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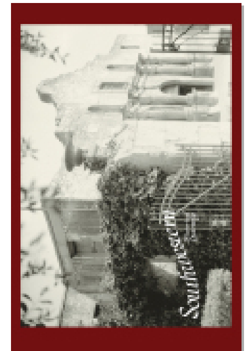

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José T. Canales, c. 1909–10. *Courtesy of State Preservation Board, Austin, Texas.*

Refuting History Fables: Collective Memories, Mexican Texans, and Texas History

By Omar Valerio-Jiménez*

In summer 1935, Carlos E. Castañeda and José T. Canales exchanged letters discussing their goals of correcting the omission of Tejanos from public school history textbooks. Castañeda worked as an archivist, but would become a distinguished professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin, while Canales was a civil rights activist and former state legislator. A lawyer by training, Canales was also an avid lay historian who wrote scholarly essays and engaged in spirited debates with academics. Both believed in preserving Tejano archives, so Canales asked Castañeda to deposit various items in the Genaro García Collection at the University of Texas, which Castañeda supervised. The documents included primary sources and articles about Tejanos' role in the state's independence struggle, a rebellion led by Juan Cortina (a great uncle of Canales), and the legislative report from the Canales-initiated Texas Ranger investigation in 1919.[1] In one letter, Canales stated, "I assure you Doctor, that public opinion will change within five years and a new Texas History will be written wherein acknowledgment will be made for the services rendered by the Mexican Texans in behalf of Texas

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[1] Carlos E. Castañeda, "Why I Chose History," *The Americas* 8 (April 1952): 478; Félix Almaráz Jr, "Carlos Eduardo Castañeda, Mexican-American Historian: The Formative Years, 1896–1927," *Pacific Historical Review* 42 (August 1973): 334; Almaráz, "Castaneda, Carlos Eduardo," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fca85> [Accessed Oct. 3, 2016].

Independence."[2] Canales optimistically believed the efforts of likeminded scholars would change the official version of Texas history within a half-decade. He and Castañeda probably could not imagine the role of Tejanos in Texas history would continue to be debated in the twenty-first century.

This essay explores early efforts to challenge the omissions and negative characterizations of Tejanos in the state's history and in public school textbooks. Several intellectuals and organizations engaged in these efforts during the 1930s, when the economic stress of the Great Depression increased xenophobia. Anti-immigrant sentiment was directed at ethnic Mexicans in general as Anglo Americans failed to distinguish between Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants.[3] These tensions led the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) to distance itself from Mexican immigrants while emphasizing their members' U.S. citizenship and loyalty as it pursued civil rights reforms.[4] One of LULAC's reform campaigns was to revise Texas history textbooks. LULAC blamed the state's history textbooks for distorting Tejano history by mischaracterizing the Texas Revolution as a racial conflict between Anglo Texans and Mexicans without acknowledging Tejano participation in the separatist rebellion. The state's Anglo-centric history textbooks, in LULAC's view, were not only biased, but helped justify contemporary discrimination against Tejanos.[5] The writings and personal correspondence of Castañeda, Canales, Adina Emilia De Zavala, and María Elena Zamora O'Shea illustrate their pursuit of LULAC's goal to revise the state's history of Tejanos. Canales was one of LULAC's founders, Zamora O'Shea and Castañeda were members, and De Zavala was in frequent contact with LULAC members.[6] Tejanos' lack

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[2] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, July 17, 1935, Box 9.6, Carlos E. Castañeda Papers, (Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin); John Morán González, *Border Renaissance: The Texas Centennial and the Emergence of Mexican American Literature* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 113.

[3] I use the term "Mexican Americans" to refer to U.S. citizens of Mexican ancestry, "Mexican immigrants" to refer to Mexican citizens living in the United States, and "ethnic Mexicans" to refer to people of Mexican ancestry irrespective of citizenship.

[4] Mario T. García, *Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, and Identity, 1930–1960* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989), 29–33, 35, 46; Benjamin Márquez, *LULAC: The Evolution of a Mexican American Political Organization* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 19–22, 37–38; Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 134–136; David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 74–78.

[5] Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 110–111.

[6] On Canales as LULAC founder, see Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 163–166. While he remained a Mexican citizen, Castañeda was an "honorary member" of LULAC, and he became a regular member after becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen. Félix D. Almaráz Jr., *Knight Without Armor: Carlos Eduardo Castañeda, 1896–1958* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 80; Craig A. Kaplowitz, *LULAC, Mexican Americans, and National Policy* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005), 44. Zamora O'Shea had joined LULAC by 1937. Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 5, 94; Andrés Tijerina, "Historical Introduction," in Elena Zamora O'Shea, Andrés Tijerina, and Leticia Garza-Falcón, *El Mesquite: A Story of the Early Spanish Settlements Between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, As Told by 'la Posta Del Palo Alto'* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), xviii.

of positive representation in the state's history textbooks, they argued, contributed to their second-class citizenship. They had direct knowledge of the state textbooks' deleterious effects on schoolchildren because all four had worked in the state's public school system. Castañeda, De Zavala, and Zamora O'Shea had all worked as schoolteachers. Zamora O'Shea also had been a school principal, while Canales and Castañeda had been school superintendents.

These four intellectuals represent a generation that endeavored to combat the racial animosity directed at Mexican immigrants through various means. They claimed whiteness to varying degrees, as did other LULAC members, in order to exercise citizenship rights and they identified Mexican Texan ancestors as patriotic to disprove the distorted historical interpretation of their forebears as disloyal.[7] Like African American scholars of the same period, these intellectuals sought to create a new narrative of the past, or a "counter-memory," that included Tejanos.[8] Their efforts to create a new, more inclusive history and preserve historical sources on Tejanos were part of their struggle to advance civil rights reforms for Mexican Texans.[9] While they shared ideological goals to refute negative interpretations of Tejanos, their efforts were not always literally coordinated because they operated in different arenas. Castañeda was an academic whose publications challenged negative portrayals of Spanish colonists, while Canales was more directly involved in civil rights campaigns. De Zavala and Zamora O'Shea sought reform through historical preservation and writing historical publications for the general public. Each of them shared a commitment to preserve Tejano archives and often coordinated these preservation efforts.

During the 1930s, ethnic Mexicans throughout the United States experienced significant tensions as the Great Depression gripped the nation, joblessness rose, and nativism increased. In the previous two decades, the number of Mexican immigrants had swelled because the

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[7] Beginning in the early 1930s, Neil Foley argues, middle-class Mexican Americans, including LULAC members, "sought to overcome the stigma of being Mexican by asserting their Americanness. In the process, they equated Americanness with whiteness." See Foley, "Partly Colored or Other White: Mexican Americans and Their Problem with the Color Line," in Stephanie Cole and Alison M. Parker, *Beyond Black and White: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the U.S. South and Southwest* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 125.

[8] Anthony L. Brown, "Counter-memory and Race: An Examination of African American Scholars' Challenges to Early Twentieth Century K-12 Historical Discourses," *The Journal of Negro Education* 79, No. 1 (2010): 55–56; LaGarrett J. King, Ryan M. Crowley, and Anthony L. Brown, "The Forgotten Legacy of Carter G. Woodson: Contributions to Multicultural Social Studies and African American History," *The Social Studies* 101, No. 5 (2010): 213–214.

