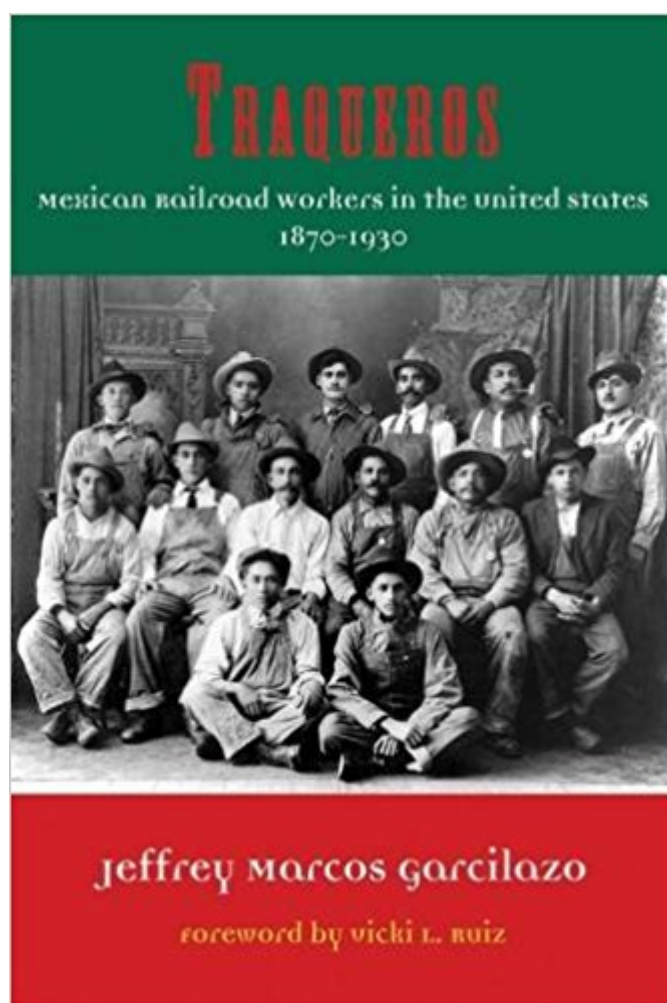


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Traqueros: Mexican Railroad Workers In The United States, 1870-1930 (Al Filo: Mexican American Studies Series)



Synopsis

Perhaps no other industrial technology changed the course of Mexican history in the United States and Mexico than did the coming of the railroads. Tens of thousands of Mexicans worked for the railroads in the United States, especially in the Southwest and Midwest. Construction crews soon became railroad workers proper, along with maintenance crews later. Extensive Mexican American settlements appeared throughout the lower and upper Midwest as the result of the railroad. The substantial Mexican American populations in these regions today are largely attributable to 19th- and 20th-century railroad work. Only agricultural work surpassed railroad work in terms of employment of Mexicans. The full history of Mexican American railroad labor and settlement in the United States had not been told, however, until Jeffrey Marcos Garc f lazo's groundbreaking research in Traqueros. Garc f lazo mined numerous archives and other sources to provide the first and only comprehensive history of Mexican railroad workers across the United States, with particular attention to the Midwest. He first explores the origins and process of Mexican labor recruitment and immigration and then describes the areas of work performed. He reconstructs the workers' daily lives and explores not only what the workers did on the job but also what they did at home and how they accommodated and/or resisted Americanization. Boxcar communities, strike organizations, and "traquero culture" finally receive historical acknowledgment. Integral to his study is the importance of family settlement in shaping working class communities and consciousness throughout the Midwest.

Book Information

Series: Al Filo: Mexican American Studies Series (Book 6)

Paperback: 246 pages

Publisher: University of North Texas Press; Reprint edition (February 16, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1574416278

ISBN-13: 978-1574416275

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 0.7 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #108,561 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > History > Railroads #20 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Railroads #105 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences >

Customer Reviews

“Traqueros is a significant contribution to the scholarly literature of United States labor history, Chicano social history, and ethnic labor history.”—Juan Gálvez-Quiñones, author of *Chicano Politics* “Traqueros is particularly important because of the originality of the research from numerous archives. Several interviews further enrich the work. Highly recommended.”—Dionicio Valdés, author of *Barrios Norteños* “Jeffrey Garcilazo’s book is a signal contribution to the field of Mexican American history—it will long stand in the historiography as the first book in this area of Chicano history from which later efforts will depart.”—Roberto Calderón, author of *Mexican Coal Mining Labor in Texas and Coahuila, 1880-1930* “A meticulous researcher, Garcilazo has gathered a stunning array of archival materials on Mexican railroad workers. From his sources, he reconstructs episodes of daily life from lonely encampments to spontaneous strikes. His arguments on economic stratification, ethnic enclaves, family ties, and identity are solidly grounded in primary documents. Never overstepping the bounds of his evidence, Garcilazo situates traqueros within the larger context of American working class history and his keen insights have retained their currency over the passage of time.”—from the foreword by Vicki L. Ruiz “Garcilazo found a fascinating story of labor migration, community formation, familial relations, and social history. . . . The writing is top notch. . . . In writing the first comprehensive treatment of the traqueros, Garcilazo has broken considerable new academic ground.”—*Montana: The Magazine of Western History* “Garcilazo has made a powerful contribution to the historiography of the railroads as well as the history of Mexican workers in the United States. . . . [I]t is refreshing at a time when analyses of the rise of big business and railroads operate at a level of abstraction that has left the picks and shovels of common laborers barely discernible. Traqueros are an invisible labor force no longer.”—H-SHGAPE, *H-Net Review* “[Traqueros] makes an important contribution to our understanding of migratory workers and the social conditions of working class family life, and it offers a detailed and nuanced portrait of railroad work in the era of Mexican immigrant dominance in southwestern track work.”—*Southwestern Historical Quarterly*

JEFFREY MARCOS GARCILAZO received his doctorate from the University of California at Santa Barbara and was assistant professor at the University of California, Irvine, before his untimely death in 2001. VICKI L. RUIZ is professor of history and Chicano/Latino studies at the University of

California, Irvine.

interesting backstory of history, authors did their research, not a gloss over, ienjoyable read

This book gives a detailed account of the Mexican Railroad Worker in the United States post the Mexican War. The field worker experience is well documented. The rail worker not so much. A description of the living and employment conditions is quite vivid. The demographic breakdown of the Mexican Railroad Workers lends insight into the developing Mexican American Communities in the U.S. at this time its history.

disappointing that not much on Texas was included. Does reveal the contribution of Mexicans to American capitalism. Reminds me of a Day without a Mexican. Started back then.

Great product. Fast delivery.

An unusual topic, lots of new stuff for me

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