Crucible
of
Struggle

A History of Mexican Americans
from Colonial Times to the Present Era

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New York    Oxford
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
2011
CHAPTER 5

Mexican Americans in the Southwest
1870 to the Early Twentieth Century

The years between 1870 and the turn of the twentieth century were marked by animosity and violence between Mexican Americans and Anglos focused on land. Clashes occurred from the lower Rio Grande in Texas to Arizona and involved Texas Rangers, outlaws, Kickapoo and Apache Indians, and Mexicans. In the former confederate state of Texas, friction between Anglo-Texans and Tejanos remained intense and continuous because of the long-standing hatred between them. Anglo-Texan ranchers, aided by the Texas Rangers, were intent on driving Tejanos from the border region claimed by the ranchers. In the New Mexico territory, the contest over land produced the Santa Fe Ring and the Lincoln County War and, combined with racism, caused delays in achieving statehood. This domination did not take place without a struggle. The abusive power of the land monopolies and the railroads prompted aggrieved New Mexicans to join Las Gorras Blancas (White Caps), the Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, and the Populist Party. In the Southwest the lives of Mexican Americans were undergoing great change because industrial capitalism was establishing its historical presence in the region. Mexicans were being driven off their lands and transformed into landless wage workers for the new industrial economy of the West.1

Triggering this process of "creative destruction" in the Southwest was the development of an American economy dependent on natural resources and finished products moving between regions. Railroads helped to effect this transition to industrial capitalism by linking western resources with eastern markets. In the 1880s, a boom in railroad construction rapidly expanded track mileage, much of it railroad feeder lines that connected the western region's hinterlands. Cattle and grain production on huge farms and ranches financed by foreign investment soon dominated the West.2

The American West's extractive agriculture and industrial economy needed great numbers of workers. Between 1870 and 1910, the number of workers in the region engaged in railroad work, agriculture, and mining increased 84 percent. The railroads were responsible for the flood tide of Mexicans entering the labor force as U.S.-financed railroads connected Mexico's interior with its northern rail lines. Migration to the Southwest from Mexico was linked to the demand for labor
during this period of economic growth. Race, more than any other factor, determined work opportunities in the region. Because of racism, Mexican Americans and the immigrants from Mexico were incorporated into the low-wage jobs and experienced both poor working and living conditions. By the late nineteenth century, immigration from Mexico and economic growth in the Southwest became integrally related. Likewise, racial conflict became interwoven with class and economic conflict.5

THE MEXICAN AMERICANS OF CALIFORNIA

In California, landownership patterns established by force and fraud in a ten-year period from 1860 to 1870 became fixed, creating the basis for the capitalist transformation and displacement of the state's remaining Spanish-speaking landowners. Whereas in 1860 29 percent of California's Mexican population owned land consisting of small parcels, ten years later 5 to 10 percent were landowners. The railroads would dominate California's expanding economy; they ushered in large-scale agriculture as the key to the state's economic development. During the 1870s the huge cattle, horse, and sheep ranches of southern California were subdivided into small land tracts on which grain, wool, grapes, and citrus were grown. The remaining Mexican vaqueros and sheepherders saw their work vanish as the area ranchers shifted from ranching to more profitable cereal grain production and then to fruit and vegetable production.5

Mexicans first replaced Indians and then the Chinese in California's agricultural fields, vineyards, and citrus orchards. Three-fourths of the Mexicans entered southern California's labor market as itinerant wage workers. By the 1890s Mexicans made up the majority of unskilled day laborers in Los Angeles, as skilled and semiskilled jobs were the preserve of white labor. Most engaged in building and street construction and supplemented this with farmwork. In light of the existing restricted opportunities for Mexican wage workers, women entered the workforce, some as domestics and others as seasonal harvest and cannery workers.5

Organized violence became a method of punishment for the region's nonwhite population, and there were frequent calls for the formation of vigilante committees to enforce swift punishment through lynchings and hangings. Lynching found expression in lawless Los Angeles as wanton killers, bandits, thugs, and common drunks roamed the streets near the downtown Plaza. Vigilance committees maintained order with the dangling rope. The lynching bees were public spectacles and an amusing pastime. Between 1850 and 1870, Los Angeles witnessed seventy-seven hangings by Anglo mobs, and most of their victims were Indians or Mexicans rightly or wrongly convicted of killing whites. The lynching of Mexicans continued into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the practice became so common that Spanish-speaking people cynically referred to American democracy as "linchocracia."6

As the overall population of Los Angeles rose to 17,400 in 1872, the town's Mexican population remained constant at about 2,100 residents. In 1876, the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived in Los Angeles bringing industry, commerce, and people. Ten years later the Santa Fe Railroad completed a line to Los Angeles,
transporting 120,000 people to the city and to other parts of southern California. By 1890, the population of the region had increased by 200 percent and totaled 201,000. At the turn of the century, as a result of the region's real estate boom, the population of Los Angeles nearly doubled from 50,395 to 100,479 residents. As the Anglo population of Los Angeles grew, residential segregation by race and class accelerated. It confined the city’s Mexicans to Sonora Town and excluded them from the city's booming economy and culture. Moreover, perceptions of Mexicans were distorted to fit the negative stereotype about them.7

Tens of thousands of immigrants from Mexico brought in by the railroads and commercial growers eventually supplemented California’s native Spanish-speaking labor force so that by 1900 it stood at over 119,000.8 This signaled the end of California's Spanish era. This bygone era now existed only in myths and fantasies celebrated up and down the California coastal towns as “Spanish Heritage Days.” These romanticized celebrations that ignored the contributions of Indian and Mexican culture were concocted by Anglo urban boosters to appeal to tourists, especially to the prospective real estate investors and developers among them.9 In South Texas, Anglo-Texans were driving Tejanos off the land, often at the point of a gun. The Anglos stole the Tejanos' livestock, destroyed their property, and killed them.

THE TEJANOS AND MEXICANS OF TEXAS

Two-thirds of the Mexican population of the United States resided in Texas. The cattle drives and the arrival of the railroads in the post-Civil War era were features of the rapid change unfolding in the Lone Star State. The massive transfer in land titles from Tejanos to Anglo-Texans was accomplished through fraud and violence. Frequent acts of racial violence, particularly the surge in lynching, were fairly common in Texas during the 1860s and 1870s. One cause of the disorder was Reconstruction. To preserve their privileged sense of superiority, Texas Democrats who regained power called for the disfranchisement of Mexicans to deprive them of their rights and to continue their exploitation. Governor Richard Coke proposed resolving the border issue by the wanton killing of Mexicans and mandated state violence that included use of the Texas Rangers to carry it out.10

The ongoing strife between Tejanos and Anglo-Texans extended from central Texas down to the border and arose over land, water rights, and cattle ownership. Cattle rustling was especially rampant in Texas; observers estimated that one hundred thousand head of cattle were stolen each year. So great was cattle theft along the Texas border that American officials believed it would lead to open warfare between the United States and Mexico. Within the context of the racialized Mexican as inherently predisposed to thievery, Tejanos bore the brunt of the vendettas and consequently came under constant attack. Considering Tejanos as creatures somehow less than human made it easy for Anglo-Texans to perpetrate a slaughter of this population.11

In the area around San Antonio, a race war between Tejano and Anglo-Texans raged over unbranded livestock. Vigilantes killed seven Tejanos near the town of Boerne, and around San Marcos observers noted that the trees were
“bearing a new kind of fruit”—alleged Tejano cattle rustlers hung by vigilance committees. Tejanos elsewhere were similarly mistreated and murdered. In west Texas, lynchings of Mexicans were commonplace. In fact, many local Anglo-Texans wanted the hangings to continue; they were calling for complete extermination. In 1877, the Salt War broke out in this region of Texas where Tejanos worked the salt lodes to gather the mineral for their use. However, ownership of the salt deposits changed hands; the new owners made the Tejanos pay for the salt. Violence flared, resulting in four deaths and several thousand dollars’ worth of damage. Texas Rangers and militia from New Mexico were called in to restore order, and in the bloody melee that ensued Tejanos were killed indiscriminately.12

The boom in smuggling contraband from South Texas into Mexico and the movement of Mexicans to the Texas side of the Rio Grande prompted the governor of Tamaulipas to institute a zona libre, or free zone, in 1858. Stretching from the mouth of the Rio Grande and twelve miles inland, the free zone exempted towns south of the Rio Grande from paying high tariff duties. Frustrated, Texas merchants began agitating for the abolition of the free zone because it further increased smuggling and cattle rustling.13

The revolutionary upheaval that plagued Mexico’s northern states after 1867 added to the violence along the Rio Grande border. Mexican insurgents crossed and recrossed into Texas to obtain weapons and supplies. Cattle rustling, a practice initiated by the United States Army during the Civil War, intensified as well. Juan Cortina again became the arch villain of the border region. All the crimes committed “under the control of armed thieves” were attributed to him or his followers, the Cortinistas. Predictably, the constant unrest caused by the general rebellion along the border provoked another wave of indiscriminate violence against the area Tejanos.14

Disputes over raids escalated and triggered a literal reign of terror on the Tejanos of South Texas. The killing of Tejanos soon took on a momentum of its own, becoming a kind of blood sport. The murders prompted the Texas adjutant general to note that in the Nueces Strip, “A considerable element . . . thought the killing of a Mexican no crime.” Mexicans, the San Antonio Express reported, “were no longer safe along the highways, or outside of towns; they were shot . . . just because they were Mexicans.”15