[9] Among the cohort of intellectuals and lay historians who published revisionist histories between the 1930s and 1950s were Jovita González, Alonso Perales, Rubén Rendón Lozano, and J. Luz Sáenz. For a brief description of these intellectuals and their scholarship, see Arnoldo De León, "Texas Mexicans: Twentieth-Century Interpretations," in *Texas Through Time: Evolving Interpretations*, ed. Walter L. Buenger and Robert A. Calvert (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 20–49.

turmoil of the Mexican Revolution (1910–20) pushed them out of Mexico, and the increasing employment opportunities created by the United States' entry into World War I pulled them north. They also filled a labor need created by a decrease in the availability of southern and eastern European immigrants, whose continued arrival in the United States was subject to quotas beginning in the 1920s.[10]

The arrival of numerous Mexican immigrants, however, exacerbated racial tensions by contributing to the immigration debate over origins quotas. Blaming immigrants for lowering wages and working as strikebreakers, many labor unions sought to curtail immigration from Mexico. They joined restrictionists who successfully lobbied to pass the so-called quota laws of the 1920s. These immigration opponents argued that the nation also had a "Mexican problem" caused by immigrants who fueled an increase in disease, crime, and illiteracy while replacing native-born workers in the nation's agricultural fields. The immigration opponents, however, were unsuccessful in lobbying for a quota on Mexican immigrants. The restrictionists were unable to overcome the efforts of the agricultural industry, which lobbied Congress to exempt immigrants from the western hemisphere. This exemption allowed the agricultural industry to continue to hire Mexican immigrants to labor in jobs few American citizens were willing to accept.[11]

Mexican Americans throughout the nation were troubled that many Americans made no distinction between immigrants who remained Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans with United States citizenship. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Mexican Americans struggled to exercise their rights as United States citizens, but were stymied by the legacies of conquest.[12] Although promised full citizenship rights by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the U.S.–Mexico War in 1848, most Mexican Americans could not exercise those rights due to Anglo Americans' dominant racial views. The surge in Mexican immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries clearly exposed the contradictions between the promises of full citizenship and Mexican Americans' second-class status. Mexican Americans had

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[10] In addition, some European immigrants left during World War I to serve in the military of their home countries. See Kathleen Mapes, "'A Special Class of Labor': Mexican (Im)Migrants, Immigration Debate, and Industrial Agriculture in the Rural Midwest," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 1, No. 2 (2004), 66–67.

[11] García, *Mexican Americans*, 27.

[12] For examples of the effects of U.S. conquest on Tejanos, see David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836–1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); Armando C. Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734–1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998); Andrés Tijerina, *Tejano Empire: Life on the South Texas Ranchos* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998); and Omar S. Valerio-Jiménez, *River of Hope: Forging Identity and Nation in the Rio Grande Borderlands* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013).

mixed reactions to the large influx of Mexican immigrants. While some welcomed the new arrivals, others were hostile to immigrants with whom they competed for jobs and housing.[13] Moreover, as the nation's economy deteriorated with the onset of the Great Depression, local and federal government agencies began targeting Mexicans for deportation. In December 1930, Secretary of Labor William N. Doak ordered agents of the Bureau of Immigration to identify and deport undocumented workers, beginning with those who were presently on strike. In response to harassment and intimidation, some Mexican immigrants "voluntarily" returned to Mexico. From 1929 to 1937, between 350,000 and 1,000,000 people left the United States for Mexico, including U.S.-born children of immigrant parents.[14]

In addition to external tensions over Mexican immigrants, the Mexican Texan community's internal disagreements provided the background context for the efforts of intellectuals who sought to correct the state's official history of Tejanos. As part of the so-called "Mexican-American Generation," whose members became politically active in the 1930s, they entered politics determined to forge "a new consciousness among Mexican Americans" and to establish civil and political organizations apart from those which welcomed Mexican immigrants.[15] Such goals motivated activists in South Texas to establish the League of Latin American Citizens in 1927, one of LULAC's predecessor organizations, and exclude Mexican immigrants from membership. One of the main proponents for excluding immigrants was José T. Canales.[16] Two years later, he helped establish LULAC, which also excluded Mexican immigrants from membership. The organization's founders justified this exclusion by arguing that a Mexican American organization would make more progress than one including immigrants (i.e., non-U.S. citizens) because U.S. citizens had specific rights (e.g., the right to vote and sit on juries) that would advance their goals, while Mexican immigrants did not. Moreover, Mexican immigrants could appeal to the Mexican consulate for assistance, LULAC founders

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[13] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors,* 37–38, 46–65.

[14] Francisco Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995, revised ed., 2006), 149–151, 336; Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), 126–127; Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors,* 72; Camille Guerin-Gonzales, *Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Labor, 1900–1939* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 94, 111.

[15] Anthony Quiroz argues that returning World War I veterans combined with an increase in middle-class Mexican Americans fueled the beginning of the Mexican American movement to "claim citizenship" in the 1920s. See Anthony Quiroz, *Claiming Citizenship: Mexican Americans in Victoria, Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005), xvii, 16.

[16] According to Orozco, the League of Latin American Citizens (LLAC) was "sometimes also called the Latin American Citizens League (LACL)." Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed,* 125–126, 151, 156.

argued, while Mexican Americans had to rely on the U.S. government.[17] Some LULAC members believed that distancing themselves from Mexican immigrants would help convince Anglo Americans to accept them as U.S. citizens, stop grouping Mexican Americans with Mexican immigrants, and halt labeling Mexican Americans as "foreigners." LULAC exalted the U.S. citizenship of its members and encouraged them to become politically involved to fight against discrimination.[18] While distancing themselves from Mexico and Mexican immigrants, LULAC members remained proud of their ethnic roots. "Being a Mexican by blood and being just as proud of my racial extraction as I am of my American citizenship," wrote LULAC founder and San Antonio lawyer Alonso S. Perales, "I feel it my duty to deny most emphatically that the Mexican race is inferior to any other race."[19]

Scholars have sometimes characterized LULAC's strategy of promoting loyalty and emphasizing citizenship as assimilationist. LULAC members, however, held contradictory and complicated views of the relationship between their ethnicity and citizenship. The organization's strategy to distance itself from Mexico and Mexican immigrants partially explains its name as the organization's founders chose "Latin American" to avoid the negative associations with "Mexican."[20] As political scientist Benjamin Márquez and historian Cynthia Orozco have shown, LULAC activists chose this strategy of pledging loyalty to the United States to further their claim of being "100% Americans" in an attempt to reap the full benefits of U.S. citizenship.[21] Yet, LULAC's political views cannot be characterized as exclusively assimilationist. In an unsigned *LULAC News* editorial entitled "Are Texas-Mexicans 'Americans'?," the author (likely the newsletter's editor, F. Valencia) portrayed Mexican Texans as the original "white" settlers of Texas while casting Anglo American colonists as "foreigners."[22] Valencia and other LULAC members, however, did not equate Mexican Americans with Anglo Americans, and were not entirely supportive of complete assimilation to Anglo American society.

Valencia's characterization of Tejanos as the original "white" settlers of the region was consistent with LULAC's emphasis on whiteness. In the view

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[17] Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed,* 128–131, 138–143; Richard García, "Alonso S. Perales: The Voice and Visions of a Citizen Intellectual," in *Leaders of the Mexican American Generation,* ed. Anthony Quiroz (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2015), 99.

[18] "Aims and Purposes of The League of United Latin American Citizens," *LULAC News,* April 30, 1932, 19; Matthew Gritter, *Mexican Inclusion: The Origins of Anti-Discrimination Policy in Texas and the Southwest* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012), 83; García, *Mexican Americans,* 29–33, 46; García, "Alonso S. Perales," 94, 99.

[19] García, "Alonso S. Perales," 96.

[20] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors,* 74–78; García, *Mexican Americans,* 35.

[21] Márquez, *LULAC,* 19–22, 37–38; Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed,* 134–136.

[22] *LULAC News,* April 30, 1932.

of most Anglo Americans, Mexicans' Spanish, African, and Indigenous ancestors made them into an inferior "mongrel" people. Legal scholar Laura Goméz has framed Mexican Americans' conflicting legal and social status succinctly by writing, "tensions around Mexican Americans' racial status arose because this legal whiteness contradicted the *social* definition of Mexicans as non-white."[23] To understand some LULAC members' claims to whiteness, it is important to review the political environment in which the organization was operating in the 1930s. LULAC members knew that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed Mexican Americans U.S. citizenship rights. Because white Americans were the only group who could legally exercise full citizenship rights in the mid-nineteenth century, the treaty legally equated Mexican Americans with white Americans. However, most Anglo Americans considered Mexicans to be non-white because of their racially mixed ancestry. Their classification as non-white angered many Mexican Americans, such as LULAC President Alonso Perales, who wrote, "we are very proud of our racial origins and do not wish to give the impression that we are ashamed of being called 'Mexicans.' Nevertheless, we have always resented the inference that we are not white."[24]

LULAC members, however, did not hold a shared view of whiteness. Rather than a monolithic view of their racial identity, LULAC members held multiple positions that reflected the varied ancestry of Mexicans as well as ideological influences from Mexico. Canales believed Mexicans had a "Latin" background linking them to the great civilization created by the Romans. Individuals of the "Latin" race, argued Canales, had become great musicians, artists, and political leaders. Moreover, he maintained that Mexicans, Anglo Americans, and Mexican Americans shared a "Latin" background.[25] While Canales's views were not unique, there were some LULAC members whose views about whiteness were more complicated. Among the most vigorous defenders of Mexicans' "whiteness" claims were several members who proudly proclaimed their own Indigenous ancestry. Alberto García, for example, highlighted Mexicans' Indigenous ancestors by emphasizing their racial intermixture with Aztec and Mayan Indians.[26] José de la Luz Saenz, a schoolteacher and activist from South Texas, went a step further by self-identifying as an Aztec Indian.[27]

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[23] Laura Goméz, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 83.

