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Critical Latina/o Foodways:
Racial Formation and Placemaking
in the San Gabriel Valley,
1910-1945

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in Chicana/o Studies

by

Natalie Santizo

2019

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Critical Latina/o Foodways:
Racial Formation and Placemaking
in the San Gabriel Valley,
1910-1945

by

Natalie Santizo

Master of Arts in Chicana/o Studies

University of California, Los Angeles 2019

Professor Robert C Romero, Chair

This thesis pieces together the social history of the Central San Gabriel Valley from a Latina/o perspective, particularly when Latina/os are largely omitted from existing historical accounts. I propose a concept, “critical Latina/o foodways,” or CLF, as an approach for recovering Latina/o social histories from traditional archives by centering foodways in archival investigations. In using the CLF approach, I am able to show how the labor and business of foods shaped placemaking practices of Latina/os in the urban outskirts of Los Angeles from 1910 to 1945. Furthermore, I show how Latino farmer-entrepreneurs shaped the civic identity and formation of Baldwin Park, a city located in the Central SGV.

The thesis of Natalie Santizo is approved.

Genevieve Gonzalez Carpio

Eric R Avila

Robert C Romero, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2019

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Introduction

“The movement between Mexican and American cultures is not so much a world of confusion, but rather a place of opportunity and innovation.”

-George J. Sanchez

In 1908, Cruz Baca made the over nine-hundred mile migration from Chihuahua, Mexico, to Irwindale, California, a city located within the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) of Southern California. He began laboring for the rock companies, where workers produced gravel for industrial purposes, eventually making his way to the neighboring city of Baldwin Park.¹ He quickly acquired farm land in Baldwin Park and, about ten years later, he would become a central catalyst for Mexican food products and culinary development in the SGV. In this thesis, I examine the ways foodways—the production, distribution, and consumption of agricultural items—impacted the placemaking practices of Mexican communities between 1910 and 1945. I assert that the study of foodways can tell us much about racial formation in this period and help us to rebuild the social landscapes of understudied Latina/o gateways, particularly semi-rural communities at the urban edge, leading us to new insights about the ways Latina/os make place and impact civic identity within these areas. Baca's rise as an important agricultural figure in Baldwin Park, and the SGV more broadly, serves as a case study by which I begin to unpack a larger history of Latina/o foods, goods, and foodways. Furthermore, it makes visible historiographical gaps in which the sizable Latina/o population of the Central San Gabriel Valley is erased from the region's social history and it reveals new pathways towards recovering these

¹ Brian Benbow and Larry O'Brien, *Images of America: Baldwin Park*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 23.

histories through an approach grounded at the intersections of critical race studies and food studies.

Despite Baca's recognition within markers of civic identity, such as the Cruz Baca Transit Center opened by Metrolink in the early 2000s, there is little known about his biography in regional archives. That is, Baca's absence in official archives attests to the difficulties of writing Latina/o history in the SGV, even more so for that of Mexican laborers who appear neither in the Baldwin Park archive nor in markers of civic identity. Thus, Baca's absence underscores the larger historiographical challenge of reconstructing Latina/o social history when archival institutions have consistently undervalued these stories. This thesis asks, how might we address these historical absences, particularly in places like the semi-rural suburbs of the San Gabriel Valley that served as the agricultural centers for a regional Mexican community?

Recovering Baca's story does more than fill an important historical gap in SGV history. It demonstrates how an analytic that I call "critical Latina/o foodways," or CLF, reveals innovative ways to reconstruct Latina/o histories. This analytic advances our understanding of Latina/o suburban history through the intersections of racial formation, placemaking, and foremost, foodways—the ways agriculture shapes labor-relations and residential locations—which in turn impacts the social landscapes of cities. This grounding allows us to understand and excavate stories of Latina/o labor, farming, business, and agriculture that give clearer insights into the civic identity of places like Baldwin Park.²

² I use "critical Latina/o foodways" rather than "critical Mexican foodways" because this framework helps not only recuperate Mexican contributions, rather can also help recover stories from other Latina/o groups as well. As this thesis focuses on Mexican workers, I use the term "Mexican laborers" respectively.

Baca's narrative, though brief, demonstrates the ways that critical Latina/o foodways provides insights into racial formation, such as how farmer-entrepreneurs shaped cultural practices and city dynamics through the development of Mexican foods in Greater Los Angeles. During the 1920s and 1930s, Baca was the only producer of dried chiles and cornhusks in the entire San Gabriel Valley, key ingredients for tamale-making. Tamale-making in the United States has been a significant cultural practice for many Latina/os, particularly for Mexican Americans and migrants.³ Walking into a kitchen, you will see an elaborate assembly line of mostly women who skillfully prepare the tamales. The scent of *masa* exudes a familiar corn smell. Whiffs of *chile* fill the air, followed by the filling of *carne*, talvez *chile con rajas*. The tamales fill up *hoyas*, bigger than most have seen before. Hours go by until the tamales are ready, the steam and amplified smells of corn, meat, cheese, and salsa married together. The smells and the tastes have been just a small part of the larger cultural practices that are preserved and which have further helped Mexican migrants make place in areas that may be new to them.⁴

A critical Latina/o foodways lens allows a fresh perspective into the significance of tamale-making and other food practices for the region's Latina/o population. People traveled near and far to prepare tamales, particularly during Christmas, when new friendships and connections resulted from these shared cultural practices. When tamale-making was most

³ Making tamales with family and friends is a common cultural practice for Mexicans and Mexican Americans.

⁴ Thinking about cultural history, I draw from historian Eric Avila who writes, "cultural history is, quite simply, the history of stories, their origins, transmission, and significance in time." He draws from Franz Boaz conception of culture as a way of life. In *American Cultural History: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2-3.

popular, Baca's customer base spanned several regions in Southern California.⁵ Customers drove in from Orange County, Los Angeles, and other cities within the SGV to purchase his goods. Where the act of buying ingredients and preparing food can be easily dismissed, CLF reveals a larger network of foods and food practices than previously acknowledged and gives us insight into the placemaking practices of immigrant communities.⁶ That is, from a CLF perspective, tamale-making was not just a means for reproducing cultural traditions by migrant laborers arriving from Central Mexico, but also a way to understand the ways Latina/os impacted civic identity in suburban outskirts of Los Angeles, through food. While understanding the preservation of cultural practice and identity making is critical to tell the story of Latina/os in the Central SGV, this thesis primarily focuses on recreating the social landscape of Baldwin Park from 1910 to 1948 when census data and archival sources are scarce.

Critical Latina/o foodways reveals the creation of regional networks between Mexicans during a tumultuous time. This project begins in 1910, soon after Baca arrived in the San Gabriel Valley (1908) and prior to the large wave of Mexican migration to Los Angeles during the upheaval of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). This period is a defining time for the Mexican population in Southern California. The year 1910, as a turning point for mass migration, anchors our understanding of Mexican American history. Historian George Sanchez notes that the construction of a Mexican national identity strengthened at this time, particularly in Los

⁵ Ana Montenegro, "Biography," in *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, ed. Aileen Pinheiro and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).

⁶ It is important to acknowledge that Mexicans were already living in this region as seen with the history of the Californios, elite Mexican men and their families. See Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

Angeles.⁷ Mexican Americans began creating new traditions in place of older ones. At the same time, Mexico was creating traditions to further enact a Mexican national identity in Mexico. This period also marks a time of significant internal migration from other parts of the United States into Southern California. Furthermore, California established itself as an agricultural powerhouse at the time, and by 1939 the state produced 75 million boxes of oranges, 16 million crates of lettuce, and 462,000 tons of prunes, amongst an array of other agricultural output.⁸ This era provides the turning point for this thesis because of the ways it prompted new ways of eating and diverse foodways rooted in these migrations, including the integration of Mexican workers into the agricultural hinterland of Southern California.⁹

The year 1945 bookends this work. It is in the post-World War II period that the SGV begins to transition from an agricultural, unincorporated area of Los Angeles, into an industrial and formal suburban region. At this time, we see significant changes in Southern California that indicate a transformation in regional foodways from slow foods to fast foods.¹⁰ In 1948, In-N-Out opened its doors in Baldwin Park, just eight years after McDonald's opened its doors in San Bernardino. In-N-Out, arguably the most popular fast-food burger joint in Southern California,

⁷ George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 9.

⁸ Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939).

⁹ For example, Eric Schlosser states that in the time period between 1920 and 1940, the Southern California population tripled, whereby two million people arrived from across the United States. The changing dynamics of Los Angeles impacted fast-food production. See his book, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark-Side of the All-American Meal*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012).

¹⁰ I draw from Joseph C. Gallegos' notion of "slow foods" as foods that require long processes involving friends, family, and a lot of patience. See Joseph C. Gallegos, "Chicos del Horno: A Local, Slow, and Deep Food," in *Food Across Borders*, eds. Matt Garcia, E. Melanie DuPuis, and Don Mitchell, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2017).

changed how society was eating.¹¹ It not only built on the typical drive-in restaurants that spread in the 1940s, but it also established Southern California's hamburger *drive-thru*.¹² The drive-thru ushered in a new way of eating centered on the industrialization of food.¹³ At this time, food was being produced rapidly, included new ingredients, and emphasized productivity.¹⁴ Throughout this period, Baldwin Park was unincorporated, and remained this way until 1956.

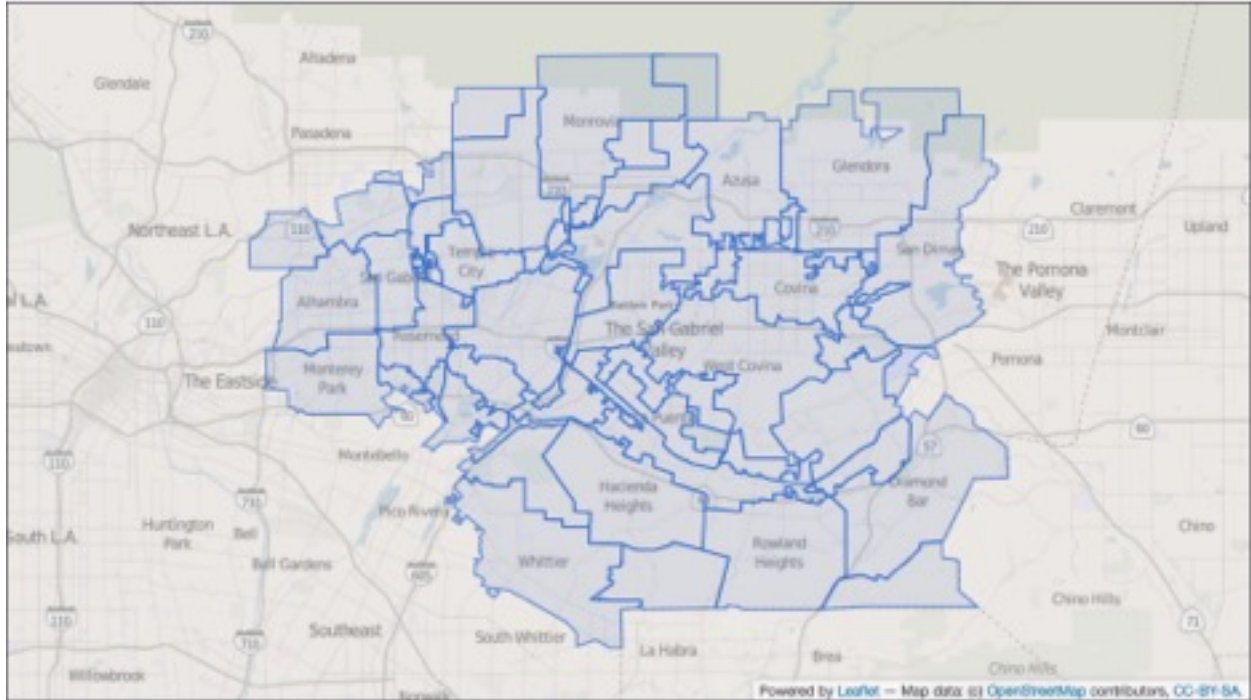
I situate this project as a suburban history. Where scholarly discussion of identity, ethnicity and place-making between 1920 and 1930 focus largely on the urban population, Baca's story and that of Mexican laborers reveals how the changing cultural traditions and placemaking practices enacted by Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles were experienced in the urban outskirts. These unincorporated areas of Los Angeles have not received the same scholarly attention as traditional urban gateways or formal suburbs. As a result, we do not yet understand how Mexican migrants forged place in these spaces and impacted civic identity, given their unique characteristics. For instance, these unincorporated outskirts of Los Angeles were characterized by cheaper land, more space, and less restrictions on usage than the urban core. The study of these areas through foodways is particularly fruitful for uncovering the relationship between racial formation and place-making.

