Southern Methodist University
SMU Scholar

History Theses and Dissertations History

Spring 5-19-2018

True Americanism: Mexican-American and Irish-American Nationalism Through the Twentieth Century

Zachary Adams
Southern Methodist University, zadams@smu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.smu.edu/hum_sci_history_etds

Part of the United States History Commons

Recommended Citation

Adams, Zachary, "True Americanism: Mexican-American and Irish-American Nationalism Through the Twentieth Century" (2018). *History Theses and Dissertations*. 6.
https://scholar.smu.edu/hum_sci_history_etds/6

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the History at SMU Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in History Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of SMU Scholar. For more information, please visit http://digitalrepository.smu.edu.

TRUE AMERICANISM:

MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND IRISH-AMERICAN

NATIONALISM THROUGH THE

TWENTIETH CENTURY

Approved by:

_____
Prof. John R. Chávez
Professor of History

_____
Prof. John Borgonovo
Lecturer of History

_____
Prof. Jo Guldi
Assistant Professor of History

_____
Prof. Erin Hochman
Associate Professor of History

TRUE AMERICANISM:

MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND IRISH-AMERICAN NATIONALISM THROUGH THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

A Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Faculty of

Dedman College

Southern Methodist University

in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

with a

Major in History

by

Zachary Adams

B.A., History, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA

M.A., History, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX

May 19, 2018

Copyright (2018)

Zachary Adams

All Rights Reserved

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researching and writing of a dissertation requires a strong support system; in composing this study, I have had the opportunity to rely upon an unparalleled group of academics, family, and friends. I would like to thank Dr. John Chávez for having the wisdom to pull this wheat from the chaff of dissertation ideas that I pitched in his office years ago, as well as the patience to guide me through so many research trips, chapter proposals, and late-night frustrations. Each member of my committee played an essential role as well, from my conversations with Dr. Erin Hochman and the advice of Dr. John Borgonovo to the encouragement of Dr. Jo Guldi to consider the use of digital tools despite my initial apprehension. My time as a teaching fellow at Fort Lewis College was equally formative, and I deeply appreciate the encouragement of everyone that I came into contact with there, especially Dr. Michael Martin, Dr. Shelby Tisdale, Dr. Josh Salyers, and Julie Tapley-Booth. My research trips would not have been possible without the dedicated staff of the many archives that I visited, namely the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection in Austin, the archives at the University of Texas – El Paso, the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and especially the American Irish Historical Society in New York City. In funding these endeavors, the Clements Center for Southwest Studies enabled me to build a deep base of archival sources.

My family and friends also played a key role, whether they realize it or not, as sounding boards, sources of advice, and avenues to break free from the world of the early twentieth

century. My brothers have been excellent at both helping and distracting as need be, from Ben and Kayla allowing me to intrude upon their home to research in New York to Seth staying up for late-night conversations about topics that he surely had little interest in. My friends in Dallas have proven to be equally essential, from the existential conversations about academia that I've had with Pat Troester to the weekly distractions with the many iterations of my trivia team, including the mainstays of the Iannuzzi clan and David Whitacre. My wonderful in-laws, Chris and Lynn Benich, also provided me with a place to stay while researching in Washington, DC, but even more so, have been understanding of the wild path of academia that I have embarked upon alongside their daughter – I could not ask to have married into a better family. I also would like to thank my own parents – my mom, who first taught me to read and has never stopped providing lessons on school and life, and my dad, whose advice to "eat the elephant one bite at a time" has been more useful than any philosophy text I've ever come across. Without exaggeration, my acknowledgements could surpass my dissertation in page count and I still wouldn't be able to fully express my appreciation for them. I would also like to thank Mr. Don Presley, of Ledyard Center School. My fifth-grade teacher, he threw me into the deep end of adult nonfiction history (especially *Escape from Colditz*) and encouraged a lifelong passion. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife. I have no idea how I convinced her to throw her lot in life alongside mine, but doing so will always be my greatest accomplishment. In standing beside me through thick and thin, she has been a source of strength and admiration, and I will always be in debt to her for her patience in allowing me to put a professional career on hold to pursue my academic goals. Like Archimedes' Mirror, I reflect her pride in me back tenfold, and will never cease to wonder at how amazing she has been as a friend, confidant, and partner.

Adams, Zachary B.A., History, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, 2008
M.A., History, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX, 2012

True Americanism:
Mexican-American and Irish-American
Nationalism Through the
Twentieth Century

Advisor: Professor John R. Chávez

Doctor of Philosophy conferred May 19, 2018

Dissertation completed April 20, 2018

In the years after World War I, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans consciously utilized the language and symbols of American patriotism to advance their social and political agendas. In doing so, they adopted and repurposed the rhetoric that a new wave of American nationalists, the True Americanists, sought to use to negate their very citizenship. True Americanists argued that the cultural obligations of United States citizenship required complete assimilation. With Mexican-American and Irish-American community leaders continuing to rely upon messages of shared ethnicity to garner and mobilize followers, their use of Irishness and Mexicanness ran afoul of this new nationalism. Instead of abandoning traditional messages of collective heritage, they fused them with American patriotism, to create organizations that remained cohesive by relying on the memory of a common homeland but were also bolstered from outside attacks by pointing out the sacrifices of community members in the interests of the United States.

True Americanism reshaped the way that Mexican Americans and Irish Americans thought and spoke about themselves in relation to the United States, but did not lead to them compromising on long-term political goals. Rather than dismissing the political activities of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, the critiques of True Americanists instead proved to be

a measuring stick that they could instead adopt and repurpose to show the ways in which they did indeed fulfill the requirements for being good American citizens.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES x

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 1: TRANSNATIONAL RAIDERS: FENIANS AND *CORTINISTAS* 32

1.1 The Fenian Civil War Experience, 1858-1865 38

1.2 The Mexican-American Civil War Experience, 1859-1865 54

1.3 Fenianism Strikes into Canada, 1864-1871 64

CHAPTER 2: FOREIGN FIREBRANDS: RICARDO FLORES MAGÓN AND JOHN DEVOY 77

2.1 The Porfiriato: Mexican Domestic Politics Come to the United States, 1876-1904 81

2.2 The Clan-na-Gael and Irish Cultural Revival, 1867-1909 90

2.3 The *Partido Liberal Mexicano* and Transnational Mexicanness, 1904-1910 103

CHAPTER 3: TRUE AMERICANISM RISES 128

3.1 The Early Mexican Revolution, 1910-1914 130

3.2 The Birth of True Americanism, 1910-1914 142

3.3 Irish Americans and True Americanism, 1910-1917 151

3.4 The Plan de San Diego, 1915 160

3.5 Easter Rising, 1916 165

CHAPTER 4: IRISH AMERICANS, MEXICAN AMERICANS, AND WARTIME PROPAGANDA 169

4.1 Irish Americans and the Neutrality Movement, 1910-1916 171

4.2 American Wartime Propaganda and True Americanism, 1917-1918 174

4.3 Irish Americans and Mexican Americans in Wartime, 1917-1918 196

CHAPTER 5: POSTWAR CLASHES OF NATIONAL IDENTITY 211

5.1 Irish-American Nationalism, 1918-1921 215

5.2 Mexican Consuls Seek to Spread Mexicanness, 1917-1925 236

5.3 The Order Sons of America 245

CHAPTER 6: AGENDAS ADVANCED, BARRIERS REMAINING 253

6.1 Irish-American Rhetoric Beyond Irish Independence, 1921-1924 254

6.2 The Box Bill 261

6.3 LULAC 269

CONCLUSION 277

BIBLIOGRAPHY 284

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Usage of the Term "Americanism" in *The New York Times*, 1900-1925 148

Figure 2 Appearance of the Term "Americanism" in Google's N-Gram Corpus, 1900-1925 .. 148

Figure 3 Usage of the Term "Hyphenism" in *The New York Times*, 1900-1925..... 149

Figure 4 Appearance of the Term "Hyphenism" in Google's N-Gram Corpus, 1900-1925 149

Figure 5 Usage of the Term "Hyphenate" in *The New York Times*, 1900-1925..... 150

Figure 6 Appearance of the Term "Hyphenate" in Google's N-Gram Corpus..... 150

For my wife, Samantha, to whom I owe more than she can possibly imagine

INTRODUCTION

> The late Ex-President [Theodore] Roosevelt was wise in perceiving that amongst us, posing as citizens of this country, were certain classes or nationalities whose allegiance was divided. He knew danger lurked in this half-hearted, divided allegiance. He had the foresight and courage to call attention to it and to designate this class of so-called citizens as being "Hyphenated Americans." From this there has sprung up in the United States a movement for better, more honest, faithful allegiance, and we have noticed a marked improvement in those people who felt the restriction.[1]

The above lines, part of a 1921 letter written by Chicago attorney William E. Bryan to President Warren G. Harding, muse upon a great shift in the conceptualization of American citizenship that occurred in the 1910s and shaped the obligations placed upon American citizens moving forward through the twentieth century. This new paradigm of citizenship, labelled True Americanism by its many adherents, coincided with the wave of nationalism that swept the United States before, during, and after World War I, and became entrenched with propaganda from the federal government during that war. Much of America's non-Anglo population experienced a wave of exclusionary rhetoric directed at them as part of the conformist impulse of this nationalism. This was particularly problematic for Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, as the way in which leaders from those communities relied upon claims of shared heritage and symbols of ethnicity to rally and mobilize support drew negative attention. Finding themselves under attack, these leaders had to adapt for a new national climate in which True Americanists

[1] William E. Bryan to Warren G. Harding, 23 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

sought to impose a binary of patriotic citizen versus disloyal traitor. The True Americanist definition of patriotic citizen required complete assimilation and devotion to the American nation with no foreign ties; both Mexicanness and Irishness violated that. This dissertation argues that the rise of True Americanism in the 1910s forced Mexican-American and Irish-American community leaders to pair symbols of American patriotism with the symbols of Irishness and Mexicanness that they had used to rally and mobilize followers since the Civil War era in order to argue for Mexican-American and Irish-American belonging in a nation subsumed by True Americanism.

Both Irish Americans and Mexican Americans became a part of the United States in significant numbers beginning in the 1840s. Mexican residents of that country's Far North found themselves and their land annexed by the United States as part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, settling the U.S.-Mexico War in 1848. Irish immigrants, on the other hand, uprooted themselves from their land and came to the United States in great number fleeing the economic consequences of recurring potato blights throughout the 1840s.[2] From those earliest days of immigration and annexation respectively, leaders from both communities sought to mobilize support behind improving conditions in their perceived homelands. For Irish-American leaders, this meant efforts to bring about Irish independence from Great Britain. Mexican-American leaders, on the other hand, organized resistance to the imposition of Anglo discrimination that set in as the United States annexed their land. In both cases, leaders used the symbols and culture of a shared heritage in an attempt to compel followers to back their causes. Although none of the early leaders from either group were able to bring about the independence of Ireland or the

[2] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): 795.

betterment of conditions for Mexican Americans in the U.S. Southwest, the use of common heritage proved viable through the first years of the twentieth century. These leaders encountered opposition, but the criticism that they received mainly depicted them as forces of chaos and disorder, rather than serious threats to the U.S.

During the 1910s, a new type of American nationalism came into prominence that saw the persistence of foreign heritage as an existential crisis in the United States. Labelling itself True Americanism, its adherents aimed to create a better nation by improving the quality of American citizens. In their opinion, Americans had to drop any semblance of their foreign past and embrace a purely American identity. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "[t]he root idea of American citizenship, the necessary prerequisite for service at home, and for service to mankind at large, is that there shall be in our citizenship no dual allegiance."[3] This was a problem for Irish-American organizations at the time, like the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF) and American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR), as they still relied upon claims at collective Irishness to encourage internal conformity in the pursuit of bringing about Irish independence.[4] In response to the exclusively American identity for which True Americanists advocated, these organizations added symbols of American patriotism to their rhetoric.[5] They sought to continue using the concept of Irish ethnicity to mobilize supporters towards supporting

[3] Theodore Roosevelt, *Americanism and Preparedness: Speeches of Theodore Roosevelt, July to November, 1916* (New York: The Mail and Express Job Print, 1917), 5.

[4] Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 542-545.

[5] This could be as simple as adopting a logo that incorporated the stars and stripes or a bald eagle, but often also included heavy use of quotes from America's founding fathers, especially George Washington, stories of Mexican Americans or Irish Americans serving their nation, and even repurposed True Americanist rhetoric that redirected critiques of hyphenism towards one's opponent.

the movement for Irish independence, but evolve enough to deflect external critiques from True Americanists.

Mexican-American leaders and organizations underwent a similar change in the 1910s. As civil rights organizations grew in South Texas, they relied upon the use of shared Mexicanness to mobilize followers in the pursuit of the common goal of ending discrimination. They too came under attack from True Americanists, criticized for not being American enough. In response, organizations like the Order Sons of America (OSA) and League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) relied heavily upon the symbols and rhetoric of American patriotism in both inward- and outward-facing communication, responding to the wave of early twentieth-century nationalism by deflecting critiques that they were not good American citizens but still using a shared Mexican-American identity to promote internal cohesion.[6] Where True Americanists sought to exclude those who were not American enough, in the case of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, their critiques instead led to organizations like the FOIF and LULAC affirming their views on the place of the Irish American or Mexican American within the United States.

Mexican Americans and Irish Americans were far from alone in being criticized for poor American citizenship. However, they provide good points of comparison as leaders from both communities took public stances in advocating for change in the 1920s. Forced to adapt their rhetoric for an era in which they encountered much more direct hostility, they had to act nimbly to construct group identities through traditional claims at ethnicity while also demonstrating their value as citizens to protect those groups from outside attacks. Acting as the ethno-political entrepreneurs described by sociologist Rogers Brubaker in *Ethnicity Without Groups*, they found

[6] Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 194.

themselves with creating and defending ethnically bounded organizations in order to advance their respective agendas.[7]

Mexican identity in the United States was highly complex, and the views of LULAC and its leaders are far from universal. Many Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants still felt a strong connection to Mexico, as revealed in sociological studies at the time. In the reprinted notes from interviews by Mexican sociologist Manuel Gamio in the 1920s, interviewees related their deep connections to Mexico, and the way in which they felt more connected to a homeland abroad than they did to the United States.[8] In addition, Mexican ethnicity included, as phrased by David Montejano, "bonds of culture, language, and common historical experience."[9] By the 1860s, this common historical experience came to be defined through Anglo discrimination. Although Mexican-American culture proved persistent, much of the rallying cries of community leaders revolved around striking back to reverse shared mistreatment at the hands of Anglos. Having been reduced to second-class citizens, Mexican Americans responded to leaders who offered the opportunity to take proactive steps in lashing out against systems of oppression, whether through the violence of the *Cortinistas* or the legal approaches of LULAC.

Irish-American leaders also built support by offering opportunities to strike back at external oppression. In their case, beyond the sociocultural markers that they understood as Irishness, like the color green or the harp of Erin, lay the ability to find common cause in identifying the abuses of the British and offering the opportunity to fight for Irish independence as a way of exacting revenge. In blaming the British for Irish hardships, particularly the Potato

---

[7] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 166.

[8] Manuel Gamio, *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971).

[9] David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 5.

Famine, and framing Irish nationalism as a way to strike back, leaders were able to catalyze support within the United States.[10] Rather than an inherent sense of ethnicity, it was the ability of Irish-American leaders to convince fellow Irish Americans that they had been wronged by the British and propose Irish independence to ameliorate that injustice that lay at the core of their common, Irish-American cause.

True Americanism represents the main catalyst in this study. Although the movement lacked a structured organization or homogeneity, even relative to other intellectual movements, its adherents followed a set of tropes in making their arguments for an exclusivist conceptualization of American citizenship, that a citizen was to identify as American and nothing else. The most central component to True Americanism was a belief that in order for a nation to be strong, its members needed as much unity as possible. When it came to immigrants and their descendants, that meant total assimilation and the remaking of one's self as completely American. As Theodore Roosevelt put it in a speech delivered in Chicago in October of 1916, "no man can ever be a really first-class citizen of the United States unless he is an American and nothing else."[11] American national identity was to supersede and replace foreign heritage. Embodied in the secondary name for this movement, One-Hundred Percent Americanism, this core tenet brought attention to immigrants and their descendants, with criticism for those that held onto ties to foreign cultures or felt connections to a homeland abroad. This ranged from communities that True Americanists deemed unassimilable to those that simply did not acculturate quickly enough, but either way it represented a weakness of the United States, which

[10] David Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798-1998* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 5.

[11] Theodore Roosevelt, *Americanism and Preparedness: Speeches of Theodore Roosevelt, July to November 1916* (New York: The Mail and Express Job Print, 1917), 121.

many True Americanists saw as existential in nature. In the same speech, Roosevelt condemned those who sought to sway domestic politics in the interest of foreign nations, claiming that "[t]o divide our citizens along politico-racial lines is to be guilty of moral treason to the Republic."[12] The stakes of assimilation were high, in the minds of True Americanists, which made their messages of the need for conformity and unity that much more urgent.

The key label that True Americanists levelled against those they saw as insufficiently American was the term "hyphenism" or "hyphenate." In doing so, they sought to delineate the confines of citizenship by excluding those who retained connections to a foreign country. To True Americanists, hyphenates placed their American identity alongside that of a foreign nation through the use of a hyphen; Irish-American, Mexican-American, and other communities that defined themselves through ties to foreign heritage were not American enough. This allowed the use of *ad hominem* criticism to dismiss the claims of members of those communities.[13] As citizens whose loyalty came up wanting, their public agitation could be waved away. In many ways, this form of othering replaced the anti-Catholic persecution that had predominated in the nineteenth century; the papists of the Know-Nothings became the traitors of the True Americanists. Anti-Catholicism still existed as a supplemental, extreme auxiliary to the True Americanist movement, but was relegated to more conspiratorial claims. Attacking the caliber of one's opponent's citizenship became a new tactic to block the political activity of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans alike.

Several crises in the 1910s whipped True Americanists into a fervor over the presence and size of sections of the American population that they saw as disloyal. The Dillingham

---

[12] Ibid., 123.

[13] In the case of True American rhetoric, the term "ethnic" carried connotations of foreignness and even backwardness, for more see Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 4.

Report of 1912, providing statistics on the presence of immigrants in the United States and recommendations for limits on incoming people, represented a more general source of concern. The Commission separated immigrants into "old" and "new" groups, and in doing so, argued that "new" immigrants proved less assimilable, more closely tied to their home countries, and less likely to settle down, all major fears of True Americanists.[14] In her 2018 book, *Inventing the Immigration Problem*, Katherine Benton-Cohen suggests that the Commission was the first step in problematizing American immigrants.[15] However, for True Americanists, the deeper problem lay with foreignness. Rather than the mere presence of immigrants, it was their unwillingness or inability to assimilate that required intervention in restricting immigration.[16] Irish-American and Mexican-American leaders who relied upon a persistent sense of heritage to draw in followers followers fell afoul of these concerns over assimilation and loyalty as they made Irishness and Mexicanness central in their calls to action.

True Americanists also referenced eugenicist works that came about in the aftermath of the Dillingham Report, like Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* or Lothrop Stoddard's *The Rising Tide of Color*, as deeply worrying on the domestic front.[17] These Americans expressed a fear of being outnumbered that was very real to them, in terms of preserving what they saw as an American culture as well as worries over maintaining the quality

---

[14] *Abstracts of Reports of the Immigration Commission, Volume I* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 13-14.

[15] Katherine Benton-Cohen, *Inventing the Immigration Problem: The Dillingham Commission and its Legacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

[16] Noah Pickus, *True Faith and Allegiance: Immigration and American Civic Nationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 64.

[17] Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, The Racial Basis of European History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916): Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920).

of the citizenry to ensure a well-functioning American democracy. When it came to Mexican Americans and Irish Americans specifically, True Americanists expressed concern over corruptibility, bloc voting, and a tendency to support machine politics.[18] By castigating the democratic participation of these communities, True Americanists sought to make a compelling case for their exclusion.

A few salient incidents in the 1910s served to draw the attention of True Americanists to Irish Americans and Mexican Americans. Irish-American ties to Germany before World War I became evidence of disloyalty dredged up after the war, including alliances with German-American organizations advocating for American neutrality, the failed *Aud* weapons shipment from Germany to Ireland, and links to more extreme Irish groups who openly obstructed the British war effort, like Sinn Fein. Mexican Americans, on the other hand, faced criticism for the violence that had spilled over into the United States during the Mexican Revolution, namely from the Plan de San Diego, as well as problems with the draft, stemming from confusion over citizenship status, problems with illiteracy, and attempts to avoid conscription.[19] Mexican Americans also had to contend with more common racialized assumptions as to their un-assimilability and general unfitness for citizenship. As True Americanists sought to draw the boundaries of Americanness and create a more stringent definition for what it meant to be a good American citizen, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans found themselves on the wrong side of the line.

---

[18] Evan Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 5; James R. Barrett, *The Irish Way: Becoming American in the Multi-Ethnic City* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012), 7.

[19] These critiques came despite the willingness of many Mexican Americans to serve when called upon, as well as the general draft dodging of Americans regardless of demographic, José A. Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire!: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 27.

Despite the earlier quote attributing this rethinking of citizenship to Theodore Roosevelt, True Americanism had significant breadth and depth. The debate over what it meant to be a good American spread across the entire United States and drew in figures as prominent as presidents and as humble as homemakers. President Roosevelt did play a significant role in catalyzing this movement, as outspoken as he became on the subject as a private citizen and Progressive Party candidate, but the movement quickly went beyond him as Americans of all classes grew concerned about foreignness in the United States across the 1910s. This ideology stretched across several administrations as well, with the favored insult of the True Americanist, hyphenism, implied at or appearing in speeches by Woodrow Wilson and Warren G. Harding, as well as Roosevelt.[20] The confluence between True Americanism and wartime patriotism made the confines of the movement blurry, but also deeply pervasive, as tendrils of the ideology spread across American intellectual culture and politics.

Historians have explored the American nationalism of the World War I era in great depth.[21] From David Kennedy's *Over Here* to Chris Capozzola's *Uncle Sam Wants You*, True Americanism has become a part of the narrative of twentieth-century American history.[22] However, in providing broad analyses of the American homefront, these historians have

---

[20] Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Policy: A History* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 83; Warren G. Harding, "Second Annual Message," 8 December 1922, quoted in Deborah Kalb, Gerhard Peters, and John T. Wooley, eds., *State of the Union: Presidential Rhetoric from Woodrow Wilson to George Bush* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2007), 86-96.

[21] For more on World War I on the home front, see: Michael Neiberg, *The Path to War: How the First World War Created Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Michael Kazin, *War Against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017); Jonathan M. Hansen, *The Lost Promise of Patriotism: Debating American Identity, 1890-1920* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[22] David Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

approached True Americanism from the side of the True Americanists, examining the ways in which World War I contributed towards a new conceptualization of American citizenship. Some social histories exist showing the way in which specific communities responded to the nationalism of World War I, but they remain largely case studies, isolated from one another rather than in conversation about those who felt the sting of zealous wartime nationalism.[23] By examining the way in which Irish-American and Mexican-American leaders responded to wartime and postwar rhetoric, this dissertation seeks to provide a unified account of how key figures from the Irish-American and Mexican-American communities responded to outside criticism and the way in which their actions reveal conflicting notions about the cultural obligations of American citizenship. Much like Michael Goebel's *Anti-Imperial Metropolis* broke free of bilateral depictions of colonizer and colonized, so too will this dissertation seek to step outside of traditional depictions of True Americanism in showing how, outside of the Anglo mainstream, Americans in general responded to attacks on the caliber of their citizenship.[24] In the face of True Americanism's growing popularity, Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders offered competing interpretations of American citizenship in which the persistence of foreign heritage did not negate one's ability to contribute to the American nation.

Several other works seek to develop long-term narratives about the evolution of citizenship in the United States. Two of the most monumental, *Civic Ideals* by Rogers M. Smith, and *American Crucible* by Gary Gerstle, straddle World War I, with Smith's book closing in

---

[23] For example, June G. Alexander, *Ethnic Pride, American Patriotism: Slovaks and Other New Immigrants in the Interwar Era* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2004); Carl H. Chrislock, *Ethnicity Challenged: The Upper Midwest Norwegian-American Experience in World War I* (Northfield, MN: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1981); April L. Schultz, *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American Through Celebration* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994).

[24] Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third-World Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 7.

1912 and Gerstle's zipping through the first decades of the twentieth century to focus on the civil rights era.[25] While Smith offers a convincing argument for the construction of American citizenship law in accordance with the civic ideologies that American leaders advanced throughout the nineteenth century, he himself admits that his interpretation takes a top-down approach.[26] Gerstle, on the other hand, presents a dueling binary of racial and civic nationalisms coexisting and shaping the course of American history over the long twentieth century.[27] In doing so, however, Gerstle imposes a dichotomy in which the rhetoric of Irish-American and Mexican-American leaders does not quite fit. This dissertation seeks to apply the writing of Rogers Brubaker in interpreting the flexible use of foreign ethnicity and American patriotism by these leaders as deliberate efforts at building and retaining groups.[28] Not only does this add nuance to Gerstle's analysis, it fills in the social history missing from Rogers Smith's work. The similar responses to True Americanism by these Mexican Americans and Irish Americans fit within the paradigm described by Brubaker. As the federal government increasingly embraced True Americanism through wartime propaganda, competing visions of nation unfolded in dialogue with one another across the 1910s.

Within Irish-American historiography, authors view the way in which leaders appeal to their followers as largely static. Beginning with Thomas N. Brown's 1966 book, *Irish-American Nationalism*, depictions of the ideology of Irish American leaders do not change.[29] In *Ireland*

---

[25] Rogers M. Smith, *Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[26] Smith, *Civic Ideals*, 7.

[27] Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 5.

[28] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 13.

[29] Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1966).

and Anglo-American Relations, 1899-1921, Alan Ward goes as far as providing a side-by-side comparison of quotes from an 1864 lecture to the Fenians and a 1919 pamphlet written for the FOIF to demonstrate their similarity.[30] Deeper context reveals a significant difference as the pamphlet couches its argument in True Americanist rhetoric, responding specifically to postwar nationalism as its author sought to effect political change in opposing Great Britain, while the lecturer solely relies upon appeals at exacting revenge on the British in rallying the support of his Fenian followers.[31] More recent books do not emphasize the evolution of Irish-American leaders' rhetoric as much as they ought, like Jay P. Dolan, who produced a 2008 synthesis, *The Irish Americans*. The chapter entitled "From Paddies to Patriots" encapsulates the way in which the Irish immigrants of the 1840s became the Irish Americans of the twentieth century. However, Dolan depicts the process as a relatively even, organic transition rather than one in which key moments, like the debut of True Americanism, produced accelerated change in the way in which Irish Americans thought of themselves and their place in the United States.[32] In approaching the extended history of Irish Americans, this dissertation will show that despite a relatively long period in which community leaders could rely solely upon claims at shared ethnicity to rally support, the decade of the 1910s was a period of rapid change in which national contexts forced the adoption of American patriotic symbols. Rather than a smooth generational assimilation, it was the sudden shift in rhetoric that accompanied True Americanism that led to the evolution from Irish to Irish American.

---

[30] Alan J. Ward, *Ireland and Anglo-American Relations, 1899-1921* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 191.

[31] Daniel F. Cohalan, *The Freedom of the Seas* (New York: Friends of Irish Freedom Press, 1919), 6.

[32] Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans: A History* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008), 104.

Mexican Americans still remain far afield from the historical narrative of True Americanism. Scholars of Mexican-American history have done a great deal to bring Mexican-American subjects and narratives firmly within the mainstream of American historical topics, but studies of the True Americanist surge have not reciprocated in kind, remaining focused on immigrants from Europe and their engagement with the new forms of nationalism. A brief glance into the correspondence surrounding Congressman John Box's effort to add Western Hemisphere immigrants to the quota system reveals that Mexican Americans faced the same accusations as Irish Americans, albeit laced with racialized language. The early papers of LULAC demonstrate the group's reaction against such exclusivist nationalism in their front-and-center adoption of patriotic rhetoric and symbolism, from the stars-and-stripes logo to the requirement that all members have U.S. citizenship.[33] Not only were Mexican Americans responding to critiques that used the new, narrower version of citizenship, they also adopted some of the movement's philosophies, emphasizing the patriotism of Mexican Americans both individually and as a community and using that as a strategy to make their demands for civil rights heard. Where community leaders once mobilized by utilizing to a pan-Mexican identity, by the end of World War I, they referred to themselves and their supporters as Mexican Americans loyal to the United States.

Historians have examined the opposition that Mexicans have faced in the United States for decades, most notably in Arnoldo de León's *They Called Them Greasers* (1983), but continuing up to the present, with works like Neil Foley's *Mexicans in the Making of America* (2017) or Ignacio García's *White but Not Equal* (2009) that build on the narrative of Anglo

[33] Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs*, 194.

antipathy to examine specific moments in Mexican-American history.[34] In emphasizing the way in which Mexicans faced racial othering through *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination, these histories tend to overlook the impact of World War I nativism and its role in changing the discussion over Mexican belonging in the United States. While Anglo racism represented a key barrier to equality, as True Americanists successfully pushed more stringent requirements for good U.S. citizenship, the ideology defined a great deal of the tactics used by the Mexican-American civil rights movement. The changes wrought by True Americanism were twofold. First, it added another layer to the exclusionary rhetoric directed at Mexicans and provided racist Anglos with another tool for justifying segregation. However, in describing the specific attributes that they saw as necessary for good American citizenship, True Americanists provided a yardstick that Mexican Americans used to demonstrate how they measured up. This double-edged sword forced Mexican-American activists to counter claims that Mexicans were generally unassimilable or disloyal, but also provided a powerful argument that, as good citizens who served their country, their public agitation for desegregation and equality merited consideration. The Mexican-American civil rights movement took on a uniquely patriotic character, standing out from other Mexican voices both past and contemporary in its use of American patriotic rhetoric shaped by the new nationalism of the early twentieth century.

In looking into that civil rights movement, many historians have approached the legal element of the fight for equality. Several excellent books detail the intense court and legislative battles that activists undertook in fighting for equality.[35] However, underpinning the legal

---

[34] Arnoldo de León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Towards Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); Neil Foley, *Mexicans in the Making of America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017); Ignacio García, *White but Not Equal: Mexican Americans, Jury Discrimination, and the Supreme Court* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009).

[35] For example, Francisco Balderrama, *In Defense of La Raza: The Los Angeles Mexican Consulate, and the Mexican Community, 1929 to 1936* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982); Guadalupe San Miguel Jr., *"Let*

arguments that Mexican Americans made to judges and voters was the use of new rhetoric that arose as a reaction to the True Americanism of the 1910s. By repurposing criticism and riding the tide of True Americanism to encourage American patriotism among Mexican Americans, activists were able to motivate followers and provide momentum behind legal attempts at desegregation. Noting the accusations of disloyalty and un-Americanness that Mexican Americans faced as well as the efforts to overcome them sets their civil rights movement apart from previous Mexican-American leaders as they faced a combination of racial discrimination and attacks on their community's fulfillment of its civic responsibilities.

Some historians have examined the way in which Mexican Americans began to differentiate themselves from Mexican immigrants as a tool for social uplift, most notably George J. Sánchez's *Becoming Mexican American* and David Gutiérrez's *Walls and Mirrors*.[36] It is important to see this development as a tactic for making legal claims about the rights of citizenship as well as a social strategy for separating the Mexican-American community from that of the Mexican immigrant in petitioning for equal treatment. However, the adoption of American patriotic rhetoric is more complex than that. This dissertation will show that its use was a response to external attacks as well, repurposing the claims of True Americanists to show the ways in which Mexican Americans had and would continue to contribute as members of the American nation.

It is also important to note that American patriotism was more than just a strategy to gain followers and persuade the American public at large. In his wartime writings, José de la Luz

---

All of Them Take Heed": Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987).

[36] George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1910-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

Sáenz consistently described his love of the United States and the way in which he felt called to serve, as did other Mexican Americans after the war. José A. Ramírez also explores this in regard to Mexican-American service in World War I in his book *To the Line of Fire!*[37] In examining the content of Mexican-American rhetoric, this dissertation seeks to tread a middle ground between the sentimental patriotism described by Ramírez and the tactical use of patriotism described by Sánchez and Gutiérrez. Patriotic rhetoric was a key strategy of the Mexican-American civil rights movement, but in its success gathering followers, it also represents a message that resonated with many Mexican Americans at large.

Other historians have sought to pinpoint the genesis of the Mexican-American civil rights movement but left out a crucial deeper context. In *Revolution in Texas,* Benjamin Heber Johnson explores the early civil rights movement and finds its origin in a middle-class survival mechanism stemming from the racial violence surrounding the Plan de San Diego in 1915.[38] This emphasizes the local happenings of the Plan de San Diego at the expense of the True Americanist evolution in American nationalism that also proved formative. Of course, this series of killings in the Rio Grande Valley is impossible to ignore, but as this dissertation will show, the first generation of LULAC leaders did not develop their organizational philosophies or rhetoric in a regional bubble, and bringing in the national context is a crucial step towards seeing how these leaders viewed themselves within the United States as a whole. Cynthia Orozco, in *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, provides excellent insight into the earlies days of the

[37] José A. Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire!: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009).

[38] Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

organized Mexican-American civil rights movement as she takes a more pragmatic approach.[39] She briefly engages with True Americanism, but her extremely detailed telling of the first conventions and early evolution of the movement leaves room for the deeper interpretations that this dissertation will provide about how national sentiments shaped LULAC's efforts to bring about change. Mexican-American activists developed a strong sense of American patriotism in conversation with True Americanism and within their community they sought to propagate that sense of civic U.S. citizenship paired with persistent Mexican cultural heritage, offering their own interpretation as to what it meant to be a good American citizen.

When it comes to studies of the construction of the abstract concepts of U.S. citizen and the American nation, Mexican Americans have drawn a significant amount of attention. Historians like Mae Ngai have looked into the development of the category of illegal immigrant and the way in which that process brought about a racialization of U.S. immigration and nationalization policies.[40] In another study, updating the foundational work of Albert Camarillo and applying his narrative of the post-annexation construction of racial hierarchies to New Mexico, Laura Gómez uncovers the way in which Mexicans in the United States came to be seen as a distinct racial group.[41] Natalia Molina, in her book *How Race is Made in America*, examines the construction of race in a more modern context, looking into discrimination against

[39] Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009).

[40] Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[41] Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848-1930* (Dallas, TX: Southern Methodist University Press, 2005); Laura E. Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

Mexican Americans in the years after 1924.[42] An earlier article by Molina examines the topic of court cases and their relevance to Mexican American citizenship and rights quite thoroughly as well.[43] Luis F. B. Plascencia follows Mexican-American citizenship into the modern era, in a book that relies upon interviews to explore current ideas about citizenship and Mexican descent.[44] As thorough as these studies are, this dissertation will build on their examinations of race to show how quality of citizenship came to be another major obstacle confronting the Mexican-American civil rights movement.

Still other historians have studied the cultural practices of Mexicans in the United States with a view towards the impact of Americanization campaigns on the household. Works like Sarah Deutsch's *No Separate Refuge* and Vicki Ruiz's *From Out of the Shadows* have approached the way in which Mexican communities in the United States, composed of both citizens and immigrants, experienced campaigns for acculturation and Americanization even as these historians add gendered analyses to the historiography of Mexican Americans.[45] Their work has done a great deal towards understanding the ways in which Mexican Americans responded to True Americanism in the private sphere, but there are not comparable studies into the way in which that movement impacted the public rhetoric of Mexican-American leaders as they fought for equal rights.

---

[42] Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

[43] Natalia Molina, "'In a Race All Their Own': The Quest to Make Mexicans Ineligible for U.S. Citizenship," *Pacific Historical Review* 79, no. 2 (May 2012), 167-201.

[44] Luis F. B. Plascencia, *Disenchanting Citizenship: Mexican Migrants and the Boundaries of Belonging* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012).

[45] Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Many others examine the close transnational ties between Mexico and Mexican communities in the United States as immigration deepened over the course of the twentieth century.[46] The Mexican Revolution represents a major point in Mexican-American history for its impact in uprooting hundreds of thousands of Mexicans who migrated north to the United States, but also because many Mexican Americans got involved in the events south of the border. Some of the same community leaders who would rely on American patriotism to push for civil rights took sides on this Mexican domestic conflict. The Idar family, of Laredo, serves as one example. Among the children of newspaper publisher Nicasio Idar were a daughter, Jovita, who played a part in the Mexican Revolution as the co-founder of an organization to provide medical aid to wounded soldiers, and a son, Federico, who became so involved in Mexican affairs that he would be assassinated there in 1938, having relocated after the revolution.[47] However, there was also Eduardo, who pursued a career in newspapers and wrote of his support of the United States entering World War I, and Clemente, who went as far as becoming a Four-Minute Man in supporting the war on the homefront.[48] Accounts of the Mexican Revolution tend to overlook this blurriness between Mexican revolutionary and civil rights activist. Close ties to Mexico are a consistent theme in Mexican-American history, but there remains room for a study that

---

[46] Don M. Coerver and Linda B. Hall, *Revolution on the Border: The United States and Mexico, 1910-1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988); Charles H, Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Secret War in El Paso: Mexican Revolutionary Intrigue, 1906-1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009); Friedrich Katz, *The Secret War In Mexico* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); W. Dirk Raat, *Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903-1923* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1981).

[47] Stephanie Louise Diaz, "Hyphenated Citizen: A Biography of Clemente Idar, The American Federation of Labor's First Mexican-American Organizer, 1918-1934" (master's thesis, University of Central Oklahoma, 2013), 9-10.

[48] Cynthia Orozco, "Eduardo Idar," Handbook of Texas Online, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fid05 (accessed March 29, 2018); Clemente N. Idar to James and Miriam Ferguson, 3 June 1917, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 8.

accommodates for both the persistence of Mexican heritage as well as the American patriotism of key Mexican-American civil rights leaders.

Writings about Irish Americans also fail to describe the momentous change wrought by True Americanism. For both Irish Americans and Mexican Americans, an examination of the *longue durée* reveals that, while the goals of ethnically bounded organizations from each community remained relatively consistent, the nature of the opposition that they faced, and their response to that opposition, underwent a great shift in the 1910s. Studies of Irish Americans during the years of True Americanism include a few notable works from the 1970s, but in using such a narrow chronological window, these authors have difficulty providing enough depth to show just how novel the American patriotism of Irish Americans in the twentieth century truly was.[49] Modern case studies like Ely Janis' examination of American support of the Land League War in the 1880s bring a more sophisticated approach, but the narrow timeline can still prove blinding to such a distinct change.[50] So, too, with the myriad of works about the Easter Rising.[51] Locating the changes of the 1910s within the extended history of Irish Americans is the only way to note the actual depth and significance of the changes in Irish-American rhetoric during the first decades of the twentieth century.

Other works that do take on an extended timeline remain geographically constricted. In *Inventing Irish America*, Timothy Meagher follows generational shifts and cultural change

---

[49] For example, Francis Carroll, *American Opinion and the Irish Question, 1910-1923* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978); Joseph Edward Cuddy, *Irish-America and National Isolationism, 1914-1920* (New York: Arno Press, 1976).

[50] Ely M. Janis, *The Land League and Transatlantic Nationalism in Gilded Age America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015).

[51] For example, Fearghal McGarry, *The Rising: Ireland: Easter 1916* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Joseph McKenna, *Voices from the Easter Rising: Firsthand Accounts of Ireland's 1916 Rising* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2017).

among Irish-American residents of Worcester, Massachusetts.[52] James Barrett takes a similar approach in examining Irish Americans living in Chicago across the turn of the century, describing them as "America's first ethnic group" and focusing on the way in which they interacted with Jewish Americans, Italian Americans, and Polish Americans.[53] The regional focus of both, despite their contributions to the understanding of Irish-American history and its evolution, leaves room for a study with national context, as well as an examination as to the specific impact of True Americanism. *Irish-American Diaspora Nationalism*, by Michael Doorley, comes closest to providing this, but in exclusively discussing the Friends of Irish Freedom, Doorley suffers from similar blind spots.[54] In expanding geographically and including organizations beyond the Friends of Irish Freedom, this dissertation seeks to reveal the significant changes in Irish-American rhetoric that came about in the wake of True Americanism.

Even iconic works of Irish nationalism over the *longue durée* overlook the role of True Americanism. Robert Kee's *The Green Flag* keeps to events in Ireland for the most part, and whereas Kerby Miller's *Emigrants and Exiles* fills in with the contributions of Irish Americans, it underemphasizes the role that changes in American culture had in the way that Irish Americans wrote and spoke about themselves, as well as their connections to Ireland and the United States.[55] The more recent *Irish Nationalists in America* by David Brundage takes more of a political history approach, providing a good synthesis of the history of the Irish in America and

---

[52] Timothy Meagher, *Inventing Irish America: Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2001).

[53] Barrett, *The Irish Way*, 3.

[54] Michael Doorley, *Irish-American Diaspora Nationalism: The Friends of Irish Freedom, 1916-1935* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005).

[55] Robert Kee, *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972); Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

their impact on the independence movement, but focuses on the personal writings of key leaders and their strategies, rather than examining correspondence, speeches, and internal communication to draw out shifts in rhetoric.[56] Perhaps the most widely read work of Irish-American history, Noel Ignatiev's *How the Irish Became White*, offers a narrative in which Irish Americans gradually overcome a racialized othering but looks toward race and the use of whiteness.[57] This dissertation will show that, in the early twentieth century, it was claims at American patriotism, rather than whiteness, that dominated the rhetoric of leaders of Irish-American nationalist organizations.

Pairing a comparative approach with an extended timeline runs the risk of underemphasizing the minute changes that occurred across the extensive histories of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans, but following the extended course of Mexican-American and Irish-American history with a focus on the 1910s reveals the unprecedented nature and rapidity of the adoption of American patriotic symbols and rhetoric. It is important to recognize that the continuities in the political and occasionally military agitation of Irish-American and Mexican-American groups stretch through decades in describing the formative impact of the 1910s moving forward. Since their earliest days of socioeconomic dispossession following annexation, Mexican-American leaders fought for better conditions in the borderlands. Not until the years after World War I did this movement against discrimination, upon its organization into more formal civil rights groups, take on such a tone of American patriotism. Not until after World War I, too, did they face such intense questioning of their loyalties to the United States, including during the early years of the Mexican Revolution, in which many Mexican Americans

[56] David Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798-1998* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[57] Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

openly supported revolutionaries south of the border. True Americanism added the powerful critique of attacking the quality of a community's citizenship, and in doing so prompted fierce rejections from Mexican-American activists.

Irish Americans, too, experienced the 1910s as an era of significant change. Examining the commonalities that existed from the Fenians through more modern groups like the Clan-na-Gael or AOH, shows the deep influence of True Americanist rhetoric. Irish Americans, too, redirected attacks on their loyalty, often by repurposing critiques of hyphenism to accuse their opponents of treason. One of their favored retorts was to label any external criticism the work of British propagandists.[58] Like Mexican Americans, they also noticeably ramped up patriotic rhetoric in the years after World War I and did so in direct conversation with True Americanism. Comparing the suddenness with which this change occurred reveals a more generalized reaction to True Americanism and draws the histories of these groups out of relative isolation and into context with one another. Following the mold of Goebel, it steps outside the paradigm of bilateral depictions of American wartime nationalisms.

When it comes to ethnic groups and the World War I-era, some of the most insightful historical works draw together multiple subjects. This is true of *Good Americans*, by Christopher M. Sterba, who links Italian Americans and Jewish Americans in their wartime volunteerism and service.[59] Richard Slotkin's *Lost Battalions* also examines the way in which the war shaped American national identity, but in taking on a broad group of subjects, including Irish, Italian, Jewish, Dutch, and also African Americans, Slotkin's book leans toward the anecdotal even as it proves enlightening. His choice of subject, also, is heavily weighted in favor

---

[58] James K. McGuire, *What Could Germany Do For Ireland?* (New York: Wolfe Tone Company, 1916), 255.

[59] Christopher M. Sterba, *Good Americans: Italian and Jewish Immigrants During the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

of the northeastern United States, New York City in particular.[60] While Slotkin continues his narrative after the war through the 1940s, both of these approaches focus on a brief timeline, which undermines their ability to fully depict the substantive nature of the changes wrought during the World War I era. They work well to enlighten readers about the way in which Americans with strong foreign heritage engaged with wartime propaganda, recruitment drives, and service, but this dissertation will provide a deeper comparative study, including Mexican Americans to avoid the propensity for focusing on subjects from the northeast.

Historians of both Mexican Americans and Irish Americans have increasingly brought comparative approaches to bear in their own analyses, in the process eroding the parochialism of these communities' histories. Often, African Americans represent a natural comparison for both, certainly implied in *How the Irish Became White*, but much more overtly in other works. Max Krochmal, in his 2016 book, *Blue Texas*, shows the way in which the civil rights movements of Mexican Americans and African Americans crossed paths in Texas, and Gerald Horne's 2005 book, *Black and Brown*, draws out the role of African Americans in the Mexican Revolution.[61] For Irish Americans and African Americans, the Civil War becomes a mutually formative moment in Christian G. Samito's *Becoming American Under Fire*, while Mitchell Snay looks at the Reconstruction era in his *Fenians, Freedmen, and Southern Whites*.[62] Scholars John Belchem and Klaus Tenfelde have also put together an edited collection that explores Polish and

---

[60] Richard D. Slotkin, *Lost Battalions: The Great War and the Crisis of American Nationality* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005).

[61] Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Gerald Horne, *Black and Brown: African Americans and the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

[62] Christian G. Samito, *Becoming American Under Fire: Irish Americans, African Americans, and the Politics of Citizenship During the Civil War Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Mitchell Snay, *Fenians, Freedmen, and Southern Whites: Race and Nationality in the Era of Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007).

Irish migration side by side.[63] Examining Irish Americans and Mexican Americans with other groups is a growing trend in historical literature and is finding success in providing new interpretations. Given key similarities between the experiences of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans in the early twentieth century, a comparison of the two is overdue.

It would be impossible to determine with any sense of universality the sentiment of all Irish Americans or all Mexican Americans, particularly over the course of a century. However, this dissertation will examine the way in which the most publicized and, often, most extreme voices described their identities and that of their compatriots to show a common sea change occurring in the 1910s. As leaders sought to use this rhetoric to garner and rally supporters, their approaches reveal the content that they thought would resonate with their intended audiences and address critiques from external opponents. In order to succeed, actual and would-be ethnic leaders had to construct a group identity that proved appealing enough for others to accept.[64] In order to capitalize on the ethnic identity of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans and achieve a political goal in the era of True Americanism required that organizations and leaders walk a fine line. Mexicanness and Irishness were useful rallying cries, but with the predominance of American nationalism, so too were the images of the loyal American, to both acknowledge the presence of American patriotism among Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, but more importantly to preemptively accommodate for the opposition of True Americanists.

For example, in the opening speech to the national convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1914, Norfolk's Mayor Wyndham R. Mayo spoke of Irishness and Americanness, using the imagery of the green Irish flag "entwined in loving embrace" with the stars and

---

[63] John Belchem and Klaus Tenfelde, eds, *Irish and Polish Migration in Comparative Perspective* (Essen: Klartext, 2003).

[64] Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups*, 4.

stripes.[65] In one fell swoop, Mayo's use of this rhetoric both rejected True Americanist conceits as to the disloyalty of Irish Americans, acknowledged the plural identities of supporters in the audience, and affirmed his own beliefs as to the coexistence of Irish and American loyalties with neither displacing the other. Similarly, a 1926 questionnaire from the Mexican-American organization Order Sons of America spoke of American citizenship, Mexican blood, and floated the concept of a transnational North American citizenship.[66] In both instances, the use of American patriotic imagery and the sense of separate ethnicity is prominent, as is the dual effort to encourage group conformity and counter external arguments about the incompatibility of the two identities.

Although dated, Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* serves as a useful starting point for recognizing the construction of these organizations as well as understanding how individual Mexican Americans and Irish Americans conceptualized their place within the abstract American nation.[67] More enlightening, however, is the way in which Alan Knight explores the revolution at the individual level in the first volume of his series, *The Mexican Revolution*. Within it, Knight describes the identity of Mexican peasants as layered, with different affiliations at the local, regional, and national level.[68] Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders certainly wrote and spoke of their identities as layered and belonging to

---

[65] *Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians, Forty-Ninth Convention* (Norfolk: Burke & Gregory, 1914), 4-5.

[66] "Cuestionario," *Orden Hijos de America*, November 1926, 1, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 8, Folder 4.

[67] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso Books, 1983).

[68] Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Volume I: Porfirians, Liberals, and Peasants* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 6.

multiple imagined communities, with their American patriotism becoming increasingly prominent during the 1910s.

However, ethnicity and patriotism were also tools that Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders used in order to construct and defend groups. In *Ethnicity without Groups,* Rogers Brubaker describes the problematic nature of simplifying nationalism into a dichotomy of civic and national varieties, proposing instead "state-framed and counter-state understandings of nationhood and forms of nationalism."[69] This dissertation will utilize that conception of national identity to show that, as True Americanism increasingly became a state-framed understanding of nationhood, accelerated by World War I propaganda, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans came to offer a competing understanding as to their belonging in the American nation.

Examining this phenomenon contributes to the historical understanding of Irish Americans in the Irish fight for independence as well as the development of the Mexican-American civil rights movement. In both of these cases, True Americanism proved formative in shaping the plural identities of leaders and adherents to these movements, and led to a fusion between Irish or Mexican ethnicity and American patriotism. The *longue durée* approach reveals the deep significance of these developments set against an extensive backdrop of agitation. In drawing out the inward- and outward-facing rhetoric from key Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders and organizations, this study elaborates upon the complex identities that these figures sought to construct in the face of intense hostility and assimilationist impulses from the extreme nationalism of True Americanists. In the case of historical studies of this nationalist movement, it also takes the trend of postwar American nationalism and examines it beyond the political or intellectual level, showing how key controversies and debates over legislation led to a

[69] Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups*, 136-7, 144.

dialectic about citizenship in which assimilationist notions sparred with those that left room for persistent ties of heritage. As True Americanists sought to create a more homogenous nation in the years after World War I, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans adopted a multifaceted approach in developing rhetoric that both relied on themes of common mistreatment to construct activist groups and included symbols of American patriotism to defend those groups from outside attack. The result was a set of ethnically bounded organizations that continued to define their membership and goals through a perceived common interest, yet suddenly developed an intense American patriotism. The writing of Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders in the 1920s is fiercely patriotic, in a way that is shockingly different from writing in the 1900s. The way in which this drastic rethinking straddles World War I and borrows key conceptualizations of American citizenship from True Americanism mean that this shift can only be explained as a response to the rise and prominence of True Americanism.

In exploring this change, this dissertation takes a *longue dureé* approach. Chapter one begins with the early presence of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans in the United States. By focusing on two early movements, the Fenians and *Cortinistas*, it shows the flexible nature of national identity in 1860s America; the limited concern over the ability of these movements to do viable harm to the United States at large, even when they brought violence to bear; and the ways in which the leaders of these movements gathered Irish Americans and Mexican Americans to their side. It argues that the use of Irish and Mexican ethnicity alone proved viable enough in the 1860s to form ethnically bounded groups of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans and spur them to action, even despite their eventual failure. It sets the foundation for later chapters to explore the ways in which Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders changed tactics in the face of True Americanism.

Chapter two continues in much the same vein, as it argues that even though Mexican Americans and Irish Americans continued to involve themselves in transnational movements, they took little action to reassure fellow Americans of their loyalties. Without outside pressure to fully embrace American citizenship, as Porfirian politics subsumed the Southwest and Irish Americans reorganized into the Clan-na-Gael, they did not bring out symbols of American patriotism and relied solely upon perceptions of shared heritage to gather followers, in many cases arguing for an even deeper embrace of Mexicanness and Irishness through calls for cultural revival.

Chapter three delves into the rise of True Americanism in the middle years of the 1910s, arguing that the contemporaneous appearance of True Americanist rhetoric alongside key moments of transnational action from Mexican Americans and Irish Americans drew negative attention and had consequences after World War I. Chapter four follows the course of World War I on the U.S. home front, arguing that, despite the involvement of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans in backing the war effort, government propaganda led to the entrenchment of the True Americanist values of complete sacrifice and utter devotion to the nation. Chapter five follows the consequences of this, as True Americanists and Irish-American nationalists clashed over the verbal miscues of an American naval officer in London, while the Mexican-American civil rights movement began to organize itself into formal organizations in South Texas. It argues that, even as Irish-American and Mexican-American organizations adopted themes and symbols of American patriotism, they still faced external criticism for not being American enough. Chapter six sees the story through to Irish independence and draws in the debate over immigration restriction that centered around the way in which Mexican Americans fit within the American nation. In examining the shifting goals and rhetoric of Irish-American organizations

as well as conflict over adding Mexican immigration to the quota system, it argues that Irish Americans no longer needed to adopt patriotic themes and thus dropped them from their rhetoric, while Mexican American leaders had to continue to embrace front-and-center American patriotism in continuing their fight against discrimination.

CHAPTER 1

TRANSNATIONAL RAIDERS: FENIANS AND *CORTINISTAS*

The two men, masculine and militaristic leaders looming large in the historiography of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans, came to live in the country by way of their mothers. The first was the child of an immigrant widow, while the second was a resident of his mother's ranch, living on land annexed by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Both men came from communities that faced discrimination from Anglo Americans. Both also fought in the U.S.-Mexico War, though on opposing sides and in different fields of operation. Following that war, in the late 1850s and 1860s, both also took action, bringing violence to bear against established state powers in the American borderlands, north and south.[70] It is this borderlands violence that has come to define American historical memory of these men. While Thomas W. Sweeny and Juan N. Cortina came from vastly different worlds, their roles as ethnic leaders in the latter half of the 19th century draws them together in historical consideration. When they died, within two years of one another, neither had accomplished the goals for which they fought, Irish independence or better treatment for Mexicans. However, examining their roles within early Mexican-American and Irish-American movements shows the long history through which community leaders could rely upon claims at ethnicity to rally and mobilize supporters. In

70 Jack Morgan, *Through American and Irish Wars: The Life and Times of General Thomas W. Sweeny, 1820-1892* (Dublin: Irish American Press, 2006), 4; Jerry D. Thompson, *Cortina: Defending the Mexican Name in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2007), 13.

looking at the way in which early Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders sought to garner community support, as well as the way in which the broader Anglo population dismissed them as forces of disorder rather than existential threats, this chapter argues that, through the 1870s, Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders could and did rely solely upon Mexicanness and Irishness in garnering support from the Mexican-American and Irish-American communities.

The 1860s and 1870s represent an era in which both Irish Americans and Mexican Americans faced disparagement and racialization but little concern over the way in which prominent organizations and leaders built their followings by relying heavily upon Irishness and Mexicanness. Historian Noel Ignatiev writes of the ways in which early Irish immigrants faced being equated with black Americans and subsumed into the lower strata of American society wherever they settled, exploring the way in which Irish Americans successfully navigated racial norms to undergo a group "whitening."[71] Historian Arnoldo De León follows a similar process of racial subjugation in Texas that started with that state's secession from Mexico and continued through annexation by the United States.[72] Rather than facing critiques of their loyalty or quality of citizenship, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans in the mid-1800s had to contend with obstacles of racial othering, manifested in social discrimination. This meant that rallying cries based in pan-Mexican or pan-Irish identity found a great deal of success in gathering support while encountering little more than dismissal from the Anglo public.

---

[71] Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 41; Jay P. Dolan, *Irish Americans: A History* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), 96-97.

[72] Arnoldo De León, *The Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

Instead of being called traitors, hard-line movements of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans, like the Fenians, led by Sweeny among others, and the Cortinistas, led by Cortina, found themselves characterized by the Anglo press as borderland bandits and irascible miscreants, a sideshow that was frowned upon but not feared. Without nativists acting intensely possessive of the social, economic, and political benefits of American citizenship, Mexican and Irish Americans did not need to visibly embrace American patriotism in order to act as public figures. Even when they escalated to the use of violence in the borderlands, the Cortinistas and Fenians were criticized in mainstream newspapers as instigators of chaos and violators of border neutrality, rather than condemned as traitors. Whiteness and the restoration of order were the concerns of the day, and while both Mexican Americans and Irish Americans bristled at their place in the American racial hierarchy, neither felt the need to defend the quality of their citizenship.

This chapter will argue that, through the 1870s, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans faced limited critiques of their national loyalties, instead contending with racialized attacks on their moral character. Using the Fenians and *Cortinistas* as a backbone, it will examine the dual loyalties brought out by the American Civil War to show that, while the American public could have attacked Irish Americans and Mexican Americans for their multifaceted identities, they did not. Beginning with the Irish experience during the Civil War, it will examine the way in which Fenian leaders presented motifs of dual flags, as well as the continued presence of rhetoric about Irish homeland. Moving forward to follow the later war experience of the Irish, it will show the way in which increased Fenian activity and even Irish participation in draft riots failed to incite critiques of Irish-American loyalty. Extending to the American southwest, it will then interpret the rhetoric surrounding the rebellion of Juan Cortina, as well as the Civil War experience of

other Mexican Americans, to show that, while racial antipathies were still highly present, national identities were still in flux and had yet to become problematic. Following a brief investigation of the aftereffects of the 1863 Battle of Puebla and its impact as a key moment in Mexican-American history and heritage, it will close with the campaigns of the Fenians into Canada, showing the ways in which the Fenians were dismissed rather than confronted as traitors.

For the nascent Irish nationalist movement, the Fenians proved instrumental in building a base of support in the United States in the aftershock of the failure of the Young Ireland uprising of 1848. Named for a group of mythical Irish warriors, the Fenians advocated for the use of physical force in severing the ties between Britain and Ireland, with significant contingents of Fenians located in Ireland and the United States, but also a presence throughout the Irish diaspora.[73] Although Irish nationalists did not achieve their goals for another half century, the Fenians initiated the process of building a broad base of support in the United States, safe from British retribution, vocal in support of Irish independence, and capable of sending tremendous financial aid across the Atlantic.[74] In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the Fenian movement developed into a nationwide organization of no little substance, reaching its zenith in its attempts to strike into Canada during the late 1860s and early 1870s. In doing so, they called upon fellow Irish Americans by referring to a shared history of misery at the hand of the British, and by appealing to a communal desire to strike back in freeing Ireland. Their membership was composed of many former U.S. Army soldiers, but Irish themes dominated Fenian rhetoric.

---

[73] Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 336.

[74] W.S. Neihardt, *Fenianism in North America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), 1-3.

Although unsuccessful, they sought to use violence to compel Great Britain to grant Irish independence.

The *Cortinistas* were a key early group that fought for better treatment for Mexican Americans in the Rio Grande Valley. Their leader, Juan Cortina, was a local figure and occasional soldier-for-hire who initially fell afoul of the American legal system when he interrupted a sheriff who was pistol-whipping a local Mexican in the streets of Brownsville, TX. Shooting the sheriff down, Cortina then fled to Mexico, where he gathered support and returned to raid Brownsville on 28 September 1859. He continued to evade and resist peace officers and federal forces on both sides of the border for several years as he established himself as a local strongman. His message of transnational Mexican unity and efforts to overturn Anglo discrimination through violence made him into a revered leader memorialized in Mexican folk *corridos*. The legacy of Cortina and his Cortinistas continued well into the twentieth century, as some Mexican American civil rights leaders saw him as an important predecessor in speaking out against the mistreatment of Mexicans, most notably J.T. Canales, lawyer, activist, and amateur historian of the Rio Grande Valley.[75] Like the Fenians, the *Cortinista* raids represent an important moment in fighting for the rights of Mexican Americans, and also like the Fenians, the *Cortinistas* relied upon messages of shared Mexican ethnicity alone to draw in supporters and encourage Mexican Americans in the Rio Grande Valley to aid them however possible. The *Cortinistas* also found themselves dismissed by the broader American public as nothing more than border bandits, just like the Fenians. The way in which both groups relied upon ethnicity to draw support, largely shunning American patriotism, shows that in the years before True

[75] Jerry D. Thompson, *Cortina: Defending the Mexican Name in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 2, 37-54.

