

Nativism, Immigration and the Latinization of America

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Abstract

There has been a great deal of controversy regarding the draconian anti-immigrant measure passed by the Arizona state legislature in April 2010. Liberal groups on the left and conservative groups on the right as well as national political leaders, including President Obama, have taken positions on it.¹ Why is it so controversial? Is this an isolated case or merely the latest one of many contentious anti-immigrant measures? What do the strong nativist responses by political leaders in that state tell us about who we are as a nation and how we view foreigners? This essay explores the significant underlying historical and contemporary factors that help explain the anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States during the early 21st century. I argue that while nativism is impacted by a variety of social, economic, and political factors, one of the most significant is the perceived and actual impact undocumented immigrants are having on American society. These immigrants are contributing to and driving the “Latinization” of America. Latinization, in turn, is changing the face of America.

Introduction

In April 2010, the state of Arizona enacted an immigration bill viewed as draconian by many Americans. The law, known as SB 1070, makes it a state crime to be in the U.S. without proper documents. It allows the police to stop anyone on “reasonable suspicion” that they may be in the country unlawfully and arrest them on the spot if they can’t produce identity papers.² Traditionally the federal government has enforced immigration laws, so this is an extraordinary step taken by the state.

The proponents of this law argue that the number of undocumented immigrants, or ‘illegals’ as they are known, is too high due to failure by the federal government to control immigration. “Illegals” are contributing to crime in the state, straining the country’s social services capability, and threatening both the personal lives of citizens and the security of this nation. The law is the state’s response to this threat and is aimed at bringing some law and order to the area.³

Local, state and national political leaders as well as grassroots, civil rights organizations, and a host of citizen groups have taken positions in support of or in opposition to this bill. Liberal groups on the left fear that this law will lead to “racial profiling” of Mexican immigrants in

¹ This law has raised the issue of the failed federal policy on immigration in general and on the presence of significant numbers of immigrants, especially those without documents, in that state and in other parts of the country.

² Ewen MacAskill, “Arizona goes it alone with tough immigration laws,” April 14, 2010. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/apr/14/arizona-tough-immigration-laws>. Retrieved. 4/14/2010.

³ MacAskill, 2010; “Arizona’s Immigration Frustration: The new state law is the result of a failed national policy,” The Wall Street Journal, April 27, 2010. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703465204575208382473306238.html>. Retrieved 10/4/2010.

particular and of Latinos in general because the vast majority of undocumented immigrants come from Mexico.⁴ Conservative groups on the right, especially the state's political leaders, refute these charges and argue that this measure is necessary in order to protect the border and to halt illegal immigration. President Obama also got involved by publicly opposing the law and filing suit to overturn it.⁵

Legislators are not the only ones engaged in immigrant bashing in Arizona. County sheriffs and local citizen groups are also taking action against undocumented immigrants. For example, County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, an elected official in Maricopa County, Arizona, has conducted a vicious campaign against those crossing the Mexican border "illegally", denied them their human and constitutional rights, and treated them harshly. Although he calls himself the "toughest sheriff in Arizona" the *New York Times* called him "America's worst sheriff".⁶ Sheriff Paul Babeu from Pinal County, Arizona, similar to Arpaio, has cracked down on "illegal" immigrants and appeared on a variety of white nationalists programs to condemn these individuals for increasing local crime and for threatening national security.⁷

Not to be outdone by county sheriffs, local citizens have established several nativist organizations and engaged in vigilante efforts aimed at patrolling the US-Mexico border and making citizens' arrests of undocumented immigrants. Among the most prominent was The Minutemen, a border watch group formed in 2005. Its purpose was to stop undocumented immigrants from crossing a 23 mile stretch of the Mexican border in the southern part of Arizona. The group's intent was to track undocumented immigrants and to report them to the Border Patrol so they could be picked up. In 2010, the group shifted its emphasis to capturing immigrants and drug smugglers instead of just reporting them. But soon thereafter the group quickly disbanded. Its leaders did not want to shoulder the responsibility and liability of potential violence against immigrants by its members and so they shut down their operation.⁸

Arizona, I might note, is not the only state engaged in this controversy. Other states and cities have experienced similar outbursts against undocumented immigrants. In Nebraska, Texas, and Pennsylvania, several municipalities enacted city ordinances against the renting of property or hiring of undocumented immigrants. In Washington State, voters took a position on a ballot

⁴ In this article I will use "Latino" as an umbrella term for several nationality groups such as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Central and South Americans that live in the U.S. Occasionally, I will use the term "Hispanic" interchangeably with Latino, especially when the sources used in this essay utilize it. The term "ethnic Mexicans" will be used to refer to all individuals of Mexican origin, whether they were citizens or not. Other terms such as Mexicans and Mexican Americans will also be used interchangeably with "ethnic" Mexicans. The term Anglo and Anglo-Americans will be used to refer to white Americans of European descent.

⁵ "Feds sue to overturn Arizona immigration law," CNN Politics, July 06, 2010. articles.cnn.com/2010-07-06/politics/Arizona.immigration.lawsuit_1_immigration-la... (Retrieved 10/4/2010).

⁶ "America's Worst Sheriff (Joe Arpaio)," *New York Times*, December 31, 2008. theboard.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/31/americas-worst-sheriff-joe-arpaio/. (Retrieved 10/20/2010).

⁷ "Pinal County Sheriff Babeu condones Neo Nazi J.T. Ready's Mexican hunting trip," Immigration Clearinghouse, June 19, 2010. immigrationclearinghouse.org/pinal-county-sheriff-babeu-condones-neo-nazi-j-t-re... (Retrieved 10/20/2010).

⁸ Brady McCombs, "AZ-based border Minuteman group calls it quits," *Arizona Daily Star*, Wed, March 24, 2010. azstarnet.com/news/local/border/article_7d47c702-378b-11df-95cb-001cc4c03286... (Retrieved 10/21/2010). See also MinutemanHQ.com for additional information on this group.

initiative known as I-1056, which would, among other things, deny social services and driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. California enacted a series of propositions denying undocumented immigrants social services and public education in a language other than English. Massachusetts tried to deny public health benefits to undocumented immigrants.⁹ In Georgia, state representative John Yates proposed that U.S. Border patrol agents "shoot to kill" undocumented immigrants crossing the border.¹⁰ Finally, political leaders in a dozen states are collecting support from legislators throughout the country to challenge automatic U.S. citizenship to the children of "illegal" immigrants.¹¹

Why the concern with undocumented immigrants now and what explains the strong reactions of political leaders and white citizens to them? The following provides a possible answer to this question.

Nativism as used in this essay is defined as an "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., Un-American') connections".¹²

The New Nativism in the Early 21st Century

A few scholars have referred to the spate of negative attitudes towards immigrants in the past several decades as a new nativism.¹³ In what sense is the nativism of the early 21st century different from the anti-immigrant sentiment of the 19th and early 20th century? In what sense is it similar?? Let me suggest several ways.

