

¡Revolución Sin Fronteras! Mexican Immigrants, Mexican-Americans, and Magonistas in Los Angeles, 1900-1930

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Abstract

From the 1900s to the 1930s, the Anglo power structure in Los Angeles silenced all groups who challenged their rule. Ricardo Flores Magón, who was the intellectual writer for the Mexican Revolution in the early 20th century, resisted the Mexican dictator Porfirio Diaz and the Anglo rule in Los Angeles. This paper argues that the Anglo power system targeted Magonistas, followers of Ricardo Flores Magón, Mexican immigrant workers, and Mexican Americans during the Mexican Revolution to prevent an uprising in Los Angeles and to maintain close economic ties with Porfirio Diaz and Mexican elites in general. To prove my thesis, I utilized the Archivo Digital de Ricardo Flores Magón. This online archive contains Ricardo Flores Magón's newspapers *Regeneración* and *Revolucion*. I also utilized the Los Angeles Times Historic. This online archive contains all newspaper articles published by the Los Angeles Times. I used the two newspapers to compare the Magonista and Anglo perspectives. The third online archive I used was the Strachwitz Frontera Collection which contains music written by Mexican and Mexican Americans. The final online primary source collection that I referenced was the Anarchist Library. This online collection contains various documents written by anarchists; including the works written by Ricardo Flores Magón. Using the four primary source collections will support my thesis.

After the United States acquired California from Mexico through imperial conquest, the Anglo power structure attempted to eliminate racial and ethnic communities in the American west. Since the late nineteenth century, Anglo elites utilized mass incarceration and deportation to remove ethnic groups from the population of Los Angeles to preserve their rule and to maintain the image that Los Angeles was a city exclusively for Anglo Americans. However, by the early twentieth century, radical movements south of the United States' border posed a threat to the Anglo power system in Los Angeles.

From the years 1900 to 1930, resistance to the Mexican dictator Porfirio Diaz, and the Mexican Revolution developed not only in Mexico, but also in Los Angeles. While the Mexican dictator Porfirio Diaz imprisoned his critics and political opponents throughout Mexico, the Anglo elite in Los Angeles incarcerated Magonistas, Mexican immigrants, and Mexican Americans. The Mexican Revolution's impact in Los Angeles is significant because it clearly demonstrated how the Anglo power structure removed Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Magonistas, who were the radical anarchist followers of Ricardo Flores Magón, from the population to defend their power structure and reveal the Anglo attempts to suppress foreign radical values. This paper argues that the Anglo power structure in Los Angeles imprisoned Ricardo Flores Magón, who was an important figure of the Mexican Revolution, and targeted Mexican immigrant laborers, Mexican American workers, and Magonistas during the Mexican Revolution to maintain their economic relationship with Porfirian Mexico and prevent a rebellion in Los Angeles.

John Mason Hart's book, *Empire and Revolution: The Americans in Mexico since the Civil War*, documents American imperialism in Mexico after the American Civil War. According to Hart, while Mexico

fought a war against an expansionary France in the 1860s, Anglo Americans moved to the west and the Anglo elite looked to Mexico for imperialistic opportunity. This marked the Anglo initiative to convert Mexico into an Anglo non-settler colony. In addition, the Americans provided the Mexicans with weapons and economic aid to fight off the French, but only a few American politicians and investors aided Mexico and bought land and bonds in Mexico. In this initial stage of Anglo imperialism in Mexico, the Anglos held a small share over Mexican land and resources. However, Porfirio Diaz's rule over Mexico would significantly intensify American economic involvement in Mexico.

According to Hart, Porfirio Diaz and his followers outwardly sought American influence in an effort to modernize Mexico. Here, Diaz initiated his policy of Order and Progress, and the Anglos recognized Diaz as a potential ally. Diaz then eliminated his political opponents and solidified his rule over Mexico. In addition, Diaz sold Mexican land exclusively to Anglo investor for the construction of privatized railroads and resource extraction. Through the alliance between the American political and economic elites and Porfirio Diaz, the policy of Order and Progress surged throughout Mexico, but failed to improve the lives of all Mexicans or modernize Mexico. According to Hart, Porfirio Diaz's rule of thirty-five years over Mexico increased the industrial markets such as mining, petroleum, and timber. Nevertheless, Diaz's policies allowed the Americans to invest and profit heavily in the industrial markets in Mexico while the unskilled laborers of Mexico were forgotten. Diaz's policy of Order and Progress garnered American praise, but the industrial and agricultural Mexican laborers did not receive any opportunities for progress, so they began to look elsewhere for social mobility.

