

TIMELINE OF MEXICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE, HISTORY AND CULTURE
PART I (PRE-1900)

- 1527 Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca becomes the first European to explore North America and leave a written record
- 1540 Explorers from Mexico first enter the Southwest
- 1598 Spain plans permanent missions, military posts, towns, and ranchos in New Mexico
- 1700 Spanish settlement of Arizona begins
- 1716 Spanish settlement of Texas begins
- 1769 Spanish settlement of Alta California begins; the first California mission is built
- 1810 Mexico's struggle for independence against Spain begins
- 1821 Mexico wins independence from Spain
- William Becknell opens the Santa Fe Trail, tying the Southwest to the United States
- 1825 Mexico gives land to American land agents who bring settlers to Texas
- 1835 The Texas Revolution begins. Battle of the Alamo
- 1836 Texas gains independence
- 1842 Mexico twice attempts to reclaim Texas
- 1845 Magazine editor John L. O'Sullivan uses the phrase "Manifest Destiny" to describe American expansion.
The United States annexes Texas and offers Mexico \$5 million to recognize the Rio Grande River as Texas' southwestern boundary, \$5 million for New Mexico, and \$25 million for California
- 1846 The US-Mexican War begins
- 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed on February 2. Mexico cedes nearly half of its original territory to the US
- 1849 California's first constitutional convention held.
Gold discovered at Sutter's Mill, leading to a tremendous influx of Anglo prospectors
- 1850 From now through the 1870s, upper-class Mexicans in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and California lose most of their lands
- 1851 All native Mexicans are excluded from the California State Senate
- 1852 Tiburcio Vásquez begins his raids in California
- 1853 In the Gadsden Purchase, the US acquires 30,000 acres in southern Arizona and New Mexico from Mexico

- 1855 The Bureau of Public Instruction in California orders that all schools teach exclusively in English.
California passes a law against vagrancy, known as the “Greaser Law.”
Mexicans already represent 16-20% of inmates at San Quentin.
In Los Angeles, Francisco Ramírez published *El Camor Público*, a newspaper defending Mexican rights
- 1859 Juan N. Cortina leads a raid on Brownsville, Texas
- 1861 Congress creates Colorado territory out of New Mexico
- 1862 Congress creates Arizona territory out of New Mexico
- 1860s Numerous memoirs, diaries and testimonies written by US-Mexicans, such as José Arnaz, Mariano Vallejo, Apolinaria Lorenzana, Pío Pico, Miguel Antonio Otero, Eulalia Pérez (housed at Berkeley’s Bancroft Collection, discussed in Genaro Padilla’s *My History, Not Yours: The Formation of Mexican American Autobiography* and Rosaura Sánchez’s *Telling Identities: The Californio Testimonials*)
- 1872 María Amparo Ruiz de Burton writes the first English-language “Mexican American” novel, *Who Would Have Thought It?*
- 1878 Andrew García publishes his autobiographical *Tough Trip Through Paradise, 1878 – 1879*
- 1880s An active and vociferous network of Spanish-language newspapers continues in the Southwest
- 1884 Helen Hunt Jackson publishes *Ramona*
- 1885 Ruiz de Burton writes *The Squatter and the Don*
- 1890 Unionization begins in the Southwest, but is largely anti-Mexican in practice
- 1891 A court of private land claims is established in California to examine confusing land grant claims; most Californio resources shift to Anglo control
- 1894 Alianza Hispano Americano formed in Tucson, AZ
- 1892 Eusebio Chacón writes his two novelettes *El hijo de la tempestad* and *Tras la tormenta la calma*
- 1897 Wealthy Mexicans in Texas found El Colegio Altamiro to preserve Mexican culture for their children