In 1875, more than two dozen Anglo-Texan raiders plundered and burned Nuecestown outside Corpus Christi in retaliation for a Mexican raid, creating terror in the Spanish-speaking settlements all the way south to Brownsville. Anglo-Texans killed every Tejano they could find. Mexicans were shot on sight and their bodies pitched into the local lakes and creeks; others were hung from trees. Neither life nor property was safe in the Texas border region extending from the mouth of the Rio Grande to El Paso. Over one hundred murders were reported to have been committed on the border, though untold numbers very likely went unreported. Great numbers of horses and cattle were stolen and all the thefts blamed on Tejanos. Killing squads of Anglo-Texan vigilantes roamed the South Texas countryside sowing panic as they hanged Tejano vaqueros and burned the homes and crops of others in retaliation for the cattle raids.16
To curb the raids, the state of Texas mobilized fourteen Texas Ranger companies to patrol the rural countryside from the Red River down to the Rio Grande. Fearing that the manhunting Texas Rangers and their acts of bloodshed would provoke further violence, the Texas Legislature mustered twenty-two militia companies to replace the Rangers. These efforts failed to suppress the raiding that plagued the border region. Many local ranchers held meetings for the purpose of protecting themselves against the marauders as tensions among Anglo-Texans increased. The attacks on ranches had convinced them that Juan Cortina, "the terror of the Texas frontier," was responsible for the problems. Caving into pressure from the United States government, Mexico ordered his arrest.17

Vengeance raged through the Anglo-Texan community, and its response was swift and brutal retribution against Tejanos. Anglo mobs hanged Tejanos in San Patricio, Refugio, and Goliad counties. In Corpus Christi, a Committee of Public Safety was formed and ordered the registration of all males over eighteen years of age, giving name, age, occupation, color, birthplace, and nationality. Anglo-Texans were demanding an invasion of Mexico as a final solution to the mayhem they helped produce. As news of the terror spread, Tejanos fled their farms and towns and crossed into Mexico.18

Hostility between Anglo-Texans and Tejanos remained intense as the nineteenth century came to a close. Banding together, the former demanded subordination and insisted on preserving their dominance over the latter through violent means. Tejano resistance of any kind was fatal. In the summer of 1901, in an act of self-defense, Tejano Gregorio Cortez made the unfortunate mistake of killing two Anglo sheriffs, an act that transformed him into the most hunted fugitive in Texas history. His brave struggle had an enormous appeal for Tejanos, also the victims of racist treatment.

Gregorio Cortez was born on June 22, 1875, near the Mexican border town of Matamoros. In 1887, the Cortez family moved to Manor, Texas, north of Austin, where the young Gregorio learned his trade as a vaquero and farmer. Going to Karnes County in central Texas, Gregorio Cortez settled on the W. A. Thulmeyer Ranch, about ten miles west of Kenedy. Here he and his brother Romaldo rented land as tenant farmers and raised corn. The Tejanos also did itinerant ranch work in Gonzales County and in several other central Texas counties.

Gregorio Cortez's troubles began on June 12, 1901, when the sheriff of Atascosa County requested help from Karnes County Sheriff W. T. "Brack" Morris in locating a horse thief identified as a "medium-sized Mexican." Gregorio Cortez fit that vague description, but so did many other Tejanos in the area. To the Texans all Mexicans looked alike. One witness told Sheriff Morris that he had recently traded a horse to Gregorio Cortez for a mare. The law officer suspected that the mare was stolen.19

Lawmen Morris and D. P. Choate rode to the Cortez farm and confronted Gregorio Cortez at his home. Serving as interpreter, Deputy Choate told the Tejano he was under arrest. When Gregorio Cortez protested in Spanish to the law officers that they had no reason to arrest him, Choate told Morris that the Tejano said, "No white man can arrest me." Angered, Sheriff Morris drew his gun and fired. The sheriff wounded Romaldo and barely missed hitting Gregorio Cortez, who then
shot and killed Morris only to save his own life. Fear of an unfair trial or mob violence most likely caused Gregorio Cortez to flee, and he became a "wanted man." As Cortez made his escape, his wife, children, and mother were taken into custody. The Texas Rangers and a posse numbering more than three hundred men soon began the pursuit of Gregorio Cortez, who was determined not to be taken back.

A hunted man and on the run for more than five hundred miles, Gregorio Cortez made his way to Belmont in Gonzales County. Here, Cortez hid at the home of his friends Martín and Refugia Robledo on land owned by a Mr. Schnabel. A posse led by Gonzales County Sheriff Robert M. Glover tracked Gregorio Cortez to the Robledo home. A gunfight soon broke out in which Glover and Schnabel were killed. Cortez escaped capture and once more was in flight, much of it now on foot.20

Gregorio Cortez walked one hundred miles to the home of another friend, Ceferino Flores, who gave him a horse, saddle, and provisions. Cortez then decided to head for Laredo. He was captured on June 22 about eight miles from the Mexican border after being on the run for ten days. A mob of several hundred people threatened to lynch the Tejano, but peace officers turned them away.21

A Gonzales County jury found Gregorio Cortez guilty of the murder of Mr. Schnabel, and the court sentenced him to fifty years in prison. On January 15, 1902, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals reversed the Gonzales County verdict and gave the Tejano life in prison for the murder of Sheriff Glover.

Gregorio Cortez had spent time in eleven jails in eleven counties and was now in prison. A model prisoner, he received much support from both Tejanos and Anglos to obtain a pardon. Cortez became a source of inspiration for the poor.
Tejanos of the state of Texas, their hero, a legend commemorated in a well-known *corrido* (ballad). In 1913, Texas Governor Oscar B. Colquitt granted Cortez a conditional pardon.22

Anglo dominance transformed Tejano life in South Texas, where Tejano land claims became a dominant issue. The cattle drives, along with the introduction of barbed wire in the 1870s, led to the enclosure of rangeland in the region by the mid-1880s. By 1892 in Cameron County, forty-six Anglo-Texans controlled over 1,200,000 acres of land, equaling four times the acreage owned by Tejanos. In Hidalgo County, only a third of the land was left in Tejano hands. However, devoid of credit, many of the remaining Tejano ranchers went bankrupt during the drought-induced "die-ups" of range cattle in the 1890s.23

The number of Mexicans in Texas increased from 43,161 in 1880 to 71,062 in 1900. Tejanos now formed a minority in central Texas, but they constituted 92 percent of the population in the region below San Antonio and along the Río Grande. The Tejano's numerical dominance served only one purpose—as the principal source of rural labor—for the influx of Anglos into South Texas who were transforming the region into a major center of commercial agriculture.24

More and more Tejanos fell into the ranks of low-wage workers as cotton garment manufacturing, the 1902 Reclamation Act, and the construction of the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexican Railways in 1904 further stimulated commercial agriculture in South Texas. The railroad's financial backers included a handful of well-to-do Tejano ranchers, bankers, and merchants such as Francisco Yturria and J. A. Fernández. These wealthy Tejanos served as intermediaries between Anglo-Texans and their Tejano workers. Some did not escape the outbreak of violence ten years later triggered by *El Plan de San Diego* (Plan of San Diego) that would see the lower Río Grande Valley once again awash with bloodshed and violence.25

The influx of Anglo newcomers led to further Tejano land displacement through taxes, fraud, legal costs to validate land claims, enclosure of water, fluctuating cattle prices, and the inability to compete with Anglo land companies. The sharp rise in land prices in anticipation of the railroad's arrival proved ruinous to the last visage of Tejano landowners. Once the railroad line was constructed, Anglo-controlled towns such as Mercedes, San Benito, Chapin, Raymondville, and Mission rose in the lower Río Grande alongside the railroad. Dozens of irrigation companies increased the arable acreage in South Texas. Hidalgo County as a result soon boasted of being the nation's highest producing agricultural county. The railroads and real estate promoters of the Río Grande Valley advertised to prospective Anglo investors that Mexicans would perform the labor in the region. They also promised that Mexicans would be excluded from sharing in their society. Peonage in South Texas meant Tejanos and Mexicans working for Anglo-Texan *patrones* and *patronas*. A Laredo newspaper would later observe: "The lands which mainly belonged to Mexicans [passed] to the hands of Americans . . . the old proprietors work as laborers on the same lands that used to belong to them." Tejanos and immigrants from Mexico made up the floating population utilized in railroad construction and farmwork. The long-time Tejano residents and the newcomers from Mexico were indistinguishable to the Anglos.26 The next stage was the disenfranchisement of Tejanos.
DISENFRANCHISING TEJANO VOTERS
AS POLITICAL STRATEGY

The Democratic Party, the self-described "party of the white man," dominated Texas politics after Reconstruction. Political disenfranchisement of Tejanos set in as Anglo-Texan Democrats used voter fraud and election-law trickery and racism to retain power over them, just as they did with blacks and poor whites. Voter fraud was rampant in the Rio Grande Valley counties and in those precincts with large Spanish-speaking populations. Entrenched South Texas political bosses such as James B. Wells, the products of Democratic political machines appearing throughout the Texas border region, had large numbers of aliens from Mexico brought in just before elections, naturalized, and declared legal residents; the new residents were then expected to vote for the bosses. Certain precincts voted more than the entire population combined. In a failed attempt to stop this political boss-ism, the State of Texas passed a law in 1895 requiring six months' residency before a person could vote. Some Tejano Democrats had access to public office. Recon-structed Confederate Army veteran and banker-merchant Thomas A. Rodríguez of Brownsville served three terms in the Texas state legislature representing parts of Atascosa, Karnes, and San Patricio counties. Confederate Army veteran and Laredo businessman Santos Benavides held the most terms in the Texas House of Representatives, serving from 1879 to 1884. However, owing to increased disen-franchisement, Thomas A. Rodríguez was the sole Tejano in the Texas House of Representatives by the end of the nineteenth century.27