Americanism, demonstrations of American pride were neither convincing for Mexican Americans or Irish Americans, nor useful in confronting outside critiques.

Both the *Cortinistas* and the Fenians were convinced that their cross-border raids would bring about lasting change. Their actions did create tremendous local anxiety in borderland towns north and south, but despite their use of violence, neither became a serious concern for Americans outside the nation's periphery. Their role as pioneers outweighs their failure to make permanent gains, territorial or otherwise, and in serving as a foundation for twentieth-century organizations of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans, their actions and rhetoric serve as a viable starting point.

Generally speaking, Anglos viewed both the Fenians and *Cortinistas* as curiosities. Many expressed prejudice towards Mexicans and Irish but they did not condemn the Fenians or the *Cortinistas* for their disloyalty to the United States. These organizations could back their respective causes without becoming a major threat to American national security – their rebellions were almost expected. Neither the Fenians nor the Cortinistas incurred the absolute wrath of the broader American public. Instead, they operated at risk of violating neutrality laws and tipping off Texas Rangers and British agents respectively.[76] They could fight for Irish independence and against Anglo discrimination without fear of touching off intense firestorms of public debate and faced legal, rather than social, repercussions for their actions. American governments, both state and federal, did step in to tamp down the activity of the *Cortinistas* and the Fenians. However, government officials feared diplomatic incidents and an upset social order rather than widespread internal dissension and an undermining of national loyalty. The

[76] Ibid., 96; William D'Arcy, *The Fenian Movement in the United States, 1858-1886* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1971), 158.

Cortinistas and the Fenians were lawbreakers, not seditious fifth columns, and were treated as criminals rather than traitors.

The Fenian Civil War Experience, 1858-1865

Although they are most notorious for their actions following the Civil War, the Fenians first appeared in New York City in the 1850s, growing in notoriety as the Union buckled from the slavery crisis. Part of a transatlantic effort to take up the mantle of the failed Young Ireland revolt of 1848, much of Fenian leadership was composed of former Young Irelanders. The organization's leader in Ireland, James Stephens, formally founded an American branch in October of 1858. Stephens charged fellow former Young Irelander John O'Mahony with heading the organization, intending to supplement Irish efforts with funding and material support from the United States. Despite initial slow growth, the organizations circles, as its chapters were known, spread across the United States. In the early years of the Fenians, Stephens continuously urged O'Mahony to be more assertive in his fundraising efforts, but before the Civil War, the Fenians organized mostly to express their moral support for Irish independence.[77] Before the Civil War, Fenian leaders wrote and spoke of deep, immovable ties to Ireland in describing their desire to fight against Great Britain and seeking to appeal to an Irish-American audience less than a generation moved from famine-induced migration.

In late 1859, New York's Fenians met publicly, hearing a speech that one of their leaders, Michael Corcoran, had written for Daniel MacCartie, a once-jailed Irish Fenian, along with his response. Both speeches asserted the deep transnational ties of Irishness and the obligation of Irish Americans to intervene on behalf of the plight of Ireland. In describing Irish independence, Corcoran labelled it "that grand consummation for which every true Irishman, at home and

[77] Neidhardt, *Fenianism in North America*, 5-8.

abroad, will be ever found ready to stake his life – namely, the freedom of his land from foreign thralldom."[78] With this speech, Corcoran called upon powerful images of an immutable homeland, and in describing the actions of the "true Irishman," placed pressure upon his audience to offer their lives in support of Irish independence. Drawing forth an imagined transnational community of Irishmen willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, his rhetoric leaves no room for the presence of American patriotism as it calls upon listeners to thrust themselves fully into the Irish cause.

The very next year, almost to the day, Corcoran, who also served as colonel and commander of New York's 69th State Militia, ignited a controversy when, during a visit from the Prince of Wales, he refused to muster his brigade to honor the prince.[79] Unlike the controversies over Irishness that erupted after World War I, this incident brought an upwelling support of Corcoran's actions on behalf of Irish and non-Irish alike. Following his refusal to muster, Corcoran faced discipline from his superiors, a charge he fought on the grounds that the unit had already met its annual limit of appearances and therefore was under no obligation to show up in honor of the Prince. The *New York Evening Post* cut to the chase, identifying the 69th as an Irish-American regiment and relaying that its members "claim[ed] that England [had] persecuted Ireland for ages, and, therefore, to do honor to the heir apparent to the throne would not only be a slavish act on their part, but would enable the Prince to say, on his return to England, that the Irishmen in America received him with enthusiasm."[80] In refusing to obey the

[78] *The New York Tribune*, 10 November 1859.

[79] *The New York Herald*, 16 November 1860.

[80] *The New York Evening Tribune*, 15 November 1860.

commands of his U.S. Army superior and instead holding true to what he perceived as deeper Irish values, Corcoran clearly demonstrated where his priorities lay.

Corcoran received letters of approval from across the country, including a golden-topped palmetto cane from Charleston, SC.[81] At his court martial, he could only offer weak justifications for his actions, but his supporters flocked to his side regardless. In front of his accusers, he claimed:

> Although I am a citizen of Ireland, I am a native of Ireland…[i]n the Prince of Wales I recognized the representative of my country's oppressors,…[and] in my opinion no change of circumstance should efface the memory of the multiplied wrongs of fatherland and…in honoring that personage, I would be dishonoring the memories, and renouncing the principles of that land of patriots.[82]

Given the support that Corcoran received from among the Irish-American population, this message of Irish loyalty superseding American military obligation seems to have resonated. Even as he flouted the orders of his superiors, Corcoran did not face castigation in the mainstream press or from his court martial. The outbreak of the Civil War trumped this incident in newspaper headlines and his court martial had been postponed long enough that the need for his brigade's deployment superseded the Army's desire to punish him for disobeying orders.[83] In the years before the Civil War, Corcoran, as both a Fenian and an Irish-American soldier, spoke very clearly about the predominance of his ties to Ireland.

The Civil War proved an important moment for the Irish in the United States. Wartime patriotism in this moment would change even the rhetoric of Michael Corcoran, who began to

---

[81] Ibid.; *The New York Herald*, 20 December, 1860; *The New York Herald*, 27 December 1860.

[82] Michael Corcoran, quoted in Susannah Ural Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 45.

[83] Timothy Egan, *The Immortal Irishman: The Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2016), 175.

refer to himself as both an Irishman and an American, rather than an Irishman first. Even though this shift was less intense than that of World War I, it means that the Irish-first sentiments of the Fenians would be put on hold temporarily. For Fenians and the broader Irish community, Irish-American units in the Union Army like the Irish Brigade and the Phoenix Regiment superseded efforts to organize in the name of Ireland during the Civil War. The Fenian Brotherhood did not dissolve, holding meetings throughout the war, including their most famous convention in 1863, in Chicago. However, key Fenian leaders from before the war, like Michael Corcoran and Thomas Meagher, as well as those who came to play a large role after the war, like Thomas Sweeny, stepped forward to serve in wartime. These individuals saw the war in differing ways, but most perceived it as an opportunity to provide Irish soldiers with military experience, hoping to build a corps of battle-hardened Fenians to fight for Ireland.[84] Although Irish Americans responded to calls for volunteers in great numbers, Fenian leaders framed the war within the context of advancing the Irish cause, even as they served under the American flag.

Dissenting opinions, including that of Corcoran, did contend that the war at large was a waste of Irish lives. Corcoran recruited for his and other Irish units, but discouraged Fenians from joining the military outside of those ethnic brigades. He did grudgingly contend that the war would provide valuable military training for those who insisted on serving, but wanted to preserve as many Fenian lives as possible to fight for Ireland, rather than the preservation of the Union.[85] Beyond Corcoran, other Irish figureheads like Generals Thomas Francis Meagher and

---

[84] Although the Irish are most famous for their role in the Union Army, many Irish served the Confederacy as well. After the war, both of these groups of veterans came together to support the Fenian Brotherhood. For more information on Irish confederates, see: Phillip Thomas Tucker, *Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers* (Abilene, TX: McWhiney Foundation Press, 2006); Sean Michael O'Brien, *Irish Americans in the Confederate Army* (London: MacFarland & Company, Inc., 2007); and David T. Gleeson, *The Green and the Gray: The Irish in the Confederate States of America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[85] Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 58.

James Shields supported the war wholeheartedly. Where Corcoran advocated moderation in Irish enlisting, preferring that Irish Americans spend their lives in the direct assistance of the Emerald Isle, Meagher and Shields saw the Civil War as an invaluable training ground.[86] To them, there was some benefit in demonstrating American patriotism, but the biggest gain was in exposing future Fenians to combat experience; Wild Geese reimagined in the age of mass immigration. Despite initial enthusiasm, support from the Irish community failed to match that of Meagher and Shields, dwindling over time as the war continued, nativism persisted, and Irish casualties mounted.[87] Even though Meagher and Shields spoke with enthusiasm to encourage Irish-American volunteerism, their words could do little to compel others to action as the realities of war reached the home front.

When it came to national identity during the Civil War, Irish-American leaders placed Irish symbols and heritage on equal footing with American patriotism. Unit flags included references to Ireland and Irish nationalism and popular songs glorified the shared Irishness and Americanness of soldiers. Irish leaders themselves, like Corcoran and Meagher, described themselves as equally beholden to the United States and Ireland. As historian Susannah Ural Bruce phrases it, "[f]ew Irish-Americans saw the war purely as Americans."[88] From the outside looking in, other Americans critiqued the Irish within the context of being uncivilized, immoral, or anti-democratic, but not disloyal. To these critics, Irish behavior was a source of weakness for the Union, but not an outright threat.

---

[86] Murray M. Horowitz, "Ethnicity and Command: The Civil War Experience," *Military Affairs* 42, no. 4 (December, 1978): 187.

[87] Susannah Ural Bruce, "'Remember Your Country and Keep Up Its Credit': Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865," *The Journal of Military History* 69, no. 2 (April 2005): 339-343.

[88] Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle*, 54.

Irish units and leaders reflected that dual set of Irish and American loyalties that were common in the Irish-American community. From recruitment posters to memoirs, from speeches to popular songs, Irish brigades, soldiers, and civilians proclaimed their loyalty to the United States *alongside* their loyalty to Ireland. In the mid-nineteenth century, Irish Americans were free to emphasize their heritage without claims of disloyalty or treason. As Irish, they faced accusations of moral bankruptcy, anti-democratic behavior, caricaturization, ridicule, and outright dismissal, but they were not labelled as a direct threat to the nation.

Civil War-era Irish pride manifested itself in several ways, generally centering around the Irishness of soldiers and the inherent characteristics that it provided, alongside constant reminders of the plight of Ireland. The most noticeable forms of Irishness included recruitment posters, speeches, and the iconography of the units themselves. In drawing interest for their ethnically homogenous units, leaders like Col. Corcoran and Gen. Meagher produced posters that emphasized labels like Hibernian, or the color green; printed recruiting material that quoted famous Irish historical war cries; and even aligned the Union cause with that of Ireland in their public speeches.[89] Their units flew Irish colors alongside the stars and stripes, and Col. Corcoran's New York 69th even flew a special Prince of Wales flag, denoting his role in the aforementioned incident.[90] Ads urged the "children of '48 to rally round her Green Banner" while reminding recruits that the Irish Brigade was one of few units commanded by Irish officers. Should they turn down the offer to serve in the unit, "no such opportunity of serving

[89] William L. Burton, "'Title Deed to America': Union Ethnic Regiments in the Civil War," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 124, no. 6 (December, 1980): 456; Horowitz, "Ethnicity and Command," 187.

[90] Bruce, "'Remember Your Country,'" 332.

‘neath the green flag [would] ever again be proffered [them].”[91] Irishness was the core component in these recruiting efforts, as “professional ethnics” used these tactics to recruit from a population that was both Irish and American, rather than Americans who were also Irish.[92] In rallying Irish Americans and Irish units, Civil War leaders relied on a strategy of embracing the visible Irish heritage of that community.

Songs were another way in which Irish American civilians and soldiers avowed their dual loyalties. Tunes like “The Irish Brigade” recalled Irish roots alongside themes of sacrifice and American patriotism, describing the Irish at the First Battle of Bull Run as having “poured out their life-blood like water; Upholding the Red, White and Blue,” as “Erin’s Green flag [was] blended; Along with the Red, White and Blue.”[93] Likewise, the song “Pat Murphy of Meagher’s Brigade” told the story of a soldier killed in action, with his compatriots vowing to continue their fight for the union and, after the war, hold themselves at the ready to take up arms for the Irish cause.[94] Finally, in a song memorializing Col. Corcoran in anticipation of his execution (following his capture by the Confederates but preceding his release), the author describes how “The Stars and the Stripes with the Green did unite” in defense of the union.[95] In all of these songs, Irish heritage fused with American patriotism in defining the spirit and the quality of the Irish fighting man. Even in the heat of wartime, Irish Americans never failed to remind others of the potency of their Irish heritage and its central nature to their very identity.

---

[91] “Phoenix Regiment, Corcoran Zouaves, Fourth Regiment Empire Brigade,” *The New York Herald*, 8 July 1862, p. 2.

[92] Bruce, “’Remember Your Country,’” 336; Burton, “’Title Deed,’” 458.

[93] B. O’Connor, Esq., *The Irish Brigade: A Patriotic Song*, score, (New York: John J. Daly, 1864).

[94] *Pat Murphy of Meagher’s Brigade*, score, (New York: H. De Marsan).

[95] *Col. Corcoran and the Prince of Wales*, score, (New York: J. Wrigley, 1862).

In his autobiography, Colonel Corcoran offers the same sentiment of dual loyalty. Following his capture at the First Battle of Bull Run and a thirteen-month imprisonment, he was part of a prisoner exchange and freed from Confederate prison.[96] He capitalized on his fame, first with a promotion to Brigadier General and second with a brief memoir of his time in captivity. Introducing the memoir, he writes that "[h]is greatest gratification was to lead his men into battle bearing side by side the Star Spangled Banner of his American home, and the Emerald Standard of his Native isle," continuing, "[o]ne half of my heart is Erin's, and the other half is America's."[97] During wartime, Corcoran felt ties of obligation towards the United States as well as Ireland, and expressed that through the two-flags metaphor that so many other Irish Americans described. However, he never lost his zeal for Ireland, and his consistent public embrace of Irishness reveals that, even as he put his life on the line for the United States, his love of Ireland never left him. Sadly, Corcoran's shifting sense of national identity was cut short during the Civil War, as he died from complications of his imprisonment in December of 1863.[98] Nonetheless, exploring his words both before and during the Civil War reveals the predominance of the Irish cause in his mind and words and his willingness to continue writing about his Irishness even as the United States called him to service.

General Meagher, commander of the Irish Brigade and a close friend of Corcoran, was another prominent Irish American who linked the American flag with his unit's Irish banner. In his published description of the Irish Brigade's actions in the leadup to the First Battle of Bull Run he described a poetic scene in which "the Green Flag was planted on the deserted ramparts

---

[96] "General Corcoran," *Harper's Weekly* 30 August, 1862.

[97] Michael Corcoran, *The Captivity of General Corcoran* (Philadelphia, Barclay and Co., 1862), 21-22.

[98] Egan, *The Immortal Irishman*, 258.

of the Confederates at Germantown, [and] the Stars and Stripes were lifted opposite to it at a distance of fifteen paces, and between the two beautiful and inspiring symbols – the one of their old home and the other of their new country – the 69th passed in triumph."[99] In using the dual flag motif and describing the persistent feeling of Ireland as homeland, Meagher reminds readers of the omnipresent nature of his Irishness and the way in which his loyalty to Ireland as homeland rests deeper than his allegiance to the United States.

He also suggested that the Irishness of his men imbued them with a special proclivity for military service and loyalty, despite injustices, perceived and real, placed upon them by the federal government. Meager wrote that, mid-battle, "[d]espite of all their hunger, thirst and exhaustion – keenly feeling, as Irishmen alone can feel, that they had been, somehow or other, played and trifled with and defrauded… – the 69th, bearing the Green Flag… still heartily and enthusiastically pressed on."[100] Building on themes of shared misery at the hands of outsiders, Meagher presented a message of persistence and exceptionalism. Having published this account, at the "Irish-American" press in New York, Meagher clearly intended his words for an Irish-American audience. Although he acknowledged his service to the United States in the previous quote, throughout the account, including the above passage, Irishness took precedence.

Meagher's writing falls in line with the words of other Irishmen during the era, regardless of his audience. In another published source, sharing his wartime correspondence with the editor of Dublin's *Irishman* newspaper, Meagher wrote of the role of Irish-American soldiers in restoring honor and glory to the Irish name from the "dense mist of misery and humiliation" that

---

[99] Meagher, *The Last Days of the 69th in Virginia* (New York: Offices of the "Irish-American," 1861), 6.

[100] Ibid., 11.

had characterized the Irish condition for centuries.[101] Meagher, much like Corcoran, saw his soldiers as Irish who happened to be serving the nation in which they lived, but Irish above all else. He even suggested, speaking at a banquet in his honor, that his tombstone might read, "Fighting for the Irish exiles' most happy home, Thomas Francis Meagher died at the head of his brigade."[102] Two years later, this time at a banquet for the Irish Brigade, speaking beneath American and Irish flags, Meagher still praised the Irishness of his men. He did engage in the rhetoric of loyalty and disloyalty, but only to condemn Northern copperheads.[103] In his writing and in his speeches, Meagher described both he and his men as Irishmen fighting for an adopted land. No matter the sacrifice that they must make in the interest of the United States, they would always be Irish. The context of the Civil War brought out a brief moment of American patriotism, but in the writing of Fenian leaders, it always appeared alongside, and usually subordinate to, deeper connections to an Irish homeland.

Wartime service seems to have earned the Irish some credit with the non-Irish public, although their role in riots, both draft-related and otherwise, did inspire some criticism. In spring and summer of 1862, the *New York Sun* ran biographies of Irish generals on their front page, describing James Shields and Thomas Sweeny as gallant and brave respectively.[104] However, outbreaks of violence among Irish communities and dissidence from Irish speakers became an area of concern in wartime. Critiques of the Irish, though, did not come with worries over their undermining the United States but rather as a castigation of the Irish moral character. For

---

[101] Meagher, *Letters on Our National Struggle* (New York: Loyal Publication Society, 1863), 6, 14.

[102] "Banquet of the Irish Brigade to General Meagher," *The New York Herald*, 12 February 1862, p.5.

[103] "The Veterans of the Irish Brigade: Grand Banquet at Irving Hall," *The New York Herald*, 17 January 1864, p.1.

[104] "The Gallant Irish General," *The Sun*, 22 April 1862, 1; "Our Brave Irish Generals," *The Sun*, 27 June 1862, 1.

example, in an August 1862 incident that saw an Irish mob confine black women and children to the upper stories of a factory and attempt to set the building ablaze, the *New York Daily Tribune* blamed the police for not intervening sooner, given the building racial tension over the previous days.[105] Other Americans expected that the Irish would act in such a manner, and it was up to the police to control their behavior.

Two incidents in the summer of 1863 also put Irish reputations to the test with their non-Irish neighbors. The first, a speech by Irish nationalist Richard O'Gorman that expressed sympathy with the Confederates and a desire to end the war, brought critiques of O'Gorman as a disloyal individual, but not part of an inherently disloyal population. The second, draft riots that erupted across New York City in mid-July, brought some individual accusations of Irish treason, but when a mainstream paper espoused those views, Irish community leaders spoke out, leading to more moderate opinions in later reporting on the riots. These two events directly antagonized the Union war effort, and were very closely linked to the Irish. Even still, the perpetrators faced individual critiques, with the Irish generalized as immoral, violent, and susceptible to demagoguery, rather than treasonous.

O'Gorman's speech equated the Union cause with that of the British in the Revolutionary War. The *New York Daily Tribune* excoriated O'Gorman, suggesting that the speech would be welcomed if it were delivered by Jefferson Davis himself. However, in attacking O'Gorman, they critiqued he and his followers as Democrats, not Irish. Their Copperhead beliefs led to this betrayal, rather than any national identity or inherent Irishness.[106] While O'Gorman's speech allowed ample opportunity for external attacks on the loyalty of the Irish, the *Tribune* instead

---

[105] "General News," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 5 August 1862, 4; "Serious Riot in Brooklyn," *The New York Herald*, 5 August 1862, 5.

[106] "Facing Both Ways," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 6 May 1863, 4.

focused on O'Gorman specifically, and attributed his misguided nature to his political alignments rather than his loyalties to both Ireland and the United States

The 1863 draft riots also proved a point of contention with the non-Irish public. Perpetrated by a largely Irish mob, these protests created an opportunity for significant critique of the Irish community. New York's newspapers reported the incident in different ways. The *Times*, for example, identified arrested rioters as Irish where applicable, but did not characterize any mobs as Irish. Instead, they attacked the morality of the rioters, referring to them as ruffians, roughs, rowdies, and even "horrid specimen[s] of humanity."[107] This is particularly surprising given the *Times*' previous antagonism of the Irish, which drove Fenian president John O'Mahony to blusteringly challenge its founder and editor, Henry J. Raymond, to a duel in 1860.[108] The readers of the *Times*, on the other hand, did not hold back. They levelled criticisms against the Irish mob in their letters to the editor referring to the class and racial motivations for the uproar, and the proclivity of the Irish to listen to a few vocal demagogues.[109] One reader, Carl Benson, went as far as to label them traitors, puppets to the Copperhead cause, and unmasculine, in his description of a Celtic mob and its use of women and children.[110] Much like critics of the O'Gorman speech, Benson identifies the deeper treason with the Copperhead politics of the mob, rather than its Irish makeup.

Two of New York's other papers, the *Herald* and the *Tribune*, took slightly differing sides. Like Benson's letter, the *Tribune* opened its coverage of the riots with a scathing critique

---

[107] "The Riot Subsiding," *The New York Times*, 17 July 1863, 1.

[108] William D'Arcy, *The Fenian Movement in the United States, 1858-1886* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1947), 104.

[109] G., "Letters on Current Events," *The New York Times*, 26 July 1863, 5; "Justice to the Victims," *The New York Times*, 18 July 1863, 4.

[110] Carl Benson, "Lessons of the Riot," *The New York Times*, 25 July 1863, 4.

of the Irish, directly labelling them treasonous.[111] However, when the *Herald* featured a letter from New York's Archbishop John Hughes the next day attacking the *Tribune's* article and pointing out the contributions of the Irish throughout American history as well as in the ongoing war, the *Tribune* adopted a much softer opinion, referring to the rioters as "grog-shop rowdies and ruffians" instead.[112] In fact, in a later article reviewing the coverage of the riots among French and German papers in New York, the *Tribune* castigated the German paper, *Abendzeitung*, for its descriptions of the Irish as unassimilable and incompatible with republican government.[113] Further, the *Tribune* pointed to the similarity between the article in *Abendzeitung* and the rhetoric of Southern Democrats when discussing the possibility of abolition and black citizenship. While a few individuals and newspapers could and did link this uprising to treason, they quickly backed down when faced with an Irish response.

When the Fenians resumed their activity with national conventions, even in the middle of the war, they did not face outside criticism for taking time out of serving the United States to plot in the interest of Ireland. In their first conferences, they offered minimal justifications as to the law-abiding nature of their organization, but in convention speeches and convention notes, leaders continued to make Ireland and Irishness a central part of the Fenian identity. By the time of their first national convention, in November of 1863, the Fenian organization had gained national recognition as its members took leave from their wartime activities and converged on Chicago. O'Mahony, still the Fenian president, intended to use the convention to formally establish an organizational structure, create greater unity among circles, and most importantly, to

---

[111] "The Mob and Gov. Seymour," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 14 July 1863, 5.

[112] John Hughes, "Letter from Archbishop Hughes," *The New York Herald*, 15 July 1863, 8; "The Irish," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 20 July 1863, 4.

[113] "The German and French Press of New York on the Riot," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 23 July 1863, 4.

make the organization's goals known to the public. Catholic leaders had attacked the Fenians as a secret society in order to deter parishioners from supporting the organization, and O'Mahony sought to defy that characterization.[114] The convention consisted of several days of committee meetings and speeches, and ended with a new constitution, a series of resolutions, and a published summary of the events. Although some of the points related to ongoing operations in Ireland were redacted, the proceedings of the convention reveal a minimal concern for showing loyalty to the United States.

The Fenians emphasized their willingness to obey the U.S. Constitution, reiterating this point in their first two resolutions, but overall they were more focused on demonstrating their loyalty to Ireland. In fact, in all of the proceedings of Fenian congresses and conventions, speakers and writers only use the term "patriotism" to refer to Irish loyalty, rather than American. The Fenian pledge similarly omits the United States, and remained unchanged throughout the history of the Fenians.[115] The Fenians also repeatedly tied Irishness to masculinity throughout the first conference, with rhetorical allusions to Irish manliness and the ability of the Irish fighting man. The convention closed with a pointed, gendered remark, thanking the Irish women of Chicago for their creation of a Fenian flag, but noting that the Irish woman "loves her country, but is not national."[116] The Fenians were largely male, and had an almost exclusively Irish identity, moving beyond the dual loyalties of the Civil War to embrace Irishness alone.[117] As they focused more on the plight of Ireland, Fenian leaders left behind the

---

[114] *Proceedings of the First National Convention of the Fenian Brotherhood* (Philadelphia, PA: James J. Gibbons, Printer, 1863), 6.

[115] Ibid., 31-35.

[116] Ibid., 29;

[117] For more on Irish women in the nineteenth century, see Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); Jane Côté,

symbols of American patriotism that had been part of their writing during the war and solely embraced symbols and rhetoric that revolved around shared Irishness and the collective desire to strike back against the British.

The *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported on the event with little outrage, recognizing the Fenian shift towards Irishness in descriptions of a speech by a regional leader named McCarthy. However, neither the *Tribune* nor any of the major New York newspapers exhibited alarm at this development. The *Tribune* reprinted the most important Fenian resolutions, along with a Fenian address to the people of Ireland, describing the resolutions as being patriotic, and the organization on the whole as a positive force in the Union cause.[118] In their coverage of the convention, they also labelled O'Mahony "a man of distinction in the world of letters…large minded and indomitable" and reported on the convention's final banquet as "in all respects a success."[119] New York's *Daily Tribune* also saw the Fenians as an asset to the Union cause, while *The Sun* labelled rumors attacking the Fenians as "unfounded and malicious," put to rest by the resolutions at the convention.[120] The *Times*, for their part, was more lukewarm, although in suggesting that the Fenians put U.S.-British relations at risk, also acknowledged that Americans should not dictate the actions of the Irish in fighting for independence.[121] Of course,

---

Fanny and Anna Parnell: Ireland's Patriot Sisters (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1991); Ely M. Janis, "Petticoat Revolutionaries: Gender, Ethnic Nationalism, and the Irish Ladies' Land League in the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 27, no. 2 (Winter 2008): 5-27.

[118] "The Irish Convention," *The Chicago Daily Tribune,* 6 November 1863, 4; "The Irish Convention," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, 7 November 1863, 2.

[119] "The Irish Convention," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, 3 November 1863, 4; "The Irish Convention," *The Chicago Daily Tribune* 6 November 1863, 4.

[120] "The Fenian Brotherhood," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 11 November 1863, 4; "The Fenian Brotherhood," *The Sun* (New York), 7 November 1863, 1.

[121] "Fenian Convention," *The New York Times*, 12 November 1863, 8.

the Fenians were not unanimously lauded, or even unanimously accepted as a legitimate organization, but critiques of their first convention remained mild.

The attacks on the Fenians following that 1863 convention follow the same pattern as criticism of the Irish community within the context of the Civil War. Rather than being disloyal, they were anti-democratic, ill-informed, and morally distasteful. The British-focused, New York-based paper *The Albion* sneered at Fenian efforts, suggesting that they called their convention having little else to do. They piled on, writing that the Fenians were "more likely, we fancy, to find their way to Tennessee than to Tipperary," a clear reference to the former revolutionary John Mitchel and his decision to relocate to Tennessee and then Virginia, abandoning the Irish cause to write on behalf of the Confederacy.[122] Similarly, an anonymous author ("An Irishman") put out a pamphlet in 1864 slamming the Fenian cause, and attacking tacit American support for their activities. With heavy sarcasm, he wrote, "It is certainly a very harmless occupation for American citizens to be engaged in. Just fomenting a rebellion within the limits of a power with which we are on terms of amity and friendship! That is all."[123] Americans as a whole were neither willing to accept the actions of the Fenians, or even acknowledge that their claims of Irish oppression had any merit. And yet, despite bringing up concerns about the actions of the Fenians, the author of the pamphlet stops short of calling their actions treasonous with the same vitriol as twentieth century critics. Within the confines of the Civil War, the Irish and the Fenians were not popular, but found themselves disliked rather than feared. In adopting American patriotism through the dual loyalties motif, Fenian soldiers demonstrated a multifaceted understanding of their obligations to the United States and Ireland

---

[122] "The 'Fenian Brotherhood,'" *The Albion: A Journal of News, Politics, and Literature,* 14 November 1863, 545; Mitchel, unlike other Irish nationalists at the time, linked the Confederate struggle with that of Ireland

[123] An Irishman, *The Fenian Brotherhood* (Boston: Press of Dakin, Davies, and Metcalf, 1864), 6.

with the latter taking priority. As Fenian leadership began to focus more on the Irish cause in the waning years of the war, American patriotism disappeared from their rhetoric.

The Mexican-American Civil War Experience, 1859-1865

Mexican Americans also fought in the Civil War, albeit to a lesser extent than Irish Americans, and certainly with less historical notoriety. However, their wartime service mirrors that of the Irish in that Civil War participation paired American and Mexican loyalties. In the 1860s, a Mexican-American collective identity was still in its early stages, annexation having occurred less than a generation earlier, but Mexican Americans during the Civil War also embraced the dual flag motif, and those who served both the Confederacy and the Union encountered racial hostilities, rather than questions about their loyalty. Mexican Americans often became scapegoats after defeat, but received this criticism based on stereotypes of Mexican cowardice rather than sedition.[124] Anglo perceptions of Mexican moral deficiency supplanted concerns over loyalty to Mexico.[125] However, during the Civil War era, Mexican Americans who served displayed complex, multifaceted understandings of nation and identity.

Much like the Irish, Mexicans and Mexican Americans served on both sides of the Civil War. Unlike the Irish Brigade, the most famous Mexican-descent unit served the Confederacy, the Thirty-third Texas Cavalry. As part of the 3,000 Tejanos to enlist in the Confederate Army, they served under a Mexican-American officer, Santos Benavides, and did so with distinction.[126] Ethnically homogenous Mexican-American units did exist beyond the Thirty-third, but were typically no bigger than a company. High desertion rates among Mexican Americans drew

---

[124] Jerry D. Thompson, *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray* (Austin, TX: Presidial Press, 1976), 6.

[125] Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 12.

[126] Jerry D. Thompson, *Mexican Texans in the Union Army* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1986), viii.

frequent criticism, but deserters were not unjustified, as Mexican-American soldiers on both sides received poor supplies and weapons, and faced extensive prejudice.[127] Nonetheless, several Mexican-American units served with valor and received praise accordingly.

For Mexican Americans in Texas, the Civil War created a complication in terms of national identity, given the creation of a new government, the Confederacy. Further, the frontier nature of the border and inability of the American, Mexican, or Confederate governments to fully control the region created even greater complexity. For example, Mexican-American leader Juan Cortina found himself alternately referred to as Mexican, American, Texan, and banditto at varying points during his life.[128] Cortina's actions demonstrate the flexibility of national identity in the American Southwest during the Civil War era moreso than any other figure and, when examined alongside the service of Santos Benavides for the Confederacy, show the way in which national loyalty was much less of a concern in the Civil War era, trumped by local demands and exigent needs.

Cortina, like the Fenians, represents the most likely target for accusations of treason and disloyalty during the 1850s and 1860s and yet he found himself attacked as a borderlands bandit and seeker of racial revenge, rather than depicted as an anti-American traitor. In July of 1859, Cortina gained the notoriety that has followed him across Texas and borderlands history when he shot the Brownsville city marshal in defense of a Mexican man that the marshal was assaulting.[129] His actions in standing up to Anglo authority earned him hero status among the Mexican community, and supporters flocked to his side. Over the next few months, Cortina

---

[127] Thompson, *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray*, 6.

[128] Thompson, *Cortina*, 250.

[129] Ibid., 38.

menaced Brownsville and the surrounding area. Finally pushed into Mexico by a combined force of U.S. regulars and Texas Rangers, Cortina continued to cross the border and bring violence to Texas in the name of protecting Mexican-descent people throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.[130] Carlos Larralde, relaying oral histories in a book that often takes on a mythical or legendary tone, describes the ensuing two decades filled with intrigue and espionage between *Cortinistas* defending oppressed Mexican people and Texas Rangers seeking to unravel Cortina's network of support.[131] Despite his stolid advocacy for the Mexican people of the borderlands, examining the *pronunciamientos* released by Cortina and the reaction of the Anglo press to his activities shows clearly that, unlike in the twentieth century, there was no strict U.S.-Mexico binary to which he was forced to conform in fighting for justice for Mexican Americans.

National identity does feature in Cortina's rhetoric and in Anglo reporting on his actions, but Cortina fits better within the paradigm of ethnosocial struggle between Anglos and Mexicans over control of land and politics in the Lower Rio Grande Valley than he does with the image of the seditious traitor. Evident in his *pronunciamiento* of 30 September, 1859, Cortina saw himself as a naturalized American citizen of Mexican descent, fighting the imposed Anglo power structure that had descended on South Texas, bringing poverty, violence, and a severe loss of rights for Mexican-descent people.[132] Cortina also showed that he also identified closely with the nation of Mexico, flying the Mexican flag over his encampment near Brownsville and raiding the town with the battle cry, "*Viva La Republica Mexicana*." As he menaced Brownsville in late

---

[130] Ibid., 39-66.

[131] Carlos Larralde and José Rodolfo Jacobo, *Juan N. Cortina and the Struggle for Justice in Texas* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 2000), 100-123.

[132] Jerry D. Thompson, ed., *Juan Cortina and the Texas-Mexico Frontier, 1859-1877* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1994), 2, 14-18.

1859, his rhetoric became increasingly racialized, preaching solidarity between Mexicans in the face of the arrogant Anglo race and insisting that they would eventually triumph. However, the Anglos of South Texas did not slot Cortina into a United States-Mexico binary, instead referring to him with increasingly creative epithets for a bandit, such as marauding chief, arch-murderer, frontier pirate, and even Christian Comanche.[133] When the Civil War broke out and Texas joined the Confederacy, Cortina became much more pro-American, accepting weapons and supplies from the Union Army.[134] His enemy was the Anglo population of Texas and the injustice that they imposed on Mexican people, regardless of the flag that they flew, and his willingness to embrace American or Mexican symbols in attacking those Anglos demonstrates that defining his national identity was secondary to confronting the racial discrimination that he saw unfolding across South Texas.

In May of 1861, in what has become known as the Second Cortina War, Cortina and his men crossed the border, into Confederate Texas this time, and seized the town of Carrizo, near Laredo. Unlike his previous uprising, this one lasted for less than two weeks before Confederate reinforcements chased him back to Mexico.[135] His incursion reached national news but coverage of Cortina still discussed him and his men in the language of the criminal, rather than the traitor. Across the country, he was referred to as a nuisance, a bandit, and a freebooter, his actions an invasion scheme but nothing more, despite the fact that he invaded Confederate territory flying

---

[133]Ibid., 21, 23, 26; Jerry D. Thompson, ed., *Fifty Miles and a Fight: Major Samule Peter Heintzelman's Journal of Texas and the Cortina War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1998), 23.

[134] Larralde and Jacobo, 80.

[135] Ibid., 19-23; Thompson, *Mexican Texans in the Union Army*, 6-8.

an American flag and at the behest of instigating Union officials located in Matamoros.[136] Although he fought against discrimination as part of a movement that stretched into the twentieth century, his actions in the 1860s were framed within the paradigm of disorder versus order.

Cortina was not the only Mexican American to levy violence against Anglo Texans under the American flag. Octaviano Zapata, another Union-motivated (though not endorsed) guerrilla, also attacked Texas under the red-white-and-blue flag, with the battle cry, "Que viva la Unión."[137] Thompson ascribes the motivations of these groups to the opportunity for retributive violence against Anglo Texans rather than identification with the Union cause. Much like the Fenians and their desire to train future Irish soldiers, the war presented an opportunity for Cortina to achieve a pressing goal, and only required that he superficially adopt the necessary symbols and catchphrases of American patriotism to advance the cause of Mexican equality by upsetting the South Texas status quo, rather than ascribe to any permanent national identity.

By 1864, Cortina had become a significant force in Matamoros, and the French intervention in Mexico, Cortina's military strength, and the ongoing Civil War set up one of the more bizarre incidents in borderlands history, vividly demonstrating the constructed nature of national identity. Reporting on the incident varies, but according to the *New York Herald's* Brownsville correspondent, as French forces marched on Cortina's position in Matamoros, the Confederate commander at Brownsville, Rip Ford, made note of their advance and sent his forces to aid in the attack on Cortina. Outnumbered, Cortina nonetheless managed to hold off his attackers and defend the border on behalf of the liberal Mexican government. The momentum of

---

[136] "Important Intelligence from the Rio Grande," *Keowee Courier*, 18 May 1862, 4; "Texas," *The New York Herald*, 20 May 1861, 1; "General War News Items," *The Ottawa Free Trader*, 4 May 1861, 2; "Later from the Rio Grande," *The Opelousas Patriot*, 25 May 1861, 2.

[137] Thompson, *Mexican Texans in the Union Army*, 8-10.

his victory and the defeat of the Confederate forces carried Cortina across the border, where he captured the city of Brownsville, not in his name, nor in the name of Mexico, but on behalf of the Union Army. Referencing his American citizenship and notifying the commander of nearby Union forces, Cortina raised the American flag, "amid the shouts of the citizens and Mexican soldiers, who were almost as proud of the starry banner as our brave boys" only to withdraw back to Mexico when Union troops failed to occupy the city.[138] In Jerry D. Thompson's 2007 book, *Cortina,* he describes the incident as more of a calculated retreat by Cortina in the face of overwhelming French forces, stepping in to aid the Union Army as it ran headlong into Confederate lines.[139] In both accounts of the incident, though, Cortina and his men allied with the United States and fought under the stars and stripes, the very flag that he had cursed in his 1859 marauding of Brownsville. Clearly, when it came to Cortina and his supporters, local exigencies trumped any conceptions of permanent national loyalty.

As the 1860s turned into the 1870s, Cortina looked increasingly southward, becoming more involved in Mexican politics as a borderlands strongman rather than a bandit or raider. He relied on his popularity in Northern Mexico to retain public support and make himself a useful ally, surviving French occupation and the chaos of the late 1860s while maintaining power afterwards. By 1870, Cortina had reached a relatively stable position of power as a regional caudillo, profiting from cattle raids in the borderlands conducted by his subordinates. He became involved as a regional figure in the political chaos of 1870s Mexico, including with Porfirio Díaz in his 1876 Plan de Tuxtepec. Despite siding with the victorious *porfiristas,* Cortina found himself arrested and sentenced to execution in 1877. He escaped his impending

[138] "The Gulf," *The New York Herald*, 20 September 1864, 1.

[139] Thompson, *Cortina*, 140-144.

doom thanks to a minor act of mercy by Porfirio Díaz, reducing Cortina's sentence to imprisonment and then commuting it to confinement to Mexico City, where he lived his remaining years, dying in 1892.[140] Although he became a figure in Mexican national politics, the time Cortina spent in the borderlands fighting for Mexican Americans links him to a legacy of fighting against discrimination in that region. Cortina brought violence to bear in the advancement of his goals while also embracing a flexible, transnational borderlands identity. It is clear that in his role as Anglo bogeyman and champion of the downtrodden Mexican, Cortina, as well as those who feared and castigated him, viewed his actions within a racial context and not one that criticized him for multiple national loyalties.

Outside of South Texas, California's Mexican-American population vividly demonstrated their dual loyalties in memorializing the 1863 Mexican victory against an overwhelming French force in the Battle of Puebla. David Hayes-Bautista has explored the phenomenon of Cinco de Mayo celebrations in the United States stemming from this victory. In his account, Mexicans and other Latinos across California took a great deal of pride in the martial ability of the Mexican forces at Puebla, and rallied around it as a symbol of Mexican strength. Just days after the battle, in a quote that would not seem out of place at a Fenian rally, a Mexican newspaper editor proposed memorializing the soldiers, asking, "[w]ould it not be fitting that, here in California, some show of appreciation be made, which those valiant men merit who have spilled their blood in defense of the homeland?"[141] By May 5, 1864, *juntas patriótocas* across California, but particularly in San Francisco, planned public celebrations to annually commemorate the Mexican victory. Involving heavy use of patriotic Mexican symbols and

---

[140] Ibid., 175-241.

[141] David Hayes-Bautista, *El Cinco de Mayo: An American Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 64-65.

speeches, the popularity of these demonstrations, their spreading across the Southwest, and their persistence as a key part of Mexican-American identity demonstrates further the flexible, constructed nature of national identity in the 1860s. With celebratory cannon fire, Mexican and American flags paired in displays, and rallies across the city, the commemoration drew little comment from the local *San Francisco Bulletin*. Similarly, a week before the Cinco de Mayo celebrations the very next year, the Spanish-language *El Nuevo Mundo* wrote instead about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, mourning the loss of such a great leader.[142] San Francisco's Mexicans could both grieve a fallen president while simultaneously loudly and publicly demonstrating their ties to a Mexican heritage. For these individuals, like the Irish, loyalties were flexible, plural, and transnational. With the Civil War raging on, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans demonstrated complex understandings of their ties to heritage and the obligations of U.S. citizenship, often putting their heritage first, even in bringing violence to bear against the United States, as the Cortinistas had done and as the Fenians planned to do.

Three other individuals illustrate the way in which Mexican Americans faced racial prejudice but not critiques of their allegiance during the Civil War. The experience of Santiago Tafolla in the middle decades of the 1800s reveals more about American perceptions of Mexicanness in the decades during and before the Civil War. Orphaned and forced to live with an abusive brother, Tafolla fled his home in Santa Fe in 1848, travelling around the southeastern United States. There, he was a curiosity, earning the nickname "Mexican Jim." Attempting to return home to the Southwest, he enlisted in the military, where he found some racial prejudice but little questioning of his loyalty. Ultimately, Tafolla encountered the most discrimination when he was stationed in Texas, first with the U.S. Army and then with the Confederate Army.

[142] "*Club Patriotico Mejicano*," *El Nuevo Mundo* (San Francisco), 28 April 1865, 1.

Deserting from the latter after hearing rumors that he and other Mexican Confederates were to be lynched, he fled to Mexico, staying for an extended period of time before returning to Texas in 1866.[143] This threat of lynching fit better within Texas racial conflicts, as part of a larger tendency to turn to extralegal violence that stretched across the nineteenth century.[144] Throughout his memoirs, Tafolla clearly demonstrates a complex sense of national identity, distinguishing himself from both Mexicans and *americanos* depending on the circumstances. In fact, he hardly mentions national loyalty at all, despite having served in the U.S. and Confederate militaries for seven years. This perhaps stems from a bitterness about the discrimination that he faced in the military. While Irish soldiers and civilians complained of excessive casualties and inferior equipment, the discrimination that Mexican-American soldiers faced could also include outright lynchings, a fear that Tafolla and his fellow Mexican Americans shared.

Charles Porter, an Irish immigrant and naturalized citizen, wrote of his Civil War experience in the Southwest serving the Union Army in New Mexico. It is a brief account, but useful in that it includes his opinion of New Mexico's Mexican-descent population. In Porter's estimation, they were not patriotic Americans, and although he suggested that they might prefer Mexican rule of the territory, he also described wealthier New Mexicans coming to the aid of federal troops when threatened by a Confederate advance. Generally, he portrayed them as apathetic when it came to national loyalty, willing to take a stance when circumstances forced them to do so, but happy to remain outside the conflict if possible. Porter does not refrain from

---

[143] Santiago Tafolla, *A Life Crossing Borders: Memoir of a Mexican-American Confederate* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2009), 9, 23-24, 31-32, 64, 70-72, 82.

[144] William D. Carrigan, *The Making of a Lynching Culture: Violence and Vigilantism in Central Texas, 1836-1916* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 13.

harsh critiques of Anglos in his account either, describing the actions of Major Lynde, the Union commander at Fort Fillmore, as downright treasonous.[145] However, the Mexican Americans of New Mexico do not merit his full ire. Clearly, exclusive national loyalty was not a requirement in Porter's mind nor in those of the people of New Mexico, as those who did aid the Union did so, in Porter's opinion, to preserve their social standing and the status quo, rather than out of any sense of national identity or obligation. Interestingly, Porter does not bring up his Irish roots in his wartime account, except to describe his naturalization as proof of his authority on the subject of patriotic service.

Returning to the Confederate side to close out the Civil War, the experience of Colonel Santos Benavides follows the wartime service of an individual loyal to his nation, within limits. A local leader of Mexican origin, he fought fiercely for the confederacy throughout the entire duration of the war, raising a company of men in its early days and refusing to surrender his position even as the Union army moved in on him in 1865. Confederate and Texan officials praised him for his loyalty to the confederate cause as he defended the border from incursions from Cortina, unionists, and other South Texas uprisings.[146] However, he, like Cortina, had a complex set of national identities that tied more closely to local concerns rather than an imagined national community. When offered the opportunity to enlist himself and his men for a three-year commitment to the Confederate cause, Benavides declined, reluctant given the racism that Mexican-American soldiers faced in the Confederate Army and preferring to remain stationed in

[145] Alwyn Barr, ed, *Charles Porter's Account of the Confederate Attempt to Seize Arizona and New Mexico* (Austin, TX: The Pemberton Press, 1964), iv-10.

[146] Jerry D. Thompson, *Tejano Tiger: José de los Santos Benavides and the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1823-1891* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2017), 84, 91, 100, 198.

the Rio Grande Valley.[147] Benavides' actions over the course of the war, interpreted in a similar manner to those of Cortina, show him as somewhat of an opposite figure, fighting for the confederacy but also in the interest of preserving the local power structure of South Texas, defending Anglo landowners and judges against social and racial uprisings. According to historian Jerry Thompson, "Santos remained a man with complicated and conflicted transnational loyalties."[148] Although he represents the ideal Mexican-American Confederate soldier, loyal and brave, his obligations to the Mexican-American soldiers that served beneath him and his recognition of the discrimination that they faced limited his willingness to contribute to the Confederate cause. Anti-Mexican racism proved the catalyst for Juan Cortina, and the service of many Mexican-Americans in the Confederate military did little to address the social standing of Mexican Americans in Texas. Nonetheless, these Mexican-American leaders did their best to act in the interest of themselves and their perceived communities and, in doing so, demonstrate that Mexican heritage remained relatively uncriticized even as these individuals faced racial stereotypes and discrimination.

Fenianism Strikes into Canada, 1864-1871

As the Civil War drew to a close, the Fenians grew significantly in strength and in national notoriety. With the postwar release of so many officers from the Irish Brigade and other units, the Fenian ranks swelled with veterans.[149] In the wake of the war, the actions of the Fenians took on an increased urgency. Three months before Appomattox, the Fenians held their second national convention, in Cincinnati, at which the proceedings went similarly to the first.

---

[147] Ibid., 97.

[148] Ibid., 113.

[149] D'Arcy, *The Fenian Movement*, 61.

Again, their rhetorical use of patriotism referenced Irish loyalty rather than American. Leadership continued to speak of the deep transatlantic ties of Irishness in another address to the Irish people, while passing several administrative resolutions. When it came to their impending confrontation with the British, they eagerly viewed tensions between the United States and Great Britain, asserting that the potential for Fenian attacks in Ireland had kept Great Britain from interceding in the Civil War and hoping that the United States would repay them by taking a more active role in Irish independence, especially since even some Confederate voices had expressed their support for the Irish cause.[150] Finally, although the Fenians are historically known for their invasions of Canada, at this meeting, they spoke of Canadian fears of Fenianism, dismissing them and asserting that even Canadian groups of Fenians focused on involvement in Ireland rather than in North America.[151] Through 1865, as the Fenians continued to make plans without acting on them, they ran into little resistance.

For their part, non-Irish Americans continued to see the Fenians as more of a novelty than a threat. *Harper's Weekly* particularly embodies this view, as they spent 1865 and much of 1866 ridiculing the organization. When the Fenians met for a third time, in Philadelphia during October of 1865, they first began to plot an attack on Canada to effect change in Ireland.[152] This did not impress *Harper's Weekly*, as their reporting on the Fenians in both their 4 November and 8 November issues employed deep sarcasm in a harsh critique of the Fenians' inability to make a concrete impact on the situation in Ireland. In response to Fenian claims of having sent arms and funds to their Irish counterparts, *Harper's Weekly* wrote "there is no evidence that any men or

---

[150] "The Iron Fleet," *The Richmond Enquirer*, 27 November 1863, 2.

[151] *Proceedings of the Second National Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood* (Philadelphia, PA: James Gibbons, Printer, 1865), 7-8, 49.

[152] Leon Ó'Broin, *Fenian Fever: An Anglo-American Dilemma* (New York: New York University Press, 1971), 52.

munitions have been dispatched from this country; and indeed, such is the vast and enveloping blarney of the lively race, that it is by no means sure that the whole thing is not a burst of rhetoric."[153] The *New York Times* piled on, with an article calling for public dismissal of the Fenians:

> But there is some danger in the joke being carried too far; not in the sense of creating international trouble – for that is altogether out of the question – but in this regard: Hundreds, and probably thousands, of poor, honest, unsuspecting Irish, living in the unsophisticated sections of this country, have been cajoled into making remittances to the managers of the Order here and elsewhere – not one tithe of which, they may depend on it, are used for any other purpose than maintaining a set of scamps in idleness.[154]

Clearly the broader public refused to take the Fenians seriously, and as such, did not see them as a legitimate concern but rather a sideshow exhibiting Irish irascibility and pugilism, both expected given Irish stereotypes at the time.

Despite that, the Fenians continued organizing, issuing a General Order on November 20th requesting muster rolls be forwarded to headquarters three times monthly.[155] In preparing for conflict, both in Canada and in Ireland, internal tensions rose, precipitating a divide in the organization. Some of the Chicago Fenians refused to comply with these orders, creating a heated internal dispute with leaders calling for the expulsion and even assassination of one another over their compliance or lack thereof.[156] President O'Mahony's attempt to assert control over the movement created further dissent, foreshadowing an impending split.

---

[153] "The Fenian Congress," *Harper's Weekly*, 4 November 1865, 694; "The Fenians," *Harper's Weekly*, 18 November 1865, 723.

[154] "The Fenian Imposture," *The New York Times*, 14 November 1865, 4.

[155] C. Carroll Tevis, "General Orders No. 2," 20 November 1865, Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., 1865, New York Public Library.

[156] John Maguire to Michael Scanlan, 29 November 1865, Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., 1865, New York Public Library.

December 1865 brought a critical moment for Fenianism as O'Mahony acted unilaterally in approving a set of bonds to raise funds for Ireland. Sidestepping the bureaucracy set up by the Fenian Senate, his claims that he took action given the exigency of the situation in Ireland fell on deaf ears, and the Senate initiated a struggle for organizational power that would rend the group asunder. Divided into presidential and senate factions, both groups pursued plans to invade Canada laid forth in the most recent convention. O'Mahony sought to invade the disputed island of Campo Bello off of the coast of Maine. He thought that success would bring him territory to claim as sovereign and, as an independent nation representing Ireland abroad, he would then issue letters of marque to enable privateers to prey on British shipping. The Senate wing placed Union General Thomas Sweeny, the aforementioned veteran of the War with Mexico and Civil War, in charge of its plans to take Canadian territory and rally Canadian Fenians to their foothold.[157] Divided, the Fenians proved even less of a threat to make good on their plans, and the broader American public treated them accordingly.

December was not a good month for Fenians in the press. *Harper's Weekly* continued to savagely critique the organization, offering up two cartoons along with a column predicting the demise of the Fenians with their recent split.[158] Their first cartoon, in the December 2nd issue, captioned as "The Fenian Joan of Arc," embraced many of the stereotypes about Irish Americans, depicting a bedraggled, hysterical Irish woman, holding a broom as a weapon and with a bottle of rye whiskey on her head, shouting about John Bull in a heavy brogue.[159] The second, at the end of the month, depicted two men, representing the two sides in the split,

---

[157] D'Arcy, *The Fenian Movement*, 103-137.

[158] "Erin-Go-Bragh," *Harper's Weekly*, 23 December 1865, 803.

[159] "The Fenian Joan of Arc," *Harper's Weekly*, 2 December 1865, 763.

sprawled out as if brawling, legs kicked through the strings of a Harp of Erin, empty whiskey bottles on the ground.[160] The Fenian split further undermined the reputation of the organization and, now more than ever, the Fenians became a tremendous novelty. In the upcoming spring of 1866, however, they initiated the first of their raids against Canada. Even when attacking an ally from American soil, though, the Fenians were described as recalcitrant lawbreakers, rather than disloyal or treasonous.

At the end of March, 1866, just days before O'Mahony's faction put its Campo Bello plan into action, the ridicule continued. Yet another cartoon from *Harper's Weekly* depicted Fenian leaders relaxing in a parlor, insisting that, in getting aid to Ireland, they would "raich it by *paishint waitin.* "[161] In the same issue, the journal described the seasonal duck hunters on the Niagara as the closest thing to a Fenian invasion yet.[162] The *Times* kept up their insults, labeling the Fenians as ignorant, cowardly, and boastful, posturing at a Canadian invasion that would never happen.[163] As March turned into April, and Fenians began to gather in Portland, Maine by the hundreds, ridicule turned to outright derision, and Canadian concern turned to outright panic.

Fenians began trickling into Portland in the first week of April, armed and prepared for conflict. By the ninth, they were 500 strong, with more members arriving daily.[164] To draw attention away from Campo Bello, the Fenians feinted towards Bermuda, informing the press that they had sent several ships and thousands of men under the command of their Secretary of

---

[160] "The Great Fenian Fight," *Harper's Weekly*, 30 December 1865, 832.

[161] "Fenian Strategy," *Harper's Weekly*, 31 March 1866, 208.

[162] "Ireland and the Fenian Leaders," *Harper's Weekly*, 31 March 1866, 205-206.

[163] "What St. Patrick's Day Might Have Brought," *The New York Times*, 30 March 1866, 1.

[164] "The Fenian Advance-Guard in Portland," *The New York Times*, 9 April 1866, 4.

the Treasury, B. Doran Killian.[165] Unfortunately for them, neither American nor British officials fell for the bluff, and so the buildup around Campo Bello continued, with U.S. and British troops deployed to keep the peace.[166] By April 15th, the *New York Herald* had dispatched a reporter to the scene, where he found an atmosphere of tension, particularly at the Maybee Hotel, where Fenian, British, and American officials all held their mealtime meetings, scowling at one another across the room, making eyes "such as schoolboys roll at each other in the presence of the master, while muttering through their teeth, 'Wait till I catch you out.'"[167] Even with the imminent threat of violence, the *Herald* could not help commenting flippantly on the Fenians, patronizing them with the comparison to schoolboys while also trivializing their zealousness. As the situation calmed with the arrival of more American and British forces to enforce neutrality, the *Herald* marveled, with no little sarcasm, at the potential of the Fenians, given that they had occupied Eastport, Maine for several weeks without any drunken brawls breaking out.[168] With the arrival of an American naval squadron and ground forces under the command of Gen. Meade, as well as his coordination with British Gen. Doyle, the situation had been defused by the 20th.[169] The Fenians retreated back to their homes. The casualties of the conflict included $40,000 in Fenian funds, countless arms seized by the American and British governments, the telegraph lines of Eastport, and a flag from one of the custom houses, seized by the Fenians

---

[165] "Fenianism," *The New York Daily Tribune*, 6 April 1866, 5.

[166] "The Fenians," *The New York Herald*, 8 April 1866, 5.

[167] "The Happy Family," *The New York Herald*, 15 April 1866, 1.

[168] "The Fenian Furor at Home and Abroad," *The New York Herald*, 16 April 1866, 4.

[169] "Gen. Meade Gone to Eastport," *The New York Herald*, 18 April 1866, 1; "Our Calais Despatch," *The New York Herald*, 20 April 1866, 8.

before they burned down the building.[170] The incident was, by any definition, a debacle, and sealed the fate of the presidential faction of the Fenians. O'Mahony found himself unable to raise funds, and the senate faction took to the fore, planning and executing their first raid of Canada two months later, in June.

The senate faction of the Fenians had not sat idly by while O'Mahony plotted to seize Campo Bello. Thomas Sweeny, the Fenian Secretary of War before the split, and Secretary of War under the Fenian Senate afterwards, began surveilling the area around Toronto even before the divide, looking for a weak point to seize Canadian territory.[171] The split between O'Mahony and his senate led to Sweeny siding with the senate, writing O'Mahony a cold letter explaining his decision, despite a hastily scrawled letter commanding Sweeny to ignore any orders emanating from the senate, under penalty of suspension.[172] As went Sweeny, so went his plans to invade Canadian territory, and for six months after the split, the senate faction set about preparing for action

Sweeny solicited proposals for action, which varied far and wide. Supporters and sympathizers sent him letters suggesting that he raise an army in England and Scotland to take the fight across the Atlantic; that he capture British ships trapped in Canadian ports by the winter ice; that he take advantage of naval deployment to Campo Bello to capture a ship *there*; or that he raid Canada in New Brunswick generally, or Port Stanley more specifically.[173] He toured the

---

[170] D'Arcy, 139; "The First Blow Struck," *The New York Herald*, 15 April 1866, 1.

[171] James D… to Thomas Sweeny, 4 December 1865, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., 1865, New York Public Library; The writer's name is partially legible, despite an attempt at redaction.

[172] John O'Mahony to Thomas Sweeny, 7 December 1865, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., 1865, New York Public Library; Thomas Sweeny to John O'Mahony,12 December 1865, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., 1865, New York Public Library.

[173] Joseph McCormick to Thomas Sweeny, 13 February 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., January-April 1866, New York Public Library; Captain J. W. Bryce to

U.S. in February of 1866, finding broad support among Fenian groups across the country, ending his tour at the senate's national convention, in Pittsburgh, where he delivered a brash speech to rally support behind military action.[174] Sweeny charged the congress with action, reminding them that "Liberty [had been] banished from the soil of Erin; [could they] restore it with the talons of the eagle in [their] own starburst, or twined round the harp, while its strings shall vibrate to the cannon's roar and be attuned with the sabre?"[175] The time for action was at hand, and Sweeny spent the rest of that spring finalizing plans and organizing logistics, preparing for an advance into Canada that he thought would force the British to the negotiating table.

In May and June of 1866, Sweeny directed his men to converge in strategic towns across the northern border.[176] This move set off a panic across Canada, with authorities on both sides of the border deploying troops to ensure neutrality, and operatives spreading across the border to report suspicious shipments for seizure by the local Collector of Customs.[177] The Fenians attempted to disguise themselves as laborers headed to California, and labelled their shipments of arms and ammunition as "machinery," fooling precisely no one.[178] Supplying an armed force from within sovereign American ground proved to be a logistical nightmare, as Sweeny admitted

---

Thomas Sweeny, 3 March 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., January-April 1866, New York Public Library; Edward Kelly to C. Carroll Tevis, 9 April 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., January-April 1866, New York Public Library; G. to Thomas Sweeny, 13 March 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., January-April 1866, New York Public Library; C. Carroll Tevis to Thomas Sweeny, 6 March 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., January-April 1866, New York Public Library.

[174] *Proceedings of the Fourth National Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood* (New York: J. Craft, Steam Book & Job Printer, 1866), 11; 24.

[175] Ibid., 25.

