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UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

Attitudes About Work and Time in Los Angeles, 1769-1880

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in History

by

Tyler Daniel Lachman

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2016

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2016

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Lachman', is written over a horizontal line.

Tyler D. Lachman

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Leonard Pitt, C. Dallett Hemphill, Dorothy Smith, Grandpa Aubrey “Buddy”
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Introduction

On January 10, 1847, during the US-Mexican War, roughly 600 American soldiers marched into the small city of Los Angeles.¹ Though the *Californio* soldiers had surprised the American marines with their fighting spirit in previous skirmishes, Los Angeles would eventually capitulate with the signing of the Treaty of Cahuenga.² In a small municipality of fewer than 2,500 people, consisting mostly of rancheros, farmers, and Indian laborers, what was to become of Los Angeles' citizens?³ More specifically, would the *Angelinos* socially and economically survive Americanization?⁴ Both nineteenth century contemporaries and modern historians have suggested that the pre-American Angelino way of life quickly died out because the Angelinos were either too indolent, or not astute enough to survive American annexation. This thesis takes a different approach and argues that between 1848 and 1880, the Spanish-speaking Angelino residents proved resilient politically, socially, and economically. While it is true that the Californio residents did lose most of their social and financial power, it was largely due to events out of their control such as the Gwin Act, torrential rains and

¹ Andrew Rolle with Arthur Verge, *California: A History, Seventh Edition* (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson Inc., 2008), 108.

² *Californio* is a nineteenth century term that refers to the Spanish-speaking, Mexican era California residents and their culture; cited in David Samuel Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.: Race, Space, and Municipal Power in Los Angeles, 1781-1894* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 9.

³ Los Angeles City Archives, Erwin C. Piper Technical Center, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3, *Register of the City of Los Angeles and its Jurisdiction for the year 1844*.

⁴ *Angelino* refers to the Spanish-speaking Californio inhabitants of Los Angeles with ties to Mexico, Spain, or Latin America, pre-1850.

flooding in 1861 and 1862, a drought that lasted from 1862 to 1864 and the overwhelming American population boom of the 1870s and 80s.⁵ Thus, this thesis utilizes research on attitudes towards work, social structure, and work routines to not only understand Los Angeles society, but also to defend it against charges that it was too slothful to keep up with Americanization.

The communal social structure of Los Angeles, from 1781 to 1846, generated a hard-working culture, prepared for American annexation. Founded by Spain to provide food for the presidios, the first *pobladores* lived a communal lifestyle, in which all civilians were expected to contribute to the overall well being of the *pueblo*.⁶ For example, the original land petitions approved by the

⁵ The *Gwin Act*, or “Land Law” as it was often called, undermined Californio land titles by demanding that “each and every person claiming lands in California...present the same to the said commissioners...documentary evidence and testimony of witnesses.” Though the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo legally protected the property of Mexican citizens living in America’s newly acquired territories, the Gwin Act usurped the treaty. California Senator William M. Gwin was enticed by the opportunity to acquire California lands for use by Americans remarking, “our titles in California are *equities*.” The law was passed by the Senate in 1851 and subsequently put Californios through financial strains as they journeyed up and down from Los Angeles to San Francisco for court. The government made things worse through unnecessary appeals that only further indebted Californios. Though most claimants eventually won their cases, the average case lasted an average of seventeen years. As a result, many Californios lost large portions of their lands to lawyer fees, which were often paid in land, and squatters, who moved in while the Californios’ titles were unresolved; cited in W.W. Robinson, *Land in California* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1948), 98-107.

⁶ Founded on September 4, 1781 by Governor Felipe de Neve, under King Carlos III; Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The History of California*, 7 vols., (San Francisco: The History Company, 1883-1887), 1:310-52; cited in Michael J. González, *This City Will Be a Mexican Paradise: Exploring the Origins of Mexican Culture in Los Angeles, 1821 – 1846* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 1; *Pobladores* means settler in Spanish. It also refers to the original eleven families who inhabited Los Angeles, consisting of forty-four settlers and two soldiers, Robert Glass Cleland, *The Cattle on a Thousand Hills: Southern*

ayuntamiento, or common council, came with livestock, a small garden plot, and other incentives but also several stipulations.⁷ The founding orders included that settlers live in close proximity, titleholders fence and develop their property, not take too much water from the *zanjas*, or canals, as well as contribute crops and meats to the pueblo collective.⁸ Thus, not only did Angelinos have to work their land to provide for their daily basic needs, but also serve the Crown by sharing with fellow Californios. This is not a practice that an indolent society would possess.

This communal mentality would continue into the Mexican era, 1821 to 1846. Records show Mexican Angelinos taking care of their daily responsibilities, while still sharing resources. Mexican independence brought *liberalism*, and the end of *gachupín*, or *peninsular* dominance.⁹ Mexican rule did not end the

California, 1850-1880 (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1951), 77; *Pueblo* refers to Spanish civilian settlements, differentiated from the military *presidios*, and religious *missions*, Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 25.

⁷ William D. Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 27-33; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 25; 42-52.

⁸ *Zanja* means water ditch or canal in Spanish. Angelinos heavily utilized the *zanjas*, which drew from the Los Angeles River, for agriculture. The *Zanja Madre* or “Mother Ditch” was the main aqueduct that brought water from the river and was located at present day Broadway Street in downtown Los Angeles, LACA, untitled records series, vol. 1, folder 1, 511; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 27; 42-52.

⁹ Under Mexico, *Liberalism* expressed many meanings. A liberal could profess “racial equality,” or argue for the secularization of the missions, and a more limited central government. This newfound liberalism also removed several social, political and economic barriers for both men and women. Overall, a liberal tried to better mankind by “removing the impediments that prevented the individual from intellectual or economic achievement.” In Los Angeles, liberalism’s most prized virtue was work; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 41-8 and 204; Michael J. González defines a *peninsular* as “an individual who came directly from Spain”; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 43; Leonard Pitt

pueblo's communal sharing of resources however, as land and water was still considered community property. For example, Angelinos who petitioned for vacant lands had to wait two years before receiving their title, and only after the ayuntamiento's land committee agreed that the property was properly fenced and cultivated to their satisfaction.¹⁰ Going further, the Los Angeles River's many *zanjas*, which were fed from the *Zanja Madre*, were available to all residents but no one was allowed to disrupt, divert, or procure too much water.¹¹ For example, one of the duties of the ayuntamiento's *zanjero*, or one in charge of *zanja* water distribution, was monitoring and reprimanding water abusers.¹² And besides their community responsibilities, Angelinos were commercially industrious despite living in a geographically isolated market.¹³ The few reliable trading partners

defines a *gachupín* as "one born in Spain," and argues that Californios "frequently" used this term, Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios, A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 309-10.

¹⁰ LACA, July 20, 1838, untitled records series, vol. 1, folder 1, 511; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 45-6.

¹¹ Finished in October 1781, the *Zanja Madre* was a canal that ran south from the Los Angeles River to the pueblo, north of the plaza, Howard J. Nelson, *The Los Angeles Metropolis* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1983), 133, and Boyle Workman, *The City That Grew* (Los Angeles: Southland Publishing, 1935), 1; cited in Blake Gumprecht, *The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 44; Donald J. Pisani, *Water, Land, and Law in the West: The Limits of Public Policy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1996), and Michael C. Meyer, *Water in the Hispanic Southwest: A Social and Legal History, 1550 – 1850* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1984); cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 48.

¹² LACA, March 3, 1839, untitled records series, vol. 1, folder 1, 102-3; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 48.

¹³ Adele Ogden, "Hides and Tallow: McCulloch, Hartnell, and Company, 1822-1828," *Historical Society Southern California Quarterly* 6:3 (September 1927), 39; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 61.

were American merchant ships that would often anchor for a year or more, receiving hides and tallow. In exchange, Angelinos would collect luxury goods.¹⁴

Although early to mid-nineteenth century America was culturally dissimilar to Los Angeles, both societies were analogous in terms of work ethic and punctuality. After achieving independence from Spain, Mexican Los Angeles rid itself of racial and economic barriers, similar to the United States post-Revolution. Therefore, both societies espoused economic independence. In Los Angeles, class and culture defined one's ability to make a good living but not necessarily race.¹⁵ Concurrently with the United States, the contemporary "American Dream" promised that *all* white male Americans, regardless of their start in society, could make a good life for themselves as long as they were willing to work hard. Americans even gained an international reputation for nervous exhaustion, called the "American Disease," or "Americanitis."¹⁶ Going further, this call to assiduous behavior made both Angelino and American culture synonymous with economic freedom. Benjamin Franklin's "Time is Money!" maxim often characterized the way Americans scrupulously used the clock for rapid profit seeking.¹⁷ Franklin explained:

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Fredrik Barth, "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries," 15, Carlos Manuel Salomon, *Pío Pico: The Last Governor of Mexican California* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 12-6, cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 41; Pitt, *Decline*, 309.

¹⁶ George Miller Beard, *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences, A Supplement to Nervous Exhaustion (Neurasthenia)* (New York, G.P. Putnam's and Sons: 1881), 13-8; 122-5.

¹⁷ Benjamin Franklin, "Advice to a Young Tradesman," in *Franklin: The Autobiography and Other Writings on Politics, Economics, and Virtue* (Boston: Cambridge University Press), 200-202.

He that can earn Ten Shillings a Day by his Labour, and goes abroad, or sits idle one half of that Day, tho' he spends but Sixpence during his Diversion or Idleness, ought not to reckon That the only Expence; he has really spent or rather thrown away Five Shillings besides.¹⁸

Likewise in Mexican Los Angeles, Angelino culture championed hard work. One particular play from 1831 entitled *Cartilla sobre cria de gusanos de seda*, or *Pamphlet On Breeding Silk Worms*, has the dramatist elucidating his intention to instruct “the parents of families” in “inspir[ing a] love of work in their sons.”¹⁹

Like Los Angeles, the United States was mostly an agrarian society. According to the United States 1850 census, there were 123,000 locations that received industrial classification.²⁰ But while industrial America had grown mightily, the 1850 US Census shows a majority of 4.5 million farmers on 1.5 million farms however, compared to 1.5 million factory or mechanized workers.²¹ Likewise in Los Angeles, cattle and farming fueled the economy. Therefore, many Angelinos and Americans lived on farms.

Californios and Americans lived in a hierarchical society in which, Indians and blacks occupied the lower strata, respectively. While the Californios worked hard, they nevertheless left the onerous work to the *Tongva* Natives, either

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 46 and 205.

²⁰ *Historical Statistics of the United States, Millennial Edition*, 5 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 4, 74.

²¹ Ibid, 74.

through crude payments or coercion.²² During Spain's reign, Angelinos cared little about native conversion, instead "beat[ing], starv[ing], and abus[ing]" the Indians into submission.²³ Under Mexico, the exploitation of the natives continued. The 1836 and 1844 *padróns*, or censuses, show many Indian men listed as *jornaleros*, or day laborers, while Indian women are often listed as *sirvientes*, or servants.²⁴ Mexico's secularization policy promised neophytes the opportunity to purchase mission lands and own their homes.²⁵ Instead, Californio Angelinos took advantage and snatched up most of the rancho lands, including Antonio María Lugo, Pío Pico, Antonio Ygnacio Avila, and Ygnacio Coronel, who became rancheros.²⁶ The neophytes were left with only two choices. The first was to reconcile with Indians in the wild but due to their conversion to

²² *Tongva* refers to the Native Indians who occupied Los Angeles. The Spanish missionaries called them Gabrielinos and Fernandinos after San Gabriel and San Fernando Mission, respectively, Hugo Reid, *The Indians of Los Angeles County: Hugo Reid's Letters of 1852*, edited and annotated by Robert F. Heizer (Los Angeles: Southwest Museum, 1968), 1; Father Narciso Durán to Governor José Figueroa, July 3, 1833; cited in C. Alan Hutchinson, *Frontier Settlement in Mexican California: the Híjar-Padrés Colony and Its Origins, 1769-1835* (New Haven: University of Connecticut Press, 1969), Miroslava Chávez-García, *Negotiating Conquest: Gender and Power in California, 1770s to 1880s* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006), 68; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 38-9.

²³ Estrada, *Los Angeles Plaza*, 36-7; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 35.

²⁴ Los Angeles City Archives, Erwin C. Piper Technical Center, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3, *Register of the City of Los Angeles and its Jurisdiction for the year 1836*; LACA, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3, *Register of the City of Los Angeles and its Jurisdiction for the year 1844*.

²⁵ *Neophyte* refers to Indians that converted to Catholicism and participated in mission life, Bernice Eastman Johnston, *California's Gabrielino Indians* (Los Angeles, Southwest Museum, 1962), 136-8; Keld J. Reynolds, "Principal Actions of the California Junta de Fomento, 1825-1827," *HSSCQ* 25 (December 1946): 267-77, 347-56; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 36-7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Christianity, they faced possible death by fellow Indians.²⁷ The other choice was to remain at or near the pueblo and become laborers for the Californios. In return for their services, the Indian laborers received poor compensation, including crudely built huts, blankets, clothing, corn, beef, beans, or *aguardiente*.²⁸ The valued goods, including expensive imports, were usually reserved for the *gente de razón*.²⁹ Sometimes the Indians were coerced to work however, either through the same methods used during the Spanish era, or through vagrancy laws designed to enslave them.³⁰ Concomitantly, the United States held legal slavery over persons of African descent, utilizing them for onerous work. Though slavery would be confined to the southern states after the American Revolution, it would not be abolished until after the American Civil War, and the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment. American culture hypocritically championed an assiduous work ethic, despite holding blacks in bondage. Besides slavery, Americans *did* possess a strong work ethic. Thus, Californio and American cultures both espoused responsibility and hard work, but simultaneously maintained an exploitative class system.

Both before and during the American era, Californio and *Anglo-American* Angelinos held a respectful relationship, sharing their mores in order to prosper in

²⁷ Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 136-8.

²⁸ *Aguardiente* was a potent wine made from mission grapes, and given out to Indians as payment for labor, Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 181; Chávez-Garcia, *Negotiating Conquest*, 68; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 38-9.

²⁹ *Gente de razón* translates as “people of reason,” but Michael J. González states that it also connotes “non-Indian,” signifying a higher social status over the Indians, *HSSCQ* 18, no. 3 (1936): 720 and 730; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 19, 30.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

Los Angeles.³¹ Sometimes this relationship was tested, including late 1847 after the Treaty of Cahuenga, and with the early the race riots of the late 1850s but overall, Anglos and Californios largely cooperated in Los Angeles.³² Anglo and European foreigners started living in the pueblo in the 1820s.³³ These immigrants “shared [a] cultural system...of kinship” with the Californios as they learned Spanish, married Californio women, adopted Catholicism and joined in traditional Californio agricultural and social practices, thereby becoming socially accepted.³⁴ On the Californio side, Juan Bautista Alvarado publicly agreed with the American maxim, “Time is Money!” arguing that it had achieved magnificent achievements.³⁵ Juan Bandini also publicly praised the American Constitution and its tenets.³⁶ The US-Mexican War would test their relationship however, as in late 1847, ten months after the Treaty of Cahuenga formally ended hostilities, tensions heightened to the point that a duel was scheduled “between Mexicans and Americans.”³⁷ Besides resentment over the war, various ethnic groups, including Californios and American soldiers, would frequent the nearby Indian *ranchería*

³¹ *Anglo-American* refers to non-Hispanic Americans. Although the term does not necessarily suggest that every American is of Anglo-Saxon ethnicity, the term refers to the dominant Anglo-Saxon American culture. According to Leonard Pitt, Anglo-American was not known of or used in nineteenth century California, but it came into popular use in the 1960s, Pitt, *Decline*, 309.

³² Pitt, *Decline*, 148-66.

