

COWBOYS - VAQUEROS

Origins of the First American Cowboys

Chapter 2

By Donald Chávez Y Gilbert

Cowboy History

The First Hispanic People

To understand the cowboy and his origins is first to know the people from whence he came. So, first we will begin with a short history of the first cowboys, **Iberian Hispanics**. *Hispania* was the name given Iberian Spain and Portugal by the Romans to the peninsula at a time when the label was **only** geographic without specific cultural or political connotation. The first Hispanic people were an agrarian-pastoral people in the broadest sense and as a result of geographic, climatic, and political forces, and (through natural selection), their own genetic hardiness, over the millennia continued to be crop farmers and shepherds, but refined, developed, specialized, and perfected as a people the culture and technology of animal farming, (ranching).

The oldest historical discoveries, archeological artifacts, and rock art found in Spain date back to circa 30,000 to 50,000 B.C. Among the most important remains of this period are the caves Cova Negra (*Játiva*) and Piñar (Granada). The largest single ethnic element was the **Iberian tribes** that were perhaps descendants of these first natives (of 50,000BC) or who more recently moved into the peninsula around 6000-4000 B.C. when the first representations of halters on domesticated horses appeared with the first equestrians. They were followed by the first clearly definable group of immigrants, a sizable wave of Celtic migrants around 1200-1300 BC from central or northern Europe. The early name of Spain, "Iberia", is Celtic and is derived from their word "aber", or "open" as it translates in Spanish, meaning "harbor" or "river."

“Archaeological evidence of the advent of riding in Spain occurs in rock art dating before 2000 B.C. and in fragments of Celtic weapons, horseshoes, bridle bits, and prick spurs by 500 B.C. About the same time, bent-knee riders in saddles

of concave silhouette appear in Iberian stone carvings, bronze castings, and vase paintings," according to *Man Made Mobile, Early Saddles of Western North America*, Richard E. Ahlborn, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980. Another source dates horsemanship to Mesopotamia from about 2000 B.C. and early signs of saddles back to the cavalry of Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) who rode cinched quilted pads in the same manner as the present day saddle; *Saddles*, Russell H. Beatie, University of Oklahoma Press 1981.

Stanley G. Payne writes in *A History of Spain and Portugal* that the "Hispanic peninsula lies at the extreme southwestern tip of Europe, in the direction of Africa and the outer Atlantic. It is partially separated from the rest of Europe by the Pyrenees.... It is second only to Switzerland as the highest area in Western Europe, the land like the original New Mexico which included most of the American Southwest, rising rapidly from the lowlands to high desert hill country. Except for the green belt referred to by Charles J. Bishko as the Humid Crescent that comprise the northern and northwestern fringes, it is a predominantly dry area. Stanley Payne's research tell us that immigration and cultural influences from southern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean contributed significantly to the main ethnic and genetic components of the historic Hispanic peoples who were already present before the Roman conquest, and that the great majority of subsequent "Spaniards" (or "Portuguese") were descendents of the original highly diversified ethnic stocks established in the pre-Roman period. He goes on to say that notwithstanding the peninsula having been subject to invasion and very light immigration throughout its history; the Roman conquest was not heavy enough to alter the genetic or phenotypical composition of the inhabitants significantly. Similarly within the culture of ranching Rodero (author of *El Ganado Primitivo Andaluz y Sus Implicaciones en el Descubrimiento de America*, E. Rodero, A. Rodero & J.V. Delgado) agrees, "the arrival of the Romans did not suppose any substantial change in the existing animals, but they brought important changes in the methods of breeding and production." The farther they (Luso-Hispanics) were from the south and east and the nearer to the north and west, Ancient Hispanic societies were increasingly primitive and less politically and technologically advanced. "The Romans described members of most of the Hispanic tribes as rather short, dark-haired, white-skinned, and physically agile, if not particularly muscular characteristics which would seem to describe modern as well as ancient inhabitants of the peninsula." **Does this sound like the makings of the first rugged cowboy?** "The largest ethnic group in the peninsula, the Iberians, were strongly tribal and warlike, qualities characteristic of the population of ancient Hispania as a whole." An Iberian tribe Tartessos founded an important kingdom of high culture in the Valley of Guadalquivir River, southern Spain. With an eye from the perspective of ranching, it should be noted that A. Rodero, E. Rodero, and J.V. Delgado in their paper The Primitive Andalusian Livestock and Their Implications In The Discovery Of America,

observe that “from the data collected in the literature we deduce that in old Spain existed a predominance of animal farming over agriculture at least in certain regions such as the Betica (Guadalquivir Valley).” Estrabon (cited for Garcia Bellido, 1989), talking about Turdentania(which corresponds presently to West of Anadalusia), notes... {”even though this region exports wheat, many wines, oil, wax, honey, pitch, cochineal and minium, the abundance of farm animals belonging to all species is enormous.”} It (the predominance of animal farming over agriculture), was favoured by the fact that most of the Iberic Peninsula was sparsely inhabited. The farm animals were one of the principal sources of wealth in old Hispania, and the food base for almost all the Spanish human populations.”

The eastern Iberians were considerably influenced by Greek and Phoenician merchants and immigrant colonies, who contributed much to their culture and political organization. Their communities never formed a major state, as did Tartessos, but were organized in a variety of small city-states not dissimilar to the Greek. The most distinctive ethnic community among them was that of the Basques of the western Pyrenees and adjacent foothills. The origin of the Basques is shrouded in mystery. Probably the most famous American of Basque origin was Don Juan de Onate. Their language which has persisted in rural regions to this day is unique and non-Indo-European. Basque society was familial and tribal, and their economy, like that of most of the peninsular tribes, was essentially pastoral.

“In the northern sector of the central plateau and in the Duero valley in the interior of the northwestern area the Celts fused with the earlier Iberian population to form the so-called Celt-Iberian race. Some of these practiced extensive agriculture along with raising flocks and herds, and in the Duero valley tribal collectivist social patterns prevailed.” By the eighth and ninth centuries B.C. Celtiberian communities and tribes had integrally fused their cultural, agrarian, and ranching technologies. Similarly, western Iberia where present day Portugal exists saw a large influx of Celts with smaller numbers of immigrant tribes such as the Lusitanians, the Calaicians or Gallaeci and the Conii.” – Stanley Payne.

By 1100 B.C. Phoenicians arrived to the peninsula and founded colonies, the most important of which was *Gadir* (today's Cadiz). Also Greeks founded colonies in southern Spain and along the Mediterranean coast. During the *Punic Wars* between Rome and Carthago Carthaginians invaded Spain and conquered large parts of it. Their most important colonies were the island Ibiza and Cartagena, the "new Carthago".

After Rome defeated Carthago, Romans invaded the colonies in Spain, eventually conquering the entire peninsula. According to Stanley “the complete lack of political or cultural unity among the disparate societies of the peninsula impeded rather than

facilitated their conquest by Rome. The incorporation of Hispania into the empire was a long, slow process, lasting from 218 B.C. to 19 B.C. (though the major part was completed by 133 B.C.). This was a much longer time than was required to subjugate other major portions of the Mediterranean littoral.” – More evidence of the tenacity of the Iberian Hispanics. This extended period of isolation sustained and contributed to their ability to perfect and consistently maintain a predominance of animal farming and to develop salient methods and higher more specialized ranching technology. “The fact also that it was highlighted by celebrated examples of diehard resistance the most famous of which was the struggle to the death of the town of Numantia in 133 B.C. has led some Spanish historians to view the ancient Hispanic tribes as already "Spanish" in their cultural characteristics, particularly in their xenophobia and obstinate resistance to foreign domination.” Large numbers of Hispanic troops volunteered to serve in the Roman forces and because of the hardy Iberian penchant for protecting the homelands and their warrior skills, the peninsula was the major source of mercenaries in the Mediterranean for nearly two thousand years. “In some respects, these qualities of ancient Hispania paralleled those of most of the rest of the ancient Mediterranean world, but in Hispania they were more pronounced and were less challenged by alternate developments. Historically, the tendency in the peninsula toward such ways of life has been more widespread and persistent than elsewhere in Mediterranean and Western Europe. At its height Roman Hispania may have had a population of five million or more. This was concentrated particularly in the more urban south and east but was also fairly dense in the south-central region, in Lusitania, and in parts of the northwest. Yet the Romanization of the peninsula was far from complete. Much of the north and northwest was influenced little by Roman life. Resistance was always strongest among the more primitive, warlike tribes of the Cantabrian mountain range in the far north. A somewhat tenuous military dominion was maintained, but even at the height of the empire there were only a few Roman towns in the far north. The Basques offered less direct military resistance but remained even more impervious to cultural assimilation. Still, Spaniards absorbed a considerable degree of the Roman culture as is still today evident in their language. According to Stanely, there is nevertheless, “some support for the notion that the rather baroque quality of Spanish esthetics was also characteristic of ancient times. In the more developed areas there was considerable emphasis on the gaudy and sumptuous. Much of the gold in the ancient Mediterranean came from the peninsula, which seems to have been the "El Dorado" of ancient times, and Hispanic gold ornaments were known throughout the ancient world. It has even been conjectured that the valuing of gold as a precious metal originated in the peninsula. Certainly the opportunity to obtain gold and other metals whetted Roman interest. Roman capital dominated commerce, in which Hispania played an essentially colonial role. Hispanic metals, especially gold, and Hispanic wool were imported by Rome in great volume. The peninsula also shipped large quantities of the three Mediterranean food staples,

grain, olive oil, and wine, to Rome. By the fourth century, Hispania had begun to rival Egypt as the empire's most important granary and continued to sustain a considerable volume of Mediterranean commerce as late as the fifth century.”

In 409, when the Roman Empire started to fall, Gothic tribes invaded the peninsula and established their kingdom in 419.

In the early 5th century, Germanic tribes, invaded the peninsula, namely the Suevi, the Vandals (Silingi and Hasdingi) and their allies, the Sarmatian Alans. Only the kingdom of the Suevi (Quadi and Marcomanni) would endure after the arrival of another wave of Germanic invaders, the Visigoths, who conquered all of the Iberian Peninsula and expelled or partially integrated the Vandals and the Alans. The Visigoths eventually conquered the Suevi kingdom and its capital city Bracara between 584–585. Though before their entry into the peninsula the Visigoths were culturally more romanized than any other Germanic group, they were an essentially pastoral people, unlike the Ostrogoths and Suevi, whose societies were agrarian. The cultural and economic life of Visigothic Hispania was carried on almost exclusively by the native Hispani, to whom was due the relative prosperity of part of the sixth and seventh centuries. If the Visigothic aristocracy was unable to develop a unified, viable political system, it was nevertheless itself the beginning of the historic Hispanic master class. In this Visigothic caste the military aristocracy of the peninsula had its roots, creating a style and a psychology of the warrior nobleman that provided the dominant leadership for Hispanic society for more than a thousand years; this psychology ultimately managed to superimpose its values and attitudes on much of the society as a whole. Yet the success of the aristocratic ethos was a consequence of the experience of medieval Hispania, not of the rule of the Visigothic oligarchy, which largely proved an historic failure.