Relying on Jim Crow techniques, Anglo-Texans retained full control of the Tejano vote via the poll tax. Between 1879 and 1899 six attempts were made to pass poll-tax legislation in Texas. All failed because of opposition from blacks and Tejanos, labor groups, and Populists. In 1901, the Texas Legislature finally passed the poll tax, which state voters approved the following year by a two-to-one margin. Requiring Texas residents to pay $1.75 to vote, the poll tax effectively created a barrier to keep Tejanos from voting. Because of greatly restricted district electorates, Texas Democrats dominated political leadership. In addition to the poll tax, gerrymandering weakened voter strength. Finally, the white primaries undercut manipulation of the Tejano vote by prohibiting Tejanos from joining the Democratic Party or participating in primary elections.28

The efforts of Anglo-Texans to further consolidate their political power took a strange turn in 1896. In the same year in which the U.S. Supreme Court upheld racial segregation in public accommodations in Plessy v. Ferguson, Ricardo Rodríguez appeared in federal district court in San Antonio, Texas. The Tejano, a five-year resident of San Antonio employed as a street cleaner, made an application for United States citizenship that would grant him the right to vote. His actions initi-ated concerted legal maneuvers by Anglos to disallow Tejanos the right to vote in the state of Texas.29

The Rodríguez case involved the right of naturalization. It focused attention on the fact that Tejanos born in Mexico could not vote unless they applied for naturalization. At the center of the debate was an 1872 federal statute that ruled that only Caucasians and Africans could become U.S. citizens. Under this law and
reflecting nineteenth-century color designations of black, white, red (American Indian), and yellow (Asian), Ricardo Rodriguez did not qualify for American citizenship because the state of Texas considered him neither "a white person, nor an African, nor of African descent."  

At issue was the question of racial and educational qualification for achieving U.S. citizenship. Interest in the Rodriguez case was high among Tejanos who were facing desperate times in Texas during which what remained of their political rights were being threatened. They rallied to condemn the "effort being made in Federal Court to prevent Mexicans from becoming voting citizens of the United States." In his court testimony, Rodriguez claimed his cultural heritage to be "pure-blooded Mexican," but the Tejano stated to the court he was not a descendant of any of the aboriginal peoples of Mexico (American Indian), nor was he of Spanish (white) or African descent (black).

Defense lawyers for Ricardo Rodriguez and witnesses who testified on his behalf asserted that he had the right to become an American citizen. They argued that since 1836 both "the Republic of Texas and the United States had by various collective acts of naturalization conferred upon Mexicans the rights and privileges of American citizenship." The defense further observed that the U.S. Congress in 1845 had extended citizenship to Mexicans after Texas annexation. The defense noted that Article VIII of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo automatically conferred American citizenship on Mexicans who did not leave the territory after one year as long as they did not declare their desire to become Mexican citizens. On May 3, 1897, the federal court ruled in favor of Rodriguez. Re Rodriguez declared that the Fourteenth Amendment granted citizenship to all people born or naturalized in the United States regardless of color or race. What was more, the Rodriguez decision upheld the legal right of Mexicans as "white," legally affirmed the rights of Tejanos to vote, and prevented further attempts by Anglo-Texans to use the courts to deprive them of their voting rights.

THE MEXICANS OF ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO

Arizona's residents of Mexican descent made up the majority population. Most were common laborers who cleared land, built irrigation canals, and worked in agriculture, on the railroads, and in the copper mines in the southern part of the territory. Another segment of the population were farmers, ranchers, and businessmen, mainly in Tucson, a commercial center for the surrounding agriculture and mining industries. The small elite class of Mexicans affiliated with the wealthy Americans served as liaisons and go-betweens for the Anglos and Mexicans. As a reward for their patronage, this group of Mexicans obtained special favors in the form of government contracts. Many were merchants; therefore, they profited handsomely from the large American military presence in the Arizona territory. Very few of these leaders participated in Arizona's territorial affairs because Mexicans had been excluded from Arizona politics beginning in the 1870s. No Mexican served as a congressional delegate from the Arizona territory, which was controlled by mining interests. In fact, the Organic Bill excluded representation for Mexican areas in Arizona, and as a result Mexicans were
disenfranchised and fell victim to a dual wage scale and other forms of racial inequality.33

Mexicans made up half the population of Arizona's Salt River Valley and were primarily small farmers who raised wheat and barley for the U.S. Army. They were originally from Tucson and Tubac, whereas others had come from Sonora's Altar Valley, having fled that region of northern Mexico because of political turmoil and raiding and taking of captives by Chiracahua Apaches. Due to U.S. federal pacification or extermination policies, the Chiracahua Apaches no longer upset daily life in the Arizona territory. The Mexican homesteaders had built the San Francisco Canal to irrigate their fields with loans from Prescott merchant Michael Wormser, a speculator in water rights. These were loans that benefited only the lender, because Mexicans eventually lost their lands to Wormser through foreclosures. Other Mexicans fell victim to Anglo business interests that were consolidating power in the territory. They became wage laborers on the commercial farms. Additional numbers of Mexicans were hired by Arizona's commercial farms with the arrival of the railroads, which opened up larger markets for agricultural products. In addition to encouraging the expansion of livestock raising, the railroads promoted private investment in mining by large eastern companies.34

Mining in Arizona was dependent on Mexican labor. The mine operators significantly reduced labor costs, because, under the racially based Mexican scale, Mexican workers earned about a third less than Anglo miners for the same work. Anglo miners disliked Mexicans because they undermined the wage structure. The "whites-only" policy of the mining unions, occupational discrimination whereby whites held the higher paying and higher status jobs, relegated Mexicans
to the bottom ranks of mine work. Management justified the wage differential by citing improved production. Mexican miners increasingly sought to adjust this unequal wage system on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border by joining the Magónistas, the anarcho-syndicalist Partido Liberal Mexicano (or PLM) of the brothers Enrique and Ricardo Flores Magón. The Magónistas played an important role in radicalizing Mexican workers in the Southwest, as did the militant industrial unionism of the Western Federation of Miners and later the Industrial Workers of the World. These organizations led the strike in Cananea, Mexico, in 1906 that was eventually crushed by the combined forces of American mine managers, the Mexican government, American troops, and the Arizona Rangers. Nevertheless, such repression further radicalized Mexican miners.

New Mexico retained the significant features of the political and social structure ruled over by the small group of wealthy Spanish-speaking ricos and Anglos whose power rested in the Republican Party. Through the Republican Party patronage system, this coterie of ricos held local and legislative offices and served as territorial delegates in the U.S. Congress. As members of the powerful and corrupt Santa Fe Ring, the Spanish-speaking ruling class took part in the greedy land grabbing and corruption that marked New Mexico’s late territorial period, in addition to competing for federal contracts to supply U.S. Army forts and Indian reservations.
The majority of New Mexico's Spanish-speaking population remained concentrated in northern New Mexico. They were communal landholders dependent on agriculture and sheep ranching for their livelihood. Northern New Mexico's subsistence economy was disappearing because capitalist market-oriented agriculture and stock raising had taken hold in the region. Furthermore, the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims refused to grant the small landholders title to their land. The coming of the railroad served as the catalyst for this transformation that ushered in marked changes to other parts of the territory. Growing numbers of Spanish-speaking villagers were migrating seasonally to work for the mines, ranches, and farms in the New Mexico territory and in Colorado. Entire New Mexican families eventually became itinerant workers. The coming of the railroads quickened this large-scale displacement of New Mexicans from their land and their further integration into a wage-labor market.

Seeking a route west, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad arrived at Raton Pass, New Mexico, on January 1, 1879, and by July had extended a rail line to Las Vegas. Two years later, railroad service came to Santa Fe—ending more than a century of commerce on the Santa Fe Trail—then to Albuquerque, and it later joined the Southern Pacific Railroad at Deming. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe was the world's largest railroad system. Along with its main competitor, the Denver and Rio Grande and other railroad companies, it had lines throughout the New Mexico territory servicing the growing agriculture, livestock, mining, and timber industries. The railroads led to the growth of towns such as Raton and Springer in the northwest, Las Cruces in the south, Deming and Silver City in the southwest, and Gallup in the west. As in California, Texas, and elsewhere, the railroads caused property values in New Mexico to jump dramatically. Property valued at $41 million in 1880 increased almost six times to $231 million in 1890. In the same ten-year period, railroad cattle shipments from New Mexico increased almost fivefold from 347,000 to 1,630,000. What one contemporary observer noted about the arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad held true for the arrival of other railroad lines to New Mexico: The railroads "heralded the replacement of mercantile capitalism by ... industrial capitalism."38

Commercial and political rivalries over land intensified the widespread disorder and unrest in New Mexico. Ranchers hungry for pastures waged bloody campaigns against New Mexican land grantees. This period witnessed the Colfax (1875–1878) and the Lincoln County (1878–1881) shooting wars. The native New Mexicans would fight against the land fraud that was driving them off their lands. Racism became intertwined with class and economic conflict.