[176] "The Fenians," *The New York Herald*, 28 May 1866, 5.

[177] Edward J. Mannix to Thomas Sweeny, 20 May 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., May 16-May 31 1866, New York Public Library.

[178] "Fenian Affairs," *The New York Tribune*, 1 June 1866, 5.

in a letter to his daughter that American authorities had been the biggest obstacle to his plans.[179] Finally, on June 1st, the Fenians marched on Canada, as Sweeny reassured the entire Brotherhood that, in making up for the Campo Bello debacle, he was "prepared to show to the world that Irishmen are not…contemptible braggarts and boasters."[180] Responding to outside ridicule that must have grated at him, Sweeny sought to take Canada by surprise, and demonstrate the willingness of the Irish American to fight and die for his homeland in front of the world.

The plan was to advance into Canadian territory in three large groups, one from the Chicago area, another from the Buffalo area, and the third from St. Albans, Vermont. The first two groups were to serve as a diversion, drawing Canadian forces south in enough numbers to allow the main group to advance into Upper Canada, sever the vulnerable transportation infrastructure, and occupy Montreal virtually unopposed. Confident of his plan, Sweeny left New York City for St. Albans, ordering his commanders to attack overnight on May 31st.[181] By 4am on June 1st, part of the center wing, under the command of John O'Neill, had advanced into Canadian territory and planted the Fenian flag in a small border town unironically named Waterloo.[182] The Canadian government sent a military detachment to meet the Fenians immediately, despite initial confusion as to the nature of the attack. The Canadian forces were significant, numbering thousands of men in total, but they proved woefully underequipped, even

---

[179] Thomas Sweeny to his daughter, 3 June 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., June 1 1866-1886, New York Public Library.

[180] Thomas Sweeny to "My Countrymen," 11 May 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, Etc., 1 May-15 May 1866, New York Public Library.

[181] Thomas Sweeny, "Official Report of General T. W. Sweeny, Secretary of War," in Joseph Denieffe, *A Personal Recollection of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Giving a Faithful Report of the Principal Events from 1855 to 1867* (New York: The Gael Publishing Co., 1906), 258.

[182] John O'Neill, *Official Report of Gen. John O'Neill, President of the Fenian Brotherhood; on the Attempt to Invade Canada, May 25th, 1870* (New York: John J. Foster, 1870), 38.

having had months to prepare to repulse the Fenians.[183] Rather than face the superior force converging upon his position at Waterloo, O'Neill ordered an advance, moving to confront a smaller group of Canadian forces at Ridgeway that even still outnumbered him. Despite their numerical superiority, after a Fenian charge, the Canadian forces routed; O'Neill turned back to Fort Erie to consolidate his position.[184]

Unfortunately, the Battle of Ridgeway was just about the only element of the 1866 invasion to turn in favor of the Fenians. Transportation problems prevented the entire west wing and much of the center wing from advancing into Canada, and O'Neill found himself without any support or reinforcements. American officials had also made themselves busy seizing arms at a rate high enough to cripple the group's military capability. When O'Neill had to retreat, following a confrontation with Canadian volunteers at Limestone Ridge, Sweeny ordered an attack from Detroit, to peel off attacking Canadian forces. His general, the formerly loyal C. Carroll Tevis, refused. When it came to St. Albans, Sweeny arrived to find a thousand poorly armed men, rather than the 16,800 that his commanders had promised. He ordered an attack, but was arrested in his hotel room on June 6th at midnight, before his east wing could take any action. Fortunately, their commander escaped, and led them across the border to capture the towns of St. Armand, defended by a single British soldier, as well as the town of Pigeon Hill, but this victory, too, was short-lived.[185] After a two-day occupation, during which President Andrew Johnson issued a proclamation commanding U.S. officials to aggressively enforce American

---

[183] Alexander Somerville, *Narrative of the Fenian Invasion of Canada* (Hamilton, Canada West: Joseph Lyght, Bookseller and Stationer, 1866), 42-46.

[184] O'Neill, *Official Report*, 39.

[185] "The Border," *The New York Herald*, 7 June 1866, 1.

neutrality, the Fenian east wing slunk back into the United States.[186] Sweeny blamed everything but his overcomplicated plan, and the biggest show of force that the Fenians would ever produce ended with the capture of miniscule slivers of Canadian territory. The 1866 invasion did mark an important step in the building of a nation, but unfortunately for the Fenians, that nation was not Ireland but Canada, whose territories united in confederation catalyzed in a large part by the Fenian incursion on their soil.[187]

Americans responded with outrage. *Harper's Weekly*, who had up until the attack considered the Fenians a joke, was appalled. Still, though, they did not attack the Fenians as traitors. Rather, they labelled them murderers and criminals, a contemptible rabble.[188] New York's newspapers also reported on Fenian actions within the context of lawbreaking, rather than disloyalty. The *Tribune* showed little sympathy for Fenian prisoners executed by Canadian authorities, but they also stopped short of condemning the invasion or the movement.[189] Reporting on the retreat from St. Armand, the *Herald* fell into old tropes, pointing to Fenian drunkenness and lack of discipline as the cause for failure, without a harsh castigation of Fenian aims.[190] Attacking the legitimacy of the Fenian organization rather than its ties to Ireland, mainstream newspapers targeted the Fenians as forces of disorder, rather than sedition.

A contemporary incident in which British authorities arrested a group of American Fenians serves to illustrate this. When it came to the arrest, following British suspension of

---

[186] Sweeny, "Official Report," 259-61.

[187] Robin B. Burns, "D'Arcy McGee and the Fenians," in *Fenians and Fenianism*, ed. Maurice Harmon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), 86.

[188] "The Fenian Raid," *Harper's Weekly*, 16 June 1866, 371; "The Fenian Raid," *Harper's Weekly*, 23 June 1866, 396-397.

[189] "Shooting of Captured Fenians," *The New York Tribune*, 6 June 1866, 1.

[190] "Third Despatch," *The New York Herald*, 10 June 1866, 1.

habeus corpus, *Harper's Weekly* still advocated that the Fenians receive all the same benefits of American diplomatic protection that other American citizens imprisoned by foreign governments received.[191] Resentment over the raids led to them suggesting that the arrested Fenians be treated as second-tier citizens domestically, but abroad, they were entitled to a basic set of rights as American citizens nonetheless.

U.S. officials swept up other Fenian officers in a dragnet along with Sweeny. By July, however, they were released, without indictment, following the application of Irish-American political power in their interest as well as a healthy dose of obstruction to prevent juries from knowing decisively which leader planned and initiated the raids.[192] Although the Brotherhood continued to raid Canada in much smaller numbers, Fenianism itself returned to being a joke.[193] *Harper's Weekly* went back to publishing articles ridiculing the group with headlines like "The Fenian Folly" and Erin-Go-Buncomb."[194] Sweeny resigned from his position as Fenian Secretary of War in the group's 1866 convention, and then left the group altogether, pursuing a few final years in the U.S. Army before being sent to his retirement on Long Island in 1870. He lived a quiet life with his family there, dying in 1892.[195]

In a final gasp, John O'Neill, elevated to a Fenian generalship and then the presidency, raised men and arms to strike into Canadian territory in significant force once more, in 1870. His men made it a few hundred yards across the border before digging in, defending their

---

[191] "Our Neutrality," *Harper's Weekly*, 23 June 1866, 386.

[192] George F. Stoughton to Thomas F. Sweeny, 27 July 1866, The Thomas William Sweeny Papers, Correspondence, General Orders, etc., 1866-1886, New York Public Library.

[193] Morgan, *Through American and Irish Wars*, 135-144.

[194] "The Fenian Folly," *Harper's Weekly,* 11 June 1870, 370; "Erin-Go-Buncomb," *Harper's Weekly*, 30 March 1867, 194.

[195] Morgan, *Through American and Irish Wars*, 148-152.

position for less than a day before retreating to the United States, O'Neill himself captured when he attempted to bring reinforcements to the front and stumbled across a U.S. marshal.[196] His rout of the Canadian forces at Ridgeway on June 2nd, 1866 remained the high-water mark of the Fenian movement. The use of violence in Irish nationalism had to wait a few more decades, as constitutional efforts to bring about independence swelled once again. Over the next few decades, though, former Fenian John Devoy rebuilt Irish-American support for physical-force nationalism through his role as the leader of the Clan-na-Gael.

Although he gained local and regional power in Mexico, his 1859 occupation of the Brownsville area would also prove to be the high-water mark for Juan Cortina in fighting for his fellow Mexican Americans. His supporters conducted furtive campaigns of mutual espionage and murder against the Texas Rangers running into the 1880s but Mexicans in the United States had to wait for another fiery leader to come to the United States and take up the mantle of fighting for their equality in the 1900s. After Porfirio Díaz jailed radical Liberal Ricardo Flores Magón, his brother, and other leaders of the upstart newspaper *Regeneración*, shutting down the paper and threatening them with violent retribution for their words, they came to Texas in 1904 and, noting the condition of Mexicans there, pushed for social equality in the United States in addition to their anti-Díaz, anarcho-socialist goals.

[196] O'Neill, *Official Report*, 20-22.

CHAPTER 2

FOREIGN FIREBRANDS: RICARDO FLORES MAGÓN AND JOHN DEVOY

They tried to kill the president. Not only that, when they found their leaders and rank-and-file imprisoned, they set out on a campaign to threaten judges, juries, and witnesses, and promised violence if faced with conviction. Further, most of them were not, and had no intention of becoming, United States citizens. The *Partido Liberal Mexicano* (PLM) and their allies, led by Ricardo Flores Magón and other Mexican intellectuals, entered the United States fleeing the oppression of Porfirio Díaz and quickly transformed into a brash source of opposition from the relative protection of the United States.[197] Even with their openly provocative actions, though, the *magonistas* never faced deep accusations of anti-American activities despite their foreign national identity. Rather, they found themselves imprisoned and prosecuted for violating neutrality laws as a result of the lobbying of the Porfirio Díaz regime. The Anglo public turned on them, but only because of their political views, wavering between socialism and anarcho-syndicalism. Much like the Fenians, the *magonistas* were a zealous group seeking to use the sovereignty of the United States as a refuge, utilizing border raids in the hopes of creating a snowball effect to bring about significant political change abroad. And, much like the mainstream public of the 1860s and 1870s, Anglos generally disapproved of *magonista* activity due to their general image as border miscreants and malcontents, fringe radicals to be arrested

[197] Claudio Lomnitz, *The Return of Comrade Flores Magón* (New York: Zone Books, 2014), xiv-xvi.

and dismissed. Even after several attempted raids in to Mexico intended to destabilize the pro-U.S. Díaz regime, the American public at large did not alter their views to see the *magonistas* as a threat to the established international order. The *magonistas* simply became more widely known but not more widely feared as newspapers covered their arrest and trial. More organized and more prominent than Juan Cortina or any other previous transnational borderland group, they still did not face critiques of their loyalty despite their intense Mexican nationalism.

This chapter follows the continued expression of pan-Mexican and pan-Irish identity within the United States by examining the way in which Porfirian politics and the PLM, as well as the Gaelic revival of the late nineteenth century, continued to make Mexicanness and Irishness highly visible in the rhetoric of Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders. Continually referencing pan-Mexican and pan-Irish identities, organizations like the PLM and the Clan-na-Gael sought to preserve the cultural ties between homeland and American ethnic population. In doing so, they encountered limited resistance, with the PLM alone facing critiques for its socialist-anarchist bent. This chapter seeks to build on the previous one to establish a norm of Irish-American and Mexican-American leaders injecting themes of Irishness and Mexicanness within their rhetoric, so as to argue that the changes of the 1910s represent a significant deviation. By showing the ways in which the politics and culture of Mexico and Ireland continued to permeate Mexican-American and Irish-American communities it will contrast the prominence of foreign culture in the late-1800s with the American patriotism of the 1910s and 1920s.

In Ireland, Fenianism fizzled much more easily than it had in the United States. British suspension of *habeas corpus* and the reluctance of Irish leader James Stephens to initiate

violence led to a halfhearted uprising.[198] The failure of Fenianism to fulfill its aims does not preclude its contributions to the history of Irish nationalism, however. The transatlantic organization left a powerful intellectual legacy in terms of continuing the legacy of physical-force nationalism. While the next few decades of the Irish Question were devoted to internal land questions and constitutional attempts to bring about home rule, the tenets of Fenianism would survive to resurface in the 1910s.[199] The capture of James Stephens and other Fenian leaders also vaulted a young Irish man to the fore of the nationalist struggle, catalyzing the career of one of the titans of Irish-American history, John Devoy. From the United States, Devoy gained power by forming temporary alliances and facing internal opposition as he waited for the right opportunity to strike for Irish independence.

The links tying Mexican Americans and Irish Americans to movements in Mexico and Ireland respectively ran deep, and continued into the twentieth century. The legacy of the Fenians and *Cortinistas* carried on as violent movements embracing Mexicanness and Irishness continued to draw in recruits, supplies, and support from their respective communities. Other Americans looked on these movements with disapproval, but did so within the context of racial stereotypes of old. The paradigm of the unassimilated, disorderly ethnic persisted, as did the complex identities of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans. Acting on transnational interests brought critiques, but not accusations of foreignness or treason. When Irish nationalists and Mexican revolutionists did take action, the Anglo mainstream saw them as a concern, but still

---

[198] Desmond Ryan, *The Fenian Chief: A Biography of James Stephens* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1969), 243-256.

[199] For more, see Ely M. Janis, *A Greater Ireland: The Land League and Transatlantic Nationalism in Gilded Age America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015); Deirdre Moloney, "Land League Activism in Transnational Perspective," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 61-74.

nothing more than lawbreaking miscreants, culturally deviant but not an exigent threat to the unity of the American nation.

The last decades of the nineteenth century saw Anglo colonization of the Southwest deepen with further in-migration and the entrenchment of Anglo politics, economy, and society. While Irish Americans experienced this era as a period during which they could escape their third-race status and witness significant sociopolitical improvement, albeit far from full-blown acceptance, for Mexican Americans in the Southwest, the influx of Anglos meant the imposition of a social hierarchy in which they had second-class status.[200] The decades between 1850 and 1880 were a period during which Anglo discrimination led to political, social, and economic disfranchisement for Mexican-descent citizens of California.[201] Historian David Montejano describes a similar process taking place in Texas, albeit accelerated by the independence of the Texas Republic and the more intense use of Ranger violence as a tool for enforcing a racialized social hierarchy.[202] This transition was slightly delayed in New Mexico, where demographic strength led to a persistence of Mexican-era social order, but by 1900, Anglos had asserted themselves across the annexed Southwest.[203] To be certain, Mexican Americans both resisted and integrated into the inexorable American annexation machine to varying degrees, but

---

[200] Noel Ignatiev, for example, describes Irish whitening through the career of Philadelphia politician William McMullen across the latter half of the nineteenth century, Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 166-176.

[201] Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California* (Southern Methodist University Press: Dallas, TX, 2005), 110.

[202] David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 38.

[203] Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 18.

pervasive discrimination in the form of *de jure* and *de facto* racism both forced Mexican Americans down the social ladder and limited upward mobility.

The Porfiriato: Mexican Domestic Politics Come to the United States, 1876-1904

The situation in Mexico proper stabilized politically from the mid-nineteenth century era of foreign intervention, but did so under the thumb of Porfirio Díaz, whose successful revolt against Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada placed him in the Mexican presidency. With a brief interregnum preceding his elimination of the no re-election clause from the Mexican Constitution, Díaz guided Mexico into the twentieth century as a fast-developing nation, albeit with significant cost to many Mexicans in terms of drastic socioeconomic change and loss of personal liberties alike. As the catalyst in Mexico's push for modernity, Díaz pursued a strategy of external investment and manipulated internal unity in order to develop infrastructure, evolve the Mexican economy, and create a cohesive nation with a collective memory of the past.[204] In quashing his opposition, Díaz laid the foundation for opposition movements to take advantage of the sanctuary of the American borderlands, reviving Mexican-American ties to Mexico as they began developing and implementing revolutionary movements to bring down Díaz's reign.

Domestically, Díaz's application of physical forms of justice both created opposition movements and drove them into the United States seeking sanctuary. In order to counter Mexico's notoriety in regards to banditry, the federal government created a federal police force, initially constituted under the Benito Juárez government in 1861 but still extant when Díaz took the presidency in 1876.[205] These *rurales* rapidly gained an international reputation as a force for

[204] Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution: Porfirians, Liberals and Peasants, Volume I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 15-20.

[205] Paul Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress: Bandits, Police, and Mexican Development* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 49.

order in chaotic Mexico and a domestic reputation as government-sanctioned thugs – they toured internationally exhibiting spectacles of horsemanship, but also operated in local communities with carte blanche, resulting in assaults, robberies, and bribery by more disorderly *rurales*.[206] Historian John W. Kitchens, for example, details two key Porfirian techniques in suppressing dissent, the suspension of individual constitutional rights, and the use of the *ley fuga*, a tactic in which prisoners were forced to attempt escape in order to justify their on-the-spot killing. One 1950 study estimated that the implementation of *ley fuga* in Porfirian Mexico resulted in over ten thousand executions without trial.[207] The "Massacre at Veracruz" represents an early example of this. In an attempt to crack down on smuggling and increase customs revenue, the Mexican government passed a law in 1879 that escalated the punishment for smuggling from a fine to imprisonment, sending a gunboat to the major port of Veracruz to enforce this new edict. In protest, a number of merchants seized the boat, defiant against the implementation of a law that they deemed unclear and unfair. Authorized to take action by Díaz, the military governor arrested those he suspected of participating and had them executed without trial. Despite the ensuing uproar, Díaz left his governor in place, indicative of his willingness to support those who quashed disorder, regardless of the cost.[208] Incidents like these alienated much of Mexico's population, but for Díaz, they represented an important step in securing foreign investment.

The benefit of the *rurales*, beyond enforcing the will of the Díaz regime, was the image of stability that they presented to the outside world. Even as they cracked down on dissent,

---

[206] Ibid., 133-137; Robert M. Buffington and William E. French, "The Culture of Modernity," in *The Oxford History of Mexico,* William Beezley and Michal Meyer, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 381.

[207] John W. Kitchens, "Some Considerations on the *Rurales* of Porfirian Mexico," *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 9, no. 3 (July 1967): 447-448.

[208] John H. Seward, "The Veracruz Massacre of 1879," *The Americas* 32, no. 4 (April 1976): 590-596.

foreign opinions of the *rurales* soared. A 1906 account from the U.S. praised Díaz for the "stroke of statesmanship on his part to convert the brigands of former days into rurales or military constabulary, thus making Mexico the safest country in the whole word to live in or to travel in."[209] Díaz's plan for Mexican growth relied upon heavy use of foreign investment and that in turn required that financiers trust that their capital would remain secure. Díaz used the *rurales* to earn trust, encouraging Americans, British, Germans and others to foot the bill for Mexican infrastructure in exchange for the significant profits to be made in an industrializing nation. Díaz provided government tax breaks for investors, but also allocated significant resources to pacifying the Mexican landscape, seeking to countermand Mexico's reputation for chaos.[210] Foreign investment in nineteenth century required a close partnership between financiers and politicians, and even as he made conditions in Mexico more amenable, Díaz also reached out to capitalists across the globe in order to fast-track Mexico's development. Although American investors provided the majority of capital, Díaz made sure to include wealthy foreigners from other nations, mainly Great Britain, in order to offset the perceived and actual influence of Americans on the Mexican economy.[211] As Díaz reshaped the Mexican economy, dissent leaked across the U.S. border, manifested in the uprisings of Catarino Garza, whose rhetoric about his own national identity, as well as the treatment of Mexican Americans, mirrored that of Juan Cortina thirty years after the *Cortinistas* evaded American forces.

Bandit groups and independent native tribes like the Yaqui remained resistant to Díaz's rule, but his regime stayed firmly in place, political and industrial machines ensuring that one

---

[209] Arthur Howard Noll, "Porfirio Díaz," *The Sewanee Review* 14, no. 4 (October 1906): 448.

[210] Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress,* 68.

[211] Jonathan C. Brown, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Investment: British Development of Mexican Petroleum, 1889-1911," *The Business History Review* 61, no. 3 (Autumn, 1987): 388-389.

another worked smoothly. In the borderlands, though, a brief rebellion cropped up in the early 1890s, challenging the condition of Mexican Americans in the American Southwest as well as the legitimacy of the Díaz regime and demonstrating that, even without a nation-building campaign from Mexico City, the cultural heritage of the annexed people of the borderlands persisted. In September of 1891, one day before Mexico's Independence Day and on Porfirio Díaz's sixty-first birthday, Catarino Garza, a journalist and newspaper editor who had left Mexico for the U.S. side of the border, crossed south across the Rio Grande to issue his plan of revolution against the Díaz government. Returning back to the U.S. side to gather recruits and gain the strength needed to challenge Díaz, Garza, like so many other Mexican revolutionists, used the sanctuary of the United States for protection. Emerging from a borderlands society fraught with racial tension and that had already exploded into violence after an attempt on Garza's life, Catarino found tremendous support for his movement in South Texas.[212] His speeches and writing, and the reception of his movement from Anglo newspapers, demonstrate a persistent sense of Mexicanness, as well as a continued effort to depict Garza and his followers within paradigms of Mexican banditry.

Straddling the border, Garza drew in recruits from Mexico and the United States alike. He presented a message heavy with Mexican nationalist symbolism, and at times his rhetoric took on a racialized tinge, appealing to the Mexican pride of his followers.[213] However, that did not preclude him from taking support from local Anglos, and even from appealing to the U.S. government at times. As his revolt captured the attention of national newspaper coverage across

---

[212] Elliot Young, "Remembering Catarino Garza's 1891 Revolution: An Aborted Border Insurrection," *Mexican Studies* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 242.

[213] Elliott Young, *Catarino Garza's Revolution on the Texas-Mexico Border* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 7-9, 31.

the latter half of 1891 and early 1892, journalists treated Garza much as they had the Fenians and *Cortinistas*. In the early stages, his supporters were "deluded converts of his fiery editorials," taking action that the *New York Times* deemed "senseless as well as full of risk."[214] The capture and execution of two of Garza's men by the Mexican federal army brought more coverage but also outrage, Anglo journalists affirming the victims' status as "American citizens and voters in this country" and relaying promises from the U.S. Consul to investigate and take action against the Mexican government as necessary.[215] Even after Garza had fought pursuing U.S. Army forces, with two casualties on the American side, and his rhetoric evolved into an irredentist aspiration to return control of South Texas to Mexico, the *Times* continued to describe the revolt as "the Catarino Garza filibustering and revolutionary troubles."[216] Clearly, the *Times* did not fit Garza and his men within a binary of loyal and disloyal, even as they fired on American federal troops and set plans to reclaim U.S. territory. Rather, they belonged to a stereotyped legacy of Mexican bandits – more eloquent, perhaps, but no different from the forces of disorder that had crisscrossed the border with Cortina or, in the north, with General Sweeny.

Even after rumors of an ambush having killed over a dozen American troops, the reporting on Garza did not evolve.[217] Instead, the *Times* described a South Texas "infested with the revolutionists and their sympathizers…The hatred of these border malcontents and offenders against the neutrality laws of the United States for the soldiers stationed along this side of the border is so intense that they would not hesitate to commit wholesale murder, if given an

---

[214] "A Prudent Revolutionist," *The New York Times,* 30 September 1891, 4; "Editorial Article" *The New York Times,* 11 October 1891, 4.

[215] "The Men Shot in Mexico," *The New York Times,* 25 October 1891, 2.

[216] "Garza's Revolution," *The New York Times,* 26 December 1891, 1.

[217] Like most reporting on Garza, these rumors proved overblown.

opportunity."[218] The same article attempted to detail the causes of Garza's popularity, and landed on a discriminatory explanation of his followers' motivation, as, "[t]o the Mexican peasant, his stomach comes first, his religion next, and his government last." The only surprise was the financial support that Garza had, presumed to have come from a wealthy Díaz opponent in New Orleans.[219] To contemporary Anglos, these borderland Mexicans, like Irish-American nationalists, opposed the advancing power of the modern nation-state as part of their nature; it was a reflexive impulse to turn to violence. Their actions had little depth beyond opportunistic lawbreaking and certainly did not pose a serious threat to the nation at large.

In January of 1892, Catarino Garza felt the need to address the American public's perception of his movement. He had issued an anti-Díaz proclamation to initiate his revolt, and tasked friends and allies with repeating his platform in the local press, but negative descriptions of his men must have irked the man whose autobiography, according to historian Elliott Young, described himself as "a heroic lone defender of Mexican dignity against Anglo insults and offenses."[220] Sitting down with a reporter, whose description of Garza reduced him to a "bandit" even after the interview, Catarino detailed the offenses of the Díaz government and the objectives of his movement. He specifically addressed the way in which his men were described in the newspapers, specifying that "I and my followers are not simply a band of border ruffians, seeking only to gratify personal ends." He went on to discuss his respect for the American government. Garza claimed that he had "too wholesome a fear and regard for the Government at

[218] "Fear for Hardie's Safety," *The New York Times*, 27 December 1891, 1.

[219] Ibid.

[220] Young, *Catarino Garza's Revolution*, 37.

Washington to do anything which might bear the semblance of treason."[221] He thought that the U.S. government would eventually see the righteousness of his cause and back him against the autocratic Díaz.

One month later, Garza wrote directly to President Benjamin Harrison, in a letter republished in national newspapers. He again made a case against Díaz, but also justified his actions, arguing that he was within his legal rights as a resident of the United States in declaring his insurrection, asserting that he had not violated American neutrality laws as written. He closed by reiterating that the justice of his movement would win the U.S. government over to his side as he labelled Díaz and his men "bandits," fitting them within the paradigm that American reporters had assigned to him and his men.[222] Clearly, although he embraced a Mexican cultural identity, Garza felt enough of a civic obligation to the United States to justify his actions within the context of American laws, relying upon legal arguments to legitimize his behavior and undermine depictions of his movement as anarchic.

When the tide turned on Catarino Garza's movement, his men captured and turning themselves in even as Catarino himself fled the country, the narrative remained largely the same. In referencing the rebellion during a December 1892 address to Congress, President Harrison labelled the participants "lawless foreign marauders" and "evil doers."[223] In October of that same year, Garza's brother, facing trial, reasserted the lawfulness of the movement and suggested that any perceived conflicts between Garza's men and U.S. troops were the result of false-flag attacks by Porfirian forces. He claimed to have heard his brother issue an order not to fire on

---

[221] "Garza Tells His Story," *The New York Times*, 4 January 1892, 1.

[222] "Garza Writes to Harrison," *The New York Times*, 9 February 1892, 2.

[223] Benjamin Harrison, *Fourth Annual Message*, 8 December 1892.

Americans as he told the court of his experiences.[224] In another case prosecuting Pablo Muñoz, a colonel in the Garza army, Muñoz's defense attorney ridiculed the conceit that the rebellion posed any threat to the United States or to the international order. In doing so, he directly referenced the Fenian invasions of Canada.[225] Just like the Fenians posed no harm to the United States, neither did the Garzistas. Although some newspapers reported concerns over the Garza movement building enough momentum to escalate into a race war or even an irredentist fight, local and national concerns remained minimal.[226] Looking back at Garza's rhetoric and the broader newspaper reporting on his insurrection reveals a complex national identity that was more than just American or Mexican, but little regard for that element of his campaign. Yet again, Anglo outsiders interpreted this borderlands fight within the stereotyped context of Mexican Americans upsetting the established order.

Borderlands revolts like that of Garza occurred regularly during the Porfiriato, but they remained isolated incidents, and even though they catalyzed some outrage and fears of chaos and racialized conflict, they did not bring out concern as to the national identity of borderlands Mexicans. Rather, a racial depiction of these revolutionists as forces of disorder and opportunism prevailed, criminals and miscreants rather than culturally compromised traitors. These bandits stood up to the U.S. Army for years, but they were bandits nonetheless, fitted within a long legacy of Mexican stereotypes and not within a paradigm of citizenship and national loyalty.

---

[224] "Garza's Brother Talks," *The New York Times*, 21 October 1892, 2.

[225] Young, *Catarino Garza's Revolution*, 178.

[226] Ibid., 163-175; 191; 235.

Despite Garza's failure, the borderlands remained a key site for resistance to the Díaz regime and borderlanders a key support system for liberal opposition. At the turn of the century, two key changes, one economic and one political, undermined Díaz and set in motion the elements of his downfall. The economic change, in accordance with the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis, brought a devaluation of the raw materials that Mexico produced relative to the price of manufactured goods. The products of the Mexican economy, oil, copper, silver, and other raw materials no longer brought the same asking price on the international market and, with this change, the purchasing power of Mexican workers fell dramatically.[227] The drop in quality of life resulted in Mexican citizens looking elsewhere for national leadership and, although his regime continued to punish dissent, created an opportunity for anti-Díaz figures to find a more receptive public. In Mexican politics, the growth of a Liberal movement to present a viable threat to Díaz took advantage of this growing dissatisfaction and forced a reaction from his regime, in the shape of crackdowns, convictions, and harsh sentencing. Faced with this challenge, a young Mexican Liberal Party bore down on their goals of ending the Porfiriato, and with their exile, brought heated Mexican politics to the United States. Over the first decade of the twentieth century, preceding the Mexican Revolution catalyzed by Francisco I. Madero, Mexican Liberals, led by Ricardo Flores Magón, launched both verbal and actual attacks on the Díaz regime from the relative sanctuary of the United States, in much the same mold as Garza, but with a more radical political platform that altered the American public's reaction to their presence.

[227]Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress*, 141.

The Clan-na-Gael and Irish Cultural Revival, 1867-1909

As resistance to Porfirio Díaz grew, Irish separatism also underwent deep changes. In the United States, the Clan-na-Gael usurped the pre-eminence of the Fenian Brotherhood following the Fenian defeats in Canada. Created as an auxiliary group paired with the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in 1867 following the senate-executive split of the Fenians, the Clan embraced the physical-force nationalism that the Fenians had backed, but remained organizationally distinct, and allied closely to the IRB.[228] In 1871, upon his release from imprisonment following the 1867 Fenian uprising in Ireland, IRB lieutenant John Devoy left Ireland in exile to come to the United States, where he found a warm reception at the hands of the Clan. Devoy earned his notoriety within the Clan when, in 1874, he proposed a plan that he and others had been contemplating since his arrival, a mission to rescue Irish prisoners from Australia. Placed in charge of the expedition, Devoy oversaw the purchase and outfitting of a ship, the *Catalpa*, under the guise of a whaling voyage. Following a daring raid on the prison colony, the freed Irish leaders boarded a whaleboat and made for the *Catalpa*, evading a British steamer and outracing a coastal police ship. In his account of the rescue, John J. Breslin, the agent the Clan had sent to make contact with the prisoners, describes the intensity of the sea chase, closing with the Irishmen bounding over the gunwales and into the *Catalpa* as Breslin "stepped to the rail and kissed [his] hand to the gentlemen who had lost the race." Intercepted by the British steamer *Georgette*, the captain of the *Catalpa* flew the American flag and, using the sovereignty of the United States for protection even at sea, backed down the British captain to transport the freed prisoners to the United States.[229] His role in planning the mission cemented

[228] John Devoy, *Recollections of an Irish Rebel* (Dublin: Peter Devoy, 1929), 237-241.

[229] Ibid., 250-260.

Devoy as a key member of the Clan and placed him on the trajectory to play a leadership role in the Irish-American community for decades to come.

After the dramatic failures of the Fenians, the success of the *Catalpa* mission emboldened Irish nationalists. The Boston *Pilot* crowed about the operation, lauding its complexity, praising the leadership behind the plan, and threatening the British with "a hundred *Catalpas*, to wipe British commerce from the face of the sea."[230] Despite plans to land at Boston, the *Catalpa* dropped its passengers in New York City, where an impromptu congratulatory demonstration in favor of the men materialized at the hotel in which Irish nationalist leader O'Donovan Rossa was staying. The *New York Times* describe the men as "Irish patriots," convicted legally through a British court martial but bearing evidence of their arduous imprisonment in the form of their bedraggled appearance.[231] Even the generally anti-Irish *Times* could not help itself from reprinting a breathless recounting of the rescue from the *Pilot*, following up with their own interview with the ship's captain from his home in Martha's Vineyard.[232] Even with the Clan's persistent Irishness, the mainstream *New York Times* lauded their audacity in taking action to free their allies from unreasonable imprisonment.

The aftermath of the *Catalpa* vaulted John Devoy to the head of the Clan-na-Gael and, despite the group's paranoid secrecy, placed them at the forefront in advocating for physical-force Irish nationalism from the United States. In 1879, however, Devoy took unprecedented action in announcing his New Departure policy, backing a plan proposed by Michael Davitt in his campaigns for land reform, to support the parliamentary Home Rule party of Charles Stewart

---

[230] "The Escaped Fenians," *The New York Times*, 16 June 1876, 5.

[231] "The Escaped Fenians in New York," *The New York Times*, 20 August 1876, 12.

[232] "The Escaped Fenians: The Flight from West Australia," *The New York Times*, 11 August 1876, 3; "The Escaped Fenians: The Story Told by the Captain of the Catalpa," *The New York Times*, 21 August 1876, 5.

Parnell. Faced with the overwhelming might of the British Empire and biding his time waiting for a conflict to weaken the British and improve Irish odds of success on the battlefield, Devoy opted for alliance as a stopgap measure, supporting Parnell as well as land reform in order to achieve temporary goals while physical force remained unfeasible. This period of the late 1870s and early 1880s represented a brief era in which violent nationalism, constitutional advocacy, and land reform efforts coalesced to fight for the betterment of Ireland. In doing so, this tenuous alliance put all of its political eggs in the Charles Stewart Parnell basket, relying upon him as a figurehead and parliamentary leader.[233] This brief period of moderate politics from the Clan had consequences, however.

Within the Clan, the decision was far from popular. It led to a significant split, during which a group known as the Triangle seized control of the organization and forced advocates of the New Departure to strike out on their own. Left in charge of the Clan's resources, the Triangle began a dynamite campaign in England intended to demonstrate physically the cost of retaining control of Ireland. Their extremism led to ferocious infighting. One of Devoy's allies against the extremists, Dr. Patrick Cronin, spoke out against the Triangle. In response, Chicago Clan members ejected him from the group in 1884, conducted an internal trial accusing him of espionage, sentenced him to death, and then assassinated him in 1889. The killing led to the imprisonment of several Clan members, a reshuffling of the Chicago police bureaucracy, and a split between extreme and conservative branches of the Clan-na-Gael.[234] It was not until 1899

[233] Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1966), 89-

[234] Richard C Lindberg, *To Serve and Collect: Chicago Politics and Police Corruption from the Lager Beer Riot to the Summerdale Scandal, 1855-1960* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), 81-85; Michael Funchion, *Chicago's Irish Nationalists* (New York City: Arno Press, 1976), 103.

that the two factions agreed to unify once more.[235] When they did reunite, they did so amidst a climate of Gaelic cultural revival, unfolding across the Irish diaspora, but with particular enthusiasm in the United States, as the Irish-American community increasingly embraced Irish language, sports, and other cultural elements.

The earliest form of this renewed interest in Gaelic culture took the form of language and literature groups in Ireland across the nineteenth century but spread quickly throughout the Irish diaspora. Intended to popularize the language and both resurrect and compose works of high culture in the tongue, this movement developed into regional clubs, eventually coalescing into a group called the Gaelic League. The League itself was formalized in Dublin in 1893, but its creation was the culmination of a decades-long movement in both Ireland and the United States. For the Irish, this meant adopting Irish customs and culture along with rejecting Englishness. Irish historian Robert Kee links this movement, and the League more specifically, with the advancement of an increased Irish consciousness across the middle- and working-class of Ireland in the closing years of the nineteenth century.[236] For nationalists in Ireland, this cultural revival was a conscious attempt to counter the popularity of British cultural symbols, namely the popular reputation of the royal family, as well as a campaign to define an imagined community of Irishness both unique from and antagonistic towards the people of England.[237] In the United States, it took the shape of a campaign to limit and then reverse the cultural erosion that leaders of the Gaelic League saw occurring in second- and third-generation Irish Americans.

---

[235] *Articles of Union: Agreed to by the Conference Committee, Representing the T.H. and U.B…*, 4 September 1899, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[236] Robert Kee, *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1972), 432.

[237] James Murphy, "*Cathleen ni Houlihan* and the Tensions of Transition," in *Ireland in Transition, 1867-1921*, eds. D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 116.

Irish Americans participation in this cultural revival remained within the context of diasporic cultural preservation. Irish cultural organizations had cropped up in the United States across the nineteenth century, but in lauding the efforts of Irish Americans to embrace Gaelic culture and language, Clan-na-Gael pointed to the 1856 founding of the Ossianic Society in New York as the progenitor of the movement. Though the Society disbanded during the Civil War, the cultural revival continued afterwards.[238] John O'Mahony, the erstwhile president of the Fenian Brotherhood and a founding member of the Ossianic Society, remarked on the need for Irish culture to restore a fighting spirit to the global Irish, and attributed the failure of his Fenians in 1867 to their flagging Irishness. In 1873, P.J. O'Daly founded a school in Boston to promote the study of the Irish language, and several periodicals promoting the Gaelic language appeared in the United States across the 1880s. Further, Gaelic societies appeared in Boston in 1873 and in Brooklyn the following year. To formalize study of the language, the Irish social organization Ancient Order of Hibernians funded a Gaelic chair in the department of literature at Catholic University.[239] In addressing this legacy of Irishness, Clan-na-Gael lauded Gaelic culture as a key component in maintaining a cohesive Irish diaspora, even as they lamented the inevitability of Irish emigration.[240]

Global relocation and acculturation threatened to undermine the strength of Ireland abroad. In addition to promoting pride in one's heritage, the Gaelic cultural revival was also a conscious attempt to halt the erosion of the global imagined community of Irishness by defining

---

[238] *The Clansman: Souvenir of the Monster Athletic Carnival of the Clan-na-Gael of Long Island* (New York: Brooklyn Weekly News, 1909), 7.

[239] "The Gaelic League Convention," *The Sacred Heart Review* 23, no. 18 (5 May 1900): 295.

[240] *The Clansman: Souvenir of Celtic and Emmet Clubs Irish Picnic and Games* (New York: John L. Moore, 1905), 19.

what it meant to be Irish and Irish American as well as by making Irish cultural symbols and heritage more accessible. The movement did not reject Americanness, but rather sought to cement Irishness as a permanent category of identity for Irish Americans. For example, in 1900, the Reverend Eugene O'Growney produced a version of the Star-Spangled Banner translated into Gaelic.[241] Rather than attacking American patriotism, O'Growney's translation, and the broader rhetoric by groups even as radical as Clan-na-Gael, posited that one could be both a loyal American and a firm Irish nationalist, and that the two national identities could coexist for Irish Americans working in the interest of both nations.

This Gaelic revival included an emphasis on the use of the Irish language in creating high culture, like literature and poems, but also contained elements that appealed to the masses. In the late 1800s, Irish athletics boomed, in both popular sports and traditional Irish games, like hurling. Groups like the Gaelic Athletic Association became extremely popular, as did participating in their events. Founded with the intent of spurring nationalism in Ireland by leaders as significant as Charles Stewart Parnell and Michael Davitt, the organization toured the United States in 1888, with the goal of raising money to restart the *Tailteann*, a traditional Irish athletic competition. Although the tour failed in this regard, the Irish athletes found a population of Irish Americans avidly interested in Irish games, along with an established, albeit small, set of Irish-American athletic organizations. The next year, an American branch of the Gaelic Athletic Association was formed and, with the formalization of rules and promotion of clubs and events, Irish sports spread across many cities. Popular through World War I, sports sociologist Paul Darby describes Irish sporting events as "an important cultural mechanism for building and

[241] "The Star-Spangled Banner in Irish," tr. Rev. Eugene O'Growney, *Supplement to "The Gael,"* December 1900, The Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

articulating an affinity for Ireland."[242] The importance of this enthusiasm for Ireland and Irishness in regards to the separatist movement can hardly be understated, and Irish-American nationalist groups worked hand-in-hand with the GAA to promote sporting events and carnivals.

For the Clan-na-Gael, this meant sponsoring an event that they labelled the "monster athletic carnival" in New York City. In doing so, they provided pamphlets for attendees, which presented an opportunity to advance their specific vision of Irish separatism to a widespread audience. Their handout for a 1905 picnic opened with the Clan rallying song, including general themes of bravery and persistence common in Irish nationalist rhetoric, urging members to "Be sure you hold the old flag high" in reference to the Irish colors.[243] The program continued in its focus on Irish nationalism, enamored with the masculine resistance to Home Rule displayed by the younger generations of Irish men and marveling at the role that Irish hurlers might play in an upcoming conflict, "what soldiers they would make!"[244] The author, an Irishman from Limerick, lamented the way in which emigration had sapped the demographic strength of the Irish, but in true nationalist fashion, praised the loyalty and contributions of the Irish diaspora to the separatist movement.[245] Another poem urged Irish Americans to "be a WORKER if you love the old land, Don't be a SHIRKER…Be practical in your [Irish] patriotism."[246] The brochure did include a brief mention of the Revolutionary War, but placed it within the context of American

---

[242] Paul Darby, *Gaelic Games, Nationalism and the Irish Diaspora in the United States* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2009), 33-60.

[243] J.P. O'Mahony, "Rallying Song of the Clan-na-Gael," in *The Clansman*, 1905, 1.

[244] John Daly, "How is Old Ireland?" in *The Clansman*, 1905, 3.

[245] Ibid., 4.

[246] Ibid., 7.

and Irish interests aligning, in describing the tearing down of a statue of King George III in New York.[247]

With little pressure to embrace American patriotism, Clan-na-Gael used their pamphlet to place Irish nationalism in the foreground, limiting their displays of American loyalty. They continued in the vein of Fenianism, both in advocating for the violent overthrow of British rule and in the primacy of their Irish identity. To be sure, individual members of the group held their own opinions about the United States and American patriotism, but the literature that the Clan put forward publicly clearly favored the group's Irishness, with any references to patriotism referring to loyalty towards Ireland and any mentions of the flag describing a green and gold banner, rather than the stars and stripes.

A 1909 pamphlet, also from the group's monster athletic carnival, reflects a similar identity – prioritizing Irishness with occasional mentions of contributions to American history. This time, the Clan brought out Molly Pitcher to demonstrate Irish loyalty during the Revolution, in addition to commemorating the Civil War sacrifice of Irish-born soldiers. These themes also appeared in the reprinting of a dramatic 1877 obituary for the Fenian president John O'Mahony. Written in verse, it demonstrates the prioritization of Irishness, and the idea that service and loyalty to the United States was not mutually exclusive with backing Irish independence. Describing O'Mahony's Civil War service, the poem reads:

> When civil rage enflamed to war the second home you knew
> You rushed to lift its lowered flag wherever, once, it flew
> And when, the contest done, its stars shone with united beam
> You hoped its radiance might requite the race that died most to redeem [248]

---

[247] Ibid., 35.

[248] *The Clansman*, 1909, 16, 27, 39.

Like its 1905 antecedent, this pamphlet most often emphasizes themes of Irish loyalty, with only a slight overlapping message of American patriotism. References to the Civil War fill only a handful of its dozens of pages, as the majority of content centered upon the rebirth of Irish fine arts and reprinted poems and essays of Irish history, resistance, and future glory. So, too, with a 1911 version of the pamphlet. The 1911 version was much simpler, with only four poems and two essays, but these works followed previous patterns. The booklet opened with an extensive essay reviewing the physical-force policy backed by Clan-na-Gael and delving into the history of violent resistance to English rule, with a focus on the symbolic uprising of 1798 and only a brief mentioning of the Fenian movement in the United States.[249] The poems took a similar approach, engaging with the diasporic qualities of the Irish abroad but drawing them together through a shared history in victimization by England. The most extensive essay was titled, "Why Irishmen Should be Proud of Their Country," by James Graham, a Democratic Congressman of Irish birth representing the state of Illinois. Within it, Graham sought to draw together an ancient shared history of Irishness, stretching back to the Roman Empire and reaching into the twentieth century. One of his major goals was to unequivocally equate the Irish with the American Revolution. Graham posited that Irishmen represented a major part of the continental fighting force and worked to smear Great Britain by labelling Tories as almost exclusively English. He openly stated, "I deliberately assert, and I propose to prove, that it was the presence of large numbers of Irish men and women, and the descendants of Irish men and women in the colonies which made the struggle between England and the colonies in 1776 a War

[249] John F. Bennet, "The Physical Force Policy," in *The Clansman: Souvenir of the Monster Athletic Carnival*… (New York: The Brooklyn Weekly News, 1911), 3-21.

of Independence."[250] In doing so, Graham not only constructed and presented a set of collective memories to unite the U.S. with Ireland and justify the efforts of Irish nationalists but also appointed a common opposition to unite loyal Americans and loyal Irishmen. Somewhat evolved from the rhetoric of Irish identity superseding American patriotism, Graham still portrayed Irish and Americans as separate entities, able to work side-by-side in pursuit of a common cause historically to justify the present actions of the Clan-na-Gael.

Irish athletics represented a major area of cultural rebirth, but also an opportunity to rally around the cause of nationalism. Like the Fenians, twentieth century Irish nationalists saw an opportunity to train future soldiers, but more importantly, these sports and communal events allowed nationalists to build a more cohesive cultural bond. As Irish sports gained popularity, athletic events helped build unified support for Irish nationalism, more specifically the violent opposition to British rule. In doing so, groups like the Clan-na-Gael advanced a message intended to create a broad imagined community composed of the larger Irish diaspora, and by aligning Irish emigrants and their descendants with the United States, gain the goodwill of that country as an ally to their cause.

Outside the realm of athletics, the first decade of the twentieth century saw the Clan-na-Gael taking its most confrontational stance since the days of the Triangle. Whereas the previous decades had seen a multifaceted approach to Irish nationalism, the Clan began the twentieth century working to assert its position as the leader in Irish nationalism, with violent separatism as the only valid approach in dissolving the Act of Union. The notes from the organization's 1902 convention, for example, detail the many methods by which the Clan sought to support Irish

[250] James Graham, "Why Irishmen Should be Proud of Their Country: Civilization and Learning in Ancient Ireland, Services to the United States," in *The Clansman,* 51.

separatism while undermining both the efforts of rival nationalist groups as well as the reputation of Great Britain.[251] Much like the realm of athletics and culture, when it came to political involvement, the Clan-na-Gael and their allies emphasized their Irishness above their American identity, sought to link the United States with the larger Irish cause, and took any actions that they deemed necessary to advance the interests of Irish independence.

The most assertive of their actions was in backing the Boers in their war with the British Empire. Irish individuals traveled to Africa and groups in Ireland raised funds in support of the Boers, but so too did Irish Americans. Following their doctrine of aiding any party seeking to do harm to the British, Clan-na-Gael, for example, directly recruited an ambulance corps and sent it to Africa. Further, affiliate organizations sent troops, money, and supplies as well. One such auxiliary group, the Irish Volunteers, gathered its members and prepared to ship out on 1 January, 1900.[252] James Moran, who had been a key founder of the Irish Volunteers in 1895 but fell from the good graces of the Clan with his expulsion at their 1898 convention in Atlantic City, saw this as an opportunity to rejoin the group. He, too, volunteered with the Boers and, upon his return, petitioned the Clan for reinstatement at their 1902 convention. He, along with other returning veterans, sought a reward for their service in the name of Ireland.[253] The convention agreed, setting aside a fund of $10,000 for returning soldiers, although the various committees placed the specific disbursement of the funds in the hands of the Clan executive.[254] At the same convention, they also enlisted the help of sympathetic congressmen in lobbying for the return of captured

---

[251] *Convention 1902*, Clan-na-Gael, 23 June 1902, Washington, DC, 18, The Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[252] Ibid., 37; This group was distinct from the Irish Volunteers formed in Ireland in 1913.

[253] Ibid., 37-39.

[254] Moran's petition, too, was sent to the Clan executive.

Irish Americans held by the British.[255] These transnational actions in the interest of Irish independence did not just arise during the Boer War. Throughout the early twentieth century, the Clan-na-Gael made no secret of their willingness to take action motivated by their Irish identity even if that involved direct confrontation with foreign powers with which the United States had friendly diplomatic relations.

This continuation of the Fenian policy of striking at the British Empire where it was vulnerable remained a constant theme for Clan. Biding their time in waiting for a conflict between England and the continental powers, advocates of physical-force separatism did what they could to sap British strength and undermine the integrity of British global holdings. At a 1904 event memorializing Robert Emmet, amidst the Clan-na-Gael Declaration of Principles, the program crowed, "To-day we are inactive, to-morrow we may strike in distant Hindostan or remote Australia, or even in the heart of London itself, as we did in Manchester and in the Transvaal. Our vengeance never sleeps. It is eternally vigilant and covers the entire universe."[256] Unapologetically aggressive, Clan leadership felt no need to mask their intentions even at this public event. They did, however, keep internal details clandestine. At their 1902 convention, the Foreign Relations Committee revealed that the Clan had reached out to several continental European powers, presumably Germany and France, among others, but redacted the details of their efforts from the printed version of the convention's notes.[257] Reaching out to foreign powers, a constant tactic in the history of Irish independence, still proved viable in the

---

[255] "Army to Free Ireland," *The Chicago Tribune,* 16 December 1895, 2; "Irish Recruits for the Transvaal Army," *The San Francisco Call*, 1 January, 1900, 3; *Convention 1902*, 21.

[256]"Clan Declaration of Principles," *Remember Emmet: 126th Anniversary Celebration Under the Auspices of Clan-na-Gael*, 4 March 1904, 8-10, The Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[257] *Convention 1902*, 18.

early twentieth century but carried the risk of failure should the operational details of Clan efforts become public knowledge.

Up until World War I, physical-force Irish nationalism built its strength and awaited a conflict between England and the strongest powers of Europe. Two quotes from a 1902 issue of the *Clan-na-Gael Journal* issued in response to constitutional attempts at Home Rule illustrate this perfectly:

> No one thinks of insurrection in Ireland NOW, or at any time when England is not facing one or more of the great powers of Europe in armed conflict, but every true Nationalist knows that BEFORE THAT CONFLICT COMES IS THE TIME TO PREPARE for the use to be made of it. We have only a limited amount of money. It is no time to waste any of it
>
> The Irish people have good political heads and know how to read the signs of the times. They see war steadily looming up and they see the parliamentary movement just as steadily degenerating. Hence fifty percent of them at home refrained from voting and the great mass of them in America have buttoned up their pockets. They don't want to put their money on a bolting or spavined horse. Perhaps they do not clearly see their way as yet, but their hopes are rising and the way will be clear enough when France and Russia move and England is in her death struggle.[258]

In 1902, on the heels of the Boer War, the Clan's rhetoric was determined and fierce. As the twentieth century continued and the promised conflict failed to materialize, their movement softened and became stagnant. They looked backward, commemorating the heroes of old like Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet, and warned of English manipulation of American foreign policy to advance her own interests.[259] The Clan continued to focus almost exclusively on Ireland,

---

[258] "The Futility of Constitutional Agitations," *The Clan-na-Gael Journal* Year 35, no. 2 (4 July 1902): 2.

[259] "Died for Ireland's Freedom," *The Gaelic American* 1, no. 1 (19 September 1903): 1; "Sam. Cavanaugh, Old Dublin Fenian, Dead," *The Gaelic American* 3, no. 1 (6 January 1906): 1; "Some Side Lights on the Irish Brigade," *The Gaelic American* 4, no. 4 (26 January 1907): 1; "The Coming Emmett Celebration," *The Clan-na-Gael Journal* 33, (18 February 1910): 1; "Gen. Miles' Address: An Eulogy on the 69th N.Y. Regiment," *The Clan-na-Gael Journal* 24 (24 June 1911): 1; "One Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Anniversary of the Birth of Robert Emmett…," *The Clan-na-Gael Journal* 25 (22 February 1913): 1; Wolfe Tone Monument Association, "To the Officers and Members of all Irish-American Organizations…," 3 May 1913, The Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

though a 1911 copy of their newsletter featured the Star-Spangled Banner printed on the front page.[260] It was not until mid-1914 when events in Ireland and continental Europe reinvigorated the movement in their calls for violent resistance to English rule, but the concurrent rise of a new type of American nationalism forced Clan leadership to evolve their rhetoric and more closely embrace American patriotism.

The *Partido Liberal Mexicano* and Transnational Mexicanness, 1904-1910

Ricardo Flores Magón, along with his two brothers, began his life as the child of a middling Oaxaca farmer. By the time he turned eighteen, he began challenging the rule of Porfirio Díaz, even getting arrested for protesting Díaz's second re-election in 1892.[261] Eight years later, he helped found the anti-Díaz newspaper *Regeneración*, alongside several other Mexico City liberal intellectuals. In the early years of the twentieth century, Magón rose quickly through the ranks of Mexican liberalism, most famously speaking out against Díaz vociferously in a 1901 speech to a nationwide congress of liberal clubs.[262] He spent the next few years in and out of Mexican prisons, jailed for his oppositional rhetoric. Finally, in January of 1904, with the Porfirian government having shuttered his newspaper and imprisoned him yet again the previous April, Ricardo Flores Magón left his country for the United States, seeking refuge as well as a sanctuary from which he could broadcast his message of liberal anti-Porfirianism. The previous three years had vaulted him into prominence as he became increasingly radicalized. He spent the rest of his life outside of Mexico, pursued by Mexican agents and American law officers based on his actual and intended violations of the U.S.-Mexico border as well as the inflammatory

---

[260] "The Star-Spangled Banner," *The Clan-na-Gael Journal* 24 (24 June 1911): 1.

[261]Ward S. Albro, *Always a Rebel: Ricardo Flores Magón and the Mexican Revolution* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1992) 3-5.

[262]Ibid., 10-13.

nature of his writing. During his time in the U.S., he evolved from a Mexican liberal calling for reform to a violent socialist and anarchist seeking to effect the overthrow of the Díaz regime. The United States became an important site for him and his movement and, despite their transnational Mexican patriotism and desire to intervene abroad, they encountered the greatest resistance from Mexican consuls and spies, not an American public resentful of their foreign loyalties.

Like the Fenians, the *magonistas* sought to instigate popular uprisings through border incursions. They hoped to compel Mexican citizens to oppose the rule of Porfirio Díaz and, in doing so, take on his extensive network of *rurales* and federal troops. They, like the Fenians, represented a zealous contingent operating abroad, and both found themselves pursued by American officials as a result of neutrality violations. However, while the Fenians had run headlong into nativist prejudice, the *magonistas* faced an uphill battle due to their connections with international socialism and syndicalism, in addition to the anti-Mexican prejudice present throughout the Southwestern United States. The U.S. represented a refuge from the Porfirian government and a source of American allies,[263] to be sure, but the politically extreme views of Magón and his followers incited ill will among most Americans and undermined their ability to operate comfortably while north of the border.[264] Even as their actions culminated in the ultimate act of treason, an attempted assassination of a sitting U.S. president, they found themselves fit not within the paradigm of seditious traitor, but rather border bandit or misguided socialist, whichever fit best at the time. Furthermore, while they spoke out on behalf of Mexican Americans and Mexicans alike, the socialist element of their ideology lent an internationalist

[263] Including both Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans

[264] Lomnitz, *The Return of Comrade Ricardo Flores Magón*, xiii-xv.

tone to their rhetoric, undermining to some extent their use of patriotic Mexican language but limiting any appeal to Americanness that might justify their presence in the United States.

Fleeing Díaz, the Magón brothers and their closest allies crossed the border into Laredo, Texas on 4 January, 1904. With little capital and no infrastructure to print their newspaper, *Regeneracíon*, their readership had to wait for them to raise funds over a period of ten months.[265] Finally, in November of that year, *Regeneracíon* came out with its first issue from the United States, with the Magón brothers having relocated to San Antonio in the meantime. They remained headquartered there for the next few months and although their writing focused on Mexican politics, being in the United States exposed them to the condition of Mexican Americans in the borderlands and prompted them to condemn Mexican diplomatic officials. While in San Antonio and later, after their move to St. Louis, they wrote about the United States occasionally, focusing mostly on the failure of the Mexican consular service, themes of Mexicanness, and the dangerous potential for further American annexation of Mexican territory.

Díaz´s consular service became the object of their ire, with almost weekly articles on the incompetency, corruption, and apathy of these officials tasked with protecting Mexicans. *Regeneración* went as far as to place sole blame for anti-Mexican racism and discrimination on the consuls, pointing out inaction in regards to crimes against Mexicans and lack of protection from the avarice of labor contractors. They consistently claimed that a consular service filled with competent officials rather than patronage appointments would reverse the situation and lead to Anglos treating Mexicans with the respect that their nationality deserved. In a November 5 article, they accused Díaz of converting consuls from "servants of the nation to vassals of the

[265]Ibid., 23-24.

dictatorship" as they expanded their attacks on his administration.[266] They also put forth their own vision of transnational Mexicanness, suggesting that greater self-respect and pride in one's homeland would lead Mexican emigrants to reject poor working conditions, representing an important first step in ending discrimination.[267] Caught up in nostalgic homesickness, they closed out the year with an article on the innately comforting nature of one's homeland, and the way in which Mexicans abroad needed to return home to rekindle that love of nation.[268] Within a year of coming to the U.S., the *magonistas* had begun to perceive some of the ills that faced Mexicans there and started to develop a transnational identity. Their descriptions of homeland and nation welcomed Mexican Americans and embraced the idea that people in the United States could take an active interest in events south of the border, both in areas that directly concerned them, like the effectiveness of consuls, and in more distant controversies, as they continued to harp on the corruption of the Porfirian judicial system.

San Antonians did not reject the *magonistas* during this first year. In fact, Ricardo Flores Magón and his top lieutenants found themselves welcomed by many. The local Hidalgo Society chose him as a speaker at their Independence Day celebrations in September, and in December, *Regeneración* reprinted an article from the *San Antonio Gazette* complimenting them on their ability to continue their fight from U.S. soil despite the presence of Porfirian spies in the borderlands.[269] To be sure, the *magonistas* were not universally accepted, but they were far from

---

[266]Examples of this include "*Los cónsules mexicanos en los Estados Unidos*," *Regeneración* 3, no 1 (5 November 1904): 3-4; "*Los mexicanos en Texas*," *Regeneración* 3, no. 6 (10 December 1904): 3; "*Los mexicanos en los Estados Unidos*," *Regeneración* 3, no. 12 (21 January 1905): 2.

[267] "*Los Mexicanos: Se niegen a trabajar en el Mississippi," Regeneración* 3, no. 2 (12 November 1904): 2.

[268] *"Amor a la patria," Regeneración* 3, no. 6 (10 December 1904): 1.

[269] "Speakers Named for Mexican Celebration," *The San Antonio Daily Express*, 27 August 1904, 10; "*Lo que dice* 'The Gazette," *Regeneración* 3, no. 10 (7 January 1905): 2.

pariahs in San Antonio, even when preaching their unapologetically pro-Mexican message. In relocating to the borderlands, they joined a transnational community of immigrants and longtime residents of Mexican descent. The national sovereignty of the United States provided shelter from direct intervention by the Porfirian regime, but the moral and monetary support that they received from subscribers and sympathizers led to their evolution from narrow political critiques of the Mexican government to a message of socialist Mexican nationalism that sought to effect change in both Mexico and the United States.

Of course, neither the sovereignty of the United States nor the support of their allies could keep the *magonistas* completely safe from persecution. The Díaz regime, in response to their continued involvement in Mexican affairs and attempts to distribute *Regeneración* into Mexico, pursued the *magonistas*. In February, the group relocated further from the border, to St. Louis, MO, motivated by their clashes with pro-Díaz residents of San Antonio and catalyzed by a violent break-in. Their account of the incident described a drunk Tejano named González, with whom they were quite familiar, entering the headquarters of *Regeneración* and threatening the paper's leadership to the point where editors Enrique Flores Magón and Manuel Sarabia had to physically remove the man. Following the scuffle, the two editors found themselves arrested by local constable Charles Stevens, who was notorious for working with González to harass opponents of the Díaz regime. After a brief, corrupt trial in which the two *magonistas* were found guilty and fined, and upon learning that Díaz had tasked the Mexican Ambassador to the United States with convincing the American government to aid in silencing them, the group decided to relocate and resume production of *Regeneración* from the relative safety of Missouri.[270] The long arm of transnational Porfirian justice proved to be the biggest threat to the

[270] "'Regeneración' *en St. Louis, Missouri*," *Regeneración* 3, no. 17 (25 February 1905): 1.