Stanley Payne continues, “Gothic dominance lasted until 711, when Muslim armies crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and defeated Roderick, the last Visigoth king.” Islamic Moors, North African Muslims (mainly Berber with some Arab) invaded the Iberian Peninsula, destroying the Visigothic Kingdom. Many of the ousted Gothic nobles took refuge in the unconquered north Asturian highlands. From there they aimed to reconquer their lands from the Moors: this war of reconquest is known as the Reconquista.

In 868, Count Vímara Peres reconquered and governed the region between the Minho and Douro rivers. The county was then known as *Portucale* (i.e. Portugal).

“The southern parts of Spain, called *al-Andalus*, were prospering in the Moorish epoch, thanks to new sciences and agricultural techniques. The Moors conquered major parts of the country until they were defeated for the first time by Visigoth king

Pelayo at *Covadonga* in northern Spain, 722.

Though the small Christian kingdoms in the north were a nucleus of resistance, the Arabian culture was prospering in the rest of the country. The Muslim Spain by that time got politically independent of the Arabian empire, and in the 10th century *Abderraman III*. Made Al-Andalus his own caliphate. In this epoch Cordoba was the indisputable cultural center of this area of the world. Decadence started in the 11th century, when the various Arabian noble families were more and more at variance among themselves, and al-Andalus broke into numerous small caliphates. The Christian kingdoms in the north started then the reconquest of Spain. The marriage between *Isabel of Castilia*, (*Castile*), and *Ferdinand of Aragon* in 1469, formally uniting the two kingdoms in 1474 making Spain the most dynamic monarchy in Europe and becoming the turning point of the *Reconquista*. From then on Muslims rapidly lost territory, until they were completely expelled with the loss of their last remaining caliphate, Granada, in 1492.

Isabel and Ferdinand succeeded in uniting the whole country under their crown, and their effort to "re-Christianize" Spain resulted in the *Spanish Inquisition*, when thousands of Jews and Moors who refused to convert to Christianity were expelled or killed.

After the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492 tons of gold and silver were brought in from the new continent and Spain became one of the most powerful nations of this epoch called the *Golden Age*." It should be noted here that this writing virtually all American history references identify Christopher Columbus (Crisobal Colon) as Italian. This is an understandable error considering the fact that Columbus represented himself to the Spanish monarchy as an Italian because he needed to conceal his political liabilities as a true son of Catalan, Spain.

Like Spain, Portugal ascended to a great world power in the Age of Discoveries with a vast Empire. Following its heyday as a world power during the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal lost much of its wealth and status with the destruction of Lisbon in a 1755 earthquake, occupation during the Napoleonic Wars, and the independence in 1822 of Brazil.

“While it had its origins as a dependency of the Spanish Kingdom of Leon, Portugal occasionally gained de facto independence during weak Leonese reigns. Portugal gained its first *de jure* independence (as Kingdom of Galicia and Portugal) in 1065 under the rule of Garcia II. Due to feudal power struggles, Portuguese and Galician nobles rebelled. In 1072, the country rejoined León and Castile under Garcia II's brother Alphonso VI of Castile. In 1095, Portugal separated almost completely from the Kingdom of Galicia, both under the rule of the Kingdom of Leon, just like Castile (Burgos). Its territories consisting largely of mountain, moorland and forest, were bounded on the north by the Minho, on the south by the Mondego. At the end of the

11th century, the Burgundian knight Henry became count of Portugal and defended his independence, merging the County of Portucale and the County of Coimbra. Henry declared independence for Portugal while a civil war raged between Leon and Castile. Henry died without reaching his aims. His son, Afonso Henriques, took control of the county. The city of Braga, the unofficial Catholic centre of the Iberian Peninsula, faced new competition from other regions. The lords of the cities of Coimbra and Porto (then Portucale) with the Braga's clergy demanded the independence of the renewed county.”

Because of its' relevance to this time period in the history of Iberia I am including a personal anecdote by Rafael Chavez, Jr. To provide a flavor or inside sense of what the Luso-Hispanic people of Iberia were experiencing at that time in history.

This is a story of the surname "CHAVEZ"; how it originated in Iberia, and how it spread throughout the years into the different countries of the world. It also deals with the award of the Coat-of-Arms to the first bearers of this name.

It is important to mention, that the name was originally spelled "CHAVES"--from the old Spanish and Portuguese plural for Ikey.s'--from the Latin 'clavis' or 'claves.' It was only in the last hundred years that the ending with "EZ" was adopted and now is used commonly throughout.

With personal interpretation and translation on my part, the facts stated are as accurate as I found them in researching the different volumes referenced at the end of this booklet.

Chavez - The Origin

"CHAVEZ" is a very old and distinguished name, tracing its origin back to the early 12th Century. Spain, then under the rule of King Alonzo VII, was in the midst of driving the Moors out of the Iberian Peninsula and bringing the country back under the control of the Christians.

Portugal, a county of Spain on the West Coast, different in customs and culture, was trying to detach itself from the troubled mother country. At the head of this movement was Don Alonzo Enriquez, cousin to the King. In 1125, he had armed himself knight and declared himself Count of Portugal.

Eighteen years later, in 1143, due to his influence with the King, his vigorous campaigning and the fact that he had been fighting hard against the Moors, Don Alonzo Enriquez managed to acquire independence for the new Kingdom. It was during this period that the Villa de Chaves (See Figure 1), a town in the Northern Province, played an important role in the history of the Spanish Peninsula.

The major portion of Northern Portugal and Spain at this time was already under Christian control with a few isolated Moorish strongholds still stubbornly hanging on. One such place was "Villa de Chaves."

This town had for many years been held by the Moors, with little success by the previous Spanish Kings in recapturing it. Don Alonzo, himself, was occupied in the battle fields of the South and unable to provide forces in the northern sections. Two young brothers, Garci and Rui Lopez, cousins to Alonzo and Captains in the King's service, took it on their own to attempt the liberation of the "City of Five Keys" (Chaves), so called because of its five gates and strong wall. The two brothers diligently worked for many months, until an army of Christians was formed and trained, capable of fighting the fierce Moorish soldiers. Although outnumbered and ill equipped, the "Soldados Catolicos," after many

days of hard battle, finally besieged and captured the city. The Moors that were not killed were either captured or driven out, returning the Northern part of Portugal and Spain under Christian control.

When Alonzo received word of the two Captains and of the battle they had won without his help, he immediately set forth to express his gratitude and bestow them with honors.

It was the year 1160 when he gave the city to the two brothers and at the same time made them knights of St. James (Santiago) which had recently been formed the highest military order in Spain. He further honored them by adding the name "CHAVES" to their surname. This, then, is the origin of this distinguished name.

DE SAN ANDRES EL BIENAVENTURADO

(Of Saint Andrew the Blessed)

POR LOS QUE ANTIGUAMENTE DE SUS GENTES

(That for their ancient peoples)

FUE EL LUGAR DE BAEZA CONQUISTADO

(was conquered the place called Baeza)

QUE SU ESFUERZO FUE TAL DIA

(and their courage came that day)

Y FUE PORTUGAL SU ANTIGUA GUIA

(from Portugal their ancient guide)

It is written that in the main Church of Baeza, near the font of holy water, was an ancient stone on which was inscribed the fact that the Chaves' had been conquerors of the city.

Other significant battles were won which eventually left Christian Spain master of the Western portion of the Western basin of the Mediterranean--and always, the shield with five keys was seen taking an important part in battle.



The Coat-of-Arms

In conferring knighthood, Don Alonzo bestowed the two brothers a Coat-of-Arms composed of five keys on a golden field.

This shield, as worn by the descendants of the two brothers, Don Garcí Lopez de Chaves and Don Rui Lopez de Chaves, thus became a scourge to the Moorish legions in future battles and in the future years.

One of the most famous and important battles in the annals of Spanish history was the battle at Navas de Tolosa, in the year 1212. King Alonzo VIII (1158-1214) supported by armies of Aragon, Navarre and Portugal, routed the Almohade, a Moslem sect led by the Amir of Morocco, Mohamed III. In this famous battle, the head of the Chaves family (La cabeza mayor de la familia de Chaves), although Portuguese, took a very important part in directing the forces that led to victory. This was sung by the famous poet Don Louis Zapata as follows:

SON CHAVES CINCO LLAVES RELUCIENTES

(Chaves, five feculent keys)

EN HERMOSO ESCUDO COLORADO

(In a beautiful field of red)

SU ORLA CON OCHO ASPAS EXCELENTE

(Its border with eight exquisite crosses)

The first known record of the name to cross from Portugal into Spain was in 1280, when Martin Reymundes de Chaves left Portugal to serve King Ferdinand IV.

After this date, the name spread into all parts of Spain and eventually into other parts of the world.

The following bearers of the name have, through the years, been honored by Kings into nobility as follows:

Don Juan Ignacio de Chaves--
Marques de Bermuda on September 5, 1689

Don Pedro de Chaves y Giron de la Hoz-Marques de Quintanar on August 28, 1714

Don Jose de Chaves--
Conde de Casa Chaves on October 18, 1815

Don Mariano del Amparo de Chaves y Villarroel-Duque de Noblejas on August 23, 1820

Don Domingo de Chaves y Artacho-Marquez de Velagomez on June 29, 1867

Don Jose Maria de Chaves y Sentemenat-Marquez de la matilla on September 22, 1879

It is important to note that different branches of the name came to the Americas at different periods of time. Significant in history, were the branches going to Peru as well as those that came to the United States.

In 1484, Portugal officially rejected Christopher Columbus' idea of reaching India from the west, because it was seen as unreasonable. This began a long-lasting dispute in which ultimately the Pope intervened and divided the newly discovered lands between the two Catholic nations and resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. The treaty divided the new world equally between the Spanish and the Portuguese, along the hump of south america, the north-south meridian line 370 leagues (1770 km/1100 miles) west of the Cape Verde islands, with all lands to the east belonging to Portugal, (accounting for the use of the Portugese language in Brazil), and all lands to the west to Spain. Vasco da Gama sailed for India, and arrived at Calicut on May 20, 1498, returning in glory to Portugal the next year. The Monastery of Jerónimos was built, dedicated to the discovery of the route to India. In 1500, Pedro Álvares Cabral sighted the Brazilian coast; ten years later, Afonso de Alburquerque conquered Goa, in India.

The Middle Ages found the mounted herdsman a frequent fixture of the semi-arid lands of Spain, but rare in countries like England and France. Strong intrepid horsemen were required to deal with the rugged geography of the Iberian Peninsula, and the wild ganado prieto, predecessor to the savage bull ring black cattle. So

integral a part of the Spanish culture was horsemanship, that the world caballero (horseman) became, and still is, the equivalent of the English word for "gentleman." The word for horse in French is cheval and knight is chevalier. The English term cavalry is derived from Italian. In Spanish the word "horse" is caballo and knight or noble horseman is Caballero. In the Middle Ages knighthood was a very high station in society. By his vows, the knight was required to swear to advocate justice and the protection of women, elderly and the weak. The noble knight was a protector of the common people guided by a code of conduct and etiquette; an interesting parallel to the modern day social worker, only without all the glory and romance. As a contemporary social worker and sheep rancher myself, it is clear now that these penchants are built into the DNA, but, I much prefer the old-fashioned version. As part of the knighthood ceremony, the knight was required to adopt an identifying coat of arms insignia, (in ranching culture later evolving into the "brand"), ride to all the villages in the kingdom, and publicly recite his vows of knighthood so that all would witness his devotion to the King and his people. This part of the ceremony was to enable all in the Kingdom to recognize the knight, and if the knight faltered in his duties, he endured public shame and dishonor. A knight's honor was a virtue for which many knights defended to the death. Keeping in mind that many of the first Spanish vaqueros were well heeled aristocratic Caballero (gentlemen), land holders and noblemen, and certainly inextricably integrated in Spanish society with the culture of Spanish knights, it should come as no surprise that the horseman's techniques used by knights flowed into the work practices back at the estancia / ranch. Getting down and dirty with the livestock was work relegated to servants. The Caballero / Vaquero rarely ever got off his horse for any menial purpose. He did virtually everything from the back of his steed.

The 13th century knights and Spanish rancher / Caballeros developed a method of rounding up (rodear) and capturing cattle for branding, etc. borrowed from the knight's skill of jousting with a lance. This heritage of Knighthood was carried from Europe to the Americas in the 15th century. The technique evolved from the Caballeros use of the lance. In this case the lance is called a garrocha. It was a 12-foot long wooden pole with a blunt tip used by the Garrochista on horseback. The garrocha is carried and used in a fashion similar to the Caballero's lance. But instead of the Garrochista and the steer racing toward each other as in a knightly joust, the Garrochista chases after the steer. An Emparedor, a horseback assistant, rides alongside the steer to guide the steer toward the Garrochista. Emparedor is derived from the Spanish word meaning to hobble, or tie. The Garrochista lunges at the side of the rump of the steer with the blunt Garrocha and knocks the steer off its footing. The steer or other livestock tumbles, enabling the Emparedor to leap off his horse, bulldog and hold him down or tie the animal's legs. This was, at best, a difficult maneuver that begged for innovation.

During the evolution of the Caballero / Vaquero in New Spain in the Americas, a vaquero revived the ancient Scythian method of using a lazo (loop). Hungarian Hussars and Asiatic nomads also used a similar method without throwing the lasso. The loop was placed at the end of the lance, and the lance was used to place the loop over the animal's head. The home end of the rope was tied to the horse or saddle, (see chapter on saddles). Of course livestock does not stand still for this procedure so the vaqueros chase the steer with lance and lazo in hand. This method worked better, but was also difficult and time consuming when the animal was missed. Again, an enterprising vaquero, perhaps more frustrated than inventive, who dropped his lance, grabbed the lazo, threw it and got lucky - snaring the animal.

A new step in the evolution of cowboy technique was born. The technique was refined by Mexican vaqueros who learned to accurately lasso livestock, then dally the home end of the rope to the saddle horn. An animal marked for butchering was brought down with a similar pole called a desjarretadera or hocking pole. The pole had a curved, sharp blade on the end. The vaquero, instead of hitting the animal's rump, would hit the hind leg, cutting the hamstring with a crippling effect. The vaquero would then leap off his horse and cut the animal's spinal cord just behind the horns. This hamstringing method was over-used to the extent that Spanish authorities outlawed the hamstringing of cattle in 1574.

By the 15th century the semi-arid plains of the Spanish plains were dotted with herds of horses, cattle, burros, mules and sheep. Spain had one of the oldest sheep raising histories in Europe. Merino sheep were at the top of the bragging pedigree tree, but it was the Churro sheep that was to prove it's' worth as a survivor of the Americas. Its' wool was coarse compared to the wool of the merino, but was suited to the arid environment of the American Southwest in basic food hunting and climate enduring ways other sheep could not match.

The First Cowboy Ranches

As is alluded to in other parts of this book, much of this text runs contrary to the history most adults and children have been taught in the United States schools. Predictably when this book was first posted in the 1990s on the internet as a resource for those seeking *the true origins of the American Cowboy* some self proclaimed experts contradicted and or openly attacked my voracity and the accuracy of the book's assertions. For this reason, in this newly updated revision on the same subject rather than boil down, consolidate, and summarize well researched historical points of consensus on ranching, I will rely much more on the language of the authors sited as references, frequently using long passages of their text sometimes verbatim. My intent is to cast criticism away from my Hispanic biases and show that this

information is extrapolated from the works of what was the result of career making long and thoroughly investigated archives and archeological artifacts by well reputed historians. Some cutting and restricting was necessary due to the protracted volumes of dissertations by the authors on the more mundane, microscopic, and controversial aspects of cowboy technology. The core essential information remains in tact.

Livestock Ranching in the modern sense of cowboy technology (animal husbandry), owes its infancy to the earliest inhabitants, (Luso-Hispanics) of the Iberian Peninsula, modern day Spain and Portugal. The history of Pre-Columbian ranching generally speaking, in terms of livestock such a sheep, horses, goats, pigs, and cattle, according to some researchers and historians who have thus far delved into historical archives is derived from the royal and municipal law codes, numerous royal ecclesiastical and private charters, most of which at the time of this writing, still preserve many more details in unpublished pennisular archives of the Mesta, the Duque de Osuna, Castilian, and Portuguese military orders and the Extremaduran Andalusian, and Alentejan towns.

Different authors have focused their studies on differing ranching specialties of transhumant evolution, to name a few, Riberio, Klein, Redonet, Camacho, and Moreno Calderon who deal largely with sheep raising, versus cattle raising historians like Charles Julian Bishko, (Andalusian Mestas), and El Rodero, A. Rodero and J.V. Delgado at La Universidad de Cordova, Spain.

Having all studied the passage of time for the same geographical area, they have (through their particularly unique journey of studies) arrived at both similar and disparate conclusions about various specific aspects of “original Livestock ranching.” Arguing the validity of opinions and considered conclusions where these knowledgeable researchers disagree is a pursuit for more historically learned men than me.

However, for my purposes here, until there is specific expurgation, a thorough virtually complete review of the aforementioned unpublished archives by a consortium of well credentialed historians, there does, none-the-less, emerge a fairly consistent and clear construction of general historical patterns of ranching evolution. It is as follows.

Prior to recorded history it is more difficult to track the evolution of specific cowboy (ranching) practices and technology, however based on the archeological data, supported by ancient archives, consistently followed by more clear modern historical documentation there creates a pattern of livelihood, culture language/dialect,(cowboy lingo), a way of life characterized ultimately by what we in modern times,

(Hollywood and some English speaking authors, notwithstanding), have come to know and love as the cowboy and western ranching. It is a profoundly special and salient way of life required of hardy people, a Hispanic culture so enduring that it has transcended and conquered its' invaders of Hispanic people time and again over thousands of years surviving, indeed thriving around the globe to this very day.

Charles J. Bishko opens his historical dissertation on this subject by stating, "the first essential to recognize that, like so many other features of Iberian civilization, cattle ranching in the Middle Ages was virtually peculiar the Peninsula, una *Cosa de Espana*. Rodero and Delgado state that "from historical beginning there existed in the Betic region a predominance of animal farming over agriculture (crop farming). The geographical characteristics of the land and the depopulation occasioned by the continuous fighting throughout eight centuries against Arabs produced the conditions to reach good development of Andalusian (animal) farming, (cowboy) technology. The Spanish horse (Barb) and sheep are considered the oldest classically characterized breeds, followed by the Granadina Goat and Fighting Bull, (Ganado prieto/ Bos Taurus Ibericus). There is no agreement between these authorities as to which sheep breed is the older between the Spanish Merino and the Spanish Churro Lebrijano/Ovis Aries studery. If the Merino was introduced by the Moors as has been noted by some historians then the Churro may be the first Spanish Sheep. Bishko continues, "cattle were, of course raised almost everywhere in medieval Europe, for their dairy products, milk, cheese, butter; as draft animals the indispensable ox; and their meat, tallow, and hides. But such cattle were either a strictly subordinate element in manorial crop agriculture, in which peasants might own at best a few cows and a yoke or two of oxen, or they were bred, e.g., in certain parts of Normandy, Wales and Ireland, on small dairy feeder farms. In the Medieval Peninsula, cattle raising of these two types was widely distributed, but most strongly established in what might be called the Iberian Humid Crescent, the rainy, fertile crop and grasslands that stretch from Beria in central Portugal up through Galicia, swing east across the Cantarian Pyrenean valleys, with certain southern salients like the Leonese Tierra de Campos, the comarca of Burgos and the Rioja Alta, and finally turn south into Catalonia. Throughout this region nobles, peasants, churches, and monasteries raised considerable stock on the basis of small herds (greyes) averaging twenty to thirty head. These humid zoned cattle belonged to still surviving northern Iberian razas: Gallegas, Minhotas, Barrosas, Arouguesas and Mirandesas in Galicia, Minho, Tras-os-Montes, and Beria Alta; Asturias in the Cantabrians; and various sub-breed of Pirenaicas between the Basque provinces and the Mediterranean. In color they ran predominantly to solid or mixed shades of white, cream dun, yellow and the lighter and medium reds and browns, and they were in general docile, easily handled and admirably suited to dairy, beef, and draft needs." According to Rodero, Andalusian ranching reached importance because, "the characteristics of the land, especially the

eastern zone of the Guadalquivir valley where there was a predominance of mountains, difficult for agriculture” (crop farming) and because the proximity to borders occupied by Arabs created a need to have easily portable property such as hoof stock. Luso-Hispanics had large tracts of lands available for cattle and sheep driving as a result of hundreds of years of depopulating by the many wars. Hoof stock stayed very isolated resulting in the development of local breeds. “Animal farming had a notable development in Cordoba during the lower middle ages. Livestock came from Extremadura, populated during the 13th century Baena, Espiel, Belmez, Tolote, Onego, Trassierra, and also Cordoba cite, Aguilar, Priego, Cabra, Ecija, and Palma del Rio. The most abundant was the ovine species (sheep), followed by porcine, (pigs), and bovine,(cattle), and also the equine, (horses/asses)” – Rodero. Bishko agrees, “because Fuenteovenjuna (Cordova) was the principle sheep center during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the prices of wool were controlled there.

