

1.1 Basic Sentences

ENGLISH

Good morning. [Good days.]
Good morning, sir. [Good days, mister.]
Good afternoon, ma'am. [Good days, Mrs.]
Good evening [good nights], miss.

how
are (to be)
you

How are you?

well
and

Fine, thanks. How are you?
[I'm well, thanks, and you?]

very

Very well, thanks.

hi
what's up

Hi! What's up? [What such?]

(it) goes (to go)
to you (it) goes

How's it going with you?

Fine, thanks.

with
the permission

ESPAÑOL

Buenos días.
Buenos días, señor.
Buenas tardes, señora.
Buenas noches, señorita.

cómo
está (estar)
usted

¿Cómo está usted?

bien
y

Estoy bien gracias, ¿y usted?

muy

Muy bien gracias.

hola
qué tal

¡Hola! ¿Qué tal? ⁽¹⁾

va (ir)
le va

¿Cómo le va?

Bien, gracias.

con
el permiso

Excuse me. [With (your) permission.]

no, not

Certainly. [How not?]

excuse (to excuse)

Excuse me.

it (I) regret (to regret, feel)

much, lots, too much

I'm very sorry. [I regret it much.]

That's O.K. [It's well.]

many (feminine)

Thanks a lot. [Many thanks.]

of, from

nothing

You're welcome. [Of (for) nothing.]

there is, there are (there to be)

Don't give it a thought.

[There's no (reason) for it.]

(I) want (to want)

to present, introduce

to present to you

to

the (masculine singular)

to the

I'd like [I want] to introduce you to [the] Mr. Molina.

the (feminine, singular)

I'd like [I want] to introduce you to [the]

Mrs. [of] Molina.

the pleasure

Glad to meet you. [Much pleasure.]

equally (equal)

Likewise [equally], thanks.

enchanted (to enchant)

to meet, to get acquainted, to know

to meet you (feminine)

Delighted [enchanted] to meet you(fem).

to meet [to get to know] you (masculine)

Glad [much pleasure] to meet you.

Con permiso. ⁽²⁾

no

Cómo no.

dispense (dispensar)

Dispéñeme. ⁽³⁾

lo siento (sentir)

mucho

Lo siento mucho.

Está bien.

muchas ⁽⁴⁾

Muchas gracias.

de

nada

De nada.

hay (haber)

No hay de qué. ⁽⁵⁾

quiero (querer)

presentar

presentarle

a

el

al (a + el)

Quiero presentarle al señor Molina. ⁽⁶⁾

la

Quiero presentarle a la señora

[de] ⁽⁷⁾ Molina.

el gusto

Mucho gusto.

igualmente (igual)

Igualmente, gracias.

encantado (encantar)

conocer

conocerla

Encantado(a) de conocerla(lo). ⁽⁸⁾

conocerlo

Mucho gusto de conocerlo(la). ⁽⁸⁾



Goodbye.

until
tomorrow

See you tomorrow. [Until tomorrow.]

luego

So long. [Until later.]

Adiós.

hasta
mañana

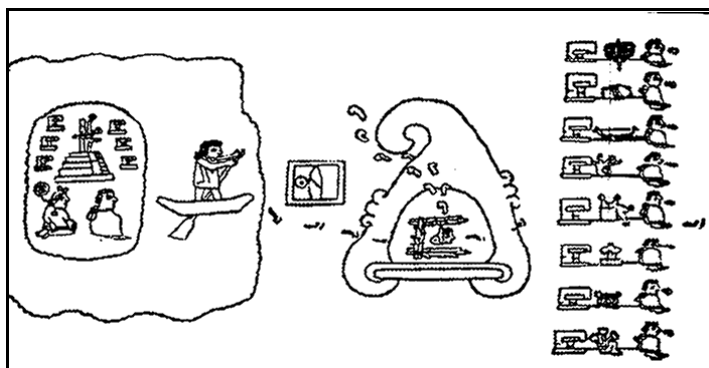
Hasta mañana.

then, later

Hasta luego.

