### Timeline of Mexican American Literature, History and Culture

#### Pre-1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1527</td>
<td>Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca becomes the first European to explore North America and leave a written record</td>
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<td>1540</td>
<td>explorers from Mexico first enter the Southwest</td>
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<td>1598</td>
<td>Spain plans permanent missions, military posts, towns, and ranchos in New Mexico</td>
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<td>1700</td>
<td>Spanish settlement of Arizona begins</td>
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<td>1716</td>
<td>Spanish settlement of Texas begins</td>
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<td>1769</td>
<td>Spanish settlement of Alta California begins; the first California mission is built</td>
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<td>1810</td>
<td>Mexico’s struggle for independence against Spain begins</td>
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<td>1821</td>
<td>Mexico wins independence from Spain</td>
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<td>1825</td>
<td>William Becknell opens the Santa Fe Trail, tying the Southwest to the United States</td>
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<td>1835</td>
<td>Mexico gives land to American land agents who bring settlers to Texas</td>
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<td>1836</td>
<td>The Texas Revolution begins. Battle of the Alamo</td>
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<td>1842</td>
<td>Mexico twice attempts to reclaim Texas</td>
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<td>1845</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>1846</td>
<td>The US-Mexican War begins</td>
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<td>1848</td>
<td>Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed on February 2. Mexico cedes nearly half of its original territory to the US</td>
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<td>1849</td>
<td>California’s first constitutional convention held. Gold discovered at Sutter’s Mill, leading to a tremendous influx of Anglo prospectors</td>
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<td>1850</td>
<td>From now through the 1870s, upper-class Mexicans in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and California lose most of their lands</td>
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<td>1851</td>
<td>All native Mexicans are excluded from the California State Senate</td>
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<td>1852</td>
<td>Tiburcio Vásquez begins his raids in California</td>
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<td>1853</td>
<td>In the Gadsden Purchase, the US acquires 30,000 acres in southern Arizona and New Mexico from Mexico</td>
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<td>1855</td>
<td>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 Ramirez published <em>El Camor Público</em>, a newspaper defending Mexican rights</td>
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<td>1859</td>
<td>Juan N. Cortina leads a raid on Brownsville, Texas</td>
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<td>1861</td>
<td>Congress creates Colorado territory out of New Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Congress creates Arizona territory out of New Mexico</td>
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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 California Testimonials*).

Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton writes the first English-language “Mexican American” novel, *Who Would Have Thought It?*

Andrew García publishes his autobiographical *Tough Trip Through Paradise, 1878 – 1879*

An active and vociferous network of Spanish-language newspapers continues in the Southwest

Helen Hunt Jackson publishes *Ramona*

Ruiz de Burton writes *The Squatter and the Don*

*Unionization begins in the Southwest, but is largely anti-Mexican in practice*

A court of private land claims is established in California to examine confusing land grant claims; most California resources shift to Anglo control

Alianza Hispano Americano formed in Tucson, AZ

Eusebio Chacón writes his two novelettes *El hijo de la tempestad* and *Tras la tormenta la calma*

Wealthy Mexicans in Texas found El Colegio Altamiro to preserve Mexican culture for their children

1900 – 1930

Mexican beet workers carry out a successful strike in Ventura, California

Creation of the first Border Patrol, largely to keep out Asian immigrants who were passing as Mexican in order to enter the US

Mexican revolutionaries Enrique and Ricardo Flores Magón establish their newspaper, *Regeneración*, in San Antonio, TX

Start of the Mexican Revolution; over the course of the next twenty years, nearly 900,000 Mexicans (10% of Mexico’s population) cross the border—the largest wave of migration the US has ever seen

The first large convention of Mexicans for action against social injustice, *El Primer Congreso Mexicanista*, was held in Laredo, Texas

Arizona and New Mexico achieve statehood

María Cristina Mena begins publishing her short stories in mainstream US magazines such as *Century*, *Cosmopolitan* and T.S. Eliot’s *Criterion*

Political exile Julio Arce (aka “Jorge Ulica”) begins writing his “Crónicas Diabólicas,” humorous columns about Mexicans living in the US, in San Francisco’s *Hispano-América* newspaper. Other *cronistas* include Benjamín Padilla (“Kaskabel”), Adolfo Carrillo and Daniel Venegas (“El Malcriado”)

Adina de Zavala publishes *History and Legends of the Alamo and Other Mission in and around San Antonio*, writing Texas history from a Mexican American and woman’s perspective

Immigration Act passed, making literacy a condition of entry to US during WWI; Mexican farmworkers waived

Public schools begin implementing Americanization programs to acculturate Mexican immigrants

Fray Angélico Chávez begins writing his religious poems, collected in *Cantares: Canticles and Poems of Youth*. The first two Mexican actresses in Hollywood, Dolores Del Río and Lupe Vélez, make their debuts