First, the new nativism targets immigrants of color.¹⁴ At the turn of the century, European immigrants, especially those from southern, central, and eastern Europe, were the primary targets.¹⁵ Although nativists attacked a diverse group of newcomers from Asia, Mexico, and other parts of the world their antipathy was directed at Europeans who were white upon arrival or who became white in the process of assimilation.¹⁶ In the more recent period, nativist hostility is directed at Asians, Muslims, and Latinos.

⁹ "American Nativism is on the March," July 11, 2010. <http://apimovement.com/sb-1070/american-nativism-march>. Retrieved 10/24/2010.

¹⁰ "Georgia Lawmaker Wants Mexican Immigrants Shot," *Prerna Lal*, October 19, 2010. http://immigration.change.org/blog/view/Georgia_lawmaker_wants_mexican_immigrants... Retrieved 10/24/2010.

¹¹ Several state leaders are planning on introducing legislation to repeal parts of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that makes citizens of all individuals born in this country. State Senator Pearce, from Arizona, argues that "wording in the amendment that guarantees citizenship to people born in the U.S. who are 'subject to the jurisdiction' of this country does not apply to the children of illegal immigrants because such families don't owe sole allegiance to the U.S." See Paul Davenport and Amanda Lee Myers, "14 state legislatures target 'anchor babies.'" *Houston Chronicle*, 10/20/10, A6.

¹² John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism: 1865-1925*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1955, 4.

¹³ See, for instance, Sánchez, "Face the Nation," 1997, 1009-1030 and Perea, Ed., *Immigrants Out!* 1997.

¹⁴ Sánchez, "Face the Nation...", 1997, 1009-1030; Feagin, "Old Poison in New Bottles...", 1997, 13-43. In Perea, *Immigrants Out!*, 1997.

¹⁵ Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 1955.

¹⁶ For information on anti-immigrant sentiment expressed towards non-European groups see Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and Rodolfo F. Acuna, *Occupied America: A*

Second, it specifically targets Mexican immigrants. Nativists direct their venom at immigrants who are here “illegally”, i.e., without the proper documents. The vast majority of undocumented immigrants, however, are from Mexico. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, for instance, 57 percent of “illegal” immigrants in 2008 came from Mexico.¹⁷ The sentiments against undocumented immigrants then are, for all practical purposes, against Mexican immigrants. Images circulated by nativists through the popular media or the internet remind Americans that the problem of “illegal” immigrants is a Mexican one.

Third, it does not limit its hostility only to Mexicans without proper documents. All Mexicans and those that look and “speak” Mexican, i.e., Spanish, are suspect in the eyes of nativists. This is the case because it is nearly impossible to distinguish between a Mexican immigrant and a US citizen of Mexican descent or between a Mexican immigrant and someone from El Salvador, Guatemala, Columbia or any other Spanish speaking country in the Americas. The hostility towards all things Mexican is reflected in nativist support for a variety of policies that have little to do with immigration. In Arizona, for instance, legislators enacted a bill to eliminate its ethnic studies program a month after passing an anti-immigrant bill. Nativists felt that the ethnic studies program- an educational program focusing on Mexican American history and culture in the schools- was promoting ethnic solidarity, white resentment, and the overthrow of the U.S. government.¹⁸ Throughout the nation, legislators, educators, and conservative groups also have condemned bilingual education, an instructional approach beneficial to immigrants and U.S.-born minorities who speak a language other than English. The vast majority of children in these programs are Spanish-speaking Latinos. Nativists have argued that bilingual education does not teach English nor does it encourage assimilation. Instead it promotes ethnic solidarity, linguistic separatism and social fragmentation.¹⁹

Anti-Mexican sentiment, I might note, is not a new phenomenon. It is rooted in the negative attitudes English colonists and Anglo Americans have had towards Spaniards and Mexicans over the centuries.²⁰ English colonists inherited anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish views from England during the 16th and 17th century. Many of these views were transferred to the

History of Chicanos (NY: Pearson, 2007). For recent works on the treatment and responses of white European immigrants to nativism see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999); David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs*; Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks: And What That Says About Race in America*; Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (NY: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁷ The U.S. Department of Homeland Security noted that in 2008 25% came from other Latin American nations. In total, 82% of all “illegal” immigrants were from Latin America. See “Illegal Immigration Statistics,” <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/illegal-immigration-statistics.html>. Retrieved 12/22/2010.

¹⁸ Jonathan J. Cooper, “Ariz. Gov signs bill targeting ethnic studies,” *Associated Press*, May 11, 2010. http://us.mg201.mail.yahoo.com/dc/launch?_gx=0&.rand=0sta37ejjpsn. Retrieved 5/12/2010.

¹⁹ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (NY: W.W. Norton, 1991).

²⁰ Weber notes that Mexicans also had negative attitudes towards Anglos although they welcomed their presence in the society and did not view them as a threat. See David J. Weber, ed., *Foreigners in Their Native Lands: Historical Roots of the Mexican Americans* (Albuquerque, N.M.: University of New Mexico Press, 1973).

Catholic Mexican population residing in what became the American Southwest. In making this transfer, Anglos found additional reasons to despise Mexicans in the 19th century. One of the most significant was race mixture. Most Anglo American visitors, merchants, and political leaders, for example, generally agreed that Mexicans had “inherited the worst qualities of Spaniards and Indians to produce a ‘race’ still more despicable than that of either parent.”²¹

Negative attitudes towards Mexicans hardened in the 19th century as a result of the legacy of hate unleashed by the U.S. conquest of Mexico in the mid-1800s and the violence encountered along the U.S. Mexico border in the latter part of the century. During the early 20th century, nativists developed new images of Mexicans as “illegals,” as dangerous criminals who were not authorized to be in the United States.²²

The negative attitudes towards Mexicans held by Anglos in the past have been strengthened and broadened in the more recent period. In addition to viewing them as illegal and inferior they are now also constructed as violent criminals, unwanted invaders bent on destroying the nation-state, a drain on the American welfare state, and potential terrorists.²³

Nativism and The Latinization of America

What explains the rise and intensity of the new nativism? Although influenced by a variety of political, economic, and social factors, I would argue that one of the most significant is cultural in nature.²⁴ Nativism, especially the antipathy towards Mexicans and other Latinos, has surfaced in the early 21st century because of the perceived and actual impact they are having on American society, especially on its culture. Some scholars refer to this as the Latinization of America. By

²¹ Weber, 1973, 60.

²² Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

²³ For two examples see “Sharron Angle’s Race-Baiting, Immigrant-Demonizing Propaganda,” http://immigration.change.org/blog/view/sharron_angles_race-baiting_immigrant-demoni... Retrieved 10/23/2010 and the website on crime by Illegalaliens.US. <http://www.illegalaliens.us/numbers.htm>. Retrieved 10/13/2010. See also Leo R. Chávez, *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigration, Citizens and the Nation* (Stanford, Cal: Stanford University Press, 2008).