1.10 Notes on Basic Sentences.

- (1) ¡Hola! ¿Qué tal? is a greeting usually used among friends or colleagues, and connotes more than casual acquaintance and social and economic equality. Be careful.
- (2) *Con permiso* is used to excuse yourself when, for example, you are on an elevator and need to squeeze by others who are in front of you in order to get out. It is also used when you want to excuse yourself from a group, or from the table. It is considered very rude in Latin America not to use *con permiso* in these kinds of situations.
- (3) *Dispénsame* is used as an apology for a minor breach of etiquette, to interrupt a conversation to ask a question, etc. *Perdóneme* is similarly used, but can also be used for apologizing in more serious situations. Be careful of the distinction between *dispénsame/perdóneme* and *con permiso*.
- (4) Note that *muchas* "many" is simply the feminine plural of the word *mucho* "much" that you also met in the phrase *mucho gusto*. The "s" is the plural part, while the "a" before the "s" is the feminine marker.
- (5) Use *no hay de qué* when the other person thanks you for some small favor. It is about the same as *de nada*.
- (6) There is a Spanish word *introducir*, which to English speakers appears to be a perfect cognate for "introduce". It is, however, a good example of a "false cognate" (called *falsos amigos* in Spanish). It means "introduce", but only in the sense of "to insert", i.e., "introduce the screw into the hole". Being aware of false cognates is one of the most important things you can do to avoid embarrassment in speaking Spanish.
- (7) Notice the [de] in *señora [de] Molina*. It's in brackets because it is optional. It varies from place to place, from person to person—and even the same woman might use either one in different circumstances (some consider [de] to be a bit more formal. On the audio it's *señora de Molina*.
- (8) *Encantado de conocerla* should be used only if you are a man being introduced to a woman, and has faintly flirtish overtones in the opinion of some. The form *Encantada de conocerlo* [woman to man] does exist and is used; *Encantado de conocerlo* [man to man] is also grammatically correct, but would be used only in certain circumstances. While there are other forms, if you are a woman use *mucho gusto* for the time being with both sexes, as should a man being introduced to another man.



Departure of the Aztecs from their mythical homeland, Aztatlán, sometimes spelled Aztlán. While little is known about Aztatlán, or even whether any such specific place ever existed, some scholars have placed it in what is now northwestern Mexico, or even in the U.S. southwest.



1.2 PRONUNCIATION DRILLS

1.21 Vowel contrasts in weak-stressed syllables

Perhaps the biggest difference between Spanish and English is the pronunciation of vowels in words of more than one syllable. In English, only the stressed vowel (the one that is pronounced louder) is usually fully pronounced, the rest become indistinguishable vowel sounds which sound alike. In Spanish, all the vowels retain their pronunciation, even those that do not have the principal stress in the word.

In pronouncing the words in the basic sentences, you may have had difficulties with some of the vowels in the words and phrases below. [For clarity, we have marked the “strong-stressed” vowel with [◌], which it sometimes is, but most often isn’t, in written Spanish depending on pronunciation and spelling conventions. All of the other vowels are “weak-stressed”.]

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 bué <u>no</u> s días | 2 se <u>ño</u> r | 3 bué <u>na</u> s tá <u>rde</u> s | 4 se <u>ño</u> ra |
| 5 bué <u>na</u> s tá <u>rde</u> s | 6 gr <u>á</u> cias | 7 disp <u>é</u> nteme | 8 mú <u>ch</u> as gr <u>á</u> cias |
| 9 present <u>á</u> rl <u>e</u> | 10 Mol <u>í</u> na | 11 há <u>st</u> a ma <u>ñ</u> ána | 12 há <u>st</u> a lu <u>é</u> go |

It is perfectly normal for you to have trouble with these vowels because *they are all under weak stress* in positions where *vowels pronounced this way do not occur* in English.