Congress creates the Border Patrol, giving the agency absolute search and seizure authority over Mexicans, leading to abuses of Mexican American constitutional rights
1926 La Opinión newspaper founded in Los Angeles (still in circulation today)
Jovita González, Tejana educator, writes Dew on the Thorn
1927 La Confederación de Uniones Obreras Mexicanos is formed and holds its first convention in Los Angeles
1928 Venegas writes Las aventuras de Don Chipote, o cuando los pericos mamén, published in installments in Los Angeles’ El Heraldo de México newspaper
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is formed in Corpus Christi, Texas
1929 The U.S. government requires Mexicans to obtain visas to enter the country

1930 – 1960
1930 Repatriation (sometimes voluntary, often illegal) of 400,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans begins
Mexican anthropologist Manuel Gamio writes his classic Mexican Immigration to the United States and The Life story of the Mexican Immigrant
1932 Singer Lydia Mendoza begins performing publicly in San Antonio
1933 The El Monte Strike, possibly the largest agricultural strike up to that point in history, led by Mexican unions in California
Mexican and Mexican American workers in Texas organized one of the broadest unions in the history of Hispanic labor in the United States: La Asociación de Jornaleros, which represented everyone from hat-makers to farm workers
College students form the Mexican American Movement and create a monthly newspaper, La Voz Mexicana
1934 Jorge Ainslie writes Los pochos, which sets a precedent in the structure and themes of later Chicano novels (such as Villarreal’s Pocho, below)
San Antonio community leader Eleuterio Escobar forms La Liga Pro-Defensa Escolar in response to the gross inequity in spending he discovered between Mexican American and Anglo public schools
1935 The New Deal’s Federal Writers Project sent agents into the Southwest to collect folklore and stories from Mexican American communities; see Tey Diana Rebolledo and María Teresa Márquez’s Women’s Tales from the New Mexico WPA
John Steinbeck writes Tortilla Flat, about the Mexican community of Monterey, California
Elena Zamora O’Shea writes El Mesquite
1936 Américo Paredes writes George Washington Gómez
1937 Jovita González, with Eve Raleigh, co-authors Caballeros (unpublished until 1996)
Many Mexican workers join the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America
1938 San Antonio Pecan Shellers’ Strike, the largest Mexican workers’ strike of the decade
1941 Through 1945, approximately 350,000 Mexican Americans serve in World War II, suffering casualties far above their proportion in the population; they become the most decorate ethnic group, winning seventeen medals of honor
1942 Bracero program begins, providing for Mexican laborers to enter the United States as short-term contract workers (program ends in 1964)
Sleepy Lagoon incident in Los Angeles
1943 Zoot Suit Riots take place in Los Angeles (case continues through 1944)
Bracero Program begins
1945 Josefina Niggli writes Mexican Village
1947  *Mendez v. Westminster* decision prohibits school segregation on the basis of Mexican descent, setting an important precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education* (1955)

Mario Suárez publishes his first “Chicano Sketches” in the *Arizona Quarterly*

1948  Mexican American veterans of WWII found the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi, TX

1950  Between now and 1955, Operation Wetback deports 3.8 million Mexicans and Mexican Americans

1952  Actor Anthony Quinn is the first Mexican American to win the Academy Award for Best Actor

Marlon Brando stars in *Viva Zapata!* as the Mexican revolutionary war hero

1954  The film *Salt of the Earth* (blacklisted in Hollywood) is heralded by many as a true representation of Mexican Americans and their struggle

In *Hernández v. Texas*, the Supreme Court recognizes that Mexican Americans have equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment

1956  Paredes writes the classic *With His Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and its Hero*

1958  Ritchie Valens becomes first Mexican American rock star

Charlton Heston portrays a Mexican American lawyer in Orson Welles’s film noir, *Touch of Evil*

1959  José Antonio Villarreal writes *Pucho*, considered the first “Chicano” novel

1960 – 1980

1960  Viva Kennedy clubs spring up in support of the Democratic ticket of Kennedy and Johnson

1962  César Chávez and Dolores Huerta co-founded the National Farm Workers Association, which would evolve into the United Farm Workers (UFW), in Delano, CA

1963  In New Mexico, Reies López Tijerina incorporates La Alianza Federal de los Mercedes (later known as the Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres)

Bracero Program ends

1965  The UFW begins its grape boycott

Luis Valdez founds El Teatro Campesino in Delano, CA

1966  Rodolfo Acuña teaches the first Mexican American history class in Los Angeles

1967  The Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) is founded in San Antonio

Tijerina takes over the Tierra Amarilla County Courthouse in New Mexico

250 students representing seven Los Angeles colleges and universities meet to form the United Mexican American Students (UMAS)

Corky González writes the epic poem, “I Am Joaquin”

*El Grito: A Journal of Contemporary Mexican-American Thought* first appears

1968  The Brown Berets form in Los Angeles and eventually become one of the largest non-student organizations in the country

