The Armendáriz es: A Transnational Family in New Mexico and Mexico

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Recommended Citation
Although the Armendáriz surname is uncommon in New Mexico today, the Armendáriz family was important in New Mexico during the early to mid-1800s, with key political, diplomatic, and social links to Texas; California; Washington, D.C.; and Mexico. The lives of the Armendárites attest to the long and constant movement of people, trade, and politics along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (the Royal Road of the Interior) and to the formation of a binational region. From Santa Fe, New Mexico, to the El Paso/Ciudad Juárez border and Chihuahua City to Mexico City, the Armendáriz family legacy demonstrates that New Mexico has never been completely isolated from the larger history, national formation, or culture of Mexico. This article recounts five generations of Armendárites to explore how one New Mexico family helped shape a transnational border region in the Mexican North and American Southwest.

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The progenitor of the Armendáriz family in New Mexico was Pedro Policarpo de Azcue y Armendáriz. His military career, experiences on the frontier, and family relations contributed to New Mexico’s and Mexico’s colonial military and social histories and set the stage for the professional and international careers of four subsequent generations of Armendárizes. Not only did don Pedro acquire one of the largest Spanish land grants in New Mexico, but he also played a major role in the arrest, trial, and death of Padre Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the insurgent leader of Mexico’s liberation from Spain.

Born around 1774, Pedro came from several generations of military families in San Bartolomé de Allende and Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico. His father was comandante don Pedro Joseph Manuel de Azcue y Armendáriz Cordero and his mother, also from Armendáriz lineage, was doña María Rita de Azcue y Armendáriz. Their fathers and grandfathers were high-ranking military officials and hacenderos, with land holdings as far back as the early 1700s in Chihuahua.¹

Pedro Policarpo de Azcue y Armendáriz came from the Chihuahua district to New Mexico with an impressive service record. Beginning in 1803, he was the alferez y habilitado de la Tercera Compañía Volante (commanding sergeant of the Third Flying Company) in San Francisco de Conchos, Chihuahua. He then moved to Janos, Chihuahua, where he became the teniente (lieutenant) and assistant to Gen. Nemecio Salcedo.² From Janos he was sent to San Elizario, Chihuahua (now Texas), then to New Mexico. He received orders transferring him to Santa Fe, the provincial capital, from the Garrison of San Elizario, El Paso del Norte district, on 3 August 1807.³ By order of Col. José Manrique, governor of New Mexico, Pedro was given the title of primer alferez de la Segunda Compañía Volante (first officer of the Second Flying Company) in the province of New Mexico and arrived in Santa Fe in May 1808.⁴

While in Santa Fe, Pedro became acquainted with don Francisco Ortiz, his wife doña María del Carmen García de Noriega, and their daughter Josefa. The Ortiz and García de Noriega clans were old families in Santa Fe. The
Ortiz line went back to Nicolas Ortiz, a native of Mexico City, who came to New Mexico with don Diego de Vargas’s recolonization in 1693. The García de Noriega family members, descendants of Oñate colonizers recruited from Zacatecas, were also deeply rooted in Santa Fe. Pedro returned temporarily to his company in Chihuahua, but on 30 March 1809, Francisco Ortiz sent General Salcedo a letter in Janos requesting leave for Pedro so that he could return to Santa Fe and marry his daughter. Just a few months later, on 11 July 1809, Pedro married Josefa Ortiz at San Francisco de Asís Church in Santa Fe, a marriage that solidified the union of two prestigious families in New Mexico and Chihuahua.5

After establishing himself politically and economically in Santa Fe and starting a new family, Pedro fulfilled his various official military duties and served in one campaign after another in ongoing territorial conflicts with the Apaches, Navajos, Comanches, and Utes. Meanwhile, the larger Mexico, or Nueva España as it was called then, was contending with an insurgency led by Padre Hidalgo. At the time of the padre’s capture and the quashing of the independence movement in 1811, Pedro was stationed back in Chihuahua City and had to manage Hidalgo’s arrest and trial.6

Serving as the assistant to the general commander and carrying the military ranks of teniente de presidio (presidio lieutenant), commander of the Second Reserve Cavalry, and vocal de la Junta de Guerra (member of the Military Council), Pedro captured, prosecuted, and punished insurgents. On 30 July 1811, he gave orders to execute Hidalgo by firing squad.7 Pedro either returned to Santa Fe afterward for a short time or stayed in Chihuahua until 1818. Records show that on 9 February 1818, he and Josefa baptized their first child, Dorotea de los Dolores, at the Sagrario Church in Chihuahua City.8 She may have died as a child for she does not appear with the rest of the family in the historical records in Santa Fe. Nonetheless, Pedro returned to Santa Fe as military commander with Josefa in 1818. He was also a tithes collector and a merchant.9

During this period, he redirected his attention, perhaps realizing that Mexico would soon win its independence from Spain, and petitioned the Spanish crown for tracts of land along the Camino Real in southern New Mexico. On 4 December 1819, New Mexico governor Facundo Melgares granted Pedro some of the largest tracts of land in New Mexico. These grants, containing close to four hundred thousand acres, became known as the Valverde and Fray Cristóbal grants, which were later consolidated under Pedro Armendáriz no. 33.10 An additional tract of land known as the Pedro Armendáriz no. 34 was granted in 1820.11 Acquiring this large acreage and witnessing the eventual independence of Mexico in 1821, Pedro began to reap the benefits of being an
official and a merchant during the formation of the new nation of Mexico. He may also have come to grips with his own participation in and with the outcome of Mexico’s struggle against Spain. At the onset of the 1820s, Pedro and Josefa, along with their children, were settling into their Santa Fe home. The census of the Barrio San Francisco in Santa Fe in 1821 lists don Pedro as forty years of age and married, doña Josefa as his twenty-seven-year-old spouse, and their children as ten-year-old Antonia and two-year-old Manuel. The census also includes five people listed as agregados (additional people), who might have been servants or extended family members. The following year, another child, Enrique Francisco de Paula, was born in Santa Fe on 14 July 1822.

