and reimagines the historical Cristero experience within contexts of present experiences, offering new meaning of encoded history to their listeners. Drawing on Shelemay's discourse (2006) and Barz's use of "rememorying" (2008), I explore how these performances function as "rememory" and aid in maintaining the relevancy of Cristero memory and its cultural and religiopolitical significance for contemporary audiences in Jalisco and surrounding areas. Combined with my textual analyses of three new Cristero corridos composed by Mariachi Los Cristeros' director, this examination of Cristero memory in musical performance provides a basis for understanding how Cristero memory informs corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo as additional manifestations of reinterpretation and recontextualization in the migrant community.

Writings on migration theory at the international and global scale, including edited volumes and anthologies, present comprehensive overviews of migration studies within issues of disposable migrant labor, human capital, citizenship, immigration policy, integration, racism, and transnationalism (Massey et al. 1993; Castles and Miller 2014; Brettell and Hollifield 2015). Migration studies that focus on Mexico-U.S. immigration attempt to define a culture of migration, building on topics of economic and financial issues discussed in international migration studies by analyzing the deep-rooted social and family networks within sending communities. These studies also include analyses of undocumented immigration in the post-NAFTA militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border. Dominating voices in these studies include Jorge Durand and Douglas S. Massey, codirectors of the Mexican Migration Project and authors of collaborative works. Durand and Massey have collaborated with numerous American and Mexican authors from the fields of sociology and political science, examining the social

processes of Mexican migration and undocumented migration (Massey et al.1990; Durand and Massey 1992; Durand, Parrado, and Masey 1996; Durand and Massey 2004; Massey, Rugh, and Pren 2010; Donato and Massey 2016).

Jorge Durand's chapter, "Mexican Migration Dynamics: An Uncertain Future" in *Mexican Migration to the United States* (2016) describes "old patterns of migration from Mexico," which paired transnational movement to agricultural and service labor demands, as the foundation for Mexican migration as a "migration tradition" (2016: 55). Based on the established structure factors of migration flow, Durand analyzes the increasing decline of Mexican immigrants to the United States in light of U.S. economic trends and anti-immigrant policies. Wayne A. Cornelius, David S. Fitzgerald, and Scott Borger's edited anthology (2009) presents studies on multigenerational migration from the region of Tlacuitapa, Jalisco as a "baseline for understanding contemporary migration patterns." The state of Jalisco, one of the most significant regions to Cristero history and Cristero corridos, is defined as comprising part of the "cradle of Mexican migration" in West and Central Mexico, establishing a parallel between historically Cristero territories and contemporary Mexican sending communities in the United States. David F. Fitzgerald's book, *A Nation of Emigrants: How Mexico Manages Its Migration* (2008) also centers on migrant sending communities from West and Central Mexico. Fitzgerald examines the Mexican government's response to Mexican emigration to the United States and its consequential impact on the "social contract between emigrants and their home country" (2008: 12). His political analysis incorporates the influence of the Mexican Catholic Church on emigrants who are already in movement to their destination, briefly addressing the new devotion in Jalostotitlán to Saint Toribio Romo as the Patron Saint of Immigrants, whose miracles aid migrants during their transborder trek in the desert.

Studies on Latin American and Mexican migration as religious experience, pilgrimage, and the miraculous have been addressed by historians, sociologists, and theologians (Elizondo 2000; Espín 2002; Cuéllar 2008), most notably Jacqueline Hagan's *Migration Miracle* (2008) who provides a detailed overview of the role of religion and faith in the undocumented journeys of Latin American migrants. Hagan's work offers an invaluable source of reference for my exploration of the relationships between the transborder experience and ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, which express themes of devotion, pilgrimage, miraculous encounters in the desert, and migrants' promises of return.

Publications associated with transborder experiences have prioritized analyses of death, violence, rape, murder, and extortion of undocumented immigrants after increased border militarization during the early 1990s (Urrea 2004; Rubio-Goldsmith et al. 2016; Slack et al. 2018). Prior to the Trump administration's notorious "Build A Wall" campaign and amplification of antiimmigrant rhetoric, the negative impact of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) severely impacted unemployment and poverty in Mexican farming communities and resulted in the expansion and consequential exploitation of Mexican *maquiladora* (factory) workers. The Clinton administration's *Operation Gatekeeper* sought to secure the U.S.-Mexico border with increased surveillance and physical barriers as an intentional form of deterrence, pushing undocumented migrants to find alternative ports of entry in dangerous terrain. After September 11, 2001, the Bush administration's *Operation Safeguard* (2003) along the Arizona-Sonoran border region continued previous attempts to seal the border from unauthorized immigration, transitioning from a deterrence approach to a consequence approach with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. This consequence-based approach, in response to the continued flow of undocumented migrants despite physical barriers

and militarization, relied on apprehension and criminal prosecution of undocumented migrants, followed by detention and deportation. The Obama administration continued the consequence approach, relying on Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) officers' targeted deportation raids as means of discouraging unauthorized entry.

As migrant deaths in the transborder region continued to rise, undocumented migrants persisted in finding alternative routes, succumbing to the elements and violence during their journey. Many migrants currently rely on smugglers, referred to as *coyotes* or *polleros*, to help them cross into the United States alive, risking extortion, violence, and abandonment by the same smugglers they paid to help. Individual case studies of migrant death in the desert and experiences of human smuggling relate to my study on how, based on Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads, undocumented migrants regard their deadly passage northward as a sanctified sojourn that they can and will survive with the help of the ghost of a Cristero martyr. Celestino Fernández and Jessie K. Finch's chapter "*Sin El Derecho de Vivir* (Without the Right to Live): Migration Songs, Corridos, and Death" in *Migrant Deaths in the Arizona Desert* (2016) is the only academic source I encountered that specifically mentioned a Saint Toribio Romo corrido within the contexts of undocumented migration and the transborder experience—Los Originales de San Juan's 2007 corrido, "Santo Toribio Romo," the only commercially distributed corrido about Saint Toribio Romo. Fernández and Finch allude to the existence of "[s]everal immigration corridos composed and recorded about San Toribio Romo," but make no mention of additional ballads or non-commercial uploads to social media.

With the exception of Férnandez and Finch's chapter on migration songs and transborder death, these aforementioned studies on Mexican migration incorporate discussion on social and family relationships but do not necessarily prioritize the role of cultural creative expressions,

specifically music, in the contexts of migration and migrant identity. Frances Aparicio and Cándida F. Jáquez's edited volume, *Musical Migrations: Transnationalism and Cultural Hybridity in Latin/o America* (2003), includes a collection of essays that primarily analyze Caribbean popular music as expressions of trans-Caribbean identities in the United States and Europe. These essays focus on the role of Latin and Latinx popular music as symbolic of national and transnational identities that traverse "national borders, geocultural spaces, audiences, and historical periods" (2003). These essays establish a basis for analyzing migrant musics as transcending multiple definitions of borders, boundaries, and spaces, including temporalities, discussion to which my work on the transcendence of space, time, and place in new Cristero corrido performance contributes. Studies on Mexican music and migration have mostly focused on commercial genres and performances, including *musica norteña* (Ragland 2009), *Nor-tec* (Madrid 2008), and *narcocorridos* (Simonett 2001). In *Transnational Encounters: Music and Performance at the U.S.-Mexico Border* (2011), contributing authors center on musical performances that specifically invoke and evoke the U.S.-Mexico border in popular genres and cross-cultural fusion, including reggae, reggaeton, *Tejano*, rap, and cumbia. In his introduction to the book, Alejandro Madrid describes the "epistemological border" as a point of contact and a "cultural battleground" (2011: 3), commenting on the established discourses on border studies set forth by scholars such as Américo Paredes (1958; 1993) and Gloria Anzaldúa (1987).

Américo Paredes's foundational studies on Mexican identity and creative expression on the U.S.-Mexico border region include his legendary work, *With A Pistol in His Hand* (1958), an analysis on the development of the Border corrido as a response to feelings of dispossession and Anglo antagonism during continuous land contestation and changes in geopolitical boundaries.

Paredes's work remains central to understanding the development of new Cristero corridos as extensions of the Border corrido tradition, which Paredes argues was a direct ascendant of the classic corrido tradition in Greater Mexico (discussed at length in Chapter Two). Additionally, Paredes's discussion of the Border corrido's narrating the history of border conflict provides further context to how these issues continue to resonate in current border and immigration politics and their expressions in ghost smuggling ballads. Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) laid a seminal basis for border/borderland studies by distinguishing between the "dividing line" of the physical border versus the "emotional residue of an unnatural boundary" that constitutes the metaphorical borderland (1987: 3). Anzaldúa theorizes that individuals and communities can embody and carry the borderland with them beyond the location of the physical border, manifested through cultural expressions such as music, oral history, literature, dance, and art. In my work, the border and transborder region are conceptualized as both a physical and imaginary space, extending Anzaldúa's definition of the metaphorical borderlands to the digital spaces of social media in which new Cristero corrido performances are found. Additionally, I expand on Paredes and Anzaldúa's definitions of the border to include the transborder region as a liminal space and experience that migrants must survive and cross, documented by their testimony and devotion to Saint Toribio Romo.

My analyses of new Cristero corridos build on the work of Martha Chew Sánchez, whose *Corridos in Migrant Memory* (2006) explores the significance of migrant corridos composed in the 1980s and 1990s to new generations of Mexican migrants in the United States Southwest region. Chew Sánchez outlines how corridos transcend space and time in their reconstruction of historical events and construction of cultural memory among newer generations. She demonstrates how younger generations interpret corridos about migration they hear in live

performances, recordings, and radio, particularly by the band *Los Tigres del Norte*, as sources of memory of the homeland and the migrant journey. My analyses of new Cristero corrido performances correlate with Chew Sánchez's study of corridos as sources for reinterpreting historical events and creating new expressions of cultural and collective memory. While the corrido, as will be discussed in Chapter Two, is widely regarded as a popular and commercial genre, my study includes corridos that are not necessarily commercialized (unlike Chew Sánchez's work).

The inherent Cristero memory and themes of undocumented migration and persecution indexed and codified in new Cristero corridos are directed toward a specific listening community familiar with the significance of their narratives, religiopolitics, and testimony. Thus, my work positions itself alongside recent contributions to the study of non-commercial music performances and migration such as Alex E. Chávez's *Sounds of Crossing* (2017). Chávez's study on *huapango arribeño*, a "musico-poetic" song tradition from North-Central Mexico, follows performances from the highlands of Guanajuato to Central Texas, mapping the migration of sound and practitioners within the experience of border-crossing, including undocumented crossing. Chávez's book demonstrates how huapango arribeño songs and their associated performances at family events document Mexican migrant historiography and construction of community amidst increasing "nativist sentiments" toward "so-called illegal immigrants as a racialized form of criminality" (2017: 3). Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads delineate and construct a cyber-based listening community that actively counters criminal definitions of unauthorized entry and of migrants themselves. Ghost smuggling ballads, like the huapango arribeño, are Mexican poetic genres and "artifacts of cultural patrimony" (Chávez 2017: 9) that

reveal how migrants perceive the undocumented journey and their undocumented identity, framed within the history and memory of Cristero persecution.

Latin American immigrants, particularly Mexican and undocumented migrants, face intense politics of exclusion in the United States, now more heavily impacted by the 2016 presidential election and the ongoing immigration debates that currently inundate American political rhetoric and the media. Musical responses by popular artists since the early 2000s utilize web-based and social media platforms that enable the distribution of what Arturo Aldama describes as "video essays" (2012), combining sound and lyrics with the emotional impact of visual storytelling. These video essays, often in the form of official music videos or video performances recorded for specific activist movements, frame and contextualize these musical responses within emotional and relatable narratives about the transborder journey and undocumented experience in the United States. Some of these manifestations, including Molotov's "Don't Call Me Frijolero" (2003) and Ricardo Arjona's "Mojado" (2005, 2006), reclaim derogatory terms such as the aforementioned "illegal," *frijolero* ("beaner"), or *mojado* ("wetback"), among other labels imposed on undocumented and documented Latin American migrants. Music videos such as La Santa Cecilia's "ICE: El Hielo" (2013) seek to cultivate empathy and counter fervent pro-deportation and anti-immigrant views with musical narratives and biographical testimonies of deportation raids. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads that are accompanied by dramatic reenactment of the events described in the corrido position themselves alongside these video essays as resistance to xenophobic characterizations of undocumented immigrants.

Building on the voices and discussions that currently contribute to migration studies, Chapter Five's analyses of Saint Toribio Romo corridos examine how these new Cristero

corridos invoke and index collective Cristero memory, reinterpreting a history of persecution within the contexts of migrant self-representation, migrant testimony, and devotional practices. Drawing on Martha Chew Sánchez's study of "transcodification" (2006) of undocumented identity in migrant corridos, in which imposed derogatory and demeaning labels acquire new meaning in the corrido's lyrical text, and Kevin Koegan's discourse on imposed criminality and the use of narratives and cultural imagery as resistant to antiimmigrant politics, I analyze how ghost smuggling ballads serve as self-representation, resistance, and empowerment within the undocumented migration community, transforming monikers such as "illegal" into a complex label tied to victimhood. Expanding on Joshua Pilzer's theory and definition of survivors' music and survivor testimony (2015), which Pilzer based on musical survivor testimonies of Korean survivors of Japanese warfare and their empathetic relatability to fellow survivors of the same events, I explore how these corridos function as paraliturgical survivor testimony for future transborder migrants. These musical testimonies reassure future survivors, describing specific experiences during which Saint Toribio Romo's ghost saved migrants from life-threatening situations and safely smuggled them across the U.S.-Mexico border. Furthermore, as expressions of intersections between folkloristics, Mexican Catholicism, and Mexican Popular Catholicism, these testimonies act as intangible votives to Saint Toribio Romo on social media.

Towards *La Cristiada* Scholarship

Contemporary studies on *La Cristiada* and Cristeros have experienced a resurgence, including new historiographies written primarily by historians and religion scholars (Andes 2012, 2014, 2015; Bautista González 2006; Butler 2002a, 2002b, 2006, 2014; Curley 2009, 2016; de Torre 2009; González Navarro 2001; Martínez 2014; López-Menendez; Olvera Cruz

2001; Y. Solís 2016; Young 2012, 2013, 2015). These works build on that of the respected and authoritative voice of Jean Meyer (1976, 1997), as well as the voices of Meyer's Mexican contemporaries, most of whom center on regional Cristero histories and localized sociopolitical events. Most recently, Robert Weis's book *For Christ and Country* (2019)[11] examines the historical role of Cristero youth activism and the determining forces behind their militant participation in Mexican Catholic social and political reform. Julia Young has written extensively on the Cristero diaspora and its migration to the Borderlands and greater United States, framing her work on the voluntary and involuntary Cristero emigrants, refugees, and exiles of the period, arguing that the Cristero experience "persists in contemporary Mexican collective memory" (2015: 15). While the aforementioned new historiographies are invaluable resources, such studies focus solely on the post-Revolutionary period or a limited time span between the start of the 1926 Cristero Rebellion and the mid-20th century. Julia Young's theoretical analysis in *Mexican Exodus* (2015) is the only study that comprehensively examines Cristero emigration to the United States and discusses the mechanism by which *La Cristiada* and its memory resonate among other generations of Mexican migrants. My work on the intersections of new Cristero corrido composition and the undocumented migrant experience opens multiple avenues for extension of Julia Young's research (discussed further in the concluding chapter). As will be described in more detail in Chapter Three, despite resurgence of historical and political research on *La Cristiada*, there is currently no dedicated musicological scholarship. The limited studies on Cristero music, including corridos, comprise part of historical compilations and overviews of Cristero art, literature, and music (Bonfíl 1994; Avitia Hernández

[11] Robert Weis (2019) *For Christ and Country: Militant Catholic Youth in Post-Revolutionary Mexico* was in pre-publication stages during the period of my research.

2006) and make no mention of contemporary performances of historical Cristero corridos or new Cristero corrido composition.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two provides a detailed overview of scholarship on the Mexican and Mexican American corrido tradition, presenting a chronology of the corrido's development since the mid-19th century to its current manifestations as a still-popular genre. This chapter will examine the development of the pre-Revolutionary Border ballad and its epic hero protagonist, a Robin-Hood archetype, and define the "classic" corrido genre that emerged during the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, giving rise to the post-Revolutionary corrido form, whence the historical Cristero corrido emerged. Additionally, this chapter will address the development of the corrido after the genre's alleged "death" after the 1930s, highlighting the transition of the corrido into the popular and commercial scene, including the migrant corrido subgenre. Through historical analysis, Chapter Two presents how new Cristero corridos, specifically Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads, hail from intersecting histories of multiple iterations of the Mexican corrido tradition.

Chapter Three centers on the history and development of the post-Revolutionary Cristero corrido within the contexts and history of *La Cristiada*, the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion. Chapter Three presents multiple examples of Cristero corridos from the period that frame a historical timeline of the Cristero Rebellion and exemplify its distinct traits as a genre. Building on Chapter Two's discussion on the development of the classic corrido, this chapter demonstrates how the Cristero corrido retained the form and epic literary structure of the classic corrido from the Mexican Revolution yet marked a significant split in the post-Revolutionary

corrido genre based on its religious themes and the religiosity of its epic hero. Chapter Three provides necessary context for differentiating between historical Cristero corridos and new Cristero corridos written decades after the end of *La Cristiada*.

Chapter Four focuses on the case study of Mariachi Los Cristeros, examining how their staged performances and interplay with their listeners cross between boundaries of reality, time, and space. By evoking and reimagining the Cristero experience, Mariachi Los Cristeros transmit new collective memory of *La Cristiada* to their post-*Cristiada* generations, educating their listeners on Jalisco's cultural patrimony through humor and music. Chapter Four's textual analysis of three new Cristero corridos composed by Idelfonso Moya, director of Mariachi Los Cristeros, explores how new Cristero corridos index the content of historical Cristero corridos, reinterpret Cristero memory, and contribute new musical expressions of Cristero oral history.

Drawing on multiple theoretical voices discussed prior, Chapter Five introduces and explores multiple examples of Saint Toribio Romo corridos, defined in this dissertation as ghost smuggling ballads, as expressions of migrant testimony, survivors' music, and Mexican Popular Catholicism. Chapter Five provides background on the life and death of Toribio Romo González, and the migrant testimonies that emerged after his canonization. Saint Toribio Romo, referred to in corridos as the Holy Coyote, or Holy Smuggler, is depicted as a new Border and Cristero epic hero, whose only request to his beneficiaries is that they return to visit him in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. As part of the new Cristero corrido repertory, ghost smuggling ballads invoke memory of Cristero persecution within the contexts of immigration politics and religious devotion. Chapter Five analyzes how Saint Toribio Romo corridos relay the miraculous experiences of migrants during their transborder pilgrimage, comprising multiple border-crossings, and completed only after migrants safely return to the homeland.

In the concluding chapter, Chapter Six, I summarize and reflect on the significance of this study and discuss multiple possibilities for further research and expansion. By presenting additional ethnographic findings that did not form part of this current study, I outline avenues for future study associated with the intersections of Julia Young's historical work on the Cristero diaspora, increasing devotion to Saint Toribio Romo the United States, and conflicts of positionality between the United States Catholic Church and the Vatican on undocumented immigration and sanctuary.

CHAPTER TWO

The Mexican Corrido: An Historical Analysis

Diverse ballad traditions across the globe are distinguished from each other by their compositional structure, narrative plots, characters, themes, and social purpose. At an international level, a ballad is defined as a "popular or traditional song that frames a narrative element," a term which in European traditions refers to oral lyrical poetry rooted in "epic and heroic" songs dating back to the Middle Ages (Porter 2001). While "ballad" is the English-language term, lyrical narratives are referred to by different names depending on their respective cultural and historical tradition, such as the Spanish *romance*, or ballad (Mendoza 1997) and the Irish *laoidh*, or narrative song (Porter 2001). Ballad traditions, whether disseminated through communal singing via oral transmission or preserved in written form, are subject to development within their region of origin, as well as further adaptations based on cultural diffusion and the impacts of colonization. The Mexican and Mexican American *corrido* tradition contributes to global balladry, distinct from other narrative song and lyrical poetry traditions on account of its unique themes and inherent oral history based on the values, sociopolitical history, and lived experiences of the Mexican people. Most scholars agree that the Mexican corrido saw its compositional and performative peak period during the years surrounding the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution and consequential political instability in the 1920s (Altamirano 2009: 54), giving rise to the corrido in its standardized and most recognizable form as the "classic" Revolutionary corrido.

In order to understand contemporary performances of corridos as expressive forms of narrating Mexican and Mexican American experiences in the U.S.-Mexico border region, which I henceforth refer to as the Borderland, and in migration politics, it will be necessary to examine

the history of the Mexican ballad tradition and the evolution of that tradition in multiple thematic-based styles through the twentieth century. I draw from existing scholarship containing multiple theoretical voices on the origins of the corrido as a Mexican ballad tradition. I provide a periodized chronology of corrido transnational development in Mexico and the U.S.-Mexico Borderland, beginning with and paying particular attention to the thematic development of the pre-Revolutionary Border corrido of the mid-19th century, followed by the rise of the classic Revolutionary corrido during the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution and its continuation during the post-Revolutionary period (including the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion), moving past its commercialization and transition into the popular sphere in the 1930s, to its iterations as the migrant corrido and narcocorrido (drug-trafficking ballad).

Using historical analysis, this chapter explores how Cristero corridos of the post-Revolutionary period have inspired new Cristero corridos decades after the end of *La Cristiada*. Additionally, I also provide contextualization for how new Cristero corridos that testify to the miraculous intercessions of the ghost of the Cristero martyr, Saint Toribio Romo—which I define as ghost smuggling ballads—hail from intersecting histories of the pre-Revolutionary Border corrido, the classic Revolutionary corrido, the post-Revolutionary Cristero corrido, the migrant corrido, and the narcocorrido.

What is a *Corrido*?

The word *corrido* comes from the Spanish word *correr*, meaning to run or to flow (Paredes 1990), referring to how the process of storytelling in epic narratives emulates fluidity. Corridos are often "easy to memorize" and narrate events that are directly tied to the listening community's experiences (Chew Sánchez 2006: 31). The corrido is ultimately defined by the

narrative's central role in the lyrical text, presenting the story in a language that is direct. Corrido lyrics are often interwoven with time-specific, colloquial language that requires historical context for contemporary ballad communities that may not be familiar with their associated meaning. Some contemporary corridos, such as new Cristero corridos composed by Mariachi Los Cristeros (as will be seen in a following chapter), use archaic colloquialisms to invoke a specific time and place in the listener's imagination, and in so doing invite the listener to recall the past as they participate in expressions of inherited cultural memory through corrido performance.

In his foundational 1939 anthology, *El romance español y El corrido mexicano*, Vicente T. Mendoza directly addresses "young composers" and tells them they need not exhaust themselves in the search for the "Mexican music school," but rather "continue the path marked by the [Mexican] people in the development of the corrido"[1] (1997: 133). Mendoza's anthology provides a detailed description of the classic corrido's standard form and its variants, listing the thirty-three different corrido classifications based on variations of form, number of strophes, number of syllables, and vocal and instrumental structure (1997: 132-135). According to Mendoza's analysis, the classic corrido—from the Revolutionary "epic era" of corrido composition and performance through the 1930s—is always strophic, typically consisting of four to eight octosyllabic verses, a similar structure to the Hispanic ballad tradition, the Spanish *romance*, first imported during the 16th-century Spanish conquest.[2] Mendoza's anthology also provides a detailed overview of corrido scales and modes (1997: 160); meter and rhythmic

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[1] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotes from Vicente T. Mendoza's *El romance español y El corrido mexicano* (2nd edition, 1997) have been translated from the Spanish by the author.

[2] As will be discussed in a following section, many scholars believe the Mexican corrido is derived from the 16th-century Spanish *romance,* a Hispanic ballad tradition (believed to date back to the 13th century) characterized by its long poetic and epic lyrical form and its "octosyllabic quatrain" structure (Sage et al. 2001). Spanish *romances* contain narratives of medieval fables, epic heroes and their triumphs, tragedies, and betrayals (González 2015: 15-16).

modes (1997: 167); melody (1997: 174); harmonic structure (1997: 183); and corrido prominence based on geographic locations (1997: 150).

Mexican Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary classic corridos' standard form and structure is comprised of six basic parts, though most scholars and *corridistas* (balladeers) agree that "not every element is found in every corrido" (Chew Sánchez 2006: 32):

1) Initial address by *corridista* to listeners, often referred to as a "greeting" to the audience.

2) *Corridista* established time, place, and names of the main characters within the narrative.

3) *Corridista* outlines the "antecedents to arguments" of the main character (Chew Sánchez 2006: 32), providing the listeners with the context of the main character's life and experiences.

4) Primary message of the narrative, including the associated moral or social teaching.

5) Main character (protagonist) farewell, or *despedida*, in which the *corridista* assumes the person of the main character and addresses the audience.

6) *Corridista*'s *despedida*, where the singer addresses the audience, including thanking the audience for listening and restating or reminding the listeners of the ballad's moral teaching.

(Mendoza 1997; McDowell 1972; Herrera-Sobek 1990, 1993; Chew Sánchez 2006)

The classic corrido was typically accompanied by guitars, *bandolón*, harp, or an instrumental *conjunto* (group) such as a *mariachi tradicional*,[3] and is sung by a soloist or by multiple singers "with diverse melodies" (1997: 137). While the corrido, like most ballad traditions, is transmitted in song form with instrumental accompaniment, its lyrical content holds precedent over its musical structure (González 2015: 23). Thus, even the melody serves as an accompanying role to the text (just as the harmony supports the melodic phrases), favoring a

[3] The typical Mariachi ensemble of present day was not established until the 1940s, when the ensemble Mariachi Vargas de Tecatitlán hired its first permanent trumpet player, thus creating the standard for an urban Mariachi ensemble—violins, guitarrón, vihuela, and trumpets. During the Mexican Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period, Mariachi ensembles, referred to as *mariachi tradicional* (traditional mariachi), were string ensemble that varied by region. The use of wind instrument in early rural mariachi sometimes included flutes. Mariachi Los Cristeros, as well be presented in a following chapter, is a *mariachi tradicional* ensemble, typical of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period.

narrower range and conjunct melodic phrases that do not detract from the clarity of the text. Although corridos after the 1930s strayed further away from these structural characteristics, particularly corridos shortened for commercialization in the popular music sphere, many corridos have since maintained the octosyllabic, four verse strains that are iconic to the classic corrido.

Mendoza regards prominent and popular corrido singers, or *corridistas* (balladeers), during the 1910-1917 Revolutionary and 1917-1930 post-Revolutionary period as "men of the world," emphasizing that these singers and songwriters were witnesses of the events they relate to in corridos and "thus make [the performance] more interesting" (1997: 144-145). Based on Mendoza's 1939 anthology, *corridistas* and composers based their ballads on themes such as "medieval gestures" (alluding to unrequited love not dissimilar to medieval balladry); combat and military life; religion and religiosity (which Mendoza refers specifically to *La Cristiada* and the Cristero cause); crime and executions; and exemplars and tragedies such as heroes and martyrs (1997: 149-150).

Figure 2.1 Excerpt from "El Corrido de la Muerte de Emiliano Zapata"[4]

Aquí le traigo el corrido De la traición insensata Que acabó con el caudillo Don Emiliano Zapata Fue en el año diez y nueve Mismo del mil novecientos, Y era en el nueve de abril Cuando sucedió el suceso Salieron de Tepalcingo Con rumbo hacia Chinameca Zapata iba con Guajardo	I have brought to you a corrido Of the insensible betrayal That ended the life of the leader Don Emiliano Zapata It was the year nineteen The same year in nineteen hundred And it was on the ninth of April When this event occurred They left Tepalcingo Making their way toward Chinameca Zapata went with [Jesús] Guajardo

[4] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. For full text of the corrido see Aurelio González's *El corrido: construcción poética* (2015), pg. 253-256.

Por creer que era hombre de veras. … Montó el precioso caballo Que a la haciendo caminó, Cuando el clarín dio tres veces La llamada de atención Entraba el héroe a la hacienda Y una descarga lo hirió En lugar de saludarlo Esa tropa lo mató Todo su traje de charro Ensangrentado quedó Y enfundada su pistola También allí se manchó … Nueve años luchó Emiliano Por el ideal agrarista Y jamás tembló su mano Cuando exigió la justicia Así se acaba el corrido De la traición insensata En que se perdió el caudillo Don Emiliano Zapata	Believing he was a true man … He mounted his precious horse Who made his way to the estate When the bugle played three times The call to attention The hero made his way into the estate And a gunshot injured him Instead of greeting him That troop killed him His entire *charro* (horseman) outfit Was covered in blood And his pistol in its sheath Also became stained .. Nine years fought Emiliano For the *agrarista* cause And his hand never trembled When he demanded justice And here ends the corrido Of the senseless betrayal In which we lost the leader Don Emiliano Zapata

As seen in the excerpt above (**Figure 2.1**), “El Corrido de la Muerte de Emiliano Zapata” (The Ballad of the Death of Emiliano Zapata) exemplifies the majority of the standard corrido’s six basic parts. In relaying the story of betrayal that lead to the demise of Emiliano Zapata, the legendary revolutionary leader of the agrarian movement and contemporary of fellow revolutionary Pancho Villa, this corrido opens with the *corridista*’s greeting to the listeners, proceeding to establish the date and place of the several events that lead Zapata’s fate. While not

included in the excerpt above, the corrido continues to provide a detailed backstory, including how Zapata's female companion warned him of a dark omen that the government was going to kill him, urging him to leave the area of Chinameca. According to the corrido's lyrical text, Zapata dismissed his companion's warnings as superstitions. He remained in the area and was consequently tricked into meeting Federal soldier Jesus Guajardo, thinking that Guajardo would defect from the Federal army to join Zapata's army of *agraristas*, or landless rural revolutionaries. After entering the estate where Guajardo was waiting, Zapata was shot and killed in an act of betrayal, leaving Zapata covered in blood. According to the lyrical text, the amount of blood even stained Zapata's gun, which was still situated in its sheath. The *corridista*'s moral teaching warns the listeners that the Mexican government and the Federal army cannot be trusted. While the *corridista* does not assume the identity of the corrido's hero as seen in other corridos from the period, he closes with a farewell to Zapata, honoring him for his near-decade-long fight for justice. The *corridista* then addresses the audience directly, telling them that the corrido has ended with the unfortunate death of the beloved leader, Emiliano Zapata.

While not evident in the "Corrido de la Muerte de Emiliano Zapata," many classic corridos from the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period (and contemporary corridos inspired by the classic corrido structure, including new Cristero corridos composed by Mariachi Los Cristeros) also conclude their inherent narrative with the phrase "*vuela, vuela palomita*" (fly, fly little dove), a motif that Vicente T. Mendoza traced back to early Hispanic wedding songs and Spanish *romances* (Mendoza 1939; McDowell 1972; A. González 2015). This motif calls upon a messenger dove who has presumably heard the entire corrido, to go forth to other regions

to share the moral or message she has just heard, bearing witness of the corrido's significance for all who will listen.

The study of Mexican corridos provides a resource for gaining a better understanding of how the Mexican people perceived and experienced historical events as they transpired, functioning as invaluable sources of oral history. Classic corridos from the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, which scholars agree marked the period of their structural and stylistic standardization, comprise a corpus of ballads containing socio-political commentary, oral history, and epic narratives of heroes, outlaws, and political villains. While the classic Revolutionary corrido is widely regarded as the "most significant literary-musical genre in Mexican popular and folk traditions" (González 2015: 63),[5] not all scholars agree on its cultural origins, including whether or not its origins precede the mid-19th century and whether or not the genre developed from an unbroken ballad tradition first introduced with the 16th-century Spanish *romance*.

Origins of the Mexican Corrido Tradition

Vicente T. Mendoza's 1939 anthology presents in great detail the history of the musical ancestors to the early-20th-century corrido, providing an in-depth index of lyrics, basic melodies, and transcriptions, serving as an invaluable overview of the historical development of Mexican popular song and balladry (1997). The premise of Mendoza's anthology centers on the Hispanic origin theory of the Mexican corrido, attributing Mexican balladry to the 16th-century Spanish *romance* and its subsequent Mexican variant, the *romance-corrido*. Adherents to the Hispanic origin theory believe the *romance* underwent its own musical and literary development in

[5] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotations from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

colonial Mexico, eventually leading to its manifestation in the latter 19th century as the Mexican corrido. Mendoza proposes a radical notion that the corrido's ancestral line is uninterrupted from its birth as the *romance* and Mexican *romance-corrido*, influenced by their contemporaries such as the *décima.*[6] According to him, these external influences added revenge, deceit, and rage as poetic themes to corrido text, essentially creating a more vulgar tradition, or the *romance vulgar* (Mendoza 1997). After the publication of his 1939 anthology, Mendoza expanded his theoretical discourse to include other Spanish influences such as the *jácara*,[7] as well as stating that the corrido did not acquire its "crystalized" form until the Mexican Revolution (Simmons 1963: 1) as opposed to his previous assertion that the Mexican corrido was a well-defined genre throughout the 19th century. However, Mendoza's 1954 *El corrido mexicano*'s chronological analysis of the corrido's ancestry is criticized as not "exempt from national extremism,"[8] ignoring the possibilities of any indigenous contributions and ascribing the corrido to a post-colonial linear, uninterrupted genealogy (Altamirano 2009: 54). Despite overwhelming academic support for the Spanish *romance* as the ancestor to the Mexican corrido, Mendoza's Spanish origin theory is not lacking in scrutiny.

Corrido scholars such as Ángel M. Garibay Kintana (1953), Armando de María y Campos (1962), Celedonio Serrano Martínez (1963), and Mario Colín (1972) challenge the Hispanic origins promulgated by the followers of Mendoza's theory, and propose that the origins

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[6] In Spain and Latin America, the *decima* is a poetic song form comprised of an introductory quatrain (*abab* rhyming scheme) followed by four ten-line stanzas (*abbaaccddc* rhyming scheme). *Decimas* descend from the medieval Spanish *romance* and developed into various regional *decima* traditions throughout Latin America (Gradante 2001; Robertson and Béhague 2011).

[7] The *jácara* refers to a 17th and 18th-century "Spanish and Hispano-American" song form typically used in in theater to entertain audiences "between acts or at the end of the presentations," defined by their comedic nature and "rowdy" character. The *jácara*'s structure includes a refrain followed by a series of couplets (Russell 2001).

[8] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotations from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

of corrido performance and artistic expression are found in the indigenous populations, a legacy of epic poetry oral narrative performance long before the arrival of the Spanish (Valenzuela 2002: 11). Celedonio Serrano Martínez's indigenous origins theory claims the corrido was not derived from the imported 16th-century Spanish *romance* but rather from Nahuatl poetry (Serrano Martínez 1963). Martínez emphasizes that any scholar who argues in favor of the Spanish origin theory denies the creative capacity of the Mexican people (Altamirano 2009: 54).[9] Corrido scholar Magdalena Altamirano criticizes Martínez's theory due to his lack of solid arguments and nationalist agenda (2009: 54). Other scholars claim the Spanish *romance* is the "principal, but not the only seed"[10] of the Mexican corrido, describing the corrido tradition as a cultural element that crossed the continents with the Spanish conquest, derived from multiple Hispanic genres such as the *correrilla*, *coplas*, and Andalusian *canto* (Custodio 1975; Valenzuela 2002: 11). Most scholars continue to accept the Spanish origins theory versus the indigenous (sometimes referred to as nationalist) theory. However, many scholars prefer to call the Spanish origins theory a *mestizo* (mixed) theory as they increasingly accept the possibility of some indigenous and native Mexican influence (Altamirano 2009: 55). Antonio Avitia Hernández's *Corrido histórico mexicano* (1998) attempts to categorize the three main schools of thought regarding the origins and development of the corrido as a prominent ballad form unique to Mexico: 1) *Indigenista* theory, in which the corrido is a derived form of epic narrative poetry of indigenous traditions; 2) *Mestiza* theory, which claims the corrido arose amidst the *mestizo* population surrounding the years of Mexican Independence (presumably between 1810 and

[9] For further reference and discussion, see footnote #6 on page 54 of Altamirano, quoted from Serrano Martínez (1963: 10).

[10] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotations from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

1821); 3) *Regionalista* theory, which states that the various characteristics of the corrido have regionally-based origins, including variations on its form and structure (Avitia Hernández 1998: 3-13; Díaz González 2010: 13).

Merle E. Simmons, who defended Mendoza's aforementioned origins theory of an "unbroken line," supports the notion that the corrido is a "modern" genre that "evolved or solidified into its modern or definitive form during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century" (Simmons 1963: 1). Simmons proposes that the corrido existed in popular form for 300 years prior to what renowned corrido and Mexican American border folklorist, Américo Paredes calls the "corrido period," alluding to supposed evidence of earlier ballad poetry in Spanish-colonized America, including supposed corrido-like songs in Argentina in the early 19th century (Simmons 1963: 2). Simmons states further that the fundamentals in subject matter, form, and style were part of a "continuing and unbroken ballad tradition" he believed was "common to much if not all of the New World" (1963: 2). Simmons disagrees with Paredes's claim that the corrido is a distinct lyrical and musical form that is "peculiar to folk groups of Mexican culture," alleging that Paredes's theory depicts this ballad tradition as a phenomenon that spontaneously appeared in the middle of the 19th century (1963: 1).

Américo Paredes theorizes that the Mexican corrido was "stirred into life" by the newly independent Mexican nation's war against the United States and its land-grabbing threats and France's mid-19th century invasion (Paredes 1963: 233), a musical manifestation of the Mexican fight for stability and the forging of a new national identity that can be traced back to the development of a 19th-century ballad tradition native to the U.S.-Mexico Borderland.[11] Like

[11] This 19th-century ballad tradition from the U.S.-Mexico Borderland, or the 19th-century Border corrido, will be discussed further in a section to follow. Paredes believes the Border corrido, native to the U.S.-Mexico border region along the Rio Grande, predates the development of the corrido tradition in Mexico.

Vicente Mendoza, Paredes frames the "corrido period" beginning in the 1860s and later ending in the 1930s, however he does not agree with Mendoza's aforementioned theory of an "unbroken line" of development from the Spanish *romance* to the Mexican corrido. Paredes' theory argues for the development of a distinctly Mexican ballad corpus separate from the Spanish colonial ballad tradition, stressing that after Mexico gained independence from Spain, the ballad in Mexico became the Mexican corrido, "more than the *romance-corrido*…the Mexican's spirit of bravado…[and] expression of Mexican nationalism" (Paredes 1963: 233). Paredes stresses that the *romance* and the *romance-corrido* were still sung during the 1860s birth of the Mexican corrido and were not genres that were essentially eliminated or replaced. Rather, these genres continued as part of an oral tradition and inheritance of Spanish colonization and began to decrease in prevalence in the passing years (Paredes 1963).

Paredes responded to Simmons theory by underlining the difference between a ballad tradition and a ballad form, emphasizing that there is a difference between the concept of a ballad form and a "large ballad corpus, [large] enough to have a significant impact on the behavior of people" (Paredes 1963: 232). Paredes counters Simmons discipleship of Mendoza's early "unbroken line theory" by dismissing Simmons' examples of other Latin American ballads in the early colonial period as insufficient proof that the corrido is not "highly original" (Simmons 1963: 13) and not unique to Mexico nor to the corrido period beginning in the 1860s. Paredes draws attention to the lack of corrido examples in Mexico during the first half of the 19th century after the 1810-1822 fight for Mexican Independence, as he and other Mexican scholars were unable to collect oral or printed examples of corrido-like ballads dated before the appearance of the mid-19th-century Border ballad in the Lower Rio Grande region of southern Texas (Hernández 2005: 65). During Paredes' fieldwork in the border region, which included

collecting corridos from members of his family and community, Paredes concludes that the Border ballads were the earliest version of the corrido. As will be discussed in the following section on the pre-Revolutionary Border corrido, Paredes frames the themes and motifs of the Border corrido as the precursor to the classic corrido of the Mexican Revolution.

Despite contestation of Mendoza's corrido's origins theory and 19th-century development, (and, as will be discussed subsequently, its fate after the 1930s), Mendoza's 1939 anthology remains an irrefutable foundation for contemporary corrido studies. In the following sections of this chapter, I will draw from prominent corrido scholar voices and follow the corrido's structural and thematic development from its earliest iterations in the pre-Revolutionary Border corrido to its contemporary expressions as migrant corridos and *narcocorridos* (drug-trafficking ballads). This chronology will reveal how the corrido developed into a well-recognized standard form during the Mexican Revolution and post-Revolutionary period and has since strayed away from the constrictions of its classic form. Additionally, this chronology will show how the corrido's overarching thematic content developed from its epic narratives and oral historiographies informed mostly by people, places, and events to popular narratives and oral historiographies informed mostly by activity, culture, and collective experience. Of particular interest to my study of ghost smuggling ballads within new Cristero corrido repertoire is the detailed history and thematic content of the Border corrido, whose themes of fighting against injustices and perceived U.S. antagonism continue to resonate in contemporary corridos tied to immigration politics.

The Pre-Revolutionary Border Corrido

The pre-Revolutionary Border corrido of the 19th century is defined by its themes of contraband, conflict, and encounter among Mexican Americans and Anglos living in the Borderland of present-day southern Texas along the Rio Grande. The Border corrido is regarded as an earlier tradition than the Mexican corrido, directly influencing the 19th-century Mexican corrido's development that would give rise to the classic corrido of the Mexican Revolution and its continued development in what Américo Paredes refers to as "Greater Mexico" (Paredes 1958).[12] Paredes justifies the presence of Border corridos prior to the rise of the Mexican corrido by stating that "one may safely assume the border-conflict ballad tradition was several decades old before it began to produce songs that were memorable enough to survive" (Paredes 1958: 138). Unlike the publication of ballad compilations and songbooks in 19th-century Mexico, songbooks were simply not a tradition in the U.S.-Mexico Borderland, resulting in the community's strong reliance on preservation of oral traditions and continuous performance. Thus, as Paredes states, the rise of the Border corrido began with events and persons that the community deemed worthy of preserving in ballad form, memorable enough to pass on as part of both oral history and corrido tradition.[13]

[12] Américo Paredes coined the term "Greater Mexico" to encompass transnational regions on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, including the region within Mexico's geopolitical borders, as well as other areas where Mexican and Mexican-descending people reside and maintain Mexican culture and identity (Paredes 1958; 1993). The concept of Greater Mexico considers the national boundary of the U.S.-Mexico border as symbolic. The "imaginary" dividing line of the U.S.-Mexico border does not constrict the expression of Mexican culture shared among Mexican communities both in "México de Adentro" (Inner Mexico), or territorial Mexico, and "México de Afuera" (Outer Mexico), including regions with established Mexican communities further removed from the physical border (Paredes 1993: 6).

[13] As will be seen in later chapters, this value of oral tradition remains application to the dissemination of new Cristero corridos and ghost smuggling ballad compositions on social media, almost none of which are published in any commercially available recording or songbook.

Among Américo Paredes's prolific works on Mexican and Mexican American folk traditions, his 1958 book, *With A Pistol in His Hand*, serves as an important foundation for contemporary corrido scholarship, specifically corrido traditions native to the United States-Mexico Borderland along the Rio Grande. In his book, Paredes frames the history of the Border corrido by following the development of the ballad "El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez" (**Figure 2.2**), an important and well-known Border corrido that depicts the life of a Mexican American outlaw and hero, negotiating significant topics of living on the Rio Grande Valley (spanning Southern Texas and Northern Mexico), including cultural identity, citizenship, migration, Border rangers, injustice, and rebellion. Paredes's work presents the Border corrido as a ballad tradition that likely served as an antecedent to the Mexican ballad tradition and continued to develop parallel to the Mexican corrido, an extension of the musical manifestation of the Mexican experience in transborder spaces and in politically contested regions after the North American invasion and Mexican-American War of 1846.

Figure 2.2 "Corrido de Gregorio Cortez, Part II" [14]

Decían los americanos "¿Si lo vemos qué le haremos? si le entramos por derecho muy poquitos volveremos." En el redondel del rancho lo alcanzaron a rodear, poquitos más de trescientos y allí les brincó el corral.	The Americans said: "What shall we do if we find him?" In an open confrontation Only a few of us will make it back." By the corral of the ranch they surrounded him. There were more than 300 men, But he jumped through their ring.

[14] For full corrido text and translations, please see "Gregorio Cortez" on pg. 13 in *Corridos Sin Fronteras/Ballads Without Borders Cancionero/Songbook* booklet published by the Smithsonian Institution (2002). Songbook transcriptions and lyrical translations by Guillermo E. Hernández, Isabel Castro-Meléndez, et al. This songbook was published as part of the Smithsonian Institution and Smithsonian Latino Center's traveling exhibition on Mexican and Mexican American corridos.

Allá por el Encimal asegún por lo que dicen, se agarraron de balazos y les mató a otro cherife.	Around El Encinal, according to what they say, they had a shoot out and he killed another sheriff.
Decía Gregorio Cortez con su pistola en la mano “No corran rinches cobardes, con un solo mexicano.”	Gregorio Cortez said, with his pistol in his hand: “Don’t run you cowardly Rangers, from one lone Mexican.”
Giró con rumbo a Laredo sin ninguna timidez: “¡Síganme rinches cobardes, yo soy Gregorio Cortez!”	He turned toward Laredo without any fear: “Follow me, you cowardly Rangers, I am Gregorio Cortez.”
Gregorio le dice a Juan en el rancho del Ciprés “Platícame qué hay de nuevo, yo soy Gregorio Cortez.”	Gregorio says to Juan at the ranch of the cypress: “Tell me, what’s new? I am Gregorio Cortez.”
Gregorio le dice a Juan “Muy pronto lo vas a ver, anda háblame a los cherifes que me vengan a aprehender.”	Gregorio says to Juan: “You will soon find out. Go and call the sheriffs, tell them to come and arrest me.”
Cuando llegan los cherifes Gregorio se presentó: “Por las buenas si me llevan, porque de otro modo no.”	When the sheriffs arrived Gregorio turned himself in. “You can take me only on my terms, no other way.”
Ya agarraron a Cortez, Ya terminó la cuestión, La pobre de su familia La lleva en el corazón.	They caught Cortez and the case is closed His poor family is always in his heart.
Ya con ésta ahí me despido con la sombra de un Ciprés aquí se acaba cantando la tragedia de Cortez.	I now take my leave by the shade of a cypress tree. Here I end singing the tragedy of Cortez.

As I discussed in the previous section, although Paredes does accept the Spanish *romance*, along with other Hispanic genres such as the *copla* and the aforementioned *décima*, as

significant predecessors to Mexican balladry, he theorizes the Mexican corrido "dates no further back than the middle of the nineteenth century" (Paredes 1958: 129). Paredes compared the Spanish *romance* in Mexico and the Borderland to the British ballad traditions in the Appalachian region in the United States, calling it a "preserved form" that developed its own unique tradition away from its land of origin (1958: 130). While Paredes claims that he does not support the unbroken *romance* lineage of the corrido, he does believe that the Borderland gave rise to its own ballad traditions separate from and earlier than Mexican balladry, influenced by the same predecessor traditions, including the *romance*. The Borderland was home to *romance* variants "peculiar to the Border" that were not found in communities in Mexico, likely influenced by "Mexicanized *romances*" brought by migrants from Mexico during the Mexican-American War, as well as New Mexican variants from the Spanish colonial period. The presence of these unique *romances* in the Borderland indicate there was "native development" over an extended period on "novelesque themes" relevant to Borderland life as part of an oral tradition brought from across the Mexican border (1958: 130-131). Paredes implies that Border *romance* and Border corrido development overlapped, presenting further evidence against the broken lineage theory.

Paredes defines the Border corrido's "lifespan"—in particular the ballad tradition of the Lower Border (adjacent to the Lower Rio Grande Valley in southern Texas)—as the period from 1836 to the 1930s, beginning approximately thirty years prior to the rise of the Mexican corrido. Throughout Paredes' analysis of Border corrido's development, he often refers to the genre as "the border-conflict tradition" (1958), outlining a timeline of correlating political and violent events along the U.S.-Mexico border that frame the Border corrido's birth, rise, and its eventual end as a prominent lyrical epic tradition in the 1930s (the decade in which Mendoza also believes

the Mexican corrido ended, or rather "died," as an epic genre).[15] In 1836, violent outbreaks and rebellion in Texas, including Native American raids and the "English-speaking invasion of Northern Mexican land," provided the initial themes for border-conflict balladry (1958: 133). The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which included the annexation of Texas to the United States, marked the Rio Grande river (referred to as the *Río Bravo* on the Mexican side) as the official dividing border for the Rio Grande communities, separating families and neighbors who now found themselves on foreign land. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is perhaps one of the formative events behind the mantra "We did not cross the Border; the Border crossed us," immigration rights and immigration reform activists within the last century, and is the same mantra behind the contemporary activist hashtag #NoHumanIsIllegal on social media. This imposed land division led to what Paredes refers to as the dispossession of the Mexican, in which new Texas settlers "prey[ed] on the newly created Americans of Mexican descent, " which Paredes also refers to as Mexican "Borderers" (Paredes 1958: 134), communities that never physically left their homes but rather went to sleep on Mexican land and awoke to living on U.S. land. (The descriptive term "Borderer" can also be applied to Anglo Borderers, referring to the Anglo-American settler-colonial community that also resided in the U.S.-Mexico Borderland)

The French invasion of Mexico (1861-1867) and the American Civil War (1861-1865) placed the Mexican Borderer community as strangers on their own land, often siding with the Union despite Texan loyalty to the Confederacy, including organizing guerilla raids from both the American and Mexican sides of the Borderland to attack Confederate regiments. In 1877,

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[15] As will be discussed further in this chapter, Vicente T. Mendoza and many early scholars of the corrido allege that the 1930s marked the "death" of the classic corrido genre due to its loss of its epic narrative structure and epic hero archetype. Mendoza's 1930s "death" period for the classic corrido happens to coincide with Paredes's end date for the Border corrido genre. However, the majority of contemporary corrido scholars to not believe the 1930s ended the corrido genre, but rather marked a pivotal point in its literary and musical expression.

President Porfirio Díaz began his thirty-year dictatorship of Mexico, vowing to cooperate with the United States, including an extradition agreement that many Mexican Borderers fervently resented (Paredes 1958: 135), particularly in light of volatile and often deadly encounters with Texas Rangers that policed the Borderland in a similar fashion as Border Patrol officers do in present day.

Border Corrido Themes and Influence on the Mexican Corrido

During the 1850s, when the Border corrido was starting to take "shape on the Rio Grande," corrido-like songs were performed in Mexico, and during the start of the Porfirio regime of 1876-1911, the Mexican corrido began to take its "definitive form" (Paredes 1958: 142). While continuous border conflict and violence directly influenced the thematic development of the Border corrido, Mexican migrants and transborder travelers imported Mexican corrido subjects to the Borderland, including personal and family relationships, love tragedies, and consequences of juvenile delinquency. Paredes refers to the interweaving of family relationship themes with violent subject matter, such as that of a young girl disobeying her parents to attend a dance, as the beginning of the dark lyrical ballad. He defines this dark lyrical ballad as a "somber, weird strain" of Border balladry that incorporated revenant characters (persons who have returned from the dead) and "supernatural signs of fatality," forming part of the corrido corpus, but not part of the thematic content of Hispanic or Border *romances* (1958: 143).

One of the most characteristic themes of the Border corrido is associated with Border outlaws, often referred to as *bandoleros*, or bandits, who symbolized socioeconomic class disparity among Mexican Borderers and the Anglo-American communities. The Border

outlaws—referring to outlaws from the Mexican Borderer community—are depicted as Robin Hood figures who robbed the rich to give to the poor. The Mexican-American War was instigated in part by territorial dispute that awoke the Mexican Borderers' growing rage and indignation against American troops and officials, particularly in response to the exploitation and discrimination against Mexicans and Mexican Americans, as well as the poverty and illiteracy of *campesino* (rural) and Mexican miner communities in contrast to the wealthier Anglo Borderers. The impoverished Mexican Borderers felt humiliated by "the *gringos*" (Anglos) and their anger was channeled through the glorification of Borderland heroes as means of vindication within corrido composition and performance (Valenzuela 2002: 18).

The impact of this growing anger and resentment led to the elevation of the "elemental conscience" of the Mexican Borderer, constructed by interiorizing the differences between "us and them": the Mexican versus the *gringos* and *rinches* (slang for Rangers), emulated in the *bandolero*'s perceived heroic actions in corrido narratives. The Mexican Borderer group conscience developed parallel to the Mexican conscience of the lower and middle-classes residing within the geopolitical boundaries of Mexico (Valenzuela 2002: 19), also facing invasion by the French occupation and Emperor Napoleon III's attempts to establish a French state in response to President Benito Juárez suspending repayment of foreign debts. While the pre-Revolutionary Mexican epic corrido of this period sang of heroes and martyrs who fought to protect and defend the independence of the Mexican people, the Border corrido called for revindication for the Mexican Borderer community—vindications against their displacement on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Where the early iterations of the Mexican corrido in the 19th-century viewed fallen heroes as exemplars for those who continued to fight against colonial imperialism, the Border corrido viewed death and bloodshed as a justification for vengeance,

giving rise to the *bandolero*, already an outcast figure, as the "mythological redeemer"[16] (Valenzuela 2002: 19).

The *bandolero* Robin Hood archetype in Border corridos not only steals from the rich to give to the poor, but also fights against the authorities and Texas Rangers to protect the Mexican community and Native Americans against vigilante enforcement in the Borderland, spanning both Texas and other border states. The Texas Rangers and American militia viewed *bandoleros* as murderous thieves and contraband smugglers, a threat to American society and physical justification for anti-immigrant sentiment by the turn of the 20th century. Based on narratives found throughout the corpus of Border corridos, the *bandolero* character is "an expression of collective protest" whose acts are admired and justified and whose enemies are collectively hated by his community (Valenzuela 2002: 20). Many corridos, such as that of *bandolero* Gregorio Cortez, are based on actual historical figures (Paredes 1958). However, scholars view the *bandolero* archetype as a cultural creation that emerges when needed, a superhero motivated by honor and vengeance, and who is protected, idealized, and mythicized.

In Mexico, the most important corrido outlaw heroes during the ballad tradition's formative period, were those brave enough to avenge the struggle between the social classes by fighting against President Porfirio Díaz's dictatorship, and were in fact, according to Paredes, influenced directly by the Border corrido's heroic epic themes (1958: 143). However, the Mexican corrido did not borrow the actual concept of the Border corrido hero; the Border corrido differentiates between the "hero of border conflict," such as the Robin Hood archetype, and the "mere outlaw," such as the average Border robber and smuggler with more self-fulfilling missions. In order to justify the actions of the Border outlaw and robber and subsequently apply

[16] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotations from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

heroic status, the *corridista* (balladeer) must present the *bandolero* as a “border raider” who fights against the outsiders to protect his community (Paredes 1958: 144).

The Border conflicts between the mid-19th century and the turn of the 20th century provided a basis for Border performance and composition of ballads, informed by daily life along the border, including family histories, ranch life, encounters with Native Americans, border battles, and civil wars on both sides of the U.S-Mexico border. The Mexican Borderer community’s strong family structure and value of cultural preservation propelled the ballad tradition, the Border corrido, treating the ballad as an inherited cultural artifact that was passed down to newer generations, developing a “truly native balladry” (Paredes 1958: 15). The *bandolero* archetype served as the heroic protagonist in the Border corrido, and like any successful superhero narrative, the hero is foiled by a menacing force, villain, or powerful antagonist. For the Mexican Borderer in the latter half of the 19th century, the antagonist archetype was the Texas Ranger, the *rinche*, whose legacy, albeit as a blood and power-thirsty abuser, was immortalized in the Border corrido.

The characterization of the Texas Ranger in Border corridos negotiates between folkloric and nonfolkloric origins, including newspapers, books, magazines, and war propaganda as early as the 1830s and 1840s. The *rinche*’s overall demeanor and character’s purpose is based on a set of Anglo-Texan beliefs of the period, which Paredes summarized in six points: The Texans viewed the Mexican as naturally cruel; believed the Mexican to be cowardly and treacherous; knew the Mexican as a second-nature thief and degenerate; believed the Mexican’s degeneracy stems from the Mexican’s mixed blood of “second-rate type of European” (Spanish) and “equally substandard Indian of Mexico;” claimed the Mexican recognizes the Texan as superior; and believed that, within Texas, the Texas Rangers were a “special breed of men” (1958: 16).

Paredes states there is legitimacy to the Mexican Borderer villainous characterization of the Texas Rangers, as Frontier records after 1848 provide evidence of “cruelty and inhumanity” (1958: 18) toward the Mexicans by Texan authorities. Some documents justify this cruelty as punishment for the battle of the Alamo, despite the fact that Texas-Mexicans died at the Alamo fighting against the Mexican army, and the fact that most Rio Grande Borderers sympathized with the Texas Republic before the Anglo invasion of their properties. Other documents depict how Texas Rangers often killed innocent Mexicans they regarded as “accomplices” (Paredes 1958: 20) whenever a Mexican Borderer shot an Anglo-American, directly influencing a large portion of the Border corrido corpus’s thematic content. As this violence intensified, the Mexican Borderers distinguished themselves from other Texans as *Tejanos* and differentiated between the Rangers and other Anglo-Americans.

In addition to the “pseudo-folklore” (Paredes 1958: 23) characterization of the Texas Ranger based on the Rangers’ aforementioned anti-Mexican belief system, the Mexican Borderer’s interpretation of the Texas Ranger greatly impacted the enduring resentment and hostility toward this Border villain. According to Paredes, the Mexican’s view of the Ranger is best defined by how the Ranger’s persona is used in sayings and Border anecdotes: the Ranger always carries a gun; if he kills a Mexican, he will always claim self-defense; he will kill an armed Mexican in his sleep or, if awake, in the back; Rangers are cowards that hide behind American soldiers “when real trouble starts” (1958: 26), if the Ranger is looking for a Mexican thief, he is satisfied shooting an innocent Mexican (revenge by proxy). In *With A Pistol in His Hand*, Paredes describes several anecdotes based on oral histories of Mexican Borderers in the 1950s who remembered the “orgy of bloodshed” at the hands of the Rangers in the early 1900s, portraying the memories of executions at the hands of the lawmen of the Border. Paredes implies

that the Rangers' brutality likely stemmed from their insecurities associated with feeling inferior to the American army, who were more successful in fighting Border raiders, and the local authorities, who were more successful in catching smugglers and thieves. While the fear of the Ranger's violent actions unified the law-abiding Mexican Borderers into avoiding encounters by protecting each other within the community, this same fear also fueled the "roll of bandits and raiders" and "high-spirited individuals who would have otherwise remained peaceful" (Paredes 1958: 27-30; 32). Mexican Borderers sang the Border hero into legendary existence, depicting him as fearless and defending his land, people and right, with a pistol in his hand.

The word *rinche* retains the essence of its roots in the fight between the *bandolero* and the Texas Ranger, and has since been applied to Border patrolmen or any other armed American "looking for Mexicans to kill" (Paredes 1958: 24), an image further complicated by contemporary Border authority figures, including Border Patrol and the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE). Contemporary Mexican-American corridos, particularly those composed during the campaigning year for the 2016 U.S. Presidential election, incorporate current political figures such as now-President Donald Trump (arguably a new *rinche* caricature) and then Presidential-candidate Bernie Sanders, whose dedicatory corrido, "El Quemazon" (The Bern)[17] by Grupo La Meta in 2016, depicts him as a new political hero and hope for the Mexican American community. As I will show in greater detail in Chapter Five, the foundation of the Border corrido's epic hero and his fight for justice continues to resonate in new Cristero ghost smuggling ballads that narrate the current immigration crises at the U.S.-Mexico Border. The Border corrido, a transnational genre that

[17] To view video performance of Grupo la Meta's "El Quemazon" see Grupo la Meta, "El Quemazon ("The Bern" Corrido for Bernie Sanders) Grupo El Meta," (2016) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcaCL4OfoLM

precedes the Mexican Revolution, is arguably one of the founding pillars of new Cristero corridos and the ghost smuggling narratives dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo.

The Classic Corrido of the Mexican Revolution

During the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, nearly half of Mexican Borderers participated in revolts in some form, while also continuing to lead uprisings on the American side of the Borderland in response to the killing, torture, and assault of Mexican Borderers at the hands of Texas Rangers (Paredes 1958: 137-138). After 1917, World War I's consequential political and cultural conflict in the United States and the 1926 Cristero Rebellion's direct impact on a "mass exodus" (Young 2015) of Mexican migration to American soil (discussed in greater detail in chapter to follow) prolonged the atmosphere of continuous border-conflict, influencing the development of oral and music traditions in the Borderland. The continuous back-and-forth border-crossing of Mexican and Mexican Americans before and during the Mexican Revolution directly influenced the development and rise of the Mexican Revolutionary corrido, also referred to as the "classic" corrido. Drawing on structural and thematic characteristics from the Border corrido, particularly the epic narrative structure and the epic hero archetype, the Mexican classic corrido attained standardization in its lyrical form in the years surrounding the Mexican Revolution, and its themes evoked Mexican events and experiences following the end of President Porfirio Díaz's regime.

During Porfirio Díaz's presidential dictatorship (1877-1911), historically referred to as the *Porfiriato*, Díaz's sociopolitical investment in mining, the railroad industry, factory infrastructure, and electricity industry propelled Mexico into a modern period "at the expense of the hardworking, exploited Indian and mestizo masses" (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 65), resulting in

significant class and land-owning disparities throughout the Republic. Díaz was notorious for suppressing or punishing any protest attempts to his policies, especially from the lower and impoverished classes, who grew increasingly resentful of Díaz's perceived valuing of foreign investors over the Mexican people. The insurrection of the Mexican Revolution was preceded by smaller guerrilla movements led by the peasant, agrarian, and impoverished Mexican communities, including help from Mexican Borderers who were simultaneously fighting against injustices from the Anglo Borderers and the Texas Rangers (Paredes 1958: 137). After the revolutionary Francisco Madero challenged Porfirio Díaz and his administration with considerable support throughout Mexico, Díaz had Madero arrested just before the next Mexican election. Madero was able to escape from prison and subsequently denounced Díaz's win of the election, calling it rigged and illegal, and issued a call for an armed rebellion in 1910 after publishing his *Plan de San Luis de Potosí*.[18] Madero received support from other revolutionary leaders, including Emilio Zapata and Pancho Villa, as well as regional militias. After Porfirio Díaz fell from power in 1911, the following years saw a series of interim presidencies, bloodshed, and widespread power and class struggles that extended into several years after the drafting and implementation of the new 1917 Mexican Constitution, whose Constituent Congress excluded the followers of Villa and Zapata. The drafting of the 1917 Mexican Constitution was long regarded as the end the Mexican Revolution, despite continuing civil war and uprisings well

[18] The *Plan de San Luis de Potosí* was Francisco Madero's political manifesto, written after he escaped from prison and likely titled based on the city in which he was staying after his escape. The document included a list of detailed reasons for why Porfirio Díaz should be removed from power, emphasizing that Porfirio Díaz's regime deceived the Mexican people with fraudulent elections, caused severe socioeconomic consequences for the lower and middle classes through his foreign investments and industrialization, and had denigrated the Presidency with authoritarian rule. The *Plan de San Luis de Potosí* called for a revolution from the Mexican people, including violent means in order to oust Porifirio Díaz and reinstate a democratic republic. Madero even set a date for the start of an armed insurrection (November 20, 1910), and although armed insurrection began as scattered revolts, scholars agree that this manifesto signaled the start of the Mexican Revolution (Coronado Guel 2014: 83).

into the 1920s (Knight 1986),[19] including *La Cristiada*, the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion (which will be discussed at length in Chapter Three).

During the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution, the Mexican *pueblo* (people) relied on the corrido as the “most appropriate musical form to express the historical events that were unfolding before their eyes” (Herrera-Sobek 1993: xxiii). The Revolutionary classic corrido was a creative manifestation based on immediate events, resembling newspaper editorials of the time (Chew Sánchez 2006) on account of their political and social propaganda in favor of the working classes, which did not shy away from pointed criticism of government officials and the sociopolitical status quo. The Mexican corrido’s literary and musical permanence is “attributed to the fact that…it is viewed as one of the most authentic expressions of the people of Mexico” (Altamirano 2009: 54)[20] during the first twenty years of the twentieth century, highly influenced by proletariat and agrarian nationalism.

As stated previously, corrido scholars overwhelmingly accept the period of the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution—the civil rebellion against the over thirty-year dictatorship of President Porfirio Díaz that resulted in the establishment of a new constitutional republic—as the “epic era” of the Mexican corrido, thematically fueled by the content brought by the Border corrido, and the people, places, and events of the period: political figures, revolutionaries, agrarian reform, social protest, national identity, cultural transformation, and liberation. This epic era of the Mexican Revolutionary classic corrido—notable for its epic narrative literary structure—produced an immense receptacle of Mexican oral history and a musical corpus

[19] For more detailed overview of the Mexican Revolution see Alan Knight’s *The Mexican Revolution* (1986). Historiographies on the Mexican Revolution, particularly recent works, frame the Mexican Revolution from 1910 to 1920.

[20] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotes from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

constructed on a strong social foundation, consumed by both the rural and urban communities, and treasured among differing social classes, most significantly the marginalized and lower classes. In fact, the corrido's role was so great during this intense period of conflict and violence, the history of the Mexican Revolution and its post-Revolutionary conflict during the Cristero Rebellion, "has been told by means of corridos," serving as necessary literature for anyone who seeks to understand the sociopolitical climate and nationalistic values of the time period (González 2015: 30).

John McDowell compares the Revolutionary classic corrido's six-part structure and standard formula (outlined in a previous section) to the "oral-formulaic method" of epic poetry in which the corrido "manipulates a set of themes provided by the values and historical experience of the people" (1972: 206, 215). McDowell refers to the consumers and listeners as the "ballad community" (1972: 215), a culturally defined group that both creates, defines, and interprets the language and themes embedded in corridos from their cultural knowledge and daily experiences. McDowell claims that the formulaic structure of the Mexican corrido aids in memorization and improvisation, including expansion and recreation (1972: 206). This concept of how a corrido's "oral-formulaic" epic structure allows freedom for improvisation, reinterpretation, and recreation will be revisited in my analysis of corrido performances by Mariachi Los Cristeros, where historical Cristero corridos (composed during the Cristero Rebellion) are performed through anachronistic parody, reenactment, and improvisation by the performers in order to relate to the experiences and social realities of younger listeners in the ballad community.