²⁴ Certainly the highly polarized struggle between the Democratic and Republican parties contributes to the spurt of nativism during the past decade. The economy also plays a role. The economic depression the U.S. finds itself in and the negative impact it is having on job loss, housing foreclosures, and high unemployment rates only make the situation worse. Americans who are suffering and being ignored by both parties need scapegoats for their problems and undocumented immigrants fit this need quite well. The conservative media, likewise, plays an important role in rapidly promoting and encouraging nativist thought throughout the country. Talk radio, the internet, conservative think tanks, and other forms of print media quickly spread misinformation about undocumented immigrants. This “well developed conservative media infrastructure” distorts, lies, and stretches the truth without any regard to their consequences for those most affected by them. The new nativism is also impacted by a variety of other factors such as the presence of immigrants, especially unauthorized ones. George J. Sánchez, “Face the Nation: Race, Immigration and the Rise of Nativism in Late Twentieth Century America,” *IMR (International Migration Review)*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (winter 1997): 1009-1030; Joe R. Feagin, “Old Poison in New Bottles: The Deep Roots of Modern Nativism,” (13-43). In Juan Perea, Ed., *Immigrants Out!: The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States* (NY: New York University Press, 1997); Thomas Muller, “Nativism in the Mid-1990s: Why Now?,” (108-118). In Juan F. Perea, Ed., *Immigrants out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States* (NY: New York University Press, 1997). The concept of “a well developed conservative media infrastructure” comes from the journalist Paul Krugman. See Paul Krugman, “Right-wing spin machine churns out the humbug,” *Houston Chronicle*, Dec 25, 2010. B9.

this scholars refer to the many ways in which the Spanish language and “the culture and values of Hispanics’ countries of origin” continue to influence American society. Jorge Ramos and Adam J. Segal, two well known journalists, also note that the Latinization of America is an unstoppable force with tremendous consequences to the present and future of this country.²⁵

This new realization of Latino influences on American life, I might note, has shattered and exposed the myth of historical insignificance propagated by Anglo Americans in the latter half of the 19th century. This myth argued that Latinos would “fade away” and become a footnote in American history once Anglos took control of what became the U.S. Southwest in the mid-1800s.²⁶ Their continued presence and growth in the past century and a half have shown that this did not occur.

The rapid population growth of Latinos in the contemporary period, as in the past, is fueling the Latinization trend. Latinos have grown so fast during the past four decades that they are now the largest minority group in the country and expected to grow over time.

U.S. Census data shows the tremendous growth of this population over the past several decades. From 1970 to 2010, for example, the number of Latinos increased from 9.6 to 47.8 million. This group grew from less than 5% to approximately 16% of the total U.S. population during these four decades. During this period, Latinos replaced African Americans as the largest minority group in the country.

The growth of the Latino population is unprecedented. Between 2000 and 2006, Latinos accounted for one-half of the nation’s growth and the Latino growth rate (24.3%) was more than three times the growth rate of the total population (6.1%).²⁷

The Census Bureau also estimates that this group will continue to grow in absolute numbers and in proportion to the total population in the next several decades. By 2050, Latinos will be approximately 24.4% of the total U.S. population.

²⁵ Ramos, Jorge and Adam J. Segal, “The Latinization of America,” Commentary, *La Prensa San Diego*, May 14, 2004. <http://laprensa-sandiego.org/archieve/may14-04/ramos.htm>. Retrieved 10/30/2010, 1.

²⁶ David G. Gutiérrez, “Significant to Whom?: Mexican Americans and the History of the American West,” *The Western Historical quarterly*, Vol. XXIV, Number 4 (November 1993), 522.

²⁷ US Census Bureau, *Hispanics in the United States: Topics About the Hispanic Population*, 12, www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic_pop_presentation.html. Retrieved 12/13/2010.

Table 1
 Latino Population in the United States: 1970-2050
 Population in millions

Source of Data & Year	Latino Pop	Percent Latino of total Pop
Census		
1970	9.6	4.7
1980	14.6	6.4
1990	22.4	9.0
2000	35.3	12.5
Projections		
2010	47.8	15.5
2020	59.7	17.8
2030	73.0	20.1
2040	87.7	22.3
2050	102.6	24.4

*Projected population as of July 1, 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 Decennial Censuses; Population Projections, July 1, 2010 to July 1, 2050

The Latino presence is not only numerical but geographical as well. For most of the 20th century, Latinos were a regional minority. They resided in the Southwest, in a few areas of the Mid-west, and in New York and Florida.²⁸ During the past two decades, Latinos moved to and settled outside of these traditional areas. The greatest growth of rate during the past two decades has been in the traditional South (e.g., Arkansas, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, and North Carolina), in the Northeast (New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maine), and in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington State, and Nevada). Latinos in the 21st century are not a regional minority anymore but a national one. They are found in all parts of the country- in large metropolitan areas, in suburbia, in small and mid-size towns and in many rural areas throughout the United States.

Finally, Latinos, unlike most European groups, maintain their Spanish language even as they acquire English. “While the use of English has increased over the years,” notes one major marketing report, “94% of U.S. born Hispanics learns to speak Spanish before they learn English.” “Eighty percent of U.S. Hispanic adults,” it continued, “speak Spanish at home, of which one-third treat English as their second language.”²⁹

²⁸ The vast majority, 30 million, are concentrated in five states—California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois. US Census Bureau, *Hispanics in the United States: Topics About the Hispanic Population*, 12, www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic_pop_presentation.html. Retrieved 12/13/2010.

²⁹ Hispanic American Market: Advertising-Marketing-Media-Public Relations,” 2, www.allied-medi.com/hispanic%20market/hispanic_american_market.html. Retrieved 11/8/2010.

Latinos also maintain many of the cultural, musical, and culinary practices originating in their home countries and incorporate them into their daily lives in this country. “Latin culture, including food, music and entertainment,” noted the report above, “is being preserved, accepted, and even emulated by non-Hispanics.”³⁰

Because of their size, distribution, and cultural maintenance practices, immigrants and native born Latinos are having a significant impact on American life. They are transforming the racial composition of this country,³¹ influencing the languages that Americans speak, shaping its political dynamics, and determining how corporate America does business in the U.S.³² Most importantly, they are altering the cultural landscape of the United States as they increasingly become part of public life.³³ Let me examine two areas of cultural change in greater detail to indicate the extent of their historical and contemporary influence. These two are radio programming and popular music. I argue that the growing Latino presence is contributing to the remaking of American culture.³⁴ They are shaping the character and content of American radio and popular music. In a few cases, Latinos are replacing American culture with their own.

Latinization: The Case of Spanish language radio

Latinos are changing the face of radio in the U.S. and altering its character from an English only medium to one that is more diverse. Their impact is reflected in the tremendous growth of Spanish language radio over the past century.

Radio broadcasting in the United States emerged in the late teens of the 20th century and soon spread to all parts of the country. The language of broadcasting was English. Many individuals residing in the U.S. however were immigrants or sons and daughters of immigrants and did not speak English. This was the case with respect to Mexican origin individuals who resided in many communities throughout the southwest in the early 20th century. In 1930, for

³⁰ Hispanic American Market, 2.

³¹Immigrants also are contributing to the changing racial character of the United States from a white to a non-white country. In 2005, non-white minorities made up 33% of the U.S. population. Latinos were the largest minority group, representing 14% of the population followed by Blacks (12%), Asians/Pacific Islanders (4%), and American Indians/Alaska Natives (1%). The National Center for Education Statistics predicts that minorities will represent 39% of the total population by the year 2020. Other sources indicate that whites might be a minority by the middle of the 21st century. See *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Minorities* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Sept 2007), iii, and US Census Bureau, *Hispanics in the United States: Topics About the Hispanic Population*, 12, www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispanic_pop_presentation.html. Retrieved 12/13/2010.