[24] Alonso Perales quoted in Neil Foley, "Partly Colored or Other White," 131.

[25] José T. Canales, "The Romans of Today," *LULAC News,* February 1, 1932, 5; García, *Mexican Americans*, 43.

[26] García, *Mexican Americans*, 44.

[27] Benjamin H. Johnson, "The Cosmic Race in Texas: Racial Fusion, White Supremacy, and Civil Rights Politics," *Journal of American History* 98 (September 2011): 416–417. LULAC members often took pride in their Aztec, Mayan, or Toltec ancestry but denied any ancestry to non-sedentary Indian groups. They embraced an Indigenous ancestry, but only to those groups who were seen as having advanced

These claims to Indigenous ancestry were consistent with the racial views dominant in Mexico, but they clashed with the racial views of Americans steeped in the nation's racial binary classification system. According to Mexican philosopher and politician José Vasconcelos, Mexicans were a "cosmic race" because of their racial ancestry. Unlike Anglo Americans' negative views of racial mixture, Vasconcelos and other Mexican intellectuals offered a positive view of racial fusion. They believed mestizos were a superior race due to their racial fusion as opposed to European eugenicists' beliefs that racial mixture degraded the "white" race.[28] Vasconcelos's views, argues historian Benjamin Johnson, influenced many LULAC members. Some aspects of the "cosmic race" idea were evident in LULAC members' pride in their Indigenous and Spanish ancestries, their insistence on Mexican Americans' white status, and their belief that Mexicans were a separate race.[29]

LULAC's emphasis on claiming whiteness for Mexican Americans as a means of obtaining full U.S. citizenship rights was not the same as supporting white supremacy. Scholars have criticized LULAC's strategy of claiming whiteness and some members' racist views towards African Americans, but these ideas were far from universally accepted because there were large variations in the racial views of LULAC members. Other scholars have characterized the organization's strategy as pragmatic but misguided, or as "legal opportunism," but one that did not support white supremacy or the concept of racial purity for Mexican Americans.[30] Several LULAC members, for example, vehemently criticized Anglo Americans' practice of racial segregation and racial classification. Although they sought to obtain a white status, LULAC members did not believe in their own racial purity and were critical of Anglo Americans' own racial purity claims. The racial views of Alonso S. Perales are exemplary of LULAC members who were proud of their mixed racial ancestry, but also claimed whiteness. According to political scientist Benjamin Márquez, Perales "never argued that Mexican Americans were racially identical or culturally similar to Anglos nor did he believe that cultural assimilation was a desirable goal."[31] Moreover, several LULAC members supported

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civilizations. See Patrick D. Lukens, *A Quiet Victory for Latino Rights: FDR and the Controversy over "Whiteness"* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 97, 201.

[28] Johnson, "The Cosmic Race," 404, 409–411; Lukens, *A Quiet Victory for Latino Rights*, 83–84.

[29] Johnson, "The Cosmic Race," 417.

[30] Lukens, *A Quiet Victory for Latino Rights,* 98; Carlos K. Blanton, "George I. Sánchez, Ideology, and Whiteness in the Making of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, 1930–1960," *Journal of Southern History* 72 (August 2006): 604.

[31] Benjamin Márquez, "In Defense of My People: Alonso S. Perales and the Moral Construction of Citizenship," in *In Defense of My People: Alonso S. Perales and the Development of Mexican-American Public Intellectuals*, ed. Michael A. Olivas (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2012), 34. Perales, like other LULAC members, understood that claiming whiteness (though not racial purity) also meant claiming to be "not Black" in the context of the U.S. racial hierarchy. See Johnson, "The Cosmic Race," 415.

multiracial coalitions, condemned white supremacy, and linked the discrimination experienced by African Americans, Mexican Americans, and American Indians.[32]

Along with touching on LULAC's complicated relationship with the concept of whiteness, "Are Texas-Mexicans 'Americans'?" advanced an assertive claim to history on behalf of Mexican Texans. It describes the guarantees promised by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and argues that the nation had not kept these promises. It then directly links Tejanos' second-class citizenship to several civil rights issues facing them, including the denial of suffrage, non-representative jury service, the lack of Mexican Texan elected officials, segregated schools, and limited access to public places. LULAC sought to develop members who were loyal to the U.S. Constitution, Author F. Valencia argued, and to show that Tejanos participated in the Texas struggle for independence. Correcting the 1930s version of early Texas history, the editorial identifies Mexican Texans as patriots, participants and survivors of the battle of the Alamo, and signers of the state's declaration of independence. Valencia implicitly linked the consequences of Tejanos' second-class citizenship to the omissions and negative characterizations of Mexican Texans in the state's history textbooks. By highlighting Tejanos' contributions to the Texas independence struggle, Valencia placed Mexican Texans back into Texas history in order to advocate for civil rights, and to establish in his conclusion that "Texas-Mexicans are *emphatically* real Americans."[33]

José T. Canales was similarly concerned with revising the state's history to offer a more positive portrayal of Tejanos and to advance Mexican American civil rights. Canales practiced law in South Texas and became a representative to the Texas House, serving five terms between 1905 and 1921.[34] While not serving in the House (he was not in office from 1911 to 1917), Canales worked as the elected superintendent for Cameron County schools from 1912 to 1914. His legislative proposals and his educational reform efforts were shaped by his family's long history in colonial Texas and by the discrimination endured by Tejanos. Beyond his duties as an elected official, Canales sought to use his influence to diminish racial

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[32] Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 126–131, 126–130; Johnson, "The Cosmic Race," 416–418.

[33] *LULAC News*, April 30, 1932.

[34] Richard Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers: Myth, Identity, and Power, 1910–1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2001), 14–18; Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2003), 43; Michael John Lynch III, "South Texas Renaissance Man: The Humanitarian, Political, and Philosophical Activities of Judge J. T. Canales" (M.A. thesis, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, 1996), 5–7; Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed,* 95; Evan Anders, "Canales, Jose Tomas," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcaag> [Accessed Aug. 18, 2016].

tensions and protect the Mexican Texan community. During the border raids caused by the Plan de San Diego uprising and subsequent repression in 1915–16, for example, Canales organized the "Canales Scouts" to help federal officials stop the cross-border raids. He also urged the military to reduce their violent repression of the local Mexican Texan population.[35]

As a state representative in 1919, Canales launched a legislative investigation into the abuses of the Texas Rangers during the previous five years and filed nineteen charges against the force. The Rangers had long exacerbated racial tensions, but their abuses escalated during the so-called Border War of 1915–16. In twelve days of hearings during which eighty witnesses contributed some 1,400 pages of testimony, Canales sought to convince fellow legislators to reform the Rangers by limiting their number, holding the force accountable to local officials, and making them liable to civil suits for abuse of authority. Unfortunately, the governor and other legislators stymied many of his proposed reforms, but the investigation led to the cancelation of individual special Ranger appointments, the dissolution of several companies of regular Rangers, and the dissemination of detailed testimony and photographic evidence of the Rangers' widespread abuse of Tejanos.[36] Canales was motivated by the Rangers' contemporaneous abuses and by his family's collective memories of conquest. Since the early nineteenth century, the Rangers had helped keep ethnic Mexicans subordinate by terrorizing the community and intimidating voters. Because of his background as a lawyer and his ancestors' struggle to obtain the proper documentation to certify their Spanish and Mexican land grants, Canales was well aware of the importance of preserving official documents.[37]

Attentive to the importance of the Texas Ranger investigation, Canales subsequently ensured a copy of the 1919 legislative testimony was preserved. In July 1919, his last legislative act transferred a copy of the proceedings to the Archives section of the Texas State Library. "Perhaps aware of the possibility that the copy might disappear," wrote historian Richard Ribb, "Canales included in his resolution [which directed officials to deposit the testimony in the archives] the necessity for obtaining a receipt from the State Librarian."[38] Canales's suspicions appeared well

[35] Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers," 55, 118–119; Evan Anders, "Canales, Jose Tomas."