The Mexican laborers then immigrated to the United States for economic advancement. In Mark Reis-

ler's book, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900-1940*, Reisler documents the phases of Mexican workers migrating into the United States. Reisler's book is a landmark publication because it uses immigration records from Mexico and the United States and immigration court hearings to support his claims. According to Reisler, the first phase of Mexican worker immigration into the United States lasted from 1900 to 1916. Reisler continues to argue that the first phase of Mexican immigration into the United States is directly linked to the intensive agricultural and industrial developments in California. Here, the low skilled workers of Mexico who were devastated by Diaz's policies were drawn to travel north of the Mexican border for economic opportunity. Moreover, the Americans incentivized the Mexican laborers to immigrate into the United States with the promise of a \$1.25 wage which was the cheapest wage in America, but was significantly larger than the wage in Diaz's Mexico which was only \$0.125. The Anglo exploitation of Mexican labor was an American call for in-migration, but the outbreak of the Mexican revolution pushed more Mexicans out of Mexico than Anglos had bargained for.

Reisler writes that the Mexican Revolution began in 1910, and the revolution created a larger wave of new Mexican immigrants to the United States. During the Mexican Revolution, the already damaged Mexican economy, employment, and agriculture plunged while poverty, malnutrition, and inflation skyrocketed. The escalation of the Mexican Revolution affected all people of Mexico. Both unskilled and skilled Mexican workers were attracted to the agricultural and industrial developments in California, and ordinary Mexican citizens were attracted to the political stability of California. Moving forward, Hart's essay, "The Evolution of the Mexican and Mexican American Working Classes", in *Border Crossings: Mexican and Mexican-American Workers*

complements Reisler's argument well. According to Hart, the Mexican immigrant laborers who migrated to California prior to the Mexican Revolution actually banded with Mexican Americans in labor unions and labor protests. Similarly, Mexican immigrants who migrated to the United States after the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution entered the United States with socialist values. Hart's argument about the development of the Mexican and Mexican American worker complements Reisler's argument because the United States allowed entry to Mexican immigrants that were able-bodied and of moral character. By moral character, the Anglos meant Mexicans who were not influenced by the Mexican Revolutions. With that being said, the Americans refused to admit Mexican socialists into the United States because the Mexican anarchist Ricardo Flores Magón challenged Anglo rule in the United States, Anglo influence in Mexico, and Porfirian rule in Mexico.

Ricardo Flores Magón was a Mexican anarchist and an important figure in the Mexican Revolution. According to Donald C. Hodges in *Mexican Anarchism After the Revolution*, Magón was the intellectual author of the Mexican Revolution with his radical anarchist/communist plan for a classless society. Ward S. Albro wrote a biography on Ricardo Flores Magón titled *Always a Rebel: Ricardo Flores Magón and the Mexican Revolution* which documents the life of the revolutionary. According to Albro, Magón was born in Oaxaca, lived most of his life under Porfirio Diaz's rule, and was raised in a politically liberal household. Moreover, as Magón entered adulthood he publicly challenged Diaz's rule, and Magón was arrested for his protests. Magón directly dealt with Diaz's oppressive rule over Mexico, however his revolutionary spirit was not crushed by Porfirian censorship. Instead, Magón looked north of the Mexican border for political freedom and a platform to remove Diaz from power.