In 1822, while serving as the alcalde (mayor) of Santa Fe, Pedro wrote a telling letter or confession to the editor of Abeja Poblana, a newspaper in Puebla, Mexico. His letter gave a detailed eyewitness account of the execution of Hidalgo and other insurgent leaders. Pedro indicated a sense of culpability, and amply demonstrated that he considered Hidalgo an honorable man. Several generations later, the historian Luis González Obregón, who discovered Pedro’s letter, wrote in 1896 that the “father of Mexico” had to die so that the nation of Mexico could be born. González Obregón further stated, “What greatest homage can be made to Mexican heroes that their merits were recognized and honored by those that sacrificed them.”

Pedro wrote this letter during a difficult time in his life. He and his family continued to live in Santa Fe and perhaps on the Armendáriz ranch in Valverde. Family troubles began when he, as tithes collector, and his father-in-law Francisco Ortiz, as director of tithe collectors, appeared to be collaborating on an elaborate scheme to profit from collecting diezmos (taxes). When their scheme began to sour, Ortiz sued Pedro for misuse of collections. Perhaps as a result of Navajo and Apache attacks on the Armendáriz land or trouble with his father-in-law, Pedro relocated the family to Chihuahua City. The Chihuahua census of 1823 lists Pedro as a merchant, his wife as Josefa, and their children as María Antonia, Manuel, and Enrique.

Despite the troubles he left behind in New Mexico and his involvement in the execution of Padre Hidalgo, Pedro continued to prosper socially, politically, and economically, working for the Mexican government in Chihuahua. He held several political and military positions and was a member of the Comision de Colonización de Tierras (Land Commission). He also belonged to many societies, such as the Rito Yorkino (Free Masons) and, surprisingly, the Sociedad Amigos de Hidalgo (Society of Friends of Hidalgo), whose mission was to promote the memory of Hidalgo in the state of Chihuahua. Pedro became the third president of this organization. He was also the first person to initiate a monument to memorialize Hidalgo.
wrote a social and military history of New Mexico and Chihuahua, an eight-page printed exposition on the relations between the Mexican military and various Indian groups, and on the strategies of warfare during this time. After a long life of service to the monarchy of Spain, to the short-lived Empire of Mexico, and to the Republic of Mexico, don Pedro Armendáriz died in Chihuahua City on 3 May 1853.

Don Pedro groomed his sons to carry the torch of his legacy and become involved with national and international issues. Born on 19 December 1819 during Mexico's ten-year effort to gain independence from Spain, Manuel Armendáriz was baptized one day later in the Church of San Francisco de Asís in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Little is known of his childhood. During his father's eventful career in Chihuahua, Manuel apparently was sent away for an education, as were many Nuevomexicano and Chihuahuan contemporaries of his class. He grew up as a citizen of the Republic of Mexico, like his Ortiz cousins in Santa Fe. In 1844 he graduated as a licenciado (attorney) and pursued a career in local, state, and federal government. Two years later, he became the local representative to the Chihuahua State Constitution. As he was establishing his career in Chihuahua, the U.S. Army of the West occupied Santa Fe on 18 August 1846. He abruptly left his office to defend Mexico.

In December a U.S. force commanded by Col. Alexander W. Doniphan marched south toward El Paso del Norte, meeting a large Mexican force at Bracito. The Americans defeated the Mexican militia, and Doniphan continued south with the intention of taking Chihuahua City. Manuel took up arms as a captain in the local National Guard, and on 28 February 1847, his army confronted Doniphan's troops north of Chihuahua City at the Battle of the Sacramento. The Mexican defenders, well dug in, were flanked and again defeated by U.S. troops, who marched into Chihuahua City two days later. After this galling defeat, Manuel traveled farther south to join Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna in the Battle of Cerro Gordo in the state of Veracruz. Mexican efforts to block passage of the U.S. invasion force on the National Road also failed. In August and September, the U.S. Army overcame Mexican defenses to occupy Mexico City.

This tragic defeat began the next period in Manuel's life as a diplomat for Mexico to New Mexico, now a U.S. possession. Resistance by Nuevomexicanos from 1846 to 1848 had not stopped the U.S. invasion and conquest of New Mexico, along with half of Mexico's northern territory. The dramatic political and boundary transformations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 ended the U.S.-Mexico War. These redrawn borders made native Nuevomexicanos and Pueblo Indians the subjects of a new and foreign
sovereignty and left them with an uncertain future regarding their personal rights, land rights, culture, religion, language, and citizenship. The question for the Nuevomexicanos became whether to stay as conquered residents or emigrate to Mexico.

Immediately after signing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico initiated a series of decrees and colonization laws that provided for the repatriation of its citizens left in areas ceded to the United States. As stipulated in Article VIII of the treaty, Mexican citizens had one year from the signing of the treaty (2 February 1848) to decide whether they would become citizens of the United States or retain their Mexican citizenship and repatriate. The first official move toward physical emigration was an appropriations act passed by the Mexican Congress on 14 June 1848. On 19 August 1848, Pres. Joaquín de Herrera issued a decree laying out how repatriation would take place. To provide for land acquisitions, transportation, and settler allowances, Herrera created a fund from the indemnity paid by the United States as required by the treaty.

To administer the repatriation laws, the Mexican government selected Padre Ramón Ortiz as commissioner of emigration to New Mexico and Manuel Armendáriz as his agent. They entered Santa Fe in the middle of April 1849 and were initially well received by U.S. authorities. The military governor, Col. John M. Washington, offered his full cooperation. Ortiz and Manuel set out for the communities surrounding El Vado (San Miguel del Vado), where nine hundred out of one thousand residents expressed their desire to emigrate to Chihuahua.