More than 10,000 high school students in California and Texas stage walk-outs to protest educational and military draft policies

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) is organized in San Antonio, TX

Between now and 1973, more than 50 departments, centers and institutes for Chicano studies were established in California
1969  González organizes the Chicano Youth Liberation Movement in Denver, CO, where participants craft the classic manifesto, “El Plán Espiritual de Aztlán”

A three day conference is organized at Santa Barbara by the Chicano Coordinating Council of Higher Education yields the formation of El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA)

1970  Jose Ángel Gutiérrez establishes the Raza Unida Party in Crystal City, TX

On August 20, the Chicano Moratorium Against the Vietnam War draws the largest demonstration of Latinos in American history up to that time; later that day, Rubén Salazar, an Los Angeles Times columnist who covered the event, is killed by a sherrif’s tear-gas projectile

1971  Tomás Rivera writes Y no se le tragó la tierra

Ernesto Galarza writes Barrio Boy

The Chicana’s Conference held in Houston, TX; it aimed to analyze women’s roles in the Movement

1972  La Raza Unida holds its first national convention in El Paso

Patricia Rodriguez organizes Las Mujeres Muralistas in the San Francisco Bay Area, with members Consuelo Mendez, Irene Pérez, and Graciela Carillo

Peter Rodriguez inaugurates the Mexican Museum in San Francisco

Jesus Salvador Treviño’s film, Yo Soy Chicano, is the first film about Chicano history to be televised nationally

Music group Little Joe y la Familia release Para la gente, which combines Tex-Mex music with jazz and rock, a style known as La Onda Chicana

Oscar Zeta Acosta writes Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo and, in 1973, Revolt of the Cockroach People

Rudolfo Anaya writes Bless Me, Última

Nicolás Kanellos starts La Revista Chicana-Riqueña, a literary and academic journal, in Gary, IN

1973  Rolanda Hinojosa writes Estampas del Valle y otras obras

1974  The Southwest Voter Registration Education Project is established

Artist Judith Francisca Baca founds the first City of Los Angeles Mural Program.

Jose Luis Ruiz produces The Unwanted, a film about undocumented immigrants in the US

Artists Harry Gamboa Jr, Gronk, Patssi Valdez and Willie Herron form the conceptual art group Asco

1975  The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is extended to “Hispanic Americans”

Angela de Hoyos publishes Chicano Poems for the Barrio

1976  Bernice Zamora writes Restless Serpents

Chicano film Chulas Fronteras debuts

1978  The Supreme Court upholds the decision in favor of Bakke v. the UC Board of Regents by a vote of 5-4, in an act that seriously undermines Affirmative Action

Robert M. Young directs Alumbrista, a film about an undocumented worker’s journey across the border

1979  Valdez’s Zoot Suit is the first Chicano play on Broadway, and becomes a film in 1981

Kanellos founds Arte Público Press (currently at the University of Houston)
1980 – today

1980  The Reagan Administration comes to power, accelerating the dismantling of most social programs initiated in the 1960s
  Arturo Islas writes *The Rain God*

1981  Poet Lorna Dee Cervantes publishes her collection, *Emplumada*

1982  Floricanto Press is founded

1983  Gregory Nava directs *El Norte*, a film about immigration

1984  Lucha Corpi writes *Delia’s Song*
  Pat Mora publishes Chants and, in 1986, Borders, two collections of poetry
  *Ballad of Gregorio Cortéz* become a film starring Edward James Olmos

1986  Ana Castillo writes *Mixquiabnala Letters*

1987  Luis Valdez directs the feature film *La Bamba*, the biopic of Ritchie Valens
  Gloria Anzaldúa writes *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
  Chicano comedian and actor Cheech Marin writes, directs and stars in *Born in East LA*

1988  Sandra Cisneros publishes *The House on Mango Street*

1989  Immigration from the Americas rises from 44.3% in 1964 to 61.4%; Mexico accounts for 37.1% of total documented immigration to US
  Denise Chávez writes *Face of an Angel*

1990  Chicano rapper Kid Frost hits the charts with “La Raza”

1991  Cisneros publishes *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*
  Gil Cuadros writes *City of God*

1992  Cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz begins his strip, La Cucaracha, in the LA Times newspaper

1993  Castillo publishes *So Far from God*

1994  Filmmaker Lourdes Portillo makes *The Devil Never Sleeps*
  California ballot initiative Proposition 187 seeks to deny undocumented workers social services, health care and public education; although it passes with 58% of the vote, it is overturned in federal courts

1995  Tejana singer Selena is tragically murdered in Corpus Christi, TX
  *My Family/Mi Familia* is a major feature film

1997  Gregory Nava films *Selena*, starring Jennifer López, which tells the story of the late singer

1998  Rock en español gains popularity in the US
  Michelle Serros writes *Chicana Falsa and Other Stories of Death, Identity and Oxnard*

2002  Comedian George López begins his eponymous TV show