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Critical Latinx Foodways: Racial Formation, Regional Identity, and Placemaking in the San Gabriel Valley, 1900—1968

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Critical Latinx Foodways:
Racial Formation, Regional Identity, and Placemaking
in the San Gabriel Valley, 1900—1968

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements of the degree Doctor of Philosophy in

Chicana & Chicano Studies

by

Natalie Santizo

2022

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Critical Latinx Foodways: Racial Formation, Regional Identity, and Placemaking in the San Gabriel Valley, 1900-1968

by

Natalie Santizo
Doctor of Philosophy in Chicana & Chicano Studies
University of California, Los Angeles 2022
Professor Genevieve Gonzalez Carpio, Chair

This dissertation is concerned with understanding how foodways—the production, consumption, and distribution of foods and food goods over time—have shaped Latinx placemaking and survival in the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) of Southern California. This dissertation exists at the intersection of Chicana/o Studies, History, Racial Geographies, and Food Studies. Where this project is historically focused, it uses a mixed-methods approach (archival research, GIS mapping, content analysis, and oral history) to create two interventions: 1. It grounds public history—building knowledges with marginalized communities—in piecing together Latinx social histories and 2. It advances the framework of "critical Latinx foodways," a methodological process of recovery through a foodways lens that expands beyond this region. Scholarship in Chicana/o Studies has often discussed agricultural labor, but has not always centralized a broader foodways lens in these investigations. And, while a growing scholarship on food workers and street vendors (Graaff & Ha 2015; Rosales 2020) has shaped contemporary understandings of race, power, and food, less

work is dedicated to understanding the connections between the contemporary regulation of food workers and the historic regulation of food workers in the first half of the 20th century. To answer the research questions, "How do foodways shape racial formation and the creation of uneven power relations? How might attention to foodways address Latinx historical absences in places like the San Gabriel Valley?" *Critical Latinx Foodways: Racial Formation, Regional Identity, and Placemaking in the San Gabriel Valley, 1900-1968* weaves together a cultural history of Mexican food workers, vendors, and entrepreneurs to challenge Anglo-dominant narratives of the region. Histories of food workers challenging regional boundaries through vending, taste, and forging place are vital to our understanding of placemaking and survival of Latinx populations in urban outskirts.

Key words: race & ethnicity, food studies, Chicana/o studies, 20th century history, racial geographies, public history

The dissertation of Natalie Santizo is approved.

Mark Padoongpatt

Robert C Romero

Eric R Avila

Genevieve Gonzalez Carpio, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2022

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the reader. To those searching for more about their local community when so little remains. To centering racialized communities forced into the shadows by a romanticized Anglo past. More importantly still, this work is for the immigrant communities of Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, and La Puente. To the 626, I owe so much.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation has existed at one point or another since I first visited the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum in 2016. In my eighteen years of living and studying in Baldwin Park, I never learned about local history. I didn't even know when my hometown was "established." This initial curiosity on learning about the history of Baldwin Park would open an immense world of public history scholarship for me, something that excited me and ignited a passion in me to keep doing the difficult work of historical repair. As a young food activist in high school, my interest in food was always there. I was even featured in the documentary *Food, Inc*. But it was my learning of Los Angeles history in various courses at the University of Southern California that helped me begin thinking about the critical study of food. As an honors thesis student in the sociology department, I wrote about the 626 Night Market. Through this project I began to critically think about what food meant as symbol and how people understood race and ethnicity through consumption. Foodways—the processes of growing, moving, producing, and eating foods and food goods—has critically shaped the ways I think about the racialization of Latina/o/x people. It has critically shaped the way I think about place and collective history.

I would like to acknowledge Baldwin Park community member Cruz Baca (Sembello) for sharing her family history with me and letting me archive and steward her family collection. This dissertation would not be possible without you and your family story. I thank you for allowing me to tell it with you.

I would like to thank my department, the César E. Chávez department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies for supporting my scholarship and for supporting me through these six years of teaching and training. I was extensively trained by ethnic studies scholars, historians, artists, writers, and more. In such a unique and nurturing space, I was able to thrive and take my time to explore, learn, and discuss. I know my experience is not what all doctoral students of color get, and for that I am eternally grateful for this department. Thank you to my cohort colleague Rudy Mondragon for growing and pushing through this journey with me. Thank you to the departmental staff who have greeted me with a warm smile or helped me figure things out last minute (Ellie Hernandez, Sandy Garcia). Thank you to Isamara Ramirez for making the time to talk about the painstaking stress of "figuring the money out" for the next year, and for helping us understand how funding works across campus. I'll always remember that mapping of university monies! Thanks to all my colleagues in Chicana/o and Central American Studies who made this place worthwhile, Iris, Joanna, Alana, Kaelyn, and more. Thank you to colleagues and alumni who have offered advice in many ways beyond the dissertation. Xaviera Flores, thank you for your insight on all things archives. A hearty thank you to AAP for hiring and supporting me for most of my doctoral journey. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to mentor undergraduate students as a general mentor and as a McNair Scholars graduate mentor. Thanks to my AAP colleagues for keeping me inspired and sane. Liliana Islas, Tiffany Tran, Ben Ha, thanks for the laughs and the good times. Thank you to UCLA Libraries digital research start-up partnerships for helping me learn "how to do" GIS mapping. This has been so very instrumental in my work as an interdisciplinary historian. Andrzej Rutkowski, your help and generosity with understanding mapping, datasets, and aerial collections was huge for this project! I would not have been able to do what I do without your help and kindness.

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I will always be indebted to all my mentors in this academic journey. George J. Sánchez, for working with me as a young Trojan unsure of what research meant. You critically shaped my pursuit of Baldwin Park history. Although not my mentor, Macarena Gómez-Barris, you changed my life with your Introduction to Ethnic Studies course. Your enthusiasm and excitement when talking about my research pushed me in more ways than I could say. Pierrete Hondagneu Sotelo, for pushing me in my sociology honors thesis on the 626 Night Market. At Arizona State University, thank you to my advisor Wendy Cheng for offering feedback, pushing me to think critically about Baldwin Park. Your work on the SGV continues to influence my work on racial geographies. Rudy Guevarra, thank you for offering invaluable mentorship and giving me opportunities beyond my time at ASU. I will always be grateful for all of it. Mary Margaret Fonow, for hiring me without knowing me. Preparing your manuscript for publication taught me many things.

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And lastly, I would like to thank my committee at UCLA. Robert Chao Romero, thank you for agreeing to serve on my committee and thank you for always being supportive. I appreciate our 626 connection. Eric Avila, thank you for being critical of my work, I needed that. Mark Padoongpatt, thank you so much for being a great mentor to discuss critical food studies with. I still remember our first meeting at UCLA, talking about food studies and ethnic studies over a meal, and feeling an immense clarity on who I am as a scholar. And finally, Genevieve Carpio. There are no words to describe what a genuine and supportive mentor and chair you have been. From beginning my journey at UCLA, to my growth as a scholar these last six years, none of this would be possible without you. It is often hard to come across a mentor and chair as supportive, attentive, and amazing as you. There are no words that can fully grasp my gratitude. I am truly grateful for all you have taught me and I will continue to pay it forward with my own students.

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VITA

NATALIE SANTIZO

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Presenter, (invited) "The Hub of the San Gabriel Valley: Racial Formation and Foodways in Baldwin Park, 1906-1948," (paper), Dissertation Presentations, Los Angeles History and Metro Studies Group, *Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West (ICW),* Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, February 2022

Introduction

Cruz Baca (Sembello) awoke before sunrise, sometime around 5 in the morning, to prepare for her shift at the barn. She recalls the freezing barn where the Baca family prepared most of the meats for their customers to enjoy, "I remember the cold mornings. It was freezing in there. I remember I would wrap myself in layers of sweaters, but my hands would stay cold."[1] At the age of ten, Cruz and her cousins were responsible for helping cook the *chicharrones* for her grandparents' Mexican food business in the 1960s, where they sold ingredients like corn husks, chiles, vegetables, and prepared foods like tamales and cheeses. Cruz and her cousins—the younger bunch of the Baca family—spent ample time playing while also tending to the *chicharrones* in the barn, making sure to not overcook them to avoid a scolding from Juanita, their grandmother. Cruz and her cousins had to constantly stir the large *hoya*, paying close attention to avoid burning the *chicharrones*. Meanwhile, her older cousins and aunts would prepare the tamales inside the house, taking care to separate the cornhusks, spread the masa evenly across each husk, add the seasoned meat, and wrap them up to cook in a large *hoya*. Each step represented an important role for each family member along an assembly line of well-experienced family cooks. Moving from the barn into the house meant you earned a new role with more responsibility, and Cruz would be able to do so a few years later. As many Mexican and Mexican American families experience, one's role in the tamal-making process changes over time: as one gets older, and more experienced, one gets to "move up" the assembly line.

Tamal-making in the United States has been a significant cultural practice for many Latina/o/x immigrants hoping to make place. Walking into a kitchen, you will see an elaborate assembly line of mostly women who skillfully prepare the tamales.[2] The scent of *masa* exudes a

[1] Oral history with Cruz Baca conducted by Natalie Santizo, December 6, 2019.
[2] I note here, tamal-making is not limited to women. However, it has often reflected women's labor in the kitchen.

familiar corn smell, taking you back to childhood memories of tamal-making. Whiffs of *chile* fill the air, followed by the filling of *carne,* talvez *queso con rajas*. The ingredients change based on the region one grew up in or is familiar with. The tamales fill up *hoyas* bigger than most have seen before. The steam amplifies the smell of corn, meat, chile, and cheese married together, representing the delicate craft of preparing tamales. The smells and the tastes bring up nostalgic memories and represent just a small part of the larger cultural practices that are preserved and which have further helped Mexican migrants make place in new areas. And, ingredients for tamales change by region and by country. The procurement and sale of these goods in the early twentieth century point to a history of shaping place through taste and the act of eating. Further, Juanita and Cruz Baca's tamales and their sale of dried chiles across southern California exemplify the hustle that many migrants quickly learned: entrepreneurship. In my dissertation, the Baca family's rise as Mexican laborers and food vendors serves as a case study by which I unpack a larger history of Mexican foods, goods, and foodways in the San Gabriel Valley. Foodways—the production, consumption, and movement of foods and food laborers—becomes a critical lens through which scholars can better understand placemaking practices when other avenues of placemaking, such as land ownership, was almost impossible for Mexican laborers due to a racialized labor system. This is not to say that placemaking is bound to land ownership, rather that the study of foodways provides insight into daily interactions, movements, and the sensorial experience of eating foods that other perspectives are unable to do.

The tamal serves as an example of the symbolic and material nature of food. That is, the tamal (by cooking, congregating, and laboring) afforded immigrants the opportunity to participate in cultural practice, to create foods from memory, and to consume the familiar. At the same time, it is the physical laboring of cultivating, procuring, and vending the ingredients of the tamal that

provides insight into regional power structures heavily tied to food. This dissertation makes clear that power structures in the early twentieth century San Gabriel Valley were heavily connected to food systems. As such, the larger processes of foodways—the production, consumption, and distribution of foods and food goods—gives us greater insight into the ways regional power structures impact the processes of making place and forming regional identity. This dissertation creates two interventions: 1) it offers "critical Latinx foodways," a methodological approach to re-reading, recovering, and assembling cultural histories through a foodways lens and 2) it pieces together a cultural history of Mexican food entrepreneurs, workers, and vendors in the Central San Gabriel Valley, an acutely understudied sub-region. As the field of Chicana/o/x Studies continues to grow, this dissertation considers the role of food workers as placemakers, agents of social change that challenged regional power structures through foodways.

I am not the first scholar to discuss twentieth century Mexican agricultural communities in the hinterlands of Los Angeles, but I am the first to exclusively focus on Mexican entrepreneurs, vendors, and laborers in what I call the Central San Gabriel Valley: Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, and La Puente. Historians Gilbert Gonzalez, Matt Garcia, and Jose Alamillo, among others, have opened a world of scholarship that critically considers the role of U.S. immigration policies and agribusiness on Mexican American placemaking in the East San Gabriel Valley, Orange County, and Inland Empire while considering autonomy and mobility across spaces. More importantly, they nod to the ways Mexican workers exerted control over their lives through leisure activities, dance halls, and alternative employment despite heavy labor regulations.[3] I expand on these contributions by proposing a broader foodways lens to study placemaking practices of

[3] Extensive research on citrus colonias has been conducted by historians. See Gilbert G. Gonzalez, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-195*0; Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own: Race, Labor, and the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*; Jose Alamillo, *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960*.

Mexican immigrant communities in Central San Gabriel Valley and how they challenged regional power structures that rendered them powerless. Further, this dissertation focuses on Mexican food entrepreneurs during the first half of the twentieth century. This foodways lens grapples with the complexities of foodways. For one, it considers how Anglos enacted ethnic foods to lay claims to space, and how Mexican communities challenged these claims through ethnic food entrepreneurship. Further, I consider the ways taste and smell impact how place is made, and how the movement of food and food vendors challenged white mobilities of containment.[4] Where my case studies are geographically focused in the San Gabriel Valley, I argue that a focus on the broader processes of foodways can help piece together cultural histories of Latina/o/x food entrepreneurship beyond this region.

This dissertation advances the fields of Food Studies, Chicana/o/x Studies, History, and Geography by contributing a cultural history of twentieth century food workers and vendors in the Central San Gabriel Valley, one which contextualizes their localized labor within the larger movement of food across borders.[5] While this project is geographically centered, it serves as an example to how we can better understand that food processes are embedded in *contests over power in semi-rural areas.* In "We Are on Tongva Land," I situate the San Gabriel Valley in early twentieth century history, connecting its relationship to Los Angeles as one of its agricultural centers. This geographic area was (and is) an important center of Mexican migrations, labor, and food production, helping establish Los Angeles County as the largest producer of agriculture in

[4] For a deeper study of white mobilities of containment, see Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads: How Place and Mobility Make Race*.

[5] 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.

the entire United States from the 1930s until 1948.[6] My project gives us insight into the larger processes of placemaking and racial formation at the local and regional level through food. I premise that Latina/o/x populations have labored agricultural lands under exploitative conditions, and at times, have become food entrepreneurs, consequently challenging the containment of their movement by selling foods and food goods across the region. And yet, for some agricultural laborers, the arduous work at ranches and their Anglo bosses further limited their mobility by containing them to place. These fluctuations of power and agency tied to foodways—from exploitative agricultural labor to food entrepreneurship—give us keen insight into the racialized power structures that shape regional transformations. And, it expands the notion that food entrepreneurship—the vending, selling, and production of foods, food goods, and food stuffs—is not exclusively a contemporary phenomenon. Rather, the policies that regulate and shape contemporary street vending and other food practices have a long-standing history of regulating racialized bodies through the labor of food in fields, ranches, farms, and streets of the San Gabriel Valley and the Greater Los Angeles region.

Research Questions

In this dissertation, I recognize that where a foodways lens helps us re-read and assemble fragmented histories, it must also grapple with the complex and contradictory nature of food systems. As such, I explore Mexican foodways from 1900 to 1968, paying close attention to how food systems shaped racial formation, regional identity, and placemaking in the Central San Gabriel Valley. The fields of Chicana/o/x Studies, Food Studies, Cultural History Studies, and Geography heavily influence and guide my conceptualization of the following research questions:

> RQ1: How do foodways shape racial formation and the creation of uneven power relations?

[6] See Rachel Surs and Judith Gerber, *From Cows to Concrete: The Rise and Fall of Farming in Los Angeles*.

RQ2: How have Mexican foodways shaped regional identity, racial formation, and placemaking practices in the San Gabriel Valley? And, how has the regulation of people's mobility shaped these processes at the regional and local scales?

RQ3: How might attention to foodways address Latina/o/x historical absences in semi-rural places?

Together, these questions provide important insights into the relationship between place, race, and food. And, by asking these questions, scholars can better understand the complex relationships between large-scale processes like U.S. immigration policies and the micro-politics of food labor in localized contexts. It is this intersection of food, race, and place, that leads us to new understandings of Mexican American cultural history in semi-rural areas from 1900 to the 1960s. Furthermore, by looking at these questions collectively, scholars can better understand the role foodways play in the racialization of groups including Japanese and Chinese agricultural laborers and food vendors who worked with Mexican food workers in the Central San Gabriel Valley.

Periodization

This project begins in 1900, six years before Cruz Baca arrived in the San Gabriel Valley (1906) and prior to the large wave of Mexican migration to Los Angeles during the upheaval of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). This period was a defining time for investors hoping to "make it big" in the California citrus industry, guided by land boosters in the late 19th century. The early 1900s saw the official incorporation of some of the first cities in the San Gabriel Valley, including Monrovia and Arcadia.[7] Focusing on a time when agricultural labor was distinctly racialized gives us insight into how labor relations would unfold in the Central San Gabriel Valley.[8]

[7] The former led by William Monroe and the latter by Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin. Monrovia was officially incorporated as a city in 1887, and Arcadia in 1903. Pasadena was officially incorporated one year ahead Monrovia, in 1886.

[8] Consider labor on Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin's principal ranch, Rancho Santa Anita. In the late 1800s, approximately 1870-1890, labor on Baldwin's vast array of agriculture was primarily handled by Chinese and

Indeed, the early 1900s 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 J. Sánchez notes that the construction of a Mexican national identity strengthened at this time, particularly in Los Angeles.[9] The Mexican Revolution, largely fueled by poverty and land displacement gives us insights into the complicated relationship between Los Angeles and Mexico. As historian Kelly Lytle-Hernandez uncovers, it was the incarceration of *magonistas,* Mexican rebels opposing the *Porfiriato* in the United States in the early 1900s that fueled a social movement of rebellions in the borderlands. In fact, it was from a Los Angeles County jail cell that Ricardo Flores Magón and his allies diminished popular support for Porfirio Diaz, who by 1910 had no support in the United States.[10] By the 1930s, revolution and revolt (violence, dissent, and the displacement of poor farmers) had pushed 10% of Mexico's population to the United States. Responding to revolt, Mexican Americans began creating new traditions in place of older ones. This period also marks a time of significant internal migration of Anglo Americans into Southern California, further shaping the racial landscape of the city. Mexican migrations North coincided with the high demand for seasonal agricultural labor.

Agriculture significantly shaped the formation of semi-rural landscapes in Southern California. By the 1930s and 1940s, California established itself as an agricultural powerhouse, producing 75 million boxes of oranges, 16 million crates of lettuce, and 462,000 tons of prunes by 1939. The industrialization of food in the 1940s, then, prompted new ways of eating and created diverse foodways rooted in these migrations, including the integration of Mexican workers into

Mexican laborers. Laborers living on the property had to purchase supplies like clothing and food from the company store, whose prices doubled market price. We can also consider Indigenous Gabrielino/Tongva populations who were forced to work on and build the San Gabriel Mission.

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

[10] Kelly Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

the agricultural hinterland of Southern California.[11] By the post-WWII era, we see significant changes to Southern California foodways from "slow foods" to fast foods.[12] For example, 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, changed how society was eating.[13] 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* as part of the industrialization era of the San Gabriel Valley after World War II.[14] The drive-thru ushered in a new way of eating centered on the industrialization of food, one that would also reflect the changing landscape from semi-rural areas to formal suburbs.[15] It was the post-World War II era that the San Gabriel Valley would become recognized as a region, marking a transition from an agricultural and semi-rural area of Los Angeles into a forma suburban region. By the 1950s, the San Gabriel Valley is largely recognized as a suburb of Los Angeles.

The year 1968, bookends this work. By 1968, highways in Los Angeles are readily facilitating movement between Los Angeles and its suburbs, shaping the relationship between urban cores and inland regions. And, in this year we see social turmoil and a call to action for the

[11] 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). The year 1945 marks significant change in this study. 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.

[12] 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).

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

[14] 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*, p.15.

[15] Eric Schlosser posits that a hamburger became the quintessential American meal in the 1950s. See *Fast Food Nation*. At this time, food was being produced rapidly, included new ingredients, and emphasized productivity. For more information on the industrialization of food, see Robert Kenner and Elise Pearlstein. *Food, Inc*. Film. Directed by Robert Kenner. New York: Magnolia Pictures, 2009.

educational reform of Chicana/o students. The year 1968 further marks an important bookend to this dissertation for national policies that impacted population movement and racial patterns in the San Gabriel Valley. For example, the 1965 Hart-Celler Act abolished prior racially motivated immigration quotas (and enacted new ones), which would come to shape much of the Asian and Latina/o/x migrations to the San Gabriel Valley at this time. The growth of restaurant businesses, coupled with new migrations of middle class Asian and Latina/o/x populations, sparked a growth of Asian American restaurants and grocers in the SGV. This entryway into restaurant entrepreneurship heavily influenced the array and diversity of Asian and Asian American foods recognized today in the San Gabriel Valley.

Literature Review

While many books, scholars, and concepts across disciplines influence my work and process, in this section I outline four fields that I build and contribute to. The subject areas of Chicana/o/x Studies, racial geographies, food studies, and cultural history are significant to my understanding of regional identity, placemaking, and racial formation. I draw from theories and concepts to create "critical Latinx foodways," an approach for re-reading and recovering 20th century Latina/o/x histories. I have divided this literature into three sections: 1. Regional Focus 2. Race, Space, and Place 3. Foodways as Cultural History.

<u>Regional Focus</u>

Figure 1 Image of the San Gabriel Valley in Southern California, Image created by the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

How do we understand the San Gabriel Valley? The San Gabriel Valley is located "east of east," beginning about ten miles East of Downtown Los Angeles (see figure 1).[16] The San Gabriel Valley, with its iconic San Gabriel Mountains looming over its municipalities, consists of 47 diverse neighborhoods (see figure 2).[17] 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 parts of Pomona and Claremont.[18] Furthest north lies The San Gabriel Mountains, near Monrovia, Sierra Madre, and Duarte, and furthest south lies Whittier, La Habra Heights

[16] Here, I borrow from the edited anthology *East of East*, a community collaborative history on El Monte and South El Monte. Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft (eds.), *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020).
[17] Natalie Santizo, "Te de Boba: Food, Identity, and Race in a Multiracial Suburb," Master's Thesis, Arizona State University, 2016.
[18] 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/.

(unincorporated neighborhood), Rowland Heights, and South Diamond Bar, although 626 aficionados might argue otherwise.[19]

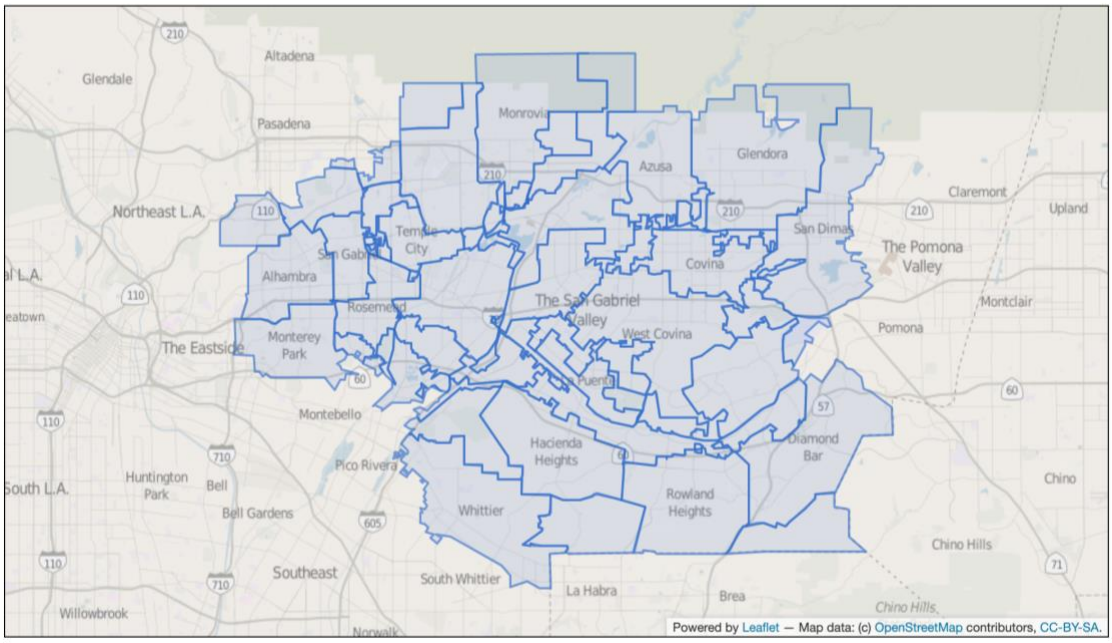

Figure 2 Image of the San Gabriel Valley, The Los Angeles Times.

Regional boundaries are always contested, but for the purposes of this study, I have outlined the general boundaries that are most popularly recognized above. Quite literally at the center of the San Gabriel Valley, you will find Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, and La Puente.[20] While the SGV is unique in its multiracial makeup, the Central SGV has a higher concentration of Latina/o/x populations. The Central SGV challenges dominant assumptions people have of the San Gabriel Valley as a whole. Most people, when referring to the San Gabriel Valley, actually think of the West SGV, what I call an "SGV imaginary."[21] That is, when most people think about where or what constitutes the San Gabriel Valley, they are actually thinking of the West SGV, or

[19] "626" refers to the San Gabriel Valley, although East SGV residents (such as those living in Pomona) might identify more with the Inland Empire. Regional boundaries are always contested. The delineations I refer to are based off of the Los Angeles Times map (figure 2).
[20] Baldwin Park, the "hub of the San Gabriel Valley," as the city seal proclaims.
[21] The "SGV imaginary" refers to the dominant ways people conceptualize and imagine the region of the San Gabriel Valley.

Alhambra, San Gabriel, Arcadia, and Rosemead. The Westside of SGV is often highlighted as THE San Gabriel Valley, directly correlated with the area's diverse variety of Asian foods like Chinese dim sum, Japanese fried chicken, Taiwanese beef noodle, and more. While focusing on the West has provided a rich multiracial and multiethnic history of regional politics, coalitions, and Asian American-Latinx relations, less scholarship has focused on the Central San Gabriel Valley.[22] Often referred to in a footnote of suburban history, this sub-region gives us insight into how twentieth century Mexican foodways shaped the identity of the Central San Gabriel Valley as a predominantly Latina/o/x area.

I begin with a discussion on existing research on the San Gabriel Valley. Leland Saito, Wei Li, and Wendy Cheng have immensely shaped scholarship on the San Gabriel Valley not only by focusing on this region, but also by focusing on interethnic relations, identity, and political struggle among Asian Americans and Latina/o/x populations in the West San Gabriel Valley. Early studies on the San Gabriel Valley were crucial for understanding and acknowledging Asian-Latina/o/x relations, moving from a black-white dichotomy emphasized in the nineties. Analyzing and acknowledging these relations further helps scholars untangle the complex relationship between race, ethnicity, and identity. Leland Saito finds connections between "Latina/os" and Asian Americans in collaborating to support redistricting in the San Gabriel Valley to provide adequate, responsible, and fair representation for its residents.[23] Their collaborative efforts not only showed the rich multiethnic makeup of the San Gabriel Valley, but helped both groups (in the mid 1950s to early 1960s) to elect city officials that met their needs. Wei Li understands the San Gabriel Valley as an *ethnoburb*, "multi-ethnic communities in which one ethnic group has a significant

[22] Gilda Ochoa's work on La Puente, exclusively, demonstrates the importance of focusing on the region. See *Becoming Neighbors in a Mexican American Community.*
[23] Leland Saito, *Race and Politics: Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites in a Los Angeles Suburb*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

concentration but doesn't necessarily comprise the majority."[24] Her work in the San Gabriel Valley challenged the popular portrayal of SGV as a suburban Chinatown, acknowledging Mexican migrations to the region as shaping place in these spaces. This intersection emphasized the importance of socio-spatial analysis on multiracial spaces. Li interrogated the San Gabriel Valley as a multiracial region that encompasses more than ethnic enclaves, but also unique multiracial spaces where dynamic interactions between race, ethnicity, class, and culture occur.[25]

Studies on post-1950s West San Gabriel Valley offer scholars the opportunity to understand the impact of regional power structures on race relations. According to Wendy Cheng, a high concentration of Asians migrated to the West San Gabriel Valley during the 1950s and 1960s, as the area had less stringent housing covenants than other suburban areas.[26] At the same time, Mexican populations who could "pass" as white were granted opportunities to purchase and rent homes in the area as well. These migrations flowed into the Greater San Gabriel Valley extending East, opening opportunities for other people of color to move across this region.[27]

Cheng posits that the region is an important site of multiracial political, economic, and social history. [28] More specifically, she develops a theoretical framework for studying neighborhoods and regions as units of analysis in understanding the creation of race, what she calls *regional racial formation*. Cheng argues that the everyday interactions, movements, and experiences of Asian American and Latina/o/x populations critically impact how people make place and challenge or reinscribe racial hierarchies at the regional level. Institutions such as high

[24] Wei Li, "Anatomy of a New Ethnic Settlement: The Chinese *Ethnoburb* in Los Angeles," *Urban Studies*, 35(3). (1998): 490.
[25] Natalie Santizo, "Critical Latina/o Foodways," M.A. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2019.
[26] Wendy Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
[27] Natalie Santizo, "Te de Boba: Race in a Multiracial Suburb," Masters Thesis, Arizona State University, 2016.
[28] Wendy Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes*, p. 9.

schools and civic identity projects influence the conception and creation of racial hierarchies of race, ethnicity, and class.[29] I return to regional racial formation in the following subsection.[30]

Moving towards the East San Gabriel Valley, historian Matt Garcia critically shaped and defined scholarship on the hinterlands of Los Angeles. His research on citrus producing communities, what he refers to as Mexican *colonias* (in San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, and Pomona) helps us understand how citrus production impacted Mexican laborers' movements across the region and how they enacted agency through alternative employment, a reflection of their agency and placemaking practices.[31] Several scholars writing with and through the San Gabriel Valley have influenced how I think about the region and offer invaluable insight into how we might conduct research in this area across multiple avenues.[32] In the Central San Gabriel Valley, I draw from El Monte historians to consider the impact of Mexican populations on the regions' memory.

Most recently, *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte* (2020), shows us how we might reimagine and challenge Anglo histories of the region through community counter-stories. Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft provide a means to piece together histories from the margins alongside community members and reimagine cities like El Monte as counterspaces that play an integral part in shaping the region. I seek to follow in the

[29] Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes*

[30] Some may consider Temple City, South Pasadena, and San Marino as part of the West SGV; As a suburban ethnic enclave for Asians and Asian Americans in the second half of the twentieth century, the West SGV today is well known for its extensive Asian markets, restaurants, eateries, boba shops, and stores.

[31] While discussing El Monte dance halls in *A World of It's Own*, Garcia focuses on this area from 1950 to 1974, after the height of agricultural production (1920).

[32] In addition to Leland Saito, Wei Li, Wendy Cheng, Matt Garcia, Gilda Ochoa, I recognize the contributions of Becky Nicolaides, Alejandro Prado, and the extent to which scholars like Kelly Lytle Hernández and Gaye Theresa Johnson have looked towards the San Gabriel Valley to think through resistance through music, activism, and more.

editors' footsteps and write about Mexican food workers and entrepreneurs in the Central San Gabriel Valley that challenged exclusionary Anglo claims to these places.[33]

San Gabriel Valley history and scholarship is extensive and has offered valuable insight into the West and the East SGV, and at times, glimpses into the Central San Gabriel Valley. My project conceptualizes what I call the Central San Gabriel Valley: Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, and La Puente, a region shaped by diverse food systems heavily connected to regional power structures. By focusing on the Central SGV in the first half of the twentieth century, and by focusing on Mexican food workers and food entrepreneurs, I hope to expand the peripherals of an SGV imaginary that often relies on the West San Gabriel Valley to tell the history of the region. And, while this project is geographically centered, it serves as a project through which we can better understand the role that food plays in placemaking practices, opening new windows for understanding the way race is shaped and identity is formed through contests over power that directly deal with the production, consumption, and movement of food. I argue that foodways—the production, consumption, and movement of foods and food laborers—have shaped placemaking practices in the San Gabriel Valley, giving us insight into uneven power relations embedded in the processes of racial formation. In the following subsection, I consider how race and space become intertwined through foodways.

Race, Space, and Place: Regional Identity, Space, and Mobility

The field of geography provides productive frameworks to think about space and place as active participants in the production of subject formation. Racial geographers encourage us to critically think about race in these processes. More specifically, frameworks for studying regions

[33] Romeo Guzman, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft, *East of East*: *The Making of Greater El Monte*.

are critical for understanding the intersection of power relations and placemaking at the regional scale. In this section, I draw from diverse scholars to define racial formation, regional identity, and mobility, and how I build on these concepts to write about the Central San Gabriel Valley. I begin with regional identity.

Regional identity, in simple terms, refers to the unique characteristics of a region and the identification of people with them. Regional identity has long-time importance in the field of geography.[34] While early regional geographers have largely approached regional identity in terms of the unity between a region and its inhabitants, geographers like Anssi Paasi have discussed regional identity as contested social constructs and processes. Paasi argues that regional identities "should be seen in relational terms as multiple and fluid because identities are increasingly associated with mobility, networks, and interactions occurring in 'soft spaces' and 'fuzzy boundaries.'"[35] To understand how power structures function at the regional scale, we must ask: What factors and forces inform the processes of racial formation at the local and regional level? Ethnic studies scholars have drawn from geographers' conception of the spatiality of identity formation to better understand how space impacts race and placemaking. In contrast, planners and marketers often deploy "regional identity" in the hopes of bolstering "local" city projects that further replicate white claims to space.[36] Regional identity, while connoting characteristics and people of a particular region, can also tell us much about the sociospatial processes embedded in

[34] Anssi Paasi, "Regional Planning and the Mobilization of 'Regional Identity': From Bounded Spaces to Relational Complexity," *Regional Studie*s, 47(8). (2013): 1206-1219.
[35] Anssi Paasi, "Region and Place: Regional Identity in Question," *Progress in Human Geography*, 27(4). (2003): 475-485.
[36] Take for example, Wendy Cheng's investigation into the revitalization of the San Gabriel Mission District. The city spent over 20 million dollars building civic identity based on a romanticized Spanish past, ignoring residents' proposal to establish a space that represented its Chinese migration into the city. See Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes*.

identity formation, namely how people make place and shape regional space, and how these processes are shaped by the movement of foods.

Understanding regional identity formation as processes that connect mobility, networks, and interactions, then, gives scholars an opportunity to analyze the ways foodways factor into these processes. For example, studying the movement of food and food goods across spatial boundaries can tell us how people make place and recreate cultural practices, particularly when land ownership is difficult to obtain. While the spatiality of race and class is not tied to land ownership, the processes of renting and owning land can tell us much about racial restrictions and life in the San Gabriel Valley. The critical study of foodways can serve as a method for understanding placemaking when land ownership is not an option. It can also tell us about the complexities of racial boundaries, by understanding how food laborers were able to move across boundaries (or not) to produce and distribute essential foods and how they challenged regional power structures by vending foodstuffs locally, like chiles, tamales, and more. The production of ethnic foods and foodstuffs challenged nuanced boundaries and at times afforded racialized people mobility, but only in relation to economy and productivity. This warrants much attention. Focusing on foodways provides us with a method for analyzing the spatiality of identity formation, or how the politics of place are crucial for class and ethnic relations. Thus, making regional identity is shaped by the intricate processes of racialization that involve people, space, and food.

Regional identity is fluid, reflecting everchanging processes that include people, practices, material objects, and *foodways*. Drawing from Paasi's notion that regional identity represents a set of processes, I find that making regional identity is heavily tied to regional heritage. Regional heritage refers to stories and people recognized as the overarching history of a particular area. As such, regional heritage critically shapes how people perceive regional identity as static, rather than

as a set of processes impacted by people, place, and food. As such, actors within semi-rural spaces create a white regional heritage to shape Anglo claims to regional identity, one which further helps Anglos lay claims to space. In this dissertation, I am particularly interested in connecting regional heritage, regional identity, and claims to space in the Central San Gabriel Valley through food, because it helps us understand how Anglos claimed ownership and established legitimacy to power in this region. Regional identity draws from regional heritage, which is heavily connected to who holds power at the regional level, what I refer to as regional power structures.

Historians and geographers have pointed to the importance of studying regional power structures because they significantly shape race relations at the local scale. Interdisciplinary scholar Clyde Woods in *Development Arrested*, uses historical geographic methods to write about Black communities in the Mississippi Delta region, examining plantation power and Black resistance to this regime, which he conceptualizes as a "blues epistemology." Blues epistemology, as a method and theory of resistance, is created by working class Black populations responding to hierarchical systems of power.[37] Woods argues that regional issues matter by examining how regional power is structured through a plantation system. His discussion of regional power shaped San Gabriel Valley scholar Wendy Cheng's concept of *regional racial formation*.

The regional scale is important in understanding racial formation and contest over power in semi-rural areas. In the San Gabriel Valley, regional power structures impact racial formation and regional identity. Cheng points to the ways discourses on race are used to execute visions and claims to place, identity, and history, showing us how *racial projects* function in the suburbs.[38] Cheng describes *regional racial formation* as, "place-specific processes of racial formation, in

[37] Clyde Adrian Woods, *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Powers in the Mississippi Delta*, (New York: Verso, 1998).
[38] For "racial projects," see Michael Omi & Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*; Also see Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America*.

which locally accepted racial orders and hierarchies complicate and sometimes challenge hegemonic ideologies and facile notions of race."[39] In other words, regional racial formation is the idea that racial identity is shaped and impacted by people's everyday interactions at the regional level, particularly within 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/o/x populations here. Focusing on regional racial formation allows for (1) an analysis on everyday actions and movements that are constantly shifting more than at the national scale, and (2) an analysis of the *dynamic* and *dialectic* between large scale ideologies and micro politics of local, everyday life.

I argue that foodways, as a set of extensive processes and actors, play a significant role in shaping racial formation and contests over power. Thinking through Cheng's concept of regional racial formation, I focus on the Central San Gabriel Valley region as a case study to uncover how regional identity, racial formation, and placemaking were shaped by Mexican foodways. Building on a regional racial formation approach, "critical Latinx foodways" provides a 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. What did everyday life look like, particularly for ranch owners and Mexican laborers? What can we gain from understanding daily life and how it impacts place? Everyday interactions impact race, and racial projects (tied to the production and consumption of food) contain bodies of color to place. By recreating the social and cultural landscape of cities within the Central SGV, I centralize a study focused on racial formation, regional identity, and placemaking. I argue that what binds these processes together are foodways. An emphasis on foodways as a grounding in

[39] See Wendy Cheng, *The Changs Next Door to the Diazes*.

this dissertation emerges from ethnic studies scholarship focused on race, food, and identity. I turn to the theory of racial formation to better understand how Latina/o/x populations made place in the suburban outskirts of Los Angeles in the early 20th century.

Drawing from Michael Omi & Howard Winant, Natalia Molina, Wendy Cheng, and Clyde Woods, I seek to understand how race is shaped regionally, how race shapes place, and how people of color challenge dominant ideologies to create an alternative regional identity. Sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant developed a theory of racial formation, which deconstructs the shifting meanings of race, arguing that race is socially constructed. Because Omi and Winant argue that race is fluid, the meaning and power inscribed within race changes over time, given the social context.[40] Dividing people along racial lines appears to be a constant and natural process when it is created through power dynamics. Omi & Winant advance the concept of *racial projects.*[41] Racial projects capture a process of racial formation that shapes the ways in which human identities and social structures are racially signified and the reciprocal ways that racial meaning becomes embedded in social structures. Historian Natalia Molina, then, expands the concept of racial projects to develop a theory of racial scripts.

According to Molina, master scripts are reproduced and enacted upon different racial groups to guide political, social, and economic power over communities of color, what she calls *racial scripts*.[42] Racial scripts are repurposed among different racial groups at similar times and across time. Consider the creation of the border patrol to deter Chinese immigration to the United

[40] 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.
[41] Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States.*
[42] She draws from philosopher Sylvia Wynter's conception of "man" as the master script for humanity and expands Omi & Winant's conception of racial projects; See Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America;* Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, 3 (2003): 257-337.

States. The racial project of deterring Chinese immigration was repurposed to deter Mexican migrations and then Central American migration.[43] All occurrences were based on the same racial script of a group "threatening" the national security and health of Americans. I think through Molina's consideration of the historic regulation of brown bodies, a reflection of the racial project of Mexicans as a hazard to public health.[44] While Omi, Winant, and Molina give us insight into how racial projects and racial scripts emerge across time and on a national level, it is important to get a closer look at how these processes manifest at the regional level. In the case of the Central San Gabriel Valley, I think about the trope of Cruz Baca, an agricultural worker, as a "good neighbor" in chapter two. Where one might consider the good neighbor trope to connote acceptance of Mexican populations, I interrogate how this trope reflects a racial script of dehumanized workers, or "faceless units of agricultural production."[45] To borrow from Carey McWilliams, the racial trope of Mexicans as units of agricultural production considers how Mexican populations are only worthy of discussing *in relation to* whiteness and as productive members of their respective cities. Regional identity reflects processes of regional power structures that control who and what is valued within regional space. Regional identity shows us that regional power structures are heavily tied to people's perception of race. As I have discussed, regional identity is a set of processes involving people, places, and interactions. These processes are shaped by regional power structures that determine who and what are valued within a given space. Regional heritage is utilized by groups to legitimize power structures at the local scale.

Regional heritage is central to laying claims to space. Residents within regional places put forth particular representations of history and identity that may not always be representative of its

[43] Molina focuses on Mexican immigration from 1924 to 1965 to help us understand how race and citizenship were constructed during this time; See Molina, *How Race is Made in America*.
[44] See Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?*
[45] Here I borrow from Carey McWilliams description of the agri-business sector.

current inhabitants. Consider the concept of abstract space which connotes empty, passive areas. French philosopher Henri Lefebvre posits that the idea of abstract space (as empty) facilitates power and capital for white elites by commodifying and bureaucratizing space.[46] He argues that space is not passive, but rather made up of active *processes* that involve multiple claims to space.[47] Similarly, geographer Edward Soja writes that space has always been political and strategic.[48] As such, space is not fixed: it is always in production. The erasure of people of color from historical narratives is not just a result, rather reflects a set of processes of politics, economy, and power involving multiple agents. These processes serve to legitimize Anglo claims to space. As gender studies scholar Sherene Razack suggests, "The national mythologies of white settler societies are deeply spatialized stories…at each stage the story installs Europeans as entitled to the land, a claim that is codified in law."[49] Eliminating people of color from regional heritage and regulating their present movement within racialized spaces allowed Anglos to lay claims to space across Southern California. Claims to space are further protected through laws that regulate racialized people's movement.[50] For example, historian Renisa Mawani argues that liquor laws were integral to maintaining racial and spatial boundaries and keeping mixed-race people in their place, what she calls *out of place*.[51] Mythologies helping build regional heritage are supported by laws that regulate

[46] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.
[47] Lefebvre developed three elements in the production of social space: the perceived, conceived, and lived. These three elements are shaped by race, class, gender, and so forth, impacting the physical products of space, such as the built environment. In other words, space is not a fixed, innocent structure, rather space is always a process, a dialectical relationship between space and people. Space changes given the people who visit, interact, and inhabit it.
[48] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, 1989).
[49] Sherene Razack, *Space, Place and the Law*, p.5.
[50] Consider federal and provincial liquor infractions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that hyper-regulated the movements of mixed-race peoples in British Columbia.
[51] Mixed race people were disciplined with excessive fines when consuming alcohol on reservation land and received severe punishment compared to their Anglo counterparts. Mawani finds that what concerned lawmakers wasn't the act of drinking itself, rather who was doing it and how it challenged the definitive boundaries of racial categories. Mixed-race people of Native and Anglo descent effectively challenged what it meant to be white. Liquor infraction fines were much higher for mixed-race people drinking in reservation spaces, further contributing to the

people's movement and consumption of eating and drinking, a means to police interracial social relations. These regulations, then, helped Anglos lay claims to space by creating a perception that Anglos have always held power over these places.[52] Where race becomes space, the production of history becomes a means to enact, regulate, and justify spatial claims. The regulation of racialized peoples' actions in particular spaces are heavily connected to regional claims in these areas.

Claims to space are heavily tied to historical narratives that "justify" these power structures.[53] The enactment of "heritage" by Anglos has erased the history of racialized people within spaces. Understanding regional identity as a process involving civic identity, memory, and racialization shows us the ways regional identity has formed in particular places over time. Regional identity shapes racial formation and placemaking practices in the Central San Gabriel Valley. Anglo claims to space across Southern California depended on the containment of memory, a past that erased Indigenous and Mexican remnants in the city of Los Angeles and which legitimized the regulation of Mexican workers in the present.[54] According to Trouillot, historical silences occur in four moments: the making of sources, the making of archives, the making of narratives, and the making of history in the final instance. Historical narratives (and their historical silences) become tools for enacting spatial claims. Race is a critical factor in these processes, as seen in Molina's work of Mexican and Chinese immigrants as a hazard to public health in Los

regulation of racialized bodies that were *out of place*. Renisa Mawani, "In Between and Out of Place: Mixed-Race Identity, Liquor, and the Law in British Columbia, 1850-1913" in *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* Sherene Razack (ed.) (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002).

[52] Gender studies scholar Sherene Razack suggests that "national mythologies of white settler societies are deeply spatialized stories…at each stage the story installs Europeans as entitled to the land, a claim that is codified in law." Sherene Razack, (ed.), *Race, Space, and the Law*, p.3.

[53] Anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot posits that the production of history is not without political intent; See Trouillot, *Silencing the Past.*

[54] See William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe.*

Angeles. As such, space continuously functions as a process of white settler colonialism, an ongoing process of dispossession.[55]

In Los Angeles, scholars can understand how a romanticized past helped Anglos lay claims to space and cement racial difference in place through food. Anglos in Los Angeles sought to eliminate the undesirable, the "unsettling" factors that challenged their claims to regional memory, power, and place. In his work on the history of Los Angeles, historian Bill Deverell find that white elites in Los Angeles erased all traces of Mexican contributions from the city, further legitimizing a "city of the future" indebted to Anglo investments.[56] Drawing on Carey McWilliams' concept of the "Spanish fantasy heritage," Phoebe Kropp links together public memory, racialized politics, and the control of public space in Placita Olvera in 1930s Los Angeles.[57] Placita Olvera, a vision of Christine Sterling that received financial support from Henry Chandler, was an Anglo re-envisioned history of the region, one that focused on a Spanish heritage glorifying missions and ranchos, which allowed Anglos to lay European claims to Southern California.[58] The hierarchical order within this space depended on the regulation of Mexican peoples' mobility within regional spaces, or how they experienced movement and how their movement was regulated and managed by their Anglo counterparts. For example, Mexican vendors in Olvera Street could only vend in *puestos*, outdoor stands to sell goods, while Anglos ran the brick-and-mortar shops, including restaurants. Mexican bodies in Olvera Street were subjected to regulation, from how they spoke to

[55] Geographer Eugene McCann argues that public space often functions as abstract space, or in the interest of capital. Monuments, statues, and dedications lay claims to public space that tells us who the space belongs to. McCann considers Confederate statues that are placed in public spaces like parks. When memorials to slaves are never created in these same spaces, public memory further reproduces colonial logics tied to Anglo notions of power. See McCann, "Race, Protest, and Public Space."
[56] William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 7.
[57] Phoebe Kropp, "Citizens of the Past?: Olvera Street and the Consumption of Race and Memory in 1930s Los Angeles," *Radical History Review*, 81. (2001): 35-60.
[58] Kropp, "Citizens of the Past?"

what they wore.[59] This positioned Anglos as owners of Mexican culture, regulating and defining what it meant to be Mexican and Spanish through foods and performances, fixing Mexican people to place. The Spanish fantasy past "became a widely popular marker of regional identity for Anglos," one which further cemented their claim to the city and power over an ideal regional identity based on a regional heritage that erased Indigenous and Mexican peoples as active agents defining Los Angeles.[60]

In my study of the Central San Gabriel Valley, I seek to tell the history of Mexican food entrepreneurs and vendors that challenge dominant histories of regional heritage tied to white claims to space. Mexican communities fought regional power structures by challenging regional boundaries through their vending of foods. Where possible, they created autonomous communities, making their own independent stores out of their homes. As interdisciplinary scholar Genevieve Carpio tells us, "Where public memory is shaped by hegemonic structures that naturalize unequal race relations under the guise of neutrality, interdisciplinary scholars must produce a historical geography in which marginalized people are afforded recognition of their resistance, accommodation, entrepreneurship, compromises, joy, and movement."[61]

I take note of the ways one group's mobility (or immobility) shaped placemaking practices and the construction of race of in the Central San Gabriel Valley in the early 1900s. Carpio points to how mobility is a critical factor in understanding hegemonic structures. That is, mobility scholarship has considered the ways movement is regulated across time and space. Carpio defines mobility as the ways people experience, regulate, and give meaning to movement. She has

[59] Mexican vendors were required to wear "Mexican costumes" when vending, further adding to the vision of a Mexican past and an Anglo present. The plaza, once a sight of activism and protests, was changed into a commercialized attraction. Also see William Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza*.
[60] Kropp, "Citizens of the Past?" p.36.
[61] Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, p.15.

approached regional memory and belonging in multiracial communities through a mobility lens to help us think about how mobility/or immobility and place are central to uneven power relations, "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."[62] She finds that regional migrations defined Mexican mobility in the Inland Empire of California. In thinking about Carpio's work on the Inland Empire and the ways mobility influences racial formation, I consider how the production and consumption of foods plays a part in racializing people's mobility.[63] As I discuss in my methods section, spatial analysis is critical when interviews and oral histories are no longer an option for reconstructing a social landscape.

I argue that the study of food can help us understand the socio-spatial processes embedded in identity formation, namely how people make place and shape regional space, and how people challenge regional boundaries through the movement of foods across space. A study of foodways provides a critical lens to understanding how regional identity forms and how placemakers challenge hegemonic power structures. Further, identity forms differently in the outskirts of Los Angeles and warrants unique attention. While regional identity is constantly shifting, I find one constant: a critical need to understand processes that connect people to place. Foodways becomes one especially productive way to do so, particularly when understanding people's relationship to space. In these processes are embedded power and racial struggles, which can and should be interrogated.

Foodways as Cultural History

[62] See Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads,* p.5.
[63] Carpio's scholarship on race and space also shape my research questions, which consider the mobility of food and Latina/o/x food vendors.