In order for an oral tradition to be absorbed into the community, it must adhere to a collective aesthetic and must be expressed in a literary language that the listeners or public can recognize as an identifier of a particular genre (González 2015: 190). In addition to formulas,

repetitions, and parallelism, which function as an aid for retaining lyrics to memory and "permit the traditionalization of texts," including variations (González 2015: 190), the Mexican corrido developed specific archetypes for characters and themes based on a historical reality but simultaneously distance from that reality in favor of more attractive qualities to the listeners, which Aurelio González calls a "necessity for the extraordinary" (2015: 191). Other scholars refer to the exaggeration of the lives of historical figures and treatment of historical events in corrido narratives as the folklorization of oral history, necessary ballad characteristics that shape themes and the life and actions of its characters into those worthy of storytelling. The most significant and definitive archetype of the classic corrido is the epic hero, the Revolutionary manifestation of its Border corrido predecessor from the 19th century, typically based on the exaltation of a living person or someone who died gloriously for a cause at the time of the ballad's composition. The epic hero of the classic corrido represents Mexican national and regional values, whose individual morals and social perspectives are a product of their time (González 2015: 142).

In his book *El Corrido: construcción poetica*, Aurelio González outlines the important attributes and qualities that define the classic corrido's epic hero: bravery, loyalty to the community and family, and religiosity (2015: 147-153). According to González, bravery is the most important characteristic of the corrido's epic hero because it redeems any possible negative actions and "guarantees dignity in the tomb," a quality that, based on the context of the corrido and the beliefs or social platform of the *corridista*, can transform a person deemed a criminal or murderer according to Federal law or public opinion into the epic hero, redeeming the hero based on his cause or the events and actions that led to his death. González stresses that this bravery is contingent on the listener, whose judgement and understanding of the narrative's context will

determine whether or not the hero was truly brave (2015: 151). The hero must also be loyal to his community and family in the face of division, disruption, or war. Family relationships, particularly those between mother and son (2015: 153), are crucial to the hero status, at times complicated by a distant paternal figure (2015:154). The epic hero's religiosity helps define the hero as *gente decente* (2015: 148), or a decent and moral person. Even if the hero's actions go against social and family values or if he strays from moral or acceptable behavior (such as becoming a bandit or criminal as seen in Border ballads), he does not abandon his religion. Religiosity ensures the hero prioritizes religious values over "personal interests," holding him to the highest standard (2015: 149).

Figure 2.3 Excerpt from "La Toma de Zacatecas" (The Battle of Zacatecas)[21]

Ahora sí, borracho Huerta Ya te late el corazón, Al saber que en Zacatecas Derrotaron a Barrón. El día veintitrés de junio, Hablo con los más presentes Fue tomada Zacatecas Por las tropas insurgentes. Al llegar Francisco Villa Sus medidas fue tomando Y a cada uno en sus puestos Bien los fue posesionando. Ya tenían algunos días Que se estaban agarrando, Cuando llegó el general A ver qué estaba pasando. Les dijo el general Villa:	Now then, Huerta you drunkard Your heart must be racing To know that in Zacatecas They defeated Barrón. On the twenty-third of June I speak now to all who are present Zacatecas was secured By insurgent troops. As soon as Francisco Villa arrived He took calculated measures And to each man at his post He strategically positioned them It had already been several days That they had been fighting When the general arrived To see what was happening General Villa told them

[21] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. For full text of the corrido see Vicente T. Mendoza's *El romance español y El corrido mexicano* (1997), pg. 476.

-Conque está dura la Plaza Ya les traigo aquí unos gallos Creo que son de buena raza. El veintidós dijo Villa Ya despúes de examinar -Mañana a las diez del día, El ataque general. Luego mandó que se fuera Cada quien a su lugar Que a la siguiente mañana Todos tenían que pelear Al general Felipe Ángeles, Jefe de la Artillería Le mandó emplazar las piezas Con las que dispararía. La seña que les dio Villa A todos en formación Para empezar el combate, Fue un disparo de cañon … Estaban todas las calles De muertos entapizadas, Lo mismo estaban los cerros Que parecían borregadas. Andaban los federales Que ya no hallaban qué hacer, Pidiendo enaguas prestadas Para vestir de mujer. ¡Lástima de generales De presillas y galones Pues para nada les sirven Si son puros correlones! Gritaba el general Villa: - ¿Dónde te hallas Argumedo? Ven y párate aquí enfrente Tú que nunca tienes miedo.	"It seems the Plaza will be difficult But I brought some roosters [men] And I think they're of good breeding." The twenty-second, Villa said After examining the situation "Tomorrow at ten in the morning We attack the General." He sent the troops away Each to his position So that the following morning Everyone had to fight. To General Felipe Ángeles, Leader of Artillery He asked him to summon the bullets With which he would shoot The signal that Villa gave To all in formation So that the battle would begin Was the firing of the canon … The streets were filled With piles of dead bodies The same with the hilltops They looked like slaughterhouses The Federal army was running They didn't know what to do They started asking to borrow clothes To dress up like women Too bad, Generals! Those clips and braids Won't serve you any benefit Since you're a bunch of cowards! General Villa shouted: "Where are you Argumedo? Come over here and stand in front of me You who claim you're never afraid.

…	…
¡Ay hermosa Zacatecas, Mira cómo te han dejado! La causa fue el viejo Huerta Y tanto rico malvado.	Oh beautiful Zacatecas! Look at the state in which they have left you! This was the fault of that old man, Huerta So rich and so evil

The corrido "La Toma de Zacatecas," or the Battle of Zacatecas (**Figure 2.3**), narrates how Pancho Villa, the legendary historical revolutionary and the epic hero of the Battle of Zacatecas, lead his Northern division to recapture the city of Zacatecas from President Victoriano Huerta and his army in June 1914. Villa's victory resulted in Huerta's resignation and exile, a great victory for those who wanted to oust the President. In his chapter on corridos in *Reflexiones 1998: New Directions in Mexican American Studies*, James Nicolopulos refers to this corrido as the epic ballad of one of the bloodiest battles of the Mexican revolution that became the "basis of variants" within the oral tradition (1999: 33). Nicolopulos draws on the historical research of Cuauhtémoc Esparza Sánchez and describes how this corrido was composed while Villa's army was capturing and rounding up federal troops, "many captured in their underwear" (Nicolopulos 1999: 32) after throwing their uniforms to avoid detection (which the corrido claims resulted in their dressing up as women in clips and braids).

While many classic corridos from the Mexican Revolution were composed anonymously, this particular corrido is said to have been composed by a carpenter named Francisco Torres Rosales, who based the lyrical text on information he received from his brother. By the next morning after Villa claimed his victory, the corrido had already been sent to a local print shop who then printed "five hundred broadsides" (sheet music) of twenty stanzas. By the afternoon "newsboys and blind harpists were hawking and singing" about the hero, Pancho Villa and his defeat of President Huerta (Nicolopulos 1999: 32), reflecting the corrido's role in exalting

Pancho Villa and his historical triumph over Huerta's army by presenting the battle's details and importance to the Revolutionary cause within an epic narrative form. This corrido's importance as the story of the epic hero and as oral history documented in real time, printed almost as quickly as the events in Zacatecas were occurring, is further marked by its function as a news source among marginalized communities. Huerta forbade Mexico City newspapers from printing and publishing any reports about his defeat in Zacatecas, resulting in increased printing (where available) and performance of this corrido in major cities (Nicolopulos 1999: 33). Thus, the "Corrido de la Toma de Zacatecas," alongside many Revolutionary classic corridos, became an invaluable record of significant events and Mexican history that were intentionally omitted in public news documents.

The Post-Revolutionary Corrido

During the post-Revolutionary period (1917-1930), Mexican musicians continued to document Mexican oral histories within the lyrical text and performance of corridos, retaining the significance and purpose of the classic corrido tradition established during the Mexican Revolution. Structurally and thematically, post-Revolutionary corridos continued to form part of the same collective corpus of the Revolutionary classic corrido, functioning as news sources and editorials for the Mexican people, particularly the lower and rural classes. Mostly importantly, post-Revolutionary corridos retained the epic hero archetype as the main protagonist, continuing the classic corrido's depiction of the hero as brave, loyal, and religious. These corridos differed from Revolutionary corridos primarily on their narratives of historical figures and events (which were, of course, reflective of the events unfolding in real time), as well as the development of minor improvisatory characteristics. Post-Revolutionary corridos expanded the classic corrido

form with improvised introductory phrases and "the insertion of words [and] exclamations" (Mendoza 1997: 135), which are still heard in contemporary corrido performances and compositions.

The most extensive repertory of post-Revolutionary corridos were those that narrated the experiences and events of the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion, giving rise to a new series of epic heroes that "in the popular imagination allowed [the classic corrido] to reach a dimension of extraordinary heroes" (González 2015: 179). The post-Revolutionary Cristero corrido created a significant divide in the post-Revolutionary genre, resulting in a religious subgenre distinct from its secular counterpart. It transformed the religiosity of the epic hero from an ideal moral trait (as seen in classic corridos) to the platform of the Cristero epic hero's cause—the protection of Cristero religious liberty in the name of Christ the King. Chapter Three will define and discuss at length the Cristero corrido within the broader historical, political, and religious contexts that significantly framed its emergence and thematic development. Chapter Three's lyrical analyses of select Cristero corridos, including those of Cristero epic heroes, their battles, faith, and martyrdom, will demonstrate the historical Cristero corrido's lasting cultural impact, evident in contemporary iterations of Cristero memory in new Cristero corridos.

Vicente T. Mendoza and Américo Paredes claimed that corridos composed during and shortly after *La Cristiada* were final contributions to the corrido tradition. Mendoza and Paredes viewed the epic narrative as the authenticating marker of the classic corrido genre, characterized by the epic hero protagonist, his deep ties to family, community, and religious values, and his rebellion against unjust laws. As discussed previously, classic corridos manifested as the public voice during and after the Porfirio Díaz regime, propelled by its need to inform, exalting important societal figures and transforming them into the people's heroes. The hero in the

Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary classic corrido is a hero in a specific moment in time, as if captured in a photograph, similar to names immortalized on streets and plazas (González 2015: 163). Corrido heroes that were based on real people may depict heroes who were either previously or later viewed as enemies of the state, murderers, or societal pariahs.

The Popular Corrido: A Transition into Commercial Consumption

Beginning in the 1930s, which also marked the end of the post-Revolutionary period in Mexico, the classic corrido tradition underwent changes in length, structure, and thematic content based on its transition into the popular music sphere, coinciding with developments in recording technologies and their impact on listening communities. Vicente T. Mendoza claimed that the corrido "died" as a popular genre after 1930 on account of commercial diffusion and the subsequent loss of the "brave, popular, and epic hero" (González 2015: 159) as the prime focus of corrido narratives. Supporters of Mendoza's corrido "death" theory do not accept the mid-20th-century commercial corrido, a shortened ballad form composed for public entertainment and consumption on radio and recordings, as an extension of the classic Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary corrido. Laurent Aubage claimed corridos after the 1940s were in crisis, subject to Mexican popular capitalism, the "subculture of the masses," and an increasing consumer society, lacking nationalistic values and in dire need of revitalization" (González 2015: 185). The recording industry of the 1940s and 1950s in Mexico and in the United States played a significant role in the commercialization of folk music, transitioning the corrido into a genre in the popular music scene.

The commercial corrido, also referred to as the "popular" corrido, was not only shorter to fit recording track restrictions, but also deviated from the typical compositional and performance

practices of the classic corrido to a more flexible meter, form, and instrumentation. The popular corrido defined the ballad more by its storytelling of daily life rather than the epic climate of a historical period. In Mexico, popular corridos of the 1950s to 1970s favored themes associated with Mexican daily life in farm and rural areas, narrating themes about ranch life, horse racing, romance, and day-to-day struggles of the working Mexican (Chew Sánchez 2006: 43). The decades following, especially through the 1970s, for example, saw vast commercial development in Mexican corrido recordings, including multiple interpreters and professional music groups (mostly *norteño* bands from Northern Mexico), eventually centering on contraband themes and, beyond the 1970s, drug-trafficking themes (González 2015: 187). There are limited academic works on these mid-20th-century popular commercial corridos, as the majority of corrido scholars tend to center more on the Revolutionary classic corrido's historical impact, or (as will be discussed in a section to follow) on the current sociocultural impacts of migrant and drug-trafficking ballads since the 1970s. Scholars who do focus on the corridos from the mid-20th century, such as Cathy Ragland (2009), center their work on the intersections of these corridos with migrant songs and the early development of *Musica Norteña* along the U.S.-Mexico Borderland, which brought the corrido out of its folk domain and further into popular consumption among Mexican migrant and Mexican American communities in the U.S. Southwest. As will be discussed in a following section, legendary Norteño group, Los Tigres del Norte, boosted the corrido genre into the musical conscious of Mexican American culture, contributing to the cross-sections of narcocorridos and migrant corridos from the late-1970s onward.

Aurelio González states that based on Mendoza's corrido "death" theory, "it seems difficult to value the corrido as an independent literary manifestation of its concerning history or

ideology" (2015: 186). González sees most Mexican corrido scholars as fairly negative toward the late-20th-century corrido's place as a literary and musical genre, particularly commercial and non-epic corridos. He views contemporary corrido scholars, who contest the corrido "death" theory, as being more open-minded on the subject of the corrido's status, its future, and its means of transmission. The corrido has "had many decades as a literary genre…valued by distinct social circles for different reasons": its worth as a news source, political and sociocultural propaganda, and ideological content (González 2015: 186).

Aurelio González's scholarship promotes the belief that the epic and its hero are subject to literary development that can and may contradict previous societal values. These developments in the corrido, particularly for post-1930s fictional epic corridos can explain the rise of contraband and narcocorridos in popular culture decades later, whose lyrics glorify drug lords, drug traffickers, and *sicarios* (hitmen) as heroes among impoverished communities who distrust Mexican law enforcement. González claims that while some Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary epic corridos are still living through performance and transmission today, most disappeared with the revolutionary climate and are thus, obsolete in popular culture (2015: 159). However, cultivation of contemporary corrido performance practices and transmission of their inherited memory, as will be seen in my analyses of new Cristero corridos composed and performed by Mariachi Los Cristeros, challenge González's theory that most classic corridos, including post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos, are rendered obsolete in the ballad community.

In addition to Aurelio González, an overwhelming majority of contemporary corrido historians and scholars disagree with Mendoza and his adherents, calling the declaration of the corrido's "death" premature and emphasizing that the corrido is a literary genre that should not necessarily be defined solely as an epic form. Scholars who center their work on the historical

and continuing sociocultural development of migrant corridos and narcocorridos, for example, do not believe the corrido died, but rather adapted to the new social and cultural needs of the Mexican and Mexican American community. As will be discussed in the following sections, unlike those who dismiss corridos after the 1930s as not forming part of the classic corrido tradition's lineage, contemporary corrido scholars view migrant corridos and narcocorridos as extensions of the same histories that brought forth the Mexican Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary corrido.

Corridos and the Mexican Migration Experience

The Mexican migrant and Mexican American experience is documented and preserved in corrido texts extending back to the legacy of the Border corrido from the 19th century and the classic corrido of the Mexican Revolution, many of which strayed from the standard structure of the classic corrido and centered more on thematic content relating to the early 20th-century Mexican immigrant experience. For example, the "traveler" corrido from the years leading to and during the Mexican Revolutionary period, narrated the experiences of Mexican immigrants working on railroads in the United States (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 34-63). Beginning in the 1920s, migrant corridos continued the development of the "traveler" and migration-themed corrido from the Mexican Revolution (which still formed part of the classic corrido tradition), narrating the migrant journey from Mexico to the United States in search of work and stability within early iterations of the migrant corrido as its own genre (Herrera-Sobek: 66). In her book, *Northward Bound: The Mexican Immigrant Experience in Ballad and Song* (1993), María Herrera-Sobek provides a detailed overview of Mexican American corridos and migrant corridos, building on Américo Paredes' foundational work on the Border corrido and the documentation of Mexican

and Mexican American life along the U.S.-Mexico Borderland. Herrera-Sobek discusses the impact of United States economic and sociopolitical crises after 1929 on corrido themes, including the Great Depression, the repatriation and deportation of Mexican Americans to Mexico during "Operation Wetback," and the strikes and protests of the Chicano movement. Many Mexican American corridos from the mid-20th century depicted autobiographical narratives (even if the *corridista* never gave their name) about daily struggles against injustices toward the Mexican American people, playing particular emphasis on the collective emotional struggle of deterritorialized Mexican Americans, border-crossing migrants, deported individuals, Bracero[22] migrant workers of the 1940s and 1960s, and undocumented immigrants.

The Mexican and Mexican American community in the United States continued to compose corridos that narrated historical events as they occurred, including corridos dedicated to the life and social justice acts of significant figures such as César Chávez during the Chicano movement and even American figures such as John F. Kennedy (Herrera-Sobek 1993). The Mexican American community used these corridos, whose thematic content and formulaic structure highly resembled the style of the classic corrido (greeting, introduction of date-time, narrating life and actions of protagonist, closing message, and moral teaching), were widely used

[22] The United States government, with the cooperation of the Mexican government, established the Bracero program in 1942 in response to WWII's direct impact on farm labor, creating a significant shortage of manpower needed to harvest crops. Despite the Mexican government's hesitation in light of mass deportation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the 1930s, they agreed to the program after the United States agreed to enforce a series of protections for the migrant workers, including the guarantee of transportation, lodging, and amenities, fair wages on par with those of U.S. citizens, immunity from the military draft, and the right "to form associations and elect a leader to represent them" (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 147-148). The Bracero program exported hundreds of thousands of Mexican workers to the United States from 1942 until the program's termination in 1964, "as a result of pressure exerted by religious groups, Mexican Americans, and others who perceived the program as detrimental" to native farm workers and to braceros (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 148). The experiences of migrant workers in the Bracero movement inspired corridos and corrido canciones, genres which had by this point been absorbed into commercial music production and competed with *conjunto-norteño* songs, polkas, and *cancion* ranchera. Maria Herrera-Sobek states the Bracero program era, despite its significant impact on Mexican migration and transnational culture, did not produce "as large a corpus" of migrant corridos (or immigration-themed corridos) "as might be expected" (1993: 174).

as protest songs during the Chicano farm, labor, and immigration reform movements (**Figure 2.4**). After reading about Cesár Chávez's twenty-five day fast in a local newspaper in 1968, Lalo Guerrero composed and dedicated a corrido to César Chávez, who served as an inspiration for exploited Mexican farmer workers and the Mexican American people. In this corrido, Chávez is ascribed epic hero status, including religiosity, one of the pillar characteristics of the classic corrido's epic hero from the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period. Guerrero, the *corridista*, ensures the audience knows that after Chávez ended his fast, which Guerrero implies served as a social protest and a spiritual act, a Mass was celebrated in Delano Park. The corrido closes with a modified version of the "*vuela, vuela palomita*" (fly, fly little dove) motif typical of classic corridos in its concluding quatrain, asking the messenger dove to fly to Chávez's hometown.

Figure 2.4 "Corrido de César Chávez"[23] (1968)

Spanish	English
Gente de mi corazón En el pecho no me cabe De regocijo y orgullo Al cantarla a César Chávez.	My beloved people My heart is not big enough For the joy and pride I have In singing to César Chávez.
Inspiración de mi gente Protector del campesino El es un gran Mexicano Este sería su destino.	He is an inspiration to my people Protector of the farm worker He is a great Mexican This must be his destiny.
De muy humilde principios Organizaste a la gente Y a los hacendados ricos Te paraste frente a frente.	From very humble origins You organized the people And the rich landowners You stood up to them face to face.
E injustamente te acusan De intentar de usar violencia	And then [they] unjustly accused you Of trying to use violence

[23] As presented by María Herrera-Sobek, along with her translations from the Spanish, in *Northward Bound: The Mexican Immigrant Experience in Ballad and Song* (1993) on pg. 181-182.

Ayuna días veinte y uno Hasta probar tu inocencia. En el estandard que llevas Mi Virgen de Guadalupe Que viniste ante alabar De bendiciones te cubre. A los 25 días El ayuno terminó Y en el parque de Delano Una misa celebró. Junto con 8,000 almas El parque de días dintió Admiración y cariño Nuestra gente le brindó. Vuela de aquí mi seno Paloma vete a Delano Y por si acaso no sabes Allí vive César Chávez	Fast twenty-five days Until they prove your innocence. In the flag you use Is the Virgin of Guadalupe To whom you came to pray May she bless you. After twenty-five days The fast ended In the Delano Park A mass was celebrated. Together with 8,000 folks The park for days felt Admiration and love Our people gave to him. Fly from my heart, dove, And go to Delano And in case you don't know César Chávez lives there.

The 1950s and 1960s saw a continuation of the aforementioned "traveler" corrido. Herrera-Sobek refers to "El corrido del ilegal" (Ballad of the Illegal Alien) to demonstrate how migrant corridos during this time intersected with Mexican American politics in the United States (1993: 187-188). "El corrido del ilegal" (**Figure 2.5**) narrates the journey of a hungry, undocumented worker who is hired by a U.S. farmer during Cesár Chávez's protest movement. The U.S. farmer promises secure work as longs as the migrant worker was not a "Chavista" (Chávez follower). In the remaining text of the corrido, the U.S. farmer and his farm work contractor took the undocumented immigrant to the fields. Suddenly, the immigrant was surrounded by police and immigration officers in their attempt to incite violence to break the Chávez-led strike. The immigrant recognizes he is being exploited and joins the strike movement, only to become arrested by immigration police. He ends his corrido by warning his

friends not to cross as an undocumented migrant worker and to never break a strike. This corrido does necessarily follow the classic corrido's quatrain format or its formulaic opening that greets the audience and sets the date, time, and place. This corrido is autobiographical, narrated by the protagonist in the story. The corrido does, however, end with a message to the listener, but with a warning rather than a moral teaching.

Figure 2.5 Excerpt from "El corrido del ilegal"[24]

Andando yo en la frontera Ya me cargaba el hambre Dicen que el hambre es canija Pero es más del que ya le ande. Me pasé al otro lado. Tuve que hacerla de alambre. A los poquitos momentos Me agarra la inmigración. Me dice, "Tú eres alambre." Le contesté, "Sí, señor." "De eso no tengas cuidado Tal vez tengas tú razón." "Si tú quieres trabajar Nomás que no seas Chavista. Yo mismo te he de llevar A manos del contratista. Le estamos dando la chanza A todos los alambristas."	As I was walking along the border I was already burdened by hunger They say that hunger is unrelenting, But it is even more painful to the hungry one. I crossed over to the other side. I had to cross the wire fence. In a few moments The immigration officer caught me He said to me, "You are illegal." I answered, "Yes, sir." "Don't worry about it. Perhaps you are right." "If you want to work, As long as you're not a Chavista, I myself will take you To a contractor. We are giving an opportunity To all the wire jumpers."

[24] As presented by María Herrera-Sobek, along with her translations from the Spanish, in *Northward Bound: The Mexican Immigrant Experience in Ballad and Song* (1993), pg. 187-188.

After the 1930s and well into the 1970s, the epic hero from the classic corrido metamorphosized to fit new social realities for Mexican and Mexican Americans, fading into less of an epic hero and becoming more of a complex, real figure who does not always claim victory or triumph in his fight against injustices. The fight becomes a collective fight for the people, whether it be against socioeconomic despair or the continuing fight for immigration reform in the United States. The classic corrido's emblematic oral history, informed mostly by people, places, and events as they unfolded in real time for the *corridista* and the Mexican and Mexican American community, did not disappear completely. As seen from the "Corrido de César Chávez," the epic hero trope did not necessarily become obsolete but decreased as a literary preference, countered by an increase in corridos that expressed oral histories more informed by cultural changes, activity, and collective experiences.

While some view the corrido's place as solely a Mexican nationalist genre, the corrido has, in fact, attained a new vitality through it use of contemporary themes without necessarily forgetting all roots in the Revolutionary classic and post-Revolutionary corrido, evident in transnational migrant corridos whose performance forges national identities and evokes collective migrant memory. Sociologist Martha Chew Sánchez's scholarship builds on the previously discussed works of Border corrido scholar Américo Paredes and María Herrera-Sobek. Chew Sánchez's book *Corridos in Migrant Memory* (2006) provides invaluable and profound insight into my cultural analyses of new Cristero corridos, especially ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo. Chew Sánchez, like her contemporaries, addresses the fact that corrido scholars are prone to resisting "the transformations" that have shaped corridos throughout the decades and rather choose to fixate on "the authenticity, degeneration, corruption, and even the death of this genre," (2006: 32). Where narcocorrido studies (as will be discussed in

a section to follow) meet significant pushback on whether narcocorridos fit within the parameters of the corrido genre, studies on corridos associated with themes of immigration also find themselves unnecessarily frisked and searched (to bluntly use the terms tied to the migrant experience) for signs of literary authenticity.

The classic Revolutionary corrido is “used as a standard against which to measure” (Chew Sánchez 2006: 32) contemporary corridos, which constricts the ballad repertory and ironically subjects it to the same authenticity policing it endured in the time period. Chew Sánchez underlines the fact that these seminal Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary corridos, sung by marginalized rural poor communities, were essentially evaluated by the “Mexican national socio-political elite” who qualified, appropriated and even romanticized the lyrical narrative content. However, migrant corridos do not necessarily adhere to the classic corrido’s “prescriptive and normative” (Chew Sánchez 2006: 32) characteristics of the epic literary form. Instead, migrant corridos, including those who may retain thematic qualities of or be interpreted as an epic narrative, “make visible the human migrant” (Chew Sánchez 2006: 25) and are more preoccupied with the migrant’s emotional strife as he constructs a transnational sense of self. The migrant figure in these corridos is often poor, displaced, and in search of a better life in his journey to *El Norte*, the physical and proverbial North. This migrant will undoubtedly face physical and psychological struggles, and once past the transborder experience, the migrant will continue to face the likelihood of rejection, racism, and discrimination. As will be seen in my analysis of Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads, the lyrical text of migrant corridos imply the migrant’s recognition of the ongoing struggles he will face and uses the corrido’s narrative structure as self-representation of perseverance and faith, while also contributing to the collective narratives of the migrant experience as survivor testimony to future survivors of the

migrant journey. The thematic content centers on emotional and physical stories to which the listeners (migrant ballad community) can relate as part of collective experience and identity.

Beginning in the 1970s, already a few decades into the increasing commercialization of folk genres in the recording industry (including Mexican corridos during the 1940s and 1950s), corridos underwent yet another significant commercialization process, this time by major production and media corporations, including the iconic Televisa, the most profitable global producer of Spanish-language television, media, and music recordings. Whereas the lyrical content of classic corridos and even some early commercial popular corridos were comprised of lengthy verses subject to performance-based alterations and improvisation, commercial corridos after the 1970s continued to adjust to shorter lengths due to stricter "imposition of commercial formats in recording industries" as recording technology continued to progress (Chew Sánchez 2006: 34). Some of the shorter corridos became what scholars refer to as the *corrido-canción* (corrido song), which sometimes introduced a brief chorus line. Contemporary artists such as Los Tigres del Norte and the late narcocorrido artist Jenny Rivera helped the corrido-canción gain increasing popularity as storytelling entertainment among Mexican American communities in the United States, particularly after winning awards in the Latin Grammys.

Chew Sánchez intentionally focuses her work on corridos composed during the 1980s and 1990s and their cultural impact on younger transnational generations, familiar with the corridos from radio and television, who regard these corridos as sources of collective and inherited memory of the migrant experience. Unlike my research, which analyzes mostly non-commercial corridos uploaded to un-delineated spaces of YouTube, Chew Sánchez examines corridos performed and recorded by *conjuntos norteños* (Norteño ensembles), including Los Tigres del Norte, who were "pioneers in the resurgence" of corridos at a time when younger

generations had lost interest in Mexican corridos (2006: 43). The *conjunto norteño*—whose standard instrumentation includes amplified electric bass, electric guitar, *bajo sexto*, and accordion—is, in fact, an ensemble unique to the U.S.-Mexico Borderland (Ragland 2009), resulting from continuous cultural exchange and "persistent crisscrossing" of national boundaries (Chew Sánchez 2006: 35). Los Tigres del Norte (Tigers of the North), a family ensemble of brothers and cousins, arrived in California on a 90-day visa in 1968 from Mexico as teenagers, searching for a better life and for more work and musical opportunities. Los Tigres del Norte grew from a band of young musicians playing gig to gig for Mexican community celebrations to "a musical dynasty" that has sold over thirty-two million albums and recordings in Mexico and in the United States (Ragland 2009: 142). In addition to "help[ing] launch a highly lucrative and expansive norteña music industry" that met the musical aesthetics and interests of the Mexican and Mexican American labor community in the United States, the group "brought the focus back to the corrido" by contributing the "stylistic nuances" of their group (Ragland 2009: 143), in particular the use of *conjunto norteño* instrumentation to accompany corrido performance. Los Tigres del Norte's cultural influence has significantly affected both Mexican American and Mexican immigrant music culture through their contributions to both migrant corrido and narcocorrido repertory.

Los Tigres del Norte's migrant corridos incorporate themes that, like their Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary classic corrido predecessor, relate to the lived experiences of marginalized people, but focus on the modern urban issues that affect the Mexican migrant community, including the effects of drug-trafficking and drug cartel violence, immigration politics, undocumented immigration, and socioeconomic displacement. The group remains overwhelmingly successful in the Mexican and Mexican American transnational community and,

evident in Martha Chew Sánchez's ethnographic work, contribute to the musical expressions of migrant collective memory in the United States through their corrido compositions. As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, these migrant corridos parallel other genres of Latinx and Latin American popular music that also engage with themes of undocumented immigration, the undocumented experience in the United States, imposed criminality, and self-empowerment of undocumented identity.

The following migrant corrido, "Tres Veces Mojado" (Three Times a Wetback) (**Figure 2.6**), similar to the corridos addressed and analyzed by María Herrera-Sobek (1993), employ migrant labels, such as *mojado* ("wetback"), that are widely considered derogatory and demeaning if imposed by the Anglo community. Within the migrant ballad community, however, these terms are reclaimed and redefined through sympathetic and empathetic representation of the undocumented immigrant as a vulnerable victim of circumstance and social injustice, not as a criminal. This corrido narrates the undocumented life of a man from El Salvador, who has crossed three different borders in order to make it to United States, labeled as a "wetback" and "foreigner," even by people with his same skin color in Mexico. The corrido, like many contemporary corridos, does not necessarily abide by the octosyllabic phrases or formulaic structure of the Revolutionary classic corrido, nor does it present the narrative of an epic hero. Instead, this corrido relays the sufferings of a migrant who, in the end, attains legal status after overcoming life-threatening transborder experiences and discrimination, dedicating this corrido to other "three times wetbacks." In many corridos by Los Tigres del Norte, as well as other commerical corridos and popular song genres that focus on migration themes, the migrant is on a perpetual journey to a better life in the face of constant physical and sociopolitical obstacles, yet

he also simultaneously longs to return to his home and yearns to live free of fear of racial hatred and threats of deportation.

Figure 2.6 Excerpt from "Tres Veces Mojado"[25] (Enrique Franco, 1988. As performed by Los Tigres del Norte)

Cuando me vine de mi tierra El Salvador Con la intención de llegar a Estados Unidos Sabía que necesitaría más que valor Sabía que a lo mejor quedaba en el camino	When I came from my country, El Salvador With the intention to arrive in the United States I knew I would need more than courage I knew that I could be dead on my way here
Son tres fronteras las que tuve que cruzar Por tres países anduve indocumentado Tres veces tuve yo la vida que arriesgar Por eso dicen que son tres veces mojado	I had to cross three borders I was undocumented in three countries I had to risk my life three times That is why they say that I am three times a wetback
En Guatemala y México cuando crucé Dos veces me salvé me hicieran prisionero El mismo idioma y el color reflexioné ¿Cómo es posible que me llamen extranjero?	When I crossed to Guatemala and Mexico I managed to not be in prison twice I thought, *The language and skin color are the same* *How is it possible that they call me a foreigner?*
En centroamerica dada su situación Tanto política como económia Ya para muchos no hay otra solución Más que abandonar su patria Y tal vez para siempre	In Central America, given its Political and economical (sic) situation For many people there is no other solution But to abandon their country And perhaps even for good
El Mexicano da dos pasos y aquí está Hoy lo echan y al siguiente día está de regreso Eso es un lujo que no me puedo dar Sin que me maten o que me lleven preso	Mexicans walk two steps and are here They can be sent back today and they come Back the next day That is a luxury I cannot afford Without risking being killed or put in jail
Es lindo México pero cuanto sufrí Atravezarlo (sic) sin papes es muy duro	Mexico is beautiful, but how much I suffered Crossing the country without documentation It is very hard

[25] For full corrido text, see Martha Chew Sánchez's *Corridos in Migrant Memory* (2006), pg. 57-58. This excerpt appears as presented by Chew Sánchez, including her translations from the Spanish to English.

…	…
Ahora que al fin logre la legalización Lo que sufrí lo he recuperado con creces A los mojados les dedico mi canción Y a lo que me igual que yo son mojados tres veces	Now that I finally managed to legalize my residence I have made up what I suffered I dedicate my song to the wetbacks And to those who just like me are Three times wetbacks

In addition to narrating biographical accounts of the immigrant experience, migrant corridos also serve as emotionally-encoded responses to imposed criminality and negative identities by United States (and even Mexican, as is the case of Central American migrants) antimigrant sentimentalities in media and political rhetoric. Migrant corridos humanize both the migrant journey and the migrant, allowing Mexican immigrants to carve self-representation into the sociocultural spaces that perpetually deny or fail to acknowledge their experiences. Smuggling themes' intersection with migration themes in migrant corridos address *coyotaje*, or human smuggling, referring to *coyotes* (smugglers) who guide undocumented migrants through the transborder desert and into United States soil for high monetary fees. María Herrera-Sobek briefly addresses *coyotaje* as it relates to migrant corridos earlier in the 20th century in *Northward Bound* (1993). In contemporary ballad communities (*corridistas* and listeners), smuggling themes are considerably more associated with the infamous narcocorrido.

Smuggling Corridos and Narcocorridos

During The 19th century, as depicted in many Border corridos from the period, smuggling activity became a highly profitable business in the U.S.-Mexico Borderland, illegally transporting domestic goods, based on fluctuating demand, in order to avoid high import duties on both sides of the border. Smuggling became even more profitable in the transport of

prohibited and illicit items, such as alcohol during the United States Prohibition era, and drugs such as heroin and marijuana after Prohibition ended in the 1930s. The first smuggling corrido is believed to be "El Contrabandista" (The Contraband Bandit), a corrido about a heroin smuggler apprehended by Texas Rangers, likely written in 1934 by Juan Gaytán in San Antonio, Texas (Ragland 2009: 144). These smuggling and drug-trafficking corrido themes from the early 20th century did not attain considerable recognition until their commercial success in the 1970s, in which transnational ensembles such as Los Tigres del Norte "captured the imagination of Mexican immigrants," warning them about the dangers of the drug-trafficking life and of life that awaited them in the United States (Ragland 2009: 144). Los Tigres del Norte's first hit recording "Contrabando y Traición" (Contraband and Treason), a smuggling (harkening back to the 19th-century *bandido* smuggling theme in Border ballads) and drug-trafficking corrido. "Contrabando y Traición" interweaves the thrill of illicit activity and narcoculture with tragic romance, transforming the *narco*, or drug smuggler, into a modern *bandido*, similar to the Border outlaw and Robin-Hood archetype of the Border corrido.

Narcocorrido scholar, Miriam Díaz González regards the narcocorrido, while often depreciated by critics and scholars for its veering from the classic corrido's literary structure and degraded due to its violent and controversial content, as the pivotal style that resurrected the corrido genre from its alleged "death" (referring to Mendoza's theory) in the mid-20th century, "acquiring a new and enormous popularity" (2010: 14). Her interpretation of the narcocorrido's significant role in the corrido's revitalization challenges scholars whose primary focus is on the corrido's historical literary development and epic narrative structure. Díaz González asserts that the corrido continuously adapts to social circumstances, and that these circumstances provide a foundation and scenery for new corrido themes. Thus, the narcocorrido and its creation of a new

drug-trafficking hero, admired by the poorest communities, is an expression of the lived social reality in Mexico, specifically in the narco-trafficking zones along both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border region and in Central Mexico. Similar to Revolutionary classic and post-Revolutionary corridos, narcocorridos highlight political, corporate, and police corruption, depicting the fight for both territorial and social power. Díaz González and her contemporaries of narcocorrido scholarship (Simonett 2001; Valenzuela 2002; Edberg 2011; Amaya 2014) question whether some corrido scholars' indignation is based on their biases on what comprises a true corrido hero or which audience has the authority to define a corrido's authenticity. She states that those who condemn narcocorridos believe their narratives promote illicit activity and drug-trafficking as a means of "social ascent" and condone drug addiction (Díaz González 2010: 15; 37).

Scholars who have discussed the development of the narcocorrido phenomenon agree that the primary themes of the narcocorrido vocalize the negative impact of globalization, labor exploitation, and capitalism, as well the power and financial struggles between the marginalized communities and authority figures (often corrupt authority figures). Narcocorridos blend the realities of lived events and tragedies seen on news media, the constant restructuring of Mexican and Mexican American identities in the face of economic and political hardships, and the romanticized life of the narcoculture community who, based on narcocorrido texts, participate in alleged heroic efforts to protect the poor communities who feel abandoned by society. Contemporary narcocorridos from the 1990s and 2000s also promote the female corrido hero, an independent leader in the drug-trafficking world who makes her own decisions, holding authority over her male counterparts by means of her accumulated wealth, status, power, and sexuality. Before her death in a plane crash in 2012, the legendary Jenny Rivera received numerous awards and recognitions for her narcocorrido albums, in which she narrates the "narco-imaginary" from

the perspective of a woman (Amaya 2014: 124). Jenny Rivera's success as a narcocorrido artist was increasingly influenced by her contributions to what the music industry labeled "regional Mexican," referring to music that "may or may not originate in Mexico" (Amaya 2014: 125), yet whose lyrical text invokes or narrates events that take place in Mexico in addition to the Borderland and the United States, including the Mexican imaginary.

The Mexican imaginary is defined by locations, events, and people in Mexico inspired by or based on reality, though not from firsthand knowledge, and often exaggerated or romanticized. Many narcocorrido artists, for example, have no direct ties to the practice of drug smuggling or the activities of drug-trafficking groups. However, their corridos are often narrated as lived experiences, and like migrant corridos, contribute to a collective culture and collective experience of their audience, who, whether or not are involved in drug-trafficking activities, have likely felt the impact of narcoculture in Mexico and in the United States. Some of these listeners may also "regard dope-dealing a gratifying shortcut or magical path to personal empowerment" (Simonett 2001: 321) regardless of whether they have firsthand knowledge, echoing the determination of the disenfranchised that has filled corrido lyrical text since its early manifestations in the Border corrido.

Narcocorridos continued to thrive on United States airwaves after radio and recording industries agreed to its censorship in Mexico during the peak of the war on the drug cartel in the early 2000s. Not all narcocorridos, however, attribute cultural and musical success to commercialization. Helena Simonett's 2001 journal article, "An Emerging Micromusic of Nuevo L.A." discusses narcocorrido compositions outside of commercial circulation that were commissioned and composed for private listening, or "private" narcocorridos (2001: 315). Unlike narcocorridos published and disseminated on commercial CD or digital formats, these

private narcocorridos are heard in “Los Angeles nightclubs frequented by drug traffickers,” and are shared through non-commercial recordings to listeners in Northern Mexico and Mexican migrant communities in the United States (Simonett 2001: 316).[26]

Narcocorrido composition and consumption skyrocketed in the 2000s, aided by its wide distribution on CDs in the United States and in globally available digital formats. Hector Amaya states, “[d]itigal technologies of circulation have again left an imprint on the corrido in general and the narcocorrido in particular, facilitating…the production and distribution of narcocorridos across nations…[and] connecting to the counterhegemonic and experiential” (Amaya 2014: 231). This digital circulation applies to more than just commercial corridos and includes cyber and social media circulations of non-commerical corridos evidenced in my study of new Cristero corridos and ghost smuggling ballads (see Chapters Four and Five).

Conclusion

The Mexican and Mexican American corrido, throughout its development since the 19th century, followed by its standardization as the Revolutionary classic corrido, past its commercialization and alleged “death” in the 1930s, to its composition and performance in present day, has been a product of living memory and cultural memory. The corrido functions as a narrative documentation of significant figures, events, and public sentiment, invigorated through retelling and adaptation by those at the margins of society, and often framed by specific moments in time and geographic location. The boundaries of historical fact and folkloric

[26] Simonett’s work also reflects on potentially dangerous ethnographic practices in this community, as well the ethical quandaries of publishing on a music culture and community that exalts illegal and criminal activity. This ethical negotiation stirred increased vocalization from narcocorrido scholars on the topic, expanding to more reflexive analyses of narcocorridos for private use, as well as the phenomenon of drug-traffickers’ hiring *corridistas* to compose corridos that inform listeners of recent murders or other illicit acts they committed. Many of these corridos were perceived as taunting or misleading law enforcement or the victims’ families.

embellishment blur into message of morality, revolution, survival, and hope for the ballad community (composers, performers, and listeners). The development and creative manifestation of the corrido stems from a complex transnational history that, since its earliest iterations in Border corridos by deterritorialized Mexicans during the Mexican-American War, preserve and shape a Mexican historiography as seen and interpreted by the working class and marginalized communities. Despite contestations regarding the corrido's origins, the majority of scholars agree the Mexican corrido reached its definitive form during the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution and the post-Revolutionary period in the 1920s. Scholars who support Vicente T. Mendoza's corrido "death" theory regard Cristero corridos as the final contribution to the classic corrido genre, thus ending the corrido's epic narrative structure and the epic hero protagonist. Contemporary corrido scholars overwhelmingly refute this corrido "death" theory and believe that the corrido genre is not and should not be defined solely by its literary-based structure, but rather by its sociocultural function as lyrical expression of Mexican and Mexican American history. Commercialization during the mid-20th century pushed the corrido into the popular music scene, and the corrido experienced a significant resurgence in the 1970s, particularly influenced by the *conjunto norteño* group, Los Tigres del Norte. Corridos since the 1980s continue to narrate the Mexican and Mexican American struggle against transnational social, political, economic injustices, especially in migrant corridos and narcocorridos.

As discussed in this chapter's detailed chronology of the corrido, the corrido genre continuously adapts to social circumstances, sociopolitical struggles, and cultural changes that provides a foundation and scenery for new and continuing corrido themes. Since the close of the post-Revolutionary period after the end of the Cristero Rebellion in 1929, corrido literary structure moved further away from the Revolutionary classic corrido, whose themes centered on

oral histories informed by people, places, and events as they were unfolding during the period. Corridos since the mid-20th century have deviated from the classic corrido's predilection for the epic narrative and epic hero archetype to narrating the collective experience and activities of a marginalized community's continuing fight against social injustices. While some corridos retain certain elements of the epic narrative and epic hero, most contemporary corridos present a complex protagonist that does not always achieve victory over his struggles, particularly in migrant corridos.

This chapter's detailed examination of the history of the Mexican ballad tradition and its development through multiple styles and subgenres throughout the twentieth century provides a necessary historical, musical, lyrical, and cultural contextualization that position new Cristero corridos and ghost smuggling ballads as part of the Mexican corrido chronology. In subsequent chapters, I suggest that new Cristero corridos and ghost smuggling ballads are part of a multi-layered historical heritage of pre-Revolutionary Border corridos, post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos, and migrant corridos.

CHAPTER THREE

"¡Que Viva Cristo Rey!": The Cristero *Corrido*

As mentioned in Chapter Two, post-Revolutionary corridos form part of the classic corrido tradition, retaining structural and thematic characteristics standardized in the classic corrido form of the Mexican Revolution. The post-Revolutionary corrido reflected the ongoing turmoil, political instability, historical figures, and events that occurred between the 1917 enacting of the Mexican Constitution and 1930, particularly the period's revolutionary heroes. Mexicans would experience a vast outpouring of post-Revolutionary corrido composition and performance during *La Cristiada*, the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion against the Mexican Federal army in response to the enforcement of the 1917 Mexican Constitution's anticlerical laws. In 1926, the same year that President Plutarco Elías Calles led Mexican literati and political elite in propagating a nationalist ideology (including musical composition) at the National Congress, Cristero communities in West and Central Mexico began encoding their nationalist ideologies, experiences, and Mexican Catholic identities in corrido compositions, creating a new post-Revolutionary corrido subgenre: the Cristero corrido.

The emergence of the Cristero corrido marked a significant split of the post-Revolutionary corrido genre, dividing it into two overarching articulations of people, places, and events of the time: secular and religious. The Cristero corrido, like its secular counterpart, paralleled the classic corrido form and continued to employ the epic narrative form and epic hero archetype, the staple protagonist of the classic corrido who courageously fought against oppression and injustice. The epic hero's religiosity, a characteristic that is found throughout Revolutionary classic corridos and continued in post-Revolutionary corridos, evolved from a moral trait to the defining factor of the Cristero epic hero. The Cristero corrido developed its

own religious themes within different contexts from its secular counterpart, centering on the experiences of Mexican Catholics who participated in *La Cristiada*, the perceived suppression of Catholic identity in response to the Mexican government's enforcement of anticlerical laws, and Cristero heroes and martyrs who resisted these laws.

This chapter discusses the Cristero corrido and its cultural impact within its broader historical context, demonstrating how Cristero corridos from the post-Revolutionary Cristero Rebellion encode Cristero history and function as sources of oral history and invaluable resources for new historiographies of the Cristero Rebellion. This chapter positions the development of the Cristero movement and its documentation in Cristero corridos within the history of the Mexican Catholic Church's role in revolutionary politics and the history surrounding the effects of the 1917 Mexican Constitution's anticlerical laws that led to the insurrection of the Cristero Rebellion. This chapter presents multiple examples and lyrical analyses of Cristero and Cristero-themed[1] corridos from the time period, demonstrating how Cristero corridos exemplify a chronology of the Cristero Rebellion and transform the epic hero archetype into a religious warrior willing to die in order to protect religious liberty. In contextualizing the Cristero corrido genre in its historical period, this chapter defines the differences between historical Cristero corridos and new Cristero corridos, contemporary performances and new compositions (written decades after the end of the Cristero Rebellion) that invoke, index, and reinterpret experiences and memory of *La Cristiada*.

[1] Not all corridos associated with Cristeros sympathized with the Cristero movement. However, these corridos are incorporated by *La Cristiada* scholars into the Cristero corrido corpus as dissenting oral histories of the post-Revolutionary Cristero Rebellion. These corridos provide additional perspectives and experiences that shaped multiple expressions of post-Revolutionary Mexican identity and sociopolitical values.

Mexican Catholicism and the Revolutionary Politics

Prior to the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, mostly fueled by New Spain's economic and political conflict with Jesuit aspirations to create reservation areas for indigenous conversion and protection, the history of the Church in colonial Mexico (New Spain) was framed by *Real Patronato*, or royal patronage, under the control of the Castilian monarchy. In the years following, the Bourbon monarchy established church reform policies that limited the Church's geographical and sociopolitical power in the colonies, significantly influenced by the Enlightenment and the expectation that the colonies should prioritize loyalty to the Crown above any external institution. The Church's lower clergy, threatened by loss of economic and social control, sought to reform itself from the Bourbon monarchy's perceived encroachments on the religious purpose of colonial missions and subjugation of the Church by royal control (Meyer 1976: 1-2). Insurgent reactions initially came from "lower clergy and the popular masses," who according to leading *La Cristiada* scholar, Jean Meyer, seemingly lacked political consciousness compared to the higher clergy and members of the Church hierarchy, who Meyer describes as "progressive reformers and representatives of the Enlightenment" (Meyer 1976: 2), as well as economically invested in their alliance with the Crown. However, the lower clergy's increased political consciousness most visibly manifested itself in the *Grito de Dolores*, or Cry of Dolores, regarded as Mexico's official cry for independence. The emblematic *Grito de Dolores* announced a revolution against Spanish colonial rule on the night of September 16, 1810 and was led by parish priest, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, when he rang the church bell in the city of Dolores, Guanajuato.

The *Grito* proclaimed a rebellion against the current social abuses of power of the Spanish colonial government while also emphasizing loyalty to the Catholic Church. Hidalgo's

cry for independence was met with overwhelming support from liberal clergy, intellectuals, rural communities, and *mestizo* and indigenous communities. Hidalgo is often referred to as *El Padre de la Patria* (Earle 2002: 776-777), or the Father of the Nation, whose call, while markedly significant to Mexican revolutionary history, exemplified only part of the various revolutionary movements for Mexican Independence at the time. During the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821), higher clergy, no longer protected by the Spanish monarchy, joined lower clergy such as fellow priests and revolutionary leaders, Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos, in the rally for a sovereign Mexican state. On September 27, 1821, Mexico was officially designated as *Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (The United Mexican States), establishing the first iteration of a Mexican Republic.

In 1822, the Archbishop of Mexico officially proclaimed the liberation of the Church from monarchic patronage, which Jean Meyer claims marked the "beginning of a "conflict which was to last for 120 years," encompassing the incorporation of anticlericalism in the 1917 Mexican Constitution and the subsequent enforcement that framed the Cristero Rebellion (Meyer 1976: 3-4). The Mexican Catholic Church's position was not without opposition, evident in Spain's attempt to persuade Pope Leo XII to condemn the Independence movement in the encyclical *Etsi jam diu* (1824), which urged all bishops in the Spanish Americas to vocally support King Ferdinand VII.[2] Mexican liberals of the period viewed and promoted the publication of this encyclical as proof that the Church was extorting the "piety and submissiveness of the people" as pretext for conflict (Meyer 1976: 3). In response to *Etsi jam diu*, the Mexican government criticized Pope Leo XII directly, claiming that the Spanish monarchy had "confound[ed] the spiritual authority of His Holiness with his temporal authority"

[2] See footnote #64 on pg. 78 in Andrés Reséndez, (2005) *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico (1800-1850).*

and was conflating alleged religious interests with Spain's desire to thwart "the independence and freedom of the American nations"[3] (Reséndez 2005: 79). Echoing the Mexican government's response, the majority of Mexican clergy claimed Pope Leo XII was misled and continued to support the Independence movement, further exemplifying the cultural and religiopolitical role of the Mexican Church despite its recognizable friction with Mexican liberals, who remained apprehensive of the Church's threat to their desire for secularization of Mexican sociopolitical life. Mexican liberals quickly realized they needed the support of the clergy and Mexican laity in the effort to safeguard Independence, especially during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) and Emperor Napoleon III's invasion of Mexico during the French Intervention (1861-1867).

In the years between Mexico's declaration of Independence in 1811 and the 1870s guerrilla warfare that led to the pre-Revolutionary thirty-one-year presidency of Porfirio Díaz, Mexican rural and lower-class communities experienced simultaneous tumultuous political instability and raging poverty (Curley 2009: 517). Throughout this period, the Church preserved its "unity, institutions, practices, and principles" through continuous symbolic and material tradition, state and civil servants in seminaries and churches, and the Mexican Church's support of liberal reform movements (Meyer 1976: 5). The support for reform, however, was interrupted by the spurning of social secularization among Mexico's political elite, including the secularization of charity work and the sale of church properties for restructuring land distribution in favor of the people. Such restructuring and land redistribution, as well as increasing industrialization, did not benefit the rural and lower classes, who felt continuously excluded and

[3] Quoted from the Ministry of Justice and Ecclesiastical Affairs to the *Jefe Politico*, Mexico City, July 6, 1825. Reference information cited by Reséndez in footnote #64 on pg. 79 in Andres Reséndez (2005) *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico (1800-1850)*.

exploited despite these reform movements. Once again at odds with Mexican liberalism, the Church viewed secularization of social responsibilities as a threat to parish power and characterized the reformers, the political elite, and the ruling class as anticlerical. In response to the Mexican Church's anti-secularism, Catholic rural communities aligned themselves with the Church's position and viewed liberalism as both an attack on religion and their rural way of life, despite the development of secular state-run charitable programs. Some members of the rural faithful reacted violently to the Reform, viewing it as an "instrument of persecution" (Meyer 1976: 5), a sentiment with prolonging effect that resulted in the 1874 guerilla warfare of *Religioneros* (Butler 2002a: 524) in the West and Central region of Mexico—these regions would become the heartland of Cristero territory.

In an effort to retain unified support under looming threats of continued United States expansion and land invasion during his presidential regime, President Porfirio Díaz (1877-1911)[4] appealed to the popular masses (particularly members of the Catholic rural and lower classes) by stating that Mexico was lost without its religion. Díaz's pleas for unity expressed that the persecution of the Church meant that the government would remain at war with its own people. Díaz did not change any of his predecessor's secularization reforms or Constitutional laws to appease the Church, but did, in fact, receive support from the Church for his attempts at creating and maintaining peace. In light of Porfirio Díaz's perceived conciliatory remarks and actions, Mexican Catholics felt their practices would be tolerated and Mexican anticlerical liberals, in turn, would see a continuation of the separation between Church and State with some exceptions (Meyer 1976: 8; Young 2015: 22). During the pre-Revolutionary period of Porfirio Díaz's

[4] Porfirio Díaz did not serve as President of Mexico between 1880 and 1884, but hand selected his successor, General Manuel González. Dissatisfied with González's presidency, Díaz ran for reelection and was reinstated to the presidency in 1884 until he was ousted in 1911 during the Mexican Revolution.

regime, the Church would experience "internal reform" and expansion of Catholic publications, education, and cultural renewal in rural areas. The Church viewed these opportunities for religious social renewal as the forming of a civil relationship with Díaz, despite his rapidly declining favorability and rising distrust by the Mexican middle and lower classes during his efforts of economic restructuring, industrialization, and modernization (Meyer 1976: 8). Between 1903 and the eve of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, the Church supported social reform in favor of the working class, including improving working conditions, protesting land grabbing, and supporting agrarian and indigenous communities. The Church's support of Mexican workers exemplified the positions outlined in Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum,* a letter to all Catholic clergy that called for "revolutionary change" in labor conditions of working classes as an integral part of Catholic social teaching, condemning unregulated capitalism and its profoundly negative impact on impoverished working communities (Ceballos Ramírez 1987; Meyer 1976: 9). Consequently, in supporting the working class, the Church aligned itself with the working class's Revolutionary and anti-Díaz cause, which repositioned the Church as a symbol and source for social action.

As discussed in Chapter Two, after the ousting and fall of the *Porifiato* (Porfirio Díaz regime), which ended Díaz's thirty-one-year authoritarian presidency, and after the rise of his political opponent and successor, Francisco Madero (who called the Mexican people to a violent insurrection against Díaz's regime), the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolutionary period and civil war saw a multiplatform and multi-class struggle. Militarized rural and labor communities and the sociopolitical elite each sought varying degrees of constitutional reform, agrarian reform, and the restructure of governmental power, all contributing to the shaping of a complex Mexican national polity. The Church became divided and Mexican Catholics doubted whether religious

and political intersections, such as the creation of the National Catholic Party (PNC), benefitted the Revolutionary cause. Yet, the Church "did not conceal [its] sympathies" for agrarian and land reform revolutionaries Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata (Meyer 1976: 10-12). In fact, followers of Villa and Zapata openly displayed Catholic imagery and denounced anticlericalism and prohibition of religious activities and worship (Curley 2009: 517-518). However, Revolutionary constitutionalist, Venustiano Carranza, who became President after the 1913 assassination of Francisco Madero and the 1914 resignation of Victoriano Huerta, believed the Church had manipulated the people. Carranza's platform openly supported the suppression of the Catholic Church in Mexico in order to protect the secular state, endorsing a new constitution that would deny the Church any "legal personality," thus laying the groundwork for the anticlerical laws that would propel the post-Revolutionary Cristero Rebellion (Meyer 1976: 14-16; Olvera Cruz 2001: 20-21).

The 1917 Anticlerical Laws and the Cristero Rebellion

Venustiano Carranza oversaw the 1916 delegation of the Constituent Congress (excluding followers of Villa and Zapata) that led to the drafting of the 1917 Mexican Constitution, which the Mexican people widely regarded as symbolizing the end of the Mexican Revolution. As discussed in Chapter Two, the 1917 Mexican Constitution was not well-received by agrarian, rural, and lower classes, thus leading the nation into a post-Revolutionary period of continued civil war and violent uprisings. In regard to the Church, the 1917 Constitution contained multiple Articles that reduced the sociopolitical and economic power of the Church as a means of creating a clearer separation of Church and State and in attempts at restoring the Mexican liberalist and nationalist ideologies. Based on these Articles' restrictions, the priesthood

was considered an ordinary profession, thus eliminating any form of special legal status for the clergy. New laws limiting the number of residing priests per state required all native Mexican-born priests to register with their respective authorities. Religious services and ceremonies were limited to the physical confines of a church and no ritual or indication of worship or procession would be performed in public spaces. Marriage and education were regulated as civil and secular institutions, free of religious ceremony and instruction (Meyer 1976: 17-21). These Constitutional Articles were overwhelmingly rejected by the Church, who regarded them as antagonistic attempts to suppress and control religious expression. Mexican Catholic communities regarded these laws as an infringement on their religious liberties and as political sterilization of Mexican Catholic identity.

President Venustiano Carranza did not enforce 1917 Mexican Constitution's anticlerical laws in the same manner or with the same intensity as his successors (Olvera Cruz 2001: 20-21), applying the laws only "sporadically and…at the state level" (Young 2015: 24). In response to the stricter enforcements[5] of Carranza's immediate successor, President Álvaro Obregón, (1920-1924), the Church hierarchy, multiple Catholic lay social organizations, and Catholic social activists (including the secret organization, the *Unión de Católicos Mexicanos*, or Mexican Catholic Union, also known as *La U*), "organiz[ed] religious spectacles" in public spaces (Young 2015: 24). These demonstrations also included events such as the 1924 Eucharistic National Congress held in Mexico City (A. Martínez 2014: 143), and arguably also incorporated Pope Pius XI's designation of the last Sunday in October as the Feast of Christ the King. Although the Feast of Christ the King was initially established as a response to "perceived threats of communism, socialism, and fascism" throughout Europe, Mexican Catholics viewed Pope Pius

[5] Álvaro Obregón, for example, expelled Spanish and non-Mexican born priests, including the *Papal Nuncio* (Vatican ambassador).

XI's gesture "as a way to elevate Christ as the true leader of the Mexican nation" (Young 2015: 24), a deliberate eliding of global Catholic political platforms and the Mexican Catholic anti-Constitutionalist agenda.

Yet, it was Álvaro Obregon's 1924 successor, President Plutarco Elías Calles, described as having been "jubilantly atheist" since childhood (A. Martínez 2014: 145), who was attributed the role of prime political antagonist by the Mexican Catholic community on account of his "anticlerical pronunciations" and "radical enforcement" (Olvera Cruz 2001: 10) of these laws. Calles's actions and implementations of anticlerical laws and their limitation of religious expression would fuel a Mexican Catholic (soon-to-be-called Cristero) guerilla and militant response, "present[ing] the most direct and widespread challenge to the Mexican Catholic Church" (Young 2015: 25). In response to public statements denouncing these laws and any acts of defiance (particularly from Mexican clergy), President Calles applied constitutional restrictions "comprehensively at the national level" (Young 2015: 25) (unlike Obregón's state-level enforcement) by imprisoning and executing clergy and congregants alike; closing churches, convents, and Catholic schools; and deporting over two-hundred foreign-born priests (Butler 2002; Meyer 1976; Olvera Cruz 2001; Young 2015). Furthermore, Calles's new *Ley Reglamentaria* (Regulatory Law), known as *Ley Calles* (Calles Law), established additional reforms to the 1917 Constitution that included "monetary and prison penalties" for violations of anticlerical laws and their religious restrictions (Young 2015: 26). Despite the Mexican Church hierarchy's desire to continue negotiations with the government and prevent further social and violent conflict, grassroots groups of Catholic activists quickly formed to protest what they believed was the government's overt religious persecution, including *La Liga Nacional*

Defensora de la Libertad Religiosa (League for the National Defense of Religious Liberty), known as *La Liga* (Young 2015: 25).

In addition to organizing an economic boycott against the Mexican government, *La Liga*'s founders wrote a manifesto that called for the unifying of all Mexican Catholic forces to "uproot once and for all from the Constitution all its injustices of whatever kind and all its tyrannies whatever their origin" (A. Martínez 2014: 147). Other Mexican Catholic manifestations followed almost immediately, including demonstrations with colorful balloons and tricolored banners inscribed with religious insignia and expressions of their discontent. After the boycott, a series of small armed revolts erupted in August 1926, and while these small multi-state revolts were quickly subdued by authorities, they paved a path for a more coordinated and organized armed movement (Bonfíl 1994: 17-18). Based on documentation and informant interviews conducted by Alicia Olivera de Bonfíl, militant Mexican Catholics justified a militant movement based on four principal reasons: 1) Overwhelming disapproval of Articles 3, 5, 24, 27, and 130 (Calles Law) in the 1917 Constitution; 2) The severity used by the local authorities who were charged with overseeing and ensuring that these new laws were abided; 3) Concerns among rural populations at the "improper" or lack of applying Constitutional agrarian land reform (which affected the majority of rural Mexican Catholics); 4) the Exacerbation by Mexican clergy determined to impede laws that did not "coincide with their interests" and thus instilling the belief that "religion was deliberately under attack"[6] by the Mexican government (1994: 20-21).

While some Mexican clergy seemed to have embraced the interest of the people's armed fight for religious freedom, the Vatican sent notice urging them *not* to participate in nor

[6] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotations from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

encourage a violent militant uprising. Pope Pius XI issued an apostolic letter in February 1926 that "indicted the Mexican government for its repression" of religious expression and asked Mexican clerty to limit their clerical actions to spiritual responsibilities and the encouragement of Mexican laity to engage in passive resistance against the Mexican government and federal enforcement of Calles Law (A. Martínez 2014: 148). However, many Mexican Catholics viewed the apostolic letter as dismissive of the severity of their religious plight, and replied to the Vatican and any Mexican clergy who refused to support their military effort with the exclamation:

> Without their permission and without their orders we are throwing ourselves into this blessed struggle for our liberty and without their permission and without their orders we will go on until we conquer and die.[7]

On July 25, 1926, in order to gain public awareness of how these anticlerical laws were affecting, endangering, and killing Mexican Catholics, the Mexican Catholic dioceses suspended all public worship, Mass, and any administration of sacraments, including the Holy Eucharist and Holy Matrimony (Butler 2002b: 9). Attempts to gain public support to pressure President Calles to reform his violent enforcement proved unsuccessful. Shortly after the suspension of Mexican Catholic worship, an official armed rebellion against the Mexican federal government ensued, led by communities whose battle cry, "¡Que Viva Cristo Rey!" (Long Live Christ the King!) afforded them the name Cristeros. This insurrection marked the beginning of *La Cristiada*, or the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion. The Cristero Rebellion encompassed a series of violent encounters between Cristeros, agraristas (agrarian Revolutionaries), and the Mexican Federal army that, despite the Cristero movement's national manifestations, were overwhelmingly concentrated in the West and Central regions of Mexico.

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[7] From General Quintanar Brigade letter to Norberto Reyes, a parish priest of Mesquitíc, Jalisco. As quoted in Jean Meyer (1976) *The Cristero Rebellion*, pg. 71.

After three years of warfare on June 21, 1929, President Emiliano Portes Gil negotiated a settlement with Leopoldo Ruíz y Flores, the Vatican's apostolic delegate in Mexico, mediated by United States involvement of Ambassador Dwight Morrow and "prominent American Catholics" at the time (Young 2015: 29). This settlement culminated in a peace treaty, *Los Arreglos Religiosos* (Religious Agreements), leading to a temporary Cristero ceasefire and the resuming of Mexican religious services. Although the anticlerical laws remain unchanged, *Los Arreglos Religiosos* marked a temporary end to the Cristero Rebellion until the 1930s smaller and "sporadic rebellions" (Young 2015: 30) referred to as *La Segunda Cristiada* (Meyer 1976).[8] During and shortly after *La Cristiada*, a "mass exodus" of Cristero exiles, refugees, and emigrants significantly contributed to the first "Great Migration" of Mexican emigrants to the United States between 1920 and 1930 (Young 2015). The significance of the Cristero Diaspora and its relationship to contemporary invocations of Cristero history in new Cristero corridos (specifically ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to the Cristero martyr, Saint Toribio Romo) will be revisited in Chapter Five.

Cristero Performative Literature and Cristero Corrido Scholarship

Whereas political and historical research on *La Cristiada* has seen revival (Andes 2015: 184) since the early 2000s, there is no dedicated musicological scholarship. The few studies of

[8] *La Segunda Cristiada*, or the Second Cristero Rebellion, was a significantly smaller revolt that took place between 1934-1938. While not as widespread as the first Cristero Rebellion, *La Segunda Cristiada* arose in response to the perceived continuous encroachments on Mexican religious liberty, regarded by some Cristero communities as the Mexican government's failure to abide by the terms established after *La Cristiada*. The most incendiary of these perceived encroachments included President Lázaro Cárdenas's reforms to the Mexican education system and his implementation of *educación socialista,* or socialist education. This education system sought to eliminate religious fanaticism by cultivating secular, rational thought in Mexicn youth. Those opposed to these reforms responded violently, resulting in fatal encounters with public school teachers, especially in West and Central states previously claimed as Cristero territories (Becker 1996). For more information see Marjorie Becker (1996) *Setting the Virgin on Fire – Lázaro Cárdenas, Michaocán Peasants, and the Redemption of the Mexican Revolution*.

Cristero music have focused solely on historical work and make no mention of contemporary practices. The most extensive overview of Cristero literature, art, and music is Alicia Olivera de Bonfíl's *La literature cristera* (Cristero Literature), first published in 1970 with a second edition in 1994. Bonfíl's work provides a detailed overview of Cristero artistic expression, including examples of prayers, fiction, political propaganda, and historical corridos. As historian Stephen Andes states,

> Many of the [Cristero corridos] were in fact saved from historical oblivion through intrepid work of scholars who ventured into the sierra to record local musicians play songs unknown outside of their immediate region. (Andes 2015: 186).