³² Ramos and Segal, “The Latinization of America,” 2004.

³³ In Georgia, for instance, 21 periodicals and 6 radio stations serve Atlanta’s Latino and Latina population. The school curriculum is changing to accommodate Latino students, whose numbers have increased in the state’s public schools by almost 98% between 1996 and 2000. Many Protestant and Catholic churches throughout the state offer services in Spanish and Mexican restaurants and taquerias (taco restaurants) are commonplace. “Georgia: Recent Population Trends... www.jrank.org/cultures/pages/3909/Georgia.html. Retrieved 10/24/2010.)

³⁴The mainstream culture, as notes Richard Alba and Victor Lee, is malleable and can absorb or accommodate a host of unlikely cultural elements from ethnic groups around the world. But these have to be “Americanized” in some way or appropriated by Americans before they become part of the mainstream. Richard Alba and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003).

instance, over 1.4 million Mexicans resided in the United States. The primary language of this group was Spanish.³⁵ English language radio did not address the entertainment or information needs of this group.

A few enterprising individuals in the U.S. and in Mexico however saw the need to tailor radio programming to this large and growing Spanish speaking population. This programming provided them with information in a language they understood and entertainment that they could relate to.

The initial broadcast of Spanish language radio occurred in the 1920s when Anglo stations sold blocks of time to ethnic Mexican brokers. These individuals purchased blocks of programming from the station out of their own pockets and sold advertising time to local advertisers in the community. The blocks of time sold to these brokers tended to be “off-hours”, that is, the early mornings and weekends when few English speakers listened. During the time allotted to them, the brokers would play live or recorded Mexican music, provide news from Mexico, inform the community about local issues, and sell products to them in a language they understood.³⁶

Spanish language broadcasting in these early years also came from Mexico. The person responsible for this was Emilio Azcárraga Viduarreta, the Mexican broadcast entrepreneur who operated Mexico City’s first and largest radio station XEW, La Voz de América Latino (the Voice of Latin America). In the 1930s, he transmitted to a Los Angeles station which in turn relayed the broadcast to other American stations. He also owned five stations along the US-Mexico border that broadcast directly into the U.S. This allowed him to undermine the new American regulations that restricted Spanish-language programming so that he could provide Spanish language radio to a Mexican audience living in the U.S.³⁷ From the beginning then Spanish language radio, or in this case, Spanish language broadcasting, was identified with “foreignness” because its programming came from Mexico or it targeted ethnic Mexicans residing in the U.S.

By the mid-1940s, Spanish language radio was a small part of foreign language broadcasting in the U.S. In this decade 58 out of 200 foreign language stations in the U.S. broadcast in Spanish. Much of this was done in “block programming” since few Latinos had the capital or knowledge to own a radio station.³⁸

Foreign language broadcasting declined in the post-WWII era, but Spanish-language radio grew in popularity because of the increase in the Latino population and its desire for Spanish-language programming. The Mexican population, for instance, increased dramatically to over 3.5 million by 1960. Most Mexicans continued to reside in the Southwest but extended their

³⁵ Richard Griswold del Castillo and Arnoldo De León, *North to Aztlán: A History of Mexican Americans in the United States* (NY: Twayne Publications, 1996), 64.

³⁶ *Hispanic Radio Today: How America Listens to Radio*, (New York, NY: Arbitron, 2009), 4.

³⁷ *Hispanic Radio Today*, 2009.

³⁸ *Hispanic Radio Today*, 2009, 8. The first Latino to own a full time Spanish-language station was Raul Cortez, from San Antonio Texas. See Felix F. Gutiérrez and J.R. Schement. *Spanish-language Radio in the Southwestern United States*. Austin: University of Texas, Center for Mexican American Studies, 1979.

settlements to other parts of the country, especially the Mid-west and the Pacific Northwest.³⁹ The Puerto Rican and Cuban population, who resided on the East Coast and in Florida, also increased during this period and stood at over 1 million.⁴⁰ By the 1960s, Spanish radio accounted for two-thirds of all foreign language broadcasts. Over 300 radio stations broadcasting in Spanish in the United States existed by 1966.⁴¹

Spanish-language radio grew significantly in the 1970s and 1980s. From 1973 to 1976, for instance, the number of Spanish-language radio stations increased from 250 to 435.⁴² During this period the quality of programming and marketing improved as well. Realizing the potential of a new market, corporations such as Spanish Broadcasting System, Katz Hispanic Radio, and Caballero Spanish Media emerged and began to assume control over this burgeoning industry. Their purpose was to “maintain, reestablish or simply remind audiences of a cultural or sub-cultural identity.”⁴³

Spanish language radio enjoyed an explosive growth in the 1990s and early 21st century. Increased immigration from Latin America, greater participation by corporate America, and changes in Federal Communications Corporation (FCC) rulings contributed to this.⁴⁴ The Spanish-language radio market grew nearly 1000% from 1980 to 2002.⁴⁵ A variety of popular genres emerged as Latino audiences continued to grow and to demand different types of Spanish language music.

Spanish-language radio stations also began to reach the top of the rankings in large Latino markets such as Los Angeles, San Antonio, Miami, Houston, Chicago, and New York City. In Los Angeles, for instance, the number one radio station in the fall of 1995 was an all

³⁹ U.S. Census, *General Characteristics from the Southwest* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1961). Table A: Spanish-American and Mexican American Population of Five Southwestern States as variously identified in Censuses of 1930 to 1960.

⁴⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census. U.S. Census of Pop, 1960. *Subject Reports. Puerto Ricans in the United States. Final Report*, PC(2)-1D (Washington, D.C.: US GPO, 1963). Table A., p. viii. For information on Cubans see. Cited in ????. Lisandro Pérez, “The Cuban Communities in the U.S., 1900-1958,” (pp. 174-188). In Jay P. Dolan and Jaime R. Vidal, eds., *Puerto Rican and Cuban Catholics in the U.S., 1900-1965* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), Table 4: Cubans admitted into the United States as immigrants, 1899-1958, 175.

⁴¹ Gutiérrez & Schement, *Spanish-Language Radio...*, 1979, 11.

⁴² The number of Spanish-language radios was: 1973-250, 1974-n.a., 1975-404, and 1976-435. Despite this increase, many of them were not minority-owned. See “Radio, Spanish-Language” n.d., www.jrank.org/cultures/pages/4368/Radio-Spanish-Language.html. Retrieved 10/19/2010.

⁴³ The existing radio stations in the mid-1970s collaborated to form a number of regional Spanish language radio networks such as the National Spanish Language network, (26 radio stations), AAA Espanol Network (15 stations), and Amigo Spanish Group (14 stations). For a list of several regional Spanish language networks in the mid-1970s see Quaal & Brown, 1976; During this period, research on the radio stations and on the Latino listening audience begins to appear. For some of these findings see Hispanic Radio Today, 2009, 11-12.