Much labor history scholarship produced within Chicana/o/x Studies inherently deals with food: agriculture, meatpacking, canneries, and more. The Bracero Program, United Farm Workers, and labor regarding Mexicans was grounded in agricultural labor struggles. Significant Chicana/o/x scholarship has discussed food, labor, and power through the history of Mexican *braceros*. In the last ten years, scholarship on braceros has expanded to think through gender and sexuality. For example, Ana Elizabeth Rosas' *Abrazando El Espiritu* challenged the way scholars conceptualized labor history within Chicana/o/x Studies by focusing on the emotional histories of braceros and their families.[64] Most recently, historian Mireya Loza explores sexuality through the social lives of braceros.[65] Rosas and Loza have informed my work in unique ways, helping me think beyond the patriarchal dominance of family histories and also recognize the critical role women play within the production, consumption, and distribution of foods. This line of work has influenced how I approach the critical study of food and the important role women play as placemakers. Historians have created revisionist histories that show the ways people of color have critically shaped regions and made place.

The cultural turn of the 1990s led an explosion of revisionist histories. George J. Sánchez' canonical text *Becoming Mexican American* (1993) shaped the way historians thought about Mexican American identity and culture in the first half of the 20th century. The cultural turn, sparked by Stuart Hall, propelled revisionist histories in the early 2000s by George Lipsitz, Dolores Hayden, Becky Nicolaides, William Deverell, Eric Avila, Lisbeth Haas, William Estrada, and many more.[66] In discussing the importance of cultural history, I look towards historian Eric Avila

[64] Ana Elizabeth Rosas, *Abrazando El Espiritu*,
[65] Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).
[66] Stuart Hall pushed cultural studies as a valid and important field to understanding lived experience.

who states, "cultural history is, quite simply, the history of stories, their origins, transmission, and significance in time."[67]

In this dissertation, I argue that foodways are a critical part of this history and by studying foods and food laborers, we can better understand the struggles of surviving and challenging regional power structures. The field of Chicana/o/x Studies has alerted me to the important intersection between labor history, power, and food, an intersection that is heavily explored by food studies historians. In 1985, anthropologist Sidney Mintz published *Sweetness and Power*, a history of sugar consumption in England. Detailing the power structures that made sugar a commodity, Mintz provides a rich labor and economic history of sugar production in the Caribbean, which made sugar a symbol of status within society.[68] Mintz helps me understand how foods are *material* and *symbolic*, as a source of nourishment that reflect an arena of control and power. That is, foods are enacted to lay claims to space and power. Mintz took a critical food studies approach by interrogating notions of identity, issues with labor, and the racialization of labor. French theorist Roland Barthes was one of the first theorists to argue for the importance of studying food in anthropological research. He states, "[Food] is not only a collection of products that can be used for statistical and nutritional studies. It is also, and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behavior."[69] Barthes' conception of food as something more than an object or source of nourishment helps me understand how the processes of foodways are symbolic to multiple arenas of life including labor, economy, identity and belonging.

[67] Avila 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.
[68] The consumption of sugar shaped diet, daily life, and the growth of capitalism. His work would come to influence the study of food and provide a foundation for food studies as an academic field of study.
[69] In Roland Barthes, "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption" p.22.

Chicana/o/x Studies scholars provide a foundation to understand the role of food in placemaking and racial formation. Food is not just a connection to cultural heritage. It is deeply rooted in political economy through foreign policy, trade, and labor. By tracing the ways foodways are developed, and, by using foodways as a lens to analyze community and identity formation, we pull apart the ways in which regions are shaped by the movement of food and food workers. The processes that makeup foodways are critical for understanding placemaking and the economies that immigrants, such as those moving to the San Gabriel Valley participate in when migrating to the United States.

Considering existing scholarship that intersects foodways and ethnic studies, scholars in the early 2000s began to ask questions about the role of food in understanding the intersections of race, ethnicity, and placemaking. Works within Asian American studies provided key anthologies to understand the intersection between food, race, and identity. The edited volume *Eating Asian America* (2013) brought together scholars to understand the racialization of diverse Asian American immigrants, particularly as they become circumscribed into the production and labor of food. 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 the United States that gave way for Thai food to boom in Los Angeles. 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.[70] While Thai food was used as a means to colonize Thai people and Thai Americans in the mid-20th century, it also served as a

[70] As noted by Mark Padoongpatt in *Flavors of Empire*.

means for Thai communities to challenge white power structures through reclaiming place in the global city of Los Angeles.[71] Padoongpatt shows us that foodways are complex, as food can replicate colonial models, but may also become a site of resistance for immigrant communities through reclamation. Reclaiming space through foodways reflects Molina's conception of counter scripts, or people of color's resistance to racial scripts by creating alternative narratives.[72]

Foodways are inextricably tied to national identity. As historian William Carleton explores in his work on Mexican American horticulturalist Dr. Fabián García, it was García's constant crossing of the U.S.-Mexico border that allowed him to secure plant varietals to breed the famous Number 9 chile, a chile he transformed from a regional to a national food.[73] Boundaries, the thickening and easing of them, define "what we eat, how we eat, and what it means when we consume food."[74] The history of making place through food in the United States is more than a reflection of cultural practice. It involves borders that create belonging and displacement, and thus critically shape the ways foods are eaten, what is eaten, and what it means to consume these foods. This helps me make explicit connections between the processes of nationality, identity, belonging, and foodways. In thinking through my work of Latina/o farmer-entrepreneurs and laborers in the San Gabriel Valley, I find it important to recognize the ways movement of food across cities within Southern California shapes regional identity, particularly as Cruz Baca moved chiles to Orange County.

[71] Importantly, by focusing on foodways, Padoongpatt was able to activate an array of archival documents like U.S Peace Corps letters sent back home from Thailand (that would otherwise be overlooked) to tell the history of Thai people and the growth of Thai food in Los Angeles. This has given me insight into the different ways archives are activated through the centralizing of foodways in archival research, which is not limited to Latina/o/x histories.
[72] See Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America*.
[73] William Carleton, "Crossing Chiles, Crossing Borders: Dr. Fabían García, The New Mexican Chile Pepper, and Modernity in the Early Twentieth-Century U.S.-Mexico Borderlands" in *Food Across Borders*
[74] William Carleton, "Crossing Chiles, Crossing Borders."

Food itself becomes embedded with meaning of race and nationality, and how important critical food studies is to the investigation of the colonial projects tied to food production, consumption, and history.[75] In some cases, the symbolic meaning of food leads to an erasure of migrations and histories of Black and Indigenous groups. Theresa Preston-Werner argues that the processes of creating national dishes leads 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 the historical contributions made by migrant Black workers. *Gallo pinto* originated from the work of Afro-Costa Ricans who worked on the railroads and the banana production industry, helping develop the dish as an icon of national identity. The history of foodways is not merely about exploring goods that have been produced over time. Rather, it is also about the critical laboring of these goods, the ways diverse populations have impacted the development of these goods, and how then customers utilize and enact these goods to make place and preserve cultural practices in a new or continued environment.

While Chicana/o/x and labor history scholars have looked at agricultural records, *Critical Latinx Foodways* shifts the focus from labor to the broader umbrella of foodways. Grounding the production (labor), the distribution (mobility), vending (entrepreneurship) and the consumption (eating) of foods and food laborers simultaneously, becomes a means to recover Latinx social histories. It opens up possibilities to interrogate the racialization of labor concurrent with the racialization of space. My work grapples with questions about geography, placemaking, and regional power structures regarding Latina/o/x foodways, primarily focused on the labor and entrepreneurial production of foodstuffs. The study of foodways allows scholars to interrogate what we eat, where it comes from, in what spaces we consume, who gets to eat what, and why this

[75] Theresa Preston-Werner, "Gallo Pinto," and Patricia Vega Jimenez, "El Gallo Pinto,"

is so. Whereas historians and Chicana/o/x scholars like Matt Garcia, José Alamillo, and Gilbert Gonzalez have discussed racial hierarchies in the hinterlands regarding labor struggles and making place in citrus regions of Southern California, less attention has been given to the histories of Mexican food entrepreneurs and food businesses in the Central San Gabriel Valley in the early twentieth century.[76] By focusing on Latina/o/x food entrepreneurship in this time period in this region, we learn about the role foodways play in constructing regional racial hierarchies, making place, and how those legacies have shaped 21st century street vending.

Given these works, I seek to understand how race is shaped regionally, by the cultivation and vending of Mexican foods and food goods in predominantly Anglo areas of the Central San Gabriel Valley during the 20th century. Building on these diverse scholars and my methodological approach, I propose my own concept, "critical Latinx foodways" a methodological approach that centralizes a foodways lens when re-reading and piecing together social histories, one which helps us engage in historical repair work, which I define as the craft and labor to mend, rebuild, claim, and heal. Specifically, a "foodways lens" focuses on the processes embedded in food to recover fragmented histories within and outside of the archive.

Methods and Methodological Interventions

Methodological Intervention

I have created "critical Latinx foodways," or CLF, to begin addressing questions of erasure, memory, and recovery of Latina/o/x histories when so little remains in traditional archives.[77] I look

[76] See Gilbert Gonzalez, *Labor and Community*; Matt Garcia, *A World of Its O*wn; Jose Alamillo *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons*.

[77] The use of "x" in "critical latinx foodways is critical here." I use "Latina/o" within a historical context, acknowledging that the "x" was not representative of, for example, Mexicans in 20th century Southern California. That is, people did not identify themselves as "latinx" at this time. However, with the methodology of "critical latinx

to Kelly Lytle Hernandez' notion of the "rebel archive" which challenges the constant and enduring bend toward disappearing racial outsiders in the legacy of archives practiced by traditional historic societies by looking through the "backdoors" and in the shadows for histories of racialized people. However, the rebel archive is not easy to build. It calls for researchers from marginalized communities to be resourceful, finding ways to recover the lived experiences of silenced communities.[78] While thinking through the rebel archive, I draw from Chicana food studies scholars to think about the critical role foods play in shaping culture. Meredith E. Abarca and Nieves Pascual Soler develop a theory of food consciousness, arguing that the study of food is critical in the development of Chicana/o/x Studies.[79] The persistence of the "rebel archive" to survive is paired with Soler and Abarcas' argument that Chicana/o/x Studies must engage with the critical study of food to create theoretical interventions in the field. Drawing from Hernandez, Soler, and Abarca, I develop "critical Latinx foodways" a methodological approach to re-read and assemble fragmented histories to create rebel archives from the margins.[80]

I offer "critical Latinx foodways" as a method grounded in foodways, a tool for re-reading and recovering Latina/o/x cultural histories through food. Foods are cultural objects, but cannot be preserved like correspondence, journals and material objects can. Its ephemeral and sensorial nature have rarely been discussed in 20th century Mexican placemaking. CLF teaches us to approach such material culture in innovative ways, or through a *rasquachismo* (an attitude and

foodways," I acknowledge that the centralizing of foodways can include contemporary collections from the 21st century that include people who identify as "latinx," for example collections on food and culture from the 2000s, further attempting to disrupt the gender binary and to address pressing questions in the development of Chicana/o/x Studies.

[78] Take for example Kelly Lytle Hernandez' digital mapping project "Million Dollar Hoods," which maps the effect of incarceration across Los Angeles by working through LAPD records that were previously sealed.

[79] Nieves Pascual Soler and Meredith Abarca, *Rethinking Chicana/o Literature Through Food: Postnational Appetites*, eds., (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013).

[80] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles;* Abarca & Soler, *Rethinking Chicana/o Literature Through Food*.

sensibility) as Tomás Ybara Frausto teaches us, to "make something out of what you have," by piecing together the fragmented stories of food that remain (via city records, correspondence, and that which can be preserved), effectively answering Nieves Pascual Soler and Meredith Abarca's call to integrate a critical analysis of food in Chicana/o/x Studies.[81] While Chicana/o/x scholars have looked at agricultural records to piece together labor stories, CLF shifts the focus from labor to the *broader* umbrella of foodways. Grounding foodways, the production (labor), the consumption (eating), and the distribution (mobility), of foods, food goods, and people simultaneously, provides a holistic lens to assemble Latina/o/x cultural histories. It is the persistent thread of foodways in historical research that can render food workers and entrepreneurs visible in semi-rural areas, honoring their legacy of shaping place for Mexican immigrant communities.[82]

Methods

As an interdisciplinary scholar, I utilize an array of methods (archival research, oral history, GIS mapping, and content analysis) to piece together a history of 20th century food workers and laborers. In this project, I focus on consulting archives from institutions in the San Gabriel Valley, including the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum, *La Historia* (historical society) in El Monte, Arcadia Library, La Puente Public Library, and the Homestead Museum in the city of Industry.[83] I also work through private family collections from community members in Baldwin Park. My methods include archival processing, as I archived the Cruz Baca family collection. From 2019 to 2022, I worked with Cruz Baca (Sembello), granddaughter of Cruz and Juanita Baca, to

[81] See Tomas Ybara Frausto, Rasquachismo, a Chicano sensibility, in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1986*, ed. R. Grisworld del Castillo, T. McKenna, and Y.Yarbro-Bejarano, 155—162, Los Angeles, CA: Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991; See Natalie Santizo, "Rasquache Mapping," *GeoHumanities*, (forthcoming); See Nieves Pascual Soler and Meredith Abarca, *Rethinking Chicana/o Literature through Food*.
[82] See Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own*.
[83] While in the city of Industry, it borders the city of La Puente and includes ample historical records of this region.

organize and collect family documents, including street (peddler) permits, land taxes, chile sales receipts, and more.[84] I have conducted oral histories with Cruz Baca Sembello and Bob Benbow, former director of the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum. I also utilize oral histories from the South El Monte Arts Posse (SEMAP) digital archive that include community members from El Monte's labor camps. From La Historia, I utilize a series of autobiographies, *cuentos* and recollections of everyday life from former labor camp residents.

I pair traditional historical methods with the digital humanities by using tools of spatial analysis. I utilize GIS mapping to recreate the social landscape of the Central San Gabriel Valley. One example of this work is the use of historic phone directory data to reconstruct the social landscape of the farm laborers and ranchers who produced agricultural products in Baldwin Park. By mapping data derived from these historic phone directories, I seek to uncover the geo-racial meanings encoded on this landscape. For instance, as I show in chapter two, these methods reveal that most Mexican laborers lived close to one another in the Northside of the city while ranch owner lived throughout the city, with a concentration in the center of the city. This realization allows us to see how race and place are intertwined in ways previously unavailable. We understand how agricultural production at the micro-level of small ranches also impacted housing patterns in Baldwin Park. This study gives an in-depth picture of how racial formation unfolded in the SGV, and how through food production, consumption, and distribution, people made place and challenged regional power structures in the outskirts of Los Angeles.

Recovering Latina/o/x histories of food workers and vendors in the twentieth century does more than fill an important historical gap in suburban history and it does much more than recover lost histories in the San Gabriel Valley. It demonstrates how an analytic that I call "critical Latinx

[84] I worked with Chicano Studies Research Center archivist Xaviera Flores, who graciously donated archival boxes, folders, and other materials for me to archive this collection.

foodways" reveals innovative ways to re-read and reconstruct Latina/o/x histories. This analytic advances our understanding of Latina/o/x semi-rural history through the intersections of racial formation, placemaking, and foodways—the ways agriculture shapes labor-relations and residential locations—which in turn impact the social and cultural landscape of cities. This grounding allows us to better understand and excavate stories of historic Latina/o/x labor, farming, business, agriculture, and placemaking that give clearer insights into racial formation and the formation of regional identity in semi-rural suburbs that made place differently than urban areas. While my dissertation largely focuses on case studies of Mexican American communities, I posit that critical Latinx foodways, as a methodological approach, helps recover histories of diverse Latina/o/x communities. As such, I utilize "Latinx" instead of Mexican in "critical Latinx foodways."[85]

Chapter Breakdown

Chapter one introduces "critical latinx foodways" as a methodological approach for re-reading, recovering, and assembling fragmented histories in and outside of the archive. Specifically, a "foodways lens" focuses on the processes embedded in food to recover fragmented histories within and outside of the archive. Grounding the production (labor), the distribution (mobility), vending (entrepreneurship) and the consumption (eating) of foods and food laborers simultaneously, becomes a means to recover Latina/o/x cultural histories. This methodology opens possibilities to interrogate the racialization of labor concurrent with the racialization of space through case studies in Baldwin Park and Los Angeles. Chapter two pieces together a cultural history of Mexican food vendors and ranch laborers in Baldwin Park. This chapter focuses on the

[85] See chapter one.

Baca family, a Mexican family whose ethnic foods trace back to the early 1900s. Here, I processed and archived the Baca family collection, which includes peddler permits, receipts for chile sales, personal narratives, and more. This chapter further pieces together a social history of Mexican ranch laborers whose narratives are often excluded within local archives. Chapter three investigates the sensorial elements of foodways, paying attention to how Anglos enacted smell and the act of eating to create racial difference and assert claims to space. Concurrently, Mexican food entrepreneurs in El Monte challenged Anglo claims to regional heritage and space by creating their own autonomous tiendas and restaurants in Hicks Camp. Chapter four investigates the history of walnut production in Southern California, comparing its promotion and boosterism to the citrus industry. It highlights the walnut industry in La Puente, exploring the gendered and racialized space of the Diamond Brand packinghouse. The dissertation concludes by making brief connections between the historic regulation of food vendors and the contemporary regulation of street vending in Los Angeles. While this project grapples with contests over power in the 20th century San Gabriel Valley, the history of this region cannot begin with Anglo pioneers claiming land. It must begin with the history of the original inhabitants of the Los Angeles basin. The following section provides a historic overview relevant to the chapters ahead.

We Are on Tongva Land: Forming the Los Angeles Basin

"Indigenous People are a central and enduring part of the state's history because of their relationship to the land."
—Damon B. Akins & Willaim J. Bauer Jr. in *We Are the Land*

The history of the Central San Gabriel Valley cannot begin with early 20th century migrations. What is known as the "San Gabriel Valley" is the home of native Tongva (Gabrieleno) people.[86] While American historians have focused on eighteenth and nineteenth century San Gabriel Valley for the San Gabriel Mission, we must acknowledge that this is occupied land. Tongva communities have lived in the Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and Southern Channel Islands) region for at least 7,000 years.[87] Puvuu'nga (the area in and near Cal State Long Beach) is a place of emergence for Tongva peoples.[88] Their connection to Puvuu'nga is not static, nor limited to this particular place. Indigenous Tongva communities have a relationship with the land that is reaffirmed through ceremonies and gatherings. Their relationship to the land reflects their connection to food sources, particularly important during pre-colonial times. Much of the violence enacted upon Tongva communities in the 18th and 19 centuries by the Spanish was inextricably tied to the destruction and containment of Tongva food sources.

California's edible landscape along the Southern coastline helped Indigenous communities thrive, reflecting their autonomous and complex social and cultural relations. Anthropologist Brian Fagan describes California as an "edible landscape" where animals, plants, and trees were as familiar to Indigenous peoples as their relatives.[89] The edible landscape spanned across the state's coastline, including rich sources of food in Northern California. They nurtured the land as

[86] Also spelled Gabrieliño or Gabrielino. While diverse bands lived in the basin, they loosely identified as the Kumivit; For more on Tongva communities, see William McCawley, *First Angelinos*.
[87] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*.
[88] See "Mapping Indigenous LA," https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=4942348fa8bd427fae02f7e020e98764# accessed May 2, 2022.
[89] See Brian Fagan, *Before California*.

caretakers of the region. Drawing from Fagan, Kelly Lytle Hernandez explores the edible landscape of Tongva communities in the Los Angeles basin. A diverse food supply of mollusks, deer, waterfowl, otters, rabits, minks, and oak trees provided an array of meals for Indigenous communities beyond Tongva tribes in the Los Angeles basin.[90] Family units gathered acorns and women would prepare them into nutrient rich foods. According to historian M. Kat Anderson, Indigenous women living in the Los Angeles basin made breads, soups, and mashes out of acorns derived from oak trees, a nutritious diet sustaining Native life.[91] Tongva life in the basin was dynamic, representing an extensive order before Europeans arrived. As Hernandez states, "Tongva life was grounded by an earned and intimate knowledge of the edible landscape and enriched by extensive social, cultural, political, and spiritual relations across the region."[92] When the Spanish first appeared in the Los Angeles basin, it was Tongva communities that knew more about Spaniards given their extensive trade networks where Spanish goods were traded into over forty Tongva villages.[93] While Spanish ships had anchored in the Tovaangar coast in 1542, the Spanish did not arrive by land until after 1602, bringing with them cattle, horses, and sheep. Further, permanent settlements of Spanish people did not occur until about 1769 with the founding of Mission San Diego and the presidios in Monterey.[94] According to historian David Torres-Rouff, while a majority of the original colonists of Los Angeles claimed some degree of African or native ancestry, they replicated the colonial legacies of the *casta* system in the Tongva basin.

[90] While I discuss Tongva communities in the region, I also acknowledge their extensive trading, relationships, (and sometimes conflicts) with neighboring tribes like the Fernandeño Tataviam, Juaneño, Luiseño, Chumash, Cahuilla, Serrano, and Kumeyaay tribes of Southern California; For a discussion of food sources, see Steven Hackel, *Children of Coyote*.
[91] See M. Kat Anderson, *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources*.
[92] Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*, p.21.
[93] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*.
[94] While Spaniards had already visited Southern California prior to this time, it was not until 1769 that Spanish colonizers arrived with a full force to colonize and convert Indigenous populations; See David Torres Rouff, *Before L.A.*

The Yaangavit, (the Yaanga village of the Tongva tribe) physically built and expanded "El Pueblo Sobre el Rio de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles del Rio de Porciuncula," later known as Los Angeles.[95] Between 5,000 to 10,000 Tongva people inhabited the area when El Pueblo de la Reina de Los Angeles was established.[96] By the 1880s, Tongva land, forcibly renamed "Los Angeles," would become an Anglo majority. By the mid-18th century, the region's population would grow to 310,000 people.[97] Spanish priests and leaders created an extensive plan to build twenty-one missions along the California coast. Now, we move inland.

When Mission San Gabriel (about ten miles from Los Angeles) was founded in 1771 on the land of the Isankanga tribe, Spaniards began "conversion" of many Tongva tribes and villages in the Los Angeles basin. Five years later, the church moved to the village of Sibangna because of conflicts with Tongva tribes. Tongva peoples were forcibly renamed by the Spanish as "Gabrieleno," an umbrella term for all Tongva peoples that diminished the agency of diverse tribes in the basin. At its height, Mission San Gabriel operated 17 extensive ranchos and enslaved 3,000 Indians, building the stolen lands with 105,000 cattle, 20,000 horses, and 40,000 sheep.[98] Mission San Gabriel—the fourth of twenty-one missions built in California—was founded on 1771, but it would be built by several Indigenous communities and villages. As Tongva tribal council member Mark Acuña shares, "There is no other way to talk about it. We built the twenty-one missions. We worked the fields."[99]

The violent work conditions also relied on eroding family units. Acuña describes that families were divided among different ranchos to keep them apart. The San Gabriel Mission would

[95] Yaanga was the largest village of the Tongva people in this region.
[96] David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*:
[97] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*.
[98] Carey McWilliams, *Southern California, an Island on the Land*, (Layton: Gibbs Smith, 1946), p. 38.
[99] Interview of Mark Acuña (tribal councilmember), January 24, 2011, *KCET Departures*, https://www.kcet.org/shows/departures/gabrieleno-tongva-mission-indians accessed January12, 2021.

symbolize fertile land at the cost of Indigenous communities, "We were wiped out because the L.A basin was the richest of all the territories. Of all the twenty-one missions, guess which one was the richest? San Gabriel. It fed the other twenty.[100] Due to high populations and high trade patterns, the San Gabriel mission became the outpost for the Spanish empire in the Tongva basin. Where the mission thrived, the destruction if Indigenous foodways became a critical means by which violence was committed on these populations.

The destruction of the Tongva edible landscape forced Indigenous villages to seek refuge at the mission. The import of Spanish horses and cattle would effectively destroy the edible landscape of the Tongva community. Ultimately, it was hunger and starvation that drove many Tongva families to seek food at the mission. According to Lytle Hernandez, it was the locking up of Tongva women at night in Mission San Gabriel that was the first instance of human caging (incarceration) on Tongva territory.[101] The history of destruction, starvation, and incarceration of Tongva communities in the Los Angeles basin attests to the depths in which food becomes a violent tool of containment.

Given the history of foodways and its connection to enacting violence, the study of historic foodways is necessary to fully understand how the racialization of marginalized communities is inextricably tied to food. In 1781, Spanish priests and soldiers lived among Tongva communities. By 1785, the mission had "baptized" 1,200 Tongva people. By the following year, many Tongva peoples were working for the missions, tending to the land and building the missions from the ground up. By 1796, Tongva peoples became the primary labor force for the missions and ranchos in the Los Angeles basin. Even with starvation pushing Tongva villages to the missions, some

[100] Interview of Mark Acuña (tribal councilmember), January 24, 2011, *KCET Departures*, https://www.kcet.org/shows/departures/gabrieleno-tongva-mission-indians (Accessed January12, 2021.
[101] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*.

Tongva peoples never converted. Many Tongva tribes that did not remain at Mission San Gabriel moved inland. By this time the cattle herds of Spanish colonizers had destroyed much of the Tongva edible landscape, including the diverse oak trees and their acorns.[102] During the Mexican period (1821-1847), conditions would change for the region.

The Mexican Period (1821-1848)

After Mexico gained its independence from Spain (1821), power in the region would transition from Spanish missionaries to powerful ranching families, bringing with them new laws and administrators. One result was secularization of mission lands beginning in 1834. While secularization promised the return of land to Indigenous peoples, few received land grants.[103] In the aftermath of the revolution, the secularization of lands began to redistribute nearly 8 million acres of mission land (1834-1836). While lands were supposed to be redistributed to Indigenous populations only twenty Indigenous people received small land plots. More than 500 land grants were issued to prominent ranching families who would eventually name themselves "Californios," a distinction closely lined with elitism and power. Californios, representing intermarried and wealthy Anglo-Mexican families, created new categories of social identity and new markers of difference, representing racialized categories of identity. With the expansion of ranchos in the 1800s, Tongva peoples became part of the extensive enslaved labor force (1800-1830), with the Spanish further pushing "conversion" of Tongva peoples to the Catholic faith. While Spaniards and Indigenous populations continued trading goods like knives, cloth, beads, and labor, the town quickly became polarized. While the colonists became distinguished "Californios," and white

[102] Oak trees remained well into the 20th century (and California has a rich diversity of them today), however, the Spanish destroyed the vast growth of these trees and the land they grew on.
[103] Securalization began after Mexico gained its independence from Spain (1821), transitioning power from Spanish missionaries to powerful ranching families.

settlers migrating from the East married into these families, the Tongva community became dependent on the exploitative labor system of ranches to sustain themselves.

During the Mexican period, the population in Los Angeles grew drastically from 1836 to 1844. By the 1840s, Spanish-Mexican Angelenos created distinct boundaries between them and Indigenous populations, refashioning themselves as Californios.[104] As such, we must recognize that colonial logics are nuanced, and where one can be colonized, they too can be the colonizer. [105] Californios enacted the same violent patterns of enslaved labor on Tongva communities by destroying their food sources by herding cattle, raising horses, and holding similar labor practices that contained Indigenous communities to particular places. Spanish became the dominant language spoken in the region, a result of Spanish rule and continued into the Mexican period. This elite class of rancheros would come to control a vast amount of land in the region, raising cattle for the hide and tallow trading business, which would continue to destroy the traditional oak trees as food source for Indigenous peoples' edible landscape.

The unjust distribution of land during secularization was challenged by Indigenous Tongva communities. In 1846, 140 Gabrielinos signed a petition demanding access to mission lands, however Californio authorities rejected their petition. Instead, these land grants made Californios into wealthy rancheros. Secularization, which was supposed to issue land to Native communities, further dispossessed Tongva peoples from their ancestral and mission lands, forcing thousands from the coast to the interior of California. In the early 1800s, Tongva members that survived the violence and destruction of their villages in the Los Angeles basin moved inland to seek refuge,

[104] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*.
[105] Take for example American Studies scholar Divana Olivas concept of "Chicanx food politics," or an analytic framework attuned to the ways communities who are both colonizer and colonized, navigate colonial food systems. See Olivas, "Chile as an Organizing Tool: Chicanx Food Politics of Project Feed the Hood," presented at American Association of Geographers annual conference, 2022.

marrying with Kokoemkam (Serrano), Kumitaraxam (Cahuilla), Achjachemen (Juaneño), and Cupa families.[106]

Secularization also changed California's economy. California economy became represented by ranch-raised cattle and the tallow trade.[107] And, it was the production of goods like hides from cattle, that afforded them success in sales. While hide and tallow proved lucrative, Native labor facilitated Anglo wealth in Mexican Los Angeles. Ranch ownership in the mid 1800s created a new elite and new categories of social identity, new markers of difference that erased Tongva peoples as the original inhabitants of the region. During the Mexican period, a handful of Anglos obtained Mexican land grants which facilitated Anglo claims to land.[108] Mexican land grants were tools for taking land and forcing Tongva people into ranch labor for survival. While Californios would ultimately fall victim to Anglo squatters and land disputes in the courts, they too replicated Spanish colonial violence against Tongva communities.

Statehood (1850)

With the growth of Anglo settlers in the 1830s and 1840s to California, the racial dynamics would once again shift. Intermarriage between Californios and Anglo settlers gave Anglo men access to power and land, further shaping the racial dynamics and divides between those that owned land, and those that did not. The ideals of Manifest Destiny became a galvanizing tool for Anglo squatters forcibly claiming land, leading to the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), and the ultimate downfall of the Californios.[109] The signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)

[106] See Tongva-approved teaching resource timeline, https://www.tobevisible.org/timeline.html
[107] From 1822 to 1844, hide and tallow sales reached 1 million. See David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*
[108] Take for example, the William Workman and Temple family in the La Puente area. See chapter four.
[109] For a detailed history of Californios, see Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-speaking Californians, 1846-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) [1966].

ceded Alta California to the United States.[110] Two years later, California would become an "official" state of the United States. In turn, California statehood and the Homestead Act (1862) enacted laws that facilitated Anglos claim of property. From 1846 to 1866, vast land in the San Gabriel Valley was characterized as a cattle herding region, an extension of Southern California's "cow towns" overshadowed by the dominant and prosperous city of San Francisco in Northern California.[111]

Where Los Angeles struggled to grow from 5,000 to 50,000 residents between 1870 and 1890, its population continued to expand rapidly during the four following decades, doubling to 100,000 at the turn of the century, quintupling to 500,000 by 1920, and passing 1.2 million in 1930.[112] While fruit and vegetable farming came to displace wheat farming of the mid-to-late 1800s, agricultural practices at the turn of the century would follow exploitative tactics at a much harsher pace than that of wheat. Moving away from a focus on community farming and into a focus of business and technology, agribusiness organized control over commonly grown crops. Due to growing demands, and the new model of business over community, yet another (new) labor system was needed: one that would avoid the reduction of seasons while also negating higher pay. This new labor system would propose villages near work sites, what would eventually become a system of housing camps on employer land. These labor-land patterns manifested across the country, including the Northeast.[113] This new labor system grounded in housing set in stone the

[110] Turning from Mexican to United States control meant that many of the Mexican land grants would not be honored, leaving many Californios unable to claim their land holdings. Intermarriage was often important in order to keep claims to land. Ultimately, the Californios would become powerless and many lost their lands to Anglo squatters and the courts unwillingness to recognize land grants.
[111] See Carey McWilliams, *Southern California*; It would take much work for Los Angeles to shift the "cow town" complex into the global city its known for today.
[112] Statistics come from David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*
[113] See William H. Friedland and Dorothy Nelkin, *Migrant Agricultural Workers in America's Northeast*, (New York:Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971).

relationship between farm labor and land.[114] In 1903, Southern California grew to 83,600 acres of citrus cultivation. By 1910, industrialized agriculture could not function without a captive supply of labor power. Low wages would leave many migrant laborers seeking housing, many of which could not afford the costs of rent in the main towns. Mexican rental communities formed, and many families and friends would live together to afford rent, as seen with Mexican laborers in Baldwin Park (chapter two).

California established itself as an agricultural powerhouse. Los Angeles was significantly shaped by migration flows connected to agricultural production.[115] The citrus belt of Southern California, extending from the San Gabriel Valley into the Inland Empire, became a model for citrus ranch owners across the nation. The "fertile land," endless supply of laborers, and the steady production of agricultural goods made Los Angeles the capital of citrus production. This success expanded well beyond the symbol and material aspects of the orange.[116] Los Angeles County became the largest producer of agriculture in the entire United States from the 1930s until 1948.[117] The Southwest produced 40 percent of the total American agricultural output, of which California (by 1929) produced the most fruits and vegetables in the region.[118] Ten years later (1939), California produced 75 million boxes of oranges, 16 million crates of lettuce, and 462,000 tons of prunes, amongst an array of other agricultural output.[119]

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[114] See Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*

[115] The railroads further helped bring Mexican workers west from Texas to California.

[116] The orange became a symbol of California's "fertile land," and a marketing tool utilized by boosters hoping to convince Anglos to move West. See Doug Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden*.

[117] See Rachel Surs and Judith Gerber, *From Cows to Concrete: The Rise and Fall of Farming in Los Angeles*, (Santa Monica: Angel City Press, 2016).

[118] United States Bureau of the Census, "Agriculture—California," Fifteenth Census of the United States, Volume 2, Part 3, 1930.

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

Early twentieth century labor practices at San Gabriel Valley ranches were shaped by the changing agrarian ideals of the nineteenth century. The agri-business model we know today—which relies on cultural capitalism—was ignited in the mid-to-late 1800s with the erosion of an agrarian idealism: small-scale family farming where landowners and laborers worked alongside each other.[120] At the center of this ideal was community, working together for the greater good. The booming wheat industry in California, however, changed the agrarian idealism of working together into monopolizing land and creating class divisions, mostly due to its large-scale production. This new agri-business model guided by economic individualism was foremost concerned with business and profits. Historian Cletus Daniel notes that to large-scale farmer in California, "seasonal farm laborers had become faceless, nameless units of production."[121] This new dehumanizing model of large-scale production became the blueprint for farmers pursuing commercial growing of fruits and vegetables in California.[122]

At the turn of the century, Los Angeles boasted a population of 100,000, and then quintupled to 500,000 by 1920.[123] Los Angeles' exponential growth in population at a rather quick rate also represented drastic changes that affected the relationship between race, space, and power in the greater region. Largely recognized for its economic successes in agriculture, railroads, and other infrastructure, Los Angeles in the early twentieth century developed an Angeleno social identity favoring elite landowners. The social and economic growth of Los Angeles from 1900 to 1920 had a great deal to do with planting and cultivating the abundant land of the region. However,

[120] For racial capitalism, see Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Laura Pulido, "Geographies of Race and Ethnicity II: Environmental Racism, Racial Capitalism, and State-Sanctioned Violence," *Progress in Human Geography*, 41 (May 2016).
[121] Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), p.64.
[122] See Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*; Also see Don Mitchell, *The Lie of the Land.*
[123] See David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.,* p.254.

it was the San Gabriel Valley, part of what historian Carey McWilliams called "the citrus belt," which produced much of the economic fervor needed to establish Los Angeles as a booming city.[124] In the San Gabriel Valley, just East of East Los Angeles, the agricultural hinterlands of Southern California would see a much different way of life revolving around agricultural production. Even within the citrus belt, agricultural communities formed differently, representing unique and diverse pockets of immigrant laborers and Anglo farmers.[125] In the hinterlands, agriculture—and its mass production—would shape the micropolitics of how immigrant communities made place and how power manifested spatially through the regulation of agricultural workers' movement.

Where Chinese laborers moved from railroad work to laboring at wheat farms in the late 1800s, tension amongst fruit growers regarding the labor force would lead to a large-scale debate impacting the type of laborers that would be welcomed into California. Chinese agricultural laborers were highly skilled in packing fruits and entrepreneurs who experimented with planting crops in undesirable land.[126] From the 1880s to the 1890s, Chinese farmers in Northern California thrived.[127] However, racial tensions regarding job opportunities for Anglo males led to disagreements between growers on restricting Chinese laborers.[128] The Chinese Exclusion Act

[124] The citrus belt stretched from Pasadena to San Bernardino, covering an extensive region of land. The San Gabriel Valley would sit right in the middle of this vast region.
[125] Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).
[126] See Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
[127] Using the 1880 manuscript agriculture census, Sucheng Chan traces large farms of Chinese farmers in Northern California, including a 978-acre farm owned by Ah Wing and Hong Tong Vey in Solano County. See *This Bittersweet Soil*.
[128] The California Fruit Growers Exchange, established in 1905, held a heated debate regarding immigrant workers in 1906 at their annual convention. The grower's exchange was formerly known in 1893 as the Southern California Fruit Exchange. By 1920, grower cooperatives (associations) were established in most agricultural sectors in California.

(1882) banned Chinese migration to the United States for ten years.[129] The Geary Act (1892) extended these restrictions, requiring Chinese residents to register and obtain certificates of residence to avoid deportation.[130] At the same time (1880) Japanese workers began to enter the agricultural labor sector and would later become a majority of vegetable truck farmers in Los Angeles.[131]

In the late 1800s, growers began seeking white men from the East Coast to fill the growing labor demands. By the turn of the century, growers sought to fill 9,000 harvest-season job openings, but they were only able to contract 917 Anglo men.[132] This further propelled the shifting from single male laborers to establishing agricultural families and permanent settlements. By 1906, the California Growers Association voted on whether to resume Chinese immigration to help with the production of fruits and vegetables.[133] Growers were split on the issue, as some wanted to continue recruiting white men, and others wanted to recruit Chinese immigrants. These debates, coupled with U.S. immigration policies, would further impact seasonal agricultural migration patterns to California up until 1914. Adding to these debates and needs were migrations North resulting from the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), creating a steady flow of laborers for growers in Southern California. Patterns of seasonal labor began to change shortly after the war.

From 1900 to 1930, a mass migration of over one million Mexicans migrated north into the United States prompted by the demand for low-cost agricultural labor.[134] These migrations

[129] The act further restricted Chinese residents who had immigrated to the United States prior to these restrictions, further negating residents' eligibility for citizenship.
[130] The Geary Act was introduced by California representative Thomas J. Geary and passed by Congress on May 5, 1892.
[131] See Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981).
[132] See Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*.
[133] Ibid.
[134] See George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

were exasperated by the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), which was ignited by the dire conditions during the Porfiriato era (1876-1911).[135] These migration patterns were not new, rather a continuation of the mass migration of Mexicans a few years after the U.S. War with Mexico (1846-1848) when president Porfirio Díaz privatized and consolidated land, pushing Indigenous and small scale farmers out of Mexico.[136]

World War I (1914-1918) spiked a demand for citrus and other agricultural production, leading to the recruitment of a Mexican labor force. Anglo agriculturalists in Southern California rallied to demand changes to United States immigration policies. Until 1917, growers in Southern California mostly relied on Chinese, Japanese, and Anglo men for labor.[137] With the growing demand for citrus, white ranchers in Southern California needed to secure a steady labor force as they began to compete with growers seeking seasonal laborers in Northern California, Arizona, and Texas. Southern California growers began advertising housing for agricultural workers, however much of the promised benefits would not be granted to immigrant workers. With the stall of Chinese immigration into the United States, Southwest growers would recruit West Indian, Puerto Rican, and Mexican agricultural laborers in the cotton and sugar-beet industries.[138] Mexican migrations were impacted by the agriculture industry and exasperated by U.S. policies.

Where the Alien Land Law (1913) banned Asian immigrants from owning land, the Immigration Act of 1924, then, banned Asian immigration and restricted European immigration

[135] The "Porfiriato," or the period where General Porfirio Diaz ruled Mexico, 1876-1911. Coined by Mexican historian Daniel Cosío Villegas.
[136] Sometimes referred to as the "U.S.-Mexico War." See Ernesto Chavez, *The U.S. War with Mexico: A Brief History with Documents*, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2007). For more on the migration of Indigenous, small farmers out of Mexico, see *Mexican Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements: A Decolonial Perspective*,
[137] By this time, growers were also hiring Mexican laborers, but they did not represent the majority of agricultural workers.
[138] See Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*.

to the United States.[139] These policies would exempt Mexicans from these restrictions, which would further increase ranchers' need for Mexican workers. By the mid-1920s, Mexicans surpassed the Chinese labor force. Mexicans—who were unrestricted from immigration quotas—became the majority agricultural labor force. The growing need for agriculture workers would leave Mexican workers with some agency to seek employment elsewhere. Many workers began leaving their citrus jobs for other employment opportunities with higher pay. Anglo ranch owners quickly caught on and began to implement restrictive policies to ensure that workers would not leave ranches in the middle of the night. Grower Associations in Southern California rallied Congress for guest worker allowances that would bind immigrant populations to place, effectively barring them from leaving the ranches. Putting up fences, barbed wire, and restricting food and clothing would effectively tie Mexican laborers to place.[140] Around this same time, the federal Department of Agriculture further encouraged permanent citrus worker housing, including single family homes to deal with the continuing labor shortages.

Housing represented yet another set of hierarchical divides along racial lines. Housing for agricultural workers was mostly inadequate and poorly built without running water or electricity, far from what they were promised by labor recruiters. In the few cases where adequate housing existed, it was Anglo men who received the best accommodations over their Mexican counterparts.[141] Although complicated and contradictory, Carpio argues that the Alien Land Law and citrus ranch housing programs "were both efforts to police the boundaries of whiteness and to

[139] Immigration quotas from each nationality was 3% of that group's population already living in the United States and recorded by the census. While Congress repealed all the exclusion acts by 1943, it wasn't until Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1965 that the qu

[140] In some cases, growers would take worker's clothes away at night, so that they would not be able to run away. See Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads: How Place and Mobility Make Race* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019).

[141] See Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own*.

control nonwhite mobility."[142] In some cases, Mexican laborers' mobility (to move North during agricultural season, and back South after completing work) was deployed by white growers as a symbol of migratory flow, as "birds of passage" who would return home after harvesting season.[143] The symbol of Mexican agricultural laborers would help white growers challenge Congressional attempts of placing a restriction on Mexican migration when Congressman John Box first challenged Mexican immigration quota exemptions in 1926.[144]

And yet in years prior, agriculturalists sought to physically tie Mexican laborers to place by restricting their movement. The complicated and contradictory relationship between local restrictions of movement between agricultural jobs, and the enactment of a symbolic representation of Mexicans as migratory birds shows us exactly what Carpio posits, that agricultural growers were effectively able to control nonwhite mobility and activate symbols of mobility to meet their demands of exploitative agricultural labor. This contradictory and complex relationship between local and national migrations is a direct example of how foodways—in this case agriculture—shape, control, and determine nonwhite workers' mobility across time and space. Changes would continue to ensue well into the Depression.

Race restrictive covenants were used to control and regulate the sale of properties as well. These covenants were a primary means to segregate populations in Los Angeles. Where restrictive covenants gained prominence in eighteenth century England, in the United States a series of Supreme Court rulings would give way for restrictive covenants to be used for racial segregation.[145] For example, historian George J. Sánchez finds that in 1892, Mr. Lee Sing sued the

[142] Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, p.103.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Take, for example, the Box Bill introduced by congressman John Box in 1926.
[145] See George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011); George J. Sánchez, *Boyle Heights: How A Los Angeles Neighborhood Became the Future of American Democracy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021).

city of Ventura for attempting to bar Chinese people from living in the city. While the federal court ruled that state and municipal governments could not discriminate populations, private individuals could restrict sales, effectively clearing racial restrictions. The first racial restrictive covenant in Los Angeles was filed in 1902, which outlined that "non-Caucasians" could not purchase properties.[146]

These newly minted covenants would run like fire throughout Southern California, effectively barring Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans, and Blacks from majority-Anglo neighborhoods. What ensued was the endorsement of racially restrictive housing covenants across Southern California. Where many characterize the 1950s for decentralizing Los Angeles, historian Scott Kurashige argues that decentralization took off in the 1920s with the real estate boom that made Los Angeles a metropolis of over one million inhabitants.[147] Racism was front and center in this boom. Coupling racially restrictive covenants with low wages, many Mexican and Asian American families would seek refuge in the labor camps across the citrus belt of Southern California.

Mexican communities in the citrus belt, known as *colonias*, developed from 1910 to 1930 and would become multiracial suburbs starting in the 1950s after deindustrialization. Often referred to as "Mexican camps," *colonias* were well known by the 1920s. These Mexican communities formed from regional economies in agriculture, cotton, railroads, and manufacturing. [148] Agricultural company towns, land owned and regulated by agricultural companies, provided housing for laborers to live in during the season. For many agricultural workers in Southern California, living in company housing also meant purchasing everyday goods like food and drink from the company store. Historian José Alamillo finds that where some citrus

[146] See George J. Sánchez, *Boyle Heights: How A Los Angeles Neighborhood Became the Future of American Democracy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021).
[147] See Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*.
[148] See Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own*.

workers in the Inland Empire marked the generosity of allowing credit to purchase items, company stores would deduct the purchases from their next paychecks, keeping workers indebted to paying off an endless cycle of accrued debt to their respective employers. Lemon workers in the city of Corona were ultimately subjected to low wages and company surveillance.[149] The regulation of food and drink via debts was yet another way Mexican mobility was regulated by local lemon companies. Where company labor camps controlled eating and the purchase of goods, laborers countered these regulations by enacting agency through leisure activities like baseball games, picnics, baptisms, and more, reflecting some agency over their lives.[150]

In Los Angeles, Japanese vegetable peddlers lived in Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights, working in the downtown area where farmers would sell their crops in bulk for export.[151] Little Tokyo emerged in 1910 and was previously known as "Five Points," a historically mixed usage, multiethnic, working-class neighborhood of Los Angeles.[152] Little Tokyo was a social center and a business hub for Japanese Americans in agriculture and fishing. According to Historian Yuji Ichioka, agriculture provided a means for Issei (first-generation Japanese immigrants) to establish themselves in the United States.[153] Many Issei took part in truck farming, "carving literal and figurative niche within the regions' vast agricultural landscape."[154] They focused on the local market, specializing in perishable crops. By 1915, Issei farmers were planting a majority of vegetables consumed in Los Angeles, including sugar beets, lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, and

[149] See José M. Alamillo, *Making Lemonade out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).
[150] Alamillo, *Making Lemonade out of Lemons*
[151] Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
[152] See Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*
[153] See Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei, The World of the First-Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924*, (New York: Free Press, 1990).
[154] Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*, p.66.

celery.[155] According to historian Scott Kurashige, entrepreneurialism became central to Black and Japanese American visions of urban economic advancement and racial progress because of labor discrimination in other sectors.[156] However, in 1913, many Japanese families were stripped of their land because of the Alien Land Laws, seeing harsher enforcement by 1920. Many would end up in the San Gabriel Valley, part of the extensive citrus belt of Southern California.[157] The experiences of Mexican and Asian workers in the San Gabriel Valley differed from those in the urban core, for this area had a mixed economy of agriculture and industry. Unincorporated areas like the San Gabriel Valley during the early to mid 1900s afforded a flexibility to people of color, where boundaries were not cemented in stone as they were in urban cores.

From Los Angeles to Its Hinterlands: The San Gabriel Valley

Studying Greater Los Angeles provides key context to how Los Angeles County became an agricultural stronghold in the early 1900s and how agriculture critically shaped the making of Los Angeles. The Mexican period of Los Angeles would actively redefine racial identities that would then impact spatial boundaries and regional identity in twentieth century Los Angeles.[158] As Torres-Rouff notes, "Angelenos reshaped the local economy, civic ideals, and strategies for reckoning identity" in18th and 19th century Los Angeles.[159] In Los Angeles, race was shaped

[155] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei, The World of the First-Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924*, (New York: Free Press, 1990).
[156] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei*.
[157] See Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Fields*.
[158] Historian David Torres-Rouff argues that making race and making Los Angeles were the same project. The time period of 1781 to 1894 critically shaped Los Angeles, particularly through racial boundaries and power structures that separated Spanish-Mexican Angelenos (who would come to be known as Californios) from Gabrielino-Tongva communities. See Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*
[159] Torres-Rouff, *Before LA*, p.53.

differently, where one could remake oneself.[160] This would come to affect race relations and power structures in the early twentieth century.

Slowly expanding into formal suburbs through agriculture, industry, and then "white flight" in the first half of the 20th century, the Central San Gabriel Valley represents an understudied area within California history. While large developers and landowners like Elias J. Baldwin, Henry Huntington, and Otis Chandler have been recognized as key players in the development of metropolitan Los Angeles, less attention has been given to agricultural laborers and Mexican food entrepreneurs. Non-white ranch and farm laborers made the citrus industry boom, an industry which became a focal point for land boosters to promote Southern California's fertile land from 1890 to 1920.[161]

As historian Jessica Kim recounts, Southern California's growth between 1890 and 1920 "resulted from the bent backs of thousands of nonwhite workers, both native born and immigrant."[162] By understanding agriculture's significant role in shaping Los Angeles and its hinterlands, we understand how food systems represent power structures at the local and regional levels. These power structures represent struggles over claims to space in the hinterlands of Los Angeles. As such, the San Gabriel Valley would see a different way of life, particularly for Mexican workers. The following sub-sections offer specific contexts to the case studies discussed in interior chapters.

Baldwin Park

[160] Mixed-race settlers coming from Spain were rung low in the casta system. However, when they came to the United States, they were able to enjoy a social status that was not afforded to them back in Spain.
[161] See Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own*; See Jessica Kim, *Imperial Metropolis*.
[162] Jessica Kim, *Imperial Metropolis*, p.61-62.

What we know as "Baldwin Park" is occupied land of indigenous Tongva (Gabrieleno) peoples stolen by the San Gabriel Mission who repurposed the area as cattle-grazing land. Baldwin Park is near the Weniinga tribe, or so-called Covina, as well as near Asuksa tribe, or so-called Azusa. In the region, cattle grazing would lead to the violent destruction of Tongva people's edible landscape, their rich and diverse food sources including acorns and grains. During the Mexican period, this land would become part of Rancho Azusa de Dalton and Rancho La Puente. The latter would be owned by William Workman, an elite Anglo ranch owner during the time. Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin, another large landowner, would then come to own the property through a business deal he secured with Workman.[163] Eventually, Anglo squatters forcibly claimed lands in this area, naming it Pleasant View (1878) and included a small town with one dairy, one well, and small farms and vineyards. Fifteen years later, this name would again change.