Andes is referring to Irene Vázquez Valle and José de Santiago Silva's field recordings from Los Altos de Jalisco (Jalisco highlands) and from the state of Zacatecas, which were produced and published in the 1976 vinyl record *Corridos de la Rebelión Cristero* by Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). This 1976 recording was been released on CD format in 2002 and its tracks have been uploaded by individual users (fan uploads) to playlists on YouTube.

Not including self-produced and non-commercial contemporary performances and reinterpretations of historical Cristero corridos (such as those by Mariachi Los Cristeros), I have been unable to find any recordings or academic studies of current Cristero corrido performances published since this 1976 INAH compilation. The late James Nicolopulos, a professor of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Texas at Austin, created a web project with his students in 2004 that provides resource links, brief historical information, and select sound files associated with Mexican and Borderland corridos from the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period,

including a page entitled "Corridos de la Cristiada."[9] Although the page has not been updated since, it remains a beneficial introduction to select Cristero corridos and summarized information on their historical context. The sound files on the "Corridos de la Cristiada" webpage include digitized streaming of tracks extrapolated from the INAH 1976 *Corridos de la Rebelión Cristera* record.

Antonio Avitia Hernández's doctoral dissertation (2006) presents a detailed catalogue of plays, literature, corridos written during and shortly after *La Cristiada*, and Cristero films (not including the recent film *For Greater Glory*, which was not released until 2014 in the United States). Avitia Hernández expands on the aforementioned work of Alicia Olivera de Bonfíl and contributes significantly to the scholarship of historical Cristero musical and literary production. However, Avitia Hernández's catalogue does not represent all Cristero corridos composed and written in the post-Revolutionary period. Stephen Andes notes that Avitia Hernández's list of Cristero corridos does not include several Cristero ballads mentioned in the works of preceding authoritative sources of Meyer and Bonfíl, suggesting that this "oversight [may stem]…from the fact that a copy of these songs could not be located" (2015: 186). Avitia Hernández's based the content of his catalogue on lyrical and musical production that exists in some tangible capacity, including sheet music, recordings, or published transcriptions, signifying that unaccounted sources of Cristero oral traditions likely still exist as part of cultural patrimony in historically Cristero regions. His dissertation encompasses creative literature from both *La Cristiada* and its smaller reprise of *La Segunda Cristiada*,[10] indexing a total of seventy-six musical works, forty-

[9] This webpage has not been updated since 2007 (based on the most recent date listed on the late James Nicolopulos's affiliated homepage), but is still available on the University of Texas at Austin server, "Corridos de la Cristiada," http://www.laits.utexas.edu/jaime/cwp5/crg/index.html.

[10] See concluding paragraph and related footnote of this subheading "The 1917 Anticlerical Laws and the Insurrection of the Cristero Rebellion" in this chapter (Chapter Three).

eight of which include Cristero and Cristero-themed (such as ballads that disavowed the Cristero movement) composed during the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion. The origins of these forty-eight corridos vary geographically, though their lyrical content depict cross-regional events and, more notably, eighteen of these corridos hail from the state of Jalisco alone (tied with the state of Durango for the most corridos from a single region.

In *Mexico in Verse* (2015), Stephen Andes's chapter, "Singing For Cristo Rey: Masculinity, Piety, and Dissent in Mexico's Cristero Rebellion," analyzes select post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos, centering on negotiations of gender and masculinity in the lyrical content. Andes explores how the texts of both Cristero and Cristero-themed corridos of the period reveal gendered articulations of Cristero desire for autonomy and anti-Cristero dissent. Andes briefly discusses the transnational origins of two historical Cristero corridos (referencing Avitia Hernández's 2006 catalogue) that were composed in Mexico but first recorded for public listening in the U.S. cities of San Antonio and Los Angeles (Avitia Hernandez 2006: 635; Andes 2015: 186). Andes states that there is no known historical explanation for why these two corridos ("Corrido de Maximiliano Vigueras" and the "Corrido del Conflicto Religioso y Los Arreglos") were recorded in the United States, but refers to Julia Young's work on the Cristero Diaspora and Mexican emigration in the 1920s and 1930s. Andes theorizes that the influx of Cristero sympathizers to the United States likely influenced the desire for "popular expression and solidarity with their coreligionists in the rebellion" (2015: 186), including listening to Cristero corridos. He emphasizes that in Mexico, Cristero corrido transmission during the post-Revolutionary period remained isolated to each ballad's regional origins, possibly only moving northward if preserved in migrant memory or by means of the rare recording during Cristero emigration (2015: 187). This concept of Cristero corrido migration during the Cristero Diaspora

of the 1920s and 1930s serves as a significant point of inquiry for further research, including how this may relate to contemporary iterations of Cristeros corridos outside of West and Central Mexico and to the composition of new Cristero corridos inspired by people, places, and events from the period. Andes emphasizes that new historiographies on *La Cristiada* since the early 2000s do not focus on "Cristero musical production," and the few scholars who have focused on Cristero corridos do not "relate [their studies] to the new historiography of the religious conflict" (2015: 185).

Although these aforementioned works and compilations constitute significant contributions to *La Cristiada* scholarship at large, none of them provides insight into contemporary performances, reinterpretations, and cultural reimagining of Cristero literature and music. Neither Avitia Hernández's doctoral dissertation catalogue nor any published source that addresses Cristero corridos lists or explores Cristero ballads composed after the 1930s and 1940s, nor do they list any Cristero corridos (historical or contemporary) dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, martyred in 1928, one year before the end of the Cristero Rebellion. Julia Young's *Mexican Exodus* (2015) briefly reflects on how intra-Mexican Revolutionary history tends to treat Revolutionary corridos as simply Mexican and not something that necessarily leaves Mexico. However, contemporary performances of Cristero corridos, including the decontextualized secular performances of "El Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra" by the Boulder-based Mariachi Sol de mi Tierra, reinterpretations and new Cristero corridos of Mariachi Los Cristeros, and paraliturgical ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, exemplify how Cristero corridos function as transnational cultural artifacts and inherited memory, uninhibited by national or temporal boundaries.

The Cristero Corrido and Post-Revolutionary Historiography

This chapter's previous discussion of the events that led to the Cristero Rebellion demonstrated how the enforcement of anticlerical laws strongly impacted the foundation for Cristero identity, their affiliated religiopolitics, and their subsequent call to arms during *La Cristiada*. The term *Cristero* was initially used as a derogatory label imposed on these communities by the Mexican Federal army and was later adopted by them as a name for both their religiopolitical identity and cause. Cristero embraced their mission to fight against the injustice of what they believed was the intentional suppression of their religious liberty, subsequently their narrating their experiences in the lyrical texts of corridos. Cristero corridos contain invaluable insight into the Cristero community's interpretation of historical events and the sociopolitical instability of the post-Revolutionary period. As a new religious subgenre of the post-Revolutionary corrido, these ballads relay Cristero religiopolitical identity, values, spirituality, and serve as musical documentation of Cristero cultural memory of the period. Taking into consideration the principal form of the classic corrido's transmission, Cristero corridos of the 1920s collectively shape an oral history of *La Cristiada*, encompassing a series of narratives that depict Mexican governmental suppression of Catholic expression, the political events that framed the insurrection of the militarized religious rebellion, violent encounters between Cristeros and agrarian and Federal armies, Cristero epic heroes and martyrs, and the events leading to the peace treaty and ceasefire in 1929.

The following five corridos narrate a timeline of events preceding, during, and ending the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion, as well as relaying the triumphant martyrdom of three Cristeros, memorializing them and characterizing them as religious epic heroes of *La Crisitada*. The first corrido, the "Corrido de la Convención," the only non-Cristero sympathizing ballad in this

section, serves as a pro-Mexican government political statement and the *corridista*'s lyrical social analysis of President Plutarco Elías Calles during his visit to the town of Jeréz, Zacatecas (the state bordering Jalisco), one year prior to the 1926 Cristero insurrection. The second, third, and fourth corridos exemplify the Cristero corrido's epic narrative form and religious characterization of the epic hero, depicting the life, execution, and martyrdom of three Cristero epic heroes: Valentín de la Sierra, a Cristero martyr regarded by non-Cristero sympathizers as a traitor to his cause, General Enrique Gorostieta, the leading general of the Cristero army, and José de León Toral, who assassinated Álvaro Obregón just after Obregón's 1928 reelection. The fifth corrido, the "Corrido del Arreglo Religioso" narrates the 1929 enacting of *Los Arreglos Religiosos* (Religious Agreements), the peace treaty negotiations between the Vatican, Cristeros, and President Emilio Portes Gil that resulted in the temporary ceasefire ending *La Cristiada*.

"El Corrido d la Convención"

"El Corrido de la Convención" (**Figure 3.1**) describes the preparation for and the arrival of President Plutarco Elías Calles to a reception and parade in Jerez Zacatecas in April 1925, just one year before the Cristero insurrection. The festivities for President Calles were sponsored by the officials and citizens of the town who, according to the *corridista*, embraced him "with a thousand honors." Unlike the three corridos to follow in this section, this ballad "contradicts all Cristero literature" (Bonfíl 1994: 146) that treats and defines Calles as the archetypal villain of the Cristero movement on account of his severe enforcement of anticlerical laws. Jean Meyer states that in the Mexican public's secular sociopolitical view (particularly the upper social classes),

> Calles was the protagonist of an attempt to achieve universal and absolute control over the country, using methods of an unprecedented modernity and efficiency which

culminated in the creation of the National Revolutionary Party…with fire and sword, he was the incarnation, albeit a negative one, of the Mexican Revolution. (Meyer 1976: 19)

While this ballad does not reflect the mainstream post-Revolutionary Mexican (let alone Cristero) social and political perception of Calles, its lyrical text establishes a pro-Calles, pro-Constitutionalist stance that characterizes him as the protagonist described by Meyer above. The *corridista*'s exaggeratedly joyful tone presents Calles as a charming, tolerant political leader who wishes to encourage the Mexican people to work together as a nation in order to revitalize agrarian, agricultural, and transportation infrastructures (appealing to the middle and lower classes). This musical image of Calles strongly foils the Cristero archnemesis, the tyrannical figure that closed and destroyed churches, murdered clergy, laymen, and even children[11] in response to criticism of his administration, regime, and implementation of Constitutional law.

Figure 3.1 Excerpt from "El Corrido de la Convención"[12]

De México a Zacatecas Pusieron un telegrama, Porque venía el presidente A la ciudad jerezana. Unos decían que no viene, Otros decían que venía; Él dijo te felicito Hermosa ciudad García. Adiós Lucita, Dame tu mano Me voy muy agradecido	From Mexico to Zacatecas They sent a telegram Because the President was coming To the city of Jerez. Some said he would not come Other said that said they believed he would He had already congratulated The beautiful city of García. Goodbye, Lucita. Give me your hand. I leave with gratitude

[11] In addition to the twenty-five Cristero martyrs canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000, fourteen-year-old martyr, José Sánchez del Río, beatified in 2005, was officially canonized by Pope Francis on October 16, 2016. Saint Joselito (referred to by his name's diminutive to emphasize his young age) was regarded by Cristeros as one of many child martyrs of the violent enforcement of Calles Law.

[12] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Derived from full corrido text as presented in Alicia de Bonfíl (1994) *La literatura cristera*, pgs. 146-149.

De este pueblo jerezano. … El presidente les dijo En la mera capital: -prepárese una maquinista Póngase un tren especial … Mucha gente lo aguardaba, Llegó a las once del día; Muchos millares de a pie Y otros de caballería. Repicaban las campanas Cuando entró a la población Todo era gusto y contento Y alegría del corazón. … Toditos los jerezanos Le obsequiaron mil honores, Regaron muy bien sus patios Con muy exquisitas flores. Toditos los jerezanos Le obsequiaron mil honores, Con una lluvia elegante De serpentinas y flores. El coche más elegante Brillaba cual mil estrellas Donde venía el presidente Y algunas jóvenes bellas. El presidente les dijo, Les dijo con atención: -¿para qué cierran su templo? Sigan con su religión. -No vengo quitando creencias, Católicos ni masones, Cada cual crea en lo que quiera, Hay distinctos corazones. -Una cosa sí les digo:	From this town of Jerez. … The president told them From the heart of the capital “Prepare an engineer And prepare a special train.” … Many people waited for him He arrived at eleven in the morning Many waited on foot, Others were on horseback. The bells were tolling When he entered the town There was much joy and delight With heartfelt happiness … All the Jerezanos Bestowed on him a thousand honors They showered their patios With many exquisite flowers. All the Jerezanos Bestowed on him a thousand honors With an elegant shower Of streamers and flowers. The car was most elegant It shined like a thousand stars It was the car in which the President rode With some beautiful young women. The president told them, He told them with care “Why have you closed your temple? Continue practicing your religion.” “I have not come to take away your beliefs Not from Catholics or from Masons Let each person believe what he wants, Each heart is different.” “One thing I will say to you

Que hay que cultivar la tierra, Que trabaje todo mundo, Ya nunca tendremos guerra. … Le hicieron un buen rodeo Poblado de hermoso cielo, Cuando se cayó el tablado Y ¡abajo todos al suelo! Se levantó el presidente, Risa y risa sin cesar Ensílleme un buen caballo Mejor me voy a colear.	We must cultivate the land, Everyone should and must work So that we will never have another war." … Everyone surrounded him Underneath the beautiful sky When suddenly, the stage caved in And everyone fell to the ground! The president stood up Laughing and laughing without ceasing "Saddle up a horse for me It's better if I go riding."

The corrido text implies that the people of Jerez, despite being located well-within Cristero territory, did not participate in a military opposition to Calles's arrival (Bonfíl 1994: 146), but rather paid him homage with a colorful welcome. Calles is described as a benevolent leader that has simply arrived to remind the people of Jerez that he desires their help in promoting a unified Mexican effort toward socioeconomic modernity and progress. The *corridista* describes Calles's surprise that the Catholic community of Jerez had "closed [their] temple," characterizing the president as sympathetic and not a threat to their religious beliefs. The *corridista* quotes Calles expressing that he has not arrived to Jerez to "take away [their] beliefs," whether they be Catholic or Masonic, stressing that the Mexican people can believe in whatever religion they choose. Instead, Calles urges Mexican people, regardless of their religious beliefs, to work hard in cultivating the earth, emphasizing that it is imperative they execute their due diligence to avoid war (alluding to the possibility of another revolution, or more likely the likelihood of a Cristero military uprising). In exaggerating President Calles's good humor and sincere desire to promote the best interests of the Mexican nation, the corrido functions as political propaganda. The *corridista*'s depiction of Calles's religious tolerance, call for solidarity,

and appeal to working-class and agrarian reform (specifically aimed toward agraristas and followers of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa) presents an overt pro-government message.

The *corridista* describes the crowds as enthusiastic in their waiting for President Calles's arrival, recounting how people traveled from long distances by train, horse, and foot just to greet him. The lyrical text further emphasizes Calles' approachable and appealing nature by describing how he laughed when the stage's platform collapsed during his speech, causing everyone to fall to the ground. His lack of anger reinforces the stark contrast to Cristero (and Cristero corrido) portrayals of Calles's cruelty, passionate anticlericalism, and intentional oppression of Mexican Catholics. Considering the cultural memory of Calles in this corrido frames a positive and seemingly compassionate image of Calles, Cristero sympathizers and anti-Calles listeners subjects the corrido to what Herrera-Sobek refers to as "legitimation" (Herrera-Sobek 1990: 110)—or more accurately, de-legitimation—of the text. In this process, Cristero-sympathizing listeners produce and apply new meaning to the lyrical text that abides by a particular social agenda, resulting in a counter-interpretation of the ballad. In retrospect of the events leading to the 1926 Cristero Rebellion, "El Corrido de la Convención" serves as a cultural artifact of Calles's 1925 address to Jerezians that, according to Cristero sociopolitical ideologies, exposes Calles's visit to Jerez as constituent manipulation.

Cristero Epic Heroes: Enrique Gorostieta, José León de Toral, and Valentín de la Sierra

According to Jean Meyer and evident in the following three corridos, the "history of [*La Cristiada*], that of the battles at least, assigns the most glorious role to the men who went off to fight, urged by their wives, mothers, and sisters" (1976: 95). These Cristero soldiers were subsequently seen as more than just heroes, but defenders and potential martyrs of the Catholic

faith who upheld the Cristero mission at all costs. In the typical literary structure of the post-Revolutionary classic corrido, the ballads of General Enrique Gorostieta, José de León Toral, and Valentín de la Sierra outline the lives of Cristero epic heroes, who, regardless of their criminal status and murderous acts according to the laws of the Mexican federal government, were commemorated as warriors of religious freedom. These corridos not only serve as epic narratives of their triumphant battles against the antagonism and injustice of the Mexican government and Federal army, but also serve as an *ejemplo* (Herrera-Sobek 1990: 105), or exemplum of the ideal Cristero and the Cristero mission: the Catholic faith is worth defending, fighting for, and even dying for in the name of Christ the King. The Cristero epic hero's bravery, loyalty to his community and family, and religiosity—the definitive characteristics of the classic corrido epic hero (González 2015: 147-153)—culminates in his prioritizing his religion and the protection of religious liberty above all else.

Differing from secular post-Revolutionary corridos, religiosity in the Cristero corrido became the foundation of the epic hero's cause: the protection and the fight for Mexican religious liberty in the name of *Cristo Rey* (Christ the King). The Cristero epic hero was not only willing to fight for the Cristero cause but was also willing to die for it as long as his death ensured the continuation and integrity of the Cristero movement. While these *ejemplo* corridos do not overtly call Cristeros to martyrdom, their honoring and exalting those who did not relent or falter in their cause when faced with the threat of death, elevates Cristero casualties to the same level of Catholic saints and martyrs before them.

Figure 3.2 Excerpt from “El Corrido del General Gorostieta”[13]

El corrido del General Gorostieta Es la historia verdadera y sin pasión De un valiente que logró escalar la meta En defensa de su santa religión.	The ballad of General Gorostieta Is the absolute real and true story Of the valiant man who scaled the heights of honor In defense of his holy religion.
…	…
Cuando al fin surgió la lucha religiosa Y del pueblo al suelo madre ensangrentó Desfondó otra vez su espada victoriosa Y las fuerzas del gobierno se enfrentó.	When the religious struggle finally began And the people’s blood was shed on the motherland He once again unsheathed his victorious sword And confronted the government’s unjust forces
Y el caudillo de las fuerzas insurgentes Cuyo grito fue -¡Que Viva Cristo Rey! Con sus tropas decididas y valientes Exigieron las Reformas a La Ley.	The leader of the insurgent forces Whose cry was “Long Live Christ the King!” With his determined and valiant troops Pleaded for Reformation to the Law
Fue una lucha muy sangrienta y prolongada Una guerra despiadada y sin cuartel. Y a pesar de estar muy mal municionada La revuelta logró triunfos a granel.	It was a prolonged and bloody struggle An unholy war that saw no quarter [break] And despite the lack of proper munitions The revolt managed to triumph in glory
Entre tanto la nación horrorizada Dio el espectro de una nueva rebelión. Que el gobierno con sus fuerzas dominaba En Sonora, en Chihuahua y Nuevo León.	During this time, the horrified nation Saw the spectre of a new revolution rising As the government forces dominated In Sonora, Chihuahua, and Nuevo León.
Y deseando que la paz fuera completa El gobierno con la Iglesia discutió Y al saberlo el General Gorostieta Prontamente sus legiones disolvió.	And desiring for the achievement of peace, The government negotiated with the Church And as soon as General Gorostieta was informed He quickly dissolved his legions.
Al venir pronto a rendirse fue atacado Por las fuerzas de gobierno federal. Y en la lucha Gorostieta fue matado Provocando una tristeza nacional.	In his attempt to surrender he was attacked By the forces of the Federal Government And in his struggle, Gorostieta was killed Causing great sadness throughout the nation.
La tragedia causó impacto por doquiera Y con duelo general en la nación	This tragedy greatly impacted every corner And with overwhelming suffering in the nation

[13] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Transcribed by the author from full corrido text as performed in *Los Corridos de la Rebellion Cristera* (2002), first published on vinyl by INAH in 1976.

Al saber que Gorostieta así muriera En defensa de su santa religión.	To know that Gorostieta would die this way In defense of his holy religion.

In July of 1927, *La Liga*, the National Defense for Religious Liberty, recruited General Enrique Gorostieta to command the military regiment of the Cristeros. At the time, Gorostieta, a former Porfirista general and veteran of the Mexican Revolution, was dedicating himself to civil duties and activities in Cuba. Despite his stating he was not a religious zealot and that he was said to have been initially apathetic to the Catholic faith, Gorostieta accepted *La Liga's* contract and returned to command the military zone in Jalisco (Olvera Cruz 2001: 15). In 1928, Gorostieta succeeded in organizing a civil and military army in northern Jalisco and southern Zacatecas, to which *La Liga* responded by naming him the Supreme General of the Cristero national guard. Gorostieta subsequently claimed the Cristero cause as his own, described as his miraculous conversion to the Catholic faith in interview accounts from the period (Olvera Cruz 2001) and in interviews during my fieldwork in Jalostotitlán.[14] Although historical documents allege that Gorostieta was not, in fact, a religious leader but rather a strategic military and anti-Calles asset for the Cristero army, "El Corrido del General Gorostieta" (**Figure 3.2**) presents his death at the hands of the Mexican Federal army as evidence of his willingness to die for the protection of religious liberty, ascribing him the honor of Cristero martyrdom.

The "Corrido del General Gorostieta" recounts the bloodshed and suffering experienced during the Cristero Rebellion, a war that seemed endless until the government finally decided to negotiate a peace treaty with the Church (referring to the discussions that would result in *Los Arreglos* of 1929). According to the *corridista*, General Gorostieta has reprised his military role

[14] Interviews with María Martín Alcalá, Carmen Martín, Francisco Pérez; informal accounts with Josefina Romo and congregants from Nuestra Señora del Carmen parish in Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. Conducted in June and July of 2017 by Teresita Lozano.

from the Mexican Revolution by “unsheath[ing] his victorious sword” to lead the Cristero army. He adopts their battle cry, shouting “Long Live Christ the King!” as he pleads alongside his army for the Mexican government to reform “the Law,” referring to both the 1917 Constitution’s anticlerical laws and to Calles Law, the reformatory addendum (Young 2015: 26) that incited the cruel and unjust enforcement of such laws. According to the lyrical text, as soon as General Gorostieta heard of these peace negotiations, he “dissolve[ed] his legions” and went forth to surrender, only to be attacked by Mexican Federal army, effectively nullifying the honor of their intent to achieve peace. The *corridista* regards Gorostieta’s struggle as his “defense of his holy religion,” killed at the hands of the Mexican government right during his gesture of goodwill, and never relenting or betraying his Cristero mission. The *corridista*’s use of the phrase “his religion” relays to the listener that General Gorostieta had both adopted the Cristero mission of protecting religious liberty and embraced the Catholic faith as his own. Typical of the classic corrido, the ballad of General Gorostieta concludes with the *corridista*’s reflection of the epic narrative he just shared, and with great sorrow exclaims how General Gorostieta’s death marked a profound loss not only for Cristeros, but for the entire Mexican nation. Gorostieta died protecting and honoring the name of Christ the King for the sake of the Mexican people. Thus, the corrido’s full text memorializes General Gorostieta as an exemplum of a man who, upon converting to the faith and subsequently contributing his military talents for the Cristero mission, died in holy glory, comparable to the lives of the martyred Catholic saints. While there is no cause of sainthood yet in place for Enrique Gorostieta by the Catholic Church, this Cristero corrido’s inherent cultural memory bestows on him a similar honor of martyrdom.

“El Corrido de Toral” (**Figure 3.3**) illustrates the life and death of José de León Toral, whose secular historical significance lies not in his death as a Cristero rebel, but in his

condemnation, prosecution, and execution for his July 1928 assassination of President-elect Álvaro Obregón. The "intellectual plot" (Olvera Cruz 2001: 22) for the assassination, however, was attributed by Mexican authorities to a nun, María Concepción Acevedo, also known as La Madre Conchita, who is also mentioned in the corrido narrative. José de León Toral, alongside Jesuit priest and canonized saint, Miguel Agustín Pro, was executed on February 9, 1929 by firing squad (López-Menéndez 2016). Despite the fact that Toral died a convicted murderer, this corrido exonerates his grave sins (along with the sins of Madre Conchita) and glorifies Toral for his exemplum of maintaining his Cristero mission and protecting religious liberty at all costs. The corrido explicitly introduces José de León Toral as a "martyr of his religion," giving his life for the Cristero cause in order to take the life of Obregón, Calles's successor as the enemy of the Church.

Figure 3.3 Excerpt from "El Corrido de Toral"[15]

Este es el corrido de José Toral Que murió juzgado por un tribunal Él sólo fue mártir de su religión Cambiando su vida por la de Obregón	This is the ballad of José Toral Who died convicted by the court He was only a martyr of his religion Exchanging his life for that of Obregón
Ya estaba cansado de verse burlado Y en la tarde aquella, de valor armado Con mano certera cumplió su misión	He was tired of being mocked and abused And that afternoon, mustered great courage With a steady hand went to fulfill his mission
Anduvo buscando la oportunidad Y día por día corría a la ciudad La suerte fue suya y fue tan sencilla Hallando a Obregón allá en La Bombilla	He was looking for the opportunity Traversing the city day after day Luck became his and it was so simple To find Obregón at La Bombilla [restaurant]
Fueron seis disparos, con tal precisión,	There were six gunshots, with great precision

[15] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Transcribed by the author from the full corrido text as performed by the group, Travadores Tapatíos in 1929, recorded on Disc IV "Post-Revolutionary Corridos and Narratives" from *The Mexican Revolution: Corridos About Heroes and Events 1910-1920 and Beyond!* (Folklyric/Arhoolie Records), 1996.

Que rodó por tierra el manco Obregón Y Toral vengado se fue a la prisión … Sus jueces quisieron sacarle verdad Y crueles tormentos sufrió sin piedad Jamás una queja su pecho exhaló La Madre Conchita también fue culpada Y a máxima pena quedó condenada Hoy sola en su celda, en cada oración Al cielo le pide para ellos perdón -Si no les perdonas, Señor, lo que han hecho, Solloza, poniendo la mano en su pecho -Yo sí les perdono con el corazón Y cuando la esposa y su tierno hijo Fueron a la cárcel por última vez Toral ya con calma, sonriendo les dijo -Junto a nuestro Padre, los veré después… Después que el jurado lo había condenado Solícito indulto se fue negado Pero del gobierno, con satisfacción Consiguió la gracia de la Confesión Después de la triste y fatal despedida Él fue fusilado conforme a la Ley Y murió gritando -¡Viva Cristo Rey!	The one-armed Obregón rolled on the ground And Toral, now avenged, went to prison … His judges wanted him to tell the truth And he was cruelly tortured without mercy He never exhaled any breath of complaint Mother Conchita was also found guilty And was given the maximum sentence Today alone in her cell, with every prayer Please to the Heavens to grant them all forgiveness “If you don’t forgive them, Lord, what they have done,” She sobs, placing her hand on her heart “I myself do forgive them with all of my heart.” And when his wife and young son Went to the jail for the last time Toral, now calm and smiling, told them “Together with our Father, is when I will see you again.” After the jury condemned him His request for a pardon was denied But from the government, to his joy He was shown mercy, and allowed to have Confession After that sad and fatal farewell He was executed according to the Law He died shouting, “Long Live Christ the King!”

The *corridista* describes how José de León Toral, exhausted from being bullied and abused for being a Cristero, deliberately went looking for Obregón as part of his mission. He fired “six gunshots with great precision,” assassinating the President-elect, and was subsequently captured and arrested. According to the corrido, Toral endured merciless torture at the hands of the court during their attempts to uncover the truth behind his assassination. As the Cristero epic

hero, Toral bore his suffering without any complaint and did not betray the Cristeros or his religion. Meanwhile, Mother Conchita, who was convicted for orchestrating the assassination, prayed fervently in her cell, not for the forgiveness of her role, but for the absolution of Toral, who physically fired the shots and murdered Obregón. According to the *corridista*, Madre Conchita exclaims that even if the Heavens did not forgive Toral, she would "forgive him with all of heart." In order to exonerate Toral of the premeditated murder of the man he and the Cristeros perceived as an oppressor of the Catholic faith, the corrido emphasizes that the government granted Toral the mercy and allowed him to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) before his execution. In receiving confession and official absolution from the Church before his execution, the corrido implies that Toral's soul was cleansed before his death. The *corridista* describes how Toral bid farewell to his wife and young son, comforting them by saying that they will see each other when reunited in Heaven with the Father, indicating that Toral had discerned his fate as a martyr and knew he would be granted grace for fulfilling his Cristero mission. Like General Gorostieta, José de León Toral has never been beatified or canonized by the Church (and never will be, as he committed murder), yet the *corridista* invites the listener to remember Toral as an exemplum of a holy man, defender of the faith, and Cristero martyr, concluding the corrido describing how Toral died shouting, "Long Live Christ the King!" Regardless of his grave sins, the corrido's memory of Toral characterizes him as a Cristero epic hero who willingly died for the name of Christ the King.

While most Cristero corridos "praised the heroic deeds of individuals who remained loyal to the cause of Cristo Rey [Christ the King]" (Andes 2015: 195), certain Cristero figures were viewed outside of the Cristero community, such as the Federal army and agrarian soldiers, as traitors to their own cause. Thus, as is the case of Valentín de la Sierra, certain Cristero epic

ballads retold and reinterpreted "the story of betrayal" (Andes 2015: 195) in order to reframe fallen Cristeros as martyrs, utilizing the Cristero cause and overt religious themes to justify this reinterpretation. The "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra" (**Figure 3.4**) narrates the death of Valentín Avila Ramírez, who the *corridista* introduces as his "friend," a label that attests to Valentín's positive characterization while informing the listener that this is the story of a Cristero martyr who was hanged in the mountains.

Figure 3.4 "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra"[16]

Voy a cantar un corrido De un amigo de mi tierra, Llamábase Valentín Que fue fusilado y colgado en la sierra.	I am going to sing a corrido About a friend from my homeland He was called Valentín And he was executed and hanged in the mountains.
Ni me quisiera acordar Era una tarde de invierno, Cuando por su mala suerte Cayó Valentín en manos del gobierno.	I do not wish to remember It was a winter afternoon When due to his bad luck Valentín fell into the hands of the government.
El capitán le pregunta Cuál es la gente que manda Son ochocientos soldados Que tienen sitiada la hacienda de Holanda.	The captain told him, "Who are the people you lead?" "Eight-hundred soldiers Who have overtaken the Holanda *hacienda*."
El coronel le decía Cuál es la gente que guías Son ochocientos soldados Que trae por la sierra Mariano Mejía.	The colonel asked him, "Who are the people you guide?" "Eight-hundred soldiers Who are led through the mountains by Mariano Mejía."
Valentín como era hombre Ya no les dio mas razón Yo soy de los mero hombres	Valentín was surely a man He refused to give them their way "I am one of those very men

[16] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Full corrido text as presented in Alicia de Bonfíl (1994) *La literatura cristera*, pgs. 93-94. Bonfíl provides two versions of this corrido and I selected the version that most closely resembles the one I heard performed by the Martín family during my ethnographic work in Orange County, California.

Que han inventado la revolución.	Who invented the Revolution.”
El general le decía Yo te concedo el indulto, Pero me vas a decir Cuál es el jurado y la causa que juzgo.	The general asked him, “I will grant you pardon.” But you need to tell me What is the jury and the cause of my judgement?”
Valentín le contestó Yo no me quiero indultar Porque yo guardo un agravio Con ese serrano y lo quiero vengar.	Valentín answered him “I do not wish to be pardoned Because I hold a grievance With that highlands man and I want vengeance.”
Antes de llegar al cerro Valentín quería llorar. Madre mía de Guadalupe Por tu religión me van a matar.	Before reaching the clifftop Valentín wanted to cry “My Mother [Virgin] of Guadalupe For your religion they’re going to kill me.”
Vuela, vuela palomita Para que rece por ti, Éstas son las mañanitas De un hombre valiente que fue Valentín.	Fly, fly little dove So that you can pray for me These are the mañanitas [Feast Day songs] Of a valiant man named Valentín.

Valentín Avila Ramírez was a Cristero spy and messenger under the Cristero general Pedro Quintanar’s leadership in northern Jalisco and southern Zacatecas. *Agraristas* (agrarian soldiers), likely working with the Federal army, encountered Valentín in 1928 during their search for Cristero battalions, unaware that Valentín was, in fact, a spy for a Cristero general. After the agraristas realized who he was, they captured him in attempts to coerce Valentín to reveal the location of General Quintanar and his troops. Historically, Valentín succumbed to this coercion, and provided information on a “group of rebels” (Andes 2015: 197), betraying that specific troop in order to save his own life as well as to settle the score with Ignacio Serrano, a Cristero who had offended him (Bonfíl 1994: 90). According to historical accounts, the agraristas decided they

had no reason to trust a traitor, despite his helping them with crucial information, and subsequently decided to execute him (Andes 2015: 197).

In the corrido, Valentín mentions his desire for vengeance based on an undisclosed dispute he had with Ignacio Serrano (not named in this version of the corrido) but does not offer the agraristas the information they asked. Instead, Valentín proudly responds by telling them that he is one of the men who "invented the Revolution," a statement emphasizing that he does not fear the agrarista threats and, like other Revolutionaries, will not betray his cause or fellow men. The agrarista general then decides to offer Valentín an opportunity to avoid execution by asking him for the location of the *jurado* (jury), which is a mistranslation of *curato* (Andes 2015: 197), or curate, meaning the location of secret Masses and Cristero religious activities. In the corrido, Valentín was offered amnesty from his execution if he gave the agraristas this last piece of information. However, the corrido recounts that Valentín, again, refuses to give more information despite his "grievance" and desire for vengeance against Ignacio Serrano. Valentín chose death over betrayal, which the *corridista* contextualizes as his defending the Cristero cause for religious liberty and prioritizing his Cristero mission above any other personal interests, including saving his own life. Recognizing his pending fate, Valentín shouts to the Virgen de Guadalupe, exclaiming that "for [her] religion, they're going to kill [him]."

The corrido ends with the "*vuela, vuela palomita*" (fly, fly little dove) trope typical of the Revolutionary classic corrido, with which many epic corridos conclude by asking a proverbial dove who had been listening to the corrido to fly away and tell others of the moral of the story. However, in this ending, the Cristero interpretation of "*vuela, vuela palomita*" does not ask the little dove to fly away and share Valentín's story, but rather asks the dove to pray for the *corridista* as he and his listeners remember and reflect upon the tragic story of "the valiant man

named Valentín." Based on historical accounts, Valentín Avila Ramírez was willing to betray his Cristero compatriots to both save his life and incite harm on a Cristero that had offended him. However, this Cristero corrido does not include any information alluding to betrayal, and instead narrates how, when given the choice between his life and vengeance, Valentín chose to protect his religion and the Cristero cause above all else. Valentín invokes the blessing of the Virgen de Guadalupe as he prepares to die a Cristero martyr. This corrido's inherent Cristero memory has reinterpreted the events leading to Valentín's death as the death of a brave Cristero who was met with little choice but to face his immortality over giving up information to agrarista soldiers. Valentín de la Sierra (Valentín of the Mountains) redeemed himself to God and died a hero and martyr, not a traitor.

The "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra," which I first introduced in Chapter One when discussing its performance by Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra and by the Martín family, is one of the most recognizable Cristero corridos, whose performance in early radio broadcasting shortly after the end of the Cristero Rebellion transitioned the ballad into secular repertory of Mexican traditional music (Bonfíl 1994: 90). This is likely why secular groups such as Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra in Boulder, Colorado (unlike the Cristero descendants of the Martín family in Orange County, California) are not always informed of its historical contextualization associated with *La Cristiada*. The popularity of the "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra" overlaps with transition of certain Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary classic corridos into the popular music scene, shortened to the two to three-minute time restrictions of early 1930s recordings and subject to decontextualization in the process. Valentín de la Sierra remained a hero each time his corrido was performed, and "the popularity of the ballad even led to two films about the so-called historical Valentín de la Sierra" in the late 1960s (Andes 2015: 197). Interestingly, these films

did not situate Valentín's story during the Cristero Rebellion in the post-Revolutionary period, but instead cast him as an epic hero during the 1910 start of the Mexican Revolution (yet another reason why, as described in Chapter One, Mariachi Sol de Mi Tierra's trumpet player, Juventino Romero may have thought the corrido was about the Mexican Revolution).

In addition to the encoded circumstances, causes, and beliefs in Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary corridos, the use of codified language specific to the corrido's affiliated ballad community helps position a historical figure as an epic hero (González 2015: 27). This is especially significant in Cristero corridos, evident in the preceding ballads of three Cristero epic heroes, whose language not only evokes religious themes, but invokes them as well, inserting direct prayers to Christ the King, the Virgen of Guadalupe, and the Saints. Cristero language in corridos elevates the protagonist to more than just an epic hero—he is a martyr, at or near the level of other martyrs and canonized Saints who preceded them in their protection of religious beliefs and religious liberty. Thus, Cristero corridos' commemoration of fallen Cristero epic heroes, specifically their respective narrative and inherent cultural memory's interpretation of a Cristero's life and character traits, exemplifies what Marisol López-Menéndez describes as the collective process that transforms death into martyrdom through "acts of remembrance" that "accommodate the social concerns" of believers and forge "collective bonding" among them (2016: 1-2). Since Cristero corridos were composed and documented as the people witnessed events firsthand (typical of classic corridos), they were immediately recorded into Cristero memory and collective consciousness. Cristeros do not wait until the Church recognizes their epic religious heroes as saints and martyrs, but instead immediately characterize and memorialize them as such in their musical expressions of oral history. Thus, studies on corridos about Cristero epic heroes contribute to new historiographies and Cristero hagiography, evident

in how these ballads narrate the lives and deeds of Cristeros as the lives of saints and servants of Christ the King.

"El Corrido del Arreglo Religioso"

After José de León Toral's assassination of President-elect Álvaro Obregon, Mexico was left without a President, causing political agitation among Obregonistas. Former President Plutarco Calles delegated power to Emilio Portes Gil as interim President with provisional power, the man attributed as having brought peace between the Cristeros and the Mexican government. During the presidency of Portes Gil, United States Ambassador Dwight Morrow resurrected the peace negotiation that was suspended after Obregón's assassination, and in June of 1929, an agreement (*Los Arreglos*) was reached between Portes Gil and Archbishop Leopoldo Ruíz y Flores, the Vatican's apostolic delegate. This agreement marked the end to the *La Cristiada*, resulting in a temporary ceasefire after nearly four years of warfare between the Cristero and Federal armies (Meyer 1976; M. Gonzales 2002). According to historian Michael Gonzales, this compromise was perceived as bittersweet by the Cristero community. In addition to the thousands of lives that had been lost during the war, nothing fundamental had actually changed in the 1917 Constitution. The anticlerical laws remained, though the Mexican government agreed not to enforce them in a manner considered hostile toward the Church (M. Gonzales 2002: 218). Despite this agreement, unresolved conflicts remained in the fight for social reform of Mexico's Constitutional government, eventually leading to the less coordinated revolts of *La Segunda Cristiada*.

"El Corrido del Arreglo Religioso" (The Ballad of the Religious Agreement) (**Figure 3.5**), unlike the previous corridos, does not incorporate any inter-narrative dialogue from any of

the people described in the corrido. Rather, this ballad functions as the *corridista*'s reflexive social and religiopolitical commentary on the peace accord that ended the Cristero Rebellion in 1929. Although Gonzales and other Cristero historians argue that *Los Arreglos* (the Religious Agreements) did not necessarily provide any consoling affirmation for the Cristeros on account of its lack of tangible constitutional change, the *corridista* remembers the treaty, which he refers to as the singular *El Arreglo Religioso* (The Religious Agreement), as a Cristero victory. The lyrical text amicably refers to Portes Gil as "Don," a title that conveys respects and honor, signifying that the Cristero *corridista* accepts Portes Gil as the "pacifist and generous" leader of the nation, foiling the characterization of his predecessors Calles and Obregón and their blatant antagonism toward Cristeros and the Catholic faith.

Figure 3.5 Excerpt from "El Corrido del Arreglo Religioso"[17]

Esta es la historia, señores Del problema religioso Que Portes Gil arreglará Pacifista y generoso Tras muchos días amargos En que no hubo religión Se han abierto las iglesias Y cesó la rebelión … Vino como consecuencia Una cruel persecución Y no hubo libre conciencia Ya ni en la Constitución …	This is the story, gentlemen Of the religious conflict That Portes Gil will resolve A pacifist and generous man Over the course of many bitter days In which no religion was allowed The church doors are finally open And the rebellion has ended … It came as a consequence From cruel persecution And there was no freedom of conscience [religion] Not even in the Constitution …

[17] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Transcribed by the author from the full corrido text as performed by the group, Travadores Tapatíos in 1929, recorded on Disc IV "Post-Revolutionary Corridos and Narratives" from *The Mexican Revolution: Corridos About Heroes and Events 1910-1920 and Beyond!* (Folklyric/Arhoolie Records), 1996.

Fue en año veintiseís Floreció la intransigencia Al declararse la guerra A la fe de la consciencia …	It was in the year twenty-six That intolerance fully blossomed And war was declared [by the government] On the consciences of the faithful …
Es que nuestra religión Por lo que damos la vida El alma y el corazón Nunca pudo ser vencida …	This is our religion The one for which we give our lives And our souls and hearts It could never be defeated …
Don Emilio Portes Gil Presidente mexicano Ya arregló las diferencias Que había con el Vaticano	Don Emilio Portes Gil The Mexican President He has resolved all the conflicts There had been between the Vatican [and State]
Hoy por eso las campanas Repican con tanta prisa Llamando a los mexicanos A la iglesia y a la misa	And this is why today the bells Toll with such intensity Calling the Mexican people To the Church and to Mass
Ya no hay tiros ni trancazos Toditito está arreglado Ahora si puedo casarme Por la iglesia y el estado	Now there are no more shootings Everything has been arranged Now I [the *corridista*] can get married By both the Church and the State
Cesó la intransigencia Volvió la paz a reinar De libertad de consciencia Ya podemos disfrutar	The intolerance has ceased Peace has returned to reign Of our freedom of conscience [worship] We can now enjoy
México ha reconquistado Su gloriosa religión La fe del gran cura Hidalgo Y Morelos y Pavón	Mexico has reconquered Her glorious religion The faith of the great Father Hidalgo And Morelos and Pavón

The *corridista* recounts the "bitter days" that marked the start of the government's suppression of religious worship as he exclaims that the Church's doors have now been opened. According to the *corridista*, the "cruel persecution" incited by the Constitution's unjust laws will

now cease thanks to Emilio Portes Gil's peace treaty with the Vatican. In "giv[ing] up [their] lives, souls, and hearts," the *corridista* and Cristeros continued their cause knowing that their religion "could never been defeated," indicating that the peace treaty and ceasefire was not a surrender to the government, but a victory. The *corridista* expresses his gratitude to President Portes Gil for ensuring that Mexican Catholics can now practice their religion, as the Church bells resound, calling the faithful back to Mass. The *corridista* is elated that he can now "get married by the Church and the State," for peace and religious liberty has finally returned to Mexico. "El Corrido del Arreglo Religioso" regards the 1929 treaty as an official end to the religious persecution experienced under Obregón and Calles, evident in how the corrido's full text narrates the significant sociopolitical events that led to and ended *La Cristiada*. The ballad's recounting of the treaty's aftermath relays to the listeners that Mexico collectively restored her faith, ascribing the Catholic religion as belonging to the entire nation and not just the Cristeros. In expressing how "Mexico has reclaimed her glorious religion," the *corridista* proclaims Cristero religopolitical and nationalist ideologies, further strengthened by his invoking the memory of the Father Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos, *padres de la patría* (Fathers of Mexican Independence). Unlike "El Corrido de la Convención," this ballad is undoubtedly shaped by Cristero interpretation of the events that framed and ended the armed insurrection, transmitting Cristero memory of the Religious Agreement between President Portes Gil and the Church as a Cristero victory, at last restoring Mexico's true religious national identity.

Cristero corridos and post-Revolutionary corridos associated with the events that occurred during *La Cristiada* (such as corridos composed from the perspective of the agraristas instead of the Cristeros) "still have validity" in their community of origin as means of commemorating its characters, values, epic climate of the rebellion, and the "political

antagonism" of the time (González 2015: 180). Their emergence created a distinct religious subgenre of the post-Revolutionary corrido and, according to early corrido scholars, effectively ended the classic corrido tradition that first manifested during the Mexican Revolution. As stated in Chapter Two, corrido scholars Vicente T. Mendoza, Américo Paredes, and their adherents, who regarded the epic narrative form as the authenticating factor of the classic corrido, considered the corpus of post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos to be the final contribution and concluding chapter of the classic corrido as a genre.

New Cristero Corridos and Performance of Cristero Memory

As presented in the previous section and as the brief analyses of Cristero and Cristero-themed corridos from the post-Revolutionary period exemplify, historical Cristero corridos encode narratives of Cristero resistance, specific battles, Cristero epic heroes and prominent figures associated with the Cristero movement (including leaders of the opposition), the lived experiences of religious persecution, and the deaths of Cristeros memorialized as martyrs of the faith. Historical Cristero corridos have been continuously sung in the Cristero heartland of West and Central Mexico as part of shared Cristero culture. Some are still sung today in popular music contexts, as well as among Cristero-descending families in and outside of Mexico. New Cristero corridos, on the other hand, express reinterpretations of Cristero memory that do not necessarily address specific historical figures, battles or events. Rather, the rememory (Shelemay 2006; Barz 2008) contained in new Cristero corridos, similar to expressions of cultural memory found within migrant corridos (Chew Sánchez 2006), centers on invoking the overarching emotional and spiritual Cristero experience and post-*Cristiada*'s interpretations of Cristero martyrdom. Post-*Cristiada* generations refers to individuals born after the end of the Cristero Rebellion who have

no experiential memory of *La Cristiada*, often relying on inherited memory transmitted from family or community members, as well as the inherited memory contained in historical Cristero corridos.

The following corrido, "El Martes Me Fusilan" (**Figure 3.6**), composed in the 1970s, at least four decades after *La Cristiada*, is attributed to composer José Antonio Meléndez Nevarez[18] and was popularized among Mexican and Mexican-American listeners by legendary Mexican singer, Vicente Fernández (b. 1940) in the 1979 release[19] of his album, *El tahúr*. It is the only Cristero corrido included in the original album, as well as in any of its subsequent rereleases in later decades. Unlike the previous corridos, the *corridista* and the Cristero epic hero in this corrido are the same person. Recorded performances of the corrido reframe the ballad as a narration in which the *corridista* reflects on his pending execution and recounts the sounds of his execution at the end of the ballad. The narrator is nameless, atypical of biographical and epic Cristero corridos such as those of Gorostieta and Toral, however similar in their narrating the martyrdom of a Cristero, whose death is also marked by the same cry, "Long Live Christ the King!"

The cry "¡Que Viva Cristo Rey (Long Live Christ the King)" is not found in the original text of the *corrido* in published sheet music, nor is it included in the text insert (containing the track's lyrics) to the original album. However, this Cristero battle cry can be heard in multiple recordings (including *conjunto norteño* and *banda* covers of Vicente Fernández's original 1979

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[18] José Antonio Meléndez Nevarez passed away on January 21, 2020, as noted by the *Sociedad de Autores y Compositores de México* (Society for Mexican Authors and Composers), https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Noticia/259. Accessed 11 March 2020.

[19] While unverified, the sudden emergence of a new Cristero corrido in 1979 (particularly as a popular corrido for commercial consumption) is likely inspired by the 1976 release of the vinyl *Corridos de la Rebelión Cristero* by Mexico's INAH (National Institute of Anthropology and History). However, there is no information on what year Meléndez Nevarez composed the corrido before its recording for Vicente Fernández's 1979 album.

recording) as a dramatic addendum to the *corrido*'s closing stanza. The spoken dialogue and brief coda that reiterates the main chorus line, "On Tuesday they will execute me at six in the morning," portrays the sonic rendering of an execution scene, incorporating the voices of the Federales, the sound of their rifles and kill shot, and the last words of the unnamed martyr: *"Viva Cristo Rey!"* Additionally, based on interviews with post-*Cristiada* families in California and in Texas[20] who are familiar with Vicente Fernández's rendition, the Cristero's cries were interrupted in the middle of his final words, "Long Live Christ the King!" According to these post-*Cristiada* interpretations, one can hear the word "*y*," or "and" right after the word "King," implying the Cristero was not able to finish his final proclamation, as it was interrupted with the sounds of gunfire from the Federal army. Two members of the Martín family in both Jalostitlán and in Orange County, California, claim that the Cristero was going to say, "*y la Virgen de Guadalupe!*", a prominent battle cry seen written on Cristero banners, in letters, texts, and other forms of propaganda.[21] However, according to interviews with a post-*Cristiada* congregants at the La Sagrada Familia Catholic Church in El Paso, Texas, the Cristero was going to say, "*y que muera el gobierno mexicano!"* or "death to the Mexican Federal government!" What makes these two different interpretations profoundly fascinating is the fact that they are based on what remains unheard in the corrido's performance, compounded by the fact that this unheard or silenced message is not contained in the original corrido text; it is only found in live or recorded performance.[22]

[20] Interviews with María Martín Alcalá and family, and Martín-Mercado family in Orange County, CA; and congregants from La Sagrada Familia (Holy Family) Catholic Church in El Paso, Texas. Conducted in May 2016, and June and July of 2017 by Teresita Lozano.

[21] For extensive photographic narration of the Cristero movement, based on photographs of the period and of archival materials, please see Jean Meyer (1997) *La vida cotidana*.

Figure 3.6 Full text, "El Martes Me Fusilan"[23] as performed by Vicente Fernández (1979)

El martes me fusilan A las seis de la mañana Por creer en Di-s eterno Y en la gran Guadalupana.	On Tuesday they will execute me At six in the morning For believe in the Eternal God And the Great Guadalupana (Virgin of Guadalupe)
Me encontraron una estampa De Jesús en el sombrero Por eso me sentenciaron Porque yo soy un Cristeo	They have found a stamp (cloth patch) Of Jesus on my sombrero For this reason they have condemned me Because I am a Cristero
Es por eso me fusilan El martes por la mañana Matarán mi cuerpo inútil Pero nunca, nunca mi alma	This is why they will execute me On Tuesday in the morning They may kill my useless body But they can never, never kill my soul
Yo les digo a mis verdugos Que quiero que me crucifiquen Y una vez crucificado Entonces usen sus rifles	I tell my executioners That I wish to be crucified And once crucified, They are free to use their rifles
Adíos sierras de Jalisco, Michoacán y Guanajuato Donde combatí al Gobierno Que siempre salío corriendo	Farewell to the mountains of Jalisco Michoacán, and Guanajuato Where I fought against the Government Who always ended up fleeing
Me agarraron de rodillas, Adorando a Jesucristo Sabían que no había defensa En este santo recinto	They caught me on my knees Worshipping Jesus Christ They knew I had no means of defense In that holy enclosure…
Soy labriego por herencia Jalisciense de nacencia No tengo más Dios que Cristo Porque me dio la existencia	I am a rural laborer by heritage Jalisciense by birth I have no God but Christ Because he gave me life

[22] These interpretations offer additional insight into the varying manifestations of both Cristero and migrant inherited memory in Mexico and in the United States borderland. Such interpretations demand further research as to why these communities adhere to two different textual insertions, perhaps based on religious and political influences of their respective regions.

[23] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Transcribed by the author from the full corrido text as performed by Vicente Fernández (2008) "El Martes Me Fusilan," *El tahúr* (CD). This álbum was originally released on vinyl in 1979.

Con matarme no se acaba La creencia en Dios eterno Muchos quedan en la lucha Y otros que vienen naciendo Es por eso me fusilan El martes por la mañana	Killing me will not stop Faith in the Eternal God Many remain fighting And others are born each day This is why they will execute me On Tuesday morning

The *corridista* in "El Martes Me Fusilan" describes himself as a rural laborer born in Jalisco (the capital and heartland of west-central Cristero territory), and yet does not specify in exactly what region he was martyred. He states that he fought in the Cristero Rebellion in the highlands of Jalisco and across the states of Michoacán and Guanajuato, emphasizing that the government always fled from his attack in cowardice. Rather than being captured in battle, this unnamed Cristero was captured while praying in a sanctuary, an exemplum of faith like martyred Cristero epic heroes of historical Cristero corridos, willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of his faith in Christ the King. The *corridista* ends his narration just before his execution, declaring that even if the Federales kill his physical body, his soul will never die and neither will the collective faith of the Mexican Cristeros in the Eternal God. The *corridista* exclaims that despite his execution (and that of any Cristero), more Cristeros remain fighting and more Cristero children are born each day to continue the fight. This statement regarding the birth of new Cristeros alludes to the fact that memories of the Cristero experience, through performance, can be both transmitted to new generations and appropriated by post-*Cristiada* generations to address contemporary injustices that echo the struggles of the Cristeros before them.

"El Martes Me Fusilan" is an example of new Cristero *corrido* (albeit thirty years older than the corridos collected for this dissertation) based on a recreated memory. Its composition and performance are a musical manifestation of rememory, lacking specific names or events in

order to create a broad depiction of an unnamed Cristero martyr. This unnamed Cristero is symbolic of any Cristero who was not previously immortalized in corrido performance from the period, allowing the corrido to be claimed as collective memory by transgenerational (and transnational) communities of Cristeros and their descendants. The fact that this corrido was composed over four decades after the 1926-1929 *Cristiada* indicates that the Cristero Rebellion and its martyrs have not been forgotten. The fight continues in various forms and is not limited to Mexico but can extend to wherever Mexicans are found. This corrido lacks specificity of its protagonist, location, and the exact date of the protagonist's execution, allowing the ballad to transcend geographic location and temporal boundaries. Additionally, the *corridista*'s message that Cristero resistance and faith live on despite continuation of injustices allows for further appropriation and adaptation to present injustices in and outside of Mexico. Therefore, as long as the allegory of Mexican struggle continues, the voices immortalized through collective corrido performance and their intertextual memory of post-Revolutionary Mexico frame a historiography that belongs to the Mexican people, regardless of where they are currently, or whether they were physically present to experience the events. As will be seen in subsequent chapters, the overarching themes are reimagined within the contexts of a continuing struggle for social justice.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the Cristero movement hails from a prolonged and complicated relationship between the Mexican Catholic Church and the Mexican government, particularly within Mexican revolutionary politics from the late 19th-century's friction with Mexican liberalism to the rejection of the 1917 Mexican Constitution's anticlerical laws. The strict and violent enforcement of anticlerical laws by post-Revolutionary presidents, including

Álvaro Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles, resulted in the militant response of Mexican Catholic communities, adopting the term *Cristero* as self-identification and for their cause. *La Cristiada*, the 1926-1929 Cristero Rebellion, encompassed a series of violent encounters between Cristeros, the Mexican Federal army, and anti-Cristero agraristas, as the Cristeros sought to fulfil their mission of protecting and defending Mexican religious liberty in the name of Christ the King. In 1929, President Emilio Portes Gil negotiated a peace treaty with the Vatican and Mexican Catholic Church, signifying the end of the Cristero Rebellion and, for the Cristeros, a victorious reinstating of religious liberty. Cristero lived experiences, values, and spirituality were documented in lyrical texts of post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos, creating a new religious genre. The Cristero corrido continued the Revolutionary classic corrido's epic hero archetype, transforming the epic hero's religiosity into his paramount mission against governmental injustice. The death of a Cristero epic hero, thus, marks the death of a Cristero martyr and exemplum of the Catholic faith. The repertory of Cristero and Cristero-themed corridos presents a lyrical history, providing invaluable insight into Cristero religiopolitics and Cristero interpretation of the post-Revolutionary period and Cristero Rebellion.

Studies on Cristero corridos make no mention of current musical practices as they relate to reinterpretations of Cristero history, new historiographies of *La Cristiada*, or invocation of Cristero memory. As introduced in the last section of this chapter, new Cristero corridos composed decades after the end of the Cristero Rebellion index and invoke thematic content from historical Cristero corridos. While historical Cristero corridos, like their secular classic corrido counterparts from the Mexican Revolution and post-Revolutionary period, narrate the specific people, places, and events of the time, new Cristero corridos (such as "El Martes Me Fusilan") do not necessarily narrate the lives and martyrdom of specific Cristero heroes. Rather,

new Cristero corridos draw on the inherited memory of their historical predecessors, as well as inherited memory of post-*Cristiada* generations, in order to express rememory of the Cristero experience, focusing on the emotional strife and struggle against injustice.

My definition of new Cristero corridos and their contextualization as extensions of cultural artifacts from historical Cristero corridos composed during *La Cristiada* provides the necessary framework for analyzing contemporary performances of Cristero corridos. Additionally, my work builds fundamental research for the study of contemporary compositional and performance practices of Cristero ballads, reflected in the anachronistic reenactments and new Cristero corridos compositions of Mariachi Los Cristeros and the phenomenon of Saint Toribio Romo corridos (ghost smuggling ballads), explored in the chapters to follow.

CHAPTER FOUR

Mariachi Los Cristeros and Inherited Cristero Cultural Memory

As discussed in Chapter Three, historical Cristero and Cristero-themed corridos are ballads composed during the period surrounding *La Cristiada*, including the years preceding the insurrection and the ten years after the 1929 ceasefire ending the rebellion. These ballads contain epic narratives, religopolitical commentary, and cultural memory of the historical figures, places, and events from the post-Revolutionary Cristero Rebellion. New Cristero corridos, however, are Cristero ballads composed decades after the end of the Cristero Rebellion by post-*Cristiada* generations, referring to individuals with no experiential or living memory of *La Cristiada*. New Cristero corridos draw on inherited Cristero memory transmitted from family members, community oral histories, and the content of collec. While historical Cristero corridos from the post-Revolutionary period center on specific Cristero epic heroes, martyrs, and battles, new Cristero corridos (such as "El Martes Me Fusilan" analyzed in Chapter Three) evoke rememory (Shelemay 2006; Barz 2008) of the overarching emotional, spiritual, and lived Cristero experience. Contemporary performance practices of historical and new Cristero corridos, both in the digital spaces of social media and in West and Central Mexico (where Cristero history remains relevant among post-*Cristiada* generations), maintain, reinterpret, and reimagine inherited cultural memory of the Cristero experience.

This chapter introduces the Acatíc, Jalisco-based ensemble, Mariachi Los Cristeros, a contemporary ensemble derived from the professional group El Mariachi Moya, who I encountered during the process of digital research collecting new Cristero corridos. Mariachi Los Cristeros, led by Idelfonso Moya and comprised of four intergenerational members of the Moya

family, record and perform Mexican folk and traditional music from Mexico's pre-Revolutionary to post-Revolutionary period, including Cristero corridos. Mariachi Los Cristeros have also composed new Cristero corridos, inspired by family and regional Cristero memory, as well as recently beatified Cristero martyrs from Jalisco. In addition to their public presence on Facebook and YouTube through the recording and uploading of public digital albums and live performances, Mariachi Los Cristeros tour multiple states in the heartland of Cristero territory dressed in costumes of archetypal characters from the Cristero Rebellion. Drawing from studies on religious satire and mockery (Lindvall 2015) and "living history" and role playing (McCarthy 2014), this chapter examines how Mariachi Los Cristeros' paraliturgical parody and dramatic reenactment, including character interaction and anachronistic interplay with audience members, transcend temporal boundaries to both evoke and reimagine inherited and collective Cristero memory. Additionally, this chapter explores the lyrical texts and rememory of three new Cristero corridos composed for Mariachi Los Cristeros by Idelfonso Moya, demonstrating how these new Cristero ballads are extensions of the post-Revolutionary Cristero corrido corpus, serving as musical oral histories that contribute to new Cristero historiographies.

Encounters with Mariachi Los Cristeros: YouTube Archives and Digital Albums

In the process of my discovery of new Cristero corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, I came across a link to an audio track upload (single image displayed throughout the video, rather than live performance or montage) on YouTube entitled "Santo Toribio,"[1] subsequently introducing me to the Jalisciense (Jalisco-based) mariachi *tradicionál* ensemble[2] named

[1] To listen to audio/video track see Mariachi Moya, "MARIACHI MOYA-LOS CRISTEROS-#09 SANTO TORIBIO," (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHExPI8bRiA&t=5s.

[2] A mariachi *tradicional*, unlike the more internationally recognized contemporary (or popular) mariachi ensemble, is comprised solely of string instruments, based on the western-central rural mariachi tradition that would

Mariachi Los Cristeros de Acatíc, the alter-ego to the ensemble El Mariachi Moya. The video's image displayed telephone contact information and two different ensemble logos: one for El Mariachi Moya, with a sombrero illustration over the "o" in Moya; and one for Los Cristeros, with a Christian cross in place of the "t" in the word Cristeros. The subscript underneath both logos read that both groups were directed by a man named Idelfonso Moya. These logos and advertising information were superimposed on an image of what is meant to be interpreted as a Cristero execution, depicting a blindfolded man backed against a brick wall surrounded by shotguns, presumptively held by the obscured bodies of Mexican Federal soldiers. This image (**Figure 4.1**) was not an illustration, but rather a photographic artistic rendering of many Cristero executions seen in archival photographs from the time period, found in *La Cristiada* literature, museums, archives, and academic studies.

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eventually develop into the iconic urban mariachi. The instrumentation in a mariachi *tradicional* can include a combination of violin, vihuela, guitarrón, harp, guitar, and guitarra de golpe, more attuned to the ensembles of the late 19th century and early 20th century (Mexican Revolutionary period). It is sometimes referred to as mariachi *antiguo*, or old mariachi, and does not utilize the trumpet – the trumpet is the emblematic instrumental addition (attributed to Mariachi Vargas de Tecatitlán in the 1940s) that solidified the birth of the widely-recognized contemporary mariachi.

Figure 4.1 Screenshot of “Santo Toribio” corrido upload by Mariachi Los Cristeros

It was not clear from the video which ensemble (Mariachi Los Cristeros or Mariachi Moya) was on the recording and, as this was my first encounter with anything related to either group, I was unaware that both, in fact, were comprised of the same family of musicians. As I listened to the video, I recognized the instrumental introduction of the audio track from a corrido by the *conjunto norteño*, Los Originales de San Juan, and deducted that this must be a mariachi cover of the 2007 corrido, “Santo Toribio Romo,” the only commercially recorded ghost smuggling ballad dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo. Although not an original composition by the group, this interpretation of the corrido began with added improvisatory commentary typical of post-Revolutionary classic corrido performances. The *corridista*’s voiceover featured a salutatory message that addressed the listener directly in Spanish, “Oh, my dear Jalostotitlán.

Tierra de Cristeros [Land of Cristeros]. A heartfelt greeting all the way from Acatíc, here with you are the Cristeros."

I immediately clicked on the YouTube profile and main page for Mariachi Moya in hopes of discovering more information on this group, as well as of finding perhaps other performances of Cristero corridos, in particular new Cristero corridos. Based on the advertising method implemented on many of their videos, it appeared that El Mariachi Moya served as the more prominent of the two ensembles, with multiple indications that the group is available for private and family events. I inferred that El Mariachi Moya must be a popular local ensemble in the region of Acatíc, Jalisco, a town east of Guadalajara and the gateway to the region known as Los Altos de Jalisco, or the highlands of Jalisco, just south of Jalostotitlán (which I have referred to previously as part of the heartland of Cristero territory). In searching their profile and YouTube video library and playlist, I learned that Mariachi Moya joined the YouTube platform in May 2009 and had since acquired over twenty-seven thousand subscribers plus the possibility of several hundred silent "lurkers" or unregistered viewers to their YouTube channel. I discovered that Mariachi Moya's recordings are available for streaming on YouTube and Facebook, as well as available for purchase on iTunes and Amazon, revealing that in addition to them being a popular ensemble in the regions surrounding Acatíc, Mariachi Moya is a professional recording ensemble with a transnational commercial presence. However, I could not find any commercial recordings or separate profile and social media page for Mariachi Los Cristeros, who, at the time, I thought was likely a collaborating or auxiliary group. All audio tracks and videos associated with Mariachi Los Cristeros were listed and moderated within the larger digital archives and digital presence of Mariachi Moya.

Scrolling through Mariachi Moya's video uploads and curated YouTube playlists, I found separate audio uploads displaying the same image in **Figure 4.1**, featuring recordings by Mariachi Los Cristeros, including uploads of the other tracks associated with their cover of the "Santo Toribio Romo," each labeled as part of a public digital album uploaded in 2013 (Mariachi Moya 2013a-o). This album contains Revolutionary classic corridos, post-Revolutionary historical Cristero corridos, a Cristero corrido attributed to an older member of the Moya family, and a series of traditional songs about Acatíc and its surrounding region, including "Las Alteñitas," a polka and mariachi standard hailing from the highlands of Jalisco. Based on these tracks, the album presents a combination of early-20th-century Mexican repertoire and religiopolitical ballads rooted in themes affiliated with the post-Revolutionary period, *La Cristiada,* and Mexican Catholicism. One of the tracks, for example, the only *alabanza* (worship) song on the album, "Que Viva la Candelaria," is described as a modified Mexican Catholic hymn arranged by Idelfonso Moya and is dedicated to La Virgen de la Candelaria, or the Virgin of Candelaria, who is venerated throughout Jalisco (especially in the Los Altos and Acatíc region) alongside neighboring patronesses of La Virgen de San Juan de los Lagos and La Virgen de Zapopan.[3] Idelfonso Moya described his arrangement as forming part of the cultural patrimony of his home municipality of Acatíc (Mariachi Moya 2013m). In fact, each track on the 2013 digital album contains thematic content pertaining to persons, places, and events from the

[3] Local histories attribute numerous miracles and divine apparitions to these patronesses, all embodiments of the Virgin Mary, since Spanish colonial presence in the late 16th century. The largest and most grand religious festivals and Feast Day celebrations are dedicated to each of the regional Virgin patronesses, including the *Carnaval Nacional de la Fe*, or the National Caravan of Faith, the largest on-foot pilgrimage to San Juan de los Lagos beginning in January and ending with pilgrim arrival on February 2nd, the Feast of the Candelaria. Although my resident fieldwork in the Jalostotitlán and San Juan de los Lagos region was technically not the primary pilgrimage season, I encountered thousands of summer pilgrims who participated in multisite treks to both the Santo Toribio Shrine and the altar of La Virgen de San Juan at the Basilica de San Juan de los Lagos. Many of these families travelled from the United States by car as part of their pilgrimage.

state of Jalisco. Separate from their cover of “Santo Toribio Romo,” two of the tracks on this digital album are new Cristero corridos dedicated to the memory of Bl. Miguel Gómez Loza, a Cristero martyr beatified by Pope Benedict XVI on November 20, 2005, and Pioquinto Moya, the late patriarch of the Moya family. I would later discover a third new Cristero corrido, also composed by Idelfonso Moya, in a different Mariachi Los Cristeros audio upload (Mariachi Moya 2017). Mariachi Los Cristeros’ new Cristero corrido compositions will be discussed in a section to follow.