According to Albro, in the early 1900s, Magón and his followers voluntarily left Mexico for the United States in order to avoid Diaz's persecution, and they trekked through various Anglo cities to avoid Anglo authority. By this time, Diaz and the Anglo elites worked together to silence growing Magonistas. In 1907, the Magonistas reached Los Angeles and continued the publication of their anti-Diaz newspaper *Regeneración* which called for the expulsion of Diaz, but under the name *Revolución* to evade police detection. In a similar manner, Hart's book *Anarchism & the Mexican Working Class, 1860-1931*, argues that in 1907, over 20,000 copies of *Revolución* were distributed in the United States and Mexico, and the Anglo elite blamed the Magonistas' publications as the agitator for the revolts in Mexico. Both Hart and Albro illustrate the Anglo power system's fear of Magonismo in Los Angeles.

Magón's stay and large following in Los Angeles alarmed the Anglo power system enough to imprison them. According to Kelly Lytle Hernandez in *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965*, the Anglo elite jailed Magonistas to disperse the movement and to quell the Mexican Revolution. Considering that Anglos had investments in Mexico, it was the Anglos' interest to protect their imperialist holdings. Thus, Magón's rhetoric posed a threat to American investment in Mexico. Hernandez writes that Magón professed land redistribution for Mexicans. This indicates that the Anglos incarcerated Magonistas within the United States rather than deport them to Mexico so that their revolutionary rhetoric could be silenced.

The historical literature deduces that the Anglo power system imprisoned Magonistas and targeted Mexicans, and Mexican Americans to suppress rebellion in Mexico. However, the literature does not address the

domestic radicalism of people of Mexican heritage within the United States. The Mexican Revolution developed in Mexico and the United States. In Mexico, supporters of the revolution were imprisoned when they challenged Porfirio Diaz. In the United States, people of Mexican heritage were incarcerated because the Anglo elite believed that all Mexicans supported the Magonista movement. In a sense, the Anglo power structure was correct. The ideology of the Mexican Revolution spilled into Los Angeles as Mexican immigrant workers and Mexican Americans in Los Angeles supported the revolution. Thus, the Anglo elite feared that Magonistas, Mexicans, and Mexican Americans would revolt against Anglo rule.

Studying the Mexican Revolution's impact in Los Angeles led me to various archives. Introducing the archives that I utilized is important because it prepares the reader for the contrasting values of the magonistas and the Anglo elite, the political allegiance of ordinary people of Mexican heritage, and Ricardo Flores Magón's personal views of the American prison system. The first archive that I researched was the Archivo Digital de Ricardo Flores Magón. This archive is accessible online and contains various primary sources. The Archivo Digital de Ricardo Flores Magón has every single issue of Magón's newspaper *Regeneración* which was published from 1900 to 1918, and *Revolucion* which was published from 1907 to 1908. Both of Magón's newspapers criticized, challenged, and eventually called for a rebellion against Porfirian rule in Mexico, American interest in Mexico, and the Anglo power structure in Los Angeles. In addition to Magón's newspapers, this primary source collection contains photographs of the Magonistas and their followers. The second primary source collection that I utilized was the Los Angeles Times Historic. This online primary source collection contains every newspaper article that the Los Angeles Times published from the year 1881 to 1987. From 1900 to 1930, the Los

Angeles Times published newspaper articles that supported the imperialist perspective of the Anglo elite. Thus, I used historical Los Angeles Times newspaper articles to contrast the Anglo perspective with the Magonista perspective.

Another primary source collection that I worked with was the Strachwitz Frontera Collection. This collection is a large volume of songs written by Mexicans and Mexican Americans. The corrido, which is best described as a story with instrumental accompaniment, helped me project the voice of ordinary Mexicans and Mexican Americans who lived in Los Angeles from 1900 to 1930. Some corridos praised the Mexican Revolution while others praised Porfirian rule in Mexico. The last collection that I referenced was the Anarchist Library. This online collection has various writings by anarchists, including letters written by Ricardo Flores Magón. The letters by Magón give insight into Magón's view of the Anglo incarceration system. Thus, after utilizing these primary source collections, it is clear that the Anglo elite imprisoned Magonistas, Mexicans, and Mexican Americans to protect their imperialist holdings in Mexico and to prevent an uprising in Los Angeles.