⁴⁴ In 1996, Congress eliminated all national ownership caps. This allowed large corporations to own up to eight stations in a large market. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 led to industry-wide consolidation and paved the way for a number of mergers. The largest for Spanish-language radio was Univision’s acquisition of Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation (HBC) in 2002.” With this acquisition Univision became the largest owner of Spanish-language radio stations in the United States with over 70 of them. The next closes was Entravision Communication Corporation with 48 radio stations. Wilkinson, 2009, cited in Hispanic Radio Today, 2009, 16.

⁴⁵ Mari Castaneda Paredes, “The Transformation of Spanish-language Radio in the U.S.,” *Journal of Radio Studies*, Vol 10, No. 1, (2003), 5.

Spanish language station, KLVE-FM. Three years later another Spanish language radio station, KSCA-FM, moved to the top-spot. The former played ballads, the latter regional Mexican music. A similar development took place in New York City, the largest radio market in the country. In 1998, the New York City tropical station, WSKQ-FM, moved into second place in the general market. The top ranking of three all Spanish language music stations in two of the largest markets in the country indicated that by the end of the decade then Spanish language stations were becoming dominant forces in U.S. radio.⁴⁶

The high ratings of Spanish language radio, the continued growth of the Latino population (over 35 million in 2000), and their increased spending power (close to \$500 billion by 2000) encouraged large corporations to increase their advertising budgets towards Latinos. By 2008 the top 10 advertisers on Latino radio spent over \$91 million dollars aimed at enticing Spanish language radio listeners to purchase their products.⁴⁷

Spanish language radio continued to grow in the early 21st century. Unlike earlier decades when Spanish language radio was concentrated in heavily Latino-populated markets in the top ten largest urban areas in the country, in this period it expanded to new communities in different parts of the country. In the most recent decade, Spanish language radio has appeared in places such as North Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania.⁴⁸

At the close of the first decade of the 21st century, over 800 Spanish language stations playing a host of different genres of music existed in the U.S. Although their number is relatively small, these radio stations are having a significant impact on America's listening habits. Spanish language stations are some of the most popular in the country. Millions of Latinos in urban and rural markets are now listening to Spanish language radio. Data from industry sources, for example, indicates that in 2008 the top five Spanish language radio stations in the country had a total of over 9.6 million listeners. In the same year, over 22.5 million listeners tuned in to Spanish language radio in the country.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Hispanic Radio Today*, 2009, 14.

⁴⁷ For a list of these advertisers and the amount of money they spent on radio advertising in Spanish language radio see *Hispanic Radio Today*, 2009, 15.

⁴⁸ Paredes, "The Transformation of Spanish-language Radio in the U.S.," 2003, 5-16.

⁴⁹ *Hispanic Fact Pack: Annual Guide to Hispanic Marketing and Media* (Chicago, Ill: Crain Communications, Inc., 2009), 31.

Table 2

Top 5 Spanish-Formatted Radio Stations, Fall 2008

Rank	Station	Market	Owner	Listeners
1	KLVE-FM	Los Angeles	Univision	2,375,400
2	WSKQ-Fm	New York	Spanish Broadcasting System	2,328,100
3	KSCA-FM	Los Angeles	Univision	1,774,400
4	WPAT-FM	New York	Spanish Broadcasting System	1,587,300
5	KLAX-FM	Los Angeles	Spanish Broadcasting System	1,539,600

Source: *2009 Hispanic Fact Pack*, 31.

Despite the challenges of Spanish-language broadcasting in the early 21st century, most industry observers agree that Spanish-language radio will continue to grow.⁵⁰

Spanish language radio then has gone from a “niche” market to a significant part of the general market. In today’s America, large parts of the country have radio stations that play Spanish language music all the time. This language has gone from being a “foreign language” to being a second language. Latinos, most of whom are U.S. citizens, have influenced the listening habits of Americans and changed the character of radio in the United States. American radio is not simply English only as in the past, it is on the way to becoming a truly bilingual institution.

The tremendous growth of Spanish language radio, in combination with the significant developments in Spanish language TV as well as the increased use of Spanish and other non-English languages in the public schools, the political arena, and in the economy has added to nativist fears that English will soon be replaced by Spanish. The above evidence suggests that this is not the case. The growth of Spanish language radio and of Spanish language listeners indicates that English is not being displaced; it is being supplemented by another language. Will this trend continue and increase in the near future so that it either replaces or becomes equal to English or will Spanish remain a minor but significant component of U.S. radio? Only the future will tell.

⁵⁰ Two of the many challenges it faces are the effects of deregulation initiated by federal legislation in 1996 and of consolidation of radio outlets by Spanish-language media “conglomerates.” See Paredes, “The Transformation of Spanish-language Radio in the U.S.,” 2003, 5-16.

Latinization: The Case of Music

Latinos also are influencing American music. Their influence is long-standing and goes back to the early 20th century. Latinos have influenced American music in several ways.

Adding Latino flavor to mainstream music

Latinos have been adding a Latino flavor or “tinge” to mainstream music for many decades.⁵¹ By Latino flavor I mean that these artists have taken some aspect of Latin music and culture—a Latin-inspired melody, a traditional musical instrument, a particular “look”, a Spanish phrase—and selectively incorporated it into popular American mainstream music. This effort then provides an “exotic” or unusual element to popular music and is readily embraced by Americans. Although initiated by Anglo musicians and artists in the late 19th and early 20th century, Latinos began to participate in the shaping of American mainstream music in the 1940s.

One of the first to add a Latin flavor to American mainstream music was Xavier Cugat. He played tangos, rumbas and other Latin American tunes in the second and third quarter of the 20th century but in a way that appealed to the U.S. mainstream.⁵² In 1939 and 1940, he recorded several Cuban and Mexican songs with a big band sound. One of the most popular songs of that period was the Peanut Vendor (el manicero). This Cuban song was originally recorded in 1930 by the Don Azpiazu Havana Casino orchestra. In 1939, Cugat softened the Cuban rhythms, added more big band instruments, and made it an instrumental piece to make it more appealing to American listeners. The following year, Cugat had a huge hit with the Mexican song “Perfidia.” As in the case of the “Peanut Vendor,” he eliminated the Spanish lyrics and recorded it as an instrumental piece. Cugat also starred in English mainstream movies during the 1930s and 1940s and performed many of his popular hits for American audiences.⁵³ He was largely responsible for popularizing Latin rhythms in American popular music.⁵⁴

Ritchie Valens continued this tradition of providing some Latin tinges to American mainstream music, in this case rock and roll. In 1957, Valens, a Mexican American teenager by the name of Richard Valenzuela, took a well known Mexican song “La Bamba” and made it into one of rock n roll’s most memorable numbers. Most of his recordings, however, were in English and had no trace of anything Latin.⁵⁵

⁵¹ See John Storm Roberts, *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States*, 2nd ed., (NY: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁵² “Americans know nothing about Latin music,” Cugat once said. “To succeed in America,” he noted, “I gave the Americans a Latin music that had nothing authentic about it. Then I began to change the music and play more legitimately.” Quoted in Storm, *The Latin Tinge*, 2nd ed, 1999, 87.