I was hard pressed to find any record of Mariachi Los Cristeros beyond social media platforms, reposts, and fan uploads. While the front ensemble Mariachi Moya, self-described as an international touring group in Mexico and the United States, had both a social media and commercial presence with recordings available for purchase, Mariachi Los Cristeros was only found on publicly accessible streaming and videos on YouTube, including links redirected from Mariachi Moya’s Facebook page. Mariachi Los Cristeros advertised the availability of physical and digital recordings to those who send a request directly to the group, indicating that none of their albums are available for purchase through commercial vendors, digital purchase, or other media platforms.

At this stage in my research I had no idea what Mariachi Los Cristeros looked like in live performance, as I had only been introduced to audio uploads on YouTube and had not viewed any live performances. However, based on these first encounters, I realized the group was undoubtedly inspired by inherited memory of *La Cristiada* and its continuing cultural significance in the state of Jalisco. Were they a religious ensemble? Was there a reason that only the name Mariachi Moya had a commercial presence? Were all members of Mariachi Moya part of Mariachi Los Cristeros? Why were they called Mariachi Los Cristeros if their recordings are

not entirely centered on Cristero themes? After communicating via Facebook and email with Marco, the director's son and co-member of both Mariachi Moya and Mariachi Los Cristeros, I was directed to multiple YouTube links of Mariachi Los Cristeros' live performances, including paraliturgical concerts, secular mariachi *tradicionál* competitions, and guest appearances on local news broadcasts. This collection of live performances would lead me to the fascinating phenomenon of the Moya family's dramatic reenactments and paraliturgical parody of four post-Revolutionary Cristero characters who traveled through time to provide musical entertainment and transmit cultural memory to their contemporary audiences.

From *Proyecto* to Cultural Phenomenon: "A Mariachi that Strayed from the Original"

Mariachi Moya, often self-described as "Mariachi Moya Internacional" on account of their binational performance tours in Mexico and the United States, was founded by Idelfonso Moya in 1997 in Acatíc, Jalisco. Based on interviews with *El Informador*, an online Jalisco news source, Mariachi Moya's early promotional methods were on radio and local advertising, and quickly moved to social networking sites and YouTube as their primary means of engaging with potential patrons and their fanbase (Solís 2015). Idelfonso Moya, the founder and director, composes a significant part of their original music, continuing the musical legacy of his father, Pioquinto Moya, a musician and composer (and the subject of a new Cristero corrido in Mariachi Los Cristeros' repertory), who the family claims composed several corridos during *La Cristiada*, most significantly the "Corrido de Quirino Navarro," the Cristero-themed ballad of the anti-Cristero mayor of Tepatitlán, Jalisco. Mariachi Moya has a wide array of recordings, including projects from their collaboration with the *Secretaría de Cultura Jalisco* (Secretariat of Culture in

Jalisco), a government institution that promotes, edits, and publishes literary and artistic cultural production from the state of Jalisco.

Mariachi Los Cristeros began as an experimental *proyecto* (project) between 2009 and 2010 in efforts to continue innovating on the trajectory of Mariachi Moya and, according to the group's director, to support local Jalisco culture and heritage preservation. When asked about the unique conceptualization of the group, the director Don Moya (as he prefers to be called) described how after leaving his position with the internationally renowned Mariachi Vargas de Tecatitlán, he had no desire to create a group that would essentially be a copy of the famous Vargas ensemble. Don Moya initially founded El Mariachi Moya, the parent ensemble of Mariachi Los Cristeros, with his sons, grandsons, and additional members from his extended family and professional colleagues. Although Mariachi Moya differs from Mariachi Vargas de Tecatitlán by the fewer number of members and their atypical instrumentation (specifically the use of accordion), their attire and much of their repertory still align with what might be expected of a contemporary mariachi ensemble.

Regarding the birth of the Mariachi Los Cristeros project, Don Moya stated that, after the success of Mariachi Moya, he wanted to form an ensemble that was completely different in order to draw more attention and to diversify the ensemble's performance venues. "Thanks to our fans, and thanks to God, we are a mariachi that strayed from the traditional," Don Moya explained, referring to its straying from the iconic urban mariachi ensemble most visually representative of the typical mariachi ensemble worldwide—elegant *charro* (rancher) outfit, wide ornate hat, silver buttons, suede vest and coat, boots, and spurs. Since the group's founding, Don Idelfonso and his three sons, Idelfonso Jr., Marco, and Leonardo (who at times goes by Oliver), who each perform regularly as part of Mariachi Moya, have gained significant local acclaim as the four-

member, all-string Mariachi Los Cristeros, an ensemble whose instrumentation and historical performance practices have propelled the group from an experimental *proyecto* to an award-winning cultural phenomenon and bearers of early Mexican musical heritage.

Mariachi Los Cristeros pride themselves in being an all-string mariachi *tradicionál* and have participated annually in the *Encuentro Nacional de Mariachi Tradicionál* (National Conference for Mariachi *Tradicionál*), mariachi *tradicionál* festivals throughout the Mexican republic, and regionally-staged historical performances, in addition to private and community events in their hometown of Acatíc, Jalisco. As a mariachi *tradicionál*, Mariachi Los Cristeros embody an ensemble typical of the Revolutionary period (no winds, rural Revolutionary attire, specializing in late 19th-century to post-Revolutionary Mexican traditional music). The culminating factor in their presence and performances is the group's resurrection and reinterpretation of post-Revolutionary Cristero culture, inspired by the history and legacy of *La Cristiada* in Jalisco and based on the inherited memory of the Moya family's experiences during the Cristero Rebellion. When combined with their Cristero costumes, performance of Cristero ballads (including new Cristero corridos) and Revolutionary Mexican music, reenactment, and parody, the ensemble certainly draws the attention Don Idelfonso was seeking in their live performances.

An Introduction to Mariachi Los Cristeros Live Performances

On October 11, 2015, Mariachi Moya hosted and uploaded a live concert from an unnamed plaza in the state of Jalisco, announcing the two-hour staged performance as the "*Show del Mariachi Moya y Mariachi Tradicional Los Cristeros en Vivo*" (Mariachi Moya 2015)—my

first introduction to live performances by the Moya family musicians.[4] I expected the concert to open with the family's primary group, El Mariachi Moya with some interspersed performances by Mariachi Los Cristeros. The concert began, however, with a thirty-minute musical and theatrical performance of Idelfonso Moya and three of his sons. Unlike the images of Mariachi Moya I had seen advertised and displayed on their commercial merchandise, Facebook business page, or YouTube profile, the Moya men were not dressed in their standard mariachi *charro* outfits. Instead, the musicians leapt on stage dressed as archetypal religious and rural Revolutionary characters from the Cristero Rebellion, lauded by the large crowd present who cheered and laughed as the "altar boy" violinist introduced the four members of Mariachi Los Cristeros. Four musicians on violin, guitarrón, and vihuela greeted the crowd, dressed as a priest in a long black cassock (typical of the 1920s), a militant rural Revolutionary with a large straw sombrero and bandolier and rosary across his chest (bearing resemblance to caricatures of Pancho Villa), a *campesino* (rural farmer) in sandals and white linen clothing, and an altar boy dressed in a red and white cassock and surplice.

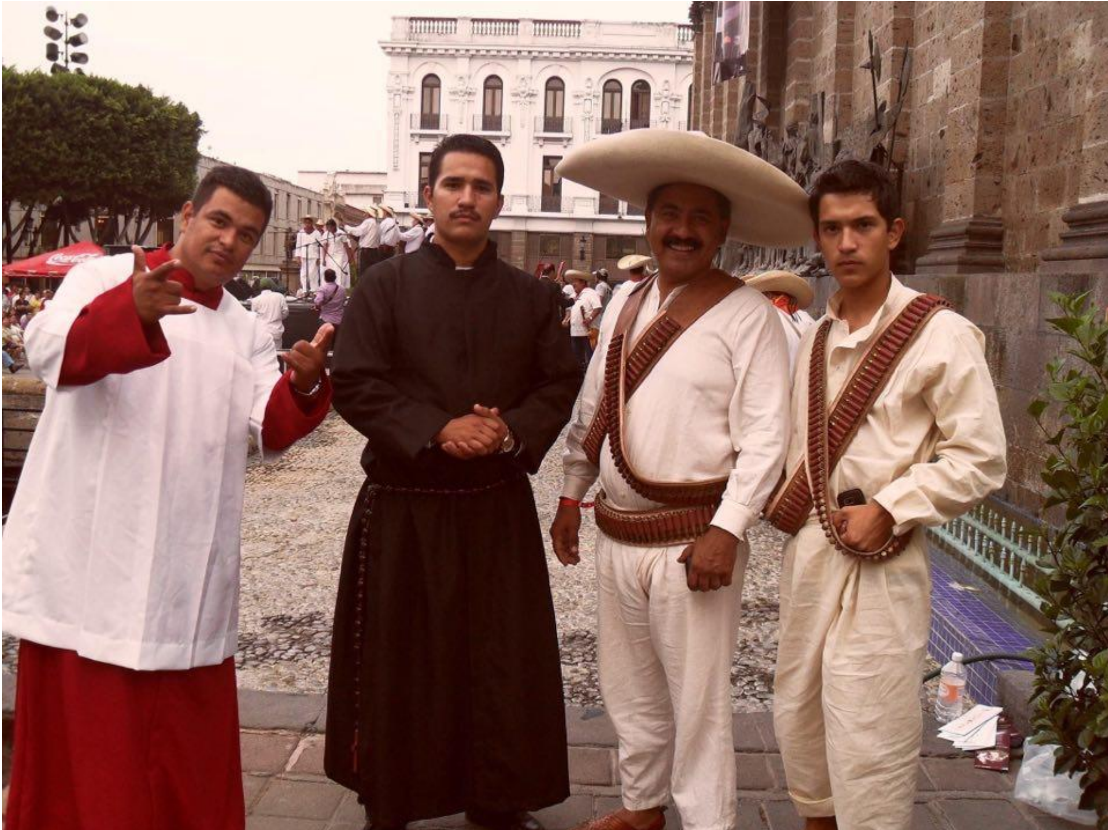
> PILLO: [In Spanish][5] Welcome! I know what you're thinking. These men bear an uncanny resemblance to Mariachi Moya. Hmm… what is that about? It is my pleasure to introduce to you El Padre [the priest], El General Campesino [the Rural General], El Campesino Menor [the Young Campesino], and of course, me. I'm Lupillo Fernández, also known as Pillo el Monguillo [the Altar Boy]. As you can see, we were fighters in the *Revolución Cristera* (Cristero Rebellion)…
>
> [*Audience cheers*]

[4] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. For Mariachi Moya's full performance (recorded from livestream) see Mariachi Moya, "Show del Mariachi Moya y Mariachi Tradicionál Los Cristeros en Vivo," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUdhic4toBM&t=5494s.

[5] All dialogue, commentary, and quotes related to Mariachi Los Cristeros, interviews, and performances contained in this chapter have been transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano.

El PADRE: Okay, okay. Well, Pillo, start us off with a good song so we can all create the proper *ambiente* [mood].

PILLO: Alrighty, we are going to start with a song that will put you all in the proper mood… this song is a beautiful instrumental piece called "Las Chiapanecas"…from [the state of] Veracruz.



Photograph 4a. Mariachi Los Cristeros in full costume in Jalisco.
Photograph taken by Mariachi Moya, Mariachi Los Cristeros, 2014. Used with permission.

When I first watched this performance, I was completely enthralled and fascinated by the fact that, straying from the dress of the standard or traditional mariachi, the members of Mariachi Los Cristeros were dressed in costumes representing personas from the Cristero Rebellion. I initially thought the performance was somehow affiliated with a church-sponsored event in their

area, considering the overt Cristero themes in their attire and anachronistic dialogue, the four members reminiscing about their experiences during *La Cristiada* while intersecting references to contemporary popular culture and current events. However, although the stage area and surrounding vendors and merchants were adjacent to the backdrop of a church, this was a secular community event featuring a full-length concert by El Mariachi Moya. Mariachi Los Cristeros were only an auxiliary and opening act to the main performance to follow.

Based on my introduction to Mariachi Los Cristero's digital albums on YouTube, I was surprised when the group began their performance with an instrumental piece typical of mariachi repertoire, "Las Chapanecas," a piece unaffiliated with Jalisco regional culture, a prominent theme in their online recordings. I figured the group was simply exemplifying the versatility of their mariachi repertory and would at least incorporate some of the Cristero corridos heard on their audio uploads on YouTube. Yet, in this particular secular performance, Mariachi Los Cristeros did not perform any Cristero ballads within their lineup, and instead presented a musical tour of songs, waltzes, and polkas from various regions in Mexico. The performance was intentionally framed as an introduction to the overarching cultural patrimony of Mexican traditional music, incorporating intermusical commentary, exaggerated role playing, irreverent humor that mocked the Church, and slapstick gestures for comedic effect.

> EL CAMPESINO MENOR: Hey, Pillo, the members of Mariachi Moya are here! [*gestures to a random section behind the audience]*
>
> PILLO: Oh! Are they? Okay, Mariachi Moya seems to have arrived. So, we are going to sing you a last song. [*gestures to a woman attempting to quiet her child in the front row*] Señora, don't shush him! Give him a kiss instead!... You know, yesterday Mariachi Los Cristeros were performing in Zacatecas and there was a showing of [Disney's] *Frozen*… Don't go see it! It's a bad influence! I came out of there singing with my girlfriend, "Do You Want to Build A Snowman…"

[*Pillo gestures provocatively at the crowd. El Padre covers his face. Audience laughs*.]

PILLO: And her father was pissed!... You all want us to end with the waltz from Sayula. It's the oldest Mexican waltz, you know. Composed in the year 1880.

GENERAL CAMPESINO: But don't go to Sayula! There's a ghost there. *El anima* of Sayula! [Referencing their original song, "El Anima de Sayula."]

Mariachi Los Cristeros closed their opener performance by continuing with a brief music history lesson, led by Pillo, on Maestro Francisco Cardenas, the late 19th-century conductor of the Guadalajara Philharmonic Orchestra. After playing their closing instrumental waltz, Pillo encouraged the audience to follow the group on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. All four members waved at the audience as they hurried behind the stage. Mariachi Moya's videographer spanned the area, zooming in on the surrounding merchant tents, food carts, and various stands around the stage, revealing what seems to be a festival or fair of some kind. Five minutes later, all four Mariachi Los Cristeros returned dressed in their *charro* attire, no longer as the Cristeros, accompanied by three other musicians on trumpet and accordion (an instrument not typical of a mariachi ensemble). The remaining hour and thirty minutes of the live performance featured solely Mariachi Moya, including both traditional Mexican mariachi standards and contemporary popular songs.

Since this live performance did not implement any Cristero corridos, despite maintaining Cristero and religion-themed parody in their dialogue and theatrics throughout the concert, I reached out to Marco Moya via email to ask whether Mariachi Los Cristeros ever performed Cristero music, such as the Cristero corridos on their YouTube albums, in live concerts or in public venues. "Yes, señorita, we sure do," he wrote enthusiastically. "I just sent you some more sound files, but please go back to the Mariachi Moya YouTube page. We were featured on some

local television channels and we played Cristero corridos like the ones you were asking about." Virtual ethnography, despite having its plethora of limitations and difficulties with informant communities, did afford me the opportunities to work extensively with the Moya family's self-curated archival footage on YouTube.[6]

Although the Moya family musicians do not currently sell any commercial recordings of their performances in character as Mariachi Los Cristeros, they utilize YouTube (specifically Mariachi Moya's main profile page) as a marketing and streaming tool in order to promote the group for local or remote events. Nearly all performances and audio streaming for Mariachi Los Cristeros are hosted on Mariachi Moya's public and promotional pages. In 2014, a Facebook account was created for "Mariachi Tradicional Cristeros de Acatic" (sic), but as a private page that required a "friend request" for accessibility, not a public business page or group page like that of Mariachi Moya. Marketing and advertising for Mariachi Los Cristeros's live performances and digital recordings is still mediated through Mariachi Moya's social media accounts. Utilizing Mariachi Moya's archival playlists, including links to fan uploads of other regional performances, I was able to view multiple performances of Mariachi Los Cristeros, including their standard lineup of historical and newly composed Cristero corridos (such as those the group composed about Miguel Gómez Loza and Pioquinto Moya, discussed in a section to follow). Unlike their opening act to Mariachi Moya's concert describe above, the majority of Mariachi Los Cristeros' musical community performances take place within paraliturgical celebrations and intentionally center on parody and dramatic reenactment of the Cristero experience, invoking and reinterpreting inherited cultural memory of the Cristero Rebellion.

[6] In Chapter one, I introduced the limited scholarship that centers specifically on social media platforms, including studies that regard YouTube as a repository for "popular archives" and an effective space for storing "cultural memories of practices" (Pietrobruno 2013: 1261-1262).

Paraliturgical Parody and the Holy Fool

The term “paraliturgical” is not used in any universal Church documents in the Catholic Church, although some social uses in religious and academic contexts conflate the term with novenas, litanies, and devotional acts that take place in church spaces and in the home (McNamara 2008). The Catholic Church refers to religious acts and ceremonies that fall outside the scope of traditional liturgy as extra-liturgical, a term that includes devotional practice within religious spaces and in private homes. Catholic worship is divided into two types: liturgy (such as the Eucharistic celebration and the Divine Office) and devotion (which can be integrated with liturgy, such as Vespers or worship activities tied to the veneration of the Virgin Mary or dedicated to the Saints). In literary, musical, and other interdisciplinary scholarship, paraliturgical is defined as that which is outside of or not necessarily aligned with liturgical canon, and includes sacred musical works such as Medieval paraliturgical repertory outside of the liturgy proper (Wulstan 2008: 349) and new Cristero corridos that express devotion to Saint Toribio Romo in thanksgiving for his miraculous intercessions (see Chapter Five). Corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo are not performed as part of Catholic traditional liturgy but are intended as part of spiritual practice among his devotees and those who seek his intercession, functioning as paraliturgical musical expressions. In my analysis of Mariachi Los Cristeros’ parody and dramatic reenactment, I apply the term paraliturgical parody to satirical acts that lack intent for spiritual practice or spiritual efficacy yet are performed in the contexts of paraliturgical religious festivals.

Since Spanish colonial presence in Mexico, parishes (church sanctuaries, church squares, parochial centers, church halls, and physical spaces adjacent to sanctuaries) have functioned as the physical epicenters for community life and activities. Religious activity that takes place on or

near church grounds but is not in the sanctuary space are regarded by the Church as extra-liturgical, and in interdisciplinary scholarship as paraliturgical. These activities and events often incorporate some element of devotion or liturgical action, such as the celebration of *posadas* (the pilgrimage of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem) and *via crucis* (the reenactment of the "Stations of the Cross," the Passion of Jesus Christ), which can take place either on church grounds or in residential spaces. In many towns and municipalities in the historically Cristero regions of West and Central Mexico, community events are often affiliated with Feast Day celebrations, *ferias* (fairs), parish festivals, parochial bazaars, and other paraliturgical festivities in the region. Based on archival footage and audio streaming on YouTube and Facebook, as well as interviews with the members, many of Mariachi Los Cristeros' on-stage performances take place in or around local parishes and range from municipalities within the state of Jalisco to neighboring states of Colima and Zacatecas, including performances for paraliturgical religious events (or extra-liturgical according to the Church) and festivities. My analysis defines Mariachi Los Cristeros' musical dramaturgy and parody as paraliturgical, satirizing and invoking religious acts and themes outside of the liturgical canon and operating without spiritual value as part of their on-stage entertainment for paraliturgical religious celebrations. Several of these performances are available on Mariachi Moya's YouTube page, as well as fan uploads by attendees and patrons (Rana Arvizu 2010a, 2010b; Mariachi Moya 2011b, 2011c, 2011e; Zacoalcoweb 2011; Mariachi Moya 2012a; Video Films Flores 2013).

Mariachi Los Cristeros do not consider themselves a sacred ensemble or a religious mariachi. This is an important distinction, considering that it is not uncommon to see mariachi ensembles perform for worship services and Mass inside Catholic churches and church spaces in Mexico, as well as Catholic churches in the United States with a large Mexican American

congregational demographic. Some mariachi ensembles in the commercial music scene self-define as Christian popular music groups.[7] Idelfonso Moya's decision to create Mariachi Moya's alter-ego, Mariachi Los Cristeros, did not necessarily stem from religious fervor or religious devotion, evident in the crass dialogue, intentional religious mockery, and crude humor experienced by audiences who attend or view their on-stage live performances. Rather, Mariachi Los Cristeros was the product of Mariachi Moya's attempts toward innovation and reinvention of the mariachi tradition, employing a complex interweaving of local history and intentional parody of the Moya family's inherited culture, Cristero memory, and regional Catholic culture.

> EL CAMPESINO MENOR: Long Live the Revolution!
>
> PILLO: Long Live Menstruation!
>
> [*Audience members laugh, some gasp. Other members of Mariachi Los Cristeros turn to Pillo in astonishment. El Padre shakes his finger at him.*]
>
> EL GENERAL CAMPESINO: No, no, no! Long Live the REVOLUTION!
>
> PILLO: Fine, both things. The point is that blood must flow. Here in Mexico, blood must flow!
>
> [*El Padre immediately runs over to Pillo, smacks him, and demands to know why he is misbehaving.*][8]

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[7] I must note, however, that in 2016, Mariachi Moya (which of course includes all four members of Mariachi Los Cristeros) released a digital album of Catholic mariachi hymns, and its genre is listed as Christian-Gospel. Their album is listed for purchase on Amazon Music on CD and as MP3 files. See Mariachi Moya (2016) *Alabanzas con el Mariachi Moya*.

[8] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. For full performance see Mariachi Moya, "SHOW DEL MARIACHI MOYA Y MARIACHI TRADITIONAL LOS CRISTEROS EN VIVO," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUdhic4toBM&t=5494s.

The members of Mariachi Los Cristeros interject their musical numbers with several jokes, irreverent humor, and anachronistic references to popular culture, and jokingly mock each other when one of them performs solo passages. Pillo el Monaguillo's (altar boy) character commandeers much of the performance, functioning as the master of ceremonies. The most vocal of the four characters, Pillo's character depicts a pubescent boy with the cultural knowledge of a grown man. Pillo is known for his sexual and patronizing humor toward El Padre, which he expresses with linguistic acrobatics and elaborate puns. Compared to the other Cristero characters in the group, he also engages most with the audience, and explains the historical and cultural significance of each piece, albeit dripping with sarcastic comments, and at several points even sexist, homophobic, and discriminatory remarks. In the following transcript, during Pillo's attempts to demonstrate regional violin and dance styles to the audience, he intentionally baits El Padre with dance melodies. Pillo tries to remind the El Padre that priests are not supposed to dance, simultaneously playing a rodeo theme to incite the Cristero priest to give in to his temptation, happily mocking his spiritual superior.

> PILLO: We can play some curious little violins styles, too. Like the little Purépecha [indigenous] old men that dance in Michoacán. [*whispers to audience*] You know, El Padre likes this. [*shouts*] Take a listen!
>
> [*instrumental music*]
>
> [*El Padre uses his violin bow as a cane, imitating an old man. He starts dancing and clogging*]
>
> EL GENERAL CAMPESINO: Wait, Father? Are you dancing? [*shocked expression aimed at audience*]
>
> [*El Padre stops dancing, embarrassed*]
>
> PILLO: Hmmm. No, Father. It's because [*stutters*], it's because priests don't dance! Well, maybe this one does. Let me see what happens if…

[*Pillo begins playing the theme from "Caballo Dorado," also known as the theme to the "Clown of the Rodeo"*]

[*El Padre gets upset and charges toward Pillo, but is held back by El Campesino menor*]

PILLO: [*laughs*] Just kidding, Father! You don't dance, you don't dance. It's not becoming of you. Okay! Let's play some music for the *marihuanos* [stoners] out there![9]

The character of El Padre rivals Pillo's dramatics in his ostentatious parody of the archetypal Cristero priest, simultaneously reprimanding the Cristeros for their vulgarity, while also participating in mockery of Catholic clergy and superficial piety. Easily offended, he is regularly restrained by other members in order to avoid physical altercations, especially when other members exhibit irreverent behavior, blaspheme, or point out his own failure avoid immoral behavior. For example, a continuous trope in Mariachi Los Cristeros' paraliturgical performances reveals how El Padre loves to dance but views it as sinful or inappropriate to his vocation, causing him great embarrassment and anger. In fact, in a recurring skit, Pillo asks El Padre if he wants to see him perform an *árabe* (Arabian) dance. El Padre, feigning reluctance, nods and watches gleefully as Pillo dances provocatively while playing the recognizable caricature melody of a Middle Eastern snake charmer. As Pillo dances to the center of the stage and gestures to both the audience and El Padre, El Padre blesses himself in repentance and attempts to slap Pillo for his lewdness.[10]

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[9] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. For full performance see Mariachi Moya, "SHOW DEL MARIACHI MOYA Y MARIACHI TRADITIONAL LOS CRISTEROS EN VIVO," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUdhic4toBM&t=5494s.

[10] To see one example of this recurring dance skit, refer to Mariachi Moya, "LOS CRISTEROS TOCANDO UN CORRIDO CRISTEROS LLAMADO MIGUEL GOMEZ LOZA," (2011) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQsfZn7drCQ.

El General Campesino, played by the director of both Mariachi Los Cristeros and Mariachi Moya, Don Moya, is the least vocal of the characters, and communicates with his fellow Cristeros and the audience through physical gestures and reactionary laughter, surprise, or disgust. He tends to agree with everything El Padre says and assumes the stereotypical macho identity of the group. El General Campesino is seemingly always trying to set a positive example for his younger counterpart, El Campesino Menor, the youngest character of the group who engages in witty banter with Pillo and attempts to evoke El Padre's disapproval with sexual innuendos guised as innocent questions, his swearing at the audience, and his childish pranks. In some performances, the Cristero characters imply that El Campesino Menor could be El General Campesino's son, possibly explaining El General Campesino's more reserved personality, allegiance to El Padre, and dedication to modeling good behavior whenever El Campesino Menor is watching. However, El General Campesino exaggerates stifled laughter in response to the antics of his fellow Cristeros, revealing to the audience that he, too, is not immune to irreverent behavior. While El Padre and Pillo represent Cristero clergy and religious servants, both Campesino characters represent Cristero laity, embodying the rural post-Revolutionary rebels that regarded Catholicism as an integral part of their Mexican identity, protective of Cristero clergy and servants of the church. Yet each of the Cristero characters welcome and incite mockery of the Church and religious practices, for which their characters proudly exclaim would be willing to die in order to defend against the injustices of the Mexican government.

Mariachi Los Cristeros' carnivalesque roles, dramaturgy, and religious parody are reminiscent of Chaucer's characters from the Canterbury Tales, and harken back to the Medieval history of religious satire. Jesters, goliards, and fools "inaugurated a carnival of laughter, tittering at vice more than preaching for repentance," uninhibited in their use of "excretory and sexual

frankness" or juxtaposing "semen, blood, and farts…with the spiritual aspect of humanity" (Lindvall 2015: 44). As described in an earlier transcript, Pillo, for example, illustrates and compares the deaths of Cristero martyrs and Federal soldiers with Mexico's menstruation, emphasizing that in order to protect and defend the Church and religious liberty, blood must flow in Mexico. Religious parody and "carnival laughter [include] everyone…pious and profane" (Lindvall 2015: 45). This juxtaposition of piety and profanity is best illustrated in the character El Padre and, in particular, the complex character of his altar boy, Pillo, whose irreligious comments and behavior question Cristero and the Church's spiritual and moral accountability, often exposing inconsistencies between the perceived religiosity of Cristero identity and their lascivious and combatant behavior. While El Padre's antics may classify him as a Cristero "jocular preacher" who negotiates between speaking religious or sociopolitical truths and attracting followers with buffoonery (Lindvall 2015: 49), Pillo's character functions more in the role of a Holy Fool, who as an altar boy is also in the service of and representative of the Church.

Like the Medieval fool who "held the license to speak the truth under the cover of wit," including mocking the King and the Pope (Lindvall 2015: 54), Pillo's satire serves a moral purpose by challenging the hypocrisies or misgivings of the Church and its faithful. In some performances, for example, Pillo reflects on his experiences fighting as a Cristero, but admits he is not certain for what, exactly, he was fighting, implying that he may doubt whether the Cristero mission justified an armed insurrection and the consequential loss of thousands of lives. This deeper reflection is regularly overpowered by Pillo's preoccupation with teaching the audience about Jalisco's history and musical heritage and thus leaving such comments as passing rhetorical thoughts for audiences to digest. Despite his crude and childish antics on stage, Pillo is arguably the voice of reason and the most historically and culturally knowledgeable of all of the

Cristeros. In every performance, Pillo provides elaborate musical and historical context for each piece, interweaving it with imagined and intentionally erroneous history for the sake of extracting laughs from the audience and maintaining a light-hearted ambiance.

> *[Pillo introduces the next piece, "El Express de los Azahares," an instrumental piece depicting a racing steam engine, train whistles, and Western motifs on violin.]*
>
> EL PADRE: Hey, Pillo. Just an observation…
>
> PILLO: Please, tell me, Father.
>
> EL PADRE: The office of the Secretary of Mexican Culture sent us here so that we could diffuse the Mexican culture, and you're here playing "Western" cowboy music.
>
> EL CAMPESINO MENOR: Yeah, what explanation do you have, Pillo? Why do you continue with your *chingaderas* [bullshit]?
>
> [*El Padre reprimands El Campesino Menor for swearing, grabs him, and starts dousing him with a vial of what the audience is meant to infer contains holy water*.]
>
> PILLO: Yes, yes. Technically this is a "Western" style song and it's a form of American music…
>
> El PADRE: You mean Texas?
>
> PILLO: Yeah, but it wasn't always American music. Remember! All of Texas, New Mexico, California, and Arizona was actually part of Mexican territory. But then President López de Santa Ana sold it for pennies… technically this music is representative of the United States,[11] but the United States has Mexican roots! They can't take credit for all the music!...
>
> PILLO: There is so much Mexican music… Here, let me play you a song in the public domain from sometime between 1920 and 1930 from another revolution. Not the Mexican Revolution or the Cristero Rebellion. No, I'm talking about the Revolution that gave rise to rap and hip hop.
>
> [*Members of audience laugh; Members of Mariachi Los Cristeros groan*]
>
> EL CAMPESINO MENOR: What?! Naaaaaaaaaaah[12]

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[11] In some performances, Pillo's character states that cowboy "Western" music and any music from the bordering U.S. states is 100% Mexican music (Zoalcoweb 2011).

Themes relating to religion and religiosity in the musical dramaturgy and parody of Mariachi Los Cristeros symbolize an integral component of identity that is not necessarily tied to spiritual devotion, but rather an invocation of inherited Cristero cultural memory and embedded social commentary on the Cristero mission, which are then reconstructed as paraliturgical parody among its cast of characters. The imagined Cristero identities of the four characters are based on archetypes of rural Cristeros from the highlands of Jalisco, who seek to protect their religious freedom against the reproachful Mexican government, as well as representatives of the Church, who call for piety yet exhibit behavior and dialogue that contradicts religious morality. Their staged performances do not center on any specific acts of worship, nor do they explicitly parody religious acts, religious music, or religious prayer. Rather, Mariachi Los Cristeros' use of paraliturgical parody plays on listener expectations of Cristero religious identity, morality, and purpose, and in doing so humanizes these archetypal Cristero characters in ways that perhaps diverge from how Cristero epic heroes, martyrs, and saints and their religious mission are recollected and honored by post-*Cristiada* generations. Additionally, these performances interweave satire with familial Cristero histories from the Moya family[13], contributing to the inherited regional histories from Jalisco. For example, in addition to honoring beatified Cristeros from their region within their parodic dialogue and performance of new Cristero corridos, Mariachi Los Cristeros also pay tribute to the late patriarch of the Moya family, Pioquinto Moya, who the Cristeros (in character) remind the audience was a Cristero composer and friend of

[12] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. For full performance see Mariachi Moya, "SHOW DEL MARIACHI MOYA Y MARIACHI TRADITIONAL LOS CRISTEROS EN VIVO," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUdhic4toBM&t=5494s.

[13] I intend to expand my work with Mariachi Los Cristeros to conduct ethnographic research directly focused on Idelfonso Moya and his family. Further research will provide deeper insight on the intricacies of their familial inherited memories of the Cristero Rebellion, as well as offer an opportunity to better understand the inspiration for the founding of the group.

theirs. Mariachi Los Cristeros utilize their reimagined Cristero characters and paraliturgical parody as part of an innovative cultural approach to transmitting Mexican Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary musical heritage to listeners.

Reenactement, Role Playing, and Anachronism in Mariachi Los Cristeros' Performances

Scholars of "living history" phenomena such as Civil War Reenactments, Renaissance fairs, and Revolutionary War reenactments agree that the term "living history" refers to people dressed in historical clothing who "do historical work in a historical setting" (McCarthy 2014: 107). Participants of living history strive for "the Real thing," the authentic reproduction of an event or lifestyle, which Patrick McCarthy refers to as "living interpretation" that simulates life from another period in time (2014: 106). In many cases, participants desire to experience history or immerse others (such as onlookers or an audience) into their character's historical realities. The act of role playing in living history and reenactment is further authenticated through costumes and paraphernalia that transform "reenactors into icons," though McCarthy warns that "reducing reenactment to iconography…essentially robs [reenactors] of attempts to illustrate other valued aspects of a historical party's image," such as the socioeconomic and political background that may have molded the life of the person they are imitating (2014: 109). Mariachi Los Cristeros' paraliturgical parody and musical dramaturgy are framed by reenactment that does not prioritize or abide by the authenticity-centered definitions of living history or living interpretation. Reenactment in Mariachi Los Cristeros performance is not preoccupied with replicating or recreating specific people, events, or moments from the Cristero Rebellion. Since Mariachi Los Cristeros do not imitate specific historical figures, their archetypal characters could be interpreted as icons, cultural symbols with costumes specific enough to convey they are

Cristeros, yet with a limited backstory. The fact that the Cristero characters incorporate limited references to their respective identities and roles in the Cristero Rebellion (a combination of improvised commentary with certain details that remain consistent from performance to performance, as will be discussed in a section below) avoids a failure to address specific socioeconomic and political background McCarthy warns can strip reenactors of sufficiently and accurately presenting historical figures. Instead, the Cristero characters' individual histories remain vague, leaving room for audience inference, imagination, and recollection of real people—perhaps a direct Cristero ascendant, the memory or inherited memory of a Cristero relative or family friend, or post-Revolutionary and Cristero historical figures they may have been introduced to at school or through local oral folklore.

In more intensive endeavors of reenactment, particularly of events such as the Civil War or Revolutionary War, reenactors work toward cultivating "ritual identity" (McCarthy 2014: 109) of historical figures, memorizing and rehearsing the intricacies of their respective background, backstory, and personality traits. The characters of Pillo, El Padre, El General Campesino, and El Campesino Menor consistently introduce themselves as revolutionary participants in the Cristero Rebellion, but are not necessarily imitating specific people, martyrs, or historical figures. In most performances, only Pillo the Monaguillo has a "Christian" name, and on rare occasion, the audience is told that El Padre is named Padre Ábalo (Zocoalweb 2011). (Introducing El Padre's name as Ábalo is a theatrical cue for punning his name with the word *abarro* or *a barrotes*, which translates to "grocery/convenience items," insinuating that El Padre is "open for business," sotospeak). As seen in the transcription below, Pillo consistently introduces himself as Lupillo Fernández, the Cristero son of renowned Mexican singer, Vicente Fernández (who was introduced in a previous chapter for his recording of the 1979 Cristero

corrido, “El Martes Me Fusilan”). Pillo jokes that his mother has asked him to ensure he gets a DNA test to confirm he is the son of Fernández. Since Vicente Fernández was born in the 1940s, well after the end of the Cristero Rebellion, it is chronologically impossible for him to father a son old enough to be a teenager in 1926. However, in the imagined reality of Mariachi Los Cristeros, the Cristero characters represent synchronized Mexican identities from both past and present, incorporating anachronistic social and cultural references to better connect with their post-*Cristiada* audiences.

> El PADRE: Wait, Pillo, why is your last name Fernández?
>
> PILLO: Well, because, as I was telling you, I’m the son of ‘Cente Fernández [Vicente Fernandez].
>
> [*Audience laughs*]
>
> PILLO: Yes! My mother told me, “Son, when you’re grown, go tell your father [Vicente Fernández] to go get one of those TNT tests.” I mean, wait. TNT? Sorry, DNA! DNA tests. See, I’m confused. Sorry.[14]

The group does not utilize props beyond their costumes and instruments, and instead invoke a historical setting through dialogue that invites the audience to accept their stage as a historical space. Mariachi Los Cristeros’ role playing is based more in caricatures and reinterpretations of Cristeros from multiple socioeconomic and vocational backgrounds, almost as if responding to a hypothetically proverbial question “what does (did) a Cristero look like?” In the highlands of Jalisco (the Moya family’s home region), Cristeros were overwhelmingly from rural backgrounds, which likely explains Mariachi Los Cristeros’ approach to their cast of

[14] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. For full performance see Mariachi Moya, “SHOW DEL MARIACHI MOYA Y MARIACHI TRADITIONAL LOS CRISTEROS EN VIVO,” (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUdhic4toBM&t=5494s.

characters, including naming the two lay characters *Campesino*, or rural farmer. Polemics aside, *La Cristiada* ended in 1929, meaning that nearly all persons with living memory of the Cristero Rebellion have died, leaving documented and intangible Cristero heritage that preserves and memorializes their experiences for new generations. Thus, for post-*Cristiada* generations, Cristeros are people from the past, seen and remembered in old photographs and remembered in retellings of oral histories and performances of Cristero corridos. The characters of Mariachi Los Cristeros offer a tangible representation of inherited Cristero memory, bringing the idea of Cristero rebels and clergy to life within an imagined temporal space onstage, oscillating between the period of the Cristero Rebellion and current day.

Mariachi Los Cristeros centers their reenactment on performative memory, using their platform as a mariachi *tradicionál* and their Revolutionary and Cristero repertory to recall and create the imaginary of *La Cristiada*, accessible to audience members who may only have general or fragmented regional and familial knowledge of its related history. The brief narratives and backstories associated with each character in Mariachi Los Cristeros are reintroduced through role playing nearly each time the Cristeros perform on stage, providing select details of continuity for audiences who may regularly attend their performances. In viewing multiple videos of staged performances recorded in different regions within the states of Jalisco, Zacatecas, and Colima, which comprise the historical Cristero heartland, Mariachi Los Cristeros seem to have a prepared base script that can be employed and emplotted naturally in diverse venues, using individual songs and Cristero corridos as cues for interjecting with their rehearsed parody or with improvisation of their imagined "recollection" of their experiences as Cristeros. For example, if the next traditional song in their prepared lineup is an instrumental dance genre, they will use this opportunity to play on the vices of El Padre, who loves to dance despite

thinking it a grave sin. If the following piece is a Cristero corrido, the characters will transition with commentary reminiscing on their time fighting against the Mexican government, mocking the Federal army, honoring recently beatified Cristeros from the various municipalities in which they perform, or interjecting with satirical comments on or mockery of religious piety. All comments, however, culminate in Mariachi Los Cristeros' mission to educate the audience.

> PILLO: Our next song is a great song from our culture. [*gestures to audience*] You must remember! It's the song that says *R con R de cigarro, R con R de barril, rápido ruedan las ruedas del ferrocarril.* [R with R like in cigar, R with R like in barrel, rapidly rotate the wheels of the rail train]. You must know what method of transportation was most used during the Revolution. What was it?
>
> [*Pillo faces the audience, waiting for them to answer*]
>
> EL GENERAL CAMPESINO: Donkeys!
> [*Audience member shouts "The Railroad!"*]
>
> PILLO: Right. The railroad system. Trains. Except, we don't have those anymore. That ended a long time ago.
>
> [*El Padre begins blowing across the sound hole of his violin and into the microphone, imitation a train. He loses his balance and pretends to faint*]
>
> EL CAMPESINO MENOR: Oops, El Padre is dizzy![15]

Evident in the transcript above, as well as previous transcripts in which Pillo adopts the role of a teacher when engaging with the audience, most of Mariachi Los Cristeros' rehearsed and improvised commentary relays musical, cultural, and regional history lessons to their listeners. Mariachi Los Cristero performances function as educational reenactment that not only transmit knowledge of post-Revolutionary music and culture, but also invite the audience to

[15] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. For full performance see Mariachi Moya, "SHOW DEL MARIACHI MOYA Y MARIACHI TRADITIONAL LOS CRISTEROS EN VIVO," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUdhic4toBM&t=5494s.

cultivate newfound cultural memory. These lessons aid in the Cristero characters' retaining the post-Revolutionary temporal space of their reenactment performance while simultaneously recognizing that their audience exists in a different time period and need to be taught about their past. Anachronistic dialogue, therefore, is integral to Mariachi Los Cristeros staged performances.

Where certain reenactment communities such as Renaissance fairs and festivals keep "the entire ritualized space time environments" sacrosanct (McCarthy 2014: 110), Mariachi Los Cristeros intentionally establishes an interactive environment that encourages anachronistic dialogue and communication among each other and with the audience. The use of anachronism in Mariachi Los Cristeros performances allows the group to maintain relevance with the experiences of a multigenerational, post-*Cristiada* audience. Mariachi Los Cristeros continuously cross the boundaries of time and space by speaking to contemporary events and popular culture while simultaneously referencing their imagined historical reality. For example, in many performances, they refer to current political events and figures (such as government elections and contemporary politicians), while still claiming they are living as persecuted Cristeros during the Calles presidency. In relaying detailed music history lessons to the audience between pieces, they include intentionally erroneous music history facts for comedic effect, such as claiming they witnessed the invention of rap and hip hop during the 1920s in Mexico (as seen in a previous transcript). All characters have no issue contradicting themselves or interweaving imagined or farce narratives of Mexican history in order to maintain the satirical nature of their onstage personas.

Although the audience is not in character (or are simply in character as themselves), they act as participants through reciprocal communication with the individual characters during live

performances as if they were students in a classroom or family gathered around a dinner table. The audience serves as a pivotal point from which the Cristeros can blur temporalities and move between their imagined lives during the years of *La Cristiada* and current day. Pillo, for example, often asks the audience questions and utilizes their response and reactions as additional cues for improvised dialogue and dramaturgy, to which his fellow Cristeros then respond. When these responses relate to imagined experiences from the post-Revolutionary period and Cristero Rebellion, the interplay and relationship between Mariachi Los Cristero and their audiences function as "public acts of recollection," memorialization, and collective remembrance that shape the process of collective memory (Arias and del Campo 2009:11).

In her article, "Music, Memory, and History," Kay Kaufman Shelemay states,

> Memory is at the same time a social phenomenon shaped by collective experience. What is often termed "collective memory" is knowledge that is shared with others through various forms of expression, including speech, music, dance, and other expressive media, and that emerges in part from a common expectation that the moment or event is, in fact, memorable. (Shelemay 2006: 8).

Since the Moya musicians (not the characters of Mariachi Los Cristeros, but the respective actors) only possess inherited rather than experiential memory of the post-Revolutionary Cristero Rebellion, their sharing of collective memory with the audience relies on the mediation of the reimagined "memories" of their Cristero characters, presented as fictitious accounts of historical moments that occurred in the Acatíc, Jalisco region during the 1920s. As the characters express collective memory of their roles through parody, reenactment, and musical performance (all forms of "expressive media" that Shelemay describes), the audience is welcomed into collective rememory, or reinterpreted memory, of Cristero rebels and the events that likely transpired during the war. This collective rememory is intrinsically tied to Jalisco and the surrounding Cristero heartland where both Mariachi Los Cristeros and their audience

members reside, directly impacted by regional oral history and local knowledge of the Cristero Rebellion. Mariachi Los Cristeros' invitation to the audience to participate in collective rememory would not have the same impact performed outside of the historical Cristero heartland. Collective remembrance of events that both the audience and the Moya musicians were never alive to witness or experience is best exemplified in Mariachi Los Cristeros' performance of three new Cristero corridos composed by Idelfonso Moya for the group, which rely on both inherited memory and rememory as a tool for preserving and transmitting Cristero cultural memory for post-*Cristiada* generations.

Inherited Memory and New Cristero *Corrido* Composition

In an archived footage of a televised performance for a 2012 mariachi *tradicionál* gala at the Teatro Degollado in Guadalajara, the master of ceremonies introduced the group to the audience saying

> And now I introduce you to musicians from a very difficult time in our country, the *Epoca de los Cristeros* [Era of Cristeros]. From that time, we have corridos, songs, legends, and other things that we cannot possibly remember. This is why it is better that we sing them. I am here to present to you Mariachi Los Cristeros de Acatíc, led by Idelfonso Moya and his sons who have formed this mariachi *tradicionál.*[16]

Greeted by a packed theater, Mariachi Los Cristeros made their way onto the stage and immediately began to play a potpourri arrangement of historical and new Cristero corridos, starting with their shortened arrangement of "El Martes Me Fusilan." Their set also included "El Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza," and the "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra." While dressed in costumes as their respective Cristero characters, Mariachi Los Cristeros relied solely on musical

[16] Transcription and translation of performance dialogue by Teresita Lozano. To view performance refer to Mariachi Moya, "GALA EN EL TEATRO DEGOLLADO MARIACHI TRADICIONAL LOS CRISTEROS DE ACATIC," (2012) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMsGcjhVpwo.

performance to share what the master of ceremonies described as the memories post-*Cristiada* generations "could not possibly remember." In this particular gala performance, a secular event that featured multiple mariachi *tradicionál* groups from the state of Jalisco and bordering states, Mariachi Los Cristeros did not open their performance with the satirical commentary typical of their paraliturgical live performances. Since this event was organized as both a festival and mariachi *tradicionál* competition, the group was limited to an eight-minute performance onstage. Their reenactment and spoken dialogue depicting a firing squad killing a Cristero functioned as a dramatic transition between the three corridos and their closing instrumental showpiece, "El Express de los Azares." Although the potpourri of Cristero corridos was simply an introduction to their song for the gala, the potpourri introduced the audience to excerpts from a new Cristero corrido, "El Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza" composed by Idelfonso Moya, exemplifying one of three compositional contributions of the Moya family to new Cristero corrido repertory.

Listening to this gala performance prompted me to revisit Mariachi Los Cristeros' digital albums on YouTube to reexamine three Cristero corridos, each composed in the early 2000s by Idelfonso Moya, and none of which have been documented in songbooks or in Cristero scholarship: "El Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza" (Mariachi Moya 2013a), "El Corrido de Pioquinto Moya" (Mariachi Moya 2013b), and "El Corrido de un Cristero" (Mariachi Moya 2017). Only two corridos, "El Corrido de Quirino Navarro" and "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra," in Mariachi Los Cristeros' performance repertory are included in Antonio Avitía Hernandez's 2006 catalogue of documented Cristero corrido.[17] As discussed in Chapter Three, Antonio Avitía Hernández's 2006 doctoral dissertation attempted to catalogue the corpus of

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[17] Two of the four new Cristero corridos recorded in their 2013 album (Mariachi Moya 2013a-o) are covers of "El Martes Me Fusilan" (Fernández 1979) and "Santo Toribio Romo" (Los Originales de San Juan 2007). Based on the digital archives of Mariachi Los Cristeros' performances on YouTube, the group does not perform their cover of "Santo Toribio Romo" in staged performances.

Cristero creative works, including music, theater, prose, and film. Stephen Andes emphasizes that Avitía Hernández's compilation only includes corridos that have been substantially documented since *La Cristiada* and the period shortly after the end of the rebellion (2015: 186). Andes suggests that other historical corridos from the period may have been lost or have remained unaccounted for through lack of performances and transcription outside of their regions of origin. However, Idelfonso Moya's compositions, despite their narrations of two historical figures from the Cristero Rebellion, are not historical Cristero corridos, which unfamiliar listeners can infer from the lyrical text's references to contemporary events.

The following three new Cristero corridos by Idelfonso Moya exemplify a style reminiscent of the classic corrido from the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period, composed as epic narratives of the lives and deaths of three historical figures: Pioquinto Moya, Blessed Miguel Gómez Loza, and an unnamed Cristero epic hero. The "Corrido de Pioquinto Moya" pays tribute to the life of Idelfonso Moya's father, a Cristero sympathizer and Mexican composer from Acatíc who survived the Cristero Rebellion. The "Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza" and the "Corrido de un Cristero" resurrect the Cristero epic hero's bravery, unyielding faith, and courageous fight for religious liberty, which defined the post-Revolutionary Cristero corrido subgenre. These new Cristero corridos exemplify Idelfonso Moya's rememory of Cristero history and culture, expressing reinterpretations of the Cristero experience as they relate to post-*Cristiada* generations in Acatíc and its surrounding regions.

Figure 4.2 Full text of "El Corrido de Pioquinto Moya"[18]

Cinco de mayo fecha señalada Mil ochocientos noventa y seis Pioquinto Moya nació en Acatíc Tierra de hechiceras, Tierra de placer	On the fifth of May Eighteen hundred and ninety-six Pioquinto Moya was born in Acatíc The land of enchantment, land of pleasure
Contemporáneo de Abraham González, De Gómez Loza y Quirino Navarro Con Luis Anaya y Pioquinto Moya Hicieron la historia en mi tierra de barro	Contemporary of Abraham González, De Gómez Loza, and Quirino Navarro With Luis Anaya and Pioquinto Moya They made history in my adobe town
Decía Pioquinto con su guitarra Y lo cantaba con amor profundo -Este lugar de mujeres tan lindas -Siempre será el más precioso del mundo	Pioquinto would say with his guitar He would sing with profound love "In this place of beautiful women, It will always be the most precious in the world."
Fue fiel soldado de Abraham Gonzalez Con su valor defendieron al pueblo No permitieron que hubiera encuentros Entre Cristeros y del gobierno	He was a faithful soldier of Abraham González With great courage he defended his town He aided in preventing encounters Between Cristeros and the Government
La gente noble de su turullo Han demostrado cariño hacia él Lo han convertido en un hombre ilustre Lo que yo tengo que agradecer	The noble people of his pastures Have shown him such care They've transformed him into an illustrious man And I am so grateful
Compositor de "Quirino Navarro," "08 de agosto," y muchas mas Cantor del templo toda su vida Formo la banda municipal	Composer of "Quirino Navarro," "08 de agosto," and many more A church cantor his entire life He formed the municipal banda
Pioquinto Moya la hizo de actor Por la barranca que es nuestro tesoro Con Anthony Quinn participó Cuando filmó *Siete ciudades de oro* [*voz de narración – Seven Cities of Gold*]	Pioquinto Moya was also an actor And here in our canyon he is our treasure He played along Anthony Quinn When he filmed *Seven Cities of Gold* [*voiceover with English translation of film title*]
Pioquinto Moya murió en Acatíc	Pioquinto Moya died in Acatíc

[18] Lyrical text transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. To view video and audio recording see Mariachi Moya, "MARIACHI MOYA-LOS CRISTEROS-#04 PIOQUINTO MOYA," (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VbkHl5egOQ&t=85s.

En el lugar que lo viera nacer En el pueblito de sus amores Ahí una calle de honor para él En esta tierra de gente bonita Mes de febrero día veintiséis Pioquinto dejo su tierra En el novecientos setenta y tres	In the place that saw his birth In the little down he so loved There is a street in honor of him In this land of beautiful people On the twenty-sixth in the month of February Pioquinto left his land In nineteen hundred seventy-three

Pioquinto Moya is not mentioned in any of the sources relating to *La Cristiada* history or Cristeros, and aside from information provided by the Moya family, I was unable to find his name in any additional academic or historical works. Based on the brief description included in the upload to Mariachi Moya's YouTube channel, "Don Pioquinto Moya" was a composer, musician, and "revolutionary of *La Cristiada*" from Acatíc (Mariachi Moya 2013c). "El Corrido de Pioquinto Moya" (**Figure 4.2**) presents a biographical narrative of the Moya family patriarch, opening with the *corridista*'s greeting and establishing of the date, place, and time, typical of the classic corrido literary structure. Born in 1896, Pioquinto Moya is described as an "illustrious man" and a "contemporary of Abraham González,[19] [the Cristero martyr, Miguel] Gómez Loza, and [anti-Cristero Mayor] Quirino Navarro." A "church cantor his entire life," Pioquinto Moya fought as a young soldier in the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period, protecting Acatíc with "great courage" and "aid[ing] in preventing encounters between Cristeros and the Government." While Mariachi Moya's descriptive information on the digital upload stated

[19] The background of Abraham González in these lyrics requires further contextualization from Idelfonso Moya. Marco Moya was unable to verify the historical significance of Abraham González, who the corrido implies was a revolutionary leader. Considering Pioquinto Moya was a teenager during the Mexican Revolution and the corrido's implication that Moya was a solider, it is likely that Idelfonso Moya is referring to Revolutionary Governor Abraham González of Chihuahua, a close friend and supporter of Pancho Villa. González died in 1913, just after the assassination of Revolutionary President Francisco Madero. For more information see William H. Beezley (1973) *Insurgent Governor: Abraham Gonzalez and the Mexican Revolution in Chihuahua*.

Pioquinto Moya was a Cristero revolutionary, the text implies he may have been a Cristero-sympathizer who simply wanted to avoid the impact of violent warfare between Cristeros and the Federal army in Acatíc. This implication is further compounded by the *corridista* informing the listener that Pioquinto Moya composed the "Corrido de Quirino Navarro" (**Figure 4.3**), the ballad of a post-Revolutionary mayor in the area and a known enemy of the Cristero community.

Figure 4.3 Excerpt from the "Corrido de Quirino Navarro"[20]

Spanish	English
Señores tengan presente Lo que les voy a contar Se levantaron en armas Los de La Unión Popular Se les hacía cosa fácil Entrar a Tepatitlán Pero el valor de Quirino No les permitió entrar Decía Quirino Navarro Con su valor todo junto Primero muerto o tirado Que desamparar el punto Ya les estaban ganando Toditos los de La Unión Cuando les llego el refuerzo De ese Treinta batallón … Ese Quirino Navarro Hombre de mucho valor Cinco días duro sitiado Y no cambió de color	Gentlemen have present What I am going to tell you They rose up in arms Those from La Unión Popular [Cristero activists] They thought it would be easy To enter into Tepatitlán But that brave Quirino Did not let them enter Quirino Navarro would say With all of his valor I'd first be dead or wounded Before deserting this place They were winning All of those from the La Unión When suddenly came reinforcements From the Treinta battalion … That Quirino Navarro A man with great valor Five days he held his ground And his face never changed color

[20] Lyrical text transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. As performed by Mariachi Los Cristeros (Mariachi Moya 2013a). The "Corrido de Quirino Navarro" full text is also found in Alicia de Bonfil (1994) *La literatura cristera* on pgs. 59-62, including two different versions of the ballad. Both versions, referenced in Antonio Avitía Hernández's compilation (2006), are attributed to an anonymous composer, not Pioquinto Moya. These texts, however, have some minor textual differences and are a few stanzas longer when compared to Mariachi Los Cristeros' recordings of the corrido.

Ese Quirino Navaro Les juró parque de acero Con sus armas en la mano No temía a ningún Cristero Los de La Unión Popular ¡Ay que chasco se han pegado! Iban corriendo de miedo De ese Quirino Navarro … Ya con ésta me despido Señores dispensarán Del combate que tuvieron En ese Tepatitlán	That Quirino Navarro He promised them a steel playground With his arms in hand He didn't fear a single Cristero Those from La Unión Popular What a predicament they are now in! They ran away in fear From that Quirino Navarro … With his I bid farewell Gentlemen you will all now share Of this battle that happened In Tepatitlán

The "Corrido de Quirino Navarro" depicts the bravery of Quirino Navarro, mayor of Tepatitlán, Jalisco (near Acatíc) and supporter of the Mexican government's military *opposition* to the Cristero movement (Bonfíl 1995: 59; Nicolopulous 2006; Avitía Hernánez 2006: 735-736). The corrido is listed as having an anonymous author in Avitía Hernández's 2006 catalogue (2006: 735), yet the "Corrido de Pioquinto Moya" and statements from the Moya musicians claim that Pioquinto Moya, a Cristero sympathizer, composed this corrido, which presents a Cristero enemy as an epic hero. Navarro was the leader of agrarian soldiers collaborating with the Federal army against the Cristeros' attempts to overtake the Jaliscience highlands surrounding Tepatitlán. Quirino Navarro's army successfully thwarted the efforts of Father José Reyes Vega and his Cristero army. Navarro pushed the Cristeros into retreat as soon as the Mexican Federal army arrived with reinforcements, ready to attack (Avitía Hernández 2006: 735). The excerpt above is transcribed from Mariachi Los Cristeros' digital album, which they regularly perform in both secular and paraliturgical settings. While this corrido is regularly introduced as a musical legacy of Pioquinto Moya, who the Cristero characters regard as a

legend of the Cristero Rebellion, its live performance by four musicians dressed as Cristeros invokes a complex combination of irony and conflicting perspectives of the Cristero battle at Tepatitlán. This complexity is further compounded when one considers that Father José Reyes Vega, a beloved and legendary Cristero martyr from Jalisco, died in the Battle of Tepatitlán.

The "Corrido de Quirino Navarro" can be heard performed by many different mariachi and *conjunto* ensembles (not just Mariachi Los Cristeros) as part of general Mexican corrido repertoire, decontextualized from its specific association with the Cristero Rebellion[21] (similar to the "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra" described in Chapter One). My inquiry as to why Pioquinto would compose lyrics that celebrate the life and courage of a Cristero enemy demands continuing research on the oral histories of the Moya family and families in the regions of Tepatitlán and Acatíc.

According to the *corridista* in "El Corrido de Pioquinto Moya," Pioquinto did not die during *La Cristiada*, but lived on as a "treasure" of his hometown, composing corridos and other musical genres. The *corridista* emphasizes that Pioquinto even "played along Anthony Quinn" as an actor in *Seven Cities of Gold*. Pioquinto Moya, remembered as a revolutionary of *La Cristaida* by the *corridista* and the Moya family after his death in 1973, not only inscribed the lives of post-Revolutionary heroes into musical verse, but also lived long enough to transmit inherited memory of his lived experiences during *La Cristiada* to his son, Idelfonso. In composing this corrido about his father, Idelfonso Moya has continued transmitting these inherited memories and musical heritage to his own sons in Mariachi Los Cristeros and to the post-*Cristiada*

[21] I first encountered this corrido on the 2004 webpage created by the late Dr. James (Jaime) Nicopolous and his students at the University of Texas at Austin as part of a digital Mexican *corrido* project (which included corridos from the Cristero Rebellion). The lyrics and recording on the webpage for "Quirino Navarro" were extrapolated by Nicopolous and his students from the recording performed by Trio Los Aguilillas. on Disc IV "Post-Revolutionary Corridos and Narratives" from *The Mexican Revolution: Corridos About Heroes and Events 1910-1920 and Beyond!* (Folklyric/Arhoolie Records), 1996.

generations from the region of Acatíc. The "Corrido de Pioquinto Moya" expresses new interpretations of Cristero history, narrating the life of a cultural icon of Acatíc that would otherwise remain undocumented in other sources of Cristero historiography.

Figure 4.4 Full text of "El Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza"[22]

<table>
<tr>
<td>En el pueblo Paredones
Municipio de Acatíc
Ahora se llama El Refugio
Yo se los quiero decir
Nació un hombre muy valiente
Como los que ahí por allí

Once de agosto por cierto
La fecha no tiene errores
Nació Miguel Gómez Loza
En esta tierra de amores
Año de mil ochocientos
Ochenta y ocho, señores

- ¡Viva Cristo Rey! decía
- ¡Viva México! también
- La Virgen de Guadalupe
Que desde el Cielo nos ve
Ha de darnos valentía
Para defender su fe

Fue jefe de los Cristeros
Los de la Unión Popular
Desherró gordo a Picachos
Arandas, Tepatitlán
Ahí en la presa de López,
Palmitos y en San Julián

Decía Miguel Gómez Loza
- Por nuestra fe hay que morir
Decía Anacleto Gónzalez</td>
<td>In the town of Paredones [El Refugio Paredones]
In the municipality of Acatíc
Now it is called El Refugio
I want to tell you all
A very brave man was born there
Just like so many others from there

The eleventh of August for certain
This date has no errors
Miguel Gómez Loza was born
In this beloved region
In the year eighteen hundred
Eighty-eight, yes sir.

"Long Live Christ the King!" he would say.
"Long Live Mexico!" too.
"The Virgin of Guadalupe,
Who from Heaven watches over
And will grant us courage
To defender her religion."

He was the leader of the Cristeros
And of the Union Popular
He freed [unchained] Picachos
Arandas, and Tepatitlán
There in the prisons of López,
Palmitos, and San Julián.

Miguel Gómez Loza would say,
"For our faith, we must die."
Anacleto Gónzalez would say,</td>
</tr>
</table>

[22] Lyrical text transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. To view video and audio recording see Mariachi Moya, "MARIACHI MOYA-LOS CRISTEROS-#01 MIGUEL GOMEZ LOZA," (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtQ6qkF67l0.

- Yo tengo confianza en ti. - Por algo eres de Los Altos Y del merito Acatíc.	"I have great faith in you. There is a reason you must be from Los Altos, And from the very center of Acatíc."
- ¡Viva Cristo Rey! decía - ¡Viva México! también - La Virgen de Guadalupe Que desde el Cielo nos ve Ha de darnos valentía Para defender su fe	"Long Live Christ the King!" he would say. "Long Live Mexico!" too. "The Virgin of Guadalupe, Who from Heaven watches over And will grant us courage To defender her religion."
Spoken dialogue/commentary: *Ay mi Capilla de Guadalupe, San Ignacio, San José de Gracia, San Pancho. Saludo desde Acatíc. De Los Cristeros!*	*Spoken dialogue/commentary*: *Oh my Chapel of Guadalupe, San Ignacio, San José de Gracia, San Pancho. Greetings all the way from Acatíc. From Los Cristeros!*
Adiós, Miguel Gómez Loza Valiente como ninguno Ya no estarás con nosostros Ya no andarás por el mundo - Habemus sancto! Lo dijo Ioannes Paulus Segundo	Goodbye, Miguel Gómez Loza Brave like noneother You are not with us anymore You will not roam the earth "Habemus sancto!" said Ionnes Paulus Segundo [John Paul II]
Mil novecientos veintiocho Murió Miguel Gómez Loza Murió el veintiuno de marzo Por la espalda un balazo En el rancho El Lindero En Atotonilco el Alto	Nineteen hundred and twenty-eight Miguel Gómez Loza died He died on the twenty-first of March When a bullet hit his back In the El Lindero ranch In Atotonilco el Alto
Murió Miguel Gómez Loza Solo quiero recordarles Era un veintiuno de marzo Murió por sus ideales Cuando entra la primavera El Día de Benito Juárez	Miguel Gómez Loza died I just wanted to remind you It was on the twenty-first of March He died for his beliefs Just as the spring began On the Day of Benito Juárez

The "Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza," (**Figure 4.4**) narrates the martyrdom of a Cristero epic hero, exemplifying the epic narrative structure of the post-Revolutionary classic corrido. The *corridista* greets his listeners, exclaiming that he is about to sing the ballad of a "brave man" born in El Refugio, formerly known as Paredones during the Cristero Rebellion. Miguel Gómez

Loza personifies the ideal Cristero soldier, shouting "Long Live Christ the King" and "the Virgin of Guadalupe," who "grant[s] [the Cristeros] courage" to protect "her religion." The *corridista* recounts how Gómez Loza led La Unión Popular to free nearby towns from the Mexican Federal army. The *corridista* describes how Miguel Gómez Loza was prepared to die "for [his] faith," an inspiration to his fellow Cristero, Anacleto González, who claimed Gómez Loza's exemplary faith proved he was from Acatíc. González's response informs the listener that Cristeros from Acatíc were known for their unshakable beliefs in God and the Cristero cause. The *corridista* proudly informs the reader that Miguel Gómez Loza has been recognized by "Ionnes Paulus Segundo" (sic), or Pope John Paul II. He laments the death of this epic hero, who was killed "when a bullet hit his back" on March 21, 1918, in the highlands. Before the *corridista* bids the listener farewell, he repeats the date of Miguel Gómez Loza's death, reemphasizing the significance of the martyrdom of a Cristero hero who died on the same day the nation commemorates the legendary 19th-century liberalist, President Benito Juárez.

Blessed Miguel Gómez Loza, a layman and leading member of Cristero activist organizations *La Liga* (National League for the Defense of Religious Liberty) and *La Unión Popular*, was executed by Federal soldiers in the spring of 1928. Gómez Loza is officially recognized as a Catholic martyr, beatified on November 15, 2005 alongside nine other Cristeros, including José Anacleto González Flores (referenced in this corrido) and recently canonized Saint Joselito Sánchez del Río.[23] Based on the overall list of Cristero figures that serve as subjects for Cristero corridos, one could safely assume that there could have been a historical

[23] Official announcement on Vatican website, posted on November 20, 2005, "José Anacleto González Flores and eight companions." http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20051120_anacleto-gonzalez_en.html; For historical information on Miguel Gómez Loza, see "Gómez Loza, Miguel" under "Los universitarios sin universidad" in the online *Enciclopedia histórica y biográfica de la Universidad de Guadalajara*. http://enciclopedia.udg.mx/articulos/gomez-loza-miguel.

corrido dedicated to this martyr. However, save for this composition and performance by Mariachi Los Cristeros, there seems to be no record of a ballad about Miguel Gómez Loza, indicating that Idelfonso Moya and the members of Mariachi Los Cristeros are contributing to the repertory and tradition of Cristero corrido composition.