[36] Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers," 1, 202–300, 302–348, 369–370; Johnson, *Revolution in Texas,* 171–175.

[37] Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy,* 158; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas,* 43–47; Charles William Goldfinch and José Tomás Canales, *Juan N. Cortina: Two Interpretations (The Mexican American)* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), 17–41; Jerry D. Thompson, *Cortina: Defending the Mexican Name in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 28–32, 37–38; Valerio-Jiménez, *River of Hope,* 179, 224.

[38] Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers," 205n685.

founded. Writing to Carlos Castañeda in 1930, Canales offered a copy of the investigation to place in the archives at the University of Texas. By this time (only eleven years after the investigation), the copy Canales had deposited at the state archives had already been misplaced, or so it seemed. Significantly, Canales did not place another copy with the library. Instead, he sought a way around the library's hold on official records by depositing a copy with a friendly archivist at an alternate location. The Ranger investigation testimony remained inaccessible at the Texas State Library for many years until, through sheer persistence, doctoral student James Sandos gained access to it in the mid-1970s.[39]

The identity of one individual who had gained access reveals much about the Texas State Library administration's politics. Prior to Sandos, the only historian to gain access to this Ranger investigation testimony was Walter Prescott Webb, who published a glowing portrayal of the law enforcement force.[40] Canales understood that the "archives [are] never a neutral space," as his suspicions along with the experience of researchers at the state library confirmed archivist Alex Poole's argument that "second-class citizenship thrived in the archives."[41]

Given the Texas State Library's preference to grant preferential access to the 1919 legislative testimony, Canales made a wise choice in depositing a copy of the proceedings at UT Austin's Genaro García Collection. Referring to the Ranger investigation testimony, Canales wrote "I want you to take and place it where it shall be preserved as it may become very important in the future."[42] His prescient remarks allude to the importance of archive preservation, as well as to safeguarding official testimony of state-sponsored abuses. Canales's words and actions reflect his intentions to portray Tejanos positively within the official history of Texas, and to preserve testimony about the Rangers' persecution of Tejanos for future historians. His actions underscore Canales's understanding of the power of archives in shaping history. As archivists Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook have argued, "archives—as records—wield power over the shape and direction of historical scholarship, collective memory, and national identity, over how we know ourselves as individuals, groups, and societies."[43]

Likewise, Castañeda understood the power of archival preservation. Castañeda's response to Canales acknowledged the importance of the

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[39] Ibid.; Benjamin H. Johnson to Omar Valerio-Jiménez, July 28, 2016, e-mail.

[40] Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers," 205n685.

[41] Alex H. Poole, "The Strange Career of Jim Crow Archives: Race, Space, and History in the Mid-Twentieth Century American South," *The American Archivist* 77 (Spring/Summer 2014): 24, 26.

[42] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Nov. 4, 1930, Box 9.6, Castañeda Papers.

[43] Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2:1–2 (2002): 2.

Ranger investigation proceedings, and also made a promise that Canales probably could not secure from the state archivists. "Let me assure you that I shall be delighted to get that copy of the Ranger investigation," Castañeda wrote. He then promised that "I will see to it that it is not lost or misplaced, for as you say it is a most interesting incident whose permanent record should be safeguarded for future generations."[44] Canales and Castañeda understood that future historians would depend on the existence of and access to such records.[45]

In addition to preserving historical sources, Canales endeavored to revise the state's history to include Tejanos. As president of LULAC in 1932–33, Canales sought to fulfill one of the organization's stated goals by promoting the idea that nineteenth-century Tejanos had been loyal to the state. The official LULAC letterhead, which stated that the organization wanted "to honor the memory of Texas Mexicans and the other Latin American patriots who fought for the independence of Texas," supported Canales's objective. Unfortunately, Texas law-enforcement officials repeatedly ignored Tejanos' pledges of loyalty, preferring to criminalize and abuse them. The experience of Mexican Texans during the Border War of 1915–16 demonstrated their tragic in-between status. They were not fully accepted as U.S. citizens, and yet they did not have Mexican citizenship. According to literary scholar John Morán González, this border conflict convinced many Mexican Texan activists of the Mexican government's unwillingness to protect their community despite Tejanos' strong political and cultural identification with Mexico. Neither did the U.S. federal government intervene to protect a Mexican Texan community under assault.[46] Writing to Castañeda, who was superintendent of the San Felipe Independent School District in Del Rio in 1934, Canales described his efforts to solicit two articles on Tejanos' contributions to the history of Texas. He asked his former law partner, Harbert Davenport, to revise an article entitled "Some Mexicans who helped make the history of Texas" for publication alongside an article solicited from Castañeda. Canales reminded Castañeda of the latter's promise to write an article that focused on the Mexican Texans "who secured land grants from the State of Texas for services rendered in the Texas revolution."[47] Canales hoped

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[44] Carlos E. Castañeda to José T. Canales, Nov. 12, 1930, Box 9.6, Castañeda Papers.

[45] On the important role of archivists in granting access to archives and how such access shaped historiography of the U.S. South, see Poole, "The Strange Career of Jim Crow Archives," 23–63.

[46] Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 97. Benjamin Johnson argues that Tejano Progressives petitioned the state and federal government to protect ethnic Mexicans during the racial violence of 1916–17, but neither President Woodrow Wilson nor Governor James Ferguson replied. See Johnson, *Revolution in Texas,* 149–150.

[47] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Dec. 12, 1934, Box 26.11, Castañeda Papers.

Castañeda's article would demonstrate that one-fifth of the Texas army consisted of Tejanos.[48]

LULAC proposed to publish these and other articles in time to distribute them in pamphlet form during the celebration of the Texas Centennial (1936) planned in two years. The pamphlet would present a "counter history" of the Texas Revolution to the history presented in the state's textbooks. It was but one part of a detailed LULAC plan to counter the negative depictions of Tejanos in published historical scholarship and public history sites. LULAC pursued this campaign because many of its members blamed the state's history textbooks for "exacerbating Mexican Texan alienation from the United States" by portraying all Tejanos as "foreigners" who had not supported the Texas Revolution.[49] In an attempt to correct this negative characterization through public history, LULAC members suggested that a portrait of Juan Seguín be placed inside the Alamo, and that Tejano Boy Scouts lead tours of the San Antonio missions.[50]

Like members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) who sought to revise depictions of African Americans in history textbooks beginning in the 1930s, various LULAC members understood that textbooks' negative characterizations of Tejanos shaped public opinion.[51] Canales believed publishing an inexpensive pamphlet with an alternative narrative of Tejanos would reach a broad audience, and therefore improve the public view of Mexican Texans.[52] Rubén Rendón Lozano eventually completed the pamphlet project by publishing *Viva Tejas: The Story of the Mexican-Born Patriots of the Republic of Texas* in 1936. *Viva Tejas,* according to Morán González, described Tejanos' significant roles in the state's independence struggle and in the commemorations of the fallen heroes.[53]

As part of the effort to create a counter-memory highlighting Tejanos' role in the state's history, Canales sought to revise the official view of Juan

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[48] According to Paul Lack and Raúl Ramos, the number of Tejanos who fought in the Texian army during Texas's war of secession is difficult to calculate with precision due to incomplete records, but it was a significant number. Raúl A. Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo: Forging Mexican Ethnicity in San Antonio, 1821–1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 161–162; and Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History, 1835–1836* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996), 132, 184. Various LULAC members explicitly criticized the state's history textbooks for anti-Tejano bias.

[49] On LULAC's campaign for the Texas Centennial, see Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 110–119.

[50] LULAC's limited finances prevented the organization from paying for Tejano Boy Scouts to lead tours of the missions. It is unclear if LULAC officially made the suggestion to house a portrait of Seguín to the Texas Centennial Committee. See Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 111–112.

[51] Brown, "Counter-memory and Race," 57.

[52] Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 153.

[53] Ibid., 116–119.