Greater El Monte

So-called El Monte and South El Monte encompass unceded, Indigenous land of the Tongva (Gabrieleno) peoples, the original people of the Los Angeles basin. Gabrielino-Tongva villages were spread out along the Los Angeles basin and overlapped on inland boundaries with the Chumash, Tataviam, Serrano, Cahuilla, Juaneno and Luiseño Indians. During the relocation and assimilation years, many found refuge with other tribes, moving inland to escape violence enacted by Anglos and Californios. Indigenous Tongva tribes living in the greater El Monte area include Houtngna, or "the place of the willow" and the neighboring Isantcanga

[163] Bob Benbow and Lorraine O'Brien, *Images of America: Baldwin Park*, p.7; Many speculate this deal was done in bad faith.

tribes.[164] It was the establishment of Mission San Gabriel (1805) that would further shape the violent destruction of Tongva villages and the edible landscapes that nourished them through fruits, acorns, and fish near the coastline.[165] About 34 miles Northwest of Corona, Mexican families in El Monte created their own avenues for building community ties in an autonomous labor camp.

La Puente

The area we know as the city of La Puente is a result of the violence and destruction of Indigenous Tongva communities. La Puente sits on unceded land of the Tongva (Gabrieleno) peoples, the original land caretakers of the Los Angeles basin. What is now called La Puente is home to the Awiinga tribe.[166] The area between what is now called La Puente and Walnut is home to the Pemookanga tribe.[167] Tongva peoples worked *with* the land, creating extensive trade networks with other tribes, what Damon B. Akins and William J. Bauer Jr. refer to as Indigenous people weaving the region together.[168] What sustained Tongva communities was acorns. While they do not contain high levels of protein (similar to wheat and corn), they contain vitamin B6 and fat, enabling indigenous communities to survive the winter seasons.[169] Tongva communities in so-called La Puente would have participated in the extensive acorn process, reflecting what Devon

[164] Also nearby include the Weniinga (Covina/San Dimas area) and Awiinga tribe (La Puente/West Covina area). See maps from *Mapping Indigenous LA.* https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=4942348fa8bd427fae02f7e020e98764#
[165] See Steven Hackel, *Children of Coyote: Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850*; See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965*.
[166] Also spelled Awingna, and Awigna. See list of Tongva villages https://www.tongvapeople.org/?page_id=696
[167] See map of Tongva villages, https://i0.wp.com/native-land.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Tongva-Villages-map.jpg?fit=1875%2C2205&ssl=1 . As the "Mapping Indigenous Los Angeles" project states, the center of a map is not a static location. Maps represent relationships, extensive networks of trade and tribal connections.
[168] See Damon Akins and William J. Bauer Jr., *We Are the Land: A History of Native California*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021).
[169] Damon Akins & William Bauer Jr., *We Are the Land*.

Peña and others call traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) that considers the land and food as intricate knowledge. Today, fifteen species of oak trees exist in California.[170] Many more would have existed prior to colonization. The edible landscape of Tongva communities attests to the importance of foodways to this region's history. Food has become embedded in the history of destruction, control, and mobility of racialized bodies. It is the direct violence of food—forced labor, destruction of sustenance, and control of eating—that drastically changed the livelihood of Tongva people. Anglos control over people by controlling eating, warrants much attention.

[170] Akins & Bauer Jr., *We Are the Land*.

Chapter 1: "Critical Latinx Foodways": A Methodology of Recovery

The study of food gives us keen insight into the processes of racialization embedded in foodways: the production, consumption, and movement of food and food laborers across time and space. Over time, white patriarchal forces have controlled and defined hierarchical placements in the production of food and food goods. Perpetual exploitation of immigrant labor in agricultural production of the late 19th and early 20th centuries are keen examples of this.[171] Critical food studies, which utilizes food to frame issues related to race, helps scholars analyze the roots of capitalist power, right down to the meals we eat in our homes.[172] In this chapter, I draw from critical food studies to create what I call "critical Latinx foodways" (CLF), a methodological intervention to reframe our approaches to archival research and recover Latina/o/x histories.[173] This methodology specifically addresses issues of recovering histories in places with fragmented primary sources and ill-preserved archives. The critical inquiry into foodways affords scholars an opportunity to engage in local, regional, and national scales regarding food. This chapter shows us how to move beyond the urban centers and look towards the hinterlands which have been vital for the development of global cities. When drawing from fragmented archives to piece together regional histories, we must value the resilience of communities that have persistently survived exploitation and violence by looking at archival silences as direct actions of erasure. I ask, how might a foodways lens offer an alternative reading of traditional archival sources? How might attention to foodways address Latina/o/x historical absences in unincorporated, immigrant

[171] See Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981); Don Mitchell, *The Lie of the Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
[172] See Rachel Slocum, "Race in the Study of Food," *Progress in Human Geography*, 35 (3). (2011): 303-327,
[173] I use Latinx in "critical Latinx foodways" as this methodological approach helps us recover histories beyond the 20th century and into the 2000s, recognizing diverse groups as integral contributors to the history of food vendors and food entrepreneurs beyond the San Gabriel Valley. Where case studies in this dissertation focus on Mexican populations, I refer to these groups as "Mexican."

communities?[174] I draw from Chicana and history scholars to create and define this methodological approach and demonstrate its use through three case studies. I begin with a discussion of the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum (to understand the problem of recovering fragmented histories and how we might reframe questions of race through food) and move into digitally mapping recovered data (to demonstrate how CLF helps us engage in historical repair work). I end with a case study on Olvera Street in Los Angeles, where I demonstrate that a foodways lens helps scholars engage with the sensorial (to understand how taste and smell lend themselves to cultural production). I assert that "critical Latinx foodways" reframes our scholarly approaches to recovering Latina/o/x histories through a foodways lens and helps uncover histories of placemaking and survival in places beyond the San Gabriel Valley. Where this chapter lays out a methodological approach, the following chapters show an application of a foodways lens through historical case studies in the Central San Gabriel Valley. I begin with a discussion on theorizing food and applying food as method to engage with historical repair work.

Theorizing Food

Studying food can tell us much about contests over power at the local scale. Food is not just a connection to cultural heritage as it is often portrayed in mainstream media and in foodie culture.[175] Food is deeply rooted in political economy through foreign policy, trade, and labor. Over the last thirty years, scholars from an array of fields have engaged with the study of food.[176] I am particularly interested in grounding the multiple processes of foodways when conducting

[174] Specifically, I use Latina/o/x to consider Latinas and Latinos in the historical record, and Latinx to consider food workers in the 21st century who may identify as gender fluid.
[175] See Khorani Sukhmani, "Can Producers and Consumers of Color Decolonize Foodie Culture?: An Exploration Through Food Media in Settler Colonies," *Gender, Work & Organization*, (2020): 1-13.
[176] See works by Sidney Mintz, Judith Carney, Matt Garcia, Mireya Loza, Psyche Williams-Forson, Perla Guerrero, and Frederick Opie Douglass.

historical and contemporary repair work. Where colonial legacies manifest in the production of food, the movement and vending of food and food goods help marginalized communities resist and challenge regional power structures of containment. The critical study of food is complex and contributes to cultural history scholarship in that it allows scholars to interrogate the everyday notions of racial formation by focusing on food workers' mobility and labor practices that shape the way they make place in contested spaces.

I find that food laborers and vendors shape the places they work (labor), live in (placemaking), and through their movement across regional boundaries (mobility). The processes that makeup foodways are vital for understanding placemaking and the economies that immigrants, such as those moving to the San Gabriel Valley in the early 20th century participated in when migrating to the United States, from cultivating traditional foods like chiles and maize, to preparing foods for neighbors in the kitchen, to commercial street vending, and how Mexican populations made place in the semi-rural outskirts of Los Angeles. Where I focus on providing a methodology that centers foodways in historical inquiries, I am also concerned with piecing together histories of twentieth century Latina/o/x food laborers, entrepreneurs, and vendors in the Central San Gabriel Valley. Studying the diverse communities in this region expands our knowledge of Latina/o/x communities beyond urban cores and how foodways have shaped spatial relations across groups.

I draw from historians and Chicana scholars to create a methodological approach to recovering and piecing together social and cultural histories through food. Chicana scholars Nieves Pascual Soler and Meredith E. Abarca develop a theory of food consciousness, arguing that the study of food is critical in the development of Chicana/o/x Studies.[177] Soler and Abarca argue that

[177] According to Soler and Abarca, not enough anthologies in Chicana/o/x studies have iterated this concern.

the omission of food in the process of theorizing about identity formation reflects "a tendency that assumes food is a mere representation of culture rather than a medium that also maintains, shapes, and recreates culture."[178] That is, food is central to identity formation, and not just a symbol of cultural representation. According to Soler and Abarca, food serves as a medium for theory building. As such, the practice of food-making itself is fully theoretical. I draw from their concept of food consciousness—the importance of food in understanding identity formation—to develop an archival approach of recovery grounded in the processes of making, selling, moving, and enjoying food. Food is not only something edible, but also a cultural object about which information can be gathered from diverse fields. And while helping us approach archives, a foodways lens also allows scholars to deal with the ephemeral nature of food history. Foods are cultural objects, but they cannot be preserved like correspondence, journals, and material objects can. Where taste and smell cannot be preserved, the sensorial is often enacted (via newspaper and advertisements) to manifest racial representations of groups, places, and people. "Critical Latinx foodways" teaches us to approach such material culture in innovative ways, by re-reading histories through food and piecing together the fragmented stories of foodways (via city records, correspondence, newspapers, and material culture that can be preserved) that have been discarded by dominant (Anglo) narratives.

"Critical Latinx foodways" Defined

"Critical Latinx foodways" is a methodological approach that centralizes a foodways lens in the scholarly investigation and assembly of social and cultural histories. This methodology helps us engage in what Marla Miller calls historical repair work, or "public historians' labor to mend,

[178] See Nieves Pascual Soler and Meredith E. Abarca, eds. *Rethinking Chicana/o Literature Through Food: Postnational Appetites*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) p.2.

to rebuild and reclaim, and to heal."[179] A "foodways lens" focuses on the processes embedded in food—the production, consumption, and movement of foods and food workers across time and space—to recover and connect fragmented histories *within* and *outside* of the archive. A foodways lens, then, shifts how we *read* and *assemble* fragmented histories. While encouraging the use of nontraditional archives, it also calls for reading against the grain in traditional archives.

I consider the ways in which the study of foodways can move us beyond the sole focus of race. Here, I draw from historian Natalia Molina's work on the relational study of race. Molina asks us to zoom out as we research by asking who else is present with the communities we study. She calls us to find "more creative ways to locate sources and of being tenacious when mining all sources."[180] CLF asks scholars to look at historical moments via a foodways lens, rather than solely relying on race and/or ethnicity as the guiding lens when approaching archives. By centering a foodways lens in conducting historical repair work, I push the boundaries of revisionist history by piecing together the damaged and forgotten while also reclaiming and healing through our community histories. Critical Latinx foodways, then, 1.) reframes approaches to reading and assembling Latina/o/x cultural histories in overlooked areas through a foodways lens and 2.) helps us reclaim "discarded" and fragmented histories to piece together cultural histories of marginalized communities.

While scholarship in Chicana/o/x Studies has continued to offer new insights into agricultural labor struggles, it has not always centralized the broader lens of foodways in these investigations.[181] And where ethnic and labor history scholars have looked to agricultural records

[179] Marla Miller, Greetings from the NCPH President for the 2019 National Council on Public History Annual Meeting, *Repair Work: Annual meeting of the National Council on Public History*. Program. 1-70 (4), 2019.
[180] Natalia Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History Through a Relational Lens," p. 529.
[181] For texts that discuss agricultural labor and identity, see Erasmo Gamboa, *Bracero Railroaders*; Ana Elizabeth Rosas, *Abrazando El Espiritu*; Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros*.

to uncover Latina/o/x histories, "critical Latinx foodways" shifts the focus from labor to the broader umbrella of food: its labor alongside production (labor), distribution (mobility), vending (entrepreneurship), and the consumption (eating) of foods simultaneously. This helps scholars understand the role of foods, and their processes, in shaping regional identity, racial formation, and placemaking practices.

Importantly, "critical Latinx foodways" becomes a tool for building new archives in areas that have been overlooked. In theorizing this methodological approach, I draw from what historian Kelly Lytle Hernandez calls the "rebel archive," that which has survived destruction, and those who have defied their erasure.[182] The rebel archive challenges the constant and enduring bend toward disappearing racial outsiders in the legacy of traditional historic societies and archives by looking through the "backdoors" and in the shadows for histories of racialized people. Hernandez encourages scholars to look through the remnants and look beyond institutional archives to recover histories of marginalized communities. While the rebel archive is a critical intervention to recovering histories from the margins, it is not easy to build.

The rebel archive becomes an even more powerful tool when paired with a methodology to recover fragmented histories in overlooked areas. Building rebel archives from the margins—from fragmented and ill-preserved archives—demands creativity. It calls for researchers from marginalized communities to be resourceful, finding innovative ways to recover and piece together the lived experiences of silenced communities when oral histories and primary sources are unavailable and to read against the grain when few narratives exist.[183] This approach draws from

[182] Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates.* Also see interview with Kelly Lytle-Hernandez by J. Frackenback, November 10, 2017. https://erstwhileblog.com/2017/10/11/dispatches-from-the-rebel-archive/ (Accessed May 1, 2019).
[183] See Natalie Santizo, "Rasquache Mapping," *GeoHumanities*, (forthcoming).

a long tradition of scholarship in revisionist histories that challenge and address archival silences.[184]

Piecing together fragmented histories through critical Latinx foodways further helps scholars understand uneven power relations in local and regional food systems. The regional scale shows us that everyday movements are constantly shifting, much more than at the national scale, and provides us with what San Gabriel Valley scholar Wendy Cheng refers to as a *dynamic* and *dialectic* between large scale ideologies and the micro politics of local, everyday life.[185] The regional scale is important in understanding racial formation and contests over power in semi-rural areas because race relations are experienced differently in urban outskirts. Even between suburban and urban places, processes like the built environment and labor patterns differ, and thus require different approaches.[186] A foodways lens affords scholars a focused lens to analyze multiple sectors of food processes at the regional and local level, including labor, boundaries, regulations, and eating. In doing so, we can better understand the everyday processes of placemaking beyond the national scale.[187]

In this dissertation, I demonstrate this methodological approach by piecing together a cultural history in the Central San Gabriel Valley where little is known about Mexican food workers and entrepreneurs in the early 20th century. Rather than solely focusing on Mexican

[184] See Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land*; George Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicana/o Los Angeles*; Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America*; Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939.*

[185] Wendy Cheng, *The Chang's Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*, (University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

[186] Take, for example, Matt Garcia's premise that Gilbert Gonzales' work on citrus producing areas in Orange County, while foundational, cannot simply be utilized in the East San Gabriel Valley/Inland Empire. While similar in that they produced citrus, the everyday notions of making place and their mobility, significantly differed.

[187] While scholarship has helped us understand national racialization processes, looking at the local scale helps us understand how racial projects manifest at the local scale. For national racialization processes, see Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

histories, CLF encourages we widen our lens by focusing on the processes of foods that are often omitted when discussing agricultural production: homemakers, food vendors, and familial food practices. Where an Anglo regional heritage has facilitated the devaluation of the fragments that exist of Latina/o/x history in the Central San Gabriel Valley, CLF encourages us to look closely at archival silences and bring together the pieces that remain, however fragmented they are.

This methodology is particularly fruitful for unincorporated areas, like the ones I study, with underfunded and ill-preserved archives. Often time, scholars grapple with piecing together histories in unincorporated areas because of the difficulty of recovering materials in the archive. In many cases, historians working to piece together histories of unincorporated areas must constantly shuffle between multiple city offices, records, and collections.[188] It is a difficult and arduous task that many historians are familiar with.[189] In this case study, I reframe my approach to recovering a history of the Baca family, one of the first Mexican families living in Baldwin Park. I also piece together the remnant traces of Mexican laborers excavated from archives dedicated to Anglo ranch owners, phone directory data, and by conducting oral histories with community members. It is from stories of marginalized communities, and their everyday interactions relating to labor and placemaking, from which we can piece together a "rebel archive" in places that have been unincorporated and in places with fragmented archives. As interdisciplinary scholar Genevieve Carpio shows us through the rebel archive of the Inland Empire, by centering overlooked family photo albums, oral histories, and through counter-mapping, we uncover largely overshadowed areas that are vitally important to the history of

[188] Consider the extensive work of recovering marginalized groups' history in El Monte by Romeo Guzmán and Carribean Fragoza. See *East of East.*

[189] See Romeo Guzmán et al., *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte,* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020); Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

California.[190] Furthermore, where the act of buying ingredients, preparing food, and passing down traditions can be easily dismissed as simple cultural practice, CLF reveals a larger network of foods and food practices that gives us insight into the placemaking practices of immigrant and migrant communities in the urban outskirts.

A CLF methodology is not limited to narratives of historic agricultural labor, as it encourages we approach questions about race through a foodways lens. As such, critical Latinx foodways encourages we ask questions about how food demands, food shortages, and a growing foodie culture shift and impacts food vendors and food workers in the 21st century. As such, CLF methodology is "critical Latinx foodways," rather than "critical Latina/o foodways" because it pushes the field of Chicana/o/x Studies to expand and think through the multiple identities encompassing Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x, inclusive of gender-fluid community members. Indeed, by piecing together case studies through CLF, we are better able to understand the experiences of diverse food workers and entrepreneurs trying to survive and make place beyond the Latina/o/x community. The following section discusses approaching local archives through a CLF lens.

Critical Latinx Foodways in Los Angeles and its Hinterlands

"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

Grounding foodways provides a unique lens for understanding Latina/o/x social and cultural histories.[191] In this chapter, I utilize critical Latinx foodways to re-read archival materials and assemble fragmented primary sources and archives through a foodways lens. It builds towards

[190] Genevieve Carpio, "Tales from the Rebel Archive: History as Subversive Practice at California's Margins," *Southern California Quarterly,* 102 (1). (2020):57-79.
[191] See Michael Omi & Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*.

demonstrating this methodological intervention through case studies in Baldwin Park, a city located in the Central San Gabriel Valley, and through a case study in Olvera Street, located in Los Angeles. A discussion of foodways from Los Angeles to the San Gabriel Valley affords scholars an opportunity to understand the dynamic and dialectic between urban cores and inland regions. In the immediate section that follows, "Reframing Local Narratives through Food," I demonstrate issues encountered at the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum (BPHSM) when trying to recover Latina/o/x histories. I begin with an oral history with BPHSM director to understand how memory is created in Baldwin Park. I then discuss approaching primary source analysis through a CLF lens with a textual analysis of dominant narratives, and by piecing together fragmented stories of Mexican farmers through aerial photographs. In the next section, "Remapping the Ethnospatial Context of Baldwin Park" CLF helps piece together cultural histories through exploring Anglo rancher and Mexican laborer residential patterns through GIS mapping. Finally, in "The Sensorial of Food: Taste and Smell in Los Angeles," I consider the role of food, as symbol and material, in building racial projects that lay claims to space.

Reframing Local Narratives through Food

> "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

Piecing together a social history of Mexican food workers in Baldwin Park requires a focused lens on foodways, rather than Mexican histories alone. That is, searching for Mexican or Mexican American narratives alone will not yield many results. Heeding Molina's caution that if we only focus on race, we will miss the way other factors affect our studies, a focus on foodways can take us into new areas where we "might find new information about the subject of our studies

in unexpected places."[192] At first glance, there is no trace of any Mexican historical accounts when walking through the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum (BPHSM). None of the displays, curated sections, or archival folders in the museum are labelled as Latina/o/x and/or Mexican histories. Walking into the BPHSM, visitors are greeted with a series of history books.[193] Opening any of these books, one will find emblematic narratives of Anglo business owners and male city officials. However, this is not representative of the current racial and ethnic population of the city, given that the Latina/o/x population comprises 80.1% of the city's total population.[194]

Patterns of uneven representation in local museums are not new to marginalized communities and are representative of much deeper issues tied to racial injustice, labor exploitation, and capitalism. Historic society collections across the region, which are often the primary stewards of these community histories, have a significant gap in records involving people of color. Many historical societies are tiny, underfunded, and volunteer-run, as is the case in Baldwin Park. Many historical society staff and volunteers work with little institutional or city support to carefully craft local narratives, preserve documents, update exhibits, or establish best practices to create inclusive content. Volunteers spend countless hours ensuring local history is present within the urban outskirts when city officials do not fund the preservation of local history.[195] Even so, we must continue to reconstruct cultural histories to reflect the diverse

[192] Natalia Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History Through a Relational Lens," p.529-530.
[193] Originally located on Ramona Boulevard, the museum moved to Baldwin Park Boulevard, where city hall is currently located.
[194] United States Census Bureau. American Fact Finder [Baldwin Park: Hispanic or Latino by Type] (2010) Retrieved from http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml. accessed May 2016.
[195] 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 community. In her study, 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. Debbie Ann Doyle, "The Future of Local Historical Societies" *Perspectives on History*, The newsmagazine of the American Historical Association, 50 (9), (December 2012).

populations that have influenced and shaped the places we make. The first step in conducting historical repair work is to understand how dominant narratives are created within local archival holdings.

Conducting oral histories with community members and museum staff helps scholars understand the relationship between how history is collected, and what historian and anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot calls "master narratives," or dominant narratives that define local history.[196] I conducted an oral history with Brian "Bob" Benbow, former director of the museum, who arrived in Baldwin Park in 1961.[197] With his long-time commitment to diverse institutional roles in Baldwin Park, Benbow led the Baldwin Park Historical Society, helping the society fund a small museum (Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum) for which he would serve as the director for several decades.[198] His efforts to fundraise and work with the city afforded the BPHSM the ability to keep its doors open and to preserve one of the few spaces in the city that discusses and highlights local history with the community.[199] Without Benbow's effort to preserve and promote Baldwin Park history, many of the archival materials would not have been accessible.[200] Given the lack of resources, Benbow would reach out to close friends and family willing to share stories about growing up in Baldwin Park, a majority Anglo community in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Understandable, given the limited resources and lack of funds to collect

[196] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).
[197] Benbow was a longtime resident of Baldwin Park and contributed important stories and accounts to the history of the city. When Benbow arrived to Baldwin Park, he describes the city population as 34% "Hispanic" with the majority Anglo. Benbow came to Baldwin Park by way of Texas, and was one of the founding teachers of Sierra Vista High School. Eventually, he would become principal and director of the Baldwin Park Adult School, a gateway program for many immigrant mothers and adults during the 1990s and 2000s. Oral history with Brian Benbow conducted by Natalie Santizo, March 1, 2016.
[198] See Natalie Santizo, "Critical Latina/o Foodways: Racial Formation and Placemaking in the San Gabriel Valley, 1910-1945," master's thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2019.
[199] Benbow's efforts allowed for a partnership where the city provided a rent-free space for the museum. Benbow would only have to worry about staffing volunteers and paying the electricity bill.
[200] In 2017 I worked with Benbow to borrow two phone directories and digitally preserve them with a historic CZUR scanner. Museum staff was given a digitized (high resolution) copy of two phone directories to help with digital preservation efforts considering the lack of funding for physical preservation of these items.

stories for the museum. While Benbow played a critical role in establishing a local history archive and museum in Baldwin Park, an oral history with Benbow reveals a blind spot: histories of Mexican and Japanese residents within the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum. Collection practices created with even the best of intentions can contribute to a "master script" that preferences Anglo-males in local Baldwin Park narratives.[201] This master narrative helps explain why folders or subject indexes have not been created for Latina/o/x history within the archive and museum, whereas they have been for topics like Anglo business owners, In-N-Out, and military officers.[202] The lack of funding is one reason as to why these blind spots exist. Even so, museum staff and directors have worked diligently towards preserving and highlighting local history that is often ignored in public school education. Where historical silences are difficult to address, CLF offers a means to do so when working with community collections.

Critical Latinx foodways calls for utilizing a foodways lens to address historical silences and becomes a medium that challenges master narratives. Rather than looking for folders on Latina/o/x history, which does not yield results, critical Latinx foodways encourages researchers to ask questions about food. Where archives are fragmented and scarce, I begin with simple questions: What agricultural crops and foods were produced in Baldwin Park? What cities neighbor Baldwin Park? What documents in this collection discuss food? These questions zoom out and afford a glimpse into understanding the region through food. Where food was largely quantified by the government at the national level, it becomes an avenue to ask questions about

[201] Philosopher Sylvia Wynter's is concerned with the overrepresentation of "man" as human, what she calls a master scrip for humanity. The master script of the Anglo man as stand-in for humanity replicates itself throughout history, always coming back to a secular master script that guides societal function. Wynter argues for challenging the master script to focus on people of color who have historically experienced marginalization. See Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, 3 (2003): 257-337.
[202] Here, I draw from archival visits in 2016.

who is producing and consuming these foods. A focus on food can also help gage dialogue for understanding how histories have been collected in the archive.

During my research visits to BPHSM, Benbow shared accounts of Cruz Baca, one of the first Mexican community members in Baldwin Park.[203] Cruz and Juanita Baca immigrated from Irapuato, Guanajuato, Mexico to Baldwin Park around 1906. When discussing Cruz Baca, Benbow repeatedly stated, "Oh he was a great guy. A great neighbor. Just a great guy really."[204] He then highlighted Baca's community work of feeding families in need with his *cultivo* of fresh fruit and vegetables, lending his horses to neighbors, and helping plow the land for the city's first park, "You know, Mr. Baca plowed the land for Morgan Park, but because of prejudice, he wasn't able to attend the grand opening."[205] This comment further points to the racial boundaries developing in the city in the early 1900s. It also indicates the limited mobility, or movement of Cruz Baca in relationship to the labor of land. Baca was afforded recognition when it came to the laboring of city space, but not when it came to community identity. When continuing to describe Baca, Benbow states, "He was that guy. He helped his neighbors because he knew happy neighbors meant happy people. He was a good man."[206] Given the master narratives of the San Gabriel Valley that have focused on Anglo land purveyors, his response is generous towards Mexican community members in Baldwin Park who were often unwelcomed in these majority Anglo communities. However, a foodways lens encourages us to look beyond the surface and recognize how foodways reflect a heavily racialized dialectic between space, race, and power.

"Critical Latinx foodways" encourages us to dig deeper into the critical connections between food and race to understand larger issues of racial struggle and belonging. Critical Latinx

[203] Archival research conducted from 2017-2018.
[204] Oral history with Brian Benbow conducted by Natalie Santizo, March 1, 2016, transcript.
[205] Oral history with Brian Benbow, 2016.
[206] ibid.

foodways argues that food processes play a critical role in the racialization of marginalized people. While starting with simple questions to widen our lens when archival material on marginalized groups is scarce, CLF ultimately encourages scholars to ask the difficult (and sometimes contradictory) questions about food and power.[207] In the case of Baldwin Park, critical Latinx foodways helps scholars understand how museum staff approach histories of food production and Mexican immigrants, and how these histories are shared with visitors to the museum.

Critical Latinx foodways helps us read racial tropes embedded in the labor and production of foods. For example, the trope of Baca as the good neighbor is utilized throughout archival sources and conversations at the museum which posits the question: good neighbor to *whom*? What makes him a good neighbor? Unlike the celebratory biographies afforded his white counterparts, little detail goes into Baca's role as business owner, and even much less consideration is given to Juanita Baca, who played a pivotal role in their family business. Is Baca only considered a good neighbor in relation to his productivity and cultivation of agriculture? These are the difficult questions we must ask to strengthen local archives and continue building with community members.

A "critical Latinx foodways" lens pays particular attention to the connection between marginalized community members, the labor and consumption of foods, and the valuation of people in relation to food productivity. This disjuncture warrants much attention. Returning to Trouillot, historical silences occur in four arenas: the making of sources, the making of archives, the making of narratives, and the making of history.[208] We often find silences at the moments of

[207] I acknowledge that foodways are complex. In some cases, food entrepreneurship afforded Mexican immigrants an avenue to make money, and yet in the agricultural system and hierarchy, Mexicans were relegated to the "bottom of the food chain," of planting and picking foods for low wages and with poor work conditions. These contradictory avenues of enacting or utilizing foodways represents the constant push and pull factors that the production and consumption of foods represent. Critical food studies must engage with untangling the complex questions regarding food, power, and racialization.

[208] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

fact creation (where sources are made), fact assembly (where archives are made), and in fact retrieval (the making of narratives). Thus, the making of sources, archives, and narratives have created critical gaps in the stories that can be told in Baldwin Park. While the making of narratives has created a master narrative grounded in Anglo (male) history in Baldwin Park, we can reconstruct narratives from the margins and backdoors to challenge dominant power structures within the archive.

Using Critical Latinx foodways, I shifted my archival research focus from Mexican histories to food production and consumption in Baldwin Park, resulting in recovering histories of Mexican food workers, albeit scarce and fragmented sources. I echo the work of historian George J. Sánchez who shifted his focus from solely Mexicans to a wider lens of examining race relations in Boyle Heights.[209] Expanding my focus from Mexican histories in the Central San Gabriel Valley into an examination of foodways in this region, affords opportunities to consider the racialization of other racial and ethnic groups alongside Mexican populations. Close analysis of documents at the museum through a CLF lens uncovers fragmented stories of Mexican ranch laborers and food producers in Baldwin Park.[210] Grounding my archival research on stories of food production, yielded a short narrative of Cruz Baca. The short narrative referenced his farm and business of selling chiles in Baldwin Park. While his wife Juanita Baca was not mentioned, further archival and community research reveals her pivotal role in the family business of producing chiles and selling tamales to a growing Mexican population in the 1930s and 1940s (see chapter two).[211] Tracking down the history of the Baca family and their role as farmer-entrepreneurs before the

[209] George J. Sánchez, *Boyle Heights: How a Los Angeles Neighborhood Became The Future of American Democracy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021).
[210] Natalie Santizo, "Critical Latina/o Foodways," Master's Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2019.
[211] See biography written by Ana Montenegro in *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, Aileen Pinheiro and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, ed., (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).

official incorporation of Baldwin Park in 1956 becomes a difficult task when archives are scarce, ill-preserved, and staffed by volunteers. Thus, uncovering stories of Mexican laborers, those that worked the local ranches and farms, is even more difficult.

Issues of collection, preservation, and representation habitually arise *within* archives. As social and cultural historians have shown, the critical gaps in archives are not unique to the San Gabriel Valley, but rather happen continuously across historic societies and museums.[212] Addressing this challenge, CLF provides a pathway for gleaning new insights into Latina/o/x populations by following foodways in archival research, and rereading traditional archival sources with a keen focus on foodways.[213] "Critical Latinx foodways," as method, calls for a re-reading of traditional sources by framing foodways as a critical factor in developing, shaping, and recreating racialization processes. For example, critical Latinx foodways considers the role of foods, food workers, homemakers, and food transporters in challenging and/or reinscribing regional power structures when traditional archives have ignored these populations.

I conduct a content analysis of historical narratives in Baldwin Park and analyze the existing (though scarce) stories of Mexican laborers in the archive. BPHSM offers four books for visitors to look through, three of which are a series of privately bound books written by historical society members and donors. The fourth book is officially published through Arcadia Publishing Company, from their *Images of America* series and co-written with former director Brian (Bob) Benbow.[214] *Images of America* is a series of published books that discuss local histories of cities across the United States. This series provides readers with a given city's history through text and

[212] See Genevieve Carpio, "Tales from the Rebel Archive," *Southern California Quarterly*, 102 (1), (2020).: 57-79.
[213] It is important to note that the uncovering of Latina/o cultural histories is not a new phenomenon. 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.
[214] These popular series can be found at more bookstores, with most cities in the San Gabriel Valley having their own copy, typically co-written with members of historical societies. See https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/series/images-of-america-book-series

archival images. Analyzing *Images of America: Baldwin Park* (2011) through a content analysis provides a glimpse into the ways Baldwin Park history has been written and the dominant narratives that are shared with visitors.

A content analysis conducts a close reading of historical texts. American Studies scholars Philip Deloria and Alexander Olson state that a close reading begins with attention to detail that considers tension and tone. Moving slowly with the text "opens the mind up to seeing new kinds of meanings."[215] I begin with a close reading of a Cruz Baca narrative. According to *Images of America*: *Baldwin Park*, Cruz Baca was an early immigrant who established himself as an important farmer in the region. This short, one-paragraph 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."[216]

In a quick reading of this short passage, readers might simply consider this a biographical sketch of Baca with some notable facts of his role as a farmer in Baldwin Park. What stands out (from a quick reading) are the variety of vegetables he grew. But when one reads this short passage through a close reading, there is a discrepancy in how Mexican community members are written into history compared to Anglo community members. Other accounts in this text described soldiers, mayors, and other elite white male figures of Baldwin Park in rich detail. Baca's entry was brief, however, it revealed insight into the agricultural crops he cultivated.[217] Similar to Benbow's

[215] Philip J. Deloria and Alexander I. Olson, "Texts: An Interpretive Toolkit," in *American Studies: A User's Guide*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017), 129.
[216] Brian Benbow and Larry O'Brien. *Images of America: Baldwin Park*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 23.
[217] Benbow, Brian and Larry O'Brien. *Images of America: Baldwin Park* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).

account of Baca, language in this text mostly focused on the good neighbor trope. Conversely, when describing white counterparts who were orange grove owners, the authors used adjectives such as "businessman," "owner," and "successful." Furthermore, this text highlights an array of families that lived in Baldwin Park. The book features 18 families total, three of Mexican descent, and one Black family. The rest are Anglo. Where a significant portion of the text covers the time period prior to the 1950s, the authors featured about 14 families. Only three Mexican families were featured: the Baca and Montenegro families (who were related) and the Miranda Sanchez family. Given historic phone directory data prior to the 1950s, I know that there were many Mexican and a few Japanese families living in Baldwin Park during this time, but *Images of America: Baldwin Park* only included a few brief narratives of these community members.

While the inclusion of Baca in this text can and should be celebrated, critical Latinx foodways encourages scholars to re-read this narrative as a starting point to further interrogate archival and historical silences of Baldwin Park's marginalized groups in relation to the development, production, and consumption of foods. In *Images of America*, Baca was the only historical account included of a Mexican farmer during the early 1900s. Critical Latinx foodways calls scholars to grapple with the difficult questions of food. The narrative of Baca 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 of chiles say about foodways of the San Gabriel Valley and its relation to Los Angeles foodways?

Through archival analysis and an oral history with a family member, I discovered that Juanita Baca played a key role in the family business of selling dried chiles and tamales. Even with the inclusion of a Mexican family, historical interpretations defaulted to men. Adding to these stories requires we expand our food lens, moving beyond male laborers and into homemakers,

those that prepared foods from their home. Grappling with master narratives of Baldwin Park history requires scholars think about communities that are left out. Archival silences, while not always intentional, must continue to be addressed and challenged by historians to build rebel archives. Scholars piecing together social and cultural histories must pay close attention to how Mexican laborers and farmers were portrayed (or not) to reconstruct a cultural history of Latina/o/x workers and their regional contributions.[218]

Enacting "critical Latinx foodways" helps scholars address the large deficits in historical society archives. I continued searching for narratives on food production, rather than Mexican residents, and discovered brief narratives describing the Baca family business. Considering the archival silences on ethnic community members, the Baca family provides exceptional insight into how a CLF lens can shift master narratives to focus on marginalized groups. While these master narratives have contributed to the movement of preserving local history in forgotten places, we must continue to address the racial tropes of these dominant narratives. I searched through a collection of privately bound books sold at the BPHSM.

In *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, edited by Aileen Pinheiro, I found a one-page narrative on the Baca family. Ana Montenegro, a relative of the Baca family, offers an alternative reading of Baca's role in Baldwin Park. Rather than simply portraying Cruz Baca as a model citizen, Montenegro describes the impact of Baca and his goods along the San Gabriel Valley and the vast suburbs of Los Angeles. She discusses Baca as the only producer of dried chiles and cornhusks in the San Gabriel Valley during the 1920s and 1930s, an important food product in forging networks in the growing Mexican community. Montenegro states that Baca worked with white dairymen, Japanese farmers, and other agriculturalists in Baldwin Park by lending his horse to other farmers.

[218] Natalie Santizo, "Critical Latina/o Foodways," M.A. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2019.

This alternative narrative digs deeper into the "good neighbor" trope by pointing to specific ways in which Baca worked with community members. And it shows us how histories written by marginalized groups tell our histories in a different way, one which breaks away from master narratives that center men. Montenegro's account serves as a counter-narrative to archival silences made during the moment of fact creation. She effectively repositions the "good neighbor trope" popularized in other texts by connecting Baca to the direct ways in which he facilitated cross-racial collaborations through foodways. In this case, language, word choice, and the ways we tell stories matter when writing historical accounts. Where I conduct a re-reading of archival materials, I also utilize critical Latinx foodways to re-read aerial photographs.

Landscapes can be read as cultural texts to think about how their changing characteristics impact placemaking practices at the local and regional scales. In thinking through landscapes as cultural texts, I consider what Gary Fields calls "enclosure," or exercises in remapping landscape aimed at transforming the socio-economy, demography, and culture of territorial space.[219] By reading landscapes as texts, Fields argues that landscapes are both material and representational. In this vein, the landscapes, and their attached agriculture, offer material and representational interpretations of land and people in Baldwin Park.

Critical Latinx foodways further considers the role of foods in reading landscapes as cultural texts. I utilized the Spence and Fairchild Collections of the Benjamin and Gladys Thomas Air Photo Archives held by the UCLA Geography Department to piece together a social history of Baldwin Park. 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 geographically, into major cities and sub-areas. But, as an unincorporated area, Baldwin

[219] Gary Fields, "Enclosure: Palestinian Landscape in a 'Not-Too-Distant Mirror,'" *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 23 (2), June 2010.

Park was not indexed in its files. When connecting food and power, scholars might consider utilizing transnational trade agreements, government policies, and local laws to understand the regulation of food movement and food laborers. Critical Latinx foodways encourages scholars to reread these traditional sources and expand our conception of "food" in creative ways. Enacting a CLF framework by centering food, I approached aerial photographs by focusing on cities known for their citrus production. Looking into aerial images of agricultural areas, I found folders for the cities of Covina and West Covina, neighboring cities to Baldwin Park. Both cities were well-known for their orange groves, which is even reflected in their city logos.[220] In these files, I found three photographs of Covina and West Covina that included Northeast Baldwin Park. With the help from a library specialist, and countless hours of matching up streets, maps, and images corresponding to the Baca family home address, we were able to uncover an aerial image of the Baca family land (Figure 3). A prominent dirt road, which appears as a diagonal line in the center of the picture, indicates the center-most point of the Baca family land. In the middle of that diagonal road are three houses. This image points to the relationship between placemaking, power, and land ownership.

Critical Latinx foodways, then, knits the story of Latina/o/x food workers, laborers, and entrepreneurs together, in a way that illuminates, rather than erases these histories. Reading the aerial photograph of El Ranchito as text, I note the characteristics of this image (Figure 3). While the landscape looks open, I consider how agriculture impacts the development of enclosure. The precise lines dividing the array of agricultural crops connect to the Anglo ideals of uniform, neatness, and cleanly spaces, a characteristic of the privatization of land. Consider Matt Garcia's study on the East San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire.[221] Critical Latinx foodways pushes

[220] See city websites, https://covinaca.gov/ and https://www.westcovina.org/
[221] Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own*.

historians to read texts and images through a foodways lens, considering the important role the production, movement, and consumption of foods play in racialization processes. A foodways lens reframes how we think of regions, illuminating the Central San Gabriel Valley as part of the cultural landscape of the Greater SGV. That is, when we look at the processes of foodways, we can center people and spaces that have largely been ignored.

Figure 3 Aerial image of Cruz and Juanita Baca's home and land in Irwindale. [222]

Foodways play a critical role in spatial relations. According to historian Matt Garcia, city planners in the early twentieth century designed neighborhoods around the ideals of orderliness and beautification, designing citrus belt cities with tree-lined streets. Zoning laws were enforced in the citrus belt and architecture relied on the Spanish mission and Victorian styles to distinguish

[222] Courtesy of the UCLA Department of Geography, Spence Aerial Collection. This is a zoomed in image of a West Covina aerial, original image taken August 30, 1954. Zoomed in image taken by Natalie Santizo on August 17, 2017.

itself from other neighborhoods. He considers the founding of Ontario by George Chaffey. Purchasing 2,500 acres, Chaffey eliminated sharecropping and distributed land among rich whites, excluding poor white and Black citizens.[223] Agricultural landscapes became a means to create spatial divides along racial difference. It was the intersection of agriculture, racialized labor, and racialized space that critically shaped the social landscape of the citrus belt of Southern California.[224]

Similarly in Baldwin Park, agriculture reflected the containment and privatization of space. Reading the aerial photograph as a cultural text, I argue that agricultural cultivation played an important role in creating enclosure in Baldwin Park. The Baca family land is material in that it produced an array of crops like tomatoes, corn, chiles and yams, and becomes representational of the privatization of land: its slow enclosure. It warrants much attention particularly as most Mexican ranch laborers living in the city were unable to own land. This image becomes another piece of demonstrating land and immigrants' complex relationship to land before the full enclosure and privatization of land bound by walls and fences. Conducting an oral history with Cruz Baca Sembello, granddaughter of Cruz and Juanita Baca, she discussed her family land in Baldwin Park. Showing her the aerial image (Figure 3), she immediately recognized it as *el ranchito*, her grandmother and grandfather's home, which would later become a boarding house for Braceros in the 1950s. While just one image, it represents the arduous work of searching, repairing, mending, and healing that a foodways lens affords us, especially when images of *el ranchito* had been lost to time. This image symbolizes the possibilities that arise out of the fragmented, the discarded and

[223] Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).
[224] According to Carey McWilliams, the Citrus Belt stretched from Pasadena to San Bernardino. See McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land*.

the archival silences of institutional archives, but the critical interrogation of food production, and what land ownership might mean for a Mexican family in an Anglo city.

In this section, I have demonstrated the issues encountered when recovering Latina/o/x histories from local, underfunded archives through a case study in Baldwin Park. I have centered foodways in my investigation, which has led me to an array of documents that give us glimpses into Baca family history, leading us to go beyond the static narratives of Cruz Baca as simply a "good neighbor," and the silences of Juanita Baca in the archives. I have shown how "critical Latinx foodways" helps me piece together a social history of Latina/o/x food workers through oral history, content analysis, and aerial images that have not traditionally been labelled as sources of Latina/o/x history. Where aerial images can point to the development of enclosure, the study of agricultural labor relations can tell us much about how a city developed and how that in turn shaped everyday life for Mexican residents in Baldwin Park. Indeed, the study of Mexican laborers who worked tirelessly to cultivate and produce agriculture in the early 1900s warrants much attention.[225]

Remapping the Ethnospatial Context of Baldwin Park

"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."[226]
–George Lipsitz in *How Racism Takes Place*

Where critical Latinx foodways helps us reframe approaches to recovering Latina/o/x history through a foodways lens, it also becomes a means to piece together social and cultural histories in places with scarce primary sources. In this section, critical Latinx foodways helps piece together the ethnospatial context of Baldwin Park in the 1920s by mapping residential locations of

[225] Carey McWilliams notes that between 1900 and 1940, "there is not a single crop in the production and harvesting of which Mexicans have not played a major role." In *North From Mexico*, p. 177.
[226] Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, p.52.

Mexican ranch laborers and Anglo ranch owners. This is particularly important when census data is unavailable for this area and time, considering it was unincorporated and remained that way until 1956. This investigation and mapping approach reveals the role of Mexican ranch laborers in local agricultural production and the impact of agriculture and ranch systems on racial boundaries manifested in residential patterns.

Given the lack of narratives of Mexican laborers within the Baldwin Park archive, "critical Latinx foodways" encourages scholars to be creative and resourceful with archival fragments. Finding a phone directory in the Baldwin Park archive (1929), I analyzed this document through a foodways lens by considering food and its production as critical information to recover these histories. In doing so, I found two important threads on foodways in the phone directory: restaurant lists and residential addresses of ranch laborers and ranch owners. Following the rebel archive's focus on centering marginalized people, I focused on piecing together a social history of Mexican ranch laborers who are often silenced within local history of Baldwin Park. Phone directory data from the 1920s and 1930s provides rich demographic data, such as race, occupation, and sometimes business ownership. This data is important when census data is scarce or unavailable, as is the case in unincorporated Baldwin Bark. Baldwin Park was officially incorporated in 1956, at a much later time than most Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley cities. 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. Existing Los Angeles census data for the 1920s through 1940s is often unreliable due to inconsistencies in the ways race (and ethnicity) was coded for Mexicans, who were formally

white but socially non-white.[227] Here, I piece together the fragmented stories of food that we do have (via city records, correspondence, phone directories, and more).

I begin piecing together through what I call "rasquache mapping," or mapping community knowledges with the resources we can gather, to understand housing and mobility patterns of Mexican ranch laborers during this time.[228] "Rasquachismo," an attitude and sensibility, as Tomás Ybara Frausto teaches us, is the ways Chicana/o/x people "make do" with what they have.[229] Working with data that I did have (phone directories) and utilizing institutional resources allowed me to recreate the social landscape of the city for the late 1920s. I worked with archivist Andrzej Rutkowski through the UCLA Digital Research Partnerships Program, where I learned to utilize Mapbox and Carto, digital platforms for creating maps. These online (free) mapping tools visualize data and layer historic maps onto digital mapping platforms through geolocation.[230] Reviewing residential addresses from 1929, I coded Spanish surnames and Anglo surnames.[231] I also included three Japanese surnames in the data to understand the migrations of other immigrant groups into the city. I then mapped surname, occupation, and residential addresses of Anglo ranch owners and

[227] To see the changing race, ethnicity, and origin categories used in the United States Census over time, see https://www.pewresearch.org/interactives/what-census-calls-us/ . Mexican populations have ranged from being included in racial categories, to only included as an ethnic category.
[228] Natalie Santizo, "Rasquache Mapping: Enhancing Community Knowledges," *GeoHumanities*, forthcoming.
[229] Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, "Rasquachismo, a Chicano sensibility," in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1986*, ed. R. Grisworld del Castillo, T. McKenna, and Y.Yarbro-Bejarano, 155—162, Los Angeles, CA: Wight Art Gallery, 1990, University of California, Los Angeles.
[230] 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.
[231] 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 estimate that there may not have been many Black families living in Baldwin Park. However, this can also represent the erasure of Black families and laborers in the San Gabriel Valley. This discrepancy does not go unrecognized. I 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.

Mexican ranch laborers. While not a perfect match to ethnicity, it gives scholars a glimpse into how the labor of food shaped spatial relations.

These digital maps consider Mexican laborers that could not own land but labored tirelessly to create their own sense of place contrary to the California Dream that boosters overwhelmingly promoted in the early 1900s. The rebel archive is constantly challenging me to center the most marginalized groups when piecing together fragmented histories. The focus here is not to create aesthetically pleasing visualizations of a city—which has become an allure of GIS mapping—but rather to visualize and discuss the racialization of space as it pertains to the exploitation of Mexican laborers who produced, tended to, and cultivated extensive agricultural crops in Southern California in the first half of the twentieth century. First, the phone directory data revealed that most Mexican residents were listed as laborers under the occupation index in the city of Baldwin Park, whereas many Anglos were listed as ranch owners. Second, mapping phone directory data helped me reconstruct areas in which Anglo ranch owners lived compared to where Mexican laborers lived. Mapping out the residential addresses for thirty-six data points, I found that white ranch owners were relatively spread out in the city, as seen with the purple dots (Figure 4).

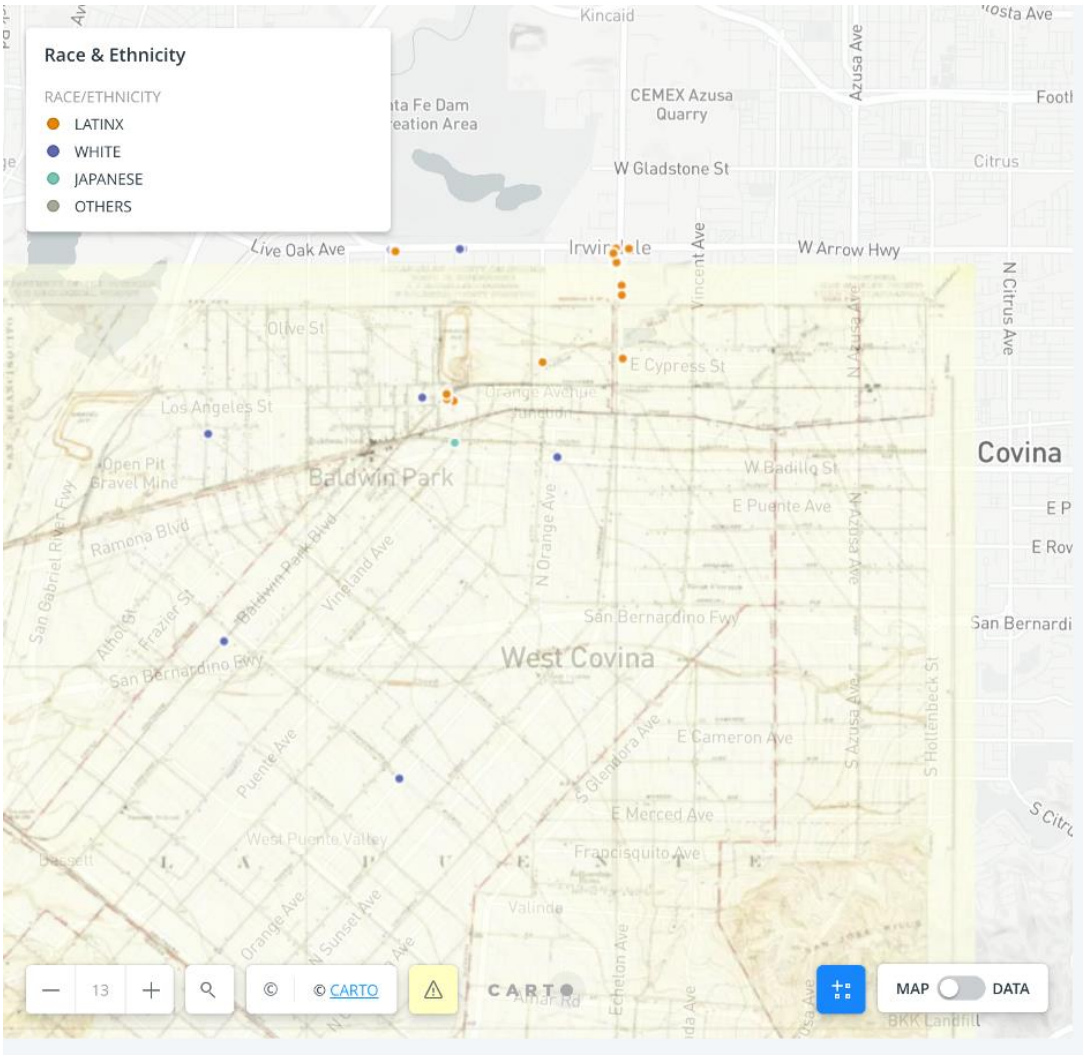


Figure 4 Map of Baldwin Park overlaid with a USGS Historic Topo Map of Baldwin Park. Data of Spanish surnames (orange) concentrated north of the city compared to white ranch owners (purple) which are more spread out. One dot may represent more than one person.[232]

A foodways lens challenges scholars to think through various foodways that intersect different racial and ethnic groups. Mexican laborers were concentrated North of the city, clustered within a half-mile radius of one another seen in the orange dots (Figure 4). Cypress Street and Bonita Street stand out as central locations for many Mexican laborers, also the neighborhood in which "El Ranchito" was located (see Figure 3). In this dataset, three Japanese surnames are listed, two as "nursery man," a person that sells or handles nursery stock, trees, plants, shrubs, or vines,

[232] Map created by Natalie Santizo, 2017.

for planting or propagation purposes, and one as "rabbit raiser."[233] This data point (green point, Figure 4), when compared with a hand drawn map of the city, reveals that these Japanese men lived in the downtown area of the city near Ramona Boulevard and Maine Street.[234] In this phone directory, few Japanese residents were listed, which may further lead to the erasure of Asian American history in Baldwin Park. However, a foodways lens considers various food workers beyond the Latina/o/x population. While this dissertation focuses on Mexican populations, a foodways lens is expansive, helping us think about the racialization of this population in relation to other groups. This map gives us a small glimpse into future work that considers Japanese-Mexican relations in Baldwin Park. For example, Cruz Baca purchased vegetables from E.H. Miyasaki, a Japanese vegetable grower in El Monte (further discussed in chapter three).