Considering that Ricardo Flores Magón supplied the Mexican Revolution with his ideology, his newspaper *Regeneración* proves a great starting point for research. According to the first issue of *Regeneración*, the newspaper was the result of Mexico's suppressive and corrupt government. Here, Magón appealed to the Mexicans who felt that the government abandoned them. Magón did not argue explicitly that Diaz was the cause of Mexico's faulty government, however he did state that innocent Mexicans suffered at the hands of a corrupt justice system and that Mexicans should remedy the corruption. With this statement, Magón appealed to all Mexicans who were silenced by their government or treated unjustly. At the same time, Magón praised whom

he considered honest government officials. According to Magón, a government lawyer named Acardio Norma earned his place in the justice system because of his honorable work and the efforts made to benefit the Mexican population. Here, Magón identified and sympathized with a government official whom he believed to be of honorable character. Thus, Magón recognized that some government officials could aid the people despite a faulty government; that particular lawyer earned his respect. Moreover, Magón wrote that the Mexican population should confront the supreme court through means of a public demonstration and demand a competent judicial branch. Magón's demands and statements were not radical but reasonable considering that most Mexicans lived in extreme poverty and only Porfirio Diaz's supporters benefited from his order and progress policies. In addition, Magón called for peaceful protests for honest judges. Lastly, in this first issue, Magón called for civil disobedience. However, as Magón criticized Diaz's regime, the Los Angeles Times praised Porfirian Mexico.

The Los Angeles Times was a newspaper that was funded by the Anglo elite to help articulate their values and visions. In addition, during Magón's publication of *Regeneración* and stay in Los Angeles, the editors were ardent capitalists. Thus, the Los Angeles Times appealed to the Anglo power system, but the newspaper also attempted to attract capitalists and the common Anglo populace of Los Angeles. Thus, the Los Angeles Times often approved and praised Porfirio Diaz's oppressive rule in Mexico. According to an article in the Los Angeles Times titled "BUSINESSIN OLD MEXICO.", a border town named Porfirio Diaz promised economic advancement for Americans through investment, and the Mexican town expected economic growth from American presence. The Los Angeles Times article incentivized American capitalists to invest in Mexico because Porfirian ruled encouraged American presence and investment because Diaz believed that Americans

strengthened the Mexican economy. In addition, investments in Ciudad Porfirio Diaz were secure because the town already had trade networks in Europe. The trade Mexican trade networks in Europe were mentioned only to attract more American capitalists in Mexican investment. Moreover, the newspaper article stated that Ciudad Porfirio Diaz had open markets in land for railroad construction and land for cattle raising. This newspaper article tried to articulate the idea that Mexico was a land made exclusively for Anglo economic gain. In addition, the same newspaper article openly praised capitalism in Mexico as Porfirio Diaz sanctioned American holdings in Mexico. However, Anglo praise of Porfirio Diaz's rule in Mexico was not only stated in newspaper publications. In the realm of song, Porfirio Diaz was also praised by his elitist circle in American recording studios.

The Strachwitz Frontera Collection of Mexican and Mexican American Recordings archive contains many songs which include the Mexican corrido. The corrido was popularized during the Mexican Revolution because the songs detailed the developments and participators of the revolution. While most corridos documented the revolutionaries of Mexico, some corridos actually detailed the lives of the Mexican conservatives and praised them. Thus, the corridos of the Mexican Revolution could be aimed at the Revolution's sympathizers, or the conservatives of Mexico who pledged loyalty to Porfirio Diaz. Using the Strachwitz Frontera Songs collection, a corrido that praised Porfirio Diaz further illustrated the American support of Diaz's policies of order and Progress.

The corrido "Gral Porfirio Diaz" by Duetto Acosta narrates Diaz's life and praises his policies and exploits. The corrido was recorded and released in New York and the quality of the recording is clear by early 20th century standards. In addition, the corrido used a finely tuned grand piano and acoustic guitar. Thus,