³³ María Raquel Casas, *Married to a Daughter of the Land: Spanish-Mexican Women and Interethnic Marriage in California, 1820-1880* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2007), 9; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 56.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Pitt, *Decline*, 23.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ LACA, November 3, 1847, untitled records series, vol. 4, folder 2, 498-9, 500, 505-6, and 622, cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 69.

and engage in drunken brawls.³⁸ Violence would be narrowly averted however, as several prominent citizens quickly came together to propose the liquidation of the *ranchería*, thereby eliminating the perceived source of strife.³⁹ After the *ayuntamiento* approved the *ranchería*'s removal, Californio and Anglo residents shared a relatively peaceful relationship. Going further, the Indian removal served as a catalyst for greater cooperation between Anglos and Californios, as Angelinos deflected their anger towards the Natives.⁴⁰ Finally, the main source of cooperation between the two groups was their shared interest in agriculture, especially cattle ranching and farming.⁴¹

Starting in the late 1850s, the Californios began to lose their social dominance due to both governmental obstruction and consecutive natural catastrophes. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo "inviolably" guaranteed the property of Californios "established in territories...previously belonging to Mexico."⁴² The 1851 Gwin Act circumvented the treaty however, as the act was designed to steal rancho lands by putting the "burden of proof" on Mexican era landowners.⁴³ More specifically, the land act requested that all claimants "present...to the... [presidentially appointed] commissioners...documentary

³⁸ *Ranchería* refers to an Indian settlement; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 20; Ibid.

³⁹ LACA, November 20, 1847, untitled records series, vol. 4, folder 2, 510, cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 69-70.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 56-62; Gumprecht, *L.A. River*, 47-56.

⁴² "The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo," Article VIII and IX, February 2, 1848. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (Hispanic Reading Room, Hispanic Division). Accessed September 14, 2014. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/ghtreaty/>.

⁴³ *Act to Ascertain and Settle the Private Land Claims in the State of California*, from the *U.S. Statutes at Large*, vol. 9, 631; cited in Robinson, *Land*, 100-2, 253-258.

evidence and...witness...testimony.”⁴⁴ Between all the costly and lengthy trips to San Francisco for court, squatters moved in and occupied the ranches despite the rancheros’ efforts. Overall, it took an average of seventeen years to get a land claim approved in an arduous process that financially hurt most claimants.⁴⁵ Next, the cattle trade was dealt a blow by torrential rains that lasted from Christmas Eve 1861 to January 23, 1862, flooding the Los Angeles River and severely damaging livestock and other public property.⁴⁶ Worse was yet to come though, after the flood came a severe drought in which Los Angeles only received four inches of rain for twenty-seven months.⁴⁷ This effectively killed Los Angeles’ traditional cattle ranching economy, cutting off the main source of income for many Californio dons including Juan Bandini, Ygnacio del Valle, Antonio F. Coronel, Pío Pico, and Julio Verdugo.⁴⁸ The drought affected Anglo and European rancheros as well, including Abel Stearns, Henry Dalton, William Wolfskill, and John Frohling.⁴⁹ Los Angeles lost its Hispanic majority shortly after the American Civil War due to an Anglo-American population boom that was buoyed by the

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ J.N. Bowman “Index of California Private Land Grants and Private Land Grant Papers” (Washington D.C.: *The Quarterly* of the Historical Society of Southern California, 1944); cited in Robinson, *Land*, 102-106.

⁴⁶ *Los Angeles Star*, January 25, 1862, 2, Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (New York: Vintage, 1999); cited in Robinson, *Land*, 169-70.

⁴⁷ Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850-1890: A Social History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 42, Pitt, *Decline*, 244-8; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 170-1.

⁴⁸ Pitt, *Decline*, 250-2.

⁴⁹ Ibid; *Los Angeles Star*, January 25, 1862, 2; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 169.

opening of the Southern Pacific Railroad.⁵⁰ Despite all these setbacks, the Californio influence on Los Angeles still continued.⁵¹

The Californios largely recovered from their financial troubles, and continued to exert their influence in politics, economics, and social life through the next generations. They continued a prominent role in local and state politics, including Cristóbal Aguilar, who was elected mayor in 1872, Ignacio Sepúlveda, who served as Superior Court Judge from 1879 to 1884, and Romualdo Pacheco, who had been active in politics since 1853 and eventually became California's governor in 1875.⁵² By the 1870s, Los Angeles' Hispanic population was mostly pushed to *Sonoratown*, which was economically neglected compared to the majority Anglo neighborhoods.⁵³ Californios did not remain in Sonoratown however, they chose to live in their rancho homes in the San Fernando, San

⁵⁰ Castillo, *Barrio*, 318; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 172.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² *La Crónica* (Los Angeles), May 11, June 8, Oct. 19, Nov. 30, 1872, March 12, June 14, 21, 28, Aug. 23, and Sept. 3, 1873; *El Demócrata* (Los Angeles), Nov. 1, 1882; Hubert Howe Bancroft, "Pioneer Register and Index," in *History of California* (San Francisco, 1886), V, 716, IV, 764; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 270-1; Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 202-3.

⁵³ *Sonoratown* refers to the Hispanic section of Los Angeles, which received its derisive nickname from Anglo visitors, who likened the area to Sonora, Mexico. It spread out from north of the Plaza and east of Main Street. Although some gente de razóns lived in Sonoratown, including Joaquín Sepúlveda, the area had a reputation for lawlessness, vice and violence. Californios and Anglos both denounced Sonoratown residents as cholos from Mexico. Except for a few exceptions, including Pío Pico and his hotel, most Californios left Sonoratown by the 1880s. Harris Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California, 1853 – 1913, Containing the Reminiscences of Harris Newmark* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1916), 31; Castillo, *Barrio*, 35, 141-9; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 139-40.

Gabriel, and San Bernardino Valleys.⁵⁴ Economically, they continued to succeed in agricultural and commercial enterprises including sheep grazing, winemaking, exotic and staple crop farming, hotel ownership, civic engineering, factory ownership, and real estate.⁵⁵ Lastly, they also continued their old social traditions together, hosting large fiestas, wearing traditional garb, and preserving their faith in Roman Catholicism.⁵⁶

This thesis argues that the industrious Californio people continued to prosper in Los Angeles after statehood in 1850. Certain historians have emphasized the hardworking Californio culture at various points in Los Angeles history. But no one has defended their overall work ethic. Thus, this thesis goes farther than other historians in discrediting the notion that Californio Angelinos died out quickly because they could not sustain success under American leadership.

By examining Californio Angelino activities, we counter critics such as Richard Henry Dana Jr., Thomas Jefferson Farnham, Lansford Hastings, Alfred Robinson, Walter Colton, James Clyman, George Simpson, Hubert Howe Bancroft, Douglas Monroy, and Leonard Pitt, who overlook or downplay the Angelino work ethic. Before the US-Mexican War, several foreigners visited Los

⁵⁴ John Preston Buschlen, *Señor Plummer: The Life and Laughter of an Old Californian* (Los Angeles: Plummer Committee, 1942), 84-87; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 282-3.

⁵⁵ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 186-192; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 247; San Fernando Valley Chapter in "Daughters of the American Revolution," *The Valley of San Fernando* (No publication information, 1924), 39; *Los Angeles Star*, Jan. 29, 1859; *La Crónica* (Los Angeles), May 4, 1872, Aug. 20, 1873; Newmark, *Newmark*, 87; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 268-9.

⁵⁶ Buschlen, *Plummer*, 84-7.

Angeles and recorded their experiences.⁵⁷ Certain visitors, who held an unflattering opinion of the Californios, published their writings in the United States. As there was little to no knowledge of California in the United States, the visitors' critical writings not only became best sellers, but also spread misinformation to American readers. Thus, many Anglo-Americans possessed a generally unfavorable view of Angelino industriousness, even before the US-Mexican War. The criticism continued through historians including Leonard Pitt, Douglas Monroy and Hubert Howe Bancroft. Specifically, they disparaged the Californios by arguing that the Californio influence swiftly disappeared post US-Mexican War, thereby validating the claims of the previous visitors, who called the Californios indolent.⁵⁸

In *Two Years Before the Mast*, Richard Henry Dana Jr. characterizes the Californios as "idle, thriftless people" who can "make nothing for themselves."⁵⁹ Dana set sail from Boston aboard *The Pilgrim* in 1834, hoping to improve his measles infected eyesight, but also to document "the grievances and...the sufferings" endured by common sailors. He eventually reached Southern California by January of 1835, and joined in the hide and tallow trade. Traveling up and down *Alta*, or Upper, California, Dana's crew landed in San Pedro where they loaded heavy hides onto small boats and then on the ship, making several trips daily. In describing Californio culture, Dana criticizes their practice of purchasing expensive goods shipped all the way from Boston, instead of utilizing

⁵⁷ Pitt, *Decline*, 14-8.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Richard Henry Dana Jr., *Two Years Before the Mast, A Personal Narrative of Life At Sea* (New York City: Harper & Brothers, 1840), 40.

their own California resources. He says their “country abounds in grapes, yet they buy, at a great price, bad wine...they barter...[t]heir...two dollar...hides...for something that costs seventy-five cents in Boston...and [they] buy [American] shoes...not made of their own hides...for three and four dollars.” Dana further writes that overall, Californios purchased goods that “average, at an advance of nearly three hundred percent upon the Boston prices.”⁶⁰ While many of Dana’s descriptions of California are incredibly useful historical resources, his opinions concerning Californio industriousness unfairly characterized the Californios as lazy. Dana’s bias may spawn from two sources. First, he was a staunch abolitionist and maritime lawyer who spent his life arguing for sailors’ rights and those of the common man.⁶¹ In that vein, Dana Jr. disliked the Californios’ treatment of the natives. Secondly, his life as a sailor was extremely tough, especially in California where he had to carry numerous hides back and forth from the beach to the boats in California, such as in San Pedro. Thus, his opinion of Angelinos may have been more positive had his current state not been so stressful and full of toil. For example, Dana Jr. described how he and his crew were throwing hides down on the beach like Frisbees. He cynically called the bluff “the only romantic spot on the coast.” That spot later became Dana Point.⁶² For more evidence that Dana Jr.’s taxing experience as a sailor made him biased, look no further than Juan Bandini’s father José. Born in Peru, José Bandini came

⁶⁰ Ibid; 2-3; 46-8; 40.

⁶¹ Jamie Malanowski, “Before Moby Dick, There Was ‘Two Years Before the Mast’,” Smithsonian Magazine, last modified June 2015, accessed June 15, 2016, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/before-moby-dick-there-was-two-years-before-the-mast-1809-55766/?no-ist>.

⁶² Ibid.

to the pueblo in 1828 as a sea captain but was not impressed with the Californio work ethic.⁶³ He said “most [of the rancheros] live in idleness; it is a rare person who is dedicated to increasing his fortune. They exist themselves only in dancing, horsemanship, and gambling, with which they fill their days.” Despite his scathing critique, José moved with his family to San Diego in 1834. Thus, like José Bandini, Richard Henry Dana Jr.’s opinion could have been colored by a sailor’s bitter sense of superiority regarding work ethic. Published in 1840, *Two Years Before the Mast* became a best seller in the United States, with 200,000 copies being sold in its first decade of publication.⁶⁴ By the 1840s, it gained a reputation as both an American literary classic, and the foremost guide to California life for Americans. Dana’s book was so popular that many miners brought the book with them on their trip to the California Gold Rush. Thus, the reputation of Californio industriousness was severely tarnished by Dana’s widely circulated book.

In his book *Life, Adventures, and Travels in California*, Thomas Jefferson Farnham depicts the Californios as a “miserable people” who practice “Castilian laziness,” and are “unconscious” to California’s favorable climate.⁶⁵ Arriving in Alta California in 1839, Farnham explored the California coast, “confidently

⁶³ José Bandini, *A Description of California in 1828* (Berkeley, 1951), 9; cited in Castillo, *Barrio*, 116.

⁶⁴ Jamie Malanowski, “Before Moby Dick, There Was ‘Two Years Before the Mast’,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, last modified June, 2015, accessed June 15, 2016, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/before-moby-dick-there-was-two-years-before-the-mast-1809-55766/?no-ist>.

⁶⁵ Thomas Jefferson Farnham, *Life, Adventures, and Travels in California. To Which are Added the Conquest of California, Travels in Oregon, and History of the Gold Regions* (New York: Nafis and Cornish; St. Louis: Van Dien and MacDonald, 1849), 344.

assert[ing] that no country in the world possessed so fine a climate...[or] so productive a soil.” He disparages the Californios however, for not adequately reaping the “rewards of honorable toil.” Thomas J. Farnham partially blames the Californios’ indolence on their mixed Indian heritage, remarking that they possess an “[un]seemly...lazy color.” Finally, he writes that the Californio men cheaply emulate aristocracy by living idle days filled with food, wine, music, smoking and napping.⁶⁶ Farnham’s book was a bestseller.⁶⁷

Lansford Hastings denigrated the Californios by attacking their intelligence, character, and racial makeup.⁶⁸ Visiting both Los Angeles and most of Alta California in 1843, Hastings not only wrote about his travels but also believed that California’s sparse population left it susceptible to takeover by American settlers. In his *Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California*, he describes the Californios as “ignorant...superstitious” and in “want of moral principle.” Hastings further writes that the “Mexican [Californians]...have resided with the [Indians] so long...there appears to be a perfect similarity...in destitution of intelligence...[and] in...bestial habits.” Specifically writing on Los Angeles, he describes the pueblo’s buildings as “small, and otherwise inferior.”⁶⁹ Published in

⁶⁶ Ibid, 358-9.

⁶⁷ Charles B. Churchill, “Thomas Jefferson Farnham: An Exponent of American Empire in Mexican California,” *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Nov., 1991), 517-534.

⁶⁸ Lansford Hastings, *The Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California* (Cincinnati, Ohio: G. Conclin, 1845), 113-4.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

1845, Hastings book became a bestseller partly because of its appeal to American settlers.⁷⁰

Alfred Robinson described Californio men as “generally indolent...addicted to many vices...[and] unworthy members of society.”⁷¹ Published in 1846, Robinson’s *Life in California* illustrates life in Los Angeles and Mexican California, yet is highly critical of Californio culture. Alfred Robinson moved to California and married Anita, Californio daughter of prominent ranchero José Antonio de la Guerra y Noriega, but continued his dismissive attitude. Speaking of his father-in-law Guerra y Noriega, Robinson said he was “amusing in character.” Robinson later wrote that the Californios’ downfall was their own fault. He remarked, “[t]he early Californians...lived a life of indolence [and] without...aspiration...[standing] by...idly...as...their more energetic [American] successors” passed them by.⁷² Alfred Robinson later formed the Robinson Trust, which helped break up rancho lands into smaller farms.⁷³

Other contemporary American writers expressed similar views. James Clyman explored California in 1845, later denouncing the lethargic Californios’ overreliance on native labor.⁷⁴ Clyman wrote “the Californians are a...lazy,

⁷⁰ Mark McLaughlin, “Lansford Hastings: Donner Party Villain?” Tahoe Daily Tribune, accessed June 20, 2016, <http://www.tahodailytribune.com/article/20071127/LIFE/71127001>.

⁷¹ Alfred Robinson, *Life in California: During a Residence of Several Years in That Country* (New York City: Wiley & Putnam, 1846), 83-4; 74; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 15-8, 236, 277, 280.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 195-202.

⁷⁴ James Clyman, *James Clyman: American Frontiersman, 1792-1881, The Adventures of a Trapper and Covered Wagon Emigrant As Told In His Own*

indolent people doing nothing but ride after herds...without any apparent object.” He further wrote that the “Indians...do all the drudgery and labour...[being] kept in a state of slavery.”⁷⁵ Scotch explorer George Simpson wrote that California’s wealth of natural resources “corrupt[ed] a naturally indolent [Californio] population.”⁷⁶ He also wrote the “population of California...has been drawn from the most indolent variety of...species.” Simpson not only dismissed all Indians and Californios as racially inferior, but also echoed Clyman in believing that California could easily be taken over by force. Finally, Hubert Howe Bancroft also criticized Californio industriousness.⁷⁷ Although he was writing about the Spanish era, Bancroft wrote, the “Spaniards...showed an undiminished willingness to have all the work...performed by Indians.” He also wrote, “the settlers were content to be idle,” living off the sweat of the Indian laborers. The image of the lazy Californio would persist long after the nineteenth century, as twentieth century historians perpetuated the stereotype.

In *The Decline of the Californios* Leonard Pitt discusses the numerous causes for what he calls the Californios’ “pitiful collapse,” including that the collapse was partially due to “economic naïveté” and “conspicuous

Reminiscences and Diaries, Edited by Charles L. Camp (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1928), 186.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ George Simpson, *Narrative of a Voyage to California Ports, 1841-1842* (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1988), 227, 233.