PLM even after they moved to the United States, a source of concern much more serious than any antagonism that they faced from the broader U.S. public.

The next year and a half saw the PLM headquartered in St. Louis as they continued to provide in-depth coverage as to the political situation in Mexico while also engaging with topics more directly relevant to the Mexican population of the United States. For one, *Regeneración* acted as the mouthpiece of Mexican liberalism in the United States by announcing the creation of affiliate clubs across the country. In March of 1905, for example, they published a "patriotic invitation" to join Salvador Medrano, of Chico, California, in forming a club there to protest the actions of Díaz via lobbying and letters.[271] Almost a year after moving to St. Louis, they published a formalized constitution for affiliate organizations in the United States, with the key difference between liberal clubs in Mexico and the United States being that they encouraged American clubs to act within the public sphere, relatively protected as they were from the punishments of Díaz. Certain organizational components were to remain a secret, like internal chains of command and the amount of funds that each group funneled to PLM headquarters, but in taking on a role in the public sphere, they tasked their allies with propagating Mexican culture, even providing a list of liberal-approved holidays that clubs across the U.S. ought to recognize and celebrate. Their specific brand of Mexican nationalism, remembering important events like Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day, and the death of Benito Juárez while also memorializing tragic events that had happened under the Porfirian regime, like the 1879 Veracruz massacre, combined their unapologetic opposition to Díaz with the goal of keeping Mexican heritage persistent among emigrants.[272] Much like the Gaelic cultural revival propagated by the Clan-na-

[271] "*Invitación Patriotica," Regeneración* 3, no. 19 (11 March 1905): 4.

[272] "*Agrupaciones en Los Estados Unidos," Regeneración* 4, no. 2 (15 February 1906): 4.

Gael, the PLM worked to maintain the visible presence of a Mexican identity in the United States.

The descriptions of Mexican nationalism within *Regeneración* mirrored themes that appeared consistently within Irish-American writing and rhetoric. The *magonistas* wrote about the transcendental nature of Mexicanness, even more relevant now that they had relocated further from the borderlands. They addressed emigrants, calling upon "Mexicans, in the name of your oppressed fatherland, speaking to your patriotic hearts – [to] not let the patriotic flame that would otherwise engulf your heart die," and described their own patriotism persisting within their blood, so integral to their identity that they felt the pains of Mexico even from abroad.[273] As refugees rather than emigrants or ethnic Americans, it is to be expected that their Mexican roots remained a key part of their national identity. Just like the Clan-na-Gael, though, which was composed of both members born in Ireland and also those whose families had lived in the United States for generations, *Regeneración* writers depicted their ethnic background as something universally inescapable that drew their attention and concern beyond American borders.

In addition to propagating Mexican liberalism within the United States, *Regeneración* engaged with more specific border concerns. They spoke out against the elimination of the *Zona Libre* in northern Mexico, where residents received relief on import taxes, paying only a ten percent fee on goods instead of the usual customs duties. For *Regeneración*, this was yet another act of despotism by Díaz – they described borderland Mexicans as impossibly impoverished and reliant upon cheap goods from the U.S., rather than more expensive products transported from central Mexico. They relayed scenes of lost harvests and daughters turning to prostitution using

[273] "*Manifiesto," Regeneración* 3, no. 48 (30 September 1905): 2; "*La Junta Organizada," Regeneración* 3, no. 49 (7 October 1905): 3.

highly dramatic language to critique Díaz's efforts to impose an inflexible state boundary on a borderlands that was economically reliant upon cheap imports from the U.S.[274] The PLM's desire for a permeable border remained within the realm of culture and economics, however, as they spoke out in response to rumors of Anglo filibustering expeditions into Sonora. In a continuation of their critiques of the consular system, they described Porfirian diplomatic ignorance as pervasive throughout the administration, spreading fear that Díaz would allow American speculators to seize Mexican territory and property, perhaps even leading to annexation.[275] Although they recognized the borderlands as a place of socioeconomic melding, the PLM viewed Mexico and the United States as highly distinct political entities and worried about the avarice of both American investors and American expansionists.

Unlike with the Fenians or the Clan-na-Gael, the PLM saw the U.S. government as an antagonist rather than a potential ally or advocate, and their time in St. Louis did little to temper their criticism of Anglos and the American government. Now tuned into the obstacles that Mexicans faced in the United States, they reprinted a purported letter from one supporter whose ability to pass as an Anglo allowed him access to discriminatory conversations. The letter, conforming to *Regeneración*'s accounts of Anglo prejudice, recounted discussions of the savagery, stupidity, and cowardice of Mexicans, praising Díaz as a rare intelligent Mexican, and suggesting that Anglo Americans were entitled to Mexican resources and land.[276] The United States was a relative refuge and many Americans, both Mexican and Anglo, represented valuable

---

[274] "*Abolición de la Zona Libre," Regeneración* 3, no. 37 (15 July 1905): 2; "*Los Verdugos de la Patria," Regeneración* 3, no. 40 (5 August 1905): 2.

[275] "*Politica Anexionista," Regeneración*3, no. 25 (22 April 1905): 1; "*Ultraje a a Soberania de Mexico," Regeneración* 3, no. 38 (22 July 1905): 2.

[276] "*El Peligro Yankee," Regeneración* 3, no. 30 (27 May 1905): 2.

allies, but the *magonistas* remained wary of what they labelled "yankee greed."[277] They also continued to expose corruption and incompetency among Mexico's foreign officials while increasingly blaming consuls and other Díaz agents for their own persecution. In August of 1905, the editors of *Regeneración* wondered if the situation in San Antonio might repeat itself, having received threatening correspondence and even read of fictionalized attacks on themselves in Mexican papers, which they presumed to be a veiled threat from the Porfirian government. Still, they insisted that their desire for justice had not been dulled despite their travails, and when faced with the wealth and influence of Mexico's consuls, they predicted that their just cause would prevail.[278] For the PLM, though, the "yankee danger" and corrupt foreign service combined to produce yet another existential crisis. Still, though, this adversity confronting the PLM came from the efforts of Porfirian diplomatic officials, rather than outraged Anglo neighbors.

In October of 1905, the Mexican government landed on a strategy that allowed them to directly influence *Regeneración* even while it was located in the U.S. Combining the use of private detectives and a powerful lobbying effort in support of lawsuits, Porfirian agents sought to use the American justice system as a hammer to smash the *magonista* movement. Central to this approach was a libel suit filed by a Mexican political boss named Manuel Esperón y de la Flor.[279] This tactic was perhaps inspired by an earlier international controversy surrounding the 1886 jailing of El Paso newspaper editor A. K. Cutting by Chihuahua officials under accusations

---

[277] Ibid.

[278] "*Mas Asesinatos?,*" *Regeneración* 3, no. 43 (26 August 1905): 1; "*No Morira Regeneración,*" *Regeneración* 3, no. 48 (30 September 1905): 2; "*Acusación Contra Regeneración,*" *Regeneración* 3, no. 33 (1 July 1905): 3.

[279] Albro, *Always a Rebel*, 31.

of libel.[280] In the Cutting affair, American diplomatic officials took action to effect the release of the editor and, despite the intransigence of local Mexican officials, negotiation between both national governments brought resolution to the issue.[281] With the situation reversed and Mexican foreign officials remaining apathetic to the predicament of the Magóns, a libel case would be sure to result in conviction and deportation, ending with the application of Porfirian justice once PLM leadership was forcibly returned to Mexico.

On the twelfth of October, acting on a bench warrant for the suit, U.S. officials raided *Regeneración* headquarters, detaining six editors, including both Magón brothers and both Sarabia brothers. Ricardo Flores Magón had not anticipated the action – officials found him working in front of a typewriter, but upon his arrest he proved to be understanding of the situation. Through an interpreter, he relayed the strength of the PLM, claiming ten thousand subscribers to *Regeneración* and seventy thousand members of PLM affiliates across Mexico.[282] These numbers, almost certainly inflated, still represented a major threat to the Porfirian government, and the libel suit aimed to cut the head off of the *magonista* snake. In another blow intended to use American laws and policy against the PLM, Porfirian agents managed to successfully argue that the majority of copies of *Regeneración* circulated south of the border, thus rendering the publication ineligible for the discounted second-class mail rates that they had been using. Faced with these challenges and fearing deportation and execution in Mexico, PLM leadership scattered. In February of 1906, the Flores Magón brothers and Juan Sarabia headed

---

[280] "The Case of Editor Cutting," *The Chicago Tribune*, 27 July 1886, 4.

[281] Godoy, *Porfirio Díaz*, 45.

[282] "Three Mexican Editors Jailed in St. Louis," *The San Antonio Daily Express*, 13 October 1905, 1.

even further north, to Toronto, leaving Manuel Sarabia behind to manage *Regeneración*.[283]

Their Mexican origins and socialist leanings did little to earn the *magonistas* sympathy from American officials and Anglos in general, but in the case of their 1905-6 arrest, it was the skillful use of the American legal system and bureaucracy by Porfirian officials that led to the destabilization of *Regeneración* leadership. When reported in the San Antonio English-language papers, the detainment of PLM leaders aroused little outrage, but also little surprise.[284] *Regeneración* remained indignant at this use of the American justice system, which they described as corruption similar to the strongarm tactics that the regime used south of the border.[285] Even with their recognition of the discrimination that Mexicans faced and their fierce Mexican pride, *Regeneración* placed the blame of their libel suit upon Mexican interference in the United States, rather than blaming the complacency of the American public. Faced with this new tactic of using lawsuits to tamp down dissent from abroad, the *magonistas* found themselves forced to regroup and consider alternate, extralegal approaches in effecting change in Mexico.

Flushed from St. Louis after the threat of a libel case and deportation, PLM leadership traveled even further north, with *Regeneración* informing its readership on 10 May, 1906 that they had relocated to Toronto, claiming that in doing so they had found a renewed sense of purpose in fighting for the Mexican people.[286] Their time in Canada did not last, however, as by late summer, PLM leadership had reunited in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, in El Paso, TX. By September, the discovery of their plans for a raid into Mexico forced PLM leadership to scatter

---

[283] Albro, *Always a Rebel*, 32.

[284] "Three Mexican Editors Jailed in St. Louis," *The San Antonio Daily Express*, 13 October 1905, 1.

[285] "*Regeneracion*," *Regeneracion* 4, no. 7 (10 May 1906): 4.

[286] "*Regeneración en Toronto, Canada*," *Regeneración* 4, no. 7 (10 May 1906): 4.

yet again. Arizona Rangers had arrested *magonistas* near the border and confiscated documents that hinted towards a rebellion in the making, enough to lead the *Tucson Daily Citizen* to speculate about the deportation of captured revolutionists.[287] The group had hoped to take advantage of the labor unrest at the nearby copper mines in Cananea and thereby gain recruits and, by storming a supply depot there, to capture thousands of rifles.[288]

The arrests in Arizona did not deter the *magonistas*, however, as on 26 September, 1906, a force of around sixty men crossed the border just south of Del Rio, Texas and attacked the town of Jiménez. Occupying the area overnight and into the morning, they were quickly dispersed by Mexican federal forces, fleeing back to the United States even as the Díaz government provided a list of suspected participants. Another unsustained uprising, this time in Veracruz, cropped up also at the end of September, and the PLM capped its month of defeats with the shuttering of its *Regeneración* presses due to a libel suit by the Cananea mining executive William C. Greene, and an attempted raid on Juárez foiled by Díaz infiltration in early October.[289] With the PLM leadership once again on the run, the end of 1906 saw many of the *magonistas* on trial, imprisoned, or deported, and their plans for a September 16th revolution laid bare in the American presses, along with lurid conspiratorial details about the group's secrecy in plotting to funnel weapons into Mexico.[290]

American papers, for their part, fit the *magonista* raids within the well-worn trope of border banditry, portraying their actions as a concern mainly for the Díaz regime. The American

---

[287] "St. Louis Mexican Junta Scatters," *Tucson Daily Citizen,* 11 September 1906, 1.

[288] "Revolutionist Junta Plotted Against Díaz," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 20 September 1906, 1; "Revolutionists Held," *Tucson Daily Citizen,* 20 September 1906, 1, 8.

[289] Albro, *Always a Rebel,* 62-69.

[290] "Revolutionists Wanted to Depose Díaz," *The San Diego Evening Tribune*, 25 December 1906, 2.

government conducted its due diligence in holding revolutionists accountable to U.S. neutrality laws, but there was no outcry over the nationalist message of the PLM. Instead, the American press increasingly linked the group to international socialism, beginning with their appeals to workers at Cananea. What had started as a radical group of Díaz opponents was swiftly transforming into an organization for social revolution in Mexico, even as PLM leaders reiterated their message of Mexican nationalism at a public meeting in San Antonio, in front of a crowd of hundreds of supporters.[291] By August of 1907, the PLM's leadership was in custody, detained by the State of California and charged with violation of neutrality laws, with the Mexican government assigning its ambassador to assist the American prosecutors in any way possible.[292] Descriptions of the raid on PLM headquarters in Los Angeles and capture of Ricardo Flores Magón had made national newspapers, along with an account of their planned assassination of Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Porfirio Díaz. The visual imagery in the story, however, dismissed the PLM, labelling them "Mexican laborers calling themselves patriots" working out of a "dingy room in a rickety old building."[293] Much like newspaper reports had patronizingly reported on the Fenians at Campo Bello, so too did they treat the PLM. The *Albuquerque Morning Journal* recounted more of the specifics of their arrest, American officials working closely with Mexican Ambassador Enrique Creel, ambushing Ricardo and several of his lieutenants as they left their headquarters to walk through the Mexican part of town, the newly captured prisoners shouting to draw the attention of bystanders.[294]

---

[291] "Anti-Mexican Sentiment," *Dallas Morning News,* 8 January 1907, 12.

[292] "Villareal is Arrested," *Dallas Morning News*, 24 August 1907, 10.

[293] "Revolutionists in Los Angeles," *Morning Olympian*, 10 August 1907, 4.

[294] "Foes of Díaz Face Death in Mexico," *Albuquerque Morning Journal* 27 August 1907, 1.

This commotion makes greater sense when considering that secret deportation was a major fear of the PLM – journalist and PLM ally John Kenneth Turner detailed a campaign of extradition carried out by the Porfirian government between 1906 and 1910. Once in Mexico, prisoners faced the wrath of the Díaz government, most likely in the form of the *ley fuga*.[295] The PLM had already faced this threat multiple times, in the cases of Librado Rivera, Antonio Villareal, and, just before the arrest of Magón, Juan Sarabia. In his book, *Revoltosos*, historian W. Dirk Raat examines the way in which public outrage and the involvement of the highest levels of U.S. government, including letters and telegrams sent by prisoners and their families to President Roosevelt, prevented their deportations at the last minute.[296] Just like the Fenians arrested in Ireland deserved the legal protections of the American justice system despite the concurrent Campo Bello raid, so too did these *magonistas* deserve their rights even having planned to take action to destabilize and overthrow a friendly foreign regime.

Once word of their imprisonment spread, PLM leaders received support from Mexican Americans, both immigrant and citizen, as well as the worker's rights movement at large. Socialist leader Mother Jones had helped to publicize the plight of Juan Sarabia, and at their annual meeting in 1908, the American Federation of Labor put out a renewed call for defense funds to fight these most recent charges.[297] European anarchists and socialists sent the prisoners letters of support, and Los Angeles police had to step up their activities when, in mid-September, Emma Goldman arrived to show her support.[298] As for the Mexican community, they staged

---

[295] W. Dirk Raat, *Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the United States, 1903-1923* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1981), 124.

[296] Ibid., 124, 134, 137.

[297] Ibid., 137; "Choose Gompers as Labor's Chief," *The Anaconda Standard*, 22 November 1908, 10.

[298] "Mexican Conspirators Escape Extradition," *Riverside Daily Press*, 16 September 1907, 7.

demonstrations in support of the prisoners and held speeches backing those PLM leaders who still walked free. At their *habeas corpus* hearings, when PLM leader Modesto Díaz was released on account of lack of evidence, the prisoners entered the courtroom and were "greeted by the Mexican spectators as would-be liberators of the Mexican republic."[299] When prosecutors decided that federal charges of having committed murder in Jiménez had a greater chance of conviction, they released the prisoners from California's custody and federal agents placed them under arrest. The extended process of relocating the trial to the federal court at Tombstone, AZ took months, but upon their transfer cheering crowds met the prisoners.[300] The Mexican community held several demonstrations to show support, including a five-hundred-strong meeting in an auditorium and a large public march, with the women carrying flowers to show their sympathy.[301] During their transfer to Tombstone, the prisoners stopped in Tucson, where family members attempted to give them flowers and provisions but were rejected.[302] A local protest developed, but attendees were mostly socialists; one possible consequence of the PLM having focusing their activity in California and Texas was that Tucson's Mexican community exhibited little concern over freeing the prisoners.[303] Regardless of the apathy in Arizona, thousands of people demonstrated their public support for Magón and his fellow prisoners, backing them as Mexican revolutionists and socialists alike. Their message had resonated with a

---

[299] "Hearing of Mexicans is Postponed," *Riverside Enterprise,* 27 August 1907, 1.

[300] "Foes of Día Face Fresh Trouble," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, 17 October 1907, 1; "Foes of Díaz Face Fresh Charge," *Albuquerque Morning Journal,* 17 September 1907, 1.

[301] "Three Mexican Revolutionists," *The Evening Tribune*, 18 October 1907, 1; "Sympathy with Mexican Prisoners," *The Evening Tribune,* 13 November 1907, 3.

[302] "Revolutionists Brought Here Under Heavy Guard," *The Tucson Citizen,* 4 March 1909, 5.

[303] "Revolutionists at Tucson for Trial," *The San Diego Union and Daily Bee,* 7 March 1909, 2.

large community across the borderlands and, even though they focused on Mexico and Mexican Americans, the prisoners were deeply embraced by international socialism.

The court case proceeded with the PLM leaders attempting to have the case dismissed on a *habeas corpus* appeal, but by May of 1908 they had been formally indicted on charges of violating neutrality law, with federal prosecutors hoping that the documents seized by the Arizona Rangers in 1906 would be sufficient for conviction and a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment.[304] At the end of 1908, the prisoners dropped their *habeas corpus* appeal, the *Albuquerque Morning Journal* speculating that they had run out of money for legal defense, and they were finally transferred from Tucson to Tombstone in April of 1909.[305] Within a month, they had been found guilty and sentenced to eighteen months of hard labor, which they accepted without comment.[306] The resolution of the court case, however, extended well beyond the courtroom.

In attempting to block an indictment, the PLM and their allies took the U.S. justice system head-on through a campaign of intimidation and violence. They began by dosing the lunch of a Mexican detective and key witness with strychnine, which led to him collapsing in the street.[307] Then, when the trial began in earnest in early 1909, a local socialist leader sent a threatening letter to U.S. District Attorney Oscar Lawler, warning him that he was being followed and reminding him, "[y]ou know what happened to Heney. If you don't turn the

---

[304] "Revolutionists' Case is Under Advisement," *The San Diego Union and Daily Bee*, 8 February 1908, 2; "Sarabia Not to be Deported," *Tucson Daily Citizen,* 15 May 1908, 8.

[305] "Mexicans to Face Trial in Arizona," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, 23 December 1908, 3; "Taken to Tombstone," *The Tucson Citizen*, 26 April 1909, 5.

[306] "Revolutionists Given Penitentiary Sentence," *The Tucson Citizen,* 19 May 1909, 1.

[307] "Poison Given to Mexican Detective," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, 30 November 1907, 1.

imprisoned patriots loose you will get what he did, only worse."[308] In doing so, the writer referred to a previous courtroom incident just two months earlier in which a California prosecutor survived being shot in the face during the middle of trial hearings.[309]

Even so, the press continued to place the PLM within the now-overlapping paradigms of border banditry and socialism, the *Tucson Citizen* describing their attempts to "organize a band of desperadoes to pillage and ravage the country as they went along," but also pointing out that Emma Goldman and her manager-paramour, Dr. Ben L. Reitman, a "'Tramp King' anarchist," had come to speak on their behalf.[310] Magón never retracted his nationalist rhetoric and, in fact, he doubled down in court, admitting to the existence of the PLM but taking the strategy of introducing their own internal documents in an attempt to demonstrate their Mexican patriotism and thereby undermine the accusation of neutrality violation.[311] If they had never thought of themselves as Americans, they were simply foreign nationals returning home to effect change in their homeland, rather than Americans seeking to destabilize a foreign power. This failed to alter public perception and did not convince jurors; they were found guilty the next day.

Other attempts to win the freedom of PLM prisoners led to the aforementioned assassination plot. In late February 1909, just before the prisoners were transferred to Tucson, the Political Refugees League took up the case of the jailed junta leaders. In doing so, the movement to free Magón and his allies connected with the anarcho-socialist movement in

---

[308] "Menacing Letters Are Sent Officer of Court," *The Evening News*, 29 January 1909, 4.

[309] "Heney Shot in Court," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 14 November 1908, 2.

[310] "Orders Given for Transfer," *The Tucson Citizen*, 25 February 1909, 8; "'Tramp King' Anarchist," *The Tucson Citizen*, 8 March 1909, 8; Colin M. MacLachlin, *Anarchism and the Mexican Revolution: The Political Trials of Ricardo Flores Magón in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 26.

[311] "Mexican Revolutionist Admits Liberal Party," *Sunday Mercury and Herald*, 16 May 1909, 1.

Chicago.[312] Another overlapping organization, the Mexican Refugees Defense League, raised defense funds for the Magón case, but also took action on behalf of jailed PLM lieutenant Antonio P. Araujo in March of 1909, sending "obscene and indecent" mail to the judge and prosecuting attorney in charge of his case. This got the fledgling Bureau of Investigation involved, as the agency dispatched several agents to Chicago to investigate the threat. Led by Agent-in-charge Eberstein, Agents Dannenberg, Mease, and Quigley looked into Chicago's socialist publications and organizations, namely the *Appeal to Reason*, *The Undesirable Citizen*, and *The Daily Socialist*. Closely conferring with the Chicago Police Department, they identified the handwriting on the letters as belonging to a man named John Murray, and zeroed in on him.[313]

Murray, the descendant of an elite New York family, came to California as a young man and became a socialist activist in his 30s, during the 1890s. He edited a local periodical entitled *Socialist* and became highly involved in labor issues.[314] He was part of a group of California intelligentsia who got involved with the PLM through his interactions with Ricardo Flores Magón, including the journalist John Kenneth Turner and his wife, lawyer Job Harriman, and Elizabeth Trowbridge, a former socialite from Boston. Together, they formed the Mexican Refugees Defense League and drew the attention of Chicago's Political Refugees League. Turner's wife described her impression of Murray after they first met, thinking that he was "an outstanding figure…, but was very volatile with a lot of fire and enthusiasm." That zeal for the

---

[312] "Seek Hearing at April Term," *The Tucson Citizen*, 23 February 1909, 5.

[313] Case 232, 15 March-15 April 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[314] Grace Heilman Stimson, *Rise of the Labor Movement in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), 227.

Mexican revolutionist cause would send Murray on a tour behind enemy lines, unsuccessfully seeking contact with Liberal clubs in Mexico, and also lead to a written campaign to earn sympathy for the *magonistas* in socialist presses.[315] By 1909, Murray had relocated to Chicago, where federal agents first interacted with him.

At the beginning of May, as the PLM leadership faced their sentencing, federal agents had identified Murray, a short man, around forty, who they thought appeared to be either Spanish or Mexican. Murray's eagerness created a vulnerability, and when federal agents sent a Chicago police informant to meet with Murray posing as an Italian socialist, Murray immediately recruited him into his inner circle. Agent Quigley was this informant's handler, referring to him solely as John Doe or, later on, Comrade T.[316]

Through their informant, the agents learned that the Mexican junta held meetings at Murray's offices, and that when Murray went to visit Magón in prison, he brought messages back and forth.[317] The Mexican consul knew of messages secreted into sewed pockets on clothes, and photographed those, but not about Murray's smuggling, which involved writing on rice-paper cigarette papers and hiding them within the cover of a checkbook.[318] Gaining Murray's trust, the federal informant learned more operational details, including failed

---

[315] Ruth Teiser, *Ethel Duffy Turner: Writers and Revolutionists* (Berkeley: University of California – Regional Oral History Office) 11; John Murray, "Mexico's Peon-Slaves Preparing for Revolution," *The International Socialist Review* 9, no. 9 (March 1909): 641; John Murray, "The Private Prison of Díaz," *The International Socialist Review* 9, no. 10 (April 1909): 737; John Murray, "Extradition of Guerra Demanded by Mexico," *Amalgamated Sheet Workers' Journal* 14, no. 1 (15 January 1909): 307; John Murray, "American Jails for Hire," *The International Socialist Review* 10, no. 4 (October 1909): 380.

[316] Case 232, 5 May-11 May 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[317] Ibid.

[318] MacLachlan, 24; Case 232, 14 May 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

assassination plots against Presidents Taft and Díaz in mid-June, with the American assassin arrested and eight Mexican assassins killed. Brash to a fault, Murray bragged to the informant that, even though the journalist Carlo de Fornaro faced libel charges for the provocative book *Díaz, Czar of Mexico*, Murray had been the actual author, writing the book using articles written by Fornaro and leaving him to deal with the fallout. Murray also went into another lofty plan for assassinating Díaz, in which revolutionists would kill him while at a bull fight, escaping during the ensuing chaos, having parked "the fastest automobile in Mexico" nearby.[319]

In mid-July, the Bureau of Investigation first heard of a new plan by Murray to assassinate Presidents Taft and Díaz that upcoming October. The two presidents were to meet at the border, in El Paso, to discuss U.S.-Mexico relations, which presented an opportunity to strike against both at the same time and away from their fortified capital cities. The agents sent their informant to Murray seeking more information, and as the plan became increasingly concrete, the Bureau was privy to the major details.[320] The Secret Service also became aware of such a plan, perhaps due to Chief John E. Wilkie's background in Chicago newspapers.[321] However, with the meeting scheduled for 16 October, the Secret Service uncovered the plot too late to take decisive action in Chicago. They rounded up suspects and learned the names of the plotters, but by then it was already the fifteenth, and although Chief Wilkie dismissed the plans as "rot," the

[319] Ibid., Case 232, 19 June 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851; Case 232, 30 June 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[320] Ibid., Case 232, 16 July 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[321] "Chief Wilkie at El Paso," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 7 October 1909, 1.

Bureau of Investigation's informant had already arrived in El Paso, with John Murray and several of his comrades.[322]

A November third debrief of their informant reveals the last-minute attempts at deterrence by the Bureau of Investigation and Secret Service, with the would-be assassins on the loose in El Paso. Travelling with his co-conspirators, the informant had left for the borderlands on the ninth of October. They stayed at a socialist safe house in San Antonio before leaving for El Paso on the fourteenth. Once in El Paso, the informant, known as Comrade T., headed to the Mexican part of the city where he was contacted by a PLM revolutionist using their secret signal, a low hissing noise. Brought into the fold, the El Paso conspirators bragged about their plans to proceed even with the elevated military presence in the city. In a candid moment, one of the revolutionists told Comrade T., "just a little chance and a little luck and then we will have power and revenge for all of the wrongs that we have been made to suffer at the hands of this dirty dog of a b----- of a dictator Díaz and his big fat bag of s--- of a partner Taft. Well anyway, how do you like Mexico anyway Comrade T.? It reminds you of sunny Italy don't it? Well it is a good country to fight for, isn't it Comrade?"[323] Even in discussing their plans to assassinate a sitting U.S. president, the PLM and their allies framed their actions within the context of fighting Díaz. To them, Taft deserved to die because of his role as a Díaz lackey, prosecuting and imprisoning revolutionists and limiting their ability to use the U.S. as a sanctuary.

The next day, Comrade T. met with his handlers and they formed a plan to arrest the conspirators. T. was to meet them in a public place and point them out to Agent-in-charge

---

[322] "Taft and Díaz to be Killed?," *The Brownsville Daily Herald*, 15 October 1909, 1; "It is All 'Rot' Says Chief Wilkie," *The Arizona Republican,* 16 October 1909, 1.

[323] Case 232, 3 November 1909, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

Eberstein. However, the actions of Wilkie in Chicago had spooked the revolutionists and they went underground. It took T. a full day to regain their trust; by that point it was the sixteenth, the day of the Taft-Díaz meeting. Speaking with them at a bar, T. learned that the men had abandoned their plan – not only had they had difficulty in finding accomplices, the revelation of the plot had led to an intense fortification of the city. There were no rooftops to hide on, and the leaders would surely not be exposed to an ambush. T. was finally able to lure two of his comrades into the open, Comrades Mendez and Galli, and immediately after Galli and T. watched Díaz drive by, completely protected in an armored car, federal agents took them into custody, capturing John Murray as well. Unable to keep them on any charges, the men were released. T. ran into Murray once again at the San Antonio safe house, and Murray wondered how their plot had been discovered so easily. True to his persona, he bragged that no jail would hold him anyways, and vowed to exact revenge by killing Taft.[324]

Following the assassination plot, the Mexican Refugees Defense League and Political Refugees Defense League remained active, but did so within the confines of U.S. law. When Congress considered implementing a literacy test for immigrants in 1912, as advocated by the Dillingham Commission, they stepped in, circulating and submitting petitions that warned of the potential misuse of immigration regulation by foreign autocracies.[325] These arguments proved compelling enough to convince Congress to hold off on implementing literacy tests until the 1917 Immigration Act. As for Ricardo Flores Magón, he was released from prison on 3 August 1910, vowing to continue fighting for Mexico but also insisting that he would not break any

[324] Ibid.

[325] "Demand the Defeat of Immigration Bill," *The New York Times*, 6 May 1912, 8.

American laws in doing so.[326] Arrested and imprisoned in 1912, 1916, and finally again in 1918, this time on charges of having violated the Espionage Act during World War I, Magón died in prison, at Fort Leavenworth on 21 November 1922.[327] A planned meeting in his memory a month later in Washington, DC stirred congressional controversy when the organizers named Representative George Huddleston, a Democrat from Alabama, as a sponsor. Representative Walter Lineberger, a Republican from California, addressed the House on the matter, as he wanted to counter claims that Magón had simply been caught in World War I sweeps of political extremists. Instead, given postwar concerns over loyalty, Lineberger detailed Magón's crimes against the United States, as well as his actions in impeding wartime draft efforts.[328] As for the PLM, they continued to seek violent reform in Mexico. After a brief attempt at revolutionary unity, by 1911 they had split from Francisco I. Madero, describing him as just another version of Díaz, a wealthy Mexican leader who would continue to exploit the people.[329] They participated in the Revolution through sporadic interventions into Northwest Mexico, relying on Mexican revolutionists and European anarchist bombmakers alike.

The political leanings of the PLM meant that the Magón movement received a slightly different reception in the U.S. but their foreign nationalism and extreme political views did not result in their portrayal as disloyal or treasonous. Reporting on their cause continued to be dismissive, with little concern over the threat that they posed to the United States. Federal agents took action to block their assassination plots, but even once the El Paso attempt was revealed to

---

[326] "Released from Penitentiary," *Riverside Enterprise,* 4 August 1910, 1.

[327] Albro, *Always a Rebel,* 139-149.

[328] *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the Fourth Session of the Sixty-Seventh Congress* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1922), 298.

[329] *Congressional Record Containing the Proceedings and Debates of the Sixty-Third Congress, Third Session* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1915), 4281.

the public, it caused little national concern. In fact, most historical accounts of the Taft-Díaz meeting fail to mention the plot entirely. Like the Garzistas, contemporaries saw the PLM as a group of borderlands bandits, allied with international socialism and with an agenda that included using violence against an American ally, but not indicative of an eroding American nation.

As the 1900s rolled into the 1910s, diplomatic tensions in Europe ratcheted up, and the Clan-na-Gael viewed the situation with opportunistic optimism. Their plans for striking against England grew in both scope and tangibility, as did their efforts to break the ties between Great Britain and the United States.[330] The *magonistas*, on the other hand, languished in the United States as other Mexican revolutionary groups took to the fore in opposing the *Porfiriato*. They found themselves increasingly on the sidelines as the Mexican Revolution began in earnest. However, the United States remained a crucial refuge for participants on all sides of the Mexican Revolution, with Mexicans playing direct and indirect roles in the course of the conflict. Both sets of ethnic Americans continued to embrace their heritage identity in a public fashion, and even back foreign political movements, without having to prove their American patriotic credentials. However, a series of crises in the late 1910s spurred a movement that demanded exclusive American patriotism as Americans increasingly witnessed and read about events that, to them, demonstrated the tenuousness of American citizenship. Faced with these existential threats to their migration-based population, the True Americanist movement emerged, vocal about their loyalty and insistent upon imposing complete patriotic devotion among ethnic populations that they saw as dangerously foreign. In doing so, they brought about two major changes in the history of American citizenship and national identity. First, they necessitated that

[330] Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America*, 141.

ethnic Americans acting in the public sphere, like Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, demonstrate visibly their American patriotism. Secondly, and with longer-lasting consequences, they created a narrower set of boundaries in defining what it meant to be a loyal or disloyal American.

CHAPTER 3

TRUE AMERICANISM RISES

During the decade of the 1910s, the United States went through a significant change in terms of public conceptions of citizenship and national loyalty. Driven by several crisis points ranging from the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution to the leadup to World War I, mainstream Americans developed deep concerns about the foreign cultural heritage of America's ethnic populations. Several events put Irish Americans and Mexican Americans in the spotlight and undermined their ability to practice a dual set of national identities. During World War I, both groups had members who made major contributions and sacrifices in the advancement of the U.S. war effort as well as those who did not conform to the propagandist ideals of the government. However, it was the latter who drew the attention of the American public and by the end of the decade, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans found themselves depicted as anti-American outsiders when they entered the public sphere. The paradigm by which they found themselves excluded had shifted from being excluded as an incompatible racialized other to being labelled as a population whose loyalties lay outside American borders and whose goals ran opposite the best interest of the United States.

The years from 1910 through 1914 set up these crisis points. In the U.S. Southwest, the first phase of the Mexican Revolution drew men and munitions to the border, and supporters of Francisco I. Madero and Porfirio Díaz added their visible public presence to that of the PLM in advocating for political causes south of the border. Anglos, too, got involved, as suppliers and as

mercenaries, with the Revolution becoming a truly cross-border conflict. Leaders and footsoldiers from the Madero and Díaz factions continued the pattern of using the American side of the border as the entire Southwest found itself drawn southward. The events of the Mexican Revolution made Mexico and Mexicanness much more visible to the American public, and therefore more salient in the eyes of True Americanists seeking to point out un-Americanized communities.

For Irish Americans, escalating tension in advocating for independence lent an increasingly hostile tone to their rhetoric about Great Britain. Although they could not predict the impending World War better than any other Americans, they viewed strife between European nations eagerly and groups like the Clan-na-Gael continued in their efforts to advocate for physical-force nationalism. For the broader American population, the rhetoric of Theodore Roosevelt, given his political and cultural prominence, led to the rise of a movement called True Americanism.[331] This ideology, which advocated for the citizen to devote him- or herself completely towards the interests of the nation, ran headlong into ideas about persistent heritage held by Mexican-American revolutionists and Irish-American nationalists. As the decade began, events in Ireland and Mexico respectively proved the catalyst in involving American citizens abroad, stoking tensions over national identity and loyalty and setting the scene for the Plan de San Diego and the Easter Rising to become key moments of transnational intervention to which increasingly vocal True Americanists could point as evidence of disloyalty. When Mexican Americans began mobilizing for greater domestic change with their civil rights movement, and when Irish Americans stepped up their agitation for full Irish sovereignty, both groups had to contend with accusations that they were not legitimate citizens, rooted in the events of the 1910s.

[331] Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 15-17.

The Early Mexican Revolution, 1910-1914

In the U.S. borderlands, Francisco I. Madero's failed challenge to Porfirio Díaz in Mexico's 1910 election and ensuing flight to the United States after his escape from prison elevated the scale and scope of resistance to the Díaz regime. Like the Magón brothers, Madero too sought the sanctuary of American sovereignty. For a brief period in 1910, the two causes aligned; upon their release from prison in August, the Magón brothers travelled by rail to Los Angeles where they delivered a speech announcing their support of Madero to a crowd of hundreds.[332] While the PLM remained based in El Paso and Los Angeles, Madero settled in San Antonio, boarding at the Hutchins Hotel, just a block from the San Antonio River. In San Antonio, Madero surrounded himself with revolutionary allies, political exiles, and sympathetic Mexican Americans.[333] It was from San Antonio that he issued his now-famous Plan de San Luís Potosí, denouncing Porfirio Díaz and calling for a general uprising against him on the twentieth of November, 1910. In anticipation of that date, the Mexican government noted the presence of revolutionaries across the border and warned the Bureau of Investigation as to the impending violations of border neutrality.[334] American agents declined to take action against Madero at this point, however, as, unlike the *magonistas*, Madero's followers had not yet violated the law.

When Madero's revolution began in earnest, on the twentieth of November, 1910, the Mexican Embassy again reached out to the U.S. government. Much like they had with the

[332] Case 232, 4 August 1910, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[333] Case 232, 8 October 1910, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[334] Case 232, 12 November 1910, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

Magón brothers, they sought to prosecute and imprison Madero through the U.S. justice system. They told the Bureau of Investigation of their attorney gathering information to bring about a case against Madero and urged agents to arrest him if at all possible.[335] By that point, however, intervention would have been extremely difficult if not impossible, as a Pandora's Box of revolutionary activity spread across the American side of the borderlands, drawing in residents of all demographics in multiple phases of revolutionary activity and support.

Beginning in December of 1910, Madero's forces initiated engagements with federal troops in Northern Mexico. They followed the tried-and-true formula of Mexican revolutionary activity in that they utilized the rugged landscape of the borderlands as well as American territory in order to evade detection, outright confrontation, or capture. In addition to crossing the border themselves, Madero's men also required munitions and supplies to enter Mexico in support of their actions in the field. The Bureau of Investigation stepped in in an attempt to intercede against both actions. At the time, and as a result of the Fenian invasions, U.S. law prohibited plots to overthrow foreign governments from American soil.[336] To prevent this, agents fanned out across key borderlands locations, from Los Angeles all the way to New Orleans, with others scouting out sites where revolutionaries purchased supplies, like New York City. The handful of agents that the Bureau deployed noted tremendous revolutionary activity, and their dispatches back to the Bureau reveal the pervasive presence of the Mexican Revolution across the American side of the borderlands.

---

[335] Case 232, 20 November 1910, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[336] Charles Harris III and Louis Sadler, *The Secret War in El Paso: Mexican Revolutionary Intrigue, 1906-1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 18.

In *The Secret War in El Paso*, Charles Harris III and Louis Sadler provide intricate details of the smuggling, recruiting, and spying that occurred on the ground in that borderlands city. However, the transnational nature of the Mexican Revolution spread well beyond Southwest Texas. During the early years of the Revolution, when Madero pressed his fight against Porfirio Díaz, the Mexican Revolution involved the United States in three distinct ways. First, the proximity to the United States provided an opportunity for former U.S. military personnel to take up arms as soldiers of fortune, fulfilling a revolutionary need for soldiers with combat experience while also providing mercenaries with a paycheck as well as the chance at plundering defeated enemies and Mexican civilians. Second, among the Mexican-American community, revolutionary factions deployed recruiters to both enlist willing revolutionaries and to propagandize, advocating their cause to crowds across the U.S. Southwest. Finally, the omnipresent arms smuggling drew individuals and businesses into the profit-heavy black market as thousands of weapons and millions of rounds flowed across the U.S. border.

By 1910, the United States had not been involved in a major military conflict since the Spanish-American War and ensuing violence in the Philippines. The close proximity of Mexico and need for trained military men allowed former U.S. soldiers to ply their trade abroad and earn a lucrative paycheck. Francisco I. Madero was the scion to a tremendously wealthy family of landholding elite, and as the opposition to Díaz, he found himself cash-rich and soldier-poor.[337] This combination made for an ideal alliance between Madero and opportunistic former U.S. Army soldiers, who flocked to Mexico from far and abroad.

Harris and Sadler provide in-depth biographies of many of these men, but they generally form a motley crew united by pseudonyms and a collective history rife with dishonorable

[337] Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, 55-61.

discharges. In January and February of 1911, Madero's men began to reach out to recruit these former soldiers. One ex-private informed the Bureau of Investigation that his skills as a machine gun operator had earned him a tempting offer, though he did not offer specific details.[338] In another instance, two of Madero's brothers offered the rank of captain to a Bureau informant, and provided him with a train ticket to Sanderson, Texas.[339] The going rate of $250 per month for an experienced machine gunner proved tempting to many, with Madero's forces containing several pockets of American veterans.[340] One such machine gunner, a man named Crump, had come to the borderlands from as far as Montana to join the fight.[341] As the opposition to Díaz evolved from Magón to Madero, the demand for fighting men spiked and, motivated by financial gain, Americans of all sorts mobilized to cross the southern border.

In February of 1911, ads appeared in three New York papers, the *World*, *Herald*, and *American*, calling for a thousand men to mount an expedition to Mexico. Alarmed at the scale and brazenness of the ad, federal investigators immediately looked into it. The ad agent who placed the recruitment offer provided little information, but further research revealed that the ads had been paid for by a man named Dick Ferris, an entertainment promoter and erstwhile filibusterer in California seeking to seize Baja California for the United States. The increase in border security due to the violence of the revolution thwarted his plans temporarily, but he told

[338] Case 232, 25 January 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851..

[339] Case 232, February 20, 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[340] Case 232, 15 February 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[341] Case 232, 16 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

agents that he planned to pursue them once the Díaz government fell.[342] It was not just veterans, or even adults, who felt the allure of the Mexican Revolution. Two months after unrolling Ferris' filibuster, in April 1911, agents spoke with the families of Harold Smith and Jack Wilkerson, two seventeen-year-olds from Douglas, AZ, whose relatives learned of their plan to run away and join the revolution just in time to stop them.[343] The sense of adventure and profit motivated Anglos of many types to involve themselves in the Mexican conflict, and although the Bureau sought to stanch the flow of recruits and weapons across the border they were more often investigating the scope of American involvement, rather than making arrests to halt it.

One of the most familiar mercenaries to Bureau agents was the American who went by the pseudonym Red Stratton. Stratton acted as a recruiter and arms agent for the PLM, and claimed to be a veteran who had served in the Philippines.[344] A Bureau investigation into his background revealed that he had also been a former Bureau of Immigration official deployed to the border, dismissed from his post after he was caught allowing ten Chinese immigrants to enter the country for the price of $50 per person.[345] Stratton funneled arms and men into Mexico, and told agents of his elaborate plan to add firepower to the Maderista cause by convincing local military officials to reschedule guard duties so as to provide an opportunity for revolutionists to

[342] Case 232, 20 February 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851; Case 232, 14 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[343] Case 232, 8 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[344] Case 232, 16 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[345] Case 232, 20 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

steal El Paso's symbolic, Civil War-era McGinty cannon.[346] Having pilfered the artillery piece, the revolutionists took it south of the border, where it was used to attack the border town of Ojinaga, as well as fire upon a church in the attack on Juárez.[347] Another American, Captain A.W. Lewis, supplied the weapon with cannon balls, sent from El Paso to Marfa via express mail, taken across the border in an automobile, and then conveyed across the mountains to the rebels by mule train.[348] When Francisco I. Madero took over the Mexican government in May of 1911, Stratton was making plans to expand his smuggling operation, looking into the purchase of a large wagon, as well as taking a position at a local market, with the thought that he could earn the trust of border troops by supplying them with goods.[349] However, his actions in smuggling horses back into the U.S. after dropping off arms caused revolutionists to reconsider their relationship with him.[350] Madero's victory brought a temporary halt to the extensive need for arms and munitions, and pre-empted an impending split between Stratton and his employers.

As opposition to Díaz spread from the concentrated zealousness of the PLM to widespread rebellion under Madero, the scale and scope increased in the United States as well. Anglos outside of the socialist movement found themselves increasingly drawn into the conflict, especially as it began to provide an opportunity for profit at the individual level. In addition, the

---

[346] Case 232, 20 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[347] Case 232, 6 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.; Case 232, 24 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[348] Case 232, 4 May 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[349] Case 232, 30 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.; Case 232, 20 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[350] Case 232, 14 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

need for supplies and munitions presented yet another area for Americans to step in and profit. While the Bureau attempted to catch individuals for their direct participation in the revolution, they also spent a great deal of time and effort in uncovering and prosecuting smuggling rings. They had some success, but for the most part they found themselves overwhelmed with tips and suspects. More than any previous conflict, the Mexican Revolution exposed the permeability of the southern border. Agents reported daily on their discoveries of smuggling rings and conspiracies to arm revolutionaries, ranging from Union Painless Dentists in El Paso, which acted as a front corporation in providing supplies to Magonistas, to the Copper Queen Store in Douglas, where Madero men could buy weapons on credit and seek reimbursement for their expenses after enlistment.[351] In January of 1911, an agent in New York City sent word to his counterparts on the southern border, warning them that a test shipment of arms labelled "upholstering and furniture fixtures" was headed their way.[352] Thus, the Bureau became first aware of a common tactic for smuggling arms that vexed them throughout the early years of the Revolution, as arms suppliers transported munitions to the battlefront using a varied nomenclature centered around building supplies and construction materials.[353] As for the Magonistas, they too sought to smuggle arms, in their case using a local gun club as a front, which the Bureau uncovered in surveilling the El Paso dentist shop. With the intensity of the

[351] Case 232, 2 October 1910, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.; Case 232, 3 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[352] Case 232, 8 January 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[353] Identical to the way in which Fenians attempted to transport arms to the Canadian border in preparation for their attacks in 1866.

Revolution drawing ever higher, the desperate need for arms created demand that Americans in the black and gray markets rushed to fill.

Of course, for Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans, the Revolution held a great deal of importance. In addition to recruits and suppliers from the Anglo population, Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans engaged with revolutionary factions and the Porfirian government through indirect political or financial support and even by getting directly involved themselves. All sides of the early revolution, save southern regional uprisings like that of Emiliano Zapata, had heavy interaction with the Mexican population of the United States. Just like with the Magonistas, Mexican communities played a significant role as loci of revolutionary activity.

In the months leading up to Madero's revolt, agents across the Southwest reported back on the sentiment of Mexicans in regards to a potential revolution and, in many cases, found them to be highly engaged in happenings across the border. For example, in San Diego, TX, Agent Cole interviewed townspeople and learned that the town's sheriff and his deputies were all of Mexican descent. Furthermore, the sheriff and his men participated vividly in Mexican celebrations, and even raised the Mexican flag rather than the stars and stripes.[354] In summarizing their findings across South Texas in late April, Agent Cole and his colleague, Agent Lancaster, reported that the white population of the region warned them that Mexicans across the borderlands would readily participate in a revolution.[355] The Magonistas, of course,

[354] Case 232, 26 March 1910, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[355] Case 232, April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

continued their speechgiving and, supplemented by Madero's backers, both groups drew the attention of Mexicans in the United States even before the revolt against Díaz began in earnest.

Once Madero officially began his fight, revolutionary activity across the borderlands spiked, including that of Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants. Díaz's consuls did their best to convince American officials to take significant, direct action, as they had in providing evidence of Madero's neutrality violations, but the actions of Consul Elias in Tucson in providing an extensive list of revolutionary participants and sympathizers proves emblematic of the efforts of Porfirian officials, as his efforts failed to elicit any significant response from the Bureau.[356] The Bureau pursued an odd middle ground in the conflict, permitting a great deal of indirect support but stepping in whenever it learned of concrete plans to cross the border and get involved in the revolution. For example, having learned of a fundraising effort among the miners of Morenci, AZ to provide facilities in El Paso for returning wounded soldiers, the Bureau took little action.[357] So, too, when they learned of the recruiting efforts of key revolutionary leader José Maria Maytorena at the Montezuma Hotel in Nogales, AZ, as well as the actions of other recruiters stationed in Phoenix.[358] Agents also attended but did not intervene during speeches by Magonista and Maderista representatives in Los Angeles, reporting back of the tension between the groups, the Maderista leader having accused Ricardo Flores Magón of

[356] Case 232, 23 February 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[357] Case 232, 5 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[358] Case 232, 10 February 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

perfidy in failing to fully support Madero.[359] An escalating revolution meant an increase in cross-border activity, however, and with that came more direct involvement of Bureau agents.

Both sides of the Revolution faced intervention in their transnational plans at taking sides in the conflict. For example, the Magonista Lázaro Gutiérrez de Lara found himself detained by El Paso police when, following a meeting of revolutionaries, he attempted to initiate an informal street parade.[360] Plotting was permitted behind closed doors, but such a disruption of public space was not to be allowed. Three days later, El Paso police acted again to tamp down public displays of support for the revolution when the Maderista general Pascual Orozco entered the city to visit with his family overnight. Agents estimated that the crowd of supporters that gathered for Orozco numbered in the thousands, and, in consultation with local officials, convinced Orozco to return south of the border before nightfall. Although many citizens of El Paso looked forward to watching the impending Battle of Juárez, government officials feared that violence from the collision of federal and revolutionary forces would spill across the border, particularly given the presence of such a high-ranking Maderista in El Paso.[361] With such a strategy of maintaining the public peace and requiring concrete evidence of border violation to initiate prosecution, revolutionary activity continued to bubble under the surface all across the borderlands.

With Madero on the verge of seizing the entire Mexican federal apparatus, Díaz supporters began to utilize the borderlands in much the same way as the revolutionists had. In

---

[359] Case 232, 16 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[360] Case 232, 8 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[361] Case 232, 11 April 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

between the Battle of Juárez and Díaz's surrender with the Treaty of Juárez, a group of San Diego-based Díaz supporters calling themselves the Defenders of National Integrity found their leader arrested. Carlos V. Mendoza had drawn the attention of local law enforcement when he had enquired across town as to the rates of transportation to Baja California. By the time authorities caught up with him, he had begun to hand out incendiary literature to the public, prominently displaying a Mexican flag that he claimed to have received from the Mexican consul. Following an agent's interview with that same consul, Mendoza's story checked out and he was released from prison. Supporting a revolutionary movement from within the United States was a violation of American neutrality, but in his efforts to reinforce the Mexican federal garrison at Ensenada, Baja, Mendoza did not merit further attention.[362] Nearly simultaneously, in El Paso, the federal general and former defender of Juárez, General Juan Navarro, sought sanctuary in an American apartment. Concerned over vigilante justice from Maderista mobs, as well as the heavy presence of revolutionists in Juárez, local detectives provided Navarro with security until the situation quieted.[363] Clearly, the Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans of the borderlands engaged with the Mexican Revolution on all sides, with widespread backing of Madero as well as Díaz, and enough potential for violence to spur government officials to take proactive action in several cases.

Violence did, at times, spill across the border in both real and perceived ways, which vividly demonstrated the permeability of U.S. sovereignty across the Rio Grande. Presaging the Villa invasion of Columbus, New Mexico, and two days before Madero's revolution even began, the deputy sheriff of Marfa warned the press about a force of sixty Mexicans crossing into

[362] Case 232, 18 May 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

[363] Ibid.

Marathon, Texas. Nothing evolved from the incident, aside from the townspeople gathering for an armed defense of their homes, but the story reached a national audience.[364] Newspaper reporting on this threat rang true to the paradigm of Catarino Garza's uprising, but repeated border crossings by revolutionists would lead to greater concern over maintaining the integrity of national boundaries. As the Revolution began in earnest, the *New York Times* reported on streams of wounded men crossing into the U.S., seeking treatment from hospitals in El Paso.[365] The consequences of revolutionary violence in the form of injured and maimed bodies entering the U.S. proved a tangible reminder of the interconnectedness of the United States and Mexico in the borderlands, even for those who did not witness the fighting firsthand. Those who did watch the revolution as spectators were not immune from harm either. The bullets of the Revolution themselves crossed the border, misfired from federal and rebel firearms, and a handful of El Paso residents were killed or wounded as Madero's forces moved in on Juárez. Plagued by the impossibility of finding a culprit, no doubt, the U.S. government announced that it would see these acts as incidents of war, rather than criminal actions, and that the deaths of these citizens were "just what it was."[366]

The conflict between Madero and Díaz during the first year of the Mexican Revolution was relatively tame compared to the violence and destruction of the later years and yet this initial phase drew in thousands of Americans from all demographics in varying forms of participation. The willingness of mercenaries, arms dealers, and smugglers to involve themselves in the pursuit of profit can be expected. After all, these men came from less-than-honorable elements of

---

[364] "Another Mexican Invasion," *The New York Times*, 18 November 1910, 1.

[365] "Madero in El Paso, a Warrant Issued," *The New York Times*, 14 February 1911, 4.

[366] "Intervention No Nearer," *The New York Times*, 9 May 1911, 2.

society despite their effort to present false identities with genteel backgrounds, like James Hazzard, who took on the identity of Harvard-educated Oscar G. Creighton rather than his own, having served the United States with honor – until a court martial ejected him from the service for drinking.[367] The intense involvement of Mexican immigrant and Mexican American communities in this cross-border movement, and the ease with which revolutionaries of all stripes were able to transect the border were the first in a series of incidents across the 1910s that created widespread insecurity as to the sovereignty of the United States as well as the loyalty of its citizens.

The Birth of True Americanism, 1910-1914

The term True Americanism had existed since at least the days of the Civil War. On the eve of that conflict, German immigrant Carl Schurz delivered a unionist speech in Boston entitled "The True Americanism" in which he urged his audience and his countrymen at large to embrace the idea of freedom as both the true centerpiece of the American nation and the biggest contribution of the United States to the world at large.[368] The phrase resurfaced in an 1894 speech, this time in front of a crowd at Harvard University, in which Henry Cabot Lodge extolled the virtues of a liberal education in shaping the mind of an American and therefore improving the citizenry of the nation.[369] Lodge spoke of an intelligent patriotism, proud of the accomplishments of the United States but also recognizant of its shortcomings. Like Schurz, he spoke of America's place in the world, and although he substituted liberal education for the idea

[367] Case 232, 16 March 1911, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851; "Insurrectos Again Threatened Juárez," *The New York Times* 14 March 1911, 2.

[368] Carl Schurz, "True Americanism," in Frederic Bancroft, ed., *Speeches, Correspondence and Political Papers of Carl Schurz* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), 48-72.

[369] Henry Cabot Lodge, "True Americanism," *The Harvard Graduates' Magazine* 3 (1894-1895): 9-23.

of freedom, he adopted a similar measured tone. However, it was another politician, who wrote an essay entitled "True Americanism" also in 1894, who played a key role in catalyzing and developing this new ideology of the American citizen in regards to loyalty, national identity, and the elimination of transnational ethnicity in favor of civic nationalism.

Published in *The Forum*, in April of 1894, "True Americanism," by Theodore Roosevelt, laid out the early tenets of this new way of thinking about American citizenship. Written well before the rising tide of the 1910s, it nonetheless outlined the way in which Roosevelt thought about the requirements of American citizenship and what it meant to be a good American citizen. Ever the advocate of reform, Roosevelt included openness to change and a desire to improve one's nation as key components of Americanism, as well as having a national, rather than local, spirit. In going through his final two tenets of Americanism, Roosevelt treaded water a bit as he addressed the elements of national loyalty and foreignness that came to be a central part in the ideology of True Americanism.

Through both of these tenets, repetitive as he is, Roosevelt remained consistent in describing the good American citizen as someone who does not look to foreign causes but instead acts exclusively American. He first castigated American citizens who might be involved in foreign causes, as he "who loses his love for his native land, is not a traitor; but he is a silly and undesirable citizen." Then, he engaged with America's ethnic communities, claiming, "[w]e welcome the German or the Irishman who becomes an American. We have no use for the German or Irishman who remains such." Roosevelt did separate his views from those of past and contemporary nativists, critiquing the American Protective Association and Know-Nothing movement specifically and labelling both un-American. However, he also took on the multifaceted patriotism that Irish-American organizations had expressed for decades, writing that

the good American citizen "must revere only our flag; not only must it come first, but no other flag should even come second. He must learn to celebrate Washington's birthday rather than that of the Queen or Kaiser, and the Fourth of July instead of St. Patrick's Day." Closing the essay in much the same vein, Roosevelt included a quote from former Wisconsin congressman and German immigrant Richard Guenther, in which Guenther reiterated that in coming to the United States and becoming naturalized, he had become American and stopped being German, "America against Germany, America against the world; America, right or wrong; always America."[370]

The article was written early, both in the political career of Roosevelt and in the development of True Americanist philosophy. It does, however, outline the core beliefs of those who would attack Irish Americans and Mexican Americans for their plural national identities. Roosevelt bristled at blanket discrimination from nativists and yet his message of America as first and only would become co-opted by those same groups. He also felt out his way in describing Irish Americans pejoratively – not yet arriving at the favored insult of the True Americanist, hyphenate, but levelling heavy critiques against Americans who retained an affinity for a foreign homeland. True Americanists sought a united America, and feared that the country's ethnic pockets undermined the integrity of the United States as a nation. The events of the 1910s, particularly in regards to both Ireland and Mexico, only served to worsen those fears.

In his *American Crucible*, historian Gary Gerstle describes a conflict between civic nationalism and racial nationalism unfolding across this period. He follows racialized accusations of inferiority that many Americans levelled against communities that they deemed incompatible with American citizenship, and the way in which that conflicted with the ideology

[370] Theodore Roosevelt, "True Americanism," *The Forum* 17, no. 2 (April 1894): 196-207.

of the civic nationalist.[371] He also focuses on Theodore Roosevelt as a key driver of a new civic nationalism, beginning with the way in which Roosevelt sought to shape the character of the American nation through immigration and naturalization laws during his presidency but deepening with Roosevelt's deployment of a political mindset that he labelled New Nationalism, borrowing the term and its foundational philosophy from a 1909 book by journalist Herbert Croly.[372] In doing so, Roosevelt applied progressive ideology to the process of creating a unified nation, advocating for a firm stance from the federal government in bringing about conformity and Americanization within the ethnic communities in the United States. It was this national exposure that deeply popularized the notions of True Americanism and, more importantly, spread fears as to what would happen if Americans continued to hold so many divided interests without unifying within an American identity.

With the 1912 release of the Dillingham Commission, True Americanists had the demographic data that they needed to assert visions of a United States overrun by unacculturated immigrants. Created in 1907 and tasked with investigating the "changed character of the immigration movement to the United States over the past twenty-five years," the commission's generalized findings were that newer immigrants were less assimilable, more prone to creating ethnic enclaves, and more interested in profiting from the United States rather than contributing to it, unlike earlier immigrants.[373] In the Southwest, the report specifically mentioned the transiency of Mexican immigrants as another source for concern.[374] Their final

---

[371] Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 5-8.

[372] Ibid., 66.

[373] *The Dillingham Commission Report*, Volume I, 13-14.

[374] Ibid., 41.

recommendations included more proactive immigration laws that assessed immigrants upon their perceived quality, rather than quantity, and levelled deportation at those who opposed naturalization.[375] By focusing on the need for immigrants to fully assimilate and buy into the American way of life and by demonstrating the ways in which America's ethnic enclaves were failing to do so, the report provided a great deal of fodder for True Americanists already concerned about the unity of the American nation.