Economic growth brought additional problems to the Spanish-speaking residents of the New Mexico territory. After 1870, a different breed of Anglo came to New Mexico. Most were ex-soldiers who had fought in the Indian campaigns or were Civil War veterans left jobless by the 1873–1879 depression. These rootless men drifted from one mining and cattle ranch to another in search of work. Many became outlaws and livestock rustlers, such as William Bonney—also known as Billy the Kid—and formed the criminal element that gained notoriety for the lawlessness and violence that scarred the New Mexico territory. They did not like Mexicans.39
Beginning in 1869, native New Mexicans migrated to southeastern New Mexico in present-day Lincoln County and established small farms and sheep ranches. They came under mounting pressure from invading cattlemen and rustlers from Texas. Lincoln County became known as “Little Texas” as Anglo ranchers killed or drove out the Spanish-speaking population from the range country. “Native inhabitants” are being “ousted from their homes” by ranchers, wrote Territorial Governor Edmond Ross to a rancher. “I understand very well... what a cow-boy or a cattle herder with a brace of pistols... and a Winchester in his hands means when he 'asks' a sheepherder to leave a given range.” The Lincoln County Stock Growers Association first warned Spanish-speaking sheepherders out of the area; then hired guns killed their animals in attempts to drive them out after the threats were ignored. Salaman’s Scouts attacked local communities, looting and destroying property, raping women, and killing unarmed men and boys. Sheepherders also lived in fear of raids by outlaws, who attacked and killed them and stole their flocks. Spanish-speaking sheepmen likewise battled with cattlemen from northern Arizona. The town of Trinidad in southern Colorado gained a reputation for violence following the so-called Trinidad War in the winter of 1867–1868 during which Anglos and Mexicans fought each other in a series of pitched gun battles that required intervention by federal troops from Fort Lyon to restore peace.

The cattle industry in the Southwest reached its zenith in the 1880s, then declined as overgrazing and drought severely damaged the pastures. This put an end to the open-range system and the yearly cattle roundups. The demise of the cattle industry opened up opportunities again for sheepherders; however, legislation curtailed the use of the public lands for sheep raising. Stock raising was now linked by a railroad network to a national American economy versus a local one. Land had also become a commodity in the New Mexico territory, stolen through legal and illegal means by land speculators looking to make huge profits.

**THE UNITED STATES AND THE NEW MEXICO LAND GRANTS QUESTION**

During the New Mexico territorial period the land held by native New Mexicans rapidly changed ownership. Numerous factors accounted for this development, the primary reason being that the land grantees did not have any control of the adjudication of land. Land claims were not surveyed prior to the confirmation hearing. For example, the Maxwell and Sangre de Cristo land grants were confirmed first, then the claimants disclosed their size. The Maxwell Grant was the largest tract of privately owned land in the western hemisphere, totaling 1,714,764 acres. The Sangre de Cristo Grant totaled 2,713,545 acres, though under the 1824 Mexican Colonization Law (48,500 acres for each grantee), these grants together should have been limited to 97,000 acres. Both grants were challenged before the U.S. Supreme Court, and the Court validated the confirmations. It ruled that Mexican law had never granted such large holdings; rather, the U.S. Congress had granted the land. On January 28, 1870, Lucien B. Maxwell sold the Maxwell Land Grant to foreign investors for $1,350,000.
The Office of the Surveyor General was ill prepared to adjudicate land grants. None of the members knew Spanish, nor were they familiar with Spanish and Mexican law. None were lawyers. The Office of the Surveyor General did not provide for due process; thus the rights of the land grantees as American citizens were violated. In adjudicating disputed land claims, the Office of the Surveyor General opted to simply rule in favor of the claimant who brought up the claim. In this way, large grants that overlapped several smaller grants were confirmed. When claimants of the smaller land grants sought confirmation, they were informed that the federal government had already confirmed the land to someone else. Through the auspices of the Office of the Surveyor General, individual speculators profited at the expense of the Spanish-speaking land grantees. In conflict of interest, these speculators included those appointed to the Office of the Surveyor General. Henry Atkinson and T. Rush Spencer each opportunistically held land grants while serving in this federal branch of government. The president of the New Mexico Land and Livestock Company, Atkinson made decisions on the Anton Chico community land grant as he participated in legal proceedings, claiming that he owned the grant. Such conflicts of interest, combined with the defects of the federal Surveyor General system, guaranteed that land grant adjudications remained patently unfair.

According to Spanish and Mexican law, a land grant was issued to a person representing the entire community, and that person was named on the grant. Speculators purchased the land grant from this person even though the land belonged to an entire community. In this way, community land grants were legally wrested away as private land grants. The new land grantee then petitioned the U.S. government to get the grant ratified.

Another method by which land was taken away from native New Mexicans was through "partitioning," the subdividing of land as had been done in California according to an 1876 law. A lawyer agreed to represent a community land grant with the understanding that a portion of the grant was given as payment for services. Those who had no money lost in court. Thomas B. Catron obtained the Tierra Amarilla community land grant on the border of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado through this procedure. Catron was involved in sixty-three land grant cases that gained the future senator from New Mexico about three million acres, in addition to his holdings in six states and Mexico. After the Tierra Amarilla grant was confirmed to the heirs, Catron purchased all their interests for $200,000 and obtained a court decree stating that he now owned the grant. The Tierra Amarilla grant heirs went to court to regain their common land but lost their case. In 1909, Catron sold the Tierra Amarilla grant for $850,000.

The most notorious of the New Mexico land swindlers was the Santa Fe Ring, involved in land, cattle, mining, lumber, and freight speculation. This cabal of judges, lawyers, territorial officials, businessmen, and newspaper editors engaged in widespread fraud, bribery, and corruption. Up to the 1880s, all of New Mexico's governors were members of the Santa Fe Ring. Several New Mexican ricos collaborated with the Santa Fe Ring to acquire land grants. The Santa Fe Ring manipulated or exploited legal loopholes to gain control of vast Spanish and Mexican land grants to become the most powerful force in the New Mexico territory.
In 1875, the Grant County Herald reported that "fraud and corruption are freely employed by the [Santa Fe] Ring which now controls the Territory in order to further their designs."48

The native New Mexican landowners banded together to challenge the Santa Fe Ring. Those on the Maxwell Land Grant resisted the Ring’s attempts to displace them, and New Mexico’s congressional delegate from San Miguel County, Trinidad Romero, indicted the Ring in a report to Washington. Expressing the idea of an ethnic homeland and a right to equality that cut across class lines, Spanish-speaking New Mexicans stood up to encroachment by an Anglo-dominated modern society and growing racism.49 In 1884, the Santa Fe Ring became the target of protest in Las Vegas, New Mexico. At a meeting held at Baca Hall angry citizens denounced the Ring, indicting it for its control of the territorial legislature, for real estate investments, and for jury tampering. Singled out were Thomas Catron, territorial secretary William G. Ritch, and Governor Lionel Sheldon. Indignant New Mexicans rallied against the fraud and corruption and helped bring about the demise of the Santa Fe Ring. In 1885, a court of land claims was established to settle the disputed land grants and to prosecute land fraud in the New Mexico territory.50

Spanish-speaking villagers could not stop the tide of Anglo invasion that accompanied the incorporation of the New Mexico territory into the American national economy. Anglos seized millions of acres of communally held pastur- lands that were protected under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo despite federal legal intervention. Additional land was being lost to lawyers as payment for legal fees, and competition with the new Anglo stock raisers forced additional numbers of New Mexicans to sell their lands. Like the Mexicans of California and Texas, more and more native New Mexicans were driven from their land and forced into wage labor. They wound up on the large cattle and sheep ranches, as miners or loggers, or on railroad construction projects, earning less money and working harder than their Anglo counterparts. The desperate though proud New Mexicans experienced a systematic dispossession, the main grievance that spurred resistance.51

Poor Spanish-speaking herders and ranchers turned to self-help through secret societies. The Gorras Blancas undertook retributive justice that was necessary during these trying times. The society became a staging ground for Mexicans to become members of the Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, who were proclaiming the identity of interests between the capitalists and the working classes. The Knights of Labor had become the preserve of rural labor and small-town mechanics. The Knights viewed land speculators and large landholders as it did lawyers and bankers—as monopolists who prospered at the cost of workers and poor people.52

Las Gorras Blancas and the Struggle to Protect Land Grants

San Miguel County was leading New Mexico in the transition to a modern capitalist economy with the feature of wage work in railroad and commercial agriculture and ranching. Land loss and low wages owing to a growing labor surplus were
developments of the troublesome times in San Miguel County, the largest county in the northeastern section of the New Mexico territory. The county extended from the eastern flank of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the Texas Panhandle border. It contained 24,204 of the New Mexico Territory's 153,593 inhabitants, and almost 90 percent were Mexicans. Several thousand Anglos lived in San Miguel County; most were recent arrivals and consisted of wealthy ranchers or those with links to the railroads. The independent farms run by Spanish-speaking New Mexicans that had flourished since the antebellum period began to compete with the Anglo stock raisers for land, water, and timber. Las Vegas was the county seat, the largest town, and a force in territorial politics. The formation of the Anglo enclave “New Town” in Las Vegas, several miles east of Old Town near the Las Vegas plaza, indicated the growing racial divisions in New Mexico. Unlike the Anglos who arrived before the Mexican War, this new group refused to acculturate to the ways of the New Mexicans, including learning their native language.53

The Anglos enlisted the ricos on their side because the latter served the ranchers' interests and because they benefited economically from regional enterprise. The bitter conflict in San Miguel County was related to the issue of community land grants. In their fight against a common enemy, the native New Mexicans banded together to demand their rights to land grants, equitable tax laws, education, labor, and statehood. Agricultural misery, as represented by land displacement, was the goad to action. The aptly named weekly newspaper *La Voz del Pueblo* (The Voice of the People) showed sympathy toward New Mexico's victimized rural poor. In its pages, it defended native New Mexicans against the "capitalists, monopolists and land grabbers."54