Nuevomexicanos received Ortiz and Manuel with overwhelming excitement. But after they had visited several northern towns and their enlistments grew, the U.S. military government in New Mexico refused to cooperate. For unknown reasons, Colonel Washington halted their activities and expelled them from New Mexico. Returning to El Paso del Norte, Padre Ortiz successfully petitioned the Mexican government to receive Manuel as comisionario (special agent) to travel from Chihuahua to Mexico City. In July 1849, he arrived in Mexico City to request reimbursement for prior expenses and further funding to continue the repatriation efforts, which over the next three years facilitated the emigration of more than four thousand people to northern Chihuahua and many more to the disputed area of Mesilla, which later became part of the United States.

As a result of Manuel’s repatriation work in Mexico City and because the U.S. military government forced Ortiz out of New Mexico, the Mexican government considered Manuel for the position of consul. As early as September 1849, the Mexican Senate received a recommendation from President Herrera to establish a consulate in New Mexico, so that citizens living in former
Mexican territory “may have the necessary protection in order to maintain commerce or a profession.” The document also urged the Senate to approve “Señor don Licenciado” Manuel Armendáriz to head the consulate in light of his “recommendable qualities.” Manuel left his position as emigration agent to establish the Mexican consulate in New Mexico. He humbly stated that he had offered the names of candidates for the consular position but that “unfortunately” none were interested and, because of a “convergence of circumstances known to all,” he was given the nomination despite his just excuses. It was unlikely, he judged, that he could live up to the honor bestowed by his government.

The Mexican Senate approved Manuel’s appointment as Mexican consul to New Mexico in a secret session on 25 September 1849. With “full confidence in the integrity of Manuel Armendáriz,” President Herrera issued an edict the following day naming Manuel as consul. However, Manuel was not recognized as consul by Washington until November, when Pres. Zachary Taylor authorized an exequatur that made Manuel a legal Mexican representative and granted him special powers to conduct business in New Mexico. On 11 December 1849, the U.S. government sent a diplomatic order to Manuel in Chihuahua City, where he was sitting as a supplemental judge on the Chihuahua State Supreme Court, to report to the United States as soon as possible.

While still in Chihuahua City, Manuel negotiated with the Mexican secretary of foreign affairs until at least October 1850 over the amount of money needed to establish and administer the consulate in New Mexico. They also discussed whether his title should be consul or vice consul, whether he should also head the consulate in the state of Texas, and whether to locate the office in Santa Fe or far to the south in Franklin, on the left bank of the Rio Grande across from El Paso del Norte, Chihuahua. Familiar with the communities in the area, Manuel recommended that the new town of Franklin, then considered part of New Mexico, was the best place for the consulate because he could more effectively impede contraband coming into Mexico from the United States. On the other hand, Manuel reasoned that Santa Fe was centrally located and close to U.S. territorial authorities. In the end, Manuel argued the consulate should operate out of both locations. During spring and the start of winter, he believed, when caravans typically traveled from the United States to the El Paso area, the consulate should be located in Franklin to monitor that traffic; the rest of the year, it should be in Santa Fe. As of late February 1850, Armendáriz was still residing in Chihuahua as he began corresponding with officials on stationery that for the first time carried a “Mexican Consulate in New Mexico” letterhead.
Manuel’s first action as Mexican consul signified his commitment to the emigration issue. On 6 February 1850, he personally procured the first one thousand pesos (the payment from December 1849) for the Mexican Treasury, who transferred the funds to repatriation commissioner Ortiz. At this time, the central government also assured Ortiz that it would not abandon the New Mexican repatriates in their new colonies. This assurance gave him reason to believe that the Mexican government had “saved its honor which was compromised because of its lack of completing its promises.” Yet, months later, when the state still had not paid money owed at the time of emigration to the families that repatriated from New Mexico, Ortiz wrote a request on 20 April 1850 from Chihuahua City to the Chihuahuan State officials to continue funding the emigration project. He was assured that the central government would deliver back payments to the repatriates and operational funds to the Chihuahua state treasurer, Bonifacio Gutiérrez.35

By 20 May 1850, Manuel had reached Franklin and began to deal with pressing issues along the troublesome border. He wrote to the Mexican ministro plenipotenciario (precursor to ambassador) in Washington, D.C., to request advice about an expedition of two thousand Americans ostensibly emigrating from Texas to California. Manuel claimed that these men, armed by the Texas government, came to take possession of New Mexico for Texas. He noted that New Mexican troops were sent to secure the area and block and punish the Texans. He feared that a civil war was about to break out in the United States, and that Mexican nationals—the majority living under his jurisdiction—would be adversely affected. Mexican officials directed Manuel on 13 September 1850 to instruct Mexican residents under his consulate to declare whether they would remain Mexican citizens or accept U.S. citizenship.36

Manuel also dealt with a different case of American encroachment on traditional Mexican lands. He wrote a letter to the Mexican legation in Washington about a complaint from the residents of Senecú, which had been settled by Piro Indians from the Socorro, New Mexico, area during the Pueblo Revolt in 1680. They were angered by Anglo Americans squatting on their land, which was divided in half by the new border marked by the Rio Grande. He sought
instructions on this problem and on the question of the intruding Texans. He noted that neither Texan authorities nor U.S. officials could be trusted to address these types of complaints in a definitive and legal manner. Regardless of Manuel’s personal convictions, he was instructed by the authorities to act prudently and not interfere with the parties involved in these conflicts.  