⁵³ He had movie appearances in *You Were Never Lovelier* (1942), *Bathing Beauty* (1944), *Week-End at the Waldorf* (1945), *On an Island with You* (1948), and *Neptune’s Daughter* (1949), among others. For further information on him see “Space Age Musicmaker: Xavier Cugat,” www.spaceagepop.com/cugat.htm. Retrieved 11/15/2010.

⁵⁴ He also paved the way for future stars such as Desi Arnaz, Perez Prado, and Tito Puente. “Xavier Cugat: Biography,” www.parabrisas.com/d_cugatx.php. Retrieved 11/15/2010.

⁵⁵ A few Latino artists such as Trini Lopez and Vikki Carr had mainstream hits in the 1960s and 1970s but little about their music had Latin influences. Their songs were generally in English and aside from using a Latin instrument or two they performed for an English speaking audience.

Latinos continued to influence other styles of music such as jazz (bugalu, bossa-nova), country, and folk during the 1960s and 1970s.⁵⁶

In the late 1990s and early 21st century, a small group of Latino pop artists became hit makers around the same time. The music industry and the media referred to this as the cross-over phenomenon. Cross-over artists continued the tradition of providing Latin “touches” to mainstream pop music.

Ricky Martin’s dynamic performance of “La copa de la vida” at the 1999 Grammy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles initiated this trend. Although Martin’s performance utilized some Spanish phrases this song was intended for an English speaking audience.⁵⁷ Since then other artists, e.g., Marc Anthony, Jennifer Lopez, and more recently Enrique Iglesias have taken aspects of Latin music-usually Spanish phrases or traditional instruments- and successfully incorporated them into American popular music. Ricky Martin, for instance, spices his English hits with a “pinch” of Spanish. In one song, he says “She’s livin’ la vida loca” (living the crazy life) and in another (Shake Your Bon-Bon) he says “hola amiga”. Iglesias also provides some Spanish phrases to his English hits. “Bailamos, let the rhythm take you over,” he sings in the song “Bailamos” (Let’s dance.) In the song “Rhythm Divine,” he sings “Viva la musica, say you’ll be mine.”⁵⁸ Iglesias latest album (*Euphoria*, 2010) continues to record chart-topping songs in English with some Spanish phrases.⁵⁹

The phenomenon of achieving commercial success in an English-only pop music mainstream, according to one scholar, reflects the unwillingness of the American public to accept Spanish as a legitimate language of communication. As shown above, Anglo audiences in the U.S. are willing to accept “touches” of Spanish or some form of bilingualism but not the language itself. In several cases, English speaking audiences have shown outright disdain for the use of Spanish on an English language radio station or for the singing of Spanish songs at a concert. Linda Ronstadt, for instance, recorded popular country and rock songs during the 1970s and 1980s. In 1987, she recorded an album of Mexican songs called “Canciones de Mi Padre.” At a show in Massachusetts, hecklers chanted “English, English” when she began to sing songs from her Spanish language album. At another concert, when Ronstadt began to sing in Spanish a disgruntled concertgoer “grumpily stomped down an aisle [toward the exit] and shouted to no one in particular, ‘Remember the Alamo, Mex!’” (This phrase has been used in reference to

⁵⁶ Roberts, *The Latin Tinge*, 1999, 160-186.

⁵⁷ David E. Thigpen, “Spicing the Mix: Latin Pop Prepares to Take on America,” *Time Magazine*, Vol. 153, Issue 10 (March 15, 1999) <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.uh.edu/ehost/delivery?vid=7&hid=10&sid=306249...> Retrieved 11/16/2010.

⁵⁸ Ricky Martin, “Livin’ La Vida Loca” on *Ricky Martin* (Sony/Columbia 1999); Ricky Martin, “Shake Your Bon Bon,” on *Ricky Martin* (Sony/Columbia 1999). Enrique Iglesias on *Bailamos* and *Rhythm Divine*.

⁵⁹ In his latest CD Iglesias records Spanish-language and English language songs. The former are geared towards the Spanish-language fans, the latter towards a diverse English-speaking American audience. His English hit single “I Like It”, which featured the Puerto Rican artist Pitbull, reached #4 on the Billboard Hot 100 when it was released in early May 2010. Seven weeks later, it climbed to #1 on the Billboard Dance Club Play Chart. This song has three sentences in Spanish. See “I Like It” Lyrics. www.lyricshall.com/lyrics/Enrique+Iglesias/I=Like+It/. Retrieved 2/5/2011. For information on the CD see “Enrique Iglesias “Euphoria” Album,” www.lyricshall.com/albums/Enrique+Iglesias/Euphoria/. Retrieved 2/5/2011.

Anglos seeking revenge for the killing of white Texans by the Mexican government during one of the most important battles for the independence of Texas from Mexico in 1836.)⁶⁰

Latino fusions: Developing non-mainstream musical forms

In a few cases, Latinos influenced non-mainstream music and contributed to the development of new hybrid forms. In the case of jazz, for instance, Latinos in the 1930s took elements of Cuban music-rhythms, instruments, and melodies- and incorporated them into American jazz to create Latin-influenced Jazz. The following decade, more substantial elements of Latin music were added to American jazz to create a new fusion that came to be known as Afro-Cuban jazz or Cubop. John Roberts, a noted ethnomusicologist and historian, noted that this style had a better balance of Latin and jazz elements than a decade earlier.⁶¹

Three leaders in Afro-Cuban jazz emerged, including Stan Kenton, Dizzy Gillespie, and Frank “Machito” Grillo. Machito, the only Latino in the group, was the first to fuse Cuban rhythms and American horns. He incorporated Americanisms into Latin music and also added percussion (congas, bongo’, and timbales). Other individuals that played important roles in shaping the Latin-black fusion were Alberto Socarrás, Tito Puente, Charlie Palmieri, Cuban-born José Curbelo, and pianist Noro Morales. The latter formed the piano quintet style that later became the Latin-jazz quintet style.⁶²

During the late 1960s, Latinos contributed to the development of another major musical hybrid that came to be known as Latin rock. Santana became instrumental in its development. Santana started out as a blues band but he quickly developed a fusion of salsa and rock that won him many fans. While extremely popular, this fusion was limited mostly to California since rock was not listened to by Latinos on the east coast. They tended to be influenced more by black music and by disco.⁶³

“Americanizing” non-U.S. music: The Case of Tex-Mex

Latinos also have contributed to the modernization or “Americanization” of non-U.S. musical genres in this country. This music comes from the immigrants’ country of origin and is quite diverse with respect to styles, genres, and content. Its primary characteristics are that it is Spanish language music, it contains rhythms not embraced by Americans, and it is played for the pleasure of Latinos, not Americans. Latinos have taken vocal styles, instruments, performance repertoire, or fashions associated with American music and incorporated them into these non-U.S. rhythms to create a distinct U.S. Latino style of music.

⁶⁰ Steven W. Bender, “How Will the Wolf Survive?: Latino/a Pop Music in the Cultural Mainstream,” 78 *Denv. U.L. Rev.* 719, 2001. www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.uh.edu/lnacui2api/delivery/PrintDoc.do?jobHand1... Retrieved 11/11/2010.