⁷⁷ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California, Vol., 1542-1800* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft & Company, 1884), 460-1, 605-6, 659; cited in Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers: The Making of Mexican Culture in Frontier California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 110.

consumption.”⁷⁸ First, Leonard Pitt argues that the Californio culture quickly died out after the US-Mexican War. Specifically, he suggests that after the brief 1850s cattle boom, the Californios lost their political, economic, and social power in the “worst possible form.” Next, he puts forward that they died out in part because they were unwilling to adopt more Anglo-American economic practices in the face of impending Anglo population domination. He specifically points to the perceived laxity with which they recorded land deeds, and their overreliance on the cattle industry. Finally, Pitt partially blames the Californios’ spendthrift “old value system,” in which they squandered their money on gambling, fiestas, and luxurious furniture and clothing.

While this thesis goes against Leonard Pitt’s points, he does provide useful information as he presents alternative causes for the Californios’ loss of social power. He lists the various contemporary critics of Californio culture, including Richard Henry Dana Jr., Thomas Jefferson Farnham, Lansford Hastings, Alfred Robinson, James Clyman, and George Simpson. Going further, Pitt also argues that these visitors were biased. He points to “culture conflict,” in that the Anglo explorers carried “Protestant...condescension towards Catholicism...the Yankee belief in Manifest Destiny...and the...generalized fear of racial mixture.” Next, Pitt describes the financial devastation wrought on rancheros and the cattle industry by both the flood and drought of the early 1860s. Finally, Pitt betrays his own argument for the Californios’ decline by detailing the second-generation of

⁷⁸ Pitt, *Decline*, 283.

Californios, who kept on in politics, social power, and Los Angeles County residency.⁷⁹

In his book, *Thrown Among Strangers*, Douglas Monroy argues that the idle Californios lived atop a semi-feudal, seigneurial system over the Indians.⁸⁰ Monroy utilizes Hubert Howe Bancroft, Richard Henry Dana Jr., and mission priests, including Fray Narcisco Durán and Padre José María de Zalvidea, to illustrate the “laziness” of the Spanish-speaking Angelinos. Dana Jr. was a staunch abolitionist and therefore, resented the Californios’ treatment of the Indians. The mission padres resented the Californio settlers for their treatment of the Indians, their apathy towards Indian conversion, and the secularization of the mission system. The majority of the padres’ writings concerning the Angelinos are overly critical of their work ethic, bitter that the Californios undermined the mission to convert the California natives. Thus, Douglas Monroy relies on prejudiced historical sources. He argues that by the time California’s Mexican era began, Californio society had become seigneurial, in which the “rancheros were as lords” over the Indians. And as lords, Monroy argues, the rancheros did not “derive success from producing and accumulating,” but from “material goods.” More specifically, Monroy suggests that Indians did all the ranching, cured all the hides and tallow, and supervised all the work, while the Californios leisurely rode horses all day. Finally, Monroy writes that the Californios were too naïve to

⁷⁹ Ibid, 14-8; 283; 108.

⁸⁰ Monroy, *Indians*, 100-11, 145, 222-5. *Seigneurial* refers to a semi-feudal system in which, peasants worked the land for the *seigneur*, or lord, who owned the estate and all the livestock, *The Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 3rd ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), 1832; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 67; 77.

survive Americanism, nor comprehend the “details of the [free] market and production.”⁸¹

To counter these critics, this thesis utilizes key sources that showcase the industriousness of the Californios, their cooperation with the Anglos, and their reaction to Americanism.

After 1850, David Samuel Torres-Rouff says that despite suffering discrimination from the government, the Californios earned respect and shared power with their Anglo neighbors. Torres-Rouff agrees that the Californios’ wealth and social status relied on the “exploitation of other people’s work.”⁸² Torres-Rouff nevertheless argues that this “asymmetrical relationship” allowed the Californios to control Los Angeles politically and economically, through the ayuntamiento and hide and tallow trade, respectively. By manipulating Indian labor, the Spanish pobladores took on less onerous but more lucrative responsibilities, thereby becoming Californios. As Los Angeles was under firm control, the Anglo immigrants were obligated to share power with the Californios. This power sharing began in the Mexican era, with American and European settlers becoming enmeshed in Los Angeles society. Not only does Torres-Rouff suggest that “travel writers,” such as Richard Henry Dana Jr. and Lansford Hastings, engaged in “literary cultural assassination...” but that their writings were disproven by the successful relationship held between Californios and Anglo immigrants. After the Treaty of Cahuenga, newly arrived Anglos and Californios made “peace with each other by joining in violence against the Indians.”

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 38; 60; 70; 74-87; *passim*; 106.

Afterwards, Torres-Rouff says they engaged in cultural diffusion, in which Los Angeles' municipal government painstakingly found common ground between the civic-minded Californios and the more individualistic Anglos. Regarding the reduced social and economic power of the Californios, Torres-Rouff points to the Land Law and the natural disasters of the early 1860s. The Gwin Act, or Land Law, undermined ranchero power by threatening the Californios' "ability to participate as equal partners in Los Angeles' social, cultural, and political life." Torres-Rouff then details the horrible effects of the floods and drought, illustrating its impact on Californios, Anglos, and Europeans. Finally, he examines the Californios' 1860s political comeback, which enabled them to continue in guiding "demographic, spatial, and social developments." Though most Californios left Los Angeles, they continued to play a prominent role long after they lost majority population status to Anglo, Chinese, Black and Mexican immigrants.⁸³

Michael J. González says the Californios' adherence to time and their work ethic created a way of life that emphasized work and responsibility.⁸⁴ Mexican Independence brought liberalism to Los Angeles, and its most "prized...virtue," work. Being a communal society, individual work ethic was considered essential to the prosperity of the pueblo. Mexican liberalism made

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ The Indian "Bacchanalia" refers to festivities held at the Indian ranchería, where Indians engaged in drunken revelry. The term came from an article by *La Estrella* journalist Manuel Clemente Rojo. In 1855, he witnessed a Sunday morning "bacchanalia" and wrote he "saw scenes more disgraceful than anyone can imagine...Here, Bacchus reigns supreme." LACA, vol. 3, October 17, 1850, 364, Sp. See Manuel Clemente Rojo, *La Estrella*, January 25, 1855; cited on p. 33; Bancroft, *History*, 4:785; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 42; 61; 77-80.

work even more celebrated however, as Angelinos could elevate themselves to a higher social position, if they were diligent and productive. Going further, the Angelinos publicly lamented local Indian behavior, including their raucous celebrations, promiscuity, laziness, and general propensity for sinful pleasure seeking. Even though many prominent gente de razón sneakily engaged in the Indian “*bacchanalia*” themselves, the Indian behavior became synonymous with indolence and immorality. As a result, work ethic became even more entrenched into Californio culture, as restraint, “not pleasure,” promised success and happiness. Lastly, González says the Angelinos’ “respect for time” helped restrain them against excesses. They used clocks, timepieces, watches, as well as church bells and town criers to maintain their daily routine. As indolence was associated with Indians and cholos, time-keeping technology and overall punctuality were essential elements to the gente de razón class.⁸⁵

W.W. Robinson researches Angelino rancho lands, including the negative effects of the Land Law. Examining rancho land titles, Robinson argues for the legitimate claims of Angelinos. Specifically, he points to William Carey Jones’ governmental land report.⁸⁶ Written between 1849 and 1850, Jones’ report was “a landmark in the history of land titles in California.” In it, he not only says that any fraudulent titles would be easy to identify but that overall, Californio land titles were “mostly perfect.” Robinson also examines Senator William M. Gwin’s 1851 Land Law, writing that Gwin’s goal was to usurp Californio rancho lands and

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Robinson, “Chapter VIII” in *Land*, 91-109; William Carey Jones, “William Carey Jones’ Report On Land Titles,” in Senate Ex. Doc. No. 18, 31st Cong., 1st sess., 1850; cited on p. 93.

leave them open to Anglo-Americans. Thus, Californios spent years in expensive litigation, as “unnecessary” governmental appeals, squatters, and debatable surveys delayed the process.⁸⁷

Robert Glass Cleland says the Land Law, natural disasters, and taxes decimated the industrious Angelino ranchos. Cleland first discusses rancho life, illustrating their incredible organization, and massive hide and tallow output.⁸⁸ This would change however, beginning with the 1851 Land Law. Land boundaries were almost a non-issue until the American era, as the American government criticized the *diseños*, or maps. Despite the seal of approval from W.C. Jones’ report, and the remarkable economic gains of the rancheros, Congress deceived the Californios and enacted the Land Law anyway. Going further, Cleland says the Gwin Act financially devastated Angelinos, especially in the late 1850s. He says the act was not only unnecessary but it “brought a multitude of evils,” including altering “the whole economic structure of the state...penaliz[ing] legitimate landowners...retard[ing] agriculture,” and breeding anxiety and resentment among Angelinos. Next, he discusses the natural disasters that befell the cattle industry in the late 1860s. The floods and subsequent drought dealt a deathblow to the cattle industry, with rancheros losing up to 71 percent of their livestock by 1870. Finally, heavy taxes were imposed by the prejudiced anti-Hispanic, and Northern California dominated state legislature. As “the northern

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, “Chapter IV: Life On Ranchos,” 51-74; “Chapter III: The Land Act and Its Aftermath,” 33-50; “Chapter VII: Taxes, Drought, and Epidemic,” 117-37; *Sacramento Union*, Jan. 7, 1865; cited on 135; *Los Angeles Star*, Sep. 16, 1851; cited on p. 122.

counties are engaged almost entirely in mining,” wrote Stephen C. Foster, son-in-law of Antonio María Lugo, “the burdens of taxation fall principally upon the south.” Thus, the legislature’s harsh taxes were another attempt to usurp Californio lands in Los Angeles and Southern California as a whole.⁸⁹

Monsignor Francis J. Weber says missionary life inspired punctuality, temporal consciousness, and routine, which greatly influenced Los Angeles culture. He discusses the time-keeping technology brought to San Gabriel Mission, San Fernando Mission, and the Los Angeles pueblo. This technology included sundials, clocks, timepieces, and alarm clocks. Msgr. Weber also says *Nuestra Señora de Los Angeles*, the pueblo’s *asistencia*, or assistant mission, played a vital role in routine, punctuality, and the “city’s [overall] growth.” More specifically, the little church’s bells regulated routine by notifying Angelinos when to wake, eat, pray and sleep.⁹⁰

Other writers, in addition to the aforementioned historians, provide useful source material for this thesis. Iris Higbie Wilson researched Anglo-American resident William Wolfskill, including his role in Los Angeles’ wine industry.⁹¹ Blake Gumprecht researched the Los Angeles River, illustrating Los Angeles’ large agricultural productivity.⁹² Bernice Eastman Johnston’s research on the Gabrielino-Tongva Indians shows the system of labor controlled by the

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Monsignor Francis J. Weber, *The California Missions* (Strasbourg Cedex, France: Editions du Signe, 2007), 45, 101; 126; 135; 170; 202-3.

⁹¹ Iris Higbie Wilson, *William Wolfskill: 1798-1866, Frontier Trapper to California Ranchero* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1965), *passim*.

⁹² Gumprecht, *L.A.*, *passim*.

Californios.⁹³ W.J. Rorabaugh's research on eighteenth and nineteenth century American alcohol consumption negates the charge that Californios drank or socialized more excessively than Anglo-Americans.⁹⁴ Finally, Richard Griswold del Castillo says Los Angeles rancho life was not glamorous, nor easy for Angelinos, including the dons who worked hard to maintain their upper class distinction.⁹⁵

Primary, secondary, and tertiary sources from the eighteenth and nineteenth century are critical to this thesis. Ayuntamiento and common council records provide valuable information on Spanish, Mexican and American era Los Angeles, including routine, industriousness, and the cultural diffusion and mutual respect exhibited between Californios and Anglos. Contemporary newspaper sources include the *Los Angeles Star*, or *La Estrella de Los Angeles*, and *El Clamor Público*. Los Angeles' various padróns, or censuses, are utilized, from the pueblo's founding on September 4, 1781 to the year 1900. Spanish and Californio sources include Pío and Andrés Pico, Juan Bandini, José Antonio Carrillo, the Sepúlveda family, Hugo and Victoria Reid, Ygnacio del Valle, Antonio Francisco Coronel, José Antonio de la Guerra y Noriega, the Lugo family, Felipe de Neve, Pedro Fages, Juníperro Serra, Narciso Durán, and José Maria de Zalvidea. Anglo and European sources include Benjamin Hayes, Eugenio Plummer, Horace Bell, William Wolfskill, Abel Stearns, John Temple, John Strother Griffith, Solomon

⁹³ Johnston, *Gabrielinos*, *passim*.

⁹⁴ W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

⁹⁵ Castillo, *Barrio*, 10-9.

Lazard, Harris Newmark, Benjamin Davis Wilson, Thomas Foster, Stephen Clark Foster, Pierre Domec, Miguel Leonis and Luis Vignes.

The first chapter discusses Los Angeles' work ethic, routine, and temporal consciousness, arguing that the industrious Californios had much in common with contemporary Anglos regarding restraint, social life, and work ethic. Going further, the chapter covers the pueblo's history, from 1769 to the end of the Mexican era. During this period, the Californios' diligence helped them to flourish as rancheros, farmers, merchants, and craftsmen. Anglos making their lives in the pueblo found many commonalities with the Californios and thus, they lived and worked together in a mostly respectful relationship. These commonalities included a mutual aversion to Indians and mutual beliefs concerning restraint and punctuality. While the Californios and Anglos often held differences concerning nationality and politics, their relationship was mostly cooperative. Going further, the Mexican era Californio-Anglo relationship would serve as a model for later Anglo immigrants after the US-Mexican War.

Chapter two discusses the cattle, farming, and wine-producing boom of the 1850s and 1860s, respectively. It addresses the rancho culture, including rancho hierarchy, cattle drives, rodeos, overall productivity, and work ethic. Next, it addresses Los Angeles' flourishing farming industry. More specifically, the chapter looks at Los Angeles' role as a premier American farming city, with its ability to produce numerous varieties of staple and exotic crops. Into the 1860s, we discuss the wine industry and how the city became the number one wine-producing city in the United States. Finally, chapter two argues that the lucrative

Californio-Anglo partnership in agriculture not only illustrates their commonalities but also the Californio economic dominance. Anglo-Americans had to cooperate with the Californio Angelinos in order to financially prosper.

The third and last chapter discusses the reasons for the Californios' loss of social and economic dominance. Regarding the end of the cattle trade, this thesis points to the natural disasters of the early 1860s, which affected all rancheros, regardless of ethnicity. Chapter three also looks at the consequences of the Gwin Act, or Land Law. The chapter argues that the Land Law slowly undermined Californio lands and influence, until the loss of the cattle trade delivered the mortal blow to Californio supremacy.

Despite their losses, the resilient Californios continued occupying prominent roles in Los Angeles. Though they no longer dominated Los Angeles society, most Californios were able to retain hundreds of acres of their property, continue in California politics, flourish in different industries, and practice their religion and culture. From their beginnings as a Spanish pueblo, to a “semi-gringo” city, the Californios exhibited hard work and perseverance in their culture and routine.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Horace Bell, *Reminiscences of a Ranger or Early Times in Southern California* (Los Angeles: Yarnell, Caystiel & Mathes, Printing, 1881).

Chapter One:
From a Spanish Pueblo to a Mexican City
1769-1847

Since its founding, Los Angeles has espoused hard work as the key to prosperity. With the arrival of the Spanish and the mission system, the Southland transitioned from a society of indigenous Tongva Indians to a Hispanicized communal and regimented society. Specifically, the Spanish brought their work ethic and their temporal consciousness. Temporal consciousness concerns the awareness, measuring, recording, and use of time.⁹⁷ For eighteenth century Spaniards, they possessed a temporal consciousness that followed the modern Julian calendar, as well as contemporary time-keeping technology. With this technology, they practiced punctuality in their daily routine. This diligence would persist in Angelino culture as Spanish soldiers and pobladores began to socially distinguish themselves. Having served the Spanish Crown faithfully, certain settlers began to receive land grants from the Spanish government, which they then used to become rancheros. This practice further convinced Angelinos that only through “worthy toil” could one thrive.⁹⁸ The Mexican era, 1822 to 1847, brought both liberalism and mission secularization to the pueblo. This liberalism lifted restrictions on commerce, land, and race as Angelinos could engage in

⁹⁷ “Temporal Consciousness,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, last modified Aug. 6, 2010, accessed July 5, 2016, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consciousness-temporal/>; Dan Zahavi, *Husserl’s Phenomenology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), *passim*.