Considering that Bl. Miguel Gómez Loza was a native of the highlands of Jalisco, it is not surprising that Mariachi Los Cristeros, its four members born and raised in this region, would be familiar with this significant religious and historical Cristero figure, and thus decide to honor him with a corrido composition, especially after his beatification in the early 2000s. Interestingly, the "Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza" erroneously states that Pope John Paul II declared Gómez Loza a saint, when in fact (as mentioned above) he is not a canonized saint, and was beatified by Pope John Paul II's successor, Pope Benedict XVI. However, this error does not detract from the general dedicatory nature of the corrido, placing overt emphasis on the nature of Bl. Miguel Gómez Loza's bravery as typical of the people of the highlands of Jalisco. Furthermore, this error (even without needing to confer with the Idelfonso Moya for verification) is indicative that this corrido was composed decades after 2005, a new Cristero corrido whose rememory of a recently beatified martyr commemorates his life as that of an Cristero epic hero.

Figure 4.5 Full text of "Corrido de un Cristero"[24]

Spoken commentary: *-Ahí le va a mi Colima, gente Cristera*	*Spoken commentary:* *"Here you go, my dear Colima, a Cristero people."*

[24] Lyrical text transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. This *corrido* is included as part of a 36-minute single upload of mixed genres recorded by Mariachi Los Cristeros, uploaded to YouTube as the second part to a digital *disco* (album) the group states is only available for purchase by request. The track can be found at the 30:50 mark on their YouTube video. For the full audio upload, see Mariachi Moya, "DISCO 14 COMPLETO LOS CRISTEROS 2 PARTE COMPLETO DEL MARIACHI MOYA," (2017) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzTvFPFQDq0.

Señores tengan presente Algo que aquí sucedió En el año veintiséis Inició la Rebelión	Señores, keep present Something that happened here In the year [nineteen] twenty-six The Rebellion began
El gobierno de Plutarco Una orden se giró Cierren toditos los cultos La ley ahora ya cambió	The government of Plutarco [Calles] Gave the order Close all of the churches The law has changed
Coquimatlán, pueblo santo Respetuoso del Creador Preguntaba Mateito -Señor tú da tu opinion	Coquimatlán, holy town Respectful of the Creator Mateito* would ask "Lord, you have your say."
Luego que giró su orden El campesino alistó Sacando las carabinas A Criso Rey defendió	As soon as the order was given The *campesino* got ready He took his rifles And defended Christ the King
Entre muchos campesinos Que desde Coqui partieron Recuerdo a Don Bonifacio Por su ejemplo guerrillero	Of so many *campesinos* That parted from here in Coqui I remember Don Bonifacio For his exemplum of a warrior
Se fue rumbo pa' Colima Donde todos se juntaron Con un grito desde el alma El Federal se ha justiciado	He went toward Colima Where they were all gathered With a cry from the soul The Federal [soldier] justified himself
- ¡Viva Cristo Rey, señores! Gritaba todo ofendido Disparando tras las cercas [*ininteligente*]	"Long Live Christ the King, señores!" Shouted all that were offended [by the law] They shot toward the trenches [*unintelligible*]
Dicen que perdió su madre Murieron también sus hijos Sus amigos ya se fueron Como habrá del maleficio	They say that he lost his mother, And that his sons also died His friends left him There must be so much maleficence
Ya con el alma cansada A su pueblo regresó Al verse tan desolado Al Padre Mateo busco	Now with this tired soul He returned to his town In seeing himself desolate He looked for Father Mateo

Con tristeza el escuchaba Del curita la versión -La guerra se ha terminado En la mesa se arregló. Echó mirada pa'el cielo Le preguntaba al Creador -Padre, dime se esto es justo Yo no encuentro la razón. En el panteón de mi pueblo Se ve con mucha tristeza Un epitafio borroso De un Cristero que confiesa -Yo no supe quien gano o quien perdió la contienda Si alguien busca las razones Espero que sí lo entienda. Vuela, vuela palomita Párate en un crucifijo Y explica a todo mi pueblo Esta caramba [*ininteligible*] Aquí se acaba llorando Del corrido de un Cristero [*voz -Un Cristero con mucha fe*] Que recorrió pueblo y patria Por tenerle fe a su Creador Señores ya me despido Con el corazón marchito Los Cristeros no entendieron ¿Ahora yo, cómo lo explico?[25]	With sadness he listened to The dear curate's version of events "The war has ended. On the mesa, it has been resolved." He looked toward the sky And asked his Creator "Father, tell me if this is just. I don't understand the reason." In the cemetery in my town You can see with great sadness A blurred epitaph Of a Cristero that confesses "I never found out who won Or who lost the fight. If someone is looking for the reasons why, I hope he understands." Fly, fly little dove. Stand on the crucifix And explain to all of my people This mess [*unintelligible*] Our story ends here in tears The *corrido* of a Cristero [*voiceover "A Cristero with great faith."*] Who roamed town and nation For his faith in his Creator Señores, I say my farewell With my heavy heart The Cristeros did not understand why So how am I to explain it to you?

The "Corrido de un Cristero" (**Figure 4.5**) opens with the same line as the "Corrido de Quirino Navarro"[26] (perhaps a nod to Idelfonso's father Pioquinto to whom the latter is

[25] Lyrical transcription and translation by Teresita Lozano, transcribed directly from audio recording as performed by Mariachi Los Cristeros.

attributed), asking the listeners to keep present and recall the events that occurred in the area during the Cristero Rebellion. The *corridista* invites the post-*Cristiada* ballad community to collectively reimagine the year 1926, the year Plutarco Calles "gave the order" to "close all churches." As the *corridista* invokes rememory of the time period, he begins to recount the tragic story of a Cristero epic hero. Unlike the two aforementioned new Cristero *corridos*, the following "Corrido de un Cristero," is not clear as to the name or possible historical identity of its main protagonist. There is a brief reference to "Mateito," an affectionate form of Mateo, but there is also another reference later in the *corrido* to a priest named Mateo.[27] Based on the title of the ballad's intentional omission the Cristero's name, this corrido's memory of *La Cristiada* is expressed similar to "El Martes Me Fusilan," whose protagonist is also unnamed. Like "El Martes Me Fusilan," the "Corrido de un Cristero" depicts a broader memory of a Cristero epic hero, commemorating the story of Cristero martyrs who may not have been memorialized in historical text or historical corridos.

While the "Corrido de un Cristero" begins with similar literary structure as a typical epic *corrido*, celebrating the bravery and deeds of the hero, the text progresses into a more reflective and tragic tone, centering more on what this Cristero lost rather than what his participation won. The Cristero is a young *campesino* (much like the archetype played by Mariachi Los Cristero's El Campesino Menor), who after hearing about Calles' unjust law, picked up his rifles and

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[26] The text to the "Corrido de Quirino Navarro," who the Moya family asserts was composed by Pioquinto Moya, Idelfonso Moya's father, can be found in Alicia de Bonfíl (1994) *La literatura cristera* on pgs. 59-62, including two different versions of the ballad.

[27] At first, I thought this may be the Cristero priest, Saint Mateo Correo Magallanes; however, Saint Mateo was born in Zacatecas and died in Durango, not Colima (Pimentel 2006). There is also a reference to a Don Bonifacio, though it is unclear if Mateito and Don Bonifacio are the same person and, thus, I have been unable to confer with Idelfonso Moya to specify if the Cristero is named in the corrido. This omission demands further research with the Moya family.

traveled to the Coquimatlán, Colima to fight against the Mexican Federal army. He joined his fellow Cristeros, shouting "Long Live Christ the King" in protest against anticlerical laws. The *corridista* informs the listener that this Cristero lost his family and decided to seek consolation from his priest when his courage (or possibly even faith) faltering. This recognition of faltering courage contrasts the archetypal Cristero epic hero, who's faith and determination are never swayed, even when faced with possibility of death. The *corridista* describes how the Cristero listened to his spiritual adviser with great sadness, despite the priest assuring him that the war had just ended and had been resolved (likely referring to the peace treaty of 1929). Yet, the Cristero does not respond in celebration, and instead questions God directly, asking for a reason for this "maleficence" and the suffering of his family and Cristero community.

The corrido's text is not clear as to whether the Cristero is asking God to explain the reason for his religious persecution, for losing his family, or for war altogether. Regardless, this questioning depicts the Cristero epic hero with additional layers of reflexive doubt and insecurity that exist parallel to his willingness to die for the Cristero cause. In this corrido's reinterpretation of the Cristero epic hero's fight for the protection of religious liberty ends with a tragic realization that he never understood the reason he had to brave the Mexican Federal army in the first place. Unlike the Cristero epic heroes from the post-Revolutionary period, this Cristero hero does not beg God for courage in this fight, but rather begs for an explanation as he "looked toward the sky and asked his Creator, 'Father tell me if this is just.'"

Typical of the post-Revolutionary classic corrido, the "Corrido de un Cristero's" final stanzas relay a moral to the listeners, encouraging them consider the intended message or lesson of the story. The *corridista* recalls the blurred text on the Cristero's gravestone, whose inscription contains the Cristero's confession beyond the grave, "I never found out who won or

who lost the fight." The *corridista* does not specify how the Cristero died yet describes that the Cristero did not live long enough to know who won *La Cristiada* nor lived long enough to understand the reason for the war. According to the lyrical text, he died after the priest informed him the Cristero Rebellion had ended, implying that he was likely killed before the ceasefire was officially announced. Similar to the "Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra," the *corridista* adopts the "vuelva, vuela palomita" trope, directly addressing the proverbial messenger dove who had listened intently to the corrido. The *corridista* asks the dove, a secular symbol of peace and religious symbol of the Holy Spirit, to stand on a cross and explain to the listeners the reason for "his mess," invoking the same doubts, insecurity, and sadness as the unnamed Cristero epic hero.

The *corridista* relays his final farewell, sorrowfully tells the listeners that "[their] story ends here in tears." Although the extent of the Cristero's courage and faith did not reflect the steadfast valor of Cristero epic heroes depicted in historical Cristero corridos, the *corridista* still remembers him as hero and martyr "who roamed town and nation for his faith in his Creator." Regardless of the doubt in his military participation, the Cristero maintained his faith, evidenced in his direct communication with God. Rather than end in triumphant celebration that this Cristero died defending his faith and protecting religious liberty for all Mexicans, the *corridista* closes in tears, evoking grief over the loss of a young *campesino*, and philosophically and spiritually confessing to the listener that even they he, the narrator, cannot explain why *La Cristiada* happened or why the Cristeros had to fight and die.

In the "Corrido de un Cristero," the *corridista*'s transmission of rememory to listeners also incites a process of reimagined collective memory, defined as "acts of evoking, making present, [and] bringing the disappeared" (Arias and del Campo 2009: 8). As listeners participate in this collective memory, the corrido text shapes new historiographies of *La Cristiada* based on

perspectives and new understandings of post-*Cristiada* generations. The inherited memory of the Cristero epic hero in this ballad is not just retold but is also reexamined by the narrator, who invites the listeners to reflect on the complexities of the Cristero's simultaneous bravery and doubt, both shaped by his religiosity. The 1926-1929 Cristero generation is no longer alive, and with no new testimony or living memory from those who experienced the rebellion firsthand, the corrido's open message leaves room for reinterpretation of historical events, indexing the emotional component and religious values of the time.

Concluding Thoughts

Mariachi Los Cristeros represent the living cultural memory of post-*Cristiada* generations that encompasses the highlands of Jalisco in the regions surrounding their hometown of Acatíc. The ensemble's existence reflects the complex creation of a reimagined Cristero identity and a product of cultural artifact that was initially adopted to distinguish the group from other mariachi *tradicionál* ensembles. The four archetypal Cristero characters depicted in the group convey religious symbolism that is not necessarily tied to spiritual devotion, but rather serves as an invocation of inherited cultural, historical, and familial memory of persons, events, and lived experiences associated with *La Cristiada*. Mariachi Los Cristeros' use of dramatic reenactment, paraliturgical parody, and anachronistic dialectics with their audience evokes inherited and collective Cristero memory that invites their post-*Cristiada* audience to reimagine a time period that neither they nor the Moya musicians were alive to experience. The use of religious satire and recollection of the Cristero experience aids in Mariachi Los Cristeros's efforts to educate their audience on Jalisco cultural and musical patrimony. Idelfonso Moya's composition of three new Cristero corridos further contributes to Mariachi Los Cristero's

performance and transmission of Cristero memory and rememory to their listeners. These ballads, whose lyrical structure is reminiscent of the post-Revolutionary classic corrido, narrate and reinterpret the lives and deaths of revolutionaries and Cristero epic heroes. The "Corrido de un Cristero" challenges the characterization of the Cristero epic hero, reinterpreting the hero's traits of bravery and religiosity alongside the *corridista*'s spiritual and philosophical reflection on the purpose of the Cristero Rebellion. These new corridos form part of the Cristero corrido corpus as new iterations of the Cristero experience and contributions to new Cristero historiography. Mariachi Los Cristeros' recordings and live performances exemplify how inherited Cristero memory remains relevant to post-*Cristiada* generations, allowing listeners to relate the Cristero experience to their own cultural and sociopolitical realities.

My work with Mariachi Los Cristeros demands further study and ethnographic research with the Moya family, as this chapter presents only a glimpse into a single case study of the intersections of inherited Cristero memory, musical dramaturgy and parody, and the continuing tradition of Cristero corrido composition that contribute to new historiographies by post-*Cristiada* generations. The case study of Mariachi Los Cristeros leaves several questions regarding what their listeners think when they hear both contemporary performances of historical and new Cristero corridos. Further research is needed in order to interrogate whether audiences appreciate the performances for historical narrative, connect the themes of persecution with contemporary feelings of social injustices, and, if so, examine how these connections relate to the injustices experienced by Mexican migrants outside of Mexico, such as those expressed in corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, a Cristero martyr. Additionally, further study can explore if and how individual members of Mariachi Los Cristeros intentionally and actively display musical and cultural attempts to maintain *La Cristiada*'s historical and religiopolitical

relevance to the experiences of post-*Cristiada* generations in live performances. I was unable to answer these questions fully in my current research but will continue expanding on my work as I continue to explore contemporary iterations of Cristero memory and its cultural and religiopolitical significance to communities in and outside of Mexico.

Teresa McKenna states that "[c]ultural performances are timebound: they provide meaning by positing a past and a history, which draws attention to" corridos as "reactions to, recorders of, and producers of social change" (1997: 32). However, the composition of new Cristero corridos reveals that cultural performances are not bound by time, but rather blur the narratives of historical figures of the past (specifically Cristero martyrs killed in the 1920s) with new narratives that occur in the present. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this transcending of past and present is negotiated to a whole new level in the ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo, whose Cristero mission did not end with his martyrdom in Jalisco in 1928. Based on testimony of undocumented Mexican migrants in these new Cristero corridos, Saint Toribio Romo continues his spiritual mission in the U.S.-Mexico transborder region, protecting migrants against new forms of political injustices away from their homeland.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ghost Smuggling Ballads and the Pilgrim Journey

After collecting the first few corridos uploaded to YouTube during the first three years of my digital ethnographic work, I decided to heed the advice of Saint Toribio Romo's ghost to migrants and make a pilgrimage to Santa Ana de Guadalupe in Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. At this point in my fieldwork, based on the regional paraliturgical performances and popularity of groups such as Mariachi Los Cristeros in Acatíc (as described in Chapter Four), I was under the impression that I would encounter these corridos to Saint Toribio Romo at the site of his shrine on the mesita, the destination for thousands of pilgrims who come to express their thanksgiving for his miracles or to invoke his protection as they make their journey northward. Or at the very least, I was convinced that I would encounter them in the broader region of Cristero territory in the highlands of Jalisco. Unlike the pilgrims who make their journey back by car, I flew to the city of Guadalajara and took a regional bus through the mountain roads to San Juan de los Lagos and a connecting bus to Jalostotitlán, where I walked down several streets to the front door of a house near the main plaza facing the church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción. I arrived on a weekday in the month of July and contrary to the expected bustle of pilgrims and visiting families, Jalos (short for Jalostotitlán, as it is referred to by locals) was strangely quiet.

When I arrived at my temporary home, I was greeted by Bertha, the cleaning lady, who informed me that my hosts, José and Pame, would not arrive until the evening. I turned to her and asked, "Where is everyone? It seems so quiet and still right now. I was expecting the streets to be crowded during the summer months, especially since most pilgrimages take place in July and August for the local Fiestas (Marian Feast Days dedicated to the regional Virgin icons)." Bertha shook her head, "It's not quiet. You are here on a weekday. Just wait until the weekend.

Also, most people stay in some of the motels and houses closer to Santa Ana de Guadalupe because they come to see Toribio. The church you see over there is for pilgrims who come to see Our Lady of La Asunción." I asked her how I would get to Saint Toribio Romo's shrine from the center of Jalostotitlán and she informed that I would need to take a bus. She emphasized that Santa Ana de Guadalupe was at least a ten-minute drive up the highlands and that Saint Toribio's church was another two mile drive up the steep hill beyond the front gates.

That afternoon, after catching the local bus that would drop me off at the top of the mesita in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, the bus driver halted on the side of the highway. He announced, "This bus will not be going to the mesita. It's too late in the day. If you are going to the Shrine, you need to get off now." I could see the giant concrete gates with gold lettering saying, "Santa Ana: Cuna de Santo Toribio Romo" (Santa Ana: Cradle of Santo Toribio Romo). I was the only person who got off and I set off to the mesita on foot, which felt appropriate considering that this was part of the pilgrimage experience, walking along the side of the partially paved road. It took me forty-five minutes to arrive at the top, and I was hungry and exhausted. There was still a scattering of pilgrims walking in front of the Old Shrine (the original, smaller church) and along its steep stone steps. As I was staring up toward the church, I heard children's voices behind me and an older man commenting on how he was going to close his food stand soon. I approached him and asked if I could purchase some food. He welcomed me into the shade where he had set up some tables in front of an open-air griddle. He explained that everything closes earlier during the weekday, but that groups of pilgrims will still keep arriving until the caretakers ask them to leave. Three little girls (the children's voices from before) ran into the shaded area. One of the girls sat in front of me and asked, "Are you looking for Santo Toribio?"

During our friendly conversation, I asked the food vendor, Luis, about the kind of music that is performed at the Shrine. He explained that loudspeakers normally play instrumental music when there are large crowds or for town events, but that they were turned off on that day. I asked Luis about live performances, and he shook his head, "No. You would need permission for that. They're very strict about so many things now. I've lived here my whole life, but many things have changed since they canonized our Padre Toribio and especially after they built the new Shrine for the larger crowds of pilgrims. At least I can keep my food business here. I don't even know the ladies who run the gift shop at the larger santuario." After finishing my meal and thanking him, I asked him if he knew about any corridos to Saint Toribio Romo that detailed his transborder miracles. He shook his head, "I'm not sure. I don't think so. Can you play one?" I played him a clip of one of the corrido YouTube videos on my phone.

"Oh, that is beautiful," Luis smiled. "I've never heard that one before. You know, there are lots of corridos from La Cristiada, but those are old ones. You know, like the one about El Catorce or Valentín de la Sierra. But no, not this one. This is a new one. I don't know this one and I have certainly not heard these around here. And that's strange because you see these two singers in the video you showed me? They're standing in front of the Old Shrine. They filmed part of that here, but I don't remember seeing them." Luis pointed to the new Shrine of Saint Toribio in the distance. "They have some CDs in the gift shop, but I think those are alabanzas [worship music]. You never know, though. You just got here, so maybe you will find them soon. I just don't know if people sing them here. Things are so different now, like I told you." Luis looked outside at the sky and setting sun. "It's getting late. There is no bus anymore and you don't have a car. Let me call my nephew. He has a taxi and he can drive you back to Jalos. You

should ask the locals back in Jalos about these songs. They have relatives in the United States and so many people come back to visit in the summer. I hope you find them."

I thanked Luis and told him I would likely see him the next day. As the taxi drove up the hill, I picked up my things and walked over. Luis grabbed his phone and ran up to me. He opened the YouTube app and handed me his phone. "Wait! Before you leave, can you tell me the name of that corrido, again? I should show it to my father."

Typical of the classic corrido's literary form, new Cristero corridos discussed in Chapter Four narrate events from a fixed past, retrospectively analyzing the heroic deeds of martyrs and philosophically questioning the purpose of the rebellion. The protagonists of these ballads, named or unnamed, have long been dead, no longer present in a physical sense, their memory recalled and invoked through musical storytelling. A new phenomenon of Cristero corridos dedicated to another martyr of *La Cristiada*, Saint Toribio Romo, also depict the story of a protagonist long dead, buried behind the altar of his Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe in Jalisco, the small ranch town just outside of Jalostotitlán. However, these new Cristero corridos do not narrate events of a fixed past, nor do their main narratives take place in the regions surrounding Cristero territory in the highlands of Jalisco. These corridos defy temporal, geographical, and spatial boundaries by describing events that took place (and continue to take place) within the last several years along the U.S.-Mexico transborder region, the liminal space of the thousands of miles of desert that stretch along the Borderland. In attempts to capture live performances of these corridos during my fieldwork in Jalisco, I instead was met with an unexpected silence, including at Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine. As described in the epigraph above, community members of Jalostotitlán directed me back to the United States in my search for performances of

these migrant testimonies, which consequently led me back to the social media platforms where I first encountered them.

This chapter provides a foundational introduction and analysis of Saint Toribio Romo corridos, specifically uploaded as audio-video performances and recordings to YouTube. Through critical literary and religiopolitical analysis of select Saint Toribio Romo corridos from the total eighteen ballads dedicated to him that I collected (see Appendix B), transcribed, and translated for this project, I will discuss their associated intersections within U.S. immigration politics, transborder survivor testimony, Mexican Popular Catholicism, and *narcocultura* (drug-trafficking culture). New Cristero corridos dedicated to and about Saint Toribio Romo serve as musical testimonies of his ghostly apparition who saves undocumented migrants from near death experiences during their dangerous trek to the U.S. border. Saint Toribio Romo is the Holy *Coyote*, otherwise known as the *Santo Pollero*, or holy smuggler, smuggling migrants to safety in his mission as the unofficial Patron Saint of Immigrants. Thus, Saint Toribio Romo corridos, which also form part of new Cristero corrido repertory, are *ghost smuggling ballads*, a definitive term I created to categorize these musical testimonies, whose themes and hero reveal new religious iterations of the 19th-century Border corrido and migrant corrido. The invocation and indexing of collective Cristero memory and a history of injustice in ghost smuggling ballads creates a parallel between persecution of Cristeros during *La Cristiada* and contemporary feelings of persecution of Mexican migrants. In this chapter, I draw from multiple theoretical voices to discuss how Saint Toribio Romo corridos, or ghost smuggling ballads, function as religiopolitical expressions of self-representation that counter imposed criminal identity on immigrants (Koegan 2009) through transcodification (Martha Chew Sánchez 2006). Additionally, I examine how these corridos function as survivors' music (Pilzer 2015) and

survivor testimony for potential migrants, contributing to the cultivation of Saint Toribio Romo devotion within Mexican Popular Catholicism and folk religion as musical votives to his intercession.

Toribio Romo González: Santa Ana de Guadalupe's Native Son and Martyr

Toribio Romo González was born on April 16, 1900 in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, a *rancheria* (small ranch town) just outside of Jalostititlán, Jalisco. Baptized the day after his birth, Toribio Romo experienced a traditional and religious upbringing, raised by a family that valued daily prayer and a devotion to the Virgen de Guadalupe. Beginning in early childhood, Toribio was exceptionally close to his sister, María (known fondly as "Quica") and younger brother, Román. According to local lore, including corridos collected for this project, he spent his afternoons admiring the "mesita," or the steep hilltop's plateau, near his home (**Figure 5.1**). When he was approximately seven years old, he is said to have had his first divine vision, allegedly describing to María that Heaven was found on the other side of the mesita (Pimentel 2006: 137). This same mesita would later become the location of his shrine and the center for pilgrimage Masses dedicated to his intercession (**Figure 5.2**)

Figure 5.1 Excerpt from "Toribio y Quica" [1] (Dueto Belen, 2015)

Cuando Toribio era niño Le dijo así a su hermana - En el cerrito está el cielo - Arriba de la mesita* Parece que vio a Diosito	When Toribio was a child He told his sister, "There on the clifftop is Heaven Right above the mesita." It seems he saw God there

[1] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano."Toribio y Quica," corrido performed by Dueto Belén. Initially produced as part of a testimonial film, according to the YouTube video. However, the URL link to the film is expired. Not commercially available. For full video see Dueto Belen, "Toribio y Quica – Dueto Belen," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6nofSz5Dlg.

También a la Virgencita Con una tierna mirada Los dos veían la mesita No estaba tan retirada Pero era muy de subida Y como estaban chiquillos Le temían a la barita	As well as the dear Virgin With a tender look They both looked at the mesita It was not too far away But the incline was steep And since they were little children They were afraid of the rocks

Figure 5.2 Excerpt from "Plegaria a Santo Toribio" [2] (Trio Amanecer, 2010)

-En la mesita está el cielo Tú le dijiste a tu hermana Ahora que allá te encuentras Para el bien de nuestras almas Santo Toribio bendito Con tu amor dame la calma	"On the mesita is Heaven," You told your sister And now you are found there For the benefit of our souls Blessed Saint Toribio With your love grant me peace

Toribio Romo entered the minor seminary at San Juan de los Lagos when he was twelve years old, subsequently dedicating himself to his studies and developing a "great interest in the promotion of social-Catholic works"[3] (Pimentel 2006: 137). His interest informed his progressive sociopolitical views for improving the plight of the lower classes—views that would later generate trouble for him as a young priest. In 1920, he entered the Seminario de Guadalajara in Jalisco's capital to complete preparation for his ordination, spending his summers back home in Santa Ana de Guadalupe where he provided catechesis for the town's children. The people of Santa Ana responded with excitement at the prospect of a native son becoming a priest.

[2] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Plegaria a Santo Toribio," corrido by Trio Amanecer. Based on the video, this performance was recorded in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Not commercially available. For full video, see Trio Amancer, "TRO AMANECER – PLEGARIA A SANTO TORIBIO ROMO.flv," (2010) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOrvtrxoG6c.

[3] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano.

Toribio contributed further to his hometown during his summers by helping in the construction of a chapel on the same "mesita" from his childhood (Pimentel 2006: 138), a *santuario* dedicated to the Virgen de Guadalupe (and after his martyrdom, to Toribio Romo). After his ordination on December 23, 1922, Father Toribio Romo's first Mass, celebrated in the same chapel on the mesita, proved to be quite the event for Santa Ana de Guadalupe, including elaborate preparations for decorating the Virgen de Guadalupe chapel, followed by a week-long celebration (Pimentel 2006: 138-139).

Father Toribio Romo's brief life as a priest consisted of five primary assignments during his tenure, though his first three consecutive assignments in Sayula, Tuxpan, and Yahualica were each cut short due to disagreements with the pastors, who perceived the twenty-four-year-old as "impetuous, impatient, [and] a quasi-socialist"[4] (Pimentel 2006: 140). This sentiment was not paralleled by the congregants in each location, who embraced him and praised him for his progressive views, particularly for his desire to work directly with lower class laborers outside the confines of the church (Pimentel 2006: 140). Sociologist Alfredo Mirandé states, "It is not clear why Father Toribio had trouble in his first three assignments," though it was likely that his conservative superior priests were not keen on progressive Catholic movements that followed after Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which directly addressed the question of fair wages and conditions of the working class (2013: 100).

In the summer of 1926 at the start of *La Cristiada*'s insurrection, Father Toribio was assigned to a parish in Cuquío, Jalisco. As expressed in his diary entries, he was often forced into hiding for long periods of time to avoid the arrest and torture at the hands of Calles's Federal army, who received tips from Callista enforcers in surrounding areas (Pimentel 2006: 141).

[4] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. All subsequent quotations from this source have also been translated from the Spanish by the author.

Unlike the self-proclaimed Cristeros (including some priests) who engaged in the militant uprising, Father Toribio never participated in armed warfare. He did, however, help organize a "large outdoor Mass that drew 15,000 people in defiance of the government" (Mirandé 2013: 101) after approximately three hundred Cristeros overtook Cuquío's City Hall (Jáuregui Ramírez 2014: 55). Although Father Toribio only participated in non-violent civil disobedience, he and his collaborators became "marked men" for the Mexican Federal army (Mirandé 2013: 101).

In the fall of 1927, the Archbishop of Guadalajara sent Toribio to the city of Tequila, whose people were without a priest on account of the aggressive enforcement of anticlerical laws and Cristero persecution. In accepting this transfer, Toribio Romo made his way to his final assignment (**Figure 5.3**).

Figure 5.3 "Padre Toribio Romo"[5] (Chuy Márquez, 2015)

Para escribir estos versos No hallo ni cuándo ni donde Voy a narrar los sucesos Del Padre Toribio Romo Su fecha de nacimiento Aquí la voy a decir Fue el año mil novecientos El día dieciséis de abril Santa Ana de Guadalupe Un lugar muy concurrido Tierra que vio nacer Al Santo Padre Toribio El veintitrés de diciembre	In order to write these verses I do not even know where to start I am going to narrate events Of Father Toribio His date of birth Here I will tell you Was in the year nineteen hundred The sixteenth day of April Santa Ana de Guadalupe A very busy crowded place The land that witnessed the birth Of Saint Toribio Romo The twenty-third of December

[5] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Padre Toribio Romo," corrido performed by Chuy Márquez. Initially produced as part of a testimonial film, according to the YouTube video. However, the URL link to the film is expired. Not commercially available. For full video performance see Chuy Márquez, "Padre Toribio Romo – Chuy Marquez," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-qAeBSE9wc.

Del mil nuevo veintidós Fue ordenado sacerdote Por la voluntad de Dios	Of nineteen hundred twenty-two He was ordained a priest By the will of God
Anduvo en varios lugares Catequizando a los niños Allí en Sayula y por Tuxpan En Yahualica y Cuquío	He traveled to many regions Catechizing the children There in Sayula and around Tuxpan In Yahualica and Cuquío
Luego en Tequila, Jalisco El siguió catequizando Pero la hora de su muerte Ya se le estaba llegando	Then in Tequila, Jalisco He continued catechizing But the hour of his death Was soon approaching
Mil novecientos veintiocho Veinticinco de febrero Llegaron los federales Dormido lo sorprendieron	Nineteen hundred-eighteen Twenty-fifth of February The Federales arrived They surprised him in his sleep
[voz de federales: ¡Sí es el cura!]	[voices of Federales: Yes, it's the priest!]
Grita – [ininteligible] Pedro Mariscal Un agrarista Iscariote -Mantenlo que ese es el cura. Así entrego al sacerdote	He shouts, "[unintelligible] Pedro Mariscal," An Iscariot* agrarista "Hold him down because he is the priest." And as such turned the priest in.
[voz de Padre Toribio: Si soy. ¡No me maten!]	*[voice of Father Toribio: Yes, I am. Please do not kill me!]*
[voz de agrarista/federal: ¡Muere, cura!]	*[voice of agrarista/Federal: Die, priest!]*
Despierta el Padre Toribio Él dice sobresaltado -Sí soy, pero no me maten. Al punto de disparar	Father Toribio awakens Startled he told them "Yes, I am, but do not kill me." Just as shots were fired.
[sonido de dispara]	*[sound of gunshots]*
Ahí en brazos de su hermana Qué dice con mucha fé -Ánimo Padre Toribio. Y - ¡Que Viva Cristo Rey!	There in the arms of his sister Who said with great faith, "Stay strong, Father Toribio." And "Long Live Christ the King!"
El día veintiuno de mayo Del año dos mil pasado Junto con el Padre Esqueda	The twenty-first day of May Of the past year of two thousand Alongside Father Esqueda

En Roma canonizado Aquí termina la historia Compuesta con mucho amor Que el Padre fiel Toribio Nos eche su bendición	In Rome he was canonized Here our story ends Composed with so much love May faithful Father Toribio Send down his blessing on us *Referring to Judas Iscariot; traitor

Faced with the increasing threats from *agrarista* whistleblowers and Callista soldiers, Father Toribio could not live in the rectory of Tequila's parish. He sought refuge in a house owned by local resident León Aguirre, situated next to an abandoned factory where he arranged a room dedicated to prayer, catechesis, and clandestine Mass, continuing to celebrate the Sacraments in secret. He left Tequila briefly to witness his brother Román's ordination Mass in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, documenting his journey in his diary as a dangerous and horrifying experience, in which he recounts, "hung on eucalyptus trees, eight Cristero cadavers"[6] (Pimentel 2006: 143). Father Román and María Romo would then join their brother in hiding at the Aguirre house in Tequila.

On Ash Wednesday in February 1928, a few neighbors alerted the two priests that the Federales had just seized nearby estates in search of known violators of the anticlerical laws. That same evening, after celebrating a secret Mass on the trunk of an orange tree adorned with a crucifix and a cloth stamp of Santa Teresita del Niño Jesús (Pimentel 2006: 144), Father Toribio pleaded to his brother to leave for Guadalajara, entrusting him with a letter of farewell to his family and faith community. According to witness accounts, Father Toribio only came out of hiding to meet with those who were extremely ill (Jáuregui Ramírez 2015: 103; Pimentel 2006:

[6] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano.

145-146), interacting exclusively with his sister, María, who remained in the Aguirre house with him after Father Román's departure.

Just before dawn on February 25, 1928, as Father Toribio slept, a group of six Federales ambushed the Aguirre house and forced their way into Father Toribio's bedroom. Pedro Mariscal, an *agrarista* whistleblower that accompanied the soldiers, identified the sleeping priest shouting, "That is the priest. Kill him!" Father Toribio awoke and screamed, "Yes, I am he, but please do not kill me," just as the first of two shots were fired (**Figure 5.3**). One of the soldiers shouted, "Die, priest," firing the second fatal shot, causing Father Toribio's body to fall into the arms of his sister, María (Jáuregui Ramírez 2014: 115). Cradling her brother in her arms, María told the twenty-seven-year old priest, "Courage, Father Toribio! Merciful Jesus, receive him! *Viva Cristo Rey*!"[7] Eyewitness accounts of the Federales' transport of Father Toribio's body claim the soldiers and *agraristas* were singing "vulgar corridos" as they dragged a makeshift gurney to the main plaza of Tequila (Jáuregui Ramírez 2014: 117-118). After ransacking the house, soldiers took María captive, undressed Father Toribio's lifeless body, and dumped the body in front of the Quemada City Hall.

After pleading to Malaquías Cuervo, mayor of Tequila at the time, to pick up Father Toribio's body, the Plasciencia family cared for and prepared the body, including organizing a vigil and wake at a local house. He was then buried in the municipal cemetery on February 26, 1928 (Jáuregui Ramírez 2014: 119-120; Pimentel 2006: 146) where his body remained for twenty years until it was moved to his hometown in 1948 (Mirandé 2013: 107). Father Toribio's remains were returned to Santa Ana de Guadalupe and interred in the small chapel on the

[7] As cited by Jáuregui Ramírez (2014) *Santo Toribio Romo: Hablan los testigos de su vida y martirio*, pg. 115. Jáuregui Ramírez cites following Vatican documents: Positio Super Martyrio. Congregatio pro causis sanctorum p.n. 1407. Mexicana (Rei Publicae). Beatificationis seu declarationis martyri servorum Dei Christophori Magallanes et XXIV sociorum in odium fidei, uti fertur, interfectorum (+1915-1937), 3 vols. 1988.

“mesita” that overlooked his childhood home (Pimentel 2006: 147). Santa Ana de Guadalupe’s native son was venerated and honored as a local martyr, and his shrine (now referred to as the “Old Shrine”) in the small chapel was frequented by those who remembered him, including those associated with the “expansive Romo family” (Young 2015: 156) in Jalostotitlán and the broader highlands of Los Altos de Jalisco.

Saint Toribio Romo, New Migrant Devotion, and the New Shrine

According to Julia Young (2015: 156), “[f]or at least forty years after he was killed, Toribio Romo was largely forgotten outside of Jalisco,” save for those who were familiar with his cultural, religious, and historical significance to the region’s Cristero territory and the greater Cristero heartland. Alfredo Mirandé claims “there was already quite a bit of interest in him by 1997” (2013: 107) after Toribio Romo’s beatification in 1992, eight years before his canonization. In fact, Toribio Romo’s remains were relocated in 1998 to directly underneath the chapel’s altar, a gesture exemplifying tangible progress toward his sanctification for local devotees. Local historians, including curators of Saint Toribio’s museum (built in the physical location and structure of his childhood home), and bearers of Jalostotitlán’s inherited Cristero memory are dedicated to preserving Toribio Romo’s legacy and significance, evident in locally printed religious literature on Saint Toribio Romo’s life, specifically literature written and printed before his official beatification and canonization. This literature, along with devotionals and novena booklets, are available for purchase in the cities of Guadalajara, Jalostotitlán, San Juan de los Lagos, and Tequila in various Catholic and secular bookstores, as well as street vendor stands.

Father Toribio Romo was canonized on May 21, 2000, alongside twenty-four other Mexican priests and Saint María Natividad Venegas de la Torre (a Cristero-sympathizing nun and Mexico's first female saint) by Pope John Paul II. On Monday May 21, 2001, exactly one year after Saint Toribio Romo's canonization, the Bishop of San Juan de los Lagos blessed and dedicated the "Calzada de los Martires" (Causeway of the Martyrs), lined with bust sculptures of the other twenty-four canonized martyrs from the Cristero Rebellion (Pimentel 2006: 147). Up until this point, the now proclaimed Saint Toribio Romo had only been the subject of localized devotion in the state of Jalisco, and it remains unclear whether he was the subject of devotion associated with inherited Cristero memory brought to the United States by Mexican migrants during what Julia Young defines as the "Cristero diaspora" (Young 2015) in the 1920s and 1930s. In the first decade of the 2000s, "his reputation had grown on both sides of the border" (Young 2015: 157) as increasing migrant testimonies transformed Saint Toribio Romo from a Cristero Catholic martyr of the past into the holy smuggler of the present – a ghost activist of the transborder region, whose miraculous favors earned him the name *El Santo Pollero*, or the Holy Coyote.

Thanks to his newly acquired sainthood and "his ever-growing reputation among emigrants," thousands of visitors and pilgrims, the majority traveling back to Mexico from the United States, have transformed Saint Toribio Romo into "an economic patron of his home" (Young 2015: 157). Each year over 300,000 pilgrims and "religious tourists" (Romo 2010) will visit the church on the mesa in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, formerly the chapel of La Virgen de Guadalupe and now the site of Saint Toribio's shrine. On any given weekend, the Shrine of Saint Toribio Romo in the village of Santa Ana de Guadalupe in Jalostotitlán, receives over 5,000

pilgrims, many of whom have successfully journeyed to the United States and have attained means of return as a promise to the saint (Fitzgerald 2009: 70; Mirandé 2013: 96).

In a 2010 article, "My Tío the Saint," David Romo describes a colorful panorama of pilgrim vehicles "with license plates from California, Texas, Nevada, and Idaho" that had driven to the highlands of Jalisco to give thanks to Toribio Romo for his protection and guidance. Although David Romo claims the number of pilgrims "has dwindled somewhat" since then, during the course of my ethnographic work in Jalostotitlán, I was told by tour guides, local historians, and parish staff that since the completion of Saint Toribio's new shrine in 2012 (a larger, modern church complex that seats several thousand people), the number of yearly pilgrims is likely around half a million. They emphasized that the new church was built as a response to the Old Shrine's inability to house the influx of pilgrims and visitors.

In light of the hordes of pilgrims and devotees who flocked to Santa Ana de Guadalupe seeking protection, asking for intercession, and in expression of thanksgiving, a new building was erected to accommodate the number of congregants in 2012, the current Shrine of Saint Toribio Romo. The Shrine's administrative staff emphasizes that this larger church was built with donations and tithes collected from the vast quantities of faithful that gathered for years in the Old Shrine, exemplifying that migrants have both amplified the significance of this Cristero martyr and have also aided in the construction of a physical space to accommodate their devotion (Aguilar Ros 2016). Toribio's remains were moved from the Old Shrine on the mesita to the new Shrine, and were placed behind the main altar, allowing visitors to venerate his relics on their own or as part of an organized tour. During my fieldwork in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, I observed how most congregants would make their way between both shrines. The *milagro* room, where pilgrims and devotees leave physical offerings of thanksgiving for miraculous intercessions, is

located near the Old Shrine, which also houses Saint Toribio's bloodstained clothes, framed in a shadow box and hung on the wall inside the chapel.

Photograph 5a. Inside the chapel of Saint Toribio Romo's Old Shrine in Santa de Guadalupe, Jalisco. Photograph taken by Teresita Lozano, 2017.

Photograph 5b. Inside the sanctuary of Saint Toribio Romo's New Shrine in Santa de Guadalupe, Jalisco. Photograph taken by Teresita Lozano, 2017.

The Holy Coyote: *Ghost Smuggling Ballads*

Of the few scholars who have discussed Saint Toribio Romo in sociological, historical, and folkloric contexts, most refer to the 2002 media testimony of Jesús Buendía Gaytán, a middle-aged undocumented man from Zacatecas (the neighboring state of Jalisco) as one of very first accounts associated with the Holy Coyote (Mirandé 2013; Romo 2010; Young 2015). In his interview published in the Mexico City magazine, *Contenido*,[8] Buendía described how, despite recounting his story about Saint Toribio Romo in 2002, his miraculous encounter with the Holy Coyote had in fact taken place in the early 1980s. After hiring a *coyote* (smuggler) back in Mexicali, Mexico (just south of Calexico, California) to help guide him across the desert,

[8] For original article referenced by scholars, see Marco A. García Gutiérrez (2002) "Toribio Romo, Protector de los mojados: Es un espejismo del desierto que hace milagros de carne y hueso,'" *Contenido*.

Buendía and the smuggler were both spotted by a U.S. Border Patrol car during the transborder journey. In order to avoid detainment, Buendía fled into the desert, where he wandered for several days and began suffering the serious effects of heatstroke, dehydration, and exposure. Suddenly, a young man with captivating blue eyes approached him in a truck and proceeded to offer him food, water, and directions to shelter as a means of ensuring Buendía's safe passage into the United States. When Buendía asked how he could repay the kindness of this stranger, the young man told him that his name was Toribio Romo, and that Buendía should look for him in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Jalisco as soon as he had secured a job and steady income. When Buendía returned to Mexico to look for his blue-eyed rescuer, he was directed to the church on the mesita where he saw the photograph of Father Toribio Romo hanging above the altar of the chapel. Buendía immediately recognized the man in the photograph as the man in the desert, and realized he had been saved by a ghost, the apparition of a Cristero martyr who had been dead for over fifty years.

During Jacquelin Hagan's ethnographic work in Jalostotitlán in the early 2000s, she spoke with a woman named Josefina, the so-called "keeper of miracles," who recounted a narrative from 1990-1991 in which three migrants from Michoacán left for the United States and became lost in the desert. As they slowly succumbed to the elements, a stranger approached them and led them to a fountain where they could drink water. He asked them where they were headed, to which they responded, Los Angeles. According to the three men, the stranger led them as they walked alongside highways to a bus station, completely unseen by any cars or Border Patrol agents that passed them by, seemingly invisible to danger. Once they arrived at the bus station, they asked the stranger how they could possibly repay him. He answered that they had no debt to pay but asked them to return to Santa Ana de Guadalupe to visit him. When the

three men traveled back to Jalisco, they went looking for Toribio door-to-door, only to find out he was a martyr buried at the top of the mesita (Hagan 2008: 42-43). Hagan states, “[s]ince the recording of this miracle in the mid-1990s, Saint Toribio has become the legendary companion of journeying migrants,” who he helps “under the guise of a coyote” (2008: 43).

Jesús Buendía Gaytán’s experience and Josefina’s recounting of the three migrants from Michoacán are two of countless emigrant stories, often manifested as oral narratives retold to others, testimonial notes and *milagros* (personal votives symbolizing a miracle) pinned to bulletin boards at Saint Toribio Romo’s shrine in Jalisco and, as exemplified by the compilation for this project, encoded into lyrical content of corridos. The Holy Coyote is depicted in some of these testimonies as a cowboy-like figure driving a pick-up truck, other times as a young priest in clerics wandering desert trails of the U.S.-Mexico transborder regions.

As described to me during my fieldwork with post-*Cristiada* Martín and Alcalá family in Orange County, California, some stories recount his presence on an airplane or as a ghostly presence next to a road sign along a Southern California highway, indicating Saint Toribio’s stomping grounds extend beyond the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands. Two women I interviewed in Jalostotitlán claimed they saw Saint Toribio at a Border Security checkpoint on their way to visit a terminally ill nephew in Los Angeles. One of the women had no visa and was terrified that she would be asked for documentation at the vehicle checkpoint, and silently prayed as the Border Patrol agent signaled to the women to roll down their window. She looked in the distance and recognized Saint Toribio Romo’s eyes and face among a group of the agents but said that he quickly turned back around. As soon as he turned his face, the Border Patrol agent simply looked at the women and, without saying anything, signaled them to continue driving, never checking or asking for documentation. The two women arrived in Los Angeles where they remained for two

months with their young nephew. “He survived the cancer surgery,” one of the women told me as she held my shoulder. “Saint Toribio made the agents forget to ask me for papers. I was here for my nephew. He wanted me to be here. Toribio protected me.”

There are several alleged encounters with Saint Toribio Romo as the Holy Coyote in the deserts of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. As described in one of the corridos (**Figure 5.4**), he has even been seen along the Río Suchiate near the Guatemala-Mexico border (an occidental marker that divides Guatemala and Mexico in a similar way that the Rio Grande, or Río Bravo as it is referred to in Mexico, divides Mexico and the United States). Regardless of his attire or location, three important factors remain consistent in each experience and tale. First, his piercing blue eyes that contrast his dark hair. Second, the fact that he always introduces his name as Toribio Romo, never referring to himself as Saint nor giving any indication that he is, in fact, a ghost of the past. Finally, he requests to all his migrant beneficiaries that they repay him by visiting him in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, assuring them that people in the area will help direct them to him.

Figure 5.4 Excerpt from “Santo Toribio Romo”[9] (Los Originales de San Juan, 2007)

El Padre Toribio Romo Nació y fue muerto en Jalisco La matan los agraristas Por ser seguidor de Cristo Desde entonces se aparece Mucha gente ya lo ha visto	Father Toribio Romo Was born and died in Jalisco The agraristas killed him For being a follower of Christ And since them he appears So many people have seen him

[9] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Originally recorded and composed by Los Originales de San Juan (2007) “Santo Toribio Romo,” found in their album *Ojala Que la Vide Me Alcance* (EMI/Capitol Latin), available on CD or MP3. The corrido has also been uploaded to YouTube, where I first discovered its existence. For video uploads, see Los Originales de San Juan, “Santo Toribio Romo.wmv,” (2011) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZmLEtEhrQY; and “Santo Toribio Romo,” (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nFSWtG8Xq0.

Por el Río Bravo y Suchiate Por el desierto traicionero Allí los salva de peligro Ese Santo misionero Cuentan que a veces les da Agua, comida y dinero *And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:* *Padre Toribio Romo, te pedimos que intercedas por nosotros. Por Nuestra Virgencita de Guadalupe, la patrona de todos los mexicanos.*	Near the Río Bravo [Rio Grande] and [Río] Suchiate Through the treacherous desert There he saved us from danger That missionary Saint They say that sometimes he gives them Water, food, and money *And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:* *Father Toribio Romo, we ask that you intercede for us. For Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of all Mexicans.*

The few scholars who have discussed Saint Toribio Romo's role as the unofficial Patron Saint of Migrants (Hagan 2008; Fitzgerald 2009; Romo 2010; Mirandé 2013; Young 2015; Aguilar Ros 2016) focus on mass pilgrimage to his shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, the physical evidence of testimonies left as offerings of transnational devotion at his shrine, and increasing transnational devotion in the United States (particularly after the tours of his relics in 2011 and 2014),[10] including the newly constructed United States parishes and social Catholic institutions bearing Toribio Romo's name. No scholar to date has compiled or analyzed any of the musical (corrido) testimonies associated with Saint Toribio Romo, the Holy Coyote.

It seems that "[n]o one knows exactly why Toribio Romo, a Cristero martyr who lived and died in Jalisco, is now an object of such fervent transnational devotion" (Young 2015: 157), though witness testimonies, including survivor testimony in Toribio Romo corridos, do not always reference Saint Toribio's life during the Cristero Rebellion. Although some corridos

[10] For more information on relics tour see "Relics of St. Toribio Coming to Sacred Heart," (2011) *Turlock Journal*; Additionally, refer to Sam Sanders (2014), "Relics of the Patron Saint of Immigrants Takes a Pilgrimage," as heard on *All Things Considered*. NPR - National Public Radio; and Bill Sherman (2014) "Catholic church building shrine to Mexican saint," *Tulsa World*.

(such as those seen in **Figures 5.1, 5.2,** and **5.3**) do incorporate details of Saint Toribio Romo's childhood and life, most ghost smuggling ballads that specifically recount his transborder miracles do not include much detail about his life beyond describing that he was a Cristero martyr. This lack of detailed historical contextualization in many of these corridos may indicate that, aside from his martyrdom and canonization, the details of Toribio Romo's twenty-seven years of life are not always textually necessary for the *corridista's* testimony to potential migrants. Perhaps the lack of these historical details of Saint Toribio Romo's life reflect how the Cristero memory embedded in the text is implied and its explicit lyrical rendering is unnecessary to the overall message of the ballad to future survivors of the migrant journey.

Ironically, there is no evidence that Toribio Romo was an advocate for Mexican emigration to the United States during his life. In 1920, while still a seminarian, Toribio Romo wrote an unpublished one act play entitled "Vámonos al Norte" (Let's Go North), in which the protagonist Don Rogaciano, a Mexican emigrant to the United States, returns to his hometown and patronizes the locals with snobbish behavior and a new Americanized identity (Mirandé 2013: 100; Romo 2010; Fitzgerald 2008: 72). Based on Toribio Romo's play, Rogaciano's new superiority complex is marked by its antithesis to Mexican cultural identity, including his abandonment of family values and religion, acquired materialism, and loss of his sexual identity. The play warns the Mexican audience that going North is essentially a cultural and religious betrayal because if you return home, you may return a cowardly, effeminized man, or worse yet, a Protestant (Romo 2010). Incidentally, a few years after Toribio Romo wrote this play, thousands of clergies, Cristero exiles, and Cristero refugees would emigrate to the United States to avoid further religious and political persecution as part of what Julia Young refers to as the Cristero diaspora (2015). While the scope of this dissertation does not interrogate exactly why

Toribio Romo became the unofficial Patron Saint of immigrants, ghost smuggling ballads reveal that Saint Toribio Romo has developed and assumed a new posthumous identity and mission as new Cristero epic hero and Border hero of the transborder region: *El Santo Coyote* (the Holy Coyote) and *El Santo Pollero* (the Holy Smuggler).

Coyote is a term used to describe a border-crossing smuggler, infamous for extorting money from desperate migrants who seek secure guidance through the desert. Additionally, the term *Pollero* also refers to the border-crossing smuggler, comparing the smuggler to someone who is transporting chicks or chickens, who in this case helps smuggle undocumented immigrants. The following corrido, "Padre Toribio Romo" (**Figure 5.5**), for example, refers to Saint Toribio Romo as "el Rey de los Polleros" (the King of the Smugglers), informing listeners that the Cristero martyr from Santa Ana de Guadalupe protects Mexican migrants, as well as migrants from any "foreign lands," who seek his intercessions as they journey "to the North." Migrants with visas, passports, and other forms of documentation can enter through traditional ports of entry in the United States and have no need for the "King of the Smugglers," while undocumented immigrants must rely on the help of *coyotes* in order to follow the appropriate paths to avoid apprehension by Border Patrol and civilian vigilantes.

Figure 5.5 Excerpt from "Padre Toribio Romo"[11] (Mariachi Jalisco de Miguel Orozco, 2015)

Spanish	English
Voy a cantar un corrido No lo dejaré a mañana De un padre muy milagroso Qué se encuentra allá en Santa Ana	I am going to sing a ballad I will not leave it for tomorrow About a miraculous priest Who can be found there in Santa Ana

[11] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Padre Toribio Romo," performed by Mariachi Jalisco de Miguel Orozco. Not commercially available. For full video, see Mariachi Jalisco de Miguel Orozco, "Padre Toribio Romo Video Aficionado," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IoxnTKhzFc.

Toda la gente le pide Para sus males alivio Consuelo de los que sufren El Padrecito Toribio	All people ask him To heal their ills A comfort to those who suffer The dear Father Toribio
De todo México entero Y del extranjero van Le ayuda con los milagros A la Virgen de San Juan	From all of Mexico And from foreign lands they come He helps La Virgen de San Juan Perform miracles
Cuando vayas para el Norte Vete por ese sendero Pídele al Padre Toribio Qué es el Rey de los Polleros	When you travel to the North Follow this path And ask Father Toribio to intercede For he is the King of the Smugglers
Cuando vayas a Jalisco Llévate tu engalana Visita al Padre Toribio Y allí te espera en Santa Ana	When you go to Jalisco Bring your offerings Go visit Father Toribio He waits for you in Santa Ana
Su historia tiene marcada Ya tiene muchos milagros Y allí se encuentran sus restos En mero Santa Ana bajo	His story is marked He has performed so many miracles And there you will find his remains Right there in lower Santa Ana
Cuando lo canonizaron Fue casi de los primeros El murío por defender La causa de los Cristeros	When they canonized him He was almost one of the firsts He died in order to defend The cause of the Cristeros
Desde San Miguel el Alto La Ciénega y La Coronoa Tambíen vamos a su templo A llevarte veladoras	All the way from San Miguel el Alto La Ciénega and La Corona [nearby towns] We also go to your Shrine And we bring you votives
Gracias al Padre Toribio Tengo años que ya no tomo Los versos ya le compuse Al Padre Toribio Romo	Thanks to Father Toribio It's been years since I've had a drink And I've just composed these verses To Father Toribio Romo

Daniel E. Martínez's chapter "Coyote Use in an Era of Heightened Border Enforcement" presents an analysis on *coyotaje*, the "process of evading bureaucratic migration

channels…synonymous with human smuggling" (2018: 149). Martínez lists three different categories of *coyotes* that undocumented migrants seek for safe crossing: "local-interior" *coyotes* who operate from within a sending community and travel back and forth to help more migrants (many of whom they know personally); "local and border" *coyotes* who may originate from a sending community but reside along the border and may not have a personal connection with the migrants they help; "border-business" *coyotes* who live near the border and engage in human smuggling as a full-time profession with no connection to the migrants who acquire their services (2018: 149). "Local and border" and "border-business" *coyotes* are the most likely to extort and abandon migrants, as they have little to no personal connection with those who pay for their services and thus have no incentive to ensure a completed crossing once they have been given a hefty sum. Saint Toribio Romo's ghost aids migrants as a "local and border" *coyote*, appearing in the desert when migrants are in most need of his intercession. Some migrants may argue that Saint Toribio Romo's historical ties to the large migrant sending communities of Jalisco could categorize him as a spiritual "local-interior" *coyote*, one who is invoked through spiritual devotion and entrusting throughout the entire journey. However, based on migrant accounts in *ghost smuggling* narratives of Saint Toribio Romo *corridos*, his ghost typically only makes himself known in the transborder region and just past the U.S.-Mexico border.

María Herrera-Sobek describes the coyote character as "a staple of Mexican, Chicano, and American Indian folklore…frequently found in the guise of a trickster" (1993: 203), basing its literary archetype on the predatory desert animal. In Mexican and Mexican American literature, including lyrical text of corridos, the *coyote* appears frequently as the "indispensable middle person" with the necessary experience to guide immigrants who are unfamiliar with the desert terrain and safer routes—a guide that arose from a "definite need" in order to successfully

permeate the border without apprehension (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 202). Herrera-Sobek describes that in immigrant lore, the "brutal and dehumanizing process of crossing the border has been recontexualized and restructured poetically into a cast of archetypal characters"—the *coyote* is the archetypal deceiver (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 203). The *coyote*, both in public discourse and migrant narratives, is notorious for exploiting and exhorting migrants by charging exorbitant fees and often abandoning them in the desert. This is not the case for the Holy Coyote, Saint Toribio Romo. While the *bandidos* and smugglers in 19th-century Border corridos described in Chapter Two smuggled domestic or illicit goods and artillery between Mexico and the United States (akin to smuggling themes in narcocorridos), the smugglers in contemporary smuggling corridos within the migrant corrido corpus, including Saint Toribio Romo corridos, smuggle human cargo through the desert, across the border, and into the United States. Américo Paredes describes 19th and early 20th-century smuggling corridos as not going into "details of smuggling or its consequences," but rather glorifying the fighting and dying of heroes during encounters with rangers and border guards (Paredes 1958: 145). However, in the case of Saint Toribio Romo corridos, the primary subject matter does, in fact, include details and consequences of smuggling immigrants, and glorifies Saint Toribio Romo, the smuggler, for his preventing immigrant encounters with border agents, dangerous thieves and vigilantes, and the elements.

Throughout the lyrical texts of Saint Toribio Romo corridos compiled for this dissertation, the Holy Coyote is pictured as a figure of trust and entrusting. Families entrust their migrant relatives to him, and migrants trust with religious fervor that he can save them and smuggle them safely across the border. In these ghost smuggling ballads, Saint Toribio Romo charges nothing, only asking that migrants promise to return and thank him in Jalisco upon securing stability and safety in the United States. Saint Toribio Romo is a keeper of spiritual

promise, the antithesis to the deceiver. Ballads dedicated to his ghost's activism and aid in the transborder region transforms the *coyote* figure into a smuggler capable of good. In the corrido, "El Cascabel" (The Rattle) (**Figure 5.6**), Saint Toribio Romo's intercession is extended to malicious and deceitful *coyotes* (whose characters foil the Holy Coyote) from death in the desert, inciting their conversion to a "good smuggler" who traverses the desert helping rather than taking financial advantage of desperate migrants. Corridos, such as "El Cascabel," in which Saint Toribio Romo's ghost saves and converts other *coyotes* in the desert contributes yet another complex layer to my definition of *ghost smuggling ballads*, in which the ghost of the Holy Smuggler intervenes and rescues a malicious smuggler, instilling in him a purpose similar to that of the Saint Toribio Romo's posthumous mission—protecting migrants on their northward march.

Figure 5.6 "El Cascabel"[12] (Jessy Rey, 2015)

Cuando llegué a la frontera Ya me estaban esperando Venían en una patrulla Policías del otro lado La chamba que me ofrecieron Era cruzar ilegales Así llegué a aquella banda De polleros federales Después de quedar de acuerdo Ya casi de madrugada Me encomendaba a mi Santo Que en Santa Ana veneraba	When I reached the Border They were already waiting for me They came in a patrol car Police from the other side The job they offered me Was to smuggle "illegals" That's how I came to this band Of police smugglers After settling on a plan It was already early morning I entrusted myself to my Saint Who in Sana Ana I venerate

[12] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "El Cascabel," performed by Jessy Rey. Initially produced as part of a testimonial film, according to the YouTube video. However, the URL link to the film is expired. Not commercially available. For full video see Jessy Rey, "El Cascabel – Jessy Rey," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsnrhDH-c78&t=58s.

Toribio Romo se llama Todo inmigrante lo ama La chamba era muy fácil De seis a seis los pasaba Dos mil dólares cobraba Y doscientos me tocaba	He is named Toribio Romo All immigrants love him The job was very easy Six by six I would smuggle through Two thousand dollars I would charge And two hundred I would keep
Pobres de los inmigrantes A veces hasta lloraban	Poor immigrants Sometimes they would even cry
[*migrant voice: ¡Le tuve que dar todo!*]	[*migrant voice: I had to give him everything!*]
A mi eso no me importaba La quota la completaba Yo ya sabía los caminos Y yo los encaminaba	That was of no importance to me I would complete my quota I knew the paths And I would guide them
Pero un día quiso el destino Cobrar lo que les robaba Una tarde de verano A un grupo lo despedía Me regrese caminando Sin saber que pasaría	But one day destiny wanted To charge me for what I robbed of them One afternoon in the summer I said goodbye to a group And I returned walking Without knowing what would happen
[*rattlesnake sound*]	[*rattlesnake sound*]
El dinero que cobraba En las manos me quemaba Sin darme cuenta en el suelo Que un cascabel me asechaba	The money that I charged Burned in my hands Unaware that on the group A rattlesnake stalked me
Me pico en la pantorrilla Inyectándome el veneno Con mi navaja exprimía El ardorito remedio	It pierced my calf Injecting me with its venom With my pocketknife I squeezed The stinging remedy
[*screams; obscures the lyrics*]	[*screams; obscures the lyrics*]
El dolor me retorcía Y la fiebre iba subiendo Solo un milagro podría Salvarme de aquel infierno	The pain caused me to writhe And the fever continued to rise Only a miracle could Save me from this hell
Invoqué a Toribio Romo Con todo mi corazón Le pedí si me salvaba	I invoked Toribio Romo With all of my heart I asked him to save me

De caballuesa labor	From this intense labor
Ya era muy de madrugada Cuando el frio me despertó Soñe que Toribio Romo Con sus manos me curo	It was already early morning When the cold woke me I dreamed that Toribio Romo With his hands cured me
Ahora pensó diferente Y me paseo por Tijuana Ayudo a los inmigrantes Los prevengo de aquella banda	Now I believe differently And I walk through Tijuana Helping immigrants And warn them of that [corrupt] band

The YouTube video for "El Cascabel" opens with a shot of the *corridista* sitting outside of a house next to a rock wall and cacti, facing the camera with his guitar. There are no regional markers that indicate where this video was filmed, though the telephone number at the bottom of the screen listed for those who would like a copy of the music video is a Mexican telephone number. The video immediately cuts to a dramatic reenactment of the corrido's storyline, showing a smuggler character (played by the *corridista*, Jessy Rey) in the desert when he meets a band of corrupt police and smugglers next to a red truck, asking him to join their smuggling ring. Based on the lyrical text, the *corridista* in "El Cascabel" was already familiar with the intercessions of Saint Toribio Romo, and prepared for his own work as a smuggler by entrusting himself to Toribio Romo's protection.[13] The *coyote* states that he venerates Saint Toribio Romo back in Santa Ana in Jalisco, meaning that he is likely from a sending community and had worked as a smuggler on his own before crossing paths with the corrupt smuggling ring. The video is edited to go back and forth between the *corridista*'s musical performance and the video's reenactment scenes, including a scene where the smuggler sits on his bed, holding a holy

[13] The smuggler's entrusting to Saint Toribio Romo reminded me *narcocorridos* in which drug-trafficking smugglers entrust themselves to folk saint such as Jesus Malverde or La Santa Muerte, which will be addressed again when I describe elements of Mexican Popular Catholicism in a later section.

card of Saint Toribio Romo as he invokes his protection before going to the desert to meet with a caravan of migrants to collect their debt. The corrido refers to this corrupt band of smugglers as "*polleros federales*" or "federal smugglers," implying that they may be Mexican federal police or even affiliated with the United States. The *coyote* needs to collect this money before he leads the migrants to the corrupt smugglers who may or may not lead them to safety.

The *corridista* admits to dismissing the cries of migrants who are forced to hand him two thousand dollars, everything they have, of which he received a two-hundred dollar cut. He said his job "was very easy" in collaboration with this band, and he felt protected by Saint Toribio Romo regardless of his valuing money over migrant lives. The reenactment scenes depict two migrant women sitting on dirt and rocks in the desert, crying and holding each other after they handed over every bit of money they had to the *coyote*. In another scene, the *corridista* (who plays himself in the reenactment) is shown physically forcing one of the migrant women to hand him the money before leading the migrant caravan forward. The rest of the reenactment scenes depict the *corridista*'s encounter with a venomous snake. The *coyote* recognizes that fate would charge him for his extortion of migrant victims in the form of a rattlesnake. As he counted his money in his hands after leaving a group of migrants in the hands of the corrupt smugglers as soon as he was given his cut, he was bit in the leg. The video reenactment shows the *corridista* writhing on the ground in agony as the snake slithered away, leaving his leg bleeding while he lay helpless. Even after his attempts to remove the venom, the pain and fever were unbearable. He knew all too well that only a miracle could save him. He invokes Toribio Romo "with all of [his] heart" and "asked him to save [him]" from the agony, clasping the holy card he had at the beginning of the video as he falls unconscious. The character of Saint Toribio Romo is never seen on the video except in the form of an obscured black figure or shadow. The angle of the

camera strategically places the listener/viewer's perspective as that of the dying smuggler, looking up at the shadowy figure of the Holy Coyote, whose hands are then shown dressing the leg wound. The *corridista* tells the listener that he was awakened by a cold front in the middle of the night when he was near death, and he dreamed that Saint Toribio Romo cured him with his bare hands. The once greedy *coyote* was miraculously healed, signifying that his experience was not a dream, but the intercession of Saint Toribio Romo's ghost.

At the end of the corrido, the *coyote* confesses that he is a changed man, and now views his work as a smuggler in a different way, more aligned to the mission of the Holy Coyote. He travels the transborder region looking for migrants in order to help them and guide them away from dangerous and corrupt smugglers who may take their money and abandon them in the desert. Rather than abandoning undocumented migrants in the desert after securing payment, he is abandoning his former alliances with corrupt smuggling rings and with (to use Martínez's term) "border-business" smugglers, reconciling his devotion to Saint Toribio Romo, the Holy Coyote. While other Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads narrate the miraculous healing and saving of undocumented migrants, this corrido reveals that the Holy Coyote also protects other *coyotes*. His intercession in these cases marks a pivotal point of conversion and redefines the smuggler's role as part of the migrant pilgrimage to safety. The smuggler is a guide in the service of undocumented migrants seeking a better life on the other side of the border, opposed to the smuggler who prioritizes financial gain over the caring for the wellbeing of the migrants he guides. This particular corrido does not include any text associated with Saint Toribio Romo's life or martyrdom during *La Cristiada*, indicating that the inherent Cristero memory in this corrido, as seen by the *corridista*'s invocation of Saint Toribio Romo's intercession and his familiarity with his Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, is implied within the narrative.