the corrido was intended for Porfirio Diaz and his band of elites. In addition, the author and performers of this corrido were supporters of Porfirio Diaz and they wanted to praise Diaz with the flattery of song. Moreover, the corrido's opening lyrics state that Diaz was a proud masculine Mexican man continues to reiterate Diaz's bravery. Also, the corrido celebrates Porfirio Diaz's economic policies and argues that he provided for the impoverished Mexicans. Lastly, the corrido establishes that Porfirio Diaz was the greatest president in Mexican history for he fought for liberty and defeated the French. Clearly, this corrido demonstrates the values of Porfirian elitists. However, the most interesting aspect about this corrido is that it was recorded and released in New York. Obviously, the Anglo elite approved of the corrido because it praised their Mexican business partner. Hence, the Americans thanked Porfirio Diaz for business partnership and Anglo investment in Mexico and permitted Mexican musicians to record a corrido on expensive instruments and quality recording systems. As the Anglo elite applauded Porfirian rule in Mexico, Ricardo Flores Magón arrived in the United States with a high level of radicalism and challenged Diaz and the Anglo power structure.

The first issue of *Regeneración* in the second era of the newspaper's publication in 1904 experienced reinstatement by Magón, and the newspaper issue witnessed Magón's challenge against Porfirio Diaz and the Anglo power structure. According to the newspaper article, *Regeneración* was silenced in Mexico, so Magón and his followers transplanted the publication to San Antonio, Texas. Magón indicated that critiques of Diaz were prohibited in Mexico, so he left Mexico and continued his mission for the dethronement of Diaz north of the Mexican border. Moreover, Magón stated that his movement returned to fight against Diaz's corrupt Mexico with enthusiasm, and the newspaper returned to give voice to the agrarian workers' values and struggles. It

is with this statement that Magón appealed to Mexican laborers in Mexico, but he also tried to attract Mexican immigrant laborers and Mexican American workers in the United States.

In a similar manner, Magón critiques the United States' relationship with Mexico. According to Magón's newspaper, Mexican diplomats stationed in the United States collaborated with the American imperialists in the quest for Anglo domination in Mexico. Here, Magón implies that Anglos controlled Mexico as well as Porfirio Diaz. Moreover, Magón writes that Diaz was an embarrassment to Mexican pride and identity because of his policies. Here, Magón clearly exposes Porfirio Diaz as a tyrant who only benefited himself under the image that he was for modernity and the economic development of Mexico. This era of Regeneración directly criticized Anglo rule, so the Anglo authorities worked with the Mexican government to silence Ricardo Flores Magón. As a result, Magón's publication of Regeneración was in constant transit to evade incarceration, and Magón re-named his publication when he reached Los Angeles in 1907.

Ricardo Flores Magón arrived in Los Angeles in 1907 after he evaded capture throughout the United States. Magón understood that his newspaper publication drew attention from the Anglo elite and Mexican authorities. Magón then renamed Regeneración to Revolución to make Mexican and Anglo authorities believe he ceased publication of his radical work while he challenged Porfirio Diaz and Anglo rule incognito. In Magón's first issue of Revolución, he openly declared a battle against Porfirio Diaz and his American allies. According to the newspaper, the main goal of the Magonista movement was to rebel against any form of government who oppressed the populace. In addition, the newspaper was for those who cherished liberty and were willing to rebel if liberty was threatened just as Magón challenged Diaz and had to flee Mexico as a result. There was shift in

Magón's rhetoric in *Revolución*. Magón's writing directly antagonized the power structures in Los Angeles and Mexico. It is clear that Magón's rhetoric became more radical once he published in Los Angeles.

Moreover, Magón declares that his movement protected liberty. The same newspaper issue states that dictatorships such as the one Mexico did not protect liberty but sought to destroy it, and the people of Mexico had to unite to terminate Diaz's dictatorship. Here, Magón declares that peaceful protests were not capable of dethroning Diaz, and that Diaz's regime could only be eliminated through active insurgency. Lastly, Magón declares that all admirers of liberty needed to participate in the battle against oppressive rulers. Clearly, Anglo elites would have taken Magón's declaration as a direct challenge of their rule. As a result, *Revolución* would cease publication in 1908. The halt of the newspaper was caused by Magón's imprisonment in Los Angeles County Jail where he served 19 months.