In the minds of True Americanists, the demand for exclusive loyalty from *all* American citizens reached a critical mass in 1914. In describing Woodrow Wilson's stance against hyphenism at the outset of World War I in Europe, diplomatic historian Alexander DeConde suggests a shift in domestic sentiment that alienated certain Americans even as it "quickened the ethnic consciousness of minority groups."[376] This persistent heritage had existed for years by the time World War I began, though. Irish Americans and Mexican Americans had looked across the Atlantic and across the border respectively for decades. The onset of World War I merely magnified this, creating the perception that the need for complete unity was both urgent and imminent and resulting in widespread calls for America's ethnic populations to fall in line like loyal Americans.

It is difficult to pin down True Americanism as a discrete group of Americans given that the intellectual nature of the movement made it widely adoptable. A broad swath of the population adopted these views, however, and the movement was far from homogenous. Even with Roosevelt's attacks on nativists, many who were anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, or who simply disliked any one of America's ethnic pockets took up the language of True Americanism

---

[375] Ibid., 46.

[376] Alexander DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy: A History* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 82.

to level critiques against their enemy of choice. Generally speaking, though, adherents to this ideology were quick to label themselves True Americanists, and usually did so in comparing themselves to another group that they perceived as less loyal. The most important tenet of True Americanism was to possess exclusively American patriotism with no predilections for any other country. True Americanists generally attacked America's ethnic populations for their corruption of democracy via bloc voting, and the ensuing impact that their political power had on foreign policy. They accused America's ethnic groups of advancing agendas that went against the interest of the United States and therefore undermined the nation in some capacity, typically by getting the United States involved internationally where it ought have remained on the sidelines. At the outset of World War I, and particularly once the United States joined, True Americanists used the image of shirking one's duty as another insult to question the loyalty of others. At its core, though, True Americanism represents an extension of the progressive impulse to take constructive action in order to bring about improvement in the realm of citizen loyalty and patriotism.

An examination of the Google N-Gram corpus, as well as *The New York Times'* Article Search API provides a visualization of the spread of True Americanism. Singling out the terms Americanism, hyphenism, and hyphenate as key markers of True Americanist rhetoric and plotting their use against time shows a definitive spike occurring in the 1910s. In identifying word usage, *The New York Times*' API shows how many times each word appears in that newspaper's reporting over a given period of time. Similarly but not identical, Google's N-Gram provides data as to the percent at which a given word appears in books that have been digitized. Figures for all three terms, among both sets of data, follow a similar pattern.

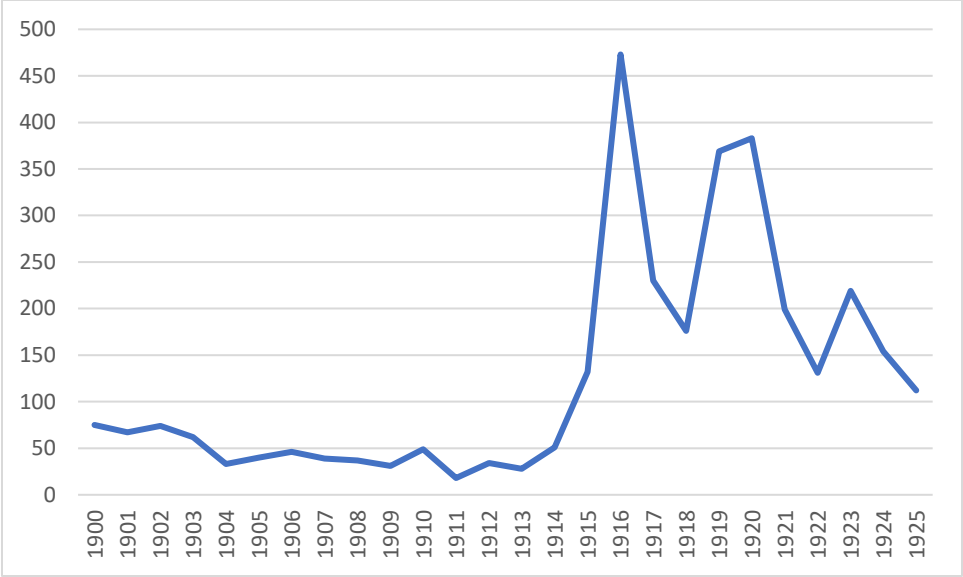

Figure 1 Usage of the Term "Americanism" in *The New York Times*, 1900-1925

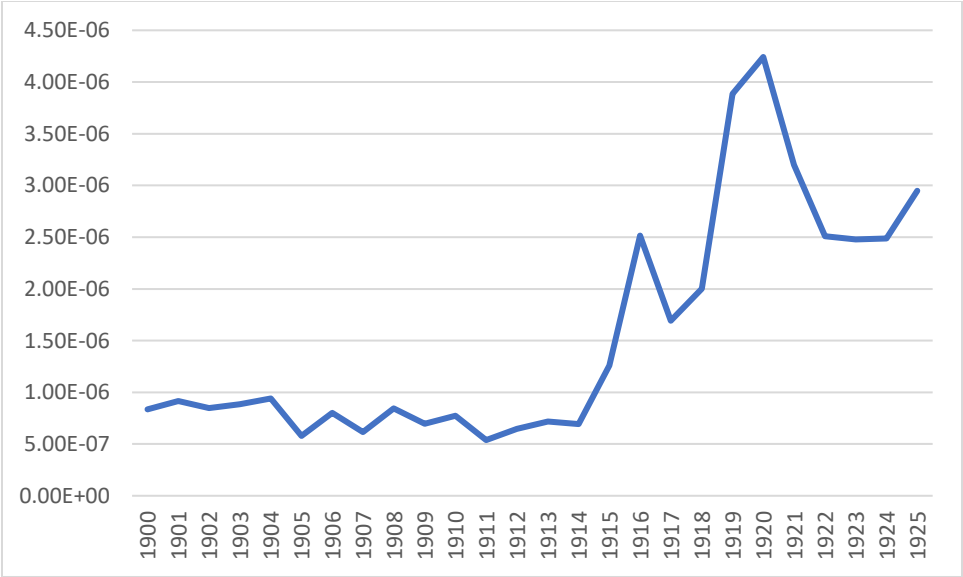

Figure 2 Appearance of the Term "Americanism" in Google's N-Gram Corpus, 1900-1925

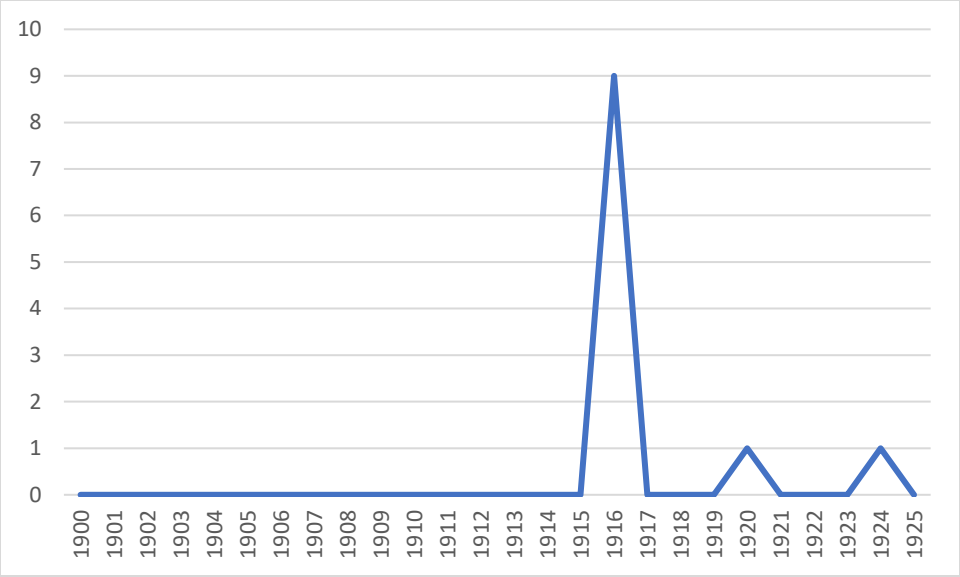

Figure 3 Usage of the Term "Hyphenism" in *The New York Times*, 1900-1925

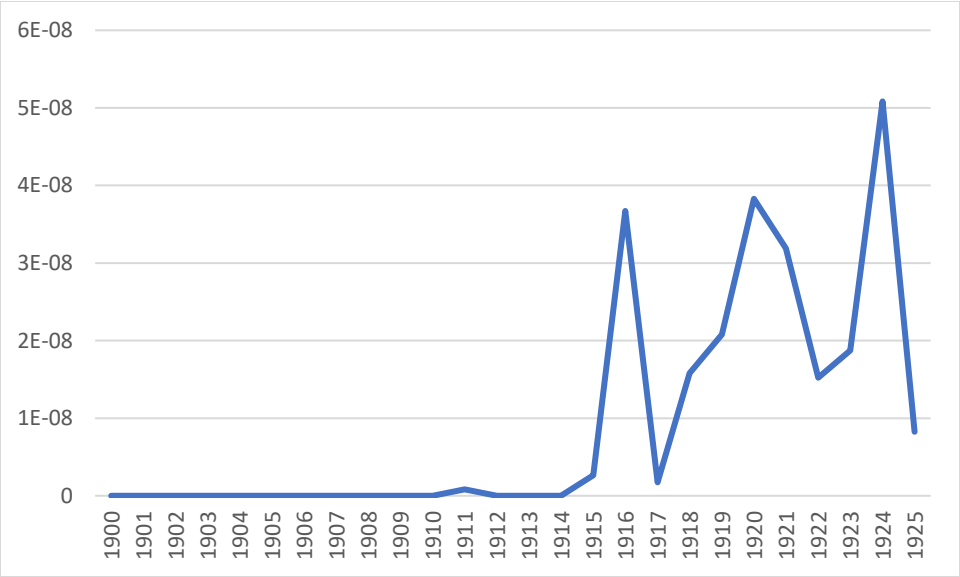

Figure 4 Appearance of the Term "Hyphenism" in Google's N-Gram Corpus, 1900-1925

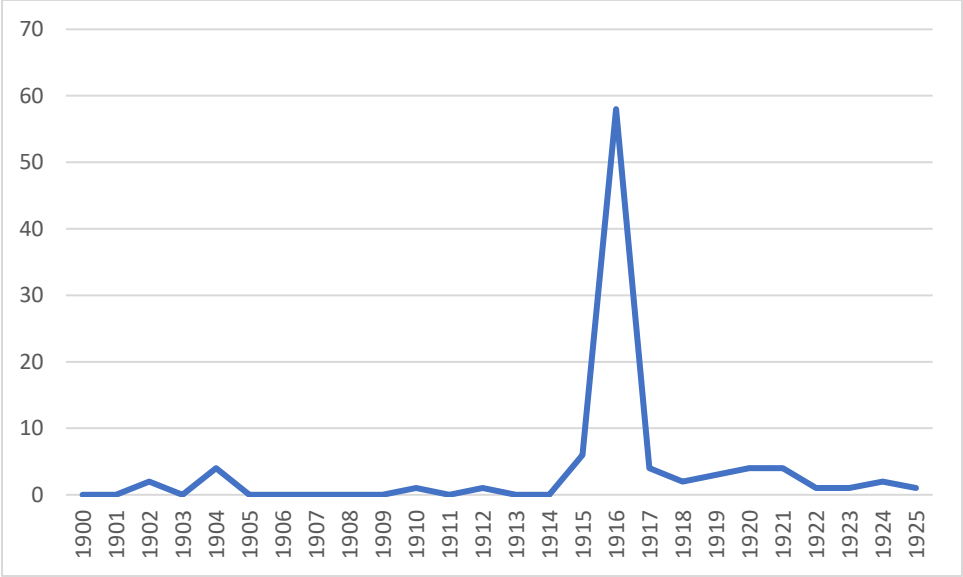

Figure 5 Usage of the Term "Hyphenate" in *The New York Times*, 1900-1925

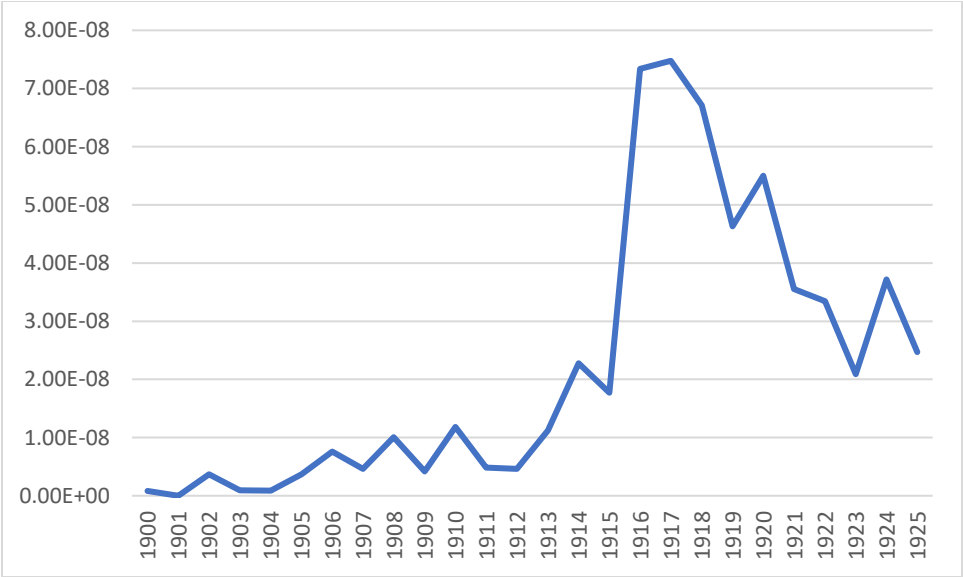

Figure 6 Appearance of the Term "Hyphenate" in Google's N-Gram Corpus, 1900-1925

In all six graphs, usage of these terms closely associated with True Americanism spikes dramatically in the middle years of the 1900s, before American entry into World War I in April of 1917. With ensuing spikes correlating strongly with presidential election years, the preceding figures make clear the rise in True Americanist rhetoric that occurred in the 1910s and its recurrence as debate led politicians to frame themselves and their opponents within the paradigm of True Americanism.

Irish Americans and True Americanism, 1910-1917

For their part, Irish Americans noticed and responded to this rising tide of exclusivist nationalism. They chafed at the claim that their persistent heritage and ties abroad undermined their ability to contribute to the American nation and lashed out at accusers. The terms hyphenism and hyphenate, used to paint cultural groups as insular and tribal, proved particularly galling. The tone of the Ancient Order of Hibernians' 1914 convention stands out significantly against those of 1910 and 1912 as the group's leaders continued to support the Irish cause, but found themselves needing to defend more staunchly the reputation of Irish Americans as stolid citizens of the United States.

Just as the Mexican Revolution drew Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans south of the border, so too did events in Ireland capture the attention of Irish Americans in reinvigorating efforts to bring about independence. Britain's general election of 1910 had produced an evenly divided parliament, which presented an opportunity for a united Irish front to push for home rule as a wedge issue. The leader of the Irish parliamentary party, John Redmond, skillfully used this advantage to empower a Liberal government, led by Prime Minister H. H. Asquith. Having earned significant bargaining power from this move, the passing of a home rule bill to grant greater sovereignty to Ireland seemed imminent. However, opposition to this development did

exist, namely among the mostly Protestant population clustered around Ulster, who had for years petitioned against Irish sovereignty by expressing concerns that their minority status in Ireland would bring abuses, using the pithy anti-Catholic slogan "home rule is Rome rule." With the success of Irish nationalists on the horizon, these Unionists responded in 1911, as local militias in the northeast of the island began drilling in preparation that they might take military action to prevent the implementation of home rule. For nationalists, this signaled an act of aggression, and even as Redmond pursued his parliamentary path, bands of nationalists began drilling as well. By 1913, militarizing nationalists had organized themselves into the Irish Volunteers, setting the paradigm for the final decade in the Irish fight for independence.[377] Although violence remained largely sporadic until Easter Rising in 1916, the Irish Volunteers came to represent a tangible group to which Irish Americans could send arms, supplies, and funds. Like the Mexican Revolution, this evolution of the Irish Question drew Irish Americans further across the Atlantic, setting the scene for Easter Rising to instigate deep True Americanist antipathy against Irish American nationalists.

Irish Americans remained split between those supporting the parliamentary actions of Redmond and those who backed the physical-force nationalism of the Fenians, advocated by the Clan-na-Gael. With Redmond empowered politically and the Irish Volunteers creating the manpower to bring violence to bear in achieving independence, both groups of Irish Americans saw the 1910s as the crescendo that would bring an end to the fight for independence. Caught in the middle was the fraternal organization Ancient Order of Hibernians in America. Consisting of two hundred thousand members by 1910, the Hibernians began the decade hoping to mend the relationship between parliamentary and physical-force nationalists in the United States. At all

[377] Kee, *The Green Flag*, 461-469.

three of their biennial conventions between 1910 and 1914, the Hibernians reached out to the United Irish League in America, who backed Redmond; and John Devoy, as leader of the Clan-na-Gael. All three times, they were rebuked.[378] The Hibernians alternately sent messages of support to Redmond, and maintained a military wing that consisted of approximately five thousand men.[379] In attempting to walk a middle ground between the two sides, and faced with the changing times of the 1910s, the Hibernians provide a great deal of insight as to the broader context within which Irish Americans fought for peace. As physical-force groups like the Clan-na-Gael scaled up their plans to aid and abet Irish violence against the British, more moderate groups like the Hibernians had to accommodate for the increasing antagonism that they faced in the years leading up to World War I.

In his 1910 address to the national convention, president of the organization Matthew Cummings delivered a speech that reflected the same mindset that had existed among Irish American nationalists since the days of the United Irishmen, that ethnic heritage and civic nationalism were not mutually exclusive. To great applause, Cummings laid out the purpose of the organization, seeing that the Order "stands for religion, patriotism, for God and Country, for the Flag and the institutions of this country, for government of the people, for the people and by the people. It also stands for a free and independent Irish Nation and will never be satisfied with less…It stands for the unification of the scattered Irish race."[380] The group also decided to send

---

[378] *Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Forty-Seventh National Convention, 1910* (Chicago: J.S. Hyland and Co., 1910), 43, 50; *Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Forty-Eighth National Convention, 1912* (Chicago: J.S. Hyland and Co., 1912), 168; *Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Forty-Ninth National Convention, 1914* (Norfolk: Burke and Gregory, Publishers, 1914), 26.

[379] *Proceedings, 1910*, 156; *Proceedings, 1912*, 43; *Proceedings, 1914*, 123.

[380] *Proceedings, 1910*, 13.

a message of its loyalty to President Taft.[381] However, in keeping with their stated goals, outside of the introductory address the convention focused on advancing the interests of Ireland. Anticipating the success of a home rule bill, they expressed support for Redmond, but reminded members that partial sovereignty was only the first step in the process of complete separation from Great Britain. In reaching out to parliamentary and physical-force nationalists, the Order sought not to shape the view of others on the best course for Ireland, nor to solicit their input, but rather to unite in advancing the Irish interest within the United States. In much the same vein, Cummings reminded members that the Order had signed a formal agreement with another ethnic group in 1907, the National German American Alliance, in which both groups vowed to support one another publicly, namely through German Americans flying German flags on St. Patrick's Day and Irish Americans flying the Irish flag on German Day, both visible displays of a mutual interest in persistent heritage and in opposing ties between the United States and England.[382]

By 1912, the Order had elected a new president, James J. Regan, and although his introductory speech was much more milquetoast in terms of rhetoric, it contained much the same message that Cummings' earlier address had. Later on in the convention, Regan revealed perhaps an even more intense conceptualization of the deep ethnic nationalism within the Irish American community when he detailed the efforts that the Order and others had gone through to call attention to English misrule and compel parliament to resolve the Irish question. Despite the diasporic outmigration of the Irish, "[i]n all our wanderings around the world, no matter where we live, no matter how generously we may make sacrifices for our adopted country, we think by day and dream by night of the humble Church where we were baptized and the sacred soil on

[381] Ibid., 33-34.

[382] Ibid., 52-53.

which we played."[383] This rhetoric mimics that of Ricardo Flores Magón in discussing his homesickness, but adds an overlay of the obligations to one's adopted country. In 1912, the Order continued to value the contributions that the Irish had made to American history; in fact, they spent much of that convention discussing plans to commemorate the service of Commodore John Barry for his service in the formative years of the U.S. Navy.[384] The advancement of Irish nationalist interests was the order of the day, however. With the Irish parliamentary party tantalizingly close to passing a home rule bill, the moderate AOH backed their efforts as a key first step in achieving full independence.

Much like the Mexican Revolution, which began its more chaotic and violent second stage in 1914, the Irish fight for independence, too, entered a new phase in 1914. The beginning of World War I denoted a key moment in English vulnerability for physical-force nationalists. For the Order, parliamentary nationalists had brought about an important first step in the successful passage of a home rule bill in late spring of 1914, although the bill, imperfect to begin with and neutered further in attempts to please the House of Lords, was far from sufficient. The rising Irish Volunteers, too, had shifted rhetoric about independence from the theoretical to the tangible, as they sent representatives to the U.S. to beg for arms, officers, drill manuals, and funds. Sir Roger Casement himself, the diplomat-turned-freedom fighter, made an appearance at the Order's 1914 convention, speaking on the urgent need for support from Irish Americans. In response, the leader of the Order's military wing, Adjutant General Rogers, asserted that all five thousand under his command were willing to donate their supplies to the Irish Volunteers, and

[383] *Proceedings, 1912*, 58.

[384] Ibid., 117.

that he would send a corps of fifty officers to help with training in Ireland.[385] The situation in Ireland had changed, necessitating a shift in the actions of Irish Americans away from raising funds and awareness and towards a more concrete form of aid. However, American culture was also in flux during the 1910s, and Irish Americans had to simultaneously step up their efforts to bring about Irish independence while contending with a rising movement that labelled its ideology "True Americanism."

Held in Norfolk, Virginia, the 1914 conference kicked off with a brief speech from that city's mayor, the Confederate veteran and longtime Norfolk resident Wyndham R. Mayo. Although he did not address rising anti-Irish sentiment directly, when read against that context his speech reveals how Irish Americans saw themselves as citizens and the way in which they rejected claims of disloyalty. Pandering to his audience and flattering them with his remarks, Mayor Mayo demonstrated the persistence of earlier, Fenian conceptions of plural identity. In one revealing line, he described the green Irish flag "entwined in loving embrace" with the American flag and assured his listeners that it "typifie[d] not only the allegiance which you owe but the allegiance which you give, first and above all things, to that flag and all it stands for, having as it does for its basic principle FREEDOM."[386] Speaking to Irish-American guests of his city as well as his own Irish-American constituents, Mayo approached the topic of Irish patriotism from an outsider's perspective, reassuring them that he still recognized their loyalty and their contributions as citizens despite a rising tide of True Americanism. However, Mayo's words were rooted in older paradigms, and as Irish Americans faced attacks on their patriotism,

[385] *Proceedings, 1914*, 26, 73, 117, 123.

[386] *Proceedings, 1914*, 4-5.

their rhetoric evolved as they began to lash out with more strident language and accusations of their own.

In the introductory address by National President James J. Regan, the Hibernian leader made sure to land his blows against the True Americanists. Amidst his short speech describing Order activities of the past year and plans for the future stood a fervent rejection of the claims that Irishness and the support of Irish independence negated the citizenship of the Order's members. Bristling at accusations of hyphenism, Regan fired back, declaring, "[w]e are Americans in every sense of the word. We are not HYPHENATED Americans. There were no hyphens at Lexington and Valley Forge, Saratoga or New Orleans. When we or our people before us came to this land we did not come in any half-hearted measure; we brought no treason from Erin."[387] With this approach, Regan resurrected the tried-and-true strategy of pointing to Irish contributions throughout American history with a twist for the age of True Americanism. In striking directly against those who besmirched the reputation of Irish Americans, Regan repurposed their language in continuing his assertions that heritage and civic nationalism were not mutually exclusive. With the convention set in Virginia and perhaps hoping not to divide his audience, Regan notably omitted the Irish Brigade and other Civil War anecdotes of patriotism, instead drawing out notable American battles against the British as his examples. However, even though his 1914 speech fit within earlier methods of asserting loyalty, Regan addressed Order members with a concrete opposition in mind rather than demonstrating faithful Irish-American citizenship in a vacuum. Unlike earlier rhetoric, even Regan's other speeches, the 1914 address was pointed and potent in its rejection of specific claims of Irish disloyalty.

[387] Ibid., 7.

Noting the influence of True Americanism in propelling anti-Irish rhetoric, Regan felt it necessary to address the topic directly later on in the convention. In a brief paragraph-and-a-half speech entitled "Intolerance," Regan described a rising tide of hatred and sought to shape the response of Order members. He described it as "a wave of bigotry and intolerance," beliefs held by others who thought that it was "bad enough to be a Catholic [but] the rankest treason to be an Hibernian."[388] Tied into older norms of anti-Catholic sentiment, this ideology was also something new, as Regan went on to compare them with the Know-Nothings and the American Protective Association of the mid- and late-1800s respectively, dismissing those groups as he denigrated contemporary nativists. This new nativism was similar to but separate from earlier forms of anti-immigrant sentiment as it replaced earlier obsessions with Catholic foreignness and loyalty to the pope with a focus on eliminating the ties that ethnic communities had abroad, insisting that America's ethnic populations could not be counted upon as loyal, reliable citizens until those links were severed. Regan told his listeners to disprove accusations of treason by continuing to live as good Americans and yet also reassured them that Irish Americans as a whole would take action if pushed too far. Just a week after Regan spoke, however, the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on Serbia, initiating the first world war, rocking the geopolitical landscape of Europe and increasing the stakes of loyalty in the United States, creating both opportunity and peril for Irish Americans in effecting the independence of Ireland.

World War I brought open conflict between Germany and Great Britain and catalyzed an even deeper connection between Irish Americans and German Americans. Both groups became heavily involved in the U.S. neutrality movement, but for Irish Americans, Germany itself represented a significant ally in supporting the Irish Volunteer movement. Irish separatists

[388] Ibid., 34.

dispatched Sir Roger Casement to initiate diplomatic communication with the German government and Irish Americans openly advocated for alliance with Germany at the expense of Great Britain. Irish-American authors at the time, like James K. McGuire, a New York businessman and onetime mayor of Syracuse, published books outlining why the German and Irish causes were linked.[389] McGuire's first book, *The King, the Kaiser, and Irish Freedom*, detailed Casement's diplomatic mission and made a case for alliance, in addition to detailing the historical and contemporary economic reasons why Ireland ought to be a sovereign nation. His second, *What Could Germany Do for Ireland?*, took on the same subject in greater detail, positing that Germany and the United States would both benefit from an independent Ireland checking the geopolitical power of Great Britain. Buried within his prose, several lines evince the urgency with which Irish American nationalists viewed the situation in Europe.

Firstly, McGuire assured his readers that the United States need not fear invasion from Germany given the geographic protection of the Atlantic Ocean.[390] Building on this foundation, McGuire then attempted to convince his reader that, in addition to Germany not being a threat, Great Britain was far from an innocent ally, exposing their censorship of the Irish press and detailing Irish opposition to British recruitment efforts. In doing so, he critiqued John Redmond for having lent his support to British recruiting efforts and noted the ensuing loss of American support for both Redmond and his United Irish League.[391] Published by the Wolfe Tone Company, named for the iconic Irish revolutionary and distributing to a mostly Irish clientele, it is unlikely that McGuire had to convince his readers of much, but perhaps he could provide

---

[389] Joseph E. Fahey, *James K. McGuire: Boy Mayor and Irish Nationalist* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2014), 48.

[390] James K. McGuire, *What Could Germany Do for Ireland?* (New York: Wolf Tone Company, 1916), 42.

[391] Ibid, 60.

momentum to the movement for American neutrality by putting in writing an argument in its favor. In closing the book, though, McGuire shifted from simply reframing the war and called his audience to action, as he presented his reader with the urgency of the situation and the way in which the Irish people must take advantage of this opportunity or remain under British control forever. McGuire insisted that "[a]ll of the patriotic effort of centuries is lost if the remnants of a people fail in this crisis to grasp the last opportunity for freedom that will ever be afforded them."[392] More than any other part of the book, this line described the urgency and opportunism with which Irish nationalists viewed the First World War. With Great Britain occupied by the war and German wartime interest in destabilizing the British home front, the stars seemed to have aligned for the Irish independence movement to adopt physical-force policies and strike against British control.

The Plan de San Diego, 1915

The evolution of the Mexican Revolution, similar to events in Ireland, brought a greater intensity, albeit accompanied by much more violence. Historians generally accept that the Revolution entered its second, more violent and more chaotic, phase in 1914. Madero had triumphed, only to be deposed by the conservative forces of Victoriano Huerta, who in turn fled following the rise of Venustiano Carranza as well as the American occupation of the port of Veracruz. In the United States, this meant a continued presence of revolutionists in the borderlands and beyond. Bureau agents continued their limited efforts to end cross-border smuggling with little success, and purchasing agents for various revolutionary factions became more established and known to arms dealers. One of Pancho Villa's representatives, Enrique Llorente, operated openly in New York City. In February of 1915, he was offered the purchase

[392] Ibid, 274-275.

of a ninety-two foot submarine, delivered to Key West for use in the Gulf of Mexico.[393] Another regional warlord, Esteban Cantú Jiménez, relied upon early military airplanes, provided and operated by one of his brothers-in-law out of San Diego, California.[394] As even the type of weaponry used across the border increased in intensity, it was only a matter of time before violence spilled into Texas, bringing with it bloodshed, reprisals, and accelerated concerns over Mexican loyalty to the United States.

During the summer and fall of 1915, South Texas boiled with racial violence. Haphazardly acting according to a document known as the Plan de San Diego that had been covertly created earlier that year, a motley crew including some revolutionists but also opportunistic lawbreakers looted farms and ranches in a loose attempt to reclaim formerly Mexican territory. These raids, increasing towards the end of July, brought panicked calls for reinforcement of the border and restoration of peace. Simmering racial tension in Texas led to widespread extralegal violence that victimized innocent Mexican men, women, and children even as vigilante forces claimed to crack down on bandits. Reprisals and vengeance on both sides led to civilian deaths, forced refugees to flee to Corpus Christi and Mexico, and resulted in the severe restriction of Mexican American rights in South Texas.[395] As a key moment in the Mexican Revolution and a formative episode in the history of South Texas, the Plan de San Diego catalyzed the Mexican-American civil rights movement even as it represented a moment of crisis during the rise of True Americanism.

---

[393] "Specifications," Enrique Llorente Papers, Folder 6, New York Public Library.

[394] "Asserts Americans Pilot Cantú Planes," *New York Times*, 9 August 1920.

[395] Johnson, *Revolution in Texas*, 2-5.

The Plan de San Diego was a document that called for an uprising to begin on 20 February 1915 in Texas. The aim of this uprising was ambitious – to take over Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and California and overthrow white rule. Before it could be initiated, however, one of the co-conspirators, a man named Basilio Ramos, was arrested with a copy of the document on his person.[396] News of the Plan spread across the United States, and although February 20th came and went without a major uprising, historian Benjamin Heber Johnson suggests that knowledge of the Plan "linked these domestic and foreign events [of racial tension and the Mexican Revolution] in the specter of a violent revolution by ethnic Mexicans on foreign soil."[397] By the summer of 1915, the vision of the Plan in creating racialized violence started to come to fruition. Rumors of armed Mexican bands engaging in depredations across South Texas arose beginning in July, but confirmed reports began appearing in Anglo newspapers in mid-August.[398] By then the raids had escalated, from theft and the destruction of railroad and telegraph infrastructure to the murder of Alfred and Charles Austin on August 6th.[399] Anglo Texans responded with the application of vigilante justice, applied indiscriminately. This included shooting, lynching, and generally terrorizing the Mexican population of South Texas.[400] Plan-inspired raids continued nonetheless, reaching thirty in number through August and September.[401] By late October, however, joint American and

---

[396] Ibid., 72-73.

[397] Ibid., 74.

[398] "Mexican Bandits Kill Two Men," *The Los Angeles Times*, 7 August 1915, 1.

[399] Johnson, *Revolution in Texas*, 77.

[400] Ibid., 87-90.

[401] Ibid., 97.

Mexican federal forces clamped down, restoring order in the region.[402] The Plan de San Diego had been quashed, but the consequences of the uprising stretched much further than South Texas.

With True Americanism yet to fully set in, Anglos continued to view Plan violence within the paradigm of Mexican banditry. Anglo newspapers at the time described Plan followers as either bandits or raiders.[403] At the time, the Plan was yet another example of the forces of disorder bringing violence to bear in the Southwest. Neither the irredentist nature of the Plan nor its use of transnational rhetoric embracing a Mexican identity were sufficient enough to convince reporters to fit the Plan within True Americanism's paradigm of foreign subversion. However, by 1917, just two years later, a history of the Rio Grande Valley by Frank Cushman Pierce took a different approach. Throughout that book, the author described Plan followers as Mexicans, slotted into a binary of American versus foreign rather than one of order versus disorder.[404]

Beyond the context of the Plan de San Diego, Mexicans and Mexican Americans continued to get involved in the Mexican Revolution from within the confines of the United States. Clemente Idar was one such individual, who went on to play a leadership role in the fight for Mexican-American civil rights but also helped the cause of Venustiano Carranza. Idar had been recruited to help the Madero cause in late 1911, and as the revolution evolved and Carranza emerged as a major Huerta opponent, Idar backed him as well.[405] Throughout the revolution,

---

[402] Ibid., 106.

[403] "Americans Kill Mexican Bandit," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 August 1915; "Three More Raiders and Woman Are Shot," *San Antonio Light*, 3 September 1915; "Robertson Is Fired Upon by Outlaw Band," *San Antonio Light*, 9 September 1915.

[404] Frank Cushman Pierce, *A Brief History of the Rio Grande Valley* (Menasha, WI: George Banta Publishing Company, 1917), 90-94, 97, 114.

[405] Adrián Aguire Benavidez to Clemente Idar, 12 September 1911, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 1.

though he did not flaunt neutrality laws like other black market suppliers, Idar acted as a purchasing agent for some revolutionary supplies, like buttons with Mexican colors on them, or small flags for soldiers.[406] Not a crucial supplier for the Carranza cause, but nonetheless an important liaison, Idar involved himself in Mexican affairs without questioning whether he should or not – even as an American citizen he still retained a connection to his perceived homeland and acted on it. Even with this devotion to the cause of fighting for Mexico, Idar still considered himself an American patriot and did not see his participation in the Mexican Revolution as negating his loyalty to the United States.

In addition to his support of Carranza, Idar also played a role as a local leader during the years of World War I. Noting the impact that confusing rumors had upon the Mexican population of South Texas, he wrote to Governor Ferguson, volunteering to put together a team to help with the recruitment of Mexican Americans and explain the draft laws to Spanish-speakers. In the letter, Idar explained that he was already doing his best to undermine war rumors and shore up support from America's Mexican population, but proposed that even more be done. He proudly labelled himself "an American citizen of Mexican extraction" in offering to go above and beyond in supporting the war effort.[407] To Idar, like other Mexican Americans, Mexicanness and American loyalty were not mutually exclusive.

Like Idar, Leonor Villegas de Magnón was another borderlands figure who participated in the Mexican Revolution. Throughout the conflict, she organized support for Venustiano Carranza, to the point of traveling herself into Mexico with an auxiliary medical corps named *La*

---

[406] Clemente Idar to Sr. General do Luís Caballero, 14 May 1914, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 3.

[407] Clemente Idar to Governor J. F. Ferguson, 3 June 1917, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 8.

Cruz Blanca. Though much of her memoir revolves around her time in Mexico, in a brief description of her own birth, Magnón belies the transnational identity of herself and her family. She describes her father uttering a line about the separate birthplaces of his children, and that "[a] Mexican flag shall be [Leonor's]. I will wrap it together with your brother's. His shall be an American flag, but they shall be like one to me."[408] The national identity of borderlanders was complex, but a sense of being Mexican did not negate the ability to feel loyal towards the United States, nor the other way around. Mexican Americans like Idar and Magnón outright rejected the concept of an exclusive national identity as they looked to both sides of the border in backing American and Mexican causes alike.

Easter Rising, 1916

While the Plan de San Diego consisted of an extended series of events, Easter Rising managed to draw the attention of True Americanists in the span of a long weekend. Although Irish Americans had a limited role in terms of direct participation, by facilitating connections to Germany and supporting such violence against Great Britain, they too faced postwar accusations of having betrayed the United States by acting in the interest of Ireland alone. While the Plan de San Diego resulted in violence directly perpetrated against American citizens, Easter Rising merely represented a glancing blow against a presumed ally. Nonetheless, the pre-existing antipathy of True Americanists towards Irish Americans and given their persistent antagonism against the British meant that Easter Rising became another watershed moment in demonstrating the perfidy of America's ethnic populations in sabotaging the interests of the United States.

The roots of Easter Rising lay in the opportunity presented by Great Britain's participation in the war, facilitated by German efforts to sow chaos abroad at the expense of rival

[408] Leonor Villegas de Magnón, *The Rebel*, ed. Clara Lomas (Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 1994), 7.

powers. However, as vocal as Irish nationalists had been, it was Irish American leadership in the Clan-na-Gael that put Sir Roger Casement into contact with the German government, as he left the United States following his address at the meeting of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and proceeded to Germany, to determine the extent to which the German government and army would aid the Irish cause. Having negotiated down from the landing of troops in Ireland to the providing of much-needed weapons instead, German officials outfitted a captured ship to appear as the Norwegian *Aud*, loaded it with weapons captured from the Russian military, and sent it to covertly deliver those supplies to the Irish coast. A series of miscommunications and the British ability to read German naval communiques made the mission a failure, but rather than cancelling their plans, Irish nationalist leadership postponed their operation to Easter Monday.[409] That day, an Irish nationalist military detachment seized several buildings in downtown Dublin and held off British forces for several days. Though communication issues again undermined a widespread, national rising, the raid on Dublin nonetheless served to catalyze Irish nationalism behind the physical-force approach. Although the initial response in the United States was at first in objection to such use of violence, as the British began to execute their prisoners quickly after the incident, many within two weeks, those Irish Americans who did support Irish independence now almost exclusively supported the use of violent means in order to bring about sovereignty.[410] True Americanists, on the other hand, saw Easter Rising as Irish Americans having put their Irish interests ahead of those of the United States in enabling their Irish peers and facilitating ties to Germany. Particularly after World War I, Easter Rising became a

[409] Joseph McKenna, *Voices from the Easter Rising: Firsthand Accounts of Ireland's 1916 Rebellion* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2017), 49-59.

[410] Kee, *The Green Flag*, 581.

flashpoint for criticism of Irish American nationalists and evidence that, when it came down to Irish independence or the interests of the United States, they would back the Irish cause.

The 1910s represented a complex era even before the United States entered World War I, but in drawing out the rising sentiments of the time, it is evident that mainstream Americans felt a crisis of national loyalty as seen by the growing popularity of the True Americanist movement. Although the movement itself was far from cohesive and homogenous, its conceptions of the need for exclusive national loyalty placed burdens upon America's ethnic pockets and represented a rethinking of the demands of citizenship as well as a fear that communities who supported movements abroad would not be reliable citizens if called upon in an hour of need. World War I kicked off an era of intense patriotism and propaganda and reframed the actions of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans from misbehavior to treason, but the demand for creating a more unified nation had been rising for years.

As for Irish Americans and Mexican Americans, they continued with their involvement in foreign causes. The Mexican Revolution, as it grew in scale and intensity, became a deeply transnational conflict, and Mexican Americans participated in a number of ways. Although the involvement of Mexican Americans was far from universal, those who did back revolutionary causes did not see it as a denial of their Americanness but rather as a way to proactively improve their homeland. The Plan de San Diego represents an impediment towards this mindset, as it brought racialized violence to South Texas and undermined perceptions of Mexican-American loyalty. However, as historian Benjamin Heber Johnson suggests, the Plan did catalyze Mexican-American patriotism in reaction to these claims. Amidst the national context, though, the story of Mexican-American civil rights has much broader influences. Irish Americans, with their more formal organizations, found themselves responding more directly to this changing

prewar national sentiment, as seen in the 1914 convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. In taking the opportunity to strike at a vulnerable Great Britain, however, physical-force nationalists like the Clan-na-Gael invited critiques that they were more loyal to their Irish roots than their American birthplace. While they continued to insist that they could strike for Ireland and still remain loyal Americans, as well as that Great Britain represented the bigger threat to the United States, the entrenchment of True Americanist views via World War I propaganda forced them to address criticisms even further in the form of adopting extremely patriotic rhetoric and imagery. So, too, would the nascent Mexican American civil rights movement have to place their Americanness front-and-center, even as they sought to effect change within the United States and not Mexico. The rise of True Americanism in the 1910s increased the stakes of national loyalty and forced a rethinking of the cultural requirements of being a good citizen, to which Irish Americans and Mexican Americans would have to respond or risk being depicted as treasonous and having their public causes dismissed.

CHAPTER 4

IRISH AMERICANS, MEXICAN AMERICANS, AND WARTIME PROPAGANDA

The pressure cooker of wartime brought the crises of national identity that had occurred over the preceding years to a head. As the United States prepared for war and entered the conflict, Americans of all types took disparate actions revealing the way in which they saw themselves fitting within the nation. Many devoted their entirety to the war effort, through victory gardens, bond drives, and enlistment. A spectrum of patriotism existed, though, and others felt the federal government's demands as an obligation, rather than responding with a sense of duty. The actions of both Irish Americans and Mexican Americans reflected this varied perceptions of loyalty, which created tension during their postwar advocacy for Irish independence and civil rights respectively. Both groups had individuals who put their very lives on the line when the federal government asked for them to serve and yet, after the war, both groups faced charges of treason and sedition from the larger public due to the actions of war opponents and draft dodgers. Wartime propaganda and the effort to create public conformity entrenched the True Americanist idea that U.S. citizens had to be American and nothing else, running into direct conflict with Irish-American and Mexican-American conceptions of American patriotism as the primary, but not only, component of their collective identity. As Mexican Americans, Irish Americans, and the American population at large sought to navigate the wartime years, their actions and rhetoric demonstrate conceptions of their own citizenship as well as that of others. Government efforts to propagate an exclusive American patriotism

dominated the media landscape, which entrenched the views of True Americanists but did not make them universal, allowing for interpretation by Mexican Americans and Irish Americans in debating with others as to how they fit into the American nation.

This chapter will explore the content of American wartime propaganda as it broadcast the True Americanist values of complete dedication and sacrifice to the United States across the nation. In examining the different ways in which Mexican Americans and Irish Americans engaged with the war effort, it will also show the way in which the wartime years further set up postwar conflicts over Mexican-American and Irish-American loyalty. After the war, True Americanists used complications over the draft in the Southwest and Irish-American support of the neutrality movement as evidence of perfidiousness stemming from the Mexican-American and Irish-American communities. However, examples of Mexican-American and Irish-American service became counter-evidence to those claims, offered by Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders to deflect external attacks. In digging deeper into the way in which World War I fed into postwar debates over citizenship, this chapter argues that the war on the American homefront worsened the disputes of the late 1910s and 1920s.

As the German resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmerman Telegram forced an American response in entering World War I, the population at large remained divided on the prospects of taking a side. German propaganda and the German heritage of many Americans created a not insignificant amount of sympathy for the Central Powers, and advocates for neutrality persisted in their messages of nonintervention. In detailing the first year of war, author Lyn MacDonald writes of the early proactiveness of Germany in spreading positive news of its military.[411] This resonated with many German Americans and

[411] Lyn MacDonald, *1914* (New York: Atheneum, 1988), 212.

German immigrants, particularly before the United States declared war. However, many Americans proved critical of the affinities of their countrymen towards the Central Powers, resulting in domestic tension and occasional conflict. John Schronk, for example, a resident of Hill County, Texas, became notorious among his neighbors for his support of Germany. When Bureau of Investigation agents looked into him in 1917, J. W. Hammuck, who had lived next to Schronk since 1901, told them of Schronk's pro-German sentiments. From 1914 through 1917, Schronk would skim his mail for reports on the war and, "if there was any good news about Germany he would come out in the yard and fire his gun, holler, and blow his bugle." Another neighbor, Henry Greer, confirmed the story, adding that, before the war, he had dismissed Schronk as a "crazy old Dutchman." As neighbors grew increasingly concerned over Schronk's actions, they successfully petitioned to have him considered an enemy alien, resulting in him being jailed and then paroled on good conduct to live with his son-in-law. Further investigation of his case revealed the drama of a small-town banking dispute, in which one side took advantage of Schronk's persistent German heritage and the wartime climate in order to have him jailed.[412] The case of Schronk is just one example of the way in which wartime Americans clashed over heritage and patriotism, but it illustrates the way in which the larger population was divided. Although the United States would enter the war in support of the Allied powers, the home front was far from united in backing the cause of France and England

Irish Americans and the Neutrality Movement, 1910-1916

Aside from those directly sympathizing with the Central Powers, other Americans favored neutrality for its own sake. William Jennings Bryan was certainly a more famous

[412] "In Re John Schronk," 22 July 1917, RG 65 National Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922, Roll 851.

neutrality advocate, but Americans of all stripes opposed the war for many different reasons, and in ways much more virulent than Bryant's political opposition to Wilsonian policy. Many Irish Americans numbered among the supporters of neutrality as they continued to see the weakening of Great Britain as a boon for Irish independence, with American nonintervention as one way to prolong the suffering of the British. For them, a greater British requirement for resources and soldiers in the trenches provided Ireland with more bargaining power in regards to making demands for sovereignty, or potentially a greater opportunity for outright rebellion. As early as November of 1914, Sir Roger Casement wrote in the *Clan-na-Gael Journal* that "[w]e, as a people, have no quarrel with the German people" in dissuading Irish men from volunteering for service and telling members of the Clan-na-Gael to agitate for American neutrality.[413] Even so, many Irishmen did serve in the British military, Casement claiming in that same article that the Irish served in higher proportions than even the British. On the American homefront, the most outspoken Irish and Irish American nationalists remained opposed to intervention on England's behalf, and took public action to make their opinions known.

In the United States, a mutual opposition to Great Britain led to a convergence of Irish and German interests in regards to the preservation of American neutrality. The National German American Alliance, which had previously allied with the Ancient Order of Hibernians, formed the American Neutrality League in 1914, planning speaking arrangements and mass meetings to advocate for abstention from the war. Conscious of the way in which their German descent might discredit the legitimacy of the group, they reached out to Irish Americans, and

[413] Sir Roger Casement, "Sir Roger Casement Warns Against Lure of Saxon Shilling," *The Clan-na-Gael Journal* 28 (21 November, 1914): 2.

strategically chose leaders with non-Germanic names.[414] The Alliance circulated pamphlets and other written materials that warned of the presence of British propaganda, like one such leaflet that warned newspaper editors about the consequences of publishing overly anti-German stories.[415] Philadelphia-based Irish nationalist Joseph McGarrity received a copy of this specific pamphlet in the mail, sent to him directly by a journalist from Augsburg, Germany named Hans Rost, whose brief letter aligned the causes of Ireland with Germany and closed his missive with "(h)uzza, huzza to Germany, to Ireland & to its brave champion, Sir Roger Casement." McGarrity added a postscript, noting the importance of keeping this letter safe, as well as his plans to relay the information to Clan-na-Gael leadership and respond to Rost with a letter of gratitude.[416] Behind the scenes, and before Wilson declared war, Irish American nationalists moved ever-closer towards the alliance with Germany that led to the *Aud* incident and Easter Rising.

Publicly, Irish American groups increasingly embraced Germanic culture. In March of 1916, just a little over a month before Easter Rising, the Clan-na-Gael displayed a marked German influence in its celebration of the anniversary of Robert Emmet's birthday, adding the German national anthem to the beginning of its program and including articles on English atrocities against Germans, German support of Irish independence, and the American public's mistreatment of German Americans.[417] With Irish Americans and German Americans coming

---

[414] Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Struggle for Neutrality, Volume III* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), 164; *National German Alliance: Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee On the Judiciary* 23 February-13 April, 1918, 694-695.

[415] Hugo Wuelfling, *Danger!: The Power of British Diplomacy*, 20 June 1915, 1-8, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[416] Hans Rost, "Letter to 'Dear Sir,'" 23 June 1915, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[417] *The Clan-na-Gael Emmet Anniversary Magazine*, 9 March, 1916, 5-12, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

together to present significant grassroots opposition to America involvement in the war, President Wilson faced a divided public when he announced that the United States would enter the conflict in April of 1917.

American Wartime Propaganda and True Americanism, 1917-1918

Concerned over foreign intelligence, the influence of enemy propaganda, and internal dissent, within two weeks of declaring war, President Wilson established the Committee on Public Information (CPI) via executive order. Composed of representatives from the Departments of War, Navy, and State, and headed by Denver newspaper man George Creel, the committee was originally tasked with the enforcement of censorship legislation. When concrete laws on censorship failed to pass both houses of Congress, Creel instead chose to widely interpret the powers of the CPI, expanding it into something that he labelled a "publicity bureau."[418] Creel took it upon himself to unite the entire American public behind the war effort and in doing so, spread the tenets of True Americanism across the nation. In a postwar memoir of his time at the head of the CPI, Creel described his work as central to the war on the homefront, recalling that, "during the three and a half years of our neutrality the land had been torn by a thousand divisive prejudices, stunned by the voices of anger and confusion, and muddled by the pull and haul of opposed interests. These were conditions that could not be permitted to endure."[419] Without explicitly labelling himself a True Americanist, Creel clearly saw the value in its message of conformity, and sought to eliminate those opposed interests he saw through the propagation of a unifying American identity.

---

[418] *Sundry Civil Bill, 1919: Committee on Public Information* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918).

[419] George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920), 5.

The CPI was a key element in the American transition to a state of total war, shoring up public support of the war effort. Using the resources of the federal government, the CPI's domestic propaganda campaigns developed a message of all-or-nothing patriotism that entrenched the views of the True Americanists and spread them throughout the American countryside. The CPI's effort was so pervasive that it permanently reshaped national conceptions of citizenship and patriotism, leading to a paradigm shift in the way that Mexican Americans and Irish Americans agitated for public change after the war.

Examining the many forms of media produced by the CPI, as well as the writings of CPI leadership, reveals an internal philosophy that institutionalized the conception of citizenship for which True Americanists had been advocating for years. For George Creel, the war required a wholehearted effort by the entire American people, and his Committee's communiques reflected that belief. Appearing as a throughcurrent in all CPI literature, this mindset included the idea that all American citizens must devote themselves entirely to serving their nation in wartime, and that failure to do so would bring certain defeat. When bureaucratic matters forced him to testify before Congress in justification for the CPI's 1918 budget, Creel detailed his vision as to how the CPI fit into the overall war effort. He saw the committee as "not alone for the expression of what was being done in Washington but to bring home the truths of this great war to every man, woman, and child in the United States, so that they might understand that it was a just war, a holy war, and a war in self-defense."[420] In closing his testimony, Creel suggested that the CPI sought to "get away from the idea that this war is the business merely of the Army and the Navy, trying to make it the war of 110,000,000 people."[421] For Creel, the war effort required the efforts

[420] *Sundry Civil Bill*, 4.

[421] Ibid., 94.

of the entire nation. That ideology trickled down to the rest of the CPI, shaping the way in which they sought to motivate the American public.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the rhetoric surrounding the draft. Seeking to inform the male public about the requirements of registration, the CPI used a great deal of peer pressure and public shaming to label those that shirked their duty as "slackers." Although the very first draft registration brought ten million American men to their local draft boards and saw patriotic displays crisscross the nation, many American men of age did not register. Historian Robert Ziegler suggests that approximately three million draft-eligible men did not register over the course of the war, with the government imposing few consistent penalties for their inaction.[422] However, there were significant social and economic consequences for those "shirkers" who avoided their duty.

Writing just two years after the completion of the war, historian John Bach McMaster details the drive to conscript citizens and punish those who failed to comply. In announcing registration drives, American leadership such as President Wilson and Provost Marshal General Crowder, the head of the draft board, put forward rhetoric framing the draft as an obligation for all citizens, and the CPI spread this message far and wide. When the draft was renewed in 1918, Crowder informed the public that "[e]very American must do his duty in this great crisis, even though he remains at home." A month later, Congress proposed a "work or fight" law, which would have expanded the role of draft boards to include managing workers by requiring those not working in necessary industries ("idlers") to report and explain themselves. Supporters framed this as a necessity to avoid industrial conscription, although their argument failed to

[422] Robert Ziegler, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 61.

convince enough legislators. Nonetheless, in asking its citizens to contribute to the war effort in any way possible, the federal government explored several different possibilities. President Wilson sought to persuade men to sign up for the selective service using the intersection of masculinity and citizenship obligations in wartime, describing the draft as a "call to duty to which every true man in the country will respond with pride and with consciousness."[423] This concept of being "true" became a way to critique those who were not seen as doing enough, in this case attacking the manhood of those who failed to enlist for the draft. The CPI simply provided the mechanism by which these messages of insufficient or inadequate fulfillment of citizenship duties became public. One of the major ways in which they subsumed the public with this vision of patriotism was by issuing a nationwide bulletin to newspapers containing articles, letters, and speeches for reprinting by local editors. Daily, Americans across the country read of the obligations that the CPI expected of every true American man.

The CPI also broadcast threats of government persecution, warning "slackers" that they would face punishment, even if they fled abroad. In their bulletin, the CPI described the ridicule that draft evaders faced in fleeing to Mexico, and detailed the domestic dragnet of government and private organizations that evolved to enforce draft laws. One particularly poignant description outlined a raid in Chicago, on 11 July 1918, in which a combination of police officers as well as 5,000 members of the American Protective League swept through public spaces across the city, capturing 4,000 men who had failed to register as well as 300 outright deserters.[424] That same issue of the bulletin contained an article that eliminated one excuse for failing to report to a

---

[423] John Bach McMaster, *The United States in the World War, 1918-1920* (New York: D. Appleman and Company, 1920), 33-39.

[424] "Government Preparing to Round Up 'Slackers' Who Fail to Register," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 402 (3 September 1918): 19.

local draft board, detailing the procedure by which men should register for the draft in absentia, under the headline "Absence from Home No Excuse for Men Failing to Register."[425] Other articles about the draft also contained similar language telling of the duties of citizenship and punishments for failing to live up to them, including a mid-September article in which the Attorney General responded to public outrage over draft sweeps in New York City by blaming the zealousness of his subordinates but not punishing them, justifying their actions morally even while acknowledging the unlawful nature of them.[426] The draft was only one part of the total war effort, though, and the CPI found itself tasked with promoting a whole series of government agendas to the public.

To borrow money in paying for the war effort, the federal government initiated a series of iconic loan drives, issuing bonds in campaigns that remain central to historical memory of the World War I homefront. In backing these campaigns, the CPI issued posters and distributed bulletin articles to convince Americans to lend their financial support. As the war came to a close in October of 1918, lukewarm support for the fourth loan drive prompted Secretary of the Treasury William McAdoo to send a telegram to news editors across the country, reprinted in the *Official U.S. Bulletin*, in which he asked that "every true American citizen examine himself under the white light of patriotism and say whether or not he has done his utmost in this emergency. The highest obligations of duty and patriotism command every true American to go immediately to his bank…(d)on't delay."[427] Again, the description of what a true American

---

[425] "Absence from Home No Excuse for Men Failing to Register," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 402 (3 September 1918): 20.

[426] "Draft Arrests in New York Are Explained to the President by the Attorney General," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 410 (12 September 1918): 1-2.

[427] "America Can and Must Put Liberty Loan Over, Says Secretary M'Adoo in Message to Nation," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 440 (18 October 1918): 1.

should do came loaded with the implication that those who failed to do so were not American enough in shouldering their fair share of the wartime burden. By affirming that complete devotion to one's nation was a mandatory component of American citizenship, McAdoo described restrictive requirements for national belonging before a nationwide audience and questioned the legitimacy of citizens who failed to measure up to that standard.

In addition to wanting to borrow their dollars and conscript their young men, the federal government also asked its citizens to contribute to the war effort through scaled-up industrial production. In an article about the coal industry, one bulletin begins by mentioning "[i]nstances of patriotic personal sacrifice" to provide for the nation's demand for fuel.[428] Between workers and soldiers, all male citizens were expected to sacrifice for the war effort. Even the beer industry made sacrifices as the government's demand for grain put a halt on the production of malted barley.[429] Via the writing of the CPI, Americans across the country read of the extraordinary requirements of wartime, and what it meant about themselves and their neighbors as citizens should they fail to answer the call.

CPI rhetoric in regards to the obligations of patriotism proved devastatingly effective. Even the simple term "slacker" brought to bear obligations of masculinity and duty to one's country in describing the failings of those who did not contribute. In an essay on the use of stereotypes in CPI propaganda, author Clayton Funk suggests that Edward Bernays, otherwise known as a key figure in the development of modern public relations, shaped Committee messages to advance this message of implied inadequacy. Combining Freudian theories of the subconscious with a form of reverse psychology, Funk points out that the CPI would be able to

---

[428] "Everybody Lending a Hand to Increase Coal Output," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 428 (3 October 1918): 3.

[429] "Stops Malting of Grain for Beer or Near Beer Brewing," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 418 (21 September 1918): 2.

use this technique to inculcate a desire for Americans to be patriotic through implying that they were not.[430] Far more likely than Bernays shaping the CPI, given his nominal role in the Latin American bureau and the ten-year gap between the end of the war and Bernays' writing on the subject, is that the effectiveness of World War I propaganda in using public shaming simply affirmed Bernays' beliefs. Nonetheless, in writing about propaganda after the war, Bernays drew out the need to identify the subconscious desires of one's audience and rely upon that in formulating a successful publicity campaign, a tactic upon which the CPI relied to great effect.[431] Implying that one's audience lacked the devotion of a true American citizen proved a fruitful method for rallying support during the war.

Its use across all forms of CPI media swamped the nation and catalyzed a universal rethinking of the way in which a good American citizen should behave. The deployment of the term "slacker" proved so effective on the ground that a Pennsylvania newspaper put out an editorial asking for mercy. Exclaiming, "Don't Pillory the Poor!," the paper suggested that the American people at large were already doing all that they could and that the use of this type of propaganda stirred antipathy more than anything else. In printing a summary of the article, CPI officials agreed that their message should inspire rather than shame, but made no noticeable change in their reliance upon the term "slacker" or use of implications that American citizens ought to be doing more.[432] In spreading this message of complete devotion to one's nation and reinforcing it incessantly, the CPI became an active component in a national rethinking of the requirements of citizenship and the need for a fully devoted, completely Americanized populace.

---

[430] "Popular Culture, Art Education, and the Committee on Public Information During World War I, 1915-1919," *Visual Arts Research* 37, no. 1 (Summer 2011): 70.

[431] Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1928), 52.

[432] "Don't Pillory the Poor!," *Four Minute Man News* Edition E (1 October 1918): 16.

When writing about potential vulnerabilities on the homefront, the CPI focused on the foreign-born population as one area of weakness. To his credit, Creel accommodated for immigrants and the children of immigrants who were fully devoted to the cause, but his bulletin regularly made special efforts to address the perceived problem of immigrants and immigrant families. Scholars of World War I are, after all, quick to point out that this demographic made up nearly a quarter of the population at the time, and thus merited special consideration from the CPI.

Military conscription proved a confusing topic for immigrants and others unsure of their citizenship status and, in an attempt to clarify things, the CPI's bulletin regularly singled out immigrants from specific nations and explained how the draft applied to them. Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans, for example, received a frontpage article in the bulletin, wherein Provost Marshal Crowder wrote that all residents of Mexican descent had to appear before the draft board, but only those who had gone through the paperwork declaring their intent to become citizens were subject to the draft. Although confusion surrounding the draft caused it to develop differently on the ground, Crowder informed Mexican citizens in the U.S. that they merely had to fill out an additional questionnaire and withdraw any paperwork that they had submitted in the naturalization process and they would be legally exempt.[433] Again, though, the CPI framed this article within the context of duty and obligation, with implied consequences should readers fail to take appropriate action.