⁹⁸ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 42.

international trade, buy up large swaths of mission lands, and achieve a higher status in society, regardless of ethnic origin. Under Spain, only full-blooded Spanish peninsulars could occupy political office in California but under the Mexican Republic, racially mixed men like Pío Pico could become prominent citizens. One still had to be culturally Hispanicized however. Starting in the early 1820s, American foreigners began to live in the pueblo. These Americans, including Abel Stearns, William Wolfskill, and Jonathan Temple, became socially accepted by adopting Catholicism, marrying rancheros' daughters, and joining in the traditional economy.⁹⁹ This cooperation not only contradicted contemporary Anglo travel writings' negative portrayal of Californios but also foreshadowed the respectful Californio-Anglo relationship after the US-Mexican War. Even before American rule however, Angelino culture exhibited restraint, punctuality, and diligence in daily routine.

Los Angeles Under Spain

Los Angeles' pobladores set the precedents for an assiduous society. Being influenced by the nearby San Gabriel, and later, San Fernando Mission, Angelinos utilized the lessons of restraint and work ethic as taught through Catholicism. With both these lessons and their temporal consciousness, they flourished. They flourished despite living in a geographically isolated land far

⁹⁹ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 56.

from New Spain's population center in Mexico City, and economically restricted from international trade by the Spanish Crown.¹⁰⁰

Before Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo and the Spanish Empire ever came to California in 1542, the Tongva Indian tribes sustained a relatively balanced and stable life.¹⁰¹ They occupied the Southland from the San Fernando Valley through Orange County. At their height they dwelled in over forty rancherías, with up to 500 to 2,000 inhabitants living in houses, or *kis*, that were made of tule reeds. Their dwellings include Yaangna, located in what was to become the pueblo's Plaza, Cahugna on the Cahuenga Pass, Pasecgna in San Fernando, Saangna in Santa Monica, Topagna in Topanga Canyon, Azucsangna in Azusa Pacific, Huachongna in Culver City, and Kukomogna in Rancho Cucamonga.¹⁰² The various Tongva villages, or rancherías of Los Angeles, not only "spoke nearly the same language," but also held shared beliefs and habits concerning spirituality, leadership, social customs, commerce, diet and environment.¹⁰³ Until the arrival of settlers under Felipe de Neve in 1781, these natives retained their own culture.

The first Spanish arrivals to the Southland were determined to establish royal dominion. Building upon the previous daring voyages and explorations of Hernán Cortés, Francisco de Ulloa, and others, Spanish explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo sailed into San Diego Bay on September 28, 1542.¹⁰⁴ He later landed briefly on Santa Clemente Island, Santa Catalina Island, and then finally San

¹⁰⁰ Casas, *Married*, 98, cited in *Ibid*, 37.

¹⁰¹ Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 1-2.

¹⁰² Reid, *Indian Letters*, "Letter Number One," 7-10.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, "Letter Number Four," 17-9.

¹⁰⁴ John W. Caughey, *California, Second Edition* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Incorporated, 1940), 50-1.

Pedro, which he named the Bay of Smokes. Not finding any gold or riches however, Cabrillo and the Spanish Empire largely ignored Alta California for two hundred years, despite the fact the Tongva Indians were friendly and the conquistadores described Southern California as a “land of endless summers.”¹⁰⁵

In 1769, the Spanish Crown turned its attention back to Alta California however, with the arrival of the mission system.¹⁰⁶ Father Juníperro Serra oversaw the founding of Mission San Gabriel Arcángel on September 8, 1771, which moved to its permanent location five years later.¹⁰⁷ A decade later, on September 4, 1781, Governor Felipe De Neve and eleven families from Sonora and Sinaloa founded *El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles*, or The Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels, on the Yaangna ranchería.¹⁰⁸ Finally, Mission San Fernando Rey de España was established by Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén on September 8, 1797, though its church was damaged by an earthquake in 1812 and repaired six years later.¹⁰⁹

The mission system brought about the merging of native Tongva approach to time with Catholic Spain’s. At first, the Indians were curious about the Spanish newcomers, and this early inquisitiveness is what allowed the missionaries to convert the first wave of neophytes for baptism and conversion. Unable to communicate with the Spaniards, the baptized Indians did not understand at first

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 128.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 23-6.

¹⁰⁹ Msgr. Weber, *California Missions*, 101.

the meaning behind the ceremonies or the movements they were taught.¹¹⁰ Their wonderment would eventually turn to resentment though, as many natives began to resist conversion. With only a few soldiers, the priests employed neophytes in the effort to convert the Indians, including whippings. Once at the mission, the natives became acquainted with a new schedule and lifestyle. The native would first have to be baptized and sometimes this was met with great resistance for daily bathing was already an integral part of Tongva daily life, and the *Soyna*, or what the natives called baptism, was often seen as an affront or threat to traditional bathing practices. Afterward, the baptized Indian would join in mission life and be taught Spanish-Catholic routine, either with kind means or cruel ones depending on the benevolence of the teacher. Hugo Reid remarked that the missions' ability to convert became much easier after San Gabriel Padre José María de Zalvidea "mastered the language and...translated the prayers...and preached...sermon[s] in their own tongue." Echoing this teaching method, the friars tied indigenous religious beliefs to Catholic ones, and were mostly successful.¹¹¹

Through education in Spanish routine, the Tongva, renamed Gabrielinos or Fernandinos, were also introduced to clock awareness. The sundial was probably the most important instrument for tracking time.¹¹² Going further, the essential mission bell-ringer "carefully followed the latitudinal readings of the

¹¹⁰ Reid, *Indian Letters*, "Letter Number Seventeen," 72-7.

¹¹¹ Ibid, "Letter Number Four," 19.

¹¹² Msgr. Weber, *California Missions*, 126.

local sundial, or *relojito de sol*,” in order to punctually keep the bell schedule.¹¹³

In addition to temporal consciousness, the introduction of European music and theory injected a sense of rhythm to the natives, as they sang hymns, psalms and learned to play musical instruments such as the flute, violin, bass viola and guitar.

The mission schedule itself featured a hierarchy, inspired by the Catholic Church and the Spanish monarchy’s hierarchy, and placed the natives in different roles, all of which were essential to maintain routine. For breakfast, they ate gruel, made from roasted corn or nuts, then ate *pozole*, or “corn soup with beans, wheat and...meat,” at noon.¹¹⁴ In the evening, the Indians were tasked with gathering their own dinner, though Spain’s mass killing of wildlife increasingly made it hard on both neophytes and the gentile Indians to hunt wild game.¹¹⁵ In addition, mission records indicate that the mission Indians’ food allowance was just “below the caloric value” needed to maintain work and health.¹¹⁶ Ironically, San Gabriel Mission was the largest agricultural producer in the mission system, having possessed 26,342 total livestock in 1832, and generating 233,695 total wheat and other crop bushels between 1782 and 1832.¹¹⁷ For animal domestication, Spanish bred corriente cattle, sheep, swine, and horses were some of the livestock species brought to North America by the Spanish, and the Tongva learned to herd and

¹¹³ Ibid, 123.

¹¹⁴ "California Mission Indians." California Mission Indians. Accessed March 18, 2015. <http://www.mtycounty.com/pgs-missions/mission-indians2.html>; Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 135-8.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 150-1; Shelburne F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1955), 21-4.

¹¹⁷ Msgr. Weber, *California Missions*, 133.

work these animals in the Spanish way. Though only certain neophytes were allowed to ride horses, the few that were, including the *vaqueros* and the *mayordomos*, became excellent horseman.¹¹⁸ The mayordomo supervised all mission work, directed the *vaqueros*, and “tend[ed to the] horses.”¹¹⁹ Acting on the orders of the friars, the mayordomo was often resented although there were exceptions including one Claudio Lopez, who supervised under Padre Zalvidea and was considered a “real hero...in the minds of the people.” The Spanish also introduced farming to the natives, assigning them to plant large vineyards, orchards, and crop fields. Among the crops they planted were wheat, barley, beans, peas, olives, grapes, citrus fruits, and cotton, wool and flax for clothing. In addition, dairy products became part of the Tongva diet as they learned to process milk, and make cheese from cows. Assigned different jobs, and “divided into various classes and stations,” the Tongva worked as “soap-makers, tanners, shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, bakers, cooks, general servants, pages, fishermen, agriculturists, horticulturists, brick and tile makers, musicians, singers, tallow-melters, vignerons...cart-makers, shepherds...weavers, spinners, saddle makers, store and key keepers, skin dress makers...mason[ers], and plasterers.” Going further, “unmarried women and young girls were kept as nuns,” while married ones were constantly warned and chastised over committing adultery because although married neophytes usually stayed monogamous, Tongva culture was not as strict as Catholic Spanish culture concerning chastity and

¹¹⁸ Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 150-1.

¹¹⁹ Reid, *Indian Letters*, “Letter Number Nineteen,” 82-9.

monogamy.¹²⁰ Another dramatic change was in housing, as Indians learned to construct adobes made from dried adobe mud bricks, and red tiled roof tiles, called *tejas*.¹²¹ This housing situation would negatively affect the natives however, as the introduced diseases like cholera, smallpox, and malaria were strengthened and spread further. More specifically, large groups of sick Indians were crammed together in thick-walled, small rooms, with little to no ventilation.¹²² This was markedly different from the way the gentile Tongva had lived, spreading their population over “small aggregations of thatched huts.”

The Indians’ perceived dislike of timely schedule prompted frustrated Spanish to charge the Indians with laziness, stereotypes that would stick with them well into the American era.¹²³ Sherburne Cook estimated that almost ten percent of Gabrielino neophytes fled, and while only two percent of Fernandiños fled, Cook says that “one in ten” planned an escape.¹²⁴ Reid wrote that “soldiers and servants” not only went on expeditions to find converts but were also employed to return deserters, even using the lash in their efforts.¹²⁵ Meanwhile, the Tongva population was being significantly reduced by epidemic and loss of habitat. As a result, the Tongva population began to merge with other tribes. By 1829, the number of mission Indians fell from 15,000 to 4,500 and by 1847, their

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Msgr. Weber, *California Missions*, 143.

¹²² Johnston, *Gabrielino*, 137; 150-1.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Cook, *Civilization*, 21-4; cited in Ibid.

¹²⁵ Reid, *Indian Letters*, “Letter Number Eighteen,” 72-7.

dramatic population loss rendered the Tongva almost discernable from other Indian tribes.¹²⁶

Nearby, the original forty-four pobladores, who established the pueblo on September 4, 1781, were establishing the city's diligent work ethic. Consisting of eleven multi-ethnic families, the first settlers left their humble lives in Sinaloa and Sonora to live on the frontier.¹²⁷ Based on Felipe de Neve's orders, Angelinos lived a communal lifestyle in which, the land and water was to be shared by all. Each family was given a matching land and garden plot huddled around the center plaza, and the common zanja, respectively. No one was allowed to lease more land than one could work as the Crown wanted to save the "proprios," or publicly owned land plots, "for future newcomers to the pueblo."¹²⁸ The townspeople could not privately own their land, nor privately keep the "[c]rops, water, pastures, and wood" on it.¹²⁹ Instead, they were awarded five-year leases with stipulations that the land is fenced, farmed, and that all crops are shared for equal distribution.¹³⁰ Though there were enforced social and economic ceilings, the reliable food sources and secure routine of the pueblo afforded a lifestyle in which, only the environment threatened the Californios as they altered the temporal, spatial, municipal, and religious atmosphere of the Southland. All their

¹²⁶ Pitt, *Decline*, 9-10.

¹²⁷ Estrada, *Los Angeles Plaza*, 27-31; Felipe de Neve, "Order of the Founding of Los Angeles," reprinted in *Founding Documents*, Doyce B. Nunis Jr. (Tucson, Arizona: Historical Society of Southern, 2004), 157-60; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 24; 26-9; 44-5.

¹²⁸ Harry Carr, *Los Angeles: City of Dreams* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1935), 37.

¹²⁹ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 44-5; Neve, "Founding," 157-60.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

agricultural plots were watered by zanjias, connected to the same zanja madre, or “mother ditch,” which drew from the Los Angeles River. Additionally, all crops were shared and circulated as payment for labor or services, and gentile Indian laborers provided more than enough workers for the landowners.¹³¹

Angelinos relied on the clock to enforce routine. The pueblo worked on a schedule that mirrored the mission system’s Catholic approach to time. This was aided by the pueblo’s small church, *Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles*.¹³² “La Placita,” as it came to be known, was erected in 1789, rebuilt in 1822 after a flood and finally appointed its own chaplain in 1832. During its long tenure, the small church’s bells regulated punctuality and civic duty. Harris Newmark, a Prussian-born immigrant who made his home in Los Angeles in 1852, later recalled the old church’s bells “ringing at six in the morning and at eight in the evening as a curfew to regulate the daily activities.” Of course there were disruptions to daily routine, including Indian attacks, floods, and droughts, but the Angelinos largely managed these crises well enough, as the threat of annihilation by the natives never came true and they held firm against Mother Nature’s wrath. Ten years after its founding, the pueblo’s population increased to thirty-one families and 139 total persons. Later on in 1820, the population increased to sixty-one families, despite the fact it took seven years to relocate the entire pueblo due to flooding of the Los Angeles River in 1815.¹³³

¹³¹ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 26-7.

¹³² Msgr. Weber, *California Missions*, 202.

¹³³ William M. Mason, *Los Angeles Under the Spanish Flag: Spain’s New World* (Burbank: Southern California Genealogical Society, 2004), 71-3, 88-96; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 26.

Los Angeles Under Mexico

The 1821 Mexican victory in the War for Independence ushered in liberalism to Los Angeles. Now all Angelinos could join in agricultural commerce, regardless of race or ethnicity; Californios still had to be culturally Hispanic, and could not be “Indian.” In addition, Los Angeles was now free to engage in international trade. As a result of this newfound *liberalismo*, or liberalism, the pueblo agriculturally, economically and politically resembled American towns. These similarities between Los Angeles and most American towns aided the city to more smoothly transition to American leadership later in the century.

Of all Mexico’s newfound liberal ideas to reach Los Angeles, none was more espoused than the virtue of work.¹³⁴ Contemporary popular songs espoused this virtue, including *Canción Sobre el Amor del Trabajo*, or Song on the Love of Work, though it is not known if this song ever reached the pueblo. A Mexican play shown in Los Angeles however, contains a prologue teaching “the parents of families...[how] to inspire [a] love of work in their sons.” Further evidence lies in the censuses, where it lists the category *ninguno*, or non-employed vagrant. The 1836 census lists only ten “vagrants,” while the list is reduced to only one by 1844.¹³⁵ Los Angeles’ work ethic did not escape the notice of Mexico either.

¹³⁴ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 42-7.

¹³⁵ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 45-6; LACA, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3, 1836 Register.

Speaking to Congress, Mexican Minister of Relations Bernardo González Angulo said “California...rewards the man who works hard.”¹³⁶

The ayuntamiento was both a reflection of the pueblo’s work ethic, and an enforcer of it. In 1837, José María Váldez petitioned the council for a farming plot, remarking that the land would spur him to “reach greater advances in his work and facilitate the advancement of his family.”¹³⁷ Reciprocally, the ayuntamiento praised citizens who could advance themselves through worthy toil but still respect the communal approach to land ownership. In 1840, four citizens filed a claim for Tomás Lucero’s land, on the grounds that Lucero failed to properly fence and develop the property. The ayuntamiento defended Lucero however, saying that he had “developed and cultivated the land,” making it more “beneficial” than before. The ayuntamiento could punish vagrancy too. For example, vagrant Francisco Duarte was warned he had several days to find a job “working for someone,” or face jail time. In that same vein, debtors could pay back their loans through labor, including Juan Elizalde who was ordered to work for Nemesio Domínguez until his forty-eight peso debt was paid.¹³⁸

Once free of Royal Spain in 1821, Los Angeles engaged in commerce. Appearance and wealth became the main identifier for a Californio, as the opening of trade allowed them to acquire luxury goods. Under Spain, the missions

¹³⁶ Quotation from C. Alan Hutchinson, *Frontier Settlement in Mexican California* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 166; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 43.