While it is normal to make mistakes with these vowels at first, but *it is a very serious error* which must be corrected early in your efforts to form Spanish habits of pronunciation. The following lists are for the purpose of helping you to master these vowels under weak stress. They are arranged in pairs of words, so that the only difference between the members of each pair is the pronunciation of one weak-stressed vowel.

If you have an instructor, practice repeating after her until you can make the contrast easily. If you are working on your own with the Platiquemos materials, practice with the audio until you feel confident that you are distinguishing the vowel sounds in pronunciation. If possible, it would be useful to get help from a native speaker with the exercises in Units 1 and 2, which focus on pronunciation. Note that in the word lists in this Unit and Unit 2, the placement of accent (or stress) marks [◌] over some vowels may appear random to you. They’re not; they follow pronunciation conventions which will become clear to you as you progress in learning Spanish.

Please note that these word lists are for pronunciation only, they’re not for building vocabulary. Some are verb forms that you’ll be learning later, some are very rare and uncommonly used words, and a few aren’t words at all. Pronunciation is so important in learning a language, though, that work with them now will pay big dividends as you progress in learning Spanish.

1.21.1 Vowel Contrast

1.21.11 a in contrast with e, i, o, and u

seda	ceda	palón	pelón
sapa	sape	fatal	fetal
lota	lote	tañir	teñir
mesas	meses	papito	pepito
bocha	boche	dadito	dedito
tinta	tinte	escupa	escupe
chinchá	chinche	soqueta	soquete
corta	corte	alumbra	alumbre
sobras	sobres	francesas	franceses
basar	besar	cantoras	cantores
manar	menar	barreta	berreta
machón	mechón	señoras	señores
tachar	techar	pastoras	pastores
tachón	techón	mercado	mercado
panal	penal	apagar	apegar
tajón	tejón	portuguesas	portugueses
libar	libar	pañal	piñal
patón	pitón	masita	misita
nadar	nidar	latera	litera
matad	mitad	salero	silero
charlar	chirlar	paquete	piquete
panzón	pinzón	fajarón	fijaron
pasando	pisando	mallador	mallidor
ara	aro	Cuba	cubo
tía	tío	coca	coco
sera	zero	cara	caro
pesa	peso	para	paro
pasa	paso	China	chino
mala	malo	canta	canto
malla	mallo	zorra	zorro
bola	bolo	santa	santo
derecha	derecho	suegra	suegro
cigarra	cigarro	negra	negro
María	moría	palma	palmo
zapata	zapato	pasta	pasto
hermana	hermano	trompa	trompo
mimosa	mimoso	rema	remo
pareja	parejo	cobra	cobro
marea	mareo	nieta	nieto
ternera	ternero	india	indio

cereza	cerezo	calor	color
llamada	llamado	esposa	esposo
lacónica	lacónico		
pajar	pujar	lanero	lunero
tarón	turón	Caracas	curacas
sabido	subido	barrita	burrita
papita	pupita	parguita	purguita
malaso	mulaso	cañado	cuñado
canita	cunita	marciano	murciano
lanita	lunita	palidez	pulidez
malita	mulita	matador	mutador

1.21.12 e in contrast with *i, o* and *u*

penar	pinar	pesado	pisado
petón	pitón	perita	pirita
pelón	pilón	pesada	pisada
telón	tilón	pesaron	pisaron
remar	rimar	mellar	millar
mesera	misera	peñita	piñita
pase	paso	pepe	pepo
tome	tomo	tire	tiro
fume	fumo	cabe	cabo
vine	vino	vive	vivo
leche	lecho	lección	loción
traje	trajo	mesita	mosita
deje	dejo	belita	bolita
teje	tejo	betado	botado
quiere	quiero	pesada	posada
peine	peino	hermita	hormita
cobre	cobro	guerrita	gorrita
cante	canto	conteste	contesto
lleve	llevo	ternero	tornero
mande	mando	cerrito	zorrito
cambie	cambio	conforme	conformo
compre	compro	eclipse	eclipso
pelar	polar	trabaje	trabajo
mentón	montón	preposición	proposición
temor	tumor	cerrar	surrar
legar	lugar	lechón	luchón
lechar	luchar	festín	fustín
sección	succión	pensado	punsado
pensión	punsión	tendero	tundero



mesita	musita	pechero	puchero
lelito	lulito	perita	purita
cercado	surcado	retina	rutina
terquito	turquito	anhelar	anular