Saint Toribio Romo *corridos* redefine the transborder experience by characterizing migrants as individuals worthy of crossing, despite the fact that, in the eyes of the United States government, they committed a federal crime. As soon as they cross into United States soil, undocumented migrants are branded as “illegal” and unwanted individuals. As will be discussed in theoretical analysis in the next sections of this chapter, these ghost smuggling ballads also serve as counternarratives and musical expressions of resistance against imposed criminal identities of migrants, recharacterizing migrants as victims of circumstance and determined warriors in the face of injustice.

Countering Imposed Criminality through Transcodification

Illegal, *mojado*, criminal, trespasser, wetback. These are just few of many different variations of derogatory labels that are used to describe undocumented or unauthorized Mexican (and other Latin American) immigrants to the United States. The use of the term “illegal” by U.S. civilians, the media, law enforcement, or politicians overtly identifies the immigrant as a lawbreaking criminal and unwanted trespasser, regardless of circumstances surrounding their entry into the United States. However, migrant corridos and other musical genres whose lyrical texts narrate or describe migrant experience and identity reclaim and redefine these derogatory terms in their lyrical text, simultaneously stripping the term of its negative and discriminatory purpose while also highlighting the reality of the struggles, fears, and suffering associated with those who bear these labels in society.

The use of derogatory and criminal labels of migrants in corrido texts is not new, evident in the examples “El corrido del ilegal” (composed during César Chávez’s farm worker strike in the 1960s) and “Tres Veces Mojado” (the 1988 popular migrant corrido by Tigres del Norte) that

I discussed in Chapter Two. The use of terms such as "illegal" in these corridos evoke sympathetic and empathetic representation of the migrant as a vulnerable victim of unjust social, political, and economic circumstances. Martha Chew-Sánchez's sociological analysis of migrant corridos from the 1980s and 1990s highlights how, in assuming ownership of derogatory terms imposed on so-called "illegal" (and at times on legal) Mexican migrants, corridos "make use of transcodification…[of terms] such as 'wetback' and reappropriate it with a new meaning (2006: 41). This new meaning reinstates dignity and humanity to imposed terms that are, in the mainstream United States sociopolitical arena, signifiers of criminals who become a burden to society and steal U.S. jobs. Within the texts of more contemporary migrant corridos, terms such as *mojado* (wetback) are "presented with multiple subjectivities" and become synonymous with hardworking survivors, a "source of ethnic pride," and empowerment for individuals ready to face new challenges on the other side (Chew Sánchez 2006: 42). Saint Toribio Romo corridos—which fall into intersectional genres of Cristero *corridos*, smuggling ballads, and migrant corridos—utilize this same method of transcodification in their lyrics and narratives, and (as will be discussed later in this chapter) are further defined by their devotional expressions that elevate the undocumented journey from a criminal act to a sacred pilgrimage. Through the use of transcodification of criminal labels for undocumented migrants Saint Toribio Romo corridos function as identity empowerment, self-representation, and resistance against exclusionary politics, paralleling not only migrant corridos from the 20th-century but also contemporary immigrant rights activism in non-corrido genres within Latinx popular music that were composed and performed around the same period that Saint Toribio Romo corridos were uploaded to YouTube.

The reclaiming ownership of criminal and discriminatory labels imposed on immigrants is employed by contemporary songs about the undocumented immigrant experience such as "Mojado," the 2006 music video collaboration between Guatemalan pop artist, Ricardo Arjona and Tejano-Norteño group Intocable. In "Mojado" (**Figure 5.7**), the musical narrative counters the sociopolitical denigration of the migrant who leaves everything he loved in search of the opportunity to work. Certain sections in the song are sung from the perspective of the *mojado*, weaving wordplay on "wetback" by emphasizing that the *mojado* simply wants to dry himself from the tears he endures on account of the burden he carries in not having the documentation to cross legally.

Figure 5.7 Excerpt from "Mojado"[14] (Ricardo Arjona, feat. Intocable, 2006)

El mojado tiene ganas de secarse El mojado esta mojado por las lagrimas que Evoca la nostalgia El mojado, el indocumentado Carga el bulto que el legal no cargaría Ni obligado	The "wetback" wants to dry himself off The "wetback" is wet from the tears He sheds from his nostalgia The "wetback," the undocumented one Carries the burden that a legal migrant would Never carry, not even if obligated

Through similar transcodification, Saint Toribio Romo corridos (as seen in the selected excerpts of **Figures 5.8** and **Figure 5.9**) reclaim the term "illegal" in the same capacity as Arjona and Intocable reclaim *mojado*, and do not use the more socially acceptable "undocumented" modifier to describe their migratory status and identity. Instead, the *corridista* either self-defines

[14] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. Original music video featuring both Arjona and Intocable was featured solely as a promotional music video, subsequently uploaded by fans to YouTube. To view an example of a fan-based upload see [Antonio Sanmartin], "Ricardo Arjona – Mojado Ft Intocable (Video Oficial)," (2012), YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0kfYPZhHjw. "Mojado" was originally published on CD for Arjona's 2005 album, *Adentro* (Sony BMG).

or refers to other migrants as *ilegal* (illegal), naming Saint Toribio Romo as the Patron Saint of the "illegals." The "illegal" in these *corridos* is not a criminal, but a dreamer of a better life, relying on the protection of a Cristero martyr to grant him[15] (and in many cases his accompanying wife and children) safe passage northward. In Saint Toribio Romo corridos the undocumented migrant self-defines as someone who is knowingly risking the wrath of Border Patrol, ICE, and U.S. law enforcement in his pilgrimage toward a better socioeconomic future. He is aware of his imposed criminal identity, and relays to the audience that Saint Toribio Romo embraces the "illegal" as someone worthy of being protected and as someone worthy of immunity from foreign law. Saint Toribio Romo allows the migrant to cross unseen, reconciling his breaking the laws of man in abiding the laws of destiny and the laws of God. The term "illegal" is transformed into a new source of self-representation, mediated through the miraculous intercessions and protection of the Patron Saint of Immigrants, that defies its negative connotation and, instead, signifies a migrant overcoming immense obstacles in order to fulfill a journey sanctioned by a divine authority higher than any state or federal entity. This transcodification strengthens these corridos further as expressions of Kevin Koegen's theory (2002) of immigrant identity and resistance against imposed criminality within current immigration politics in the United States.

[15] All of the Saint Toribio Romo corridos in the collection compiled for this dissertation seem to be from a male perspective. While I do not delve further into the sociocultural explanations for these male-dominated narrations, there is much room for gender analysis of these and other migrant corridos. Scholars such as María Herrera-Sobek, whose work provided invaluable information for this project, has written extensively on feminist analysis of Mexican and Border ballads.

Figure 5.8 Excerpt from "Plegaria a Santo Toribio"[16] (Trio Amancer, 2010)

Spanish	English
Santo Toribio bendito Las gracias te vengo a dar Por el favor que me hiciste Para poderme pasar A los Estados Unidos Cuando anduve de ilegal Patrón de los ilegales Así te nombra la gente Donde cruzas las fronteras Sin que nadie pueda verte Santo Toribio bendito En mi yo quiero tenerte	Blessed Saint Toribio I have come to give you thanks For the favor that you granted me In order that I may cross To the United States When I was an "illegal" Patron of Illegals That is what they have named you Where you cross the Borderlands Without being seen by anyone Blessed Saint Toribio I wish to have you within me

Figure 5.9 Excerpt from "Santo Toribio Romo"[17] (Los Originales de San Juan, 2007)

Spanish	English
Ya son miles de ilegales Que lo empiezan a adorar Le piden al Padre Romo Que los ayude a cruzar Fronteras, ríos y desiertos Para su sueño alcanzar Como un ángel o fantasma Se aparece al ilegal Los cuida y hasta los cura Pa'que puedan continuar Y luego desaparece Señal que van a llegar	There are now thousands of illegals Who have started to adore him They ask Father Romo To help them cross Borderlands, rivers, and deserts In order to fulfill their dream Like an angel or ghost He appears to the illegal He protects them and even heals them So that they can continue on And then he disappears A sign that they will soon arrive

[16] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Plegaria a Santo Toribio," performed by Trio Amanecer. Based on the video, this performance was recorded in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Not commercially available. For full video, see Trio Amancer, "TRO AMANECER – PLEGARIA A SANTO TORIBIO ROMO.flv," (2010) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOrvtrxoG6c.

[17] Originally recorded and composed by Los Originales de San Juan (2007) "Santo Toribio Romo," found in their album *Ojala Que la Vide Me Alcance* (EMI/Capitol Latin), available on CD or MP3. The corrido has also been uploaded to YouTube, where I first discovered its existence. See footnote #9 in this chapter.

Kevin Koegen's discourse on the politics of immigration and the symbolic construction of identity addresses how recent arrivals to new countries, specifically the United States, are subject to "antiimmigrant politics because they have yet to become well-incorporated into American social institutions" (2002: 224). The term "illegal immigrant" implicates a person who did not simply enter this country without documentation but trespassed into prohibited territory. In United States immigration politics, a border has not been crossed, but violated by an unwanted and unverified trespasser who knowingly committed a crime. Undocumented immigrants face intense politics of exclusion in which U.S. immigration authorities and vocal sectors of the United States public impose on them an all-encompassing criminal identity through negative characterization and use of criminal and discriminatory terms. Through these negative representations and terminology, migrants are labeled as a threat to U.S. society and to dominant American culture, regardless of the extenuating circumstances that led to this alleged "criminal" act. For example, in their chapter "*Ni de aquí, ni de allá*" (Not From Here, Not from There), R.G. Gonzales and his co-authors explore how undocumented immigrant youth negotiate the challenges of forming an identity in the face of "increased levels of inequality…[and] social, political, and economic barriers" (2016: 119). Undocumented persons, youth in particular, cope with fluctuating self-conceptualization and identity politics in light of their immigration status and their "position within U.S. racial and ethnic hierarchy" (Gonzales et. al. 2016: 121). This self-conceptualization is often at ends with the way they perceive themselves within the immigrant community and the way they wish to present themselves to an antagonizing public. They do not regard themselves as criminals, but as victims of varying socioeconomic and political forces, as well as individuals who persevere in order to survive.

Koegen theorizes that “there is always the potential for resistance” that evokes “sympathies toward potential victims of such [immigration] policies” (2002: 224). Considering that “immigrant-identity politics are accomplished through the use of established narratives and cultural imagery” (Koegen 2002: 225), this resistance can manifest in countercultural imagery of undocumented migrants through new narratives and self-representation in performative contexts, including musical text and music videos. Most expressions of countercultural imagery, specifically musical activism (primarily in the form of music videos on social media) within the last fifteen years, are strategically aimed toward individuals with negative perceptions toward the immigrant and undocumented population. Saint Toribio Romo corridos, particularly ghost smuggling ballads on YouTube that are accompanied by a performance video or dramatic reenactment of some kind, are situated within recent immigrant rights music videos disseminated on social media as part of immigrants’ representations and resistance to criminal identity in the public sphere.

Latinx popular music videos (including “Mojado,” described earlier) which Arturo Aldama refers to as “video essays” (2012), utilize emotional and relatable storytelling to foster empathy from migrant and non-migrant listeners. For example, music videos such as La Santa Cecilia’s “ICE: El Hielo” (2013) depicts stories of three undocumented immigrants, describing their dreams and aspirations in coming to the United States while simultaneously living in fear of ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement) raids and deportation. The entire song is in Spanish and the original music video, which was uploaded to the National Day Laborer Organizer Network’s website in 2013 for the #NOT1More anti-deportation campaign, contains no English subtitles. The musical narrative is reenacted by actors throughout the music video, and only at the end of the song is the audience told that some of the actors are, in fact, undocumented and in

threat of deportation. Despite the fact that the entire song is in Spanish, introductory text before and after the film is entirely in English. Non-Spanish speaking audiences rely on the evocation of sympathy toward the undocumented experience through the visual narrative by the actors. Spanish-speaking audiences, particularly migrant audiences, relate to the lyrical text and the visual narrative by connecting the stories of the three undocumented migrants to their own. In engaging with this music video, the migrant audience is invited to listen to and view the video essay with empathy, solidarity, and empowerment, contributing to symbolic constructions of undocumented identity. The migrant audience, including undocumented viewers or those who have ties to the undocumented community, see a reflection of their experiences, reaffirming their definition of undocumented as a person who continuously overcomes injustice and constant threats against their wellbeing. The non-migrant, English-speaking audience relies solely on the video performance, in which the actors' depictions of undocumented life, the emotional struggles of each day, and the reenactment of a deportation raid constructs a characterization of the undocumented migrant that counters imposed criminality by bringing awareness to the legitimacy of their aspirations and struggles due to their immigration status. This form of cultural imagery evokes a sympathetic reaction that humanizes the undocumented experience for the non-migrant listener.

Figure 5.10 Excerpt from "ICE El Hielo"[18] (La Santa Cecilia, 2012)

José atiende los jardines Parecen de Disneyland Maneja una troca vieja sin la licencia	José tends to the gardens They look just like those in Disneyland He drives an old truck without a license

[18] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. For full video performance see La Santa Cecilia, "La Santa Cecilia – Ice El Hielo," (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lNJviuYUEQ. Also featured on the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON) website for the 2013 call for artists for #Not1MoreDeportation.

No importa si fue taxista Allá su tierra natal Eso no cuenta para el Tío Sam	It doesn't matter that he was a taxi driver In this birthplace That doesn't count for Uncle Sam
Marta llegó de niña Y sueña con estudiar Pero se le hace difícil sin los papeles Se quedan con los laureles los que nacieron acá Pero ella nunca deja de luchar	Marta came as a girl And dreams of going to school But it is difficult for her without papers The laurels [benefits] belong only To those who were born here But it does not stop her from trying

Immigrant resistance songs such as "ICE El Hielo" can open avenues for dialogue between undocumented migrants and listeners who may regard them as criminals, serving as a form of immigrant activism and advocacy in hope of cultivating a culture of sympathy. Although Saint Toribio Romo corridos function similarly in their construction of symbolic identity, self-representation, and empowerment within the migrant community, resistance in Saint Toribio Romo corridos is not necessarily projected at the people who impose a criminal identity on migrants, but rather at other migrants and those who are preparing for the transborder journey. Like the music videos to "Mojado" and "ICE El Hielo" (both composed during the same time period as many of the Saint Toribio Romo corrido collected and compiled for this dissertation), Saint Toribio Romo corridos are accessible to anyone with internet access on YouTube's platform. However, given their insular nature and their specificity to the migrant community, those familiar with *La Cristiada* or with Saint Toribio Romo the Cristero martyr, and those in Saint Toribio Romo's devotional community, it is unlikely that members outside of this community will engage with these corridos in the same way that English-speaking listeners may come across undocumented immigrant activist songs that are part of immigration reform campaigns. Thus, Saint Toribio Romo corridos are expressions of self-representation and

resistance within and for the migrant community, including future survivors of the transborder journey. Although these ghost smuggling ballads are not directed at listeners who participate in imposing criminal status and criminal identity on migrants, they contribute to cultural imagery of resistance by validating the migrant community, empathizing with their situation, and empowering them through the religious overtones of their inherent testimony of Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercessions. As will be discussed in the section to follow on Saint Toribio Romo corridos as sources of survival testimony, amateur music videos contribute significantly to this cultural imagery of resistance through the physical representation of the undocumented journey and Saint Toribio Romo's intercessions. These physical representations, accompanied by the testimonial and spiritual text of the corridos, reinforce immigrant self-conceptualization. The combination of visual imagery and music reminds migrants and future transborder survivors of near death experiences and intense suffering that form part of their pilgrimage to a better life, protected by the ghost of a Cristero martyr who is either invoked or appears when needed to ensure safe crossing.

Like "Mojado" and "ICE El Hielo," Saint Toribio Romo corridos also exemplify Koegen's theory of immigrant resistance against impositions of criminal identity on migrants by reclaiming "illegal" as a self-empowering identity of determined struggle against oppressive power and injustice, as well as an identity of deeply rooted faith. Just as Latinx video essays described above and many migrant corridos in general "express the collective hopes, suffering, happiness, and disappointments of the [migrant] community" (Chew Sánchez 2006: 26), Saint Toribio Romo corridos express the collective migrant experience as an emotional and dangerous journey sealed by the ghostly protection of a Cristero martyr. In this collective narrative, invoking the memory Cristeros before them, undocumented migrants are only criminals

according to state and federal law, but not according to the values of their moral and spiritual codes. The migrant journey is more than the physical migration to another country. It is a pilgrimage, and migrants are pilgrims determined to reach their destination through any means possible in order to help and save their families from multiple sources of social, political, and economic injustices.

While not explicitly expressed in the corrido texts, these ghost smuggling ballads imply how immigrants are victims of new forms of political and economic injustices at the hands of both Mexican socioeconomic and United States political injustices, spiritually arming themselves with self-affirmation and empowerment for political and social persecution, exclusion, and harassment that awaits them on the other side. The *corridistas* sing of their invocation of Saint Toribio Romo's protection before leaving Mexican soil (whether it is in the recesses of their own homes or at the actual Shrine of Saint Toribio Romo). The invocation of Saint Toribio Romo in these corridos reflects an anticipation of danger, death, dehumanization, and imposed criminality during the transborder journey and upon entering U.S. territory.

Figure 5.11 Excerpt from "Homenaje a Santo Toribio Romo"[19] (Roberto H. Reyes, 2017)

Me vine pa' el Norte, no tengo papeles Pedí el pasaporte que no me quisieron dar Solo mi estampita y una medallita Del Santo Toribio, el me ayuda a entrar Crucé la frontera sin ver a la Migra Durante el camino un rosario recé	I came to the North, I don't have any papers I asked for a passport they refused to give me Just my holy card and my medallion Of Saint Toribio, he will help me enter I crossed the Border without seeing the Border Patrol

[19] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Homenaje a Santo Toribio Romo" performed by Roberto H. Reyes. The video for this corrido features an image from the back of a CD cover for a recording by a San Juan de Los Lagos company called Romi Records, indicating that this recording may be available for purchase if listener contacts composer or username directly. For full video, see Roberto H. Reyes, "Homenaje A Santo Toribio – Roberto H Reyes….(Recordando A Dos Martires)," (2017) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CK4EcGOxziU&t=1s.

Pidiendo por todos los que van al Norte Mi madre me dijo, -Pídele con fe. No soy el primero, de eso estoy seguro Ya a muchos paisanos los ha protegido Vayan a Santa Ana a ver testimonios De muchos milagros de Santo Toribio	During the journey, I prayed the rosary Asking for all those who travel North My mother had told me, "Ask him with faith." I am not the first, I am certain of that Now there are many who he has protected Go to Santa Ana to see the testimonies Of so many miracles by Saint Toribio

The corrido "Homenaje a Santo Toribio" (Homage to Saint Toribio) (**Figure 5.11**) does not have any accompanying video footage except for an image of Saint Toribio Romo and Saint Pedro Esquera (another Cristero martyr from the region canonized in 2000) superimposed on a photograph of a CD cover (indicating to the listener that they can obtain a recording directly from the *corridista*). The *corridista* introduces himself as an undocumented immigrant, stating that he went North to the United States without any documentation and was refused a passport when he asked. The fact that this migrant sought legal avenues for migration and was denied resonates significantly with undocumented migrants that have been left with no choice but to cross into the United States with no legal recourse, having exhausted all options or having attempted to secure documentation with little success. This corrido does not employ the words "illegal" or *mojado*, but overtly expresses that the *corridista* made his way across the border without authorization, not as a criminal but as a man who was left with no options. Lacking documentation, he carried with him a holy card of Saint Toribio and permeated the Borderland without being seen by Border Patrol. The *corridista* expresses that as he traversed the Borderland, he prayed for all migrants who were traveling North, invoking the help of Saint Toribio, further validating and reaffirming that his and other undocumented migrants' journey is sanctified. Heeding his mother's advice, the *corridista* prepared for his journey knowing that

Saint Toribio Romo would ensure he was not apprehended or arrested. He emphasizes to the listener that he is not the first migrant to experience these miracles, for Saint Toribio has protected so many migrants, evident from the testimonies in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Although the *corridista* admits to crossing into the United States and evading Border Patrol, nowhere in this corrido (or in any of the corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo compiled for this dissertation) are there any references to lawbreaking, criminality, or trespassing. In Saint Toribio Romo corridos, migrants are traveling, empowered by their devotion to Saint Toribio and determination. They are "illegal" only according to state and federal law, but not according to the values of their community and their religion.

As I discussed in this section, Saint Toribio Romo corridos contribute to the transcodification of criminal and discriminatory labels and serve as self-empowerment and resistance to imposed criminality of immigrants. Unlike non-corrido genres in Latinx popular music and their associated immigrant rights activism since the early 2000s, Saint Toribio Romo corridos' intended audience is limited to the migrant and Saint Toribio Romo devotional community. Many migrant corridos, are "often accessible only to the intended audience" and may "become opaque to those audiences" who the *corridista* may wish to exclude (Chew Sánchez 2006: 43).

Although the Saint Toribio Romo corridos I collected were found almost exclusively on YouTube (except for the 2007 corrido by Los Originales de San Juan) and thus publicly available to any listener and viewer, these corridos are sources of self-representation and resistance by and for the migrant community, listeners familiar with Saint Toribio Romo and his ghostly intercessions, and future transborder survivors. The members of this specific ballad community have established a digital space for performing and consuming narratives with

Spanish-speaking individuals who either search for the ballads or stumble upon them through other related video material. These musical forms of self-representation could potentially evoke the sympathies of Spanish-speaking individuals (who may or may not have migratory experiences), however their intrinsic cultural practice appears to be aimed toward other transborder survivors and to future transborder survivors.

The intended audience of Saint Toribio Romo corridos and their inherent religiopolitics frame these corridos as both a legitimized migrant journey and a religious pilgrimage. In addition to expressions of resistance against imposed criminality and negative characterizations of undocumented migrants, these ghost smuggling ballads function as survivor testimony of the transborder journey, relaying miraculous experiences with the ghost of Saint Toribio Romo who saves them from different near-death experiences as expressions of what Joshua Pilzer defines as "survivor's music" (2015).

Survivor Testimony and the Future Survivor Listening Community

Saint Toribio Romo corridos relay the continuous traumatic lived experiences of migrants through the transborder desert region, acting as expressions of survivor testimony and survivor's music. As they recount these survivor experiences, these corridos also express their devotion to the adopted Patron Saint of Immigrants in contexts outside of Catholic liturgy, including the digital secular spaces of social media. Their testimonial lyrical text not only explains to listeners that the *corridistas* were spared a tragic death, but that they were rescued, healed, and given resources necessary to continue their journey, including the ability to evade Border Patrol agents, and securely arrive on United States soil. Thus, the *corridistas*' singing their corridos provide further evidence that they, in fact, are survivors of this journey, a journey that does not simply

end once they have permeated the border. Undocumented migrants will continue surviving exclusionary politics and discrimination on account of their immigration status well after they have survived the transborder journey.

In his chapter, "The Study of Survivors' Music" in *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology*, Joshua Pilzer introduces the concept of "survivors' music," stating

> [T]here are numerous survivors who are shunted to the margins of society by the political and social pressures that suppress public awareness of the often-systematic violence and exploitation they have suffered. The act of listening to such survivors, therefore, is a political act of the most significant importance, capable of inaugurating political movements for social justice, reparation, and reconciliation. (Pilzer 2015: 483).

Pilzer writes that ethnomusicologists can study music of survivors as "records of experience and adaptive resources for survival and selfhood" (2015: 482), which intersects with my previous discussion of how Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads serve as expressions of self-representation and empowerment. Pilzer's work is based on musical survivor testimonies and music from Korean survivors of the Japanese military during the Asia Pacific War of 1931-1945, events that have already transpired and are recalled through musical performance as educational narratives to listeners, sources of sociopolitical advocacy and activism, and empathetic relatability to other survivors of those experiences. In relaying and sharing survivor testimonies and narratives with listeners, particularly other survivors of the same events and experiences, survivors' music performances become important sites of "identity and community building" (2015: 483) and cultivate solidarity with those who are currently living these experiences.

According to Pilzer, the term "survivor" encompasses individuals and communities that have experienced violence, trauma, war, abuse, and discrimination, including those who continue to live these experiences in the "daily activity of surviving" (2015: 485). Undocumented migrants, for example, experience physical and emotional traumas during weeks to month-long

treks through unforgiving elements, abuse by corrupt smugglers, rape and sexual violence from smugglers or border thieves, and violence from vigilante justice of non-state and non-federal border guardians that hunt migrants, allegedly protecting the U.S. border and private land. Even migrants who have survived the journey once will inevitably make the journey once more, especially if they are deported and choose to return to the United States, leave the United States again in order to return with their family members, or find that without documentation, the transborder desert is the only entry and exit port between the United States and Mexico any time they need to travel. In some Saint Toribio Romo corridos, for example, the *corridista* explains how they "travel to the Other Side" multiple times, secure work in the United States and send money to back their family, and then "make [their] way back" to stop at Santa Ana de Guadalupe to give thanks to Saint Toribio Romo (Chuy Márquez 2016).[20]

The musical and cultural practice of these ghost smuggling ballads define their associated ballad community as including migrants and future migrants who are either preparing for or contemplating travel to the United States for sociopolitical and economic stability. The testimonies in Saint Toribio Romo corridos, which are mostly narrated in first person by the *corridista*, implore migrants who wish to make the journey northward to invoke the name of Saint Toribio Romo, follow his path through the desert, and rely on his protection in order to survive the journey. Their overarching survivor testimony empathizes with their listeners, encouraging them that survival is possible through the protection of Saint Toribio Romo. Saint Toribio Romo corridos are survivors' music for future survivors of the undocumented journey.

[20] Quotations transcribed from the lyrical text to the corrido, "Santo Toribio (Mañanitas a Santo Toribio," performed by Chuy Márquez. Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. To see full video see Chuy Márquez, "Santo Toribio – Chuy Márquez….(Mananitas A Santo Toribio Romo)," (2016) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19Kp9T5n3S8. Márquez also performed the corrido "Padre Toribio Romo" in a video uploaded by a different YouTube username.

Anthropologist and activist, Victoria Sanford states that survivors' music "can be of enormous value to other people who may be experiencing or have experienced similar trauma, injuries, and other struggles" (Sanford 2006: 13). Sanford emphasizes that compiling "marginalized voices transforms experience into collective memory," paralleling my argument that new Cristero corridos contribute to a reimagined collective Cristero memory, collective migrant memory, and collective survivor experiences of undocumented immigrants. As survivors' music to future transborder survivors, Saint Toribio Romo corridos evoke more than just empathy and affirmation to listeners. The communication between the *corridistas* and the ballad community provides a platform for recalling and processing dangerous encounters in the desert, near-death experiences, fear of deportation, border abuse, and other transborder traumas. The fact that the *corridista* is alive to sing of his experience relays to the listener that such migration journeys are survivable with the protection of Saint Toribio Romo. As such, these corridos also act as survivor advocacy within the immigrant community, legitimizing the transborder journey. In the texts and message of these ballads, immigrants are not criminals, but pilgrims worthy of saving, worthy of surviving, and worthy of arriving at their destination.

In addition to their lyrical text, Saint Toribio Romo corridos' role as survivors' music and collective memory of the transborder undocumented journey are increasingly effective in corrido dissemination on social media accompanied by dramatic reenactment of transborder events. Listeners are provided visual representation of effects that they or others they know have experienced and survived, or for future survivors of the transborder journey, provide visual representation of a reality they may soon face. The fact that these videos are not professionally shot or edited frames their reenactments as if they were home videos, reflecting an accessibility and potential sense of intimacy in the eyes of the viewer. The *corridista* and the actors in the

video have lived this and are using reenactment to capture their near-death experiences and miraculous intercessions in a vivid, near tangible way. While survivors' music can certainly be effective without visual representation, dramatic reenactment contributes significantly to the "realness" of the events, similar to the music video essays of popular Latinx ensembles that depict the undocumented experience and deportation raids. The following two corridos, "Santo Toribio Romo" and "Nueva Vida," exemplify the combination of lyrical text and dramatic reenactment in their expression as survivors' music.

Figure 5.12 "Santo Toribio Romo"[21] (Dueto Belen, 2015)

Para empezar a cantar Pido permiso primero Para cantarle unos versos A un Santo que tanto quiero En Santa Ana, Jalisco Vecino de San Miguel Verán al Padre Torbio Si lo quieren conocer Muchas personas de lejos Lo han venido a conocer Otras no ocupan venir Por las fronteras lo ven Por las fronteras ingratas El Santo se ha aparecido De ver tantas injusticias De malientes y bandidos Donde más lo necesitan Un jovencito aparece Cuidándolos de peligro	In order to start singing I ask your permission To sing a few verses To a Saint who I love dearly In Santa Ana, Jalisco Neighbor to San Miguel You will all see Father Toribio If you really want to know him Many people from far away Have come here to meet him Others cannot make the journey They meet him along the Borderlands Along the merciless Borderlands The Saint has appeared Upon seeing so many injustices Of malevolents and bandits Wherever he is needed the most A young man appears Protecting you all from danger

[21] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Santo Toribio Romo" performed by Dueto Belen. Initially produced as part of a testimonial film, according to the YouTube video. However, the URL link to the film is expired. Not commercially available. For full video see Dueto Belen, "Santo Toribio Romo – Dueto Belen," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6nofSz5Dlg.

Salvándolos de la muerte A otros pobre mexicanos Y otras tierras también Al norte nos ha pasado Sin conocer la ley Mi Santo Toribio Romo Te encargo mucho a mi madre A mi esposa y a mis hijos Que nada malo les pase También quiero agradecerte De que me hayas ayudado A componerte estos versos Que para ti estoy cantando Si a alguien le falta un detalle De lo que yo estoy cantando Vaya a Santa Ana, Jalisco Donde se encuentra este Santo	And saving you all from death He has done so for other poor Mexicans And in other lands as well Northward he has helped us cross Without knowing the [immigration] law My Saint Toribio Romo I leave my mother in your care And also my wife and children So that nothing bad will happen to them I would also like to express my gratitude For having helped me Compose for you these verses That I am singing now If any of you feel any detail is lacking From what I am singing to you now Go then to Santa Ana, Jalisco Where you will find this Saint

The corrido "Santo Toribio Romo" (**Figure 5.12**) is performed by Dueto Belen, a father and young son duo, who are featured in the accompanying video as both performers and reenactors of their own survivor testimony. The video opens with footage taken from inside the old Shrine of Saint Toribio Romo in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, pilgrims huddled together as they kneel in front of the altar. As soon as the lyrics begin, the video cuts to the father and son singing alone in front of the altar, indicating that they recorded this video when the chapel was not being used for worship.[22] The young boy is singing the main melody, speaking directly to the listener and asking the listener for permission to share his testimony and express his gratitude to Saint

[22] Based on my ethnographic work in Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe, it seems the building of the new Shrine in 2012 led to many changes regarding musical performances in both churches. It is highly probably that this corrido, despite being uploaded to YouTube in 2015, was recorded much earlier, before the building of the new Shrine. During my research, I did not encounter any live performances or any recording sessions of Saint Toribio Romo corridos. However, this corrido reveals that live performances and recordings did take place at some point in the recent past.

Toribio Romo. The video cuts to footage of pilgrims walking the steep steps from the *Calzada de Martires* (Causeway of Martyrs) toward the Old Saint Toribio Romo shrine as the young *corridista* describes how pilgrims travel long distances to meet Saint Toribio and invoke his protection, while others first encounter him in along the Borderland. As soon as the *corridista* sings the word "Borderlands," the video changes to a desert background and the father and son due are featured as reenactors in a transborder journey. Interestingly, the reenactment is not paralleling the lyrical text, but rather accompanying it as a referential visual representation of the *corridista*'s transborder survival as he informs the listener how Saint Toribio Romo appears in the "merciless Borderlands' when he sees "so many injustices" of those seeking to do harm on migrants. The video depicts the young boy unconscious on the desert floor as his father desperately tries to wake him but is unsuccessful. The father looks up at the sky, places his hands over his head in helpless exasperation. As the young *corridista* (who in the video is portraying the unconscious child, presumably representing himself in the narrative) starts singing the corrido lines describing how a "young man appears" when "he is needed most," the video shows a disembodied arm reaching out to the unconscious child and waking him instantly. As the child looks up, he sees a silhouette of a man, completely obscured, almost like a shadow, looking down at him, all the while the *corridista* is emphasizing to the listeners that Saint Toribio Romo protects "you all from danger and [saves] you all from death." These poignant lines are worded in such a way that explains to the listeners that Saint Toribio Romo protects and saves them specifically, incorporating the listener into the story of survival. The corrido has become a collective narrative. This is not just a story about the father and son, but of "other poor Mexicans and [from] other lands as well," including those preparing for their journey.

The music video to "Santo Toribio" cuts to a new scene with the father and son in the desert, alert and walking with their backpacks, this time looking directly at the camera and singing along with the audio track of the corrido lyrics, "Northward he has helped us cross without knowing the law," informing the listener that they survived their journey. This *corrido*'s characterization of Saint Toribio Romo as a *coyote* also serves as a counternarrative to United States government's depictions and portrayal of transborder smugglers as the culprits for the increasing number of deaths in the desert. Jacquelin Hagan writes that "official accounts [from the United States Congress and White House] deflect responsibility for the dangers of border crossing from government enforcement policy to all coyotes, who are labeled by officials as criminals" and scapegoats for the treachery along migrant trails (2008: 63). Blaming *coyotes* on migrant death is a "proven political strategy" (Hagan 2008: 63) to maintain public perception that undocumented migration is both nefarious and dangerous. However, based on survivor testimony in these ghost smuggling ballads, both Saint Toribio Romo and undocumented migrants foil these characteristics. Undocumented migrants regard and present themselves as victims of their socioeconomic status who simply want a better and are willing to risk death in order to fight for themselves and their families. Saint Toribio Romo, the Holy Coyote, does not lead these migrants to death, but rescues them from death, ensuring their survival, which migrants then share in their oral and musical survivor testimony. The Holy Coyote does not know or abide by the laws of the United States Department of Homeland Security, and since he is a ghostly apparition, he cannot be apprehended or tried for his alleged crimes. He is simply fulfilling his saintly mission of helping poor undocumented migrants survive and cross safely.

The corrido then reflects back to the beginning of their journey, as the *corridista* asks Saint Toribio to protect his family in their absence. The video shows the father and son kneeling

in front of a family members who impart their blessing as the father and son set on their way. The family is left crying in the doorway. Suddenly, the video cuts to the father sitting in front of a computer, typing out the lyrics to the corrido they are singing, as the *corridista*'s voice is heard in the background thanking Saint Toribio Romo for helping him compose this ballad. The video ends with footage of the father and son back in the desert scene and then cuts to the duo in front of Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine, symbolizing the transborder journey through the desert to the United States and then the pilgrimage back to Santa Ana de Guadalupe as a fulfillment of Saint Toribio Romo's request for those he saves. The *corridistas* conclude their corrido by telling the listener that if the listener feels something is missing from their narration, he should make his way to Santa Ana de Guadalupe to meet Saint Toribio Romo for himself.

Although the text to "Santo Toribio Romo" presents are more general recounting of Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercession during near-death transborder experiences, its expression as survivors' music lies in the visual representation that accompanies the corrido, presenting two narratives at once: the video's testimony of a father and son's survival in the desert and the collective testimony of all migrants who first encounter Saint Toribio Romo when his ghost appears to them in order to save them from danger and death. The juxtaposition of reenactment of an unconscious migrant child to the corrido's text creates a powerful survivors' testimony, as the *corridista* alternates between singing to the listener and singing directly to Saint Toribio Romo when expressing his gratitude for his intercession. The corrido invites the listener to recall their own experiences or bear witness to this story of survival as encouragement that the journey is possible with the help of Saint Toribio Romo.

Figure 5.13 "Nueva Vida"[23] (Victor Cano, 2015)

La migra anda merodeando Por todita la frontera Anda buscando ilegales Por aire y por carretera	The border patrol is roaming Throughout all of the border region They are looking for illegals By air and by highway
Por eso lo decidimos Largarnos por el desierto Pa' que nadie la atrapara Y burlar la vigilancia	This is why we decided To go through the desert So that no one would catch us And to avoid those watching
Mi esposa iba embarazada Pero dijo que aguantaba Valia la pena arriesgarlo Seguir el plan acordad	My wife was pregnant But she said she could handle it It was worth the risk To continue according to the plan
Dentro un grupo de mexicanos Poco a poco iba avanzando Pero mi esposa sentía Los estragos del cansancio	Among a group of other Mexicans Little by little, we advanced But my wife felt The extreme effects of exhaustion
Caminamos cuatro días Bajo un sol endemoniado El grupo ya no se veía Lejos nos había dejado	We walked for four days Under the demon sun The group was no longer visible They had left us far behind
Descansamos un momento Me dijo - ¿Qué voy a hacer? Siento un dolor en el vientre Creo ya quiere nacer	We rested for a moment She asked, "What am I going to do?" "I feel a pain in my womb, I believe he is ready to be born."
Le dije - ¡Esto no es posible! Si todavía falta un mes Ya no hay nadie que me ayude. ¡El grupo ya se nos fue!	I told her, "This is not possible!" "You still have one month to go. There is no one else left here to help me. The rest of the group has already left."
-Padre mío allí te la dejo. Con cariño la acosté Avente nuestra maleta Lueguito me eché a correr	"My Father, I leave her in your care." I laid her down with care I tossed our suitcase And I immediately started running

[23] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Nueva Vida" performed by Víctor Cano. Initially produced as part of a testimonial film, according to the YouTube video. However, the URL link to the film is expired. Not commercially available. For full video see Victor Cano, "Nueva Vida – Victor Cano," (2015) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZmZLbRozjk.

El grupo iba muy lejos Hasta que los alcanze Les conté lo que pasaba Y con ellos regresé Mi esposa estaba tranquila Abrazando a su bebé Me dijo -Me quedé dormida, Fue un milagro, eso lo sé. -Sentí su mano en mi frente Y una paz desconocida Con sus manos me curaba Y nos salvaba la vida. -A mi me dijo su nombre Escrito en mi corazón Se llama Toribio Romo Dijo es él siervo de Dios. En Jalostotitlán, Jalisco A Santa Ana una vez fui Me hallé a ese Santo Toribio En la mesita lo vi Todos nos arrodillamos Dándole gracias a Dios Llegaré un día a tu Santuario Y allí me arrodillaré	The group was much too far ahead Until I reached them I told them what had happened And with them I returned My wife was calm Embracing her baby She told me, “I fell asleep It was a miracle. That I know.” “I felt his hand on my forehead And I felt a peace I had never known With his hands he healed me And saved our lives.” “He told me his name Written on my heart His name is Toribio Romo He said he was the servant of God.” In Jalostotitlán, Jalisco To Santa Ana I traveled once before I encountered this Santo Toribio I saw him on the mesita We all knelt Giving thanks to God I will return one day to your Shrine And there I will kneel

In the corrido “Nueva Vida,” which translates to “New Life” (**Figure 5.13**), alluding to the birth of the migrant woman’s baby in the desert, the *corridista* recounts the terrifying journey he and his pregnant wife took while traveling with a migrant caravan through the desert. There is no mention of a guide or *coyote*, meaning that the group relied on each other in order to travel the right path to safety. Like the previous corrido, “Santo Toribio Romo,” “Nueva Vida’s” musical text is accompanied by a dramatic reenactment and alternates this footage with footage

of the *corridista* performing, only this time the reenactment does parallel the text of the corrido closely and the actors are different people from the two musicians in the opening footage to the video. The corrido begins with a *corridista* on guitar accompanied by a violinist, sitting in front of a desert area surrounded by cacti. The musical aesthetic of this performance is reminiscent of classic corridos from the Revolution and from *La Cristiada*, which were originally performed with a basic accompaniment of guitar and strings. However, unlike the classic corridos, this corrido's lyrical text begins the story immediately and does not greet or address the listener at the start of the ballad. Instead, the *corridista* sets the scene by describing how the highways and traditional ports of entry were surrounded by Border Patrol agents specifically looking for "illegals," resulting in the *corridista*'s decision to join a caravan with his wife and travel through the desert. As the *corridista* is singing, the video cuts to a mountainous desert scene with a Border Patrol agent on horseback overlooking the area as an undocumented immigrant huddles underneath rocks to avoid being seen. The video continues, showing a group of migrants in the hot sun, and a man and his pregnant wife (portraying the *corridista* and his wife) walking several feet behind. The *corridista* sing that despite the *corridista*'s wife reassuring him that she could make the journey, she started to succumb to heat exhaustion and dehydration. In her pregnant state, she could no longer keep up with the caravan and they fell further and further behind. In the reenactment footage, the migrant caravan is wobbling, barely moving, and the pregnant woman begins to stumble, succumbing to heat exhaustion. The video then shows a brief montage of each migrant walking with defeated expressions as the *corridista* tells the listener that they had been walking for four days "under a demon sun." At the end of the montage, it is clear that the *corridista* and his wife have fallen so far behind the caravan that the other migrants are no longer visible. The *corridista* and his wife are now traveling the desert alone.

The visual imagery of the couple's desperate situation is emotionally impactful, revealing a full-term pregnant woman crying and begging her husband to find help. As one hears the audio track of the *corridista* singing, the listener is witnessing the unfolding of a situation that could easily result in the death of three people: the man, his wife, and their unborn child. The *corridista* continues his story, telling the listener that his wife turned to him and asked, "What am I going to do?" The gravity of the situation is further compounded when his wife started to feel labor pains. The migrant explains that her labor should not be possible because she "still [had] one month to go," indicating that the woman was about to give birth to a premature baby. The migrant, in desperation, shouts that "there is no one left to help [him]" because the rest of the group had already left. The *corridista* sings of how he threw their suitcases and ran after the caravan to ask for help, asking God to protect her until he returns. The video shows the migrant running through the desert until he reaches the migrant caravan and begs them to go back with him to check on his wife.

When he returns, he finds that his wife has already given birth and is safe. She explains she "fell asleep" and a man came to her aid, placed "his hand on [her] forehead" and "saved [their] lives," implying that the stranger helped her deliver her baby. She told her husband that he called himself Toribio Romo, a servant of God who inscribed his name "on [her] heart." As the new mother explains what happened to her husband, the video visually narrates how a man in a black cassock places his hands gently over the frightened woman's head. Like the previous videos for "El Cascabel" and Dueto Belén's "Santo Toribio Romo," Saint Toribio Romo's face is completely obscured, presented as a shadowy figure in front of the bright sun. Unlike other survivor testimonies in Saint Toribio Romo corridos, this testimony implies that perhaps the new mother was not familiar with Saint Toribio Romo, referring to him as a miraculous stranger. Her

husband, the *corridista*, however, tells the listener that he had met Saint Toribio Romo once at his Shrine in Santa Ana. The video cuts to footage of pilgrims entering the Old Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe as the *corridista* informs the listener how he had once "seen him on the mesita." This survivor testimony reveals that even though the *corridista* did not directly invoke Saint Toribio Romo during the most perilous point of their journey, the ghost of the Saint appeared when he was needed, sent by God as protection.

Based on the *corridista*'s closing stanza, he has yet to return to Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine to give him thanks but has vowed to do so, promising that he will kneel before him in the church. From his testimony, the *corridista* was previously aware of Saint Toribio Romo's request that the benefactors of his intercession return to Santa Ana on pilgrimage of thanksgiving. Although the corrido text does not explicitly inform the listener that the migrant caravan crossed safely into the United States, the *corridista*'s vow to return implies that he and his wife have survived the journey and must now wait for an opportunity to return to Saint Toribio Romo's shrine where "there he will kneel" as an offering of thanksgiving. In the meantime, he has composed this ballad to share with other survivors and future survivors of the undocumented migrant journey. The video ends with footage of an artistic offering pasted on one of the walls in the *milagro* room at Saint Toribio Romo's shrine. In the drawing, Saint Toribio Romo is depicted holding a baby wrapped in a blanket. Both Saint Toribio and the baby are positioned under the mantel of the Virgen de Guadalupe, a multilayered symbol of pregnancy, motherhood, and protection. The image of the Virgen de Guadalupe is believed to represent the Virgen Mary in a state of pregnancy, based on the dark girdle she is seen wearing just above her belly. The infant in Saint Toribio Romo's arms could either represent the Child Jesus or, more likely, the *corridista*'s newborn child, shielded under the protective mantel of the Virgen de

Guadalupe. This final footage reveals that the *corridista* and his wife may have been able to return to the Shrine after the composition of this corrido and have left their votive of thanksgiving to Saint Toribio Romo for other pilgrims to witness. If one interprets this votive as evidence of the *corridista* and his family's return, the corrido's survivor testimony represents the fulfilment of the migrant pilgrimage: the journey across the border and the migrants' return to their homeland.

The lyrical text of one Saint Toribio Romo corrido reveals the emergence of intertextuality as a literary technique within survivor testimony, suggesting possible dialogue between survivors based on references to specific details within the narratives of other corridos. Evidence of intertextuality indicates that other *corridistas* are engaging with each other's musical testimonies on YouTube (though it is unknown at this time whether they engage solely with the text or also communicate with the other usernames). The corrido "Al Padre Toribio Romo" (**Figure 5.14**), uploaded in 2014, is listed as an original composition and performance by Juan Reynoso, who calls himself "El Zenzontle de Jalisco" (sic), or the Mockingbird of Jalisco, on his YouTube channel. The accompanying video features Reynoso holding a guitar as he sits on his living room couch in his home, facing a stationary camera. Unlike the two preceding corridos, "Al Padre Toribio Romo" does not include any dramatic reenactment and instead presents Reynoso's testimony as if he were performing specifically for the listener in a private setting, sharing his story in the same way one would share with a friend or family. Before beginning his performance, Reynoso addresses his listener, introducing and contextualizing his musical testimony stating,

> In this song, I tell the story of a new *santito* [dear saint] that you will find in Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. To be more exact, in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. He was a martyr of the Cristero Rebellion, and I have titled my song "Al Padre Toribio Romo."

Figure 5.14 Excerpt from "Al Padre Toribio Romo"[24] (Juan Reynoso, 2014)

Me dispongo a contar una historia De un Santito que su sangre dio Por seguro se encuentra en la gloria Regalada de su Padre Dios	I am prepared to tell the story Of a dear Saint who gave his blood For certain he finds himself in the glory Given to him by his Father God
Abogado de todo inmigrante Un gran martir que su vida dio Lleva de nombre Toribio Romo En Santa Ana se le da el honor…	Advocate of each immigrant A great martyr who gave his life He bears the name Toribio Romo And in Santa Ana he is honored
Me despido de ti, Padrecito Pido que me des tu bendición Ya me voy para tierras extrañas Con fervor yo te doy mi oración	I say farewell to you, dear priest I ask that you give me your blessing I leave now to strange lands With fervor I offer you my prayer
Me despido y te tengo confianza Ojalá tú me hagas el favor Ya me voy a la tierra de Gringos A buscar una vida mejor	I say farewell and I trust in you I hope you grant my prayer I now go to the land of the Gringos [U.S.] In search of a better life
Cuentan que un día allá por el desierto Una serpiente a un hombre mordió Con la fe que el hombre pido ayuda Santo Toribio lo auxilió	They say that one day in the desert A snake bit a man With the faith with which this man asked for help Saint Toribio saved him
También cuentan que en el otro lado A un señor le presto pa'el camión Cuando vino a pagarle la deuda En Santa Ana lloró de emoción	They also tell that on the other side He loaned a man money for the bus When he returned to pay his debt In Santa Ana he cried, overcome with emotion
También cuentan que al cruzar el Norte Una madre casi daba luz Sin ayuda y ya desesperada Santo Toribio le dio salud …	They also say that while crossing to the North A mother was at the point of giving birth Helpless and desperate Saint Toribio gave her health …
Me despido de ti Padrecito Y pido que me des tu bendición…	I say farewell to you, dear priest I ask that you give me your blessing…

[24] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Al Padre Toribio" performed by Juan Reynoso. Not commercially available. For full video see Juan Reynoso, "Al Padre Toribio Romo Por Juan Reynoso 'El Zenzontle de Jalisco,'" (2014) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bRR437GDe8.

Reynoso begins his ballad, describing how Saint Toribio Romo is the "advocate of each immigrant," and "a great martyr who agave his life" when he was murdered by "the tyrannical government." He then proceeds to address Saint Toribio directly, bids him farewell, and asks for his blessing before he "leave[s] now to strange lands," the "land of the Gringos in search for a better life." As the *corridista* (Reynoso) invokes the protection of Saint Toribio, he recounts three testimonies he has heard associated with transborder miracles, including a miracle that took place in the United States when Saint Toribio Romo "loaned a man money for the bus" on "the Other side." The other two testimonies exemplify intertextual references to ghost ballads that have been uploaded to YouTube by other users. Reynoso informs the listener that Saint Toribio has saved a man from a snakebite in the desert after the man asked for his help and has also helped a helpless mother give birth in the desert, events specifically depicted in the corridos "Nueva Vida" (**Figure 5.13**) and "El Cascabel" (**Figure 5.6**) respectively. Interestingly, Juan Reynoso uploaded his corrido to YouTube in January 2014, more than a year before "Nueva Vida" and "El Cascabel" were uploaded to YouTube.

Considering the fact that at least seven Saint Toribio Romo corrido uploads were deleted early in my digital ethnography, it is possible that "Nueva Vida" and "El Cascabel" may have been deleted and then reuploaded at a different time, and that Juan Reynoso viewed these corridos in earlier uploads. It is possible that the reference to a Saint Toribio Romo's helping a man with bus fare in the United States may also associated with another ghost smuggling ballad, though this testimony is not included in the narrative texts of the corridos in the current compilation (see Appendix B). The referencing of other expressions of survivor testimony within Saint Toribio Romo corridos on YouTube lends further credence to my theory that these ballads function as self-representation within the migrant community, as well as platforms for reflecting

on migrant experiences among both transborder survivors and future survivors. In fact, in Juan Reynoso's "Al Padre Toribio," the corrido ends with Reynoso asking Saint Toribio for his blessing before even leaving for the border, characterizing him, the *corridista*, as a future survivor and justifying his upcoming journey with the miraculous intercessions described by survivors. While Reynoso never states whether or not this ballad is based on his own experience, the corrido functions as amplification of other survivor testimonies, as well as musical devotion to Saint Toribio Romo. Reynoso offers his prayer "directly to the Holy Coyote "with fervor," imploring for his intercession and advocacy.

Evidence of intertextuality in these ghost smuggling ballads demands for further research on *corridistas*' engagement with other Saint Toribio Romo corridos. This research will require direct communication with users who upload ghost smuggling ballads on YouTube, as well as commenters on specific corrido uploads, in order to comprehend why and how Saint Toribio Romo corridos might inspire new compositions of survivor testimony within the migrant community. Establishing dialogue with individual *corridistas* and the ballad community may reveal additional insight regarding why the migrant community has embraced YouTube as a ballad and devotional platform.

Survivor testimony in Saint Toribio Romo corridos contains multiple emotional and religiopolitical layers that offer the migrant community, including future survivors, affirmation and justification for the undocumented journey. According to these testimonies, the journey has been sanctified through the protection of the ghost of Saint Toribio Romo, a new Border and Cristero epic hero who intercedes during migrants' near-death experiences in order to ensure their safe crossing to the United States. These expressions of survivor testimony contextualize the migrant journey as part of a pilgrimage that centers on the allegorical longing for return. For

the beneficiaries of Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercession, the migrant pilgrimage does not end in the United States but rather back in Santa Ana de Guadalupe at Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine. As will be discussed in the following section, Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads and their inherent intersections of testimony and religion exemplify expressions of Mexican Popular Catholicism, contributing to the spiritual practices of devotees.

On Mexican Popular Catholicism

The inherent memory of a Cristero martyr, Mexican Catholic themes, and devotional prayer encoded in Saint Toribio Romo corridos contextualize the undocumented migrant experience as a sanctified journey. The corridos are rooted in Popular Catholic spirituality and exemplify paraliturgical musical expressions of devotion to saints. Saint Toribio Romo, while officially recognized by the Catholic Church as a martyr and saint, is not officially recognized as the Patron Saint of Immigrants. The phenomenon of the Holy Coyote and his devotional following became visible starting in the early 2000s, after his canonization, and has been directly impacted by increasing survivor testimony and the influx of thousands of pilgrims who have returned to Santa Ana de Guadalupe in thanksgiving to Saint Toribio Romo. Saint Toribio Romo corridos are not hymns, yet they interweave invocation of protection, prayers of thanksgiving to Saint Toribio Romo, and proclamations of faith within their survivor testimonies. These corridos are not performed in church spaces, yet many music videos associated with these corridos include footage from outside and inside of the sanctuary of the Saint Toribio Romo Shrine. These corridos represent musical votives of devotional practices to Saint Toribio Romo, serving as religious expression within Mexican Popular Catholicism.

Theologian, Orlando Espín defines popular Catholicism as the "everyday faith and faith-life of Catholics… by which Catholic tradition is interpreted and constructed" through Catholic identity (Espín 2002: 143). Catholic identity in this capacity encompasses the lived experiences of collective Catholic communities, informed by their prayer life outside of the Church, as well as life events that shape their interpretations of religious practice. These religious practices stem from spiritual and cultural need to cope with and make sense of daily life. Popular Catholicism is often regarded as oppositional to Catholicism, but Espín states the "tension between popular and official expressions of Catholicism" has been highly exaggerated by church leaders and theologians, especially in regard to Mexican and Mexican American Catholic communities where "popular religion is the operative faith" (2002: 140). The most iconic example of Mexican and Mexican American popular religion is the widespread devotion to the Virgen de Guadalupe, Patroness of Mexico and the Americas, whose omnipresent image is seen outside of church spaces and in secular spaces (public murals, shops, restaurants, market areas, artwork, and even clothing). In 2008, Televisa (Mexico's dominating media company) premiered *La Rosa de Guadalupe* (The Rose of Guadalupe), a Mexican *telenovela* (drama series) centered on different modern-day characters whose serious predicaments depended on the miraculous intercession of the Virgen de Guadalupe, symbolized by the appearance of a rose that indicated their petitions had been received.[25] Successful both in Mexico and the United States, this series is still ongoing and has already entered its thirteenth season, further evidence of the Mexican popular religion's intrinsic ties to Mexican cultural expression and new expressions of folklore, even in public entertainment unaffiliated with religion.

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[25] The series (created by Carlos Mercado Orduña and produced by Televisa) is currently available on the *Canal de las Estrellas* channel in both Mexico and the United States. More information and individual storylines are available on IMDb. See *La rosa de Guadalupe*, (2008) Television series, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1192302/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1.

Devotional practices to the Virgen de Guadalupe represent the intersections of Catholic veneration and Mexican Popular Catholicism at the national level. Her Basilica and shrine are located in Mexico City and receive millions of pilgrims each year, including future and returning migrants. Mexican spirituality and associated expressions of popular Catholicism are also tied to various devotional and veneration practices of virgins and saints at the local level, including folk saints and holy apparitions. Many of the shrines for these Virgins and Saints are located in "established sending communities" (Hagan 2008: 41) in West and Central Mexico, where large numbers of migrants are among the many pilgrims that visit these sites. These migrants arrive seeking blessings and "spiritual comfort before embarking on the dangerous trip" to the United States (Hagan 2008: 41). Jacquelin Hagan writes extensively on the various pilgrim sites visited by Mexican and other Central American migrants in their journey northward through and from Mexico, stating that migrants will "seek out churches and shrines for spiritual sustenance" in as many places they can (2008: 131). There comes a point where these churches and shrines are no longer accessible or simply do not exist in the long stretches of several thousand miles where migrants continue for long periods of time in isolation and life-threatening situations. Thus, in order "to cope with the loneliness, the despair, and the physical danger," migrants will "rely on divine companionship" that they invoke through individual or collective (if in a group) prayer (Hagan 2008: 132). Many migrants obtain devotional booklets for their journey in the gift shops and religious retail stores affiliated with these shrines and churches. In the 1980s, the Italian Scalabrini congregation and the Catholic Diocese of Mexico City published the *Devocionario Migrante* (Migrant's Prayer Book), modeled after a similar devotional for migrant workers in the Bracero program, "Manual for Braceros," from the 1960s (Fitzgerald 2008: 83).

The state of Jalisco is home to multiple virgins and saints that are affiliated with the protection of migrants, including Jalisco-based Virgen de San Juan de los Lagos and Virgen de Zapopan, as well as localized patron saints of specific towns and regions. During my fieldwork in Jalostotilán, I spent time at the Shrine of the Virgen de San Juan de los Lagos, a forty-five-minute bus ride outside of town. I encountered multiple pilgrim families who I would later see at the Saint Toribio Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, indicating that migrant pilgrims do not solely visit one shrine when returning with their offerings of thanksgiving. The Lopez family, for example, had arrived in San Juan de los Lagos from Raleigh, North Carolina with their teenage son, Brandon, who they consider their "miracle child" after a series of miscarriages over eleven years. Prior to Brandon's birth, the Lopez family would travel from the United States to Jalisco in petition for a miracle baby. "I wasn't supposed to make it," Brandon told me, as we stood in front of thousands of framed photographs, letters, religious images, and other gifts of thanksgiving mounted to the walls of the Virgen de San Juan de Los Lagos' shrine. "But I made it," he said, hugging his mother, who began to cry. Vicky Lopez, Brandon's mother, explained how the family vowed to come back every year to "say [their] prayers and continue forward with [their] faith." "It is very important to us that we come back each year. And now that we know about Saint Toribio Romo, we come to see him, too," Vicky stressed.[26]

Musical expression of the intersection between La Virgen de San Juan de los Lagos and Saint Toribio Romo is seen in the following "Corrido a Santo Toribio" (**Figure 5.15**), composed and performed by the group Fuerza Alteña. Similar to Saint Toribio Romo corridos that contain dramatic reenactment (as seen in the previous section), this corrido opens with the group dressed

[26] Interview with Vicky Lopez, José Lopez, and Brandon Lopez in the *milagro* room at the Virgen de San Juan de Los Lagos shrine in San Juan de Los Lagos, Jalisco. Interview conducted by Teresita Lozano on July 20, 2017.

as migrants and carrying jugs of water as they hide behind boxcars parked on train track next to a busy highway. Unlike the corrido videos, this video was recorded in an urban setting and road signs indicate that it was likely filmed in the United States. One of the migrants shouts, “Let’s go! It is God’s will and with Saint Toribio, we will make it!” Another migrant yells, “After this car we will go. They are waiting for us!” The migrants kiss the scapulars around their necks in sign of invoking divine protection as they run toward a car, presumably a smuggler who was waiting for them. The rest of the video features alternating footage of Fuerza Altena performing live, the migrant actors, brief shots of the migrants’ families, San Juan de los Lagos, and images (holy card and framed photo) of Saint Toribio Romo.

Figure 5.15 Excerpt from “Corrido a Santo Toribio”[27] (Fuerza Alteña, 2013)

Spanish	English
Virgencita de San Juan Estoy aquí de rodillas He venido a despedirme Y a que otra vez me bendigas Me voy para el otro lado Se que jamás nos olvidas	Dear Virgin of San Juan I am here on my knees I have come to say farewell And to ask again for your blessing I am going to the other side I know you never forget about us
Échame tu bendición Para poder ir tranquilo Mientras regreso te encargo A mis viejitos queridos También mi esposa y mis hijos Me los cuides yo te pido	Give me your blessing So that I may travel in peace Until my return, I leave in your care My dear parents And also my wife and my children I ask that you protect them
Voy a pasar a Santa Ana	I am going to pass through Sana Ana

[27] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. “Corrido a Santo Toribio,” performed by Fuerza Alteña. To view full video, see Fuerza Alteña, “FUERZA ALTENA – CORRIDO A SANTO TORIBIO (VIDEO OFICIAL),” (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFhEKB5j1q4. The 2013 upload claimed the track was commercially available under the international label Discos Barajas (based in Santa Ana, CA, according to Facebook). After several unsuccessful attempts to find a commercial track of this corrido, I was able to find it on iTunes, Amazon, and Spotify within Fuerza Alteña’s album *Sigo Siendo Cabrón*. The album was publicly released in May 2015, two years after the original upload (indicating the track was not yet commercially available when it was originally posted). “Corrido a Santo Toribio” is the second of two Saint Toribio Romo corridos that are accessible outside of YouTube, the other being Los Originales de San Juan’s 2007 “El Santo Toribio Romo.”

Voy a ver a mi patrón Al que me pasa pa' El Norte No importa la situación No hay Migra que me detenga Si llevo tu bendición Aquí estoy, Santo Toribio Llego a la hora de partir Dime si vienes conmigo O allá me esperas tu a mi Te pago yo adelantado Traigo flores para ti … Te pido por los que no Vienen acá a tu capilla Pásalos también, Señor No te cuesta naditita Que viva Santo Toribio Y mi linda Virgencita …	I am going to see my patron saint The one who will smuggle me North No matter the situation There is no Border Patrol who will stop me If I have your blessing with me I am here, Saint Toribio The time has come for me to leave Tell me if you are coming with me Or if you wait for me there [on the Border] I repay you in advance I have brought you flowers … I implore you for those who Do not come here to your chapel Please smuggle them, too It does not cost you a thing Long live Saint Toribio And my beautiful Virgin [of San Juan de los Lagos] …

Before he embarks on his migrant journey, the *corridista* invokes both the protection of the Virgen de San Juan de Los Lagos, the patroness of his home region in Jalisco, and Saint Toribio Romo, who he definitively knows will "smuggle [him] North, no matter the situation." The migrant asks Saint Toribio directly if he will be accompanying him or if "[he] will wait for [him] there" along the Borderlands. In case he cannot return to express his devotion and offer thanksgiving in Jalisco, the *corridista* has brought Saint Toribio and La Virgen de San Juan flowers, "repay[ing] [them] in advance." He is aware that not all migrants prepare for their migrant pilgrimage by stopping at their chapel and altars, so he asks the Virgen de San Juan de los Lagos and Saint Toribio to "please smuggle them, too" as it "does not cost [them]" anything to do so. This ghost smuggling ballad functions as a musical votive for the *corridista*'s patron saints, an intangible offering that reflects his fervent devotion and faith that he will be granted

safe passage. This ballad also informs listeners that the *corridista* has invoked intercession for migrants who were unable visit either shrine, implying that some migrants may not even know they have a patron saint protecting them.

Before the early 2000s, Toribio Romo remained fairly unknown beyond Santa Ana de Guadalupe, and devotional practices to him were limited to Jalostotitlán (Saint Toribio Romo's birthplace), Tequila [28] (where he was martyred), and the surrounding regions in the Jalisco highlands. After Saint Toribio Romo's canonization and the 2002 publication of Jesús Buendía's migrant testimony, more survival testimonies came forward, bringing an influx of migrant pilgrims and devotees to Jalostotitlán and to the Old Shrine at Santa de Guadalupe. The development of this new devotion to a newly canonized Cristero martyr and its transnational expression among believers directly impacted the aforementioned established practices of Mexican migrant devotion. The Vatican has only recognized Toribio Romo's sainthood in the context of his martyrdom during *La Cristiada* but has not yet recognized the transborder miracles documented and disseminated by the migrant and Mexican Catholic community. However, migrant devotionals that suggest the intercession of Saint Toribio Romo continue to circulate in Mexican sending communities, historically Cristero territories, and along the U.S.-Mexico Borderland.

During a trip to Ciuidád Juárez, Chihuahua, the border city to El Paso, Texas, I obtained a small 60-page booklet called *Devocionario del Migrante* (**Photograph 5c**), an updated version of the Scalabrini migrant prayer book from the 1980s (described in a section above). This

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[28] In Tequila, for example, stands the Santuario de Santo Toribio Romo, a church dedicated to his memory. The church seems to receive very few pilgrims on account of it being surrounded by major tequila distilleries that form part of the major tourist sites for the area. Unlike the masses of visitors that walk into the Old Shrine and the new Shrine of Saint Toribio Romo, the doors to the Santuario de Santo Toribio remain closed except for Sundays. A statue of Saint Toribio Romo stands in the church square, seemingly blending into the background amidst the multitudes of visitors who walk past it on their way to the various tequila stands propped around it.

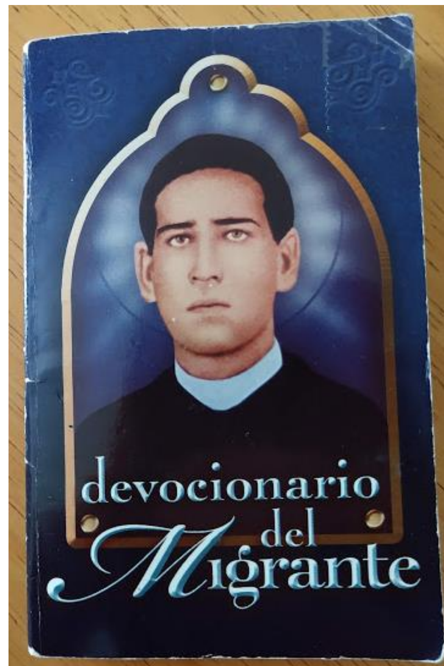
particular copy features an image of Saint Toribio Romo on the cover and the first page contains a message from the Archbishop of San Juan de Los Lagos in Jalisco (which is located approximately 16 miles from Jalostotitlán). The Archbishop's message reads,

> The peace of Christ be with you, friend! Surely you are about to leave your homeland. Carrying with you dreams and aspirations, you walk through God's paths looking for a better life for you and your family. It pains me so much to think of the void you leave in your home and the problems that this separation will bring… never lose contact with your family… I hope this prayer book that you hold in your hands remains a symbol of your communion with God [and] with your family... May God bless you brother and migrant. May God permit you to return to the home you have just left.[29]

Incidentally, despite the cover featuring the image of Saint Toribio Romo, this devotional does not reference Saint Toribio anywhere in its text. His protection and religious significance for the migrant community is implied solely through the front cover and the spiritual endorsement of the Archbishop of San Juan de Los Lagos, who also serves Jalostotitlán. The pastoral message shows how the Mexican Catholic community acknowledges migrants' reasons for risking their lives and leaving their homeland, while also upholding the migrant's allegorical longing to return. In his blessing of farewell, the Archbishop specifically prays for God to lead migrants back to their homeland. This message reveals a complex intersection between Mexican Catholic ideology, Mexican Popular Catholicism, and border-crossing politics, further evidenced by the incorporation of contact information for advocacy institutions and shelters that offer migrants aid on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico borderland. Despite his lacking any official endorsement from the Catholic Church as the patron of immigrants, let alone of undocumented immigrants, Saint Toribio Romo has been adopted by the Mexican migrant community as their Patron Saint based solely on the increasing testimonies of his ghostly apparition during

[29] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. To view full content of this migrant devotional, see *Devocionario del Migrante*, published in 2012 by LiPAK Impresos. The booklet does not contain further publication information, but I was able to find information on LiPAK Impresos, a company that specializes in printed religious items and is based in Michoacán, Mexico.

undocumented migrant journey While neither the Diocese of San Juan de Los Lagos nor the Mexican Catholic Bishops Conference make any reference to Saint Toribio Romo being the Patron Saint of Immigrants, the strategic use of Saint Toribio Romo's image on the front cover further endorses his significance to the migrant community, legitimizing his veneration in popular religious practice and immigration politics.