N. Cortina, his great uncle. Cortina was a land grant heir who lived in Brownsville, Texas, from where he led a six-month rebellion in 1859. Incensed by an instance of police brutality against a former Mexican worker on his mother's Rancho El Carmen, Cortina shot the marshal, Robert Shears, and rescued the worker. This incident sparked the rebellion, which exposed long-simmering tensions resulting from the aftermath of the U.S.–Mexico War. Cortina's forces eventually numbered some four hundred men (from both sides of the U.S.–Mexico border), who fought local law enforcement, Texas Rangers, and federal troops. The Cortinistas published several proclamations identifying their motivations for the rebellion, including Mexican Texans' increasing land loss, criminalization, and denial of citizenship rights.[54] A combined force of Texas Rangers and federal army troops eventually suppressed the rebellion, but not before the conflict caused widespread devastation and the abandonment of many ranches from Brownsville to Rio Grande City. Tracing this unjust treatment to U.S. annexation, the Cortinistas accused the United States of failing to uphold Mexican Texans' citizenship rights.[55]

By the 1930s, several historians had published negative portrayals of Cortina, characterizing him as a cattle thief, bandit, and a scourge. Among these scholars were Walter Prescott Webb and J. Frank Dobie, whose influence helped shape public opinion throughout the state. Canales believed the academic and popular views of Cortina were not only mistaken, but also harmful because they led to negative views of Tejanos. As part of the effort to rehabilitate the academic interpretation of Cortina, Canales helped his son-in-law, Charles Goldfinch, obtain primary sources on Cortina not previously consulted by scholars. Goldfinch's thesis, for his master's degree from the University of Chicago in 1949, argued that neither Cortina nor his followers stole any property during their rebellion. Moreover, Goldfinch posited, Cortina had legitimate reasons, including Tejanos' land loss and increasing criminalization, for launching the rebellion.[56] After Goldfinch finished his master's thesis, Canales had it published in book form. Canales subsequently published an essay, "Juan N. Cortina Presents His Motion for a New Trial," in 1951, in which he

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[54] "Difficulties on Southwestern Frontier" (hereafter DSF), 36th Cong., 1st Sess., no. 52, Vol. 7, 1859–60, serial no. 1050 (Washington, D.C.: Thomas H. Ford, Printer, 1860), 71, 79–82; Jerry D. Thompson, *Juan Cortina and the Texas–Mexico Frontier* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1994), 23; Thompson, *Cortina,* 11–12, 39; Thompson (ed.), *Fifty Miles and a Fight: Major Samuel Heintzelman's Journal of Texas and the Cortina War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1998), 17–34; Valerio-Jiménez, *River of Hope,* 222–235; Jerry Thompson, "Cortina, Juan Nepomuceno," *The Handbook of Texas Online,* <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fco73> [Accessed Aug. 8, 2016].

[55] *American Flag* (Brownsville, Tex.), Nov. 26, 1859; DSF 81 (quotes); Goldfinch and Canales, *Juan N. Cortina,* 42–43.

[56] Reprint of Charles W. Goldfinch, "Juan N. Cortina, 1824–1892: A Re-Appraisal" (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1950), in Goldfinch and Canales, *Juan N. Cortina,* 20–71; Evan Anders, "Canales, Jose Tomas"; Thompson, *Cortina,* 2–3.

argued that Cortina had not been given an "impartial trial" by historians who misinterpreted his actions. He decried historians' characterization of Cortina as "'a bandit' and 'a thief'; as 'the red robber of the Rio Grande'; as 'the black sheep of his Mother's otherwise commendable flock'; and as 'The Rogue of the Rio Grande.'"[57] These epithets "like labels on bottles, are of easy manufacture," Canales argued, but they do not reveal the true character of a man. Using published sources and his son-in-law's master's thesis, Canales presented a detailed defense by arguing that Cortina was a diplomat and a good patriotic soldier who opposed slavery in the United States and the French intervention in Mexico.[58] The reinterpretation of the Cortina rebellion was necessary for Canales for personal reasons and because of the Cortinistas's goal: they demanded that the nation respect Mexican Americans' U.S. citizenship rights and honor the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The Cortinistas, in effect, were civil rights predecessors to LULAC, the civil rights organization Canales had helped found.

Canales also sought to disseminate new scholarly interpretations of Cortina to academics whose published works cast Cortina in a negative light. In December 1949, Canales wrote to Castañeda and asked for the mailing addresses of Dobie and Webb in order to send them a copy of Goldfinch's thesis. Both Dobie and Webb excused the Texas Rangers' violence against Mexican Texans and their indiscriminate destruction of Tejano ranches during the Cortina uprising. Moreover, both scholars depicted Cortina negatively as a "black sheep" and a "bandit" who was responsible for a "reign of terror."[59] Castañeda provided the scholars' mailing addresses and acknowledged that the thesis would gain a wider audience as a result of Canales's decision to have it published.[60] Believing that Goldfinch's thesis offered a significant contribution, Castañeda deposited a copy in the Texas Collection of the library at the University of Texas.[61] Within two months of Canales's initial inquiry, he wrote to Castañeda again to inform him that both Webb and Dobie thanked him for their copies of Goldfinch's thesis. Webb replied that "it is too bad that I did not have access to the other side of the story," and offered the excuse that "the

[57] These negative characterizations are found in the following books: John D. Young and J. Frank Dobie, *A Vaquero of the Brush Country: The Life and Times of John D. Young* (1929; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), xii, 49; Walter Prescott Webb, *The Texas Rangers: A Century of Frontier Defense* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965), 176; Lyman L. Woodman, *Cortina: Rogue of the Rio Grande* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1950), 8.

[58] Reprint of José T. Canales, "Juan N. Cortina Presents His Motion for a New Trial," in Goldfinch and Canales, *Juan N. Cortina,* 1–19.

[59] Thompson, *Cortina,* 1–2.

[60] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Dec. 3, 1949, and Carlos E. Castañeda to José T. Canales, Dec. 19, 1949, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers.

[61] Carlos E. Castañeda to José T. Canales, Feb. 3, 1950, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers.

limitation[s of] time, energy[,] and money" led to the one-sided slant of his book, *The Texas Rangers*.[62] Despite his protestations, Webb did have access to various primary sources, which proved the Ranger abuses that he cavalierly ignored, according to Ribb. Dismissing the evidence of Ranger abuses, Webb wrote a book that exonerated "the Rangers as he [vilified] the Border Mexicans."[63] In Webb's view, Ribb maintains, "the Border War becomes a series of unprovoked attacks by Border Mexicans[,] bandits and slackers[,] who murder and destroy property of Anglo innocents."[64]

Webb acknowledged writing the Ranger book in response to the Canales-led 1919 Ranger investigation. Significantly, his book was an extended apology for Texas Ranger abuses, and a thinly veiled argument justifying the Rangers' white supremacy.[65] In closing his 1950 letter to Canales, Webb offered a self-congratulatory spin on his book by writing, "there is some value, however, in presenting one side of the story because it induces another scholar to bring out the other side and fill the gaps."[66] On a subsequent trip to Austin, Canales met with Webb to provide two additional copies of Goldfinch's thesis at the latter's request. Webb personally assured Canales that a revision of Texas history would occur with the publication of a new textbook, and "a new appraisal will be made on Cortina."[67] According to Canales, Dobie also had misgivings about his previously published interpretation of Cortina. In his February 1950 letter to Castañeda, Canales transcribed part of the letter he received from Dobie in which the latter implied that his views changed after reading Goldfinch's thesis. Dobie acknowledged that the truth appeared to be more difficult to comprehend as he grew older. If he were to rewrite his co-authored *A Vaquero of the Brush Country,* Dobie maintained, he would "revise some things said about Juan N. Cortina." Dobie also thanked Canales for copies of a pamphlet on the U.S.–Mexico War that reinterpreted Antonio López de Santa Anna's role in the conflict.[68]

Canales's correspondence with various scholars and activists demonstrate his attempts to change the dominant views of Mexican Texans and create a counter-memory of Tejano involvement in the state's history. In a March 1950 letter to Castañeda, Canales outlined three aims of his life at the current stage of his career. The first was to "do away with

[62] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Feb. 7, 1950, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers.

[63] Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers," 402–408.

[64] Ibid., 408–409.

[65] Ibid., 402–413.

[66] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Feb. 7, 1950, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers.

[67] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Mar. 8, 1950, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers.