1.21.13 *i* in contrast with *o* and *u*

timo	tomo	mirada	morada
figón	fogón	piquito	poquito
lisar	losar	pisada	posada
mirar	morar	tirito	torito
misión	moción	hijito	ojito
trincar	troncar	imito	omito
millar	mollar	tintísimo	tontísimo
ligar	lugar	mirar	murar
mirón	murón	piñón	puñón
billar	bullar	minita	munita
pinzón	punzón	chinchero	chunchero
pintar	puntar	nidoso	nudoso
fisión	fusión	pidiendo	pudiendo
fungir	fungir	rimita	rumita
misita	musita	mirajes	murajes
imito	humito	pintada	puntada
milita	mulita	riquita	ruquita
linoso	lunoso	birlador	burlador
tinero	tunero	pirita	purita
filera	fulera	linares	lunares
cirquito	surquito		

1.21.14 *o* in contrast with *u*

tope	tupe	omito	humito
vocal	vucal	monita	munita
olate	ulate	plomero	plumero
troncar	truncar	mosita	musita
lonita	lunita	roquita	ruquita
sotana	sutana	motilar	mutilar
porito	purito	acosar	acusar

What's in a name? What to call people of Latin American descent living in the United States has never been resolved to everybody's satisfaction. Some reject *Latino*; some believe *Hispanic* to be essentially meaningless and to over-emphasize the influence of Spain; and all people of non-Mexican descent and many of Mexican descent reject *Chicano*. (Many people of Mexican descent believe it to be more a political statement than a descriptive term). Some just prefer to be called "Americans". We don't have the answer to this dilemma, but in the *Platiquemos* series use *Latin*, *Latino* or *Latinoamericano* to refer to people living in the Latin American countries.

1.21.2 Discussion of minimal vowel contrast under weak stress

English speakers of course also distinguish words in this same minimal way--*pit, pet, pat, pot, putt, put*, for example--but only rarely under *weak stress*. That is, English has similar differences only in syllables that are noticeably louder than any of the Spanish syllables you have been practicing. The underlined vowels in the following English words are all the same vowel sound in actual speech, no matter how they are spelled.

president precedent bottom plot'em warden pardon

They would **not** be the same in Spanish.

By careful repetition of these Spanish words after a native speaker (the voices on the audio are native speakers), and by observing closely the point of difference between each pair, you can begin to *hear* and, having *heard*, to *imitate* differences of a type and frequency that are quite strange to an English speaker's way of talking.

In learning the basic sentences you were probably also corrected (or would have been if you'd been working with an instructor) for placing too much stress on some syllables, too little stress on others. *There are only two levels of stress in Spanish* (English has four). In simple terms, that means that in Spanish all of the vowels in a word are pronounced alike except for the vowel that is stressed (spoken louder than the others). In the discussions that follow, the two pronunciations in Spanish will be referred to as *strong stress* and *weak stress*.

1.22 The stress system in Spanish

There are two things that are important about stress. One is to get the two stresses placed on the right syllables. The other is to make each of them the right strength. Let us examine these two aspects one at a time.

The following pairs of words differ only in the placement of stress, and, as you can see, the difference in meaning that results is considerable.

