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Antonio Rios-Bustamante and Pedro Castillo. *An Illustrated History of Mexican Los Angeles, 1781-1985*. Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Research Center, University of California, 1986. xi + 196 pp.

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Author

Valdes, Dennis Nodin

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needed for a long time in order to clear up many misconceptions which people have about Marxism and its influence in Latin America. It serves as an introduction to the rich and varied thought of Latin American Marxists. Latin America has its own fecund tradition which should be incorporated and studied by Marxists from other countries. The author's style is clear and extremely readable. The author leaves one with the desire to read the works of these thinkers. The individuals who read this book from cover to cover can then decide for themselves whether Marxism in the twentieth century has been adopted or adapted to Latin America's reality by intellectuals of the region.

Carlos Perez

University of California, Los Angeles

¹*Hispanic American Historical Review* 65:3 (August 1985): 607-609.

²*Hispanic American Historical Review* 66:2 (May 1986): 447-448.

Antonio Rios-Bustamante and Pedro Castillo. *An Illustrated History of Mexican Los Angeles, 1781-1985*. Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Research Center, University of California, 1986. xi + 196 pp. Maps, illustrations, photographs, table, bibliography, and notes. \$15.00 (paper).

One of the most attractive works yet to appear in Chicano history, *An Illustrated History of Mexican Los Angeles*, is a popular account of the past two centuries of Mexican life in the city of Angels. It has two independent tiers, the first, written history, the second, illustrations.

The written history is a popular account of Mexican life in the city and region since early European exploration. Its chapters cover the indigenous peoples, early contacts, the Spanish and Mexican periods, the late nineteenth century, and three periods in the twentieth century. The work is accessible to readers not familiar with Chicano studies literature and would serve well in introductory college level courses. Based mostly on secondary sources, it is scholarly, well written and easy to follow.

The sections covering the history of Los Angeles prior to the United States invasion offer a Chicano interpretation of a literature until recently dominated by Anglo-American viewpoints. First, its consciously Mexican focus makes it somewhat unusual in the context of English-language accounts of the period. Second, the authors emphasize *mestizaje*, or the mixing of European, Mexican and indigenous roots. Third, the authors challenge still popular stereotypes about class backgrounds of early Los Angeles Mexicans, who were neither gracious Spanish noblemen nor lazy *peones*. They were mostly poor, hard working farmers, and their lives changed rapidly between the founding of the pueblo and the United States invasion. Fourth, the authors

challenge the myth of peaceful acceptance of the United States during the 1846 - 1847 invasion. They detail the widespread resistance of the poorly armed population, without the support of its own upper class, to the invaders from the East. In sum, it is a concise synthesis of the recent revisionist Chicano scholarship.

The history of the United States period has several topics which are more original. Perhaps the most interesting to Chicano studies scholars are the accounts of local newspapers, their growth and change. They offer ample detail on the structure and functions of the Mexican press in Los Angeles from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. The authors' accounts of the rise and fall of specific newspapers, the activities of United States- and Mexican-born editors and their assessments of conditions in their city emphasize the increasing diversity of the Mexican population itself. Their argument that the increase in newspaper circulation in the late-nineteenth century reflects a rise in literacy, however, is not convincing. In the late-nineteenth century Mexicans throughout the Southwest experienced a declining rate of literacy. A more likely explanation for greater newspaper circulation is the combination of greater availability of printing presses, better communications and the growth of a sufficiently large segment of the Mexican urban population to support Mexican editors.

Another interesting feature in the authors' discussion of the post-1850 period deals with the formation and elaboration of social, cultural and political organizations within the city. The nature of these organizations at any given time reflected the social structure and political goals of the members. The authors' portrayals further suggest constant cultural change and diversity within the Mexican population of the city. It provides compelling evidence of the various ways in which Mexicans countered the effects of political, social and cultural isolation and repression by the Anglo majority.

The second level of the monograph is visual. The book is interspersed with more than one hundred illustrations, including maps, sketches, diagrams, drawings and photographs dating from the eighteenth century to the present. The original copies of most of them belong to research collections in California, notably the Bancroft Library, the Huntington Library, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the Los Angeles Public Library, the UCLA Research Library, the California State Library, the California Historical Society, the Los Angeles Housing Commission, the Los Angeles City Planning Commission, and several personal collections. This marvelous collection of primary sources is a major contribution to the history of the largest Mexican community in the United States. The illustrations are beautifully framed and edited, and offer convincing support to the opinion that a picture can be worth countless words.

Dennis Nodin Valdes
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities