

tion,” and “Worlds of Work.”

West’s chapters contrast sharply with Paul’s original work. West tells stories illuminated by anecdotes that create an overall tone for the reader, a tone that emerges as complicated and rich. West writes a general social history of the region based in the scholarship of the forty years since *Mining Frontiers of the Far West* was first published. In “Breaking and Building Communities,” for instance, West presents the devastation of Native American communities and the development of mining frontiers not simply as counterpoints, but as closely interconnected relationships. These chapters are overviews of more recent thinking on Western history applied directly to the mining context. For the well-read scholar, West’s work is most useful in raising questions for additional research. For the general reader who may not read other books on Western history, West’s additional chapters provide historical context.

Various approaches could have been taken in a new edition of Paul’s book. His history could have been extended by time or by place. As well, new knowledge from the last forty years of scholarship on Western mining could have been added in keeping with Paul’s original themes. West, however, is modest in his intent, and this may be the best solution—don’t tamper with a classic. West adds social and historical context, allowing us to consider the original work with new eyes, and he also updates Paul’s original annotated bibliography. West is an excellent storyteller, and his writing contrasts with Paul’s, leaving no doubt that two authors are at work. Spelling out the authorship on the “Contents” page, however, might be in order.

In his 1963 review in the *American Historical Review* historian Clark Spence predicted that the “richness of ideas and interpretations” in Paul’s work would create a book that endures. Spence’s insightful prediction has proven true. With this edition Paul’s work is readily available

to a new generation, enriched by Elliot West’s thoughtful and non-intrusive additional chapters.

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Roberto R. Calderón. *Mexican Coal Mining Labor in Texas and Coahuila, 1880-1930*. (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1999.) 316 pages. 17 b&w photos. Bib. Index. Cloth \$39.95.

Thousands of Mexican coal miners and their families earned their livings from mining coal on both sides of the international border between 1880 and 1930. Those entering the United States sought greater opportunity, fleeing the undemocratic government of Porfirio Díaz and the upheaval of the Mexican Revolution, often staying and becoming an important segment of the working class in Texas and the greater Southwest. As Roberto Calderón shows in *Mexican Coal Mining Labor*, this was part of a transnational process spurred mainly by United States capitalists and the coming of American-owned railroads heading south and west from Texas into north-east Mexico. The coal mines were dug in large part to service the railroads, and so the first mines in the North Texas Coalfield emerged due to the advances of various rail lines. The emerging coal companies sought Mexican workers to mine the coal to fuel the railroads and smelters as well as utility and other industries to change the industrial landscape of northern Mexico and Texas. These growing industries gave rise to a new industrial workforce, and coal drove industrialization. With the digging of the first shafts came workers’ efforts to organize, and Calderón shows that Mexican miners developed grassroots efforts in Mexico, joined national organizations, and also played a significant role in the unionization of Texas mines throughout the hand loading period studied here. After that, oil displaced coal and a new era began.

This book is presented in five chapters which offer an in-depth history of coal mining in the regions studied, especially Texas. Beginning with the Mexican foundations of coal mining immigrants, the author discusses foreign capital penetration into Mexico, the labor conditions there—wages, discrimination, and labor organizations—and the important fact that there was a steady flow of intellectual and political ideas, many born of socialist, anarchist, and liberal critiques of the Porfirian regime on both sides of the border. Mexican workers began to migrate within Mexico in pursuit of economic opportunities, and when they came they built new communities, developed strategies of mutual aid in an era when governments and companies offered little or no assistance, and experienced repressive political climates and exploitative employers. They brought what they learned from those experiences with them to Texas, where they found some of the same problems, especially the dual wage system and racist management practices that precluded their promotions despite their skills.

After portraying these Mexican origins, the author turns to the “contours” of the mines in Texas and Coahuila and the marketing of the product. He explains the geology of the coalfields, the locations of the lignite and bituminous deposits, the thickness of the seams, methods of extracting the coal, and the social and historical implications of this geography. The non-expert may find the material regarding coal mining operations too technical, the histories of the various companies somewhat tedious, and the local histories unnecessarily detailed; someone interested in precisely these things will be glad to find them here and these could be the most useful parts of the book, depending on one’s interests. In addition, the information presented regarding the operation of American owned mines in Mexico, like that of the Mexican Coal and Coke Company which used American methods throughout its plant (the only difference was labor),

provides an interesting historical parallel to more contemporary relationships between American capital and Mexican labor.

A detailed picture of the demographics of the main mining communities in south Texas in Maverick and Webb counties informs the reader on age, gender, education, and other measurable aspects of miners’ lives. Those statistics are brought to life by discussion of working conditions and labor activity on both sides of the border. Once in the United States, Mexican coal miners joined both the Knights of Labor, during the 1880s, and the United Mine Workers (UMWA) until its decline in the 1930s. The one area it appears the UMWA failed to unionize coal miners was in the lignite fields, but the reasons for that remain unclear. What is clear from reading this book is that Mexican laborers were productive and profitable, and actively organized to secure a fairer share of the wealth they generated despite the obstacles they faced. With this work, Calderón tells a multi-layered story that is wide-ranging, well-researched, and an extremely informative contribution to industrial, labor, and social history in Texas and Coahuila in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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Charles L. Keller. *The Lady in the Ore Bucket: A History of Settlement and Industry in the Tri-Canyon Area of the Wasatch Mountains*. (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 2001.) Photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index. xi + 426 pp.

When I saw the title of this book, I assumed that Charles Keller had written a history of mining in the canyons east of Salt Lake Valley. He did that, but he also wrote about other economic activities and some recreational activities as well. The canyons in question are Mill Creek, Big Cotton-