The Los Angeles power structure imprisoned Ricardo Flores Magón to silence his radical rhetoric in an effort to prevent his ideals from spreading into Los Angeles' population. Yet, after Ricardo Flores Magón was released from Los Angeles County Jail, his revolutionary spirit actually increased dramatically. Magón once again reinstated his newspaper *Regeneración* after his release from jail in 1910. This reinstatement of Magón's paper in the fourth era expressed the pinnacle of radical Magonismo, and fueled Ricardo Flores Magón's ideology throughout Los Angeles. According to the first issue of the reinstated *Regeneración*, the Magonistas, Mexicans, and Mexican Americans still held their ground against Anglo and elite Mexican suppression after three years of forced labor in the American prison system. Here, Magón compares the Anglo power structure to Porfirian dictatorship in Mexico and concludes that both governments were the same. In addition, Magón argues that

Magonistas, Mexicans, and Mexican Americans fell victim to tyranny in the Los Angeles.

Moreover, the newspaper conveyed that the Magonista movement elevated into a new era in 1910, and that the Magonistas contributed to the Mexican Revolution from Los Angeles by publishing radical revolutionary values. Clearly, Magón equally detested Anglo rule in Los Angeles as much as Porfirian rule in Mexico. In addition, Magón openly supported rebellion in Mexico so the Anglo rule hypothesized that Magón would attempt to incite an uprising in Los Angeles. Lastly, the newspaper advised that all people of Mexican heritage and Magonistas to band together and prepare for uprisings. Magón's final declaration for rebellion definitely frightened the Anglo elite because Magón did not explicitly state whether Magonistas, Mexicans, and Mexican Americans should prepare for uprising in Mexico or rebellion in Los Angeles. Thus, there was a dramatic shift in Magón's rhetoric. Magón went from a critic of Diaz to a radical anarchist who challenged Diaz and Anglo rule.

Retrato de grupo. Digital image. Archivo Digital De Ricardo Flores Magón. Accessed February 24, 2019.

<http://archivomagon.net/sin-categoria/galeria-mag-09/>.

In a similar manner, there was a photograph that was published in the same issue of *Regeneración* which clearly illustrates the large number of Mexican and Mexican American supporters of the Magonista movement. According to the same newspaper issue, the photo was taken on August 4, 1910, in front of Union Station in Los Angeles and depicted meeting of Ricardo Flores Magón and his followers with Lazaro Gutierrez de Lara who was a prominent Mexican lawyer in support the Mexican Revolution. The photo was captured in broad daylight

in the center of Los Angeles. Furthermore, Ricardo Flores Magón's followers were so large in numbers that not all were captured in the photo. The number of Magón's followers would have been enough to startle the Anglo power structure in Los Angeles. Magón's publications and his public meetings with his followers frightened the Anglo elite, so the Anglo elite decided that incarceration would eliminate the Magonista movement.

Moreover, the photograph was a testament to Magón's challenge against the Anglo power structure in Los Angeles. Magón chose to meet with a prominent figure of the Mexican Revolution in the center of Los Angeles to send a message to the Anglo elite. Magón's message was that he had enough supporters in Los Angeles to confront the suppressive Anglo power structure. Similarly, the large public assembly of Magonistas captured by the photograph demonstrates that Magón was capable of organizing large scale resistance movements. In addition, the Magonista rally that was held in the center of Los Angeles was reminiscent of Magón's past declarations in *Regeneración* that called for the Mexican population to conduct public demonstrations against Porfirio Diaz. Thus, the photograph perfectly captured the strength and essence of the Magonista movement in Los Angeles. However, the Anglo elite did not stand idly by as Magón challenged their rule. The Anglo elite expressed their opinion of Ricardo Flores Magón through the Los Angeles Times when he was captured and arrested in 1918.

