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Chapter 3:

This chapter begins with a presentation of what social order Mexico had before the discussion of Mexico's Independence. For example, Manuel González, mentions that there was a socioeconomic pyramid that had Mexico's so-called most prestigious race Criollo, below those of Spanish blood. The type of power that the European had, was reflected upon the control they had in economy and politics. I believe having had what can be considered outsiders run a foreign country, would turn out to having many in disagree, initiating movements that could have freed them from the European. The possibility of having others take position or charge of these major components of Mexico's prosperity was nowhere to be reachable by Indians, mestizos or blacks. However, those closest to the availability of running the country were the Creoles and therefore, discontent with their placement in the pyramid and limited access to success, movements of Latin American revolutions were initiated by them.

The Latin American revolutions were, yet to be one of the many events to unleash what would be the overthrow of the old ruling country, Spain. Events such as Spain's own taste of their medicine, with the Napoleonic occupation of power in Spain. To have a clear view of what type of invasion it was, Napoleon was able to replace a King Ferdinand VIII with naming his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, new ruler of the people. As having a leader inflicts in people's decisions and way of living, this figure too was not accepted and many rebelled against it. Spain here can be viewed as a reflection of what Latin America suffered and how it was left as, after their invasion.

The process of Mexico gaining its Independence can also be traced by legendary figures who played an essential role. The Criollo, yet indiscriminating and compassionate for others was Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. He was part of the race known as creoles, those who felt privileged and thought to

have the right of having power due to their access to education or wealth. On the other hand, Miguel Hidalgo saw needs in equality and change in Mexico. Hidalgo was an ordained priest, but his occupation did not stop him in the revolutionary efforts to free Mexico from Spain. The superiors of Hidalgo were not in favor of his involvement in Mexico's crisis under the power of Spain and was sent off to Dolores. In this section, I was clueless that he formed part of the creoles, it was surprising to learn that this heroic figure launched from Dolores ,area of exile, the famous " Grito de Dolores" (Cry of Dolores) on September 16, 1810. Considering, that I had heard a few details on how the Mexican revolution was proceeded, I believe certain details such as how strong of a willingness this priest had, to go against the odds of what he was expected to do in his religion, occupation and race, are essential for others to know for a depth comprehension of the Independence.

However, the chapter does state that the independence date in Mexico is celebrated on September 16 of every year, however, the Independence of Mexico is stated by González to have occurred in 1821. The death of Hidalgo motivated other priests to follow his plan, but were captured and killed. Eventually, Agustin de Iturbide, declared finally Mexico as a free country, ironically also stating himself as the new emperor of the nation. This event was quite interesting because it marked the end of the Spanish ruling, but also indicated that Mexico had new rules to follow under this not so organized leader among the use of power.

Moving further into the chapter, we see details of how Mexico was doing economically, in California. González, covers in this section the prosperity of Mexico's economy by the use of ranching rather than the mission system. The missions secularization allowed for the ranches to provide sufficient crops, livestock and therefore bolstered the economy. I was able to view that despite the demographic of people and commitment from all, in order to have a better Mexico, a form of social economic pyramid was visible. The rancheros, were mostly light skinned and the elite of the system, upper-class women, following were the mestizos and at the bottom the Indians. Californian society was lo longer living under

the Spanish crown, but we can see privilege and inferiority in the society that suffered under those same factors. Shortly after, we learn that California was not the only one suffering from the changes of Mexico's freedom, New Mexico was part of it too. The chapter described that New Mexico had fallen behind the changes because of the long distance among Mexico City and New Mexico. The chapter also indicated that New Mexico was facing a "Indian problem" which indicated that many times they asked for military involvement to help out during the years of 1820 to 1830s.

An overview of what Texas was and what it became was an important aspect into what later would be the Treaty of Hidalgo. The Texan population was composed of Mexicans and Anglo. The immigration of these people were not taken very well by the Mexicans as a sense of privilege and owning of territory could have resulted. However, the Mexican government still promoted Texas as the only area for them to arrive. Of course, later that confidence of Texas being a deserted place and not much to give, was taken over and an independence for it was given under the Texas Revolt. This specific detail on how Texas separated from Mexico, was described briefly to me as I learned about the territories that Mexico lost and now I comprehend more.