Data from the phone directory further revealed that Anglo ranch owners had much more agency in daily life, given a wider range of occupation and residential locations. Anglo men were represented in a range of occupations, including ranch ownership, confectionary ownership, restaurant ownership, agriculturalists, gas station ownership, and more (figure 5). The second map highlights some of the diverse occupations listed for Anglo men, including "HSF" which refers to railroad workers. A close reading of these occupations in the phone directory points to diverse employment opportunities afforded to Anglo men. This included establishing their own restaurants, agency not afforded to their Mexican or Japanese counterparts. Mapping this data gives a glimpse into the social relations that manifested spatially in Baldwin Park. And, we see how the labor of foods (on ranches) shaped spatial patterns in the city. For example, in one of the

[233] See The Codes of California, San Francisco, Bender-Moss Company, Annotated by James M. Kerr, Vol 1, Political Code, (1921).
[234] With clusters of data, Carto occasionally lumps certain data together. So, where two people might have the same address or live on the same street, they are not always featured as their own data "point." For example, the green data point represents residential data from three Japanese men, even though it only shows one green point.

prominent clusters of laborers near Orange Avenue and just North of the downtown area, also represents where the Baca family ranch existed. This is also near the housing addresses of Japanese residents in the city (Figure 5). While not perfect, piecing residential and occupational data together through GIS mapping gives us a glimpse into what daily life could look like for Anglo men, Mexican laborers, and Japanese residents.

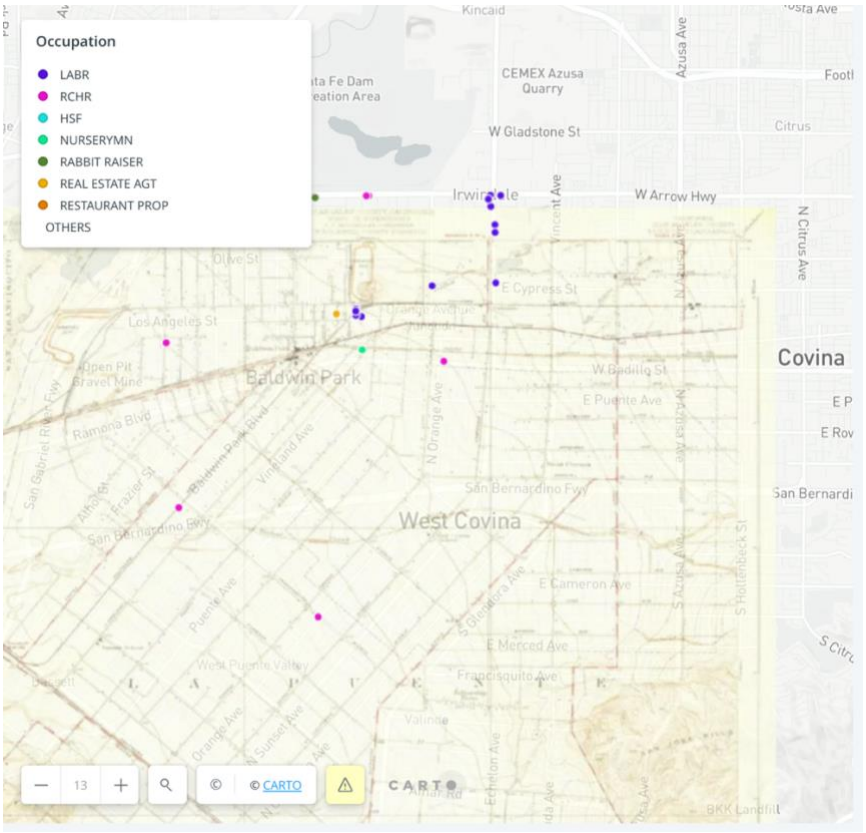


Figure 5 Map of Baldwin Park overlaid with a USGS Historic Topo Map (vanilla shading) of Baldwin Park. Data is shown by occupation. All Spanish surnames were listed as laborers (purple) while Anglos were listed in a range of occupations (pink, blue, green, orange.[235]

This new interpretation particularly focuses on the often left-out Central SGV, and through a new lens that maps labor relations through foodways. Rather than an end result, GIS mapping is just one means by which we can visualize spatial relations that would otherwise go unnoticed. When foregrounding foodways, GIS mapping provides insight into the ways racialized labor

[235] Map created by Natalie Santizo, 2017.

systems manifested spatially over time and shaped contemporary racial patterns. It encourages a re-reading of discarded items deemed unusable, as vital stories of survival grounded in the resourcefulness and resilience of marginalized communities.[236] Here, we value the resourcefulness and adaptability of these marginalized communities when thinking about living and working conditions of ranch and agricultural laborers. This stems from a restructuring of epistemological approaches to Latinx social histories from the ground up.

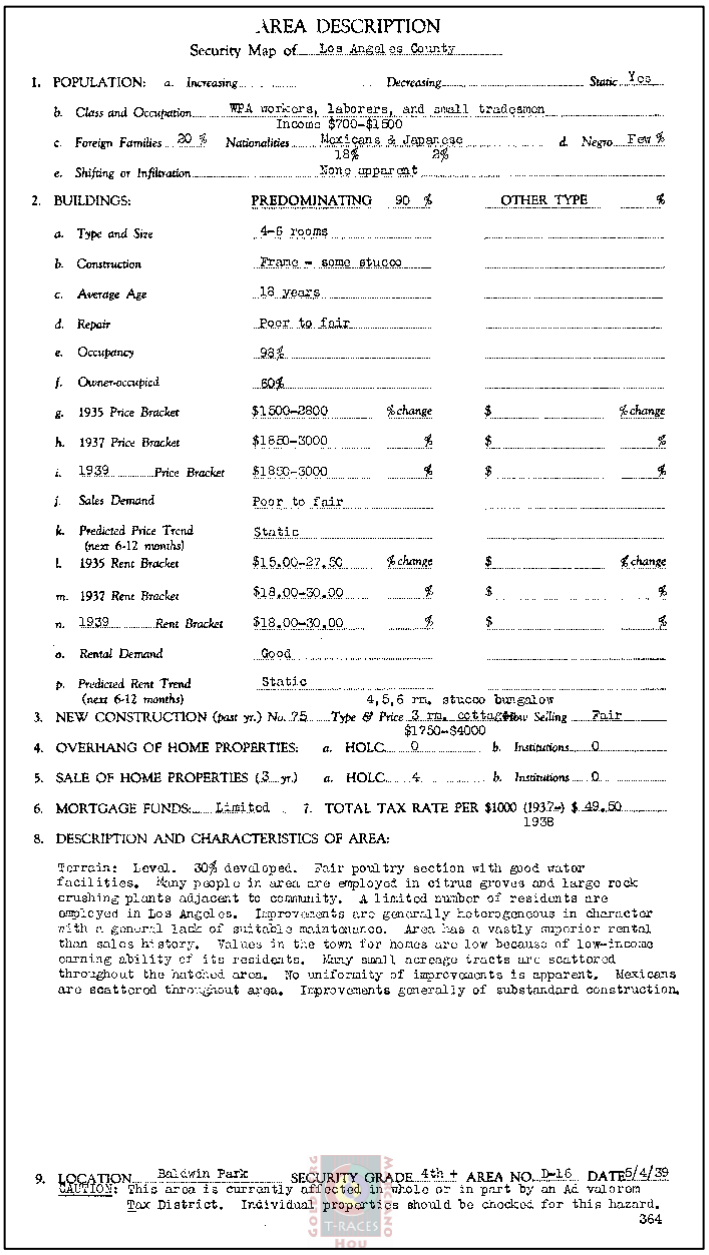
CLF encourages us to thread visualizations of racial boundaries together with diverse archival and digital materials. As historians have shown, many agricultural laborers living in company housing were required purchase all goods through company stores, which overpriced essential items for workers.[237] I looked towards other primary sources to contextualize the maps of Mexican laborers and Anglo ranch owners. Correspondence of ranch owners show that Mexican laborers were severely underpaid and often indebted to their employers. Looking at area descriptions from security maps of Los Angeles County produced by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), I found that Baldwin Park was a high rental community at this time.[238] The area description, written by Home Owners Loan Corporation employees, serve as descriptive documents to understand Anglo perceptions of cities and their quantifiable population characteristics.

The area description for the Baldwin Park area gives us a view of what the city looked like in 1939, a turning point for changes in agricultural production across the citrus belt. Accessors labeled rental demand "good," and it was predicted to remain that way for the next year. This document also describes high rates of employment in citrus groves and rock crushing plants.

[236] Natalie Santizo, "Rasquache Mapping," *GeoHumanities*, forthcoming.
[237] See Jose Alamillo, *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons*.
[238] See (http://salt.umd.edu/T-RACES/demo/demo.html),

"Foreign families," included 20% of the total population in which 18% of that total was labelled as "Mexicans" and 2% was labelled as "Japanese" (see figure 6). Few Japanese names were included in the 1927 phone directory (seen in figure 4) many of which also participated in the cultivation of vegetables, plants, and other agricultural goods. The final section of the HOLC area description 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."[239] Noting water in this report connotes the value given to areas with private water sources and reliable irrigation. Having a good water source was critical for creating agricultural sites. 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. Critical Latinx foodways helps scholars to piece together fragmented histories of Latina/o/x food workers across archives.

[239] Home Owner Loan Corporation area description of Baldwin Park, http://salt.umd.edu/T-RACES/demo/demo.html), accessed May 10, 2020.



AREA DESCRIPTION

Security Map of Los Angeles County

1. POPULATION: a. Increasing ... Decreasing ... Static Yes
   b. Class and Occupation WPA workers, laborers, and small tradesmen Income $700-$1500
   c. Foreign Families 20 % Nationalities Mexicans & Japanese 18% 2% d. Negro Few %
   e. Shifting or Infiltration None apparent

2. BUILDINGS:	PREDOMINATING 90 %		OTHER TYPE %	
a. Type and Size	4-6 rooms			
b. Construction	Frame - some stucco			
c. Average Age	18 years			
d. Repair	Poor to fair			
e. Occupancy	98%			
f. Owner-occupied	60%			
g. 1935 Price Bracket	$1500-2800	% change	$	% change
h. 1937 Price Bracket	$1650-3000	%	$	%
i. 1939 Price Bracket	$1650-3000	%	$	%
j. Sales Demand	Poor to fair			
k. Predicted Price Trend (next 6-12 months)	Static			
l. 1935 Rent Bracket	$15.00-27.50	% change	$	% change
m. 1937 Rent Bracket	$18.00-30.00	%	$	%
n. 1939 Rent Bracket	$18.00-30.00	%	$	%
o. Rental Demand	Good			
p. Predicted Rent Trend (next 6-12 months)	Static			

3. NEW CONSTRUCTION (past yr.) No. 75 Type & Price 4,5,6 rm. stucco bungalow $1750-$4000 How Selling Fair
4. OVERHANG OF HOME PROPERTIES: a. HOLC 0 b. Institutions 0
5. SALE OF HOME PROPERTIES (3 yr.) a. HOLC 4 b. Institutions 0
6. MORTGAGE FUNDS: Limited 7. TOTAL TAX RATE PER $1000 (1937-1938) $ 49.50
8. DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AREA:

Terrain: Level. 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. A limited number of residents are employed in Los Angeles. Improvements are generally heterogeneous in character with a general lack of suitable maintenance. Area has a vastly superior rental than sales history. Values in the town for homes are low because of low-income earning ability of its residents. Many small acreage tracts are scattered throughout the hatched area. No uniformity of improvements is apparent. Mexicans are scattered throughout area. Improvements generally of substandard construction.

9. LOCATION Baldwin Park SECURITY GRADE 4th + AREA NO. D-16 DATE 5/4/39
CAUTION: This area is currently affected in whole or in part by an Ad valorem Tax District. Individual properties should be checked for this hazard.
364

Figure 6 Image of Home Owner Loan Corporation description of Baldwin Park.[240]

A foodways lens offers a re-reading of traditional sources, one which considers how foods—their production, movement, and consumption—shape regional power structures. Through a CLF approach and mapping methodologies, we can begin to uncover the development of foodways and their impacts on ethnospatial relations within the unincorporated outskirts of Los

[240] Image retrieved from (http://salt.umd.edu/T-RACES/demo/demo.html)

Angeles. To contextualize fragmented data from the HOLC area description, I looked toward other area collections to fill in the gaps. Approaching historical repair work requires an adaptable lens by looking through the "backdoors," including archived folders pertaining to Anglo landowners to uncover fragmented accounts of everyday life of ranch laborers. While focused on recovering Latina/o/x histories, CLF challenges us to think about the racialization of these populations alongside other racial groups.[241]

I looked towards larger ranches in the San Gabriel Valley to contextualize the experiences of Mexican ranch laborers. Drawing from the Arcadia Public Library (Lucky Baldwin collection), Mexican laborers in nearby Arcadia struggled to earn an income on ranches that undervalued their work and perpetually placed them at the bottom of a racialized labor system. Correspondence from friends of Lucky Baldwin revealed an extensive ranch system with over 300 Mexican and Chinese laborers, who were "overworked and underpaid."[242] Most laborers lived on the property in labor camp-style housing, similar to the labor camps in nearby El Monte (discussed in chapter 3), a city next to Baldwin Park. Dependence on the company store often meant inflated prices. Coupled with low wages, these practices relegated laborers to perpetual exploitation.[243] While larger ranches have their own hierarchical structures, it provides important insight into the agricultural labor patterns across the San Gabriel Valley and laborers that have remained in the shadows. 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 also have recoded new narratives that

[241] Consider Natalia Molina's concept of relational racial formation and her exploration of historical racial projects. See Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America*; See Natalia Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History through a Relational Lens." *Pacific Historical Review*, 82 (4).(2013): 520–541.
[242] In *Lucky Baldwin Papers*, Arcadia Public Library, accessed August 2017.
[243] See Jerry Gonzalez, *In Search of the Mexican Beverly Hills;* See Jose Alamillo, *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons.*

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/o/x populations, but by reconstructing the social landscape of the SGV by centering marginalized groups.[244] In the following section, I engage the senses of taste and smell in shaping power relations.

The Sensorial of Food: Taste and Smell in Los Angeles

In the previous sections, I have discussed how critical Latinx foodways helps scholars reframe questions about race and placemaking through a foodways lens, and how this approach helps recover and assemble fragmented histories in unincorporated areas. In this section, I discuss how a foodways lens helps scholars engage with the senses. I grapple with the complex and contradictory processes of foodways by studying the enactment of taste and smell to establish racial difference.

Food is unique in that the labor and movement of foods are also connected to the sensorial—taste, smell, and odor—forcing us to consider the physical and symbolic notions of what these foods and their processes, *mean*. The senses are enacted in different ways by diverse groups to lay claims to space. For example, the exploitation of cultural foods became a means for Anglos to lay claims to space. And yet, the act of selling ethnic foods and food goods allowed Mexican entrepreneurs and workers to challenge regional power structures of containment. Foods can be enacted in complex (and contradictory) ways, and we must acknowledge these tensions to better understand the role foodways play in racializing space. This section considers how a foodways lens allows scholars to engage in a dynamic and dialectic between urban cores and its

[244] See Natalie Santizo, "Rasquache Mapping." Forthcoming, *GeoHumanities*.

hinterlands. I ask, what are the larger implications of taste and smell in claiming space in urban centers and its semi-rural peripherals? Doing so allows scholars to think through the critical role food play across multiple scales.

I utilize "critical Latinx foodways" as a lens to understand the ways foods were enacted in Los Angeles to lay claims to space.[245] In her study on Olvera Street, Phoebe Kropp points to the descriptors of Olvera Street, the sultry señoritas and street vendors, a reflection of the "Spanish Fantasy Past" that relegated Mexican and Indigenous peoples to the past.[246] Expanding this erasure, historian Bill Deverell points to the whitewashing across Los Angeles and the erasure of Mexican contributions to this city. "Critical Latinx foodways" encourages a foodways lens to guide the critical inquiry into archival silences regarding marginalized groups. I heed Natalia Molina's call to zoom out by thinking through how foods were enacted to create Olvera Street as an attraction, a place to discover "new" and delicious foods. Rather than approach this inquiry as recovering the histories of Mexicans in Olvera Street, I focused on understanding how foods were enacted to support and extend a Spanish Fantasy Past.

I looked towards local newspapers across Southern California that described Olvera Street with a keen focus on descriptions of foods consumed, sold, and marketed in this alleyway, including *San Pedro Pilot* and *The SaMo Jac* (Santa Monica Junior College student paper). Ample stories written about the Spanish Club's excursions to Olvera Street point to the racialization of space through the vending and consumption of Mexican food. The Santa Monica College first opened in 1929, serving 153 students in its first year. The student newspaper covered the Spanish Club's excursions to Olvera Street. I utilized newspaper clippings of the Spanish Club (also known as Los Hidalgos) excursions from 1931 to 1939 to analyze the ways foods were enacted to lay

[245] I further expand on this case study in chapter 3.
[246] Phoebe Kropp, "Citizens of the Past?" *Radical History Review*.

claims to space. Beyond the Spanish Club, organizations across Southern California participated in Olvera Street excursions, including the Women's Twentieth Century Club, P.T.A of Eagle Rock, the Travel Club (SMJC), the Eagle Rock Business and Professional Women's Club, and more. For many organizations and people across the region, food was the main attraction. Organizations and clubs organized meetings at Olvera Street, followed with a luncheon at local restaurants. Given my focus on interpretations of Mexican foods, I conducted a close reading of the Santa Monica Junior College Spanish Club excursions.

Where historians have explored the representation and romanticization of Mexican culture in Olvera Street, "critical latinx foodways" helps scholars look towards representations of foods that pushed a possession of a Mexican past by consuming Mexican foods. Anglos in Los Angeles heavily relied on Mexican foods and Mexican vendors to create the Spanish fantasy of Olvera Street. In this case study, a foodways lens considers the role foods play in creating a Spanish fantasy past. Most of the club's announcements of excursions and meetings in the school newspaper mentioned food, an exciting headline to catch readers' attention. In one post (figure 7), Spanish Club members are described as Spaniards, "Feeling themselves to be true Spaniards by this time, they partook eagerly of tortillas, enchiladas, and frijoles."[247]

[247] *The SaMo Jack*, Vol. VII, No. 32, June 3, 1936.

Olvera Street Scene Of Spanish Club Meeting

Members of the Spanish club, Los Hidalgos, spent a very enjoyable evening last Wednesday, when they attended a Spanish theater in Los Angeles. Feeling themselves to be true Spaniards by this time, they partook eagerly of tortillas, enchiladas and frijoles. Beulah Hart, president of the organization, announced that the next meeting would be in the form of a festival at her home, the date to be decided upon later.

Mrs. H. R. Cejudo, adviser of the club, accompanied the group on the trip to Los Angeles.

Figure 7 Image of Spanish Club outing, SaMo Jac, October 21, 1931

The consumption and authority over Mexican foods like tortillas, enchiladas, and beans, becomes an embodiment of a Spanish identity. As French gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's infamously stated, "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are."[248] The physiological of taste, the gustatory of sweet, salty, bitter, sour, and umami, become avenues for the physical and symbolic consumption of food. Food is enacted as a symbol of colonial logic and is entwined in fantasy and memory.

The very act of eating afforded Anglos a claim to Mexican people and Mexican culture, further helping establish a "Spanish Fantasy Past." As Kyla Tompkins posits in *Racial Indigestion,* there is a relationship between eating and racial identity, where the act of eating coupled with food cultures inform the production of racial difference. It is the interrogation of the what, where, and who gets to eat and why that helps scholars address questions about race and the production of

[248] See Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste, Or Transcendental Gastronomy*, Translated by Fayetter Robinson (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakinston, 1854 [1825]).

difference. The portrayal of racialized bodies becomes an extension of settler colonialism where Anglos very well consume racialized bodies, as seen in 19th century cookbooks and novels.[249] The palatable consumption of Mexican foods (often referred to as "Spanish foods") and thus people, granted ownership over the landscape of Olvera Street. Possessing the past becomes a means to possess the landscape (and people) in the present.

I argue that smell and taste in food spaces are tools for asserting a white spatial imaginary that relegates racialized people as disposable.[250] Smell and taste facilitate racial projects of possession and difference. In newspaper and magazine clippings from the 1930s, Natt Piper described the "pungent odors from the open-air cooking of tamales, tocas [tacos], and enchiladas."[251] Taste and smell become tools of colonialism, where "pungent odors from the open air cooking of tamales, tacos, and enchiladas" become a means to distinguish between Mexican food workers that vended and served these foods and Anglo consumers that ate these foods. Odor and smell warrant much attention. Scholar Oscar Gutierrez calls for a "geographies of odor," exploring the ways odor and smell in Southeast Los Angeles have "shaped our intimate knowledge of uncontained geography" of toxic urban environments.[252] Gutierrez argues that poor communities of color in Huntington Park are understood as sites of waste. Further, the constant moving and uncertainty of odor (and their smells) shift how we think about space. Drawing from Gutierrez' work, I posit that food smells shape how we think about racialized space. That is, food smells and taste become symbolic markers of difference and inferiority between Anglos and racialized groups.

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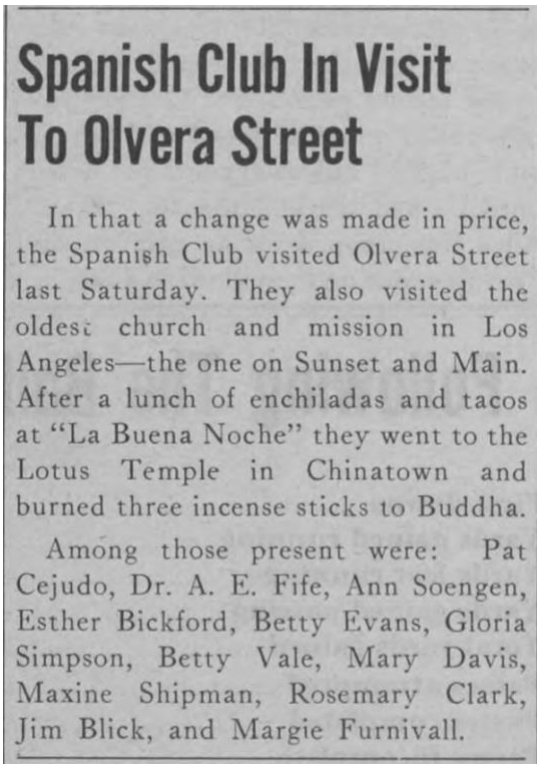
[249] See Kyla Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*.
[250] According to George Lipsitz, a white spatial imaginary is inscribed in the physical contours of the places whee we live, work, and play, and it is bolstered by financial rewards for whiteness." It produces privatization and controlled environments. Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011).
[251] Natt Piper, "El Paseo de Los Angeles," in *The Architect and Engineer*, December 1931, 33-36.
[252] Oscar A. Gutierrez, "Nauseous Attachments: Southeast Los Angeles and Queer Geographies of Toxic Odor," presented at the American Studies Association annual conference, November 2019, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

In Olvera Street, while Mexican food was touted as savory and delicious foods, odor became a means to draw a line between Anglos and Mexicans. As historian Natalia Molina describes, Asian Americans and Latinx populations become the "diseased," the "smelly and unwashed" immigrants subjected to chemical sprays and hygiene codes.[253] Ethnic foods and their respective smells became an avenue to distinguish Anglos from racialized others, including Asian immigrant populations. Here, I think through connections regarding the odor and embodiment of consumption between Olvera Street and Chinatown.

A foodways lens helps us think about relational racialization regarding culture and food. Take, for example, one visit by the Spanish Club to Olvera Street. Usually visiting Olvera Street and dining at a restaurant before heading home, this visit (1939) included a visit to Chinatown to burn incense at the Lotus Temple for Buddha (see figure 8).



Spanish Club In Visit To Olvera Street

In that a change was made in price, the Spanish Club visited Olvera Street last Saturday. They also visited the oldest church and mission in Los Angeles—the one on Sunset and Main. After a lunch of enchiladas and tacos at "La Buena Noche" they went to the Lotus Temple in Chinatown and burned three incense sticks to Buddha.

Among those present were: Pat Cejudo, Dr. A. E. Fife, Ann Soengen, Esther Bickford, Betty Evans, Gloria Simpson, Betty Vale, Mary Davis, Maxine Shipman, Rosemary Clark, Jim Blick, and Margie Furnivall.

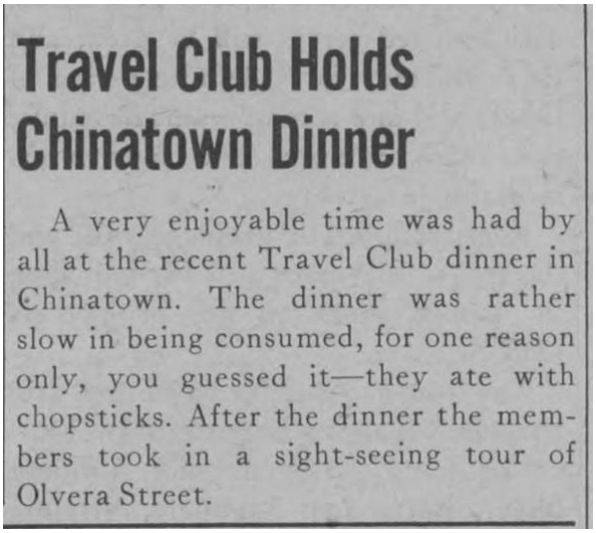
Figure 8 SaMo Jack Newspaper, November 1, 1939.

[253] See Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles*.

This clipping points to the ways in which Anglo students perceived racialized groups and their cultures as excursions. Rather than just thinking through Olvera Street, critical Latinx foodways considers threads that connect Chinatown and Olvera Street. Drawing from Molina's relational racialization approach, expanding towards Chinatown helps us understand how taste and smell were enacted by Anglos to establish difference across racialized spaces. That is, racial food tropes were used across groups. The excursions to Chinatown and Olvera Street extend the racial tropes of Mexican and Chinese people as part of the past, as excursions for Anglo consumption. Anglos enacted power over portraying, consuming, and performing ethnic culture through food, facilitating Anglo claims to space.

Food, as material and symbol, was enacted by Anglos in the 20th century to assert claims over space in Los Angeles. A foodways lens considers how food, and its consumption, helped perpetuate the fantasy past through racial tropes. Just as Mexican food served as a palatable replacement for Mexican people, Chinese food became a means for Anglos to consume. For many clubs and organizations across Southern California, both Chinatown and Olvera Street represented excursions of consumption, material and symbolic. For example, the travel club, similar to the Spanish club, participated in excursions to Chinatown and Olvera Street in the 1940s.[254] These student groups often visited Olvera Street and Chinatown in one excursion, nodding to the similarities between Olvera Street and Chinatown as racialized spaces (see figure 9).

[254] "Travel Clubs Holds Chinatown Dinner," *SaMo Jac*, Vol. 12, No. 9, November 20, 1940.



Travel Club Holds Chinatown Dinner

A very enjoyable time was had by all at the recent Travel Club dinner in Chinatown. The dinner was rather slow in being consumed, for one reason only, you guessed it—they ate with chopsticks. After the dinner the members took in a sight-seeing tour of Olvera Street.

Figure 9 Travel club, SaMo Jac, Vol 12, No. 9, November 20, 1940.

The relationship between Chinatown and Olvera Street as attractions were connected through food. That is, foods often became the means for an array of groups and organizations to visit. Many organizations across Southern California visited Chinatown and Olvera Street in one trip. Consider the Brownie Troop 601 who often took excursions to Chinatown and Olvera Street for lunch. These spaces were meant for Anglo consumption, both symbolic and material. Part of the attraction-like treatment of both spaces revolved around the consumption of food. Consuming Mexican and Chinese food became a performance, a means to "participate" in culture that was either romanticized or exotified.

One example of the performativity of consuming foods is the use of chopsticks by the travel club for lunch and dinner. In 1941, the travel club hosted an excursion to Chinatown, including a Chinese dinner and a trip to Olvera Street (figure 10). The Chinese dinner included lon dow yuk, chow fan, jow har que, dun ta gong, and more, but the club stated that "everyone going will be expected to use chopsticks."[255] This posting points to the ways in which racialized spaces became places where Anglos could perform and embody marginalized groups. For Kyla Tompkins, eating

[255] "Chinatown Draws Travel Members," *SaMo Jac*, Vol. 10, No. 27, May 14, 1941.

is a trope of racial formation and played a significant role in the privileging of whiteness in the 19th century. For Anglos, eating was enacted to demarcate racial difference. This attests to the who gets to eat and why, posed in the beginning of this chapter. Who gets to eat and who is consumed? To draw from Tompkins, a white body politic represented a refusal to be consumed. Where Spanish club members became Spaniards by eating enchiladas, travel club members performed Chinese culture by using chopsticks. As Tompkins argues, eating is central to the performative production or racialized bodies. An "eating culture" is "a privileged site for the representation of, and fascination with, those bodies that carry the burdens of difference and materiality, that are understood as less social, less intellectual, and, at times, less sentient: racially minoritized subjects, children, women, and, at times, animals."[256]

Chinatown draws Travel members

The Grand View Village Cafe will be the scene of a gay time Friday night, when the Travel Club members get together for their annual trek to Chinatown.

Everyone going will be expected to use chopsticks, although knives and forks will not be forbidden, and there will be more than enough food for all. The menu will include the following: Lon Dow Yuk, Chow Fan, Jow Har Que, Dun Ta Gong, Egg Too-Young, See you Gai, Cha Sui, tea, and Hung Yun Bang.

Students planning to go should see Bob Weaver, president of the club. Transportation will be provided for those who do not have cars. Those going will meet in front of the College Friday night, May 16, at 7:30, and they will all leave together.

After dinner the students will tour the art shops of Chinatown. Time permitting, they will also visit Olvera Street.

Figure 10 Travel Club Excursion, SaMo Jac, Vol 10, No.27, May 14, 1941.

[256] Kyla Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*, p.8.

Racialized people become a representation of the bottom of the food chain, and their foods become a stand-in for "dealing" with the "smelly" and "unwashed" tropes developed in the 20th century. Symbolically, the consumption of these foods allowed Anglos to relegate Mexican and Chinese people to the past. The physical eating and consuming of these foods granted Anglos a claim to space, authority to decide who consumes and who is consumed. However, marginalized groups also asserted their own claims to space via Mexican restaurants and Mexican tiendas (see chapter 3).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have developed "critical latinx foodways," a focused methodology that helps scholars re-read archival materials through a foodways lens and address gaps in Latina/o/x histories by piecing together fragmented cultural histories. Critical Latinx foodways shifts how we *read* and *assemble* fragmented histories. I demonstrate this methodological approach through three case studies 1. Reframing the recovery of Mexican histories through food 2. Assembling fragmented histories through digital mapping and 3. Engaging with taste and smell, the sensorial aspects of food.

I begin with discussing the issues encountered at local archives, the Baldwin Park Historical Society and Museum, when trying to recover these histories. In "Reframing Local Narratives Through Food," I show how this reframing helps us address the racialization of Mexican food vendors within local archival collections, and how this reframing helps me uncover the roles of Mexican food vendors in shaping place in Baldwin Park. In "Remapping the Ethnospatial Context of Baldwin Park" a CLF analytic foregrounds attention to rancher and laborer dynamics, which gives us direct insight into how agriculture shaped race relations in this area.

When Latinx histories are ill-preserved and discarded, one must find a way to piece together form the fragments, that which has not been considered valuable. I utilized GIS mapping and primary sources together helped me visualize housing and labor patterns in Baldwin Park and to begin piecing together a social history of Mexican ranch laborers whose employment was often tied to residential mobility within the city. In "The Sensorial of Food: Tase and Smell in Los Angeles" I discuss the role of taste and smell in laying claims to space.

CLF, by rereading traditional archives and bringing together GIS mapping, community histories, oral history, and fragmented archival material, provides us with a dynamic picture of the social and cultural landscape of unincorporated areas. CLF allows scholars to reconstruct a social history from the fragments to understand how racial formation and placemaking unfolded within places like the Central SGV. CLF allows me to connect a multitude of primary sources as diverse aerial photos of land, phone directories with residential addresses, mapping (list your examples here) and more, to seam these stories together into a social history of Latinx populations in the San Gabriel Valley. It is this persistent thread of foodways that binds together agriculture, food systems, and regional identity to tell an alternative history in Baldwin Park. And, it is at this critical intersection that we are able to gain a holistic and distinct picture of Baldwin Park in the early twentieth century.

Piecing together from the fragments, that which has been discarded, affords marginalized communities a way to envision alternative histories that acknowledge the resistance embedded in food work. While being a food laborer (planter, packer, or vendor) represented exploitative labor in some cases, it also included stories of resistance and the challenging of racialized boundaries within city limits. The study of foodways is complex and requires a two-fold analysis which considers the simultaneous exploitation of racialized bodies, and the resistance enacted by

marginalized communities. These contradictions give us insight into the complex processes embedded in racial formation and regional identity. Thinking through food challenges us to rethink the processes of racialization embedded in human geographies, or the study of the movement, regulation, and patterns of people across locations. In the next chapter, I piece together a cultural history of Mexican laborers and food entrepreneurs in Baldwin Park.

Chapter 2

From Chile to Tamal: Mexican Foodways and Race Relations in Baldwin Park

In much the same way that race making leads to the formation of new individual and collective identities, place making leads to the transformation of previously neutral spaces into places with particular meanings that contain their own individual and differentiated identities.[257]

—David Torres-Rouff

In 1906, Cruz and Juanita Baca, along with their infant son Lazaro, made the over 900-mile migration from Irapuato, Guanajuato, Mexico, to a semi-rural town located within the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) of Southern California. It was in Irwindale that Cruz started his career as a laborer for the Thomas C. Roger Rock and Sand Company, known as "puente largo" to laborers. At puente largo he produced gravel for industrial purposes and hauled materials with his plow horses and wagon. Before settling in the San Gabriel Valley, Cruz picked up work as a *traquero*, traveling through Kansas City, Wichita, and Dodge City (Kansas), eventually laying track in Texas as more work became available.[258] From about 1907 to 1912, Cruz and his wife Juanita travelled through Kansas and Texas while living in empty boxcars alongside Mexican and Chinese traqueros and their families.[259] Around 1912 to 1913, Cruz travelled back to Mexico for their two eldest daughters, Herminia and Santos, who had been left behind in Irapuato. After retrieving his daughters, the Baca family travelled to Laredo, Texas by train. With little money left, they travelled nearly 170 miles by foot to reach San Antonio to work on the railroads once again and make money for their trip back to California. Finally making it back to the San Gabriel Valley around 1914,

[257] David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.*, p.12.
[258] Cruz Baca (granddaughter to Cruz and Juanita Baca), oral history conducted by Natalie Santizo, December 6, 2019; By 1914, Kansas City had twelve railroad lines entering the city and built one of the largest railroad stations in the country. Kansas City became an important railroad junction for the Central Mid-states.
[259] *Traqueros*, or Mexican track workers, played pivotal roles in establishing the western railroads. These families created communities within the boxcars, as Anglo residents prohibited them from living in local towns near the labor sites.For many, the wives of *traqueros* would cook, clean, and take care of the children as the men worked on laying track.For more on traqueros, see Jeffrey Marcos Garcilazo, *Traqueros: Mexican Railroad Workers in the United States, 1870-1930*. Recent scholarship has begun to discuss *traqueros* as the often forgotten labor force from the Bracero Program. See Erasmo Gamboa, *Bracero Railroaders: The Forgotten World War II Story of Mexican Workers in the U.S. West*.

Cruz continued working for the rock company, supplementing this work with agricultural jobs that used his team of mules and wagon for transportation. By laboring on the railroads and working seasonal agricultural jobs, Cruz and Juanita were finally able to purchase land in Baldwin Park and establish a reputable business, one grounded in the resilience and hustle that many Mexican migrants quickly learned: entrepreneurship.[260]

This chapter does more than add a Mexican narrative to our understanding of San Gabriel Valley history. Rather, by focusing on Mexican food workers (farmers, ranch laborers, and entrepreneurs), it offers a revisionist history that challenges the dominant ways we understand this region. I highlight my principal argument that by centralizing a foodways lens in addressing archival silences, we can recover Latina/o/x histories that 1) tell us about the processes of placemaking and resistance and 2) about how race is made and shaped in the Central San Gabriel Valley. This chapter will specifically explore the history of Mexican food workers and vendors in Baldwin Park in the early twentieth century. I pay particular attention to how food production shaped placemaking practices of Mexican immigrants in the first half of the twentieth century, and how food laborers and agriculturalists navigated regional and local boundaries. I ask, how did Mexican food laborers and entrepreneurs make place in Baldwin Park? How did racial formation unfold in early twentieth century Baldwin Park? How did the racialization of agricultural labor within city boundaries in turn shape the racialization of place? I begin with a discussion of Mexican ranch laborers at Rancho Santa Anita to understand how the racialization of agricultural labor impacted the racialization of space. Then, I discuss the Baca family history which serves as a case study to unpack a larger history of Mexican foods, goods, and foodways in the Central San Gabriel

[260] While entrepreneurship can take on many forms, this story focuses on the entrepreneurship of foods and food goods.

Valley. Finally, I conclude by considering what piecing together social histories of marginalized Mexican communities might tell us about survival and resistance in the urban outskirts.

From Arcadia to Baldwin Park: Mexican Ranch Laborers

From 1900 to 1930, national immigration policy represented tumultuous and contradictory restrictions for Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican agriculture workers led on by the Depression. This period would also be a defining time for Mexican-descent people hoping to make place in Southern California. Historian George J. Sánchez argues that the traditions Mexican immigrants brought with them during this time were vibrant and complicated cultural practices.[261] Some of these cultural practices would include traditional foods, recipes passed down from generation to generation. For some, these cultural practices would afford opportunities to make money and make place in areas that did not readily welcome them. The semi-rural nature of the San Gabriel Valley, of which Carey McWilliams refers to as "neither rural nor urban" can helps us better understand the ways in which other modes of placemaking took place beyond the Los Angeles urban core. The Baca family would become one of many families migrating from Mexico to the San Gabriel Valley of Southern California in the first three decades of the twentieth century. I begin with a discussion of Mexican ranch laborers at one of the largest ranches in the San Gabriel Valley during this time: Rancho Santa Anita.

While it is important to highlight Mexican entrepreneurs who were able to negotiate land ownership during the early 20th century, it is also critical to interrogate the ways Mexicans were relegated to the perpetual labor of agricultural fields. Where ranch laborers provided the vital infrastructure for foodways to develop in Los Angeles and its suburbs, they were severely

[261] He notes the complicated notion of culture through the amalgamation of urban and rural cultural practice. See George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*.

exploited and underpaid. Histories of Mexican laborers of Baldwin Ranch in the city of Arcadia—although fragmented—help rebuild the social history of ranch life for Mexican laborers in the Central San Gabriel Valley and, more specifically, Baldwin Park. Although Baldwin Ranch is not located within Baldwin Park's municipal borders, detailing its history shows how racial and ethnic relations between ranch owners and laborers were developing in the Greater San Gabriel Valley, including Baldwin Park which was located just a few miles away.[262] More so, it provides insight into the development of race relations in Baldwin Park during the early 1900s. Correspondence between Elias Lucky Baldwin and his friends point to details of how Mexican and Chinese farmers on Rancho Santa Anita lived alongside the crops they tended to.[263] Rancho Santa Anita (about seven miles from Baldwin Park) would foreshadow some of the labor patterns throughout the San Gabriel Valley and juxtapose some of the characteristics of ranch labor compared to the smaller, local ranches in Baldwin Park.[264] I begin with a brief history of Baldwin.

Elias Jackson Baldwin, known as "Lucky" Baldwin, was once the wealthiest and a well-known landowner in Southern California during the late 1800s and early 1900s, holding vast acres of land in present day Montebello, Baldwin Park, Arcadia, Covina, La Puente, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Francisco, and Lake Tahoe.[265] He was born in Butler County, Ohio on April 3rd, 1828.[266] Lucky Baldwin grew up in a farming family and as he grew older, he bought into mining shares and real estate.[267] He invested in hotels, stables, and brickyards, which turned him ample profits. Eventually, Baldwin decided to move West, arriving to San Francisco just before the Gold

[262] Rancho Santa Anita was located a few miles West of Baldwin Park.
[263] Elias "Lucky" Baldwin Papers, Arcadia Library.
[264] 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 producing vast agricultural crops and products.
[265] In *Lucky Baldwin Papers*, Arcadia Public Library, Folder: Baldwin, Elias J. (Lucky).
[266] 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.
[267] Sandra L. Snider, *Lucky Baldwin: City Maker*. ("Lucky" Baldwin Papers, Arcadia Public Library: 1976). Accessed August 9, 2017.

Rush. Around 1873, Baldwin travelled to Southern California on a business trip, arriving in the San Gabriel Valley to invest in real estate. In 1875, he returned to the San Gabriel Valley and made an offer to purchase Rancho Santa Anita in Arcadia, offering $150,000 for the 8,000 acre ranch. According to a letter regarding Baldwin's real estate, in the late 1800s 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. He acquired a total of 54,000 acres of land in the San Gabriel Valley, spanning into Puente Hills, Pasadena, and Whittier as well.[268] By 1907, Baldwin had opened the first horse race track in Southern California, the Santa Anita Racetrack, but closed in 1909 when horse racing was banned in the state.[269] The racetrack would eventually be used for Japanese internment from 1942 to 1944, foreshadowing tense and violent race relations in the San Gabriel Valley. Rancho Santa Anita, or the principal Baldwin Ranch, grew into an extensive and diverse rancho. 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, reflecting of the greater regions' agricultural output. Like many other former mission landholdings in the region, Baldwin's ranch also produced grape crops processed on the ranch, which produced 384,000 gallons of wine (see figure 11). The vast amount of agriculture and farming of this ranch alone required extensive, strenuous, and underpaid labor to raise profits.

[268] Arcadia Public Library, Folder: Baldwin, Elias J. (Lucky).
[269] A new racetrack would eventually be built in 1934 by Hal Roach and Charles Strub.

Figure 11 Old winery on Lucky Baldwin's Rancho Santa Anita, 1957, University of Southern California Libraries and California Historical Society.

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 immigrant workers. For every successful ranch owner able to accumulate wealth were hundreds of Chinese and Mexican laborers who were irrigating, plotting, harvesting, and transporting Southern California's regional gold: commercial agriculture.[270] Over 300 Chinese and Mexican laborers were responsible for tree planting, orchards, groves, reservoir building, well digging, and irrigation systems at Baldwin Ranch. Many Chinese immigrants worked in agricultural labor in the area prior to the 1880s.[271] But the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the consequential immigration policies would change these labor patterns at ranches across the region. For larger ranches like Rancho Santa Anita, extensive

[270] Take for example, Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin who owned multiple landholdings in the San Gabriel Valley and Los Angeles.
[271] Correspondence between Lucky Baldwin and friend, Arcadia Public Library, Folder: Baldwin, Elias J. (Lucky).

and diverse crops required a vast labor force (see figure 12). Agriculture involves a complex and intricate process of tending to crops and trees. Workers learned the delicate craft and skill of planting, irrigating, tending to, and harvesting an array of crops.

Figure 12 Men in corral at Rancho Santa Anita, Photographs of Rancho Santa Anita, PC 008, California Historical Society, circa 1890.

Baldwin welcomed visits from friends who lived in Northern California and family from the East Coast who were beginning to hear about the booming real estate business in Southern California. In 1891, Mr. Fraser—one of Baldwin's friends—visited the ranch and took detailed notes of his visit.[272] 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. He has over 300 Mexican and Chinese workers. They have to purchase all food, material, clothing at his store."[273] Workers lived in labor camp housing on the ranch, typified by shack-like housing often built with scrap material. This note on the labor details of the ranch is pivotal, especially as scholars begin to understand rancher-laborer dynamics at the turn of the century. The

[272] First name not included.
[273] Notes taken during a visit to his Santa Anita Rancho. Four-page typed reminiscence by Mr. Fraser. August 26, 1891. in the Lucky Baldwin Papers, Arcadia Public Library, Accessed August 9, 2017.

late 1800s point to the transition from a majority Chinese agricultural labor force into the beginning of Mexican agricultural labor pushed by immigration policies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. And, correspondence shows the dwindling Anglo labor force in the agricultural sector.

Mexican laborers struggled to earn an income on ranches that undervalued their work and perpetually placed them at the bottom of a racialized labor system. GIS mapping of Anglo ranch owners and Mexican ranch laborers in Baldwin Park shows how agricultural (and its exploitative wages) helped shape housing patterns. Anglo ranch owners had greater range in residential location when compared to Mexican laborers who largely remained concentrated in the Northeastern part of the city. The following map shows residential patterns of Mexican, Anglo, and Japanese residents of Baldwin Park categorized by occupation. The purple clusters located Northeast of the city represent Mexican residential addresses, all of whom were categorized as laborers. The array of colors point to Anglo male occupational diversity along with a wider range of residential addresses spread throughout the city (figure 13).

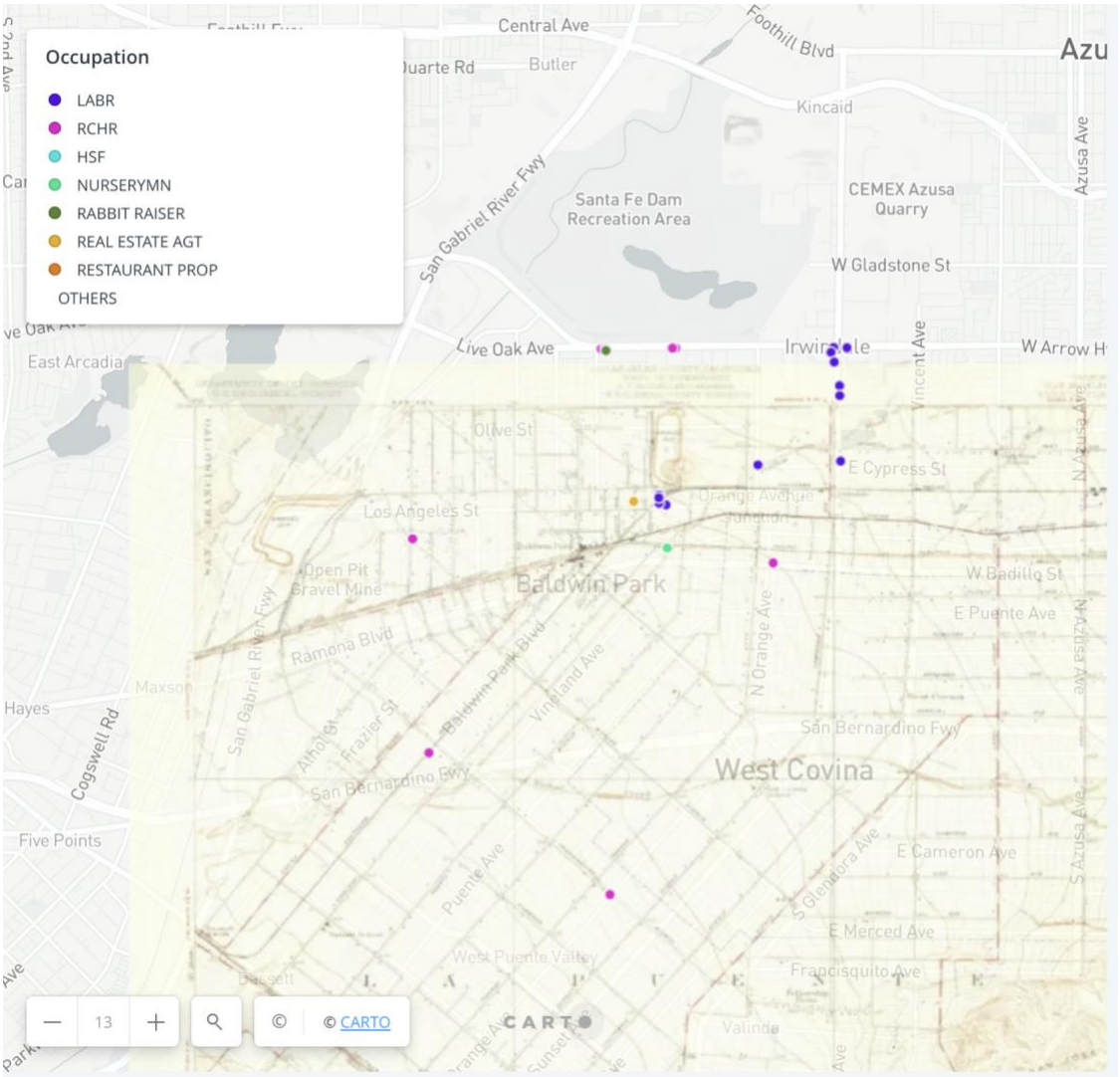


Figure 13 Map of phone directory data, created by Natalie Santizo.