Photograph 5c. Saint Toribio Romo's image on the cover of a copy of the *Devocionario del Migrante* (Migrant Devotional). Photograph taken by Teresita Lozano, 2020.[30]

Based on the testimonial content in multiple Saint Toribio Romo corridos discussed in this chapter, migrants ask for Saint Toribio Romo's protection as a spiritual guide and companion throughout their transborder journey. However, there are some corridos that narrate

[30] This migrant devotional booklet was purchased by the author in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua in 2015.

the experiences of migrants who were completely unfamiliar with him until they witnessed his apparition in the desert. These musical testimonies correlate with some of the earliest survivor testimonies recorded in the media and at Saint Toribio Romo's shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, in which migrants returned to Santa Ana de Guadalupe looking for their transborder savior only to find out he had been dead for over half a century. As a result of their return, and evident in the following corrido, Saint Toribio Romo's intercession marks a point of conversion for migrants who were unaware as to the identity of the stranger who helped them. Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous apparition and aid instills in the migrant newfound devotion, subsequently bringing him closer to God and to his faith.

Figure 5.16 "Testimonio a Santo Toribio"[31] (Roberto H. Reyes, 2016)

Spanish	English
Anduve buscando a un hombre Para las gracias poderle dar Anduve por mucho tiempo Y en este templo yo lo vine a hallar	I was looking for a man In order to thank him I was looking for a long time And in this church, I finally found him
Un día cruzaba el desierto Y entre aquel campo sólo quedé De pronto perdí las fuerzas Por el calor y me desmayé	On day I was crossing the desert And when I entered that area, I was left alone All of a sudden, I lost all of my strength Due to the heat and then I fainted
No supe si fueron horas O tal vez días las que pasé Solo recuerdo ese rostro Y su mirada llena de fe	I did not know if hours passed Or if possibly days had passed All I remember is his face And his expression, full of faith
Me levantó con su mano Y la cabeza me acarició	He lifted me up with his hand And caressed my head

[31] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. "Testimonio a Santo Toribio," performed by Roberto H. Reyes. Not commercially available. Based on information from the video for Reyes's other corrido, "Homenaje a Santo Toribio" (see footnote #19 in this chapter), this corrido may be available for purchase if listener contacts composer or username directly. The corrido's alternate title is "Protector del Emigrante Santo Toribio." For full video see Roberto H. Reyes, "Testimonio a Santo Toribio," (2016) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pwz5ZCfLeC8.

Me dijo – Sigue el camino, Ya mero llegas, anda con Dios. En Dios yo nunca pensaba Desde ese día yo me acerqué Siempre buscando a ese hombre Entre la gente nunca lo hallé Cuando regresé a mi casa A mis viejitos les platiqué Entre llantos me dijeron -Por ti rezamos todos con fe Me invitaron a Santa Ana Muy de mañana me levanté Llegamos a ese pueblito Rayado en solazo, al templo entre Cuando vi al Santo Toribio De mis viejitos yo me agarré El llanto cubrió mis ojos Y entre sollozos, les díje -Ése es. Les dije, -Ése es. Él fue el quien salvo mi vida Y en Dios bendito yo me acerqué Por todas las oraciones De mis viejitos con mucha fe	He told me, “Follow the path, You are almost there, go with God.” I never thought about God Since that day I grew nearer Always looking for that man Among the crowd, I never found him When I returned to my house I told my dear parents the story And as they cried, they told me “For you we all prayed with faith.” They invited me to Santa Ana Early in the morning I arose We reached the small town The sun’s rays shining, I entered the church When I saw Saint Toribio I grabbed hold of my dear parents My eyes welled up with tears And in between sobs, I told them, “That’s him.” I told them, “That’s him.” He was the one who saved my life And to God I grew near Because of all the prayers Of my dear faithful parents

In the corrido “Testimonio a Santo Toribio” (**Figure 5.16**), the *corridista* recounts how he had been trying to find the man who helped him when he was lost and alone in the desert. The *corridista* describes how he crossed into the desert alone and “lost all of [his] strength,” causing him to faint from heat exhaustion. When he awoke, he was uncertain whether “hours passed” or if he had been unconscious for days. “All [he could] remember” was the holy expression on a stranger’s face as “he lifted [the *corridista*] up with his hand” and placed his hand on his head. The stranger told him where to keep walking, assuring him that he was almost to his destination and telling him to “Go with God.” The *corridista* confesses to the listener that, prior to this

moment, he was not a religious man and never thought about God. However, after his miraculous encounter with the stranger, he "grew nearer" to God and since then went looking for his face among the crowd with no success. The fact that he remembered the stranger's face but never made the connection with any images of Saint Toribio Romo indicates that the *corridista* was not familiar with the Cristero martyr at all. Additionally, unlike in other survivor testimony, Saint Toribio Romo never introduced himself to the *corridista* and did not ask him to return to Santa Ana to give thanks. When he did return home from the United States to his family, he told his parents about his miraculous experience, to which they responded with tears as they explained to him how "[they] all prayed with faith" for his protection. His parents "invited [him] to Santa Ana" where they traveled to Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine. Upon entering the church, the *corridista* "grabbed hold of [his] dear parents," his eyes "well[ing] up with tears." As he cried, the *corridista* told his parents, "That's him," pointing to the image of Saint Toribio Romo that is situated above the altar (likely referring to the Old Shrine). The phrase, "that's him," is the only line of the corrido that is repeated, signifying the weight of the emotion the *corridista* felt upon recognizing that he had been saved by the ghost of a martyred priest, Saint Toribio Romo. Although the *corridista* had been unaware of Saint Toribio Romo's existence and had not entrusted himself to God on his migrant journey, his parents had invoked Saint Toribio Romo's help for him and had asked for his protection. After visiting the Shrine, the *corridista* continued to grow closer to God, attributing his conversion to the fervent prayers of his family. Although the *corridista* did not know to return to Santa Ana de Guadalupe to give thanks to Saint Toribio Romo, his testimony reveals his belief that his parents' faith allowed him to survive and return, completing his migrant pilgrimage and initiating a devotion to his new patron. His ballad now

serves as survivor testimony and devotional testimony, promoting the intercession of the holy priest “the one who saved [his] life.”

Encounters with Saint Toribio Romo’s ghostly apparition and subsequent sharing of their experience through survivor testimony in corridos aids in maintaining Saint Toribio Romo’s devotional following as expressions of Mexican Popular Catholicism. The majority of Saint Toribio Romo corridos reference their promise to their miraculous intercessor that they will return for thanksgiving and to pay their respects. Many ghost smuggling ballads discussed throughout this chapter are accompanied by videos that contextualize this promise of return with footage from Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Saint Toribio Romo’s Shrine, and the *milagro* room. The more testimonial expressions are disseminated by transborder survivors and other beneficiaries of Saint Toribio Romo’s intercession, the more these miraculous experiences are absorbed into collective memory and collective conscious in the migrant community. Espín emphasizes that the framing of popular Catholicism “draw[s] continuously on the memory of those who participate” in its practice (2002: 141), especially since memory helps contextualize religious practice. Saint Toribio Romo corridos provide a platform for documenting and preserving collective memory, allowing listeners and viewers on social media to engage with and potentially contribute to this memory, either through their own testimonial upload or through comments on YouTube.[32]

Saint Toribio Romo corridos function as intangible votives not unlike the letters, candles, photographs, and personal items left in the *milagro* room next to Saint Toribio Romo’s Shrine.

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[32] Although my ethnographic research on Saint Toribio Romo corridos utilized “lurking” digital methodologies for this project (meaning that I did not actively engage with users and comments on YouTube), I plan on expanding my ongoing study to both analyze and participate in the comments sections. While some Saint Toribio Romo corridos do not receive regular comments, others with significantly high views receive comments on a weekly basis, years after the original upload.

Since these testimonies are not currently performed at the Shrine and cannot simply be pinned to a wall alongside other manifestations of thanksgiving for Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercessions, they are instead placed in the digital repositories of YouTube for others to listen and view. The overt religious expression in these ghost smuggling ballads qualifies these musical testimonies as paraliturgical hymns similar to prayers found in migrant devotional books, novenas, and prayer books. Where some of these corridos imply that the *corridistas* have yet to return safely to Santa Ana de Guadalupe to pay their respects in person, YouTube serves as a temporary *milagro* room and digital altar upon which migrants can share their experiences with other devotees of Saint Toribio Romo and future survivors of the transborder journey.

Saint Toribio Corridos, Folk Saints, and Intersections with *Narcocultura*

In Mexican and Latinx Catholic practice, veneration of the Saints is second only to the veneration of the Virgen de Guadalupe. Folk Saints hold an important cultural role in expressions of Mexican Popular Catholicism and *religiosidad popular* (popular religiosity) in general, particularly during periods of great tragedy, war, death, and destruction. According to historian Mario García, popular religiosity, the core of Mexican Popular Catholicism in Latin American and Latinx culture, is defined by "two essential factors"—the control of Latinx Catholicism by the public and not the institutional church or clerics, and religious expression not "officially recognized" nor "appreciated" by the Church (García 2008: 251). García adds that popular religion is driven by the veneration and worship of folk saints and holy figures through devotional practices (M.T. García 2008: 262), evident in paraliturgical expressions such as the composition and sharing of Saint Toribio Romo corridos as musical votives. Folk saints are not officially canonized by the Catholic Church but are instead the faithful departed that have been

canonized by the people, often interwoven with Catholic devotional practices to other Saints and Marian images. Through public canonization, folk saints are ascribed specific patronages based on their life, manner of death, and posthumous intercession or miraculous deeds.

Since Saint Toribio Romo has been officially canonized as a Cristero martyr and saint by the Catholic Church, he is not considered a folk saint according to his actions during life. However, folkloristics rooted in survivor testimony of Saint Toribio Romo's posthumous mission as the Holy Coyote reveal a secondary canonization bestowed by the migrant community, adopting him as the Patron Saint of Immigrants. Reinforced by his holy status from his historical role as a martyr of the Cristero Rebellion, Saint Toribio Romo is characterized in devotional practices and ghost smuggling ballads as both a Catholic saint and folk saint, whose mission evolved fifty years after his death into a protector of Mexican migrants. Expressions of devotion to Saint Toribio Romo as the Patron Saint of Immigrants within one corrido in particular, "Santo Toribio Romo" by Los Originales de San Juan, positions Saint Toribio Romo alongside folk saints who are spiritually and culturally associated with narcocorridos and *narcocultura* (drug-trafficking culture): San Judas (Saint Jude), Jesús Malverde, and La Santa Muerte (Saint of Death).

Like Saint Toribio Romo, San Judas, has undergone a secondary public canonization. In addition to his veneration in Catholic practice as the Patron Saint of Lost Causes, Saint Jude is also venerated in the drug-trafficking community as the traditional protector of thieves and bandits (Flores and González 2007: 112). Unlike Saint Jude and Saint Toribio Romo, folk saints La Santa Muerte and Jesús Malverde have never been recognized by the Catholic Church. In fact, they have been vocally denounced by the Catholic Church and in some cases have even

been denounced by the secular community for their association with criminality, death culture, drug-trafficking, and malfeasance.

Figure 5.17 Full text of “Santo Toribio Romo”[33] (Los Originales de San Juan, 2007)

<table>
<tr><td>Todos tenemos un Santo
O alguien a quien adorar
La Santa Muerte o San Judas
O la Virgen de San Juan
Malverde o Toribio Romo
El Patrón del Ilegal

El Padre Toribio Romo
Nació y fue muerto en Jalisco
Lo matan los agraristas
Por ser seguidor de Cristo
Desde entonces se aparece
Mucha gente ya lo ha visto

Por el Río Bravo y Suchiate
Por el desierto traicionero
Allí los salva de peligro
Ese Santo misionero
Cuentan que a veces les da
Agua, comida y dinero

Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:

Padre Toribio Romo, te pedimos que intercedas por nosotros. Por nuestra Virgencita de Guadalupe, la patrona de todos los mexicanos.

Ya son miles de ilegales
Que lo empiezan a adorar
Le piden al Padre Romo
Que los ayude a cruzar
Fronteras, ríos y desiertos</td>
<td>We all have a Saint
Or someone to venerate
La Santa Muerte or Saint Jude
Or the Virgen de San Juan
[Jesús] Malverde or Toribio Romo
The Patron of Illegals

Father Toribio Romo
Was born and died in Jalisco
The agraristas killed him
For being a follower of Christ
And since then he appears
So many people have seen him

Near the Río Bravo [Rio Grande] and [Río] Suchiate
Through the treacherous desert
There he saved us from danger
That missionary Saint
They say that sometimes he gives them
Water, food, and money

Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:

Father Toribio Romo, we ask that you intercede for us. For our Lady of Guadalupe, the Patroness of all Mexicans.

There are now thousands of illegals
Who have started to adore him
They ask Father Romo
To help them cross
Borders, rivers, and deserts</td></tr>
</table>

[33] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. “Santo Toribio Romo” by Los Originales de San Juan is found in their 2007 album, *Ojalá que la vida me alcance* (EMI Televisa/Capitol), available on CD or MP3.

Para su sueño alcanzar Como un ángel o fantasma Seaparece al ilegal Los cuida y hasta los cura Pa' puedan continuar Y luego desparaece Señal que van a llegar Santa Ana de Guadalupe A diario eres visitado Allí nació el Padre Romo Jalisco es afortunado Le diste un Santo al mundo El Protector del Mojado	In order to fulfill their dream Like an angel or ghost He appears to the illegal He protects them and even heals them So that they can continue on And the he disappears A sign that they will soon arrive Santa Ana de Guadalupe You are visited each day Father Toribio was born there Jalisco is so fortunate You gave a Saint to the world The Protector of the "Wetback"

"Santo Toribio Romo" (**Figure 5.17**) introduced through excerpts earlier in this chapter, is the fifth track of ten Los Originales de San Juan's 2007 album *Ojalá que la vida me alcance* (Hopefully Life Catches Up to Me). [34] In addition to being the only commercially published corrido prior to its upload to YouTube,[35] "Santo Toribio Romo" is also the earliest corrido recording of ghost smuggling ballads compiled for this study, first released in 2007 on CD and digital albums, uploaded as a fan video on YouTube in 2011 by username [07ELAPA], and then

[34] I was unable to find any substantial information on Los Originales de San Juan beyond a few brief biographical introductions on their Amazon and Spotify music profiles. The group is a conjunto Norteño based in Southern California, formed in the early 1990s and led by Chuy Chávez. Over the past several years, they have toured along the California coast region and within Mexico, and they have released recordings with EMI Latin, Televisa, and with independent labels. They promote themselves as a group known for their "corridos'-style" original songs, and produce both censored and uncensored versions of their corridos depending on the explicit content, notably language and references to *narcocultura* (drug-trafficking culture) that is highly censored in Mexico but not in the United States. Based on exploratory listening of their albums on Spotify and Amazon, Los Originales de San Juan's corridos consist of typical popular *corrido* themes associated with romance, drug-trafficking, migration, social conflict (vengeance, murder, police encounters, treason), family conflict, and daily Mexican and Mexican American life. Many of their corridos reference cities and towns in the west-central states of Jalisco, Zacatecas, and Michoacán, as well as the border state of Sinaloa. Although they do not specify their regional ties to Mexico, their name is likely derived from San Juan de Los Lagos, the town adjacent to Jalostotitlán.

[35] The "Corrido a Santo Toribio" by the group Fuerza Alteña was first published to YouTube in 2013 but was not commercially available until 2015. "Santo Toribio Romo" by Los Originales de San Juan was first published in a 2007 album, several years before its upload to YouTube by the artists.

reuploaded to YouTube in 2015 by Los Originales de San Juan. Mariachi Los Cristeros recorded a cover of this corrido for one of their digital albums but have never performed this ballad as part of their regular repertoire in religious or secular performances.[36]

The entire album's overarching themes are based on facing mortality, escaping death (escaping destiny), incarceration, police corruption, and the consequences of drug-trafficking activity, including pointed messages to unnamed individuals that have allegedly threatened the *corridista*. In the album track "Santo Toribio Romo," the *corridista* greets listeners by reminding them that every person has "a Saint or someone to venerate," whether it be La Santa Muerte, San Judas, Jesús Malverde, or Toribio Romo, the "Protector of the Wetback." According to the *corridista*, Saint Toribio Romo "appears to the illegal" as an "angel or ghost" so that the migrant can continue his journey. The narrator mentions but does not specifically claim to venerate La Santa Muerte and Jesús Malverde, two emblematic folk saints of the drug-trafficking world that are often featured as the subjects of their own corridos within narcocorrido repertory. Given the album's overarching themes, the *corridista* may simply be listing common patrons with which his listening community may be familiar, including both Catholic saints and folk saints invoked in practices associated with *narcocultura*. Saint Toribio Romo, the saint that the *corridista* has chosen to venerate, is not necessarily incorporated into the communion of "narco-folk saints." However, the juxtaposition of Jesús Malverde and La Santa Muerte alongside Saint Toribio Romo exemplifies how spiritual characters and smuggling themes from narcocorridos feed into ghost smuggling ballads, indicating the possibility of cross-cultural devotional practices.

[36] The corrido's veneration of anticanonical "narco-folk saints" and ties to the drug-trafficking community likely gave the group significant pause, especially considering the severe impact of cartel violence in the states of Jalisco and Zacatecas. Additionally, the Catholic church's negative view of these folk saints would likely cause controversy if performed in paraliturgical contexts, including religious parody.

Contrary to the Mexican Catholic Church's regard for Saint Toribio Romo's impact on the pilgrim church, these devotional practices affiliated with La Santa Muerte and Jesús Malverde are regarded by the Catholic church as antithetical and threatening to its beliefs.

The Catholic church describes La Santa Muerte as a "heretical saint who personifies death" and a "deeply threatening presence in the country with the world's second-largest Catholic population" (Woodman 2017), openly denouncing her and her cult following as blasphemous and satanic. Regardless of the Church's denouncement, many marginalized and disenfranchised communities in Mexico (both Catholic and non-Catholic) have turned to La Santa Muerte for comfort amidst the sociopolitical chaos, drug war, economic instability, and police corruption in Mexico. La Santa Muerte, whose name literally translates to Saint Death or Holy Death, is depicted as a Grim Reaper figure, a skeleton shrouded with a mantel and holding a scythe. La Santa Muerte is also depicted as holding the Earth in one of her hands and a set of scales in the other, symbolizing balance and justice (Thompson 1998: 407). Like the Virgen de Guadalupe, her icon is seen inside shops, in shop windows, home and street altars, street processions, and artistic renderings in both Mexico and in the United States. Anthropologists have characterized her existence as the manifestation of both "Catholic imagery and rituals as well as pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican gods and rituals," including the Virgin Mary, Tonantzin (the Mother goddess), and Mictecacihuatl (the Mesoamerican goddess of the Underworld and Death). In this sense, La Santa Muerte is seen as more than just a folk saint, but a mother goddess and divine protectress (Bastante and Dickieson 2013: 436). La Santa Muerte has been adopted as a protectress of the *narco* (drug) community, and has also been adopted by the Mexican military and Mexican local police in their war against drug culture (Bastante and Dickieson 2013: 442), though her veneration is certainly not limited to narcoculture and the criminal element. She is

often sought as a reaper of justice for those who have been hurt, injured, betrayed, or outcasted. One of La Santa Muerte's most famous public devotees is known as Doña Queta, who evangelizes in the Mexican streets of Tepito, freely blending spiritual practices with Catholic Devotion and Santería (Bastante and Dickieson 2013; Chestnut 2018). Although those who fear the image of La Santa Muerte view her as an evil and superstitious symbol of drug-traffickers and criminals, her devotees view her as a "complex, multi-faceted spirit" of justice, holding the power to "achieve both good and evil ends" depending on the nature of her invocation (Thompson 1998: 406).

Much like Saint Toribio Romo's presence, discussion, and musical devotion on social media, La Santa Muerte has also become part of a digital devotion phenomenon, including "popular social network sites like Facebook [which] provide an interface where devotees" can collectively discuss and venerate her by means of digital altars, photos, prayers, and testimony of her miracles (Chestnut: 2018: ix-x). La Santa Muerte is featured in countless narcocorridos, included corridos dedicated to her in thanksgiving for her patronage and protection of those in the drug-trafficking community. Narcocorridos by well-known Mexican artists in the genre, including "La Santísima Muerte" (2008) by Beto Quintanilla and the more recent "La Santísima Muerte" (2016) by Los Cadetes De Linares, have contributed to La Santa Muerte's public presence in the drug-trafficking ballad community, invoking her intercession, directing messages to her devotees, and glorifying her as the main protagonist of their ballad. La Santa Muerte's prominence in popular religion, narcoculture, and Mexican and Mexican American culture has been addressed and discussed as part of numerous studies and scholarly publications. I was unable to find substantial scholarly works that are solely dedicated to La Santa Muerte corridos, and these ballads are only briefly addressed within general La Santa Muerte scholarship. La

Santa Muerte corridos are mentioned in narcocorrido scholarship and are not given the same attention as ballads dedicated to renowned folk saint in transnational narcoculture Jesús Malverde.

Devotion to folk saint Jesús Malverde is traced to the myth of a 19th-century *bandido* from the border state of Sinaloa, Mexico, a region notorious for contemporary drug activity and drug violence. Unlike Saint Toribio Romo, there is no historical documentation that proves Jesús Malverde existed as a real person in the 19th-century, and multiple gravesites claim to be the authentic resting place of his remains. The name Malverde literally translates to "bad green," alluding to the evil and damage of wealth and money, framing Jesús Malverde as Robin Hood figure like the bandits immortalized in Border ballads in the years preceding the Mexican Revolution. Legend states that Jesús Malverde was born Jesús Juarez Mazo around 1870 somewhere near Culiacán in Sinaloa and grew up during the pre-Revolutionary dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Malverde is said to have been initiated into a life of crime after both of his parents died from hunger and disease during the family's struggle in the face of great economic inequity brought by the agriculture and railroad industries (Price 2005: 175). There are several versions of his death, though most attest he died somewhere around 1909 due to a friend's betrayal or a targeted killing by the Mexican government.

Like Saint Toribio Romo, Jesús Malverde's cultural memory seemingly lay dormant for several decades after his death only to be "reborn in people's consciousness in the twentieth century" (Michel et al. 2014: 203) as a folk saint for those in desperate situations. Malverde has no direct association with the Catholic Church and his lore and devotional following as a patron of the downtrodden has been shaped entirely by folk practices, oral histories, testimonies, and corridos. He is well-known among the drug-trafficking community as the patron saint of drug-

traffickers since the 1980s, the “anticanonical” narco-saint who symbolizes the power struggle between social classes and the negative impact of economic globalization on vulnerable communities (Michel et al. 2014: 202). Scholars of the Malverdian cult have emphasized that the media has aided in Jesús Malverde’s direct association with drug-traffickers and smuggling activity, not unlike the media’s role after publishing migrant testimonies of Saint Toribio Romo’s ghost miraculous intercession. Malverde devotees have been featured and interviewed for news programming, sharing their testimonies and promoting Malverde as a patron of the impoverished victims of disproportionate distribution of wealth in the global market. Small business owners in Mexico and along the U.S.-Mexico border, for example, will build altars to Jesús Malverde in order to invoke his protection of financial stability and success of their business. Icons and imagery of Malverde depict him as a bronze-skinned man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a white and black button shirt. The Malverdean cult presents the folk saint as a redeeming saint of illicit and illegal activity. Similar to Saint Toribio Romo and La Santa Muerte, Jesús Malverde’s devotion in popular religion has developed a transnational following through its association with both migration and drug smuggling to the United States.

Jesús Malverde is a prominent figure and theme in many commercial narcocorridos, whose lyrical text narrates Malverde’s miracles and offer their profound gratitude for his intercession (Flores and González 2011; Michel et al. 2014). In Malverde’s shrine and chapel in Culiacán, Sinaloa, visitors and devotees can obtain prayer books, novenas, and even booklets containing the lyrical text to Malverde *corridos*, including *Canciones y corridos de Malverde* (Malverde Songs and Ballads). Enrique Flores and Raúl Eduardo González categorize these corrido songbooks as *corrido-exvoto*, or corrido offerings, meant to coincide with devotional prayer specifically at the shrine (2011). The corridos in the songbooks found at Malverde’s

shrine are not the same commercial corridos composed for popular music consumption. These sacred ballads are composed by the chaplains at the Malverde shrine and other *corridistas* hired by families who experienced Malverde's miracles. They are available at the shrine both as offerings for Malverde and printed testimonies for visiting pilgrims, many dedicated to specific families and lyrically "signed" by the *corridista* by stating the composer's name at the end of the ballad (Flores and González 2011: 392-396). This is a stark difference to what I discovered regarding Saint Toribio Romo corridos, paraliturgical ballads I expected to capture live only to find out they were not performed in his main shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Like Saint Toribio Romo corridos, however, the devotional *corridos* to Jesús Malverde express promises to return to his shrine in Culiacán as a demonstration of thanksgiving for his bringing wealth and protection to families, share stories of his various miracles along the borderlands, and narrate testimonies of persons cured from illness.

The folkloristics and development of devotional practices affiliated with the anticanonical "narco-folk saints," La Santa Muerte and Jesús Malverde demonstrate significant parallels with the devotional following of Saint Toribio Romo as the Patron Saint of Immigrants. All three saints have been publicly canonized through testimony, oral history, popular religious practices, and dedicatory corridos. Each saint embodies Alfredo Mirandé's aforementioned definition of "practical spirituality" (2013), a figure who emerged to help the vulnerable, forgotten, and chastised in their time of great need, and subsequently bestowed a sacred identity. While only one corrido in the compilation contextualized these "narco-folk saints" in relation to the Holy Coyote, further research may uncover references within other corrido lyrical texts in narcocorrido repertory. Dedicated study of Saint Toribio Romo's religious and cultural intersections with other folk saints may provide important insight on the relationship between

transnational popular Catholicism and religious practices in *narcocultura* in Mexico and the United States. Additionally, further study may indicate whether or not these intersections retain ties to the inherited Cristero memory in Saint Toribio Romo devotional practices and ghost smuggling ballads.

Conclusion

Through theoretical and lyrical analyses of Saint Toribio Romo corridos, this chapter has demonstrated how these ghost smuggling ballads serve as musical testimonies of transborder survival and expression of devotion. Through the use of transcodification of derogatory terms used to label migrants (similar to the use of "illegal" in migrant corridos discussed in Chapter Two), these Saint Toribio Romo corridos contribute to contemporary musical representations of the undocumented experience in non-corrido genres of popular Latinx music and activist music videos. Similar to non-corrido popular Latinx music video essays, Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads, particularly those accompanied by video imagery and dramatic reenactment, provide a safe digital space for immigrants' self-representation against imposed criminality and exclusionary politics. Saint Toribio Romo ghost smuggling ballads function as expressions of survivor testimony of the transborder journey. Although ghost smuggling ballads and their inherent musical testimonies are disseminated and consumed within public digital spaces on social media, their highly codified contents prioritize the migrant and future survivor community.

The Toribio Romo described in ghost smuggling ballads is not necessarily characterized with the same historical traits as the Cristero martyr who died in 1928. Historical and archival documents from the time period surrounding *La Cristiada* and related to Toribio Romo's life reveal that he "never left his home state while alive" and therefore could not possibly have

known about the different migrant trails through the desert (Young 2015: 157). Folkloristics and secondary canonization of Saint Toribio Romo have ascribed him a posthumous mission as the protector and guide of migrants, sanctifying their journey as a pilgrimage to the United States. This pilgrimage is completed when migrants safely return to Mexico to give thanks and leave their testimonies in the *milagro* room. Ghost smuggling ballads form part of paraliturgical devotional practices to Saint Toribio Romo, who the Catholic church is yet to recognize as the Patron Saint of Immigrants. Thus, Saint Toribio Romo corridos exemplify expressions of Mexican Popular Catholicism, and, in the case of one corrido, reveal possible intersections with folk religious practice in *narcocultura*. The corridos serve as intangible votives to Saint Toribio Romo, interweaving Cristero memory with migrant advocacy. In the historical corpus of Cristero corridos from the 1920s, inherited memory of the Cristero Rebellion regards Cristeros as a community of faith that defied the laws of Calles to protect their religious liberty and their identity. In ghost smuggling ballads, undocumented migrants defy what they believe are unjust and discriminatory immigration laws in order to protect their families and future, relying on the spiritual and physical intercession of a Cristero martyr in order to continue their journey.

This chapter provides a necessary basis for dedicated study on ghost smuggling ballads, which comprise a significant part of new Cristero corrido repertory, reflected by their reinterpretation and recontextualization of inherited Cristero memory and the Cristero epic hero. Toribio Romo is no longer a localized Saint, but the transnational Holy Coyote, a supernatural and religious Robin Hood archetype, a reiteration of the 19th-century Border epic hero who saves migrants from the desert and smuggles them through necessary routes to avoid apprehension. Saint Toribio Romo corridos function as combined expressions of sacred music and religiopolitical statements that amplify the belief in a “pilgrim church” and a person’s right to

migrate in search of a better, sustainable, and safer life. They provide experiential narratives of Mexican Catholic migrants that potentially contribute to transnational discourse on immigration reform, undocumented immigration, and Catholic social doctrine of migration within Mexican and United States Catholic communities. As will be discussed in greater detail in the final chapter, Saint Toribio Romo corridos and their religiopolitical significance within transnational immigration politics demands further research, particularly as they relate to Catholic social teachings on immigration politics, the Vatican's stance on immigration, and ongoing religious and political negotiations on immigration policy and human rights activism in the United States Catholic community.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion: Continuing the Migrant Pilgrimage

Cristero Corridos and Intersecting Histories of the Mexican Corrido Tradition

In order to contextualize the new Cristero corrido within the overarching history of the Mexican corrido tradition, I presented a detailed chronology of the Mexican ballad tradition and its transnational development in both Mexico and the U.S.-Mexico border region. Drawing on existing scholarship and multiple theoretical voices, I mapped the structural and thematic history of the Mexican and Mexican American corrido, beginning with the pre-Revolutionary Border corrido of the 19th-century, whose lyrical documentation of Border conflict, violent encounters, and feelings of marginalization relay the experiences of deterritorialized Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the historically contested U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Nearly all scholars agree that the Mexican corrido attained its definitive form as the Revolutionary classic corrido during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917). The classic corrido's epic hero archetype retained key characteristics of the Border corrido's epic hero, who avenged the struggle of the lower and rural classes along the U.S.-Mexico border. Contemporary migrant corridos and narcocorridos continue the 19th-century Border corrido's themes associated with border-crossing, *bandoleros* (outlaws), smuggling, and cross-cultural encounters, significant themes that eventually found new articulation in ghost smuggling ballads that honor Saint Toribio Romo.

The Revolutionary classic corrido narrated the triumphs of Mexican revolutionaries against antagonistic figures and institutions of power and oppression, documenting the Mexican people's interpretation of important events as they unfolded in real time. The classic corrido attained structural and lyrical standardization during the Revolutionary period, thematically

driven by the people, places, and events of the time, including significant political figures and revolutionaries, liberation, social protest, and social and political reform. The classic corrido created a vast repository of Mexican oral history as seen and experienced by the Mexican people, a musical manifestation of living memory of specific moments in time, retold and adapted through oral transmission and performance. The epic era of the classic corrido extended from the years surrounding the Mexican Revolution into the post-Revolutionary period (1917-1930) and contributed new narratives to the classic corrido corpus. Vicente T. Mendoza, Américo Paredes, and their adherents believe the post-Revolutionary corrido culminated in the emergence of the Cristero corrido as the final chapter of the classic corrido tradition. After what Mendoza referred to as the classic corrido's "death" in the 1930s after its transition into commercialization in the popular music sphere, corrido themes centered less on the epic hero and more on individual experiences and daily life.

In Chapter Three, I emphasized how the Cristero corrido marked a distinct split in the post-Revolutionary classic corrido, dividing the genre into two subgenres: secular and religious. Cristero corridos composed in the years surrounding *La Cristiada* (1926-1929) developed unique religious themes that centered on the experiences of Mexican Catholics who took part in the Cristero Rebellion, Cristero heroes and martyrs who resisted the 1917 Mexican Constitution's anticlerical laws, and Cristeros' fight against the perceived suppression of their Catholic faith as a result of enforcement of Calles Law. The secular post-Revolutionary corrido's epic hero was characterized by his bravery, loyalty to community and family, and religiosity (González 2015) as evidence of his morality and values. The Cristero corrido transformed religiosity from a moral trait into the definitive characteristic of the Cristero epic hero and the platform for his mission against the Mexican government's suppression of Catholic religious liberty. Cristero corridos

that narrate the glorious triumphs, lives, and deaths of Cristero epic heroes commemorate them as martyrs of the Cristero cause, heroes willing to die for Christ the King. Rather than waiting for the Church to recognize these Cristeros as saints, the ballads memorialized them as protectors of religious liberty, ascribing them a place at or near the level of canonized Saints and martyrs who preceded them in their mission.

Whereas historical Cristero corridos, their inherent religiopolitics, and documentation of the Cristero experience during *La Cristiada* serve as lyrical Cristero historiography, new Cristero corridos draw from and build on historical themes and Cristero memory, creating a new historiography. I have defined new Cristero corridos as extensions of cultural artifacts of their historical counterparts, laying a necessary foundation for analyzing contemporary compositions and performances within contexts of post-*Cristiada* collective memory and migration. As described in Chapter Three, despite a resurgence in *La Cristiada* scholarship, primarily seen in political and historical scholarship since the early 2000s, there has been no dedicated musicological scholarship on Cristero corridos. The limited studies on Cristero creative literature, art, and music include analyses of historical works and make no mention of contemporary Cristero corrido performance practices, including recent studies (Andes 2015, Nicolopulos 2004) that center on select Cristero corridos and analyze the lyrical texts based on their historical significance. My definition and study of new Cristero corridos contributes to Alicia Olivera de Bonfíl's seminal *La literatura cristera* (1994), first published in 1970, which provides a detailed overview of Cristero creative literature and select Cristero corridos, and Antonio Avitia Hernández's doctoral dissertation (2006), which attempted to catalogue all documented Cristero literature, plays, and corridos from the Cristero Rebellion. While the studies described above contribute significantly to *La Cristiada* scholarship, in particularly new

historiographies of the Cristero Rebellion that build on the authoritative voice of Jean Meyer (1976), none of these studies address, list, or explore any Cristero corridos composed after the 1930s and 1940s. My analyses of new Cristero corridos composed by Idelfonso Moya and the collection of ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo reveal *La Cristiada*'s continuing relevance to post-*Cristiada* generations.

New Cristero Corridos and Memory

The 1979 Cristero corrido "El Martes Me Fusilan" (On Tuesday They Will Execute Me), composed several decades after the end of the Cristero Rebellion, narrates the martyrdom of an unnamed Cristero from an unnamed location in the highlands of Jalisco. Unlike historical Cristero corridos that relay narratives of specific Cristero epic heroes, battles, and moments of resistance, "El Martes Me Fusilan" marked a pivotal shift in its reinterpretation of the Cristero experience. Similar to cultural memory found in migrant corridos (Chew Sánchez 2006), new Cristero corridos prioritize the emotional and spiritual experiences of Cristeros as imagined and reimagined by *corridistas* who were not alive to witness these events firsthand. New Cristero corrido composition relies on inherited cultural memory, often transmitted from family or community members, as is the case with the four members of the group Mariachi Los Cristeros. Mariachi Los Cristeros' "El Corrido de un Cristero" (The Ballad of a Cristero), draws on the broader depiction of the Cristero experience in the same manner as "El Martes Me Fusilan," narrating the life and death of an unnamed Cristero martyr. These two new Cristero corridos' lack of specificity in details found in classic corridos and post-Revolutionary Cristero corridos allow for further adaptations and reinterpretations. In new Cristero corridos, the Cristero epic hero's definitive religiosity and willingness to fight and die for Christ the King serves as a

continuing example of faith and valor for post-*Cristiada* generations – the Cristero fight did not end in 1929, but continues to this day as part of the transnational allegory of Mexican struggle.

Chapter Four's discussion of the Jalisco-based group, Mariachi Los Cristeros, exemplified the persisting inherited memory of *La Cristiada* and its continuing significance to post-*Cristiada* generations with ties to historical Cristero territories. Mariachi Los Cristeros' dramatic reenactment and composition of at least three new Cristero corridos reflects how their anachronistic performances, engagement with audiences, and musical reinterpretations of their familial and regional Cristero past attest to the ongoing processes that shape collective Cristero memory. Two of Idelfonso Moya's new Cristero corrido compositions, for example, narrate the lives of Miguel Gómez Loza, a recently beatified Cristero martyr from the region of Acatíc (where Mariachi Los Cristeros is based), and Pioquinto Moya, the Moya family's Cristero patriarch and post-Revolutionary composer. None of the members of the group have any living memory of the Cristero Rebellion, and it is safe to say that none of their current listeners have any either. Idelfonso Moya's new Cristero corrido compositions contribute to the vast corpus of Cristero balladry decades after the end of *La Cristiada*, resurrecting themes and historical figures, as well as expressing new Cristero historiographies through lyrical text. Overall, Mariachi Los Cristeros' performances transcend temporal boundaries as they invoke inherited Cristero memory while also engaging with their contemporary realities through parody and satire, doing so in both secular and religious spaces.

Mariachi Los Cristeros does not necessarily ascribe their Cristero archetypal characters—El Padre, Pillo el Monaguillo, El General Campesino, and El Campesino Menor—and Cristero themes to religious fervor, claiming that they simply desired to distinguish themselves from other mariachi *tradicionál* ensembles. However, their costumes, dialogue, and dramaturgy reflect the

creation of an imagined Cristero identity, evoking collective Cristero memory and inviting their post-*Cristiada* audiences to "recollect" and reimagine the years surrounding the Cristero Rebellion. My analysis of Mariachi Los Cristeros' staged performances builds on Kay Shelemay's discourse on how the relationship between history and memory is subject to reinvention and adaption by listeners and performers (2006), a process referred to as "rememorying" (Barz 2008), or rememory. For post-*Cristiada* generations, collective Cristero memory is not bound by oral histories or documentations of living memory from the time period (including historical Cristero corridos). Rather, Cristero memory is now shaped by a process of reinvention, retellings of inherited memory, new reflections on the significance of Cristero resistance, new imaginings of the Cristero historical experience. Mariachi Los Cristeros' musical dramaturgy and their evocation of new Cristero collective memory sets precedent for *La Cristiada*'s contemporary religiopolitical significance in the state of Jalisco and the Cristero heartland and beyond, including its expression in corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo.

Due to inability to coordinate meetings during my fieldwork in Jalisco, I was unable to spend significant time with the Moya musicians and their family. In order to understand further and interrogate the significance of the Moya family's inherited Cristero memory and its influence on Mariachi Los Cristeros' participation in recreating and reimagining the Cristero experience on stage, my work with the ensemble demands closer study, specifically in their hometown of Acatíc. Although their extensive digital archive provided an invaluable resource for analyzing their live performances and their engagement with their post-*Cristiada* audiences, digital research and virtual ethnography limited my ability to speak directly to members of their audience. Further research and extended residency in Acatíc and areas in which Mariachi Los Cristeros regularly tour will allow me to attend live performances and interrogate how their

attendees may interpret the ensemble's performances and paraliturgical parody as part of collective Cristero memory. Do they connect themes of persecution and Cristero religiopolitics to contemporary feelings of injustices? Do these audiences make any connection between Mariachi Los Cristeros' performances and their inherent Cristero memory with the injustices expressed in Saint Toribio Romo corridos (whose Shrine is located only two hours from Acatíc)? While I was unable to answer these questions in my current research, I continue expanding my work to explore the current significance and creative expression of Cristero memory as it relates to post-*Cristiada* generations in and outside of Mexico.

The Holy Coyote: A New Border and Cristero Epic Hero

Many contemporary migrant corridos and narcocorridos, including ballads composed by renowned groups such as Los Tigres del Norte, retain the epic narrative and epic hero archetype from the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary classic corrido, yet present the epic hero as someone who is not always triumphant in his struggles. This complex migrant protagonist reflects how contemporary corridos narrate a collective experience of marginalized communities' ongoing fight against social injustices. In ghost smuggling ballads, the migrant protagonist cannot continue or succeed in his journey without the help of Saint Toribio Romo, whose intercession he invokes prior to or during his transborder sojourn as an act of religious devotion. Through survivor testimony, the migrant narrator presents Saint Toribio Romo as the Cristero epic hero and the Border *bandolero* hero. Like new Cristero corridos described in Chapters Three and Four, Saint Toribio Romo corridos are informed by Cristero memory, specifically of a Cristero martyr from Santa Ana de Guadalupe in the highlands of Jalisco. Saint Toribio Romo

corridos serve as additional manifestations of new Cristero corrido composition that transcend geographic and temporal boundaries within contexts of the migrant journey.

As discussed at length in Chapter Five, ghost smuggling ballads depict Saint Toribio Romo as the Holy Coyote, or Holy Smuggler, a simultaneous Cristero martyr of the past and Border ghost of the present. *Coyote* refers to the border-crossing smuggler known in the migrant community and presented in smuggling corridos, migrant corridos, and narcocorridos as a figure who extorts desperate migrants who seek safe passage across the U.S.-Mexico border. Other terms for human smugglers include *Pollero*, comparing border smugglers to those who carry and transport chickens. Whereas the *coyote* described in corridos is the archetypal deceiver (Herrera-Sobek 1993: 203) to whom migrants risk entrusting large sums of money and their very lives in order to complete their transborder journey, the Holy Coyote is a figure of faith and trust and charges nothing from migrants. The Holy Coyote only asks that migrants return to Santa Ana de Guadalupe to give him thanks at his Shrine on top of the "mesita," where migrants can leave tangible testimony in the *milagro room*. While some migrants familiar with other migrant accounts of Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercession in the desert invoke his help prior to embarking on their journey, other migrants first encounter him as a ghostly apparition who saves them from near death experiences. In ghost smuggling ballads, Saint Toribio Romo is a Cristero epic hero, killed in 1928 upholding the Cristero mission to defend religious liberty in the name of Christ the King and now continuing his Cristero mission as the Holy Coyote.

The Border outlaw, or *bandolero*, and Robin Hood archetype shaped the Border epic hero of the Border corrido, whose triumphs and heroic deeds were based on avenging the mistreatment and marginalization of Mexican and Mexican American Borderers by Anglo Borderers (Paredes 1958). Border corridos extending back to the mid-19th century recount the

violent encounters between dispossessed Mexicans and Texas Rangers along historically contested region of the U.S.-Mexico border. These corridos include themes associated with defying U.S. authority, smuggling contraband (themes that continued in contemporary narcocorridos), and with reclaiming Mexican Borderer identity in the face of perceived U.S. antagonism against Mexicans. As the Holy Coyote and new iteration of the Border epic hero, Saint Toribio Romo does not seek vengeance nor does he utilize any form a violence to protect the migrant against Border Patrols and vigilante surveillance, arguably contemporary embodiments of the Texas Ranger and Anglo Borderer characters from the Border corrido. Based on the lyrical texts of ghost smuggling ballads, the Holy Coyote heals migrants from succumbing to exposure, appearing to them in moments of most dire need, including right before giving birth to a baby, losing consciousness, and, in the case of a greedy former *coyote*, after being bitten by a venomous rattlesnake. Rather than confronting Border Patrol, the Holy Coyote allows migrants to continue through the desert pathways unseen and avoid apprehension and detainment, in some cases providing them food, water, and money before disappearing.

Ghost smuggling ballads disseminated in the digital spaces of social media, contribute to the vast corpus of Border, Cristero, and migrant corridos. Through migrant testimony, their text retains the relevancy of Cristero memory through the actions and intercessions of Saint Toribio Romo, a Cristero martyr whose apparition now resides along the U.S.-Mexico border. Historical Cristero corridos relayed the fight for religious liberty at the hands of what the Cristeros regarded as a corrupt government on account of President Calles's severe, militant, and violent enforcement of anticlerical laws. New Cristero corridos dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo present the lived experiences of migrants as they make their way northward in search of a better life, whose plight is rooted in the transnational impact of economic and political instability associated

with both the Mexican and United States governments. For the Cristeros, expression of religion and religious identity violated federal law. For post-*Cristiada* migrants, crossing into the United States soil without the appropriate documentation brands them as “illegal” and violators of U.S. federal laws. The Holy Coyote does not abide by U.S. border-crossing laws, and instead aids in smuggling migrants as a fulfilment of his saintly patronage.

Ghost Smuggling Ballads and Popular Catholicism

As described in Chapter Five, during life, Father Toribio Romo González never left the state of Jalisco and was martyred in the town of Tequila outside of his native Jalostotitlán. After his May 2000 canonization alongside twenty-five other Cristeros by Pope St. John Paul II, Toribio Romo González’s localized veneration transformed into a transnational devotional cult, inspired by publications of migrant experiences such as the 2002 media testimony of Jesús Buendía Gaytán. Soon after, Saint Toribio Romo’s Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe could no longer hold the influx of pilgrims seeking his intercession or returning in thanksgiving for his miraculous help during the transborder journey. In 2012, a new Shrine was erected, allowing the thousands of migrant pilgrims and visitors to attend special Masses, pay homage to Saint Toribio Romo’s relics, and leave votives and offerings of thanksgiving in the *milagro* room adjacent to the Old Shrine. Although the Catholic Church does not recognize Saint Toribio Romo as the Patron of Immigrants, witnesses of his ghostly apparition and beneficiaries of his intercession have adopted him as such and have embedded their spiritual devotion in the lyrical texts of ghost smuggling ballads.

Saint Toribio Romo corridos function as paraliturgical expressions of devotion and reveal new musical manifestations of Mexican Popular Catholicism, the “everyday faith and faith-life

of Catholics" (Espín 2002: 143) whose practices are structured and redefined by the collective lived experiences of Mexican Catholics. Similar to hymns, ghost smuggling ballads are encoded with prayers, implorations for divine intervention, invocations of protection, and prayers of thanksgiving to the Holy Coyote. However, Saint Toribio Romo corridos are not performed in church spaces and most are not published as commercial recordings. Rather, the majority of ghost smuggling ballads are shared as both migrant testimony and devotion on YouTube, transforming the video sharing platform into a digital altar and temporary *milagro* room for migrants who have yet to make their way back to Santa Ana de Guadalupe to pay tribute to their patron saint. Ghost smuggling ballads have bestowed on Saint Toribio Romo a secondary canonization, informed by folkloristics and growing religious tourism to Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe, likely influencing the use of his image as the cover of migrant devotional booklets despite never mentioning his name in their text.

My analysis of corridos devoted to Saint Toribio Romo as sources of Popular Mexican Catholicism contribute to recent studies of popular religion in Mexican and Mexican American Catholic communities (Elizondo 2002; Espín 200; Cuéllar 2008; Hagan 2008), which overwhelmingly center on spiritual expressions and devotional practices associated with La Virgen de Guadalupe, the iconic Patroness of Mexico and the Americas, and regional Virgin patronesses throughout Mexico, including La Virgen de San Juan de Los Lagos. To date, select scholars (Hagan 2008; Fitzgerald 2008; Romo 2010; Mirandé 2013; Young 2015; Aguilar Ros 2016) have published works that specifically discuss Saint Toribio Romo's following in the migrant community. This dissertation adds an important layer to the growing body of literature on the topic by drawing attention to Saint Toribio Romo corridos and other musical expressions of transnational devotion.

In addition to expressions of Mexican Popular Catholicism, Saint Toribio Romo corridos exemplify possible intersections with narco-folk saints and characters found in narcocorridos, including Jesús Malverde and La Santa Muerte. Similar to the Saint Toribio Romo's following, devotional practices associated with Malverde and La Santa Muerte are found in both Mexico and the United States, driven by testimony of miraculous intercession and "practical spirituality" (Mirandé 2013). Although Malverde and La Santa Muerte are regarded as anticanonical and sometimes satanic (especially La Santa Muerte) by the Catholic Church—a stark contrast from Saint Toribio Romo's official canonization and legitimized veneration as a Cristero martyr—these folk saints have emerged as sources of spiritual help for devotees who feel marginalized, chastised, and vulnerable, similar to the experiences of migrant devotees of the Holy Coyote.

The Transborder Migrant Journey as Sacred Experience

In addition to expanding on discourses related to reinterpretations of memory in musical performance and musicological scholarship to current studies on *La Cristiada*, my work contributes to studies on migration and migrant experience, specifically Mexican migration to the United States. My work builds on Jacqueline's Hagan's in-depth study (2008) of miraculous experiences and religious expression in Latin American migration. As intersecting sources of Cristero memory, paraliturgical devotion, and migrant testimony, Saint Toribio Romo corridos have reframed the migrant journey as a sacred experience. My theoretical analyses of ghost smuggling ballads in Chapter Five exemplify how Saint Toribio Romo corridos contextualize migrant experiences of miraculous intercessions as new forms of self-representation and self-empowerment, as well as counternarratives and resistance to imposed criminality on undocumented migrants. Ghost smuggling ballads utilize transcodification (Chew Sánchez 2006)

of derogatory terms such as "illegal" and "wetback" within lyrical text to evoke sympathetic characterizations of the migrant as a victim of sociopolitical and economic circumstances. Saint Toribio Romo corridos that are accompanied by dramatic reenactment of migrants' transborder near-death experiences present visual narratives that invite audiences to view migrant experiences with empathy and solidarity, similar to what Aldama refers to as "video essays" (2012) and music videos that accompany commercial works by popular Latinx and Latin American artists and activists such as Ricardo Arjona and La Santa Cecilia. Arguably sources of migrant musical activism, ghost smuggling ballads directly respond to exclusionary politics as outlined by Koegen's theory of symbolic construction of migrant identity and the use of "countercultural imagery" as resistance to impositions of criminal status on migrants (2002). Undocumented migrants do not view their transborder journey and permeance of the U.S.-Mexico border as an immoral or criminal act, but rather as a necessary step toward a better and safer life for themselves and for their family.

On another level, in Saint Toribio Romo corridos, the transborder journey is reframed as more than just a sojourn to social and economic stability—the transborder journey is a sacred pilgrimage, protected by the intercession of the Holy Coyote's ghost, sent by God to ensure that the migrant completes his journey. Whereas Américo Paredes defined the U.S.-Mexico border as a region of encounter and conflict that continuously shaped Borderer identity (1958), Gloria Anzaldúa defined the U.S.-Mexico border as a metaphorical boundary that is carried and invoked beyond a physical space (1987). In my work, I draw from these foundational definitions of the border to include the transborder region, the liminal space conceptualized as both physical and imaginary. The transborder region encompasses the vast desert terrains and "no man's land" that separates the visible political boundaries of Mexico and the United States, to which many

migrants succumb without the intercession of the Holy Coyote. The transborder region is invoked and evoked in the digital spaces of social media through the dissemination and consumption of Saint Toribio Romo corridos as sources of migrant testimony. Since the migrant pilgrimage is only complete when the migrant is able to return to his homeland and pay homage to his patron in the heart of Cristero territory, the undocumented migrant experience in the United States reflects a continuation of the transborder passage that migrants cross multiple times. Saint Toribio Romo's ghostly apparition exemplifies the transcendence of temporal boundaries, uninhibited by the border between life and death or between the past and present. While Father Toribio Romo González's life ended as a Cristero martyr in the highlands of Jalisco, his ghostly apparition continues his new mission to protect migrants. He does so by transcending and spiritually abolishing both the territorial border and its enforcement, an enforcement that has produced a violent dehumanization of the migrant similar to the enforcement of laws and Cristero experiences of dehumanization that sparked the Cristero Rebellion in 1926.

Building on Joshua Pilzer's discourse on survivor testimony and survivors' music, my work exemplifies how Saint Toribio Romo corridos delineate their ballad community as survivors and future survivors of the transborder journey. Each ghost smuggling ballad contains migrant testimony, informed by religious devotion as a testament to the Holy Coyote's protection, and relays to listeners that they are pilgrims worthy of crossing. As survivor testimony, ghost smuggling ballads contribute to devotional expressions and practices, serving as intangible offerings of thanksgiving and as sources of comfort and encouragement for those who have experienced or will experience the migrant pilgrimage. As survivors' music, ghost smuggling ballads also create new expressions of migrant cultural and collective memory,

recontextualizing the migrant experience and border-crossing within Cristero history and memory. Migrants unfamiliar with Saint Toribio Romo prior to their miraculous encounters in the desert are initiated into Cristero culture and collective memory, evidenced by the musical documentation of their newfound devotion and desire to return to Jalostotitlán in thanksgiving.

Returning to Jalostotitlán

When I first encountered new Cristero corridos as musical testimonies and video narratives on YouTube, I expected to observe performances of these ballads as offerings of thanksgiving at Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Many of the accompanying videos to ghost smuggling ballads featured footage from Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe, footage of musicians performing in front of the Old Shrine and of surrounding streets flooded with migrants. Yet, when I traveled to the highlands of Jalisco, aside from the soundscapes of migrant prayer, pilgrims conversing with other pilgrims, traffic, and liturgical music from pilgrim Masses, I discovered a surprising silence. In fact, some of the residents I spoke to were unfamiliar with the collection of Saint Toribio Romo corridos that exist in the spaces of social media, shared by survivors of the transborder journey with other devotees and future survivors as testimony and votives to the Patron Saint of Immigrants. During the course of my research, several questions remained, demanding ongoing study.

While in Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe, I witnessed large processions of migrants that filled the space in and around Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine, Old Shrine, and *milagro* room. In conversing with residents, I learned that Jalostotitlán experienced a significant social and spiritual change in their small town after Saint Toribio Romo's canonization and adoption as the unofficial Patron Saint of Immigrants transformed the town and Santa Ana de

Guadalupe into an epicenter for religious tourism. Residents recall a decrease in community-organized musical processions and performances since the years prior to the devotional following of the Holy Coyote. Some families even recalled parish choir directors and musicians who composed original work dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo. Did Saint Toribio Romo's cult following, impact of religious tourism, and daily pilgrimages of thousands of devotees affect local musical expressions that existed before the early 2000s? Do residents of Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana de Guadalupe feel overwhelmingly negative about the impact of religious tourism on their town, or do they welcome these changes as significant to their local Cristero history? Although I had the opportunities to speak to some residents, closer study will require in-depth conversations with residents, visitors, pilgrims, clergy, and religious tourism staff. Returning to Jalostotitlán will also allow further investigation on the musical activities that may have preceded the sudden transformation of a previously quiet town whose native son was venerated and commemorated through community celebrations and festivals. Perhaps the sudden silence of community music at the Shrine correlates with the presence of ghost smuggling ballads on social media.

The Cristero Diaspora, Saint Toribio Romo Devotion, and Immigrant Rights Activism

My digital research methods to collective Saint Toribio Romo corridos did not directly engage with either the *corridistas* or the migrant listening community on social media. As I continue my research, I plan to initiate communication with the migrant listening community online in order to incorporate migrant interpretations and responses to corrido lyrical text and performances. While my textual and theoretical analyses of multiple ghost smuggling ballads provided a foundational basis for understanding the significance of Saint Toribio Romo corridos

to the migrant journey and undocumented experience, the scope of my research did not address why *corridistas* have turned to social media as the primary platform to share their testimonies. Do the *corridistas* perform ghost smuggling ballads outside of social media? Are these ballads intended for readaptation and performance or are they singular contributions to a repository of migrant and Cristero memory online? Despite not encountering live performances at Saint Toribio Romo's Shrine in Jalisco, are there performances of ghost smuggling ballads or other musical expressions of devotion to the Holy Coyote in the United States?

My ongoing research seeks further understanding of Saint Toribio Romo corridos and their religiopolitical transnational significance in Catholic communities in the United States, including how they may inform interpretations of United States Catholic social teachings on immigration politics and of Pope Francis's public statements and publications on immigration. In the past several decades, particularly in light of increased undocumented immigration during the 1980s and 1990s, the friction between Catholic social teaching and U.S. immigration policy resulted in ongoing tensions within the U.S. Catholic community. This friction is centered heavily concepts such as the "rule of law" (abiding by national border laws) and aiding in current humanitarian crises, including the effects of President Donald Trump's "Build the Wall" campaign and the detainment and separation of undocumented children and families. In his address for the 101st World Migrant and Refugee Day in 2014, Pope Francis addressed the migrant and refugee community, advocating that the Church "has been a mother with a heart open to the whole world, and has been without borders."[1] Four years later, Pope Francis authored the book *A Stranger and You Welcomed Me: A Call to Mercy and Solidarity with*

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[1] Pope Francis, (2014), "Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 101st World Day of Migrants and Refugees," https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20140903_world-migrants-day-2015.html.

Migrants and Refugees,[2] whose premise seeks to "restor[e] the human faces of those who have been reduced to numbers or brutalized by vile epithets" and includes a section with his February 2017 Homily in the border city of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua on "Crossing Borders" (2018). Additional research on how Saint Toribio Romo's devotional following in Mexico and the United States reflects negotiations on immigration policy reform and immigrant rights movements may provide further insight into the Holy Coyote's transnational significance beyond Mexican Popular Catholicism.

In the past few years, religious institutions associated with immigrant and refugee aid have adopted Saint Toribio Romo as part of their cause, revealing Saint Toribio Romo's increasing relevancy to immigration policy and human rights activism in United States Catholic communities. I plan to expand my field site to include regions beyond Jalisco and the U.S.-Mexico border that are relevant both to Cristero memory and to Saint Toribio Romo's devotional following, including churches and missions in the United States with large migrant communities that have adopted Saint Toribio Romo as their patron or claim ties to Saint Toribio Romo's miraculous intercession, including Saint Toribio Romo Catholic Church in Chatsworth, Georgia, Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma,[3] Saint Toribio Romo – St. Turibius Parish in Chicago, Illinois, and Saint Cornelius Catholic Church in Richmond, California.

Saint Cornelius Catholic Church, for example, was the recording site for "Santo Toribio" (**Figure 6.1**), a paraliturgical *alabanza* (hymn) composed and performed by Father Filiberto Barrera that was uploaded to YouTube in 2011. Although this *alabanza* does not meet the

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[2] See Pope Francis (2018), *A Stranger and You Welcomed Me: A Call to Mercy and Solidarity With Migrants and Refugees*.

[3] Richard L. Fricker (2014), "Patron saint of the border crossers," *Tulsa People*. https://www.tulsapeople.com/patron-saint-of-the-border-crossers/article_c09f0b32-8bba-5e1b-a52d-8241c2dd2010.html.

literary parameters of a corrido, I have incorporated the song as part of the collection of ghost smuggling ballads in Appendix B, musical evidence of Saint Toribio Romo's transnational presence. As described in the information text on the YouTube video, Father Filiberto Barrera, a Mexican-born priest residing in California recorded this musical dedication to Saint Toribio Romo on an Android phone in the narthex of his parish. Similar to Saint Toribio Romo corridos, this paraliturgical hymn serves as spiritual resistance against the imposed criminality of undocumented immigrants, expressing a collective identity of a wounded and victimized migrant people "inspired by Toribio" who follow as "faithful migrants." The lyrics, "Thank you, Father Toribio for your visit here," allude to the fact that Saint Toribio Romo somehow made his presence known in Richmond, California.

Figure 6.1 Excerpt from "Santo Toribio"[4] (Father Filiberto Barrera, 2011)

Derrama, Padre Santo Tu gracia sobre mi Sobre este pueblo herido Cansado de vivír Lejos de esta tierra Que nos vio nacer Somos un pueblo herido Movido por Toribio Ayudános, Señor A ser fieles migrantes Al margen de Toribio Dispuestos a entregarte El corazón, el corazón Gracias Padre Toribio Por tu visita aquí Aquí al pueblo de Richmond	Pour, Holy Father Your grace over me Over all these wounded people Who are tired of living Away from the land In which they were born We are a wounded people Inspired by Toribio Help us, Lord To be faithful migrants Alongside Toribio Willing to offer you Our heart, our heart Thank you, Father Toribio For your visit here Here in the city of Richmond

[4] Transcribed and translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano. To listen to and view full video, see Filiberto Barrera, "Santo toribio Richmond by father philiberto," (2011) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy0uXmSzvt4.

Que sigue junto a ti Los pasos del Maestro Con fe y devoción …	Who goes forth at your side In the footsteps of our Teacher With faith and devotion …

Upon further research, I learned that Saint Cornelius Catholic Church, whose congregants are largely Mexican and Mexican American, was the site of an arson hate crime[5] in 2007. Additionally, a year prior to his uploading his performance of "Santo Toribio" to YouTube, Father Barrera led 170 teenagers from his parish's confirmation classes to protest against police checkpoints that targeted undocumented drivers.[6] Father Filiberto Barrera's composition reveals that musical expressions of devotion to Saint Toribio Romo are not limited to corrido compositions but also include paraliturgical hymns informed by migrant experiences in the United States. Father Filiberto's participation in immigrant rights activism and invocation of Saint Toribio Romo demonstrates the politicization of Saint Toribio Romo's following in U.S. Catholic spaces. Does Saint Toribio Romo and his associated devotional practices play a role in other areas of Catholic social activism and immigrant rights movements such as the Sanctuary Movement, an ecumenical network of religious institutions that house and protect undocumented migrants in direct threat of deportation? Does Saint Toribio Romo's religious presence in U.S. Catholic churches influence congregant religiopolitics? Closer study in these spaces may also provide an opportunity to ask both migrants and non-migrants on their interpretations of Saint Toribio Romo's devotional following and its musical manifestation, as well as whether

[5] For more information, see following articles, "Richmond parish resilient," (2007) *The Catholic Voice (Diocese of Oakland) online edition*, https://www.catholicvoiceoakland.org/2007/07-01-22/inthisissue.htm; Randy Myers (2007) "Richmond church fire saddens parish," *East Bay Times* https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2007/01/07/richmond-church-fire-stuns-saddens-parish/.

[6] For full article see Karl Fisher (2010) "Sobriety checkpoint near church offends Richmond priest," *East Bay Times*. https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2010/03/30/sobriety-checkpoint-near-church-offends-richmond-priest/.

devotional practices in the United States contribute to the legacy of what Julia Young refers to as the Cristero diaspora.

In her work, Julia Young delineates the connection between the transnational impact of *La Cristiada* on those who "carried the conflict with them" and "reenacted it" in the United States to the Cristero memory that "persists in contemporary Mexican collective memory" (Young 2015: 15) in West and Central Mexico. My study of Saint Toribio Romo corridos and continuing research on devotional practices in migrant and transnational communities in the United States extends Young's definition of the Cristero Diaspora (2015) to include recent migrant arrivals. Through their invocation of a Cristero martyr's protection during the transborder journey and participation in performance of Cristero collective memory in corridos, my ongoing research seeks to explore how contemporary migrants form part of the Cristero Diaspora, connecting Cristero experiences of fleeing persecution to contemporary migrant experiences of social injustice.

Concluding Thoughts

My research on contemporary performances of Cristero corridos composed during the Cristero Rebellion and new Cristero corridos inspired by their historical counterparts, including the ballads composed for Mariachi Los Cristeros that express rememory of the Cristero experience during the 1920s, reveal a forgotten history that has been continuously preserved among post-*Cristiada* families with ties to the Cristero heartland. My work contributes to historiographical scholarship on *La Cristiada*, allowing historians to follow the continuity of the Cristero experience and oral history embedded in Cristero corridos that is not found in historical documents. New Cristero corridos exemplify how Cristero collective memory did not end with

its documentation in historical corridos and oral history. Cristero memory is shaped by an ongoing process of reinterpretation, reinvention, and recontextualization by those who were never alive to experience the Cristero Rebellion firsthand. This recontexualtization of Cristero memory transcends the spatial and temporal boundaries within the testimonial lyrical texts of ghost smuggling ballads dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo. In light of increasing migrant testimony and growing devotional practices dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo in both Mexico and the United States, Saint Toribio Romo is no longer a localized Cristero saint from a small town in the highlands of Jalisco, but is now the Holy Coyote and Patron Saint of Immigrants whose ghostly apparition appears to migrants in need in the transborder desert region between Mexico and the United States. Like migrants guided by the miraculous intercessions of the Holy Coyote, Saint Toribio Romo corridos have traversed the physical and imaginary border without apprehension as part of their own musical migrant journey parallel to the migrant transborder pilgrimage and undocumented migrant experience. Within the spaces of social media, ghost smuggling ballads cross boundaries uninhibited, but certainly not undocumented.

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APPENDIX A

New Cristero Corridos Composed for Mariachi Los Cristeros

The following collection of three new Cristero corridos have been compiled through archival collection on social media and virtual ethnography with the group, Mariachi Los Cristeros de Acatíc, based in Acatíc, Jalisco. All three corridos are composed by Idelfonso Moya. All lyrical transcriptions are derived from Mariachi Los Cristeros' digital albums and live performances. Original translations from the Spanish have been conducted by the author.

**Note: All copyright privileges are retained by the respective composer and artists.*

El Corrido de Pioquinto Moya[1]

Composed by Idelfonso Moya
Mariachi Los Cristeros de Acatíc

Cinco de mayo fecha señalada Mil ochocientos noventa y seis Pioquinto Moya nació en Acatíc Tierra de hechiceras, Tierra de placer Contemporáneo de Abraham González, De Gómez Loza y Quirino Navarro Con Luis Anaya y Pioquinto Moya Hicieron la historia en mi tierra de barro Decía Pioquinto con su guitarra Y lo cantaba con amor profundo -Este lugar de mujeres tan lindas -Siempre será el más precioso del mundo	On the fifth of May Eighteen hundred and ninety-six Pioquinto Moya was born in Acatíc The land of enchantment, land of pleasure Contemporary of Abraham González, De Gómez Loza, and Quirino Navarro With Luis Anaya and Pioquinto Moya They made history in my adobe town Pioquinto would say with his guitar He would sing with profound love "In this place of beautiful women, It will always be the most precious in the world."