The chapter ends with the continuous description of how after Texas being under United States power, more interests in other territories awoke after the successful takeover. For example, before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, González states that attempts to invade New Mexico were present and also California. California was not being easily given, so when James K. Polk, president of the United States in 1844, saw that to use a war like confrontation with Mexico would help, he did so. The strategy that Polk used was that because Mexico was in possibly going to be invaded by the British, he had no choice but to go into war, which had Mexico declare war too in the year of 1846. The war between the United States and Mexico is known as the Mexican War of 1847. The desire for Polk was to reach Mexico City, but before annexing all the country, a treaty was given to Mexico in order to avoid all lost of territory. The prevention of more troops to proceed throughout Mexico was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Chapter 4:

This chapter begins with the description of what Chicano's think of what Mexico turned to be after it turned into United States land. The year that the Mexican American, population is described is before the 1900s, which marked their timing of living under powerless, unchanged and oppressed years. González stated that despite the Chicano and Mexican American suffering in this time, the Chicano Scholars believe sharing this information is crucial to understand the modern Mexican American today.

As the chapter describes how Mexicans were viewed, the anti-mexican feelings are reflected upon the postwar periods. For example, Anglo American opinions towards the Mexicans was that they were to be expelled from the near lands that they resigned in. The hatred was seen strongest among the Anglo community towards Mexican. It was quite interesting to see that the term used against the Mexicans was “greasers” used to describe the Spanish-speaking immigrants working under the gold rush. The fact that others than the Anglo community working under the search for gold, created competition and ownership personalities in between the groups.

The fact of sharing lands and working under the same areas was already a crucial part of why Mexicans suffered discrimination, but in regard to folklorist Arthur L. Campa commented, “ Cultural, political, and religious differences tended to polarize Mexicans and Anglo Americans, but the most persistent reason for the prejudice felt by Americans was the Mexicans were dark-skinned people ”. This section dedicates a great description of the form of hatred and racial perspectives Anglo Americans had towards the Mexicans and sadly it takes me to wonder if in these days we see similarities in what is described to have happened many years ago. What is surprising is that González does state that despite the two groups being unfriendly against one another, other cases between Anglo American and Mexicans, showed that a possible of an easy going friendship and even marriages occurred. The justification offered in the chapter in this section of what situations where no hate was present and instead friendships occurred, was based on the location that the Mexicans settled in. The fact that some settled in Texas and

others in California, the most prominent groups of Mexicans to suffer from hatred would be in Texas and less in California. This was a very interesting point made.

As California was brought up in the beginning of the chapter, a section of what Mexicans were living through in the hands of American government was discussed further into the chapter. The lives of the Mexicans (both native-born and immigrants), were terrible and sad. The American government showed no remorse to victims hurt under the hands of Americans, in situations of break-ins to homes or lynchings with insufficient culpability evidence. Other minorities who also were not protected under laws implemented to protect and serve all were Asians, Native Americans (usually subject to genocide as their lands were removed) and people of color.

Later into the chapter, a section dedicated to bandits, which resulted from the oppression and hatred being felt in the minorities, was analyzed. As I read through this section and noticed that the Anglo American saw these bandits as vicious and violent people, not very different to how the Spaniards saw the Indians during the conquest. One famous bandit from California, with Indian and Mexican blood, was Tiburcio Vasquez. The laws towards these bandits also excluded them from finding clear and accurate proof to them committing kills, stealing and causing harm. The result of having rebels was because of what the same American society had created, if hatred and discrimination would not have been present in the lives of oppressed, bandits would have not risen.

As mentioned in the beginning the way that Mexicans were viewed depended on the area of where they had settled, that being before or after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The author did provide a section for different areas in where you would find demographic representation of Mexicans like in California and Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. The areas where they settled in, I found the levels of prejudice in some cases at a high level and in others not so much. It intrigues me to want to know more on why Mexican faced all this discrimination, still when the Anglo in some locations were the first to invade and force change upon the existing community.

As the chapter reaches the end, the phenomenon of immigration is covered. The use of immigration was a form for many Mexicans to expand their skills and better their lives as they entered what used to be their lands. The chapter illustrated that the continuous waves of immigration were what created the middle class in the American Southwest.