But the raising of cattle on dairy or stock farms, or as a subsidiary to dirt-farming, is not ranching, which implies the ranging of cattle in considerable numbers over extensive grazing grounds for the primary purpose of large-scale production of beef and hides. With the possible exception of the Hungarian Plain and western portions of the British Isles, for both of which areas we badly need careful pastoral studies, medieval Iberia appears to have been the only part, as it was unquestionably the most important part, of medieval Europe to advance to this third level of cattle raising. While the precise circumstances must remain obscure, the available charters and *fueros* enable us to determine that a genuine ranch cattle industry evolved in the Peninsula in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, under Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII of León-Castile. Its birthplace was not the Humid Crescent, but that portion of the sub humid or arid interior tableland of the Meseta Central lying between the middle course of the Duero River and the massive sierras of Gata, Gredos, and Guadarrama; or, more specifically, the *tierras* of Zamora and Salamanca in León, and those of Segovia and Avila in southern Old Castile.

From this original area of its nativity, cattle ranching, on an ever increasing scale, expanded southward in the van of *reconquista* colonization. By the later twelfth century it had moved, along with the sheep industry of León, Castile and Portugal, into the broad pasturelands of New Castile, Extremadura and Alentejo, the latter region apparently being the cradle of the Portuguese ranching system which was later extended into Algarve, the Atlantic Islands and the Brazilian *sertao*. On this southern half of the *meseta*, chiefly to the west of a line running through central New Castile, Castilian and Portuguese military orders, nobles and townsmen grazed thousands of cattle, although in both numbers and economic importance these were less significant than the great sheep flocks of the Mesta and other owners. But this situation was reversed after 1250, with Ferdinand III's reconquest of Andalusia, when royal

repartimientos assigned to cattlemen rather than to sheep raisers the bulk of the *campos*, *campiñas* and *marismas* of the Guadalquivir valley. As a result, the Andalusian plain became in the latter Middle Ages the one region of the Peninsula, and perhaps of all Europe, where pastoral life, and indeed agricultural life in general, was dominated by a thriving, highly organized cattle-ranching economy. The fact that many of the early colonists of the Canaries and the Indies came from this Andalusian cattle kingdom, which was at its height in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, or from the not too dissimilar cattle *ambiente* of Extremadura, provides one significant clue to the promotion of cattle over sheep ranching in the American colonies.

Just why medieval Castile and Portuguese Alentejo became the site of this widespread ranch cattle industry is a complex question. The only factor usually mentioned, the taking over or imitation of an already established Moorish cattle-ranching system, is clearly of secondary consequence. Some Moorish influence there undoubtedly was, especially in Andalusia, but the Berber was not much of a cattleman in North Africa, nor did he abandon in the Peninsula his typically Mediterranean preference for mutton over beef. Comparatively little in the techniques, vocabulary, dress or equipment of the Castilian and Portuguese cowboy can be traced to Moorish sources; and it is significant that the predominance of the old Iberian breeds of cattle was not adversely affected by African strains, as happened after the Moorish importation of the merino sheep and the Barb horse.

The really decisive factors determining the development of medieval Iberian cattle ranching appear to have been four in number, all of them native to the Peninsula:

- (1) the presence, as in almost every phase of medieval Luso-Hispanic life, of numerous active, enterprising and ambitious individuals, many of whom were already familiar with Humid Crescent pastoralism and swiftly realized the broader opportunities presented by the conquest of the *meseta* grazing grounds. Whether nobles, churchmen or town-dwelling ganaderos, such men were the first true prototypes of the cattle ranchers of the Indies.”

The words ganaderos, ganaderia vacuna, ganado, etc. come from the infinitive Spanish word ganar, to earn a wage, a living, (money). In the context of this paper a ganado refers to a general herd or flock of livestock and ganaderia vacuna means a cow herd. The name ultimately assigned to the select species of bull used for bull fights, Ganado Bravo, literally means wild or bold cattle.

Another root word referred to frequently in the Spanish ranching lexicon is the infinitive mudar, to move. A remuda refers to a herd or group of livestock in a range drive “moving” from one location generally to market. Remuda most often

heard in reference to the group of cowponies used in a cattle drive, is also a *remuda caballada*. The group of cattle on a drive is a *remuda vacada*, as is the term *remuda boregada* for sheep.

“(2) the transformation imposed upon Castilian and Portuguese agriculture by the frontier advance from northern, rainy, good-soiled "European" conditions onto the interior sub humid plains of the *meseta* (Köppen BS; Thornthwaite DB'd, DB's), with their scarcity of water, poor soils and predominantly *mattoral*-type bush vegetation (the *monte bajo* of the stockman) -- an environmental change that affected medieval Iberian life as radically as, in W. P. Webb's view, occupation of the Great Plains did American. Extremes of aridity and deficiencies of browse restricted cattle ranching chiefly to the western half of the *meseta*; Aragon was always strong sheep country, and in eastern New Castile, i.e., La Mancha, cattlemen were relatively few.

(3) the Reconquista, which for centuries created frontier areas on the *meseta* where Christians and Moors often raided or fought; where the population huddled in large, widely spaced towns separated by *despoblados*; where rural labor was scarce and crop-farming hazardous; and where cattle and sheep, being mobile and little demanding, had obvious advantages. Royal colonization policies, with their predilection for large seigniorial and municipal grants, further accentuated pastoral trends.”

The old adage that necessity is the mother of invention applies well here. Under these challenging circumstances it was necessary to move on and up (invent) to a higher level of animal farming technology unseen in other parts of Europe and the world where pastoral peoples could safely, contentedly continue their small family enterprises maintaining “good enough” methods where neither the livestock nor their keepers were subjected to the constant Iberian stresses and rigors of Darwinian survival of the fittest tests and living long enough to reproduce.

“(4) the special breed of cattle that developed on the *meseta* and the Andalusian Plain, cattle unique in medieval Europe. Moorish strains, as already observed, never became prominent; some North-African stock was brought in, but these were, as the reference to them in Cabeza de Vaca shows, the brown Atlas shorthorns still found in Morocco, and not to be confused with the native breeds of the Peninsula.

The cattle of Castilian and Portuguese ranching were -- as nearly as a very amateur zoötechnician can determine -- the result of various degrees of crossing between lighter-colored European types of all-purpose cow found in the Humid Crescent, and the wild, or semi-wild, black, dark red, and dark brown descendents of that uniquely Iberian strain, *Bos taurus ibericus*, the ancestor of the modern fighting bull. Mingling

upon the *meseta* as the *reconquista* frontier drove southward, these two *razas*, (breeds), produced a very hardy hybrid stock, varying astonishingly in color and color combinations from creams, yellows and duns to deep browns, reds and blacks - -a stock characterized by markedly feral instincts and often complete wildness. Such cattle were valuable chiefly for their tough hides and stringy beef. Medieval Castilians, however, were proud of them. The *Siete Partidas* notes with satisfaction that animals born in the hot frontier country were larger and stronger than those of the humid region; one fifteenth century writer, Fernando de la Torre, calls Castile the "tierra de bravos toros"; another claims for her "los mas grandes y mejores toros del mundo." These cattle, unsuited for dairy or draft purposes, compelled the *criaderos*, *charros* and *serranos* of Castile and Portugal to abandon their cozy little cow pastures for the open range, to take to the horse for herding, to perfect systematic methods of long-distance grazing, periodical round-ups, branding, overland drives, and so forth -- in short, to invent cattle ranching. These too are the cows whose long, stern faces, low-swinging heads, formidable horns, narrow sides and long legs appear on the opening pages of the family photograph albums of nearly every *criollo* breed of the Americas from the longhorns of the pampas to the longhorns of Texas."

Criollo is a Spanish term which is applied to American livestock born of European parents; reference – El Diccionario Internacional, Simon and Schuster 1973.

Corriente is a Spanish term meaning common. The Corriente cattle of the Americas may or may not have been derived of pure and or hybridized Iberian strains as further expounded herein, however, upon being transplanted in the Americas it became feral multiplying by the hundreds of thousands in effect becoming the "common/corriente" criollo strain and thusly evolving itself over the next five hundred years into a recognized breed, separate and distinct from the newer breeds imported by other European countries. Through a combination of natural selection and later selective breeding for horns the Corriente subspecies of longhorn cattle have developed their own line in North America.

Bishko -"These range cattle of the *meseta* and Andalusian Plain gave rise to a characteristic Iberian and, later, Ibero-American phenomenon, the *ganado bravo* or unbranded wild cattle existing in some numbers on the fringes of the ranching industry as a result of loose herding methods and the frontier conditions of the cattle country." Like the name given the common Peninsular scrub sheep, Churra in Spanish, the multitudes of range cattle were similarly dubbed common cattle in Spanish, the corriente cattle. "The co-existence of herded, branded cows and wild, ownerless ones was a regular feature of peninsular *ganadería vacuna* long before there appeared across the ocean the very much larger wild herds of Española, New Spain, Brazil, the River Plate, and other regions; just as the medieval hunts of *ganado bravo* by mounted hunters, using dogs and armed with lances and pikes, anticipated

the great *monterías* and *vaquerías* of Cuba, Española and the pampas.

From this same cattle background arose the *fiesta brava*, the bullfight, a prominent element in Iberian and Ibero-American social history that has too long been left to amateur historians. Much imaginative nonsense has been written about the alleged Roman or Moorish origins of the bullfight; but if one relies solely on historical evidence it seems highly probable that *toreo* first developed in the cattle *ambiente* of the *meseta* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. To this day the *suerte de picar* and the *suerte de banderillar* display old traditional techniques of handling and hunting range cattle, and the still archaic organization of bull raising and the *corrida* illumines certain otherwise obscure aspects of medieval ranching. For the intimate relationship existing in the Iberian mind between cow-punching, *ganado bravo*, and the bullfight, no better example can be cited than the familiar descriptions of the discovery of the buffalo in Cabeza de Vaca, Oñate, Villagrà, Castañeda, and others, passages whose strong ranching, cow hunting, and bullfighting flavor has never been fully appreciated. When, on the Great Plains of North America, as absolutely nowhere else in the Western hemisphere, Castilians encountered animals resembling cows, they naturally looked upon them as the *ganado bravo* declared by the *Siete Partidas* to be in the public domain. Despite certain visible evidence to the contrary, it followed that these animals must be ferocious, long-horned, risky to approach and, like difficult *toros de lidia*, given to attacking from the side and exceedingly dangerous to horses. Doubtless someone dismounted to try a *verónica* with his cape.