The 1887 civil suit won by landowner José Leon Padilla (*Phillip Millhiser et al. v. José Leon Padilla*) against the Las Vegas Land and Cattle Company over the legality of recent land acquisitions by speculators boosted the morale of the aggrieved native New Mexicans and helped to hasten the collective struggle unfolding over the issue of land. The Las Vegas Grant, a community grant, was one of the largest in the territory, encompassing almost half a million acres. A few wealthy Anglos and Spanish-speaking New Mexican speculators purchased the tracts illegally and established large cattle and sheep companies. Disputes took place between New Mexican farmers and the large stock companies over boundaries, water, and fencing. The unsettled legal status of the Las Vegas grant allowed the land speculators to continue fencing. The Spanish-speaking farmers wanted the land to remain open to them for grazing, water, wood, and other common needs until the dispute over land was settled in the courts. As industrial capitalism burst through in northern New Mexico, hidden avengers struck in defense of the common people to challenge it. In 1889, the clandestine organization Las Gorras Blancas began organizing the poor Spanish-speaking ranchers and farmers threatened by the partitioning off of the Las Vegas Grant into separate ranches by promoters and profiteers of the new order. The Gorras Blancas increased its membership, and it began to openly challenge corporate power in San Miguel County. The county, and much of northern New Mexico, would soon become the site of an uprising by this secret organization that united the local Spanish-speaking population in demanding equal rights as American citizens.55
Las Gorras Blancas had a local indigenous character and confirmed the presence in northern New Mexico of individuals with radical leanings. Juan José Herrera and his brothers Pablo and Nicanor, all of whom were from San Miguel County, organized the group in 1888. A former mayor of Las Vegas, a captain in the New Mexico territorial militia who fought in the Civil War, Juan Herrera belonged to the labor organization the Holy Order of the Knights of Labor. The Knights had catapulted to national fame and power in 1885 following their victory in the Southwestern railroad strike. The Knights were opposed to land speculation. Living on a ranch near San Geronimo, Juan Herrera founded Las Gorras Blancas because local Anglo ranchers had fenced land that prevented Spanish-speaking farmers from grazing their livestock. To his advantage, Herrera had knowledge not only of labor unionism but also of American law, and he spoke Spanish, English, French, and several Indian languages. In the same year he organized Las Gorras Blancas, Juan Herrera became a "sojourner," that is, a recruiter for the Knights of Labor in New Mexico. The class-conscious native New Mexican established twenty local assemblies of the Knights in San Miguel County and recruited new members in Santa Fe, San Miguel, Mora, Taos, and Colfax counties in northern New Mexico and in counties in southern Colorado with Spanish-speaking populations. These new Knights pledged to "defend the life, interests, and reputation, and family of all true members." Seven hundred people in the area of El Salitre, El Burro, Ojitos Frios, and San Geronimo within the boundaries of the Las Vegas grant joined Las Gorras Blancas in warning Anglos to stay away from their land. Starting in the summer of 1889, and convinced justice was with them, Las Gorras Blancas began cutting fences and destroying other property. Striking at night, the masked riders began settling old scores; they cut several miles of barbed wire fence belonging to two unpopular ranchers near San Geronimo who had claimed common lands. Then Las Gorras wrecked the farm and sawmill of José Ignacio Luján outside the village of San Ignacio. Anonymous warnings soon turned up in localities troubled by the rural rebellion, cautioning that dire consequences would follow if fencing did not stop. Homes and barns on grant lands were also burned. Throughout the winter, going from one place to another in a circuit of destruction, Las Gorras Blancas kept up their nighttime raids on other fenced-in ranches within the Las Vegas grant, demolishing fences, crops, farm equipment, and other rural property. Las Gorras Blancas committed few acts of vigilance against persons. Rural agitation continued throughout much of northern New Mexico. Alarmed by this rise in clandestine activity, San Miguel County officials urged New Mexico Governor LeBaron Bradford Prince to organize a militia to stop the growing terror.56

Las Gorras Blancas increased in size and determination and extended their attacks on land grabbers to stolen land grants adjoining the Las Vegas grant and to those in Mora and Santa Fe counties. In March 1890, several hundred armed Gorras Blancas boldly rode into Las Vegas in a show of force. Members posted leaflets throughout town declaring their motives and intentions. The leaflets were signed "The White Caps, 1,500 Strong and Growing Daily." The fence cutters made common cause with the area land grantees who were now wage workers or tenant farmers. In another notice posted along roads, Las Gorras Blancas told land
grant members not to cut and sell lumber or crossbeams to the railroads unless it was for the price approved by their organization and not to work for anyone unless the Gorras approved the work and the pay. “White Caps, Fence Cutters, and Death” was prominently appended to this threatening notice. Claiming full employment at a decent wage was a just cause, Las Gorras Blancas stopped wagon teams hauling railroad ties for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad and unloaded and destroyed the ties if the drivers were not charging enough for their hauls. The masked riders also exhorted railroad workers to strike for higher wages and compelled employers to meet their terms. Because of this defiant intrusion by Las Gorras Blancas, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad stopped purchasing railroad ties in the Las Vegas area. Las Gorras Blancas began destroying and burning railroad bridges and tracks. By the summer of 1890, there were dozens of reports of violence. Hundreds of miles of fence had been destroyed, homes ransacked and burned, and agricultural implements smashed, all of this handiwork attributed to Las Gorras Blancas.

Organizing by the fence cutters continued as residents on land grants in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado came into its fold. Las Gorras Blancas also infiltrated the Knights of Labor, and the contingent of Spanish-speaking Knights named themselves Los Caballeros de Labor. The fifty Knights' local assemblies joined native New Mexicans in resisting land grabbers by organizing into the Las Vegas Land Grant Defense Association. Los Caballeros de Labor expanded its enlistment of native New Mexican wage earners, declaring to them that it was their right to organize to protect their jobs and families. Tapping the membership of the Knights' local assemblies, Juan Herrera recruited them into Las Gorras Blancas. On the night of July 3, Los Caballeros de Labor once again rode into Las Vegas. During the next day's July 4th celebration, a thousand Caballeros de Labor from San Miguel County, led by a twenty-five piece band playing “John Brown's Body,” joined a daytime procession through the town in a show of strength and support of the right of the people to own the land and to protect them against monopolists. Some members carried banners with slogans proclaiming in Spanish their organization's principles and objectives—free schools for their children, popular election of those who held public office, and protection of the workers against the monopolists, among others. In an indication of the populist leanings of Las Gorras Blancas, other men marching in the procession chanted: “El pueblo es rey, y los oficiales públicos son sus servidores humildes que deben obedecer sus mandados.” (“The people are king, and the public officials are their humble servants who must obey her mandates.”) On July 12, Knights' leader Terrence Powderly granted the San Miguel Caballeros de Labor a charter.

There was dissension, however, among the Caballeros de Labor regarding the tactics of Las Gorras Blancas.

Membership in Los Caballeros de Labor increased, and so did the night riding by Las Gorras Blancas. Tensions were running high in San Miguel County as a result of the rural rebellion. Aware of the growing threat to established order posed by Las Gorras Blancas, Governor Prince was in Washington, DC, lobbying for statehood for New Mexico, and could do nothing. Upon his return to Santa Fe, Prince contemplated using American soldiers stationed in the territory to patrol...
areas in which Las Gorras Blancas was active. On August 16, the governor paid a visit to Las Vegas. With over half the population of Las Vegas endorsing the fence cutting and other disturbances on the Las Vegas Land Grant, the meeting turned into a loud protest against the land grabbers. The Caballeros de Labor sent a committee headed by Nestor Montoya, the leader of San Miguel's Knights of Labor in Santa Fe who was also part owner of the newspaper La Voz del Pueblo, to speak with the governor. Angry that the public associated the Knights with the outbreak of violence, Montoya told the governor that Los Caballeros de Labor would help him quell the fence cutting and other destruction of rural property.\footnote{59}

The influence of Las Gorras Blancas waned as a result of Governor Prince's intervention, but more so because few fences remained standing in northern New Mexico. Another factor leading to Las Gorras Blancas' demise was that those who were members of the Knights of Labor became involved in politics. Native New Mexicans in Los Caballeros de Labor and in the Knights of Labor turned to the Populist Party. San Miguel County emerged as a bastion of El Partido del Pueblo Unido (the United People's Party). Composed of dissident factions from the Democratic and Republican parties, El Partido del Pueblo Unido was opposed to placing corporate and financial interests above the general welfare of New Mexico's mechanics, laborers, farmers, and ranchmen.\footnote{60}

Las Gorras Blancas, Los Caballeros de Labor, and the United People's Party were consequences of a long process of economic and social deterioration in the situation of the Spanish-speaking people of northern New Mexico. Organized resistance on such a large scale against the ruthless and greedy Anglo and Spanish-speaking ruling classes in the territory had not been seen since the Taos Revolt of 1847. It would not occur again until the early 1960s with the rise of the alianza movement of Reies López Tijerina. The loss of village lands in northern New Mexico continued and pushed more and more rural New Mexicans into the ranks of seasonal work. Some fled to Colorado while others remained in the countryside, landless, and further depressing rural wages by their competition. Racism played a role in the opposition by Congress to block statehood for New Mexico, whereas in Arizona many Anglos believed Mexicans were not ready for statehood.

STATEHOOD FOR NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA?