What can a deeper exploration into food production and labor tell us about larger racial struggles of belonging? I turn to the work of historical geographers and race scholars to understand the importance of placemaking and spatial boundaries relating to labor. Utilizing historical geography methods to study plantation power in the Mississippi Delta, Clyde Woods shows us that there is power in regional structures. He argues that there is Black resistance towards these power structures "below the radar" enacted in the everyday practices of movement, music, and

storytelling, what he calls a "blues epistemology."[274] Wendy Cheng draws from history, geography, and critical ethnic studies to create the concept of "regional racial formation" the idea that racial identity is shaped and impacted by people's everyday interactions at the regional level.[275] As she notes, it is in the everyday movement and interactions of local residents that critical resistance can occur.[276] It is the locality of race and space which helps us truly understand what race means for the urban outskirts.[277]

I argue that foodways play a significant role in the processes of racial formation, placemaking, and resistance at the regional level. "Critical Latinx foodways," by re-reading traditional archives, bringing the fragments together, and by utilizing GIS mapping, gives us a glimpse into the lived experiences of racialized ranch laborers in Baldwin Park. Here, I unmap Baldwin Park as a neutral space. Maps are active producers of space and reflect a "process that naturalizes and fixes space."[278] Sherene Razack states, "Just as mapping colonized lands enabled Europeans to imagine and legally claim that they had discovered and therefore owned the lands of the 'New World,' unmapping is intended to undermine the idea of white settler innocence and to uncover the ideologies and practices of conquest and domination."[279] Unmapping allows scholars to understand what racial structures have been laid atop space in the San Gabriel Valley, and in what ways racialization manifests spatially, for example in the regulation of people's mobility.

Through GIS mapping, I note the ways in which agricultural production correlated with housing patterns, whereby Anglo ranch owners had greater range in residential location when

[274] See Clyde Adrian Woods, *Development Arrested*.
[275] Cheng draws from Michael Omi & Howard Winant's concept of "racial formation," Clyde Woods' notion of "blues epistemology," and Henri Lefebvre's focus on the everyday, to create what she calls "regional racial formation."
[276] Wendy Cheng, *The Chang's Next Door to the Diazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California*, (University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
[277] See scholarship by Clyde Woods and Wendy Cheng.
[278] See Sherene Razack, *Race, Space, and the Law*.
[279] Razack, *Race, Space, and the Law*, p.5.

compared to Mexican laborers who largely remained concentrated in the Northeastern part of the city. Mexican laborers often rented living spaces with coworkers and other family members, often needing to share rooms with multiple laborers to afford rent. From community knowledges, such as personal collections, oral histories, and phone directories, it becomes apparent that Mexican laborers often rented living spaces with coworkers and other family members, often needing to share rooms with multiple laborers to afford rent.

Where GIS mapping reveals extensive residential restrictions on Mexican ranch laborers in the SGV, attention to foodways draws attention to how Mexicans, at times, challenged regional restrictions by vending food and food goods. Growing demands for the golden fruit of Southern California required the exploitation of Mexican workers and their further marginalization within small ranch communities. At the same time, Cruz Baca's chile sales allowed him to cross regional boundaries. The Baca chile business necessitated that Cruz traverse the southern California region. As one example, Cruz would frequently drive into Santa Ana to sell his chiles at the Carrasco family mill, about 34 miles away in Orange County. Thus, the production, consumption, and distribution of foods and food goods is complex: in some instances, it afforded Latinx workers the opportunity to challenge city and regional boundaries, and in some cases the reliance on agricultural labor contributed to laborers perpetual exploitation, and constriction within residential boundaries. Growers' agri-business model demanded the exploitation of Mexican workers and their marginalization within small ranch communities.[280]

Through examples from Baldwin Ranch and residential patterns of ranch laborers in Baldwin Park, I have shown how the racialization of agricultural labor impacted the racialization of space. Where agricultural production correlated with segregated residential patterns, Cruz

[280] See Doug Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

Baca's chile sales allowed him to cross regional boundaries by driving into Santa Ana to sell his chiles at the Carrasco family mill.

Baldwin Park

During the Mexican period, former mission land would become part of Rancho Azusa de Dalton and Rancho La Puente. The latter would be owned by William Workman, an elite Anglo ranch owner during the time. Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin, another large landowner, would then come to own the property through a business deal he secured with Workman.[281] Eventually, Anglo squatters forcibly claimed lands in this area, naming it Pleasant View (1878) and included a small town with one dairy, one well, and small farms and vineyards. Fifteen years later, this name would again change. By 1880, squatters decided on a different name for the town: Vineland.

One of the earliest maps of the San Gabriel Valley region includes Vineland, named by Anglo squatters in 1894.[282] The town continued to grow, adding a general store, with Maine Street as the downtown area (still existing today). Squatters then formed the Vineland School District and created a small school building in 1890. By 1906, Elias "Lucky" Baldwin, having extensive land holdings, was proposing to establish a new town "Baldwinville" near Vineland.[283] At the same time, Vineland was hoping to establish itself as a formal town and city. Community members worried that Baldwinville would prevent the community of Vineland from moving forward with their plans to establish themselves as a formal city. To prevent a clash with Baldwin, committee members invited Baldwin to the local grocery store (Shultis Grocery Store) and held a big town

[281] See Bob Benbow and Lorraine O'Brien, *Images of America*: *Baldwin Park*; Many speculate this deal was done in bad faith.
[282] See map in *Images of America*: *Baldwin Park*, p. 9.
[283] By this time, Lucky Baldwin had already influenced the formation of many cities in the region, including Arcadia and Pasadena.

event (1906). Committee member D.J. Shultis brought along his wife, Mrs. Shultis.[284] According to historical accounts, Lucky Baldwin ended up slipping while walking in, falling backwards. Baldwin fell and was caught by Mrs. Shultis before hitting the floor. Being over 80 years old, Lucky Baldwin could have sustained severe injuries from the fall. Historical accounts of this story mention that Lucky Baldwin asked to repay the Shultis. The Shultis' talked to Baldwin about wanting to establish Vineland as a formal town, asking him to abandon his efforts to establish Baldwinville.[285] Baldwin accepted their proposal. Rather than be called Vineland, the town decided on the name of Baldwin Park to honor Lucky Baldwin.[286]

From 1910 until 1930, Baldwin Park continued to grow with the railroads, businesses, restaurants, schools and more. Baldwin Park was one of the many cities that shaped the San Gabriel Valley as an agricultural powerhouse. Diverse communities in the San Gabriel Valley helped establish Los Angeles as a powerful economic stronghold. As historian Jessica Kim states, "Southern California became wealthy based on labor-intensive crops such as citrus in hinterland regions…and then consolidation in centralized fruit markets in Los Angeles, and finally export to markets across the nation."[287] Concurrently, Kim points to the ways Anglo elites grew their wealth in Los Angeles by extracting money, resources, and land from Mexico. Drawing on Kim's work on extraction, I consider how Anglo elites extracted from the inland areas of Los Angeles. The wealth promised by boosters attracting Anglo men to Los Angeles hinged on a system of racialized labor in the hinterlands of Los Angeles, including the San Gabriel Valley, Inland Empire, and Ventura County.

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[284] First name is not noted in documents. See Bob Benbow and Lorraine O'Brien, *Images of America: Baldwin Park*
[285] Bob Benbow and Lorraine O'Brien, *Images of America*.
[286] In some maps, Baldwin Park continued to be referred to as Vineland. See map by the Southern Pacific Railroad published in *The Inside Track: The Way through the Wonderful Fruit and Flower Garden of Southern California*, 1907, via the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Found in Garcia, *A World of It's Own*.
[287] Jessica Kim, *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865-1941*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019) p.28

When Los Angeles was at the verge of remaining a "cow town" compared to its Northern counterpart of San Francisco, citrus in the hinterlands, as mythos and as material power (to land, control, and economy) afforded Los Angeles the opportunity to grow.[288] The hinterlands warrant much attention. American Geographer George Chisholm used the German word *hinterland* to refer to the backcountry of ports, "the land which lies behind a seaport or a seaboard and supplies the bulk of the exports."[289] Historians in the late 19th century adopted the economic term to address questions about how to discuss unincorporated regions in state histories and understand their relationship to cities. A focus on the hinterlands, and its relationship to Los Angeles, helps us understand how nodes of transactions, purchases, and interactions helped build Los Angeles as global city.

The citrus industry heavily shaped race relations in the San Gabriel Valley by exploiting Indigenous, Mexican, and Asian laborers. However, people of color also resisted regional power structures through dance halls and community groups in the postwar era. Historian Matt Garcia's *A World of Its Own* provides a model for understanding how foodways, in this case agriculture, shape regional power structures involving education and neighborhood boundaries. While the work of Gilbert González helped establish the importance of studying the hinterlands of Los Angeles, Garcia argued that his model could not be easily applied to the San Gabriel Valley. That is, the patterns seen in Orange County could not simply be reproduced in the San Gabriel Valley: the very oranges, Valencia versus Navel, would create different labor and housing patterns, that warranted a critical study of East San Gabriel Valley. The sweeter navel orange required more

[288] See Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land*.
[289] This economic definition of hinterlands looked to understand global relations to land, capitalism, and economic flows. Where "hinterland" in the late 19th century connoted an economic meaning rather than a physical one for the English and French.

intensive farming and growth in clusters. This orange was sensitive to soil and climate variation, requiring round-the-clock care.[290]

The navel orange shaped people's relationship to land, drawing more people to these townships than areas that did not produce the navel orange. This contrasted the rural landscape pushed by the less demanding Valencia orange, most typically grown in Orange County. Garcia brings to light multiple ways in which food—its cultivation, production, and labor—critically shapes space, particularly concerning boundaries, population statistics, and power. However, while Garcia discusses the music scene in El Monte (post-1950), less attention has been given to what I call the Central San Gabriel Valley: Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, and La Puente.[291] I apply an interdisciplinary foodways lens to this history, one that engages with the digital humanities to piece together a history of Mexican food entrepreneurs and laborers in the Central San Gabriel Valley. As the region began establishing itself as a semi-rural area near Los Angeles, it attracted larger groups of Mexican immigrants.

The Baca Family Story

Cruz and Juanita Baca, arriving to Irwindale/Baldwin Park by 1906 reflected a large migration of Mexican immigrants hoping to make place. Cruz and Juanita would become catalysts for Mexican food entrepreneurship in the San Gabriel Valley by creating food networks through their Mexican products, a means for Mexican families to make place in new spaces. It was here in the Central San Gabriel Valley that the Baca family would establish themselves as what I call

[290] Thus, the growth of the navel orange shaped the making of towns including Pasadena, Monrovia, Duarte, Azusa, Glendora, Covina, San Dimas, Pomona, Claremont, Upland, and Ontario.

[291] Garcia's work focuses on the East San Gabriel Valley (Pomona, Claremont, Upland), and where he writes about El Monte, he focuses on music halls in the post-1950s era; Gilda Ochoa writes about the complex relationship between Mexican American and Mexican immigrant communities in La Puente. However, most of her case studies and interviews focus on 1994-1996, and the early 2000s. See Ochoa, *Becoming Neighbors in a Mexican American Community: Power, Conflict, and Solidarity*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).

"farmer-entrepreneurs," laborers who cultivated their own land and sold specialty foods and food goods to their local community networks. The impact of both Cruz and Juanita Baca, independent farmers, warrants much more attention than previously given. To fully piece together the story of the Baca family requires going beyond archives and recovering local community histories to fill in the gaps. While the Baca family is often mentioned in relation to agricultural production in the scarce archival materials that exist, the stories passed down by the Baca family tell us much more. I begin with a brief history of the Baca family.

Figure 14 Image of Baca family members. From left to right: Ralph Baca (son of Cruz and Juanita), Benito Miranda, Mary Baca Miranda (daughter of Cruz and Juanita), Juanita Baca, and Maria Luisa (young daughter of Benito and Mary). Image taken in 1939.[292]

Cruz Baca (born to Jose Santiago Vaca and Guadalupe Nieto Luna on September 14, 1882) married Maria Juana "Juanita" Miranda Guerra (born to Simona Miranda and Refugio Guerra on April 27, 1884) and had seventeen children (see appendix A).[293] By their arrival to Baldwin Park

[292] Image courtesy of Cruz Baca (Sembello), private collection.
[293] I began piecing together the Baca family history by conducting an oral history with Cruz Baca (Sembello), great granddaughter of Cruz and Juanita Baca.

(1906) they had five children (Herminia, Santos, a baby boy, Lazaro, and Maria Marina).[294] After returning to the San Gabriel Valley from Mexico, where they brought back their two eldest daughters Herminia and Santos, Juanita and Cruz had three more children: Jose, Jose Carmen, and Maria Crescencia. By this time, they had eight children, seven survived. The family continued to travel for work, completing difficult and laborious jobs in agriculture and the railroads. While working on the railroads out of state (1910), Juanita and Cruz lost newborn twins to the dire conditions of living in boxcars. The unforgiving cold weather would leave the twins sick, ultimately leading to their passing. Juanita and Cruz buried their twins in the ground, near one of their workstations in Kansas. This was not their first loss. Juanita and Cruz had already lost a child in Mexico before they made the migration to the San Gabriel Valley. Despite their tragic loss, Cruz continued to work and save money, partaking in seasonal agricultural work in the Central Valley. Juanita travelled back to the San Gabriel Valley to stay with her brother in La Puente after the tragic loss of her newborn children. During the off-season, they worked local jobs in the San Gabriel Valley in gravel (1914). In 1914, a big flood occurred in the city of Baldwin Park, damaging buildings, lands, houses, and the railroad tracks along Ramona Boulevard and Main Avenue (downtown area).[295] This occurred before the Santa Fe Dam was built in the city, which would regulate water flows and prevent destructive floods. As a result, the Pacific Electric Railway tracks were washed out by the flood.

As they built up their savings, and as railroads neared completion, Cruz and Juanita stopped working out of state on the railroads. By 1919, they had four more children: Jesus, Cruz (Chris), Frances (Pachita), and Clemencia. By the 1920s, Cruz and Juanita Baca had made enough money

[294] There was a baby boy who passed away in Mexico, which would be the third child born into the family. His name is unknown. See family genealogy in Appendix A.
[295] Floods would continue to be a problem in the region.

to purchase horses, pigs, and cattle in the Baldwin Park. They had farming land in Baldwin Park, and lived in a small home in the city.[296] Once they were able to save from their agriculture and food profits, the Baca family purchased land in Irwindale (bordering Baldwin Park) which would become their principal home known as *el ranchito*. Over the next decades, their success afforded them the opportunity to purchase land in the neighboring cities of Irwindale and La Puente, where other family members farmed crops and earned an income. Their ability to purchase land contrasted sharply with Mexican workers at Rancho Santa Anita who lived on the property in labor camp-style housing, similar to the labor camps in nearby El Monte. Rancho Santa Anita workers had to rely on the company store, effectively contained to place by Anglo ranchers. This meant inflated prices for everyday goods like foods and clothes relative to their low wages. This prevented laborers from upward mobility, relegating them to the constant laboring of the ranch to pay off their debts at the company store.[297]

While a small farm, the Baca's occasionally hired other Mexican friends and community members living in the Baldwin Park/Irwindale area. Property owners like the Baca's would eventually open up a brick and mortar business. Juanita helped her daughter Cruz (Chris) Baca open a Mexican restaurant in Baldwin Park called El Mexicali, affording women entrepreneurs the opportunity to open up shop, similar to Natalia Barraza who opened El Nayarit in Echo Park (1947).[298]

Handwritten receipts written by Juanita Baca show a meticulous record system of paying her workers from *el ranchito*, noting the hours worked by her employee in the 1940s.[299] The

[296] Their farmland was located on present-day Sierra Vista High School in Baldwin Park. Their first home is located at the intersection of Los Angeles and Alderson streets.
[297] See Jerry Gonzalez, *In Search of the Mexican Beverly Hills: Latino Suburbanization PostWar Los Angeles*; See José Alamillo, *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960*.
[298] See Natalia Molina, "The Importance of Place and Placemakers in the Life of a Los Angeles Community."
[299] Handwritten worker receipts, in Baca Family Collection (private collection), courtesy of Cruz Baca (Sembello).

handwritten receipts, appearing on scraps of papers and bound with a metal wire, attest to the reflexive *rasquachismo* of making do with what you have.[300] And, Juanita's receipts attest to the history of women entrepreneurship and business in the early 20th century. For Mexican families moving into the San Gabriel Valley at the time, surviving often meant being resourceful. Where Anglo owned companies like the La Puente Walnut Grower's Association could afford to issue their packinghouse workers a bank-issued check (and keep track of their debts and payments), many Mexican families at the time wrote down payments on pieces of paper.[301] This is also evident in handwritten receipts written by Cruz Baca to purchase extra shares of water rights in the early 1900s to irrigate their crops.

While Cruz tended to the land and travelled to sell chiles, Juanita ran the family business of selling tamales, meats, and cheeses to Mexican families nearby. Their sales of vegetables and specialty foods sharply contrasted the sales of ranch and citrus owners who sold their cash crops in downtown Los Angeles in bulk for export. Anglo growers often focused on quantity over quality, as evidenced with the production of Valencia oranges used for making orange juice. Large land and private investments supported the massive production of citrus in the hinterlands of Los Angeles. Here, I am reminded by George Lipsitz and Ana Elizabeth Rosas to investigate the localized issues of how people live in the world.[302] The localized selling of their goods, at a smaller scale than Anglo citrus growers, reflected the autonomous communities built by Mexican immigrants in the Central San Gabriel Valley.

The Baca family is one node of an extensive network of Mexican merchants, food vendors, and entrepreneurs across Southern California. Mexican families created tortilla factories,

[300] See Tomás Ybarra Frausto, "Rasquachismo, a Chicano Sensibility."
[301] For more on walnut packinghouse workers in the Central San Gabriel Valley, see chapter 4.
[302] See George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight,* and Ana Elizabeth Rosas, *Abrazando El Espiritu*.

restaurants, food businesses from their homes, service stations, beauty shops, and more across Southern California. For example, historian Mark Ocegueda notes that in 1942, Mt. Vernon Avenue in San Bernardino (along Route 66) was home to at least 26 Mexican owned businesses.[303] In Baldwin Park, the Baca family would continue to build as farmer-entrepreneurs in the 1940s and 1950s, making significant impact through selling foods and food goods. Eventually, Juanita and her daughter Cruz (Chris) would run a boarding house for Braceros coming in for agricultural work (1950s), creating even more networks of Mexican communities in the Central San Gabriel Valley. Some of these families would eventually move to nearby cities like Whittier, El Monte, La Puente, and Covina.

The Baca family story is one of many in this dissertation where I demonstrate that a critical analysis of foodways can uncover regional stories of placemaking, stories that tell us about the larger processes of racial formation in the San Gabriel Valley, and how the selling and transporting of foods reflected processes that challenged regional boundaries. Scarce archival material makes it difficult to fully understand the lived experience of Cruz and Juanita Baca when first arriving to Irwindale and Baldwin Park. Their first home, El Ranchito, would sit at the border between the cities of Baldwin Park and Irwindale. For Cruz and Juanita, they would refer to their home as Baldwin Park. When first arriving to the region, it was difficult for Cruz and Juanita, who only had a few dollars with them when arriving to the San Gabriel Valley from Guanajuato, Mexico. Where rental records do not exist for 1906, it could be probable that they rented a room or lived in a shared space when they first arrived in the region. Where not much is known about their home in Mexico, it is important to note the state of Guanajuato, where the Baca family migrated from.

[303] These merchants would be located along a half mile stretch along Mt. Vernon Avenue, between 9th Street and 5th Street. See Mark Ocegueda, *Sol y Sombra: San Bernardino's Mexican Community 1880-1960*, dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 2017.

Many merchants and merchant families migrated from Mexico to the United States in the first half of the twentieth century, representing one of the highest concentrations of Mexican migrations during the early twentieth century.[304] Juanita's family, the Guerras, were well known merchants in Guanajuato Mexico.[305] It is clear they knew how to grow chiles, vegetables, and herd cattle.

The Baca family was making place in a city who was beginning to define themselves as a community. This is particularly important when considering how race relations unfolded in the city. By 1912, Baldwin Park had opened its first school, and expanded its downtown area to include a furniture store, grocery store, real estate office, and postal office. Just two years after the opening of Central School, the city would experience catastrophic water issues.[306] What distinguished Cruz and Juanita Baca apart from other residents in the early 1900s was their land ownership, successful entrepreneurship, and sale of Mexican goods—principally dried chiles, cornhusks, pork, and prepared tamales—that paved the way for Mexicans to recreate cultural practices, particularly for those migrating from Mexico to the San Gabriel Valley after the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920).

The Baca family tried to make place, establish roots and networks of family and community in areas that were predominantly Anglo. I define placemaking, simply, as the ways immigrant communities make meaning and community in areas that were new to them. I draw from historian David Torres-Rouff who states, "In much the same way that race making leads to the formation of new individual and collective identities, place making leads to the transformation of previously neutral spaces into places with particular meanings that contain their own individual and differentiated identities."[307] Placemaking practices further show us how Mexican communities

[304] See Robert Chao Romero, *The Chinese in Mexico.*
[305] Oral history with Cruz Baca (Sembello), conducted by Natalie Santizo.
[306] In 1914, a flood from the Dalton Wash flooded the city, and it drastically affected the livelihood of Baldwin Park residents, especially those migrating from Mexico with little money. It destroyed many people's agricultural crops, damaged homes, and warped the railroad track of the Pacific Electric Railway. Issues with the Big Dalton wash would result in future floods, leading to land disputes for many local families, including the Bacas in the 1950s.
[307] David Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A,* p.12.

resisted a regional heritage centered on whiteness and how racial struggles manifested Mexican community's willingness to exist despite being excluded in community spaces. This is an important recovery as so little remains in local archives for this time. For the 1920s, only two Mexican families appear in local historical texts: the Juventino and Pragedes Miranda Sanchez (grandfathers cousin) family and the Cruz and Juanita Baca family.

The experience of Mexicans during the 1920s and 1930s in Southern California do not exist as a monolith: Mexican communities experienced regional power structures in different ways, through labor, and social interactions. Even within the hinterlands of the San Gabriel Valley, Mexican *colonias* arising from the citrus industry were not all the same.[308] During the 1920s and 1930s, Mexican communities in Los Angeles were hardest hit by repatriation policies. The Great Depression shaped race relations in Los Angeles leading to the forceful deportation (Mexican repatriation) of Mexican and Mexican American families (1929-1939). It is estimated that between 400,000 to 2 million Mexican-descent people were sent to Mexico. These numbers include repatriation efforts from Arizona, Texas, and California.[309] The Depression exasperated the tightening of restrictions and the racialization of Mexicans as "aliens."[310] Much of the racial tension in the first half of the 20th century was part of economic turmoil and the growing immigration population. These policies would be enforced differently in the hinterlands of Los Angeles.[311] The flows of agricultural labor from the hinterlands to their urban core would continue

[308] See Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own*.
[309] Prior to the Great Depression, United States immigration policy fluctuated. In some moments, migrations from Mexico were less restricted. And in other moments, migration from Mexico was severely restricted through immigration policies and laws. See Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929-1939*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974).
[310] Historian Natalia Molina notes that the racialization of Mexican immigrants (alongside Chinese and Japanese immigrants) through public health crises created negative perceptions of these groups, further contributing to the justification of their deportation. See Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).
[311] When recovering histories of Mexican families in Baldwin Park, local archival materials and inaccurate census data make it difficult to precisely understand how many Mexican families were living in Baldwin Park in the 1920s.

a need for Mexican laborers, changing how repatriation policies affected immigrant communities in Baldwin Park. Given their proximity to agricultural production in the hinterlands, the Baca family was able to remain in the Central San Gabriel Valley.

The Baca family heard of Mexican families in and near Los Angeles being repatriated, however they were able to avoid repatriation in the San Gabriel Valley. While the Baca family was also hard hit during this time, it was Juanita who would seek employment in ranches, agriculture, and more to carry her family through these difficult times. Into the 1930s, Cruz and Juanita were still travelling to seasonal agricultural jobs in the Central Valley for additional income. Even so, this time period demonstrates the time in which Cruz and Juanita began to spend more time in Baldwin Park and Irwindale through the production of agricultural crops. It was the production and vending of foods and agricultural goods that afforded them a fluid mobility in a racially divided city. By 1920, the Baca family had grown to include three more children: Antonio, Refugio, and Rafael. Right before the Depression (1922), Herminia, eldest daughter of Cruz and Juanita, would die during the birth of her second son. Four years later, Cruz and Juanita would have a total of 17 children, 12 survived. Cruz and Juanita's twelve children would help with the agricultural labor, also travelling up North for seasonal agricultural jobs. Their daughters would help with making cheeses, preparing meats, and making meals.

For the Baca family, the ranch system guided their way of life. Since their arrival to the San Gabriel Valley, the Baca's farmed vegetables to eat and feed their children. By the 1930s they farmed chiles, tomatoes, and corn, and grazed cattle in the city of Baldwin Park and Irwindale. With cattle, they prepared meats, cuts, and produced dairy and cheeses to sell. Their extensive agricultural production and variety of food items helped them establish connections with Anglo and Mexican residents. Cruz had established a network in Baldwin Park by working with Anglo

dairy men, Japanese vegetable farmers, and other community members. Further, their cultural connection to Guanajuato, from where Cruz and Juanita migrated, afforded them the opportunity to create cheeses that were sought out by other immigrants from Mexico in the first half of the 20th century. Guanajuato, a state in Mexico, was (and still is) well known for green chile production and their dairy industry. In 2012, Guanajuato was the largest producing state of goat's milk in Mexico, producing 868,000 *tonnes* of milk in 2016.[312]

Juanita made and sold cheeses to other Mexican families, reflecting the processes of procuring *sabor* and making place. According to anthropologist Ramona Lee Perez, *sabor* destabilizes taste as rational and fixed and instead locates it in an embodied personal and social dynamic.[313] *Sabor*, as an ethnographic model of taste, builds consciousness, sociality, and spatiality, a "sensual awareness on relishing, mastering, and sharing."[314] According to anthropologist Ramona Lee Pérez, *sabor*—the multisensory satiation of taste—constructs consciousness, sociality, and spatiality. Taste becomes "embodied and personal yet social and dynamic."[315] As an epistemological intervention, *sabor* awakens us to the sensorial awareness of relishing, mastering, and sharing. Perez relocates taste as an embodied dynamic. Making and procuring taste becomes an embodied cultural practice. For the Baca family, making *sabor* represented their community ties with other Mexican families in the region. While their supply of foods was barely enough to feed their own family, Cruz and Juanita still shared fruits and

[312] See "Guanajuato Growers Diversify Crops While Producers Expand Operations," Oxford Business Group, https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/analysis/growers-are-diversifying-crops-and-producers-are-expanding-their-operations-all-which-boosting#:~:text=Furthermore%2C%20the%20state%20has%20become,billions%20of%20pesos%20per%20year. Accessed June 1, 2022.
[313] Ramona Lee Perez, "*Las Fronteras del Sabor*: Taste as Consciousness, Kinship, and Space in the Mexico-U.S. Borderlands."
[314] Ramona Lee Perez, "Las Fronteras del Sabor: Taste as Consciousness, Kinship, and Space in the Mexico-U.S. Borderlands, *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, 19(2).(2014): 310-330.
[315] Perez, "Las Fronteras del Sabor,"

vegetables with other Mexican families struggling during this time and afforded free cheeses to those that needed it the most.

Making *sabor* was a form of making place in areas where Mexican ingredients weren't readily available as they were in urban cores. During the 1920s and 1930s, Mexican food was well known and easily purchased in city centers like Olvera Street in Downtown Los Angeles. However, the ingredients for these foods were not readily available in the hinterlands. Juanita's sale of cheeses would be particularly important to get the Baca family through the Depression. As historian Vicki Ruiz posits, "Whether living in a labor camp, a boxcar settlement, mining town, or urban barrio, Mexican women nurtured families, worked for wages, built fictive kin networks, and participated in formal and informal community associations."[316] Where Juanita made and sold cheeses to Mexican families in Baldwin Park, I note that the state of Guanajuato in Mexico is well known for their dairy production, particularly goat's milk. This could also point to the cultural knowledges Juanita brought with her from Mexico that helped her make place in Baldwin Park. The Baca family's production of cheeses, tamales, and meats reflected making *sabor* in Baldwin Park, how taste and smell become a means to make place.

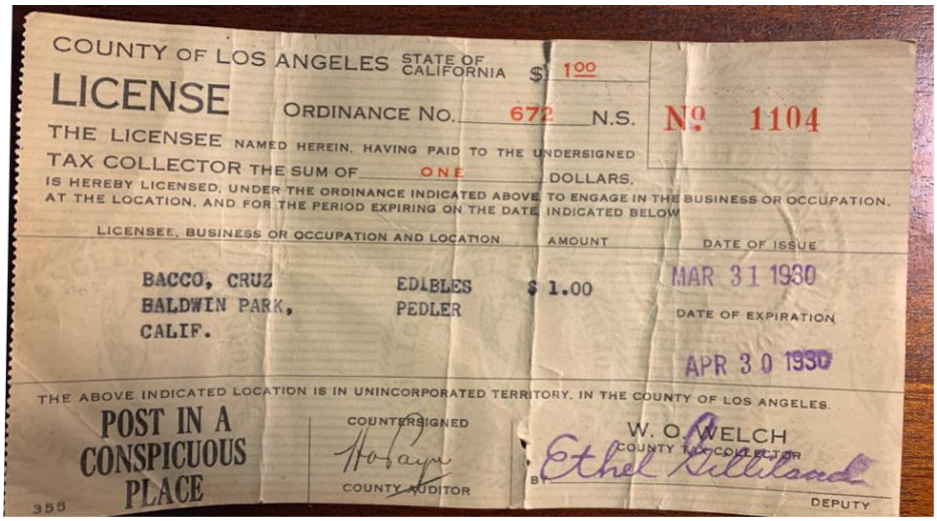
Building *sabor* also meant building an extensive customer base of Mexican immigrant families across the region. As such, *sabor* was heavily connected to ethnic mobility. By the late 1930s, Baca's extensive production of chiles afforded him the opportunity to vend chiles (and move) across the region. At this time, Cruz was an established chile vendor, raising chiles on their principal land in Baldwin Park (the area known as Sierra Vista High School). He applied for and renewed his "peddler permit," a permit allowing for the sale of food and food goods on a monthly basis in order to sell his chiles and other agricultural goods (see figure 15). In the Baca Family

[316] Vicki L. Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, p.7

collection, which I archived, I found a series of four "edibles peddler" permits issued to Cruz Baca in 1930. The permits were issued by the County of Los Angeles, connected to ordinance number 672 N.S.[317] The permit, costing one dollar at the time would grant Cruz a licensure to "engage in the business or occupation at the location, and for the period expiring on the date." Where the permit includes a line for location, Baca's location was noted as an "edibles peddler" (see figure 15).

The permitting of people who sold edible items warrants much attention. Where county (digital) records do not indicate any files for these permits, nor the ordinance number, it becomes difficult to fully piece together this history. However, these primary sources indicate an early regulation of street vendors foreshadowing the issuance of the first street (sidewalk) vending permit in Los Angeles County in 2020. Further, these monthly permits nod to an early regulation of food vendors. Where food vending afforded immigrants like Cruz Baca the opportunity to make some money and move across boundaries, their movement and livelihood probably depended on the state regulation of the goods they sold. While I cannot be certain, I believe the permits were issued for Baca's sale of chiles. In what follows, I further explore the mobility of the Baca family through their sales of chiles beyond the San Gabriel Valley.

[317] Not much is said in digital records of county ordinances.


COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES STATE OF CALIFORNIA $1 00

LICENSE ORDINANCE NO. 672 N.S. No 1104

THE LICENSEE NAMED HEREIN, HAVING PAID TO THE UNDERSIGNED TAX COLLECTOR THE SUM OF ONE DOLLARS, IS HEREBY LICENSED, UNDER THE ORDINANCE INDICATED ABOVE, TO ENGAGE IN THE BUSINESS OR OCCUPATION, AT THE LOCATION, AND FOR THE PERIOD EXPIRING ON THE DATE INDICATED BELOW

LICENSEE, BUSINESS OR OCCUPATION AND LOCATION		AMOUNT	DATE OF ISSUE
BACCO, CRUZ BALDWIN PARK, CALIF.	EDIBLES PEDLER	$ 1.00	MAR 31 1930 DATE OF EXPIRATION APR 30 1930

THE ABOVE INDICATED LOCATION IS IN UNINCORPORATED TERRITORY, IN THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES.

POST IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE

COUNTERSIGNED
COUNTY AUDITOR

W. O. WELCH
COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR
BY Ethel Gillilland
DEPUTY

355

Figure 15 Image of an edibles peddler permit issued to Cruz Baca from the County of Los Angeles. Issued March 31, 1930.[318]

Vending foods afforded Cruz Baca the opportunity to challenge regional power structures of immobility. In the first half of the 20th century, Baca would travel with his son Rafael (Ralph) to Orange County, taking Highway 39 down Azusa Avenue all the way to Santa Ana to sell a bulk of his chiles at the Carrasco family mill. This represented a 36-mile trip on a horse and wagon, a long trip using his mules and wagon. Cruz Baca (Sembello) recalls her father Ralph's stories of taking those trips with Cruz Baca (senior), "It was a long trip down the Azusa Avenue [Highway 39]. My dad would remember how high up he was on the wagon, galloping with the horses."[319] Mobility (and immobility) were critical factors in regulating racialized groups.[320]

As Genevieve Carpio, Natchee Blu Barnd, and Laura Barraclough argue in their edited special issue of *Mobilities*, settler colonial spaces are structures of mobility injustice created by power over movement and are directly attached to belonging.[321] Mexican ranch laborers in the Central San Gabriel Valley were restricted through residential and occupational immobility. Their

[318] Courtesy of Cruz Baca (Sembello), private collection.
[319] Oral history with Cruz Baca Sembello, conducted by Natalie Santizo.
[320] See Genevieve Carpio, *Collision at the Crossroads*.
[321] Genevieve Carpio, Natchee Blu Barnd, and Laura Barraclough, "Introduction to the Special Issue: Mobilizing Indigeneity and Race Within and Against Settler Colonialism," *Mobilities*, (2022): 1–17.

work as agricultural laborers on Anglo ranchers further tied them to place. However, for Baca, the act of vending chiles became a means to challenge containment, moving beyond the confines of Baldwin Park. It also afforded him flexible mobility within city boundaries, selling chiles and exchanging goods with other agricultural farmers. Here I am reminded of Robin D.G. Kelley's work on Black resistance through everyday interactions. Moments of refusal and breaking boundaries add up to cumulative effects on disrupting power structures.[322] As Baca continued vending chiles, they would grow an extensive customer base across the region.

Handwritten receipts indicate that Cruz produced ample chiles, in this case one ton of yellow chiles (see figure 16). Such a massive amount of chiles indicates a need for vast land to grow, cultivate, and raise chiles for sale. The Baca family also leased many acres of land to farm vegetables, graze cattle, and raise chiles, principally in the area near Frazier Street and Francisquito Avenue, in the city of Baldwin Park.[323] Vegetable sale receipts with Japanese growers in El Monte indicate that Baca conducted business with an array of communities in the San Gabriel Valley, further attesting to his extensive network of agriculturalists, growers, and food workers (see figure 17). Throughout the 1930s, for instance, Cruz Baca (chapter two) periodically purchased fruits and vegetables from E.H. Miyasaki in El Monte like "porto rican" potatoes, which became popular amongst Louisiana farmers in the 1930s and 1940s (see figure 17).[324] Many Japanese growers would afford store credit to customers who would pay off their sum after receiving their paychecks. These interethnic exchanges of purchasing, producing, and procuring foods would be part of the

[322] See Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels*.
[323] The land was located on what is now Sierra Vista High School in Baldwin Park.
[324] One receipt shows Baca's purchase of "porto rican potatoes" from February to March (1936) purchasing 5 boxes per month. These potatoes connect to the promotion of Louisiana "porto rican" potatoes (sweet potatoes) advertised in the 1930s and 1940s. Racist, colonial imagery accompanied the marketing of this vegetable. See artwork addressing colonial legacies of the vegetable by Miguel Luciano. See Marisa Lerer & Conor McGarrigle, "The US's Economic Promises Are Over: An Interview with Miguel Luciano," *Visual Resources*, 34:1-2, (2018), 143-156.

racial and ethnic makeup of the Central San Gabriel Valley, yet another example of how foodways shaped the racial dynamics of this region.

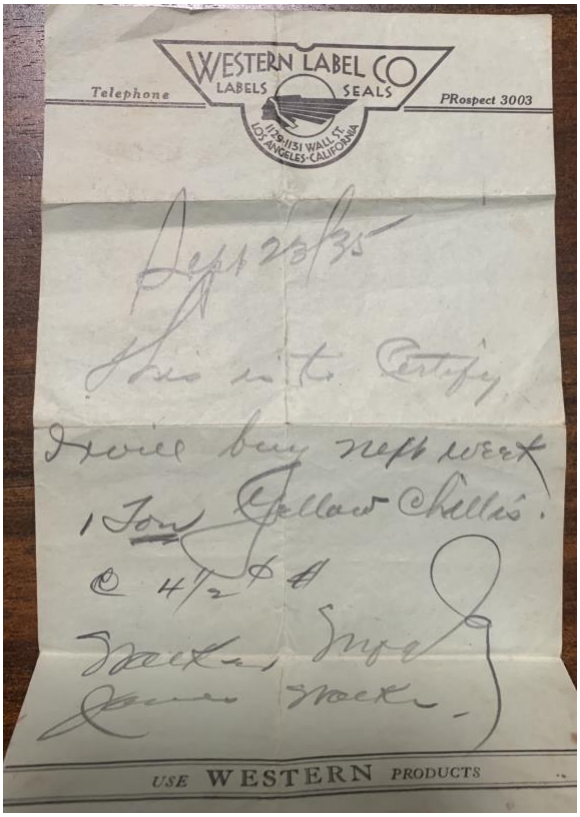
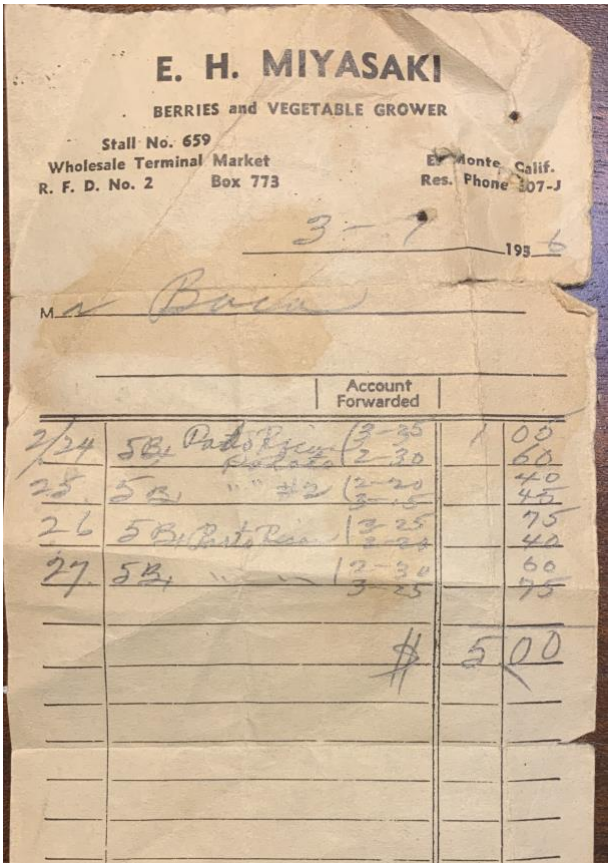


Figure 16 Image of September 23, 1935. Handwritten sale receipt for yellow chiles.[325]

[325] Courtesy of Cruz Baca (Sembello), private collection.


E. H. MIYASAKI

BERRIES and VEGETABLE GROWER

Stall No. 659
Wholesale Terminal Market
R. F. D. No. 2 Box 773

El Monte, Calif.
Res. Phone 507-J

3-7 1936

Mr. Baca

Account Forwarded

2/24	5 Bx. Potatoes	(3-35 / 2-30	1	00 60
25	5 Bx. " #2	(2-20 / 2-15		40 45
26	5 Bx. Potatoes	3-25 / 2-24		75 40
27	5 Bx. "	2-30 / 3-25		60 75
			$	5 00

Figure 17 Image of Receipt for sale of vegetables dated March 1936.[326]

These goods paved the way for Mexicans to recreate familiar cultural practices and to enact new forms of placemaking throughout the San Gabriel Valley. By 1949, the Baca family grew to include over 35 family members including daughters, sons, and grandchildren of Cruz and Juanita. By the 1940s and 1950s, Cruz and Juanita were well known by the Mexican families of Irwindale and Baldwin Park. They had grown an extensive customer network through chile sales all over the greater San Gabriel Valley and through their chile sales in Santa Ana (Orange County).

This work then extended into Juanita's business of selling tamales, chicharrones, cheeses, pork meat, and other Mexican foods. For historian Natalia Molina, El Nayarit (a Mexican restaurant in Echo Park) and its employees served as placemakers by affording a social and recreational space for customers who could "imagine their lives outside of the strict confines of

[326] Courtesy of Cruz Baca (Sembello), private collection.

being a 'worker.'"[327] Focused on the 1950s, Molina shows us how restaurants and immigrant communities shaped and claimed space. My work highlights precursors to restaurants as placemaking centers of cultural and social exchange by considering food entrepreneurship as an ideal of mobile-placemaking. Where Mexican restaurants are important cultural centers (which I explore in chapter 3), we must also consider those communities that could not afford to establish restaurants, and who vended these goods via homes, parks, and via their movement across the region. This work also orients us to the critical role that taste plays in cultural practice and making place.

What distinguished Cruz and Juanita Baca apart from other residents in the early 1900s was not simply land ownership and labor, but rather their business in Mexican food goods—principally dried chiles, cornhusks, pork, and prepared tamales. Cruz Baca Sembello (granddaughter of Cruz and Juanita) recalls waking up early at sunrise to prepare the *carne* for the tamales and *chicharrones* for Mexican customers. The line to purchase Juanita's tamales, *chicharrones*, and cuts would reach out the door, keeping a young Cruz busy, making sure the pork cracklings would not burn over the blazing fire. Cruz and her cousins—the younger bunch of the Baca family—spent ample time playing and tending to the *chicharrones* in the barn making sure to not overcook them to avoid a scolding from Juanita. Cruz and her cousins had to constantly stir the large *olla*, paying close attention to avoid burning the *chicharrones*.

While many Mexican families prepared their own meals in the 1950s and 1960s, they also sought key ingredients like dried chiles and quality meat when preparing specialty items like tamales for Christmas. Juanita would sell her famous pork tamales, with meat from pigs who were fed quality grain, a point of pride for the Baca family which they argue drew more customers to

[327] Natalia Molina, "The Importance of Place and Place-Makers in the Life of a Los Angeles Community: What Gentrification Erases from Echo Park," *Southern California Quarterly*, 97(1). (2015): 69-111, p.71.

their business. Some customers came in for the cuts to prepare their own meals at home. Customers from all over the San Gabriel Valley (SGV) would come to Baldwin Park to purchase her tamales and meats. Baldwin Park, about sixteen miles from downtown Los Angeles, is just one of many cities making up the San Gabriel Valley. Customers could distinctly tell Juanita's tamales apart from other vendors, and she would come to have a steady amount of customers, especially around Christmas time, when they are commonly eaten.

Tamal-making becomes a means to explore *sabor* through kinship, traditions, and embodied experience. *Sabor* includes kitchen knowledge, kitchen labor, and the social context of cooking spaces. Anthropologists recognize core figures like the matriarch of a family as playing a key role to facilitate recurring personal connection through shared activities, like cooking, to ground kinship, a complex social-spatial structure.[328] This story is one of many through which I demonstrate that a critical analysis of foodways can uncover regional stories of placemaking, stories that tell us about the larger processes of racial formation in places like the San Gabriel Valley. Cruz Baca Sembello remembers helping her grandparents sell these goods as a child in the 1950s and 1960s.

Tamal-making in the United States has been a significant cultural practice for many Latina/o/x populations. Ingredients, assembly, and practices differ depending on regions and countries.[329] 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, taking you back to childhood memories of tamal-making. Whiffs of *chile* fill the air, followed by the filling of *carne*, talvez *queso con rajas*. The ingredients change based on the region one grew up in or is

[328] See Robert Alvarez, *La Familia: Migration and Adaptation in Baja and Alta California, 1800-1975*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
[329] In this story, I focus on Mexican and Mexican American tamal-making.

familiar with. The tamales fill up *ollas* bigger than most have seen before. Hours go by until the tamales are ready, the steam and amplified smells of maza, meat, chile, and cheese married together, representing the delicate craft of making tamales. The sensorial of smelling and tasting the masa and meat often bring up nostalgic memories and represent just a small part of the larger cultural practices that are preserved through the act of making food, and which have further helped Mexican migrants make place in areas that may be new to them.

Food is a lens through which we can understand race relations between groups and understand how self-identity is formed locally through food interactions and pathways. Erin Curtis' research on Cambodian donut shops attests to how foodways become an avenue to build community and economic opportunities. Most importantly, immigrants' roles in food entrepreneurship, labor, and business attests to the complexities of studying food alongside race, gender, and economy. He states, "Immigrants can also reshape our understanding of the role of food and food enterprises and contestation of ethnic, cultural, and urban identities"[330]

While the Bacas provided tamales and chicharrones that began to gain popularity at the time (1960s), Baldwin Park represented a city that did not readily welcome Mexican families. However, a growing Mexican population in the surrounding cities of Irwindale, El Monte, and La Puente created a growing need for Mexican foods and goods, which the Baca family provided. By the 1950s and 1960s, there was a strong presence of Mexican families in Baldwin Park. While successful in their at-home food business, it took the Baca family decades of hustle to establish a reputable home business of selling Mexican food goods, one which flourished by word of mouth. This hustle of selling foods on the street, and from one's home is symbolic of contemporary Latina/o/x food entrepreneurship grounded in resilience.

[330] Erin Curtis, "Cambodian Donut Shops and the Negotiation of Identity in Los Angeles," in *Eating Asian America*, eds. Robert Ji-Song Ku, Martin Manalansan IV, and Anita Manuur, p.15.

A critical Latinx 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 popular, Baca's customer base spanned several regions in Southern California.[331] Customers drove in from Orange County, Los Angeles, and other cities within the SGV to purchase his goods. The Baca family business, namely their Mexican foods, became a medium for maintaining, shaping, and recreating culture for Mexican families making place in the San Gabriel Valley.

The everyday acts of vending, selling, eating, and enjoying are rebellious, showing us the ways Mexican immigrant communities sought to make place in areas that did not welcome them. As historian Robin D.G. Kelley notes, resistance occurs in the everyday, from walking across city boundaries, commuting on public transportation, and listening to music.[332] Power structures are challenged and reinscribed at the regional level, by everyday actions, movements, and experiences. Kyla Tompkins moves from asking the what of food to the how of eating, which "reveals something larger about the relationship between eating and racial identity between bodies inscribed with the marks of race and food."[333] Tompkins argues that eating and food cultures play a significant role in creating racial difference and political inequality.

Juanita's goods are one example of a larger network of Mexicans trying to make place in this valley. Because of their central roles in shaping placemaking practices through their Mexican foods and goods, the Baca family provides important insight into racial formation, regional

[331] Ana Montenegro, "Biography," in *The Heritage of Baldwin Park*, ed. Aileen Pinheiro and the Baldwin Park Historical Society, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1981).
[332] Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and The Black Working Class*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).
[333] Kyla Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion*, p. 1.

identity, and agricultural labor relations. Thus, food becomes a critical lens through which scholars can better understand placemaking practices, when other avenues of placemaking, such as land ownership, was almost impossible for Mexican laborers due to a racialized labor system. The Baca family home (figure 3, chapter one) would come to be known by many Mexican families as "el ranchito," according to Cruz Baca (Sembello). And, in the 1950s, "el ranchito" would serve as a boarding house for many Braceros making their way to Southern California. As more Mexican families moved into Baldwin Park, they often sought help from the Baca's for food and housing. Moving into the 1950s, the Baca family still experienced racial aggressions in Baldwin Park.

Making place in a racially segregated city meant navigating racial boundaries in employment, schooling, and everyday interactions. Given the racial tensions of the early 1900s, it is even more important to recover the histories of racial tensions and the everyday resistance to hegemonic structures in this region. In the oral history I conducted with Cruz Baca (Sembello), she recalls stories of her parents having their house "tomatoed" by Anglo residents who "wanted them gone," as more Mexican families began to own homes in Baldwin Park in the 1940s and 1950s. Similar stories ensued. Baca's aunt who went to school in the neighboring city of Covina, was the only Mexican student in her class and was often ridiculed in class for being Mexican. She was not allowed to participate in her own graduation ceremony. Thus, while the Mexican population rose during this time, it did not necessarily mean a welcoming of Mexican families within the social landscape. Much like we saw in the content analysis at the Baldwin Park Historical Society Museum, racialized bodies only become of value when they are of service to capitalism. Racism was embedded into the built environment of the city.

In developing the civic identity of Baldwin Park, Anglo leaders looked towards developing community spaces including parks. J.W. Morgan sold his land (formerly a citrus grove) to create

a park for the youth of Baldwin Park.[334] Baca plowed the land for the first park in the city in the early 1900s, Morgan Park, which took months to complete. While laboring tirelessly to plow the land of the park, the Baca family was not allowed to attend the opening ceremony because they were Mexican. Racial tension and civic boundaries were drawn in Baldwin Park, even when multiracial collaborations existed. Edward Said develops the concept of "imaginative geography," or the act of groups to reinvent meanings about landscapes to justify their spatial entitlement to these landscapes.[335] Imaginative geography reinvents meanings about land that serve Anglo claims to land for the sake of community development. It positions Indigenous and racialized peoples as inferior and "primitive," therefore justifying Anglo claims and reimagined meanings onto landscapes. Gary Fields expands on this work to discuss "enclosure" whereby imagining geography becomes a first step to controlling territorial landscapes and remaking them. He states, "Through the metaphor of improvement, groups with territorial ambitions frame alternative meanings about the land they seek by elevating their own credentials as improvers while denigrating those on the land as primitive, loathe to work and upgrade the land."[336] The Baca case is particularly interesting, given he plowed the land for the park.