In the sixteenth century not only the cow but the organization, methods and customs of the peninsular ranching system reached the Indies, there to become the enduring foundation of Latin-American ranching to the present day, the trunk from which have stemmed the various regional traditions that distinguish Mexican cattle techniques from Argentine, or Brazilian from Venezuelan. What was the nature of these parent institutions?

The ecological and frontier conditions of the *reconquista*, together with the steady demand for beef and hides, produced in portions of medieval Castile and Alentejo a fairly numerous class of cattle ranchers, although only in Andalusia did these outnumber the ubiquitous sheepmen. Of these peninsular cowmen a small but powerful seigneurial group were large operators, with herds (*cabañas*, *hatos*) running up to a thousand or more head. Such, for example was the rancher-noble Don Juan Alfonso de Benavides, who *ca.* 1306 ranged up to around 800 cows; or the Castilian Dominican nunneries of Santo Domingo de Caleruega, Santo Domingo de Madrid and Santa Clara de Guadalajara, with 1000, 1500, and 1000 head, respectively. The military orders of Castile and Portugal also belonged to this group, with their extensive ranges held as *encomiendas* in New Castile, Andalusia, Alentejo and

Algarve. In 1302, the Castilian branch at Uclés of the Order of Santiago had at least a thousand head, while the Orders of Santiago de León and of Calatrava found it necessary to appoint special administrative officials for their great herds, the *comendadores de las vacas*, who were subject to supervision by *visitadores*.

Recognition of the dividing line between municipal and seigneurial cattle ranching in medieval Iberia is basic to its proper understanding. The distinction finds reflection not merely in disparity of size between town ranching outfits and those of the nobles, monasteries and military orders at the top of the industry, but in differences of organization, land use and pasturage and marketing rights. Seigneurial ranching operated far more freely than municipal, which partly explains why the *cabildos* of the Indies had so much difficulty imposing livestock controls upon the new colonial landed classes. While abundant data on *vaqueros'* wages and the prices of hides, leather and meat can be found in the *cuadernos* of the medieval Castilian and Portuguese Cortes, neither these nor the royal law codes contain any considerable body of restrictive legislation aimed at close control of seigneurial cattle ranching.

Municipal ranchers, on the other hand, were rigorously supervised by the local town government, the *concejo* or *concelho*, which controlled their grazing grounds. The later medieval *fueros* and ordinances of Castilian and Alentejan towns regulate almost every aspect of cattle ranching: grazing rights; compensations for crop damage; wages of cowboys; branding; penalties for rustling, brand-changing, or killing another man's stock; marketing and sale of cattle in the town's markets, butcher shops and *ferias*; slaughtering practices; and many other related subjects. Some towns, although clearly not all, possessed a stockmen's gild or, which operated as a kind of municipal bureau of pastoral affairs, and must be carefully distinguished from the national Mesta Real of the transhumant sheepmen. Jurisdiction of the local *mesta* was confined to the town's *términos*; all *vecinos* grazing cattle sheep, horses, goats, pigs, and other animals on the municipal ranges were required to join, while strenuous efforts were made to impose membership upon non- *vecinos* holding pasturelands adjacent to those of the town. While subordinate to the supreme authority of the *concejo*, such local *mestas*, which held meetings two or three times a year under their elected *alcaldes de la mesta*, were powerful bodies, administering all the livestock provisions of the local law code. In the cattle country, these *mestas* at times subdivided along the lines of *ganado mayor* and *menor*; this meant that the local cowmen had their own organization, a kind of sub- *mesta*, under their own duly elected *alcalde* or *alcaldes de la mesta*, who fined or otherwise punished violators of cattle laws and settled disputes among the ranchers. A major function of municipal *mestas* was to regulate and protect the use of brands and earmarks, and to facilitate recovery of lost cattle. Cattlemen were commonly required to work their herds in the spring and fall for all stray stock (*mesteños*, *mostrencos*) and turn these over to the *mesta* officials. The

latter, after recording the brands and other distinguishing features of the strays, and having the *pregón* or crier proclaim these details at intervals in the plaza mayor, held the animals for a fixed period of months in a corral pending identification by the owners.

In other towns of the cattle country, however, no trace of a municipal *mesta* can be found in the *fueros* or *ordenanzas*; here the *concejo* or *concelho* itself administered pastoral affairs, and its own *alcaldes* and their *escribano* performed the functions elsewhere assigned to the *mesta* officials. This appears to have been the precedent generally followed in the Americas, where, from the sixteenth century on, *cabildos* like those of Lima, Caracas, Habana, and many others exercised direct control over the ranch cattle industry, as their *actas capitulares* testify. In Mexico City, however, an important exception occurs; here, in 1537, under order of Charles V and Viceroy Mendoza, the *cabildo* organized a *mesta* for handling-livestock problems, which deserves further study. Recent writers have regarded its establishment as marking the introduction into New Spain of the Real Concejo de la Mesta, but its creation by, and subjection to, the *cabildo*, its municipal membership, and the general character of its organization and aims, indicate that it was closer to a municipal *mesta* of Andalusian type adapted to New World conditions than a colonial counterpart of the national Mesta of the Castilian transhumant sheep industry.

As for the cowboys themselves, only the briefest mention of questions requiring further examination can be made. Their life, and that of the cowgirls as well, finds its most vivid memorial in the fourteenth century picaresque poem of Juan Ruiz, archpriest of Hita; students have yet to recognize how thoroughly this masterpiece of medieval Castilian literature reflects the life of the range cattle country between Segovia and Toledo. In the municipal sources, these medieval ancestors of the *vaqueros*, *vaqueiros*, *gauchos*, *huasos* and *llaneros* of the Indies always appear as freemen, who hire themselves out for a year's time, usually from one *día de San Juan* to the next, and receive an annual wage (*soldada*) paid in cash, a percentage of calves, or a combination of these. Whether, as seems inherently likely, unfree cowboys could also be found, performing compulsory herding services for seigneurial *dueños de ganado* like some *indios de encomienda* in the New World, is unknown. *Vaqueros* were held liable to deduction of pay for stock lost; in cases of rustling, sworn statements supported by other men of trust were required; and when an animal died, it was necessary to produce the hide and affirm under oath that the death was due to natural causes or the attacks of wolves or bears. When express permission was granted, the peninsular cowboy might graze a few cows, marked with his own brand, alongside those of his employer. The herds were not left to roam at will, but kept under standing guard to avoid both stock losses and the heavy penalties imposed for trespass against the *cinco cosas vedadas*: orchards, grain fields, vineyards, ox pastures

and mown meadows. As with sheep, dogs were used to assist the vaqueros in guarding and on round-ups. Herds of any size were tended by a foreman (*mayoral*, *rabadán*, *mayordomo*) and from three to four *vaqueros* on up. Large outfits often had both a *mayoral* and *rabadán*, and perhaps a dozen or more hands. In Andalusia such crews normally included a *conocedor*, who memorized each cow's appearance as an aid in detecting strays or identifying the owner's own lost stock. Such a post could, of course, exist only where, as seen, cattle varied infinitely in color, and where also Spanish and Portuguese provided that remarkably rich, syncopated terminology of color and marking terms for cows and horses such as no other European language possesses. The *conocedor* clearly filled an important need in the period prior to official registration of brands, but the advent of the municipal *libro de marcas y señales* in the late fifteenth century soon ended his usefulness; although he can be found still flourishing in the 1527 *Ordenanças* of Seville, he does not appear to have crossed the ocean.

The dress and equipment of Latin-American cowmen owe much to peninsular models. Students of costume could doubtless trace back to the twelfth century regional dress of the *charros* and *serranos* of Salamanca and southern Old Castile, the cradle of the ranch cattle industry, the cowboy costume that appears with many local variations in the Indies: the low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, the bolero jacket, the sash and tight-fitting trousers, the spurred boots. Since, for herding on the open range, mounted *vaqueros* were indispensable, the rise of Iberian cattle ranching could hardly have occurred if the Peninsula had not been in the middle Ages the one European region where saddle horses were at once relatively abundant and cheap enough to escape being an aristocratic monopoly. Numerous references to horses and horse-breeding in the cattle documents indicate that the horse herd, the later *remuda* or *caballada*, was a normal feature of peninsular cowboy life....

For working stock the Castilian and Alentejan *vaquero* carried the long pike-like *garrocha*, which still survives in peninsular ranching and bullfighting use, and can be found also among Venezuelan *llaneros*, Brazilian *sertanejos* and other American cowboys. Carrying of arms was strictly regulated by the *concejos* in an effort to check brawls, *vaqueros* being ordinarily forbidden to possess any other weapons than the *garrocha* and the *puñal pastoril*, perhaps a distant forerunner of the Bowie knife. "...peninsular cowboys also handled *reses vacunos* with the *garrocha*, with the aid of trained, belled steers (*cabestros*) and by their dexterity in throwing animals to the ground with a twist of the tail or horns, all of which alternatives to roping are still used in Ibero-America. Five foot seven inch Bill Pickett, "Dusky Demon" born on December 5, 1870 in Williamson County, Texas, to former slaves, Thomas Jefferson and Mary Elizabeth Pickett is frequently credited in American western history for inventing this rodeo technique coined Bulldogging. Indeed he had the makings of a

traditional cowboy touting his tough and powerful 145 pound body, but the technique preceded him by hundreds of years. He did give the technique the English name “bulldogging” from observing the paralyzing effect of a bulldog’s bite.

For grazing purposes, cattle were ranged either as *estantes* in local pastures that often varied seasonally from lowland to nearby sierra; or as *transhumantes* that might be driven as much as 400 miles over the official trails or *cañadas* linking the summer pastures (*agostaderos*) of León and Castile with the winter *invernaderos* of the south. The proportion of migrant to nonimmigrant herds is difficult to determine; cows were less transhumant than sheep, but even so large numbers were trailed each year *á los extremos*, over the same routes as the Mesta flocks. Royal charters granting towns and military orders along the *cañadas* the right to collect *montazgo* from the transhumants reckon this toll for units as high as 1000 and even 2000 cows. At certain seasons the collective trail herds of the towns, and others belonging to nobles, monasteries and military orders, must have marched along the *cañadas* in a great series, accompanied by their heavily armed cavalry escorts (the *rafalas*), and by *dueños* and *vaqueros* who doubtless entertained their charges by day with the profaner aspects of diverse Leonese and Castilian dialects, soothed them at night with renditions of secular and ecclesiastical songs -- cf. the *vaquero* songs in the *Arcipreste* -- and defended them from the perils of drought, storm, stampede and attack by Moorish or other foe. Yet, in many parts of the *meseta*, *reses estantes* predominated.