1.22.1 Exercises on minimal stress contrasts

esta	<i>this</i>	está	<i>is</i>
ingles	<i>groins</i>	inglés	<i>English</i>
peso	<i>monetary unit</i>	pesó	<i>he weighed</i>
perno	<i>bolt</i>	pernó	<i>a kind of wine</i>
pico	<i>peak</i>	picó	<i>he stung</i>
balde	<i>bucket</i>	baldé	<i>I crippled</i>
libro	<i>book</i>	libró	<i>he freed</i>
ara	<i>altar</i>	hará	<i>he will do</i>
abra	<i>open</i>	habrá	<i>there will be</i>



1.22.2 Discussion of minimal stress contrasts

In short, you can be rather drastically misunderstood if you fail to place the stresses correctly when you speak. This, of course, is also true in English, but not so obviously true in view of the greater complexity of the English stress system. We have in English also a fair number of items which can have the stresses arranged in more than one way:

address or **address**
Chilean or **Chilean**

Caribbean or **Caribbean**
New **O**rleans or New Orleans

Since we do not have as many nice neat minimal pairs in English as there are in Spanish (like *esta/está*), we may at first be deceived into thinking that Spanish uses stress in a way that English does not, but this is not true.

The other important thing to learn in drilling on stress is to stress syllables with the right amount of force or strength. English has four stress levels, or four different ways of pronouncing vowels in words or phrases. Without going into irrelevant detail about the differences, the important thing to remember is that Spanish has only two stress levels, or two ways of pronouncing vowels. **One vowel is stressed, the others are pronounced exactly alike.**

Because this is a very important part of understandable, native-like Spanish pronunciation, there is below (and on your audio) a long list, arranged according to the number of syllables and placement of stress. For convenience, we have placed an accent mark over the stressed vowel--please note that this is not always the case in Spanish spelling. Until you can say these using only the two stresses, you cannot expect to progress and learn complex utterances successfully. Time spent practicing these will be well rewarded.

1.22.3 Contrasting stress patterns

rója
múcho
tángo
hásta
dónde
fúmo
báño
ténga
áño
tárde

cómo
gústo
buéno
luégo
fráses
ábra
vísa
táxi
hiélo
cérca

está
calór
estóy
señór
razón
pasár
abrír
decír
ciudad
sérvir

colór
usted
adiós
cortés
fumár
favór
perdón
visté
también
cerrár



rápido	trabájo	trabajar
lástima	salúdos	oración
fósforo	mañana	entendér
siéntese	señóra	español
déjeme	difícil	autobús
único	molésta	estación
bárbaro	escúche	corazón
médico	ventána	saludár
miércoles	minútos	regulár
sábado	tiquétes	conocér
céntimo	centávós	Paraguáy
sánwiche	boléto	Uruguáy
último	sabémos	salvadór
próximo	llegáda	contestár

dígamelo	teléfono	telegráma	trabajaré
préteselo	simpático	inmediáta	casualidad
tómeselo	decídase	despedídas	liberación
traígamelo	magnífico	absolúto	habilidad
véaselo	muchísimo	suficiénte	comunicar
cuéntemelo	propósito	presentárle	ferrocarril
dándomelo	fanático	señoríta	mentalidad
viéndoselo	perdóneme	conociéndo	agricultór
cámbiemelo	altímetro	adelánte	entonación
sáqueselo	figúrese	demasiádo	encontrará
muévaselo	América	panoráma	caminaré
súbamelas	milésimo	monográma	amarizár
cómaselo	tantísimo	entendído	amanecér
búscamelo	buenísimo	confundído	facilitár

conociéndose	presentaciones	anterioridad
acercándose	americano	posterioridad
preciosísimo	laboratório	cristalización
presentándole	conversaciones	cumunicación
primerísimo	conservatório	nacionalidad
encontrándola	camisería	argumentación

generalización	especialización	institucionalidad	desnaturalización
identificación	decontaminación	impresionabilidad	impersonalización
naturalización	responsabilidad	constitucionalidad	agriculturización
recapitulación	respetabilidad	supernaturalidad	americanización
capitalización	irregularidad	decapitalización	superalimentación



igualmente	actualmente	generalmente	materialmente
usualmente	cordialmente	literalmente	el señor Cárter
señor Cárter	señor Cástro	al señor Cástro	especialmente
doctor Cárpos	así dice	inmoralmente	el color negro
color verde	el ya viene	informalmente	el señor Vargas

1.22.4 Discussion of contrasting stress patterns

You may have noticed, in listening to and imitating these examples, that they seem to be pronounced faster than English words of similar length. Actually they are not, but there is a big difference in rhythm, which makes it seem that they are. Basically, in English the stressed (loudest) syllable tends to be lengthened, while in Spanish the length of each syllable is almost exactly the same. This is why Spanish sounds so fast, almost machine-gun like to English-accustomed ears.