New Mexico had been seeking statehood for over half a century. In 1850, the year of President Zachary Taylor's death, and in the midst of the debate over slavery, the U.S. Congress nullified statehood for New Mexico when it passed the Compromise Bill granting New Mexico territorial status. In light of the era's racism, many officials were reluctant to admit large numbers of Mexicans, who were considered inferior. Other attempts to implement a state constitution followed. In 1871, the House failed to pass the Enabling Act to adopt a constitution in preparation for being admitted as a state, despite a passionate speech by House U.S. congressional delegate J. Francisco Chaves in support of the bill. In the following year, New Mexico voters rejected a proposed constitution for statehood because of a provision for public schools and another provision that was unfavorable to the territory's largely Catholic population.
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The majority of native New Mexicans joined the call for statehood out of their fear of being further disenfranchised by the growing Anglo presence. Mining interests, merchants, railroads, and large landowners, on the other hand, lined up to oppose New Mexico's becoming a state because they feared it would increase taxes. The main obstacle to New Mexico's gaining statehood was prejudice against the territory's native New Mexicans. Nativists believed the large Spanish-speaking population was too Catholic, too foreign, and unable to govern themselves. Some questioned their loyalty, even though thousands of native New Mexicans fought for the Union in the Civil War. Nevertheless, a movement for statehood took hold. Blocking this effort would be members of the U.S. Congress who championed imperialism and articulated a belief in white dominance. In the wake of late-nineteenth-century xenophobia, they deemed the New Mexico territory undeveloped and "too Mexican."

In 1888, a bill before Congress proposed statehood for several western territories, including New Mexico. The congressional Committee on Territories favored statehood for the Anglo territories of the Dakotas, Montana, and Washington but not for the New Mexico Territory because it lacked a public school system. Despite efforts of New Mexico's Republican political machine to amend a public school system proviso, the statehood bill was defeated. Racial prejudice remained a factor in denying the territory statehood. According to the subcommittee, "about two-thirds of the population is of the mongrel breed known as Mexicans and harbored anti-American sentiment." The Mexicans of New Mexico were "illiterate, superstitious, morally decadent, and indifferent to statehood." Native New Mexicans protested to their delegate to Congress, Antonio Joseph, who was working to pass the Enabling Act before Congress adjourned. Still, the U.S. Congress denied New Mexico statehood.

Eight years later, in 1902, the "omnibus bill" called for statehood for the Oklahoma territory and for the Arizona and New Mexico Southwest territories. The chair of the Committee on Territories was Indiana Senator Albert J. Beveridge, and he refused to act. Beveridge opposed admitting any more western states, as this would weaken Indiana's voice in the Senate, but more so because he was an ardent racist and imperialist. The Indiana senator was determined to keep "Mexican" New Mexico and "frontier" Arizona out of the Union. A subcommittee toured the three western territories marked for statehood. The subcommittee held sessions and heard testimony in Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Carlsbad. Only one witness gave unfavorable testimony regarding the fitness of the territory's Mexicans for statehood. This was sufficient evidence for Senator Beveridge to conclude that the people of New Mexico did not want statehood. The subsequent Beveridge Committee report recommended that New Mexico and Arizona be left as territories. Besides listing economic conditions, statehood for New Mexico was rejected because of the "condition" of the Spanish-speaking residents—specifically their "education, moral and other elements of citizenship were underlined as unfavorable qualities."

To Senator Beveridge, New Mexicans were at most second-class citizens. The Senator casually dismissed the fact that the New Mexicans had voted for statehood by noting that ignorant people could be convinced to vote for anything, if told that
it would help them. The Beveridge Report triggered indignation among Spanish-speaking New Mexicans. Finally, in 1910, Congress and President William Howard Taft approved an Enabling Act permitting New Mexicans to draft a constitution for statehood. Special language, voting, and educational guarantees were drawn up for the citizens of “Spanish descent.”

Although native New Mexicans volunteered to fight in the Spanish American War, the stereotype of the foreign-leaning Hispano persisted. Eastern newspapers accused New Mexico of siding with Madrid against Washington. Spanish flags reportedly were seen flying in Taos and Santa Fe, and it was feared that the territory’s Spanish-speaking population was set to revolt against the United States. New Mexicans reacted strongly to these newspaper reports of disloyalty by holding mass protest meetings in Santa Fe and Albuquerque. The 17,000 American soldiers who landed on the southeastern tip of Cuba in June 1898 included 1,200 men of the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt. Known as the “Rough Riders,” this unit featured a contingent of New Mexicans, led by Captains Maximiliano Luna and George Washington Armijo, who were in the forefront of the fighting. Educated at Georgetown University and a member of the New Mexico legislature, Luna was commissioned captain of Troop F, First U.S. Volunteer Calvary. He served in Cuba and then was sent to the Philippines, where he died. Many more New Mexicans had volunteered for service in the Spanish American War, but Governor Miguel A. Otero, Jr., kept them out. The governor feared that racial conflict between native New Mexicans and their Anglo comrades-in-arms would erupt and forestall efforts to gain statehood for New Mexico.

In 1906, the U.S. Congress passed a joint statehood bill for both the Arizona and New Mexico territories. New Mexico's population was about 50 percent Spanish-speaking, whereas Arizona's combined Indian and Mexican population was a little over 12 percent. The bill stipulated that rejection of joint statehood by the voters of either territory would prevent both Arizona and New Mexico from becoming states. Socially conservative members of the Arizona legislature passed a resolution protesting joint statehood, declaring that it “would subject us to the domination of another commonwealth of different traditions, customs and aspirations.” Arizona’s nativist residents assailed the territory’s Mexican Americans as “un-American.” Their opinions were summarized in a protest presented to the U.S. Congress on February 12, 1906. It stated that “the people of Arizona, 95 percent of whom are Americans, [object] to the probability of the control of public affairs by people of a different race, many of whom do not speak the English language. . . .”

Finally, on June 20, 1910, President Taft signed the Enabling Act authorizing the New Mexico territory to call a constitutional convention. Three provisions were proposed to protect the rights of the Spanish-speaking population to vote and to have access to education and to preserve all rights granted to native New Mexicans under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. On October 3, one hundred delegates convened at Santa Fe and drafted a constitution that voters confirmed on January 21, 1911. President Taft approved the constitution on February 24, 1911. Arizona also ratified its constitution, but President Taft rejected it. Congress asked New Mexico to resubmit a less restrictive provision for constitutional
amendments and asked Arizona to resubmit an amendment on the recall of officers. As the nineteenth century ended, the long-term territorial status of New Mexico and Arizona remained unresolved. With manual labor scarce in the Southwest, great numbers of workers from Mexico were recruited under labor contracts to fill this gap.

THE NEW SOUTHWEST ECONOMY AND THE FIRST MODERN PHASE OF MEXICAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

An expanding American economy produced an extractive industry and agriculture economy in the Southwest that became the hallmark of the late-nineteenth-century American West. Mexico was also on the verge of modern economic development. This unfolding structural transformation continued to concentrate wealth and power in the hands of the rich and to impoverish workers on both sides of the border to further enrich the wealthy. Rapid expansion of the railroads initiated this process by linking rural areas abundant in natural resources to national and international markets. The railroads employed labor on a mass scale, transforming once isolated workers into an industrial proletariat. American-owned railroads recruited and transported large numbers of workers from Mexico's
Central Plateau to northern Mexico, where the emigrants easily crossed the border to earn even higher wages. Trains allowed the workers to ride great distances free, or American employers paid the transportation. The latter hired Mexican workers through newly opened recruiting centers in El Paso, Eagle Pass, and Laredo, Texas, and spread this labor throughout the Southwest and West.68

Work in the American West was unsteady at best, as the cyclical fluctuations of the economy periodically threw large numbers of people out of work. Another characteristic of the West was that unskilled low-paid work became the domain of nonwhite workers. Employers argued that nonwhite workers were racially suited for this work because they, unlike white workers, lacked the necessary innate qualities such as ambition, skill, and intelligence for the better jobs. The debasement of work resulted in the emergence of a dual-wage labor system in the Southwest. Its long-range consequence was that it reinforced fragmentation on the basis of race among workers and led to their disunity.69

Under President Porfirio Diaz, railroads spurred the modernization of Mexico. Mexico's national railroad system was based on heavy foreign capital investment and tied to the American Southwest, a region undergoing vigorous expansion and relative prosperity. The construction of Mexico's north-south railroad lines permitted the economic development of its northern border by drawing tens of thousands of Mexicans to the region as economic pressures in Mexico mounted.70 Mexican and foreign investors who already had large properties in that country took possession of more of Mexico's land. With unemployment already severe in Mexico, both living costs and population growth increased significantly, and wages stagnated. Almost 90 percent of Mexico's workers earned between twenty and twenty-five cents per day, as the price of basic foodstuffs more than doubled.

The migration from remote districts in Mexico by this country's poor to the newly developed industries in northern Mexico in search of work was one stage in the general movement of Mexicans to the United States. Although freight traffic—usually in boxcars with no accommodations—was far more important than passenger traffic, Mexico's trains played an essential role in increasing Mexican immigration to the United States.