¹¹ By eating, I mean eating habits and patterns, including the growth of precooked foods and fast-foods.

¹² Eric Schlosser states, "Southern California had recently given birth to an entirely new lifestyle- and a new way of eating. Both revolved around cars." In *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012), 15.

¹³ Eric Schlosser states, "A hamburger and french fries became the quintessential American meal in the 1950s, thanks to the promotional efforts of the fast food chains." In Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*, 6.

¹⁴ For more information on the industrialization of food, see Kenner, Robert and Elise Pearlstein. *Food, Inc.* Film. Directed by Robert Kenner. New York: Magnolia Pictures, 2009.

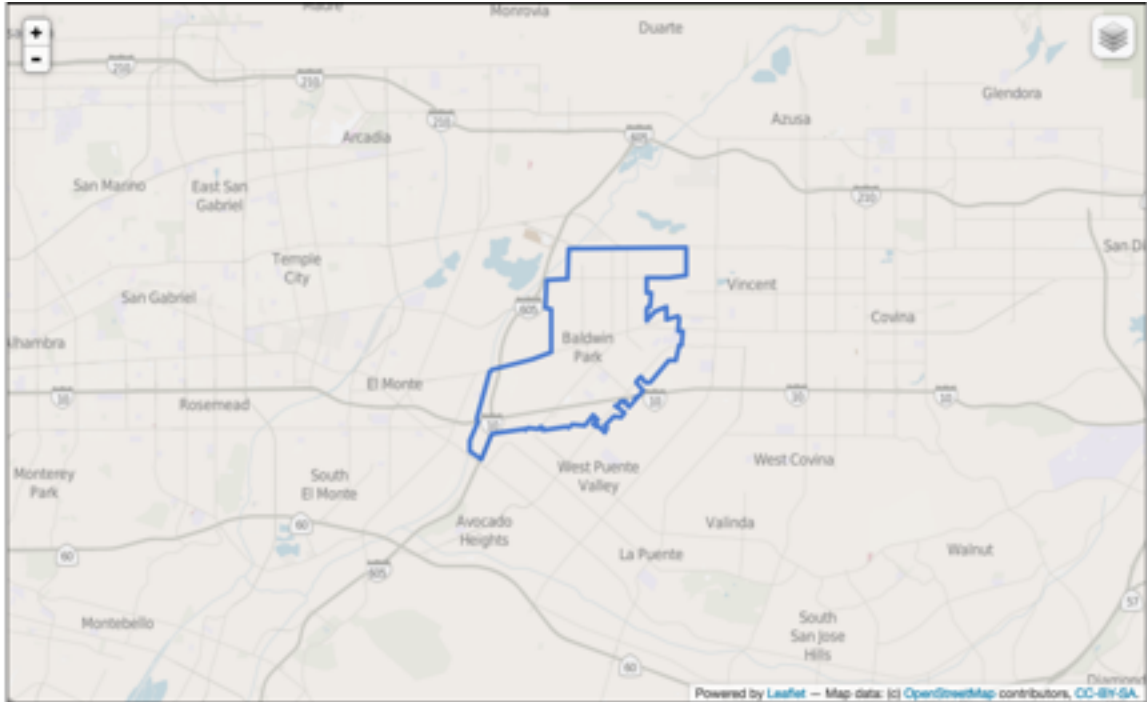


Map 1. San Gabriel Valley, 2010. Image of cities located within the San Gabriel Valley. (Image retrieved from *Los Angeles Times*, <http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/region/san-gabriel-valley/>)

Drawing attention to an area that has not often received scholarly attention, this project focuses on the Central San Gabriel Valley. The San Gabriel Valley, with its iconic San Gabriel Mountains looming over its municipalities, consists of 46 diverse cities (Map 1). At its western edge, you will encounter San Marino, South Pasadena, Alhambra, and Monterey Park, and to the eastern edge you will encounter San Dimas and Glendora.¹⁵ Furthest north lies Monrovia, Duarte, and Sierra Madre, and furthest south lies Whittier, La Habra Heights, Rowland Heights, and South Diamond Bar. But at the center of the San Gabriel Valley, you will find Baldwin Park (Map 2).¹⁶

¹⁵ Los Angeles Times, “Mapping L.A., Regions, The San Gabriel Valley,” (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times, 2010), <http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/region/san-gabriel-valley/>.

¹⁶ Baldwin Park, the “hub of the San Gabriel Valley,” as the city’s banner proclaims.



Map 2. Baldwin Park, 2010. Image of cities located within the central San Gabriel Valley, including Baldwin Park, West Puente Valley, La Puente, and El Monte. (Image retrieved from Los Angeles Times, <http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/region/san-gabriel-valley/>)

While scholars have conducted dynamic research on Asian American and Latina/os in the San Gabriel Valley, this research largely focused on the West SGV, further erasing cities like La Puente, El Monte, and Baldwin Park from the SGV imaginary.¹⁷ However, substantial scholarship on SGV history has not critically engaged with cities in the Central SGV. Thus, Baldwin Park serves as a site for understanding how to shift the way a region is talked about.

¹⁷ The West SGV includes Monterey Park, Alhambra, Arcadia, and San Gabriel. Wendy Cheng, Leland Saito, and Wei Li have produced insightful research on Asian American and Latina/o relations in the West SGV, analyzing how space and place shape racial formation, civic identity, and the development of critical political resistance. Wei Li coins the term “ethnoburb” to discuss the importance of significant clusters of ethnic minorities in a suburb, even when they may not be the majority in the overall region. See Wendy Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013); Wei Li, “Anatomy of a New Ethnic Settlement: The Chinese *Ethnoburb* in Los Angeles,” *Urban Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp 479-503, 1998; Leland Saito, *Race and Politics: Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites in a Los Angeles Suburb*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

With few exceptions, minimal research has been conducted in the Central SGV.¹⁸ Through focusing on the Central SGV, I create an important intervention within SGV history by focusing on cities that represent predominantly Latina/o communities.¹⁹ This study is the first to begin reconstructing the Latina/o social history of the Central San Gabriel Valley by focusing on Baldwin Park.

In this thesis, I ask: How can the study of foodways help us understand Latina/o histories in the Central San Gabriel Valley? How might a CLF framework provide new insights into racial formation, placemaking and civic identity in the unincorporated outskirts of Los Angeles at a key moment of Mexican migration? In the following sections I provide information on the methods used in this project, which focus on archival documents and digital mapping. I start by discussing the context of the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum. I then discuss my framing, particularly the ways in which interdisciplinary scholars focusing on ethnic studies and foodways influence this work. Finally, I share findings in which I have applied a CLF framework to an array of archival documents to reconstruct the social landscape of Latina/o agricultural workers and a key farmer-entrepreneur in Baldwin Park in the early 1900s. The findings are divided into

¹⁸ Cities within the Central SGV are almost always discussed *in relation* to a certain topic. Matt Garcia's work on citrus groves and placemaking provides a way in which the San Gabriel Valley can become central to understanding racial formation in these areas. See Matt Garcia, *World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). In her work on music and resistance, Gaye Theresa Johnson touches on El Monte, a neighboring city to Baldwin Park, when discussing dance halls, soundscapes, and spaces of solidarity. See Gaye Theresa Johnson, *Spaces of Conflict, Sounds of Solidarity: Music, Race, and Spatial Entitlement in Los Angeles*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013). Gilda Ochoa's work on immigrants, citizenship, and identity in La Puente shows us the possibilities of focusing on the Central SGV. See Gilda Ochoa, *Becoming Neighbors in a Mexican American Community: Power, Conflict, and Solidarity*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).

¹⁹ Although predominantly Latina/o, Baldwin Park and El Monte have significant populations of Asian American residents. According to U.S Census Data via American Fact Finder, 14% of Baldwin Park residents identify as "Asian." In El Monte, 25.1% of the population identifies as "Asian."

two sections: Reconstructing Social History Through Farmer-entrepreneurs and Remapping the Ethnospatial Context of the SGV. I conclude with future directions and possibilities for expanding this work.

Methods

When collecting stories, people often rely on their networks of family and friends.²⁰ Likewise, these networks critically shape the stories that have been collected within the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum (BPHSM).²¹ At first glance, there is no trace of Latina/o history embedded within the displays of the museum.²² But close analysis of documents through a CLF lens uncovers buried stories of Latinos in Baldwin Park.²³

Tracking down the history of Baca and his role as a farmer-entrepreneur before the official incorporation of Baldwin Park in 1956 becomes a difficult task when archives are scarce, ill-preserved, and staffed by volunteers.²⁴ Thus, uncovering stories of Mexican laborers becomes even more difficult. Issues of collection, preservation, and representation habitually arise *within* archives. In historic society collections, which are often the primary stewards of these

²⁰ Debbie Ann Doyle, "The Future of Local Historical Societies" Perspectives on History, The newsmagazine of the American Historical Association, (December 2012).

²¹ The Baldwin Park Historic Society was founded in 1975 and faces the same challenges encountered by most small historic societies. The director, who is over eighty years old, is the main curator and collector of Baldwin Park history. All his contributions are solely on a volunteer basis.

²² The museum space is no more than 1,200 square feet and the most prominent glass case display focuses on In-N-Out. The back of the museum features a small archive of books, papers, documents, newspapers, yearbooks, and general history books.

²³ I say Latino here instead of Latina/o because of the few narratives uncovered on laborers, I only found accounts of male laborers. Women were mostly omitted from any narratives, pointing to further work that is needed on the visibility of women of color in the archives.

²⁴ Unfortunately, most of these materials are not cared for according to formal standards due to lack of funding. All books are shelved without being placed in acid-free environments, although the director has tried to activate preservation techniques, like keeping the lights dimmed in this area.

community histories, there is a significant gap in records involving people of color. It is because of these absences that we know little about how Baca developed his own business after working as a laborer, how he came to grow such an extensive customer base primarily made up of Mexican Americans at a time when most ranch owners were white, and how he helped shape the civic identity of Baldwin Park. As social historians have shown, the critical gaps in archives is an issue that is not unique to the San Gabriel Valley, but rather happens continuously across historic societies and museums.²⁵ Addressing this challenge, CLF provides a pathway for gleaning new insights about Latina/o populations by following foodways within traditional archival sources, such as city directories and autobiographies.²⁶

I use historical methods, including close analyses of primary documents, to tell the story of foodways, Mexican laborers, and farmer-entrepreneurs such as Baca. From 2017 to 2018, I conducted archival research at the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum, which houses a local history collection including phone directories, historic objects, clothing, and autobiographies. During these visits, I began to decode how documents were collected and organized while also surveying how Latino farmer-entrepreneurs and laborers are (or more accurately are not) written into Baldwin Park history through a content analysis of two popular local history books on display at the BPHSM. Together, *Images of America: Baldwin Park* and *The Heritage of Baldwin Park* provide glimpses into the ways Baldwin Park history has been

²⁵ Michel-Ralph Trouillot. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995); Debbie Ann Doyle, “The Future of Local Historical Societies,” *Perspectives on History*, *The newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*, December 2012.

²⁶ It is important to note that the uncovering of Latina/o social histories is not a new phenomena. My intervention lies in the way CLF provides a means to uncover stories through an emphasis and grounding of *foodways*, a method which has not been emphasized in archival work.

written.²⁷ Conducting an oral history with a museum staff member further helped me unravel how the museum began to shape and form its collections and, more broadly, how the history of Baldwin Park has been documented over time. These processes reveal how erasure occurs within local archives, including why certain figures and families are included within local narratives and why others are left out.

I have approached the archive as a scholar activist, one who does not only focus on uncovering Latina/o stories from a traditional archive, but one who also works closely with the community to provide resources, aide with preservation, and tell a Latina/o history through the lens of the community.²⁸ As a long-time resident of Baldwin Park, it is not only important for me to conduct research in this area, but also to provide resources building on my access to the institution. Building on these tenets, I built trust with archival staff who offered me the opportunity to borrow historic phone directories in order to digitize them through the UCLA Libraries. I closely handled these primary documents and digitally preserved two phone directories (1927, 1941) using a specialized CZUR scanner by creating high-resolution PDF copies of the phone directories. Digitizing these phone directories provided much needed preservation of documents that would otherwise deteriorate over the years. I focused on phone directories as they provided rich community data for the 1920s and 1940s that would otherwise be unavailable through the United States Census Bureau (since Baldwin Park was an

²⁷ Brian Benbow and Larry O'Brien. *Images of America: Baldwin Park*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 23.; Pinheiro, Aileen, and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, ed, *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).