Meanwhile the issue of Texas encroachment remained unresolved. On 8 September 1851, Manuel embarked on a mission to establish his authority in Texas and secure recognition by the Texas authorities. He wrote to the Mexican minister of foreign affairs from Río Florido, in the state of Chihuahua near Jiménez, that he was heading southeast down the Mexican side of the Río Grande apparently to Brownsville, Texas, where another consulate was previously located. He had to retreat to the Mexican interior, however, because the road was dangerous and the general military commander in Chihuahua provided him no security detail. He awaited further assistance from the secretaría de relaciones exteriores (secretary of foreign affairs) in Mexico City. Finally, on 15 October 1851, the central government ordered the commanders in Chihuahua and Nuevo Leon to assist Manuel with his march. It appears that he failed to establish his authority in Texas and returned to Franklin, where, in the later part of 1851, he renounced his position and was replaced by Juan Zubirán as Mexican consul to New Mexico. He then went to Chihuahua City where he married Manuela García Conde, a native of Mexico City who had been living in Chihuahua for some time. The marriage was an advantageous union of two distinguished Mexican families that further strengthened Manuel’s ties with the military, political, and church aristocracy in Chihuahua, Santa Fe, and Mexico City. Manuela’s father, Gen. Francisco García Conde, was a three-time governor in the states of Coahuila, Chihuahua, and Distrito Federal. He started his military career at age twelve and in time moved from cadet to commanding general. In 1840 he left his position as governor in Mexico City and moved to Chihuahua, where he was appointed military general and state governor. He was the commanding general at the Battle of the Sacramento against the United States and is best known for fiercely defending against Apache incursions and establishing many military posts to strengthen the northern frontier. Francisco was thus an important nineteenth-century figure in the border region. Even though Francisco died before his daughter’s marriage to Manuel, he had undoubtedly fought or lobbied side by side with members of the Armendáriz family and most likely had been Manuel’s commanding officer, which perhaps led Manuel to meet Manuela and unite the two powerful families. 

Fairly soon after his marriage, Manuel returned to the border and became director of customs on the Mexican side at El Paso del Norte in 1851. After
establishing himself in this position, he and Manuela had at least seven children there and in Chihuahua City. Manuel and his young family apparently moved back and forth between the border town of El Paso del Norte and Chihuahua City after his new appointment. In 1856 U.S. consul David R. Deffenderffer noted that Manuel was back in El Paso del Norte working as collector of customs. Even though they were on friendly terms, Deffenderffered noted that Manuel was perhaps a “just man on his own but was much influenced by other local politicos to charge unfair duties to American merchants crossing the border into Mexico.”

Returning to Chihuahua City sometime during the Battle of Ayutla or perhaps after the Constitution of 1857, which resulted in the final ousting of Santa Anna, Manuel was reinstated in the Chihuahua government. He started out as the vocal de consejo (member of the state congress) and moved on to become the jefe político (district chief, similar to mayor) of Galeana, Chihuahua. In 1861 he was magistrado del Supremo Tribunal (Supreme Court justice) and then became a representative of the local legislature. The imperialist reign of Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph von Hapsburg in Mexico during the French Intervention from 1864 to 1867 sparked high-profile opposition from Manuel. During this period, he traveled to Washington, D.C., and New York City as one of fifteen Juarista emissaries of the Mexican government and Pres. Benito Juárez. Their primary goal, besides attending propaganda events, was to gain U.S. financial support and arms and munitions to aid the Mexican fight against the occupying French. He was listed as a Juarista refugee from Mexico at a patriotic banquet in New York City that celebrated the Juaristas’ successful efforts to acquire arms for Mexico.

While in Washington, D.C., Manuel used his diplomatic skills and political connections to New Mexico and the border region to negotiate an arms purchase for the state of Chihuahua. Chihuahua had dispatched commissioners to New Mexico to buy some thirty-five hundred firearms that were deemed substandard for the Union Army. But they learned they needed official permission from Sec. of War Edwin M. Stanton, who served Pres. Abraham Lincoln. Manuel convinced the secretary to give the order for the release of the arms to Mexican authorities and arranged for their transfer from arsenals throughout New Mexico to Franklin and then clandestinely into Chihuahua in the care of old confidant and family lawyer Juan N. Zubirán, who was then the administrator of the El Paso customs house. Perhaps this arms transfer helped the Jauristas defeat the French forces in 1867.

Taking advantage of his visit to the U.S. capital, Manuel renewed the legal fight for his family’s land in New Mexico. Ironically, by this time he
had been leasing parcels to the U.S. Army, on which it built and operated Fort Craig, but federal payments were not made to him until 1870. This dispute led to further legal battles pertaining to the Armendáriz land grant, and perhaps tiring of the fight, Manuel decided to sell it. He started to sell parcels of land with assistance from Zubirán in 1869. The sale of large portions of the land started to disconnect him from his native New Mexico and from the border area. Even though the Armendáriz private land claim was confirmed as early as 21 June 1860, it was not surveyed until 1872. The final survey and patent issued by the United States occurred in 1878, granting it to the heirs of Pedro Armendáriz.

Just prior to selling his family’s land, Manuel had moved from Chihuahua to Mexico City to complete his professional career and service to his nation. In recognition of his binational experiences, connections to the García Conde family, and long and significant career as a lawyer, politician, military officer, and diplomat, he was commissioned to head the National Archives in Mexico City. He held the position for more than a year from 1868 to 1869. On 4 October 1869, he turned over a complete, detailed, and extensive inventory of the archival collections to his successor. His last action as director of archives was to sign a receipt for the acquisition of a collection of the newspaper Diario Oficial. Apparently he lived out the remainder of his life in the Mexican capital until his death in 1879.

Although Manuel’s brother, Enrique, neither involved himself in the land issue in New Mexico nor participated in local, state, or federal politics, he did have a successful military career. In 1846 he joined the Mexican National Guard, and like his brother, he became captain and fought Doniphan’s army in the Battle of the Sacramento. Later, in 1865, he accompanied Mexican governor Manuel Ojinaga to Guerrero, Mexico, to confront the French imperialists and was taken prisoner. After his release, he marched to El Paso del Norte. Under President Juárez, he became coronel de infantería (colonel of infantry) in the Ejército Permanente (Permanent Army) at the National Palace in Mexico City. He remained in this position for the subsequent president, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, until the fall of his administration in 1876. Little is known of Enrique after this date.

The Armendáriz story does not end with brothers Enrique and Manuel. Manuel and Manuela’s son, Pedro Marciano Armendáriz, also straddled the international border and lived between Chihuahua City, Mexico City, and El Paso, Texas. Unlike his father Manuel, uncle Enrique, and grandfather Pedro, Pedro Marciano accomplished no political or military feats. He was, however, a successful industrialist, businessman, and committed father. He too made the Armendáriz family migration from Chihuahua to Mexico
City, where he began his career building railroads and railroad bridges, and distributing railroad supplies.

While establishing his railroad construction and supply company, Pedro Marciano married María Michel in the Santa Vera Cruz Church in Mexico City in 1889. Their union lasted only a year, and for several years afterward, he concentrated on his business before remarrying. During this time, he was offered an elaborate contract to build a railway in the state of Veracruz. After several years of negotiation, however, the contract fell through. In 1901, at the onset of a new century and in the middle of the industrial and transportation era, Pedro Marciano was contracted by state officials to build a railway and an international bridge connecting the then recently renamed border towns of El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. This was one of the first U.S.-Mexico international bridges. Maybe catching wind of the impending revolution to overthrow the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, president since 1884, Pedro Marciano returned to Mexico City.

In the same year of Francisco Madero’s uprising to oust Díaz, forty-seven-year-old Pedro Marciano remarried, this time to Adela Cecilia Hastings on 22 December 1910. Adela was born in Texas to an Anglo American father and Mexican American mother. At the time of this marriage, Pedro Marciano was ill.
a travel agent like Adela’s father. The couple prospered in Mexico City since
the Mexican Revolution increased business for the railway and transportation
industries. Soldiers, professionals, and refugees migrated to the U.S.-Mexico
border, fueling much of the railroad traffic during the revolution.

Well established even during the revolution, Pedro Marciano had the
wealth and prestige to be the founding president of the Country Club in
Churubusco, a suburb of Mexico City. On 9 May 1912, Adela gave birth to
their first child, Manuel Pedro Gregorio, who grew up to be a successful
and celebrated actor during the golden age of cinema in Mexico and also
in Hollywood. Manuel Pedro Gregorio, or Pedro as he was known, started
his early childhood in relative comfort. In 1917, when he was five years old,
the family visited Adela’s parents at Laredo, Texas. The couple returned to
Mexico City to give birth to a second son, Francisco, in 1919. Soon after his
son’s birth, Pedro Marciano became ill and died in September 1921, leaving
Adela to raise the two boys on her own. She soon moved with her sons to
live with her parents in Laredo, where she died just a year later.

The two boys were taken under the care of their grandparents and an
older cousin, also named Manuel Armendáriz. Young Pedro and Francisco
went to local public schools before another older adult cousin, Francisco
Armendáriz, took Pedro to California to attend the California Polytechnic
School, where he excelled not only in his classes but also in journalism and
theatre. After Pedro graduated in 1932 with a degree in engineering, he had
difficulty finding employment in California. Consequently, he moved back
to Mexico City to take over his parents’ estate.

In Mexico City, Pedro began a career as a writer for local newspapers. He
then got a job, perhaps through connections to his father’s railroad business
and travel agency, writing for an English-language tourist magazine and serving
as a tour guide for Ferrocarriles Nacionales (National Railroads). His fluency
in English enabled him to teach many Americans about Mexico City. In 1935
he landed his first movie role, as a villain in María Elena. The film turned
out to be a failure, but during this same year, he was discovered by a Mexican
film director, Miguel Zacarias, when reciting Hamlet in English to tourists.
He went on to have an illustrious career starring and co-starring in more than
120 movies filmed in Latin America, Europe, and Hollywood. Considered the
Clark Gable of Mexico, Pedro was a handsome and romantic Mexican movie
icon and often played leading roles with major cinema beauties such as María
Candelaria, Dolores del Río, and Gloria Marín.

Pedro portrayed historical figures that his parents and grandparents would
have either known personally or encountered during their lifetimes. In his
many Mexican films, he took on the roles of Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata,
and various characters related to the revolution and the French Intervention. Often his roles were portrayals of common folk of indigenous and mestizo background. His leap to stardom also involved the Mexican film industry and Hollywood casting him in international projects and American movies. In 1948 he shared a starring role with John Wayne and Harry Carey Jr. in John Ford’s The Three Godfathers, and with Henry Fonda, John Wayne, and Shirley Temple in Ford’s Fort Apache.67

Pedro was one of the first Mexican crossover actors to make movies in Hollywood. Even though he made international films, he also continued to appear in Mexican films. Film historian Seth Fein describes Pedro as a “filmic personification of the nation” of Mexico. For example, in his role as a mestizo bandit in Soy Puro Mexicano (1942), filmed as a joint U.S.-Mexico cinematic production during World War II, Pedro occupied a complex international position. Fein observes that Pedro negotiated between Mexican identity and politics and Mexico’s wartime alliance with the United States. This collaboration between the two national industries and audiences is what Fein believes “accelerated and shaped” the golden age of Mexican cinema from
1936 to 1969. Although some of his roles portrayed the stereotypical Mexican bandido or desperado, he played them with dignity and nationalist flair. In his last film, From Russia with Love (1964), he diverged from these types of roles and played James Bond’s Turkish ally.

While filming his last and best-known international film, he was quite ill from cancer he had developed during the shooting of an earlier Hollywood movie. Remaining in Los Angeles to seek medical care and tiring of the battle to fight his illness, he took his own life on 18 June 1963. He left behind not only a legacy of movies but also his wife, Carmen Pardo Lamiñana, an actress from a well-known cinema family, and his two children, Pedro Armendáriz Jr. and Carmen Armendáriz, both of whom grew up in the entertainment industry.