What does it mean when a Mexican laborer quite literally built the landscape? Where Baca was recognized as a contributing member of Baldwin Park by working with Anglo dairymen, feeding families during the Depression, and working with Japanese farmers, his physical laboring of the park was recognized and accepted. And yet, the grand opening of the park directly excluded the Baca family from attending.

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[334] Bob Benbow and Lorraine O'Brien, *Images of America: Baldwin Park*, p. 55.
[335] Edward Said, "Imaginative Geography and Its Representations: Orientalizing the Oriental," in *The Cultural Geography Reader*.
[336] Gary Fields, "Enclosure: Palestinian Landscape in a 'Not-Too-Distant Mirror,'" *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 23 (2). (June 2010):216-250, p. 220.

While the Baca family would later be recognized through markers of civic identity (such as the Cruz Baca transit center in the 2000s), they were erased in other instances. The refusal of city officials to include laborers in the fabric of civic identity (through the grand opening of Morgan Park) shows us the constant and enduring bend towards disappearing racial outsiders, which Kelly Lytle Hernández challenges with the "rebel archive."[337] Thus, the rebel archive of Baldwin Park seeks to not only fill in these archival silences, but also to show the struggles of marginalized groups whose contributions are quite deeply embedded into the very foundation and soil of city parks. But the Baca family story does not contain itself to markers of civic identity.

On top of racial tensions, the Baca family was dealing with the aftermath of the continuous floods that took place in the first half of the twentieth century. Baldwin Park had flooding issues since 1914, with its first flood of the Big Dalton Wash. Where issues continued into the 1950s, Los Angeles County began drafting up plans to control the flooding. Through the Baca family personal collection, which I archived as part of this dissertation work, I found that the Baca family would eventually be summoned to court by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, to condemn their parcels of land for public use to confine, control, and conserve the flood and storm waters of the Big Dalton Wash (1952). While no official court ruling is found within the Baca family archive, through images, oral histories, and current housing tracts on the land show that their land was not lost to eminent domain. In 2008, children of Cruz and Juanita sold the property to the city of Irwindale. Today, the 5-acre land where El Ranchito was located became a track of homes. However, a small street (approximately 1/10 of a mile) is named after Juanita (Juanita Street) and an adjacent street is named after her daughter Cruz (Chris) Baca, known as Baca Street. This sharply contrasted the fate of the Mexican communities of La Loma, Palo Verde, and Bishop

[337] See Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates*.

in Los Angeles. Making up Chavez Ravine, these communities would be violently and forcibly removed to create Dodger Stadium.[338] The Baca family represents the struggles for land rights beyond the urban core and reflects the continuous struggle to make place and remain there.

While just a glimpse into the experiences of Mexican food entrepreneurs in Baldwin Park, we begin to see the stories of survival and resilience, the willingness to survive and help others survive. These little fragments of lived experience, and the valuing of these stories demonstrate how CLF pieces together a social history of marginalized populations like Mexican laborers in the Central SGV.

Conclusion

Centering the citrus industry, and the segregation of housing resulting from this industry at the center of his analysis, demonstrates that foodways can tell us a great deal about how racial boundaries are created, maintained, and negotiated. While I am not the first scholar to argue against the urban bias in Chicana/o/x History, I add to this conversation by considering the ways food—its production, consumption, and movement—impact the ways marginalized Latina/o/x communities make place outside of cities.[339] In other words, Los Angeles would not have seen its success without the agricultural fields of Greater Los Angeles.

While several scholars have given us keen insight into the racialization and repatriation of Mexican-descent people in Los Angeles, less is known about Mexicans placemakers who shaped

[338] See Eric Nusbaum, *Stealing Home: Los Angeles, the Dodgers, and the Lives Caught in Between*.
[339] Carey McWilliams first oriented historians to the study of farmworkers in Southern California, describing the arduous and exploitative work of Mexican laborers. Historian Gilbert Gonzalez expanded this work on his pinnacle study of citrus villages in Orange County. He states, "Most historians focusing on Southern California emphasize the leadership of downtown magnets such as Harrison Grey Otis and the influence of the powerful Merchants and Manufacturers Association, but neglect the ways in which the expansion of citrus production during the 1920s created an extraordinary wealth for predominantly white investors from the Midwest and East." p.11 ; For a critique on the urban bias in Chicano history and focus on Mexican agricultural workers see Gonzalez, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950.* Also see Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*.

the Central San Gabriel Valley through food entrepreneurship and food labor. It was the intersection of agriculture, racialized labor, and racialized space that critically shaped the social landscape of the citrus belt of Southern California.[340] Garcia argues that the citrus industry and worker settlements laid foundations for an expanded and segregated landscape of Greater Los Angeles. Garcia pushed the boundaries of what resistance meant, particularly when Chicano Studies had traditionally focused on strikes as the ultimate symbol of resistance. This is critical to note instances in which foodways shape racial formation and regional boundaries, but also provide avenues of resistance for racialized people by challenging containment, Anglo rancher's attempt to fix Mexican laborers to place.

The Baca family shaped the San Gabriel Valley in the early twentieth century through the labor, business, entrepreneurship, and movement of food. Stories like theirs are all the more exceptional given a historic context in which ranch ownership was Anglo dominated. Stories like those of the Baca's challenge the incorrect assumption that ranch ownership was exclusively white. Further, their ranch reflected community needs by hiring local Mexican residents and by providing foods to families in need. It is under the most unlikely of social conditions, coupled with the needs of a changing population, that Cruz and Juanita Baca rose as important agricultural and entrepreneurial figures in Southern California.[341] Reconstructing the histories of Latina/o/x food laborers and entrepreneurs in Baldwin Park can help scholars understand how to approach spatial questions regarding historical silences, in spaces where archival material is scarce or inaccessible.

[340] According to Carey McWilliams, the Citrus Belt stretched from Pasadena to San Bernardino.

[341] Working through small archives and collections spread throughout the San Gabriel Valley has afforded me small glimpses into the social history of Mexican laborers and farmer-entrepreneurs in the Central San Gabriel Valley. I have paired these small fragments with collections that have not faced similar issues of collection and preservation (UCLA and Congressional notes). Through an analysis focusing on historic Latina/o/x food entrepreneurs and laborers, I show how Mexican businesses, labor, and food goods shaped racial formation in the San Gabriel Valley, how they made place, and how they resisted regional boundaries, giving us insights into twentieth century suburban history with resonance far beyond this region.

Piecing together this social history from extremely scarce sources and fragmented archives is not an easy task. As I continue to work closely with community members from Baldwin Park, this project and the shared community knowledges of resilience and adaptability continue to expand. I have used street peddler permits, customer receipts, agricultural receipts, and more in this chapter to piece together what I call the rebel archive of Baldwin Park. This archive has critically shaped my understanding of Baldwin Park history that moves beyond settler colonial frameworks and acknowledges the survival and resistance of Latinx communities in the urban outskirts. "Critical Latinx foodways" grounded in the study of foodways, gives us a glimpse into the lived experiences of Mexican laborers in the early 20th century and what it means to "map" and "repair" when so little remains. I have (and continue to) piece together a social history of Mexican foodways, one which is not solely focused on the labor of food, but also the interactivity between labor, eating, and mobility. By shifting our focus from one avenue of foodways into three core areas (labor, eating, and mobility) of foods and food workers, we gain a better understanding of how marginalized communities made place in unwelcomed spaces, how their identity was shaped by food, and how they challenged regional boundaries through their movement.

Chapter 3
Food and Myth: Fantasies Past, Taste, and Autonomy in El Monte, 1900-1972

"Though we often think of iconic political struggles unfolding in America's biggest cities, El Monte and South El Monte show how suburban communities on the metropolitan periphery often became critical spaces for radical politics, civil rights battles, labor disputes, identity struggles, and immigration debates across the twentieth century."

Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft, in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*

Where historians have suggested El Monte did not change much in the 75 years after 1866, local historians and El Monte community members have contributed diverse stories of Mexican, Black, and Asian Americans who shaped the city through autonomous communities, music, dance halls, and more.[342] That is, scholars have interrogated how memory and place are made through music, architecture, the built environment, and more. As the community anthology *East of East* shows, Greater El Monte is a point of contact between an array of community members. This chapter tells the history of struggles over claims to space and regional heritage through the power system of food. I also grapple with the relationship between urban cores and its hinterlands by examining how groups utilized foodways to lay claims to space in Los Angeles and El Monte. Specifically, this chapter considers the role of tase and smell in creating a dominant Anglo regional identity and memory in urban spaces while considering how Mexican communities in the hinterlands challenged these assumptions by creating their own food businesses. I explore the role of food, as symbol and object, at a time when El Monte demographics began shifting in part by the Bracero Program (1942-1964), a WWII guest worker program between the United States and Mexico. This demographic shift would critically shape agricultural labor patterns and influence

[342] One of the first articles written about El Monte posits that the city would not experience significant changes. See William F. King, "El Monte, An American Town in Southern California, 1851-1866," *Southern California Quarterly*, Dec. 1971; Revisionist historians and interdisciplinary scholars would later position otherwise. See Matt García, *A World of Its Own*; Gaye Theresa, Johnson, *Spaces of Conflict, Sounds of Solidarity*; Romeo Guzmán et al., *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*.

U.S. immigration policies that would bar Mexican immigration. In this chapter I ask, how did Anglos enact foods, as symbol and material, to lay claims to space in urban cores and its hinterlands? How did Mexican families enact foodways to assert their own claims to space in the hinterland of El Monte? I utilize *La Historia* archives, El Monte's community led historical society committed to preserving histories of marginalized communities. I also utilize the South El Monte Arts Posse (SEMAP) digital archive, a grassroots collection of El Monte history courtesy of historian Romeo Guzmán. Finally, I utilize local newspapers including *The San Pedro News Pilot* and *The SaMo Jac* to understand how Anglos portrayed and enacted ethnic foods across space in Southern California. I argue that while Anglos enacted the sensorial elements of Mexican foodways to lay claims to regional heritage and space, Mexican immigrants in Hicks Camp created counter-spaces through food entrepreneurship that challenged Anglo regional power structures.

I am interested in how place is made through the extensive processes of foodways. For Anglos, authority over ethnic foods supported fantasy pasts and built a pioneering mythos to cement racial difference in place. Taste and smell demarcated difference while the authority to consume (instead of being consumed) demonstrated power over racialized bodies. That is, being able to taste and enjoy, while determining what was considered "smelly" or "tasteless" helped racialize immigrant groups as inferior "others." In El Monte, Anglos tried to distinguish themselves from a Spanish regional heritage by building a pioneer myth, lending itself to ranch culture to set itself apart from its Spanish urban cores. And yet, El Monte's white residents latched onto symbols of the Spanish fantasy past by advertising and eating "Spanish" barbecue during their Pioneer Days Festival. As Kyla Tompkins posits, it is not just about the what we consume,

rather about the where we consume, who gets to consume, and why this is so that connects the act of eating to the racialization of people.[343]

This chapter is broken down into two parts. In part one, I consider the role of taste and smell in building an Anglo regional heritage. Taste and smell demarcated difference across Southern California, from its urban core to its hinterlands. At the turn of the century, memory and identity would become critical tools enacted by Anglos to claim space. I conduct an analysis of the pioneer myth of Monte, connecting this myth to the Spanish Fantasy Past, a mythological tool that would help Anglos lay claim to space across Southern California. Part two considers how Mexicans asserted their own claims to space. Where Anglos utilized food, taste, and smell to demarcate difference, Mexican food entrepreneurs and vendors in a labor camp of El Monte established grocery stores, restaurants, and interethnic relationships that challenged Anglo claims to space. Mexican entrepreneurship, via tiendas and restaurants, became an avenue where Mexican immigrants could challenge an Anglo regional heritage that erased their contributions to semi-rural places. Further, the business of vending and selling ethnic foods and foodstuffs reflected an autonomous labor camp that challenged "shanty-town" portrayals. Their entrepreneurship attests to a counter-regional heritage that challenged the pioneer mythos of El Monte, demonstrating the important role Mexican immigrants played in shaping the region. These case studies reveal that foodways are complex: in some cases, taste and smell were enacted to replicate colonial projects of containment, and in some cases foodways became a means for Mexican entrepreneurs to make place and challenge regional power structures seeking to contain them to place. I begin with a brief history of greater El Monte.

[343] See Kyla Wazana Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion.*

I—Food and the Pioneer Myth of Monte

Beginning in 1851, Anglo squatters migrating from the South claimed land in Greater El Monte, renaming and dividing the region into two villages, Lexington and Willow Grove.[344] According to historian William F. King, in 1860 Los Angeles and El Monte were the main towns in the county.[345] El Monte was characterized as a new town developed by American farmers. Before the incorporation of El Monte as an "official" city, the township of Monte (recognized by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors) consisted of 120,000 acres, some of which included land from the former Mission San Gabriel.[346] A great drought in the region (1862-1864) would cause a shift in how the landscape was treated, lived on, and cultivated. During this time, El Monte was primarily known as farming land. Most farms in El Monte during the 1850s were between 80 to 160 acres. Squatters replicated the mission's production of crops, focusing on lucrative corn farming because it was easy to cultivate and versatile in use.[347] By 1855, squatters planted 1,800 acres of corn and the following year, El Monte produced 40% of the corn and 45% of the wheat for Los Angeles County.[348]

At the turn of the century, white residents of El Monte sought to preserve a regional heritage centered on the white settlers of Lexington. Editors of the community anthology *East of East* state that in the 1900s, white residents of El Monte looked toward the recent history of the city's white pioneers to imagine a past and present for themselves, one that would distinguish itself from a Spanish California.[349] A pioneer myth that imagined an (Anglo) regional heritage validated

[344] See *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft (eds.), (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020).
[345] William F. King, "El Monte, An American Town in Southern California, 1851-1866," *Southern California Quarterly*, Dec. 1971, 53, no.4, 317-332.
[346] William F. King, "El Monte, An American Town in Southern California,"
[347] King, "El Monte," p. 324.
[348] King, "El Monte."
[349] See Guzmán et. al., *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*.

their claims to space in El Monte. The city, officially incorporated in 1912, drew on the ideals of Manifest Destiny to establish Anglo pioneers as the "first inhabitants" of the region.[350] These narratives demanded the erasure of native Tongva peoples, the original land caretakers of the Los Angeles basin, from the landscape.[351]

Historian Romeo Guzmán explains that Anglo squatters in El Monte latched on to city slogans like "the end of the Santa Fe Trail" to distinguish itself from other settlements and erase Indigenous and Mexican histories to this place. To further promote El Monte as one of the first American settlements, the city of El Monte held a pioneer parade beginning in the 1930s, helping its Anglo residents distinguish itself from a Spanish California romanticized by Anglos in Los Angeles. Performances, monuments, and school parades in El Monte celebrated the pioneer mythos, carrying it beyond the 1930s. As the editors of *East of East* state, "El Monte prided itself as the first American settlement in Southern California and thus the central hub connecting this new territory to the rest of the nation."[352]

Pioneer Myth and Spanish Barbecue in El Monte

Where other historians have focused on the large-scale details of the parade, I investigate the micropolitics of the El Monte Pioneer Days festival, including costumes, recreational activities, foods, and advertisements to understand how the parade built a regional heritage around a pioneer mythos.[353] In the 1930s, Anglos in El Monte sought to establish cultural practices that

[350] The ideals of Manifest Destiny became a galvanizing tool for Anglo squatters to forcibly claim land across Southern California.
[351] What we refer to as El Monte is actually the Tongva village of Houtngna, or "the place of the willow," which also neighbors the Isantcanga tribe According to other sources, it was called Sheevanga or Sheevangna, or "the wooden or willow area." Also nearby include the Weniinga (Covina/San Dimas area) and Awiinga tribe (La Puente/West Covina area). See list of Tongva tribes in the Los Angeles basin. http://www.tongvapeople.org/?page_id=696 ; Also see *Mapping Indigenous LA*. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=4942348fa8bd427fae02f7e020e98764#
[352] Guzman, et. al., *East of East*, p. 4.
[353] For history of the pioneer days parade, see Guzmán, et. al., *East of East*, introduction.

distinguished their community from Anglos who drew on Mexican and Spanish myths. Looking into the fine details of the parade, from what foods were served, to how the event was advertised, gives scholars a new lens to better understand how white residents of El Monte sought to distinguish themselves from other cities. The El Monte Pioneer Days Festival began as a three-day festival first taking place in May of 1935. The event was covered extensively in newspapers across Southern California and became a well-known celebration of American identity. This parade continued for several decades and gained regional attention from Los Angeles to Calexico. White residents of El Monte sought to distinguish themselves from its urban cores of Los Angeles who relied on a Spanish fantasy past to establish claims to space.

While Anglos in El Monte relied on "American" traditions to distinguish themselves from Los Angeles, the Pioneer Days festival still looked towards the Spanish fantasy past to attract visitors. For example, newspaper stories of the parade featured the color bearer who wore a Spanish costume, indicative of the borrowing and blending of fantasy pasts to attract festival goers.[354] Further, organizers of the pioneer festival promoted the celebrations by offering a Spanish barbecue.[355] These micropolitics of the parade attest to the reality that although Anglos in El Monte attempted to distinguish themselves from a Spanish fantasy past, they still drew on Mexican culture and food to promote the event. These characteristics largely reflected the characteristics of La Fiesta de Los Angeles in the late 1800s, the pinnacle celebration parade of Los Angeles, as well as local celebrations in 1900s Olvera Street.

[354] Image of color bearer for the El Monte Pioneer Days festival, *The Calexico Chronicler*, May 17, 1938.
[355] In fact, many of the characteristics replicated much of the practices of the annual Placita Olvera parade that commemorated the "founding" of Los Angeles.

La Fiesta de Los Angeles, beginning with the founding of the Merchant's association (1893), helped build the city in relation to a white regional identity.[356] Massive floats (16 feet by 25 feet) adorned the city's downtown streets, accompanied by a pageant in its commemorative parade (1894).[357] The large-scale fiesta "offered elite Anglos in Los Angeles the ideal vehicle by which to forget—whitewash—both the unpleasantness of recent decades as well as the entire bloody history of the Southwest throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."[358] According to Bill Deverrel, La Fiesta was an icon in inventing regional tradition. Anglos in Los Angeles enacted what Carey McWilliams called a "Spanish Fantasy heritage" that relegated Mexicans and Indigenous peoples to the past.[359] Drawing from McWilliams, historian Phoebe Kropp defined the Spanish Fantasy Past a romanticized regional history along racial lines that celebrated an imagined Mexican past "to support the denial and denigration of Mexicans in the present."[360]

Olvera Street and its plaza (known as Placita Olvera) was an Anglo re-envisioned history relying on images of sultry señoritas, quaint vendors, and mission bells to romanticize a so-called Spanish past.[361] Colorful buildings and small *puestos* sold Mexican foods, souvenirs, pottery, and more. In the twentieth century, Anglos in Olvera Street celebrated the anniversary of Los Angeles Olvera with traditional Mexican dresses, planting a chile tree, eating Mexican foods, donning sombreros, and more.[362] Olvera Street honored so-called Spanish traditions, building a regional identity on a romanticized past. White residents in El Monte, however, looked towards "American"

[356] See Bill Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*. For an extensive history on La Fiesta, see David Torres-Rouf, *Before L.A.*
[357] See Bill Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*.
[358] Bill Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*, p.59.
[359] Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land*, (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith:1946).
[360] Phoebe Kropp, "Citizens of the Past?" *Radical History Review*, p. 37.
[361] Olvera Street opened Easter Sunday in 1930, named "El Paseo de Los Angeles." Formerly a route and access point for local Mexican families, Christine Sterling sought to create a fantasy past out of this alley, one that would draw upon a romanticized image glorifying Spanish missions and ranchos while relegating Mexican and Indigenous people to the past. The project was funded by Harry Chandler.
[362] See *San Pedro News Pilot*, vol.7, no 156, September 4, 34.

cultural practices to break away from such celebrations. Anglo community members in El Monte, working alongside the El Monte Historical Society, attempted to break away from the "fiesta" tradition by focusing on a pioneer regional heritage grounded in ranch life. White residents looked to recreational activities like hayrides, milking contests, and milk-drinking contests to establish difference.[363]

Figure 18 Image of Pioneer Days Parade Advertisement, in San Pedro News Pilot, May 22, 1936.

Pioneer festival event planners attempted to distinguish themselves from Spanish and Mexican settlements by latching onto the cowboy trope, hosting a rodeo as part of the multi-day festival. Advertising the celebration as a "rodeo" added to Anglo visions of difference, markers of

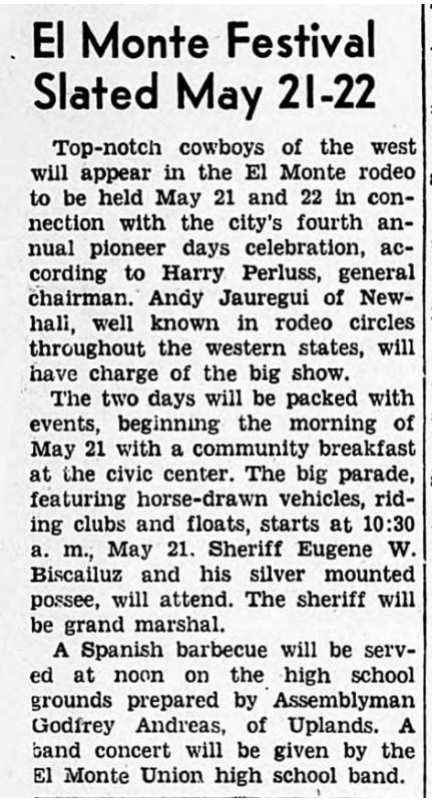
[363] Take for example La Fiesta de Los Angeles of 1894. This large scale, week-long festival in Los Angeles "provided a clean slate upon which elite Angelenos could move forward into the future while hiding a fractured, violent, and contested past from view" in Torres-Rouff, *Before L.A.,* p.6. Also consider the celebration of Olvera Street in the 1930s commemorating the founding of Los Angeles in 1781. See "Tree Planted to Commemorate 153rd L.A. Anniversary," *San Pedro News Pilot*, September 4, 1934

separation from a Spanish fantasy past (see figure 18). In newspapers like the *San Pedro News Pilot* and the *San Bernardino Sun*, the festival was advertised as a two-day rodeo including wagons, stagecoaches, buggies, and the "exhibition of Indians," complete with a "pioneer breakfast" to be served at the start of the event. The *San Pedro News Pilot* reported on the festival, "El Monte citizens are getting into the pioneer spirit by donning calicoes and ten-gallon hats, with the men exhibiting chin whiskers."[364] In addition to sporting and encouraging cowboy attire, organizers included "top-notch" cowboys as part of the 1938 festival activities, which included rodeo circles, horse-drawn vehicles, and riding clubs from across Southern California (see figure 19s).[365] A rodeo connoted cowboys, an Anglo symbol of the American West. And yet, ranch culture, broadly, was distinctively shaped by Mexican and Mexican Americans. For example, American cowboys learned to ride a herd, use a branding iron, and more, from Mexican vaqueros.[366] Also implicit in the connection between the pioneer festival was how the pioneer mythos relegated Indigenous people as part of a violent past.

Racist portrayals of ethnic groups spanned the nineteenth century with floats of Chinese immigrants and Native groups in La Fiesta's parade. In El Monte, white residents replicated these practices. The *San Bernardino Daily Sun*, which announced the 1941 pioneer days festival, mentioned "Indian fights" would be covered in a production for the parade, followed by a costume dance in the civic center.[367] As the festival continued into the next decade, they held "The End of the Santa Fe Trail Pageant" (1941), a contest that would crown a Queen of the pioneer parade to attract more attendees.[368] By the 1960s, the festival helped reproduce racial tropes in educational

[364] *San Pedro News Pilot*, "End of Santa Fe Trail Pageant at El Monte," May 22, 1940.
[365] The pioneer festival was advertised in newspapers across Southern California, from San Pedro to Calexico.
[366] See Russell Freedman, *In the Days of the Vaqueros*; See Laura Barraclough, *Charros.* "American" notions of rodeo and cowboy culture have been challenged with the history of charreria in Mexico In the Days of the
[367] This most likely referred to the Oatman Indian massacre.
[368] *San Bernardino Daily Sun,* June 4, 1941.

institutions, requiring students to dress up for a "pioneer day" that commemorated Anglos as the first settlers of El Monte.[369]



El Monte Festival Slated May 21-22

Top-notch cowboys of the west will appear in the El Monte rodeo to be held May 21 and 22 in connection with the city's fourth annual pioneer days celebration, according to Harry Perluss, general chairman. Andy Jauregui of Newhall, well known in rodeo circles throughout the western states, will have charge of the big show.

The two days will be packed with events, beginning the morning of May 21 with a community breakfast at the civic center. The big parade, featuring horse-drawn vehicles, riding clubs and floats, starts at 10:30 a. m., May 21. Sheriff Eugene W. Biscailuz and his silver mounted possee, will attend. The sheriff will be grand marshal.

A Spanish barbecue will be served at noon on the high school grounds prepared by Assemblyman Godfrey Andreas, of Uplands. A band concert will be given by the El Monte Union high school band.

Figure 19 Image of El Monte Festival posting, San Pedro News Pilot,, May 10, 1938.

I argue that Anglos effectively utilized foodways, specifically the sensorial elements of taste and smell, to assert power (and difference) over racialized groups in urban cores and its hinterlands. Anglos latched onto the pioneer mythos in El Monte throughout the first half of the twentieth century through foods, like Spanish barbecue, to enact difference and superiority over immigrant groups moving into the city.[370] That is, establishing racial difference through the consumption of food further helped Anglos lay claims to spaces increasingly inhabited by seasonal agricultural laborers, including Mexican and Chinese groups. While advertisements for the festival

[369] Guzmán et al., *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte / Edited by Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft.*

[370] The South El Monte Arts Posse (SEMAP) collective are currently working on a re-envisioning of the city logo that considers marginalized group's history in the area.

promoted a "pioneer breakfast," an offering of eggs, toast, and oatmeal, it also sought to attract large crowds by offering "Spanish barbecue" to festival goers. Barbecue has long connected to histories of the American West, a reflection of cowboy culture described earlier. And yet, where barbecue has long connotations of an American (Anglo) West, the El Monte Pioneer Days festival relied on Spanish barbecue" by the "Barbecue King" to attract large crowds. Local newspapers described and promoted the festival by highlighting Spanish barbecue prepared by the Romero Family, who was well recognized by Anglos across Southern California in mid-19th to twentieth centuries. Interestingly, white residents hoping to distinguish themselves from a Spanish regional heritage, looked to Frank Romero, a mixed-race foreman of Indigenous, Mexican, and Anglo descent to cook up food for the festival. The story of Frank begins with his father, José, who started the family business of barbecuing the largest events across Southern California.

José Romero, known as Joe Romero, was the original "barbecue King" of Los Angeles. José Romero was born at the San Luis Rey Mission in San Diego. According to an oral history with his grandson Jack Romero, José grew up at the mission in San Clemente, helping make the adobe bricks for the walls. His mother was a mission Indian that worked alongside the nuns. Their racial background would be conflated with a Spanish heritage, much like how Mexican and Indigenous communities were conflated with a Spanish heritage in Olvera Street.[371] He began his business in the mid-1800s, serving a Spanish pit barbecue for many Los Angeles companies. José would host as many as 12 large-scale barbecues per year. Joe specialized in large-scale barbecues, equipped to feed as much as 30,000 guests. While his primary job was taking care of horses for the city of Los Angles, his barbecue business flourished in the second half of the 19th century.

[371] Eventually, José and his wife Modesta Carrasco Romero would get married and move to Los Angeles in 1858. Oral history with Jack Romero, conducted by Paul Spitzzeri, May 16, 1997.

Among his clients was the Temple family, Mexican land grant holders producing walnuts in La Puente/Irwindale (see chapter 4).

Many newspapers referred to the Romero family business as a Spanish barbecue, further carrying a Spanish regional heritage through time and space. What made his food Spanish barbecue? Although few detailed accounts exist, primary sources point to the fixings served with the barbecue of Mexican rice, fresh salsas, and beans. As we know, during the early 1900s, Mexican foods were conflated as Spanish foods, as seen in the case of Olvera Street. One press photo features a Romero family member helping prepare a barbecue for the Shriner's national convention at Meyer Ranch in 1929.[372] This image shows how the family played with a Spanish fantasy past through their clothing (see figure 20). By this time, José's son Frank Romero, was taking over the barbecue business.[373] Frank was a foreman at the Homestead in present-day La Puente/Industry, but began to focus on barbecue as the business flourished.[374] Frank, following his father's legacy, became the (second) barbecue king, taking on more barbecue events year-round across Southern California. Frank built up their equipment of sheet iron, refrigerator carts, and pipes to feed about 48,000 guests, hosting many events for Harry Chandler, a land purveyor of Los Angeles, and owner of the *Los Angeles Times*.[375]

[372] While a note for this original image states that this photograph is of Señora Romero, wife of José Romero, the timeline indicates that this was probably a daughter-in-law or other family member. José and Modesta had 14 children. By 1929, José would be in his late eighties or early nineties, as he was married to Modesta Carrasco in 1858. Image courtesy of the Homestead Museum.
[373] José Romero passed away in 1932.
[374] By 1929, Frank was married to Mae Scott and had a son, Jack Romero. Jack was born in 1921.
[375] One such barbecue included an event for Harry Chandler at Rancho Santa Anita, Lucky Baldwin's estate. The event held a land auction with 82,000 guests.

Figure 20 Press photo of Romero family member setting up for barbecue, June 6, 1929.[376]

Anglos in El Monte, while aiming to distinguish themselves from a Spanish past, played with the micropolitics of Spanish foods to attract people across the Southland to attend. Spanish barbecue, and its consumption, became a means to attract people to the Pioneer Days festival that commemorating the first American settlement in Southern California. That is, evoking taste became a means to attract attendees. Space and place are active agents in our everyday lives that shape how race is lived and experienced. As such, space shapes and reproduces social relations.[377] Where historians have focused on architecture, music, and built environment, I consider how food was enacted by Anglos to lay claims to space *across* Southern California. Just as eating Mexican food played a critical role in asserting Anglo claims to space in Los Angeles, white residents in El

[376] Image courtesy of the Homestead Museum.
[377] Lefebvre describes three processes of space: 1. Perceived (spatial practice) 2. Conceived (representations of space) 3. Lived (representations of space). These three processes impact how people are perceived and how people perceive others. These meanings transcend space and become attached to racialized groups outside of particular spaces. Consider Chinatowns, that were historically marked as "vice," or "dirty." These meanings become attached to racialized people moving beyond Chinatown, contributing to how they are treated in and out of these spaces. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 1991).

Monte utilized foods to build an Anglo regional heritage that at times lent itself to a Spanish fantasy past.

Anglo push towards marketing Spanish barbecue parallels the use of Mexican food in Olvera Street to attract visitors. Anglo authority to define and consume Mexican foods in Olvera Street beginning in the 1920s was an early step in the Americanization (and commodification) of Mexican foods that largely took place in the 1950s. Local newspapers across Los Angeles, similar to advertisements promoting the Spanish barbecue in El Monte, discussed Mexican restaurants and their foods in Olvera Street, helping link the racialization of people and foods to spatial claims. For many people living across Los Angeles and its hinterlands, Olvera Street represented a popular attraction full of delicious foods, performances, and novelty goods. This is seen through the consistent excursions of the Spanish Club "Los Hidalgos" of Santa Monica Junior College, located fifteen miles West of Olvera Street. The alleyway and its restaurants represented a place to gather for "Spanish" and "Mexican" lunches, as the school newspaper used the terms interchangeably across multiple newspaper posts to describe Mexican foods. Spanish Club newspaper postings in the *SaMo Jac* vividly described the lunches eaten at Olvera Street restaurants, including enchiladas, handmade tortillas, beans, tostadas, and more (see figure 21).

Los Hidalgos Dine At La Paseo Spanish Inn

Does this menu sound appetizing?

Tamales, enchiladas, Mexican soup, tostatoes, and Mexican cookies.

Los Hidalgos found it not only sounded appetizing but was appeitzing. This discovery took place while the Los Hidalgos were dining at the El Paseo Inn last Tuesday evening.

Besides eating, the Olvera Street expedition, headed by C. G. Fallis, explored Mexican curio shops, and finished the evening by touring Chinatown.

Figure 21 Newspaper clipping describing Spanish Club "Los Hidalgos" outing in Olvera Street, SaMo Jack Newspaper, April 25, 1934

A majority of the club's announcements of excursions and meetings in the school newspaper mentioned food, an exciting headline to catch readers' attention. The headline "Does this menu sound appetizing?" seeks to engage the senses of smell and taste married together by the appeal of tamales, enchiladas, Mexican soup, tomatoes, and Mexican cookies. The sensorial experience of taking a bite of an enchilada, and smelling the heated tortilla married with a red sauce and cheese, brings its consumer joy.

I argue that Mexican food promoted in Olvera Street and El Monte became a stand in for Mexican people, a means for Anglos to consume the *palatable* parts of Mexican culture.[378] The critical study of food shows us that colonial domination is not about erasing non-white cultures, rather its about making them more visible. For example, Mexican food represented an excursion for Anglo Angelenos, a way for Anglos to enjoy and consume Mexican culture and that also

[378] Here, I draw from Mark Padoongpatt's work on Thai Los Angeles, and how Thai food became a stand in for Thai people, a means for whites to consume the palatable parts of Thai identity. See Padoongpatt, *Flavors of Empire*.

relegated Mexicans to the past. That is, the act of eating becomes two-fold: the sensorial of taste and smell are enacted to symbolically consume the inferior, and to mark difference and authority over what is edible, and what is not. As Kyla Tompkins posits in *Racial Indigestion,* there is a relationship between eating and racial identity, where the act of eating coupled with food cultures inform the production of racial difference. As Tompkins posits, it is the interrogation of the what, where, and who gets to eat and why that helps scholars address questions about race and the production of difference.

Foodways become an arena for replicating colonial projects of containment and regulation. As historian Vicki L. Ruiz posits, "preference for another's cuisine does not necessarily translate into egalitarian attitudes or even empathy" for another group.[379] I trace these processes by analyzing Anglo consumption of Mexican foods in Olvera Street, coupled with the promotion of a Spanish barbecue in El Monte. Even when the El Monte Pioneer days festival attempted to separate itself from a Spanish Fantasy Past, they too drew from the promotion of Mexican and Spanish foods to attract customers and visitors. Anglos in Los Angeles and El Monte heavily relied on an "eating culture" to establish an Anglo regional heritage and lay claims to space. According to Tompkins, an "eating culture" is "a privileged site for the representation of, and fascination with, those bodies that carry the burdens of difference and materiality, that are understood as less social, less intellectual, and, at times, less sentient: racially minoritized subjects, children, women, and, at times, animals."[380] Anglos asserted authority over Mexican foods and Mexican vendors. To draw from Tompkins, a white body politic represented a refusal to be consumed. Racialized people become a representation of the bottom of the food chain. Colonial domination required a romanticization and celebration of Mexican culture, one that did not erase Mexicans from the

[379] Vicki Ruiz, "Citizen Restaurant."
[380] Kyla Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion,* p.8.

landscape, rather relegated them to the past. For Katherine Massoth, disgust and the appropriation of food culture helped Anglos gain power by denigrating Mexicans through the taste and smells of their foods.[381] Similarly, I show that a Spanish fantasy past heavily relied on Mexican foods as symbols of racial difference, established superiority over Mexicans who were relegated to the past. I turn to an example from Olvera Street to show these processes.

From 1931 to 1939, the Spanish club of Santa Monica Junior College described their excursions to Placita Olvera in the student newspaper, conflating the terms "Mexican" and "Spanish" to describe enchiladas, tacos, and tostadas. In another *SaMo Jac* issue, Spanish Club members are described as Spaniards, "Feeling themselves to be true Spaniards by this time, they partook eagerly of tortillas, enchiladas, and frijoles"[382] (figure 22). A Spaniard identity is granted based on the act of eating Mexican foods.

The consumption of foods is more than the physiological of taste, the gustatory of sweet, salty, bitter, sour, and umami. As French gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's infamously stated, "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are."[383] Food is consumed physically and symbolically. As such, food is enacted as a symbol of colonial logic of containment and is entwined in fantasy and memory. For example, the ability to consume, rather than be consumed, effectively helped Anglos lay claims to leisure spaces like Olvera Street. Their authority over what is considered Mexican or Spanish food, and their ability to consume, rather than serve, effectively fixed Mexican and Indigenous people to place, relegating them to a consumable fantasy past. The very act of eating and its portrayal of racialized bodies becomes an extension of settler colonialism

[381] Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race, and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492-1700*, Critical Perspectives on Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[382] *The SaMo Jack*, (Santa Monica Junior College), Vol. VII, No. 32, June 3, 1936.
[383] See Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, The Physiology of Taste, Or Transcendental Gastronomy, Translated by Fayetter Robinson (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakinston, 1854 [1825]).

that seeks to eliminate racialized bodies and regulate their movement. The idea of consuming the "other" helps us understand the perpetuation of racial tropes through food, as seen in 19th century cookbooks and novels.[384]

Olvera Street Scene Of Spanish Club Meeting

Members of the Spanish club, Los Hidalgos, spent a very enjoyable evening last Wednesday, when they attended a Spanish theater in Los Angeles. Feeling themselves to be true Spaniards by this time, they partook eagerly of tortillas, enchiladas and frijoles. Beulah Hart, president of the organization, announced that the next meeting would be in the form of a festival at her home, the date to be decided upon later.

Mrs. H. R. Cejudo, adviser of the club, accompanied the group on the trip to Los Angeles.

Figure 22 Spanish Club outing, SaMo Jac, October 21, 1931

The consumption of Mexican foods reflects the embodiment of Spanish colonizers with agency to determine who can consume and be consumed. The concern here is not about what is authentic rather who gets to define these boundaries. Tangentially, ethnic studies scholars have investigated the ways in which colonial food projects serve to assimilate immigrant peoples, by consuming the "right" foods.[385]

The very sensorial experiences of taste and smell have been central to the racialization of immigrant communities over time. As historian Natalia Molina describes, Asian Americans and Latinx populations become the "diseased," the "smelly and unwashed" immigrants subjected to chemical sprays and hygiene codes.[386] Where cleanliness was a central trope of United States

[384] See Kyla Tompkins, *Racial Indigestion.*
[385] See George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*.
[386] See Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles*.

expansionism, it expanded into the arena of food through taste and smell. Food became another avenue for Anglos to distinguish themselves from racialized "others." For example, food historian Rebecca Earle finds that Spanish colonizers in the conquest of Spanish America sought to distinguish themselves from Native populations through food. Spaniards cautioned of the "dangers" of consuming maize, cassava, and herbs to establish a bodily difference between them and Indigenous peoples.[387] In this sense, food and the act of eating, demarcated bodily difference. Smells become an extension of racial projects in and of itself. Consider Natt Piper's description of Placita Olvera in 1930,

> "a street in which the fiesta spirit lives—every day and every night. Beautiful coloring; soft guitar music; pungent odors from the open-air cooking of tamales, tocas [tacos], and enchiladas, cries of vendors of native wares and the constant stream of visitors all blend into a fabric…"[388]

The "pungent odor" of enchiladas and their "delicious" taste become symbolic markers of difference between Anglos and racialized others. Ethnic studies scholar Oscar Gutierrez argues that through odor, poor communities of color in Huntington Park are understood as sites of waste. Further, the constant moving and uncertainty of odor (and their smells) shift how we think about space. Drawing from Gutierrez' work, I argue that the smell of food and the act of eating shape how we think about racialized space. Smell and taste are tools for asserting a white spatial imaginary that relegates racialized people as disposable.[389] Authority to taste and smell become a means to own the very people that served these foods. For example, while Mexican food in Olvera Street was touted as savory and delicious foods, it was only such when consumed by Anglo

[387] According to conquistadores, the diets of Native peoples that reflected "inferiority," to their so-called "superior diet" of red wine, cheese, wheat bread, and olive oils. She finds that for many Spaniards, they worried that the consumption of Native diets, including grasshoppers, cassava, sauteed worms and more, would turn them into Indigenous peoples. See Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador*.
[388] Natt Piper, "El Paseo de Los Angeles," in *The Architect and Engineer*, December 1931, 33-36.
[389] According to George Lipsitz, a white spatial imaginary is inscribed in the physical contours of the places whee we live, work, and play, and it is bolstered by financial rewards for whiteness." It produces privatization and controlled environments. See Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*.

visitors. It is the palatable consumption of Mexican and Spanish foods and thus people, which granted ownership over the landscape of Olvera Street. Possessing the past becomes a means to possess the landscape in the present.

The sensorial realities of foods, tasting, smelling, and eating, evoke a regional identity of an Anglo future and a romantic, Spanish past to further relegate Mexican and Indigenous peoples in the past. Similarly, squatters of greater El Monte relied on a mythos of Anglo pioneers, an extension of Manifest Destiny ideals, to claim and take Indigenous land and create a history tied to Anglo migrations West. Food—its cultivation, production, and labor—critically shapes space, particularly concerning boundaries, population statistics, and power. Residents within regional places put forth particular representations of history and identity that may not always be representative of its current inhabitants. Understanding the role of foodways in establishing regional identity—a process of civic identity and memory—helps us understand how the processes of laying claims to space shape racial formation and placemaking practices in the Central San Gabriel Valley. However, where Anglos relied on foodways to create racial difference, Mexican immigrants in El Monte utilized food entrepreneurship to create their own sense of community in Anglo-dominant places.

II—Mexican Tiendas in Hicks: Labor Camps and Entrepreneurship in a Mexican Barrio

Mexican groceries in Hicks Camp reflected autonomous communities that challenged common presumptions of labor camps as dirty, and underdeveloped areas. El Monte's Hicks Camp was named after its German owner, Robert Hicks. In the early 1900s, Robert and his son Stanley Hicks served as labor dispatchers for local farms by offering contracts to Mexican immigrants,

earning an income for recruiting workers.[390] Becoming a center for Mexican families, Hicks Camp provided rental land for many immigrants moved into Hick's Camp. An influx of Mexican families began paying Mr. Hicks rent to build a home on his land instead of taking his labor contracts.[391] This provided Hicks a steady flow of income via rent payments from hundreds of Mexican families. What once began as a means to secure labor contracts with Hicks, developed into a rental region, a community of dirt roads, with little plumbing and running water. Although the roads weren't paved, Mr. Hicks would plow the dirt roads once a year to even out the dirt. By 1930, around 800 residents lived in the community.[392] As Felix Ramos, resident of Hick's Camp, recounts, "That's the way we grew up. Our streets were all dirt. We didn't have any pavement. Our houses were all wooden and everyone made their own home according to how they wanted to build their home. We owned a home, but we didn't own the land. The land was owned by Mr. Hicks."[393] Adding to this pattern were the racially restrictive covenants of the 1920s spreading throughout Southern California that reached greater El Monte, leaving many immigrant families to seek refuge in Hick's Camp. Restrictions enacted by real estate companies, planners, and city officials would lead to racial housing covenants, barring certain racial groups from property ownership.

Life in the Labor Camps

According to historian Daniel Morales, from 1910 to 1972, Hick's Camp was a vibrant Mexican community in El Monte, growing to a population of over a thousand residents by the

[390] Cecilia Rasmussen, "The Heyday and Decline of a Lively Barrio," Los Angeles Times, November 27, 1995
[391] Daniel Morales, "Hicks Camp: A Mexican Barrio," in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft, (eds.), (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020).
[392] *Cuentos de El Barrio: The Barrio and Beyond*, City of El Monte Centennial Edition, La Historia Historical Society, Vol. 4, 1, Fall 2012.
[393] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Romeo Guzman and Daniel Morales, 2014.

1930s.[394] While Hick's Camp (sometimes referred to as 'Hicks' by residents) represented a vibrant Mexican community of working-class people, it often meant making do with what you have. Ernie Ravago, whose father arrived in Hick's Camp in 1923, recounts making a piñata out of an old Quaker Oats box, taking turns to hit the piñata with other Hick's Camp children.[395] Ravago and his friends would make baseballs by stuffing old socks, another nod to the resourcefulness of Hicks residents when it came to everyday life. Similarly, Ramos remembers making his own Halloween costume, "During Halloween they wouldn't get me a costume, but I would go and get a sack of potatoes, cut off some arms, and I was a potato. We created our own things."[396] People knew each other, made friends, married, and supported one another. In the 1950s, Hick's Camp community members hosted an annual Christmas party, celebrating the holiday amongst family and friends in El Monte.[397] Local churches near and in the camp would sponsor free food and meals, further building community and leisure activities amongst members. Another labor camp would form in the nearby area called Hayes Camp (later known as Medina Court), but it would reflect class differences within the growing Mexican population of El Monte.[398] Stemming from a large wave of migrations following the Mexican Revolution, Hicks became an extension of the agricultural labor force—and its attached migrant settlements—in the citrus belt of Southern California.[399]

[394] Daniel Morales, "Hicks Camp: A Mexican Barrio."
[395] See *Cuentos de El Barrio: The Barrio and Beyond*, City of El Monte Centennial Edition, La Historia Historical Society, Vol. 4, 1, Fall 2012.
[396] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Romeo Guzman and Daniel Morales, 2014.
[397] See La Historia, collection of photographs (uncatalogued).
[398] Hicks Camp was considered less developed than Medina Court. According to Morales, Medina Court was seen as a barrio more closely aligned with a middle-class sensibility.
[399] See Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own*; Carey McWilliams describes the San Gabriel Valley as part of the "citrus belt" of Los Angeles. See McWilliams, *Factories in the Field.*

Figure 23 Image of children in Hicks Camp, courtesy of La Historia Historical Society

While many worked seasonal agricultural jobs, labor camp residents found work in multiple job sectors. Manuel Garcia (Sr.) and his son, Jesse Garcia, were dairymen living in Hick's Camp. In one image, Don Margarito Felice and Dona Conchita are pictured at the Whippet gasoline station in Hick's Camp.[400] For many Mexican families in the labor camps, participating in seasonal agricultural labor was a normal part of everyday life. Summers were for agricultural labor up north in the Central Valley to tend to grapes, cotton, prunes, and other crops in the cities of Fresno and Merced, coming back down in the fall seasons for school. Felix Ramos, a resident

[400] Images can be viewed at *La Historia*. See *La Historia*, collection of photographs. It is unclear whether Whippet was located in Hicks Camp, or just outside (near the entrance) of Hicks.

of Hick's Camp from the 1940s to 1960s recounts, "I worked in the fields up north picking grapes, fertilizing grape fields, picking corn, cotton. Picking up prunes. I would go to San Jose where they had the drier where they made prunes into raisins at night. During the day I would pick fruits and during the night I would do raisins."[401] Many Mexican families in neighboring Baldwin Park would also travel up North for seasonal labor. The Baca family (chapter 2) moved in similar ways to supplement their tamal and meat business. In El Monte, participating in seasonal agricultural work was vital, especially as local production shortened after the harvesting season. Locally, Hicks residents worked on walnut ranches and berry farms.

Prior to the 1930s, walnut ranches required ample workers to tend to the orchards. According to Ravago, walnuts were a big part of his time in Hick's Camp. Walnut trees grew extensively in El Monte, with walnut trees across from Hicks Camp on Arden Drive, and the south side of the railroad tracks on the street. For some families in Hicks, they would pick walnuts in Whittier, living in tents for the four-month season during the harvest. Laborers would typically collect walnuts with a long pipe, reaching the high points of the trees. Walnuts would then be separated into piles, peeled and shelled and placed into sacks to collect pay. El Monte had extensive shelling places in Hicks Camp, Medina Court, in South El Monte, and a large processing house on the corner of Ramona (formerly Columbia Avenue) and Tyler. The Ravago family would save the discarded shells and use them for heat in the burning stove. El Monte had a walnut packinghouse during this time, but after a plague destroyed much of the walnut ranches in the San Gabriel Valley during the World War II era, and as prices dropped, walnut ranches dissipated.[402] Furthermore, gravel (rock companies) in Irwindale required a route to transport materials. This route would be

[401] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Romeo Guzman and Daniel Morales, 2014.
[402] A moth infestation would ruin much of the walnut trees across the San Gabriel Valley.

built on former walnut ranches. Even with local jobs, many residents from the labor camps still relied on seasonal agricultural labor to make ends meet during the depression.

Mexican communities in El Monte struggled during the Great Depression. Much like the Baca family who took on seasonal agricultural jobs and sold cheese and foods from their land, Mexican families in the El Monte labor camps followed suit. Backyard gardens became a means to survive food shortages, and seasonal agricultural jobs afforded an income when local jobs were no longer available. But most importantly, neighbors in the camps helped each other survive the depression.

Growing up in the labor camps was a polarizing experience for Mexican families in greater El Monte. While Hicks was a vibrant community of Mexican families making place in El Monte, the incorporated city of El Monte was an Anglo dominant community. Historian Daniel Morales finds that while the monumental *Mendez v. Westminster* (1947) won a ruling against school segregation, the El Monte School District remained segregated after the ruling. Some community members of Hicks recall the segregated classrooms. Felix Ramos recounts his experience as an elementary school student, "We were looked down upon. I would be in class and they wouldn't help me to read or learn. And the Anglos are doing all the learning. So I would go to the next grade. Just because of my age. They could care less."[403] In his first few years of school, the classrooms were segregated. Moving into fifth grade, he took classes with Anglo students. Both Japanese and Mexican students experienced discrimination in El Monte.

Piecing together a cultural history through foodways helps historians trace interethnic relations in the hinterlands closely tied to food production and labor. It also encourages a relational racialization approach, drawing from Molina, to understand how Mexican placemaking was also

[403] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Romeo Guzman and Daniel Morales, 2014.

shaped by relations with Japanese residents.[404] The school setting reflected many of the daily Mexican-Japanese interactions for working-class communities in El Monte. Ernie Ravago, who grew up in Hick's Camp in the 1930s, recalls school memories with his Japanese classmates. At the time, Japanese and Mexican students would go to school together, separated from their Anglo counterparts. However, Ravago saw this as a privilege, "We got along real well with the Japanese kids. Coming to school no one could speak English very well. Our parents didn't speak English and their parents didn't speak English either."[405] The lunch table became a means to exchange, to share in the hardships of feeling like outsiders in an Anglo majority city. Food became a site of shared experience, "All we had was tacos or burritos, papas, con huevo, or chorizo con huevos, frijoles, con papas. Sometimes we would trade our burritos with Japanese kids. They had rice balls (onigiri) wrapped in seaweed, sushi, cookies with salmon. They were good and something entirely different."[406] Food became an avenue for students to share in a collective struggle of segregation. And it reflected cross-racial collaborations and interactions during the time.