In the Los Angeles Times article "PAIR OF REDS FOUND GUILTY", the Anglo elite celebrated the conviction of Ricardo Flores Magón and his brother. According to the newspaper article, the Magón brothers were found guilty in a federal court for trying to incite arson, murder, and assassination in their publications. Here, the Anglo power system dismissed the causes of the Mexican Revolution and Magón's rhetoric, painted Mexicans and Mexican Americans as a threat to Anglo rule and society and portrayed the Magonistas as vio-

lent criminals. In addition, the newspaper stated that Ricardo Flores Magón would receive 10 years in a federal penitentiary and he would have to pay a \$10,000 dollar fine. Here, the Anglo power structure portrayed themselves as protectors of law and order by heavily punishing the publication of a newspaper. Moreover, the newspaper article stated that Ricardo Flores Magón was just a restless spirit who enjoyed conjuring disorder because he had criminal records in both Mexico and the United States. Similarly, the Anglo elite labeled Ricardo Flores Magón as the sole cause of the Mexican Revolution but failed to acknowledge that Magón was fighting against American imperialism in Mexico as he stated in his newspapers. Lastly, the newspaper article stated that the federal courts continued to look for anyone who worked on the publication of *Regeneración* or had any association with Ricardo Flores Magón. Thus, the Anglo Power Structure in Los Angeles wanted to eliminate any Magonista ideals in Los Angeles, but Magón refused to remain silent while incarcerated in a federal penitentiary.

After Ricardo Flores Magón was found guilty of a federal crime, he was sent to Leavenworth Prison in Kansas to complete his federal sentence. While in Leavenworth prison, Magón kept in touch with supporters of the Magonista movement. Using the Anarchist Library, which contains various primary sources written by Magón, I was given insight on Magón's thoughts of the American prison system through a letter. According to the letter written by Magón from Leavenworth penitentiary, he was only allowed to send out 3 letters per month, and that he appreciated all the letters he received from the supporters of his movement. Here, Magón revealed that his supporters still looked to him for guidance even though he was imprisoned.

Moreover, Magón wrote that he reflected on his time spent in the United States' prison system and concluded that the Anglo power structure's incarceration methods mirrored Diaz's system in Mexico. Even

while incarcerated, Magón denounced the Anglo elite and Porfirio Diaz and maintained that he was imprisoned unjustly. Lastly, Magón compared himself to a seed sower. Magón stated that while he was in prison, he would continue to export his radical ideology by having free Magonistas publish his letters. Hence, like a seed sower, Magón would continue to plant his values in Mexico and Los Angeles. Thus, this letter written by Magón demonstrates that Magonismo survived his last carceral stint.

The corrido also expresses the values of the Mexican Revolution. Corridos that praised the revolution resonated with Magonistas, Mexicans, and Mexican Americans. The song “Corrido Villista” perfectly illustrated that Mexicans and Mexican Americans supported the Mexican Revolution. The song was recorded by Los Alegres de Teran who were a conjunto during the 1940s, and only uses guitar and accordion accompaniment. The corrido was not recorded during the Revolution, as suppressive government in Mexico and Los Angeles would have prohibited any music that challenged their rule and celebrated the insurgent forces, still the corrido survived censorship. The corrido immediately declared loyalty to Pancho Villa and the Revolution because Villa fought for the common man. In addition, the corrido painted Porfirio Diaz as a tyrant who sold Mexico out to the Americans and a selfish person. Thus, people of Mexican heritage in Los Angeles could identify with the corrido.

Furthermore, this corrido had more agency than the corrido that documented Porfirio Diaz’s life. In “Corrido Villista”, the performers state that it was a man’s highest honor to die for Pancho Villa and the Mexican Revolution. In contrast, the corrido “Gral Porfirio Diaz” only argues that Porfirio Diaz was the greatest Mexican president, but the performers did not state that they would die for Diaz. Thus, the difference between

the two corridos clearly demonstrates that Mexican laborers, Mexican American workers, and Magonistas admired the objectives of the Mexican Revolution dearly. In a similar manner, “Corrido Villista” states that Villa’s loyal followers would trek through steep mountains and dense forests to fight anyone who resisted the goals of the Mexican revolution. Evidently, the corrido perfectly encapsulates the fervor that all people of Mexican heritage and Magonistas carried for the Mexican revolution. Thus, Magón’s values which shaped the Mexican revolution survived his death. Similarly, Ricardo Flores Magón’s life was immortalized by another corrido.