⁶¹ Roberts, *The Latin Tinge*, 1999, 114.

⁶² Roberts, *The Latin Tinge*, 1999, 103. Latin-jazz and Latin-influenced jazz became a larger part of the whole jazz scene by the 1990s.

⁶³ Roberts, *The Latin Tinge*, 199, 206-210.

Several different types of non-U.S. music have been Americanized by Latinos in the 20th century. Among the most well known are mambo, salsa, Tex-Mex, and duranguense.⁶⁴ The first one is Cuban-based, the second has Puerto Rican influences, and the latter two are Mexican derived. Let me elaborate on one of them, Tex-Mex, to illustrate the process of developing a U.S. based Latino musical form that remains rooted in “foreign” rhythms, i.e., in the sounds of another country.

Tex-Mex music is anchored in selective Mexican musical traditions, especially the ranchera song type and the polka dance form. The polka, although European in origin, became a part of Mexican music by the late 1800s. The ranchera is a particular type of rural-based song that gained popularity in Mexico and in Texas during the 19th century. In the first half of the 20th century, the polka and the ranchera were merged and became a distinct form of Tex-mex music. While the polka remained a popular form of instrumental music, the ranchera became a polka with lyrics.

Tex-mex music is significantly influenced by American culture. During the years from the 1930s to the present, for example, Tejano musicians, i.e., Mexican artists born and raised in Texas, incorporated elements of the big band sounds, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, pop, and country into their music. Tejano groups likewise occasionally incorporated selective Caribbean or Latin American song types and dance forms such as boleros, mambos, and cumbias into Tex-mex music.

Tex-mex music is sung mostly in Spanish. Although a few songs have been recorded either in English only or in two languages, the core of this music continues to be sung in Spanish. This language is, in essence, the most important means for maintaining this unique musical sound, and likewise, for preserving Tejano culture in the U.S. The lyrics in most songs document the experiences and fortunes of Mexican origin individuals living in the United States, especially those born and raised in this country. They also are rarely critical of American authorities or institutions.

Finally, Tex Mex music is primarily an urban phenomenon, although it has rural roots. Most scholars argue that this music originated in rural areas or small towns of South and Central Texas. Over the decades, however, the music migrated to the larger cities and is now extremely popular in large metropolitan areas such as Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi. It also migrated to other states with significant numbers of Mexican origin individuals who hail from Texas or the border areas of the Southwest.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Roberts argues that big-band mambo was the first clearly North-American/US Latin style. I would argue that other styles such as the Cugat-led rhumba and Tex-Mex music, especially Texas-based conjuntos and big band orquestras of the 1930s and 1940s preceded it.

⁶⁵ Tex-mex music is also a multi-class phenomenon, although its primary base of support is among working class individuals. Originally, Tex-mex music appealed to and was supported primarily by working class individuals. But in the last three decades it has gained mass appeal and become popular among the ever growing middle class groups within the Tejano population. In the 1990s, this music was by briefly enjoyed by some non-Tejanos regardless of class, occupation, or education. See Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *Tejano Proud: Tex-Mex Music in the 20th century* (College Station, Tx: TAMU, 2002).

Tex-mex music then is a non-threatening and complex blending or synthesis of various musical traditions found in Mexico, the United States, and in the Caribbean. Its core, however, has been and continues to be Mexican in nature.⁶⁶

Replicating Non-U.S. Musical Genres

In addition to Americanizing non-U.S. musical genres, Latinos have also supported their replication. As indicated earlier, Spanish language music from the immigrants' country of origin is quite diverse with respect to styles, genres, and content. Americans in many cases are not familiar with these musical genres or else they have diverse views towards them. Some forms of non-U.S. music, especially those that come from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Brazil, are readily accepted and embraced by Americans of all colors.⁶⁷ Its rhythms, while foreign, are danceable and its lyrics, if present, are non-threatening. Among those greatly appreciated in the U.S. have been the tango, rumba, mambo, and bossa-nova in the 20th century, and salsa in the early 21st century. I would argue that nightclubs that play salsa music in the present are probably the most integrated public spaces in the U.S. They are frequented by immigrants from all the Spanish speaking countries in the Western Hemisphere and loved by native born Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Anglo Americans.

Other types of non-U.S. music, especially those originating in Mexico, are not as readily appreciated by Americans. In many cases, this music, known as Regional Mexican in the recording industry, does not have any discernible North American characteristics or influences.⁶⁸

The only exception to the non-acceptance of Regional Mexican music is mariachi music. This rhythm is readily accepted by Americans because it plays an important role in political and cultural events. Mariachi music, a particular type of Mexican music played by string and wind-based orchestras, is considered to be the national music of Mexico.⁶⁹ U.S. political leaders at all levels of government regularly hire mariachi musicians to appear at gatherings and in ethnic celebrations. Additionally, individuals and community groups constantly play mariachi music at weddings, quinceaneras (fifteen year old birthday celebrations), festivals, and other formal or informal occasions. Many high schools and colleges throughout the country also teach mariachi in music classes and promote the establishment of mariachi groups.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ San Miguel, Jr., *Tejano Proud*, 2002.

⁶⁷ This music, for the most part, does not reflect an immigrant experience in particular nor is it critical of American policies, practices, and authorities either.

⁶⁸ Regional Mexican music is diverse and includes several different genres such as mariachi, Tejano, grupo, banda, norteno, conjunto, and duranguense. This type of music outsells all other genres of Spanish language music in the U.S., including Spanish adult, contemporary, romantic, and salsa. Ramiro Burr, *The Billboard Guide to Tejano and Regional Mexican Music* (NY: Billboard Books, 1999), 9. On Duranguense see Josh Kun, *The New York Times*, May 14, 2006. www.nytimes.com/2006/05/14/arts/music/14kun.html?_r=1. Retrieved 10/19/2010.

⁶⁹ Mariachi music was played by string orchestras but since the 1940s it has become a trumpet led ensemble. Various musical rhythms, including polkas, rancheras, guapangos, waltzes, and boleros comprise mariachi music. The term "mariachi" is derived from the French term "le mariage" since Mexican bands were frequently hired for weddings during the French intervention of Mexico in the mid-1800s. Roberts, *The Latin Tinge*, 1999, 264-265.

⁷⁰ Its acceptance is widespread in the U.S. An indication of its acceptance is the development of a mariachi opera by the Houston Grand Opera in early November 2010. See Everett Evans, "Opera and mariachi: A natural match," *Houston Chronicle*, Nov 8, 2010, D1,D4.

Other genres of Regional Mexican music however are not appreciated as much as mariachi music. They are, for the most part, viewed as “foreign” in language, rhythms, and content. One example of Regional Mexican music viewed in this manner is musica nortena.

Musica nortena began as a particular type of folk music in northern Mexico in the late 19th century. Although originally comprised of musicians who used a variety of instruments by the early 1900s the accordion and the bajo sexto, a unique 12 string Mexican guitar, became the core of this style of music, especially along the border. Norteno groups played instrumental regional Mexican dance rhythms such as polkas, waltzes, and schottisches.