The traditional Latin-American cycle of ranching life, with the rounding-up and branding of calves in the spring *herredero* and the cutting-out of beef for slaughter in the autumn, comes straight from peninsular practice. Municipal laws forced ranchers to work their herds at least once, and commonly twice, a year in order to brand calves, remove strays and cut out stock for market; although this involved, strictly speaking, only each *criadero's* rounding up his own cows, it is difficult to believe that some form of coöperative *rodeo* had not emerged before 1500.

Branding is unquestionably a very ancient peninsular livestock practice, dating from at least the Roman period. The oldest medieval brand yet discovered is a heart-shaped one depicted on the flanks of a bull and a horse in two tenth-century manuscripts of the Leonese abbey of San Miguel de Escalada. No study has yet been attempted of peninsular cattle brands (*hierros*, *marcas*) or of the supplementary system of earcrops (*señales*), although it is obvious that they are the immediate prototypes of the intricate symbols and monograms common to Latin-American and Anglo-American ranching. Branding was originally optional in the Peninsula, being used by the stockmen for their own protection, but from at least the thirteenth century the *fueros* require it of all municipal ranchers. The brand book, destined to become universal in the Americas, is a comparatively late device; down to the fifteenth

century the *concejos* kept simply a temporary record of the brands of strays turned into the town corral. Only in the latter part of that century do we find evidence that at least in Andalusia some towns were compelling the cattlemen of their *tierra* to register brands and earmarks with the town or *mesta escribano*, by whom they were inscribed in a genuine brand register, the *libro de marcas y señales* or *libro de la mesta* . The relative novelty of the *libro de marcas* may help explain why in New Spain, New Castile and elsewhere *cabildos* and royal officials encountered so much difficulty in getting ganaderos to register brands or even to brand at all. Whether any peninsular brand book of the Middle Ages still exists in some unsearched archive is unknown, but probable enough; at present the oldest known such register for the entire Luso-Hispanic and Ibero-American world seems to be the remarkable *Relación de los hierros de bacas y abejas y bestias*, which the cabildo of Mexico City opened in 1530, seven years before it established the New Spanish *mesta*.

A final question of prime importance for colonial agrarian institutions is that of the peninsular or American origin of the cattle ranch, variously styled in the Indies *sitio de ganado mayor*, *hacienda de ganado*, *fazenda*, *finca*, *hato*, *sitio de estancia*, *estancia* and the like. From the fact that throughout the Middle Ages royal pasturage rights in *realengo* land were conceded by the Castilian and Portuguese crowns to towns, nobles and ecclesiastical corporations, and by them granted or rented to their *vecinos* , vassals or others, it has been contended that ranching based upon private ownership of large estates was a New World invention. The subject is too involved for more than brief mention here, but it should be noted that this view rests solely upon documents dealing with transhumancy and municipal ranching, fields in which rights would naturally loom larger than land titles. Yet evidence that seigneurial ranchers frequently possessed extensive domains that were in effect true *estancias* is readily discoverable. The *pergaminos* of Madrid mention privately owned grazing grounds in New Castile, while those of Cáceres reveal that in late medieval Extremadura private pasturelands were threatening to absorb, by purchase or usurpation, the communal ranges of towns and villages. The military orders held great *dehesas* in Extremadura, New Castile and Andalusia, some of which they grazed directly, while others were allotted to their stock-raising vassals. The Seville Ordenanças cite *campiñas*, *cortijos*, *casas fuertes*, *donadíos* and other large *heredades*, located in the *marismas* and *islas* of the Guadalquivir, from which the municipal herds were barred and which were evidently being operated as seigneurial ranches. Even among municipal ranchers there were those who in addition to grazing cattle on town lands had their own *dehesas*, *dehesas dehesadas*, *prados*, *sotos* and *pastos*, some of which were certainly larger than mere cowpastures. It is noteworthy that ca. 1500, probably in response to seigneurial influence, some Castilian and Andalusian towns, instead of allowing, as previously, unrestricted movement of herds within their *términos* , were sitting (*asentar*) *reses estantes* on assigned portions of

their *tierra*; this trend toward municipal allocation of grazing sites may have given rise in the Indies to the term *estancia* (commonly classified as an Americanism) and to the grants of *sitio de ganado*, *sitio de estancia*, etc., for which a municipal origin may be conjectured.” The word **transhumant** refers to the seasonal and alternating movement of livestock together with the people who tend the herds, between two regions as lowlands and highlands.

”Even in our present state of knowledge regarding the development of *latifiundismo* in late medieval Spain and Portugal, it seems possible to reach two principal conclusions about the *estancia*. The first is that by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the ranch (i.e., the seigneurial estate devoted to large-scale stock raising) and the landed *ganadero* were both well established in the peninsular cattle kingdom, probably to a much greater extent than in the more heavily transhumant sheep industry upon which alone previous judgments have been based. The second conclusion is that not only was peninsular ranching thus characterized ca. 1500 by a dual system of pasturage rights and large landed estates, but that the system was in a state of flux, with the domanial element in the ascendant. It is this dualism, in process of transition from rights to tenures that finds reflection in sixteenth-century colonial documents. In New Spain, New Castile, and the Brazilian *capitanías*, as in Iberia, grazing rights in royal and municipal land coexisted with *sitios de ganado*, *tierras de señorío* and *fazendas*. The seigneurial *estancia* triumphed early under New-World conditions of conquest and settlement, but, like so many other elements in the Ibero-American cattle tradition, it was almost certainly an importation from the Peninsula. That the ranch cattle industry of Castile and Alentejo expanded between 1200 and 1500 in both territorial extent and volume of production, in response to increasing demand for beef and hides, is a safe inference, but nearly all aspects of this process have been neglected by historians. Marketing centered about the towns, especially the great cattle fairs (*ferias de ganado*, *feiras de gado*) that were held annually by old cow towns like Segovia, Avila, Plasencia, Béjar, Cáceres, Córdoba, Seville, Evora, Beja and others. At these, local slaughterers competed with professional itinerant cattle buyers, who traveled from one town to another and drove their purchases north to markets or feeding grounds outside the cattle country. Galicia, already in the Middle Ages what she remains to this day -- Spain's chief milch cow center -- was also, it would seem, an important beef feeder region for *meseta* cattle, like present-day western Buenos Aires and eastern La Pampa provinces, southern Brazil or the northern Great Plains of the United States. Hamilton's statistics suggest that prices on beef, hides, tallow, and other cattle products rose markedly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in line with the price structure as a whole. To a degree unusual in the cereal-consuming Middle Ages, meat, whether fresh, salted, or dried (*carne seca*), was a staple foodstuff for Spaniards and inland Portuguese, a fact which explains another curious Iberian and Ibero-American phenomenon, the Bula de la Cruzada, with its virtual repeal of the

dietary meat restrictions of medieval Catholic Europe. As for hides, their mounting output can be linked to the significant late medieval shift of the peninsular tanning and leather trades from goat and sheep skins, which the Moors had preferred for their Córdoba and Moroccan leathers, to the tougher, if less workable, cowhide. From the limited data thus far assembled on this subject, it looks as if cowhides were not only in heavy demand at home but were also the basis of an important export trade to Italy, France, the Low Countries, and perhaps other areas. Furthermore, this does not imply a surplus, for in late medieval Andalusia hides were being imported from North Africa, England, Ireland and, within the Peninsula itself, from dairy-farming Galicia and other districts. Presumably this means that peninsular hide production *ca.* 1500 was insufficient to satisfy home and export demands; if so, this enables us to grasp the immediate economic circumstances under which colonial Latin-American cattle raising and early large-scale export of cowhides from the colonies first developed. The demands of the home market, mercantilist preference for colonial rather than foreign sources of raw material, the colonists' own need for a commodity yielding quick overseas revenues, and the natural disinclination of the Crown and the Real Concejo de la Mesta to foster a competitive wool industry in the Indies, must all have combined to swing the New World decision to the cow instead of the sheep. To be sure, sheep raising was by no means neglected; in New Spain, for example, Viceroy Mendoza encouraged it strongly, and in Peru, as Cieza de León's frequent references indicate, large numbers of imported Iberian sheep along with the native llamas dominated the livestock picture. Yet this colonial wool seems to have been almost wholly intended for local use and not for export to the Peninsula, where the Mesta successfully protected its markets against colonial competition. What effect the rise of a far more productive American cattle industry had upon the eventual decline of peninsular cattle ranching, and to what extent this decline contributed to insuring the complete triumph of the Spanish sheepmen in the Hapsburg period, are interesting questions to which no answer is now possible.

Such, in broad and tentative outline, is the peninsular background of Latin-American cattle ranching. To students of colonial and modern Latin America it should not seem altogether unfamiliar. Changes there certainly were in the organization of the industry when it crossed the ocean; but the coexistence of seigneurial and municipal ranching; their common conflict with the agriculturist, whether *encomendero* or Indian; the regulatory activities of government, both royal and municipal, in connection with pasturage, branding, marketing and the like; the commerce in hides; the traditional cycle of the cowman's year; above all, the *ganaderos* and *vaqueros* themselves, galloping along in the dust of their wild or half-wild herds -- these are the stuff of colonial and post-colonial ranching no less than of that of the Peninsula. In the New World a vaster cattle kingdom was founded, but, as every reader of *Os Sertoes* and

Doña Bárbara discovers, it continued to preserve tenaciously its traditional institutions, many of which still flourish. It was with a cattle country in mind, and in words that apply to many other stock raising regions of the Western Hemisphere, that Sarmiento declared in *Facundo* (chap. ii): "En la República Argentina se ven a un tiempo dos civilizaciones distintas en un mismo suelo. . . . El siglo xix y el siglo xii viven juntos; el uno dentro de las ciudades, el otro en las campañas." No more perfectly expressed estimate could be made of the enduring influence of medieval Iberian cattle ranching upon the history of the Americas."