¹³⁷ José María Váldez’ petition for a farming plot, LACA, January 17, 1838, vol. 1, 86, Sp.; LACA, vol. 1, August 8-August 27, 1840, 491-94, Sp.; LACA, vol. 3, 1833-1834, 130-6; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 46-7.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

were the only source of income for the pueblo but that bar was lifted, allowing trade with foreigners.¹³⁹ Merchant ships began arriving off the coast of Los Angeles, sending smaller vessels to collect hides and tallow harvested from slaughtered cattle. These merchants included McCullough, Hartnell and Company from England, and Bryant, Sturgis and Company from Boston later on. Often staying a year or so, they would fill up their ships with as much as 40,000 hides. In return, the Californios received “specie,” or coins, and luxury goods including “furnishings, décor, and dress.” Between 1822 and 1846, Los Angeles sent more than a million hides to the United States, making the ranchero class essential to Los Angeles’ economy.¹⁴⁰ An example is the del Valle family’s prized Chinese lacquer sewing stand, earned through trade, and proudly displayed in their San Fernando Valley adobe at Rancho Camulos.¹⁴¹ As a result of the increase in available imports, Californios concluded that because expensive clothing could only be obtained through hard work, luxurious attire affirmed the gente de razón’s status.

Richard Henry Dana Jr. did not understand the importance of imported goods to Californio culture, being ignorant of Spain’s previous ban on foreign trade. Dana, along with several other travel writers, confused the Californios’ love of imports with laziness. On the contrary, Spanish Angelinos relied on their own resources for over thirty years before they could access foreign goods. Thus, the

¹³⁹ María Raquel Casas, *Married to a Daughter of the Land: Spanish-Mexican Women and Interethnic Marriage in California, 1820-1880* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2007), 98; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 37.

¹⁴⁰ Odgen, “Hides and Tallow,” 254-64; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 61.

¹⁴¹ “Becoming Los Angeles,” at *Los Angeles County Natural History Museum*.

ability to purchase imports was a newfound source of prestige for the gente de razón, not a way to avoid work.

Within the city itself, Angelinos lived industrious lives. By 1844, the city contained 1,382 gente de razón, including skilled workers and their businesses.¹⁴² The censuses list the various commercial trades including calcium and lime miners, coopers, shoemakers, cigar makers, hatters, tailors, carpenters, clerks, cashiers, cooks, bakers, smiths, dry good dealers, liquor vendors, and merchants.¹⁴³ Iron was scarce, so Californios had to use creativity and ingenuity to re-purpose tools and other metal materials.¹⁴⁴

Angelinos followed a Catholic-inspired routine, consisting of daily Mass and prayer. Though the pueblo often lacked clerics, a priest was almost always nearby to service the people.¹⁴⁵ Regardless of the lack of materials, or clerics to enforce a Catholic schedule, all gente de razón were expected to rise with the sun, sometimes earlier. Then, after a routine consisting of timely work, mealtime, and prayer, Angelinos were then free to join in social activities, usually until eight when most retired to bed.¹⁴⁶

The clock aided the Angelinos' pursuit of punctuality. Kentucky-born Miguel Pablo Pryor was the pueblo's watchmaker, and he "tended to the chimes

¹⁴² González, *Mexican Paradise*, 75; Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 29-31; LACA, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3: *1836 and 1844 Register*.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Los Angeles Natural History Museum*, "Becoming."

¹⁴⁵ Cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 82.

¹⁴⁶ Jose del Carmen Lugo, "Life of a Rancher," trans. and ed. Helen Pruitt Beattie, *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (1950): 185-236; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 47.

and springs of Angelino timepieces.”¹⁴⁷ Antonio F. Coronel personally kept a calendar with precise recordings of the sun’s cycles.¹⁴⁸ Coronel further recalled that many Angelinos’ homes possessed clocks. José del Carmen Lugo also remembered seeing clocks and watches, utilizing them to rise and regulate daily schedule.¹⁴⁹ Clocks were also used to regulate prayer, as Coronel recalled attending balls and fandangos, and how when the time reached eight o’clock, “the father of the family stopped the music and said the rosary with all the guests.”¹⁵⁰

Out on the ranchos, routine was slightly different but still inspired by Catholicism and assiduousness. Not counting natives, the 1844 census lists 460 residents residing outside the city, just about a quarter of the total gente de razón in all of Los Angeles.¹⁵¹ Among those residents, they owned a total of 80,000 cattle, 25,000 horses, and 10,000 sheep, making Los Angeles the top agricultural center on the Pacific Coast.¹⁵² American visitor Horace Bell described rancho routine:

At morning [one] hear[s] the clatter of horses' feet and the jingling of spurs as the mounted men, hat in hand report for duty to the major domo-in-chief and then in detachments[,] dash off at a full gallop in all directions to their respective duties. By this time coffee is served in the dining hall, and the patron, members of his household, and guests take their morning cup. At nine or ten

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Antonio F. Coronel, *Cosas de California* or *Tales of Mexican California*, edition by Doyce Nunis, translation by Dianee Avalle-Arce (Santa Barbara: Bellerophon Books, 1994), 81; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 47.

¹⁴⁹ Lugo, “Rancher” 190-1; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 7.

¹⁵⁰ Vallejo to the commandant at the port of San Francisco, San José, June 4, 1829. Cook, *Expeditions to the Interior*, 176; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 79.

¹⁵¹ LACA, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3: 1836 and 1844 Register; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 75.

¹⁵² Gumprecht, *LA River*, 45-7.

o'clock the vaqueros begin to return from the field, and herds of gentle horses are driven into the corral, fresh ones are caught, and those of the day before are turned loose, may be not to be used again for a week; the fresh ones are saddled, and then the under major domos report to the chief, who in turn, hat in hand, reports to the patron, and then the whole ranch goes to breakfast, which being disposed of the duties of the day are resumed.¹⁵³

Contrary to Douglas Monroy's opinion, Los Angeles was not a seigneurial society. While Monroy argues the rancheros acted as lords, or owners who demanded rent, the ranchero population was only a quarter of the total population and in general, the city was held in higher regard than the rancho, according to Antonio Coronel.¹⁵⁴ In fact, many city dwellers found rancho life to be lonely, dreary, and unsafe due to the threat of Indian attack. For his definition of rancho in his dictionary on Mexicanisms, Mexican scholar Francisco Santamaría wrote, a rancho is a "modest...humble site."¹⁵⁵ Though Nasario Domínguez made a fortune in livestock trading on Rancho San Pedro, many still considered him a "wild fellow."¹⁵⁶ Antonio Coronel did not think the cattle industry benefitted Los Angeles, saying that "educated and intelligent people" sought more constructive pursuits than ranching.¹⁵⁷ Rancheros themselves did not consider their life seigneurial. José del Carmen Lugo grew up on a rancho but thought rancho life

¹⁵³ Bell, *Ranger*, 288-289.

¹⁵⁴ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 67-77.

¹⁵⁵ Francisco Santamaría, *Diccionario de mejicanismos* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa S.A., 1959), 915; cited in *Ibid*, 72.

¹⁵⁶ Cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 73.

¹⁵⁷ Antonio Coronel, *Tales of Mexican California*, translated by Diane de Avalle-Arce, edited by Doyce Nunis (Santa Barbara: Bellerophon Books, 1994), 78, 81; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 73.

was lackluster and even grueling sometimes.¹⁵⁸ Of living quarters, Lugo said “the house on a little rancho,” was made of “rough timber roofed with tules [reeds].” Rancho homes “rarely had more than two rooms...[o]ne served as the entry and the living room, the other as a sleeping room.” There was no need for a door, for the family had “nothing worth taking.”¹⁵⁹ It was not until the 1850s cattle boom that ranchos began to take on the look of an estate or manor.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, some visiting Americans mistakenly assumed the rancheros had been wealthy for decades, which then influenced some historians including Douglas Monroy. The Californios did not demand rent from the Indians nor did they provide protection to the Indians, like a feudal lord would treat their serfs. Indeed, the Californios terribly exploited the Indians through vagrancy laws, insufficient pay, and the removal of their rancherías. The Californios were not seigneurs over them however, nor did they practice semi-feudalism. In addition, we are not inferring that rancheros were “wild,” but that rancho life was not glamorous, nor seigneurial. In contrast, the harshness of rancho life further illustrates the resilience and hard work of the Californio rancheros.

In waking up early and dutifully attending to daily responsibilities, Californios could enjoy leisure activities. Balls and fandangos were still staples of Angelino life, sometimes lasting a few days if it was a wedding or an important event.¹⁶¹ Dances included the *jota*, *bolero*, *fandango*, and *waltz*, and were utilized in dancing competitions, such as among Juan Bandini, Antonio María Lugo, and

¹⁵⁸ Lugo, “Life of a Rancher,” 214-7; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 73.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 76-7.

¹⁶¹ Dana, *Before the Mast*, Chapter XXVII.

Nicholas Den.¹⁶² Although the dancing, drinking, and festiveness were legendary, all fiestas were required to be located near a church, in order to “permit a procession at the end of the services.”¹⁶³ In this way, the fiestas music, dancing, and adherence to time, illustrate a jovial society.

Besides fiestas, Angelinos socialized within their cultural mores. Horse racing was extremely popular with daily races being bet on. As evident of its popularity, Horace Bell remembered \$5 wagers on horse carriage races between San Pedro and Los Angeles, pulled by relentlessly “whipped” horses and mules.¹⁶⁴ Perhaps the most famous race of all commenced in October 1852, involving Don Pío Pico and his California-bred horse Sarco versus Don José Sepúlveda and his Australian mare Black Swan.¹⁶⁵ Most Californios attended, some from as far up as San Francisco, betting a combined total of \$25,000 and the same amount in horses, cattle, sheep, and land. At the yell of “¡Santiago!” the race began, with Sepúlveda pulling ahead of Pico by about 75 yards, and eventually winning the race, taking \$1,600 and 300 head of cattle from Pico as a reward.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, and as previously discussed, cockfights, bullfights, and bear and bull fights were a favorite of Californios, often being linked to religious festivals.¹⁶⁷ These practices, and bear hunting in general, were so widespread that

¹⁶² Pitt, *Decline*, 129.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Bell, *Ranger*, 20.

¹⁶⁵ Pitt, *Decline*, 128-9.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Bell, *Ranger*, 285-6.

they contributed to the eventual extinction of the California Grizzly Bear, the state animal.¹⁶⁸

While, according to Ruth C. Engs, Protestant countries generally tried to fight alcohol consumption more than Catholic nations, W.J. Rorabaugh instead surmises that American alcohol consumption was just as excessive as any other nation. Rorabaugh's argument elucidates the Americans' willingness to join Californios in drinking celebrations. Engs argues that America's Protestant roots encouraged temperance movements to curtail the consumption of alcohol.¹⁶⁹ Paul E. Johnston, who studies society in Rochester, New York, between 1815 and 1837, suggests that temperance became a "middle-class obsession" by 1828.¹⁷⁰ He further surmises that temperance was used as a marker between the classes, including between white Americans.¹⁷¹ Rorabaugh agrees that Americans worried about alcoholism, including Boston scholar George Ticknor, who warned Thomas Jefferson, "[i]f the consumption of spirituous liquours should increase...[America] should be hardly better than a nation of sots."¹⁷² Rorabaugh disagrees that America drank less than others, instead saying that America was just as indulgent if not more than most of Europe, including Catholic countries. John Adams, who daily drank a "tankard" of hard cider at breakfast, asked, "is it not

¹⁶⁸ T.I. Storer and L.P. Tevis, *California Grizzly* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 335.

¹⁶⁹ Ruth C. Engs, "Protestants and Catholics: Drunken Barbarians and Mellow Romans?" *Indiana University Scholarworks* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, 2000).

¹⁷⁰ Paul E. Johnston, *A Shopkeeper's Millenium, Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York City: Hill & Wang, 1978), 55-6.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Rorabaugh, *Alcoholic Republic*, 5-6.

mortifying...that we, Americans, should exceed all other...people in the world in this degrading, beastly vice of intemperance?”¹⁷³

¹⁷³ Ibid, 6.

Americans in Mexican Los Angeles

Anglo-Americans started arriving in Los Angeles between 1822 and 1846; the American collaboration with the Angelinos, concerning lifestyle and routine, would foreshadow the collaboration that would occur after 1848. In general, the Americans found the Californios to be incredibly welcoming. After a long life at sea and a brief one in Mexico, Abel Stearns moved to Los Angeles in 1828, having renounced his American citizenship in favor of Mexican citizenship.¹⁷⁴ He stayed in the pueblo for over thirty years, becoming one of the most powerful rancheros in Los Angeles.¹⁷⁵ In 1831, William Wolfskill and his fur trapping party received a warm reception at San Gabriel from Father José Bernardo Sánchez.¹⁷⁶ Wolfskill decided to stay in the pueblo and hunt otter pelts. Two years later, he abandoned hunting altogether, having had his first child with his first wife María de la Luz Valencia, bought some land and “devoted himself to unremitting labor.”¹⁷⁷ Benjamin Davis Wilson, who arrived with the Rowland-Workman Party in 1841, forsook his initial plans to go to China and instead stayed in Los Angeles because he received “so much kindness from the natives [and] arrived at the conclusion that there was no place in the world where [he] could enjoy more true happiness and friendship than among them.”¹⁷⁸ As a result of this cooperation, the

¹⁷⁴ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 185.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Cited in Wilson, *Wolfskill*, 77; 87.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 55.

population of American expatriates went from about twenty-five in 1840 to fifty-three by 1844.¹⁷⁹

Eager to join the ranks of the gente de razón and prosper, the Americans became culturally Hispanicized. First, to ingratiate themselves to the rancheros, they adopted Roman Catholicism and its daily prayer routine.¹⁸⁰ Then, seeking to settle down in the pueblo, the Americans married Californio women. A popular wartime folk song went, “Already the se[ñ]oritas, Speak English with finesse. ‘Kiss me!’ says the Yankees, The girls all answer ‘Yes!’”¹⁸¹ As evidence of the marriages, Pennsylvanian Isaac Williams married Don Antonio María Lugo’s daughter María de Jesús Lugo in 1841 and many other Americans followed suit. These included Benjamin Davis Wilson, Kit Carson, Abel Stearns, Jonathan Temple, Lemuel Carpenter, and William Wolfskill, who married ranchero daughters Ramona Yorba, Josefa Jamarillo, Arcadia Bandini, Rafaela Cota, Maria Carpenter and Magdalena Lugo, respectively.¹⁸²

These marriages, and the embrace of Catholicism, helped some Americans become prominent residents. Abel Stearns constructed a store and warehouse at San Pedro where he bought, sold, and stored hides, tallow, and luxury goods. Jonathan Temple, known as Don Juan Temple, arrived in Los Angeles in 1827 and opened up the city’s first merchant store. In 1842, Don Benito Wilson purchased part of Rancho Jurupa from Bandini and renamed it Rancho Rubidoux.

¹⁷⁹ LACA, untitled records series, box b-1366, vol. 3: 1836 and 1844 Register.

¹⁸⁰ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 55-65.

¹⁸¹ Works Projects Administration, Writers Program, *Los Angeles: A Guide to the City and Its Environs* (New York, 1941), 112; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 23.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

Isaac Williams' wedding gift was the five square-league Rancho Santa Ana del Chino and 4,000 animals. Two years later, the rancho gained another three square-leagues and "employed nearly eighty" Indians.¹⁸³ Finally, in 1841 William Wolfskill, along with his brother John, worked their way into purchasing over four square-leagues of rancho land in Northern California where they planted California's third orange grove, after San Gabriel Mission and the plot managed by Luis Vignes.¹⁸⁴

Many of these American immigrants had survived close calls with Indians previously and thus, unduly feared the Indian populace. The abundance of Gabrielino workers meant that Californios, unless they socially sank to the level of the cholo, could never lose their power. Some Americans joined in this exploitation, as census records show Indian laborers listed under American proprietors.¹⁸⁵ In addition to employing them in labor, many Americans simultaneously tried to rid the pueblo of Indian influence. Of the twenty-six signatories on an 1846 petition to remove the ranchería, four were Americans including Miguel Pryor, Guillermo Wiskies (Wolfskill), Samuel Carpenter (Lemuel), and Ricardo Lankem (Laughlin).¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ Chavez-Garcia, *Negotiating Conquest*, 60; cited in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 61.