[1] To view video and audio recording see Mariachi Moya, "MARIACHI MOYA-LOS CRISTEROS-#04 PIOQUINTO MOYA," (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VbkHl5egOQ&t=85s.

Fue fiel soldado de Abraham Gonzalez Con su valor defendieron al pueblo No permitieron que hubiera encuentros Entre Cristeros y del gobierno	He was a faithful soldier of Abraham González With great courage he defended his town He aided in preventing encounters Between Cristeros and the Government
La gente noble de su turullo Han demostrado cariño hacia él Lo han convertido en un hombre ilustre Lo que yo tengo que agradecer	The noble people of his pastures Have shown him such care They've transformed him into an illustrious man And I am so grateful
Compositor de "Quirino Navarro," "08 de agosto," y muchas mas Cantor del templo toda su vida Formo la banda municipal	Composer of "Quirino Navarro," "08 de agosto," and many more A church cantor his entire life He formed the municipal banda
Pioquinto Moya la hizo de actor Por la barranca que es nuestro tesoro Con Anthony Quinn participó Cuando filmó *Siete ciudades de oro* [*voz de narración – Seven Cities of Gold*]	Pioquinto Moya was also an actor And here in our canyon he is our treasure He played along Anthony Quinn When he filmed *Seven Cities of Gold* [*voiceover with English translation of film title*]
Pioquinto Moya murió en Acatíc En el lugar que lo viera nacer En el pueblito de sus amores Ahí una calle de honor para él	Pioquinto Moya died in Acatíc In the place that saw his birth In the little down he so loved There is a street in honor of him
En esta tierra de gente bonita Mes de febrero día veintiséis Pioquinto dejo su tierra En el novecientos setenta y tres	In this land of beautiful people On the twenty-sixth in the month of February Pioquinto left his land In nineteen hundred seventy-three

El Corrido de Miguel Gómez Loza[2]

Composed by Idelfonso Moya
Mariachi Los Cristeros de Acatíc

En el pueblo Paredones Municipio de Acatíc Ahora se llama El Refugio Yo se los quiero decir Nació un hombre muy valiente Como los que ahí por allí	In the town of Paredones [El Refugio Paredones] In the municipality of Acatíc Now it is called El Refugio I want to tell you all A very brave man was born there Just like so many others from there
Once de agosto por cierto La fecha no tiene errores Nació Miguel Gómez Loza En esta tierra de amores Año de mil ochocientos Ochenta y ocho, señores	The eleventh of August for certain This date has no errors Miguel Gómez Loza was born In this beloved region In the year eighteen hundred Eighty-eight, yes sir.
- ¡Viva Cristo Rey! decía - ¡Viva México! también - La Virgen de Guadalupe Que desde el Cielo nos ve Ha de darnos valentía Para defender su fe	"Long Live Christ the King!" he would say. "Long Live Mexico!" too. "The Virgin of Guadalupe, Who from Heaven watches over And will grant us courage To defend her religion."
Fue jefe de los Cristeros Los de la Unión Popular Desherró gordo a Picachos Arandas, Tepatitlán Ahí en la presa de López, Palmitos y en San Julián	He was the leader of the Cristeros And of the Union Popular He freed [unchained] Picachos Arandas, and Tepatitlán There in the prisons of López, Palmitos, and San Julián.
Decía Miguel Gómez Loza - Por nuestra fe hay que morir Decía Anacleto González - Yo tengo confianza en ti. - Por algo eres de Los Altos Y del merito Acatíc.	Miguel Gómez Loza would say, "For our faith, we must die." Anacleto González would say, "I have great faith in you. There is a reason you must be from Los Altos, And from the very center of Acatíc."

[2] To view video and audio recording see Mariachi Moya, "MARIACHI MOYA-LOS CRISTEROS-#01 MIGUEL GOMEZ LOZA," (2013) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtQ6qkF67l0.

- ¡Viva Cristo Rey! decía - ¡Viva México! también - La Virgen de Guadalupe Que desde el Cielo nos ve Ha de darnos valentía Para defender su fe	"Long Live Christ the King!" he would say. "Long Live Mexico!" too. "The Virgin of Guadalupe, Who from Heaven watches over And will grant us courage To defender her religion."
Spoken dialogue/commentary: *Ay mi Capilla de Guadalupe, San Ignacio, San José de Gracia, San Pancho. Saludo desde Acatíc. De Los Cristeros!*	*Spoken dialogue/commentary*: *Oh my Chapel of Guadalupe, San Ignacio, San José de Gracia, San Pancho. Greetings all the way from Acatíc. From Los Cristeros!*
Adiós, Miguel Gómez Loza Valiente como ninguno Ya no estarás con nosostros Ya no andarás por el mundo - Habemus sancto! Lo dijo Ioannes Paulus Segundo	Goodbye, Miguel Gómez Loza Brave like noneother You are not with us anymore You will not roam the earth "Habemus sancto!" said Ionnes Paulus Segundo [John Paul II]
Mil novecientos veintiocho Murió Miguel Gómez Loza Murió el veintiuno de marzo Por la espalda un balazo En el rancho El Lindero En Atotonilco el Alto	Nineteen hundred and twenty-eight Miguel Gómez Loza died He died on the twenty-first of March When a bullet hit his back In the El Lindero ranch In Atotonilco el Alto
Murió Miguel Gómez Loza Solo quiero recordarles Era un veintiuno de marzo Murió por sus ideales Cuando entra la primavera El Día de Benito Juárez	Miguel Gómez Loza died I just wanted to remind you It was on the twenty-first of March He died for his beliefs Just as the spring began On the Day of Benito Juárez

Corrido de un Cristero[3]

Composed by Idelfonso Moya
Mariachi Los Cristeros de Acatíc

Spanish	English
Spoken commentary:	*Spoken commentary:*
-Ahí le va a mi Colima, gente Cristera	*"Here you go, my dear Colima, a Cristero people."*
Señores tengan presente Algo que aquí sucedió En el año veintiséis Inició la Rebelión	Señores, keep present Something that happened here In the year [nineteen] twenty-six The Rebellion began
El gobierno de Plutarco Una orden se giró Cierren toditos los cultos La ley ahora ya cambió	The government of Plutarco [Calles] Gave the order Close all of the churches The law has changed
Coquimatlán, pueblo santo Respetuoso del Creador Preguntaba Mateito -Señor tú da tu opinion	Coquimatlán, holy town Respectful of the Creator Mateito* would ask "Lord, you have your say."
Luego que giró su orden El campesino alistó Sacando las carabinas A Criso Rey defendió	As soon as the order was given The *campesino* got ready He took his rifles And defended Christ the King
Entre muchos campesinos Que desde Coqui partieron Recuerdo a Don Bonifacio Por su ejemplo guerrillero	Of so many *campesinos* That parted from here in Coqui I remember Don Bonifacio For his exemplum of a warrior
Se fue rumbo pa' Colima Donde todos se juntaron Con un grito desde el alma El Federal se ha justiciado	He went toward Colima Where they were all gathered With a cry from the soul The Federal [soldier] justified himself
- ¡Viva Cristo Rey, señores! Gritaba todo ofendido	"Long Live Christ the King, señores!" Shouted all that were offended [by the law]

[3] This corrido is included as part of a 36-minute single digital album recorded by Mariachi Los Cristeros. The track can be found at the 30:50 mark on the video. For the full audio upload, see Mariachi Moya, "DISCO 14 COMPLETO LOS CRISTEROS 2 PARTE COMPLETO DEL MARIACHI MOYA," (2017) YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzTvFPFQDq0.

Disparando tras las cercas [*ininteligente*]	They shot toward the trenches [*unintelligible*]
Dicen que perdió su madre Murieron también sus hijos Sus amigos ya se fueron Como habrá del maleficio	They say that he lost his mother, And that his sons also died His friends left him There must be so much maleficence
Ya con el alma cansada A su pueblo regresó Al verse tan desolado Al Padre Mateo busco	Now with this tired soul He returned to his town In seeing himself desolate He looked for Father Mateo
Con tristeza el escuchaba Del curita la versión -La guerra se ha terminado En la mesa se arregló.	With sadness he listened to The dear curate's version of events "The war has ended. On the mesa, it has been resolved."
Echó mirada pa'el cielo Le preguntaba al Creador -Padre, dime se esto es justo Yo no encuentro la razón.	He looked toward the sky And asked his Creator "Father, tell me if this is just. I don't understand the reason."
En el panteón de mi pueblo Se ve con mucha tristeza Un epitafio borroso De un Cristero que confiesa	In the cemetery in my town You can see with great sadness A blurred epitaph Of a Cristero that confesses
-Yo no supe quien gano o quien perdió la contienda Si alguien busca las razones Espero que sí lo entienda.	"I never found out who won Or who lost the fight. If someone is looking for the reasons why, I hope he understands."
Vuela, vuela palomita Párate en un crucifijo Y explica a todo mi pueblo Esta caramba [*ininteligible*]	Fly, fly little dove. Stand on the crucifix And explain to all of my people This mess [*unintelligible*]
Aquí se acaba llorando Del corrido de un Cristero [*voz -Un Cristero con mucha fe*] Que recorrió pueblo y patria Por tenerle fe a su Creador	Our story ends here in tears The *corrido* of a Cristero [*voiceover "A Cristero with great faith."*] Who roamed town and nation For his faith in his Creator
Señores ya me despido Con el corazón marchito	Señores, I say my farewell With my heavy heart

Los Cristeros no entendieron ¿Ahora yo, cómo lo explico?	The Cristeros did not understand why So how am I to explain it to you?

APPENDIX B

Corridos Dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo

Original Compilation, Lyrical Transcription, and English Translations
by Teresita Lozano

The following eighteen corridos have been compiled through archival research on social media, specifically YouTube. The corridos in this collection are organized by the date they were uploaded to YouTube. There are multiple covers and re-posts not included in this compilation, particularly multiple musical interpretations of "Santo Toribio Romo" (2007) by Los Originales de San Juan, as the lyrical content remains the same.[1] Nearly all of the corridos in this collection are commercially unavailable except through direct communication with the composer or respective YouTube username.* All lyrical transcriptions and original translations from the Spanish have been conducted by Teresita Lozano (the author).

**Note: Many of the following corridos (including their lyrical content) are unpublished or informally published outside of YouTube. All copyright privileges are retained by the respective composer and artists.*

Organization of Appendix B

Title of Corrido

Composer/Performer (if known)
[Username] associated with YouTube post
Date Posted

- Relevant information about composer, performance, and video

Followed by lyrical transcription and translation.

[1] For example, the corrido "Santo Toribio Romo" by Los Originales de San Juan was first released in their album 2007 *Ojala aue la vida me alcance*, but it was not uploaded by the ensemble to the YouTube platform until after 2015, four years after the 2011 fan-based upload to YouTube.

El Corrido del Padre Toribio

Los Cristeros de Arandas
[STMARIADELVALLE]
September 06, 2007

- Video description states performance is "interpreted" by Los Cristeros de Arandas from Arandas, Jalisco. It is unclear whether Los Cristeros de Arandas composed this corrido.
- Audio track with images of Toribio Romo and montage of Cristero photographs.
- Guitar duo (possibly requinto); two voices
- No reenactment or music video footage, just audio.

En novecientos veintiocho Veinticinco de febrero En las sierras de Tequila Otro mártir se fue al cielo	In nineteen hundred twenty-eight The twenty-fifth of February In the highlands of Tequila Another martyr went to the heavens
El sábado en la mañana Antes de que el sol rayara [brillara] Con dos descargas de mate Al Padre Romo mataban	That Saturday in the morning Before the sun shined its rays With two kill shots (discharges) They killed Father Romo
Lo mataron los rurales En 329efensoría malsalva* Cayó en brazos de su hermana Y a Dios le entregó su alma	The rural folk killed him In an act of misguided defense He fell into the arms of his sister And to God commended his soul
And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:	*And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:*
¡Esos malditos rurales! Ya se la habían sentenciado. Es Miércoles de Ceniza, nos lo [inintelligible].	*Those damned rural folks! They had already sentenced themselves. On that Ash Wednesday, they [unintelligible].*
Los rurales de Tequila no tenían nada de menso. Corriones si había peligro. Y bravos con los indefensos.	*The rural folk of Tequila were not at all stupid. Runners if there was danger. And savage with the defenseless.*
¡Ay Nerón! Cuantos bastardos dejaste por donde quiera.	*Oh, Nero! How many bastards have you left throughout this world.*
La gente de la barranca Rancho donde lo mataron Hicieron una camilla Y a Tequila lo llevaron	The people of the ravine On the ranch where he was killed Made a gurney for him And took him to Tequila

Cada de [*inteligible*] roturaron En la plaza de Tequila A la pobre de su hermana Se la llevaron cautiva	Every [unintelligible] took turns In the plaza of Tequila And his poor sister Was taken captive
And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:	*And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:*
Su hermana al despedirse se inco al lado de su hermano. Y con su humilde rebozo, limpió el rostro ensangrentado.	*His sister, in saying farewell, knelt at the side of her brother. And with her humble shawl cleaned his bloodied brow.*
María que cuidó a Toribio durante toda su vida, dio al rostro de su hermano el beso de despedida.	*María, who cared for Toribio all of his life, bestowed on her brother's brow the kiss of farewell.*
Ella compartió con él ilusiones, desconsuelos, sus logros, sus esperanzas, sus desdichas, y desvíos. Y a la hora del martirio, se lo encomendó a los cielos.	*She shared with him her aspirations, her grief, her achievements, her hopes, her misfortunes, and her deviations. And at the hour of his martyrdom, she commended him to the heavens.*
La buena hermana María que apoyó sus actitudes, compartía allá en el cielo el premio de sus virtudes.	*The good sister, María, who supported his acts, will now share in Heaven the reward of her virtues.*
El Padre Romo decía con una fe muy fundada *-Si muero sirviendo a Dios, el morir no cuesta nada.* *El Padrecito Toribio su muerte ya presentía. Mas sabía que si es por Dios, da lo mismo hoy que otro día.*	*Father Romo would say with well-founded faith, "If I die serving God, dying costs me nothing."* *Dear Father Toribio sensed his death. And he knew that if it is for God, he will offer the same today as any other day.*
Cuando el Padre se dio cuento que los andaban buscando, pensó en salvar a su hermano y a Guadalajara enviarlo.	*When the priest realized they were looking for them [his family], he thought of saving his brother by sending him to Guadalajara.*
Toribio dijo a Román cuando se iban a acostar *-Mañana te vas temprano, tan luego de celebrar [misa]a entregar unos papeles que allá te voy a mandar.*	*Toribio told Román when they were about to go to bed, "Tomorrow, you will leave early, as soon as you finish celebrating mass, to deliver these papers that I will give you."*
Locuantes de la salida, y por allí en un rincón, Toribio pidió a Román lo escuchar en confesión.	*They were loquacious at moment of departure, and in a small corner, Toribio asked Román to hear his confession.*

Enseguida el uno al otro se dieron la bendición. Toribio no dio a Román instrucciones muy precisas. *-Toma esta carta y la abres al recibir mis noticias.* *En esa carta el buen Padre se despedía de su gente y le pedía a su familia que no lloraran su muerte.* Ay ranchito de Santa Ana Tu que lo viste nacer No pensaste que en Toribio A un mártir verías crecer Todas las calles de Jalos Que Toribio caminó Deben de estar orgullosas Del hombre que las pisó Capilla de la mesita Donde fue su santa misa Allí está el Padre Toribio Cantando una eterna misa *And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:* *El Padre nos dio un ejemplo que debemos entender. Si por cuidarte la vida no cumples con tu deber, no te excedas en cuidados, o muerto en vida haz de ser.* En novecientos veintiocho Veinticinco de febrero En la sierra de Tequila Otro mártir se fue al cielo	*Side by side, they gave each other their blessing. Toribio did not give Román too specific of instructions, "Take this letter and only open it after receiving my message."* *In that letter, the good priest said goodbye to his people and asked his family not to cry for his death.* Oh, little ranch of Santa Ana You who witnessed his birth Did you not think that in Toribio You would see a martyr brought up All the streets of Jalos That Toribio once walked How proud they must be Of the man that on them once tread The chapel on the mesita** Where his Holy Mass was said Father Toribio is there Singing an eternal Mass. *And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:* *Father Toribio has given us an exemplum we must all understand. If in saving your own life you fail to carry out your mission, do not exceed in caution, or dead during life you will be.* In nineteen hundred eighteen The twenty-fifth of February In the highland of Tequila Another martyr rose to Heaven

Corrido Dedicado a El Santo Toribio Romo

Luis Gutiérrez Valdivia
[Emauri Music]
March 15, 2010

- Description states this upload is a corrido dedicated to Saint Toribio Romo
- Composer listed as Luis Gutierrez Valdivia; Emauri Music Publishing.
- Re-posted by [Fernando Arturo Chavez] on March 6, 2015.
    - Description asks viewers to visit the effigy of Saint Toribio Romo in the San Ignacio de Loyola (Saint Ignatius of Loyola) Parish in Los Angeles, California
- Audio track; video montage of Toribio Romo photographs, Cristeros of Guadalupe emblem with mantra "Sangre de mártires, semillas de nuevos Cristanos" [Blood of martyrs, seeds of new Christians]
- Vocals with mariachi ensemble accompaniment – trumpets, strings, vihuela, guitarrón

<table>
<tr>
<td>Ya son muchos testimonios
Muchos milagros cumplidos
Por Tijuana y Mexicali
Ya son various testigos
El Santo Toribio Romo
Su misión: cruzarlos vivos

Un apodo se ha ganado
Le dicen Santo Pollero
Se escuchan los comentarios
Les ayuda con dinero
Forma de pago que exige:
Lo visiten a su pueblo

Jalostotitlán, Jalisco
Santa Ana de Guadalupe
Es el rancho que en su pueblo
Todos se sienten felices
Del Santo Toribio Romo
Muy fieles a sus raíces

And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:

Murió ofreciendo su sangre, porque así tenía que ser. Agraristas y soldados dispararon en contra de él. Y en los brazos de su hermana grito</td>
<td>There are so many testimonies
So many miracles granted
Near Tijuana and Mexicali
There are several witnesses
Saint Toribio Romo
His mission: to smuggle them alive

He has earned a nickname
They call him Holy Smuggler
You can hear the accounts
He helps them with money
And the only repayment he asks:
To visit him in his hometown

Jalostotitlán, Jalisco
Santa Ana de Guadalupe
Is the ranch where its people
They all feel so happy
About Saint Toribio Romo
So loyal to their roots

And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:

He died offering his blood, because it had to happen that way. Agraristas and soldiers shot at him. And in the arms of his sister, he cried,</td>
</tr>
</table>

- ¡Viva Cristo Rey!	*"Long Live Christ the King!"*
Veinticinco de febreo Año veintiocho corría Lo acribillaron a tiros A su iglesia defendía Ahora defiende ilegales Es su misión de hoy en día	The twenty-fifth of February In the year eighteen They pelted him with bullets He defended his Church And now he protects illegals It is his mission nowadays
Hoy miles de feligreses Le rezan con alegría Y piden por sus familias Que enfrentan la travesía Para que crucen con bien Y puedan volver un día	Now, thousands of congregants Pray to him with joy And plead for their families That face the journey So that they may cross safely And can return again some day
Familias establecidas En los Estados Unidos De regreso pa' sus pueblos Se sienten comprometidos Pasan a ver al Coyote Y se quedan sorprendidos	Families now settled In the United States Back their hometowns They feel obligated to return They pass by to see the Smuggler And they leave in awe
Santa Ana de Guadalupe Pronto te iré a visitar Y al Santo Toribio Romo Quiero ponerle su altar Todo mi agradecimiento Porque me ayudo a cruzar	Santa Ana de Guadalupe Soon I will go visit And Saint Toribio Romo I want to place on his altar All my gratitude Because he helped me cross the Border

Plegaria a Santo Toribio

Trio Amanecer
[Romi Records Inc]
May 27, 2010

- Lyrics attributed to Miguel A. Gonzalez E.
- Seems to be part of Romi Record company who record Banda music in San Juan de Los Lagos and Jalostotitlán area
    - No indication that his is available commercially
- Guitar trio performing in front of "Old Shrine" in Santa Ana de Guadalupe
- Includes dramatic reenactment of Toribio narrative
- Includes brief scenes of dramatic reenactment of migrants avoiding Border Patrol
- Shows footage of Santa Ana de Guadalupe region and the "Old Shrine"

Santo Toribio bendito Ahora te vengo a cantar Hasta tu templo divino A las plantas de tu altar Por los milagros que haces Las gracias te vengo a dar	Blessed Saint Toribio I come now to sing to you All the way to your holy shrine At the foot of your altar For the miracles that you make I have come to give you thanks
-En la mesita* está el cielo Tu le dijiste a tu hermana Ahora que allá te encuentras Para el bien de nuestras almas Santo Toribio bendito Con tu amor dame la calma	"On the mesita* is Heaven," You told your sister And now you are found there For the benefit of our souls Blessed Saint Toribio With your love grant me peace
Allá en Santa Ana, Jalisco Tus restos son venerados Te visita mucha gente De ti no nos olvidamos Santo Toribio bendito Todos las gracias te damos	There in Santa Ana, Jalisco Your remains are venerated So many people visit you We never forget you Blessed Saint Toribio We all give you thanks
Santo Toribio bendito Las gracias te vengo a dar Por el favor que me hiciste Para poderme pasar A los Estados Unidos Cuando anduve de ilegal	Blessed Saint Toribio I have come to give you thanks For the favor that you granted me In order that I may cross To the United States When I was an illegal
Patrón de los ilegales	Patron of Illegals

Así te nombra la gente Donde cruzas las fronteras Sin que nadie pueda verte Santo Toribio bendito En mi yo quiero tenerte Allá en Santa Ana, Jalisco Tus restos son venerados Te visita mucha gente De ti no nos olvidamos Santo Toribio bendito Todos las gracias te damos	That is what they have named you Where you cross the Borderlands Without being seen by anyone Blessed Saint Toribio I wish to have you within me There in Santa Ana, Jalisco Your remains are venerated So many people visit you We never forget you Blessed Saint Toribio We all give you thanks *plateau on a mountain where Toribio's shrine is located

Santo Toribio Romo

Los Cañeros
[PANZON110744]
January 09, 2011

- Performed by (and likely composed by) Los Cañeros.
- Description includes greeting to Capilla de Milpillas, a town southwest of Jalostotitlán.
- Video imagery indicates Single track, "Santo Toribio Romo" from a locally produced CD called *Puros Corridos de Cristeros*, featuring Los Cañeros.
- Not available for commercial purchase. Sold directly from ensemble, Los Cañeros.
- Lyrics and banda arrangements by Benito González Hermosillo

En el nombre sea de Dios Y la Virgen de San Juan Murió un sacerdote joven Nació en Jalostotitlán	In the name of God And of the Virgin of San Juan A young priest died He was born in Jalostititlán
Recuerdo al siervo de Dios Toribio Romo González Que allí en Tequila, Jalisco Lo matan los federales	I remember this servant of God Toribio Romo González Who was there in Tequila, Jalisco Killed by the Federales
Mil novecientos veintiocho Fecha de que murió este mártir Del movimiento Cristero	Nineteen hundred twenty-eight The date that this martyr died During the Cristero movement
Era el General Beltrán Jefe de aquel batallón Ordeno que dispararan Sobre el siervo del Señor	It was General Beltrán Leader of that battalion He ordered that they shoot At the servant of the Lord
Todo aquel pueblo lloraba Rodeando el cuerpo presente Y Malaquías Cuervo* Se burlaba de la gente	All the townspeople cried Surrounding his physical body And Malaquías Cuervo* Mocked those people
Adiós Tequila, Jalisco También Jalostotitlán Recuerden al Padre Romo Cuando estén frente al altar	Goodbye Tequila, Jalisco And also Jalostotitlán Remember Father Toribio When you stand before his Altar
*Governor of Tequila, 1928	*Governor of Tequila, 1928

Santo Toribio [R]ichmond

Fr. Filiberto Barrera
[MCandSCshow]
June 25, 2011

- Description only states that the video was uploaded on an Android phone
- Original composition by Filiberto Barrera, Mexican priest in California
- Final strophe is in English – only Bilingual song in this collection
- Lyrics allude to Toribio Romo's presence/visit to Richmond, CA
- Video is an amateur (non-professional) testimony recording by Father Filiberto Barrera
  - His full name is not included in any of the video's description or comments
  - Upon further research of his name, Fr. Filiberto Barrera is a priest and immigrant rights activist.[2]
- Video of Fr. Filiberto singing and performing on guitar, likely recorded in a narthex or parish hall
- While it is a paraliturgical hymn and not a corrido, its call for immigrant rights activism makes this upload relevant within the compilation of Toribio Romo corridos.

Derrama, Padre Santo Tu gracia sobre mi Sobre este pueblo herido Cansado de vivír Lejos de esta tierra Que nos vio nacer Somos un pueblo herido Movido por Toribio Ayúdanos, Señor A ser fieles migrantes [Al margen] de Toribio Dispuestos a entregarte El corazón, el corazón Gracias Padre Toribio Por tu visita aquí Aquí al pueblo de Richmond Que sigue junto a ti	Pour, Holy Father Your grace over me Over all these wounded people Who are tired of living Away from the land In which they were born We are a wounded people Inspired by Toribio Help us, Lord To be faithful migrants [Alongside] Toribio Willing to offer you Our heart, our heart Thank you, Father Toribio For your visit here Here in the city of Richmond Who goes forth at your side

[2] For more information, see following articles: [Voice staff] (2007) "Richmond parish resilient," *The Catholic Voice (Diocese of Oakland) online edition*. https://www.catholicvoiceoakland.org/2007/07-01-22/inthisissue.htm; Randy Myers (2007) "Richmond church fire saddens parish," *East Bay Times* https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2007/01/07/richmond-church-fire-stuns-saddens-parish/; Karl Fisher (2010) "Sobriety check point near Richmond offends," *East Bay Times*, https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2010/03/30/sobriety-checkpoint-near-church-offends-richmond-priest/.

Los pasos del Maestro Con fe y devoción	In the footsteps of our Teacher With faith and devotion
Somos un pueblo herido Movido por Toribio Ayúdanos, Señor A ser fieles migrantes [Al margen] de Toribio Dispuestos a entregarte El corazón, el corazón	We are a wounded people Inspired by Toribio Help us, Lord To be faithful migrants [Alongside] Toribio Willing to offer you Our heart, our heart
Ayúdanos a crecer En gracia y humildad Dame, Padre Toribio Hoy día tu bendición No olvides acordarte De mí, de mi aflicción	Help us to grow In grace and humility Give me, Father Toribio Your blessing today Do not forget to remember Remember me, remember my affliction
Somos un pueblo herido Movido por Toribio Ayúdanos, Señor A ser fieles migrantes [Al margen] de Toribio Dispuestos a entregarte El corazón, el corazón	We are a wounded people Inspired by Toribio Help us, Lord To be faithful migrants [Alongside] Toribio Willing to offer you Our heart, our heart
Sung in English (with Spanish):	*Sung in English (with Spanish):*
Oh Jesus, our Good Shepherd Impart your *bendición* Upon these Pilgrim people That need your *sanación***	Oh Jesus, our Good Shepherd Impart your [blessing] Upon these Pilgrim people That need your [healing]**
Somos un pueblo herido Movido por Toribio Ayúdanos, Señor A ser fieles migrantes [Al margen] de Toribio Dispuestos a entregarte El corazón, el corazón	We are a wounded people Inspired by Toribio Help us, Lord To be faithful migrants [Alongside] Toribio Willing to offer you Our heart, our heart

Santo Toribio Romo

Los Originales de San Juan[3]
[07ELAPA]
August 31, 2011

- Fan upload of audio track by Los Originales de San Juan
- Single track from (2007) "Santo Toribio Romo" from album, *Ojalá que la vida me alcance*, EMI/Capitol Latin.
- Audio track only with montage of Los Originales de San Juan album photos
- Re-posted by Los Originales de San Juan on their official YouTube channel on January 18, 2015.

Todos temenos un Santo O alguien a quien adorar La Santa Muerte o San Judas O la Virgen de San Juan Malverde o Toribio Romo El Patrón del Ilegal El Padre Toribio Romo Nació y fue muerto en Jalisco Lo matan los agraristas Por ser seguidor de Cristo Desde entonces se aparece Mucha gente ya lo ha visto Por el Río Bravo y Suchiate Por el desierto traicionero Allí los salva de peligro Ese Santo misionero Cuentan que a veces les da Agua, comida y dinero *And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:* *Padre Toribio Romo, te pedimos que intercedas por nosotros. Por Nuestra Virgencita de Guadalupe, la patrona de todos los mexicanos.*	We all have a Saint Or someone to venerate La Santa Muerte or Saint Jude Or the Virgen de San Juan [Jesús] Malverde or Toribio Romo The Patron of Illegals Father Toribio Romo Was born and died in Jalisco The agraristas killed him For being a follower of Christ And since then he appears So many people have seen him Near the Río Bravo [Rio Grande] and [Río] Suchiate Through the treacherous desert There he saved us from danger That missionary Saint They say that sometimes he gives them Water, food, and money *And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:* *Father Toribio Romo, we ask that you intercede for us. For Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of all Mexicans.*

[3] For original discography information see Los Originales de San Juan (2007) "Santo Toribio Romo," *Ojalá que la vida me alcance*.

Ya son miles de ilegales Que lo empiezan a adorar Le piden al Padre Romo Que los ayude a cruzar Fronteras, ríos y desiertos Para su sueño alcanzar Como un ángel o fantasma Se aparece al ilegal Los cuida y hasta los cura Pa' que puedan continuar Y luego desaparece Señal que van a llegar Santa Ana de Guadalupe A diario eres visitado Allí nació el Padre Romo Jalisco es afortunado Le distes un Santo al mundo El Protector del Mojado	There are now thousands of illegals Who have started to adore him They ask Father Romo To help them cross Borders, rivers, and deserts In order to fulfill their dream Like an angel or ghost He appears to the illegal He protects them and even heals them So that they can continue on And then he disappears A sign that they will soon arrive Santa Ana de Guadalupe You are visited each day Father Toribio was born there Jalisco is so fortunate You gave a Saint to the world The Protector of the "Wetback."

Corrido a Santo Toribio

Fuerza Alteña
[Musica de Arranque]
July 01, 2013

- Description specifies: Single track, "El Santo Toribio Romo" from 2013 album, *Sigo Siendo Cabron*; produced by Discos Barajas; Composed and Performed by Fuerza Alteña
    - Discos Barajas international label based in Santa Ana, CA and Sacramento, CA, according to Facebook business page
- Description claims *corrido* track is commercially available on iTunes
    - Commercially available on iTunes, Amazon, and Spotify
    - Released to public on May 01, 2015 – after this video was posted in 2013
- Video opens with dramatic reenactment of migrants crossing the border in an urban setting, alternating with video footage of Fuerza Alteña performance.

<table>
<tr>
<td>Before music begins, actors are seen kissing their scapulars and running across railroad tracks.

Spoken Dialogue:

- Vamonos que, en esta primeramente Dios y Santo Toribio, y la vamos a hacer.

- ¡Aguas! Pasando ese carro, nos vamos a ir. No están esperando.

- ¡Vámonos! ¡Corran!

Actors jump into a passing vehicle.
Scenery switches to live band. The accordion player has a holy card of Santo Toribio attached to his instrument. All Banda members wearing their performance attire.

Virgencita de San Juan
Estoy aquí de rodillas
He venido a despedirme
Y a que otra vez me bendigas
Me voy para el otro lado
Se que jamás nos olvidas

Échame tu bendición</td>
<td>Before music begins, actors are seen kissing their scapulars and running across railroad tracks.

Spoken Dialogue:

"Let's go. If it is God's will and with Saint Toribio, we will make it."

"Watch out! After this car, we will go. They are waiting for us."

"Let's go! Run!"

Actors jump into a passing vehicle.
Scenery switches to live band. The accordion player has a holy card of Santo Toribio attached to his instrument. All Banda members wearing their performance attire.

Dear Virgin of San Juan
I am here on my knees
I have come to say my farewell
And to ask again for your blessing
I am going to the other side
I know you never forget about us

Give me your blessing</td>
</tr>
</table>

Para poder ir tranquilo Mientras regreso te encargo A mis viejitos queridos También mi esposa y mis hijos Me los cuides yo te pido	So that I may travel in peace Until my return I leave in your care My dear parents And also my wife and my children I ask that you protect them
Voy a pasar a Santa Ana Voy a ver a mi patrón Al que me pasa pa' El Norte No importa la situación No hay Migra que me detenga Si llevo tu bendición	I am going to pass through Santa Ana I am going to see my patron saint The one who will smuggle me North No matter the situation There is no Border Patrol who will stop me If I have your blessing with me
Aquí estoy, Santo Toribio Llego a la hora de partir Dime si vienes conmigo O allá me esperas tu a mi Te pago yo adelantado Traigo flores para ti	I am here, Saint Toribio The time has come for me to leave Tell me if you are coming with me Or if you wait for me there [on the Borderlands] I repay you in advance I have brought you flowers
And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:	*And Spoken Dialogue/Commentary:*
Un saludo para toda La Raza de Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. Especialmente para el compa Javier, y vámonos. ¡Primos, oigan!	*A shout-out to all of La Raza [Mexican people] from Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. Especially my friend, Javier, and let's go! Listen, cousins!*
Te pido por los que no Vienen acá a tu capilla Pásalos también, Señor No te cuesta naditita Que viva Santo Toribio Y mi linda Virgencita	I implore you for those who Do not come here to your chapel Please smuggle them, too, Lord It does not cost you a thing Long live Santo Toribio And my beautiful Virgin [de San Juan]
Traigo nudo en la garganta Y roto mi corazón Unos tragos de Tequila Aliviaron mi dolor Que sean de México viejo Y claro de Espolón	I have a lump in my throat And my heart is broken A few shots of Tequila Alleviate my pain May they be from old Mexico And of course Espolón*
Si por cosas del destino Muriera yo en otras tierras Me regresan a Jalisco No me entierren donde quiera	And if destiny bids that I die in other lands Take me back to Jalisco Do not just bury me anywhere

Yo solo descansare En mi tierra Tequilera Adiós mi tierra bendita Adiós San Juan y Santa Ana Voy a tomarme un Tequila A mi pueblo que es Arandas Jalos y mi San Miguel Siempre los llevo en el alma *Lead singer kisses scapular as he finishes final strophe.*	I will only rest in peace In my Tequilera land Goodbye to my holy land Goodbye to San Juan and Santa Ana I am taking a shot of Tequila For my towns of Aranadas Jalos and my San Miguel I always have you present in my soul *Lead singer kisses scapular as he finishes final strophe.* *Brand of Tequila

Al Padre Toribio Romo

Juan Reynoso, "El Zenzontle de Jalisco"
[Juan Reynoso]
January 10, 2014

- Description states, "This is the story of the advocate for all immigrants, for Father Toribio Romo, a treasure of Jalisco…"[4]
    - Description specifies that this corrido is written and performed by Juan Reynoso, "El Zenzontle de Jalisco" (the Mockingbird of Jalisco).
- Video is an amateur (non-professional) testimony recording of Juan Reynoso in his home, offering a musical transborder narrative and thanksgiving to Saint Toribio Romo.
- Juan Reynoso performs both vocals and guitar, typical of traditional *corrido* performance.
- No indication that this corrido is commercially available.

Spoken Commentary before beginning corrido performance: *- En esta canción cuento la historia de un nuevo santito que se encuentra en Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. Para ser más exactos en Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Fue un mártir de la Revolución Cristera y la canción la titule "Al Padre Toribio Romo."*	*Spoken Commentary before beginning corrido performance:* *"In this song, I tell the story of a dear new Saint who one will find in Jalostotitlán, Jalisco. To be more exact, in Santa Ana de Guadalupe. He was a martyr of the Cristero Rebellion, and I have titled the song, 'Al Padre Toribio Romo'."*
Me dispongo a contar una historia De un Santito que su sangre dio Por seguro se encuentra en la gloria Regalado de su Padre Dios Abogado de todo inmigrante Un gran mártir que su vida dio Lleva de nombre Toribio Romo En Santa Ana se le da el honor ¡Viva Cristo Rey! Era su lema Y a escondidas oficiaba misas Un cobarde le jugo traición Y en su cama dormido quedo	I am prepared to tell the story Of a dear Saint who gave his blood For certain he finds himself in the glory Given to him by his Father God Advocate of each immigrant A great martyr who gave his life He bears the name Toribio Romo And in Santa Ana he is honored Long Live Christ the King! Was his motto And he would officiate Mass in hiding A coward betrayed him And in his bed, he stayed sleeping

[4] Translated from the Spanish by Teresita Lozano.

Lo asesinó el gobierno tirano Solo porque no renuncia a Dios Y aperró a la cruz de Jesucristo Una bala su vida quitó Me despido de ti, Padrecito Pido que me des tu bendición Ya me voy para tierras extrañas Con fervor yo te doy mi oración Me despido y te tengo confianza Ojalá tú me hagas el favor Ya me voy a la tierra de Gringos A buscar una vida mejor Cuentan que un día allá por el desierto Una serpiente a un hombre mordió Con la fe que el hombre pido ayuda Santo Toribio lo auxilió* También cuentan que en el otro lado A un señor le presto pa' el camión Cuando vino a pagarle la deuda En Santa Ana lloró de emoción También cuentan que al cruzar el Norte Una madre casi daba luz Sin ayuda y ya desesperada Santo Toribio le dio salud** Ay Jalisco haz de estar orgulloso Jalostotitlán con más razón Dios te ha dado quien cure tus penas Toribio que es Santo de Dios Me despido de ti, Padrecito Y pido que me des tu bendición Ya me voy para tierras extrañas Con fervor yo te doy mi oración Me despido y te tengo confianza Ojalá que me hagas el favor Ya me voy a la tierra de Gringos A buscar una vida mejor	The tyrannical government assassinated him Solely because he would not renounce God And he clutched the cross of Jesus Christ A bullet ended his life I say farewell to you, dear priest I ask that you give me your blessing I leave now to strange lands With fervor I offer you my prayer I say farewell and I trust in you I hope you grant my prayer I now go to the land of the Gringos In search of a better life They say that one day in the desert A snake bit a man With the faith which this man asked for help Saint Toribio saved him* They also tell that on the Other Side He loaned a man money for the bus When he returned to pay his debt In Santa Ana he cried, overcome with emotion They also say that while crossing to the North A mother was at the point of giving birth Helpless and desperate Saint Toribio gave her health** Oh, Jalisco, you must be so proud Jalostotitlán with more reason God has given you someone to cure your ills Toribio, who is a Saint of God I say farewell to you, dear priest I ask that you give me your blessing I leave now to strange lands With fervor I offer you my prayer I say farewell and I trust in you I hope you grant my prayer I now go to the land of the Gringos In search of a better life

*This is a reference to the *corrido,* "El Cascabel" performed by Jessy Rey. Indicates creation of musical dialogue between *corridistas* and testimonies on social media. **This is a reference to the *corrido*, "Nueva Vida" performed by Víctor Cano. Indicates creation of musical dialogue between *corridistas* and testimonies on social media	*This is a reference to the *corrido,* "El Cascabel" performed by Jessy Rey. Indicates creation of musical dialogue between *corridistas* and testimonies on social media. **This is a reference to the *corrido*, "Nueva Vida" performed by Víctor Cano. Indicates creation of musical dialogue between *corridistas* and testimonies on social media

Padre Toribio Romo

Mariachi Jalisco de Miguel Orozco
[Ramon Gonzalez]
September 24, 2015

- Description states this is a "Corrido [to] Padre Toribio Romo" performed by Mariachi Jalisco de Miguel Orozco
    - Indicates that audio was recorded in November 2014, possibly in Santa Ana de Guadalupe
- Video shows amateur/home video footage taken by a passenger riding in a car, driving through Jalostotitlán and Santa Ana
- Audio track of *corrido* playing in the background as video gives tour of the New Shrine, indicating this was likely composed after moving Santo Toribio's relics from the Old Shrine.
- No information about commercial availability
- No indication that this is a single track from an album
- No information on composer, arrangement, or publication

Voy a cantar un corrido No lo dejaré a mañana De un padre muy milagroso Qué se encuentra allá en Santa Ana Toda la gente le pide Para sus males alivio Consuelo de los que sufren El Padrecito Toribio De todo México entero Y del extranjero van Le ayuda con los milagros A la Virgen de San Juan Cuando vayas para el Norte Vete por ese sendero Pídele al Padre Toribio Qué es el Rey de los Polleros Cuando vayas a Jalisco Llévate tu engalana Visita al Padre Toribio Y allí te espera en Santa Ana Su historia tiene marcada	I am going to sing a ballad I will not leave it for tomorrow About a miraculous priest Who can be found there in Santa Ana All people ask him To heal their ills A comfort to those who suffer The dear Father Toribio From all of Mexico And from foreign lands they come He helps La Virgen de San Juan Perform miracles When you travel to the North Follow this path And ask Father Toribio to intercede For he is the King of the Smugglers When you go to Jalisco Bring your offerings Go visit Father Toribio He waits for you in Santa Ana His story is marked

Ya tiene muchos milagros Y allí se encuentran sus restos En mero Santa Ana bajo	He has performed so many miracles And there you will find his remains Right there in lower Santa Ana
Cuando lo canonizaron Fue casi de los primeros El murió por defender La causa de los Cristeros	When they canonized him He was almost one of the firsts He died in order to defend The cause of the Cristeros
Desde San Miguel el Alto La Ciénega y La Corona También vamos a tu templo A llevarte veladoras	All the way from San Miguel el Alto La Ciénega and La Corona [nearby towns] We also go to your Shrine And we bring you votives
Gracias al Padre Toribio Tengo años que ya no tomo Los versos ya le compuse Al Padre Toribio Romo	Thanks to Father Toribio It’s been years since I’ve had a drink And I’ve just composed these verses To Father Toribio Romo

El Cascabel

Jessy Rey
[Mx Tv]
November 25, 2015

- Corrido composed and performed by Jessy Rey.
- Produced as part of testimonial film; expired URL link. Video indicates that film is available for purchase by calling phone number featured in video.
- Solo singer with guitar
- Autobiographical approach. Performer also takes role of narrator in reenactment.
- Includes dramatic re-enactment of corrido narrative's transborder events in the desert, alternating with video footage of Rey performing.
- Singer wearing jeans, leather vest, and bandana
- Desert scenery, filmed in front of a home outdoors

Cuando llegue a la frontera Ya me estaban esperando Venían en una patrulla Policías del otro lado	When I reached the Border They were already waiting for me They came in a patrol car Police from the other side
La chamba que me ofrecieron Era cruzar ilegales Así llegue a aquella banda De polleros federales	The job they offered me Was to smuggle "illegals" That's how I came to this band (group) Of police smugglers (Federales)
Después de quedar de acuerdo Ya casi de madrugada Me encomendaba a mi Santo Que en Santa Ana veneraba	After settling on a plan It was already early morning I entrusted myself to my Saint Who in Santa Ana I venerated
Toribio Romo se llama Todo inmigrante lo ama La chamba era muy fácil De seis a seis los pasaba Dos mil dólares cobraba Y doscientos me tocaba.	He is named Toribio Romo All immigrants love him The job was very easy Six by six I would smuggle through Two thousand dollars I would charge And two hundred I would keep
Pobres de los inmigrantes A veces hasta lloraban [*voz de inmigrante:* ¡Le tuve que dar todo!]	Poor immigrants Sometimes they would even cry [*voice of immigrant:* I had to give him everything]
A mi eso no me importaba La quota la completaba	That was of no importance to me I would complete my quota

Yo ya sabía los caminos Y yo los encaminaba Pero un día quiso el destino Cobrar lo que les robaba Una tarde de verano A un grupo lo despedía Me regrese caminando Sin saber que pasaría [*sonido de cascabel*] El dinero que cobraba En las manos me quemaba Sin darme cuenta en el suelo Que un cascabel me asechaba Me pico en la pantorrilla Inyectándome el veneno Con mi navaja exprimía El ardorito (?) remedio [*gritos; obscura el texto*] El dolor me retorcía Y la fiebre iba subiendo Solo un milagro podría Salvarme de aquel infierno Invoqué a Toribio Romo Con todo mi corazón Le pedí si me salvaba De [caballuesa] labor Ya era muy de madrugada Cuando el frio me despertó Soñé que Toribio Romo Con sus manos me curo Ahora pensó diferente Y me paseo por Tijuana Ayudo a los inmigrantes Los prevengo de aquella banda.	I knew the paths And I would walk them But one day destiny wanted To charge me what I robbed of them One afternoon in the summer I said goodbye to a group And I returned walking Without knowing what would happen [*sound of rattlesnake*] The money that I charged Burned in my hands Unaware that on the ground A rattlesnake stalked me It pierced my calf Injecting me with its venom With my pocketknife I squeezed The stinging remedy [*screams; obscures the lyrics*] The pain caused me to writhe And the fever continued to rise Only a miracle could Save me from this Hell I invoked Toribio Romo With all of my heart I asked him to save me From this intense labor (*compares to field labor*) It was already early morning When the cold woke me I dreamed that Toribio Romo With his hands cured me Now I believe differently And I walk through Tijuana Helping immigrants And warn them of that band

Nueva Vida

Víctor Cano
[Mx Tv]
November 25, 2015

- Performed and composed by Victor Cano, accompanied by unnamed violinist.
- Produced as part of testimonial film; expired URL link. Video indicates that film is available for purchase by calling phone number featured in video.
- Two performers: violin, guitar, voice
- Desert scenery, filmed outdoors
- Includes dramatic reenactment of corrido narrative's transborder events in the desert, alternating with video footage of musicians performing.

<table>
<tr><td>La migra anda merodeando
Por todita la frontera
Anda buscando ilegales
Por aire y por carretera

Por eso lo decidimos
Largarnos por el desierto
Pa' que a nadie la atrapara
Y burlar la vigilancia

Mi esposa iba embarazada,
Pero dijo que aguantaba
Valia la pena arriesgarlo
Seguir el plan acordado

Dentro un grupo de mexicanos
Poco a poco iba avanzando
Pero mi esposa sentía
Los estragos del cansancio.

Caminamos cuatro días
Bajo un sol endemoniado
El grupo ya no se veía
Lejos nos había dejado

Descansamos un momento
Me dijo - ¿Qué voy a hacer?
Siento un dolor en el vientre
Del que ya quiere nacer</td><td>The Border Patrol is roaming
Throughout all of the border region
They are looking for illegals
By air and by highway

This is why we decided
To go through the desert
So that no one would catch us
And to avoid those watching

My wife was pregnant
But she said she could handle it
It was worth the risk
To continue according to plan

Among a group of other Mexicans
Little by little, we advanced
But my wife felt
The extreme effects of exhaustion

We walked for four days
Under a demon sun
The group was no longer visible
They had left us far behind

We rested for a moment
She asked, "What am I going to do?
I feel a pain in my womb
From the one that wants to be born."</td></tr>
</table>

Le dije - ¡Esto no es posible! Si todavía falta un mes Ya no hay nadie que me ayude. ¡El grupo ya se nos fue! -Padre mío allí te la dejo. Con cariño la acosté. Avente nuestra maleta Lueguito me heche a correr El grupo iba muy lejos Hasta que los alcanze Les conté lo que pasaba Y con ellos regrese Mi esposa estaba tranquila Abrazando a su bebé Me dijo - Me quede dormida Fue un milagro, eso lo sé. - Sentí su mano en mi frente Y una paz desconocida Con sus manos me curaba Y nos salvaba la vida. - A mi me dijo su nombre Escrito en mi corazón Se llama Toribio Romo Dijo es él siervo de Dios. En Jalostotitlán, Jalisco A Santa Ana una vez fuí Me hallé a ese Santo Toribio En la mesita lo vi. Todos nos arrodillamos Dándole gracias a Dios Llegaré un día a tu Santuario Y allí me arrodillaré.	I told her, "This is not possible!" "You still have one month to go. There is no one else left here to help me. The rest of the group has already left." "My Father, I leave her in your care." I laid her down with care I tossed our suitcase And immediately started running. The group was much too far ahead Until I reached them I told them what had happened And with them I returned My wife was calm Embracing her baby She told me, "I fell asleep. It was a miracle. That I know." "I felt his hand on my forehead And I felt a peace I have never known With his hands he healed me And saved our lives." "He told me his name Written on my heart His name is Toribio Romo He said he was the servant of God." In Jalostotitlán, Jalisco To Santa Ana I traveled once before I encountered this Santo Toribio I saw him on the mesita* We all knelt Giving thanks to God I will return one day to your Shrine And there I will kneel. *plateau on a mountain where Toribio's shrine is located

Padre Toribio Romo

Chuy Márquez
[Mx Tv]
November 25, 2015

- Composed and performed by Chuy Márquez and unnamed string players.
- Produced as part of testimonial film; expired URL link. Video indicates that film is available for purchase by calling phone number featured in video.
- Two guitars; one fiddle. Musicians dressed in vaquero-style with hats.
- Filmed outside of adobe home (likely near Toribio Romo's childhood home)
- Shows video footage of Toribio Romo; footage of "Old" Shrine, alternating with video footage of musicians performing.

Para escribir estos versos No hallo ni cuándo ni donde Voy a narrar los sucesos Del Padre Toribio Romo Su fecha de nacimiento Aquí la voy a decir Fue el año mil novecientos El día dieciséis de abril Santa Ana de Guadalupe Un lugar muy concurrido Tierra que vio nacer Al Santo Padre Toribio El veintitrés de diciembre Del mil nueve veintidós Fue ordenado sacerdote Por la voluntad de Dios Anduvo en varios lugares Catequizando a los niños Allí en Sayula y por Tuxpan En Yahualica y Cuquío Luego en Tequila, Jalisco El siguió catequizando Pero la hora de su muerte Ya se le estaba llegando	In order write these verses I do not even know where to start I am going to narrate the events Of Father Toribio Romo His date of birth Here I will tell you Was in the year nineteen hundred The sixteenth day of April Santa Ana de Guadalupe A very busy crowded place The land that witnessed the birth Of Saint Toribio Romo The twenty-third of December Of nineteen hundred twenty-two He was ordained a priest By the will of God He traveled to many regions Catechizing the children There in Sayula and around Tuxpan In Yahualica and Cuquío Then in Tequila, Jalisco He continued catechizing But the hour of his death Was soon approaching

Mil novecientos veintiocho Veinticinco de febrero Llegaron los federales Dormido lo sorprendieron	Nineteen hundred-eighteen Twenty-fifth of February The Federales arrived They surprised him in his sleep
[*voz de federales:* ¡Sí es el cura!]	[*voices of Federales:* Yes, it's the priest!]
Grita – [*inintelegible]* Pedro M— (?) Un agrarista Iscariote -Mantenlo que ese es el cura. Así entrego al sacerdote	He shouts, "[*unintelligible]* Pedro M— (?)" An Iscariot* agrarista "Hold him down because he is the priest." And as such turned the priest in.
[*voz de Padre Toribio:* Si soy. ¡No me maten!]	[*voice of Father Toribio:* Yes, I am. Please do not kill me!]
[*voz de agrarista/federal:* ¡Muere, cura!]	[*voice of agrarista/Federal:* Die, priest!]
Despierta el Padre Toribio Él dice sobresaltado -Sí soy, pero no me maten. Al punto de disparar	Father Toribio awakens Startled he told them "Yes, I am, but do not kill me." Just as shots were fired.
[*sonido de dispara*]	[*sound of gunshots*]
Ahí en brazos de su hermana Qué dice con mucha fé -Ánimo Padre Toribio. Y - ¡Que Viva Cristo Rey!	There in the arms of his sister Who said with great faith, "Stay strong, Father Toribio." And "Long Live Christ the King!"
El día veintiuno de mayo Del año dos mil pasado Junto con el Padre Esqueda En Roma canonizado	The twenty-first day of May Of the past year of two thousand Alongside Father Esqueda In Rome he was canonized
Aquí termina la historia Compuesta con mucho amor Que el Padre fiel Toribio Nos eche su bendición	Here our story ends Composed with so much love May faithful Father Toribio Send down his blessing on us
	*Referring to Judas Iscariot; traitor

Santo Toribio Romo

Dueto Belen
[Mx Tv]
November 25, 2015

- Composed and performed by Dueto Belen, a father and young son duo; singers with synthesized accompaniment
- Produced as part of testimonial film; expired URL link. Video indicates that film is available for purchase by calling phone number featured in video.
- Audio track re-posted by [TierraCalienteTV] on October 19, 2016 with full final strophe. (Last strophe is cut out in the original upload).
- Filmed in desert scenery meant to depict transborder region.
- Shows footage of Santa Ana de Guadalupe region and the "Old Shrine."
- Includes dramatic reenactment of corrido narrative's transborder events in the desert. (with Dueto Belen featured as protagonists), alternating with video footage of Dueto Belen performing.

Para empezar a cantar Pido permiso primero Para cantarle unos versos A un Santo que tanto quiero En Santa Ana, Jalisco Vecino de San Miguel Verán al Padre Toribio Si lo quieren conocer Muchas personas de lejos Lo han venido a conocer Otras no ocupan venir Por las fronteras lo ven Por las fronteras ingratas El Santo se ha aparecido De ver tantas injusticias De malientes y bandidos Donde más lo necesitan Un jovencito aparece Cuidándolos de peligro Salvándolos de la muerte A otros pobre mexicanos	In order to start singing I ask your permission To sing a few verses To a Saint who I love dearly In Santa Ana, Jalisco Neighbor to San Miguel You all will see Father Toribio If you really want to know him Many people from far away Have come here to meet him Others cannot make the journey They meet him along the borderlands Along the merciless Borderlands The Saint has appeared Upon seeing so many injustices Of malevolents and bandits Wherever he is needed the most A young man appears Protecting you all from danger And saving you all from death He has done so for other poor Mexicans

Y otras tierras también Al norte nos ha pasado Sin conocer a la ley Mi Santo Toribio Romo Te encargo mucho a mi madre A mi esposa y a mis hijos Que nada malo les pase También quiero agradecerte De que me hayas ayudado A componerte estos versos Que para ti estoy cantando Si a alguien le falta un detalle De lo que yo estoy cantando Vaya a Santa Ana, Jalisco Donde — [*CORRIDO CUTS OFF*] Donde se encuentra este Santo* **Final verse can be found in re-upload of audio track by TierraCalienteMx:*	And in other lands as well Northward he has helped us cross Without knowing the [immigration] law My Saint Toribio Romo I leave my mother in your care And also my wife and children So that nothing bad will happen to them I would also like to express my gratitude For having helped me Compose for you these verses That I am singing to you now If any of you feel any detail is lacking From what I am singing to you now Go then to Santa Ana, Jalisco Where — [*CORRIDO CUTS OFF*] Where you will find this Saint* **Final verse can be found in re-upload of audio track by TierraCalienteMx:*

Toribio y Quica

Dueto Belen
[Mx Tv]
November 25, 2015

- Composed and performed by Dueto Belen, a father and young son duo; singers with synthesized accompaniment
- Produced as part of testimonial film; expired URL link. Video indicates that film is available for purchase by calling phone number featured in video.
- Dueto Belen sings in front of "Old Shrine" and surrounding Santa Ana Cristero monuments
- Filmed in desert scenery meant to depict transborder region.
- Shows footage of Santa Ana de Guadalupe region and the "Old Shrine." Also includes dramatic reenactment of Toribio's martyrdom.
- Video incorporates archival photographs and video tour of "Old Shrine."
- Title refers to Toribio and his sister, María, also known as Quica
- Lyrics indicate that Toribio's shrine is small, likely indicating that only the Old Shrine had been built when this corrido was first composed and performed.

Cuando Toribio era niño Su pensamiento era grande También no se imaginaba Que alguna vez fuera Padre Tampoco que fuera Santo De los que fueran inmigrantes Cuando Toribio era niño Le dijo así a su hermana - En el cerrito está el cielo - Arriba de la mesita* Parece que vio a Diosito También a la Virgencita Con una tierna mirada Los dos veían la mesita No estaba tan retirada Pero era muy de subida Y como estaban chiquillos Le temían a la barita De niño empezó a estudiar Y muy pronto se ordenó El obispo que mandaba A predicar lo mando	When Toribio was a child His aspirations were big But he never imagined That one day he would be a priest Nor imagined he would be a Saint Of all who became immigrants When Toribio was a child He told his sister, "There on the clifftop is Heaven Right above the mesita."* It seems he saw God there As well as the dear Virgin With a tender look They both looked at the mesita It was not too far away But the incline was steep And since they were little children They were afraid of the rocks As a boy he began his studies And soon he was ordained a priest The bishop in charge Send him to preach

Allá en Tequila, Jalisco Mucha gente confesó En una choza muy pobre El Padre y Quica vivían Bautizaba y celebraba Pero todo era a escondidas Si lo encontraba el gobierno Mas pronto lo matarían La guerra andaba muy fuerte En Los Altos de Jalisco A muchos padres mataron Después al Padre Toribio Una triste madrugada Allí lo mataron dormido En su querida mesita* Ahorita está descansando Su templecito es chiquito Allí muy grande es el santo Millones de peregrinos Sus milagros van pagando *plateau on a mountain where Toribio's shrine is located	There in Tequila, Jalisco He gave confession to many people In a poor hut He and Quica lived He baptized and celebrated [Mass] But he did it all in hiding If the government found him They would no sooner kill him The war was quite strong In Los Altos de Jalisco They killed so many priests And then they killed Father Toribio One tragic early morning They killed him as he slept In his beloved mesita* He is now resting His sanctuary is small But the Saint there is great Milliones of pilgrims Come to repay his miracles *plateau on a mountain where Toribio's shrine is located

Santo Toribio (Mañanitas a Santo Toribio)

Chuy Márquez
[Tierra Caliente Tv]
October 31, 2016

- Composed and performed by Chuy Márquez, who also composed and performed "Padre Toribio Romo," uploaded November 2015.
- Audio track with no video or footage; Background image shows photo of Toribio Romo and a photo of the altar inside the "Old Shrine"
- "Mañanitas" implies this is a paraliturgical devotion to Santo Toribio on his Feast Day
- No indication that this corrido is commercially available, other than directly from composer or possibly from Romi Music Publishing (based on tags within the video).

Santo Toribio es mi guía Cuando voy al otro lado Siempre traigo una oración Por eso me voy confiado	Saint Toribio is my guide When I travel to the Other Side I always recite a prayer And that is why I go forth with trust
Siempre llego a trabajar Y gano mi buen dinero Para mandarle a mis hijos Y a la mujer que más quiero	I always make it to work And I earn good money To send to my children And to the woman who I love most
Cuando vengo de regreso Siempre paso por Santa Ana A visitar en su iglesia Como en el fin de semana	When I make my way back I always stop by Santa Ana To visit him in his church Just like you would on a weekend [Sunday]
Santo Toribio es mi guía Cuando voy al extranjero Cada año vengo a dar gracias Por cuidar lo que más quiero	Saint Toribio is my guide When I journey to foreign land Each year I return to give thanks For his protecting what I hold most dear
Yo le doy gracias a Dios También a Santo Toribio Y al Ángel de mi Guarda Porque siempre va conmigo	I give thanks to God And also to Saint Toribio And to my Guardian Angel Because they always accompany me
Cuando vengo de regreso Siempre paso por Santa Ana A visitar en su iglesia Como en el fin de semana	When I make my way back I always stop by Santa Ana To visit him in his church Just like you would on a weekend [Sunday]

Testimonio a Santo Toribio

Roberto H. Reyes
[Tierra Caliente]
November 17, 2016

- Video description states composer and performer is Roberto H. Reyes.
- Audio track with no footage or video, only background photo of Saint Toribio Romo.
- Banda accompaniment; bass, guitar, violin
- Video imagery includes photograph of CD album cover with list of other Cristero-themed songs by Robert H. Reyes. Album title is listed as “Recordando a Dos Mártires” (Remembering Two Martyrs).
- Despite publication information listed on image of CD cover included in video, no indication that this corrido is commercially available other than directly from Reyes or possibly from Romi Records Publishing (based on tags in video).

Anduve buscando a un hombre Para las gracias poderle dar Anduve por mucho tiempo Y en este templo yo lo vine a hallar	I was looking for a man In order to thank him I was looking for a long time And in this church, I finally found him
Un día cruzaba el desierto Y entre aquel campo sólo quedé De pronto perdí las fuerzas Por el calor y me desmayé	One day I was crossing the [Borderlands] desert And when I entered that area, I was left alone All of a sudden, I lost all my strength Due to the heat and then I fainted
No supe si fueron horas O tal vez días las que pasé Solo recuerdo ese rostro Y su mirada llena de fe	I did not know if hours passed Or if possibly days had passed All I remember is his face And his expression, filled with faith
Me levantó con su mano Y la cabeza me acarició Me dijo -Sigue el camino -Ya mero llegas. Anda con Dios	He lifted me up with his hand And caressed my head He told me, “Follow the path, You are almost there, go with God.”
En Dios yo nunca pensaba Desde ese día yo me acerqué Siempre buscando a ese hombre Entre la gente nunca lo hallé	I never thought about God Since that day I grew nearer Always looking for that man Among the crowd, never finding him
Cuando regresé a mi casa A mis viejitos les platiqué	When I returned to my house I told my dear parents the story

Entre llantos me dijeron -Por ti rezamos todos con fe	And as they cried, they told me "For you we all prayed with faith."
Me invitaron a Santa Ana Muy de mañana me levanté Llegamos a ese pueblito Rayado en solazo, al templo entre	They invited me to Santa Ana Early in the morning I arose We reached the small town The sun's rays shining, I entered the church
Cuando vi al Santo Toribio De mis viejitos yo me agarré El llanto cubrió mis ojos Y entre sollozos, les dije -Ése es.	When I saw Saint Toribio I grabbed hold of my dear parents My eyes welled up with tears And in between sobs, I told them, "That's him."
Él fue el quien salvo mi vida Y en Dios bendito yo me acerqué Por todas las oraciones De mis viejitos con mucha fe	He was the one who saved my life And to God I grew near Because of all the prayers Of my dear faithful parents

Homenaje a Santo Toribio

Roberto H. Reyes
[Tierra Caliente Tv]
January 09, 2017

- Video description states composer and performer is Roberto H. Reyes.
- Audio track with no footage or video, only background photo of Saint Toribio Romo.
- Banda accompaniment; bass, guitar, violin
- Video imagery includes photograph of CD album cover with list of other Cristero-themed songs by Robert H. Reyes. Album title is listed as “Recordando a Dos Martires” (Remembering Two Martyrs). This is the same image included on video to Roberto H. Reyes’s “Testimonio a Santo Toribio” and “Santo Toribio Bendito.”
- Despite publication information listed on image of CD cover included in video, no indication that this corrido is commercially available other than directly from Reyes or possibly from Romi Records Publishing (based on tags in video).

Me vine pa’ el Norte, no tengo papeles Pedí el pasaporte que no me quisieron dar Solo mi estampita y una medallita Del Santo Toribio, el me ayuda a entrar	I came to the North, I don’t have any papers I asked for a passport they refused to give me Just my holy card and my medallion Of Saint Toribio, he will help me enter
Crucé a la frontera sin ver a la Migra Durante el camino un rosario recé Pidiendo por todos los que van al Norte Mi madre me dijo, -Pídele con fe.	I crossed the Border without seeing the Border Patrol During the journey I prayed the rosary Asking for all those who travel North My mother had told me, “Ask him with faith.”
No soy el primero, de eso estoy seguro Ya a muchos paisanos los ha protegido Vayan a Santa Ana a ver testimonios De muchos milagros de Santo Toribio	I am not the first, I am certain of that Now there are many who he has protected Go to Santa Ana to see the testimonies Of so many miracles by Saint Toribio
Crucé a la frontera sin ver a la Migra Durante el camino un rosario recé Pidiendo por todos los que van al Norte Mi madre me dijo, -Pídele con fe.	I crossed the Border without seeing the Border Patrol During the journey I prayed the rosary Asking for all those who travel North My mother had told me, “Ask him with faith.”
No soy el primero, de eso estoy seguro Ya a muchos paisanos los ha protegido Vayan a Santa Ana a ver testimonios De muchos milagros de Santo Toribio	I am not the first, I am certain of that Now there are many who he has protected Go to Santa Ana to see the testimonies Of so many miracles by Saint Toribio

Santo Toribio Bendito

Roberto H. Reyes
[Roberto H. Reyes]
January 09, 2017

- Video description states composer and performer is Roberto H. Reyes.
- Audio track with no footage or video, only background photo of Saint Toribio Romo.
- Banda accompaniment; bass, guitar, violin
- Video imagery includes photograph of CD album cover with list of other Cristero-themed songs by Robert H. Reyes. Album title is listed as “Recordando a Dos Martires” (Remembering Two Martyrs). This is the same image included on video to Roberto H. Reyes’s “Testimonio a Santo Toribio” and “Santo Toribio Bendito.”
- Despite publication information listed on image of CD cover included in video, no indication that this corrido is commercially available other than directly from Reyes or possibly from Romi Records Publishing (based on tags in video).

Allá en Santa Ana, Jalisco Tenemos a un Santo que es muy milagroso Y en poquito tiempo, se halla concurrido Se ha visto grandioso Muchos llegan a Santa Ana A darle las gracias a Santo Toribio Vemos a todas edades Y pobres y ricos que van a rezarle Santo Toribio bendito Te llevo en mi pecho y en mis oraciones Porque eres muy milagroso Tues fieles te traen en sus corazones Muchos llegan a Santa Ana A darle las gracias a Santo Toribio Se ven de todas edades Y pobres y ricos que van a rezarle Santo Toribio bendito Te llevo en mi pecho y en mis oraciones Porque eres muy milagroso Tues fieles te traen en sus corazones	Over there in Santa Ana, Jalisco We have a Saint who is truly miraculous And in such little time is now so crowded It has looked so grand So many come to Santa Ana To give thanks to Saint Toribio We see all ages And the poor and the rich who go to pray to him Blessed Saint Toribio I hold you in my heart and in my prayers Because you are truly miraculous Your faithful devotees have you in their hearts So many come to Santa Ana To give thanks to Saint Toribio We see all ages And the poor and the rich who go to pray to him Blessed Saint Toribio I hold you in my heart and in my prayers Because you are truly miraculous Your faithful devotees have you in their hearts