In the Americas it all began with the Vaquero, the Spanish and Portuguese cowboy, and in the United States of America the Spanish Cowboy first introduced the cowboy culture in the heart of New Mexico along the Rio Grande River. The Spanish produced the llanero of Venezuela, the gaucho of Argentina and the vaquero in New Spain which became Mexico and the U.S. Southwest. From the Spanish and Mexican vaquero evolved the North American cowboy. No geographic area had a more significant nor continuous influence on the evolution of the American cowboy than New Mexico. Prior to the U.S. war with Mexico in 1846-48 the states were unfamiliar with the ranching and cowboy culture, so it is ironic that despite the U.S. victory over New Mexico, it was New Mexico cowboy culture copied by the U.S. which was to have a vastly more profound impact on the culture of it's conqueror than the reverse. Even in the 1800's, John Chisholm, the largest Anglo cattle rancher in the USA was based in Lincoln County, New Mexico. It is estimated that Don Juan de Oñate, one of the four richest men in New Spain, (later Mexico), spent in excess of a million dollars from his silver mines to fund a colonial expedition to New Mexico. On January 26, 1598, Don Juan de Oñate left Zacatecas, Mexico to establish the first significant infusion of colonists, a settlement in the New Mexico Kingdom; the first original colony celebrated the first Thanksgiving Day, April 30, 1598, after they crossed the Rio Grande into what is present time U.S.A. This point of the Rio Grande at the new Kingdom of New Mexico was a few miles from the place called "El Paso Del Norte," before Jamestown was founded in 1607 in Virginia, and before the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth MA in 1620. There was no Texas in existence yet; however, El Paso Del Norte would eventually come to be known as the present day El Paso, Texas. The Oñate muster formed a four mile long procession with over 80 wagons and ox carts, with between seven and thirteen thousand head of European livestock, and counted 560 persons, 94 individuals identified as indios, mestizos, mulattos, negros, or simply as servants, *New Mexico's First Colonists*, by David H. Snow. Only 130 men brought wives and children. Of the 200 soldiers, 171 declared that they brought complete armor for himself and horse. Oñate alone brought 14 saddles about evenly divided between estradiota and la jineta styles. The first cowboys in New Mexico evolved from the remaining handful of most rugged Oñate families who arrived between 1598 and 1600, (e.g., Juan Vitoria de Carbajal & Pedro Sanchez y Monroy), and those who

escaped the 1680 Pueblo revolt and returned with the De Vargas re-conquest in 1693, (e.g., Don Fernando Duran y Chavez II & Lucia Hurtado). Most of those not qualifying for Darwin's "fittest" category were already gone by the year 1601; "November 24th of that year following the mass desertion of the camp by some 400, more or less, of the expeditions' original members and their families and servants."

The word cowboy is actually a Spanish word, a transliteration of the original Spanish word for the first of his kind, the "vaquero." The word vaquero evolved from the root word "vaca" meaning cow. Ergo the word vaquero, (cowman), translated into the English - cowboy. The English term for someone who managed cattle prior to the adoption of the Spanish Vaquero method and name for cowboying was "Drover." Both the English and French managed cattle on foot with a dog within a fenced enclosure. As pasture was exhausted in one area, the cattle were then led to a new field to graze. The colonists arriving on the U.S. east coast were unfamiliar with Hispanic ranching. Stock raising was a small adjunct or side business to the mainstay agricultural industry and other areas such as shipping, city retail businesses, fur trading and fishing. Ranching was not practiced in their particular European homelands, so they were not acquainted with the ranching business, nor would they have had any idea where or how to begin even if they were aware of the industry. The northern colonies focused on industrial pursuits using immigrant labor and the southern colonies concentrated on agriculture using slave labor. It was the open spaces of the Nueva España, (New Mexico), in America where the original American cowboy, the Spanish vaquero evolved along with the original western saddle, cowboy methods, (e.g. roping), and vocabulary, beginning along the Rio Grande river basin. Ironically, it was the application of the old English fencing system and American barbed wire which led to the decline of the great American Cowboy Empire.

Texas historian Walter Prescott Webb places the birth of Texas cowboy life and ranching in a diamond-shaped area of Texas with San Antonio on the north, Laredo on the west, Indianola on the east, and Brownsville on the south. The Nueces River, once the border between Mexico and Texas, runs through this region. This area, the *brasada*, or brush country, is the home country of Webb's friend J. Frank Dobie, the folklorist who wrote extensively on the cattle industry, the cowboy, the vaquero, and the brush country. Dobie loved this region's unique Spanish-influenced culture and inhabitants. And both Webb and Dobie agreed that the most important influence on this country lay in its Spanish roots.

To the influence of the vaquero on this ranching culture, Dobie, in his *Longhorns*, adds a second figure, the herd-owning caballero, a Spanish gentlemen-owner (p.viii). Some of these men established large ranches and hired cowboys to do the work, just as the Spanish priests and conquistadors had done in Mexico and Mexican Texas.

Early cattle raisers put their herds on "the open range" - public land open to anyone who used it for cattle grazing - and the cattle roamed and survived as best they could with a minimum of care, even in the winter months. The men held periodic roundups to brand and gather cattle for slaughter or market. From this cattle-rich area much of the stock for the trail herds later came.

Two other scholars offer support for Webb's and Dobie's basic theory of the area of origin. Folklorist Joe Graham, whose chief interest is in South Texas ranching, sees the main influence on Texas ranching farther to the west and south, thus acknowledging only part of the diamond-shaped area Webb describes. In his *El Rancho in South Texas*, Graham cites as support for his vaquero theory, among other notions, the more than two dozen terms taken from Spanish to describe items and techniques essential to cowboy life. Some of this borrowing was reluctant because of the deep prejudice of Texans against the Mexicans, especially after the war for independence in the 1830s and the later conflict in the 1840s between the United States and Mexico. Another scholar, photographer and filmmaker Bill Witliff, has photographs to supplement his argument that the vaquero is the progenitor of the cowboy. He says in *Vaquero: Genesis of the Cowboy*, "When Texas got interested in the cow business, the Texas cowboy adopted most of the vaquero's accoutrements and methodology of working cattle in big country, adapting here and there to fit his particular needs" (n.p.). A traveling exhibit from the Institute of Texan Cultures carries these photographs to a large audience.

The second school of thought is a revisionist view denying the predominance of the vaquero influence and is espoused largely by Terry Joran in his *Trails to Texas* and to a lesser degree in *North American Cattle-Raising Frontiers*. Jordan, a cultural geographer, holds that the impetus for an early cattle-raising culture in Texas came especially from the South as elements of mostly British culture were transferred to Texas by newly arrived immigrants from Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas by way of Louisiana, where many of the people had settled temporarily before being allowed by Mexican authorities to move into Texas around the mid-1800s. While it is true that these people had a long history of cattle raising using slash and burn techniques in woodlands with some open areas of grazing in the South, it is also true that they did not have experience raising cattle on the vast, open, treeless plains found in Texas. To these open areas the southerners often applied the word *prairie*, not the Spanish term *llano* or the word *plain* as found in the descriptive name Great Plains applied to the flat, rich, one-time grassland, now given largely to farming, that stretches from the Texas Panhandle into Canada. These newcomers from the South made extensive use of dogs in working their cattle. The English term *cow pens* was used instead of *ranch* from Spanish *rancho*. These southerners used whips to drive their cattle and did not rely upon the lazo used by the vaqueros and, later, by the cowboys. There was little

need for the southerners to rope their cattle if the men had pens in which to catch the animals in order to work them. These southerners also used salt licks, which cattle regularly visit, as a means of managing stock. These ranchers had what Jordan describes, in *North American Cattle Raising Frontiers* (p.367), as a "greater attention to the welfare and quality of livestock" than was common in the open-range culture farther west. Their cattle were better bred than the Longhorn cattle that formed the basis for open-range ranching in Mexico and Texas. The slender conformation of Longhorn cattle was not a negative factor in the beginning years of Texas ranching, because the main market for cattle was in hides and tallow, not beef. The Anglos, according to Jordan, established themselves and the basis for ranching culture in an area in South Louisiana, some four hundred miles east of Webb's diamond in South Texas, and later moved their way of stock raising to Texas. He discusses at some length their tradition of trailing herds of cattle to market.

There is, however, doubt as to the validity of some of Jordan's conclusions, and some cases he is just wrong. Historian Richard Slatta in his *Comparing Cowboys and Frontiers* criticizes Jordan's errors as stemming from the historical *over-revisionism* of the 1980s and 1990s that sought to rewrite the history of the West along deconstructionist lines. Among the revisionists - or New West Historians as they call themselves - are Patricia Limerick (*The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* [1987]), Richard White ("*It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own*": A New History of the American West [1991]) and an exhibit entitled "The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier," housed at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art (1991). Slatta correctly links this drive for revisionism to the Deconstruction movement that has dominated the arts, especially literature, during the same period, but he admits that some correcting of the traditional image is overdue. The New West historians have sought to revise the notions that Anglos were the prime movers in the Westward movement and have emphasized the roles of other ethnic groups and women. However, a general feeling that revisionism has resulted in overcorrection is apparent.

Slatta notes that Jordan "ignores" both linguistic and material culture evidence to draw some "feeble" conclusions. Among the errors of Jordan's early thesis is the claim that *buckaroo* and *corral* derived from the African term *buckra* and *kraal* and came west with the slaves accompanying new Anglo settlers from the South. Another is that the Africans "shaped" the ranching culture and strongly influenced the development of the cowboy. The most specious of Jordan's claims is that the role Texas culture played in the development of ranching techniques and institutions has been greatly exaggerated (pp. 188-189). In these matters, Webb and Dobie were closer to being on target than is Jordan. Frank Graham, a South Texas cowboy of long years, characterizes the difference between cowboys and vaqueros by saying that the vaquero is the "master

teacher. He was here before Anglos came, and he gave his terminology to us." He also taught the British descendants of the South "how to work cattle in the wild, open country. And the vaquero knew the brush; the English did not." Ramirez supports this idea when she notes that in Texas the vaqueros remained behind when Anglos came to dominate ranching there and those vaqueros taught the newcomers the skill of working cattle in open country and heavy brush." (p.252).

The corrective that Slatta has brought to Jordan's notions is encouraging and may lead to further correction of the notion that the cowboy is dead and gone. My own work in *Clear Fork Cowboys* (1985), *Ranch Rodeos in West Texas* (1988), *Historic Ranches of Texas* (1993), *Watkins Reynolds Matthews: Biography of a Texas Rancher* (1994) presents enough evidence to prove even to the most skeptical that cowboys are still working cattle in one region of the West and, by extension, in a good many others as well.

Indeed, as I emphasize elsewhere in this book, cowboys continue to thrive in many parts of the USA, particularly where he has been best preserved, in New Mexico, the cradle and heart of cowboy country where the American cowboy originated over four hundred years ago.