¹⁸⁴ J. Eliot Coit, *Citrus Fruits – An Account of the Citrus Fruit Industry with Special Reference to California Requirements and Practices* (New York, 1915), 3; J. Albert Wilson, *History of Los Angeles County* (Oakland, 1880), 183; cited in Wilson, *Wolfskill*, 149-50.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ LACA, vol. 1, February 19, 1846, 527-31; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 28.

Besides commerce, Americans also joined local politics. Stearns became *sindico*, or treasurer in the ayuntamiento, surveying lands, city planning, and census taking.¹⁸⁷ Though not an American, the Italian Juan Bautista Leandri served as alcalde in 1840. Finally, B.D. Wilson was also alcalde from 1845 to 1846. Californios trusted the Americans with leadership roles as they mostly conducted themselves in a manner “indistinguishable...from the” Californios.¹⁸⁸ Additionally, Richard Henry Dana observed, although derisively, that the Americans raised their children as “Spaniards, in every respect.”¹⁸⁹

Los Angeles praised the virtue of hard work, believing that drive and diligence were the keys to prosperity. Starting as a communal Spanish pueblo, the pobladores established their culture. After Spain, this assiduous culture continued as Californio families generated individual wealth, being inspired by Mexican influence concerning liberalism, the virtue of work, and the secularization of the missions. Los Angeles was diligent enough to attract American immigrants, who shared the Californios’ industriousness.¹⁹⁰ In working with the Americans, the Angelinos dictated routine, firmly establishing their political and social influence before the American takeover. The American immigrants could not make a life in Los Angeles without cooperating with the Californios. The Californio population

¹⁸⁷ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 62-3.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid; David Langum, “Law and Community on the Mexican Frontier, Anglo-American Expatriates and the Clash of Legal Traditions, 1821-1846,” *The Journal of San Diego History*, *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly*, Fall 1988, Vol. 34, Number 4.

¹⁸⁹ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 60; Dana Jr., *Before the Mast*, 188.

¹⁹⁰ González, *Mexican Paradise*, 42-3.

was not only larger than the Americans, but their control of politics and culture was too strong to dismiss, even if the American immigrants had wanted to. This relationship would be tested however, with the advent of the US-Mexican War.

Chapter Two:
Los Angeles, “Queen of the Cow Counties” & Garden Paradise
1847-1870

After the tensions between Californios and Anglos concerning the US-Mexican War died down, Angelinos began to prosper under the American flag. By late 1847, Los Angeles’ routine was back in motion, albeit under new leadership. Regardless, Californios proved their industriousness during the first twenty years of American leadership. News of the northern gold discovery instantly created a new market for Angelinos to sell to, as over a hundred thousand people from all over the world came to Northern California in search of great wealth; the need to feed all these people greatly expanded commerce in Los Angeles. As California’s trading markets expanded, Angelinos capitalized on them, engaging in lucrative commerce including ranching, raising exotic and rare crops, and pursuing other trades and occupations. Alfred Robinson said the “early Californians...lived a life of indolence without aspiration.”¹⁹¹ Research on routine and temporal consciousness concerning Los Angeles agriculture, from 1848 to 1865, disproves Robinson’s assertions, however. Contrary to Robinson’s writings, Angelinos turned Los Angeles into a booming agricultural hub. They not only sold their crops in California but also all over the globe as rancheros and farmers expanded their operations to sell larger amounts of product to open market. The

¹⁹¹ Pitt, *Decline*, 277; Robinson, *Life in California*, 175.

Californios were more than equipped to handle the American free market economy.

Rancho Life

Ranching was incredibly lucrative after 1848, forging further Californio-American cooperation in lifestyle and routine. Horace Bell, though quite the exaggerator at times, said that “a man was poor indeed who could not sell at the time one or two hundred head of cattle.”¹⁹² Bell further said that “first-class rancheros...[like] the Sepúlvedas, Avilas, Lugos, Yorbass, Picos, Stearns, Rowlands and Williams, could sell a thousand head of cattle at any time and put the money in their pockets as small change.”¹⁹³ While he might have been inflating the amount of overall wealth, his underlying claims about the boom times are true. For instance, hides, or “California bank notes,” were an extremely valued form of payment even being used in fines levied by the common council.¹⁹⁴ On October 12, 1840, Abel Stearns and A.B. Thompson both agreed to pay John “Domingo” Dominec \$5,796 in hides at \$2 each.¹⁹⁵ Besides its use as currency, rawhides were utilized for several things, with William Brewer writing in 1861, that they were a “universal plaster for ailing implements,” including use

¹⁹² Bell, *Ranger*, 26-27.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 31; John E. Ebbetts “John E. Ebbetts’ Note,” note for 227 hides, payable to Nathan Spears (Stearns MSS: March 26, 1833).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

as a “spread before the beds as a carpet or mat. Bridle reins and ropes for lassos (*riatas*),” tying “fences,” and “repair[ing]...weak wagon wheel[s].”¹⁹⁶

Rancheros combined American laws concerning record keeping with traditional Californio ranching as they took their operations to a larger scale, pushing thousands of lucrative cattle up north for sale. Robert Glass Cleland writes in great detail on rancho life, including the hard work the enterprise required. Though already a rancho community, Los Angeles would merge its ranching style with the Americans beginning with the 1851 *Laws Concerning Rodeos, and Defining the Duties of Judges of the Plains*.¹⁹⁷ The Act, passed by the state legislature, respected traditional Californio practices concerning *rodeos*, or roundups, but put in regulations that were perceived to be more favorable to large-scale ranching. It required at least one major round up a year, giving one’s neighbors at least four day’s notice. In addition, there were designated rodeo seasons, held either between April 1 and July 31, or March and September, depending on the area. To distinguish one cow from another, the rancheros used branding systems, *always* necessitating three separate marks for recording in the “Book of Marks and Brands.” These marks were the *fierro*, or range brand, the *señal*, or earmark, and the *venta*, or sale brand. Despite this, Charles Nordhoff said that branded cattle only accounted for about one-fifth of the total herd, including mavericks such as the *orejanos*, or unbranded calves, which

¹⁹⁶ William H. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864: The Journal of William H. Brewer*, edition by Francis P. Farquhar (New Haven: 1930), 48; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 52.

¹⁹⁷ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 53-7.

automatically became property of the ranchero.¹⁹⁸ Additionally, the *Juez de Campo*, or Judge of the Plains, presided over each rodeo, meting out judgment and punishment to offenders; he had a powerful and respected job that generously compensated him with \$2,000 a year.¹⁹⁹

Most rancheros lived in the city, leaving most of the day-to-day operations to the mayordomo, who was also trusted with leading the herds to the northern mines. Pío Pico further described the position saying,

My Mayordomo is the person who represents my interests at the rancho and is subject only to the proprietor or owner of the ranch. His business is to take care of the cattle and do whatever is demanded, to deliver or sell cattle when he is commanded, and he arranges the labors of the ranch.²⁰⁰

To count the cattle, rancheros used the traditional tally stick, which marked ten cows at a time, though with thousands of head, counting was still a daunting task.

Abel Stearns spoke of the process in front of the land commission saying,

Each owner of a stock farm collects his cattle together in herds on his own farm in Rodeos. When the farm is large some have two or three Rodeos on the farm at different spots. The cattle of different owners necessarily get mixed together as there are no fences and it is the custom at certain seasons for the owners of the Ranchos to drive their cattle together within their own limits for the purpose of separating their own cattle from those of their neighbors. When this is done they notify their neighbors to appear and take their cattle away if they choose to do so...When the Rodeo is ordered the servants are sent out in the borders of the Rancho and the cattle are driven in to the place established for the Rodeo, and no owner of a

¹⁹⁸ Ibid; Charles Nordhoff, *California for Health, Pleasure, and Residence. A Book for Travellers and Settlers* (New York City: 1873), 241.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid; *Los Angeles Natural History Museum*, Special Collections, 1855 City Ordinances.

²⁰⁰ Testimony of Don Pío Pico in “Don Juan Forster vs. Pío Pico” (Orange County, California, WPA. 1936, Project Number 3105; 4 vol.s, typescript), II, 39; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 55-6.

Rancho has a right to go over the line of his Rancho to drive in the Cattle except by special permission of the neighboring land owner.²⁰¹

Farming

Farming, Los Angeles' second most prominent industry, also saw an increase as Angelino farmers, native and non-native alike, expanded their farmlands and crop yields. Farmers from all over the world flocked to Los Angeles and followed the lead of Mexican-era immigrants. These immigrants included William Wolfskill, Benjamin D. Wilson, John Rowland, and Frenchmen Luis Vignes, and the Sainsevain brothers.²⁰² In 1849, Army Lt. Edward Ord noticed that there were four miles worth of trees, gardens, orchards, fields and vineyards, and between sixty and one hundred corn fields.²⁰³ Going further, Blake Gumprecht used calculations from Ord's survey, and surmised that between 1,500 and 1,600 acres of Los Angeles' land was utilized for farming.²⁰⁴ The 1850 census listed the total cash value of the Southland's crop yields at \$13,296, including "Indian corn...Irish potatoes...wheat...barley...tobacco...peas...beans

²⁰¹ Land Commission Case Number 398, "Rancho Dominguez," 21-2; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 55.

²⁰² Wilson, *Wolfskill*, 158-162.

²⁰³ E. O. C. Ord, *The City of Angels and the City of Saints, or a Trip to Los Angeles and San Bernardino in 1856* (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1978), 9; cited in Gumprecht, *LA River*, 55.

²⁰⁴ E. O. C. Ord and W. Hutton, "Plan de la Ciudad de Los Angeles," Tracing Made From the Original, 1849, Huntington Library; cited in Gumprecht, *LA River*, 57.

[and] orchard products.”²⁰⁵ By the mid-1850s, the city’s wheat output “exceeded local consumption,” allowing them to sell grains to both the United States and Europe.²⁰⁶ In addition to the incredibly eclectic crop variety, Los Angeles’ farms tended to be much larger than those in the Midwestern and Eastern states, and as a consequence, relied much more on machine and animal driven power, according to Alan L. Olmstead and Paul W. Rhode.²⁰⁷

Iris Higbie Wilson researched William Wolfskill, and Los Angeles’ agricultural growth in general, and suggested that Wolfskill and his compatriots took many Californio ideas and farming techniques honed from the mission era, albeit on a faster and larger scale. In return, the Californios economically benefitted from their brethren’s own knowledge in agriculture, which introduced newer and more popular crops. Going further, Southern Californians held a monopoly on many of these exotic crops at that time. In 1858, the *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* documented Wolfskill’s crop yields in a piece titled, “Wolfskill’s Vineyard and Orchard at Los Angeles.” It stated:

There are here thirty orange trees bearing; most of which are about 19 years old from the seed; 2,050 in orchid but not in fruit and 4,000 are in the nursery; lime trees in orchid 23 in nursing 6,000; six citron trees in fruit 100 in nursery; walnut trees in bearing 61, in nursery 300; bearing apricot trees 18 (embracing 12 varieties), in nursery 40; of pear trees in bearing there are 60 in fruit of 11

²⁰⁵ *1850 Federal Census of Los Angeles County*, accessed August 1, 2016, <http://files.usgwarchives.net/ca/losangeles/census/1850/pg0023a.txt>.

²⁰⁶ Alan L. Olmstead and Paul W. Rhode, “Chapter One: The Evolution of California Agriculture 1850-2000,” edited by Jerry Siebert in *California Agriculture: Dimensions and Issues* (Berkeley, California: University of California Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2003), 2.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

varieties and 60 the number comprising 20 varieties not in bearing, and 100 in nursery.

The apple trees in bearing are 400 of 15 varieties. There are 12 quince trees and four olive trees and bearing and six of the latter not yet in fruit of lemon trees there are 66 in number in the orchid and the number 100 in the nursery; 30 fig trees in fruit 10 not yet bearing and 50 in nursery embracing many varieties.

Of the orange trees in fruit, some have produced as many as 1,000 in a season and the number one of the trees not less than 2,000; which at 6 1/2 cents each makes the handsome little sum of \$125.00 as the product of one tree. Within the past year the trees have been attacked by an insect that is proving very destructive to the oranges.²⁰⁸

Wine grapes were the most prized crop of all. Mexican-era immigrant, Luis Vignes, brought vines from France believing them to be an improvement over the state's mission vines.²⁰⁹ By 1847, he had about forty thousand vines growing at his vineyard, eventually expanding his business to ship his wine as far as New York City by 1861.²¹⁰ By 1850, the city possessed more than one hundred vineyards, holding 400,000 vines, and yielding 57,355 gallons a year, making it the number one producer in the nation. The closest competitor was Guernsey, Ohio, which produced 20,000 gallons a year.²¹¹ So many Frenchman planted their vines south of Aliso Street that it was soon dubbed "French Town." The geologist William P. Blake visited in 1853, witnessing that "the most important production of the soil, at this time, is the grape." In 1857, fifty Germans purchased 1,200 acres from Don Bernardo Yorba and Don Pacífico Ontiveros and founded Anaheim, combining the name of the Santa Ana River and *heim*, the German

²⁰⁸ Wilson, *Wolfskill*, 160.

²⁰⁹ Gumprecht, *Los Angeles River*, 48-9.

²¹⁰ Irving McKee, "The Beginnings of California Winegrowing," *HSSCQ* 30, Number One (1948), 63-6, cited in *Ibid*.

²¹¹ Gumprecht, *Los Angeles River*, 313.

word for home. By 1863, Los Angeles listed sixty-five total vineyards, 1,000 vines each, including newcomers Charles Kohler, John Frohling, and Irishman Matthew Keller, who all joined in local politics in order to ensure a smooth relationship between Americans, Europeans and Californios cultivated.²¹²

Illustrating these acts of cooperation, most of Los Angeles' prominent citizens signed a May 20, 1850 "Petition to Congress to Build a Suitable Port of Entry at San Pedro," which argued that it was essential, not only for Los Angeles' infrastructure, but also for the growth of United States' commerce in the West.²¹³ The petition stressed that "in no section of the United States have there ever existed obstructions of so serious a character to [t]rade [and c]ommerce." Goods shipped from Europe, South America and Mazatlán, first unloaded in San Francisco sailing past Los Angeles, before traveling back down to San Pedro, "materially retard[ing the]...settlement," and keeping "[l]abor...[and] business...under the most serious disadvantages." General C.C. Rich's survey suggested that the more southern trade route from Los Angeles was far superior to San Francisco's, "as it is...much nearer, [and] can be travelled at all seasons of the year, while the road across the Sierra Nevadas...is inaccessible at least six months out of the twelve." If however, shipping were to come to Los Angeles first, then "shipping rates" would "lower greatly for...both...North" and South, thereby encouraging greater trade in the West overall. It was signed by an eclectic group that included prominent Californios such as Leonardo Cota, José Antonio Andrés

²¹² Ibid, 50; 107.

²¹³ LACA, Special Collections, "Petition to Congress to Build a Suitable Port of Entry at San Pedro."

Sepúlveda, Felipe Lugo, Americans including Abel Stearns, Alexander Bell, Juan Temple, B.D. Wilson, and Europeans including Luis Vignes.²¹⁴ Their wishes were soon granted as the Southland's burgeoning export trade built up San Pedro and its harbor by default. By 1858, Wilmington was founded nearby, with the harbor being adequately improved enough to not only support a growing population but also greater shipping trade.²¹⁵

After 1848, the Californios continued to be industrious. Rancheros and farmers made lots of money off the gold rush miners and the international markets, respectively. This success further cemented the relationship between the Californios and Anglo-Americans, as they profited from the 1850s economic boom. The slothful city that Richard Henry Dana Jr. described would not have had the economic success that Los Angeles experienced.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Gumprecht, *Los Angeles River*, 108; Fogelson, *Fragmented Metropolis*, 108-17.