1.23 The intonation system in Spanish

Up to this point we have been working with stress in pronunciation in individual words and short phrases, with particular attention to the unstressed (or “weak stressed”) vowels. There is another “pronunciation” problem which seems difficult to English speakers. That is intonation; the rise and fall in pitch of the voice in speaking a phrase or sentence.

Spanish pronunciation of phrases has three main patterns. The exercises below are on these three patterns. Note that Group I (falling pattern) includes commands, declarative phrases, and some questions [those that begin with an interrogative word - *cómo* (“how”); *cuándo* (“when”), etc. Group II (rising pattern) are all questions. Group III (ending in a low level pattern) are declarative, in the examples given mostly simple responses to questions.

Group I (falling pattern)

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Venga acá. | 12 ¿Cómo le va? |
| 2 Claro que sí. | 13 ¿Quiénes son? |
| 3 Son las tres. | 14 ¿Qué le pasa? |
| 4 Llega en avión | 15 ¿Cuándo llega? |
| 5 No lo creo. | 16 ¿Cuanto cuesta? |
| 6 No me importa. | 17 ¿Qué comemos? |
| 7 Viene mañana. | 18 ¿De dónde son? |
| 8 Llegó María. | 19 ¿Para dónde van? |
| 9 Aquí se baila. | 20 ¿Por qué se fue? |
| 10 ¿Cómo está? | 21 ¿Por cuánto tiempo? |
| 11 ¿Dónde está? | 22 ¿A cuánto estamos? |

Group II (rising pattern)

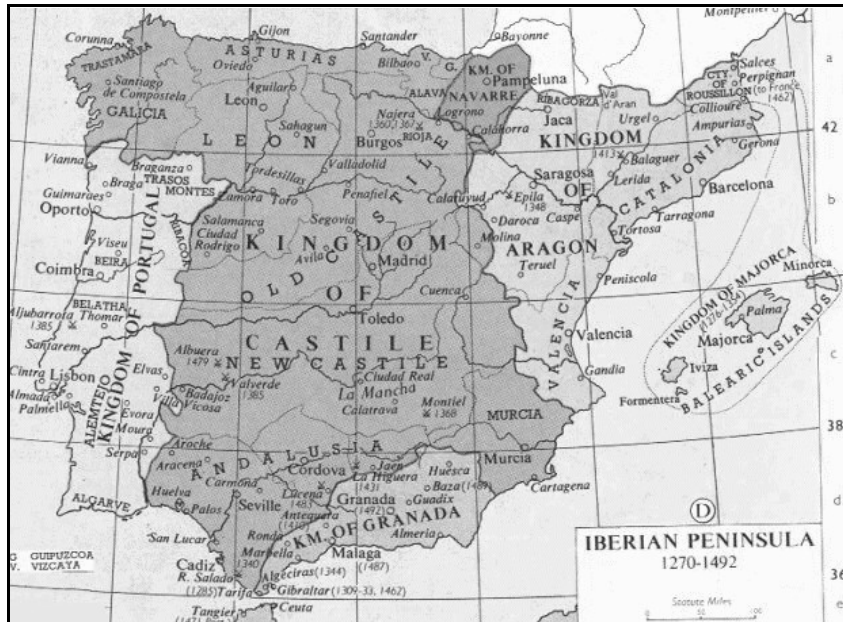
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|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 ¿Ya se va? | 7 ¿Le gustó María? |
| 2 ¿Quiere café? | 8 ¿Leyó el diario? |
| 3 ¿Vino con usted? | 9 ¿Tienen otro? |
| 4 ¿Comieron ya? | 10 ¿Le paso la leche? |
| 5 ¿Tiene un lápiz? | 11 ¿Trajo su carro? |
| 6 ¿Se va conmigo? | 12 ¿Le gusta su trabajo? |

