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Running head: HARVEST OF EMPIRE Harvest of Empire Harvest of Empire In the early 1990s, the federal government initiated the construction of a large wall along the two-thousand-mile border with Mexico (Gonzalez, 2001). By 1998, only sixty miles were completed, separating California from Tijuana and creating a new vision of the border, made of corrugated steel kept together by the troop landing platforms that were left from the Persian Gulf Wars (Gonzalez, 2001). Thousands of people are crossing the border everyday; in many instances, the border between Mexico and America into the epicenter of the dramatic political, social, economic, and cultural changes (Gonzalez, 2001).

People live in the atmosphere of immigration, without beginning and end, but only few know the true origins of Mexican migration to the United States. As such, the purpose of Gonzalez's book is to provide facts, describe the history of immigration from Mexico to the U. S. and to emphasize the differences between Latin American and European immigration. It is really important as the immigrants need to know the history of their move to the United States in order to understand their position and choose the right direction.

In his book, Gonzalez (2001) discusses the three important themes. First, the roots of the Latino immigration and its evolution are described. A reader can learn the important facts, which were not known before. Second, Gonzalez applies to the anecdotal evidence from one particular family, to reconsider immigration experiences from the viewpoint of one Hispanic family. Finally, Gonzalez describes modern Hispanic immigration in relation to the growth of political mobilization among the Hispanic immigrants. The themes of cultural assimilation and the marginalization of minorities have to complete the

picture of Mexican immigration to the U. S. This is essential for Mexican immigrants to obtain the right understanding of their past and the author wants to help with it.

Unfortunately, not always can the author stay neutral. Gonzalez (2001) is a prominent Latino journalist, and he cannot always conceal his rage at American racism and domination. This can be easily traced throughout his writing. The struggle against racism is an important issue but the author seems to overemphasize the differences between European and Mexican immigration, while it is known that many immigrants from other countries were treated even worse. Nevertheless, what he writes at the end of the introductory chapter of his book lays the foundation and defines the direction of his argument: “ The American people still cling to a basic sense of fairness, that once they understand the facts, they rarely permit injustice to stand. Our most dangerous enemies are not each other but the great wall of ignorance between us” (p. xix). As such, there is some hope that the book will help to reduce the negative effects of ignorance on the difficult relations between Americans and Latinos.

References

Gonzalez, J. (2001). *Harvest of Empire: A history of Latinos in America*. Penguin.