The heart, temerity, and genetic predisposition to push forward are better understood with a knowledge of the pre Columbian Hispanic history. The parallels in geographic and societal challenges between Hispano-Iberia and Hispano-America are uncanny.

The Role of Indians

Much has been said about the role of American Indians during the course of the evolution of the cowboy culture and development of the American West. The lives of Indians changed dramatically with the arrival of the first Europeans, the Spanish colonists. There is not a people on earth which does not have its' elements of good, bad, and in-between, so it is safe to assume that some Spanish treated the Indians kindly while others were indeed, cruel. Similarly, Cabeza de Vaca wrote, referring to the Indians, "They all differ," Some menaced the strangers. Others greeted them as honored guests." - The West. G. Ward.

There are accounts of a number of Indian leaders who themselves are quoted as saying how much their lives improved with the acquisition of horses, sheep, goats, cattle and other domestic livestock. There appears to be a consensus of opinion, at least among the historians whose writings I have seen, that with the exception of the Mexican

Vaqueros, no other people revered their horses like the nomadic Indians. What's more, most of the nomadic tribes were not truly nomadic until the advent of the Spanish pony. Indian life improved greatly with the adoption of horses, particularly Indian women whose job it was to carry most of the family gear. Indian teepees and travois sizes increased from small 3-4 person teepees to those larger ones we are accustomed to seeing in old paintings, and those in use now. The horse made carrying these heavier units possible. Because horses were subservient to the Spanish, when Indians first set eyes on horses, many named them after the only work animals they had known - their dogs. Horses were given names like "Big Dog," "God Dog," and "Seven Dogs," because one horse could carry the equivalent of seven dogs.

The first large infusion of European animals into the control of Indians were thousands of animals left behind when Pueblo Indian Pope' lead the Indian Pueblo Revolt of 1680 when the Spanish ranchers fled with what little they could carry. The Pueblo Indians, being an agrarian culture, did not need horses as much for transportation as did other tribes. Thus, they traded many of these horses to the Comanches, Navajos, Apaches, and other tribes, who in turn, traded to the many northern and western tribes.

This had been a mistake, which if not for the intervention of Juan Bautista de Ansa and his army, almost led to the extinction of the Pueblo Indians. The convenience of the Spanish horses resulted in an almost relentless campaign of attacks, plunder, and quick getaways by the warring tribes. Without making any skewed judgments about how well the Spanish got along with the Pueblo Indians, it should still come as little surprise that these Indians ultimately revolted.

First, the diseases that the Indians were exposed to, and for which they had no immunity, reduced their population by 1/3 by 1638 - about 20,000 tribal people. Within another two years, another 10,000 lives were similarly lost. Secondly, by that point it must have been evident that the Friars' prayers to cure illness were not living up to the Friars' claims. Or, perhaps they reasoned that white mans' God did not favor Indians. Third, by 1660 a severe multi-year drought was punishing the region. Fourth, the drought further aggravated hostilities with the Pueblos' traditional enemies, Navajo and Apache tribes, forcing them to increase their raids on the Pueblo Indians, a problem the Catholic missions were ill-equipped to remedy. If it had not been Tiwa spiritual leader Pope,' no doubt it would have been another Indian leader to conclude that this calamity of circumstances were due to Spanish presence and, therefore, needed to be purged from Pueblo life.

By the end of the 20th century when a monument was proposed in New Mexico to the contributions of the first European colonists, American Indians were still airing their

grievances and staging protests - mostly about their treatment by Spanish colonists, and mainly that of Don Juan de Oñate. More about this later.

The fact remains that American Indians have rarely shunned the bounty, technological advances, freedoms, power and protection this country offers the citizens of the United States. As we have seen in the past and recently, protection from other invading countries is no small feat. In addition, they enjoy their own "sovereign territory," - in other words, their own country within the country of the United States. Granted, it has taken time for them to re-establish some of these separate freedoms from the over-dominating takeover of "manifest destiny." Manifest Destiny was forced on all then-existing people and kingdoms of the now southwestern territory of the United States by the new eastern colonies, and the Anglo-American "forefathers" of our country.

But for thousands of years before Caucasians came to this country, indigenous (Indian), tribes had been making alliances and war on each other. Still today, the only complaints we hear in the news are those of "white" injustices. My people, those of Hispanic descent have also been mistreated at the hands of Anglo-Americans. This shared experience of abuses gives me common cause with the Indians, but I am ever mindful that we have benefited more than suffered, not to mention the fact that we Hispanics and Indians share many common ancestral grandparents with Indians and the Anglo-Americans. Now we work and play together.

I speak from personal experience, having lived and worked with Indian tribes for fifteen years in the later part of the 20th century in connection with my employment with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Some American Indians treated me very well, and some despised and attacked me because I was not a "card carrying," Indian. Some individuals with whom I enjoyed many happy times were friends in the Salish country of Missoula, Montana, the Jicarilla Apache tribe, and the Standing Rock Sioux reservation; special thanks to Tenley Vigil and Rosetta Badhand.

Finally, in keeping with the theme of this book, I must make one inescapable observation about Indians and Cowboys. In all the years I lived and worked with and around Indian country, I observe that American Indians to this day pay mute tribute to the cowboy culture brought here by the Oñate colonists. Everyday, including activities associated with tending their horses, sheep and cattle, they don cowboy hats, boots, and other cowboy attire. I couldn't help but notice that the few times reservations Indians wear their Indian attire is on special anniversaries, and religious days of celebration. Virtually, all the rest of their days, reservation Indians dress up as cowboys. It is said that imitation is the best form of flattery, and for that my thanks' goes to American Indians in Indian country.

I would like to conclude my remarks on the role of Indians with the following story about an original cowboy and frontiersman who can better reflect on the role of Indians at the time Cowboys and Eastern Anglo Americans were making their mark on the American West. I recommend his book.

Andrew Garcia, a True Frontiersman in Indian Country

Andrew Garcia was one of the first American pioneers of Hispanic descent to write his own story. After writing volumes of script and thousands of pages, he resisted all efforts to put his work into publishable form for fear that the accuracy, facts, and writing style might be compromised and fall victim to the western fiction market. He was born in the Rio Grande Valley in the El Paso, Texas / Las Cruces, New Mexico area in 1853, and schooled in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His book, *Tough Trip Through Paradise*, was edited by Bennett H. Stein who found several thousand pages of Garcia's manuscript stored in dynamite boxes packed in the heavy waxed paper that explosive power comes in. Thanks' goes to Bennett Stein, who must have labored many long hours condensing and consolidating those thousands of pages into a more concise 460-page book, first printed by the Rock Foundation in 1967.

The Hollywood movie, *Little Big Man*, starring Dustin Hoffman, was based not on an Anglo muleteer, as the movie suggests. Rather, it was actually based on the true story of Hispanic pioneer, Vaquero rancher, farmer and trader, Andrew Garcia, during the time of the 1877 Nez Perce war. He was not known as Little Big Man by the Indians, rather he earned the name, The Squaw Kid, derived from the 9 years he lived in Indian country with three Pend d'Oreille Indian wives named, In-who-lise, Squis-squis, and Mal-lit-tay-lay. Little Big Man was actually the name of an Indian warrior.

At the age of 23 in 1876, he ventured north to Montana where he was first employed by the U.S. government as a herder and packer. He scouted for the U.S. military throughout Yellowstone and Musselshell country when the Cavalry was, as he put it, pursuing horse stealing and plundering Indians. He served with Sturgis' Boys in Blue out of Fort Ellis. There, he met a hunter and trapper called Beaver Tom in 1878. Beaver Tom, being middle-aged and more worldly than Garcia, easily lured Garcia into going with him to Musselshell on a trapping and trading expedition. Having been through that area with the U.S. Cavalry, Garcia knew there was, indeed, plenty of game for furs and no shortage of Indians to rob and kill.

As Bennett Stein writes, "...his teepee days occurred at the very time when the free life of the Plains Indians was on the brink of extinction. He witnessed that extinction and had a story that no one else could tell." Garcia tells the true story of the end of an era of vast open ranges before barbed wire fences, a time when the Indians were just

beginning to appreciate the new resources brought to America by the Spanish. They had the best of both Indian and Spanish / Mexican worlds. Horses gave them tremendous mobility and speed in the wild and untamed open country. After having myself, enjoyed and crossed the beautiful expanse of mountains and tribes, during my tenure with the Bureau Of Indian Affairs - after hearing the voices of the Tiwas of New Mexico, to the utterances of Salish of Montana during the 20th century, and after having viewed such places by land and air - I can only imagine how a phenomenally panoramic picture this vast land much have appeared to Garcia before the landscape was cut up by endless ribbons of highway and railroad lines, and the sky divided by miles of telegraph, electric, and telephone wires.

The sense of justice taught him in his formative years by the Catholic Padres in New Mexico, helped him transcend the wide-spread hatred of Indians and gave him common cause with the tribes of the Northwest, even during those intense years of warfare. Garcia was different from other writers of this time, not just because he was self-taught, moreover, because his was a, "tell it like it is - no sugar added," account of those times. This was in opposition to other writers who romanticized, embellished, and took artistic license in corrupting the truth. Garcia himself explains in one passage;

The novelist always manages to cover up the trail on the Indian or villains who are pursuing the hero with the red-headed maiden in his arms on horseback. I never had such luck. They could always find my trail dead easy and run the hell out of me. It was always a matter of speed with me. We all like to see the hero and fair damsel make their get-away from the villain and for her to live happily with the hero.... I am sorry to have to dispel the beautiful hallucination and tell, in most cases, that is b___ s___. In the many years that I have lived, I have seen more heroes get it in the neck from the villain than were left to go around. If it was not for the strong arm of the Law and the brave men who enforce it, there would not be a hero left to tell the tale, and the woods would be full of grass widow heroines. Many flourishing jails and penitentiaries will bear me out on this.

Over the next six years in Musselshell, Montana, he observed the last wave of Buffalo extermination and final throes of effort by the Plains Indians to resist their own extermination at the hands of the new Americans. His nine years with Indian wives, mentioned above, were his most meaningful and final connection to the wild and beautiful, natural order of his world that apparently centered him. Although the second half of his life was spent in what many people would describe a western paradise with his white wife, Barbara Val, raising four healthy sons on his 667 acres of beautiful, forested Montana ranchland, what prompted him to begin writing was the fact that he was never again quite so happy as when he lived among the Indians in the

open wilderness. He died in 1943, having resisted efforts to publish his work out of fear that the true history of his time would be corrupted. His greatest fears were realized a quarter-century later, when Hollywood indeed, changed and distorted his story and actual history in the movie, *Little Big Man*.