Chapter Three:
Cattle Busts and “The March...Up to Jerusalem to be Taxed”²¹⁶
Loss of Californio Social & Political Dominance
1851-1880

Beginning in the late 1850s, land laws, natural catastrophes and taxes would begin to take away the lands, livelihoods, and social power from Angelinos. The old rancho properties and Californio culture would give way to smaller cities and newly arrived immigrants from America, Europe, and Mexico. Not only did the land laws and taxes affect Californios, but also Anglos including Abel Stearns, John G. Downey and Henry Dalton. Research on land practices and taxes, 1848 to 1865, show that Angelinos lost rancho lands to Mother Nature’s wrath, squatters, expensive litigation, and taxes, finally losing social and economic control to a larger population of Anglo-Americans.

The End of the Cattle Trade

Los Angeles had a history of flooding, but the 1862 “Noachian Deluge of California Floods” was probably the worst in state history, with continuous raining for thirty days from Christmas 1861 to January 25, 1862.²¹⁷ It swelled the Los Angeles River to a “fierce and destructive” level, sweeping away thousands

²¹⁶ Pitt, *Decline*, 105; *Los Angeles Star*, February 26, 1852.

²¹⁷ Gumprecht, *LA River*, 145.

of precious grape vines and trees, and killing four people.²¹⁸ The *Los Angeles Star* also estimated that 200,000 cattle died, though the survivors soon got fat on the wild grass that came after the rains.²¹⁹ This also turned out to be an issue however, as the market was already stalled, and by then the rancheros needed more cattle as much as they needed more rain in 1862.²²⁰ In total, Los Angeles “received an estimated fifty inches of rain,” and was dealt \$25,000 in damages from the flood.²²¹ The wine trade was the only trade that continued to thrive, as most farmers restarted their operations, albeit at a great cost.

The cattle trade did not survive though. After the floods came The Great Drought, lasting two years, killing scores of cattle, and what was left of the native grass. Rancheros, American and Californio alike, could only watch as their cattle slowly succumbed to starvation. In February 1863, C.R. Johnson wrote to Abel Stearns, “there is no grass and the cattle are very poor...Should we have no rains your cattle buyers will get nothing but hides and bones.” A few days later, Johnson wrote to Stearns, “the cattle will commence dying within a month...the horses have no strength...the loss on the stock must be very heavy this year.”²²² To their dismay, the rains never came and their cattle, along with their livelihoods, were left dead and bleached under the hot California sun; the cow skeleton came to symbolize the end of the “Cow Counties” for Angelinos,

²¹⁸ Ibid; *Los Angeles Star*, January 4, 1862.

²¹⁹ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 129-30; *Los Angeles Star*, February 8 and March 8, 1862.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Gumprecht, *LA River*, 146; *Los Angeles Star*, “City Improvements,” January 25, 1862.

²²² Ibid.

according to Cleland. Abel Stearns quickly sold 1,000 of his best cattle for eight dollars a head to Miller and Lux of San Francisco as rancheros slaughtered their cattle for their horns and hides, which were of “trifling value.” The cost of skinning, almost made the cattle worthless, with rancheros barely being able to sell hides for twenty-five cents a head.²²³ The *Star* even recorded 5,000 cattle being sold in Santa Barbara for thirty-seven cents a head in 1864.²²⁴ The Southern News summarized the end of the cattle trade best writing:

The large rancheros keep their men busily employed in obtaining hides. Thousands of carcasses strew the plains in all directions, a short distance from the city, and the sight is harrowing in the extreme. We believe the stock interest of this county, as well as the adjoining counties, to be “played out” entirely. Famine has done its work, and nothing can now save what few cattle remain on the desert California ranches...²²⁵

Fighting the Land Commission & Squatters

Despite overwhelming evidence from congressionally appointed lawyer William Carey Jones’ report that Californios possessed “mostly perfect titles,” the 1851 Gwin Act forced Californios to defend their claims.²²⁶ Jones’ report on California’s land titles was submitted to Congress before California’s admission into statehood. It looked favorably upon the legitimacy of most Southern California titles, except for warnings about fraud during the mission

²²³ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 134.

²²⁴ *Los Angeles Star*, vol. 14, no. 15, August 13, 1864.

²²⁵ *Southern News*, April 6, 1864; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 134.

²²⁶ William Carey Jones, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior: A Copy of the Report of William Carey Jones, Special Agent to Examine the Subject of Land Titles in California* (January 30, 1851), 21-4; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 95.

secularization and Pico eras, but concluded that fraud would be easy to detect and that titles, even “*verbal* permits,” were “never questioned by neighbors.”

California Senator William M. Gwin read the report differently, sensing that the Californios’ less strict system could lead to land usurpation, especially land containing gold. Thus, his 1851 Gwin Act came into legislation, stating that “every person claiming lands in California...derived from the Spanish or Mexican government shall” have to substantiate their claims to appointed commissioners.²²⁷ This instantly forced all Angelinos to look for their land titles, and gather together neighbors for what Senator Thomas Hart Benton called, “the march...up to Jerusalem to be taxed.”²²⁸

On Monday, February 22, 1852, a “meeting” of Californios, “represent[ing]...fifty-three titles,” gathered at Ignacio Coronel’s house for “the purpose of taking energetic steps to secure” a meeting with “Land Commissioners,” and reach an understanding that would “obviate...” their “hardships.”²²⁹ The group, of which a “four/fifths” majority were “native Californian rancheros,” feared that if they journeyed “to San Francisco to have their claims settled,” they would lose up to “one-third” of their land’s “value.” It was believed the courts would devalue their lands due “to the impossibility of carrying all the witnesses there,” or because some possessed incomplete titles. They were even willing to “travel seven hundred miles” to Washington D.C. to “petition...the president,” if they did not receive a favorable response from the

²²⁷ Ibid, 100.

²²⁸ Pitt, *Decline*, 105; *Los Angeles Star*, February 26, 1852.

²²⁹ Ibid; *Los Angeles Star*, February 28, 1852.

land commission.²³⁰ The response came on August 27 of that same year when commissioners, Alpheus Felch, Thompson Campbell, and R. August Thompson, sailed via the *Sea Bird* to the city, and were greeted to a majestic ball held at Manuel Garfia's adobe home on Main and First Street.²³¹ Satisfied that the courts would be on their side, the rancheros dropped their plans to visit the capital.

The Angelinos were misled however, as it took years, sometimes decades, to validate a claim. Though most Angelinos eventually had their claims upheld, it was a taxing experience as they had to take lengthy trips to court in San Francisco to either prove their land claims, legally evict squatters, or both, all the while paying high lawyers fees. Some even had to sell their land to the same squatters they were fighting in court, because the litigation was too costly. Thus with the cattle industry dead, so too was the rancheros' livelihoods as they were pushed into serious debt and many of their lands taken away. With the death of the cattle trade, most could no longer keep the taxes at bay.²³²

Though a strong majority of Angelinos proved their claims, it was a worrisome experience. The first issue was that some Californios charged American soldiers with ransacking their adobe homes during the war, possibly taking title deeds with them. This claim is dubious due to the fact that almost all the soldiers were illiterate.²³³ Nevertheless, damage claims from the war were

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Robinson, *Land*, 85.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ James M. McCaffrey, "Life in the U.S. Army," *PBS U.S. –Mexican War, 1846-1848*, last modified March 14, 2006, accessed August 1, 2016, http://www.pbs.org/kera/us_mexicanwar/war/army_life_us.html.

sought out from Californios, including charges of title deed theft.²³⁴ Subsequently, they had to gather together neighbors to take up to San Francisco for court. In Manuel Garfia's case, he filed his patent in September of 1852, and then produced the necessary documentary evidence and witness testimony, which included Pío Pico, José Antonio Carrillo, Manuel Domínguez, Antonio F. Coronel, Ygnacio del Valle, Fernando Sepúlveda, Agustín Olvera, Abel Stearns, and José del Carmen Lugo.²³⁵ While Leonard Pitt described the approval process as routine, it took an average of seventeen years to get one's title confirmed, and no lands could be sold until 1859.²³⁶ Garfias was first approved by Thompson and the commission on April 25, 1854, then confirmed by the district court on March 6, 1856 before finally receiving a patent, signed by President Abraham Lincoln, on April 3, 1863. His title was for 13,693.93 surveyed acres.²³⁷

Other pre-war Angelino claims usually followed the same time-consuming pattern. Underscoring the cooperation and affection felt between Americans and Californio residents of Los Angeles, Anglos often defended their Californio neighbors from losing what was rightfully theirs, regardless of a perfect title. In 1853 for example, Dr. Ramon de la Cuesta had his claim to Rancho Temescal in Santa Barbara denied by the commission, as they argued that the title *diseño* was vaguely drawn.²³⁸ Los Angeles Judge Benjamin Hayes overturned this decision in 1856 however, countering that the property lines were well known and respected

²³⁴ *Los Angeles Star*, June 20, 1857.

²³⁵ Robinson, *Land*, 85-6.

²³⁶ Ibid; Pitt, *Decline*, 107.

²³⁷ Robinson, *Land*, 85-6.

²³⁸ United States District Court (California: Southern District) Land Case 153 SD; cited in Ibid.

by neighbors for years.²³⁹ The Supreme Court upheld Hayes' decision in 1863, and the patent was issued to Cuesta in 1871.²⁴⁰

Fifty lawyers made money off of these cases, showcasing how the Angelinos were being taken advantage of. Though more so in the north, the need for legal representation to defend title claims enticed American lawyers into making money off of the Gwin Act.²⁴¹ The advertisement sections of both the *Los Angeles Star*, and *El Clamor Público* featured notices from attorneys, such as former land commission board member James Wilson, who offered "his services to the land proprietors...in the preparation and presentation of their claims."²⁴² Even some prominent citizens worked as counselors for the claimants, including Horace Bell, Henry W. Halleck, and William Carey Jones.²⁴³ According to Leonard Pitt, only Halleck, Jones, Henry Hittell, and Elisha Oscar Crosby were honest attorneys, while all the others were said to be crooked. In addition, most claimants paid their lawyer fees in land, and almost never in cash.²⁴⁴

Some had to contend with squatters. Old San Gabriel mission for example, was "settled upon with powder and lead" by squatters and the church turned into a raucous saloon.²⁴⁵ The Catholic church eventually gained back its mission

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ *United States v. Auguisola*, United States Supreme Court, 68 U.S. 352 (1863); "Rancho Temescal Map," accessed September 16, 2015, http://cosb.countyofsb.org/pwd/surveyor/mm_pdfs/BK1/MM1_06.pdf.

²⁴¹ Pitt, *Decline*, 105.

²⁴² *Los Angeles Star*, May 28, 1853.

²⁴³ Pitt, *Decline*, 91.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, February 12, 1853; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 106.

properties after President James Buchanan restored the title.²⁴⁶ Other squatter examples include a tavern keeper named Thompson, who “smile[d] under...squatter sovereignty,” encroaching onto Workman, Rowland, and Temple’s land at El Monte.²⁴⁷ Thompson eventually started paying rent, and was said to be diligent in his payments.²⁴⁸ Elsewhere, Henry Dalton was unable to legally eject settlers living in shacks at Azusa Four Corners, located at his Rancho Azusa de Dalton.²⁴⁹ The courts ruled against Don Enrique because the occupied land was left out of Henry Hancock’s official government survey and in the end, the costly court battle bankrupted Dalton, and he lost the land to foreclosure.²⁵⁰ Miguel Leonis owned Rancho El Escorpión and Las Calabasas, now present-day Calabasas, West Hills, and Bell Canyon, and acquired more land by pushing his livestock further and further to graze, thereby taking advantage of current homestead laws.²⁵¹ He ended up fighting squatters himself, including a violent confrontation with ex-Union soldiers in present-day Hidden Hills. He was able to hold onto his fortune and land, through the employing of armed workers, which included Basque and French countrymen, as well as Californios and Mexicans.²⁵²

The most notorious squatter example didn’t even happen in Los Angeles but Santa Barbara where Irish gambling kingpin Jack Powers, of the New York Volunteers, refused to leave mission lands, leading to a violent standoff against

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Pitt, *Decline*, 106; Bell, *Ranger*, 350.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ C.C. Baker, “Don Enrique Dalton of the Azusa,” *HSSCQ, Annual Publication*, 1917; cited in Robinson, *Land*, 127.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Pitt, *Decline*, 250.

²⁵² Ibid.

Sheriff William W. Twist's posse.²⁵³ With the blessing of the church and a favorable State Supreme Court ruling, Don Nicolás Den tried to evict Powers. But Powers refused, "claiming it was government property." Towing a cannon on horseback, Twist led a mostly Californio posse to Powers' residence. Though Powers was in town getting supplies in case of a standoff, three of Powers' men happened to come across the sheriff's posse, and after spotting the cannon, attempted to drag it away. A melee ensued in defense of the cannon, concluding with several wounded and two deaths, including American John Videll, a Powers supporter, and the accidental death of a Californio named Leyva. Later that afternoon, Powers and his posse "paraded" through town, and though "no further bloodshed followed" that day, the event sparked greater tension between Santa Barbara Californios and Americans. Powers subsequently "delivered himself up to the [s]heriff," being allowed to harvest his last crops via a short-term lease, before leaving for Los Angeles. Afterwards, the ethnic tension subsided, and "[t]ranquility [was] again restored" between Santa Barbara residents.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Ibid, 106-7; Bell, *Ranger*, 287; *Los Angeles Star*, May 7, 14, and 28, 1853.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

Taxes & Death

The final blow to the Angelinos came from taxes imposed by an unfriendly state government.²⁵⁵ This put Angelinos in further financial straits, compelling some to fight the taxation. Under Mexico, there were not any taxes on land, allowing large swaths of land to be occupied by rancheros, without much penalty. That changed however, starting in 1850, when grazing lands were first assessed at fifty cents an acre, before being lowered to twenty-five cents an acre a year or two later.²⁵⁶ In contrast, cultivated grounds, such as orchards and vineyards, were assessed at five dollars an acre, angering small farmers who felt that they were paying too much compared to the rancheros. Plus, it was also alleged that rancheros had land omitted from the assessment lists, allowing them to pay less property taxes. Even if the charge is untrue, small farmers were right to be upset over the price difference. Into the late 1860s, the cattle bust would drastically lower the value of grazing lands, ending the debate over tax fairness between rancheros and small farmers. The fluctuating value of Los Angeles' total real and personal property illustrates the decline, with the total property value worth \$1,931,403 in 1850, before rising to \$2,561,359 in 1855, and then crashing to \$1,623,370 by 1863.²⁵⁷

Northern Californian domination of state politics left the Southland politically powerless against "direct taxation," and the forced "subdivision of

²⁵⁵ Alexander W. Hope to Abel Stearns, December 22, 1849; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 122.

²⁵⁶ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 118-21.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

large tracts of land.”²⁵⁸ In 1852, the state tax was between sixty and seventy cents, and the county tax was from one dollar to a dollar and twenty-five cents.²⁵⁹ In 1858, the normal county tax and jail tax were thirty cents each, the interest on funded debt and support for the indigent were twenty-five cents each, and the school tax was five cents.²⁶⁰ The property taxes were much more destructive however, as direct taxation caused financial frustration for Angelino landowners in the 1850s. Alexander W. Hope, the chairman of the legislative committee on public lands, wrote to Abel Stearns in 1849 that northern politicians were “teetotally and universally against anything Spanish.”²⁶¹ The property taxes imposed by the state legislature slowly drained the Angelinos’ finances. Don Bernardo Yorba, for example, was ordered to sell 1,000 square varas by a county judge in order to pay back a creditor.²⁶²

In response, some southerners tried to split Southern California from the North, thereby ending northern influence.²⁶³ In 1859, Andrés Pico, with the backing of southern newspapers, J.J. Warner, and others, proposed a joint resolution to the state assembly, asking for the secession of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties from California to form the “Territory of Colorado.” The state legislature acted

²⁵⁸ Ibid, 123; Governor Peter H. Burnett, “Call for a Convention to Divide the State of California, 1851,” in *HSSCQ Annual Publications*, Vol. X, Part 3, 77-8.

²⁵⁹ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 118; *Los Angeles Star*, February 2, 1859; “Tax and Assessment List,” 1859, 1860.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Alexander W. Hope to Abel Stearns, December 22, 1849; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 122.

²⁶² Pitt, *Decline*, 109.