²⁸ As stated by Charles R. Hale, activist methodology commands a commitment to social action in pursuit of social change. See Charles R. Hale, *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), xxi.

unincorporated city at this time). I then applied geospatial analysis to the phone directory data. Where ethnic studies scholars have recently activated local archives to fill historical gaps regarding U.S empire in Thailand and the expansion of prisons, local historical archives in the San Gabriel Valley can also point to the ways cities have developed socially and economically, through the labor of food.²⁹ This scholarship focuses on telling the Latina/o history of the Central San Gabriel Valley while providing a unique framework to conduct such research.

Critical Latina/o foodways as an analytic, is the centralizing of foodways as a lens for the scholarly investigation of Latina/o social histories. Engaging critical Latina/o foodways as a method of recovery, I focus on archives that discuss an array of topics including agriculture, ranches and restaurants, rather than primarily seeking “Latina/o narratives.” In other words, by centering foodways in my investigation into Latina/o social histories, I am able to utilize ample archives that would not normally be considered archives of Latina/o histories, much less of the Central San Gabriel Valley.³⁰ This is critical work, particularly when archives of Latina/o histories in this area are scarce. For example, I utilize the Lucky Baldwin archive in order to rebuild ranch labor dynamics and experiences of Mexican ranch laborers in the SGV. I also uncover stories such as Baca’s, which conversely provides insight into histories of foodways, race, civic identity and place-making. And, I am able to begin tracing the development of historical Latina/o foodways in Southern California, roots that have established a regional cuisine here.

²⁹ For more on U.S empire in Thailand, see Mark Padoongpatt's *Flavors of Empire* ; See Kelly Lytle-Hernandez' *City of Inmates* for more on the expansion and history of prisons in Los Angeles.

³⁰ I heed Natalia Molina’s call to read race in between the lines. See her article, “The Power of Racial Scripts: What the History of Mexican Immigration to the United States Teaches us about Relational Notions of Race” *Latino Studies*, Vol 8., 2, 156-175, 2010.

I engage with digital humanities methods by mapping data retrieved from city phone directories for the year 1927 to reconstruct the social landscape of farm laborers and ranchers who produced agricultural products in Baldwin Park. I focus on mapping surname, occupation, and residential addresses, particularly where streets and addresses are divided along racial lines. By mapping the data derived from these historic phone directories, I seek to uncover the geo-racial meanings encoded on this landscape. As I will discuss, these methods reveal that most Mexican laborers lived in a cluster north of the city. Conversely, I found that white ranch owners lived throughout the city with a concentration in the center of the city, not having to adhere to the geographical and social boundaries of Mexican laborers.³¹ These spatial differences were often a result of labor within the agricultural sector.

Where city collections such as those held at the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum have large gaps in the Latina/o experience during the early 1900s, it has been critical to use multiple archives across the region to reconstruct rancher-laborer dynamics. I pair my work in the BPHSM with analyses of other area collections in order to reveal the significance of Baca's work as a farmer-entrepreneur at the time. For instance, I conducted archival research at the Arcadia Public Library, about seven miles from Baldwin Park, which contains the Elias "Lucky" Baldwin Papers. Baldwin, for whom Baldwin Park was named, was one of the wealthiest landowners of Southern California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth

³¹ In her new book *Collisions at the Crossroads*, Genevieve Carpio states, "I argue that mobility has been an active force in racialization over the twentieth century, one that has operated alongside 'place' to shape regional memory and belonging in multiracial communities" (5). In thinking about Carpio's work on the Inland Empire and the ways mobility influences racial formation, I take note of the ways one group's mobility (or immobility) shaped placemaking practices and the construction of race and of Mexicans in Baldwin Park during the early 1900s. See Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads: How Place and Mobility Make Race*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019).

centuries and helped establish many cities within the SGV, including Arcadia, Monrovia, and Pasadena. The documents in this archive include land grants, newspaper clippings, and pamphlets used to market land in the San Gabriel Valley, as well as extensive documentation of Baldwin's personal life.

I use a CLF lens to look for narratives of Mexican laborers in the Lucky Baldwin Papers, an archive solely dedicated to Baldwin's life. In doing so, I build on efforts to recover the “rebel archive.”³² The constant bend toward disappearing racial outsiders, emphasized in the conception of the rebel archive, continues through the legacy of archives and collection practiced by historic societies such as these. While the history of In-N-Out on which the Baldwin Park Museum focuses on can give us insight into historic American foodways and drive-thru culture, I recognize the critical importance of Baca as the sole producer of Latina/o foodstuffs in Baldwin Park and the potential for shaping the history of American foodways from a Latina/o perspective. Utilizing the archives and noticing the discrepancies in who gets to be discussed and why allows me to open up the archives. I do so by making clear the value, significance, and importance of Mexican laborers and Baca's life as a farmer-entrepreneur who helped establish and develop Latina/o foodways and shape regional food in Southern California.

Building on the attention to archival erasure addressed by ethnic studies scholars, this project aims to do more than add a Mexican narrative to our understanding of SGV history.

³² The “rebel archive,” described by historian Kelly Lytle-Hernandez, is the archive that has survived destruction. In an interview about her book *City of Inmates*, Lytle-Hernandez states, “So, I was put into a position... to look for the story of the rise of incarceration in Los Angeles through a series of back doors.” She goes on to state, “Those back doors led me to a profoundly new understanding of what's happening in our nation's jails, prisons, and detention centers: that, in particular, we live in a settler society, and in settler societies there is a strong bend—a constant bend, an enduring bend—toward eliminating indigenous communities and disappearing racialized outsiders.” See Interview with Kelly Lytle-Hernandez by Julia C. Frankenback, November 10, 2017. <https://erstwhileblog.com/2017/10/11/dispatches-from-the-rebel-archive/>

Rather, by focusing on Mexican agricultural producers and laborers it offers a revisionist history of the San Gabriel Valley that begins to uncover the diverse foodways of Southern California, and thus the way we understand the SGV as a whole. CLF not only allows researchers to address the erasure of Latino laborers within the SGV from local archives, but also to reconstruct how racial formation and place-making unfolded within the Central SGV.

Towards a Critical Latina/o Foodways

“Race is an unstable and de-centered complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle.”

–Michael Omi & Howard Winant

“Racialized space has come to be seen as natural in this nation...the racial projects of U.S society have always been spatial projects as well.”

–George Lipsitz

This section references key scholars that have influenced the CLF approach of recovering Latina/o social histories. It first considers the ways in which public history shapes civic memory. I then discuss the relationship between erasure and racial formation in order to understand how these manifest within the archives. I continue by sharing the ways notions of space, place and race influence this work, followed by a discussion of the intersection of race and foodways. I end by reiterating the ways CLF offers a new, intersectional approach to reconstructing Latina/o social histories grounded in foodways.

Historical events involving people of color are often omitted or erased from history because they do not fit neatly within the dominant narrative which serves the status quo. History is complex and involves several processes that should not be relegated to a glorified past, much

like Carey McWilliams shows us in his early work on California and agriculture.³³

Deconstructing silences is a difficult process, particularly when looking at archives and historic societies for the reasons outlined earlier, but it is necessary work.³⁴

How does the construction of history, then, relate to the construction of race and racial inequality? Sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant developed a theory of racial formation, which deconstructs the shifting meanings of race. Because Omi and Winant argue that race is fluid, the meaning and power inscribed within race changes over time, given the social context.³⁵ Dividing people along racial lines appears to be a natural process, when it is actually created through power dynamics embedded in institutions that favor whiteness.³⁶

Historical narratives are prime examples of how racial formation occurs through shared texts.³⁷ That is, historical narratives serve as tools through which racial boundaries are reinforced and learned, particularly wherein white narratives are valued by devaluing people of color.

³³ Carey McWilliams dispels the myth of the virtue of land, particularly promoted by Agrarians who believed that farming was the key to preserving society. He states, "What was masked by the image of fruits and vegetables created by nature, mediated only by simple farmers and country maidens into whose lives the sun also smiled? Farm life that had become strictly a business affair. Harvests without festival. Work that was routinized. Workers who bent their bodies to bring in the crops but who were excluded from the body politic." In *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939), x.

³⁴ In *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Michel-Rolph Trouillot discusses the ways power influences history, particularly when thinking about how historical facts are conceptualized in comparison to historical narratives, or, "what happened" versus "that which is said to have happened." In other words, Trouillot argues that the way we write history can connote either an event that happened or an event that may (or may not) have happened. The distinction between both is not always clear. See Michel-Ralph Trouillot. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

³⁵ Through racial ideology, U.S. society classifies people by conflating particular characteristics and traits (read myths and stereotypes) with race. The normalization of these processes, then, allows for the reorganization of resources along racial lines and gives way to social inequality.

³⁶ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "Conclusion" in *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Hosang, LaBennett, and Pulido, (Oakland:UC Press, 2012) 55.

³⁷ Texts become learning resources and thus impact our conceptions of race.

During the cultural turn of the 1990s, scholars began interrogating issues regarding whiteness through revisionist histories.³⁸ This work responded to Stuart Hall, who pushed cultural studies as a valid and important field to understand lived experience.³⁹ This new scholarship focused on people of color and marginalized communities, emphasizing the importance of highlighting stories that have never been told.⁴⁰ These interrogations continued into the 2000s with scholars of revisionist histories who center people of color in their investigations, showing the possibilities to understand the complex ways histories have been told, challenged, and rewritten to reflect the histories and struggles of communities of color.⁴¹ Most importantly, these scholars, through their interventions and activations of the archive, tell us that archives critically shape the stories we *can* tell. Interdisciplinary scholars have shown us the ways in which we can activate archives and think about racial geographies through the use of an array of analytics, from racial

³⁸ Scholars such as Al Camarillo, Vicki Ruiz, and George Sanchez created revisionist histories within Chicana/o Studies. We can primarily see the interrogation and investigation of whiteness through Eric Avila's book *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* published in 2004; Scholars such as George Lipsitz, Lizbeth Haas, Dolores Hayden, Phoebe Kropp, and William Deverell also shaped the era of revisionist history.

³⁹ For more on Stuart Hall and the cultural turn, see journal article Hua Hsu, "Stuart Hall and the Rise of Cultural Studies." *The New Yorker*, July 17, 2017. Online. <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/stuart-hall-and-the-rise-of-cultural-studies>; In his recent publication, Eric Avila gives us a short introduction to American cultural history, its development as a subfield, and key examples, from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the Dodgers' move from Brooklyn to Los Angeles. See *American Cultural History: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁴⁰ For work on Los Angeles revisionist history, see Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land*, (Layton: Peregrine Smith Publishers, 1980); Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios*, (Berkeley: University of California, 1996); George Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicana/o Los Angeles*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Robert Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850-1930*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, (Brooklyn: Verso, 2006).

⁴¹ William David Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008); Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth Century America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

projects to spatial entitlement.⁴² The interaction between archives, racial formation, space and place is critical in this discussion.

Identity forms differently in the outskirts of Los Angeles and warrants unique attention. Thus, neighborhoods and regions are important units of analysis in understanding the creation of race and identity. Wendy Cheng's work shows that people of color have persistently impacted civic identity while also influencing memory making within the city.⁴³ Despite this recognition, these stories are still subsumed under white narratives.⁴⁴ Thinking through Cheng's concept of regional racial formation in my work, I focus on the Central San Gabriel Valley region, and Baldwin Park, specifically, as a case study to uncover how place-making and civic identity were shaped by Latino laborers and foodways. By recreating the social landscape of Baldwin Park, I am not only discussing the foodstuffs that were produced, but also the labor relations between Mexican laborers and white ranch owners that allowed for their production. In thinking of notions of the everyday, as Henri Lefebvre has influenced me to do, residential location is critical for understanding how racial formation and placemaking occurred in Baldwin Park. Spatial analysis is critical when interviews and oral histories are no longer an option for reconstructing

⁴² This includes Natalia Molina, Genevieve Carpio, Wendy Cheng, Gaye Theresa Johnson, Laura Barraclough, Robert Chao Romero, and Mark Padoongpatt, among several other scholars.