In 1877, one year after the United States celebrated its centennial, Mexico's President Diaz initiated the building of a national rail network. The construction program more than doubled Mexico's track mileage from seven hundred miles in 1880 to more than fifteen thousand miles by 1910. The Mexican Central and the Mexican National Railroads became the major north-south conduits of goods and people. Both roads made possible the opening of important American markets, which in turn advanced the growth of agriculture, ranching, and mining in Mexico's northern region and made it easier for thousands of Mexicans to ride the freight lines long distances to search for work.71

The Mexican Central Railway provided a direct link between Mexico City and Mexico's northern border with the United States. Controlled by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, the Mexican Central Railroad ran through the Mexican states of Aguascalientes, Zacatecas, and Chihuahua to the twin border towns of Ciudad Juarez-El Paso. The Ciudad Juarez Railroad provided another link between central Mexico and Mexico's northern border.72
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The arrival of the railroad in El Paso, Texas, spurred rapid population increases in this border town, turning it into a major railroad, mining, ranching, and labor hub. El Paso was a strategic point between the American railroad network of the Southern Pacific Railroad from the west, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad from the north, the Texas and Pacific and the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio railroads from the east, and the Mexican Central Railroad originating in central Mexico. In 1881, the Southern Pacific Railroad, laying lines east from Los Angeles, met the Texas and Pacific Railroad at El Paso, and the Santa Fe Railroad arrived at this American border town from Santa Fe. Connecting with the Santa Fe Railroad at Ciudad Juárez across from El Paso, the Mexican Central Railroad was an extension of this American rail line into Mexico. As a result of this railroad network covering a large area, El Paso became the quintessential entry point into the United States for Mexican immigrants seeking to cross the U.S. border. In 1887, the Kansas City Consolidated Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO) built a copper and lead smelter near the El Paso railroad yards. The community of “Smeltetown” came into existence as ASARCO’s Mexican employees began building houses for themselves and their families.73

Constructed in 1881 and initially called the Texas Mexican Railway, the Mexican National Railroad ran through Saltillo and Monterrey to Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Across the Rio Grande from Nuevo Laredo was Laredo, Texas. In 1883, the International Mexican Railroad reached Piedras Negras, Coahuila, located across the border from Eagle Pass, Texas. The twin border towns of Piedras Negras and Eagle Pass served as a departure point for Mexicans immigrating to Houston and other cities in eastern Texas. In the same year, the Mexican National Railroad reached the city of Matamoros, Tamaulipas. Brownsville, Texas, was located across the border from Matamoros. There, the Mexican National Railroad linked up with the St. Louis and Mexico Railroad into the interior of Texas.74

Agua Prieta, Sonora, became an important link for minerals and for labor to extract these minerals for American mining interests in the Sonora area. The Nacozari Railroad Company, owned by the Phelps Dodge Corporation’s El Paso and Southwestern Railroad, reached Agua Prieta in 1901. This Mexican rail line served as the conduit for Mexican labor to Douglas, Tucson, and Phoenix, Arizona, and to El Paso. In 1882, the Sonora Railroad Company Limited, owned by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, arrived in Nogales, Arizona, across the border from Nogales, Sonora.75

Characterized by an abundant supply of unskilled labor, the Porfiriato, the more than thirty-three years in which Porfirio Díaz ruled Mexico, contributed to the growth of a labor market in the northern states of Mexico. Drawn by work opportunities at relatively high wages, 270,900 Mexicans from central Mexico settled in the Mexican and U.S. border states. The employment of Mexicans by American railroad companies expanded greatly between 1880 and 1890. In 1908, 16,000 Mexicans were recruited by labor agents in El Paso for railroad work; two years later, 2,000 Mexicans were being hired each month for track work. Some Mexicans on their own sought out labor recruiters or tapped kinship networks to obtain jobs. Making up from 60 to 75 percent of some of the track crews, thousands of Mexicans employed on six-month contracts as graders, track layers, and
"spikers" constructed track lines and branch lines. Using handcars and in gangs of four to six workers, they inspected, maintained, and repaired worn rail arteries in southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada and north to the Canadian border and east to Chicago.76

Mexican labor built, maintained, and repaired the railroads that forged the links between the Southwest and the urban markets of the Midwest and the East. Over 70 percent of the track laborers had lived in the United States less than five years, and 98 percent were aliens. Most had been recruited in El Paso. Mexican track hands earned between $1.00 and $1.25 per day, less than other workers doing similar kinds of work but six times greater than the amount earned by workers in Mexico. Many worked as laborers and as helpers in the railroad shops and powerhouses.

Commenting on the influx of Mexicans, the U.S. Commissioner-General of Immigration pinpointed their appeal as railroad workers:

Mexican labor met an economic condition demanding laborers who could stand the heat and other discomforts of that particular section. The peon makes a satisfactory track hand, for the reasons that he is docile, ignorant, and non-clannish to an extent which makes it possible that one or more men shall quit or be discharged and others remain at work; moreover he is willing to work for a low wage.77

Mexican labor also made agricultural expansion in the Southwest possible. Cotton began to supplement ranching throughout Texas. In 1900, Texas cotton farmers expanded production into central and southwestern Texas. Unlike east Texas, these regions lacked black and white tenant farmers and sharecroppers to harvest the cotton. Therefore, Mexicans were recruited to fill the labor demand. Before the great Texas cotton harvests became possible, Mexicans performed the backbreaking work of "grubbing" the land. Grubbing consisted of clearing the land of mesquite brush and thorny undergrowth to make it fit for cultivation. The wages for Mexican workers almost doubled as they became vital to agricultural production. In 1903, Mexican agricultural workers earned 50 to 75 cents per day; in 1907, they were earning between $1.00 and $1.25 per day.

Mexicans met the increased demand for labor in the planting and harvesting of sugar beets. In 1897, the U.S. Congress imposed a 75 percent tax on foreign sugar imports. This tariff encouraged the development of American sugar beet production, and by 1906 domestic sugar beet production more than tripled from the 135,000 acres planted in 1900. Within two decades, land dedicated to sugar beets would increase to 872,000 acres, with the Great Plains region producing two-thirds of the nation's total crop.78

Railroad transportation to eastern markets stimulated expansion of the California citrus industry. The refrigerated railroad car and technical innovations in canning and food preservation increased perishable fruit and vegetable crop production. Between 1900 and 1920, California orange production quadrupled, and lemon production increased fivefold. In 1909, more than fifteen million boxes of California citrus, harvested with Mexican labor, were shipped by rail to the East.
By 1925, California was harvesting about twenty-four million boxes of citrus wholly through the use of Mexican labor. Mexican workers also aided in the growth of cotton in the Imperial Valley.\textsuperscript{79}

The Southwest produced 40 percent of America's fruits and vegetables, production that was accomplished with Mexican labor. The mines and smelters, sugar beet farms, government irrigation projects, road construction, cement factories, and municipal street railway work all depended on Mexican labor. In all instances of employment, Mexicans were given the worst jobs at the lowest pay. Working conditions were brutal. Mexicans were isolated from Anglo workers by laws, custom, and the dictates of society. American labor unions disliked and complained about Mexicans because they were used by employers to break strikes, destroy unions, and depress wages. However, the unions placed no restrictions on non-skilled employment opportunities for Mexicans. The workers were subjected to a barrage of racial slurs and insults and became the targets of Anglo working-class frustration during economic depressions.\textsuperscript{80}

U.S. immigration officials reported that many of the immigrants from Mexico were married and had their families with them but were mobile and moved readily to places that needed their labor. Widespread discrimination against Mexicans was a recurring fact of life in the American West. Anglos ensured that Mexicans remained not only in low-wage jobs but also relegated to the worst living conditions. The daily life of mining families was harsh. Segregated by race and ethnicity, the mining camps had a higher turnover of workers. Mexican workers and their families occupied adobe huts or hovels outside of the town limits. Railroad section hands lived in freight cars fitted with windows and bunks or in shacks along the roads. Housing for the Mexicans who lived in the region's urban centers was likewise deplorable, marked by poor sewage, dilapidated housing, and rampant disease. In all these instances, Anglos showed no compassion but instead blamed Mexicans for their own lamentable conditions as the result of poor morals, laziness, or their alleged backward culture. Mexicans nonetheless established a sense of community and common interests in the United States. Restaurants, grocery stores, barbershops, tailor shops, and other services catered to the community. The desire of Mexicans to locate near kin and friends resulted in residential clustering. In these insular environments circumscribed by prejudice and discrimination, Mexicans maintained their social, cultural, and family customs and language, and their newspapers stressed Mexican pride and the importance of Mexico as the homeland. Along with churches, mutual aid societies were the first social institutions created by Mexican immigrants in the United States.

Mexicans banded together in mutual aid societies to defend themselves and to maintain old customs in the new environment. The orientation and goals of the mutual-aid societies and fraternal organizations varied from welfare and relief to Masonic and social pursuits. All produced camaraderie and advocated ethnic consciousness already strong among the immigrants. Most of the self-help organizations were local in nature, whereas others became national in scope. Founded in 1894, the Alianza Hispano-Americana (Hispanic American Alliance) had chapters in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. The tendency of
Mexicans toward trade unionization derived in part from the mutual-aid societies among them.

As wages began fluctuating in response to industrial development, Mexicans found the need to organize for decent wages and better working conditions. In 1883, Tejano vaqueros in west Texas were among the several hundred cowboys who went on strike against the cattle companies. Thousands of Mexicans from Texas to California joined the Holy Order of the Knights of Labor. The expansion of mining in Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado led to pronounced unionism. Mexican farmworkers likewise fought to improve wages and working conditions. In 1903, more than one thousand Mexican and Japanese sugar beet workers on area farms near Oxnard, California, waged a successful two-month-long strike. Even though they were unwelcome in the predominantly white unions because they were imported at times to break strikes, more and more Mexicans in the early twentieth century turned to labor unions for help.

CONCLUSION

Following the end of the Civil War, the twin practices of paternalism and patronage in the Southwest gave way to a virulent strain of racism with regard to Anglo relations with Mexicans. By the late nineteenth century, racial divisions defined one's place in the region. The forces of oppression were marshaled against Mexicans to deny them their rights and drive them off their land. This was done at times in collusion with the elite Mexicans. However, the wealth, status, and education of the elite Mexicans mattered little to Anglos, many of the latter newcomers to the Southwest. Assimilating racist instincts, they did not draw distinctions between the landowning and merchant elite and the Mexicans employed as ranchers and tenant farmers, for they now regarded all Mexicans much as they did blacks and foreign immigrants—a “servile people...beaten men of a beaten race.”