²⁶³ Assembly Joint Resolution, Number 22, February 15, 1859; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 124.

indifferent to the request and approved the division, but the slavery debate and the coming civil war helped kill the bill in the United States Congress.²⁶⁴ Despite the losses, Los Angeles' twenty-five leading landowners kept most of their property by the end of the fifties.²⁶⁵

With the 1860s however, and its horrible floods, drought, and eventual cattle bust, the taxes took a greater toll, snatching away more of the old large rancho lands, lands that had long been an integral part of Los Angeles culture and lifestyle. Despite the eventual defeat of unfavorable squatter laws and the fact most claimants eventually received confirmation of their land patents, the indebtedness of many rancheros became too much to bear. As the cattle trade declined, so too did the rancho livelihood that justified the owning of thousands of acres of land. The delinquent tax lists, from 1859 to 1864, feature prominent citizens such as the Picos, Juan Bandini, José Sepúlveda, Manuel Domínguez, Henry Dalton, John Forster, Phineas Banning, John G. Downey, and even Abel Stearns.²⁶⁶ Abel Stearns, the richest man in Los Angeles whose property was valued at \$187,673 in 1862, owed the most taxes, paying \$1,163.57 and \$3,753.46 in state and county taxes, respectively.²⁶⁷ Stearns was able to survive the late fifties and its taxes, through a combination of shrewd business decisions outside of ranching, and his role as the leading loan giver in a society that did not have

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Pitt, *Decline*, 109.

²⁶⁶ *Los Angeles Star*, November 21, and December 5, 1857, September 20, 1862, January 17, February 7, and February 28, 1863, and February 13, 1864.

²⁶⁷ Los Angeles County, "Tax Book," 1863; cited in Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 120.

any banks to rely on.²⁶⁸ His fortunes would change however, the Great Drought induced his associates to demand *their* money to pay for their own troubles caused by the drought, including a lawyer who brought a suit for \$1,800.²⁶⁹ Stearns lamented, “There are so many demands for money...but I do the best I can.”²⁷⁰ Larger suits followed, including an unpaid note for \$35,000 to John Parrott in San Francisco, which resulted in “an awful sacrifice” of 3,000 horses, and 15,000 heads of cattle.²⁷¹ He lost several properties to auction, including Rancho La Habra (now La Habra and La Habra Heights) for only \$14.07, Rancho Las Bolsas (Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, Fountain Valley, and Westminster) for only \$91.35, and Rancho Cajón de Santa Ana (part of Anaheim, Fullerton, and Placentia) for a paltry \$12.10.²⁷² Finally, he sold his holdings to an investment group named the Robinson Trust, but included himself as a partner. The subsequent land boom alleviated all his financial difficulties, and the Trust ultimately became highly prosperous. Before Stearns could amass a fortune, thereby completing his financial comeback, he passed away in San Francisco on August 23, 1871 at the age of seventy-three.²⁷³

Other Angelinos faced similar difficult financial situations. By 1862, Pío and Andrés Pico could no longer mortgage their properties to avoid debt, paying Stearns almost \$40,000 in mortgage and interest payments on Los Coyotes Ranch,

²⁶⁸ Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 195-6.

²⁶⁹ C.R. Johnson to Abel Stearns, October 7, and November 8, 1862; cited in Ibid, 199.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid, 200; C.R. Johnson to Abel Stearns, August 8, 11, and 22, October 22, and November, 11, 1864, and March 24, and June 12, 1865.

²⁷² Cleland, *Thousand Hills*, 202.

²⁷³ Ibid, 203-7.

which now includes Cerritos and La Mirada.²⁷⁴ Having involved so many rancho financiers in their mortgage loans however, several other rancheros lost property despite their prudent management of their own finances.²⁷⁵ Manuel Garfias, although considered a “bad manager” by many, had to give Benjamin D. Wilson Rancho San Pascual (now Pasadena and San Marino) for \$1,800 after the accumulated interest became too much.²⁷⁶ Ygnacio del Valle never paid off his debts, gradually losing thousands of acres of his Rancho Camulos, near the San Fernando Mission.²⁷⁷ His friend and neighbor, Henry Mayo Newhall, was gracious enough however, not to press him to repay the loan allowing his family to occupy the land in comfort beyond his passing in 1880.²⁷⁸ Vicente Lugo lost most of Rancho San Antonio (present-day cities of Bell, Huntington Park, Commerce, Maywood, Lynwood, Vernon, and Walnut Park), and his vast herds of cattle, to drought and debt. Eventually, through leasing agreements, he recovered 800 acres, half of which was sold for profit, and the other half went to his son Blas and family.²⁷⁹

Julio Verdugo’s financial plight was particularly sad. By the 1860s, he was mired in debt, and therefore mortgaged Rancho San Rafael (Glendale, Montrose, Verdugo City, La Cañada Flintridge, Cypress Park, Eagle Rock, Glassell Park, Highland Park, Mount Washington, and Atwater Village) to pay his

²⁷⁴ Pitt, *Decline*, 109.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Robinson, *Land*, 87; Pitt, *Decline*, 109; Newmark, *Sixty Years*, 36.

²⁷⁷ Ruth Waldo Newhall, *The Newhall Ranch: The Story of the Newhall Land and Farming Company* (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1958); cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 251.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Pitt, *Decline*, 251-2.

taxes, and renovate his home. His three percent monthly interest mortgage payments had swelled though, leading to the foreclosure and public sales of Rancho San Rafael and Rancho La Cañada (La Cañada Flintridge, and La Crescenta-Montrose.) Finally, he lost Rancho Los Feliz (Los Feliz and Griffith Park) to lawyers and creditors, being given 200 acres from a sympathetic American.²⁸⁰

Juan Bandini, despite his early showing of American patriotism and assimilation, suffered financially starting in the early fifties.²⁸¹ By July 1851, he owed \$12,822.90 to a French gambler, who had loaned him \$10,000 on four percent interest, before granting an extension in exchange for a mortgage on Bandini's home and inn. As Bandini's troubles grew, his stepsons, C.R. Johnson and Abel Stearns, compelled him to sell more land and cattle in order to pay his debts on his many ranchos. Quoting from the Bible in 1855, he lamented:

Our inheritance has turned to strangers-
our house to aliens.
We have drunken our water for money-
our wood is sold unto us.
Our necks are under persecution-
we labor and have no rest.²⁸²

Three years later, the Don sold his last 1,000 head of cattle, ending his career as a ranchero, and leaving him wondering "what would become of...[him]self." He died on November 4, 1859 at the age of fifty-nine.²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid, 111-16.

²⁸² Cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 111-116.

²⁸³ Ibid.

Conclusion & Legacy of the Los Angeles Californios

Despite the setbacks of the 1860s, many Californios financially survived their struggles and continued to play an important role in Los Angeles. The troubles of the 1860s led to the loss of Californio social and economic control in Los Angeles. By the 1870s, the Californios lost their population majority to the growing numbers of Anglo-Americans.²⁸⁴ They may have temporarily “declined,” but they did not die out. Most Californios continued to prosper, living on their remaining rancho lands in Los Angeles County. The Californios no longer held vast grazing lands, but the majority of Californio families still held onto hundreds of acres outside the pueblo. Blas Lugo returned to farming on 70 acres inherited from his father, Vicente.²⁸⁵ Blas married first wife Maria Adelaida Alvarado in 1865 in a weeklong celebration that culminated with the couple arriving at their new home built near the family mansion.²⁸⁶ Ygnacio Coronel helped inspire his students, Geronimo and Catalina Lopez, to build the first English-speaking school in the San Fernando Valley.²⁸⁷ They not only ran the school for thirty years, but also expanded the valley in general by operating an inn, grocery, newspaper and post office at their two-story adobe, dubbed “Lopez Station.” The Lopez family continued to live in Los Angeles after Geronimo’s and Catalina’s deaths in 1921

²⁸⁴ Pitt, *Decline*, 123.

²⁸⁵ Daughters of the American Revolution, *The Valley of San Fernando* (n.p., 1924), 39; *Los Angeles Star*, Jan. 29, 1859; *La Crónica* (Los Angeles), May 4, 1872; Aug. 20, 1873; Newmark, *Newmark*, 87; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 268.

²⁸⁶ Hugo Martinez, “Pioneer Family, ‘The Lugos,’” accessed July 6, 2016, http://hmart.tripod.com/Family_Lugo.html.

²⁸⁷ Darrell Saltzman, “4 Years After Quake, Repaired Landmarks to Reopen,” *Los Angeles Times* December 1, 1997; Pitt, *Decline*, 268.

and 1918, respectively. Their house is considered the oldest house in the San Fernando Valley, and is also a historical landmark.²⁸⁸ The Sepúlveda brothers managed to retain coveted land in San Pedro.²⁸⁹ Eventually in 1887, Ramón Sepúlveda sold \$75,000 worth of the land and then moved into one of San Pedro's most luxurious houses.²⁹⁰ Though most had left the Plaza area to live elsewhere in Los Angeles County, a few remained. Pío Pico left his ranching days behind and opened a three-story, Italianate style hotel on Main Street in 1870.²⁹¹ It served as one of Los Angeles' premier social destinations until the early 1890s, when an indebted but still popular Pico sold his hotel and retired before passing away in 1894 at age 92.²⁹²

Politically, Californios continued to serve in important positions. Martin Aguirre, a relative of William Wolfskill, was elected constable in 1885.²⁹³ Despite some controversies, he was a highly respected lawman, especially after his heroics saving nineteen people during a flood in 1886. He was elected sheriff in 1888, becoming the first Mexican to hold that position in the American era. Aguirre later served as a bailiff, warden, and a deputy sheriff before passing away in 1929.²⁹⁴ Ignacio Sepúlveda was educated in the east before returning to Los Angeles to practice law.²⁹⁵ He was first elected as a county judge in 1870 and

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 269.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, 250.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Cecilia, Rasmussen, "L.A.'s 1st Latino Sheriff Was a 19th Century Hero," *Los Angeles Times* November 15, 1998; Pitt, *Decline*, 269.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Pitt, *Decline*, 271.

eventually became a superior judge in 1879.²⁹⁶ Reginaldo del Valle was elected assemblyman in 1880 and then state senator two years later.²⁹⁷ A Democrat, del Valle lost his 1884 bid for Congress but later became chairman of the 1888 and 1894 Democratic State Conventions, and a delegate in the 1900 Democratic National Convention.²⁹⁸

Even after the nineteenth century, the Californio culture continued to flourish through their kin. Through persistent engagement in local politics, business, and social life, Angelino ancestors such as the Cotas, Sepúlvedas, del Valles, Yorbas, Workmans, Temples, Picos, and Verdugos continue to live in the Southland today, some still on rancho lands their forefathers purchased. This includes World War II veteran Bernardo Yorba, who ranched lands originally granted his family by the Royal Spanish government until his death in 1998 at age seventy-seven.²⁹⁹ Finally, the Domínguez family still lives and operates businesses on their family's old rancho lands.³⁰⁰ The Domínguez Adobe is now a historical landmark.³⁰¹

Los Angeles history continues to be appreciated today in various museums, preserved sites, books, and media outlets such as film and television. Museums include the Los Angeles Natural History Museum, the Museum of the

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Pitt, *Decline*, 272-3.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ H.G. Reza, "Rancho Bernardo Yorba Dies," *Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 1998 (Accessed October 5, 2015) <http://articles.latimes.com/1998/jun/16/local/me-60469>.

³⁰⁰ "History," Dominguez Rancho Adobe Museum, last modified 2016, accessed July 6, 2016, <http://dominguezrancho.org/history/>.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

San Fernando Valley, the Gene Autry Museum, and the Historic Southwest Museum. Many of the old adobes are preserved today as historical landmarks, including Leonis Adobe in Calabasas, Campo de Cahuenga in Studio City, the del Valle family's Rancho Camulos in Piru, Lopez Station in the San Fernando Valley, and Avila Adobe and the Pico House in Downtown. Finally, Californio history has been depicted in books and on film and television, such as on *Comedy Central's* "Drunk History," the novel *Ramona* and its numerous film adaptations, and perhaps most famously through books, shows and films featuring fictional Californio character Zorro.³⁰²

As said by Horace Bell, who came to Los Angeles in the 1850s, the "Californio [Angelinos] were not lazy,"³⁰³ Overall, the Californios' treatment of the Indians was abhorrent, but so was the United States' overall treatment of Native Americans, and their system of slavery. The Founding Fathers are not considered indolent, nor were they. But why do some consider the Californios lazy? As this thesis has shown, the reasons are numerous but simple. The travel writers, such as Richard Henry Dana Jr., Lansford Hastings, Thomas Jefferson Farnham, James Clyman, George Simpson and Alfred Robinson, held pre-conceived biases against the Californios. They disliked the Californios because of their racial mixture with Indians and their Roman Catholic faith. Richard Henry Dana Jr. was particularly damaging in his assessment of the Californios, writing they are parasites "fattening upon...the [Indians'] extravagance, grinding them

³⁰² Comedy Central, "Los Angeles," *Drunk History*, accessed August 1, 2016, <http://www.cc.com/episodes/ltzhzt/drunk-history-los-angeles-season-3-ep-306>.

³⁰³ Horace Bell, *On the Old West Coast*, ed. Lamar Bartlett (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1938), 4; cited in González, *Mexican Paradise*, 47.

into poverty.”³⁰⁴ Speaking of Don Juan Bandini, Dana Jr. called him “poor, and proud...lead[ing] the life of most young men of the better families-dissolute and extravagant.” He further said “Bandina” was “impotent in act...keeping up an appearance of style, when their poverty is known...”³⁰⁵ For the historians, including Hubert Howe Bancroft, Douglas Monroy, and Leonard Pitt, the source of their errors lies in several places. Bancroft and his assistants were not able to get much information directly from the Californios themselves, being distrusted or ignored by most, according to Leonard Pitt.³⁰⁶ Having interviewed Pío Pico, José del Carmen Lugo, and Antonio Coronel, Bancroft’s work is not necessarily irrelevant. Pico’s and Lugo’s accounts are suspect however, as Pico embellished his accounts being referred to by Bancroft’s assistant as a “champion liar,” and Lugo suffered from poor memory.³⁰⁷ As a result, Hubert Howe Bancroft’s research is flawed, and incomplete. Douglas Monroy’s research relies on biased sources such as the mission priests, travel writers, and Bancroft’s writings instead of researching the Angelinos themselves. He incorrectly believes the myth that rancheros lived in idle, “halcyon days,” while lording over their Indian vassals.³⁰⁸ As we have shown however, while rancheros made a good living in general, the cattle boom did not occur until the 1850s. Going further, the cattle trade was not glamorous, nor seigneurial, and rancheros often led more demanding lives than those in the pueblo. Leonard Pitt presents great insight into the various reasons for

³⁰⁴ Dana Jr., *Before the Mast*, 223; cited in Pitt, *Decline*, 16-7.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Pitt, *Decline*, 280-1.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Pitt, *Decline*, 1-25.

the Californio loss of dominance, including the Land Law, natural catastrophes, and an intrusive American government. Unfortunately, he also places blame on the Californios, arguing they were too “static...tradition-bound,” naïve and inexperienced to survive Americanization.³⁰⁹ He may have had a change of heart however, as he responded to criticism by adding a footnote to the 1970 third edition. The footnote said “the Californios were the victims of an imperial conquest...The United States...had long coveted California for its trade potential and strategic location...”³¹⁰ Nevertheless, this thesis disputes Leonard Pitt’s belief that “the Californian’s economic naïveté and his penchant for conspicuous consumption led him to the brink of disaster.”³¹¹

Twenty-first century Angelinos owe much to the industrious Californios. Despite the false collective memory generated by travel writers and historians, Los Angeles’ trajectory towards becoming an economically vibrant metropolis would not have been possible had it not been for the hard work and resolve of the Californios. Possessing qualities that Anglo-Americans respected, Los Angeles’ transition into the American era was smoother than could have been. The Californios were no longer Los Angeles’ dominant population, but they proved their worth in surviving the troubles of the late 1850s and early 1860s. The Californios did not die, nor did they decline, they adapted.

³⁰⁹ Raymond V. Padilla, “A Critique of Pittian History,” *El Grito: A Journal of Contemporary Mexican-American Thought* 6, no. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 3-41.

³¹⁰ Ramón Gutiérrez, “Foreword” in Pitt, *Decline*, ix-x.

³¹¹ Pitt, *Decline*, 283.

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