[68] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Feb. 7, 1950, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers. Dobie's reference to the book, co-authored with John D. Young, related the experiences of John Young in the nineteenth century. Young and Dobie, *A Vaquero of the Brush Country,* xi–xvi.

Pennybacker's *History of Texas*, which created a great deal of prejudice against our people."[69] His second goal was to vindicate the memory of Cortina from negative depictions, while his third aim was to publish a book burnishing the view of Mexican Americans in Texas history. Anna J. Hardwicke Pennybacker published *A New History of Texas* in 1888, and it quickly became the textbook most widely used to teach Texas history in the state's public schools. Morán González argues Pennybacker's textbook portrayed Anglo Americans as the first settlers of Texas, and thereby ignored various Native American nations and Spanish colonists who were living in Texas when the Anglo American arrivistes first set foot in the region.[70] Not surprisingly, several Mexican Texans sought to revise Pennybacker's damaging portrayal.

Canales was personally aware of the manner in which the textbook's interpretation of Texas history exacerbated racial tensions in public schools. Pennybacker's textbook, Canales maintained, helped Anglo Texan teachers and students portray Mexican Texans as the foreign others and enemies of the "state's true founders." As a teenager, Canales moved from the Corpus Christi area to Austin because he grew tired of a local teacher's overreliance on Pennybacker's textbook, which "failed to recognize Tejano contributions to political and economic development."[71] According to sociologist Paul S. Taylor, the antagonistic views about the role of Mexicans in Texas history was so strong among Anglo American teachers and students that some Mexican Texan students dropped out of school due to their emotional distress.[72]

José T. Canales's friend and confidant, Carlos E. Castañeda, came from humble origins in northeastern Mexico.[73] After his family moved to Brownsville, Texas, his father and mother died, so Castañeda began working part-time at a grocery store and as a math and Spanish-language tutor while attending high school to help support three sisters, with whom he lived. While pursuing his undergraduate and graduate studies, Castañeda worked as a translator, engineering aide, highway supervisor, and Spanish tutor, and later volunteered for the U.S. Army (before he became a U.S. citizen) to support himself and his sisters.[74]

Castañeda's academic career would introduce him to Mexican Texan scholars and activists. While pursuing his doctorate in the 1920s,

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[69] José T. Canales to Carlos E. Castañeda, Mar. 8, 1950, Box 9.7, Castañeda Papers.

[70] Morán González, *Border Renaissance*, 81.

[71] Ribb, "José Tomás Canales and the Texas Rangers," 18.

[72] Paul Schuster Taylor, *An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934), 272–274.

[73] Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor*, 3-4; Alamaráz, "Castaneda, Carlos Eduardo," 320.

[74] Almaráz, "Carlos Eduardo Castañeda," 321–322; Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor,* 5–13.

Carlos E. Castañeda, c. 1930s, *Courtesy of Special Collections Library, University of Houston.*

Castañeda, now married and a father of a young daughter, taught at William and Mary College before returning to Texas to become a librarian at the University of Texas in Austin, a move that allowed him to continue his graduate coursework.[75] As the head librarian of the Genaro García Collection, Castañeda met several LULAC activists through his life-long friend José T. Canales, and he began corresponding with Adina Emilia De Zavala and María Elena Zamora O'Shea, who were involved in historical preservation and revision projects. Although Castañeda sympathized with the goals of LULAC, he strategically avoided becoming involved in ideological debates within the organization. He was careful to remain apolitical because he was a state employee and because he remained a Mexican national until 1936, when he became a naturalized United States citizen.[76] After obtaining his doctorate in 1932, Castañeda continued working as a librarian while publishing various articles and books, and finally secured a position as an associate professor at the University of Texas at Austin in 1939.[77] Citizenship seems to have encouraged him to become more politically involved. In the early 1940s, he took a leave of absence from his academic post to become associate director of the Dallas Regional Office of the Fair Employment Practice Committee, where he investigated discriminatory practices in companies and unions involved in federal defense contracts. In this role, Castañeda became more vocal in disputing discrimination against ethnic Mexicans, African Americans, and American Indians, as well as acknowledging the link between workers' economic exploitation and racism.[78] He became a full professor at the university in 1946 after this wartime leave of absence.[79]

In the early 1930s, Adina Emilia De Zavala exchanged several letters with Castañeda to request research assistance but also to offer her own historical interpretations and share her essays. Best known for her efforts to rescue the Alamo mission complex from developers in the 1900s, De Zavala was also active in promoting Texas history through publications and various conservation efforts. In the late 1880s, she began meeting with other San Antonio women to discuss the state's founders. This women's society group eventually joined the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) as the De Zavala chapter, in honor of Lorenzo de Zavala, her grandfather, and was chiefly responsible for preventing the destruction

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[75] Almaráz, "Castaneda, Carlos Eduardo," 323–334; Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor,* 18–42, 67; Lynch, "South Texas Renaissance Man," 43.

[76] Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor,* 68, 80–81, 153; Castañeda was invited to LULAC's founding convention but did not attend, writing "I to this date am, in reality, a Mexican citizen and can't belong to the League," Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed,* 164.

[77] Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor,* 168-169, 172; Almaráz, "Castaneda, Carlos Eduardo."

[78] Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor,* 216–265; García, *Mexican Americans,* 241–244.

[79] Almaráz, *Knight Without Armor,* 269; Almaráz., "Castaneda, Carlos Eduardo."

Adina De Zavala, c. 1908. *Courtesy of Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas.*

of the Alamo by real estate developers.[80] In De Zavala's earliest letters to Castañeda, she asked for copies of his essays about her grandfather and for information on various missions in Texas.[81] In subsequent letters, De Zavala appeared self-assured in correcting Castañeda on the proper Spanish-language spelling of missions, and they engaged in a friendly disagreement.[82] Her exchanges with Castañeda demonstrated De Zavala's self-confidence in offering her opinion regarding historical issues to a fellow historian with more academic training.

While De Zavala regularly received research assistance from Castañeda, the friendship was mutually beneficial as she often helped Castañeda by locating primary sources or answering questions. In 1940, for example, Castañeda wrote to De Zavala to inquire about a collection of papers belonging to Lorenzo de Zavala that her father deposited at the Galveston Historical Society (GHS) in 1874 but had been withdrawn in 1889. Castañeda's inquiry was spurred not only by a fellow doctoral student who had begun a dissertation on Lorenzo de Zavala, but also by Castañeda's view of her grandfather's sources as a valuable contribution to Texas history. De Zavala acknowledged that she had her grandfather's papers at her house, and would permit Castañeda's fellow student to review them.[83] While she did not indicate why her family removed her grandfather's papers from the GHS, it appears she wanted the sources made more available to fellow researchers, and possibly believed the GHS was not accessible. Like Canales, De Zavala understood the importance of preserving historical sources and ensuring access to future researchers.

De Zavala and Castañeda often asked one another for feedback on their essay drafts and research projects. After learning Castañeda was in the process of writing his multi-volume *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas*, De Zavala urged him to use the term "the Alamo" to describe the fort and mission complex and not simply to allude to the mission. De Zavala referred Castañeda to her book, *History and Legends of the Alamo,* to support her argument and strongly suggested he avoid the mistakes of other contemporary scholars. Her background in historical preservation motivated De Zavala to emphasize a specific interpretation and terminology for the Alamo. De Zavala and Castañeda also visited one another whenever their schedules permitted to discuss history and

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[80] Suzanne Seifert Cottraux, "Missed Identity: Collective Memory, Adina De Zavala, and the Tejana Heroine Who Wasn't" (M.A. thesis: University of Texas at Arlington, 2013), 64, 66–67; L. Robert Ables, "Zavala, Adina Emilia De," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fzafg> [Accessed Aug. 15, 2016].

[81] Adina De Zavala to Carlos E. Castañeda, Apr. 30, 1933, Adina De Zavala to Carlos E. Castañeda, May 23, 1933, Carlos E. Castañeda to Adina De Zavala, May 30, 1933, Box 15.4, Castañeda Papers.

[82] Adina De Zavala to Carlos E. Castañeda, Mar. 20, 1934, Carlos E. Castañeda to Adina De Zavala, Mar. 4, 1934, Box 15.4, Castañeda Papers.