In the early 1900s, many Mexican and Chinese residents worked as laborers and farmers in greater El Monte. A section of El Monte, known as Chino Camp (or "Chinese" in Spanish and colloquially often referring to a person of East Asian descent) was home to Asian agricultural laborers. From 1860 to 1910, Chinese immigrants represented skillful truck gardeners, farmers, peddlers, fruit packers, and harvest laborers in California.[407] In 1907, Chino camp city included 500 Chinese and Japanese laborers, mostly working on the railroads and agricultural sector.[408]

[404] Natalia Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History Through a Relational Lens."
[405] Ravago, "A Walk in Time With Memories of Growing up in Hicks Camp, El Monte," in *Cuentos de El Monte*, p.9.
[406] Ravago, *Cuentos de el Barrio*, p.9.
[407] See Sucheng Chan, *The Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910.*
[408] These migrations stemmed from the prior century, where Chinese laborers migrated to Los Angeles to labor on the railroads (mid-1870s). The first railroad in Los Angeles was the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad, built by General Phinease Banning in 1869. Over 4,000 Chinese workers built the Southern Pacific Railroad (connecting Los

During this time, the United States saw a total exclusion of Chinese labor and then throughout the next three decades, Asian immigration was brought to standstill.[409] The Alien Land Law and the relaxation of immigration quotas for Western hemispheric immigrants (Mexicans) further shifted the preference from Chinese agricultural workers to Mexicans workers.[410] Concurrently, Japanese immigrants entered the agricultural sector in the late 1880s.

Many Japanese farmers in the hinterlands cultivated extensive amounts of land when the Great Depression caused land values to drop across California.[411] This allowed Japanese agricultural workers to lease farms despite the Alien Land Law of 1920 which barred Japanese immigrants from owning land.[412] As Japanese and Mexican populations grew from 1900 to 1930, interethnic relationships formed between Japanese tenant farmers (who rented from their Anglo counterparts) and Mexican laborers looking for employment.[413] Where the Japanese population in El Monte increased, by the 1930s, the Chinese population had decreased as more Anglo ranchers hired Mexican laborers for agricultural work. The racial makeup of the city would continue to shift due to land ownership restrictions and the regulation of inter-marriage (California Miscegenation Laws).[414] Mexicans would continue to seek agricultural work, dominating work in Japanese-run truck farms in greater El Monte. In the 1930s, Mexican and Japanese farmers would sell, exchange,

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Angeles and San Francisco) completed in 1876. As railroads expanded across the nation in Texas and Kansas, many workers from Southern California would travel as *traqueros* laying track for the railroads' expansion. As the first railroads neared completion, many Chinese workers sought work in the agricultural sector (1870s).

[409] At this time, most of the Native population in Los Angeles had been pushed towards Inland Southern California.

[410] Considering that in the late 1800s, the Chinese labor force dominated wheat farming.

[411] By 1917, the growing population of Japanese farmers would unite to form the Japanese Farmers Association. The association supported Japanese farmers hoping to make place amidst the Alien Land Laws and largely represented truck farming in Los Angeles. The growth of Japanese truck farmers in Los Angeles would lead to a rich network of diverse farmers in the hinterlands.

[412] Where U.S. immigration policies restricted Asian migrations in the mid-1920s, Anglo growers shifted their focus from Asian labor to Mexican labor. This was further facilitated by the great Mexican migration resulting from the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917). Rather than previous migration patterns represented by single males, Mexican families migrated as a unit, further adding to Mexican settlements across citrus producing regions.

[413] From 1900 to 1930, over 750,000 Mexicans migrated to the United States.

[414] First enacted in California in 1913 to restrict Chinese and Japanese populations, revision to the Alien Land Law in 1920 further making lease agreements with undocumented "aliens" (read Chinese and Japanese) illegal.

and purchase supplies and foods from each other in El Monte. For example, in 1920 Johnson Sing ran the largest asparagus farm in the San Gabriel Valley, encompassing 60 acres east of Arden Drive in El Monte.[415]

Mexican families labored on Japanese tenant farms in El Monte. Ravaga recalls the Owishi family in El Monte. The Japanese family had a farm north of Bixby Street of yellow corn, onion, and Italian squash, reaching Lower Azusa Road, and sold fertilizer. By this time, Hick's Camp community members had organized to get a water well. According to community members, Chino Camp was located North of the pump, encompassing around 7 to 8 houses.[416] Ravaga also recalls the Nagao family whose horses helped cultivate corn, onions, and squash. During the holidays the Nagao family held hayrides for 25 cents, riding community members on wagons across the fields. The Nagao family also ran a berry stand on Lower Azusa Road and Tyler Avenue (now Santa Anita), selling an assortment of berries, walnuts, and candies. Many Hick's Camp teenagers worked on berry farms in El Monte. Eva Ravaga worked as a berry picker, earning 8 cents an hour, and eventually earning 10 cents an hour during the summer.

Where Ramos' godparents had a small store, it still meant financial struggles, "I remember when I was a kid during the summer you get ready for school. They would go buy me a pair of Levis, a new shirt, and shoes. It was awesome for me. I would put them on and go to sleep with them because I was excited to put them on."[417] As Ramos grew up, he attended Rosemead High School, dropping out after 6 months. He decided to make his own money, working as a construction worker and then in the fields, "We used to have fields behind Hicks Camp… We used to pick corn, and different vegetables they grew there. For a big sack of onions they would give

[415] See poster on "Chino Camp," at *La Historia*.
[416] See Ernie Ravago, "A Walk in Time with Memories of Growing up in Hicks Camp, El Monte," in *Cuentos de el Barrio*.
[417] Oral history with Felix Ramos, 2014.

you 25 cents. You had to pickup a whole sack of onions and chop them."[418] Ramos would travel for seasonal agricultural labor, attesting to the local farms in El Monte that would supply Mexican residents of Hicks with local labor and small earnings. By the age of 17, Ramos would continuously travel up North for seasonal agricultural work, eventually joining the army. Ramos' account reflects just one of a handful of Mexican grocers and restaurant owners that challenged regional power structures attempting to contain them to place.

From Mexican Tiendas to Mexican Restaurants: Entrepreneurship in Hicks

In contrast to the Limoneira ranch in Corona where workers were required to purchase everyday goods like food and drink from the company store, Mexican workers and Mexican families in Hicks Camp experienced some agency as a labor camp that was not owned by a company. Mexican residents in Hicks addressed Anglo boundaries to purchase and consume foods in the city by creating their own businesses.[419] And, Mexican grocery stores and gas stations became contact points, spaces that facilitated daily interactions between store owners, children, and families. Tiendas became avenues of community formation, where everyday interactions like purchasing goods, candy, and playing in the streets reflected autonomous counter-spaces that challenged Anglo claims to space. Where segregation contained Mexicans to space, these communities formed their own sense of place. The labor camps of El Monte were vibrant communities of immigrant populations hoping to make place, challenging an Anglo regional heritage that claimed the region as exclusively white. Here, I am reminded of Robin D.G. Kelley's

[418] Ibid.
[419] José M. Alamillo, *Making Lemonade out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

work that resistance outside of protests, city hall meetings, and politics, *matter*.[420] People's everyday acts of resistance, whether intentional or not, make a difference.[421]

Where the Pioneer Days festival sought to distance the city from a Spanish and Mexican past, these autonomous tiendas and businesses (which at times attracted white customers) became counter-spaces for envisioning an alternative regional heritage that included Mexican immigrants. I pause here to recognize that other Mexican barrios existed in El Monte (Medina Court, Granada Street, Chino Camp, and La Sección), however I focus on Hick's Camp and discuss a restaurant in Medina Court.[422] Hicks camp represented an autonomous, mostly Mexican community of working-class families. While many residents in Hicks were agricultural laborers, a handful of residents established themselves as merchants and restaurant owners. These businesses met the growing demands of foodstuffs for Mexican residents in Hicks.

The stories of Mexican grocers attest to the autonomous nature of Hicks Camp that challenged Anglo journalists' portrayal of Hicks as a shanty town. For many journalists in the first half of the 20th century, Hicks Camp was described as an undesirable area riddled with drugs and gang activity.[423] Yet, everyday struggles and interactions of Mexican communities in Hicks challenge these assumptions. For example, community members organized to establish water and plumbing, and they created their own businesses and restaurants that reflected community needs. In the first half of the twentieth century, three to four Mexican groceries existed within the labor

[420] He develops an infrapolitics, everyday resistance by Black working class people. Infrapolitics, as method of resistance, describes "the daily confrontations, evasive actions, and stifled thoughts that often inform organized political movements." Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*, (New York: Free Press, 1996), p.166.
[421] Kelley pushes us to rethink resistance in the everyday, regardless of intention.
[422] For details on Mexican barrios in and near El Monte, see Ernie Ravago "A Walk in Time with Memories of Growing Up in Hicks Camp, El Monte," in *Cuentos de El Monte: The Barrio and Beyond*, La Historia Historical Society, Vol 4, 1, 2012.
[423] See Cecilia Rasmussen "The Heyday and Decline of a Lively Barrio," Los Angeles Times, November 27, 1995.

camp of El Monte.[424] *La Historia*, a grassroots community archive dedicated to preserving and collecting Mexican histories of the area, has created an important intervention in filling in the gaps.[425] One of their most valuable projects includes a series of images from the labor camps showing the placemakers of Hicks: families, mothers, business owners making place in a city that did not readily welcome them.[426]

Figure 24 Image of Don Nacho's store in Hicks Camp. Courtesy of La Historia Historical Society

[424] In an oral history with Felix Ramos, he recounts knowing of three Mexican grocery stores in the camps. Images and conversations with La Historia board members point to four grocery stores existing within Hick's Camp.
[425] With fragmented archives, it has been difficult to piece together this history.
[426] Photographs are viewable at La Historia. Due to protecting these images and reducing the exploitation of these histories, visitors are not allowed to take pictures of the photographs. Any images included in this dissertation from La Historia are granted with permission and a usage fee that supports La Historia's efforts to preserve, collect, and care for the histories of Mexican community members of El Monte.

Through photographs at La Historia, I traced a few of the Mexican grocers that developed businesses from the camps. Don Nacho (Ignacio) Gutierrez and Eva Gutierrez owned *La Nacional Tienda de Abarrotes y Legumbres* (La Nacional) in Hicks (see figure 24). They sold a variety of goods, including legumes, tortillas, meats, and more. Doña Maria Guevara owned a restaurant in Hick's, one of the few Mexican restaurants in the community. According to historian Daniel Morales, the store gained lots of customers beginning in the 1940s with the influx of braceros coming into work agricultural jobs.[427] *Las Quince Letras*, another Mexican grocery store, was owned by Don Rafael Contreras, godfather of Felix Ramos. Primary sources from La Historia are paired with an oral history from the South El Monte Arts Posse digital archive, and La Historia's community anthology *Cuentos De El Monte*.

For the few Mexican families that owned a business, they often had to "make do with what you have" and quite literally building stores via the home front, a typical characteristic seen in many *abarrotes* in Mexico and Central America.[428] In an oral history, Ramos recounts how his godfather built their family home and store in Hicks, "I remember as a little kid, we didn't have any stores in Hicks. So we had to build our own… The home well, it was pretty strong. It had a bedroom, one restroom, and we had a little kitchen and a little living room and then the store in the front and a room for storage."[429] Running a store front out of your home afforded economic opportunities to make money, especially during the depression. These stores were reflective of the hard work and hustle of food entrepreneurship and vending.

[427] Daniel Morales, "Hicks Camp: A Mexican Barrio," in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, eds. Romeo Guzman, Carribedan Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020).
[428] Abarrotes, or small convenience stores, often family run, that sell foods, food goods, chips, sodas, and more.
[429] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Daniel Morales and Romeo Guzmán, by South El Monte Arts Posse (SEMAP), conducted on January 14, 2014, courtesy of Romeo Guzmán.

Felix Ramos discusses that the hard work at his godfather's store in Hicks was formative to his life growing up in the labor camp. Born in Los Angeles in 1937 and raised by his *padrino* and *madrina* in Hick's Camp, Felix recalls Las Quince Letras, his godfather's store, "My madrina first had a molino. They sell masa, tortillas, all that stuff. Then it became a grocery store. I was raised by taking care of that store. I would go and clean up on the weekends and take care of the business. Whatever had to be done."[430] The Contreras family was able to raise money to build the store front from their work on the Mexican railroads.[431] At the time (1940s), railroad workers made good money, which allowed them to save money and build the store front. The Contreras family was resourceful, using ample strategies to maximize profits, like purchasing meat in bulk and making cuts themselves in their family store. Ramos recounts,

> "I used to take half of a cow, cut it in half, and cut off one leg cut the ribs out, and the other leg, then I had to slice to make the beef for beef stew, and the steak...every part of the cow had a different quality of meat. We did all that ourselves in the store. We cut all the meat. We would buy from where they slaughtered the cows in East LA, and we would bring the whole cow in the car and cut it up. That was a way to save more money. My dad [godfather] would save because of the labor."[432]

It was these moments of resourcefulness that could afford the Contreras family a means to make a few more dollars. Where Anglos laid claims to space by asserting authority over the consumption of ethnic foods, Mexicans in El Monte enacted foods as a form of entrepreneurship to sustain their autonomous communities. Natalia Molina urges us to consider that Mexican immigrants made important contributions to their communities beyond the traditional scope of resistance.

I heed Molinas' call to recognizing these contributions by considering how Mexican tiendas in Hicks represented everyday resistance to Anglo claims to space and regional heritage.

[430] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Daniel Morales and Romeo Guzmán, by South El Monte Arts Posse (SEMAP), conducted on January 14, 2014, courtesy of Romeo Guzmán.
[431] Two railroads were being built, La Nacional y Internacional.
[432] Oral History with Felix Ramos, 2014.

The existence and history of these stores effectively challenge the Anglo pioneer myth of El Monte. Mexican restaurants challenged white claims to spaced and regional identity.

The grocery stores, gas stations, and restaurants became contact points for the community, facilitating interactions for Mexican families, children, and community members. Ramos states, "I knew a lot of people because they used to come to the store [Las Quince Letras] and buy groceries. The Galvanez, the Rodriguez. There were a lot of Neto, Navarette, a lot of nicknames of the people that used to come. I still see once in a while one or two. We get a reunion once a year here in the park. We get the Cantaranas, Hick's, Medina Court all together, La Mision. And we bring potluck and tell stories."[433] Everyday interactions at these Mexican tiendas became a part of making place, a community of immigrant families and workers. For historian Mark Ocegueda, Mexican restaurants in San Bernardino, like the Mitla Café, were anchors of community life, facilitating immigrants' transition from Mexico.[434] Similarly, the Mexican tiendas and restaurants of Hicks facilitated daily interactions, placemaking practices, and everyday life that challenged a regional identity that centered whiteness. That is, everyday acts of resistance significantly impact power dynamics and race relations.

Molina reveals that ethnic restaurant owners and workers, while not explicitly working to subvert social norms, are still placemakers that shape the urban landscape. Similarly, store owners facilitated placemaking in the labor camps of El Monte. For example, many children growing up in Hicks recall Don Margarito's gas station. Ernie "Neto" Ravago recalls stopping by Don Margarito's store for patches to fix flat tires. Ravago and his friends would swing by the gas station to pick up a patch and fix tires as purchasing new ones was often impossible because of economic

[433] Oral history with Felix Ramos, conducted by Daniel Morales and Romeo Guzmán, by South El Monte Arts Posse (SEMAP), conducted on January 14, 2014, courtesy of Romeo Guzmán.
[434] See Mark Ocegueda, *Sol y Sombra: San Bernardino's Mexican Community 1880-1960*, dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 2017.

circumstances. This is just one of many instances where community members enacted a resourceful mentality to fix things when money was low. Cecilia Hernandez who grew up in Hicks, recalls stopping at Don Margarito's gas station to purchase one cent candies when they had little money to spend.[435]

For many children, Don Margarito's gas station served as a social hub, a quick stop for a treat, to mingle with friends, and to briefly talk to Don Margarito. Billy Aguirre recalls hanging out at Don Nacho's store as a kid and teenager, a local meeting spot for his close friends. Felix Ramos would eventually marry Maria Guevarra and have three children. Guevarra's family also owned a store in Hick's Camp.[436] Maria's grandmother owned a restaurant (one of two in Hick's Camp) which would feed an array of customers, from Braceros to attorneys.[437] At night, the restaurant became a molino, a masa assembly to make and prepare fresh tortillas to sell to Mexican customers of Hick's Camp. The restaurant would eventually become one of the handful of Mexican grocery stores in Hicks. Ramos recounts that while there were more Mexican owned stores in the outskirts of the camp, only three existed in Hicks.[438] Don Rafael, another Hicks resident, owned a grocery store on Main Street.[439]

The mobility of Mexican vendors and entrepreneurs also challenged a white mobility which relied on the containment of racialized peoples. Where Anglos utilized taste, smell, and consumption to lay claims to space and regional heritage, Mexican entrepreneurs and vendors were able to enact a Mexican mobility by vending foods and common goods. For example, Joe

[435] See Cecilia Hernandez, "God's Country: Hicks Camp," in *Cuentos de El Barrio: The Barrio and Beyond*, City of El Monte Centennial Edition, La Historia Historical Society, Vol. 4, 1, Fall 2012.
[436] One of the 3 to 4 total Mexican grocery stores in Hicks. The name is unknown.
[437] In an oral history, Ramos recalls hearing these stories from family. The restaurant owned by the Guevarra family was established before Ramos was a child, and it would eventually become the Guevarra family's grocery store after making enough money from the restaurant and masa sales. Name of restaurant is unknown.
[438] Where Ramos recalls 3 stores, *La Historia* pictures and narratives refer to a total of 4 Mexican grocery stores.
[439] Name of the store is unknown.

Rodriguez recalls the vendors in Hicks that didn't have store fronts, instead providing mobile goods and services. Don Manuel's truck would stop in Hicks as a "grocery store on wheels," selling fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh meats, candy, and ice cream. Rodriguez would purchase candies from Don Manuel, as well as his favorite vanilla ice cream milk bar. Don Manuel's mobile store front connected to the history of Japanese truck farming as well as street peddlers that sold goods on bicycles in the early 20th century.[440] For Manuel, mobile vending allowed him to challenge regional boundaries that sought to contain immigrant populations to Hicks. He would vend in other labor camps, as well as other cities in the San Gabriel Valley. Where a few stories of Mexican grocers and mobile vendors exist, less remains in the archives about the Mexican restaurants in the labor camps of Greater El Monte.

Ethnic restaurants are cultural contact points for immigrant communities hoping to make place away from home. Where Mexican grocery stores facilitated placemaking practices, Mexican restaurants helped create spaces of agency. The story of Luisa Mendoza, owner of "El Nopal" Mexican restaurant remains one of the few stories within La Historia's collection. Luisa, known as Mama Chita, arrived in Hicks Camp around 1926. By this time, the labor camp had been established for a decade and a half. Mama Chita migrated from Abasolo, Guanajuato, Mexico in 1918. She secured domestic work in Santa Monica for many years, saving her earnings to eventually bring her family along. With the money saved, she was able to bring her children in 1923 and later moved to Hicks Camp in 1926. By this time, she also saved enough money to purchase a restaurant called "La Ventura" located on Main Street. According to her great grandson Sergio Paul Jimenez, she renamed it "El Nopal." She had extensive customers, from families in

[440] See Joe Rodriguez, "The Vendors," in *Cuentos De El Monte: The Barrio and Beyond*.

Hicks to Anglos in Greater El Monte.[441] Her children, Jesus "Jessie" Mendoza, Natividad "La Guera" and Frances "Mama Quica" all worked with Mama Chita at El Nopal. The family would eventually expand to three restaurants, two of which were located in Medina Court, "La Gloria" and "La Fiesta." La Gloria opened in the late 1930s in Medina Court. By 1940, Mama Chita's son-in-law, Tony Ortiz (married to Frances), helped build the third restaurant, La Fiesta, on Peck Road in Medina Court. As material, these restaurants provided food for customers looking for a hot meal. As symbol, these Mexican restaurants represented an autonomous community making place in an Anglo dominated region. As historian Natalia Molina posits, "restaurants can serve as social spaces that shape the neighborhoods in which they are located in ways that empower those who inhabit the surrounding area."[442] La Fiesta in El Monte—similar to Mitla Café in San Bernardino (1937) and El Nayarit in Echo Park (1947)—served as a form of public space where ethnic entrepreneurs acted as placemakers.[443]

La Fiesta provided a place for Mexican leisure, cultural practice, and joy. During Christmas time, La Fiesta restaurant was a family gathering place to visit the nativity scene created by Mama Chita. She began organizing a family Christmas tradition in Hicks. She created an elaborate nativity scene with the community, a common practice in many Mexican households that celebrates the birth of Jesus in the Catholic religion. The nativity scene would be displayed in her restaurant on Main Street, taking up a whole room in the restaurant for families to visit and relish. Everyday cultural practice, and the spaces (restaurants) that welcome these interactions, are part of quotidian resistance to regional power structures. By 1940, Luisa Mendoza had permanently

[441] See Sergio Paul Jimenez, "My Familia at Hicks Camp U.S.A: The Great American Barrio," in *Cuentos De El Monte: The Barrio and Beyond*.
[442] She finds that Mexican restaurant El Nayarit and its employees provided a social and recreational space where customers imagined their lives outside of being a worker. See Natalia Molina, "The Importance of Place and Place-makers in the Life of a Los Angeles Community: What Gentrification Erases from Echo Park," *Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. 97, No.1, pp.69-111.
[443] Natalia Molina, "The Importance of Place and Place-makers in the Life of a Los Angeles Community,"

moved to her third restaurant La Fiesta, in Medina Court. She continued her nativity scene during Christmas time where many Mexican families continued to visit during the holidays.

Closing Hick's

In the 1930s, while Hicks experienced population growth, it also shrunk in size due to repatriation. Repatriation, the forcible deportation of Mexican and Mexican American residents (1929-1939), hit the community of Hick's Camp. While there aren't specific numbers of how many families from greater El Monte were repatriated, Robert Hicks began demolishing the homes of repatriated families.[444] This would foreshadow the closing of Hicks in 1973. Moving into the 1940s, Hicks residents began to organize to gain support from El Monte to improve living conditions. While tenants paid Mr. Hicks rent, payments only covered an annual levelling of dirt roads. Trash collection was not included in the rental prices, leading to trash issues and rodent infestations. Community members organized to create a committee, supported by Father John V. Coffield, whom many Hicks residents discuss as an advocate and supporter of the community. The committee petitioned the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for better schools, housing, parks, and trash collection. While community members fought hard for changes, Mexican families continued to build the community of Hicks. By 1950s, Hicks had been renamed as Hicksville, with about 200 families and four churches.[445] Mama Chita passed away in the 1960s and Mama Quica Ortiz (daughter of Mama Chita) continued the family restaurant business.[446] By the 1960s, Hicks Camp had significantly shrunk in size as land was sold to developers and then the city of El Monte.

[444] Daniel Morales, "Hicks Camp: A Mexican Barrio," in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft, (eds.), (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020).
[445] Daniel Morales, "Hicks Camp: A Mexican Barrio," in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*.
[446] La Fiesta remained in the family until the 1980s.

In 1969, most of the roads in Hicks remained dirt roads, but a few streets like Maravilla had paved streets.

Moving into the 1970s, it was still difficult for Felix Ramos as an adult to make ends meet. With his three children and wife, he remembers, "We never went out to In-n-Out or a burger or nothing. Very rare. We couldn't afford that. On outings, we would pack our lunch, burritos, sandwiches and cokes and we would go to a park. That was our outing for Sunday. That's all we could afford. We didn't go to movies or anything."[447] Even as Hicks represented a vibrant, autonomous community, members struggled Even as an adult, racial covenants would bar Mexicans from Hick's Camp to get homes in the area, "We went through a lot. We couldn't purchase homes here [El Monte]. My father-in-law wanted to buy a property in Covina. Mexicans weren't allowed to own property in Covina."[448] As Ramos grew older and married, segregation ended in El Monte. But as Ramos recounts, there were some areas that did not want to recognize that, "And every time I would go into an Anglo store I would feel *menos*. *Me hacian menos*."[449] Ramos felt marginalized when simply purchasing groceries at Anglo-frequented stores like Stater Brothers and Ralphs, reflecting the fact that laws do not always reflect the social experience in a particular time period.

These difficulties foreshadowed the demolition of Hicks Camp in 1973, a result of the growing real estate business and the privatization of land. By this time, only 57 houses had remained. Those remaining families were forced to move out. Ramos recounts his memory of how Hick's Camp came to an end,

> "They started selling it in sections. First… By the railroad tracks we used to have a section here. But then they phased that out. I don't know if the bowl [sp] company phased them out. They phased a section out. Then we used to have a *bajadita*, they called it the carrisos,

[447] Oral history with Felix Ramos, 2014.
[448] Ibid.
[449] Ibid.

> and we used to go down the carrisos there. From here on, they built Anglo stuff. Then they started building houses. Then they put the school, they bought out Rio Vista school and bought out almost half of Hicks land and built a school. Then there was only a little street. Then around the 70s everybody had to move," including his father-in-law."

His father-in-law was given $18,000 for his house as the other remaining families were also offered compensation and the option to buy into the residential redevelopment. Ramos recalls that but anyone receiving money had to show proof of living in Hick's Camp for a certain amount of years. Similar to Chavez Ravine, most of the residents would not purchase a stake in the new project. The last demolition reflected redevelopment projects funded by the federal government to make way for freeways, public works projects, and private tract housing.[450]

Conclusion

> "What El Monte and South El Monte can teach us is that a borderland, fringe, edge city, and place of transit and departure might be a middle, but that the middle is often also the center of the action-in a real sense that too often goes unrecognized."[451]
> -Romeo Guzmán, Carribean Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft

In this chapter, I have discussed how Anglos and Mexican immigrants enacted foodways in diverse ways to lay claims to space. I argue that while foodways enabled an Anglo regional heritage and claims to space, Mexican food entrepreneurs and laborers challenged these presumptions through their own avenues of foodways: Mexican tiendas and restaurants in Hicks Camp. Where memory and heritage are enacted to create fantasy pasts and mythos, foodways play a major role in accessing Anglo claims to land. These myths heavily rely on the symbolic and material representations of foodways—the production, consumption, and distributions of food goods—to enact claims to space. Anglos utilized food spaces (restaurants, festivals, and orange production) to lay claims to space. Taste became a marker of difference in the Riverside through

[450] Daniel Morales, "Hicks Camp," in *East of East*.
[451] Guzmán, et. al., *East of East*, p.11.

the navel orange, a distinguishment from Mexican and Indigenous peoples. The navel orange became symbol of Anglo superiority, a rich and sweet taste connoting difference. In similar fashion, Mexican foods in Olvera Street become the marketable, palatable replacement for Mexican people. The consumption and exotification of Mexican foods established ownership and possession of Mexican people. In El Monte, a pioneering mythos, while attempting to separate itself from a Spanish and Mexican past, still drew from the Spanish fantasy (via costumes, dances, and barbecue) to celebrate the El Monte Pioneer Days festival. However, where foodways can replicate colonial projects, food entrepreneurship can also help lay claims to space for marginalized groups.

Mexican communities in Hicks Camp made place through their autonomous groceries and restaurants from 1910 to 1972. Detailing stories from a Mexican grocer family out of the labor camp shows the autonomous nature of Hicks. Mexican families made do with what they had, and enacted claims of space through the creation of stores and restaurants in Hicks. And yet, Mexican food entrepreneurs who owned their homes in the labor camps did not own the land. This would ultimately come to affect Mexican immigrant's relationship to space, eventually leading to the destruction of Hick's Camp in 1972. These community histories help us understand the ways space was racialized in the first half of the twentieth century through the stories of food workers and food vendors, a history building on the rancher-laborer relations explored in chapter two. In this case, place becomes an active agent of separation between Anglos and ethnic community members. These mythos and fantasy pasts have physical and material consequences on the present.

Chapter 4
California's Finest Walnuts: Marketing and Packing Walnuts in Puente

"Racialized space has come to be seen as natural in this nation"[452]
—George Lipsitz in *How Racism Takes Place*

"[Racism] appears at times in the most seemingly unmarked spaces—such as the breakfast table—to remind us that its power as an agent of discrimination exists despite recent attempts to render it invisible"[453]
—Theresa Preston-Werner

La Puente was once home to the largest walnut packinghouse in the nation. From the 1880s to the 1920s, Southern California produced 95% of California's walnuts, much of which were grown and packed in the San Gabriel Valley.[454] I situate walnut history within the local context of Rancho La Puente.[455] Specifically, I consider the walnut packinghouse of La Puente, home to the Diamond Brand Walnuts. The Workman family, who had received a Mexican land grant, planted walnuts in their rancho (present day La Puente/Industry) from the late 1800s into the 1920s.[456] Where citrus picking was largely done by a male labor force, walnut-picking represented a mixed labor force including family units.[457] In the walnut packinghouses, labor was largely done by (Anglo) women, a similar gendered pattern to citrus labor. In this chapter, I use the walnut as case study to discuss the marketability of nuts, an extension of citrus marketing heavily connected to land.

Where citrus culture and production dominated the agricultural output of California, this chapter considers the role of a less studied agricultural good: walnuts. In my exploration of

[452] George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, p.52.
[453] Theresa Preston-Werner, "Gallo Pinto: Tradition, Memory, and Identity in Costa Rican Foodways," p.22.
[454] According to historian Paul Spitzzeri.
[455] Rancho La Puente, an extensive Mexican land grant, includes areas of present-day Baldwin Park, Covina, West Covina, La Puente, Walnut, City of Industry, Hacienda Heights, Avocado Heights, and Whittier.
[456] The 1940s would see the fall of the walnut industry in Southern California largely due to the growth of the suburbs and the plummeting prices from the Great Depression, moving production up to the San Joaquin Valley.
[457] Take for example, the Ravago family in chapter three who picked and shelled walnuts in El Monte. Many families in the Central San Gabriel Valley worked to pick, shell, and sort walnuts in the citrus off-season.

walnuts, I focus on the marketing strategies deployed by California walnut growers to encourage and expand walnut consumption. Similar to the citrus industry, walnut conglomerates sought to push a "scientific" agenda, one which relied on the "nutritious" macronutrients of the nut to promote its consumption. Southern California walnut growers further latched on to the "cleanliness" of their nuts, particularly at the sorting and packing level to establish a "reputable" brand, as seen in their multiple advertisements and promotion materials. In this chapter I also offer a glimpse into the gendered marketing strategies by reviewing recipes promoted by the California walnut growers that were geared towards women consumers. I then explore the work of women at the La Puente walnut packinghouse. Where few primary sources remain of the women workers, I offer a glance into gendered labor hierarchies by analyzing a series of women's paychecks from the packinghouse. Exploring women's role in walnut packinghouses alongside nutrient-based marketing strategies gives us insight into how walnut production and consumption, together, reflected a gendered and racialized hierarchy in agricultural production.

I ask, how did California walnut corporations market and promote walnut consumption? What is the relationship between the gendered labor of walnut packinghouses and the promotion of walnut recipes? How did labor patterns differ within the multiple processes of walnut production? I argue that walnut growers developed a gendered, marketable symbol of California prosperity and health, one which further cemented regional hierarchies favoring growers, in place. I begin with a brief history of Rancho La Puente to understand how walnut production developed in the Central San Gabriel Valley. Afterwards, I conduct an analysis on walnut production, marketing, and the gendered role of walnut labor in the region.

From A Mexican Land Grant to Walnuts in Puente

Where Spanish missionaries and colonizers displaced Tongva villages, the Californios during the Mexican period of California would continue the exploitation and extraction of Indigenous labor and land. Californios, who were often Anglo males that intermarried Mexican women, perpetuated cycles of violence, abuse, and enslaved labor.[458] In Puente, many Californios were Anglo.[459] What we know as La Puente was referred to by Anglo squatters as the town of Puente, named in 1886 by Anglos migrating West.

In 1842, Don Julian (John Rowland) was granted a 17,740 acre Mexican land grant, named Rancho La Puente, by Governor Juan Alvarado.[460] At the time, the vast Mexican land grant included the areas of so-called Puente Valley, Azusa Valley, San Jose Hills, San Jose Valley, and part of the Puente Hills. Rowland, alongside William Workman, migrated from Taos, New Mexico, to the Los Angeles basin by travelling on the Old Spanish trail. Together, they acquired an *enlarged* rancho of 48,790 acres granted by Governor Pio Pico in 1845 (see figure 25). The land grant would grow to include the areas we know as Baldwin Park, Covina, West Covina, Puente Hills, La Puente, Hacienda Heights, Industry, Rowland Heights, and Walnut. After statehood, it took Rowland and Workman until 1867 to receive recognition of the land by the United States Land Commission, nineteen years after statehood. Participating in the lucrative hide and tallow (fat) business traded at the port of Los Angeles, Workman and Rowland herded cattle on their vast land for this purpose. The men would eventually divide the land holdings in half, each taking their respective parcels independently (1851).

[458] For history of Californios, see Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios*.
[459] Prior to the official incorporation of the city of La Puente in 1956, the city/area was known as "Puente."
[460] See Homestead Museum, https://www.homesteadmuseum.org/about-us/rancho-la-puente

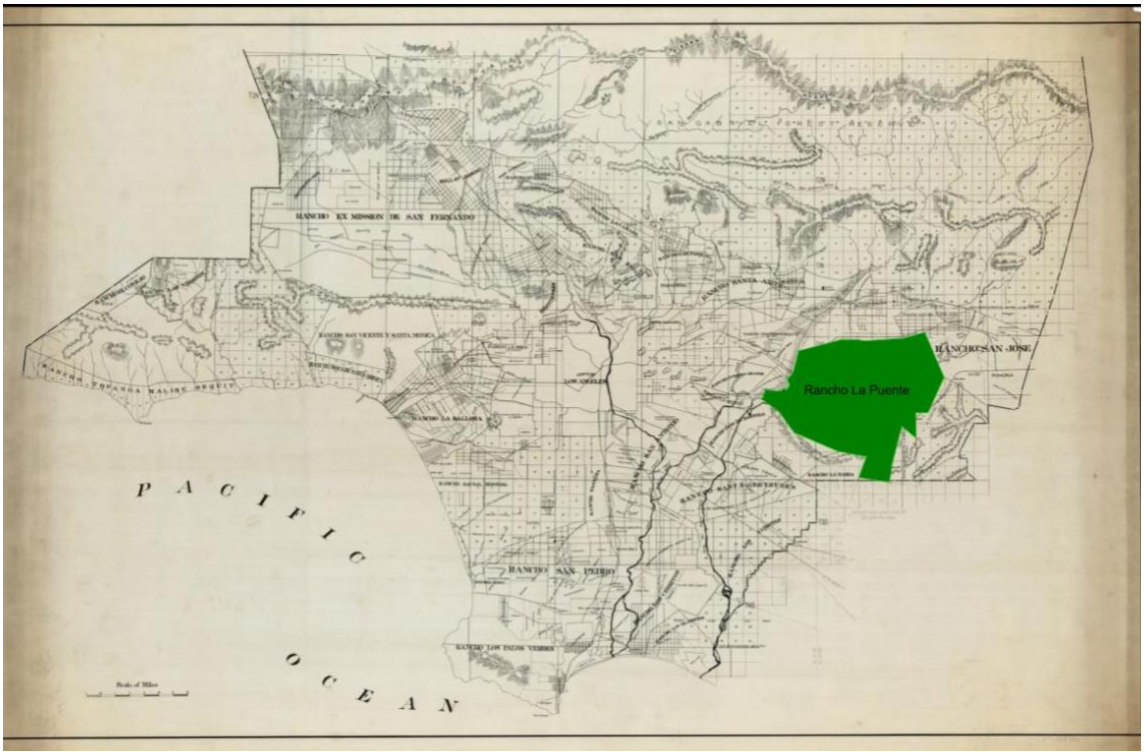


Figure 25 Image of Rancho La Puente in relation to other ranches.[461]

The Rowland Family

According to local narratives, in 1885, Albert Rowland (son of John and Charlotte Rowland) sold just one parcel of his many inherited land holdings to real estate developers A.E. Pomeroy and George Stimson.[462] This land became 37 small parcels of land they would sell in 1886, becoming the settlement of Puente. Upon its establishment, the town was home to 225 people. At the time, this area was largely rural, a vast agricultural land and former holding of mission grazing land. The land was cultivated for its grapes which would be used for wine making. Other agricultural crops in the area included an array of vegetables, barley, and wheat. In the late 1800s, ranchers in Puente began planting walnut trees, becoming one of the most lucrative businesses for ranchers in the area at this time. Some ranchers planted the native California walnut,

[461] Image retrieved from Los Angeles Public Library.
[462] See James Laffin, Lucas McQuillan, and Sergio Lopez, "Chapter 1: 1915-1924," Uncategorized item, Los Angeles County Public Library, La Puente, local history collection.

and others planted grafted varieties. In 1920, the town would be home to the largest walnut processing house in the world, processing over $1.5 million worth of walnuts. [463]

The Workman Family

Just as the lush, fertile land of citrus supported the agenda of land boosters in the late 1800s, so did the lush walnut groves of the San Gabriel Valley attract land purveyors and growers to the region. The Workman family, settling into their landholdings of Rancho La Puente, remade the region through walnuts. They were one of the earliest families to plant walnuts in the region, which would shape a lucrative and successful walnut industry in the Central San Gabriel Valley. The growth of walnut production in the region would eventually lead to the establishment of the largest walnut packinghouse in the United States. Walnut production grew extensively across the San Gabriel Valley falling in line with land boosterism of the 1870s (just as the citrus industry did). Where historians have analyzed the connection between land boosterism and the production of the orange, I consider how the walnut also shaped these relationships. I begin with a history of the Workman and Temple families.

The Workman family had two children, Margarita and Joseph. Margarita married Francis Pliny Temple (F.P.F Temple) having 11 children, 8 survived. By the end of the Mexican-American War (1848) and with the beginning of the Gold Rush, the hide and tallow industry shifted to an industry focused on the production of fresh meat. With the shifting industries, F.P.F Temple and his father-in-law William Workman decided to invest in walnuts. Margarita and F.P.F Temple continued this business and were able to accrue significant wealth from the walnut industry. In the next decade, the decline of the gold rush shifted the economy once again (1855). Together, William Workman and his son-in-law FPF Temple invested in real estate, railroads, oil, and opened their

[463] See James Laffin, Lucas McQuillan, and Sergio Lopez, "Chapter 1: 1915-1924." La Puente Public Library, Local History collection. Accessed May 2019.

own bank. Workman and Temple ran into difficulties, resulting in the need for a financial investment. In 1870, Lucky Baldwin, a land purveyor in the San Gabriel Valley (chapter 2), lent them money. Workman and Temple were unable to save the bank. Originally a $340,000 loan, the steep interest rate in the contract increased the debt to $575,000. Workman and Temple defuncted on the loan, resulting in a loss of most of their land holdings in 1879. Workman and Temple ceded around 18,000 acres of the Rancho La Puente, Workman's portion of the original Mexican land grant.

Baldwin would continue to invest in walnut orchards on his newly acquired land, further helping develop the area as a walnut-producing region. After Baldwin's passing (1909) his nephew would sell parcels of land from his extensive Rancho La Puente holdings. Walnuts became a major selling point of these parcels (see figure 26). The advertisement promoted the region as "the heart of the English walnut district where land is advancing in value everyday."[464] Similar to citrus, walnuts afforded Anglo ranchers a means to accrue wealth and land in Southern California. Where Baldwin and his family successfully took ownership of the Workman family land, the Workman-Temple children would make their own homes in neighboring cities with the little money they had left.

[464] Advertisement for Rancho La Puente, Los Angeles Record, November 2, 1911.

Figure 26 Image of land advertisement, Los Angeles Record, November 2, 1911

The sons of FPF and Margarita Workman Temple would continue investing in the walnut industry. Where the family lost a majority of their landholdings in Rancho La Puente, they were able to keep just a few acres of land they owned outside of the ranch. Their son Francis oversaw

the 75-acre homestead in Puente until 1888. Similarly, their son John owned a ranch in what is now Whittier Narrows, a large park and recreational area in South El Monte. Their third son, Walter P. Temple, lived in Montebello with his wife, Laura Temple.[465] Walter and Laura eventually discovered oil on their land, providing them with a considerable amount of money. Through this, they were able to purchase a piece of their family land back (present day city of Industry/La Puente). Walter and Laura Temple remodeled the original adobe house of Walter's grandfather, William Workman, adding plumbing and electricity to the home. They designed what is known as "la casa nueva" a 12,000 square foot Spanish colonial revival house and holding of the Homestead Museum in the city of Industry and lived there from 1917 to 1932.[466] The Temple family continued growing their wealth by following in their family footsteps, investing in walnuts, oil, and real estate businesses in Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley. Their investments would help them establish Temple City in 1923, Northwest of Industry and La Puente.[467] I now turn to a history of walnut production in Southern California.

Walnuts in California

The area between what is now called La Puente and Walnut is home to the Pemookanga tribe.[468] Tongva peoples worked *with* the land, creating extensive trade networks with other tribes, what historians Damon B. Akins and Wiliam J. Bauer Jr. refer to as Indigenous people weaving

[465] They would have four children, Tomas, Agnes, Walter Jr. and Edgar.
[466] Although in the city of Industry, it closely borders the city of La Puente, only a few miles from the Los Angeles County La Puente Public Library; Walter and Laura Temple had 3 survived children who would be raised in this home after moving from Montebello.
[467] Temple City borders El Monte, Rosemead, San Gabriel, East Pasadena, and Arcadia; But by the next decade (1932) the family once again lost their land and investments, including *la casa nueva*. The home would become a military school for boys and then a convalescent home. The city of Industry eventually acquired the Homestead and began restoration processes in the 1970s, opening to the public by 1981.
[468] As the "Mapping Indigenous Los Angeles" project states, the center of a map is not a static location. Maps represent relationships, extensive networks of trade and tribal connections. See map of Tongva villages, https://i0.wp.com/native-land.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Tongva-Villages-map.jpg?fit=1875%2C2205&ssl=1 .

the region together.[469] What sustained Tongva communities was acorns. While they did not contain high levels of protein, they contained vitamin B6 and fat, enabling Indigenous communities to survive the winter seasons.[470] Indigenous foodways of nuts and seeds were often seen as inferior by Spanish colonizers entering the region. And yet, in the next two centuries, Anglos would market and sell nuts as nutritious sources of healthy fats and protein.

According to the California Walnut Growers Association, walnuts in California were first planted by the missions and were then planted extensively after the Gold Rush (1849).[471] Where the English walnut originated in Iran, walnuts (of a different variety) existed in America prior to 1492.[472] The commercial production of nuts in California during the late 19th and early 20th centuries was concentrated in Southern California. Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties were the largest producers of nuts across the country. According to Leon Batchelor, horticulturalist for the University of California, the walnut flourished in the 20th century because of production practices in the previous century. Batchelor reports that the California walnut industry originated from walnuts that were first planted in California in 1867 by Joseph Sexton who purchased walnuts in San Francisco.[473] According to this report, two types of trees resulted: hard-shell and paper-shell walnuts. A third varietal, the Santa Barbara soft shell, became the dominant type of walnut, growing vigorously and deemed superior to the other two varietals. The soft shell produced larger and thicker nuts compared to their hard-shell and paper-shell

[469] See Damon Akins and William J. Bauer Jr., *We Are the Land: A History of Native California*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021).
[470] *We Are the Land*, 2021.
[471] See *The California Walnut*, California Walnut Grower's Association, (Los Angeles: 1919); According to Jerome B. Siebert, walnuts first appeared in California around 1867 with the English walnut (sometimes called the Persian walnut) on a commercial scale. According to Siebert, by the 1930s walnuts became one of the largest crops in California. See Jerome B. Siebert, *Marketing California Walnuts*, Working paper no. 676 (revised). California Agricultural Experiment Station, (Berkeley: University of California, 1994).
[472] Jerome B. Siebert, *Marketing California Walnuts*.
[473] It is assumed that these walnuts came from Chile.

counterparts.[474] Seedling trees were eventually cultivated in bulk, further helping develop the walnut industry in California. After proving lucrative, the demand for walnut trees skyrocketed. By 1871, French varieties had grown in popularity.

The walnut industry represented a lucrative business during the early 1900s. In 1909, walnuts were priced at 11.5 cents per pound. But by 1922, walnuts had doubled in value, costing 22 cents per pound.[475] Fancy budded walnuts increased from 15 cents to 26 cents. Americans consumed between 60,000,000 and 95,000,000 pounds of walnuts annually. For many, walnuts were consumed during the holidays, a seasonal food (as it was priced higher than other foodstuffs). Their popularity, spurred by marketing strategies used by citrus growers, shifted seasonal consumption to year-round consumption. By 1923, walnut production in California rose to 48,930,000 pounds, increasing more than 2.5 times the quantity of 1909.[476] Typically, walnut trees were planted at least 30 feet apart, and in some cases 60 feet apart. Some walnut trees in California did not experience deterioration after 40 years, but soil, drainage, and climate could affect these patterns. Recently planted walnut groves would take about 6 to 10 years to produce walnuts, and several walnut varietals existed throughout the state. The Chase, Placentia, and Ehrhardt were among the most popular. Chase and Ehrhardt varietals were found in the Puente region.[477] The largest walnut shipping centers in California were in Santa Ana, Whittier, Puente, Saticoy, and Santa Barbara.[478]

By 1915, seedlings were not as widely used and grafted or budded groves became the preferred varieties including Placentia, Eureka, Ehrhardt, Payne, Concord, and Grove. The

[474] Leon Dexter Bachelor, "Walnut Culture in California."
[475] For No.1 soft shells.
[476] Batchelor, "Walnut Culture in California," (University of California Press, June 1924), Berkeley, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin No. 379.
[477] Climate was a critical part of keeping walnuts safe. A reliable water source was critical as walnut trees required steady irrigation.
[478] Batchelor, "Walnut Culture in California."

Placentia, generally planted in Southern California, was representative of a successful walnut to grow commercially. By 1919, California produced 97% of the nation's walnut crops.[479] The Placentia was also one of the most profitable varietals in Southern California. Because of climate concerns, the Placentia was not preferred by growers in the Central Valley, who preferred the Eureka varietals. According to *Walnut Culture in California*, a report by a University of California agricultural experiment station, walnuts in California, Riverside and San Bernardino counties were beginning to plant more walnut trees as well as in Santa Clara, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Napa and Sonoma counties in 1924.[480] During this time, over 100,000 acres of walnut trees of various ages existed in California. In 1924, a well-grown tree could be sold for $1 to $2 per tree. Ideally, walnut trees would be planted 60 feet apart in each direction, but many growers planted trees 30 feet apart in rows that were 60 feet apart. Walnut trees were typically planted in January and February for soil purposes.

Where walnut production grew in the early 20th century, California walnut growers competed with walnut growers in Oregon and Washington. Growers in California looked towards citrus grower associations to develop their own organizations that promoted California walnuts. In the following section, I delve into a history of the California Walnut Grower's Association and analyze their advertisements to understand how they marketed the walnut towards women.

Marketing the Walnut: The California Walnut Grower's Association

[479] California Walnut Growers Association, ed., *The California Walnut*, USAIN State and Local Literature Preservation Project, California. (Los Angeles: California Walnut Growers Association, 1919).
[480] Leon Dexter Batchelor, "Walnut Culture in California," (University of California Press, June 1924), Berkeley, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin No. 379.

The California Walnut Growers Association (CWGA) formed in 1912, a member-owned cooperative seeking to promote, expand, and lead walnut-marketing in California. The association grew to a membership of 3,000 growers a few years after its founding, with the goal of standardizing their output. The CWGA was organized by Charles C. Teague, a founder of the California Fruit Growers Exchange (which would later become Sunkist Growers Inc.).[481] By 1935, the CWGA represented 39 entities and included 7,806 growers.[482] The CWGA had success in its early years of marketing walnut consumption during the holidays, becoming a Christmas staple.

The CWGA sought to promote the use of the walnut beyond holidays by promoting its nutritional value and marketing walnuts to women. The association took a gendered approach by offering recipes to women for baking and cooking foods with walnuts. The California Walnut Grower's Association published several publications to promote, advance, and market the walnut, from annual reports, cookbooks, and advertisements. These promotional materials resulted in high supply, demand, and profits in the industry. According to *The California Walnut* (published by the CWGA) by 1919, over 65,000 acres of land in California was dedicated to walnut production, representing an investment of over $60,000,000 in the industry.[483] In 1918, grower's profited $11,000,000 from the production of 40,230,680 pounds of walnuts. The output in 1919 was expected to surpass 40,000,000 pounds. Batchelor's report, *Walnut Culture in California* (published two years later) confirms that California produced 56,200,000 pounds of walnuts in

[481] Also see Alexandra Rasic, "From the Homestead Kitchen: Walnuts—A Gift That Keeps on Giving," *The Homestead Blog*, December 15, 2020, Accessed May 1, 2022.
[482] Harry Carlyle Hensley and Neil Hopper Borden, *Marketing Policies of the California Walnut Growers Association; A Study Appraising the Methods Used to Increase the Demand for Walnuts, with Emphasis Placed on the Value and Effectiveness of the Advertising, Sales, Promotion, Price Policies, and Distribution Channels Employed by the California Walnut Growers Association*, [U.S.] Farm Credit Administration. Bulletin No. 10 (Washington: [U.S. Govt. Print. Off.], 1937).
[483] California Walnut Growers Association, ed., *The California Walnut*, USAIN State and Local Literature Preservation Project, California, (Los Angeles: California Walnut Grower's Association, 1919).

1919, surpassing the projections made by the California Walnut Grower's Association.[484] With the continued growth of the walnut industry, the CWGA spent more time and money to promote their walnuts to women, basing their value in nutritional properties while offering recipes for breads, salads, and more.