⁴³ Wendy Cheng, a racial geographer, challenges the dominance of whiteness in dominant public accounts of SGV history by focusing on the West San Gabriel Valley, an area that is predominantly Asian American and Latina/o. In order to understand how Asian Americans and Latina/os make sense of place, shape city dynamics, and form identity, she developed a theory of “regional racial formation.” Building on Omi & Winant’s macro concept of racial formation and Henri Lefebvre’s focus on the everyday, Cheng describes “regional racial formation” as the idea that racial identity is shaped and impacted by people's everyday interactions at the regional level, particularly with local place contexts. She finds that the unique racial makeup of the West SGV significantly impacts the way identity is formed by Asian Americans and Latina/os here.

⁴⁴ Wendy Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

the social landscape of the Central SGV. However, when attempting to tell these stories, scholars often encounter persistent issues regarding sources.

Building on a regional racial formation approach, critical Latina/o foodways provides a new means for conducting revisionist histories, one that uncovers not only the social histories of people of color, but also the foodways that have often influenced, created, and impacted regional foods and regional identity. Food studies allows us to interrogate what we eat, where it comes from, in what spaces we consume, who gets to eat what, and why this is so.⁴⁵ It is this line of work in the field of food studies that challenges us to rethink race and racialization, and to move beyond traditional notions of what race is, as Omi & Winant encourage us to do. I turn to works by food studies scholars to show the fresh perspectives that this field has to offer, but also to show the new perspective I offer as a scholar working at the intersection of food studies and ethnic studies.

Food studies, broadly, is the critical examination of food in relation to business, economy, health, history, society, art, labor, and more.⁴⁶ Traditionally, the food studies field has focused on agribusiness and industry while also drawing in scholars from psychology and nutrition.⁴⁷ Among the most widely cited writers in food studies is journalist Michael Pollan, famous for his

⁴⁵ See Kyla Wazana Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the 19th Century*, (New York: New York University Press, 2012).

⁴⁶ Food studies is still considered a new field of study. In the past ten years, several schools and universities across the nation have established food studies programs, including the University of Oregon, Brown University, and our own UCLA. NYU is notable for their robust food studies program, including Masters and Ph.D. programs.

⁴⁷ The field began growing around the eighties and nineties, when New York University and Boston University established food studies programs. Several programs have concentrations in nutrition and/or global public health. See Emma Cosgrove, "The Rise of Food-Studies Programs," *The Atlantic* (June 1, 2015). <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/06/the-rise-of-food-studies-programs/394538/>

book *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006), who describes the major ways humans have obtained food, particularly critiquing the industrial food system, and thus contemporary agribusiness.⁴⁸ Anthropologist Sidney Mintz has also critically shaped food studies through his research on the Caribbean and the anthropology of food.⁴⁹

Studying the intricate processes of foodways gives way to important insights into how racialization takes place. Yet, the field of food studies has often failed to take race seriously. Nevertheless, in recent years, scholars from the humanities and social sciences have critically engaged with food studies to tell histories of underrepresented communities, address issues of erasure, and critically understand racial formation across the nation.⁵⁰ For instance, as detailed in an important new volume interrogating food and the border, during World War I, certain foods have demarcated exclusion; during terrorist attacks, borders have thickened to ban particular foods and bodies; and during the rise of immigration tension, Mexican food imports have decreased.⁵¹ By examining these moments of tension, economics, and borders with a central focus on food, we are better able to understand that food is intricately intertwined with racialized policies of immigration, labor, and economy. Despite these promising interventions across fields,

⁴⁸ Pollan's work is very similar to Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, and is often compared to it; He was also featured in *Food, Inc.*, an award-winning documentary critiquing the American food system, in which I also appear. *Food, Inc.* touches on an array of topics including the overuse of corn to fatten up cows, the over-reliance on high-fructose corn syrup in the American diet, and the effects of these foods on communities of color including Baldwin Park, of which I am briefly highlighted.

⁴⁹ His book *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*, published in 1985, recounts the history of sugar and the relationship between labor, power, food, and slavery. This book is widely cited by anthropologists and food studies scholars globally. Mintz emphasizes a particular approach in food studies that focuses on the origins of a particular food.

⁵⁰ See Psyche Williams-Forsen, Kyla Wazana-Tompkins, Mark Padoongpatt, and Meredith Abarca.

⁵¹ Matt Garcia, E. Melanie Dupuis, and Don Mitchell, eds, *Food Across Borders*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2017).

I am one of only two ethnic studies scholars in the 2018 cohort of the Food Studies graduate certificate at UCLA.

Food studies has relied on ethnic studies scholars to make critical connections between foodways and race. Ethnic studies scholars often move beyond discussing the materiality of food to uncovering the making of racial identity and racial formation in relation to food.⁵² In *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs*, for instance, Psyche Williams-Forsen interrogates the relationship between African American women, food culture, and racism. Examining the complex relationship between the black female body and chicken, she reveals how stereotypical images of food further racialize black female bodies in America.⁵³ Williams-Forsen asks, “Since we now know what people ate historically, how do we find out what these foods meant beyond nourishment? And how have these foods informed and helped to shape modes of black feminist social consciousness and personal identity?”⁵⁴ Soul food originates from the resourcefulness of black women slaves who would use the scrapes, or the unwanted parts of animals, in order to prepare meals for their families.⁵⁵ Where the resilience that often results from foodways is rarely acknowledged, Williams-Forsen shows us that black women are resilient and have always made

⁵² Krishnendu Ray (2007) A Review of: “Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs. Black Women, Food, & Power”, *Food and Foodways*, 15:1-2, 131-136. Also see Charles Joyner and Kyla Wazana Tompkins' work.

⁵³ Psyche A. Williams-Forsen. *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs: Women, Food, and Power*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

⁵⁴ Krishnendu Ray (2007) A Review of: “Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs. Black Women, Food, & Power”, *Food and Foodways*, 15:1-2, 131-136, DOI: 10.1080/07409710701378396; The working relationship between black women and chicken began during slavery, where female slaves were often sent to town to sell live chickens. She analyzes how these racialized images of food perpetuated stereotypes, but also uncovers how black women redefined themselves in these spaces. By bartering prices in town, black women not only made space for themselves, but also made extra earnings.

⁵⁵ Psyche Williams-Forsen. *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs*; See also Frederick Douglass Opie, *Hog and Hominy: Soul Food from Africa to America*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

and claimed space for themselves, even under dire circumstances. The study of foodways is also a means for understanding community and identity formation amongst marginalized communities.

In another exceptional example of the insights into racial identity provided by the study of foodways, *Flavors of Empire: Food and the Making of Thai America* explores Thai American identity and community formation through the rise of Thai food in Los Angeles. Mark Padoongpatt's text interrogates the deeply racialized power structures *in* Thailand and America that gave way for Thai food to boom in Los Angeles. He traces the popularity of Thai food to informal U.S colonialism in Thailand. Cold War relations in Thailand gave way for white U.S culinary tourists to become authorities over Thai food.⁵⁶ Tourists constructed the "Thai subject" via exotification and objectification. White suburban housewives, through cookbooks and recipes, defined what it meant to cook "authentic" Thai food. Padoongpatt states that while the popularity of Thai food spun a positive image of Thais in America, it became a replacement for Thai people: a way Americans could deal with the *palatable* parts of Thai identity. However, Padoongpatt argues that Thai food became central to Thai American identity and community formation, and while it was used as a means to colonize Thai people and Thai Americans in the mid-20th century, it also served as a means for Thai communities to challenge white power structures through reclaiming place in the global city of Los Angeles. By focusing on foodways, Padoongpatt was able to activate an array of archival documents (that would otherwise be

⁵⁶ Mark Padoongpatt, *Flavors of Empire: Food and the Making of Thai America*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017).

overlooked) to tell the history of Thai people and the growth of Thai food in Los Angeles.⁵⁷

Padoongpatt shows us the complex processes of racialization and resilience through food.

As demonstrated by the aforementioned scholars, food is not just a connection to cultural heritage. It is also deeply rooted in political economy through foreign policy, trade, and labor.⁵⁸ By tracing the ways foodways are developed and by analyzing community and identity formation, we are able to pull apart the ways in which food interacts with labor, economy, and foreign policy. The processes embedded within foodways are critical for understanding placemaking and the economies that immigrants, such as those in Baldwin Park, fall into when migrating to America.

Another important contribution from scholarship on foodways is the way in which national identity is critically and constantly shaped by foods. How do particular foodstuffs become part of a country's national dish? The answer to this question can tell us much about the ways foods shape national identity through nostalgia, memory, identity making, and erasure. In, "Gallo Pinto: Tradition, Memory, and Identity in Costa Rican Foodways," Theresa Preston-Werner explores the ways in which processes of creating national dishes lead to racial erasure. Studying *gallo pinto*, Costa Rica's national dish, Preston-Werner finds that black origins of this dish are erased through a national imaginary relying on "family tradition" instead of historical

⁵⁷ Padoongpatt used U.S Peacecorp volunteer papers to understand how white suburban housewives began publishing the first Thai cookbooks in the United States, while also conducting an analysis of said cookbooks.

⁵⁸ Even within the creation of Thai food, much of the ingredients needed to be produced in Sinaloa, Mexico to avoid tariffs from the United States. To avoid these high tariffs, Thai immigrant and entrepreneur Pramorte Tilakamonkul established Mexico as a foreign trade zone for Thai ingredients. The transnational processes of creating foodways attests to the complexities of food and foodways and how race place, and policy significantly affect these relations.

contributions made by migrant black workers.⁵⁹ She finds that gallo pinto originated from the work of Afro-Costa Ricans who worked in the railroads and the banana production industry, helping develop the dish as an icon of national identity.⁶⁰ The complexities of the origin of pinto, its perceptions among Costa Ricans, as well as the different versions of pinto and its name, all point to the complex relationship between food, race, and national identity and the erasure of blackness. The study of gallo pinto and Costa Rican identity gives us an opportunity to discuss the ways food itself becomes embedded with meaning of race and nationality, and how critical food studies is to the investigation of the ways black-brown relations are affected through food.

Most importantly, the study of foodways gives us insight into how national identity and regional identity are shaped by foods. The history of foodways is not merely about exploring the goods that have been produced over time. Rather, it is also about the critical laboring of these goods, the ways Latina/os have impacted the development of these goods, and how then customers utilize and enact these goods in order to make place and preserve cultural practices in a new or continued environment.

As an ethnic studies scholar, I use foodways as a lens through which I critically engage the intersection of critical race studies and food studies. Food provides a unique, overlooked, and critical lens for studying the interstices of race, ethnicity, gender, history, geography, labor, and migration that other perspectives are unable to do. However, Latina/os are rarely mentioned as

⁵⁹ Theresa Preston-Werner, "Gallo Pinto: Tradition, Memory, and Identity in Costa Rican Foodways," *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 122, no. 483 (2009): 11-27.

⁶⁰ Preston-Werner, "Gallo Pinto," 42; The author traces Afro-Costa Rican origins of gallo pinto, a rice and beans dish, through a history of rice in the American Atlantic, interviews with Costa Ricans, and family genealogies. When conducting interviews about the national dish, participants specifically distinguished themselves from Afro-Costa Rican versions of gallo pinto, which tends to be made with coconut milk, deeming this method of preparation "strange" by southern Costa Ricans, and as the "wrong" way to prepare the dish.

critical players in the establishment of historical foodways. When mentioned, we are relegated to the physical laboring of the fields.

It is here that I advance the concept of Critical Latina/o foodways in order to underscore the unique insights into race-making and food studies produced when focusing on the Latina/o population. While physical labor continues to signify the important and critical roles that Latina/os play in food systems (and the continuous exploitation of this labor), solely focusing on field work completely omits the fact that Latina/os were front and center in the creation and business of foodstuffs, the distributions of goods, developing the American diet, and creating food networks throughout Southern California.⁶¹ It is here that stories such as Cruz Baca's are impactful for showing the ways in which foodways serve as a method for recovering omitted and erased histories of people of color that tell us the ways in which Latina/os have shaped civic identity and made place in the suburbs over time.

Critical Latina/o foodways draws from history, ethnic studies, and food studies to create an interdisciplinary approach to uncovering Latina/o social histories. By centering a lens that focuses on foodways, I activate traditional archives in a way that allows me to piece together Latina/o social histories regarding civic identity and placemaking when primary documents are sparse. It is to this practice that I now turn.