Bulletin staff mainly reported positive news, but they did produce some negative articles in regards to the dangers of foreignness to the United States and the need to get more support

[433] "Ruling Defining the Status of Mexican Citizens in U.S. and their Duty to Register," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 411 (13 September 1918): 1.

from communities that they perceived as weak links. Foreign residents were not irredeemable, but they required more attention to convince them to back the war effort. In summer of 1917, Creel's bulletin reprinted a memo from the Department of Labor in response to the closing of a night school for immigrants in Oklahoma City. The memo outlined the benefits of these Americanization programs, and laid out the increased need for them given the exigencies of wartime. Learning the facts about the United States and its government would convert these foreigners into full-fledged American citizens. "With the knowledge thus acquired they not only better their own condition but become a very real asset to the community in which they reside and indirectly, to the Nation as well."[434] Nearly a year later, the problem of foreignness persisted, in this case addressed by the Department of the Interior. Following an announcement about an upcoming conference to discuss Americanization, Creel relayed alarming statistics, including a quadrupling in grain elevator fires, which he attributed to the influence of German propaganda on non-English speakers. However, the Department of the Interior was addressing this vulnerability, "taking steps to safeguard our national unity and further to insure a unified people back of the fighting line."[435] America's foreign population was indeed substantial, but Creel asserted that, if properly educated and informed about the United States and the war, they would fall in line like other citizens, although he did note that immigrants who had not been naturalized held little legal obligation to the American government.

In order to reach as many Americans as possible, Creel established several other departments that reached out to the public using forms of media beyond the written word. Perhaps the most famous of these departments, and to be sure the largest, was that of the iconic

---

[434] "Need of Night Schools for Alien Population Urged," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 1, no. 27 (11 June 1917): 3.

[435] "National Conference Called to Discuss Plans for Americanization of Aliens," *The Official U.S. Bulletin* 2, no. 261 (19 March 1918): 7.

Four-Minute Men. The idea for this organization came from the business community of Chicago where two young men, Donald Ryerson and William McCormick Blair, developed the concept following a suggestion from Blair's cousin, then-Congressman and future Senator Joseph Medill McCormick.[436] The creation of the Four-Minute Men preceded American entry into the war, but the CPI began talks to absorb the group almost immediately, on 20 April 1917, and formalized ties on 16 June, placing Blair at its head as director.[437] Just over a year after the establishment of the CPI, Creel estimated that the Four-Minute Men had 35,000 volunteers placed within 5,200 communities across the nation.[438] By the end of the war, the number of orators had increased to 75,000 in nearly 7,500 locations.[439] As the shock troops of the CPI, the Four-Minute Men broadcast CPI messages to a national audience.

In deploying the Four-Minute Men, Blair focused on areas where speakers could find a rapt audience already in place. They most famously spoke in cinemas following films, but also engaged with audiences at factories, churches, schools and other meeting places.[440] The sinews of the Four-Minute Men were two official publications, the bulletin and a newsletter, sent out intermittently from Washington, DC to local chairmen and distributed by them. In order to ensure that the volunteer orators conveyed a consistent message, bulletins contained facts and figures relating to a particular topic as well as some sample speeches. The orators themselves were responsible for the specific content, as well as the timing of their speech. Keeping to the

---

[436] Despite his involvement in creating the Four-Minute Men, Sen. McCormick regularly drew postwar criticism from True Americanists attacking him for speaking out on behalf of Irish independence

[437] *The Four Minute Men of Chicago* (Chicago: History Committee of the Four Minute Men of Chicago, 1919), 13.

[438] *Sundry Civil Bill*, 5.

[439] Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 7; *The Four Minute Men of Chicago*, 5.

[440] *Sundry Civil Bill*, 5.

confines of four minutes proved a constant challenge.[441] Over the course of the war, the CPI sent out forty-six bulletins, with topics covering everything from explanations of war policies to lessons on how to detect enemy propaganda, as well as six newsletters reporting on the status of the organization and asking for feedback.[442] Although the group's practices became somewhat formalized, the tone of these publications took on an impromptu nature, and orators were granted a wide freedom in relaying the government's message.

The Four-Minute Men had a hemispheric reach. In addition to the forty-eight contiguous states, orators addressed audiences in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone, and American Samoa.[443] In one drive to reach Alaskans, speakers relied on boats and even sled dogs in order to reach far-flung populations, including native people.[444] Supplemeting the geographic reach of the organization with social cachet, celebrities also lent their efforts to the cause. Actor Otis Skinner took matters into his own hands during presentations of his play, *Mister Antonio*, addressing audiences in-character as the Italian organ-grinder Antonio Camaradonio during the intermission of the play.[445] The supplement to the play was inoffensive enough that theater critic Henry Adams Bellows labelled it "in consonance with the inevitable facts" in a review of the production.[446] Recently retired sports star Honus Wagner, so famed for his German heritage that fans had dubbed him the Flying Dutchman during his playing career, formed and funded a

---

[441] "Purpose and Plan of the Four Minute Men," *General Bulletin* no. 7A (25 November 1917): 4.

[442] *The Four Minute Men of Chicago*, 17.

[443] Alfred E. Cornebise, *War As Advertised: The Four Minute Men and America's Crusade, 1917-1918* (Philadelphia, PA: The American Philosophical Society, 1984), 21.

[444] "Carrying the Four Minute Message in Alaska the Land of Distances," *Four Minute Men News* Edition D (29 June 1918): 2.

[445] "Otis Skinner Gives Four Minute Speeches," *Four Minute Men News* Edition A (15 November 1917): 3.

[446] "Mister Antonio and the Great War," *The Bellman* 24, no. 619 (25 May 1918): 580.

committee of speakers in his hometown of Carnegie, PA. Leaning into his celebrity to provide an example for other speakers, the *Four Minute Men News* suggested that Wagner proved adept at whipping crowds into a patriotic fervor, and "never exceeded the time limit, except perhaps when his remarks were intended for the sole attention of one of those enemies of the human race, called umpires."[447] The group was also demographically diverse, despite being segregated, with a women's division to address audiences in female spaces, black speakers to appeal to African American audiences, committees composed of speakers of several foreign languages, speakers with tribal backgrounds to address audiences on reservations, and even a junior division. In writing about its own members to the director, the Los Angeles committee mentioned the importance of two members of Spanish descent.[448] Dominated by white men of the business community, the group nonetheless recognized the need to appeal to a broad audience, and took an active role in embracing speakers that would get the most positive response from crowds. Between all these divisions and hemispheric initiatives, the messages of the Four Minute Men became truly inescapable.

The content of these Four-Minute speeches varied based on topics that the director deemed relevant at the time, but just like with the CPI's *The Official U.S. Bulletin*, themes of sacrifice and citizen obligation were omnipresent. Newsletters and bulletins also warned of the pervasiveness of enemy propaganda and, reflecting the beliefs of George Creel, crowed that exposure to facts would turn back any arguments for neutrality and convince the most stubborn citizen to devote his or her all to the cause. In the thirty-first bulletin, Blair wrote to his men that, once learning the truth, "(w)ho of us then can hesitate to give every ounce of American

---

[447] "Honus Wagner Now Four Minute Man at Carnegie," *Four Minute Men News* Edition D (29 June 1918): 1.

[448] "Los Angeles Chairman Selects Speakers of Varied Vocations," *Four Minute Men News* Edition E (1 October 1918): 5.

blood and treasure for the defense of American homes NOW."[449] Theatregoers in late August 1917 heard two separate speeches on this topic, "Unmasking German Propaganda" and "What Our Enemy Really Is," both intended to expose the way in which German propaganda undermined the war effort and detail the potential consequences of a German victory.[450] The latter speech laid out the expectations of the male American citizen in regards to backing the United States, as Blair wrote that:

> Every man who loves the American flag and the principles of democratic government for which it stands is now duty bound to stand by that flag and (its) military policy…It behooves every man who has clear vision of America's line of duty to give voice to his thought and throw the weight of his influence to the support of that true American sentiment that is represented by that vigorous war policy of our President.[451]

With these campaigns, the Four-Minute Men aided the federal government in laying out the stakes of the conflict, but also delivered and reinforced messages to the public encouraging them to be true patriots and fall in line behind the war effort. Like the CPI, they presented complete devotion to the nation as a mandatory requirement of citizenship, conflating fulfillment of those obligations with American manliness.

Two other major themes, the urgency of taking action and the duty that was expected of good citizens, fleshed out the propaganda effort of the Four-Minute Men. Another address, "Why We Are Fighting," urged listeners to approach the war effort as if the U.S. were to take on Germany alone, while a speech entitled "Mobilizing America's Man Power" was preceded by a brief note from the Secretary of Labor, William B. Wilson, in which he told the Four-Minute

---

[449] "Danger to America," *Bulletin* no. 31 (27 May 1918): 1.

[450] "What Our Enemy Really Is," *Bulletin* no. 14 (27 August 1917); "Unmasking German Propaganda," *Bulletin* no. 15 (27 August 1917).

[451] Ibid., 5.

Men that, "(i)f you want America to win, then support the program with full zeal."[452] The bulletin for the speech "Danger to America" featured a prominent subsection describing the long-term consequences of German victory, "The Sword of Damocles Over Our Children."[453] With such a mighty task at hand, the Four-Minute Men joined the rest of the CPI in calling for complete sacrifice and devotion from Americans. The stakes at hand should Germany prove victorious made these sacrifices seem urgent, as well as the need for all legitimate citizens to fully back the president in giving their all to the war effort. Edition D of the newsletter illustrated this perfectly, with two brief quotes for volunteers to use in developing their speeches. The first, a fictional story, told of a returned veteran correcting a civilian commenting on the arm that he had lost in battle. "'I didn't lose it,' replied the soldier, 'I *gave* it.'" Two lines later, the newsletter told readers that "(t)he citizen who makes no sacrifices for his country never knows the full fine glow of that which men call patriotism."[454] In their speeches, through both direct demands and indirect insinuations, Four-Minute Men placed heavy obligations upon their fellow citizens, implying that, perhaps, it was not out of the question for the true American to willingly sacrifice even a literal arm and a leg for the good of the nation.

Speeches did not consist of blind zealousness, however, as the director did at times have to intercede to ensure that speakers delivered the right message in the proper tone. Trying to finetune this induced occasional mixed messages. In Edition C of the bulletin, Blair contradicted the theme of duty that pervaded CPI media, suggesting that the implication that citizens could be doing more would produce negative feelings and alienate audiences. However, on the very next

---

[452] "Why We Are Fighting," *Bulletin* no. 11 (23 July 1917): 3; "Mobilizing America's Man Power," *Bulletin* no. 34 (29 July 1918): 1.

[453] "Danger to America," 6.

[454] "The Spoken Word," *Four Minute Men News* Edition D (29 June 1918): 17.

page, Blair praised a volunteer for his implementation of the concept of duty, which helped that volunteer persuade a German-American man in the audience to donate a cherished pair of binoculars during the "Eyes for the Navy" campaign.[455] Speakers could, however, go too far. In an October, 1918 version of the newsletter, CPI leadership disavowed the actions of a public speaker in Pennsylvania who described himself as a Four-Minute Man but did not actually belong to the organization. In addition to calling out individuals he perceived as slackers by name, the man also advocated for the use of violence, asserting that he and his neighbors were "determined to wipe out seditious talk among pro-Germans here even if it requires tar and feathers and a stout rope in the hands of a necktie party."[456] The CPI had a specific vision for its public speaking division, and inciting mobs did not fit within their methods of guilt-induced patriotism.

By the time the group folded, on Christmas Eve, 1918, the CPI estimated that volunteers had delivered three quarters of a million lectures, to a cumulative audience of over three hundred million.[457] In testifying before Congress, Creel explained the vital nature of the Four-Minute Men in canvassing the entire nation, as their "audiences (were) made up not of people who come to hear a patriotic speech already convinced, already on our side, but (were) made up of representatives of every class and nationality in the country – many of them people the Government could reach by no other means."[458] With such a wide audience, the Four-Minute Men represented a significant mouthpiece for the CPI to broadcast government messages and

---

[455] "Criticism of Speeches," *Four Minute Men News* Edition C (1918): 4-5.

[456] "Exponent of Violence Not a Four Minute Man," *Four Minute Men News* Edition E (1 October 1918): 20.

[457] *Sundry Civil Bill*, 5.

[458] Ibid., 63.

propaganda to the broader public, and with the content of their messages reflecting the CPI philosophy that American patriotism and duty required complete devotion, the Four-Minute Men played a major role in the entrenchment of the cult of True Americanism.

With the CPI dominated by male leaders and exporting a message of patriotism couched heavily within masculine gender norms, there was still room for women to contribute in the war effort. Reflecting the perceived spheres of women at the time, propaganda aimed at a female audience focused on the domestic home, as well as the field of education. Still, in addressing America's women, the federal government advanced themes of obligation, resource conservation, and patriotism, similar but not identical to the messages that they preached to male audiences. The female role in education and childrearing brought an emphasis on raising good citizens and educating immigrant mothers in Americanization drives, moreso than the male-oriented propaganda that dwelt upon the draft and loan drives. The underlying message of creating a unified American citizenry fully devoted to the war equally shaped the women's war effort as propaganda of all types inundated the nation.

Organizationally, the women's war effort fell under a cooperative set of organizations. On the ground, women organized themselves within their states, under the umbrella of the nationwide Council of National Defense (CND). The Bureau of Education worked to provide informational pamphlets on Americanization to these organizations that they might effectively implement initiatives. The Committee on Public Information itself played more of a supplemental role, although Creel's group was far from uninvolved in the female war effort.[459] Under the CND and Bureau of Education, campaigns for the cultural assimilation of America's

[459] "Letter to Alexander Whiteside," 27 March 1918, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 625, National Archives.

ethnic populations mirrored those of the CPI in their intensity, and complemented them in the way in which both contributed to a sociocultural narrowing of the confines of American citizenship.

One major campaign, "America First," kicked off in late summer of 1917, as the National Committee of One Hundred in Washington, DC petitioned for more education for the purpose of Americanization. In a pamphlet distributed to state organizations, the group laid out its goals, which included making the use of English common among immigrant communities; spreading appreciation of American history, civics, and ideals; and unifying the home front. The Committee acknowledged American diversity, but suggested that citizenship education would lead to cohesion and cooperation across ethnic boundaries.[460] The words of committee chairman H. H. Wheaton in encouraging his volunteers could have come directly from a Four-Minute Man newsletter. In a form letter to leaders of America's patriotic societies, he urged leaders to "(s)end out the clarion call to every member to preach the doctrine of 'America First' on the street, in the office, in the factory, on the platform, in the pulpit, in the class-room, at mass-meetings, everywhere," adding that he saw his campaign as the only national movement aimed at uniting America's diverse population.[461] The patriotism that Wheaton encouraged was universal, pervasive, and fundamental. Compliance with the vision that he set forth required subordinating or eliminating allegiance to one's homeland in the name of national cohesion.

A collaborative pamphlet issued by the National American Woman Suffrage Association in New York City reiterated the message of "America First." Using the motto "One Country;

---

[460] H. H. Wheaton, "America First," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 621, National Archives.

[461] H. H. Wheaton, "Letter from H. H. Wheaton to Patriotic Societies," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 621, National Archives.

One People; One Flag," the brochure laid out the group's aims to assist the Council of National Defense. The organization's purpose statement, "[t]o so weld America's thirteen million foreign born and thirty-three million of foreign born origin with our native born people that all shall stand together a unified America" encapsulated the assimilation effort at hand neatly.[462] In order to accomplish this, the Association would use its millions of members, as well as the mandate created out of government campaigns like loan drives and conservation efforts, to gain entrance to "foreign colonies" and appeal for cooperation from America's immigrant populations. The pamphlet framed this campaign as an act of altruism, finally appealing to immigrants and their families to join together in common cause after having been ignored or mistreated for generations.[463] Spreading the English language and engaging with immigrant mothers were distinct goals here, with the pamphlet suggesting that volunteers also provide childcare so that mothers could attend civics and language classes.[464]

Concerns over language were omnipresent, and appeared in poster campaigns as well. The National Americanization Committee and Bureau of Education collaborated on one such poster creatively entitled "America First," which described the many benefits that came from a three-step program of learning English, going to school, and naturalizing. In addition to presenting its message in eight languages including English, the poster also depicted an immigrant man with a pickaxe shaking hands with Uncle Sam in the foreground, and a

---

[462] "Americanization," *War Service of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 631, National Archives.

[463] Ibid., 2.

[464] Ibid., 17.

naturalizing citizen shaking a judge's hand and receiving citizenship papers in the background.[465] A Connecticut poster with versions in seven different languages urged those of foreign birth to learn to write English that they might write letters to a son serving abroad. Presuming a generational disconnect in language literacy, the poster suggested that learning English would make the soldier proud of his parents, and even featured a grinning doughboy, with the caption "Hurrah, the folks at home have learned English!"[466] National and state organizations alike held a vision of a population fully assimilated and universally speaking the English language and worked hard to convince America's foreign population that learning English would be a significant boon. Language campaigns cast a wide net, with translations into many different tongues, and a particular focus on German Americans.

One memorandum from the National Committee of One Hundred illustrated the major concerns that these groups felt over the German-American population. Entitled "Germany's 'Peaceful Penetration' of the United States," it detailed the demographic proliferation of German Americans, persistence of the German language, and presence of German-language newspapers. The memo also cherrypicked the cities of Columbus, OH, Fort Wayne, IN, and Philadelphia, PA for a brief section that juxtaposed spending on German- and English-language education, finding the latter wanting in all three cases. The most important part of the memo in regards to citizenship or loyalty, however, was a section that translated the Delbruck Law of Germany, which described it as a provision permitting German citizens to naturalize in other nations without surrendering their German citizenship. In reality it was a bit more complex, allowing

[465] "America First," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 628, National Archives.

[466] "To Persons of Foreign Birth," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 632, National Archives.

Germans abroad to opt to retain their German citizenship and thus creating the concept of dual citizenship within German law, but the intent of the CPI in describing this law was clear.[467] The Committee succinctly offered its critique, following a brief explanation of the law with the simple phrase, "A Man with Two Countries."[468] This conflicted with the Committee's conceptions of American citizenship so severely that it felt no need to comment beyond those five words, deeming them sufficient in questioning the loyalty of dual-citizen German Americans.

By retaining any semblance of connection to their homeland, German Americans betrayed the sense of complete homefront unity that wartime propagandists demanded from the American citizenry. In an article sent out to newspapers for syndicated printing entitled "War Americanization to Produce a United People Behind the Fighting Lines," the Bureau of Education laid out its proposal for bringing about assimilation of the broader public. It included heavy use of public and night schooling for language and civics education, but also encouraged readers to take direct action. The article made reference to a campaign to have a million Americans pledge to each teach one immigrant English. In doing so, it claimed, "(m)en and women who do their part in the cause of actively proclaiming 'America First' will perform a genuine service toward the great end of winning the war."[469] In another brochure through which citizens could inform the government as to the success of their private organization in

---

[467] Alfred M. Boll, *Multiple Nationality and International Law* (Boston, MA: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007), 1986.

[468] "Germany's 'Peaceful Penetration' of the United States," *National Committee of One Hundred, Washington*, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 631, National Archives.

[469] "War Americanization to Produce a United People Behind the Fighting Lines," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 631, National Archives.

Americanizing immigrants, the CPI suggested that, among other things, this homefront effort should include the elimination of immigrant colonies and sections, which only proved obstacles to a united populace. The CPI suggested that eliminating these enclaves would convince immigrants to stay, assimilate, and back the United States government and its institutions.[470] In taking on a task as massive as this wave of Americanization, national organizations sought to delegate, advising state and local organizations as to how they might proceed.

For their part, state counterparts to this national organization produced a great deal of material on their own. Massachusetts put out a pamphlet that defined Americanization as the teaching of language and civics to immigrants as well as an effort to create harmonious relations and mutual understanding between native- and foreign-born.[471] Pennsylvania pointed out that the debate over immigration had shifted during wartime, from arguments over who to allow into the United States to decisions as to how immigrants should be best assimilated in order to promote domestic harmony.[472] The multifaceted approach to Americanization there included educational and industrial agencies, all levels of government from municipal up to federal, racial and national groups, social welfare organizations, religious groups, patriotic societies, and the

[470] "Americanization Registration Card," Committee on Public Information, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 631, National Archives.

[471] "Co-ordination of Americanization Work in Massachusetts," 9 September 1918, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 628, National Archives.

[472] "Community Organization in War Time," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 632, National Archives.

press.[473] Texas added another form of cultural outreach, as its Committee on Women's Work suggested the creation and maintenance of liberty choruses among foreign communities.[474]

Texas was far from alone in playing into feminine expectations with their choruses. National and state campaigns alike targeted the female spheres of domesticity and childrearing as they expanded beyond the realm of education to engage with wives and mothers just as they sought to appeal to educators. In discussing household economics and the effort to promote conservation, New Jersey's council asked, "Are You a Woman Slacker?" The pamphlet added, "(t)he attitude of the woman with soldier spirit is 'Stand at attention, receive government orders, obey.'"[475] The U.S. Department of Agriculture was more specific in its requests of women, producing a series of pamphlets about recipe substitutions and fuel-saving cooking techniques that would allow for more resources to be devoted to the war effort.[476] On a lighter (or perhaps more subversive) note, Missouri women could ask their council for a copy of *Mother Goose in War Time*, an illustrated children's book that provided brief poems to explain the war effort, such as: "Rub-a-dub dub; Three men in a tub; And who do you think they be?; The slacker, the traitor; The wilful [sic] food waster; – Send them to Germany!"[477] The efforts to mobilize for war included the entire American family, and in creating nationwide campaigns with themes of

---

[473] "Organization Chart of Americanization for Pennsylvania," in *Americanization in Pennsylvania*, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 632, National Archives.

[474] "For the Education, or Americanization, Department," Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 632, National Archives.

[475] "Are You a Woman Slacker?" Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 625, National Archives.

[476] "Save Sugar," *U.S. Department of Agriculture – U.S. Food Administration*, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 632, National Archives.

[477] *Mother Goose in War Time* Missouri: George F. Nardin Press, 1918, 4.

sacrifice and loyalty, national and state organizations went a long ways in promoting the idea that the American citizen should have no obligations beyond that of their American patriotism.

With True Americanism's doctrine permeating the Committee on Public Information and the Council of National Defense, and the ability of those groups to reach the entirety of the American public, its efforts to persuade and educate Americans entrenched a restrictive definition of citizenship necessitated by the urgency of wartime. The Committee played a vital role in redefining the concept of an American citizen as being an individual willing to devote the entirety of him- or herself to the larger interests of the nation. This pervasive indoctrination of the public clashed with earlier conceptions that allowed some leeway in regards to ethnic Americans. Through their utter inundation of American media and society, agencies including the CPI and CND directly caused a rethinking of American citizenship, which changed the way that Irish Americans and Mexican Americans perceived themselves and were perceived by others as fitting into the broader nation.

Irish Americans and Mexican Americans in Wartime, 1917-1918

For their part, Irish Americans responded to wartime in a variety of manners, and even in different ways in public versus in private. Generally, though, agitation against England went on hiatus as Irish American nationalists sought to frame Ireland's struggle within the context of Wilsonian rhetoric about the sovereignty of small nations.[478] Looking at several, but not all, collections of Irish American nationalist ephemera in archives in New York, Washington, DC, and Philadelphia, a noticeable lack of material exists beginning with America's entrance into the war, with pamphlets, newsletters, and other pro-independence rhetoric reappearing in the waning months of war.

[478] Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America*, 152.

Leading up to Wilson's declaration of war in April 1917, Irish Americans continued to preach the advocacy of neutrality that had brought them closely in alliance with German American groups. As late as February, the executive council of the Friends of Irish Freedom met in New York to reiterate their position in a pamphlet that contained a petition directly addressed to President Wilson. Within the petition, they repeated old talking points that included the profitability of remaining neutral as well as heeding George Washington's advice in regards to entangling alliances. They also brought up a major concern of the CPI and Council of National Defense, warning about the possibility of domestic strife and suggesting that the years of work in assimilating such a diverse population behind "the honor and interests of America" could be undone, causing to "divide again into racial groups and old world alliances the millions of people who here dwell together in peace and harmony." The Friends closed their pamphlet with a copy of their resolution about a recent bill that proposed to quash revolutionary conspiracies against friendly governments, labelling it a piece of legislation in the interest of England and Russia rather than the United States, and one that would lead to repression of their rights to organize in favor of the Irish cause.[479] Clearly, the Friends of Irish Freedom saw Americans as possessing layers of allegiance that could still include loyalty to foreign heritage, and in addition to worrying about the viability of the Irish independence movement, sought to warn Wilson about the possible consequences of calling on German Americans to fight against their homeland, as well as Irish Americans to fight alongside the hated English.

Once Wilson declared war, Irish Americans changed gears, no longer advocating for neutrality in such strength. Government propagandists seem to not have seen them as a direct

[479] "Friends of Irish Freedom Opposed to War," 10 February 1917, 1-4, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

threat, either, given their focus on the German and Eastern European populations of the United States. However, reading between the lines of American propaganda does reveal a measured attempt to keep Irish Americans in line, as the actions of nationalists did occasionally draw a sideways remark. In addition to demanding that citizens support the American government wholeheartedly, the CPI also added that Americans must support their allies as well. The Four-Minute speech entitled "Unmasking German Propaganda" represents one such instance, as it labels any rhetoric undermining England as having been motivated by German propaganda. One of the sample speeches asked listeners if they would "stand by the Government that is protecting your home and your freedom from the domination of such a despotism? Or will you throw obstacles in the way of your own protecting Government by giving voice and circulation to the lies which Germany is propagating here in America?"[480] Not confronting Irish American nationalists directly, the CPI nonetheless clearly identified anti-English rhetoric as out-of-bounds during wartime, and implied that good citizens would never consider such words.

Publicly, Irish Americans generally fell in line with the American war effort. At a commemoration of the Easter Rising revolt, just three weeks after Wilson had declared war, the Clan-na-Gael program varied greatly from the Robert Emmett celebration just a year earlier. Gone were the many references to Germany and the cause of neutrality, save for a single ad for a German restaurant. Instead, the program focused on the accomplishments of Irish martyrs, their biographical stories, and even included a play re-enacting scenes from the Rising. In describing Ireland's fight for independence, the tone had changed as well, focusing more on the justice of the Irish cause with less of an emphasis on the perfidy of the English.[481] Irish-American

---

[480] "Unmasking German Propaganda," *Four Minute Men Bulletin* no. 15 (27 August 1917): 2.

[481] *The Clan-na-Gael Irish Patriot Martyrs Anniversary Magazine*, 24 April 1917, 1, 5, 34, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

nationalists did not go to ground, but they reframed their message significantly in response to America's involvement in the war.

In the summer of 1917, the Friends of Irish Freedom held a second Irish Republic Day, hosting a series of Irish cultural and athletic events. Again, very few references to Germany appeared in the program, in stark contrast to pre-war literature. However, the Friends included a brief essay on the first page detailing their principles, which demonstrated an evolving conception of the fight for Irish freedom within the context of a war in alliance with England. They opposed England's efforts to pass a milquetoast Home Rule Bill in conciliation with Irish agitation before and during the war and instead advocated for complete sovereignty. They also appealed to allied efforts by framing their side of the war as a fight for liberty. In reference to the Irish independence movement in wartime, they wrote:

> "And now at this time when the Liberty loving men of our race are fighting side by side with the Liberty loving men of our own beloved United States, of England, France, Italy, Russia, Japan and all the other nations who are fighting that Justice and Liberty may be restored to all small nations, we solemnly appeal to the government at Washington and to the Liberty loving people of all those nations to join with us in a mighty appeal to the government of Great Britain that they might now see the wisdom and the justice of forever breaking the galling chains that now hold in degradation Ireland to England."[482]

By agreeing to fight a shared enemy in the Kaiser's Germany, the Friends of Irish Freedom hoped to establish enough goodwill to be able to advocate strongly for Irish independence after the war. They also wrote of the transcending nature of the concept of liberty in fighting against the Kaiser, and applied that concept to their own struggle for sovereignty, to align the cause of Irish independence with the war effort at large. According to this mindset,

[482] "Proclamation of Principles," *Second Irish Republic Day*, 25 August 1917, 1, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

Irish participation came with a caveat and, much like the Civil War and Fenianism, the Friends of Irish Freedom agreed to postpone their active efforts in order to fight a greater evil.

This willingness to fight was far from universal. In Ireland itself, tensions with the British government flared, especially in regards to the prospect of conscripting Irish men into the British Army. When the United States Navy deployed to the waters of Great Britain, they found themselves occasionally running abreast of Irish antipathy. In an incident that True Americanists took great glee in bringing up after the war, a group of young Irish men in Cork attacked American sailors on leave from the naval base at Queenstown. Recounted in a postwar memoir by the ranking naval official there, Rear Admiral William S. Sims, despite a host of other pleasant interactions with the Irish, this moment stood out as fodder for those seeking to level attacks against Irish-American nationalists after the war.[483] Not all Irish nationalists agreed to put their movement on hold to fight Germany, and for those in Ireland, the need for independence seemed much more urgent than to Irish Americans willing to cooperate with allied war interests.

Of course, even with the public rhetoric of wartime service in exchange for postwar independence, some Irish Americans still maintained their anti-English views in private, as vehemently as they had before the U.S. joined the conflict. Philadelphia nationalist Joseph McGarrity participated as a leader in groups like the Clan-na-Gael that nominally fell in line with the American war effort. A private poem scrawled in pencil, however, offers insight into his more personal views on the conflict. Written a full two months after the U.S. had joined the war as an ally of Great Britain, his poem, "English Ships," began by detailing the use of the English fleet as a tool of imperial oppression. Referring to the current conflict, though, McGarrity wrote,

[483] William Sowden Sims, "The Return of the Mayflower," *The World's Work* 39 (November 1919): 62.

"But now at last oh God what Joy; For all who love the Irish Green; To see the double Cross go down; Before a German submarine."[484] In this poem clearly not intended for the public eye, McGarrity was blunt in his persistent hatred of the English, regardless of the rhetoric of the organizations in which he played a leading role.

As the war came to an end, Irish-American nationalists ramped up their agitation for independence. In spring of 1918, the second session of the sixty-fifth Congress heard petitions in support of Irish independence, as well as a resolution from New Hampshire's Senator Jacob Gallinger that applied Wilson's rhetoric on self-determination to the cause of Irish independence.[485] Congress overlooked these appeals in favor of addressing wartime issues, but Irish Americans continued to advocate for independence nonetheless. At their national conference in 1918, the Clan-na-Gael issued a petition to President Wilson and Congress following Wilson's speech on the League of Nations from 27 September, 1918. Within the petition, the Clan sought to utilize Wilson's rhetoric to advance claims that Ireland deserved sovereignty, "His Pronouncements Regarded As Creating A Wholly New Situation Favorable To The Small Nationalities And Particularly To Ireland."[486] Irish nationalists also participated in the October 1918 Congress of the League of Small and Subject Nationalities, which passed several resolutions aimed at lobbying for recognition of their rights to sovereignty by the U.S. Congress as well as internationally.[487] Patrick McCartan, an Irish emigrant and nationalist living in

---

[484] "English Ships,"8 June 1917, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[485] *Journal of the Senate of the United States of America: Sixty-Fifth Congress, Second Session* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 91, 120.

[486] "Irish Petition to President and Congress," 1918, 1, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

[487] *League of Small and Subject Nationalities, Inc.*, 29-31 October 1918, 1, Joseph McGarrity Papers, Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

Philadelphia, added his voice in a document that he sent to the State Department on 17 February, 1918, in which he described himself as an envoy of the provisional government of Ireland. He urged officials to reject a treaty from Great Britain that would have subjected British nationals in the United States to conscription on the grounds that Irish emigrants merited special consideration and considering the significant sacrifices that Irish-descent people had already made in support of the allied cause.[488] Although the Irish-American nationalist movement was far from monolithic, the general message of prominent organizations and leaders fighting for the cause was that they would put direct agitation for freedom on hold, but that they would refuse to be forgotten and expected serious consideration of Irish sovereignty after Germany had been defeated. This fit within their pre-war definitions of loyalty, their allegiance to the United States in wartime superseding obligations to Ireland without negating their desire to fight for Ireland once the needs of wartime had been met. This did not mesh with the message of World War I propagandists, who expected that ascribing to American patriotism would eliminate their desire to advocate for a foreign nation at all.

The wartime experience of Mexican Americans mirrors that of Irish Americans in many ways, most particularly in regards to the diversity of reactions from that community. Several scholars have brought to light the wartime responses and contributions of Mexican Americans. However, difficulties in researching Mexican Americans still persist. The conflation of Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants by many Anglos, including neighbors, presents a challenge in terminology that becomes important when considering the evolving definition of citizenship for Mexican Americans specifically. The federal government's inclusion of Mexican people

[488] *Memorandum on the Pending Anglo-American Treaty*, Maloney Collection of Historical Papers, New York Public Library, Box 10.

within the category of white in demographic surveys makes definitive statements difficult as well.[489] Studies like José A. Ramirez's *To the Line of Fire!* have begun to overcome these obstacles, but it remains difficult to cast a wide net in discussing the Mexican-American experience. Nonetheless, an examination of the writings of Mexican Americans at the time, using other complementary source material, draws out the wartime actions of a demographic whose members varied from being zealously loyal to Mexico, to being unsure of their citizenship status and therefore obligation to the United States, to being fiercely devoted to the United States.

Although many Mexican Americans got involved with the war in one way or another, the most complete extant source about the wartime experience comes from Texas schoolteacher José de la Luz Sáenz. His published wartime diary, edited and reissued in 2014, offers the most detailed account of the war from the Mexican American perspective. Sáenz is far from indicative of all Mexicans who served, but his writing demonstrates the ways in which he personally engaged with wartime rhetoric about citizenship and duty, his service as fulfillment of said duty, and how he saw that service as a good-faith contribution to the American cause that might be redeemed in advancing postwar claims to civil rights.

Citizenship and sacrifice played a central role in Sáenz's wartime diary, and his writing reflected a great deal of the patriotism that organizations like the CPI and CND were attempting to spread across the nation. In providing a brief biography of Sáenz to precede the published version of the diary, Emilio Zamora suggests that Sáenz's love of country dated to an early age;

[489] Ian Haney López, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 1.

many of the lines in the diary read as if they had come directly from a CPI pamphlet.[490] For example, once he reached the battlefield in France and could no longer write to his wife, Sáenz told her, "(w)hile you wait for the calm that is to come, know that my sacrifice was necessary and more than necessary, it was honorable…I would not have been a man had I fled the draft to avoid the scorn where I was born and expected to die."[491] In another letter, he mentioned that, for his family, the war demanded that he sacrifice the love that he would have given them in person if he had remained at home.[492] Sáenz's patriotism was much less straightforward than the simple concept of sacrifice, though, as he added, "(t)he fight for the rights of the oppressed gives us the opportunity to claim justice for the humiliations and difficulties we often face because we carry the indelible characteristics of our *raza*."[493] Like the Irish Americans willing to fight under the assumption that their service would merit more serious consideration of Irish independence, Sáenz linked his volunteerism directly with the ability to then use his sacrifice to advocate for better treatment of Mexican Americans.

Of course, Sáenz saw himself as a representative of Mexican Americans during wartime in addition to predicting his postwar ability to advocate for equality. He took great mirth in subverting the prejudices of civilians and fellow soldiers alike, often wondering to himself after the fact if he should have taken things even farther. On his way to basic training, a German man confronted him in a tavern, asking in Spanish why he hadn't fled to Mexico. Deeply offended, Sáenz made a point to respond to the man in English, noting amongst his banter, that "(t)he flag

---

[490] Emilio Zamora, ed., *The World War I Diary of José de la Luz Sáenz* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014), 2-3.

[491] Ibid., 179.

[492] Ibid., 168.

[493] Ibid., 179.

that calls us to defend the nation, the flag under which we have been born, became men, and raised our children – we hold it high over the contemptible reptiles, the bad citizens."[494] In describing the same incident, Sáenz reveled in the fact that the same prejudiced neighbors who had previously accused Mexican Americans of disloyalty would now have to serve beside him, and measure their patriotism directly against his.[495] Of course, other occasions deserved a more measured response, like one instance during his training when Sáenz shot back retorts at censorship officials initially, only to walk away. Privately, he wished that he had said more, but he also considered that in the long run, "it is better that I meet my responsibility as a loyal soldier than to pay attention – at this time – to the nauseating spew of an abject and cowardly reptile."[496] In thinking about his own patriotism and comparing himself to others, Sáenz maintained a high standard. He had little patience for those whose racism prevented them from recognizing the contributions of he and his fellow Mexican Americans.

In addition to recounting his own thoughts on the subject, Sáenz's diary details the way in which he sought to share his vision of patriotism and the postwar fight for equality with others. He consistently mentions taking on a leadership role among groups of men, particularly other Mexican Americans, and attempting to relate his thoughts on the war to them. This attempt at proselytization even started before his training, as he addressed his students in Texas, telling them that he was leaving to fight in the war and closing his final lesson before training by saying that the war "will be a great honor for our people. Long live Washington! Long live the Star

[494] Ibid., 41.

[495] Ibid., 40.

[496] Ibid., 72.

Spangled Banner! Long live our *raza*!"[497] While in France, his language skills proved helpful in facilitating communication between Spanish-, English-, and French-speaking soldiers, which also lent him a credence of authority. He regularly wrote of efforts to convey the momentous nature of wartime service, especially to fellow Mexican Americans, and expressed frustration when his message seemed to fall on deaf ears.[498] Sáenz saw a special role for the Mexican American in the U.S. Army, telling other soldiers of the warlike cultural heritage of Mexican Americans and equating the fight against the Kaiser's despotism with that of Benito Juárez against the foreign invaders of Mexico in the 1860s.[499] Although Mexican Americans had a unique part in the war, they were not alone in their desire to effect postwar change, as Sáenz recognized and wrote about when he described interacting with Native American soldiers in training camps. He wrote of Native American soldiers having similar aims as Mexican Americans, who were "going to war fully conscious of our decision and cherishing in our hearts the hope for a better future for our people who have been unjustly treated and scorned for so long."[500] In putting his wartime thoughts to paper, Sáenz provides an unparalleled look into the mindset of a Mexican American soldier in World War I who backed the American cause. His descriptions portray him as uniquely prescient in looking beyond the war towards a struggle for civil rights, but in many ways, he reflected the general sense of duty among Americans who served, not just Mexican Americans. Heavily congruent but not identical to the national loyalty described in propaganda efforts, Sáenz wrote of a patriotism similar in many ways to that of Irish

[497] Ibid., 35.

[498] Ibid., 94.

[499] Ibid., 110.

[500] Ibid., 60.

Americans – loyal to the United States, but also seeking to advance a postwar cause. Though civil rights and Irish independence were distinct aims, the belief that demonstrating loyalty would add cachet to postwar petitions was common among both Mexican Americans and Irish Americans.

Of course, a vast spectrum existed in Mexican-American reactions to World War I, and Sáenz's diary, however thorough, only represents the experiences of one individual. Many others supported the war effort, through enlisting, serving as Four-Minute Men, or even in participating in loan drives.[501] Others, though, rejected the war effort. Draft dodging, common across the country, existed in Mexican communities, motivated by several factors. First, simple self-preservation led many to eschew registration with local draft boards and even flee to Mexico. Confusion over who was subject to conscription, almost certainly fueled by German propaganda, also led to a refusal to comply with draft laws. Although non-naturalized immigrants had to register with local draft boards, they did not have the same obligations to serve as American citizens, and even those who had initiated the process of naturalization. Finally, a persistent loyalty to Mexico motivated others to cross the border, refusing to serve a government to which they felt no sense of duty.[502] When called to testify before Congress in 1930 regarding an immigration bill and asked about the draft, Mexican-American civil rights leader J.T. Canales speculated that many Mexican-descent residents of the Southwest were simply unaware of their citizenship status, and thus rejected any impositions of the federal

[501] José A. Ramirez, *To the Line of Fire!: Mexican Texans and Word War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), xiii, 23, 57, 61.

[502] Ibid., 26, 32.

government.[503] Labor organizer and Mexican-American community activist Clemente Idar offered to help the draft effort by educating Spanish-speaking citizens in a series of public meetings, but Governor James Ferguson did not take him up on the offer.[504] As the draft evolved far from smoothly in the U.S. Southwest, propaganda organizations sought to win the loyalty of Mexican-descent Americans.

The largest effort to engage with a foreign language-speaking segment of the American public lay with the Germans, but propagandists did not ignore Spanish speakers. In composing its pamphlets, the CPI translated several into Spanish, including President Wilson's response to a 1917 proposal from the pope suggesting a return to the *status quo ante bellum*. The CPI also chose to highlight a specific section of its *Conquest and Kultur* pamphlet on the use of German propaganda to weaken the United States via infiltrating the other nations of the Western Hemisphere and appealing to their people. Of the four-and-a-half million copies of the pamphlet *How the War Came to America*, fourteen thousand were printed in Spanish.[505] This targeting of a Spanish-speaking audience was limited, with translations of the aforementioned pamphlet only numbering one twentieth of the amount translated into German, but the effort of the CPI to appeal to this demographic suggests that there was some consideration on the part of the federal government towards propagandizing Spanish speakers.

Propagandists themselves did occasionally write to their superiors from areas with large Mexican-descent populations, but generally speaking they found mixed results. Writing from

---

[503] *Congressional Record*, Louis Wilmot Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 7, 377-387.

[504] Clemente Idar to James and Miriam Ferguson, 3 June 1917, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 8.

[505] "The Activities of the Committee on Public Information," *War Information Series* 18 (February 1918): 8-9.

Hillsboro, New Mexico, a Four-Minute Man told of his travails, given that the vast majority of his audience was of Mexican descent and, in his opinion, staunchly against the war. He blamed the apathy on difficulties presented by a drought occurring at the time, and insisted that he had faithfully delivered all of the speeches sent to him, along with some extra speeches from outside sources. He closed by describing his audience gloomily. "Most of them do not want to be convinced. To sum up, the spirit here is lamentably poor. A few of us are full of pep and try."[506] Contrast that description, however, with that of a member of the Women's Council of Defense of the State of New Mexico, who wrote of language barriers but praised the loyalty of her Mexican neighbors. The situation in and around Santa Fe was such that "[m]ost of the population do not speak English but are anything but foreigners and we do not dare nor wish to put out anything as if we so considered them for they are as loyal as any English speaking people could possibly be."[507] For Mexican Americans, like any other demographic, World War I provoked a variety of responses as they responded to the American government's call for service. As Mexican Americans began to advocate for civil rights after the war, their experience and actions during the war would become a site of contention in debating their standing in relation to a new understanding of American citizenship.

World War I represented a formative experience in the development of the modern United States. The exigencies of wartime necessitated a massive commitment from the American people and, recognizing the need for unity, the federal government initiated an unprecedented campaign of propaganda. In doing so, the federal government broadcast an affirmation of the nationalism that True Americanists had espoused for years, requiring universal

---

[506] "Items of Interest," *Four Minute Men News* Edition B (12 November 1917): 16.

[507] "Letter from Maude Prichard to Carri Chapman Catt," 17 June 1918, Council of National Defense – Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department, Box 625, National Archives.

unity and duty in the interest of the American nation. This made sense in wartime, but the extent to which wartime propaganda saturated American society meant that these messages proved pervasive in a national rethinking of the obligations and requirements of citizenship. This set a new yardstick for Mexican Americans and Irish Americans in taking public action after the war.

During the war, German Americans bore the brunt of criticism even as propagandists expanded to include outright and implied attacks on the loyalties of other communities. After the war, Irish Americans and Mexican Americans emerged as two salient groups through their public agitations. By advancing the interests of Irish independence and Mexican-American civil rights respectively, they drew the ire of True Americanists, who pointed to the persistent heritage of both as inconsistent with the new definition of American citizenship. As Irish Americans scaled up their lobbying and fundraising efforts and Mexican Americans set to constructing more formal civil rights organizations to roll back discrimination in the courts and at the ballot box, both engaged in a dialectic with True Americanism by subverting its rhetoric. True Americanism and wartime propaganda had reframed critiques of America's ethnic communities by imposing a dichotomy of patriot and traitor, and nationalist and civil rights organizations responded by showing the way in which their members did indeed fulfill the requirements of citizenship. An arms race of patriotism ensued, resulting in the crystallization of all-or-nothing conceptions of American citizenship that allowed for minimal attachment to one's roots but not for membership in a transnational community of shared heritage.

CHAPTER 5

POSTWAR CLASHES OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

The end of World War I brought international peace, but little domestic bliss. The wartime gains realized by True Americanist ideology had entrenched the all-or-nothing cultural obligations of their definition of citizenship. Critiques of Irish Americans became much more virulent as the fight for Irish independence entered its most violent phase, and as Mexican Americans began to create civil rights organizations to fight for equal treatment, they, too fought against presumptions of poor citizenship. In response, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans began to shift their rhetoric in the postwar period that they might accommodate for new views on American citizenship. Irish-American nationalists and Mexican-American civil rights activists, as the most salient members of their ethnic communities, adapted to this new environment by repurposing True Americanist themes of service to country and American heritage. In doing so, they redirected critiques of their respective agendas to avoid significant compromise.

This chapter will delve into a 1921 controversy over the verbal faux pas of an American admiral in speaking about Irish Americans. When Admiral William S. Sims characterized an element of the Irish-American population as jackasses manipulating the broader American public, the nationwide debate over his punishment revealed the way in which True Americanist definitions of citizenship clashed with the actions of Irish-American organizations over the previous decade. It will also explore the complex national identities of Mexican Americans, through the American patriotism embedded in the rhetoric of early civil rights organizations

emerging from South Texas as well as efforts by the Mexican government to retain the allegiance of America's Mexican population. In doing so, it argues that, after World War I, the rhetoric of Irish-American and Mexican-American leaders irrevocably changed as True Americanists strived to impose all-or-nothing American patriotism upon ethnically bounded organizations.

In Ireland, the fight for independence entered a critical period as more radical groups like Sinn Féin capitalized on the support that they had received in the wake of Easter Rising to back Ireland's newly declared legislative body, the Dáil.[508] For Irish Americans, this meant a period of highly contentious activism. Those who supported the young Irish Republic worked ardently to garner funds and arms for the movement, but also sought to persuade the American public of the righteousness of their cause and bring about diplomatic recognition of independent Ireland. However, they did so in the face of contentious postwar hostility. In the United States, this tension played out as a nationwide public relations contest, with Irish Americans voicing their opinions loudly and publicly, in rallies and across newspapers and magazines. When it came to the public's perception of the Irish cause and the loyalty of Irish Americans, the stakes were extremely high. While opponents did their best to depict Irish Americans as traitorous and disloyal, nationwide organizations like the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF) and the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR) emphasized the patriotism of their members, tied their cause to the American Revolution, and highlighted the contributions that those of Irish descent had made throughout the history of the United States. These themes had existed in their rhetoric previously, but they began to take on a more central role as these organizations sought to portray their members as true Americans who also had a shared interest

[508] F.S.L. Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine* (Suffolk: Collins/Fontana Press, 1979), 400.

in Irish independence, rather than citizens with a plural Irish and American identity. They clashed with True Americanists in the media, with both sides producing editorials, pamphlets, and advertising, and building an atmosphere of contention that required only a simple faux pas to set off national controversy. The Irish fight for independence was still a highly volatile issue, and Irish supporters fought bitterly with True Americanists over the legitimacy of their advocacy for a foreign conflict.

In Mexico, on the other hand, the Revolution settled down, with power consolidated in the hands of Venustiano Carranza and his Constitutionalists, followed by Álvaro Obregón in 1920.[509] There was a significant outbreak of violence during the Cristero Rebellion from 1926 through 1929, as radical Catholics rebelled against the anticlerical stances and actions of President Plutarco Elías Calles and the powerful union leader, Luís N. Morones.[510] However, this religious uprising remained largely confined to Central Mexico, rather than spreading to the borderlands where its violence would have drawn in support from the United States.[511] As a result, with the chaos from the most violent phase of the revolution having calmed, the new Constitutionalist government set about to rebuild the Mexican nation through intensive statebuilding efforts. For Mexicans in the United States, this meant a series of initiatives to develop national culture and encourage immigrants and refugees to consider a return to Mexico, or at the very least, to continue sending their remittances south. As a result, a prominent pro-Mexican culture grew across parts of the United States that had high concentrations of

---

[509] William H. Beezley and Colin M. MacLachlan, *Mexicans in Revolution, 1910-1946* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 45-48.

[510] Jean A. Meyer, *The Cristero Rebellion: The Mexican People Between Church and State, 1926-1929*, trans. Richard Southern (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 15.

[511] Ibid., 85.

immigrants, sponsored by the Mexican government and put into place through their system of embassies and consulates. Manuel Gamio, renowned Mexican academic, noted this pervasive spirit of Mexicanness during his 1926 surveys across the United States.[512]

For many Mexican Americans, though, American citizenship grew as a key source of identity. These concerned citizens fomented a widespread civil rights movement, which sprang up in South Texas in the 1920s in the form of organizations like the Order Sons of America, Order Knights of America, and League of Latin American Citizens, which all coalesced into the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in 1929.[513] These groups, like Irish-American organizations at the time, made the citizenship and loyalty of their members a central component in their internal and external communications both as a way of propagating American patriotism within the Mexican-American community but also in order to make compelling arguments for overturning discrimination. Mexican Americans now fought domestically to end *de jure* and *de facto* racism through petitions, court cases, and elections, rather than participating in violent transnational movements. In a controversial decision, the convention that brought together the civil rights organizations of Texas decided to restrict membership to U.S. citizens alone, setting the tone for the way in which its members argued for better treatment.[514] Even as the Mexican government sought to propagate a strong sense of Mexicanness, Mexican Americans evolved, creating an identity in conversation with True Americanism even as it was in contention with that ideology's tenets. For them, the age of transnational violence had come to a close, and they began to pursue other means of reasserting control of their homeland.

---

[512] Gamio, *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant*.

[513] Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 1.

[514] Ibid., 121.

Continuities persisted in the tactics of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans. Neither abandoned their cultural heritage even as groups like LULAC sought to promote American patriotism.[515] For those that fought to effect change in the United States, the language of loyalty and patriotism remained powerful tools for claiming the rights and protections of U.S. citizenship. If they had fulfilled their wartime duty, now came time to reap the rewards in the form of public space to advocate for themselves. True Americanists sought to counter this by minimizing wartime contributions and by highlighting the complex heritage of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans as a point of weakness or lack of commitment to the American ideal. In response, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans made American patriotism a core component of their identity, with room for them to continue embracing a persistent heritage. Here, in the postwar era, the issue at hand became clear. As True Americanists sought to use the complex, layered identities of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans to discredit their public political activism, organizations from both of those communities wrapped themselves in the American flag to assert the legitimacy of their actions and deflect critiques without compromise.

Irish-American Nationalism, 1918-1921

In Ireland, the fight for independence entered its most violent phase in the early 1920s. Peaceful efforts at bringing about home rule before World War I had failed, as well as wartime and postwar efforts at recruiting diplomatic allies, from the Kaiser to Woodrow Wilson. As Sinn Féin took to the forefront of the struggle, the need for support from the United States grew exponentially, and Irish Americans proved willing to take on the challenge.

After World War I and the failure of Easter Rising, the British, pressured by the United States, sought to bring about an amicable solution to the issue of Irish independence. In doing

[515] Ibid., 180.

so, Prime Minister Lloyd George proposed that the Irish should have the home rule that they desired, so long as they could develop a peaceable solution through an internal convention. Despite this offer, and the support of John Redmond, the Irish proved unable or unwilling to develop a consensus, even after the convention stretched on from spring of 1917 to spring of 1918. The problem at hand lay with the fractured nature of Irish politics, including unionist groups from the twenty-six counties seeking independence, fervent Ulster unionists, and the absence of the Sinn Féin party, boycotting the convention as part of their extremist position.[516] As F.S.L. Lyons points out in his *Ireland Since the Famine*, this inability to come to an amicable solution demonstrated both the intractability of the situation in Ireland, as well as the rise of the Sinn Féin party, at the expense of parliamentary negotiations for a legislative independence for Ireland.[517] For Sinn Féin, meeting the British halfway was not enough. They sought complete sovereignty and were not afraid to use violent means to achieve their goals. In the wake of the harsh reprisals of Easter Rising and growing support for their approach among Irish and Irish Americans, they garnered a strong enough following to completely take charge of the movement for Irish separatism.

The 1918 Irish election saw Sinn Féin running on a platform promising that, rather than representing their districts in British Parliament, they would establish their own Irish legislation. This, combined with fresh outrage at British plans to pass conscription legislation to draft Irish troops in the final year of World War I, and a tripling of the electorate to include many young, disaffected voters, swung the electoral needle in favor of Sinn Féin.[518] A sweeping legislative

[516] Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine*, 385.

[517] Ibid., 386.

[518] Ibid., 399.

victory granted them the authority to proceed with this agenda. They continued their policy of boycotting Parliament and, with their newfound public support, created their own legislative body, the Dáil Eireann (Assembly of Ireland), which ratified a provisional constitution for Irish republican government on 21 January, 1919.[519]

Irish Americans provided as much support as they could for this. Even before the creation of Dáil, the Friends of Irish Freedom and Clan-na-Gael had put on a massive event at Madison Square Gardens, on 10 December, 1918, with ten thousand in attendance to hear speeches by Boston's Cardinal O'Connel, Daniel Cohalan, John Devoy, and Governor Charles Whitman of New York.[520] In February 1919, as British officials still sought to head off Irish nationalism, they allowed Eamon de Valera, who was then elected as the head of the provisional Irish government, to escape from prison. De Valera had been born in the U.S., but left for Ireland, where he became a key leader in Sinn Féin. He had emerged following the events of Easter Rising as the only commander pardoned from execution. The United States played a role even in this component of the revolution, as several historians have postulated that it was the intervention of the American consul on behalf of de Valera that kept him alive long enough to break out of prison.[521] Upon his escape, on the third of February, 1919, the Dáil Eireann greeted him warmly, welcoming him as their new president and political figurehead.

By July 1919, he had fled to the United States, where he attempted to gather international support for Irish independence over the next eighteen months.[522] However, even though the

---

[519] Thomas E. Hachey, *Britain and Irish Separatism: From the Fenians to the Free State, 1867-1922* (Chicago: Rand McNally Publishing Company, 1977), 202-4.

[520] Alan J. Ward, *Ireland and Anglo-American Relations, 1899-1921* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 167.

[521] Lyons, *Ireland Since the Famine,* 376.

[522] Brian Feeney, *Sinn Féin: A Hundred Turbulent Years* (Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 2002), 121.

struggle for sovereignty dragged on, American rabidity for the Irish cause would not weaken. Just weeks after de Valera's escape, the two-day Irish Race Convention convened in Philadelphia, to raise awareness and support for the plight of the Irish. The Clan-na-Gael's aggressive stance dominated the rhetoric of this meeting, with resolutions demanding that the Peace Conference at Versailles recognize Irish national sovereignty, among other initiatives. As a further source of support, the six thousand attendees initiated a pledge drive, which collected just over a million dollars in six months.[523] As the spring of 1919 turned to summer, though, hostilities broke out in Ireland, and supporters of Irish independence faced down the diplomatic might of the British government while their transatlantic allies bore the brunt of British and unionist attacks.

Historian Thomas E. Hachey describes three separate phases to the Irish war for independence, which lasted from 1919 until 1922. The first of these phases, lasting until early 1920, involved sporadic incidents that escalated in intensity, followed by a second period from March through December of 1920 in which British forces responded in kind to an increasingly violent Irish insurgency. Finally, in the leadup to peace, there was a period of relative truce, lasting until the formal cessation of hostilities on 11 July, 1921. Following this, British withdrawal led to a fragmentation of Irish nationalist forces, creating civil war and more violence that lasted until December of 1922.[524] Contention over the terms of the treaty led to a civil war following its implementation, stretching into 1923.[525] Although the British sent well-armed detachments to combat the revolutionaries, guerrilla tactics, ambushes, and assassinations

[523] Ward, *Anglo-American Relations,* 172.

[524] Hachey, *Britain and Irish Separatism,* 259, 283, 291.

[525] Robert Kee, *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972), 732.

characterized nationalist violence.[526] This allowed Irish separatism to survive despite the challenges they faced in arming their flying columns. Although they did manage to smuggle some arms in from abroad, including the United States, their key strength lay in the willing support of the populace and in the extensive counterintelligence ring that groups like Sinn Féin had created after meeting underground for years.[527] Unable to defeat the British militarily, Irish nationalists relied upon the political aid of their international allies and their ability to pressure the British government.

Following World War I, British officials ended many of their propaganda efforts in the United States. They had successfully drawn the Americans into war on their side, but peacetime demanded that these resources be used elsewhere. However, a new propaganda war emerged, to sway the American public and place political pressure on the federal government for the recognition of the Irish republic. The British countered as best they could, sending lecturers to America to promote their unionist cause and attempting to spread word of the atrocities committed against their soldiers, but True Americanism represented the main source of opposition to Irish-American organizations.[528] British propagandists were an obstacle, but the true barrier proved to be the application of True Americanist ideology in insisting that Irish politics had no place in the United States.

While in the United States, Eamon de Valera spent a great deal of time touring the country, speaking on behalf of the Irish republic and presenting his ideas to the American public. While he was in the United States, he also embarked on massive fundraising drives, initiating a

---

[526] J. Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army: A History of the I.R.A.* (Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1970), 22-24.

[527] Hachey, *Britain and Irish Separatism,* 264.

[528] Ibid., 236-239.

bond campaign that raised 5.5 million dollars to support his cause. Rather than proving to be a uniting force, he instead utterly alienated the more-moderate Friends of Irish Freedom, led by Daniel Cohalan, establishing a replacement group in 1921, the American Association for the Recognition of the Republic of Ireland. This group raised an additional five million dollars to add to the cause.[529] Although Irish-American support fractured under the stress of de Valera's presence, American backers continued to contribute enormous amounts of capital, both economic and political, in supporting their fight, despite disunity and the hostility of True Americanists.

One of the most public opponents of the Irish independence movement and a lightning rod for Irish ire was Rear Admiral William Sowden Sims, a key naval officer during World War I whose role as a liaison between the U.S. and British navies brought him a great deal of publicity on both sides of the Atlantic. During the war, Sims' deployment to Europe, working alongside the officers of the British Navy, cemented a longtime love that he had felt for the English and created tension between himself and Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels. For example, in speaking before a British audience in 1910, Sims belied American isolationism in making claims that "if the time should ever come when the British Empire is menaced by a European coalition, Great Britain can rely upon the last ship, the last dollar, the last man, and the last drop of blood of her kindred beyond the sea."[530] The speech antagonized neutrality proponents, particularly given his implication of a special diplomatic relationship existing between Great Britain and the United States. During the war, Sims only increased his Anglophilia. He espoused British views that the U.S. Navy ought to wholeheartedly embrace the

---

[529] Ibid., 255-256.

[530] William Sowden Sims, "The Return of the Mayflower," *The World's Work* 39 (November 1919): 62.

construction of destroyers, as opposed to larger battleships and cruisers that were less helpful in combatting submarines but were the priority under Daniels' program to increase the size of the navy.[531] Daniels eventually adopted Sims' views, but did so too late to make a constructive difference in the course of the war. Nonetheless, throughout the 1910s and 1920s, Sims built strong opinions and made them known in a highly outspoken manner, with controversial postwar castigations of Daniels' reluctance to make the shift towards destroyers, including in testimonials before Congress in 1920.[532] In 1919, though, Sims brought up another wartime issue as he mentioned another impediment to the war effort that he found frustrating. While stationed in Ireland, he personally witnessed the obstructionist efforts of Sinn Féin and, after the war when Sinn Féin propaganda efforts picked up, he felt compelled to speak out yet again.