In 1919, the CWGA launched a national advertising campaign, the first nut company in the United States to do so. In the California Walnut Growers Association pinnacle publication, *The California Walnut* (1919), nutritional content was a staple theme of describing and promoting the consumption of California walnuts. The CWGA latched onto statistics on protein values, comparing the walnut to other foods like beef steak, wheat flour, and potatoes (see figure 27). They state, "the walnut contains the essential elements for human nutrition in much more abundant quantities than any other article of daily diet."[485] Walnuts are compared with wheat flour and potatoes which are carbohydrates, not protein sources. Comparing a protein with a carbohydrate leads to a dramatic difference when solely considering protein contents, further noting the stark differences in nutritional values.

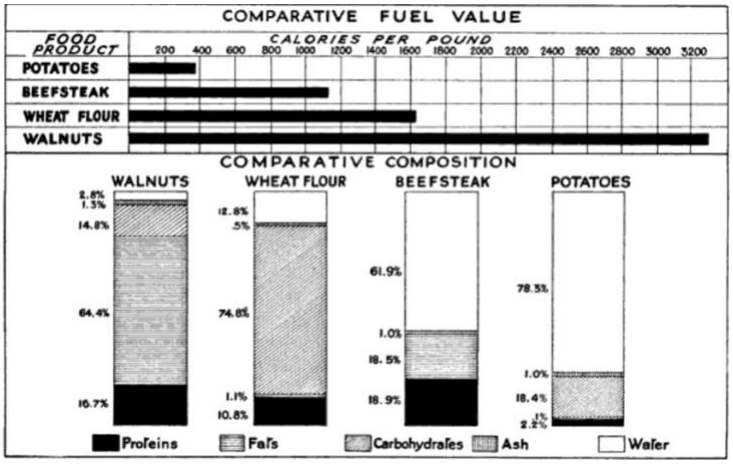


Figure 27 Image of nutritional facts, Walnuts in California, California Walnut Grower's Association, 1919

[484] Batchelor, Leon Dexter, "Walnut Culture in California."
[485] California Walnut Grower's Association, *The California Walnut*, p.13.

The CWGA developed a plan to encourage and promote walnut consumption and distinguish California walnuts from other state productions. In 1913 the CWGA created a brand name, the Diamond Walnut Growers, also known as "Diamond Brand" walnuts. Diamond Brand Walnut advertisements sought to promote the consumption of the brand's walnuts, further distinguishing itself from other walnuts (see figure 28). Similar to the promotion of the orange, the walnut became a symbol of California prosperity and health,

> "A drive through the miles and miles of the splendid walnut groves of California, a stop at one of the many modern packing houses, a trip through, watching the entire process, would show you why California's walnuts are finest…Diamond Brand walnuts are a most nutritious food, rich in fat and protein and containing a high percentage of nitrogen. Valuable as a healthful food, most delightful eating as they come from the shell, and adding much goodness to many dishes." (see figure 29 and 30).

Historian Douglas Sackman chronicles the citrus as empire by studying how citrus growers fabricated a rich Eden, a valley of fertile land and oranges. Oranges were marketed as nature's "pure" products.[486] The walnut industry followed suit by describing the "splendid walnut groves" as nutritious food. Around 1915, marketing strategies of the walnut further pushed everyday consumption of the walnut. Recipes were an important staple in promoting year-round consumption. Take, for example, the Diamond Brand brochure, which included over 12 recipes for cakes, lunches, and dinners (figure 28).

[486] See Douglas Sackman, *Orange Empire*.

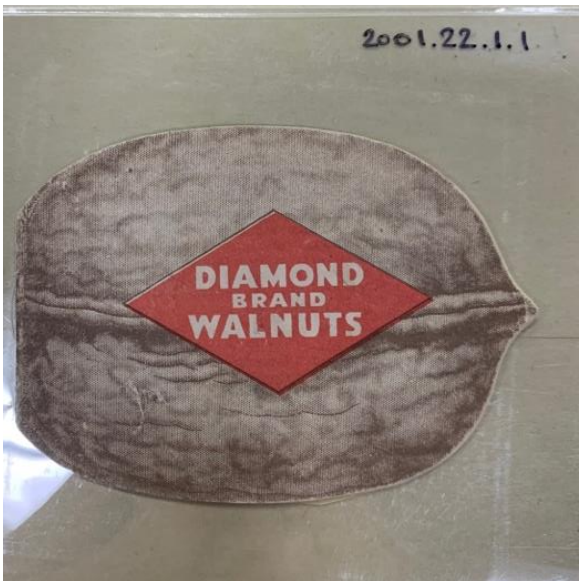


Figure 28 Image of Diamond Brand Walnuts brochure, shaped like a walnut, circa 1920s.[487]

This three-inch by two-inch mini advertisement by Diamond Brand walnuts (figure 28) referred back to health statistics from *The California Walnut* publication. It served as a customer introduction to the newly branded Diamond Brand Walnuts, whose packaging could "put an end to your buying walnuts of an unknown quality."[488] Materially, consuming Diamond brand walnuts meant consuming a nutritious food stuff, and symbolically, it referred to (white) Anglo superiority over walnut production, much like the citrus in Riverside afforded Anglo superiority over citrus production. As explored by Sackman in *Orange Empire,* growers created a race-based hierarchy with the help of scientists and land purveyors closely aligned to eugenic ideals of creating the perfect (white) human race.[489] Scientists of the U.S Department of Agriculture manufactured the perfect product of nature: the orange. Similar patterns occurred with the walnut.

According to the walnut advertisement, California walnuts were distinct for their rich, nutty *white* meats in comparison to darker meats from production elsewhere, a reflection of this

[487] Image taken by Natalie Santizo, April 2022. Courtesy of the Homestead Museum.
[488] See figure 27, Diamond Brand Walnuts brochure, "New 'Diamond' Package California Walnuts," courtesy of Homestead Museum.
[489] Douglas Sackman, *Orange Empire*.

eugenics-based principle of Anglo superiority seen with citrus.[490] The idea of the "unknown" walnuts without certified origin was juxtaposed with a "superior" Diamond brand walnut that carries "an absolute guarantee of quality—well-filled shells—rich, nutty, white meats. The kind of walnuts you always want to buy—but have never before had any way to identify them" (see figure 29).[491] Consuming the white, "rich, nutty" flavor meant consuming the best quality walnuts produced by Anglo growers. Here, I pause to discuss the relationship between the walnut and the orange, and how both products became an avenue for Anglos to create racial boundaries through taste.

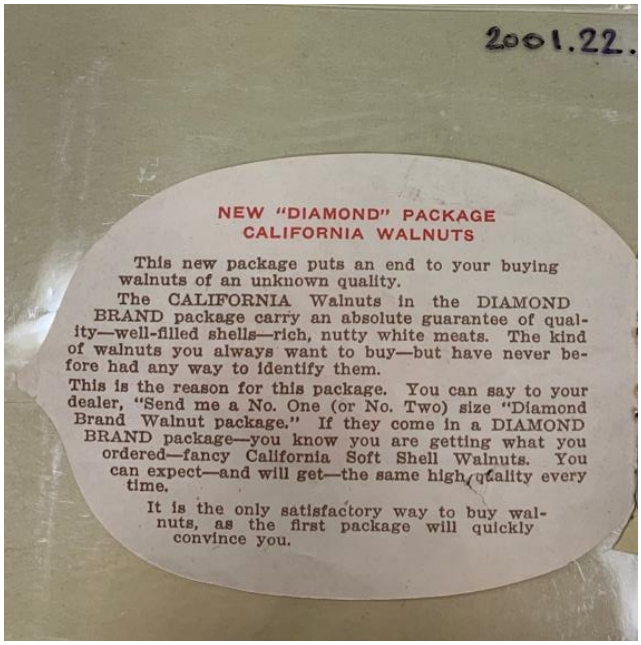


Figure 29 Image of Diamond Brand Walnuts brochure description[492]

[490] Premise exists for considering foodstuffs and trees as an extension of the eugenics movement establishing white superiority. See Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation*. While looking into the history of the eugenics movement in the United States, she considers how white people equated redwood trees with a white race. That is, Stanford trees became representative of the white race. In similar fashion, the white meat of the walnut connoted a pureness, a clean palatable nut.
[491] Diamond Brand Walnuts, advertising brochure. Homestead Museum Collection.
[492] Image taken by Natalie Santizo, April 2022. Courtesy of the Homestead Museum.

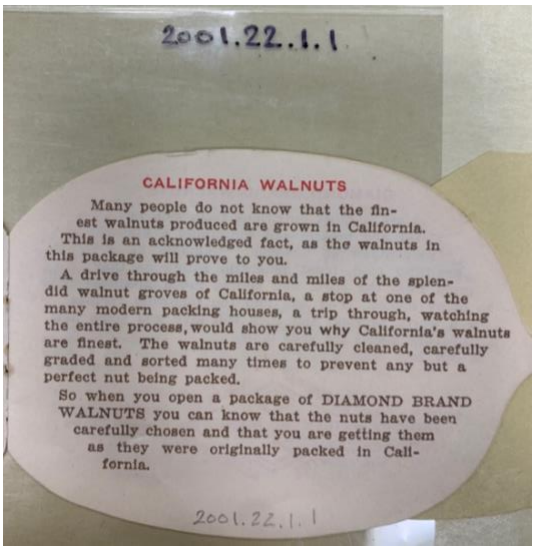


Figure 30 Image of Diamond Brand brochure, California Walnuts description.[493]

I look towards the Inland Empire to understand the similarities and differences in producing and promoting agricultural goods in the Central San Gabriel Valley. Nationally, the orange garnered attention through crate label art and newspaper advertisements that heavily connected a Spanish fantasy past to citrus-producing ranchos.[494] Interestingly, Anglo growers in the Inland Empire sought to *distance* themselves from a Spanish fantasy past to further cement differences between them and racialized others. Where walnut conglomerates in California sought to distinguish themselves from other walnut producers, Anglos in the Inland Empire sought to distinguish their oranges from Spanish and Mexican varietals. Orange growers, as walnut growers, sought to establish Anglo dominance in the production of these goods, a reflection of growers that colonized land and established racial hierarchies in food production. As citrus demand peaked, the Valencia orange, with its seeds and its quantity driven production, was sought to produce orange juice, requiring less labor-intensive work.[495] In contrast, the Washington navel orange demanded

[493] Image taken by Natalie Santizo, April 2022. Courtesy of the Homestead Museum.
[494] See Sackman, *Orange Empire.*
[495] While citrus was grown in 7 California counties, the Valencia orange was only grown in three: Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura counties From 1912 to 1914 and from 1925-1927, Valencia orange production increased by

intensive farming that produced a sweeter, deep red-orange hue, a seedless orange that would reign dominant to the Valencia.[496]

As symbol and material, the navel orange enacted taste—a sweeter, richer orange—to *distinguish*, to draw a line between the Riverside fruit of prosperity, and the Valencia variety—deemed less exquisite—further away from an Anglo cultural heritage. Anglos in the Inland Empire used the navel orange as an icon and symbol of Anglo history and memory beginning in the late 19th century, what Genevieve Carpio refers to as an "Anglo Fantasy Past."[497] The orange as material became a physical means for Anglos to accumulate wealth by extracting labor from racialized communities. The Riverside Historical society, founded in 1903, latched on to this distinction to create a regional heritage that promoted Anglo success and erased racialized labor hierarchies of the landscape.[498] In this case, regional identity became a manifestation of whiteness, and the orange became symbol of these processes. The navel orange produced in Riverside—with sweeter taste and bold color—symbolized the United States control of California following the Mexican-American War.

I argue that taste evokes an Anglo national identity that seeks to be superior. Both the California Diamond Brand walnut, with its rich, nuttier taste, and the Riverside navel orange

249% or 7,053,000 boxes. See Gilbert G. Gonzalez, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in Southern California*.

[496] Larger quantities could not be pushed out as easily as the Valencia, which was harvested in the summer. The navel, in contrary, was harvested in the winter. Where the Valencia orange tree could be planted alongside other crops, the navel required at least 30 feet of distance between trees. The navel orange was further sensitive to soil and climate variation, requiring round-the-clock care. Thus, the growth of this orange shaped the making of towns including Pasadena, Monrovia, Duarte, Azusa, Glendora, Covina, San Dimas, Pomona, Claremont, Upland, and Ontario. See Matt Garcia, *A World of It's Own.*

[497] Citrus built the foundation that facilitated Southern California's economic growth. Although the citrus industry in California began in the 1870s, it did not reach its height until the 1920s, fifty years after the first orange tree was planted in Mission San Gabriel. It took years of promotion, expansion, and investment for the orange to become a dominant export. In 1880, the citrus profits were not calculated because they were so low. But by 1886, 27 million pounds of oranges and lemons were produced. See Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*.

[498] The society emerged from its earlier roots of the Riverside Pioneer Society of the late 1800s. Membership required having arrived to the colony between 1870 and 1872, when Riverside was first founded. See Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*.

reigned superior because of taste. The walnut and orange become markers of difference, reflecting an Anglo claim to superiority over racialized "others." Taste become an avenue to racialize people, particularly at a time when Mexicans were considered white.[499]

There has always been a desire to assert and regulate American identity through cuisine. Abroad, food was used as a tool for empire.[500] For grower associations, taste became a tool for building national recognition of their agricultural production, another form of claiming space. In the previous chapter, I described how Anglos laid claims to space by eating Mexican foods and advertising Spanish barbecues. In this chapter, I consider how grower associations marketed taste to assert Anglo superiority in agricultural production. Carpio finds that relying on the navel orange, coupled with the mobility of ranchers, afforded a white superiority over space in Riverside, one that limited Mexican and Japanese laborers. The delicate care and craft of the navel orange as a symbol of Anglo progress, cemented a white history and memory in Riverside while erasing the labor of countless immigrant populations who planted, cropped, and cultivated those oranges.[501] The orange became a symbol of Anglo labor and entrepreneurship that rung in a "capitalist cornucopia" and thus a rightful claim to land.[502] I find that the marketing of these food goods relied on reinforcing the boundaries of whiteness.

Just as people overlay new meanings onto the landscape, so too do people etch new meanings onto regional identity through foods like recipes, ingredients, smells, and flavor. Historian Katherine Massoth argues that food is a site of cultural contention that helps establish

[499] The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) legally established Mexicans as white citizens, but they were socially treated as "others."
[500] Take for example, the Americanization of Filipino food in the Philippines and U.S. tourism in Thailand. See Orquiza, *Taste of Control: Food and the Filippino Colonial Mentality Under American Rule,* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2020); See Padoongpatt, *Flavors of Empire: Food and the Making of Thai America*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017).
[501] See Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*.
[502] Ibid, p.41.

boundaries of whiteness. For example, middle-class Anglos strategically created racial and ethnic differences in New Mexico through taste, by appropriating certain recipes and ingredients to create regional foods.[503] After annexation, many Anglos in New Mexico did not find Mexican food palatable. And yet, decades later, Anglos would begin to appropriate recipes and ingredients, refashioning Mexican food to create a New Mexican culinary tradition. Consider the words of Massoth, "If we consider the nation as home and homemaking as a performance of identity, then it is clear how cooking could function in creating boundaries and performing nationhood."[504]

Where the "spicy, dirty, and suspect" nature of Mexican food in Texas was seen as unfit for human consumption, cleanliness became a central trope of United States expansionism, trickling into the arena of food through taste and smell."[505] For example, food historian Rebecca Earle finds that Spanish colonizers in the conquest of Spanish America sought to distinguish themselves from Native populations through food. Spaniards cautioned of the "dangers" of consuming maize, cassava, and herbs to establish a bodily difference between them and Indigenous peoples.[506] In this sense, food and the act of eating, demarcated bodily difference. For California walnut growers, difference via taste was established through recipes.

After establishing the high quality of their walnuts, Diamond Brand also included a series of recipes in their advertisement, nodding to the gendered role of preparing walnut dishes (see figure 31). The recipes included in the Diamond Brand walnuts were catered towards encouraging

[503] These recipes of "New Mexican" foods directly reflected politics of inclusion and exclusion along the U.S.-Mexico border.
[504] Katherine Massoth, "Mexican Cookery That Belongs to the United States: Evolving Boundaries of Whiteness in New Mexican Kitchens," in *Food Across Borders*, p. 45.
[505] Katherine Massoth, "Mexican Cookery That Belongs to the United States," p. 50.
[506] According to conquistadores, the diets of Native peoples that reflected "inferiority," to their so-called "superior diet" of red wine, cheese, wheat bread, and olive oils. She finds that for many Spaniards, they worried that the consumption of Native diets, including grasshoppers, cassava, sauteed worms and more, would turn them into Indigenous peoples. See Rebecca Earle, *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race, and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492-1700,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

women to consume and prepare walnut cakes with recipes including walnut and raisin coffee cake, Turkish cake, simple walnut cake, and more. One recipe included a Spanish cake, a nod to the Spanish fantasy past.

Figure 31 Image of California Diamond Brand adverstisement, introduction to recipes.

Similarly, the California Walnut Grower's Association sponsored walnut cookbooks like *100 Delicious Walnut Recipes* by Alice Bradley, the principal cook of the Boston Cooking School. Although a recipe book, this published piece specifically promoted the association's Diamond Brand walnuts to women for preparing salads, desserts, and confections promoting year-round consumption. As the cookbook was copyrighted by the CWGA, Bradley encouraged the use of California Diamond Brand walnuts to "ensure the success" of the recipes. The book begins by promoting everyday consumption with its first section, "The Place of Walnuts in the Every-Day Menu." This opening section of the book addresses women as the reader, "To the woman who makes a point of serving foods that are at once appetizing, nutritious and economical, the California Walnut offers an almost unlimited variety of delightful all-year-round uses."[507] The

[507] Alice Bradley, *100 Delicous Walnut Recipes*, (Califronia Walnut Grower's Association, 1919).

opening section is followed by "Why Diamond Brand Walnuts are Better Walnuts," further promoting CWGA walnuts and their uniform quality. Bradley describes the walnut as a product of nature's "supreme productive effort," *her* (nature's) "aim to pack the greatest possible amount of nutriment into the smallest possible space."[508] Nature becomes her, a representative of the women who are reading the cookbook and who are also attempting to pack rich nutrients into the meals they prepare of their families.

Seeking to market the walnut to women who dominated the kitchen space in homes, the cookbook provided a wide variety of recipes to transcend across all meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner, and desserts. The first recipes in the cookbook dealt with breads and cakes including muffins, scones, and rolls.[509] Hearty dishes included diamond vegetable roast, sweet potato and walnut croquettes, brown sauce, walnut meat cakes, nut sausages, eggplant with walnuts, scalloped onions with walnuts, and more. The recipe book also included a variety of salads including salted walnuts, walnut and salmon, frozen walnut and cheese, cream, walnut deceit, and more. Finally, the cookbook ends with an array of walnut dessert and cake recipes. The last page of the cookbook included an advertisement for a new Diamond Brand walnut product, the canned shelled walnuts with a variety of halves and pieces.

Where cookbooks represented a gendered marketing approach, newspaper and magazine advertisements drew from the publication's notion of cleanliness and value to assert the superiority of Diamond Brand walnuts. The national advertisement campaign reigned successful, further driving up sales by creating a legitimate brand based on quality product. The national launch of the advertisement (1919) coincided with the rise of the advertisement industry. As seen in the magazine advertisement (see figure 32), the company relied on vivid imagery of the walnuts,

[508] Alice Bradley, *100 Delicous Walnut Recipes*, p.4.
[509] See page 12 and 13 of publication.

stamped with the Diamond Brand logo. The advertisement mentions the ideal combination of Diamond Brand walnuts, "an even higher quality" reflective of their plump, flavory meats. As the "best quality" nuts, Diamond Brand promoted their goods as full-meat, fine-flavored pick of California's finest crop. Part of distinguishing the brand's walnuts included a grading system and hand and machine sorting at the packinghouse.

Figure 32 Advertisement for Diamond Walnuts[510]

The Diamond Brand Walnuts looked towards notions of cleanliness to establish a superior walnut. Take for example, another page of the walnut-shaped advertisement (figure 32), "The

[510] Courtesy of the Homestead Museum.

walnuts are cleaned, carefully graded and sorted many times to prevent any but a perfect nut being packed."[511] Clean nuts and nutritious contents were key in establishing an Anglo superiority over walnut production. The recipe cookbook previously discussed *100 Delicious Walnut Recipes*, further referenced cleanliness and inspections as a critical part of distinguishing Diamond Brand walnuts. Their walnuts went through extensive inspections, a "rigid grading system" to ensure quality. Cleanliness was further promoted in the walnut packinghouses (see figure 33). Packers wore clean white uniforms, with their hair pulled back, further drawing on a gendered approach to packing and sorting a uniform, high quality walnut.

Figure 33 Diamond Walnut Packing Plant, Los Angeles Public Library, Circa 1920

Where the Anglo myth of the clean, white walnut reflected White women's ability to perfect walnut recipes at the leisure of their home, it starkly contrasted Mexican and Indigenous labor in the fields to sort and clean the nuts. The myth of the superior California Diamond Brand walnut rested on the hands of workers covered in black soot from the walnut trees. That is, the

[511] Diamond Brand Walnuts advertisement, "California Walnuts," courtesy of the Homestead Museum.

notion of cleanliness starkly contrasted the physical laboring of picking, sorting, and shelling walnuts from their trees.

La Puente Packing House: Women's Labor

For many walnut laborers, the process of shelling and sorting left their hands black from the dust and soot of the walnuts. Black hands from collecting, sorting, and shelling walnuts, symbolize the laborious job of walnuts. It further points to the racialized power hierarchy in agricultural production during this time. Effectively erasing Mexican and Indigenous labor from the landscape was required to build the myth of the superior, meaty (white) walnut. The mythos of the superior walnut, alongside the superior navel orange, became a means for Anglos to distinguish themselves from Indigenous and immigrant groups, begging for the erasure of racial outsiders that did not "fit" the regional heritage of the modern citrus rancher. Many immigrant families partook in the laboring of walnuts to earn additional income during the depression.

It was a difficult and time-consuming job that many Mexican and Indigenous families participated in to make ends meet across the San Gabriel Valley, including El Monte, La Puente, and Baldwin Park. In nearby El Monte, walnut trees grew extensively near Hicks Camp where many Mexican families would pick and shell walnuts for additional income. Some Hicks Camp families would pick walnuts in Whittier, living in tents for the four-month season during the harvest. Walnut laborers typically collected walnuts with a long pipe, separating them into piles, peeled and shelled and placed into sacks to collect pay. El Monte had extensive shelling and a large processing house (chapter 3). The Ravago family saved the discarded shells and use them to heat the stove during winter time. Similarly, Jack Romero (also discussed in chapter 3) who's family worked at the Homestead of the Temple family, recalls picking walnuts and having black

hands after shelling them. The physical laboring in the orchards significantly contrasted the uniform and "clean" work of women in the packinghouses.

Where few primary sources exist on the women packing house workers in the Central San Gabriel Valley, remnant sources draw us towards an understanding of women's work in the packinghouses. In this section, I analyze a series of employee checks for women packing house workers for the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association.[512] Many packinghouses throughout the San Gabriel Valley were responsible for processing walnuts, ensuring the rigorous requirements of Diamond Brand walnuts. Walnuts were often graded as level one or level two, the former being the highest quality of walnut.

Around 1912, the region of Puente formed the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association. According to historian Paul Spitzzeri, the association formed among growers who had purchased parcels of land from Lucky Baldwin's estate. According to a *Los Angeles Times* news report, the founding members included S.L. Waats, C.J. Hurst, S.H. Robinson, W.S. Sawyer, and B.F. Maxson. William R. Rowland, son of John Rowland (one of two owners of Rancho La Puente) would also join the association in 1912, cultivating walnuts and other crops on their family holdings of the original Rancho La Puente subdivision of the Rowland family.[513] In this year, the crops represented by the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association included 2,000 acres of English walnuts between La Puente and West Covina with an estimated value of $60,000. The association estimated a total of 7,500 acres across its members in the next few years as trees continued to develop.[514] By July 1913, the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association sacked and sorted an $80,000 walnut crop in their newly built 100 x 50 feet packing house, sitting on a

[512] Paychecks are courtesy of the Homestead Museum.
[513] "New Walnut Association," *Los Angeles Times*, August 9, 1912.
[514] "Walnuts Worth 60,000," *Covina Argus*, October 19, 1912.

175 X 50 feet lot near the Southern Pacific Railroad, ideal for exporting the walnuts.[515] The growth of the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association created ample jobs in the packinghouse, but packer positions would be overrepresented by white women.

White women hired at the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association packinghouse cleaned, washed, bleached, sorted, graded, and packed the walnuts. Employee checks for women packing house workers for the La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association provide a brief glimpse into racial and gendered labor in the production and distribution of walnuts in the Central San Gabriel Valley.[516] The paychecks in this collection represent pay to women working in the La Puente walnut packinghouse from the year 1919. The pay ranges from $2 to the highest amount of $36.25. Many checks were issued for an amount between $18 and $19 (see figure 34). It is not clear whether women were paid an hourly wage or by the unit. Where little remains from primary sources on women's' work in the La Puente packinghouse, the checks afford a list of a few women employees: Sarah J. Moon, Gladys Schrum, Minnie Mc Caige, Eva Bacon, Mrs. A Rogers, Edna Calipaugh, Violet Jenkins, Grace Sailor, Julia Lyons, Edith Lofthouse, Annie Serrano, Sylvia Moore, Rosie Stiles, Flossie Kelly, Mabel Sauder, Mildred Wright, Dorris Slack, Laura Moon, Lydia Brockmon, Amanda Harralson, Angele Navet, and Victoria Higuera. The checks were signed by the La Puente Walnut Grower's Association and paid out through the First National Bank of Puente.

[515] "Lucky's Walnuts Now Bear Fruit," Times, July 27, 1913.
[516] Both sources are courtesy of the Homestead Museum.

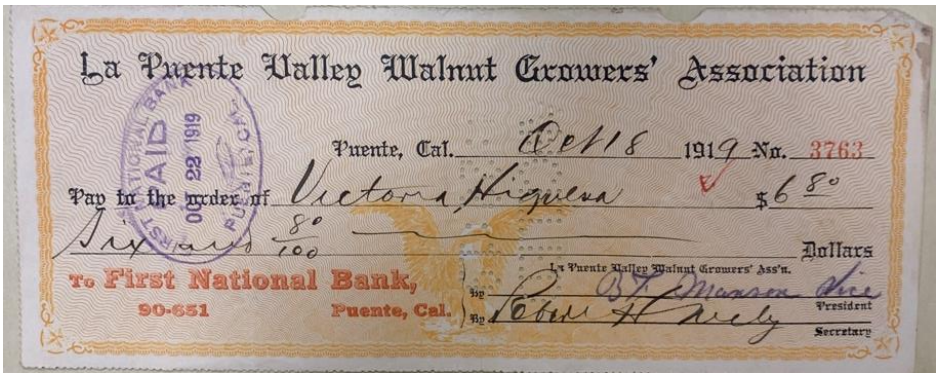


Figure 34 Paycheck for Victoria Higuera, La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association, October 18, 1919, for $6.80

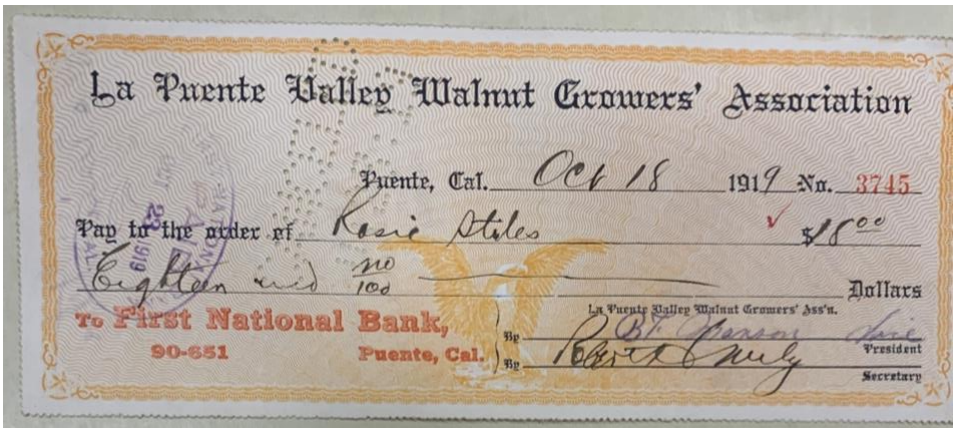


Figure 35 Paycheck of Rosie Stoles, La Puente Valley Walnut Grower's Association, October 18, 1919, $18.00

Some patterns to note here are the check amounts and the surnames of those checks. Of the 23 checks issued to women employees, only two checks were issued to Mexican women, Victoria Higuera and Annie Serrano. Where Victoria Higuera was paid $6.80 her Anglo counterpart, Rosie Stoles, was paid $18.00 (see figure 34 and 35).[517] Historian Paul Spitzzeri believes these were weekly checks issued to the women workers.[518] Most packing house workers were white women, with only a record of two Mexican women in the packinghouses. Victoria Higuera was one of these workers. Her family had a long history of working at the Homestead for the Workman-Temple family in the early 1900s. Annie Serrano was the second Mexican worker

[517] Without other information, it is unclear if payment was an hourly wage, or by production. And, it is unknown whether Higuera and Stoles held different positions within the packinghouse. Future research might consider phone directory data and census data research to contextualize the pay.
[518] Conversation with Paul Spitzzeri at Homestead Museum, April 2022.

in the packing house, although less is known about her. While the work of women in walnut packinghouses warrants much attention, I also consider the role of women who picked, shelled, and sorted walnuts on the land.

Where we know that Mexican women were increasingly employed in canneries of Southern California during the 1930s, less is known about the walnut packinghouses.[519] In her canonical book *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives*, Vicki L. Ruiz posits that Mexican American working women were able to establish interethnic collaborations in the workplace, but this was mostly due to their proximity to white women in the canneries. As Ruiz posits, "Mexicanas claimed a space for themselves and their families" by building community while grappling for financial stability.[520] If Mexican women were paid significantly lower than their Anglo counterparts, why did they continue working these jobs? Anthropologist Patricia Zavella sought to answer some of these implications through interviewing Mexican cannery workers in Santa Clara. While not walnut packing, it offers further insight into the less studied walnut packinghouses of the Central San Gabriel Valley. One of Zavella's informant stated, "It was a breeze compared to the field."[521] From correspondence between Carey McWilliams and Louis Adamic (1937), we know that white and Mexican women working in dire conditions at packinghouses in California would eventually unionize. But this history does not include voices from the fields of walnut orchards.[522] Where packing houses were one side of this work, fieldwork was another where women played a pivotal role.

[519] For a history on Mexican working women, see Vicki L. Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*.
[520] Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, p.7.
[521] Patricia Zavella, *Women's Work and Chicano Families: Cannery Workers of the Santa Clara Valley*, p.96.
[522] Walnut packinghouse workers would eventually join the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America; Letter from Carey McWilliams dated October 3, 1937 to Louis Adamic, Adamic File, Carton 1, Carey McWilliams Collection, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles, found in Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*.

Women were an integral part of walnut labor across Southern California. Little is known about the women laborers who separated, picked, and sorted walnuts on the orchards. One fragment of this history points to the work of women in nearby El Monte. One image shows two women and two children shelling and picking walnuts in El Monte, about ten miles away from La Puente (figure 36).[523] The image was taken by Philip Brigandi (1873-1945) a photographer contracted by the Keystone View Company, a well-known photography firm based in Pennsylvania. This image points to the arduous labor of picking and shelling walnuts. In the image, I note the dirt on the walnuts and ground, representative of the labor to sort and shell these nuts for processing. I also note the dirt on the women's clothing, hands, and face. In the first half of the 20th century, walnut labor tied ethnic women to place, processing walnuts for hours to take home low pay.

[523] It is unclear whether the women are Mexican of Indigenous. Photographed by Philip Brigandi circa 1920, image held at the Homestead Museum.

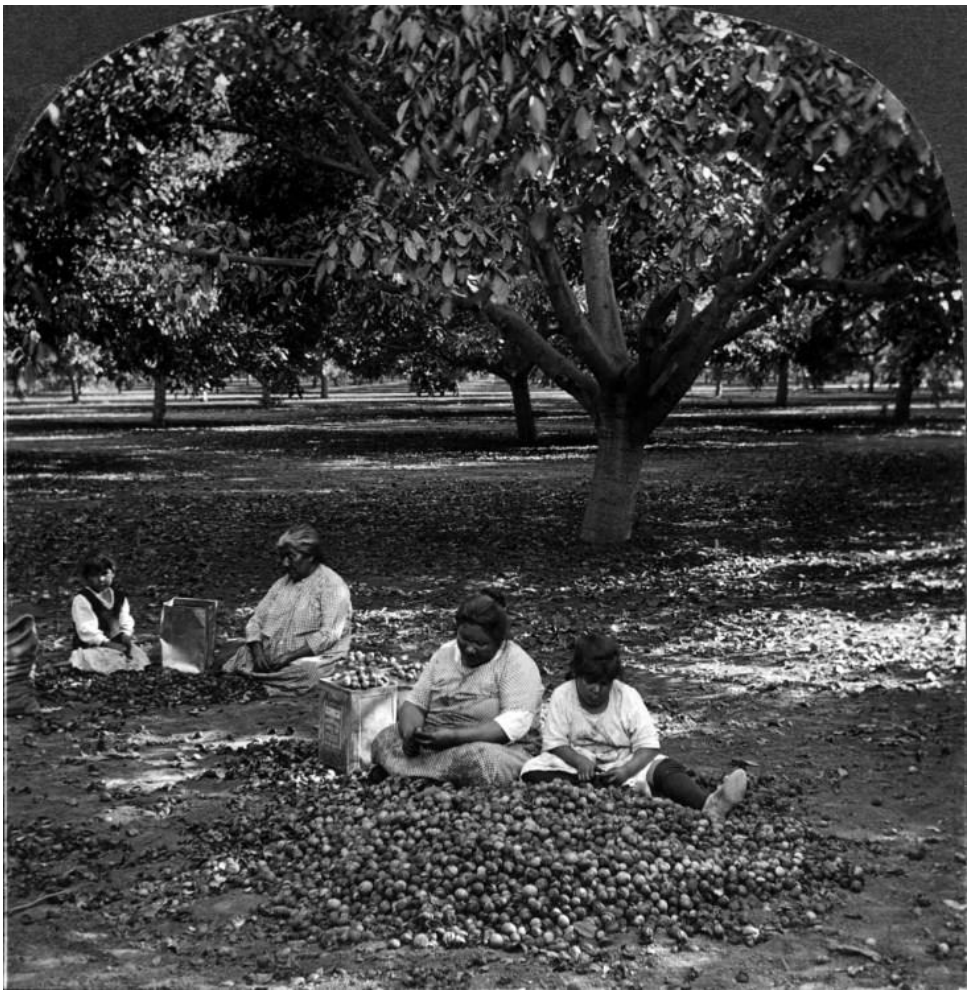


Figure 36 Women shelling and picking walnuts in La Puente, circa 1920s, photographed by Philip Brigandi.[524]

The hidden reality of walnut labor echoed the erasure of a racialized labor hierarchy in the citrus industry. The history of multiracial struggles and the landscape of immigrant agricultural labor were erased, overlaid with images of resourceful Anglo ranchers, entrepreneurs, and fruitful navel orange groves, reigning superior over Spanish and Mexican oranges, serving as a stand-in for a dominance over Mexican people. A gendered erasure of labor occurred with the walnut industry in the Central San Gabriel Valley.

[524] Image courtesy of the Homestead Museum.

The difficult labor of women shelling walnuts in the 20th century reflected the laborious jobs of Indigenous women in the 17th century who shelled acorns and mash the nuts into pastes, flour, and other forms of edible foods. Where acorns were a source of nutrition for Tongva communities across this region, Anglos destruction of the landscape forced them to starve and seek refuge in Mission Lands (late 1700s). Acorns could be stored year-round, making them an important food source for Indigenous populations. But shelling, grinding, and processing acorns took plenty of time and work by Indigenous women. According to Akins and Bauer, an Indigenous woman could grind 6 pounds of acorns in three hours.[525] The processing of acorns included ridding the tannic acid from bitter acorns. Tongva communities in so-called La Puente would have participated in the extensive acorn process, reflecting what Devon Peña and others call traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) that considers the land and food as intricate knowledge.[526] Today, fifteen species of oak trees exist in California.[527] Many more would have existed prior to colonization.

Here, I do not seek to conflate Indigenous women's experiences to that of Mexican women, rather I show how foods were enacted by Anglos in different ways to control racialized people's movement. Where the moth infestation during World War II (1939-1945) would create a decline of the walnut industry, the California walnut would make a comeback in 1980, when walnut production began rising well into 1993.[528] Today, the Diamond Brand is now Diamond Foods, owned by Blue Road Capital and includes five product lines including snack nuts, popcorns, potato chips (Kettle brand), and in-shell nuts.

[525] Akins and Bauer, *We Are the Land*.
[526] Devon Peña, Luz Calvo, Pancho McFarland, *Mexican Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements*.
[527] Ibid.
[528] Jerome B. Siebert, *Marketing California Walnuts*, Working paper no. 676 (revised). California Agricultural Experiment Station, (Berkeley: University of California, 1994).

Conclusion

Place is made through the multiple avenues of food. In this chapter, I particularly consider the California walnut industry as an extension of Anglo claims to space while considering how growers took a gendered health approach to marketing this foodstuff. In previous chapters, I discuss how Mexicans made place and challenged Anglo claims to space. Chapter 4 considers how grower conglomerates asserted racial differences in place through the superiority of a white, meatier walnut, and a juicier, rich orange. I consider the advertising strategies promoted by California walnuts. I pay particular attention to how advertisements were marketed toward white women and promoted as healthy and clean walnuts reigning superior over other varietals. Here I consider the similarities between the citrus and walnut industries and how growers in Southern California latched onto white tropes of purity and cleanliness to cement differences between them and racialized others. In the La Puente area, I discuss the role of white women in packinghouses, juxtaposing this "clean" labor to the "dirty" labor of picking, shelling, and sorting walnuts. Where archival material is significantly sparce, this chapter does not offer a complete view into women's' racial and gendered labor of walnuts, but it does give us a glimpse for future work in this field.

Conclusion
Moving Food, Moving Freedom: Histories of Street Vending

"To reiterate, we do race; we remember race; and we create culture. Historical memory shapes affinities of belonging and claims to citizenship. As tangible and discursive manifestations of memory, foodways signify sites of contestation and comfort." [529]
—Vicki L. Ruiz

The histories of food workers matter. In Critical Latinx Foodways, I have attempted to show how place is made through foodways, the intricate processes and people embedded in food systems. When we talk about power and the memory of place, we must look at the struggles of food systems, as they directly reflect and constitute regional power structures. In this dissertation, I argue that foodways can tell us much about racial formation in this period and can help us to rebuild the social landscapes of understudied Latina/o/x gateways, particularly semi-rural communities at the urban edge. I assert that the study of Mexican foodways in the Central San Gabriel Valley affords insight into contests over power reflected in the processes of making place and creating regional identity.

I have proposed "critical Latinx foodways," a methodological approach that centers foodways in our understanding and interrogation of regional power structures, regional identity and placemaking practices. As method, critical Latinx foodways helps scholars re-read and assemble fragmented histories of marginalized populations by grounding the investigation of foodways as a central thread in archival and community research. I have applied this methodology to a study of the region I call the Central San Gabriel Valley, which includes the cities of Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, and La Puente. Each chapter in this dissertation utilizes a foodways lens to tell the history of Mexican food workers, vendors, and entrepreneurs that shaped the places they lived in. From tamal vendors, restaurant owners, walnut packinghouse workers,

[529] Vicki Ruiz, "Citizen Restaurant," p.18.

agricultural laborers, and ranch laborers, food work is important to study. And, each chapter considers the power struggles embedded across diverse food systems: from the business of ethnic restaurants to the agricultural production of walnuts. Where I focus on the San Gabriel Valley, I compare Los Angeles (chapter 3), and the Inland Empire (chapter 4) to further demonstrate the centrality of the semi-rural SGV in understanding 20th century Southern California food systems. The San Gabriel Valley, geographically between Los Angeles and the Inland Empire, becomes a center where regional identity (and regional heritage) is contested through food.

In chapter 1, I show how the study of foodways helps us re-read and assemble fragmented histories and how cultural practice and placemaking is heavily connected to taste and smell. I have unearthed a cultural history of diverse Mexican populations in twentieth century San Gabriel Valley. In chapter 2, I archived the Baca family collection, reflective of the community work this dissertation seeks to advance. The Baca family and their business of selling chiles and vending tamales across the region shows us how Mexican families made place in Anglo communities that did not welcome them. Further, through GIS mapping of phone directory data, I piece together a glimpse of how agricultural labor shaped residential patterns of Mexican laborers in Baldwin Park.

In chapter 3, I analyze taste and smell through the consumption of ethnic foods in El Monte and Los Angeles. I discuss the El Monte Pioneer Days Festival, which consequently drew from the Spanish Fantasy Past to promote an Anglo regional heritage and (claim) to the city. At the same time, Mexican populations living in the labor camp of Hicks challenged these claims by creating their own tiendas and restaurants. Moving into chapter 4, I discuss the history of walnut production in Southern California, another means by which Anglos asserted racial difference through marketing and promoting a superior orange and walnut. I consider the production of walnuts in La Puente, and labor patterns at the local walnut packinghouse to discuss the racial and

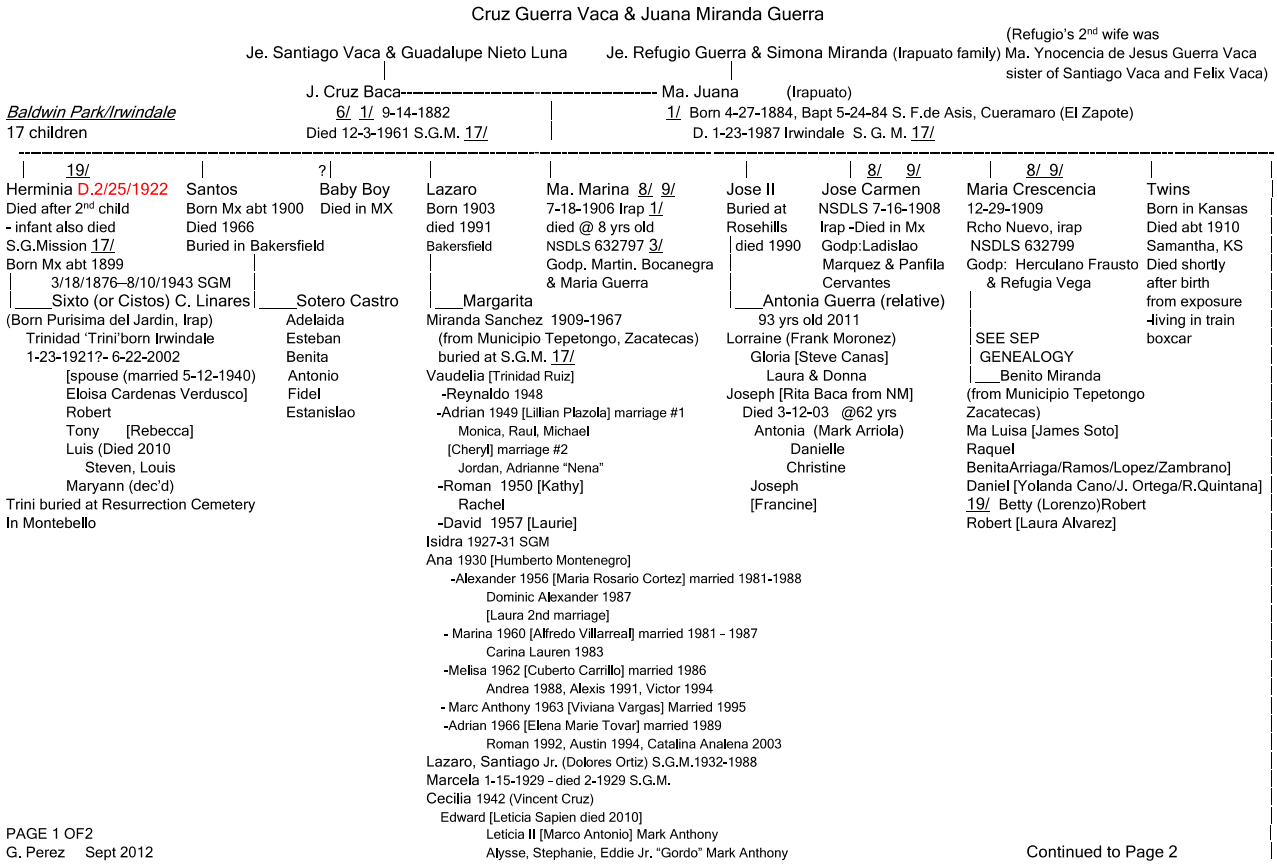
gendered patterns of the agricultural system. Collectively, these case studies highlight my principal argument that by centralizing a foodways lens in history, we can re-read and assemble Latina/o/x histories, that 1) tell us about the processes of regional power structures and how Mexican populations have challenged these notions and 2) about how race is made and shaped in the Central San Gabriel Valley. Mexican food laborers, vendors, entrepreneurs, and business owners in the first half of the 20th century have significantly shaped how people make place in the urban outskirts. And they have challenged regional power structures that hoped to contain them to place, by challenging boundaries and selling goods across space. This dissertation highlights the resilience of Mexican immigrant communities who fought to make their own spaces in areas that did not welcome them. I hope their families are proud of this project.

Future Directions

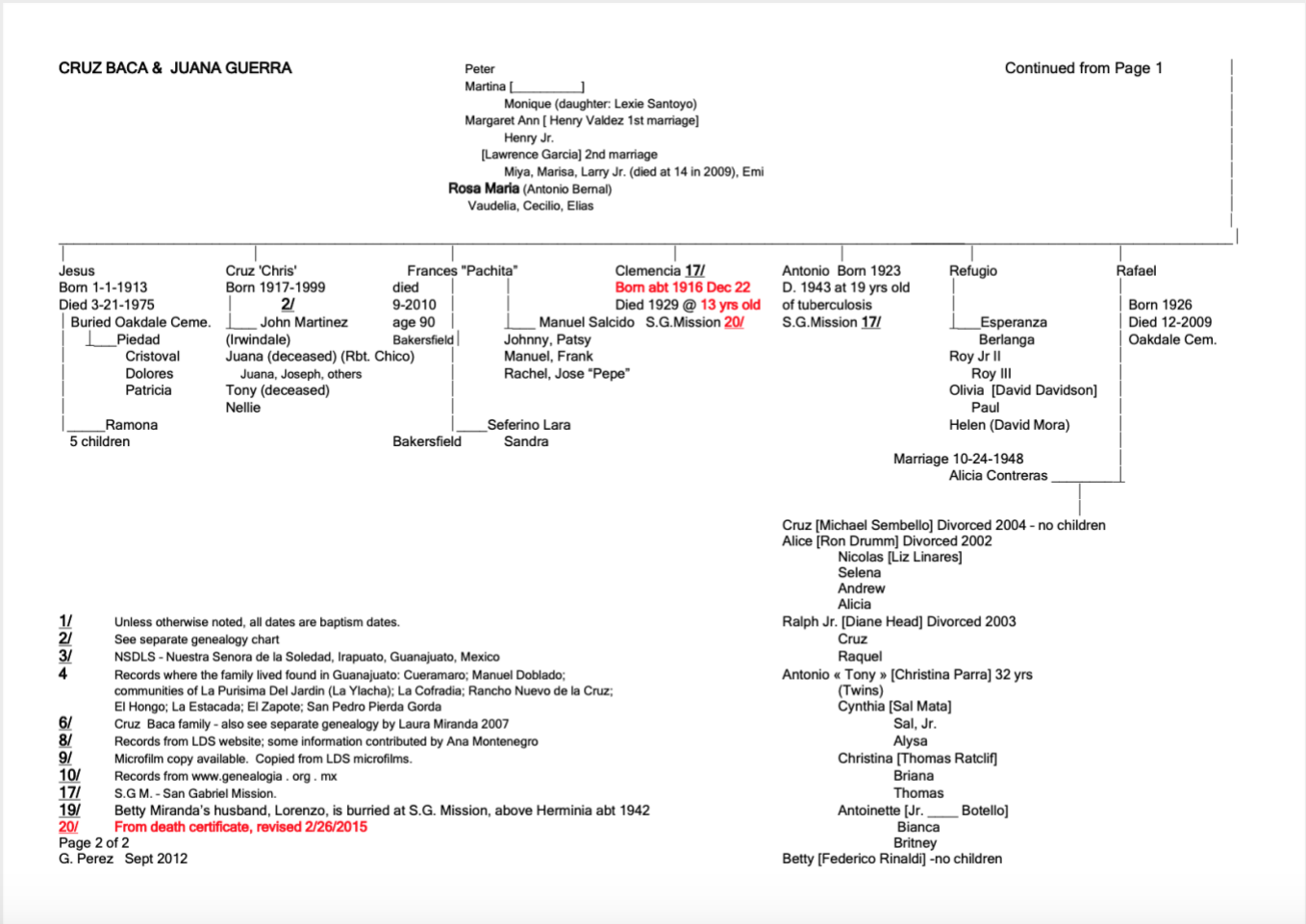
The study of food can tell us much about contests over power at the regional and local scales. That is, food demonstrates complex and intricate processes that can reproduce colonial logics but can also be sites of resistance and breaking boundaries. As I expand this project, I will consider how historic street peddler permits from the 1930s connect to Los Angeles County sidewalk (street) vending permits first issued in 2020. This is a starting point for asking how the regulation of food vendors and food entrepreneurs in Los Angeles County changed over the last 100 years. A CLF lens reveals the centrality (symbolical and material) of semi-rural spaces. The study of the San Gabriel Valley through foodways challenges the characterization of an urban outskirt by effectively re-centering it as an arena where multiple power struggles occur. As scholars continue to fill in the gaps, we must do so through community relationships. Building these histories alongside community members is a critical part of this work.

Appendix A

Family Genealogy of Cruz and Juanita Baca



Cruz and Juanita Baca family genealogy. Provided by Cruz Baca (granddaughter). Page 1 of 2. Lineage of children continues onto page two.



Cruz and Juanita Baca family genealogy. Provided by Cruz Baca Sembello (granddaughter). Page 2 of 2.

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Gonzalez, Esperanza Aragon

Gutierrez, Connie

Jimenez, Sergio Paul

Rodriguez, Joe

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