⁶¹ For an examination of everyday life and the exploitation of Mexican migrant farmworkers, see Seth Holmes, *Fresh Fruit Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

Critical Latina/o Foodways and the Recovery of Unincorporated Los Angeles History

Reconstructing Social History through Farmer Entrepreneurs

“The exploration of identities, the conservation and creation of cultural practices and traditions, and the reconstruction of historical narratives are not without political intent.”

-Vicki Ruiz

Walking into the Baldwin Park Historical Society Museum, you'll be greeted with a series of history books offered to first time visitors. Opening any of these books, you would begin to notice familiar narratives: white men, their businesses, and city officials.⁶² This focus is surprising, given that Latina/os comprise 80.1% of the Baldwin Park population.⁶³ To help illustrate why this disjuncture exists, I turn to an oral history that begins to reveal the formation of this museum and archive.

I conducted an oral history with Brian Benbow, the director of the museum, who arrived to Baldwin Park in 1961. He states, “When I arrived to Baldwin Park back in '61, Baldwin Park was about 34% Hispanic and the rest was Anglo.”⁶⁴ Benbow came to Baldwin Park by way of Texas, and was one of the founding teachers of Sierra Vista High School, one of the two high schools in Baldwin Park.⁶⁵ There were twenty-one teachers, seventeen of which were new to teaching.⁶⁶ Eventually, he would become principal and director of the Baldwin Park Adult

⁶² Brian Benbow and Larry O'Brien. *Images of America: Baldwin Park*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 23.; Pinheiro, Aileen, and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, ed, *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).

⁶³ United States Census Bureau. American Fact Finder [Baldwin Park: Hispanic or Latino by Type.]. (2010: retrieved June 01, 2018), Retrieved from <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>. Population statistics for 2010.

⁶⁴ Brian Benbow, oral history conducted by Natalie Santizo, March 1, 2016, transcript.

⁶⁵ Benbow taught reading, writing and spelling, and went on to teach geography and history.

⁶⁶ According to Benbow, teachers came from Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas.

School, which was a gateway for many immigrant mothers and adults during the 1990s and 2000s.⁶⁷ With his time and diverse institutional roles in Baldwin Park, Benbow quickly became involved with the Baldwin Park Historical Society, and has been the director of the BPHSM for several years. His dedication and commitment to the museum does not go unnoticed.⁶⁸

During the oral history, Benbow asked me about my interests with the archives and I let him know about Cruz Baca. He began talking about Baca in a way that struck me.⁶⁹ When discussing him, Benbow repeatedly stated, “Oh he was a great guy. A great neighbor. Just a great guy really.”⁷⁰ The idea of Baca as a good neighbor is repeated throughout archival sources, which posits the question, “Good neighbor to *whom*?” More so, we may ask, “What makes him a good neighbor?” Unlike the celebratory biographies afforded his white counterparts, no detail goes into Baca’s important role as agriculturalist and businessman. So what roles do historic societies play in the processes involved with collecting and circulating such stories? It is important to pause here and discuss the emergence of historical societies.

According to historian Debbie Ann Doyle, “Many local historical societies were founded in the late 19th and early 20th century by amateur historians whose interest in the past was often combined with a desire to celebrate the significance, growth, and business potential of the

⁶⁷ I vividly remember in the early 2000s when my mother took English and computer classes at the adult school during night sessions, as I would sometimes accompany her. Almost all of her classmates were women of color, specifically Mexican immigrant mothers.

⁶⁸ Working long hours and building relationships with older residents in Baldwin Park without receiving pay shows his commitment to the preservation of local history.

⁶⁹ This was my first oral history that I have conducted. I was a bit nervous so it was difficult to guide my participant into only speaking about his life.

⁷⁰ Oral history with Brian Benbow conducted by Natalie Santizo, March 1, 2016, transcript.

community.”⁷¹ Many historical societies are tiny, underfunded, and volunteer-run, as is the case in Baldwin Park. These historic societies often rely on private donations and volunteers to manage the society and museum.⁷² Historical societies remain underfunded and are often run by volunteers who do not receive formal training in history, curation, and archiving.⁷³

Many societies simply do not have the funding or resources to preserve documents, update exhibits, or establish best practices to diversify their content. Cary Carson finds that most history museums develop exhibits for a targeted white, older, and upper-middle class audience.⁷⁴ The lack of funding, coupled with the changing demographics in cities like Baldwin Park, namely going from a predominantly white population to a predominantly Latina/o population, shows us how historic societies are no longer meeting the needs of their community audiences.⁷⁵ In the following paragraph, I analyze the existing, though scarce, stories of Latina/os in the Baldwin Park archive and unpack the ways language and word-choice impact dominant portrayals of this group in popular historical narratives.

In order to understand how CLF helps unpack ideologies of Mexican Americans in Baldwin Park, I conducted a content analysis of two popular local history books that represent dominant narratives of white businessmen: *Images of America: Baldwin Park* and *The Heritage*

⁷¹ Debbie Ann Doyle, “The Future of Local Historical Societies” Perspectives on History, The newsmagazine of the American Historical Association, (December 2012).

⁷² Doyle finds, “... that approximately 15 percent of local historical societies are staffed entirely by volunteers, 25 percent by volunteers and a part-time staff member, and only 25 percent have more than one professional staff member.” Doyle, “The Future of Local Historical Societies.”

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Cary Carson, “The End of History Museums: What's Plan B?” *Public Historian* 30 (November 2008), 9–27.

⁷⁵ As noted by Carson, “local historical societies are, therefore, struggling to tell stories that remain relevant and significant to their evolving constituencies.” Carson, “The End of History Museums”

of *Baldwin Park*.⁷⁶ In my content analysis, I selected a series of subvariables that allowed me to analyze the ways in which Cruz Baca has been portrayed in the local museum and archive. These subvariables include language, funding of publications, and people featured. Through this analysis, I unpack how Baca was portrayed, analyze what critical information is left out of the archives, and remap his regional contributions through a CLF lens.

Images of America is a series of published books that discuss local histories of cities across the United States. This series is made up of short books that provide the reader a “look” into a given city's history through text and archival images.⁷⁷ According to *Images of America: Baldwin Park*, Cruz Baca was an early immigrant who arrived to Baldwin Park circa 1906 from Chihuahua, Mexico.⁷⁸ Over the next ten years or so, Baca became a farmer and established himself as an important farmer-entrepreneur in the region.

This short, one-page biography engaged Baca's role as a community member, farmer, and family member. The book states, “He gradually built his property up to 100 acres located between Ramona and Frazier Street. Baca raised chilies, corn, yams, and tomatoes, and his cows’ milk was used to produce cheese. He became the only supplier of dried chilies and cornhusks in the San Gabriel Valley.”⁷⁹ I was instantly fascinated by his prominence as a farmer and as the

⁷⁶ Copies of these books are available for purchase in the museum and are frequently recommended to visitors by museum volunteers.

⁷⁷ I first found *Images of America: Baldwin Park* at the Baldwin Park Public Library in 2016, and was immediately drawn to the character of Cruz Baca. The series *Images of America* also features cities like Pasadena, Pomona, Arcadia, and West Covina, among others.

⁷⁸ There is a discrepancy in what exact year Baca arrived to the San Gabriel Valley. A few narratives have stated the year was 1906, while others state it was 1908. Baca was featured on a short, half-page spread. Brian Benbow and Larry O’Brien. *Images of America: Baldwin Park*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011)

⁷⁹ Brian Benbow and Larry O’Brien. *Images of America: Baldwin Park*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 23.

sole producer of these dried goods. Other accounts focused on soldiers, mayors, and other elite white male figures of Baldwin Park. Baca's entry, however, showed something we do not often talk about within the local museum of Baldwin Park: agriculture and entrepreneurship.⁸⁰

The greater San Gabriel Valley was a site for a diverse range of crops and agriculture, as seen in the Baldwin Ranch in Arcadia.⁸¹ Agriculture is such a key part of this area, but is often left out when discussing placemaking and social landscapes in Baldwin Park. In fact, the first orange groves in the entire United States were planted in the San Gabriel Mission, showing the importance of the San Gabriel Valley in the development of regional foodways and the development of Los Angeles as a global city.⁸² Agricultural labor relations can tell us much about how a city developed and how that in turn shaped civic identity.

In *Images of America*, Baca's story was the only historical account included of Baldwin Park's Latina/o history during the early 1900s. His small but powerful narrative as "the only" producer of such goods made me ask: who discovered this information and from what source? What does his role as sole provider say about foodways of the San Gabriel Valley and its relation to Los Angeles foodways? In this text, language for Baca mostly focused on the phrases "good neighbor" and "community member," despite stating that he was a farmer and had his own business. Conversely, when describing white counterparts who were orange grove owners, the

⁸⁰ Even though Baldwin Park was part of the citrus belt in California and is part of a larger recognition of agricultural history, the local museum does not emphasize this history within the museum.

⁸¹ I will discuss the Baldwin Ranch in the following subsection.

⁸² According to historian David Boulé, in the early 1900s, most Americans had not seen an orange before. Brought over by the Spanish, oranges would become the symbol for prosperity and growth in California. By 1920, the California citrus industry was the number two highest revenue industry in California, behind oil. The drastic increase and revenue earned from oranges attracted many investors and families to California, aided by the clever marketing on orange crates from companies like Sunkist. In *L.A. Foodways* (2019). Directed by Raphael Sbarge. KCET. 57 minutes.

authors used words such as “businessman,” “owner,” and “successful.”⁸³ Similar trends occur in the second book.

As *The Heritage of Baldwin Park* shows, there are similar trends in word choice and language when describing indigenous people and people of color in contrast to Anglo Americans. Edited and largely written by Aileen Pinheiro, the first chapters discuss the history of the San Gabriel Valley as a whole, describing it as a “beautiful” valley with an emphasis on the Spanish missions. Pinheiro goes on to describe “Indians” of the area, “Lenore Rowland states in her account of the Rancho La Puente that the ‘Inditos’ as the Californians affectionately called their workmen, had not been disturbed from their hereditary habitat for generations.”⁸⁴ This narrative situates the history of the area in racialized terms, deeming indigenous people as static and dehumanizing them by setting power relations through the use of “affectionate.” These descriptions, through word choice, set the tone for the rest of the book. Pinheiro goes on to discuss encounters between native Tongva communities and white people, discussing how one white man was “forced to” act towards natives, “Other Indians were not as friendly to the white intruder...Rowland did not want to shoot as he was a peaceful man, so he used his shot gun as a club.”⁸⁵ In this specific narrative regarding John Rowland, one of the first white settlers of Rancho La Puente, despite a violent scene, is still described as a “peaceful” man, who was “forced” to act in a way that is not of his character.⁸⁶ Likewise, chapter two, which discusses the

⁸³ Brian Benbow and Larry O’Brien. *Images of America*

⁸⁴ Pinheiro, Aileen, and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, ed, *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).

⁸⁵ Pinheiro and BPHS *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, 13.

⁸⁶ *ibid*, 13.

founding of the San Gabriel Missions, uses the same racist language to discuss native people.

Pinheiro states, “The story is told that upon reaching the site of great multitude of savages, armed and led by two chiefs, tried to prevent the founding of the mission.”⁸⁷

The language of these accounts shows us that historic societies continue to function through a settler colonial framework. Here I reiterate Michel Trouillot's interrogation of history and “what happened” versus “what is said to have happened.”⁸⁸ Sometimes the line between these distinct statements is blurred, and what is said to have happened becomes the “fact” from which people learn local history. As scholars and researchers, we immediately see the discrepancies and inaccuracies. However, daily visitors will read these narratives and usually take these narratives as “what happened,” or factual stories, instead of “that which is said to have happened.” Narratives promoted in these key texts, then, further promote inaccurate, white-centered narratives that perpetually erase Latina/os from local history. This perpetuates the skewed learning of local histories centered in racist interpretations of native and brown residents. It is critical to continue interrogating historical accounts.

Similar to Lefebvre, historian William Deverell identifies the ways everyday interactions and processes helped create a futuristic Los Angeles that subsumed Mexicans into a fantasy past.⁸⁹ Deverell’s definition of whitewashing, which he describes as, “the process of removing and censoring non-white aspects of Los Angeles and its history,” is productive in helping unpack

⁸⁷ *ibid*, 15. Here, we not only get a sense of the racist language used against native Tongva people, but also the resistance against colonialism, and an attempt to fight back. Unfortunately, resistance gets coded as violent, or as “bad.”