In the November, 1919 issue of the progressive journal *The World's Work*, Sims published an article that eventually became a significant chapter in his wartime memoir, *The Victory at Sea*. This chapter, "The Return of the Mayflower," emphasized the cooperation between American and British naval forces and highlighted the gratitude of the English people over the presence of U.S. forces to combat Germany's submarine warfare campaigns. However, in the last few pages of the chapter, Sims described incidents in which Sinn Féin supporters brought violence against American sailors stationed in Ireland, drawing the attention of Irish-American nationalists.[533] In doing so, Sims did not attack Irish Americans as a whole. Rather, he was careful to distinguish between extremist Sinn Féin supporters and the Irish majority. Regardless, by offering his frank opinion on the issue and bringing the controversy to light, he

---

[531] William J. Williams, "Josephus Daniels and the U.S. Navy's Shipbuilding Program During World War I," *The Journal of Military History* 60, no. 1 (January 1996): 19.

[532] Ibid., 34.

[533] Sims, "The Return of the Mayflower," 63-65.

became a catalyst and a key national symbol over which both True Americanists and Irish nationalists bickered.

In his descriptions of the wartime naval experience on the coast of Ireland, Sims mentioned a warm welcome by the Irish people and broad support of the American presence to counter the German U-boat threat. However, he also depicted a sinister undercurrent of Sinn Féin activism, which he saw as a loud sect advocating for independence against the wishes of the majority. He disgustedly wrote of Sinn Féin efforts to aid the German cause, calling them misguided and delusional. Sims also granted a view at his personal ideas as to national identity, foreshadowing his eventual conflict with Irish supporters. Sims told of Sinn Féin efforts at winning Irish-American sailors to their cause, but proudly reflected upon the sailors' rejection of Irish nationalism, writing that "these splendid sailors were Americans before they were anything else; their chief ambition was the defeat of the Hun and they could not understand how any man anywhere could have any other aim in life."[534] Sims repeated the True Americanist belief that it was America before all else, and in his article, he proudly boasted that his sailors personified that motto.

In Ireland, though, matters came to a head when the presence of American sailors offended the masculinity of the Sinn Féiners by impinging on the femininity of local Irish women. As sailors on shore leave headed to the nearby city of Cork to seek out and court Irish women, they became targets of the young men of Sinn Féin. Sims points out that the American sailors, having saved their pay for leave, could spend lavishly in dating Irish women, something that allowed them to outcompete other, Irish suitors. Again, Sims is quick to defend the honor of his men, pointing to the wholesome nature of their interaction with Irish women, as well as the

[534] Ibid., 64.

fact that some of these relationships even evolved into postwar marriages, in accordance with courtship norms at the time.[535] This respectful interaction did little for the young Irish men, though, forced to watch American sailors parade down the streets of Cork with Irish women on their arm.

With their opportunities for female interaction limited by the presence of the sailors, these young Irishmen lashed out, and American sailors seen on the streets with women became targets of group violence, most commonly in the form of beatings, but also in public stonings and agitations in front of popular dating spots, like movie theaters. The women themselves faced Sinn Féin violence as well, with their hair and clothing torn, and their reputation besmirched in public assaults.[536] The American sailors did their best to stand up to their attackers, but overwhelmed by numbers, Sims described them returning more often in a hospital gurney than not. In response to these attacks, the discovery of revenge plots by the sailors, and efforts by Navy blacksmiths to create discreet weapons for protection, Sims finally made the difficult decision to keep the Americans on-base and out of Cork.[537]

These incidents stood out vividly in Sims' mind, and he used the platform of his writing to ensure that the American public became aware of them. In writing his article, Sims did not fail to engage in gendered attacks of his own, though, emphasizing the fact that these attackers grouped up, in a cowardly attempt to overwhelm individual American sailors.[538] Furthermore, the Sinn Féiners unabashedly and enthusiastically attacked women, a clear sign that they were

---

[535] Ibid., 64.

[536] Ibid., 64.

[537] Ibid., 65.

[538] Ibid., 64.

indeed ruffians and not the noble freedom fighters that they portrayed themselves as. For Sims, the loyal American sailor and wartime leader, the actions of Sinn Féin in attacking American sailors was unforgiveable. However, his article did not escape the notice of Irish Americans and they swiftly responded. For the next three years, Sims would continue to attack the vocal Sinn Féin element in the United States and abroad, and Irish-American organizations like the FOIF and AARIR would do their best to retaliate, feeling an insult against Sinn Féin as an insult against Irish Americans as a whole.

The Irish nationalist response came almost immediately after Sims' article. Within weeks, Daniel T. O'Connell, the director of the Irish National Bureau in Washington, D.C., had taken action. The Bureau, founded in June of 1919 as the printing press of the Friends of Irish Freedom, set out to broadcast nationally a message in support of Irish nationalism through the use of Irish-focused news articles and pamphlets. Like a nationalist version of the Associated Press, by mid-October of that year, O'Connell and the Bureau had sent out information, survey results, and full-blown articles to thousands of journals, and provided pamphlets to politicians, educators, and citizens alike. Within months of their founding, the Bureau had even established a Section of Information to pursue research and bring together facts in support of their cause.[539] The emphasis on winning the information war as a key element in promoting Irish interest meant that the Bureau could not allow Sims' comments to go unmentioned.

The Bureau's first response was to send letters to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels as well as Sims himself, on November first, eighth, and twenty-first. Upon receiving responses from Daniels and Sims, the Bureau then composed a pamphlet and offered that to their clientele. Several journals, including the Christian socialist *The World Tomorrow* opted to publish this

[539] Willard DeLue, "News Bulletin," *Irish National Bureau* (12 October, 1919): 1.

counterargument, given the prominence of the Irish fight for independence within national news.[540] Within this pamphlet, O'Connell and the Bureau asserted the significant contributions of Irish and Irish Americans during the war, pointing to the actions of these loyal citizens to countermand attacks on Sinn Féin and Sinn Féin supporters. How could the Irish be disloyal when so many of them had served the United States and the Allies? In his letters to Daniels and directly to Sims, O'Connell proceeded to attack each of Sims' positions point by point.

O'Connell bristled at the accusations of pro-German activity, pointing out the minimal activity in support of Germany as restricted to the actions of Sir Roger Casement. He emphasized the contributions of Ireland itself, with 6.5% of Irish men volunteering for the war versus 4% conscripted from the United States. Finally, he asked Sims to consider the sweeping electoral mandate handed to the Sinn Féin political party in the first elections for the Dáil. When presented with this evidence, Sims' response seemed typical for such an outspoken figure; he responded with a terse, "Received and contents noted."[541] This dismissal infuriated O'Connell, who proceeded to write Secretary Daniels yet again, attacking Sims in an attempt to discredit his reputation.

In his second letter to Secretary Daniels, O'Connell shifted his focus from Ireland to the United States and took up a new argument in which he pointed out the presence of a cabal of British propagandists seeking to minimize support for Irish independence as part of their plan to engender tremendous support for England.[542] In addition to opposing prejudiced Americans, Irish Americans also sought to revert or expose tremendous efforts by British propagandists that

---

[540] Daniel T. O'Connell, *The Truth About Ireland in the Great War* (Washington, DC: Irish National Bureau, 1919), 6.

[541] Ibid., 8-14.

[542] Ibid., 15-18.

guided the perceptions of the American people and their opinions on Irish independence. O'Connell described the English Speaking Union as one such organization, having hosted Sims for an anti-Irish speech in May which a number of notable anti-Irish figures attended. These claims flipped True Americanism on its head – those who opposed Irish independence were themselves compromised by foreign influence. England was the true enemy here, trying to reassert control over the United States by manipulating its people while also maintaining imperial control over the Irish. As such, O'Connell and other pro-Irish writers sought to establish the Irish as a trustworthy demographic, and one that had the best interests of the United States in mind. After all, the United States had also thrown off the yoke of British oppression a century and a half earlier, and should be able to sympathize with the struggle of the Irish. These dual arguments of loyalty and sympathy continued across the early 1920s.

Despite the best efforts of the Irish National Bureau, Sims' opinions remained unchanged. When he composed his 1921 book, *The Victory at Sea*, he did not change a single word in his depiction of Sinn Féin and the violence that occurred involving American sailors in Cork.[543] In fact, Sims would appear to have been vindicated, as his book won the Pulitzer Prize for history in that year. However, his controversial nature and willingness to attack Sinn Féin would get him in trouble yet again, and this time, lead to a national debate on the merits and loyalty of the American movement to support Irish nationalism.

On June 7, 1922, Admiral Sims again ignited the controversy between Irish-American nationalists and True Americanists. Sims had received permission to leave his post at the head of the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and head to England for vacation with

[543] William Sowden Sims, *The Victory at Sea* (London: John Murray, 1920), 40-73.

his wife, Anne.[544] Sims had been chosen as the recipient of an honorary degree from Cambridge University in recognition of his service during the war.[545] In addition to receiving his degree, Sims was feted across England by an adoring British public, with American reporters sending news of special parties and demonstrations in his honor back across the Atlantic on a weekly basis. Both the American and British public seemed to respond well to Sims' brash persona, and by now he had become a Pulitzer-winning author, in addition to wartime hero and current head of the U.S. Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island. His tour of England reinforced Sims' confidence of his own views and also granted him a pulpit from which he could issue his thoughts on U.S.-British geopolitical affairs.

Even after the war, Sims remained an outspoken admirer of all things English, especially as he had gained the admiration of the British public through his wartime service. As a result of this mutual adoration, he received a celebrity treatment during his time overseas. As his 1922 visit came to an end, the London branch of the English Speaking Union sought to honor Sims with a dinner and a speech at the London Guild Hall. Sims, having already delivered a speech for the New York branch of that organization, happily obliged. At the end of his dinner, Sims rose to his feet and delivered an unscripted speech that roused his British audience to applause. Within it, he castigated Irish nationalists in Ireland and the United States, attacking them for having undermined the war effort and seeking to shame their supporters. Utilizing animal imagery, he labelled Irish-American nationalists as zebras and jack-asses, who manipulated American democracy and the principle of freedom of speech in order to strengthen their cause at

[544] "Begs Cambridge Men Not To Mob Sims," *The New York Times*, 22 May 1921, 10.

[545] "Cambridge Honors Sims and Prince," *The New York Times*, 1 June 1921, 3.

the expense of the United States.[546] Sims made sure to point out that he was referring specifically to Sinn Féin and their backers, and that not all Irish Americans had betrayed the Allied cause, but the content of his speech was strongly anti-Irish. Sims' words were extremely well-received by his audience, and the British papers lauded him as one American courageous enough to speak out against that Irish voting bloc that had cowed so many U.S. politicians. In the United States, however, Sims' speech proved to be much more divisive.

Several factors combined to ensure that Sims' speech became a prominent issue in the United States. First, the nature of Sims' speech as part of a much-documented overseas journey added to the amount of people exposed to his rhetoric. Journalists had been chronicling his entire trip in the American papers, including events as mundane as a presentation in his honor at a British boarding school and photographs of him and his wife boarding the vessel that took them across the ocean.[547] Within hours of their delivery, Sims' words to the Speaking Union were cabled across the Atlantic, speeding through undersea telegraph wires headlong towards domestic controversy. Although Sims had delivered speeches with similar content before, including an almost-identical speech in Boston earlier that year, this time his words were guaranteed a wide impact.[548] Newspapers across the nation printed accounts of the speech including as much detail as possible, amplifying Sims' audience to include much of the American newspaper-reading public. Sims' words were no longer contained within an audience of like-minded listeners, and his opponents took extreme umbrage to the claims that he made.

---

[546] "Sims Tells Britain to Ignore Irish Here," *The New York Times*, 8 June 1921, 1.

[547] "Picture Section," *The New York Times*, 26 June 1921, 4.

[548] "Loyal Americans Back Sims," newspaper fragment, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on the "Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

Second, the timing of Sims' speech thrust him into the spotlight. Not only had he regularly delivered anti-Sinn Féin speeches previously in the United States, he had also been censured in the years following the war as a result of his blistering critique of the blunders that he thought Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels had committed during the war. Sims had earned the reputation of an officer who would speak his mind, rebelling against decorum and his superiors if need be. Third, in 1922, less than six months before Sims made his speech in London, another American official, U.S. Ambassador George Harvey, occupied the front pages as a result of a speech in London in which he suggested that there were invisible, inexorable forces that created a permanent Anglo-American bond.[549] This sentiment, expressed in such a public manner, set Irish-American nationalists on edge. Close ties between the United States and Great Britain undermined their efforts to bring about American intervention in favor of the Irish republic, such that Harvey's comments created a climate of wariness in which Sims made his speech. Furthermore, by creating a precedent of speaking out of place and in favor of the British, Harvey allowed Sims' opponents to portray him as yet another recalcitrant Anglophile, running amok under an administration incapable of keeping its appointees in line. They utilized this tactic, critiquing the leadership of the federal government in an attempt to show their strength by bringing about change.[550]

---

[549] "Demands Recall of Ambassador," *Berkeley Daily Gazette,* 25 February, 1922, 1.

[550] Interestingly, some critics of both Harvey and Sims cheekily brought up the Volstead Act, suggesting that the alcohol served at these dinners had played a factor in encouraging them to speak so boldly and that their tolerance for alcohol had perhaps decreased during Prohibition. This point perhaps sarcastically points to the lawbreaking of officials while abroad, subverts the image of the drunken Irishman with one of a drunken statesman, and possibly allows Sims and Harvey room to recant their statements. See: "Demands Recall of Ambassador," *Berkeley Daily Gazette,* 25 February, 1922, 12; Lawry Bernard to Edwin Denby, 20 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on the "Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

Finally, the presence of pre-existing antipathies between Irish Americans and True Americanists created a powder keg of public opinion on the "Irish Question" to which Sims provided a match. The tension between these groups stretched back to World War I, when Sinn Féin had indeed made attempts to impede the British war effort. As pointed out by their Americanist opponents, Sinn Féin had both sought alliance with Germany and obstructed British and American war aims through threats, violence against servicemen, and general insubordination, forcing the British to station a major chunk of their troops in Ireland during the war.[551] For Sinn Féin these efforts made sense, but for True Americanists they were the unforgiveable acts demonstrating Irish-American perfidy. In the eyes of American nationalists, Sinn Féiners in the United States and any who allied with their cause were disloyal traitors and weak links in the chain of American patriotism. For Irish Americans, True Americanists represented a major obstacle in their attempts to raise funds, gain attention, and garner American political support for the Irish republic. A spectrum of opinions on the Irish Question thus unfolded loudly across the United States, spurred on by organizations on both sides.

Although Sims' speech was a relatively minor incident in the grand trajectory of the Irish fight for independence, for Americans, it mattered. Sims' leadership position within the Navy became the token over which Americans squabbled. For Irish Americans, another official censure for Sims would denote a victory, and his dismissal would be an absolute coup. They flexed their muscle in order to punish Sims for speaking out against their cause and demonstrate the political capital that they had acquired, with several senators and representatives adding their voices to the members of the public castigating Sims. Sims' supporters, on the other hand, supported his message in general, and acted out of fear that the Irish bloc had acquired enough

[551] Kee, *The Green Flag*, 531.

power to dictate the actions of federal officials. They sought to show that, despite the raucous cries for Sims' dismissal, there were enough who supported him that backing Sims would not be career suicide for Secretary of the Navy Edwin Denby.

Irish-American organizations fired the first salvo in this war of words. Incensed by the content of the speech, the AARIR and FOIF abandoned their previous strategies of targeted pamphlets in favor of another method. Through several nationally organized campaigns, they encouraged their members to sign petitions, mail form letters, pass resolutions, and even independent letters to inform Secretary Denby of their frustration and demand some sort of punishment for Admiral Sims. They flooded Denby's office with thousands of letters, postcards, and news clippings to illustrate their point, hoping to bring about some punishment for Sims, ranging from censure, to firing from his position at the Naval War College, to even deportation because of treason.[552] In their rhetoric they suggested that Sims' love for the English made him a prime candidate for treason, and theorized that he would become a leak of top-secret naval information for the British, if he had not done so already. Many labelled Sims with unkind nicknames to characterize this disloyalty, like "lick-spittling Anglo-Maniac" or "Canadian Carpetbagger."[553] Letter-writers did their best to demonize Sims, but in doing so, they repurposed True Americanist definitions of citizenship and loyalty to level attacks at Sims.

Within these letters emerged themes of loyalty that demonstrated what it meant to these Irish Americans. They often brought out Irish sacrifices and contributions to the American

---

[552] For example, the hundreds of identical form letters in RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 4.

[553] Alphonse Koelble to Edwin Denby, 22 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

cause. Most commonly this included their own personal sacrifices in World War I, or the sacrifices of their family members who had served. Cornelius O'Dwyer, in immaculate cursive, penned a highly sentimental letter reflecting on his Irishness, his service in the Civil War, and the immense pride that he took in his national identity.[554] These writers sought authority and credence because of this service, and featured it prominently in their writing wherever it was relevant. They also used these examples of volunteerism to deflect the claims of Sims and his supporters as to Irish disloyalty. The Washington, D.C. branch of the AARIR even went as far as to take out two full-page ads in the Wednesday, June 22 edition of the *Washington Times* that included excerpts pointing out Irish sacrifice, followed by a full page listing Irish casualties from World War I.[555] Supporters of the Irish republic pointed prominently to their wartime contributions and insisted that, despite their persistent heritage, they were no less patriotic than any other group of Americans.

American history proved highly fruitful. In addition to the famed Irish Brigade from the Civil War, writers pointed to General Phil Sheridan, Admiral John Paul Jones, and other Revolutionary and Civil War figures, regardless of their authenticity and Irishness. The goal here was to show that the Irish had contributed to the United States in her hour of need and create a sense of obligation towards aiding in the crisis in Ireland.[556] Sims also earned frequent comparisons to Benedict Arnold, including an entire poem labelling him "The Arnold of the

---

[554] Cornelius O'Dwyer to Edwin Denby, 16 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

[555] "To the American People," *The Washington Times*, 22 June 1921, 6-7.

[556] J. T. Carroll to Edwin Denby, 16 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

Fleet."[557] Despite the fact that he had been highly decorated and elevated to his position at the head of the Naval War College in Newport, Sims' character endured heated attacks from pro-Irish writers seeking to juxtapose their loyalty with Sims' unseemly predilection for the British.

Finally, pro-Irish organizations passed group petitions and forwarded them to Denby, prominently featuring the size of their membership in an attempt to intimidate him into further action given their strength as a voting bloc. Resolutions came from Niagara all the way to Nevada, and included groups as small as a few hundred to the New Jersey and Connecticut chapters of the AARIR, whose membership numbered 20,000 and 35,000 respectively.[558] These groups were not afraid to throw their weight around, and did so by constantly referring to the loyalty and patriotism of their members, with the subtext that the Irish identity of these thousands of members did not negate their American citizenship.

Before Sims steamed back to New York City, he took the time to address the controversy over his remarks. He stood by what he had said, but suggested that the words had been taken out of context. Still he refused to retract his statement as he boarded the *Olympic*, headed across the Atlantic to the United States, while the nation speculated about what would happen upon his

---

[557] Eugene F. O'Riordan, "The Arnold of the Fleet," RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 8.

[558] American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR): Niagara Chapter to Edwin Denby, 14 June, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1; AARIR: Reno Chapter to Edwin Denby, 10 June, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1: O'Donovan Rossa Branch, 13 June, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 3; AARIR: New Jersey Chapter, 9 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1; AARIR: Connecticut Branch, 10 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

arrival.[559] Would Denby castigate, or even fire Sims? How would he be greeted by the Irish-descent population of New York City when he landed at the harbor? Newspapers buzzed with letters to the editor and articles regarding Sims, the plans of Sinn Féin and other pro-Irish groups, and guesses about how Denby would proceed.

Irish Americans, for their part, planned a raucous greeting for Sims and his wife. They threatened to turn out in a show of force to demonstrate the strength of their movement. AARIR members from as far as Boston planned on making the trip to New York, and local Irish organizations made plans for up to 2,000 Irish World War I veterans to show up clad in full military uniform.[560] In response, supporters of Sims also planned a demonstration.[561] The situation seemed to be shaping up to become a violent clash, which worried New York resident John W. Ripley enough to warn the Department of State, who in turn forwarded Ripley's letter to other naval officials as well as the Department of Justice.[562] The New York Police Department sent officers to line the streets upon Sims' arrival, doing their best to prevent the headlong collision of the seemingly unstoppable Irish-American force with the immovable True Americanist object.

---

[559] "Sims Declares Speech Misquoted; His Views Nothing New," *New York Times,* 12 June 1921; "Admiral Refuses to Take Back His Pro-English Talk," 9 June 1921, Newspaper Fragment, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 7.

[560] "…To Join in Admiral Greeting," Newspaper Fragment, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 2; "Irish and Patriotic Societies Plan to Greet Admiral Sims," *New York Tribune,* 18 June 1921.

[561] "The Reception of Sims," *The Brooklyn Citizen,* 22 June 1921.

[562] John W. Ripley to the Department of State, 18 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 7.

Sims' landing, and the controversy itself, died out quickly, like so many other headline stories. Sims was greeted by a few hundred pro-Irish supporters in a peaceful demonstration but nothing else materialized. In fact, a photo of the incident seems almost comical, with police officers lining the streets nearly shoulder-to-shoulder and only a handful of bystanders present.[563] Sims proceeded peacefully to the train station, where he travelled to Washington, D.C. to receive an official reprimand from Denby, who bureaucratically chided Sims. "Your remarks on the occasion constitute a deliberate disregard of specific instructions."[564] For his part, in addressing the press in regards to the reprimand, Sims cheekily replied, "I had it coming to me – I spilled the beans…I'm sorry if I caused this administration any inconvenience, but I didn't know the speech was loaded."[565] Sims' use of humor defused the situation enough, as he headed back to his position at Newport.

Although the incident died down almost immediately after Sims' arrival in Washington, the nationwide contention over the Irish Question reveals a great deal about how Americans thought about loyalty and patriotism. For those who subscribed wholeheartedly to wartime propaganda and made up the postwar group of True Americanists, any support for nationalism abroad constituted treason and needed to be countermanded immediately. Irish-American nationalists, though, saw no incompatibility between their service and contributions to the United States and their fundraising and awareness campaigns on behalf of the Irish republic. The

---

[563] Edwin Levick, "Photo," *New York Evening Post*, Newspaper Fragment, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 8.

[564] "Now That's Done," Newspaper Fragment, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 8.

[565] "Sims Draws Reprimand for His Speech," *The New York Call*, 25 June 1921.

tensions between these groups exploded across the nation for a few weeks in June of 1921 and the way in which both groups sought to engage with the concept of American loyalty at the expense of the other reveals a great deal of insight into what they thought it meant to be American citizens.

Mexican Consuls Seek to Spread Mexicanness, 1917-1925

In Mexico, the 1920s brought increased political stability. The Revolution was far from settled, but Venustiano Carranza had consolidated federal power and passed a national constitution in 1917. As the decade turned, he set out on a campaign to eliminate his rivals nationwide and secure his rule. The most significant opponents with which he had to contend were Pancho Villa, whose missteps allowed Carrancista General Álvaro Obregón to decimate his force at the Battle of Celaya, and Emiliano Zapata, whose forces had been weakened by attrition but still constituted a significant threat on the doorstep of Mexico City. In attacking the guerrilla movement, Carranza turned to more underhanded tactics. In April, 1910, he sent a Constitutionalist agent, Jesús Guajardo, to feign defection and act as a double agent within Zapata's forces. Zapata sought all the reinforcements he could get and eagerly took in Guajardo and his men, especially after they proved their loyalty in capturing a Constitutionalist post and executing the prisoners. Within days, though, Guajardo caught Zapata at a vulnerable movement, guarded by a minimal amount of loyal troops. His men gunned down Zapata in the streets on April 10, and with Zapata died a key destabilizing force in Mexico.[566] Carranza, by this point, had also defeated Villa and in November warded off a challenge from the exiled Felipe Ángeles, resulting in the execution of Ángeles in 1919 and the marginalization of Villa.[567]

[566] John Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1969), 324-327.

[567] Friedrich Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 534.

Picking off his enemies one-by-one, Carranza limited the violence across the countryside as his government maintained its control through the late 1910s.

The 1920s saw a change in power, but not a return to the nationwide violence that had existed before Carranza. Instead, as Álvaro Obregón announced his candidacy in the 1920 election against the wishes of Carranza, he rose up in brief rebellion, issuing the *Plan de Agua Prieta* that resulted in his forces deposing and killing Carranza. Carranza's failure to build broad support kept this uprising limited, and Obregón came to power with support from the United States. Minor internal uprisings popped up under the Obregón regime in both 1922 and 1923, but his ability to gain the support of the people prevented them from spreading. Further, American recognition of his government allowed him to import arms and ammunition, making the quashing of revolts much easier.[568] With this popular mandate and the ability to put down uprisings, Obregón drastically cut down on the revolutionary activity going on in Mexico. In 1926, the Cristero Rebellion erupted, but mainly in southern Mexico, with then-president Plutarco Elías Calles able to defeat it before it spread to the north.

In Mexico, the drawing down of violence beginning in 1917 and increasing pacification of the countryside simply limited opportunities for Mexican Americans to get involved. Revolutionaries no longer exhibited the same demand for support and supplies that they had in the heyday of the Carranza-Villa-Huerta conflict. Further, as revolutionary uprisings remained limited and far from the border, there was no momentum to build support in the US and no geographic access to get involved. In fact, on the U.S. side of the border, banditry and raiding had brought an increasing military presence, including an air division and the deployment of

[568] John Mason Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 335-345.

early tanks.[569] The Plan de San Diego and Pancho Villa's 1916 raid on Columbus, NM had made Americans much more conscious of the vulnerability of the southern border. The U.S. military was nowhere near able to exert complete control over the border, but more recruits and an emphasis on security meant that the freewheeling days of border smuggling and gun-running were drawing to a close.

With the end of revolutionary activity in the United States, Mexican Americans took up different pursuits. Postwar rhetoric of national identity and loyalty certainly impacted them dramatically, but rather than the Irish example of using patriotism to justify support for an external homeland, Mexican Americans of the 1920s lived in a homeland that had been annexed, and as their identity became more American, their transnational activity abated in favor of advocating for the rights that they deserved in the land that they had inhabited for generations. As the Mexican-American fight for civil rights emerged out of Texas in the 1920s, the earliest organizations of that movement brought to bear a set of patriotic images and rhetoric designed at asserting the rights of Mexican Americans as citizens while also conforming to the context of the national discussion about what it meant to be an American. Mexican immigrants, for the most part, took a different approach. The postrevolutionary Mexican government *also* engaged heavily in promoting a Mexican national identity, including in cross-border efforts to retain the loyalty of immigrants and refugees from the Revolution. Mexicans in the United States no longer supported a revolution, but they did continue to react to the language of patriotism and loyalty even as they looked to embrace different national identities.

---

[569] Don Coerver and Linda Hall, *Texas and the Mexican Revolution: A Study in State and National Border Policy, 1910-1920* (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1984), 127.

For Mexicans who continued to look southward and emphasize their Mexicanness, national identity also took on a sense of primacy in the postwar period. In this case, it was the Mexican government acting as the catalyst in order to retain the loyalty of its population abroad. For the new government, these emigrants and their remittances made up a significant part of the economy. Furthermore, as the new government sought to develop the nation, returning emigrants became an important source of settlers for Mexico's own internal colonization projects. Finally, the new Mexican government had worked to consolidate its political strength after the fragmentation of the Revolution and it linked political disunity to Mexico's fragmented national culture, corralling the nation's diverse heritage under the concept of the *Raza Cósmica*. Even though this group preferred Mexicanness over Americanness, national identity and loyalty still became highly prominent after World War I, inundating the United States as a whole with the assimilationist efforts of True Americanists and Mexican Americans competing with the transnational efforts at Mexican patriotism sponsored by the postrevolutionary Mexican government.

In order to accomplish this, the Mexican government relied upon its system of consulates set up across the Southwest. In fact, the use of consuls as government agents in retaining the loyalty of *Mexico de afuera* began immediately after Carranza consolidated power in 1917. By 1930, the Mexican government had established consulates in over fifty different locations, representing the Mexican government and advancing its agenda from within the United States.[570] These consuls created community groups like the *Brigadas de la cruz azul*, which planned and

[570] Gustavo Cano and Alexandro Delano, "Working Paper 148: The Mexican Government and Organized Mexican Immigrants in the United States: A Historical Analysis of Political Transnationalism, 1848-2005," for *The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies*, University of California – San Diego (June 2007): 11, 14.

executed cultural events sponsored by the consul.[571] In addition to these consular efforts, Mexico appointed *comisiones honoríficas Mexicanas*, for areas that did not have enough Mexicans nearby to justify a full-blown consul but still merited some sort of government presence.[572] Rómulo Munguía was one such honorary consul, serving the Mexican government in San Antonio as he put on public programs and offered government literature in order to promote Mexicanness in that city.[573] With this widespread footprint, the Mexican government found itself able to reach a significant, captivated audience with messages to maintain their psychological and cultural attachments to Mexico.

In the book *Crafting Mexico*, author Rick A. López documents the efforts of the postrevolutionary Mexican government in developing a cohesive, inclusive national culture. These cultural campaigns embraced Mexican indigeneity and celebrated the artisanal practices of those who had formerly lived on the fringes of Mexican society. By highlighting arts and crafts like pottery and basket weaving, Mexican bureaucrats like José Vasconcelos and academics like Manuel Gamio hoped to create a distinctively Mexican culture with a legacy that could look back to a shared past.[574] The construction of this Mexicanness played directly into the efforts of consuls, both official and honorary, as they sought to reinforce Mexican national identity across the United States. These efforts helped define what Mexico *meant*, under the umbrella of

---

[571] Ibid., 12.

[572] Gilberto G. González, *Mexican Consuls and Labor Organizing: Imperial Politics in the American Southwest* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 49.

[573] Rómulo Munguía, *Unfinished Autobiography*, Rómulo Munguía Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 2.

[574] Rick A. López, *Crafting Mexico: Intellectuals, Artisans, and the State after the Revolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 13.

Vasconcelos' conception of the *raza cósmica* and the cultural exhibitions hosted across the continent in the 1920s and beyond.

In the years after 1921, the Mexican government worked to export these markers of Mexican national identity, using their consuls to sponsor celebrations and send popular art abroad to bring Mexican identity to those living in the United States. Rómulo Munguía worked avidly to aid the Mexican government in this regard. The importance of national identity in the years after World War I lent a sense of urgency to his actions in promoting Mexican culture. Consuls had been officially instructed to avoid interfering in U.S. politics or internal affairs in government regulations passed in 1923 and 1924, but cultural programs and an active campaign to retain the loyalty of Mexican immigrants fell outside of this set of restrictions. Munguía, a Mexican citizen who had participated in several different stages of the revolution before fleeing to Texas in 1920, saw a distinct connection to Mexico among older immigrants that was under threat of disappearing.[575] Throughout his career, he founded transnational organizations in the United States that stretched across the border to Mexico. By giving Mexican institutions like banks, universities, and libraries a satellite location in San Antonio he both extended the cultural reach of the Mexican nation and made it more prominent for Mexicans living in the United States.

Munguía's most significant initiative in promoting Mexicanness, though, lay in his efforts to sponsor celebrations and festivals. These ritualized public displays of nationhood had a broad footprint in the United States, and became community events that drew in the larger Mexican community and reminded them of their origins. Munguía sponsored annual celebrations on 16 September, commemorating Mexican Independence Day. Just like the

[575] Munguía, *Unfinished Autobiography*.

American equivalent, these events featured patriotic songs and skits, and history lessons. In a sop to the United States, they typically featured both national anthems, but the theme of the day was Mexico and Mexicanness.[576] Similar Mexico-focused celebrations occurred in California for Cinco de Mayo, in this case sponsored by mutual-aid societies and the Mexican Protective League at first, but eventually taken under the aegis of the Mexican consulate.[577] These community events were not the only tactic that the Mexican government used.

In November of 1922, American author Katherine Anne Porter contacted the Obregón government seeking to put together a companion exhibit of art to match the Exhibition of Popular Art that had been on display in Mexico City. The Mexican government agreed to facilitate such an exhibit. Diplomatic mixups prevented Porter from touring the nation with these objects, but she was able to put them on display and sell them in Los Angeles, where the exhibit drew three- to four-thousand visitors daily for its first few weeks.[578] In this instance, these physical objects contained meanings of Mexicanness, available for purchase by upper- and middle-class Americans but also on display for Los Angelenos of Mexican descent to view and interpret. True Americanists might insist on an exclusively American identity, but by exporting these cultural objects, the Mexican government made sure that Mexicanness remained relevant to its emigrants. While LULAC and the OSA wrapped themselves in the American flag, the importance of national identity and the ramifications that Americanization might have on

[576] Nicolas Vazquez, "Letter from Nicolas Vazquez to Rómulo Munguía," 21 August 1959, Rómulo Munguía Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 2.

[577] David E. Hayes-Bautista, *El Cinco de Mayo: An American Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 184-185.

[578] López, *Crafting Mexico* 99-100.

Mexican immigrants led to the assertive efforts by the Mexican government to retain its prominence in the hearts and minds of *Mexico de afuera*.

It can be difficult to gauge the success of cultural programs like these. However, in 1926, the Mexican scholar Manuel Gamio crisscrossed the United States, conducting a sociological study of the nation's Mexican population. Commissioned by the New York-based Social Science Research Council, Gamio and his assistants interviewed of Mexican immigrants and a few Mexican Americans in meetings where their subjects brought up a variety of subjects, economic, political, and cultural.[579] Most importantly, the interviewees speak frequently about Mexicanness and their status as immigrants.[580] A division between Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants emerges prominently from the documents, as immigrants speak of their fierce loyalty to Mexico while the American citizens acknowledge their Mexican heritage in addition to the patriotic obligations of American citizenship.

Cultural celebrations like those hosted by Munguía and the consulate came to embody and reinforce Mexicanness for many of the immigrants. Tomás Mares, for example, mentioned that he and his local *mutualista* put on annual celebrations on 16 September and 5 May. He enjoyed celebrating these holidays with his countrymen, but also admitted that in order to make them more acceptable, they had to display both the American and Mexican flag.[581] Likewise, Miguel Chávez, of Douglas, Arizona, joined the *Zaragoza*, his local patriotic society. He felt strongly enough about Mexico to be moved to tears upon hearing the Mexican national anthem.

---

[579] Manuel Gamio, *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant: Autobiographic Documents* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), xi.

[580] One interviewer seemingly asked his subjects about where they would side in a potential conflict between Mexico and the United States, as this specific hypothetical situation appears regularly, with deep insight from the interviewees.

[581] Gamio, "Tomás Marte," in *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant*, 139.

For him, the local society was a source of information about Mexican history, which he absorbed avidly.[582] Clearly, organizations, independent and sponsored by the Mexican government, played a significant role in reinforcing Mexicanness as a national identity within the United States.

However, in areas where Mexican Americans controlled these community groups, celebrations of Mexicanness were more limited. Concha Gutiérrez del Río, of Arizona, expressed frustration at the role of Mexican-American women in the leadership of her local chapter of *La Cruz Azul*. Although the group was intended to spread a strictly pro-Mexican message, Mexican-American leaders had propagated an anti-Mexican platform in meetings, leading to declining attendance and the selection of a new Honorary President. This new leader was American, yet she claimed to hold a deep love for Mexico. Still, her citizenship caused Concha to cast suspicion upon her true intent.[583] In fact, the suspicion of Americans and Americanness ran so deep that, in one letter to labor organizer, revolutionary liaison, and civil rights activist Clemente Idar, a colleague warned him about broaching the topic at all. "Mark what I am going to tell you. DON'T DO IT…steer clear of the naturalization issue because that is one of the most dangerous issues that I know of, in our efforts to bring about a closer understanding between Mexican and Americans."[584] The differing views on national identity and loyalty between Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans emerged as a key sticking point. While Mexican Americans embraced Mexicanness as a cultural heritage, they sought to link themselves to the United States as loyal citizens, which led to tension between themselves

---

[582] Gamio, "Miguel Chávez," in *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant*, 169.

[583] Gamio, "Sra. Concha Gutiérrez del Río," in *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant*, 165-167.

[584] "Letter to Clemente Idar," 19 April 1923, Clemente Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 12.

and those that subscribed to the Mexican government's attempts to reinforce Mexican loyalty throughout *Mexico de afuera*.

Americanness was not the only nationality inundating the United States in its postwar period. Even as Mexican-American civil rights groups used American patriotism and loyalty as a lever to bring about social and political change, the Mexican government put forward a new, postrevolutionary Mexican national identity in an attempt to retain the loyalty, and remittances, of its citizens abroad. For those of Mexican descent living in the Southwest, this created a complex landscape of national identities, all set within the background of True Americanist demands for exclusive dedication to the United States. Some fell in line with this interpretation, naturalizing and subscribing to assimilation campaigns. For many immigrants, though, the pull of heritage and national origin held strong, and despite their economic and geographic realities, they remained tied to Mexico, even amidst the insistently Americanist postwar climate.

The Order Sons of America

For many Mexican Americans, the combined end of World War I and the Mexican Revolution led into a period of immense activity within the realm of civil rights. While many had supported the Mexican Revolution during the 1910s, increasing Mexican immigration as a result of the conflict led to even greater hostility from the Anglo community. In response, the Mexican American community turned inward, as a defense mechanism and in an attempt to distinguish themselves from immigrants.[585] In addition, for those living in South Texas, national identity had taken on a sense of vital urgency. Intense Anglo retributions for the irredentist Plan de San Diego of 1915 built a climate of ethnic hostility throughout the Rio Grande Valley. In

[585] For more on this process, see David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

response to that, middle-class Mexican Americans in the region turned to civic organizations as a way of distancing themselves from the spirit of the Plan de San Diego, emphasizing their Americanness and patriotism in an attempt to counter racialized portrayals of difference.[586] In the 1920s and beyond, Mexican Americans and their civic organizations undoubtedly took great steps to emphasize their citizenship as Americans.

Wartime propaganda also played a role by creating a climate in which Americanness became an exclusive identity, with no room or consideration for foreignness. As a demographic with a persistent heritage and that often came under attack, Mexican Americans made prominent the rhetoric and symbols that emphasized their patriotism and contributions to the United States. With the tendency of Anglos to conflate Mexican Americans with recent Mexican immigrants, the importance of presenting a cohesive, loyal national identity rose to the forefront of the civil rights movement. American citizenship brought a certain set of legal rights, but in addition to that, it represented a way to earn the trust of an Anglo public pervaded by True Americanist spirit.

In 1921, in San Antonio, thirty-seven men attended the initial meeting of the Order Sons of America.[587] Their intent in founding this group was to bring about change in the treatment of Mexican Americans, through eradicating *de facto* discrimination but especially in attacking the *de jure* segregation of Texas' school systems.[588] Previous attempts to fight for the rights of Mexicans through other avenues, including *mutualistas* and through the network of Mexican consulates, had largely failed. What made this organization different and allowed it to become a

---

[586] For more on this, see Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

[587] Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs*, 74.

[588] Johnson, *Revolution in Texas*, 182.

key player in the fight for civil rights, was its engagement with postwar rhetoric about national loyalty and the way in which it emphasized Mexican-American contributions to the war effort to make a compelling case for equality in the postwar environment of nationalism.

Clemente Idar, labor organizer and former backer of Carranza's Constitutionalist forces, played a significant role in the organization, writing its constitution alongside two other leaders.[589] Idar had explored his own sense of American national identity a few years earlier, as he had penned a document entitled "Al Margén de la Americanización." Within this 1919 essay, he explored what he saw as the reasons for the wartime propaganda effort, as well as the continuation of that Americanist impulse into the postwar era.[590] Idar suggested that Americanization could be a mixed blessing. If it veered into the territory of Anglo patronage over new naturalizing citizens, then it ran the risk of quashing immigrants with the perceived superiority of American culture. Instead, he favored an Americanization that united native- and foreign-born residents while also recognizing the difficulties inherent in convincing immigrants to leave behind ties to their home country.[591] Acknowledging the difficulties in convincing immigrants to naturalize, he pointed out that it was better for them to do so regardless. Rather than a rejection of culture, he, and the OSA, sought to embrace their American national identity and make that a major cornerstone of their organization.

The founders of the OSA, including Idar, made U.S. citizenship a requirement in order to join. This had three key effects. First, even though the group continued to work alongside

---

[589] Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs*, 75.

[590] Idar critiqued Americanization a bit here, suggesting that Wilson supported these campaigns at reinforcing domestic loyalty to make the world safe for *American* democracy, rather than democracy at large. From there, though, he moves on to explore the effects of Americanization.

[591] Clemente Idar, "Al Margén de la Americanización," Clemente Idar Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 8, Folder 19.

consuls and *mutualistas* to fight for the rights of Mexicans at large, it excluded a large group of potential members.[592] However, on the positive side, it allowed the organization to advocate on behalf of its members with the knowledge that the entire group possessed the rights of citizens.[593] It also allowed them to tie into postwar rhetoric about loyalty and service, fighting for their rights from the position of deserving citizens, rather than cultural or ethnic outsiders.

The program from their March 23, 1922 rally reflects this sentiment. Not only does it boast a red-white-and-blue theme, it includes a speech on Americanization, closes with a song titled "America,"[594] and is written entirely in English. Their slogan, "For Our Country," sits tucked under the header, making the patriotic intentions of the group explicitly clear.[595] Further, in another undated pamphlet, the Order pairs "America" with its citizenship-focused preamble and ends with a closing prayer composed by George Washington.[596] Andrés de Luna, the group's president, spoke in front of his local chapter of the Daughters of the American Republic as well, congratulating them on their efforts at Americanization and encouraging them to continue to work at increasing civic involvement.[597] Finally, at an event hosted by the OSA at the Breakers Hotel in Corpus Christi, the group sponsored speeches on citizenship and loyalty, as well as the value of the Mexican-American citizen, in front of an audience of Mexican

---

[592] Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs*, 75-6.

[593] Orden Hijos de America, "Cuestionario," November, 1926, Clemente Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 8, Folder 4.

[594] Now better known as "My Country 'Tis of Thee"

[595] Order Sons of America, "Programme," 22 March, 1922, Clemente Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 8, Folder 4.

[596] Order Sons of America, "Preamble, Opening Hymn, and Closing Prayer," Clemente Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 8, Folder 4.

[597] Andrés de Luna, "Address to the Daughters of the American Revolution," Andrés de Luna Collection, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 9.

Americans and Anglos.[598] The rhetoric of patriotism ran thick within the literature of the Order Sons of America as they sought to use loyalty and citizenship to leverage change. One glaring omission, though, is the complete lack of any mentioning of national loyalty in their Declaration of Principles.[599] Before the decade came to a close, though, the Mexican-American civil rights movement continued to evolve, coalescing into larger groups that bought in even further to the concept of Americanness as a key piece of identity.

As the OSA fought for change in the poll tax, education, jury rights, and workplace discrimination, the group also underwent significant internal tensions that ultimately led to division. In early 1927, dissenters broke away and formed the splinter group Order Knights of America. Later that year, in an attempt to re-establish a sense of unity, the groups tried to combine again, under the aegis of the new League of Latin American Citizens.[600] Controversy erupted over this coalition organization's decision to restrict membership to American citizens, yet the new League held strong in its decisions. Citizenship offered too many advantages and the gap between the interests of citizens and immigrants proved too wide to bridge.[601] Like the OSA, the League made patriotism a key tenet of the group, and even went as far as including the idea of loyalty to the United States as the first article in its new constitution.[602] With True Americanists using claims of hyphenism to discredit non-Anglos across the country, they wanted to ensure that their commitment to the United States would not come into question.

---

[598] "Sons of America Banquet Was a Big Patriotic Event at Breakers Hotel Tuesday Night," Newspaper fragment, Ben Garza Collection, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Album 1.

[599] "Declaration of Principles, Order Sons of America, 1922," in Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs,* 231-233.

[600] Johnson, *Revolution in Texas,* 182-3.

[601] Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs,* 120-6.

[602] "Constitution, League of Latin American Citizens, 1927," in Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs,* 235.

It would take one more evolution for Mexican-American civil rights to take on an iteration that would continue for decades, as in 1929, the OSA, Order Knights of America, and League of Latin American Citizens all merged into the new League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). Just like its predecessors, loyalty and patriotism was a key element of LULAC's platforms, and just like the earlier League, LULAC brought out loyalty to the United States as the first point in its constitution.[603] LULAC went on to emphasize obligation to one's nation as a requirement for all its members, conforming to postwar ideals of patriotism and national dedication and using their citizenship to continue the work of previous organizations. In doing so, they took a similar approach to Irish Americans by maintaining their agenda, but pursuing it in closer accordance with the desires of true Americanist to avoid accusations of hyphenism if at all possible.

The 1920s saw new developments for Irish Americans and Mexican Americans. Just as the Mexican Revolution settled down and Mexicans in the United States began to engage with national identity beyond their support of revolution, the Irish fight for independence entered its most critical phase. Still, for both groups, postwar rhetoric of loyalty and nationality pervaded their thoughts and actions. True Americanists continued the wartime paranoia about treason that they had put into place, seeking to silence the public voice of Irish Americans in regards to Irish independence, including everyday writers of petitions and letters to the editor, but also extending to Irish American politicians, like Senators Pat Harrison and Medill McCormick.[604] Across the Northeast, and from Chicago to San Francisco, the vocal movement for Irish sovereignty

---

[603] Ibid., 237.

[604] J. N. Keenan to Warren G. Harding, 10 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on the "Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

instilled disdain in Americans whose definitions of patriotism included room for one nationality alone.

Mexican Americans, in putting together the earliest organizations in their battle for civil rights, conformed to this idea. They certainly retained key elements of their culture, but the most prominent features of organizations like the Order Sons of America and LULAC were not Mexicanness, but rather American citizenship and patriotism. Citizenship represented a certain set of rights to which they were entitled, as well as a lever to use in advancing legal arguments to combat discrimination across the Southwest. Patriotism and service, however, became a moral component in their demands for justice. Those who had served in the war had paid their dues to the United States, and expected both respect and consideration given the sacrifices that they had made. They would continue to emphasize their contributions to the nation as they fought for rights even through the end of World War II.

For Irish Americans, patriotism and loyalty had meaning loaded with morality and obligation as well. They emphasized the contributions that the Irish had made to the United States historically, and that they themselves had made in conflict, with veterans as far back as the Civil War pointing to their service as a major reason why their demands should be taken seriously. Further, they pointed to parallels between American and Irish history to justify why the United States should adopt a more pro-Irish stance and recognize the young republic. They sought political capital to use abroad, rather than at home, and patriotism was one way of appealing for that support. The importance of Ireland and Sinn Féin's reputation in the court of public opinion meant that they, and True Americanists, took highly contentious positions in attempting to either silence or discredit one another.

The goals of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans changed greatly in the 1920s as they travelled along separate paths. What remained consistent, though, was the postwar use of language of loyalty and national identity pervading the rhetoric and imagery of groups like LULAC and the AARIR. Their objectives differed, but whether in pursuit of civil rights or the recognition of the Irish republic, both Mexican-American activists and Irish-American nationalists wrapped themselves in the American flag and pointed to their wartime contributions as justification, even as they faced pushback from others who sought to discount their Americanness. This decade in American history saw the nation immersed in propaganda, editorials, letters to legislators, and rallies all seeking to define what American loyalty and patriotism was. The next few years saw this sense of Americanness consolidate significantly, given new economic and geopolitical developments.

CHAPTER 6

AGENDAS ADVANCED, WITH BARRIERS REMAINING

Across the 1920s, True Americanism and other more virulent nativist movements earned significant legislative gains in the form of restrictionist immigration legislation. At the same time, Irish-American backers of Irish independence and Mexican-American civil rights activists faced crucial moments in advancing their political goals. As both groups pursued their respective aims, the urgency of adopting patriotic rhetoric and symbolism became clear. Now, more than ever, Irish Americans raising funds and agitating for the recognition of the Irish republic, as well as Mexican Americans issuing petitions for desegregation and advancing court cases to tear down barriers, had to use every tool at their disposal to legitimize their causes. In consequence, both Irish-American and Mexican-American organizations continued to fit themselves within the context of this new nationalism and insist that their citizenship was not mutually exclusive with their heritage. As the Irish fight for independence came to a close and the Mexican-American civil rights movement began to gain serious traction, groups supporting both causes responded to the hyperpatriotic national mood, demonstrating the necessities of overt patriotic loyalty for any seeking to effect political change. In following the final years of Irish-American support for Irish independence as well as the continuation of the Mexican-American civil rights movement, this chapter argues that as Irish-Americans shifted away from transnational politics and towards advocating for domestic policies, their need to adopt front-and-center American patriotism faded, taking with it the references to service and sacrifice that

had predominated in the years immediately following World War I. Mexican-American leaders, however, still needed to deeply embrace American patriotism as they encountered resistance to their efforts to end discrimination.

Irish-American Rhetoric Beyond Irish Independence, 1921-1924

With the Sims incident of 1921 having provided no definitive solution to the contention between True Americanists and Irish-American nationalists, the latter continued to provide material and political support to Irish revolutionaries against the opposition of the former. However, the rhetoric of Irish-American patriotism within the movement was not limited to the Sims affair alone. Throughout the early years of the 1920s, Irish-American organizations put forward messages of American patriotism and loyalty that had been unprecedented in the days of the Fenians, or even in the conventions of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians (AOH) in the early 1910s. Irish Americans as a community evolved within the context of postwar norms of American patriotism and that included even those who looked across the Atlantic most fervently. While the response against Sims represents one important moment pairing organic responses from Irish Americans with those organized by formal groups, it was only part of a larger trend towards embracing Americanness in order to continue advancing the Irish cause.

Organizationally, Irish-American support for Irish independence underwent a split in the 1920s during which established groups and leaders found their roles challenged by Eamon de Valera, the exiled president of Ireland's provisional government.[605] A power struggle between de Valera and the old Fenian John Devoy developed as both sought to guide American support for Irish nationalism in their own direction. Two competing organizations arose, the Friends of

[605] Dave Hannigan, *De Valera in America: The Rebel Irish President and the Making of Irish Independence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 132-135.

Irish Freedom (FOIF), founded in 1916 by Clan-na-Gael leadership, and the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR), founded in November of 1920 by de Valera.[606] Despite this split, however, Irish-American groups retained a fierce American identity. Three letters from the Sims incident illustrate this. One, on AARIR letterhead, labels its members "all loyal citizens of our Republic."[607] The Hudson County, NJ chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians described its members using identical language.[608] The third letter, a resolution from the Padraic H. Pearse branch of the FOIF, in Washington, DC, does not describe its membership in the same detail, but does continue to use the tactic of labelling its opponents as British hyphenates, carrying on a trend stretching back before World War I.[609] The paradigm shift that True Americanism had wrought was so deep that neither a world war nor the threat of factionalism could reshape the rhetoric of Irish Americans. Across the spectrum of Irish-American organizations, with their varied leaders, tactics, and goals, overt American patriotism remained a constant. Even Irish citizens relied upon these messages to stir audiences in the United States.

During Eamon de Valera's cross-country tour leading rallies and raising funds, the Irish leader implemented themes of American patriotism with two objectives in mind. First and

---

[606] David Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798-1998* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 150, 161.

[607] Josephine M. Crick to Edwin Denby, 14 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1.

[608] John McCabe to Edwin Denby, 18 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 7.

[609] Thomas McGrath to Edwin Denby, 12 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 7.

foremost, equating the Irish cause with American values was a persuasive approach intended to motivate supporters and convince skeptics in a hyperpatriotic postwar environment. The need for funds and supplies persisted into the 1920s, after all. The second goal, given the creation of the Dáil, was to secure American diplomatic recognition of Irish independence by gaining the political support of Americans. As such, these rallies were rife with patriotic pandering.

One Philadelphia event began with a parade of American veterans escorting de Valera from his hotel to the site of his speech and continued with the leader quoting a letter from George Washington to the Irish, urging them to continue in their struggle.[610] At another, he told his listeners that the Irish rebels with whom he was imprisoned at Lincoln, England used to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and that the song gave them great comfort in the face of English tyranny.[611] However, in an exchange of correspondence in late February, 1920, Justice Daniel F. Cohalan, of the FOIF, cautioned de Valera that despite his popularity, his Irish-American followers only backed him so long as he did not push them too far. Cohalan warned that Irish Americans were American above all else, and that they specifically worked for the complete independence of Ireland, rather than a partial compromise with the British. On behalf of all Irish Americans, he rejected the possibility of a British Monroe Doctrine covering Ireland, and assured de Valera that if nationalists in Ireland pursued such a compromise, his followers in America would oppose it given its conflicting with the diplomatic interests of the United States.[612] De Valera could pay lip service in his speeches and writing, but if the interests of the United States conflicted with that of Ireland, American patriotism would prevail.

---

[610] Dave Hannigan, *De Valera in America: The Rebel President and the Making of Irish Independence* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 73-74.

[611] "Americans True to American Ideals," *News Letter of the Irish National Bureau* 7 (22 August 1919): 3.

[612] Daniel F. Cohalan to Eamon de Valera, 22 February 1920, AIHS files, 62.

In the effort to bring about Irish freedom by attacking British interests, sometimes the line between agendas blurred. In his correspondence with de Valera, Cohalan shows the way in which the FOIF did evolve in the postwar era, not in straying from American patriotism but in exposing and opposing what they saw as diplomatic overreach by Great Britain. For example, when it came to the League of Nations, the FOIF took on a uniquely isolationist sentiment in that they opposed American participation based on a loss of sovereignty, but more specifically because they saw the League as a British attempt to control other nations. They raised concerns about the voting imbalance of the League, American demilitarization, and the way in which the League would discourage self-determination, given that empires could bring League alliances to bear against independence movements. Seeing the League as a diplomatic impediment to Irish independence in particular, they mobilized against it. In expressing their opposition, though, they moved beyond the Irish cause to embrace the rhetoric of True Americanism in labelling the League an anti-American plan. The FOIF passed a resolution formally opposing the League as early as 7 August 1919, and its press arm, the Irish National Bureau, immediately went into action. With several different pamphlets outlining the FOIF position in circulation, the group claimed to be acting in the best interest of the United States. Their resolution labelled the League "a product of English statecraft…undemocratic, unAmerican, and antagonistic to the wise and far-seeing caution to our country given by Washington in his farewell address."[613] In developing their platform against the League in such a manner, the FOIF took advantage of a postwar mood in which American patriotism was essential to advancing a public agenda. However, older trends of anti-British lobbying persisted. Much like Irish-American advocacy for neutrality before World War I, the anti-League platform relied upon Irish opposition to

[613] The National Council of the Friends of Irish Freedom, "Resolved," 7 August 1919, AIHS 1, p.39.

anything related to Great Britain. In order to continue opposing the British at every turn, postwar Irish Americans needed to relate their platforms in a veil of Americanism.

The FOIF took on a similar bent when it came to immigration reform in the 1920s. They opposed the 1924 quota law on the grounds that nativism was un-American. They traced the anti-immigrant sentiment that catalyzed the 1924 law back through the nineteenth century to the Know-Nothing party, and used Lincoln's opposition to that movement to support their claims. The anti-British sentiment still drove their political stance, however, as they also pointed out that the British received more than half of the immigrant allotment for 1927, a disproportionate amount that would only further the efforts of the British government to manipulate the United States.[614] The old Anglophobia ran deep, and as Ireland moved closer towards independence, the FOIF underwent a transition from using American patriotism to advance Irish interests towards using that same patriotism to oppose British interests, but with an increased focus on domestic policy came a decrease in outside criticism of Irish Americans. Affirmations of American loyalty still appeared in Irish-American rhetoric and literature, but became much less central. When Irish Americans moved away from backing foreign nationalism and towards lobbying on domestic issues, the controversial nature of their actions cooled significantly. However, for Mexican Americans, the concurrent rise of their civil rights movement brought increased attention and criticism even as they relied upon American patriotism to effect domestic change.

For Irish Americans in the 1920s, as their nationalist organizations shifted gears to focus on domestic issues rather than events in Ireland, the once-patriotic rhetoric of the late 1910s lost its edge. As the conflict in Ireland evolved from an independence movement to a civil war, the need for overt political action to bring about the recognition of an independent Ireland faded.

[614] "A Protest Against the Immigration Law of 1924," AIHS files, 94.

With it went the fierce opposition of True Americanists and the need for Irish Americans to emblazon their American patriotism on their sleeve. Historian David Brundage also points to a general disillusionment spreading amongst Irish Americans with the imperfect resolution of the movement for independence.[615] With Irish Americans no longer occupying a salient position in demanding political change and a distinct drop in the virulent antagonism from other Americans, such explicit patriotism no longer became a prerequisite for Irish American groups like the FOIF to continue advancing organizational goals.

With the defeat of the League of Nations and the independence of Ireland, albeit swamped with civil unrest, the FOIF transitioned more wholeheartedly towards anti-British activity. At its 1921 national convention, held less than a week after Irish and British negotiators arrived at a settlement over independence, the group led off its agenda with discussions of American diplomacy, still backing an Irish Republic, but unsure of the results of the peace discussions. When it came to American foreign policy, the FOIF continued to rely on patriotic tropes to oppose the Four-Power Treaty amongst Pacific Ocean powers, the 5-5-3 Plan for naval disarmament, the cancellation of foreign loans from World War I, and the lifting of tolls for the Panama Canal.[616] A similar tone persisted in their attacks of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, accusing him of treason for having fought the League of Nations but acceded to the Four-Power Treaty.[617] However, a pamphlet warning of historical revisionism focused more on the insidious nature of British propaganda. The patriotism of the FOIF was, in this case, reactionary and although it did mention Irish contributions to the United States, the emphasis remained on

---

[615] Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America*, 163.

[616] "Declaration of Principles Adopted by the National Convention of the Friends of Irish Freedom," 10-11 December 1921, AIHS files, 70.

[617] Daniel F. Cohalan, "Senator Lodge – Past and Present," AIHS files 2, 55.

castigating the British rather than celebrating the Irish.[618] Without a strong opposition to react against, the fierce Irish-American patriotism that had characterized earlier literature became derailed.

So, too, was the case with FOIF literature regarding Ireland. A poster relaying the FOIF's September 1922 resolution calling for an end to violence in Ireland did contain references to the American identity of FOIF members, but only as an afterthought.[619] Another pamphlet that reprinted an April 1923 article from *The Gaelic American* took a similarly reactionary approach against British overreach, cautioning that the effort of the Irish Free State to join the League of Nations was an attempt at compelling the United States to join.[620] No longer taking a proactive stance in advocating for Irish independence, the FOIF's message became weakened, diluted, and increasingly paranoid of British conspiracies. Nonetheless, the FOIF, and Irish American nationalists as a whole, had aided in resolving the centuries-old struggle for Irish sovereignty. They evolved a unique Irish American identity that embraced the civic nationalism of the 1910s even as they retained their heritage and advocated in the interest of their homeland. True Americanism had made a deep impact among Irish Americans, reshaping the dialogue surrounding Irish-American nationalism in a way that did not occur in over a century of Irish presence in the United States. This movement for an exclusively American civic and cultural identity in the end became a tool with which Irish-American nationalists could justify their public presence and, through demonstrating the ways in which they complied with the civic obligations, blunt critiques. The political situation in Ireland was

[618] "Americans! Wake Up!," AIHS Files, 75.

[619] "A Message from America!," 29 September 1922, AIHS Files, 85.

[620] "Free State Makes Bad Blunder in Applying for League Membership," 28 April 1923, AIHS Files, 87.

far from settled, and Irish Americans continued to play a role in that nation's evolution, but the high tide of Irish nationalism in the United States began to ebb in 1922 and with it went the need to redirect accusations of treason, disloyalty, and un-American activity.