[83] Carlos E. Castañeda to Adina De Zavala, July 22, 1940, Adina De Zavala to Carlos E. Castañeda, July 30, 1940, Box 15.4, Castañeda Papers.

their various projects. Indisputably, De Zavala had previously shared her struggles with Clara Driscoll over control of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. In at least two letters, De Zavala confided in Castañeda some of her difficulties in convincing "Our friends - the enemy—(yours and mine)" concerning the physical description of the Alamo based on primary sources and its current state of disrepair.[84] Her reference to their shared friends and enemies is somewhat ambiguous, but it seems likely De Zavala was referring to Driscoll as the dispute described in the Castañeda letters is one that De Zavala indeed had had with her DRT nemesis. Besides disagreeing on the historical nature of the buildings in the Alamo complex, De Zavala and Driscoll held different views of Mexicans' role in the state's history. According to anthropologist Richard Flores, Driscoll characterized Mexicans as "deeply flawed" and responsible for their own lower socioeconomic status in Texas.[85] In contrast, De Zavala sought to highlight the contributions of Spanish and Mexican settlers to the state's early history. By referring to mutual friends and enemies, De Zavala not only acknowledged a common set of goals but also an ideological alliance with Castañeda and other scholars in their struggle to revise the state's history.

The state's official historical interpretation of its early settlements and of the Texas Revolution inspired De Zavala to challenge the state's neglect of Spanish and Mexican contributions. She came from a well-known family involved in politics in Mexico and Texas. Her grandfather Lorenzo de Zavala was the first vice president of the Texas Republic and one of the creators of its constitution. He had been a former governor of the state of Mexico, congressional representative and senator for his native state of Yucatán, a contributor to Mexico's constitution of 1824, and an empresario in Texas.[86] Born in 1861 near the historic San Jacinto battlefield, where the Texas rebellion ended in success, Adina Emilia De Zavala grew up in Galveston and San Antonio, and received her education at the Ursuline Academy in Galveston and later at Sam Houston Normal Institute at Huntsville before working as a schoolteacher for several years.[87] Her father, Augustine, was the son of Lorenzo de Zavala and his second wife, Emily West de Zavala, an Irish American from New York. Adina

[84] Adina De Zavala to Carlos E. Castañeda, July 30, 1940, Oct. 14, 1940, Box 15.4, Castañeda Papers.

[85] Richard R. Flores, *Remembering the Alamo: Memory, Modernity, and the Master Symbol* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 71–75.

[86] Adina De Zavala, *History and Legends of the Alamo and Other Missions In and Around San Antonio,* edited and introduced by Richard R. Flores (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1996), vii; Raymond Estep, "Zavala, Lorenzo De," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fza05> [Accessed Aug. 15, 2016]. Adina De Zavala capitalized the "de" in her surname, while her father and grandfather did not. Richard Flores, "Adina De Zavala and the Politics of Restoration," in De Zavala, *History and Legends of the Alamo,* liiin3.

[87] Ables, "Zavala, Adina Emilia De."

María Elena Zamora (at the end of the fourth row on the right) pictured in the 1906 *Pedagogue* yearbook. *Courtesy of University Archives, Texas State University, San Marcos.*

Emilia De Zavala also had Irish ancestry from her mother, Julia Tyrrell, whose parents were Irish immigrants. Although scholars have suggested that De Zavala did not identify as a Mexican Texan, she was proud of her Mexican ancestors, and shared alliances with Mexican Texan activists and scholars.[88] De Zavala empathized with Mexicans, Flores argues, while "celebrating Americanism" in her efforts to preserve and highlight the state's Spanish and Mexican pasts.[89]

Like De Zavala, María Elena Zamora O'Shea was a lay historian who often communicated with Castañeda about historical sources and interpretations as she sought to create a counter-memory to the state's official history. She was a Tejana with deep roots in South Texas. Born on a ranch in Hidalgo County, Zamora O'Shea was also a descendant of land-

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[88] Flores, "Adina De Zavala and the Politics of Restoration," xl–lii; Seifert Cottraux, "Missed Identity," 2-4.

[89] Flores, *Remembering the Alamo*, 89.

grant heirs who helped established the *villas del norte* (northern towns) along the Río Bravo (Rio Grande) in the province of Nuevo Santander during the mid-eighteenth century.[90] She absorbed collective memories of conquest from her family, and also learned the value of primary sources because her ancestors had to provide proof of property ownership to the state's courts after the U.S.–Mexico War. Zamora O'Shea's ties to Mexico remained strong after the war as her father, Porfirio Zamora, served in Mexico's Republican forces in their struggle against the French invaders at Puebla.[91] Because her family valued education, it was not surprising that she excelled in school and eventually became a schoolteacher. After becoming literate in Spanish on her family's ranch in Nueces County, she attended boarding school in the late 1880s at Laredo's Ursuline Convent to learn English. Her teaching career began at Palito Blanco, a ranch school in Jim Wells County, when she was only fifteen years old. After seven years, she began working at a school on the King Ranch. Subsequently, Zamora O'Shea furthered her education by attending several universities in Mexico and Texas, and she eventually graduated from Southwest Texas State Normal School in San Marcos, Texas, with a teacher's certificate. Her friendship with Canales had been crucial in helping her gain admission to Southwest Texas State (she was the first Latina to attend that university), and they would remain close friends and allies throughout her life.[92] She devoted herself to education and resented Tejanos' underfunded schools due to the state's classification of Tejanos as non-white, as did other members of LULAC, and, unsurprisingly, she "insisted that she was Caucasian, a white."[93]

Zamora O'Shea and Castañeda shared several goals, including preserving primary sources related to Tejanos' ancestors and correcting the state's omission of Tejano history. As an archivist and historian, Castañeda repeatedly asked Zamora O'Shea about acquiring the personal papers of her father, who had served in Mexico's military and been the personal secretary of Juan N. Cortina from 1865 to 1872, when the latter was a general in Mexico's military.[94] Her father had ties to political and

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[90] Tijerina, "Historical Introduction," x–xi; Valerio-Jiménez, *River of Hope,* 17–91.

[91] Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 71.

[92] Leticia M. Garza-Falcón, "Renewal through Language in Elena Zamora O'Shea's Novel *El Mesquite,*" in O'Shea, Tijerina, and Leticia Garza-Falcón, *El Mesquite,* xxvii–xxx; Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 71–72; Cynthia E. Orozco, "O'Shea, Maria Elena Zamora," *The Handbook of Texas Online* <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fos21> [Accessed Sept. 8, 2016]; "Latino Presence 1906–2006," *Hillviews Magazine* (Texas State University), Spring 2007, 34.

[93] Tijerina, "Historical Introduction," xviii–xix. According to Morán González, "By 1937, Zamora O'Shea had joined the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), praising the organization for its efforts to improve access to public education for Mexican American children and for its antiracist work to restore Mexican American civil rights." See Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 94.

[94] Carlos Castañeda to Elena Zamora O'Shea, June 8, 1929, June 8, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

[95] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, Sept. 9, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

military leaders in Mexico and to the family of Canales. Although Zamora O'Shea understood the importance of depositing her father's personal papers (held by her siblings) at a university archive, she struggled to convince her brother and sister of the need to preserve such papers. In another exchange, she offered to provide Castañeda with a brief biography of her father as well as a few of the books he owned.[95] Both Zamora O'Shea and Castañeda believed it was important to demonstrate Mexican Texans' early literacy and knowledge of history. In the course of their frequent correspondence, Castañeda learned more about her family connections to a famous ancestor. Her maternal grandmother, Concepción García de Moreno, was related to Genaro García, the Mexican historian and politician whose vast collection of books and primary sources Castañeda oversaw at the University of Texas. Castañeda, therefore, sought to convince Zamora O'Shea to share family documents that established the connection to Genaro García and offered to have the university pay for such a collection.[96]

Like Canales, Zamora O'Shea worked tirelessly to correct the state history's omission of Spanish and Mexican Texan colonists' contributions through her work as a schoolteacher, school principal, lay historian, and public intellectual. Throughout the late 1920s and 1930s, she wrote several letters to Canales and Castañeda regarding an essay on Juan Cortina that she sought to publish. After completing a draft, she forwarded the essay to Castañeda for his suggestions and to determine its publication potential. Both Zamora O'Shea and Castañeda agreed that its publication would help refute the bad impressions in Pennybacker's "imaginary history of Texas" that contained "history fables."[97] Zamora O'Shea agreed with Canales in characterizing Pennybacker's textbook as extremely biased against the state's early Mexican colonists and detrimental to the education of the state's Tejano students. She taught school for twenty-three years and was in a good position to understand the deleterious effects of Pennybacker's textbook on school children.[98] As a schoolteacher in South Texas, Zamora O'Shea witnessed the damaging effects of Pennybacker's textbook on her students who stiffened at their desks when she discussed the Battle of Goliad, in which Anglo Texan prisoners of war were executed on orders from General Santa Anna. In *El Mesquite,* a historical novel, she described her goal of placing Tejanos back into history textbooks, "Sometimes I have wondered why it is that our forefathers who helped with their money, their supplies, and their own energies have been entirely forgotten. History

[96] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, Sept. 9, 1929, Oct. 2, 1929, Carlos Castañeda to Elena Zamora O'Shea, Sept.17, 1929, Oct. 24, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

[97] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, undated, Carlos Castañeda to Elena Zamora O'Shea, Aug. 21, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers; Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 84.