Pedro Armendáriz Jr. starred in several American movies. He was most noted for his roles in Old Gringo (1989), Once Upon a Time in Mexico (2003), The Crime of Father Amaro (2003), and The Legend of Zorro (2005). Pedro Armendáriz Jr. died in New York City on 27 December 2011. Pedro Armendáriz Sr.’s only daughter, Carmen, is a television producer in Mexico City. Their cousin, Gloria Marín, was also a famous actress during the golden age of cinema in Mexico. She was the great granddaughter of Manuel Armendáriz. Gloria Marín was her film name, which she took from her actress mother, Laura Marín. Her father was Pedro Mendez Armendáriz, the son of Dolores Armendáriz, who was the daughter of Manuel.

As ambassadors of Mexican culture through television and film, industry, transportation, trade, diplomacy, and politics, the Armendáriz family has built bridges between peoples and nations. Several generations of the Armendáriz family participated in the formation of a binational region and in the construction of

ILL. 6. Advertisement for The Fugitive at the KiMo Theatre in Albuquerque, 1948
The advertisement appeared in the Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal, on the bottom of page 10, on 10 January 1948. (Courtesy Samuel E. Sisneros Collection)
Mexican culture and identity. Their multigenerational narrative represents the arc of a family’s transition from Spanish colonial and monarchical rule to Mexican independence and nation building through the U.S. occupation and French imperial intrusion to Mexican civil war, reform, and national revolution, and finally, to twentieth-century modernity.

ILL. 7. GLORIA MARÍN
Marín appears on the cover of Somos Uno Magazine, 1 July 2000. (Courtesy Samuel E. Sisneros Collection)
FIG. 1. DESCENDANTS OF PEDRO POLICARPIO DE AZCUE ARMENDÁRIZ AND MARÍA JOSEFA ORTIZ
(Genealogical chart by Samuel E. Sisneros)
Notes

1. Marriage entry of don Pedro Manuel Armendáriz and doña María Rita Armendáriz, 23 August 1769, Catholic Church of San Bartolomé, Valle de Allende, Chihuahua, Registros Parroquiales, 1662–1957, Microcopy 16251, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah [hereafter FHL]. Pedro Manuel is listed as the legitimate son of don Carlos Armendáriz and doña Ana Cordero; María Rita is listed as the legitimate daughter of don Pedro Armendáriz (deceased) and doña María Ignacia Durán, Españoles. For further Armendáriz family history, see Paul Harden, “The Pedro Armendáriz Land Grant,” El Defensor Chiefton, 2 May 2009, www.caminorealheritage.org/PH/0509_armendaris.pdf; and Javier Sanchiz Ruiz’s Geneanet website, http://gw5.geneanet.org/sanchiz?lang=en;pz=pedro;nz=armendariz;ocz=1;p=pedro+manuel;n=armendariz+cordero.


3. Nemesio Salcedo Transfer Order, 3 August 1807, Chihuahua, no. 2069, ff. 374, r. 16, microfilm, 1806–1809, ser. 1, Spanish Archives of New Mexico II, 1621–1821, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico [hereafter NMSRCA].

4. J. J. Bowden, “Private Land Claims in the Southwest” (master’s thesis, Southern Methodist University, 1969); Part II, Socorro County, The Pedro Armendaris Grant, nos. 33 and 34, vol. 2, pp. 163–70, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico; and The Pedro Armendaris Grant, nos. 33 and 34, ff. 1663–1720, r. 16, microfilm, Pedro Armendáriz Land Grant, SC 33 and 34, Surveyor General case files, subser. 5.2, Surveyor General/Court of Private Land Claims Records, ser. 5, Spanish Archives of New Mexico I, 1685–1912 [hereafter SANM I], NMSRCA.


7. For a personal account of the execution of the Mexican revolutionary leaders, see Luis González Obregón and Pedro Armendáriz, Ultimos instantes de los primeros caudillos de la Independencia: narración de un testigo ocular (México: Oficina Tip. de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1896). The other insurgents executed were don Juan Aldama, don Mariano Jiménez, and don Manuel Santamaría.


11. Bowden, *Private Land Claims in the Southwest*, 163–70, and The Pedro Armendaris Grant, nos. 33 and 34. These records list the heirs of Pedro Armendáriz as Manuel, Enrique, Antonio(?), Miguel, and Rodrigo García, husband of deceased daughter Belén Armendáriz. The land grant records also list Rodrigo’s parents as don Pascual García and doña Victoria Telles.


13. Baptism of Enrique Francisco de Paula Armendáriz, 14 July 1822, ff. 984, r. B-52, microfilm, San Francisco de Asís Catholic Church Baptismal Registry, AASF, NMSRCA.

14. Pedro Armendáriz’s letter to the editor is reprinted in González Obregón, *Últimos instantes.* In his introduction to the transcription of Armendáriz’s letter, González Obregón noted that he bought the letter from a collector who found the pages in a dirty, insect-infested rat’s nest.


18. Pedro Armendáriz, *En la tardanza esta el peligro; la experiencia lo demuestra* (Chihuahua: impreso por J. Melchor de la Garza en la oficina del estado, 1834), Microcopy Z-S076, no. 2, New York City Public Library, New York. Dr. Ratíl Armendáriz provided me with scanned copies of this rare and little-known literary work.


27. At the time of the U.S. occupation, the town of Doña Ana became part of New Mexico. Therefore, many Mexican patriots crossed the Rio Grande to Mesilla, which was considered Mexican territory by the Mexican government, but U.S. territory by the U.S. government. On 30 December 1853, the United States convinced Mexican president Antonio López de Santa Anna, whose regime was on the verge of bankruptcy, to agree to a treaty of cession, usually called the Gadsden Purchase, for the sum of 15 million. The people in Mesilla found themselves and their town in U.S. territory. Many participated in a subsequent emigration to other towns, such as Asunción, in northern Chihuahua. See Sisneros, “Los Emigrantes Nuevomexicanos,” 44–45.