⁸⁸ Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*.

⁸⁹ William Deverell. *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2005).

the erasure of indigenous and Latina/o people in introductory narratives on San Gabriel Valley history. This definition can also help us unpack narratives of Baca that move from describing him as a “good neighbor” to understanding the critical role he played as a community member and producer of Latino goods.⁹⁰ Deverell traces whitewashing and erasure to every day aspects of life: work, landscape and environment, city building, cultural production, and public health. He uncovers that white city leaders and developers were able to carry out their “vision” for Los Angeles by appropriating and absorbing Mexican history and spaces.⁹¹ He states, “Los Angeles matured, at least in part, by covering up places, people, and histories that those in power found unsettling.”⁹² Mexicans were virtually wiped out of civic identity from the 1850s to the early 1900s by the way history was told, manufactured, and perceived. Likewise, over a century later, similar processes continue to occur in the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum.

In *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, I found that representations of historical figures were overwhelmingly white. Over seventy stories featured white families, particularly white men, compared to two stories of Mexican laborers. To better understand Pinheiro's method of collecting and archiving Baldwin Park history, I closely analyzed the dedication, which included a list of contributors. Among the listed contributors were the Stowell family, Esther Ray, Eileen Franich, and Henry Littlejohn. All contributions were given by Anglo patrons and were featured in the book in a minimum of one-page spreads; with, one notable exception.

⁹⁰ Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*, 3.

⁹¹ He asserts that Mexicans were often isolated in time and space, relegated to the past with no hopes of being part of the future. Narratives of the “sleepy” Mexican promulgated the justification for a white elite Los Angeles where race was not a “problem.”

⁹² *ibid*, 7.

Ana Montenegro offers an alternative reading of Baca's role in Baldwin Park.⁹³ Rather than simply portraying Baca as a model citizen, Montenegro began to interrogate the impact of Baca and his goods along the San Gabriel Valley and the vast suburbs of Los Angeles.⁹⁴ She discusses Baca as the only producer of dried chiles and cornhusks in the entire San Gabriel Valley during the 1920s and 1930s, an important food product in forging networks in the growing Mexican community. Through this narrative, we find that Baca worked with white dairymen, Japanese farmers, and other agriculturalists in Baldwin Park.⁹⁵ Baca would often lend his horse to other farmers, particularly for transporting items. This powerful narrative points to the ways in which Baca was well known by the community and appreciated for his willingness to help. This narrative effectively repositions the "good neighbor trope" popularized in other texts by connecting the "good neighbor" to the direct ways in which Baca facilitated cross-racial collaborations through agriculture. Thus, language, word choice, and the ways we tell stories matter when writing historical accounts. Baca's cross-ethnic collaborations point to the ways in which agriculture creates diverse foodways, particularly when farmers are able to produce unique goods. I also uncovered more details about Baca's presence in Baldwin Park through Congressional records.

⁹³ Montenegro is a relative of Baca, the daughter of one of Baca's sons, and cousin of a former Baldwin Park council member, Cruz Baca (named after Cruz Baca, the farmer-entrepreneur).

⁹⁴ It is in her narrative in which I discovered the impact Baca had as the sole producer of dried chiles and cornhusks that spanned a wide customer base, "People would drive as far as from Santa Ana for his goods to make tamales during Christmas time." Ana Montenegro, "Biography," in *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, eds. Aileen Pinheiro and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

Congressional records corroborate the impact of Baca in Baldwin Park, pointing to the ways in which a Mexican farmer-entrepreneur was able to shape civic identity in Baldwin Park. In 2001, Hilda Solis, former United States Secretary of Labor, commemorated Cruz Baca in the House of Representatives. Solis described Baca's history, stating that he was born in Mexico in 1874 and confirming his arrival to Baldwin Park in 1906.⁹⁶ Solis states that in 1909, Baca returned to Mexico to bring his wife and children to the United States where the family settled in Baldwin Park in 1910, "following a long journey on foot through Texas and Arizona."⁹⁷ Here, we learn that Baca had made two trips to-and-from Mexico. What did these journeys look like? What did these trips cost? This recognition points to an array of possibilities and further research into Baca's personal history and transnational migrations.

Through this narrative we further unpack the "good neighbor trope." Solis states, "His efforts to improve the community are many, such as plowing and landscaping the land to develop Morgan Park for free and helping to plow his neighbors land when they were experiencing difficulties."⁹⁸ Here, we find that Baca critically contributed to the creation of Baldwin Park's biggest park, presently located on the grounds of the Baldwin Park community center. His involvement with forming Morgan Park tells us that he is critically embedded in the civic identity and formation of the city. But more so, we find that Latina/os have been front and center in shaping cities, from the agriculture cultivated from the land, to the creation of parks that are

⁹⁶ Congressional Record-Extensions of Remarks. E304. March 7, 2001. Hon. Hilda Solis, "Commemorating the Contributions of Mr. Cruz Baca." There is a discrepancy on the actual date that Baca arrived to the San Gabriel Valley, with some accounts stating he arrived in 1906 and some accounts stating he arrived in 1908.

⁹⁷ Solis' statement gives us a possibility in resolving the discrepancy in dates of Baa's arrival to the San Gabriel Valley. In Congressional Record-Extensions of Remarks. E304

⁹⁸ Congressional Record-Extensions of Remarks. E304.

still used today. It is more than a simple memory of who built a park, but rather a foundation that tells us about the ways Latina/o labor, people, and agriculture helped form community in Baldwin Park.

While this narrative reiterates information we already know about Baca, we grasp a shifting narrative of Baca as a community member, one which helped shape Baldwin Park's slogan as “the hub of the San Gabriel Valley.”⁹⁹ Solis mentions several community acts by Baca, from helping pull a car out of the San Gabriel Valley River with his horse and wagon, to saving a family from a burning fire, all of which shift the “good neighbor” trope from a patronizing and empty narrative, into a story of critically shaping Baldwin Park through community service, agriculture, and land.¹⁰⁰ Baca built his business and land to have ample resources that he made accessible to the community at large. Solis states, “During the Great Depression, Baca provided food for the poor, he would park his wagon full of produce at Morgan Park to help feed the community. He also provided transportation for those in need with his horse and wagon, taking people as far as San Gabriel.”¹⁰¹ Through his community work, volunteering and contributions, Baca was known as a “great neighbor” because he helped establish Baldwin Park as “The hub of the San Gabriel Valley,” as a community where members help each other and care for each other during difficult times. CLF has allowed me to push through simple interpretations of Latina/os in Baldwin Park, and dig into the stories that make these people “great.” It is in these accounts that

⁹⁹ Thinking through the city's slogan as a hub, we think of the many ways geographic location is critical to this civic identity, particularly when Baldwin Park is located in the center of the San Gabriel Valley, as seen in Map 1 and Map 2. Consequently, we can also understand Baldwin Park as a hub of Latina/o foodways, particularly when customers were coming into Baldwin Park to purchase dried chiles and cornhusks to make tamales.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*

we begin to form a stronger sense of how foodways—through figures like Baca—connect to civic identity.

Baca's business of Mexican foods gives us insight into how food shapes civic identity. Solis goes on to state, "Realizing a demand for the ingredients for tamales, Mr. Baca became the only supplier of those ingredients in the San Gabriel Valley."¹⁰² Baca's keen sense of knowing what Mexicans needed at the time created a hub for these Mexican goods, which would help establish a sense of place for many Mexicans immigrating from Central Mexico.¹⁰³ As Solis states, "But Mr. Baca's legacy is not as a landowner or businessman, it is the humanity he demonstrated to his fellow man, neighbor, and community...his influence will be everlasting in the City of Baldwin Park."¹⁰⁴ Solis' commemoration of Baca in the House of Representatives is monumental, further pointing for the need to interrogate stories like these, not to simply tell stories that have not been told, but to begin uncovering the ways Latina/os made place and critically shaped the development of cities in the early 1900s. Without these stories, and without the discussion of how Latina/o foodways have come to impact these areas, we are unable to fully tell the history of Latina/os in the suburbs of Los Angeles, and the critical roles they played, not only as laborers, but as catalysts for change, community, and civic memory. Aerial photographs also provide new insights into the life of Cruz Baca.

Aerial photographs help uncover and assert the impact of Baca's land as a farmer-entrepreneur, particularly when documents are scarce. I surveyed the historic SGV region using

¹⁰² *ibid.*

¹⁰³ Here, I think through ways in which the production of Latina/o goods not only helped create a sense of place, identity and home, but also how the movement of these goods to different areas within Southern California also critically shaped regional American foodways.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

the Spence and Fairchild Collections of the Benjamin and Gladys Thomas Air Photo Archives held by the UCLA Geography Department. The Spence Air Photos are a series of black-and-white aerial images taken between the time of 1918 and 1971, primarily focusing on the Los Angeles area. The collection is divided into major cities and sub-areas. But, as an unincorporated area, Baldwin Park was not indexed in its files. Enacting a CLF framework, I approached the aerials by focusing on neighboring cities that had a history of citrus. Thus, I focused on images of agricultural land. I found five Baldwin Park aerials within the West Covina collection, which neighbors Baldwin Park and was well-known for its orange groves. With the help from a library specialist, and countless hours of matching up streets, maps, and images corresponding to Baca's home address, we were able to uncover an aerial image of Baca's land (Figure 1). A prominent dirt road, which appears as a diagonal line in the center of the picture, signifies the center of Baca's land. In the middle of that diagonal road are three houses. It is unclear whether Baca owned this whole parcel of land, however, it is probable given the narratives found in the archive that discuss his ownership of vast amounts of land in Baldwin Park. While this image may be overlooked by scholars, it gives us a glimpse of the importance of a farmer-entrepreneur, how ownership of vast land impacted his ability to produce Latina/o goods, and how critical these narratives are, considering that most land in Baldwin Park at the time was owned by white ranchers.



Figure 1. Cruz Baca's land. Spence Aerial Collection, UCLA Department of Geography. Photograph taken by Natalie Santizo, retrieved August 17, 2017.

CLF has allowed me to activate an array of traditional archives in order to piece together the histories of Latina/os in the San Gabriel Valley. In this section, I have focused on Baca through oral history, a content analysis, the use of congressional notes, and aerial images that have not traditionally been coded as sources of Latina/o history. I have centered foodways in my investigation, which has led me to an array of documents that tell us about Latina/os in the unincorporated outskirts of Los Angeles, leading us to go beyond the static narratives of Baca as simply a good neighbor. The impact of Baca, an independent farmer and agriculturalist, warrants much more attention than previously given. During the 1920s, Mexican laborers worked tirelessly to keep ranches mostly owned by whites, functioning and producing agricultural goods that kept up with societal demands. Through Baca, we can better understand the lives of Mexican laborers, learn about an exceptional example of farmer-entrepreneurship, and uncover the ways

content and language shape our understanding of local history. I now turn to Baldwin Ranch in order to unpack the ways agriculture shaped the lives of Mexican laborers.

Remapping the Ethnospatial Context of the SGV

“To understand the present, however, requires that we understand the past: onto what racial landscape are we etching yet another set of groups and dynamics?” -Manuel Pastor

Elias Jackson Baldwin, known as “Lucky” Baldwin, was once the wealthiest and most well known landowner in Southern California, holding vast acres of land in present day Montebello, Baldwin Park, Arcadia, Covina, La Puente, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Francisco, and Lake Tahoe.¹⁰⁵ He was born in Butler County, Ohio on April 3rd, 1828.¹⁰⁶ Lucky Baldwin grew up in a farming family, often thinking of innovative ways to make the family money, such as salting their pigs in the morning so that they would consume more water, and thus weigh more when selling them at the market. As he grew older, he bought into mining shares and real estate, “...learning to manipulate \$100 millions in stocks and mortgage policies.”¹⁰⁷ Eventually, Baldwin decided to move West, arriving to San Francisco just short of the Gold Rush. He invested in hotels, stables, and brickyards, which turned him ample profits. Around 1873, Baldwin made his way South on a business trip, arriving in what is now called the

¹⁰⁵ According to a letter regarding Baldwin's real estate, he owned Rancho La Puente (14,000 acres), Rancho La Cienega (3,000 acres), Rancho Potrero Grande (4,000 acres), Rancho La Merced (2,000 acres), Rancho Felipe Lugo (1,000 acres), Rancho San Francisquito (1,000 acres), Rancho Santa Anita (4,000 acres), Santa Anita Tract (1,000 acres), and Arcadia (900 city lots), among other city lots, within the San Gabriel Valley. In *Lucky Baldwin Papers*, Arcadia Public Library, Folder: Baldwin, Elias J. (Lucky), #53. ID 24AF.