Land-hungry Anglo migrants and speculators from the East flooded southern California with the arrival of the railroads. Racism was quickly picked up by these new arrivals, who remained isolated from the Mexicans on whose labor they depended. Segregated by race into Sonora towns, Mexicans dug ditches, harvested crops, and performed other work considered unfit for Anglos. In South Texas, Tejanos lost their land through fraud and coercion. Texas Rangers' hatred and brutality toward the Mexicans was extreme; the Rangers acted as hired guns to Anglo-Texan ranchers who dispossessed and proletarianized Tejano ranchers and vaqueros. The eventual violent collapse of Tejano ranching society took place in the early twentieth century, when the Texas Rangers, intermediaries in the transition to capitalism, cleaned out the remaining Tejano landowners, summarily executing more than three hundred “suspected Mexicans.” The railroads' arrival in Texas led to economic penetration. In addition to population shifts and the Americanization of cities, commercial agriculture underscored the taking away of land from Tejano farmers and ranchers and increased their use as low-wage itinerant workers. As the nineteenth century came to a close, Tejanos
and growing numbers of Mexican immigrants now made up the large labor force in South Texas.84

Those in power in the New Mexico territory followed a policy of keeping the Spanish-speaking population subjugated. The transition to wage work for New Mexicans came as they lost control of their lands to growing market forces. The antimonopoly outrage briefly brought down the wrath of the native New Mexicans. Seeking to halt their dispossession and exploitation and to protect themselves against the monopolists, they formed Las Gorras Blancas, the Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, and the Populist Party. This movement, which included fence cutting, began in 1888 and was spent by 1890. It succumbed to the power pressures of the industrial capitalism that ushered in proletarianization. The Spanish-speaking farmers, small ranchers, and craftsmen were transformed into a migratory labor force in mining and agriculture.

Because of xenophobia that witnessed a rebirth of nativism, the U.S. Congress objected to statehood for the New Mexico territory, claiming language difficulties, illiteracy, and the lack of desire for statehood on the part of its Spanish-speaking residents. Racism was also an underlying factor in the Arizona Territory. Here, Anglos deemed the Mexicans as un-American and an obstacle to America's progress and development.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the extractive economy of the American West was firmly fixed to the larger national and world economies. The railroads and their feeder lines created the infrastructure for its development and added enormously to power and wealth for a few and to proletarianization for masses of Mexicans as they moved into the labor force as racialized wage workers.85 Railroads, mines, corporate ranches, and farms came to depend on the labor of Mexicans, both U.S. citizens and, increasingly, nationals from Mexico.86 Powerful economic forces governed the streams of Mexican immigration to the United States.

As the development of the Southwest economy opened up in railroad, mining, and agricultural work, similar economic expansion in northern Mexico drew Mexicans to the border region in search of work. Employment agencies advanced board, lodging, and transportation to the job-hungry Mexicans. U.S. immigration officials looked the other way, as they did not think the Mexicans would become a public charge.87 In fact, U.S. immigration policy was being shaped to favor the labor demands of American employers always in need of cheap labor. The U.S. Departments of Labor, Agriculture, and the State began to work closely with American businesses in shaping labor migration patterns on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Mexican immigration followed certain cyclical trends related to the social and economic situation in Mexico and the labor needs of the Southwest economy. By 1890, more than 75,000 Mexicans had immigrated to the United States. Almost two-thirds crossed into Texas, whereas the remainder went to California, New Mexico, and elsewhere. In 1908, following a short recession, between 60,000 and 100,000 Mexicans entered the United States each year. In 1910, the Mexican population of the United States was estimated at between 381,000 and 562,000.88 The continual arrival of immigrants from Mexico soon became the most compelling drama that unfolded in the Southwest.
NOTES


5. Almaguer, Racial Fault Lines, 32; White, It's Your Misfortune, 324; Carey McWilliams, Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California (Boston: Little, Brown, 1935), 21; Monroy, Thrown Among Strangers, 271–272. For example, only 10 percent of the Spanish-speaking population of Los Angeles were permanent residents in 1870. Ten years later, in 1880, census records showed that over 90 percent of the town's Mexicans had arrived after 1848.

6. Estrada, Los Angeles Plaza, 71. Between 1850 and 1851, forty-four homicides were committed in Los Angeles County. No one was convicted of these murders. Griswold del Castillo, The Los Angeles Barrio, 106–107; White, It's Your Misfortune, 332–333; Robbins, Colony and Empire, 30.


8. Almaguer, Racial Fault Lines, 31. The remaining Chinese in California worked as farm hands and ranch hands. They made up half the workforce in the southern California citrus industry and over 90 percent of the truck gardeners and vegetable vendors in Los Angeles. White, It's Your Misfortune, 323. In Santa Barbara, 80 percent of the Mexican wage earners were unskilled workers but did not hold full-time employment. Monroy, Thrown Among Strangers, 245–250, 252.


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15. U.S. Consul Thomas F. Wilson testified that along the border no concern was raised over killing a Mexican. De Leon, Tejano Community, 18–19.


18. Webster, “Texan Manifest Destiny,” 131–134. A battle of attrition was also taking place against Indians that followed the swelling Anglo settlement onto Indian lands.


20. Ibid.

21. Meanwhile, Gregorio’s brother Romaldo died in the Karnes County Jail from a gunshot wound.


26. Ibid., 29–32, 34; White, It’s Your Misfortune, 323–324.


31. Wilson, “Brown over ‘Other White,’” 152–153. Rodriguez also stated that he was unacquainted with the American form of government.


33. Truett, Fugitive Landscapes, 57; Marcy G. Goldstein, “Americanization and Mechanization: The Mexican Elite and Anglo American in the Gadsden Purchase Lands,


43. Gonzales, "Struggle for Survival," 301; Malcolm Ebright, "The Embudo Grant: A Case Study of Justice and the Court of Private Land Claims," *Journal of the West* 19, no. 3 (July 1980): 36. The U.S. Constitution mandates that no one be deprived of property without a judicial determination that meets the requirements of due process of law. Due process requires that there be a hearing at which interested parties can present evidence and cross-examine opposing witnesses. The failure to require a hearing meant that most land claims were decided solely on the affidavits of the claimant and their witnesses. Claimants were usually not even notified of the proceedings.


45. Ibid., 38; Gonzales, "Struggle for Survival," 302.

46. Ibid., 38; Gonzales, "Struggle for Survival," 302.


49. For example, Governor William Pile and his librarian were accused of selling or destroying Spanish and Mexican archive records. In its report to President Ulysses S. Grant, an investigative committee recommended removing Governor Pile from office. Philip B. Gonzales, ""La Junta de Indignación": Hispano Repertoire of Collective Protest in New Mexico, 1884–1933," *Western Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 166–167.
50. Ibid., 167–168.
54. Rosenbaum, Mexican Resistance in the Southwest, 118–119.
56. Laurie, Artisans into Workers, 154; Rosenbaum, Mexican Resistance in the Southwest, 119–121; Larson, New Mexico Populism, 36, 40; Larson, “The White Caps of New Mexico,” 175, 178, 181.
57. Larson, New Mexico Populism, 36, 40; Larson, “The White Caps of New Mexico,” 176, 179.
60. Laurie, Artisans into Workers, 175; Rosenbaum, Mexican Resistance in the Southwest, 126; Larson, New Mexico Populism, 67; Larson, “The White Caps of New Mexico,” 182. In one nighttime procession, five hundred masked men on horseback rode through Las Vegas, carrying torches and flags and shouting, “Que viva el Partido del Pueblo Unido en el Condado de San Miguel!” (“Long Live the United People’s Party in San Miguel County!”).
67. “The rights, privileges and immunities, civil, political and religious, granted to the people of New Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo shall be preserved inviolate.” See N. Mex. Const. art. VII § 3, art. XII §§ 8, 10, 1912.

71. Truett, Fugitive Landscapes, 59.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., 60; Montejano, Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, p. 94; Robbins, Colony and Empire, 31–32; White, It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own, 255.

74. Truett, Fugitive Landscapes, 60; Montejano, Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 95, 98.

75. Truett, Fugitive Landscapes, 59, 82–83; Miguel Tinker Salas, In the Shadow of the Eagles: Sonora and the Transformation of the Border During the Porfiriato (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 131–132. In 1927, the Southern Pacific of Mexico Railroad linked Guadalajara with Nogales, Arizona. This rail link altered the dynamics of immigration from Mexico because prior to this most immigrants from the Mexican state of Jalisco entered the United States through El Paso.

76. Juan Mora-Torrez, The Making of the Mexican Border: The State, Capitalism, and Society in Nuevo Leon, 1848–1910 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 127–133. For example, Mexicans were introduced into sugar beet work in central California to undercut the wages of Japanese and German-Russian workers.


78. From 1923 to 1932 Nebraska ranked second behind Colorado in annual sugar beet acreage (74,000 acres) and first in the nation in yield per acre (12.7 tons).


80. Three-fourths of the street railway workers earned $1.75 per day. Mexicans performed almost all of the construction and maintenance work on southern California’s urban street railway systems.

81. Montejano, Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 87–88; White, It’s Your Misfortune, 289. Founded in 1911 in Texas, the Mexican Protective Association was one of the earliest Mexican agricultural unions.

82. Montejano, Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 94.


84. Montejano, Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 89, 92.

85. White, It’s Your Misfortune, 257, 267, 323.


87. Ibid.

88. For example, many of the Mexicans employed as railroad section hands took advantage of the free transportation furnished by the railroad companies and returned to their homeland.