Nacho Cardenas wrote and recorded a corrido that documented the life and efforts of Ricardo Flores Magón. The corrido was titled “Corrido a Flores Magón” and was released in the early 1950s. Like “Corrido Villista”, “Corrido a Flores Magón” was released after the events of the song’s subject matter because of suppressive government in Los Angeles. This corrido is not located in any archive, but the song can be accessed through YouTube. In this corrido, Cardenas states that Magón was a proletariat who struggled against corrupt government in Mexico to aid the lower classes. Here, Cardenas summarizes Magón’s mission, but he also implicitly argues that Magón’s mission was justified. Furthermore, the corrido argues that Magón ignited the Mexican revolution and his revolutionary spirit could not be broken by Anglo imprisonment or Anglo assassination attempts. Cardenas’ wants to immortalize Magón as a revolutionary who combated his enemies despite the odds set against him. Lastly, the corrido declares that Ricardo Flores Magón never betrayed his cause and died proudly with his revolutionary vision. Cardenas cemented Magón as the definitive example of the Mexican revolutionary. Furthermore, Cardenas’ corrido was credible because Magón maintained his values even after his death.

“Retrato De Cuerpo Presente.” Digital image. Archivo Digital De Ricardo Flores Magon. Accessed February 25, 2019. <http://archivomagon.net/sin-categoria/galeria-mag-24/>.

Ricardo Flores Magón died while he was incarcerated in Leavenworth Prison in 1922, and his funeral service was held in Los Angeles where his Mexican and Mexican American supporters attended. A photograph that was captured at Magón’s funeral accurately depicts his devotion to the Mexican revolution and Magonismo. Located in the Archivo Digital de Ricardo Flores Magón, the photograph was taken by an anonymous person. In the photo, Magón’s dead body is in an open casket and his casket is covered in floral arrangements. The floral arrangements in the photo indicate that Magón’s large numbers of followers genuinely mourned his death. In addition, Magón’s funeral service was held in a large hall which meant that many people were going to attend his funeral, so his supporters had to find a venue large enough to accommodate the attendees. Moreover, Ricardo Flores Magón’s open casket revealed that he was beaten while in prison. Magón’s face showed bruises. This could only indicate that prison guards assaulted Magón while he completed his prison sentence. The Magonistas displayed Magón’s bruised face to expose the violence Mexicans and Mexican Americans faced in the Anglo prison system. Thus, Magón’s open casket funeral was a political statement against the Anglo power structure in Los Angeles. Lastly, the most distinctive aspect of this photo is a banner that read “Tierra Y Libertad” above Magón’s casket. Obviously, Magón dedicated himself to the Mexican revolution. Despite being imprisoned, demonized, and assaulted by the Anglo elite, Magón continued to resist Porfirian and Anglo rule even after his death. Thus, Magón was truly the prime example of the Mexican revolutionary of the early 20th century, who

fought for all Mexicans and Mexican Americans who were victimized by Anglo and Porfirian rule.

Overall, the Anglo power structure ruled over Los Angeles with a suppressive grip over the populace just as Porfirio Diaz did in Mexico. The Anglo elite did not tolerate any form of resistance to their rule. So, when Ricardo Flores Magón arrived in Los Angeles with his anarchist rhetoric, the Anglo elite decided that Mexican immigrants, Mexican American workers, and Magonistas were a threat their oppressive rule. Hence, after utilizing the perspectives of Magonistas, Anglo political and economic elites, and ordinary Mexicans and Mexican Americas, it is clear that the Anglo elite targeted Mexican immigrant laborers, Mexican American workers, and Magonistas to maintain their economic ties with Porfirio Diaz in Mexico and as method to prevent an uprising in Los Angeles.

Endnotes

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California Press, 2002), 9.

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4 *Ibid.*, 73.

5 *Ibid.*, 74-77.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*, 260.

8 *Ibid.*

9 Mark Reisler, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States,*

1900-1940 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976), 3.

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11 *Ibid.*, 4-5, 14.

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14 John Mason Hart, ed., *Border Crossings: Mexican and Mexican-American*

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19 *Ibid.*, Chapters 2-4.

20 *Ibid.*, 80-81

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24 *Ibid.*, 94.

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