¹⁰⁶ Chronicles of the Builders of the Commonwealth Historical Character Study Vol 3, The History Co. Publishers, SF, 1892, in the “Lucky” Baldwin Papers, Arcadia Public Library, Accessed August 9, 2017.

¹⁰⁷ Sandra L. Snider, *Lucky Baldwin: City Maker*. (“Lucky” Baldwin Papers, Arcadia Public Library: 1976). Accessed August 9, 2017.

San Gabriel Valley, where he saw the opportunity to profit in real estate.¹⁰⁸ In 1875, he returned to the Valley and made an offer to purchase Rancho Santa Anita (present day Arcadia), offering \$150,000 for the 8,000 acre ranch.¹⁰⁹ Over the years, he acquired a total of 54,000 acres of land in the San Gabriel Valley, spanning present day Puente Hills, Pasadena, and Whittier.¹¹⁰

Rancho Santa Anita, or the principal Baldwin Ranch, grew into an extensive and diverse agricultural land. At its peak, the Baldwin Ranch included 500 acres of orange groves, 1,000 young trees, 3,000 English walnut trees, lemons, almonds, pears, peaches, apricots, prunes, figs, persimmons, olive groves, experimental camphor, pepper, coffee, and tea plants: quite an impressive amount of agriculture at a time when the San Gabriel Valley was still developing as a region. Baldwin's ranch also produced grape crops, which produced 384,000 gallons of wine. He also produced 55,000 gallons of prize-winning brandies yearly. This vast amount of agriculture, including a diverse range of crops and trees, not only shows us that the San Gabriel Valley was critical for the development of agriculture in Southern California, but also that the care of such diversity required hundreds of workers. The vast amount of agriculture and farming of this ranch alone required extensive, strenuous, and cheap labor to raise profits.¹¹¹

Analyzing foodways flowing from Baldwin Ranch helps rebuild the landscape of ranch life in the San Gabriel Valley and, more specifically, Baldwin Park. Although the ranch is not located within Baldwin Park's municipal borders, detailing its history shows how racial and

¹⁰⁸ Sandra L. Snider, *Lucky Baldwin: City Maker*

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹¹ Sandra L. Snider, *Lucky Baldwin: City Maker*

ethnic relations between ranch owners and laborers were developing at this important time. More so, it provides insight into the development of race relations in Baldwin Park during the early 1900s.

Over three hundred Chinese and Mexican laborers were responsible for tree planting, orchards, groves, reservoir building, well digging, and irrigation systems at Baldwin Ranch. Agriculture involves a complex and intricate process of tending to crops and trees. Mr. Fraser, one of Baldwin's friends who visited the ranch in 1891, took detailed notes of his visit. He states, "He [Baldwin] employs a large number of people on this ranch, mostly single men, though there are 4-5 white families, Mexican families and quite a number of Chinese. They have to purchase all food, material, clothing at his store."¹¹² Most laborers lived on the property in labor camp-style housing, similar to the labor camps in nearby El Monte, the city next to Baldwin Park. Dependence on the company store often meant inflated prices relative to low wages. This prevented laborers from accruing wealth or savings.¹¹³ It kept ethnic laborers static, unable to move positions, and relegated them to the constant laboring of the ranch.¹¹⁴

CLF provides a pathway for unpacking the relationship between ranchers and laborers through a rereading of traditional archival sources that foregrounds foodways, racial formation, and placemaking. I peeled through extensive documents in the Lucky Baldwin archive that focused on Baldwin's ranch, through notes and letters that discussed ranch life and the labor of

¹¹² Notes taken during a visit to his Santa Anita Rancho. 4 page typed reminiscence by Mr. Fraser. August 26, 1891. in the Lucky Baldwin Papers, Arcadia Public Library, Accessed August 9, 2017.

¹¹³ See Matt Garcia's *A World of It's Own*, and Jerry Gonzalez' *In Search of the Mexican Beverly Hills*.

¹¹⁴ See *In Search of the Mexican Beverly Hills: Latino Suburbanization PostWar Los Angeles* by Jerry González.

producing vast agricultural crops and products. With a central focus on foodways, I turned to the Baldwin Park archives to further dig into the labor relations of agricultural production. Baldwin Park phone directories provide rich data on race and ethnicity as well as labor during the 1910s and 1940s.

Using critical Latina/o foodways with traditional archival and new digital methodologies unveils two interventions. First, a CLF lens allows us to focus on Mexican ranchers and laborers, giving us insight into the ways agriculture shapes placemaking and race relations. Second, primary documents contextualize the rise of farmer-entrepreneurs and producers of Latino foodstuffs, such as those provided by Baca. This type of work proves fruitful when census data is scarce or unavailable, as is the case in unincorporated, historic Baldwin Park.

Baldwin Park was officially incorporated in 1956, at a much later time than most Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley cities.¹¹⁵ As a result, it becomes difficult to find demographic data for Baldwin Park prior to this time, since it was unaccounted for in the census. More so, existing Los Angeles census data for the thirties and forties is often unreliable due to inconsistencies in the ways race was coded, particularly for Mexican residents whom were formally white but socially non-white.¹¹⁶ Working with data that I do have, primarily the phone directories, allows me to recreate the social landscape of the city and to begin building an alternative to census data. Rather than simply map out the data of all residents, a CLF analytic foregrounds attention to ranchers and laborers, which gives us direct insight into how agriculture

¹¹⁵ El Monte was incorporated in 1912, La Puente in 1956, and Industry in 1957 compared to cities in the SGV that were incorporated much earlier. Whittier, 1898; Covina, 1901; Alhambra, 1903, respectively.

¹¹⁶ U.S Census Data via Social Explorer for Los Angeles during this time often divided people into categories like Whites, colored, and others which is problematic for obvious reasons.

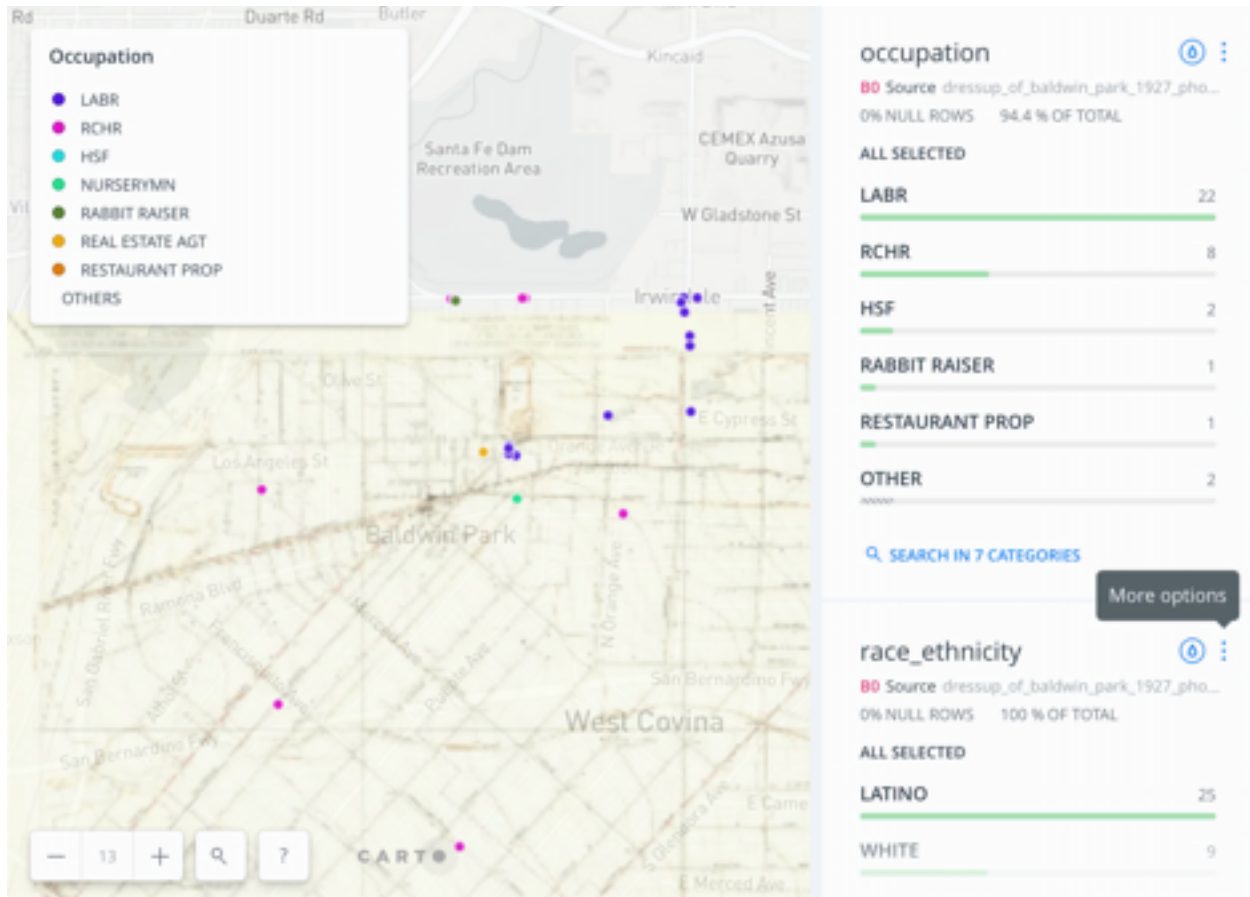
shaped race relations in this area. I did this by using the phone directory data, where first and last names, spouse, occupation, and address of residence are listed. Reviewing residential addresses from 1929, I digitized and coded Spanish surnames and Anglo surnames.¹¹⁷ I then mapped phone directory data through digital platforms Mapbox and Carto, online mapping tools that visualize data and layer this data onto historic maps through geolocation.¹¹⁸ By coupling phone directory data with spatial mapping and a content analysis of current historical narratives, I am able to provide an alternative reading to these official SGV narratives by piecing together the social landscape of Baldwin Park.

Ethnic Studies scholars have created interventions that tell the stories of people of color while providing new methodologies for supporting how this work can be done. That is, they have not only shown us the ways official narratives erase people of color, but have also recoded new narratives that challenge the hegemony of whiteness. Building on this tradition, I use digital mapping to show ways in which we can challenge erasure in the archives by not only inserting stories of Latina/os, but by reconstructing the social landscape of the SGV to retell the history of

¹¹⁷ Although Spanish surnames do not directly mean that a person listed was Mexican American and Anglo surnames can also represent black residents, phone directories provide insight into the ethnic make-up of Baldwin Park that is unavailable in Census data. Drawing from narratives and autobiographies included within the Baldwin Park history books, I am able to estimate that there may not have been many black families living in Baldwin Park. However, this can also represent an erasure that may also be present within the Baldwin Park archives: the erasure of black families and laborers. This discrepancy does not go unrecognized. I also utilize the 1929 phone directory because this year is situated in the middle of my period of study, at which point Mexican immigration had already reached its peak and the city was moving into the Depression era, giving us insight into the critical changes occurring within this area.

¹¹⁸ By layering a historic map onto google map and georeferencing these maps (ensuring accuracy of the layering) I am able to compare the geographies of Baldwin Park and able to see the data of where laborers lived in 1929, to the exact location of their household in present day Baldwin Park. For a more in-depth analysis, one can compare the areas of laborers to contemporary locations of residents in the city to understand where Latina/os are living and if it correlates to where they lived in the 1920s.

this area. This new interpretation particularly focuses on the often left-out Central SGV, and through a new lens that maps labor relations through foodways.



Map 3. Map of Baldwin Park overlaid with a USGS Historic Topo Map of Baldwin Park. Data of Mexican laborers (purple/LABR) concentrated north of the city compared to white ranch owners (pink/RCHR) which are more spread out.