[98] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, June 12, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

should be told as fact, pleasant or unpleasant."[99] Zamora O'Shea also corresponded with Canales about her essay on Cortina, and obtained his support for her endeavor. In turn, Canales shared his writings on Cortina with Zamora O'Shea, and also sent her copies of his legislative resolutions on Cortina.[100] Moreover, she offered to provide Castañeda a photograph of her father with Cortina to accompany her essay.[101] Canales, Zamora O'Shea, and Castañeda shared a goal of portraying Cortina and Porfirio Zamora in a more positive light and emphasizing their contributions to the state's early history.

Like other Mexican Texans who corresponded with Castañeda, Zamora O'Shea often sought his expertise in answering her queries regarding specific historical facts. She wrote to ask about the chronology of Spanish colonization and to inquire if the García Collection had specific books on the history of Tamaulipas. Zamora O'Shea also asked Castañeda to confirm her father's descriptions of collective memories he had learned from his family. According to her father, the Spanish established towns in Texas before they created Spanish settlements in California, which Castañeda confirmed.[102] In another letter, Zamora O'Shea described reading about the shipwreck of Pánfilo de Narváez, which brought families to Nuevo Santander's northern region. While this assertion is problematic, she made a convincing argument about the establishment of ranchos in Nuevo Santander before the creation of missions in the region. In making this argument, Zamora O'Shea briefly described several local Indigenous groups—Tampacuas, Carrizos, and Tejones—and concluded by arguing that the colonists who held ranchos in northern Nuevo Santander were the region's true "pioneers." To support her assertion, she alluded to Pennybacker's claims of the existence of vast quantities of mustangs between the Nueces River and Rio Grande. By making this reference to mustangs, Zamora O'Shea attempted to prove that the Spanish colonists who established ranchos were the source of the horses.[103] In a subsequent letter, she mentioned that she would like to prove that Texas was already settled and had an established means of communications before the arrival of René Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, in the 1680s, which was the popular claim in Anglo Texan history books, including Pennybacker's

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[99] Elena Zamora O'Shea, "The Ranches of Southwest Texas As They Were in the '80s–'90s," in Zamora O'Shea, Tijerina, Garza-Falcón, *El Mesquite,* lxxi.

[100] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, June 29, 1929, Oct. 2, 1929, Apr. 28, 1930, July 22, 1930, Feb. 3, 1931, undated, Carlos Castañeda to Elena Zamora O'Shea, July 20, 1929, Oct. 24, 1929, May 11, 1930, May 13, 1931, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

[101] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, June 12, 1929, Apr. 28, 1930, Feb. 3, 1931, Carlos Castañeda to Elena Zamora O'Shea, May 13, 1931, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

[102] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, Oct. 20, 1929, Carlos Castañeda to Elena Zamora O'Shea, Oct. 24, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

[103] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, Oct. 28, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers.

textbook. Zamora O'Shea's determination to disprove that La Salle was the first European to arrive in Texas was partly motivated by the collective memories she absorbed from her father and grandmother.[104] Again, Zamora O'Shea sought to correct the state's omission of the role of Spanish-Mexican colonists, and Tejanos' ancestors, in establishing early settlements in Texas.

Zamora O'Shea was cognizant of the varied ways that historical interpretations were disseminated. Aside from material taught in schools, she worried about the impact of a book and film on the history of Texas. In 1929, she informed Castañeda that a young woman from Dallas was about to publish a book manuscript titled "The Birth of Texas" that ignored Mexican Texans' contributions. She described the author as a staff member of the state's land office who was familiar with the early land titles claimed by Tejanos' ancestors. Zamora O'Shea urged Castañeda to make good use of the library at his disposal and intervene because no one would doubt his word. It is unclear if De Zavala wanted Castañeda to write a response to the book or take some other action, but her uneasiness about a book that slighted Mexican Texans' early history was clear.[105] In a subsequent letter, she expressed her concern more explicitly as she described how a film based on the previously mentioned book would likely perpetuate myths about Tejanos' ancestors by suggesting that "our ancestors were truly brutish." The Mexican Texan "descendants of the first colonists," she argued, "should do something to stop the continuous offenses that they give us in their history books."[106]

Zamora O'Shea had reason to be worried about the proposed film because of an earlier, notorious film that depicted the state's independence struggle, *Martyrs of the Alamo, or the Birth of Texas* (1915), in which the filmmakers perpetuated horrible stereotypes of Mexicans. According to Flores, *Martyrs of the Alamo* was not only supervised by D. W. Griffith, but was also clearly inspired by his explicitly racist film, *Birth of a Nation* (1915). Both were silent films that portray people of color in an intensely negative way. *Martyrs of the Alamo* depicts the Mexican people as drunks, lazy, and lustful of Anglo American women. The film played into the prominent fears of Anglo Americans and supported the state's official depictions of Mexican soldiers and civilians as treasonous, inept, and

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[104] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, Nov. 16, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers; Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 85-87; Natasha Miller Pasternack, "'History should be told as fact': Elena Zamora O'Shea's Reconstruction of the Texas Past" (M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2010), 15–17.

[105] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, Nov. 16, 1929, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers. It is unclear if "The Birth of Texas," was published.

[106] Elena Zamora O'Shea to Carlos Castañeda, April 28, 1930, Box 32.7, Castañeda Papers; Morán González, *Border Renaissance,* 84. Zamora O'Shea might have been referring to the film, *Heroes of the Alamo,* which opened in 1937. Flores, *Remembering the Alamo,* 110.

corrupt.[107] Zamora O'Shea feared the proposed film, based on another flawed history of Texas, might depict Anglo Americans as superior and the Mexican population as debased and uncultured.

The efforts of Castañeda, De Zavala, Canales, and Zamora O'Shea to revise offensive historical interpretations and offer a counter-memory, or alternative narrative, that included Mexican Texans were part of a broad civil rights campaign to obtain full citizenship rights. These intellectuals deserve more recognition for their endeavors to preserve archives related to Tejano history, their determination to create a counter-memory that included Tejanos, and their promotion of their ancestors' significant role in the state's history. Although their activities and pursuits were varied, these scholars shared a commitment to social justice for Mexican Texans. They believed in the significance of Spanish-Mexican contributions, the importance of public education, and the value of preserving archives and historical sites related to Tejanos. These early scholars were immersed in a binational experience by traveling to Mexico, learning about Mexican history, and interacting with scholars from Mexico. They were also proud of their bicultural background, and resisted Anglo American efforts to describe Mexican culture as inferior. Their correspondence demonstrates the significant role they played in challenging the omission of Tejanos from the telling of the state's history, and their strong belief in this exclusion's damaging effects on schoolchildren's education. Their efforts confirm that the struggle against negative portrayals of Mexican Americans in the state's textbooks has been a long process, and it is one which continues in the present day.[108]

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[107] Flores, *Remembering the Alamo,* 98–103.

[108] One example of this struggle is the effort to create a Mexican American studies curriculum and textbook for use in the state's public schools. See Tom Dart, "Classrooms: the latest battleground in Texas's culture wars," *The Guardian* (Manchester, UK), Sept. 19, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/sep/19/ted-cruz-texas-board-of-education-curriculum-hillary-clinton> [Accessed Sept. 20, 2018].