Group III (ending in a low level pattern)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Gracias, señor. | 7 No. Muchas gracias. |
| 2 Muy bien, gracias. | 8 No viene entonces. |
| 3 Si, señora. | 9 Sí, papá. |
| 4 No, señorita. | 10 No, mamá. |
| 5 No hay, hombre. | 11 Adiós, señores. |
| 6 Venga María. | 12 Hasta mañana, señorita. |

What's up with all the handshaking? In the "Anglo" culture, shaking hands is usually done only on first meeting a person, or after a long period without seeing the person. In the Latin Culture, people shake hands every time they meet, sometimes even multiple times on the same day. To most "Anglos", this can seem a bit too much of a good thing. It is, however, essential in the Latin Culture if you want to be polite.

The *abrazo* (embrace) can be an affectionate hug or a ritualized form of greeting expressing a higher degree of intimacy (or esteem) than shaking hands. You should get someone who knows the intricacies to show you how to give a proper *abrazo*. Who to shake hands with (*dar la mano*), and who to give an *abrazo* to, require a good deal of familiarity with the culture. To begin with, you'll need to let yourself be guided by the actions of your Latin counterpart.



Spain in 1492. The *reconquista* ("reconquest"), taking the Iberian peninsula back from the muslim Moors, was finally completed in 1492. For hundreds of years before that, Spain had been divided into several more-or-less allied kingdoms in the Christian north; and several Moslem caliphates in the south.

The coincidence of the completion of the *reconquista* and the uniting of Spain (by a royal marriage) with more-or-less the borders it has today, made Columbus's first voyage in 1492 possible. Had these two events not fortuitously coincided, we can't know when (or whether) some other European (or vice-versa, when some explorer from the Americas) would have brought about the *encuentro* (meeting) of the two worlds.



La Adelita
Jorge Negrete

Adelita is the best-known song to come out of the Mexican Revolution (along with *La Cucaracha* and *La Valentina*--see the *Cantemos* series). Unfortunately, while a lot of people have heard of it, few have actually heard it. The version we have here is by Jorge Negrete, one of Mexico's first singing idols. It also contains some music of a *Banda de Guerra* (literally "war band", but much more like what we would call a drum and bugle corps). If you ever see a Mexican parade, you will hear music very much like this.

Si Adelita se fuera con otro
la seguiría por tierra y por mar
Si por mar en un buque de guerra
si por tierra en un tren militar

If Adelita were to go with another
I'd follow her by land and by sea
If by sea, in a warship
if by land in a military train

Y si acaso yo muero en campaña
y mi cuerpo en la sierra va a quedar
Adelita por Díos te lo ruego
con tus ojos me vayas a llorar

And if perchance I die in battle
and my body's going to stay in the mountains
Adelita, in the name of God I beg you
to cry for me with your eyes

Ya no llores querida Adelita
Ya no llores querida mujer
No te acuerdes ingrata conmigo
ya no me hagas tanto padecer

Don't cry any more beloved Adelita
don't cry any more beloved woman
Don't remember us together, ungrateful woman
Stop making me suffer so much

Ya me despido querida Adelita
ya me alejo de ti....

I'm saying goodbye now, dear Adelita
I'm leaving you now....

The song goes on for a few more verses in the same vein, but the words are indistinct, and this is enough to get the idea--and as much or more than many Mexicans know.



Jorge Negrete and friend. Negrete was much more than just a *mariachi* singer; he was a trained opera singer; and was one of Latin America's first movie stars. For a picture of him in white tie and tails, see the *Cantemos* series.

A "soldadera" or female soldier in the Mexican Revolution. Could this be the original Adelita?