29. Copy of communication from Manuel Armendáriz to Gobierno del Estado de Chihuahua, undated as attached to letter from Angel Trias to Ministro de Relaciones Interiores y Exteriores, 4 May 1850, ASREM, Chihuahua, Mexico, Translación de Familias, Emigración, año de 1850, Ministro de Relaciones Interiores y Exteriores, legajo 2–13–2977, 15–19.


31. Draft edict, José Joaquin de Herrera, President of Mexico, 26 September 1849, ASREM, National Palace, Mexico City, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 117.

32. Various correspondence to and from Mexican officials, 18 September 1849 to 22 November 1849, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 114–21; and Draft letter from Mexican Legation to Manuel Armendáriz, 22 November 1849, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 30, 3.

33. For diplomatic order, see Luis de la Rosa, Washington, D.C., to Señor Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico City, 22 November 1849, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 121; and Unsigned note to Lic. Manuel Armendáriz, 11 December 1849, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 122. For Manuel as supreme court judge, see Angel Trías, Chihuahua, Mexico to Ministro de Justicia y Negl. Eccos., 29 December 1849, Archivo General de la Nación [hereafter AGN], Justicia, vol. 345, doc. 326, México, D.F.
Various correspondences from Mexican and U.S. officials, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 131–35. El Paso, Texas, originally consisted of two hamlets—Franklin and Magoffinville—and was later referred to as El Paso after the larger Mexican village across the river. This contested area was part of New Mexico until 1854, when the boundary dispute was settled and the U.S. Senate accepted the present boundary. W. H. Timmons, *El Paso: A Borderlands History* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1990), 120–33.

Copy of Testimonial from Manuel Armendáriz to Gobierno del Estado, ASREM, legajo 2–13–2977, 15–19.

Manuel Armendáriz, Franklin, New Mexico, to Ministro Plenipotenciario in Washington, D.C., 20 May 1850–3 October 1850, ASREM, Legacion Mexicana en Washington, año de 1850, Correspondence from Consulates, Ministro de Relaciones Interiores y Exteriores, legajo 58, 222–24.

Manuel Armendáriz, Franklin, New Mexico, to Ministro Plenipotenciario in Washington, D.C., 22 September 1850, includes copy of letter from J. José Sanchez and José María Uranga y Cienfuegos, El Paso, Chihuahua, to Gafatura Política del Canton Bravos, 15 September 1850, transcribed for “the Mexican Consul on the other side of the river,” ASREM, legajo 58, 225–26. The Senecú community took refuge in the El Paso del Norte area along with the Spanish mestizo people that were pushed out of New Mexico during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and formed a large land-based community that encompassed both sides of the Rio Grande. Many later migrated to the town of Doña Ana in southern New Mexico. See Timmons, *El Paso: A Borderlands History*.

Manuel Armendáriz, Río Florido, Chihuahua, to Señor Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de la República Mexicana, 8 September 1851, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 135–39.

Communiqué from Sr. Robles, Mexico City, to Ministro de Relaciones, 15 October 1851, ASREM, Expediente personal: Manuel Armendáriz, legajo 1800, 140.


Marriage of Manuel Armendáriz and Manuela García Conde, 10 January 1851, San Francisco y Nuestra Señora de la Regla Catholic Church Marriage Registry, Microcopy 162690, FHL. The marriage record was a conventional entry documenting that the couple went through the usual and required prenuptial practices, but their ceremony was unique in that the bishop, Antonio Laureano de Zubiría of Durango, returning from a visit to Santa Fe, New Mexico, blessed the marriage. The marriage record lists Manuel’s parents as don Pedro Armendáriz and doña Josefa Ortiz. The marriage record lists Manuela’s parents as Gen. don Francisco García Conde (deceased) and doña Concepción Humana. The godparents were don Rodrígo García (widower of Manuel’s sister Belén) and doña Merced García Conde de Muñóz.

Almada, “García Conde, Francisco,” *Diccionario de historia*, 246. Francisco García Conde’s younger brother was Pedro García Conde, the great Mexican general and military reformer in the U.S.-Mexico War era. Also known for his work as an engineer, Pedro García Conde completed the first survey map of the state of Chihuahua in 1854 and worked for the Mexican Boundary Commission to survey southern New Mexico.


44. Church registry notations for Manuel and Manuela’s children are as follows: Baptism of Pedro Felipe de Jesus, 9 February 1852, El Sagrario Catholic Church, Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico, Registros parroquiales, 1709–1957, Microcopy 162668, FHL; Baptism of Nicando Patricio Manuel, 17 March 1853, El Sagrario Catholic Church, Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico, Registros parroquiales, 1709–1957, Microcopy 162669, FHL; Marriage of don Alejandro H. Armendáriz and doña Elpidia Muñóz, 8 September 1881, Santa Vera Cruz Catholic Church, Mexico City, Registros parroquiales de Santa Veracruz, 1560–1953, Microcopy 035853, FHL; Baptism of María de los Dolores, 5 January 1857, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Catholic Church, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, Registros parroquiales, 1727–1956, Microcopy 162706, FHL; Marriage of María de los Dolores Armendáriz and Santiago Mendez, 2 May 1881, Santa Vera Cruz Catholic Church, Mexico City, Registros parroquiales de Santa Veracruz, 1560–1953, Microcopy 035853, FHL; Marriage of Belén Armendáriz and Juan Duque de Estrada, 31 October 1878, Santa Vera Cruz Catholic Church, Mexico City, Registros parroquiales de Santa Veracruz, 1560–1953, Microcopy 035852, FHL; and Marriage of Guadalupe Armendáriz and Angel García Peña, 31 October 1884, Asunción Sagrario Metropolitano, Mexico City, Registros parroquiales: parroquia Asunción Sagrario Metropolitano en la colonia Centro, delegación de Cuauhtémoc, 1536–1953, Microcopy 35286, FHL. The record notes that Guadalupe would have been born in 1868. No baptism record was found for Pedro Marciano. Manuel’s sister Belén had a daughter also named Belén who married Manuel Aspiroz, Mexican ambassador to the United States (1899).