After WWII, vocal singing was introduced into musica nortena. The corrido, i.e., a particular type of Mexican ballad, became one of the most important forms of vocal singing. Corridos, sung to a waltz beat in the 1940s, became a specific way to report, document, and interpret the experiences of Mexicans surviving in a country that despised them for who they were but desired them for their cheap labor.⁷¹

Musica nortena quickly became popular among Mexicans on both sides of the border in the 1950s. By the 1960s it emerged as a dominant musical style along the border and in different parts of the U.S. It became a cross-cultural phenomenon uniquely tied to traveling in the United States as an immigrant in search of a better life.⁷²

Continued immigration led to the growth in popularity of musica nortena after the 1960s. It also led to its transformation from a regional folk to a modern musical form that touched the lives of Mexican immigrant workers throughout the country.⁷³

Musica nortena was heard only on Spanish language radio in the U.S. and in Mexico and promoted in the Mexican cinema shown on both sides of the border.⁷⁴ It also was supported by a growing network of nightclubs, bars, dance halls and flea markets located in highly segregated communities throughout the country.

During the late 20th century, this music became increasingly transnational and more deeply attached to a working class Mexican Diaspora. Musicians added new instrumentation, stylistic innovations, and new themes. Despite these developments, musica nortena continued to focus on Mexican immigrants, especially those who were “undocumented.” Songs about the undocumented evolved from telling stories about immigrants who silently endured racial mistreatment and constant fear of deportation to one where they subverted and resisted American authorities. By the early 21st century musica nortena reflected a new identity of undocumented immigrants as non-assimilating and assertive individuals in the face of cultural, economic, and

⁷¹ Cathy Ragland, *Música Nortena: Mexican Migrants Creating a Nation between Nations* (Philadelphia, Penn: Temple University Press, 2009), 59.

⁷² Ragland, *Música Nortena*, 2009, 59.

⁷³ During the 1960s and 1970s, corrido-based norteno music continued to reflect immigrant experiences of border-crossing, mistreatment in the U.S., and family life under difficult working conditions in a new country but it incorporated the new themes of drug smuggling and of living in the U.S. as an unauthorized immigrant. The latter two topics became dominant by the 1990s. Ragland, *Música Nortena*, 2009, 60, 100.

⁷⁴ Piporro, a popular star of Mexican cinema, promoted the plight of the bracero and undocumented in traveling variety shows and concerts. He also promoted the plight of the bracero and undocumented in traveling variety shows and concerts. See Ragland, *Música Nortena*, 2009.

political oppression. Los Tigres del Norte became the leaders in this type of music. This group became the voice of the Mexican immigrant population working throughout the entire U.S.⁷⁵

Musica nortena in particular and Regional Mexican music in general are played in community festivals, patriotic celebrations, paid dancehalls, and family events on both sides of the border. This music is also played in the interior areas of the U.S. where significant numbers of immigrants reside.⁷⁶

The venues in which Regional Mexican music is played, whether it's a major arena such as Madison Square Garden in New York City, a cinco de mayo festival in Los Angeles, or a quincenaria (15 year old coming out party) in Chicago, Illinois, is attended primarily by Mexicans. Few if any Anglos, African Americans or non-Latinos attend these events. They are socially segregated events that appeal to different generations of Mexican residents in the U.S. Many of its fans have been here in this country for decades but speak mostly Spanish and listen generally only to Spanish language music. They are raised on this music and it becomes the only music that they listen to. For these communities, Mexican music is an alternative to American music. For them, it is their mainstream.

Conclusion

The following has shown that nativism has reemerged in the U.S. This nativism is not limited to Arizona. It is a national phenomenon affecting many areas of the country. This nativism is different in several respects from anti-immigrant sentiment of the past in that it targets Mexican immigrants without documents. The new nativism does not limit itself to attacking undocumented Mexican immigrants. It also expresses hostility to legal immigrants from Mexico, to U.S. born Mexicans and to all Latinos whose heritage is based in Latin America.

A variety of factors influence the new nativism but I argue that one of the most important is cultural in nature. Nativists acknowledge the significant impact Latinos-undocumented, legal, and U.S. born- are having on American life, especially on its culture. They now realize that Latinos have been and are contributing to the Latinization of the U.S.⁷⁷

The numerical increase of Latinos, their wide dispersal throughout the country and their cultural maintenance practices are fueling this trend. Latinos have grown so fast that they are now the largest minority group in the country and expected to grow even more over time. They are also settling in different parts of the country. Unlike the recent past when Latinos were concentrated in a few states of the Southwest or in New York and Florida, they can now be

⁷⁵Over the course of their five decades in the music industry, Los Tigres have sold over 35 million units, filled numerous stadiums, and received critical praise around the globe. The group began in the 1960s and continues to dominate the record industry in the early 21st century. On Los Tigres see "Global Pop," The Music Center: Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County, n.p. www.musiccenter.org/events/gpop_ltdn.html. Retrieved 11/17/2010.

⁷⁶As noted earlier, over the past century, immigrants have been settling in areas outside of the southwest. See Gilberto Garcia and Jerry Garcia, *The Illusion of Borders: The National Presence of Mexicanos in the United States* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2002); Victor Zuniga and Ruben Hernandez-Leon, Editors, *New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States* (NY, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005).

⁷⁷Ramos and Segal, "The Latinization of America," 2004, 1.

found in all parts of the country. Latinos, likewise, maintain their language and their cultural practices over time.

The growing presence of individual who maintain their language and cultural practices is having a significant influence on many aspects of American social, economic, political and culture life.⁷⁸ Most importantly, Latinos are altering the cultural landscape of the United States. This influence is not a recent phenomenon but an historical one. Latinos have been influencing American life for over a century.

To illustrate the manner in which Latinos have been and are influencing or “Latinizing” American culture I examined radio programming and popular music. With respect to the former, I showed how Latinos are changing the face of radio in the U.S. and altering its character from an English only medium to one that is more diverse. Will this trend continue and increase in the near future so that it either replaces or becomes equal to English or will Spanish remain a minor but significant component of U.S. radio? Only time will tell.

I also examined popular music and argued that Latinos were influencing both U.S. and non-U.S. musical genres in this country. Their influence is a long-standing phenomenon that goes back to the early 20th century and includes adding a Latino tinge to popular mainstream music, creating non-mainstream musical forms, and both Americanizing and replicating non-U.S. musical genres in this country. Each of these developments has varying degrees of support from Americans. The first two are heartily embraced, the third is tolerated, and the fourth is rejected, feared or misunderstood. Will these trends continue? Will American music continue to accommodate the varying degrees of Latino-influences or has it reached its limits? Will incorporation of additional Latino-influences into American music stem or inflame the tide of hostility, fear, and anxiety towards undocumented immigrants? More importantly will Latinization in the present lead to the development of a new national identity in the future? What will that identity look like?

These questions will remain unanswered for now but they will continue to be asked as long as Mexican immigrants in particular and Latinos in general increase their presence in this country.

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⁷⁸ Ramos, and Segal, “The Latinization of America,” 2004, 2.

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