

revolutions began in the northern tier of states (Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia) and culminated with East Germany's decision to reunify on October 3, 1990. The southern tier states, more divided ethnically, and the poorest of satellite countries, have found transition replete with economic crises, internal wars, and the difficulty of the transformation from socialism to free enterprise. This is problematic not only because of the sheer magnitude of the task but also because the "Old Guard" has remained in many of those areas split by ethnic and religious diversity.

The breakdown of the Soviet Union was essentially completed by the end of 1991. Comprised of 15 republics, the multi-ethnic population experienced ethnic and religious xenophobia, disgust with the domination of the "nomenklatura," the failures of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, the retreat from the adulation of Leninist teachings, a foreign debt of more than \$70 billion, and the central government's refusal or inability to create a new currency. Yeltsin's initial attempts to privatize industry occurred as breadlines, energy breakdowns, and anxiety increased. The authors see the role of the United States as one of providing machinery, free trade, and technical and financial assistance to dismantle nuclear weapons.

The last three chapters are primarily policy recommendations. For example, the U.S. should promote both the EC and NATO in Europe. The U.S. should not repeat its mistake after World War II, by precipitously pulling troops out of Europe. Internally, the U.S. must stress police protection and reform of the educational system and reduction of the budget deficit. Above all, the U.S. should maintain cooperation with the Atlantic Alliance.

For the most part, this work is well-organized but suffers from the standard problem of chronology versus topical arrangement. For example, the EC, though discussed early in the book, is not clearly described until later chapters. Repetition is fairly common. And the problems of writing recent history are apparent; most of the references are secondary sources. Given the above weaknesses, this remains an excellent reference for an upper-level undergraduate course either in post-1945 Europe or American-European relations. The first five chapters are excellent. They can provide material for lectures on the history of the transatlantic alliance. Because the last three chapters are policy statements, they might best be omitted if used in an undergraduate course. Alternatively, these policy statements could serve well as a vehicle for graduate students to exercise analytical skills. Obvious supplemental work would include research of the events that have occurred since the writing of this book at the end of 1992.

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**George J. Sanchez.** *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945.* New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. Pp. 367. Cloth, \$35.00. ISBN 0-19-506990-0.

*Becoming Mexican American* explores the complex process by which Mexican immigrants and their American-born children living in Los Angeles between 1900 and 1945 were transformed from being Mexicans living in the United States to ethnically and culturally identifying themselves as Mexican Americans. Following an introduction that reviews the historiography, both sociological and historical, on cultural adaptation and ethnic identity of immigrants in general and Mexicans in particular, Sanchez divides his study into four major parts.

Part one, "Crossing Borders," identifies first the changing economic and social factors within Mexico from 1900 to 1920 and then the "attracting" factors in the United States, most often economic opportunity, even if low paying or migratory jobs, that encouraged Mexican peasants and even the middle class to leave first their villages and then their country during this period. The author also sets the Mexican experience in perspective to other immigrant experiences, noting the circular pattern of migration that marked Mexican immigrants as it often did other groups. Although most Mexicans entered through Texas, the search for employment led many of these immigrants eventually to settle in Los Angeles. While students may find the use of graphs, tables, and percentages less than fascinating, this section, like others

in the book, offers instructors the opportunity to have their students evaluate whether the statistical evidence really supports the author's conclusions.

Part Two, "Divided Loyalties," discusses the early efforts by both American institutions and the Mexican consulate to "Americanize" Mexican immigrants living in Los Angeles in the 1920s. The American efforts, most often progressive and Protestant in orientation, centered on morals, habits, and English literacy, while the Mexican efforts approached the immigrant as a returning resource who could bring back skills to a developing Mexico. Leaders of both campaigns were middle class and progressive in attitude, and viewed the Mexican immigrant as a class apart since he was most often a blue collar and even more likely a migratory worker. Sanchez concludes that this separation of the classes tended to negate the efforts of both the American and Mexican establishments in truly reaching the majority of Mexicans in Los Angeles in much more than encouraging English literacy. One important exception to this limitation is that the Mexican effort to inspire loyalty to Mexico encouraged an ethnic pride that fostered a growing identity as an ethnic American.

Parts Three and Four, "Shifting Homelands" and "Ambivalent Americanism," contain the real essence of Sanchez's conclusions about why and how Mexicans became Mexican Americans. "Shifting Homelands" examines the changes in religious practices, entertainment, work, and family life that truly moved Mexicans in Los Angeles away from their Mexican orientation towards roots in American cultural patterns that they uniquely adapted to their Mexican heritage. This section could be particularly useful for instructional purposes as it demonstrates the use of diverse data such as popular music and radio advertisements to support some of the author's conclusions. His argument, that as immigrants married, children were born here, home ownership increased in the barrios, and more and more Mexicans in Los Angeles were coming to see themselves as Mexican Americans, seems well founded and logical.

It is in his final major division, "Ambivalent Americanism," that Sanchez presents his most important conclusions. Despite important changes earlier, it was the 1930s, Sanchez argues, that solidified the transformation of Mexicans into Mexican Americans in Los Angeles. The impact of economic hard times, Mexican and American efforts at repatriation, New Deal policies that encouraged labor organization, in which many second-generation Chicanos participated, and the coming of age of American-born children created a population that saw themselves as an ethnic group within America. It is not surprising that Sanchez identifies the rise of the second generation as the crucial turning point for the creation of a new identity as Mexican Americans.

A scholarly work using a multi-disciplinary approach, this book is sometimes repetitive, and at times reveals its origins as a doctoral dissertation. As such, many undergraduates would find *Becoming Mexican American* difficult reading. Far too limited in scope to be used as a text, even in a course centering on Chicano history, the book does have several strengths if used for students in upper-level or graduate history courses.

First, it is an excellent example of a case study approach to exploring broader historical questions through an in-depth analysis of what is either an identifiably representative or unique example. Second, the book and its topic are interesting, and Sanchez has done an admirable job of research. As well, he has included comparisons with other Chicano centers, such as San Antonio, and other immigrant groups. Finally, for either teachers or students the 48 pages of endnotes and 23 pages of bibliography offer a gold mine of sources and ideas for the study of Mexican Americans beyond the confines of Los Angeles. However, it seems likely that Sanchez's book will be more valuable to instructors than to students.

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