The Box Bill

Historian Mae Ngai points to the imposition of immigrant quotas in 1921, formalized with the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, as a new paradigm in the field of immigration based upon new ideas of citizenship, race, and nation that had evolved in the early twentieth century.[621] She describes this moment as the creation of the paradoxical category of illegal alien, which defined domestic policies and race relations for decades. At the same time, debate over the finer elements of immigration policy continued to drive the national conversation over foreignness and inclusion that had been drawn to the surface by True Americanists. For Mexican Americans, this meant asserting their view as to how they fit within the United States. In limiting incoming immigration, the Johnson-Reed Act had omitted quotas for immigrants from Western Hemisphere countries and as politicians debated over whether Mexican and, to a certain extent Canadian, immigration ought to be restricted, perceptions of Mexican Americans and their belonging came to the fore.

The key proponent of adding Western Hemisphere countries to the quota system was Texas' Congressman John Box. Over the course of the 1920s and into the 1930s, he proposed several iterations of his Box Bill to update the Johnson-Reed Act, which stirred conversation about how Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants should and did fit within the United

[621] Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004) 3.

States.[622] In spearheading this movement for further restrictionism, Box received correspondence from across the country in support of his bill, although the letters were particularly concentrated in Texas. The writers expressed their concerns about Mexican immigrants but in doing so, their views often spilled over in worrying about the impact of any Mexican presence in the United States at all. The content of their letters overlaps quite a bit with the anti-Irish sentiment expressed in the Sims incident and, although the two demographics did not face identical opposition, the use of True Americanist tropes remained a constant throughout.

J.E. Farnsworth, Vice President of Southwestern Bell Telephone Company and resident of Dallas wrote to Box in 1927, expressing his support for the bill. His argument for further restriction fused the racialized critiques levelled at those of Mexican descent with the tenets of True Americanism. He described a Mexican colony of ten- to fifteen-thousand in Dallas whose occasional need for public assistance had become a burden to the rest of the community, leaning into stereotypes of indolence with his remark that it occurred "whenever the slightest depression in business occurs." Moving on, Farnsworth suggested that, despite claims about the country's need for immigrants, "[i]f the Ship of State is to sink, let it go down beneath the waves with the American flag at the mast head and the people singing 'Hail Columbia,' 'Star Spangled Banner' and 'Nearer My God to Thee,' instead of a motley crowd howling 'Hoch der Kaiser,' 'Viva Italia,' 'Vive Mexico' and other foreign gibberish."[623] In closing his letter, Farnsworth wrote that he supported any who took the time to become naturalized citizens. However, in broadly labelling three significant ethnic populations, all of which included natural-born and naturalized

---

[622] Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 19.

[623] J.E. Farnsworth to John C. Box, 22 April, 1927, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 8.

citizens, as a "motley crowd," Farnsworth belied the strict cultural requirements that he saw as prerequisites for citizenship.

Mrs. C. I. Dunham, of Pomona, California also wrote Box, worried that Mexican workers would replace white laborers and concerned about Mexican use of charity. She, too, brought up a True Americanist talking point, claiming that her ancestors had lived in the United States since before the Revolutionary War.[624] In doing so, Dunham sought to add cachet to her opinions as an American of countless generations. To her, like so many others, incoming Mexican immigration represented a threat to an established American way of life, with no possibility of naturalization or assimilation on any scale as a solution.

H.P. Davis, of Austin, brought up issues of crime rates and decreased standards of education, alongside the "lowering of American patriotism."[625] In bringing to bear racial concerns about the presence of Mexicans in the U.S., concerned citizens regularly framed their words within the rhetoric of True Americanism. By doing so, they utilized worries about the quality of the nation's citizenship to blunt their language and make their arguments more relevant. After all, Americanization campaigns and propaganda about being a loyal American had swept the country for over a decade by this point. When conceptualizing the role of those of Mexican descent within the United States, supporters of the Box Bill added assumptions of unassimilability to pre-existing stereotypes about Mexicans as they levelled their critiques.

The Box Bill dealt strictly with immigration, but most writers conflated Mexican immigrants with Mexican Americans. Those that did distinguish between the two depicted

---

[624] C.I. Dunham to John C. Box, 14 February 1928, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 8..

[625] H.P. Davis to John C. Box, 3 March 1928, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 8.

Mexican immigration hampering both the conditions and assimilation of Mexican Americans. A.B. Crane, judge and superintendent of Willacy County, wrote that he was worried about immigrants putting "our native Mexicans out of work," and in doing so leading to Mexican Americans enabling the more negative qualities of immigrant laborers, either by facilitating the contract labor system or by acting as middlemen in providing liquor to immigrants, thus making "our Mexicans worse than they were in that they quit work as soon as those come."[626] W.F. Cottingham, writing from Corpus Christi, described the racial antipathy of South Texas as emanating from the presence of immigrants to exacerbate tensions between Anglos and Mexican Americans. He suggested that current conditions meant that the descendants of Mexican immigrants took longer to acculturate, and that "assimilation is often weakly expressed after four or more generations."[627] For True Americanists, poorly assimilated Americans meant bad citizens, and therefore a danger to the United States as a whole. Rhetoric about Mexican Americans, even when differentiated from Mexican immigrants, still utilized racialized language shrouded in patriotic concern and represented a threat to the Mexican-American civil rights movement.

In response to a 1930 iteration of the Box Bill, several Mexican-American civil rights leaders from South Texas travelled to Washington D.C. to address Congress directly. J.T. Canales, Ben Garza, and Alonso Perales all spoke before the House of Representatives' Committee on Immigration and Naturalization. In addressing the Box Bill, Mexican Americans had been placed into a difficult paradox. The bill addressed immigration and immigrants at a

[626] A.B. Crane to John C. Box, 10 March 1928, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 9.

[627] W. F. Cottingham to John C. Box, 4 February 1928, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 9.

time when Mexican Americans sought to distance themselves from the immigrant community both as a tactic to gain social acceptance and in order to use the asset of their American citizenship to more convincingly argue for civil rights.[628] Rather than playing a role as representatives of the Mexican-descent community at large, these leaders approached their situation as providing testimonials from South Texas, utilizing an outsider's perspective when discussing Mexican immigrants. They expressed sympathy for the plight of the immigrant but trod a middle ground, cutting through racialized arguments in favor of the bill but not opposing it completely, should unbiased statistics support a quota system. They spoke in a way that cemented their position as American citizens and reinforced their service to the community and nation. Rejecting the conceits of restrictionists that those of Mexican descent were unassimilable, they detailed the success that the newly formed LULAC had had in spreading pride in American citizenship across South Texas.

While J.T. Canales began by drawing out concerns over availability of labor in South Texas and detailed accounts of the mistaken deportation of Mexican Americans, Alonso Perales delved into his American citizenship and what it meant to him. He rejected any conceits as to the inferiority of those of Mexican descent and stated that he was "just as proud of my racial extraction as I am of my American citizenship." In detailing the goals of the newly formed LULAC, Perales first mentioned "to develop within the members of our race the best, purest, and most perfect type of a true and loyal citizen of the United States of America; and to define with absolute and unmistakable clearness our unquestionable loyalty to the ideals, principles, and citizenship of the United States of America." Perales told the committee that he supported the

[628] David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 74.

protection of the American laborer, but rejected the premise that Mexican immigration represented a threat to American workers. Facing pushback from Congressman Green, Perales reiterated that he saw a racial, rather than economic, motive behind the Box Bill, adding, "I am an American citizen, and I am for the American people." Following the exchange, Perales was excused and a written statement submitted to the congressional record, but not before J.T. Canales interjected to point out that Perales had served his country as a diplomat and translator in resolving the Tacna-Arica border dispute in South America, under General Pershing.[629] Perales' written statement contained a brief summary of service to his country, including time with the army during World War I, but highlighting Perales' association with Pershing, the American war hero and famous military leader, was a pointed gesture on the part of Canales. This tactic, to add credence to Perales' words, mirrored the rhetoric of Irish Americans in pointing out their service in countering claims of disloyalty. That Pershing was also the leader of the Punitive Expedition in leading an Army column into Mexican territory in 1916 might also have been a factor in Canales mentioning that service specifically, to disassociate Perales from the nation of Mexico, following Perales' remarks about pride in his ancestry. In his written statement, Perales detailed nearly a dozen examples of his military and diplomatic service to the United States. Listing these, and perhaps emphasizing Pershing, represent a way to demonstrate that Perales' heritage did not negate his loyal citizenship, rejecting the claims that True Americanism made about ethnic groups and their inability or unwillingness to assimilate.

In his written statement, Perales immediately attacked those who depicted Mexicans "generally as a degenerate and inferior people, incapable of assimilation or good citizenship.

---

[629] *Congressional Record*, Louis Wilmot Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 7, 373-390; William E. Skuban, *Line in the Sand: Nationalism and Identity on the Peruvian-Chilean Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 67.

Such an indictment is absolutely false and a grave injustice to a worthy race. The truth is, gentlemen, that the vile calumnies cast against the Mexican people have been prompted chiefly by an ingrained, deeprooted racial prejudice."[630] Here, Perales cut to the quick of True Americanism as applied to America's ethnic population, in that selective interpretation of the philosophy paired with eugenicist thought at the time allowed for racialized attacks on specific groups under the guise of maintaining the integrity of the American nation. Like Irish Americans, he rejected the premise that Mexican Americans were unassimilable, or that they lacked the same amount of patriotism or loyalty as other demographics. In backing his argument, Perales provided a litany of descriptions of life in Mexico and on the border that subverted stereotypes about Mexican-descent people. His final citation was a 1921 report by Colonel L.M. Maus to the International Reform Bureau of Washington, D.C. Within it, Maus wrote of his admiration for the Mexican people of the United States. Although he explained away stereotypes as the deterministic result of Mexican peons having been ruled strictly by church, government, and landowner in a way that tacitly acknowledged their accuracy, he did offer examples that Mexican Americans represented good, loyal citizens. When describing the confusion over World War I draft laws that led to many Mexicans and Mexican Americans flouting draft laws, Maus wrote that "thousands of them were sent to France where they rendered an excellent account of themselves in the trenches and on the fighting line – many of them lie among the fields of the honored dead in France, while hundreds of others returned home wearing the highest military awards for heroic deeds."[631] In offering proof of good citizenship from Mexican Americans, Perales, via Maus, utilized the same tactic as Irish Americans, pointing to

[630] *Congressional Record*, 390.

[631] Ibid., 391.

military service as a concrete example. World War I may have entrenched the tenets and mores of True Americanism through its propaganda, but for those ethnic groups that came under attack after the war, it offered a recent instance in which they had responded to their nation's call in a time of need.

The final member of LULAC to address the Committee was its president, Ben Garza, who offered more information about the confusing state of citizenship for Mexicans in South Texas. He described immigrants who had assumed that residence in the United States for decades granted them automatic citizenship, others who retained Mexican citizenship thinking it best to be protected by the consular system, and Mexican Americans who had been deported despite their citizenship. Garza also brought up the problem of Mexicans themselves conflating Mexican ancestry and citizenship and the way in which LULAC sought to address this problem. In regard to his organization's effort to advance an identity of ethnic Mexicanness with proud American citizenship, Garza explained, "[g]entlemen, I sincerely think that you have not the least idea how well this thing is working in the minds of the Mexican people. They all love this country." After a few more questions from the chairman, Congressman Albert Johnson, Garza continued, "[m]en that before did not even care to speak the English language are to-day attending night schools. A great number of Mexican citizens have been in this country for many years and who have children and grandchildren are applying for their citizenship papers."[632] In speaking before Congress, LULAC leadership did not take a strident stand against the quota system, but rather spoke of the contributions that Mexican Americans had made, were making, and could make in the future as American citizens just as loyal and assimilated as any other demographic.

[632] Ibid., 398-399.

Nonetheless, nativist Albert Johnson headed the committee, which sent the 1930 iteration of the bill on to the House with the recommendation that it be adopted. Proposing that the Western Hemisphere quota be set at four times the amount of American emigrants in the preceding fiscal year, Mexican immigration faced a drastic reduction, with a limit of 2,900 to be legally admitted.[633] In the report that the committee distributed to the House, Johnson described an existential threat to the United States in analyzing birth rates, or the "differential fecundity" between white and Mexican parents in California. He predicted that the disproportionate growth of America's Mexican population, paired with the bestowment of natural-born citizenship upon the children of immigrants, would result in a "hyphenized, politically unstabilized, Latinized majority throughout the Southwest."[634] The views of True Americanism towards ethnic groups proved difficult to dislodge, and although the testimonials of LULAC leaders seem compelling in the Congressional Record, it was the lobbying of business leaders for continued cheap labor from Mexico that defeated the Box Bill in all of its iterations.

LULAC

When faced with outside criticism, LULAC took a slightly different approach than Irish-American organizations had. While the group still responded within the context of loyalty and national identity, it sought to inculcate an *increased* sense of Americanness among its members and the Mexican community at large. Where Irish Americans had simply affirmed their patriotism, LULAC sought to grow Mexican-American patriotism even further. The two major emphases of the early years of LULAC, citizenship and education, melded into a single approach aimed at overcoming the significant sociocultural barriers faced by Mexican Americans.

---

[633] *Report to Accompany H.R. 10343*, Louis Wilmot Papers, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 7, 17.

[634] Ibid., 4.

Citizenship represented a core component of LULAC at the organization's conception. In a 1927 meeting at Harlingen, Texas, civil rights leaders meeting to lay the foundation for LULAC discussed the role that citizenship ought to play within the group. Having invited leaders from the Mexican immigrant community as well, a debate broke out over the inclusion of noncitizens. When the committee decided that membership would be restricted to citizens only, historian Cynthia Orozco describes Mexican immigrants and others who had argued for their inclusion hotly storming out of the auditorium.[635] The role of American citizenship was so central to the organization's identity, from the very beginning, that its leaders proved willing to surrender the support of Mexican immigrants. In taking this step, LULAC leadership demonstrated the continued value of the privileges of American citizenship, but also the compelling nature of a fully American identity in making arguments for equality in a nation subsumed by True Americanist ideology.

The early years of LULAC centered on the fight for equal education for Mexican-descent students. For LULAC, though, education and citizenship converged at several points. Early leader Andrés de Luna spoke on the topic often, asserting that education was a certain path to social uplift. Not only would better schooling open up trajectories to professional careers, it would also create better Mexican-American citizens, an area in which public schools were failing.[636] In a council-wide survey, the Encino, TX branch of LULAC concurred.[637] This

---

[635] Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 125.

[636] Andrés de Luna, "Address to the Daughters of the American Revolution," Andrés de Luna Collection, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Folder 9; Andrés de Luna, "Address to the Monday Club," Andrés de Luna Collection, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Folder 9.

[637] "Survey – LULAC Council of Encino," Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 1, Folder 8.

mirrored the claims of True Americanism, that better civic education would improve the citizen body as a whole.

Education also represented an important step for Mexican Americans to assert their citizenship in fighting for civil rights. Hearkening back to World War I-era slang, a 1931 article in the *LULAC News* asked readers, "Are You a LULACKER or Slaker (sic)" and linked good citizenship, upstanding membership in LULAC, and a thorough education as goals for each of its members.[638] The *News* had a regular "Education" column that contained advice for students as well as essay prompts that offered scholarship money as prizes.[639] One winning essay, by high school senior J.A. Hernández, encapsulated LULAC's views on the interconnected nature of citizenship and education. Entitled "A Nation's Real Wealth," within it, Hernández ruminated on the way in which a more enlightened citizen could participate in representative government at a higher level, describing a standard of excellence that he set as a challenge for his fellow Americans.[640] The concerns that Hernández expressed about the quality of a nation mirror those expressed by True Americanists for decades, although Hernández wrote for a Mexican-American audience about advancing the interests of that demographic specifically.

The platform of better education separated Mexican Americans from Irish Americans somewhat, but both groups did seek to spread knowledge as to their ancestors' contributions to American history. Irish Americans had relied upon this tactic as a persuasive tool since the days of the Fenians, and did so in order to demonstrate their deep American roots. LULAC had the same goal in mind, but also used Mexican-American history as a way of building the American

---

[638] "Are You a LULACKER or Slaker," *LULAC News* 1, no. 5 (December 1931).

[639] "Education," *LULAC News* 2, no. 4 (December 1932): 8.

[640] J. A. Hernández, "A Nation's Real Wealth," *LULAC News* 2, no. 3 (November 1932): 6.

identity of Mexican Americans. One *LULAC News* article complained of the limited portrayals of Mexican-descent historical figures, restricted into the role of villain, with Santa Anna and Pancho Villa as examples.[641] In another, the group followed the course of Mexican-American history, from colonization to American citizenship under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, to service in World War I. Closing with a line that would not seem out of place coming from the FOIF, the article described Mexican-American soldiers as having "crossed the Atlantic in great numbers and whose graves in Flanders show their loyalty to the flag."[642]

LULAC embraced the rhetoric and symbols of American patriotism beyond its work in the field of education. In the first volumes of its newsletter, LULAC printed columns about how to properly display the American flag, even more editorials about education and its role in creating good American citizens, and several other essays on patriotism from Mexican-American high school students, as part of a patriotic competition. The group also adopted an intensely patriotic symbol, emblazoning a shield pattern with stars and stripes on the upper right and bottom left halves respectively, with the acronym LULAC slashing diagonally across the center.[643] Like Irish-American organizations, LULAC placed American identity front-and-center.

For LULAC, American patriotism did not displace Mexican heritage. In an early article published about the group, author Cástulo Gutiérrez characterized the intricacies of how LULAC balanced American citizenship with Mexican culture. He wrote that, rather than an attempt at complete Americanization with the ensuing loss of culture and language, the groups preferred to

---

[641] *LULAC News* 2, no. 4 (December 1932): 4.

[642] Are Texas-Mexicans 'Americans?'," *LULAC News* 1, no. 9 (30 April 1932): 7.

[643] *LULAC News* 1, no. 3 (October 1931): 13; *LULAC News* 1, no. 5 (December 1931): 13; *LULAC News* 2, no. 4 (December 1932): 8.

get its members to understand the rights of citizenship as well as its obligations.[644] This approach fits closely with the Irish. Neither group was willing to give up their Irishness or Mexicanness and yet both used the language of loyalty to demonstrate their commitment to the United States and advance a specific agenda unhindered by claims of treason. Much like Irish Americans had coopted the tactic of accusing their opponents of hyphenism, Mexican Americans redirected nativist claims that their persistent heritage undermined the American nation. One LULAC member, Ruben Lozano, fused this with LULAC's emphasis on education. In rejecting the idea of complete assimilation, Lozano wrote that, "[t]he rise and fall of a nation is through its citizenry, and history has clearly shown that internal evils, regardless of nature or size, may be cured by education."[645] Complete acculturation was not the goal, but rather the growth of an informed, patriotic group of Mexican Americans to challenge inequality and counter accusations that they did not belong. With such a membership, and by asserting strongly their American loyalty, the leaders of LULAC sought to bring about domestic change.

Mexican Americans, however, still faced a long campaign to address their inequality. In the establishment of their civil rights movement, they had relied heavily on patriotic rhetoric, but apart from growing LULAC membership, the organization could point to few victories through the early 1930s. The Box Bill was defeated in its many forms, but at the hands of the agribusiness lobby. Mexican Americans underwent a period of increased American patriotism, but many also became swept up in Depression-era deportations. Furthermore, in an attempt to fight segregation by challenging the Del Rio school district, LULAC-backed lawyers lost the case of *Salvatierra v. Del Rio ISD*, which set a legal precedent for the segregation of Mexican

---

[644] Cástulo Gutiérrez, "Para Los Que No Conocen Nuestra Institución," *El Popular*, Ben Garza Collection, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Album 2.

[645] Ruben R. Lozano, "An Appeal," *LULAC News* 2, no. 3 (November 1932).

students.[646] Nonetheless, the development of civil rights organizations in the 1920s and their coalescence under the umbrella of LULAC represented important moments in the fight for equality.

In working beyond patriotic rhetoric, LULAC advanced several tactics. First, in order to encourage growth and create new branches, the organization established several "flying squadrons," tasked with travelling through Texas to discuss desegregation with school officials and spread general goodwill.[647] The group also offered civic education to Mexican adults, in particular encouraging naturalization by Mexican immigrants.[648] By drawing awareness to the inequality that Mexican Americans faced and educating others as to the rights of citizenship to which they were entitled, LULAC created a strong base of activists spreading rapidly outward from South Texas. The 1930s was a key decade, and the patriotic rhetoric of LULAC a key tactic in gaining momentum during the early years of the Mexican-American civil rights movement even though concrete achievements remained limited.

For Mexican Americans, it was the reputation of service in World War II that brought significant gains in bringing about equality. To supplement the advocacy of LULAC, returning veterans founded another group that emphasized their patriotic contributions, the American G.I. Forum (AGIF). This newest generation of Mexican-American activists represented a substantial reinforcement – Mexican-American soldiers in World War II outnumbered their Great War predecessors by a ratio of about thirty to one.[649] With such a visible record of service and newly

---

[646] Brian Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles: Mexican Americans, African Americans, and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Texas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011) 27-28.

[647] Benjamin Marquéz, *LULAC: The Evolution of a Mexican American Political Organization* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 27.

[648] M. C. Gonzales, *LULAC News* 1, no. 8 (March 1932): 1.

[649] Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles,* 28.

reinforced ranks, the Mexican-American civil rights movement truly boomed in the 1940s. By 1948, AGIF had been brought to life, and the *Salvatierra v. Del Rio ISD* decision had been reversed. Segregation died hard, though, and across the 1950s and even into the 1960s, activists had to root out school districts that resisted integration.

In many cases, historians present the Mexican-American civil rights movement as a struggle to distance those of Mexican descent from black Americans and use those arguments of whiteness to put together compelling claims for equality. Similarly, the way in which Mexican Americans sought to separate themselves from Mexican immigrants represents a similar strategy. However, the most common throughcurrent in the fight for equality was the appeal to patriotism. Mexicans living in the borderlands had fought to better their social conditions using violent and nonviolent means alike, since the earliest days of annexation by the United States, but the twentieth century shift in building civil rights organizations represents a completely new approach. The growth of these groups on the heels of World War I represented a major development in advancing the Mexican-American cause, but it is also important to keep in mind that these groups evolved in a national *zeitgeist* that placed American loyalty above all else. Their reaction to this nationalism and response to it as a group that embraced both civic nationalism and maintained its heritage demonstrates how True Americanism evolved beyond its exclusionary, mainstream advocates.

True Americanism was a movement that crossed the entire United States and reshaped the way in which many different groups of Americans conceived of themselves within the broader nation. This demand for a fully American identity represented a major obligation that arose in the 1910s, cemented by World War I propaganda, and yet as ethnic groups like Mexican Americans and Irish Americans found themselves criticized for failing to live up to those

standards, they managed to subvert those attacks. In pointing to their community's service and measuring themselves against the civic components of True Americanism, these groups were able to retain political goals that they had held for decades, reshaping them within the context of this national sentiment. The extreme patriotism of the postwar era could and did prove to be a tool for exclusion, but in setting a standard for what it meant to be a good American citizen, it also opened up the opportunity for ethnic communities to show how they measured up. Mexican Americans and Irish Americans responded to this new nationalism as proud members of the American nation just like Anglos, German Americans, Italian Americans, and many other demographics, but as groups that sought to create change while facing marginalization for their ethnicity, overt displays of patriotism also became a shield behind which they could advance their respective agendas.

CONCLUSION

Between 1914 and 1920, Mexican Americans and Irish Americans constructed identities in conversation and contention with the new ideology of True Americanism. While they rejected many of the tenets of True Americanism, particularly the demand to sever ties to foreign nation and heritage, the members of both groups who publicly advocated for change shifted their rhetoric in a distinct manner. Mexican-American civil rights activists and Irish-American nationalists both sought to show the ways in which their communities fit within the paradigms that True Americanists were describing, through acts of service to the United States and the embrace of patriotic American symbols. In describing a set of requirements for American citizenship that would exclude culturally salient communities who did not conform completely to the American mainstream, True Americanists instead provided leaders from those communities with the opportunity to demonstrate how they had lived up to the obligations of United States citizenship without being compromised by their persistent heritage. Through subverting True Americanist rhetoric and publicly embracing their American patriotism, these Mexican Americans and Irish Americans were able to resist the overwhelming nature of postwar True Americanism and show the way in which they and their communities belonged as loyal citizens of the United States. Where once they had solely relied upon the language of ethnicity to encourage internal cohesion and unite in pursuit of a common goal, the spread of True Americanism led to a multifaceted approach, including continued use of a shared heritage to bind organizations together but also the adoption of symbols of American patriotism to fend off

external attacks. Mexican-American and Irish-American community leaders still relied on perceptions of shared heritage to rally support, but they also encouraged their followers to embrace a new identity that blended the common bonds of shared ancestry with the obligations of United States citizenship.

Propagating these new identities led Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders to re-frame their public political activity to further emphasize the patriotism and patriotic contributions of their community. For Irish Americans, this meant a proliferation of American symbols and pro-American rhetoric as well as a deeper acknowledgement of their place in the United States. For example, the claims of Thomas Meagher and Michael Corcoran as to the permanent nature of Irishness evolved into descriptions of steadfast Irish loyalty to the United States, like in the program for the 1919 Irish Race Convention, which included a 1782 quote from a Frenchman in the United States that affirmed, "An Irishman, the instant he sets foot on American soil, becomes *ipso facto* an American…the very existence of America probably owed its preservation to the fidelity of the Irish."[650] The Irish diaspora in the United States had begun to describe itself instead as a community of Americans with special ties to Ireland that merited acting upon through the support of Irish nationalism but did not negate their place in the United States. Mexican Americans, too, saw a change in the way that community leaders wrote and thought about them. From the days of Juan Cortina through even the writings of the *magonista* movement, Mexican Americans who took action to improve conditions in their homeland described a transnational identity that could switch from Mexican to American and back depending on the circumstances. In the years after World War I, Mexican-American civil rights

[650] "Irish Immigrants of Revolutionary Days," *The Irish Race Convention: Souvenir Program*, (New York: The Irish World, February 22-23, 1919), 10.

organizations embraced a more American identity, that they could use the rights of citizenship "to resist any manner of unjust or un-American treatment based on prejudice, discrimination or desire to set aside rights, privileges, prerogatives or considerations to which all inhabitants of the United States are entitled under the letter and spirit of the American Constitution."[651] This group of leaders has been drawn into the narrative of American history and labelled the Mexican American Generation to indicate a shift in identity, but examining this evolution within the field of race and discrimination omits their participation in a larger national conversation about what it meant to be an American citizen. Not only did they seek to differentiate themselves from Mexican immigrants, they made a conscious effort to adopt the language of True Americanism.

Both Mexican-American and Irish-American leaders presented a competing vision of American citizenship that did not involve complete assimilation. Within that vision, they saw themselves as part of a community of citizens no less loyal to the United States than any other American, but with a shared heritage that drew together a common set of interests. For Mexican Americans, that meant uprooting the entrenched systems of discrimination that had set into place across the American Southwest following annexation by the United States. Irish Americans, on the other hand, did their best to aid in bringing about the independence of Ireland. Both groups had used transnational border violence in an attempt to bring about their aims in the past, but settled into a new set of methods. As they sought to use public space to promote their respective causes, they ran into an opposition that denied their very legitimacy as citizens, whether it was J. N. Keenan, who wrote to President Harding in regards to the Sims affair, "America for Americans and to hell with the Irish, Germans, British and other foreigners when they carry on

[651] "Preamble," *Order Sons of America: Preamble, Opening Hymn, and Closing Prayer*, Clemente N. Idar Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 8, Folder 4.

objectionable propaganda in this country that is injurious to America and Americans," or County Judge A. B. Crane, who wrote in a letter to Congressman John Box that Mexican immigrants "go on North and soon learn to say that they are native born Mexicans (meaning Mexicans born in the United States) and that they are citizens, so they get that valuable asset American Citizenship without becoming Naturalized."[652] In both cases, American citizens writing to federal politicians sought to call into question the quality of citizenship of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans and in doing so, undermine the ability of those communities to agitate publicly.

Mexican Americans and Irish Americans did not experience the era of True Americanism in an identical manner. While Irish Americans continued to push for Irish independence from Great Britain, Mexican Americans shifted towards backing a civil rights movement that had grown out of South Texas. However, their similar response to critiques from the True Americanist movement demonstrate a parallel conception of the cultural requirements of citizenship that did not include total assimilation. Mexican-American and Irish-American community leaders both pushed to show the ways in which their communities fit the mode of loyal American in the years after World War I and both sets of leaders adopted the rhetoric and symbolism of American patriotism in their attempts to do so. For both Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, this represented a significant deviation in the way in which they had written about, spoken of, and conceptualized their national identity. And for both, ties of heritage remained powerful tools to manifest the internal cohesion of a perceived community in the

[652] J. N. Keenan to President Warren G. Harding, 10 June 1921, RG 80 National Archives, Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on "The Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921, Box 1; Judge A. B. Crane to Congressman John Box, 10 March 1928, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Austin, Box 2, Folder 9.

pursuit of a shared goal, even as leaders more openly embraced American patriotism to fend off outside attacks.

By the end of the 1920s, both Irish Americans and Mexican Americans advanced their respective causes using an approach that resonated but did not conform with the mores of True Americanism. This new nationalism had caused a national rethinking of the role of the U.S. citizen within the American nation and members of America's ethnic communities did not prove immune to this paradigm shift. When Mexican-American civil rights leaders combined the organizations of South Texas into the League of United Latin American Citizens in 1929, they listed the new group's first objective as "[t]o define with clarity, and absolute and unequivocal presision (sic) our indisputable loyalty to the ideals principles, and citizenship of the U.S."[653] So, too, did *The Sinn Feiner*, the printed mouthpiece of the most radical advocates for Irish independence in the United States, advertise to its American readers "a political policy which means not only AMERICA FIRST – AMERICA ALONE – AMERICA SUPREME, but AMERICA ONLY."[654] Both of these reflect True Americanist ideology almost perfectly, and yet both Irish Americans and Mexican Americans continued to use the concept of shared ethnicity to unite behind a set of common interests. True Americanism was able to reshape the rhetoric of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, but conceptions of ethnicity and common heritage ran deep, and continued to play a significant role in the way in which community leaders were able to organize and rally supporters.

---

[653] *Objects and Aims of the United Latin American Citizens*, Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers, The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas, Box 1, Folder 5.

[654] *The Sinn Feiner*, 1920, Maloney Collection of Irish Historical Papers, New York Public Library, Box 11, Folder 2.

The experience of Irish Americans and Mexican Americans was not wholly unique. Other groups of Americans with a strong sense of heritage also felt the rebukes of True Americanists for their failure to assimilate. In fact, when criticizing the loyalty of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans, True Americanists often referenced the failings that they saw in other communities. For True Americanists, the crisis of foreignness in the United States during the 1910s was very real and extremely alarming. In drawing together the way in which Irish Americans and Mexican Americans engaged with this extreme version of American nationalism, this dissertation describes a more general phenomenon of resistance to the postwar impulse towards Americanization. Irish Americans and Mexican Americans represent only two out of a whole host of communities who came under attack. And yet, by exploring them together rather than within their own isolated contexts, a clearer picture of a second, competing postwar nationalism emerges. Certainly other communities responded in a similar manner, and while other historians have examined those communities during the World War I-era, they have done so in a vacuum. This dissertation seeks to begin the act of piecing together the puzzle of America's ethnic groups in the postwar era and the more collective response that they had to True Americanism, and although it would be impossible to cover every community deemed unacceptable by the True Americanists, examining Irish Americans and Mexican Americans in conjunction with one another provides a more cohesive narrative about the way in which Americans outside of the cultural mainstream took on the challenging obligations of World War I American nationalism.

The entrenchment of True Americanism with the propaganda of World War I forced Mexican-American and Irish-American community leaders to develop a multifaceted approach in pursuing their long-term goals, relying on persistent ethnicity to maintain internal group

cohesion while adopting American patriotism to resist the external attacks of True Americanists. As the United States developed modern conceptions of citizenship that would impact the relationship between citizen, nation, and government across the twentieth century, opposing visions clashed. Organizations of Mexican Americans and Irish Americans that sought to effect change, both domestically and internationally, continued to use references to a shared heritage to compel support for a perceived common cause, but as they came under attack for this continued practice, they successfully melded American patriotism with pre-existing notions of heritage. With the concept of American citizenship and its obligations that evolved from this debate and continue to this day, it is important to note the way in which True Americanists used messages of inadequate loyalty to undermine the legitimacy of the concerns of their fellow citizens and the way in which those fellow citizens resisted in order to fight back, making their voices heard and scoring tangible victories in their respective agendas.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Resources

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Council of National Defense. RG 62. Committee on Women's Defense Work: Educational Propaganda Department. National Archives, College Park, MD.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. RG 65. Investigative Case Files of the Bureau, 1908-1922. National Archives, College Park, MD.

General Records of the Department of the Navy, 1798-1947. RG 80. Office of Public Relations. Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy Concerning a Speech of Admiral William S. Sims on the "Irish Question," Delivered in London in June 1921. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

GENERAL ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

Andrés de Luna Collection. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. University of Texas, Austin.

Ben Garza Collection. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. University of Texas, Austin.

Clemente N. Idar Papers. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. University of Texas, Austin.

Enrique Llorente Papers. The New York Public Library, New York.

Joseph McGarrity Papers. Villanova University. Villanova, PA.

Louis Wilmot Papers. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. University of Texas, Austin

Maloney Collection of Irish Historical Papers. New York Public Library, New York.

Oliver Douglas Weeks Papers. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. University of Texas, Austin.

Rómolo Munguia Papers. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. University of Texas, Austin.

Thomas William Sweeny Papers. New York Public Library, New York.

ORAL HISTORIES

Ethel Duffy Turner: Writers and Revolutionaries. Interviewed by Ruth Teiser. Regional Oral History Office, 1966. Bancroft Library, University of California – Berkeley.

Published Primary Sources

Barr, Alwyn, ed. *Charles Porter's Account of the Confederate Attempt to Seize Arizona and New Mexico*. Austin, TX: The Pemberton Press, 1964.

Bernays, Edward. *Propaganda*. New York: Horace Liveright, 1928.

Bogardus, Emory. *The Mexican in the United States*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1934.

Cohalan, Daniel F. *The Freedom of the Seas*. New York: Friends of Irish Freedom Press, 1919.

Creel, George. *How We Advertised America*. New York: Arno Press, 1972.

de Magnón, Leonor Villegas. *The Rebel*. Edited by Clara Lomas. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 1994.

Denieffe, Joseph. *A Personal Recollection of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Giving a Faithful Report of the Principal Events from 1855 to 1867*. New York: The Gael Publishing Co., 1906.

Devoy, John. *Recollections of an Irish Rebel*. New York: Chas. P Young, 1929.

Gamio, Manuel. *Forjando Patria: Pro Nacionalismo.* First ed. Mexico City: Editorial Porrua, 1916.

———. *Mexican Immigration to the United States*. New York: Arno Press, 1913.

———. *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant: Autobiographic Documents Collected by Manuel Gamio*. Dover ed. New York: Dover Publications, 1971.

Godoy, José. *Porfirio Díaz, President of Mexico: The Master Builder of a Great Commonwealth*. New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1910.

Grant, Madison. *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, The Racial Bias of European History*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916.

Harding, Warren G. "Second Annual Message," 8 December 1922. Quoted in Deborah Kalb, Gerhard Peters, and John T. Wooley, eds., *State of the Union: Presidential Rhetoric from Woodrow Wilson to George Bush*. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2007.

Inman, Samuel Guy. *Intervention in Mexico*. New York: George H. Doran Company, 1919.

Irishman, An. *The Fenian Brotherhood*. Boston, MA: Press of Dakin, Davies, and Metcalf, 1864.

Lodge, Henry Cabot. "True Americanism." *The Harvard Graduates' Magazine* 3, (1894-1895): 9-23.

McCombs, Vernon Monroe. *From Over the Border: A Study of the Mexicans in the United States*. New York: Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement, 1925.

McGuire, James K. *The King, The Kaiser and Irish Freedom*. New York: Wolfe Tone Company, 1915.

———. *What Could Germany Do For Ireland?*. New York: Wolfe Tone Company, 1916.

McMaster, John Bach. *The United States in the World War, 1918-1920*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1920.

Mother Goose in War Time. Missouri: George F. Nardin Press, 1918.

Noll, Arthur Howard. "Porfirio Díaz." *The Sewanee Review* 14, no. 4 (October 1906): 436-448.

O'Brien, William and Desmond Ryan, eds. *Devoy's Post Bag*. 2v. Dublin: C. J. Fallon, Ltd., 1948.

O'Connell, Daniel T. *The Truth About Ireland in the Great War*. Washington, DC: Irish National Bureau, 1919.

O'Neill, John. *Official Report of Gen. John O'Neill, President of the Fenian Brotherhood; on the Attempt to Invade Canada, May 25th, 1870*. New York: John J. Foster, 1870.

Perales, Alonso. *En Defensa de Mi Raza*. 2v. San Antonio: Artes Gráficas, 1937.

Post, Louis F. *The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty: A Personal Narrative of an Historic Official Experience*. Chicago, IL: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1923.

Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Forty-Eighth National Convention, 1912. Chicago: J. S. Hyland, 1912.

Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Forty-Ninth National Convention, 1914. Norfolk, VA: Burke & Gregory, 1914.

Proceedings: Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, Forty-Seventh Convention, 1910. Chicago: J. S. Hyland, 1910.

Proceedings of the First National Convention of the Fenian Brotherhood. Philadelphia: James Gibbons, Printer, 1863.

Proceedings of the Fourth National Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood. New York: J. Craft, Steam Book & Job Printer, 1866.

Proceedings of the Second National Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood. Philadelphia: James Gibbons, Printer, 1865.

Robarge, George. *Journal*. New London Submarine School, 1918.

Roosevelt, Theodore. *The New Nationalism*. New York: The Outlook Company, 1910.

———. "True Americanism." *The Forum* 17, no. 2 (April 1894): 196-207.

Sáenz, José de la Luz. *The World War I Diary of José de la Luz Saenz*. Edited by Emilio Zamora. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014.

Schurz, Carl. "True Americanism." In *Speeches, Correspondence and Political Papers of Carl Schurz, Volume I*, edited by Frederic Bancroft, 48-72. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913.

Sims, William Sowden. "The Return of the Mayflower." *The World's Work* 39, (November 1919): 40-65.

Somerville, Alexander. *Narrative of the Fenian Invasion of Canada*. Hamilton, Canada West: Joseph Lyght, Bookseller and Stationer, 1866.

Stoddard, Lothrop. *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

Stowell, Jay S. *The Near Side of the Mexican Question*. New York: George H. Doran Company, 1921.

Sullivan, James P. *An Irishman in the Iron Brigade: The Civil War Memories of James P. Sullivan, Sergt., Company K, 6th Wisconsin Volunteers*. Edited by William J. K. Breaudot and Lance J. Herdegen. New York: Fordham University Press, 1993.

Sundry Civil Bill, 1919: Committee on Public Information. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918.

Tafolla, Santiago. *A Life Crossing Borders: Memoir of a Mexican-American Confederate*. Edited by Carmen Tafolla and Laura Tafolla. Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 2009.

Taylor, Paul S. *Mexican Labor in the United States.* 2v. New York: Arno Press, 1928.

The Four Minute Men of Chicago. Chicago: History Committee of the Four Minute Men of Chicago, 1919.

Tone, Theobald Wolfe. *An Argument on Behalf of the Catholics in Ireland*. Belfast: Society of United Irishmen, 1791.

Turner, John Kenneth. *Barbarous Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969.

Published Secondary Sources

Acuña, Rodolfo. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*. San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1972.

Albro, Ward S. *Always a Rebel: Ricardo Flores Magón and the Mexican Revolution*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1992.

Alexander, June G. *Ethnic Pride, American Patriotism: Slovaks and Other New Immigrants in the Interwar Era*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2004.

Ambrose, Joe. *The Fenian Anthology*. Cork: Mercier Press, 2008.

Anders, Evan. *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso, 1983.

Axelrod, Alan. *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Balderrama, Francisco. *In Defense of La Raza: The Los Angeles Mexican Consulate, and the Mexican Community, 1929 to 1936*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982.

Barrett, James R. *The Irish Way: Becoming American in the Multi-Ethnic City*. New York: Penguin Press, 2012.

Beezley, William and Colin M. MacLachlan. *Mexicans in Revolution, 1910-1946*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009.

Behnken, Brian. *Fighting Their Own Battles: Mexican Americans, African Americans, and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Texas*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Belchem, John and Klaus Tenfelde, eds. *Irish and Polish Migration in Comparative Perspective*. Essen: Klartext, 2003.

Bell, J. Bowyer. *The Secret Army: A History of the I.R.A.* Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1970.

Blaisdell, Lowell L. *The Desert Revolution: Baja California, 1911*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1962.

Boessenecker, John. *Bandido: The Life and Times of Tiburcio Vasquez*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.

Boll, Alfred M. *Multiple Nationality and International Law*. Boston, MA: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007.

Boyce, D. George and Alan O'Day, eds. *Ireland in Transition, 1867-1921*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Bric, Maurice J. *Ireland, Philadelphia, and the Re-invention of America, 1760-1800*. Portland OR: Four Courts Press, 2008.

———. "The American Society of United Irishmen." *Irish Journal of American Studies* 7, (1998): 163-177.

Brown, Jonathan C. "Domestic Politics and Foreign Investment: British Development of Mexican Petroleum, 1889-1911." *The Business History Review* 61, no. 3 (Autumn 1987): 387-416.

Brown, Thomas N. *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890*. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1966.

Brubaker, Rogers. *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Bruce, Susannah Ural. "'Remember Your Country and Keep Up Its Credit': Irish Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865." *The Journal of Military History* 69, no. 2 (April 2005): 331-359.

———. *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865*. New York: New York University Press, 2006.

Brundage, David. *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798-1998*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Burton, William L. "'Title Deed to America': Union Ethnic Regiments in the Civil War." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 124, no. 6 (December, 1980): 455-463.

Camarillo, Alberto. *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848-1930.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Carrigan, William. *The Making of a Lynching Culture: Violence and Vigilantism in Central Texas, 1836-1916*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006.

Carroll, Francis. *American Opinion and the Irish Question, 1910-1923*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978.

Cashman, Sean Dennis. *America in the Twenties and Thirties: The Olympian Age of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*. New York: New York University Press, 1989.

Chávez, John R. *Beyond Nations: Evolving Homelands in the North American World, 1400-2000*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

———. *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

Chrislock, Carl H. *Ethnicity Challenged: The Upper Midwest Norwegian-American Experience in World War I*. Northfield, MN: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1981.

Coerver, Don. *The Porfirian Interregnum: The Presidency of Manuel González of Mexico, 1880-1884*. New Orleans, LA: Tulane University Press, 1979.

Coerver, Don M. and Linda B. Hall. *Revolution on the Border: The United States and Mexico, 1910-1920*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988.

Cohen, Deborah. *Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Cohen, Lizabeth. *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Cornebise, Alfred E. *War as Advertised: The Four Minute Men and America's Crusade, 1917-1918*. Philadelphia, PA: The American Philosophical Society, 1984.

Côté, Jane. *Fanny and Anna Parnell: Ireland's Patriot Sisters*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1991.

Cruttwell, C. R. M. F. *A History of the Great War, 1914-1918*. Chicago, IL: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1991.

Cuddy, Joseph Edward. *Irish-America and National Isolationism, 1914-1920*. New York: Arno Press, 1976.

Curti, Merle. *The Roots of American Loyalty*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1946.

Curtin, Nancy J. "The Transformation of the Society of United Irishmen into a Mass-Based Revolutionary Organisation." *Irish Historical Studies* 24, no. 96 (November 1985): 463-492.

———. *The United Irishmen: Popular Politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791-1798*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Darby, Paul. *Gaelic Games, Nationalism, and the Irish Diaspora in the United States*. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2009.

D'Arcy, William. *The Fenian Movement in the United States, 1858-1886*. New York: Russell and Russell, 1947.

Davis, Richard. *The Young Ireland Movement*. Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble Books, 1987.

Davis, Thomas B. "Porfirio Díaz in the Opinion of His North American Contemporaries." *Revista de Historia de America* 63 (1967): 79-116.

DeConde, Alexander. *Ethnicity, Race, and American Policy: A History*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992.

de León, Arnoldo. *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983.

Deutsch, Sarah. *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Diner, Hasia. *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.

Dolan, Jay P. *The Irish Americans: A History*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2008.

Donnelly Jr., James S. "Propagating the Cause of the United Irishmen." *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 69, no. 273 (Spring 1980): 5-23.

Doorley, Michael. *Irish-American Diaspora Nationalism: The Friends of Irish Freedom, 1916-1935*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005.

Dyer, Thomas G. *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Pluto Press, 1994.

Esposito, Matthew D. *Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics in Porfirian Mexico*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010.

Fahey, Joseph E. *James K. McGuire: Boy Mayor and Irish Nationalist*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2014.

Feeney, Brian. *Sinn Fein: A Hundred Turbulent Years*. Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 2002.

Foley, Neil. *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

———. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.

French, William. *A Peaceful and Working People: Manners, Morals, and Class Formation in Northern Mexico*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

Funchion, Michael. *Chicago's Irish Nationalists*. New York: Arno Press, 1976.

Funk, Clayton. "Popular Culture, Art Education, and the Committee on Public Information During World War I, 1915-1919." *Visual Arts Research* 37, no. 1 (Summer 2011): 67-78.

García, Ignacio. *White but Not Equal: Mexican Americans, Jury Discrimination, and the Supreme Court*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009.

García, Mario T. *Desert Immigrants: The Mexicans of El Paso, 1880-1920*. New York: Yale University Press, 1981.

———. *Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, and Identity, 1930-1960.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

García, Richard A. *Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class: San Antonio, 1929-1941*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991.

Garner, Paul. *Porfirio Díaz: Profiles in Power*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Gellner, Ernest. *Nationalism*. New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Gerstle, Gary. *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Gleeson, David T., *The Green and the Gray: The Irish in the Confederate States of America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Gómez, Laura E. *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race*. New York: New York University Press, 2007.

Gómez-Quiñones, Juan. *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994.

———. *Sembradores: Ricardo Flores Magón y el Partido Liberal: A Eulogy and Critique*. Los Angeles, CA: Aztlán Publications, 1973.

Gonzales, Manuel G. *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2009.

Gonzales, Michael J. "Imagining Mexico in 1910: Visions of the *Patria* in the Centennial Celebration of Mexico City." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 39, no. 3 (August 2007): 495-533.

González, Deena J. *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe, 1820-1880*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

González, Gilberto G. *Mexican Consuls and Labor Organizing: Imperial Politics in the American Southwest.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999.

Graybill, Andrew. *Policing the Great Plains: Rangers, Mounties, and the North American Frontier, 1875-1910*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007.

Greenfield, Liah. *Advanced Introduction to Nationalism*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2016.

Griswold del Castillo, Richard. *La Familia: Chicano Families in the Urban Southwest, 1848 to the Present.* Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1984.

Guerin – Gonzales, Camille. *Mexican Workers, American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939*. (Camden: Rutgers University Press, 1994,

Gutierrez, David. *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Hachey, Thomas E. *Britain and Irish Separatism: From the Fenians to the Free State, 1867-1922*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1977.

——— and Lawrence J. McCaffrey, eds. *Perspectives on Irish Nationalism*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1989.

Hale, Charles. *The Transformation of Liberalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989

Handlin, Oscar. *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People*. 2nd ed. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1973.

Hannigan, Dave. *De Valera in America: The Rebel President and the Making of Irish Independence*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.

Haney-López, Ian. *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race*. New York: New York University Press, 2006.

Hansen, Jonathan M. *The Lost Promise of Patriotism: Debating American Identity, 1890-1920*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Harmon, Maurice, ed. *Fenians and Fenianism: Centenary Essays*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1970.

Harris III, Charles H. and Louis R. Sadler. *The Secret War in El Paso: Mexican Revolutionary Intrigue, 1906-1920*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009.

Hart, John Mason. *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

Hayes-Bautista, David E. *El Cinco de Mayo: An American Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

Hernández, Kelly Lytle. *Migra!: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. Camden: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

Higonnet, Patrice. *Attendant Cruelties: Nation and Nationalism in American History*. New York: Other Press, 2007.

Hilton, Sylvia L. and Cornelius A. Van Minnen, eds. *Federalism, Citizenship, and Collective Identities in U.S. History*. Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2000.

Hoffman, Abraham. *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929-1939.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974.

Horne, Gerald. *Black and Brown: African Americans and the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920.* New York: New York University Press, 2005.

Horowitz, Murray M. "Ethnicity and Command: The Civil War Experience." *Military Affairs* 42, no. 4 (December, 1978): 182-189.

Ignatiev, Noel. *How the Irish Became White*. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Jacobo, José Rodolfo and Carlos Larralde. *Juan N. Cortina and the Struggle for Justice in Texas*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Service, 2000.

Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2000.

Janis, Ely M. *A Greater Ireland: The Land League and Transatlantic Nationalism in Gilded Age America*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2015.

———. "Petticoat Revolutionaries: Gender, Ethnic Nationalism, and the Irish Ladies' Land League in the United States." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 27, no. 2 (Winter 2008): 5-27.

Johnson, Benjamin Heber. *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Johnson, Susan Lee. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2000.

Kaplowitz, Craig Allan. *LULAC, Mexican Americans, and National Policy.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005.

Katz, Friedrich. *The Secret War in Mexico*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Kazin, Michael and Joseph A. McCartin, eds. *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

———. *War Against War: The American Fight for Peace, 1914-1918*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017.

Kee, Robert. *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972.

Kelly, M. J. *The Fenian Ideal and Irish Nationalism, 1882-1916*. Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2006.

King, Desmond. *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Kitchens, John W. "Some Considerations on the *Rurales* of Porfirian Mexico." *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 9, no. 3 (July 1967): 441-455.

Knight, Alan. *The Mexican Revolution*. 2v. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Knobel, Dale T. *America for the Americans: The Nativist Movement in the United States.* New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996.

———. *Paddy and the Republic: Ethnicity and Nationality in Antebellum America*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1986.

Koopmans, Ruud et al. *Contested Citizenship: Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Kreneck, Thomas H. *Mexican American Odyssey: Felix Tijerina, Entrepreneur and Civic Leader, 1905-1965*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001.

Krochmal, Max. *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016.

Langham, Thomas C. *Border Trials: Ricardo Flores Magón and The Mexican Liberals*. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1981.

Larson, Cedric and James R. Mock. *Words That Won the War: The Story of The Committee on Public Information*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1939.

Larson, Robert W. "The White Caps of New Mexico: A Study of Ethnic Militancy in the Southwest." *Pacific Historical Review* 44, no. 2 (May 1975): 171-185.

Lewis, Stephen E. and Mary Kay Vaughan ed. *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

Lieven, Anatol. *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Linberg, Richard C. *To Serve and Collect: Chicago Politics and Police Corruption from the Lager Beer Riot to the Summerdale Scandal, 1855-1960*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991.

Link, Arthur S. *Wilson: The Struggle for Neutrality, Volume III*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960.

Lloyd, David and Peter D. O'Neill, eds. *The Black and Green Atlantic: Cross-Currents of the African and Irish Diasporas*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Lomnitz, Claudio. *The Return of Comrade Ricardo Flores Magón*. New York: Zone Books, 2014.

López, Rick A. *Crafting Mexico: Intellectuals, Artisans, and the State after the Revolution*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Lyons, F.S.L. *Ireland Since the Famine*. Suffolk: Fontana Press, 1973.

Macdonald, Lyn. *1914*. New York: Atheneum, 1988.

MacLachlan, Colin M. *Anarchism and the Mexican Revolution: The Political Trials of Ricardo Flores Magón in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

Márquez, Benjamin. *LULAC: The Evolution of a Mexican American Political Organization.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.

Masich, Andrew E. *Civil War in the Southwest Borderlands, 1861-1867*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017.

Mcaleer, Margaret H. "In Defense of Civil Society: Irish Radicals in Philadelphia During the 1790s." *Early American Studies* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 176-197.

McCaffrey, Lawrence J. *The Irish Diaspora in America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

McGarry, Fearghal. *The Rising: Ireland: Easter 1916*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

McKenna, Joseph. *Voices from the Easter Rising: Firsthand Accounts of Ireland's 1916 Rebellion*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2017.

McWilliams, Carey. *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States.* New ed. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990.

Meagher, Timothy. *Inventing Irish America: Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928*. South Bend, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2001.

Menchaca, Martha. *Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants: A Texas History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

Meyer, Jean. *The Cristero Rebellion: The Mexican People Between Church and State, 1926-1929*. Translated by Richard Southern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Miller, Kerby. *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Exodus to North America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Molina, Natalia. *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014.

———. "'In a Race All Their Own': The Quest to Make Mexicans Ineligible for U. S. Citizenship." *Pacific Historical Review* 79, no. 2 (May 2012): 167-201.

Moloney, Deirdre. "Land League Activism in Transnational Perspective," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 61-74.

Montejano, David. *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.

Montoya, María E. *Translating Property: The Maxwell Land Grant and the Conflict over Land in the American West, 1840-1900*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Morgan, Jack. *Through American and Irish Wars: The Life and Times of General Thomas W. Sweeny, 1820-1892*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2006.

Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*. New York: Random House, 2001.

———. *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*. New York: The Modern Library, 1979.

Neiberg, Michael. *The Path to War: How the First World War Created Modern America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Neihardt, W. S. *Fenianism in North America*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975.

Ngai, Mae M. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

O'Brien, Sean Michael. *Irish Americans in the Confederate Army*. London: MacFarland and Company, 2007.

Ó'Broin, Leon. *Fenian Fever: An Anglo-American Dilemma*. New York: New York University Press, 1971.

O'Leary, Cornelius and Patrick Maume. *Controversial Issues in Anglo-Irish Relations, 1910-1921*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004.

Orozco, Cynthia. *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009.

Orwell, George. "Notes on Nationalism," *Polemic* 1, no. 1 (October 1945).

Pagán, Eduardo. *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Panunzio, Constantine M. *The Deportation Cases of 1919-1920*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1970.

Pascoe, Peggy. *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Peck, Gunther. *Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Migrant Workers in the North American West, 1880-1930.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Pérez, Emma. *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Piccato, Pablo. *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900-1931*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001.

Plascencia, Luis F. B. *Disenchanting Citizenship: Mexican Migrants and the Boundaries of Belonging*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012.

Pubols, Louise. *The Father of All: The de la Guerra Family, Power, and Patriarchy in Mexican California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Quinlivan, Patrick and Paul Rose. *The Fenians in England, 1865-1872: A Sense of Insecurity*. New York: Riverrun Press, 1982.

Raat, W. Dirk. *Revoltosos: Mexico's Rebels in the Unites States, 1903-1923.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1981.

Ramírez, José A. *To the Line of Fire!: Mexican Texans and World War I.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009.

Marta Ramón. *A Provisional Dictator: James Stephens and the Fenian Movement*. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2007.

Reisler, Mark. *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900-1940.* Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976.

Reséndez, Andrés. *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico, 1800-1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Rivas-Rodríguez, Maggie and Emilio Zamora ed. *Beyond the Latino World War II Hero: The Social and Political Legacy of a Generation.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009.

Rodriguez, Gregory. *Mongrels, Bastards, Orphans, and Vagabonds: Mexican Immigration and the Future of Race in America.* First Vintage Books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 2007.

Rosenbaum, Robert J. *Mexicano Resistance in the Southwest: The Sacred Right of Self-Preservation.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

Ruiz, Vicki. *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Ryan, Desmond. *The Fenian Chief: A Biography of James Stephens*. Miami, FL: University of Miami Press, 1967.

Samito, Christian G. *Becoming American Under Fire: Irish Americans, African Americans, and the Politics of Citizenship During the Civil War Era*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004.

San Miguel Jr., Guadalupe. *"'Let All of Them Take Heed:' Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.

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

Sandos, James A. *Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan of San Diego.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.

Sanger, George P. ed. *The Statutes at Large and Proclamations of the United States of America from December 1869 to March 1871*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1871.

Schults, April L. *Ethnicity on Parade: Inventing the Norwegian American Through Celebration*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.

Servín, Elisa, Leticia Reina, and John Tutino, eds. *Cycles of Conflict, Centuries of Change: Crisis, Reform, and Revolution in Mexico*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

Seward, John H. "The Veracruz Massacre of 1879." *The Americas* 32, no. 4 (April 1976): 585-596.

Sim, David. *A Union Forever: The Irish Question and U.S. Foreign Relations in the Victorian Age*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013.

Skuban, William E. *Line in the Sand: Nationalism and Identity on the Peruvian-Chilean Frontier*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007.

Slotkin, Richard D. *Lost Battalions: The Great War and the Crisis of American Nationality*. New York: Henry Holt, 2005.

Smith, Anthony D. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

———. *Theories of Nationalism*. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.

Smith, Rogers M. *Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.

Snay, Mitchell. *Fenians, Freedmen, and Southern Whites: Race and Nationality in the Era of Reconstruction*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007.

Sterba, Christopher M. *Good Americans: Italian and Jewish Immigrants During the First World War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Stimson, Grace Heilman. *Rise of the Labor Movement in Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955.

Thompson, Jerry. *Cortina: Defending the Mexican Name in Texas*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007.

———. *Fifty Miles and a Fight: Major Samuel Peter Heintzelman's Journal of Texas and the Cortina War*. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1998.

———, ed. *Juan Cortina and the Texas-Mexico Frontier, 1859-1877*. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1994.

———. *Mexican Texans in the Union Army*. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1986.

———. *Tejano Tiger: José de los Santos Benavides and the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1823-1891*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2017.

———. *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray*. Austin, TX: Presidial Press, 1976.

Truett, Samuel. *Fugitive Landscapes: The Forgotten History of the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Tucker, Philip Thomas. *Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers*. Abilene, TX: McWhiney Foundation Press, 2006.

Vanderwood, Paul J. *Disorder and Progress: Bandits, Police, and Mexican Development*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981.

Vargas, Zaragosa. *Crucible of Struggle: A History of Mexican Americans from Colonial Times to the Present Era.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Vaughn, Stephen. *Holding Fast the Inner Lines: Democracy, Nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

Ward, Alan J. *Ireland and Anglo-American Relations, 1899-1921*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969.

Whelan, Bernadette. *United States Foreign Policy and Ireland: From Empire to Independence, 1913-1929*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006.

Williams, William J. "Josephus Daniels and the U.S. Navy's Shipbuilding Program During World War I." *The Journal of Military History* 60, no. 1 (January 1996): 7-38.

Wilson, David A. *United Irishmen, United States: Immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998.

Womack, John. *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1969.

Yarbrough, Jean M. *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012.

Young, Elliott. *Catarino Garza's Revolution on the Texas-Mexico Border*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.

———. "Remembering Catarino Garza's 1891 Revolution: An Aborted Border Insurrection." *Mexican Studies* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 231-272.

Zamora, Emilio. *Claiming Rights and Righting Wrongs in Texas: Mexican Workers and Job Politics During World War II*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009.

———. *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993.

Zieger, Robert H. *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000.

Unpublished Secondary Sources

Cano, Gustavo and Alexandro Delano. "Working Paper 148: The Mexican Government and Organized Mexican Immigrants in the United States: A Historical Analysis of Political Transnationalism, 1848-2005." For *The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies*, University of California – San Diego (June 2007): 1-49.

Díaz, Stephanie Louise. "Hyphenated Citizen: A Biography of Clemente Idar, The American Federation of Labor's First Mexican-American Organizer, 1918-1934." Master's Thesis, University of Central Oklahoma, 2013.

Periodicals

Congressional Record
El Nuevo Mundo (San Francisco)
Four Minute Men News
General Bulletin
Harper's Weekly
La Prensa (San Antonio)
LULAC News
News Letter of the Irish National Bureau
Regeneración
The Albion
The Chicago Daily Tribune
The Clan-na-Gael Emmet Anniversary Magazine
The Clan-na-Gael Journal
The Clansman
The Gaelic American
The International Socialist Review
The Los Angeles Times
The New York Daily Tribune
The New York Herald
The New York Times
The New York Tribune
The Official U.S. Bulletin
The San Antonio Daily Express
The San Antonio Light
The Sinn Feiner
The Sun (New York)
The Tucson Daily Citizen
War Information Series