



Power and Control in the Imperial Valley: Nature, Agribusiness, and Workers on the California Borderland, 1900-1940 (Connecting the Greater West Series)

Benny J Andrés

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Power and Control in the Imperial Valley examines the evolution of irrigated farming in the Imperial-Mexicali Valley, an arid desert straddling the California–Baja California border. Bisected by the international boundary line, the valley drew American investors determined to harness the nearby Colorado River to irrigate a million acres on both sides of the border. The “conquest” of the environment was a central theme in the history of the valley.

Colonization in the valley began with the construction of a sixty-mile aqueduct from the Colorado River in California through Mexico. Initially, Mexico held authority over water delivery until settlers persuaded Congress to construct the All-American Canal. Control over land and water formed the basis of commercial agriculture and in turn enabled growers to use the state to procure inexpensive, plentiful immigrant workers.

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