Mapping phone directory data, I visually reconstruct areas in which white ranch owners lived compared to where Mexican laborers lived. Mapping out approximately thirty-six data points, each representing a person and their occupation and residential location, I found that

white ranch owners were relatively spread out in the city, showing their mobility (Map 3).¹¹⁹ Conversely, Mexican laborers were concentrated North of the city, clustered within a half-mile radius of one another, and showing their immobility.¹²⁰ Cypress Street and Bonita Street stand out as central locations for many Mexican laborers. This pattern suggests that residential choices may have been shaped by redlining, the availability of more affordable housing, or family networks.¹²¹ It is also possible that this was the location of a labor camp. In the neighboring city of El Monte, for instance, there were two well-known labor camps: Hick's Camp and Chino Camp. Oral histories and further source work can help determine relationships between previous residents.

Through a CLF approach and mapping methodologies, we can begin to uncover the development of foodways and their impacts on ethnospatial relations within unincorporated Los Angeles. While we already know that agriculture was a racialized industry through scholars such as Carey McWilliams, a CLF approach allows us to understand for one, the impact of agriculture on residential boundaries for Mexican laborers, and two, the ways Latina/o foodways impacted civic identity. In addition, Anglo ranch owners had much more agency in all aspect of daily life, which can be seen through occupation. In Map 3, one can see that Mexicans included in this data set were all listed as laborers. Conversely, white populations were largely coded as ranchers.

¹¹⁹ While this dataset does not account for all Mexican laborers, it gives us insight into the ways racial boundaries were developing.

¹²⁰ I critically draw from Genevieve Carpio's definition of mobility as “a geographic concept referring to the ways we experience, manage, and give meaning to movement” (9). She particularly applies mobility to notions of everyday movement within a community, helping me think through the ways a group’s mobility is connected to another group's (im)mobility. Carpio's emphasis on cars, movement, space, and place provides gleaning new insights into the ways certain groups were racialized. In *Collisions at the Crossroads: How Place and Mobility Make Race*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019).

¹²¹ See Matt Garcia's *A World of It's Own*.

Within the general white rancher population, there was significant occupational diversity listed in addition to their roles as ranchers. For instance, white ranchers' occupational categories included "business owner," "rabbit raiser," and "restaurant owner," among other types of employment (Map 3). This does not include the diverse amount of occupations of whites listed in the phone directories who were not ranch owners.

From a CLF perspective, restaurants as listed in the directories provide further insights into which communities were being welcomed into the rapidly growing city. In 1927, the majority of restaurants were diners and confectionaries, such as the Baldwin Park Home Bakery and Mary Frances Home Bakery and Confectionary.¹²² There was only one cafeteria listed, Sunshine Cafeteria.¹²³ It is significant that although primary sources reveal restaurants were located throughout the city, there are no Mexican food restaurants listed in the directories. Instead, the restaurants listed include names that indicate traditional American fare, such as Baldwin Park Cafe, Palm Cafe, Light Lunch, and Quintard's Cafe. When comparing the 1927 restaurant listing to those of the 1941 phone directory, they are not more diverse. Rather, all of them continue to be owned by Anglos (Figure 2).

¹²² Baldwin Park Phone Directory. Pacific Directory Company. City Directory. (1927).

¹²³ Sunshine Cafeteria is listed as a property owned by Mrs. Clarence Smith. Quintard's Cafe is listed as a property owned by Ernest L. Quintard.

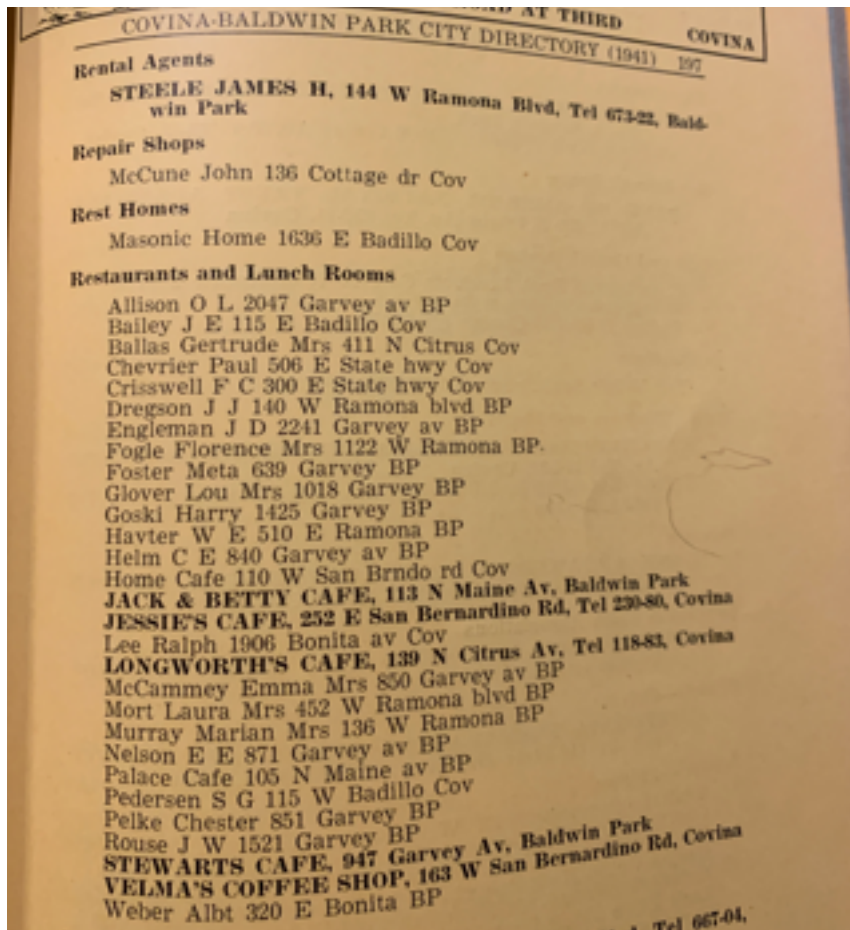


Figure 2. Image of Baldwin Park Phone Directory: List of Restaurants, 1941.

While phone directory data gives us a gaze into the 1920s and 1940s social landscape of Baldwin Park, we do not get the full picture from the restaurant listings and mapping of the Mexican laborers and white ranch owners. By utilizing Home Owner and Loan Corporation (HOLC) maps and data, I am able to continue rebuilding the landscape of Baldwin Park for the early 1900s. HOLC maps provide area descriptions, documents that were commissioned by the

County.¹²⁴ The area description for Baldwin Park gives us a view of what the city looked like in 1939, further rebuilding the social landscape of Baldwin Park in the early twentieth century.¹²⁵

According to this document, the population growth in Baldwin Park was labeled as “static,” instead of “increasing” or “decreasing.” Most residents were WPA workers, laborers, and small tradesman averaging an income between \$700 and \$1500. Interestingly, the “foreign families” section lists that there were 18% Mexicans, 2% Japanese, and few% of black residents in Baldwin Park in 1939. These statistics reiterate the fact that there were few Mexicans in relation to whites in the city at the time and that the population was slowly growing. This data also nods to the narratives of Baca working with local Japanese farmers. While I have not found any primary documents that further discuss the Japanese population, future work could focus on uncovering the history of Japanese and black residents in Baldwin Park.¹²⁶

The area description document describes the housing and renting market in depth, characterizing most buildings in Baldwin Park as 4-6 bedroom buildings with about 98% occupancy. The price bracket in 1939 was \$1850-\$3000, an increase from 1935 where the price bracket was \$1500-\$2800. Interestingly, the sales demand was labeled as “poor,” while the rental demand was labeled as “good.” The rental bracket for 1939 was listed as \$18.00-\$30.00.

¹²⁴ "T-RACES: a Testbed for the Redlining Archives of California's Exclusionary Spaces"
R. Marciano, D. Goldberg, C. Hou <http://salt.umd.edu/T-RACES>

¹²⁵ This document is broken down into bullet points numbered one through nine: population, buildings, new construction, overhang of home properties, sale of home properties, mortgage funds, and description & characteristics of area, respectively. The one page document follows a bulleted format until the description section, where a paragraph describes the area and what it looked like. I found the population, buildings, and description sections most fruitful.

¹²⁶ R. Marciano, D. Goldberg, C. Hou. “T-RACES.”

Baldwin Park was becoming a rental area where few people were able to purchase homes, particularly as a working class city.¹²⁷

The final section of this document describes Baldwin Park as not fully developed and as an agricultural area. The document states, “30% developed. Fair poultry section with good water facilities. Many people in area are employed in citrus groves and large rock crushing plants adjacent to community.” Noting water in this report connotes the value given to areas with private water sources and good irrigation. Having a good water source was critical for creating agricultural sites. Furthermore, Baca’s early history working for a rock company foreshadows much of the occupations that would stand out for residents of Baldwin Park several years later: agriculture and rock companies. While this document gives us further insight into Baldwin Park’s labor and housing history, we also make connections between Mexican laborers, who were most likely renting in Baldwin Park, further corroborating the phone directory data where several Mexican laborers lived in the same areas.

CLF has allowed me to first uncover Latina/o histories, primarily where we would not normally look for these narratives. This is done through emphasizing critical foodways. CLF then allows me to connect a multitude of primary sources as diverse as letters from farm visits, congressional notes, residential addresses, aerial photos of land, restaurant lists, and more, in order to seam these stories together into a social history of Latina/os in the San Gabriel Valley. It is this persistent thread of foodways that binds together agriculture, food systems, and civic identity in order to tell an alternative history of Latina/os in the San Gabriel Valley. It is at this

¹²⁷ The description and characteristics of area section gives us an insight into Baldwin Park’s scenery and social landscape.

critical intersection that we are able to gain a holistic and distinct picture of the San Gabriel Valley in the early twentieth century.

Conclusion

Baca's story provides an alternative view on San Gabriel Valley history, which is currently dominated by the commonsense that only white ranchers were significant historical figures in the development of the region. Concurrently, understanding the ways agriculture shaped and defined where Mexican laborers could live within city boundaries uncovers how race relations and city boundaries formed within Baldwin Park. Through my concept of "critical Latina/o foodways," I have shown that studying the history of foodways can tell us much about Latina/o contributions to the development of American foodways, civic identity, and placemaking, and thus the value of continuing such work. More so, we have learned the following: foodways critically shaped how Mexican laborers made place in the Central San Gabriel Valley, Latina/o foodways established in the SGV reached as far as Orange County, shaping Southern California as a region, and Latino farmer-entrepreneurs critically shaped the slogan of Baldwin Park as well as the physical boundaries and development of land in this city.

Ending this project in 1945 establishes a turning point defined by the founding of In-N-Out (1948), the industrialization of food, and the continuing ways Latina/os impacted the Southern California palate of regional food. As previously discussed, in 1945 the San Gabriel Valley was undergoing significant regional changes. Agriculture, while becoming more industrial on a global scale, was slowing down in the San Gabriel Valley, as the region was transitioning from an agricultural outskirts to a formal suburb. The East San Gabriel Valley Land Use Plan (1954), a proposal commissioned by the Los Angeles regional planning commission lead by

Milton Breivogel, reveals the ways the SGV would be marketed, envisioned, and developed into the postwar era.¹²⁸ Significantly, the part of Los Angeles County identified by the Commission as presenting the largest problem was the East San Gabriel Valley (Figure 3).¹²⁹ This document tells us the ways in which this region was defined by Los Angeles County officials, the ways in which the SGV was transitioning from an agricultural to a (sub)urban area, and the ways in which labeling the area as “problematic” would come to shape the SGV. Further, the land use plan marks a new era that points to new directions for the San Gabriel Valley regarding infrastructure, highways, industrialization and urbanization, all of which would interact with and impact food production in this area.

By piecing together the social landscape of Baldwin Park, I not only tell the history of Latina/os in the Central SGV and the critical roles they played to define the city, but also I give a glimpse into how we can begin to recuperate these histories through a grounding in foodways. This work, while thorough, only begins to shed light on the intersection of critical race studies and food studies. I will expand this work by utilizing local archives in El Monte and La Puente in order to tell the social history of farmer-entrepreneurs and food entrepreneurs in the San Gabriel Valley. As I aforementioned, Latina/os have been front and center in the business and entrepreneurship of foodways. Through further case studies and narratives, I hope to develop this work by making explicit connections between local Latina/o foodways and the creation of a Southern Californian regional cuisine, particularly by following customer networks and the

¹²⁸ Milton Breivogel started his career in Wisconsin and moved to Los Angeles in 1941, where he produced development plans for Los Angeles. More information on Breivogel can be found through the Online archive of California.

¹²⁹ Remember it is during the 1920s and 1930s that Baca grows in popularity with his Mexican goods.

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