46. Francisco Bulnes, Juárez y las revoluciones de Ayutla y de reforma (México: Editorial H. T. Milenario, 1967). See also Richard N. Sinkin, The Mexican Reform, 1855–1876 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979). After Mexico lost its northern territory, Santa Anna’s conservative centralist dictatorship ceased and federalism took hold. But in 1853, Santa Anna and conservative centralism returned. Struggles intensified between liberals and conservatives during the end of Santa Anna’s final reign, with the liberals returning to power in 1855. They enacted the Constitution of 1857, which incorporated many of their ideas. The conservatives revolted as a result, disavowing the liberals’ reforms and proclaiming Félix Zuloaga as president. This began the Guerra de Reforma (Reform War) that split Mexico into two political camps. Conservatives upheld church control and the sustained privileges of the elite and the military. Benito Juárez and other liberals wished to confine the powers of the church and the
For three years a bloody battle ensued, but eventually the conservatives were defeated in 1861.

52. Deed Book no. 1, Socorro County Records, Socorro, New Mexico, 15–14; and Prefect Court Records, folder 54, book A, NMSRCA. It appears that all or a large portion of the remaining land grant was sold in 1869 to Vicente St. Vrain. The land grant was further broken up and sold to a stream of owners. See Harden, “The Pedro Armendariz Land Grant.”
55. Communiqué from Lerdo de Tejeda, Mexico City, 30 December 1869, AGN, vol. 5, 202; and Side note and signature by Manuel Armendáriz, Jefe del Archivo General de la Nación, 31 December 1869.
58. Marriage of Pedro Armendáriz and María Michel, 4 March 1889, Santa Vera Cruz Catholic Church, Mexico City, *Registros parroquiales de Santa Vera Cruz, 1760–1953*, Microcopy 035853, FHL. The marriage record notes Pedro (no middle name) as
single, a native of Chihuahua, a one-year resident in Mexico City, and the legitimate son of Manuel Armendáriz and Manuela García. The bride is listed as single, a native of Zacatecas, and the legitimate daughter of Faustino Michel and Josefa Parra. Witnesses were Francisco García Conde and Josefa Parra. Gustavo García mentions that this marriage lasted only one year. See Gustavo García, *Pedro Armendáriz: México en el Alma*, 3 vols. (México: Editorial Clío, 1997), 1:15–24.


60. "Contrato puente internacional sobre el Río Bravo y tranvías," Microcopy 513, pt. 1, r. 35, seq. 2, Ciudad Juárez Municipal Archives, University of Texas at El Paso Library. See also "Contract between Francisco Mena, Secretary of Communication of State and in charge of communication and public works and Pedro M. Armendáriz for the construction of railway (ferrocarril) in Chihuahua, September 27, 1901," English translation in *Chamizal Arbitration: The Countercase of the United States of America before the International Boundary Commission, United States and Mexico*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1911), 174–80. The contract states that resident Pedro M. Armendáriz—on his account or that of the company/firm or companies under his charge—construct for the term of fifty years a railway coming into Ciudad Juárez extending to the middle line of the Rio Bravo del Norte. He was also to build the international bridge (metal or wood) on the Mexican side, which was to connect to the American side. When completed in two years, he was to mark the point of the dividing line between the two countries. His firm was to charge ten centavos for each person crossing on the railway line. For the transport of cargo, the carrier would be subject to local governmental tariffs. A few months later, on 11 February 1902, the contract was revised, changing the term to ninety-nine years and time of completion to two years and nine months.


62. Marriage of Pedro Armendáriz and Adela C. Hastings, p. 82–83, San José y Nuestra Señora del Sagrado Corazón Catholic Church, Mexico City, *Registros parroquiales de San José y Nuestra Señora del Sagrado Corazón, 1640–1955*, Microcopy 037801, FHL. The marriage record notes Pedro (no middle name) as single, son of Manuel Armendáriz and Manuela García. Adela's parents are listed as C. B. Hastings and Gumersinda P. L. Hastings. The godparents of the nuptials were C. B. Hastings and Luisa C. de Arriqueta. The witnesses were César Campesino and D. A. González Hastings. The record notes that the Archbishop of Mexico City granted an exemption for the nuptial mass to be celebrated during the prohibited period of Advent. Interestingly, there is no mention of Pedro's previous marriage or an annulment in this marriage record or in the pre-marriage investigation. See Información Matrimonial, 19 December 1910, San José y Nuestra Señora del Sagrado Corazón Catholic Church, Mexico City, *Registros parroquiales de San José y Nuestra Señora del Sagrado Corazón, 1640–1955*, Microcopy 037837, FHL. In this pre-marriage investigation, the parish priest, Francisco Domínguez, requested that the archbishop allow the marriage during the prohibited period of Advent because the groom and the bride’s father were travel agents and their business would suffer gravely. In other testimonies, the groom is listed as Pedro M. Armendáriz. It is also noted that Pedro was baptized on
5 November 1863 in Chihuahua, was the son of Manuel Armendáriz and Manuela García Conde, and had been a resident of Mexico for twenty years.


64. García, Pedro Armendáriz, 1:17.

65. Ibid., 1:18–22.


67. For Pedro Armendáriz’s filmography, see García, Pedro Armendáriz, 3:66–67.


70. For a complete study of Pedro Armendáriz Jr.’s life, see Gerardo de la Torre, Pedro hijo de Pedro (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2006).

71. For more on Carmen, see García, Pedro Armendáriz, 2:32–34, 53. Gustavo García notes that Pedro starred with his cousin, Gloria Marín, in El Jefe Máximo. See García, Pedro Armendáriz, 1:37.